

**WEST BERKSHIRE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY 2011/12
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT – MAY 2010**

Annual consultation on proposed changes to how help will be given by West Berkshire Council with free or subsidised home to school and college transport to pupils and students for the 2011/2012 school year.

1. INTRODUCTION

West Berkshire Council's Home to School Transport Policy sets out the circumstances in which it will provide free or subsidised transport to help children and young people get to school or college. It therefore relates to West Berkshire residents of statutory school age (from the term following 5th birthday to the end of Year 11).

Local Authorities are required by law to provide help for some pupils but may also provide help for others on a discretionary basis. In order to run an effective and efficient best value home to school and college transport service within financial constraints, West Berkshire Council reviews its policy each year to consider whether or not changes are needed.

Any policy is subject to any change in government legislation when they occur. West Berkshire Council implements all mandatory requirements following new government legislation.

The Council are not proposing any changes to the current policy which will take effect for the 2011/12 academic year. This consultation document sets out the main provisions of the current home to school transport policy, the only change being an adjustment to the fare paid for the Fare Paying scheme.

2. WHAT DOES THE COUNCIL DO NOW?

The 2010/11 Home to School Transport policy can be seen in full on the Council's website www.westberks.gov.uk/Schooltransport, or simplified in the Parent's Guides to Admissions. A copy is also available from the Council, whose contact details are given at the end of this consultation document.

The policy covers the eligibility to receive statutory assistance, subject to age, the school attended, availability of walking routes and distances involved, as well as the level of family income. It also outlines the discretionary assistance available through the fare-paying scheme.

3. WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING PROPOSED FOR 2011/12?

The only amendment to the policy that is being proposed is the application of an inflation factor to the charges made for the fare-paying scheme, as outlined below.

This cannot, however, be a replacement for consideration of the full policy document available on the Council's website (www.westberks.gov.uk/HST).

The paragraph number shown refers to the full policy document and should be quoted on the consultation response form when making comments. **Comments are invited on all or any aspects of the proposed policy for 2011/12.**

4.1. Fare Paying Scheme

The Council will continue to apply a graded fare charging system based on radial distances from home addresses to the schools concerned.

To ensure recovery of charges, parents/carers will be required to pay in two instalments; the first to be paid prior to issuing a travel pass and the second to be paid early in February 2012. Fares will remain discounted by 30% for additional fare paying siblings.

It is proposed that a small inflationary increase be applied as follows:

Band A, up to 3 miles --- £ 196 per year (2 payments of £ 98.00) **(Increased from £190)**

Band B, up to 6 miles --- £ 393 per year (2 payments of £ 196.50) **(Increased from £386)**

Band C, over 6 miles ---- £ 753 per year (2 payments of £ 376.50) **(Increased from £739)**

4. WHAT IS THE CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING TIMETABLE?

The consultation will run until 28 June 2010. The Council will then consider the comments received and decide on the Home to School transport policy to be applied in 2011-12.

A short version of the policy is published annually in the Parents' Guides to Admissions for Primary and Secondary Schools published each September to enable parents to make informed decisions on preferred schools.

5. HOW TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS KNOWN

If you want to comment on the proposed policy for 2011-12 please use the response form provided with this document that should be returned to the address given on the form **by 28 June 2010**. The response form is also available from the Council's website and can be printed and posted or e-mailed.

Any queries regarding the consultation process can be made to Mwazwita Mundangepfufu, preferably by e-mail, at the same address or by telephone (Telephone: 01635 519031 Email: mmundangepfufu@westberks.gov.uk).

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CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Please return the form as soon as possible and **no later than 28 June 2010** to Mwazwita Mundangepfufu, Education Service, West Street House, West Street, Newbury RG14 1BD.

Please refer to the Policy paragraph number if applicable followed by the comment in each case.

General Comments:

Please continue overleaf or attach additional pages if you have more comments to make.

Which of the following best describes you?

Please tick all applicable and fill in names of school/s

Parent currently receiving transport? Yes No

School *

Governor*

College *

Parish Council

Other (Please Specify)

Authority *

Your Name and address are not required, but will be useful to us in assessing responses and participation

Name

Address
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