

APPENDIX 1

GWYNEDD COUNCIL

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY (September 2022)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Section 2 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 requires Local Authorities to assess the travel needs of all learners under the age of 19 who receive education or training and who are ordinarily resident in the Authority's area.
- 1.2 There is no statutory duty for a Local Authority to provide free transport to post 16 learners who continue their studies in mainstream further education or training.
- 1.3 It is the Council's intention to provide transport for post 16 learners who live three miles or more from an eligible school or college.
- 1.4 The Council will provide transport for post 16 learners who receive their education or training and who are ordinarily resident within the Authority area. The Council will not limit the age to under 19 only.
- 1.5 This new policy will come into force on 1 September 2022 and will affect every learner starting an eligible course from this date.

2. Who is eligible?

- 2.1 This Policy is for learners living in the County of Gwynedd.
- 2.2 Learners must be following a course/courses that are included in the Database of Approved Qualifications in Wales (DAQW). [See www.daqw.org.uk for details.]
- 2.3 Learners with additional learning needs will be able to take advantage of the Council's post 16 transport scheme for a period of up to 4 years from the beginning of their first term

3. Distances

- 3.1 The Council will not provide transport for learners that live less than three miles from an eligible school or college.
- 3.2 The Council will use the distances from the home to the eligible school or college measured by means of the Council's Geographic Information System (GIS) to ascertain the true distances.

4. Relevant schools and college sites

- 4.1 The Policy is relevant for travelling to the following educational establishments:
 - secondary schools maintained by Gwynedd Council with a provision for Years 12 and 13.

- special schools maintained by Gwynedd Council with a provision for Years 12 & 13 & 14
- sites in Dolgellau, Pwllheli, Glynllifon, Menai-Bangor, Parc Menai, Llangefni and Caernarfon of Llandrillo Menai Group.

4.2 The courses available in each of these establishments can be seen in their prospectuses, that are available directly from the establishments. An initial application form for taking advantage of the post 16 transport network will be available at the time learners consider their choices from the Local Curriculum.

4.3 Also, under the 'empty seats' scheme, higher education students at Bangor University and Bangor Menai Site, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai will be able to travel on routes serving the Bangor Menai Site, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai on the term days of the Menai Site, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai only.

5. Post 16 transport network

5.1 As a result of the geographic nature of Gwynedd, it is not always possible to arrange transport routes that go past the homes of every learner wishing to travel. Learners will have to make their own way to the nearest pick-up point. Every effort will be made to keep this distance as short as possible.

5.2 Transport will be available on specific routes leading to the relevant establishment(s). Learners will be informed on the Council's Website the exact routes that are anticipated will be available the following September at the time of completing the application for a place at the relevant school or college.

5.3 It is the responsibility of individual learners to arrive at the nearest pick-up point on any of the routes. The Council will not provide additional transport to reach any pick-up / drop-off points on any of the routes.

5.4 It is the transport provider's responsibility to assess the safety of any pick-up/ drop-off point. Learners will have to use the safest pick-up point that is nearest to their home.

5.5 The Council will review the network of routes on an annual basis to improve efficiency. Any changes will be known prior to the Easter Holidays and will only be introduced at the beginning of the next academic year.

6. Applying for transport

6.1 Every post-16 learner wishing to take advantage of the transport will need to download the relevant pass from the Council's website. Receiving a pass is subject to accepting the Travel Behaviour Code.

6.2 Travel will not be permitted without a pass other than a short period at the beginning of the first term of post 16 learners there will a period when they may travel without a pass at the beginning / end of a journey subject to carrying an appropriate letter from the school / college which confirms that they have registered in the school / college.

- 7.4 A photograph of the learner entitled to use the pass will be on each pass with the name(s) of the school/college and the number(s) of the valid travel routes.
- 7.5 The pass must be carried every day and must be available for inspection by those authorized to do so, e.g. bus driver, bus inspector, Council officer. Learners without a pass in their possession at the time can be refused the right to travel, unless payment is made of the appropriate amount that would be due on public transport or the current amount fixed by the Council for every journey on contracted transport.
- 7.6 A request can be made for a plastic pass in special circumstances. The pass is available free of charge but a charge would be made for a new pass due to loss, tearing or other damage to the pass. The fee will be in line with the current rate.
- 7.7 Each pass is for the use of the individual only. Allowing another individual to use another learner's pass is contrary to the Policy. This type of misuse will lead to the individual(s) losing the privilege of using transport subsidised by the Council and those individuals' passes will be withdrawn.
- 7.8 The application form for a pass can be found on the Council's website.
- 7.9 Should learners change their courses, or the location of their courses changes, a new application must be made. These applications will receive urgent consideration.

8. Travelling Times

- 8.1 Transport will be available between Monday and Friday during the relevant school/college terms only.
- 8.2 A journey to a school or college must be completed before 12:00.
- 8.3 A journey home from college or school cannot be made before 13:00. A journey home must start before 18:00, unless the learner has an official letter from the school / college confirming that the time of the last lesson / lecture on a specific day(s) prevents travelling before 18:00.

9. Type of transport provision

- 9.1 The Council will provide transport in the most effective and appropriate way. The Council will mainly arrange the use of public bus and train services.
- 9.2 The Council will provide transport on buses, mini-buses or taxis under contract to the Council.
- 9.3 The Council expects operators to ensure the punctuality of their services, that the vehicles are clean and of quality with drivers trained specifically for the nature of the work and passengers.

10. 'Empty Seats' Scheme

10.1 Under certain circumstances not every seat in a vehicle that provides learners transport to a school or college in line with this Policy will be full. Under such circumstances other learners could pay for the use of any empty seats.

10.2 The categories of learners in question are as follows:

- those living less than three miles from the educational establishment
- students in higher education in Bangor University or Menai Site, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai
- pupils under 16 years who attend an out-of-catchment school

10.3 Applications for an empty seat pass will be in the same way as a normal pass. However, applications will not be decided upon until after the first day of the Autumn Term.

10.4 During any academic term it is possible for the number of learners entitled to transport to increase, and therefore there may be no empty seats remaining. Under such circumstances, it will not be possible for learners in any of the additional categories above to continue to travel in the vehicle. Under such circumstances the Council will refund the full fee to the learner for the term. Then, it will be the individual learner's responsibility to reach the school or college.

11. The Behaviour Code

11.1 The Council supports the "Travel Behaviour Code" prepared by the Welsh Government. The Code establishes the expectations of individual learners, fellow passengers and transport providers. The Code can be seen on the Council's Website.

11.2 When learners submit an application for post 16 transport, they, or their parents/guardians, must state on the application form that they have read and understood and are committed to adhering to the Behaviour Code and are aware of the possible results of breaching the Code.

11.3 An unacceptable action by a learner that is contrary to the Code could lead to:

- recovering the cost of deliberate damage from learners and/or their parents/guardians
- cancelling the travel arrangements agreed for learners for a specific period or an unspecified period. [It will be the learners' responsibility to make their own transport plans under these circumstances]
- disciplinary action by the relevant school or college
- submitting a report of the incident to the Police.

12. Transport on medical grounds

12.1 As a consequence of physical disability and / or other special needs, some students will be facing problems when using the Council's post 16 transport network.

12.2 The Policy attempts to develop inclusion, along with the independence of every learner. Encouraging their educational and social development will be of great benefit to all learners and it includes working towards travelling independently.

Learners will receive encouragement to achieve this as soon as possible and this of course will be in consultation with parents/guardians.

12.3 The Council will endeavour to ensure that it will be possible for learners with travelling difficulties to use vehicles that provide the core network. In order to make it easier for them, the Council will consider the use of easy access vehicles, adapting the pick-up/drop-off points, providing an assistant, developing a buddy scheme, extending transitional relief, etc. The aim is to develop confidence and independence when travelling that will be of additional assistance after the end of the educational period.

12.4 When making a decision, the following will be considered before allocating special transport for learners:

- the nature of the special needs of the learner
- whether the usual journey is accessible or not to the learner
- whether the learner has specific medical problems, whether short-term or long-term
- whether the learner has mobility problems.

12.5 Under certain circumstances, it will not be possible to use the Transport Network – or the usual vehicle. Evidence from a specialist - e.g. a Paediatric Consultant, must be submitted in writing with the application form, detailing the personal difficulties that prevent a learner from using the usual transportation method and an assessment of the learner's ability to travel under certain circumstances. The Council will consider the best way of providing transport for the individual learner, namely by using the core network or a special arrangement under some exceptional circumstances.

12.6 The needs of learners with transport needs due to medical reasons will be reviewed annually.

13. Financial support for learners

13.1 Since 2004/05, the Welsh Government has offered the Education Maintenance Allowance for learners over 16 years old that attend a local school or college. The main element is a weekly allowance that is associated with attending the educational establishment and a sufficient studying effort is made.

13.2 The Allowance is dependent on the income of the household. The allowance is paid in order to assist those who are post 16 with the cost of travelling, books and equipment when following a course in a school or college.

13.4 Learners can find more about this on the Website
www.cyllidmyfyrwycymru.co.uk

14. Changes to Policy and Fees

14.1 From time to time, the Council will change its Post 16 Transport Policy. Any changes will be decided prior to the Easter holidays before the start of the next academic year. The changes will come into force on the following 1 September.

14.2 The Council will review its policy for post 16 transport on an annual basis. Any changes will be decided prior to the Easter holidays before the start of the next academic year. The changes will come into force on the following 1 September.

15 Complaints and observations

15.1 Any complaints or observations regarding this Policy must be submitted in accordance with the Council's Complaints and Observations Procedure.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The following are available on the Council Website: www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru

- A Timetables and maps of the Network to the relevant establishments
- B The Behaviour Code
- C Application Form
- Ch Complaints and Observations

The details and the application form for the Education Maintenance Allowance and Assembly Learning Grant are available on the following Website www.cyllidmyfywryrcymru.co.uk or from individual schools and colleges.

The relevant schools and colleges can be contacted as follows:

Ysgol Bro Idris : 01341 424949

Ysgol Godre'r Berwyn: 01678 520259

Ysgol Dyffryn Nantlle : 01286 880345

Ysgol Syr Hugh Owen : 01286 673076

Ysgol Brynrefail : 01286 672381

Ysgol Tryfan : 01248 352633

Ysgol Friars : 01248 364905

Ysgol Dyffryn Ogwen : 01248 600291

Ysgol Pendalar : 01286 672141

Ysgol Hafod Lon : 01766 772140

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai

Dolgellau : 01341 422827

Pwllheli : 01758 701385

Glynllifon : 01286 830261

Bangor : 01248 370125

Llangefni : 01248 383348

Parc Menai : 01248 67434

Caernarfon : 01248 673450

