

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Post 16 home to place of learning Assistance with Travel Policy

September 2016



Waltham Forest

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STRUCTURE

This policy is divided into 4 parts. Young people with special educational needs and disabilities should read **all parts**. Those without special educational needs and disabilities should read **Parts 1 and 2 only**.

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

WHAT DOES THIS POLICY COVER?

This policy covers assistance with travel to help young people aged 16+ to access appropriate education and training.

This assistance is available to all young people aged 16 to 18 entering further education, and to continuing learners aged 19 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who satisfy the eligibility criteria.

BACKGROUND

The Education and Skills Act (2008) places a duty on all young people to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday. This does not necessarily mean staying in school. Young people are able to choose how they participate, which could be through:

- Full-time education, such as school or college
- An apprenticeship
- Part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more each week

LEGAL BACKGROUND

Local Authorities also have a duty to facilitate access to full-time education for young people aged 16–19 and this may include assistance with travel in certain circumstances. Other post 16 learners with learning difficulties and disabilities aged 16–25 attending colleges and other places of learning may be eligible for assistance.

The provision of assistance with travel by the council will be based on individual needs and circumstances and with due regard to the efficient use of resources.

PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following principles:

- **Independence and wellbeing**
The Council will promote independence, social inclusion and physical well-being for all children and young people. This will be achieved through identifying modes of travel which best support this aim.
- **Sustainability**
The Council will favour environmentally sustainable forms of travel, including walking, cycling and the use of public transport. The council will also promote those options which make the most effective use of public resources.

PART 2: ASSISTANCE WITH TRAVEL OFFERED BY EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

This includes support from Transport for London (TfL), schools and others. Applications for these forms of support should be made directly to the relevant organisation.

The Council considers that this range of options – in particular TfL Oyster travel cards – offer sufficient support for **all** young people **without** special educational needs and disabilities, or other exceptional circumstances.

All young people **with** special educational needs and disabilities should also consider each of these options **before** reviewing the forms of assistance with travel offered by the Council.

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON – FREE AND DISCOUNTED TRAVEL

For the vast majority of Post 16 students, travel needs will be met by the free and discounted options provided by Transport for London (TfL).

Young people should obtain the appropriate Oyster card before starting their programme of study. It is the young person's responsibility to ensure they meet the requirements set by TfL for retaining an Oyster card.

For further details on these options, please visit the Transport for London website (www.tfl.gov.uk).

- **16+ Oyster photo card**

Residents of London boroughs aged **16 to 18** and in full-time education, or on a work-based learning scheme of at least 12 hours per week can apply for a 16+ Oyster photo card. This includes apprenticeships.

The card gives:

- Free travel on London buses and trams
- Half adult rate Oyster single fares on the tube, DLR, London Overground and some national rail services
- Child rate travel card season tickets on the tube, DLR, London Overground and some national rail services

- **Apprentice Oyster card**

Young people aged over 18 years who live in Waltham Forest and are **on the first year of an apprenticeship** that will last for more than 12 months are eligible to apply for an Apprentice Oyster card.

The Apprentice Oyster card gives a 30% discount on bus, tram, tube, DLR, London Overground and national rail travel card season tickets.

- **18+ Student Oyster photo card**

18+ Student Oyster photo cards are available to students who are **aged 18 and over**, and who are attending a full-time course (and in certain circumstances a part-time course) at colleges, schools and universities registered on the TfL 18+ Student Oyster photo card scheme.

The 18+ student card gives a 30% discount on bus, tram, tube, DLR, London Overground and national rail travelcard season tickets.

THE 16–19 BURSARY FUND

The 16–19 Bursary Fund, administered by individual education providers is available to support any student who faces genuine financial barriers to participation in education, including transport costs. There are two types of 16–19 bursary available.

Those most in need are eligible for a **vulnerable student bursary** of up to £1,200 per year. To qualify, you must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- you are in or recently left local authority care
- you get Income Support (or Universal Credit in place of Income Support) in your name
- you are disabled and you get both Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) (or Universal Credit in place of ESA), and either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name

To receive the maximum bursary the programme of study must last for 30 weeks or more. If the programme is shorter than 30 weeks, you may receive less.

You could get a **discretionary bursary** if you do not qualify for the vulnerable student bursary. Education providers may, at their discretion, distribute any remaining funds to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their students. This is targeted at young people facing financial barriers to participation, including transport costs.

All education providers must make available a copy of their 16–19 Bursary Fund policy upon request. Applications should be made directly to the school, college or training provider.

For further information on the 16–19 Bursary Fund visit: www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Local providers and contact details are listed in Appendix B or on the Waltham Forest Local Offer website.



RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT SCHEME

The Residential Support Scheme is for students aged 16–18. If the programme of study being followed is not available locally and is more than 15 miles from the home, or more than a two hour return journey away, you can apply for help with the cost of term-time accommodation.

How much assistance you receive will depend on household income and where the education provider is based.

For further information on the Residential Support Scheme, including eligibility criteria, visit www.gov.uk/residential-support-scheme

RESIDENTIAL BURSARY FUND

Students aged 16–18 may be able to get a bursary towards the cost of accommodation from some specialist residential colleges. This is different from the Residential Support Scheme.

Most of these colleges are ‘Specialist Residential Centres’ for subjects like agriculture, art and design or horticulture. Each has its own eligibility criteria, often including parental income. To apply for assistance you should contact the college directly.

DISCRETIONARY LEARNER SUPPORT

If you are aged 19 or over and studying on a further education course and facing financial hardship, you could get Discretionary Learner Support (DLS). This is similar to the 16–19 Bursary Fund.

You apply directly to your learning provider (eg. your college) for DLS. How much you get will depend on your circumstances. The money can help with learning costs, including transport.

For more information visit www.gov.uk/discretionary-learner-support

Local providers and contact details are listed in Appendix B or on the Waltham Forest Local Offer website.

PART 3: ASSISTANCE WITH TRAVEL OFFERED BY THE COUNCIL

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR ASSISTANCE WITH TRAVEL?

The following eligibility criteria apply to all applicants for assistance with travel offered by the Council.

Eligibility will be determined using the following statements to see if they apply to you:

- a) You are **a resident of Waltham Forest**.
- b) You have a **special educational need or disability** as identified in an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) , or other exceptional circumstances.
- c) You have explored all available sources of support in Part 1 of this document.
You can apply for Council assistance with travel in addition to the options provided by other organisations, but any assistance received will be taken into account when assessing what form of assistance with travel is most appropriate.
- d) Your chosen study programme takes place at a **publicly funded provider**.
See details of ‘Eligible learning and training providers’ in Appendix A.
- e) Your learning provider is **the nearest provider** that can meet the majority of your needs.
Travel assistance will not be provided on the basis of one subject being unavailable at your nearest learning provider.
- f) Your **study programme is full-time** – equivalent to a minimum of **18** hours per week.
Your study programme does not however have to last a full year.
- g) You are **under 25 years of age** or engaged in a full time course of education during the academic year in which you turn 25 years of age
- h) If you are aged 19 or over, you have been in **continuous education or training** since before your 19th birthday.
Assistance with travel will not be provided to those who have left education and are returning after the age of 19.
- i) The study programme you attend provides a **clear educational or training benefit**, suited to your needs.
- j) You live **more than 3 miles away** from your learning provider (by the shortest safe walking route), or you live **less than 3 miles away** and your EHCP or SEN statement **identifies the need for specific travel assistance**.

EXCLUSIONS

You will **not** be eligible for travel assistance if any of the following statements applies:

a) You are employed and starting or continuing an **apprenticeship**

Apprentices aged 16 to 18 can apply for a 16+ Oyster photo card. Young people aged over 18 years and in the first year of their apprenticeship are eligible to apply for an Apprentice Oystercard.

b) Your **study programme is at Level 4 or higher**, including a foundation degree

Education levels are explained on the government website.

2.2 HOW ARE FORMS OF TRAVEL ASSISTANCE CHOSEN?

The Council's SEND assistance with travel staff will assess whether a young person is eligible for assistance with travel in accordance with this policy. If a young person is eligible for some form of assistance with travel, the Council will decide which form is most suitable.

The SEND assistance with travel staff will allocate assistance with travel options in the most cost-effective manner and will always prioritise those options which lead to the least dependency and lowest cost. Learners aged 16+ are encouraged to travel independently on public transport and, where appropriate, parents and carers will be expected to support this.

Assistance with travel for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Statement of Special Educational Need (SEN) will be offered based on the particular needs of the young person. Most young people with an EHCP or SEN statement do not receive or require specialised assistance with travel. As such, the issuing of an EHCP or SEN statement does not necessarily mean that the Council will provide any form of assistance with travel. Equally, assistance with travel is not limited only to those with an EHCP or SEN statement.

The final decision about whether to offer assistance with travel and in what form will be made by the Council, according to the circumstances of each individual case. The following will be considered:

- whether the young person would have considerable difficulty in walking or using public transport due to their special educational needs or disability
- whether the young person has a physical or medical disability that rules out the use of free public transport, or suitable public transport is not conveniently available – for example wheelchair users, students who require specialist seating, harnesses, head restraints or other specialist facilities
- the distance and complexity of the journey to and from school, and the public transport routes available



- whether the young person is deemed to be vulnerable and at risk of danger if they use public or other transport
- whether the young person would be able to travel independently to their place of learning if suitably travel trained

Existing sources of support must be identified at the point of application, including but not limited to any mobility allowance, direct payment and awards made under the 16–19 Bursary Fund, and will be taken into account when making a decision about the level and type of assistance with travel that may be provided. A decision may be taken that additional assistance with travel will not be provided.

For more information please see the 'Decision Making Flowchart' in **Appendix C**.

2.3 FORMS OF ASSISTANCE WITH TRAVEL

Where assistance with travel is offered by the Council, it may take one of the following forms:

- **Reimbursement of the cost of travel fares/passes** for parents and carers to escort the young person to and from school on public transport
- **Personal travel budgets** for young people, or their parents or carers, to arrange their own transport, or use a combination of options
- **Reimbursement of mileage costs** for parents and carers who are able to transport the young person to and from school
- **Independent travel training** to give young people the essential skills required to travel independently, either on foot or by public transport
- **Travel assistants** to support young people undertaking travel training
- A place on a **shared minibus or taxi route**, using collection points where possible – see '**2.4 Specialist Transport**' below for more details

For more information on these assistance with travel options, please see the '**Post 16 Assistance with Travel Options**' guide.

2.4 SPECIALIST TRANSPORT

Specialist transport, in the form of a place on a minibus or taxi, will only be offered to those young people who have the greatest need for assistance with travel.

If offered specialist transport, individuals will be expected to travel with other young people attending the same or a nearby place of learning, unless there are compelling reasons for individual transport. These shared routes will use collection/drop-off points to ensure the maximum efficiency and to reduce journey times. Collection/drop-off from the home address will be offered only in exceptional circumstances.

2.5 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Journey types

Assistance with travel will be limited to journeys at the start and end of the learning day only. There will be no assistance with journeys between establishments during the learning day.

Young people attending residential schools

For those young people with special educational needs and disabilities who attend residential colleges on a termly basis, the Council will support:

- one journey at the start of each term; and
- one journey at the end of each term

It is expected that the majority of these young people will travel either by public transport (accompanied by a parent or carer as necessary), or be transported in a parent or carer's vehicle. The Council will offer reimbursement of mileage costs or public transport expenses in these cases. There may however be exceptional cases where specialist transport could be considered.

Motability vehicles

Some young people may be in receipt of the higher mobility component (HRMC) of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA). This is the gateway to the Motability Scheme that supplies vehicles, adapted or not, in return for the DLA, usually on contract hire terms. If a young person is the HRMC recipient and the family obtains a vehicle through the Motability scheme, then the vehicle is expected to be used for the benefit of the disabled young person and the Council will offer reimbursement of 40p per mile to allow the family to utilise that vehicle to take their child to and from school.

Multiple home addresses

The Council will provide assistance with travel from one home address only. Parents and carers of individuals with more than one residence should nominate one address to be the young person's 'main residence', from which assistance with travel eligibility will be assessed. If no single address is nominated, the 'main residence' will be taken to be the address nearest to the agreed place of learning.

PART 4: APPLICATIONS, COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

HOW DO I APPLY FOR ASSISTANCE WITH TRAVEL?

Assistance with travel for young people reaching the age of 16 will be discussed as part of the wider Education Health and Care Plan process prior to the end of Year 11.

Alternatively, parents and carers who believe that their child may be entitled to assistance with travel should obtain and complete an 'Assistance with Travel to College' application form.

For an application form please contact the Waltham Forest SEND assistance with travel staff.

Transport Officer, SEN Team
Wood Street Health Centre
6 Linford Road, Walthamstow
London, E17 3LA

Tel: 020 8496 6500
assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk

NOTIFICATION OF DECISION

All applications will receive careful consideration, via a screening process with exceptional cases being reviewed at a multi-disciplinary panel. Parents and carers will be informed of the Council's decision in writing within ten working days of receipt of the completed application.

WHAT IF I DISAGREE WITH A DECISION?

Where an application for assistance with travel support has been refused, or the applicant wishes for further consideration of their circumstances, the following process will apply.

• Stage 1 – Review

You should complete a review/appeal form within 20 working days of the original notification of decision.

These forms can be obtained from and should be returned to the SEND assistance with travel staff.

The decision will then be reviewed by the appropriate Group Manager. You will receive a decision within 2 weeks with notification of the option to appeal to the next stage.

• Stage 2 – Appeal

You have 20 working days to challenge the review decision. This appeal will be passed to the Independent Travel Assistance Appeals Panel (this must not include the officer who made the initial decision or the 14–19 Education Manager). The panel will consider all of the evidence and make a final decision. This decision will be sent by letter within one week.

When requesting a review it is important for applicants to supply as much evidence as possible in support of their request. For example, it may be helpful for the appeal panel to have information about family circumstances, details of how the young person currently travels to college or school and any concerns arising from that, whether anyone is able to accompany the young person to and from college etc. All evidence supplied will be taken into account by the review panel.

COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be dealt with using Waltham Forest's staged approach. You can complain directly to the SEND assistance with travel staff at the above address or by contacting:

SEND services
1st Floor, Room 48
Wood Street Health Centre
Linford Road, E17 3LA

Email: councilcomplaints@walthamforest.gov.uk

OTHER INFORMATION

Duration and review

Once a young person has been assessed as eligible for assistance with travel, they will remain eligible for the entirety of the educational year for which the assessment is made, unless the young person's place of residence changes, in which case eligibility would be subject to reassessment.

Equally, if a young person is assessed as not requiring assistance with travel, the Council will not be obliged to re-assess the individual for that educational year, unless the place of residence changes or an appeal is lodged in line with the Appeals procedure.

All assistance with travel offered is subject to annual review, in line with Education Funding Agency Guidelines.

APPENDIX A – DETAILED ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

ELIGIBLE LEARNING AND TRAINING PROVIDERS

Your study programme or training must take place through a publicly-funded provider:

- A publicly-funded school or academy (including a free school or University Technical College (UTC));
- A publicly-funded further education institution, including sixth form college and further education college;
- A local authority maintained or assisted institution providing further or higher education;
- An independent specialist provider for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- A learning provider that is funded by a local authority to deliver accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes (this could include colleges, charities and private learning providers).



APPENDIX B – USEFUL CONTACTS

Provider	Email	Phone Number
Barnet and Southgate College	charles.nelson@barnetsouthgate.ac.uk	020 8200 8300
Big Creative Education	Lauren.Ireland@bigcreative.education	020 8498 3300
Capel Manor College	James.gould@capel.ac.uk	0845 612 2122
Epping Forest College	cspencer@efc.ac.uk	020 8508 8311
Leyton Sixth Form College	Elaine.coughlan@leyton.ac.uk	020 8928 9000
Newham College	Matthew.Brooks@newham.ac.uk	020 7473 4110
Sir George Monoux College	Keris.McNaught@sgmc.ac.uk	020 8523 3544
The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London	Tbrowning@conel.ac.uk	020 8442 3055
Tower Hamlets College	Muir.Forest@tower.ac.uk	020 7510 7510
Waltham Forest College	Sandra.small@waltham.ac.uk	020 8501 8501

APPENDIX C – DECISION MAKING FLOWCHART

Decision making Flowchart: Assistance with Travel for Young People aged 16+ with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

