

**Peterborough City Council Transport Assistance Policy Statement for Post-16
Students**

1 September 2022 – 31 August 2023

People and Communities

Peterborough City Council

Ground Floor

Sand Martin House

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Peterborough City Council

Post-16 Transport Assistance Policy Statement 2022 – 2023

1. Summary of Policy Statement and Main Objectives

This policy statement sets out the assistance available to help facilitate the attendance of students resident in Peterborough, aged 16-19 (or 25 where the student has Special Education Needs, learning difficulties and/or disabilities (SEND) and has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)) who wish to undertake, or are already undertaking, a course of full-time study.

It includes information on the Council's subsidised travel policy for students as well as signposting all other students to information about arrangements made by post-16 providers, where known, and by various travel operators.

Students who qualify for post-16 travel assistance who do not meet the low income criteria or do not have an EHCP are required to make a financial contribution towards the full cost of travel provided by the Council. These charges are reviewed and published annually.

2. Eligibility for Transport Assistance

Assistance with the cost of transport to approved courses is provided by Peterborough City Council (PCC) for post -16 students who meet all the requirements set out below:

- The student must be living in Peterborough (their parent/carer paying Council Tax to PCC)
- The student must be attending their nearest appropriate centre (see section 5.1)
- The student must be enrolled on a full time course i.e. a minimum of 15 taught hours per week at sixth form centres either in school or college; or 12 hours if the course is in school or college full time prospectus.
- The student must be under the age of 19 at the beginning of the educational year, i.e. 31st August of the relevant year, or continuing a course (progression levels are regarded as a new course) started whilst aged under 19;

A student who has already attained or will reach the age of 19 on or before 31st August in the calendar year (2022) of their first application for assistance with Post 16 transport, will not be eligible for support from the scheme. Any student aged 19 or over on 31st August in the calendar year of their application, will only be eligible to apply for support if they can demonstrate explicitly that their course is a continuation of one on which they have already successfully completed the first year of study, having started the course prior to attaining the age of 19. The onus will be on the student to prove continuous study.

The distance between the family home and the 'nearest appropriate centre' (see 5.1 below) must be 5 miles or over (for students paying the subsidy, see section 6.1 below) or 3 miles or over (for students in receipt of accepted benefits, see section 6.2. below) measured by the shortest unimpeded walking route, and must not exceed 30 miles, measured by road route.

Travel assistance will only be provided to allow students to travel during the Council's published academic terms at the start and end of a standard college/sixth form day. Where a college/sixth form requires a student to access their course outside of these times or at a satellite site, the student will need to discuss transport arrangements with their post-16 centre.

4 POST 16 STUDENTS WITH SENSORY, PHYSICAL OR MEDICAL NEEDS INCLUDING THOSE WITH AN EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLAN

4.1 The following groups of students may be considered eligible for transport assistance to approved courses from the City Council:

- Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- Students placed in a specialist provision for the duration of a statutory EHC needs assessment
- Students with exceptional physical, sensory or medical needs that have significant impact upon their ability to travel

4.2 Post-16 transport assistance is also available for students who have an EHCP and attend their Nearest Appropriate Centre (NAC). These students must live more than 3 miles from the school or college or be unable to walk this distance as a result of their SEND.

4.3 Students eligible for transport assistance should be transported to school in a manner which assists their readiness to engage in learning on their arrival at school/college and ensures both their comfort and safety.

Wherever possible, students in these groups should be treated in the same way as those students without any additional needs, i.e. in general they should walk/cycle to school, travel on public transport, or be taken by parents. They should be encouraged to develop independent travel skills. All students will be encouraged to use public transport as soon as possible as part of their development of independence skills.

4.4 If a school/college named on the EHCP is a parental choice and a nearer provision can meet the needs of the student, rather than a parent's more distant choice, transport will not be provided.

4.5 The LA has a duty to transport eligible students to and from their recognised home (a student child's 'home' is the place where he/she is habitually and normally resident) to their appropriate educational placement to allow attendance during normal school/college hours. Assistance with transport will only be given to and from the nearest pick-up point for public or other transport. It is not to be assumed that 'home to school' necessarily means door to door (unless the student is not capable of getting to

the nearest pick-up point or the arrangements put in place include a planned pick up from home)

4.6 Transport by a contracted service e.g. taxi or minibus will only be granted when it can be clearly demonstrated that the student cannot walk to school or travel by public transport. To ensure all students who receive transport still meet the criteria for transport, and that the most appropriate mode of transport is arranged for each student, parents are expected to complete an application for transport when a student starts a new school/college

4.7 Transport will **not** be provided for:

- parents or students to attend extra school/college activities, e.g. school plays, sports days, parents evenings
- students to attend doctor or dental appointments as these should be arranged for out of school hours, and
- for students to attend breakfast clubs, after school/college clubs, or out of school/college activities

5. ALL STUDENTS

5.1 Nearest appropriate centre (NAC)

The nearest appropriate centre is the nearest school or college (regardless of city boundaries) to the student's family home; and/or, where appropriate, is the designated post-16 centre for that family home, able to offer the main essentials of the course required for higher education and/or career outcomes.

Non-availability of particular subject/module combinations at the student's nearest/designated school/college will NOT normally be sufficient reason to provide assisted transport to a more distant centre.

Therefore, if the nearest or designated school or college offers the course leading to the required qualification and/or the main essentials of the course with regard to higher education/career outcomes can be offered, and is able to provide a place, assistance with transport will not be provided to a more distant centre.

If a school/college named on the EHCP is parental choice and a nearer provision can meet the needs of the student, rather than a parent's more distant choice, transport will not be provided.

5.2 Apprenticeships/Traineeship and work-based training

The Council will consider unpaid traineeships in the same way as other full-time courses and students will need to meet the criteria set out in 3.1 and 4.1. The council will not be responsible for transport assistance for students enrolled on paid apprenticeships.

5.3 Distance

There is a limit imposed on the travelling distance of 30 miles from home, measured by road route, for post-16 students. If a student chooses to attend a post 16 centre that exceeds this 30 mile distance then PCC will not be responsible for transport costs.

6 Payments

6.1 Parental Contribution

The amounts shown below apply to the relevant academic year but are subject to variation agreed by the Council.

Parent/carers can pay the parental contribution by the following choices:

- Pay by debit/ credit card for whole academic year £600 (complete payment form on website after submitting application form).
- Pay by debit/ credit card for half of academic year September to February £300 (complete payment form on website after submitting application form).
- Pay in 6 monthly instalments (one initial payment of £100 followed by 5 x payments of £100 (payments from October to February). The Transport Team will send parent a GoCardless link to email address provided to set up direct debit.

The parental contribution for Post 16 transport assistance is required for those students who do not have an EHCP and do not meet the low income criteria.

6.2 Proof of Benefit – Low Income criteria

Documentation which provides proof of either the student or a member of their household is in receipt of one of the following benefits (documentation must be for the current financial year) and should be provided with the application:

- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (we do not accept contribution-based Job Seekers Allowance)
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- NHS Tax Exemption certificate. We will need to see a photocopy / scanned copy of the entitlement confirmation stating the expiry date
- Universal Credit with a household monthly net income of no more than £935

7. Cycle Allowance

A cycle allowance is available to students who are entitled to travel assistance but who choose to cycle instead of receiving a bus pass. Currently students can claim £100 per term cycle allowance.

8. Application

In order to apply for transport assistance, students are required to complete an application form online: <https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/residents/schools-and-education/school-transport>

9. Appeals

Any parent who has been refused school/college transport assistance may appeal to the Appeals Committee (Service Issues) if they wish to challenge:

- (1) the refusal is not in line with this policy
- (2) the transport arrangements offered
- (3) that there are exceptional reasons to depart from this policy

9.1 Stage One: Review by the Team Manager, Passenger Transport Operations

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the home to school transport decision to make a written request to the Team Manager, Passenger Transport Operations asking for a review of the decision. The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and /or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed. Within 20 working days of the parent's written request the Team Manager, Passenger Transport Operation will review the original decision and send the parent detailed written notification of the outcome of their review, setting out:

- The nature of the decision reached;
- How the review was conducted
- Information about other departments and /or agencies that were consulted as part of the process (if applicable);
- What factors were considered;
- The rationale for the decision reached;
- Information about how the parent can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate)

9.2 Stage Two: Review by an independent appeal panel

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the Team Managers stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two. Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeals panel made up of Councillors will consider written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and gives a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days), setting out:

- The nature of the decision reached;
- How the review was conducted;
- Information about other departments and /or agencies that were consulted as part of the process (if applicable);
- What factors were considered;
- The rationale for the decision reached;
- Information about the parent's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below) Local Government ombudsman – parents have a right of complaint to the Local government Ombudsman, but only if there is evidence of a failure by the council to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled. If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for a judicial review. One of these reasons must be set out in the application for appeal. The appeals process will be undertaken in accordance with the following principles

Procedure

If parents/carers or students wish to appeal against a transport decision made by PCC, they should contact within 20 working days from receipt of the home to school transport decision which the appeal is made. Passenger Transport Operations Team People and Communities Peterborough City Council Ground Floor Sand Martin House Bittern Way Fletton Quays Peterborough PE2 8TY Tel: 01733 317455 (call centre)

13.4 Transport appeal hearings Unless there is an emergency or extenuating circumstances, appeals will normally be held monthly during term time.

Students and parents/carers who, having followed the above review and appeal process, remain dissatisfied with the Council's decision may refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO). The LGO will not usually consider cases unless they have been through the full review and appeal process.

Further information regarding how to make a complaint to the Ombudsman can be found on their webpage www.lgo.org.uk .

14 Contacts

Peterborough City Council Passenger Transport Operations Team?

Website: www.peterborough.gov.uk

Email: educationtransport@peterborough.gov.uk

Telephone: 01733 317455

15. Dedicated College Transport

The following colleges have their own dedicated transport routes, students are advised to contact the College directly regarding transport arrangements:

Post 16 Centre/ College	Contact Information
Peterborough College	Website: www.peterborough.ac.uk Email: info@peterborough.ac.uk Telephone: 0345 872 8722
Stamford College	Website: www.stamford.ac.uk Email: enquiries@stamford.ac.uk Telephone: 01780 484300

16. 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. Bursaries can be applied for through the Post 16 or College the young person attends. Students who do not meet the eligibility criteria for transport assistance may wish to apply for a bursary. Further information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>.

17. Public Transport

	Contact
Traveline East Anglia	0871 200 22 33 Web: www.traveline.info
National Rail Enquiries	08457 484 950 Web: www.nationalrail.co.uk
Great Northern Rail	Web: www.greatnorthernrail.com
Stagecoach	01223 433 275 Web: www.stagecoachbus.com

17.1 Rail Travel

Student Travel cards are available from Great Northern Rail currently offering a 34% discount: <https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/tickets/discounts-and-railcards/student-connect/>