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Local authority transport policy statement - post 16

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1.0 Summary of policy statement and main objectives

This document describes the transport support available to young people aged 16 to 18 and 19+ who are entering or continuing in Further Education and learning. It explains the support packages in place to encourage participation and prevent transport being a barrier to learning. This policy statement provides information from Blackpool Council and the learning providers. It addresses transport arrangements for the academic year 2022/2023.

2.A. Blackpool Council transport

Assistance may be provided on a discretionary basis for students aged 16 to 18 in the following circumstances:

Blackpool Council may offer transport assistance with home to college or home to school transport for sixth form students who are aged between 16 and 18 when their course starts and where they or (in the case of dependent students) their parents are in receipt of Income Support or Income Based Job Seekers Allowance and where at least one of the following circumstances apply:

1. Severe or Complex Learning Difficulties – as evidenced by the EHC Plan and where previous historical need for Transport Assistance is also evidenced.
2. Physical or Medical Condition – where this impairs the ability to travel independently as evidenced by professional medical reports.
3. Home to Special School Transport for Students Aged 16-18 attending a school –young people with transport assistance included as part of their statement of Special Educational Needs and who remain at a school beyond compulsory school age will be eligible for transport assistance until the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of 19.

Blackpool Council is not required to provide support for pupils with Special Educational Needs or disabilities who attend sixth form colleges of further education. However, discretionary support may be provided in certain circumstances.

Conditions

No assistance will be provided under this scheme for a student who is aged 19 or over when he/she begins a course of Further Education, a student attending a part time course or undertaking a Higher Education course.

Suitability of courses

A student may wish to attend a college or sixth form other than the nearest suitable one because he/she considers that particular course is more suitable to him/her. In the case of A levels, (for the purpose of considering an application for transport assistance), the Council defines a 'suitable course' as one where at least two or more subjects are available, unless the student can only demonstrate that a third (or subsequent) subject is an essential requirement for a subsequent course or career. A similar test will be applied where a student is seeking to attend a more distant school or college in order to follow a particular syllabus within the same subject.

If a student's choice of course cannot be supported, travelling expenses may be paid only to the amount that would be payable to the nearest school or college offering the alternative course.

Support available in 2022/2023

In 2022/2023 funding for 16-18 (19-24 with an EHC Plan) and 19+ learners will be provided by ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency). Funding is available to support learners who are experiencing financial difficulty meeting the costs associated with learning. The purpose of the College's allocation of funds is to provide assistance for eligible learners facing financial barriers which impact upon their ability to continue in education or training.

All funds are managed locally by the College and will be allocated on a first come, first served basis via an application and assessment process. Students must meet the specified eligibility criteria in order to be considered for an award. Please see <https://www.blackpool.ac.uk/support/financial-support-16-18s> for information about funding and eligibility.

Eligible students who live in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre may be eligible to receive an unlimited travel bus pass which can be used on Blackpool Transport buses and tams including weekends and throughout the year. This will be via the Blackpool Transport app.

2.B Blackpool and the Fylde College

B&FC will run a FREE circular bus service between Poulton-le-Fylde and our Bispham Campus. It means that students travelling on bus routes from Lancaster, Preston and Over Wyre can link up with the service in Poulton-le-Fylde and travel for FREE directly to and from the Bispham Campus.

The bus service will also stop at Poulton-le-Fylde train station, providing a free direct link to the College from towns served by the rail network, such as Kirkham, Chorley and Preston. In addition, students who disembark buses at Norcross roundabout can catch the free service there, if they don't want to walk the remaining distance to College. For more information please go to <https://www.blackpool.ac.uk/campus/bispham#shuttle-bus>

If students live in areas not serviced by the free College bus or Blackpool Transport, they may be eligible for a travel bursary payable every month based on attendance levels at College. Only eligible students will qualify. See <https://www.blackpool.ac.uk/support/financial-support-16-18s> for more details.

Students aged 16-18 who are unable to use public transport as a result of a learning difficulty or disability should contact their Local Authority in the first instance.

If students are not eligible for this funding but experiencing financial difficulty they may be able to access hardship funding and would need to contact the Careers Team for further information and advice on 01253 504474 or email careers@blackpool.ac.uk

2.C Myerscough College

The College provides bus services for students travelling from Preston Railway Station, Fleetwood via Blackpool, Burnley via Blackburn, Clitheroe and St Annes, which run daily to and from the Preston campus. A service from Preston Bus Station runs every morning and lunchtime, with a return service at lunchtime and at the end of the College day.

Students travelling on Stagecoach buses from South Lancashire and Merseyside (e.g. Chorley, Penwortham and Southport) can purchase a student gold rider pass direct from the college, allowing travel on buses during term time including evenings and weekends. In addition, students from Charnock Richard, Chorley and Bamber Bridge can catch the 125C in the morning which is a direct service to college.

Students travelling from Lancaster and Morecambe can travel on Stagecoach service buses 40/41 linking to the 401 shuttle bus service to College. This service runs between College and Bilsborrow village all day giving easy access to public transport. More details can be found on www.myerscough.ac.uk or e-mail transport@myerscough.ac.uk.

Students can pay on the bus daily or discounted bus passes can be purchased from the Finance Office at the College. Financial support is available from the College Further Education Bursary Fund for students with an annual household income of less than

£35,000. Eligible students must complete an application form and provide evidence of household income as required. Students must live more than 3 miles from the College for help with travel to College. The bursary fund can either offer free or a contribution towards bus passes.

In addition bus passes for other public services may be available if required when travelling on a daily basis to College. All students are treated equally and the same criteria are used, although individual circumstances are taken into account.

Some training is offered as part of independent living courses.

2.D. Blackpool Sixth Form College

Blackpool Sixth recognises that the cost of transport is a concern for some young people and their families. Our subsidised transport schemes not only help with transport costs to and from college but could also provide unlimited travel throughout the day, including evenings, weekends and during the college holidays. Below are the key details:

	Usual Price (monthly)	Subsidised price
Blackpool Transport Digital Smart Card <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •valid 7 days a week & during holidays •Receive July & August travel for free! Covers the following areas: Blackpool, Fleetwood, Thornton-Cleveleys, Bispham, Over Wyre & Lytham St. Annes	£47.50*	10 x monthly instalments of £42 (including free summer travel) – Sept 2022 to June 2023
Stagecoach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Valid 7 days a week & during holidays (receive July & August free)) Covers the following areas: Lancaster, Garstang, Poulton, Blackpool and Preston.	£105.00* (equivalent to a 28 day North West 4 week Megarider when purchased directly from Stagecoach)	10 x monthly instalments of £40.00 (purchased directly from Student Finance at college).
Blackpool Sixth College Buses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Services run twice a day (once in the morning to college and once in reverse after college finishes) Lytham Bus covers the following area: Lytham St. Annes Kirkham Bus covers the following areas: Freckleton, Warton, Wrea Green, Kirkham, Wesham, Elswick and Great Eccleston		Deposit of £20.00 to be paid at collection and refunded at the end of the academic year. Students can trial the college bus without a pass for the first week of the academic year. After this a pass must be purchased. Purchased directly from Student Finance at college.

* These are current prices and any changes would be minor, reflecting increases from the transport companies.

** To access this service you will have to register with Student Finance and be provided with a pass. You will not be eligible for any other subsidised transport whilst registered on this free service. Passes will be available on a first come, first served basis.

2.E. St Mary's Catholic Academy Sixth Form

St Mary's Sixth Form offers a student bus service and generously subsidised fares on these journeys. Students who qualify for a bursary are given generous additional assistance, which may include a free bus pass, to ensure that transport to our Sixth Form is not a barrier to education. We run a number of school buses, from Lytham Square through Ansdell and St Annes to Blackpool, from

Fleetwood through Cleveleys to our school: other, more local routes are also available (this is currently under consultation).

Students may decide to purchase a termly discounted buss pass or may prefer to pay daily. Financial support is available from St Mary's Bursary Fund – for details please see our website or contact our sixth form office and ask for Mrs Pickworth.

Contact the Sixth Form Office for more information (01253) 396286.

2.F. Blackpool Transport

The range of tickets Blackpool Transport offer are:				
	1 day	3 day	7 day	30 day
16-21 Tickets *	£4.20 (or £3.70 via the app)	Not available	£12.50 (via app) £ 15.00 on vehicle or from Paypoint**	£45.50 (via app) £65.00 from Paypoint**
Adult Tickets	£6.00 (or £5.50 via the app)	£13.50 (via app) £ 15.00 on vehicle or from Paypoint**	£15.50 (via app) £17.00 (on vehicle of from Paypoint)**	£54.00 (via app) £65.00 from Paypoint**
* Photo ID is required to purchase and travel with a 16-19 ticket				
** Blackpool Transport Travel Shop at Market Street (Town Centre, next to BHS) or Rigby Road				
Blackpool Transport Saver tickets give unlimited travel on Blackpool Transport buses and trams. Tickets can be purchased in advance from Travel Centres or at over 100 local Pay Point agents (local newsagents and convenience stores) a full list is available on the website at www.blackpooltransport.com . Alternatively purchase all saver tickets via the Blackpool Transport mobile app, search "BPL Transport" in the App Store or Google Play Store.				

Additional Information

What times during the day can learners use their travel pass or obtain concessionary fares?

The travel cards issued by both Blackpool Transport Services and Stagecoach are flexible. Details of any restrictions can be provided by contacting the companies directly using the contact details contained within this document.

Will there be continuing support to Learners who reach 19 whilst continuing on a course?

Support will continue to be provided where a student continues to satisfy eligibility criteria.

How will learners be assessed to see if they are eligible for support?

Predominantly the main test of eligibility is whether or not the student or their parent is in receipt of benefits. However, assessment criteria vary and have been described in the earlier sections of this document.

What help is provided for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those over 19 or learners facing difficulties in following their courses?

Each of the Further Education institutions is responsible for ensuring that appropriate support is provided to ensure that students can successfully complete their courses. If a student has disabilities or learning difficulties these should be discussed with admission officers when making application to the college.

The Council makes direct provision to a significant number of post 16 pupils and students who are in receipt of income support or jobseekers allowance or are a dependent of someone in receipt of the same and who also has special educational needs. This support is predominantly made in the form of a taxi or minibus service.

Do you provide mobility/independence training for learners who face difficulty with transport?

The Council through the Local Transport Partnership has established the Blackpool MAP (Mobility Access Project), which aims to

develop the skills necessary for independent travel for all young people as they transfer into further education. This scheme has been developed as part of the 2002/03 Transport Pathfinder project and has been created in partnership with Park Special School, Blackpool and the Fylde College and the Council. Further information is available by contacting the Passenger Transport Services.

What help can learners apply for if they need to travel to a course that is beyond the Local Authority area?

Under the Council's policy for the support to students aged 16-18, those students attending non-Blackpool institutions is based on the same basis as for those studying within Blackpool.

What help is available for learners who attend a further education institution which is beyond daily travelling distance and they need to stay away?

The Council may assess such applications on an individual basis at the discretion of Children's Services.

Complaints

Should you have a complaint please contact the provider. If the transport is provided by Blackpool Council please refer to our complaints procedure by contacting the address below. If this does not result in a satisfactory outcome, learners and their families may complain to the Secretary of State.

Useful Contacts

Blackpool Council, PO Box 4, Blackpool, FY1 1 NA

Tel: 01253 477477

E-mail: send@blackpool.gov.uk

Blackpool and The Fylde College, Careers Team, Ashfield Road, Blackpool, FY2 0HB

Tel: 01253 504298 or 504474

E-mail: careers@blackpool.ac.uk

Website: www.blackpool.ac.uk

Myerscough College, Bilsborrow, Preston, PR3 0RY

Tel: 01995 642398

E-mail: transport@myerscough.ac.uk

Website: www.myerscough.ac.uk

Blackpool Sixth Form College, Victoria Jackson, Deputy Head of Student Services

Tel: 01253 394911

E-Mail: victoria.jackson@blackpoolsixth.ac.uk

Website: www.blackpoolsixth.ac.uk

St Marys Catholic Academy, St Walburgas Road, Blackpool, FY3 7EQ

Tel: 01253 396286

E-Mail: jem@st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk

Website: www.st-mary.blackpool.sch.uk

Blackpool Transport, Rigby Road, Blackpool, FY1 5DD

Tel: 01253 476036

E-Mail: jean.cox@blackpooltransport.com

Website: www.blackpooltransport.com

Stage Coach, Central Bus Station, Tithebarn Street, Preston, PR1 1YU

Tel: 01772 255777

E-Mail: colin.nicholson@stagecoachbus.com

Website: www.stagecoach.com

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