

Pupil Benefits Policies

Including;

Clothing Grants

Free School Meals

Travel up to Year 11

Travel Policy Statement: Travel aged 16-25

1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this document is to set out the support available to pupils through the Pupil Benefits service, the eligibility criteria, the application process and the appeals process.
- 1.2. The guide has been developed ensuring due regard is given to the Education Act 1996. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications> for more information.

2. School Uniform Grants**2.1. Support available**

- 2.1.1. £100 per pupil when transferring from Year 6 to Year 7 at a secondary school. Support will be available via direct bank payment

2.2. Eligibility criteria

- 2.2.1. The pupil must reside in London Borough of Hackney
- 2.2.2. The pupil must attend a community or voluntary aided school or an academy that has bought into Hackney Learning Trust's traded service in respect of School Uniform Grants.
- 2.2.3. Parent must receive either:
 - Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £15,400
 - Income Support
 - Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
 - Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
 - The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
 - Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
 - Working Tax Credit with an annual gross income of no more than 16,190

2.3. Application and appeals process

- 2.3.1. Parents can apply by completing an online application form, after receiving the notification letter from HLT informing them of the secondary school allocation in May. Please follow the link for the online application form;
<https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/content/school-uniform-grant-age-11>
- 2.3.2. An appeals process is not applicable for School Uniform Grants.

2.4. Legislation

- 2.4.1. Section 510 & 511 Education Act 1996

3. Free School Meals**3.1. Support available**

3.1.1 From Year 3 onwards, when the statutory free meals does not apply, pupils could still receive free meals provided by their schools if the eligibility criteria are met.

3.2. Eligibility criteria

3.2.1. The pupil must be on roll at a school in The London Borough of Hackney.

3.2.2. The pupil must attend an academy, free school, community or voluntary aided school.

3.2.3. Parent must receive either:

- Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (after tax and not including any benefits you get)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (with no Working Tax Credit) with an annual gross income of no more than £16,190
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the four weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)
- Children who receive a qualifying benefit in their own right are also allowed to receive free school meals

3.3.4. If a child is found eligible for free school meals, they remain eligible until they finish the phase of schooling (primary or secondary) they're in on 31 March 2022

3.3. Application and appeal process

3.3.1. Parents can apply at any time by completing an online application form;
<https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/content/apply-free-school-meals>

3.3.2. Eligibility is checked using the "Electronic Checking System" (ECS). Eligibility is reviewed annually by Hackney Learning Trust. The parent and the school are notified if the pupil is no longer eligible.

3.3.3. An appeals process is not applicable for the Free School Meal application.

3.4. Legislation

3.4.1 Section 512, 512Za and 512Zb & 513 Education Act 1996.

4. Transport Assistance

4.1. Introduction

It is the responsibility of parents and guardians to ensure that children attend school under section 444 of the Education Act 1996, and this includes making the necessary travel arrangements to and from school.

Under section 509 of the Education Act, local authorities have a power to offer assistance with travel based on individual circumstances. Where the local authority does offer assistance with travel, this is only provided for journeys to and from home and the child's school for attendance in normal school hours.

The Home to School Travel Policy is separate from the Local Authority's admission arrangements. You can apply for a place at any school but you can only have one nearest suitable school for transport purposes. For transport purposes the nearest suitable school is identified by considering whether the pupil would have been offered a place had that school being listed as a preference on the application form.

Hackney Learning Trust pays for the cheapest form of suitable transport when applicants meet the eligibility criteria.

4.2. Travel up to Year 11

There are three eligibility criteria which will be used to determine whether provision of travel assistance is appropriate with some examples shown in the appendix at the end of the policy.

4.2.1. All Parents (Non-income assessed)

- i. **Pupils with SEN, or a disability or mobility problem**, who reside in the London Borough of Hackney and;
 - attend a school or a setting at which they receive statutory education, and;
 - who do not have a suitable alternative, nearer educational placement on offer and;
 - who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to and from the school or other place (even though the provision is within the statutory walking distance) due to their SEN, disability or mobility needs. These cases are assessed on an individual basis. Further information is available at <https://www.hackneylocaloffer.co.uk/kb5/hackney/localoffer/advice.page?id=XATR8-VsbNE>
- ii. **Unreasonable to expect the pupil to walk the particular route.** Pupils are entitled to free transport if they attend a qualifying setting other than a school at which they receive education, provided they do not have a suitable alternative, nearer educational placement on offer, and cannot reasonably be expected to walk (although the school or place is within the normal walking route distance) because of the nature of the route.
- iii. **Pupils attending a qualifying school outside the distances shown below.** Pupils who attend a qualifying school or other place at which they receive statutory education, outside the statutory walking distances (2 miles if aged 5 to 7 and 3 miles if aged 8 and over) when there are no suitable arrangements for boarding at or near school, and who do not have a suitable alternative nearer educational placement on offer.
- iv. **Pupils on roll attending a qualifying school outside the distances shown below on grounds of religion or belief.** Pupils who live more than 2 miles (if aged 5-7) or 3 miles (if aged 8 and over) from the school or other place where they receive statutory education, and who do not have a suitable alternative nearer educational placement on offer. In these circumstances the parents must demonstrate that they have applied for, and been refused, a place at other equivalent nearer schools or educational establishments.

4.2.2. **Income assessed (eligible for free school meals or the parent/carer is in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit)**

- i. Pupils aged 8 to 11 (primary) who attend a qualifying school or setting where statutory education is provided, which is more than 2 miles from their home and do not have a suitable alternative educational placement.
- ii. Pupils aged 11 or over (secondary) who are attending one of the three nearest qualifying schools or other places where they may receive statutory education if the school or other place is more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from home.
- iii. Pupils aged 11 or over, whose parents have expressed a preference for the school or other place where statutory education is delivered based on their religion or belief, and the preferred school or place is more than 2 miles and less than 15 miles from home, and there is no suitable alternative school or place nearer to the home. Reasons for the parental preference could include the particular ethos in a school or the fact that the school is a single sex school of a religion different to that of the parents where their belief in single sex education is sufficiently serious.

4.2.3 **Disabled Parent (Non-income assessed and income assessed)**

When there are pupils whose parent's disability may prevent them from accompanying the pupils to the qualifying school or other place, even though it is within normal walking distance from the home, the LA may provide free travel; support for those pupils. However, if the parent is in receipt of transport assistance as part of their disability living allowance or other similar benefit, they will not receive this support. Parents would be expected to meet the eligibility criteria above. Any free travel/support provided will be reviewed regularly.

4.2.4 **Measuring Distance**

Hackney Learning Trust will consider the safety of the route when measuring statutory walking distance, which will be measured by the shortest route by which a child accompanied, as necessary, may walk safely. However, the 6 miles upper limit in (ii) above and the 15 mile upper limit in (iii) above, will be measured using road routes.

4.3. **Other eligibility criteria**

- 4.3.1. The pupil must reside in the London Borough of Hackney
- 4.3.2. The pupil must attend a maintained school, academy, free school or an independent school if the school or academy is named in the pupil's Education, Health and Care Plan. These are known as suitable schools.
- 4.3.3. Parents who are either eligible for Free School Meals or who are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £15,400.
- 4.3.4. Parents may find the examples in the Appendix at the end of this document helpful in understanding whether their child meets the eligibility criteria for home to school transport.

4.4. **Application and appeals process**

- 4.4.1 Application can be made at any time. An application form is available at <https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/sites/default/files/document/Home%20to%20School%20Travel%20Assistance%20Application%20Form.pdf>

4.4.2. Income assessed parents will need to re-apply every academic year to determine eligibility by income. If the pupil no longer qualifies under the income eligibility criteria, they can be reassessed on the nearest school/distance eligibility criteria.

4.4.3. There are two stages to the appeal process;

- **Stage 1** – In writing within 20 school days to Head of Admissions and Pupil Benefits.
- **Stage 2** – if the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 decision, s/he has 40 school days to make a written request for the appeal to be heard by an independent appeal panel comprising suitably experienced officers of the Authority who are not members of the admissions and pupil benefits team.

4.5. **Legislation**

4.5.1. Section 509A, 509AA, 509AB, 509AC Education Act 1996

5. **Travel Policy Statement: Travel aged 16 to 25**

5.1. **Support available**

Students can apply for 16-19 bursary funding via their school or college for help with travel. Applicants should contact their school or college for further information.

Hackney Learning Trust pays for the cheapest form of suitable transport when applicants meet the following eligibility criteria:

Students/Trainees must be over compulsory school age, but under the age of 19 (or over the age of 19 but under the age of 26) and remain on the roll of a school under an Education, Health and Care plan or have begun a particular course of education and training at a school or other educational institution before attaining the age of 19, and continuing on the course. Hackney Learning Trust will also continue assisting those undertaking employed and non-employed programme led apprenticeships

Hackney Learning Trust will pay for travel expenses between home and school or other educational institution up to a maximum of £390.00 per year for those using public transport. Hackney Learning Trust may seek expenses from the school or other educational institution, where appropriate.

This policy is also intended to cover the arrangements for Students/Trainees with learning difficulties/disabilities, including, but not restricted to Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

5.2. **Eligibility criteria**

The student/trainee must live in the London Borough of Hackney

Student must attend one of the following, which is more than 3 miles from their home:

- A maintained school or Academy with a 6th Form in Hackney;
- A maintained or assisted 6th form or FE College in Hackney;
- An establishment funded directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. For example, independent specialist providers for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- A learning provider funded by Hackney Learning Trust to deliver foundation, or other accredited programmes of learning in Hackney;

- Be undertaking an employed or non-employed programme-led apprenticeship or traineeship in Hackney

Eligibility may also extend to students who attend a full-time course (12 hours of lessons or more a week) at one of the above institutions outside Hackney because the chosen course of study is not available within Hackney or if there are other exceptional educational, curricular or social reasons why study must be outside Hackney.

Parents must be eligible for Free School Meals; in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit or Universal Credit with an annual net earned income of no more than £15,400

The income and distance thresholds may be waived for students/Trainees with learning difficulties/disabilities, including but not restricted to students with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or EHC plan.

5.3. Application and appeal process

- 5.3.1. Apply before start of course. An application form is available at <https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/sites/default/files/document/Post%2016%20Travel%20Assistance%20Application%20Form.pdf>
- 5.3.2. Stage 1 Appeal Process – In writing within 20 school days to Head of Admissions and Pupil Benefits.
- 5.3.3. Stage 2 Appeal Process – If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the Stage 1 decision, s/he has 40 schools days to make a written request for the appeal to be heard by an independent appeal panel comprising suitably experienced officers outside the admissions and pupil benefits team

5.4. Legislation

- 5.4.1. Section 509AA/S509AB of the Education Act 1996 as amended by Section 83 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

Appendix

Parents may find the examples below helpful in understanding whether their child meets the eligibility criteria for home to school travel

- Child A is six years old and attends her nearest suitable school. It is 2.3 miles from her home. Child A is eligible for free home to school transport.
- Child B is seven years old and attends a primary school that is 2.6 miles from her home. However, there is another suitable primary school just 1.2 miles from her home which has places available. Child B is not eligible for free home to school transport, as she is not attending her nearest suitable school.
- Child C is eleven years old and attends his nearest suitable school. It is 2.6 miles from his home. Child C is not eligible for free home to school transport because his school is not beyond the statutory walking distance for a child of his age.
- Child D is fourteen years old and has cerebral palsy. She attends her nearest suitable school. It is 1 mile from her home. The nature of her condition requires her to use crutches to walk, and she needs to take her time to ensure she is balanced. The local authority decides that she could not reasonably be expected to walk to school. Child D is eligible for free home to school transport.
- Child E is twelve years old. He attends his nearest suitable secondary school. It is 2 miles from his home. The only walking route to his school is along a busy country lane. The local authority carries out an assessment of the route and decides it would not be safe for him to walk to along this road. Child E is eligible for free home to school transport.
- Child F is eleven years old and eligible for free school meals. His nearest suitable school is 2.5 miles from his home. His second nearest suitable school is 3 miles away. His third nearest is 5 miles away. Child F would be eligible for free home to school travel to any of these schools.
- Child G is eleven years old and eligible for free school meals. Her three nearest schools are School X, School Y and School Z. School X is 1.5 miles from her home, School Y is 2.2 miles from her home, and School Z is 5.5 miles from her home. Child G would be eligible for free home to school travel to School Y or School Z, but not to School X.
- Child H is thirteen years old, and is eligible for free school meals. He and his parents are members of the Church of England. Because of this, he attends a Church of England school that is 8 miles from their home. There are other schools which are nearer to their home, but none of these is a Church of England school. Child H is eligible for free home to school travel.