**NOTES TO ACCOMPANY HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY**

Evidence of benefits to be provided to support requests for assistance on financial grounds

Evidence must be current i.e. not more than 3 months old for it to be considered. You must provide evidence to show one of the following:

* You receive income support
* You receive income-based job seekers allowance
* You receive the guarantee element of state pension credit
* You receive support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
* You receive employment support allowance (income based)
* You are in receipt of income based free school meals (NOT universal free school meals available for all Key Stage 1 children)
* You receive the maximum level of working tax credit\*
* You receive child tax credit but are not entitled to working tax credit and your household income is less than £16,190 per year\*
* You receive Universal Credit with an annual net income not exceeding £7,400.

\*You will need to send us a copy of your full tax credit award statement for the forthcoming financial year.

Measurement of distances

Where an application is assessed on grounds of distance, the distance will be measured along the shortest available safe walking route from the nearest entrance to the pupil’s home where it meets the public highway to the main gate or entrance to the school using the Council’s digitised mapping system, MapInfo. For Paignton Community & Sports Academy, this will be the Borough Road site. Footpaths not available to vehicles may be used unless they are deemed unsafe. For distances over the statutory walking distance, driving routes will be measured.

Transport assistance on grounds of parental medical condition

Discretionary transport assistance may be given if your child needs to be accompanied to school but you are medically unfit to accompany them and no-one else is able to help. Professional medical evidence will need to be provided stating that you are not able to walk the required distance. This will be kept under regular review.

Transport assistance where a family has children at more than one school

Discretionary assistance may be given if you have children at more than one school and who need to be accompanied to school, and there is no-one else to accompany the children. You may be required to escort your child on a vehicle provided by the council. Where appropriate, you will be expected to keep your child’s name on the waiting list for the sibling’s school. If a place becomes available at the sibling’s school and is declined, then transport assistance will no longer be given.

Transport for siblings of pupils who are eligible for travel assistance

Where one child in a family is entitled to transport assistance e.g. due to mobility issues, siblings attending the same school will not be entitled to travel with them.

Determination of unsafe walking routes

The safety of a walking route will be determined by the council taking into account factors such as footpaths, lighting and road crossing points. The council’s highways officers will make the final decision as to whether or not a walking route is safe. The designation of a route as unsafe will be reviewed if changes are made to the highways and/or footpaths along the route.

Transportation of pupils in wheelchairs

The council will make every effort to transport pupils in their normal wheelchair. However, this is dependent on there being a vehicle available for use that can accommodate the wheelchair safely. Where the council is unable to procure or provide a suitable vehicle you will be offered a fuel allowance to transport their child to school yourself. You must contact the council before purchasing a new wheelchair to check whether we will be able to transport it. The council will not transport wheelchairs to school where a pupil does not need to travel in the chair. Wheelchairs will need to be inspected and tagged before we can transport them so you must let us know as soon as possible if your child’s wheelchair is due to be changed. Please bear in mind it can take some time to find a suitable vehicle, particularly for a large chair.

Transporting children with SEN/mobility issues

Where you are requesting assistance because of your child’s SEN/mobility issues, we will normally require recent professional evidence (e.g. consultant, GP, social worker) to support your application. If you are not able to provide this your child may not be given travel assistance. Where a child is physically able to walk but is not able to do so safely even when accompanied by an adult, transport assistance will be given. Again, evidence will be required to support your application.

Behaviour of pupils

If your child misbehaves when travelling to and from school on transport arranged by the council, the council reserves the right to withdraw travel assistance for a period of time. If the poor behaviour continues travel assistance may be restricted to a fuel allowance for you to transport your child yourself.