



# Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2020-21

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## Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2020/21

Transport policy statement for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged 19 and those young people aged 19 – 24 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Department Responsible: Passenger Transport

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### Policy Statement and Objectives

The Herefordshire Post 16 Transport Partnership is made up of Herefordshire Local Authority (LA), Herefordshire Colleges and other interested groups.

This Transport Partnership has defined an aim that no student should be prevented from accessing and completing further education because of lack of support. The Partnership has, therefore, drawn up a policy for transport of Post 16 students with this aim in mind.

Post 16 transport is discretionary and in the case of students aged 16 to 19 is subject to an annual contribution payable by the learner. Details of how to pay can be found on the Council's website [www.Herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk).

Arrangements for Post 16 transport are reviewed annually and confirmed in this statement published each May.

Although there is no automatic entitlement to free home to school transport for learners aged over 16 years old, The Partnership is committed to ensuring that an appropriate level of assistance is provided for those who need it most and is supportive of Government guidance which promotes access to education for all – especially those for whom additional arrangements are essential to achieve this.

There is a range of further education provision within the county and Herefordshire's transport policies support travel by promoting a safe and sustainable transport system to assist with access to education, training, employment and other essential services. Therefore most learners are able to access education through a variety of travel options already available to them and do not require any further assistance to help them make the necessary arrangements.

Key supporting council policies and programmes include:

- [Herefordshire Local Transport Plan](#)
- [Choose How You Move](#)
- [Herefordshire Sustainable Modes of Travel to School](#)
- [Disabled persons bus pass scheme](#)
- [Herefordshire Children and Young People's Plan](#)

## **1. Students living in Herefordshire and attending Post 16 provision within the County (and the provided places at Ludlow Campus)**

General Transport Policy with regard to Herefordshire students who attend Herefordshire Colleges of Further Education, including at Ludlow campus, Hereford Sixth Form College, and one of the three High Schools within Herefordshire. Please note that this policy relates solely to students over 16 years and under 19 years of age on 1 September.

### **1.1 Students are eligible for Travel Assistance on the following basis:**

A full-time student attending the sixth form of a secondary school or a Sixth Form College or a Further Education College qualifies for travel assistance provided that he/she satisfies the following conditions.

1. Must be over 16 years and under 19 years of age on 1<sup>st</sup> September
2. Is ordinarily resident in the area administered by Herefordshire Council in the appropriate time;
3. Lives more than three miles from the School or College by the nearest pedestrian route;
4. Is not in full-time employment nor sponsored by any government funded agency;
5. Is not already in receipt of a mandatory/discretionary/lodgings award from the authority and does not intend to apply for such an award/grant.
  - Students will cease to be eligible at 31<sup>st</sup> August following their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, even where they are continuing on the same course.
  - The Transport Partnership will decide upon the form of travel assistance provided with the administration being carried out by Herefordshire LA – Admissions and Transport Section.
  - In some circumstances students may be required to make their own way up to three miles to a designated boarding point or from an alighting point.
  - Students are expected to use existing local bus services, train services or contracted bus services unless these are not suitable.
  - In providing transport the Partnership will, where possible, place students on existing commercial or subsidised bus services, or trains. Where additional contracted vehicles are provided these will be integrated with the existing local bus network where this is appropriate.
  - General provision will be for one return journey at the start and end of the day, approximately 9.00am – 5.00pm, irrespective of varying attendance patterns at School/College. Students travelling on local bus services operated under contract to the Authority will be allowed to travel at other times of day, if suitable journeys exist. Where students travel on commercially operated local bus services, or trains, travel at other times of day will be subject to agreement between the Authority and the transport provider.
  - Assistance is not given to establishments in the private sector.

## **1.2 Definition of Full-time Education**

For transport purposes, full-time education for Post 16 students is defined as follows:

*Where a student attends a course at a School/College for at least 15 hours and at least seven sessions (morning, afternoon or evening) per week.*

## **1.3 Lodgings Allowances**

Where daily travel is considered to be unreasonable a Lodgings Allowance may be offered. Such an allowance will be means tested and will only apply to courses in the publicly maintained sector.

## **1.4 Travelling Allowances**

All students are generally expected to travel on local bus services, rail services or vehicles operated under contract to the Authority. If contract or public transport is either not available or not appropriate and there is no other sensible transport provision, reimbursement of costs via payment of a Personal Transport Budget may be available at the department's current rate. In making this concession the Transport Partnership expect that the use of the student's own transport has the full support of the parents, and that the student had appropriate car insurance especially if conveying other students. If a student also conveys other entitled students to School/College he/she may be able to claim an additional allowance.

In the case of a student who travels as a passenger in a car driven by a person who is not a student, e.g. travels with a parent, reimbursement is made at a separate mileage rate, unless the parent makes a special journey.

The range and nature of help provided with transport for Out of County placements are outlined in the following paragraphs.

## **1.5 Transport Policy for Post 16 students with Special Education Needs**

In the case of students with special educational needs, in the age range 16 years to 19 years on 1<sup>st</sup> September, transport may be provided to the nearest suitable school or further education institution, irrespective of the normal statutory walking distances defined for primary or secondary pupils, if walking is too difficult for the student. For SEN students aged 19 to 25 please refer to section 5.

## **1.6 Independent Travel Training**

Further education institutions within Herefordshire consider that use of public transport is an essential skill required for young people with Special Educational Needs to become independent and support Herefordshire Council's Independent Training programme.

Prior to a young person entering Post 16 Education, they will be assessed by the school they attend and/or by the Independent Travel Trainer, to determine the level to which they could travel independently. Full details of the Independent Travel Training can be found on the website [www.Herefordshire.gov.uk](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk) .

- Students will be provided with the most suitable form of transport, based on the assessment carried out by the school and/or the Independent Travel Trainer.
- Some students will never be able to achieve independent travel but if following this assessment it is recommended that a student is suitable for the programme, it is expected that parents will permit their child to embark on the programme.
- Students who have been identified as being suitable candidates for Independent Travel Training will be provided with the most suitable form of transport until such time that they are fully independent.
- Should a parent refuse permission for their child to be included on the Independent Travel Training programme, a bus pass or Travel Allowance may not be issued.

### **1.7 Journeys supported for Post 16 students (and parents where appropriate)**

Transport assistance may be given, in appropriate cases:

- a) To view a college prior to a firm application;
- b) To and from college each day or (in the case of residential courses) at the beginning and end of terms and at half terms;
- c) To attend a period of assessment required as part of the application and recruitment process;
- d) To attend any necessary case conferences and reviews.

The location of some colleges occasionally requires reasonable overnight accommodation costs to be met. Such costs are limited to the student and his/her parents only.

### **1.8 Types of travel assistance for Post 16 students:**

- a) If the college provides transport, students are expected to use it;
- b) If students are capable of using public transport independently, they are expected to do so – some colleges regard use of public transport as part of their students training.
- c) If appropriate, minibuses or taxis are arranged, with escorts when necessary, by the Education Department's Transport Section.
- d) If it is necessary for private transport to be used, a mileage rate is paid.
- e) Students with Special Educational Needs are expected to travel independently whenever appropriate. (see Independent Travel Training above)

## **1.9 Charges for Travel Assistance**

The Post 16 Transport Partnership will review charges each year following recommendations from Herefordshire Council. The current charges will be defined on the council's [website](#). It should also be noted that students will only be issued with a travel permit once the necessary payment has been made. If a student is found to be travelling on any vehicle administered by the Post 16 Transport Partnership without making payment they will be asked to leave the vehicle at the next appropriate boarding/stopping point. It will be the student's own responsibility to make the necessary journey home. Refunds are not available for passes issued for the Summer academic term.

## **2. Students who live outside Herefordshire but attend a 16 to 19 Sixth Form or Further Education establishment within the County**

### **2.1 Earl Mortimer College, John Masefield and John Kyrle High – Sixth Form provision**

Transport provision is not given by Herefordshire LA to students attending any of these High Schools from outside the County. Students should apply to their home LA if they consider that the Post 16 establishment is the most appropriate for their studies or that the establishment is their nearest.

### **2.2 Herefordshire Colleges of Further Education and Hereford Sixth Form College**

Transport provision is not normally given by the Partnership to students from outside the County who wish to attend these colleges. In the first instance, students should contact their home LA if they consider that the college is the most appropriate for their studies or that establishment is the nearest.

If a student is refused assistance from their own LA they may then apply to Herefordshire LA. The student will be required to pay the termly contribution required by Herefordshire Council, however, this arrangement can only proceed with the agreement of the College after the student has been offered a place.

## **3. Students living within Herefordshire but attending at 16 to 19 Sixth Form or Further Education establishment outside the County**

### **3.1 Areas served by Herefordshire & Ludlow College Ludlow Campus**

Herefordshire & Ludlow College of Further Education considered the provided establishment for the following civil parishes:

Adofrton, Aymestry, Brampton Bryan, Brimfield, Buckton and Coxhall, Burrington, Downton, Elton, Kinsham, Leinthall Starkes, Leintwardine, Lingen, Little Hereford, Orleton, Pipe Aston, Richards Castle, Stapleton, Walford, Lethon and Newton, Wigmore and Willey.

Students living in one of these designated parishes will be eligible for travel assistance under Section One

### **3.2 Other areas outside the County**

Generally there is no funding for students who attend an establishment outside the county, unless the appropriate course, which meets the individual's needs is not available within Herefordshire.

In such cases, lodgings allowance may be offered instead of travel assistance (see Lodgings Allowance under Section One).

## **4. Overseas Post 16 students**

The Department for Children, Schools and Families have for many years had a policy on the admission of pupils into Local Education Authority Maintained Schools. The current guidance is obtained in the Government's Code of Practice on School Admissions.

The Herefordshire Post 16 Transport Partnership had decided that transport assistance may only be offered to those students who have been resident in the United Kingdom for 3 years prior to the commencement of the course. However, should a spare seat be available on the College/Contract vehicle a travel pass may be issued at an appropriate fee determined at the time of application to the students.

## **5. SEN Students aged 19 to 25**

This policy applies to all students with SEN who are making a new application for travel assistance for a new higher education course or placement which starts on or after their 19th birthday.

### **5.1 Transport Assistance**

The Local Authority has a duty to encourage, enable and assist participation of all young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to 25 years of age. However, there is no automatic entitlement to free home to school transport if your child is over 16 at the beginning of the academic year (1st September). This is regardless of whether they are working a year behind.

Travel assistance will generally only be considered to the nearest provider with post 16 provision which, in the opinion of Herefordshire Council offers an appropriate course. An appropriate course is one that enables the young person to meet his or her learning and or employment objectives, or is specifically designed to meet the student's special educational needs. You should also meet the following criteria:

- You live in Herefordshire

- You have an Education, Health and Care plan and the course you are attending is aligned to the aspirations set in your EHCP
- You are attending a full time educational course (15 hours or more at least 3 days a week) at the nearest suitable (or most accessible) school or college to your home. If a similar suitable course is offered by an FE provider nearer to your home, you will not be eligible for support. You must be attending during the normal school/college day and during term time only.
- You are unable to travel to school/college/training without transport assistance
- There is no support available from people in your household, other family members, or personal assistants, who can assist you in traveling to the chosen educational placement.
- You have a journey of more than three miles from home to school/college and are unable to travel via free public transport. Or are unable to travel this distance because of your special educational needs and/or disabilities (please provide proof of this with your application).
- Herefordshire Council has arranged the educational placement.

We will use this information to decide whether we can provide you with transport assistance.

If you do not qualify for transport support, you or your parent/carer will need to arrange your own transport. There is no option to pay for transport in this case.

## **5.2 Transport Provision**

In assessing your application we will need to understand your specific circumstances and any supporting information so that we are able to identify the most appropriate transport support. You will need to provide this information on your application.

Where it is considered that transport support should be provided, assistance will be arranged in the most cost-effective way and will focus on support that will enable you to travel as independently as possible. Independent Travel Training can help support independence by developing personal, social and life skills by looking at the needs and capabilities of a young person. Where a young person is considered sufficiently capable, we will offer independent travel training to develop the skills to be able to travel more independently. Where you attain the necessary confidence and ability, we will expect you to travel independently to and from school/college.

The likely options that we will explore will include:

- Independent travel training in the event that local transport options are available and accessible with support



- Placement on existing services – were feasible. You may be required to meet the service at a point away from your home
- Personal travel budget so that you may arrange your own transport

In exceptional circumstances and where all other options have been explored we may provide a direct service. Where a direct transport service is provided this will comprise transport for one return journey from home to the school/college at the official beginning and end of the school/college day. Transport is not provided to meet a student's individual timetable, including pre or after-school/college clubs or extra-curricular activities. Transport is not provided for work experience placements, work-based learning or travel between establishments.

Entitlement will cease once you are aged over 25 at the start of an academic year.

### **5.3 Review of Transport Provision**

Travel assistance will be reviewed at least annually with you, parents/carers and education and care professionals who know you and are part of the EHC Plan review. You will be told of all decisions in writing. We need to ensure that the service provided continues to be appropriate and that you continue to meet the entitlement criteria.

Any applicant for whom travel assistance has been agreed may be asked to reapply each academic year. It should not be assumed that the same form of travel assistance will be agreed for a further period.

In every case, travel assistance will be reviewed following a house move, change in placement or course, or a change in needs (condition, medication or equipment) or any other change in circumstances which may be relevant. Such a review may mean that where transport has previously been agreed you may no longer be granted travel assistance.

### **5.4 How to apply for Transport Assistance**

If you believe you qualify for transport assistance, please apply online at [www.Herefordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport). Applications can be made at any time but you must allow up to 28 days for the issue of a travel pass, we are unable to refund travel expenses incurred while travelling without a pass.

The closing dates for applications for train passes are:

- Autumn term train pass - 11 September 2020
- Spring term train pass - 15 January 2021
- Summer term train pass - 16 April 2021

You may be required to supply supporting information along with your application.

## 6. Other transport options

A number of bus operators provide various forms of periodic ticketing which can be purchased by those post 16 students who wish to make their own arrangements accessing their further education provision.

**Stagecoach West and Wales** both operate a system of scholar season Tickets. Further details are available from [www.stagecoachbus.com](http://www.stagecoachbus.com)

**First Midland Red** operate a system of periodic tickets (weekly, monthly etc.). Further details from: [www.firstgroup.com](http://www.firstgroup.com)

**DRM** bus operate a system of periodic tickets (weekly, monthly etc.). Further details from [www.drmbus.com](http://www.drmbus.com)

**Sargeant Brothers** operate a system of periodic tickets (weekly, monthly etc.). Further details from: [www.sargeantsbros.com](http://www.sargeantsbros.com)

**Transport for Wales** operate a system of periodic tickets (weekly, monthly etc.). Further details from [www.tfwrail.wales](http://www.tfwrail.wales)

## 7. Bursary funding for 16-19 year olds

Access to financial support is available to post 16 students via the 16-19 Bursary Fund. This fund has two elements: A bursary for young people in defined vulnerable groups and discretionary awards by FE institutions to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their students. Further details can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

FE institutions are free to determine the assessment criteria for eligibility for discretionary bursaries, and the frequency of and conditions for payments for all awards; subject to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

## 8. Appealing against a decision made by the local authority regarding school/college transport assistance?

### 8.1 Stage 1

Parents have the right to appeal against the initial decision made by officers in Passenger Transport on the grounds of non-provision of transport.

All 1<sup>st</sup> stage appeals must be submitted by completing the Request for Review of Transport Entitlement Decision form available to download from the Council's website at this [link](#)

All appeals are individually assessed by a Senior Officer in the Transport and Access Department against the Authority's approved Home to School Transport Policy taking into account special circumstances. Evidence to substantiate any special circumstances must be supplied at the time of appeal.

Appellants are advised in writing, within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal detailing reasoning for the decision, including what factors were considered, details of who was consulted and information of how to escalate to the next stage.

## **8.2 Stage 2**

If the appellant is still not happy they can request that the complaint is referred to an independent review panel. All 2<sup>nd</sup> stage appeals must be submitted by completing the Request for Review of Transport Entitlement Decision form available to download from the Council's website at this [link](#). The Panel will be convened within 40 working days of the request. You will have the option to attend the panel hearing in person to present your case, or for the panel to review your case based on written evidence.

The Panel sends a decision letter within 5 working days, including detail of how to escalate to (Local Government Ombudsman) LGO.

Complaints with the way applications or appeals are handled should be made through the Authority's [complaints procedure](#).

## **9. Further information**

Further information on educational transport is available from [www.GOV.UK](http://www.GOV.UK)