London Borough of Barnet

SEND Travel Assistance Policy Young Adults (19-25 years old)

(2026 -2027)

Delivered by Barnet Education & Learning Service (BELS)

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Introduction

London Borough of Barnet (LBB) has a duty to make a transport policy statement setting out any transport or other arrangements it proposes to make for the academic year in respect of adults aged under 25 with EHCPs (s.508G Education Act 1996 and see page 7 statutory guidance).

In accordance with sections 508 and 509 of the Education Act 1996, as amended by sections 54-57 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, this policy sets out LBB policy and arrangements for the provision of transport for 19–25-year-olds to support their access to appropriate education and training.

LBB has a duty under section 508F in respect of adults (19+) to facilitate their attendance at local authority maintained or assisted further or higher education institutions or Further Education institutions. It also has a duty to facilitate the attendance of relevant young adults receiving education or training at institutions outside both the further and higher education sectors, but only in cases where the local authority has secured the provision of education or training at that institution and the provision of boarding accommodation at that placement.

If the student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), then the place of learning will be named in Part I of the EHCP.

LBB expect reasonable choice to include enabling young adults to choose courses outside their home local authority boundaries if it makes sense for them to do so. However young adults should also carefully consider transport cost implications when selecting their place of study, particularly if the learning venue is outside of the London transport boundaries for concessionary fares. LBB generally expects a majority of learners will study at the nearest appropriate centre, utilising fare concessions and the most cost-effective mode of transport.

Main changes from the previous LBB post 16 travel assistance policy.

The key changes relate to greater clarity in terms of:

- Greater clarity has been provided under Section 20 regarding the operational arrangements for Council-arranged transport. These provisions clarify existing operational practices and do not change the eligibility criteria, access to travel assistance, or the forms of assistance available for young adults.

Part 1: Type of Travel and Support Available for Young Adults

Various travel and support options are accessible to young adults aged 19-25. These include:

1. Student oyster photocards (Appendix - A)
2. Young person rail card (Appendix – B)
3. 18-25 leaver oyster photocard (Appendix – C)
4. Cycling (Appendix – D)

Part 2: Travel Assistance for Students with SEN and Disabilities, Including Those with EHC Plans (19-25)

Specialised Travel Assistance is not automatic for a young adult in LBB with an EHCP or who attends a college. Young adults will be expected and encouraged to use public transport available to them and travel independently to attend their place of learning. This supports their growing independence and is also better for the environment.

The naming of a college or other institution in a young person's EHCP is governed by sections 39 and 40 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Young adults have the right to ask for a particular college to be named in their EHCP. When naming the young adult's preferred college, LBB need to consider if it is suitable for their age, ability, aptitude, or special educational needs, and that it is compatible with the efficient education of others or the efficient use of resources. If LBB determines the preferred college is not suitable, it will name a different setting that it believes to be appropriate.

If LBB determines that providing travel assistance to the young person's preferred college would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources, LBB may:

- Name a different college that would be appropriate.

or

- Name the young adult's preferred college on the condition that the learner makes arrangements for and fund their own travel. This will be documented in a side agreement and, if this agreement breaks down, LBB reserves the right to call an emergency annual review to consider whether the preferred college remains suitable and an efficient use of resources.

It would be recommended that parents should liaise with the SEND team to ensure consideration is given to transport options at the time of considering school preferences.

5. Eligibility Criteria

Applications for travel assistance will be considered against the following criteria:

- Young adult is aged between 19 and 24 (and in some cases up to the age of 25) and has an EHCP.
- Has a special educational needs/disability that would make it impracticable or dangerous for them to try to undertake a journey to college of less than 3 miles. Applications will be assessed on their own merits.
- Is on a course of further education at college or training provider.
- The course is deemed to be suitable and will provide an educational benefit to the learner – as assessed by the SEN Service.
- The young adult lives more than 3 miles from college and is unable to undertake the journey by free public transport.

6. Evidence and Information

Any relevant evidence may be considered as part of the assessment of eligibility and may include:

a) EHCP & Annual Review reports.
b) Information about the nature and reasonableness of the route, i.e. journey times, changes, safety, nature of roads and pavements, congestion, other passengers etc.
c) Information from Social Care (initial or core assessment/CAF if appropriate.
d) An existing travel training plan (or assessment being undertaken).
e) Reports from other relevant professionals relating to the request for travel assistance.

7. Discretionary Assistance

While there is no statutory responsibility for local authorities to provide travel assistance outside of the remit of the eligibility criteria, LBB has discretion to grant travel assistance even where it falls outside of the normal policy and may do so in exceptional circumstances.

Discretionary travel may be provided in either direction between the area of the young adult's home address and their college, or both. It may be provided free, or a charge may be made. LBB will consider and take account of relevant factors when deciding whether to charge for the provision of discretionary transport, including reducing charges for students from low-income families. This is subject to the availability of resources. Applications for travel assistance must be submitted via the usual process.

8. Applying for travel assistance

Travel assistance for young adults, including those with SEND is not automatic. The young person (with help from their parent/carer as appropriate) will be asked to complete an online application form or e-form (local offer website) to provide the information needed to determine eligibility.

9. Requests for travel assistance

Travel assistance requests are considered in two stages:

- first, to determine whether LBB should offer travel assistance (eligibility),

and then

- second, to determine what type of assistance should be offered (the travel solution).

Applicants will need to complete a new application if one of the following applies to them:

- the young adult has changed address.
- the young adult has changed the college they attend.

All young adults continuing in education must reapply for travel support annually.

Making a new application will allow LBB to gather the most accurate information and allow it to assess risk and accommodate the needs of the student, more effectively.

The Transport Panel (which consist of managers from the Transport Brokering Team, SEND and the inclusion team) aims to process applications as quickly as possible; parents/carers should allow up to 30 working days from the date of application for a response to their application. Whilst a travel request is being made and a solution being identified LBB will not be responsible for the young adult's travel arrangements.

After the acceptance of an application, LBB aim to identify travel arrangements within 10 working days. This is not always possible, particularly in complex situations or where we are unable to source the arrangements. If it goes beyond the 10 working days' time limit, the Transport Brokering Team will update the applicant and confirm when they should expect a response. The maximum length of time expected for arrangements to be made is 6 weeks (excluding college holidays). During this time the parent/carer remains responsible for travel arrangements for the young learner. Where, it takes longer than this, a personal transport allowance will be provided until such a time that the LBB arrangements are in place.

To reduce disruption to the service and inform effective planning, LBB has implemented cut off dates for applications at certain times of the year. The cut off dates are only applicable for applications made for arrangements to begin for the next academic year. These times will be on the local offer web page.

The beginning of the academic year is the most crucial time with regards to college travel and we aim to promote continuity in the service LBB provide the students. Late applications present multiple issues for the service in several ways, which is why a cut-off date is necessary.

Late applications will still receive travel assistance upon a successful application; however, this may be delayed for the start of the academic year.

10. Determining eligibility

The application will be considered initially by the Transport Panel against the eligibility criteria in this Travel Assistance Policy and where LBB considers it is necessary to make transport arrangements.

In other cases, and where the request is linked to a decision about college placement, the request will be considered by the Complex Needs Panel. Travel requests are usually considered by the panel at the same time as considering which college the young adult should attend.

In coming to a recommendation, the Complex Needs Panel will take account information from the EHCP. The panel will also have regard to the cost of transport as well as educational suitability and other factors, such as parental preference when taking into consideration the most efficient use of resources.

In some cases, it may be necessary to seek further information from the parent/ young adult or request medical evidence or seek advice from one of LBB professionals or the young adult's current college.

If a request is turned down at this stage, the parents/carers are informed of their right of

appeal. Appeal arrangements are set out in part 3.

11. LBB – travel assistance offer

LBB considers public transport as a suitable method of transportation for most young adults to travel to their educational provisions.

Where public transport provided by TFL is not currently suitable and more specialised travel assistance is required, LBB operates several different schemes to provide support for young adults, to allow them to attend their place of learning.

Where assistance is agreed, consideration is then given to how the pupil will travel to college.

LBB will seek options which promote independence and the well-being of pupils including, for example, encouraging a healthy lifestyle by walking a reasonable distance where the pupil is mobile, and the route is safe.

The offer of assistance will take account of the young adult distance from home to college, the suitability and availability of public transport, whether there is already transport going to the named college and the efficient use of Council resources.

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

- Walking to college, accompanied as necessary and appropriate by parent/carer.
- Cycling to college.
- Travel pass/ oyster card for the parent/carer/ appropriate adult to a accompany the pupil.
- Mileage allowance.
- Personal Travel Allowance.
- Independent travel training.
- Shared college transport arranged by LBB or any travel arrangements LBB makes under this section is free.

12. Walking to college, accompanied as necessary by an appropriate adult

LBB will encourage and support parents/carers to walk with their young adult to their nearest college. Sustainable travel benefits young learners and everyone around them by helping people keep healthy, improving mental wellbeing, easing congestion, and reducing toxins in the air. This includes identifying the most suitable and safest route to do so. A one-off green allowance of £100 will payable once a year if this travel assistance is chosen. Once paid young adult will not be eligible for any other assistance.

13. Cycling to college

To encourage young adults to cycle to college, LBB can pay a cycling allowance (currently 20p

per mile) for revenant young adult to use their own bike. This will be based on four journeys per day.

14. Travel pass/oyster card for the parent/carer to accompany the young adult

Young adults are entitled to discounted transport on buses and travel discounts on trains, although it may be necessary for them to be accompanied by an adult to travel to college. In these instances, travel assistance may be provided through funding an additional adult pass for an appropriate adult to travel with them.

15. Mileage allowance

A mileage allowance (currently 45p per mile) is paid for parents/ carers to use their own car to transport the young learner to college. This will be based on four journeys per day.

16. Personal Travel Allowance (PTA)

A Personal Travel Allowance is to assist with the cost when the parent/carer agrees to take full responsibility for getting the young learner to college.

The Personal Travel Allowance is a regular cash contribution paid into the young person or parents/carers' nominated bank account each month. Where attendance falls the PTA will be suspended or cancelled. Due to LBB auditing and fraud prevention processes, receipts for public transport fares, taxi journeys or fuel purchases may be requested.

17. Independent Travel Training (ITT)

Independent Travel Training (ITT) develops the skills for young adults to travel independently on public transport, by reducing reliance on specialist provided transport and/or on parents and carers. Specialist travel trainers work one to one with the young adult to ensure they have the skills to make journeys independently. Those who undertake the training achieve increased life choices and opportunities; greater access to the local community and its facilities; and better socialisation. The travel training programme can support many modes of transport, including bus, train, tube, walking, cycling or a combination of different types of transport methods.

The training will help build the young person's confidence in other areas of their life such as:

- Future job and training opportunities
- Accessing new hobbies, leisure activities and social clubs
- Social Skills

Who is eligible?

To be considered for ITT a young person must have the potential, once trained, to travel to and from college independently. Before any training takes place, we will first assess whether the

young person is suitable for ITT on an individual basis.

Please note that there may be a waiting list for ITT. Therefore, students should continue using a PTA until a place becomes available.

What are the benefits?

Young adults who successfully complete the travel training will benefit from increased confidence, independence, freedom, and better opportunities to access education, training, employment, and other day to day activities; whilst helping them maintain better relationships with their peers. It will also help families find time to do things independently, as well as enabling them to do more things together. This all contributes to leading a more fulfilled life for the young person and those around them.

How is the training delivered?

The young person and their parents/carers will be involved from the outset, starting with a meeting with the travel assessor who will work with the student and family to tailor the programme to individual needs.

The training is delivered one to one from a trained professional. Until the young adult is considered capable of completing the route on their own confidently, they will be accompanied at all times. There will be regular assessments of progress which will be shared with the family. The young person will be taught the basic principles of travelling alone including the green cross code, how to get on and off transport and what to do in an emergency.

18. Shared college transport arranged by LBB.

Provisions of travel assistance using shared transport will only be granted in exceptional cases when it is deemed essential to the young adults needs. All vehicles and drivers will be sourced by a qualified, registered contractor, working to enhanced contractual standards set by the Council.

In a bid to reduce congestion and make best use of council resources young adults will mostly travel together on communal bus routes.

Vehicles are routed to pick up several students from different locations who attend a particular college. Therefore, journeys can be relatively long, and the young adult person will spend more time in the vehicle than with other forms of travel assistance. On some routes, the transport may arrange for a designated pick-up point for pupils to access the transport. This can help reduce journey times so that learners spend less time on the bus to and from their college.

19. Guidelines for the provision of passenger assistants

There is no automatic statutory entitlement to a passenger assistant and therefore LBB will not be able to supply one unless it is satisfied there is a need to organise one.

20. Operation of Council-arranged transport

Where council-arranged transport is provided under this policy, the operational arrangements for the delivery of that transport will, where relevant and appropriate, be consistent with those set out in the Council's Travel Assistance Policy for Children of Compulsory School Age.

This includes operational arrangements relating to passenger safety, safeguarding, training, the management of behaviour & safety risks, medication, medical equipment, wheelchairs, mobility equipment, journey arrangements and pick-up & drop-off arrangements,.

These provisions relate only to the operation and delivery of Council-arranged transport. Eligibility for young adults travel assistance, the form of assistance offered and any financial contribution will continue to be determined solely in accordance with this young adults policy and the statutory framework applicable.

Where there is any inconsistency between the two policies in relation to young adults travel assistance, this young adults policy will take precedence.

Part 3: Transport Appeals

21. Decisions that can be appealed

- Eligibility.
- The transport arrangements offered.
- The safety of the route.

22. Stage 1 of the appeals process

The first stage of the appeal is for the decision to be reviewed by a senior officer. Please see the requirements from all parties below.

Requirements of the requestor for stage 1 of the appeal:

- The parent/carer can nominate a representative on their behalf.
- The requestor has 20 working days from date of LBB decision, to make a request for the decision to be reviewed.
- The requestor must send their request in writing to the Transport Brokering Team.
- If the requestor does not meet the 20 working days deadline, LBB is not under any obligation to consider but can use its discretion to do so in exceptional circumstances.
- The requestor must provide reasons to why they believe the decision should be reviewed.
- The requestor should provide information on their personal and/or family circumstances if it is relevant to the case.
- The requestor should also provide any supporting evidence for their request.

Process of Stage 1 appeal:

- The senior officer must confirm receipt of the request.
- The senior officer then has 20 working days from the date of request (when emailed) to review the original decision. In exceptional circumstances, there might be a delay, which the applicant will be advised of, and the estimated response time.
- The senior officer must also have sent the parent written notification of the outcome from the review within 5 working days of the decision being made. All responses will be via email or by post (although that does not guarantee that the decision will be with the requestor if it is sent by post within the 20 working days period)
- The written outcome should include information on how the decision was reached, how the review was conducted, information about other parties that may have been contacted for information, the rationale and factors behind the decision.
- Within the written notification, the senior officer must also include details on escalating the appeal to Stage 2 if the requestor is not satisfied.

23. Stage 2 of the appeals process

The second stage of the appeal process is for the decision to be reviewed by an independent appeals panel.

The requirements for all parties are outlined below.

Requirements of the requestor for Stage 2 of the appeal:

- The parent/carer can nominate a representative on their behalf.
- The requestor has 20 working days from date of LBB decision from Stage 1 of the appeals process, to make a request for the case to be escalated to Stage 2.
- The Transport Brokering Team should send the appeal form to the requestor which should be completed within the 20 workings.
- If the requestor does not meet the 20 working days deadline, LBB is not under any obligation to consider but can use its discretion to do so in exceptional circumstances.
- At this point the requestor should provide any new additional/supporting information that may have not been provided earlier or that may act as grounds, to challenge the stage one decision.

Process of Stage 2 appeal:

- The independent appeal panel members should not have been involved in the original decision-making process. They must be independent of the process thus far.
- LBB generally aims to have a senior representative from the Barnet Education Learning Service department, a medical/health professional, and a member of the public present at the independent appeals panel.
- The independent appeals panel has 40 working days from date of the parents/carers request to reach an outcome.
- The independent appeals panel must send written notification of the outcome within 5 working days of its decision. In exceptional circumstances, there might be a delay, which the applicant will be advised of, and the estimated response time.

24. Raising a complaint to Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

If the requestor has gone through all the stages of LBB complaints procedure and they are still dissatisfied, the requestor can ask the LGSCO to review the complaint. The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) looks at individual complaints about councils. The Ombudsman investigates complaints in a fair and independent way - it does not take sides. It is a free service.

LBB would generally advise that where a requestor is not satisfied with the panel's decision following the appeal process above, they can raise a complaint with the LGSCO once LLB own appeals/complaints process has been completed.

However, the requestor can raise a complaint at any point if:

- The LA did not comply with the procedural rules or
- There were any irregularities in the way the appeal was handled.

For more information you can visit their website - http://www.lgo.org.uk/

Appendix

Appendix A – Student oyster photocards

If the young adult is aged 18 or over, a London resident and enrolled on a college course, they may be eligible for a Student Oyster Photocard. They can save 30% off adult-rate travelcards and bus and tram pass season tickets. Applications are usually made online. For further details 18+ Student Oyster photocard - Transport for London (tfl.gov.uk) or telephone the helpline on **0343 222 1234**.

Appendix B – Young person rail card

If the young adult is between 16 and 25 years old, they will be deemed eligible. With the Railcard they will enjoy 1/3 off rail fares when they go by train. An annual fee of £30 (or £70 for 3-years) applies. For more details refer to www.16-25railcard.co.uk/ or telephone **0345 3000 250**.

Appendix C - 18 to 25 Care leaver oyster photocard

If the young person is between 18 to 25 and a care leaver living in a London borough, they can get discounted travel with an 18-25 Care Leaver Bus & Tram Discount Oyster photocard.

For more details refer to 18-25 Care Leaver Oyster photocard - Transport for London (tfl.gov.uk)

Appendix D - Cycling

Cycling is an efficient, cheap, quiet, healthy, and non-polluting sustainable form of transport. We seek to provide safe, convenient, and clearly identified cycle facilities to make cycling easier and more fun, and as part of our traffic management measures.

Free cycle route maps are available from TfL online. Cycleways - Transport for London (tfl.gov.uk)

Most colleges have secure cycle storage areas. Young adults should contact their college or training provider for information.

For more information on cycling in and around Barnet please refer to the following link https://www.barnet.gov.uk/roads-and-pavements/transport-and-around-barnet/cycling .

Glossary

Academic year	Defined in the School Information (England) Regulations 2008 as a period commencing with 1st August and ending with the next 31st July.
Bursary	a grant, especially one awarded to someone to enable them to study at sixth form or college
Council arranged transport	Transport which exclusively carries children and young adults to and from their place of education and cannot be boarded by members of the public.
Disability	Defined in section 6 of the Equality Act 2010. A person has a disability if they have (a) a physical or mental impairment, and (b) that impairment has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A chronic physical or mental health condition may constitute a disability. Not all disabilities are visible.

Education Health and Care (EHC) plan	An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has special educational needs or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies. Home to school travel arrangements are not normally considered to be special educational provision. In exceptional cases travel arrangements may be deemed to constitute special educational provision because they fulfil an education or training function. In these circumstances the travel arrangements should be recorded in section F of the EHC plan. Travel costs can also be provided as part of a Personal Budget, where one is agreed and included in the EHC plan as part of the special educational provision. This should be recorded in section J of the plan.

Home	The place where a child is habitually and normally resident. Local authorities should make clear in their school travel policies how they will determine a child's home address for the purposes of assessing their eligibility for travel, including in circumstances where their parents do not live together and the child spends part of the week with each parent. In these circumstances, there is no expectation that local authorities should provide travel to and from two separate addresses.
Independent travel training (ITT)	Independent Travel Training (ITT) develops the skills for young adults to travel independently on public transport.
Individual healthcare plans	Drawn up by schools in consultation with parents and relevant health professionals. They capture the key information and actions that are required to effectively support a child with medical needs in school. For more information about supporting children with medical needs in schools see Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school. This guidance suggests that schools may wish their policies on supporting pupils with medical conditions to refer to home to school travel.
Local government and social care ombudsman (LGSCO)	The Ombudsman investigates complaints in a fair and independent way - it does not take sides. It is a free service.

Medical need	A health need that has the potential to put a young adult safety or wellbeing at risk while travelling to and from school.
Mobility problem	A physical impairment that impacts a young adult ability to walk to school.
Parent	References to parent in this document include birth parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, carers or legal guardians with parental responsibility.
Personal transport allowance (PTA)	A PTA is financial contribution to assist with the cost when the parent/carer agrees to take full responsibility for getting the young person to school.
Private hire vehicles (PHVs)	May carry up to 8 passengers and can only be pre-booked via a licensed private hire vehicle operator. See also the definition of ***taxi*** below.
Relevant Young Adult	Means an adult who is aged under 25, started their current course after their 19th birthday and for whom an EHC plan is maintained.
Resident	Anyone who is a resident in the Borough of Barnet.
Road route	A route passable by a motor vehicle.
Adult safeguarding	Adult safeguarding is the process of protecting adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect. It is mainly aimed at people with care and support needs who may be in vulnerable circumstances and at risk of abuse or neglect by others. In these cases, local services must work together to spot those at risk and take steps to protect them.
SEND Local Offer	Sets out, in one place, information about the provision local authorities expect to be available across education, health and social care for children and young adults in their area who have SEN or are disabled, including those who do not have an EHC plan. Further information can be found in the Special education needs and disability code of practice: 0 – 25 Years.
Special educational needs (SEN)	Defined in section 20 of the Children and Families Act 2014. A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.
Wheelchair bound	Refers to people who use wheelchairs and mobility scooters and may not identify with walking.
Young adults	An adult who is aged under 25, started their current course after their 19th birthday and for whom an EHC plan is maintained."