



# Downs View

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13<sup>th</sup> March 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

## Home to School Transport Re-Procurement

We have been advised that this is the last year that the existing home to school transport contract will run. This summer the council must legally put transport routes back out to tender, and every four years thereafter. This could mean that if your child uses the council's home to school transport service, their travel arrangements may change from September 2023.

On 8<sup>th</sup> February the Home to School Transport Team and the Parent and Carers Council (PaCC) held two joint PaCC Connect sessions which explained both the upcoming changes to how the service is procured and also shared with families the way the service operates behind the scenes. The focus was on how team members have important areas of responsibility, and all the component parts that are in place to ensure a safe, reliable and well-run service.

Central to the presentation was the principle that children and young people's needs are always at the forefront of everything we do. The link to the briefing that was sent to parents and carers who attended, and the question and answers which arose from the sessions is included in the Ping.

## Post 16 Transport Consultation

Annually the council seek your views on a document which sets out the transport support available to sixth-form age students and adult learners (over 19 years of age, with an Education Health and Care Plan), travelling to their education settings. The Policy Statement sets out the travel support and schemes that are available from the council, schools, colleges and transport providers.

The council are not proposing any significant changes to the 2023-2024 Policy Statement from September 2023. However, the council are looking to introduce a couple of changes, which, if approved by the Children Young People and Skills Committee, could come into effect in September **2024**.

According to National Guidance on Post 16 transport and travel support to education and training there is no legal requirement for councils to provide free or subsidised travel support to young people of sixth form age (between 16 and 19 years of age), including those with special educational needs and or disabilities.



There are two proposed changes for September 2024. One relates to the discontinuation of free travel support over and above what is required by law and introduces a partial parental contribution towards travel assistance to pupils of sixth form age. The other proposal relates to the timings of travel to this age group.

The council has decided to consult on the 2024-25 policy early so that it can be finalised in plenty of time to allow parents and young people to have a full understanding of what support will be available to them when they apply for sixth form education options at the end of the 2023-24 academic year, ready for September 2024.

No decisions about these proposals have been made. The council are committed to a wide consultation on these proposals before it makes any decision.

The link for you to use to complete the consultation is included in this Ping. It is a save and return format, so you do not need to complete it all in one go.

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vanessa".

Vanessa Hickey  
Executive Headteacher