

**SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
CHILDRENS' SERVICES AND LEARNING**

**CONSULTATION
HOME TO SCHOOL AND POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY 2011-12
ACADEMIC YEAR**

This document gives details of various options that are being considered and seeks your views. No decisions have been made yet, and final decisions will be made taking account of feedback to these options.

1. WHY WE ARE CONSULTING?

- 1.1 Southampton City Council is currently looking at all the services it provides, particularly in the light of the very difficult budget position we are all facing.
- 1.2 Local Authorities must by law provide transport help for some students, but may also decide to provide transport help for others. We are consulting about whether we should provide extra help over and above what we must do legally.

2. WHY IS THIS CHANGE BEING CONSIDERED NOW?

- 2.1 The Council would prefer not to reduce or remove services altogether but it has to be realistic about what can it continue to provide when the budget will be so much smaller in the years to come.
- 2.2 The Council needs to review what is necessary to support parents and children attending school / college against availability of learning places, how easy it is to get around the city, the availability of public transport and school and college travel plans.
- 2.3 All our decisions will be made in the light of the Council's priorities for the city of economic development, education and skills, well-being and sustainable communities.

3. DETAILS OF WHAT WE MUST PROVIDE BY LAW (STATUTORY ENTITLEMENT), AND WHAT WE CURRENTLY CHOOSE TO PROVIDE (SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL'S DISCRETIONARY POLICY)

In this section we outline the transport we must provide by law for different age groups and that we also choose to provide

3.1 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Early Years

There is no legal requirement to provide transport support for early years; however Southampton City Council supports transport to specialist nurseries for pre-school aged disabled children.

3.2 Mainstream Primary

3.2.1 The legal requirement for free home to school transport is as follows:

- Pupils in Year R to 8 years old who live over 2 miles from the school, and attend their catchment school.
- Pupils aged 9 years old to Year 6 who live over 3 miles from the school, and attend their catchment school.
- Pupils aged 9 years old to Year 6 who live between 2 and 3 miles from the school, attend their catchment school and meet means testing criteria.

3.2.2 Southampton City Council's policy is as follows:

- Pupils in Year R to Year 6 who live over 2 miles from the school and attend their catchment school.
- Pupils in Year R to Year 6, who live over 2 miles from the school, attend their nearest faith school and meet means testing criteria.

3.3 **Mainstream Secondary**

3.3.1 The legal requirement for free home to school transport is as follows:

- Pupils who live over 3 miles from the school and attend their catchment school.
- Pupils who live over 2 miles / under 6 miles from the school, attend one of their three nearest schools and who meet means testing criteria.
- Pupils who live over 2 miles / under 15 miles from the school, attend their nearest faith school and meet means testing criteria.

3.3.2 Southampton City Council's policy is as above, plus:

- Pupils in Year 10 or Year 11 who move schools, live over 3 miles from the school and were previously attending catchment school.

3.4 **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Primary & Secondary**

3.4.1 The legal requirement for free home to school transport is as follows:

- Pupils in Year R to 8 years old who live over 2 miles from the school and attend their nearest appropriate school.
- Pupils aged 9 years old to Year 11 who live over 3 miles from the school and attend their nearest appropriate school.
- Pupils aged 9 years old to Year 11 who live over 2 miles / under 6 miles from the school, attend 1 of their 3 nearest appropriate schools and meet means testing criteria.

3.4.2 Southampton City Council's policy is as follows:

- All children attending Rosewood and Cedar Schools are provided with transport.

- Primary: Pupils who live over 2 miles from the school and attend the nearest appropriate school are provided with transport.
- Secondary: Pupils who live over 2 miles from the school but less than 6 miles and attend one of the three nearest appropriate schools are provided with transport.

3.5 **Post- 16**

- 3.5.1 There is no general legal requirement to provide free transport to students over the age of 16.
- 3.5.2 The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires councils to consider a students' ability to attend further education up to 19, including considering provision for those with learning difficulties and / or disabilities up to the age of 25.
- 3.5.3 As an urban authority with a good range of provision and good transport links the council may consider that there is enough transport to enable students to access learning of their choice within Southampton.
- 3.5.4 Southampton City Council provides transport as follows:
- Mainstream: students aged 16 -19 who live over 4 miles from the college, attend their nearest appropriate college and receive a full Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).
 - SEN: students aged 16 - 21 who live over 3 miles from the college and attend their nearest appropriate college.

N.B. If a school / college is full the next nearest school / college will be considered.

4. **PROPOSED CHANGES FOR EARLY YEARS, MAINSTREAM PRIMARY AND MAINSTREAM SECONDARY**

We are asking you to comment on Option 1A and Option 1B, giving reasons if appropriate.

4.1 **OPTION 1A: EARLY YEARS, MAINSTREAM PRIMARY AND MAINSTREAM SECONDARY: REMOVE TRANSPORT FUNDING WHICH WE DO NOT HAVE TO PROVIDE BY LAW**

4.1.1 **WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THIS CHANGE?**

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Early Years

- There are a small number of children of pre- school age currently travelling across the city to attend specialist nurseries. However, if another placement could be made available closer to their homes, the City Council could withdraw this transport support as there is no legal requirement to provide transport assistance for pre- school children.
- Currently, 13 pupils are transported at a cost of £35,000 per year.

Mainstream Primary

- This would affect children aged 9 years old to the end of Year 6 living 2 - 3 miles from their catchment school who do not meet means testing criteria. No children currently qualify so there would not affect anyone at this time.

Faith schools

- A number of other Councils across the country are consulting on removing entitlement to travel to faith schools. It is considered that there are alternative suitable non-faith schools locally.
- The City Council currently supports 7 pupils at Primary Faith schools at cost of £2,100 per year and 123 pupils at Secondary Faith Schools at a maximum cost of £40,000.

Mainstream Secondary

- Stop funding transport for children who move school in Year 10-11.
- The City Council currently supports 16 pupils at a cost of £8,000 per year.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) Primary & Secondary

- This would increase the qualifying distance from 2 to 3 miles from the school for pupils aged 9 to year 11 who do not meet means testing criteria.
- Savings in this area are likely but difficult to quantify as a large number of the pupils affected by this change may well qualify for transport support under exceptional grounds

4.1.2 Total savings from Option 1A are at least £45,100 per year.

4.2 OPTION 1B: EARLY YEARS, MAINSTREAM PRIMARY AND MAINSTREAM SECONDARY:

AS OPTION 1A, BUT REMOVE ALL FUNDING WHICH IS NOT LEGALLY REQUIRED FOR 'NEW' PUPILS.

4.2.1 Current students would continue to receive funding until they cease to be eligible, or finish their current phase of education.

4.2.2 Total savings from Option 1B are calculated as at least £45,100 per year by 2018.

5. PROPOSED CHANGES FOR POST- 16 STUDENTS

We are asking respondents to comment on Option 2A, Option 2B, Option 2C and Option 2D, giving reasons if appropriate.

5.1 OPTION 2A: POST -16 MAINSTREAM STUDENTS

REMOVE ALL POST-16 TRANSPORT FUNDING FOR MAINSTREAM STUDENTS.

5.1.1 There are currently 39 young people travelling at a cost of £37,000 per year.

5.2 OPTION 2B: POST- 16 MAINSTREAM STUDENTS

REMOVE ALL POST-16 FUNDING FOR 'NEW' MAINSTREAM STUDENTS.

5.2.1 Current students would continue to receive funding until they cease to be eligible, or finish their current phase of education.

5.2.2 Total savings from Option 2B are calculated as £37,000 per year by 2014.

5.3 OPTION 2C: POST- 16 MAINSTREAM AND SEN STUDENTS

KEEP THE CURRENT POLICY OF SUPPORTING POST-16 STUDENTS BUT INTRODUCE A GRADED CONTRIBUTION SYSTEM.

5.3.1 In order to qualify, mainstream students must demonstrate that a suitable course is not available locally.

5.3.2 Most of the post-16 transport support is provided for those with learning difficulties and / or disabilities, and an option to remove this has not been included. However, a contribution may be sought as follows:

- Band A up to 3 miles from College - £250 per year (2 payments of £125). There are currently 19 students, so this would come to £4,750 per year.
- Band B over 3 miles from College - £500 per year (2 payments of £250). There are currently 79 students, so this would come to £39,500 per year.

5.3.3 Total income from Option 2C is calculated as £44,250 based on current student numbers.

5.4 OPTION 2D: POST 16 MAINSTREAM AND SEN STUDENTS:

KEEP THE CURRENT POLICY OF SUPPORTING POST-16 STUDENTS BUT INTRODUCE A GRADED CONTRIBUTION SYSTEM FOR 'NEW' STUDENTS.

5.4.1 Current students would continue to receive funding until they cease to be eligible, or finish their current phase of education.

5.4.2 Total income from Option 2D is calculated as £44,250 per year by 2014.

6. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- 6.1 We would very much like to hear your views on the options mentioned above.
- 6.2 As well as giving your comments, please could you choose whether you would prefer Option 1A or Option 1B, Option 2A or Option 2B and Option 2C or Option 2D giving reasons if appropriate.
- 6.3 Please send your choices and comments on the proposals, to Nicky Brooks by 1 March 2011 to the email or address below:

transport2011@southampton.gov.uk

Southampton City Council
Ground Floor, Southbrook Rise
4-8 Millbrook Road East
Southampton SO15 1YG

- 6.3 The consultation is being carried out over 28 days ending on 1 March and we would like to hear from as many people as possible, including those directly affected and the wider public.
- 6.4 We can then report a summary of all issues raised during the consultation to Southampton City Council's Cabinet in April 2011. The Cabinet will be asked to make the final policy decision.
- 6.5 The target timetable is as follows:

25 January 2011	Consultation starts
1 March 2011	Consultation finishes.
11 April 2011	Cabinet meeting where the final policy decision will be made.
31 May 2011	Publish policy.

**Thank you for taking the time to consider these options
and letting us know your views**