



# **East Sussex County Council**

## **Post-16 Transport Policy Statement**

**2024 - 2025**

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## Introduction

Local authorities do not have 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 arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the authority considers necessary to make to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

All young people carrying on their education post 16 must apply for travel support.

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

Local authorities also have a duty to encourage, enable and assist young people with learning difficulties / disabilities to participate in education and training, up to the age of 25.

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 East Sussex County Council (the council) considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of Post 16 learners receiving education or training.

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.

## Aims and objectives

East Sussex County Council aims to have a clear policy that families understand, to enable learners to make decisions about where to study having considered the transport options available to them, and to signpost them to other support as appropriate.

East Sussex County Council has published separate policies outlining the transport assistance the council provides to young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The policies can be found at:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/education-learning/schools/transport/policies-appeals/policies>

These students may not be able to use public transport and/or may have long and expensive journeys to access a suitable course nearest to their home.

The County Council encourages young people to become more independent and offers training to students to help them to travel independently. This training will also help young people to access leisure facilities and provide opportunities for employment.

In addition to the published policies, for ease of reference, the eligibility criteria are set out in section called **LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability** (see pages 9-13). Please note that learners of sixth form age have different eligibility criteria to Adult Learners.

## Transport and travel support

**Concessionary tickets for young people 16 - 25 from public transport providers including council run vehicles** (*information correct as at May 2024 and is subject to change*)

- Bus travel concessions

**Under 19s pay £3.20** for a multi-operator day ticket - accepted on other operator's services. Tickets can be purchased from the operator directly. Either through their app (Brighton & Hove Buses, Stagecoach and Metrobus) or as a paper ticket on all participating operators except Brighton & Hove Buses.

Multi-operator day tickets are accepted on: Stagecoach, Brighton & Hove Buses, Metrobus, Compass, Cuckmere services in East Sussex.

**19 to 29 pay £3.75** for the multi-operator day ticket - available now on Stagecoach services and **coming soon** to other operators' services.

**Freedom Weekly Ticket:** a Freedom weekly ticket for under 19s is available for £15. That's £3 per day if you travel 5 days a week and £2.14 per day if you travel every day of the week. This ticket gives the bus pass holder unlimited (travel on as many bus services as you like with as many operators as you like) on every bus in East Sussex for seven days in a row, at all times and days of the year.

**UNACCOMPANIED under 19s** can buy a single fare for £1 after 6pm on school days and anytime on non-school days.

Proof of age may be required so under 19s can apply for a 3i-D card. To find out more about other discounts and applying for the ID card visit [www.3i-d.co.uk](http://www.3i-d.co.uk)

Please be aware that all bus tickets are currently subsidised by Government funding. This funding runs until the end of March 2025, so prices for bus tickets could increase if no additional Government funding is made available to the Council after this date. The ticket prices affected, if funding ends, would be the under 19s multi operator day ticket, the 19 to 29 multi operator day ticket, the Freedom weekly ticket and the under 19s unaccompanied ticket.

- Train travel concessions

#### Discounts for 16 and 17 year olds

16 and 17 year olds with the 16-17 Saver will be eligible for 50% off standard Anytime, Off-Peak, Advance and Season tickets.

The 16-17 Saver is available to buy for £30 online at [www.16-17saver.co.uk](http://www.16-17saver.co.uk)

The 16-17 Saver is valid for one year or up until the holder's 18th birthday, whichever comes first. However, season tickets bought with a 16-17 Saver discount before it expires, can be used for up to 4 months after the expiry date.

#### 16 to 25 railcard

The [16 to 25 railcard](#) offers 33% off a wide range of tickets for those not travelling each day (subject to a minimum fare).

#### Unizone rail ticket (college and university students)

The Unizone ticket gives unlimited discounted travel for a fixed price those who study in or around Brighton or Worthing. To qualify for a Unizone ticket, a student will need a 16-25 Railcard and valid ID confirming attendance in further or higher education.

Find out more at [Southern Railway](#)

Please visit [eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/public](http://eastsussex.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/public) to find out more information on public transport services.

- Coaches serving school sixth forms

Students attending schools with sixth forms, where hired vehicles are available, can purchase a travel permit for a vacant seat. The cost from September 2024 is £188.70 per term based on a six-term year. Full details of buying a seat on school transport can be found online at [Request a vacant seat | East Sussex County Council](#)

## Travel support from schools and colleges

Some schools and colleges provide their own transport for students. Details can be found below and are correct at the time of publication. However, they may be subject to change by the provider themselves without prior notification to East Sussex County Council. Students are advised to contact their school/college directly regarding any possible changes.

- Heathfield Community College - runs two services in conjunction with local bus companies. Payments for these services are made termly across the academic year. Students in receipt of the 16-19 Bursary can have help with transport costs. The services are partially subsidised by the College for all students.

Find out more at [Heathfield Community College](#) or by contacting the College directly.

If your school/college is not listed above, please contact them directly for up-to-date information regarding any transport and/or support they may be able to offer, particularly if the school or college is outside of East Sussex.

## 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 below:

- in care
- care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, in their own right
- in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right
- discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment. To be eligible for the discretionary bursary young people must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2024 or

- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2024 and have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2024 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- be studying a programme that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be funded by either a Government funding agency or the local authority.

Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursary. Young people who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application.

Further information can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) - search for post 16 bursaries.

## Hardship Fund

The following colleges have been allocated extra council funds to assist the most disadvantaged learners to access their course. These funds can be issued **in addition to** Bursary Funds. Learners should make enquiries to Student Services at their college.

- East Sussex College Group - Eastbourne, Hastings and Lewes
- Plumpton College
- Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> Form College
- DV8 Bexhill & Brighton

## Young parents / Care to Learn

If you are a young parent under 20, Care to Learn can help pay for your childcare and related travel costs, up to £160 per child per week, while you're learning.

Care to Learn can help with the cost of:

- childcare, including deposit and registration fees
- a childcare 'taster' session (up to 5 days)
- keeping your childcare place over the summer holidays
- taking your child to the childcare provider

### Types of child care

The childcare provider must be Ofsted registered and can be a:

- childminder
- day nursery
- pre-school playgroup
- out of school club

If your child needs specialist childcare, the provider must also be on the Care Quality Commission's register for specialist provision.

If you want a relative to get Care to Learn for looking after your child they need to be both:

- providing registered childcare for children they're not related to
- living apart from you and your child

## Payments

Childcare payments go directly to your childcare provider. Before your childcare provider can be paid:

- your childcare provider needs to confirm your child's attendance
- your school or college needs to confirm that you're attending your course

Payments for travel costs go to your school or college - they'll either pay you or arrange travel for you.

## Attendance

Payments will stop if:

- you stop attending your course
- you finish your course
- your child stops attending childcare

## Eligibility

You can get Care to Learn if:

- you're a parent under 20 at the start of your course
- you're the main carer for your child
- you live in England
- you're either a British citizen or a national of a European Economic Area country
- your course is publicly funded (check with your school or college)
- your childcare provider is registered with Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission

## Type of course

Care to Learn is only available for courses in England that have some public funding.

This includes courses that take place in:

- schools
- school sixth forms
- sixth form colleges
- other colleges and learning providers, including Foundation Learning
- your community at Children's Centres

Young parents are also entitled to apply for an Under 19 Bus Only Ticket or for those aged 19 and over can apply for the 19 - 25 card. For more information, please visit [www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/how-to-claim)

## LA support

### LA support for young people without special educational needs or disabilities

The Council regards where a student decides to study as an individual choice but considers it essential that students (and their parents) weigh up the home to college journey when deciding which school/college to attend as the Council does not have

a duty to provide transport assistance to post 16 students other than the arrangements contained in this policy.

The Council has considered the needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to access education or training provision if no arrangements were made and considers that the various concessionary schemes available to students, coupled with financial support for those with genuine money difficulties results in there being sufficient access for all students to attend the school/college of their reasonable choice, irrespective of its location and their home.

Public transport services cannot be tailored to meet individual timetables and students are expected to make suitable adjustments to their travel arrangements to facilitate attendance.

Journey length, rurality and the nature of the route are factors for families to consider and these issues do not, in themselves, confer an entitlement to transport assistance.

## **LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability**

East Sussex County Council recognises that some students with learning difficulties or disabilities may not be able to travel to school or college independently or may not yet be ready to do so.

### Criteria for help (16-19 students)

Students with learning difficulties or disabilities, or their parents or carers may apply for travel assistance. Each case will be considered by the council and support will usually only be considered further if all the following criteria are fulfilled. We call this the Gateway criteria.

- The student lives in East Sussex;
- The student has a current EHC plan;
- The student will be attending the equivalent of a full-time educational course which allows for appropriate progression;
- The placement is the nearest suitable college to their home address and named in the student's EHC plan;
- The student does not have the ability travel independently.

If these gateway criteria are met, the Council will then consider the circumstances of the student and the family and their broader network, to assess whether it is necessary to provide transport for the student. The Council thinks it is reasonable for parents/carers to prioritise transporting the student over other commitments.

The following factors will be considered when determining the eligibility of the student to receive an offer and what offer should be made. Other relevant case specific factors will also be considered.

1. Nature of the journey for the student/family for example, the distance, likely journey time, and complexity of the journey by road, public transport or on foot; whether the journey on foot or public transport could be reasonably made if the student is accompanied.



2. Parent/carer/broader network availability to accompany for example, the current commitments of the parent(s)/carer(s) and broader network; whether the student's family or broader network is reasonably able to transport or accompany them, given all other factors. Parents/carers will be expected to prioritise transporting the student over other commitments such as (but not exclusively):
  - taking pre-school aged children to nursery;
  - voluntary work;
  - undertaking work commitments that can reasonably be carried out at times other than at college start and end times, for example when self-employed or on flexible work contracts.unless doing so is unreasonable in all the circumstances.
3. Available suitable vehicle and/or disability benefits for example, whether the family has a suitable vehicle, which may include a Motability vehicle; whether the student is receiving PIP with a component intended to support travel; any current social care support.
4. The student's needs relating to travel for example, whether the student has complex needs, and/or requires a second person on transport; if independent travel is a realistic goal, and whether this has been appropriately encouraged by the family.
5. Other relevant factors, for example, the health of the parent/carer and the potential impact of providing transport or accompanying the student, given all other factors.

The following evidence may be required in addition to an application for travel assistance:

1. Recent evidence from a relevant health and/or educational professional regarding the SEND of the student and how this impacts on the need for travel assistance, their ability to walk or travel on public transport, accompanied or otherwise.
2. Recent evidence from a relevant health professional regarding a parent/carer's health, if this means that they are not able to accompany or transport the student themselves.
3. Evidence from the parent/carer's employer regarding their work commitments, to include working hours, days, times, location of work and distance in miles from home to work and from the placement to work.
4. Written evidence to demonstrate other commitments, although broader caring responsibilities would not normally be considered as a reason why a parent/carer would not be able to transport the student, as the family would be expected to find alternative solutions in most cases.

### Contribution towards post 16 travel assistance

Where travel assistance is agreed, a contribution towards to the cost of travel is required for students of sixth form age - those over 16 years but under 19 years - or continuing

learners who started their programme before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. The contribution is based on the current cost of a 'Freedom' bus ticket and is reviewed annually. In the academic year 2024/25 this is £570 per year. Payment can be made in 10 instalments. Transport will not be arranged until payment in advance is made. If subsequent payments are late, transport will be suspended or even cancelled.

Low-income families are required to contribute half of the amount - £285. To qualify as Low Income, the applicant must meet the same eligibility criteria as for Free School Meals. More information on eligibility can be found on ESCC's website at <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals>

### Criteria for help (Adult learners)

The gateway criteria set out for the 16-19 students applies. If an adult learner meets the gateway criteria the Council will take into account the following factors when determining whether transport is necessary and what offer should be made.

1. Nature of the journey for the adult learner for example, the distance, likely journey time, and complexity of the journey by road, public transport or on foot; whether the journey on foot or public transport could be reasonably made if the adult learner is accompanied.
2. Parent/carer/broader network ability to provide transport support, e.g. accompanying the learner on some journeys; transporting the learner on certain days.
3. Available suitable vehicle for example, whether the adult learner has a vehicle for their use, which may include a Motability vehicle.
4. The adult learner's needs relating to travel for example, whether the adult learner has complex needs, and/or requires a second person on transport; if independent travel is a realistic goal.
5. Any income available to the adult learner that can reasonably be expected to be used to fund transport to and from college. This may include, for example, a college bursary, disability benefits or the mobility component of personal independence payments (PIP).
6. The financial circumstances of the adult learner and potential impact of a declined application. A financial statement will be requested in support of the application to determine reasonable outgoings on essential items.
7. Advice from the college, for example, whether independent travel training is part of the learning programme.
8. Other relevant factors.

The following evidence may be required in addition to an application for travel assistance:

- Recent evidence from a relevant health and/or educational professional regarding the SEND of the adult learner and how these impact on the need for travel assistance, their ability to walk or travel on public transport, accompanied or otherwise.
- A copy of the care and support plan (if applicable)
- Where the parent/carer is stated as being the primary carer/advocate for the adult learner and/or in receipt of Carer's Allowance, further evidence may be required regarding the support with transport they are able to provide (if any).

In the case of adult learners, if the council agrees transport is **necessary** it will be provided free of charge.

### Type of help given

It is for the Council to identify the most suitable, cost-effective mode of transport to get students between home and college, taking account of any special arrangements to support the student's particular needs. This may be one of the following:

- Independent Travel Training (ITT)
- A Personal Travel Budget (PTB)
- Minibus or taxi

Please note that minibus or taxi travel will usually only be provided if necessity is proven and for students with severe disabilities and/or the most complex health needs. This type of transport is shared with other students unless a needs assessment determines that this is not reasonable and may not be a door-to-door service.

### Service limitations

Students will usually only be transported at published school/college start and finish times, and they may be expected to enable sharing with other students through early arrival or delayed collection if safe to do so; or students may need to arrive earlier or leave later than their taught hours in college.

An offer of travel assistance may be part-week or involve a pick-up or drop-off point.

Transport will not be provided for the following:

- Temporary addresses. This is a domestic matter for families to resolve.
- Journeys to and from other destinations. Transport is not offered to or from points other than the college/education centre and home or pick up/drop off points.
- To take account of work/business commitments or domestic difficulties of parents/carers.
- To accommodate attendance at before or after school or college activities or homework clubs.
- Before or after medical appointments
- To accommodate work experience or off-site educational placements
- For pre-course visits, 'taster' days or parents' evenings/visits
- In the event of sickness where a student has to be collected from college
- Specific exam timetables that start or finish outside of the normal college day
- College trips or educational visits

### Review of travel provision

A new application must be made if the student moves to a new home or the family's circumstances change.

Failure to inform us of a change of circumstances may result in having to pay back for costs incurred by the Council.

The mode of travel assistance being offered will also be reviewed regularly to make sure that the service provided continues to be appropriate for the student's needs and the most cost effective for the Council.

## **Refunds**

We do not reimburse travel costs incurred before an application is made.

## **Travel training**

Based on the information given in an application, students will be assessed for suitability for our Independent Travel Training (ITT) programme, which can provide a young person with the skills and confidence for greater independence in their adult life. A young person who is ready for travel training may be offered temporary travel assistance until they have progressed to being independent on their journey to school or college.

What can travel training provide?

The trainer works with the student and family. They tailor the programme to their journey from home to their school or college. The training sessions with the student are one-to-one. The needs of the young person determine the length of the course. The student gains independence gradually over several weeks. Progress is closely monitored, and students only move on through the programme when the trainer feels they are ready. On the final journeys the trainer follows the student without any contact unless needed.

Find out more online about [eastsussex.gov.uk/traveltraining](https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/traveltraining)

## **Other travel assistance available if application declined**

Where it is decided that travel assistance will not be provided by the Council, but the gateway criteria as set out in the policy are met, the parent/carer may be offered a low-income mileage allowance.

This scheme is available to low-income parents/carers who have to travel long distances (over 10 miles) to transport the student to the college named in their EHCP. The mileage allowance given will be 25p per mile for one return journey per day for the miles beyond the first 10 mile of the journey from home. For example, where the distance from home to college is 15 miles, the allowance given will be calculated as 2 journeys x 5 miles x 25p. Proof of attendance will be sought from the school/college.

If you think that you may be eligible for this low income mileage allowance, make an application via the online application form available at:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/education-learning/schools/transport/send-transport>

## **Apprenticeships**

Students doing apprenticeships should apply to their employer or learning provider to have reasonable travel expenses met.

## Applying for LA transport support

Applicants must use our online form found at [eastsussex.gov.uk/sendtravel](https://eastsussex.gov.uk/sendtravel) For support with completing an application please email [SEN.transport@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:SEN.transport@eastsussex.gov.uk)

Those without internet access can contact 01273 335530 to arrange for a form to be sent.

## Appeals

If an application is declined, applicants can follow our two-stage appeal procedure. Find out more at [transport appeals](#).

## Mainstream college and sixth form contact information

### Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> form College

Website: [Bexhill 6<sup>th</sup> Form College](#)

Telephone: 01424 214545

Email: [enquiries@bexhillcollege.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@bexhillcollege.ac.uk)

### East Sussex College (Eastbourne, Lewes and Hastings)

Website: [East Sussex College](#)

Telephone (Eastbourne): 030 300 39300 - Email: [Eastbourne.admissions@escg.ac.uk](mailto:Eastbourne.admissions@escg.ac.uk)

Telephone (Lewes): 030 300 39200 - Email: [Lewes.admissions@escg.ac.uk](mailto:Lewes.admissions@escg.ac.uk)

Telephone (Hastings): 030 300 39400 - Email: [Hastings.admissions@escg.ac.uk](mailto:Hastings.admissions@escg.ac.uk)

### Plumpton College

Website: [Plumpton College](#)

Telephone: 01273 890454

Email: [enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@plumpton.ac.uk)

### DV8 Sussex

Website: [DV8 Sussex](#)

Telephone: 01424 213890 (Bexhill campus) Telephone: 01273 550432 (Brighton campus)

### Ark sixth form East Sussex

Website: [Sixth form | Ark Alexandra](#)

Telephone: 01424 439888

Email: [sixthform@arkacademy.org](mailto:sixthform@arkacademy.org)

### Beacon Academy sixth form

Website: [Beacon Academy sixth form](#)

Telephone: 01892 603018

Email: [enquiries@beacon-academy.org](mailto:enquiries@beacon-academy.org)

### **Hailsham CC sixth form**

Website: [Hailsham CC sixth form](#)

Telephone: 01323 841468

Email: [hcc@hccat.net](mailto:hcc@hccat.net)

### **Heathfield CC sixth form**

Website: [Heathfield CC sixth form](#)

Telephone: 01435 866066

Email: [office@heathfieldcc.co.uk](mailto:office@heathfieldcc.co.uk)

### **Seaford Head School sixth form**

Website: [Seaford Head School sixth form](#)

Telephone: 01323 872723

Email: [reception@seafordhead.org](mailto:reception@seafordhead.org)

### **Uckfield College sixth form**

Website: [Uckfield College sixth form](#)

Telephone: 01825 764844

Email: [office@uckfield.college](mailto:office@uckfield.college)

### **Uplands Academy sixth form\***

Website: [Uplands CC sixth form](#)

Telephone: 01892 782135

Email: [office@uplandsc.com](mailto:office@uplandsc.com)

\*Uplands has recently consulted on closing their sixth form. If the proposal goes ahead, there will be no new admissions to Uplands Academy sixth form from September 2024. Those students currently in year 12 would have full access to their studies as they moved into year 13, so they can complete their courses in Summer 2025. This would mean that from September 2025 the sixth form at Uplands Academy would fully close.

## **Consultation**

Each year local authorities are required to consult young people of sixth form age and their parents as well as other stakeholders on the Post 16 Transport Policy statement before it is finalised. Consultation lasts for a minimum of 4 weeks.

The policy could be changed in the future and the current support available does not amount to a legitimate expectation that it will continue to be offered.