

**HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE POLICY
AND
PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL'S TRANSPORT
STATEMENT FOR POST 16 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES**

Updated April 2017

Introduction

1. The legal responsibility for ensuring a child's attendance at school rests with the child's parent/carer. Generally, parents/carers are expected to make their own arrangements for ensuring that their child gets to and from school. The Local Authority is under a statutory duty to provide transport as set out in Education Act 1996 which outlines the categories of children and young persons of compulsory school age (5-16) who are eligible for free school transport. The Council's policy is to provide free school transport (referred to in the Act as "travel assistance") to those categories of eligible children in accordance with its legal obligations. Otherwise it will be at the Local Authority's discretion, where there are exceptional circumstances.
2. This revised document (revised in April 2017) incorporates the changes that Portsmouth City Council has made to its home to school transport provision following a consultation with stakeholders that was completed in March 2017. This policy is effective from 31st May 2017 and applies to any application received thereafter. The policy will be subject to regular review.
3. The Home to School Transport Policy and Portsmouth City Council's Transport Statement for Post 16 Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities outlines the criteria for which transport assistance might be provided for:
 - a. children of statutory school age, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, attending mainstream schools and special schools or a resourced provision;
 - b. young people with special educational needs and disabilities in a further education setting.
4. Transport assistance will be provided where the Statutory Criteria (SC) are met and on non-statutory grounds where the Exceptional Circumstances Criteria (ECC) are met.
5. The layout of the document is aimed at helping parents and carers to find their way through if they believe they are entitled to free home to school transport. It is divided into five parts:
 - a. Statutory Transport Criteria (Part One).
 - b. Portsmouth City Council's Transport Statement for Post 16 Learners in Further Education and continued learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (Part Two)
 - c. Non statutory assistance under the Exceptional Circumstances Criteria (Part Three)
 - d. Important information (Part Four)
 - e. Appendices (Part Five)

Part One: Statutory criteria for transport assistance for children of statutory school age

a) Criteria for Travel Assistance to mainstream schools

SCHOOL AGED CHILDREN - Reception - YEAR 11 HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE		
Section	Who Can We Help?	What Are The Criteria?
1	Children living further than the statutory walking distance from their designated catchment school or a nearer school.	<p>Children in Reception Year to aged 8 years old, who live over 2 miles (but less than 6 miles) from their designated catchment school measured by the shortest walking route between the home and the school, qualifying special school, or a nearer school.</p> <p>Children aged 8 years old to Year 11 who live over 3 miles (but less than 6 miles) from their designated catchment school. This is measured by the shortest walking route between the home and the school, qualifying special school or a nearer school. Generally, journey times must not exceed 45 minutes.</p> <p>Where parents express a preference for the designated catchment school, special school or a nearer school, and the school is unable to offer a place, travel assistance will be offered to the next nearest school or special school with a place available, providing the distance criteria outlined above is met.</p>
2	Children with an Education Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs.	<p>Children attending their designated catchment school, or a nearer school, or qualifying special school who are unable to walk to school (accompanied or unaccompanied) by reason of their special education needs, disability or mobility problem. Generally, journey times must not exceed 45 minutes.</p>
3	Children of disabled parents	<p>A single parent (or where both parents have a disability, each parent) must provide evidence from a medical professional stating the impact of their condition on their ability to accompany their primary aged child(ren) or secondary aged child(ren) with special educational needs to school. The child(ren) must attend their designated catchment school, qualifying special school or a nearer school. Generally, journey times must not exceed 45 minutes.</p>

FAMILIES ON LOW INCOME WITH PRIMARY AGED CHILDREN - AGE 8 TO AGE 10 YEARS		
Section	Who Can We Help?	What Are The Criteria?
4	Parents or carers with financial responsibility for a child or children and who meet the criteria for low income.	Children aged 8 years to age 10 years, attending their designated catchment school or nearer school, who live over 2 miles) from the school measured by the shortest walking route AND who are entitled to free school meals or whose parents are entitled to the MAXIMUM level of working tax credit.
FAMILIES ON LOW INCOME WITH SECONDARY AGED CHILDREN - YEAR 7-YEAR 11		
Section	Who Can We Help?	What Are The Criteria?
5	Parents/carers with financial responsibility for a child or children and who meet the criteria for low income.	Children in Year 7 to Year 11 who live over 2 miles (but less than 6 miles) from their home address to one of the three nearest schools, measured by the shortest walking route AND who are entitled to free school meals or whose parents are entitled to the MAXIMUM level of working tax credit.*
6	Parents/carers with financial responsibility for a child or children and who meet the criteria for low income and attend the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief	Children in Year 7 to Year 11 who live over 2 miles (but not more than 15 miles) from their home address to the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief and who are entitled to free school meals or whose parents are entitled to the MAXIMUM level of working tax credit.**

- For some students living in the PO6 post code area, one the three nearest schools may be situated within another Local Authority area. If a parent/carer choses to send their child/children to a school outside of Portsmouth, we will consider transport to that neighbouring Local Authority school, if it is one of the three nearest to the student's home address. However, If a parent/carer wishes to send their child/children to a school within the Portsmouth boundary, only the three nearest schools within the Portsmouth boundary will be considered as being one of the three nearest schools.

****** For some students living in the PO6 post code area, the nearest faith school may be situated within another Local Authority area. If a parent/carer chooses to send their child/children to a faith school outside of Portsmouth, we will consider transport to that neighbouring faith school, if it is the nearest faith school to the home address. For students living outside of the PO6 post code area, we will only consider transport to St Edmunds Catholic School the designated faith school for Portsmouth residents.

6. Children who do not meet the statutory criteria for home to school transport assistance, outlined on Pages 3 and 4 of this Policy, may be eligible for assistance with transport to school if they meet the criteria for exceptional circumstances. (see Part three).

Looked After Children

7. When a looked after child with an Education Health and Care Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs is moved out of the PO1 to PO6 post code area, by Portsmouth City Council Children's Social Care, the cost of any home to school transport will only be met by Education, where it is shown that the school place was jointly commissioned by both services.
8. Looked after children with an Education Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs who are moved out of the Portsmouth area (PO1-PO6) by Portsmouth City Council Children's Social Care but who continue to attend a Portsmouth school, will have their travel assistance costs met by the Education Service for the first two weeks only, thereafter any transport costs will be met by Children's Social Care. Looked after children with an Education Health and Care Plan or a Statement of Special Educational Needs, who are moved back in to the Portsmouth area (PO1-PO6) by Portsmouth City Council Children Social Care, but who continue to attend a school in another local authority area will have their travel assistance met by Children's Social Care.

Concessionary Travel (Privilege Place Scheme)

9. A spare place on a contract vehicle may be offered to a child who is not entitled to transport assistance, taking account of the pupil's special needs, and any impact on any other pupil's currently travelling. It will be withdrawn if it becomes clear that it is needed by an entitled child or if re-tendering or re-planning changes the route or reduces the number of concessionary seats. A flat rate charge will be made (set annually by the Local Authority).

