


REPORT AUDIT TRAIL				
<b>CONSULTATION</b> <i>This is important as it shows that consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of the report and provides a quick reference point for specific comments, whilst the report will not be publishable if these areas have not been completed by the named persons below. <b>You must liaise with and receive sign off from the relevant Cabinet Member(s).</b></i>				
Name/Position	Portfolio/Ward/ Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in para:
Councillor Victoria Cusworth	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	24/04/25	24/04/25	Minor amendments to policy approved.
Andrew Bramidge	Assistant Chief Executive/ Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment	29/04/25	Click here to enter a date.	
Chloe Parker, Finance	Finance and Customer Services	24/04/25	24/04/25	No financial implications from the recommendations.
Michele Scales, Legal Services	Legal Services	24/04/25	24/04/25	Legal implications - we have reviewed the policy and have no issue with the proposed minor amendments.
Rebecca Price, Human Resources	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	24/04/25	24/04/25	No HR implications from the recommendations.
Karen Middlebrook, Procurement	Finance and Customer Services	24/04/25	28/04/25	The procurement implications as drafted are appropriate for use in this instance, and therefore I am happy to sign off.
Simon Dennis, Equalities	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	24/04/25	24/04/25	Approved.
Other officers below, Arthur King	Principal Climate Change Officer	25/04/25	28/04/25	Approved. 11.1 – 11.3 CIA reference 456

<b><u>REPORT APPROVAL TRACKING</u></b>			
<b>Equalities</b> Your report will not be authorised for submission to Cabinet by your Strategic Director if you have not undertaken and included an initial equalities screening. All equalities analysis documents should be included as appendices	<b>Initial Screening completed and included with report</b>	YES	28/04/2025
	<b>Full Assessment completed and included with report</b>	YES	28/04/2025
<b>Carbon Impact Assessments</b> Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports. Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to <a href="mailto:climate@rotherham.gov.uk">climate@rotherham.gov.uk</a> for feedback prior to your report being sent to your Strategic Director for approval.	Carbon Impact Assessment completed and included with report.	YES	28/04/2025
<b>Background information</b> <b><u>MANDATORY:</u></b> Insert headings for a few main <b><u>public</u></b> documents you have used or referenced to write this report. This is a legal requirement. For Cabinet reports, <b><u>insert hyperlinks</u></b> . Do not list private documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Families Act 2014</li> <li>• Travel to school for children of compulsory school age Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2024</li> <li>• Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training Statutory guidance for local authorities January 2019</li> <li>• Rotherham SEND Local Offer</li> <li>• Flexible working for parents and carers of disabled children - Working Families Flexible working and the right to request - Working Families</li> <li>• Rotherham MBC Corporate Safeguarding Policy [children, young people and adults]</li> <li>• Taxi and private hire licensing – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</li> <li>• <a href="https://roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/road-safety-gb-publishes-updated-walked-routes-to-school-guidelines-2105/">roadsafetygb.org.uk/news/road-safety-gb-publishes-updated-walked-routes-to-school-guidelines-2105/</a></li> <li>• Road Safety information for Parents and Teachers – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</li> <li>• 3737_BEHAVIOUR GUIDE_V2.indd Public Transport</li> <li>• 35693_Zoom Zero Pass_code of conduct.indd</li> </ul>		

<b>Appendices</b> If appendices are essential to the understanding of the report, list titles here. Ensure that appendices have proper titles. List any appendices relevant to the decision being taken first with the Equality Analysis documents coming next and the Carbon Impact Assessment being listed as the last Appendix for all reports.	Appendix 1 <i>Revised Home to school Transport Policy 2025</i> Appendix 2 <i>Initial Equality Screening</i> Appendix 3 <i>Equality Analysis</i> Appendix 4 <i>Carbon Impact Assessment</i>	
<b>Cabinet Member Approval</b> You should retain an email confirming the Cabinet Member approval for your records. Strategic Directors should not authorise reports unless Cabinet Members have given sign off	 Changes to HtST Policy for April 2025. YES	29/04/25
<b>Report Authorised by Strategic Director</b>	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.
<b>Report Authorised for publication by Chief Executive</b>	YES/NO (delete as appropriate)	Click here to enter a date.

Select report type  
Delegated Officer Decision

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Delegated Officer Decision – Click here to enter a date.

**Report Title**

Home to school Transport Policy Academic year 2025/2026

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Strategic Director approving submission of the Report**

Andrew Bramidge

**Report Author(s)**

Name, Elise Saxton  
01709 822649 or elise.saxton@rotherham.gov.uk

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

The Home to School Transport Policy is based on statutory guidelines issued by the Department for Education (DfE) which stipulate local authorities' responsibilities when making home to school travel arrangements for children of compulsory school age.

The local authority must publish a transport policy statement on or before 31 May each year. The statement must include the details of the transport arrangements and the details of the financial support in respect of reasonable travelling expenses that the local authority considers it necessary to make to facilitate access to education or training for learners of sixth form age for the following academic year.

The Post 16 transport requirements are contained within the current Home to school transport policy, so there is a requirement for the policy to be reviewed and published prior to 31<sup>st</sup> May each year.

**The Local Authority have a statutory duty to review and publish the Recommendations.**

1. Approval of reviewed home to school transport policy with minor amendments as attached as Appendix 1.

**List of Appendices Included**

<b>Appendix 1:</b>	Home to school Transport Policy Academic year 2025/2026
<b>Appendix 2:</b>	Initial Equality screening Assessment Form
<b>Appendix 3:</b>	Equality Analysis
<b>Appendix 4:</b>	Carbon Impact Assessment

## **Background Papers**

**Home to school Transport Policy 2024:** [School transport – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Statutory guidance – Home to School Travel – 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024:  
[Home-to-school travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training Statutory guidance for local authorities - January 2019  
[Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training](#)

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**  
N/A

**Council Approval Required**  
No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**  
No

## **Home to School Transport – Academic Year 2025-2026**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Home to School travel is an integral part of the school system that supports children of compulsory school age to access education, enabling them to fulfil their potential.
- 1.2 The Council have a statutory responsibility to make suitable travel arrangements to and from school for eligible children of compulsory school age. Statutory guidance is published by the Department for Education (DfE) and sets out what local authorities must do to comply with the law.
- 1.3 Following publication of revised statutory guidance June 2023 (revised January 2024) the Council undertook a formal consultation to allow the Home to School Transport Policy to be rewritten and established for the academic year 2024-2025.
- 1.4 The RMBC Home to School Policy has been updated with minor changes this year to ensure it reflects the academic dates and complies with statutory duties for 'Post 16 Transport Policy Statement Obligations'.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 It is a requirement of the new DfE guidelines, that there is an up-to-date policy in place to allow parents/carers to consider home to school travel arrangements when applying for school places and make informed choices about educational settings. Where a child may not be eligible for free school travel, this may influence the parental view of the school place that is applied for.
- 2.2 To ensure parents/carers are fully informed, an updated policy must be in place and easily accessible, reasonably ahead of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2025, as any objections to school admissions arrangements for September 2025 must be submitted by this date.
- 2.3 The current Policy has been reviewed by Council officers and it is felt that whilst currently compliant, there are a number of required minor amendments which need to be made to the policy.

## Amendments/additions summary:

1. Update publication date.
2. Section 1.5 Definition of terms - additional content added to define what is classed as Compulsory School Age to provide clarification. Also added as a link to section under 6.4 Children/young people of compulsory school age (5 – 16).
3. Section 4.2 Statutory Walking Distances: Addition of phrase, 'public transport if necessary', to remove the assumption that using public transport is the only expected mode of accompaniment.
4. Section 6.3 Children below the age of 5 years - Inclusion of wording, 'In some instances' for provision of transport for none-compulsory school age children as any transport offered will be granted under discretionary considerations on an individual basis – which is covered further on in policy.
5. Section 10.3.7 Addition of, '12 hours or more guided learning'. To support the introductory statement contained under: Section 10. 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.
6. Section 10.3.11 – Removal of example (e.g., taxis, specially adapted vehicles) to support the Council's commitment to considering other more sustainable travel solutions and remove assumptions that previous transport provision will only be considered.
7. Section 10.3.13 - included copy of confirmed timetable to be provided as additional evidence where a young person is moving to college, to reduce risk of delay of a travel solution offer.
8. Due to some of the amendments, some of the sections referred to as guidance have had to be amended throughout policy. These are minimal.

### 3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 **Option 1:** The Council does not make any changes to the current Policy other than to include the dates applicable for the new academic year 2024/2025.

Whilst the current Policy is compliant, there is a requirement to include some additional clarifications within it.

- 3.2 **Option 2:** The Council makes any changes to the current Policy to include the dates applicable for the new academic year 2024/2025, and includes the relevant clarifications.

- 3.3 The preferred option is Option 2.

The primary purpose of the refreshed statutory guidance is to support Local Authorities in adhering to their statutory responsibilities, whilst making difficult decisions around how to make best use of the limited resources available.

The guidance also ensures that Home to School travel policies applied by local authorities, are clear for parents/carers to understand, enabling them to make informed decisions around school placements in the context of what arrangements are available for home to school travel, and these minor changes provides clarity around requirements and definitions which will help reduce ambiguity and the risks around mis-interpretation by the reader.

#### **4. Consultation**

- 4.1 Full formal consultation on the revised Policy is not required due to only minor changes being made.
- 4.2 Appropriate Consultation is being undertaken with relevant staff within RMBC.

#### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

- 5.1 If adopted, the revised Policy will become effective from May 2025, with revised processes implemented following this date.
- 5.2 If adopted, the Policy will be published on the Council's website and the Rotherham Local Offer website.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)**

- 6.1 **Procurement:** *There are no direct procurement implications arising from the recommendations detailed in this report.*
- 6.2 **Finance:** *There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations detailed in the revised policy.*

#### **7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)**

- 7.1 As set out within the body of the report, the Local Authority has a statutory duty, by virtue of Section 508B(1) Education Act 1996 [The 'Act'], in the case of an eligible child to make such travel arrangements as they consider necessary in order to secure that suitable home to school travel arrangements, for the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at the relevant educational establishment for him are made and provided free of charge. Section 508B(10)(b) defines relevant educational establishment.
- 7.2 Section 508A of the Act deals with the duty placed upon the Local Authority in respect of the promotion of the use of sustainable travel on journeys to and from places of education in the Borough.
- 7.3 Section 508AC of the Act places a statutory duty on the Local Authority to consider making such travel arrangements as they consider necessary for



the purpose of facilitating the child's attendance at any relevant educational establishment in relation to the child.

- 7.4 The Local Authority must also comply with published Statutory Guidance, as referenced within the report.
- 7.5 Part 4 of the Statutory Guidance 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age' deals with local school travel policies. The Statutory Guidance states that Local Authorities should keep their school travel policy under regular review to ensure it continues to meet local needs and comply with statutory requirements. An up-to-date policy must be available by 19th September each year.
- 7.6 Option 2 is the preferred option, in adopting the reviewed Policy the risk of legal challenge will be limited. Further clarification has been added in regard to definition of Compulsory School age and Local Authority Discretionary Powers to reduce challenges.
- 7.7 **Legal:** In light of the minor amendments a consultation process has not been undertaken. Where changes are proposed to the school travel policy which may affect children's eligibility for transport, the Statutory Guidance states that Local Authorities should consult locally. Where required consultation should last for at least 28 working days during term time.

The Statutory Guidance also confirms that Local authorities may not consider it necessary to consult on minor amendments or corrections, *which has been the case on this occasion. Policy reviewed and have no issue with the proposed minor amendments.*

## **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.
- 8.2 **HR:** *No implications from the recommendations*

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

- 9.1 **Children & Young People, and Vulnerable Adults:** *No implications from the recommendations.*

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

- 10.1 In undertaking its Home to School travel function, the Council complies with relevant legislative requirements including the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 10.2 The policy will ensure the consistent and fair application; recognising that every individual is entitled to equality, dignity, and respect.
- 10.3 When making eligibility decisions for Home to School travel, the Council and its officers aim to ensure there is no discrimination on the grounds of culture,

ethnic or national origins, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs or socio-economic status.

- 10.4 Adherence to these requirements is assured by means of officer awareness, observation, case reviews and both customer satisfaction and complaints received into the service. In addition, those affected by decisions have the right to challenge that decision thorough a formal appeals process.
- 10.5 An ***Initial Equalities Screening Assessment*** has been completed and is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 10.6 An ***Equality Analysis*** has been completed and is attached as Appendix 3o to this report.

## **11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change**

- 11.1 There are no direct CO2 emissions or climate change implications introduced by this report and a further report with the revised version of the Policy is attached as Appendix 4  
*Approved Tracking Reference: **CIA 456***

## **12. Implications for Partners**

- 12.1 It is recognised that effective Home to School Travel requires collaborative working between educational providers and parent/carers to ensure suitable travel arrangements are in place for eligible children. Schools will be required to support the council in delivering Home to School Travel, for example by promoting good behaviour on transport, and sharing information to ensure the child's needs are met. This includes considering travel arrangements, when making changes to their school day.
- 12.2 The local authority school travel team (Transport Services) and the special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) team including associated partners, need to ensure there is collaborative working in place that considers travel arrangements when deciding which educational setting is to be named in a child's Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) and assessed for suitability with the child's needs in mind.

As the new policy will strive to develop sustainable travel solutions, there may be increased demand on public transport networks and partnership working with SYMCA will be critical to the success of transport sustainability in the context of Home to School travel.

## **13. Risks and Mitigation**

- 13.1 The Home to School Policy must give confidence to stakeholders that it is compliant with statutory guidance and addresses the obligations placed upon the local authority to operate lawfully. It is therefore imperative that policy is updated in accordance with the guidelines and any changes are made through the effective Council processes that will ensure transparency and

fairness to all families, not limited to those with children eligible for free Home to School travel.

- 13.2 Failure to implement updates to policy in accordance with statutory guidance may result in reputational or financial risk to the council, of not ensuring the needs of eligible children are met, or an overspending of public money where eligibility is not clearly defined. This will be managed through the Corporate Risk Register, and annual policy review in line with statutory guidance.

#### 14. Accountable Officers

Elise Saxton, Transport Business & Projects Manager.

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

*Report Author: Name, Elise Saxton*  
*01709 822649 or [elise.saxton@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:elise.saxton@rotherham.gov.uk)*  
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