Nottinghamshire County Council

Post-16 SEND Travel Consultation for Young People

Overview

We would like your views on how we should provide travel assistance in future for eligible young people aged 16 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Although the law does not require the Council to provide free or subsidised travel for young people with SEND who are attending post-16 education, the right travel support can make an important difference, helping young people attend school or college.

As part of our current Post-16 Transport Policy, eligible young people may currently receive:

- **Council-organised transport:** This could be a taxi, minibus or specialist vehicle. It costs the council an average of £11,000 per student each year.
- **A Direct Travel Assistance Payment (DTAP):** An upfront payment made directly to a young person or their parent or carer to arrange travel. This costs the council on average around £2,500 per student per year.
- **Parental mileage:** A payment at a lower rate than a DTAP that can only be used towards fuel costs for travel to school or college. This costs the council on average around £1,250 per student per year.

Why are we asking for your views?

We are asking for your views on the future of our post-16 SEND transport policy because demand for council-organised transport has almost doubled over the past five years.

Travel assistance for children and young people with SEND will cost around £29 million this year, and this figure is expected to rise by £6 million in the next two years to £35 million.

The county council is facing a significant budget shortfall to maintain all the services that we provide.

We want to make sure future SEND travel assistance continues to meet young people's needs and remains affordable.

We are therefore reviewing our Post-16 Transport Policy to try and reduce costs and we're consulting on four options.

Options

Option 1 – A contribution for organised transport

- Council-organised transport would continue to be available to eligible learners aged 16 to 25 with SEND.
- Families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) choosing organised transport from September 2027 would be asked to pay £795, equivalent to 7% of the cost of the transport. This matches the proposed contribution for a council bus pass for pupils using mainstream school transport from September 2027.
- Families with household income below £7,400 would not be charged.
- This option is estimated to save the Council £0.4m.

Option 2 - Year 12 enhanced assessment from 2027 plus contributions

- Existing Post 16 SEND learners on organised transport would retain their current arrangements until they complete their post-16 education. However, from September 2027, families of young people aged 16 (in year 12) would only be granted organised transport in exceptional circumstances.
- To demonstrate exceptional circumstances, families would need to complete an enhanced assessment as part of their application for travel assistance.
- If families applied for a DTAP or parent mileage they would not need to complete the enhanced assessment. These options can be chosen at the application stage.
- If the Council decides the application does not meet exceptional circumstances, then a direct travel assistance payment (DTAP) will be offered.
- In addition, the Council would introduce the charge for organised transport from September 2027 for families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) on organised transport (as outlined in Option 1).
- This option is estimated to save the Council £1.5m

Option 3 - Post 16 enhanced assessment from 2028 plus parental contributions

- From September 2028, families of young people aged 16-25 would only be granted organised transport in exceptional circumstances.
- From September 2028, all families with young people in or entering Post 16 education would need to apply for travel assistance.
- If a family wished to apply for organised transport, they would need to demonstrate they had exceptional circumstances
- To demonstrate exceptional circumstances, families would need to complete an enhanced assessment as part of their application for travel assistance.
- If families applied for a DTAP or parent mileage they would not need to complete the enhanced assessment. These options can be chosen at the application stage.
- If the Council decides the application does not meet exceptional circumstances, then a direct travel assistance payment (DTAP) will be offered.
- In addition, the Council would introduce the charge for organised transport from September 2027 for families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) choosing organised transport (as outlined in Option 1).
- This option is estimated to save the council £2.3 million.

Option 4 - All Post 16 learners to have an enhanced assessment from 2027 plus parental contributions

- From September 2027, families of young people aged 16-25 would only be granted organised transport in exceptional circumstances.
- From September 2027, all families with young people in or entering Post 16 education would need to apply for travel assistance.
- If a family wished to apply for organised transport, they would need to demonstrate they had exceptional circumstances
- To demonstrate exceptional circumstances, families would need to complete an enhanced assessment as part of their application for travel assistance.
- If families applied for a DTAP or parent mileage they would not need to complete the enhanced assessment. These options can be chosen at the application stage.

- If the Council decides the application does not meet exceptional circumstances, then a direct travel assistance payment (DTAP) will be offered.
- In addition, the Council would introduce the charge for organised transport from September 2027 for families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) choosing organised transport (as outlined in Option 1).
- This option is estimated to save the council £3.1 million.

What does exceptional circumstances mean?

We propose that council-arranged transport could be provided where an individual assessment demonstrates that:

- the young person is eligible for Post-16 SEND travel assistance; and
- because of the young person's SEND, medical needs, journey requirements, family circumstances or a combination of relevant factors, neither DTAP nor parent/carer mileage would provide a reasonable and practicable means of enabling them to attend their education setting; and
- there is no other reasonable travel arrangement that could be made by the young person or their family, including arrangements that could reasonably be secured using DTAP; and
- without additional assistance from the Council, there is a significant likelihood that the young person would be unable to access their education placement.

No single factor would automatically establish exceptional circumstances.

Post-16 SEND Travel Consultation Questionnaire

Section A: About You

A1A) Where do you live? Please tick.

Please tick	Options
☐	Ashfield
☐	Bassetlaw
☐	Broxtowe
☐	Gedling
☐	Mansfield
☐	Newark and Sherwood
☐	Rushcliffe
☐	Nottingham City
☐	Outside Nottinghamshire
☐	Prefer not to say
☐	Other (please tell us)

A1B) Which school, college or place of learning do you go to?

A1C) How many days per week do you go to your school, college or place of learning?

Please tick	Options
☐	Less than one day
☐	1–2 days
☐	3–4 days
☐	5 days

A1D) How do you usually travel there? Please tick all that apply.

Please tick	Options
☐	Transport arranged by the council
☐	Lift from a parent or carer
☐	Bus, tram or train
☐	Travel with a support worker, personal assistant or escort
☐	Taxi arranged by my family
☐	A mix of different ways
☐	Not sure
☐	Prefer not to say
☐	Other (please tell us)

A1E) Are you happy with the way you travel there?

Please tick	Options
☐	Yes
☐	No
☐	Not sure

A1F) What would help make travelling easier for you? Please tick all that apply

Please tick	Options
☐	Training to help me travel independently
☐	Help planning and practicing my journey
☐	Free travel or help paying for buses, trams or trains
☐	Someone to travel with me
☐	A taxi, minibus or specialist vehicle
☐	A passenger assistant or other support on the journey
☐	Information in a way I can understand
☐	Extra help if my journey changes or is delayed
☐	Not sure
☐	Other (please tell us)

A1G) Is there anything else you would like to tell us about how you travel or your feelings about your travel? Write your answer in the box below.

Section B: Your views on proposed changes

The council is looking at different ways of providing travel support in the future. Please read each option and tell us what you think.

Option 1 – A contribution for organised transport

- Council-organised transport would continue to be available to eligible learners aged 16 to 25 with SEND.
- Families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) choosing organised transport from September 2027 would be asked to pay £795, equivalent to 7% of the cost of the transport. This matches the proposed contribution for a council bus pass for pupils using mainstream school transport from September 2027.
- Families with household income below £7,400 would not be charged.
- This option is estimated to save the Council £0.4m.

B1) Do you think the council should make this change from September 2027?

Please tick	Options
☐	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree

Option 2 - Year 12 enhanced assessment from 2027 plus contributions

- Existing Post 16 SEND learners on organised transport would retain their current arrangements until they complete their post-16 education. However, from September 2027, families of young people aged 16 (in year 12) would only be granted organised transport in exceptional circumstances.
- To demonstrate exceptional circumstances, families would need to complete an enhanced assessment as part of their application for travel assistance.
- If families applied for a DTAP or parent mileage they would not need to complete the enhanced assessment. These options can be chosen at the application stage.
- If the Council decides the application does not meet exceptional circumstances, then a direct travel assistance payment (DTAP) will be offered.
- In addition, the Council would introduce the charge for organised transport from September 2027 for families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) on organised transport (as outlined in Option 1).
- This option is estimated to save the Council £1.5m

B2) Do you think the council should choose this option from September 2027?

Please tick	Options
☐	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree

Option 3 - Post 16 enhanced assessment from 2028 plus parental contributions

- From September 2028, families of young people aged 16-25 would only be granted organised transport in exceptional circumstances.
- From September 2028, all families with young people in or entering Post 16 education would need to apply for travel assistance.
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- In addition, the Council would introduce the charge for organised transport from September 2027 for families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) choosing organised transport (as outlined in Option 1).
- This option is estimated to save the council £2.3 million.

B3) Do you think the council should make this change from September 2028?

Please tick	Options
☐	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree

Option 4 - All Post 16 learners to have an enhanced assessment from 2027 plus parental contributions

- From September 2027, families of young people aged 16-25 would only be granted organised transport in exceptional circumstances.
- From September 2027, all families with young people in or entering Post 16 education would need to apply for travel assistance.
- If a family wished to apply for organised transport, they would need to demonstrate they had exceptional circumstances
- To demonstrate exceptional circumstances, families would need to complete an enhanced assessment as part of their application for travel assistance.
- If families applied for a DTAP or parent mileage they would not need to complete the enhanced assessment. These options can be chosen at the application stage.
- If the Council decides the application does not meet exceptional circumstances, then a direct travel assistance payment (DTAP) will be offered.
- In addition, the Council would introduce the charge for organised transport from September 2027 for families of young people aged 16-18 (years 12 and 13) choosing organised transport (as outlined in Option 1).
- This option is estimated to save the council £3.1 million.

B4) Do you think the council should make this change from September 2027?

Please tick	Options
☐	Strongly agree
☐	Agree
☐	Neither agree nor disagree
☐	Disagree
☐	Strongly disagree

B5) Do you have any other thoughts about these options?

(Please write your answer in the box below)

Thank you for completing this consultation.

Please send your response to:

Post-16 SEND Travel Review

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County Hall, Loughborough Road,

West Bridgford,

Nottingham, NG2 7QP