

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

Post 16 Travel Assistance Policy

2020/2021

1 **Statement**

Local Authorities have a duty to prepare and publish an annual Transport Policy Statement (TPS) specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport or otherwise that the authority considers it necessary to make, to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

We are committed to ensuring that sixth form students (including those with Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) up to age 25 if they started a course before their 19th birthday) have access to educational opportunities at school, college or other training establishment, enabling them to get the knowledge, skills and experience necessary for them to pursue their chosen careers and, to meet the challenge of employment and personal development in the future.

This Policy Statement describes the help with transport costs that is available to Barking and Dagenham sixth form aged students (including those with Education, Health and Care Plan up to age 25 if they started on course before their 19th birthday).

This statement is published in line with the statutory duties under the Education Act 1996, including s.509AA and s.509AB and takes into account the Department for Education statutory guidance - Post 16 transport to education and training - January 2019.

2 **Travel options and costs**

Details of all concessionary / free fares, discounts, subsidies, passes or travel cards available for learners aged 16-18 and who provides them, plus details of any costs to the learner.

Free or reduced-price travel

Most students of sixth form age and adult learners will be able to get to school/college or training on foot or by using public transport.

There are many travel options for learners within our Borough, and within London, and this is either free or offered at a reduced rate, by Transport for London for many students who are 16 or over.

Transport for London travel for students of sixth form age

16+ Oyster Photo Card

Students who are 16 – 18, live in London and are in full time education, can apply for free travel on buses and public transport using a 16+ Oyster photo card if they are:

- Under 19 on the 31st August prior to the start of the current academic year.
- Living in a London Borough; and
- In full-time education (as defined under the scheme)

This enables students to travel for free on Buses and Trams. Students can also get reduced travel fares on the Tube, DLR and London Overground Services.

Students may apply for an Oyster Card through the Transport for London website:

Zip Oyster photocards - Transport for London

Freedom Pass

The freedom pass is for people who have permanent disability that imposes a mobility problem or who are registered blind.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund

This is a discretionary award available for education-related costs for students between the ages of 16 and 18. It can also be made to pupils who are 19 or over if they continued on a course they started when they were 16, 17 or 18 or if they have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Find out more at 16 to 19 Bursary Fund - GOV.UK

Dial-a-Ride

Some students may be eligible for travel assistance from Dial-a-Ride (TFL) if they meet any of the following criteria:

- A Taxi Card Member
- Are in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility component of Disability Living Allowance
- Are registered blind or partially sighted.
- Are in receipt of Higher Rate Attendance Allowance
- Other students can apply but will need to complete a paper-based assessment to determine their eligibility

How to apply to Dial-a Ride: you may apply for this service by downloading the application form from the website Dial-a-Ride - Transport for London or by calling 0343 222 7777.

Young Parents

Care to Learn (C2L) is a scheme that can help young learners with childcare and travel costs if they are 19 or under when they start their course. Details can be found at www.gov.uk/careto-learn.

Apprentices and trainees: Can make use of TfL concessions as above and may obtain some assistance from their employer. Information is available at Gov.uk.

3 SEND Applicants

Where a student has a learning difficulty or a disability, a transport needs assessment should be completed by the Education, Health and Care Plan team as part of the annual review and/or part of the transition process.

A student / student's family can apply to the council for help with transport costs for Post-16 education. The level and type of travel assistance is discretionary and will vary depending upon individual circumstances. A student / student's family may already be in receipt of some / all of the following which would help to determine the level of funding required from the council:

- free school meals
- maximum level of Working Tax Credit
- any level Universal Credit
- Council Tax Reduction (previously known as Council Tax Benefit)

Young people commencing Post-16 provision who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will have the name of the Post-16 institution that they will be attending named in that Plan. Should a young person with an EHCP choose to attend a Post-16 institution other than that which is named in their EHCP, then this may impact on the level of travel assistance that can be provided.

In making a decision, the Council would have to be satisfied that:

- Any different arrangements would meet the needs of the child/young person
- No additional costs would be incurred by the council

Independent Travel Training for learners who face difficulty with transport

The council preferred option for young people with an EHCP is Independent Travel Training (ITT) which seeks to promote independence so that students will ultimately be able to travel on their own.

For some students Independent Travel Training (ITT) would not be appropriate due to their complex needs, but where students have the potential to benefit from Independent Travel Training it is expected that those students will take part in the programme.

It is a programme of support that aims to enable a young person to become an independent and safe traveller; as a result it covers topics such as road safety, personal safety, journey planning and coping strategies.

If it is identified through a transport needs assessment process that travel training would be an option for an individual student, a referral can be made by the school, EHCP team or the family / young person. On receipt of a referral, the team will evaluate the suitability of travel training for that particular student, and where appropriate begin a personalised programme of training to meet their needs.

If a place is offered and a parent refuses to consent to their child attending independent travel training, their child's eligibility may be reviewed and future travel arrangements may be offered on the condition that their child attends the training in the future. Continued refusal may lead to withdrawal of travel assistance, although consideration will be given to individual circumstances.

When to apply for travel assistance or support

You can apply any time after you know where you have been offered a place at school / college and you are encouraged to submit your application as soon as possible. All students need to apply on an annual basis.

4 Vulnerable Young People

The Council may also offer assistance to a young person of 16 or 17 who is vulnerable to not being in education, employment or training (NEET), or who has already become NEET if it considers this necessary to support their participation in education, training or employment.

5 How to apply for Travel Assistance

Applications must be made online using the link below:

<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/travel-assistance-application-form>

Applicants must provide all evidence listed or requested by the Council. Where a form is incomplete and/or evidence is not provided as requested, within any given time limit, no award can be made.

Notes for applicants for discretionary awards

Awards

A decision will be given in writing, including reasons for a refusal. Where an application is successful, assistance will be given for a specified period, or until it is reviewed. No award will be for more than one academic year. It is the responsibility of the student to make a further application. Awards cannot be backdated. Applications should therefore be made as soon as a pupil is offered and has accepted a place, or their circumstances have changed when they are part way through a course.

Reviews

Assessments of the need for assistance will be reviewed annually and more frequently where circumstances change within the year.

Changes in circumstances

Students must inform the Council of any changes in circumstances that may affect entitlement to assistance. These include a change of address or place of learning, changes in health or SEND or associated needs that affect travelling to the place of education/training.

Eligibility Checks

The Council has a duty to ensure that it protects public funds. The Council may contact students during the academic year, to ensure they are still eligible for assistance.

Awards made in error

Where an award of assistance has been made in error, the Council has the right to withdraw this after first considering the circumstances of each case to determine whether there are exceptional reasons for provision to continue. Where it is decided to withdraw assistance, up to one term's notice will be given. If the error was discovered before the commencement of the academic year the assistance will be withdrawn straight away.

Fraud

Where an award of assistance has been made as a result of fraud it will be withdrawn immediately. All monies paid will have to be repaid. Legal action to recover monies may be taken. Criminal proceedings may be taken, which may lead to conviction.

6 Appeals and complaints

Appeals can be made to the following: transport.appeals@lbbd.gov.uk

Stage One: Review by a senior officer

A parent/carer has 10 working days from receipt of the local authority's home to school transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.

The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.

Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's written request a senior officer will review the original decision and send a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review, setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted.
- information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted
- as part of the process;
- what factors were considered;
- the rationale for the decision reached; and
- information about how the parent can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).

Stage Two: Review by an independent appeal panel

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.

Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeal panel will consider written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and give a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days), setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached.
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB); ○ information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process.
- what factors were considered; ○ the rationale for the decision reached; and
- information about the parent's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

The independent appeal panel members are independent of the original decision-making process and suitably experienced, to ensure a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of the parents and the local authority.

Local Government Ombudsman

There is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman,

If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for judicial review.

Should you wish to make a complaint about a service you have received please talk to the person who is providing the service or their manager in the first instance as most complaints can be sorted out 'on the spot'. However, should you feel this is not possible or you do not receive a satisfactory response from the service area please contact our Complaints Team on 020 8227 2405 / 2111 or socialCareComplaintsandInformation@lbbd.gov.uk and they will initiate a formal complaint investigation for you.

You may also write to the Complaints Team at the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

If an applicant remains dissatisfied, they may consider contacting the Local Government Ombudsmen (LGO) or complaining to the Secretary of State for Education. The LGO is an independent organisation that investigates complaints against councils. It is a free service and information can be found online at www.lgo.org.uk.

To complain to the Secretary of State, young people or their families should use the contact form on gov.uk - www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus. Any complaint should outline the case, set out the decision taken by the local authority and include any other relevant documentation, for example any advice or decisions from the LGO where appropriate.

Complaints about the service you have received may be made using the Council's complaints procedure, which can be found at SocialCareComplaintsandInformation@lbbd.gov.uk

Contact Details

Transport Commissioning

Opening times: 07.00am – 17.30pm

Contact Numbers: 020 8227 2713

E-mail – transport.request@lbbd.gov.uk

Address: 3RD Floor Roycraft House

15 Linton Road

Barking

IG11 8HE

Mobility Services

Contact Number: 020 8227 2334 - 020 8227 2325

E-mail: mobility@lbbd.gov.uk

Community Learning Development Team

Contact number: 020 8227 5432

E-Mail: cldtintake@lbbd.gov.uk

7 **Local Colleges**

Barking & Dagenham College, Dagenham Road, Romford, RM7 0XU – 020 8090 3020

Redbridge College, Little Heath, Barley Lane, Romford R6 4XT – 020 8548 7400

Havering College, Ardleigh Green Road, Hornchurch, RM11 2LL – 01708 455 011