



# Changes to our Home to School Travel Assistance Policy

This policy tells you the rules we follow when we help some children travel to school



**What do you think about our ideas?**



Helping some children travel  
to school

**1**



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## Helping some children travel to school

We are Sutton Council. We have lots of different services and support for people in our area.



One of the things we do is help some children and young people travel to school. This could be by bus, train, taxi or walking.



Children who might need help to travel to school are:

- children who live in our area but cannot safely travel to school
- children with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**. This is called **SEND** for short.



Children with SEND might need extra support to learn or move about

## Why we need to change how we do things



Councils across the country have less money. We are all finding it hard to run services with the money we have.



Helping children travel to school is important but it costs a lot of money.



More families are asking us for travel help but we have less money to pay for it.



We need to find a way to keep supporting children and young people who need help with travel.

## About our changes



We have some rules about helping some children travel to school. It is called our **Home to School Travel Assistance Policy**.



We have 6 ideas about changing some things in the policy.



We asked the Sutton Parent Carer Forum to arrange a meeting with families. At the meeting, we talked to the families about our ideas.



We are asking lots of people what they think about our 6 ideas.



We would like you to read about our 6 ideas then answer some questions.



We will listen to what everyone tells us. It will help us decide what to do next.



We will decide what changes to make in February 2024.



Any changes to the policy will start in September 2024.

# How to tell us what you think about our ideas



You must read this booklet first and then fill in our questionnaire online:  
<https://bit.ly/assistedtravel>



You must fill in the questionnaire by **11 November 2023**.



You **cannot** send your answers back to us by email or post. It has to be online.



We are having some meetings where you can find out more information.



## Dates for the meetings:



### Date:

Thursday 12th October 2023



### Time:

10am to 12pm



### Where this meeting is:

Creative Room  
Cantium House  
Wallington  
SM6 0DZ



### Date:

Monday 16th October 2023



### Time:

7.30pm to 9pm



### Where this meeting is:

Online on Google Meet:  
[meet.google.com/yzg-hngz-tbu](https://meet.google.com/yzg-hngz-tbu)



**Date:**  
Thursday 2nd November



**Time:**  
10am to 12pm



**Where this meeting is:**  
Carew College  
Church Road  
Beddington  
Wallington  
SM6 7NH

If you have any questions, or for more information, you can contact us:



**By phone:**  
020 8770 5000



**By email:**  
[consultation@cognus.org.uk](mailto:consultation@cognus.org.uk)

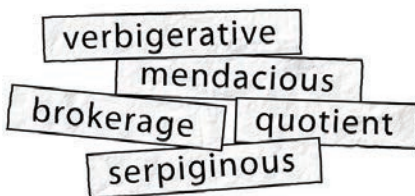
# How to fill in the online questionnaire



This booklet tells you about our ideas. Then we tell you what questions are in the questionnaire.



You will see a question written in **blue**. This is the question that is on the questionnaire.



This means

If it has hard words, we have explained what it means underneath.

## Questions about you



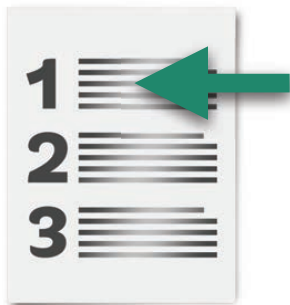
On the questionnaire, there will be some questions about you.

Please answer these questions before you read about our ideas.



**Question 1:** In what capacity are you responding?

This means: Tell us who you are.



There will be a dropdown list. You can choose 1 answer.



If you choose **other**, we will ask you to tell us more about your answer

**Question 2:** If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide the name of the organisation.



This means: If you are filling in this form for an organisation, tell us their name.

**Question 3:** Do you or your child/ young person currently receive home to school travel assistance?



This means: Tell us if you or your child/ young person currently receive help with travel to school at the moment.

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 4:** If you answered yes to the previous question, what support are you currently receiving?

If you ticked **yes** to **Question 3**, tell us what help you get.

There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing on the list.



Taxi



Minibus



**Mileage allowance.** This means money for petrol



**Personal Travel Budget.** This is when we give money to parents and carers. They use the money to pay for their child to get to school



**Other.** If you choose **other**, we will ask you to tell us more about your answer.

**Question 5:** How far do you or your child/ young person live from their place of learning?

This means: How far do you live from you or your child's school or college?



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing on the list.



Choose **not applicable** if you or your child do not go to school or college

## Idea 1

### Tell more people about Independent Travel Training



This training helps young people to travel by train, tube, bus, taxi and walking.



Someone supports you until you feel ready to do it by yourself.



We will offer this training to young people aged 11 to 25 with SEND.



The young person must live in Sutton. But they do not have to go to school in Sutton.





We would do a check first to make sure it was right for the young person.

## Questions about idea 1

**Question 6:** Have you heard of independent travel training?



Tell us if you have heard of independent travel training before.

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 7:** Would your child potentially benefit from independent travel training?



Tell us if you think the training would be good for your child. Your child might already be getting the training.

**You must answer this question.**



**Question 8:** If you answered **no** to the previous question, what are the main reasons.

If you ticked **no** to **Question 7**, we will ask you to tell us why.



**Question 9:** What could the Council do to encourage more families to consider independent travel training?

Tell us what we could do to get more people to do independent travel training.



**Question 10:** If you have any additional comments on proposal 1, please share them in the box below.

Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about Idea 1.

## Idea 2

**Stop giving travel support to children under 5 years old.**

**We would only give support for very special reasons.**



Councils have rules they have to follow. These rules say we have to give travel support to some children aged 5 to 16.



Most parents and carers of children who are under 5 should take their children to school or nursery.



We have been giving travel support to some children under age 5.





But other councils do not give travel support to children under age 5.

We could stop giving travel support to all children who are under 5 too.

### **When would we make this change**



Any changes to the policy will start in September 2024.

## Questions about idea 2

**Question 11:** Should the Council remove any travel assistance that it is not obliged to provide by law to children aged under 5?



This means: Do you think we should stop travel help for children who are under 5?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 12:** If you ticked no or not sure to the last question, do you think there are other options we should consider here instead?



This means: If you ticked **no** to Question 11, is there anything we could do instead?



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing on the list.

On the list it says:



- **Mileage allowance.** This means money for petrol



- **Personal Travel Budget.** This is when we give money to parents and carers. They use the money to pay for their child to get to school



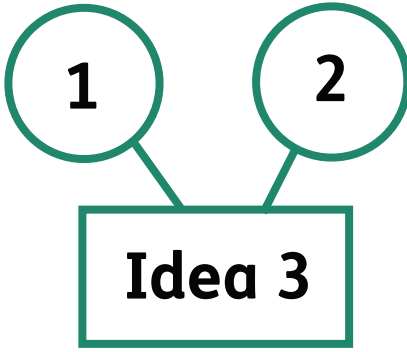
**Question 13:** If you answered other, what ideas do you think we should consider?

This means: If you answered **other** to **Question 12**, we will ask you to tell us more about your answer.

**Question 14:** If you have any additional comments on proposal 2, please share them in the box below.



Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about Idea 2.



## Idea 3

We have 2 ways we could do this idea.  
We call the ways **options**.



The options are only for young people ages 16 or older who cannot travel by themselves.



**Option 1: Ask families and carers to pay for travel support for young people 16 or over**

or



**Option 2: Ask families and carers to pay for travel, then we will give them money back**



At the moment we give travel support to young people age 16 and older who have SEND.



The help might be:

- a bus or taxi



- someone to travel with



- paying money for petrol if someone drives them



This help is free.





Council rules say we do not have to pay any travel support for young people who are 16 or over.



Other councils do not pay for travel support for young people over age 16.



### Option 1. What we would do

We would ask families to pay £800 a year for travel support.



If families do not have enough money to pay for this, we might ask them to pay £400.



This is families who get Working Tax Credit and/ or free school meals.

## Option 2. What we would do



**Ticket**

**For young people who can travel by train, bus or tube:**

We would ask families to buy tickets and then we will give them the money back.



**For young people who have friends or family drive them to school or college:**

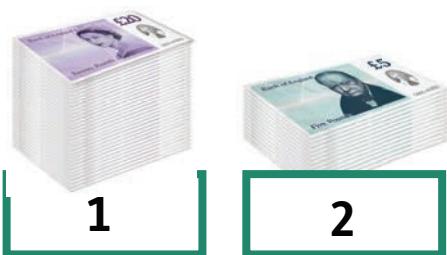
We would give them money for petrol. We would give 45 pence for every mile they travel.



**For young people who might need different ways of travelling:**

We would give 45 pence for every mile they travel.

The family could use this money to help the young person travel in a way that was best for them.



Option 1 would cost us a lot more money than option 2.



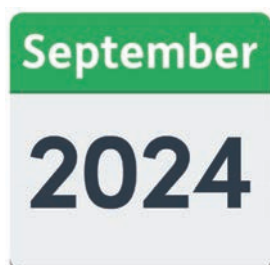
For option 1 and 2, the Council will not sort out travel on mini buses and taxis anymore.



Families and carers need to sort out travel themselves.



We would stop giving free taxis and minibuses to all young people aged 16 or over.



Any changes to the policy will start in September 2024.

## Questions about idea 3

**Question 15:** Do you agree with the principle of contributions from families for post 16 children?



This means: Do you think we should charge families of children over age 16 for travel help?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 16:** Do you agree that the contribution should be £800?



This means: For Option 1, do you think £800 is the right amount of money to charge?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 17:** Do you agree that the Council should apply a “means test” so that lower contributions are required from low income families?



This means: If families think they will find it hard to pay, the Council can check first.



If the family gets Working Tax Credit and/ or free school meals, they could pay less.



Do you agree that families who find it hard to pay should pay less?

**You must answer this question.**



**Question 18:** Do you agree that the contribution for low income families should be £400?

This means: Do you think that £400 is the right amount of money to charge to families who find it hard to pay?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 19:** Do you agree with the principle of reimbursement of travel costs for eligible young people, either from public transport or other vehicles available to families.



This means: Do you think we should ask families and carers to pay for travel, then we will give them money back.

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 20:** If you have any additional comments on proposal 3, please share them in the box below.



Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about Idea 3.

## Idea 4



This idea is for young people aged 16 and older who travel by a mini bus:



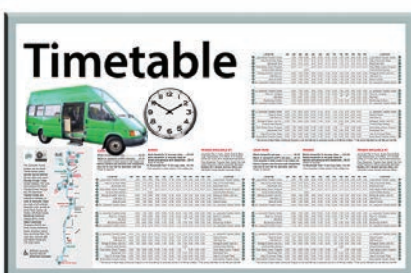
**Have 1 place to pick up young people for college. Then 1 place to drop young people off after college.**



**The mini bus would only go once in the morning and once after college has finished.**



At college, students don't all start at the same time in a morning. They finish at different times too.



At the moment, mini buses go to and from college at different times, lots of times a day.



Government rules say we don't have to give travel support to young people 16 and over.

### **When would the change start**



Any changes to the policy will start in September 2024.



We would work with colleges to make sure pick up times work well for students.



Anyone aged 16 or over would have to ask us again for travel support.



## Questions about idea 4

**Question 21:** Do you agree with the principle of having a single pick up and drop off time in college settings for eligible young people?



This means: Do you agree we should have 1 pick up and drop off point. 1 in the morning and 1 in the afternoon after college?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 22:** If you have any additional comments on proposal 4, please share them in the box below.



Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about Idea 4.

## Idea 5



If students travel by themselves or with one other person, we will offer Personal Travel Budgets.

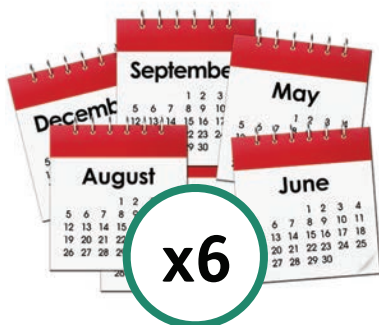


A **Personal Travel Budget** is when we give money to parents and carers.

They use the money to pay for the student to get to school.



We will look at how far you live from school when we decide how much money you will get.



We give the money 6 times a year.



The money will not affect any benefits you get paid.



We will also offer a Personal Travel Budget to some other families.

This would be if how the young person travels now costs more than we would pay them for a Personal Travel Budget.



**If we make this change:**

We will give families clear information about how to use the Personal Travel Budget.



Parents will have more choice about how they get their children to school.



This means that some children could do more after school clubs, if they wanted to.



We already give Personal Travel Budgets to some parents and carers.

At the moment, this is only money for petrol when the parent or carer drives the child to school.



We need to look at how we can let more parents know about and use a Personal Travel Budget.

## Questions about idea 5

**Question 23:** Do you agree that the Council should do more to promote the use of Personal Travel Budgets?



This means: Do you think we should do more to let people know about Personal Travel Budgets?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 24:** If you are a parent/ carer, would you be interested in accessing a Personal Travel Budget? This could give you more flexibility in how you support your child to get to school.



This means: Would you be interested in a Personal Travel Budget?

Answer this question if you are a parent or carer.



Choose **not applicable** if you are not a parent or carer.

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 25:** If you have any additional comments on proposal 5, please share them in the box below.



Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about Idea 5.

## Idea 6



This idea is for children aged 5 to 16 who travel by a mini bus.



**Have 1 place to pick up children and young people in a morning.**

**Then 1 place to drop them off after school.**

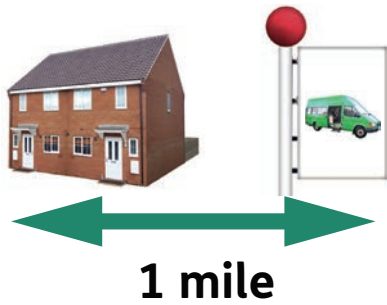
We would call this place a **pick up point**.



A parent or carer would bring the young person to the pick up point in the morning.



Then they would pick the young person up from the pick up point after school.



The pick up point will be up to 1 mile away from their home.



We would do a test first to see how it worked. Then parents and carers can see if it is right for their child.



This idea is already in our policy but we don't do it in Sutton.



This means it would still be a change for families.

## Questions about idea 6



**Question 26:** Do you agree with the principle of the Council introducing central pick-up points for pupils in Sutton, where it is appropriate and safe to do so?

This means: Do you agree we should have 1 pick up point?

**You must answer this question.**

**Question 27:** If you have any additional comments on proposal 6, please share them in the box below.



Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about Idea 6.

**Question 28:** If you have any other comments on this consultation, please share them in the box below.



This means: Tell us if there is anything else you want to say about our ideas about changes to our policy.





## More questions about you

The next few questions ask you about you.



These questions make sure we are asking lots of different people what they think.



You do not have to answer the questions if you do not want to.



We will keep what you tell us safe and private.

We will not be able to work out who you are from the answers that you give.



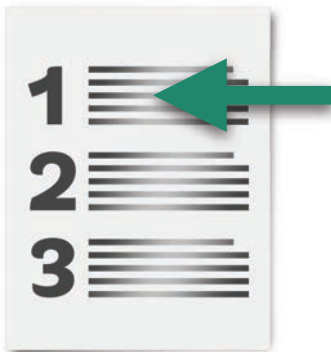
### Question 29: How old are you?



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list.



### Question 30: What is your sex?



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list.



If you don't want to tell us, choose **prefer not to say**.



## Gender

When you are born, a doctor says if you are a boy or a girl. This is your gender at birth.



You might stay this gender all of your life. Or, as you grow up, you may feel like your gender is wrong. You may change your gender.

**Question 31:** Is the gender you identify with the same as the sex registered at your birth?



This means: Is your gender the same as your gender at birth?



If you don't want to tell us, choose **prefer not to say**.



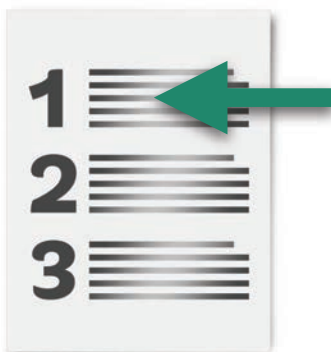
**Question 32:** If you would like to write your own description of your gender identity, please do so here.

This means: You can tell us what gender you are, if you want to.



**Question 33:** How would you describe your ethnicity?

This means: What is your ethnicity?  
**Ethnicity** is your race, background and culture.



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list.

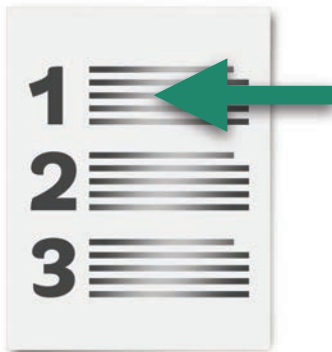


If you don't want to tell us, choose **prefer not to say**.

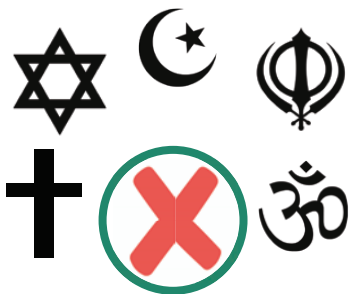


**Question 34:** which of the following describes your religion or beliefs?

This means: tell us what religion you are.



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list.



**Atheist** means you do not believe in any religion.



**Secular** means you are not religious.



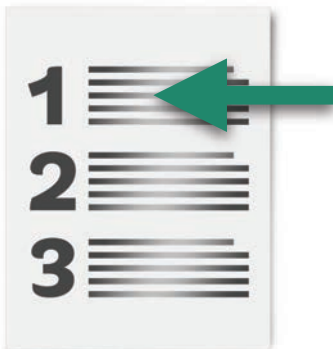
**Question 35:** If you selected other, please state if you wish.

This means: If you chose **other**, you can tell us what religion you are, if you want to.



**Question 36:** Which of the following describes your sexual orientation?

This means: Tell us what **sexual orientation** you are. **Sexual orientation** mostly means who you are attracted to.



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list.



**Heterosexual** means you are a man who is attracted to women or a woman who is attracted to men



**Bisexual** means you are attracted to both men and women



**Gay woman** or **lesbian** means you are a woman who is attracted to other women



**Gay man** means you are a man who is attracted to other men



**I prefer not to say.** This means I don't want to say



**Question 37:** If you would like to describe your own identity, please write it here.

This means: You can tell us what sexual orientation you are, if you want to.

**Question 38:** Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

This means: Do you have a health condition or illness that:



- will last or has lasted for 12 months or more

**and**

- affects how you do everyday things? Things like cleaning, shopping or making meals





**Question 39:** If you answered yes, do you have any access needs e.g. sign language interpreter, information in large print. Please specify if you wish.



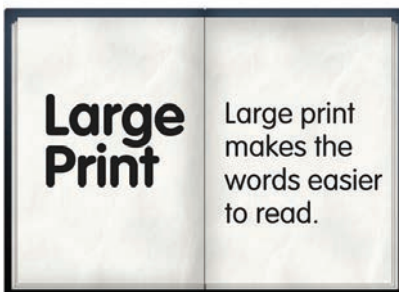
This means: If you chose **yes** for **Question 38**, tell us about your support needs.

This might be things like:

- an interpreter, if you communicate using British Sign Language

**or**

- information in large print



**Question 40:** Do you regularly provide unpaid support caring for someone?

This means: Are you a **carer** for someone?

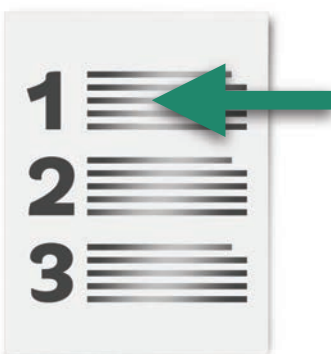


A **carer** is someone who cares for a friend, partner or someone in their family. They are not paid to care for people as part of their job.

**Question 41:** If you answered yes, how many hours do you spend providing unpaid care in a typical week?



This means: If you said **yes** to **Question 40**, how many hours every week do you care for someone?

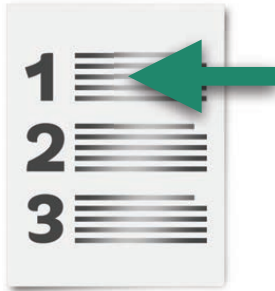


There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list.

## Question 42: What is your marital status?



**Marital status** means if you have ever been married or in a civil partnership.



There will be a list. You can choose 1 thing from the list:



**Single.** This means I am not married or in a civil partnership



Married



Civil partnership



**Separated.** This means: I have broken up with my partner but we are still married or in a civil partnership



**Divorced.** This means: the law says I am not married or in civil partnership anymore



**Widowed.** This means I am still married or in a civil relationship but my partner has died

**Question 43:** Have you been pregnant and/ or on maternity leave during the past 2 years?



This means: Have you been pregnant or had a baby in the last 2 years?