



Post 16 Education Transport Policy

This policy supersedes all previous policies and applies only to the academic year 2022/23

SUMMARY

This document outlines the Brighter Future for Children's Policy for providing assistance with education transport for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged up to 19 and those young people aged 19-25 with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

OWNER

Anne Tarrant – School Transport Manager

VERSION

V1.3

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Brighter Futures for Children
Civic Offices, Bridge Street,
Reading RG1 2LU

Company number 11293709

Contents

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Background to this policy | 3 |
| Legal and policy framework..... | 4 |
| Raising the Participation Age | 4 |
| Part One: Mainstream Post 16 School and College, Training or Work Placements | 5 |
| General transport available | 5 |
| Part Two: Transport Provision for Young People with Special Educational Needs | 5 |
| Key Contact Numbers | 5 |
| BFFC’s Approach | 6 |
| General Entitlement | 7 |
| Eligibility Criteria | 7 |
| Choosing a School | 8 |
| Transport Requests | 8 |
| Bus Passes and College Transport | 8 |
| No Transport Provision | 8 |
| Individual Requirements..... | 9 |
| Pupil’s Home Address | 9 |
| Change of Address..... | 9 |
| Moving into Reading Borough..... | 9 |
| Medical Conditions..... | 9 |
| Parents’ Disabilities | 10 |
| General Requirements for Parents/Carers and Young People Using Transport | 10 |
| Behaviour on Transport | 10 |
| Emergency Contact Details | 10 |
| 19-25 Provision | 10 |
| Work placements, apprenticeships, and traineeships | 10 |
| Decisions, Reviewing of Decisions, Complaints and Appeals..... | 11 |
| Decisions | 11 |
| Appeals Process..... | 11 |
| Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal..... | 11 |
| Corporate Complaints Policy..... | 12 |
| Useful Contacts | 12 |

Background to this policy

This document outlines the Brighter Future for Children's (BFFC) policy for providing assistance with education transport for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged up to 19 and those young people aged 19-25 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

This policy describes what travel assistance will be considered to support young people of sixth form age, to assess appropriate education and training. Support will be assessed and if required, the most suitable travel assistance will be provided where necessary

We have no specific duty to make transport arrangements for young people of sixth form age, even if they have an EHCP.

Our aim is to promote greater independence and ability for young people who have special needs and disability, who may need additional support when travelling to and from Sixth form/College. By promoting independence of young people with SEND, it empowers them to become integrated into mainstream society as soon as possible and helps them on their journey towards adulthood.

BFFC's SEND Travel Assistance Policy only applies to Reading's residents. Residents of other boroughs should apply to the Local Authority where they normally live.

This policy has been developed in accordance with the DfE Post 16 Home to school Travel and Transport guidance.

This policy is not a definitive statement of the law but takes into account legislation, relevant guidance, regulations, recommended practice and BFFC's own experience. Transport to and from school is provided in accordance with various statutory provisions such as the Education Act 1996, as amended by subsequent enactment and the Equality Duty pursuant to the Equality Act 2010.

This policy may be updated in the light of changes in legislation and other such circumstances. In considering the date of implementation of any future change, BFFC will consider the effect on young people whose school or college attendance or travel arrangements were made in good faith in the light of this or previous policies. However, BFFC reserves the right to implement any change of policy before the end of the school or college career of any particular child or young person.

Throughout this policy we use the term *parent* to mean one or both parents and to include the young person's main carer(s). We use the term 'assistance' in this policy because in some cases BFFC may meet only a part of the cost. It still remains the responsibility of parents in all circumstances to ensure their young person attend school or college.

The Policy is in two parts:

Part One:

The Policy for mainstream learners in post 16 school, college training and work placements.

Part Two:

The Policy for learners with special educational needs and disabilities.

Legal and policy framework

The requirements placed on a local authority are defined in the Education Act 1996 (as amended), Education and Skills Act 2008, Education and Inspections Act 2006,

Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and the Equality Act 2012. These Acts require that:

1. A local authority shall prepare for each academic year a transport policy statement.
2. The statement shall specify the arrangements for the provision of transport or otherwise that the authority consider it necessary to make for facilitating the attendance of persons of sixth form age, receiving education or training at:
 - a. A school
 - b. A college of further education
 - c. An authority maintained or assisted institution providing further education
 - d. An establishment supported by the Education Funding Agency
 - e. A learning provider funded by the authority to deliver accredited programmes of learning which lead to a positive outcome.
3. This requires the authority to have regard to the need to include sufficient information in their transport statement and the need to publish the statement in good time, so that young people and their parents are able to take account of these matters when choosing an establishment.
4. The statement shall specify the arrangements that the authority consider it necessary to make for the provision of financial assistance in respect of the reasonable travelling expenses of persons of sixth form age, receiving education or training at any establishment such as is mentioned in subsection.
5. The statement shall also provide information about the travel provision put in place for young adult learners aged 19+ and those aged 19 – 25 with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan.

The Department for Education ‘Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training’, January 2019 advises that local authorities should not differentiate between providers or institutions in the arrangements it provides to support young people in facilitating their attendance in education or training. In preparing this Policy Statement, BFFC (‘the Authority’) is mindful of the requirements under the Education and Skills Act 2008, which are as follows:

Raising the Participation Age

Young people are required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18.

Raising the participation age (RPA) does not mean that young people must stay in school, they will be able to choose one of the following:

- Full-time education, such as school, FE college or home education
- Apprenticeships, work-based learning
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for at least 20 hours a week

Part One: Mainstream Post 16 School and College, Training or Work Placements

Whilst BfFC is committed to supporting Post 16 education, BfFC does not have a statutory duty to offer transport for a young person Post 16. There is no automatic entitlement to assistance for school or college transport once learners are over the age of 16.

However, to benefit learners, preferential rates of travel are available from some rail and bus operators, such as Reading Buses. The parent/young person should contact the relevant transport provider to purchase tickets.

Certain colleges such as the Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) provide buses from Reading to the college, at a small charge. For further information, please contact the respective college.

Information about Bursary Funding which may be available to young people should be sought from the educational establishment attended. Parents and carers should ensure that they are aware of the cost of transport and take this into account when making choices regarding Post 16 education.

Information regarding a bursary can also be found on the governments website by clicking this link [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#).

Families who experience financial difficulties should contact the school/further education establishment who may be able to provide assistance through their bursary funding scheme.

The only exceptions to this may be for certain learners with special educational needs or disabilities, in certain circumstances (please see [Part Two](#)).

General transport available

There are a number of public transport service providers in Reading. Colleges and schools in Reading and surrounding boroughs have their own transport arrangements but each arrangement can vary.

Young people should check with their setting about the transport arrangements and ticketing prices that can apply to both bus and train travel.

Part Two: Transport Provision for Young People with Special Educational Needs

Key Contact Numbers

School Transport Service

Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading RG1 2LU

Telephone: 0118 937 2542

Email: School.Transport@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

BfC's Approach

It is the policy of BfC to provide transport assistance for certain young people (post 16) with special educational needs or disabilities who continue education, training or workplace learning.

BfC wishes to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with special educational needs and disabilities in education and training. Travel training will be considered for pupils as part of the annual review process.

Young people with an EHC plan will be assessed on their transport eligibility by BfC at the transfer stage when they move from compulsory education to post-16 education.

Decisions/recommendations will be made in accordance with the legal framework and statutory guidance for post-16 transport provision. Suitable travel arrangements will then be provided to address the needs of eligible young people.

- BfC wishes to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with special educational needs and disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training and the following will be considered:

Free transport will be provided to a young adult learner, where BfC has secured and named a setting in an EHC plan which provides both the provision of education or training and the provision of boarding accommodation. This applies to a young adult learner aged under 25, subject to an EHC plan and where it is considered necessary to facilitate that person's attendance at the place of education or training.

Free transport assistance may be provided where a young adult learner was receiving education or training at an establishment maintained or assisted by BfC and providing further education, or at a college of further education, and BfC considered that:

- a. the person's attendance on that course was reasonably necessary; and
- b. it was necessary for BfC to provide transport to facilitate that person's attendance on the course.

In deciding whether it is necessary for BfC to provide free transport assistance for a young adult learner, BfC would amongst other things, have regard to:

- the learner's age, ability and aptitude
- any learning difficulties and/or disabilities the person may have
- the locations and times at which the education or training is provided
- the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which the learner could reasonably be expected to take.

For the purposes of deciding whether to provide free transport, BfC would not consider it necessary, other than in exceptional circumstances, for a young adult learner to attend an additional further education course at the same level or equivalent where the learner had previously attended and completed a course at an establishment within the further education sector. BfC expects to see evidence of the learner making progression, but each case will be considered on its own merits.

General Entitlement

There is no automatic entitlement to assisted transport once a young person is over the age of 16. However, cases will be decided on an individual basis and BFFC will consider any supporting evidence provided as part of a request together with a completed transport application form.

If eligible, transport will only be provided to the nearest education and /or training provider for learners and subject to funding in relation to the published eligibility criteria outlined below.

Assistance with transport will not be provided if it is deemed that suitable provision is available at a closer learning provider as measured from the home address.

The “nearest suitable” learning provider is the closest school or college to the home address able to meet the young person’s educational needs. If parents choose to send their young person or the young person chooses to attend a school or college which is not the “nearest suitable”, assistance with transport will not be provided by BFFC. These distances are measured by the nearest available walking route and verified by BFFC or its agents, by appropriate means which might include the use of computer-generated mapping systems. BFFC views these distances as an exact measure, and they cannot be considered as marginal. The measurements are taken from the entrance to the home to the main entrance of the learning provider.

BFFC provides independent travel training schemes to enable young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to travel on public transport independently and safely. Information on this can be accessed through the school/college or through the School Transport Services. Assistance is normally only provided for the standard school or college day and to one site or educational establishment destination.

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for consideration for transport to school or college, young people must:

- have an EHC plan and be unable to access public transport
- be resident within Reading
- be aged 16 to 25
- attend a school or college, including Special Schools and Academies.
- On a full time course (minimum 15 taught hours) and attending their nearest appropriate centre, offering an appropriate course for that young person
- Live more than 3 miles from the school / college or not be able to walk less than those distances specified due to SEND

Young people are expected to make use of public transport wherever possible and travel training is available.

Applicants will be required to provide relevant documents to prove their eligibility to assistance with transport. Other documents may be required and details should be obtained from the School Transport Service before applying.

Choosing a School

For young people meeting the eligibility criteria, BfFC will only provide assistance with transport costs to the nearest school considered by BfFC to be able to meet the young persons identified needs. This may not be their choice of preferred school.

Assistance with transport will not be provided if it is deemed that suitable provision is available at a closer placement as measured from the home address.

In cases where a parent wishes to choose a different school, discounted or discretionary fares with some public transport providers may be available through the School Transport Service or direct from the public transport providers.

If a college of further education or equivalent is chosen, an application can be made directly to the education provider's Bursary Fund which is available for low-income families (details of which can be obtained from the provider and further information can be found on the governments website by clicking this link [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#)).

Transport Requests

Applications must be made annually and will be reviewed regularly to assess whether or not assistance with transport is still required. In cases where it is not clear if the appropriate criteria are fully met, an appeal can be made through the published appeals process.

There is no guarantee that any transport provided will be the same as when the learner attended school in Year 11 and every encouragement will be made towards independent travel by public transport.

The Council also has a legal obligation to review and re-tender transport contracts on a regular basis. However, any review of this nature will be communicated with parents prior to any changes being made.

Bus Passes and College Transport

BfFC has arrangements with some local bus and train operators for the purchase of annual season tickets at preferential rates e.g., Reading Buses.

The parent/young person should contact the relevant transport provider to purchase tickets.

Certain Colleges such as Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA) and Henley College provide buses from Reading to the College at a charge. For further information please contact the respective college.

No Transport Provision

Transport will NOT normally be provided in the following circumstances:

- if the young person does not fulfil the criteria
- if there is a change of address following issue of a final EHC plan
- if the parent/carer request a place that is not the nearest appropriate establishment at which a place is available

- for young people with an EHC plan where the parents have agreed to make provision for transport
- for after school clubs or school trips
- for work experience placements or other extra-curricular activities
- for dental or hospital appointments
- for clinical, medical or non-educational appointments
- in the event of detention and/or exclusions
- to attend meetings following exclusion
- to attend open days and 'taster sessions' at a setting
- following continued inappropriate behaviour occurring on transport
- in the event that a young person is unwell.

It is the parents' responsibility to provide transport on these occasions.

Individual Requirements

Pupil's Home Address

Transport to and from school will normally be determined from a single permanent residence. This is normally the address where the young person spends most time with the parent/carer and has been used for admission purposes. BfFC must be notified in writing of all changes of home address.

Change of Address

If there is a change of address for a young person, then parents must inform the School Transport Service immediately. If necessary, the School Transport Service will reassess the pupil's entitlement to transport. Proof of residency will be required to ensure the correct entitlement for the young person.

Please note that a change of address does not mean an entitlement to transport, although in exceptional cases, BfFC may consider that continuing attendance at the current setting to be in the young person's best interest. In such cases transport will be considered to ensure attendance. Consideration will also be given as to whether the change of address was entirely outside any parental control. This decision is at the discretion of BfFC.

Where the change of address affects the designation of the nearest suitable school or college named in Section I in an EHC plan and parents choose to continue the current placement, parents will be responsible for making suitable transport arrangements and the plan will be amended.

Moving into Reading Borough

Families moving into Reading Borough will be subject to the criteria as outlined in the section above – Change of Address.

Medical Conditions

If a young person has a temporary or enduring medical condition making it impossible to walk to school, then assistance may be provided. Applications for assistance on this basis will need to be supported by appropriate evidence from the medical profession. Evidence required by the Company may include, but may not be restricted to, a letter from the young person's General Practitioner or Consultant or both and must be supplied at no cost to the Company.

If a parent feels the young person may be eligible, they need to contact and discuss this with the SEN Team.

BfFC reserves the right to require the young person to be examined by its own medical adviser and may choose to seek comment from the educational institution or school attended by the child or young person. In an exceptional case BfFC may choose to substitute the advice from its own adviser for that submitted by a parent.

Provision of the assistance will be reviewed from time to time as appropriate.

Parents' Disabilities

Assistance is not normally provided for a young person in respect of the disability of either or both of their parents. However, each application will be considered on its own merits at the discretion of BfFC and in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

General Requirements for Parents/Carers and Young People Using Transport

Behaviour on Transport

Parents, schools, young people, transport contractors and BfFC, working in partnership, all share responsibility for ensuring that acceptable behaviour is maintained to ensure safe and stress-free transport for all.

The provision of transport maybe withdrawn either for a period of time or permanently should a young person misbehave whilst being transported to or from school. Normally a warning letter will be sent to parents/carers prior to transport being withdrawn. However, in the event that any incident is considered serious enough, following an investigation by the School Transport Service, the withdrawal of transport may be immediate. In this instance the responsibility for ensuring attendance at school will remain with the parent/carer of the young person.

Emergency Contact Details

Parents/carers need to provide contact telephone numbers, including alternative numbers in the event of the operator or BfFC being unable to contact the parent/carer before transport can be provided.

19-25 Provision

Application for assistance should be made through the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Team.

Work placements, apprenticeships, and traineeships

Where a young person wishes to apply for a work placement, apprenticeship, or traineeship, they should discuss travel costs with the relevant employer/organisation, as the employer/organisation may be able to help with travel cost via subsidies or discounts.

Decisions, Reviewing of Decisions, Complaints and Appeals

Decisions

Decisions as to the eligibility for transport, the mode of transport, and other practical matters of transport for young people with EHC plans will be taken by BfC's Education Officers with particular authorisation to do so.

Appeals Process

Informal

If a parent is unhappy with a decision that has been made, we recommend in the first instance that this is raised with the SEN case officer that has made the decision.

Formal Process

The appeal process is fully outlined in the main School Transport Policy, which can be found on our website [here](#).

Local Government Ombudsman

A parent/carer who remains dissatisfied after following this procedure may further complain to the Local Government Ombudsman, but only if complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal was handled. If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may apply to judicial review. The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH
Tel: 0845 602 1983

Further information is available on the Ombudsman's website: www.lgo.org.uk

Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal

Where the young person in question holds an EHC plan, it may be that a disagreement about transport is part of a wider question of school provision and placement. As mentioned elsewhere in this Policy, in such an instance, it may be necessary for the matter to be considered by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.

Please note that the tribunal does not hear appeals specifically about transport, although it may consider it as part of a wider appeal regarding placement. Officers of the Special Educational Needs Team will discuss the appropriate means of appeal in each case as necessary.

Special Educational Needs & Disability Tribunal

1st Floor, Darlington Magistrates' Court
Parkgate, Darlington
DL1 1RU

Tel: 01325 289350

Fax: 0870 739 4017

Sendistqueries@tribunals.gsi.gov.uk

Corporate Complaints Policy

Parents can also follow the Company's Complaints Procedure by contacting:

Brighter Futures for Children
Customer Relations Team
Civic Offices
Bridge Street
Reading RG1 2LU

Tel: 0118 937 2905

Email: complaints@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Website: www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org/compliments-and-complaints

Useful Contacts

Elevate Reading

Elevate Reading (part of Brighter Futures for Children) -

Providing information, advice and guidance to post 16 young people, supporting them into education, employment and training .

Elevate Team (Brighter Futures for Children)

3rd Floor, Reading Central Library Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BQ

M 07929178133

T 0118 9372204

E elevate@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

LinkedIn: Brighter Futures for Children

Twitter: @BFfC_Child

Website: www.brighterfuturesforchildren.org

Berkshire College of Agriculture

Hall Place, Burchetts Green, Maidenhead SL6 6QR

The college operates their own bus service to the college and young people can purchase passes directly from the college.

Tel: 01628 827482

Email: enquiries@bca.ac.uk

Bracknell and Wokingham College

Church Road, Bracknell RG12 1DJ

Tel: 0800 612 6008

Email: study@bracknell.ac.uk

Newbury College

Monks Lane, Newbury, RG14 5TD

Tel: 01635 845312

Email: Info@newbury-college.ac.uk

Henley College

Deanfield Avenue, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1UH.

Tel: 01491 579988

Email: info@henleycol.ac.uk

Reading College

King's Road, Reading RG1 4HJ

Tel: 0800 612 6008

Web: <http://www.reading-college.ac.uk/>

Reading Buses

Reading Transport Ltd.

Great Knolly's Street

Reading RG1 7HH

Tel: 0118 959 4000

Email: info@reading-buses.co.uk

Web: www.reading-buses.co.uk

Horseman Coaches

2 Acre Road

Reading RG2 0SU

Provide services to Henley College

Tel: 0118 975 3811

Email: Buspasses@horsemancoaches.co.uk

Web: www.horsemancoaches.co.uk

16-25 Railcard

Tel: 0345 3000 250

Email: railcardhelp@nationalrail.co.uk

Web: www.16-25railcard.co.uk

National Rail Enquiries

Tel: 0845 748 4950

Web: www.nationalrail.co.uk