

Carmarthenshire County Council

School Transport

Policy

Applies to 2027/28 Academic Year



This policy has been reviewed and is valid as of 1st October 2026.

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INTRODUCTION

Carmarthenshire County Council has a legal duty to provide free home to school transport for learners of compulsory school age who attend their designated catchment school and who live beyond the statutory walking distance, in accordance with the **Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008**¹.

This policy sets out the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities for providing home to school and college transport for learners living within Carmarthenshire. In delivering these duties, the Council must:

- Promote and facilitate access to Welsh-medium education, in line with the Council's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and Welsh-language obligations.
- Promote sustainable modes of travel, supporting the national transport hierarchy, which prioritises active travel, public transport, shared transport, and low-emission modes where feasible.
- Ensure that learner travel arrangements are safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible, reflecting the Council's wider commitments to sustainability and encouraging a shift towards greener travel.

This policy is correct as of **1 October 2026** and applies to the **2027/28 academic year**. The policy is reviewed annually and in accordance with any relevant legislative changes.

Free transport is only provided where a learner meets the eligibility criteria outlined in this document. Parents and guardians should read this guidance carefully before submitting an application. Please **do not reapply** if a previous application was refused unless your circumstances have changed (e.g., change of address or change of school).

Parents and guardians considering an application for school transport are strongly encouraged to read the Schools Admission information on Carmarthenshire County Council's website at [Education & Schools - Carmarthenshire County Council](#) and to contact the Learner Travel Team if they are unsure about eligibility for free transport, including when planning a change of address or a change of school, or when transitioning from primary to secondary education.

¹ [Learner Travel \(Wales\) Measure 2008](#)

1. FREE TRANSPORT PROVISION FOR COMPULSARY AGED LEARNERS

Learners will qualify for free transport to school where they meet **ALL OF** the following criteria:

- 1.1 **Are ordinarily resident within Carmarthenshire** (i.e. Council Tax for registered home address is paid to Carmarthenshire). The “home address” is as defined in the “*Admission to School – Information for Parents*” booklet published by the Local Authority Education & Schools - Carmarthenshire County Council and a “parent” as defined in Section 576 of the Education Act 1996. Please note that registered home addresses and parental responsibility² are checked at the application stage against the records held by the school and Education Authority.
- 1.2 **Are of compulsory school age**. By law parents and guardians must arrange for their children to receive full-time education at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday, however transport is offered from the date of their 5th birthday. There is no entitlement to transport to learners under the age of 5.
- 1.3 Attend the designated catchment school for their address, as defined in Carmarthenshire’s Admission to School – Information for Parents booklet Catchment areas [Information and guidance for parents - Carmarthenshire County Council](#) and live over the “statutory distance” from the school (Refer to **point 4.3** for detailed guidance).

Learners may also qualify for free transport to school where they meet **ONE** of the following criteria:

- **Live within the “statutory distance” of the designated catchment school but there is no available walking route to school.** Refer to **point 4.3** for detailed guidance.

² For the purposes of this policy, parental responsibility has the meaning set out in Section 3 of the Children Act 1989 and refers to all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority that a parent has in relation to a child and the child's property. Where this policy refers to a parent, it includes any person who has parental responsibility for the learner in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

- **Live within the “statutory distance” of the designated catchment school but where the medical condition of learners either prevents them from making use of the normal transport or the condition prevents them from walking the defined “statutory distance”.** Refer to **point 4.9 and 4.10** for detailed guidance.
- **Live outside of the catchment area but have additional learning needs.** Refer to **point 4.7** for detailed guidance.
- **Have a Local Authority Individual Development Plan (not School held) /Statement of Additional Learning Needs issued by the Local Authority.** Refer to **point 4.7** for detailed guidance.
- **Attend a Referral Unit.** Refer to **point 4.8** for detailed guidance.
- **Is a Looked After Child and the Local Authority with corporate parental responsibility.** Refer to **point 4.4** for detailed guidance.
- **Live outside of the catchment area but have changed address from within the catchment area during GCSE years to outside of the catchment.** Refer to **point 4.2** for detailed guidance.
- **Live outside the catchment area but resides at more than one address, with one address located within the catchment area.** Refer to **point 4.15** for detailed guidance.
- **Has been permanently excluded from their school.** Refer to **point 4.12** for detailed guidance.
- **Where a learner is unable to secure a place at their catchment school because the school is full and has been formally refused admission through the school admissions process.** Refer to **point 4.14** for detailed guidance.

2. DISCRETIONARY PROVISION

The Local Authority provides several forms of discretionary home to school transport, including assistance for post-16 learners, transport to faith-based education, and access to spare seats on contracted transport services, as described in this policy and in **Appendix 3**. These arrangements are not statutory entitlements and fall outside the Local Authority’s legal duties. The Authority may therefore amend or restrict any element of discretionary transport following appropriate consultation where required.

2A. PROVISION FOR WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION

The Local Authority recognises its statutory duties and strategic commitments to promote access to Welsh-medium education, as set out in the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP) and the Welsh Language and Education Act 2025.

In support of these commitments, free home to school transport will be provided where the learner meets the relevant statutory eligibility criteria set out in Section 1 of this policy.

2B. PROVISION FOR FAITH SCHOOLS

The Local Authority provides discretionary transport assistance for learners on religious grounds, provided the learner meets the relevant age and statutory distance criteria.

Voluntary Aided Schools (Within the County)

Transport assistance under this section applies ONLY to the following Voluntary Aided schools within Carmarthenshire:

- Model Church in Wales School
- Penboyr Church in Wales School
- Pentip Church in Wales School
- St Mary's Catholic School, Llanelli
- St Mary's Catholic School, Carmarthen

Transport assistance may be provided for learners attending any of the above schools where the learner:

- Meets the applicable age and minimum distance criteria; and
- Resides no more than 8 miles from the school - Measured as the shortest available driving route from the learner's home address to the nearest available entrance to the school.

St John Lloyd Catholic Comprehensive School, Llanelli

Transport assistance may be provided where the learner:

- Meets the standard age and minimum distance criteria; and
- Resides within the designated catchment area of the school.

Transport may also be provided for learners residing outside the school's catchment area, provided that:

- The learner meets the standard eligibility criteria; and
- The learner can make their own way to the nearest available pick-up point located within the designated catchment area.

Voluntary Controlled Schools (Within the County)

Transport assistance under this section applies ONLY to the following Voluntary Controlled schools within Carmarthenshire:

- Abergwili School
- Laugharne Church in Wales School
- Llanddarog Church in Wales School
- Llanllwni School

Transport assistance may be provided where the learner:

- Meets the standard age and minimum distance criteria; and
- Resides within the designated catchment area of the school.

These provisions are not statutory requirements and represent discretionary concessions offered by the Local Authority. As such, the Local Authority reserves the right to withdraw any or all elements of this concessionary provision at any time, following an appropriate period of consultation.

Where Local Authority transport is not provided, families may consider:

- Active travel – Walking, cycling, or scooting where routes are safe.
- Public transport – Using local bus and train services
- Private arrangements – Travelling by car, car-sharing with other families, or using private hire transport.

2C. PROVISION FOR NURSERY SCHOOLS

The Local Authority has no statutory duty to provide transport for learners who are below Statutory School Age, whether part-time or full-time and therefore no entitlement to free home to school transport exists for this age group.

Parents and guardians are responsible for arranging and funding travel. Where Local Authority transport is not provided, families may consider:

- Active travel – Walking, cycling, or scooting where routes are safe.
- Public transport – Using local bus and train services
- Private arrangements – Travelling by car, car-sharing with other families, or using private hire transport.

2D. PROVISION FOR POST-16 LEARNERS

The Local Authority may provide discretionary transport assistance for learners aged 16–18 (and those aged 19 who began their course before turning 19 and continue to attend the same course). Assistance may be considered in the following circumstances:

Sixth Form Provision - Where a learner attends the sixth form of their designated catchment school, subject to:

- Meeting the minimum distance criteria; and
- Being under 19, or aged 19 but continuing a course that began prior to their 19th birthday.

Further Education Colleges - where a learner attends their nearest further education college campus within the County, subject to:

- Meeting the minimum distance criteria;
- Being under 19, or aged 19 but continuing a course that began before turning 19; and
- Being enrolled on a full-time course.

These post-16 transport arrangements are not statutory requirements, and the Local Authority may withdraw or amend any concessionary element of this policy at any time, subject to appropriate consultation. Transport assistance for post-16 learners is arranged

on the basis that learners are responsible for travelling independently to the nearest suitable point on the core transport network. Further information is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Learners in post-16 education may be eligible for financial assistance from the Welsh Government to help with transport costs. Available schemes include:

- **Education Maintenance Allowance** - Financial support for eligible learners from low-income households who remain in full-time education or training beyond compulsory schooling.
- **Assembly Learning Grant** - Support for learners aged 19 or over who are enrolled in Further Education.
- **Financial Contingency Fund** - Funding provided to FE and HE institutions in Wales to support learners experiencing financial hardship.
- **Young Person's Travel Scheme** - Discounted travel for young people using public transport, subject to eligibility and operator participation.

3. HOW TO APPLY FOR TRANSPORT

All learners who are eligible for free home to school transport must submit an online application using the form available at [School Transport Applications](#)

Each application will be assessed individually by the Learner Travel Team to determine eligibility in accordance with this policy.

Applications must be submitted at least 15 days before the date transport is required. If the application is approved, a Travel Pass will be issued by the Local Authority. Details of the routes to be used will be supplied with the Travel Pass. The Travel Pass will usually be issued within 15 days of the application, although this timescale will be extended in respect of applications made between June and September, and will not apply for learners transferring from Primary school to Secondary School (see below).

Learners transferring from Primary School to Secondary School are advised to submit the appropriate transport application by 1st January in the year of transfer. Applications received by this date allow sufficient time for confirmation of attendance at the designated catchment school and for the Learner Travel Team to assess entitlement to free home to school transport in accordance with this policy.

Submitting an application by the recommended deadline increases the likelihood of learners being allocated a transport route, pick-up point and vehicle that are suitable for their needs, as routes and capacity are planned well in advance of the new academic year. Early application also allows sufficient time for families whose applications are refused to request a review through the appropriate appeals process before the start of the academic school year.

Confirmation of eligibility for transport or otherwise will usually be issued by the Learner Travel Team by June, with Travel Passes issued to eligible learners during August. Applications submitted after 1st January will still be considered; however, these may be processed later and learners may not be allocated their preferred pick-up point or vehicle, depending on availability

Applications for college transport must be made directly to the relevant college.

4. POLICY STATEMENTS

- 4.1 **Parental or Guardian and Learner Preference** - The Local Authority acknowledges that parents/guardians and learners may express a preference for a particular school. However, parental preference does not create an automatic entitlement to free home to school transport. Transport assistance will only be provided where the learner meets the eligibility criteria set out in Section 1 of this policy. Where parents or guardians choose a school other than the designated catchment, transport arrangements and costs remain the responsibility of the parent or guardian.
- 4.2 **Change of Address** - Parents and guardians must inform the Local Authority and the school immediately of any change in home address. A change of address may affect a learner's eligibility for free home to school transport. Where a learner no longer meets the eligibility criteria as a result of a house move, transport assistance will be withdrawn.

Where a learner moves home during their GCSE studies (after the October half-term of Year 10), the Local Authority will provide transport assistance until the end of Year 11, provided the learner meets the age and distance criteria at the new address and was previously attending the Local Authority designated school. Transport in these circumstances will be offered on the nearest available vehicle and from the nearest available pick-up point.

- 4.3 **Statutory Distance** - Is defined as being 2 miles (3.218 Kilometres) or over for primary schools and 3 miles (4.828 Kilometres) or over for secondary schools and is measured by the nearest available route from the nearest point from where the applicant's address meets the public highway to the nearest available entrance to the school. Although the distance is sometimes referred to as the "walking distance" it does not imply that the learner is necessarily expected to walk, but it is the distance within which a parent/guardian is expected to make their own arrangements for the learner's journey, at their own cost, to and from school.

Where a learner of statutory school age lives within the statutory distance but no available walking route exists, the walking route will be assessed in accordance with the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure guidance on the assessment of risk for walked routes to school. Refer to **Appendix 4** for detailed guidance.

- 4.4 **Looked After Children** - Where a learner is a Looked After Child and the Local Authority, acting in its role as corporate parent, determines that attendance at a particular school is in the learner's best interests, transport assistance may be provided. This may include placements at schools other than the catchment school for the learner's current address, where continuity of education, maintaining sibling links, or preserving established peer relationships is a priority.

Learners will be assessed against the statutory distance criteria, and where eligible, free home to school transport will be provided to the school identified by the Local Authority as the most suitable placement. These arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis.

- 4.5 **Dual residency** - Where parents or guardians share responsibility for a learner and the learner has established dual residency at two parental addresses, the Local Authority may provide home to school transport from both addresses, subject to the learner meeting the standard eligibility criteria and the following conditions:

- Both addresses are confirmed as permanent residences;
- Residency details are accurate and up to date on the Local Authority's education systems; and
- The learner attends:
 - the designated catchment school for their main home address, or
 - a school identified by the Local Authority as the most suitable placement.

Where at least one residence is within Carmarthenshire, the learner may be eligible for a Travel Pass from each eligible address. Parents or guardians must contact the Learner Travel Team to confirm eligibility and submit the required application.

Where a learner has two homes within different Local Authorities, each Local Authority will be responsible for providing transport only during the periods when the learner resides within its area. Separate applications may therefore be required to each Local Authority.

Transport from any address that is outside the school's designated catchment area will be provided from the nearest available transport route to that school, which may be more than 1.5 miles from the home address. Parents or guardians will be responsible for ensuring the learner travels safely to the designated pickup point. Pickup points may change during the learner's time at school in line with route planning and operational requirements.

- 4.6 **Sibling Eligibility for Transport** - Each learner's eligibility for free school transport is assessed on an individual basis against the standard criteria at the time of application. Consequently, there may be instances where one sibling qualifies for transport while another does not, for example where eligibility has been granted following a successful appeal or where catchment arrangements have changed.

- 4.7 **Additional Learning Needs** - Where a learner has a Local Authority Individual Development Plan (not school held) or a Statement of Additional Learning Needs issued by the Local Authority, or is undergoing statutory assessment due to identified learning difficulties, transport specified in an IDP takes precedence over the policy.

In such cases, learners will be assessed to identify the appropriate type and level of specialist transport required. These transport arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis.

- 4.8 **Referral Unit** - Learners placed by the Local Authority in a Pupil Referral Unit provision may receive transport where the Local Authority determines it is necessary for them to access their placement. Eligibility will follow the principles in Section 1 and may reflect distance, safeguarding needs, or Additional Learning Needs.

- 4.9 **Medical Conditions** - Learners may be eligible for transport assistance on medical grounds where appropriate supporting evidence is provided. Acceptable evidence includes:

- A medical certificate or signed statement from a qualified medical practitioner confirming that the learner is unable to walk the statutory distance and explaining how the condition affects the learner's mobility; **OR**
- A copy of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Statement of Entitlement, which must relate specifically to the learner (not a family member) and confirm mobility-related needs; **OR**
- A copy of the learner's Blue Badge which must relate specifically to the learner (not a family member) and confirm mobility-related needs.

Transport provided on medical grounds will be reviewed regularly and will cease when the learner is able to travel independently or when the medical need no longer justifies additional assistance.

- 4.10 **Temporary Medical Conditions** - Learners with temporary medical conditions that prevent them from walking the statutory distance, may be eligible for short-term transport assistance providing they meet the applicable age and minimum distance criteria of this policy.

Applications must be supported by medical evidence confirming:

- The nature of the condition;
- How the condition affects mobility;
- The expected duration of the condition; and
- The likely impact on school attendance without additional transport support.

Transport offered for temporary medical reasons will be granted for a defined period and reviewed as required. Support will end once the learner's mobility has improved sufficiently or the temporary condition no longer warrants additional transport.

- 4.11 **Managed Moves** - Transport is not automatically provided for managed moves; however, the Local Authority may offer assistance where the move is formally agreed and required to support behaviour, inclusion, safeguarding, or educational stability. If the managed move becomes a permanent transfer, ongoing transport will only be provided if the learner meets the standard eligibility criteria that apply to all learners. Any proposed changes to a learner's placement must be discussed with the Transport Department in advance to ensure that suitable transport arrangements are available.

- 4.12 **Permanently Excluded** - Where a learner is permanently excluded and the Local Authority allocates an alternative educational placement, with transport arrangements agreed in advance, transport may be provided subject to the age and distance criteria set out in Section 1. Where approved, transport will normally be offered on the nearest available vehicle and from the nearest available pick-up point. Support will continue only for as long as the alternative placement remains necessary and will cease if the learner becomes eligible to return to their designated catchment school or no longer meets the criteria for assistance.
- The Local Authority may provide transport to an alternative placement where it is considered necessary, even if this is not the nearest or designated catchment school. Any proposed changes to a learner's placement must be discussed with the Transport Department in advance to ensure appropriate transport arrangements can be made.
- 4.13 **School Reorganisation** -. Where a school closes or undergoes statutory reorganisation following a formal consultation process, the Local Authority will identify appropriate alternative catchment schools. Free home to school transport will then be provided to the nearest suitable school identified by the Education Department, subject to the learner meeting the eligibility criteria set out in Section 1.
- 4.14 **School Oversubscription** - Where a learner is unable to secure a place at their designated catchment school because the school is full and has formally been refused admission through the school admissions process, the Local Authority will identify the next nearest suitable school with available capacity. Learners allocated a place at this alternative school by the Local Authority may be eligible for free home to school transport, provided they meet the relevant statutory distance criteria.
- This provision ensures that learners are not disadvantaged where oversubscription at their catchment school is outside the control of parents or guardians, provided that an application for school admission was submitted by the stipulated deadline.
- Where parents or guardians choose a school other than the school allocated due to oversubscription, this will be treated as a parental preference. In such cases, transport assistance will not be provided unless the learner independently meets the standard eligibility criteria set out in Section 1.
- 4.15 **Schools with Multiple Sites** - Where a school operates on more than one site, free transport will be provided only to the main administrative site unless the Local

Authority identifies an alternative site as the designated location for the learner's timetable. Internal movement between sites during the school day is the responsibility of the school.

- 4.16 **Out of School Hours** - Free school transport is provided only at the start and end of the school day, in line with official published school hours. Transport is not provided for extracurricular activities, extended provision, breakfast clubs, revision sessions, work experience placements, or after-school events. Parents or guardians are responsible for arranging and funding travel for such activities unless the school provides alternatives.
- 4.17 **Transport for Educational Visits or School-Organised Trips** – It is the responsibility of the school to arrange and fund school trips. The Local Authority does not provide or fund transport for school trips.
- 4.18 **Induction Days** - Transport for school induction days is not automatically provided. Free home to school transport can be arranged for learners who have been deemed eligible for transport for the new academic year, in line with the criteria set out in Section 1. Learners transferring from Primary to Secondary School must submit the required transport application by 1st January in the year of transfer to be considered for transport for induction days. Late applications may result in transport not being available.
- 4.19 **Passenger Assistants** - The provision of a passenger assistant is not automatic and will only be considered where:
- A learner's assessed needs require it, as identified through ALN processes or risk assessment; or
 - The Local Authority determines that passenger assistant provision is essential for safety.

Passenger Assistants support the safe operation of the service but are not responsible for behaviour management beyond reasonable supervision.

- 4.20 **Spare Seats** - Refer to point **Appendix 3** for detailed guidance.
- 4.21 **Personal Travel Budgets** - The Local Authority may, in limited circumstances, offer a Personal Travel Budget (PTB) instead of providing transport directly. A PTB may be provided where:

- This represents better value for money than commissioning transport;
- The learner's needs make direct transport provision unsuitable; or
- The parent or guardian prefers a PTB and the Local Authority agrees it is appropriate and safe.

PTBs may take the form of a fixed mileage allowance or financial grant to assist with transporting the learner between home and school, or to an appropriate pick-up point where the distance to meet a suitable vehicle exceeds 1.5 miles.

To be eligible for a PTB, a learner must meet the criteria for free home to school transport as set out in this policy. PTBs will not be provided where a learner attends a non-catchment school chosen solely on the basis of parental preference.

4.22 Non-Usage of Transport Provision - Where a learner repeatedly fails to use their allocated transport without notifying the Learner Travel Team, the Local Authority may withdraw the seat temporarily and reallocate it to another learner. Parents and guardians must inform the Local Authority immediately if transport is no longer required. Travel Passes that are no longer needed must be returned to the Learner Travel Team so that the seat can be reassigned to another learner.

4.23 Right to Withdraw Transport

The Local Authority reserves the right to withdraw or amend transport arrangements where:

- A learner no longer meets the eligibility criteria;
- Transport is misused or a learner's behaviour poses a safety risk to themselves, other passengers, or transport staff;
- Spare seat availability changes and a discretionary place can no longer be accommodated;
- Parents or guardians fail to comply with the requirements of this policy, including the provision of accurate and up-to-date information; or

Where transport is provided as a discretionary arrangement, the Local Authority may withdraw the place in the circumstances outlined above.

Where a learner has a statutory entitlement to home to school transport, non-use of transport may result in the withdrawal of a seat on a particular route or transport arrangement.

However, the learner's statutory entitlement will remain and transport may be reconsidered following a further application.

A minimum of seven days' written notice will normally be provided before transport is withdrawn or amended, except where immediate action is necessary to address safety concerns.

Where transport is withdrawn due to behaviour or safety-related concerns, the Local Authority may consider alternative transport arrangements where withdrawal would otherwise prevent the learner from having reasonable access to education.

Parents and guardians remain responsible for ensuring that the learner attends school.

4.24 Payment for Travel on School Transport - The Local Authority does not offer the option for parents or guardians to pay for transport for learners who are not entitled under this policy.

5. BEHAVIOUR ON TRANSPORT

The provision of free home to school transport is made on the understanding that learners will behave in a manner that shows respect for fellow learners, staff, property and the safety of all. As part of the school transport application process, parents or guardians will be required to confirm that both the applicant and the learner have read and understood the [Code of Conduct - Mainstream](#) [Code of Conduct - ALN](#). This includes acknowledging that unacceptable behaviour may result in temporary suspension of transport or the withdrawal of a particular transport arrangement.

Where a learner's behaviour compromises the safety, welfare, or comfort of other passengers, transport staff, or the learner themselves, the Local Authority may take appropriate action. This may include warnings, temporary suspension from transport, or the withdrawal of access to a specific route or transport provision.

Where transport is necessary to fulfil the Local Authority's statutory duty to provide home to school transport, any decision to withdraw a transport arrangement will take account of the learner's continued ability to access education. In such circumstances, the Local Authority may consider alternative transport arrangements where appropriate to ensure reasonable access to education while maintaining the safety of all transport users.

Parents, carers, and guardians are responsible for ensuring that learners understand and comply with the Transport Code of Conduct and for supporting the Local Authority in promoting safe, respectful, and responsible behaviour on all school transport services.

6. SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRAVEL

The Local Authority encourages learners to use sustainable modes of travel to and from school wherever it is safe and practical to do so. This includes [active travel](#) - walking, cycling, and the use of public transport, rather than travelling by private car. Sustainable modes of transport are those that may improve the physical wellbeing of users or contribute positively to the environmental wellbeing of the Local Authority area.

Information on local bus and rail services is available from Traveline Cymru at [Traveline.Cymru](#) or by calling 0800 464 0000. Further information and advice are also available on the Carmarthenshire County Council at [Public Bus Services](#).

The Local Authority works with public transport providers to support suitable transport options for journeys to and from school and is committed to promoting safe, healthy, and environmentally responsible travel for learners.

A limited number of spare seats may be available on some contracted school transport vehicles. Refer to point **Appendix 3** for detailed guidance.

7. HOW TO MAKE ENQUIRIES/COMPLAINTS ABOUT TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Further information about this policy is available from the Local Authority's Learner Travel Team. Enquiries should be directed by email to LearnerTravel@carmarthenshire.gov.uk and additional guidance can be found on the School Transport pages of the Carmarthenshire County Council website [School Transport Application](#).

Operational complaints relating to the home to school transport service should be submitted by email to PublicTransport@carmarthenshire.gov.uk.

Parents or guardians who have submitted an application for free transport and have been refused may request a review of the decision. Details of the review process will be provided as part of the email notice of refusal.

8. APPEALS PROCEDURE

The Local Authority provides a discretionary appeals process for applicants who wish to challenge a decision relating to home to school transport eligibility. Full details of the appeals process are set out in **Appendix 5**.

Where transport assistance is refused for:

- Learners below the age of 5,
- Learners over the age of 19, or
- Applications for spare seat

There is no entitlement to transport. However, concerns regarding the application of this policy may be raised through the Council's complaints procedure.

Applicants retain the right to refer their case to the [Local Government Ombudsman](#). The Ombudsman can only consider matters relating to the process followed by the Local Authority, not the outcome or the professional judgement of the Local Authority in applying the transport policy. Referrals to the Ombudsman should only be made once the Local Authority's internal appeals process has been completed.

APPENDIX 1: HOW WE PROVIDE TRANSPORT

1. Methods of Transport Provision

The majority of learners entitled to free home to school transport will travel on vehicles contracted directly by the Local Authority. Where suitable contracted transport is not available, the Local Authority may make use of public passenger transport services.

In circumstances where no appropriate contracted or public transport option exists for all or part of a learner's journey, the Local Authority may offer a Personal Travel Budget to enable a parent, guardian or responsibly adult to convey the learner to school, or to an appropriate pick-up point where the distance exceeds 1.5 miles. This support is only available where the learner is eligible for free transport and the Authority is unable to provide transport directly.

2. Pick-Up and Set-Down Points

It is not always possible for transport routes to pass close to every learner's home. Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring that learners travel safely to and from the designated pick-up and drop-off point, which will normally be no more than 1.5 miles from the home address.

Transport is provided only at the start and end of the school day, in accordance with the school's standard operating hours. The Local Authority is not required to provide transport:

- To the door of the home,
- At exact times requested by parents and guardians, or
- During the school day, between sites, or for partial attendance.

Breakfast clubs, after-school activities, and extracurricular events are not covered by free home to school transport.

3. Journey Times

Where possible, journey times will be kept to a reasonable duration. However, journey length may vary depending on:

- Rural geography,
- The number of learners travelling, and
- The layout of the contracted route.

The Local Authority will plan routes to ensure safe and efficient transport but cannot guarantee shorter or individually tailored journey times.

4. Behaviour on Transport

All learners using Local Authority provided transport must follow the Home to School/College Transport Code of Conduct.

Misbehaviour may result in warnings, temporary suspension from transport, or withdrawal from a particular transport arrangement. Where transport is required to meet the Local Authority's statutory duty, alternative arrangements may be considered where necessary to ensure reasonable access to education.

Parents or guardians are responsible for ensuring that learners understand and comply with behaviour expectations.

5. Use of Cameras on Transport

CCTV or other recording devices may be installed on some contracted vehicles for:

- Safeguarding purposes,
- Behaviour monitoring, and
- Ensuring the safety of drivers and passengers.

Footage will be managed in line with data protection legislation and used only for legitimate operational or safeguarding purposes.

6. Post-16 Transport Arrangements

Transport provision for post-16 learners is not made on the same basis as for learners of statutory school age.

Post-16 transport is provided on the basis that learners are expected to travel independently to access the core transport network. Arrangements operate as follows:

- Learners are responsible for making their own way to a suitable point on the core transport network.
- In some circumstances, learners may be required to travel more than 1.5 miles to access a suitable vehicle on the core network.
- No bespoke or feeder transport arrangements will be provided for post-16 learners, except where mobility needs have been identified (ALN).

- Transport will not be provided for learners living within three miles of their place of learning, regardless of the availability of a walking route.

In exceptional circumstances, learners progressing into post-16 education at their designated catchment school may be permitted to continue using existing feeder vehicles, where spare seat capacity allows. Such arrangements are discretionary, subject to annual review, and do not create an entitlement to continued provision.

APPENDIX 2: CONDITIONS OF USE OF TRAVEL PASSES

Learners must present their valid Travel Pass to the driver at the start of each journey. Transport may be refused if a valid pass is not shown. Travel Passes are non-transferable

and may only be used by the learner named on the pass, for the specific route and journeys allocated.

Misuse or fraudulent use of a Travel Pass is treated seriously and may result in:

- Disciplinary action by the school or college, and/or
- Suspension from transport services or withdrawal from a particular transport arrangement by the Local Authority.

Parents and guardians must notify the Learner Travel Team immediately if any details on the original application form change, so that eligibility can be reassessed. Where a change requires a new pass, the existing pass must be returned before a replacement can be issued. Failure to return the original pass will delay the processing of new application request.

If a Travel Pass is no longer required, it must be returned to the Learner Travel Team as soon as possible so that the seat may be allocated to another learner.

If a Travel Pass is lost or damaged, parents or guardians must request a replacement via the website [Replacement Pass](#).

A £6 replacement charge applies for all reissued passes. Temporary travel arrangements may be issued where possible.

Learner Conduct - All learners using Local Authority provided transport must at all times adhere to the School Transport Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including the temporary or permanent withdrawal of transport provision [Code of Conduct - Mainstream](#) [Code of Conduct - ALN](#).

APPENDIX 3: SPARE SEAT POLICY

The Local Authority operates a discretionary Spare Seat Scheme on a limited number of contracted school transport vehicles. Spare seats may be offered to learners who do not

qualify for free transport, subject to strict availability, safety requirements and operational capacity.

Spare seats are not a statutory entitlement and may be withdrawn at any time. Allocation is for one academic year only and does not guarantee future provision. Applications must be made online via the Councils website [Spare Seats Application](#).

Applications do not need to be resubmitted in subsequent years and will be reconsidered automatically, unless circumstances change (for example, a change of address or school,). Any allocation remains valid for one academic year only and does not guarantee renewal.

1. Eligibility Criteria

Spare seats may be offered where the learner:

- Resides in Carmarthenshire and the home address is registered with the school;
- Attends the Local Authority designated catchment school;
- Lives within statutory walking distance, but at least one mile from the school;
- Has no suitable public transport or fare-paying school service available; and
- Is of statutory school age.

Spare seats are only available on:

- Dedicated contract vehicles seating nine or more passengers, and
- Mainstream school transport routes

Spare seats **cannot** be offered on:

- Taxis or private hire vehicles,
- Vehicles used exclusively for specialist ALN provision,
- Routes where a fare-paying school bus operates, or
- Routes where suitable public transport is available.

In line with Welsh Government regulations, the Local Authority cannot accept payment for spare seats on vehicles that do not meet the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR).

2. Conditions of Allocation

- Spare seats are offered from September each year, where possible, once all eligible learners have been allocated seats. Additional spare seats may be awarded during the year where capacity becomes available.
- Allocation is subject to change or potential withdrawal at any time if space is required for an eligible learner.
- Allocation is for one academic year only and does not guarantee future availability.
- No additional mileage or route alterations will be made to accommodate spare-seat passengers.
- The Local Authority's determination of available seating capacity is final.
- Not all apparent empty seats can be allocated; seats may be required for:
 - occasional eligible travellers,
 - risk assessment purposes,
 - staff such as passenger assistants, route assessors, or driver training.

Contractors may sometimes use larger vehicles than required for operational reasons; this does not guarantee spare seat availability.

3. Priority Order

Where spare seats are available, they will be allocated in priority order, with younger learners given precedence.

If a spare seat must be withdrawn during the academic year, allocations will be withdrawn in reverse priority order, with older learners removed first.

4. Application Process

- Applications must be submitted online by the last day of the preceding academic year
- Eligibility will be assessed based on spare capacity available at the start of the new academic year and reviewed periodically thereafter.
- Applications may only be submitted by a third party where full written consent has been provided by the parent or guardian.
- Once submitted, applications will be reconsidered annually; however, allocation is not automatic for subsequent years and remains subject to available capacity and

the applicable criteria. A new application must be submitted where there is any change in circumstances (for example, a change of address or school attended). Route details will be issued with the Travel Pass.

5. Use of Spare Seat Travel Passes

- Learners must present the Travel Pass at the start of each journey.
- Passes are non-transferable and valid only for the named learner and assigned route.
- Misuse or fraudulent use may result in disciplinary action and immediate withdrawal of the concession.
- Any changes in circumstances (e.g., address, school, eligibility) must be reported to the Learner Travel Team immediately.
- Where a replacement pass is required, the existing pass must be returned before a new one is issued.
- If the pass is no longer required, it must be returned promptly so the place can be reallocated.

Replacement passes are subject to the standard charge set by the Local Authority.

6. Withdrawal of Spare Seats

The Local Authority may withdraw a spare seat at any time with seven days' written notice, including (but not limited to) situations where:

- the seat is required for a learner eligible for free transport;
- route or operational arrangements change;
- misuse or fraud occurs; or
- the learner no longer meets scheme conditions.

When a spare seat is withdrawn:

- the Travel Pass must be returned immediately; and
- responsibility for the learner's travel returns to the parent or guardian.

Failure to return the pass may affect eligibility to access the scheme in subsequent years.

There is no entitlement to transport in these circumstances.

APPENDIX 4: WALKING ROUTE ASSESSMENTS

Local authorities must assess whether a learner's walking route to school is **available (safe)** or **unavailable (unsafe)** in line with the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure.

1. What the Assessment Looks At

Assessors walk the route and consider:

- Footways and road width
- Traffic levels and speed
- Crossing points
- Visibility
- Environmental risks
- Lighting
- Changes in the area

2. When Reassessments Are Required

Reassessments are carried out when conditions change, such as:

- accidents or incidents,
- new developments,
- changes in traffic,
- infrastructure changes,
- or when a learner's needs change.

3. Social Danger

Assessors also consider social risks, such as:

- crime or anti-social behaviour,
- stranger danger concerns,
- evidence of drug or alcohol misuse.

Local authorities work with the Police and safeguarding partners to identify and verify any social dangers.

4. Outcome

A route will only be classed as available where, having regard to the age of the learner and any requirement for accompaniment, it is considered to be reasonably safe to walk.

All route assessments are carried out on the basis that learners will be accompanied where necessary by a responsible adult. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to

determine whether a learner requires supervision on their journey and to make suitable arrangements for such accompaniment where they are unable to provide it themselves.

Where identified risks cannot be reasonably mitigated, the route will be classed as **unavailable**, and transport assistance may be provided in accordance with the Council's policy.

APPENDIX 5: APPEALS POLICY

Purpose

To provide a fair, transparent and consistent process for reviewing decisions made under the School Transport Policy. The process ensures decisions are reconsidered objectively, consistently, and within reasonable timescales, based solely on written evidence.

Scope

Parents or guardians may appeal decisions relating to:

- Eligibility for free home-to-school transport
- Requests involving exceptional circumstances

Appeals cannot be made for:

- Learners under age 5
- Learners aged 19 or over
- Spare seat refusals

Appeals Process Overview

The appeals process is designed to ensure that all applications are considered fairly, transparently, and independently. It consists of two stages, with each stage being reviewed by a different panel. Where an appeal is not upheld at Stage 1, parents or carers may request that the decision be reviewed at Stage 2.

Stage 1 – Officer Review Panel

Parents or carers may submit a written request for a review of the transport decision within 28 calendar days of receiving notification of the outcome.

The appeal will be considered by an Officer Review Panel comprising representatives from:

- Passenger Transport (Learner Travel),
- Legal Services, and
- Education and Children's Services.

The review will be based solely on the written information provided. Parents or carers will not attend the panel meeting. Following consideration of all relevant information, a written decision will be issued outlining the outcome.

Stage 2 – Member Appeal Panel

Where a parent or carer remains dissatisfied with the Stage 1 outcome, they may request that the appeal be referred to the Home to School Transport Appeals Panel.

The appeal will be considered by elected Members at the next available meeting. The panel will review all relevant information and circumstances before reaching a decision.

The decision of the Home to School Transport Appeals Panel is final and concludes the Council's appeals process.

Grounds for Appeal and Supporting Evidence

Applicants should clearly set out the reasons for their appeal and provide relevant supporting evidence. Examples of acceptable grounds (though not exhaustive) include:

- Family circumstances: work patterns, single parent responsibilities
- Medical needs: GP/consultant letters, disability benefits proof
- Care/social circumstances: social worker or safeguarding evidence
- Bullying/safety concerns: safeguarding logs, police/PCSO reports
- Housing/homelessness: Housing Services evidence, eviction notices

Policy Review

The Appeals Policy is reviewed periodically to ensure fairness, clarity and compliance with statutory guidance.

APPENDIX 6: TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS

The recent school and college catchment review which was recently agreed by Cabinet following a public consultation exercise included the following transition arrangements:

- Learners already receiving school transport before September 2027 would continue to receive transport from the same address to the same establishment until the end of their statutory education (Year 6 for primary, Year 11 for secondary). Sixth form and college students already receiving transport prior to September 2027 would continue to receive transport if attending the same establishment/campus from the same address.

- New applicants from September 2027, or those changing address or school, would be subject to the revised catchment areas.
- Learners entering sixth form or starting college from September 2027 would also be subject to the revised catchment areas.

It is the intention to extend the transition arrangements for learners affected by a change in catchment area where currently living within a catchment area but not within the catchment area from September 2027 as follows (providing there is no change of address or school):

- Those currently living within a catchment area of a school which will not be the catchment area of the same school from September 2027 and starting full-time primary school in the Spring, Summer and Autumn term of 2027 (where parents will have made applications for a full-time school place by the closing date of 31st January 2026 and allocated places in April 2026). These pupils are not eligible for transport until their 5th birthday.
- Those currently living within a catchment area of a school which will not be the catchment area of the same school from September 2027 and starting full-time secondary school in September 2027 (as parents will have made decisions on school places).
- Those already receiving transport to secondary school wishing to continue to sixth form.