

Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment Template

Title of the Assessment:	Post 16 Transport Policy	Date of Assessment:	6 .01.11
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Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives
1.1) What are the objectives of the strategy, policy or service being assessed?
<p>Local authorities have a duty to prepare and publish an annual Transport Policy Statement specifying the arrangements for the provision or transport or otherwise that the authority considers necessary to assist learners of sixth form age to access appropriate post 16 provision.</p> <p>The objective of the Central Bedfordshire Post 16 Transport Policy Statement is to meet this statutory responsibility and support young people to attend post 16 education and training in schools, colleges and work based learning providers.</p> <p>For the academic years 2009/10 and 2010/11 the Council adopted the previous policy of Bedfordshire County Council. The current Policy provides subsidised or free transport in certain circumstances:</p> <p>To be eligible students must:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> be enrolled on a full time course be 16 years of age and under 19 years of age at 1 September 2010 be attending the nearest school or college to their home address which offers the qualification they are studying for, irrespective of the module content. This may be in Central Bedfordshire or a neighbouring council. Live more than 3 miles from their place of study, measured by the shortest available walking route. The distance may be less than 3 miles if a student has a medical condition which prevents them from walking to school or college, or the need for transport on road safety grounds can be justified based on the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy. <p>The cost of the subsidised scheme for students, for the academic year 2010/11 is £133.95 per term or £364.25 per student for an annual pass. Some students, whose families are in receipt of certain benefits, are entitled to free transport.</p> <p>All students with a statement of special educational need and in receipt of free home to school transport in Year 11 because of their special needs, are provided with transport free of charge, irrespective of the distance between home and school or college. This includes all children who attended a special school or specialist provision in a mainstream school in Year 11. When a student leaves a local authority maintained school to attend a further education establishment, their statement ends and they are assessed under the statutory duties stated in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009). Where a student with special educational needs remains in education, free transport is provided up to the age of 25.</p>

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The Council is required to review its Post 16 policy annually. Proposals for a new Policy for 2011/12 were considered at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19th October 2010. The Council consulted on proposed changes between 8th November and 17th December 2010. A draft policy for 2011/12 is to be considered at the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 January 2011.

1.2) What needs is it designed to meet?

The Policy is designed to support young people to attend post 16 education and training in schools, colleges and work based learning providers. The Department for Education issues guidance to local authorities in preparing their Policy Statement.

The proposals included in the draft policy have been developed to ensure equitable and transparent processes for providing transport to post 16 students. The proposals are in line with new legislation, Department for Education guidance and are compatible with the current Home to School Transport Policy criteria in respect of low income, medical needs and looked after children, as agreed by the Executive of the Council in March 2010.

The eligibility criteria relate to specific areas of:

- Distance
- Road safety
- Low income
- Attendance at a school on grounds of the student's or parents' religion
- Medical grounds
- Children for whom Central Bedfordshire is a Corporate Parent
- Course content; and
- Special educational needs

i) Distance

Subsidised transport will be available for students aged 16 – 18 whose home address is more than 3 miles, but no more than 15 miles from the school or college they are attending. The distance will be measured using the shortest walking distance up to three miles and the motorised route up to 15 miles, using the Council's Geographic Information System (GIS).

ii) Transport on grounds of road safety

Within the guidance issued by the Department for Education, it is a reasonable expectation that young people over the age of 16 will be able to walk or cycle up to 3 miles to get to their place of study. Therefore, subsidised transport will not be provided for students where the distance between home and school or college is less than 3 miles.

iii) Subsidised transport for families with a low income

Central Bedfordshire is committed to working to assist low income families. Where students are assessed as entitled to subsidised transport and their family are in receipt of certain benefits no charge will be payable.

iv) Transport to a faith school on grounds of the parent's religion

Transport is not provided to schools on denominational grounds. Transport will be provided to a denominational school where it is the nearest establishment which offers a qualification at the same level and in the same subject area as the course of choice.

v) Transport on grounds of medical needs

Where a student attends the nearest school or college offering the qualification and subject they are studying for, transport can be considered on medical grounds irrespective of distance between home and school. Each application is considered on an individual basis. An application for transport must be supported in writing by a GP or medical consultant.

vi) Transport for children for whom Central Bedfordshire Council is a Corporate Parent

Whilst representing only a very small number of the total 16 – 18 age population, Looked After Children (including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) can be some of the most vulnerable students in need of support. The most suitable establishment to meet these particular students' needs will not always be the nearest school or college to their home address.

As Corporate Parents to these children, Central Bedfordshire Council will ensure that free transport will be provided for students to attend the most suitable establishment to meet their individual needs, irrespective of distance.

vi) Assessment of course content

The Council is committed to ensuring that Post 16 students have access to a wide range of provision and are able to make choices about the school or college they attend.

In ensuring that subsidised transport is provided in a fair and equitable way and resources are not committed to students travelling considerable distances, subsidised transport will be available to

- a school where the learner has been enrolled for a minimum of two years and has been eligible for subsidised transport, or
- to the nearest establishment which offers a qualification(s) at the same level and in the same subject area(s) as the course applied for and accepted on to.

vii) Transport for students with Special Educational Needs

Transport needs for students with special educational needs will be assessed as part of the statutory assessment process.

Where students have been assessed as requiring transport and are eligible, the subsidised rate will be charged, as set by the Executive of the Council and reviewed annually.

Subsidised transport will be provided for a student to the most appropriate establishment as identified through the assessment, where the distance between home and the establishment is more than 3 miles.

Where the distance is less than 3 miles the assessment will include consideration of whether a student could reasonably be expected to walk or cycle to school or college. Where this is not possible subsidised transport will be provided.

The most appropriate mode of travel will be agreed as part of the assessment process.

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The assessment will consider transport to the nearest suitable school or college. If by parental or student preference a more distant establishment is named, transport will be the responsibility of the parent.

A travel training programme to support those students who are physically able to walk, to travel more independently and to support transition to adult life will be introduced.

Where a student with Special Education Needs remains in further education, transport could be provided up to the age of 25, if specifically required through the annual statutory assessment process; either the Statement of Special Educational Needs or the Learning for Living and Work Assessment.

viii) Replacement Bus Passes

Students are required to carry a bus pass on all occasions that they travel. Where a bus pass is lost a replacement must be obtained.

A handling charge will be made for a new pass to be issued as set out in the Council's Fees and

Charges Policy. In addition the cost of a new pass provided by a bus company will be passed on to a student. Information on the cost of replacement bus passes will be provided when the original pass is issued.

1.3) What outcomes will be delivered?

The proposals will ensure that the policy is equitable for all students aged 16 – 18 and will support young people to attend post 16 education and training in schools, colleges and work based learning providers.

1.4) Which other strategies or policies support this?

The proposals relate to the second of the Council's key priorities:

Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.

The proposals also support the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan and the Local Area Agreement to ensure that children, young people and families:

- enjoy and achieve at school and meet their full potential
- are supported in families with a low income
- receive appropriate services if they have special educational needs or are identified as vulnerable

The proposals also have an impact on National Indicator 198 (Mode of travel to school) which is a priority in the Local Area Agreement and a mandatory indicator in the Local Transport Plan. This target aims to reduce car use for journeys to school and to increase the number of children travelling by sustainable modes of transport.

The Home to School Transport Policy agreed by Executive in March 2010 sets out the Council's statutory responsibilities and entitlement to transport for children of statutory school age, 5 to 15.

The proposals also link to the:

Education Vision
14 – 19 Strategy
Child Poverty Strategy
Care Matters Implementation Plan
People in Care Pledge
Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy

1.5) In which ways does this support Central Bedfordshire's intention to tackle inequalities and deliver services to vulnerable people?

The Council's equalities scheme highlights the importance of supporting attainment and narrowing attainment gaps and helping people access education opportunities.

The proposals support specific transport arrangements for:

- Students living in a family with a low income
- Students with a medical condition
- Students for whom Central Bedfordshire is a Corporate Parent
- Students with special educational needs

1.6) Is it possible that this could damage relations amongst different communities or contribute to inequality by treating some members of the community less favourably such as people from black and minority ethnic communities, disabled people, women, or lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities?

Distance – The introduction of a maximum 15 mile distance may reduce choice for some students who wish to follow a specialist course only offered at colleges beyond the agreed distance and where their family cannot meet the cost of transport.

Transport on grounds of road safety - The removal on transport on road safety grounds for students attending school could introduce concerns over the personal safety of those students.

Subsidised transport for families with a low income – The removal of free transport for families in receipt of working tax credit, but not at the maximum rate will mean that certain families in receipt of working tax credit, but not at the maximum rate, who have previously received passes free of charge, will in future be required to pay.

Special Educational Needs – The introduction of a subsidised charge for students with Special Educational needs will mean that families who had previously received transport free of charge but no longer meet the low income criteria will be required to pay the subsidised rate.



Stage 2 - Consideration of Relevant Data & Research			
Equality checklist issues to be considered			
Awareness	Appropriateness	Accessibility	Partnership - working
Take Up levels	Adverse Outcomes	Staff Training Needs	Contracts & monitoring
2) What sources of evidence and key facts will be used to inform the assessment?			
N/A			
Each item ticked below must be evidenced			
Internal desktop research			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Needs Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Monitoring / Performance Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other local research	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Third party guidance and examples			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	National / Regional Research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Best Practice / Guidance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Benchmarking with other organisations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspection Reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Public consultation related activities			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consultation with Service Users	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consultation with Staff	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Customer Feedback / Complaints
<input type="checkbox"/>	Data about the physical environment e.g. housing market, employment, education and training provision, transport, spatial planning and public spaces		
Consulting Members, stakeholders and specialists			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Elected Members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Specialist staff / service expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<p><i>Please bear in mind that whilst sections of the community will have common interests and concerns, views and issues vary within groups. E.g. women have differing needs and concerns depending on age, ethnic origin, disability etc</i></p> <p>Lack of local knowledge or data is not a justification for assuming there is not a negative impact on some groups of people. Further research may be required.</p>			
2.1) Existing Data and Consultation Findings:			
<p>- Age: National Data There is little national data in relation to age, however it is acknowledged that young people in rural areas experience difficulty in accessing services.</p> <p>The proposed policy will enable all students to access subsidised transport to a school or college that is more than 3 but less than 15 miles from their home address, subject to meeting other eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The result of the consultation was that there was no clear view on the proposal to implement a maximum 15 mile criteria for subsidised transport to be provided.</p> <p>No clear view was identified regarding the proposal not to provide subsidised transport on road safety grounds. However, respondents living around Harlington Upper School strongly disagreed with this proposal.</p>			

<p>Disability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disabled young people are at particularly high risk of being NEET between the ages of 16 and 19 - 21% of disabled people aged 16 – 24 have no qualifications, compared with 5% of non-disabled people of the same age - Disabled students account for only about one in 20 undergraduates <p>The proposed policy will support transport as identified the statutory assessment process at the subsidised rate for learners with special educational needs up to the age of 25.</p> <p>The result of the consultation was that there was a clear majority in agreement with the new proposal in respect of students with special educational needs.</p>
<p>- Carers: There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>
<p>- Gender Reassignment: There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>
<p>- Pregnancy and Maternity: There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>
<p>Race:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The differences in attainment are reflected in NEET rates. Amongst 16 – 19 year olds in 2005 : 13% of African-Caribbean people were NEET compared with 8% 'White British' and those of Indian Heritage - Black students are the least likely to enter higher education via the traditional A-level route. They tend to be mature students i.e. aged over 21, to enter with vocational rather than academic qualifications and are at higher risk of dropping out without completing their degree <p>There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>
<p>Religion or Belief: There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>
<p>-Gender:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More young men than young women are NEET. 12% of male 16 – 18 year olds compared with 10% of girls - National research suggests that less able boys are virtually unemployable because they lack interest, drive, enthusiasm and social skills. The single group most likely to be shut out of higher education in future decades is white boys from poor backgrounds. In some urban universities they are in a small minority. <p>There were no specific issues raised in the consultation</p>
<p>Sexual Orientation: Lesbian and gay young people are more likely to leave school at 16, despite achieving 6 GCSE's at Grade C. There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>

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- **Other:** *e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion*

Children who grow up in poverty are less likely to get qualifications or go on to higher education and are more likely to become young parents.

No clear view was identified in the consultation regarding the proposal to provide free transport for all Looked After Children, Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

The proposal regarding free transport for students living in a family with a low income had a clear majority in agreement with the new proposal.

2.2) To what extent are vulnerable groups experiencing poorer outcomes compared to the population or workforce as a whole?

These are outlined above.

2.3) Are there areas where more information may be needed? No

2.4) Are there any gaps in data or consultation findings? The consultation covered all proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy.

2.5) What action will be taken to obtain this information?

2.6) To what extent do current procedures and working practices address the above issues and help to promote equality of opportunity?

The policy provides subsidised transport for all students aged 16 – 18 who meet certain eligibility criteria.

Consultation on proposed changes to the policy ensure that it is equitable for all students aged 16 – 18 and is compatible with the home to school transport policy took place between Monday 8th November and Friday 17th December.

Stage 3 – Assessing Positive & Negative Impacts

Equality checklist issues to be considered

Awareness	Appropriateness	Accessibility	Partnership - working
Take Up levels	Adverse Outcomes	Staff Training Needs	Contracts & monitoring

Analysis of Impacts	Impact ?	Summary of impacts and reasons for this
3.1) Age	No	
3.2) Disability	Yes	Transport needs for students with special educational needs will be considered as part of the statutory assessment process. Where students have been assessed as requiring transport and are eligible, the subsidised rate will be charged. Previously all students who had attended a special school or specialist provision in a mainstream school in Year 11 received transport, irrespective of distance between home and school, provided free of charge.

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3.3) Carers	No	
3.4) Gender Reassignment	No	
3.5) Pregnancy and Maternity	No	
3.6) Race	No	
3.7) Religion / Belief	No	
3.8) Sex	No	
3.9) Sexual Orientation	No	
3.10) Other e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion	Yes	<p>- As Corporate Parents to Looked After Children Central Bedfordshire Council will ensure that free transport will be provided for students to attend the most suitable establishment to meet their individual needs, irrespective of distance.</p> <p>- Students from families with a low income, as defined in the policy will be provided with free transport, where they meet other eligibility criteria.</p>

Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning

4.1) What are the main conclusions from the assessment?

The Policy sets out the arrangements for the provision of transport, or otherwise that the authority considers necessary to enable young people to attend education or training. There is national data on the reasons why young people do not remain in education and training when they reach the age of 16. However specific data is not available locally to determine whether the availability of transport has an impact on this decision.

The proposed policy will ensure that all students aged 16 – 18 will be entitled to subsidised transport to a school or college as long as they meet the eligibility criteria in respect of distance and course content.

The policy also addresses the transport needs of certain young people. Specific provision is made :

- to ensure that students with special educational needs will be entitled to subsidised transport to the most appropriate establishment as identified through the statutory assessment process, where the distance between home and the establishment is more than 3 miles from their home address. Where the distance is less than 3 miles the assessment will include consideration of whether a student could reasonably be expected to walk or cycle to school or college. Where this is not possible subsidised transport will be provided. Transport will be provided up to the age of 25 in certain circumstances
- so that, subject to the eligibility criteria being met, transport will be provided free of charge for student who live in families with a low income, as defined in the Policy.
- to ensure that children for whom Central Bedfordshire is the Corporate Parent will be provided with transport to the most suitable establishment to meet these particular students' needs will not always be the nearest school or college to their home address.
- to ensure that transport can be considered on medical grounds irrespective of distance between home and school.

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The main conclusion from the assessment is that the implementation of the process for assessing entitlement to subsidised transport for the academic year 2011/12 will be transparent and will enable all young people to access subsidised or free transport to a school, college or workbased learning where the distance and other eligibility criteria is met. is met.

The proposals are in line with new legislation, Department for Education guidance and are compatible with the current Home to School Transport Policy criteria in respect of low income, medical needs and looked after children, as agreed by the Executive of the Council in March 2010.

4.2) What are the priority recommendations and actions?

There is the need to ensure that the take up of subsidised transport is monitored to ensure that the policy supports vulnerable and hard to reach groups
A review needs to be undertaken to assess the impact that access to transport has on the decision to remain in education and training at post 16.

4.3) What changes will be made to address any adverse impacts that have been identified?

The implementation of the Policy will be monitored for the academic year 2011/12 and reviewed for the 2012/13 academic year.

4.4) Are there any budgetary implications?

There are no additional budgetary implications in order to implement the Policy.

4.5) Actions to be Taken:

Action	Date	Priority
Review of take up of service for 2011/12	01.12.11	High

Stage 5 - Quality Assurance & Scrutiny:

Checking that all the relevant issues have been identified

5.1) What methods have been used to gain feedback on the main issues raised in the assessment?

Step 1:

X | The Corporate Policy Advisor (Equality & Diversity) for comment & decision re further scrutiny

Step 2:

| The Equalities Working Group | The Equalities Forum

The Equalities Forum considered the proposals at the meeting on 9 December 2010. There was general agreement with the proposals and that for students with special educational needs specific advice should be provided to students and their families to support them through the new eligibility criteria.

5.2) Were any additional actions / amendments identified? No

Step 3:

5.1) Has a member of the senior management team been notified of the outcome of the assessment? The Assistant Director, Learning and Strategic Commissioning, Children's Services



Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact
<p>6.1) How will implementation of the actions be monitored? Take up rates for subsidised transport and destination of students for the academic year 2011/12 will be compared with data for the current academic year.</p>
<p>6.2) What sort of data will be collected and how often will it be analysed? Numbers applying for and taking up subsidised transport – termly. Destination data for all students of sixth form age resident in Central Bedfordshire – annually.</p>
<p>6.3) How often will the policy be reviewed? The Policy will be reviewed annually.</p>
<p>6.4) Who will be responsible for this? The Director of Children’s Services</p>
<p>6.5) Have the actions been incorporated in the service / business plan or team targets? The actions are incorporated in the Business Plan of the Children’s Services Joint Strategic Commissioning Team.</p>

The results of all equality impact assessments will be made accessible to the public.