

**Staffordshire County Council
Post-16 Transport Policy Statement
2019-2020**

Post-16 Transport Policy Statement - Academic Year 2019 – 2020

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

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Document first release:

Draft for consultation 11 February 2019

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Details of concessionary fares, discounts, subsidies, passes or travel cards including any charges available for Post 16 young people.18

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 Staffordshire 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.

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. The post 16 travel statement is published each year, following a period of consultation allowing students, parents, schools, colleges and neighbouring authorities to comment. This consultation is carried out each year and published on the [website](#)

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.

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 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.

We support low income students, and those with an Education, Health and Care Plan who require specialist travel assistance due to a learning difficulty or disability, through the Staffordshire Post 16 travel assistance scheme as detailed below.

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

Please note that the Your Staffordshire Card is being withdrawn from 31 August 2019. Additionally, changes are being made to the terms of use of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, otherwise known as the Older and Disabled Persons' Pass – details of any agreed changes should be available by the end of May 2019.

Transport and travel support

Concessionary tickets for young people 16 – 25 from public transport providers

[Travel INTO Staffs](#) is your one-stop site for travel information and advice in Staffordshire. It provides information to help make smarter travel choices by walking, cycling, care sharing, public transport and park and stride.

For public bus services, for journey planning, timetables and route maps visit [our bus travel webpage](#)

To find the public bus current ticketing option that best meets your circumstances please contact directly the bus operators in your area.

Stoke on Trent Smart ticket

Information correct as at 31 January 2019 - [The Smart multi-operator bus pass](#) allows you to travel on buses provided by different operators across North Staffordshire with just one ticket.

You can travel with any of the bus operators listed below, on any bus route, at any time of day across Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and North Staffordshire within the boundaries of the scheme.

Smart tickets cannot be used to travel to or from areas outside of the boundary, but you can use it to travel up to the boundary and pay the additional fare to your final destination.

Smart tickets are valid on the following bus operators' services –

First

D&G

Scraggs

Arriva Midlands

You can buy before you travel from the following city council locations with student identification and a passport photo:

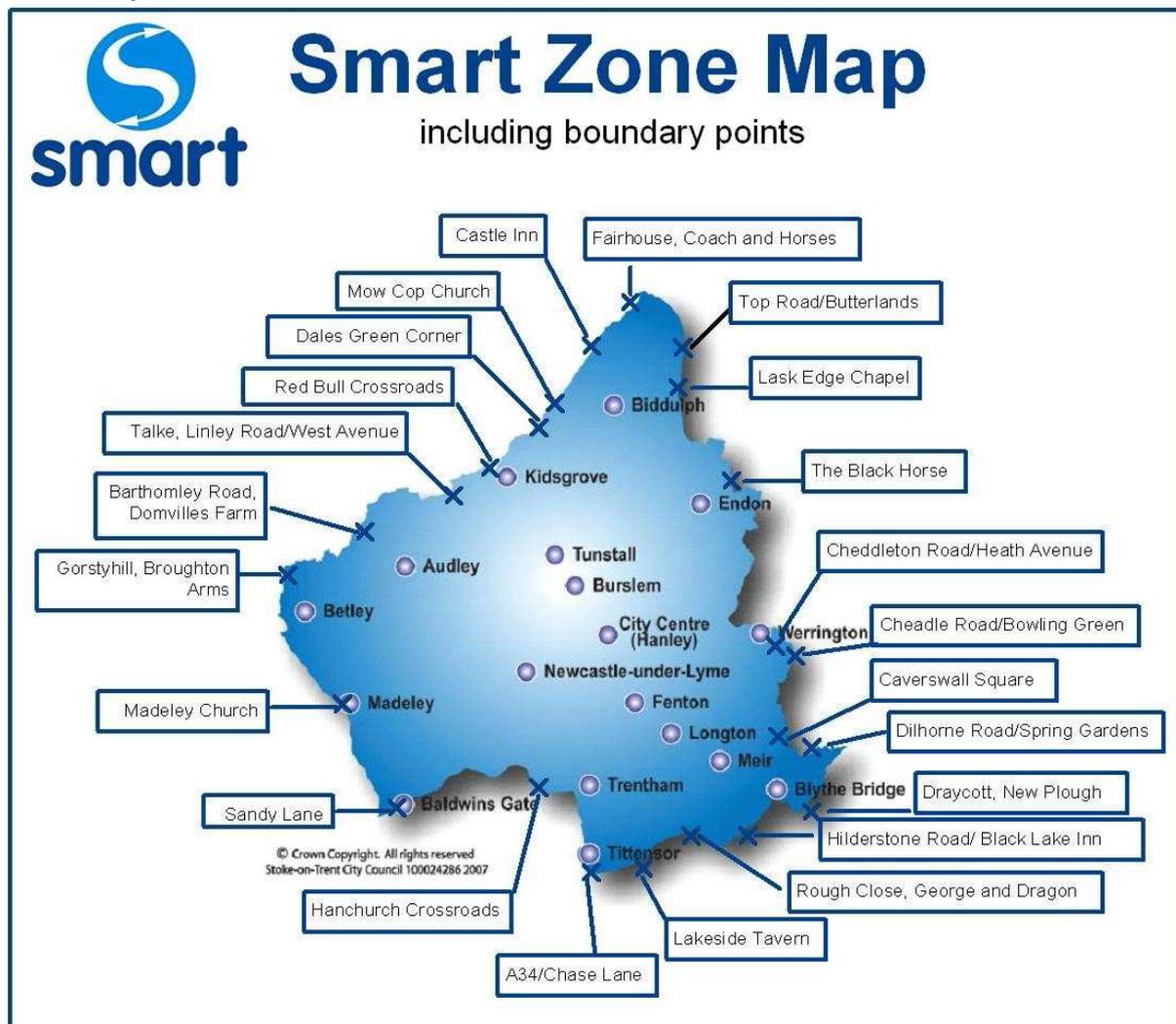
- 1 Smithfield, Hanley

- Bentilee Neighbourhood Centre
- Stoke One Stop Shop
- Tunstall Local Centre

Weekly tickets can also be bought on the bus.

Students at Stoke on Trent College, Newcastle-under-Lyme College or Stoke on Trent Sixth Form College can also buy tickets from the college travel office.

Student tickets cost £16 per week, £50 a month or £125 for 3 months. Please note all prices quoted are correct as at 31 January 2019 but are reviewed each year and so subject to change – check the website for up to date prices.



Travel support from schools and colleges

Schools and colleges may also offer their own transport arrangements. For up to date information, prices and application forms contact the school or college directly

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.

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 2019 or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2019 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.

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 £160 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

Types of child care

The childcare provider must be Ofsted registered and can be a:

- childminder
- pre-school playgroup
- day nursery
- out of school club

If your child needs specialist childcare, the provider must also be on the Care Quality Commission's register for specialist provision.

If you want a relative to get Care to Learn for looking after your child they need to be both:

- providing registered childcare for children they're not related to
- living apart from you and your child

Payments

Childcare payments go directly to your childcare provider. Before your childcare provider can be paid:

- your childcare provider needs to confirm your child's attendance
- your school or college needs to confirm that you're attending your course

Payments for travel costs go to your school or college - they'll either pay you or arrange travel for you.

Attendance

Payments will stop if:

- you stop attending your course
- you finish your course
- your child stops attending childcare

Eligibility

You can get Care to Learn if:

- you're a parent under 20 at the start of your course
- you're the main carer for your child
- you live in England
- you're either a British citizen or a national of a European Economic Area (EEA) country
- your course is publicly funded (check with your school or college)
- your childcare provider is registered with Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission

Type of course

Care to Learn is only available for courses in England that have some public funding. This includes courses that take place in:

- schools
- school sixth forms
- sixth form colleges
- other colleges and learning providers, including Foundation Learning
- your community at Children's Centres

Young parents are also entitled to apply for an Under 19 Bus Only Ticket or for those aged 19 and over can apply for the 19 – 25 card.

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.

Local Authority support

Support for all students who are capable of walking or using public transport (accompanied as necessary) – known as the ‘post 16 support scheme’

Support is offered to a student -

- If they or their parent is in receipt of a benefit that leads to the receipt of free school meals - these are Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit but **not** Working Tax Credit and the household income is not more than **£16,190**, the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Universal Credit with an annual net earned household income of no more than £7,400, or receives the maximum level of Working Tax Credit and
- Have their 19th birthday on or after 1 September 2019 or continuing a course begun before the day of their 19th birthday (see definition) and
- Is a full-time student (16 hours or more timetabled sessions per week) - [the course can be at entry level or at level 1, 2, or 3](#). Travel assistance is not given to higher education courses (level 4 and above, such as Foundation Degrees or Higher National Diplomas). and
- Is studying a course that is funded by the Staffordshire County Council – travel assistance is not given to students paying fees for their tuition, or studying as part of a paid apprenticeship and
- Is studying at the nearest school, college or Local Authority funded training provider offering the course, or catchment school, which is between 3 and 15 miles away. When considering if a course is available, we take into account the end qualification awarded (not

the individual subjects taken), the training provider having a place available to offer to you on that course, and that you meet the entry requirements demanded by the training provider.

- The student is a resident of Staffordshire (please note for students who are resident within the city of Stoke on Trent, you will need to make an application for support to Stoke on Trent City Council, telephone 01782 234598)
- In return for a contribution of £494 towards the cost we will provide a pass for public transport or a seat if one is available on an existing route contracted either by Staffordshire County Council, the school or the college. The price is reviewed each year and can be paid in instalments.
- The contribution rate is fixed regardless of the number of days travelling, the distance travelled or cost to the Council
- Staffordshire County Council will determine suitability of the transport provided – this will be based upon balancing reasonable costs and reasonable travel/waiting times to enable access to the place of learning for the general start/finish times of the establishment. This could mean that the transport arranged may not provide the quickest or most convenient journey.
- Students may be required to travel up to one mile to or from the pickup/drop off point to complete your journey

For information, the average gross cost per student to Staffordshire County Council of providing travel assistance for the academic year 2017-18 was £857 for a student attending a mainstream school

LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability

The following applies for students with special educational needs or a disability:

- Is a Staffordshire resident
- Have their 19th birthday on or after 1 September 2019 or continuing a course begun before the day of their 19th birthday (see definition) and
- Is a full-time student (16 hours or more timetabled sessions per week) - [the course can be at entry level or at level 1, 2, or 3](#). Travel assistance is not given to higher education courses (level 4 and

above, such as Foundation Degrees or Higher National Diplomas).
and

- The student is unable to walk or use public transport (even when accompanied) due to their learning difficulty or disability and
- The student is attending the nearest suitable school, college or Local Authority funded training provider offering the course as specified by the Local Authority and named in the Education, Health and Care Plan, regardless of the distance to travel
- Staffordshire County Council will determine the suitability and type of travel assistance provided. This will be based upon the student's needs and abilities, balancing reasonable costs and reasonable travel/waiting times to enable access to the place of learning for the general start/finish times of the establishment and not necessarily the student's own session times. Students using shared transport may be required to arrive before their own sessions begin and stay after they end to accommodate other students using the route.
- Support will be offered to low income students for a contribution of £494, or to non-low income students for a contribution of £625. Low income is where the student or their parent is in receipt of a benefit that leads to the receipt of free school meals - these are Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance, Child Tax Credit but **not** Working Tax Credit and the household income is not more than **£16,190**, the Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 or Universal Credit with an annual net earned household income of no more than £7,400, or receives the maximum level of Working Tax Credit
- Staffordshire County Council may be able to provide travel assistance through the offer of a personal travel budget. Under this scheme the student will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements.

In addition to the above conditions, the following also applies to students with an Education, Health and Care plan beginning a new course over the age of 19:

An additional assessment is made as to why it is necessary for the council and not the student/family to make their own travel arrangements. The decision is based upon information provided by the parent/carer and previously provided within any Social Care and Health

Assessment or Education, Health and Care Plan. We will consider, amongst other things –

- ❖ What other arrangements you have considered or tried and why they are not suitable.
- ❖ If there is a family member/carer who is able to transport the student and why it would not be a reasonable arrangement to make.
- ❖ If the student is in receipt of 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. We would normally expect this benefit to be fully utilised and if there are any factors limiting its' use you should provide details of them.
- ❖ If there is a 'Motability' vehicle which the student may or may not be driver. If a decision has been made to not use the 'Motability' vehicle to support the student to reach their education placement, we would normally expect the carer/student to make their own appropriate alternative arrangements or provide details as to why that is not possible/reasonable.
- ❖ Any other exceptional circumstances that you consider need to be taken into account and consider any recent supporting evidence that you provide.
- ❖ Please note that we would not generally consider work or childcare commitments on their own as an exceptional reason for travel assistance to be provided.

What is a new course and what is a continuing course?

Our definition of a new course is one where the named qualification, learning aims, outcomes, unit/course code or title of the course differ to the previous year. For example, an A level in maths delivered over 2 years (the qualification being awarded only at the end of completion of the second year) is considered a continuing course.

Where a student follows a programme of study such as a level 1 course the first year, and progresses on to the level 2 the next, or completes a series of courses where the outcomes differ each year and there is no requirement to progress to the second or further years to successfully complete each year, this is not considered a continuing course.

For information the average gross cost per student to Staffordshire County Council of providing travel assistance for the academic year 2017-18 was -

- £6042 for a student with learning difficulties and disabilities attending a school
- £9504 for a student with learning difficulties and disabilities attending a college

Refunds

Should you leave your course and require a refund you must return your pass to Transport & the Connected County. Refunds will not be made until the pass has been received. An administration fee of £10 may be deducted.

Travel training

Staffordshire County Council is committed to enabling its residents to become as independent as possible. To this end, the County Council offers Independent Travel Training. This is a lifelong skill which can have positive impacts beyond the home to school or college journey. It promotes independence and choice, develops confidence and social skills and it opens up further education and employment opportunities. Training is tailored to the skills and the pace of the individual.

The Travel Trainers work in partnership with schools and parents/carers to enable the individual to achieve their goals. Travel Training involves route planning, using a variety of travel options, road and personal safety, dealing with emergencies and applying for the appropriate travel pass. For more information please speak to your child's school or college or email the Travel Training team at independent.traveltraining@staffordshire.gov.uk

Apprenticeships

Staffordshire does not offer any specific travel assistance for apprenticeship or traineeship students. Please contact your learning provider or work placement for more information.

Those not in education, employment or training (NEET)

No specific arrangements are made directly by the Council for students who are NEET. Local bus companies offer a range of passes and should be contacted directly for further information.

LA support in other circumstances

Travel assistance may be available under the Staffordshire Post 16 travel assistance scheme if there are special reasons why it should be necessary to attend a learning establishment further away from home. For eligible students we will offer travel assistance between your home address and your accommodation general location on the same basis as to which the placement funding has been agreed (e.g. termly boarding, weekly boarding, 38 week placement) providing all other entitlement criteria are met.

Students using schemes operated by schools or colleges or buying a public service pass directly from the operator or via the college, should contact them directly for details of what transport support they offer or valid areas for tickets to be used outside of Staffordshire.

Additional eligibility criteria

The Staffordshire Post 16 travel assistance scheme is for students who are resident in Staffordshire only. Students living outside of Staffordshire should approach their own local council.

Under the Staffordshire County Council schemes, if the nearest suitable learning provider offering the course is in another local authority area then students will still qualify for assistance providing all other entitlement criteria are met.

Students who reach the age of 19 whilst continuing a course remain eligible until the end of that academic year for transport support (different arrangements apply for those with learning difficulties and disabilities please see 'LA support for Learners with special educational needs or a disability')

Applying for LA transport support

If you wish to buy a bus pass directly from the local bus company, or use transport arranged by your school or college, contact them directly for details of how and when to apply.

Applications for a Disabled Person's Concessionary Bus Pass should be made through your local Staffordshire library.

Students who wish to apply for travel assistance from Staffordshire County Council must make an application each year. Application forms and dates to apply by will be available [from our website](#)

Appeals

The Local Authority has adopted a 2 stage review and appeals process as recommended in the DfE July 2014 statutory guidance. There are separate forms to request a [post 16 support scheme decision review](#), or for a [review of decision of support for those with Special Educational Needs or disabilities](#).

Details of concessionary fares, discounts, subsidies, passes or travel cards including any charges available for Post 16 young people.

Passes purchased directly from public service operators, schools and colleges will have different arrangements regarding costs, timings and how and when to apply, and they should be contacted directly for more information.

For disabled students and those with learning difficulties, passes issued under the Disabled Persons Concessionary bus pass scheme can at present be used at any time of the day, any day of the week, if the journey starts or ends in Staffordshire. However, changes to this scheme are being considered and the final outcome of those changes should be known by the end of May 2019. Outside of Staffordshire the card will be available for use as a minimum between 9.30am and 11pm Monday to Friday and all day weekends and bank holidays.

Students who have been issued a pass under the Staffordshire County Council post 16 travel assistance scheme are normally limited to travel on school days only. Passes issued for a seat on a contracted vehicle are limited to the one morning and one afternoon journey to and from school during term time. Any transport between sites during the day is not covered by the scheme, but the school or college may be able to offer assistance.