

Stockport
Post-16 Transport Policy Statement
Academic Year 2026 – 2027

Transport policy statement for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged 19 and those young people aged 19 – 24 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Department Responsible

School Transport Team, School Admissions.

Contact details

School Transport Technical Lead

Document first release

SEPT 2025

Review

Annually

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1. Transport Policy Statement

This policy applies to learners aged 16-18 in education and continuing learners aged 19 and over with learning difficulties or disabilities.

There is no automatic entitlement to free transport to school or college for students aged 16 and over. The council retains the discretionary power to determine the necessary travel assistance and provisions to support a young person's participation in education and training over the statutory school age.

A travel solution for attending their designated/qualifying school/college that offers desired courses will reflect individual needs. The outcome of this approach is to actively encourage young people to travel as independently as possible and to develop confidence, as well as essential travel and social skills that will support their future options and opportunities. This aligns with the SEND Code of Practice (2015) which states that 'providers should enable children and young people to have the information and skills they need to help them gain independence and prepare for adult life'.

2. Requirements

2.1 Introduction

This policy aims to inform young people and their families about travel options and support available, helping them to make informed decisions when selecting post 16 choices.

Local authorities are not required to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel support. Under Section 509AA of the Education Act (1996), they have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement. This policy outlines the arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the authority considers necessary to ensure the attendance of all students of sixth-form age receiving education or training, as well as learners aged 19 to 25 with Education, Health, and Care Plans, to attend schools and further education institutions.

Education or training refers to learning or training at a school, further education institution, a council maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education, an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency, learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council: for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

Wherever possible, it is expected that parent/carers of young people with SEN or a disability make arrangements for their child to attend education in the same way as for parents/carers of children and young people who do not have SEND. This approach, including independent travel where appropriate, is an important factor in developing the children and young people's independence, social and life skills; providing a travel support framework to enable as many parents/carers to do this as possible is a key part of this policy.

The Council's approach to disability, to encompass all disabled adults and children living in Stockport has at its heart a focus on the person and their family, looking at all aspects of an individual and their family's situation. Through this approach, the Council's vision is that disabled citizens should have the same life opportunities and achieve the same outcomes, across key areas such as: education, choice and control, health, employment, housing and inclusive communities, as those which are available for the wider population.

2.2 Definitions and Points of Clarification

All young people continuing their education post 16 must reapply for travel support.

Travel assistance in previous years does not guarantee any assistance post 16.

‘Sixth form age’ refers to young people who are over 16 years of age but under 19 or continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday (years 12,13,14).

This policy uses the term ‘Post 16’ to include both learners of sixth form age and those with learning difficulties / disabilities up to the age of 25.

Education or training refers to learning or training at a school, further education institution, a council maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education. It also includes establishments funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency and learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council, for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

This policy document specifies the support that Stockport Council (the council) considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of Post 16 learners receiving education or training.

2.3 Aims and Objectives

The objective of the statement is to support young people who need it most, removing transport as a barrier to their continued participation into further education. Travel assistance will only be provided if there are no appropriate alternative travel options available (be it personal, with the assistance of family or public transport) and when it is the only reasonable means of ensuring that the learner can safely access education.

The council has the following aims and objectives when assessing transport / travel support and is committed to –

- Promote healthy, sustainable and safe travel solutions;
- Actively engaging and promoting good outcomes for all young people;

- Supporting young people to fulfil their potential;
- Promoting independent travelling for young people wherever possible, taking account of their needs and aspirations;
- A commitment to equality of opportunity and the celebration of diversity and an opposition to all forms of discrimination;
- Promoting sustainable, safe and healthy travel options;
- Ensuring the most efficient and effective use of public resources, delivering better outcomes and providing better value for money.

2.4 Legislation and Responsibilities

Parent/Carer and Young People's Responsibilities

A young person must stay in some form of education or training until their 18th birthday if they were born on or after 1 September 2004.

Options are:

- full-time education - e.g. at a school or college
- an apprenticeship or traineeship
- part-time education or training - as well as being employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week
- an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency
- learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council: for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

A young person can leave their place of education on the last Friday in June as long as they will be 18 by the end of that year's summer holidays. There is an expectation parents/carers will actively promote and support their young person to access and attend education and training.

Council Responsibilities

Section 509 AB(1) of the Education Act 1996 imposes a requirement that the Council should set out the extent to which the arrangements specified in the EHC plan can facilitate the attendance at schools and colleges of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The 16-18 transport duty relates to young people of sixth form age with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged up to 19.

The Council also has a duty under the Education and Skills Act 2008 to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training.

The Children and Families Act 2014 replaces the Statement of SEN and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) for those over the age of 16 with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans. Under the Act, the Council may continue to maintain an EHC plan for young people over 19 if a young person requires additional time, in comparison to the majority of others of the same age who do not have SEN, to complete his or her education or training. Councils may continue to provide special educational provision until the end of the academic year in which the young person turns 25.

Arrangements cannot be limited to those young people who had been assessed as having particular transport needs prior to the age of 16. The Children and Families Act 2014 also places a duty on councils to publish a Local Offer setting out their services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and this must include information on the arrangements for travel to and from post-16 institutions.

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education on post-16 transport and travel support to education and training settings (January 2019) states that the transport needs of young people with SEND must be reassessed when a young person moves from compulsory schooling to post-16 education, even if the young person is remaining at the same educational setting

3. Transport and Travel Support

Stockport is served by a vast network of reasonably priced and accessible transport. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) offer many travel concessions and passes for young people, as do the bus companies serving the area. Stockport Council supports independent travel training for young people with special educational needs to travel on public transport independently, which enhances their future work and social opportunities.

Pass/concession	Information	Weblink or contact information
Our Pass	Our Pass offers eligible 16–18-year-olds free bus travel on all registered bus services within Greater Manchester.	ourpass 0300 323 0777
TfGM Scholar's Permit	Full time students aged 16 -19 who are permanently resident in Greater Manchester can purchase a TfGM Scholar's Permit.	tfgm scholars-pass
System One Young Person	Young People/Students between ages 16 and 26 and in full time education can purchase the System One Young Person's ticket. Holders of a valid membership card can then purchase Young Person tickets	systemonetravelcards
Bee Network – Bee AnyBus travelcards	For travel within the Greater Manchester network only.	
Student Bee Bus tickets	Students attending a college or university within Greater Manchester can purchase a Student Bee Bus ticket. Student term tickets can be used at anytime of Bee Network buses up to the last service of the day that the ticket expires.	
System One County Card	Available to people of all ages and will allow travel on any train within Greater Manchester any day of the week up to 4pm. The county card can also be used on the city centre tram, zone 1 only.	
How students can use a travel pass or obtain concessionary fares TfGM Travel pass for disabled people	Students have to apply for this via TfGM but could be eligible via a current/active EHCP The pass is free, and lasts between one and five years depending on your disability. Within Greater Manchester: Travel for free on all buses and Metrolink trams within Greater Manchester between 9.30am and midnight, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays. You can travel for free on trains within Greater Manchester on journeys scheduled to run at or after 9.30am, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays.	TfGM tickets and passes
TfGM Travel plus pass for disabled people	The pass is free and lasts between one and five years depending on your disability.	TfGM tickets and passes

	This pass is for use by the person named on the pass only. Any carers or other people accompanying the card holder will be required to pay the normal fare. Within Greater Manchester: Travel for free on all local buses, on Metrolink trams and on trains within Greater Manchester at any time.	
Ring and Ride	Ring and Ride is a door-to-door public transport service for people who have difficulty using public transport. Ring and Ride provides short local trips to any location within Greater Manchester that is within 6 miles of the home address for you and an accompanying adult. To be eligible to use the ring and ride service you must hold a TfGM Concessionary Plus Pass or a TfGM Concessionary Disabled Person Pass.	<u>Ring & Ride</u>
Travelling to school/college	Individual school/colleges may provide further information on any travel options that they offer	<u>Travelling to school</u>

3.1 The 16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups.
2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment.

For more information on the 16 – 19 bursary, including eligibility, visit this website [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#)

Colleges will set their own eligibility criteria for the discretionary bursary but must comply with the eligibility conditions set out by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursaries. Young people who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application.

3.1 Learner Support from schools/colleges

The Learner Support is available in colleges and school sixth forms to help with learning costs if you are aged 19 or over. The funds are prioritised for those who face financial hardship. They can be used to help with:

- Financial hardship and emergencies;
- Childcare costs (for Ofsted-registered childcare); (must be 20 or over or 19 to apply • for care to learn).
- Accommodation costs, for those who wish to access specialist courses or who are unable to access courses locally;
- Essential course-related equipment, materials and field trips; and,
- Travel costs. Colleges and sixth forms will take into account whether there are alternative sources to help available.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible to apply, you must be 19 or over; and have been accepted onto and be studying a programme of learning funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency

Colleges determine priority groups and maximum amounts they award. The focus of funds are for financially disadvantaged people aged 19 or over, who need support in areas such as childcare, transport, books and equipment. You have to apply directly to your college or learning provider. Each college or learning provider has its own application process.

For more information on Learner Support, please visit [Learner Support](#)

3.3 Young parents/Care to Learn

The Care to Learn scheme can help with childcare costs while you study if you are under 20 at the start of your course.

For more information on: types of childcare; payments; attendance; eligibility and types of courses please visit [care-to-learn](#)

4. Local Authority Support

A Local Authority's (LA) duties for sixth-form age learners varies significantly from those duties for children in Year 11 or lower. The key impacts you should know about are:

- The LA no longer has to provide transport to a child who it has previously considered eligible,
- This document exhausts the travel assistance on offer to learners and the expectation is that most learners including those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities must access this assistance as no alternative exists,
- The LA may exercise its discretion in exceptional circumstances however any transport assistance offered will be determined as necessary by the council and you may be asked to pay the cost of transport in whole or in part.

The options that will be considered for eligible students when assessing the travel assistance that may be provided may include:

- Independent travel Support
- Personal Budget/milage

4.1 Independent Travel Support

Independent travel training supports young people with the skills and confidence to be able to travel independently and safely using public transport or walking to support access to new opportunities and essential services.

The benefits of independent travel are:

- Helps develop skills and confidence to have new experiences.
- Provides young people with more control and choices.
- Increases opportunities for work experience, employment and education by preventing life restrictions.
- Increases opportunities for social and leisure activities, e.g. cinema, sports or bowling activities.

- Develops independence for young people (and parents/carers through less reliance on lifts/taxis).
- Helps improve understanding of community safety whilst travelling.
- Builds confidence for parents/carers as their young person becomes more independent.

For more information about travel training support in your locality, visit www.stockport.gov.uk/independent-travel-training

A Greater Manchester travel training guide is available on TfGM's website, visit [Travel training in Greater Manchester | Bee Network | Powered by TfGM](#)

4.2 Personal Budgets

It may be possible for the Council to provide parents/carers with an amount of money to enable them to provide personalised travel arrangements to suit the needs of the young person and their family. The sum provided will be at the discretion of the Council; it will be based on the distance travelled from home to college. This considers the route from parents/carers home address to college and the distance is measured using the Council's transport systems. The personal budget is then based on the mileage for two return journeys per day.

This includes a variety of flexible support options such as: access to funds for parent/carers to enable them to drop earlier and collect later, paying for a family member, mileage and use of a befriending service.

A sum of **41p** per mile will be paid as measured by the Council's transport systems from the young persons home to the attended education provision.

An additional lump sum will be paid to families in receipt of a personal budget to contribute towards standard overheads. The lump sum amount is **£703.73** per annum. The Council reserve the right to pay a proportion of the lump sum according to how many weeks are left of the academic year. The Council also reserve the right to pay the lump sum in instalments.

4.3 Local Authority support for vulnerable families

We realise that some families may not be able to manage a personal budget and as such the contribution of the personal budget may be used effectively to facilitate attendance of the young person.

If the Council holds information through its social care systems that suggest a family may struggle to use a personal budget effectively then, in exceptional circumstances, it reserves the right to withhold the offer of a personal budget and may choose instead to commission transport for the young person.

4.4 Apprenticeships

Learning providers are responsible for ensuring that non-employed Programme-led Apprentices have reasonable expenses met in full where these 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 and learning providers should take account of learners' likely transport arrangements when planning off-the-job training, particularly outside normal working hours. The costs of expenses for Learners can be claimed by learning providers against the Additional Learner Support allocation on the Training Provider Statement.

4.5 Access to Work

[Access to Work](#) is a discretionary grant scheme delivered by DWP which can assist in paying for practical support to enable disabled people or those with health conditions to overcome workplace barriers.

Access to Work can pay for things such as: specialist equipment; adaptations to equipment and workplace; a support worker or job coach; communication support; additional travel costs of getting to work if someone is unable to use public transport or drive themselves; disability awareness training for employers about the employee's specific condition.

For supported interns, this means Access to Work can fund:

- job coaches
- assistance to travel to and from work if the intern cannot use public transport or drive themselves

- specialist equipment for the intern to use at work

4.6 Those not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Local authorities should also consider the needs of those who are vulnerable to becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the age of 16 or 17 or who have already become NEET. These young people should be offered a suitable course of education or training and provided with any transport support that is necessary to enable them to participate.

4.7 Eligibility Criteria

When determining eligibility for home-to-education travel support, the local authority will consider the following factors, in addition to the information contained within the application form:

- The age of the student, students must be over the age of 16 years, have an EHC plan and be attending a full-time college course (more than an average of 12 hours a week of supervised study or course-related work experience).
- An assessment of the young person's ability to travel independently;
- Whether education/training provision is available at a nearer location to the young person's home address that offers a similar course;
- Whether attending a specialist college as a day pupil in a placement funded by the local authority High Needs Student Budget;
- The person's physical mobility;
- Access to a Motability vehicle and whether it is reasonable to use it to travel to the relevant location;
- Availability and willingness of family and carers to assist with transport;
- Any factors that may pose an unreasonable demand or risk to health and safety when travelling;
- Whether all alternatives to local authority transport have been considered as set out in this document.

In line with the preparing for adulthood agenda of encouraging independence and building self-esteem, support for travel to college/setting will take the following form:

- Mainstream Public Transport;
- Independent Travel Training;
- Personal Budget/allowance;
- In exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the Director of Education, Work, and Skills contracted transport may be offered. Where transport is provided from home this may be shared with other students.

Exceptional circumstances may take other forms but can be broadly defined as:

- There is no person such as parent/carer or responsible adult connected with the learner that possess the capacity to facilitate the attendance of the learner, as evidenced by Council social care records.
- The learner has complex and high-dependency health needs, or at the discretion of the Director of Education, Work, and Skills

For the purposes of the transport service, complex and high dependency health needs will be defined as a young person with **profound physical and health care needs**, receiving multiple systems of care for which the parent/carer could not be reasonably expected to coordinate and arrange.

Transport provision will be available at the beginning and the end of the school/college day. It cannot be arranged for bespoke timetabling for individual students.

5. Application, review and Appeals Processes

5.1 Applying for LA Travel Support

The parent/carer or young person must make a formal application for travel support to access education before any assistance is considered. The Council may request the provision of written evidence from education specialists and/or medical experts.

Requests for assistance with travel arrangements should be submitted to the Transport Team using the appropriate application form. To apply for local authority travel support, please use the link below.

www.stockport.gov.uk/documents/send-travel-support-application-form

5.2 Changes in Circumstances

It is the parent's/carer's/young person's responsibility to inform the Council of any changes in their circumstances.

A change in circumstances may mean a previously declined application may be accepted and the parent/carer/young person is able to reapply. In addition, a change in circumstances for an existing travel solution may mean no longer meeting the eligibility criteria and the travel solution could be withdrawn.

Changes in circumstances include: home address; move from one college to another; change in medical and physical conditions; move into Council care.

5.3 Health and Safety

Whilst the council endeavours to always meet presenting need of young people and are responsive to SEND, if the safety of other passengers is compromised, through breaches of the code of conduct, the Council reserves the right to suspend or withdraw the travel solution.

There is an expectation that the parent/carer and/or the child/young person signs a Code of Conduct. The Transport Team reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a travel solution if the child/young person or parent/carer refuses to sign the Code of Conduct.

Parents/carers will be expected to ensure their child's and young person's continued attendance at college when a travel solution is withdrawn.

6.Appeals

If an application for travel arrangements is not approved by the Council, or the parent/carer disagrees with the type of arrangements being offered, parents/carers

have a right of appeal. The appeal should be made in writing within 20 working days of the decision letter being received by the parents/carers.

Appeals are administered in two stages:

Stage 1: Review by Senior Officer within the Transport team

Parent/carer will be sent confirmation that their appeal has been received and that their appeal is under review. Further evidence may be requested to support the appeal and consultation with case workers and professional bodies may be required. Stage 1 appeals are decided by a head of service or senior officer. Parents should receive their decision letter within twenty working days of their appeal form being received.

Stage 2: Independent Panel – Independent Review of Evidence

If the parent/carer remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they should notify the Council in writing within 20 working days of receiving their Stage 1 appeal decision making clear the grounds on which they still wish to appeal.

The appeal will then be considered by an independent appeal panel and will involve consideration of all evidence gathered and the reasons for the decision being made. Parents/Carers will be invited to attend an appeal hearing, virtually or in person, to present their case. Where a parent does not wish or is unable to attend a hearing, the panel will make their decision based on written representations from the parent/carer.

Parents should receive their decision letter within forty working days of the parent notifying the Council of their wish to escalate their appeal to stage 2.

This decision is the final stage of the Council's appeal procedure in relation to travel arrangements. If parents/carers remain dissatisfied they can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman.

During the appeals process no new travel arrangements will be provided or, in the case of existing arrangements, no change will be implemented.

If after the appeal, travel assistance is agreed, it will commence from the date of the letter sent to the parent / carer. No backdated payments will be made nor will the Council accept any claims by parents/carers for costs incurred (e.g. for making alternative transport during the process of appeal.

Appeals should be addressed to:

The Secretary to the Independent Appeals Panel,
Corporate and Support Services,
Democratic Services,
Town Hall,
Stockport,
SK1 3XE.

Or via email admission.appeals@stockport.gov.uk

A complaint to the Local Government Ombudsmen can be made by the parent/carers/young person only if there has been a failure to comply with the procedural rules or there has been maladministration of the policy.

Telephone: 0300 061 0614.

Alternatively, you can write to:

The Local Government Ombudsman

PO Box 4771

Coventry

CV4 0EH

Fax: 024 7682 0001

You can also text 'call back' to 0762 481 1595