

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026

The arrangements as set out in this policy are publicised in the “SEND Local Offer” as per section 30 (2) (d) of the Children and Families Act 2014.

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 years and over.

Department Responsible: Regeneration & Environment, Transport Services, Business & Projects Team, Sandbeck Building, Hellaby Depot, Rotherham S66 8QL
Email: education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk
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To make an application for any of the home to school transport options explained within this policy, or for further information please visit Rotherham SEND Local Offer page:



<https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/> or scan the QR code:



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

<p>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.</p> <p>Kurdish Sorani هه‌نگه‌ر تۆ یان کەسێک کە تۆ دەبیناسی پێویستی بەیارمەتی هەبێت بۆ ئەوەی ئەم بەلگەنامە یە تێبگات یان بێخوێنتەوه، تەکایە پەیوەندیمان پێوه بکە لەسەر ئەو ژمارەیە سەردەدا یان بەو نێمەیلە.</p> <p>Arabic 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</p> <p>Urdu 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۔</p> <p>Farsi 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.</p>	<p>Slovensky</p>
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APRIL 2025

LINKS/USEFUL CONTACTS:

To apply for a new Zoom Zero Travel Pass or renew an existing one	https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/
To request and pay for a lost, stolen or damaged Zoom Zero Travel Pass. (Stolen passes can be replaced free of charge if you have a Crime Reference Number from the Police).	Traveline on 01709 515151
To apply for special educational needs and/or disability transport (ages 5-16)	https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/
To apply for special educational needs and/or disability transport (ages 16+)	https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/
To request changes on transport, or cancel existing transport provision.	https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/
To report concerns, issues or incidents regarding home to school transport operations.	R&E-Passengertransport@rotherham.gov.uk
Find my Local Council	https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council
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
South Yorkshire Local Authorities Barnsley – School Transport Doncaster – Travel Assistance Service Sheffield – Home to School Transport	schooltransport@barnsley.gov.uk transport@doncaster.gov.uk Indetravel@sheffield.gov.uk

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1. Introduction and general principals

This document sets out Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC), hereafter referred to as the Local Authority's (LA)'s, policy for providing appropriate 'Home to school' travel solutions for eligible children/young people of compulsory school age living within Rotherham Borough. Children/young people who are not Rotherham residents should refer to the transport policy issued by their home Local Authority.

1.2. Local Authority statutory duties

Section 508B of the Education Act 1996 (amended by the Education & Inspections Act 2006) deals with the duty of 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" with regard to children in an Authority's area who are of compulsory school age.

The duty applies to home to school travel arrangements at the beginning of the school day and to return home at the end of the day. The LA are not required to make arrangements for children and young people who travel between institutions during the school day or attend commitments outside of the normal school day hours.

Section 508C of the Education Act 1996 considers travel arrangements for other children who are not "eligible".

Further information regarding Home to School transport and the statutory duties to which Local Authorities must have regard are contained within the 'Statutory guidance for local authorities for children of compulsory school age' revised June 2023, and issued by Department for Education to accompany the Education and Inspections Act 2006 [Travel to school for children of compulsory school age \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154442/Statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-for-children-of-compulsory-school-age-2023.pdf)

This Policy also explains what transport arrangements may be available to learners who are over statutory school age and wish to continue their education post16. Statutory duties to which Local Authorities must have regard are contained within the 'Statutory guidance for local authorities for Post-16 travel support to education and training', revised January 2019 and issued by Department for Education to accompany the Education and Inspections Act 2006 [Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1154442/Statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-for-post-16-travel-support-to-education-and-training-2019.pdf).

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.

1.3. Sustainable school travel

Section 508A of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the LA to promote the use of sustainable travel on journeys to and from places of education in the Borough. Sustainable travel in this context is that which may improve:

- The physical wellbeing of users, and/or

- The environmental wellbeing of all or part of the LA area.

Sustainable travel benefits children, young people and everyone around them, by helping people keep healthy, improving mental wellbeing, easing traffic congestion and reducing toxins in the air.

Sustainable travel includes using public transport and shared transport, independent travel training, road safety training and active travel such as walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting to school.

1.4. Parent/Carer responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 places the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their children attend school promptly and regularly.

Section 444(4) provides a parent/carers with a defence if their child is eligible for free travel to school and the LA have failed to make home to school travel arrangements for them.

1.5. Definition of terms

1.5.1 Compulsory School Age

Compulsory school age for a child begins on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday – whichever comes first. If the child's fifth birthday is on one of those dates then they reach compulsory school age on that date.

1.5.2 Suitable school

A suitable school is defined as a 'qualifying school' that is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude, and special educational needs they may have, provided it is able to admit them. It does not mean the most suitable school as preferred by the parent/carers.

For eligible secondary school age children, the suitable school for the purposes of supported travel assistance, will almost always be their nearest qualifying school unless defined by the admissions process. A link to the admissions policy is contained here:

[Schools admission policies – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

A 'qualifying school' is outlined in Section 1.5.4.

1.5.3. Home address

The home address is considered to be the one where the child/young person resides with their primary parent/carers, and where the child benefit monies are paid to, or where the young person is registered on the electoral register. Where parents do not live together, and the child spends part of the week with each parent, the LA will not provide transport assistance to and from two separate addresses.

1.5.4. Qualifying schools

A qualifying school is any school within the Borough which fits into one of the following categories:

Community schools, foundation schools, voluntary aided and controlled schools;

Academies (including those which are free schools, university technical school colleges; studio schools and special schools;

Alternative provision academies;

Community or foundation special schools;

Non-maintained special schools;

Pupil referral units;

Maintained nursery schools (where attended by a child of compulsory school age);

City Technology colleges and city colleges for the technology of the arts;

For children with special educational needs, an independent school is considered a qualifying school providing that it is the only school named in their EHCP or the nearest of two or more schools named in the EHCP.

1.5.5. Accompaniment

A child/young person will not normally be eligible for Home to School transport assistance on the grounds of their special educational needs, disabilities or mobility problems, or on the grounds that the route is unsafe if they would be able to walk to school accompanied. Where the LA determines that a child would be able to walk if they were accompanied, the general expectation is that the parent will accompany them or make other suitable arrangements for their journey to and from school.

The following reasons will not be considered as exceptions to this, where the parent/carers cannot accompany the child/young person because of;

Parent's working patterns

Children attending other schools

It is reasonable for the LA to expect the parent/carers to make suitable arrangements to fulfil their various responsibilities (e.g. as an employee and as a parent/carers).

Parents/carers have the right to request flexible working arrangements with their employer. Further information can be found here:

[Flexible working for parents and carers of disabled children - Working Families](#)

[Flexible working and the right to request - Working Families](#)

For parents and carers who are entering or returning to employment, please visit: [Flexible working and time off | Contact](#)

1.5.6 Where a child/young person is required to be accompanied to school, and their parent/carers have disabilities or mobility problems as defined by a medical professional which would make it difficult for them to accompany their child, the LA may provide transport assistance when appropriate medical evidence has been provided from a healthcare professional.

2. SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough 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>

2.1.1. Reporting a safeguarding concern or incident

Any safeguarding concerns or incidents involving transport services operating RMBC home to school contracts, must be reported immediately to the Travel Planning Team so that they can be investigated and actioned accordingly:

- Email: R&E-PassengerTransport@rotherham.gov.uk.
- Telephone: 01709 334322 (24 hours voicemail is available).
- Incident and report forms are available on the Rotherham SEND Local offer: [Transport/Getting Around – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#).

Safeguarding concerns or incidents may also be reported to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH):

- Email: MASH-referral@rotherham.gov.uk
- Telephone: 01709 336080

2.1.2. The following safeguarding standards also apply to the Home to School travel providers:

- All drivers and passenger assistants have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, with an additional check of the children's and adult's barred list.
- Camera equipment capable of recording both audio and visual, is installed in all vehicles used to transport children and young people as part of any arrangement to which the policy applies.
- All vehicles will be fitted with seatbelts in line with manufacturers recommendations and compliant with current safety standards.
- The driver will not allow a child to transported travel in the front seat of a vehicle.
- The driver will possess an appropriate level 2 qualification in a subject relevant to the transport of passengers.
- The driver (and any passenger assistants) have attended the Council's training course on safeguarding vulnerable passengers.
- The driver (and any passenger assistants) have an understanding of handling emergency situations, i.e. road accident or medical emergency.

- The driver (and any passenger assistants) have the appropriate training with regards to any specific needs of the children travelling, which may include managing behaviour.
- The driver and passenger assistant (if relevant) will have ability in English and Maths that meets the required standard.
- The driver will 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 still required to meet the same standards, which includes an enhanced DBS check.
- Drivers and passenger assistants must adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct when working with children and young people.
- 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. Consideration will be made if it is necessary to refer any cases back to DBS.

Refer to the council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licensing policy for more information: [Taxi and private hire licensing – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

2.1.3. The LA ensures that appropriate processes are in place to uphold the required standards of transport provided as part of a Home to School travel arrangement, and where necessary, relevant services/agencies will be informed.

2.1.4. 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.

2.1.5. Parents/carers need to ensure that a responsible adult meets the child/young person when they are collected and dropped off by the transport provider. If an emergency occurs which prevents this, the Travel Planning Team should be informed **urgently** (Tel. 01709 334325). 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.

3. TRAVEL SOLUTIONS

Transport assistance may be provided for eligible travellers through the following travel solutions:

- A Zoom Zero Travel Pass (available for mainstream travel and as a travel solution for children and young people with SEND)
- Independent Travel Training
- Personal Transport Budget
- Refunded travelling expenses

- Free or subsidised travel on a coach, minibus, taxi or specially adapted vehicle

Further information about each 'Travel solution' is provided within the policy below.

4. MAINSTREAM SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Parents/carers of children/young people who are of compulsory school age and access public transport to travel to and from school should visit the 'Travel South Yorkshire' website to see what concessionary bus passes and saver tickets are available to ensure they are using the most cost-effective way to travel: [Tickets and Passes - Travel South Yorkshire](#).

Responsibility for the operation of public transport services on lies with the providers of the bus services and/or South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).

4.1. Eligibility for free transport assistance

Children/young people attending a school in Rotherham, but who live outside the LA's boundary, must apply to their home Local Authority for advice and guidance. Your Local Authority can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>.

The closing date for Zoom Zero Travel Pass (ZZTP) applications, as specified by SYMCA, is 30th June each year. There is no guarantee that passes will be available for the start of the new academic year where an application has been received after this date, and no refunds will be made for travel expenses incurred as a result of a late application for a Zoom Zero Travel Pass.

4.1.1. The majority of Rotherham children/young people assessed as entitled to free transport assistance are issued with a Zoom Zero Travel 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 child/young person as necessary.

4.1.2. To apply for a new Zoom Zero Travel Pass, or renew an existing one, please visit Rotherham SEND Local Offer and complete the relevant application form: <https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/>.

4.1.3 Eligibility of entitlement for a Zoom Zero Travel Pass is established following an assessment of each application under statutory requirements which govern the LA. Assessment criteria and include:

- the age of the child/young person,
- the school they are attending,
- a distance measurement from the home address to the school based on the statutory walking distances referred to in section 4.2,
- any additional needs the child/young person may have.

4.1.4. Parents/Carers may wish to consider whether their child/young person will/will not be entitled to a Zoom Zero Travel pass under the criteria contained in this policy before submitting their preferred secondary school places.

4.1.5. Catchment schools and the home addresses they cover can be found here: [Finding and choosing a school – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

4.1.4. Confirmation of eligibility for each child/young person is based on the family circumstances, and availability of school placements at the time the application is assessed.

4.1.6. Following a change in the child/young person's circumstances, for example, a change of address, eligibility for free transport assistance will need to be re-assessed as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the statutory walking distance.

4.1.7. The statutory walking distance between the child/young person's home address 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 (see section 4.4).

4.1.8. A Zoom Zero Travel Pass is only issued for one academic year. It is the **responsibility of the parent/carer** to make an application for a renewed bus pass by the 30th of June before the start of each new academic year, so eligibility can be reassessed.

4.1.9. Where it is not possible for a child/young person to travel by public transport, the Local Authority may consider an alternative travel solution.

4.2. Statutory walking distances

Children 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 if necessary.

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.

For Children aged 5-7 years (on 1st September), who are 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 and not equal to 2 miles (otherwise referred to as the lower statutory qualifying distance). For children 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.

For Children/young people aged 8-16 years (on 1st September) who are 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 and not equal to 3 miles (otherwise referred to as the upper statutory qualifying distance). For children/young people with a Zoom Zero Travel Pass parents/carers are responsible for ensuring their child's safety by making appropriate arrangements for their child/young person to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stops and during the journey if appropriate.

Secondary aged children/young people **who do not qualify for free transport assistance** need to obtain a concessionary fare pass issued by SYMCA. 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.

Children/young people aged 16-19 years There is no statutory duty for the Local Authority to provide Zoom Zero Travel Passes for children/young people aged 16-19 (on 1st September) who wish to continue their education as they are no longer statutory school age. Please visit Travel South Yorkshire website for information of what concessionary passes and saver tickets may be available.

Learning providers may provide concessionary passes for students to travel. Please contact the Student Services or 6th form teams for available options.

4.3. Children/young people attending denominational (faith) schools

There is no statutory duty to provide free transport assistance to denominational (faith) schools except for eligible secondary aged children/young people from low-income families (section 4.8).

4.4. Available walking route

Where children/young people are attending their nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school determined by the Local Authority, consideration for a Zoom Zero Travel Pass may be given where the available walking route has been established as not suitable even when they are being accompanied by a parent/carer (section 1.5.4).

Where the safety of a walking route is challenged, the LA will undertake a "walking route assessment", which involves walking it at the times of day or on the days of week that the child/young person would travel.

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. [Road Safety GB publishes updated Walked Routes to School guidelines](#)

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.](#)

There is no suggestion that a child/young person is required to walk to school. The availability of a suitable walking route is the assessment criteria applied in accordance with statutory guidance.

- **It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to advise the LA of any changes during the school year, for example a change of address or school. Failure to notify the LA may affect future entitlement for home to school transport assistance.**

4.5. Children/young people who are not attending their nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school as determined by the Local Authority

The LA 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 LA will only provide free transport assistance where the school attended is the nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school determined by the LA, from the child/young person's main home address.

Parents/carers who apply for a place in a school for their child/young person which is **not** the nearest available qualifying school or any alternative catchment school determined by the LA, will not be provided with free transport assistance, regardless of the distance involved, unless low-income criteria apply (section 4.8).

4.6. Managed moves

Transport assistance will not be provided for a child/young person when a managed move between two schools is agreed by the schools. Parents/carers should contact the schools concerned if they need assistance with travel.

4.7. Exceptions

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

- A Zoom Zero Travel Pass may be given to children/young people who attend a school outside of The Rotherham Borough, provided that it is the nearest available qualifying school to the home address, beyond the statutory walking distance and is within South Yorkshire.
- If a child/young person is permanently excluded from their school and the LA allocates an alternative educational establishment which is located within the statutory qualifying distance (appropriate to the age of the child/young person from their home address, transport assistance may be provided by issuing of a zoom zero travel pass.
- Some children/young people may be registered at more than one school. Where they are registered at two qualifying schools (which are not Pupil Referral Units), if eligible, transport assistance may be provided to whichever of the schools the child/young person is attending on any school day.
- Transport assistance may be available for some children/young people whose parents/carers have disabilities. Where it is a condition of the availability of the walking route that the child/young person should be accompanied, but their

parents/carers disabilities prevent this, alternative arrangements may be considered.

4.8. Extended rights for children/young people from low-income families

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced free transport assistance for qualifying children/young people from low-income families to exercise school choice. Where these extended rights need to be considered, it is a requirement that the family provide relevant proof when making their application for assistance to the LA.

Qualifying children/young people will be entitled to Free School Meals or from families in receipt of Maximum Working Tax Credit. Children/young people from 'low income' families meeting these criteria will receive free transport assistance (usually a Zoom Zero Travel Pass) on condition that:

Children/young people 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, and not equal to, 2 miles **or**

Children/young people 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, and not equal to, 2 miles, but not more than 6 miles **or**

Children/young people 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 above are measured as:

- More than 2 miles – as per the statutory walking distance, along the nearest available walking route.
- More than 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>

4.9. Behaviour expectations, public transport

4.9.1. The ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of any child/young person during the journey to and from school **rests with parents/carers**. Some children/young people may need to be taken to the bus stop and supervised until the bus arrives. Similarly, these children/young people may need to be met on their return journey. Parents/Carers are expected to explain to their child/young person that it is important to maintain positive behaviour while they are travelling on transport.

4.9.2. The Education & Inspections Act 2006 places a requirement on schools to assume responsibility for their child/young person's conduct and promote appropriate standards of behaviour on the journey to and from school. Headteachers are also able to take action to address unacceptable behaviour which includes behaviour at all stages of the journey from home to school and includes waiting for, and while using, public transport.

4.9.3. Guidance on **‘Promoting Positive Behaviour by Children/young people on Public Transport in South Yorkshire’** has been developed by Local Authority Education Transport Officers, SYMCA, South Yorkshire Police and Transport Operators. Further details can be found by visiting: https://www.travelsouthyorkshire.com/getmedia/2a6143cd-39bc-4219-85a1-f6ebaea8c0b9/3737_BEHAVIOUR-GUIDE_V2-

4.9.4. Schools are a key partner in working collaboratively with those agencies who have developed this guidance. Each school should consider initiatives for reinforcing a message of safe and sensible behaviour on the journey to and from school.

4.9.5. Schools’ behaviour policies should set out what the school will do in response to poor behaviour and bullying which occurs off the school premises and is witnessed by a staff member or reported to the school, including the sanctions that will be imposed on children/young people.

4.9.6. It is a requirement for the use of Zoom Zero Travel Passes for each child/young person to follow an expected Code of Conduct - [35693 Zoom Zero Pass code of conduct.indd \(travelsouthyorkshire.com\)](#)

4.9.7. Where a Zoom Zero Travel Pass has been issued to a child/young person, it is a requirement that their Parent/Carer accept their child/young person will follow the expectations set out in the code of conduct.

4.9.8. In the event of children/young people exhibiting persistent, deliberate, disruptive and/or dangerous behaviours (including physical and verbal abuse), the LA may consider withdrawing a Zoom Zero Travel Pass and will seek to work with the school to address any behavioural issues, which may include sanctions being imposed in line with school behavioural Policies.

Additionally, the bus operator can refuse entry to the vehicle for such children/young people, and in some circumstances, it may be necessary to inform the Police.

An eligible child’s travel arrangements will only be withdrawn as a last resort, and the LA will provide a suitable alternative travel solution including a personal travel budget/parental travel claim based on the concessionary bus fare of £1.00.

4.9.9. Parents/Carers will be expected to make their own arrangements to ensure their child/young person attends school if their child has been refused entry onto a public transport vehicle.

4.9.10. Responsibility for the operation of public transport services lies with the providers of the bus services and/or South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).

5. LOCAL AUTHORITY DISCRETIONARY POWERS

The LA has discretionary powers to provide home to school transport for non-eligible children/young people who live within Rotherham and are not 'eligible travellers.'

Any requests for transport assistance will be assessed on an individual basis and where transport is provided for all or some of the required school journeys, parents/carers will be requested to make subsidised contributions towards this transport. The cost is currently £1.00 per journey to travel within the Rotherham Borough, £2.00 per day for travel outside of the Rotherham Borough. Transport will be provided free of charge where a family have provided proof of low income (section 4.8).

6. TRANSPORT FOR CHILDREN/YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN (EHCP) AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

6.1. Naming a school in a child/young person's EHCP

Section 39 of the Children and Families Act 2014 governs the naming of a school in a child/young person's EHCP. Parents/carers have the right to ask for a particular school to be named in their child/young person's EHCP and the LA must name that school in the plan unless it would be unsuitable for the child/young person's age, ability, aptitude, special educational needs, or incompatible with efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources.

Where a parent would prefer their child/young people to attend a school that is further away from their home address than the nearest school that would be able to meet their needs, the LA will consider whether arranging home to school transport to the preferred school would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

If the LA determines that providing transport to the parent/carer's preferred school would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources, the Local Authority may name the parents/carer's preferred school on the condition that the parent/carer arranges the travel or provides some or all of the cost of the travel.

6.2. Disabled person's pass

A disabled person's pass may be available to some Rotherham residents which 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 [Apply for a travel pass – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#) and on the Travel South Yorkshire website [Disabled Pass - Travel South Yorkshire](#)

6.3. Children below the age of 5 years

Parents/carers are usually required to take children under the age of 5 to their early year's provider as there is no statutory duty for the LA to provide transport for children who are not yet of compulsory school age.

In some instances, specialist transport may be granted under LA discretionary powers. In this instance, parents/carers may be required to make subsidised contributions towards this transport. The cost is currently £1.00 per journey to travel within the Rotherham Borough, £2.00 per day for travel outside of the Rotherham Borough. Transport will be provided free of charge where a family have provided proof of low income (Section 4.8).

6.4 Children/young people of compulsory school age (5 – 16) (Section 1.5.1)

Not every child/young person with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) will be eligible for free home to school transport assistance. The LA will need to assess eligibility on the grounds of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problems on an individual basis.

Where a child of compulsory school age, attending their nearest available qualifying school, or any alternative catchment school determined by the LA has a temporary medical condition which affects their ability to travel to school, even if accompanied, they may be provided with free transport assistance. The LA will need to confirm eligibility for home to school transport assistance.

6.5 Applications for home to school transport solutions

To establish entitlement of eligibility of home to school transport assistance, an assessment of entitlement needs to be undertaken. The assessment will consider the child/young person's physical ability to walk to school and any health and safety issues related to their SEND. The assessment process also considers whether the child/young person can be reasonably expected to walk to school and if so, whether the parent/carer can reasonably be expected to accompany the child/young person (section 1.5.5).

The LA requires completion of an application for home to school transport assistance for every request for assisted home to school transport (which will usually be completed by the parent/carer of the child/young person).

6.5.1. All applications are assessed on an individual basis of need and in accordance with current home to school transport policy and statutory guidance.

6.5.2. To make an application for transport assistance, please visit RMBC website and find the appropriate application form under the SEND Local Offer:

<https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/>

In addition to the application, the LA will require:

- ❖ Information from the child/young person's school.
- ❖ Any relevant information in the child/young person's EHCP plan, which is relevant for transport considerations /or
- ❖ Information from a professional involved in the child/young person's care, e.g., educational psychologist or hospital consultant/or

- ❖ Any relevant information in the child/young person's individual healthcare plan

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

6.5.3. The transport solution offered by the LA is determined following a comprehensive assessment of the information provided which relates to the child/young person's needs and abilities, including age, mobility and how their SEND affect their ability to travel.

6.5.4. Where an eligible child with SEND is able to travel on public transport, they may be entitled to a Zoom Zero Travel Pass to allow them to access free transport which will operate from and to the bus stop nearest to the child/young person's home address (section 4.1.3).

6.5.5. Parents/Carers should ensure their child/young person's safety, by making appropriate arrangements for them to be accompanied to and from the nearest bus stop, as appropriate.

6.5.6. Children/young people 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 (section 9).

6.5.7. Some parents/carers may choose to use their own vehicle to transport their child/young person to and from school. 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 (section 8).

6.5.8. Children/young people in receipt of home to school transport assistance must have their eligibility re-assessed following a change of circumstances, for example, a change of address or school as this may affect both the identity of the qualifying school and the distance. **It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the LA of any changes.**

6.5.9. There may be occasions where a change needs to be made by the LA to existing home to school transport during the school term. When changes do become necessary, families and schools will be provided with as much notice as possible so that the child/young person can be fully prepared for any required change.

6.5.10. Eligibility for assisted home to school transport should be reviewed when a child/young person transitions into a new key stage (for example moving from primary to secondary school) to ensure that arrangements are still appropriate. Any recommended changes to a children/young people's transport arrangements will be considered by the Council provided they have been given suitable notice.

6.5.11. Requests for transport assistance to allow children/young people to attend exams may not be provided. Usual transport operations will remain in place for children/young people 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.

6.5.12. Children/young people who attend a residential school (e.g., a term-by-term basis) outside of 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.

6.6. SEND and alternative provision improvement plan

The LA may provide transport assistance for a child/young person who has been placed in an alternative provision by the LA and not by their school (provided they meet the qualifying criteria in section 6). Where transport assistance has been approved, the school will be expected to support the LA with delivery of home to school transport arrangements by:

- promoting good behaviour on transport;
- sharing appropriate information with the LA to ensure the needs of the child/person requiring transport are met;
- consider any implications for home to school transport arrangements when arranging for the child/young person to be educated off-site or proposing changes to their school day or week;
- promote sustainable travel to school.

6.7. Children and young people educated other than at school (EOTAS/EOTAC)

Section 19(1) Education Act 1996 sets out that each Local Authority shall make arrangements for the provision of suitable education at school or otherwise than at school for those children of compulsory school age who, by reason of illness, exclusion from school or otherwise, may not for any period receive suitable education unless such arrangements are made for them.

An EOTAS/EOTAC package provides education for children and young people with social, emotional, behavioural, medical, or other issues who, without such adaptation to the curriculum, may not be able to tolerate access to education in a mainstream or specialist education setting.

The LA may provide transport assistance for a child/young person to access such provision (provided they meet the qualifying criteria in section 6).

7. ASSISTED HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT (TAXI/MINIBUS/COACH)

- Children/young people who are provided with transport on a coach, minibus or taxi will be collected and returned at named points near their home address. If the child/young person 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 child/young person is collected from home, they are expected to be supervised to board the vehicle at the agreed time.
- Transport will usually be shared with other eligible passengers who also require assisted transport to travel to and from the same school.
- Transport assistance will be provided for the start and finish times of the school day. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to meet other transport needs such as travel to and from work placements, breakfast clubs, after-school clubs, extra-curricular activities, transitional transport, or any other arrangements they make with a school, including provision at an alternative school bases.
- Any extra transport equipment, seating, restraints, or training required due to the child/young person'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 child/young person can travel on any contracted vehicle.
- The child/young person's parent/carer must ensure that a responsible adult meets the child/young person when they are returned to their home address by the transport operator. If an emergency occurs which prevents this, the Travel Planning Team should be informed immediately.
- 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/young person may be taken to a place of safety until they are collected by a responsible adult.
- If a child/young person will be absent from school for any reason, such as illness or holiday, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Travel Planning Team as soon as possible to prevent unnecessary charges being made to the Local Authority and to ensure safeguarding of the child/young person. The Travel Planning Team will also need to be informed, in advance when the transport is required to start again.

- Where transport support is provided, no variation can be made to the journey without the prior consent of the LA.

7.1 Medical/mobility considerations

7.1.1. Where a child/young person with medical/mobility needs is travelling on assisted transport provided by the LA, it may be necessary to undertake a risk assessment prior to transport assistance being put in place.

7.1.2. Where a child/young person has a medical care plan for transport and where treatment or equipment is essential for the child/young person'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/young person. This should always be in date and in good working order otherwise the child/young person will be refused transport by the driver or passenger assistant.

7.1.3. 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 child/young person's name, date of birth and the dosage prescribed.

7.1.4. Parents/Carers are advised to contact their child/young person'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.

7.1.5. The LA will undertake a risk assessment for any child/young person who is unable to transfer from a wheelchair, or requires other specialist equipment in order to travel, before any assisted transport can be provided. Parents/carers may be entitled to claim a mileage allowance if there have been significant delays in acquiring suitable transport.

7.1.6. If a child/young person is due to receive medical treatment which affects their mobility and fitness to travel, the Travel Planning Team must be informed at least 10 working days in advance so that an updated transport assessment can be undertaken. Children/young people may be refused transport provision until this assessment has taken place and it is deemed safe for them to travel again.

7.1.7. If a child/young person 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/young person by contacting Wheelchair Services at

Rotherham.wheelchairs@rothgen.nhs.uk

7.1.8. Defective equipment will result in transport being stopped as all drivers are instructed to refuse to transport children/young people with defective wheelchairs.

7.1.9. If a child/young person is due to change a wheelchair or buggy, including seating system, the parent/carer must inform the Contract Monitoring Officer at least 10 working days in advance, as 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 a child/young person if changes are made until it is confirmed safe for them to travel again.

7.2 Journey times

As a general guide, the maximum journey time for a child of primary school age should be 45 minutes each way, and 75 minutes each way for children/young people of secondary school age, including any time taken to walk to a pick-up point.

There will be circumstances in which this is not possible, for example:

- in rural areas where children/young people live in remote locations
- where a child/young person needs to travel a long way to the school named in their EHC plan
- when journey times are extended by traffic delays

Travel arrangements for some children/young people with SEND, in particular those with mobility problems, can be complex to arrange. Shorter journeys may be desirable; however, a child/young person may need to travel a long way to the school that is able to meet their needs and one vehicle may need to collect several children/young people along the journey.

Where long journeys are unavoidable, due to the school that has been named in the child/young person's EHCP, the LA will consider whether there are measures they can take to minimise negative impacts for the children/young people travelling and may ask the school or parent/carer to offer advice on effective ways of managing their behaviour.

7.3 Behaviour expectations, assisted home to school transport

The ultimate responsibility for the safety and conduct of children/young people during the journey to and from school rests with parents/carers.

The LA will collaborate with schools to promote good behaviour on home to school transport as they have the power to sanction children/young people for misbehaviour which takes place on school travel.

The LA and school will work together to:

- Set high expectations for children/young people's behaviour on school travel and ensure these are communicated clearly to parents and children/young people;
- Ensure arrangements are in place to report and manage incidents of unacceptable behaviour;
- Work with operators to put in place measures to manage unacceptable behaviour where it occurs.

The LA will ensure that all drivers and passengers assistants have appropriate training to enable them to manage children/young people's behaviour while travelling.

Unacceptable behaviour may include, but is not limited to, being rude, pushing and kicking, bullying, distracting the driver, refusing to wear a seatbelt and/or refusing to remain seated, which may endanger the safety and wellbeing of themselves and other passengers.

Travel arrangements may be withdrawn if the behaviour becomes unmanageable or there is a serious health and safety concern, and alternative transport options may be offered for the child/young person.

Further information regarding behaviour expectations can be found in the LA Behaviour Charter which can be accessed here: [Transport/Getting Around – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)

Managing behaviour that is part of a child's SEND

The LA recognise that a child/young person's challenging behaviour may be part of their SEND. The LA work with transport operators, schools and families to find positive ways to manage this behaviour wherever possible.

Where necessary, a risk assessment will be undertaken by the school and/or LA.

Some children/young people may find changes to transport arrangements distressing and benefit from having consistency in their travel arrangements wherever possible. Where a change to travel arrangements is planned, the LA will provide suitable notice to allow the parents/carers time to prepare children/young people for the change and can request to meet a new driver/passenger assistant to help with the change.

7.4. Children/young people with SEND attending respite care

There is no statutory duty within national home to school transport guidance for the LA to provide free transport assistance for children/young people to travel to respite care placements.

7.5. Children/young people with SEND in Public Care

When a child/young person becomes a looked after child (LAC) by RMBC, they may become eligible for transport assistance. This may also include transport to other destinations as appropriate.

The LA would expect the child/young person to use public transport, unless they are too young to travel alone (see section 4.2) or there are specific risks or safeguarding concerns. When age or risk prohibits them to do so, there is an expectation that the carers or known professionals transport them.

Children/young people of compulsory school age with an EHCP, in the care of RMBC may be eligible to receive transport assistance (provided they meet the qualifying criteria in section 6).

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

8. PARENTAL TRAVEL PAYMENTS

8.1. Personal transport budget (PTB)

A personal transport budget (PTB) may be provided where agreed, to parents/carers for children/young people who are eligible for transport assistance. The PTB solution enables families to make their own arrangements to achieve the best travel arrangements for their child/young person instead of relying on the traditional services which may not always be the most suitable transport option. Parents/Carers will need to ensure that their child/young person arrives at their educational establishment regularly and on time, and that the arrangement does not negatively affect their ability to access educational provision.

8.1.1. To be considered for a PTB arrangement a child/young person must have their entitlement assessed and satisfy the following criteria:

- ✓ They are confirmed as an 'eligible child/young person' under the criteria contained in the current home to school transport policy.
- ✓ the LA does not have existing space on any routes currently operating to the school which has been identified as one suitable to accommodate the child/young person's needs.

8.1.2. PTB payments are allocated in the terms set out in the LA/Parent Carer agreement letter, and each payment is usually made before the start of the upcoming term via bank transfer and parent/carers agree to provide their bank account details to the LA.

8.1.3. Each PTB is agreed via a distance measurement based on:

The shortest available driving distance (mileage) from the child/young person's home address to their nearest available qualifying school, or place of further education, named in their EHCP

multiplied by

the current mileage allowance as agreed by the LA (currently 45p per mile)

multiplied by

the number of days the child/young person is expected to attend their place of education during each term.

8.1.4. Each PTB is allocated on the agreed assumption that the child/young person attends school/college regularly, achieving an attendance level as set out in the agreement letter. Persistent absence is defined as an attendance rate of 90% or below. If the child/young person's attendance falls below the agreed rate, other transport options will need to be considered, as the PTB offer will no longer be viable.

8.1.5. Under LA Financial Regulations, Risk Management and Systems of Control, it is a requirement for the attendance of each child/young person in receipt of a PTB travel solution to be reviewed, before the next allocation of monies can be released. Where the agreed attendance level has not been reached, any "unspent" PTB monies will be recovered from the parent/carer.

8.1.6. PTB monies cannot be used to travel to and from work placements or to travel to and from medical, dental or similar appointments. PTB monies will also not be allocated where a child/young person is required to travel to extra-curricular activities or after school clubs.

8.1.7. Where a parent/carer has more than one eligible child/young person living at the same address and attending the same school, only 1 PTB payment will be offered to the family, as it would be expected that they are able to travel together.

8.1.8. Where a parent/carer has more than one eligible child/young person living at the same address but attend different schools, the PTB payment will be based on the shortest available driving route from home to each educational establishment and return.

8.1.9. If there are any changes to the child/young person's circumstances during the PTB agreement, for example a change of address, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the LA so that the agreement can be reviewed and amended accordingly.

8.1.10. A request for a PTB arrangement may be refused by the LA, if space on an existing route operating to and from the eligible child/young person's school/college is suitable and available for the child/young person.

8.1.11. Where a PTB arrangement is no longer appropriate, a request for an alternative travel solution can be requested by the LA or the parent/carer provided both are given a minimum of 15 working days' notice. Consideration will be made as to whether or not there are any 'unspent' PTB monies owed to the LA which need to be paid back.

8.1.12. Alternative arrangements/payments may be considered in exceptional circumstances, following negotiations with parents/carers and with additional signed approval from the Transport Services Manager.

8.2. Parental travel claim (PTC)

A PTC agreement can be a long term or temporary solution where an agreement between the parent/carer and the LA has been established. PTC's may be offered to the family in place of PTB in the following instances:

- the child/young person will be unable to achieve the required attendance level for the PTB arrangement due to their needs,
- where the parent/carer has been asked by the LA to consider making their own transport arrangements on a short-term basis,

8.2.1. The PTC is calculated using the same criteria as 8.1.3. unless alternative arrangements have been agreed for travel on public transport or in a taxi. In order for the LA to make payment to the family an official claim form which has been verified by their educational establishment should be submitted to the LA on regular basis as payments are based on actual days attendance at school.

8.2.2. Payments are made via bank transfer and parent/carers agree to provide their bank account details to the LA.

8.2.3. Where a PTC solution has been agreed for travel on public transport or via a taxi, rather than for an agreed mileage rate per day, the parent/carer will be asked to provide receipts with their claim.

9. INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING

The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 sets the expectation that professional working with children/young people with SEND will support them to prepare for adult life and help them to achieve the best outcomes in employment, independent living, health and community participation.

For many children/young people, learning to travel independently is an important part of preparing for adulthood and it will help them lead fulfilling adult lives. When deciding on appropriate transport solutions, consideration will be made as to whether the child would be suitable to join the Independent Travel Training programme.

Each personalised training 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. Training will also improve their ability to access social and leisure activities and reduce their reliance on individual transport.

9.1 Independent Travel Training and Parental consent

Children/young people are not able to join a personalised travel training programme without appropriate consent from the parent/carer.

Where consent has not been granted, alternative transport solutions will be considered for the eligible child/young person.

9.2 Safeguarding during Independent Travel Training

The LA will ensure each child/young person participating in a personalised travel training programme will be kept safe at all times. Parents/carers will be involved in the programme throughout its duration, and consent required before their child/young person moves on to each required stage of the programme.

Each child/young person's abilities, journey to be undertaken will be risk assessed prior to the programme taking place and candidates will be continually observed during their training.

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

10.1 Summary of policy statements and main objectives

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.

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.

10.2 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 £1.00 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 children/young people 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.

10.3 Support for Post 16 Learners with Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)

10.3.1. 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 6.2.

Those unable to take advantage of a disabled person's pass should contact student services at their chosen college or school sixth form.

10.3.2. All learners with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) or Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) in Year 11, who already have assisted home to school transport, 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.

10.3.3. 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.

10.3.4. Post 16 learners are expected to take advantage of the concessionary fare schemes, so that they can access public transport for their daily travel to and from school/college.

10.3.5. There is no automatic entitlement to free home to school or college transport once a young person is over 16 years old and beyond statutory school age and the LA does not have a duty to provide transport assistance. Responsibility for making appropriate transport arrangements rests with the learner and/or parents/carers. Some learners will, however, be considered for transport assistance and provided with a travel solution (see section 3).

10.3.6. 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.

10.3.7. Young people will be engaged in 12 or more hours guided learning 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)

10.3.8. 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.

10.3.9. The LA 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.

10.3.10. 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).

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.

10.3.11. Providing assisted transport 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

10.3.12. In order for the LA to assess for entitlement of eligibility, they will need to undertake an individual assessment for the young person and will require completion of an application for home to school transport assistance; this will usually be completed by the parent/carer of the young person.

10.3.13. To make an application for transport assistance, please visit RMBC website and find the appropriate application form under the Rotherham SEND Local Offer:

<https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/>

In addition to the application, the LA will require:

- ❖ Information from the young person's school/college (*including copy of confirmed timetable where appropriate*)
- ❖ Any relevant information in the young person's EHCP plan, which is relevant for transport considerations /or
- ❖ Information from a professionals involved in the young person's care, e.g., educational psychologist or hospital consultant/or

- ❖ Any relevant information in the young person's individual healthcare plan
- ❖ Relevant proof of low income (if appropriate, section 4.8).

Failure to provide all the evidence may result in a delay in an application being processed or the application being refused.

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

10.3.14. 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.

10.3.15. 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 10.3.11 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.

10.3.16. 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, minibus, 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. (Section 10.5).

10.3.17. 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.

10.3.18. 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.

10.3.19. 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.

10.3.20. Where transport support is provided, no variation can be made to the journey without the prior consent of the Council.

10.3.21. 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.

10.4 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.

10.5 Charges for transport assistance for none-statutory transport

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.

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.

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 £1.00 per journey, and school term dates. The approximate costs per each school terms are as follows:

Autumn term (Sep – Dec) 15 weeks @ £10* per week = £150

Spring term (Jan-Mar) 12 weeks @ £10* per week = £120

Summer term (Apr-July) 12 weeks @ £10* per week = £120

Charges are based on one return bus journey per day at £2.00.

**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.*

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 £1.00 per journey, and school term dates. The approximate costs per each school terms are as follows:

Autumn term (Sep-Dec) 15 weeks @ £20.00* per week = £300

Spring term (Jan-Mar) 12 weeks @ £20.00* per week = £240

Summer term (Apr-July) 12 weeks @ £20.00* per week = £1240

Charges are based on four bus journeys (2 return journeys) per day at £4.00**

**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.*

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.

The learner may have their assisted transport withdrawn if:

- *their parent/carer fails to make payment or make a reasonable contribution towards their assisted transport.*
- *their parent/carer has not engaged with the Council's Sundry Accounts Team to secure a manageable payment plan.*

Transport will only be withdrawn as a last resort after all other options have been explored.

10.6 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 that 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:

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

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.

Means testing

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.

11. 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 10.3.11.

12. 19 – 25 LEARNERS

Learners who are aged 19-25 and have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who are unable to travel to and from their educational establishment without assistance, should contact their education provider in the first instance 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. The education provider will be able to provide more details on entitlement and how to make an application.

13. 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>

14. APPEALS PROCESS

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.

14.1 Appeal Timings

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

14.2 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**).

14.3 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. Parent/carer 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 needs, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform the Local Authority.

14.4. Flowchart of the appeals process

Officer A declines the home to school transport application or offers travel arrangements that the parent/carer consider 'unsuitable' for their child young person's needs.



Within 20 working days from receipt of Officer A's decision letter, parent/carer challenges Officer A's decision on the basis of:

- Entitlement
- Distance measurement
- Route safety
- Transport solution offered
- Consideration of exceptional circumstances



STAGE 1 – Review by a Senior Officer

Officer B (a Senior Officer) reviews Officer A's decision and sends the parent/carer written notification of the outcome including:

- Detailed reasoning for decision made.
- Notification of option to escalate to STAGE 2.



Parent/carer challenges Officer B's decision and requests to progress to STAGE 2 within 20 working days from receipt of decision letter from Officer B.



STAGE 2 – Review by Appeal Panel

Within 40 working days from receipt of decision letter from Officer B Independent appeal panel (Officer A or B must not sit on the panel) considers written/verbal representations from parent/carer. The appeal panel is independent of the Stage 1 Process and suitably experienced.



A decision letter is sent to parent/carer (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.