

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

This Policy includes Learners aged 16-19 years in further education and training and continuing learners with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LLDD) aged 19 and over

Academic year 2023/2024

Department Responsible: Regeneration & Environment, Transport Services, Business & Projects Team, Sandbeck Building, Hellaby Depot, Rotherham S66 8QL

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You can find further details on the internet at <https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/> and look at the information about **Education & Health Care Plans**. Under the **Travel Assistance** section you will find a range of online forms which you can use to make enquires about transport assistance.

"If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us": education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Slovak

Slovensky

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

کوردی سۆرانی

هه‌گهر تۆ یان کهسێک که تۆ ده‌یناسی پێویستی به‌یارمه‌تی هه‌بێت بۆ نه‌وه‌ی لهم به‌لگه‌نامه‌یه‌ تیبگات یان بیخوینێته‌وه‌، تکایه‌ په‌یوه‌ندیمان پێوه‌ بکه‌ له‌سه‌ر نه‌و ژماره‌یه‌ی سه‌ره‌وه‌دا یان به‌و نیمه‌یه‌.

Arabic

عربي

إذا كنت انت أو اي 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 او را می شناسید برای خواندن یا فهمیدن این مدارک نیاز به کمک دارد لطفاً با ما بوسیله شماره بالا یا ایمیل تماس حاصل فرمایید.

☐ Please note that free internet access is available at all our library sites ☐

May 2023

To apply for a new zoom zero travel pass or renew an existing one	Complete the online application/renewal form available here: Find out about free school travel – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
To apply for special educational needs and/or disability transport (ages 0-16)	Search for ‘A Guide to School Transport & Travel’ at A Guide to School Transport and Travel – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and select the online application form under the
To apply for special educational needs and/or disability transport (ages 16-25)	Complete the online application form available here: A Guide to School Transport and Travel – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
To request changes, report concerns or cancel existing transport provision	Complete the online change request form: Cancel or change school transport – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council , or contact the travel planning team to request a change: R&E-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk or Tel: 01709 334322
South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) Traveline/Enquiries	https://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/en-gb/contact/traveline Telephone: <u>01709 515151</u>
Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub	MASH-referral@rotherham.gov.uk Tel. 01709 336080
Other South Yorkshire Local Authorities Barnsley – School Transport Doncaster – Travel Assistance Service Sheffield – Home to School Transport	<u>schooltransport@barnsley.gov.uk</u> <u>transport@doncaster.gov.uk</u> <u>Indetravel@sheffield.gov.uk</u>

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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(4) provides a parent/carer with a defence if he or she proves that the Local Authority has not fulfilled its statutory duty to make suitable arrangements for home to school transport for those that are eligible. 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, and the updated guidance of ‘Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance 2014’ at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>

This Policy also explains what transport arrangements may be available to learners who are over statutory school age and wish to continue their education post 16. Further information regarding Post 16 transport and the guidance to which Local Authorities should regard to are contained within the ‘Post 16 Transport to Education & Training’ 2017 issued by Department for Education.

This Policy explains the criteria used in establishing a learner’s eligibility for transport assistance for those living in the Rotherham Local Authority following a request for this to be provided. You can find further details on the internet at Rotherham SEND Local Offer and look at our Policies, Procedures and Guidance. Here you will find a range of online forms which you can use to make a request for transport assistance.

The 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.

Sensitive information submitted for assessments and reviews will be treated in a confidential manner and may be shared with the transport operator/provider.

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 Transport Services Team to ensure the necessary review is undertaken by emailing:

education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

This Policy remains largely unchanged from the previous version (2022-2023 published May 2023). New Statutory Guidance will be published by Central Government during 2023 meaning that Policy will be subject to a full review with formal consultation being undertaken.

2 SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Rotherham Council has developed a safeguarding policy which explains what safeguarding is, different types of abuse and neglect and actions to take regarding any safeguarding concerns to ensure continued safety and welfare. The Rotherham Corporate Safeguarding Policy can be accessed at the following link: -

<https://moderngov.rotherham.gov.uk/documents/s106259/Appendix%20-%20Corporate%20Safeguarding%20Policy.pdf>

2.1 The Council's Safeguarding Policy is applied to all contracts, with the addition of the following safeguarding requirements that also apply to Home to School Transport contracts:

- Camera equipment, capable of recording both audio and video, must be installed in all vehicles used to transport children as part of any arrangement to which the policy applies. The system must meet or exceed the council's specification for taxi camera systems and must be operational at all times that the vehicle is being used as part of a contracted service.
- Subject to certain exemptions, the driver must not allow a child to be conveyed in the front seat of a vehicle.
- The driver must possess an appropriate BTEC / NVQ level 2 qualification (or equivalent) in a subject relevant to the transport of passengers.
- The driver (and any passenger assistants) must have attended the Council's training course on safeguarding vulnerable passengers.
- The driver and passenger assistant (if relevant) must have ability in English and Maths that meets the required standard.
- The driver must have satisfactorily completed an advance driving skills test to Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) standards (taxi and private hire test).
- Drivers that do not hold a hackney carriage/private hire drivers licence issued by Rotherham MBC are required to obtain an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Disclosure and Barring Service (which must be obtained via Rotherham MBC), and consent to their DVLA driving licence being checked by Rotherham MBC using a third-party organisation if required. Any information that is detailed on the Enhanced Disclosure Certificate and/or the DVLA driving licence will be considered in accordance with Appendix C of the council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing policy – any driver that does not

meet the required standard will be prohibited from working as part of this contract. Drivers and passenger assistants are required to notify the Council of their arrest and/or conviction for any offence – this notification must be received within specified timescales.

- Drivers and passenger assistants that do not hold a hackney carriage/private hire drivers licence issued by Rotherham MBC are required to subscribe to the Disclosure and Barring Service Online Update Service. This will allow the Council to verify that a DBS Certificate remains current.
- Drivers and passenger assistants must adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct When Working with Vulnerable Persons (as specified in Appendix G of the council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing policy).

2.2 The Council will monitor driver/vehicle compliance against these standards and will take swift and robust action should it become apparent that there are areas of non-compliance.

2.3 In addition, the Council will ensure that there are appropriate processes in place to ensure that any concerns regarding any aspect of transport provided as part of Home to School arrangements (can be Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing policy) are referred to the relevant service/agency so that those concerns can be addressed. The Council will provide details of these processes to all those that are involved in the delivery/receipt of a Home to School Transport Service.

2.4 The implementation of the above requirements will ensure that this policy supports the delivery of the Council's Strategic Plan to keep people safe when using licensed vehicles in Rotherham. Additional requirements may be introduced should circumstances require this – appropriate communication will take place with all those affected by any amendments to the requirements outlined above.

3 TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE AND ELIGIBILITY

Transport assistance may consist of these options: -

- A zoom zero travel pass (formerly known as a zero fare bus pass) which entitles a pupil to free bus travel between the nearest bus stop to their home address and their registered school base.
- Refunded travelling expenses according to the cheapest available public transport route for those pupils able to access public transport services.
- Personal Travel Budgets are a distance calculation based in accordance with the Council's current rate, for pupils requiring special arrangements. These can be considered as a suitable transport option provided that the arrangement makes financial sense to the Local Authority.
- Refunded travelling expenses based on a distance calculation in accordance with the Council's current rate, where a personal transport budget is not suitable.
- Independent Travel Training for Learners aged 14+.
- Free or subsidised travel on a coach, minibus, taxi or specially adapted vehicle if the pupil is unable to travel by public transport due to the distance, their mobility, or effect of their complex special educational needs (see section 3.09).

Eligibility to Free Transport Assistance – Mainstream

3.01 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 year's 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 year's provision. The bus operator may charge the concessionary fare to a child under the age of 5 years if they are travelling with an older child paying a concessionary fare.

3.02 Pupils aged 5-7 years

For pupils aged 5, but less than 8 (on 1st September) attending their nearest available qualifying school or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, free transport assistance (usually a zoom zero travel 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). For pupils with a zoom zero travel pass 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.

3.03 Pupils aged 8-16 years

For pupils aged 8-16 (on 1st September) attending their nearest available qualifying school or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, free transport assistance (usually a zoom zero travel 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). For pupils with a zoom zero travel pass 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 stops and during the journey.

The distances of 'more than 2 miles' or 'more than 3 miles' referred to above are 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 (see section 3.07v for more details).

3.04 Pupils aged 16-19 years

For pupils aged 16-19 (on 1st September) who wish to continue their education please refer to Section 8, Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years in further education, for details.

3.05 Pupils attending denominational (faith) schools

Free transport assistance to denominational (faith) schools was historically provided on a discretionary basis to pupils meeting the distance criteria. However, there is no statutory duty to provide it except for eligible secondary aged pupils from low-income families. Changes to Policy were made in September 2013. From this date only new applications for secondary aged denominational (faith) pupils who qualify under low-income criteria will receive free transport assistance (see section 3.08).

If individual circumstances change, e.g., a change of address or school, pupils will need to be re-assessed for entitlement and free transport assistance may be withdrawn for those pupils no longer qualifying.

3.06 Pupils not attending their nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school 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 free transport assistance where the school attended is the nearest available qualifying school*, or any alternative catchment school 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 available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, will not be provided with free transport assistance, regardless of the distance involved, unless low-income criteria apply (see section 3.08).

- i) The ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any pupil during the journey to or from school rests with parents/carers.

3.07 Exceptions

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

- i) A zoom zero travel pass may be given to pupils who attend a school outside Rotherham Local Authority, providing that it is the nearest available 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), travel assistance may be allocated.
- iii) Pupils from low-income families (see Section 3.08).
- iv) A pupil attending their nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, who has a temporary medical condition affecting their mobility may be provided with free transport assistance.

Parents/Carers who wish to request such assistance should apply online, and must include supporting formal medical evidence with their application, enquires should be made to the Transport Business & Projects Team:

education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

- v) Consideration for providing a zoom zero travel pass for pupils attending their nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school 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 Great Britain in the ‘Assessment of Walked Routes to School’ guidelines. These criteria and assessments are common to all the South Yorkshire Authorities. A zoom zero travel 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. For further details please visit: Road Safety information for Parents and Teachers – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.
- vi) There is no suggestion that a pupil is required to walk to school. The availability of a suitable walking route is the assessment criteria which has to be applied in accordance with Statutory Guidance.
- vii) Transport assistance may be available for some pupils whose parents/carers have disabilities. These disabilities may include dual sensory impairment or physical difficulties. 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 may be considered.

3.08 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 zoom zero travel pass) on condition that:

- i) Pupils aged 8 to 10 years attending their nearest available qualifying school (unless an alternative available school has been determined by the Local Authority) where the distance between home and school is more than 2 miles.
- ii) Pupils aged 11 to 16 years attending any 1 of their 3 nearest available 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 available denominational (faith) 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 in Section 3.08 are measured as:

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

walking route.

- From 2 miles up to the 6 mile or the 15 mile upper limits – along road routes passable by suitable motorised transport.

To make an application for free school meals please see the Council's website:

<https://www.rotherham.gov.uk/benefits/apply-free-school-meals/1>

To make an application for Working Tax Credit, please contact the Tax Credit Helpline on: Tel. 0345 300 3900. NGT text relay for anyone who has communication difficulties on the phone: dial 18001 then 0345 300 3900.

3.09 Eligibility to free transport assistance – Pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)

Pupils under the age of 5 years

Parents/Carers are usually required to take children under the age of 5 to their early year's 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 is currently 80p per journey but if families qualify under low-income criteria (see section 3.08) then no charges will be applied.

Pupils aged 5 to 16 years

Pupils with an EHCP or SEND will have their individual transport needs assessed against the Home to School Assessment Matrix criteria considering the distance, their age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel. This may include: -

- Mobility
- Medical
- Behavioural
- Vulnerability
- Practicality and:
- Training

Under the provisions of paragraph 3 of Schedule 27 to the Education Act 1996, parents/carers may express a preference for a child with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of SEN to attend a school which is not the nearest suitable school identified by the Local Authority.

The parents' or young person's preferred school might be further away from their home than the nearest school that can meet the child's SEN. In such a case, the local authority can name the nearer school if it considers it to be appropriate for meeting the child's SEN. If the parents prefer the school or college that is further away, the local authority may agree to this but is able to ask the parents to provide some or all of the transport funding (paragraph 9.214 of the SEND Code of Practice).

3.10 Disabled Person's Pass

A Disabled Person's Pass may be available to some Rotherham residents following assessment of qualification and allows free travel on buses, trams and trains within South Yorkshire and some cross boundary services. Severely disabled children who cannot travel alone may qualify for a disability pass and a care giver may also qualify for one so they can travel with them free of charge. More details are available on the Council's website www.rotherham.gov.uk search for Disabled Person's Pass/Apply for a Travel Pass. Applications may be made at any library or contact service centre. Further details are also available on the Travel South Yorkshire website www.travelsouthyorkshire.com

SEND 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.

SEND Pupils in Public Care

When a young person becomes a Looked After Child (LAC) by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) they may become eligible for transport assistance. This may also include transport to other destinations as appropriate. We would expect the young person to use public transport unless they are too young to travel alone or there are specific risks or concerns. When age or risk prohibits independent travel there is an expectation that the carers or known professionals transport them.

Young people in the care of RMBC under the age of 16, who have an EHCP may continue to receive transport assistance provided, as specified in Section 5. This will be subject to assessment and approval.

A LAC who is the financial responsibility of another Local Authority needs to contact their Authority for their transport requirements.

4. PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES - MAINSTREAM TRANSPORT

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

- 4.01 A pupil's home address is considered to be the one that is in receipt of Child Benefit and is based within the Rotherham Borough. 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.

- 4.02 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.
- 4.03 Pupils who have qualified for a zoom zero travel pass (see section 3) will continue to be assessed and reviewed each school year.
- 4.05 Where it is not possible for pupils to travel by public transport, the Local Authority may consider other arrangements.
- 4.06 Secondary aged pupils who do not qualify for free transport assistance need to obtain a concessionary fare pass issued by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYLTE). The Zoom Under 16 Travel Pass (proof of age) 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.
- 4.07 Pupils attending a school in Rotherham, but who live outside the Rotherham Authority's boundary, must apply to their home Local Authority for advice and guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>.
- 4.08 It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs including travel to and from work placements, breakfast and after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities, transitional travel, or any other arrangements they make with the school including provision at an alternative site.
- 4.09 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.
- 4.10 Parents/Carers are expected to explain to their child that it is important to maintain positive behaviour while they are travelling on transport. Parents/Carers who have a zoom zero fare pass sign to accept the Code of Conduct that the pupil will follow. If a pupil persistently endangers their own safety, or that of others, by not following this Code of Conduct, transport assistance will be withdrawn. Further information can be found by visiting: www.travelsouthyorkshire.com.
- 4.11 In the event of a pupil exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), the Local Authority may exclude your child from using school transport or withdraw a Zoom Zero Travel Pass. Additionally, the bus operator can refuse entry to the vehicle for such pupils and in some circumstances the Police may be involved. Parents/Carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school.

Guidance on 'Promoting Positive Behaviour by Pupils on Public Transport in South Yorkshire' has been developed by Local Authority Education Transport Officers, SYLTE, South Yorkshire Police and Transport Operators. Further details can be found by visiting: https://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/getmedia/2a6143cd-39bc-4219-85a1-f6eb9ea8c0b9/3737_BEHAVIOUR-GUIDE_V2-

5. PARENTS/CARERS GUIDELINES - PUPILS WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP) OR A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND) TRANSPORT

Pupils who have been assessed as requiring transport assistance, other than a zoom zero travel pass, may receive support for independence and mobility training. The aim is to reduce their reliance on individual transport and to develop independent travel skills.

- 5.01 Pupils in receipt of transport assistance must 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.
- 5.02 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, including provision at an alternative site. Additional transport requests to attend exams may not be provided. Usual transport operations will remain in place for the child/young person during exam periods. It is an expectation that educational establishments will work with children/young people and families to support attendance for exams and use existing transport arrangements.
- 5.03 Transport assistance should be reviewed on an annual basis, or when a pupil transitions into a new key stage in their education. Any recommended changes to a pupil's transport arrangements will be considered by the Council. 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 zoom zero travel pass or a disabled person's pass.
- 5.04 Pupils issued with such a 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 stops as appropriate.
- 5.05 Pupils who are assessed as requiring transport on a coach, minibus or taxi will be collected and returned 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 supervised to board the vehicle at the agreed time.
- 5.06 Pupils who attend a residential school (e.g., a term-by-term basis) outside Rotherham named in their EHCP or 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 Council.
- 5.07 Some parents/carers may choose to use their own vehicle to transport their child/children to and from schools. They may be entitled to a parental payment if there are no spaces available on existing transport for the eligible traveller, or where

no contracted transport provision exists. Further information can be obtained by contacting: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk.

- 5.08 Any extra 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 Council. 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.
- 5.10 If your child will be absent from school for any reason, such as illness or holiday, you must inform the Travel Planning Team (TPT) as soon as possible to prevent unnecessary charges being made (especially if your child travels alone). You **must** inform the Travel Planning Team in advance when you need the transport to start again (**please note that 24 hours voicemail is available on 01709 334322**) SMS (Text message Service, incoming only) on **078600 18829** or via email: R&E-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk.
- 5.11 If your child is due to receive medical treatment which affects their mobility and fitness to travel, you must inform the Travel Planning Team at: R&E-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk 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 again. Contact details are provided above.
- 5.12 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, including any wheelchair harness. Any defects should be reported and rectified urgently to ensure the safety of the child by contacting Wheelchair Services at Rotherham.wheelchairs@rothgen.nhs.uk
Defective equipment will result in transport being stopped as **all** drivers are instructed to refuse to transport pupils with defective wheelchairs.

- 5.13 If your child is due to change a wheelchair or buggy, including seating system, you must inform the Contract Monitoring Officer at least 10 working days in advance at **R&E-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk**. 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 if changes are made until it is confirmed safe for the pupil to travel again.
- 5.14 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 driver or passenger assistant.
- 5.15 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 identified with the pupil's name, date of birth and the dosage prescribed.
- 5.16 Parents/Carers are advised to contact their child's school, to discuss the transfer of items such as letters, money or common medicines. Transport staff may be able to agree to carry these but cannot accept responsibility.
- 5.17 As a parent/carer you must ensure that a responsible adult meets the child when they are dropped off by the transport provider. If an emergency occurs which prevents this, the Travel Planning Team should be informed **urgently** (Tel. 01709 334322). In the event of a responsible adult not being available, the transport operator will contact the Travel Planning Team. If the issue cannot be resolved the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) (Tel. 01709 336080) will be informed and the child may be taken to a place of safety until they are collected by a responsible adult.
- 5.18 In the event of a pupil exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), the Local Authority may withdraw their transport provision. Parents/Carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child attends school.
- 5.19 Where transport support is provided, no variation can be made to the journey without the prior consent of the Council

Please visit **www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org** for further information.

6. PERSONAL TRANSPORT BUDGETS

A personal transport budget (PTB) may be provided where requested, to parents/carers for children/young people who are eligible for transport assistance. This will enable families to

make their own arrangements to achieve the best travel arrangements for their child/young person instead of relying on the traditional services that are currently provided which may not always be the most suitable transport option. Parents/Carers will need to ensure that the child/young person can travel to and from their educational establishment on time and that the arrangement does not negatively affect their ability to access educational provision.

- 6.1 All requests for a PTB are subject to an assessment of suitability by the Local Authority and a formal agreement of acceptance by the eligible child/young person's parent/carer.
- 6.2 A PTB arrangement can be withdrawn by the Local Authority or parent/carer at any time, providing appropriate notice is given to allow an alternative transport option to be put in place.

7. INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING

Pupils aged 14+ and who have been assessed as requiring transport assistance may receive support for independent travel training to enable them to travel independently. Each personalised programme will ensure that children/young people will be fully trained to carry out their journey from their home address to their place of education. It will also improve their ability to access social and leisure activities and reduce their reliance on individual transport which is not available during weekends, evenings and school holidays.

8. TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENT FOR LEARNERS AGED 16-19 YEARS IN FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND CONTINUING LEARNERS WITH A LEARNING DIFFICULTY AND/OR DISABILITY (LLDD) AGED 19 AND OVER

Summary of policy statements and main objectives

- 8.1 There is no automatic entitlement to free home to school or college transport once a learner is over 16 years and beyond statutory school age. Responsibility for making appropriate transport arrangements rests with the learner and/or parents/carers.
- 8.2 Providing assisted transport (e.g., taxis, specially adapted vehicles) will only be given for learners with special educational needs and disabilities who have had their needs assessed against set criteria including distance, age, mobility and the effect of their complex needs on their ability to travel, compared to their peer group. This may include:
 - Communication and Interaction Difficulties
 - Cognition and Learning Difficulties
 - Specific Learning Difficulties
 - Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties
 - Sensory and/or Physical Needs which severely restricts mobility

- 8.3 Learners with special educational needs, and disabilities, who have received transport assistance and are moving from statutory education (Y11) to further education, will need to have their transport needs reassessed when they apply for transport provision. This is to ensure that any assistance offered is suitable to meet those needs. Continuing post 16 learners will also have their transport needs reviewed at least on an annual basis.
- 8.4 Learners must be permanently resident within the Rotherham Borough.
- 8.5 This policy outlines what transport support is available when starting a full time (over 12 guided learning hours per week) further education course up to the age of 19 and those learners aged 19 and over with a learning difficulty and/or disability.
- 8.6 This policy covers the statutory duties of the Local Authority under Section 509AA of the Education Act 1996 and subsequent amendments. It only applies to residents of the Rotherham Borough area. Further information can be obtained by visiting www.gov.uk
- 9. CONCESSIONARY FARES, DISCOUNTS, SUBSIDIES, PASSES OR TRAVEL CARDS AVAILABLE FOR POST 16 LEARNERS IN COLLEGES, SIXTH FORMS AND AT SOME TRAINING PROVIDERS**

The following passes and tickets are the most appropriate for those using public transport to access education and training:

- **Zoom 16-18 Travel Pass**

This pass is available to all South Yorkshire residents and have reached the age of 16 but haven't reached the age of 18 on 1st September of the current academic year. It entitles the traveller to travel for the concessionary fare of 80p per journey on all buses and trams and for half adult fare on trains within South Yorkshire. To apply, please visit <https://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/en-GB/LandingPage/Zoom-16-18-Pass> (creating a MyTSY account if the child/young person doesn't have one already).

With a Zoom 16-18 additional discounted tickets can be purchased for periods ranging from one day to four weeks.

Individual enquires can be made by contacting **Traveline on 01709 515151**.

- **18-22 Discount Card**

This card gives a 15% discount on TravelMaster daily, weekly and four-weekly tickets bought online. An account will firstly need to be made with TravelMaster. Once an account has been set up, an application can be made online at: <https://www.sytravelmaster.com/18-22discountcard>

- **Zoom Beyond 18-21 Travel Pass**

This pass is available to all South Yorkshire residents who are attending who are aged between 18 and 21. Further details can be found here:

<https://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/en-gb/ticketsandpasses/18-21-pass>

- **Zoom Zero Travel Pass – Private Purchase**

The Zoom Zero Travel Pass provides free travel between home and college within the South Yorkshire boundary. The family of the young person would have to make a private purchase for a pass so although it doesn't represent a saving compared to paying on the bus every day, it can be a more convenient to buy the pass rather than having to find change every day. details can be found here:

www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/en-GB/LandingPage/Zoom-Zero-Fare-private-purchase

Further details on all of the above passes and tickets, including operators' tickets, are available on the Travel South Yorkshire website. Other saver ticket options are also available so please visit www.travelsouthyorkshire.com

10. SUPPORT FOR POST 16 LEARNERS WITH EDUCATION, HEALTH & CARE PLANS (EHCP) OR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

A Disabled Person's Pass may be available to some Rotherham residents who are over the age of 16 following assessment. Please refer to Section 3.10 of this policy.

Those unable to take advantage of the above Disabled Person's Pass should contact student services at their chosen college or school sixth form.

All learners with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) should have their transport needs reassessed when they move from compulsory schooling to post 16 education. This is in accordance with the Post 16 Transport to Education and Training Statutory Guidance for Local authorities:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-transport-to-education-and-training

10.1 Post 16 learners will be aged between 16 and 18 years at the start of the academic year (i.e., September) and those continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday.

10.2 Post 16 learners are expected to take advantage of the concessionary fare schemes so they can access public transport for their daily travel to and from school/college in and around the Rotherham Borough. The following learners will, however, be considered for transport assistance under this policy:

- Consideration will be given to learners who have communication and interaction difficulties, cognition and learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties, social,

emotional and mental health difficulties, sensory and/or physical needs which affect their ability to travel.

- The distance between home and school or college, offering a suitable course, must exceed 3 miles by the shortest available walking route. This may be disregarded where learners require assisted transport as a result of their learning difficulty and/or disability.

10.3 Young people will be engaged in learning or training at:

- A school (including academies)
- A further education institution
- An Authority maintained or assisted institution providing further education
- An establishment funded directly by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) e.g., independent specialist providers for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- A learning provider that is funded by the local authority to deliver accredited programmes of learning (this could include colleges, charities and private learning providers)

10.4 Learners are encouraged to attend courses within the Rotherham Borough. Specific details of the course and reasons for choice will need to be given in order that an assessment can be made, having due regard to the efficient and effective use of resources.

10.5 The Council supports the principle of young people having a reasonable opportunity to choose between the courses available to learners at post 16 and be supported to access their choices.

10.6 Reasonable choice will include enabling young people to choose courses outside the Rotherham boundaries if it makes sense for them to do so. The Council will be mindful of our neighbouring local authorities transport policies and consider how this transport policy can support movement across boundaries (i.e., South Yorkshire).

10.7 Reasonable choice will also include enabling young people to choose an establishment of education that is not the closest to where they live, if it makes sense to do so.

10.8 The following information will also be required to support the learner's application for assistance:

- Recent medical evidence from a GP, Consultant, specialist service or other qualified person, which is no more than 3 months old.
- Supporting evidence/recommendation from Education, Health and Care Assessment Team.

Please be aware that failure to provide all the evidence may result in a delay in your application being processed or your application being refused.

11. How will Post 16 learners be assessed for assistance?

11.1 Learners are expected to take advantage of the concessionary travel arrangements available. However, if a learner can demonstrate they have exceptional circumstances as to why additional assistance may be required, then the appropriate transport application form should be completed. This form is available online on the Council Website:

Transport assistance for children and young people with additional needs – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

11.2 Completion of the transport application form does not mean learners are eligible for transport assistance. The form is an application for transport in order that the Council can undertake an assessment.

11.3 The Council will consider the enquiry and make a determination of whether the learner qualifies for transport and what suitable transport provision will be required. Each case will be assessed individually and will depend upon their particular needs and circumstances. (See section 8.2 for qualifying categories). Those learners with an EHCP who are vulnerable to becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the age of 16 or 17, or who have already become NEET; should be offered a suitable course of education or training and may be provided with transport assistance that may be necessary to enable them to participate.

11.4 Where assisted transport has been recommended, this may be provided as any of the following:

- A zoom zero travel pass which entitles the learner to free bus travel between the nearest bus stop to their home address and their registered school base.
- Refunded travelling expenses according to the cheapest available public transport route for those learners able to access public transport services.
- Personal Transport Budgets based on a distance calculation in accordance with the Council's current rate, for learners requiring special arrangements, provided that the arrangement makes financial sense to the Local Authority.
- Refunded travelling expenses based on a distance calculation in accordance with the Council's current rate, where a personal transport budget is not suitable.
- Independent Travel Training.
- Free or subsidised travel on a coach, minibuss, taxi or specially adapted vehicle if the learner is unable to travel by public transport due to their mobility, or effect of their complex special educational needs. A learner will normally be expected to share a vehicle with other or students, subject to any social distancing measures which may be in place.

Parents/carers will be required to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the transport provided. See section 13 for further details.

- 11.5 Approval for transport assistance will usually be for the academic year only. Each case should be reviewed annually in time for the start of the next academic year to ensure the arrangements are still appropriate. If there are any changes to individual circumstances prior to this, such as change of address, change in needs as referred to in section 8.2 of this policy, or if the learner is able to walk, cycle or drive to school/college, it is the responsibility of the learner and/or parents/carers to inform the Council to ensure the necessary review is undertaken.
- 11.6 Transport is usually only provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day. The Council will not fund any additional transport required during the day, transport to alternative sites, work placement transport, induction visits and enrolment days (see section 11.7 for more details). Additional transport to attend exams may not be provided. Usual transport operations will remain in place for the learner during exam periods. It is an expectation that educational establishments will work with the learner and their families to support attendance for exams and use existing transport arrangements.
- 11.7 The Local Authority will not provide transport assistance for learners who are required to attend induction visits at college during the first week of the new academic year. It is expected that families will make their own transport arrangements until the learner has received a confirmed timetable from college and a copy has been provided to the Transport Services Team.
- 11.8 Where transport support is provided, no variation can be made to the journey without the prior consent of the Council.
- 11.9 Learners who are in receipt of transport support and subsequently fail to attend school or college, without a valid reason, may have their transport support suspended or withdrawn.

12. APPRENTICESHIPS/TRAINEESHIPS

Transport assistance is not provided to learners undertaking work placements, apprenticeships or traineeships. In these circumstances learners are advised to contact their employer or learning provider for advice.

13. CHARGES FOR TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE

- 13.1 Charges apply to all post 16 learners where they require help in travelling to school or college regardless of whether they are living in the parental home or sheltered/residential accommodation.

13.2 Learners and/or parents/carers will be notified of the charges in advance of the travel arrangements and usually invoiced as soon as possible before the start of each term. These charges **must** be paid immediately so that transport arrangements can be made. Every opportunity will, however, be given for learners and/or parents/carers to pay the charges by smaller, more manageable, payments suitable to the learner and/or parent/carer if requested.

13.3 Where it has been agreed to provide transport assistance within the Rotherham Borough, learners and/or their parents/carers will be charged on a termly basis (i.e., 3 invoices per year will be sent, usually before the start of each term) based on the current cost of the concessionary student fare of 80p per journey, and school term dates. The approximate costs per school terms 2022-2023 are as follows:

Autumn term 2023 (Sep – Dec) 15 weeks @ £8.00* per week = £120
Spring term 2024 (Jan-Mar) 12 weeks @ £8.00* per week = £96
Summer term 2024 (Apr-July) 12 weeks @ £8.00* per week = £96
Charges are based on one return bus journey per day at £1.60

**This can be subject to change. Charges will depend on school/college actual term dates, actual number of days per week students attend school/college and the current cost of available concessionary fares.*

13.4 Where it has been agreed to provide transport assistance to provision outside the Rotherham Borough, learners and/or parents/carers will be charged with 3 invoices per year usually before the start of each term based on the current cost of the concessionary student fare of 80p per journey, and school term dates. The approximate costs per school terms 2022-2023 are as follows:

Autumn term 2023 (Sep-Dec) 15 weeks @ £16.00* per week = £240
Spring term 2024 (Jan-Mar) 12 weeks @ £16.00* per week = £192
Summer term 2024 (Apr-July) 12 weeks @ £16.00* per week = £192
Charges are based on four bus journeys (2 return journeys) per day at £3.20**

**This can be subject to change. Charges will depend on school/college actual term dates, actual number of days per week students attend school/college and the current cost of available concessionary fares.*

***The journey to some learning providers may require more than one bus journey each way.*

13.5 Refunds of transport costs cannot be made for occasional day's absence. If, however, the learner is absent for a full week (e.g., due to illness/holiday) then refunds will be considered upon receipt of confirmation of attendance details from the school/college.

13.6 Where the learner and/or parents/carers during the course of the academic year fail to make payments or make a reasonable contribution towards their assisted transport, engage with the Council's Sundry Accounts Team to secure a manageable payment plan, or submit an appeal, then the learner may have their assisted transport withdrawn. This action will only be taken as a last resort after all other options have been explored.

14. FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

16 to 19 Student Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Student Bursary Fund is designed to help support those young people who face the greatest barriers to continuing in education or training post 16. If the learner is aged between 16 and 19 years and think they may struggle with the costs for full-time education or training, they may be eligible for a bursary. This can be used to assist with transport costs.

Students in the following groups may receive the maximum bursary of £1,200 a year:

- young people in care
- care leavers
- young people claiming income support in their own name
- disabled young people who receive both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in their own name.

To receive the maximum bursary the course must last for 30 weeks or more. If the course is shorter than 30 weeks, the student may receive less funds.

Other students facing genuine financial difficulties may be awarded a bursary at the discretion of their school, college or training provider.

Further information can be obtained directly from the learner's school or college on how to apply for a bursary.

Full details of the bursary scheme are available on the Directgov website at:
www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund.

- 14.1 Families experiencing financial hardship (low-income families or learners) can apply to have the transport charges waived. However, consideration will be given as to whether or not the learner has applied for, or is in receipt of, an allocation from the 16-19 bursary fund from the learning provider.
- 14.2 Eligibility for help with transport to school/college is not dependent on means testing, but a means test will be used to determine whether the contribution towards the transport costs should be waived for low-income families. The Transport Policy Statement for Learners aged 16-19 years in Further Education, uses the low-income eligibility criteria as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006, e.g.: Free School Meals eligibility or being in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit. Written evidence of these benefits will be requested by the Council and where evidence has not been provided (or is not relevant to the period in which transport is being provided) charges will be issued.

15. RAISING THE PARTICIPATION AGE

From 2015, all young people up until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18 are required to participate in education or training. There is no change to the statutory school age which remains at 5 to 16 years.

This change did not extend the entitlement for the provision of free transport assistance beyond Y11, as it does not mean that the learner must stay at school. They may choose to work full time and study part time, continue full time study at school or college, be involved in part time training whilst volunteering or follow an apprenticeship.

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>.

This continues to mean that transport will only be allocated to learners who qualify under the criteria as set out in Section 8.2.

16. 19 – 25 LEARNERS

Learners who are aged 19-25 and have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) should contact their education provider to discuss the possibility of transport assistance.

If the learner is continuing a course they started aged 16 – 18 they are known as a 19+ learner and may be entitled to an allocation from the discretionary element of the 16-19 Student Bursary fund. (Section 14). The education provider will be able to provide more details on entitlement and application.

17. CARE TO LEARN

The Care to Learn scheme can help young parents with childcare costs to continue in, and return to, education after the birth of a child.

The learner must be aged under 20 at the start of their course.

The scheme is available for publicly funded courses in England which includes courses in:

- Schools
- Sixth forms in schools
- Sixth-form colleges

The learner may receive up to £160 per week to help with:

- Childcare, including deposit and registration fees
- A childcare taster session for up to 5 days

- Keeping a childcare place over the summer holidays
- Taking the child to their childcare provider

Childcare payments are paid directly to the learner's childcare provider, and before they are paid

- The learner's childcare provider needs to confirm the child's attendance
- The learner's school or college need to confirm that the learner is attending their course

Travel payments will be paid directly to the learner's school or college and the learner who should then assist with the learner's transport arrangements.

Further Information on C2L can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn>

Applications for C2L funding can be made online via the Student Bursary Support Service portal. This can be found at:
<https://studentbursary.education.gov.uk/w/webpage/student-bursary>

18. APPEALS PROCESS AGAINST THE LOCAL AUTHORITY'S REFUSAL TO PROVIDE TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE

The decision regarding refusal of free home to school transport assistance is based upon information available to officers at the time of the assessment. Parents/Carers have the right to appeal against the Local Authority's decision not to provide transport assistance if they feel that an error has been made in the assessment of the entitlement, distance measurement, route safety or there are exceptional circumstances that breach this Policy.

18.1 Appeal Timings

The Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance - July 2014 issued by the Department of Education, recommends the timings of Appeals procedures. These are recommended timings and not compulsory, but every effort will be made to meet these.

Stage 1 Appeal Review

Parents/Carers must, in writing, within 20 working days of the original decision, request a review of the original decision which will be undertaken by a Senior Officer (**Stage 1 Review**). Requests to appeal should be made in writing to education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk Parents/Carers will be provided with a notice of appeal form, which must be completed and returned within 20 working days. This should be accompanied by any other relevant evidence or medical reports that the parent/carer intends to rely upon. All evidence provided, together with a statement of appeal explaining the reasons for the original decision will be submitted to the Senior Officer for consideration.

Following the Stage 1 review the Senior Officer will respond in writing, within 20 working

days of receipt of the parental request and receipt of the completed Notice of Appeal, either upholding or overturning the original decision. This will explain the reasons for the review decision and unless the original decision is overturned, offer the parent/carer the opportunity to escalate their appeal to be heard by an independent panel (**Stage 2 Appeal Review**).

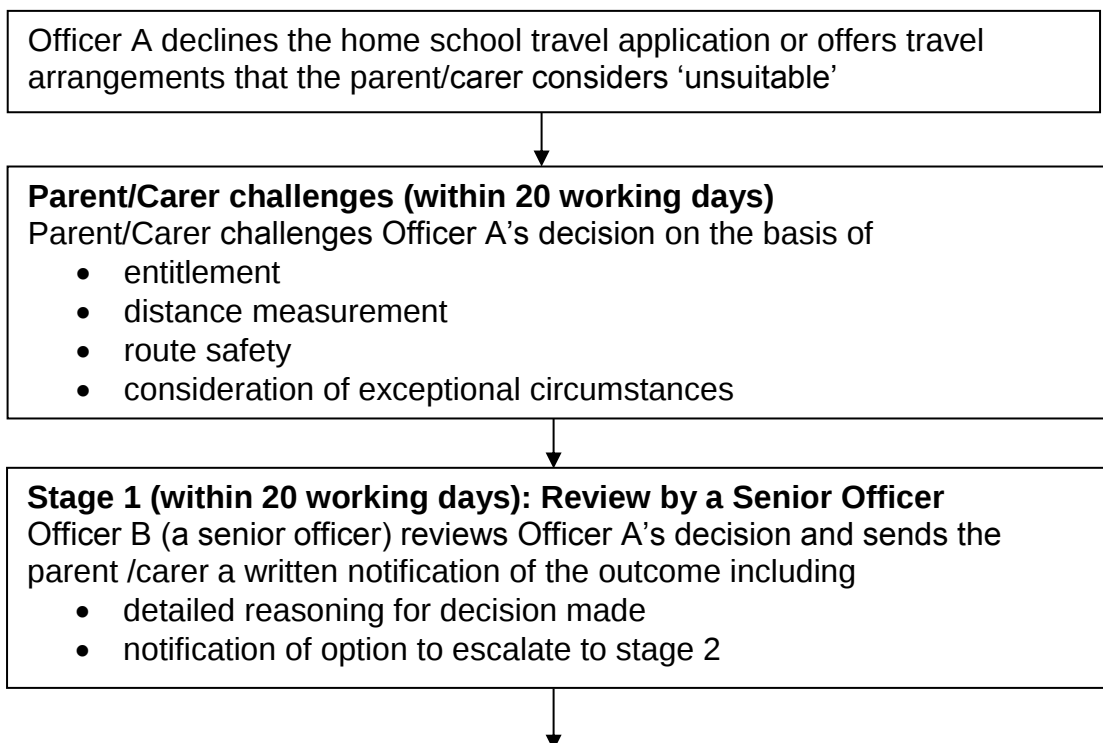
Stage 2 Appeal Review

Parents/Carers must confirm in writing their request for the appeal review to progress to Stage 2 within 20 working days of the letter confirming the outcome of the Stage 1 Appeal Review. Upon receipt, a statement of appeal will be prepared, and all evidence submitted to an independent panel which has had no involvement in either of the previous decisions. The independent panel will review the previous decisions and the parental grounds for appeal within 40 working days. The outcome will be communicated to the parent/carer in writing within 5 working days of the panel hearing by the Council.

A Stage 1 or Stage 2 decision 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.

If there is a change in individual circumstances during the academic year, such as change of address or mobility needs, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Passenger Services Team to ensure a review is undertaken by e-mailing: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk.

FLOWCHART OF THE APPEALS PROCESS



Parent/Carer challenges (within 20 working days)

Parent/Carer challenges officer B's (the senior officer) decision



Stage 2 (within 40 working days): Review by an Appeal Panel

Independent appeal panel (officer A or B must not sit on panel) considers written/verbal representations from parent/carers. The appeal panel is independent of the Stage 1 process and suitably experienced.



A decision letter is sent to parent/carers (within 5 working days), including how to escalate the case to Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). Parents/Carers may contact the LGO if they feel that the Local Authority's procedures have not been followed.