# Travel Policy Statement 2020-2021 for Students attending further education, with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) who live in Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol and North Somerset

The policy is based on the Statutory guidance produced by the Department for Education. It sets out the travel assistance the Local Authority will provide for SEN students of sixth form age and SEND young adults aged 19 to 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in education and training.

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

**1. Summary of Policy Statement and Main Objectives**

You should note that your Local Authority is under no obligation to provide travel support for students attending further education establishments.

Students are normally expected to progress in their relevant study plan to continue to access travel support from their Local Authority.

The Local Authority may exercise its discretion, where they believe it appropriate, to ask students, parents and carers for a contribution towards travel costs. This policy will apply to students in receipt of DLA with a mobility/vehicle allowance so the Local Authority may ask students/parents/carers for a contribution towards travel costs in this instance.

**Our travel policy promotes and supports:**

* The Government’s initiative to increase walking, cycling and bus travel.
* The three Local Authorities School Travel Plan Strategies and independent travel.

The nature and mode of travel support will be determined by the Local Authority and will be one that is consistent with the Local Authority’s duty to secure Value for Money. It will normally be provided at standard college hours, at the beginning and end of the college day.

Transport will be provided only where there is no appropriate alternative.

The desired outcome of this approach is actively to encourage young people to travel as independently and inclusively as possible and to develop confidence and vital travel and social skills to support options for post 16 training and employment thereafter.

Support with travel for students with SEND will be considered up to the end of the academic year in which the student becomes 19. Consideration will also be given to
19-25 year-olds who are continuing to progress and meet criteria under the low income policy to enable participation.

**2. Who is eligible for support with travel?**

Each Local Authority will consider travel arrangements for students who are attending the nearest appropriate further education provision and:

* Have an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), or medical or physical difficulties, which means they are unable to walk the distance of 3 miles (accompanied as necessary) and
* Are studying a full-time course

Students under Bath & North East Somerset who meet the criteria for support will be required to undertake two weeks independent travel training. Their ability to travel independently will be assessed by personnel from the BANES Travel service.

**NB It is important to note that students must apply annually for travel support and all travel support is subject to review.**

**3. How do students apply for support with travel?**

An application form can be obtained from your home Local Authority (your Local Council).

Or

You may be able to obtain an application form from one of the following:

* College Coordinator
* Disability Support Coordinator
* School

Applications are normally received by end of July.

**The applicant is responsible for returning the completed application form. Completed application forms should be sent to the Local Authority in which the student lives (some Local Authorities may request additional information)**:

**Bath and North East Somerset**

**Council**

People and Communities

SSEN Service (Post 16 Transport)

Lewis House

Manvers Street

Bath BA1 1JQ

Email: SENDSchool\_TravelTeam@BATHNES.GOV.UK

**Bristol City Council**

Home to School Travel Team

Floor 2

100 Temple Street

Bristol

BS3 9FS

Email: home.school.travel@bristol.gov.uk

**Please be aware that we cannot guarantee that transport will be in place for the start of the academic year if an application is received too late.**

**4. What support is provided for students with SEND including those over 19?**

On a case by case basis students over 19 and up to the age of 25 may be considered for support with travel. Should support be granted students will need to apply yearly and decisions will be based on any changing needs, changes in circumstances, progression in learning and in line with the policy.

**5. Decisions on eligibility for support with travel**

The assessment of support with travel needs will be made in line with this Travel Policy and will draw together any information from the relevant college/school, the student and other colleagues.

The mode of travel will be the most inclusive, sustainable and cost effective. In some cases a Personal Travel Budget (PTB) may be made to the parent/carer/student.

**6. What independence training is available?**

For young people with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP), schools are actively encouraged to use the annual review process as an opportunity to discuss the young person’s transition to post 16 study or training. Schools and colleges are normally expected to empower the young person to develop the necessary skills to become independent travelers.

**7. What support can students apply for if they need to travel to a course that is outside the Local Authority area?**

Local Authorities will consider applications for support with travel to colleges outside the area, if the course is considered to be the nearest appropriate course. Applications should be made to the Local Authority in which the student lives. Support with travel will be approved only if the individual application represents reasonable public expenditure. A Personal Travel Budget (PTB) may be offered.

The Local Authority will normally provide support with travel, at the start and end of each term, for SEND students at Independent Specialist Providers. The mode of support with travel will be assessed by the Travel Team in line with the student’s needs and the policy.

**8. What support is available for students choosing to attend further education which is beyond daily travelling distance?**

Students wishing to study on a course that is beyond daily travel distance should contact the Local Authority to discuss this. For students who are moving to a Post 16 Independent Specialist Provider (residential college), the application form will be completed by the current school, the student or parent/carer.

Support with travel will be provided at the start and end of each term (ie. 12 journeys) for students in residential college.

**9. What support is available for students who do not meet these criteria?**

The majority of students are able to access their chosen course by walking / public transport. Where communities are not well served by public transport then a number of post 16 providers make innovative, strategic arrangements supported by the Transport Partnership.

**10. What support is available for students on Apprenticeships or Traineeships?**

The learning provider is responsible for ensuring that students have reasonable expenses met in full, where reasonable expenses are needed to overcome barriers to learning. These may include the cost of travelling to or from the place of learning or work placement. Employers are encouraged to support trainees with expenses such as transport and meals.

It may also be worth asking the learning provider if they offer their own transport service as some may do this.

**11. Appeals process**

All applications for travel support are considered in line with the policy criteria.

Where applications do not fulfil the policy conditions set out above, consideration will be given to the individual’s circumstances.

However, students, parents/carers have a right to appeal. Please see below for details of the appeal process.

# **Bath and North East Somerset Appeal Process**

All appeals will be considered on an individual basis in line with this criterion.

To submit an appeal the applicant should put in writing the reason for the appeal together with any supporting evidence e.g. medical report to:

**Bath and North East Somerset Council**

People and Communities

SSEN Service (Post 16 Transport)

Lewis House

Manvers Street

Bath BA1 1JQ

Email: SENDSchool\_TravelTeam@BATHNES.GOV.UK

**The appeals process has two stages:**

**Stage 1 – Appeal to the SEND Manager**

The young person has a right to appeal and can be supported by Parents/carers. They have 20 working days from the receipt of our decision to make a written request for a review of the decision. This first stage involves the SEND Team Manager responsible for SEN school transport examining your evidence to see if our policy has been applied properly and fairly. If he/she finds that it has not been and that you are entitled, then transport will be provided. If he finds that our policy has been applied properly and fairly then your Stage 1 appeal will be rejected, and he/she will respond within 20 working days explaining why this decision has been made.

**Stage 2 – Appeal to a senior officer panel**

If you are unsuccessful at Stage 1 and you feel that you are entitled due to your circumstances, then you can escalate your appeal to Stage 2. You have 20 working days from receipt of our Stage 1 response to submit a request for a Stage 2 appeal. This request will be referred to a senior officer panel (consisting of a senior officer from both the Transport service and the Education service) who will set up an appeal hearing within 40 working days.

We aim to ensure that the appeal process is conducted in a transparent and fair manner and that the young person feels they have been able to put their case and have been listened to.

Approximately 10 working days before the hearing, the young person will be sent an invitation to attend the hearing. They will be asked to send information and evidence in support of their appeal.

All papers will be treated as confidential and hearings will be held in private. If the young person or their representative is unable to attend, the case will be heard in their absence.

After the hearing the Panel will make their decision. They will consider the information and evidence submitted, both beforehand and at the hearing. They will consider whether providing transport for the young person in question would be an effective and efficient use of Council resources or whether this consideration is outweighed by the appeal made by the young person.

The Panel make their decision on the evidence and circumstances presented and concerning the individual young person in question.

The Panel’s decision is final and binding on both parties for the academic year in which the appeal is brought. The Panel’s decision and their reasons will be contained in a letter sent to both parties within five working days of the hearing. Further appeals may only be made in subsequent years if there is a substantial change in circumstances to consider.

At both stages of the process there is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman but only if the complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal was handled. If the complainant considers the decision was flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may apply for judicial review.

# **Bristol Appeal Process**

All appeals will be considered on an individual basis in line with this criterion.

To submit an appeal the applicant should put in writing the reason for the appeal together with any supporting evidence e.g. medical report to –

**Bristol City Council**

Home to School Travel Team

Bristol City Council

Floor 2

100 Temple Street

Bristol

BS3 9FS

Email: home.school.travel@bristol.gov.uk

**12. Travel information**

Students are advised to contact their school, college or training provider Student Support Services to get advice on eligibility criteria to receive a Bursary Fund/financial help. Details of the scheme at <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

**First Bus Student Tickets**

Details of where to obtain these can be found at [www.firstgroup.com](http://www.firstgroup.com) along with the current price of various types of ticket.

Students may purchase discounted travel tickets from the First Bus Group. <https://firstgroup.com/students>

**Railcards**

A 16-25 Railcard saves 1/3 on rail fares throughout Great Britain for a year. Minimum fares apply for travel at or before 10.00am Monday to Friday (except during July and August). For further details and up-to-date prices go to <http://www.16-25railcard.co.uk>

If the college or Post 16 provider is not listed below please contact them directly for individual schemes they may operate

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| **College** | **Travel Details** |
| South Gloucestershire and Stroud College (formally Filton College) | The college sells discounted bus tickets for local bus routes. Tickets are available from the finance office. A student photo card will be required, at an additional cost.The college can advise you of any other travel schemes available e.g. Rail travel |
| City of Bristol College | Travel and transport options are available from [www.cityofbristol.ac.uk](http://www.cityofbristol.ac.uk) or contact student support team 0117 3125000 or email csot@cityofbristol.ac.uk |
| St Brendan’s Sixth Form College | The college sells a variety of First bus tickets at a reduced rate for students. Contact the College ticket office 0117 9777766.The college also operates a number of their own routes; please contact the ticket office for more information. |
| Weston College | The college offer a variety of local First bus and other operator routes during term time. Contact the college 01934 411411 or [www.weston.ac.uk/form/contact-us](http://www.weston.ac.uk/form/contact-us) |
| Bridgwater College | The college offer a variety of local travel schemes. Contact Student Support Team 01278 441233 or [www.bridgwater.ac.uk](http://www.bridgwater.ac.uk) |
| Bath College | The college can give you details of public bus and rail services, park and ride options as well as the cost of college buses. <http://www.bathcollege.ac.uk/college-life/getting-to-college> or e mail enquiries@bathcollege.ac.uk |

# **16 – 19 Bursary Fund**

You may be able to apply for a bursary to help with expenses, such as travel costs. Please see this link for more information [www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/overview](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund/overview) and whether you would be eligible. You will need to apply to your school, college or training provider