Travel Assistance Policy for young people

1.0 Summary

1.1 The Council currently provides transport to approximately 715 pupils with Special Educational Needs at an annual cost of £3.75m. Assisted transport is essential for the majority of special educational needs pupils accessing schools and colleges, but there is a need to strengthen the eligibility policy to guide the assessment of the need for transport provision by the Council.

1.2 The adoption of a policy for transport provision that promotes independence is beneficial to service users and to the Council. Moreover, the recent appointment of an Independent Travel Programme manager provides the necessary resource and expertise to help service users to make the transition to independent travel, wherever this would be appropriate.

1.3 The West London Alliance (comprising Brent, Hounslow, Ealing and Harrow) has formulated a new joint policy on children’s eligibility for travel assistance. It has been jointly agreed to aim to have this new policy fully in place for implementation in summer 2013. The approach in this policy also accords with the Adult Social Care ‘Promoting Independence’ policy agreed in 2012.

1.4 This report seeks approval for a West London Alliance Eligibility Policy which provides clear criteria for access to transport provision and promotes the adoption of alternatives, including the provision of independent travel training, which reflect the needs of the individual and help to promote greater independence.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 That the Council adopts the WLA Travel Assistance Policy for Young People Eligibility Policy for access to Council-funded transport for pupils in special schools and other learning centres

2.2 That each pupil receiving transport should have their eligibility reviewed annually.
3.0 Detail

Background

3.1 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide assistance with home to school transport for children where there is no suitable education provision within a reasonable distance from their home. This distance is determined as:

- 2 miles for children aged under 8 years; and
- 3 miles for pupils aged 8 and over.

3.2 In London, travel on buses is free for young people up to 18 years of age, and the council would expect all pupils to take advantage of this free provision, before agreeing to provide other transport assistance.

3.3 There is no automatic entitlement to assistance with transport for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

3.4 Through its work to improve the supply of provision for pupils with special educational needs in the borough, the Council is reducing the number of pupils who have to travel out of borough for provision and generally to reduce the time that pupils spend on transport as much as possible.

3.5 The council currently has an eligibility policy which has needed to be replaced with an up-to-date policy with a stronger emphasis on independence. Other west London boroughs have been in the same position so the London boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow and Hounslow within the West London Alliance (WLA) have joined together in formulating a new policy in order to produce a consistent approach to providing travel assistance for children and young people attending school/college. The aim of this collaborative approach is to ensure that regardless of where a child lives, within the WLA region, the level of service received is consistent, the service experience is the same and the most efficient, effective and suitable travel assistance is provided. There will also be a shared approach to monitoring implementation.

3.6 This policy (attached as an Appendix to this report) was agreed as a draft in November 2012 and has subsequently been the subject of consultation in each borough with a view to being adopted for implementation in summer 2013.

Consultation

3.7 The consultation period included two public meetings at Brent Town Hall, two meetings at Special Schools and a meeting with One Voice Community, the voluntary sector group representing parents of children with special needs. Attendance was low at the public meetings. This was partly due to poor weather conditions during late January, however, the meetings were advertised to all parents from late November and in the local press during January 2013.
3.8 There were 100 consultation questionnaires received, most from the original mail out to all parents and carers of service users. Some questionnaires were returned at public meetings, school meetings and 3 online returns from Brent Council’s consultation portal.

3.9 In general, the written consultation feedback was positive. Most respondents agreed that Brent should annually review the need to provide travel assistance and supported the Council’s policy of promoting independence for special educational needs children and young people.

3.10 Of the 100 returns 69% agreed that service user’s need for travel assistance should be reviewed annually. 17% disagreed that this annual assessment should take place, with 14% neither agreeing or disagreeing. Those who disagreed commented that SEN children should only be assessed when the special educational need changes in some significant way. Other criticisms were that the annual reviews put pressure and stress on parents and wasted Council money.

3.11 Of the 100 returns 64% agreed that the Council should promote independence for young people with special educational needs. 16% disagreed that the Council promote independence for these young people, with 20% neither agreeing or disagreeing. Those disagreeing or neither agreed or disagreed, felt that the Council should assess children to ensure their readiness for independent travel training.

3.12 In response to the question of suggesting other ways the Council can support independent travel, respondents (52% responding) thought the Council should have more variety of ways to get pupils to SEN schools. This could take the form of carers paid by the Council, trained travel buddies and encouraging siblings to assist the SEN pupil. There was overwhelming support for the independent travel training scheme. There was also a commonly expressed concern that all pupils should only be travel trained once their abilities have been assessed and there is parental consent.

3.13 In response to highlighting areas of the proposed policy that consultees disagreed with, respondents (31% responding) confirmed that they thought there should be no fixed age where travel training should begin, for example 12 years of age. The general view was that each pupil should be taken on a case by case basis and assessed on their own abilities to travel independently. Concerns were raised that using a travel buddy scheme may end up more expensive than pupils continuing to use Brent Transport Service. One respondent suggested that transport assistance should be refused for parents not choosing the nearest suitable school.

3.14 In response to suggestions for improvements to the service, respondents (46% responding) broadly agreed that escorts and drivers of Brent Transport Service should receive enhanced training on special educational needs. There was also support for earlier warnings to parents of any changes in route times or staffing as these issues have an impact on autistic pupils’ routine. The majority of comments were thankful for the reliable and professionally run Brent Transport Service. Others commented that they would like to see improved
communications between parents and BTS. Again support was expressed for the independent travel training scheme for 10 – 16 year olds that would improve their confidence whilst ensuring their safety.

4.0 Impact on Existing Service Users

4.1 If the proposed policy is agreed, the following timescales for implementation of the new policy are proposed:

A. Assessment of all new SEN clients from May 2013.

B. Re-Assessment of all SEN pupils from May 2013 but implemented from September 2013.

4.2 Upon the policy becoming active all new SEN service users with new SEN Statements or moving into the borough will have their assessment for travel assistance carried out under the new the policy. During the summer term all those currently in receipt of assisted transport will re-apply but the decisions will only take effect at the start of the next academic year in September 2013.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 Annual expenditure on transport for young people with special educational needs is in the region of £3.75m. The new Eligibility Policy will enable the council to control costs. The focus on independent travel training and assisted travel options other than Brent Transport Service will continue to assist in spending the Council’s scarce resources wisely.

5.2 It is currently estimated that gross annual savings will be at least £100K through the implementation of this policy although this will be reviewed in the light of experience and as part of the work on opportunities for cost savings, including work with Adult Services.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The Local Authority is statutorily tasked with ensuring that children with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) receive an education that is appropriate and compliant with that set out in the child’s statement in accordance with Sections 312-349 of the Education Act 1996 (as amended).

6.2 The Local Authority is obliged to have regard to parental preference for a child to be educated in either specialist or mainstream provision when supplying SEN provision – Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

6.3 The Local Authority when dealing with children with Special Educational Needs must have regard to the Secretary of State’s published Code of Practice and must not promulgate transport policies that seek to limit parental choice.
6.4 Local authorities under Section 509(1) of the 1996 Act are required to make “such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as they consider necessary, or as the Secretary of State may direct, for the purpose of facilitating the attendance of persons receiving education at schools”.

6.5 The Education Act 1996 (Section 508B) places a duty on Local Authorities to make travel arrangements for eligible children in their area.

6.6 Section 508A of the Act (inserted by the Education and Inspections Act 2006) places a general duty on local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport.

6.7 The Department for Education (DfE) SEN Code of Practice (Paragraph 8.87) also recommends that Local Authorities have a clear and transparent policy to address the transport needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities.

7.0 Diversity Implications

7.1 An equalities impact assessment has been carried out in respect of this policy. This assessment has not identified a negative impact on any groups with protected characteristics. The policy is positive in respect of the affected groups, children with special educational needs and their families, since it emphasises independence and quality of life. Clearly it is important that this policy forms part of a wider approach to inclusion of young people with disabilities, as reflected in the Council’s SEND Strategy. It will also be important to monitor the impact of this policy as it is implemented.

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 There are no staffing or accommodation issues contained within this report.

Background Papers:

i) WLA Policy for Travel Assistance for Children and Young People 2013

ii) Consultation Report on WLA Policy for Travel Assistance for Children and Young People 2013

iii) Equality Analysis for WLA Policy for Travel Assistance for Children and Young People 2013

iv) WLA Independent Travel Strategy - November 2012

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POLICY FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Policy for the provision of travel assistance for children and young people attending school/college.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Education Act 1996 as amended, requires local authorities to make suitable travel arrangements for eligible children as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance at school.

The London boroughs of Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow and Hounslow within the West London Alliance (WLA) have joined together in forming this policy in order to produce a consistent approach to providing travel assistance for children and young people attending school/college. The aim of this collaborative approach is to ensure that regardless of where a child lives, within the WLA region, the level of service received is consistent, the service experience is the same and the most efficient, effective and suitable travel assistance is provided.

At the heart of this approach there are two key principles which underpin a culture of providing travel assistance; promoting independence and maintaining quality of life. By working in partnership with parents, children and young people, schools and the voluntary sector, we hope to secure the right option for each child so they are better prepared to enter adulthood confidently as active participants in society.

The WLA has considered the statutory legal framework and statutory guidance in formulating this policy.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Inclusion and independence

Councils are committed to the principles of inclusion and to promoting greater independence for children and young people with special educational needs so that their experiences can be similar to those of their peers. They recognise the importance of extending the range of travelling options available so that the most suitable arrangements can be made to support individual needs. It is recognised that travelling to school as independently as possible is a valuable experience for young people as they grow up. In order to do this, many young people with special needs may need extra training to help them to learn the skills required for greater independence. Opportunities currently available within some WLA councils include;
a. Accredited travel training programmes to enable pupils to develop the skills needed for independent travel.

b. Trained travel buddies where mainstream peers work as travelling partners for pupils with special educational needs.

The WLA councils are working to expand the access to this range of options in future to support the principles in this policy.

_Safe and Sustainable Travel_

The Education Act 1996 places a general duty on the Local Authority to assess the travel needs of all children and persons of 6th form age to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to school to meet those travel needs. Sustainable modes of travel will be defined as those which improve either the physical well-being of those who use them or the environmental well-being of the area.

The WLA supports this principle and aims to promote safety and sustainability where it provides assistance with travel for pupils and young people with special educational needs.

_Service Standards and the efficient use of public resources_

In recognising the significant spend on transport across the WLA. The councils adopting this policy have agreed to work together and provide a coordinated travel service for children and young people with special educational needs that aims to deliver its services to clear and consistent standards of both quality and costs. Where travel assistance is provided, councils will work collaboratively and seek to use the most economically efficient and effective means available.

_Safeguarding_

In providing travel assistance to children and young people, councils will ensure that all decisions reflect their safeguarding duties.

3. **LEGAL BACKGROUND**

Parents/carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. However, under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006, local authorities have a duty to provide assistance with travel to and from qualifying schools/college for children and young people aged 5-16 in certain circumstances.

In addition, local authorities also have a duty to facilitate access to full-time education for young people aged 16-19 and this may include assistance with travel in certain circumstances. Other post 16 learners with learning difficulties and disabilities aged 16-25 attending colleges and other places of learning may be eligible for assistance.
There is no mandatory entitlement to travel assistance for children under 5.

Under s508A of the Education Act 1996, local authorities must produce annually a strategy on sustainable modes of travel for children and persons of sixth form age travelling to and from their places of education. The strategy is intended to improve the physical well-being of those who use the “sustainable modes of travel” and or the environmental well-being of the area.

Under s508B of the Education Act 1996, local authorities must provide such travel arrangements as they consider necessary to get every “eligible child” to his “relevant educational establishment” Travel arrangements for an eligible child must under s508B be free of charge and may not require participants to incur extra costs. Local authorities may also choose to provide travel assistance to those who do not qualify as eligible children but these arrangements may include a requirement under s508C for the child or his parent to pay some or all of the costs.

The criteria by which an “eligible child” is defined is set out in Part 4 of this document, which sets out Entitlement.

The provision of travel assistance by WLA councils will be based on individual needs and circumstances and with regard to the efficient use of resources.

Each of the WLA councils will consult parents and carers on a draft of this policy and will take into account the feedback received from this consultation before finalising the policy. Each council will also carry out an equality impact assessment in respect of this policy before finalising it to determine the affect this policy may have upon all sections of the community.

4. ENTITLEMENT

This document explains the background relating to the provision of travel assistance by the council for children and young people living in WLA region and describes how the policy applies to:

a. Children aged 5-16.

b. Young people in full-time education from ages 16 - 19.

c. Learners aged 19 or over, but under 25, who have or should have had a learning difficulty assessment under section 139A of the Learning and Skills Act 2000.

d. Children and young people with medical needs.

An “eligible” child is defined as one to whom at least one of the following criteria applies;

a. A child with special educational needs, a disability or mobility problem, who lives within the walking distance, but cannot be expected to walk;
b. A child who cannot be expected to walk because of the nature of his/her route;

c. A child beyond the walking distance (2 miles for pupils below the age of 8 and 3 miles for those aged 8 and over) who is without suitable alternative arrangements;

d. A child between 8 years and 10 years in a low-income family living more than 2 miles from their preferred suitable school; or

e. A child in a low-income family living between 2 to 6 miles from his/her suitable secondary school; or

ELIGIBILITY AND PROVISION FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN AGED 5-16

Eligibility for travel assistance will differ according to the age and needs of the pupil. Each individual case will be given careful consideration. In general, councils would expect parents and carers to take responsibility for the travel arrangements for younger pupils and for most older pupils either to walk to school or access to free travel on public buses, where available, and to develop their independent travel skills where appropriate.

The following factors or combinations of factors will be taken into consideration in determining whether travel assistance is needed and the nature of assistance required:

a. If a child lives farther away from school than the statutory walking distances and for whom parents/carers have unsuccessfully tried to obtain a place at a suitable school within the statutory distance, and where no other school which is closer to home has places available. The statutory distances are:

   (1) Over 2 miles for children aged 5, 6 and 7

   (2) Over 3 miles for children aged 8-16

These distances are measured based on the shortest route along which a child may walk in reasonable safety. It may include footpaths as well as roads if these are well lit, are of reasonable width and are in good condition. Where these distance criteria are exceeded, it is expected that the provision of free bus and tube services by TFL will meet the need for travel assistance in almost all cases.

b. If a child is from a low income family (defined as those whose children are entitled to free school meals or whose parents are in receipt of maximum level working tax credits), if they meet the following criteria:

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1 Children from low income groups are defined in the Education Act as those who are entitled to free school meals, or those whose families are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC).
(1) Children aged between 8 and 11 who live more than 3 miles from their nearest qualifying school.

(2) Children aged 11 to 16 who attend one of the three qualifying schools nearest to their home, and live more than 3 miles but less than 6 miles away from that school, even if another of the three nearest schools has places available and is closer to the child’s home.

(3) Children aged 11-16 where the parents/carers have expressed a preference based on their religion or belief, where a young person lives more than 2 miles but less than 15 miles from the nearest suitable school.

The 3 mile limit is measured in the way described above. The 6 mile and 15 mile limits will be measured along road routes, and will not include footpaths. Where these distance criteria are exceeded, it is expected that the provision of free bus services by TfL will meet the need for travel assistance in almost all cases and travel assistance will be provided only where the child’s needs require it.

c. If a child is unable to walk in safety to school because of the nature of the route. Where a parent/carer believes that a route is unsafe, the route will be assessed by the council.

Where it is agreed that a walking route is unsafe, it is expected that the alternative provision of free bus services by TfL will meet the need for travel assistance in most cases and travel assistance will be provided only where the child’s needs require it.

d. Children who are unable to walk to school, or to travel to school by other means, by reason of their special educational needs, medical needs or disability.

**PROVISION OF TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-19**

The object of this provision is to offer assistance to those students whose ability to attend or to complete a course may be affected by availability of transport or the ability to pay for the transport provision that is available. WLA London Boroughs have been working in partnership to produce a minimum standard for the WLA area and all participating councils are committed to meeting that standard. Young people continuing at the same school or education placement post 16 will be subject to a continuing eligibility assessment.

Eligibility for assistance will depend upon but not be limited to:

- Residency;
- Age;
- Distance travelled;
- Establishment and the course being attended;
- The availability of alternative resources;
- Family income;
g. Students with disabilities or special educational needs;

h. Attendance at a 6th Form based on the students religion or belief;

i. Preference of school or college by virtue of the learners and/or parents’ religion or belief.

PROVISION OF TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES

This section explains what travel assistance may be provided for children and young people with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities, if they could not reasonably be expected to travel to school/college independently and even if the journey is within the ‘statutory walking distance’ described above. The entitlement to travel assistance for these children and young people varies according to their age group follows:

a. Pre-school children - aged under 5.

b. School children - aged 5-16.


Pre-School Children. Parent/Carers will normally be expected to transport their children to non-statutory provision. However, children of age 2 years or older placed in a nursery school or class or children’s centre for the purpose of assessment of their special educational needs may be granted assistance with travel at the council’s discretion in exceptional circumstances.

Children Aged 5-16. Travel assistance for children with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), medical needs or disabilities will be determined primarily by the needs of the child and will only be provided for travel to a qualifying school. The issuing of a Statement of Special Educational Needs does not necessarily mean that the council will provide travel assistance.

The Authority does not have a duty to make travel arrangements when the parents have decided to send their child with a statement of SEN to a school that is farther away than the school that the Local Authority deemed suitable to meet the needs of the child. In this case it is likely that the council will name two schools on the Statement and indicate that the parent has opted to send the child to a school which is not the school deemed by the council to be suitable and therefore parents will be required to make and fund any travel arrangements.

Eligibility for the Provision of Travel Assistance.

When considering whether or not provision of travel assistance for a particular child is necessary, councils will take into account the following:
a. The special educational needs and/or disabilities of the student; for example, where the child has severe learning difficulties or would have considerable difficulty in walking or using public transport due to disability;

b. The need for specialist transport, including an assessment as to whether the student has a physical or medical disability that rules out the use of free public transport, or suitable public transport is not conveniently available (e.g. for users of wheelchairs, students who require specialist seating arrangements, specialist harness, specialist head restraint, other specialist facilities and the appropriate mode of transport required);

c. The distance of the student’s home from the school/educational establishment;

d. Whether the student is deemed to be vulnerable and at risk of danger if they use public or other transport;

e. The nature of the route to school including the safety of the route and alternative routes available;

f. The potential capability of the student to travel independently to school/educational establishment with the provision of suitable travel training;

The weight to be given to each or any of the factors listed above will be a matter for the council in their discretion, according to the circumstances of each individual case.

With respect to independent travel training this policy should be read in conjunction with the WLA approach to Alternative Travel Training.

5. TRAVEL OPTIONS

It is important to offer a range of transport options which best address the individual needs of clients but which also utilise existing networks, which promote independence and which represent the most cost effective and sustainable mode of transport.

The different types of travel assistance available include the following:

   a. Transport for London provides free bus travel for all under 18 years and this is the expected entitlement for the majority of students within the West London Alliance area. However where this is not provided it may be possible to provide funding for the provision of Oyster/travel cards to enable access to free travel on London buses provided by Transport for London.
b. *Funding for the provision of Oyster/travel cards for the parent/carers to enable them to accompany their child where they have access to free travel on London Buses and where parents consent.*

c. Funding for the provision of Oyster/travel cards or travel passes for tube or train travel to and from school.

d. A travel training or mobility programme for the young person where available.

e. Where available a travel buddy or passenger assistant to travel with a pupil on the journey from home or where appropriate and suitable in the context of the child’s needs from a specified meeting point to school and return.

f. Where parents consent payment of mileage allowances for parents/carers who use their own vehicles with the agreement of the council.

g. Payment of public transport fares for travel arranged by parents/carers with the agreement of the council.

h. A seat on a vehicle suitably adapted as necessary to transport the pupil to the appropriate education provision from home or where appropriate and suitable in the context of the child’s needs an agreed meeting point.

i. A range of more flexible options which explore more creative solutions and promote the independence of the client.

Other arrangements that could be used to travel to the place of learning may include the use of a freedom pass.

**Travel Options for Young Adults**

When determining eligibility for transport for young adults, including those Post 16 clients remaining in full time education, consideration will be given to a full range of travel options. These options reflect the core principle of promoting independence and could include where available the provision of a freedom pass, independent travel training support, travel buddyng, motability, the London Taxicard Scheme and Capital Call, which is a complementary service to Taxicard.

**6. EVIDENCE AND INFORMATION**

All cases will be considered on their individual merits in line with this policy and in accordance with statutory guidance. The following may be considered as part of the assessment when determining eligibility.

a. The Statement of SEN and Annual Review reports.
b. Relevant Professional Reports.

c. Information about the nature and reasonableness of the route i.e. journey times, changes, safety, nature of the pavements and roads, congestion, other passengers etc.

d. Information from a social care initial or core assessment/CAF if appropriate.

e. Information submitted during the application.

f. Where travel training is available, an existing Travel Training Plan (or assessment being undertaken)

g. Evidence from a consultant if parent/carer indicates that they are medically unfit to get their child to school.

h. Other exceptional circumstances which prevent a parent/carer from taking their child to school.

Evidence must be submitted in support of any application for travel assistance. The weight to be given to each or any of the factors listed above will be a matter for the council in their discretion, according to the circumstances of each individual case.

7. PUPILS WITH TEMPORARY MEDICAL AND/OR MOBILITY DIFFICULTIES.

Children and young people, who have temporary mobility problems caused by medical conditions that prevent them from walking, may be eligible for travel support. An assessment will be made to determine the most appropriate method of travel assistance in each case.

(Supporting medical evidence from a consultant confirming the nature of the temporary medical condition and an estimate of the period for which the provision will be required). The assessment criteria appended to this policy describe eligibility and procedures in more detail.

Any assistance provided in accordance with this section may be time limited in accordance with the needs of any individual case.
8. EDUCATIONAL RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS

For those children attending educational residential placements, wherever possible and with their consent parents will be encouraged to make their own travel arrangements and supported through the provision of mileage allowance. The number of journeys that will be funded will normally be in line with the contract (with the school) of the individual placement (e.g. termly). The Authority does not have a duty to make travel arrangements when the parents have decided to send their child with SEN to a school that is farther away than the school that the Local Authority deemed suitable to meet the needs of the child. In this case it is likely that the council will name two schools on the Statement and indicate that the parent has opted to send the child to a school which is not the school deemed by the council to be suitable and therefore parents will be required to make and fund any travel arrangements.

9. APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS

Each council will provide details of their application process to all parents, carers and young people and provide all appropriate forms. Where the council makes a decision to provide travel assistance, it is usually agreed for a limited period of time and reviewed each year. In exceptional circumstances where the pupil has severe and complex needs, travel may be agreed for longer periods of time.

Applications must be supported with evidence.

10. REVIEW / REAPPLICATION

a. Travel arrangements will be reviewed at least annually or if the child’s or parents circumstances change. The child’s progress and any other relevant information needs to be recorded on the Annual Review form which may be used to help determine future travel options.

b. Where a pupil/student changes school/college or moves home or there are other changes in the child’s circumstances such as successful travel training, travel assistance will be reviewed accordingly.

11. APPEALS

If parents/carers disagree with the council assessment of the travel assistance that it deems is necessary for their child, including a decision that the child does not qualify for or need any help, they can appeal against that decision by writing to explain why they feel that the child’s circumstances are exceptional or that the assessment carried out is wrong. Each case will be given careful consideration by an independent senior officer of the council (i.e. the reviewing officer will not be an officer involved in the original decision). In the first instance parents/carers should write to the relevant local authority in the case of an appeal.
Councils will establish an independent and impartial 2nd stage review process which will be published locally. Further information including what this will entail and the response times will be provided during and after the consultation period for this policy.

12. TRANSPORT ARRANGEMENTS

If provision of transport by the council is agreed, the council will arrange the most appropriate, sustainable and cost-effective transport provision. This will be provided in line with local operational policies and councils will make clear the responsibilities of councils and the responsibilities of parents and carers. These operational policies will also make clear the circumstances in which the service can be withdrawn.