

Guide to Suffolk County Council's (SCC's) funded school travel policy:

Who does it apply to?

SCC's funded school travel policy provides children aged 5-16 years old with funded school travel to their nearest suitable school with an available place. This applies to children starting a new school from September 2020 or moving home. To be eligible for SCC funded school travel children would have to be.

- Under 8 years old and living over 2 miles from their nearest suitable school with an available place.
- Between 8 – 16 years old and living over 3 miles from their nearest suitable school which an available place.

SCC's policy on school transport changed in September 2019. From this date there are no Transport Priority Areas (areas where children would receive funded school travel to a particular school over and above the statutory minimum distance).

Safe route to walk to school

SCC will also provide funded school travel where there is no safe route to walk to school:

- SCC funded school travel will be provided for children attending their nearest suitable school, which is less than the statutory walking distance, if it is considered unsafe for the child, accompanied as necessary, to walk to school.
- This entitlement will continue as long as the route remains unsafe.

Low income extended rights

Children will qualify for SCC funded school travel if their parents are in receipt of the maximum Working Tax Credit or the child is entitled to Free School Meals due to low income, if:

- Aged 8 to 10 and the school is at least 2 miles away.
- The school is between 2 and 6 miles (if aged 11-16 and there are not three or more suitable nearer schools).
- The school is between 2 and 15 miles and is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16).

Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disabilities and mobility difficulties (including temporary medical conditions)

- Children are entitled to SCC funded school travel however far they live from their school if they cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school or their education setting, accompanied as necessary, because of their SEN, a disability or mobility problem.
- The entitlement for children with special educational needs and disabilities or mobility difficulties is assessed against the statutory School Travel Policy except where a child's Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) expressly states that travel should

be provided.

Measuring nearest suitable school

- We include Public Rights of Way when measuring the distance from home to school for eligibility purposes.
- Public Rights of Way are usually available all year round; but if they are not accessible, parents can appeal.
- Distances are measured by the shortest available route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety.
- Distances are measured from the point of the network that is closest to the address point of the child's home to the gate or access to the school or college.
- Routes are calculated using a network comprised of the Ordnance Survey Mastermap Highways Network which includes all roads and urban paths, plus Public Rights of Way.

Opting in for SCC funded school travel

All parents whose children are eligible for SCC funded school travel must opt in by the **31 May each year** for transport to be provided in the following school year. This will not be provided automatically.

This is because some families, although eligible for SCC funded school travel, do not use their seat(s) which means is paying for unused seats. Therefore, we are asking families to opt-in.

New pupils:

For those starting at secondary/upper schools in September 2020 parents will be informed if their child is eligible by 30 March 2020.

For those starting at primary/middle schools in September 2020, parents will be informed if their child is eligible for SCC funded travel by 15 May 2020.

If their child is eligible parents must opt-in by **31 May 2020** for SCC funded school travel to ensure it is in place for September 2020.

Returning pupils:

Pupils that have used SCC funded school travel before must opt-in every year by 31 May if they wish to continue to use it in September 2020. If they have moved house or changed schools they will be re-assessed under the 2020/2021 school travel policy.

Spare Seats

SCC will offer 'spare seats' on school buses for students to buy on a first come, first served basis. Spare seats can be applied for from **1 July 2020**.

The cost of a spare seat for the year will be £780 in September 2020 with phased in

increases of £30 per term (£90 per year). This is to reduce the public subsidy Suffolk County Council provides.

Post-16

SCC will provide Post-16 travel to those students who are attending their nearest school sixth form or Post-16 centre, irrespective of the county boundary, and:

- are full-time learners aged 16-18, or aged 19 and over and continuing to attend the same course started before they were 19; or relevant adult learners with Education, Health and Care Plans aged 19-25
- are undertaking an approved full-time course of further education study
- are normally resident in Suffolk
- live at least three miles away from either their nearest school sixth form or Post-16 centre

For students wishing to study more specialist subjects or courses which are not available at their nearest school sixth form or nearest Post-16 centre, applications will be considered on an individual exceptional basis. Applications will be offered only to the nearest centre offering this programme where this is needed to enable the student to progress.

The policy does not apply to young people who are planning to take part in a traineeship, an apprenticeship or a supported internship.

The cost of travel for 2020/2021 for post 16 students will be £840 for mainstream students and £720 for a student with special educational needs.