

# **THURROCK COUNCIL**

## Education Transport Policy

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\*Please note that all application forms will be available on the website under the heading 'School Transport', within the Children's Services section.

## 1. Introduction

By law, parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly.

The number of pupils receiving transport has reduced following the decommissioning of certain streams of school transport, therefore, parents are advised to consider transport arrangements when choosing a school. Parents are also encouraged to include their nearest suitable school as well as any others they may wish to apply for. Please refer to the relevant sections of this policy for more detailed information or contact the Council (See contact details in Appendix 1)

All local authorities have a legal duty to make suitable travel arrangements to and from school for children who meet certain criteria. To this end, Thurrock Council has drafted this Education Transport policy to ensure the delivery of an education transport service that is in line with the statutory requirements of the Education Act 1996. We will, therefore, provide transport for all children whom the law refers to as “eligible” children. There are several categories of eligible children.

The arrangements we make must be sustainable. Sustainable school travel is travel that improves physical and environmental well-being. It includes walking, the use of escorts where necessary, cycling, the use of public services such as buses or trains (the Council will then issue bus or train passes) contracted vehicles, car sharing, or the reimbursement of travel costs.

Thurrock Council will decide the type of arrangements it will make generally and for any individual child. Some arrangements are required legally and some are discretionary which means the Council does not have to provide it. In this policy we use the phrase “travel assistance” which covers a range of methods used to travel to school. We provide definitions of words used in this policy in Appendix 1.

Thurrock Council has decided to use its discretionary powers to offer assistance either free of charge, at cost, or at a reduced cost to pupils who are not considered eligible children. These arrangements may be changed in future.

The Council has a duty to ensure that it obtains best value and uses its money in the most effective ways possible.

This document sets out the Council’s Home to School Transport Policy and describes how the Council fulfils its legal duties and exercises its discretionary powers as required by the Education Act 1996.

## **2. Eligibility: Who benefits from free travel assistance?**

A pupil who meets **each** of the following criteria:

### **2.2 Has their principal home in Thurrock**

For all transport, at any age, the pupil's principal home must be within Thurrock. Where a pupil lives at more than one address, the one used is usually the one where the parent or carer who receives child benefit for them lives. If no child benefit is paid, the issue will be determined by the Council.

### **2.3 Is of compulsory school age, that is, broadly, between 5 to 16 years old. (Full details are provided in Appendix 1).**

### **2.4 Is an "eligible child" (as defined by the law)**

The pupil must require travel assistance for one of the following reasons;

- Distance between home and school  
(Please note that Thurrock Council adheres to statutory distances as stipulated within the Education Act 1996)
- Travel along an unsafe route
- Special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).

In addition, some low income families have additional rights, if they meet certain conditions.

### **2.5 Attends the nearest suitable qualifying school, with places available.**

A school is suitable if it provides education appropriate to the age, ability, aptitude of the child, and any special educational needs that the child may have.

The term "qualifying school" is defined in the Education Act – see Appendix 1.

## **3. Extended Rights for Low Income Families**

### **3.1 Some low income families additionally benefit from extended rights, relating to**

- Distance
- Choice of a school based on the parent's religion or belief

### **3.2 Low income families, as defined by law in this context, benefit from additional rights to home to school transport in some circumstances.**

- 3.3 A low income family is one where the pupil receives free school meals, or would receive free school meals, because of their income (not automatically because they are in Reception to year 2 inclusive), or the parent or carer receives maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC) or the Universal Credit (UC).
- 3.4 Children of statutory school age, from low income families, will be eligible for travel assistance where they:
- attend primary school and live more than two miles from their nearest suitable school.
  - are in secondary school and attend one of the three nearest suitable schools if it is between 2 and 6 miles from their home.
  - are in secondary school and attend the nearest suitable school that is between 2 and 15 miles from home if their parent has expressed a wish, based on their religion or belief, for that school, and, having regard to this religion and belief, there is no nearer suitable school.

#### **4. Where there is no place available at the nearest suitable school**

- 4.1 All pupils must attend their nearest suitable school where a place is available (or one of the three nearest suitable schools in the case of low income families with extended rights choosing a secondary school). The distance to the nearest suitable school is extended for such families preferring a school on the grounds of religion or belief).
- 4.2 Parents will remain on the waiting list for nearer suitable schools and should take a place if offered in order to continue to qualify for travel assistance. They should renew this application annually, in order to remain on the waiting list.
- 4.3 In some circumstances, parents may decide that it will not be in the best interests of their child to move school at the point when a place becomes available at a school nearer to their home. If a parent decides that their child is to remain at their current school no travel assistance will be provided. Parents may apply for assistance if they can show exceptional circumstances, under the Exceptional Circumstances scheme.

#### **5. What to consider when choosing a school for your child**

- 5.1 Parents should always bear in mind the provision of transport when making their choices for school.
- 5.2 All parents are advised to apply to the nearest suitable school if they wish to be considered for travel assistance. This applies even if an older sibling is at a school that is further away and receives travel assistance. Having a sibling at a particular school does not guarantee admission or travel assistance. For information about catchment areas and feeder schools, please see below.

## **6. Advantages of transferring to a closer school**

- reduced travel time for children; children less tired;
- ability to take part in out of school activities;
- better for the environment as local schools mean fewer cars on the road and fewer buses;
- local schools means that friends live closer;
- sense of community.

We align the development of our policy and our practice with the current Department for Education (DfE) Guidance relating to Home to School Transport. The Guidance can be found using the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/445407/Home\\_to\\_School\\_Travel\\_and\\_Transport\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445407/Home_to_School_Travel_and_Transport_Guidance.pdf)

## **7. Distance and eligibility**

7.1 In line with the statutory guidance the Council will provide travel assistance free of charge for a pupil to and from their nearest suitable school with a place available if this is:

- 2 miles or more from their home for children below the age of eight;
- 3 miles or more from their home for children aged eight and above.

7.2 In addition, the Council currently uses its discretionary powers to extend the offer of travel assistance where the nearest suitable school place is 2 miles or more for children aged 8 to 11 years. This is above the statutory requirement of providing assistance where the nearest suitable school place is 3 miles or above. This provision may change at any time in the future.

## **8. How is distance measured?**

The Council uses Data Map to measure distance between home and school. This software calculates home to school distances, and does not include unsafe routes. An unsafe route is a route considered unsafe for a child to walk alone without being accompanied in a reasonable manner.

## **9. Which forms of travel assistance does the Council provide?**

9.1 The arrangements for all travel assistance must be suitable and in some instances parental consent is necessary.

9.2 Assistance may take the form of a mileage allowance when the parent's vehicle is used, a public transport pass, a seat on a coach/taxi, an escort,

travel training or a walking bus. This assistance is provided at the Councils discretion.

## **10. Situations where the Council does not provide travel assistance**

- Pupils who are below compulsory school age – i.e. those who are in Reception, but not yet of statutory school age
- School activities taking place after or before school
- Year 6 Induction / Transition Days
- Pupils attending a selective school
- Foreign Exchange pupils
- Inter-school travel (where a school is on two, or more, sites)
- Work placements
- Where the parent is unable to take their children to school due to work commitments
- Where the parent has children in more than one school

However, the Council may offer assistance in exceptional circumstances.

## **11. Application Timetable and Process**

- 11.1 Awards of travel assistance are given for a specified period of time, which will not exceed an academic year.
- 11.2 First time and repeat applications for assistance to start at the beginning of the next school year should be made as soon as possible in the current school year. Applications must be completed in full and received by us in the window between the start date of the current school year and June 30 of the same academic year. All required evidence must be provided before the application can be accepted as complete.
- 11.3 When a pupil requires assistance part way through a school year an application should be made as soon as possible. Applications for pupils moving into Thurrock should be submitted as soon as a place has been offered and accepted.
- 11.4 The Council processes all applications as soon as practicable. Awards will be made from the date the completed form is received with the required supporting evidence.

## **12. School Catchment Areas and feeder schools**

- 12.1 Some primary, secondary Schools and academies operate a catchment area for admissions. Some schools have feeder schools. Being in or out of catchment, or having attended a feeder school are not relevant to eligibility



for travel assistance. Distance will be measured in accordance with this policy.

- 12.2 Parents are advised to check distances with the Council before choosing a school if they are considering the need for travel assistance.

### **13. Safe Walking Route**

- 13.1 All routes from home to school in the borough are considered using the shortest available safe walking route. The Council will consider whether the pupil could reasonably be expected to walk if accompanied by a responsible person, such as a parent or other adult. The Council will also consider the age of the child and whether one would ordinarily expect a child of that age to be accompanied.

- 13.2 Routes are inspected by officers of the Council initially and where a decision cannot be reached they are referred to a Panel to make a decision.

Where a route or part of a route is considered unsafe to be walked by an unaccompanied child, travel assistance will be provided to those pupils who would otherwise have to use that route to get to and from school because there is no alternative available safe walking route. Funding for this assistance will only be provided to eligible children.

- 13.3 The Council reviews unsafe routes. It will re-inspect and declare the route safe once steps have been taken to remove the risk. Where a route previously considered to be unsafe becomes safe, entitlement to travel assistance will be reviewed.

- 13.4 Parents have the right to appeal against a decision that the route is safe.

### **14. Parental Preference**

- 14.1 Parents are able to express their preference for a particular school. Where a child which is given a place at a school chosen by the parent is not the nearest suitable school the pupil would not benefit from home to school travel assistance because there is a nearer suitable school.

- 14.2 As noted above, there are special considerations for families in receipt of benefits under the provision for extended rights.

- 14.3 In addition, the Council will have regard to a preference that is based on the parent's religion or belief (or the pupil's religion and belief where they pupil is in post 16 provision).

## **15. Pupils who are 4 years old and younger**

The Council does not provide transport for children below compulsory school age unless they have special educational needs or disabilities. Such cases will be considered if an application is made under the Exceptional Circumstances scheme.

## **16. Post 16 Transport**

16.1 The Council does not make provision for Post 16 home to school transport except in exceptional circumstances.

16.2 There are, however, travel options for Post 16 pupils. The local bus companies, Ensign Bus Company and First Essex Buses are offering a Post 16 student bus pass that can be issued either via the colleges in Thurrock or by contacting Ensign bus directly on 01708 865656. This pass will allow students unlimited travel including evenings and weekends on all services offered by the two companies in and around Thurrock and as far as Basildon Bus station.

## **17. Post 16 SEND Educational Transport**

17.1 Post 16 SEND pupils are not automatically eligible for free educational transport, but they are entitled to a Needs Assessment. If any transport assistance is awarded as part of this assessment they may be offered a maximum of 12 journeys to residential placements. Journeys to non-residential college provision will be considered as a part of the Needs Assessment. If a parent/ carer wishes to accompany their child to their residential educational facility this will be done at their own expense. If the parent / carer is in receipt of benefits or earning a low income they may opt to complete an Exceptional Circumstances form requesting support with travel expenses. If additional journeys are required then an Exceptional Circumstances form must be completed.

17.2 It is the expectation that Travel Training be offered to all post 16 pupils with SEND. In all other cases, Travel Training should be offered as an alternative to, or in conjunction with, an offer of transport.

## **18. Excluded Pupils/Pupils attending alternative provision**

Any pupil attending alternative provision because they have been excluded or directed to attend a place other than their registered school and this place is outside the statutory walking distance will be treated as an eligible child.

## **19. Looked After Children**

- 19.1 It is the responsibility of the Foster Care or Residential Care Provider to ensure that Looked after Children placed with them attend school.
- 19.2 Looked after Children may be eligible for travel assistance, if they qualify under the rules. If the cost of transport to school is included in the placement fee no other transport assistance will be provided.

## **20. Choosing a school for reasons related to religion or belief**

Following consultation and changes to policy, in line with statutory guidance no discretionary transport to schools chosen for reasons of religion or belief will be provided. Thurrock Council will, however, continue to carry out its statutory duty to pupils in receipt of benefit who are attending a faith secondary school between 2 and 15 miles from their home.

## **21. Proof of Religion or Belief**

Parents must confirm on the school admissions application form that they have chosen the particular school for reasons of religion or belief.

## **22. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

- 22.1 Travel assistance for pupils with special educational needs, a disability and/or challenges with mobility.
- 22.2 The Council must make travel arrangements free of charge to pupils who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to their nearest suitable school where a place is available because of mobility issues or because of health and safety issues related to their Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND).
- 22.3 Each case is considered individually and suitable arrangements are made for each pupil. Appropriate information regarding the needs of the individual will be considered as part of this process and this will be reviewed regularly.
- 22.4 In line with statutory guidance, where a route has been formally identified by the Council as an unsafe route, and a child with SEND is required to access that route the Council will assess whether the child can reasonably be expected to walk if accompanied by a responsible adult and if so, whether the child's parent / carer can reasonably be expected to accompany the child. It is expected that parents will accompany the child unless there are exceptional circumstances that make this impractical; for instance, where the parent cannot accompany their child because of illness or disability. In such cases, the Exceptional Circumstances Scheme will apply.

## **23. Children with an Educational Health Care Plan or Statement of Special Needs**

- 23.1 The Council will provide travel assistance, free of charge, to the nearest suitable school named in an Educational Health Care Plan (hereinafter referred to as “an EHCP”) or Statement of Special Educational Needs if the pupil cannot reasonably be expected to walk there.
- 23.2 Sometimes an EHCP or Statement of SEN names two schools, this is because the Council has agreed that the pupil will attend the parent’s school of choice. Transport will not be arranged or paid for by the Council in cases where a place is granted based upon parental preference. In such cases, parents/carers will be expected to make their own travel arrangements and pay for any expenses incurred.

## **24. Travel Assistance for children with SEND**

- 24.1 As with all travel assistance, for pupils who have SEND and who qualify as an “eligible child” it is given free of charge.
- 24.2 If parents agree to drive their child to school a petrol allowance of 40p per mile may be provided to support such travel.
- 24.3 Any assistance given using the Council’s discretionary powers may not be free from charge, as with all discretionary awards.

## **25. Children with SEND Weekly / Fortnightly boarding placements**

Subject to a needs assessment, where children attend a special education provision outside of Thurrock, the Council will consider transport to take the child to school on a Sunday evening, or Monday morning, as agreed with the school and to collect the child to take them home at the end of the school week / fortnight, or earlier as agreed with the school. The Council will only offer funding for planned travel or travel required in exceptional circumstances. Such circumstances will be reviewed by the Council and only if they are found to be exceptional will transport will be provided.

## **26. SEND - Residential placements in an Independent Special School**

- 26.1 Residential placements are usually for:
- 39 Weeks (termly) or
  - 52 Weeks
- 26.2 Subject to a needs assessment, children who are not Looked After, but attend a special education provision outside of borough may be eligible for a

maximum of twelve (12) single journeys from home to school and school to home each academic year. This will consist of trips required at the start and end of each term and half term breaks.

- 26.3 Any travel assistance will be subject to an assessment which will take into consideration the age, needs and ability of the pupil and the individual circumstances of the parent / carer concerned.
- 26.4 If agreed, it is the direct responsibility of the parent and or school to notify the Passenger Transport Unit of the requirement for transport at least 10 days in advance of the expected date of travel. Any additional trips will be the responsibility of the parent.
- 26.5 When public transport is assessed as the most suitable method of transport the Council will reimburse parents at the rate of a standard ticket. Payment will be made in arrears, on receipt of proof of travel and cost. Where parents opt to use any other form of transport such as a private taxi such transport will be procured entirely at the parent / carer's expense.
- 26.6 Where there is a risk of a placement breakdown the SEND Team may consider providing reimbursement of fuel or public transport costs in order to support additional trips on a short term basis so that the child can be supported back into his / her full time boarding arrangement.

## **27. Facilitating inclusion in main stream provision for children attending Special Schools**

Where a child with a Statement or EHCP on roll at a special school is attending a designated mainstream secondary school for whole day sessions as part of a formal integration programme, transport will be considered in exceptional circumstances by the SEN Case Management panel

## **28. Annual Review**

The Council will carry out an annual review, and more frequent reviews where required, of any travel assistance agreed for pupils with SEND.

## **29. Primary School Age and SEND Children – School to Home Transport**

- 29.1 On arrival at a child's home at the end of the school day, the driver will use his discretion, and any requirements of the contract, to decide how long to wait for the parent/ carer to collect the child.
- 29.2 Should the parent not collect their child from the vehicle within a reasonable time (maximum three (3) minutes) the vehicle will proceed to the next stop. The Driver will advise his/her base of the failure of the

parent / carer to collect the child from the vehicle within the set time frame. The parent can then contact the base if needed, otherwise the arrangements below will apply.

- 29.3 The driver will then complete the route and once the remaining children have been collected, the child will be brought into the Thurrock Council Civic Offices and placed into the care of the Social Care Duty Officer. The parent will need to make arrangements to collect the child from Social Services.
- 29.4 This action is for emergencies only and transport will be suspended if the behaviour persists and the child is not collected on three (3) occasions within a term.
- 29.5 If a parent is likely to be late to collect the child they must inform the school and make alternative arrangements for the child to be collected directly from school or at the drop-off point.

### **30. SEND Children Arriving and Departing from School**

- 30.1 Drivers and Passenger Assistants are not allowed to leave children and young people unaccompanied in their vehicles or in school premises. Consequently, schools are required to ensure that they have sufficient staff available to support transport providers at both the start and finish of the school day.
- 30.2 Subject to an assessment of need, transport may be provided for children with special educational needs to their nearest appropriate school if:
- The pupil is under 11 and lives more than 2 miles from the nearest appropriate school,
  - The pupil is aged 11 years, or older, at the start of the school year and lives more than three miles from the nearest appropriate school. The pupil has a physical or sensory impairment which makes it impossible for them to travel to school by any other means and prevents them from walking safely to school even when accompanied by a responsible adult.
  - The pupil has a severe, profound and multiple learning difficulty, or disability, preventing them from walking safely to school, even when accompanied by a responsible adult,
  - The pupil has a disability which places them on the Autistic Spectrum and prevents them from walking safely to school, even when accompanied by a responsible adult,
  - The pupil has a disability, which prevents them from accessing the form of transport generally available to take other pupils from their area to school.

30.3 The guidance is that any transport provided for SEND pupils should be reviewed on an annual basis, and more frequently where circumstances may change within the term i.e. after medical treatment. Parents must advise the Council of any change that would result in transport no longer being required.

### **31. Additional considerations / Exceptional Circumstances for SEND Transport**

31.1 Parents / carers should note that:

- All SEND travel assistance is to be re-assessed on at least an annual basis
- The most appropriate travel assistance must be provided.
- A taxi will only be awarded after all other options have been considered.
- Parent / carer's will be offered a maximum of 40p per mile payment to transport their child using their own vehicle to and from school.
- Where transport is provided the default option is public transport.
- Parents may up-grade their transport at their cost.

#### **31.2 Exceptional Circumstances - SEND**

The Exceptional Circumstances provisions can be used for SEND pupils that do not fully satisfy the SEN needs assessment.

Parents and schools are encouraged to explore, and where possible, implement, travel training as an alternative to transport and to increase the child / young person's skills around independent travel while decreasing their reliance on transport.

Parents / carers will be offered mileage in circumstances where they are in a position to transport a child to and from school using their own vehicle. Such mileage will be calculated based upon a flat rate of 40p per mile. Where a parent / carer is not in a position to drive (due, for example, to the lack of a licence or a medical condition) or where a child requires transport due to a medical condition medical evidence from a qualified medical officer is required to support the assessment of the case.

### **32. Managed moves**

If a child has changed school under a managed move parents should re-apply for assistance and eligibility will be reconsidered.

### **33. External moves - Child moving into Thurrock**

Families moving into the Borough should apply for school transport as soon as they have been accepted by a Thurrock school.

### **34. Internal moves- Child moving within Thurrock**

- 34.1 Parents moving within Thurrock will need to reapply for travel assistance. Eligibility will be assessed under this policy. Assistance will only be given to the nearest suitable school.
- 34.2 In cases of hardship, parents can apply under the Exceptional Circumstances scheme.

### **35. Temporary arrangements including disability or illness of carer**

- 35.1 Where the normal arrangements for home to school travel are no longer appropriate, for example, because a child, young person or in exceptional circumstances a parent, has a temporary disability or illness parents can apply under the Exceptional Circumstances form.
- 35.2 Travel assistance may be offered for a specified period of time, and kept under review.

### **36. Suitability of travel assistance.**

- All transport arrangements must be suitable
- Travel assistance must enable the pupil to reach school without stress, strain or difficulty.
- It must enable the pupil to travel in reasonable safety and comfort.
- It does not have to be a door to door service. Council arranged transport may collect and drop off pupils at designated pick up points and it is the parent's responsibility to get them to this point and collect them from it, on time.

The Council will have regard to the Department for Education Guidance about length of journey time and number of changes required when considering suitability.



### **37. Permission for designated adult to collect child**

- 37.1 When parents are unable to collect their child, and have arranged for another adult to do so, the parent must inform the Council's Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) in writing as soon as possible. PTU staff will inform the transport provider.
- 37.2 Parents must give full details of those adults who may drop off or collect their child. Details must include:
- names,
  - telephone numbers
  - addresses
  - relationship to child
- 37.3 The permission statement must also be signed, and dated, by the parent.

### **38. Reimbursement**

#### **38.1 Reimbursement of Travel Costs**

Where the Council makes payments for transport costs these cannot be backdated. No payment can be made for travel costs unless agreed in advance. Payments are made from the date that an application and all required supporting evidence has been accepted and transport is awarded.

#### **38.2 Reimbursement of Charge**

If a Parent has paid for transport and this is no longer required part way through a term, a partial reimbursement of the charge may apply. Any repayment will be pro rata to the number of schooldays left subject to the payment being made.

### **39. Reporting a change in circumstances**

Parents/post 16 pupils must report all changes in circumstances to the Awards and Benefits team. These include, but are not limited to:

- Moving house
- Moving school
- Changes in safety of the route
- Change in income for families qualifying as low income families
- Changes in health/disability/special educational needs of pupil or other family member that affect getting to school

- Changes regarding eligibility for benefits
- Other

#### **40. Exceptional Circumstances Applications including Post 16 Transport**

- 40.1 An application for travel assistance for a pupil who does not meet the criteria for any category of award described in this policy may apply to be considered for an award under the Exceptional Circumstances Scheme. These are only made in exceptional circumstances. Applications should be made as soon as possible on the form that appears within Appendix 2 and cannot be backdated.
- 40.2 Applicants must provide all evidence listed or requested by the Council. Where a form is incomplete and/or evidence is not provided as requested, within any given time limit, no award can be made. Assistance will not be backdated.

#### **41. Eligibility Checks**

The Council has a duty to ensure that it protects public funds. The Council may contact families during the academic year, to ensure they are still eligible for travel assistance.

#### **42. Awards made in error**

- 42.1 Where an award of travel assistance has been made in error, the Council has the right to withdraw this after first considering the circumstances of each case to determine whether there are exceptional reasons for provision to continue.
- 42.2 Where it is decided to withdraw transport, up to one term's notice will be given. If the error was discovered before the commencement of the Academic Year the transport will be withdrawn straight away.

#### **43. Fraud**

Where an award of travel assistance has been made as a result of fraud it will be withdrawn immediately. The Council will require all monies paid to be repaid. It will refer the matter to its legal department. If the pupil requires travel assistance following this, a fresh application should be made. The matter must be dealt with by the police.

## **44. Appeals**

44.1 The Council has adopted the appeal procedure recommended by the Department for Education Guidance. This procedure applies to all applications.

44.2 Parents/carers may complain/appeal if they:

- Believe a mistake has been made in the consideration of their child's transport entitlement.
- Are dissatisfied with the service they have received or the way in which they have been treated.
- Are of the view that their child's circumstances are not covered by the policy and that there are exceptional circumstances that should be taken into account. In such circumstances, their case would be considered through the Appeal process and as an exception, under the exceptional circumstances scheme.

44.3 In the first instance, parents/carers should contact the Council's Complaints Team on 0800 021 3016 or [complaints@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@thurrock.gov.uk). Correspondence will be dealt with as Stage One of the complaints procedure.

44.4 If the parent/carer remains unhappy with the response received, they may request that their complaint be re-considered:

- at Stage Two of the complaints procedure, if dissatisfied with the service or treatment they have received, or
- at a transport appeal, if disputing the accuracy of the transport entitlement decision or submitting an exceptional case for transport.

44.5 If the matter cannot be resolved at Stage Two or transport appeal the complainant will be informed that they can refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (L.G.O).

## **45. Information about other forms of support available to pupils/students**

45.1 Proof of Age Scheme (PASS)

In order for young people to prove their age and be able to obtain student / half price fares the UK Government has introduced the Proof of Age Standards Scheme (PASS). All official Proof of Age cards carry the "PASS" hologram.

These schemes are particularly useful for those pupils who live under the statutory distance requirement, i.e. under 3 miles, or for non-eligible / entitled children.

#### 45.2 Benefits of a Proof of Age Card

The PASS Card helps a young person to prove his / her age to the bus driver so he / she can have the reduced fare he / she is entitled to under the bus company's terms and conditions. Also, if a young person looks younger than his / her age, it will help prove their age when buying age-restricted goods

#### 45.3 The following bus companies have confirmed that they accept Proof of Age cards for journeys in and out of Thurrock:

- Arriva Essex
- Ensign Bus Company
- PASS Scheme for Essex, including Thurrock
- Be Identified Throughout Essex (BITE)
- Amber Bus Company
- First Essex Buses

#### 45.4 The BITE Card is Essex County Council's proof of age card for young people aged 11 and above. The card is obtained by completing an application form obtainable from schools or libraries.

<http://www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Getting-Around/Bus/Fares-and-bus-passes/BITE-cards.aspx>

#### 45.5 There is a requirement for a colour passport quality photograph and for an authorised person to verify the young person's age and to sign the application and the photograph.

For Thurrock students there will be a cost of £5.00 per card. It takes between 2 to 4 weeks to obtain. Replacement cards cost £5.

#### 45.6 Additional benefits associated with the PASS Scheme

##### **Retailers**

As the card has the PASS hologram, endorsed by the Home Office, the card should be accepted by major retailers, but this cannot be guaranteed. Please call Consumer Direct on 0845 4040506 if you encounter a problem.

##### **Libraries**

The BITE Card can be used as a library card in Thurrock, Essex and Southend.

## Other National Proof of Age cards

### **CitizenCard**

The standard cost of the card is £15, additional charges if required urgently.

Anyone can apply for a card, but if students under the age of 16 do need parental consent

<http://www.citizencard.com/online-application>

### **ValidateUK**

The standard cost of the card is £15 (includes postage and packaging).

Anyone can apply for a card.

<http://www.validateuk.co.uk/>

## **46. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)**

46.1 Passenger assistants and anyone else providing direct travel assistance are required to have a current DBS check at the Enhanced level and to have their DBS certificate re-issued at least every 3 years. Licensed taxi drivers are required to have their DBS certificate renewed every year.

46.2 The DBS certificate should be shown when requested.

## **47. Accessibility of pick up and set down points**

47.1 Most transport provided operates from defined pickup and set down points which, in most cases, will be local bus stops as these are considered to be the safest locations.

47.2 Details of the pick-up points are sent out to parents by letter, shortly before the commencement of term. Any problems in relation to these should be emailed to: [passengertransport@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:passengertransport@thurrock.gov.uk).

47.3 The Council cannot give a specific time when the transport will arrive at the pick-up and set down points and consequently parents are advised to arrive at least ten (10) minutes earlier than the arrival time stated, in the award letter.

47.4 The vehicle will not wait more than a maximum period of 2 (two) minutes when collecting pupils depending upon, traffic and other factors which in the driver's judgement could cause the vehicle to arrive at its destination (s) late. The vehicle will leave at a time that will enable the driver maintain the vehicle's schedule.

47.5 Transport assistance cannot be tailored to meet individual timetables, but consideration will be given whenever possible to minimise inconvenience to pupils.

47.6 Please note that times cannot be adjusted for work commitments or other siblings.

#### **48. Primary School Age and SEND Children Drop-off-dealing with emergencies**

48.1 Should the parent not collect their child from the vehicle within a reasonable time (maximum three (3) minutes) the vehicle will proceed to the next stop. The Driver will advise his/her base of the failure of the parent / carer to collect the child from the vehicle within the set time frame. The parent can then contact the base if needed, otherwise the arrangements below will apply.

48.2 The vehicle will continue on its journey and once the remaining children have been returned home, the child will be brought into the Civic Offices and placed into the care of the Social Care Duty Officer where the parent will be able to collect the child.

48.3 There will be a charge for this service which will be set on a cost recovery basis and will be reviewed annually.

48.4 This action is for emergencies only and transport will be suspended if the behaviour persists and the child is not collected on three (3) occasions within a term.

48.5 As soon as a parent becomes aware that they may be late they should inform the school to allow the child to remain at school. This will prevent unnecessary delay of the vehicle and late arrival at the drop off points for other children.

#### **49. Managing Risk**

49.1 The Transport Operator is responsible for assessing the risks associated with the route and vehicles used.

49.2 Parents are responsible for the safety of their children between the home and the Pick-up and Drop off points and while waiting for the vehicle to arrive.

49.3 Parents should advise the SEND team of any special requirements prior to transport being approved.

49.4 The Council has quality standards for the monitoring of vehicles and equipment used in the operation of education transport.

49.5 The Council will monitor each provision / route at least once every year.

## **50. Seatbelts and safety**

- 50.1 These are provided on all vehicles commissioned by the Council where required by law. Where provided, pupils **MUST** wear these. If a pupil is 14 or over they carry legal responsibility and could face a fine of up to £60 if a police officer boards a vehicle and they are not wearing a seat belt where one is provided, without a reasonable excuse or medical exemption. Parents should check that their child understands what is required of them, and pupils should ask drivers and passenger assistants if they are unsure.
- 50.2 Pupils must comply with all other safety requirements stipulated by transport providers.

## **51. Severe Weather and Transport Delays**

- 51.1 The decision on whether or not transport will operate during periods of severe weather rests with transport contractors who will be aware of localised weather conditions. They will liaise as necessary with the Passenger Transport Unit.
- 51.2 Schools advise when they are unable to open, due to severe weather, via BBC Essex and Heart Essex. Parents should ensure they tune to these radio stations in bad weather.
- 51.3 Some schools may also send text messages to Parents.
- 51.4 Drivers are responsible for advising their companies of any delays, caused by bad weather or heavy traffic etc. Parents can contact the transport provider directly on the number advised in their transport award letter if there has been more than a 15 minute delay.

## **52. Provision of Passenger Assistants**

- 52.1 Passenger assistants will only be provided in the following situations:
- where transport is to a Primary School
  - where there are more than 8 pupils in a vehicle (applies to primary schools only)
  - where a child with disabilities needs a personal assistant to use the school transport,
  - where a Health and Safety issue is apparent and the journey time is one hour or more,
  - if a majority of pupils on the vehicle are in year 1 or 2.

52.2 Passenger assistants for SEND purposes are assessed on a case-by-case basis as outlined in the SEND Passenger Assistant's section,

52.3 Passenger assistants on Council contracted vehicles require a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate, that is checked, and deemed satisfactory.

### **53. Managing pupil behaviour**

53.1 The Council expects all pupils to behave in an acceptable manner, respecting other users of the vehicle, staff, drivers and other road users.

53.2 Pupils must:

- Wear their seat belt where it is provided.
- Follow the driver's instructions.
- Always have their ticket or pass with them.
- Keep their belongings with them and not obstruct gangways.
- Take litter with them.

53.3 Pupils must not:

- Consume food or drink
- Smoke or drink alcohol
- Interfere with emergency exits, doors, windows or safety equipment
- Play music, unless using personal headphones
- Distract the driver by any means
- Make excessive noise

Extreme behaviour of any type, including distracting the driver and making excessive noise or any other action that interferes with the safety of the passengers, driver and other road users may result in an immediate and permanent suspension.

53.4 If a pupil causes damage to a vehicle or other property they or their parent will have to pay for the damage and could be prosecuted. Thurrock Council will support transport operators and the police in taking action against anyone who acts in a way that puts the safety or well-being of other users of the transport at risk.

53.5 Drivers will report incidents of poor behaviour to the pupil's school. The Head Teacher of a school is able to take action for poor behaviour that takes place outside of the school premises.

53.6 Thurrock Council will not tolerate bullying or discrimination on the transport it provides. Pupils should report any poor behaviour and



action may be taken both by the Council and the Head Teacher and/or police.

53.7 Any sanctions imposed by the Council as a result of poor behaviour will be reviewed. As with all aspects of home to school transport there is a process in place for the lodging of appeals or complaints to the Council.

#### 53.8 **Sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.**

Thurrock Council reserves the right to suspend or terminate transport for violent or abusive behaviour or where the safety of those operating or travelling on the transport are in jeopardy.

### 54. **Sustainable Travel to School**

54.1 Thurrock Council actively endorses and supports schools to take responsibility for encouraging school journeys to be taken by sustainable modes of travel to:

- mitigate acute and localised congestion
- mitigate local air quality issues
- improve road safety
- improve childhood physical activity rates
- reduce childhood obesity
- improve wellbeing of school pupils

54.2 Sustainable modes of travel include travelling:

- on foot
- by bike
- by public transport (bus and rail)

54.3 School journeys undertaken by motorised vehicles should be avoided wherever possible, with suitable alternatives in place to encourage the uptake of sustainable travel. This includes initiatives and incentives to encourage healthier lifestyles and to improve the usage of sustainable forms of transport.

### 55. **School Travel Plans & Accreditation**

55.1 A school travel plan is a document produced by schools that sets out the framework for encouraging pupils to travel to and from school by sustainable modes of transport.

55.2 It plays an important part in improving road safety and encouraging pupils to walk, cycle and use public transport.

55.3 A school travel plan should include:

- a description of the school and its environment
- a baseline survey
- a summary of established good practice initiatives - specifically pedestrian training, cycling skills, road safety in the curriculum
- a summary of any road safety or schools transport problems
- proposed initiatives with objectives and targets, e.g. a walking bus
- a delivery action plan to achieve objectives and targets
- plans for monitoring and review
- school transport provision

55.4 Every school in Thurrock has a school travel plan and they are required to monitor travel behaviour and to review and update their plans annually.

56.5 Modeshift STARS provides an online portal for schools to monitor and report on initiatives undertaken by pupils, staff and parents, setting different criteria to meet in order to be accredited bronze, silver or gold.

Assessments take place three times during the course of an academic year, with schools being awarded in September of each year.

Please check with the school your child attends / would like to attend to view a copy of their Travel Plan or to find out the level of accreditation they have been awarded.

## **57. Initiatives & Resources**

57.1 In order to support schools to encourage more pupils to travel sustainably to school, Thurrock Council provides a range of initiatives and resources. The initiatives and resources are dependent on the funding available and rely on school staff to work with council officers to deliver the initiatives.

57.2 Please check with the school your child attends / would like to attend to see what initiatives and resources are available.

- Pedestrian Training for parents of reception pupils,
- Scooter Training for Year 1
- Kerbcraft for Year 2
- Level 1 Bikeability for Year 4
- Level 2 Bikeability for Year 6

57.3 Park and stride - Parents are encouraged to park a short distance from the school and then walk with their children the rest of the way. Park

and stride provides an ideal opportunity for children to be physically active, which is important to their wellbeing.

- 57.4 School crossing patrol service - There are currently 18 school crossing patrol sites in Thurrock. Although it is a parent's responsibility to ensure their child's welfare on the journey to and from school, the school crossing patrol officers are there to provide safer places to cross.
- 57.5 Walking Bus - A Walking Bus is a great way to encourage more children to walk to and from school. Each 'bus' consists of a group of children, who are escorted by a minimum of two parent volunteers – a 'driver' at the front and a 'conductor' at the back. A walking bus can take up to 16 children who walk in pairs.
- 57.6 Cycle Train - A Cycle Train is similar in approach to the Walking Bus scheme. Each cycle train follows a planned route and consists of a group of children wearing hi-visibility clothing escorted by parent volunteers.

## **58. Volunteers**

Volunteer helpers may be recruited for any of the Council organised Walking Buses or Cycle Trains. They will be recruited in accordance with the Department for Education's Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance and be given suitable training.

## **59. Payment of charge (where applicable)**

Any charge will be payable in advance in either one instalment or in multiple instalments as agreed with the Awards and Benefits Team. The first instalment or full amount is due in the month of August of each year.

Where transport is awarded due to eligibility against criteria in this policy, any changes in circumstances should be notified to the Awards and Benefits Team who will reassess eligibility.

## **60. Advice on Benefits**

Advice on entitlement to benefits can be obtained from the Council's Awards and Benefits Team or by using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/entitlement>

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# Appendix 1

## Glossary

<b>Word</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>The Act</b>	the Education Act 1996
<b>Borough</b>	the Borough of Thurrock
<b>Child</b>	also means Children
<b>Compulsory School Age</b>	Between the ages of 5 and 16 years old.  “beginning at the start of the term following a child's fifth birthday” and “ending the last Friday in June of the <b>school year</b> in which they are 16”.
<b>Council</b>	Thurrock Council
<b>Council Contact Details</b>	<p><b>Awards and Benefits</b>            ☎ 01375 652511            email: awards@thurrock.gov.uk</p> <p><b>School Admissions</b>            ☎ 01375 652883            email: School.Admissions@thurrock.gov.uk</p> <p><b>SEN Team</b>            ☎ 01375 652555            email: sen@thurrock.gov.uk</p> <p><b>Passenger Transport</b>            ☎ 01375 413883,            email: passengertransport@thurrock.gov.uk</p>
<b>DBS</b>	<p>Disclosure and Barring Service, formerly Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).</p> <p>The DBS enables organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to make safer recruitment decisions by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable for certain work, especially that involve children.            DBS certificates are valid for up to 3 years</p>

Denominational School	<p>A school associated with a particular religious denomination or faith.</p> <p>A school funded, sponsored and / or controlled by a specific religion or faith.</p>
EHC Plan	<p>Education, Health and Care Plan.</p> <p>A unique plan heavily focused on the individual personality and requirements of each child. The plan contains details of the special education, health and care needs of the individual child or young person.</p>
Eligible Child	As defined in Schedule 35B of the Education Act 1996; a child attending their nearest suitable school that also meets the Home to School distance requirements.
Entitled Child	A child that the School accepts is practicing in the faith to which the Denominational School subscribes to. The school may require evidence that the child, and their family, attend the Church, Chapel, Madrasa, Mosque, Synagogue or Temple, etc. to which the school is associated with.
Nearest suitable School	<p>Nearest suitable school is defined as a school designated by the Council as the nearest appropriate school to the home address with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any special educational needs that the child may have.</p> <p>The nearest suitable school for a child with special educational needs may well be different than for other children.</p>
Non-Eligible	A child attending a school, selected by their Parents, which is not their nearest suitable school, but who meets the Home to School distance requirements.
Non-Entitled Child	A child that is not practicing the faith to which the Denominational School subscribes
Looked After Children	Children that are "Looked After" by, or in the care of, the Council as defined by the Children Act 1989
PAN	The published admission number or PAN is the number of pupils in each year group that the admission authority has agreed will be admitted without causing problems for the school.
Parent	The term includes Mother, Father, Carer or Guardian
Passenger Assistant (Escort)	A Passenger Assistant assists the child / young person, helping them to get on and off the vehicle, ensuring their safety and comfort and supporting them during the journey to and from school.

Qualifying Benefits	<p>Maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC)</p> <p>Free school meals. Children in School Years 1 and 2 receiving “Fee” schools meals as a result of the Governments Universal Infant Free School Meals policy will not automatically be considered eligible for fee school transport.</p>
Safe Route	<p>A safe route is one which is considered safe to be walked, accompanied as necessary by a parent or other responsible adult.</p> <p>also see Unsafe routes</p>
Selective Schools	A school that admits students on the basis of some sort of selection criteria, usually academic
SEN and SEND	A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
SEN Assessment	The identification and statutory assessment of children with special educational needs of a kind and degree which requires the LA to determine the educational provision, equipment required to support a child as well as advice to parents, schools and other agencies
School	Any institution at which people receive formal education. Includes Academies which are distinguished by the fact that they usually come under the direct control of the central government as opposed to schools that usually fall under the jurisdiction of local governments. An academy is rather independent in terms of curriculum, and may also receive support both financial, as well as material, from various sponsors.
Selective Schools	A school that admits students on the basis of some sort of selection criteria usually academic.
Travel assistance	Any of the arrangements the Council
Unintentionally homeless	A person who through no fault of their own has become homeless. Those who have not deliberately done, or failed to do, something that caused them to become homeless,
Unplaced	A child has been refused a place at their nearest school or schools; due to no place being available the child is defined as “Unplaced”. It is the Council’s duty to ensure that Unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as

	possible.
Unsafe Route	An unsafe route is defined as where ‘the nature of the route is such that the child cannot be reasonably expected to walk, accompanied if necessary, in reasonable safety’. Such routes are assessed thoroughly against set criteria (including nature of footways and crossings, traffic flow and visibility).
<b>Words in the masculine also include the feminine, and vice versa. Words in the singular also mean the plural.</b>	

**The definitions below are taken from the Education Act 1996**

Section 444(5) of the Act defines the statutory walking distances.

Schedule 35B of the Act defines:

‘eligible children’ (paragraphs 2-7 and 9-13);

‘qualifying school’ (paragraph 15);

‘disabled child’ (paragraph 15(4));

‘religion and belief’ (paragraph 15(6)) and 509AD of the Act;

‘low income family’ (paragraphs 9-14).

Section 579 of the Act defines ‘child’.

Section 509AC of the Act defines ‘compulsory school age’.

The Equality Act 2010 defines ‘religion or belief’ for the purposes of this Act.

The Children’s and Families Act section 10 defines ‘SEN’



## Appendix 2

### Thurrock Council Exceptional Circumstances Scheme

#### Guidance notes

(Please read these guidance notes before completing the application form)

You may apply for assistance for all or part of your child's travel costs if you do not meet the criteria of eligible child or stated discretionary awards. There is no definition of exceptional circumstances, but you should set out as fully as you can what you would like us to take into account, including the length and nature of the journey, personal or social difficulties, experiences, such as bullying or domestic violence that make it necessary for your child to move school/not be able to walk etc. If we ask you for evidence, this must be provided as soon as possible and within ten working days. Awards are not backdated. They are given for a maximum of one year, and are subject to the same conditions of repayment in the case of error and fraud that apply to all awards.

The Council will decide whether transport is necessary to enable the child get to school. Exceptional transport is a discretionary award and the Council will consider circumstances that are entirely exceptional. Parents will need to give a statement of their circumstances and it is essential they show why they require assistance.

With the exception of any contracted travel provision where this exception does not apply, should parents decide to use different transport methods the Council may pay an amount equal to the cost of travel at the lowest costs. Parents will be responsible for any shortfall and evidence of expenditure will be required.

The Council will be responsible for determining what the lowest cost transport is by using information obtainable on the internet, or such other sources that are available. The Council's offer will be considered to be final and there will be no right of appeal on the amount offered.

Examples of situations that might be considered exceptional depending on individual cases. (This is for guidance only).

Include, but are not limited to the following examples:

- Medical condition of a child,
- Medical condition of a parent,
- Family residing in temporary accommodation and on the housing list

- Mother / Father moved into a refuge,
- Looked After Child / Child who is the subject of a child protection plan,
- Bullying,
- Complex social circumstances experienced by the family,
- Sudden and traumatic change of family circumstances outside the family's control,
- For reasons outside the family's control they are unable to ensure their child gets to school safely.
- Sudden and traumatic change of family circumstances outside the family's control,
- Child is the subject of a child protection plan,
- For reasons outside the family's control they are unable to ensure their child gets to school safely

The situations that would be **unlikely** to be considered exceptional are:

- work or study commitments mean the parent cannot take their child to school or a pick up point,
- family breakdown and fragmentation

How do we deal with exceptional circumstances?

Under the exceptional circumstances policy, each case will be considered individually and on its merit. Exceptional home to school transport will be provided up to a maximum of one academic year, based on the period of time covered by the evidence provided. We will review such arrangements at the end of each term. Transport will be allocated specifically for the exceptional circumstance and will be withdrawn once the need ceases.

Where we are unable to make an exceptional circumstances award it remains the parent's responsibility to ensure that the child attends school regularly and must make appropriate arrangements for this. In some cases it may be possible for the child to transfer to a nearer school where there is a place available.

The evidence you provide **MUST** be dated within the last six weeks.

Applications for exceptional transport must be made in writing with supporting evidence. You must demonstrate clearly that:

- you are not able to transport your child yourself both logistically and financially
- there are strong educational reasons to keep your child at their current school rather than move to a more local school where they could walk to school or be entitled to transport within the policy.

Before we consider the application we will normally need the application to be supported by either or both of the following depending on the circumstance:

- written evidence from a suitably qualified specialist stating that the child is unable to walk to school.
- a written endorsement of the exceptional circumstances from a senior officer of the council, such as an Education Welfare Officer or Principal Social Worker.

In considering exceptional circumstances the general expectations are that:

- If one parent cannot take the pupil to school the other parent, another relative or a friend will assist,
- The distance criteria will usually still apply,
- The family's financial circumstances significantly limit their ability to find their own solution.

Further details and examples of circumstances that may be considered to be Exceptional can be found in the Exceptional Circumstances Application form, Appendix 2, which, can be obtained by contacting the Awards and Benefits Team by telephone: 01375 652511 or email: [awards@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:awards@thurrock.gov.uk)

## Appendix 3

### Exceptional Circumstances Application Form

Pupil(s) details:

Child 1

Surname

First name

Date of birth

Does this child have a Statement of Needs?

YES

NO

Which school is the child attending?

Child 2

Surname

First name

Date of birth

Does this child have a Statement of Needs?

YES

NO

Which school is the child attending?

Child 3

Surname

First name

Date of birth

Does this child have a Statement of Needs?

YES  NO

Which school is the child attending?

Home Address

Post code

Parent/Carer name

Relationship to child

Contact numbers:

Mobile

Home

Other contact numbers

Email address

Date transport required:

Length of time transport required

(If the circumstance considered is ongoing any transport awarded will be reviewed either annually, monthly or termly – depending on the term of the award.)

Please give full details on separate sheet of why you are applying for travel assistance. You should attach copies of all supporting evidence, and provide any further evidence if requested within the time given. Without full supporting evidence we may be unable to consider the application and support cannot usually be backdated.

Would you like the school or your local Councillor informed of your application?

School                      YES         NO  

Local Councillor      YES         NO  

**Parent/Guardian agreement**

I understand that:

This is my application for home to school travel assistance for my child.  
I am declaring that the information given on this form is correct. I understand that if I have given false or misleading information I may have to repay monies I receive as a result and that I could be prosecuted.

If an award is paid in error I will be notified and travel assistance withdrawn on notice. I may be required to repay any monies received

Parent/Care signature  Date

Please return completed application forms and all supporting documentation to:  
Educational Awards and Benefits Department, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays,  
Essex, RM17 6SL

Thurrock Council will use and store the information I give on this form in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY:

Assessor name:

Transport awarded: YES  NO

Start date  End date:

Decision Agreed by  Dated

Appeal Agreed by  Dated

Please use the details below for further information:

Email address: [awards and benefits@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:awards_and_benefits@thurrock.gov.uk)  
Telephone: 01375 652511 - Educational Awards and Benefits Team

## Appendix 4

# Thurrock Council

## Home to school transport application

Please complete a separate form for each child and return to: **Education Awards and Benefits, Thurrock Council, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL**

### How we will use your information

The information you provide on this form will be used to process your application for transport to school. We may need to ask you for evidence of the benefits you receive.

We need to collect your contact details and financial information. This information will be stored securely and confidentially with the Revenues and Benefits team on their database and in printed copy. Our Special Education Needs Case Management Team and Passenger Transport Unit will also have access to the information so that they can consider your request.

Access will be on a strictly need to know basis and data will be kept for seven years before being securely deleted/destroyed. Your data will not be shared with any external third parties unless the law allows, such as to prevent or detect crime. By signing the form you are agreeing to your data being processed in this way.

### Student's details

<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Postcode</b>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	
<b>Male or female</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female
<b>Year of study</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> year 2 <input type="checkbox"/> year 3 <input type="checkbox"/> year 4 <input type="checkbox"/> year 5 <input type="checkbox"/> year 6 <input type="checkbox"/> year 7 <input type="checkbox"/> year 8 <input type="checkbox"/> year 9 <input type="checkbox"/> year 10 <input type="checkbox"/> year 11
<b>School to be attended</b>	



## Transport

<b>Nearest boarding point to your home address, if known</b>	
<b>Date transport is first needed*</b> *We cannot guarantee transport form this date	

**We issue a credit card-style pass for students in years 7 to 11. A recent passport-style photo of the student must be included with this application if they attend in these years.**

**Write the applicant's name on the back of the photo – do not staple the photo to this form**

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## Your details, as claimant – parent or carer

<b>Surname</b>										
<b>First name</b>										
<b>Date of birth</b>										
<b>Home phone number</b>										
<b>Mobile phone number</b>										
<b>National Insurance number, or NASS number</b>										

## Details of your spouse or partner, if living at the same address

<b>Surname</b>										
<b>First name</b>										
<b>Date of birth</b>										
<b>National Insurance number, or NASS number</b>										

## Benefit details

**This section is to be completed only if you – as parent or carer – are receiving benefits.**

Which benefits do you receive currently?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Income Support**
<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Seeker's Allowance, income-based, <b>not contribution-based**</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment and Support Allowance, income-based, <b>not contribution-based**</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	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*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Maximum Level of Working Tax Credit*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Universal Credit
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit**
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support Under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

\* If you are receiving Child Tax Credit and the Maximum Level of Working tax Credits, please provide a copy of **ALL** pages of your award letter.

\*\* We will seek confirmation from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP).

## Declaration

I understand that home to school transport may be provided free of charge by the Council only to those who qualify as “eligible children” under the law.

I understand that the distance from my home address to the school that my child attends or will attend using the nearest available walking route, is:

- 2 miles or more for primary aged pupils (ages 5 to 10)
- 3 miles or more for secondary aged pupils (ages 11 to 16)
- 2 miles to 6 miles for secondary aged pupils (ages 11 to 16) whose parents receive benefits

I understand that I must notify Thurrock Council’s Education Awards and Benefits section of changes in my circumstances that may affect my award – these include changes in benefit or other income, a partner moving in or out of the home, other changes in who is living at the home, and changes in address or school. If you are unsure whether a change affects your entitlement, contact us at [awards@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:awards@thurrock.gov.uk).

I understand that Thurrock Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and to this end may use the information I have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. I also understand that it may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes.

I authorise Thurrock Council to make enquiries about the validity of the information provided on this form from other central and/or local government bodies, as deemed appropriate by Thurrock Council, and hereby consent to the disclosure of any information sought in accordance with the foregoing for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

I understand that where transport is awarded because a route is deemed unsafe, and which later is deemed to be safe, I will be given notice of the change, and transport or payments will cease.

## Behavioural agreement

I understand that if my child’s behaviour does not accord with the Council’s Code of Behaviour on transport that transport may be withdrawn.

I certify that the information provided is to the best of my knowledge correct and complete.

<b>Parent or carer signature</b>	
<b>Full name</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

<b>For office use only</b>	
<b>Entitled</b>	<b>Refused</b>

Contract	Dates	Reason:
Bus:	Recorded:	
Rail:	Checked:	
Taxi:	Input:	

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## Appendix 5

### Thurrock Council

#### Palmers College transport application

Please complete a separate form for each child and return to: **Education Awards and Benefits, Thurrock Council, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL**

#### How we will use your information

The information you provide on this form will be used to process your application for transport to Palmers College. We may need to ask you for evidence of the benefits you receive.

We need to collect your contact details and financial information. This information will be stored securely and confidentially with the Revenues and Benefits team on their database and in printed copy. Our Special Education Needs Case Management Team and Passenger Transport Unit will also have access to the information so that they can consider your request.

Access will be on a strictly need to know basis and data will be kept for seven years before being securely deleted/destroyed. Your data will not be shared with any external third parties unless the law allows, such as to prevent or detect crime. By signing the form you are agreeing to your data being processed in this way.

#### Student's details

<b>Surname</b>	
<b>First name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Postcode</b>	
<b>Date of birth</b>	
<b>Male or female</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> male <input type="checkbox"/> female
<b>Year of study</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> year 1 <input type="checkbox"/> year 2 <input type="checkbox"/> year 3

<b>Which Borough do you/your parents pay council tax to?</b>	
--	--

<p><b>If you lived in Thurrock for less than 3 years please give your previous address and date of residence</b></p>	
--	--

**We issue a credit card-style pass for students. A recent passport-style photo of the student must be included with this application if they attend in these years. Write the applicant's name on the back of the photo – do not staple the photo to this form.**

**Your details, as claimant – parent or carer**

<b>Surname</b>									
<b>First name</b>									
<b>Date of birth</b>									
<b>Home phone number</b>									
<b>Mobile phone number</b>									
<b>National Insurance number, or NASS number</b>									

**Details of your spouse or partner, if living at the same address**

<b>Surname</b>									
<b>First name</b>									
<b>Date of birth</b>									
<b>National Insurance number, or NASS number</b>									

**Benefit details**

**This section is to be completed only if you – as parent or carer – are receiving benefits.**

Which benefits do you receive currently?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Income Support**
--------------------------	------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Seeker's Allowance, income-based, <b>not contribution-based**</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment and Support Allowance, income-based, <b>not contribution-based**</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	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)*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Universal Credit
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit**
<input type="checkbox"/>	Support Under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

\* If you are receiving Child Tax Credit please provide a copy of **ALL** pages of your award letter.

\*\* We will seek confirmation from the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP).

### Declaration

I understand that Post 16 transport may be provided free of charge by the Council only to those who qualify as “eligible children” under the law. I understand that this means that I live 3 miles or more from Palmers College my child, who is between 16 and 19, attends or will attend and I am in receipt of one of the eligible benefits. My child has lived in the area covered by Thurrock on 30<sup>th</sup> June in the year before applying.

I understand that I must notify Thurrock Council's Education Awards and Benefits section of changes in my circumstances that may affect my award – these include changes in benefit or other income, a partner moving in or out of the home, other changes in who is living at the home, and changes in address or school. If you are unsure whether a change affects your entitlement, contact us at [Awards@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Awards@thurrock.gov.uk).

I understand that Thurrock Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and to this end may use the information I have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. I also understand that it may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes.

I authorise Thurrock Council to make enquiries about the validity of the information provided on this form from other central and/or local government bodies, as deemed appropriate by Thurrock Council, and hereby consent to the disclosure of any information sought in accordance with the foregoing for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

I understand that where transport is awarded because a route is deemed unsafe, and which later is deemed to be safe, I will be given notice of the change, and transport or payments will cease.

## Behavioural agreement

I understand that if my child's behaviour does not accord with the Council's Code of Behaviour on transport that transport may be withdrawn.

I certify that the information provided is to the best of my knowledge correct and complete.

<b>Parent or carer signature</b>	
<b>Full name</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

For office use only		
Entitled		Refused
Contract	Dates	Reason:
Bus:	Recorded:	
Rail:	Checked:	
Taxi:	Input:	



**Appendix 6**

# South Essex College

## Transport Booking Form

To be returned by all students attending Thurrock Campus or Basildon Campuses at South Essex College

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B. \_\_\_\_\_

Campus : Thurrock / Basildon  
(please delete as appropriate)

Suggested Boarding point :

\_\_\_\_\_

Course Title : \_\_\_\_\_ Duration: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach and return with the completed application form.

**FAILURE TO COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS  
FORM WILL RESULT IN NO TRANSPORT  
BEING PROVIDED**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS ONLY)**

Please tick the boxes that apply to you or your difficulty/needs

Travel Sickness	Large Wheelchair	Crutches
Hearing Impaired	Wheelchair	Walker
Trained Nurse	Behavioural Difficulties	Blind/Sight Difficulties
Epilepsy	Seating - Harness	Autistic

Do you take any special medication for your disability? If yes please state which medication you are taking below :

\_\_\_\_\_

Office use only

Contract number .....



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## Post 16 Transport Assistance 2016/2017

### Notes of Guidance and Application Form

#### General information

The following information applies to new/returning students who are between 16 years and under 19 years of age on 1st September of the year in which you apply. Assistance is only given to students who meet our criteria and Councilors review the policy each year. If travel assistance is awarded in one academic year free transport is not automatically awarded for further years.

Students attending **Palmers** should apply directly to the college for travel assistance.

## Are you eligible?

We assess students under the following criteria:

- You must have lived in the British Isles throughout the three years immediately before 1st September of the year in which you apply. For courses starting in the Spring or Summer terms the qualifying dates are 1st January and 1st April respectively. You will not be eligible if you are living in the UK wholly or mainly for education purposes. Special arrangements apply to students whose parents have been temporarily working abroad and to some people from other European Union Countries.
- You must have lived in an area covered by Thurrock Council from the 30th June in the year before you apply. For courses starting in the Spring term this date is the 31st October and for the Summer term is the 28th February.
- Your course must be registered as full time at a maintained college or school. The subjects you take must be either an academic or vocational progression (from those qualifications that you have previously achieved). We will not fund you to do re-sits.
- Travel will only be funded if you live 3 miles or more from the school/college by the shortest available walking route. The route measured is from your front gate to the nearest school/college gate. Thurrock Council use the Datamap system to calculate this distance which uses the quickest, safe walking route for students. This can include footpaths and has been assessed by an independent body to ensure accuracy.
- Travel will only be funded if you attend the nearest publicly funded school or college that offers the course you wish to study. If you are going to study a multi subject course, such as A levels, IB or GCSEs, then you are expected to go to the nearest school or college that offers 50% or more of those subjects, for example 2 out of 3 subjects, or, 2 out of 4 subjects.
- If you apply to the nearest school/college and are not offered a place, you can be considered for transport to the next nearest school/college. You must attach the letter of refusal to your application for transport to the next nearest that can offer a place.

If you are applying **after** the start of the academic year, we must receive completed applications before the closing date for the term you wish to commence your transport. These are:

- Autumn Term by 1 August
- Spring Term by 31 January
- Summer Term by 30 April

**If we do not receive forms by these dates, we cannot guarantee transport will be provided for the start of the school term.**

## Benefit Eligibility

There will be no charge for students or families that are in receipt of:

- Income Support (IS)
- Job Seeker's allowance (Income Based)
- 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) as assessed by the Inland Revenue
- Income related employment and support allowance
- Universal credit

- Financially supported by NASS.
- Support Under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

### **What sort of transport will be awarded?**

The Passenger Transport Unit (PTU) has to provide the most economical form of transport that is practical for students and is also committed to the use of public transport. The PTU has the final say in the type of transport awarded.

### **Public transport**

Public service bus and rail season tickets are ordered termly by the Passenger Transport Unit. British Rail season tickets/bus passes will be sent to the home address, unless otherwise agreed. A passport sized photograph must accompany your application. It is important that you carry your tickets at all times as they will be inspected on all journeys. **You will be responsible for the cost of your journey if the ticket is not available or lost.**

The PTU is unable to refund any fares paid or fines incurred for not having the appropriate ticket. Although tickets are issued on a termly basis the photo card is valid for at least one year, if not longer. Please ensure you retain the photo card until a new one is issued.

### **Contract Transport**

Apart from public transport, the PTU operates contracted transport to some colleges. Tickets are issued as soon as possible at the start of each academic year by PTU and sent to your college, along with a timetable for the contracted vehicle.

### **Fuel Allowance**

Fuel allowance will only be considered where no form of public transport is available, or you are unable to use public transport for medical or timetable reasons. However, documentary evidence will be required, for example a letter from your doctor detailing your condition or a letter from the college stating timetable problems.

### **Change of Transport**

If you feel the transport awarded is incorrect please contact this office as soon as possible. If you wish to change to another mode of transport please write to this department with the type of transport needed and the reason for the change. You must not return the ticket issued until your request has been approved by this office. The PTU has the final say in the type of transport awarded.

### **Claiming back fares already paid**

Whilst the Education Awards and Benefits Department aim to process all completed applications within 5 working days and PTU arrange transport within 10 working days, at the busier periods in the year you should be prepared to fund your own travel costs until transport can be arranged. If you are entitled to assistance you will be entitled to a refund of those expenses. Therefore, you must obtain receipts and attach these securely to claims form for reimbursement.

Reimbursement will only be made back to the date the authority received your **application**.

### **Fares for work placements**

It is the responsibility of the college to assist students with their work placement travelling costs.

### **Appeals**

If your application is refused, a family may apply for support from the Council because of exceptional circumstances that mean that they face some form of hardship. Applications must be made on the appropriate form available from the Education Award and Benefits Department by calling 01375 652511. We will consider each case individually.

### **Conditions of the travel award**

1. You must maintain attendance and make satisfactory progress during your Course
2. You must agree to tell us immediately about any:
  - a) decisions to change or end your course early;
  - b) interruption to your studies;
  - c) change in living arrangements from those taken into account in the assessment
  - d) change of address
3. We assess your travel assistance in according with the above policy.

### **In making this application you are agreeing the following conditions:**

I have not previously applied to Thurrock Council for travel for this year. If I do not attend 6th form or college for any part of the period covered by the travel award or I move out of the Thurrock area, I will refund any money you ask me for (including a proportion for season tickets, if applicable). If you are under 18 we will send the bill to your parent or guardian.

I authorise Thurrock Council to make enquiries about the validity of the information provided on this form from other central and/or local government bodies, as deemed appropriate by the Authority and hereby consent to the disclosure of any information sought in accordance with the foregoing for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **Warning - it is an offence to obtain travel assistance by deception.**

### **Travel assistance queries**

#### **Apply by post**

You should send completed forms (including college certificate) and all correspondence about travel to:

Education Awards & Benefits Department  
Thurrock Council  
Civic Offices  
New Road  
Grays  
RM17 6SL

If you want us to acknowledge that we have received the application form, please send a stamped address postcard, which we will return to you when we receive the form in our office.

By phone or personal visits

You can phone or visit the office between 8:45am and 5:15pm from Monday to Thursday and on Friday between 8:45am and 4:45pm. The Education Awards and Benefits Department telephone number is 01375 652511.

### Checklist

Please complete this checklist to ensure that the form has been completed with all the relevant information and all evidence required has been attached.

**Please remember the deadline for Post 16 transport applications is the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016, any applications received after this date are not guaranteed transport at the start of term**

#### Students

- Have you read the notes and guidance for Post 16 Transport?
- Have you read the notes and guidance for Post 16 Transport?
- Have you completed all relevant sections of the form?
- Have you enclosed an acceptance letter for your chosen school/ college, or had part F completed and signed by your school/ college?
- Have you enclosed a passport size photo and written your name on the reverse

#### Parent/ (s)

- Have you heard the notes and guidance for Post 16 Transport?
- If you have indicated benefits, have you completed your National Insurance Number or National Asylum Seekers ref number and date of birth?
- If you have indicated 'Child Tax Credit' ONLY as your benefits, have you provided a copy of all the pages of your 2016/17 Child Tax Credit award
- Have you signed the declaration on page 9?

**Please keep pages 1 to 6 for your reference and complete and return pages 7 to 11 to:-**

Education Awards and Benefits Section  
Thurrock Council  
Civic Offices

## Transport awards — For NEW students over 16

Application form for travel for **new** students aged between 16-19 starting full-time courses in September 2016.

**Please note there is a charge for Post 16 Transport ensure you have read the notes when you complete**

### *How we will use this information you provide*

The information you provide on this form will be used to process your payments for transport, OR to access your eligibility for financial help with transport. We may need to ask you for evidence of your Benefits. We need to collect your contact details and financial information. This information will be stored securely and confidentially with the Revenues and Benefits team on their data base and in hard copy. The Special Education Needs Case Team and Passenger Transport Unit will also have access to this information so that they can consider your request. Access will be on a strictly need to know basis and data will be kept for seven years before being securely deleted/destroyed. Your data will not be shared with any external third parties unless the law allows (such as to prevent or detect crime). By signing the form you are agreeing to your data being processed in this way. Your form must also be signed by your parent/s or carer with full parental responsibility for you

### **Closing date for the academic year 2016/2017**

**1st August 2016**

**Please note- If we receive forms after this date, we cannot guarantee transport will be arranged for the start of the term.**

### **Part A (To be completed by all students)**

1. Students surname

2. Students first Name(s)

3. Title

5. Date of Birth

6. Age you will be  on the 1st Sept

7.(a) Home Address

(b) Telephone - Landline   
 Number - Mobile

(c) Which Borough do you/your parents pay council tax to?

(d) If you have lived in Thurrock for less than 3 years please give your previous address(es) and date (s) of residence.

From To

### OFFICE USE ONLY

Acknowledged

<b>Registered</b>	Date	
	Initials	

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
-



**8. Details of the last three schools or colleges you attended**

Name of school/ College or Town	Month from	Year	Month to	Year	Was it full or part time

Office use only

TRANSPORT AWARD	
Contract	
Operator	
Date & Initials	

**9. Previous Study**

(a) If you have left the last college or school before the end of the academic year

(b) Has the student ever received transport from Thurrock Council?

YES  NO

**12. New College/School and course details**

(a) Name of college/ School you will Attend.

(b) Which campus/ site is your course at?

(c) Exact course title and level of course, for example NVQ 3.

(d) Subject(s), for example Maths, English.

(e) Total length of the course                      Month      Year  
Starts           

**Part B Benefit Details**

**(To be completed by yourself / your parent(s) ONLY if in receipt of benefit)**

Please tick which benefits you are currently in receipt of-

<input type="checkbox"/>	Income Support (IS)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Income-related (not contributed based) <b>Job seekers allowance (IBJSA)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Income-related <b>Employment and Support Allowance</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	The <b>Guarantee</b> element of the state Pension Credit
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Child Tax Credit</b> (where there is <u>no</u> Working Tax Credit) AND the <b>total house hold Income</b> , as assessed by the Inland Revenue, that does not exceed <b>£16,190</b> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Financially supported by NASS (National Asylum Support Service).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Universal Credit

Please note that we will seek confirmation from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to confirm your benefit entitlements. If this is unsuccessful we will request this information from you.

<b>Details of Claimant / Parent</b>	<b>Please complete ALL details</b>
Surname: .....	Date of Birth <input type="text"/>
	National Insurance Number or NASS Number <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
<b>Details of Spouse/Partner (to be completed if you live at same address) Please complete ALL details</b>	
Surname: .....	Date of Birth <input type="text"/>
	National Insurance Number or NASS Number <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>

### Part B Declaration

I understand that Post 16 transport may be provided free of charge by the Council only to those who qualify as “eligible children” under the law. I understand that this means that I live 3 miles or more from the college/sixth form my child, who is between 16 and 19, attends or will attend and I am in receipt of one of the eligible benefits.

I understand that I must notify Thurrock Council's Education Awards and Benefits section of changes in my circumstances that may affect my award – these include changes in benefit or other income, a partner moving in or out of the home, other changes in who is living at the home, and changes in address or school. If you are unsure whether a change affects your entitlement, contact us at [Awards@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:Awards@thurrock.gov.uk).

I understand that Thurrock Council is under a duty to protect the public funds it administers and to this end may use the information I have provided on this form for the prevention and detection of fraud. I also understand that it may also share this information with other bodies administering public funds solely for these purposes.

I authorise Thurrock Council to make enquiries about the validity of the information provided on this form from other central and/or local government bodies, as deemed appropriate by Thurrock Council, and hereby consent to the disclosure of any information sought in accordance with the foregoing for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

I understand that transport provided or payments made which are found at a later date to be fraudulent will be recovered from me.

### Behavioural agreement

I understand that if my child's behaviour does not accord with the Council's Code of Behaviour on transport that transport may be withdrawn.

1. Student signature.	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
2. Parents/Guardian signature.	<input type="text"/>	Date	<input type="text"/>
3. Parents full name	<input type="text"/>		

**Part C:**

**Please attach a copy of your offer letter to your application.**

Alternatively, if this is not available to you, your college or 6th form school must fill in this section before the form is returned.

1.
  - (a) The student has been offered and accepted a provisional/definite place on the course shown in part A question 11.
  - (b) The student's course does not receive any funding, for example from the European Social Fund or Essex Training and Enterprise Council.

2.(a) Will late travel be needed?    Yes        No   

Days and Dates	Site	Finish Times	Reason

**3. College dates**

If the college is outside the boundaries of Thurrock or Essex, please give the term dates

From	To
Autumn	
Spring	
Summer	

**4. What level is the course?**

Further Education                          Higher Education   

**5. Is the applicant starting the course late?**

Yes                          No   

If YES, please give the first day of attendance

Your signature   
  
 Name

Date

College or school stamp

**Please tick which evidence you are submitting?**

Copy of offer Letter    School Stamp (please use the box)  
                     

You must sign the application form before it is posted to:

Awards & Benefits Section,  
 Thurrock Council,  
 Civic Offices,  
 New Road,  
 Grays,  
 Essex,  
 RM17 6SL.

**Closing date: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016**