

# Post-16 travel assistance policy statement, including young adults aged 19 to 25 with EHC plans

July 2024

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## Introduction

The Council's annual Post-16 Policy Statement is a borough-wide policy. The policy and the practice that results from it are intended to be consistent across Camden and enable greater consistency of practice and equity of provision of home to school travel assistance for pupils aged 16 to 25. It will encourage the use of more environmentally sustainable forms of transport, supporting young people to walk, cycle and use public transport such as local buses and trains.

Local authorities do not have to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel support but do have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy by the 31 May each year. This statement specifies the arrangements for the provision of transport and/or other support that a local authority considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of young people of sixth form age receiving education or training. In determining the policy, we have considered all relevant matters including the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment. Camden Council is also committed to reducing emissions and improving Air Quality, to improve the quality of life for all our residents.

This policy statement gives information about the schemes and support available within Camden for the provision of college travel assistance aged 16 to 19 and 19 and 25. It outlines the transport schemes and assistance available for post-16 learners who live and study in Camden or those learners who live in Camden and attend an educational establishment outside of the borough if it is the nearest provider offering the appropriate course.

The sixth form age duty applies to young people of sixth form age and young people with EHC plans up to age 25 where they are continuing a course started before their 19th birthday.

The local authority is required to make such arrangements for the provision of transport as they consider necessary in respect of:

- (a) adults (i.e. those who are aged 19 or over) for the purpose of facilitating their attendance at local authority maintained or assisted further or higher education institutions or institutions within the further education sector; and
- (b) relevant young adults with an EHC plan (which can only be maintained up until the age of 25) for the purpose of facilitating their attendance at institutions where they are receiving education or training outside the further and higher education sectors. For those young adults, the local authority's duty only applies where the local authority has secured the provision of education or training at that institution and the provision of boarding accommodation in connection with that education or training.

The adult duty applies only to young people who are attending a course which they started before their 19th birthday, including those with EHC plans.

Where the local authority makes such arrangements, any transport provided must be free of charge. Where the local authority decides not to provide transport arrangements

in a particular case, they still have discretion to pay all or part of the reasonable travelling expenses for the student.

Camden Council comply with The Equality Act 2010 in regards to all public sector duties and we consider how our school travel decisions and policies affect people with protected characteristics to ensure that we:

- eliminate discrimination against people with protected characteristics;
- promote equality of opportunity between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This document is the current policy of Camden Council. It will be reviewed annually and republished on the 31 May each year.

## **16 to 19 travel assistance**

The Council will only provide travel assistance for learners of sixth form age where it considers that travel assistance has been demonstrated as necessary to enable the young person to reasonably access their education or training provision.

When determining whether the need for travel assistance has been demonstrated, the Council will have regard to, amongst other things:

- Whether the student is currently in receipt of any funding from the 16-19 Bursary Fund and to what value.
- Whether the young person has received travel training, is able to travel independently and his/her ability to access public transport.
- The nature of the young person's special educational needs, disability and/or learning difficulty. This includes the physical ability of the young person to walk, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult to the learning provision or a pickup point.
- Distance and journey time from the young person's home to establishments of education and training.
- The cost of assistance and alternative means of transport.
- The nature of the route or alternative routes which the young person could reasonably be expected to take.
- The reasons why a young person wishes to attend one establishment rather than another.
- Whether the establishment is named in the student's EHC plan and whether there are alternative suitable schools or colleges that the student could attend.
- Supporting evidence from professionals involved with the young person and their family.
- If there is a nearer education provision which is suitable and can provide the same or similar qualification(s) or course.
- The best use of the Council's resources.
- Transport links – the ease of access to public transport.
- The distance measurement between home and learning placement.

Please note: This is not an exhaustive list and requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

When travel assistance is provided, it will normally only be provided at the start and end of the school/college day. Pupils may have to wait until the end of the school/college day to access homeward travel.

Only in exceptional circumstances connected to an individual's learning difficulties and/or disabilities and where no alternative mode of travel is available, will taxi travel be considered, normally on a shared taxi basis. Solo transport provision will only be

considered for those pupils in receipt of funded Independent Personal Support Budget (IPSB) funding or those that present with complex medical and/or health needs.

## **19 to 25 travel assistance**

Assistance with transport for students over the age of 19 with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The Council's duty and powers in relation to post-19 (19 to 25) travel assistance apply to young adults and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged between 19 and 25 inclusive who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

The Council is required to help where needed to students who attend a local authority maintained or assisted further or higher education institutions or an institution within the further education sector.

The Council must also provide assistance, where necessary, to students with EHC plans, where the Council has secured the provision of education or training at an institution outside the further and higher education sectors and the Council is providing boarding accommodation in connection with that education or training. In these cases, the Council will consider whether assistance with travel is necessary to enable the young adult to maintain attendance at their education placement. If it is identified that assistance is necessary, then there would be no charge/ financial contribution expected from the young adult.

The post-19 (19 to 25) Home to School Travel Policy will be focused upon a needs-led approach in which the individual needs of each young adult are assessed to inform the appropriate form of travel support, as we move away from standard provision in favour of a policy which recognises that young people are, in many cases, more capable of achieving independent travel than pupils of statutory school age.

The overall intention of the adult transport duty is to ensure that those with the most severe disabilities with no other means of transportation can undertake further education and training after their nineteenth birthday to help them move towards more independent living.

For post-19 students starting a new course, the student must evidence why it is necessary for the Council and not the student to make travel arrangements. To assess this and understand the individual circumstances, the Council would need to know:

- The nature of the route, or alternative routes, which the student could reasonably be expected to take to college.
- What other arrangements the student may have considered or tried and why they are not suitable.

- If there is a family member or carer who is willing and able to transport the student and if not, why it would not be possible or reasonable for them to do so.
- Whether the student is in receipt of higher rate mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance, the purpose of which is to assist those who have mobility problems, with severe difficulty walking or who need help getting around outside. The Council would normally expect this benefit to be fully utilised and if there are any factors limiting its use the student should provide details of them.
- Whether there is a 'Motability' vehicle for which the student may or may not be the driver.
- Whether the student has support from the Council's social care department to assist with travel.
- Any other needs or circumstances that the student considers necessary to be taken into account. The Council will consider any recent supporting evidence that the student provides.

If travel assistance is provided, contribution towards the cost of travel assistance will not apply.

The Council will consider whether to exercise its discretion in exceptional circumstances to pay all or part of the reasonable travelling expenses of a young adult with an EHCP attending an institution outside the further education sector or which is not a council-assisted or a maintained institution based on the individual circumstances including the factors set out above.

## **Concessionary fares and travel assistance schemes**

### **16 to 17 Saver Railcard**

This is a national scheme that offers 16 and 17-year-olds a 50% discount on standard anytime, off peak, advance and season tickets. The 16 to 17 Saver costs £30 and is valid for one year or until the young person's eighteenth birthday, whichever comes first. Full details and an online application can be found on the [16 to 17 saver websites](#)

### **Post-16 travel assistance policy**

In extenuating circumstances, where travel assistance has been demonstrated as necessary, the Council may offer support to children and young people to travel to their educational placement, in the form of:

- A post-16 transport bursary. The Council will exercise discretion to provide travel assistance to support families and young people to make their own transport arrangements to develop independence and prepare for adulthood pathways
- Bus pass
- Train pass
- Independent travel training, fully-funded and offered on a one-to-one basis

- Other bespoke travel options that enable travel and the development of travel skills and independence, for example a Travel Buddy
- Provision of a private bus, coach, or minibus
- Shared contract transport vehicle (coach, minibus, taxi) using collection point
- Shared contract transport vehicle (coach, minibus, taxi) using home collection
- Provision of taxis or licensed private hire car (in exceptional circumstances).

If transport assistance is agreed, an application will be required to be submitted each year so that the Council can re-assess entitlement to travel assistance in-line with the current statement.

### **Independent travel training**

In line with the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment, independent travel training (ITT) will be expanded as an option. The Council will identify young people, and those who will be transitioning from compulsory education into Post 16 and above who could benefit from ITT and contact their families with a view to undertaking an ITT assessment.

An ITT assessment will be carried out with the support of the family and/or school, to confirm the suitability of the young person for the one-to-one ITT programme, considering the following criteria:

- The likelihood of the pupil being eligible for SEN transport under the 16 to 19 policy
- Existing level of independent travel skills
- The age of the pupil
- The distance between home and school
- The SEND of the pupil
- The route which the young person would need to undertake
- Journey times using public transport and the complexity of the journey
- The frequency of the journeys required.

This assessment would take place before the pupil undertakes the ITT programme, which would last for approximately four to six weeks. During the programme, the pupil will travel to and from their education or training provision each day with their dedicated one to one ITT trainer both in the morning and afternoon from the home to the school and vice versa.

During the period when a pupil is taking part in the ITT, this will be their travel assistance offer. At the end of the ITT programme, the Council will review the pupil's progress with the family to decide if it is appropriate for the pupil to continue to travel independently. If it is not appropriate for the pupil to travel independently, their travel assistance offer will be reviewed. Although most young people are successfully supported to achieve and benefit immensely from becoming independent travellers. It is, however, acknowledged that for some young people, due to the nature of their SEND, ITT will not be appropriate. Where a young person successfully completes the ITT programme, they will receive a post-16 bursary or their public transport fares will be funded.

## **Traineeships and apprenticeships**

If a young person is accepted onto an apprenticeship or traineeship and the Council assesses a young person aged 16 to 19 years as eligible for travel assistance under its policy, the assistance offered in the first instance will be in the form of a post-16 transport bursary to support families and young people to make their own transport arrangements as they transition to employment.

### **Assessment of eligibility**

In extenuating circumstances, where travel assistance has been demonstrated as necessary, the Council may offer support to children and young people to travel to their educational placement. It is important to note that an application for post-16 travel assistance should be submitted each year so that the Council can re-assess entitlement based on its existing eligibility criteria.

### **Financial contributions**

Where it is agreed that travel assistance is required, we will ask students aged 16 to 19 or their parents/carers to contribute towards the transport costs. For the academic year 2022/2023 the contribution will be as follows:

- £581.40 for students whose families are in receipt of the maximum Working Tax Credit and/or who continue to meet the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals; students in care; care leavers; those on Income Support/Universal Credit in their own right; disabled young people who receive Employment Support Allowance/Universal Credit and either Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in their name; or
- £801.80 for all other students.

Where a post-16 transport bursary has been agreed the financial contribution will not apply.

### **Collection points**

Collection points are similar to bus stops, where the Council identifies designated pick-up and drop-off locations for the pupil to meet the bus or taxi rather than offering a door-to-door service. This reduces the time needed for the route to pick up the pupils and supports young people to become more independent and better prepares them for adulthood.

The Council will assess individual needs to determine suitability of routes for collection points. In most cases, collection points will be considered for young people attending mainstream settings. The Council will also ensure that it is aware of any individual circumstances which may mean that a collection point is not appropriate for a pupil or pupils on that route due for example, to their additional needs.

Achieving this level of independence will not be possible for some young people with the most complex SEND needs, and in some cases parent/carers' own mobility or disability may impact on them being able to accompany their child to a collection



point. Where this is the case, the ambition for the service is to improve the range of options available for young people to take responsibility of their own travel assistance where this is desired and appropriate. In such circumstances, the Council will carefully consider and assess the individual young person's needs as well as the mobility and or disability of their parents/carers.

All collection points will be assessed in advanced for their suitability.

- Wherever an existing bus stop can be legally used as a collection point, it will be.
- Minibuses can stop to collect and drop off on yellow and double yellow lines; vehicles cannot stop on red routes, white zig zags (near a zebra crossing) or school keep-clear hatchings.
- The driver always plans not to cause obstructions to other road users while making a drop off or collection and will try to stop in parking areas or bays
- Collections or drop-off are always made kerb-side.
- Each collection point is physically assessed before being used in service; a driver will go out and access to see if the location is safe (for example, a well-lit public location, not too close to a junction or on the brow of a hill).
- The drivers complete dynamic risk assessments at the time of collections or / drop-offs in the eventuality of any changes (new road layouts, another road user in the stopping space) and will slightly adjust the collection point if it is unsafe to stop.
- A collection point should not be more than one mile from the home address.

Where a route has been identified as suitable for collection points to be introduced, a further four-week consultation will be undertaken with the families and young people on that route to ensure that the proposed arrangements are appropriate, for example the location of the collection point. Once a collection point route has been established, that route will remain a collection point and no specific consultation will be undertaken. This means that any young pupil joining the route will be informed that it is a collection point route, and they will be expected to use the collection point. Families will have the opportunity to make representations via the Council's appeals process.

### **Independent Travel Allowance**

An Independent Travel Allowance (ITA) in the form of mileage reimbursement may be offered to parents/carers of all pupils who are entitled to travel assistance where this offers best value for money to the county council. The mileage rates to be used will be set in line either with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) rates, or, agreed on an individual basis with carers where the alternative would be high-cost individual transport. Mileage will be calculated by the Council, payment for mileage will be paid after the contribution amount is exhausted.

### **The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund**

A student must be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2022 to be eligible for help from the bursary fund in the 2022 to 2023 academic year.

Students aged 19 or over are only eligible to receive a discretionary bursary if they are continuing a study programme, they began aged 16 to 18 (19+ continuers) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

### **What is a bursary for?**

A bursary is money that you, or your education or training provider, can use to pay for things like:

- clothing, books, and other equipment for your course
- transport and lunch on days you study or train.

### [16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education. You could get a bursary to help with education-related costs if you're aged 16 to 19 and:

- studying at a publicly funded school or college in England - not a university (a publicly funded school is one that does not charge you for attending it).
- on a training course, including unpaid work experience.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

- A bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups below:
  - They are in or have recently left local authority care.
  - They receive Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves.
  - They receive Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their own name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit.
  - They receive a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name and either ESA or Universal Credit.
- Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books, and equipment. Your education or training provider decides how much you get and what it's used for. If young person is 19 and over, they will only be eligible for a discretionary bursary so could get this if they are either:
  - continuing a course, they started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer').
  - have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). Their school or college will have their own criteria for discretionary bursaries. The school or college will look at the students' individual circumstances – which usually includes the family income.

For information on bursaries the student should ask student services at their educational establishment about their criteria and any evidence they will need to apply for one. 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.

School Bursary Funding - Contact your Head of Sixth Form or Bursar in the first instance.

## **Appeals**

Parents/carers of young people who live in Camden and who wish to appeal a decision that did not grant Travel Assistance regarding one of the following, may apply for their case to be considered at a Stage 1 appeal in relation to any of the following:

- The young person has not been offered home to school/college travel support, but you believe your individual circumstances are so exceptional that assistance should be provided, or
- The young person has been offered travel support, but you disagree with the mode of assistance provided.

During an appeal about an application for travel assistance, travel assistance will not be provided to the young person unless the appeal concerns the travel arrangements offered, in which case the offered arrangements will be available pending the appeal decision. Where the appeal concerns a change to existing travel arrangements, then the previously agreed travel arrangements will continue until the review is complete.

### **Stage one: Case review by a senior officer**

Parents/carers must complete a stage one appeal form on which they must indicate whether they believe the original decision to be wrong or whether they wish their case to be considered as an exception to the policy. The form must be returned with details of the case within 20 working days from receipt of the original decision.

The written request should detail why the parent/carer believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/ or family circumstances they believe should be considered.

Within 20 working days of receipt of the written request a senior officer, who was not involved with making the original decision, will review the case. More complex cases may sometimes exceed the 20-working-day turnaround time for review.

The senior officer will write to the parent/carer, normally within five working days of the review, setting out:

- the decision reached
- how the review was conducted
- 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/carer can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).

Where possible, applications for review at stage one of the review process should be accompanied by independent supporting evidence such as from a GP or consultant, a social worker, the police, other local authority officers and copies of relevant court orders as appropriate.

### **Stage two: Case review by an independent panel**

If the parent/carer remains unhappy with the decision at stage one of the appeal, they can complete a 'Stage 2 appeal form' to request that their case is escalated for consideration by an independent panel.

The independent appeal panel will be independent of the original and stage one decision-making process (but are not required to be independent of the local authority) and suitably experienced. Panel members may include officers of the local authority and by including officers on independent panels it will strengthen the experience and knowledge of the panel and allow appeals to be heard more rapidly as there will be a larger number of panel members to draw on.

Requests for a stage two appeal must be made within 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision.

Stage two appeals will normally be considered within 40 working days of receipt of the parent/carers request for it to be escalated. Any additional supporting documents should be supplied by the parent at least 10 working days prior to the review hearing date. A copy of the paperwork that has been submitted to the stage two appeal panel will be sent to the parent at least seven working days prior to the review.

The parent/carer will be asked to indicate on the 'Stage 2 appeal form' whether they wish to attend the appeal to present their case verbally. An officer for the local authority will also be invited to present the local authority's case. Parent/carers are not required to attend and if they do not indicate that they wish to attend, the review will be scheduled to be heard in their absence.

The stage appeal panel will give equal consideration to all case reviews whether conducted in the presence of all parties or heard in the absence of one/both parties. If the panel considers that further information is required, the case will be adjourned so that the information can be made available

The clerk at the stage two appeal will write to the parent/carer, normally within five working days of the review, setting out:

- the decision reached
- how the review was conducted
- 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/carer's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

### **Local Government Ombudsman**

There is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, but only if the complainant considers that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the review has been handled. Further advice is available on the [Local Government Ombudsman website](#) or call their advice line on 0300 061 0614.

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.

### **Other important contacts**

For any changes to transport provided by us, please contact Camden Accessible Travel Solutions, 7 York Way, London. N1 0BE. Tel 0207 974 6723 or [TravelSolutions@camden.gov.uk](mailto:TravelSolutions@camden.gov.uk)

Transport for London (TfL). [16+ Zip Oyster photocard](#): Children aged 16 to 17 can get free and discounted travel on TfL services with a 16+ Zip Oyster photocard.

The following organisations do not have access to alternative funding for home to school or college travel, but may be able to offer parents/carers advice in connection with their application:

- The Co-ordinator, Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service ([SENDIASS](#)), Kentish Town Community Centre, 17 Busby Place, London, NW5 2SP. Tel: 020 7974 6264; email: [SENDIASS@camden.gov.uk](mailto:SENDIASS@camden.gov.uk)
- The Co-ordinator, KIDS – Camden, Kentish Town Health Centre, London NW5 2BX. Tel: 0207 359 3635.