

Briefing Paper

HOME TO SCHOOL AND POST-16 TRANSPORT

1. CONSIDERATIONS:

- 1.1 To note details of the proposed consultation process in relation to the review of Thurrock Council's Home to School Transport Policy
- 1.2 To receive comments in relation to the proposed consultation process

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Each local authority has a statutory responsibility to provide free home to school transport for certain children of statutory school age. The responsibilities are set out in the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Statutory requirements

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a number of changes in the law relating to free school transport. As a result of the changes, the local authority must provide free transport if:

- 3.1.1 a child is eligible as defined by the Act (including for those families in receipt of certain income-related benefits)
- 3.1.2 if the child is below the age of 8 and lives more than 2 miles from the school they attend, or are aged 8 or above and live more than 3 miles from the school they attend;
- 3.1.3 if a child lives within the statutory distance but the local authority considers it is necessary to enable the child to attend school

Each local authority has its own policy on help with transport for young people over the age of 16 and in Further Education or sixth form.

4. THURROCK CONTEXT

- 4.1 The current Thurrock home to school transport policy entitles children of compulsory school age to free transport if:
 - 4.1.1 the home address to the local mainstream school is over 2 miles for primary pupils and 3 miles for secondary pupils;
 - 4.1.2 travel to their nearest denominational school the home address to the local mainstream school is over 2 miles for primary pupils and 3 miles for secondary pupils;

- 4.1.3 the route to school, although less than those distances, may be considered unsafe for walking;
- 4.1.4 the family is from defined low income and attends a secondary or faith school, in line with statutory distances.
- 4.2 The post-16 policy entitles students to free transport to attend colleges and sixth forms if the home address is 3 miles or more for the establishment offering the majority of selected courses
- 4.3 Thurrock also has a policy of offering spare seating to non-entitled children at a concessionary rate charge of £200 per year.

5. PROPOSED CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 5.1 Thurrock Council will need to consult widely on proposed changes to the policy
- 5.2 The consultation will need to be completed prior to publication of the Primary and Secondary Admission Booklets for 2011, so parents can make an informed choice about their school preferences.