

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**ADULT AND CHILDREN'S
SERVICES
CABINET MEMBER**

CHANGES TO POST 16 STUDENT TRANSPORT POLICY AND FEES 2011/12

1 OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1** To seek approval for the changes to the post 16 student transport policies for the academic year 2011/12.
- 1.2** To seek approval for the changes in fees contained within the policy.
- 1.3** An urgent decision is required in order that the policies can be published in line with the statutory requirements.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 There are two post-16 student transport policies. One policy relates to students who have special education needs (SEN) or special medical needs; and the other policy relates to students without SEN or special medical needs. The policies are reviewed and reissued every year.
- 2.2 During the academic year 2010/11 the local authority (LA) provided transport support for 49 students with special or medical needs and 1088 other students.
- 2.3 The council has a statutory duty to facilitate the attendance of people of 6th form age to education or training and students can be expected to pay all or part of the cost of transport. During the academic year 2010/11 students made a contribution of £185, or £195 if paid in termly installments, to their travel pass.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 **Option 1:** To approve the changes to the policy including changes to the fees structure. The proposed policies are shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 **Option 2:** To retain the status quo.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 Option 1:

The changes to the policy will provide closer alignment to pre 16 home to school policies. The updated fee structure provides a single rate of £30 for those meeting the criteria.

4.2 Option 2:

By not making the changes would not provide closer alignment to the pre 16 home to school policies and retains the fee structure of £185 for eligible students.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 Financial

The anticipated cost for option one will be an additional £220,000 giving a total cost of £758,420 for the 2011-12 academic year. This is an additional cost pressure that will be considered at the cabinet meeting on 29 June 2011.

5.2 Staffing

There are no staffing implications.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 Environmental

Keeping the contribution low encourages students to travel by bus rather than cars. It also supports the public transport network, which relies on the income it receives from post 16 students.

6.2 Statutory

The council has a duty to help post 16 students access further education, but not to provide free transport.

The council must consult stakeholders about the policy and must state what support is available to students with learning difficulties and disabilities up to the age of 25.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Consultation feedback was sought from the members of the Post 16 Partnership group which represents the views of further education providers, students and other relevant stakeholders. There has been no negative feedback received.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 To approve the policies for Post 16 Transport as per Appendix 1.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

Hewson House
Station Road
Brigg
North Lincolnshire
DN20 8XJ
Author: Becky McIntyre
Date: 27/05/11

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

None

North Lincolnshire Council
TRANSPORT FOR STUDENTS AGED 16-19

Academic Year 2011/12

Appendix 1



If you are applying to a college or school sixth form to continue your education post 16 you may be eligible for help with your transport.

1. **Courses covered**

Your chosen course of study must be a full time course (at least 450 guided learning hours) of further education of at least 30 weeks' duration at a publicly funded institution. Students attending work based learning programmes must apply to their employer for transport support.

2. **School/College Attended**

The course will normally be at a college or sixth form within North Lincolnshire. In some circumstances we may consider providing support for course outside North Lincolnshire, e.g.:

- where it would be unreasonable to travel to a local provider and the journey to the out-of-county college is much easier,
- if the course is unavailable in North Lincolnshire and it is essential to your intended career progression. **NB:** Even though the course in North Lincolnshire may not be exactly the same as the student's preferred course elsewhere, if it provides the student with the same opportunity to follow a higher education course or meets the entry criteria for their chosen career, transport support will not be provided to the course outside North Lincolnshire.
- if it is nearer than one in North Lincolnshire and the transport costs no more
- the distance from home to the out-of-county college should be no more than 25 miles. If the distance exceeds 25 miles, but the student meets the other eligibility criteria, transport support may be provided for part of the journey, e.g. from a convenient bus stop en route

3. **Personal Eligibility**

a) Residence

You must be living in North Lincolnshire when you are enrolled on the course, and either:

- have 'settled' status and been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least 3 years before the start of the course, or
- be a national of any EU country and have been ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area for at least 3 years before the course starts,

Anyone who moves to North Lincolnshire for the purpose of receiving full-time education **may not** be eligible for support from North Lincolnshire Council.

b) Three Year Limit

Unless you have special education needs and are eligible for support under that transport policy, we will only give support for a maximum of three years.

c) Age

You must be under 19 at the start of your course.

d) Distance

You must live more than 3 miles from school sixth form or college

4. **Other Financial Help**

- Colleges and school 6th forms have Learner Support Funds which they use to help students suffering from hardship. You should ask the college or the school 6th form you are attending about these.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q. How do I apply for transport support to College or School Sixth Form?

A. You can apply on line at: www.northlincs.gov.uk/northlincs/education/students/post16.htm or complete the blue application form (P16/01) available at North Lincolnshire colleges and school 6th forms, or as a download on the website, and return it with a passport-sized photograph and the appropriate payment to the School Transport Office, Hewson House, Station Road, Brigg, DN20 8XJ.

Q. Am I entitled to transport support?

A. You should be eligible for support if:

- you are under 19 on 1 September before the start of your course, and
- your course is full-time, and
- you have received less than 3 years transport support to attend a post 16 course, and
- you live in North Lincolnshire and you have not moved into the North Lincolnshire area specifically to attend the course, and
- you are to attend a school or college in North Lincolnshire (subject to the exceptions explained in paragraph 2, page 1).
- You live more than 3 miles (walking route) from school or college

Q. What support will I receive?

A. You will receive a bus pass to travel from the stop nearest to your home to your school 6th form or college in North Lincolnshire. This is valid on school/college days only. If there is no bus service to the school/college we will consider paying a mileage allowance. If your course is outside North Lincolnshire and we cannot issue a pass that is accepted by the public transport operator we may refund all or part of your bus/rail fare. The method and rate of reimbursement must be agreed with us in advance. We will not normally provide taxis for students to connect with the public transport network. We expect them to make their own way to the nearest bus stop as they would if they were going to work or other types of training.

Q. Will the travel pass cost me anything?

A. Yes. The amount you must contribute is £30 for the full year. If you lose your pass and need a new one, the cost of a replacement pass is £25.

If you have a disability you may be eligible for a free bus pass under the national scheme. Further information is available on the council's website: <http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Transportandstreets/publictransport/ConcessionaryTravel/>

Q. How can I pay for my pass?

A. You can pay or by credit/debit card on line at

<http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Education/students/post16.htm>

You may also pay by postal order, cheque (made payable to North Lincolnshire Council) or cash. Cash payments must be paid at one of the Local Link Offices. Cash must not be sent via the post.

Q. Will I receive a pass for the second year of my course automatically?

A. No – you need to apply for a new pass each year.

Q. How will I find out about my transport once I have sent off my application form?

- A.** Your pass will be sent to the North Lincolnshire college for you to collect, or posted to your home if your course is outside our area or you attend Brigg or Baysgarth 6th form. We will return your form, photograph and payment if you are not eligible to receive transport support.
- Q. Will any fares I have paid before receiving my pass be refunded?**
- A.** No – you should make sure that your application is received in good time. If we receive your application by 31 July we will guarantee that you will have your pass for the beginning of the term.
- Q. Can I specify the bus route I want to travel on?**
- A.** No, we will decide the route students travel on, according to where they live. This helps us to manage bus loading. Details of the routes serving your community are on our website: <http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Education/students/post16.htm>
- Q. If my circumstances change and/or I no longer need my pass what should I do?**
- A.** You should inform the School Transport Office (Tel 01724 297218) **It is important that, even though the pass covers the full year, if you have decided not to use it and are travelling to college by other means, or if you have withdrawn from your course, you inform us, and return your pass. Otherwise we may be paying the bus company for you to travel even though you are not doing so. If you need to use your pass later in the year, provided you still meet the eligibility criteria, we will return it to you at no additional cost.**
- Q. When can I use my travel pass?**
- A.** You can use the pass to travel on the bus route number printed on the pass between home and college on school/college days from 7am to 8.30 pm for one return journey per day. You will have to pay the appropriate fare if you travel outside normal term dates, e.g. at half term, unless attendance at college during these times is compulsory and essential to your course and you give us a letter of authorisation from the college in good time to enable us to inform the bus operator.
- Q. Does my pass guarantee me a seat on a bus?**
- A.** No, as most of the bus routes are public registered services we cannot guarantee you a place on a bus at a specific time. If you have significant problems please contact us.
- Q. I wish to attend a college outside of North Lincolnshire. Can I still apply for transport?**
- A.** We will consider providing support to schools and colleges outside North Lincolnshire in certain circumstances (see paragraph 2, page 1). You should send a covering letter with your application giving details of the reasons for your decision.
- Q. I have my own transport. Can I claim for travel expenses?**
- A.** This option is normally available only where there is no other transport available. You should send a covering letter with your application if you wish to apply for travel expenses. The same financial contribution will apply.
- Q. I live a long way from the bus route. Can I be picked up nearer home?**
- A.** We expect students to make their own way to the nearest bus stop. We will not normally provide any link transport to the public transport network. Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council may be able to offer you some help, e.g. through their scooter hire scheme.

- Q. I have lost my bus pass. How can I get a new one?**
- A.** Bus passes are valuable items. You should take good care of them. You can apply to the contact points listed overleaf for a replacement. A £25 charge will be made.
- Q. My parents live at separate addresses and I spend time with both parents during the week. Can I have two travel passes to both homes?**
- A.** We may consider providing two passes if the cost of a pass costs us no more. Some of the bus companies charge us as and when students travel, whereas others charge us a fixed rate regardless of the days travelled. Such an arrangement would be a concession and not a right under the Post 16 Transport Policy.
- Q. Is any additional support available for students who have learning difficulties or disabilities?**
- A.** Yes. Details of the students who are eligible, and support available to them, are set out in a separate document. Please call 01724 297218 if you want a copy of it. The policy is also available on-line: <http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Education/students/Post16Transport/Disabilities.htm>
- Q. Are there any circumstances when my pass could be withdrawn?**
- A.** If your behaviour on the transport is unacceptable the bus companies have the right to refuse transport and your pass will be withdrawn. You will then be responsible for making your own way to school or college.
- Q. Is any other help available?**
- A.** Learner Support Awards may be available to students suffering from hardship. You should ask the college or the school 6th form you are attending about these.
- Q. If I am unhappy with any decision made about my transport can I appeal?**
- A.** Yes, you have the right to appeal against the decision. Please call us on 01724 297218 to ask for details and an appeal form.

Useful Contact Points

For queries about policy and eligibility ☎ 01724 297218, e mail: school.transport@northlincs.gov.uk
www.northlincs.gov.uk/northlincs/education/students

Scooter scheme and other travel advice, Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council ☎ 01652 661226

Data Protection

If your application is successful, your details will be held on North Lincolnshire Council's computer system for the purpose of providing you with the appropriate transport. The relevant information may be given to the people and organisations within and external to the Council, including the bus companies, who are responsible for providing the transport. The Council has notified with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will ensure that your personal details are held securely and only used for the purpose described.

**TRANSPORT FOR STUDENTS AGED 16 AND OVER WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
AND WHO NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**



Academic Year 2011/12

If your child:

- Was statemented at school, or
- Has learning difficulties or disabilities, or
- Has medical needs

and is unable to travel to school/college independently, or needs extra time to complete their course because of their medical need or disability, they may be entitled for additional help with their transport.

Students who are able to use public transport, should refer to the blue Post 16 Transport Policy leaflet. They may also be entitled to free travel on public transport under the national scheme, details of which are given below.

Courses covered

The chosen course of study would usually be a full time course (at least 450 guided learning hours) of at least 30 weeks duration of further education at a publicly funded institution. We may be willing to consider applications to part-time courses if the student is unable to attend full-time provision because of their disability. Post 19 students must be attending courses funded by a public body such as the YPLA.

School/College Attended

The course must be at a college or school within North Lincolnshire unless:

- the out-of-county college placement is funded by a public body such as the Young Person's Learning Agency (YPLA) or North Lincolnshire Council
- the course is not available in North Lincolnshire and there is no suitable alternative locally
- it would be unreasonable to travel to a college in North Lincolnshire and access to the out of county college is much easier
- The course is nearer and transport costs no more

Personal Eligibility

a) Residence

The student must live in North Lincolnshire and

- have 'settled' status and been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least 3 years before the start of the course, or
- be a national of any EU country and have been ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area for at least 3 years before the start of the course

Anyone who moves to North Lincolnshire for the purpose of receiving full-time education **may not** be eligible for support from North Lincolnshire Council.

b) Disability

Students may be eligible for additional support with transport if they had a statement of special education need at school or have a medical condition, which means they cannot use public transport, or they need longer to complete your course because of their medical need or disability. If a student is able to use public transport, for example having received independent travel training at school or college, but whose parent chooses not to use this means of transport, the student may not be eligible for additional support under this policy.

c) Age

Students must be aged 16-20 on 31 August 2011. Transport support may be extended to students aged up to 24 if they are attending residential educational provision funded by a recognised public body such as the YPLA.

d) Educational Progression

The College and Connexions/Education Service/YPLA must support the student's attendance on the course and we must have evidence that they will gain educational benefit from it.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS AGED 16 AND OVER WITH SOCIAL NEEDS AND WHO NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Q. How do I apply for transport support to College or School?

A. If you can travel on public transport without support you can apply on line at: www.northlincs.gov.uk/northlincs/education/students/post16.htm or complete the blue application form (P16/01) available at your college, school 6th form or 11-16 North Lincolnshire school and return it with a passport-sized photograph and the appropriate payment to the School Transport Office, Hewson House, Station Road, Brigg, DN20 8XJ.

If you are unable to use public transport or need support to do so you need to complete the application form P16/S available from the School Transport Office at Hewson House, Brigg. If you need any help in completing the form you should ask your Connexions Personal Adviser.

Q. Will the transport cost me anything?

A. Yes. The amount you must contribute is £30 for the full year. **If you lose your pass and need a new one, the cost of a replacement pass is £25.**

Depending on your disability, you may qualify for a pass to travel free on public transport. You can find out more about this on the council's website -

<http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Transportandstreets/concessionaryfares/>.

If you are a student at St Hugh's Communication and Interaction Specialist College, John Leggott or North Lindsey College the staff there may also be able to advise you on whether or not you are entitled to receive a free travel pass.

If you are not using public transport and/or do not meet the criteria for a free pass under the national scheme, you will need to make a contribution to the cost of transport.

Q. How can I pay for my pass?

A. You can pay or by credit/debit card on line at

<http://www.northlincs.gov.uk/NorthLincs/Education/students/post16.htm>

You may also pay by cash, postal order or cheque, made payable to North Lincolnshire Council. Cash payments must be paid at one of the Local Link Offices. Cash must not be sent via the post.

Q. How will I find out about my transport once I have sent off my application form?

A. You will receive a letter giving details of the transport that has been arranged. You should receive this **by 26 August** if we have received your application form by 31 July. Sometimes it can take a little longer to confirm transport provision for students who need special arrangements. Where a number of children share the same vehicle, we need to know the requirements of them all before we can set up the contract.

Q. Will transport be provided door to door?

A. Not necessarily, it will depend on your capabilities and special needs. We want to encourage students to be as independent as possible, and this includes using to a convenient pick up point.

Q. If I move house or change my course what should I do?

A. You should tell the School Transport Officer at Hewson House (tel 01724 297218) about any change in your circumstances as soon, or preferably before, it occurs. We will then decide if you are still eligible to receive transport support or need to make alternative arrangements.

Q.	I wish to attend a college outside of North Lincolnshire. Can I still apply for transport?
A.	If the YPLA or Council has organised an out-of-area residential placement we will normally offer a mileage allowance for parents to transport students at the beginning and end of each half term (a total of 12 return journeys per year) unless we already have transport to the placement and the student can share that. If the student is to travel daily to the school or college we need to be satisfied that the same, or a comparable, course is not available in North Lincolnshire. The council or relevant agency must approve it as a suitable course, and it must lead to educational progression.
Q.	I have my own transport. Can I claim for travel expenses?
A.	This option is normally only available where there is no other transport available. You should send a covering letter with your application if you wish to apply for travel expenses. If you have a mobility vehicle, and there is no existing transport we will normally expect you to use this rather than contracting other transport.
Q.	Will my transport stay the same all year?
A.	Not necessarily. During your course you may follow an independent travel training programme. This may lead to a change in the pick-up arrangements or the transport provided.
Q.	Is any other help available?
A.	Learner Support Awards may be available to students suffering from hardship. You should ask the college or the school 6 th form you are attending about these.
Q.	My parents live at separate addresses and I spend time with both parents during the week. Can I have two travel passes to both homes?
A.	We would consider providing transport to separate addresses only if it costs the council no more and was a regular arrangement. Such an arrangement would be a concession and not a right under the Post 16 SEN Transport Policy.
Q.	If I am unhappy with any decision made about my transport can I appeal?
A.	Yes you have the right to appeal against the decision. Please call us on 01724 297218 to ask for details and an appeal form.

Useful Contact Points

For queries about eligibility ☎ 01724 297218

For queries about bus routes ☎ 01724 297216

www.northlincs.gov.uk/northlincs/education/students

e mail: school.transport@northlincs.gov.uk

Connexions ☎ 01724 282200

Data Protection

If your application is successful, your details will be held on North Lincolnshire Council's computer system for the purpose of providing you with the appropriate transport. The relevant information may be given to the people and organisations within and external to the Council, including the bus companies, who are responsible for providing the transport.

The Council has notified with the Information Commissioner under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will ensure that your personal details are held securely and only used for the purpose described. Help us to keep your information accurate and up to date by informing the Education Transport Section of any changes to the details you have supplied as soon as they have occurred.