

# SEN Home to School Travel Assistance Frequently Asked Questions

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## SEN Home to School Travel Assistance Frequently Asked Questions

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## SEN Home to School Travel Assistance Frequently Asked Questions

This document has been prepared to address frequently asked questions regarding upcoming policy changes affecting the SEN Home to School Travel Assistance Service provided by the London Borough of Barnet (LBB).

**The Travel Assistance Service is administered by the Transport Brokerage & Contract Management team (TBT), a division of Barnet Education & Learning Services (BELS).**

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### 1. What is home to school travel assistance?

Travel Assistance refers to the different ways of supporting children and young people residing in Barnet with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to travel to and from school/college.

### 2. How can I know if my child is eligible for travel assistance?

Your child may be eligible for travel assistance if they have a special educational need, disability, and/or medical condition that prevents them from traveling to and from school or college independently. Decisions regarding the provision of travel assistance are made on an individual basis, considering factors such as; the distance from home to school or college, the child's or young person's support & medical needs, and family circumstances, among other criteria.

### 3. What age does the young person need to be to access travel assistance?

Travel assistance is available to those that are aged between 5-25 years old.

### 4. What if my child does not meet the age criteria?

LBB may take individual and family circumstances into account for applications that do not meet the age criteria. However, please note that work commitments and childcare barriers are not qualifying factors for SEN home-to-school travel assistance. Before making a decision, the London Borough of Barnet may consider, but is not limited to, the following factors:

- The parents/carers ability to accompany the young person
- The needs of the young person
- The needs of the parents/carers
- Public transport options available with the safety and feasibility of these options, in line with the young person's needs.
- The current travel arrangements being utilised by parents/carers.
- Commercially available safety equipment. I.E buggy, pushchairs, ear defenders, headgear, etc.

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### 5. If my child does not have an EHCP, could they still be eligible for travel assistance?

Yes, if your child has a special educational need, disability, and/or medical condition that prevents them from traveling to and from school independently, they may qualify for travel assistance even without an EHCP.

The applicant must follow the general application process and submit supporting information or evidence that addresses the need for travel assistance. This information will aid the Local Authority in making a fair decision.

### 6. What types of travel assistance are available?

#### 6.1. Compulsory school age travel assistance options

Travel options will be considered in the following order but will always be appropriate for the needs of the child:

- Walking to school, accompanied as necessary and appropriate by parent/carer.
- Cycling to school
- Travel pass/ oyster card for the parent/carer/ appropriate adult to accompany the pupil on public transport.
- Mileage allowance
- Personal transport allowance
- Independent travel training
- Shared school transport arranged by LBB
- Individual transport if the needs of the child/young person require it

#### 6.2. 16yrs-19yrs old travel assistance options

There are no changes to this policy proposed at present, but we may be releasing a consultation on this policy later this year. This means that no changes are expected for the start of the academic year 2024/2025.

#### 6.3. 19-25 travel assistance options

Travel options will be considered in the following order but will always be appropriate for the needs of the young adult:

- Walking to college, accompanied as necessary and appropriate by parent/carer.
- Cycling to college.
- Travel pass/ oyster card for the parent/carer/ appropriate adult to accompany the pupil.
- Mileage allowance.

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- Personal Travel Allowance.
- Independent travel training.
- Shared college transport arranged by LBB

### 7. Why is the Travel Assistance policy changing?

LBB is reviewing changes to the provision of SEN home-to-school travel assistance as part of a broader travel and transport review. This review also takes into account the Department for Education's (DfE) revised guidance on Home to School Transport, published in June 2023 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>).

We welcome feedback from parents, carers, providers, schools, young people that use the service, residents, and other stakeholders on potential changes to the way we provide travel assistance for compulsory school-aged children and young adults. Our goal is to clarify and simplify our policies for current users and prospective applicants of the travel assistance service.

### 8. Which policies will be affected?

#### 8.1. London Borough of Barnet - Travel assistance policy for children of compulsory school age (5-16)

This Policy is currently up for consultation. Please visit the following URL for more information. <https://www.engage.barnet.gov.uk/5-16-send-travel-assistance-policy>

#### 8.2. Policy and Arrangements for the Provision of Travel Assistance for Sixth Form Age (16-19)

There are no changes to this policy proposed at present but we may be releasing a consultation on this policy later this year. This means that no changes are expected for the start of the academic year 2024/2025.

#### 8.3. Policy and Arrangements for the Provision of Transport for Young Adult learners with Learning difficulties (19-25)

This Policy is currently up for consultation. Please visit the following URL for more information. <https://www.engage.barnet.gov.uk/19-25-send-travel-assistance-policy>

### 9. What is consultation?

The consultation phase of the policy change allows parents, carers, residents, schools, young people that use the service and providers to provide feedback on the proposed changes. During this stage, LBB seeks input from its residents and service users before the changes are implemented. This process gives the people the opportunity to voice their opinions and suggestions.

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Within the consultation webpage (referenced above), there is a link directing users to a questionnaire. Please do share your views via the consultation so these can be taken into account before any proposed changes are finalised.

### 10. What will be the key changes to the Travel Assistance policies?

#### 10.1. Compulsory school age – key changes

- Greater clarity on the range of travel assistance options that are available and their suitability.
- Greater clarity on the range of greener travel assistance options; including the use of designated pick-up and drop-off points for travel to school.
- Further clarity on the risk assessing and decision-making process, for when it is unsafe for a young person to travel on transport arranged by LBB.
- Insight into the training we provide to Passenger assistants / drivers as well as their general responsibilities.
- Clarification on the handover of medication and medical equipment.
- Detailed breakdown of the appeals process stages.

#### 10.2. 16yrs-25yrs old key changes

There are no changes to this policy proposed at present but we may be releasing a consultation on this policy later this year. This means that no changes are expected for the start of the academic year 2024/2025.

#### 10.3. 19yrs-25yrs key changes

- Greater clarity on the range of greener travel assistance options; including the use of designated pick-up and drop-off points for travel to school.
- For young adults with an EHCP, greater clarity on preference of colleges, and whether this choice is compatible with the efficient education of others or the efficient use of resources.
- Greater clarity over the appeals process.

### 11. Who will be affected by the changes to the Travel Assistance policy?

For individuals that are already accessing travel assistance, their entitlements will not be affected. However, those that apply after the policy changes go live would need to adhere to the new policies. Applications made during the academic year 2023/2024 will not be affected for the academic year 2024/2025. However, applications made in the academic year 2024/2025 will be affected if the policy changes have gone live.

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### 12. How can I give my feedback on Barnet's Travel Assistance policy?

Consultations on the proposed changes to the policies are already live and can be accessed here:

<https://www.engage.barnet.gov.uk/5-16-send-travel-assistance-policy>

<https://www.engage.barnet.gov.uk/19-25-send-travel-assistance-policy>

Both consultations close on 25th July 2024

### 13. When do I need to apply for Travel Assistance?

You can apply for travel assistance for the next academic year as soon as the educational setting has been confirmed. If you haven't yet made an application for Travel Assistance for September 2024 please do so asap and in any event by the end of July 2024.

### 14. If I am unhappy with the decision made regarding Travel Assistance for my child, can I make an appeal?

Yes, you can make an appeal if you are unhappy with either the decision made not to provide Travel Assistance for your child, or decision regarding the type of Travel Assistance which will be provided.

Further details on how to appeal can be found here:

[https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/parent\\_zone/documents/2263-information-on-transport-application-appeals-complaints](https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/parent_zone/documents/2263-information-on-transport-application-appeals-complaints)

### 15. What is the appeal process for a decision regarding Travel Assistance?

Further guidance on the appeal process can be found here:

[https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/parent\\_zone/documents/2263-information-on-transport-application-appeals-complaints](https://www.barnetlocaloffer.org.uk/parent_zone/documents/2263-information-on-transport-application-appeals-complaints)

### 16. How to raise a complaint

If for any reason you are not satisfied with the service, you can raise a complaint to BELS using its complaints procedure. To submit a complaint or to find more information on complaints, please visit the following page

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/your-council/contact-council/complaints>

Please note that appealing a decision for an application and raising a complaint are two separate processes.

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### 17. Raising a complaint to the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

If the requestor has gone through all the stages of LBB complaints procedure and they are still dissatisfied, the requestor can ask the LGSCO to review the complaint. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) looks at individual complaints about Local Authorities. The Ombudsman investigates complaints in a fair and independent way - it does not take sides. It is a free service. More Information can be found here <https://www.lgo.org.uk/> .

### 18. Who can I contact for further support and advice with my travel assistance application?

Service	Description	Webpage	Helpline/contact information
Barnet SENDIASS (Special Education al Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service)	A service provided by Barnet Council that can provide support & advice on SEND services and laws surrounding this area.  Assistance for writing applications and understanding documents & reports is also available.	<a href="https://www.barnet.gov.uk/children-and-families/barnet-send-information-advice-and-support-service-sendiass">https://www.barnet.gov.uk/children-and-families/barnet-send-information-advice-and-support-service-sendiass</a>	<a href="#">Contact Barnet SEND Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)   Barnet Council</a>
IPSEA (IPSEA (Independent Provider of Special Education Advice))	Leading charity service offering legal advice and support around SEND Laws	<a href="https://www.ipsea.org.uk/pages/category/tran-sport-to-school-or-college">https://www.ipsea.org.uk/pages/category/tran-sport-to-school-or-college</a>	<a href="https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/service-overview">https://www.ipsea.org.uk/Pages/Category/service-overview</a>
Contact	Information and advice for families	<a href="https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-">https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-</a>	<a href="https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-advice-services/other-">https://contact.org.uk/help-for-families/information-advice-services/other-</a>



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	raising a child with special needs	<a href="#">advice-services/education-start/education-learning/transport-to-school-and-college/</a>	<a href="#">ways-to-get-advice/our-helpline</a>
Mencap	Mencap is a leading organisation that campaigns for the rights and inclusion of people with a learning disability. It provides support, advice, information.	<a href="#">Learning Disability - Down syndrome - Williams syndrome   Mencap</a>	<a href="#">Learning Disability Helpline   Mencap</a>

### 19. Transport Brokering Team Contact Details

<b>Phone</b>	020 8359 4038 / 020 8359 5110
<b>Email</b>	Transport.brokering@barnet.gov.uk

Lines are open from 07:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday. Please note that between 07:00 – 09:00 & 15:00 – 17:00 it is peak operational hours.