

Travel Policy Statement 2017-2018 for Students attending further education, with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) who live in Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol and North Somerset

This travel policy statement applies to students aged 16-19 who attend their nearest further education establishments. Consideration will also be given to 19-25 year olds who are continuing to progress and meet criteria under the low income policy to enable participation.

1. Summary of Policy Statement and Main Objectives

You should note that your Local Authority is under no obligation to provide travel support for students attending further education establishments.

Students are normally expected to progress in their relevant study plan to continue to access travel support from their Local Authority.

The Local Authority may exercise its discretion, where they believe it appropriate, to ask students, parents and carers for a contribution towards travel costs. This policy will apply to students in receipt of DLA with a mobility/vehicle allowance so the Local Authority may ask students/parents/carers for a contribution towards travel costs in this instance.

Our travel policy promotes and supports:

- The Government's initiative to increase walking, cycling and bus travel.
- The three Local Authorities School Travel Plan Strategies and independent travel.

The nature and mode of travel support will be determined by the Local Authority and will be one that is consistent with the Local Authority's duty to secure Value for Money. It will normally be provided at standard college hours, at the beginning and end of the college day.

Transport will be provided only where there is no appropriate alternative.

The desired outcome of this approach is actively to encourage young people to travel as independently and inclusively as possible and to develop confidence and vital travel and social skills to support options for post 16 training and employment thereafter.

Support with travel for students with SEND will be considered up to the end of the academic year in which the student becomes 19. Consideration will be given to support beyond the age of 19.

2. Who is eligible for support with travel?

Each Local Authority will consider travel arrangements for students who are attending the nearest appropriate further education provision and:

- Have had a statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), or medical or physical difficulties, which means they are unable to walk the distance of 3 miles (accompanied as necessary) and
- Are studying a full time course

Students under Bath & North East Somerset and North Somerset who meet the criteria for support will be required to undertake two weeks independent travel training. Their ability to travel independently will be assessed by personnel from the BANES Travel service.

NB It is important to note that students must apply annually for travel support and all travel support is subject to review.

3. How do students apply for support with travel?

An application form can be obtained from your home Local Authority (your Local Council).

Or

You may be able to obtain an application form from one of the following:

- College Coordinator
- Disability Support Coordinator
- School

Applications are normally received by end of July.

The applicant is responsible for returning the completed application form. Completed application forms should be sent to the Local Authority in which the student lives (some Local Authorities may request additional information):

Bath and North East Somerset Council

People and Communities
SSEN Service (Post 16 Transport)
Lewis House
Manvers Street
Bath BA1 1JQ
Email: SENDSchool_TravelTeam@BATHNES.GOV.UK

Bristol City Council

Home to School Travel Team
Floor 2
100 Temple Street
Bristol
BS3 9FS
Email: home.school.travel@bristol.gov.uk

North Somerset Council

Home to school Transport
Integrated Transport Unit
Town Hall
Walliscote Grove Road
Weston-super-Mare
BS23 1UJ
Email: schooltransport@n-somerset.gov.uk

Please be aware that we cannot guarantee that transport will be in place for the start of the academic year if the application is received too late.

4. What support is provided for students with SEND including those over 19?

On a case by case basis students over 19 and up to the age of 25 may be considered for support with travel. Should support be granted students will need to apply yearly

and decisions will be based on any changing needs, changes in circumstances, progression in learning and in line with the policy.

5. Decisions on eligibility for support with travel

Decisions relating to students who did not previously have a Statement of Special Educational Needs prior to the introduction of Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) will be assessed on a case by case basis. Decisions will take into account the age of the student, and the journey and medical evidence provided by colleagues and other partners.

The assessment of support with travel needs will be made in line with this Travel Policy and will draw together any information from the relevant college/school, the student and other colleagues.

The mode of travel will be the most inclusive, sustainable and cost effective. In some cases a Personal Travel Budget (PTB) may be made to the parent/carer/student.

6. What independence training is available?

For young people with Statements of Special Education Needs or an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), schools are actively encouraged to use the annual review process as an opportunity to discuss the young person's transition to post 16 study or training. Schools and colleges are normally expected to empower the young person to develop the necessary skills to become independent travelers.

7. What support can students apply for if they need to travel to a course that is outside the Local Authority area?

Local Authorities will consider applications for support with travel to colleges outside the area, if the course is considered to be the nearest appropriate course. Applications should be made to the Local Authority in which the student lives. Support with travel will be approved only if the individual application represents reasonable public expenditure. A Personal Travel Budget (PTB) may be offered.

The Local Authority will normally provide support with travel, at the start and end of each term, for SEND students at Independent Specialist Providers. The mode of support with travel will be assessed by the Travel Team in line with the student's needs and the policy.

8. What support is available for students choosing to attend further education which is beyond daily travelling distance?

Students wishing to study on a course that is beyond daily travel distance should contact the Local Authority to discuss this. For students who are moving to a Post 16 Independent Specialist Provider (residential college), the application form will be completed by the current school, the student or parent/carer.

Support with travel will be provided at the start and end of each term (ie. 12 journeys) for students in residential college.

9. What support is available for students who do not meet these criteria?

The majority of students are able to access their chosen course by walking / public transport. Where communities are not well served by public transport then a number of post 16 providers make innovative, strategic arrangements supported by the Transport Partnership.

10. What support is available for students on Apprenticeships or Traineeships?

The learning provider is responsible for ensuring that students have reasonable expenses met in full, where reasonable expenses are needed to overcome barriers to learning. These may include the cost of travelling to or from the place of learning or work placement. Employers are encouraged to support trainees with expenses such as transport and meals.

It may also be worth asking the learning provider if they offer their own transport service as some may do this.

11. Appeals process

All applications for travel support are considered in line with the policy criteria.

Where applications do not fulfil the policy conditions set out above, consideration will be given to the individual's circumstances.

However, students, parents/carers have a right to appeal. Please see below for details of the appeal process.

Bath and North East Somerset Appeal Process

Stage one: Review by a senior officer

- A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's home to school transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.
- The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.
- Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's written request a senior officer reviews the original decision and sends the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review, setting out:
 - The nature of the decision reached;
 - how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB21);
 - Information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
 - what factors were considered;
 - the rationale for the decision reached; and
 - information about how the parent can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).

As with the whole appeals process the timings are recommended and not compulsory. We envisage many appeals will be dealt with much sooner than these timings, particularly those which have a time pressure, whilst complex cases may take longer.

Stage two: Review by an independent appeal panel

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.

Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeal panel considers written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and gives a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days), setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB);
- information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
- what factors were considered;
- the rationale for the decision reached; and
- information about the parent's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

The independent appeal panel members should be independent of the original decision making process (but are not required to be independent of the local authority) and suitably experienced (at the discretion of the local authority), to ensure a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of the parents and the local authority, and that road safety requirements are complied with and no child is placed at unnecessary risk. 21 Road Safety GB is the sole published standards known to the department, hence referenced.

Local Government Ombudsman – it is recommended that as part of this process, local authorities make it clear that there is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, but only if complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled. If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for judicial review.

All appeals will be considered on an individual basis in line with this criterion.

To submit an appeal the applicant should put in writing the reason for the appeal together with any supporting evidence e.g. medical report to:

Bath and North East Somerset Council

People and Communities

SSEN Service (Post 16 Transport)

Lewis House

Manvers Street

Bath BA1 1JQ

Email: SENDSchool_TravelTeam@BATHNES.GOV.UK

Sources of impartial, information advice and support

SEND Partnership Service

Telephone: 01225 394382 (Monday to Thursday 10am to 3pm during term time)

Email: send_partnershipservice@bathnes.gov.uk

Child Law Advice

<http://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/transport/>

Telephone: 0300 330 5485

Bristol Appeal Process

All appeals will be considered on an individual basis in line with this criterion.

To submit an appeal the applicant should put in writing the reason for the appeal together with any supporting evidence e.g. medical report to –

Bristol City Council

Home to School Travel Team

Bristol City Council

Floor 2

100 Temple Street

Bristol

BS3 9FS

Email: home.school.travel@bristol.gov.uk

North Somerset Council Appeal Process

All appeals will be considered on an individual basis in line with this criterion.

To submit an appeal the applicant should put in writing the reason for the appeal together with any supporting evidence e.g. medical report to –

North Somerset Council

Home to school Transport

Integrated Transport Unit

Town Hall

Walliscote Grove Road

Weston-super-Mare

BS23 1UJ

Email: schooltransport@n-somerset.gov.uk

12. Travel information

Students are advised to contact their school, college or training provider Student Support Services to get advice on eligibility criteria to receive a Bursary Fund/financial help. Details of the scheme at <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

First Bus Student Tickets

Details of where to obtain these can be found at www.firstgroup.com along with the current price of various types of ticket.

Students may purchase discounted travel tickets from the First Bus Group.
<https://firstgroup.com/students>

Wessex Buses

For information on Wessex buses which serve Bath, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, their website is: <http://wessexconnect.com/>

Railcards

A 16-25 Railcard saves 1/3 on rail fares throughout Great Britain for a year. Minimum fares apply for travel at or before 10.00am Monday to Friday (except during July and August). For further details and up-to-date prices go to <http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk>

If the college or Post 16 provider is not listed below please contact them directly for individual schemes they may operate

College	Travel Details
South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (formally Filton College)	The college sells discounted bus tickets for local bus routes. Tickets are available from the finance office. A student photo card will be required, at an additional cost.

	<p>The college can advise you of any other travel schemes available e.g. Rail travel</p>
<p>City of Bristol College</p>	<p>Travel and transport options are available from www.cityofbristol.ac.uk or contact student support team 0117 3125000 or email csot@cityofbristol.ac.uk</p>
<p>St Brendan's Sixth Form College</p>	<p>The college sells a variety of First bus tickets at a reduced rate for students. Contact the College ticket office 0117 9777766.</p> <p>The college also operates a number of their own routes; please contact the ticket office for more information.</p>
<p>Weston College</p>	<p>The college offer a variety of local First bus and other operator routes during term time. Contact the college 01934 411411 or www.weston.ac.uk/form/contact-us</p>
<p>Bridgwater College</p>	<p>The college offer a variety of local travel schemes. Contact Student Support Team 01278 441233 or www.bridgwater.ac.uk</p>
<p>Bath College</p>	<p>The college can give you details of public bus and rail services, park and ride options as well as the cost of college buses. http://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/college-life/getting-to-college or e mail enquiries@bathcollege.ac.uk</p>

16 – 19 Bursary Fund

You may be able to apply for a bursary to help with expenses, such as travel costs. Please see this link for more information www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/overview and whether you would be eligible. You will need to apply to your school, college or training provider