

Home To School Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 22 February to 31 March 2022

Introduction

Surrey County Council's Home to School Travel Assistance Policy (H2S TA) explains the eligibility criteria for travel assistance for children, with and without special educational needs, of statutory school age (5-16 years old), for children under 5 and for young people aged 16-19 and 19-25 and describes how the Council fulfils its duties and exercises its discretionary powers as set out in the Education Act 1996 and subsequent legislation and guidance.

The Council is refreshing the Home to School Travel Assistance Policy in several key areas, including the introduction of collection points and further promotion and implementation of Independent Travel Training (ITT). The policy will help align the Authority's commitment to moving away from an offer of school transport to a travel assistance model, with an increased focus on sustainability and Surrey's green agenda.

An overview of the proposed changes to the policy is found in the 'Proposed Changes Guide' document at the bottom of this page under 'Related Documents'. We strongly recommend that you read the 'Proposed Changes Guide' before completing the consultation.

The consultation uses the term 'Additional Needs' and 'SEND' to refer to children, young people and adults with special educational needs and disabilities. We have agreed to use identify-first language (eg "additional needs" rather than SEND unless it refers to legislation or

a policy as this was the preference of young people we spoke to.)

How to Get Involved

The consultation starts on Tuesday 22 February 2022 and runs for a period of 28 working days until midnight Thursday 31st March.

You can get involved by either:

1. Completely the Survey below
2. Or booking into one of the virtual public meetings, to be held on Microsoft Teams [H2S TA Public Meeting Tickets, Multiple Dates | Eventbrite](#)
3. Or, you can call our Contact Centre on 03456 009 009 and ask to be booked into one of the virtual public meetings.

The Proposed Changes are summarised in the **‘Proposed Changes Guide’** document.

If you require this survey in an alternative format, please contact research@surreycc.gov.uk and we will do our best to assist you.

THE SURVEY

The consultation uses the term ‘Additional Needs’ and ‘SEND’ to refer to children, young people and adults with special educational needs and disabilities. We have agreed to use identify-first language (eg “additional needs” rather than SEND unless it refers to legislation or a policy as this was the preference of young people we spoke to.)

Q1. YOU OR YOUR CHILD(REN)S HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE STATUS

Question 1.1: Are you...?

Please select the answer which best describes yourself when completing this survey. Answer yes under the appropriate answer.

A young person with special educational needs or disability/additional needs (SEND)

A young person without additional needs (SEND)

A parent/carer of a young person(s) with additional needs (SEND)

A parent/carer of a young person(s) without additional needs (SEND)

An educational professional or governor

A professional transport service provider (bus driver, taxi, etc)

A Surrey resident

Other (if other please specify)

Question 1.2: Do you or your child(ren) currently receive Home to School Travel Assistance from Surrey County Council? Answer yes, no, don't know or not applicable

Question 1.3: If yes to the question above, how old are you or your child(ren) who currently receives Home to School Travel Assistance? Please state answer

Question 1.4 Are you applying for Home to School Travel Assistance in the next Academic Year? Answer yes, no, don't know or not applicable

Question 1.5: Do you or your child(ren) have an active Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or are currently going through an EHCP assessment? Answer yes, no, don't know or not applicable

Question 1.6: Do you or your child(ren) use public transport to travel to and from school/education centres? Please state answer. If yes, do you travel as a family, with an adult or independently?

Question 1.7: Do you or your child(ren) use public transport at the weekend, evenings or on holidays to access services, activities, visit friends or family? Please state answer. If yes, do you travel as a family, with an adult or independently?

Question 1.8: If you/your child(ren) is currently receiving Home to School Travel Assistance from the Council, do you/they also receive the mobility component of either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)? Please state answer. If yes do you pay the higher rate or lower rate?

Q2. INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

Our engagement with children and young people, including those with special educational needs and additional needs (SEND), suggests that independence is important to them.

Question 2.1: Being independent is different for everyone. As you and/or your child(ren) prepare for independent travel as a young adult(s), what objectives are most important to allow your child(ren) to travel independently? Please answer yes under the relevant answers

Being able to travel without a parent or carer in attendance

Be able to undertake a single journey/route independently using public transport

Be able to undertake a single journey/route independently walking/cycling

Be able to plan and undertake any journey independently using public transport

Be able to undertake any journey when they want using any form of transport

Be able to undertake any journey by driving a car or motorcycle

Be able to undertake any journey by cycling or walking

Be able to travel on public transport with an accompanying adult (e.g., parent/carer)

Be able to carry own bags and board and alight a vehicle on their own

Be able to access transport from a collection point

Be able to share school transport with other children or young people

Not Applicable

Other (please specify)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Question 2.2: In your opinion, what are the three biggest benefits for a child or young person who is successfully supported to travel independently on public transport to access services and activities in the community? Please yes under the relevant answers

Increased self-esteem and confidence

Improved access to friends and social or leisure activities

Improved access to educational opportunities

Improved access to employment or vocational opportunities

Increased opportunities to use public transport as an individual or family at weekends, evenings, and holidays

Reduced reliance on family members or friends to assist with travel needs

Other (please specify)

Question 2.3: What are the three biggest benefits for the family of a young person who is successfully supported

to travel independently on public transport? Please yes under the relevant answers

Family members have more time to do their own thing e.g., study or employment

Increased numbers of travel options available for family travel

Reduced dependency on family or friends financially

Less need for adults to accompany young person to and from places

Opportunities to access community services and activities that were previously not accessible

Positive changes in family relationships and interactions

Other (please specify)

Question 2.4: What are the three biggest barriers that stop children and young people using public transport independently to access services and activities in the community? Please yes under the relevant answers

Specific health needs cannot be supported on public transport

Has never used public transport before, even with an accompanying adult

Unable to access services and activities due to poor public transport links

Limited awareness of danger or unable to keep safe

Specific needs may place child/young person or member of the public at risk

Wouldn't be able to manage situations that aren't planned or are out of routine

Risk of getting lost or missing stop

Unable to communicate with public transport staff or members of the public

Unable to handle money

Not being able to access opportunities to learn the necessary skills to use public transport

Family concern for the young person's safety and not allowing them the opportunity to try to travel on public transport independently

Fear of bullying or being attacked

Other (please specify)

Question 2.5: What could the Council do to support more children and young persons to travel on public transport to school or college?

BROADER OPTIONS

Question 2.6 To what extent do you agree that the introduction of the following options would help increase your child's travel independence?

2.6.a Bikeability- This is a council manage cycling programme that equips children and young people with cycling safely skill and confidence. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

2.6.b Driving lessons. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

2.6.c Access to TFL Oyster Card (in some areas of the county). Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

2.6.d Independent Travel Training (ITT)

The Council plans to offer Independent Travel Training (ITT) to children and young people who are eligible for travel assistance, removing the need for them to undertake individual travel training at home. ITT is tailored 1-1 training and practical assistance to build confidence and independence to travel safely and without anxiety on public transport. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 2.7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement below:

If a child or young person has the potential to become an independent traveller and would benefit from ITT, then they should be expected to undertake the training on

offer. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 2.8: Please provide any further thoughts, comments, and suggestions in relation to Independent Travel Training. What would improve your child's confidence to travel independently?

COLLECTION POINTS

Question 2.9. The Council plans to encourage the use of collection points, which are safe designated pick-up and drop-off locations for pupils to meet the bus or taxi. Where children and young people with SEND needs or parents or carers' mobility/disability impact on them being able to use collection points, the Council will assess individual needs.

Would you consider your child using collection points for catching the bus or taxi to and from school/college?
Answer yes, no or don't know

Question 2.10. The Council plans to encourage the use of collection points, designated pick-up, and drop-off locations for pupils to meet the bus or taxi.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the use of collection points for children and young people would be beneficial to their travel independence? Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 2.11: Collection points can be in a variety of various locations however care will be taken to identify

locations that have suitable facilities for boarding, alighting, and waiting. Which types of location do you think would be most suitable for a collection point?

Answer yes under up to three

Bus stops

Supermarkets

Local points of interest e.g., local shops

Suitable roadside locations

Near health centres/GP surgeries

Near libraries and/or other Council buildings

Near to local schools and nurseries

Other (please specify)

Question 2.12: How far do you think would be reasonable to travel to a collection point if they are introduced?

Answer yes under your chosen answer

Within 15 minutes from my home/school/college

Within 30 minutes from my home/school/college

Within 45 minutes from my home/school/college

Distance based on individual needs assessment

Other (please specify)

Question 2.13: What are the three biggest barriers to a child or young person accessing their school or college transport from a collection point? Answer yes under up to three

Specific health needs would make waiting at a collection point unsuitable

Fear of bullying or being attacked

Being exposed to environmental factors, such as rain or snow

Limited awareness of danger/unable to keep safe, even when accompanied by an adult

Specific needs may place child/young person or member of the public at risk

Wouldn't be unable to manage situations that aren't planned/out of routine, such as late running of transport

Being unable to support child/young person and their siblings at the same time

Other (please specify)

Question 2.14: Please provide any further thoughts, comments, and suggestions in relation to the use of collection points.

TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

Question 2.15 The Council is proposing changing the measuring system for determining Independent Travel

Allowance (ITA) from Straight Line to Road Route. Determining mileage reimbursement will be measured based on the road journey, better reflecting the journey undertaken.

To what extent do you agree with this proposal? Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 2.16: What do you think are the top three barriers stopping a young person or their family using a Travel Allowance? Answer yes under up to three answers
Value of Travel Allowance is too low

Family's/young person's work commitments

Family commitments

Distance to school or college is too far

Public transport links are not suitable

Family/young person unable to identify and arrange suitable travel arrangement

Other (please specify)

Question 2.17: What would motivate young people and families to use travel allowances to use greener modes of travel and transport, such as Active Travel? Please answer yes under up to 3.

Better cycling routes

Better bus routes

Better access to the countryside

Being able to travel with friends or peers

Improve health and wellbeing

Mitigating the impact of climate change

Better access to public transport (including demand responsive minibuses)

Rewards or prizes for travelling by greener modes

Question 2.18: Please provide any further thoughts, comments, and suggestions in relation to Travel Allowances. Please state answer

Q3. SPECIFIC TRAVEL ASSISTANCE POLICY CHANGES

It is important that we understand the levels of support for specific proposed travel assistance policies.

Please indicate below to what extent do you agree with the proposed policies.

For more information about the proposed policy changes and what this will mean for current users please see the 'Proposed Changes to the Home to school travel assistance policy?' document.

Question 3.1 We propose to clarify the Council's position on transport journey times.

The Council is proposing that the recommended journey times (45 minutes for a primary aged child and 75 minutes for a secondary aged child) will not apply to pupils travelling to out of county schools, where distances and the frequency of journeys may vary. We are also proposing to change the maximum journey times for primary aged children to 75 minutes. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.2 We are proposing to introduce a simplified mileage reimbursement system which replaces the original tiered system with the aim of increasing the take-up of this offer.

The Council proposes to introduce a simpler scheme to enable a more unified reimbursement process for parents and carers (including how and when they are reimbursed). The mileage rates to be used will still be set in line with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Distances will be calculated using the shortest road route. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.3 The Council proposes to change the notice period for the removal of travel assistance in certain circumstances.

The Council proposes to write to parents and carers when a walking route becomes safe with the explanation of the change and continue to provide assistance for four weeks at which point transport will be withdrawn.

If a family's low-income status has ended, applicants who have been entitled to travel assistance will be written to with the explanation that assistance will end. Travel assistance will be provided for the next 8 weeks. The Council will also connect with families and offer support such as signposting to specific services if this would prove helpful to them. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.4 The Council proposes to clarify the reasons for the withdrawal of transport and include the removal of assistance if an application approved for H2ST has been done in error.

the policy will be expanded to include the withdrawal of assistance if there are errors with the initial assessment. Parents and carers will have the right of appeal if assistance is withdrawn for this reason in the usual way. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.5 The Council proposes to clarify its position regarding the provision of travel assistance for under 5s. It is proposed that The Council may provide assistance to children who are aged four and entering the reception year at primary school if extenuating circumstances have been demonstrated. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.6 The Council proposes to add information on Medical and Health Interventions in the Travel Assistance Policy.

It is proposed that the new policy will provide guidance on the operational standards and processes which the Council follows if there is a requirement for a medically trained Passenger Assistant to support children during their journey to school. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.7 The Council proposes to reduce the reliance on one child per vehicle transport.

The proposed change to individual transport will be that it will only be agreed in extenuating circumstances. This would normally be linked to medical needs or where child or young person is receiving one-to-one support in their educational training venues. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.8 The council proposes to clarify the conditions in which transport may be withdrawn based on instances of dangerous behaviour and a more detailed process.

in circumstances where a child's behaviour has been dangerous and or potentially risks harm to themselves and others in a vehicle (including the driver), a review of the arrangements will be undertaken. It is proposed that parents and carers will be written to. If the occurrences are repeated, then a parent/carer will be asked to accept a mileage allowance instead of transport being provided. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.9: The Council proposes to create an updated version of its statement for post-16 young people in-line with national guidance.

The proposed change to the policy will be that the Council may provide travel assistance for young people with additional needs over 16 years of age to help them transition into adulthood and explore independent travel. This would include a focus on independent travel, including the use of public transport and not on the provision of private hire vehicles such as minibuses or taxis. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.10 The Council proposes to introduce Post 16 bursaries.

It is proposed to exercise discretion to provide transport assistance, assistance in the form of a post-16 transport bursary to support families and young people to make their own transport arrangements to develop independence and prepare for adulthood. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.11 The Council is proposing to introduce changes to its travel assistance appeals process.

It is proposed to continue with a two-stage process and that the stage two panel will be independent of the first but that the membership will include Council Officers in the future. Please answer Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree or Don't Know

Question 3.14 Do you have any additional comments to make on the proposed changes? Please state answer

ABOUT YOU

Surrey County Council would like to hear from all the community. We can only do this if you help us by providing information about your background. If any group in the community is under-represented, we can initiate other outreach activities to ensure they are heard. What is your age?

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? Please state answer, if yes does this affect you a limited a little or a lot?

What is your sex? Please state answer

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth? Please answer yes, no or prefer not to answer

What is your ethnic group? Please state answer

Do you look after, or give any help or support to family members, friends, neighbours, or others because of either: long-term physical or mental ill-health/disability and/or problems related to old age? If yes, please state how many hours.

Which of the following best describes your family's annual income? Please state yes under the answer

£10,000 to £24,999

£25,000 to £49,999

£50,000 to £74,999

£75,000 or more

Prefer not to say

Thank you for completing this survey. If you have any questions please contact research@surreycc.gov.uk and quote 'Home to school travel assistance survey'