Education and Children’s Services

Post 16 Transport Policy

2006/2007
Post 16 Transport Policy

1. **Introduction**

This policy applies to all students commencing their courses in the Academic Year 2006/07.

Sandwell Education and Children’s Services have worked closely with a number of partners in order to develop transport strategies to support students wishing to continue their education/training Post 16. Partners involved have been:

- Sandwell Secondary Schools (including special schools)
- Sandwell College
- Dudley College
- Learning and Skills Council Black Country
- Centro
- Black Country Connexions
- Sandwell Council Transport Planners

The Post 16 Transport Policy is a requirement of the Education Act 2002, it is published by the LA and supported and endorsed by the partners. It provides information on the transport assistance available to students as defined by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), together with details of where further information can be obtained. The policy will be updated annually, and will reflect the developments in transport support.

2. **Post 16 Travel Assistance Provided by Sandwell Council**

The LA will on a termly basis provide an appropriate travel pass or assistance equivalent to the cost of an appropriate pass, to a student who is studying/training at a Post 16 establishment, and who meets the following criteria.

2.1 **Criteria for Assistance**

   i) Aged 16 to 18 (up to the age of 19 where a student reaches their 19th birthday whilst enrolled on a course) **and**

   ii) Undertaking a full time course of study in education/training (12 hours or more a week) **and**
iii) Attending the nearest school or college offering a suitable course or continuing to attend the same school or college at which he/she was a registered pupil at the end of Year 11 and to which he/she received home to school transport assistance from the Authority and

iv) Is a Sandwell resident during the period for which the travel pass is valid and

v) Living three miles or more (walking distance) from the Post 16 establishment where he/she is studying/training and

vi) Undertaking a course of study at a Post 16 establishment where transport assistance is not available through other funding sources, eg Learner Support fund, free bus services, etc.

2.2 **Transport to Denominational School/Colleges**

Students who are aged 16 and over and remaining in further education and meet the criteria for assistance in Section 2.1, will receive travel assistance to attend an educational institution where that wish is based on the parents’ religion or belief.

For the purposes of this section:

- ‘Religion’ means any religion.
- ‘Belief’ means any religious or philosophical belief.
- A reference to religion includes a reference to a lack of religion.
- A reference to belief includes a reference to a lack of belief.

2.3 **Assistance for students eligible to receive an EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance)**

Students who are aged 16 and over and remaining in further education may be eligible to receive an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA). If a student is eligible to receive an EMA and meets the criteria for assistance in sections 2.1 and 2.2 they will receive travel assistance for the first term of their course only.

2.4 **Students attending Sandwell Academy**

Because Sandwell Academy does not currently have Year 11 pupils, students attending the Academy and who meet the criteria under 2.1 i), ii), iv), v) & vi) will qualify for transport assistance as specified in this policy.
3. **Definition of a walking route**

The walking route is defined as a safe available walking route between the front door of the home address to the main gates at the school/college entrance. Measurement is assessed by computer software.

4. **Travel Assistance**

4.1 **Students 16-18 years**

All eligible students will be awarded assistance equivalent to the cost of a Scholar’s Pass for the first term of their course.

Students not entitled to EMA will be issued with Scholar Passes or given assistance to the value of the Scholar’s Passes for the second and third term of the academic year, which allows travel to and from school/college on appropriate public transport.

4.2 **Students 19 Years**

Students who reach their 19th birthday whilst undertaking a full-time course of study, and who qualify under the criteria above, will be issued with a Centro Student Card, for use during the remainder of the academic year.

4.3 **Cash Payments**

Students who attend courses, which cannot be reasonably reached on a daily basis by public transport, will receive a termly payment equivalent to the cost of an appropriate travel pass, providing they meet the criteria detailed above.

4.4 **Leaving College or Change of Address**

Where a student leaves their course of study or moves out of the area, they must return the travel pass to the LA. Failure to do so will result in the student being charged for the remaining period of the pass.

4.5 **Applications for Travel Assistance**

Applications for post 16 travel assistance can be obtained from the LA by telephoning 0121-569 8208 or writing to Access Service, Education Benefits, Education and Children’s Services, PO Box 41, Shaftesbury House, 402 High Street, West Bromwich, B70 9LT.

4.6 **Application Dates for Travel Assistance**

Students have to be able to show that they are enrolled on a full-time course in order to be able to apply for assistance. Travel assistance will only be considered starting from the term in which the application is made.
5. **Students with Special Educational Needs**

Sandwell LA will assist students who have, or had, at the end of Year 11, a Statement of Special Educational Needs that identified a special transport need.

Assistance will be given by providing a free annual travel pass; home to school/college transport (ie taxi/minibus); or a travel allowance.

The decision on what support will be provided is dependent upon the student's individual needs. Entitlement is for a maximum of three years after leaving school. If a student decides to continue with their education at the age of 20 they will be assisted up until the age of 23.

Transport assistance will be subject to annual review by the LA.

6. **Appeals Procedure**

The policies shall be applied to all applications unless there are specific exceptional circumstances. Such cases will be considered on the merits of the individual case.

Should an applicant be dissatisfied with the decision he/she may appeal. An appropriate senior officer will consider any appeals.