

Dear parents,

The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) and Achieving for Children are proposing changes to the Home to School Transport policy.

It is very important that you respond to this consultation even if it doesn't affect you now, this policy change if it goes ahead may impact you in the future.

The Local Authority are considering removing or changing all non-statutory transport concessions from September 2021.

They are consulting on several areas, some of which are more relevant to our members than others.

The first 2 sections are mainly relevant if you live in the 2 localities related to this part of the consultation - (Holyport Village and Eton Wick) so you can just reply with a tick against the box which says **"I don't know if this concession should be removed or changed"** if this doesn't affect you and /or you're not sure how to respond

So, the **third section** talks about Post 16 home to school transport for pupils with SEND -

Currently, free school transport to post 16 pupils with SEND is provided to:

(a) students from 'low income' families;

(b) students who are assessed as 'low income' in their own right. This is usually because they are in receipt of Universal Credit (formerly) ESA. It is important to note that ANY post 16 student with SEND who cannot work part time due to their disability is eligible for Universal Credit & thereby qualifies for free transport, regardless of parental income.

The proposed changes in policy will require these students to now pay for their transport.

One proposal is that this will be a 100% charge and the other proposal is to charge a flat rate of 50% to all low-income students.

Currently all pupils who pay for their transport pay one charge regardless of the distance travelled, however there is also a proposal to charge according to distance travelled. This immediately puts students for whom there is no local provision at a disadvantage.

And then the next section - the **fourth part** of the consultation is about the charge for home to school transport for low-income families regardless of whether the children are SEND, looked after, etc etc. Again.....

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One proposal is that this will be a 100% charge and the other proposal is to charge a flat rate of 50% to all low-income students.

The **fifth section** relates to "exceptional circumstances" and this is where, for any family something different is put in place due to a change in circumstances for a fixed period only. The proposal wants to reduce this fixed period from 24 weeks to 1 school term i.e. approx. 13 weeks. The type of things this might relate to is - if your SEND child was to have surgery and couldn't leave home or you were in hospital and RBWM temporarily transported the sibling; or if you were ill and needed treatment which meant you couldn't drive for a period of time.

The final two sections relate to children of certain ages - again regardless of whether they have SEND or not so they will be relevant to some families but not all. So again, you could select the **"I don't know if this concession should be removed or changed"** option here.

These changes are clearly unfair and penalise the most vulnerable young people. We can only stop this change this by sharing our voices via the consultation that you will see below.

It just takes a few minutes, multiple people from the same household can complete this, including carers and grandparents etc.

<https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/council-and-democracy/consultations/education-consultations/home-school-transport-policy-consultation>

We have been given very little notice of this consultation so PLEASE complete now as the closing date is the 12th April.

It would be a huge help if you could share this on your Facebook page/School Facebook page or any other viable route. We want to make sure everyone is given the opportunity to share their views. Thank you for your support.

Best wishes

PaCiP – Parent Carer Forum of Maidenhead and Windsor