

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION

**Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate
Street, ROTHERHAM.
S60 2TH**

Date: Wednesday, 6th November, 2013

Time: 1.30 p.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine whether the following items should be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended March, 2006) of the Local Government Act, 1972.
2. To determine any item(s) the Chairperson is of the opinion should be considered later in the agenda as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for absence.
4. Declarations of Interest.
5. Questions from members of the public and the press.
6. Communications.
7. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 18th September, 2013. (Pages 1 - 13)
8. Families for Change. (Pages 14 - 23)
9. Pupil Referral Unit Restructure. (Pages 24 - 36)
10. Amended Home to School Transport Policy. (Pages 37 - 67)
11. Date and time of the next meeting: -
 - Wednesday 18th December, 2013, to start at 2.00 p.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.

Improving Lives Select Commission membership: -

Chairperson – Councillor G. A. Russell, Vice-Chairperson – Councillor C. Read,
together with Councillors Ali, Astbury, Burton, Clark, Dodson, Donaldson, J.

Hamilton, Kaye, Lelliott, License, Pitchley, Robinson and Roddison and Co-opted members: - Mrs. A. Clough (ROPES), Mrs. J. Blanch-Nicholson (Home Start), Mr. M. Smith (Safe@Last), Parish Councillor N. Tranmer, Mrs. J. Jones (GROW), Mrs. J. Fitzgerald (Rotherham Parent and Carers' Forum).

**IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
18th September, 2013**

Present:- Councillor G. A. Russell (in the Chair); Councillors Ali, Astbury, Buckley, Burton, Clark, Dodson, J. Hamilton, Kaye, Lelliott, Pitchley and Read and co-opted member Mrs. A. Clough.

An apology for absence had been received from co-opted member Mr. M. Smith.

18. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest to record.

19. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no members of the public or the press in attendance.

20. COMMUNICATIONS

There was nothing to report under this item.

21. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 10TH JULY, 2013.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission held on 10th July, 2013, were considered.

Resolved: - That the minutes be agreed as an accurate record for signature by the Chairperson.

22. ROTHERHAM LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2012-2013.

Councillor G. A. Russell, Chairperson of the Improving Lives Select Commission, welcomed Steve Ashley, Chair of the Rotherham Independent Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Phil Morris, Business Manager, Rotherham Independent LSCB. Steve and Phil had been invited to attend this meeting so that the annual report of the LSCB could be considered.

Also in attendance for this item were Joyce Thacker, Strategic Director, Children and Young People's Services, and Rotherham's Lead Member for Children, Councillor Paul Lakin, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families' Services.

Councillor Russell especially welcomed Steve Ashley to the meeting. Steve had started his new job at the beginning of September, and this was the first meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission that he had attended. Councillor Russell looked forward to working with him and the LSCB in the future.

Steve presented the annual report of the Rotherham Independent LSCB. The Annual Report covered all areas of the Board's activity during 2012/2013, including: -

- LSCB governance and partnership arrangements;
- Progress against the Board's priority areas and business plan;
- Activities of the Sub-groups;
- Information about the Child Death Overview Panel;
- Contribution of Lay Members;
- Challenges and Priorities for 2013-2016.

The Children Act (2004) required LSCBs to produce annual reports that provided a 'rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services', 'published in relation to the preceding financial year' and 'fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles' and 'list the contributions made to the LSCB by partner agencies and list what the LSCB has spent'.

Reference was made to Rotherham's LSCB's priorities for 2012/2013 and how these were reflected in the business plan for 2013-2016 and the work of the Board's Sub-groups.

The Rotherham LSCB had its own budget; the main contributors were Children's Social Care Services, Children's Health Services and the Police. The 2012/2013 outturn for the budget was a £6,940 under-spend. £841 of this had been earmarked for learning and development activity and the remaining £6,099 would part-fund the 2013/2014 budget.

The main risks and uncertainties surrounding Children and Young People's Services was the revised Ofsted inspection framework for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers due to be implemented nationally in November, 2013. The Rotherham LSCB was working with partner agencies to assess performance and ready evidence of the positive outcomes of children and young people.

The Independent Chair referred to a separate piece of work that he was undertaking in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation to determine how effective Children and Young People's Services was in protecting children and young people at the present time. This was a separate piece of work to the Inquiry that had been commissioned by Rotherham's Chief Executive.

Discussion ensued and the following items were raised by member of the Improving Lives Select Commission: -

- Impact of Welfare Reforms: – were referrals to social care services increasing as a result of the welfare reforms?

- An increase in contacts/referrals had not been identified at the present time;
- The recommendations from the Serious Case Review into Daniel Pelka's tragic death were being reviewed by Rotherham's Safeguarding Children and Families Service;
- Rotherham's Safeguarding Children and Families Service was also responsible for the Early Help Panel, which aimed to provide help to families before they reached crisis point. The Service had also provided robust training for all schools on identifying signs of neglect and the appropriate response.
- Social care thresholds: - were the thresholds correct?
 - The Independent Chair was confident that social care thresholds governing which intervention children and families would be subject to were correct;
 - Further work was on-going on whether all agencies knew the thresholds and understood whether it was their role to refer and how to do this.
- The Local Safeguarding Children Board and its associated Sub-groups: - were these groups working well together?
 - The Independent Chair was the chairperson of the full Local Safeguarding Children Board, and also of the Performance Sub-group;
 - Due to the time-limited nature of the full Board meeting, the Independent Chair would be working to ensure that the focus of the Board meetings would be performance and how the agencies were working together;
 - Board meetings would also be a forum for professional challenge between the agencies that were represented.
- What were the main areas of concern?
 - It was right and proper that huge amounts of local and national attention were being paid to the issues of Child Sexual Exploitation. However, it was possible that this could lead to other areas being missed;
 - The levels of neglect of children and young people was also an emerging issue;
 - The Independent Chair had received projections relating to deprivation upon starting his role. He was aware of the Council and partner's work aiming to reverse this, and would keep a watching brief on the issue.
- Safeguarding Children and Families' Services four RED rated performance indicators, as shown the annual report. What was being done to ensure that performance improved?
 - The Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Services confirmed that it was a concern to the Service to have RED rated areas. The Service carried out fortnightly performance and analysis reports. There were no cases

- that had not been allocated to a named worker. The Strategic Director received a weekly report on the allocation of cases;
- Children and Young People's Services participated in a Multi-Agency Support Panel (MASP) that sought to support families, explore all options available and undertake a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) on the family's situation.
- Performance Indicator NI65 (Children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time) (RED rated) and NI67 (percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales (GREEN rated) were discussed to fully understand their direction of travel.
 - The Independent Chair had charged the Strategic Director with benchmarking Rotherham's performance against national outcomes;
 - It was expected that Central Government would shortly be announcing changes to the overall suite of performance indicators;
 - The Independent Chair agreed to produce a critical suite of performance indicators that was user-friendly.
 - Working with Partner Agencies to safeguard children: -
 - The Independent Chair confirmed that all partners were currently participating on the Board, following the outcome of an audit of attendance;
 - The LSCB had worked to ensure that reporting pro-formas were as user-friendly as possible to enable partners to contribute their opinions.
 - Publication of the Serious Case Review into Child S's death had now taken place. What had happened since publication?
 - The Strategic Director confirmed that hundreds of workers had been trained in the lessons learned. This also included each 'generation' of new workers that joined Children and Young People's Services;
 - Training sessions aimed to be 'two-way', and allow front line workers to outline their thoughts and explain job related pressures to facilitators and managers;
 - A robust action plan was implemented following each Serious Case Review.
 - Different agencies working together to safeguard children and young people was a very positive thing, were there any barriers preventing this from being fully realised?
 - IT systems used by different agencies were not always consistent and did not always communicate. A consistent system for reporting and recording concerns would have been implemented with the Contact Point IT system, but

- funding for this had been withdrawn by Central Government whilst the system was being piloted;
- Co-location of area teams was considered important to increase the wealth of multi-agency interface. The Strategic Director was determined to continue supporting the practice of staff being located in their areas with multi-agency colleagues, despite reducing resources bring pressures to centralise teams.
- What was the role for members of the public in reporting their concerns about a potential case/s of Child Sexual Exploitation. What would be the message, for example, to people who were reluctant to report their concerns for fear of being ridiculed/ignored/laughed at?
 - The Independent Chair was clear that no agency would support an attitude of such complacency following a contact from a member of the public;
 - Literature had been circulated within the community informing people how to report their concerns.
 - The Councillor who had raised this question had not seen any of the literature referred to within his local community.
 - The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families' Services referred to the Countering Child Sexual Exploitation training that had been made available for Rotherham's Elected Members. 60 of the Council's 63 Elected Members had participated in this training. The training had also been rolled out to Parish Councils;
 - The Strategic Director spoke about the training that had been offered to all Schools;
 - Age-appropriate training would be designed for children in Years 6 and 7 by the Healthy Schools Team, which informed young people about the risks and what to do if they felt threatened;
 - A training package had been put together for Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Governing Bodies;
 - A communication campaign had been designed, including the Rotherham Advertiser, and the use of social media, leaflets, e-safety training.
 - Other issues discussed included: -
 - Children Missing Education;
 - Domestic Abuse.

The members of the Improving Lives Select Commission thanked the Independent Chair and his colleagues for the annual report. The Commission's feedback was that the report was very specific and that it would be useful to have general statistics included within the report to provide a balanced view of the numbers of children, young people and families that interacted with Safeguarding Children and Families' Services.

Resolved: - (1) That the 2012/2013 Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual report be received and its content be noted.

(2) That the Independent Chair develop a critical suite of indicators for use by Elected Members, Select Committees and so on, to scrutinise the performance of Safeguarding Children and Families' Services.

(3) That future annual reports of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board include general statistics that could be used to contextualise the information within the report.

23. WORKING TOGETHER - LINKS BETWEEN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE.

Consideration was given to the report presented by Phil Morris, Business Manager (Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board), and Sam Newton, Safeguarding Manager (Health and Wellbeing, Neighbourhood and Adult Services) that outlined the legal and policy similarities between children and adult safeguarding, outlined the services provided by all organisations across the Borough and the potential for future joint working across Children's and Adult's Services.

The report outlined a number of issues of difference between Children's and Adult's Services: -

- The Council had a responsibility to safeguard all children and a responsibility to safeguard all vulnerable adults;
- Where families had adults with social care needs (such as substance misuse or mental health needs) and the family also had children, there was a need for both sets of services to work together to ensure continuity and consistency of support;
- Where there were adults in the family that were unable to protect themselves from abuse, it would be unlikely that they had the capacity to provide effective and safe parenting.

The report set-out the frameworks both Services were governed by: -

Children's Safeguarding: -

- Working Together, 2013, was national statutory guidance for safeguarding children;
- Every local authority had to have an independent local safeguarding children board;
- Rotherham's Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) was established as a statutory body following the Children Act, 2004;
- Rotherham's LSCB was chaired by an independent person and had senior representatives from all agencies that operated across the Borough, including the services that worked with adults.

Adults' Safeguarding: -

- There was a range of pieces of legislation and guidance supporting social care for adults. These included 'No Secrets' and guidance provided by the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (ADASS);
- A policy framework from the ADASS had been implemented through the South Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Procedures. All relevant partners, including the police and NHS, had signed up to this in order to work together to safeguard adults from abuse;
- Rotherham's Safeguarding Adult Board had been established in 2003.

Links between the two Services on their formal frameworks: -

- The Rotherham LSCB had representatives from services working with both children and their parents;
- The Adult Safeguarding Board had representation from the Director for Health and Wellbeing, representing Adult Services, and the Director for Safeguarding Children and Families' Services, representing Children's Service;
- The specific links between the two Services occurred mainly when adults who were parents or carers were: -
 - **Adults with substance abuse;**
 - **Adults involved in domestic abuse;**
 - **Adults with mental health problems;**
 - Adults who were involved in criminal activity;
 - Adults with disabilities or learning difficulties.
- The text in bold indicated the main areas of concern for both Services within Rotherham, including working with parents who had learning difficulties;
- Joint work was undertaken between Children's and Adults' Services in the transition of young people with significant learning difficulties and disabilities as they became adults;
- The Children and Young People and Families Strategic Partnership Board was the overall strategic planning group for agencies working with children and families;
- This Board linked to the Health and Wellbeing Board and also the overall priorities for communities within the Borough;
- The overall strategic group for children's safeguarding was the Rotherham LSBC;
 - The LSCB had a Sub-group with responsibility for Child Sexual Exploitation ('CSE Gold Group'), which oversaw the implementation of the CSE Strategy and Action Plan and the work of the 'Silver Group' that had operational responsibilities for CSE.

- The strategies for joint working across Adults' and Children's Services was the Think Family Group, which consisted of partner agencies including the Local Authority, Health, Probation, Police and voluntary sector organisations;
- The Domestic Abuse Priority Group oversaw the strategic work to reduce domestic abuse and support victims, including children living with families where this was an issue.

The report detailed the other forums whereby Children's and Adults' Services co-ordinated support and actions: -

These groups included: -

- The Early Help Support Panel;
- Multi-Agency Support Panel;
- Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements;
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference;
- Proposals were in place for a Vulnerable Adults Risk Management approach to bring all agencies working with adults together to address concerns;
- Common Assessment Framework was the key part of delivering frontline services that were integrated and focused around the needs of children and young people;
- Universal services that supported parents and carers;
- Services that supported adults in overcoming problems that affected children.

Main tensions and obstacles of working together: -

- The impact of public sector savings and the resulting reduction in members of staff and resources available;
- Changes in personnel working with children and families and adults, which could lead to discontinuity in service delivery;
- Changes in legislation and guidance for each area that could result in changes to information sharing protocols;
- High demand on one or more public sector services that diverted staff to focus on specific projects.

Future developments: -

The report had outlined that there was already established links between the two Services and also communications with partner agencies, spanning operational delivery and strategic planning. National legislation and local changes were being incorporated.

Current and future work included: -

- Ensure that agencies working with adults who were parents fully understood the impacts their interventions would have on the children in the family;
- This included workers identifying children who may be affected by their parent/carer's issues;
- The Rotherham LSCB agreed in June, 2013, to examine the interface between the two Services across the Borough. This piece of work was being undertaken by the LSCB's Quality Assurance Sub-group and would be reported back to both the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Boards;
- The Rotherham LSCB was also planning to use developing performance information about Early Help Services and their impact on outcomes for children to examine the effectiveness of services.

The representatives of Children's and Adults' Services shared case studies with the Improving Lives Select Commission to illustrate the different types of social care interventions and legal frameworks available to each Service.

Discussion ensued between members of the Select Commission and the representatives of the Services. Issues raised included: -

- How easy was it for people to get access to the services/support they wanted/needed?;
- Thresholds within Social Care;
- Members of the Select Commission recognised how difficult the job of front line workers could be;
- Were there areas where young people who had less significant learning disabilities could fall through the gaps and not receive a suitable transition?;
- Co-location of workers and multi-agency teams.

Resolved: - (1) That the report be received and its content relating to the benefits, challenges and obstacles of multi-agency working to improve family's lives be noted.

(2) That the Improving Lives Select Commission receive a further report relating to the transition for young people from Children's to Adults' Services.

24. DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES: SCRUTINY REVIEW.

Consideration was given to the report that outlined the main findings and the recommendations of the scrutiny review of domestic abuse services in Rotherham.

Minute No. 48 (Work Programme Update) of the Improving Lives Select Commission meeting held on 23rd January, 2013, agreed to undertake a scrutiny review of domestic abuse services as part of the 2013/2014 work programme.

The submitted report outlined the information presented to the Select Commission at this meeting and the scope of the review subsequently undertaken.

The review had been concluded and it was found that there was excellent local work taking place driven by the Domestic Abuse Priority Group on behalf of the Safer Rotherham Partnership. This had brought about positive changes to local practice in the last few years.

Areas for further improvements included: -

- There was less consistency and integrated working by partners for standard and medium risk cases;
- The Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service represented the voice of the victim and co-ordinated measures to reduce the risk to victims and their families. However, it was only funded on a year-by-year basis, something which was inconsistent with the level of priority afforded to domestic abuse within the Safer Rotherham Partnership. The short-term approach inhibited service planning for the essential and effective service;
- Funding allocation for target hardening and early intervention and prevention had reduced in recent years and required further review as the effectiveness of easy and low-cost intervention had the potential to prevent escalation.

The submitted scrutiny review report outlined the twenty recommendations of the review. The twenty recommendations were grouped into the following categories: -

- Commissioning and funding;
- Strategy;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Protocol and process;
- Prevention and early intervention;
- Forced marriage and so-called 'honour' based violence.

The focus of the review recommendations was to develop a more integrated domestic abuse service that had clear protocols and pathways for all risk levels and were understood by every partner agency. It was also recommended that domestic abuse should be more integrated at a strategic level so that the other workstreams were addressing the impact it had on victims and families as the long-term effects to individual were harmful on many levels.

Discussion ensued on the scrutiny review report: -

- Domestic abuse was not always reflected in the Council's strategic frameworks;
- Short-term funding of the support agencies was inefficient and was leading them to use a disproportionate amount of their time seeking future funding streams;
- Were all agencies using the same protocols?;
- Did victims feel able to come forward and report these crimes;
- Portrayal of domestic abuse within the media and television programmes;
- Individuals can be both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Resolved: - (1) That the report be received and the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review be endorsed.

(2) That the scrutiny review on domestic abuse report be forwarded to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and then to Cabinet.

(3) That Cabinet be requested to refer the report to the Safer Rotherham Partnership for their consideration.

(4) That Cabinet's response to the recommendations be fed back to the Improving Lives Select Commission.

25. SCRUTINY REVIEW: SUPPORT FOR CARERS (EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST).

The Scrutiny Manager (Scrutiny Services, Legal and Democratic Services, Resources Directorate) presented a report that outlined a joint review that was being undertaken by the Improving Lives and Health Select Commissions on the support available for carers.

A Members' Seminar had recently covered the topic of carers, and one of the comments raised by Elected Members was that sometimes carers were unable to get adequate support and access to services.

Councillor B. Steele, Chair of the Health Select Commission, would be the Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Review.

The submitted report outlined: -

- The accepted definition of a carer;
- The profile of carers in Rotherham, which showed that, compared to national averages, Rotherham had higher numbers of carers caring for higher numbers of hours per week;
- Existing strategies to support carers were the 'Rotherham Carers' Charter' and 'Joint Action Plan for Carers 2013-2016', which included priority areas;

- Neighbourhood and Adult Services had already committed to undertaking an Officer review, it was intended that the Scrutiny Review would add value to this exercise;
- The potential scope of the review: -
 - Looking at available support from the perspective of carers, especially adult carers of adults with long term conditions such as dementia, focusing on access to information;
 - Did all carers identify themselves as a carer?
 - Did they consider that they need support?
 - Who did they go to for initial support when becoming a carer?
 - Where did they go for support?

Discussion ensued on the information presented and the proposed review: -

- Working with and supporting young carers;
- How did carers define their role, and did 'caring' differ from the tasks that extended families would expect to do for one another in the course of life?;
- Caring responsibilities usually built up gradually over time.

Expressions of interest were sought from the members of the Improving Lives Select Commission.

Resolved: - (1) That the report be received and its content noted.

(2) That Councillors J. Hamilton, Lelliott and Pitchley join the Scrutiny Review group.

(3) That all of the co-opted members of the Improving Lives Select Committee be contacted about joining the Scrutiny Review.

26. REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS ABOUT A CHILD / CHILDREN.

During consideration of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board's Annual Report, a member of the Improving Lives Select Commission asked for clarity on the correct ways to report concerns about a child's welfare.

What to do if you are worried about or have concerns about a child in Rotherham: -

- If it is an emergency ring 999;
- Contact Children's Social Care Services (Contact and Referral Team) – 01709 823987 (Out of Hours – 01709 336080);

- If you would like to share information which might help protect a child – Crimestoppers - 0800 555 111 anonymously, or the Police on 101;
- Or Childline – 0800 1111;
- For advice and information relating to Safeguarding Children Issues – Rotherham Safeguarding Children Unit 01709 823914.

27. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING: -

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on Wednesday 6th November, 2013, to start at 1.30 p.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL: REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Improving Lives Select Commission
2.	Date:	6 th November 2013
3.	Title:	Families for Change
4.	Directorate:	CYPS

5. Summary

The Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched their Troubled Families Initiative in April 2012. Rotherham has responded to this initiative by delivering the Families for Change programme. Operational implementation has now been underway for almost 12 months (since January 2013). The presentation accompanying this report sets out requirements of the Troubled Families Financial Framework and the infrastructure that we have put in the place. This report provides an update on the outcomes of the work – in relation to payment by results (PbR) outcomes, the impact on families, and learning that may inform future service delivery.

6. Recommendations

The commission is asked to:

- Receive this report and seek clarification of any points herein to satisfy the requirement of the commission to scrutinise provision locally.
- Ensure that Elected Members are aware of the referral routes available for vulnerable families that would benefit from Early Help (via the Early Help Assessment Team).¹
- Consider how the learning from the Families for Change programme can inform the Select Commission's future work programme, (including for example its scrutiny of the use pupil premium and child poverty).

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Engagement. Identification and Case Studies

Rotherham has provided a commitment to DCLG to work with 730 families across the three years of the programme. This breaks down to 244 in year 1 (achieved), a further 365 by April 2014 and a further 121 by April 2015. We are on a trajectory to achieve this. 415 families who meet the Families for Change identification triggers are now engaged with services, including Children's Social Care, Youth Offending Services, Families for Change commissioned services as well as through a multi-agency approach overseen by Families for Change Coordinators.

¹ Early Help Assessment Team: 01709 822636

Families are identified using a combination of three criteria set out in the Troubled Families Financial Framework; a fourth filter may be applied at local discretion. The criteria are:

Crime/anti-social behaviour (ASB)

We need to identify young people involved in crime and families involved in anti-social behaviour, defined as:

- Households with 1 or more under 18-year-old with a proven offence in the last 12 months, AND/ OR
- Households where 1 or more member has an ASBO, ASB injunction, anti-social behaviour contract (ABC), or where the family has been subject to a housing-related ASB intervention in the last 12 months (such as a notice of seeking possession on ASB grounds, a housing-related injunction, a demotion order, eviction from social housing on ASB grounds).

Education

We need to identify households affected by truancy or exclusion from school, where a child:

- Has been subject to permanent exclusion; three or more fixed school exclusions across the last 3 consecutive terms; *OR*
- Is in a Pupil Referral Unit or alternative provision because they have previously been excluded; *OR* is not on a school roll; *AND/OR*
- A child has had 15% unauthorised absences or more from school across the last 3 consecutive terms.

Work

Once we have identified everyone who meets one, or both of the anti-social behaviour and education criteria, we can identify households which also have an adult on out of work benefits (Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Income Support and/or Jobseekers Allowance, Severe Disablement Allowance).

In the first year of the programme, Rotherham's local filter was that the family was resident in one of the eleven most deprived neighbourhoods. In subsequent years we are asking professionals to refer families who are affected by factors including domestic abuse, problematic use of alcohol and poor parental mental health.

Much of the work delivered through the Families for Change initiative is about 'joining-up' the support that is provided with families, to ensure that it is purposeful and integrated, and that the family are clear about what is expected of them and what they can expect from services. The PbR funding also provides an imperative for the work to be outcomes-focused.

Case studies provide an excellent insight as to the nature and impact of the Families for Change work and two are included as an appendix to this report.

7.2 Payment by Results

Rotherham submitted its first payment by results claim for families who have achieved the outcomes set out in the Troubled Families Financial Framework at the end of July 2013.

An outcome is achieved if school attendance for all children in the family has increased to more than 85% and this has been sustained across **three school terms**. It is also possible to claim an outcome for school leavers. This improvement needs to have been achieved in conjunction with a reduction in involvement in crime or anti-social behaviour. All the 88 claims made by Rotherham in July were based on achievement of these outcomes. Clearly the requirement to evidence improvement over three school terms places a time lag on the availability of results claims to be made.

An additional payment is available where an adult family member has engaged with ESF Employment Support (Wiseability) or the Work Programme. In July Rotherham claimed for one family that has engaged with Wiseability.

The October claim period for Payment by Results (PbR) allowed us to claim outcomes for a further 53 families who had achieved improved outcomes for school attendance and anti-social behaviour. For six families we were able to claim the progress to work outcome.

If an adult family member has entered and sustained employment for a period of 6 months it is possible to claim an outcome regardless of the progress in relation to attendance and anti-social behaviour. In October we were able to claim for 5 families where an adult has remained in continuous employment for 3-6 months (dependent on the benefit previously claimed).

The total financial value of the claim in July was £51,200, in October it was £35,500.

7.3 Learning and informing wider system changes

The purpose of the Troubled Families work, as stated by DCLG, is not just to achieve specific outcomes with this (relatively) small cohort of families, but to use the work to model better ways for existing services to engage with families.

Families for Change has been delivered in this spirit; some of the learning is already being implemented across services, whilst some will require longer term system and culture change.

- The value of the leadworker role is evidenced through better outcomes with families again and again. Often services for vulnerable families are available (e.g. debt advice, bereavement counselling, mental health treatment) but, without an advocate to act on their behalf, families fail to access appropriate services. The leadworker provides the advocacy required. Families for Change work ensures that there is a leadworker available for families who are part of the cohort. If this approach could be embedded in the way that all services are commissioned and delivered this may help us to target provision more effectively.

- The leadworker is also able to ensure that services are better coordinated and that practitioners from different disciplines work together to deliver a coherent package of support to families. The Family CAF is an effective tool to assess and plan for a family's needs. It is hoped that use of the Family CAF will become embedded across services.
- The Families for Change work has helped to improve the Family CAF training process and has informed new guidance for practitioners. An alcohol audit will also be embedded into the Family CAF process to help quantify the extent that alcohol affects family functioning, and identify the pathways that need to be in place.
- Long-term, a more coordinated approach to service delivery could be achieved, at least in part, if all front-line workers take a holistic whole-family approach to how they assess family's needs, and implement policies. For example, families are sometimes severely impacted by mounting debt caused by fines levied by the local authority, or for non-payment of school meal costs, where this might have been avoided by simple solutions (e.g. helping the family claim the free school meals they are entitled to, or helping them address the underlying issue that means they are unable to maintain appropriate home conditions). Work is already underway to join up work with families that fall into rent arrears with family support work.
- Operational information and intelligence sharing is an ongoing challenge to delivering joined-up services effectively. Overarching agreements are in place to ensure that appropriate information sharing is possible and properly governed. The Families for Change work provides a model for how this can work at operational level, where information is shared wherever there is a clear purpose for this, and the family's consent is sought where this is required.
- A managed step-down approach has been implemented for families who are identified as part of the Families for Change cohort; this allows social workers to transfer cases that no longer require statutory intervention into a Family CAF process where there is a dedicated (externally-commissioned) lead worker. It is hoped that this will enable families to sustain long term change and avoid the necessity to re-refer to social care.
- Although a dedicated (externally-commissioned) leadworker will not be available for families who do not meet the Families for Change criteria, the managed step-down process has been proposed for all families that exit from social care intervention.
- Long-term, it would support families to thrive if all services were delivered as part of a managed and coordinated multi-agency pathway that ensured that service provision was de-escalated in a planned way across the continuum of need.
- Some specific gaps in service have been identified, for example, to provide whole family support for families affected by domestic abuse, and the provision of therapeutic interventions that may have a longer-term impact on the causes of dysfunction in families. The Families for Change work will allow us to commission specific pieces of work with a targeted cohort of families, track the

outcomes of these interventions and explore creative partnership funding options for the work. For example, a family mediation pilot has delivered significant outcomes in relation to improving school attendance. We will share these outcomes with schools to explore if this would be an effective spend of Pupil Premium monies.

7.4 Future Delivery

In July 2013 DCLG announced that the Troubled Families Programme will be extended until 2016, central government has committed funding to this for 12 months and suggested that there will be capacity to work with 400,000 more families nationally. This significantly widens the reach of the work (it would aim to work with 60% more families than the original initiative) although little information has been released about how the parameters will be set, and how the funding will be allocated. There are clear indications that the identification criteria will include indicators to work with families with pre-school children as this was a notable lack in the current programme.

The nature of the new programme's structure will have an effect on the way that we approach the sustainability of existing dedicated provision that has been put in place to deliver the Families for Change work. The role of the Troubled Families Coordinator, Families for Change Coordinators, performance and business management staff and commissioned services will all need to be reviewed in the light of what we have learned to date and the requirements of the new programme. If continued funding is not available from DCLG (or if this funding has different obligations attached) there will need to be a local decision about what we continue to deliver, and what we stop delivering. This dialogue will need to be in the context of a holistic view of services that are delivered to families, across the spectrum of Early Help (and including adults and children's services delivered by RMBC and its partners). Schools already play a central role in the delivery of early help services, and now account for significant resources – both in terms of schools budgets and officers – to support families in receipt of early help, often commissioning discrete and bespoke services to respond to need. The allocation to all schools of Pupil Premium funding further increases the financial resource available to support children and young people (available for those who who have been registered for free school meals at any point in the last six years known as 'Ever 6 FSM'). In 2013/14, the total projected pupil premium for Rotherham is £10,524,000². There will be significant cross-over in the Families for Change and pupil premium cohorts since both include families where benefits are claimed.

8. Finance

The PbR claimed in October 2013 was £35,500. This represents 5/6 of the attendance and anti-social behaviour results claimed (£700 per family), in line with the formula set out in the Troubled Families Financial Framework. An outcome related to progress towards employment allowed us to claim an additional £100 for 6 families. We have now claimed outcomes for 147 families at a rate of £800 (year 1

² Illustrative projection, subject to validation with school roll info and Ever 3 FSM as of January 2013. Source: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/financialmanagement/schoolsrevenuefunding/a00218077/funding-settlement-2013-14>

rate). If our projections are accurate we will be able to begin claiming at a higher rate from July 2014. The year 2 funding formula reduces the attachment fee available to 40% of the total allocated amount, but results are 60% of the total; this means that £1600 will be available per family.

9. **Risks and Uncertainties**

For this, and subsequent financial years, the balance of funding available becomes increasingly weighted towards payment by results, and therefore there is a risk that if existing, successful programmes, and establishment infrastructure are not sustained in the medium term, the potential for evidencing further successes would be reduced significantly.

10. **Policy and Performance**

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Children and Young People's Plan 2013-2016
- Early Help Strategy 2012-2015

11. **Background Papers**

The full Troubled Families Financial Framework is available online at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-troubled-families-programme-financial-framework>

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APPENDIX

Case Study 1

Family Background

There are five children in the family, three are at high school, two are at primary school and the youngest is under five. The children's school attendance was poor, partly because the younger children are not on roll at the primary school closest to their home, or where the pre-school children attend the Children's Centre. Adult A worked in a packing warehouse for 3 years but suffered an accident at work. Following his accident Adult A had a break in employment for 1.5 years; he then sought new employment within a packing warehouse but was made redundant. He is currently on a Work Programme through JCP.

The youngest child, Child G is eligible for a place at F Children's Centre through 2 Year Funding but as Child G is still breastfeeding Mum does not feel Child G is ready to access Nursery at present. Mum accesses groups and activities at F Children's Centre with Child G on a weekly basis, and enjoys this.

Needs Identified

Due to the distance, concerns about the older children's safety and recent severe weather conditions Adult A takes all of the children to school; W secondary and K Primary school. Adult A's Work Programme starts at 9am, which is the same time as school starts. When Adult A was late for Work Programme this resulted in his benefits being stopped – this had an obvious worrying impact on the family's financial situation.

When Adult A finds employment, the family expressed concerns that they would continue to struggle to take all children to and from school as Adult B would have to manage this alone.

The family explained that they had completed an admissions form to move Child E and Child F from K Primary School to F Primary School as the school is a lot closer to the family home therefore Adult B could walk with the children to school. This would alleviate some of the pressure on Adult A to transport all children to school as he would only have to travel to W comprehensive School.

An initial investigation of breakfast club and after school club provision suggested that the costs would be prohibitive for the family (more than £120 per week).

Multi-Agency Involvement

Children's Centre Staff

School Staff, including Leadership Teams and Learning Mentors

Education Welfare Service

Outcomes

The Families for Change Coordinator established that, because the children are on free schools meals they are entitled through the pupil premium to access the breakfast club at W secondary at no charge. They were also able to access school uniform, PE Kits and Stationary for their studies. The Families for Change Coordinator also arranged for the younger children to access the breakfast club at K Primary School at no charge. The children now attend breakfast club from 8am.

Adult A is now attending the work programme and receiving benefits. The children's school attendance has improved above the threshold to claim payment by results (except for a period of ill health from one child).

The family will be affected by the Benefits Cap, the Families for Change Coordinator has ensured that the family understand what the impact of this will be.

Family Voice

'The boys enjoyed breakfast club, they told me all about it when they came home from school. Thank you for helping my family'

Key Factors

The Families for Change Coordinator investigated the causes of the problem (poor school attendance and lack of income) and, by working persistently with colleagues, was able to find a simple solution to a significant problem for the family

Case Study 2

Family composition and background

Mum – Adult H

Step Dad/dad – Adult J

Eldest child 16 years – Child K

Middle child 12 years – Child L

Youngest child 4 years – Child M

Adult H has two older sons who live independently.

The family reside in a 4 bedroom privately rented property and thought they may be liable for the under occupancy charge so were considering moving to a smaller property. The children attend three different schools, Riverside Pupil Unit / Aston Academy (dual registered), Aston Academy and Whizz Kids pre-school. Neither parents is in employment, Child K is involved in anti-social behaviour and has poor school attendance.

Family Background

The family are originally from outside the South Yorkshire county boundary, but moved to the City Region approximately ten years ago when Adult H fled serious domestic violence and was housed in a refuge. The family then moved to Rotherham around 5 years ago. Adult H met a new partner, remarried and they now have a child together.

The leadworker first met the family two years ago in 2011 when Child K was convicted of offences of Burglary and Possession of Class B drugs. The case was allocated through the leadworker's previous role of case manager at the Youth Offending Team and continued until Jan 2013 when a new case manager took over. During this time Child K was further convicted of a further offence of Sexual Assault and sentenced to another community based order.

The main issue within the family was the problematic behaviour of Child K which included non-attendance at school, anti-social behaviour within the local community

and poor temper control. At the beginning of involvement with the family Child K had just been diagnosed with ADHD and had been prescribed medication for this. It was hoped that with the medication his behaviour may improve. It is likely that Child K has witnessed domestic violence against his mother or certainly been aware of the abuse. Research into the impact of domestic violence on children has found that children who witness the abuse can experience both long term and short term emotional difficulties. It is therefore possible that Child K's behaviour derives, in part, from his early childhood experiences.

Child K also misuses substances, in the main, cannabis although the most recent offence was linked to alcohol misuse. His cannabis use has been on-going and consistent for several years and until recently he has seen no reason to give up the drug. Many studies have found that teenagers with ADHD are more likely to misuse substances, sometimes to manage their symptoms. Child K was willing to discuss his substance use but unwilling to change his behaviour and this was a major cause for concern for his parents.

The family are a close knit family and appear very supportive of each other. During his time at the Youth Offending Team Child K was well supported through the Order by his parents who attended regular review meetings and also school meetings. In terms of the younger children there have been no major concerns about either child. Both are getting on well at school, attend regularly and there have been no reports of anti-social behaviour in relation to Child L. There have been a number of social care referrals in relation to possible parental substance use which have been investigated, however, no evidence has been found to support this.

Families for Change involvement

The Families for Change Coordinator became involved with the family again in Feb this year as they formed part of the cohort of FFC families given that they meet the three criteria for involvement in the initiative. Due to the previous engagement with the family (when employed in the Youth Offending Team) the Families for Change Coordinator already knew family well was able to approach them directly to discuss involvement in the initiative and also the benefits of the Family CAF as an assessment of the family's strengths and needs. They agreed to the FCAF being completed which was completed alongside Child K's case manager from the Youth Offending Team. What the family identified as the priorities for them was ensuring Child K completed his YOT Order successfully, ensuring a smooth transition from school to college, to help Adult A improve her chances of gaining employment and to assist with housing issues.

The Families for Change priorities were very similar: to reduce anti-social behaviour, improve attendance and educational attainment and help the family into employment.

Once the Family CAF was completed a team around the family meeting was set up and since that time several meetings have taken place. An action plan is now in place and being worked.

Progress so far

Since the FCAF was initiated the family have made some progress towards their goals and objectives. Child K has now finished school and completed his exams. He

has attended two college interviews and has been given a place at RCAT College from September 2013 to do a catering course. He has worked extremely well with his Connexions worker and both are positive he can succeed on his course with a little on-going support. A heartening aspect of his current attitude is that he now has some aspirations which he did not have when he first engaged with the Youth Offending Team. The team around him (including my previous work with him) have worked hard to raise his aspirations as he is clearly a capable and engaging young person.

He is no longer with the Youth Offending Team having successfully completing his Order in March. It is a little too early to say if this will be his last involvement with the criminal justice system; however, he is clear that he no longer wants to be involved in offending. One of the most significant changes for Child K, however, has been his decision to stop using cannabis. He has made this decision as he recognises that if he cannot realistically continue to use the drug and pursue his desire to become a chef. He is not finding this easy and it has had an impact on his moods with him being more irritable, although he has been to see his doctor about this and they are referring him to CAMHS. It is positive that he has recognised this and sought help as this is not something he would have done in the past.

In relation to Adult H's desire to get back into work, she has been referred to the Wiseability employment support programme. She initially missed her first two appointments; however, the Families for Change Coordinator encouraged the Wiseability key worker to keep trying to engage. At the last team around the family meeting Adult H stated that she had now attended a confidence and motivation course at Northern College and that she was planning to take more courses. She reported back that she was really enjoying the courses and has started to give some consideration to what she could do now that her daughter was starting school. She was hoping to take a counselling course as she would like to work with victims of domestic violence in the future.

In relation to housing issues the family was referred to the Youth Offending Service housing worker who spoke to Adult H about their housing situation. The family have decided to stay in their current property as they are not going to be subject to the under occupancy charge so do not require any further support

Adult H's confidence is growing and she is starting to make progress towards her goals. Her husband is now on the work programme having spent 12 years without working and suffering from depression. He too is starting to think about working again. The family are starting to make real progress after some years of struggle and difficulty. The Team Around the Family will continue to work with the family until Child K becomes settled in college, however, it is likely that fairly soon after that services may be able to withdraw to leave the family to continue to make the progress they have started.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Improving Lives Select Commission
2.	Date:	6 November 2013
3.	Title:	Proposed Restructure of RMBC Pupil Referral Units
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services

5. Summary

This report was submitted to Cabinet at its meeting of 16 October 2013, which agreed the recommendation as set out in paragraph 6 (1).

In recent years, there has been a changing landscape for the national Alternative Provision sector. The Charlie Taylor Report on Improving Alternative Provision made a range of recommendations to re-shape provision and better meet the needs of those children on the periphery and outside of mainstream education. In acknowledging the principles of the report, the Local Authority, in partnership with schools, conducted a review of existing pupil referral unit provision in Rotherham and at the same time has had to take account of the implementation of the Schools Funding Reforms 2013-14.

The existing pupil referral unit provision consists of 3 ‘partnership’ pupil referral units (Riverside, St Mary’s and the Bridge), the Rowan Centre (for pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers) and the ARC (for primary pupils (Y1-4) plus some KS3 pupils with more complex needs). In addition there is a primary SEN unit at Thorogate School for Y5/6 pupils and an Alternative Curriculum Service that organises and manages offsite provision for pupils that schools feel unable to cater for.

6. Recommendation

- 1) **That Improving Lives Select Commission is asked to note the request to Cabinet:-**
 - **That the existing ‘five’ registered pupil referral unit model in Rotherham is streamlined into a ‘two’ registered pupil referral unit model that more appropriately meets the needs of those vulnerable pupils who are unable to access mainstream school (as per statutory guidance).**
- 2) **That Improving Lives Select Commission is asked to determine if there are any issues arising from this report to feed into its work programme.**

7. Proposals and Details

The wider picture

Where children and young people manifest challenging behaviour which cannot be managed in mainstream education, a time limited period in a pupil referral unit will also be accompanied by holistic, whole family support which facilitates sustained improvement in the home. Rotherham's Early Help strategy outlines the importance of both preventing escalation of need, and also intervening earlier to reduce the risk of further escalation where this is possible. As children do not live in isolation, access to support children and young people on a pupil referral unit roll may be solicited from the Early Help Support Panel, where partner agencies delivering services to adults as well as children (such as Choices and Options, Adult Mental Health and Housing) can be engaged to provide a tight package of support coordinated by the Family CAF. Often, parenting is seen as the root cause of many children's behavioural issues. However, parenting itself can only be improved if the adult in question has the mental health capacity to recognise the need to change and commit to this, which on occasion can only be achieved following adult mental health interventions. Where mental health issues are prevalent in the child or young person, CAMHS will likewise be pivotal in affecting positive change in partnership with the Local Authority.

The current local offer

'Partnership' pupil referral units were set up as 'Behaviour and Attendance' partnerships (in approx. 2009) by the LA and secondary schools where clusters of schools across geographical areas worked together with pupils from those schools accessing 'their' pupil referral unit. Riverside (at Catcliffe) serves the Southern partnership (Wales, Brinsworth, Maltby, Aston and Dinnington. St Mary's (at Rawmarsh) serves the Northern partnership (Clifton, Wath, St Pius, Swinton and Rawmarsh). The Bridge pupil referral unit (at Whiston, adjacent to Newman Special School) serves the Central partnership (Wickersley, St Bernard's, Oakwood, Thrybergh, Wingfield and Winterhill).

Only one of the 'partnership' pupil referral units has any fully qualified teaching staff and none of them offer the opportunity to access GCSEs. There is a focus on 'vocational' courses. These pupil referral units have a notional 25 places each and generally work on offering 20 full-time equivalent places. Most placements are part-time.

Rowan is based in Rawmarsh, has an onsite nursery, and is a joint venture between RMBC and Barnardo's. Rowan has fully qualified teaching staff and offers 6 GCSEs plus additional accreditation. Rowan can cater for 15 pupils of compulsory school age. Pupils are also able to continue with partially completed courses in conjunction with their mainstream school so have the opportunity to achieve more where appropriate. Placements are full-time and long-term. There is a focus on the development of parenting skills and there is a post-16 offer onsite through RCAT.

The ARC pupil referral unit is located across two sites, Swinton (KS3) and the Welcome Centre (Y1-4), and also hosts the Home Tuition and CAMHS Education

Services. The CAMHS Education classroom is currently located at CAMHS in Kimberworth Place.

The Thorogate unit does not currently sit under the 'pupil referral unit' umbrella. It can have up to 9 pupils on roll with 6 pupils onsite in the unit at any one time. It caters for pupils with statements (SEN) who are unable to currently access a full-time programme in mainstream school, pupils who have been permanently excluded (PX) and who are therefore the full responsibility of the LA to provide a full-time, appropriate education, and pupils who schools require support with and who are very close to being permanently excluded.

In order to improve outcomes for children attending the PRU provision it is proposed to have:

PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT 1:

- This would be a 65-place (secondary) pupil referral unit located across 2 sites (currently St Mary's and Riverside). It will offer part-time, full-time, short and long-term placements. GCSEs will be offered as well as appropriate vocational courses. Links to both pre and post-16 offers at FE are intended. This would be operational with effect from January 2014 which would leave the Bridge premises vacant.
- Primary provision is still under review as the current system is not meeting pupil or school needs. There is massive pressure on the system with many schools struggling with children displaying extreme and often violent behaviours. It is the preferred choice that primary pupil referral unit provision takes place in a total of four small nurture group centres. Three of these would ideally be located on primary school sites (as per the Thorogate model) and would cater for Y1 & 2, Y3 & 4, and Y5 & 6. This Y5 & 6 centre would replace the Thorogate unit (as Thorogate school no longer wish to host that unit). The fourth would need to cater for pupils with more extreme behaviours who are unlikely to be able to access any primary school site for a time. It is anticipated that each of these centres would cater for a total of 6 pupils each onsite at any one time. Host primary schools are currently being sought so it is anticipated that the primary provision at the unit adjacent to Kimberworth Place would need to continue until probably summer 2014. These primary units would be under the leadership and governance of pupil referral unit 1 with the Head Teachers of the host primary schools being required to sit on the management committee of that pupil referral unit (as per guidance from the DfE).
- An increased number of staff would be required for these units.
- Dalton Foljambe primary school is interested in hosting a primary unit for Y1 & 2 pupils. This option is currently being investigated further.
- If the proposal for the complex needs provision proceeds then it might be appropriate to consider placing the complex needs primary pupils there as a separate unit under the management and staffing of pupil referral unit 1.

- If two further units cannot be found on primary school sites then it might be appropriate to consider finding an alternative location for Riverside secondary pupil referral unit at Catcliffe and placing the primary pupils in the unit premises there where they would benefit from being in close proximity to a mainstream primary school.
- Pupils currently accessing ARC KS3 (Swinton) will either be reintegrated back into their mainstream school, be relocated into one of the two sites at St Mary's and Riverside, or would be eligible for the proposed complex needs provision (should that proposal proceed).
- Schools will be offered the opportunity to commission part-time places at pupil referral unit 1 (at both secondary and primary phases). Capacity for school commissioned places will be dependent upon LA demand.

PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT 2:

- This will be a 25-place specialist centre (jointly funded through the LA and Barnardo's at Rowan in Rawmarsh) that will support the education of pupils with a range of health needs including teenage pregnancy. It is proposed that transition to this wider range of provision takes place from September to October with the centre being fully operational with its revised remit from October half-term 2013. The Centre will be re-branded to reflect the change from being a teen parent unit to an education centre for pupils with a range of health needs. There will continue to be an on-site nursery for the children of teenage parents.
- The CAMHS Education service offer will be incorporated into the Rowan centre with Rowan working closely with CAMHS and other health and RMBC colleagues. This will enable the resources at Rowan to be utilised to maximum effect. Fully qualified teaching staff will teach all pupils across the range of need. CAMHS Education service is required to be part of the planned pupil referral unit places (i.e. with delegated budget) rather than be a service. It also needs to be located within an educational rather than a health setting. These stipulations are as per guidance from the DfE. Through this CAMHS Education pupils would receive an improved offer from the LA if they are not well enough to access their mainstream school. A range of accreditation will be offered to all pupils irrespective of the reasons for being placed there. There will be a focus on pupils returning to mainstream school as soon as they are well enough to do so. Discussions are already taking place with CAMHS to develop an appropriate operating procedure with joint input from Education and CAMHS.
- The home tuition service will operate from Rowan with a SLA being put in place for this between Rowan and the LA. Tuition will be delivered by sessional tutors. Revised statutory guidance from the DfE on health needs (Jan 2013) indicates that the LA must be able to offer up to a full-time onsite offer for health needs if required which it is currently unable to do. The oversight and line management of the hospital school will also be located at this centre. This is to ensure that there is continuity of provision with a cohesive approach for all pupils requiring education outside of school for health reasons. The hospital school currently caters for pupils who have very

short stays in hospital (generally 1 or 2 days). If, on occasions, there are longer term pupils then home tutors are likely to be already be working with them so it would then be appropriate for the home tutors to continue working with those pupils at the hospital.

- Training related to health issues (as well as educational issues) would be targeted to all staff working across the range of health needs pupils.
- Schools will be offered the opportunity to commission places at this centre for vulnerable pupils who fulfil the entry criteria on health needs. There are already a number of requests from schools for those places.

Staffing establishment (staffing figures are given as number of people not number of full-time equivalent posts)

Pre-proposal staffing levels

St Mary's	13
The Bridge	14
Riverside	12

Rowan	7 RMBC
staff (Barnardo's staff numbers are not included here)	
Alternative Curriculum	2

Thorogate unit	3
ARC	21

(ARC staffing figures include primary, KS3, CAMHS Education, and Home tuition but do not include sessional tutors)

Hospital school	3
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Total staff	75
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Proposed staffing levels by July 2014

Pupil referral unit 1(secondary only)

29

Primary provision is still being reviewed. Proposed interim staffing levels:

ARC KS3	6 (to be reduced by 2 in January as pupil numbers fall). 0 staff by April 2013. (1 member of staff transferring across to primary with immediate effect)
ARC primary	9 plus ARC Head of Centre

By July 2014 it is intended that primary provision will sit under pupil referral unit 1 which means the post of ARC Head of Centre will no longer be required. It is not clear at this time what level of staffing will be required for primary provision – current numbers are not at risk at the moment.

One possible proposal for staffing of primary pupil referral unit provision (figures are included within proposed HN allocation for 2014/15):

18 people across the primary units which also include a support/cover team from the pupil referral unit which can also link with schools. This broadly equates to the current numbers of staff at ARC primary (10), ARC KS3 (6) and Thorogate (3) but would change some of the levels.

Pupil referral unit 2 (Rowan)	7 RMBC staff. In addition, CAMHS Education staff, existing home tutors, and staff at the hospital school will transfer across to the management of Rowan. Current vacancies of Team Leaders for CAMHS Education and Home Tuition will not be filled. Staff at Rowan will work with a wider range of pupil need.
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Total number in proposed structure 63

There are many staffing anomalies across the pupil referral units currently, with staff doing similar roles on different pay grades and different terms and conditions. These issues will be rectified giving parity for all staff grades as the result of this restructure.

Of the pre-proposal staffing levels, 11 posts are currently vacant – most of these vacancies will not be replaced, 2 members of staff are currently employed as casual staff and are not eligible to apply for posts in the new structure, and 2 members of staff are considering retirement at Xmas.

2 of the vacancies are at Rowan – both posts have been ring-fenced to staff at risk from the restructure of the partnership pupil referral units in the first instance.

Premises:

The following is proposed:

Rowan (Rawmarsh) will continue to be used.
St Mary's (Rawmarsh) will continue to be used.

Riverside (Catcliffe) will either continue to house secondary pupil referral unit or it will house a centralised primary provision for 2 of the primary units (Y3/4 and Y5/6).

There is a possibility that Riverside pupil referral unit could be relocated to other suitable premises if they can be found. There would be financial implications with this option and would have to be discussed at CSART.

There is a possibility that Y1 and Y2 pupils who need to access Alternative Provision could be located at Dalton Foljambe school in a primary unit should that proposal proceed.

If the primary provision moves to Riverside premises at Catcliffe then the unit adjacent to Kimberworth Place would be vacated.

The classroom in Kimberworth Place will be vacated (Nov 2013)

It is intended that the Bridge premises at Whiston will be vacated (Jan 2014). If no alternative location is found for the Thorogate primary unit (currently going through a formal closure process) then it is proposed that the primary unit is relocated to the Bridge premises in January 2014 as a temporary measure whilst a longer term solution is found.

The Redbarn house premises at Swinton will be vacated by April 2014 at the latest.

8. Finance

From 1.4.13 a change to the DfE School Funding Regulations required all Pupil Referral Units to have a delegated budget which must be allocated from the Dedicated Schools Grant Allocation paid to the Authority by the Department for Education on a financial year basis.

Each PRU will manage its own budget via their Management Committee (equivalent of Governing Body in maintained Schools).

The funding must be based on the DfE's 'place-plus' funding model i.e. £8k per planned place is allocated, with additional income to the pupil referral unit (or 'top up') to be provided by individual schools (from their delegated budgets) when they place pupils in the units, or, by the Authority (from the Dedicated Schools Grant allocation) if the Authority places the pupils.

The total value of funding allocated for 2013/14 was lower than was allocated for 2012/13 due to the need to introduce the new funding methodology, whilst recognising that the pupil referral unit provision in Rotherham was still under review during this transitional year. Increased pressure on the High Needs Block also led to the reduction in funding available for pupil referral unit provision.

This proposal allocates less funding to the overall pupil referral unit provision and corresponding anticipated operating costs will also be lower than the current model.

These figures are calculated on the basis that Pupil Referral Unit 1 places (secondary) will all be commissioned by the authority rather than schools,

therefore any funding additional to the 'places' allocation will be provided from the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs block allocation. It is however anticipated that some places will be commissioned by schools. School contribution rate will be equivalent to 75% of the Average Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) rate on a pro-rata basis.

Overview of reduction in staffing, management, and premises costs for Rowan, ARC, Bridge, St Mary's and Riverside (excluding hospital school)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Staff	1,491,482.25	1,352,081.59	1,393,535.07
Management	302,543.68	261,062.49	133,346.93
Premises	138,749.74	159,167.50	106,052.00
TOTAL	1,932,775.67	1,772,311.58	1,632,934.00

Overview of total funding for 2012-15 (excluding hospital school)

	Actual DSG	Actual HN allocation	Proposed HN allocation
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
TOTAL	2,465,149	2,255,082*	2,114,147**

*operating costs exceed High Needs allocation – proposed restructure will reduce cost to required level

**it is estimated that income from schools will reduce this figure by approx. £200,000

9. Risks and Uncertainties

- Financial issues include protected salaries and setting up costs of primary centres as well as potential costs of relocating Riverside pupil referral unit if that is required.
- This model has yet to be tested operationally – some slight adjustments might be required which could have financial implications although these would be minimal.
- Financial cost required to set up Dalton Foljambe due to space requirements.
- If level of permanently excluded pupils rises then less capacity for schools to be able to commission places to support them with pupils with a high level of need
- If level of permanently excluded pupils rises then there would be less income from schools
- Schools will only commission places at the pupil referral units if the quality of provision is high.
- There is limited capacity within primary schools to host primary units due to the rising birth rate.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- This proposal will support our vision for Rotherham in providing quality education for some of our most vulnerable pupils ensuring they have opportunities to develop skills, learn and improve their future employment prospects.
- This proposal also meets the aims of Transforming Rotherham Learning and the Rotherham Mission for all its children and young people.

11. Background Papers

The proposal has the support of the sub-group of the Inclusion Strategic Steering Group that was set up to review Alternative Provision. It incorporates many of the recommendations from that review.

The proposal has the support of the LAs DLT.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 for Statutory Guidance for Pupil Referral Units
Appendix 2 for Rotherham's requirements for Pupil Referral Units
Appendix 3 for outcomes from consultation and timeline

13. Contact Name

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Appendix 1

Statutory Guidance:

- The LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education for permanently excluded pupils and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such provision. Good alternative provision is that which appropriately meets the needs of pupils which required its use and enables them to achieve good educational attainment on par with their mainstream peers. All pupils must receive a good education, regardless of their circumstances or the settings in which they find themselves.
- The LA is required to arrange suitable full-time education (or as much as the pupil's health condition allows) for pupils of compulsory school age who, because of illness, would otherwise not receive suitable education.
- The LA must provide such education as soon as it is clear that the pupil will be away from school for 15 days or more, whether consecutive or cumulative.
- The LA must ensure that the education pupils receive is of good quality, allows them to take appropriate qualifications, prevents them from slipping behind their peers in school and allows them to reintegrate successfully back into school as soon as possible.
- The LA must address the needs of individual pupils in arranging provision and must not have processes or policies in place which prevent a pupil from getting the right type of provision and a good education.

Appendix 2

The requirements of pupil referral unit provision in Rotherham are that it:

- Provides a high quality educational provision and improves the outcomes for those children in need of alternative provision outside of the mainstream school provision in Rotherham (as per statutory requirements of the Local Authority under section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1991, as amended by section 3 of the Children, Schools and Families Act 2010.)
- Provides a financially viable model of delivery using the new DfE funding methodology and is efficient and effective in its operation in terms of affordability, allocation and use of resources, particularly as the funding now sits within the High Needs Block.
- Offers improved opportunities for the development of good practice across the borough's AP provision.
- Brings together skills and expertise under a 'two' pupil referral unit model rather than a 'five' pupil referral unit model with each of the pupil referral units having a different focus.
- Has a focus on the development of skills required for successful reintegration back into mainstream communities.
- Works closely with schools to reduce the number of pupils requiring long-term provision in pupil referral units.
- Works closely with health services such as CAMHS to improve outcomes for those children who are not accessing mainstream education on health grounds.
- Integrates into Rotherham's broader early help provision, identifying clear pathways for drawing additional whole family support where required, engaging with children's social care where need dictates, where ASB and/or worklessness is an issue, this may also include bespoke targeted support in line with Rotherham's Families for Change delivery plan.

Appendix 3

Consultation updates and proposed timeline

- Staff from the Alternative Curriculum team were transferred across to the pupil referral unit structure with effect from 1st September 2013 which enabled them to have the opportunity to apply for posts within the revised structure for Pupil Referral Unit 1.
- All staff in the pupil referral units (both secondary and primary) were given the opportunity to apply for posts in the new structure. This was to ensure equality of opportunity. If primary units on primary school sites have to be staffed by school staff then those primary staff in the pupil referral units system would be at risk later next year.
- A formal consultation process commenced with a meeting with all staff and unions on 5th July 2013 and ended with a meeting on 13th September 2013. This consultation period was extended by one week at the request of the unions.
- Individual meetings have taken place with staff, unions, and staff with union representatives together. HR and Lorraine Lichfield have had regular meetings to answer questions put by staff and unions.
- Schools have been involved in the Review of Alternative Provision which outlined this potential model. The recommendations from the Review have been shared with all schools, learning communities, ISSG and other professionals with two primary workshops being held where schools had further opportunity to join the debate. Two further sessions were offered for all to attend to discuss the proposed model. Attendance was disappointing.
- No alternative model has been proposed by either schools or staff at risk.
- All staff queries have been answered.
- As the result of discussion with staff, the model has been amended to replace two of the learning mentor posts with higher level teaching assistants to strengthen the model further. The model has been further amended with an increase in administrative staff in the structure.
- Current learning mentors (band F) have been permitted to apply for Higher Level Teaching Assistant (band G) posts which will be an opportunity for their personal development should they be successful.
- Anomalies with some staff gradings have been rectified prior to the restructure which has meant that an increased number of staff have become eligible to apply for the posts that match the work they have been doing to date.
- There was a union request to have a primary representative on the interview panel for the Head of Pupil Referral Unit 1 (as well as the two secondary representatives already planned). This was agreed and took place.

Additional updates

- There were two candidates for the Head of Pupil Referral Unit 1. The interviews have taken place and there is a successful candidate.

- The Head of Pupil Referral Unit 2 (Rowan) has transferred permanently to the LA and has been replaced at Rowan by a Centre Manager.
- Thorogate unit is currently going through the formal closure process as the host school no longer wish to have the unit onsite.
- The ARC pupil referral unit has been deregistered (with effect from 1st September 2013).
- It is the intention to deregister Riverside and the Bridge pupil referral units in December 2013. There will then be two registered pupil referral units (St Mary's and Rowan) – both of which have received 'good' Ofsted judgements within the last 12 months. Both of these units will be renamed in the New Year.

- June – July 2013 Cabinet member and advisers briefed
- 5 July – 13 Sept 2013 Staff and union consultation re pupil referral unit proposal
- Sept – Oct 2013 Pupil referral unit 2 to take on wider range of health needs
- Sept – Oct 2013 Recruitment process for Pupil referral unit 1 (all pupil referral unit staff to be eligible to apply for posts in Pupil referral unit 1 to ensure equality of opportunity)
- Jan 2014 Bridge premises to be vacated.
Bridge and Riverside pupil referral units to be deregistered. Rotherham will therefore have 2 registered pupil referral units (from existing registrations at St Mary's and Rowan – both of these units will be renamed and both of these units have received 'good' Ofsted judgements within the last 12 months).
- April 2014 ARC KS3 to lose 2 members of staff
- July 2014 ARC KS 3 to close – premises at Swinton vacated
Primary provision in place.
Welcome Centre premises vacated.

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Improving Lives Select Commission
2.	Date:	6th November 2013
3.	Title:	Amended Home to School Transport Policy
4.	Directorate:	Environment & Development Services

5. Summary

The Council has a statutory duty to provide free transport to and from school for “eligible” children. The criteria for assessment of entitlement to free transport assistance are contained within the Home to School Transport Policy which is updated and published annually; this report sets out proposed changes to the policy.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the *Improving Lives Select Commission* considers and comments on the proposed amendments to the “Draft Home to School Transport Policy – September 2013”.

7. Proposals and Details

The Home to School Transport Policy is usually reviewed around April annually since this allows time for it to be read and understood before the commencement of the academic year in September.

Following lobbying by ATCO (Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers) the Department for Education released updated statutory guidance in April 2013 which indicated that the procedures for parental appeals against the decision not to grant free transport assistance should follow a recommended format. Internal procedures were amended to reflect the new guidance and a draft Home to School Transport Policy was prepared for submission. However, following legal challenge, the Department for Education was forced to withdraw this statutory guidance in mid July 2013 since it had not consulted on the changes for the necessary time period therefore it has not been possible to prepare an amended version of the policy before now.

Sections 2.03 and 2.08 have been amended as a result of clarification and agreement with CYPS and there have been some other minor text amendments. All of these amendments are identified in red text on the "Draft Home to School Transport Policy - September 2013" but none of these affect entitlement or qualification.

8. Finance

There are no financial implications regarding publication of the Policy. Any costs relating to the publicity will be contained within the existing budget.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The Department for Education presented updated guidance at the request of Local Authority Officers who administer Home to School Transport entitlement; the more detailed and prescriptive guidance was welcomed but has unfortunately been withdrawn by DfE due to lack of consultation. It is likely that this guidance will be re-issued at a later date following further consultation. An updated version of the Home to School Transport Policy containing the necessary amendments will then need to be prepared, agreed and accepted prior to publication.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

All discretionary elements of transport provision have now/previously been removed from the Home to School Transport Policy; the Policy now covers only the elements that are a statutory duty. Legislation within the Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced extended rights to free transport assistance for pupils from "low income" families; these are also covered within the Policy.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Home to School Transport Policy – April 2012 (currently published)

Contact Name: *Craig Ruding, Principal Officer, Education Transport, 22527, Craig.Ruding @rotherham.gov.uk*

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

“If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us”:

Tel: 01709 822527

Email: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Slovak

Ak vy alebo niekto koho poznáte potrebuje pomoc pri pochopení alebo čítaní tohto dokumentu, prosím kontaktujte nás na vyššie uvedenom čísle alebo nám pošlite e-mail.

Kurdish Sorani

كوردی سورانی

نهگهر تو یان كه سێك كه تو دهیناسی پێویستی بهیارمهتی هه بییت بۆ نهوهی لهم بهنگهنامه یه تیپگات یان بیخوینیتهوه، تکیه په یوه هندیمان پێوه بکه له سههر نهو ژماره یه ی سه ره وه دا یان بهو نیمه یته.

Arabic

عربي

إذا كنت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم أو قراءة هذه الوثيقة، الرجاء الاتصال على الرقم اعلاه، أو مراسلتنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني

Urdu

اردو

اگر آپ یا آپ کے جاننے والے کسی شخص کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے یا پڑھنے کیلئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا نمبر پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں یا ہمیں ای میل کریں۔

Farsi

فارسی

اگر جناب عالی یا شخص دیگری که شما اورا می شناسید برای خواندن یا فهمیدن این مدارک نیاز به کمک دارد لطفاً با ما بوسیله شماره بالا یا ایمیل تماس حاصل فرمایید.

April 2012

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION SERVICE

Passenger Transport Services - Corporate Transport Unit,
Hellaby Depot, Sandbeck Way, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL
Fax 01709 334323

Principal Officer – Education Transport
Tel: 01709 822527 (24 hours voicemail service is available)
e-mail: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Useful Contacts	Telephone Contact
Education Transport Enquiry Service (24 hours voicemail is available)	01709 822649 or 822525
Passenger Transport Service	01709 822527 or 822416
Contract Operating Service (24 hours voicemail is available)	01709 334322 or 334325 Or 334324
Contract Monitoring Service	01709 334319
Mobile/Text Service	07789 650085
South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive Traveline / Enquiries	01709 515151
Children's Social Care Access Team	01709 823987
<u>Other South Yorkshire Local Authorities</u>	
Barnsley – School Transport	01226 773584 or 773590
Doncaster – Pupil Support and Transport	01302 737325 or 736080
Sheffield – Home to School Transport	0114 2735831

CONTENTS

	Page
1 Introduction	4
2 Transport assistance and eligibility	4
2.01 Pupils under the age of 5 years	5
2.02 Pupils aged 5 to 7 years	5
2.03 Pupils aged 8 to 16 years	5
2.04 Pupils attending denominational schools	6
2.05 Pupils not attending qualifying schools	6
2.06 Exceptions	7
2.07 Pupils from low income families	7
2.08 Pupils with Special Educational Needs	9
2.09 Appeals	10
3 Parents/Carers Guidelines - Mainstream Transport	11
4 Parents/Carers Guidelines - Special Educational Needs Transport	13

1 INTRODUCTION

The Statutory Duty to provide free transport assistance to eligible learners

Section 508B of the Education Act 1996 (amended by the Education & Inspections Act 2006) deals with the duty on local authorities to make such travel arrangements as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance at school for “eligible” children to “qualifying schools”. Schedule 35B of the Act defines “eligible” children. The duty applies to Home to School travel arrangements at the start of the day and school to home travel arrangements at the end of the day. It does not relate to travel between educational institutions during the school day.

Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. Section 444 of the 1996 Act outlines the situations in which a parent/carer may have a defence in law against a prosecution by a local authority for their child’s non-attendance at school. Section 444(3B) provides a parent/carer with a defence if he or she proves that the Local Authority has not fulfilled its statutory duty to provide this. Further information regarding Home to School transport and the statutory duties to which Local Authorities must have regard are contained within the “Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance” 2007 issued by Department for Education to accompany the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

This Policy explains the criteria used in establishing a learner’s eligibility for transport assistance for those living in the Rotherham Authority area.

This Policy is correct at the time of publication. It should not be assumed, however, that there will be no changes to this information before the start of, or during the school year. Every effort will be made to update this Policy in a timely manner according to changes in statutory duties.

Key information submitted for assessments and reviews will be treated in a confidential manner and may be shared with the transport operator/provider of Home to School Transport.

If there is a change in individual circumstances, such as change of address or change in needs, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the CTU and to ensure the necessary review is undertaken.

2 TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE AND ELIGIBILITY

Transport assistance may consist of one of these options:-

- i) A zero fare bus pass which allows a pupil to free bus travel between the nearest bus stop to their home address and their registered school base.
- ii) Refunded travelling expenses according to the cheapest available public transport route for those learners able to access public services.
- iii) Mileage expenses in accordance with the Council’s current rate, for pupils requiring special arrangements.
- iv) Free or subsidised travel on a coach, minibus, taxi or specially adapted vehicle if the learner is unable to travel by public transport due to the distance, their mobility, or effect of their complex special educational needs (see section 2.08).

Eligibility to free transport assistance – mainstream settings

2.01 Pupils under the age of 5 years

There is no statutory duty to provide transport assistance to children under the age of 5 years. Parents/Carers are expected to accompany children under the age of 5 years to their early years provider and on public transport.

Currently, there is no charge for children under the age of 5 years to travel by public transport if accompanied by a parent/carer paying full fare. Financial assistance is not given to parents/carers for their personal transport costs when they accompany their child to early years provision. The bus operator may charge the concessionary fare to a child under the age of 5 years if they are travelling with older siblings paying a concessionary fare.

2.02 Pupils aged 5-7 years

For pupils aged 5, but less than 8 years of age (on 1st September) attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority), a zero fare bus pass will be provided where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles (otherwise referred to as the lower statutory qualifying distance). Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop and during the journey as appropriate.

2.03 Pupils aged 8-16 years

For pupils aged 8-16 years of age (on 1st September) attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority), a zero fare bus pass will be provided where the distance between home and school is more than 3 miles (otherwise referred to as the upper statutory qualifying distance). Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop and during the journey as appropriate.

2.04 **Pupils attending denominational schools**

Some transport assistance to denominational schools has historically been provided on a discretionary basis. There is no statutory duty to provide it except for eligible secondary aged pupils from low income families (see section 2.07).

Following consultation, changes in Policy have been made which will affect some pupils attending denominational schools. **As from the academic year commencing September 2013, only new applications for secondary aged denominational pupils who qualify under low income criteria (see section 2.07) will receive free transport assistance.**

All pupils attending denominational schools who currently receive free transport assistance (including new pupils who qualify for the academic year commencing September 2012), will continue to receive this; for primary aged pupils up until the end of Y6, and for secondary aged pupils up until the end of Y11. If individual circumstances change, e.g. a change of address or school, pupils will need to be re-assessed for entitlement and transport assistance may be withdrawn.

New applications for free transport assistance commencing September 2013 will only be provided for those secondary aged denominational pupils who qualify under low income criteria (see section 2.07).

2.05 **Pupils not attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school,* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority).**

The Local Authority recognises its obligations under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, to comply with parental preferences regarding choice of school. In order to ensure the efficient use of its resources the Local Authority will only provide transport assistance where the school attended is the nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) from the pupil's main home address.

Parents/Carers who apply for a place in a school for their child/children which is not the nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) do so knowing that free transport assistance will not be available regardless of the distance involved (unless section 2.07 applies).

Please note that the ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to or from school rests with parents/carers.

2.06 Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be made in the following circumstances:-

- i) A zero fare bus pass may be given to pupils who attend a school outside Rotherham, providing that it is the nearest appropriate qualifying school* to the home address, beyond the statutory walking distance and is within South Yorkshire.
- ii) If a pupil is permanently excluded from their school and attends an alternative base of educational provision (which is located beyond the appropriate qualifying distance from the home address), a zero fare bus pass may be allocated via the Behaviour Support Service (01709 336611).
- iii) Pupils from low income families (see section 2.07).
- iv) A pupil attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school,* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) who has a medical condition affecting their mobility may be provided with free transport assistance. Parents/Carers who wish to request such assistance should do so in writing, along with supporting formal medical evidence, to the Transport Assessment Officer (01709 822649).
- v) Consideration for providing a zero fare bus pass for pupils attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school,* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) will be made if the route is not considered available to walk. Set criteria have been established by Road Safety GB in "Assessment of walked routes to school" guidelines. These criteria and assessments are common to all the South Yorkshire Authorities. A zero fare bus pass will not be issued where an assessed available walking route to school (determined by the Council in accordance with the above guidelines) exists.
- vi) Transport assistance may be available for pupils whose parents/carers have disabilities. Where it is a condition of the availability of the walking route that they are accompanied, but their parents/carers disabilities prevent this, alternative arrangements will be considered. These disabilities may include dual sensory impairment or physical difficulties.

2.07 Pupils from low income families

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced free transport assistance for qualifying pupils from low income families. Those who qualify are pupils in receipt of **free school meals** or from families in receipt of **Maximum Working Tax Credit**.

Please contact the Council's Customer Services on 01709 336006 to make an application for free school meals.

Please contact the Tax Credit Helpline on 0845 300 3900 to make an application for Working Tax Credit.

There are changes pending according to the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the introduction of the Universal Credit System.

Pupils meeting these criteria will receive free transport assistance (usually a zero fare bus pass) on condition that:

- i) Pupils aged 8 to 10 attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school*, (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles, but less than 6 miles.
- ii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 attending any 1 of their 3 nearest appropriate qualifying schools*, where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles, but not more than 6 miles.
- iii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 attending their nearest appropriate denominational school on grounds of religion or belief, where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles.

The distances referred to are measured as:

Up to 2 miles – as per the statutory walking distance, along the nearest available walking route.

The 6 mile or the 15 mile upper limit – along road routes passable by suitable motorised transport.

*The nearest appropriate qualifying school is one with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

2.08 **Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Pupils under the age of
5 years

Parents/Carers are usually required to take children under the age of 5 to their early years provider. If, however, a child is assessed as requiring specialist transport, parents/carers will be requested to make subsidised contributions towards this transport, for those attending non statutory education. The cost will (currently) be a maximum of £1.20 per day but if families qualify under the low income criteria (as above) then no charges will be applied.

Pupils aged 5 to
16 years

Pupils with SEN will have their individual transport needs assessed against set criteria taking into account the distance, their age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel. This may include:-

- Complex communication difficulties
- Severe and complex learning difficulties
- Complex learning and behavioural difficulties
- Physical and medical difficulties
- Dual sensory impairment

Under the provisions of paragraph 3 of Schedule 27 to the Education Act 1996, parents/carers may express a preference for a child with a Statement of SEN to attend a school which is not the nearest suitable school identified by the Local Authority. If the Local Authority considers that it would be incompatible with the efficient use of its resources to provide and fund home to school transport to the more distant parental preference, it may name both schools within the child's Statement of SEN (paragraph 8:87 of the SEN Code of Practice), on the express condition that parents/carers accept, and continue to accept, liability for arranging and funding home to school transport.

Mobility Pass

A Mobility Pass is available to Rotherham residents and allows free travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire and some cross boundary services. Severely disabled people, who are unable to travel without assistance, can also qualify for a special mobility pass that enables a carer to travel with them free of charge. Please contact the Local Authority on 01709 336010, to discuss qualification criteria. Further details are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com

SEN Pupils attending Respite Care

Transport assistance to respite care placements will only be provided where pupils can be accommodated on existing transport provision and this does not incur any additional cost to the Local Authority.

SEN Pupils in Public Care

When a pupil with a Statement of Special Educational Needs becomes a "Looked After Child" by Rotherham Authority they may become eligible for transport assistance to other settings as well as their registered school. Requests for transport need to be made via the social worker and must be authorised by a Service Manager. To arrange, amend or cancel the transport, please contact the Business Support Team in Children and Young People's Services on 01709 334049. The Social Care Out of Hours Team can be contacted on 01709 336080.

2.09 **Appeals**

Parents/Carers have the right to appeal against the Authority's decision not to provide transport assistance if they feel there are **exceptional circumstances** that breach this Policy. Please request a Notice of Appeal Form from the Transport Assessment Officer on 01709 822649 (24 hours voicemail is available) or e mail: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Parents/Carers must submit their grounds for appeal within one calendar month of the original decision. The appeal must also include any relevant medical reports which are no more than 3 months old. This will then be considered by an independent appeals panel within one calendar month from submission.

3 PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES - MAINSTREAM TRANSPORT

Provision and Conditions

The majority of Rotherham pupils assessed as entitled to transport assistance are issued with a zero fare pass allowing them to travel free by public transport to/from school. Where specific buses are provided for mainstream home to school transport, these may be run commercially by the operators or on contract to the Local Authority. In both instances, these are registered services available to the general public and as such parents/carers should consider the need to accompany the pupil as necessary.

- 3.01 A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of Child Benefit. Pupils in receipt of free transport assistance will have their eligibility re-assessed following a move of address or circumstances as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance.
- 3.02 The distance between the pupil's home and school is measured using a computerised mapping system. This is from the front door of the home address to the nearest designated school entrance by the nearest available walking route.
- 3.03 Pupils who do qualify for a zero fare bus pass (see section 2) will continue to be assessed and reviewed each school year.
- 3.04 Dual residence or parents/carers work and family commitments will not be regarded as valid reasons for determining entitlement to transport assistance. A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.
- 3.05 Where it is not possible for pupils to travel by public transport, the Local Authority may consider other arrangements.
- 3.06 Secondary aged pupils, not qualifying for transport assistance through the Local Authority need to obtain a concessionary fare pass issued by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTE). The MegaTravel (Proof of Age) Pass allows the holder to travel at the concessionary fare on buses trams and trains in South Yorkshire. Further information and application forms are available from the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com or the Rotherham or Meadowhall Interchanges, or contact **Traveline on 01709 515151**.
- 3.07 Pupils attending a school in Rotherham, who live outside the Rotherham boundary, must apply to their home Local Authority, for assistance.
- 3.08 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs including travel to and from work placements, extra curricular activities, transitional travel or any other arrangements they make with the school.
- 3.09 The ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to and from school rests with parents/carers. Some pupils may need to be taken to the bus stop and supervised until the bus arrives. Similarly, these pupils may need to be met on their return journey. Pupils who are unaccompanied between home and bus stops should follow a safe route known to the parents/carers.
- 3.10 Parents/Carers are expected to explain to their child that it is important to behave while they are travelling on transport. Parents/Carers who apply for a zero fare pass sign to accept the Code of Conduct that the pupil will follow. If any pupil persistently endangers their own safety, or that of others, by not following the Code of Conduct, transport assistance will be withdrawn.
- 3.11 Pupils may be excluded from travel and in some circumstances the Police may be involved. Guidance entitled "Promoting Positive Behaviour by Pupils on Public Transport in South Yorkshire" has been developed by Local Authority Education Transport Officers, South

Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, South Yorkshire Police and Transport Operators and can be accessed at

www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/onboard/teachers-and-parents/behaviour-guide/

- 3.12 It is against the law to smoke on buses, coaches, minibuses and in taxis.

Please remember that in the event of serious or persistent misbehaviour, the Local Authority may exclude your child from using school transport or withdraw a zero fare bus pass. Additionally, the bus operator can refuse entry to the vehicle for such pupils.

4 PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES – SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) TRANSPORT

Provision and Conditions

Many secondary aged pupils who have been assessed as requiring transport assistance, other than a zero fare bus pass, will receive support for independence and mobility training as part of their school curriculum. The aim is to reduce their reliance on individual transport in Key Stages 3/4. Plans to encourage independent travel will be considered at the earliest opportunity by the school working in partnership with parents/carers.

- 4.01 Pupils in receipt of transport assistance will have their eligibility re-assessed following a change of address or circumstances, as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance. Dual residence or parents/carers work and family commitments will not be regarded as valid reasons for determining entitlement to transport assistance. A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.
- 4.02 Transport assistance may be reviewed on a term-by-term basis. Any recommended changes to a pupil's transport arrangements will be considered by the Local Authority. Changes, for various reasons, may be necessary during the school term and you will be informed of these as soon as possible. Where individual transport is ceased, pupils may be eligible for a zero fare bus pass, provided they live beyond the statutory walking distance (see section 2).
- 4.02 Pupils issued with a zero fare bus pass will access free transport which will operate from and to the bus stops nearest to the pupil's home. Parents/Carers should ensure the pupil's safety by making appropriate arrangements for them to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop as appropriate.
- 4.03 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs such as travel to and from work placements, breakfast and after-school clubs, extra curricular activities, transitional transport or any other arrangements they make with a school.
- 4.04 Pupils who are assessed as requiring transport on a coach, minibus or taxi will be picked up and dropped off at named points near their home address. If the pupil is not at the boarding point at the agreed time in the morning, the transport will continue its journey to avoid late arrival at schools. If the pupil is collected from home please ensure they are ready to board the vehicle at the agreed time.
- 4.06 Pupils who attend a residential school (e.g. a term-by-term basis) outside Rotherham, named in their Statement of SEN, will be allocated a maximum of 6 return journeys to/from their place of education. No additional journeys will be funded by the Local Authority.

- 4.07 Some parents/carers may wish to use their own vehicle to transport their child to and from school. They may be entitled to claim a fuel allowance, when no spaces are available on existing transport, or where no contracted transport provision exists. This will only be paid for the journeys **when the eligible child is travelling in the vehicle**. Further information can be obtained from the Transport Assessment Officer (01709 822649).
- 4.08 Any special transport equipment, seating, restraints, or training required due to the pupil's physical, medical or behavioural needs which require supervision during travel will usually be arranged by the Local Authority. In some circumstances, an agreed written individual transport care plan will be required to be signed by the parent/carer before the pupil can travel on any contracted vehicle.
- 4.09 Where a vehicle collects a pupil from the home address, drivers will not usually be expected to leave the vehicle and bring the pupil from the house. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements to accompany their child to and from the designated pick up point, and to see them safely onto and off the vehicle. In exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Local Authority, an escort/driver may assist with movement of the pupil if they are specifically trained to do so.
- 4.10 If your child will not be going to school for any reason, such as illness or holiday, you must inform CTU as soon as possible (01709 334322 or 334325) to prevent unnecessary charges being made (especially if your child travels alone). You must inform the CTU in advance when you need the transport to start again (**please note that 24 hours voicemail is available**).
- 4.11 If your child is due to receive medical treatment which affects their mobility and fitness to travel, you must inform the CTU (01709 334319 or 334325) at least 10 working days in advance so that an updated transport assessment can be undertaken. Your child may be refused transport provision until this assessment has taken place and it is deemed safe for them to travel.
- 4.12 If a pupil is transported in a wheelchair, it is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that this is in good condition and free of defects. This also includes any wheelchair harness. Any defects should be reported and rectified by contacting **Wheelchair Services (01709 302262)** to ensure the safety of the child. Defective equipment will result in transport being stopped as **all** drivers are instructed to refuse to transport pupils with defective wheelchairs.
- 4.13 If your child is due to change their wheelchair or buggy, including seating system, you must inform the Contract Monitoring Officer at least 10 working days in advance (01709 334319). It is important that the correct restraints are used to secure the wheelchair into the vehicle. All drivers are instructed to refuse transport provision for pupils until these changes are made and until it is confirmed safe for the pupil to travel.
- 4.14 If your child has a medical care plan for transport where treatment or equipment is essential for the child's health (e.g. epipen, inhaler, vagal nerve stimulator magnet, suction machine etc) it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure this is sent with the child. This should always be in date and in good working order otherwise your child will be refused transport by the operator.
- 4.15 Transport Staff will **not** administer medicines unless these are part of the Transport Care Plan and staff have received appropriate training. It is important that such medicines are in date, clearly marked with the pupil's name and the dosage prescribed.
- 4.16 Parents are advised to contact their child's school, to check on their policy for the carriage of

items such as letters, money or medicines. Transport staff may agree to transport these but cannot accept responsibility for any loss.

- 4.17 As a parent/carer you must ensure a responsible adult meets the child when they are dropped off by the transport provider. If an emergency occurs which prevents this, the CTU should be informed urgently (01709 334322 or 334325). In the event of a responsible adult not being available to meet the child, the Transport Operator will contact CTU. The pupil will be taken to a place of safety according to the instructions of Children's Social Care, Contact and Referral Team (CART 01709 823987) until they are collected by a responsible adult. Outside normal school transport hours the Social Care Out of Hours Team will be contacted on 01709 336080.
- 4.18 In the event of a pupil exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), they will be excluded from transport. Transport provision will be withdrawn by the Local Authority and parents/carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school.

DRAFT HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

“If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us”:

Tel: 01709 822527

Email: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Slovak

Ak vy alebo niekto koho poznáte potrebuje pomoc pri pochopení alebo čítaní tohto dokumentu, prosím kontaktujte nás na vyššie uvedenom čísle alebo nám pošlite e-mail.

Kurdish Sorani

سۆرانی

نهگهر تو یان كه سێك كه تو دهیناسی پێویستی بهیارمهتی هه بێت بۆ نهوهی لهم بهلگه نامه یه تیبگات یان بیخوینیتهوه، تکایه په یوه ندیمان پێوه بکه له سههر نهو ژماره یه ی سه ره وه دا یان بهو نیمه یته.

Arabic

عربي

إذا كنت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم أو قراءة هذه الوثيقة، الرجاء الاتصال على الرقم اعلاه، أو مراسلتنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني

Urdu

اُردو

اگر آپ یا آپ کے جاننے والے کسی شخص کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے یا پڑھنے کیلئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا نمبر پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں یا ہمیں ای میل کریں۔

Farsi

فارسی

اگر جناب عالی یا شخص دیگری که شما اورا می شناسید برای خواندن یا فهمیدن این مدارک نیاز به کمک دارد لطفاً با ما بوسیله شماره بالا یا ایمیل تماس حاصل فرمایید.

September 2013

ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT AND PROVISION SERVICE

Passenger Transport Services - Corporate Transport Unit,
Hellaby Depot, Sandbeck Way, Hellaby, Rotherham S66 8QL
Fax 01709 334323

Principal Officer – Education Transport
Tel: 01709 822527 (24 hours voicemail service is available)
e-mail: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Useful Contacts	Telephone Contact
Education Transport Enquiry Service (24 hours voicemail is available)	01709 822649 or 822525
Passenger Transport Service	01709 822527 or 822416
Contract Operating Service (24 hours voicemail is available)	01709 334322 or 334325 or 334324
Contract Monitoring Service	01709 334319
South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive Traveline / Enquiries	01709 515151
Children's Social Care Access Team	01709 823987
<u>Other South Yorkshire Local Authorities</u>	
Barnsley – School Transport	01226 773584 or 773590
Doncaster – Pupil Support and Transport	01302 737325 or 736080
Sheffield – Home to School Transport	0114 2735831

CONTENTS

Section	Page
1 Introduction	4
2 Transport assistance and eligibility	4
2.01 Pupils under the age of 5 years	5
2.02 Pupils aged 5 to 7 years	5
2.03 Pupils aged 8 to 16 years & Raising the Participation Age.	5
2.04 Pupils attending denominational schools	6
2.05 Pupils not attending qualifying schools	6
2.06 Exceptions	7
2.07 Pupils from low income families	7
2.08 Pupils with Special Educational Needs	8
2.09 Appeals	9
3 Parents/Carers Guidelines - Mainstream Transport	11
4 Parents/Carers Guidelines - Special Educational Needs Transport	13

1 INTRODUCTION

The Statutory Duty to provide free transport assistance to eligible learners

Section 508B of the Education Act 1996 (amended by the Education & Inspections Act 2006) deals with the duty on local authorities to make such travel arrangements as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance at school for “eligible” children to “qualifying schools”. Schedule 35B of the Act defines “eligible” children. The duty applies to Home to School travel arrangements at the start of the day and school to home travel arrangements at the end of the day. It does not relate to travel between educational institutions during the school day.

Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. Section 444 of the 1996 Act outlines the situations in which a parent/carer may have a defence in law against a prosecution by a local authority for their child’s non-attendance at school. Section 444(3B) provides a parent/carer with a defence if he or she proves that the Local Authority has not fulfilled its statutory duty to provide this. Further information regarding Home to School transport and the statutory duties to which Local Authorities must have regard are contained within the “Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance” 2007 issued by Department for Education to accompany the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

This Policy explains the criteria used in establishing a learner’s eligibility for transport assistance for those living in the Rotherham Authority.

This Policy is correct at the time of publication. It should not be assumed, however, that there will be no changes to this information before the start of, or during the school year. Every effort will be made to update this Policy in a timely manner according to changes in statutory duties.

Key information submitted for assessments and reviews will be treated in a confidential manner and may be shared with the transport operator/provider of Home to School Transport.

If there is a change in individual circumstances, such as change of address or change in needs, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the CTU and to ensure the necessary review is undertaken.

2 TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE AND ELIGIBILITY

Transport assistance may consist of one of these options:-

- i) A zero fare bus pass which allows a pupil to free bus travel between the nearest bus stop to their home address and their registered school base.
- ii) Refunded travelling expenses according to the cheapest available public transport route for those learners able to access public services.
- iii) Mileage expenses in accordance with the Council’s current rate, for pupils requiring special arrangements.
- iv) Free or subsidised travel on a coach, minibus, taxi or specially adapted vehicle if the learner is unable to travel by public transport due to the distance, their mobility, or effect of their complex special educational needs (see section 2.08).

Eligibility to free transport assistance – mainstream settings

2.01 Pupils under the age of 5 years

There is no statutory duty to provide transport assistance to children under the age of 5 years. Parents/Carers are expected to accompany children under the age of 5 years to their early years provider and on public transport.

Currently, there is no charge for children under the age of 5 years to travel by public transport if accompanied by a parent/carer paying full fare. Financial assistance is not given to parents/carers for their personal transport costs when they accompany their child to early years provision. The bus operator may charge the concessionary fare to a child under the age of 5 years if they are travelling with older siblings paying a concessionary fare.

2.02 Pupils aged 5-7 years

For pupils aged 5, but less than 8 (on 1st September) attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority), a zero fare bus pass will be provided where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles (otherwise referred to as the lower statutory qualifying distance). Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop and during the journey as appropriate.

2.03 Pupils aged 8-16 years

For pupils aged 8-16 (on 1st September) attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority), a zero fare bus pass will be provided where the distance between home and school is more than 3 miles (otherwise referred to as the upper statutory qualifying distance). Parents/Carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop and during the journey.

Raising the Participation Age

From Summer 2013 changes are being made which raises the age to which pupils/students must continue their education or training. There is no change to the statutory school age which remains at 5 to 16 years. Students in Year 11 during the 2012/13 academic year will be required to continue their education or training until at least the end of the academic year in which they reach 17 years. Those in Y10 and below during the 2012/13 academic year will have to continue until at least their 18th birthday.

However, this change will not extend the entitlement for the provision of free transport assistance beyond Y11 as it does not mean that the student has to stay at school; they may choose to work full time and study part time, continue full time study at school or college, or be involved in part time training whilst volunteering.

More information about Raising the Participation Age can be obtained from the Department of Education website at:-

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/youngpeople/participation/rpa>

Post 16 students are also advised to read the "Transport Policy - Learners Aged 16-19 years in Further Education - Academic Year: 2013/2014" which gives details of various transport options available to this age range. This Policy can be read and downloaded from the following Rotherham Council website or searching on the following link.

http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/downloads/file/200/rotherham_post_16_transport_policy/1135

2.04 **Pupils attending denominational schools**

Some transport assistance to denominational schools has historically been provided on a discretionary basis. There is no statutory duty to provide it except for eligible secondary aged pupils from low income families (see section 2.07).

Following consultation, changes in Policy have been made which will affect some pupils attending denominational schools. **As from the academic year commencing September 2013, only new applications for secondary aged denominational pupils who qualify under low income criteria (see section 2.07) will receive free transport assistance.**

All pupils attending denominational schools who currently receive free transport assistance (including new pupils who qualify for the academic year commencing September 2012), will continue to receive this; for primary aged pupils up until the end of Y6, and for secondary aged pupils up until the end of Y11. If individual circumstances change, e.g. a change of address or school, pupils will need to be re-assessed for entitlement and transport assistance may be withdrawn.

New applications for free transport assistance commencing from September 2013 will only be provided for those secondary aged denominational pupils who qualify under low income criteria (see section 2.07).

2.05 **Pupils not attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school,* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority).**

The Local Authority recognises its obligations under the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, as amended by the Education Act 2002, to comply with parental preferences regarding choice of school. In order to ensure the efficient use of its resources the Local Authority will only provide transport assistance where the school attended is the nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) from the pupil's main home address.

Parents/Carers who apply for a place in a school for their child/children which is not the nearest appropriate qualifying school* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) do so knowing that free transport assistance will not be available regardless of the distance involved (unless section 2.07 applies).

Please note that the ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to or from school rests with parents/carers.

2.06 Exceptions

Exceptions to this policy may be made in the following circumstances:-

- i) A zero fare bus pass may be given to pupils who attend a school outside Rotherham, providing that it is the nearest appropriate qualifying school* to the home address, beyond the statutory walking distance and is within South Yorkshire.
- ii) If a pupil is permanently excluded from their school and attends an alternative base of educational provision (which is located beyond the appropriate qualifying distance from the home address), a zero fare bus pass may be allocated via the Behaviour Support Service (01709 336611).
- iii) Pupils from low income families (see section 2.07).
- iv) A pupil attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school,* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) who has a medical condition affecting their mobility may be provided with free transport assistance. Parents/Carers who wish to request such assistance should do so in writing, along with supporting formal medical evidence, to the Transport Assessment Officer (01709 822649).
- v) Consideration for providing a zero fare bus pass for pupils attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school,* (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) will be made if the route is not considered available to walk. **When assessing the safety of an “available route”, only the potential risk created by traffic, the highway and topographical conditions will be considered.** Set criteria have been established by Road Safety GB in “Assessment of **Walked Routes to School**” guidelines. These criteria and assessments are common to all the South Yorkshire Authorities. A zero fare bus pass will not be issued where an assessed available walking route to school (determined by the **Local Authority** in accordance with the above guidelines) exists.
- vi) Transport assistance may be available for pupils whose parents/carers have disabilities. Where it is a condition of the availability of the walking route that they are accompanied, but their parents/carers disabilities prevent this, alternative arrangements will be considered. These disabilities may include dual sensory impairment or physical difficulties.

2.07 Pupils from low income families

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced free transport assistance for qualifying pupils from low income families. Those who qualify are pupils **entitled to free school meals** or from families in receipt of **Maximum Working Tax Credit**. Pupils **from “low income” families** meeting these criteria will receive free transport assistance (usually a zero fare bus pass) on condition that:

- i) Pupils aged 8 to 10 **years** attending their nearest appropriate qualifying school*, (unless an alternative appropriate school has been determined by the Local Authority) where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles, but less than 6 miles.
- ii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 **years** attending any 1 of their 3 nearest appropriate qualifying schools*,

where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles, but not more than 6 miles.

- iii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 **years** attending their nearest appropriate denominational school on grounds of religion or belief, where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles.

The distances referred to are measured as:

Up to 2 miles – as per the statutory walking distance, along the nearest available walking route.

The 6 mile or the 15 mile upper limit – along road routes passable by suitable motorised transport.

*The nearest appropriate qualifying school is one with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child.

Please contact the Council's Benefits Section on 01709 336065 to make an application for free school meals.

Please contact the Tax Credit Helpline on 0845 300 3900 to make an application for Working Tax Credit

There are changes pending according to the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the introduction of the Universal Credit System.

2.08 Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Pupils under the age of 5 years

Parents/Carers are usually required to take children under the age of 5 to their early years provider. If, however, a child is assessed as requiring specialist transport, parents/carers will be requested to make subsidised contributions towards this transport, for those attending non statutory education. The cost will (currently) be a maximum of **£1.40** per day but if families qualify under low income criteria (**see section 2.07**) then no charges will be applied.

Pupils aged 5 to 16 years

Pupils with SEN will have their individual transport needs assessed against set criteria taking into account the **distance**, their age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel. This may include:-

- Complex communication difficulties
- Severe and complex learning difficulties
- Complex learning and behavioural difficulties
- Physical and medical difficulties
- Dual sensory impairment

Under the provisions of paragraph 3 of Schedule 27 to the Education Act 1996, parents/carers may express a preference for a child with a Statement of SEN to attend a school which is not the nearest suitable school identified by the Local Authority. If the Local Authority considers that it would be incompatible with the efficient use of its resources to provide and fund home to school transport to the more distant parental preference, it may

name both schools within the child's Statement of SEN (paragraph 8:87 of the SEN Code of Practice), on the express condition that parents/carers accept, and continue to accept, liability for arranging and funding home to school transport.

Mobility Pass

A Mobility Pass is available to Rotherham residents and allows free travel on all buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire and some cross boundary services. Severely disabled people, who are unable to travel without assistance, can also qualify for a special mobility pass that enables a carer to travel with them free of charge. Please contact the Local Authority on 01709 336010, to discuss qualification criteria. Further details are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com

SEN Pupils attending Respite Care

There is no statutory duty within national Home to School Transport guidance to provide free transport assistance to respite care placements. Free transport may be provided where pupils can be accommodated on existing Home to School transport provision and this does not incur any additional cost to the Local Authority.

SEN Pupils in Public Care

When a pupil with a Statement of Special Educational needs becomes a "Looked After Child", (LAC), funded by Rotherham L.A. the transport to and from their school or registered educational base will be organised and funded from the Home to School Transport budget provided that they reside within the Rotherham boundary.

Were that LAC is fostered outside the Rotherham area the funding for their Home to School transport will be provided from Social Care irrespective of whether their educational placement is within or outside the Rotherham area. LAC's who are the financial responsibility of an LA other than Rotherham need to refer to their home authority for the provision and funding of Home to School Transport.

Requests for transport assistance to settings other than the registered educational base need to be authorised and funded via the Social Worker. To arrange, amend or cancel this transport please contact the Business Support Team in Children and Young people's Services on 01709 334049. The Social Care Out of Hours Team can be contacted on 01709 336080

2.09 Appeals

Parents/Carers have the right to appeal against the Authority's decision not to provide transport assistance if they feel there are **exceptional circumstances** that breach this Policy. Please request a Notice of Appeal Form from the Transport Assessment Officer on 01709 822649 (24 hours voicemail is available) or e mail: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Parents/Carers must submit their grounds for appeal within one calendar month of the original decision. The completed Notice of Appeal form must also include any relevant medical reports which are no more than 3 months old. This will then be considered by an independent appeals panel within one calendar month from submission.

Appeals against the Local Authority's refusal to issue a zero fare bus pass

Following receipt of the completed Notice of Appeal form, a Statement of Appeal will be prepared by the Local Authority and both this and the completed Notice of Appeal will be sent to Democratic Services together with any other relevant correspondence. Democratic Services will then convene a Zero Fare Pass Appeals Panel meeting comprising Local Councillors who

will make a decision regarding the appeal and decide whether a zero fare pass should be issued. Parents/Carers will be invited to attend this meeting which will also be attended by Transport Officers, Legal Officers and Administrative Officers. Our Democratic Services Officer will make contact with you when the date/time of the Appeal Panel meeting has been established and you will be forwarded copies of all relevant paperwork.

The decision regarding issue of a pass will be made only by the Councillors present and this decision will be communicated to you shortly after the Panel meeting has taken place. Any decision made by the Councillors will be effective for the complete academic year following which entitlement will be reviewed for the next academic year. You will then again have the right to appeal this decision if necessary.

Appeals against the Local Authority's refusal to provide other types of transport assistance

Following receipt of the completed Notice of Appeal form, a Statement of Appeal will be prepared by a Senior Officer and both this and the completed Notice of Appeal will be presented to a member of the Senior Management Team for review. If the member of the Senior Management Team upholds the Appeal, transport assistance will be provided accordingly. If the member of the Senior Management Team rejects the Appeal it will be passed to a Director to review. Both the member of the Senior Management Team and the Director will have had no involvement in the original transport decision to ensure an independent Appeal hearing. The Directors decision will be final and will be communicated to the parent/carer shortly after the Appeal hearing has taken place.

Parents/carers may contact the Local Government Ombudsman if they feel that the Local Authority's procedures have not been followed, but it is unlikely that the LGO could assist on matters of Policy.

3 PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES - MAINSTREAM TRANSPORT

Provision and Conditions

The majority of Rotherham pupils assessed as entitled to transport assistance are issued with a zero fare pass allowing them to travel free by public transport to/from school. Where specific buses are provided for mainstream home to school transport, these may be run commercially by the operators or on contract to the Local Authority. In both instances, these are registered services available to the general public and as such parents/carers should consider the need to accompany the pupil as necessary.

- 3.01 A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of Child Benefit. Pupils in receipt of free transport assistance will have their eligibility re-assessed following a move of address or circumstances as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance.
- 3.02 The distance between the pupil's home and school is measured using a computerised mapping system. This is from the front door of the home address to the nearest designated school entrance by the nearest available walking route.
- 3.03 Pupils who do qualify for a zero fare bus pass (see section 2) will continue to be assessed and reviewed each school year.
- 3.04 Dual residence or parents/carers work and family commitments will not be regarded as valid reasons for determining entitlement to transport assistance. A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.
- 3.05 Where it is not possible for pupils to travel by public transport, the Local Authority may consider other arrangements.
- 3.06 Secondary aged pupils, not qualifying for transport assistance through the Local Authority need to obtain a concessionary fare pass issued by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPT). The MegaTravel (Proof of Age) Pass allows the holder to travel at the concessionary fare on buses trams and trains in South Yorkshire. Further information and application forms are available from the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com or the Rotherham or Meadowhall Interchanges, or contact **Traveline on 01709 515151**.
- 3.07 Pupils attending a school in Rotherham, who live outside the Rotherham boundary, must apply to their home Local Authority, for assistance.
- 3.08 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs including travel to and from work placements, extra curricular activities, transitional travel or any other arrangements they make with the school.
- 3.09 The ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to and from school rests with parents/carers. Some pupils may need to be taken to the bus stop and supervised until the bus arrives. Similarly, these

pupils may need to be met on their return journey. Pupils who are unaccompanied between home and bus stops should follow a safe route known to the parents/carers.

- 3.10 Parents/Carers are expected to explain to their child that it is important to behave while they are travelling on transport. Parents/Carers who apply for a zero fare pass sign to accept the Code of Conduct that the pupil will follow. If any pupil persistently endangers their own safety, or that of others, by not following the Code of Conduct, transport assistance will be withdrawn.
- 3.11 Pupils may be excluded from travel and in some circumstances the Police may be involved.
Guidance entitled “Promoting Positive Behaviour by Pupils on Public Transport in South Yorkshire” has been developed by Local Authority Education Transport Officers, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, South Yorkshire Police and Transport Operators and can be accessed at www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/onboard/teachers-and-parents/behaviour-guide/
- 3.12 It is against the law to smoke on buses, coaches, minibuses and in taxis.

Please remember that in the event of serious or persistent misbehaviour, the Local Authority may exclude your child from using school transport or withdraw a zero fare bus pass. Additionally, the bus operator can refuse entry to the vehicle for such pupils.

4 PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES –SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) TRANSPORT

Provision and Conditions

Many secondary aged pupils who have been assessed as requiring transport assistance, other than a zero fare bus pass, will receive support for independence and mobility training as part of their school curriculum. The aim is to reduce their reliance on individual transport in Key Stages 3/4. Plans to encourage independent travel will be considered at the earliest opportunity by the school working in partnership with parents/carers.

- 4.01 Pupils in receipt of transport assistance will have their eligibility re-assessed following a change of address or circumstances, as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance. Dual residence or parents/carers work and family commitments will not be regarded as valid reasons for determining entitlement to transport assistance. A pupil’s home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of the Child Benefit.
- 4.02 Transport assistance may be reviewed on a term-by-term basis. Any recommended changes to a pupil’s transport arrangements will be considered by the Local Authority. Changes, for various reasons, may be necessary during the school term and you will be informed of these as soon as possible. Where individual transport is ceased, pupils may be eligible for a zero fare bus pass, provided they live beyond the statutory walking distance (see section 2).
- 4.03 Pupils issued with a zero fare bus pass will access free transport which will operate

from and to the bus stops nearest to the pupil's home. Parents/Carers should ensure the pupil's safety by making appropriate arrangements for them to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop as appropriate.

- 4.04 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs such as travel to and from work placements, breakfast and after-school clubs, extra curricular activities, transitional transport or any other arrangements they make with a school.
- 4.05 Pupils who are assessed as requiring transport on a coach, minibus or taxi will be picked up and dropped off at named points near their home address. If the pupil is not at the boarding point at the agreed time in the morning, the transport will continue its journey to avoid late arrival at schools. If the pupil is collected from home please ensure they are ready to board the vehicle at the agreed time.
- 4.06 Pupils who attend a residential school (e.g. a term-by-term basis) outside Rotherham, named in their Statement of SEN, will be allocated a maximum of 6 return journeys to/from their place of education. No additional journeys will be funded by the Local Authority.
- 4.07 Some parents/carers may wish to use their own vehicle to transport their child to and from school. They may be entitled to claim a fuel allowance, when no spaces are available on existing transport, or where no contracted transport provision exists. This will only be paid for the journeys **when the eligible child is travelling in the vehicle**. Further information can be obtained from the Transport Assessment Officer (01709 822649).
- 4.08 Any special transport equipment, seating, restraints, or training required due to the pupil's physical, medical or behavioural needs which require supervision during travel will usually be arranged by the Local Authority. In some circumstances, an agreed written individual transport care plan will be required to be signed by the parent/carer before the pupil can travel on any contracted vehicle.
- 4.09 Where a vehicle collects a pupil from the home address, drivers will not usually be expected to leave the vehicle and bring the pupil from the house. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements to accompany their child to and from the designated pick up point, and to see them safely onto and off the vehicle. In exceptional circumstances, agreed by the Local Authority, an escort/driver may assist with movement of the pupil if they are specifically trained to do so.
- 4.10 If your child will not be going to school for any reason, such as illness or holiday, you must inform CTU as soon as possible (01709 334322 or 334325) to prevent unnecessary charges being made (especially if your child travels alone). You must inform the CTU in advance when you need the transport to start again (**please note that 24 hours voicemail is available**).
- 4.11 If your child is due to receive medical treatment which affects their mobility and fitness to travel, you must inform the CTU (01709 334319 or 334325) at least 10 working days in advance so that an updated transport assessment can be undertaken. Your child may be refused transport provision until this assessment has taken place and it is deemed safe for them to travel.

- 4.12 If a pupil is transported in a wheelchair, it is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that this is in good condition and free of defects. This also includes any wheelchair harness. Any defects should be reported and rectified by contacting **Wheelchair Services (01709 302262)** to ensure the safety of the child. Defective equipment will result in transport being stopped as **all** drivers are instructed to refuse to transport pupils with defective wheelchairs.
- 4.13 If your child is due to change their wheelchair or buggy, including seating system, you must inform the Contract Monitoring Officer at least 10 working days in advance (01709 334319). It is important that the correct restraints are used to secure the wheelchair into the vehicle. All drivers are instructed to refuse transport provision for pupils until these changes are made and until it is confirmed safe for the pupil to travel.
- 4.14 If your child has a medical care plan for transport where treatment or equipment is essential for the child's health (e.g. epipen, inhaler, vagal nerve stimulator magnet, suction machine etc) it is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure this is sent with the child. This should always be in date and in good working order otherwise your child will be refused transport by the operator.
- 4.15 Transport Staff will **not** administer medicines unless these are part of the Transport Care Plan and staff have received appropriate training. It is important that such medicines are in date, clearly marked with the pupil's name and the dosage prescribed.
- 4.16 Parents are advised to contact their child's school, to check on their policy for the carriage of items such as letters, money or medicines. Transport staff may agree to transport these but cannot accept responsibility for any loss.
- 4.17 As a parent/carer you must ensure a responsible adult meets the child when they are dropped off by the transport provider. If an emergency occurs which prevents this, the CTU should be informed urgently (01709 334322 or 334325). In the event of a responsible adult not being available to meet the child, the Transport Operator will contact CTU. The pupil will be taken to a place of safety according to the instructions of Children's Social Care, Contact and Referral Team (CART 01709 823987) until they are collected by a responsible adult. Outside normal school transport hours the Social Care Out of Hours Team will be contacted on 01709 336080.
- 4.18 In the event of a pupil exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), they will be excluded from transport. Transport provision will be withdrawn by the Local Authority and parents/carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school.