

Home to School Transport Policy 2025-26

School Transport Information for
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead



achieving
for children

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Context

It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children regularly attend school. This includes making any necessary travel arrangements, except where there is a duty on the local authority to do so.

This policy sets out the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) council's responsibilities and commitment to meeting the home to school travel assistance needs of eligible children and young people (including those with special educational needs and disabilities) who are of compulsory school age (5 to 16), and resident in RBWM.

Responsibility for administering this policy lies with the School Transport Team, which is part of Achieving for Children (AfC). AfC is a community interest company (a not-for-profit social enterprise) that delivers children's services for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.

RBWM and AfC are committed to promoting children and young people's independence, social and life skills essential for their preparation for adulthood. These goals underpin our home to school travel assistance policy because where possible, children and young people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, will be encouraged and supported to travel independently.

RBWM and AfC provide help and support with home to school transport where children meet the eligibility criteria for support. This policy applies from September 2025 and covers:

- home to school transport for children aged 4 to 16
- home to school transport for children with special educational needs
- This policy sets out:
 - the rules for deciding who gets help with transport
 - how to apply for assistance
 - what type of transport might be provided
 - special circumstances when more help may be available

Home to school and college transport for young people aged 16 and over is detailed in the separate [post-16 policy statement on the AfC school transport website](#).

This policy supersedes all previous policies and will be regularly reviewed to take account of statutory duties and any changes to legislation.

Any changes are listed, for reference, in the [changes to the policy](#) section below.

When a word or phrase is underlined and in blue, this means the full definition of that word or phrase is set out in [the definition section](#) below. If you are viewing an electronic version of this document you should be able to click on the phrase to take you to the definition.

Overall responsibility for this policy lies with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Associate Director for Operations.

Any questions or queries relating to this policy as a whole should be addressed to the Service Leader for School Support Services, Achieving for Children, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF or by email at transport@achievingforchildren.org.uk.

Welcome

Children and young people arriving at school or college in the morning will best achieve their potential if they are on time and ready to learn. For most families, this means that they make their own arrangements to get the child or young person to school or college and pupils are encouraged to engage in active travel to school such as walking or cycling, accompanied as appropriate.

The School Transport Team can provide help for some children and young people with their journey to and from school. In most cases, this is if the child or young person lives more than a certain distance from their nearest school, or if they have special educational needs that mean they can't safely walk to school. Some children and young people will also be eligible for free home to school transport based on exceptional circumstances. Help is provided according to national guidelines and legislation, and this guide sets out the eligibility criteria.

As a child gets older, it is likely that they will start to travel more independently, walking to school or using the bus, perhaps with friends. This helps them to gain useful skills and confidence, equipping them for self-sufficiency as an adult. We are keen to foster this independence in the assistance we provide to children and young people who are eligible for free home to school transport.

Many families will be considering a new school for their child or young person to start in September 2025, and we encourage them to read this guide before making an application.



Councillor Amy Tisi
Cabinet member for Children's Services,
Education and Windsor



Lin Ferguson
AfC Executive Director of Children's Services
(Windsor and Maidenhead)

At a glance

An application and eligibility checker has been developed to help parents and carers check if their child may be entitled to home to school transport assistance, and to guide them to the correct application form. A link to the checker can be found on the school transport webpages or on this form: [Application and Accessibility Checker](#).

Criteria for children aged 8 to 16 years old from low income families are slightly different, further details can be found in [section 10 \(how to apply\)](#).

We may be able to take into account [exceptional circumstances](#) when assessing a child's eligibility for free home to school transport. This can be found in [section 7 \(exceptional circumstances\)](#).

If a child is not entitled to free home to school transport, we may be able to offer a 'paid for' [concessionary seat](#). Further information can be found in [section 6 \(concessionary seats\)](#).

Expectations of parents, guardians or carers

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring the safe, efficient and cost effective transport of their child or young person receiving home to school transport from the borough. They must:

- confirm they have read and understood the home to school transport code of conduct ([see section 8 - behaviours](#))
- ensure that the child or young person is ready for transport ([see section 8 - behaviours](#))
- ensure that the child or young person has their travel pass ([see section 8 - behaviours](#))
- inform RBWM of [changes in circumstances](#) as soon as possible ([section 7 - exceptional circumstances](#))
- acknowledge that this policy differs for children who are post-16

Responsibilities and requirements in support of this policy include:

- applications should not be made until a school place has been accepted
- applications for transport are for school places deemed '**the nearest appropriate school**' as outlined in the [definitions section](#) of this policy. Where parents select alternative schools to their nearest schools, they accept responsibility for making their own transport arrangements for their children
- if a parent or carer does not name the nearest suitable school in their original application for a school place, this may affect their eligibility for travel assistance
- all supporting documentation will be provided upon application to support the evaluation of the request - this includes any documentation to support low income status
- any entitlement to travel assistance is subject to review on an annual basis and requires a new application (unless otherwise stated) to ensure all details for eligibility remain up-to-date
- individual family work commitments, childcare arrangements and inconvenience to parents or carers is not normally taken into account when considering eligibility for travel assistance

Expectations of the School Transport Team

RBWM and AfC aim to provide safe, efficient and cost-effective travel assistance for children and young people entitled to transport. To do this, RBWM and AfC will:

- arrange reasonable pick-up and drop-off points on routes
- arrange reasonable pick-up and drop-off times
- limit, as far as possible, maximum journey times
- provide passenger assistants, where appropriate
- ensure additional standards of service for vehicles on borough routes
- only withdraw transport assistance on reasonable grounds and with notice
- assess each application on its own merit, resulting in an assessment that is judged on the specific and individual circumstances of each child

Responsibilities and requirements in support of this policy include:

- applications submitted out of term will be processed within a maximum of 25 working days
- applications submitted in term will be processed within a maximum of 15 working days
- all applications received will be assessed against criteria outlined in this policy alongside assessing that the school is 'the nearest appropriate school'
- emails regarding changes to existing transport arrangements will be dealt with within three working days
- general transport enquiry emails are normally dealt with within five to 10 working days
- ensuring the service is operational from 8.45am to 5.15pm, Monday to Thursday, and from 8.45am to 4.45pm on Friday
- ensuring all transport arrangements put in place are safe, secure and appropriate

1. Statutory responsibilities

RBWM and AfC's home to school transport policy sets out what help and support is available to children and young people who are travelling between home and school or college. The policy covers the assistance available for:

- children of statutory school age (aged 5 to 16)
- children of statutory school age (aged 5 to 16) with special educational needs, a disability or other mobility difficulties
- young people aged 16 to 18
- young people aged 16 to 18 with special educational needs, a disability or other mobility difficulty
- young people aged 19 to 25 with high needs

This policy applies to children and young people in school or college from September 2025 who are residents of RBWM and attending a school or college only.

Children and young people who are not resident in RBWM, but attending a school or college in the borough will need to contact their home local authority.

Non-statutory school aged children (0 to 4 years old)

Children under statutory school age are not automatically entitled to transport to an early years setting or school. Statutory school age begins on the first day of the term following the child's 5th birthday.

Parents of 4 year old children may be able to purchase a seat on school transport under the 'paid for' concessionary seat scheme. Further information can be found in [section 6 - concessionary seats](#). A discount of 50% of the normal concessionary seat cost is given if the child is from a low income family.

Statutory school aged children (5 to 16 years old)

Statutory school age begins at the start of the term after a child's 5th birthday and ends on the last Friday in June in the school year in which they turn 16.

Children of statutory school age need to attend a school or educational setting on a full time basis. This is defined as 190 days (or 380 sessions) each academic year.

There are four categories of students of statutory school age living in RBWM and attending their nearest appropriate school who are eligible for free travel assistance:

- children who live beyond the statutory walking distance
- children from low income families (where extended rights apply – see [section 2 - additional responsibilities](#))
- children whose walking route to school is unsafe
- children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or a mobility difficulty

The nearest appropriate school is defined as shown in the [definitions section](#) below.

A qualifying school is:

- a maintained school or nursery, or a special school approved under Section 342 of the Education Act 1996
- a pupil referral unit or alternative provision academy
- an academy

When applying for school places, parents and carers should consider the nearest schools to their home address. If parents or carers opt not to apply to any of the nearest schools, the child may not be entitled to free home to school transport assistance. **There is a parental responsibility to ensure a child attends school.**

Parents or carers will need to provide evidence that the more distant school is the nearest appropriate school with places available. This is checked with the School Admissions Team - details can be found on the [school admissions webpages](https://www.rbwmschooladmissions.org.uk) or by emailing rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk. The parents and carers may also be asked to lodge an admissions appeal for a place at the nearer school, with free home to school transport only being offered if the appeal is unsuccessful.

Parents and carers should note that siblings will only qualify for free home to school transport to that same more distant school if they also meet the criteria in the policy and are assessed on an individual basis requiring their own application.

Non-statutory school age (age 16 and over: mainstream and SEND)

The government changed the law so that young people are expected to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday. This can mean:

- full-time education, such as school, college or home education
- work-based learning, such as an apprenticeship
- part-time education or training if they are employed, self-employed or volunteering for more than 20 hours per week

Eligibility for free home to school transport nationally **has not** been extended upwards with these changes in the law.

There is no automatic continuation of any free home to school transport arrangements for young people aged 16. If a young person qualifies under the following criteria, transport assistance may be provided:

- they are 16 years of age or older, AND
- they attend the nearest appropriate school, college or other institution for education or training, AND
- they have a special educational need, disability or mobility issue that means that they cannot reasonably be expected to walk or take public transport to that school, college or institution, AND
- they are from a low income family, for example: their parents receive the maximum amount of Working Tax Credits or the student or one or more of their parents receive Income Support (IS), Employment Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit (UC)

Qualifying students will be provided with transport assistance in the form of a Zonal Personal Transport Budget.

Where qualifying students are provided with a seat on an existing route they are required to make a financial contribution to the cost of their transport provision, equal to 50% of the charge for a fare paying seat on council arranged school transport routes. Current fare paying costs for the 2025-26 academic year are £868, 50% contribution is £434, payable on an annual, termly or monthly basis.

The route is measured by the shortest available driven route. Applications can only be assessed from the child's current home address.

For students not entitled to school transport assistance, there are other possible sources of assistance listed in the post-16 policy statement, such as:

- National Rail 16-17 Saver
- paid for seats on transport operated by the borough (providing a route already exists and there is capacity)
- transport routes operated by individual schools and colleges
- bursary funding provided by individual schools and colleges

The full post-16 transport policy statement can be found [here](#)

Support for students with SEND 19 to 25 years

Young people aged 19 to 25 and with high needs may be eligible for assistance with transport if:

- they attend, on a full-time basis, an appropriate school, special school or college offering the course being followed, are taking up an apprenticeship or are in part-time education or training when employed, self-employed or volunteering, AND
- they meet national eligibility criteria for access to adult care and support and for access to carer support

Exceptional circumstances

RBWM and AfC recognise that there may be additional circumstances which should be taken into account when assessing eligibility for free home to school transport, even where a child or young person is not eligible under the criteria set out above. Parents, carers and young people are able to point out individual or extenuating circumstances.

The list below is not exhaustive, and there will be other circumstances in which RBWM and AfC may agree to provide free home to school transport.

Please note that individual family work commitments, childcare arrangements or inconvenience to parents and carers are not normally taken into account when considering eligibility for travel assistance.

All requests that may fall under the exception circumstances criteria will be assessed by a transport panel before a decision is made. Where RBWM and AfC does agree to provide free home to school transport, this is not to be taken as a precedent for any other child or young person, including a sibling of that child or young person. **Assistance will be for a period of up to one school term.**

Children unable to walk the statutory distance

In some cases, a child of statutory school age who has an education, health and care plan (EHCP), attends their nearest appropriate school and lives at or under the statutory distance from the school may not be able to use a walking route safely, even if accompanied. This can happen if the child:

- is, on a long-term basis, physically unable to move around independently, due to:
 - a disability, such as severe cerebral palsy, that requires daily use of significant mobility aids (for example, a wheelchair)
 - a disability such as severe visual impairment
 - a medical condition, such as juvenile arthritis, resulting in severe persistent pain and/or extreme fatigue
 - a medical condition, such as intractable epileptic seizure disorders, that result in a serious persistent health and safety risk
- has a lack of awareness of common dangers and a lack of age appropriate independence skills, due to:
 - severely restricted communication skills, arising from, for example, profound hearing impairment, severe autism or severe language disorders
 - significant learning disabilities, where a child might be unable to assess risk and adapt to everyday situations. This might arise from severe learning difficulties, for example:
 - severe difficulties with interpreting complex social situations or being unable to cope with unexpected change. An example might be a child with Asperger's Syndrome who has very little awareness of personal danger
 - severe behavioural, emotional or social difficulties in comparison with other children of their age

Where a child is unable to use a walking route safely, even accompanied, then free home to school transport will be provided if requested. This applies even if the distance to the school is equal to or less than the statutory distance.

A long-term restriction on a child's ability to physically move around independently is something that is likely to last for at least a year, and perhaps for the rest of their life. It can include intermittent or sporadic conditions such as epilepsy or multiple sclerosis.

Children in care and looked after children

Where a child is placed in foster care for a temporary period, RBWM and AfC will provide free home to school transport to the child's current school to enable them to continue to attend, if:

- that school is farther than the statutory distance from the temporary address
- the foster carer can demonstrate that they cannot reasonably be expected to transport the child or young person to and from that school

Where a young person aged 16 or above is placed in foster care for a temporary period, RBWM and AfC will provide free home to school transport to the young person's current school or college to enable them to continue to attend, if:

- they have an EHCP and special education needs, disability or mobility issues that means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk or take public transport to the school or college
- the foster carer can demonstrate that they cannot reasonably be expected to transport the child or young person to and from that school

If the above criteria are not met, then the arrangements for transport will fall to the foster carer.

Assistance will be for a period of up to one school term.

Children and young people in temporary residential circumstances

If a child is forced to relocate temporarily to alternative accommodation due to circumstances outside their control, RBWM and AfC may provide short-term free home to school transport if the school is more than the statutory distance from the home address. The distance criteria may be waived if the child is accommodated in a refuge, and whose safety would otherwise be at risk. Any temporary arrangements made would be subject to regular review.

No provision will be made for young people aged 16 and over in these circumstances unless they have an EHCP, are from a low income family and have a special education need, disability or mobility issue that means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk or take public transport to their school or college. **Assistance will be for a period of up to one school term.**

Children and young people excluded from school or at risk of permanent exclusion

If a child attends a pupil referral unit or similar establishment because the child has been permanently excluded from their main school or college, then the unit will be considered to be their nearest appropriate school. If the unit is farther than the statutory distance from the home address, then the child will be eligible for free home to school transport.

If a child attends more than one school, pupil referral unit or similar establishment, because they have been permanently excluded or because they are at risk of permanent exclusion, then both schools will be regarded as their nearest appropriate school.

The child will receive free home to school transport to and from each of the schools that is more than the statutory distance from the home address.

In exceptional circumstances, for example if a child is attending the pupil referral unit for only part of the school day, permanently excluded children who are eligible for free home to school transport may also be provided with transport at times other than the normal start and finish of the school day, if a child is attending the unit for only part of the school day.

Young people aged 16 and over and excluded from school or college are not eligible for free home to school transport to a pupil referral unit or similar establishment, unless they have an EHCP, are from a low income family and have a special education need, disability or mobility issue that means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk or take public transport to the pupil referral unit or similar establishment.

Children placed in a school under the fair access protocol

RBWM and AfC operate a fair access protocol to ensure that children without a school place, especially the most vulnerable, can be found and offered a place quickly. This includes children excluded from school and children moving into an area where there are no school places available.

Where a child has been placed in a school under the fair access protocol, that school will be considered the nearest appropriate school. If that school is more than the statutory distance from the home address, then free home to school transport will be offered.

The fair access protocol does not apply to young people aged 16 and over.

Parents and carers with a disability or illness

If a child is attending their nearest appropriate school and lives at or under the statutory distance from the school, RBWM and AfC may provide free home to school transport if no parent or carer is able to accompany the child on the walk to school because of a medical condition or disability. Evidence of this need must be provided.

It is expected that the parents and carers will have made every effort to secure other help, including (but not limited to):

- assistance from immediate and extended family members, friends and neighbours
- assistance via the school's own school travel plan (for example, a walking bus)

RBWM and AfC may seek confirmation of this from the parents, carers, school or other agencies, and may also consider whether any disability benefits received could be used to help with home to school transport. **Any arrangements made would be subject to regular, and at least termly, review.**

No provision will be made for young people aged 16 and over in these circumstances unless they have an EHCP, are from a low income family and have a special education need, disability or mobility issue that means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk or take public transport to their school or college. **Assistance will be for a period of up to one school term.**

Attendance at a residential school

Some children will attend a residential (boarding) school as their nearest appropriate school, and will not require home to school transport at the normal start and end of the school day. If the child is eligible for free home to school transport, and home to school transport is requested, parents and carers will be encouraged to transport the child themselves, for example using a personal transport budget (see [types of transport and their operation in section 5](#)).

If the borough directly provides transport, then this will match the young person's boarding arrangements.

2. Additional responsibilities and distances

Suitable is the designated area or nearest qualifying school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any special educational needs and disability that the child may have.

Distances will be measured from where the home meets the public street, for example, from the front gate to the nearest gate or point of access to the school premises, and by the shortest route along which a child accompanied as necessary may walk safely. As such, the route measured may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways as well as recognised roads.

Responsibilities are to:

- promote the use of sustainable travel and transport
- make suitable travel arrangements for eligible children

The duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport

RBWM and AfC have a general duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport. This duty applies to children of compulsory school age who travel to receive education or training within the area.

The Education Act 1996 defines sustainable modes of travel as those that the local authority considers may improve the physical wellbeing of those who use them, the environmental wellbeing, and a combination of the two. This may include walking, cycling, travel training as well as other modes of travel.

The duty to make suitable travel arrangements for eligible children

RBWM and AfC have a duty under the Education Act 1996 (section 508B) to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made, for eligible children, to facilitate their attendance at school.

This duty relates to home to school travel arrangements, and vice versa ('home' is the place where the child is usually resident).

'Eligible children' are defined in schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996 as those children of compulsory school age (5 to 16) for whom free travel arrangements will be required.

Age and national curriculum year groups

The policy outlines how eligibility for free home to school transport changes, according to age, as a child gets older. For the purposes of the policy, that change of age will be regarded as taking effect from the start of the academic year immediately following the academic year in which the child reached that age. For example, if a child is educated in national curriculum Year 6 (NCY), but other children their age are in Year 7 (NCY), they would be assessed as if they were also being educated in Year 7 (NCY).

If a child is being taught outside the normal national curriculum year group for their age, they will still be considered for home to school transport according to their age, not their year group.

Review of home to school transport arrangements

The child will usually remain eligible for free home to school transport to the school until:

- they reach one of the age thresholds for eligibility, and are no longer eligible on distance
- they leave the school
- they move to a new address

RBWM and AfC reserves the right to review the eligibility of any child receiving free home to school transport at any time.

Eligibility may change if a place becomes available at a school closer than the one the child attends.

Statutory walking distance eligibility

Please note that the calculation of distances relating to entitlement to home to school transport differs from the methods used for school admissions purposes.

The nearest school defined by school admissions guidance will not necessarily be the same under transport guidance.

For transport eligibility purposes, the statutory walking distance will be measured by the shortest available safe walking route (accompanied as necessary) between the home address and the school, special school or college. A route might include footpaths, bridleways and other tracks which are not passable by motorised transport.

For pupils who fall within the 'extended rights' eligibility criteria, the six mile and 15 mile upper limits are not walking routes ([see section 2 - additional responsibilities](#)). These routes are those which are passable using a suitable motorised vehicle; in short, the two upper limits will be measured along road routes.

The criteria specified within the Education Act is set out in sections below.

RBWM and AfC have a duty to provide free transport for pupils whose homes are outside the statutory walking distance to the nearest suitable school:

- more than two miles (if the child is below the age of 8)
- more than three miles (if the child or young person is aged 8 to 16)

For children from low income families:

- for children aged 8 to 10, the statutory distance is two miles
- for children aged 11 to 16, the statutory distance is:
 - between two and six miles to one of the three nearest appropriate schools
 - between two and 15 miles to their nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief

Safe walking routes

Safe walking route means a route which is safe for the child to walk, accompanied if necessary (appropriate to their age and nature of the route).

RBWM and AfC has a duty to provide travel assistance for children who cannot be expected to walk to the nearest suitable school where there is no safe walking route under the relevant statutory walking distance, even if accompanied by an adult. Routes are assessed to be safe using nationally recognised road safety guidelines.

RBWM and AfC must consider a range of risks, including rivers, ditches, traffic speed, fields of vision for the pedestrian and motorist, and whether the route would be considered safe if the child were accompanied by their parent, carer and guardian. All details included on the application form act to form the risk assessment if deemed eligible.

If a route is judged as being unsafe, it is discounted when assessing an application for home to school transport assistance. If there is no safe walking route to the nearest appropriate school, the pupil will be entitled to free home to school transport assistance to that school.

Please note that working arrangements and childcare issues will not be considered for the purposes of assessment to be reasons why a child cannot be accompanied.

Extended rights eligibility

RBWM and AfC have a duty to provide free transport for children whose parents, carers and guardians are entitled to:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit – provided you are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Universal Credit - with an annual earned income of £7,400 or less (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- the guaranteed element of pension credit
- support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

And

- The nearest suitable school is beyond two miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11). This is measured by the shortest walking distance which a child would safely travel, accompanied if necessary (not by road).
- The school is between two and six miles (if aged 11 to 16 and is one of their three nearest qualifying schools). The six miles limit would be measured by road travel.
- The school is between two and 15 miles and is the nearest secondary school preferred on the grounds of religious belief (aged 11 to 16). The 15 miles limit is measured by road travel.

Where free home to school transport is given to children from low income families, parents and carers will be asked to re-apply for transport each year, confirming each time that their child continues to be entitled. If free home to school transport is given part-way through the year, then the parents and carers will be asked to re-apply in time for the start of the following academic year. Assistance will only be granted or renewed once that evidence is received by RBWM and AfC.

Eligibility and accompaniment

Transport only for the compulsory part of the school day

The duty to provide travel arrangements to eligible children does not extend beyond the compulsory part (the published start and finish) of the school day.

RBWM and AfC are not required to provide flexible travel arrangements to facilitate:

- a child's part time attendance
- a child's trial placement
- the child's attendance at extra-curricular activities
- a later start or earlier finish during a child's transition into a new school
- attendance to medical appointments

RBWM and AfC are not required to provide travel arrangements for a child who is registered at a school but is attending a place other than that school (unless it relates to a temporary exclusion). This relates to trial or assessment places at a school that is not their nearest suitable or is not named in their EHCP. This responsibility lies with the school or setting at which the child is registered. **Parents, carers, guardians and schools should take this into account when seeking places at other schools or settings.**

Timing of assessment of eligibility

At the point when home to school travel arrangements eligibility is considered, securing a place in an alternative (usually nearer) school should be a prospect. For most cases this will be during the normal school admissions round when places are allocated.

A smaller number of cases will need to be considered during the school year, for example as a result of families moving to a new area within the borough.

Where granted, travel assistance will normally apply for the whole of the school year of entry, unless there are significant changes, such as the family moving house or the child changing school.

Any entitlement to travel assistance is subject to review on an annual basis.

Maximum journey times

Best practice suggests that the maximum length of a journey for a child of:

- primary school age might be up to 45 minutes each way
- secondary age child or a young person aged 16+ the journey time might be up to 75 minutes each way

A child or young person's special education needs and disabilities might be such that it implies a shorter maximum journey time. RBWM and AfC will take this best practice into account when considering what home to school transport provision to offer.

Journey times may exceed these limits in some circumstances, including:

- exceptional traffic or weather conditions
- attendance at a special school
- attendance at a remote boarding school
- attendance at a remote school or institution in order to avoid exclusion
- attendance at an alternative school following an exclusion or managed move

If a permanent change in road or other conditions makes it likely that a journey will permanently exceed the limits of 45 or 75 minutes (as appropriate), the difficulty will be discussed with the parents or carers.

Accompaniment

In deciding whether a child is eligible for travel assistance for reasons of special educational need, disability or mobility, or unsafe route eligibility, RBWM and AfC have a responsibility to consider whether the child could reasonably be expected to walk if accompanied by an adult.

The general expectation is that a child will be accompanied by a parent, carer or guardian or responsible adult, where necessary, unless there is a good reason why it is not reasonable to expect the parent, carer or guardian to do so. Working arrangements and childcare issues will not normally be considered reasons why a child cannot be accompanied.

RBWM and AfC promote equality of opportunity for disabled parents. Where a parent's disability prevents them from accompanying their child along a walking route that would otherwise be considered unsafe without adult supervision, a reasonable adjustment might be to provide free home to school travel arrangements for the child in question.

Arrangements and eligibility for those with special educational needs and a disability or mobility problems (including temporary medical conditions)

RBWM and AfC have a duty to provide travel assistance for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities who are registered at their nearest suitable school which is within the statutory walking distance from their home, where the child cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems, physical, mental health reasons, neuro-developmental difficulties and disabilities or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special educational needs.

Details on home to school transport for young people who meet this criteria can be found in the separate SEND policy statement.

Attendance at after-school clubs

After-school clubs can be a valuable experience for any young person. In the case of a child with an EHCP, RBWM and AfC will consider free transport home from one after-school club a week, where the club directly contributes to the educational outcomes in the child's EHCP.

This transport will only be provided:

- if the child is eligible for free home to school transport
- from the child's main school to their home address
- after school (no transport assistance will be provided home from evening events)
- on a weekday in term-time (no transport assistance will be provided for weekend events)
- home from one after-school club per week

Transport home from additional after-school clubs, or from clubs that do not directly contribute to the educational outcomes in the child's EHCP, will be the responsibility of the parents or carers.

3. When transport is not provided

To addresses other than the home address

RBWM and AfC will not provide free home to school transport to or from any address other than the child's or young person's main home address.

When the child changes home address and school

If a child or young person changes address or school, then their eligibility for free home to school transport will be reassessed on the basis of the standard policies set out above. This may mean that the child or young person is no longer eligible for free home to school transport.

If a child or young person changes address, RBWM and AfC will not provide free home to school transport to maintain a place at their current school. The child or young person will be reassessed on the basis of the standard policies. This may mean that the child or young person is no longer eligible for free home to school transport.

If a child or young person moves into an address in a different local authority area, RBWM and AfC will cease to provide free home to school transport. The parents, carers, or young person should contact their new local authority for further assistance.

If a child or young person is withdrawn from one school or college and placed in another by their parents or carers, then their eligibility for free home to school transport to the new school or college will be reassessed on the basis of the standard policies. Where there is no change of address, it may be that the child or young person will no longer be eligible for free home to school transport because the nearest appropriate school would still be the original school where the child or young person had a place.

RBWM and AfC may offer to move the child or young person to a nearer suitable school with places, bearing in mind any special circumstances, such as examinations and length of time in current school. This could mean that the child or young person is no longer eligible for free home to school transport.

To meet parental preference

In most cases, parents and carers are responsible for making arrangements for their child to get to school. When choosing which schools to apply for, parents should consider how their child will access that school, as there is no guarantee that your child will be eligible for home to school travel assistance.

If parents or carers choose a school, college or other institution for their child that is not the nearest appropriate school with places (or for those on a low income, not one of their three nearest appropriate schools or nearest preferred school on the grounds of religion or belief with places for those aged 11 to 16) to the home address, RBWM and AfC will not provide free home to school transport.

If a parent or carer does not name the nearest suitable school in their original application, this may affect their eligibility for travel assistance.

Where parents have made an application for a place at their preferred school, but the local authority has been unable to meet this or any of their preferences, the local authority will allocate a place with the most accessible school with available places. In such cases the school will be treated as a qualifying school for transport assistance unless this is unnecessary because the school is within safe walking distance.

If parents or carers of a child or young person with an EHCP choose a school or college that meets the needs of their child but is not, in RBWM and AfC's view, the closest school or college to the home address that could do so, RBWM and AfC will not provide free home to school transport.

When considering a place at a school that is not the nearest appropriate school, parents and carers are strongly advised to consider whether they will be able to provide or pay for transport themselves to that school for the whole duration of their child's attendance at that school. This includes places at schools, special schools, colleges or other institutions for post-16 education.

To enable attendance at a particular school on specific grounds

RBWM and AfC will not take the following into account when identifying the nearest appropriate school or college to a child or young person's home address:

- religious or philosophical beliefs (or lack of), except where a child is from a low income family, as set out in [section 7 - exceptional circumstances](#)
- preference for single-sex or co-educational education. A girls' school will not, however, be considered the nearest appropriate school for a boy or vice versa
- preference for selective education
- preference for a residential school

Outside the normal start and finish to the school day

Free home to school transport will only be provided at the normal start and end of the school day. Transport at other times will remain a parental responsibility, including where a child or young person is:

- attending extra-curricular activities, including after-school sports or non-sports clubs and societies
- starting school late or finishing school early to attend dental, hospital or other appointments
- unwell, and has to be collected from school early
- in detention

Transport may be arranged at times other than the normal start and end of the school day for a child or young person eligible for free home to school transport if:

- a permanently excluded child or young person is attending a pupil referral unit for only part of the school day
- a child or young person with an EHCP is attending an after-school club
- a child or young person is attending a residential school

To locations other than the main school

RBWM and AfC will not generally provide free home to school transport to or from any address other than the child's or young person's main school or college. Transport to and from other locations will remain a parental responsibility or, in some circumstances, the responsibility of the school.

This includes where a child or young person is:

- attending lessons or other activities at another school during the school day. The organising school or institution will be responsible for these transport arrangements
- where a school has outsourced part or all of its education to another provider located at a different site
- attending work experience
- accompanying a friend home

Free home to school transport may be provided to more than one school if a permanently excluded child or young person, or a child or young person at risk of permanent exclusion, is dually registered (for example attends more than one school or pupil referral unit). Free home to school transport will only be offered, however, to those schools that are farther than the statutory distance ([see section 2 - additional responsibilities](#)).

To nursery schools and pre-school settings

RBWM and AfC will not generally provide free home to school transport to or from nursery schools or any other early years settings for children under the statutory school age. A concessionary fare paying seat may be purchased and a discount of 50% of the usual cost if the child is from a low income family.

To enable education other than at school

A small number of children and young people receive their education outside schools. If parents or carers decide to educate their child other than at school (for example at home) then no free home to school transport will be provided by RBWM and AfC. If RBWM and AfC have arranged for a child or young person to be educated other than at school, then free home to school transport may be provided.

To meet the needs of parents and carers

Parents and carers are reminded that free home to school transport is provided to meet the needs of the child, not those of the parents or carers. So, for example, difficulty in getting a child to school because of work commitments will not make that child eligible for assistance with home to school transport.

4. Short term medical conditions

Consideration will be given by the Transport Team to provide home to school travel assistance for pupils with temporary medical conditions.

If a child suffers from a temporary physical or medical condition that means they are unable to walk to school or travel in their usual manner, travel assistance may be provided.

Applications for transport on this basis must be supported by appropriate evidence from the medical professional. This may include, but is not restricted to, a letter from the child's consultant or other medical professional involved in the child's medical welfare.

All requests that may fall under the short term medical condition criteria will be assessed by a transport panel before a decision is made.

5. Types of travel

Types of travel assistance that may be provided

The type of travel assistance offered will be decided by RBWM and AfC, taking into account the needs of the young person and the nature of the journey to be undertaken.

The assistance offered might include, but is not limited to:

- a parent consenting to use their car in return for payment of a mileage allowance
- a parent consenting to a walking escort or responsible adult to escort the young person on public transport
- training and support to travel independently
- free passes for children on public transport
- provision of a seat on a dedicated school bus or minibus, or a seat in a taxi, usually shared with one or more pupils, where a pupil's needs require more personalised arrangements

Travel in a vehicle on a route that RBWM and AfC have arranged (contracted) may include a passenger assistant (an escort). RBWM and AfC will determine the means of travel assistance to be provided, to ensure that appropriate travel assistance meets the needs of the child and young person - not the needs of the parents or carers - through the most efficient use of resources.

'Suitable' travel assistance arrangements

For travel assistance to be suitable, it must be safe and reasonably stress free, to enable the child to arrive at school ready for a day of study. It could not be expected that a child makes several changes on public transport resulting in unreasonably long journey times.

Guidance advises that a child of primary school age should not travel for more than 45 minutes each way, and a secondary school aged child's travel should not exceed 75 minutes each way, including any walking time.

It is desirable that journeys to special or specialist settings for children with complex needs should be shorter, but this may not be possible. Particularly where a child's special educational needs can only be addressed in an out-of-borough placement.

Pick-up points

Eligibility for travel assistance is assessed based on the pupil's registered home address, but any transport provided may not necessarily be door to school gate. Local authorities can use reasonable pick-up and drop-off points in appropriate individual cases. This may be a bus stop or other place where young people can safely wait for their vehicle.

RBWM and AfC aim to ensure there are safe and appropriate pick-up points within reasonable distance from schools and centres of population. Pupils can be required to walk to and from a central pick up or drop-off point. This will usually be within one mile walking distance from the child's home, and total walking distance will be within the relevant statutory mile walking distances according to age and ability, and in the light of any identified special educational needs and disabilities.

Parents or carers may not vary the agreed pick-up and drop-off times except in exceptional circumstances, by agreement with RBWM and AfC. Neither passenger assistants nor drivers are authorised to agree to variations to the route. Any changes agreed with the borough in exceptional circumstances will not set a precedent for the future.

Reasonable pick-up and drop-off times

Children and young people on contracted vehicles will be picked up and dropped off at times that ensure that they reach school or college at the normal start time, and leave school at the normal finish time each day. These pick-up times will, as far as possible, take into account the maximum journey times, set out in [section 2 - additional responsibilities](#).

Parents and carers are reminded that a child or young person will not usually be transported outside the normal school start and finish times.

At the end of term, when some schools finish early, RBWM and AfC may arrange for a contracted route to run at an earlier time, if possible. If not possible (for example, if a route serves more than one school), the school or parent or carer would be responsible for making alternative arrangements.

Supporting the development of self-reliant travellers

RBWM and AfC have responsibility to ensure children's needs are addressed, and this includes travel assistance which facilitates the best opportunity for independence. Where it is safe, appropriate and reasonable to do so, pupils with special educational needs will be expected to walk, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult, to and be dropped off, at a common pick-up point near their home.

Attendance at a residential school

Where children with EHCPs require a residential placement following assessment, travel assistance may be offered as follows:

- weekly boarders: travel assistance between home and school once each direction each week
- termly boarders: travel assistance between home and school at the beginning and end of each term and half term
- 52-week placements: travel assistance between home and school for eight visits throughout the year

Some children will be attending a residential (boarding) school as their nearest appropriate school and will not require home to school transport at the normal start and end of the school day. If the child is eligible for free home to school transport and home to school transport is requested, parents and carers will be encouraged to transport the child themselves, for example using a personal transport budget (see types of transport and their operation in [section 5 - types of travel](#)). If the Transport Team directly provides transport, then this will match the young person's boarding arrangements.

Mileage allowance

Where this offers best value for money and the parents, carers or guardians agree to this, a mileage allowance will be offered to parents, carers or guardians of children with special educational needs and disabilities who are entitled to free home to school travel arrangements.

If you were offered this form of travel assistance, attendance levels will be monitored and money will be reclaimed for non-attendance at school.

Passenger assistants

Passenger assistants (PAs) are sometimes used on shared or individual vehicle routes to monitor the wellbeing and conduct of children and young people, and ensure their safety while the journey is in progress.

When passenger assistants are used

Passenger assistants are generally only provided on routes contracted by RBWM and AfC for children and young people with an EHCP, and where it is considered that the health and safety of the child, driver or anyone else travelling in the vehicle would be at risk if not provided. Usually, this would be where one or more of the children or young people on the route has:

- a severe physical condition
- a medical condition that could require immediate referral to emergency services
- severe behavioural difficulties
- Except in exceptional circumstances, passenger assistants will not be provided for:
 - children attending mainstream schools
 - hearing impaired children

A passenger assistant may be provided on a mainstream route in some exceptional circumstances. A passenger assistant may also be provided for any child aged up to 6 years old (in Reception, Year 1 or 2) receiving free home to school transport who is not travelling with their parent or carer.

Parents and carers as passenger assistants

In some circumstances, if a passenger assistant is necessary, and is not already provided, a parent or carer may be asked to act as a passenger assistant for their child.

Roles and responsibilities of the passenger assistant

Passenger assistants are given basic passenger training, including safeguarding and child sexual exploitation awareness training. This training is kept under review to ensure that the needs of all children and young people on the route can be met.

Passenger assistants will have had an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for people working with children before taking up any duties. They will display their ID badge at all times when on duty.

Passenger assistants will ensure good behaviour on the routes, although parents and carers are reminded that an acceptable standard of behaviour is expected from all children and young people receiving free home to school transport.

In the event of a medical emergency, the passenger assistant will request assistance from the emergency services. The passenger assistant will not administer any medication or first aid, unless specifically trained and registered by RBWM and AfC to carry out the particular procedure required.

Passenger assistants have a responsibility to report any accidents, incidents, near misses or illness that occur in transit to RBWM and AfC. The passenger assistant will write down the particulars of any such incident, provide any necessary care and report to the Transport Team, who will then inform the parents, carers and school as appropriate.

RBWM and AfC try to ensure continuity of service by providing the same vehicle, driver and passenger assistant for a period of time. This cannot be guaranteed, however, and changes may be needed at short or no notice.

6. Concessionary seats

Please note

- There are separate arrangements for children under the age of 5 years that are from a low income family, see non-statutory school aged children (0 to 4 years old) in [section 1 - statutory responsibilities](#).
- There are separate arrangements for students ages 16 to 18 who have an EHCP and are from a low income family, see non-statutory school age (ages 16 to 19 mainstream and SEND) starting in [section 1 - statutory responsibilities](#).
- Applications for concessionary seats for September will be processed at the end of August once all students entitled to free home to school transport have been assigned seats on transport. Parents and carers applying for a concessionary seat should make arrangements to take their child to and from school until they have received confirmation of a seat from the Transport Team.

The concessionary fare paying scheme allows parents, carers and young people to buy an annual pass for a spare seat on an operating home to school transport route, when they are not otherwise eligible for free home to school transport. The availability of concessionary seats should not be relied upon, and availability in one school year does not guarantee a seat will be available in following school years.

Eligibility for the concessionary fare paying scheme

A child or young person aged 4 to 19 can buy a pass for a seat on a home to school transport route if they:

- are not already eligible for free home to school transport, and
- are seeking places on a route that has been contracted by RBWM and AfC for home to school transport, and
- are seeking places on a route that has spare seats, once all children or young people eligible for free home to school transport have a place (assignments are usually made around 31 August), and
- are attending a school to which the home to school transport route already goes

Concessionary seats can be bought for children and young people who live inside or outside the borough (at a slightly higher cost for non-borough residents).

Concessionary seats cannot be bought on local public transport. Concessionary seats also cannot be bought on routes contracted by RBWM and AfC for children with an EHCP unless AfC's Children and Young People Disability Service (CYPDS) agrees that it would be appropriate.

Places are usually offered on a first come, first served basis. If there are more applications for concessionary places than there are seats available, then seats will be allocated on in the following priority order:

- children aged 4 to 8 (normally in national curriculum years Reception to 3)
- children aged 8 to 16 (normally in national curriculum years 4 to 11)
- young people aged 16 to 19 (normally in national curriculum years 12 and 13)

If there are still more applicants than places, priority will be given to the applicant with the shortest distance between their home address and their nearest current pick-up point on the route, measured along the safe walking route.

Cost of concessionary fare paying seats

The cost of concessionary fare paying seats for applicants is set out in RBWM's fees and charges document. This is updated by the full council annually, and the charges for the 2025-26 academic year will be published once confirmed by council. The costs for the 2024-25 academic year are shown below:

- annual concessionary seat for RBWM resident £868
- annual concessionary seat for non-RBWM resident £1,386

These were agreed by council on 29 February 2024.

The average actual cost to the local authority of a concessionary fare paying seat for a school year is:

- for children without SEND £1,837
- for children with SEND £8,977

The cost of the concessionary seats will be waived for children and young people of statutory school age from low income families that are residents of RBWM. For children under 5 years of age from a low income family, and those young people aged 16 to 19 who have an EHCP and are from a low income family, a 50% discount to the usual concessionary seat cost is given.

Withdrawal of concessionary fare paying seats

RBWM and AfC reserve the right to withdraw a concessionary seat at any time. This will usually be because a seat is needed for a child or young person who is eligible for free home to school transport, or because the vehicle is being replaced by a smaller vehicle. There may be other reasons.

RBWM and AfC will try to give as much notice as possible, with a minimum of seven calendar days. Notice can be given during term time or school holiday time, by email to the address supplied by the parent or carer, or letter sent by post to the parents or carers last known address. Payment for the concessionary seat will be adjusted to reflect the actual time the child or young person has used the seat, and refunds issued on a pro rata basis.

Parents, carers and young people are advised, therefore, not to rely on the availability of a concessionary seat when considering home to school transport arrangements. In addition, the offer of a concessionary seat does not set a precedent for the future provision of home to school transport for the child or young person, their address or their circumstances.

Using concessionary fare paying seats

Children and young people using concessionary seats will be expected to use existing stops and routes. **RBWM and AfC are under no obligation to provide extra or larger vehicles to maintain or create concessionary seats.**

Refunds

If a young person no longer requires the concessionary fare paying seat or it is withdrawn for any reason, a refund will be issued. Refunds are calculated on the number of remaining days the fare paying seat is valid on.

7. Exceptional circumstances, change of circumstances and other assistance

It is the responsibility of parents and carers to inform RBWM and AfC as soon as possible if there is a significant change in circumstances, change of home address or change of school.

Parents and carers should provide telephone numbers, including alternative numbers, to allow the vehicle operator and RBWM to contact them quickly if required. Neither RBWM, AfC nor the operator will be responsible for any interruption in the service provided to a child or young person, or for any other difficulties arising, as a result of not having an up-to-date telephone number or home address.

If, as the result of an accident, planned surgery or illness, parents or carers feel that home to school transport arrangements are no longer appropriate, a request for revisions to the arrangements must be made to transport@achievingforchildren.org.uk or by calling 01628 683800 at the earliest opportunity.

The following are examples of exceptional circumstances or change of circumstances. The Transport Team will exercise its discretion to provide free home to school travel assistance in specific cases.

Non eligible children (those below statutory school age)

There is no statutory duty to provide travel assistance for those under the age of 5. RBWM and AfC may exercise their discretionary power and provide home to school travel assistance for children under the age of 5 on a case-by-case basis.

Change of address

Parents, carers and guardians must inform RBWM and AfC in writing of any change of address as soon as possible, as eligibility for travel assistance will need to be reviewed.

In exceptional cases, pupils may remain at their current school with travel assistance provided, for example if a school move is at a crucial time in their studies and it is not in their interests to change schools. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Changing schools

Where a parent decides to change their child's school after they have started, the child's eligibility for travel assistance will have to be reconsidered. This may include the need to make a completely new application.

Pupils living in temporary accommodation

If a pupil is of statutory school age and the family, carer or guardian is placed in temporary accommodation by RBWM and AfC, consideration will be given to the provision of education travel arrangements for a limited period, up to a maximum of one school term. Individual circumstances will be taken into account (for example reasons for the displacement, age of the child, likely timescales, parent, carer or guardian's circumstances).

Transport to a pupil referral unit or other education provider

Transport to a pupil referral unit and to other places where education may be provided will only be provided in accordance with their general entitlement. If a child has been placed temporarily in a pupil referral unit, they may be eligible for travel assistance, if eligibility criteria are met.

Parents, carers or guardians must be aware that there is no transport entitlement to and from the pupil referral unit or similar education provider at any other time. This also applies to pupil exclusions.

Any requests for exceptional arrangements will need to be supported by documentary evidence from the pupil referral unit, for example a medical certificate or a court order.

Pupils excluded from school

A pupil permanently excluded from a school will be provided with assistance to their new school provided it is both the nearest suitable school, as agreed by RBWM and AfC, and is outside the statutory walking distance from home.

Special resource provisions

Eligibility to special resource provisions will be subject to normal eligibility criteria.

Elective home education (EHE) and education other than at school (EOTAS)

Where parents have made the choice to educate their child at home, no assistance will be available from RBWM and AfC in connection with any transport need arising.

Where RBWM and AfC arrange for a pupil to have education other than in school, RBWM and AfC will provide transport subject to normal eligibility rules on home to school travel arrangements.

Transport provided in error

Where free travel assistance has been provided in error, or, where there have been material changes to the route to school, provision will be withdrawn. However, travel assistance will continue until the end of the term in which the error was notified, in order to allow parents, carers or guardians to make alternative arrangements.

8. Behaviours and expectations of children and young people

Parents, schools, pupils, transport contractors and RBWM and AfC, working in partnership, all share responsibility for ensuring that acceptable behaviour is maintained to ensure safe and stress free school transport for all.

We expect all young people to:

- be ready for their transport in good time
- behave in a safe and responsible way whilst travelling
- follow all instructions from the driver (or passenger assistant where one is provided), especially in an emergency
- wear seat belts or appropriate safety harnesses at all times whilst on the vehicle, where these are provided

Bullying, including the use of hate speech, will not be tolerated, and will be reported to parents and the school or college. We will not tolerate abuse of any sort, whether from a young person or from their parents and carers.

Children and young people are expected to behave in a safe and appropriate manner whilst on transport. RBWM and AfC will work with schools, parents, and the child to help manage behaviours to ensure the ongoing safety and comfort of all passengers, including drivers and any passenger assistants.

Should a pupil misbehave whilst being transported to or from school, the provision of transport may be withdrawn either for a period of time or permanently. Normally, a warning letter will be sent to parents, carers or guardians before transport is withdrawn. However, if following an investigation by the Transport Team an incident is considered serious enough, the withdrawal of transport may be immediate. In this instance, the responsibility for ensuring attendance at school will remain with the parent, carer or guardian of the child.

As part of their responsibilities to ensure that children and young people are safe, AfC will engage with transport operators and providers in the local area to ensure that drivers are aware of and carry out their safeguarding responsibilities appropriately. If parents and carers have any issues or concerns around the safeguarding of their or other children whilst being transported to or from a place of education or learning, they should contact the Transport Team immediately.

The home to school transport code of conduct

The behaviour of children and young people on home to school transport is the responsibility of parents and carers. For the comfort and safety of all passengers, any inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.

The parents and carers of all children and young people travelling on either public transport or on a contracted vehicle are required to have read, understood and signed RBWM's Home to School Transport Code of Conduct when applying for assistance with transport. This includes children and young people who are paying for concessionary seats. Having agreed the code of conduct, parents and carers become responsible for the behaviour of the child or young person on home to school transport.

The code of conduct, which is regularly updated, is available here: [read the Code of Conduct](#)

Unacceptable behaviour will be monitored and may result in an exclusion from transport. Parents and carers will then become responsible for home to school transport during the period of the exclusion from transport.

Where a criminal act is suspected, the police will be notified. Schools will assist with investigating unacceptable behaviour and may wish to apply their own disciplinary actions, in addition to any exclusion from the transport.

Ensuring the child or young person is ready for transport

Where home to school transport is provided to an eligible child or young person, it is the responsibility of the parents or carers to ensure their child is at the designated pick-up point at the specified time. A contracted vehicle will only wait for a maximum of three minutes beyond the specified time. A public bus or train will not, of course, wait at all beyond the scheduled time for the stop.

If a child or young person misses their transport, either to or from school or college, RBWM and AfC will not arrange an alternative and the parents or carers will need to make their own arrangements for getting the child or young person to school or back home.

It is the responsibility of the parents and carers to ensure that their child or young person is safely taken to the pick-up point and collected from the drop-off points. For younger children, or children and young people with specific needs, this may mean that a parent or carer or other responsible adult walks with the child to and from the pick-up and drop-off point.

The driver and any passenger assistant will know when a child or young person is generally met by a parent or carer at their drop-off point. If the parent or carer is not at the drop-off point as expected, then the driver will deliver the child or young person into the care of Social Services. In the event that a child or young person cannot be taken to Social Services, the driver will take them to a police station. The parents or carers will then need to collect the child or young person. These measures will only be taken as a last resort and, at the same time, the vehicle operator or the local authority will attempt to contact the parent or carer by telephone.

Requirement to carry a travel pass

All children and young people receiving assistance with home to school transport on a public transport route or on a contracted vehicle are required to carry their travel pass with them on their route, if they have been issued one.

If a child or young person is unable to present a pass when requested by the vehicle driver, passenger assistant or officer of RBWM, they may be refused entry to the vehicle. Drivers are given guidance and training on how to report these incidents.

A child or young person issued with a pass and persistently travelling without it could be breaching the Code of Conduct, which could lead to having their transport withdrawn.

If a travel pass has been lost, the parent or carer should complete a replacement school travel pass form (cost applies) via the borough's website here.

Incidents and accidents

If something goes wrong on a school transport route, whether an accident, behavioural problem or any other concern about the operation of transport, we will investigate the situation and take action where necessary.

Anyone can report an incident, accident or concern to us by emailing transport@achievingforchildren.org.uk and giving details of their concern. It may be necessary to ask the staff on the route, school staff, other students or their parents or carers to provide reports as part of our investigation. Depending on the nature of the situation, we may need to tell other council teams as part of our statutory duty to report safeguarding concerns.

Once our investigation is complete, we will let everyone involved know the outcome and what actions we are taking.

9. Contracted routes

Additional standards of service for contracted vehicles

RBWM and AfC will carry out checks with the DBS for potential drivers and passenger assistants. All relevant offences will be considered, including driving convictions. Offences against children or young people, of violence and against traffic legislation will be among particular reasons for denying employment on a contracted route. Each case will be considered on its own merits and a right of appeal exists for drivers (and passenger assistants) denied employment.

The driver and passenger assistant will be required to carry identification at all times. If a parent or carer feels that their child would benefit from meeting the drivers (and passenger assistants) on a contracted route before starting, they can contact the School Transport Team to make arrangements for this to happen. This may not always be possible, particularly if arrangements have had to be made quickly, or in the case of a substitute driver or assistant. Parents and schools are asked to check the identification of any unfamiliar driver or passenger assistant before entrusting a child or young person to their care.

It is required that drivers and passenger assistants have basic training in the requirements of the children using the transport. In addition, the vehicle operator will be expected to carry individual information including schools' and parents or carers' contact details, and warnings of any relevant medical conditions. All such information held by the operator and the authority is subject to the GDPR and Data Protection Act.

The vehicle will also be expected to have an operational means of contact with its base, such as a mobile telephone or two-way radio. This will be used to communicate, amongst other things, any significant delay to a journey so that the parents and carers can be informed.

In some cases, a vehicle may also be equipped with an on-board camera. These cameras are sealed to prevent tampering, and footage is recorded over on a loop and only viewed in the case of reports of behavioural issues by young people or concerns regarding the staff on the route.

If a child or young person on a contracted route is taken ill during the course of a journey, the vehicle will either proceed to the home or school, or will stop and summon assistance by calling the emergency services. Arrangements for any other children or young people in the vehicle to complete their journeys will be made as quickly as possible.

The duties of the driver (and passenger assistant) are limited to the vehicle only. Parents and carers are expected to take the child to and collect the child from the vehicle at home or at the drop-off point as necessary. At school, a member of the school staff is expected to collect the child from the vehicle and take the child to the vehicle.

Monitoring transport provision

RBWM and AfC will undertake regular checks to ensure compliance with service standards. These checks will include:

- spot checks on equipment, vehicles and licences
- checks to ensure all drivers and passenger transport assistants are authorised, carry identification and undertake duties in accordance with service standards and requirements
- checks to ensure that contracts are operating in accordance with the agreed timetable

Variations to routes and route planning

As well as regularly reviewing whether children and young people receiving free home to school transport are still eligible and are receiving appropriate, cost-effective transport, RBWM and AfC's School Transport Team keeps the routes and vehicles under review. This helps ensure that home to school transport is delivered as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible.

Changes may include:

- a new pick-up and set-down point
- a change to journey times
- a change to the contractor employed
- a change in the size or type of vehicle
- addition or withdrawal of a passenger transport assistant

When reviewing the routes and vehicles, RBWM and AfC will not normally consult with parents or carers, so that reviews can be carried out quickly and efficiently. Where, however, a child or young person's special educational needs and disabilities indicate a sensitivity to change, the impact of the review will be considered and discussed with the school, parents and carers.

Where possible, notice of changes to routes will be given to parents and carers. In some cases, changes will be made at very short notice, particularly if these are temporary changes due to driver or passenger illness, road closures or termination of a contract with a vehicle operator.

Very rarely, it may be necessary to temporarily cancel a route taking a child or young person to school. This is most likely to be when bad weather including flooding or icy conditions makes it unsafe, or is expected to make it unsafe, for the vehicle to travel. If, in these circumstances, parents or carers decide to make alternative arrangements to transport their child to school, this will be entirely at the parents' or carers' own discretion and cost. The parents or carers will also be responsible for the return journey if conditions have not improved sufficiently for the contracted vehicle to make the journey safely.

In all circumstances, however, where a child or young person has been transported to school, arrangements will be made to return them home, to their designated drop-off point, or to a place of safety.

Emergencies and changes at short notice

RBWM and AfC will attempt to make arrangements at short notice, including emergencies, but this cannot be guaranteed, particularly if a child or young person is travelling on a contracted vehicle with other occupants. Parents and carers will probably, therefore, need to make their own arrangements at their own expense in the case of an emergency. **RBWM and AfC do not accept responsibility for any such arrangements made by parents and carers.**

Withdrawal of home to school transport assistance

Home to school transport assistance can be withdrawn for a number of reasons. The most common will be:

- changing eligibility, including age and income
- changes in the circumstances of the child or young person
- changes in the ability of a child or young person to travel safely to school or college
- re-measurement of home to school transport distances
- errors and applications based on false information

Where a child or young person reaches one of the age thresholds set out in RBWM and AfC's eligibility criteria (they reach the age of 8 or 16), then home to school transport assistance may be withdrawn at the end of the academic year in which the child or young person reaches that age.

Where a child or young person is eligible for free home to school transport because they are from a low income family, parents and carers are asked to re-apply for home to school transport each year, providing evidence of their low income. In most circumstances, if a child or young person is no longer eligible on low income grounds, their free home to school transport will be withdrawn at the end of the academic year.

Where a child's or young person's circumstances change, such as a change of address or change of school, any home to school transport assistance will usually continue until the child or young person moves to the new address or school. Assistance will only continue past that date if the child or young person is still eligible for free home to school transport in their new circumstances.

As a child or young person with special educational needs, a disability or mobility issue gets older, they may become able to safely walk to their school. This will be assessed annually as part of the annual review process and could mean that a child or young person will no longer be eligible for free home to school transport. Any resulting changes to free home to school transport will be implemented at the start of the first school term after the annual review date, or sooner, by mutual agreement.

In some circumstances, a child or young person's eligibility for free home to school transport may change because the home to school transport distance has been re-measured. This could be because a new road or footpath shortens the safe walking route from home to school, or because a more accurate measurement of an existing route has become available. If the child or young person is now closer than the statutory distance to their nearest appropriate school, free home to school transport will be withdrawn. At least 12 weeks' notice will be given to the parents or carers.

Where travel assistance has been provided because of a mistake in assessing eligibility, home to school transport will be withdrawn. At least 12 weeks' notice will be given to the parents or carers.

Where travel assistance has been provided on the basis of false or misleading information provided by the parents or carers, home to school transport may be withdrawn immediately and with no more than four weeks' notice. This will apply in all cases except where the child or young person is still eligible for assistance.

If RBWM and AfC believe that the information from the parents or carers was deliberately false or misleading, the costs of providing any assistance with transport may be sought from them.

10. How to apply

Starting school and transferring to secondary school

5 to 16 year olds with or without an EHCP

[Application forms for 5 to 16 year olds are available online.](#)

School and college transport for 16 to 25 year olds with an EHCP

[Application forms for 16 to 25 year olds are available online.](#)

When choosing school placements, **parents need to be mindful that not all students with an EHCP will be eligible for transport assistance.** Transport assistance is only provided to the nearest school that RBWM and AfC has agreed can meet the needs of the student.

Requests for home to school travel arrangements for children should be discussed with the SEND Team or the Transport Team as early as possible.

Low income families

If you are applying for free home to school transport under low income criteria, you will need to upload electronic evidence documenting that:

- the child is in receipt of free school meals (for example a letter from the school) Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:
 - Income Support
 - income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
 - the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
 - Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
 - Working Tax Credit run-on paid for four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
 - Universal Credit, your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
 - children who get paid these benefits directly, instead of through a parent or guardian, can also get free school meals
- you are in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit (for example the tax credit award notice) or other benefits

This is in addition to providing your child's basic details.

Religion or philosophical belief

If you are applying for free home to school transport to a school on the grounds of religion or philosophical belief (as part of meeting the low income criteria), you will be asked to contact the leader of the religious establishment your child attends to provide additional information to support your application. Full instructions are provided as part of the application process.

SEND post-16 transport eligibility

Most, if not all, young people aged 16 and older with special educational needs will already have an EHCP if they need one. If not, then RBWM and AfC will need to consider whether an EHCP is required.

For students 16 years and older, transport assistance is only given if the young person is also from a low income family and has a special educational need, disability or mobility issue that means that they cannot reasonably be expected to walk to that school, as set out above.

Qualifying students will be provided with transport assistance in the form of a Zonal Personal Transport Budget.

Where qualifying students are provided with a seat on an existing route they are required to make a financial contribution to the cost of their transport provision, equal to 50% of the charge for a fare paying seat on council arranged school transport routes. Current fare paying costs for the 2025-26 academic year will be published once confirmed by council. The costs for the 2024-25 academic year are £827, 50% contribution is £413.50, payable on an annual, termly or monthly basis.

You will need to submit a new application before the start of each school year the young person will continue to study. [Application forms for those 16 and above are available online.](#)

Any agreed home to school transport arrangements will continue to be considered via the annual review process.

Applications for home to school transport assistance, aged 19 to 25 with SEND

Where a young person with high needs is continuing their education past the age of 19, the parents or carers should submit a new application before the start of each school year the young person will continue to study. [Application forms for 19 to 25 year olds are available online.](#)

When to apply

- **Parents and carers who wish to apply for travel assistance** should do so as soon as the offer of a school place has been accepted
- **For parents and carers who file an appeal against a placement** the application should be made as soon as possible after the appeal outcome is known
- **Those wishing to be considered for travel assistance under the extended rights criteria** should do so as soon as the offer of a school place has been accepted **AND** should include evidence of low income or entitlement to free school meals with their application.
- Only one application will be considered for any student per academic year, unless there has been a significant change to their circumstances (such as change of address, school or medical/special educational needs).

If applications for travel assistance are made as soon as the offer of a school place has been accepted, applicants will be notified of outcomes from their application as soon as appropriate travel assistance has been secured, and at least 14 calendar days before the start of the academic year.

Transport will normally only be provided from the start of the term after a child's 5th birthday.

Travel assistance arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis, to ensure that any assistance provided during the academic year remains appropriate and that eligibility criteria for the forthcoming academic year are met. Reviews will be carried out in the spring of each academic year. One possible outcome of these reviews is that parents or carers may be asked to re-apply for travel assistance support. Applications will need to be submitted and assessed before the end of the summer term in the academic year.

Siblings

A separate application for home to school transport is required for each child living at an address, and each application will be considered separately by RBWM and AfC. If free home to school transport is provided for one child living at a particular address, it does not necessarily mean that any of that child's siblings, or any other child living at that address, will also get assistance.

Fair access protocol

If a child has been admitted to a school that has been agreed by the Fair Access Panel, it may be appropriate for transport to be given. This will usually be in the form of a bus pass. A decision on whether transport will be offered will be made at the Fair Access Panel meeting.

Review provision of travel assistance

The child will usually remain eligible for free home to school transport to the school until:

- they reach one of the age thresholds for eligibility, and are no longer eligible on distance
- they leave the school
- they move to a new address

RBWM and AfC reserves the right to review the eligibility of any child receiving free home to school transport at any time. Eligibility may change if a place becomes available at a school closer than the one the child attends. Eligibility will usually be reviewed at the following points:

- end of Year 3 in which the pupil attains 8 years of age
- Year 6
- following independent travel training
- at the annual review meeting if pupil has an EHCP
- following a change in address
- following a change in circumstances

We aim to process applications received during the academic year as quickly as possible. Our target is to assess applications within 25 working days, and assign young people to transport within 10-15 working days of the decision being made.

For applications for transport to start in September each year, we aim to make an assessment and let applicants know the outcome within 25 working days. We assign young people to transport and inform their parents or carers of the transport arrangements during the summer holiday.

11. Complaints and appeals process

Complaints arise when you are unhappy about something, for example, you may feel you have not been dealt with properly or in a professional manner, that information given to you was incorrect or that there has been an unacceptable delay.

In the first instance, please contact the Transport Team via email:

transport@achievingforchildren.org.uk

If further to this your issue has not been resolved, please follow the complaints procedure.

Complaints about the provision of travel assistance will be investigated in accordance with the council's complaint process. The [complaints process can be found on the RBWM council website](#).

This does not apply to complaints about a refusal to grant transport, which will be dealt with through the transport appeals procedure.

Appeals procedure

There is a two stage process should an appeal need to be lodged regarding the decision of an application. Parents, carers, guardians or a young person are entitled to challenge the decision of RBWM and AfC to refuse to provide assistance with transport as set out in this policy, or when the parents, carers, guardians or young person consider that the travel assistance offered by RBWM and AfC is unsuitable.

A decision may be challenged on the following grounds:

- eligibility
- distance measurement
- safety of the route
- transport arrangements offered

How to make a stage one appeal

A written request should be emailed to: transport@achievingforchildren.org.uk providing the following information:

- confirmation that you are the legal parent or guardian of the child
- copy of the letter refusing transport
- reasons for the appeal (eligibility, distance, route safety or transport arrangements)
- your reasons for challenging the decision. This should include any additional evidence you wish to present to support your request for travel assistance not submitted with your original application

Stage one: Review of decision

Within 20 working days of receipt of the written request, a senior officer will review the original decision and send the parent 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, for example: Road Safety GB)
- information about other departments or agencies that were consulted as part of the process
- what factors were considered
- the rationale for the decision reached
- information about how the parent can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate)

Mediation

If you are unhappy or have further questions regarding the outcome of your stage one appeal, we welcome a formal discussion with the Transport Team to outline your concerns and explain the reasoning behind the decision.

Stage two: Appeal

If you are unhappy with the decision made at stage one, you will have 20 working days from the receipt of the decision to make a request to escalate the matter to stage two appeal.

A stage two appeal involves a review by an independent appeal panel. **A stage one appeal must be carried out before a stage two appeal can be considered.** No member of the appeal panel will have been involved in the original decision to decline transport assistance. This panel will consider verbal and written representations from the parent, guardian or young person involved in the request.

Appeals are registered by completing the form found on the [school transport appeals page](#) or contacting the Clerk to the Panel in the council's Democratic Services. You can appeal against the result of a stage one appeal decision made by the Transport Team. All appeals must be completed on the online form or emailed to democratic.services@rbwm.gov.uk, or by post to:

Clerk to the Appeals Panel
Democratic Services Section
Royal Borough of Windsor Maidenhead
Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead SL6 1RF

If a parent or carer wishes to make a formal appeal against a decision, they should complete the form listed on the [school transport appeals page](#).

Following the appeal hearing, a detailed written notification of the outcome is sent to the parent or carer setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed, for example Road Safety GB)
- information about other departments or agencies that were consulted as part of the process
- what factors were considered

- the rationale for the decision reached
- information about the parents' or carers' right to complain to the Secretary of State

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)

You have a right of complaint to the LGO on the grounds that there was a failure on the part of the local authority to comply with procedural rules or there was an irregularity in the way the appeal was handled.

The LGO can be contacted at:

Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry CV4 0EH
Helpline: 0300 061 0614
[LGO website](#)

12. Key contacts

School Transport Team

First point of contact is via the Customer Service Centre: 01628 683800

General enquiries: Transport@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Application enquiries: Transport.applications@achievingforchildren.org.uk

School Admissions

General enquiries: rbwm.admissions@achievingforchildren.org.uk

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team

General enquiries: cypds@achievingforchildren.org.uk

General information: [Local Offer website](#)

13. Change control

Nature of change	Pages affected	Details
General update	All	Date references updated from 2024-25 to 2025-26 throughout the policy
General update	All	Cost of fare paying seat updated for 2025-26 academic year
Definition of home address	48	Amended to clarify arrangements for pupils whose parents live at different addresses, in line with legislation

14. Definitions

Descriptions of common terms used in the home to school transport policy

Word	Definition
RBWM	The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
AfC	Achieving for Children
College	For the purposes of this policy, a college is any provider or institution offering sixth form education, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a school • a further education institution • an authority maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education • an establishment funded directly by the Education Funding Agency • a learning provider that is funded by the local authority to deliver accredited programmes of learning. The institution need not be located within the geographical boundary of RBWM
Designated area	Most schools in RBWM offer priority for places to children who live within a defined geographical area around the school. This is called the designated area. You can view the designated areas online using RBWM's online mapping portal 'Know Your Neighbourhood' at: Know Your Neighbourhood
Discretionary home to school transport	This means that the local authority is not, by law, required to offer this home to school transport, but currently chooses to.
Education, health and care plan (EHCP)	Children have an education, health and care plan if they have severe learning, behavioural or physical difficulties that affect their ability to learn.
Fair access protocol	RBWM and AfC's fair access protocol ensures that any child without a school place resumes their education in a suitable school with the minimum of delay. The fair access protocol can be found online .
Home address	The home address is, for the purposes of this policy, a residential property where the child mainly lives, normally with someone who has parental responsibility, not an address at which your child may sometimes stay or sleep due to your domestic arrangements. Proof of residence may be requested (for example: receipt of child benefit) to confirm that a child and the child's family lives at the address. The council will not generally provide travel assistance to or from any other address.

Word	Definition
	<p>In cases where parents or carers live separately, the home address will be taken to be the address where the child lives most of the time. Where a child lives equally with both parents at different addresses, the child's home address will be taken to be the address of the parent who lives closest to the school or place of education the child attends.</p> <p>In the absence of a formalised legal agreement, we will consider all available evidence that you provide to support your application. We will not accept the address of a relative (unless it can be evidenced that the applicant and the child live there as a long-term and permanent arrangement), friend or childminder, a temporary address or an address of a house you intend to move to, or a commercial address.</p>
Free home to school transport	RBWM and AfC can provide free home to school transport in a number of ways, including paying a mileage allowance; providing a personal transport budget, providing a bus or train pass, or organising a shared or individual vehicle.
Low income family	<p>A low income family is one that is in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit or whose children are entitled to receive free school meals (further information on entitlement to free school meals can be found on the government website).</p> <p>For post-16 eligibility, this means the young person qualifies for income support, and/or whose parents or carers qualify for income support or are in receipt of the maximum amount of working tax credit.</p>
Mainstream school	A mainstream school is a school that is not a school specifically for children and young people with an EHCP.
National eligibility criteria for access to care	<p>These are criteria set by the government to help local authorities decide who should receive assistance with adult social care. The eligibility threshold for adults with care and support needs is based on identifying how a person's needs affect their ability to achieve relevant outcomes, and how this impacts on their wellbeing.</p> <p>The eligibility decision-making process involves the consideration of whether your needs for care and support arise from certain physical or mental conditions and as a result, you are unable to achieve at least two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feed yourself • maintain personal hygiene (keeping clean) • manage toilet needs • be appropriately clothed • stay safe in your own home • manage the housework in your home • see and keep in touch with friends and family and meet new friends

Word	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work, volunteer or do education and training you may need • make use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport, and recreational facilities or services • carry out any caring responsibilities you have for a child
Nearest appropriate school	<p>The nearest appropriate school for the purposes of this policy is the nearest school that is suitable for the child or young person's age, gender and any special educational needs or disabilities they may have. Consideration of which school is appropriate, in terms of this policy, excludes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an opinion that a school is inappropriate or unsuitable because of your child's suitability for selective education or the school's Ofsted ratings, exam performance and popularity • an opinion that a school is inappropriate or unsuitable because of a religious or philosophical belief (including lack of belief) that you hold. The exception to this is when a child is from a low income family and qualifies under extended rights for pupils from low income families <p>RBWM and AfC do not accept that obtaining a place at a grammar school means that the grammar school in question can be regarded as the nearest appropriate school.</p> <p>Where the distance between the home address and two different schools is the same, both schools may be considered as the nearest appropriate school.</p> <p>The words 'appropriate' and 'suitable' in relation to a school place are interchangeable for the purposes of this policy.</p>
Parents, carers or guardians	<p>In this policy, the parents and carers will be the people with whom the child or young person usually lives. This can include people who are not parents but who have parental responsibility or care of the child or young person. If that person or people are not a birth or adoptive parent, then evidence may be sought to ascertain the legal basis of the relationship.</p>
Parental responsibility	<p>It is the responsibility of parents and carers to ensure that their child attends school. In most cases, this means that they will make their own arrangements for getting the child to and from school.</p> <p>If parents or carers believe that their child might be eligible for free home to school transport, it is their responsibility to make any application needed (see how to apply on page 40).</p> <p>Parents and carers are reminded that free home to school transport is provided to meet the needs of the child, not those of the parents or carers. For example, difficulty in getting a child to school because of work commitments or the need to get other children to different schools will not make that child eligible for assistance with home to school transport.</p>

Word	Definition
Road route	The home to school distance for children aged 11 to 16 and from low income families attending one of their three nearest appropriate schools, attending their nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, is measured along the shortest available walking route.
Safe walking routes	<p>The home to school distance is measured along the shortest safe walking route, from the home address to the school or college. If there is no safe walking route for an accompanied child to their nearest appropriate school, then free home to school transport will be provided if requested.</p> <p>Safe walking routes are assessed using the closest pedestrian entrances to both the home and the school. The measurement is made using RBWM and AfC's electronic mapping system. This may be checked using other methods, including physical measurement.</p> <p>A route will normally only be available if it can be used safely throughout the academic year, and may include footpaths and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. If the child cannot reasonably be expected to walk along this route, even when accompanied by an adult, then the route is considered 'unsafe' and not available.</p> <p>Walking routes are assessed in accordance with Road Safety GB guidance. In some cases, a child with an EHCP may not be able to use a walking route safely, even if accompanied, if, for instance, they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are, on a long-term basis, physically unable to move around independently, due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a disability such as severe cerebral palsy that requires daily use of significant mobility aids (for example a wheelchair) • a disability such as severe visual impairment • a medical condition such as juvenile arthritis resulting in severe persistent pain and extreme fatigue • a medical condition such as intractable epileptic seizure disorders that result in a serious persistent health and safety risk • have a lack of awareness of common dangers and a lack of age appropriate independence skills, due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • severely restricted communication skills, arising from, for example, profound hearing impairment, severe autism or severe language disorders • significant learning disabilities, where a child might be unable to assess risk and adapt to everyday situations. This might arise from severe learning difficulties, for example • severe difficulties with interpreting complex social situations or being unable to cope with unexpected change. An example might be a child with asperger's syndrome who has very little awareness of personal danger

Word	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • severe behavioural, emotional or social difficulties in comparison with other children of their age <p>A long-term restriction on a child's ability to physically move around independently is something that is likely to last for at least a year, and perhaps for the rest of their life. It can include intermittent or sporadic conditions such as epilepsy or multiple sclerosis.</p>
School	<p>For the purposes of this policy, a school is any state-maintained provider offering statutory age education, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community • voluntary controlled • voluntary aided • academy • free • community or foundation special school • special academy or free school • university technical college • studio school • a pupil referral unit or alternative provision, where this is arranged by RBWM and AfC • city technical college (CTC), city college for technology of the arts (CCTA) or an academy) <p>For children with an EHCP, this may also include independent or private schools (for example, schools not maintained by the local authority or by the government via the Education Funding Agency), where it is the only school, or nearest of two or more schools named as RBWM and AfC's preferred placement on the child's EHCP.</p> <p>The school need not be located within the geographical boundary of RBWM.</p>
Sibling	<p>Children and young people are defined as siblings if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are a full, half, step, foster brother or sister • they live at the same address
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities
Special school	A school that provides education for children with special educational needs and disabilities, usually when a child has an EHCP. Some special schools are independent (private) schools.

Word	Definition
Statutory home to school transport	This means that the local authority must, by law, provide free home to school transport to these children, if requested.
Statutory school age	Statutory school age begins at the start of the term after a child's 5th birthday and ends on the last Friday in June in the school year in which they turn 16.