

Post-16 Transport Policy for Learners with SEND

Issued by: Hull City Council

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1. Introduction

This policy outlines Hull City Council's approach to supporting transport for learners aged 16–25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who are in education or training. It aligns with the Department for Education's statutory guidance and aims to ensure fair, transparent, and needs-based provision.

Local authorities are not required to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel support but do have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement specifying the provision of transport to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

2. Legal Framework and Equalities

This policy is underpinned by the following legislation:

- Education Act 1996 (Sections 508A, 508B, 509AA): Requires local authorities to promote sustainable travel and publish annual transport policy statements for post-16 learners.

- Children and Families Act 2014: Establishes the legal basis for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), including transport as part of special educational provision where necessary.
- Equality Act 2010: Requires public bodies to make reasonable adjustments and prohibits discrimination against disabled learners in accessing education and related services, including transport.
- The Care Act (2014)
- Mental Capacity Act (2005) (applicable from age 16)

Hull City Council is committed to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination.

Transport arrangements will:

- Be inclusive and accessible.
- Consider individual needs and reasonable adjustments.
- Support independence and participation in education.

3. Eligibility

Transport assistance may be provided to learners who:

- Are aged 16–25 and have an EHCP.
- Are unable to travel independently due to their SEND.
- Are attending the nearest suitable educational setting offering the required course.
- Are enrolled in full-time education (12+ timetabled hours per week).
- Are not in paid employment or apprenticeships.
- Have been assessed to determine if transport is still required.

The Local Authority reserves the right to discuss the length of the course, start date, and course code with the education provider.

4. Annual Review and Assessment of Needs

For pupils with an EHCP: Transport needs are assessed annually as part of the EHCP review. For those transitioning to adulthood, an Adult worker will be involved and a Care Act Assessment will be undertaken.

For pupils without an EHCP but with identified SEND: A Care Act Assessment is required to identify eligible needs, including access to education.

The Mental Capacity Act (2005) will determine if the person can consent to the assessment. If not, a Best Interests decision will be made.

Failure to cooperate with the assessment process will impede the application.

The assessment will consider:

- The learner's independence and mobility.
- Accessibility and distance to the educational setting.

- Changes in health, care, or educational needs.
- Suitability of public transport.
- Outcomes of previous transport arrangements.

5. Independent Travel Training

Where appropriate, learners will be offered independent travel training to:

- Promote independence and confidence.
- Enable safe and effective use of public transport.
- Reduce reliance on specialist transport services.

Training will be tailored to individual needs and reviewed annually.

6. Types of Transport Support

Support may include:

- Council-arranged transport (e.g., minibus or taxi).
- Personal Transport Budgets (PTB).
- Travel passes or mileage reimbursements.

Local schools, colleges and training providers provide support through various funds, including 16-19 bursaries funding, for travel. This could be in the form of subsidies, or travel cards. In the first instance learners should apply to their school, college or training provider for assistance with travel in the first instance.

In exceptional circumstances, support may be available for learners without an EHCP. Decisions will be made by the transport panel who will review each application.

Travel will typically only be provided at the beginning and end of the school/college day and a student will normally be expected to share a vehicle with other students. The council's commissioned transport will not be provided:

- To access breakfast or after school clubs, including out of school activities;
- To and from work experience placements, taster or open days, or transition visits;
- To any provision off the school site organised by the school;
- To two or more addresses. Transport is provided to the main residence, typically where the young person is registered with a GP. This also applies to parents who have joint custody, single parents, parents with work commitments;
- For transfers between educational establishments during the school day;
- To and from medical, dental, psychiatric, speech therapy or similar appointments;
- Following detention, suspension or exclusion;
- At times to suit the convenience of family arrangements;

- For late arrivals or early departures;
- For those whose level of attendance is a cause of concern and there is no eligibility for transport under the SEN criteria;
- For pupils on exchange visits.

7. Financial Contribution

A standard annual contribution is required for eligible learners receiving council-arranged transport. The rate increases annually in line with inflation.

Payment options: full payment or instalment plans.

Families experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to apply for bursaries through their educational provider.

Failure to pay may result in cancellation of transport.

For those aged 18 and over: The Hull City Council Charging and Financial Assessment for Adult Social Care and Support Services Policy applies. Financial support towards care costs, including transport, is determined through financial assessment rather than a fixed annual contribution.

The Mental Capacity Act (2005) applies to financial decisions. If capacity is lacking, a Best Interests decision will be made.

Each eligible learner who qualifies for transport assistant will be required to make a contribution towards their travel this will be £380.00 for the year 2025-26 (this is reviewed annually).

Learners or parents who may require financial assistance with the associated costs of continuing in post 16 education, should make enquiries with the School, College or Training Providers bursary arrangements.

Previous academic years' contributions must be paid in full before a further year of transport will be approved.

Personal Transport Budget (PTB) payments for all post-16 pupils include a reduction of the annual contribution amount.

If a PTB is cancelled during the academic year (after the first term) and no alternative transport is arranged, the amount of outstanding annual contribution will still be considered outstanding.

Should the learner's transport assistance cease before the end of the academic year, only within the first term will a percentage pro-rata reduction be refunded.

Refunds or reductions will not be made for students attending a reduced timetable or part-time; the contribution in full will be invoiced.

8. Application Process

Applications must be submitted annually. Forms are issued in April and should be returned by June for September arrangements.

Late applications may result in delays or changes.

Needs are reviewed annually or more frequently if circumstances change.

Support may change in line with best value and provider availability. Awards made as a result of fraud will be withdrawn, and legal action may be taken.

If you:

- are a young adult learner under the age of 25 years;
- have an Education and Health, Care Plan (EHCP);
- are planning on or continuing your learning; and
- you require transport to attend your learning provider 'Hull Connect to Support' is Hull's local information and advice website for adults with health and social care needs and their carers. Connect to Support has been developed in partnership with Hull Adult social care, local people, service providers and community organisations.

9. Appeals/Complaints Process

Parents/carers may appeal decisions regarding transport eligibility:

- Stage 1: Written appeal with supporting evidence.
- Stage 2: Independent panel review if Stage 1 is unsuccessful.

10. Contact Information

Email: SENtransport@hullcc.gov.uk