

# POST-16 TRANSPORT POLICY 2016-17

Name of Local Authority:  
Northumberland County Council - 929

Wellbeing and Community Health Services Group

## Contents:

<b>Eligibility for the Student Travel Scheme</b>	<b><i>Paras 1- 2</i></b>
<b>Transport <u>Provision</u></b>	<b><i>Paras 3- 8</i></b>
<b>Application Process</b>	<b><i>Para 9</i></b>
<b>Additional Information for Students with Special Needs</b>	<b><i>Paras 10-11</i></b>
<b>Review Procedure</b>	<b><i>Para 12</i></b>
<b>Complaints Procedure</b>	<b><i>Para 12</i></b>
<b>Student Support</b>	<b><i>Para 13</i></b>
<b>Normal Eligibility Criteria</b>	<b>ANNEX 1</b>

## Eligibility for Post-16 Transport

### 1. What is the Northumberland Post-16 Transport Scheme?

This scheme is to enable eligible young people to access relevant learning. You should check your eligibility carefully before applying for a course or for transport. You can check the availability of courses at your nearest learning provider by accessing the relevant prospectuses.

### 2. What are the eligibility criteria for Post-16 Transport?

If, in September 2016, you are entering Post-16 education for the first time, then in general terms Northumberland County Council will not normally provide, make arrangements for or meet the costs of any transport required for you to travel from home to your place of study. If you live in an area served by public transport you will need to make your own travel arrangements and purchase the appropriate travel pass through a commercial operator such as Arriva, Go North East or Stagecoach. You will be bound by their Terms and Conditions.

However, students in the following categories may be eligible for assistance, including financial assistance, with their transport from home to their place of study:

- i. Students from Low Income Households
- ii. Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan
- iii. Students with Medical Conditions/Disability
- iv. Students who live in areas without access to Public Transport.

**i. Students from Low Income Households**

Free transport will be provided where a student from a low income background meets all the eligibility criteria as set out in Annex 1. Criteria for eligibility on low income grounds are as follows:

- i. income support
- ii. income-based jobseeker's allowance
- iii. income-related employment and support allowance
- iv. guarantee credit of pension credit
- v. Child Tax Credit (but not entitled to Working Tax Credit) where your annual income, as shown on your Tax Credit award notice, is £16,190 or less
- vi. Also entitled are:  
16–18-year-olds receiving the above benefits or tax credits in their own right.
- vii. asylum seekers in receipt of support provided under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

This list can also be found on the Post 16 application form.

**ii. Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan**

Where a student has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, the Council will normally make the arrangements for and meet the costs of the transport necessary to transport the student to the nearest educational establishment which could meet the needs set out in their Statement, LDA or EHC plan. In such circumstances, transport may be provided up to the age of 25 rather than the normal age of 19.

**iii. Students with Medical Conditions/Disability**

Where a student has a medical condition or disability (whether temporary or permanent) and is not the subject of a Statement of Special Educational Needs, Learning Difficulty Assessment, or Education, Health and Care Plan, and where their disability or medical condition means that they cannot access the normal transport arrangements that the majority of their peers would have been able to access from their home to their appropriate place of study, then the Council will consider on a case by case basis whether or not to make arrangements for and pay for transport for the student. The normal expectation is that the student will only be eligible for support if they meet all the eligibility criteria as defined in Annex 1 and are unable to travel independently because of a medical condition or disability.

**iv. Students Who Live in Areas Without Access to Public Transport**

The normal expectation is that the student will only be eligible for support if they meet all the eligibility criteria as defined in Annex 1. In such cases where a student is unable to access a viable public transport system to reach their nearest appropriate educational establishment, assistance will be provided to facilitate their travel. Sometimes this will involve the provision of a "feeder" transport arrangement e.g. a taxi to/from the nearest public transport route. Such "feeder" transport will be organised and paid for by the Council. However the student will be responsible for any cost they then incur travelling on public transport to and from their nearest appropriate educational establishment.

For those students who use council contracted school transport services to attend their nearest appropriate educational establishment they would be required to pay £600 per year; this is a flat-rate charge irrespective of the distance travelled or whether their journey to and from their nearest appropriate educational establishment also included the provision of a “feeder” service from an outlying area.

## Transport Provision

### 3. What kind of transport provision can I expect if I can't access public transport to travel to and/or from my chosen learning provider?

The normal expectation is that the Council will only offer assistance with arranging (not funding) transport for students who are unable to access public transport if they meet all the eligibility criteria as defined in Annex 1.

Where appropriate a “feeder” service will be provided to/from the nearest public transport route. In such cases the feeder journey will be paid for by the Council but the student will be responsible for the costs incurred travelling on public transport.

Alternatively, new journey arrangements may need to be put in place or a place on a school bus already operating into the school or college may be offered. In all cases a boarding pass will be issued at the discretion of the local authority.

You may need to share transport with other students. You may also need to wait for transport or arrive early at your learning provider to accommodate different timetables. We will try to minimise waiting times.

You will be expected to make your own way to and from the nearest main pick-up/drop-off points, unless you have a disability or medical condition which makes this unreasonable.

### 4. How long can I expect to have transport to a learning provider?

You will normally be provided with transport for two years of further education study in Year 12 and Year 13.

You will not be provided with transport for a third year (Year 14) unless you started in the school year before September 2016 the first year of a two year course in Year 13 or have been agreed to require a third year because of your special educational needs.

You will be allocated transport for three terms, providing you continue to attend, but the type of transport may change. Transport during holiday periods will not be provided. If you are required to attend your learning provider during such periods then you should approach the learning provider for assistance with travel costs.

### 5. What information will be on my *Student Travel Pass*?

**Your Student Travel Pass** will normally contain the following features:

- Your photograph
- Your name and student identity reference;
- The learning provider at which you are enrolled.
- Boarding and alighting point description
- Route number of school bus service

You must show this travel pass when you board the vehicle each day. If you fail to

show your pass on a local authority operated contract service, you will be unable to travel.

A dedicated school transport route will be allocated to the student and indicated on the Student Travel Pass. This is in order to ensure there is sufficient capacity available for all passengers and will help to prevent overcrowding and passengers being left without a seat.

**7. What times during the day can I use my travel pass when travelling on council contracted school transport?**

Passes only cover travel at the start and end of the main education day and do not include extra-curricular activities, access to extended services or travel on days which are not normal working days for that establishment. Requests for transport outside normal hours are unlikely to be granted though consideration will be given on an individual basis. Transport will not operate during holiday periods.

**8. Can I buy a concessionary fare?**

In some cases it may be possible for you to buy a spare seat on existing County Council contracted transport that serves a school which is not the nearest appropriate provider to your home address as defined in Annex 1. However, you should be aware that the first priority for the allocation any spare seats is always for those eligible for free transport either pre-16 or post-16, that concessionary fares cannot be allocated until after the start of the school year and that they can be withdrawn without notice at any time if the seat is subsequently required for eligible students, whether pre-16 or post-16. The cost of a concessionary fare for a Post-16 Student is £750 per year.

## **Application Process**

**9. When do I need to apply for transport support?**

**You should check your eligibility for transport carefully by reading Annex 1 before applying for a course.**

*Please familiarise yourself with the content of Annex 1 first and only submit an application for Post-16 transport if you consider yourself as falling into one of the categories below:*

- a. Students from Low Income Households, i.e. as described on the post 16 application form
- b. Students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Education, Health and Care Plan
- c. Students with Medical Conditions/Disability
- d. Students who live in areas without access to Public Transport.

Application forms for Post 16 Transport will be available from 1 June 2016. You **must** apply for transport for each of the two years you are in Post-16 Education, i.e. Year 12 & Year 13. We recommend that you apply before the exam results come out. If you do not have a valid pass for travel you will not be permitted to travel on the school bus service.

**If you have applied for transport your pass will be allocated during the summer break for Year 12 and will be valid for one year only. You will need to re-apply for Year 13.**

If you are currently enrolled at a learning provider, you can apply online at the "Post-16 Transport" page through the local authority webpage

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-transport-1/Transport.aspx>

Or alternatively you can contact your High/Secondary School or ring the local authority to request a form.

The application form should be returned to:

*The Network Officer Team, School Transport Team, County Hall, Morpeth NE61 2EF*

If you are eligible for a place on a Council contracted school bus service but do not qualify for free travel you be required to pay an annual charge of £600.

A place on a school bus will be provided in return for an annual payment of £600. This can be made as a one-off payment of £600 or via an initial deposit of £200 and the remaining balance of £400 paid by direct debit. One invoice will be raised this year for £600.00 on receipt of a completed application form. Attached to the invoice will be a Direct Debit mandate and a letter to notify the parent that they must make an initial payment of £200.00. The letter will clearly state that the Direct Debit Mandate only relates to the remaining balance of £400.00. This letter will also notify parents that **NO** pass will be issued until the first payment of £200.00 and the mandate has been completed and returned.

We aim to process all applications within 15 working days of the receipt of a completed application form and, where applicable, the first initial payment of £200 is made.

## **Students with Special Needs**

### **10. What kind of transport will you provide for a student with special needs?**

We will make arrangements consistent with the availability of existing public, education and social care transport. We may also contract additional services to ensure value for money.

We will review taxi provision termly based on development of independent travel skills.

You may be provided with a more personalised mode of transport if you have a specific transport requirement which was identified in your Statement of Special Educational Need, Learning Difficulty Assessment, or Education, Health and Care Plan.

The local authority will consider costs and will decide on the type of transport to provide. You will be allocated transport for three terms, providing you continue to attend, but the type of transport may change.

You may need to share transport with other students. You may also need to wait for transport or arrive early at your learning provider to accommodate different timetables. We will try to minimise waiting times.

### **11. Do you provide independent travel training for students who are not confident enough in using public transport?**

Northumberland County Council promotes independent travel to support young people in the transition from using a taxi to using public transport. In partnership with schools, colleges and training providers it works to support those young people that are most in need of support in order to prepare and equip them for traveling on public transport.

Independent travel training is delivered within schools, colleges and training providers

across Northumberland.

During the review process for those young people who have a statement of Special Educational Needs or Learning Disability Assessment, who are making the transition from school to college, independent travel will be discussed. If appropriate an individual travel support plan will be drawn up so that the young person can receive further support to prepare them for independent travel when they start their new school/college.

The County Council also works with Children North East's Youth Link Project to provide peer and travel buddy support for those in need. Referrals to the travel buddy scheme are made via the County Council with the support of schools, parents and carers.

## **Review procedure**

### **12. If I am refused transport, is there anything I can do about it?**

If you are refused transport you will be sent a letter advising you of the reason for the refusal. You have the right to ask for a review of this decision.

The review process is a two stage procedure.

#### **Stage One – Request Review by a County Council Officer**

If you have been informed that you are not entitled to transport assistance under the County Council's Post-16 policy you can apply for a review under Stage One. You must set out clearly, in writing, why you believe that the County Council should reconsider the refusal to grant you transport costs, enclosing any relevant information that may support your case. You may only request a review based upon the students or your families personal circumstances or the application of the Post 16 policy but not about the policy itself.

A review of your case will not be undertaken over the phone, your case must be submitted either by letter or email.

You should write to the Transport Operations Manager, County Hall, Morpeth NE61 2EF within 10 working days of the date on the letter advising you that you have been refused support.

Email: [mark.cusack@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:mark.cusack@northumberland.gov.uk)

You will be advised of the outcome of the review in writing within 10 working days of the receipt of your correspondence.

#### **Stage Two**

If your Stage One is unsuccessful and you still wish to challenge the decision, you can submit an application to a review panel. How this process will work will be enclosed with the decision letter if your review confirms the original decision.

You should only seek a panel review if you have information that has not previously been considered in Stage One. The panel will not consider your application without the submission of relevant supporting information. You will be informed in writing of the outcome of your panel review and the reasons for this decision.

If you win your review you will be allocated transport, but you will not be entitled to claim a refund on transport costs incurred before the date when your request for a panel review was received. If you lose your review you will not be able to seek another review during that academic year unless there have been significant and material changes in your circumstances that require a new decision about your application. If you feel that your circumstances have changed you should make a further application to the Council.



## Complaints

A post-16 transport complaint is a complaint about how the local authority has carried out (or failed to carry out) its transport responsibilities in relation to post-16 students. It can be made by a person who is, or will be, 16-19 at the relevant time, or the person's parent /carer. Any such complaints should be submitted to the Council under its Complaints Procedure. However, any complaint solely about the outcome of the review will not be considered under this procedure.

If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your application, there is a right of complaint to the Secretary of State.

## Student support

### 13. Is there any further help available for students?

#### Residential Support

If you attend a further education institution which is beyond daily travelling distance and you need to stay away, you may be eligible for residential support.

The Department for Education offers a residential support scheme. If you need to study away from home because the course you need isn't available locally, you may be able to get financial help with the cost of your term-time accommodation in 2016-17. More information on residential support is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/residential-support-scheme>

#### Help with Childcare costs

If you are studying and aged under 20 at the start of your course, Care to Learn can help pay for your childcare costs while you are learning.

More information on the Care to Learn scheme is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn>

#### 16-19 Bursary

If you are 16 to 19 you might be able to get £1,200 from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund from your school, college or training provider.

If you are in one of the groups below, you could get a bursary of £1,200:

- student in care or care leavers
- student claiming Income Support in your own name
- disabled students getting Employment and Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment

If you are not in one of these groups, you could still get a discretionary bursary depending on your own and your family's circumstances. Contact your learning provider to discuss whether you are eligible for a discretionary bursary which is designed to assist students with low incomes with items such as transport costs. More information on the 16-19 Bursary is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

**You can also ring the Learner Support Helpline on 0800 121 8989  
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm for further information.**

## NORMAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Assistance will normally only be considered if you meet **all** of the following criteria:

- You are a Northumberland resident; and
- You are 16 years old or over, but 18 or under, on 31 August 2016. Arrangements will not be made for new courses that start in Year 14 except for students with special educational needs (see paragraph 2 (b) ii above), but will be made for courses that start in Year 13 and continue into Year 14; and
- Your course is undertaken at the nearest appropriate provider, as defined below; and
- Your course is full time, which is a minimum of 12 hours a week, within one academic year; and
- Your course is at a higher level than your previous achievements and provides appropriate progression to further learning or employment; and
- Your course is foundation learning, level 1, 2 or 3, but not level 4 or higher education or if you are an Apprentice. Students undertaking work placements, apprenticeships or traineeships are advised to contact their employer or learning provider; and
- You live 3 or more miles, by the shortest route indicated by the local authority, from the learning provider of your choice, or you live less than 3 miles from the learning provider of your choice but the route is not deemed to be a safe walking route by the Authority. The walking distance is measured using the County Council's approved GIS system, the current version which is in use is Arc View 10. Distance measures between home and school will be strictly applied. This means that in some cases pupils living in the same street or even adjoining properties may not all be eligible for free home to school transport. Routes are measured from the main entrance to the property that opens onto a road or street that is maintained at public expense to the main school entrance. Private driveways or roads not owned or maintained by Northumberland County Council are **not** included in the measurements. Decisions about the safety of walked routes follow the guidelines on the Assessment of Walking Routes issued by the Road Safety Officers Association (ROSA). Such assessments of walking routes address issues from a road safety perspective. They do not consider matters of personal security which is deemed to be the responsibility of parents.and
- Your estimated journey time to your chosen educational establishment will be no more than 75 minutes (150 minutes daily travelling time). This calculation will be based on using public transport, typically local bus services, to get to and from your learning provider; and
- The cost to the Council of your proposed journey is an efficient use of public resources; and
- You make the appropriate contribution (if any) towards the costs as determined by the Authority.

For the purposes of this policy the nearest learning provider is as follows:

- the educational establishment you want to attend post-16 is the nearest establishment to your home address; or
- the educational establishment you want to attend post-16 is not the nearest school but is the school named by the local authority as the catchment area school for your home address; or
- the educational establishment you want to attend post-16 is not the nearest school but is the nearest school which would be consistent with your religion or beliefs and you supply the necessary evidence of that religion or belief; or



- the educational establishment you want to attend post-16 is not the nearest establishment to your home address but it is the nearest that offers the course you wish to study in accordance with the following:
  - i. For a student wishing to study one or more A-levels, this will be the nearest educational establishment that offers 9 or more different A-levels. For the avoidance of doubt, the student's choice of A-levels, A-level subject combination, timetable clashes etc. will not be taken into account when determining eligibility.
  - ii. For a student wishing to undertake a vocational course, this will be to the nearest education establishment that offer the relevant vocational course at the appropriate level. To facilitate this, all courses will be categorised by the Authority under "vocational areas" and transport will only be provided for students who express a desire to study at their nearest educational establishment that offers a course under their chosen vocational area at the appropriate level of study. It is expected that there will be approximately 31 separate categories, including "Travel & Tourism", "Art & Design", "IT & Computing/Media" or "Catering & Hospitality". The full list of vocational areas is set out below. For the avoidance of doubt, the student's precise choice of course within each of these areas of vocational study will not be taken into account when determining eligibility.

Normally, the only exception in applying these criteria will be where an individual has applied to the appropriate provider at the appropriate time, but has been refused admission by the school/college, in which case that establishment will be ignored when considering eligibility. In such cases, written evidence of refusal will be required.

### List of Vocational Areas

Aerospace	Fashion
Accounting	Foundation Learning
Agriculture	Hairdressing
Animal Management & Care	Health & Social Care
Arboriculture	Horse Management & Care
Art & Design	Horticulture
Beauty Therapy	IT & Computing/Media
Business & Administration	Motor Vehicle
Catering & Hospitality	Outdoor Education & Activities
Childcare	Renewable Energies
Construction	Sports & Leisure
Countryside Management	Public Services
Customer Service	Science & Technology
Engineering	Skills for Working Life
Floristry	Travel & Tourism

## Useful Contacts

Information on the **Post-16 Transport Scheme** and the application process is available by email to [post16transport@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:post16transport@northumberland.gov.uk) or telephone **0345 600 6400** or can be downloaded from the local authority's website <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk>

Information on the availability of courses within Northumberland and Tyne & Wear can be found on the relevant prospectuses.

*The Employability and Skills Service at the local authority will either provide advice or direct you to another source of support in identifying a suitable course. This Service was formerly known as Connexions Northumberland. The Service can be contacted on 01670 622799.*

Ashington Community High School Sports College

[Admin@ashingtonhigh.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:Admin@ashingtonhigh.northumberland.sch.uk)

01670 812166

Astley Community High School

[reception@astleyigh.org](mailto:reception@astleyigh.org)

0191 2371505

Bedlingtonshire Community High School

[Admin@bedlingtonshire.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:Admin@bedlingtonshire.northumberland.sch.uk)

01670 822625

Berwick Academy

[admin@berwickacademy.co.uk](mailto:admin@berwickacademy.co.uk)

01289 305083

Cramlington Learning Village

[Admin@cramlingtonhigh.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:Admin@cramlingtonhigh.northumberland.sch.uk)

01670 712311

Haydon Bridge High School

[admin@haydonbridge.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@haydonbridge.northumberland.sch.uk)

01434 684422

James Calvert Spence College

[enquiries@jcsc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@jcsc.co.uk)

01665 710636

Ponteland Community High School

[pchs@pchs.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:pchs@pchs.northumberland.sch.uk)

01661 824711

Prudhoe Community High School

[Admin@prudhoe.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:Admin@prudhoe.northumberland.sch.uk)

01661 832486

Queen Elizabeth High School

[Admin@queenelizabeth.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:Admin@queenelizabeth.northumberland.sch.uk)

01434 610300

St Benet Biscop RC Voluntary Aided High School

[CampbellH@st-benetbiscop.org.uk](mailto:CampbellH@st-benetbiscop.org.uk)

01670 822795

The Blyth Academy

[admin@bcc.uk.com](mailto:admin@bcc.uk.com)

01670 798100

The Duchess's Community High School

[Admin@duchesss.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:Admin@duchesss.northumberland.sch.uk)

01665 602166

The King Edward VI School

[kevi@the3rivers.net](mailto:kevi@the3rivers.net)

01670 515415

The Northumberland C of E Academy

[Executive.director@ncea.org.uk](mailto:Executive.director@ncea.org.uk)

01670 816111

Bede Academy

[enquiries@bedeacademy.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bedeacademy.org.uk)

01670 545444

Buzz Learning

[www.buzzlearning.co.uk](http://www.buzzlearning.co.uk)

01670 852244

CSV

[www.csv.org.uk](http://www.csv.org.uk)

0191 2303833

Northumberland Adult Learning

[www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)

Northumberland College 01670 841200 and choose option 1 or via the Website:

<http://www.northumberland.ac.uk>

<http://www.northumberland.ac.uk/campuses/how-to-get-here/>

The government's website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/education>

Information on bus routes, rail services and timetables is available from the Traveline website: [www.travelinenortheast.info](http://www.travelinenortheast.info) or via individual company websites

Arriva: [www.arrivabus.co.uk](http://www.arrivabus.co.uk)

Go North East: [www.simplygo.com](http://www.simplygo.com)

Stagecoach: [www.stagecoachbus.com](http://www.stagecoachbus.com)

East Coast: [www.eastcoast.co.uk](http://www.eastcoast.co.uk)

Northern Rail: [www.northernrail.org](http://www.northernrail.org)

Students experiencing difficulty with transport are encouraged to speak to their school/college student support staff or tutor or head of sixth form/college.

*Information in connection with this policy statement is available from Mark Cusack by email at:*

[mark.cusack@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:mark.cusack@northumberland.gov.uk)

Information on how to seek a review of transport eligibility decisions can be found at [www.northumberland.gov.uk](http://www.northumberland.gov.uk)