

Draft School Travel Service and Post-16 Travel Service Policy Consultation

The draft School Travel Service and Post-16 Travel Service Policy sets out Southampton City Council's approach to the operation of the School Travel Service in Southampton. This includes the Council's statutory requirements along with local policy.

As part of a routine review of our policy, we are proposing a few changes that we would like to hear your feedback on. Now is your opportunity to have your say.

The full draft policy is available to read online: www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations

How to have your say

You can provide your feedback by:

- Completing the consultation questionnaire online: www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations
- Requesting a printed paper copy at a Southampton Library
- Emailing your feedback to YourCity.YourSay@southampton.gov.uk

The closing date for all feedback is **27 November 2023**.

Summary of proposed changes

Proposed changes	Relevant section of the draft policy
<p>We are proposing to update the appeals process to bring it in line with government guidance.</p> <p>The appeals process is for disputing a decision made by Southampton City Council against the provision of travel support. In line with government guidance, we propose to introduce a two-stage process for appeals. The first stage would be a review by senior officers within 20 working days of receiving an appeal. Then, if the appellant wishes to escalate the appeal, the second stage would be a review by an independent panel within 40 working days of the appeal being escalated.</p>	<p><i>Page 19</i></p>
<p>We are proposing to set out a clear order and hierarchy for how travel options will be considered by the council.</p> <p>The aim is to improve transparency. This would apply both to new applicants and to those already receiving travel support. If a child/student/adult learner is eligible for travel support, we would consider a range of options, working with pupils, parents and carers pro-actively to establish the most suitable and sustainable approach. Proposed methods of travel support would be considered in a clear order, which is set out below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Travel training – Independent travel training gives children, students and adult learners the essential skills needed to travel independently 	<p><i>Page 16, paragraph 4.5</i></p>

Proposed changes	Relevant section of the draft policy
<p>either on foot, by other sustainable travel option, such as bike or scooter, or by public transport.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Sustainable travel such as bike or scooter. 3. Bus/rail pass. 4. Personal Travel Budgets (PTBs) – only applicable to children and young people with an EHCP. Parents or carers can use PTBs in any reasonable way to get their child to school. 5. Group pick up/drop off. (Where appropriate and reasonable, parents or carers may be expected to take their child to and from a pick-up/drop off point. Pick-up/drop-off points will be within 1 mile of the child's home address). 6. Vehicle (taxi / minibus) provision by other Southampton City Council directorates that have suitable vehicles. 7. Transport – multi occupancy (transportation for multiple children). 8. Transport (taxi / minibus) – single occupancy (transportation for a single child). 	
<p>We are proposing that parents/carers who wish to apply for school travel support list their nearest school in their school application forms.</p> <p>When an application for travel is considered following the normal admissions round, it can be difficult for local authorities to know whether a child could have been admitted to their nearest school if their parent/carer did not list that school as a preference when they applied for a school place. Therefore, Southampton City Council is requesting that parents/carers list their nearest school on their application form if they intend to apply for travel support.</p>	<p><i>Page 17, paragraph 4.16</i></p>
<p>We have included a proposed definition of a home address and how this would be defined in the case of dual custody arrangement.</p> <p>We are proposing the following definition: The designated home address will be defined as the address at which the child resides and spends the majority of their time.</p> <p>In cases where a child has a shared living arrangement, such as equal shared custody for separated parents/carers, we would use the address where the recipient of the child benefit lives. If no child benefit is received, we would use the address where the child is registered at their GP surgery.</p>	<p><i>Page 17, paragraph 4.13</i></p>
<p>We have suggested changes to the terminology used within the policy to ensure it is consistent and in line with the service's rebrand from 'Home to School Transport' to 'School Travel Service'.</p> <p>This introduces flexibility to the policy and is a more accurate reflection of the service offer to provide sustainable as well as suitable travel options.</p>	<p><i>Throughout the draft policy</i></p>