

# Proposal to amend the Medway Council Education Travel Assistance Policy

This document is designed to:

- Notify you of Medway Council's proposal to amend the Education Travel Assistance Policy as set out below.
- Explain why this change is being proposed
- Invite your comments on this proposal

## The statutory process

All local authorities have a statutory duty to have in place arrangements for the provision of education travel assistance for children and young people (mainstream and SEND) who meet the published eligibility criteria. The Education Travel Assistance Policy is developed within a national legal framework that sets out what local authorities must do to facilitate travel to school and sets out eligibility criteria for granting that support.

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the responsibility of the parent of every child of compulsory school age, to cause their child to receive efficient full-time education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. The duties and powers of local authorities to provide education travel assistance are covered in other sections of the Act and its amendments. The provision of travel assistance incorporates consideration for children from low-income families.

Sections 508B and 508C of the Education Act 1996 (as amended) sets out the local authority's duties and powers respectively, to make such suitable travel arrangements as the local authority considers necessary, to facilitate a child's attendance at school. This applies to home to school travel arrangements and vice versa. They do not relate to travel between educational institutions during the school day.

## Why are we proposing to amend the policy?

As a result of a number of transport appeals to the School Transport and Curriculum Appeals Committee from parents whose children had acquired a place at a grammar school on an independent admission appeal, but who didn't pass the Medway Test, we are consulting on whether to amend the policy by way of considering whether pupils who secure a place at a Medway Grammar School on appeal should also be classed as grammar ability under the policy and therefore entitled to travel assistance under the same criteria.

The proposal is to add in a sentence to section 1.4c of the policy (Highlighted in yellow below) ...

*For secondary age pupils, Medway Council also take into account whether a child is of grammar ability (under the Medway Test assessment procedures **or admitted to a Medway grammar school following an independent admission appeal**) or non-grammar ability. For grammar assessed pupils a Medway grammar school will be considered as the nearest suitable qualifying school.*

Please note that this change does not automatically mean that travel assistance will be provided, but that pupils within these criteria will be assessed and considered in the same way as pupils assessed as grammar through the Medway Test process.

As this is a discretionary change, the amendments will be effective for future transport applications and assessments only, which are effective from 1 September 2021.

## The next stages

Following the six-week consultation period, Medway Council's Cabinet will consider the responses to this consultation. They may then decide not to proceed with the proposal or determine to amend the policy.

## Next steps – timings subject to change as necessary

Consultation period	19 April 2021 to 30 May 2021
Report Outcome of Consultation to Cabinet	13 July 2021
Formal implementation of proposals if approved	Those assessed from 1 September 2021

- **No decisions will be made until the consultation has been completed and local views have been carefully considered.**

## How to make comments

We would like to hear your views on these proposals.

Email your comments to [thomas.cogley@medway.gov.uk](mailto:thomas.cogley@medway.gov.uk) by **30 May 2021**

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This information can be made available in other formats from **01634 333333**

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If you have any questions about this leaflet and you want to speak to someone in your own language please ring 01634 335577

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