

Post 16 Transport Policy 2014/15

INTRODUCTION

Bracknell Forest Council supports the idea that Post 16 students should be encouraged to continue with their education and training. It therefore seeks to enable all 16-19 students to access appropriate education by providing support and assistance for transport where possible. The Council will consider, on an individual basis and subject to funding, applications for assistance as per the published Policy.

Whilst Bracknell Forest is committed to supporting Post 16 education it does not have a statutory duty to offer Post 16 transport.

Parents should ensure that they are aware of the cost of transport when making choices for their child's Post 16 education. Funding is no longer made available to local authorities but direct to colleges and 6th form schools in the form of a bursary.

The Council will take into account the needs of students with disabilities and or difficulties who may not otherwise be able to access and/or complete further education without assistance. It is happy to give students advice both verbally and in writing about the transport options available to them. Further Education Colleges can also assist students with information on transport.

In accordance with the guidelines from the Department for Education the authority has consulted with various stakeholders in preparing this. This includes all contacts and providers listed at the end of this document as well as those children of sixth form age and their parents.

The content of this document is valid for the academic year starting 1 September 2014.

ELIGIBILITY

To qualify, students must be a Bracknell Forest resident, aged 16 and under 19 on 1 September 2014 and continuing full-time further education at one of the following:

- a school (including Academies)
- a further education institution
- an Authority maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education

- an establishment funded directly by the YPLA e.g. Independent Specialist Providers for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- a learning provider that is funded by the local authority to deliver Foundation Learning or other accredited programmes of learning which lead to a positive outcome (this could include colleges, charities and private learning providers)

In order to be considered for assistance students must fulfil **one** of the criteria listed below:

- have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and be continuing with their education at their current educational establishment
- previously had a Statement of Special Educational Needs which ceased at the end of Year 11 and wish to continue with their education/training at a further education establishment on a full-time basis. In order for assistance with transport to be considered a Moving Forward Plan drawn up with the Adviza (formerly the Connexions Service) must be submitted with the application.
- Previously had a statement of Special Educational Needs and are supported by Adult Social Care

The table below sets out the charges for Post 16 students for the academic year 2014/2015.

Students with a current statement of SEN as at 1 September 2014	No charge	
Previously statemented students who are in receipt of Free School Meals*	£480.00 per annum	Payable in 3 instalments of £160.00
Previously statemented students	£630.00 per annum	Payable in 3 instalments of £210.00

* Eligibility will be verified

If pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and will be continuing education at their current educational establishment transport will continue to be provided "free" transport.

If pupils have previously had a Statement of Special Educational Needs that has ceased and they wish to continue in full time education/training at a further education establishment then they will need a Moving Forward Plan from Adviza – this should have been drawn up during the students' final year at school.

Applicants will need to fulfil the following criteria:

1. Show that the course(s) they wish to take is/are not run at their current school
2. Show that the course(s) they wish to take is/are not run at an establishment closer to their home address than that to which transport is requested
3. Agree to undertake travel training where appropriate

Eligibility for transport will be means tested.

When assessing what support the student might need the Council will also take into account receipt of the mobility component of Disabled Living Allowance. Therefore

those families that are in receipt of the mobility component of DLA for the student may be required to make a contribution towards education transport

All requests must be made on the application form available from the Integrated Transport Unit (ITU) and submitted for consideration.

Applications must be made annually and will be reviewed to assess whether or not assistance with transport is still required. In any event the provision will cease at the end of the academic year in which the student's 19th birthday falls unless they are considered under 'Students over 19' – see below.

If the need for assistance with transport is agreed then the ITU will arrange transport to the educational establishment **subject to payment of the appropriate contribution.**

There is no guarantee that the transport provided will be the same as when the student attended school and every encouragement will be made towards independent travel by public transport. However, should there be a need for additional support for the student due to a particular disability this will be taken into consideration.

Students travelling to a place of further education where the ITU already provides transport may be offered a seat in that vehicle. However, students should be aware that the transport will only operate at the times arranged by the Integrated Transport Unit for their own clients and no changes or additional transport will be provided to meet the needs of Post 16 students.

RAISING THE PARTICIPATION AGE

The Education and Skills Act 2008 increased the minimum age at which you people in England can leave learning, requiring them to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.

A person ceases to be of compulsory school age on the school leaving date of the academic year in which they turn 16. The school leaving date is currently set as the last Friday in June. Raising the participation age does not affect the compulsory school age. A person who ceased to be of compulsory school age but has not yet reached the age of 18 is under a duty to participate in one of the following:

- full-time education, such as school, college or home education
- work-based learning such as an apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours a week

STUDENTS OVER 19

Students who have a learning disability and are over 19 can contact the Community Team for People with a Learning Disability on 01344 354466 who will provide advice and assistance for them to continue with the courses. There is no guarantee that the transport provided will be the same as when the student attended school and every encouragement will be made towards independent travel by public transport

PREFERENTIAL RATE SCHEME

The Council does have arrangements with local bus and train operators for the purchase of annual season tickets at preferential rates. The Council will, following receipt of a one-off payment, be able to purchase tickets direct from transport providers at reduced rates.

Payments will vary according to the method of transport required and in the case of rail passes the rail mile distance also affects the cost.

Details will be provided to any student and are only be available to students travelling by rail or on registered bus routes – these include routes to Charters School.

In addition, if you are attending Bracknell and Woking College they have an arrangement with First Beeline for student travel cards – further details can be found at http://www.bracknell.ac.uk/school_leavers/money_matters/cheap_bus_travel.aspx

If, having purchased an annual ticket for transport you then decide you no longer wish to attend, refunds will be available on the following basis:

Notification received by the Integrated Transport Unit, in writing, prior to the end of the Autumn Term – refund of 2 terms

Notification received by the Integrated Transport Unit, in writing, [prior to the end of the Spring Term – refund of 1 term

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP

For any student facing financial hardship you may be eligible for assistance from the 16-19 Bursary Fund which is held by further education colleges, sixth for colleges, school sixth forms, academies and training providers. Please contact the school or college you wish to or are attending for further information.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Decisions as to the eligibility for transport, the mode of transport, and other practical matters of transport will be taken by the council's officers with particular authorisation to do so. This is not a statutory appeal, but the council expects to uphold the normal professional standards of such appeal procedures.

No appeals will usually be considered regarding the mode of transport provided. The method of transport is provided by the council's transport officers based on the best available, taking into account the student's needs and the requirement to offer best value.

Parent/carers do have the ability to challenge the decision made by officers on the grounds of:

- The transport arrangements offered
- Their child's eligibility
- The distance measured
- The safety of the route

Only one appeal will be given for each transport application unless there has been a significant change in circumstances.

Stage One

- A parent/carer has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's Post 16 transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision
- The written request should detail why the parent/carer believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent/carer believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed
- This written request should be made to the Senior Admissions Officer, Bracknell Forest Council, Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD and clearly marked POST 16 TRANSPORT APPEAL
- Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent/carer's written request the Senior Admissions Officer reviews the original decision and sends the parent/carer a detailed written outcome setting out:
 - the nature of the decision reached
 - how the review was conducted
 - Information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process
 - what factors were considered
 - the rationale for the decision reached
 - information about escalation to stage two (if appropriate)

Stage Two

- A parent/carer has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one decision to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two
- This written request should be made to Democratic Services, Bracknell Forest Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, RG12 1AQ clearly marked POST 16 TRANSPORT APPEAL.
- Parent/carers should be aware that no appeal at Stage Two will be considered until such time as Stage One has been completed.
- Within 40 working days an independent appeal panel considers written and verbal representations from the parent/carer and officers and gives a detailed written outcome within 5 working days of their meeting setting out:
 - the nature of the decision reached
 - how the review was conducted
 - information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process
 - what factors were considered
 - the rationale for the decision reached
 - information about escalation to the Local Government Ombudsman
- The independent appeal panel members are independent of the process to date and suitably experienced, ensuring that a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of parent/carers and the local authority.

Local Government Ombudsman

A parent/carer who remains dissatisfied after following this procedure may further complain to the Local Government Ombudsman, but only if complainants consider that there was a failure to comply with procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal was handled. If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may apply to judicial review. The Ombudsman can be contacted at:

PO Box 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH (tel. 0845 602 1983)

Further information is available on the Ombudsman's website: www.lgo.org.uk

CONTACTS

Adviza – formerly Connexions Adviza is a charity inspiring people to make better decisions that help them progress in learning and work

Tel: 0845 408 5001

Email: info@adviza.org.uk

Web: <http://www.adviza.org.uk>

Berkshire College of Agriculture

The college operates their own bus service to the college and students can purchase passes direct from the college. For more information

Tel: 01628 827482

Email: enquiries@bca.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.bca.ac.uk/?s=travel+to+bca&x=18&y=18>

Bracknell Forest Council - CTPLD – Community Team for People with a Learning Disability for transport advice for young people with a learning disability

Tel: 01344 354466

Email: Admin.CTPLD@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/communityteamforpeoplewithalearningdisability>

Bracknell Forest Council - Integrated Transport Unit – for all transport advice

Tel: 01344 352002

Email: corporate.transport@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Web: <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/schooltransport>

Bracknell & Wokingham College

Further education college offering a range of full and part-time courses

Tel: 0845 330 3343

Email: study@bracknell.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.bracknell.ac.uk>

Farnborough College of Technology

Further education college offering a range of full and part-time courses

Tel: 01252 407040

Email: info@farn-ct.ac.uk

Web: <https://www.farn-ct.ac.uk>

Farnborough 6th Form College

6th Form college covering a wide range of full time courses

Tel: 01252 688200

Email: admin@farnborough.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.farnborough.ac.uk>

Henley College

Further education college offering a range of full and part-time courses

Tel: 01491 579988

Email: info@henleycol.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.henleycol.ac.uk/henleycollege/contact/main.html>

Strodes College

Further education college offering a range of full and part-time courses

Tel: 01784 437506

Email: info@strodes.ac.uk

Web: <http://www.strodes.ac.uk>

TRANSPORT PROVIDERS

Courtney Buses – 01189 733486 for travel in and around the Bracknell area

Fernhill Travel – 01344 421423 for travel to Charters School

First Beeline – 01344 872222 for travel in and around the Bracknell area

First Great Western – rail travel across the area 01189 083679

Horseman Coaches – 01189 753811 for travel to Henley College

Stagecoach – 0871 200 2233 travel to Farnborough 6th Form College

White Bus Company – 01344 882612 for travel to Charters School

Check your travel arrangements on Traveline

http://www.travelinesoutheast.org.uk/se/XSLT_TRIP_REQUEST2?language=en&timeOffset=15