



Surrey County Council

**Proposed Travel
Assistance Policy for
learners aged 16 to 25**



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Introduction

Local authorities do not have to provide free or subsidised post-16 travel support but do have a duty to review, prepare and publish an annual transport policy by the 31st of May each year.

The Council's annual Post-16 Policy Statement is a county-wide policy which applies equally to all districts, boroughs and electoral divisions. The policy ensures greater consistency of practice and equity of provision of home to school travel assistance for pupils aged 16 to 25. It encourages the use of more environmentally sustainable forms of transport, supporting young people to walk, cycle and use public transport such as local buses and trains. [Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy \(SMOTSS\)](#)

There is no automatic entitlement to free school or college transport once a student is over 16. The Local Authority's duty is to review, prepare and publish an annual transport statement specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport, or otherwise that the authority considers necessary, to make to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

This policy statement gives information about the schemes and support available within Surrey for the provision of college travel assistance for learners aged 16 to 19 and 19 to 25. It outlines the transport schemes and assistance available for post-16 learners who live and study in Surrey or those learners who live in Surrey and attend an educational establishment outside of the county if it is the nearest provider offering the appropriate course.

In determining the Surrey policy, we have taken into account all relevant matters including the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment. Surrey is also committed to reducing emissions and improving air quality, to improve the quality of life for all our residents. This links to our [Climate Change Strategy](#).

The full national Home to School Transport guidance is set out for reference on the link below:

[Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training](#)

Further information regarding Surrey's commitment can be found by accessing the statutory school age travel assistance policy: [Home to School Travel Assistance Policy for under 16 year olds - Surrey County Council](#)

The Council will only provide travel assistance for learners of sixth form age where it considers that travel assistance has been demonstrated as necessary to enable the young person to access their education or training provision.

Assessment of Eligibility

When assessing whether the need for travel assistance has been demonstrated, the Council will consider:

- whether the student is currently in receipt of any funding from the 16-19 Bursary Fund and to what value;
- whether the young person has received travel training, is able to travel independently and his/her ability to access public transport;
- the nature of the young person's special educational needs, disability and/or learning difficulty. This includes the physical ability of the young person to walk, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult to the learning provision or a pickup point;
- distance and journey time from the young person's home to establishments of education and training;
- the cost of assistance and alternative means of transport;
- the nature of the route or alternative routes which the young person could reasonably be expected to take.
- the reasons why a young person wishes to attend one establishment rather than another.
- whether the establishment is named in the student's EHCP and whether there are alternative suitable schools or colleges that the student could attend;
- supporting evidence from professionals involved with the young person and their family;
- if there is a nearer education provision which is suitable and can provide the same or similar qualification(s) or course;
- transport links – the ease of access to public transport;
- the distance measurement between home and learning placement.

If there is a family member or carer who is willing and able to transport the student and if not, why it would not be possible or reasonable for them to do so.

Circumstances such as a parent / carer's work schedule or having multiple children attending different schools are generally not considered sufficient reasons for a parent / carer being unable to facilitate their young person's journey.

What Support Can Surrey County Council offer

Where travel assistance is demonstrated as necessary, the Council will provide support to young people assistance to access their educational placement. If eligible, this assistance will be available for the academic year, and all pupils must reapply annually. Support will be provided in the form of:

- Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance.
If the Council is satisfied that a child/young person would be prevented from accessing education without support the authority will provide travel assistance in the form of an SCC post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (ITA) to support families and young people to make their own transport arrangements to develop independence and prepare for adulthood pathways.)
- Bus / train pass
- Training to cycle independently (reimbursement of bicycle and safety equipment), subject to agreement by parent/carer.
- Independent travel training, fully funded and offered on a 1-2-1 basis.
- Applying for a concessionary seat on an existing service

If there are exceptional circumstances where the above options cannot be utilised to facilitate attendance, families can make representations to the Council via the travel assistance appeal process.

Financial Contributions

Where the authority agree to provide a contracted service we will ask students aged 16-19 or their parents/carers to contribute towards the transport costs. For the academic year 2025/2026 the contribution will be as follows:

- **£675.49** - for students whose families are in receipt of the maximum Universal Credit and/or who continue to meet the eligibility criteria for Free School Meals; students in care; care leavers; those on Universal Credit in their own right; disabled young people who receive Employment Support Allowance/Universal Credit and either Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment in their name; or
- **£931.57** - for all other students.

Where a Post-16 Travel Allowance has been agreed the financial contribution will not apply.

Families are required to pay the financial contribution in 3 termly instalments in advance of each term. Autumn term's contribution payment must be paid before the start of the academic year in which travel support is due to commence. Failure to pay will result in travel assistance being withdrawn.

Payment Dates;

31 July 2025 for Autumn term

30 November 2025 for Spring term

28 February 2026 for Summer term

When contracted travel assistance is provided, it will only be provided at the start and end of the school/college day. Pupils may have to seek alternative travel arrangements such as public transport or wait until the end of the school/college day to access homeward travel.

Bursary and Travel Support

All students should discuss with their school or college student support service whether they may be eligible with transport costs from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund.

There are two types of bursary schemes highlighted in this policy statement for your reference and investigation:

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund*

What is a bursary?

A bursary is money that you, or your education or training provider, can use to pay for things like:

- clothing, books, and other equipment for your course,
- transport and lunch on days you study or train.

16 to 19 Bursary Fund Overview (GOV.UK)

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education. You could get a bursary to help with education-related costs if you're aged 16 to 19 and:

- studying at a publicly funded school or college in England - not a university (a publicly funded school is one that does not charge you for attending it).
- on a training course, including unpaid work experience.

Parents/carers are advised to liaise with the educational setting to apply for a bursary on behalf of the pupil

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. A bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups below:

- you are in or you recently left local authority care.
- you get Income Support or Universal Credit because you're financially supporting yourself.
- you get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in your name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit.
- you get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in your name and either ESA or Universal Credit.

2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books, and equipment. Your education or training provider decides how much you get and what it's used for.

If you're 19 and over you'll only be eligible for a discretionary bursary and could get this if you either:

- are continuing a course you started aged 16 to 18 (known as being a '19+ continuer')
- have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP). Your school or college will have their own criteria for discretionary bursaries. They'll look at your individual circumstances - this usually includes your family income.

Ask student services at the educational establishment about their criteria and any evidence you will need. Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursaries. Young people who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application.

School Bursary Funding - Contact your Head of Sixth Form or Bursar in the first instance.

For bursary support at colleges see 'College Contact Information' for specific contact details.

Transport Standards

Provision of transport for part-time hours

Travel assistance will only be provided at the start and finish of the normal school or college day. The provision of transport for part-time hours, individual timetables, Induction days and enrolment days does not fall within local authorities' statutory duties and will not be provided.

When contracted travel assistance is provided, it will only be provided at the start and end of the school/college day. Pupils may have to seek alternative travel arrangements such as public transport or wait until the end of the school/college day to access homeward travel.

Schools/ Colleges and parents and carers should take this into account when individual timetables and bespoke hours are being considered. Where families wish to have more flexible travel arrangements, a travel allowance can be requested.

Dual and link placements, inclusion, and pupil referral units

Dual placements are where a child or young person attends more than one educational setting or where a school arranges a college link placement for a pupil. Dual placements may require additional transport assistance, such as transport at earlier or later times of the school day. Schools are responsible for arranging and paying for the cost of such transport. Where a pupil is on the roll at one school but visits another school for inclusion or link purposes, the school/college where the pupil is usually based will be responsible for arranging and paying for transport.

Concessionary fares and travel schemes

Surrey Link Card

The Surrey Link Card allows all Surrey residents under the age of 21 to travel at the child rate single or return fare on all journeys.

[Apply for a Surrey LINK bus card - Surrey County Council](#)

[Our concessionary seat scheme - Surrey County Council](#)

Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (Post-16 ITA) in the form of mileage reimbursement may be provided to parents/carers of pupils who have demonstrated a need for assistance."

Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (ITA)

A Post-16 Independent Travel Allowance (Post-16 ITA) in the form of mileage reimbursement may be provided to parents/carers of pupils aged 16 to 19 who have demonstrated a need for assistance where this offers best value for money to the county council. The amount paid will be calculated using a standard banding rate determined by catchment area (crows flies distance to the educational establishment).

Banding	Full Year
0 to 5.99 miles	£ 1,600
6 to 10.99 miles	£ 2,700
11 to 15.99 miles	£ 4,200
16 plus miles	£ 5,000

Traineeships and Apprenticeships

If a young person is accepted onto an apprenticeship or traineeship and the Council assesses a young person aged 16 to 19 years as eligible for travel assistance under its policy, the assistance offered in the first instance will be in the form of a post-16 transport ITA (Independent Travel Allowance) to support families and young people to make their own transport arrangements as they transition to employment.

Independent Travel Training

In line with the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment, ITT will be expanded as an option. The Council will identify young people, and those who will be transitioning from compulsory education into post-16 and above who could benefit from ITT and contact their families with a

view to undertaking an ITT assessment. Families can also self-refer if they wish to access ITT for their child.

An ITT assessment will be carried out with the support of the family and/or school, to confirm the suitability of the young person for the 1-2-1 ITT programme, taking into account the following criteria:

- The likelihood of the pupil being eligible for SEN transport under the 16 to 19 policy.
- Existing level of independent travel skills.
- The age of the pupil.
- The distance between home and school.
- The SEND of the pupil.
- The route which the young person would need to undertake.
- Journey times using public transport and the complexity of the journey.
- The frequency of the journeys required.

This assessment would take place before the pupil undertakes the ITT programme, which would last for approximately four to six weeks. During the programme, the pupil will travel to and from their education or training provision each day with their dedicated one to one ITT trainer both in the morning and afternoon from the home to the school and vice versa.

During the period when a pupil is taking part in the ITT, this will be their travel assistance offer. At the end of the ITT programme, the Council will review the pupil's progress with the family to decide if it is appropriate for the pupil to continue to travel independently. If it is not appropriate for the pupil to travel independently, their travel assistance offer will be reviewed. We will always listen and support individuals through this process and give feedback on progress. Although the vast majority of young people are successfully supported to achieve and benefit immensely from becoming independent travellers, it is however acknowledged that for some young people, due to the nature of their SEND, ITT will not be appropriate. Where a young person successfully completes the ITT programme, they will receive a Post-16 Travel Allowance or their public transport fares will be funded.

Collection points

Collection points are like bus stops, where the Council identifies designated pick-up and drop-off locations for the pupil to meet the bus or taxi rather than offering a door-to-door service. This reduces the time needed for the route to pick up the pupils and supports young people to become more independent and better prepares them for adulthood.

The Council will assess individual needs to determine suitability of routes for collection points. In most cases, collection points will be considered for young people attending mainstream settings. The Council will also ensure that it is aware of any individual circumstances which may mean that a collection point is not appropriate for a pupil or pupils on that route due for example to their additional needs.

Achieving this level of independence will not be possible for some young people with the most complex SEND needs, and in some cases parent/carers' own mobility or disability may impact

on them being able to accompany their child to a collection point. Where this is the case, the ambition for the service is to improve the range of options available for young people to take responsibility of their own travel assistance where this is desired and appropriate. In such circumstances, the Council will carefully consider and assess the individual young person's needs as well as the mobility and or disability of their parents/carers.

All collection points will be assessed in advanced for their suitability.

- Wherever an existing bus stop can be legally used as a collection point, it will be.
- Minibuses can stop to collect and drop off on yellow and double yellow lines; vehicles cannot stop on red routes, white zig zags (near a zebra crossing) or school keep-clear hatchings.
- The driver always plans not to cause obstructions to other road users while making a drop off or collection and will try to stop in parking areas or bays.
- Collections or drop-off are always made kerb-side.
- Each collection point is physically assessed before being used in service; a driver will go out and access to see if the location is safe (for example, a well-lit public location, not too close to a junction or on the brow of a hill).
- The drivers complete dynamic risk assessments at the time of collections or / drop offs in the eventuality of any changes (new road layouts, another road user in the stopping space) and will slightly adjust the collection point if it is unsafe to stop.
- A collection point should not be more than one mile from the home address.

Where a route has been identified as suitable for collection points to be introduced, a further 4-week consultation will be undertaken with the families and young people on that route to ensure that the proposed arrangements are appropriate, for example the location of the collection point. Once a collection point route has been established, that route will remain a collection point and no specific consultation will be undertaken. This means that any young pupil joining the route will be informed that it is a collection point route, and they will be expected to use the collection point. Families will have the opportunity to make representations via the Council's appeals process.

19 to 25 travel assistance

Assistance with transport for students over the age of 19 with learning difficulties or disabilities

The Council's duty and powers in relation to post-19 (19 to 25) travel assistance apply to young adults and young people with special educational needs and disabilities aged between 19 and 25 inclusive who have an Education Health and Care Plan.

The Council is required to provide assistance where needed to students who attend a local authority maintained or assisted further or higher education institutions or an institution within the further education sector. The Council must also provide assistance where necessary to students with EHCPs where the Council has secured the provision of education or training at an institution outside the further and higher education sectors and the Council is providing boarding

accommodation in connection with that education or training. In these cases, the Council will consider whether assistance with travel is necessary to enable the young adult to maintain attendance at their education placement. If it is identified that assistance is necessary, then there would be no charge/financial contribution expected from the young adult.

The post-19 (19 to 25) Home to School Travel Policy will be focused upon a needs-led approach in which the individual needs of each young adult are assessed to inform the appropriate form of travel support, as we move away from standard provision in favour of a policy which recognises that young people are, in many cases, more capable of achieving independent travel than pupils of statutory school age.

The overall intention of the adult transport duty is to ensure that those with the most severe disabilities with no other means of transportation can undertake further education and training after their 19th birthday to help them move towards more independent living.

For post-19 students starting a new course, you must evidence why it is necessary for the Council and not the student to make travel arrangements. To assess this and understand the individual circumstances, we would need to know:

- the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which the student could reasonably be expected to take to college.
- what other arrangements you have considered or tried and why they are not suitable.
- if there is a family member or carer who is willing and able to transport the student and if not, why it would not be possible or reasonable for them to do so.
- whether 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.
- whether there is a 'Motability' vehicle for which the student may or may not be the driver.
- whether the student has support from the Council's social care department to assist with travel.
- any other needs or circumstances that you consider need to be taken into account and the Council consider any recent supporting evidence that you provide.

If travel assistance is provided, contribution towards the cost of travel assistance will not apply.

The council will consider whether to exercise its discretion in exceptional circumstances to pay all or part of the reasonable travelling expenses of a young adult with an EHCP attending an institution outside the further education sector or which is not a council-assisted or maintained institution based on the individual circumstances including the factors set out above.

College contact information

Brooklands College

- Email: **info@brooklands.ac.uk**
- Telephone: Weybridge Campus: 01932 797 700
- Telephone (Ashford Campus): 01932 797 600

East Surrey College

- Email: **clientservices@esc.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 01737 788444

Esher College

- Email: **info@esher.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 0208 398 0291

Godalming College

- Email: **college@godalming.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 01483 423526

Guildford College Group

- Email: **info@guildford.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 0800 6126008

NESCOT

- Email: **studentfinance@nescot.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 0208 394 1731

Reigate College

- Email: **enquiries@reigate.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 01737 221118

Strode's College

- Email: **info@windsor-forest.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 01784 437506

University College for the Creative Arts

- Email: **advicefarn@ucreative.ac.uk**
- Telephone: 01252 722441

Woking College

- Email: wokingcoll@woking.ac.uk
- Telephone: 01483 761036

Appeals

Parents/carers of young people who live in Surrey and who wish to appeal a decision that did not grant travel assistance regarding one of the following, may apply for their case to be considered at a stage one appeal in relation to any of the following:

- The young person has not been offered home to school/college travel support, but you believe your individual circumstances are so exceptional that assistance should be provided, OR
- The young person has been offered travel support, but you disagree with the mode of assistance provided or the arrangements offered.

If you request a different form of travel assistance than what has been offered, this request will not be granted while your appeal is pending.

Stage one: Case review by a senior officer

Parents/carers should explain how, without support from the authority, their young person would be unable to access education. The form must be returned with details of the case within 20 working days from receipt of the original 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 they believe should be considered.

Within 20 working days of receipt of the request a senior officer, who was not involved with making the original decision, will review the case. More complex cases may sometimes exceed the 20-working day turnaround time for review.

The senior officer will write to the parent/carer, normally within five working days of the review, setting out:

- 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; and
- information about how the parent/carer can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).

Where possible, applications for review at stage one of the review process should be accompanied by independent supporting evidence such as from a GP or consultant, a social worker, the police, other local authority officers and copies of relevant court orders as appropriate.

Stage two: Case review by an independent panel

If the parent/carer remains unhappy with the decision at stage one of the appeal, they can complete a 'Stage 2 appeal form' to request that their case is escalated for consideration by an independent panel.

The independent appeal panel will be independent of the original and stage one decision-making process (but are not required to be independent of the local authority) and suitably experienced. Panel members may include officers of the local authority along with Surrey County councillors. Including officers on independent panels will strengthen the experience and knowledge of the panel and allow appeals to be heard more rapidly as there will be a larger number of panel members to draw on. County councillors will continue to be part of appeal hearings.

Requests for a stage two appeal must be made within 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision.

Stage two appeals will normally be considered within 40 working days of receipt of the parent/carers request for it to be escalated. Any additional supporting documents should be submitted alongside the stage two request form. A copy of the paperwork that has been submitted to the stage two appeal panel will be sent to the parent at least 7 working days prior to the review.

The parent/carer will be asked to indicate on the 'Stage two appeal form' whether they wish to attend the appeal to present their case verbally. An officer for the local authority will also be invited to present the local authority's case. Parent/carers are not required to attend and if they do not indicate that they wish to attend, the review will be scheduled to be heard in their absence.

The stage two appeal panel will give equal consideration to all case reviews whether conducted in the presence of all parties or heard in the absence of one/both parties. If the panel considers that further information is required, the case will be adjourned so that the information can be made available.

The clerk at the stage two appeal will write to the parent/carer, normally within five – ten working days of the review, setting out:

- 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; and
- information about the parent/carer's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

Local Government Ombudsman

There is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman, but only if the complainant considers that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the review has been handled. Further advice is available on the **LGO website** or on the Local Government Ombudsman advice line on 0300 061 0614.

If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for judicial review.

Other important contacts

Surrey Link Card

- Telephone: 0300 200 1004
- Email: **surreylink@surreycc.gov.uk**

Home to school/college travel assistance

- Surrey Contact Centre Telephone: 03456 009 009 (8am to 6pm weekdays)
- Email: **contactcentre@surreycc.gov.uk**

For any changes to transport provided by Surrey County Council, please contact the Surrey School Travel and Assessment Team on: 0300 200 1004 or submit an **online enquiry form**

Complaints procedure

Surrey County Council complaints procedure.

School bus services

Local bus services serving schools and colleges.

College and Sixth Form Travel Assistance Provision

Please see the information below regarding travel opportunities linked to further education within Surrey, along with information on local travel assistance providers.

Godalming College

Subsidised bus services (£1250 for full academic year):

- Farnham via Frensham, Churt, Hindhead and Haslemere.
- Liphook via Rake, Liss, Bordon, Headley and Grayshott.

Full details can be found here: **Godalming College Bus Services** or by contacting the Finance Office at: **finance@godalming.ac.uk** or 01483 423526.

Cobham to Salesian Community Bus

A community minibus service transporting students from Cobham to Salesian School.

Strode's College

Students living and travelling within Surrey can benefit from the Surrey Link Card for either bus or rail travel.

Full details can be found here: [**Travel to Strode's And Windsor Colleges**](#)

Stagecoach

Stagecoach sells StudentRider tickets which can be used on any Stagecoach bus in the area. These passes are available to all 16 to 18 year olds, and to college/university students in full-time education.

StudentRiders are available for different areas, including Guildford & Godalming; Woking; and the 'Gold' area which covers all of Surrey, Hampshire and West Sussex. These can be bought on a termly or annual basis, and offer a saving overpaying for daily/weekly tickets.

Full details can be found here: [**Student tickets for Surrey and Kingston \(Stagecoach\)**](#)

Surrey LINK bus card

The Surrey LINK card is available to Surrey residents attending all colleges.

[Apply for a Surrey LINK bus card - Surrey County Council](#)