

Local Authority Transport Policy Statement 2021/2022

Transport policy statement for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged 19 and those young people aged 19 – 24 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Name of Local Authority: Gloucestershire County Council
Department Responsible: Education, Children's Services
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1. 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.

All young people carrying on their education post 16 must reapply for travel support.

'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 policy 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 policy document specifies the support that Gloucestershire County Council (the council) considers necessary 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.

2. Aims and Objectives

In Gloucestershire we have invested to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to access education, employment, training and essential services across the county.

As such, most young people are able to access Post 16 provision without requiring additional support. However we recognise that the rural nature of some parts of the county can require some young people to travel outside of their immediate community to access opportunities. This travel policy statement therefore applies to students aged 16-19 who attend their nearest further education establishment. Consideration will also be given to 19-25 year olds who are continuing to progress and meet criteria under low income policy to enable participation.

Gloucestershire County Council's travel policy promotes and supports the Government's initiative to increase walking, cycling and bus travel. When making travel provision, the council takes account of best practice expectations set out within the national guidance covering Home to School Travel and Transport, Post 16 Transport to Education and Training and the Home to School Travel for Pupils Requiring Special Arrangements

3. Details of concessionary fares, subsidies, passes and travel cards available for learners aged 16-18 and who provides them

There are a range of travel options available for learners, ranging from in-house transport set up through education providers to multi-journey bus passes (weekly, monthly or annually) available through the different public bus services across the county. All of these arrangements, including bus timetables and the terms and conditions of multi-journey passes, can be found on the individual transport or education provider's websites which are detailed in section 10.

Concessionary bus passes

Young people who are registered as disabled are able to apply for a concessionary bus pass through the council. Those unable to travel independently due to the nature of their disability may also be entitled to apply for a bus pass for a companion to travel with them. All relevant details can be found on the council's website: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/apply-for-a-free-concessionary-bus-pass/applying-for-a-disability-related-bus-pass/>

Young people in receipt of a disability concessionary bus pass through the council can access free transport between 09:30 – 23:00 Monday to Friday and at any times on weekends and Bank Holidays.

The council understands the importance of helping young people with disabilities to lead as independent a life as possible and can be contacted to discuss individual cases where some additional support in accessing, or fully benefiting from, a concessionary bus pass may be required.

4. Other financial assistance that is available for learners

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups below:

- in care
- care leavers
- 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
- discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

To be eligible for the discretionary bursary young people must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2021 or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2021 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2021 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- be studying a programme that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be funded by either a Government funding agency or the local authority

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.

Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Care to Learn (C2L) can help to pay for childcare and travel costs for learners aged 19 and under at the start of their course and learning providers can help learners to access this support. Further information is available from www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

Individual providers will usually arrange all of the support young people need to access an apprenticeship with them but limited travel assistance can also be available. Further information is available from: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/thinksmartapprentice

5. Support for mainstream Post 16 learners

Where usual methods of travel are not possible due to the distance involved and the absence of suitable public transport alternatives, learners will have the option of purchasing a pass to use on a school bus contracted by the council (subject to a seat being available) under the council's Spare Seat Scheme. Passes allow the learner to access one journey each way, at the start and end of the school day.

As this is not a subsidised scheme, learners will need to pay the full £800 for this pass on an annual basis. However, on services that are not controlled by the council fares are set by the operator, and prices may vary for those routes. A list of these operators, and full details of the Spare Seat Scheme, can be downloaded from <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/spareseat>

Priority on school buses contracted by the council will be given to children aged under 16 for whom the council has a statutory duty to provide free travel assistance. Post 16 learners can then purchase passes for seats that have not been allocated, with priority given to those without any alternative way of travelling to the school.

Special consideration of vulnerable mainstream Post 16 learners:

The council is committed to 'doing the right thing' which means spending reducing funds where the need is greatest and where it will make the biggest difference. Discretionary priority will therefore be given to the most vulnerable in the community whose individual circumstances warrant special consideration on top of the usual arrangements made by the council.

Discretionary subsidised assistance will only be considered for those learners who can demonstrate that they cannot access any post 16 education without additional financial help from the council. This will include learners who:

- are unable to access education unsupported (i.e. their family income is such that even with the bursary they cannot afford the cost of transport);
- are young parents;
- have exceptional individual circumstances (i.e. for vulnerable or socially excluded young people)

In all cases the learner must be studying on a full-time basis (over 540 guided learning hours for the academic year) and not have a post 16 provider less than 3 miles from their home address (measured by the shortest available pedestrian route) which they could access.

Learners (or their parent/carer) are advised to contact the Fair Access Team on 01452 425396 to discuss whether their individual circumstances are sufficiently exceptional to be referred for special consideration by senior managers.

The council will make decisions on a case by case basis through the Senior Officer Review process. This will take into consideration points such as the setting attended and its distance from home, the availability and cost of transport and the needs of the learner. The financial situation of the family will be considered when determining the appropriate level of subsidy to be offered.

6. Support for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 16-25

Whilst transport is not automatically provided for learners with a learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD), additional consideration for support is given when their learning difficulty or disability makes travel assistance essential, or they must travel much further from home to attend a school or college which can meet their needs.

The council considers requests for assistance against the published criteria. For learners with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) the annual review process will provide an opportunity to discuss the young person's transition to post 16 education and to take travel implications into account when making decisions.

Who is eligible for travel support?

Support will only be considered for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who are studying on a full-time basis (over 540 guided learning hours for the academic year) at their nearest school or college which can meet their educational needs and is over the 3 mile walking distance. This covers learners who are:

- Attending a setting named in their EHCP and completing a specialist or non-specialist course - until the end of the academic year in which they reach 25 years of age

Travel support offered to eligible learners

In line with the council's focus on ability, not disability, support is provided to enable learners to travel as independently as possible, and assistance is provided as detailed below:

- If the learner can travel on a bus, the council will provide a bus pass, and if the learner requires training in order to travel on a bus then an individual travel training programme will be arranged. In some circumstances a pass may be provided for a companion to travel with the learner.
- If the learner is unable to travel on a bus with the support outlined above, the council will discuss the payment of a Personal Travel Allowance with the learner and their family. The Personal Travel Allowance will be the council's contribution towards the cost of the learner's travel arrangements, and will be paid direct to the learner or their family. It will be the responsibility of the learner or their family to make the travel arrangements that are best suited to their needs and circumstances, which can be adapted later if necessary.
- Young people on an apprenticeship scheme may be provided with travel support to the education setting if they are eligible, but not the work placement. Further assistance with travel costs may be available from the Government's Access to Work scheme.
- For further information go to <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

Travel assistance will be reviewed annually in line with the learner's EHCP review to ensure that the correct level of provision is in place.

It is acknowledged that some learners will have exceptional circumstances due to their high level of needs, and there is a process for reviewing the support available, based on evidence provided by the relevant professionals.

Applying for Post 16 travel support?

New learners transferring to post 16 education in September 2021 can apply by visiting www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/sentransport To complete an individual assessment, the council will require full details of the young person's learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the effect these have on their travel arrangements. Specific and up to date written evidence from relevant health and/or education professionals supporting the case will also be required to make a final decision.

Learners in receipt of a Personal Travel Allowance to attend a course commencing in September 2021 will be informed individually of the level of assistance to be paid to the young person or their family by the council.

SEN Travel Enablement will notify learners and their families of the level of assistance to be provided, including any learner contribution towards the cost of assistance.

7. Learners who attend a residential further education institution

Learners receiving education or training at an independent specialist provider on a residential basis (when this placement is arranged by the council and funded by High Needs Top Up Funding) will receive travel assistance until July, or the end of their last term (whichever is earlier), in the academic year that they reach the age of 25. These learners are not required to contribute towards the cost of their transport.

Term-time boarders at residential colleges will normally only be provided with travel support at the beginning and end of terms and half terms (12 journeys in total) to reflect the residential provision.

8. Challenge process for learners who do not meet the transport policy criteria

Learners and their parents/carers can challenge the council on its refusal of transport assistance if their circumstances are exceptional. This should be done through the Senior Officer Review process where a learner's individual circumstances can be considered. Further details can be obtained by contacting the Co-ordinated Admissions & Transport Team on 01452 425416 or 01452 425011 for SEN Travel Enablement.

Any complaints about the policy itself should be directed through the council's usual complaints process for investigation: <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/feedback>

9. Travel arrangements for students on an Apprenticeship or Traineeship

SEN Travel Enablement does not cover the travel costs of students who are on an Apprenticeship or Traineeship, other than contributing to the home to school/college travel costs in respect of any days attending the educational setting. In most cases it is expected the student will be able to travel independently as a prerequisite of being accepted on to an Apprenticeship or Traineeship scheme.

Assistance with travel costs may be available from the Government's Access to Work scheme. For further information go to www.gov.uk/access-to-work

10. Points of contact for learners requiring assistance with transport

Further information regarding home to school/college transport and an application form are available on Gloucestershire County Council's website:

Mainstream Travel: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/school-and-college-transport/apply-for-a-new-or-lost-school-bus-pass/>

SEN Travel: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/SENtransport

Spare Seat Scheme: <http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/spareseat>

Post 16 Course Providers:

All Saints' Academy: <https://www.asachelt.org/>
Email: admin@asachelt.org

Archway School: www.archwayschool.net
Email: admin@archwayschool.net

Balcarras School: www.balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: admin@balcarras.gloucs.sch.uk

Holmleigh Park High School: www.hphigh.co.uk/
Email: contact@hphigh.co.uk

Berkeley Green UTC: www.berkeleygreenutc.org.uk/
Email: office@berkeleygreenutc.org.uk

Bettridge School: www.betridgeschool.co.uk/
Email: admin@bettridge.gloucs.sch.uk

Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre: www.bournside.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: hello@bournside.gloucs.sch.uk

Chipping Campden School: www.chippingcampden.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: office@campden.school

Chosen Hill School: www.chosen-hill.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: kn@chosen-hill.gloucs.sch.uk

Churchdown School: www.churchdownschool.com/
Email: school@churchdownschool.com

Cirencester College: www.cirencester.ac.uk
Email: student.journeyteam@cirencester.ac.uk

Cleeve School: www.cleeveschool.net
Email: info@cleeveschool.net

Cotswold Chine School: www.cotswold-chine.org.uk
Email: info@cotswold-chine.org.uk

Dene Magna: www.denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: reception@denemagna.gloucs.sch.uk

Denmark Road: www.denmarkroad.org
Email: office@denmarkroad.org

Farmor's School: www.farmors.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: admin@farmors.gloucs.sch.uk

Gloucester Academy: www.gloucesteracademy.com
Email: info@gloucesteracademy.co.uk

Gloucestershire College: www.gloscol.ac.uk
Email : info@gloscol.ac.uk

Hartpury College: www.hartpury.ac.uk
Email: transport@hartpury.ac.uk

Heart of the Forest Community Special School: www.heartoftheforestschool.co.uk/
Email: admin@heartoftheforest.gloucs.sch.uk

Henley Bank High School: www.henleybankhighschool.co.uk
Email: admin@henleybankhighschool.co.uk

Katharine Lady Berkeley's School: www.klbschool.org.uk
Email: info@klbschool.org.uk

Marling School: www.marling.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: adminoffice@marling.gloucs.sch.uk

National Star College: www.natstar.ac.uk
Email: enquiries@nationalstar.org

Newent Community School: www.newent.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: admin@newent.gloucs.sch.uk

Pate's Grammar School: www.patesgs.org/
Email: sfm@patesgs.org

Rednock School: <https://www.rednockschool.org.uk/>
Email: admin@rednockschool.org.uk

Ribston Hall High School: www.ribstonhall.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: rhrs@ribstonhall.gloucs.sch.uk

Ruskin Mill: www.rmt.org
Email: enquiries@rmt.org

Sir Thomas Rich's School: www.strschool.co.uk
Email: info@strs.org.uk

South Gloucestershire and Stroud College: www.stroud.ac.uk
Email: info@sgscol.ac.uk

Stroud High School: www.stroudhhigh.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: admin@stroudhhigh.gloucs.sch.uk

St Peter's Catholic High School and Sixth Form Centre: www.stpetershighschool.org.uk
Email: 6thform@st-petershigh.gloucs.sch.uk

St. Rose's School: www.stroses.org.uk
Email: admin@stroses.org.uk

Tewkesbury School: www.tewkesburyschool.org
Email: office@tewkesburyschool.org

The Apperley Centre: www.shrubberieschool.co.uk
Email: apperleyadmin@shrubberies.gloucs.sch.uk

The Cotswold School: www.cotswold.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: admin@thecotswoldschool.co.uk

The Crypt School: www.cryptschool.org/
Email: enquiries@crypt.gloucs.sch.uk

The Shrubberies School: www.shrubberieschool.co.uk
Email: admin@shrubberies.gloucs.sch.uk

William Morris House: <https://william-morris.org.uk>
Email: info@william-morris.org.uk

Wyedean School: www.wyedean.gloucs.sch.uk
Email: principal@wyedean.gloucs.sch.uk

11. Other useful websites

Traveline: www.traveline.info

Thinktravel: www.thinktravel.info

Government website providing information regarding financial support available to learners aged 16 to 19:
<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

Council's concessionary bus pass scheme: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/apply-for-a-free-concessionary-bus-pass/applying-for-a-disability-related-bus-pass/>

Gloucestershire Youth Support Team: <https://youthsupportteam.co.uk/>

Apprenticeships: www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Care to Learn (C2L): www.gov.uk/care-to-learn

UCAS: www.ucasprogress.com