

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 2 February 2023

Report of the Director of Education, Culture and Skills

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Delivering better services;

**Determination of Home to School Transport Policy -
Academic Year 2024/2025**

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

Lancashire County Council reviews the Home to School Transport policy on an annual basis. There are no changes to the determined policy for the academic year 2024/2025.

This is deemed to be a Key Decision and the requirements of Standing Order C19 have been complied with.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the Home to School Transport Policy for the academic year 2024/2025 as set out at Appendix 'A'.

Detail

In accordance with the Education School Information Regulations 2008 (Regulation 8.), the county council has a duty to publish all relevant information that may inform parental decision making when applying for a secondary school, no later than six weeks before the closing date for secondary school applications which is 31 October each year.



Additionally, the county council is required to publish general arrangements and policies in respect of home to school travel for children of compulsory school age. The county council informs parents of entitlement to receive transport assistance by publishing a Home to School Transport Policy on the Lancashire County Council website and it is reviewed annually.

Statutory Entitlement

The Department for Education issued statutory guidance in July 2014 that reaffirmed that Local Authorities had a duty to provide free transport for all pupils of compulsory school age (5-16) if their nearest suitable school is:

- beyond 2 miles (if below the age of 8); or
- beyond 3 miles (if aged between 8 and 16)

Pupils attending secondary schools whose parents are on the qualifying benefits for free school meals, or in receipt of the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit, also receive assistance with travel costs if they attend one of their three nearest schools, provided the distance to school is between 2 and 6 miles. For low income families there is also denominational transport assistance if a pupil is attending a particular school on the grounds of faith and the school is between 2 and 15 miles from home.

County Council's Home to School Transport Policy.

There have been no changes to the Home to School Transport Policy that impact on the entitlement of pupils to receive transport assistance.

The Policy closely reflects the statutory guidance provided by the DfE and is equitably applied when assessing all pupils transferring from primary to secondary school.

The only changes that have been made to the 2023/2024 Home to School Transport Policy are as follows:

- Dates have been amended.
- The inclusion of details relating to the Travel Assistance Grant to replicate the offer in the SEN Transport Policy.
- The removal of the section on discretionary denominational assistance, as this is no longer available, having been phased out over 5 years.
- The Student Support Appeals Committee has been renamed to the Independent Transport Appeals Panel.

Information about the availability of transport assistance

The admission information which is available for all parents from each September (online and paper where requested) provides a summary transport policy. Parents are advised to check the policy carefully if getting their child from home to school and back is a consideration. Parents are directed to a full copy of the Home to School Transport Policy on the Lancashire County Council website, and are encouraged to seek advice from the area education office if they have any queries. The county



council also has officers in attendance at most secondary school open evenings, to give advice on transport eligibility and admission queries.

Consultations

It has not been necessary to consult on the Home to School Transport Policy 2024/2025 as there have been no changes.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

There are no suggested changes to parental entitlement to receive transport assistance.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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None

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

