

TRANSPORT TO SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Calderdale Local Transport Strategic Partnership Group

Post 16 Transport Provision 2012-13

1. Introduction

The Calderdale transport partnership includes representatives from:

- Children and Young People's Services
- Health and Social Care
- Calderdale College
- Education Funding Agency (EFA)
- Calderdale Schools
- Highways and Engineering
- West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (Metro)
- Service Users

The Calderdale Transport Partnership's main objective is to bring about higher participation and retention rates for learners in schools and colleges of further education. This provision is essentially concerned with assistance with transport costs. The central principle is that no learner should be prevented from taking part in full-time education because of the lack of support travelling to and from school or college.

Information Regarding Courses Available

For further information regarding what courses are available locally please visit the websites below:

www.calderdale.ac.uk
www.workabout.org.uk

2. Assistance available to Post 16 Learners in Education

All learners who attend an education provision are able to access a range of concessionary bus and rail fares. The concessionary Metrocard is also available to those on work based courses. A Scholar's PhotoCard is for 16 to 18 year old students in full time education, allowing them to:

- claim half-price bus and train travel
- claim half price rail season tickets
- buy a School Plus MetroCard.

There is a £2 administration fee when you get your PhotoCard.

The School Plus Metrocard often works out as the cheapest form of transport for many students, these are available for post 16 learners between the age of 16 and 18 who are in full time education (16 hours or more). These passes are subsidised (the actual cost is £13.50 per week and £49.50 per month), however the cost to the learner is £9.00 per week or £33.00 per month (under £400 per year) and allows learners to travel 7 days a week at anytime of the day, anywhere in West Yorkshire on buses. The above pass will also allow learners to travel between sites during the day.

Help and advice on all public transport services times and fares within the West Yorkshire District is available through the Metroline telephone information and comments service (Tel: 0113 245 7676) or by visiting the Metro website www.wymetro.com

Further information regarding school transport can be found at www.generationm.co.uk

Information is also available from your School office or College student services, however detailed below is a summary of what the local colleges are currently providing.

Nelson & Colne – Public transport used (Burnley & Pendle Transport, First). www.wymetro.com for details (as stated by Student Services). Apart from SEN transport (which is coordinated by us) for Calderdale Students

Burnley College – Public transport used (Burnley & Pendle Transport, First). However, Student Services will help find relevant bus routes (**01282 733333**) from Todmorden or visit www.wymetro.com

Kirklees College (Huddersfield & Dewsbury) – Public transport used (First & Arriva) for those travelling from Calderdale. www.wymetro.com for details (as stated by Student Services). Apart from SEN transport (which is co-ordinated by us) for Calderdale students.

Greenhead College (Huddersfield) - Public transport used (First & Arriva) for those travelling from Calderdale. www.wymetro.com or 0844 800 4411 for details (as stated by Student Services).

New College (Huddersfield) – Public transport used (Halifax Joint Committee & First) for those travelling from Calderdale. www.wymetro.com for details.

Apprenticeships

Learning providers are responsible for ensuring that non-employed Programme-led Apprentices have reasonable expenses met in full where these are needed to overcome barriers to learning. These may include the cost of travelling to or from the place of learning or work placement. Employers and learning providers should take account of learners' likely transport arrangements when planning off-the-job training, particularly outside normal working hours. The costs of expenses for learners can be claimed by learning providers against the Additional Learner Support allocation on the Training Provider Statement.

Any learners with further questions regarding arrangements for Apprenticeships can contact Linda Beever at Calderdale & Kirklees Careers on 01484 226700.

Contact details and a summary of fares schemes are detailed at Appendix 1.

3. Eligibility criteria

The provision applies to all learners living in Calderdale who are attending school sixth forms, including the independent sector and colleges of further education and who are unable to access their school or college provision by using a School Plus MetroCard. This could be due to the learners specific circumstances, the location of the school or college or the learner is aged 19 or over. (The costs of a School Plus Metrocard will be deducted from any provision offered).

Learners should be:

- of learner age - applicants must be above the statutory school leaving age of 16 years and be attending school sixth forms and further education colleges up to the age of 19 years. Where a learner has enrolled on a course prior to his/her 19th birthday and which continues beyond their 19th birthday, support will continue to be available until that course finishes;
- attending school or college - learners must be enrolled on and attending a course at a school or college funded by the EFA. Usually assistance will only be provided for one provision even if the learner attends more than one provision;
- home learners - a home learner generally means that a learner must have settled status in the UK and must have been 'ordinarily resident' for the three years preceding the first day of the academic year of their course. Strict conditions apply to residency eligibility. Advice is available from your school office or college student services;
- attending full time - learners will be attending full time courses at school or college. A full time course is one that comprises 12 guided learning hours per week (450 within the academic year).
- ability to prove need - applicants must demonstrate that in the absence of an award they would experience difficulties accessing or completing their education because of financial constraints and barriers;
- living more than 3 miles from a school sixth form or college - applicants must be attending a school or college over 3 miles away from their home measured using the shortest walking route;
- attending their nearest school or college – applicants must be attending the nearest school or college to their home address which offers the same or a similar course in order to qualify for assistance. The partnership will have regard to any preference the learner or parents may have based on their religious belief (the learner or parent is responsible for justifying this);
- learners with special educational needs will be supported up to the age of 25 years, subject to finance being available; please see sections 6,7 and 8 for criteria/details;
- learners on work based learning courses are not eligible for support through this policy.

4. Priorities

Regard will be given to those applicants who can be said to be socially excluded through their personal circumstances and priority will be given to those people who fall into "widening participation" categories, namely:

- learners on free school meals or whose parents are on benefits which would qualify them to receive free school meals if they were still at school.
- learners whose parents/carers are in receipt of the maximum working tax credit.
- learners living independently on low income;
- learners in care, or have been, in care;
- learners who are very young parents;
- learners with disabilities who need support (mobility allowances will be taken into account);
- learners who are vulnerable to becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) or who have already become NEET;
- learners on probation;
- learners considered to be "at risk";
- learners who are carers.

5. Provision

Where it is not possible for a School Plus Metrocard to be used due to the learners specific circumstances, the cash equivalent to the School Plus Metrocard will be deducted from any support given. The partnership will assess each case individually and provide the most cost effective transport solution.

Alternative provision can be made by purchasing bicycles if learners prefer. If you wish to take advantage of this provision this must be indicated on the application form. An allowance of up to £300 will be provided to purchase a bicycle and the safety and security equipment required. Receipts will be required, as proof of purchase and the bicycle will be expected to last throughout your college/school course.

Other transport solutions which may be provided if the provisions detailed above are unsuitable may include (this list is not exhaustive):

- Payments to parents/learners to arrange their own transport;
- A walking escort;
- An escort to accompany on public transport;
- Transport from a pick up point (taxi or specialist transport);
- Home to school or college transport (taxi or specialist transport).

6. Learners with Special Educational Needs

Learners who have Special Educational Needs will be treated no less favourably than other learners and recognition is given to the differential costs they may incur in comparison with other learners. Please note although the Access Team will assess all applications if successful transport assistance may be financed by different partners. Further information will be provided to successful applicants.

Mobility allowances will be taken into account. Parents in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component (HRMC) of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will be expected to use their vehicle, where they have obtained one through the Motability Scheme, as this has been provided for the benefit of the learner. Where a parent has NOT obtained a vehicle, the HMRC of the DLA will still be taken into account when determining any assistance. A mileage allowance will be provided for parents/guardians to make their own arrangements.

Consideration will be given to providing transport assistance for Post 16 Learners with Special Educational Needs where the distance is less than 3 miles. In such cases an assessment of need may be necessary.

A learner will be regarded as having a disability/learning difficulty if the Partnership is satisfied that he or she:

- has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of the same age, or
- has a disability, which either prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided by institutions providing Post 16 education or training.

A learner will not be regarded as having a learning disability solely because the language (or form of language) in which he or she is taught, is different from that which has at any time been spoken in his or her home.

Learners with disabilities or learning difficulties will receive assistance with travelling expenses to one provision only provided they:

- live within the Calderdale boundary and are full time learners attending their nearest school or college within Calderdale;
- are full time learners attending the nearest school or college outside the Calderdale boundary where an equivalent course of study cannot be undertaken in Calderdale;
- ability to prove need - applicants must demonstrate that in the absence of an award they would experience difficulties accessing or completing their education because of financial constraints and barriers. Households with an income of above £30,810 will be given reduced assistance with transport costs (this is higher for students with SEN to reflect the higher costs involved). A contribution of up to 50% towards the cost of transport or reimbursement of 50% of the transport costs if transport is arranged by a parent/guardian will be provided;
- had a Statement of Special Educational Needs, which explicitly identified transport in their statement at the time of leaving a mainstream secondary or special school, or;
- previously had a Statement of Special Educational Needs that did not identify a need for transport (i.e. due to the proximity of their home to the school) or since leaving school have subsequently developed learning difficulties as defined by the Partnership above. In such cases an assessment of need may be necessary. These will be undertaken by the Access Team's Independent Travel Trainer and will take into account the information supplied by the learner/parent on the application form, additional advice supplied by other relevant professionals and in certain cases observation of the learner to assess their travel capabilities.

Please note support is allocated each academic year and new applications have to be made each year by all learners. The Post 16 Transport Provision is reviewed every May and applications are then assessed against the new guidance issued by the EFA. If transport assistance is provided for the next academic year learner's travel needs will be reviewed to ensure the appropriate provision is made.

Different approaches of providing transport assistance will be pursued wherever possible in order to make best use of the limited funds available.

7. Independent travel

As learners become older and move towards greater independence they may want to develop their skills of independent travel and for some this may mean using public transport or walking to school or college. For others transport assistance may be required throughout school/college life.

Independent Travel Trainers are employed by the Access Team who support schools and colleges in providing identified young people with the skills necessary to become more independent in their travel.

Schools and colleges work in partnership with the trainers, learner and their families to enable learners to achieve greater levels of competency in their independent travel.

If you would like more information about the Independent Travel Scheme please contact:

Ann Exton/Jason Oldroyd
Independent Travel Trainers
The Access Team
Children and Children People's Service
Northgate House
Halifax
HX1 1UN

Tel: 01422 392654 or email ann.exton@calderdale.gov.uk or jason.oldroyd@ravenscliffe.calderdale.sch.uk

8. Learners attending residential schools and colleges

Support will be given to those learners who meet the criteria set out in this guidance.

Learners who are boarding at their nearest suitable specialist residential college will receive payment of approved travelling expenses for journeys made to and from the college at the start and end of each full academic term and at half terms less the amount of a School Plus Metrocard.

Approved travelling expenses will be based upon the cheapest available fare by public transport for a given journey (and will also be expressed in terms of a mileage allowance by car for that journey).

Learners are able to exercise reasonable choice to attend relevant courses and may take up appropriate education outside of the Calderdale Council boundary where appropriate subject to the following.

- Distance.

Payment of or assistance with transport costs will be made where a learner has to travel more than 3 miles to the nearest school or college in Calderdale which offers the appropriate course.

- Out of Authority schools and colleges.

All colleges will have access to a 16-19 Bursary Fund and this can be used to fund transport costs. This is not ring fenced to learners who live in the Local Authority where the college is based. Learners attending out of authority colleges should contact the College directly to enquire about any transport assistance which may be available.

Assistance from this provision will only be provided to learners attending a school or college outside the Calderdale boundary where an equivalent course of study cannot be undertaken in Calderdale and no other funding is available. Specific details of the course will need to be given in order that an assessment can be made regarding suitability. In such cases transport costs will only be made available to learners who are attending their nearest available school or college outside the Calderdale boundary.

9. Conditions

Support will not be given to learners if there is no reasonable progression in their studies. This will be established by staff at the school or college who have discretion to determine whether satisfactory attendance (under normal circumstances learners will be expected to attend more than 85% in any one month) and conduct is being maintained in the context of a learner's individual circumstances and with reference to any Student Learning Agreements which may be in place.

Learners who are in receipt of transport assistance and who subsequently fail to attend school or college without a valid reason or who terminate their attendance will be required to pay back to the issuing organisation any outstanding monies.

All passes remain the property of the issuing organisation and must be returned when requested.

10. Appeals procedure

The Service Manager with the responsibility for Home to School Transport has the discretion to approve requests for transport assistance in special circumstances if applications are found to justify approval outside the guidance. Learners who wish to appeal against the decision not to award support or to withdraw existing support should contact the Access Team on 01422 392531 who will send out a Stage One Appeal Form in the first instance.

If learners are not satisfied with the outcome of their Stage One Appeal, a further appeal may be made to the Appeals Panel, which will meet when necessary. Please contact the Access Team on 01422 392531 for a form.

11. Applying for support

Applications may be requested by contacting the Access Team on 01422 392531. Alternatively, application forms may be also be obtained www.calderdale.gov.uk/education/schools/travel/post-16transport/application.html