

Change to Home to School Transport Policy – Scenarios

Definition of a Pupil’s Qualifying School (refer to paragraph 2.3 of the draft policy)

At the moment, a pupil’s qualifying school is defined by Warwickshire County Council to mean only the pupil’s closest school to home with a space available for the pupil by the shortest available route (this will be a driving route if the journey is over the statutory walking distance or a walking route if the journey is less than the statutory walking distance). This may not be the priority area school (sometimes referred to as ‘catchment school’) but will be the one physically closest to the student’s home address.

The County Council are proposing to change the definition of the qualifying school for a pupil to mean either the closest qualifying school (see paragraph 2.2 of the draft policy) to the pupil’s home address, with places available, that provides education appropriate to the age, ability, and aptitude of the pupil and takes into account any special educational needs that the pupil may have, **or** the priority area school in which the pupil resides. This means that some children will have two qualifying schools.

Low-income families would continue to benefit from extended rights eligibility criteria.

The definition of a pupil’s qualifying school will continue to take into account any special educational needs that the pupil may have.

For those pupils who have achieved the relevant entry criteria for a selective school, the policy remains unchanged and that school will only be considered as their qualifying school if it is the closest qualifying school to the pupil’s home address and there are no nearer non-selective schools capable of educating the child.

Similarly, transport to faith schools will only be provided if it is the closest qualifying school to the child’s home, taking into account all relevant schools. The exception to this will be when the pupil is of secondary school age and qualifies under the extended eligibility criteria (see section 3.3).

Subject to approval following consultation, it is proposed that this change would be effective from the date the new policy is published (anticipated September/October 2020).

Todd is 7 and attends his local primary school, which is further than the statutory walking distance (2 miles). As this is the nearest school to Todd, Todd is still entitled to transport assistance.

This policy change does not affect Todd.

Martha will start secondary school in September 2021. Martha is within the admissions priority area for School X, but actually lives closer to School Y which is the closest school to Martha's home address. Both schools are over the statutory walking distance. Martha would receive transport assistance to either School X or School Y.

This policy change means that Martha will be entitled to free transport assistance to School X or School Y.

Carlos is 11 and attends his local special school, which is further than the statutory walking distance (3 miles). As the nearest appropriate school to Carlos, as stated on his EHC plan, Carlos is still entitled to transport assistance.

This policy change does not affect Carlos.

Amanda is 14 and currently receives free transport to her priority area secondary school. Her family plan to move house in October 2021 but will still be in the priority area for her school. However, there is a closer school to her home address with space in her year group.

As there has been a change in Amanda's circumstances she is now reassessed under the new criteria. She will remain entitled to free transport assistance due to the new address being in the priority area for her school.

This policy change means that Amanda will remain entitled to free transport assistance to her current school as it is her priority area school.

James is due to start secondary school in September 2021. His priority area school is under the statutory walking distance and deemed safe to walk. James would not be entitled to free transport assistance to his priority area school.

This policy change does not affect James

Kate is 13 and currently receives free transport to her priority area secondary school (which is also the closest school to her home address). Her family plan to move house in January 2021 after the publication of the new policy to an address outside of her current school's priority area.

As there has been a change in Kate's circumstances she will need to be reassessed under the new criteria. She may no longer be entitled to free transport assistance if the new address is not in the priority area for her current school and/or her current school is not the closest qualifying school to her new address with space in her year group.

This policy change does not affect Kate