

Consultation on home to school transport policy and post 16 transport policy statement (2025)

We would like to hear your views on proposed changes to our **home to school transport policy and post 16 transport policy statement (2025)**.

We are consulting on proposed changes to our **home to school transport policy** (for compulsory school age pupils), and our **post 16 transport policy statement** (for pupils in post 16 education). These documents set out the statutory (legal) responsibilities that we have, to help with transport to school or another education setting for children and young people living in Oxfordshire.

It is some time since we last thoroughly reviewed and consulted on these policies. Since then, various wording and phrasing has been added or tweaked within the documents to clarify specific aspects or to provide information where this was previously missing. Amendments have also been made to reflect changes in the statutory guidance from the government's department for education (DfE).

Consultation focus

This consultation is seeking views on:

- **Review area 1:** Updates to the format and language used in our home to school transport policy and our post 16 transport policy statement to improve customer understanding, awareness and overall experience.
- **Review area 2:** Specific updates to the use and application of direct travel payments in our home to school transport policy to ensure the language is more user friendly and consistent with current government guidelines.
- **Review area 3:** Specific updates to our home to school transport policy for travel arrangements to Alternative Education Provision settings to meet current government guidelines and to reflect Oxfordshire's current Alternative Education Provision arrangements.
- **Review area 4:** Proposals to ask for a financial contribution for post 16 pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) for travel to post 16 settings.

As well as consulting on the proposed changes as mentioned above, we are also exploring views on the following discretionary elements of both policies **where proposals for change have not been developed**:

- **Review area 5:** Discretionary travel at split village locations
- **Review area 6:** Spare seat scheme

Please read the supporting documentation which can be found at:
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/hometoschool> before answering the questions.

Survey

Q1 I am responding to this survey as: (Choose one option) *

- ☐ as a child/young person using home to school transport
- ☐ as a parent/carer of a child/young person using home to school transport
- ☐ an Oxfordshire resident
- ☐ a member of the public living outside of Oxfordshire
- ☐ a representative of a transport provider serving Oxfordshire schools
- ☐ a representative of an Oxfordshire school
- ☐ a parish, town, district, or county councillor in Oxfordshire – please give your name and the parish or town/ward or division you represent below
- ☐ other (please specify)

Q2 Do you/your child or young person have SEND and an EHCP?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Q3 Do you live in any of the following villages which are identified as split villages within the existing home to school transport policy?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Adderbury/Twyford
- ☐ Ascott-under-Wychwood
- ☐ Charlbury
- ☐ Dry Sandford
- ☐ Duns Tew
- ☐ Freeland
- ☐ Great Haseley
- ☐ Kirtlington
- ☐ Long Hanborough
- ☐ Old Boars Hill
- ☐ South Hinksey
- ☐ Tadmarton
- ☐ Twyford/Adderbury
- ☐ Yatscombe Copse

Q4 Do you use the home to school transport spare seat scheme?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Part 1: Proposed changes to Oxfordshire County Council's home to school transport policy (for compulsory school age pupils), and the post 16 transport policy statement (for pupils in post 16 education)

Q5 Review area 1: Updates to the format and language used in our home to school transport policy and our post 16 transport policy statement to improve customer understanding, awareness and overall experience.

We propose to update both documents to:

- Improve understanding of our home to school transport policy and our post 16 transport policy statement amongst families/stakeholders.
- More clearly define requirements and explanations to minimise instances of misunderstanding/misinterpretation.
- Improve the overall customer experience of these policies.

Please indicate to what extent you **agree** or **disagree** with the proposed changes for review area 1:

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree somewhat
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree somewhat
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Not sure

Q6 If you **strongly disagreed** or **disagreed somewhat**, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Q7 Review area 2: Specific updates to the use and application of direct travel payments in our home to school transport policy to ensure the language is more user friendly and consistent with current government guidelines.

What changes are proposed?

We proposed to refresh the wording in the home to school transport policy to align with current provision and updated guidelines from the DfE. We also propose to update the wording to:

- Improve understanding of direct travel payments related to mileage rates amongst families/stakeholders.
- More clearly define requirements and explanations of how decisions about how direct travel payments are made to minimise instances of misunderstanding/misinterpretation.

There will be no impact to anyone currently receiving direct transport payments as a result of the proposed changes to the policy.

Please indicate to what extent you **agree** or **disagree** with the proposed changes for review area 2:

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree somewhat
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Disagree somewhat
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Not sure

Q8 If you strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Q9 Review area 3: Specific updates to our home to school transport policy for travel arrangements to Alternative Education Provision settings to meet current government guidelines and to reflect the Oxfordshire's current Alternative Education Provision arrangements.

What changes are proposed?

To reflect that Alternative Education Provision is now not solely based a Meadowbrook College, we proposed to update the wording in the policies.

Please indicate to what extent you **agree** or **disagree** with the proposed changes for review area 3:

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree

- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Not sure

Q10 If you strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Q11 Review area 4: Proposals to ask for financial contribution for post 16 pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to post 16 settings.

What changes are proposed?

We are proposing to introduce a contribution charge for young people in post 16 education that require provision of travel arrangements from the council and are keen to understand what the impact might be on families, schools, and wider community.

The proposed charge for Post 16 travel is as follows:

- Less than 3 miles from home to school/college £546.00 per annum (£182.00 per term)
- 3 miles and over from home to school/college £1,015.92 per annum (£338.64 per term)

The proposed rates would mirror the cost of the council's spare seat scheme, including the existing waiver of a contribution due to low-family income.

Please indicate to what extent you **agree** or **disagree** with the proposed changes for review area 4:

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree
- ☐ Not sure

Q12 If you strongly disagreed or disagreed somewhat, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Part 2: Exploring potential future changes to discretionary elements of Oxfordshire County Council's home to school transport policy (for compulsory school age pupils), and the post 16 transport policy statement (for pupils in post 16 education)

Q13 Review area 5: Discretionary travel at split village locations

What changes are proposed?

Exploring whether discretionary support should continue to be available for pupils living in 'split villages', where pupils are able to access travel support to either the nearest suitable school or the designated/catchment school for the village/area.

What is the council seeking views on?

With limited funds available it is essential that we provide support only where it is necessary. This discretionary provision for split villages has been in place since the last consultation in 2014. In this consultation we now want to explore if this support continues to be necessary, and if it were to be changed or withdrawn, what the impact might be on families, schools, the council, and wider community.

As part of this early exploration, we are also asking for views on if the council should continue to provide discretionary transport support to two destinations or split villages (catchment school and nearest suitable school), whilst other locations in the county can only access this support from a single destination (their nearest suitable school).

No proposals for split villages have been developed. Should these come forward in the future, we will formally consult on them before any decisions are made.

Understanding potential impacts now will help us to see if any mitigation is required and what this might look like should any proposals be developed.

If proposals were developed to **reduce** this service (limit/reduce number of split villages), what would the **potential impact** be on families, schools, and wider community?

- ☐ Significant positive impact
- ☐ Somewhat positive impact
- ☐ Neither positive nor negative impact
- ☐ Somewhat negative impact
- ☐ Significant negative impact

☐ Not sure

Q14 If you answered somewhat negative or significant negative impact, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Q15 If proposals were developed to **withdraw** this service, what would the **potential impact** be on families, schools, and wider community?

- ☐ Significant positive impact
- ☐ Somewhat positive impact
- ☐ Neither positive nor negative impact
- ☐ Somewhat negative impact
- ☐ Significant negative impact
- ☐ Not sure

Q16 If you answered somewhat negative or significant negative impact, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Q17 What are your views on split villages being able to access transport support to two destinations (nearest suitable school and catchment school) where all other parts of the county can only access transport support to a single destination (nearest available school)?

Q18 Area 6: Spare seats scheme

Exploring whether the discretionary selling of spare capacity seats on existing home to school transport services (which we organise) should continue into the future.

What is the council seeking views on?

With limited funds available it is essential that we provide support only where it is necessary.

The discretionary provision for spare seats has been in place for many years. We are exploring, at an early stage, if this support should continue to be made available in its current format and approach. This includes whether the financial support underpinning the scheme should be either adjusted to make the scheme sustainable moving forward, or whether financial support should be withdrawn.

As part of this early exploration, we also want to understand the impact might be on families, schools, and wider community if the spare seats scheme were to be changed or withdrawn.

No proposals for spare seats have been developed.

If proposals were developed to change the level of contribution (increase), what would the **potential impact** be on families, schools, and wider community?

- ☐ Significant positive impact
- ☐ Somewhat positive impact
- ☐ Neither positive nor negative impact
- ☐ Somewhat negative impact
- ☐ Significant negative impact
- ☐ Not sure

Q19 If you answered negative or significant negative impact, please tell us why you gave that answer:**Q20** If proposals were developed to **reduce** this service, what would the **potential impact** be on families, schools, and wider community?

- ☐ Significant positive impact
- ☐ Somewhat positive impact
- ☐ Neither positive nor negative impact
- ☐ Somewhat negative impact
- ☐ Significant negative impact
- ☐ Not sure

Q21 If you answered negative or significant negative impact, please tell us why you gave that answer:

Q22 If proposals were developed to **withdraw** this service, what would you like to see the council do to the **lessen impact** on families, schools, and wider community?

Q23 At present we provide a spare seats scheme for some children and young people who do not meet the stated eligibility criteria for assistance with transport, where travel arrangements (contracted by the council) are already in place and spare capacity exists. This scheme allows non-entitled children/young people to purchase access (a seat) on a specific vehicle/route.

What are your views on the council continuing financially subsidising some of the costs for children and young people who are not entitled to free transport support to purchase spare seats where they are available?

Should these come forward in the future, we will formally consult on them before any decisions are made. Understanding potential impacts now will help us to look at if any mitigation is required and what this might look like should any proposals be developed.

About You

We would like to know more about you so that we can understand more about our customers and residents, as it helps us to know if we are hearing the views of a wide range of people and communities.

If you do not wish to provide any of this information, please select prefer not to say.

Information in this section is anonymous and is governed by the [General Data Protection Regulations 2018](#).

Q24 What is your age?

- ☐ Under 16
- ☐ 16 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 34
- ☐ 35 - 44
- ☐ 45 - 54
- ☐ 55 - 64
- ☐ 65 – 74
- ☐ 75 - 84
- ☐ 85 or over
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q25 What is your sex?

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ I use another term (please state here)

Q26 What is your ethnic group or background?

- ☐ Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi or any other Asian background)

- ☐ Black or Black British (Caribbean, African, or any other Black background)
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, and any other mixed background)
- ☐ White (British, Irish, or any other white background)
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other ethnic group or background (please specify)

Q27 Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a long-term illness, health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- ☐ Yes - a lot
- ☐ Yes – a little
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q28 Are you a carer?

A carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who, due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction, cannot cope without their support. Both children and adults can be carers

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q29 What is your postcode?

Please provide the first four or five digits of your postcode (but not the letters at the end). e.g. OX1 1 or OX14 5.

Q30 Would you like to find out more about what's happening in Oxfordshire?

We'd like to invite you to receive **email updates** on news, events and developments across Oxfordshire and opportunities to have your say.

The email contact details you provide will be separated from the feedback you have shared in this survey.

Would you like to sign up to any of the following?
(Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ Your Oxfordshire – our residents e-newsletter
- ☐ Consultations e-newsletter - with opportunities to have your say and updates on our response to residents' feedback
- ☐ No thanks

Q31 If you'd like to sign up, please provide your email address below:

You can post completed paper surveys to us for free (no stamp required) by writing this address as one line in the middle of an envelope:

Freepost OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Please also write 'School transport' on the top left corner of the envelope, so we can easily identify what is inside the envelope.

Please ensure that you submit your consultation response to the County Council by midnight on **Sunday 9 March 2025**. Any responses received after this time may not be taken into consideration.