



## **Post-16 Transport Policy Effective from 1 September 2023**

This document outlines the Council's transport and travel assistance services and support available to students.

Other financial support is available directly from colleges, and students are advised to contact the colleges directly to obtain details of eligibility criteria and the level of support available.

The provision within this Policy relates to students who are over the compulsory school age but under 19 (25 for those with special educational needs), or those who are on a course which they started before they reached 19.

This Policy relates to the academic year 2023/24 only. Students should re-apply for assistance with travel arrangements at the commencement of each academic year.

## Transport & Travel Assistance Scheme

Students meeting **all** of the following criteria are eligible to receive assistance with travel costs from Luton Council:

- Students from low income\* families and learners in local authority care or those that have recently left local authority care.
- Students must be resident in Luton throughout the duration of the course.
- Students enrolled on and attending a full time course engaged with learning or training at:
  - a further education institution (e.g. Luton Sixth Form College, Barnfield College, Central Bedfordshire College);
  - a school or academy (e.g. Cardinal Newman Catholic School);
  - a local authority maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education;
  - at any establishment (not falling within the above categories) at which the authority secures the provision of education or training under section 15ZA of the Education Act 1996.
- Students must be over the statutory school age but not aged 19, or over, on 31 August in the year in which their course of study began.
- Students must live further than three miles (walking route) from the nearest institution to offer their chosen course.
- Where a student opts to attend an institution other than their nearest college the chosen course must differ by at least 50% to that offered by nearer institutions. For example, a student may be studying 4 A Levels and 2 of these may not be available at nearer colleges. In this case assistance with travel costs will be provided. However, if 3 of the A Levels are available at a more local institution then assistance will not be provided.

\*Low income is defined as students whose parents meet the criteria used for assessing eligibility for free school meals (the current criteria is set out below) or where their parents receive maximum working tax credit:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of State 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 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

The Council will provide eligible students with half termly payments direct into their bank account.

The Council will pay half (50%) of the cost of a weekly bus ticket up to a maximum value of £7.50 per week. For example, if a weekly bus ticket costs £10 the Council will provide £5 towards these costs. If the weekly ticket costs £17 the Council will provide a subsidy of £7.50 and the student will need to contribute the remaining £9.50.

#### **Further information:**

- **Applications will not be approved when a place in a nearer college was not offered due to late application or missed interviews.**
- **Applications for transport assistance must be received by 16th September 2023 to qualify for financial assistance in the first half of the Autumn Term.**
- **Half termly cash payments will only be made if the student's attendance is 95% or above.**

#### **Medical Grounds**

Students suffering from a medical condition or injury that impairs their ability to walk may apply for travel assistance on medical grounds. Travel assistance granted on medical grounds will be limited to the duration of the student's incapacity and will require a supporting letter from a general practitioner or hospital.

Applications for travel assistance on medical grounds must be submitted to the college in the first instance.

#### **Special Educational Needs**

Students with special educational needs are subject to the general policy set out above. However, where a student's special educational needs means that they cannot travel to their place of study in the same way as other students, they may be entitled to Council funded travel assistance.

Students must

- live in Luton and
- be aged between 16 - 25 on the 1st September 2023.

Applications will be considered by the Council's Travel Assistance Team who will support applications for students who cannot reasonably be expected to travel on public transport to and from their place of study, provided that:

- The student is attending the nearest suitable course.

Where a student opts to attend an institution other than their nearest college, the chosen course must differ by at least 50% to that offered by nearer institutions. The suitability of courses will be considered in the light of needs described and outcomes specified in the learner's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

- The student's individual education package has been approved as appropriate and suitable to meet their education needs, by the Council's Post 16 Education Panel. Where a young person has an EHCP, transport will only be considered for the education provision specified in the relevant document.

In considering a request for assistance with transport the team will take account of the nature of the student's needs, his/her level of mobility, ability to travel on public transport, how vulnerable the student is and how far he/she travels. If transport is necessary, the Council will arrange transport that meets the needs of the student.

Where appropriate, the Council expects students to engage in an independence travel training programme to work towards accessing public transport.

## **Traineeships**

Learning providers are responsible for ensuring that learners undertaking Traineeships have reasonable expenses met in full where these are needed to overcome barriers to learning. These may include the cost of travelling to or from the place of learning or work placement.

## **Financial Hardship**

Students who require further assistance with transport costs can apply to their college for additional support. College contact details are set out on the last page of this policy.

## **16-19 Bursary Fund**

Following the abolition of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), the government has introduced a 16-19 bursary fund to assist students in further education with the costs of attending college, including travel costs.

Further information on the bursary fund can be found on the Gov.UK Website:  
[www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund)

Details of individual college schemes are available on college websites, or by contacting the Student Services Team at your college.

Luton Sixth Form College:

[www.lutonsfc.ac.uk](http://www.lutonsfc.ac.uk)

Barnfield College:

[www.college.barnfield.ac.uk](http://www.college.barnfield.ac.uk)

Central Bedfordshire College:

[www.centralbeds.ac.uk](http://www.centralbeds.ac.uk)

Bedford College:

[www.bedford.ac.uk](http://www.bedford.ac.uk)

## **Young parents/Care to Learn**

If you are a young parent under 20, Care to Learn can help pay for childcare and related travel costs while you're learning. Further information is available at [www.gov.uk/care-to-learn](http://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn)

## **Applying to Luton Council for transport support**

Application forms for travel assistance, are available from colleges, Luton Council's Travel Assistance Team or online (see contact details below).

The application form must be completed and signed by the student and also signed by the College's authorised signatory to certify that the student has been enrolled on the course specified. Application forms should be returned to the College for endorsement.

Students enrolled on courses of more than one year must re-apply for assistance with transport at the commencement of each academic year.

If you have any queries regarding the application procedure please contact your college or call 01582 548098 (for students with an EHCP) or 01582 548227 (for students without an EHCP).

## **Appeal Procedure**

If you are dissatisfied with a decision made by the Travel Assistance Team, you can ask for your case to be reviewed by writing to:

- Shaun Askins, Service Manager – Strategy & Sustainability (email: [shaun.askins@luton.gov.uk](mailto:shaun.askins@luton.gov.uk)), for cases relating to pupils with an EHCP.
- Deborah Craig, Head of Provision and Services in Education (email: [Deborah.craig@luton.gov.uk](mailto:Deborah.craig@luton.gov.uk)) for students without an EHCP.

Alternatively, correspondence can be addressed to either officer and posted to Luton Council, Town Hall, George Street, Luton LU3 3QB.

If you are still unhappy with the decision you can apply for your case to be heard by an appeal panel by writing to one of the above-mentioned officers. The appeal panel will comprise of local authority representatives not involved in the original decision. If you wish, you can present your case in person. Parents/students can appeal if they feel that:

- The policy has not been applied correctly or fairly.
- There is additional information which has not yet been considered, and which may support their case for travel assistance.
- There is a material change in circumstances relevant to the transport application.

If students/parents are still dissatisfied they can submit a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman at the following address:

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
The Oaks No 2  
Westwood Way  
Westwood Business Park  
Coventry, CV4 8JB

Tel: 024 7682 0000

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

Complaints can also be made to the Secretary of State for Education by completing the contact form at [www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus](http://www.education.gov.uk/help/contactus)

## **Discounts from Local Transport Operators**

Local transport operators *may* offer discounted rates to students. Students are advised to check websites for the most up to date information on any discounts that may be available to them.

Arriva – bus company operating in the Luton & Dunstable conurbation:  
[www.arrivabus.co.uk/lutonanddunstable-student-tickets/](http://www.arrivabus.co.uk/lutonanddunstable-student-tickets/)

Centrebus – bus company operating in the Luton & Dunstable area:  
[www.centrebus.info/Pages/StudentTicketing](http://www.centrebus.info/Pages/StudentTicketing)

Grant Palmer – bus company serving Luton and Bedfordshire:  
[www.grantpalmer.com](http://www.grantpalmer.com)

Stagecoach – operates services between Luton and Bedford:

[www.stagecoachbus.com/unirider-student-ticket](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/unirider-student-ticket)

First Capital Connect – train services from Luton, Luton Airport Parkway and Leagrave stations

## Useful Contact Details

Travel Assistance - Luton Council:

- Students with an EHCP should telephone 01582 548098 or email [travelassistance@luton.gov.uk](mailto:travelassistance@luton.gov.uk)
- Students without an EHCP should telephone 01582 548227 or email [emma.shadbolt@luton.gov.uk](mailto:emma.shadbolt@luton.gov.uk)

website [www.luton.gov.uk](http://www.luton.gov.uk)

National Traveline: Tel: 0871 200 2233

Barnfield College, New Bedford Road, Luton LU2 7EW. Tel: 569569 website: [www.barnfield.ac.uk](http://www.barnfield.ac.uk)

Central Bedfordshire College, Kingsway, Dunstable, LU5 4HG. Tel: 01582 477776 [www.centralbeds.ac.uk](http://www.centralbeds.ac.uk)

Luton Sixth Form College, Bradgers Hill Road, Luton, LU2 7EW.  
Tel: 01582 877500  
[www.lutonsfc.ac.uk](http://www.lutonsfc.ac.uk)

Cardinal Newman Sixth Form, Warden Hill Road, Luton, LU2 7AE.  
Tel: 01582 597125.  
[www.cardinalnewman.luton.sch.uk](http://www.cardinalnewman.luton.sch.uk)

Chalk Hill Academy Sixth Form, Leagrave High Street, Luton LU4 0NE  
Tel: 01582 601221  
[www.chalkhills.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk](http://www.chalkhills.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk)

Stockwood Park Academy Sixth Form, Rotherham Avenue, Luton LU1 5PP  
Tel: 01582 722333  
[www.stockwoodpark.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk](http://www.stockwoodpark.thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk)

Bedford College, Cauldwell Street, Bedford, MK42 9BH. Tel: 01234 291000.  
[www.bedford.ac.uk](http://www.bedford.ac.uk)

Luton Council's Youth Advice Service, Tel: 548340  
[www.youth.luton.gov.uk](http://www.youth.luton.gov.uk)

Arriva, 487 Dunstable Road, Luton, LU1 2QH. Tel: 03448 004411.  
[www.arriva.co.uk](http://www.arriva.co.uk)

Centre Bus, 34 Humphrys Road, Woodside Industrial Estate, Dunstable, LU5 4TP. Tel:  
08443511120.  
[www.centrebus.co.uk](http://www.centrebus.co.uk)

Grant Palmer Passenger Services, Unit 2C Commerce Way, Flitwick MK45 5BP Tel:  
01525 719719  
[www.grantpalmer.com](http://www.grantpalmer.com)

Rail enquiries: 08457 484950

Department for Education [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)