

# **Home to School Transport Policy Review**

## **Consultation Analysis Report 2023**

### **Appendix**

June 2023

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## **Appendix 1: Questionnaire full results**

### **Home to school transport policy review consultation 2023**

#### **Overview**

We want to hear your views on our proposed revision of our home to school transport policies in North Northamptonshire for 2024-2025 onwards.

In common with other Local Authorities, North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) is required to provide assistance for travel between Home and School for children and young people residing in the area who meet the eligibility criteria set out in legislation.

The Council produces a series of policies setting out what assistance they are providing and how to access it. The policies should enable parents to understand easily whether their child is eligible for free home to school travel, or whether there is any other help with home to school travel provided by the Council using its discretionary power.

The Council is legally required to provide free transport assistance if a child is of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) and falls within one of four categories:

- statutory walking distances (over 2 miles for up to 7 years old and over 3 miles for 8-16 year olds)
- any diagnosed special educational needs, disability or mobility problems
- whether the walking route meets road safety standards
- extended rights for those on low incomes (as explained in [Appendix A3](#) of the current policy)

To be eligible to free transport assistance the child needs to be attending their nearest school which has places and can meet their needs (this is known as the nearest suitable school). The legislation sets out that all transport for eligible children and young people must be provided free of charge to the family.

After we have allocated seats for pupils who are eligible for free transport the Council has discretionary powers to provide seats to non-eligible pupils. The Council is allowed to impose a charge for non-eligible pupils to offset all or some of the cost of their transport.

This includes all transport provided for those attending 6th form studies, whether at school or college or other education provision.

#### **Special educational needs and disability (SEND) pupils**

We are not proposing any changes to the SEND service and application process. Most pupils under 16 with SEND will continue to be entitled to free transport where they are unable to walk to school due to their special educational needs, disabilities or mobility issues. Young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) over the age of 16 and up to age 25 where they are continuing a course which they started before their 19th birthday, will also continue to be entitled to free transport where they are unable to make their way to their place of education in any other way, for example if they have mobility issues. There are a small number of Post 16 SEND pupils who purchase a fare paying seat (Spare seat) on home to school services.

#### **Discretionary transport**

The current charge to the family/student for discretionary transport (spare seat) is £600 per year. The average cost to the Council of providing transport for the Home to School service in 2022/23 was approximately £1,050 per person per year. This increases to approximately £1,200 per person per year when administration costs are added.

The current charge of £600 was introduced 10 years ago and has not increased and does not cover the cost of the transport provided. This means that the Council is having to subsidise the discretionary transport for children/ young people who are not entitled to transport. This means the Council must pay the cost of subsidising this discretionary transport from its wider budget, which reduces funding available for other services.

Widescale changes have not been introduced for about a decade and with rising costs the Council is heavily subsidising this service and we now need to re-examine our approach and the amount we can afford to subsidise to ensure fairness and efficiency.

Every day the Council provides over 8200 passenger journeys between home and school for children and young people attending mainstream schools and colleges, which cost the Council around £4.3M in 2022/23. The vast majority of these passengers, around 89%, are statutorily entitled to free transport, but the remaining 11% receive transport under the discretionary powers. This is made up from approximate 100 passengers at Post 16 and a little over 300 passengers across the rest of the school age range.

The Council also provides transport for around 1200 children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. The cost of providing transport for this group is in the region of £7.5M per year.

The annual budget for home to school transport is £11 million but in 2022-2023 was £3 million overspent.

Local authorities are expected to target any support on those young people and their families who need it most, particularly those with a low income.

How the transport assistance is provided is up to the Council. The Council might, for example, provide a child with a seat on a dedicated school bus or minibus, or with a pass for free travel on a commercial bus. They may also provide a seat in a taxi.

Where parents agree, the local authority might provide a personal transport budget or pay a mileage allowance to the parent to transport their child to school, pay a cycling allowance to enable a child to cycle to school, or provide independent travel training to a child, to give them the skills necessary to travel independently.

## **What we are reviewing**

We are revising our Home to School Travel Assistance Policy and Post 16 Education Transport Policy. However, no changes will be made to the Post 16 Education Transport Policy in the 2023/24 revision as this policy will be reviewed at a later date. Any changes made to the Home to School Travel Assistance Policy will not come into effect until **September 2024**.

We want to understand people's views on our proposed changes and options affecting the discretionary transport to help us ensure we achieve the right balance of fairness.

The following lists the changes we are considering making to our policies. We are also seeking feedback on how we intend to make the wording and layout of the policies clearer to understand.

- Proposed change to policy
- Change to the status of Linked Schools
- Insertion of a provision to allow the Council to reclaim costs of transport awarded based upon inaccurate application
- Changes to the provision of discretionary transport (Spare Seats) 4 Options
- Clarification on the services provided for children and young people with Medical Needs
- Clarification of the ways in transport support might be provided
- Clarification on who is authorised to meet a child from the bus

To help make the policy clearer we are also adding in a new section providing details of the way in which appeals and complaints will be dealt with. This is intended to clarify the difference between a complaint and

an appeal and sets out the process which is to be followed in either case. The appeal process is set out in the form designated by the Department for Education Guidance.

Results of the consultation will be used to help shape the new policy which would be introduced from September 2024 for the 2024-2025 academic year, to allow parents and carers time to plan ahead.

A paper on the final proposals is scheduled to appear before the council's Executive on 13 July 2023.

North Northamptonshire Council is committed to improving the service for the Residents of North Northamptonshire. Over the coming year we will be working with the members of the Northamptonshire Parent Carer Forum, outside this consultation, to improve the experience of home to school transport for everyone. We have already co-produced a guidance leaflet which will be published shortly to assist parents and carers in understanding the current service offer. This work will be ongoing and will include looking at improving the access points for the service, including reviewing the application processes and communication, as well as improving the on-road delivery of the service.

## Related Documents

Please read the related documents to gain a better understanding of the service and our proposals before giving us your feedback:

- [Current Home to School Education Transport Policy \(September 2022 – July 2023\)](#)
- [Draft Home to School Travel Assistance Policy \(Academic year 2024-25\) as reformatted](#)
- [Current Post 16 education transport policy](#)
- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)

As responses are received, we will bring together a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document which will be published here and will be kept updated throughout the consultation period.

Further information about current support can be found on our [school travel assistance website](#).

## Have your say

Please tell us your views by completing this questionnaire. You do not have to answer all of the questions or give us your feedback on every section. If you do not wish to answer a question or give feedback on a specific section, then you can skip those questions and move on to the next section.

Your feedback will be part of a report with many other people's feedback, so you will not be personally identified.

You can also access this online questionnaire free of charge at any North Northamptonshire Council library. Please see the [Library website](#) or telephone 0300 126 3000 to check opening times.

Alternatively, you can email or send your comments in by post using the contact details below.

If you have any queries, comments or would like a copy of this questionnaire in another format (including paper, easy read or large print) you can contact us by email, post or telephone. Our contact details are as follows:

Email address: [HomeToSchoolConsultation@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:HomeToSchoolConsultation@northnorthants.gov.uk)

Postal address: Home to School Transport Policy Consultation Response  
North Northamptonshire Council  
Sheerness House  
Meadow Road  
Kettering  
NN16 8TL

The deadline for completing this questionnaire is midnight **12 June 2023**.

For information about how consultation and engagement responses are managed, please see the [consultation and engagement privacy notice](#).

Thank you for helping us by completing this questionnaire.

## About you

**Q. Are you:** Please tick (✓) all that apply

There were 506 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable.

	Response number
A parent/guardian/carer of a young person aged under 16 in education in North Northamptonshire	431
A parent/guardian/carer of a young person aged 16 or over in education in North Northamptonshire	60
A student aged under 16 in education in North Northamptonshire	2
A student aged 16 or over in education in North Northamptonshire	5
An educational professional in North Northamptonshire	18
A representative of an education provider in North Northamptonshire	5
A representative of a transport operator in North Northamptonshire	1
A childminder and/or a before/after school setting	2
An interested member of the public	35
A North Northamptonshire Council Councillor	3
A Town or Parish Councillor	10
A representative of a Town/Parish Council	3
A representative of the voluntary sector or a community organisation	1
A representative of the local business community	0
Other (please give details below)	9

Other:

- A Council Tax payer
- A grandparent and a retired Headteacher.
- Parent of past pupils
- Employee of NNC
- Two young students under 16
- Retired resident
- Parent of a child who is resident of North Northamptonshire, but attends school in a different county
- A mum of a previously transported disabled child
- I am a parent almost 16 years old (it will be in October)

## Are you a parent/guardian/carer of a young person?

We would like to understand the circumstances of parents, guardians, and carers of a children and young people.

**Q. To send you to these questions please can you tell us if you are parent/guardian/carer of a child/young person? Please tick (✓) relevant answer**

There were 509 responses to this question.

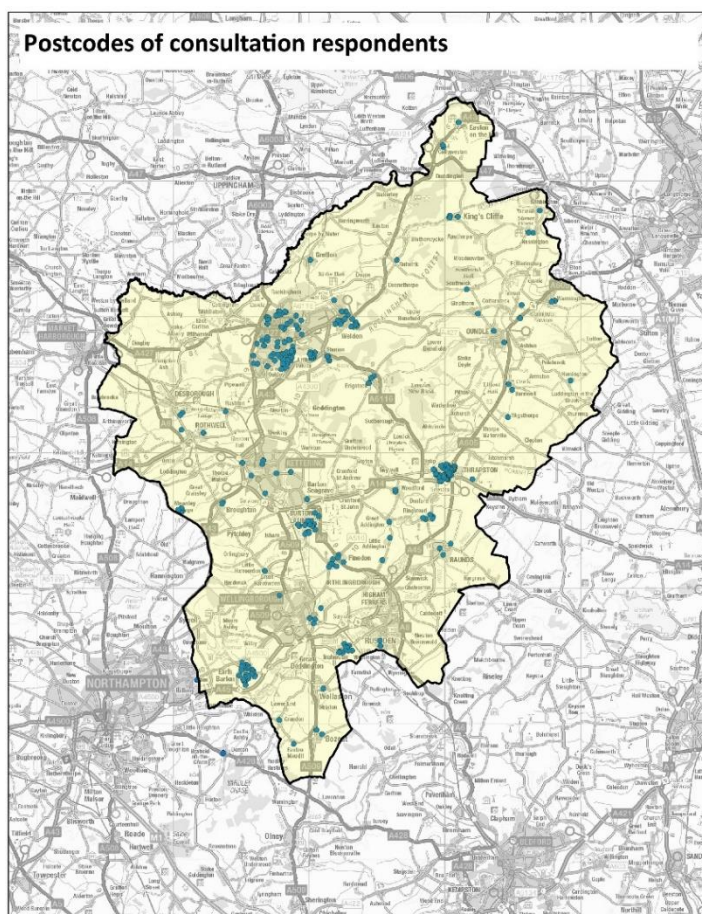
	Response number	Percentage (%)
Yes	468	91.9%
No	41	8.1%

## Parent/guardian/carer

**Q. If you currently use the home to school transport service, or plan to use it from September 2024, then please tell us your postcode:**

By providing us with your postcode, you are consenting for us to use this information to understand where respondents live. If you do not consent to us using this information in this way, please do not provide your postcode.

There were 344 valid postcodes provided.

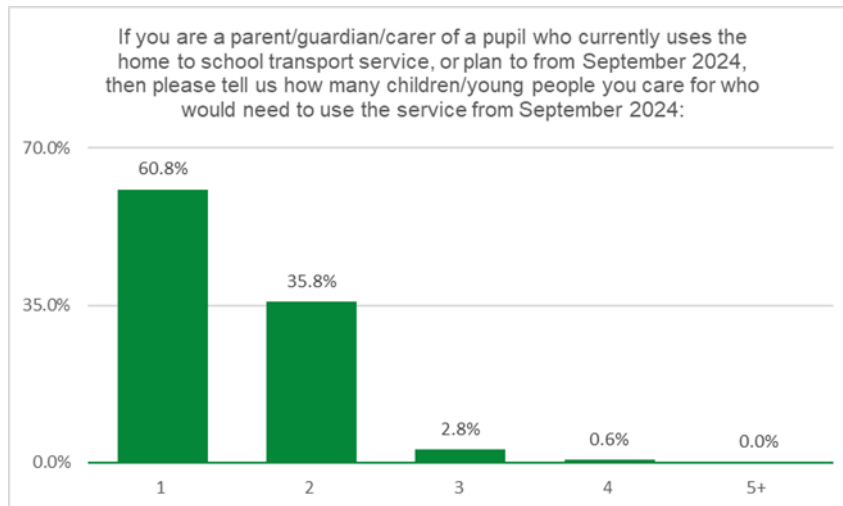


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**Q. If you are a parent/guardian/carer of a pupil who currently uses the home to school transport service, or plan to from September 2024, then please tell us how many children/young people you care for who would need to use the service from September 2024: Please tick (✓) relevant answer**

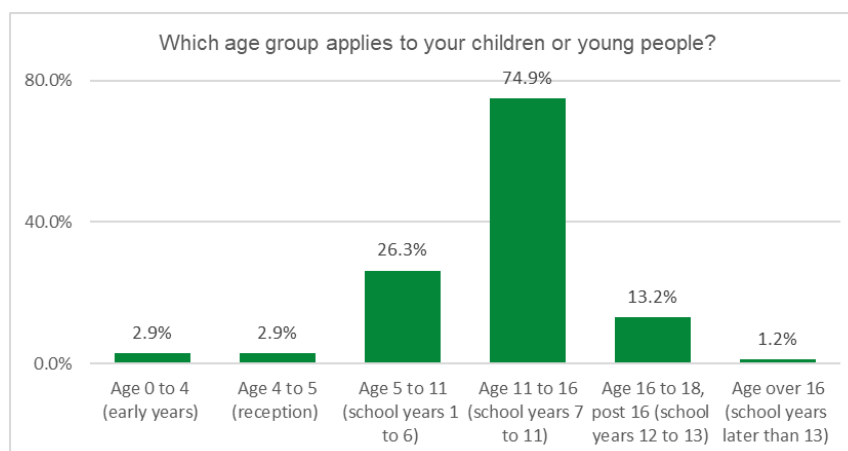
There were 352 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
1	214	60.8%
2	126	35.8%
3	10	2.8%
4	2	0.6%
5+	0	0.0%

**Q. Which age group applies to your children or young people? Please tick (✓) all that apply**

There were 410 responses to this question.

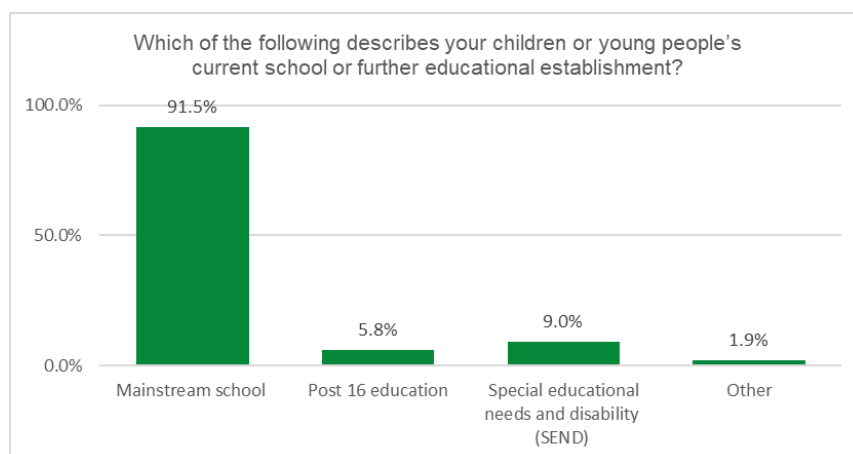




	Response number	Percentage (%)
Age 0 to 4 (early years)	12	2.9%
Age 4 to 5 (reception)	12	2.9%
Age 5 to 11 (school years 1 to 6)	108	26.3%
Age 11 to 16 (school years 7 to 11)	307	74.9%
Age 16 to 18, post 16 (school years 12 to 13)	54	13.2%
Age over 16 (school years later than 13)	5	1.2%

**Q. Which of the following describes your children or young people's current school or further educational establishment?** Please tick (✓) all that apply

There were 411 responses to this question.



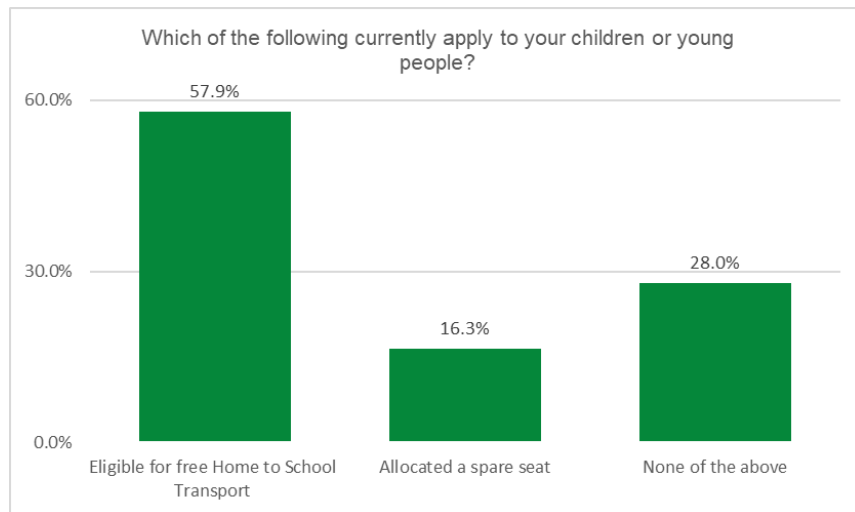
	Response number	Percentage (%)
Mainstream school	376	91.5%
Post 16 education	24	5.8%
Special educational needs and disability (SEND)	37	9.0%
Other (please give details below)	8	1.9%

Other:

- [Redacted] have Sen no echp
- Also on pathway to chams in nurture in the school
- Nursery
- [Redacted] School
- Secondary school
- SEND in mainstream school
- Currently in independent prep school
- Waiting referral for AsD assessment

**Q. Which of the following currently apply to your children or young people?** Please tick (✓) all that apply

There were 404 responses to this question.

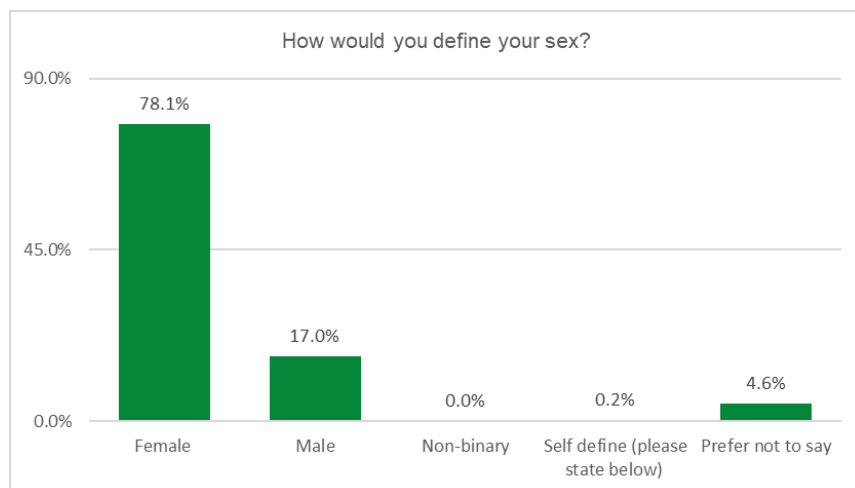


Eligible for free Home to School Transport  
 Allocated a spare seat  
 None of the above

	Response number	Percentage (%)
Eligible for free Home to School Transport	234	57.9%
Allocated a spare seat	66	16.3%
None of the above	113	28.0%

**Q. How would you define your sex?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 411 responses to this question.



Female  
 Male  
 Non-binary  
 Self define (please state below)

	Response number	Percentage (%)
Female	321	78.1%
Male	70	17.0%
Non-binary	0	0.0%
Self define (please state below)	1	0.2%

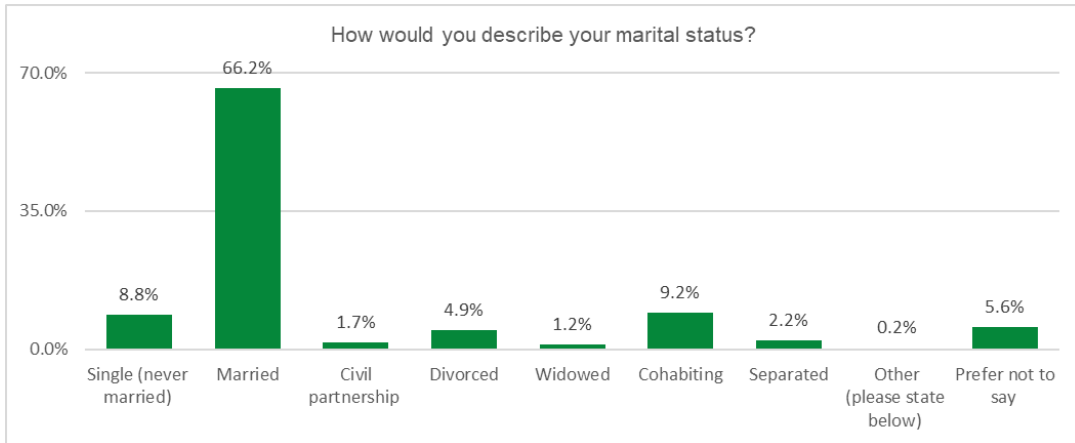
Prefer not to say	19	4.6%
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Self define:

- Not sure why this is relevant!

**Q. How would you describe your marital status?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 411 responses to this question.



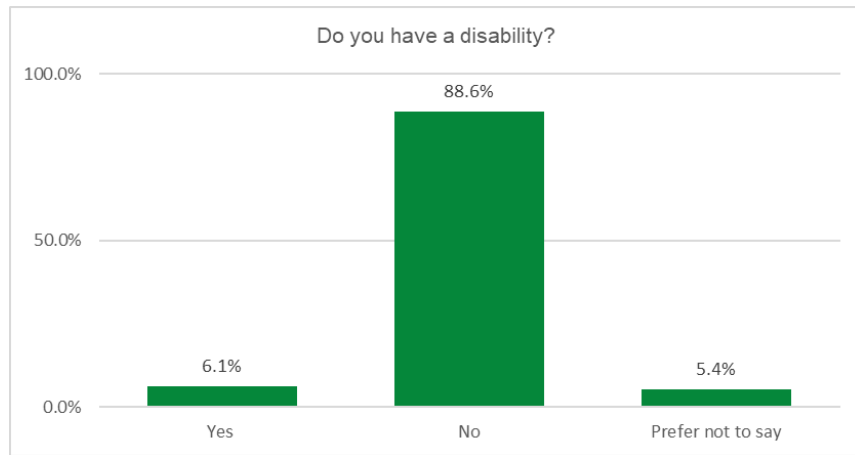
	Response number	Percentage (%)
Single (never married)	36	8.8%
Married	272	66.2%
Civil partnership	7	1.7%
Divorced	20	4.9%
Widowed	5	1.2%
Cohabiting	38	9.2%
Separated	9	2.2%
Other (please state below)	1	0.2%
Prefer not to say	23	5.6%

Other:

- Again, not sure why this is relevant to this type of survey!

**Q. Do you have a disability?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 411 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	6.1%
No	364	88.6%
Prefer not to say	22	5.4%

## Style of the Draft Home to School Travel Assistance Policy (Academic year 2024-25) document

We have received feedback telling us the layout of the current policy is difficult to follow, and that some people have struggled to find the relevant information. We have re-written the policy into a new format, which we believe is more user friendly for people to read and clearer to understand.

This section of the questionnaire asks for your views on the revised format. Please note that these questions are about the **form and style** of the policy and not the detail of the content/proposed changes. You will be able to provide feedback on the content/proposed policy changes in the next section of this questionnaire.

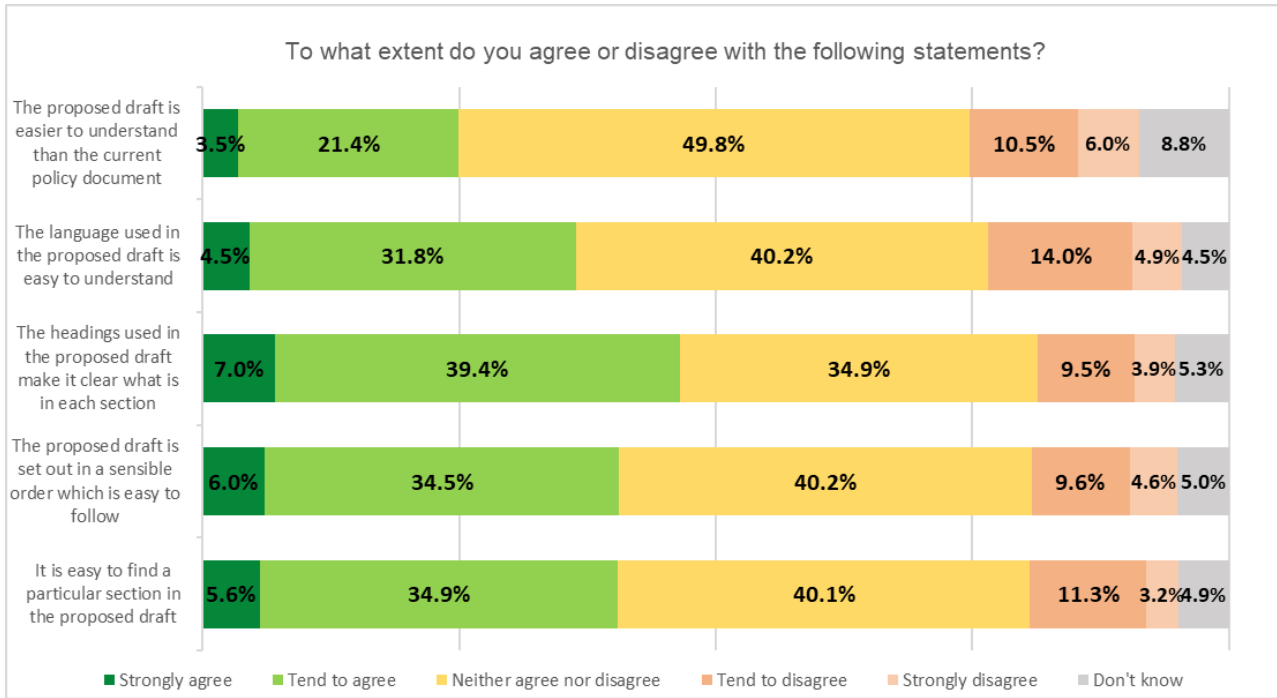
**Based upon the outcome of this consultation and the feedback on the new format for the Draft Home to School Travel Assistance Policy (Academic year 2024-25) the Post 16 policy for 2024 may be reformatted before publication later in the year.**

As a reminder please see links to the current and proposed draft policies:

- [Current Home to School Education Transport Policy \(September 2022 – July 2023\)](#)
- [Draft Home to School Travel Assistance Policy \(Academic year 2024-25\)](#)
- [Current Post 16 education transport policy](#)

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 286 responses to this question.



The proposed draft is easier to understand than the current policy document

The language used in the proposed draft is easy to understand

The headings used in the proposed draft make it clear what is in each section

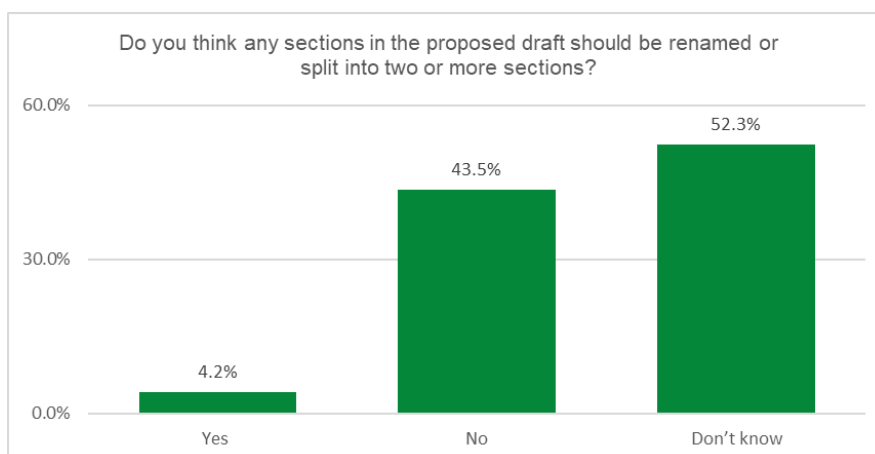
The proposed draft is set out in a sensible order which is easy to follow

It is easy to find a particular section in the proposed draft

	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	10	3.5%	13	4.5%	20	7.0%	17	6.0%	16	5.6%
Tend to agree	61	21.4%	91	31.8%	112	39.4%	97	34.5%	99	34.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	142	49.8%	115	40.2%	99	34.9%	113	40.2%	114	40.1%
Tend to disagree	30	10.5%	40	14.0%	27	9.5%	27	9.6%	32	11.3%
Strongly disagree	17	6.0%	14	4.9%	11	3.9%	13	4.6%	9	3.2%
Don't know	25	8.8%	13	4.5%	15	5.3%	14	5.0%	14	4.9%

**Q. Do you think any sections in the proposed draft should be renamed or split into two or more sections?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 285 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Yes	12	4.2%
No	124	43.5%
Don't know	149	52.3%

**Q. If you said 'Yes', then please tell us:**

**Which sections should be split?**

There were four responses to this question.

- I think the document should be re done and all topics put into a section relevant to that topic.
- E.g everything to do with SEN in one section. Everything to do with fare paying passengers in another section, low income households in its own section etc. At the moment you have to jump to different sections to find info and it gets confusing.
- Eligibility should be detailed and explained as clearly as possible
- Need one page summary
- None

**Which sections should be renamed and what should we rename them?**

There were five responses to this question.

- The section Who is Entitled to Travel Assistance isn't as clear as the previous policy which has the header Free Travel Arrangements. The new policy should include the word "Free" in the header for clarity.
- Adding free into the "who is entitled to travel assistance."
- The difference between low income and exceptional circumstances needs to be clear as I would have banded disability, low income, in temporary care etc, under specialised applications.
- Notification process should be more personalised to child. It's written very unclear to the layman and only seeks to either confuse parents or push through an agenda via broad and complicated language. PLEASE MAKE IT CLEARER BEFORE WE CAN COMMENT WITH AN EDUCATED UNDERSTANDING.
- It should be very clear what an eligible school is and if parents will have any choice if in between two schools. In Thrapston Prince William is the main school most children go to but nearest is Raunds so will our children have to go to Raunds Manor or can we still get free transport to

Prince William. I know the policy isn't that specific but it is unclear if the current process has changed.

**Q. If you have any other suggestions as to how we can make the policy easier to understand, please tell us here:**

There were 18 responses to this question.

- The format of the original was better than the draft.
- How to apply and when needs to be near the start of the document.
- Better indenting and listing.
- Why are you making this so confusing and hard to know what's going on I'm dyslexic and things are hard enough as it is. Always trying to make cuts and/or trying to remove vital services shame on you
- I think that it is easier for parents to read what is useful for them. Not all of the information is relevant to everyone so it would be easier to have just the relevant info. The school/Council would be aware of who needs the additional info.
- There are too many villages that aren't connected by safe footpaths. This is not taken into account.
- Why this policy is not available with schools. For example when I enquired with [Redacted] School in Kettering they had no idea.
- it should be mandated to be put up on every school website or at least on the council school admissions application pack
- I think there needs to be clarity on young people that live in Earl's Barton...a village as I feel many children are discriminated here when it comes to secondary schools.
- We appear to have no clear feeder school....it makes it very stressful for our children.
- Also....whist I understand the council have budgets....please explain to many parents who have multiple children how they are meant to pay £1200 each year when they are struggling to pay general household bills!
- Just explain how on earth you think parents can afford the school bus now when you have DOUBLED the price !
- Put it in plain English. I've read it as a parent of a child starting secondary school September 2024 to a linked school from their primary but I believe not the closest secondary school. I'm not sure what changes if any you are proposing from reading this!!
- Concentrate on policy reform and not gender or relationship status, which are not needed for this discussion.
- Travel assistance for those of us who choose another suitable SEN provision. Completely unfair to penalise children who would struggle in an unsuitable provision.
- Just simply explain what is changing and what action is required from parents. This is not made clear anywhere
- The school my children attend is a feeder school to Oundle which is not the closest. The closest is Raunds which does not have enough spaces for all the children from Thrapston to attend how does that affect the transport provided?
- I think £1200 is too much for term time only transport. There is no late bus so this can prevent students from attending after school clubs. The new proposal needs to consider a range of travel times in the afternoons ideally.
- Including a link to nearest school as some areas are not clear

- The language used could be seen as prohibitive for those who have not good a good reading level or who have English as a second language
- It is not clear exactly what is expected of parents. There is too much waffle in the document. Parents are really only interested in the following: a) whether transport will actually be available for our children; b) how much we are proposed to pay so that we can make an informed decision
- This is an unbelievably long form to expect people to read and comment on. A simple outline of the proposed changes to transport is necessary, not expecting people to read scores of documents and draft documents.
- The way the policy is written is a bit irrelevant, I am really concerned with the rules and the cost to myself of my sons transport.

## Proposed policy changes

**The changes being proposed and consulted upon here may affect children and young people from all age groups. The findings from this consultation will therefore be used to amend both the policy for statutory school age pupils and the policy for post 16 pupils as appropriate.**

**The following questions are about the proposed changes we are considering to make to the policies.**

We will ask you a series of questions on each proposed policy change under review. There is also the opportunity to comment on anything within the policies towards the end of the questionnaire.

The sections under review are regarding:

- Proposed change to policy
- Change to the status of Linked Schools
- Insertion of a provision to allow the Council to reclaim costs of transport awarded based upon inaccurate application
- Changes to the provision of discretionary transport (Spare Seats) 4 Options
- Clarification on the services provided for children and young people with Medical Needs
- Clarification of the ways in transport support might be provided
- Clarification on who is authorised to meet a child from the bus

### **What is the council's legal requirement**

We are legally required to provide home to school transport for pupils of compulsory school age (5 years to 16 years of age) if:

- The child lives beyond two miles to the nearest suitable school (below the age of eight)
- The child or young person lives beyond three miles to the nearest suitable school (age 8 to 16)
- The child lives beyond two miles to the nearest suitable school for pupils aged eight to 11 and is from a low-income family (for example in receipt of free school meals)
- The child or young person lives between two to six miles to one of the three nearest qualifying schools for pupils aged 11 to 16 and is from a low-income family
- The child or young person lives between 2 and 15 miles from school where this is the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief for pupils aged 11 to 16 and is from a low-income family



- The child or young person lives below the statutory walking distance to the nearest suitable school and cannot reasonably be expected to walk due to their special educational needs or disability.
- The route has been assessed by the Council as unsafe to walk even when accompanied by an adult.

## Linked schools

Schools are said to be "linked" if there is a priority given to applicants to a school from a certain school or location. These are sometimes also known as "feeder schools" and this mainly affects the transition from primary school to secondary school (year 6 and 7). The statute requires transport to be provided for children meeting certain statutory criteria to their nearest suitable school which has places available. The current policy states that linked schools will be treated in the same way as the nearest suitable school, even if there is an alternative suitable school with places available closer to the child's home.

Treating linked schools in the same way as nearest suitable schools means that the Council are providing additional transport under their discretionary powers, that they are not required to provide.

This provision would not affect young people with an Education Health and Care Plan which will continue to define their nearest suitable school.

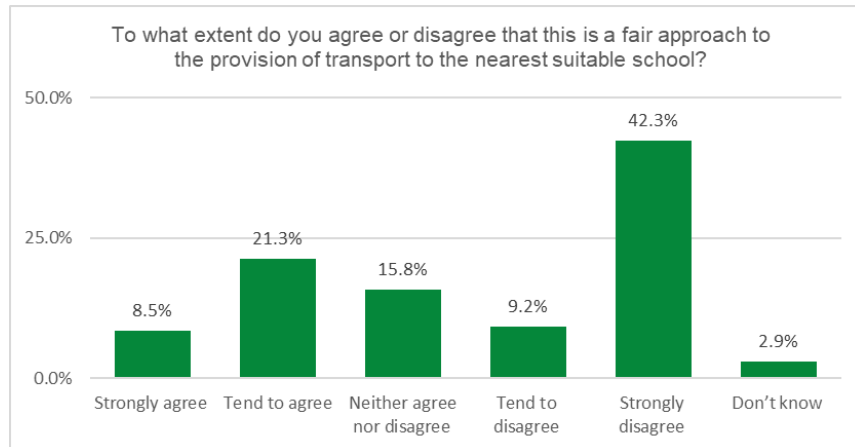
### Our proposal:

- With effect from September 2024, transport will only be provided to the nearest suitable school which has places available, subject to the young person also meeting the other eligibility criteria for transport. The nearest suitable school means the school which is geographically closest to the child's home and is deemed suitable to meet the needs of the child and has places available to accommodate the child.
- This proposal will ensure the council meets its statutory duty and will deliver efficiency savings to help reduce the services current overspend and ensure the available funding is directed at delivering our statutory requirements.

To avoid problems for young people already attending a linked school under the current policy, any changes to this provision would apply to new applications only. Those already receiving transport under this criterion in the current policy would continue to receive transport until their next trigger point; for example, change of school, change of address, etc.

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is a fair approach to the provision of transport to the nearest suitable school?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 272 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	23	8.5%
Tend to agree	58	21.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	43	15.8%
Tend to disagree	25	9.2%
Strongly disagree	115	42.3%
Don't know	8	2.9%

## Inaccurate Applications

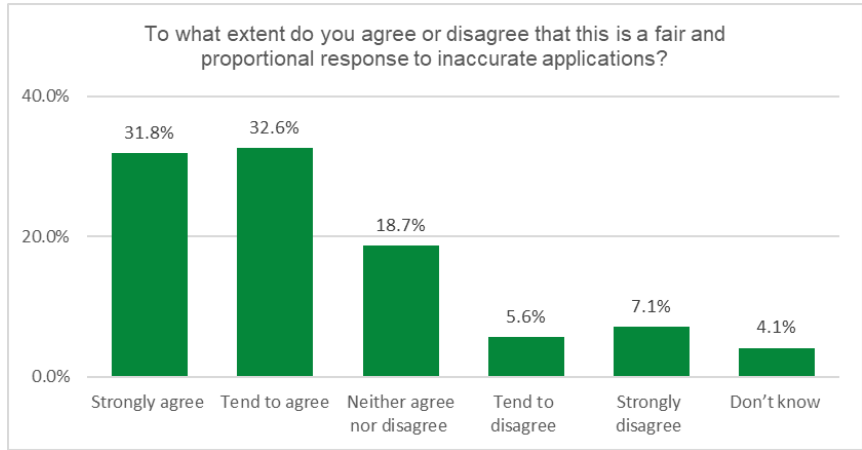
This is a new stipulation, which would allow us to reclaim any costs of providing transport to a “nearest suitable school” where it subsequently becomes apparent that the placement at that school was based upon inaccurate information, e.g. where applications were made from a different address to the one at which the child actually lives.

### Our proposal:

- To reclaim any costs of providing transport where the placement at that school was based upon inaccurate or fraudulent information.

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that this is a fair and proportional response to inaccurate applications?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 267 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	85	31.8%
Tend to agree	87	32.6%
Neither agree nor disagree	50	18.7%
Tend to disagree	15	5.6%
Strongly disagree	19	7.1%
Don't know	11	4.1%

## Provision of Spare Seats/Discretionary transport

The Council recognises that it needs to provide transport for those who are entitled under the legislation, but wishes to consult upon the continued provision of discretionary transport also known as “spare seats”, for those not entitled under the legislation.

The Council spends circa £14m per annum to provide ‘Home to School’ transport. This includes meeting its statutory duty for:

- all pupils of compulsory age (5-16) if the nearest suitable school is beyond a set distance; and
- all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues.

This spend also includes approximately £500k per year to provide “spare seats” and the “guaranteed” spare seats scheme.

Spare seats are seats on a vehicle which are surplus to requirements due to the nature of the vehicle providing the transport. For example, where there are 29 children entitled to free transport and the journey is provided on a 38 seater bus, the surplus or “spare” seats are currently made available, for a fee, to young people who would otherwise not be entitled to transport under the statutory criteria.

In addition, under the current policy, students who apply for a spare seat before a set date are guaranteed a “spare seat”, even if this means that the Council has to commission additional seats on the vehicle, or commission more vehicles, to accommodate that request. It costs the Council more to provide additional or larger vehicles to meet this demand.

The average cost to the Council of providing transport for the Home to School service is approximately £1,050 per person per year.

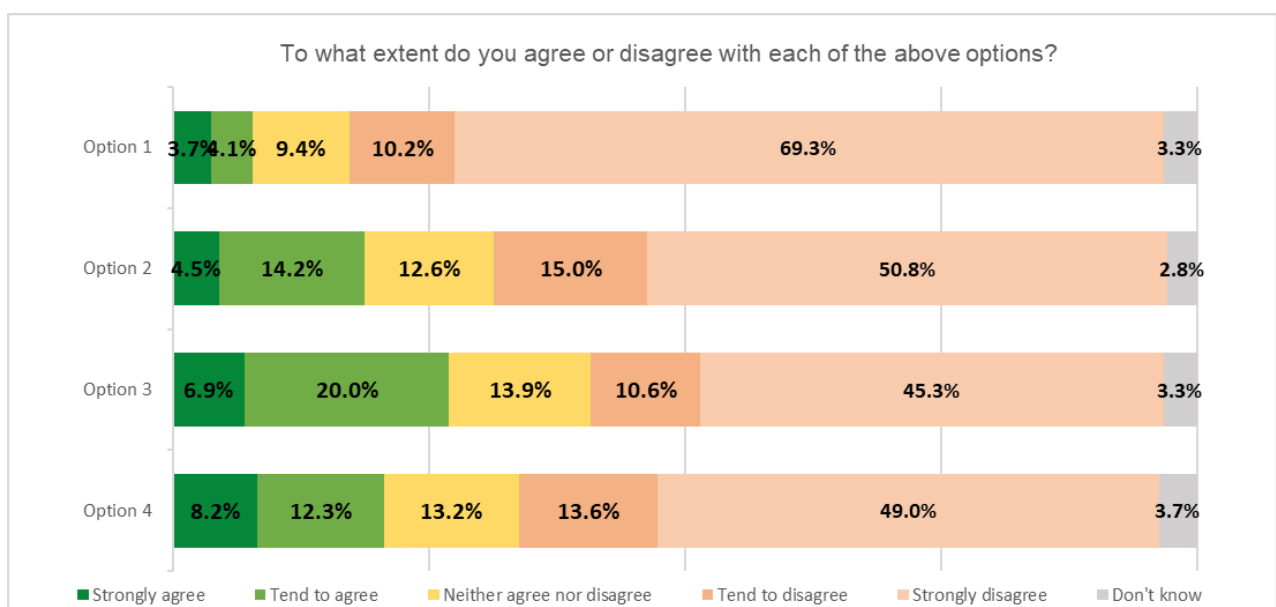
The current charge to the family/student for discretionary transport (spare seat) is £600 per year and was introduced 10 years ago and has not increased. This fare does not cover the cost of the transport provided. This means that the Council is in effect subsidising transport for young people who are not otherwise entitled to transport.

**The Council is considering the following options:**

- Option 1. Withdraw all discretionary (spare seat) transport for all age groups. This would mean that parents of all children and young people who were not eligible for transport under the statutory criteria would need to provide transport for themselves.
- Option 2. Withdraw discretionary transport (spare seat) provision for all Post 16 students, i.e. retain spare seats for those of Statutory School age only. This would mean that all Sixth form students would need to make their own way to their chosen place of education. Sixth formers with SEND who cannot access education or training in any other way would still be eligible for free transport.
- Option 3. Cease to guarantee a “spare seat” for those applying before a set date (usually the 3rd Friday in May); fare paying “Spare seats” would only be available where there were genuinely spare seats on a vehicle rather than purchasing additional capacity on the vehicle to ensure additional seat availability. Priority would continue to be given to those of statutory school age, and then on a first come first served basis for Sixth form students.
- Option 4. Increase the charges payable by all students in receipt of discretionary transport to cover the true cost or a higher proportion of the true cost of the provision of the seat. This option may also be applied alongside Options 2 or 3.

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the above options?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

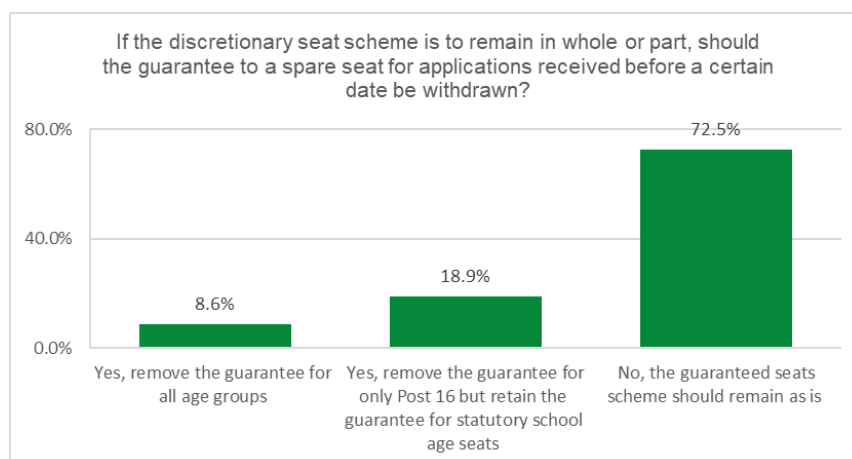
There were 248 responses to this question.



	Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4	
	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	9	3.7%	11	4.5%	17	6.9%	20	8.2%
Tend to agree	10	4.1%	35	14.2%	49	20.0%	30	12.3%
Neither agree nor disagree	23	9.4%	31	12.6%	34	13.9%	32	13.2%
Tend to disagree	25	10.2%	37	15.0%	26	10.6%	33	13.6%
Strongly disagree	169	69.3%	125	50.8%	111	45.3%	119	49.0%
Don't know	8	3.3%	7	2.8%	8	3.3%	9	3.7%

**Q. If the discretionary seat scheme is to remain in whole or part, should the guarantee to a spare seat for applications received before a certain date (usually the 3rd Friday in May) be withdrawn?**  
Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 244 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Yes, remove the guarantee for all age groups	21	8.6%
Yes, remove the guarantee for only Post 16 but retain the guarantee for statutory school age seats	46	18.9%
No, the guaranteed seats scheme should remain as is	177	72.5%

## Discretionary transport (spare seat) fare review

As mentioned on the previous page, the current charge to the family/student for discretionary transport (spare seat) is £600 per year. The average cost to the Council of providing transport for the Home to School service is approximately £1,050 per person per year. This increases to approximately £1,200 per person per year when administration costs are added.

The current charge of £600 has not increased for 10 years and does not cover the cost of the transport provided. This means that the Council is having to subsidise the discretionary transport for children/ young

people who are not entitled to transport. This means the Council must pay the cost of subsidising this discretionary transport from its wider budget, which reduces funding available for other services.

The Council does not have to provide this discretionary spare seat service.

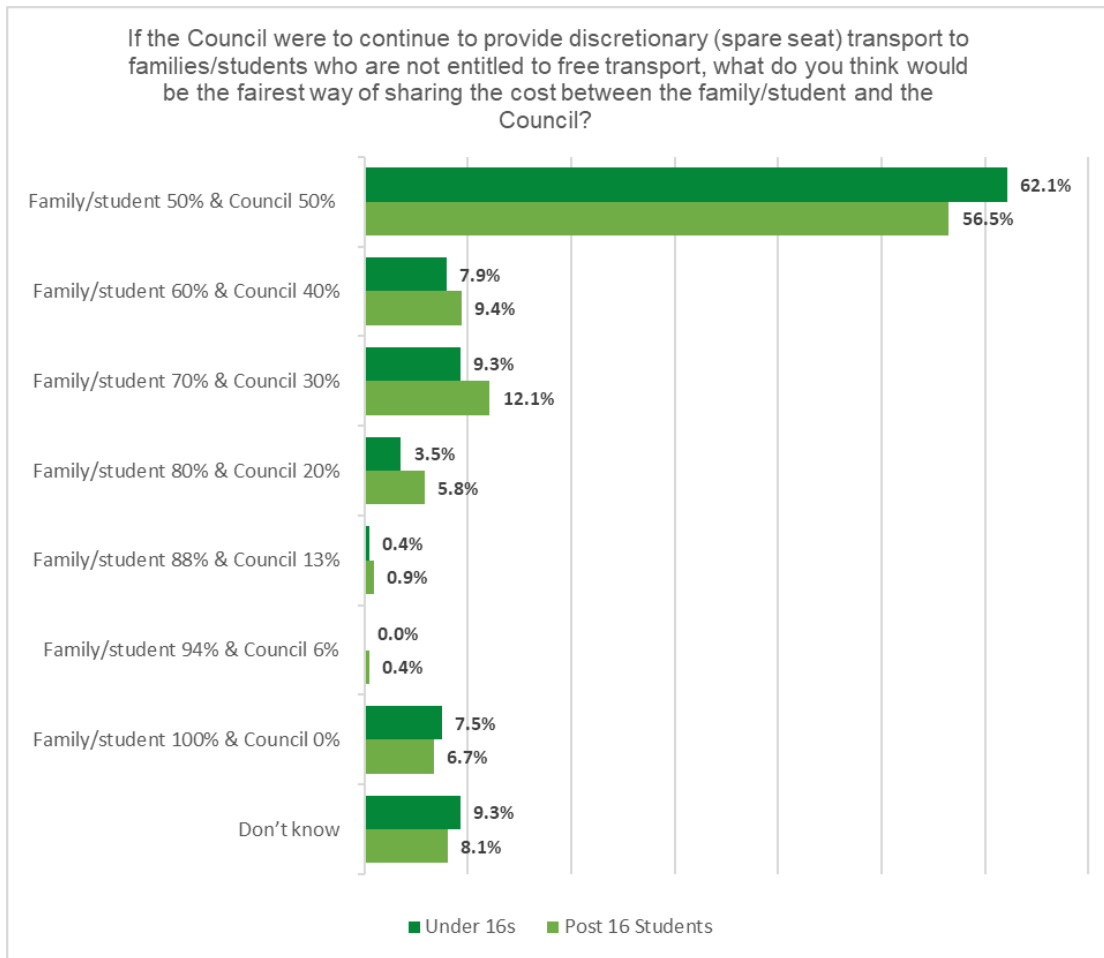
**The following table gives several examples as to how the cost of the discretionary (spare seat) transport could be shared between families/students who are not entitled to free transport and the Council:**

Cost to family/ student	Cost to the Council	Percentage of subsidy provided by the Council		To note
		Family/ student	Council	
£600	£600 (including approximate £150 administration cost)	50%	50%	This is the current rate and shares the cost 50/50
£720	£480 (including approximate £150 administration cost)	60%	40%	This shares the cost 60/40
£840	£360 (including approximate £150 administration cost)	70%	30%	This shares the cost 70/30
£960	£240 (including approximate £150 administration cost)	80%	20%	This shares the cost 80/20
£1050	£150 approximate administration cost	88%	13%	This means the family/student pay the cost of transport and the Council pays the administration cost
£1125 (including £75 contribution towards the approximate administration cost)	£75 contribution towards the approximate administration cost	94%	6%	This means the family/student pay the cost of transport plus a half of the administration cost. The Council pays the other half of the administration cost
£1200 (including approximate £150 administration cost)	£0	100%	0%	This means the family/student pay the full cost of transport and the administration cost

**Q. If the Council were to continue to provide discretionary (spare seat) transport to families/students who are not entitled to free transport, what do you think would be the fairest way of sharing the cost between the family/student and the Council?**

When giving your answer please consider if this should be different for those students who are in post 16 education and those that are younger. Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 229 responses to this question.



	Under 16's		Post 16 students	
	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)
Family/student 50% & Council 50%	141	62.1%	126	56.5%
Family/student 60% & Council 40%	18	7.9%	21	9.4%
Family/student 70% & Council 30%	21	9.3%	27	12.1%
Family/student 80% & Council 20%	8	3.5%	13	5.8%
Family/student 88% & Council 13%	1	0.4%	2	0.9%
Family/student 94% & Council 6%	0	0.0%	1	0.4%
Family/student 100% & Council 0%	17	7.5%	15	6.7%
Don't know	21	9.3%	18	8.1%

**The Council has the option to provide a concessionary fare or discount to certain groups of people. These might include:**

Families on low incomes including:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

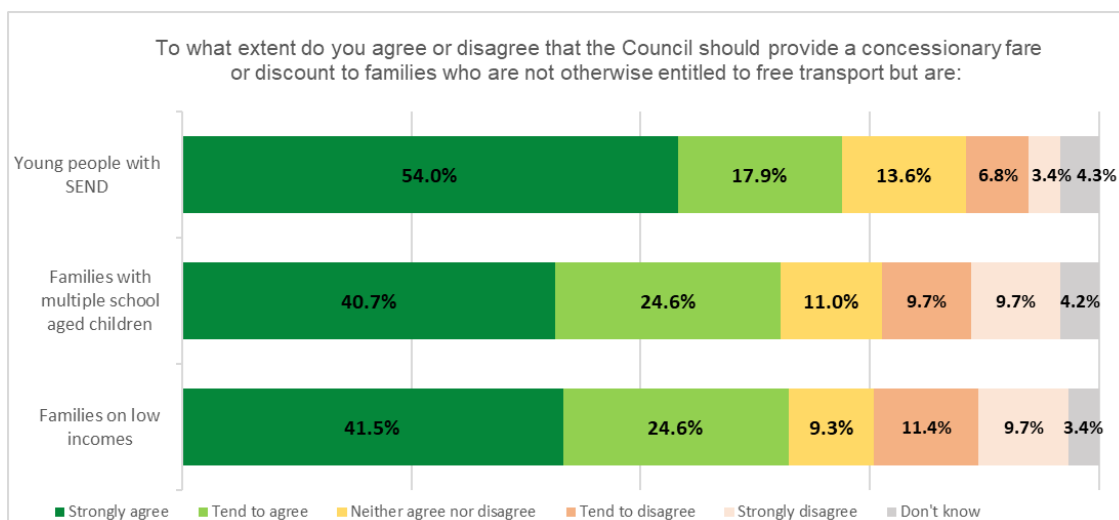
- Child Tax Credit, with no element of Working Tax Credit, and a household income below £16,190 (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs)
- Guarantee Element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council should provide a concessionary fare or discount to families who are not otherwise entitled to free transport but are:**

- on low incomes and/or in receipt of benefits
- have multiple school aged children
- young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND)

Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 237 responses to this question.



	Families on low incomes		Families with multiple school aged children		Young people with SEND	
	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	98	41.5%	96	40.7%	127	54.0%
Tend to agree	58	24.6%	58	24.6%	42	17.9%
Neither agree nor disagree	22	9.3%	26	11.0%	32	13.6%
Tend to disagree	27	11.4%	23	9.7%	16	6.8%
Strongly disagree	23	9.7%	23	9.7%	8	3.4%
Don't know	8	3.4%	10	4.2%	10	4.3%

## Transport of Children and Young People with Medical Needs

Local authorities need to ensure that drivers of vehicles providing dedicated home to school transport, and any passenger assistants involved in providing home to school transport, have undertaken appropriate training and that this is kept up to date.



The current guidance sets out that this training should include the handling of emergency situations, including when to contact the emergency services.

Some young people have medical needs which may impact upon their transport. For most young people their needs can be met by a Passenger Assistant (i.e. someone who is employed to supervise and support one or more young people on the vehicle) but for those with more serious conditions additional support may be required. It is anticipated that the current guidance will be revised to require a Risk Assessment to be carried out for those with medical needs and where it is considered appropriate to ensure safe transport, a Passenger Assistant be trained in managing those needs, for example, administering auto injectors. This proposal will primarily affect those young people with SEND who have serious and unstable medical conditions.

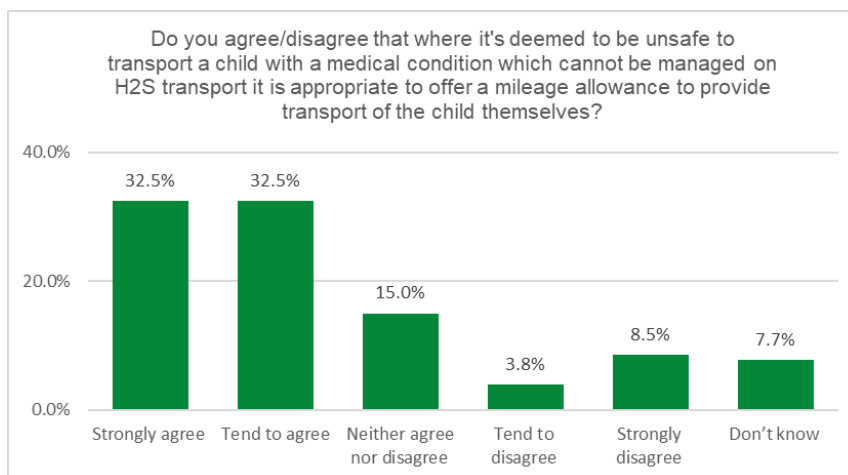
### The proposal:

- A medically qualified Passenger Assistant (i.e. Nurse or Nursing Assistant) will only be appointed in the most exceptional cases (for example a condition which requires frequent and immediate medical attention). In most circumstances one or more Passenger Assistants would be trained in how to deal with the child's needs and condition. This may require arranging for specialist training and support from the School Nurse or other professional involved with the child.
- Based upon a Risk Assessment, where it is felt that it would be unsafe to transport the child, because their medical condition cannot be managed on Home to School Transport parents/guardians/carers may be requested to transport the child themselves in exchange for a mileage payment.

This proposal is in line with the draft guidance issued for consultation by the Department for Education at the end of 2022, and is included in this policy in anticipation of the publication of the confirmed guidance later this year.

**Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree that where it is deemed to be unsafe to transport a child with a medical condition which cannot be managed on home to school transport it is appropriate to offer parents/guardians/carers a mileage allowance to provide transport of the child themselves?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 234 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	76	32.5%
Tend to agree	76	32.5%
Neither agree nor disagree	35	15.0%
Tend to disagree	9	3.8%
Strongly disagree	20	8.5%
Don't know	18	7.7%

## Travel options

The Council has a duty under Section 508A of the Education Act 1996 to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport. This duty applies to all children and young people of compulsory school age (5 to 16) who travel to receive education or training in a local authority's area.

The proposed policy includes a list of travel options. Travel options which may be considered are:

- Walking (alone or accompanied by parent)
- Walking bus (walking with other children and adult supervisors)
- Cycling or Scooting
- Bus/Train Pass for public transport
- Discounted travel schemes
- Parental mileage payments
- Personal budget
- Independent Travel Training
- Dedicated school bus routes (with passenger assistant if required)
- Minibus or shared Multi-Purpose vehicle (people carrier) from pick up points (with passenger assistant if required)
- Minibus or shared Multi-Purpose vehicle (people carrier) from door to door (with passenger assistant if required)
- Shared Taxis (with passenger assistant if required)
- Solo taxi (with passenger assistant if required)

This is an ambitious list of the various ways that we could go about meeting needs for transport to school.

For some pupils, especially those with special educational needs and disability (SEND), some of these forms of transport will not be practical options, but this does not mean that they should be ignored for all pupils. Some of the options will require further work before they become practical, for example a walking bus would need local and/or school support to put it in place, not least in providing adults to supervise the young people.

**Q. If there are any other potential travel solutions which you would like to see included in this list, then please tell us here:**

Schools and parent groups in particular are asked to consider whether there are any local options open to them to improve access to the school premises, for example, remote parking with an escorted walk from the parking place to the school, sometimes known as Park and Stride, or encouraging development of safe cycling skills through training.

There were 42 responses to this question.

- You are expecting parents to pay more for transporting their children to school rather than bus. This means more parents will now have to drive causing havoc outside schools and bad for the environment and a major safety concern.
- This option will not be possible for some parents that live in areas where there are no footpaths to school.
- I don't have any ideas! I choose my child's school as it had an established bus service from our village. Living in a small village and being a [redacted] who starts work early I choose a school that I knew my child could safely get to! Without this transport option my child cannot get to school unless I drop her at 6.30am on my way to work! There is the X4 but that only has so many seats and as there are 2 double decker buses on our currently bus route, all those children will not fit! We live too far to walk and the village roads are very unsafe!
- Park and stride is a good idea
- If there is not a safe walking/ cycle route then transport should be provided. Children have to be in full time education until 18. Transport to their nearest setting should be provided. Why should rural communities be charged extra in this way when we already have less amenities, no public transport.
- Currently, public transport to Oundle from Corby would have children travelling in the dark in the winter months and arriving at school up to an hour before the gates would open OR a later bus would mean they'd be late for school. If the county allows the choice of schools so far from where they live, they must ensure there is transport to get the children there (either school bus or public transport). Or the county could withdraw allowing people to apply for schools further than 3 miles away. It's not rocket science. The council needs to ensure more school spaces locally or they need to provide good, well thought out transport options for the children. The council can't have it both ways.
- Seriously you act as if this is your money you are using, these are our tax pounds and really all school transport at any age should be cost free for all pupils stop wasting our taxes on stupidity and things that are unnecessary corrupt government puppets for corporation's.
- An adult could accompany Sen children on a bus (one per bus not per child)
- Create safe and decent footpaths from the villages to town
- Provide more buses to make sure all children can get to and from school safely.
- Ensure children go to the nearest school - this is the most sustainable for the environment
- Put a scheme together whereby parents can arrange a formal car share system i.e FAXI. Also ensure parents pay for the bus. I applied for a bus pass for my daughter in May last year. I actually didn't hear if she had got a place and had to phone the council to get clarification. She didn't get a pass until well into October and again I had to chase this up! when I applied for the bus pass I ticked to pay by direct debit which was totally ignored. Despite chasing I didn't receive an invoice until May this year, and it is for the full amount of £600. I have only paid a pro-rataed amount of £420 as I'm sure the council would not expect me to pay for a service I haven't yet received. There were numerous instances where the bus late/stopped at the wrong place or left the school too early over the first few weeks and the bus can be late now sometimes. I was also told there was no bus contract in place at the start of the school year. Ensuring the Council collects fees in a timely manner, procuring longer term contracts and doing things correctly in the first place would save the Council a lot of money and officer time and managing the contracts properly would make the service run more efficiently. So perhaps looking at your own processes would actually save money instead of passing it on your service users.
- The new secondary school in Weldon has no safe cycling/walking route from Corby and is not on a public transport route. It will not be the nearest school for any Corby residents so you need to ensure that children can get there in a safe environmentally friendly manner.

- I'd like to see a student discount on bicycles. My daughters particular school promotes biking and is very popular with the children in the warmer weather.
- I picked prince William because the was price was reasonable. Increasing the price by double is not on. And proposing to cancelling the buses all together wouldn't work. 5 buses go from corby and villages. All those kids couldn't fit on the single x4 bus. And if the families that can drive, how do all those extra cars fit up herm road to make the drop off safe? The thinking behind this is absolutely rediculous and unfair.
- Some of the bus routes are for walkable distances but along unsafe roads. Before removing the transport options (paid or unpaid) there needs to be pathways/cycle lanes/scooter lanes in place. These need to be safe and protected ie. not just lines in the road which cars ignore but proper pathways/cycle ways separated from the road. Examples - between Mears Ashby and Wilby or Earls Barton, between Earls Barton and Wollaston, between Irchester and Rushden or between Irchester and Wollaston. These are certainly walkable distances but no parents would think that it is safe for their child to use at the moment. These routes would be useful to all members of the community too.
- It is not our choice to not have a secondary school in the village and the fact we are expected to pay for children to get to school for their education is disgusting.
- My oldest has always had a free buss pass to Wollaston and my son is due to start September it's in our catchment area but not the nearest we are told we have a choice and I chose the best school for them in our area that offered free school transport from our home and if this changes it's unfair on parents we can't afford to pay for passes with the cost of living and it's unfair to add extra pressure to parents that are already struggling
- Mini bus from the school
- Continued bus service as it is 100 steps from our house !!!!
- Expand the zones on the Wellingborough Mega rider student bus pass to reach the outskirts of Northampton town to allow students from villages between Wellingborough and Northants to access the service to Wellingborough. These passes are £183.20 per term within a zone.
- We need more bus services for parents and children at morning school and afternoon school times some mums have to wait over a hour for a bus to get back up crow hill from irthlingborough Town
- Our nearest school doesn't have school transport provided so we didn't apply. We have a child due to start secondary school 9/23 and one in the future. The older one is attending the feeder school from primary school. Secondary schools don't provide breakfast clubs for children that need dropping off earlier due to work commitments. People's choices of secondary school have been made on the fact that there is transport to get them there because they can't so to withdraw would be ridiculous. We can't just quit our jobs so we can get our children to school at the start of the day and home time!!!
- Car share scheme with mileage allowance.
- Drop parking closer to school with spaces where child can walk short distance
- More bus stops around school
- People on zebra crossings so it's more safe and they can travel alone
- Scheme for bikes not everyone can afford one
- encouraging development of safe cycling skills through training.
- Cycling bus - designated cycling "teachers" have a set meeting point for the local area where those who are able to ride a bike safely can meet and bike to school together.
- Merging buses - using for example one bus to do two areas. Or using a mini bus rather than a bigger bus to pick up. If only 5 kids get on the bus in one area using that same bus to pick up the 10 kids in another rather then having two separate buses.

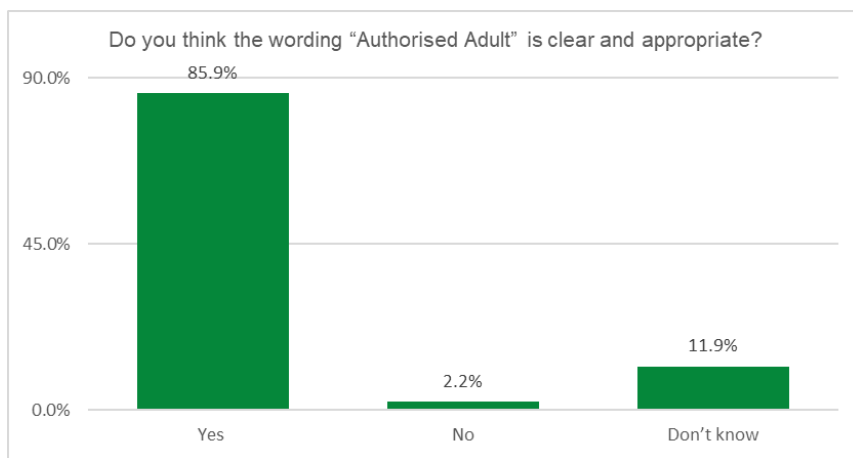
- Foot bridge over the road at the Raunds roundabout. It's around 2 miles from Ringstead to Raunds but it isn't safe, especially in the winter for children and teens to walk that route. Put a footbridge in, some lights on the footpath and problem solved...long term. No need for transport unless the child has special needs and the walk improves the health of the kids.
- The problem is that public buses are unreliable. Most in our Village genuinely don't turn up.
- The path from Ringstead to Raunds (BP) is not suitable or safe for 40 plus students that would potentially walk to school everyday.
- There is no safe crossing.
- Removing or limiting the current bus service will lead to more traffic on the road and congestion around an already busy school/residential area.
- We have serious concerns over the safety of walking students from Ringstead to Raunds.
- This will result in an early start and a late return home. Concerns over weather.
- Free bus pass for public transport. Percentage towards driving lessons to allow post 16 to be able to transport themselves. Working in partnership with schools to allow them to set up discounted transport for pupils for feeder schools.
- N/a for our town with no secondary school
- Decent bus links and timetables between local towns meaning we don't have to rely on using the bus service funded by the council
- Invest in safe cycle routes to encourage cycling
- Modify the roads to allow for the opportunity for children to cycle to school. The two nearest schools would be along the A45 or the A605, neither of which have good pathways or even cycle paths that would allow the children to safely travel to school.
- Alternative increase public transport to allow the children to get to school in another safer way.
- For us provided bus is the only option other than parents take in car but this will heavily increase traffic and local pollution causing other costs to the council
- The Government and Councils should provide safe, reliable and affordable transport to schools for all students. Reducing the carbon emissions by investing in cleaner and more efficient buses and ensuring that as many children as possible are either walking, cycling or taking the bus is vital. Rural villages are being stranded with bus services being cut.
- Car shares with other families
- No option available to us Weldon to Oundle. Too big a distance to walk or cycle and roads unsafe to do so too. Transport should be provided free if charge. We did not choose this school
- Build paths with street lights and Improve paths to secondary school which is located in neighbouring village, or have a sign posted route using public footpaths cross country across farmers land
- i am shocked these proposals are being put forward without prior review of the inefficient manner in which the bus services are currently administered. My child attends school in Oundle (we live in Corby) and Corby kids have x2 buses which follow each other in tandem driving all around the Town stopping at the exact same stops through to Oundle. Not only is this time inefficient it is petrol inefficient. The common sense approach would surely be to assign children to a Corby area bus which does these collections then drives straight through to Oundle with the other bus assigned to Priors Hall and Weldon which then ran through to Oundle? This would provide significant savings in terms of time and money but appears to be something not considered?
- X4 bus pass.

## Who can collect the child from the vehicle

The wording regarding who needs to meet a child from the vehicle has been amended in the proposed draft policy to change the term “[parents] or their representative” to “[parents] or an authorised adult”. The council accepts and acknowledges that parents cannot always meet their child from the vehicle, but suitable arrangements need to be made to ensure that the child is left with an appropriate person, who can be responsible for their welfare, and not someone who is not authorised to collect the child. This is particularly important for young people with SEND.

**Q. Do you think the wording “Authorised Adult” is clear and appropriate?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 227 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
Yes	195	85.9%
No	5	2.2%
Don't know	27	11.9%

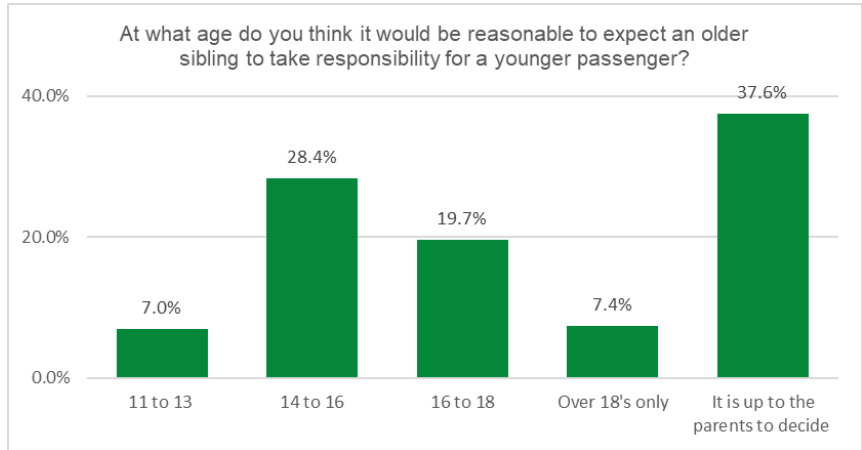
**Q. If you said ‘No’, then please tell us why and what alternative would you suggest:**

There was one response to this question.

- Would need to have an age appropriate adult collecting.

**Q. At what age do you think it would be reasonable to expect an older sibling to take responsibility for a younger passenger?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

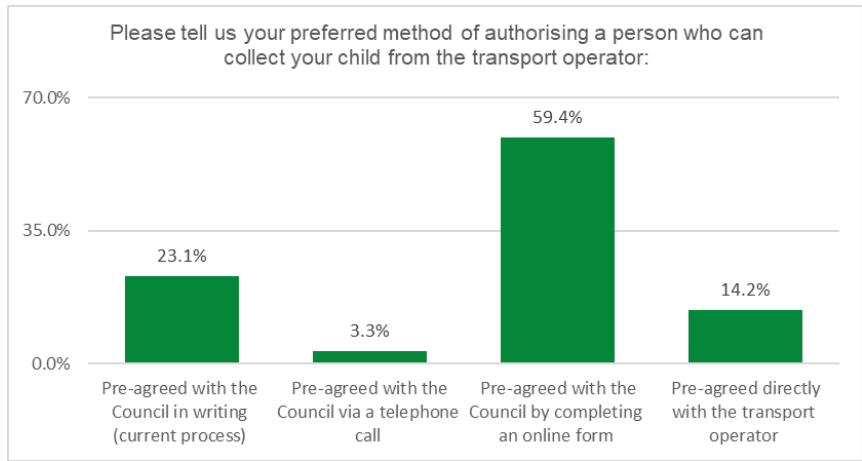
There were 229 responses to this question.



	Response number	Percentage (%)
11 to 13	16	7.0%
14 to 16	65	28.4%
16 to 18	45	19.7%
Over 18's only	17	7.4%
It is up to the parents to decide	86	37.6%

**Q. Currently the arrangement for authorising someone to collect a child from the bus is done via email or letter to the Transport Team and is arranged by the team with the transport operator. Please tell us your preferred method of authorising a person who can collect your child from the transport operator: Please tick (✓) relevant answer**

There were 212 responses to this question.

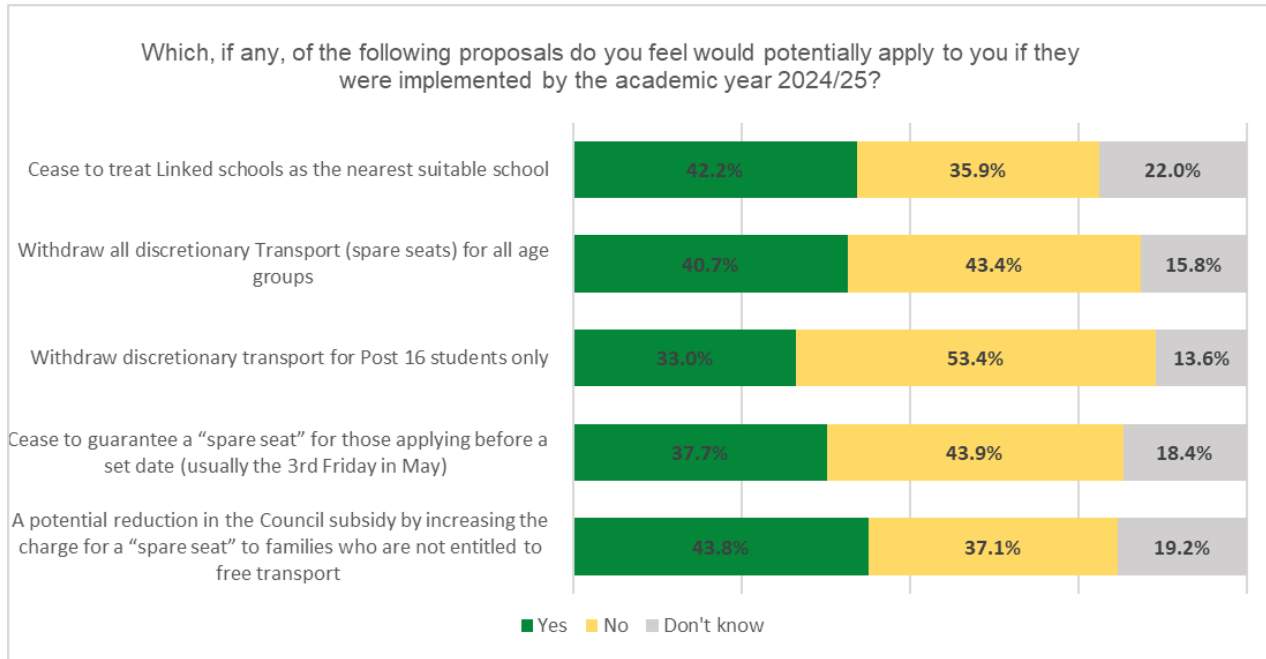


	Response number	Percentage (%)
Pre-agreed with the Council in writing (current process)	49	23.1%
Pre-agreed with the Council via a telephone call	7	3.3%
Pre-agreed with the Council by completing an online form	126	59.4%
Pre-agreed directly with the transport operator	30	14.2%

## Other comments

**Q. Which, if any, of the following proposals do you feel would potentially apply to you if they were implemented by the academic year 2024/25?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 227 responses to this question.



	Yes		No		Don't know	
	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)	Response number	Percentage (%)
Cease to treat Linked schools as the nearest suitable school	94	42.2%	80	35.9%	49	22.0%
Withdraw all discretionary Transport (spare seats) for all age groups	90	40.7%	96	43.4%	35	15.8%
Withdraw discretionary transport for Post 16 students only	73	33.0%	118	53.4%	30	13.6%
Cease to guarantee a "spare seat" for those applying before a set date (usually the 3rd Friday in May)	84	37.7%	98	43.9%	41	18.4%
A potential reduction in the Council subsidy by increasing the charge for a "spare seat" to families who are not entitled to free transport	98	43.8%	83	37.1%	43	19.2%



**Q. If you feel any of the proposals set out in this consultation would have a negative impact, please tell us what you think that impact would be along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be mitigated:**

There were 96 responses to this question.

- With increased numbers needing schools and limited places, the demand for transport is going to be higher because the nearest suitable school in terms of demand is going to be further away. Public transport options - schedules and size of transport liaisons alongside free travel on certain routes would help.
- An increase in cost to parents for post 16 transport costs is a joke when it is a legal requirement for children to stay in some form of schooling until 18 but free school transport stops at 16. Costs of living have gone up (including council tax) and now we're to pay more for transporting our children to school or get them there ourselves? I live in a village with no public bus service. I have to drive on roads where potholes are not filled in causing damage to my vehicle, costing me more money.  
I hear from other parents that post 16 school transport can be paid for on a monthly basis but not one parent has had an invoice yet for 22/23 and we're almost going into the final term of the 22/23 academic year.  
I think the council needs to make a huge effort to sort that out first and foremost to enable parents to budget for the costs.
- Forcing additional payments onto families for school transport will have many negative impacts.  
1 children not able to get to school  
2 increase on road traffic especially around busy schools with parents having to drop and collect children.  
3 making jobs harder to maintain or achieve due to potential reduced hours of working to be able to run children around  
4 reduced income due to point 3
- Why do I have to pay £1200 TO GET TO MY NEAREST PLACE OF EDUCATION!  
It's horrible, I'm 17, I shouldn't have to worry about my parents paying silly amount of money to get up school. I have no choice not to come and my parents work.  
Sort it out, it's a disgrace, makes me so angry.  
You make me come to school, but also make me pay £1200 to get there when I have no other option. Horrible.
- Parents cannot afford to double the price of getting their children to school children. Ow have to stay in education until they are 18. Our feeder school is more than 6 miles away. I have a [redacted] year old and one going into 6th form in September. There will be 7 going into 6th form staying on that school bus. What happens to them?
- All of these proposals will directly affect my child attending school. Both parents work and will be unable to drive our children to and fro school which is why we pay for a seat on the bus. My children attend/will be attending their secondary school from a primary feeder school and we should not be penalised by transport costs/potentially no transport for living outside of the catchment area. It is not fair to put extra pressure on parents, reasonable transport should remain available to all students attending their allocated secondary school.
- We would be hugely impacted as a family, we live in [redacted] with a child in year [redacted] at Prince William and another due to start. I am a non driver (despite best efforts) with a husband that works away and another [redacted] children to take to/from primary school in the opposite direction.

The children would ideally carry on through the same schools with each other? As was the plan when the eldest started.

The raise in council tax should be taken into account when complaints of council subsidies are made, the options for those of us that work enough to not be entitled to any help in paying our bills are always taken away first.

Subsidising the school transport fees is a fair ask from a council, the costs to the average family are extortionate and the idea of fair choice is taken away from families when they are told inadvertently if they cannot afford the full £1200 that the closest school is the only option.

We will have around 4 weeks to view the new Weldon academy once open before the next child's secondary requests have to be made, there is no way to tell how a school is fairing or get a true view from students 4 weeks after it's has opened!

Taking real choice away from the squeezed middle again.

No X4 bus service that covers safe and punctual school journeys to Oundle

Please reconsider, if an increase is truly required that is one thing but taking away the options from parents is very cruel when some of us have made choices for our children based on information we had available at the time.

if the council proposals were to take place then the impact that would have is potentially having to remove children from the current school.

parents choose schools for their children based on if that school is good for the child or not its not based on which school is closer.

it's unfair to force parents to choose a school closer to them just because it benefits the council what the council would deem as a satisfactory school for a child to attend is not necessarily the best school for that child.

to then enforce parents to pay extra for a bus place for children that are not entitled to free school travel just because they don't live in the catchment area is unfair the parents pay a subsidised amount for a bus that is full of children that don't have to pay

why not scrap free school travel and make it so all children have to pay the subsidised amount and that guarantees them a place in the bus.

children in the catchment area don't need free transport they live closer to the school

- If discretionary transport was ceased in Corby to Prince William, there would be hundreds of pupils displaced from attending their current school. Attendance at the school would be seriously impacted. The safety of the pupils using public transport at young ages would be compromised. The X4 bus would breach its capacity limits, leaving pupils at bus stops to wait for the next bus and being late to school. Some pupils would be forced to attend secondary schools in Corby, which are already at full capacity. If the council remove the guaranteed seat allocation, many pupils and parents will be effected with extra stresses and anxiety regarding the transport of their child.
- 1. Your plans fail to consider the negative impact on the residents of the largely rural eastern part of the NNC area.
  2. Your plans fail to acknowledge the distinct catchment of Prince William School, Oundle, which is a linked school (but not closest geographically) for children in Thrapston; PWS was built as a replacement for secondary schools in Thrapston and Oundle. It seems disingenuous and unfair for NNC to be considering charging families for school transport to a school (albeit built by a predecessor authority) that has always been seen to serve families in Oundle, Thrapston and surrounding villages.
  3. Your consultation refers to Government legislation that encourages sustainable school transport, yet a proposal to increase the sixth form fee (possibly doubled) would only deter would-be users and lead to more private vehicle journeys to and from school sixth forms.

- As both a parent and teacher the linked or feeder school system allows a smooth transition between primary to secondary settings allowing for better educational outcomes for students. The relationship the schools create between them supports both students and their families and the current feeder school for Thrapston Primary is Prince William school despite Raubds manor being geographically closer. [Redacted] have attempted to include TPS as a feeder primary but this is not yet implemented and so the relationship is not yet in place therefore the majority of TPS move to PWS as they feel most comfortable with this as it is their link school and most often have siblings at the school already. If you move to a system that removes entitlement to transport from the current feeder to the geographically closer school it creates huge issues for parents and students who may not have a relationship with this school and have an older child at a school in the other direction which in terms of extra curricular activities, peer relationships, school events and even school term dates can cause significant distribution as they will not be in line with one another making attendance at events, supporting school activities and child care in holidays problematic at best. Schools need parental support at events and student involvement in activities to provide a thriving community and education for all its students. It will also impact student numbers and this has a knock on effect to the school itself. Students are now required to attend school or alternative setting until 18 and removing travel options will directly impact school numbers for post 16 education options which impacts upon provision of subjects and options within their setting. This reduces options for young people locally and will have negative effects upon outcomes for these young people whom we need to invest in not take from. To mitigate these issues you need to provide adequate opportunities for schools that are considered geographically closer than their linked schools to build the relationships with these schools and consider changing how linked schools work so that primary and secondary schools locally can work more collaboratively to build these connections to ensure parents and most importantly students feel secure when they move to transition between them. Currently TPS has just one link school but if we allowed Manor to become a link school or change this policy to allow all schools to collaborate for the best interests of the students then it would be more reasonable to consider changing the travel options however as parents are unlikely to be able to personally get their children to school (especially if they are in different schools in opposite sides of the county or like myself work and cannot be late, having a school with no teachers, nurses, doctors, shops open etc because they are moving their children around is hardly a workable solution to your financial situation) Perhaps our county should have considered the cost implications of moving hundreds of children around from Thrapston to secondary school from year 7 when had they left the middle school open they would not have had to do so until they were much older reducing the cost to the council for transport by quite a considerable sum. My suggestions would be:

Allow schools time (3years min) to build positive relationships with all primary schools in their locality and then revisit the provision of transport and look at the best options at that time  
Increase post 16 payments for transport where criteria for free is not met moving to a 10% increase in the first year as a trial only. This should be means tested in order to provide equal opportunity to post 16 options for lower income families. Discuss with schools potential impact upon numbers of post 16 as a result of this change.

Consider increasing payment for 11- 16 only in cases where families are deemed higher earners. This would be reviewed regularly and only if a closer (link) school is not available.  
Most importantly perhaps TALK TO, LISTEN AND ACT UPON SCHOOL ADVICE AND PARENT CONCERNS. Schools know their students and parents and understand what they need to develop the best young people in all aspects. Don't make decisions that are solely financial but have huge implications upon the future education options for young people in our

county. Getting them to school where they feel happy is the very basic of what we should provide them.

- If you discontinue the “spare seat” option for children who have already chosen to attend a school that is not their “linked school” you are going to force parents to have to drive their children to and from school, most schools cannot handle that amount of traffic at the start and end of the day. This will affect the residents in the local area, it will increase air pollution and potentially mean parents have to reduce their working hours.
- Children who have been already offered places at schools outside their direct catchment areas, regardless of why, will require transport to and from school. If they already have a spare seat place on the buses then this should not change for those children as. It will impact on the families and the child’s access to their education.

Any future placements of children for their education would need to consider how the child could access the school without transport, as in the old days where parents had little choice but to expect their child to go to the nearest school to their home, unless they accepted responsibility for getting their child to and from school. This is a retrogressive step with Trusts, Ofsted ratings and parental choices.

- I don’t have any ideas! I choose my child’s school as it had an established bus service from our village. Living in a small village and being a [redacted] who starts work early I choose a school that I knew my child could safely get to! Without this transport option my child cannot get to school unless I drop her at 6.30am on my way to work! There is the X4 but that only has so many seats and as there are 2 double decker buses on our currently bus route, all those children will not fit! We live too far to walk and the village roads are very unsafe!
- Increasing the fees would be a huge issue for many families who are already struggling with the current financial crisis. Many of these families won’t meet the criteria for additional support. Perhaps you should look at the current providers of transport as the fees seem out of proportion per head? In fact your figures are way more than it would cost for my child to use public transport to and from school for the whole school year. Because of this I assume you hope that parents will send their children on public transport, but this is certainly not a safe option for younger children.

As we live in a village with no secondary school provision we have no option but to send our children to schools that are not within walking distance so we are at a disadvantage from the start. All of the schools in our nearest town are a very similar distance away so it becomes farcical trying to work out which one is closest depending on the exact distance from our front door! Perhaps for villages that have NO secondary schools within walking distance you should consider offering transport to ANY of the suitable schools in the nearest town. This might save you a huge amount of admin time/money processing appeals!

- This will increase traffic and penalise rural communities which already have less amenities than the towns.. Education post 16 is no longer optional When children are attending their nearest provider it should be free to 18 less still planning to charge over £6 a day!
- Removing school transport options for 6th Formers will increase the pressure on both families and the young people themselves.
- Already paying for post 16 education transport which we can’t afford but is compulsory (400 may I add to travel 15 miles each way rather than 600 to travel 2 miles!) How on earth we then cover extra transport costs to get the youngest to school in addition to an increase in cost is beyond me? Unless we work more hours that then mean we can’t use school transport at all?
- My son would not be able to attend his school if transport is withdrawn and he would then need to apply for an in year place somewhere nearer, meaning he would have an upset in his education just before his GCSEs. He would miss the school, his friends and teachers if he had to move and it would have a completely negative affect on him.

- This could potentially put children off attending sixth form and affect their education.
- Government say they should stay in education till 18 so I do not agree with the post 16 payments. Free transport should be given.
- I am a single [parent] with a child that attends a school out of town. Live in Corby and my child attends Prince William in Oundle. I work for the [redacted] and have long 12hr shifts with a 4 on 4 off pattern that consists of day and night shifts. I am unable to drive my child to school or collect [them]. I feel it is unfair for [them] to be made to switch schools if the bus stopped running as this would disrupt [there] education and have a negative effect on [there] mental health, but I would be unable to do the 50 minute round trip twice a day with my work pattern. As a single [parent] paying the 600 pound is a strain as it is but a massive increase will be difficult. I feel all parents should be able to simply have a direct debit and it come out monthly September to July every year so spread through 11 payments with no payment in August due to the high cost of school uniform that month.
- My children have to stay on for a levels or vocational course in college. We live in a small village with no bus service. Have little council extras and the council tax is extortionate. The village is increasing in size of those going into year 7 due to a new estate. We are unable to drop off children and pick them up for the school day so proposing that there will no longer be spare seats or transport provided for what is a legal requirement is unacceptable and utterly ridiculous. It's bad enough that we pay £600 and you don't guarantee a place on the bus and have little assistance getting these places even though there were spaces at the time. Communication is sometimes non existent how can you guarantee that this will be sorted out in time for 24/25 and will you publish the results of this questionnaire?
- The proposal to potentially change discretionary and spare seat policies would have a significant impact. There are children who are inside 3 miles today for whom walking is completely untenable. If school finishes at 3:15 and requires a 2.5 mile walk, it will be dark by the time they're home and in some cases this would involve walking down unlit country roads which is very unsafe for an 11 year old. We would be in this position in Glapthorn if school transport were no longer offered to PWS. The council should be supporting working parents and environmental targets by ensuring transport is available to those who cannot reasonably walk.
- Free transport across the board
- There is no bus service between Oundle and Thrapston so we are totally reliant on the school bus. If the system is to change, we ought to have known about it before choosing our 6th form. There are lots of people who are just about managing who will have to pay any increased charges and who will struggle as a result.
- As a working single parent I am heavily reliant on the bus to transport my child to and from school as my shift pattern would not allow for me to transport her from Corby to Oundle which would have a significant impact her attendance at school and my attendance at work. I can only just afford the £600 payment per year - I do not meet the definition of low income and therefore I'm not entitled to a free space, however it is still a struggle on a sole salary with the cost of everything else also rising rapidly over the last year, and if this cost were to be doubled I would also find my finances being severely impacted.
- My child's only alternative option to school transport would be public bus which wouldn't get her to school on time or mean she's arriving so early that school gates are closed which in winter poses a risk being it will still be dark!  
Having said this the proposal could easily price my options out. Travelling on public transport would cost £4 a day therefore I can't justify spending up to £1200 via council 'spare seat' scheme (the max I'd justify is £750 BUT this needs to be set up on a pay monthly scheme - the process in place now is shocking - never know when invoice will arrive and sometimes it's part of the cost or sometimes all - totally not manageable for most families).

I'd ask you to seek efficiencies on how you spend and deliver the service - ie: optimise digital solutions to reduce your overheads or seek alternative approach to procuring the service ie via a community transport operator or negotiate with transport companies on their pricing. I would want to understand the cost breakdown as seems really high.

Surely if set up and delivered effectively you like to think the discretionary places offset cost of SEN places!?!??

- By not guaranteeing spare seats to 16-18 year olds will potentially make it more difficult for some students to stay in full time education until the age of 18 which is a legal requirement by the government.
- They have a huge impact. Even the £600 pa is largely unaffordable and particularly ridiculous as the bus is already running and always has spare seats
- For children already settled in a school and about to make GCSE options losing a bus place could mean they have to swap schools, detrimental to education. Plus Corby schools already oversubscribed, hence children having to travel outside of the town and needing the bus. We applied for 2 corby schools ahead of the one outside of Corby our daughter is at, as it was a close alternative, both we didn't get a place at. The school we pay for the bus for, is closer than travelling across Corby.

Removal of the bus would mean that more parents travelling , not environmentally friendly and given public bus services unreliable and also dangerous for younger children. There is no control or safety in place for our children.

- Make all schools use distance as their primary selection factor.  
Ensure all siblings are offered spaces at the same school.  
Stop allocating Corby children to Kettering schools and Kettering children to Corby schools. This is antagonistic to green travel plans and forces the use of school transport or private cars.  
I will be applying for the secondary school nearest to my house for my children. I expect them to get a place and not find half the allocation is for Kettering children. If they can't walk to the nearest school, the next nearest requires crossing a busy dual carriageway or using two local busses. Given the constant reductions in local busses, that by default will become my car. Other schools in Corby will also require me to use busses or private transport.

If you want to review the transport policy, review the admission policies first.

- Withdraw of spare seating isn't right - family increased funding should be carried out by central government
- I chose this school because the price was reasonable. To increase it by double is outrageous. To stop the buses all together wouldn't work. Leave as is.
- Often children do not get into their nearest school due to admissions issues and are put in further away schools through no fault of their own....these children should be provided with transport.

Being in a village with no pavements, no street lights, no public buses is a serious disadvantage...lower income families need support to make use of education.

- There has to be a decision about freedom of choice of schools - often this is reliant on the availability of transport. If there is to be no freedom of choice for some families, then this should be absolutely clear that this is the admissions policy.  
Linked to this, there needs to be a school place for every child at their nearest school - if a child is not allocated their first choice and it is their nearest, this would be a problem for parents needed transport.
- As per my comments below, asking for £1200 per child from people who could have multiple children there is just too much. We have no choice but to send our children via bus to school in Wellingborough so why does it matter which school in Wellingborough it is? Cost difference to the council is negligible.

When my 2nd child starts, this would then be £2400 and this is astronomical and quite simply not affordable.

Charge all children a smaller amount instead, or recognise that actually there isn't much difference from our village so make more eligible for free transport.

- Removing free transport if it's not the nearest school if it's in the catchment area it should be free or what's the point in saying we have a choice of schools to pick the what's best for our children if we loose it I can't get my children to school or afford to pay for 2 kids bus passes
- There is currently an issue with applicants from Earls Barton where we are given a choice of 4 schools but never know which will provide free transport. I would like to see all schools treated as equal and free transport be included so long as a child from the village is attending Wollaston, Wrenn or Weavers. Currently if you live one end of the village it seems you are meant to go to Weavers and those at the other end are expected to go to Wrenn but there is no clear line and parents are often left facing transport charges AFTER choosing schools.
- From September 2023 I will have [redacted] children travelling by school bus from Earls Barton to Sir Christopher Hatton Academy. Currently the cost is already high at £600 each. Increasing to £1200 each would make this unaffordable. Particularly as we have a [redacted] child who we hope will attend Christopher Hatton from Sept 2025 via the sibling link.
- We would really struggle to afford to send two children on school transport if the cost increases to £1200 per pupil. I also feel that it is unfair that we are penalised for wanting to choose a school for our children that best meets their needs by having to pay a bus fare at all when other pupils going to schools (not their nearest) don't have to pay for transport.
- This is absolute madness!!

We chose the school sir christopher hatton for a number of reasons.

We knew we had to pay for the school bus for both children (even if this seemed unfair when it is less than a mile further than wrenn !!).

The council have been very unorganised when it comes to sending out invoices for the bus money!! Also lots of children are getting on it each day without a pass / payment. Perhaps this could be dealt with first as I'm sure a LOT of money could be clawed back in this way..

I am extremely distressed about the DOUBLING of the bus pass cost as with 2 children at the school we currently save £100 a month to cover the cost each term. We therefore need to double this to £200 which is just not feasible.

We have looked into the use of the public bus from Earls Barton Square (this is ridiculous as the bus stop is currently [redacted] from our house) and this works out as £650 per child per year. So why does the council want £1200 .

Could they share a bus with weavers as has happened in the past...

I could understand a small increase- and had prepared for £800 (a £200 increase ) but a £600 increase is ludicrous!! Surely we should not be penalised for the fact that the council have not raised the price in 10 years .

We would not be able to afford to use this service at £2400 each year. This is extremely sad as the children love the bus as it is a crucial part of their day/ independence.

- This would result in transport costs for my family jumping to £3600 per year which I feel is an unfair amount to pay for compulsory education.
- Safe transport of children to school, environmental and green matters and traffic congestion (especially at the school gate) would be negatively affected if school busses were not available.
- Parents with more than one child will be impacted more especially if the children are close in age. Roads around the counties are not safe for young girls, villages do not have schools near by that they are able to walk to safely. If these services do not continue fore those who need it more children will be at risk.

I don't know the answers to solve these issues but asking parents for more money especially in the current climate isn't the answer.

- One of us would have to give up work or find a lower paid part time job within less than school hours just to get them there and back! Secondary schools don't have breakfast clubs etc so they can be dropped off earlier and they can't just wander the streets. Our nearest secondary school doesn't have school transport provided so we didn't apply the one our child will attend is linked to their primary we also have another child who will start secondary school in 2026 and would like them to attend the same school. No secondary schools are close to us whichever they go to would require transport the nearest is over 5.5 miles away.
- Some will use this as an excuse not to send their children to school
- If children are left without buses/transport to school and families are unable to get them to school
- Children should be entitled to choose secondary school it shouldn't be option of the nearest school in that case they should have option of school transport as this will impact working parents if they have to drop their children as there is no sufficient transport links buses don't arrive or they are not on time this could impact children education

I think transport should be available to everyone and definitely should improve around Kettering/Corby Wellingborough area

- There is not enough space on the X4 bus from Corby to Oundle for all the pupils that go from Corby to Prince William School. This must be taken into account for all students from Corby who started at Prince William School before the new Secondary school in Weldon opened as there were not enough school places in Corby for Corby children.
- We were allocated CBA even though it wasn't our first choice. The only saving grace for my children having to attend different schools is the free bus for CBA students as there is no other way for my child to get home in the afternoon. I will very strongly argue this point if you try and take it away as regardless of my income, as a single parent, I simply cannot afford to pay for transport and don't see why I should when this was something offered at open evening and convinced me to put this as my 3rd choice school.
- I understand that parents on benefits struggle and think it's great that they get help. But what about the people that are just above the benefits cap? Like myself and my family, we work but we would not have £600+ per year per child (we have 3) to pay to get them to school. I think it's appalling that if the nearest school to you is horrible (from personal family experience) that they should have to go to that school or the parents have to pay £1800 a year for a bus. At a time where the cost of living crisis is dire for everyone, you're wanting to add more money and hardship for all families
- We have a child in year [redacted] and live 5 miles away - without the free transport I would have to change jobs to get my daughter to school - this would not be feasible or wanted. Otherwise this would then mean that my income would be less and I would have to pay out for a school bus or other form transport.

Also we have a child currently in year [redacted], so in the future should payment become compulsory then I would need to find 2 lots of bus fares making it absolutely outrageous to even comprehend how I would afford that!

It was bad enough thinking our daughter would need to pay for a bus which stops at the same stop our son would get on (should he get in to CBA) and there is no feasible school solution - ie a 6th form bus to get the students there!

In this climate, with the thought of in future we would need to pay for transport is holy unacceptable - our children need to be educated - then get them to school for free!!

- Many of Corby's families have been unable to secure a place for their child at their nearest school and find themselves with a student at a school outwith what would previously have been a 'catchment' area. This was mostly due to influx of population prior to infrastructure being in



place, this is not a fault of their own and charges could be unaffordable to them. Perhaps the reintroduction of catchment areas would help decrease running costs of transportation responsibilities. Living over 4 miles away from my child's school puts them in the necessary transport bracket but additionally takes a place away from a child who may need to be transported to their own school further away from the provision of said school.

- My two children (will be 3 in September) go to a school that is not our "nearest" school. I have only recently found out that there will be no school bus anymore for those that are out of the catchment area, even though plenty of children use the school transport from my area to get to the school. So I am understandably worried now about this.
- If fees are going to increase to the maximum this should be done in increments, giving people time to adjust budgets when costs of living are already a struggle for many families.
- It would make it impossible for some children to attend school. Post 16. There also no safe route to walk to Wollaston school from the surrounding villages.
- The proposals seem to target post 16 students, who have to remain in education, where there is no local education provision within three miles and no alternative public bus provision. Whilst I don't disagree with a financial contribution towards services, if public single fares are capped at £2.50 per single journey, this is a total cost of £950 per academic year. But this relies on there being a public service in place, which gets children to school on time (and is reliable which is often an issue) - and such a service is not always in place.
- All of these proposals would not support the current national and local current secondary school application process, which encourages and allows freedom of choice for secondary school places. The current application process does not also guarantee a child a place in their 'local' secondary school due to high numbers of applicants. Will this change if the travel policy changes to allow this?

All schools would like the opportunity to be graded good or outstanding by OFSTED, the way to ensure this is to take children from a cross section of locations, and I'm sure the council would like the schools in their area to be good or outstanding! There are many negative factors to this proposal, but the largest in my opinion is infringing young people and parents human rights by taking away their freedom of choice.

- Very negative for working parents or parents with no transport. Keep current scheme in place.
- I don't know
- The linked school not being the nearest and therefore not providing free transportation is ridiculous. The linked schools should have transportation provided to their catchment areas.
- My concern is the closest linked school.... For Thrapston I can only assume this is Raunds Manor? However the transport link from Thrapston to Oundle Prince William has been in place for years. My parents and aunty have done this years ago, so did myself and my husband. We have been telling our kids it will be Prince William. They have family in Oundle to help in times of bus issues and they already have family attending PWS. To have the linked school changed to closest really puts the fear in me. My son knows so many people who are at Prince William through life/clubs etc the thought of him going to a different school where he knows no one is scary, it will really throw his confidence and affect his education. Yes costs are going up, but we pay our taxes for that, they have gone up. In East Northants I pay more council tax than my [redacted] in Birmingham for a similar size house..... please do not change the current linked schools, the affects of the kids will be more that you realise. Costs are going up, that is life right now.
- Our eldest child attends Prince William and our youngest is due to start in Sept 2024. The current proposal could mean she is unable to attend Prince William as we can't afford the charge for each year of her secondary school career and may miss out on being with her sibling and friends which concerns.

- The change of the link school impacts my child as they have been preparing to go to the linked school as their preferred school. I would be willing to pay a contribution for the buses to get my child to school safely.
- Linked/ feeder schools should not be changed under these proposals. This removes parental choice for secondary school placements as a substantial costs then has to be factored into account. This will result in the privileged attending the current linked school and the underprivileged attending the unpreferred, previously non-linked but geographically closer school. This will create a two tier system, split friendships groups from the same locality, split siblings, and put more financial pressure on families to ensure their child is able to attend the current linked school.
- Town that has no secondary school, prince william connection needs to stay.
- Eldest child (Yr [redacted]) currently at linked school (Prince William, Oundle) and receives free transport from Thrapston. Youngest child (Yr [redacted]) at Thrapston Primary school and intend for [them] to also go the linked school, Prince William. However, despite most children from TPS feeding onto PW, it is not the nearest school in distance and so would not be considered the nearest suitable school and thus we would need to pay the cost of two bus passes which would have serious financial implications for us. Not possible to drive our children due to our employment.
- Ceasing to provide linked school costs will have a massive financial impact on those of us that have little choices. For example we live in thrapston and the only school for years 1-6 promotes a move to PWS in oundle heavily. However Raunds manor is closer meaning that we wouldn't be able to send our children to the same school as each other. If only the closest school is to be provided without cost - it would be reasonable for that distance to be covered despite the choice of school. That is to say that as Raunds Manor proclaims to be a sports school and is not deemed to be ideal by ourselves for our child's future - we should be able to choose PWS and still claim the entitlement for the distance to the nearest school - ie Raunds is 5.3miles from the current school - measured as a fairer way than the home address. The distance to the preferred school is 8.0 miles. Families should be charged a cost per mile for the difference per child per day at a fair cost. Eg 50p per mile ( which is greater than most work place travel allowances ). In this example we would be willing to pay a cost for the excess 2.7miles each way per school day. This would allow for a cost to be recouped by the council above the initial allowance we would be accepting for the closest school.
- We live in a town with no secondary school, Thrapston, which limits us to where we send our children to school. Whilst I understand why the council are proposing to charge parents to transport children to certain schools I don't understand why parents cannot pay the additional distance beyond the nearest school allowing parents free choice of where to send their children without an extra cost, example the extra distance between Raunds Manor and Prince William Also being able to take in to account any siblings which are already at a certain secondary school.
- Reduces options on which schools parents can choose which could best develop and support children. Massive increase in costs to families. Mitigation Lobby government to properly support schools and choice. Properly tax the rich
- Its shocking!! We live 7 miles from our nearest secondary school and they have no choice to catch a bus. Why do we pay a horrendous amount of council tax if it doesn't include transport for our children??  
My post 16 son has no choice but to also use the bus. Why is there not an option to pay termly?  
Why should post 16 have to pay when the government states they have to stay in education till 18?

Why do other counties ie [redacted] college bus only charge £450 for the yr which is only for the college? Yet our bus is going to the school anyway and i believe there is only 4 students post 16 and enough room for them??

- Our linked school is PWS and that's where we would want our children to attend so would hope that free transport would be made available
- Currently the idea of linked school has been used, changing to the next available local school. Has it been considered the impact this might have on the schools? Manor school in 2020 was oversubscribed and potentially more children will be sent to a small school setting without the thought of the cost to the school for classes, teachers etc. In 2020 Prince William school was not oversubscribed which seems to indicate that it could meet the needs of the children travelling in from Thrapston. Funding and support will need to be given to the school to adapt to the changes in numbers. This seems to be moving the funding issue to another sector and doesn't seem to really sort out the whole budgetary issue. It just seems to be passing the problem to another department.

There will be a big impact on the children who are preparing to go to the main feeder school as families will have to pay the additional amount as a lot of them will be deemed willing to travel and will need a spare seat. This could cause issues with children's safety in travelling to school as it seems that if these spare seats can be withdrawn at any time. This will impact on all our children and young people who have to remain in education until the age of 18. This could impact on people's ability to work and therefore pay the fees. I propose that the feeder schools are kept the same and transport is provided with some cost to the parents.

- Withdrawing 'spare seats' would leave a large number of children without transport and currently public transport to our secondary school is not timed well enough to coincide with the school day.

Removing the guarantee of a spare seat - the communication from the council is already shockingly bad when it comes to school transport so I fear that parents would have no clue if their child had/had not got a space until they turned up to the bus on the first day in September. Increasing the cost - will have a negative impact on household finances, particularly with rapidly rising costs already, and where there are multiple children requiring transport. Some reduction for households with multiple children on transport (should it be increased) would support a little with this.

- Currently where we live in Thrapston, 90% of children from the primary school go to Prince William in Oundle as has always been a linked feeder school from when it was a middle school. Geographically our nearest school would be Raunds Manor. I'd imagine for our small town changing the free bus to only Raunds would cause a lot of upset amongst parents and carers. Especially with the many siblings groups across both schools. As far as I'm aware the free school bus to Raunds has only been introduced over the last few years whereas the Prince William one much longer.
- Most secondary school children in Thrapston attend Prince William in Oundle as a linked school but it is not the nearest, Raunds is. Changing linked schools takes away a parent's choice of school and will not necessarily give children the best start in life. The policy should allow parents in a town with no secondary school of its own, the ability to choose from at least two schools for their children to continue their education and give them the best start in life. The schools will really lose out as there will be less students attending. This affects their funding. There will be a massive environmental impact on the towns where the schools are. Take Oundle. The route to school is single track after cars have parked along the roads approaching the school so traffic will be a nightmare as far more cars will travel in and out of the town at school drop off and pick up times. Roads will need resurfacing more often. So although it makes savings in some areas it will cost in others. Many will turn to car rather than pay the fee. If the government expects

children to attend school until 16 they should have a choice of school within reason if there isn't one in their own town.

House prices will also be affected in Thrapston. What about parents who have a child at one school already and their second is due to start next year? Are you expecting siblings to be split or parents to pay for one and not the other? I personally think the policy needs to take into account where people live and be reasonable.

- The changing to nearest school from linked school in relation to Prince William and Raunds Manor from Thrapston. I am pretty sure that if the change of majority of children have to attend Raunds because it is closer will have a big impact on increased numbers needing a place in Raunds and therefore a huge shortfall in requests for Prince William due to Oundle being on the very edge of the county. This is not going to be a sensible option in regards to having to attend closest school.

I would much prefer my children to attend a school they could walk to, when we moved to Thrapston this was something on the cards but no building a secondary school has occurred. If your proposal goes ahead it would then mean lots of families (including myself) would end up have siblings in different schools due to the not being able to afford to 'pay for transport' for the linked school, so child have to attend nearest school.

- I feel very strongly about linked schools potentially ceasing to be treated as the nearest suitable school. There are long established feeder schools that are feeder schools for good reason. There would not be room for all pupils of feeder schools at the nearest geographical school instead of the linked school. It would result in much more uncertainty and stress in the application process with people having to decide whether to apply for a different school based purely on transport costs. Parents would be faced with gambling and applying for a place at the nearest geographical school knowing that they may well get a place at the linked school instead and free transport. The potential change in policy would cause particular issues for parents with older children already at the linked school as they would obviously want their children at the same school but would have to pay when younger siblings joined. Or they would have to move older siblings and disrupt their education to get all children at the same school with free transport.
- The school my children attend is a feeder school to Oundle which is not the closest. The closest is Raunds which does not have enough spaces for all the children from Thrapston to attend how does that affect the transport provided? Also how is it going to be decided who goes to Raunds for the limited spaces available there? You'll be splitting friendship groups children they would play with outside of school which will have a detrimental effect on their education and mental health. You'll be splitting the children in towns like Thrapston in two.
- As a family living in Thrapston where there are a lot of children but no secondary school we feel this policy greatly impacts taking us from 2 main choices - Prince William in Oundle our current linked school and Raunds Manor to just Raunds Manor. This school does not have the same rating but families who cannot afford to pay for the longer journey will be penalised. In addition children with older siblings in Oundle will either end up at a different school to those siblings or end up being separated from the bulk of their friends. House prices in our area will suffer as a consequence and affected schools will either buckle under the pressure of so many new pupils or existing schools will lose funding and standards will drop. Alternatively more and more parents will revert to transporting their kids to school themselves adding more traffic to roads which are already suffering adding to the council road repair budgets, and further adding pollution to the environment as a consequence. Towns like Oundle will suffer from increased traffic and noise. This needs more thought for people in places like Thrapston
- Please ensure that low income and vulnerable families receive the support they deserve. If there are spare seats then please let them be filled for sensible recompense

- Our children have attended their feeder school since the beginning of secondary school which is the school that the Council placed them at. To start charging us now for transport would be disgusting and costly for us as a family. Fortunately we are not entitled to any free transport and do not require SEND help. We will therefore have to pay the full amount for both children which seems unfair. Also considering that it is compulsory for children to stay in education until they are 18, why are we also penalised for transport for over 16's. I agree that the plan should probably be tidied up, but the cost to parents should be scrapped. Also, the buses that they are travelling on often break down and behaviour is not monitored.
- I feel changing the policy to the nearest school only is entirely inappropriate and I am truly disgusted by this proposal. It places pressure on students and family to have to consider lower graded schooling and will limit students education and experience. In a time of extreme financial crisis, this decision shows a real lack of care and compassion, placing further demands on families. This is extremely stressful news and really questions the council's priorities and agenda. If savings are to be made, then there are other public services that should be reviewed and other creative options that could be considered. For example, rather than pay for independent travel companies to facilitate journeys, an investment in a council owned transport fleet would undoubtedly make savings.
- Parents should have to the right to choose which school their child attends without taking into account financial commitments (otherwise they would attend private school). This proposal for some may remove this choice. In the current climate where some families are just making ends meet to find an additional £600 (per child) in order to get their children to and from a school of their choice is simply abhorrent. Living in a town where there are realistically only 2 secondary schools to choose from, choice is to simply be removed should this proposal go ahead, creating a social economic divide.
- If post 16 transport was denied or increased in cost from the current charge, it would severely affect the education of my child as I would be unable to get them there and back myself and there is no safe path or public transport available.
- Students are not able to attend after school/wider curriculum clubs which are an important part of school life and forming friendships as there is no late bus provided. We would pay for a late bus option but I don't think it's fair to have to pay to get our children to/from a school we have been (gratefully) allocated but is beyond walking distance.  
Post 16 although not compulsory education, should still be supported by the Council as it is part of investing in our young people's futures. I'd be so sad if a family chose not to send a child to do A-levels because the bus fee is too much. A decision should be made on academic achievement not the logistics of bus transport. 50/50 is fair for post 16s.
- To remove ability to get the school would remove the most suitable school option or require one of the parents to change jobs to be able to do the school run. There is no consideration for parents who are also carers to other family members.
- This is a scandalous proposal in this current climate. To ask families to potentially double what they pay now is scandalous. If the Council needs to get funding increased it should confirm from government budget increases, not passed on to parents already struggling to juggle unaffordable cost of living increases. It's beyond atrocious this is even being proposed.  
Shame on you
- From the perspective of a parent who has a child currently making use of the (paid) discretionary transport service, the proposals as drafted appear to seek to financially penalise ourselves and others in our situation and we cannot understand why other parents are not being similarly asked for a contribution. For example, Thrapston children are attending school in Oundle (c. 8 miles each way) whereas their closest school is in Raunds (c. 4 miles each way) yet all taxpayers are subsidising this and this does not appear fair. Certainly, in a cost of living crisis,

and residing in Corby, which is historically the lowest income location of the new authority area, these proposals from my perspective would appear to hit such families like ourselves on a proportionately greater basis than others in the area and is, to my mind, underplayed in the Equality Impact Assessment which accompanies this consultation.

- Revoking the discretionary transport service or raising its cost would have a negative impact on my family whatever the outcome is. If no service is provided I will need make alternative arrangements for transport and given there is no public transport service between Corby and Oundle at school times it will require myself, and other affected parents, to drive our own vehicles which will impact on our employment in terms of office hours, cost in terms of petrol costs making the journey and increased wear and tear on our vehicles, local congestion in forcing more cars onto the road at peak times, including in Oundle itself, and also local emissions which will increase exponentially as a result of these forced movements. Public transport between Corby and Oundle at the end of the school day does not align in terms of timings so these changes will impact on pupils too in needing to wait around in the Town for a later bus (impacting their evenings/ability to do homework/undertake extra curricula activities) and also potentially impact on the amenity of Oundle itself in having school children waiting around in the town centre every day. Taken together these proposals will impact both families, and the local area, negatively, particularly the latter which is at odds with the Council's declaration of a local climate emergency and also the overarching net zero legislation set nationally (leaving the council vulnerable to legal challenge). The only logical solution to these impacts is to continue the discretionary service as currently operates for existing pupils (and their siblings due to enter secondary school).

These are significant changes being proposed to the discretionary service and had we been aware these were on the horizon we would have made a different choice when it come to selecting a secondary school. However, the fact is that they were not and we could not foresee the future and parents making use of the facilities, at a cost to themselves on the basis of a service which is available, are being punitively punished when other options exist to claim costs back (and which the current consultation has not sought to address/consider). If these changes are to be introduced, the only fair way of applying this is to make it clear that the discretionary service is to cater for existing pupils (and linked younger siblings only). This will enable families to ensure their children can attend the same school in a safe and consistent manner and also allow the council to plan for the potential phasing out of the service altogether (as appears to be its intention). This would have the effect of satisfying all parties and save on local climate impacts concurrently (which is a key legal requirement for the Council).

- Spare seat charges for children that are not eligible already result in extra car journeys for families. If costs increase this is likely to lead to more car journeys, with both environmental and congestion impacts.

Although would not directly impact my child this year , it would in the future . I feel it unfair that children have a legal responsibility to stay In some form Of education or training role Post 16 yet the option of transport is being proposed to cease after 16. My child accesses free transport to school and after 16 would either be expected to find their own way to school which would cause significant disruption or I would be expected to suddenly find a spare £600... given the current cost of living crisis this is another example of authority not being in touch with the people they supposedly represent

- The proposals would have a negative impact on the children and young people in Thrapston who attend Prince William School. Children from Thrapston and villages to the north along the A605 have historically had a link to PWS and I feel strongly that this should remain. There are a large number of children from Thrapston who travel to Oundle each day for school, PWS intakes

from a largely rural area so this isn't a surprise. I feel strongly that a special case should be made for pupils in Thrapston and the nearby villages who have historically been 'linked' to PWS.

- I currently have 1 child at a secondary school that is potentially no longer going to be a linked school with the primary school that my youngest 2 children attend. I'm extremely concerned that my youngest 2 children therefore will not be able to attend what is my first choice of secondary school as we are not in a financial position to be able to pay for 2-3 children to all attend the same school. The current linked school system should stay in place as the geographically nearest school is not
- Due to historic underprovision of secondary education in Corby in recent years, plus my local school being subject to a draconian 50% intake of pupils from outside the town until the current financial year, our options for well rated secondary schools were limited in the town and we decided to send our child to school in Oundle, as we were entitled to living within the NNC area and on the basis we were happy to pay the cost of doing so. These proposed changes represent a significant reversal of the established offer and would cause my family, and others in our position, a significant issue with school travel. Yes costs may have changed to the service but some of the options presented are knowingly extreme and leading so as to force parents to choose to take a more expensive service as opposed to its complete removal. Prince William School in Oundle has one of the largest Year 7 intakes across the whole of the former county of Northamptonshire and is served by a large rural hinterland comprising small towns and villages which cannot sustain a school population to fill it and it is necessary for kids outside its immediate area to make this shortfall up. This issue will not go away, no matter which option NNC takes

**Q. If you have any other comments you would like to make that you have not already told us, then please tell us here:**

There were 53 responses to this question.

- Council to work with transport operators closer to ensure the correct size vehicle is used for the correct amount of users. This will reduce the spare seat issue, reduce the cost of the vehicle hire by maximising the seating capacity and have more suitable vehicles on the roads in and around schools.
- My child was allocated a school furthest away, when she had a sibling link at the closest school to us.  
Therefore I don't think it's acceptable to charge for a bus. It's putting a financial strain on us when there was no need to send her to a school it's impossible to walk to, a 15 mins drive away. There should not be a charge for this
- Please reconsider, especially taking into account the families this will impact most. Forcing the hand of people to choose a school because they have no other viable options is taking away choice in reality.
- The current policy provides so many taxis for school transport that it is often impossible for others to obtain a taxi at school times. This is a negative impact that is not considered but SHOULD BE.
- We are currently still waiting for our travel invoice from September 2023. This is very stressful and will now require payment of a large sum of money. This should be taken at the start of the school year or in monthly instalments
- I didn't honestly understand half of the document and the whole process is hard work and a pain to organise and process and get an answers from anyone that deals with it. As a mum of a

SEND child the system should be simple and it's really hard work to get any communication from anyone

- Children who have bus seats free due to their nearest school being more than the expected mileage from their home, e.g. Thrapston children going to Raunds or Prince William requiring free buses, costs the council similar costs to those who have spare seats and pay. Doing the mathematics, and pitched against the X4 youth ticket prices for example, the current price for parents to pay for 180 day return trips is insufficient. However, these parents should not be asked to pay excessively more to cover the costs for those children entitled to the County taking responsibility for there being no local school! To increase from £600 to more than £840 per year is ridiculously exploiting those who respect they have to pay for the privilege of secure county provided transport for their children. At £840 per fare paying child there is a profit to subsidise the council provision for the free bus children. It's common sense when you do the sums of a double decker bus of fee paying children from Corby to Oundle offsetting the free transported pupils from Thrapston to Oundle. ( in my opinion)

- Why are 'spare seat' children subsidising free children's seat?

I feel you coatings per spare seat are incorrect and do not reflect the cost to the council of free school seat. If a spare seat is occupied surely this costing helps recoup the monies for free school seats?

Would it not be fairer to charge all children using the facilities the same?? Our children have already been allocated their current schools which were chosen on the basis of school accessibility, there must be a duty of care to ensure they are able to attend? My child would have attended a school closer to home if there had been sufficient school places at a school she could safely attend!

- Absolutely diabolical suggestions.
- The old system needs to be looked at before changing. When applying for a place in May no confirmation is received until well AFTER students start school in September. Many parents have to phone / email the council to find out whether or not their child has a place. Causing a huge amount of stress on both parents and child. Bus passes aren't issued until October/November and Invoices aren't issued until April! If you are going to increase the cost, invoices need to be issued at the beginning on the school year, giving parents plenty of time to ensure payment is made! Parents should be notified in August along with a bus pass being in the child's procession before they start school. If we are applying in May, the council have plenty of time to set all this up.
- If you are withdrawing school transport, you need to ensure local public transport is leaving Corby at the appropriate time to reach oundle that doesn't put kids in danger of travelling in the dark or reaching Oundle too early for school. It's not acceptable to have them waiting around. It will have a negative affect on their schooling as they won't be getting as much rest as they will need to be up much earlier for a bus and they won't then learn as well at school due to tiredness and the stress of travel. Also buses are not always reliable and don't always run as they should. Would a child be classed as late or absent through no fault of their own?
- Applying for post 16 and payment options have always been an issue. When you need to cancel your place on the bus or speak to someone regarding an invoice issue this becomes difficult. Invoice should be sent out quarterly to help parents budget. Bus passes are not received for some students and when you email you get no response. Very poor communication
- Please see above
- Next year I will have a SEN child and a [redacted] former as well as another [redacted] aged child on the same bus. It would be preferable to have both there so the child with SEN can always be accompanied.



- Easy, safe, comfortable, low cost, un means tested, transport to the nearest school should be provided for all children who want it no questions asked. Parents are fined and potentially gaoled for not getting children to school so all barriers should be removed. We can't assume parents can afford transport.

- It would give a parents a piece of mind if you could give them a guarantee that their child will get a place on the bus for the duration of the years that she will attend secondary school, especially if it is paid for.

Also give parents know if their child got a place on the bus and not make them to call school transport to find out the outcome and then chase the bus passes for months. Better communication would be appreciated.

- There are simply not enough school places in Corby, finding a new school if needed would be impossible, causing more cost and admin for thr council.

It is simply not acceptable to provide a child a place and then remove the means to get to school, the policy the government and local authorities have had in place for years is to provide the option for school choices, not simply to attend the local school. The rules are now being changed from beneath childrens feet. Parents have ade decisions based on thr best option for them.

Where are all the children's places in Corby that will be made available should they be needed if you go ahead with this? Will children from the villages that have been allocated schools in Corby have those places removed to free up school places for Corby children?

- Put a scheme together whereby parents can arrange a formal car share system i.e FAXI. Also ensure parents pay for the bus. I applied for a bus pass for my [child] in May last year. I actually didn't hear if [they] had got a place and had to phone the council to get clarification. [They] didn't get a pass until well into October and again I had to chase this up! when I applied for the bus pass I ticked to pay by direct debit which was totally ignored. Despite chasing I didn't receive an invoice until May this year, and it is for the full amount of £600. I have only paid a pro-rataed amount of £[redacted] as I'm sure the council would not expect me to pay for a service I haven't yet received. There were numerous instances where the bus late/stopped at the wrong place or left the school too early over the first few weeks and the bus can be late now sometimes. I was also told there was no bus contract in place at the start of the school year. Ensuring the Council collects fees in a timely manner, procuring longer term contracts and doing things correctly in the first place would save the Council a lot of money and officer time and managing the contracts properly would make the service run more efficiently. So perhaps looking at your own processes would actually save money instead of passing it on your service users.

- Please look at other ways of saving money rather than disadvantaging the youngest people in society.

- We have no school within walking distance. There are 3 schools in Wellingborough that are all very close together. If I'd chosen a different school, my child would get subsidised transport to Wellingborough. Instead I have to pay for her to go an almost identical distance to a different school in Wellingborough. In fact pre covid there was a shared bus between the school that is prescribed as the free school and the school my child now attends - and they dropped the fee paying children off first!

I do not think that asking us to pay double is fair or reasonable- why not instead split the cost across all children? This would then reduce the £600 currently being paid significantly. My child is eligible for free transport to a school in Wellingborough so why does it matter which one? It is also not clear which the closest school is to Earls Barton. Nor do we have links to any school. General consensus is Weavers is closest, some children at Wrenn get it free some don't. Regardless, a significant number travel from the village each day.

The service provided needs to vastly improve - that is needed at the current cost let alone if it was doubled. Lack of response from the council letting us know if a place has been allocated at all. Ticking the box for pay monthly and then huge invoices landing all in one go. Put that with a sometimes unreliable service and abusive drivers and this would suggest we are over paying at current levels.

- From Earls Barton, families of children attending Wrenn, Weavers and Wollaston currently get free school transport. It is only Sir Christopher Hatton Academy in Wellingborough that requires families to pay for school transport. Under the new policy, I assume that only 1 of Wrenn, Weavers or Wollaston would be deemed the nearest/linked school meaning many of families would be charged for school transport than they are today. I believe this is a good idea as it would spread the cost of school transport across more families, rather than having 3 free schools and 1 (Hatton) at an extortionate and unaffordable fee. If the cost to get a child to Hatton increases to £1200 per year, we would be better using the public bus which would be £550 per year but would be less safe for children of school age.
- See above
- Currently there is free transport being provided to schools where the pupils do not meet criteria. For example, there are 3 buses that go from Earls Barton to Wollaston secondary school that do not charge the fee despite Earls Barton school not being a feeder to Wollaston. Make it fair by only providing free transport to linked schools and charging for guaranteed spare seats for all non-linked schools in a consistent manner.
- We need secondary schools in our larger villages so the kids can walk to school.
- Maybe you could cut transportation costs by allocating the school closest to them! Brook Weston is 0.4miles from my house, my child would of happily walked to school - safely, but instead has been allocated CBA at the opposite side of town! I counted 10 double deckers leaving Brook Weston and heading out of town!! My youngest is due to start primary, I can see [Redacted] Primary from my window, but not guaranteed a place. The whole system stinks!
- As an employee of a school, I see first hand the allocation process for children into education. If a school that is closer to their home is not available, which is quite often the case for say Corby, as there seems to be more children than school places, then the child is allocated a place at the next available nearest school. Often resulting in transport being required via a "spare seat". I believe a lot of the transport issue stems from the school place allocation process and I believe this should be looked at to achieve a more streamlined transport approach. I understand the cost of transport having to be dealt with but I find it highly unfair on parents to be expected to pay these high costs when they don't necessarily ask for their child to attend a school out of their catchment area, especially if they have recently moved and have to be in year transferred to the next available school.
- Penalising children who choose to attend a suitable SEN provision further away from their nearest school and not providing any mileage payments to the parents who have to transport their child to and from school. Children's mental health and capabilities should be recognised before making any such decision.
- I think faith based schools should be considered like "linked" schools. If choosing a faith based school and meeting their criteria, then this should be deemed the "nearest appropriate school" if other schools do not offer faith based education, even if it exceeds the 3m rule and triggers transport requirements. There may be a closer school but if it isn't faith based, then it isn't necessarily appropriate
- We were allocated CBA even though it wasn't our first choice. The only saving grace for my children having to attend different schools is the free bus for CBA students as there is no other way for my child to get home in the afternoon. I will very strongly argue this point if you try and take it away as regardless of my income, as a single parent, I simply cannot afford to pay for

transport and don't see why I should when this was something offered at open evening and convinced me to put this as my 3rd choice school.

- The local authority ultimately decide the secondary school for children. I applied for the local school where my child could walk to, the LA assigned a school which they have to provide transportation for. Sort out your internal processes, move to catchment school county wide this will avoid transportation costs!!!
- All villages need to have an allocated school at both primary and secondary age. Currently we have neither therefore transport is not provided. No catchment school for us Currently.
- As there is a current lack of places, some of the pupils are being places via the Fair Access protocol in School Admissions.

As the parent then has no control over the school given it would be fair that if the school given by the fair access panel is over the 2 or 3 mile distance then transport should be provided.

This is assuming the parent applied for their nearest school and no other schools can be offered. Fair Access placements and transport arrangement should be discussed with the School Admissions Team.

- I don't know what families are meant to do if they can't afford the transport. It makes it a bit elitist and Tory really because those with money will have the privilege of being able to select a school that's better. Everyone else will have to go for whatever's nearest even if not right for the.
- Most consultations are a formality that has to be done, and in my experience you have already made your decision! However, please take into account mine and others views before reaching your final decision and taking away young people's choice of education. If you already plan to do this then please work with schools to provide alternative modes of transport.
- You have no guarantee to get the school close to your house so it would be unfair to penalise financially if you do not go to the school closest to your home
- no
- As above
- Attending school (excluding home schooling) is a legal requirement. Therefore the council/government should subsidise and support families to attend a school of their choosing. Why are post 16 treated differently? They have to stay in education until 18. School may not be compulsory, but that's no excuse to charge them more. Treat them the same and continue to support them.

It looks like another nail in the coffin for future generations

- How does this work with Thrapston Primary and Prince William School?  
It's difficult to understand the proposed changes. I think these things should be written on a school by school basis or schools should help 'translate' what it means for us practically. I've read this document (I'm not sure all will) and instill don't have a clue as to how this will affect my children as they go up to PWS in Sep 2026
- My child is highly anxious, especially after COVID. He has been preparing to go to his feeder school and he has talked to staff members and had gradual school visits over the years. Being told that this might change so suddenly will greatly impact upon him as we will need to prepare him for another school, with staff he might not know [Redacted]. I am concerned about how this will impact on him and his education.
- The administration of 'spare seats' is absolutely appalling at the moment. Luckily parents are guaranteed a seat at the moment as no communication is ever sent to confirm a place after the application, the bus passes are always issued late...this year I think it was March! Also the invoices are always issued late, last year it was March this year May. Parents are unable to pay any money to the council until they receive the invoice number and actually when you're suggesting an increase billing parents for multiple children could be as much as £2400 in one bill!! This is just not helpful and actually if there was a more efficient setup for making payments

this would be hugely beneficial. Having a customer account reference number and then enabling parents to pay monthly by direct debit etc would hugely support households with budgeting for and paying this bill. In short the prices laid out in your proposal for admin costs per rider may well be accurate, however the admin service currently provided is just not efficient or effective at all!

- My biggest disagreement is with changing linked schools and only having one option if you live in a town in the middle of two existing catchment areas.
- In fact you're not very good at anything your objections against the expansion of rushden lakes baffles me. The town centres of Northamptonshire were dead before it even got built. What killed them was the parking is in disrepair and a pain to get in and out of public transport is a joke, they are a rundown 60s to 80s badly designed mess with no heart.
- I understand it must be very difficult to find a balance of making efficiencies and providing a service. But please understand the impact of reducing access to decent school transport. By increasing costs to families it would marginalise those most at risk.  
If you are unable to fund appropriate school transport fairly to all who need it, if you can't respond when someone makes a reasonable request for school transport or if things are getting worse not better, then we must question the government as to why this basic service is not being properly funded.
- Would this impact children already attending the school who are authorised to have free school transport.  
Surely if the council has allocated a child to attend the school previously, then transport should be provided up until they reach year 11.
- Unfortunately by moving our local school to obtain transport would be detrimental. Raunds manor is a [redacted] school and will split child friendships.  
It will make a dramatic line between rich and poor.  
If we have to pay for transport more parents will drive causing chaos at school times people will start choosing any school, if they have to travel they will apply to a preferred school anywhere.
- I can't believe that the cost of transporting a post 16 student from Irchester to Wollaston exceeds the current £600 charge. I would be very interested to know if I can obtain this information through a freedom of information request. I don't think it's acceptable to charge parents the average cost of pupil transport, especially in cases where this would exceed the actual cost incurred for their child.
- A late bus option needs to be considered to all children to take part in important after school clubs/wider curriculum options.  
A sliding scale of fees for number of children using the bus per family would perhaps be fairer for post 16 years.  
Rather than signing up for the whole year, perhaps bus seats should be offered per term. For example, we would need seats for our children during Autumn Term, part of the week for the Easter term and potentially not at all for the summer term.  
If the prices are too high, communities will find their own creative solutions along the lines of hiring their own mini buses/car shares and charge the council for mileage. No £75 admin fee per child! The buses will then not be supported and make them inefficient to run. It needs to be cost-effective and fair.
- The Government would find budget increases if it benefited one of their contributors. The Council cannot pass this on to parents. It is morally and financially wrong on every level, as often children are not placed in schools they have chosen, it's allocated.  
Push back harder on budget allocation and fight for the people that put you in these positions in the first place

- I am disappointed that there was no data accompanying this consultation on the distribution of pupils making use of the discretionary transport service so consultees can see the impact of these proposals spatially (as this is available by virtue of data relating to users). I feel this should have been made available for greater understanding where this will impact residents by location. Furthermore, in a climate emergency, which the council itself has declared locally, I am unclear how removing a bus service, and forcing parents to make individual journeys as a result, aligns with this local, and indeed national, requirement?  
I am also unclear how a £200 admin fee has been proposed through the current consultation as no details are given as to why this is now required? Specifically, in the same consultation held by West Northants Council no admin fee was proposed, so I am unclear what the exceptional circumstances are in North Northants to warrant this - particularly as no detail is provided.
- As the parent of a child who currently uses the discretionary transport service between Corby and Oundle I have been struck by how seemingly inefficient this service is from a time and cost perspective and cannot fathom why it runs the way it does. Specifically, x2 buses follow each other in tandem the whole way between Corby and Oundle. Due to the route taken this is time consuming and surely inefficient in terms of petrol consumption and the worse of all worlds when considering local emissions. I have never understood why, for example, one bus does not focus on Corby itself (and maybe the villages thereafter) in order to take the most direct route and the other is focussed on Priors Hall, Weldon and Weldon Park given the numbers of pupils collected at these locations. This would save both unnecessary mileage and also, surely, require less travel time for Corby children? I do not know how the bus service operates in other locations but from my perspective the current application appears inefficient and improvements could surely be made which would help with cost savings.
- Regarding Thrapston. Thrapston has always been linked with Prince William school, and is linked through the Primary School as well.  
A special case for Thrapston should be made for the provision of transport to Prince William School.
- I feel strongly that a special case should be made for Thrapston. If a large number of pupils stopped attending the school because of lack of travel provision this would have a detrimental effect on the school, conversely parents may start to transport their children putting more traffic on the A605 and contribute to traffic in Oundle, which with the number of schools gets very busy at the beginning and end of the school day.

## More about you

**Q. Are you responding to this questionnaire as an individual or on behalf of an organisation/community group?** Please tick (✓) relevant answer

There were 230 responses to this question.

	Response number	Percentage (%)
As an individual	228	99.1%
On behalf of an organisation/community group	2	0.9%

## **Organisation/community group respondents**

**Q. If you are replying on behalf of an organisation or community group please tell us the name of your organisation and your job title/role:**

### **Name of organisation:**

There were two responses to this question.

- [Redacted] parish council - Vice chairman
- [Redacted] Town Council

### **Job title/role**

There were two responses to this question. We have not listed the job titles / roles of respondents within this appendix in order to ensure respondents' anonymity is retained.

## **Appendix 2: Written responses**

### **Feedback received via letters / emails**

There were four written responses received.

Further to your ongoing School Transport consultation, I have a number of concerns with the lack of supporting data and information published alongside these proposals upon which consultees can interrogate and review further, specifically to determine whether children are being treated equally as per the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 and other legislative requirements the Council needs consider through its development of Policies. On this basis, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 I formally request the provision of data and associated information as outlined below:

1. The bus patronage data upon which your policy is based in respect of the “spare seat” policy. Specifically, I request the origin (pick up point) and destination (school) broken down by the 300 pupils outlined under the Discretionary Transport section of the Council’s consultation webpage (available at: <https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com/cet/home-to-school-transport/>). This is not considered an onerous request as this data will exist by virtue of providing the service (the council collates this via the spare seat application process and bus passes/the bus service is provided on this basis). It is anticipated this data will show the spatial impact and any trends within these proposals and allow consultees to genuinely interrogate and understand how and where these will impact on certain communities.

2. Can you provide evidence of your analysis and assessment of alternative public transport options which have been reviewed as part of these proposals? Specifically, can it be confirmed the Council is aware, using the data on existing patronage, that pupils from Corby and Weldon who attend Prince William School in Oundle are unable to access public transport which will deliver them to school on time? The attached timetable was downloaded this morning directly from the Stagecoach website (<https://www.stagecoachbus.com/plan-a-journey>). On pdf pages 2 and 6 it quite clearly shows that the bus timetable does not align with the school day (the earliest option would have school children arriving in Oundle over an hour before the school day begins or afterwards). These are not feasible options for school children, parents or, indeed, residents of Oundle. Please can evidence of your review of available public transport options be shared accordingly.

3. The Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to net zero carbon operations by 2030. My understanding is that even though the bus service is contracted out, the Council remains responsible for its Scope 3 emissions and that removal of the spare seat service altogether does nothing to reduce emissions in the locality, as is required through both national legislation (Climate Change Act 2008) and the corporate objectives of the Council. On this basis please can you advise how forcing more private vehicles to take individual journeys, in the absence of viable public transport alternatives, aligns with national and local requirements?

More specifically, please can data and/or information be provided on the Scope 3 emissions associated with the current school transport operations and, inter alia, the anticipated emission reductions these proposals will make? (Ideally this would be disaggregated between “spare seat” and free transport users).

Alongside this, is it possible to provide the Council's estimate of the local impact on emissions which will arise from the daily/annual increase in private vehicle movements which will result from these proposals?

4. With regards to the Equality Act 2010, Section 149 (Public Sector Equality Duty), subsection 1(b) please can the Council's analysis be shared of how these "spare seat" proposals "*advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it*". Age is a protected characteristic under this Act and these proposals, as drafted, are considered to actively revoke equality of opportunity between school children based on where they reside. I would therefore welcome sight of the Council's analysis/assessment which outlines how these proposals eliminate unlawful discrimination or advance equality of opportunity.

In respect of children from Corby, my local estate school (Brooke Weston) had a policy in place for decades where children from outside the Town and (then) Borough took up 50% of the annual intake. Where this (50%) residual figure did kick in for residents of the Town/Borough, preference was given to Oakley Vale Primary School (and not Corby Primary Academy as the other primary school on the Estate), further reducing equality of opportunity in this respect. This fact, alongside the issue that Corby has been lacking an additional secondary school for at least a decade as the town has grown, placed downward pressure elsewhere to the effect that children could not attend their nearest secondary school and, to aspirational parents, the alternative choices were not palatable from an Ofsted perspective. Furthermore, the new secondary school at Weldon Park does not open until September 2023 and only serves to address existing demand and nothing to tackle past admissions decisions and failures of the previous Council to deliver the requisite number of schools to meet the needs of a growth area.

On the basis of this local context, myself and a number of parents in the same situation have independently sought solutions and looked to Prince William School in Oundle given it is located in our local authority area and a paid for bus service is in operation. Furthermore, this school has been, and continues to be, running at a deficit in terms of pupil numbers so we are actually helping the school run more efficiently from an Academy perspective by sending our children there, irrespective of the cost we invoke in doing so. Given this, these policies as drafted, from the perspective of a Corby resident, appear to do little to eliminate unlawful discrimination or advance equality of opportunity and I would welcome any details/data/assessments which proves otherwise.

5. An Equalities Impact Assessment was published alongside these proposals. I take issue with the wording used under the header "*What were the findings of the initial Equality Screening Assessment?*" In each instance the word "could" has been used and, as the parent of a child potentially affected, I can confirm that this wording, as drafted, underplays the impact of these proposals. In each instance, reference to "could" needs to be replaced by "would" under this section of the EIA. There is no "could" about these proposals. My family, and others in our situation will be impacted, of that there is no doubt. This equally applies in the instances "may" has been used in this same section as on the same basis "may" underplays the impact of these proposals and needs to be replaced with "will". On this basis, please can I request formal minutes/decision making documents where this EIA was considered prior to its publication with a view to understanding why this particular choice of wording



was used given I consider this to underplay the impact of this proposed policy on affected families.

I apologise for the number of questions made through this request but after review of the proposals as drafted in relation to the spare seats policy I can see no evidence which quantifies the claims made within. Without sight of this information, which should be readily available to justify your policy proposals, I have concerns how these proposals align with both national legislation and local objectives, as outlined within, and how these have the potential to discriminate against children on the basis of their home address.

Given the Council's recent decision to implement a garden waste collection charge on residents, despite local opposition, I have tangible concerns that this consultation constitutes little more than "window dressing" and these proposals shall be implemented whatever the local feedback is. On this basis I have copied in my local MP, Tom Pursglove, to this message to highlight my concerns and, following discussion with parents equally impacted with the implementation of these proposals, that you should expect to receive similar feedback between now and June 12<sup>th</sup>.

I have just received a notification from Corby Business Academy that the council are completing a consultation regarding the school buses.

My son is due to start the school in September 2023 and I have already applied for the school bus. This school was third choice for us due to distance. The school is 5.5 miles away from our house which is nearly a 2 hour walk. It would be extremely disappointing if the school bus was chargeable to families who did not have this school as a first choice.

For very many years almost all the pupils at Thrapston Primary School routinely transfer to Prince William School in Oundle.

The latest consultation document has given rise to some angst among parents, particularly the following statement:

To be eligible to free transport assistance the child needs to be attending their nearest school which has places and can meet their needs (this is known as the nearest suitable school).

It might be argued that Manor School in Raunds is closer than Prince William hence the uncertainty.

Can you confirm, and reassure our parents, that pupils attending Prince William School in Oundle will continue to be eligible for free transport.

There is a lot of talk from worried parents including myself for children at Thrapston Primary School who generally are fed through to Prince William as the feeder school will have to start paying for transport unless they attend the closest school which is Raunds Manor.

These children have mostly been together since nursery and many have siblings already attending the feeder school in Oundle. It seems so unfair that due to new funding the children whose parents simply cannot afford this service, including myself will see their children having to attend a different school just because it is closer and not the feeder school. These children have gone through so much during their school lives including a lock down, they should be kept together where possible and not separated due to parents not having enough money in this cost of living nightmare.