

## **Post-16 Transport Statement 2023-24**

### **WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL AUTHORITY**

#### **Introduction**

Local authorities do not have to provide free or subsidised post 16 travel support but do have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the authority considers it necessary to make to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

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

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

This statement uses the term 'Post 16' to include both learners of sixth form age and those with learning difficulties / disabilities up to the age of 25.

This document specifies the support that Warwickshire County Council (the council) provides to facilitate the attendance of Post 16 learners receiving education or training.

Education or training refers to learning or training at a school, further education institution, a council maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education, an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency, learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council, for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

#### **Aims and Objectives**

For local authorities in England, provision of travel assistance for students of sixth form age is not a statutory requirement and it is up to the local authority to decide what arrangements it considers necessary.

We aim to provide support to those young people who need it the most whilst working within Government guidelines and supporting a sustainable public transport system across the county whilst building independence and life-long travel skills.

Please note the Raising of the Participation Age has not created any new entitlement to free or subsidised post-16 travel assistance – students are not required just to stay at school or college but can work, volunteer or take part in an apprenticeship whilst continuing their education.

## **Transport and travel support**

Always check all your travel options before you make a decision – consider your journey to and from school or college when choosing where to attend, and that receipt of travel assistance in previous years does not guarantee any assistance post 16.

Most students who need to make travel arrangements will be able to make use of public transport, and public bus and train companies offer travel passes at competitive prices which may be your cheapest option – contact them directly for details and cost. For help with planning a journey contact Traveline on 0871 200 2233 (you will be charged for this call) or visit the [Traveline](#) website. For details of your nearest bus stop and routes see our [bus travel pages](#).

Some schools and colleges also operate their own transport – contact them directly for information.

Warwickshire College offer some of their own bus services, please contact them directly or visit <https://wcg.ac.uk/page/55/transport>

## **Local Authority Support**

If a young person under 16 is currently receiving travel assistance and carrying on their education post 16, they must reapply for travel support.

In all cases travel assistance is considered/provided from only one permanent home address to the one main base where the student is registered.

## **Warwickshire County Council Spare Seat Scheme (Paid Transport) for travel for those aged 16-19**

For students who are not entitled to free home to school transport and students aged 16-19, this scheme allows travel on Warwickshire County Council bus services after all entitled travellers have been accommodated.

Seats will be allocated to students based on the following categories (listed in order of priority – highest first):

1. Students who have travelled on the same bus service in the previous academic term
2. Warwickshire residents who have not previously travelled on the service, or who are asking for a different bus service to the one travelled on in the previous academic term
3. Non-Warwickshire residents who have not previously travelled on the service, or who are asking for a different bus service to the one travelled on in the previous academic term

Further information on the scheme's terms and conditions can be found using the following [link](#)

The parental contribution for 2023/24 is as follows:

- where the student lives less than three miles from the school – £435 per year, or £43.50 per month by direct debit (10 month plan, August to May)
- where the student lives more than three miles from the school – £870 per year, or £87 per month by direct debit (10 month plan, August to May)

Students or families in receipt of a qualifying benefit will qualify for a reduced charge:

- where the student lives less than three miles from the school – £217.50 per year, or £21.75 per month by direct debit (10 month plan, August to May)
- where the student lives more than three miles from the school – £435 per year, or £43.50 per month by direct debit (10 month plan, August to May)

Please note that the prices above are subject to change each year

Students should apply for transport after the opening date in June and prior to the closing date in July. Students applying after **9<sup>th</sup> July** are unlikely to receive a pass before the start of term and significantly reduce their chances of obtaining a seat on the bus.

### **Direct Travel Payments – Post 16 Students Only**

Direct travel payments are only offered to Warwickshire residents when there is no suitable Warwickshire County Council or commercial transport available between home and school/college. If this is the case you will receive a letter advising you of this.

To qualify, students should be:

- (a) Studying at the nearest suitable school, college or local authority funded training provider offering the qualification of choice\* for the young person;
- (b) Studying a full-time course (at least 540 guided learning hours per year).
- (c) Travelling more than 2 miles to the nearest pick up point

*\*When considering whether a qualification is "the qualification of choice for the young person", we take into account the end qualification awarded (not the individual units taken, or the name of the course), the training provider having a place available to offer on that course, and that the students meet the entry requirements demanded by the training provider;*

Parents / students may use their own vehicle or public transport to get to school/college. Applicants entitled to a direct travel payment will be sent three claims forms (one for each term) to claim back £110 per year (or £220 if in receipt of a qualifying benefit\*). Students who receive a direct travel payment can then also apply to travel on a Warwickshire County Council service (normal terms and conditions then apply).

Those in receipt of direct travel payments under the 16-19 scheme will have to show receipts which illustrate that at least the amount being

claimed back has been spent by the family on transporting the student to and from college before payments will be made. Additional evidence may be demanded by the County Council.

For more information on how to apply please use the following [link](#)

## **Transport for students aged 16-25 with an EHCP, learning difficulties and/or Disabilities**

### **1. Contributory Transport for Learners Aged 16-19**

Support with transport may be considered for students who meet the following criteria:

- resident in Warwickshire on the 1st September prior to the beginning of the course;
- agrees (or family agree) to pay a flat rate charge as a contribution towards the cost of transport;
- has a current EHCP or has provided proof of learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- is aged over compulsory school age and under 19 years on the 31st August before the course starts;
- is attending a full-time course (over 540 guided learning hours per year);
- is attending the nearest qualifying special school\*, sixth form or the nearest college offering the qualification of choice\*\* for the young person; and
- has a journey from home to school or college which is more than three miles measured by the shortest available route to the place of study or, following consideration of the student's special educational needs and/or disabilities, the Local Authority has concluded that they would be unable to get to the establishment unless transport assistance was provided.

*\*A student's qualifying school is either the nearest establishment that can provide education appropriate to their age, ability, and aptitude, whilst taking into account any special educational needs that they have, or their priority area school. The qualifying school will be calculated with reference to section 2.3 of this policy.*

*\*\*When considering whether a qualification is "the qualification of choice for the young person", we take into account the end qualification awarded (not the individual units taken, or the name of the course), the training provider having a place available to offer on that course, and that the students meet the entry requirements demanded by the training provider.*

The Local Authority encourages young people to travel independently. Direct travel payments are available when no existing Local Authority transport is operating.

Transport is procured for the start/end of the school day although reasonable adjustments will be made to provide transport which accommodates student's individual timetables. However, when considered necessary and reasonable,

students may be required to wait at college at the beginning or end of the day.

The Local Authority will seek advice from relevant professionals if there is any dispute over the nature of transport requested / required.

A bus pass for travel during off-peak hours may be available through the England National Concessionary Travel Scheme which the Local Authority operates on behalf of central Government. Please contact the Concessionary Travel Team via [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/freebustravelfordisabledpeople](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/freebustravelfordisabledpeople) or call 01926 359180 for further details.

## **2. Limited Free Post-19 Transport Assistance Availability**

For learners with an EHCP or learning difficulties and/or disabilities, free transport assistance will be provided for those beginning new courses after their 19th birthday. This will only be provided if it is considered necessary by the Local Authority for the young person to attend the course, and also necessary for the Local Authority to facilitate attendance at the place of education or training.

In deciding whether it is necessary for the Local Authority to provide free transport assistance in these circumstances, the authority would generally require young people to meet all of the following criteria, in that they should be:

- Resident in Warwickshire;
- Aged 19 or over but under 25 at the start of the academic year in which the course begins\*;
- Holding an EHCP or have provided proof of a learning difficulty and/or disability;
- Starting a new course of study for a higher level qualification than has previously been studied for\*\*;
- Attending a full-time course of at least 540 guided learning hours per academic year;
- Unable to travel to the place of education without transport assistance, and with no support available from members of the household in which they reside, other family members, or from personal assistants.\*\*\*;
- Studying at the nearest suitable school, college or Local Authority funded training provider offering the qualification of choice for the young person. When considering whether a qualification is “the qualification of choice for the young person”, we take into account the end qualification awarded (not the individual units taken, or the name of the course), the training provider having a place available to offer on that course and that the students meet the entry requirements demanded by the training provider;
- Travelling further than the statutory walking distance of 3 miles by the shortest available route or, due to the young person’s special educational needs, disability and/or mobility problems, they cannot reasonably be expected to walk to the place of education, accompanied as necessary; and
- Attending during the normal school/college day and during term time only

*\*This provision will not be available for anyone beginning a new course of study*

*before their 19th birthday, and will not be available for anyone after the end of the academic year which includes their 25th birthday.*

*\*\*For the purposes of deciding whether to provide free transport the Local Authority would not consider it necessary, other than in exceptional circumstances, for a young adult learner to attend an additional Further Education course at the same level or equivalent where the learner had previously attended and completed a course at an establishment within the Further Education sector.*

*\*\*\* If the young person is in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance, the purpose of which is to assist those who have mobility problems, with severe difficulty walking or who need help getting around outside, it would normally be expected that this benefit will be fully utilised before assistance under this section is sought. Similarly, if the young person has access to a 'Motability' vehicle, of which the student may or may not be the driver, then we would normally expect the carer/student to make their own appropriate transport arrangements.*

Transport will only be provided to the main campus of the young person's registered educational placement. Transport to any other address or setting will be the responsibility of the educational establishment, the young person's parents or the young person themselves.

Transport assistance may also be provided in exceptional cases where the above criteria are not all met. In those circumstances the Local Authority would have regard, non-exclusively, to:

- 1) the young person's age, ability and aptitude;
- 2) any learning difficulties the young person may have;
- 3) the locations and times at which the education or training is provided;
- 4) the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which the learner could reasonably be expected to take;
- 5) the ability of other members of the young person's household to transport the learner to and from the educational placement; and
- 6) the ability of the young person to travel independently.

The type of transport assistance offered will be determined by the Local Authority and will be one of the following:

- Direct travel payments made to the parent/carer;
- Independent travel training for the young person;
- A bus or train pass;
- A specialist vehicle (as a last resort, only when absolutely necessary)

If the Local Authority deems that the student does not qualify for free transport assistance, transport would remain the responsibility of the young person or their Parent/Carer. There is no option to pay for transport provision under these circumstances.

### **Further Information**

If a student wishes to attend a Further Education institution outside Warwickshire they should contact the Transport Delivery team to discuss what bus services are available.

If you are not sure how to get to your chosen school/college please visit <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/schoolbustimetables> or call Transport Delivery to discuss available options. On occasion, you may need to approach an Operator (such as Stagecoach) directly to purchase a pass.

Students who have queries regarding post 16 transport should contact the Transport Delivery team:

E-mail: [to@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:to@warwickshire.gov.uk) Telephone: **01926 412929 (Opt 2)**

### **Appeals**

The Local Authority has adopted a 2 stage review and appeals process for those both under and over 16. Further information on submitting an appeal can be found [here](#).

Should the two stage process be completed and be unsuccessful, no further reviews or appeals will be held during that academic year unless there had been a material change of circumstances or further new supporting evidence is being provided.

After having completed the two stage process and your appeal has not been upheld you may want to consider contacting the Local Government Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State for Education.

Please note the responsibility to supply any supporting information for an application or review/appeal rests with the applicant. This will include information from outside agencies, which the applicant feels supports their request.

If you have a complaint about the level of assistance offered by Warwickshire County Council, please find the complaints procedure here <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/complaints>

### **Other National and Local Support**

#### **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. A bursary is money that you, or your education or training provider, can use to pay for things like:

- clothing, books and other equipment for your course
- transport and lunch on days you study or train

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursary:

1. A vulnerable bursary for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups below:
  - In care or recently left local authority care

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

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

### **Young parents / Care to Learn**

If you are a young parent under 20, [Care to Learn](#) can help pay for your childcare and related travel costs, up to £180 per child per week, while you're learning.

Care to Learn can help with the cost of:

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

Further information about the scheme including eligibility and how to apply can be found by using the following [link](#)

### **The Residential Support Scheme**

Whilst not assisting with transport costs the [Residential Support Scheme](#) does provide financial support with accommodation costs for students (aged between 16 and 19) who need to live away from home to study because their course is not available locally

### **Residential Bursary Fund**

You may be able to get a bursary towards the cost of accommodation from some specialist residential colleges under the [Residential Bursary Fund](#). Each specialist college has its own eligibility criteria, which often includes parental income.