

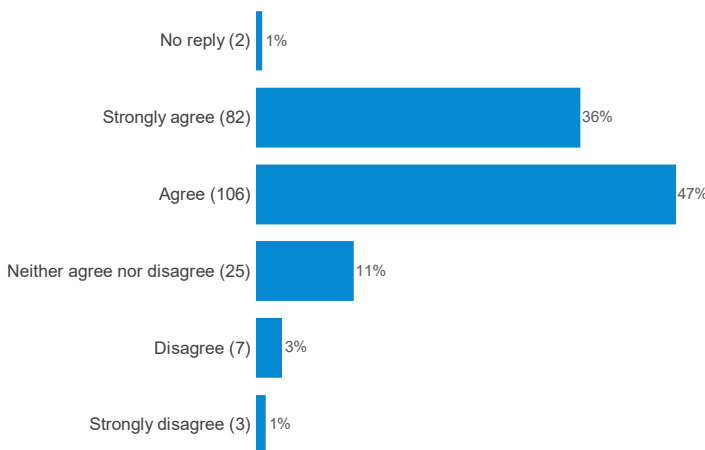
Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

# Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

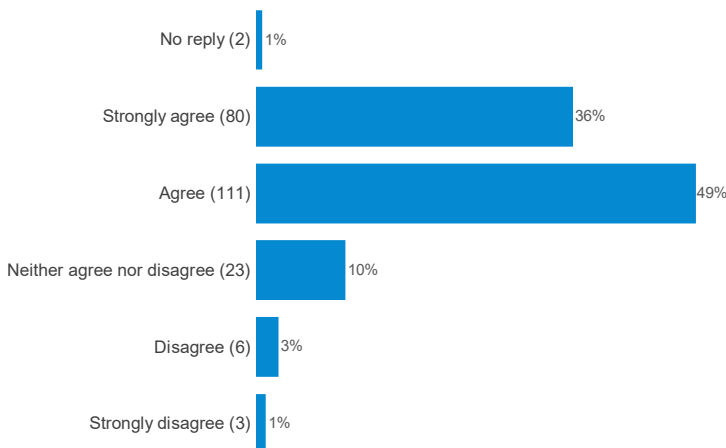
This report was generated on 08/07/25. Overall 225 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 30 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 1000 rows.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that adopting separate individual mainstream and SEND Educational Travel Assistance Policies for statutory age pupils aged 5-16 years, will achieve the following: **(Please select one option per row) (Make it easier to understand the different eligibility criteria between Mainstream and SEND travel assistance)**

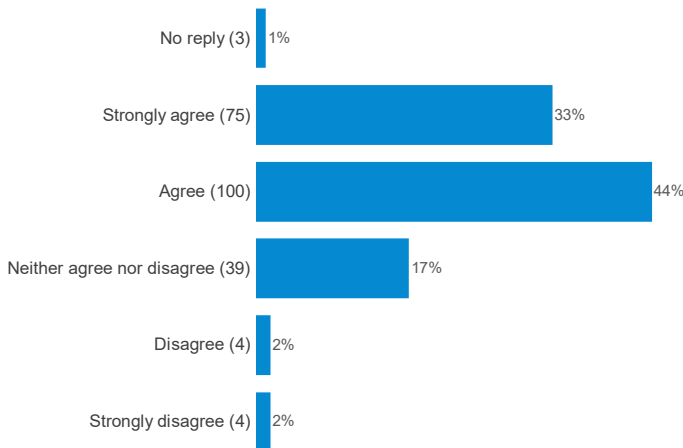


To what extent do you agree or disagree that adopting separate individual mainstream and SEND Educational Travel Assistance Policies for statutory age pupils aged 5-16 years, will achieve the following: **(Please select one option per row) (Make it easier to find the relevant information for Mainstream and SEND travel assistance)**

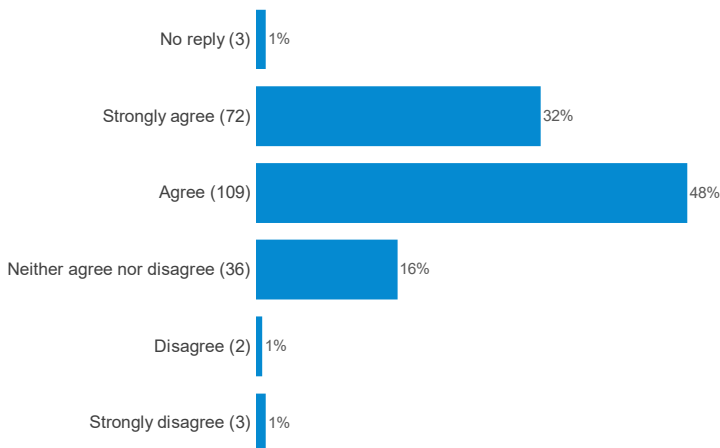


Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

To what extent do you agree or disagree that changing the format and language within the Educational Travel Assistance Policies will achieve the following: **(Please select one option per row) (Make the policies easier to understand )**

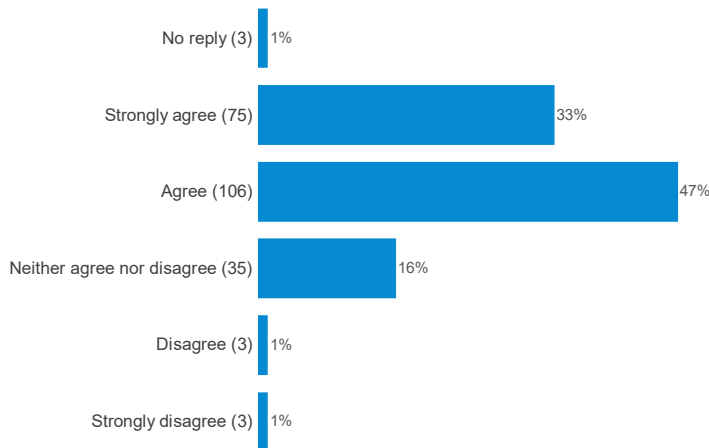


To what extent do you agree or disagree that changing the format and language within the Educational Travel Assistance Policies will achieve the following: **(Please select one option per row) (Make it easier to find the relevant information within each of the policies)**



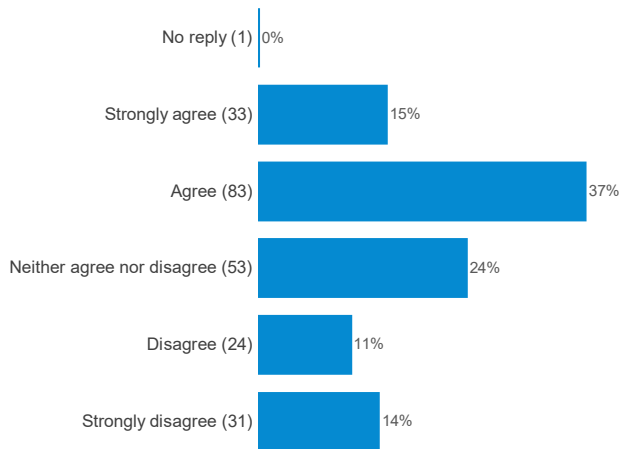
Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

To what extent do you agree or disagree that changing the format and language within the Educational Travel Assistance Policies will achieve the following: **(Please select one option per row) (Make it easier to follow the different stages of the application process)**



**The existing policy already states that the council will only provide travel assistance where the child is attending the nearest suitable school to the home address.**

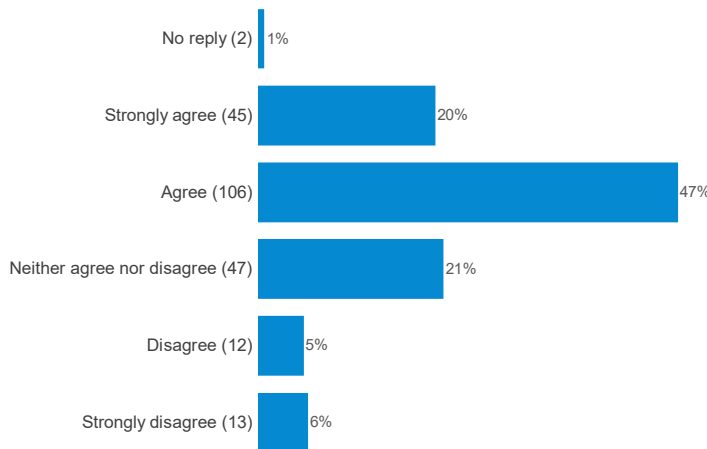
To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed SEND policy makes it clearer that travel assistance will only be provided in these instances? (Please select one option only)



Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**The existing policy already states that travel assistance can only be provided at the start and the end of the day.**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed SEND policy makes it clearer that travel assistance can only be provided at these times? (Please select one option only)**



**Please state any circumstances where you feel the council should still provide travel assistance outside of the normal start and end of the school day: (Please write in the box below)**

- Where a child's mental health will be impacted negatively by attending a provision for a longer time.

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- EOTAS Alternative Provision Part time timetables

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- All circumstances where a pupil would normally receive transport but for other reasons travels to/ from school at another time. This should be given to all students who need it and not put the burden on parents/ carers to manage this.

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- in case of emergency school closures

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- To enable children with SEND to attend extra-curricular activities and be included in a wide range of personal development opportunities.

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- Council should still provide travel assistance where it is in the best interest of a student, or where they are completing a course in sixth form which will aid their transition to adult/ working life, but where this course start and end times might fall outside the normal school hours.

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- Where parents have no other means of transport and/or it disadvantages the family situation by them providing this (e.g. not working) by offering this service it helps the LA to support the schools to support the families in turn. If the schools professional judgement is that the child's needs can be best met with a temporary change to transport, especially relating to their EHCP identified needs then removing the barrier of transport to this allows the schools judgement to be supported and potentially avoid instances of suspension (which also helps the LA)

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- Only very short duration work where a child with profound needs is not able to sustain a whole school day in the initial transition plan

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- In the case of a medical emergency when the school feels that it is the child's best interest to be sent home

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- only to meet severe emergency medical needs, such as children who are terminally ill or with severe conditions that are such high risk that incidents could be fatal, and need specific requirements to meet their healthcare treatments i.e. they can only go to school half day on a Monday because they are too exhausted can't cope, or have to go for medical treatment.

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- like really sick kids that might die

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- To help our children attend after school

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## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please state any circumstances where you feel the council should still provide travel assistance outside of the normal start and end of the school day:** (Please write in the box below)

In most cases if the child has a different timetable "outside the norm" that is normal for them for their needs. A parent shouldn't be effectively penalised for schools deciding on different timetables.

In the case child I'd sick and parent don't drive or disable , if school is offering after school programs

The children will miss out on education, support they require and some children even food as the parents are unable to get them there

With regards to sleep issues and BSPs. I think children should have an adapted timetable. Later pick up etc when parent can't drive with disability.

Maybe if they have a club

This doesn't work for those children on part time timetables or EOTAS, trying to make it clear that it's only start/end of day means those disabled children won't be included

Perhaps if the child needs to return home due to illness

I feel if the school has half a day or have exams and are finishing early then transport should still be in place, to pick up pupils when they finish early.

When the child is unable to access education and requires an adapted timetable. When the school does not comply with start and end of day times.

If a child has an after school activity at the school such as a club, transport should be provided for that as well

Where there is a medical or safeguarding emergency

If SEN/mainstream pupils have an after school club or extra curricular activities after school

Children who finish school early due to circumstances, for example their own needs or family needs. Also, children who are not using shared transport. It's the children's needs that are most important in all of this.

I strongly believe that transport assistance should still be offered in circumstances where families are not in a position to collect their child with SEND and where the school has implemented a reduced timetable for legitimate reasons. It is important to recognise that a reduced timetable is typically only used to address significant social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs, and removing transport assistance at these times risks exacerbating these vulnerabilities further. By restricting travel assistance to the start and end of the normal school day, the proposed policy does not adequately reflect the reality of how some children with complex needs access education in practice. This change could have a negative impact on attendance and overall engagement with school, as families may struggle to provide the additional transport needed for part-time or staggered provision. For children with SEND, maintaining consistent access to school, even on a reduced timetable, is vital for their emotional wellbeing, stability, and continued progress. For these reasons, I disagree with the proposed clarification in the policy and believe that there must be flexibility to support children with SEND who require alternative travel arrangements during the school day in exceptional circumstances.

I believe its the upmost important, to keep all children safety i think its a must to continue to provide transport support .

Maybe settling in days. For reception children.

If there is a collective event at school

Yes! As has already stated, where the child is sick and can not complete the day's education or the child needs to go home urgently for medical reasons or in case of an emergency where an ambulance is not readily available.

If a child should have interventions during half terms.

None

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please state any circumstances where you feel the council should still provide travel assistance outside of the normal start and end of the school day:** (Please write in the box below)

After school some children choose to attend the after school clubs there may be children who might be sick in between school hours and may want to use the transport to go back Children may wish to attend extracurricular activities that will improve their well-being after school

Start of a new academic year as there may be settling in sessions

Some children can not cope with a full day at school. Therefore, they so adjusted hours and the travel should be available for them.

To support social engagement at school ie extra curricular activities

For those who need to be transitioned into education or on a part time timetable and to transport children from school to home who are ill. Those who have SEN should especially be given transport for these circumstances.

Because most children lives far away from the school theat might be came late at school

Hospital appointments and religious observances

After school clubs should be promoted but getting home then will be difficult.

If a child is stuck in a school that cannot meet need and is waiting for a place at a suitable school and If that child is unable to do full days then the council should provide transport for that child as the council has not fulfilled the needs of that child as they are in a school that is unable to meet that's child's need. That's not the child or parents fault.

If you child is sent home cos they are unwell or booted out of the school on those days, Mon to Fri. IE they should still get travel back home.

Economic is hard and parents are struggling to feed their kids.

transition or if school calls half days for teacher training

Where the child attends part time but attends a full day.

Medical conditions which limit the child's tolerance for full days in education

In the event of the school closing early due to adverse weather conditions or in an emergency situation for example.

When the child attends the nursery setting within abbey court school, the timetable is reduced and the child attends alternate morning / afternoon sessions only. It would be imperative to recognise that this is the start and end of their "school day" and so transport should be provided in line with the session times.

During transition into a school where the pupils are on a reduced timetable. When my son joined reception the school offered only half days for the first few weeks.

For school exams this makes it very difficult for working parents

not every young persons needs are a one size fits all. its becoming more apparent that not all education providers can facilitate a whole day or certain hours for a young person who is struggling. parents aren't always in a position to drop/collect at different times

I think sen transport should be provided to children who attend placements oit side of these times as ot could be a fact that the pupils has a part time timetable due to needs, disabilities or medical reasons, therefore they should still be provided with transport. Also I think the LA should offer transport on an individual needs basis, not just put as many children as possible on shared transport to save money. For example a child attending a school with 121 and 6 pupils in a class shoild not be put on to shared transport of more then 7 especially as the transport driver and assistant do not have the training the school staff do, this would lessen the journey that children have to travel before attending their school which is also difficult for them.

Medical / Clinical Appointments. Allow for after school clubs and sports.

Help with getting a child to an appointment or take a child back to school after an appointment

None

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please state any circumstances where you feel the council should still provide travel assistance outside of the normal start and end of the school day:** (Please write in the box below)

Kent council allow pupils to go to after school clubs .MedwAy children lose out socially by not attending the after schools clubs

Transitions when a child is forced to change settings, medical reasons and short term where EBSA is present. Providing transport at different times may be the key to getting that child back to school. There should be a better understanding and willingness to look at individual cases and needs for all students with SEN.

#NAME?

No

For pupils who find transitioning from home to school difficult and require a structure and routine that remains consistent. Coming to school on a bus is their routine. For families for those pupils whom are on a personalised timetable who do not own their own cars or drive.

Appointments or leaving late to or from school.

If your child has a medical appointment and wont be using transport at said times, appointments are usually after 9am, and can be before 3.30pm.

if school or college change finish times then travel should also be able to change their times so children / young adults can be brought home safely

When a child needs to come home ( decided by school), a child cannot wait until 3pm for example when they are having a mental breakdown

Emergency closure of schools, where a parent has given plenty of notice that the child will only attend the school for AM or PM due to appointments

If the school day is adjusted for all students (e.g. earlier finish) for any reason If the child takes part in after school activities, reasonable efforts should be made to accommodate to avoid discrimination and lack of opportunity for the child

Medical condition of the child received SEN Transport To support working parents with an official form to their employer with times of SEN Transport for parents to get a flexible working contract and to be able to keep working

Where a child is overwhelmed with the additional travel time then the full school day. School times may be adjusted for the child with the view to helping the child adjust and they will still need transport.

I do not agree with this it should be normal school hours only

If the parents are working or carer of old parents time is limited

If the child is placed in an out of area school and is taken ill etc some parents do not drive and have no means of collecting their child.

Where the family will be put under undue financial difficulties, especially if the circumstances would enhance learning or for medical issues.

It's should be free for under 16

If a child is ill/accident and the parent is unable to collect them due to distance and available transport.

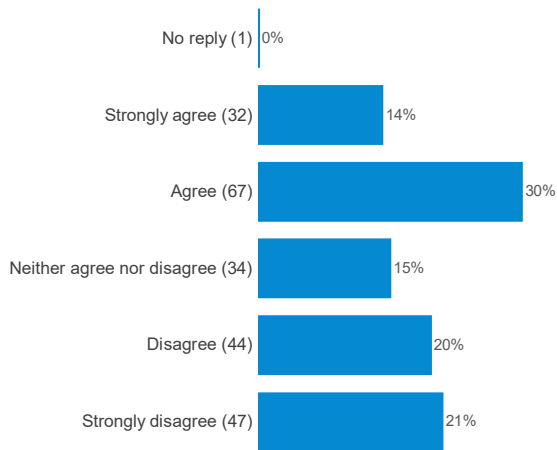
For medical reasons if a young person is unable to attend for a whole day due to complex needs.

For medical emergencies

To assist with getting to medical appointments

Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid? (Please select one option only)**



**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid: (Please write in the box below)**

It is unfair that some parents contribute and others don't and nothing happens as a consequence.

Having a child is a choice and comes with an element of cost

Parents have a duty of care to ensure that they use any disability funding for their child in an appropriate manner

As this is a discretionary service I think this measure is appropriate at this point to ask for contributions to travel. As long as this is clearly set out on uptake of the agreement and the families are in receipt of enough financial support for this to be viable so that there is no need for the young person to be disadvantaged then I agree

As stated, it is not fair on other families who comply and pay so transport should be suspended.

To avoid losing too much money

It is a reasonable expectation as long as low income families are protected.

In the interest of those parents who DO pay the parental contribution. To deliberately refuse to pay and still take advantage of the assisted travel is fraud

it is wasting council money to continue providing it when they havent contributed its unfair on the other parents who do pay the contribution, for some of them to get away with not paying it its taking money that could be spent elsewhere away from the service there is no responsibility to provide this transport to over 16s under the law, personally i think it should be removed to save costs so that the money can be more efficiently spent - if the children can get a bus safely then their parents could pay for this like every other parent has to.

i dont think you should provide this service when its non statutory and the councils finances are in such a bad state - its not cost efficient and money needs to be saved.

Because it is unfair that some parents do their best to pay their contribution, and others simply don't pay. There needs to be a consequence.



## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

I agree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the agreed parental contribution has not been paid, as it promotes fairness and ensures public funds are used responsibly. The contribution system is in place to help share the cost of post-16 travel assistance, which is not a statutory entitlement. When parents agree to contribute and then fail to do so without a valid reason, it places additional strain on limited local authority budgets, potentially impacting support for other families in genuine need. Enforcing payment or withdrawing the service encourages accountability and helps ensure that assistance is available and sustainable for those who meet both eligibility and financial commitment requirements

I would absolutely expect to pay a contribution if my child is receiving a non statutory service. It shouldn't even be set up before contribution is paid. As a parent I would not expect it for free. Or to 'steal' funding that is sorely needed.

It is clearly stated that a contribution is required before making use of travel assistance, if that is not paid, then the service should not be provided. I assume that if there is some financial hardship that there is room for discussion about payment plans etc before getting to the point of withdrawal of service

I would happily pay to know my child is safe and getting to school

Only fair to pay certain amount to those that decide not to

As the people that pay regularly and on time feel it's not fair others aren't paying but are receiving the same service they have to pay for

It's not fair for parent who does pay if there are no consequences for non payment. I'd think most paying parents would wonder why they bother paying if nothing happens?

I understand that it is costing the council a lot of money. My son turns 16 next year and I will have to start paying from September next year and I would feel it is unfair if I am paying and someone else is not.

most send children will get dla so they can apply and get a free bus pass

It's unfair on parents who do make the payments to continue to provide travel assistance if payment has not been made by others

Because it isn't fair to the ones who have

It's unfair on the parents who have paid. Why should they bother if others are disregarding it

If they aren't paying and no punishments, then why should other parents have to pay. It's not fair, and it just allows those to continue to abuse the system. My child overs transport and post 16 I would hope he still gets it as he is vulnerable but I am already preparing that I will have to contribute. The people that aren't paying are probably not paying into the system and getting hand outs from our councils and government. I go to work and feel I fight for help for my son. So yes take the transport away straight away if they aren't paying.

I agree to some extent but parents must be given reasonable notice and a payment plan in place and not 1 full payment

Without some financial commitment from the parent to support the service, the financial burden may become increasingly difficult and altogether unsustainable for the Council.

I agree, it's a small contribution and by agreeing the terms it should be fulfilled. Once the parent knows the travel will be stopped would make them keep their commitment and reducing funds in other areas

Accountability

Parents have a duty, clearly stated by the LA. We all enter into an agreement, this should be honoured by all.

It's only fair for everyone to pay agreed amount. Individual situations should also be considered

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

If this policy was put in place in the first place then you would of had a better system where parents wouldn't take advantage. Its abhorrent that you are having a debt of 57k thats disgraceful. And things can change to improve it. This sort of things affects every person that has to rely on sen travel.

I think if any contribution has been made necessary to be paid, it should be paid

it is fair to all.

Look! Parents are supposed to carry their fair share of their children educational responsibility however difficult that may be because it is not fair for the tax payer to carry all those responsibility. Fact, Britain is a welfare state but where the welfare is not sustainable, all of us will suffer it. We need to cooperate and collaborate to ensure that the welfare state is still there for our children and children's children. Many of our people are abusing this welfare state in all its ramification and it is not proper.

Everyone should contribute based on their money if they need transport

My son does not have SEND and we have to pay for his bus pass when he started studying A-levels so why should it be different for those parents?

If the parents carnt pay there part then let the parents not get any help let them take them

Completely agree with the penalty. If parents are agreeing to contribute and then don't this is unacceptable as this could mean an impact on future parents/children. The withdrawing of travel assistance in cases where the parents haven't paid their contribution is fair as long as they have been made fully aware of this at the start of the process.

It isn't fair if the majority of parents are paying their contribution but others aren't and still receiving travel assistance. Each individual case should be looked at though!

It's only fair to pay your way

I've paid for my son's post 16 for the last two years and I'm shocked the amount of people who haven't paid for the service.

As parents it is our right to support our childrens care needs and we should support payment towards this

Seems fair

If agree to make contribution then stick to it

Contributions help to keep service in place if not paid for parents should not be able to access this

I agree because most parents have more than one children

It should be fair for all

not right for some to pay and others not however needs to be case by case as some people are living on or below poverty line

It isn't fair on the parents that pay.

It's unreasonable for them to not contribute

This is unfair on families who do pay and if the student were to use a bus or train in any other setting or circumstance, they would have to pay as they go. People are fined for dodging fares on the London underground for example. So, why should this be any different?!

Because it is a fair adjustment.

As a matter of principle it has to be paid

When my child reaches 16-19 I accept that I will be responsible for some of the cost of her travel, it is not fair that some parents choose not to contribute

Unfair on those parents who pay and the council

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

As with anything else a debt should be paid! I am aware transport is expensive so am prepared to contribute however would be furious to find I am scrimping the money together when others are leaving the bill unpaid. As long as payment plans are available for those that may struggle to make larger payments I see nothing wrong with withdrawing the service for unpaid bills.

Parents should pay there contribution.

Not every family can afford the cost of travel for their children to attend school. The overall cost of living in the UK has risen significantly, while many people's salaries have not kept pace with inflation. With high deductions for Tax, National Insurance, Council Tax, and other expenses, it feels unfair to penalise families who genuinely cannot afford these additional costs. Education is a right, and no child should be denied access to school simply because their parents cannot afford the travel expenses.

I agree with withdraw if parents have been contacted and given a warning that they have a certain amount of days to pay. I know from experience and a lot of chasing up by myself and by other parents that, even though direct debits were set up, money was still not being taken from bank accounts at the end of months. Eventually we had to pay the full amount in one go. Not all families are fortunate to be able to do that. So the first steps need to be how payments are set up and made and with easy contact information for any problems.

I agree as long as parents on low income are given subsidiary.

I agree that there that it would be enough time to pay the amount.

If parents have agreed to contribute and have not then it should be withdrawn

I've always paid mine so feel everyone should be the same. I do think it's a lot of money especially if college only wants their students to attend 3 days a week instead of 5!

They have to pay for public buses or taxis

Unfair to parents who have contributed Encourages contributing parents to stop contributing Decreases the affordability and quality of services for those children who contribute However, reasonable attempts at contact should be made with the parents, for example if parents or siblings have become critically ill there should be a procedure in place to monitor and give them more time in exceptional circumstances

Because it's written in the policy

There is an agreement to pay and if you do not, then the contract is withdrawn. Same as any other contract.

With clear expectations parents should realise what they are signing up for

Not fair to those who pay. Cost is high for all and all who use service need to contribute.

It's too expensive

Make it fair for all, why should others pay and the ones who don't get away with it

It is clearly set out that there is a parent contribution. If not paid it is unfair to those that are paying. If having difficulty paying, then in discussion with the parent/s any further arrangements can and should be looked at including and not limited to possible monthly contributions or other support.

To make it fair to all

It is because they are done with high school and now mature

There shouldn't be a parental contribution. Pupils are required to be in education until they are 18 so to withdraw or change any policy post 16 makes no sense. The law now requires young people to participate in education or training until they are 18 this is know as the raising of the participation age. This has been in place since 2015. The councils policies need to reflect the 10 year old law.

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you neither agree nor disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:**  
(Please write in the box below)

If parents cannot pay due to income difficulties

Everyone should be held accountable for their duties, so parents should pay their travel contribution, however where parents are going through financial hardship this should be taken into account and should not impact on a young persons ability to access education.

I believe as children need to stay in education till 18 Sen children should have this support needed to stay in education. Other local authorities fund fully for post 16 Sen transport.

SEND Travelling could also be a necessity given the severity of the child's needs. However if it is not mandatory there is every right to withdraw SEND travel assistance

I believe that it is important to check every case. There may be families who cannot afford transport

It's still not clear who pays the parental contribution for children in care.

Depending on people's circumstances. Everyone's situation are different...

circumstances need to be taken into account, if the parents are on low income/disabled etc they may not be able to pay

I understand that parents would be asked to pay a contribution but I cannot fully agree without knowing how much the contribution would be

My son is under 16 so this does not apply to me

It depends on the circumstance of the family.

Not applicable to us

Some parents find it difficult to pay off their bills genuinely and therefore have issues with paying off their bills while some do have the money and can't just be bothered and is depending on the council to do everything.

Depends on the individuals need and affordability from the parents

As education is now mandated to 18, the transport should still be fully funded by Government.

In today's world, a higher education is becoming more necessary. Ending full support for pupils at GCSE level can limit pupils' long-term options.

I can not agree if the parents are low income earners, aside from that the student supposed to pay

Students aged 16 to 19 do not have automatic access to travel support. Parents and young people must consider the availability and cost of transport when deciding on a further education choice, as there is no automatic access to transport help for those over 16, and mainstream students do not get free transport. The council provides travel support as a discretionary measure, especially to those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP). In cases when travel aid is provided, parents or guardians may be expected to pay the related costs, unless a reassessment is necessary owing to a change in circumstances. Furthermore, in the event of non-payment, the council reserves the right to discontinue transport services.

I agree that it's unfair to the parents that have paid in full, but I disagree that transport should stop completely, as children are expected to stay in school until they're eighteen, also it is stated in the policy that its a "CONTRIBUTION" meaning "VOLUNTARY", if this is the case then maybe the word should be changed to compulsory??! Also some parents may not have paid in full but I'm sure that some they've paid something towards it, which maybe is all they can afford during this current financial climate, therefore shouldn't be penalised

It all depends if the parent or carer can afford it

Some parents may be experiencing a short period of difficulty in payment, not necessarily because they do not want to pay

could there be a plan where money is taken directly from benefits each month thus covering the contribution for travel this to also include send children travel

Every family is different it should be free if the child is in education

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you neither agree nor disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

Depending on the circumstances.

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

Charging parents who already have additional expenses due to raising children with disabilities and additional needs is shocking and completely unsupportive. It adds more stress to an already stressful situation. Many children with disabilities and additional needs are not able to go on to employment or training at this stage in their lives and so must remain in education. Charging parents for this is unacceptable and the council should remove these costs completely and make travel assistance free for any child with an EHCP regardless of age. If the child remains in education with an EHCP then clearly that has been agreed as the best option for them at their annual review and so should not be charged to families at all.

Children with SEND have enough obstacles to face, have low attendance and more challenges. This proposal would add another challenge.

A young person with profound needs has little control or influence over the adults supporting them and a young person in care may suffer as a result of disputes between foster parents and the corporate parent over payment. The young person will potentially experience hard through no fault of their own

I feel this places vulnerable children and families without access to education due to their parents/guardians financial hardships.

I think there needs to be consideration around specific circumstances. Students should not miss out on education due to the actions of the parents.

It hard for our children to go to school

Sometimes money is an issue through no fault of the person's own

Different families have different financial circumstances, and removing travel assistance unfairly penalises those already facing hardship. Not all families can afford the parent contribution, especially during a cost-of-living crisis. This change risks excluding vulnerable pupils from accessing post-16 education simply because of income, which undermines equality and opportunity.

Children needs transport but not every parent can afford to pay towards it

Maybe if the amount that parent need to contribute is a bit lower am sure parent won't have any issues contributing.. some house hold are single parents house hold with one income however you want time child to attend school.

Disrupting the education of a child is not an acceptable response to an adult with holding payment. Go through standard debt recovery procedures which are already in place within Medway council for things such as PCN's. Punishing a child and with holding education is immoral.

Because by law children have to be at school till they are 18 so how is that fair on the SEND children and parents that at 16 they either pay or get withdrawn from transport

By law all pupils have to be in education till 18 therefore i think parents shouldn't have to pay for this especially when a school for sen kids is not local and there no choice but to attend that school.

Its the child who loses out, will end up not gaining qualifications and therefore more likely to be reliant on benefits ect rather than completing their qualifications and being able to contribute to society. The post 16 travel fees are a lot of money for people who are already living on the breadline to find, with rising costs on every day living so high now. Its the child who loses out

I think this should be looked at with regards to income! I think this should reflect the amount asked for as a contribution

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid: (Please write in the box below)**

Some families may not be in the position to make payments of that magnitude, or not even aware they had to make payments, maybe if letters were sent rather than emails all the time things could be clearer

Not all parents families can afford we like our children to attend post16 education but children needs are not being met you need to take into consideration low income families who can't possibly make additional payments where there is a crisis of support with funding cost of living is so high

This should instead be taken out of the award rather than charged after the award has already been paid. Taking it out of the award instead means less paperwork and also means less pressure and stress to the parents.

Cost of living crisis. Many parents can't afford this cost. Child's disabilities are still the same as they were before reaching 16

These are children with complex needs who are unable to access statutory provisions. Often the distance of provisions is not within the families home location. Often the needs of the child mean they can not commute using public transport. This unfairly disadvantages children and families. There are subsidised public transport options for neurotypical children however they often access education close to home and if not the family have chosen this. Children with additional needs and their families do not have this choice. While I understand those on low incomes should not have to pay again it is those that work or are reasonably comfortable financially that are again having to over pay. It's discriminatory in the context of equality.

because they might not live with parents and cannot afford travel to education

If in full time education help should still be provided

Because the child still needs an education and needs to be able to get to school. Most can't travel by themselves and many parents work and can't take them. Also these children a lot of the time are more expensive to raise than ordinary children. They are registered disabled so why can they not be entitled to free travel to a crucial part of their growth and education.

It's difficult times so it's hard for parents to afford the basics not alone travel

It is law to be in education at these ages so I don't understand why parents who usually get free transport then have to pay for this age group

16-19 travel assistance should still be offered especially to low income families. also a payment plan should be put in place to make it more affordable for families

Sadly the child is the one who will suffer. The impact of this change will be the child is unable to receive their education. The child cannot be held accountable for their parents decisions not to make their contribution.

I completely disagree, those whom seek help, need the support, help your child learn, ie travel, repositibility. Why's council would consider taken away, from a child is unbelievable, there is would find myself unable to get my child to school as myself I suffer autoimmune disease's, which I rely on this support for my child.

Take my individual experience as example. The transport assistance was only available two months after the school year started. Our application had been submitted one month before the school year started. We parents had to pay to hire taxi for sending and collecting our son Thomas, at substantial monetary costs for the two months, in addition to the lost work hours in accompanying Thomas to the school. We still paid for the contribution, plus the aforesaid losses, for reasons that the council was not able to source and secure a transport assistance in time. We think this would not be fair. We guess a lot of parents chose not to pay because of this, though we paid.

all students should have the same right to use local/public transport to go to school and come back home safely

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

The level of payment is obscene compared to many other councils. You, alongside most other councils are using a legal loophole to punish parents of children with SEN in this age group. It is not in the spirit of the legal reforms and puts immense pressure on the poorest and most disadvantaged families. If you look at recent reports the cost of living for people with disabled children already sits at more than £1000 per family per year and you are adding even more. That does not take into account the emotional impact of raising a child with SEN. It creates huge inequality with their non-disabled peers.

Not all families can afford to help their children in further education

Children will lose out on education because of financial circumstances- eg. Parent may not be able to afford travel fees

Withdrawing travel assistance directly jeopardizes a student's ability to attend school or college. For many families, especially those with lower incomes or multiple children, the parent contribution, even if seemingly small, can be a significant barrier. Education is a fundamental right. Policies that create financial barriers to accessing education, particularly for young people who are still developing and dependent, raise significant ethical concerns about fairness and social responsibility.

Any non-payments should be looked at on an individual case by case, if families can provide sufficient evidence as to why they are unable to pay then a decision should be made in communication with that family as what the next steps should be.

SEND children are not able to make their way to school safely so they need this travel to access education. As long as the children are in full time education, parents should not have to pay.

I disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16–19 where the parent contribution has not been paid, as it may disproportionately impact families facing genuine financial hardship and place undue pressure on young people's access to education. Many families in this age group are already navigating the rising cost of living, and while they may not qualify for full financial support, they may still struggle to make regular or upfront payments. Withdrawing travel assistance due to non-payment risks punishing students for circumstances beyond their control and may result in them missing school or dropping out altogether — particularly in rural areas or where public transport options are limited. Education at this stage is critical for young people's future employment and life chances. Removing travel assistance could create unnecessary barriers for those who are already vulnerable or disadvantaged, widening inequalities instead of addressing them. A more balanced and fair approach would be to explore flexible payment plans, hardship waivers, or additional support assessments rather than withdrawing essential services.

I worry this will impact the most vulnerable. Where SEND parents may have financial difficulties while waiting benefit payments to come through etc. this may prevent them applying for any travel assistance. We could see parents deciding to home school. I worry this may lead to Medway missing safeguarding concerns.

Some families can't afford it. The child shouldn't suffer for that

It's not the child's fault if the parent has paid their contribution, why should their continuing education and development be affected by something that isn't within their control.

Let's never penalise children

Those who have EHCPs are entitled to free education up to age 25. This should include free transport as SEN schools that can meet each child's SEN needs are, more often than not, very far away from the family home. I am a full time carer and can not afford the huge contribution Medway Council expect us to pay. My daughter's SEN school is more than 30 mins drive from our home. If the education is provided for free up to 25 yrs then so should the transport. If an SEN student continues their education from age 20 to 25 the transport is provided free again. This makes no sense. Why not provide free transport for all SEN students with EHCPs for the whole of their education.

Families rely on travel assistance so they can continue to work if the payments became more than what will be the point of working when you have other cost of living

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid: (Please write in the box below)**

I think we all pay enough to the government/ council to expect free travel for all children attending school regardless of age, within a mile and half agreed no free travel but beyond that...

It is the law for a child to stay in full-time education or training until 18 years old. Therefore, it should be the councils responsibility to fund it until that age.

Not all mums dads can drive have a car some are to disabled them self to take there own child to school or college and can't aford the payment and with the benefits cuts too.

The child has special needs and shouldn't lose out because the parents are failing them

This age group are still young

Treated on a case by case basis. The child should not have transport withdrawn if there is financial hardship (not necessarily low income)

I see both sides however withdrawing travel assistance for pupils whose parents have not contributed only punishes the child. The child is vulnerable by virtue of their special needs. School may be their only safe space and to withdraw their access to this could be catastrophic from a safeguarding point of view. School may be the only place the child receives a hot meal for example. Raising disabled children is incredibly expensive and financial support is being withdrawn left right and center for some families. There must be a way to means test whether the non payment is a choice (and the parent could actually afford to pay) or whether there is simply just not any money available to make the payment. Either way, punishing a child for their parents actions is never justifiable.

Residents of Medway pays high council taxes when compared to other councils and also most parents are not financially bouyant due to cost of living

Cost of living and additional costs rising even for working parents it's, everyone should be treated equally not matter finance, disability or age

Not everyone can afford this yet the child still needs to remain education.

punishing the young person opposed to the parent is not conducive. Many young people especially SEND wont access services without travel assistance.

All children deserve the right to an education. SEND children especially are not ready to be made to leave the education system at 16 just because their parents can't afford or cannot get them to a suitable education establishment

Cost of living has risen as it would be the child that sufferers because parents maybe can't afford it

For some families the transport is essential with the cost of living rising, parents have jobs and other children to care for. Personal situations could be affected by this and mean parents have to give up work or cannot afford to provide payment for transport. The needs of the child/teen will mean they are unable to access public transport. This could be detrimental to families.

To be honest, I don't think there should be a charge to parents for post 16 as children need to stay in education until 18, therefore transport should be provided regardless of payment as it is for the child's education.

Th government states that children should remain on education until 18, however, the transport to provide this is not classified as a requirement which make no sense. A child should receive the transport the same from the start of their education until the end. Send children and their families already have a great number of difficulties and this is just another barrier to their learning.

You have raised council tax and a lot of families cannot afford the travel fees especially where Medway council choose a placement out of Medway. Your duty is to educate all children and you will be challenged in court for failing to provide transport and educate

Parent may not have the means at the moment, so it is advisable to continue providing travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 until an alternative means of contribution is considered.



## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid: (Please write in the box below)**

Again, the proposal is frankly untenable. Stating that "The council has written off £59k worth of unrecoverable debt due to non-payment of the parental contribution, and this is unsustainable." is factually incorrect, as £59k relative to the overall budget for this aspect of care is deemed minimal. In addition, the proposal fails to consider the financial situation of parents that are likely stretched beyond measure and need the support that they can get (noting on a separate but related note that the Medway council without fail increases council taxes annually). Threatening indirectly to "reserve the right to withhold transport" is not a positive stance by the council and presents a combative tone, rather than focusing on collaborative efforts to manage the situation. Persons with SEN need (no matter the age) should not be at risk of not receiving travel assistance in any scenario.

Do not withdraw the transport Assistant..transportation in Medway is too expensive compared to London and other areas

Household income should be taken into account, for low income households if it is difficult to pay, this should be assessed on a case by case basis or a reduced fee could be applied

Payment should be made over the year not in one lump sum. If this was made available more families would have the funds to pay it. It is a big financial out lay when we have already had to find the money for school uniforms.

I'm a single parent going through a difficult divorce, so if my funds don't stretch enough to be able to pay for the contribution, it's unfair that my son may not receive a bus pass. When a house hold with 2 incomes chooses to just not pay full stop. Maybe the contribution should be means tested like any other benefit you would receive.

You don't know everyone's situation

Pupils and families with SEN have enough barriers already. Providing transport to these families free of charge whilst they are at a provision I feel is essential.

Parents should be supporting their child until 18 or even earlier adulthood

Parental financial situation and reasons for non payment must be fully explored. SEND parents have so many admin tasks and responsibilities to meet, regular reminders must be sent to ensure it has not been overlooked. I can't tell you how much paperwork there is when you are a SEND parent!

A lot of families can not afford this payment, meaning that the post 16s are at a higher risk of becoming non attendees, which I find particularly interesting as the law states that under 18s are to stay in education, therefore those with an ehcp or travel assistance should not have to pay to get these children to their places. It is absolutely disgusting

For families that are low earning or not earning, this could mean them not being able to feed themselves and it will be the young person that will suffer as they wont be able to attend school or college.

I am worried that children with SEN with parents with low income are unable to attend school. Is there any other way of making savings in the council? Every child has the right of education especially the most vulnerable ones. I know parents that scrimp and save and work all hours to be able to support their child and family. It must be a difficult decision to make where the funds are most needed. Possibly the council could consider reducing charges to a level the family can contribute rather than taking SEN Transport away? Not sure if that could be assessed somehow.

Current economic situation for many parents.

Because this is unfair to the disabled child, if they are in receipt of pip I feel it should be provided based on income, wealthy parents should pay, struggling families require some help

Because you need to look at the individual circumstances of why the person can not pay.

I personally think each case should be reviewed on an individual basis. The more benefits that are claimed the more contributions should be made.

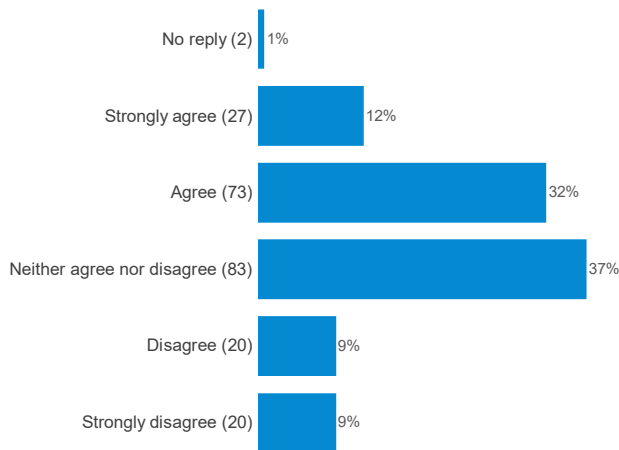
I do think it should be reviewed on a case by case basis. Making a blanket decision could mean a child could be treated unfairly.

Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed change to withdraw travel assistance for pupils aged 16-19 where the parent contribution has not been paid:** (Please write in the box below)

The parent might be facing financial difficulties

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes to the appeals process?** (Please select one option only)



**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:** (Please write in the box below)

The new proposed panel includes educated people with experience of SEN and as such more capable and understanding of the issues.

NA

It seems like a fairer way in deciding

Seems fairer

i believe that councillors are more influenced by the emotional side of constituent's views, rather than considering the facts and policy/law carefully, and are more likely to overturn a decision when it is not appropriate. they also regularly have no good knowledge of transport requirements or the professional knowledge to make the decision Officers that have specific experience in this knowledge, training and qualifications should be the ones to carefully consider these appeals and make the decisions because they are the ones qualified to make them

people making the decisions need to have the right expertise and knowledge

I strongly agree with the proposed change to the school transport appeals process, replacing elected Councillors with a multidisciplinary panel of senior council officers from SEND, social care, and Educational Psychology at stage 2. This is a welcome and progressive step. The expertise brought by professionals who work directly within the relevant services ensures that appeal decisions are made by those with the most appropriate knowledge, experience, and understanding of complex educational and welfare needs. It promotes a more informed, child-centred, and legally sound approach to decision-making. Importantly, this change maintains fairness and transparency by ensuring the panel remains independent of the original decision-making process, while enhancing the quality and consistency of decisions. The continued ability for Councillors to represent constituents at hearings strikes a good balance, ensuring that families still have a voice and support within the process. Overall, this proposal strengthens the integrity of the appeals process, safeguards children, and ensures that the local authority’s statutory duties are upheld in a professional, evidence-based manner. I fully support the change.

Seems more fair across the board. Possibly ones who are more educated in certain areas to make those decisions.

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:** (Please write in the box below)

Not having elected members required to be present might make the appeals process happen faster due to there being less onus on a few individuals having time in their calendar

Independent panel members who have an understanding of the subject matter they are judging is surely something that should already be in place. Common sense should prevail!

It seems fairer to use independent people to assess each case.

Think it's fair to have balance between parents and panel

Going through higher person

I think an independent advisor is essential! Council members are always going to protect the budget. I think these proposals changes are a direct reflection of this. Our poor Sen children!

People who understand the children better should be the ones making the decisions during appeal.

it should be a lot quicker and easier

Because elected officials do not necessarily have any knowledge of the issue whereas SEND staff most certainly do and can therefore make a more informed decision.

Independency of final panel

As long as those on the panel understand additional needs and an ed psy, social workers should then decisions will be more informed.

As it is not a statutory requirement, there may be no need for elected members on the panel, as this may not be time or cost-effective.

Fair way of sorting appraisals

It's important for SEND children and families to be heard and the best way for that to happen is by people/professionals if have an understand of the child and their SEN and behaviour.

To enhance delivery of service and serve the families better.

Sometimes people misunderstand the process so it gives them a chance to appeal and understand

An independent panel is essential to a fair, non- biased hearing at stage 2.

Will make progress alot quicker

Having an independent panel with individuals across a variety of areas with specialist knowledge seems more appropriate than the current arrangement with senior councillors - potentially more scope to be objective and impartial while still knowledgeable about the system and issues.

Mm pre independent

It sounds fair

A decision is made much more quickly

It sounds good to have outside professionals to help contribute to the decision to provide transport or not. I would hope they will be able to provide a better understanding of the students SEN/complex needs and therefore give transport to those who really need it.

I agree because is was helpful for most parents and care

People with real knowledge about SEND should be making decisions so I agree with this.

Seems fair and balanced

It should be n independent and unbiased decision

Quite often people with no idea of the realities of life with a disabled child, are making life changing decisions for send children and their families. It's about time that people with at least some idea are involved in the decision making process

Should be taken more seriously

Professionals with an understanding of SEN and children are more likely to make correct decisions based on a child's needs and not based on cost.

Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you agree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:** (Please write in the box below)

Seems more impartial

Provide a more impartial and specialised review procedure, which might enhance the consistency and fairness of school transportation decisions.

I think having a multidisciplinary team will be better however worry that the SEN staff and Educational psychologists are already overwhelmed with workloads. I believe they are better suited to make a decision but worry that this would leave gaps in other areas such as EHCP process etc which would cause other problems. I believe transport and the EHCP process should be part of the same process.

I agree that send, social workers should be on the panel

experience send panel

If it will improve the process, then change is good.

Sounds fair

They have better understanding of children's needs

The decisions can be made with the staffing you will allocate - this will allow other members to focus on other areas in the unit.

The senior council officers are in a better position to make decision about SEN Transport as the possibility have more access to information

Councillors may use their political views, rather than following the statutory rules.

For fair and unbiased review

Specialists and experts should understand the needs better than randomly elected councillors

**Please tell us why you neither agree nor disagree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:** (Please write in the box below)

The changes have not been made clear enough to Me to understand what and why it's changing.

Need more information about how independence of panel members will be guaranteed and how process will be quality assured as fair and proportionate

I don't know how impartial they'd be but then the councillors might not be either.

It depends on the severity of the child's needs

I am sure it will be done with the child's best interest

I have no understanding of the appeal process and hope I never need to.

A parent will always do what they feel is best for there child, sometimes there is not long enough to get all the evidence gathered

Because I don't think anyone actually cares about post 16 children. My child is quite vulnerable and he doesn't look it but I dnt think it matters cos your classing them as adults when I fact they are still children till they are 18. And some 16 olds could benefit from having transport. I know my son would for himself. So I don't think it matters cos no matter who is there you just read what's on the report and go from that and not speaking to the parents.

It's not clear to me in the wording of the document t. Councillors generally have no idea what it is like to be the parent or carer of a disabled child. Anything to do with disability is far more expensive.

just don't

This has not affected me

No experience

I am unable to understand whats tge benefit here

It is not clear what benefit this change will bring.

No reason

Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you neither agree nor disagree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:** (Please write in the box below)

I hope not to be in this position

I gratefully accept what I am given. I know enough people in medway that appeal to get as much as they get or those that can't access support. I am fortunate to have what support I get. I hope others if they need to appeal can get the required support.

It doesn't matter who hears the appeal as long as its a fair process.

It doesn't matter hence why

Provided the process is transparent and this does not require increasing council staff levels, this should theoretically have no material impact to outcomes.

It would be ideal to have completely independent members from any government authority so that there is no bias. As someone from a government authority will have an insight to the potential internal issues which could influence decisions. However this may not always be a bad thing either.

I feel 2 appeals is adequate.

I'm ok with that

I have never gone through the appeal process so do not understand how it works

As long as it is not detrimental to the student that's all that matters, this should not be a cutting cost exercise when it comes to send students

There is a risk of unconscious bias.

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:** (Please write in the box below)

Council employees with simply hold the council line. There is nothing impartial about it. It makes the appeals process pointless

This proposal introduces a fundamental shift in governance. Officers, bound strictly by policy guidelines, would not have the ability to consider extenuating circumstances. This could result in inflexible and unjust decisions. If officers were allowed to disregard policy, they would, in effect, be amending it which is a dangerous precedent that undermines democratic accountability. Elected members play a crucial role in ensuring policies serve the best interests of the community. Their involvement in Stage 2 appeals provides a necessary safeguard against rigid application of policy and allows for the consideration of unique circumstances. Removing this democratic check risks eroding trust in the appeals process and diminishing transparency

I think Councillors are more likely to independently consider the impact and views of the child/parents

As it is more of a long, drawn out process for the SEND parent's which have already been fighting for their child's needs for most of their lives. The person also not being independent also means they will have a favour against the council/department they work for

Do not understand why this needs to be done.

Not all parents can fight further more most have a disability that require additional help. Let the panel appeals ppl live with the families see how they manage everyday with school And in fair you don't listen to parents thst do appeal

should be elected officials

A lot of the time these decisions are made by people that need to cut the amount of money they are spending. Children slip through the net and don't get what they need to continue their education because of budget cuts

It's ludicrous

This does not seem to be a fair and balanced board to deliver a final decision.

Why would anyone council take away from a child in a high poverty area !

Independent review should be maintained. The council officials will not maintain the Independence

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please tell us why you disagree with the proposed changes to the appeals process:**  
(Please write in the box below)

because you are replacing truly independent councillors with people that still work withing the council and therefore will decide in "the council's" favour everytime!! strongly disagree!! the fact that most of your appeals are overturned definitely shows that the council have a hidden agenda! so no it MUST be independent people NOT connected to the council in any way, shape or form!

Senior council officers are part of the government bureaucracy system. They may pose substantial conflicts of interest when sitting in the panel for final decisions. Elected councillors can serve better in neutrality in this regard.

This is clearly a way to ensure you can control the outcomes and fix the system to ensure you can decline more people. Use independent lay people if councillors are too busy

The elected members of the Council are the bonafide representatives of the population. I am against putting only civil servants or only Council officials on an appeal panel that has the final say on a matter affecting the members of the public and especially the future of the children. The appeal panel must be broad enough to be seen as impartial as justice must not only be done, it must be seen to have been done. If it is possible, there could be a chairperson of the panel who can be an independent lawyer, clergy man or an MP or a top civil servant on voluntary basis.

councillors always more independant

So you can't afford to give free travel to all children attending school but you can waste money on "senior" council members, one to two members would pay for all free travel, simple maths.

Life is heard enough with a child or young person with disabilities keep changing this taking them away.

Councillors are responsible to their constituency. Employees do not have these constraints. I don't trust unelected employees to be independent

It will be waste of time and resources

We need support and needs to be fair for everyone every child deserves the same amount of support what ever background or disability

more consideration needs to made for the young people/students. there is a financial crisis and many parents already lack in support and services. stop making those who need the support the most suffer for money saving exercises.

Your panel from Medway council is not independent and why do you not give rants and bursaries for travel? Kent children get bursaries from Kent council to help towards costs.

Not a fair process.

You state in the write that an independent appeal panel will be the replacement. Later on in the explanation, you state that Panel members are not required to be independent of the local authority. Which is it? If it is indeed the latter - the flaw inherent is clear - how can you have panel members (making a final decision about a matter/ appeals process), that are potentially not independent of the LA as part of a decision making process that could impact the LA? Has this not been considered at all? Panel members should be independent of the LA hence I disagree wholeheartedly.

Things are we okay they way they are. Parents and guardians require all the assistance the council can support with at this time

They should have knowledge and experience with SEND pupils.

One appeals stage is enough, and it will shorten the period

The panel will then not be independent if they still work for the council. A more balanced solution is necessary- the number of councillors could be reduced but not removed entirely, for example. Also, consider other reasonable choices for the panel, like independent experts or professionals who don't work for the council.

You need to look at the individual circumstances

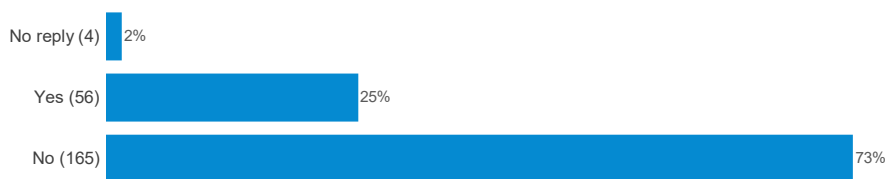
The decision makers might not have had any contact with the child or the parents, so decisions could be subjunctive to their own interpretation and misconceptions.

Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Do you think parents should be given the option to attend stage 2 appeal hearings online? (Please select one option only)**



**Are there any further changes you think should be made to the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and/or Post 16 Transport Policy Statement? (Please select one option only)**



**Please give details of any further changes you think should be made to the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and/or Post 16 Transport Policy Statement: (Please write in the box below)**

I think the council should reconsider the mandatory training requirements of drivers and assistants. Some we've had have been wonderful but other (Norse) have been absolutely horrendous with bullying and belittlement from staff and such a lack of basic human compassion that I'm shocked they even got the job.

For children in care the home Local Authority (the Corporate Parent) has full context of the need of the young person and a school may make an offer based upon EHCP consultation documents which the host LA SEN team have not made changes to for a long time. The Corporate Parent may have valid reasons to decline an offer of a place on roll if they do not feel that the school or the current cohort will be a suitable match. In this instance, where an appropriate match school is further away, the child should not be penalised by having transport withdrawn.

I think post 16 transport for Sen should be fully funded. These young people have to stay on in education till 16. Transport issues just makes that even more challenging. These kids need more support not less.

stop providing services that aren't in law/statutory guidance when the council has so little money and is in so much debt and problems, you need to save money for services that really need it. you can't say how the financial situation is so bad but then at the same time be spending money unnecessarily. also why aren't you offering travel training? you could be getting kids off of formal transport placements and actual shared transport buses and onto independent travel, increasing how independent they are, by supporting them to learn how to use the bus or walk and follow a route. this is a serious missed opportunity to upskill kids and help them function better, and would save you a lot of money if you could improve their skills so that they could switch from formal taxi buses shared onto just bus passes... like tens of thousands surely if not hundreds. why haven't you done it - not cost effective and such a missed piece of work, really ineffective and poor practice from the council to not have done this as well to facilitate better wellbeing health and skills for these kids, you're letting down midway kids

The policy should include a hardship provision or flexible payment scheme for families experiencing financial difficulty. Not all households who struggle to pay will meet standard low-income thresholds, especially those with fluctuating incomes or multiple dependants. Additionally, clearer consideration should be given to students with SEND who may require escorted transport or have reduced independence. Travel support should not be one-size-fits-all — flexibility and inclusion must be built into the system to ensure equal access to education.

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please give details of any further changes you think should be made to the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and/or Post 16 Transport Policy Statement:** (Please write in the box below)

Post Education is important to autistic kids who are so accustomed to routine and being around other kids so please make it 50% or less for the parent it's not easy financially for a lot of parents and more so affect the kids if they can't attend school because of

1. It should be changed to 18 not 16. Children have to attend school till this age legally 2. SEND transport should be provided from 2 miles onwards for any child, regardless of their age 3. Low-income SEND families should be provided with shared transport from 2 miles onwards from the school, regardless of their age

Travel arrangements for young people with SEN in foster care can be complicated & need to be taken into account.

Cameras on buses! I have no idea why this isn't essential. I don't believe in the process of how ratios are calculated how an earth this is safe. The polices are never met. The emails are genetic and cold! The head of transport I think is rude and disconnected from the reality of it. She avoids questions. My daughter is travelling longer than an older child. She has no care for the welfare of these children and it's heartbreaking.

As children now have to stay in education until they are 18 I don't understand why travel assistance isn't from 5-18 instead of 5-16

Firstly, ensure that the direct debit paperwork is available to fill in at the time of application. This means less time chasing payments by parents and less administration. Secondly, it is counterproductive to pay the travel allowance and THEN ask for parental contribution back at a later date. Rather, it would be less administration to simply only pay the travel allowance minus parental contribution on the outset. This would mean less administration costs and less fiscal pressure on parents.

I don't think post 16 transport should be taken away. Those who actually benefit from it and need it should still stay. They are still children and not adults. My son is vulnerable and worrying about what's going to happen worries me. Because it will be whether he goes to college or not. 2 buses and a train isn't good for a child that is vulnerable. 18 onwards I feel it should then be taken away but not 16, and whether transport will be provided or not.

Parents should automatically be allowed to have transport for children with SEND regardless of an EHCP or whether they are going through the process or not

If parents receive free transport then this should still be available after 16 till they finish education e.g 6th form

Distance between home and school should not be a factor if a child needs transportation in exceptional circumstances. I.e. behaviour issues, mental health issues and SEMH and disability

Better communication with parents.

I think traffic and travel time should also be factored in to consider the provision of travel assistance, in addition to the single factor "travel distance". For example, my son is attending MidKent College. The school is within the distance at which a minibus is not provided for travel assistance. Due to the busiest traffic in Medway it took me the same time or more to give my son a lift every day than when he attended Triple R at Rainham, which, though, is much farther.



## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please give details of any further changes you think should be made to the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and/or Post 16 Transport Policy Statement:** (Please write in the box below)

The Education Act 1996 – Section 508B & Schedule 35B (Still the primary legislation for transport) states that a local authority must provide free home-to-school transport for eligible children. A child is eligible if: They are of compulsory school age (5-16), and They attend their nearest suitable school, and They meet criteria such as distance from school or inability to walk due to SEND or mobility needs. ?? For children with an EHCP, “nearest suitable school” is defined differently — it is usually the school named in the EHCP, unless: The parents have chosen a different school and agreed to make their own transport arrangements as part of that choice (as stated in the EHCP under Section I or transport arrangements agreed separately). You have changed the wording to eligible. It is not about an eligible school, and you have swayed from the national and legal wording on this to create confusion. In general, it should be the school named in the plan unless it is specifically identified within the EHCP that travel will not be provided

Offering an accessible point of contact for families applying if they have difficulties with completing the applications and using clear language within the policy

When a no school closer to a post 16 student house can offer the subjects that he/she chose I believe the council should step in and help with the transport cost if he/she should receive an offer further away from the house.

Should make the company that taking said children if they late they should get a penalty fine

Reduce the frequency that re-applications have to be made

Travel assistance should be available to low income families even if there is a nearer school

Improve the search to find the SEN transport on Medway Council's website. Currently unless you know the exact words it doesn't find the page you are looking for.

Stop wasting money employing people to police non free travel and give free travel, must be cheaper way round.

Inspections on the companies and vehicles who give the transport should be done. Speed trackers should be installed on all vehicles and cameras.

All transport up to the age of 18 both mainstream and send should be funded for those that met criteria for 11-16 as they are no longer allowed to leave education at 16

parent should have a voice as knows the child the best

Consideration should be given to all children with additional needs. This option of transport offers independence for the child that many parents cannot offer in a different ways.

this needs seriously looking into who is and isn't sharing with other service users. ensuring that appropriate young people have the appropriate support, ACTUALLY looking in to the individuals who will share transport and if its appropriate for the safety and needs

All children should be offered suitable transport on individual needs and contact parents and schools to see what is suited for the child, and not just for the LA to decide on how they are transported. The LA to have better communication with parents ASAP, especially when there is severe issues with transport at the start of every academic year. Transport should be provided regardless of parental preference and post 16 should not have to contribute as the children have to stay in education until 18 especially as most sen children have lower abilities or need the support being given to them in their setting the get the qualifications they need.

Transport should be kept the same from the start of their education until the end of their education and not altered purely because they have turned 16.

Bursaries , grants and you forget the law around travel, where children have a medical condition

I found the things I was told during the EHCP process different to what was actually the case and so better communication and understanding is needed to help parents. If the SEN transport was better understood/integrated into the EHCP process it would likely reduce the workload (and appeals) for the transport team AND would provide a better experience for the student and parents.

## Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please give details of any further changes you think should be made to the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and/or Post 16 Transport Policy Statement: (Please write in the box below)**

This is more of a general comment - majority of the proposed changes are in favor of the council and do not consider the unique needs of SEN children, young adults and their carers who are under immense pressure to live life as functionally as possible and importantly, thrive within the community. Whilst the council must operate in a sustainable manner, handling costs judiciously, this is not the way to go about it. Cutting costs where SEND is involved is a right shame

Those already provided with bus passes, still get a bus pass if they are going into sixth form.

Children with SEND shouldn't automatically lose assistance at 16. Just because they reach a certain age doesn't mean the condition is suddenly better

You should teach SEND children how to catch the bus. Perhaps take some lessons on independent travel.

My child currently has travel assistance for get to and from school, and is hoping to do 6th form, however I have not received any information whether he is entitled to claim for travel, which I would be happy to put a percentage towards. Instead of a survey, additional information for the upcoming year and what happens next would have been greatly appreciated.

Bus passes to contain the child's photo and school if found makes it easier to return to the child, rather than sending to the address on the pass and causing less financial hardship on the family until either a new one is issued or old one returned. A temporary pass can be issued by school if passes are lost or not arrived on time, assessed weekly and school can advise you if they have had to issue a pass.

The criteria for acceptance or eligibility is still not clear and hard to find. It's not clear at what point eligibility is likely to be withdrawn and as such is a shock and impact to child and parents.

We believe that parents should have the option to allow their children to enter their home of their own accord when dropped back after school rather than parents having to greet them, if they feel the child is able to do so and encourage a level of independence for the child

Given the current economic climate and rising child poverty rates, it's crucial to consider the financial burden on parents. Many of us are already shouldering high costs for activities that benefit our children's development. Adding transportation costs to and from school can be overwhelming. I urge the council to explore ways to provide more support to families, ensuring that transportation costs don't exacerbate financial

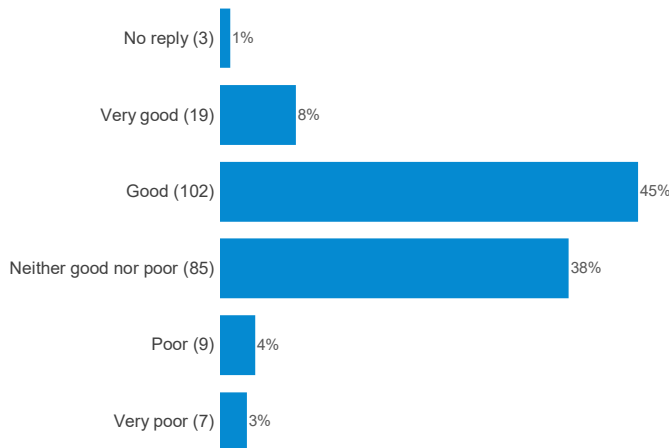
When a parent is taking into consideration what school is best for their child, they are trying to pick the school that best suits the child's needs, not the distance. Parents are also balancing the needs on occasion of other responsibilities including other children and work. I don't see how a parent should be penalised for choosing a school further away as they know the child better than the local authority. Also, they are balancing their household needs. The local authority wants better attendance but are unable to support when a parent has two or more children who need to be at a separate school at the same time. The expectations of good attendance are immediately an issue. This can also put pressure on work

There is really no need to apply again when you have other children and circumstances are not changing any time soon.

There shouldn't be a post 16 policy due to the change of law in 2015 all young people are required to continue education - the council's responsibilities to everyone up to 19 should be the same as 5-16 year olds

Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**How would you rate the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and Post-16 Transport Policy Statement overall in terms of being easy to read and understand? (Please select one option only)**



**Please explain what would make it easier to read and understand the proposed Education Travel Assistance Policies and/or Post 16 Transport Policy Statement: (Please write in the box below)**

Find an Autistic person to write the plan, in plain black and white. It will stop all the jargon as well as be easy to read for the SEND parents, which in most cases are undiagnosed Autistic/ADHD too

I think parents should be given a link to read the polices when applying

Laymen’s terms. All you do as a parent/carer of a disabled child is fill out forms and chase people/services.

Terrible

Utter disgrace

If its written by a human and for humans to understand

My older son who is taking A laves the travel just stopped he is SEN needs

There are loads of cancellation expecially during winter

Your lack of law and the Childs rights have not been taken into account

Its not very explanatory to a lay man

Parents having o pay for bus transport when the child has a bus pass due to distance

You need to explain early on that travel will need to be paid for if you even manage to get transport ...its not free

See previous comments

**Do you have any further comments or suggestions relating to the proposed changes that have not been raised previously within this survey? (Please select one option only)**



Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

**Please give details of any further comments or suggestions relating to the proposed changes that have not been raised previously within this survey:** (Please write in the box below)

This survey seems very concerned with if we can understand the changes and if the policy makes them clear. The issue is the changes themselves and not our ability to read your policies.

The Post 16 Travel Assistance policy should also make the guidelines clear on travel assistance to Post 16 SEN provisions where some courses or educational programs start and finish times fall outside the normal school day.

Children LEGALLY have to be at school till they are 18, not 16. You need to change the plan to the current, government law , not the 'old-school' plan where you could leave at 16

I think the system is a direct reflection of saving money. Parents are in a position of having no alternative. We are trusting our kids are safe with no evidence of this. Too many children are crammed onto buses with little support and it's not safe. Polices are hidden and hard to find. If you email for information you are fobbed off. When you find the information you are told it's just an aim. Our alternatives are non existent if you can't drive due to disability.

I live in hoo and wouldn't be able to get my child anywhere without the additional support so im dreading this next battle to fight for my child who clearly won't travel on public or taxi

To re-look at free bus passes etc. For 6th formers ... as I don't understand why it stops once hits 6th form as its law to be in education plus parents income has not changed .

No person should be under review that has already had transport provisions in place!! these are vital for families to get there children to school!! my son goes to a school out of Medway and I do not drive so I do rely on the travel service, and now to have my sons travel reviewed because Medway deemed it "too expensive" is just not on!! My Son goes to a school that cater specifically to his needs and his is thriving at, and now from September 2025 you will be reviewing whether my son could go to a school closer! absolutely NOT ON and I will fight it all the way.

The travel assistance is critical for many parents with SEND children. Parents would lose substantial work hours if this is not properly arranged, and they would be significant losses financially and emotionally for the whole family. we parents feel thankful for the council's good work and help. Really appreciate it a lot.

Education travel Assistant was encouraged children to go to having on time at school and be at home on time

Think Iv said enough in the other comments.

Listen to the parents and carer's and not dismiss their concerns so quickly

That emails regarding payments should appear less threatening and maybe more supportive

The school needs to provide classes on travel if your not excepted for the school bus and are told to use public transport.

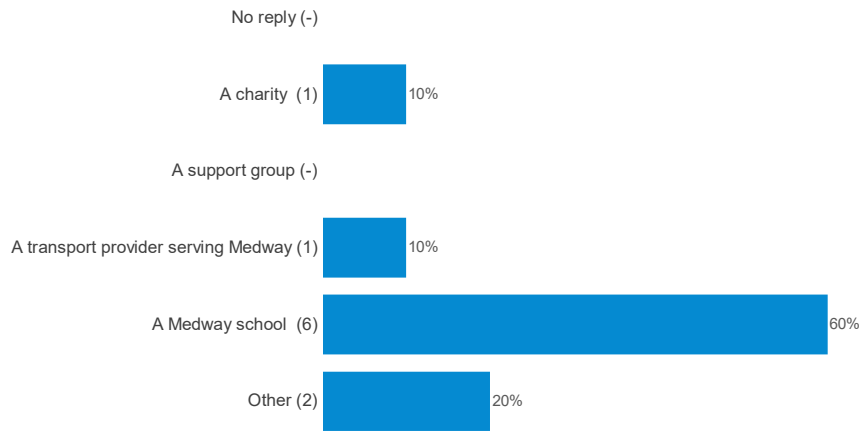
can passes be made electronic so less chance of being stolen, misused or lost. You send a link for the pass followed by a code to an email to down load the pass.

**I am responding to this survey as:** (Please select one option only)



Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

I am responding to this survey on behalf of: (Please select one option only)



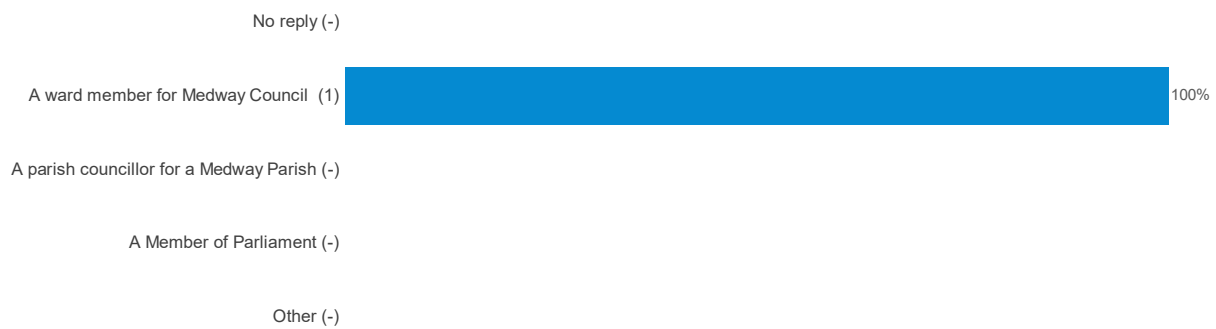
Other, please state:

- SEN School
- A foster agency

Name of organisation: (Please write in the box below)

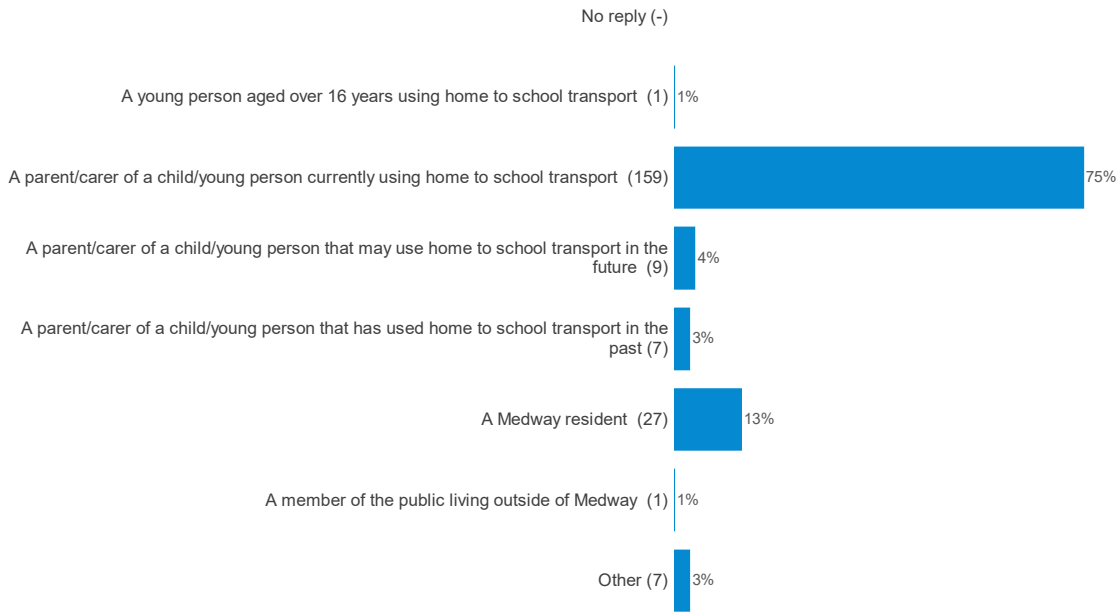
- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Cliffe Woods Primary School | Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School |
| Moor House School           | ISP Teynham                                 |
| The Marlborough             | The Rowans Primary                          |
| HATs Transport              |   |

As an elected representative, are you: (Please select one option only)



Education Travel Assistance Policy Consultation 2025

I am: (Please select one option only)



Other, please state:

Other.

Education professional

Parent of child with special needs who could not get help with transport due to the 3 mile rule when the roads I drive day come to 2.82 miles each way

Education professional

parent of child who has free travel on the bus for school

Do you or your child/young person have SEND or an EHCP? (Please select one option only)

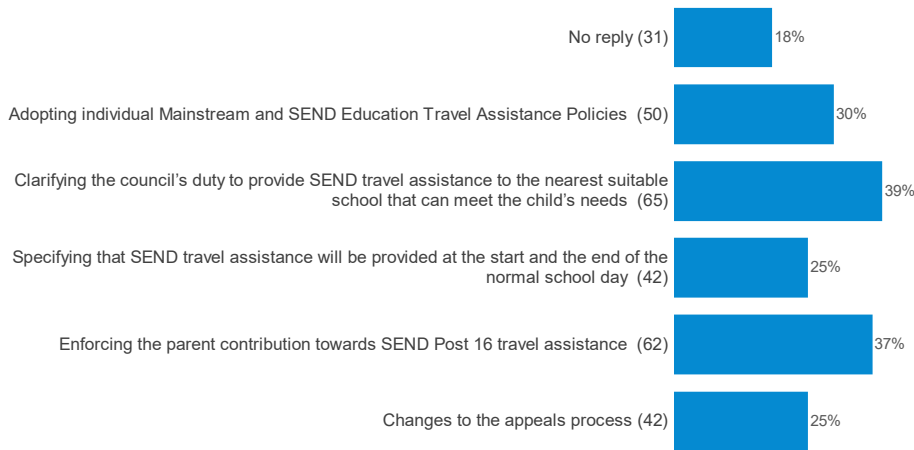


Do any of the proposed changes within the policies affect you? (Please select one option only)



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Which of the proposed changes within the policy affect you? **(Please select all that apply)**

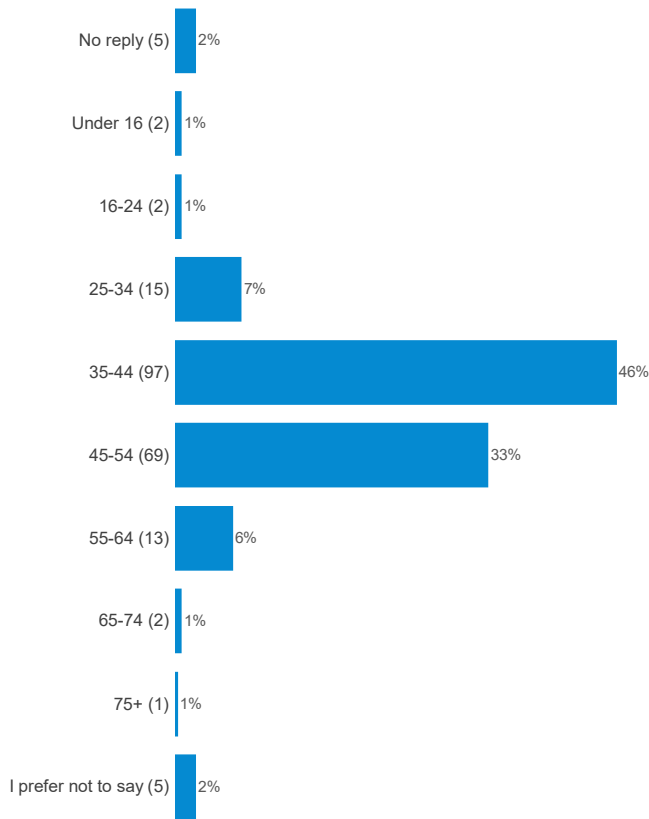


What is your sex? **You are registered with a sex at birth, the only recognised options for sex in the UK are 'female' and 'male', which is why these are the only options to choose from. (Please select one option only)**



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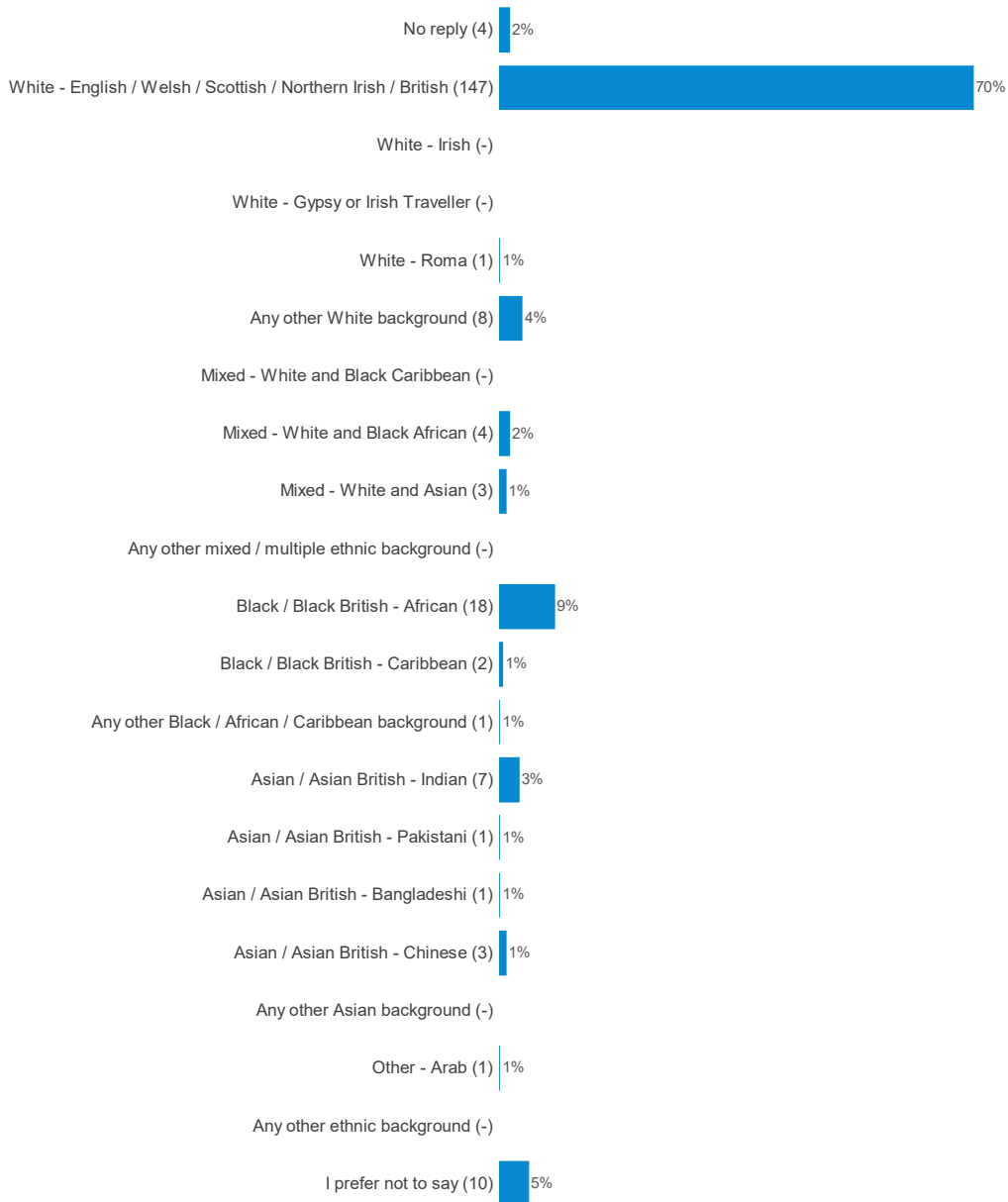
In which of the following age bands do you fall? **(Please select one option only)**





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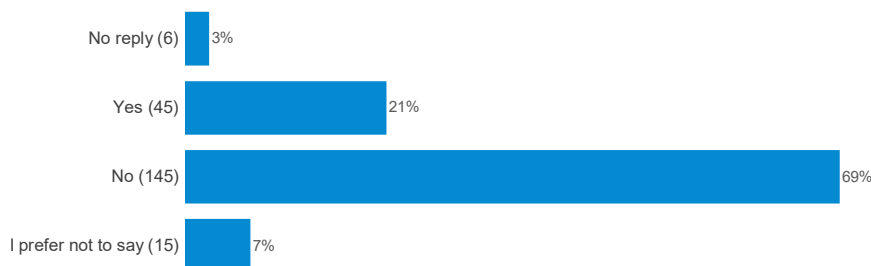
What is your ethnic group? **(Please select one option only)**



**Other, please state below:**

White European

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more? **(Please select one option only)**



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In which area do you live? (Please select one option only) (Do you live?)

