

## SEN TRAVEL ASSISTANCE CONSULTATION RESPONSE April 2019

As you know, Royal Greenwich has been consulting with parents on an updated Home to School Travel Assistance policy.

First of all we would like to thank all parents who have taken time to give their comments and/or to attend meetings. It is always important to hear your views even if they are not in agreement with our proposals.

We understand that it has raised a lot of anxieties – with some parents not understanding the policy or concerned that they will be significantly affected. We also know that also that any change can be difficult.

Generally, when parents had the opportunity to talk to one of the SEN team, they felt reassured or understood what the changes and plans were and why.

Although we hoped that parents of children and young people in mainstreams schools would attend the meetings as they were open to all, most were parents of children in special schools.

Whilst we are not able to change much of the policy as a result of the consultation – as it is in line with the national statutory guidance, we will be taking comments into account as we implement the policy.

### As part of the consultation:

- Headteachers were informed through the schools e-bulletin
- SENCOs were informed through the SENCo newsletter.
- All parents of children currently using transport were send or given a flyer to inform them of the consultation and how to take part.
- Information was on the Local Offer  
Four parent meetings were arranged
- A survey monkey was available for parents to respond

The number and type of responses is in the table below:

Type		Numbers
Surveys	Survey monkey	87
	Paper copies	5
Parent meetings	TWC early evening	5
	CPA daytime	32
	Eltham Centre early evening	2

	Willowdene daytime	27
	GPV	general

There were also some individual surgeries for parents at Willowdene who wanted to ask about their individual situation.

**Profile of those who responded to the survey monkey:**

The majority were from parents of children and young people using home to school transport, and 78% were using shared minibus or coaches.

82% had children at primary and secondary school, with 20% in post 16 settings.

**Young people’s views:**

The ACE groups were consulted during April – with a groups of young people from The John Roan, Charlton park academy, Willowdene secondary school and Shooters Hill and Halley Academy.

**Outcome of the consultation and what we plan to do as a result**

Issue	What we will do	When
Generally – only 67% said they understood if their child would be eligible, 46% said they understood which journeys were eligible, and 31% said it was clear how decisions were made.	We will provide a parent guide to SEN travel assistance to make it clearer for parents	End of June
Many of the parents who have expressed concern or anxiety about changes – would not be affected as their children have very complex	Provide clear statement on Local Offer and GPV website to reassure parents	May

needs and do meet the criteria for travel assistance needs.		
Parent unclear why they have to complete application form if already have EHC plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relook at application form including group of parents and professionals</li> </ul>	June/July
Parents concerned about being asked to take their child to a collection point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will pilot with a few schools to start with.</li> <li>• Parents of children who will be asked to take their child to a collection point will be invited to a meeting to discuss concerns and help to plan for them.</li> <li>• Parents of children or young people who are already in the school or college will be asked to reapply alongside those who are moving to those settings in September.</li> <li>• We will consider how we can talk to the young people who will be using collection points</li> <li>• We will evaluate the pilot by the end of autumn term before extending it to other schools and settings.</li> </ul>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> group will be piloted in September.  Parents of children or young people whose children are at the schools or colleges will receive a letter at beginning of May  Meeting with parents will take place at beginning of June</p>
Parents concerned or worried about when they will be asked to reapply	A schedule will be set out for the next 2 years to explain when a parent will need to reapply.	Schedule will be set out by June
	Provide meetings and/or surgeries for parents in each group to discuss their particular concerns.	These will be set up in line with the schedule.
Parents worried about how they will	Provide clear contact for support to consider	June

take other children to school or to get to work if they are no longer eligible for travel assistance	options	
	Parents will be notified in time for them to make alternative arrangements	Usually a month before end of the relevant term
Lack of clarity about post 16 or post 19 entitlement	Relook at policy document to ensure it is clearer how we make decisions about this group of young people.	By the beginning of June – the revised policy will be available on Local offer
Anxiety about potential changes	Hold an annual consultation on how the policy is working and on any changes that are made.	Next consultation will take place in March 2020