

Central Bedfordshire Equality Impact Assessment Template

Title of the Assessment:	Post 16 Transport Policy	Date of Assessment:	15.07.11
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Stage 1 – Aims and Objectives

1.1) What are the objectives of the strategy, policy or service being assessed?

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.

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.

A new policy for the 2011/12 academic year was agreed in April 2011. The Policy is being implemented for all students entering Post 16 education for the first time and for all students transferring to a new course from September. All students starting the second or third year of a course will continue to be assessed using the Criteria from the previous policy. The 2011/12 Policy provides subsidised or free transport in certain circumstances. For transport to be provided a students must :

- be enrolled on a full-time course
- be 16 years of age or over and under 19 years of age at 1 September 2011. For a student with Special Educational Needs transport could be provided up to the age of 25 if specifically required through the annual statutory assessment process.
- be attending a school where the learner has been enrolled for a minimum of two years and has been eligible for subsidised transport, or
be attending the nearest establishment which offers a qualification(s) at the same level and in the same subjects area(s) as the course applied for and accepted on to.
- live more than 3 miles but not more than 20 miles from the school or college they are attending. The distance may be less than 3 miles if a student has a medical condition which prevents them from walking to school or college. The distance may be more than 20 miles if a student with special educational needs is attending the nearest establishment as identified through the statutory assessment process.
- live in the area of Central Bedfordshire for the whole academic year.
- Where a student with special educational needs remains in education, free transport is provided up to the age of 25

In accordance with the new Policy, subsidised transport will not be provided for students where the distance between home and school is less than 3 miles and where transport is provided on road safety grounds at statutory school age.

The cost of the subsidised scheme for students, for the academic year 2011/12 is £144.00 per term or £391.00 per student for an annual pass. Some students, whose families are in receipt of certain benefits, are entitled to free transport.

The Council is required to review its Post 16 policy annually. The Council consulted on proposed changes for the 2012/13 academic year between 9 May and 24 June 2011. A draft policy was considered at a meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28 June 2011.

1.2) What needs is it designed to meet?

The Policy is designed to support the most vulnerable young people to attend post 16 education and training in schools, colleges and work based learn providers.

The proposals included in the draft policy have been developed to ensure equitable and transparent processes for providing transport for these 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:

- Low income
- Medical grounds
- Children for whom Central Bedfordshire is a 'Corporate Parent'
- Special educational needs

a) 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, as their family are in receipt of certain benefits no charge will be payable.

b) 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.

c) 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.

d) 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.

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.

Where a student with Special Education Needs remains in further education, transport could be

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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.

1.3) What outcomes will be delivered?

The proposals will ensure that the policy is equitable for the most vulnerable students aged 16 – 18 and is compatible with the home to school transport policy for these young people.

1.4) Which other strategies or policies support this?

Children and Young Peoples Plan
 Education Vision
 Home to School Transport Policy
 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 removal of transport for the majority of students on distance and course content grounds will mean a reduction in choice of school or college for many students, particularly those living in rural areas where subsidised transport could be considered.

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

	Place survey / Customer satisfaction data	X	Demographic Profiles – Census & ONS
	Local Needs Analysis		Service Monitoring / Performance Information
	Other local research		

Third party guidance and examples

X	National / Regional Research	X	Analysis of service outcomes for different groups
X	Best Practice / Guidance	X	Benchmarking with other organisations
	Inspection Reports		

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Public consultation related activities			
x	Consultation with Service Users	X	Consultation with Community / Voluntary Sector
	Consultation with Staff	X	Customer Feedback / Complaints
	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			
X	Elected Members	X	Expert views of stakeholders representing diverse
X	Specialist staff / service expertise		
<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>			
2.1) Existing Data and Consultation Findings:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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. 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disability: 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 subsidised transport for learners with special educational needs up to the age of 25.</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>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Race: 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>- Religion or Belief: There were no specific issues raised in the consultation.</p>			
<p>-Gender: Girls outperformed boys at Key Stage 4 – 54.4 per cent of girls achieved 5 or more A – C grade GCSE's or equivalent including English and mathematics compared to 47.1 percent of boys (Source: DCSF 2008/09 data)</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>- Sexual Orientation: Lesbian and gay young people are more likely to leave school at 16, despite</p>			

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achieving 6 GCSE's at Grade C.

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

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

Students from the most vulnerable groups are under-represented in post 16 education and historically have under-performed. The proposals within the draft policy are designed to ensure that these groups continue to receive support.

2.3) Are there areas where more information may be needed?

Where transport will not be provided due to distance grounds, schools and colleges will be working with the council to develop new transport offers to support young people. As the policy is not designed to be implemented until September 2013, the details of the offer available from schools/colleges will be determined throughout next academic year.

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?

N/A

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

The proposals set out in the Policy will ensure that transport will be provided at a subsidised rate, or free, for the most for the most vulnerable students in Central Bedfordshire.

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	No		
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 <i>e.g. Poverty / Social Class / Deprivation, Looked After Children, Offenders, Cohesion</i>	No		

Stage 4 – Conclusions, Recommendations and Action Planning

4.1) What are the main conclusions from the assessment?

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

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Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people. The proposals also support the priorities set out in the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan.

4.2) What are the priority recommendations and actions?

The implementation of the Policy will ensure equitable and transparent processes for providing transport to the most vulnerable post 16 students.

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 2012/13 and reviewed for the 2013/14 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 2012/13	01.12.12	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
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Other:

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?

Yes

Stage 6 – Monitoring Future Impact

6.1) How will implementation of the actions be monitored?

Take up rates for subsidised transport and destination of students for the academic year 2011/13 will be compared with data for the current academic year.

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.

6.3) How often will the policy be reviewed? The Policy will be reviewed annually.

6.4) Who will be responsible for this? The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services

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 Commissioning Team.

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