



Wigan[♥]
Council

Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025 - 2026

Post-16 Transport Policy Statement

Academic Year 2025 - 2026

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

Integrated Transport Unit - Environment Directorate

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Document Approved

5th June 2025

Review

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1. Transport Policy Statement

This policy applies to learners aged 16-18 in education and continuing learners aged 19 and over with learning difficulties or disabilities.

There is no automatic entitlement to free transport to school or college for students aged 16 and over. The council retains the discretionary power to determine the necessary travel assistance and provisions to support a young person's participation in education and training over the statutory school age.

Where the Council offers a travel solution to a young person in line with this discretionary power, this will reflect the young person's individual needs taking into consideration their circumstances. The outcome of this approach is to actively encourage young people to travel as independently as possible and to develop confidence, as well as essential travel and social skills that will support their future options and opportunities. This aligns with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice (2015) which states that 'providers should enable children and young people to have the information and skills they need to help them gain independence and prepare for adult life'.

2. Introduction

2.1 Introduction

This policy aims to inform young people and their families about travel options and support available, helping them to make informed decisions when selecting post-16 choices.

Local authorities are not required to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel support. Under Section 509AA of the Education Act (1996), they have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement. This policy outlines the arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the authority considers necessary to enable the attendance of all students of sixth-form age receiving education or training, as well as learners aged 19 to 25 with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCP).

Education or training refers to learning or training at a school, further education institution, a council maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education, an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency, learning providers delivering accredited

programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council: for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

Wherever possible, it is expected that parent/carers of young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or a disability make arrangements for their child to attend education in the same way as for parents/carers of children and young people who do not have SEND. This approach, including independent travel where appropriate, is an important factor in developing the children and young people's independence, social and life skills; providing a travel support framework to enable as many parents/carers to do this as possible is a key part of this policy.

In this context, the Council's approach to disability is to focus on the individual and their family in order to put appropriate support in place where this is necessary. The Council's vision is that disabled individuals will be enabled to access all opportunities available to them.

2.2 Definitions and Points of Clarification

'Sixth form age' refers to young people who are over 16 years of age but under 19 or continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday (years 12, 13, 14).

This policy uses the term 'Post 16' to include both learners of sixth form age and those with learning difficulties / disabilities up to the age of 25.

This policy document specifies the support that Wigan Council (the council) considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of Post 16 learners receiving education or training and the factors that will be considered in determining whether such support is required to be put in place.

Travel assistance in previous years does not guarantee any assistance post 16. All young people continuing their education post 16 must reapply for travel support.

2.3 Aims and Objectives

The objective of the statement is to support young people who need it most, removing transport as a barrier to their continued participation into further education. Travel assistance will only be provided if there are no appropriate alternative travel options available (be it personal, with the assistance of family or public transport) and when it is the only reasonable means of ensuring that the learner can safely access education.

The council has the following aims and objectives when assessing transport / travel support and is committed to:

- Promoting healthy, sustainable and safe travel solutions.
- Actively engaging and promoting good outcomes for all young people.
- Supporting young people to fulfil their potential.
- Promoting independent travelling for young people wherever possible, taking account of their needs and aspirations.
- Ensuring equality of opportunity and the celebration of diversity and an opposition to all forms of discrimination.
- Promoting sustainable, safe and healthy travel options.
- Ensuring the most efficient and effective use of public resources, delivering better outcomes and providing better value for money.

2.3 Legislation and Responsibilities

Parent/Carer and Young People's Responsibilities

A young person must stay in some form of education or training until their 18th birthday if they were born on or after 1 September 2004.

Options are:

- full-time education - e.g. at a school or college.
- an apprenticeship or traineeship
- part-time education or training - as well as being employed, self-employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.
- an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency.
- learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council: for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

A young person can leave their place of education on the last Friday in June as long as they will be 18 by the end of that year's summer holidays. There is an expectation that parents/carers will actively promote and support their young person to access and attend education and training.

Council Responsibilities

Section 509 AB(1) of the Education Act 1996 imposes a requirement that the Council should set out the extent to which the arrangements specified

in the EHCP can facilitate the attendance at schools and colleges of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The 16-18 transport duty relates to young people of sixth form age with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged up to 19.

The Council also has a duty under the Education and Skills Act 2008 to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training.

The Children and Families Act 2014 replaces the Statement of SEN and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDAs) for those over the age of 16 with an EHCP. Under the Act, the Council may continue to maintain an EHCP for young people over 19 if a young person requires additional time, in comparison to the majority of others of the same age who do not have SEN, to complete his or her education or training. Councils may continue to provide special educational provision until the end of the academic year in which the young person turns 25.

Arrangements cannot be limited to those young people who had been assessed as having particular transport needs prior to the age of 16. The Children and Families Act 2014 also places a duty on councils to publish a Local Offer setting out their services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and this must include information on the arrangements for travel to and from post-16 institutions.

The statutory guidance from the Department for Education on post-16 transport and travel support to education and training settings (January 2019) states that the transport needs of young people with SEND must be reassessed when a young person moves from compulsory schooling to post-16 education, even if the young person is remaining at the same educational setting.

3. Transport and Travel Support

3.1 Concessionary tickets for young people 16 – 25 from public transport providers

Greater Manchester is served by a vast network of reasonably priced and accessible transport. Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) offer many travel concessions and passes for young people, as do the bus companies serving the area. Wigan Council supports independent travel training for

young people with special educational needs to travel on public transport independently, which can enhance their future work and social opportunities.

Pass / Concession	Information	Weblink or contact information
Our Pass	Our Pass offers eligible 16–18-year-olds free bus travel on all registered bus services within Greater Manchester.	ourpass 0300 323 0777
TfGM Scholar's Permit	Full time students aged 16 -19 who are permanently resident in Greater Manchester can purchase a TfGM Scholar's Permit.	tfgm scholars-pass
System One Young Person	Young People/Students between ages 16 and 26 and in full time education can purchase the System One Young Person's ticket. Holders of a valid membership card can then purchase Young Person tickets	systemonetravelcards
Bee Network – Bee AnyBus travel tickets	For journeys that include travel on non-Bee Network bus services outside Greater Manchester, and starts or ends within the AnyBus boundary	Bee Anybus Travel tickets
Bee Network – Bee Bus travel tickets	For journeys on all bus services in Greater Manchester on Bee Network buses that travel across the	Bee Bus Travel Tickets

	Greater Manchester boundary	
Student Bee Bus tickets	Students attending a college or university within Greater Manchester can purchase a Student Bee Bus ticket. Student term tickets can be used at any time on Bee Network buses up to the last service of the day that the ticket expires.	Student Bee Bus tickets
System One County Card	Available to people of all ages and will allow travel on any train within Greater Manchester any day of the week up to 4am. The county card can also be used on the city centre tram, zone 1 only.	System One Travel
Travel Pass for Disabled People	A permit that allows people with eligible disabilities to travel for free and low cost on public transport in Greater Manchester, and the rest of England, under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme. Depending on your disability, you could qualify for a Travel Pass or a Travel Plus Pass for Disabled People.	Travel passes for disabled people
Care Leavers Travel Offer	Free local bus travel for 18–21-year-olds who are classed as a care leaver.	Free bus travel for care leavers

Ring and Ride	<p>Ring and Ride is a door-to-door public transport service for people who have difficulty using public transport. Ring and Ride provides short local trips to any location within Greater Manchester that is within 6 miles of the home address for you and an accompanying adult.</p> <p>To be eligible to use the Ring and Ride service you must hold a TfGM Concessionary Plus Pass or a TfGM Concessionary Disabled Person Pass.</p>	Ring & Ride
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3.2 Travel support from schools and colleges

Winstanley College

Winstanley College offers a number of private coach services travelling throughout the borough. Find further information about private and public transport to this college by following the link below;

[Transport - Winstanley College](#)

St John Rigby College

St John Rigby College offers a number of private coach services travelling throughout the borough. Find further information about private and public transport to this college by following the link below;

[Travelling to St John Rigby College - St John Rigby College](#)

Wigan and Leigh College

Find information about transport to this college by following the link below;

[Free Bus Travel - Wigan & Leigh College](#)

3.3 The 16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups.
2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment.

For more information on the 16 – 19 bursary, including eligibility, visit this website [16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#)

Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursaries. Young people who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application. Colleges will set their own eligibility criteria for the discretionary bursary but must comply with the eligibility conditions set out by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

3.4 Learner Support from schools/colleges

The Learner Support is available in colleges and school sixth forms to help with learning costs if you are aged 19 or over. The funds are prioritised for those who face financial hardship. They can be used to help with:

- Financial hardship and emergencies.
- Childcare costs (for Ofsted-registered childcare).
- Accommodation costs, for those who wish to access specialist courses or who are unable to access courses locally.
- Essential course-related equipment, materials and field trips; and,
- Travel costs.

Colleges determine priority groups and maximum amounts they award. They will consider whether there are alternative sources to help available.

You must apply directly to your college or learning provider. Each college or learning provider has its own application process.

For more information on Learner Support, including the eligibility criteria, please visit [Learner Support](#)

3.5 Young Parents / Care to Learn

The Care to Learn scheme can help with childcare costs while you study if you are under 20 at the start of your course.

For more information on types of childcare, payments, attendance, eligibility and types of courses please visit [care-to-learn](#).

4. Local Authority Support

A Local Authority's (LA) duties for Post 16 learners varies significantly from those duties for children in Year 11 or lower. The key impacts you should know about are:

- The LA no longer has to provide transport to a child who it has previously considered eligible.
- This document exhausts the transport and travel support on offer to learners (see paragraph 3 above) and the expectation is that most learners, including those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities, must access this support where they need it.
- Any travel assistance offered by the Council which is over and above the support already available as outlined at paragraph 3 will be based on an assessment of the individual circumstances. It is at the LA's discretion as to whether travel assistance is provided.
- The LA may exercise its discretion in exceptional circumstances.

4.1 Local Authority support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability

This policy promotes, supports and encourages the growing independence and social inclusion of all children and young people, as appropriate to their age and ability. Any support assistance will be the most efficient and effective in terms of both sustainability and cost. It will also ensure that we are supporting young people to prepare for adulthood and so will promote independent travel as a first option in all instances.

The transport needs of young people with special educational needs and disabilities must be reassessed when a young person moves from compulsory schooling to post -16 education, even if the young person is remaining at the same educational setting.

Travel Assistance may be offered in exceptional cases for those young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan where it is suitably demonstrated that it is necessary for such assistance to be put in place.

A young person will need to be able to demonstrate why they cannot access any of the travel solutions outlined in this policy statement. Travel Assistance will only be agreed following an assessment of need indicating a travel assistance solution will be required.

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.

4.3 Independent Travel Support

Independent travel training supports young people with the skills and confidence to be able to travel independently and safely using public transport or walking to support access to new opportunities and essential services.

The benefits of independent travel are:

- Helps develop skills and confidence to have new experiences.
- Provides young people with more control and choices.

- Increases opportunities for work experience, employment and education by preventing life restrictions.
- Increases opportunities for social and leisure activities, e.g. cinema, sports or bowling activities.
- Develops independence for young people (and parents/carers through less reliance on lifts/taxis).
- Helps improve understanding of community safety whilst travelling.
- Builds confidence for parents/carers as their young person becomes more independent.

Travel training in Wigan is delivered by Embrace – Wigan and Leigh. For information, visit [Transport and travel - SEND](#).

A Greater Manchester travel training guide will be available in summer 2025 which you will be able to locate on TfGM's website.

4.4 Personal Travel Budget

It may be possible for the Council to provide parents/carers with an amount of money to enable them to provide personalised travel arrangements to suit the needs of the young person and their family. The sum provided will be at the discretion of the Council and it will be based on the distance travelled from home to college. This considers the route from the parents/carers home address to college and the distance is measured using the Council's transport systems. The personal budget is then based on the mileage for two return journeys per day. The rate per mile is currently paid at £0.45.

Personal travel budgets (PTB) provide for a variety of flexible support options such as:

- Drive a student to college or school yourself.
- Arrange for a friend or relative to cycle or walk with the student.
- Car share with other parents.
- Get a bus pass for a friend to accompany the student.
- Use it towards the cost of a taxi or share the cost of the taxi with other parents.
- Support the cost of before and after school clubs for other children in the family.

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.

4.6 Apprenticeships

Learning providers are responsible for ensuring that non-employed Programme-led Apprentices have reasonable expenses met in full where these are needed to overcome barriers to learning. These may include the cost of travelling to or from the place of learning or work placement. Employers and learning providers should take account of learners' likely transport arrangements when planning off-the-job training, particularly outside normal working hours. The costs of expenses for Learners can be claimed by learning providers against the Additional Learner Support allocation on the Training Provider Statement.

4.7 Access to Work

[Access to Work](#) is a discretionary grant scheme delivered by DWP which can assist in paying for practical support to enable disabled people or those with health conditions to overcome workplace barriers.

Access to Work can pay for things such as: specialist equipment; adaptations to equipment and workplace; a support worker or job coach; communication support; additional travel costs of getting to work if someone is unable to use public transport or drive themselves; disability awareness training for employers about the employee's specific condition.

For supported interns, this means Access to Work can fund:

- Job coaches.
- Assistance to travel to and from work if the intern cannot use public transport or drive themselves.
- Specialist equipment for the intern to use at work.

4.8 Those not in education, employment or training (NEET)

Local authorities should also consider the needs of those who are vulnerable to becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) at the age of 16 or 17 or who have already become NEET. These young people should be offered a suitable course of education or training and where necessary and appropriate they should be provided with transport support enable them to participate.

4.9 LA support in other circumstances

Travel assistance is available to students with SEND with an EHCP on courses outside of Wigan, provided this is the nearest suitable course and the placement has been approved by the SEND team. Eligibility and travel support offers will be determined in accordance with 4.2 and 4.5.

If you need to study because your course is not available locally, you may get help with the cost of term time accommodation. For information visit [Get funding for college accommodation](#)

Students with SEND who are educated in Residential Colleges are entitled to claim the cost of 4 single trips to college each term. The amount to be refunded will be based upon public transport rates or a mileage rate of 45p per mile. Students or their carers wishing to apply for this travel assistance support should do so by completing the application from found at:

[Post-16 SEND Travel Assistance Application](#)

[Post-19 SEND Travel Assistance Application](#)

5. Application, Review and Appeals Processes

5.1 Applying for LA Travel Assistance

The parent/carer or young person must make a formal application for travel support to access education before any assistance is considered. The Council may request the provision of written evidence from education specialists and/or medical experts.

It remains the legal responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure that their compulsory school aged child attends school regularly.

Requests for assistance with travel arrangements should be submitted to the Transport Team using the appropriate application form. To apply for local authority travel support, please use the link below.

[Post-16 SEND Travel Assistance Application](#)

[Post-19 SEND Travel Assistance Application](#)

5.2 Changes in Circumstances

It is the parent's/carer's/young person's responsibility to inform the Council of any changes in their circumstances.

A change in circumstances may mean a previously declined application may be accepted and the parent/carer/young person is able to reapply. In addition, a change in circumstances for an existing travel solution may mean no longer meeting the eligibility criteria and the travel solution could therefore be withdrawn.

Changes in circumstances could include, for example, a change in an individual's home address, a move from one school to another, a change in medical and/or physical conditions, or move into Council care.

All changes in circumstances must be notified in writing without delay to ITU@wigan.gov.uk

5.3 Health and Safety

Whilst the council endeavours to meet the presenting needs of young people, if the safety of other passengers is compromised, through breaches

of the Code of Conduct, the Council reserves the right to suspend or withdraw the travel solution without notice.

There is an expectation that the parent/carer and/or the child/young person signs a Code of Conduct. The Transport Team reserves the right to withdraw the offer of a travel solution if the child/young person or parent/carer refuses to sign the Code of Conduct.

Parents/carers will be expected to ensure their child's / young person's continued attendance at school when a travel solution is withdrawn.

5.4 Appeals

If an application for travel arrangements is not approved by the Council, or the parent/carer/young person disagrees with the type of arrangements being offered, parents/carers/young person have a right of appeal. The appeal should be made by completing the online appeals form found at [Transport Stage1 Appeal Form](#) within 20 working days of the decision letter being received by the parents/carers/young person.

Appeals are administered in two stages:

Stage 1: Review by Senior Officer within the Transport team

Parent/carer/young person will be sent confirmation that their appeal has been received and that their appeal is under review. Further evidence may be requested to support the appeal and consultation with case workers and professional bodies may be required. Stage 1 appeals are decided by a head of service or senior officer. Parents/carers/young person should receive their decision letter within twenty working days of their appeal form being received.

Stage 2: Independent Panel – Independent Review of Evidence

If the parent/carer/young person remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they should notify the Council by completing the online appeals form found at [Transport Stage2 Appeal](#) within 20 working days of receiving their Stage 1 appeal decision making clear the grounds on which they still wish to appeal.

The appeal will then be considered by an independent appeal panel and will involve consideration of all evidence gathered and the reasons for the

decision being made. Parents/carers/young person will be invited to attend an appeal hearing, virtually or in person, to present their case. Where a parent does not wish or is unable to attend a hearing, the panel will make their decision based on written representations from the parent/carer/young person.

Parents/carer/young person should receive their decision letter within forty working days of their notification to the Council of their wish to escalate their appeal to stage 2.

This decision is the final stage of the Council's appeal procedure in relation to travel arrangements. If parents/carers/young person remain dissatisfied they can contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

During the appeals process, no new travel arrangements will be provided, or, in the case of existing arrangements, no change will be implemented.

If after the appeal, travel assistance is agreed, it will commence from the date of the letter sent to the parent / carer/young person. No backdated payments will be made, nor will the Council accept any claims by parents/carers/young person for costs incurred (e.g. for making alternative transport during the process of appeal).