

Equality Analysis (EIA) Form

A) Description

Name of service, function, policy (or other) being assessed

Home to School Transport Policy & Post 16 Transport Policy – update to policy May 2019

Directorate or organisation responsible (and service, if it is a policy)

Economy and Place Directorate, Passenger Transport

Date of assessment

March 2019

Names and job titles of people carrying out the assessment

Adam Houchen, Process & Procurement Manager

Accountable person

Steve Burgess, Head of Transport and Access

What are the aims or main purpose of the service, function or policy? What does it provide and how does it provide it?

Herefordshire home to school transport policy and Post 16 Transport Policy statement set out details of the provision of school and college transport in the County.

The policies defines parental responsibility, and the circumstances where the Local Authority must make transport arrangements due to legislation and what is provided additionally by the Council as a result of local determination.

The policies sets out how the Local Authority will assess individual circumstances, and the parental right for review of decisions made that affect their child.

The policy applies to, and considers:

- Children attending mainstream educational provision aged 4 to 16
- Young adults attending further education courses aged 16 to 19
- Children and young adults with special educational needs (SEN) aged 2 to 25
- Children with social, emotional, and mental health needs (SEMH)
- Looked after children (LAC). Children who have become the responsibility of the Local Authority
- Children who are from low income families
- Children with different religion or belief

Location or any other relevant information

Countywide

List any key policies or procedures to be reviewed as part of this assessment.

Home to School Transport Policy & Post 16 Transport Policy

Who is intended to benefit from the service, function or policy?

The numbers of students and young adults using Local Authority commissioned transport in the academic year 2018/19 are given in the table below:

User Type	Number of
Children attending mainstream educational provision aged 4 to 16	2623
Young adults attending further education courses aged 16 to 19	1320
Children and young adults with SEN & SEMH needs	350
Looked after children (LAC)	12
Children who are from low income families	50
Children attending schools on the grounds of religion and belief	56

Who are the stakeholders? What is their interest?

Stakeholder	Interest
Students attending schools and college's	Provision of transport that enables attendance at their chosen educational setting
Families/Parents/Carers	Provision of transport that allows their child to access suitable education in a safe and reliable way
Transport providers (i.e. public transport providers, minibus/taxi companies)	Revenue for their businesses through the supply of contracted transport services
Educational establishments/settings for pupils of all abilities and needs	Regular attendance of pupils
Council officers and members engaged in school transport services	Clear policy and guidance that allows transport for students to be commissioned in an appropriate and fair way

B) Partnerships and Procurement

If you contract out services or work in partnership with other organisations, Herefordshire Council remains responsible for ensuring that the quality of provision/delivery meets the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, ie.

- Eliminates unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advances equality of opportunity between different groups
- Fosters good relations between different groups

What information do you give to the partner/contractor in order to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Act? What information do you monitor from the partner/contractor in order to ensure that they meet the requirements of the Act?

School and college transport in Herefordshire is delivered through a combination of council operated vehicles, and employed staff, and through a network of transport contractors including bus and coach companies and private hire taxi companies. Currently 39 commercial operators are registered on the passenger transport procurement framework.

All commercial contracts are bound by conditions of contract which include details of the contractors responsibilities and expected actions in relation to the Equality Act 2010.

Regular contractual compliance checks are carried out to ensure compliance with all legal and ethical responsibilities.

Are there any concerns at this stage that indicate the possibility of inequalities/negative impacts? For example: complaints, comments, research, and outcomes of a scrutiny review. Please describe:

No. The home to school and post 16 policies describe how transport assistance is provided for students and contains specific guidance for students with special needs and disabilities, students from low income families, and students with different religious beliefs. This ensures transport is provided to entitled students equally.

C) Information

What information (monitoring or consultation data) have you got and what is it telling you?

Data is extensively collected on an ongoing basis via applications for transport, appeals on decisions made not to provide transport, and through the recording and monitoring of informal, and formal complaints.

Students are categorised so that monitoring of transport provision for specific groups can be carried out. This includes SEN students, students from low income families, and students with different religious beliefs. The numbers of students provided with transport on a statutory, and discretionary basis is also recorded and monitored.

Financial monitoring takes place which ensures that the policy remains appropriate for available budgets and funding is available for the type of provision required.

D) Assessment/Analysis

Describe your key findings (eg. negative, positive or neutral impacts - actual or potential). Also your assessment of risk.

Strand/community	Impact
Children	A positive impact as the home to school transport policy provides the authority to commission transport which enables children to access appropriate education, including extended discretionary entitlement for students aged under 5.
Young adults	A positive impact as the post 16 transport policy provides the authority to commission transport which enables young adults to access appropriate further education.

Children and young adults with disabilities or special educational needs	A positive impact as both policies define specific criteria for these student groups which enables them to access education through a higher level of support including discretionary entitlement.
Low income groups	A positive impact. Extended rights for students from low income families are defined in the policies which allow equal access to education despite financial restrictions. The post 16 policy also provides information for students on bursary support grants that are available to them.
Students with different religious beliefs	A positive impact. The home to school transport policy defines extended entitlement for students with specific religious beliefs. This allows them to access education at an educational setting that supports their belief.

E) Consultation

Did you carry out any consultation?

Yes No

Who was consulted?

The current policies are live and are published on the Herefordshire Council website for all county residents to access. This enables ongoing consultation with, and feedback from interested groups and individuals. Extensive consultation was carried out prior to the implementation of the policies.

A policy update was carried out in May 2019 which maintained existing entitlement criteria but also provided additional guidance on how the policy should be consistently and fairly applied to all. In preparation for this update stakeholders were contacted and asked to provide feedback on the policy in general, and the May 2019 update. The stakeholders were:

- All Herefordshire primary and secondary schools, including special educational schools
- Herefordshire Council Cabinet members for transport and for education
- Senior council officers from the following council directorates
 - Economy and place
 - Children and Families
 - Adults and communities
 - Corporate support

Describe other research, studies or information used to assist with the assessment and your key findings.

Published policies from a number of similar local authorities was considered when producing the policy update along with guidance from the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, and Department of Education guidance including:

- Post-16 transport to education and training - Statutory guidance for local authorities October 2017
- Home to school travel and transport guidance - Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014

Do you use diversity monitoring categories? Yes No

(if No you should use this as an action as we are required by law to monitor diversity categories)

If yes, which categories?

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy & Maternity
- Race
- Religion & Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

What do you do with the diversity monitoring data you gather? Is this information published? And if so, where?

The diversity of the student population provided with home to school and college transported is recorded at the point of application and monitored monthly. Data is reported internally on a monthly basis to senior council officers.

F) Conclusions

1. Students of all ages and abilities, including those with disabilities and special educational needs benefit from the policies which allow them to regularly access appropriate education.
2. Provision of educational transport as authorised by the policies supports the councils priorities as defined in the corporate plan 2016-2020.
 - Enable residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives
 - Keep children and young people safe and give them a great start in life
 - Support the growth of our economy
 - Secure better services, quality of life and value for money
3. No negative impacts upon any particular groups have been identified, however this will be regularly reviewed through ongoing monitoring

(I) *Taking immediate effect.*

(R) *Recommended to Council/Directors through a Committee or other Report*.*

(S) *Added to the Service Plan.*

(J) *To be brought to the attention of the Equality Manager.*

*Summarise your findings in the report. Make the full assessment available for further information.

NB: Make sure your final document is suitable for publishing in the public domain.