

## Amended Home to School Travel Policies

### Home to School Travel for Pupils in Primary Schools, 2007-2008

Most parents make their own arrangements for their children to travel to school. We encourage children to walk to school as long as its safe.

We will pay for transport for children who have to travel:

- More than 3 miles to the nearest appropriate school if they are 8 or over; and
- More than 2 miles if they are under 8.

This applies to all children who are registered at a school, including those under 5, but it does not include children at nursery schools or classes.

By 'appropriate' we mean that the religious (denominational) character of the school is right for your child. This means that we will pay for your child's travel if they have to travel to the nearest Catholic or Church of England primary school. If there is no appropriate school within the limits set out on page 6, we will pay for your child's travel to the nearest appropriate school where there are places available.

We will also pay the travel costs of children who are at the same school as older brothers or sisters whose travel costs we are already paying. The distance from home to school must be within the limits set out in this section.

We may also pay other children's travel costs if we decide it is necessary because of their age and the nature of the routes they could take to school. As a general guide, we will treat routes with no pavements and no street lighting as unsafe for children.

**If you claim Working Tax Credit at the maximum level or are eligible for free school meals we will pay for travel if your child is 8 - 11 and their nearest appropriate school is more than 2 miles away.**

We will pay the full cost of transport arrangements of pupils who are entitled to free travel. Only in exceptional circumstances will we pay the travelling costs of pupils who do not fall into the categories previously described.

We will measure the distance between your child's home and the school gate nearest to their home by the shortest available suitable walking route. We do not necessarily expect children to walk that distance – it is just a way of deciding whether you should pay for the travel or whether we should pay.

We make special arrangements to transport children who are going to special schools or classes. You will find details of these arrangements in the 'special education' section.

You can get more information on transport to school from the Transport and Welfare section of the Children and Young People's Department (phone 0151 606 2000).

### Transport to Special Schools and Classes

We will pay the travel costs of children going to a special school, special class or base in a mainstream school as long as it is the nearest suitable school to the child's home.

We will pay the costs of the travel in one of the following ways.

- If the pupil can travel by public transport, we will provide a travel pass.
- If not, we will arrange travel on our own vehicles or on vehicles contracted to us. If necessary, we will also provide an escort for your child on these journeys.

We do not provide transport to Wirral Hospitals' School unless your child has a statement of special educational needs which names the school, or there are other special reasons. We can also agree to pay the travel costs of children with statements of special educational needs going to mainstream school in some circumstances. For example, this could apply if your child has a severe medical or physical disability and their level of mobility would prevent them from travelling to school alone.

### **Home to School Travel Policy for Pupils in Secondary Schools 2008-2009**

Pupils are eligible for free travel to and from school if they live more than three miles from the nearest appropriate school (two miles if the child is under eight). 'Appropriate' is defined in terms of the following:

1. The academic nature of the school. For example, all-ability schools provide for children of all abilities and grammar schools for only part of the ability range. A pupil who lives within three miles of an all-ability school but who is given a place at a grammar school more than three miles from home is not eligible for free travel unless they are entitled to free travel for one of the reasons set out below.
2. The religious character of the school. For example, we will pay the cost of transport arrangements of children who have to travel more than three miles (or two miles if the child is under eight) to the nearest school of their parents' religion.

If there is no appropriate school within three miles we will pay the cost of transport arrangements to the nearest appropriate school but not to a more distant one.

This policy also applies to the case of children who are allocated places at St. Anselm's College and Upton Hall School – the nearest appropriate school means the nearest Catholic school which may be an all-ability school.

However, we will pay the travel costs of:

1. children who are transferring to the same secondary school as older brothers or sisters whose travel costs we are already paying; and
2. pupils from Sacred Heart Parish, Moreton to St. Mary's College if the distance is over three miles.

**If you are eligible for free school meals or the maximum level of Working Tax Credit then you will be eligible for free travel to one of the three nearest appropriate schools more than 2 miles from your home but no further than 6 miles. (We measure the first 2 miles by using a suitable walking route and the next 4 miles by using the shortest road route). If your preference is based on religious reasons then the distance is extended to 15 miles.**

We will pay 50% of the travel costs of those children who are given a place at a secondary school which was not named as their first or second preference, and which is further away from their home address than any schools named as a preference, as long as they live more than three miles from their school. These children will be given a bus pass and the parents will be issued with an invoice for 50% of the cost of the pass. In 2005/06, the full cost of a Solo or one-zone trio pass was £186. The full cost of an area Trio pass was £233.

We may also pay the travel costs in those cases where, because of the children's age and the nature of the available routes which they could reasonably be expected to take to school, we think it necessary to pay the travel costs. As a general guide, we will treat routes without pavements and street lighting as 'unsafe' for children.

We will pay the full cost of transport for pupils who are entitled to free travel. Only in the most exceptional circumstances will we pay the travelling costs of pupils who do not fall into the categories described before.

We will measure the distance between the child's home and the school gate nearest to the child's home by the shortest available walking route. We measure distance using a computerised mapping system. This is not to suggest that we expect children to walk that distance. It is just a way of deciding whether you should pay for the travel or whether we should pay.

### **Transport to Special Schools and Classes for Secondary Age Pupils**

We will pay the travel costs of children going to a special school or special class or base in a mainstream school as long as it is the nearest appropriate school to the child's home.

'Appropriate' is defined as 'appropriate to meet the special educational needs of the child as shown in the child's statement'.

We will pay the costs of the travel in one of the following ways:

- (a) If the pupil can travel by public transport, we will provide a travel pass.
- (b) If not, we will arrange travel on vehicles we own or those contracted to us. If necessary, because of the nature of your child's age or special needs, there will be an escort on these journeys.

We do not provide transport to Wirral Hospitals School unless your child has a statement of special educational needs which names the school or there are special reasons. In exceptional circumstances, the Director of Children's Services can also agree to pay the travel costs of children with statements of special educational need going to mainstream schools. For example, this could apply to a severe medical or physical disability, where the child's level of mobility would prevent him or her from travelling to school independently.