**Consultation on change of Reading Borough Council School Transport Policy**

**19 February 2024- 17 March 2024**

**Introduction and context**

On 17 January 2024, Reading Borough Council ACE Committee decided to consult on proposed changes to School Transport policy. Brighter Futures for Children on behalf of Reading Borough Council are consulting on the policy. The reports to ACE Committee setting out the context of the proposed changes can be found here:

[Agenda for Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee on Wednesday, 17th January, 2024, 6.30 pm - Reading Borough Council](https://democracy.reading.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=5201&Ver=4)

The consultation being undertaken is related to the following proposals:

1. That free transport entitlement for pupils attending Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School is removed.
2. That the travel assistance entitlement for eligible pupils is clarified and means an offer of a bus pass or school bus at a pickup point, with an expectation for active travel as part of a child’s healthy development.
3. That the policy clarifies the exceptional circumstances required to access any exceptional additional support in addition to travel assistance.
4. That the policy clarifies that parents are liable for costs incurred by Brighter Futures for Children on behalf of Reading Borough Council if children did not access travel assistance provided.
5. That the policy clarifies that students are not entitled to travel assistance post-16 except in appropriately evidenced exceptional circumstances.

You can read the current Policy here [BFfC-School-Transport-Policy-2022-2024-.pdf (brighterfuturesforchildren.org)](https://brighterfuturesforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/BFfC-School-Transport-Policy-2022-2024-.pdf)

Please send responses to this consultation to School.Transport@brighterfuturesforchildren.org

**Consultation Questions:**

**Please answer questions in the text box provided. You can provide as little detail or as much detail as you would like in your response.**

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| 1. Are you responding as a parent/carer; a pupil of a local school; or as a member of the community?
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| 1. Please indicate which area of Reading you live.
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| 1. Do you or someone you know currently access school transport assistance?
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| 1. If you currently access school transport assistance, what school transport assistance do you receive?
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| 1. If you access school transport assistance, what one thing would make it easier for you (or if you are a parent, your child) to travel more independently to school?
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| 1. This consultation proposes that free school transport assistance entitlement for pupils attending Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge School is removed. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?
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| 1. If the free entitlement for school transport assistance to Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge was removed, should this be removed from September 2024, or phased out over a number of years, as the River Academy school opens up new year groups?
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| 1. If the free entitlement for school transport assistance to Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge is phased out, over how many years should this phasing out take place?
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| 1. It is proposed that the travel assistance entitlement for eligible pupils is clarified and means an offer of a bus pass or school bus at a pickup point, with an expectation for active travel as part of a child’s healthy development. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?
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| 1. It is proposed that the policy clarifies the exceptional circumstances required to access any exceptional additional support in addition to travel assistance. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?
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| 1. That the policy clarifies that parents are liable for costs incurred by Brighter Futures for Children on behalf of Reading Borough Council if children did not access travel assistance provided. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?
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| 1. It is proposed that the policy clarifies that students are not entitled to travel assistance post-16 except in appropriately evidenced exceptional circumstances. Do you agree or disagree with this proposal?
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| 1. The policy has been updated to reflect statutory guidance and been reordered in some areas. Do you have any other comment on the revised policy as is being proposed?
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