

18 December 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

Here follows an important message from Suffolk County Council.

Suffolk County Council has launched a consultation on proposals to change school and post-16 travel policies.

This is an extremely important consultation as the council currently spends £21M per year getting children to and from school. For some time, we have been concerned that if action isn't taken costs will continue to rise and this isn't something we can afford to happen. We have already introduced a number of efficiency changes to the service saving around £2.6 million however, now, like many other councils across the country, the authority needs to consider making more significant changes.

The council's current school and post-16 travel policies go above legal requirements, which means around 2400 children and young people receive free/subsidised school or post-16 travel that we are not legally required to provide.

In addition, around 2400 children receive free travel to schools further away than legally required. The consultation seeks views on changing these policies and includes three alternative options, pre- and post-16:

Option 1: *In September 2019, change the school travel policy so that it is in line with the legal requirements. This would mean implementing all the changes in one go, including ceasing free travel to the transport priority area schools where it is not the pupils' nearest.*

Option 2: *From September 2019, introduce the changes year by year as a child joins or moves school so that it is in line with legal requirements. This means that we would introduce all the changes on a phased basis.*

Option 3: *Make no changes to the school travel policy but make savings from other services provided by Suffolk County Council.*

More information on the consultation including these options and post-16 proposals can be found in the consultation booklet which can be viewed at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel

Before any decisions are made about the future of school and post-16 travel in Suffolk, it is important that we understand the potential impact of any proposed changes and get as much feedback as possible. Please have your say by responding to the consultation by Wednesday 28 February 2018.

To complete the survey please go to www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel and for more information please contact the school travel teams mailbox schooltravel@suffolk.gov.uk.