



I request the disclosure of the following information held by the Council relating to statutory Home-to-School and Post-16 Transport provision.

Please provide the following data for the last three complete academic years (e.g., 2022/23, 2023/24, and 2024/25, or the last three years for which data is available):

Part 1: Students Assessed for Transport Eligibility

For all children and young people who were assessed for eligibility for Local Authority-funded home-to-school, college or education transport on the grounds of Special Educational Needs, Disability, or Mobility Problems (under the relevant sections of the Education Act 1996):

1. The total number of such assessments/applications received.
2. The total number of these students who were subsequently deemed eligible for transport assistance.

Year	Q1	Q2
22/23	510	410
23/24	578	515
24/25	591	476

Part 2: Motability Scheme and Transport Provision

For the students deemed eligible for transport assistance (as per Question 2 above), please provide the following breakdown of the Council's records:

3. The total number of eligible students whose transport was ultimately provided by the Local Authority via dedicated contracted vehicle (e.g., shared taxi, private hire car, or contracted minibus).
4. Of the students receiving dedicated contracted transport (as defined in Question 1 above), the number whose family or appointee declared the use of a Motability Scheme vehicle as part of the transport application/assessment process.
5. If possible, provide the cost of the student's dedicated contracted transport whose family or appointee declared the use of a Motability Scheme vehicle

Q3

The total number of eligible students provided with council organised transport for each of the years above re:

- 22/23 978
- 23/24 1093
- 24/25 1154

Q4 & Q5

We do not hold the information that you have requested in an easily retrievable format. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) relieves a public authority from the obligation to comply with a request for information where the estimated time required to locate, review and extract the information exceeds a certain threshold set out in Regulations.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3244) set out the rules in relation to the cost limit (otherwise called the "appropriate limit"). These Regulations are published by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI) and are viewable on their web site from this link:
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/uksi_20043244_en.pdf

The Regulations set out the cost limit for Government departments and for other public authorities. For local government, Regulation 3 states that the cost limit is £450 and Regulation 4(4) states that the prescribed hourly rate is £25. Regulation 4(4) further provides that where the local authority estimates the time taken to gather the information would exceed this limit (which based on the prescribed hourly rate, equates to 18 officer hours), it may refuse the request under section 12 of FoIA.

I am satisfied the cost limit applies to your request and will explain why this is the case

Applications are completed either through an on-line portal or using a paper version. All received applications would need to be reviewed individually and manually to obtain the response to provide the answer for Q3. In addition, the collation of historic information for the cost of routes would also be a manual process. Individual records would need to be reviewed for the three year period and this would take over 18 hours to complete by one member of staff.

Part 3: Policy Information

6. Do you require families or appointees to declare whether or not they have a Motability Scheme vehicle when applying/assessing for transport-to-school or education
7. Please provide a copy of the section of your most recent Home-to-School/College Transport Policy or associated guidance that specifically addresses the existence or use of a Motability Scheme vehicle by a family when determining their eligibility for transport-to-school or education and the type of support they can receive (mileage, contracted transport etc.)

6 Yes

7 Wigan Council's Home to School Transport Policy for 5-16 years does not include specific reference to Motability Scheme. However our Post 16 Transport Policy statement 2025-2026 does. The extract in regards to this and the type of support they can receive is;

Extract from Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025-2026

4.5 Eligibility Criteria

When determining eligibility for home-to-education travel support, the local authority will consider the following factors, in addition to the information contained within the application form:

- The age of the student, students must be over the age of 16 years,
- have an EHC plan and be attending a full-time college course (more than an average of 12 hours a week of supervised study).
- The walking distance from the individual's home to the relevant educational institution is more than 3 miles.
- An assessment of the young person's ability to travel independently, which may include an assessment undertaken by a travel trainer.
- Whether education/training provision is available at a nearer location to the young person's home address that offers a similar course.
- Whether attending a specialist college as a day pupil in a placement funded by the local authority High Needs Student Budget.
- The young person's physical mobility.
- Whether the young person has access to a Motability vehicle and whether it is reasonable to use it to travel to the relevant location.
- Whether all alternatives to local authority transport have been considered as set out in 4.2

4.2 Transport Assistance Offer

In line with the preparing for adulthood agenda of encouraging independence and building self-esteem, support for travel to college / education setting will take the following form:

- Mainstream Public Transport.
- Independent Travel Training.
- Personal Travel Budget (in the form of a mileage allowance).
- In exceptional circumstances, contracted transport from either pick up and drop off points or from home. Where transport is provided this may be shared with other students.

Transport provision will be available at the beginning and the end of the school/college day. It cannot be arranged for bespoke timetabling for individual students.