

London Borough of Waltham Forest
Home to school travel assistance Policy
(5-25 years)

March 2021

CONTENTS:

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. PRINCIPLES**
- 3. FORMS OF ASSISTANCE**
- 4. ELIGIBILITY**
- 5. DISCRETIONARY ASSISTANCE**
- 6. HOW TO APPLY**
- 7. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**
- 8. FURTHER INFORMATION**

1. Introduction

This policy relates to home to school assistance with travel to all children and young people between the age of 5 to 19 years, and up to 25 years for young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan, who are residents of Waltham Forest. In some specific circumstances this policy may also be relevant for children under 5 with SEND.

The Education Act places a duty on Local Authorities to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made, where necessary, to facilitate a child's attendance at school. The duty on local authorities is to make such travel arrangements as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance at school for eligible children.

This Policy has been developed in line with:

- Education Act 1996
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 0-25 years Code of Practice 2014
- Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance 2014
- Post 16 Transport to Education and Training 2019

This duty relates to travel from home to school and back, usually via an agreed pick-up point. It does not relate to travel between education settings during the school day.

For children attending a residential school;

- A child boarding on a weekly basis where the school is closed at weekends will be provided with travel assistance at the beginning and end of the school week, other periods of closure and during term time only.
- A child boarding on a termly placement where the school is not closed at weekends will be provided with travel assistance limited to the start and end of the school term, half terms and for periods of whole school closure only.
- Any other journeys required will be the responsibility of parents/carers.

As set out in the national guidance, the Local Authority will review travel policies, arrangements and contracts regularly to ensure it is in line with statutory duties and best value for money is achieved.

2. Principles

As outlined in the national guidance, relevant consideration has been given to sustainability, delivering value money and finding school and parent friendly solutions. This policy is underpinned by the following general principles:

- promote a safe, active and sustainable approach to travel assistance to and from school and other educational settings.
- ensure children are able to travel to school in a way that keeps them safe, well, resilient and independent.
- promote the most independent method of travel.
- use of the most cost-effective travel options.

In the interest of improving life chances, the Local Authority will always consider forms of travel assistance that help to develop independent travel skills to enable children and young people to lead independent lives as they grow older. The Local Authority aims to support parents/carers through this process as much as possible.

3. Forms of Assistance

The majority of children and young people, including many of those with SEND and an EHCP, do not require specialised travel assistance and are able to travel to their educational establishment without additional support, through London's free and discounted travel or other means. Further information about free and discounted travel of Transport for London Services is available on the TfL website.

Where this option is not suitable one of the below forms of travel can be considered for eligible children and young people. Parental consent is required to utilise these options and we encourage parents/carers to enable their child's independence where possible. The child or young person's safety is the most important factor in deciding which option is most suitable. The decision about specific types of assistance is made by the Assistance with travel team based on the information provided predominantly in the application form. In majority of cases this together with information available on our system is sufficient for decision making. In some more complex cases we will liaise with other professionals involved including: SEN officer, Social worker (if applicable); SENCO or family liaison officer at school, health professionals, and Early help.

- Independent travel training to give children and young people the essential skills required to travel independently either on foot or by public. Independent Travel Training (ITT), where suitable, is our preferred type of travel assistance as it gives children and young people the skills and confidence to travel independently however this will only be offered where the young person is suitable. By reducing young people's dependence on specialist transport, we can better prepare them for adulthood and increase the opportunities open to them in future, such as going on to college, employment or community and social engagement. If this is not appropriate, eligible children will be considered for other options. The suitability for independent travel training will be regularly reviewed. Learners must meet a standard of suitability and will be assessed internally and by our providers before commencing independent travel training. Further information about independent travel training is in the appendix of this policy.
- Reimbursement of the cost of travel: reimbursements for fares/passes for parents and carers to escort their children to and from school on public transport or mileage will only be available on a short-term basis.
- Personal travel budgets for parents and carers to arrange transport themselves, or use a combination of options. These budgets are currently based on value by mileage.

In circumstances where the above options are not suitable, eligible children may be offered:

- A place on a shared minibus/bus, using collection points where possible.
- A place in a taxi (for out of borough placements only where other modes of assistance are not suitable). Taxis are arranged through specifically contracted organisations following all relevant checks.

The Local Authority will also take into account the journey length of time when deciding which form of assistance is most appropriate. A child's total journey should be no more than 45 minutes for primary age and 75 minutes for secondary age pupils.

Local authorities may, at their discretion, use appropriate pick up points when making travel arrangements. For arrangements to be suitable, they must also be safe and reasonably stress free, to

enable the child to arrive at school ready for a day of study. The Local authority will work with families to ensure this. These pick-up points should not exceed 0.3 miles from home and are included in the journey time. The Local Authority will take into account whether the child or young person is able to walk to a pick-up point. The Local Authority will usually seek quiet residential areas to use as pick-up points and must factor in things like places to park, dropped kerbs, and sufficient space for the buses. Please note it is a parental responsibility to make an assessment if their child can go to and from pick up point on their own. Should the child require an adult it is a parental responsibility that the child gets to and from the pick-up point safely.

If parents/carers are not happy with the method of travel that the LA has deemed suitable they are able to request a review of the offer made and should the reviewed offer be not suitable, appeal. Details of how to request a review and appeal are in section 7 of this policy. Parents/Carers will be responsible for any costs that they incur arranging alternative transport while their application is being reassessed, but every effort will be made to complete this as quickly as possible.

Learners aged 16+ are encouraged to travel independently and, where appropriate, parents and carers will be expected to support their child to travel independently. There are several other options available to post-16 learners to access support with travelling to education and training:

- 16+ Oyster Photo Card
- Apprentice Oyster Card
- 18+ Student Oyster Photo Card
- The 16–19 Bursary Fund
- Residential Support Scheme
- Residential Bursary Fund
- Discretionary Learner Support

Further information on these forms of assistance is available in the appendix. For eligible pupils who are aged 19-25 the Local Authority will consider the available options and identify a suitable form of assistance for the individual. This may include the options listed earlier in section and this will be assessed on individual needs. For adults, the LA is required to make such arrangements as it considers necessary to facilitate the student's attendance at LA maintained further/higher education institutions or within the further education sector. For students on EHC plans, the LA is required to make such arrangements as it considers necessary to facilitate attendance at education/training institutions outside the further/higher education sector. This only applies if the LA is also providing boarding accommodation. As stated in the guidance; The overall intention of the adult transport duty is to ensure that those with the most severe disabilities with no other means of transportation are able to undertake further education and training after their 19th birthday to help them move towards more independent living.

HOW DO WE DECIDE WHICH OPTION IS USED FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE?

Every child and family seeking travel assistance is different. Assistance with travel will assess every application on an individual basis upon its own merits, prior to making an offer of the most appropriate travel assistance. We will also consult our SEND team colleagues and other professionals involved in your child's care, should we require more information or needed their input into decision

making. The mode of transport will be chosen taking into account any special arrangements needed to support the child's needs and that delivers the best value.

When applying for assistance please ensure you provide the team with any information that you think will be relevant for provision of transport. This is to ensure that should transport be awarded, the provider is in a position to meet your child's needs.

4. Eligibility

A child must attend their nearest 'qualifying school' to be eligible for travel assistance. While parents are free to name any school they wish during the admissions process, their child will only be eligible for free transport where the school selected is their nearest appropriate school. Any travelling arrangements or expenses will be the responsibility of parents/carers if there is a nearer suitable qualifying school, unless the school is solely named in the child's EHC Plan. An application for assistance with travel does not affect whether a school should be named in an EHCP.

The 'nearest qualifying school' means the nearest school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age and ability of the child, and any special educational needs that the child may have. Further detail on qualifying schools can be found in the appendix of this policy.

This policy applies to; Children and young people in education aged 5-16, and; Young people with special educational needs and disabilities in education aged 16- 19. There are differences in the eligibility in each age group.

For children and young people in education aged 5-16, eligibility it based on the following criteria:

1. Does the child have any special educational needs or disabilities, which limit their mobility or ability to use public transport?

The Local Authority has a duty to make transport arrangements for all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special educational needs (SEN) or disability. Usual transport requirements (e.g. the statutory walking distances) will not be considered when assessing the transport needs of children eligible due to SEN and/or disability.

Many children with a EHCP are able to walk to their school or travel independently using public transport. However, we recognise that some children will require more support and we will ensure that children and young people are assessed on an individual basis and that any decision about travel assistance is based on individual needs. An EHCP does not necessarily mean that the Local Authority will provide any form of assistance with travel. Equally, assistance with travel is not limited only to children with an EHCP.

2. Is the nearest suitable school further than the statutory walking distances?

Schedule 35B of the Education Act sets statutory walking distances. The Local Authority should offer free transport to 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)

In some circumstances a child with special educational needs or disability (SEND) may not meet the distance criteria but is unable to walk to school because of their needs. Where this is identified through the assessment process then travel assistance will be offered. The distance criteria does not apply if the child is eligible for travel assistance due to their special education needs or disabilities.

The measurement of the statutory walking distances is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. It is measured by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk safely.

3. Does the child come from a 'low-income background'?

The Local Authority will offer travel assistance where pupils are entitled to free school meals or their parents are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit if:

- the nearest suitable school is beyond 2 miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11);
- the school is between 2 and 6 miles (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools);
- the school is between 2 and 15 miles and is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16).

4. Are there any other exceptional circumstances?

Unsafe routes

The Local Authority has a duty to make transport arrangements for all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to nearest suitable school because the nature of the route is deemed unsafe to walk.

Parental Disability

The Local Authority will work with families to promote and ensure equality of opportunity for disabled parents. For example, if a parent's disability prevents them from accompanying their child along a walking route that would otherwise be considered unsafe without adult supervision, a reasonable adjustment might be to provide assistance with travel for the child in question.

POST-16 ELIGIBILITY

In relation to Post-16s, the legislation recognises that a local response to transport arrangements is important in enabling young people's participation in education and training and as such the flexibility of the extent of an individual policy lies with individual local authorities. A local approach allows local circumstances to be taken into account. The legislation therefore gives local authorities the discretion to determine what assistance with travel and financial support are necessary to facilitate young people's attendance.

Local Authorities have a duty to facilitate the attendance of young people of sixth form age receiving education and training and this may include assistance with travel in certain circumstances. This duty applies to young people of sixth form age and young people with EHC plans up to age 25 where they are continuing on a course started before their 19th birthday.

The Local Authority encourages most post-16 students to use public transport and travel independently because of the beneficial effects this will have on the young person's development

and preparation for adulthood. We recognise that in some circumstances additional assistance with travel may be required.

For children and young people in education post-16, in addition to the criteria set out above, eligibility is based on the following considerations:

- You have a special educational need or disability as identified in an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There may be other exceptional circumstances.
- You have explored the available sources of support outlined in Section C (detailed in Appendix).
- Your chosen study programme takes place at a publicly funded provider as set out in the national guidance.
- Your learning provider is the nearest provider that can meet the majority of your needs. Travel assistance will not be provided on the basis of one subject being unavailable at your nearest learning provider. Reasonable choice may be considered in enabling young people to choose an establishment of education or training that is not the closest to where they live if it makes sense to do so. If the young person is attending the sole college named in their EHCP, as with school children, this is deemed to be their nearest suitable college.
- Your study programme is full-time – equivalent to a minimum of 18 hours per week. Your study programme does not however have to last a full year. In some circumstances, we may still offer travel assistance to those attending fewer hours if this is due to the individuals' SEND. The LA will review any application for travel assistance for a student attending a part time course and assess each case on an individual basis.
- You are under 25 years of age or engaged in a full-time course of education during the academic year in which you turn 25 years of age.
- If you are aged 19 or over, you have been in continuous education or training since before your 19th birthday. Education is still continuous if the provider has changed providing there is no gap. Assistance with travel will not be provided to those who have left education and are returning after the age of 19.
- The study programme you attend provides a clear educational or training benefit, suited to your needs.
- You live more than 3 miles away from your learning provider (by the shortest safe walking route).

Exclusions

Poor behaviour: Persistent poor behaviour will not be tolerated on transport provision. The Local Authority will work closely with the relevant schools to consider any required action. This may, in some situations, result in temporary or permanent exclusion. If the behaviour is due to the individuals SEND the Local Authority will consider whether there is an alternative form of assistance that could be provided.

5. Discretionary and Temporary Assistance

The Local Authority has discretion to grant travel assistance even where it falls outside of the normal policy or statutory duties, and will do so only in exceptional circumstances. The reasons for such decisions will be recorded and reviewed regularly, as required. Each case will be dealt with on an individual basis. This may include;

- **Under 5s:** the Local Authority has no statutory duty to provide travel assistance for children under five and will not do so in the majority of cases. There might be exceptional circumstances where travel assistance can be considered such as parental disability or children who are starting specific education provision before their 5th birthday and those are assessed on individual basis.
- **Religion and belief** (outside of the low-income circumstances outlined in section 4). The local authority has a duty to consider a parent/carers' preference for their child to attend a school with particular faiths or beliefs. There may be exceptional circumstances where the Local Authority could support families with assistance with travel.
- **Temporary circumstances** (e.g. housing, medical, exclusions) Where an individual experiences a temporary change in circumstance affecting their ability to travel to school, travel assistance may be considered for a set period of time. This will be assessed on an individual basis and will be regularly reviewed.
 - If the Local Authority places the family in temporary accommodation, in some circumstance the Local Authority may provide travel assistance if the child's school is further than the statutory distances. This will be for a short period of time usually until a nearer school place can be offered. If the parent/carer choose for the child not to attend a nearer school travel assistance will no longer be available.
 - Temporary medical circumstances – if a child or young person has a temporary medical condition that means they meet the eligibility criteria in section 4 they can request an assessment for travel assistance to be considered. Evidence from a medical practitioner will need to be provided for this assessment.
 - School exclusions - Where a pupil is registered at a school, but is attending a place other than that school as a result of temporary exclusion, eligibility for home to school travel will apply to the other place for the temporary period.
- **Shorts breaks/respite** - Assistance may be considered for journeys at the end of the school day to a short breaks venue, but it will be the responsibility of the parent/carer to organise the journey from the short breaks venue to home after the short break activities have finished unless the child is staying overnight and going directly back to school the following day. The assistance will be at the Local Authority's discretion. The Local Authority does not have a duty to offer travel assistance to and from respite and short breaks. A minimum of one week's notice of any changes is required. If your child requires transport to respite provision this will usually be scheduled for the end of the transport round which may affect the time the child gets to respite provision. This might impact on their time at the respite provision. Similarly, if your child requires transport in the morning following an overnight respite, they will be collected from the respite venue after the transport to schools has been completed, which may result in them arriving to school later. Please note this only applies to children who already access transport to/from school.
- **Multiple addresses** - If a child resides at two home addresses we will consider transport to both but will need up to date, accurate information from parent/carers on the details of living arrangements to review whether both addresses can properly be where the child is

“habitually and normally resident”. The Local Authority normally provides assistance with travel from one home address only. Parents/carers of pupils with more than one residence should nominate one address as the ‘main residence’, from which eligibility will be assessed. If no one address is nominated, ‘main residence’ will be taken as the address nearest the school.

- **Dual placements** - When a dual placement is outlined on an EHC Plan, the Local Authority may consider travel assistance between the two schools on a discretionary basis and outside the terms of this policy in order to decide how best to cater for the individual circumstances of a learner.

Where possible, parents/carers should facilitate their child’s travel in these circumstances. In most circumstances, any discretionary or temporary assistance should take the form of a TfL travel card, or if this is not possible, mileage allowance for parents/carers or a reimbursement of public transport expenses.

6. How to apply for travel assistance

Parents and carers who believe that their child may be entitled to assistance with travel should obtain and complete a ‘School Assistance with Travel’ application form.

For an application form contact:

Travel Assistant
Waltham Forest Special Education Needs and Disabilities Service
London Borough of Waltham Forest
Wood Street Health Centre
6 Linford Road, Walthamstow
London, E17 3LA
Tel: 020 8496 6500
Email: assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk

All applications will receive careful consideration. Parents and carers will be informed of the local authority’s decision in writing within ten working days of receipt of the completed application. If your child is granted assistance with travel we will confirm in the letter what travel assistance will be provided and any details related to this assistance.

If your child is not granted travel assistance we will write to you and explain:

- The decision reached
- What factors were considered
- The rationale of the decision
- Documents considered
- Details of how to escalate to stage 1
- Applicable law and guidance

All decisions will be made in accordance with the law and policy guidance applicable at the time of making the decision. Applications are usually assessed within 20 workingdays of receiving a fully completed form after all supporting documents have been received.

If you are awarded assistance with travel in the form of a place on an in-borough bus there are specific application deadlines within the academic year to ensure transport can be scheduled and planned appropriately.

Applications awarded before this date	Start of bus place
September 30th	1st day of school after October half term
November 30th	1st day of the Spring term in January
January 31st	1st day of school after February half term
March 31st	1st day of the Summer term in May
April 30th (for the current academic year)	1st day of school after June half term
April 30th (for next academic year – new applications)	1st day of the Autumn term in September

Assistance with travel team has an annual renewal process. The process commences in January for readiness for September of the next academic year. In this process we will write to all families receiving assistance with travel asking them to confirm details of their child/ren we hold on file. Families are being asked to respond by a specific deadline to allow Local Authority officers enough time to process all received renewals or record any changes required for a child from September in the next academic year. Renewal process does not impact on the assistance with travel already allocated unless there's a specific wish from a parent/carer. In such cases we will liaise with the family to ensure those requests are considered and implemented timely.

7. Appeals and Complaints

Where possible we will try to work with parents/carers to agree a way forward before review is required. The appeals procedure is a two-stage process, as set per the National Guidance. The below process should be followed for parents/carers who wish to challenge a decision about:

- the transport arrangements offered;
- their child's eligibility;
- the distance measurement in relation to statutory walking distances; and
- the safety of the route.

INTERNAL PROCESS
<u>Stage 1 – Review by a senior officer</u>
A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's home to school transport decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision. The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.

Within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's written request a senior officer will review the original decision and send the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review, setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB21);
- information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
- what factors were considered;
 - the rationale for the decision reached; and
 - information about how the parent can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).

Application forms for an appeal can be obtained from and should be returned to:

Waltham Forest Special Education Needs and Disabilities Service
London Borough of Waltham Forest
Wood Street Health Centre
6 Linford Road, Walthamstow
London, E17 3LA

Tel: 020 8496 6500

Email: assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk

Stage 2 – Review by an independent appeals panel

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.

Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeal panel considers written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and gives a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days), setting out:

- the nature of the decision reached;
- how the review was conducted (including the standard followed e.g. Road Safety GB);
- information about other departments and/or agencies that were consulted as part of the process;
- what factors were considered;
- the rationale for the decision reached; and
- information about the parent's right to put the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman (see below).

This appeal will be passed to the Independent Travel Assistance Appeals Panel which will comprise Local Authority officers and SEN practitioners who have been independent of the decision (this must not include the SEN Officer who made the initial decision or the SEN Manager). The panel will consider all of the evidence and make a final decision. This decision will be sent by letter within one week. You will make your appeal on a form and will present in person to the independent panel.

When requesting an appeal please supply as much evidence as possible in support of the request. For example, it may be helpful for the appeal panel to have information about family circumstances, details of how the child currently travels to school and any concerns arising from

that, whether a responsible adult is able to accompany the child to and from school etc. All evidence supplied will be taken into account by the review panel.

Local Government Ombudsman

There is a right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. Further information on this can be found on the LGO website:

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint/fact-sheets/education/school-transport>

If the complainant considers the decision of the independent panel to be flawed on public law grounds, the complainant may also apply for judicial review.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

All complaints will be dealt with using Waltham Forest's staged approach. You can complain directly to the SEN Team at the above address or using the Local Authority's website.

During the appeals process individuals will receive the assistance according to the Local Authority's assessment. Any changes agreed as a result of the appeal will be implemented as soon as reasonably possible.

8. Appendix

a) **Independent Travel Training**

Independent travel training provides practical help to young people to travel by themselves in a way that suits them. Travel training aims to help people confidently travel independently to a place of education, training, key services or leisure, and prepares them to travel to work.

Independent travel training can be beneficial in enabling greater access to transport, education and employment opportunities for a range of people. It promotes our vision to support children and young people with SEND to prepare for adulthood so they can live independently and secure work opportunities. Travel training also enables people to travel in a more sustainable way (i.e. by public transport, on foot or by bicycle). Waltham Forest Local Authority encourages children and young people to undergo travel training if they are suitable to improve their independence now, and in the future. Suitability for independent travel training will be regularly reviewed to increase the opportunity for young people to access this provision and reduce dependence on the Local Authority.

What is it?

The Local Authority can provide a bespoke training programme designed to help children and young people learn the skills to travel independently. These programmes consist of training sessions, escorted travel with trained travel assistants and help to apply for relevant travel passes (Zip Oyster etc.) once the training is complete.

For children currently travelling on specialist buses or taxis, Independent Travel Training offers the opportunity to safely become independent and learn an essential life skill for the future.

Who is it for?

Children with complex special educational needs or disabilities, who:

- would like to travel independently to school, but require assistance in learning to do so
- are currently travelling on specialist buses and taxis but are moving from primary school to secondary school
- are currently travelling on specialist buses and taxis but are moving from secondary school to college or another setting

How does it work?

Independent Travel Training is a programme designed to give children and young people the skills to travel to school on their own – this includes road safety, personal safety, money skills, route planning and how to use public transport.

When a child is offered travel training:

- a personal travel plan will be designed for them by an experienced travel trainer, together with the parent(s)/carer(s);
- targets will be set, which will be reported against on a regular basis during the training.

The training normally takes between 2 and 12 weeks. Some young people may require an extension to this to become fully independent. The Local Authority can also offer travel assistants either before or after the training to give extra support to ensure the maximum success.

Travel training includes but is not limited to:

- using different / most suitable modes of transport,
- planning when there are unexpected changes to routes or transport arrangements ie: road closures, replacement bus or replacement route, no train etc,
- managing behaviour in stressful situations,
- learning to navigate and finding different way of reaching destinations when there are disruptions to transport, building confidence, etc.;
- stranger danger – recognising who would be the safe stranger to approach should there be a need
- managing money

What happens when training starts:

Following referral to the service, provider makes contact with the family to carry out initial suitability assessment.

When this assessment is completed, the Local Authority is notified if the learner has been assessed as suitable to complete travel training

Following successful suitability assessment, another assessment takes place to assess home to school route and possible hazards or dangers the trainer needs to be aware of in terms of learner needs and route logistics.

Stages may include:

- Starting as 1 to 1 door to door service for the first few weeks;
- At 2 weeks there is a review and recommendation on further progression or extension of this phase;
- Learner's progress is reviewed weekly;
- Around week 6 there is a reduction plan set up to eventually finish with independent travel;
- Last week of training is shadowing - tutors join the route at any point and observe the learner (without their knowledge).

Benefits of Travel Training

- Increased independence and confidence, and improved self-esteem;
- Increased opportunity to participate in social and leisure activities;
- Improvement to general health and well-being, improved quality of life;
- Increased opportunity to access healthcare services;
- Increased opportunity and likelihood of entering employment or education
- A more efficient use of local authority resources, increasing the amount of funding that is available to invest in high quality education, health and care services;

b) Qualifying school overview

References to the 'nearest qualifying school' mean the nearest school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age and ability of the child, and any special educational needs that the child may have. A qualifying school includes places other than a school at which a pupil might receive education under Section 19 (1) of the Education Act 1996.

Qualifying schools are:

- community, foundation or voluntary schools;
- community or foundation special schools;
- independent and non-maintained special schools;
- pupil referral units;
- maintained nursery schools; or
- city technology colleges (CTC), city colleges for the technology of the arts (CCTA) or academies, including free schools and University Technical Colleges (UTC)

For Post-16 institutions this includes;

- A publicly-funded school/academy (including a free school or (UTC));
- A publicly-funded further education institution, including sixth form or FE college;
- A local authority maintained or assisted institution providing further or higher education;
- An independent specialist provider for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- A learning provider that is funded by a local authority to deliver accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes (this could include colleges, charities and private learning providers).

c) Other forms of travel assistance (Post-16)

16+ Oyster photo card

Residents of London boroughs aged 16 to 18 and in full-time education, or on a work-based learning scheme of at least 12 hours per week can apply for a 16+ Oyster photo card. This includes apprenticeships. The card gives:

- Free travel on London buses and trams
- Half adult rate Oyster single fares on the tube, DLR, London Overground and some national rail services
- Child rate travel card season tickets on the tube, DLR, London Overground and some national rail services

Apprentice Oyster card

Young people aged over 18 years who live in Waltham Forest and are on the first year of an apprenticeship that will last for more than 12 months are eligible to apply for an Apprentice Oyster card. The Apprentice Oyster card gives a 30% discount on bus, tram, tube, DLR, London Overground and national rail travel card season tickets.

18+ Student Oyster photo card

18+ Student Oyster photo cards are available to students who are aged 18 and over, and who are attending a full-time course (and in certain circumstances a part-time course) at colleges, schools and universities registered on the TfL 18+ Student Oyster photo card scheme. The 18+ student card gives a 30% discount on bus, tram, tube, DLR, London Overground and national rail travelcard season tickets.

THE 16–19 BURSARY FUND

The 16–19 Bursary Fund, administered by individual education providers is available to support any student who faces genuine financial barriers to participation in education, including transport costs. There are two types of 16–19 bursary available. Those most in need are eligible for a vulnerable student bursary of up to £1,200 per year. To qualify, the individual must meet at least one of the following criteria, the individual:

- Is in or recently left local authority care
- gets Income Support (or Universal Credit in place of Income Support) in their name
- is in disabled and gets both Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) (or Universal Credit in place of ESA), and either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name

To receive the maximum bursary the programme of study must last for 30 weeks or more. If the programme is shorter than 30 weeks, the individual may receive less. The individual could get a discretionary bursary if they do not qualify for the vulnerable student bursary. Education providers may, at their discretion, distribute any remaining funds to young people in ways that best fit the needs and circumstances of their students. This is targeted at young people facing financial barriers to participation, including transport costs. All education providers must make available a copy of their 16–19 Bursary Fund policy upon request. Applications should be made directly to the school, college or training provider. For further information on the 16–19 Bursary Fund visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>. Local providers and contact details are listed in Appendix B or on the Waltham Forest Local Offer website: <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/service-categories/local-offer>.

d) Application Form

See separate document – Travel Assistance Application Form

Index	Page
Appeals and Complaints	11
Appeals process	11
Application process	10
Discretionary and Temporary Assistance	8
Does the child come from a 'low-income background'?	7
Does the child have any special educational needs or disabilities, which limit their mobility or ability to use public transport?	6
Dual placements	10
Eligibility	6
Exceptional circumstances	7
Exclusions	8
Formal complaints	13
Forms of Assistance	4
How do we decide which option is used for travel assistance?	5
How to apply for travel assistance	10
Introduction	3
Is the nearest suitable school further than the statutory walking distances?	6
Multiple addresses	9
Parental disability	7
Post-16 eligibility	7
Principles	3
Religion and belief	9
Renewal process	11
Shorts breaks/respite -	9
Temporary circumstances	9
Under 5s	9
Unsafe routes	7