

Education Travel for Post-16 Students for the academic year 2020-21

This applies to Devon parents and their post-16 children seeking travel assistance to and from mainstream, state-funded sixth form and Further Education colleges.

Policy updated:	October 2018
Review date:	October 2019 for 2021-22 and then annually unless a need to review earlier is identified

Description of Policy

This policy describes travel arrangements for post-16 students in Devon.

Linked Policies

[Education Transport Policy](#)

[Special School Education Transport](#)

Education Travel for Post-16 Students

for the academic year 2020-21

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2020 Education Travel Post-16 – updated 15 February 2019

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General Information and Contacts

Date Determined	15 February 2019
Review date	Annual
Approval	by Cabinet Members of Devon County Council
Key partners	Babcock Learning and Development Partnership Devon Association of Primary Headteachers Devon Association of Secondary Headteachers Devon Association of Governors Church of England Diocese of Exeter Roman Catholic Diocese of Plymouth School Admissions Service
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Useful links	Department for Education Local Government Ombudsman; 0300 061 0614 PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH

Summary

The LA has a statutory duty to make arrangements to provide free home to school transport for some children of compulsory school age and discretion whether to provide transport for others. There is no statutory duty on local authorities to provide a formal universal Post-16¹ travel scheme although there is a duty to consider whether support is essential to facilitate continued participation in education. There is no automatic entitlement to home to college transport after the age of 16.

This document sets out Devon's approach to Post-16 Education Travel. Devon will make decisions with reference to its commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant which seeks to redress disadvantage of opportunity with the armed forces community.

Councils have a duty to publish a transport policy for Post 16 transport setting out their transport arrangements and the financial help available for learners of sixth form age (16-18 or after 18 if they started the course before their 19th birthday). They have discretion to set out our own arrangements but must have regard to various factors including:

- The needs of those who could not access Education if no arrangements were made;
- The need for young people to have reasonable opportunities to choose between courses;
- The distance and journey time of the place of study;
- It is for officers to decide whether a course of study represents a new course. There are some programmes of study which mean that each year a student achieves a qualification, certificate or training outcome but do not lead to a final overall qualification at the end of the programme or study or course. An example of this is a "skills for living" type course which does not lead to a final qualification and consists of individual certificates or training outcomes. Where a student undertakes a new qualification or certificate or training outcome this will be considered a new course even though the student will not have changed their programme of study.

Devon County Council expects that parents² will consider how students are going to get to and from college³ prior to applying and accepting a place. Where there is public transport serving a college, it expects that parents will make their own arrangements to pay for a bus or rail ticket and, where necessary, they will approach the college for assistance through their bursary scheme. Only where a parent can evidence⁴ that he or she is unable to make other arrangements to get the student to and from college and that the absence of LA travel assistance is an unsurmountable barrier to education will Devon provide travel assistance.

This is a transport policy for students under the age of 19. An exception to this will be consideration of support for students under the age 21 who started the same formal education course before

¹ Children are of statutory school age from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday (or from the fifth birthday if it falls on 1 January, 1 April or 1 September) until the last Friday in the June of the academic year when he or she reaches 16 years of age. Where young people are over the statutory school age but taught in Year 11 in a secondary school, they will be considered as if they were still of statutory school age under the Education Travel Policy.

² In this document, any reference to parents should be taken also to mean the student unless otherwise specified. In most instances, travel arrangements will be made by the parent but post-16 students could make arrangements themselves. The term parent also includes carers.

³ In this document, any reference to college should be taken to include sixth form school or college and Further Education colleges. This means any education setting for post-16 students.

⁴ In this document, where a parent is required to evidence, this should be taken to mean that the parent must provide satisfactory evidence to the LA to support any request for assistance.

they were 19. Adult learners over 19 at a new College or undertaking a new course or level of course (e.g moving from a Level 1 to a level 2 course) will be signposted to Adult Social Care for advice.

Key points:

- There is no universal entitlement to travel assistance from the LA for post-16 students.
- Parents are responsible for making travel arrangements for their children unless the young person makes their own arrangements.
- Where parents are unable to make their own arrangements then it is their responsibility to approach the College and/or the Local Authority for assistance.
- Colleges are provided with bursary funds to support a student with travel, clothing, books and equipment for a course.
- Where there is financial difficulty, parents should approach colleges for assistance through their bursary scheme.
- The LA should only be seen as providing assistance where there is a barrier to accessing or remaining in education and where all other options have been investigated and are not available, as evidenced by the parent.
- Where travel assistance is provided by the LA, a contribution towards costs will be required.
- Where necessary, the LA may undertake an assessment of need.

POLICY

1 Equality Statement

- 1.1 Devon County Council will only commit to policies and practices which will eradicate discrimination and promote equality for all, regardless of age, gender, disability, religion and belief, race and ethnicity and sexual orientation.
- 1.2 This policy will be subject to an [Equality Impact and Needs Assessment](#). This assessment will be integral to all future policy and guidance reviews.

2 Safeguarding Statement

- 2.1 Devon County Council and its partners recognise that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. Whether their interest is in all young people 'staying safe' in all aspects of our services, or whether they are working in specific areas of vulnerability, all staff will have appropriate training and induction so that they understand their roles and responsibilities and are confident in carrying them out. Schools, settings, children, young people and their parents or carers, or any member of the community should feel secure that they could raise any issues or concerns about the safety or welfare of children and know that they will be listened to and taken seriously. This will be achieved by maintaining an ethos of commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. This is supported by a clear child protection policy, appropriate induction and training, briefings on and discussion of relevant factors and refreshed learning in line with current legislation and guidelines.
- 2.2 Devon County Council acts as a Corporate Parent for Children in Care. This means that the LA has a legal and moral duty to provide the kind of support that any good parents would provide their own children. This policy has been written to comply with this principle.

3 Legislative Background

- 3.1 This policy is made by Devon County Council (DCC), the Local Authority (LA) for the County of Devon, acting under the provisions of the Sections 508 and 509 of the Education Act 1996 and Schedule 35B inserted by Part 6 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It supersedes any previous agreement or policy. The policy applies to the academic year **2020-21** and will be reviewed annually. There should be no assumption that any discretionary elements of the policy will continue in future policies although Devon's approach has so far been not to remove provision from children who were receiving support at the point when a change to policy was made.

It was determined by the Cabinet of Devon County Council on 9 February 2018 following a public consultation hosted at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionarrangements

POLICY

4 Who is eligible for LA Travel Assistance?

4.1 There is no universal entitlement to travel assistance from the LA for post-16 students who are above statutory school age. All applications are looked at on a case by case basis. Individual circumstances will be considered and assistance may exceptionally be made available for post-16 young people who:

- live in the Devon County Council administrative area;⁵ and
- are under 19 on 31st August immediately preceding the start of the academic year;⁶ and
- attend the **nearest** appropriate establishment for their post-16 education; and
- live more than 3 miles from the college;⁷ and
- are in full-time⁸ education;⁹

and provide satisfactory evidence to the LA:

- that they have applied to their college for financial assistance, with details of the level of support offered; and
- of the cost to them if they were to make the necessary travel arrangements;¹⁰ and
- of a medical condition or other circumstance that would prevent the parent making the necessary travel arrangements, and
- of their financial circumstances e.g. proof of receipt of means tested benefit.
- that transport is an insurmountable obstacle to attendance.

4.2 Where a student does not attend the nearest establishment because of their chosen course, they will be required to provide evidence that the course is essential for entry to Higher Education.¹¹ It must be evidenced that a similar alternative course is not available closer to home.

4.3 Where the LA is satisfied that there is a need for travel assistance to be provided, that assistance will be chargeable in all cases.¹² This will be a contribution towards the costs incurred by the LA. For students from a low-income household, the parent will be expected to have sought financial support from the college bursary scheme to pay towards that contribution.¹³

⁵ That is the county of Devon except for the Plymouth City Council and Torbay Council areas.

⁶ Or he or she must be attending a specific course for those with learning difficulties and be required to attend beyond the age of 19 in order to complete the course. (Support would then continue until the end of the academic year during which he or she reaches 21 in order to attend the same course at the same establishment.)

⁷ The nearest sixth form to the home address or, where the nearest secondary school does not have a sixth form, the nearest FE College. Where the chosen course is essential and is not available at the nearest establishment, attendance must be at the nearest college to the home address offering the course, or one very similar. The nearest establishment may be in another local authority area.

⁸ At least 16 hours of education over at least 3 days a week.

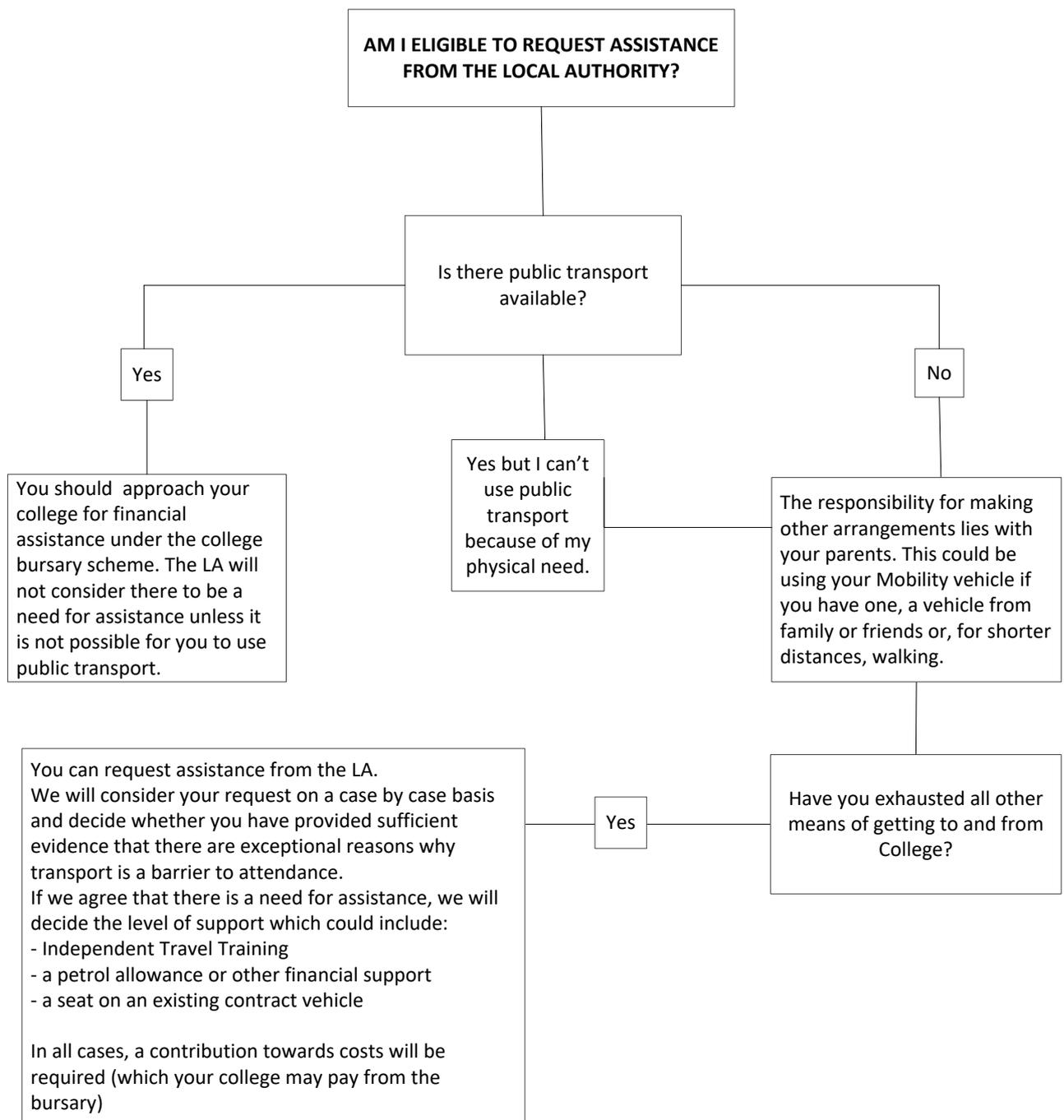
⁹ Travel assistance is not provided to students undertaking work placements, apprenticeships or traineeships. In these circumstances, young people are advised to contact their employer or learner provider.

¹⁰ This should be the most cost-effective arrangements possible.

¹¹ Confirmation of current entry requirements or a letter from the Higher Education setting stating that the course is essential for entry to the Higher Education course. 'A' levels are adequate for entry to university and therefore the wish to study the International Baccalaureate rather than 'A' levels is considered an expression of preference.

¹² The LA will not require a contribution towards the costs of providing Independent Travel Training.

¹³ A contribution to the cost of transport support is required in all cases, including where the young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan.



5 What would LA Travel Assistance consist of?

- 5.1 In cases where the LA agrees assistance it will be for a "main road" type of service only. Parents will be expected to make their own arrangements for transport to a specified pick up point. Transport assistance will not necessarily be for a door to door service.
- 5.2 Any assistance offered will be to the college start and finish times, based on one inward and one outward journey each day. Travel assistance will not be tailored to meet individual timetables, i.e. where contract vehicle timetables are not in line with that of the student. In such circumstances parents are expected to make suitable adjustments to travel arrangements.

The LA will determine the most appropriate travel arrangements. There will be a presumption in favour of shared travel arrangements. It will not be the LA's responsibility to get a student to a pick up point.

5.3 The type of assistance that may be provided will be the most cost effective for the LA and will be open to review.¹⁴

- provision of a Vacant Seat on a LA contract vehicle;¹⁵ or
- a financial allowance to assist with travel costs to and from college or to and from an appropriate pick-up/drop-off point for a public service or LA contract vehicle; or
- Independent Travel Training.

Where the journey time is lengthy or requires changes of vehicle as a result of the course chosen by the student, whilst assistance may still be offered, the parent will be responsible for managing that journey.

6 How would students get to and from college without LA assistance?

6.1 Before the LA will consider providing travel assistance to the **nearest appropriate** College or designated sixth form, it will require the parent to evidence that all other options have been explored and that no other arrangements or sources of support are available. This includes whether the student could:

- walk to and from college; or
- use a bicycle; or
- use a motorcycle or moped; or
- use a car provided by family or friends; or
- access public transport; or
- make other arrangements.

In many cases, the student will be able to walk to and from college or travel using public transport. Where this is the case, there is no need for the LA to assist in any way.

6.2 The LA expects that travel by public transport will be funded either by the family, with or without the support of the college bursary scheme. If, after approaching the college, the parent is able to evidence that there remains a genuine hardship acting as a barrier to accessing or remaining in education, the LA will consider offering additional assistance. Students must attend their **nearest appropriate** College or designated sixth form in order to require assistance from the LA.

7 How do Parents request LA Assistance?

7.1 Where a parent is unable to make other arrangements to enable the student to travel to and from college, the flow chart on page 9 above will assist in self-assessing whether assistance may be available from the LA. Parents should also visit the LA website at <https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/school-and-college-transport> or to contact the Devon Customer Service Centre on 0345 155 1019 for advice and t.

7.2 All requests for assistance will be considered on a case by case basis. While they may be challenging for parents, the LA does not consider that the following circumstances are likely to be exceptional on their own:

- parents' work hours or child-care arrangements not fitting in with public service times or college times; or
- parent's need to get other children to and from school;

¹⁴ While it may be agreed to provide a financial allowance to a parent, should other students require support in the same area, it may become more cost-effective for the LA to offer Vacant seats on a vehicle.

¹⁵ The LA will not assist with travel on public service vehicles as parents will be able to make their own arrangements, supported financially by college bursary schemes where appropriate.

- the convenience of using a family vehicle (including Mobility vehicle provided for the student) for other purposes; or
- an unavailable route, assessed by the LA¹⁶.

7.3 The LA's assistance may include offering a Vacant Seat on a LA contract vehicle where there is no access to suitable public transport.

8 Appeals, Comments and Complaints

8.1 When a request for travel assistance is refused, the LA provides for parents to pursue their request for assistance to:

- The Transport Eligibility Officer Panel, who will review the case and decide if there is sufficient argument to set aside the normal policy.
- The School Transport Appeal Committee, consisting of elected Members, where a parent, may put their case in person.

Information regarding the appeal process may be viewed at,

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/guide/secondary-school-transport/sec-appeals>

Where travel assistance is refused and an appeal has been dismissed, there will be no recourse to a further appeal unless there is a significant and material change in circumstances likely to affect the appeal decision.¹⁷

Where a parent feels that an appeal has not been conducted in a fair manner, he or she may pursue a complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman.

Comments about the service provided under this policy or general queries can be made by telephoning the My Devon Customer Service Centre on 0345 155 1019 or by emailing the Transport Co-ordination Service. If the issue is a complaint about the transport service or policy, the complaint process may be viewed online at www.devon.gov.uk under "Have Your Say", <https://new.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/feedback-and-complaints/>.

¹⁶ The legal requirement to provide education transport where the route is deemed unavailable to be walked, accompanied as necessary, only applies to students of statutory school age. Therefore, such circumstances will not confer an entitlement to travel assistance for post-16 students.

¹⁷ It will be for the LA to accept whether any change in circumstances is significant and material to the case.

Policy History				
Date	Summary of change	Contact	Implementation date	Review date
10/2017	2018-19 Policy updated to 2019-20	Policy and Strategy Officer	9/2018	10/2018
9 Feb 2018	Policy determined by the Cabinet of Devon County Council	As above	9/2018	10/2018
10/2018	2019-20 Policy updated to 2020-21	As above	9/2019	10/2019
15 Feb 2019	Policy determined by the Cabinet of Devon County Council	As above	9/2019	10/2019

PROCEDURE

This Appendix provides guidance and detail for officers of the LA in operating the policy.

Appeals - When a request for travel assistance is refused, parents can pursue their request for assistance to:

- a Transport Eligibility Officer Panel;
- a Panel consisting of elected Members.

Where a parent feels that an appeal has not been conducted in a fair manner, he or she may pursue a complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman.

Appeal Panel - there is access to an appeal panel consisting of County councillors where a parent is dissatisfied with a decision to refuse assistance. The Appeals is a second tier of appeal after the Transport Officer Eligibility Panel.

Applications - Travel assistance is not provided automatically for any student. Parents must make a formal request as early as possible to enable appropriate provision to be put in place. Establishing that there exceptional need to support from the LA may take some time.

Where assistance is agreed, it will be for that academic year only. The parent can make a further request for the following year if that is necessary.

Attendance - Where travel assistance is agreed, it may be reviewed termly, taking into account the student's attendance. Assistance may be withdrawn if attendance is less than 95% as a result of unauthorised absences. The LA reserves the right to suspend transport assistance until a reintegration plan is agreed between parent, student and establishment.

Boarding - Where a parent has decided to educate the student at a boarding college, no assistance for transport will be available from the LA solely on that basis.

Where the LA provides travel assistance for a student who boards at a college, it will be provided in accordance with the boarding arrangements where the usual distance criteria are also met:

- weekly boarders will be provided with journeys from college on Friday afternoons and to school on Monday mornings
- termly boarders will be provided with journeys from school at the end of each term and half-term and to school at the beginning of each term and half-term
- termly borders will be provided with transport for exeat weekends only when the school's residential facility is closed¹⁸
- unused journeys will not be carried forward

Children of Passengers - Where a student is carried on education transport and is also the parent of a child, the LA will seek to support the student's education and any wish to be accompanied by the child. The following will be taken into account:

- the safety of the parent and child and others on the vehicle;
- suitability of the vehicle;
- costs which carrying the child would incur.

Code of Conduct - The LA has formulated Codes of Conduct to detail the standards of behaviour required of passengers on education transport. This is in the interests of the health and safety of all

¹⁸ Where there is doubt, the 0-25 Special Education Team will confirm whether the child is required to return home for the weekend. An exeat weekend means that boarding students are expected to leave the school after lessons have finished on the Friday afternoon to spend the weekend away from school with their family or guardian.

passengers, drivers and other road users. A student who persistently misbehaves on education transport will be deemed not to be abiding to the Code of Conduct. A potential consequence of this is a ban from travelling, either for a temporary or indefinite period.

No alternative transport assistance will be provided. Students will be responsible for making their own arrangements.

Transport will not be provided for students until a request has been approved by the LA, a photograph and payment has been provided as necessary and the Code of Conduct agreed to by the student and/or the parent.

The provision of a photograph and the acceptance of a travel pass will also be acceptance of the terms of the Code of Conduct. Parents of post-16 students are encouraged to be aware of the Code of Conduct and support students in meeting its terms.

Colleges with Multiple Sites - Where a college operates with more than one site, travel assistance will be based on the distance to the main site.

Where a college out-sources all or part of the education provision, the college will be responsible for all transport arrangements to and from the off-site provision. Travel assistance will be arranged to the main college site only. Transport to an alternative place of study will not be supported by the LA.

College [16 to 19 Bursary Scheme](#) - If there is a financial barrier to the young person remaining in education the college should be approached for assistance. All colleges receive funds for a 16-19 bursary scheme to provide targeted help to individuals in need. They may exercise their discretion to make financial awards to young people in ways that best fit their needs and circumstances. Bursary awards should be targeted towards young people facing financial barriers to participation, such as the costs of transport, meals, books and equipment. There are two types of bursaries:

Exceptional need bursary – the DfE calls this the Vulnerable Student Bursary

Students could receive up to £1,200 if they:

- are in Care to a Local Authority or have recently left LA Care; or
- receive Income Support in their own name; or
- are disabled and receive both Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance in their own name.

Discretionary Bursary

Parents can apply for a discretionary bursary if they are not eligible for a vulnerable bursary but need financial help for their children to stay on in a school, college or training provider.

Concessionary Seats – These are seats on contract vehicles provided by the LA, available for a contribution towards costs for students who have no entitlement to assistance from the LA. That may be because the parent has not shown that the establishment is not the nearest appropriate establishment.

Concessionary seats are subject to removal should they be required by a passenger with an entitlement to transport.

Costs - Whenever the LA provides discretionary transport assistance, it will take into account whether the costs to the LA are reasonable and sustainable when determining the form of assistance to be provided. The LA has limited resources to provide discretionary support. Colleges are provided with specific funds to be deployed through their own bursary schemes.

Distance - Students must live beyond a minimum walking distance of three miles from the college unless he or she is unable to walk that distance, accompanied as necessary.

Equal Cost Grounds - The LA does not provide travel assistance to an alternative college on the grounds that there would be no additional cost than would be incurred should transport be provided to a closer college.¹⁹

Exceptional Medical Reasons (parent or student) - will be considered as part of assessment of need process which will consider all relevant factors

The requirement for travel assistance will be reviewed no less than termly.

Assistance with transport on the grounds of a parent's medical reasons will not be considered where the student does not require the parent to accompany him or her to college.

Exceptional Need - In very limited circumstances, the LA may consider that a student requires transport support to a college to which there would not otherwise be an entitlement to assistance from the LA or other source.

The LA reserves the right to provide support where it considers this to be essential to meet the needs of the individual. In doing so, social, medical and educational needs of the student will have been considered. A decision should not be seen as a precedent for other children whose circumstances may appear to be similar.

Faith-based Schools - The LA has a duty²⁰ to have regard to the preference of a parent to have a child attend a school or institution on the grounds of the parent's religion or belief. This is not a requirement on the LA to provide travel assistance.

Fees and charges - Fees and charges for education transport services will be set by the LA annually and are subject to change at any time. Any allowance would be net of the required contribution. For example, if the costs were assessed as £800 a year, the allowance would be £800 less the contribution of £600 in the academic year.

The contribution to costs must be paid in advance for the academic year before a seat is made available or other arrangements put in place. Where a student no longer requires travel assistance, the travel pass must be returned to the address on the reverse of the pass. When a Travel Pass is received a refund will be made based on the time left before it expires.

Independent, Fee-Paying Schools²¹ Where a parent has decided to educate the student at an independent school, no assistance for transport will be available from the LA.

Where the LA arranges for a student to receive education at an independent school as part of an EHCP, that college will be deemed to be the nearest college for the purposes of a request for travel assistance (except where it named is the result of parental preference and where a closer college could meet the student's needs.)

¹⁹ There may be additional cost either immediately or subsequently where a vehicle is no longer required for an entitled passenger. An alternative route may currently of equal cost but will be subject to a price increase or change which would require, for instance, a larger vehicle

²⁰ Education and Inspection Act 2006.

²¹ This does not include academies, free schools, studio schools or university technical colleges. Although independent of the LA, they are state-funded establishments. Here independent schools are those which charge fees to parents.

Independent Travel Training In some cases, ITT will have been considered before a student reaches the end of statutory education. It should be considered as part of the EHCP process along with personal budgets and Mobility schemes.

Measuring Distances - Distances up to the three mile walking distance are measured by the shortest available walking route. This may include metalled roads, recognised footpaths and bridleways.

Distances above three miles are measured by the shortest available road route for the entirety of the distance.

Measurements of distance for transport purposes are made between the nearest entrance to the student's property (usually the front gate or entrance to the property) and the nearest official entrance to the college grounds.²² Measurements are made using Devon's electronic Geographic Information System shown at www.devon.gov.uk/schoolareamaps.²³

No Pass, No Travel: Requirement to Carry a Pass - All passengers are required to carry a pass if issued to them.

It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the student arrives on time, carrying any pass that is issued.

Parent - In this policy, parent should be read to include carer or guardian where appropriate. Post-16 students may also apply for a school or college place in their own right and also make their own arrangements for transport. While parents will act in this area in the majority of cases, references to parents in this policy should also be read as the student where this is the case.

Participation Age - Nationally, the Participation Age has been increased. The Participation Age is not the same as the statutory school age. The effect of the Raising of the Participation Age is that a young person who ceased to be of statutory school age but has not reached the age of 18 or attained a Level 3 qualification is under a duty to participate in education or work-based training. This statutory requirement on young people is not accompanied by a statutory entitlement to transport support.

Passenger Escorts - The LA will arrange for an escort to be allocated to a particular student or for a vehicle where it is considered appropriate to do so in the interests of safety or welfare. All requests for an escort will be considered on a case by case basis. Provision will be reviewed regularly, including at the end of statutory education.

Pick-up and Drop-off Points - Travel assistance will not necessarily be from door to door. The responsibility for getting a student to and from a pick-up point lies with the parent. The LA does not assume that the student will walk to and from the pick-up point but where he or she does, it is the responsibility of the parent to accompany the student as necessary.

Preference - There is no entitlement to transport where a student attends a school or FE College which is not the nearest available appropriate establishment to the home address unless it can be evidenced that the student could not attend a closer college.

²² It should be noted that transport is not provided on private grounds such as private driveways.

²³ Distances for School Admissions purposes are measured in a straight line while distances for Education Transport purposes are measured along available walking routes or road route. This means that the nearest school for admissions purposes may not be the nearest school for transport purposes. It cannot be assumed that there will be free school transport to the nearest available school as measured for admissions purposes. Parents should always consider whether there would be an entitlement to transport support to a new school.

Recoupment - Where a Child in Care with an EHCP is accommodated by another LA within Devon, this LA may make arrangements for the student's education transport. The costs of that transport will be recovered from the home LA.

Prior to any provision being put in place, the 'belonging' LA must agree to the transport arrangements and costs with Devon' Transport Co-ordination Service – and supply an LA Order Number.

Residence - Transport support will be provided to and from one residential address in Devon, deemed by the LA to be the student's main home address.

Responsibilities and Expectations

Parents

- to accompany a student as necessary when walking or travelling to and from college or a pick-up point and to wait with the student until the vehicle arrives;
- to ensure that a student has their travel pass (where issued) with them before they leave home;
- to ensure the student knows what to do in the event they have lost their travel pass and are refused travel, or if for any reason the vehicle does not arrive;
- to formally request travel assistance in good time²⁴ except where the student does so in his or her own right;²⁵
- to provide evidence of personal circumstances in support of any request or appeal for transport;
- to pay any contribution towards costs that are required directly or indirectly via the college bursary scheme;
- to apply for support through the college bursary scheme;
- to inform the LA of any change of address or college and to return any pass that was issued for the previous address;²⁶
- to apply for a seat on a contract vehicle provided by the LA.

Students

- to consider how they will get to and from college before accepting a place there;
- to use and pay for public transport where this is available;
- to make their own way to a public transport pick up point;
- to approach if necessary their college for transport support (via 16-19 Bursary);
- to be aware of commercial tickets and discounts available from public transport operators;
- to evidence they have approached their college for support;
- to evidence that they have considered and exhausted all other options to make and pay for their own travel arrangements;

²⁴ Consideration of transport arrangements should be made at the same time as considering colleges and courses. As a guide, requests for LA assistance should be made by the end of May each year, and contributions towards costs made by the end of June.

²⁵ Parents of children with an EHCP must complete a transport application form where more detailed information is required to ensure the most appropriate form of transport is provided.

²⁶ Where a pass is not returned, the parent or student will be liable to pay all costs of the pass from the date it became invalid. Where a contribution was required towards the cost of a pass, no refund will be paid by Devon for the period when it was no longer required until the pass is returned.

- to make any approach for assistance from the LA in good time²⁷ before the start of the course;
- to pay any contribution towards costs that are required directly or indirectly via the college bursary scheme; to comply with requests for further information or evidence required by the LA in order to fully consider their request for support;
- where appropriate, to work with Independent Travel Trainers;
- to agree to and abide by the “Code of Conduct;”
- to attend regularly (at least 95%).

Colleges

- to provide clear information to students about their 16-19 bursary schemes;
- to provide evidence when requested of the outcome of applications for assistance under their bursary scheme;
- to provide evidence of attendance for individual students when requested.

Local Authority

- to provide transport assistance in the exceptional circumstances when there is an evidenced need to do so, where it accepts that the absence of transport would be a barrier to regular attendance and learning;
- to administer a scheme to make seats available on contract vehicles where there is a need for assistance;
- to determine what assistance will be allocated on a case by case basis;
- to monitor attendance levels for students provided with transport assistance;

Selective Schools - There is no entitlement to transport on the grounds that a college attended is selective. The LA is not obliged to have regard to a preference to attend a selective college when arranging transport.

Students with Additional Needs - There is no automatic entitlement to free transport following the issue of an EHCP. Parents of students with SEN are advised not to rely solely on presenting a case that a college is named in the EHCP in cases where it has been named as a result of parental preference.

Students with SEN may have specific needs that require the use of specialist transport provision. Even where a specialist vehicle is not required, it may be necessary to use more expensive transport provision, such as taxi transport, in order to meet specific needs. The LA arranges transport at the lowest possible cost commensurate with meeting the needs of the student.

Whereas transport assistance is available only to the end of the academic year in which a young person reaches 19, an exception may be made where the young person has been studying a specific course for those with learning difficulties and is required to attend beyond the age of 19 in order to complete the course. Support would then continue until the end of the academic year during which he or she reaches 21 in order to attend the same course at the same establishment. Transport support will continue without disruption as necessary to that point

Temporarily Rehoused (not returning to the former home address) The LA may provide transport support for up to 12 calendar weeks where a student is temporarily rehoused due to circumstances beyond the control of the parent and where the parent can evidence that they would otherwise be unable to get the student to and from college. After this period, it is expected that arrangements will be made to attend a closer college.

²⁷ Consideration of transport arrangements should be made at the same time as considering colleges and courses. As a guide, requests for LA assistance should be made by the end of May each year, and contributions towards costs made by the end of June.

Rehousing must have been involuntary, for example, a move to bed and breakfast or hostel accommodation following eviction, awaiting a new permanent address. The parent must provide supporting evidence which may include letters from other relevant teams in the LA, a Housing Association or landlord to confirm the student cannot return to the former home address and the new address is not considered to be a permanent address.

The LA will not assume that the family will be rehoused in the same area as the former home unless there is a clear view from a Housing Association or landlord that this will be the case.²⁸

Any assistance will be in very exceptional circumstances, subject to an assessment of need. This provision does not apply to Children in Care, the responsibility for whom will fall to social care.

Temporary Absence from the Home Address (intention to return) - The LA will provide travel assistance for up to 12 calendar weeks where a student is absent from the home address due to circumstances beyond the control of the parent and the parent can evidence that they would otherwise be unable to get the student to and from college.

The temporary move must have been involuntary, for example following fire, flooding or where essential repairs are required to the home. The parent must be able to establish that the student will be able to return to the same address. The parent must provide supporting evidence to the LA, for example, a letter from a landlord confirming that the family can return to the property.

Any assistance will be in very exceptional circumstances. This provision does not apply to Children in Care, the responsibility for whom will fall to social care.

Transport Eligibility Officer Panel - The Panel will consider requests for students to receive travel assistance where a request has been refused. The Panel will sit weekly as necessary to consider evidence provided by the parent that there are exceptional circumstances that mean the decision to refuse assistance should be set aside.

The Panel will consist of senior officers of the LA with responsibility in transport management and policy and Special Educational Needs.

The Panel is authorised to approve transport assistance under exceptional circumstances with a cost limit. Approval above this limit must be referred to the Portfolio Holder.

Where there is a house move or change of colleges, this will be considered to be a fresh application. Additional material related to the application that was refused, such as further medical information, will initially be considered by the Passenger Services Manager and will be referred to the Transport Eligibility Officer Panel if it is considered that it could lead to the original decision being changed. Otherwise, the parent will be directed to the Council's complaints process or to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Where the Panel does not agree to provide travel assistance, there will remain a right of appeal to an Appeal Panel consisting of County Councillors.

Transport Passes - Students are expected to carry a pass where one is issued and show this to the driver or officer of the LA when requested to do so.

²⁸ Where a Child in Care is placed outside the Devon LA area, it will be the responsibility of the receiving LA to make appropriate education transport arrangements. Devon will be liable to meet reasonable costs only where the Child in Care is the subject of an EHCP.

Transport provided in Error as a Result of False Information - Where transport has been agreed as a consequence of information provided by the parent which was false or misleading and where correct and accurate information would have resulted in a refusal for transport, provision will be withdrawn. This may be with immediate effect and will normally be with notice of withdrawal not less than 4 calendar weeks.

The costs of providing the travel assistance may be recovered from the parent.

Transport provided in Error or following a Change in Assessment - Where transport has been agreed as a consequence of an error of the LA or where an improvement in the accuracy of methods for assessing eligibility identifies that transport has been provided for a non-eligible student,²⁹ provision will be withdrawn.

Notice of withdrawal will be not less than 12 calendar weeks.

Transport Provision - Where travel assistance is provided, there is an expectation that all students will travel by public transport unless either no public transport is available or it would not be appropriate for the student's individual needs. This will be a decision of a transport entitlement officer, basing the decision on any information provided by the parent, the college and on his or her previous transport history.

The following forms of transport will be used, supported by Independent Travel Training where appropriate:

1. Contracted³⁰ coaches and minibuses³¹
2. Petrol allowances³²
3. Contracted taxis

The LA will arrange safe and efficient transport provision at the lowest possible cost commensurate with existing legislation and related Devon policies, where possible using existing public service provision. As far as possible, taxis will only be used in order to provide a link between a pick-up point and home. Where there is no alternative available, the LA may exceptionally authorise the use of taxis for the whole of a journey.

Where it is not possible to use or to establish public service provision, or where the use of such provision would require a significant increase in costs, the LA may commission contract coach or minibus services. Where no such services exist, the TCS establishes and manages the necessary transport contracts.

Even where a specialist vehicle is not required, it may be necessary to use more expensive transport provision, such as taxi transport, in order to meet the specific needs of students. The TCS arrange transport at the lowest possible cost commensurate with the needs of the students being met. All provision is subject to review.

²⁹ This may occur where the distance from home to school is remeasured and found to be under the relevant walking distance. In this case, the child will have benefited from free transport and would be expected to be able to walk to school and not be obliged to transfer to another school

³⁰ This will be the offer of a Vacant seat. Once allocated, a Vacant seat will be guaranteed provision while the student's circumstances remain unchanged.

³¹ Where public service vehicles including buses, trains and ferries are available, it is expected that parents will make their own arrangements to use them, seeking support from college bursaries where appropriate.

³² A petrol allowance could be used for a private vehicle or could be used towards payments for a taxi, arranged by the parent. It could be used for any purpose, agreed by the LA, to support the student in getting to and from college.

Unavailable routes - A route is considered by the LA to be unavailable when a child of statutory school age could not be expected to walk to school, accompanied as necessary by an appropriate adult, in reasonable safety.

This provision does not apply for post-16 students. There is no assumption that the student would walk along a route that had been assessed as unavailable by the LA.

Vacant Seats - vacant seats differ from the concessionary seats that have been offered by Devon. While they are chargeable, once a Vacant Seat has been allocated to a post-16 student, it is that student's seat and will not be withdrawn unless his or her circumstances change. It will not be withdrawn on the grounds that an entitled child of statutory school age requires a seat on the vehicle.

Work Experience and other activities - The LA will not consider travel assistance or vary provision to transport for a student to:

- attend work experience,
- attend a college as part of a foreign exchange programme,
- attend an induction or taster day at another establishment,
- attend appointments and activities for medical or sports reasons,
- attend breakfast or after-college clubs,
- attend college trips,
- attend late school,
- attend college on a part-time basis,
- accompany a friend home.

Glossary

Parent has the meaning of parent, carer or guardian and will include student where a student makes a decision, request or appeal in their own right.

School has the meaning of academy, school or college.

0-25 Special Education Team	Formerly, the County Special Education Team of the People Directorate of Devon County Council. Responsible for assessing additional needs of children and allocating education placements for children with particular needs.
Assessment of Need	can be completed to establish whether there is a responsibility on the council to provide transport support
Children in Care (CiC)	These children are looked after by or provided with accommodation in the exercise of its functions by Devon LA or any other local authority which has informed Devon LA of its wish to place a child. Also includes those children who were in Care until they were adopted or made the subject of a child arrangements order or of a special guardianship order.
Children formerly in Care	These children were looked after until they were adopted (see the Adoption and Children Act 2002 section 46) or made the subject of a child arrangements order or a special guardianship order (Children Act section 14A). Child arrangements orders are defined in s.8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by s.12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. This priority applies to all children who were formerly in care, regardless of the date they were adopted.
Code of Conduct	A written agreement between the local authority and the child and/or the parent. It acknowledges the standards of behaviour required of passengers on education transport and the potential sanctions should behaviour be unacceptable.
Compulsory or statutory school age	The age at which children in England must receive full-time education at school, at home or otherwise. This is from the beginning of the term following a child's 5 th birthday until the last Friday of June during the academic year when the child reaches 16.
Concessionary seat	See Transport website for further details.
Contract vehicle	A bus, coach or taxi which has been hired by the LA to serve a particular route to a school or college.
DfE	The government's Department for Education.
Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC)	This replaces a Statement of Special Educational Needs as a formal document describing a child's special educational needs (SEN) and how they will be provided for in college. The Children and Families Act 2014 provided for the phasing out of Statements by EHCPs by 2017.
Escort	An adult allocated to some vehicles where there is an identified need for supervision.
Exeat weekend	An exeat weekend means that boarding students are expected to leave the school after lessons have finished on the Friday afternoon to spend the weekend away from school with their family or guardian.
Extended Schooling	Provision for children to be on site at a college before or after the normal school day.

Feeder route	A journey part way between home and college. A feeder route will take passengers to meet the vehicle which arrives at the college.
GIS	Geographical Information System. Measurement will be based on GIS. This is an electronic mapping system which makes measurements using computer software. In Devon, this means specifically the mapping system used by the Transport Co-ordination Service for measuring purposes.
LA area	the area in respect of which Devon County Council is the Local Authority. This is the administrative county of Devon excluding that area in Plymouth covered by Plymouth City Council and that in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham covered by Torbay Council.
Main road service	this may mean that supported students may have to make their way to a pick up point
My Devon Customer Service Centre	Helpline for information on services in Devon: 0345 155 1019 and mydevon@devon.gov.uk . The first point of contact at 0345 155 1019 for enquiries regarding transport. Queries which cannot be resolved at this stage will be passed on for specialist advice and assistance from the Education Transport Team.
Pick-up point	The place where an education transport vehicle will stop to collect a child entitled to travel.
Post-16 student	A person who is above statutory school age (16) and is continuing to study, either at a sixth form or a further education college. Young people over 16 may submit requests and appeals for school admissions and transport in their own name or permit a parent to do so on his or her behalf.
Route review	An exercise by the Transport Co-ordination Service to consider whether the transport provided in an area is as efficient as possible.
Selective school	A school which admits all or some of its children following a test of the children's ability.
SEN	Special Educational Needs; recognition that a child requires additional support to appropriately access education.
Set-down point	The place where an education transport vehicle will stop to enable a child to disembark.
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
Statement of SEN	A document that sets out all of a child's special educational needs and how and where special educational provision will be made. Statements will be phased out from September 2014 as they have been replaced by Education, Health and Care Plans under a provision of the Children and Families Act 2014.
Transport Co-ordination Service or TCS	The Transport Co-ordination Service, the team responsible for assessing eligibility and organising the education transport network.
Transport Eligibility Officer Panel	A Panel consisting of LA officers. Responsible for hearing appeals against decisions of the TCS to refuse transport. A further appeal exists to elected Members of Devon County Council.
Vacant seat	where a spare seat is available on a contract vehicle this can be sold where public transport is unsuitable or not available

Education Post-16 Travel Policy 2020

Schedule of Fees and Charges

This Schedule is subject to change following the allocation of resources.

Contribution for post-16 passengers	£600 per year
Discount on contributions if paid in full in advance	£30
Upper limit for transport provided on temporary absence from home address grounds	£35 per day
Upper limit for transport provided where a student is temporarily rehoused	£35 per day
Upper limit for transport provided on temporary medical grounds	£35 per day
Petrol Allowance	25p per mile

Education Post-16 Travel Policy 2

Independent Travel Training

There are circumstances in which the LA will assist students with learning or physical disabilities to attend their education setting by providing individual travel training (ITT):

1. where there is a statutory entitlement to that assistance;
2. where there is no statutory entitlement to assistance but the LA has chosen to exercise its discretion to provide travel assistance; and
3. where specialised transport has been requested and the LA believes that the child could benefit from training to enable him or her to travel with a greater degree of independence.

ITT provides tailored, practical support for students to travel to education on foot or by public transport. Once developed, the skills to do this can be used when travelling to work, key support services or generally for leisure.

ITT is delivered through discussion and planning with the student and accompanied journeys. It is aimed at people less inclined to travel independently, including people with reduced mobility, learning difficulties, young inexperienced travellers and those who may be older but have lost confidence.

There are three broad aims:

- Increase the individual's independence;
- Improve the individual's quality of life
- Improve the efficiency of the LA's transport network by using the most cost-effective provision appropriate to the individual's needs.

With regard to ITT, the LA has the following aims:

- To enable the student to develop skills and confidence to travel as independently as possible and to be able to transfer those skills and confidence to other aspects of day to day life
- To reduce financial costs for the provision of travel assistance as much as possible, safely and appropriately
- To promote sustainable travel with the environmental benefit of a reduction in CO2 emissions
- To reduce the amount of time family, friends and professionals need to support the student
- To open new learning opportunities for students
- To enable students to be more engaged, motivated and requiring less support

The LA recognises longer-term benefits of ITT for the wider community:

- Reduced reliance on welfare benefits due to increase in independence and access to education and employment
- Reduced social care requirement
- Reduced costs to the health service due to health benefits associated with greater independence
- More people available for work
- Promotion of sustainable travel
- Increased use of public transport
- Greater access to community services and social integration

Assessing Potential to Travel Independently

Where a student's travel arrangements are amended from the most cost-effective provision because of his or her disability or where such a request is made for new travel arrangements, the TCS will assess the student to identify whether there is a potential for the student to travel independently.

The LA considers that Independent Travel Training has the following immediate benefits for the student:

- Enables the student to be more independent
- Improves self-confidence
- Increases the student's use of his or her own initiative
- Reduces the student's reliance on family, friends and professionals
- Improves social skills
- Can have physical benefits where the student walks all or part of the way

The TCS officers will identify candidates for ITT where a more independent journey to education is available but not used. Teaching staff and ITT trainers will jointly assess candidates and will reach a decision whether ITT should be offered. This will be where the student is believed to have the potential to benefit from ITT and to be able to travel independently.

The assessment will be undertaken by the Independent Travel Trainer. The form ITT1 will be used to record the referral, assessment and its conclusion.

A student or his or her parents cannot refuse the offer of ITT and continue on existing transport. It is for the LA to determine how the travel assistance will be provided. Nevertheless, any concerns of the family will be considered and ITT trainers will work with students and parents to overcome those concerns as fully as possible. Students and parents will have recourse to the Transport Officers Eligibility Panel and to the Transport Appeal process if they wish to overturn a decision to offer ITT.

ITT Delivery

ITT will include at least one of the following:

- One-to-one advice and information (or small group work)
- Accompanied journeys with the student
- More general training sessions concerning all aspects of undertaking a journey

ITT develops key skills:

- Personal safety awareness – including stranger danger
- Road safety awareness – such as road crossing, getting on and off vehicles
- Journey planning – telling the time, reading timetables
- Preparation – what to take, making allowances for weather or coping with changes
- Technology – using phones, smartcards and tickets
- Communication – with drivers and other passengers, including responding to unwelcome behaviour
- Using money if necessary

ITT will be delivered by trained officers who have undergone appropriate checks by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

ITT is delivered flexibly considering the needs of the individual. The aim will be to reduce support as confidence and competence increase until the point when the student can successfully travel independently.

Existing transport provision, including the use of taxis, will continue during the period of ITT or for a temporary period until an ITT trainer becomes available.

ITT is a dynamic learning process. During this process of learning the trainer will constantly assess and review the progress of the student. If, at any stage, the trainer does not feel independent travel is suitable he or she will recommend that training is halted temporarily or permanently.