



Post-16 Transport Policy Statement

Academic Year 2026-2027

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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If you would like this document in another language or reading format e.g. large text, please contact the Authority on telephone: 01629 536771

Post-16 Transport Policy Statement - Academic Year 2026 – 2027

Derbyshire County Council's policy statement on transport and travel assistance for Learners of Sixth Form age and Post-16 Learners for whom an Education, Health and Care Plan (or EHCP) is maintained.

Department Responsible: Children's Services

Policy applicable from: 1 September 2026 to 31 August 2027

Introduction

Eligibility for Post-16 transport and travel assistance arrangements for learners of Sixth Form age is not prescribed by statute and a local authority must decide what transport and travel arrangements it considers necessary as a response to local needs. In doing so, however, a local authority must have regard to statutory guidance from the Department for Education: 'Post-16 transport to education and training - statutory guidance for local authorities (January 2019)'.

The Raising of the Participation Age under the Education and Skills Act 2008, requiring young people to participate in education or training up to their 18th birthday has not created any new entitlement to transport beyond age 16.

This Post-16 transport policy document specifies the discretionary transport and travel support arrangements that Derbyshire County Council ('the Authority') considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of Learners of Sixth Form age receiving education or training at schools and Post-16 institutions. The policy document also specifies the arrangements which are in place for Post-16 Learners for whom an EHCP is maintained by the Authority as well as specifying the travel and transport arrangements to facilitate the attendance of adults (persons who are aged 19 or over) at institutions in the FE or HE sector maintained or assisted by the Authority or at institutions in the FE sector.

Local authorities must publish their Post-16 Transport Policy Statement by 31 May each year. Exceptionally, it may be necessary for the local authority to amend and republish this policy in-year in response to complaints, or a direction by the Secretary of State, or to provide for additional arrangements / payments / concessions.

1.0 Aims and Objectives

The Authority has the following aims and objectives regarding its Post-16 Transport Policy:

- to ensure, wherever reasonably possible and having regard to the cost of transport, that Learners of Sixth Form age are able to access the education and training of their choice; and
- to assess and provide transport / travel assistance which is appropriate to meeting eligibility and/or needs, having regard to the cost of transport and any alternative means of facilitating attendance; and
- where travel support is deemed necessary, priority will be given to solutions that will help maximise the development of the Learner's independence, for example through independent travel training.

2.0 Overview of eligibility criteria for transport / travel assistance

a) Academic Year 2026/27:

- commences 1 September 2026 and ends 31 August 2027.

b) The Learner must be:

- aged 16-18 and in educational Year 12 or 13; or
- aged 16-18 with an EHCP and attending a special school, post-16 provider or college in educational Year 12, 13, 14; or
- aged 19-25 with an EHCP, and are continuing a programme that began before their 19th birthday; or
- living 3.0 miles or more (measured by the Authority using a GIS tool) from their institution of learning (except where it can be evidenced why learners living less than 3.0 miles should nonetheless be eligible);

The Authority measures distances using a Geographical Information System (GIS).

c) The learning establishment the Learner is attending must be:

- a Sixth Form at an Authority maintained School, Academy School or Special School; or
- a state funded College of Further Education; or
- a Higher Education institute maintained or assisted by the Authority; or
- an establishment where a study programme of residential further education has been secured by the Authority.

d) Type of course:

- the Learner must be enrolled on a full-time Study Programme scheduled to provide at least 580 directed learning hours over 36 or more weeks; this equates to approximately 15 hours per week for 3 or fewer days per week. This is unless the circumstances described in section 5 of this policy document apply to the Learner. In exceptional circumstances, for example where a break in learning is required for medical needs, a lower number of hours might be considered;
- please note, the Authority does not provide transport or travel assistance for part-time courses; higher education; or non-state funded education, unless the Learner is on a course which has been arranged through the Authority or the circumstances described in section 5 apply to the Learner.

e) Residence:

- the Learner's permanent home address must be in the county of Derbyshire (not including Derby City) and will normally be the home address enrolled/ registered with the school or college; and

- where a Learner subsequently moves address, eligibility will be re- determined; and
- where a Learner shares equal time between different parental addresses, eligibility will normally be assessed from the property nearest to the school or college attended.

2.1 Overview of transport / travel support – persons of Sixth Form age

Where a person of Sixth Form age (a person who is over compulsory school age but under 19 or a young person aged under 25 who has a current EHCP and is on a course that started before their 19th birthday) makes a request for travel assistance, the Authority will assess what arrangements or support may be required by having regard to all the circumstances of the application and considering:

- The needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to access education or training provision if no arrangements were made;
- The need to ensure that young people have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education and training is provided;
- The distance from the Learner's home to establishments of education and training;
- The journey time to access different establishments;
- The cost of the transport in question;
- Alternative means of facilitating attendance at establishments
- Any preferences based on religion or belief
- Non-transport solutions to facilitate learner access

Whilst the Authority encourages the participation in education and training of persons who are over compulsory school age but under the age of 19, and persons aged 19-25 for whom an EHCP is maintained, Learners will normally be expected to meet the cost of travel between home and the establishment at which they are receiving education or training, except in the circumstances set out above where the Authority decides that support is required. Generally, the Authority will offer support and assistance to Learners by providing information about: any schemes under Section 93 of the Transport Act 1985 providing travel concessions; local transport providers and services; and other sources of additional support.

(a) Support for Learners in educational years 12 & 13 includes:

- 'b_line2' - Derbyshire County Council's travel concession card for young people
- 'spare seats' - school Sixth Formers may purchase a seat (where available) on a contracted school bus service;
- College bus services (arranged by colleges; not the Authority);
- student fares offered by public transport operators;
- financial assistance from the 16-19 Bursary Fund (and other funding) may be
- available from Schools, Academies and Colleges;

These options are further detailed in section 3.

Where, in the opinion of the Authority, the above arrangements cannot meet the transport/ travel needs of persons of Sixth Form age, then the support provided may include the following:

- Independent Travel Training;
- Car mileage reimbursements paid to parents/carers;
- Bus or rail pass (including disabled person's Gold Card);
- Minibus: shared occupancy (with escort if deemed necessary);
- Taxi: shared occupancy normally;
- Taxi: solo occupancy (evidence of need would be required);
- Passenger Escort: if deemed necessary, supported by evidence of need
- Specialist vehicle, e.g. one with medical support equipment and/or staff.

2.2 Apprenticeships and Traineeships

The Authority does not provide transport for Apprenticeships or Traineeships.

2.3 Eligibility Criteria for Transport assistance for Students with Special Educational

Needs and/or Disabilities, including those over 19 with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)

Most young people with special educational needs and disabilities will be able to travel to school/college in the same way as students who do not have special educational needs, i.e. they will walk to school/college, travel on public transport or be taken by parents/carers. A small number of young people with special educational needs and disabilities will be assessed by the Authority as requiring special transport assistance in order to be able to access school/college.

2.4 Applying for Transport Assistance

To apply for Post 16 transport assistance a student must:

- be a Derbyshire County resident (excluding students resident in Derby City).
- Be attending a full-time course (a minimum of 580 guided learning hours per year, over a period of at least 36 weeks) at a school, further education college or specialist post 16 provider that is funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (EFSA). The scheme does not apply to Higher Education courses or Universities.
- Be attending the nearest establishment which provides the chosen study programme that can meet the student's special educational needs and has agreed to offer the student a place. This will normally be the establishment named in the student's EHCP (if they have one); this may be an establishment outside Derbyshire, but if a student chooses to attend a provision further afield when a more local educational institution can meet their needs transport assistance will not be provided.
- Be over compulsory school leaving age and under 19 on 1st September 2026, or be 19 or over on that date but are continuing a course that began before their 19th birthday. Learners in this second category must hold an EHCP.
- Or be attending a Supported Internship (in which case the eligibility applies only for transport to and from one agreed placement base).

2.5 Travel Assistance Available

If travel assistance is approved following an assessment in line with paragraph 2.1, the Authority will identify the most appropriate and cost-effective solution for each student.

Students assessed as requiring support will normally receive assistance to travel to and from the nearest suitable school, further education college or specialist post 16 institution that can meet their educational and support needs. This will ensure the effective use of resources whilst promoting choice and managing public funds in a prudent manner.

In determining transport provision/needs, the Authority will, in the first instance, explore if the young person's parent/carer is able to provide transport and receive a mileage reimbursement at 45 pence per mile. If this is not possible, the Authority will consider alternative transport arrangements, which will be looked at on a case by case basis. These arrangements might include:

- Minibus - shared occupancy (with escort, if deemed necessary);
- Taxi - solo or shared occupancy (with escort if deemed necessary – evidence of need would be required);
- Specialist vehicle, e.g. one with medical support equipment and/or staff.

2.6 Charges

From September 2014, Learners of Sixth Form age with SEND (special education needs, or physical disabilities), or LDD (learning disabilities/ developmental delay), for whom transport assistance is provided by the Authority have been required to make a financial contribution towards the cost of the transport.

The contribution will normally be charged at the same rate as the Spare Seats Assistance charge for other Learners of Sixth Form age; with a lower rate for those Learners with SEND or LDD who meet low income family criteria (see section 2.7 below).

The post-16 charge for academic year 2026-2027, applicable from September 2026 will be as follows: standard rate £499 and lower rate £337 (for those who meet the low- income family criteria in section 2.7 below). A range of payment methods is available.

2.7 Low income Criteria

For the purposes of charges in section 2.6 above, low income family criteria will be met if the Learner's household is in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- maximum level of Working Tax Credit
- Income Support
- Income-Based Jobseekers Allowance
- the Guarantee element of Pension Guarantee Credit equivalent to/ less than Income Based Jobseekers Allowance
- Support under part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Income Related Employment and Support Allowance
- Universal Credit, provided the annual net earned income does not exceed £7,400 (£616.67 per month)

Documentary evidence demonstrating benefit entitlement must be provided to support the low income criteria.

If you qualify under low income criteria and your circumstances change part way through the year you must let us know.

3.0 Concessions / Independent Travel Training / 'Spare Seats' / College bus services / 16-19 Bursary

3.1 b_line travel concession card:

All young people up to their 19th birthday, who live in Derbyshire, are eligible for a free 'b_line2' card issued by the Authority. This includes young people in full time education and on training courses, apprentices and young people looking for work.

Young people can use a 'b_line2' card for travel on:

- normal scheduled bus and train services between any two points in Derbyshire;
- a bus service going outside the county, provided that the journey starts or finishes in Derbyshire;
- train services going outside the county as far as Sheffield, Nottingham, Burton, Uttoxeter or Manchester (and intermediate stations on these lines), as long as one end of the journey is in Derbyshire.

There are no restrictions on the times for use of 'b_line2' travel cards – card holders benefit from concessions on any day of the week and at any time of the day.

Lost or defaced b_line cards: If a 'b_line2' card is lost, becomes damaged or defaced the full travel fare must be paid until a replacement card is obtained. £5 is charged for all replacement cards.

For further information about b_line please visit the b_line webpage
[b_line discount travel card - Derbyshire County Council](#)

3.2 Independent Travel Training

Derbyshire County Council does not currently operate a county-wide Independent Travel Training (ITT) service. Many of Derbyshire's special schools and specialist colleges provide their own ITT programmes as part of Preparing for Adulthood. Parents and carers should contact their child's school or college directly to discuss availability, eligibility and referral routes.

The Council is actively exploring options for a new ITT scheme and will update this policy once future arrangements are confirmed.

3.3 'Spare Seats' available on Derbyshire County Council school transport

Sixth form learners may be able to purchase a pass that allows them to travel to and from a school or Academy on a contract school bus, minibus or specialised transport service, which does not have a fare paying facility - i.e. not on public buses that call at or near schools.

Charges for the academic year are normally split into three and invoices are issued each Term; a range of payment options are available. To make enquiries, please see section 7.2 further below.

Please note that Spare Seat Assistance is offered on a first come first served basis. Places cannot be guaranteed (priority will be given to providing seats for eligible pupils of compulsory school age).

3.4 College bus services

A number of colleges in Derbyshire provide/arrange bus services for students and some offer a wide network of routes. College buses may be available to students free of charge, whilst others require the purchase of a travel pass from the college at a cost set by the college and not the Authority. Most college bus passes are restricted to specified college services, but some passes also allow subsidised travel on certain public service buses during term time. For further information contact the College directly – see College contact details at section 9.0 further below.

Depending on where the Learner lives and their choice of college, the Learner might need to travel to the college on regular public transport. In this case the b_line2 card may help to reduce the cost of public transport to the college.

3.5 Gold Card for persons with disabilities

The Derbyshire Gold Card is a free bus travel pass generally issued to older people who have attained state pension age. Younger persons of any age with particular disabilities may be eligible for a Gold Card. Gold Card is operated under the terms of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENTCS) and allows free travel on local buses anywhere in England after 9.30am and up to 11.00pm on weekdays, and at weekends and on bank holidays at any time. Any travel before 9.30am on weekdays will be charged at the standard fare.

For further details please phone Call Derbyshire on 01629 533190 or visit the Gold Card webpage [Gold Card - Derbyshire County Council](#)

3.6 Financial support from the '16-19 Bursary Fund'

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are two types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

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

- in care;
- care leavers;
- in receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, in their own right;
- in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right;

2. **Discretionary bursaries** that institutions award to meet individual needs, such as help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment.

To be eligible for the discretionary bursary Learners must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 on 31 August 2026; or

- be aged 19 or over on 31 August 2026 and have an EHCP;
- be aged 19 or over on 31 August 2026 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18;
- be studying a programme that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be funded by either a Government funding agency or the local authority.

Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursary. Learners who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application.

Further information can be found here [16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK](#). Alternatively, enquiries regarding support from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund can be made directly to the school / college the Learner is, or will be, attending.

4.0 Support for Learners who attain the age of 19 years whilst continuing on a course (“Continuing Learners”)

4.1 The b_line2 student travel concession scheme is only available up to the Learner’s 19th birthday. Some public transport operators, however, offer their own young person / student concessions that help reduce travel costs for Learners aged 19 and over. Please make enquiries direct to your local bus or rail operator.

4.2 Where a Learner with SEND or LDD has yet to complete a full time programme of study which they began before their 19th birthday, transport and travel support may, at the sole discretion of the Authority, be provided until the relevant course has been completed.

5.0 Support for Adults and Relevant Young Adults

5.1 The Authority has a duty to make such arrangements for the provision of transport as it considers necessary in respect of

- a) adults (who are aged 19 or over) and who are attending a course which they started after their 19th birthday to facilitate their attendance at FE or HE institutions which are maintained or assisted by the Authority or institutions within the FE sector; and
- b) relevant young adults aged between 19 and 25 with a EHCP to facilitate their attendance at institutions where they are receiving education or training outside the FE and HE sectors and where the Authority has secured the provision of education or training at that institution and the provision of boarding accommodation in connection with that education or training.

Any transport support provided to an adult or relevant young adult will be provided free of charge

In deciding whether it is necessary for the Authority to make transport arrangements for an adult or relevant young adult, the Authority will consider each case on an individual basis. In undertaking that assessment, the Authority will have regard to the age of the person and the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which the person could reasonably be expected to take.

5.2 Transport reviews

The Authority may review the suitability of home to school transport arrangements each year to ensure that the learner's levels of skills and needs are correctly met in the most appropriate way.

6.0 Review / Appeal Process

Where transport assistance is refused, or if a Learner wishes to challenge a decision about the transport assistance offered by the Authority, a two-stage review / appeals process will be followed.

6.1 Stage One: Review by a senior officer

A Learner has 20 working days from receipt of the Authority's transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision by completing a review form (Appendix A), which can also be obtained from the School Admissions and Transport Team (see section 9.0 of this policy for contact details).

The written request should detail why the Learner believes that the decision should be reviewed and give any details of any personal and/or family circumstances the Learner believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed. The Learner's request should be accompanied by any necessary supporting evidence. In the matters of route distance, correction of administrative errors and withdrawal of a temporary seat, the final decision rests with the Authority (subject to the Learner's right of appeal under Stage two of the review / appeals process).

Within 20 working days of receipt of the review form, a senior officer of the Authority will review the original decision. Where the grounds for the review clearly relate to the special education needs and/or disability of the Learner, the Stage One review will be undertaken by the relevant Lead SEND Officer.

After completing the review, the senior officer will send the Learner a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review, setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed, e.g. Road Safety GB);
- 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 Learner can escalate their case to stage two of the review / appeals process (if appropriate).

6.2 Stage Two: Review by an independent appeal panel

If they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the review of their case, a Learner has 20 working days from receipt of the Authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to the School Admissions and Transport Team (see section 9.0 of this policy for contact details) to escalate the matter to stage two.

Within 40 working days of receipt of the Learner's request, an independent appeal panel will meet to consider written and (if the Learner and/or their parent/ adult carer wishes to attend the panel meeting) verbal representations from the Learner and/or their parent/ adult carer and the officers involved in their case.

Whist employed by the Authority in a capacity unrelated to School Admissions and Transport, the independent appeal panel members will be independent of both the original decision-making process and the stage one review by a senior officer. This will ensure that a balance is achieved between meeting the needs of the Learner and the Authority, and that road safety requirements are complied with (if applicable) and no Learner is placed at unnecessary risk.

Within five working days of the independent appeal panel meeting, the panel will send both the Learner and the School Admissions and Transport Team a detailed written notification of the outcome of the appeal, setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed, e.g. Road Safety GB if applicable);
- 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 Learner's right of complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (N.B. the Ombudsman can only investigate a complaint if there has been a failure to comply with procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled; he/she will not investigate the merits of the panel's decision).

7.0 Travel to a course beyond the local authority area

7.1 The b_line 2 card is valid for journeys to and from some destinations just outside Derbyshire, provided the journey starts or finishes in Derbyshire. For further information about b_line, please visit the [b_line discount travel card - Derbyshire County Council](#)

7.2 Where the normal area school Sixth Form is located in a neighbouring local authority area, Spare Seat Assistance on school buses may be available.

7.3 For Learners with SEND or LDD, please refer to sections 2 or 5 depending on your individual circumstances.

7.4 Colleges located within the areas of Derby City Council and other neighbouring local authority areas (e.g. Nottinghamshire County Council, Staffordshire County Council, etc.) may provide college bus routes for students travelling from Derbyshire – please see section 9.0 below for contact details

8.0 Learners who attend a further education institution which is beyond daily travelling distance and they need to stay away

The Authority does not normally provide transport assistance for residential placements. We may, however, provide assistance for Post-16 learners with SEND or LDD for whom a residential placement has been arranged by the Authority.

9.0 Points of contact and sources of information

Derbyshire County Council's website [Derbyshire County Council](#)

Information about the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund [16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

Call Derbyshire:

Tel: 01629 533190 Email: contact.centre@derbyshire.gov.uk

School Transport Team:

Tel: 01629 536740 Email: Schooltransport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Derbyshire County Council's School Admissions and Transport Team office:

Tel: 01629 537479 Email: admissions.transport@derbyshire.gov.uk

Colleges with dedicated bus routes serving Derbyshire:

Bilborough Sixth Form College [Bilborough College](#)

For information on dedicated college bus routes visit the Bilborough Sixth Form College Transport webpage. [Transport - Bilborough College](#)

Burton and South Derbyshire College [Burton and South Derbyshire College](#)

For transport information visit the Burton and South Derbyshire College transport webpage [Getting here](#)

Chedle College [Cheadle College](#)

For transport information ([Travelling to College - Cheadle College](#))

Chesterfield College [Chesterfield College](#)

For transport information [Transport - Chesterfield College](#)

Derby College [Derby College](#)

For travel options visit the Transport Getting to College webpage of the Derby College website [Transport-Getting to College - DCG](#)

Macclesfield College [Macclesfield College](#)

For college bus information visit the Transport webpage of the Macclesfield College website [Travelling to College - Macclesfield College](#)

Marple Sixth Form College [Marple Sixth Form College](#)

For transport information [Travelling to College - Marple College](#)

Newcastle and Staffordshire College Group [Leek Campus | NSCG](#)

For transport information [Bus Transport to Leek | NSCG](#)

[University of Derby, Buxton Campus](#) [University of Derby, Buxton Campus](#)

For college bus information visit the transport webpage [Transport - University of Derby, Buxton Campus](#)

[Vision West Nottinghamshire College](#) [West Notts College - Mansfield](#)

For information on dedicated college bus routes visit the Getting to college webpage of the Vision West Nottinghamshire College website [Getting to college | West Notts College](#)

School and College contacts:

A list of Derbyshire secondary schools with contact details is available on the Derbyshire County Council website [School names and addresses - Derbyshire County Council](#)

Sources of information on Public Transport:

Comprehensive information on all public transport serving Derbyshire (and Derby city) is available from the public transport section of the Derbyshire County Council website [Bus and train timetables - Derbyshire County Council](#).

Alternatively, constantly updated online bus timetables are available at Travel Derbyshire [travelderbyshire.co.uk](#)

For online train information visit the National Rail website [National Rail](#)

For information on public transport by phone for Derbyshire or further afield call Traveline: 0871 200 2233 or visit the Traveline website [Plan Your Journey | Traveline](#)

Many bus operators serving Derbyshire have websites with details of fares, timetables, mobile phone apps, etc. Some are listed here:

- Trent Barton [trentbarton](#)
- Stagecoach [stagecoachbus](#)
- Arriva Midlands [Midlands - Timetables - Arriva UK Bus](#)
- High Peak Buses [High Peak](#)
- TM Travel [TM Travel](#)
- Diamond Buses Staffordshire [Staffordshire | Diamond Bus](#)
- Notts & Derby Buses [Notts & Derby Buses](#)