

APPENDIX A

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Public Consultation on the Warwickshire County Council Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Home to School Transport Service 2022

3rd December 2022 – 26th February 2022

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Public Consultation on Warwickshire County Council's Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) Home to School Transport

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the public consultation on changes to the County Council's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to School Transport Service.

What is this consultation about?

This consultation seeks to gather views on changes that the County Council is proposing to make to the SEND Home to School Transport Service.

There are three main changes being consulted on:

- Better planned transport for children and young people through a simplified application process for parents/carers;
- A new assessment framework which would be used to determine the most appropriate method of transport based on children and young people's special educational needs and/ or disability;
- Clarification to the wording in the Home to School and College Transport Policy, specifically for young people aged 19 and over, to make this clearer and easier to understand.

We would like you to share your views on these proposals to help improve the way the County Council provides SEND Home to School Transport for children and young people with SEND in Warwickshire. Responses are invited from a range of partners and stakeholders to include parents and carers, learners, WCC colleagues, health and social care professionals, schools, colleges, parent and carer groups and transport providers.

The consultation will inform the new application and assessment process for Home to School Transport for children and young people with SEND in Warwickshire. If approved, the changes would take effect for the 2023-24 academic year onwards.

The consultation will run from 3 December 2022 to 26 February 2023.

Why are we consulting?

The Council is working to provide children and young people with Special

Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) the best service experience they can.

Our vision for learners with SEND is that:

“All our children and young people have the right to lead a fulfilling life and to be part of their community. We want our learners with SEND to feel fully included in their local schools, wherever appropriate, by giving schools the resources and skills to meet their special educational needs.”

The Council is consulting for three reasons:

- To seek views on the proposals prior to a decision being made on any changes to current services.
- To provide clarity on what the local service offer of the Council is for children and young people with SEND
- To ensure transparency to any proposed changes to the local service offer

In 2021 an external review of the SEND Home to School transport service. This was done with Warwickshire County Council staff, residents, Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice and Transport Providers in the county. The review considered how, as a local authority, Warwickshire County Council could make it easier for parents / carers to apply for transport, how applications are assessed, what options are available, and how the authority can work with parents and carers, transport providers, schools and education settings and other stakeholders to improve the service. It was recognised that Warwickshire County Council could improve the Home to School Transport Service.

In developing the three proposals that are being consulted on we have engaged with a range of people to understand the factors impacting change, These have included:

Who	How	When
Parents/ Carers	1. Virtual Engagement Sessions 2. Surveys with Parents/ Carers 3. Workshop with Parents/ Carers 4. Needs Assessment Framework/ Matrix Testing	1. March 2022 - May 2022 2. March 2022 3. June 2022 4. November 2022
Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice	5. Virtual Engagement Session with Warwickshire Parent Carer Voice	5. November 2022
Children and Young People	6. Face to Face Workshops with Children and Young people	6. April 2022
Schools/ Settings	7. Online Survey with Schools/ Settings	7. March 2022
Internal Staff	8. Virtual Engagement Sessions with Staff	8. March 2022
External transport providers	9. Virtual Engagement Sessions with Transport Providers	9. May 2022

	10. Online Survey with Transport Providers	10. March 2022
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Please note that an Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared and is available for you to review.

We would like to know whether you think the proposals would create any equalities or other impacts, and if so, what these might be and how you think they would affect you or other people. We would also like you to tell us if you have any ideas on how we could overcome or reduce these impacts.

The Equalities Impact Assessment will be updated after the consultation taking account of the feedback we receive.

What areas of the Home to School Transport Service are we consulting on?

The following pages will set out the proposed changes to the SEND Home to School Transport Service which includes three elements:

1. A new method of assessing the needs of children and young people applying for Home to School Transport
2. Changes to the application process for Home to School Transport
3. The wording of the section of the Home to School Transport Policy relating to young people aged 19 and over

1. Better planning through a simplified application process

Under the current arrangements, parents/carers must apply if they would like their child to be considered for Home to School Transport. This application is done separately to a child's school application and can be time-consuming for parents/carers to complete. Due to the timing of the application, which is not submitted until after a child's school place has been offered, it does not allow for the SEN Home to school transport team enough time to plan the transport network and provision for young people. It also means that parents/carers can be left waiting to receive confirmation of their child's transport arrangements and they then have limited time to make preparations for the start of the school year.

The proposed new application process removes the need for parent/carers to make a separate application for transport. Instead, they would be asked to indicate whether they wish their child to be considered for Home to School Transport when they apply for their child's school place. A simple 'Yes/No' tick box on the school application form would help to inform the County Council that they wish their child to be assessed for Home to School Transport.

Parent/carers would have a second opportunity to apply once the school placement has been confirmed by responding to the placement confirmation email.

A simplified application form would be available on the County Council website all year round for any parents/carers who have not applied at either of the points mentioned above. ([Application process leaflet – see for detail](#))

2. Menu of options for transport through adopting a Needs Assessment Matrix and Framework (NAMF)

The Needs Assessment Matrix and Framework (NAMF) is a tool that has been designed to help identify potential travel options for a child or young person, based on their level of special educational need and/or disability.

The County Council is proposing to use the NAMF to carry out individual assessments at the time an application for Home to School Transport is made, including a change to the setting.

The introduction of this tool would set out travel options based on the child or young person's special educational needs and/or disability. This can include options such as independent travel training and direct travel payments. Warwickshire County Council is consulting on whether or not the tool should be used or not. The content within the tool, if approved, will change over its lifecycle and is not specifically being consulted upon. ([NAFM Leaflet – See for Detail](#))

3. Clarifications to the policy

The Home to School and College Transport Policy has been identified as requiring clarifications, specifically in relation to passenger assistants and young people who are 19+. Warwickshire County Council have identified the current policy is not clear or well structured, therefore new wording is being proposed. Warwickshire wishes to consult on the clarifications outlined in the Policy Leaflet attached ([Policy Leaflet - See for Detail](#))

Supporting Information

The following documents are available on www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask to help you understand the proposals in more detail and to inform any response you wish to make:

- [Easy-read version of consultation](#)
- [Consultation information leaflet](#)
- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)

- [FAQs](#)
- [Home to School Transport Policy 2020](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice, DfE 2015](#)

How can I take part in the consultation?

The main way to feedback is an online questionnaire that can be accessed from Warwickshire County Council's online consultation hub www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask.

The questionnaire is anonymous and does not ask for any personal information.

If you require a paper copy of the questionnaire or an alternative format please contact us by phone or email (see below for contact details).

If you would like to respond to this consultation in writing you can do this by emailing sendchange@warwickshire.gov.uk or sending your written response to Warwickshire SEND & Inclusion Services, Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4SP.

[A Home to School Transport consultation leaflet will be circulated to all educational settings and they will be encouraged to make this leaflet available to parents and learners. This leaflet and all other supporting documents are also available online at \[www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask\]\(http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask\).](#)

Schools and other educational settings will be consulted through informal and formal meetings and events.

There will also be drop-in events at the following times:

Virtual:

In-person:

{to be added}

Contact Details

For further information on this consultation please contact:

Email: sendchange@warwickshire.gov.uk

Tel: 01926 745105

Closing date

The consultation will close at 5pm on 26 February 2023.

What will happen after the consultation?

Following the consultation all feedback will be analysed and will be used to inform any changes made to the Home to School Transport assessment and application process, and any changes of wording in the Home to School and College Transport Policy document.

If approved, the changes will be in place for the 2023/24 academic year onwards.