



Home to School Travel Policy

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1.0 Introduction

This document describes the policy for home to school travel assistance for all children and young people aged 0-25 years. It explains the responsibilities of parents/carers and Cumberland Council regarding school transport, as well as how to apply for school transport and the criteria applied to determine eligibility.

The Council supports thousands of families in Cumberland every year by providing travel assistance to school and college. We aim to make sure our children and young people can travel safely and comfortably in accessing their education.

We recognise that one size doesn't necessarily fit all and that different families have differing needs; our policy gives some scope to recognise this via a range of available support. We also want to ensure that young people are best prepared for adulthood, and the policy will allow us to support some young people with SEND to travel independently. Where children and young people are eligible for transport assistance (see Section 2 for eligibility criteria), this will be provided free of charge.

The Policy has been developed in accordance with the latest statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE); a copy can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>. It is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure that arrangements adopted within Cumberland reflect any new legislation and guidance. It has been informed by national home to school transport research and the Council's financial and demand forecasts.

The policy explains how the Council decides who can get travel assistance and what help is available for children and young people with SEND. It applies to children attending:

- Mainstream schools and academies
- Specialist units in mainstream schools and academies
- Special schools and academies
- Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)
- Sixth form colleges

Home to School travel assistance aims to:

- support those most in need
- promote principles of independence
- provide the most cost-effective travel assistance
- promote and encourage the use of sustainable travel

As a Council, we expect the service delivered to be of a high standard. All children and young people who travel under this policy can expect that those standards will be monitored and maintained. In this policy we have referred to children of statutory school age (5-16 years) as “pupils”, and those over statutory school age as “students”.

Only people living in the Cumberland Council area will be considered for school and college transport assistance from Cumberland Council.

2. Eligibility – who can get home to school travel assistance?

2.1 Under Statutory school age (0 to 4 years) Eligibility for Travel Assistance

Children under statutory school age are not automatically entitled to transport to an early-years setting or school. Statutory school age begins on the first day of the term following the child’s 5th birthday.

The Council will provide travel assistance for children under statutory school age attending a Reception class who would otherwise fulfil the eligibility criteria.

2.2 Children (including those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)) attending nursery provision aged 0 to 4

Parents/carers are responsible for making their own travel arrangements for transporting their child to and from nursery provision.

2.3 Children without an Education Health and Care Plan attending a reception class in a school in the year before they turn 5

If it is determined that, once the child is 5, they will meet the eligibility criteria for home to school travel assistance, they will receive travel support during their time in Reception before they turn 5.

2.4 Children with an Education Health and Care Plan attending a reception class in a school in the year before they turn 5

If it is determined that a child with an EHCP attending a reception class would be eligible to receive Council funded home to school travel assistance once they turn 5, they will receive travel support during their time in Reception before they turn 5.

2.5 Statutory school age (5 to 16 years - Mainstream and SEND)

Statutory school age begins at the start of the term following a child's 5th birthday and ends on the last Friday in June in the academic year in which they turn 16.

Children of statutory school age need to attend a school or educational setting on a full-time basis; this is defined as 190 days (or 380 sessions) each academic year.

The Council provides free transport to an eligible pupil's catchment area school. In some areas, there may be another suitable school closer to home than the catchment school. In these circumstances, the Council will provide free transport for eligible pupils to the catchment school or the nearest suitable school.

There are 4 categories of statutory school age students living in Cumberland **and attending their catchment or nearest suitable school** who are eligible for Council funded travel assistance:

1. children who live beyond the statutory walking distance

2. children from low-income families (where extended rights apply – see section 2.12)
3. children whose walking route to school is unsafe
4. **some** children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), a disability or a mobility difficulty

2.6 Eligibility for Post-16 Pupils (16-19)

DfE guidance on post-16 travel can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-transport-to-education-and-training>. The Council has a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport, or otherwise, that the authority considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training. This does not mean that the Council is required to provide free transport for all students.

The Council encourages post-16 learners to use public transport and travel independently wherever possible, as this supports their personal development. For more information, please refer to the **Post-16 Travel Statement** on our website:

[Transport assistance for post 16 low income and SEND students | Cumberland Council](#).

Travel assistance may still be considered for post-16 learners who:

- Have severe physical or complex learning disabilities
- Are unable to safely travel on public transport, even with a responsible adult
- Without assistance would find it impossible to attend post-16 education or training

2.7 Eligibility for Pupils over 19 (19–25)

Young people aged 19 or older with SEND and an EHCP should contact the **Adult Social Care Department** to apply for transport. Each application will be assessed individually based on the person's needs. For more information, visit [Adult social care | Cumberland Council](#)

2.8 Suitable School

The nearest suitable school is defined as 'the nearest qualifying school with places available that provides education appropriate to the child's age, ability, aptitude, gender and any special educational needs they may have'. A 'qualifying' school is: a maintained school (including academies) or nursery, a special school approved under s.342 of the Education Act 1996, a pupil referral unit or alternative provision academy.

A suitable school is not necessarily the most suitable school for a child. Schools are able to meet a wide range of needs. The nearest secondary school to the home of a child of secondary school age, for example, will almost always be their nearest suitable school (provided it would be able to admit them). The nearest suitable school could also be located in a different council area. Where pupils meet the eligibility criteria, Cumberland Council will fund transport to such schools.

Where a child has an EHCP, the school named in the EHCP will normally, but not always, be considered to be their nearest suitable school. For exceptions see section 2.19.

The nearest suitable school used for the transport eligibility assessment may not be the same as the catchment school or nearest school for admissions purposes. Transport can only be provided from one address which should be the child's main residence. In the case of a child having more than one address, the one which receives the child benefit will be considered the main residence.

2.9 Statutory Walking Distances

The statutory walking distances are used to determine whether a pupil is eligible for Council funded travel assistance:

- Pupils below the age of 8 are eligible if they live more than 2 miles from their catchment or nearest suitable school, measured by the shortest safe walking route.
- Pupils aged 8 and above are eligible if they live more than 3 miles from their catchment or nearest school, measured by the shortest safe walking route.

Where a pupil lives within the statutory walking distance of their catchment or nearest suitable school and is not eligible for Council funded travel assistance on any of the other grounds set out in this policy, the parent/carer is responsible for making suitable arrangements for their child's travel to school.

2.10 Calculation of distances and available routes

For eligibility purposes, the statutory walking distances are measured using the shortest walking route a pupil, accompanied as necessary, can walk in reasonable safety. This is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. The route might include footpaths, bridleways and other tracks and may access alternative pedestrian entrances to school which are not passable by motorised transport. The Council does not expect that a pupil who is not eligible for travel assistance will use this route to get to and from school, either alone or accompanied by a parent or carer. This is simply the route the Council will use to determine whether a pupil is eligible for support.

Some pupils will have eligibility for transport assistance under the 'Extended Rights' criteria,(See para 2.12 and 2.13 below). This extends the upper limits for distance measurement to schools in some cases, to 6 miles for primary-age children and to 15 miles for secondary. These are well beyond the distance that could reasonably be walked and these routes will, therefore, be measured along road rather than walking routes.

2.11 Pupils who live beyond the statutory walking distance

Travel assistance will be provided free of charge (that is, funded by the Council) for those pupils of statutory school age who are travelling further than the statutory walking distance from their home to/from the nearest open entrance gate allowing pedestrian access of their nearest suitable school or catchment school. When calculating the walking distance, where two schools are closely co-located, we will use all entrance gates which are used by pedestrians for both schools in our measurements.

Pupils who live beyond the statutory walking distance may be required to use public transport and, in these cases, the Council will provide a bus or train travel pass for them to use the relevant public transport service.

2.12 Extended rights for pupils from low-income families

A pupil may be eligible for extended rights under the 'low income' provisions. The Council defines low-income families as those where a child receives free school meals because their parents or carers receive at least one of the benefits listed below:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Universal Credit
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

If the pupil is not entitled to free school meals, another benefit that is accepted is entitlement to the maximum level of Working Tax Credits.

2.13 Eligible Pupils (low-income) Primary school children aged 8, 9, 10 and 11 where the walking distance is more than 2 miles;

- Secondary school pupils aged 11 to 16 can receive free transport to one of the three nearest suitable schools, as long as it is more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from home;
- Pupils aged 11 to 16 attending their nearest faith secondary school preferred by parents on the basis of religion, and which is greater than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles from their home. When assessing whether a child lives within the 6 or 15 mile upper limits, the Council will measure road routes only. The Council will seek proof of adherence to the religion in question.

When choosing a school, you will need to consider the possibility of your income increasing above the threshold. Should your family income increase above the threshold limit for low income families, the additional transport benefit will continue up to the end of the current academic year in July. In the following year, assistance will revert to that based on the statutory entitlement.

2.14 Pupils whose route to school is unsafe

A pupil is eligible for Council funded travel assistance if they attend their catchment or nearest suitable school, and

- it is within the statutory walking distance of their home, **and**
- the nature of the route means they could not be expected to walk there in reasonable safety, even if accompanied by their parent/carer, **and**
- there is no alternative route within the statutory walking distance that they would be able to walk in reasonable safety, even if accompanied by their parent/carer.

There is no entitlement to free transport for pupils living within the statutory walking distance, and attending a school on the basis of their religious faith where this is not the nearest suitable school, even if there is no safe walking route available.

All walking routes are assessed by the Council in accordance with the Road Safety GB and RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) guidelines. The Council will assess the route at the times the pupil would be using it and will consider:

- the age of the pupil
- whether risks might be less if the pupil were accompanied by their parent/carer
- the width of the road and the existence of pavements
- the volume and speed of traffic
- the conditions at different times of the year

Where a route previously assessed as unsafe is reassessed and determined to be safe (for example by reviewing the route, through route improvements, upgrades or

maintenance, the building of new footpaths or installing of pedestrian crossings, etc.) the transport eligibility for all pupils who are using the previously assessed unsafe walking route will be reviewed. Pupils who are no longer eligible once the route is reassessed as safe, will be given notice until the end of the academic year before Council funded travel assistance is withdrawn. It will then be the parent/carer's responsibility to make suitable travel arrangements for their child.

2.15 Walking Routes, accompaniment and parental circumstances

Where it is determined that a child would be able to walk to school safely if they were accompanied, the expectation is that a parent/carer will walk with them, or make alternative arrangements for their journey to and from school. Where a child lives beyond the statutory walking distance, there is no expectation on the part of the Council that they will walk to school, but this does not mean they are entitled to free transport if they are not otherwise eligible.

Pupils will not normally be eligible for travel support solely on the basis of parents/carers' working patterns or the fact that they have another child attending another school which means they may have difficulty in accompanying their child on the walk to school.

2.16 Transport to schools that are not the nearest or catchment

Generally, travel assistance will only be provided to the catchment school, or to the nearest suitable school if this is closer to home than the catchment school. (In most cases, the catchment school is also the nearest suitable school, although there are some exceptions in parts of Cumberland.)

If parents/carers have applied for a place at their catchment and nearest suitable school and a place cannot be offered, travel assistance to the next nearest suitable school with a place available will be offered if this is in excess of the statutory walking distance, or if there is no safe walking route below the distance thresholds. If a place is allocated at a school listed as a preference and the catchment/nearest school(s) has not been listed as a higher preference, travel assistance will not be provided.

Where the Council allocates a place at a school which has not been listed as a preference, we will only consider providing Council funded travel assistance if the nearest suitable school was expressed as one of the preferences.

2.17 Other exceptional circumstances

Parents/carers of pupils who do not meet the eligibility criteria above may have reasons why they think their child should be provided with travel assistance. The Council has a two-stage appeal process for parent/carers to challenge decisions about transport eligibility. See section 5, 'How to challenge a decision'.

Each appeal must be made in writing. The appeal will be considered and transport may be provided at the discretion of the Council.

Discretionary assistance will be:

- dealt with on a case-by-case basis
- granted for a set period of time, and usually short-term
- is subject to review more frequently than other circumstances
- may cover the whole cost of transport provision or be a contribution to the cost of the travel assistance

2.18 Religion and Belief

If your child is aged between 5 and 16 and you apply for a place in a school on the basis of religion, and in the view of the Director of Children and Family Wellbeing the appropriate religious education is not provided in the catchment or nearest school, then transport from the nearest boarding point can be made available at an annual cost of £655.00 per child payable termly (£258.00 Autumn term, £243.00 Spring term and £154.00 Summer term), provided:

- Adherence to the relevant religious denomination can be demonstrated and;
- Your child is attending the nearest such school and it is no more than 8 miles away in the case of a primary school and 15 miles for a secondary school, and;

- Your child is aged under eight and you live more than 2 miles from school or aged eight or over and you live more than 3 miles away, measured by the shortest available walking route.

No refund will be made in respect of any unexpired part of a travel pass no longer required. Please note that pupils eligible for a paid-for seat under this criterion are not eligible for free transport in the event that a route is deemed to be unsafe.

Children aged 11 to 16 from low-income families attending their nearest faith secondary school preferred by their parents/carers on the basis of religion and, which is greater than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles from their home, are entitled to assistance with transport.

2.19 Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) or mobility issues

Pupils who have SEND or mobility issues may require assistance with getting to school or to another educational setting. This may be over and above the provision made for other pupils. Pupils with SEND who attend their nearest suitable school/setting and satisfy the distance, unsafe walking route or low-income assessment criteria set out above, are eligible for Council-funded travel assistance.

Having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) does not automatically mean that a child will be eligible for travel assistance.

A pupil with an EHCP will not usually be provided with Council funded travel assistance unless they meet the statutory eligibility criteria, or they live within the statutory walking distance limits and the pupil has a special educational need, disability or mobility issue which prevents them from walking to school in reasonable safety, even if accompanied.

The Council considers the individual needs of pupils, including taking professional advice where appropriate, and will consult with parents/carers and teachers about travel needs and assistance. The pupil may also be consulted.

The Council will take the following into account when determining eligibility for transport assistance for pupils with SEND:

- distance to nearest suitable school
- medical needs
- behaviour challenges impacting on reasonable safety
- mobility issues
- whether the pupil is able to walk to school in reasonable safety if accompanied by their parent/carer
- vulnerability
- low-income family criteria
- practicality

This list is for guidance only and is not exhaustive. Satisfying one or more of the factors listed does not automatically support entitlement to Council-funded travel assistance.

When determining the most appropriate type of travel assistance for pupils with SEND, the Council will consider the following:

- age of the pupil
- nature and severity of the pupil's SEND
- availability of public transport
- length and nature of the journey
- most cost-effective mode of transport
- safety of handover arrangements
- travel training readiness
- pupil's ability to use public transport independently

2.20 Elective Home Education

Where parents/carers decide to provide Home Education for their children instead of sending them to a school, this is called Elective Home Education. [Home education: responsibilities | Cumberland Council](#). In the case of EHE, no assistance will be available from the Council in connection with any transport need arising.

2.21 Education other than at school (EOTAS)

Education other than at school (EOTAS) must be agreed by the Council. Where the Council arranges for a pupil/student to have education other than at a school, the Council will provide transport subject to the normal eligibility criteria.

2.22 When travel assistance is not provided

Includes but not limited to:

- Journeys needed if a child or young person becomes unwell during the day
- Travel to and from medical and specialist appointments of any kind
- Travel for children or young people who have been excluded during the school day
- Attendance at breakfast or after school club
- Journeys from/to alternative/multiple addresses

2.23 Spare Seats Scheme

If your child does not have an entitlement to transport and there are spare seats available, your child may be able to travel as a 'Spare Seats Scheme' passenger. Information about the Spare Seats Scheme, including the current charge, is available from: [Apply for the Spare Seats scheme \(Reception to year 11\) | Cumberland Council](#)

Spare seat(s) can only be sold if they are available based on capacity limits of the vehicle, and if in doing so, the Public Services Vehicle Accessibility Regulations 2000 are not contravened. It may be after the start of term before parents are informed about the availability of a spare seat. This is because the Council has to ensure it has sufficient capacity to accommodate those pupils with a statutory entitlement before it is able to offer any spare seats.

If there is a seat available, there is no guarantee about continued availability and it may be withdrawn at very short notice if it is required for an entitled child, or if the route or vehicle size is changed. It must be stressed that until you are advised in

writing by the School Transport Team that a seat is available, you must make appropriate arrangements to get your child to school.

You should not base your preference of school on the possibility of your child travelling as a 'Spare Seats Scheme' passenger. Your child's transport remains your responsibility and at any time throughout your child's education, you may have to make your own transport arrangements. Your child may become settled in a school to which transport becomes a difficulty for you. Even if you are able to find a solution it may be expensive. It is important to have alternative arrangements in mind as every year this causes problems for some parents/carers.

2.24 Moving House

If you move house you will need to complete an application form for your new address to find out if you will be entitled to assistance with transport.

2.25 Pupils with dual living arrangements

Transport to school can only be provided from one address. Where parents have shared custody, the address used to assess eligibility will be the one where the child spends most time. Where this is not clear or where the time spent at each address is equal, the address registered for child benefit purposes will be used to assess eligibility.

3.0 Types of Travel Assistance

Cumberland Council offers different types of travel assistance to meet the needs of children and young people, including those with SEND. The Council may provide:

- A bus pass for public or school services
- Independent Travel Training
- Personal Travel Budgets (PTB)
- A seat on an existing vehicle route

- Individual transport (for children with complex needs, only in exceptional cases)
- Passenger Assistants

The Council prioritises reducing individual transport arrangements to support independence.

3.1 Independent Travel Training (ITT)

Independent Travel Training helps children and young people gain the skills and confidence to travel safely and independently between home and school. Eligible children and young people may join a training programme to help them travel independently. Once they successfully complete the training, their travel arrangements will be updated.

- The training is a one-to-one programme tailored to the individual's needs
- It includes a rigorous training plan and assessment process delivered by a qualified travel trainer
- Criteria for successful completion are agreed upon before the programme begins

More information about ITT will be provided in the near future ITT will only be provided with parental consent.

3.2 Personal Travel Budget (PTB)

A PTB is a grant payment to support families in transporting their child to school. It aims to reduce journey times and promote the child's independence.

PTBs provide flexibility, allowing parents/carers to choose different transport modes that suit their circumstances, for example:

- Driving the child to school
- Paying for a bus pass
- Arranging shared travel with other families

- Hiring a taxi (if cost-effective)

The budget is calculated based on the distance from home to school and must not exceed the cost of transport the Council would otherwise provide. The mileage rate is set at £0.45p per mile. To ensure that PTBs are financially viable, the Council may also pay a fixed daily allowance ranging from £5 - £45 a day where applicable.

Allowances may be considered for:

- Medical needs requiring immediate attention during travel
- Behaviour needs creating safety risks
- Situations needing an extra adult
- Rural communities or longer journeys

3.3 Travel Passes

Travel passes enable children and young people to travel to school using public transport, accompanied by an adult where necessary.

3.4 Transport Vehicles

Where essential, the Council may provide transport vehicles to take children and young people to and from school.

- Where applicable, vehicles are specially adapted to meet individual needs
- Whenever possible, children and young people will travel together, typically in buses
- In exceptional cases, single-occupancy taxis may be provided based on assessed needs
- Pick-up and drop-off locations may be at a convenient point within a reasonable distance from the home

3.5 Passenger Assistants

A passenger assistant may be provided if needed, based on the pupil's needs.

3.6 Pick-Up and Drop-Off Points

Parents may be required to transport their children to designated pick up points to join the transport provided. Pick up points will be located within a reasonable distance of home.

Parents are responsible for supervising their child to and from the pick-up point. Where pick-up and drop-off points need adapting for a child or young person who has SEND, supporting evidence will be considered to ensure an appropriate pick-up point is agreed.

Pick-up and drop-off times will be planned to take into account school/college start and finish times and will enable the child and young person to arrive at school on time. The Council is unable to guarantee that pick-up or drop-off times will be compatible with any other arrangements that may be made by parents/carers. You must also bear in mind that the journey to/from school may not be by the most direct route and that the arrangements are likely to change from time to time. In cases where the parent/carer believes that the use of the allocated boarding point/alighting point, is unsuitable, e.g. due to safety concerns, the Council will, upon a request from the parent/carer, consider the suitability of the travel arrangements and whether a route safety assessment to the boarding point/alighting point is required.

The home to school transport route will involve a number of pick up and drop off points on the way to and from school. As a result, your child will take longer to get to school than a non- stop journey or the most direct route from the pick-up point.

The Council is not able to make changes in timetables or start and finish times, unless this is agreed in exceptional arrangements.

3.7 Journey Times

Recommended maximum journey times are as follows:

- **45 minutes** for primary-aged children
- **75 minutes** for secondary-aged children

We will always try to offer a solution which does not exceed the recommended maximum journey times but, on some occasions, given the challenging nature of Cumberland's geography or as a result of traffic delays, these times may be exceeded. In particular, if a child's EHCP names a school far away from home, journey times may exceed the recommended maximum.

3.8 Behaviour on School Buses

The behaviour of the majority of pupils on home to school transport is generally good and does not cause concern. To support this, Cumberland Council has a Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct for schools, parent/carers and pupils setting out advice and expectations. [Behaviour Policy](#) The policy has equal application to any passenger travelling on a contracted or local bus service.

4.0 Applications and Reviews for Travel Assistance

4.1 How to apply

All parents/carers, including those of pupils with SEND, must apply through the Council's website: [Apply for school transport \(Reception to Year 11\) | Cumberland Council](#)

- If approved, the family is informed of the travel arrangements
- If declined, families can appeal the decision

A new application for school transport needs to be made at various stages:

- Starting infant/primary school;

- Transfer from infant to junior school;
- Transfer from junior/primary to secondary school;
- Changing address or changing school at other times;
- Annual review for 'low income' families.

Due to the volume of applications you need to apply in good time. All applications must be made by 31 May to guarantee your application will be assessed by the beginning of the academic year. If you apply later, travel assistance may not be in place at the start of term and there may be a considerable delay. In the meantime, you are responsible for your child's transport and any expenses you incur will not be refunded.

If you submit an application by 31 May and you do not hear anything about your application or receive a travel pass by mid-August, you should contact the School Transport Team.

Should a duplicate travel pass be required, a £15.10 replacement fee is charged.

4.2 Reviews

Travel arrangements are reviewed at least annually, or more often if a child's needs or circumstances change. Changes to routes, operators, or timings may occur to ensure best value and meet children's needs.

Following a review, families may be offered an alternative form of travel assistance depending on the child's needs and available transport options.

4.3 Eligibility criteria

The Council will review the following factors when assessing applications:

- The **age** of the child or young person
- The nature of the child or young person's **special educational needs/disabilities**
- The **walking distance** between home and school or college

- The **health and safety** of the child or young person on their route to and from school
- The **availability of placements** in the nearest suitable school
- The **most sustainable and cost-efficient** type of travel assistance
- **Eligibility** for Independent Travel Training

Each application is assessed individually to determine the most appropriate type of travel assistance, if needed. Consideration will be given to whether the child or young person can reasonably walk to school or use public transport and other types of transport.

5.0 Appeals

You can only appeal a decision about home-to-school transport on the following grounds:

- The **transport arrangements** offered
- The **child or young person's eligibility**
- The **distance measurement** in relation to statutory walking distances
- The **safety of the route**

For all other concerns or complaints, please use the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure: www.cumbria.gov.uk/council-democracy/accesstoinformation/internalreviewscomplaints.asp

5.1 Appeals Procedure

The Travel Assistance Appeals Process has two stages:

Stage 1: Review by a Senior Manager

Timeframe: Submit your appeal in writing within 20 working days of receiving the Council's decision.

Content: Your written request must explain why you believe the decision should be reviewed and include details of any exceptional personal or family circumstances.

Form: Use the online appeal form available here: [Stage 1: Review by a Senior Manager | Cumberland Council](#)

The Senior Manager will review the decision within 20 working days and provide a written outcome explaining:

- The nature of the decision reached
- How the review was conducted
- Any departments or agencies consulted during the process
- The factors considered
- The reasons for the decision

Stage 2: Review by an Independent Appeal Panel

Timeframe: You must request a Stage 2 review within 20 working days of receiving the Stage 1 outcome.

Grounds for Appeal:

- The Council has not properly applied its Travel Assistance Policy.
- There are exceptional reasons to justify making an exception to the policy.

Form: Use the online appeal form available here: [Stage 2 – Review by an Independent Appeal Panel | Cumberland Council](#)

An Independent Appeal Panel will consider your appeal within 40 working days.

Hearing Details:

- You can attend the appeal hearing and bring up to two supporters
- You will receive at least 20 working days' notice of the hearing date
- If you cannot attend, you must notify the Council in advance. If you fail to attend without notice, the Panel may proceed in your absence based on your written submission

- Submit any additional evidence at least 10 working days before the hearing, unless there are exceptional circumstances

5.2 Referral to Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman

The decision of the Panel is final. When you receive the decision letter, if you consider that there has been a failure to comply with the procedural rules, or if you feel there are any other irregularities in the way your appeal was handled, you may have a right to refer the matter to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman for further investigation, please see link below. Please note that this is not a further right of appeal. www.lgo.org.uk/

Alternatively, you may be able to seek a Judicial Review of the decision. However, this is a complex process, and it is advisable to seek legal advice prior to pursuing this route

5.3 Further Appeals

Please be aware that a further appeal will not be agreed unless there has been a significant and/or exceptional change to your circumstances, and this change directly affects your application for transport.

Appendix 1 - Glossary

Term	Explanation
Accessible	Easy to use or reach, especially for people with disabilities.
Additional Support Needs	Extra help a child may need to learn and succeed in school.
Adult Social Care	Services that help adults with disabilities or special needs live safely and comfortably.
Annual Review	A yearly meeting to check if the help a child is getting is still right for them.
Appeals Process	The steps you take to ask for a decision to be looked at again.
Application	A form or request asking for help or support.
Assessment Placement	A temporary school place while the best long-term option is decided.
EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan)	A detailed document explaining the extra help a child with special needs will get.
Eligibility Criteria	The rules that decide if someone can get help or support.
Exceptional Circumstances	Unusual or special reasons that mean normal rules might not apply.
Fixed Daily Rate	A set amount of money paid each day for travel costs.
Funding	Money provided to pay for something.
Independent Travel Training (ITT)	Help to teach young people how to travel safely on their own.
Mainstream School	A school that most children attend.
Mileage Rate	The amount of money paid for each mile travelled.
Nearest Suitable School	The closest school that can meet a child's educational needs.

Panel	A group of experts who review decisions and give advice.
Passenger Assistant	An adult who travels with a child on transport to help keep them safe.
Personal Travel Budget (PTB)	Money given to families to arrange their child's travel to school.
Post-16	Refers to education and training for young people aged 16 and older.
Provision	The help, support, or services that are provided for a child or young person.
Review	Checking to see if something is still working well or needs to change.
Route	The way or path a bus or other transport takes to get to school.
Rural	A countryside area, often with fewer transport options.
SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)	Extra support needed by children who have learning difficulties or disabilities.
SEND Tribunal	A special court that decides disagreements about support for children with SEND.
Shared Transport	When children travel together in the same vehicle, like a bus or taxi, to save costs.
Special School	A school designed to support children with specific educational needs.
Statutory Walking Distance	The distance children are expected to walk to school based on their age.
Supportive Evidence	Information from professionals or others that explains why help is needed.
Transition	Moving from one stage to another, like changing schools or growing older.
Travel Assistance	Help provided by the Council to get children to and from school.

