



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bedford Borough Council
'Post Statutory School
Age' Transport Policy
2026/27

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This policy document became effective at the start of the 2017/18 academic year and describes the support available to students of post statutory school age with travel arrangements to and from schools that offer education post 16.

1.1 Students who are entitled to receive assistance with travel arrangements to and from 6th form school

1.1.1 Students are only eligible for transport if they are between 16 and 18 years of age on the 1st September of the academic year for which they wish to apply.

1.1.2 Transport will be awarded to students, provided they meet all of the following criteria:-

- a) They live in Bedford Borough throughout the duration of the course.
- b) They are enrolled and attend a full-time course up to and including level 3 (this means courses up to and including A Level).
- c) They are attending the nearest 6th form school to the home address within Bedford Borough. Those establishments are; Bedford Academy, Kempston Academy, Biddenham School, Sharnbrook Academy, Mark Rutherford School and St Thomas More RC School.
- d) The eligibility criteria outlined in this policy are met (Sections 1.3 and 1.4)

1.2 Exceptions

1.2.1 In some areas the majority of the houses are closer to one particular school or there may be local circumstances where a particular school may not be the nearest school for the whole area but where an exception can be made, or if the nearest school does not offer post-16 education. The following exceptions allow transport to the school listed for students living within the following area boundaries where the eligibility criteria are met.

Area	School
Bolnhurst	Sharnbrook Academy
Clapham	Sharnbrook Academy
Keysoe	Sharnbrook Academy
Little Staughton	Sharnbrook Academy
Pavenham	Sharnbrook Academy
Milton Ernest	Sharnbrook Academy
Oakley	Sharnbrook Academy
Stevington	Sharnbrook Academy
Thurleigh	Sharnbrook Academy
Turvey	Sharnbrook Academy

1.3 Eligibility Criteria - Distance

1.3.1 Students who attend their nearest 6th form school or exception school will be provided with assistance with travel arrangements if they exceed the statutory walking distance criteria of more than 3 miles away from their home.

1.4 Eligibility Criteria - Road Safety

1.4.1 Students who live under the statutory walking distance may be entitled to assistance with travel arrangements where the nature of the route is such that a student cannot be expected to walk in reasonable safety.

- 1.4.2 Students living less than half a mile from school are not entitled to receive assistance with travel arrangements on road safety grounds.
- 1.4.3 Bedford Borough Council follows the guidance published by Road Safety GB to assess walking routes to schools.
- 1.4.4 The walking route must have;
- a) a continuous adequate footway on roads that carry normal to heavy traffic or
 - b) step-offs on roads that are lightly trafficked, but have adequate sight lines to provide sufficient advance warning or
 - c) on roads with low traffic flow, no step-offs, but sufficiently good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning
- and;
- d) if there is a need to cross roads, there must be crossing facilities e.g. zebra or pelican crossings, pedestrian phases at traffic signals (including necessary refuges), school crossing patrols, traffic calming (sufficient to enable safe road crossing), pedestrian refuges, etc. or;
 - e) sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunity to cross safely.
- 1.4.5 Walking routes are designated as safe or not safe by an independent 3rd party assessment, conducted in accordance with 1.4.4 above.
- 1.4.6 Route reviews will be undertaken when changes in the road network or additional pathways mean a safe route to school may be identified. Major changes to the public highway will also be considered as and when the change occurs.

1.5 Medical transport

- 1.5.1 Discretionary travel assistance may be provided where a pupil has a temporary medical problem or if they have a long term condition that prevents them from walking to school or accessing existing school transport.
- 1.5.2 Discretionary travel assistance may also be provided where parent(s)/carer(s) have a temporary medical problem or if they have a long term condition that prevents them from accompanying their child to school.
- 1.5.3 Each case is considered on its individual merits and relevant supporting independent professional evidence will be required. The evidence must clearly state inappropriate types of transport and be specific about appropriate distances before transport can be awarded.
- 1.5.4 This would be for one return journey per day, at the beginning and end of the standard school day, and solely to the nearest 6th form school or exception school.

1.6 Charges

- 1.6.1 The travel arrangements for post statutory school age students, eligible under this policy, are not free of charge in any cases. Confirmation of cost will be advised upon approval of the student's application.
- 1.6.2 For students allocated to a Bedford Borough Council route commissioned by the school transport service, the transport fee is subject to annual review through the fees and charges review process.
- 1.6.3 For those allocated to commercial or public transport routes (those NOT commissioned by the school transport service), the proposed costs for these services will be in line with the advertised price via the commercial provider, in addition to an administration fee.

- 1.6.4 Students are entitled to a discount of the costs of transport if their parent(s)/carer(s) are in receipt of Universal Credit with annual earnings of £7,400 or less.
- 1.6.5 The transport fee is offered at a fixed rate and no further reductions are available for part time travel.

1.7 When to apply for assistance with travel arrangements

- 1.7.1 Bedford Borough Council will publish the post 16 transport policy by 31st May each year.
- 1.7.2 Application forms will be available from Bedford Borough Council. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/carer(s) and student to apply for transport within the published deadline.
- 1.7.3 Deadlines for applying for post 16 transport are published each year. Application forms received after the published deadlines are not guaranteed to be processed for the start of the term but will be processed as soon as possible.
- 1.7.4 The Council does not offer reimbursements for travel costs where the application has not been submitted in accordance with these timescales.
- 1.7.5 The Council reserves the right to change the post 16 travel arrangements policy, subject to relevant consultation on 31st May each year. There should be no expectation that travel arrangements will continue, other than those arrangements which must be provided because there is a statutory duty to do so.

1.8 General policy principles

- 1.8.1 Where students receive free home to school transport as a result of an error, such free home to school transport will be withdrawn within a reasonable timescale
- 1.8.2 'Home' is defined as the place where the student is habitually and normally resident. Suitable travel arrangements will only be made using the student's home address, as defined. The Local Authority is not responsible for providing travel arrangements from any other address. The Local Authority is only responsible for providing travel arrangements for students resident in Bedford Borough. The Local Authority will only provide travel arrangements from one address, which meets the definition described.
- 1.8.3 Bedford Borough will determine the 'home address' of the student considering a number of factors as follows:
- The address used for schools' admissions purposes.
 - The address of the parent who receives child benefit (if applicable).
 - The address as defined in any applicable court order.
 - The address as held by the school attended by the student.
- 1.8.4 The measurement used to calculate the distance from home to school is defined as the shortest route using a network of public rights of way including footpaths, bridleways, and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. The measurement is calculated from the nearest point on the 'walking route network' to the boundary of the student's home to the nearest accessible school gate. The measurements are taken annually, using a computerised mapping system, in accordance with admissions application dates.
- 1.8.5 Bedford Borough Council does not guarantee that this scheme is the cheapest method of transport available and you are advised to make your own investigations prior to applying for transport.
- 1.8.6 The Local Authority will consider what is the most suitable and cost-effective means in providing travel arrangements based on the evidence available.
- 1.8.7 Students who have a particular disability or mobility problem (including a temporary medical condition) may be entitled to assistance with travel arrangements to school. If their disability or mobility problem (including temporary medical conditions) means that they could not reasonably be expected to walk to school then suitable assistance with their travel arrangements will be made.

- 1.8.8 The travel arrangements will apply to one return journey per day, at the normal start and end of the 6th Form day. Transport is not normally provided to meet a student's individual timetable. The Council will not ordinarily be able to support transport arrangements for non-standard or part-time timetables; such arrangements are discretionary, and the Council can only consider supporting in exceptional circumstances, where it can be deemed an efficient use of Council resources.
- 1.8.9 Transport will only be provided to the main establishment where the student is studying. Transport will not be provided for induction days, work experience, placements, extracurricular activities or travel to alternative sites during the day. In such cases the parent(s)/carer(s)/student will be responsible for making alternative arrangements.
- 1.8.10 Assistance with travel arrangements does not imply a door to door service. The Local Authority will normally expect the student to make their own way from their home or school to a 'pick up' point.

Section 2 – Appeal and Complaints Procedure

2.1 If you feel aggrieved by a decision taken

- 2.1.1 All parent(s)/carer(s) have the right to appeal if they disagree with the decision regarding transport eligibility. Bedford Borough Council offer a two stage appeal process as detailed below.

2.2 The Appeal Process

- 2.2.1 Parent(s)/Carer(s) have 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.
- 2.2.2 You may challenge a decision on any or all of the following grounds:
- Eligibility - you believe that we have failed to take into account some significant factor in assessing whether your child is eligible for travel assistance
 - Distance measurement between home and school
 - Safety of the walking route between home and school
 - Transport arrangements offered are not suitable for the student's needs
- 2.2.3 Your appeal should detail all the reasons why you believe the decision should be reviewed and give details of any exceptional circumstances you believe should be considered when the decision is reviewed. You should submit any evidence that supports your appeal (for example letters from your school, medical professional or social worker, or financial evidence such as benefit eligibility). You can appeal for any reason or combination of reasons, but you should carefully consider if you have sufficient additional evidence to support your case.
- 2.2.4 Within 20 working days of receipt of the appeal a senior officer, who was independent of the original decision, will review the original decision made and send the appellant a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review and information about how the parent/carer can escalate their case to stage two (if appropriate).
- 2.2.5 The Appellant 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, which is a review by an independent appeal panel.
- 2.2.6 Stage two appeals will be decided by a Transport Appeals Panel of three Councillors. All will be impartial and have no member interests/roles in Transport, Education or Social Services. Appellants will be advised of the names of the Councillors who will decide their appeal.
- 2.2.7 The panel will consider all appeals on their individual merits. The procedure will normally be as follows:
- a). The Presenting Officer will be invited to explain the Council's case
 - b). The Appellant and the Panel can ask questions about the Council's case.

- c). The Appellant will be invited to explain their case.
- d). The Presenting Officer and Panel will ask the Appellant questions about their case.
- e). The Presenting Officer will sum up their case (they cannot mention any new evidence or points).
- f). The Appellant will sum up their case (they cannot mention any new evidence or points).

2.2.8 The Panel will make their decisions after they have heard all of the appeals they are dealing with on that occasion. Neither the appellant nor the Presenting Officer will be present when they make their decision. The Clerk will be present to record the decision and provide legal/procedural advice. The Panel will either uphold the appeal or they will dismiss the appeal.

2.2.9 The Clerk will notify the Appellant within 5 working days after the decision is made explaining the result and how the Panel reached their decisions.

2.2.10 The Appeal Panel's decision is final and binding, they cannot review their decision. However, an appellant may make a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman if they feel there has been any administrative fault in the way the Panel has reached its decision.