

To: **EXECUTIVE MEMBER for CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING**
November 2022

**EDUCATION TRANSPORT POLICY FOR BRACKNELL FOREST CHILDREN
AGED 5-16
Executive Director of People**

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report seeks formal approval of the Education Travel policy, for children aged 5-16 for the period 2023 -2024.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **For the Executive Member to agree the Education Transport Policy Statement 2023/24, for Bracknell Forest Children aged 5-16.**

3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 To ensure compliance with statutory requirements to publish a compliant travel policy for children aged 5-16.
- 3.2 There are no statutory changes to the policy from the last academic year. Amendments have been made to aid clarity for residents i.e., a clearer, reader friendly policy. The policy will be subject to graphic design whilst awaiting content approval.

4 Alternative Options Considered

- 4.1 No alternative option was considered.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 Local Authorities are required to publish transport statements each year setting out the travel arrangements they will make to support eligible children of compulsory school age.
- 5.2 In 2019 the DfE consulted on revised statutory guidance for local authorities on home to school travel and transport for children of compulsory school age (5-16). The revised guidance was expected to be published in early 2020; however, this was paused due to COVID 19. DfE have sent out a near final draft of the updated guidance. Given the delay they are now taking final comments from LAs. It is unlikely that any new guidance will formally be in place before the academic year 24/25. This policy therefore continues to follow home to school travel and statutory guidance dated July 2014. The main body of the policy has no significant changes apart from ensuring clarity on certain points. The revised policy is at Appendix A for approval.
- 5.3 The Education Travel Policy for Post 16 students is published separately.
- 5.4 This policy does not have any financial implications as eligibility criteria for free education transport remains the same. Discretionary arrangements for non-eligible

children i.e., pre statutory school age children are normally funded by the department supporting the application. Alternative Provision transport should be funded by the school where the child is registered or, for SEN children, the setting named in section I of their individual EHC plan.

6 Consultation and Other Considerations

Legal Advice

- 6.1 The relevant legal issues are addressed within the main body of the report. The report recognises the mandatory duties to “Eligible children “and the discretionary duties owed to all the other groups of learners.

Financial Advice

- 6.2 There are no financial implications for this policy as the eligibility criteria for free education transport remains the same; however, as the expenditure on this budget is directly related to the number of pupils eligible for this service and this number is increasing year on year, this may cause a significant financial pressure.

Other Consultation Responses

- 6.3 As there are no substantive changes there is no requirement to consult on the policy. The draft policy was sent to the Parent Carer Forum; however, to date no response has been received.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 Equality Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2 of this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 There are no strategic risk management issues related to this policy.

Climate Change Implications

- 6.6 The recommendations in Section 2 above are expected to:

Have no impact on emissions of CO2.

The reasons the Council believes that this will have no impact on emissions are:

The modes of transport are determined by distance and the needs of the children travelling. The current education travel contract framework is in place until 2026 and whilst we can ensure that the vehicles currently utilised meet the framework standards, there is little that can be done to influence the types of vehicles used until these contracts are retendered. The Council will, however, continue to promote sustainable travel where it is feasible.

Background Papers

DfE Home to school travel and transport guidance – July 2014

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/575323/Home_to_school_travel_and_transport_guidance.pdf

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