

Education System Upgrade & Impact on Home to School/College Travel Assistance

To:

All Schools within the Rotherham Borough

Post-16/Post-19 Education Providers

All Schools outside the Rotherham Borough attended by a Rotherham pupil in receipt of Home to School/College Travel Assistance

URGENT COMMUNICATION

Important Update: Education System Upgrade – Temporary Service Impact on Home to School/College Travel (Applications & Operations)

We are writing to inform you of significant upcoming changes within the Local Authority that will affect the management of Home to School and Home to College Travel Assistance over the coming months. We ask that you read this update carefully and share this information urgently with your staff teams.

Further updates and communication materials will follow, including a leaflet designed as a help guide for parents/carers and we would be grateful for your assistance in arranging appropriate distribution to your pupils, and also publish on your school websites. Copies will also be available on our SEND Rotherham Local Offer webpage.

Overview of the System Upgrade

The Local Authority is preparing to implement a new Education Data and Records System. This upgraded system will support all education functions, including the application, assessment, recording, monitoring and delivery of Home to School/College transport and travel assistance.

Temporary System Downtime

As part of this changeover, both the current and new systems will be unavailable for several days while data is securely transferred.

Exact downtime dates are for the period **Thursday 9th July – Monday 20th July**.

During this period, the following functions will be affected:

- Submitting new travel assistance applications (SEND & Zoom Zero)
- Renewal applications for the 2025/26 academic year
- Processing and assessing applications
- Day-to-day monitoring of routes and transport operations
- Recording changes, incidents and safeguarding updates

We are developing a comprehensive contingency plan to maintain service continuity, including manual processes for monitoring, incident management and communications.

However, response times may be slower than usual, and we kindly request your patience.

IMPORTANT Information relating to Home to School Transport Applications - New School Year September 2026 - 2027

New Travel Assistance Applications – SEND and Mainstream (Zoom Zero Travel Pass)

Parents, carers and family advocates should submit a new application as soon as a school or college place is confirmed, where they believe a child or young person may be eligible.

Closing date for guaranteed assessment before September: Friday 29 May 2026

Applications received after this date will be processed in 'date received order' and may not have a travel solution agreed and arranged for the start of the new academic year.

Please note that the Local Authority's statutory duties apply to usual start and finish times of each school only.

To support timely assessment, all applications must include:

- A fully completed application form
- Confirmation of the named school/college base (where school have more than one site)
- A confirmed timetable – transport cannot be confirmed until one is received.
- Relevant supporting information (EHCP, medical info, risk assessments, photos, proof of income as applicable)
- Transport Care Plan (where required)
- Details of mobility or accessibility needs
- Up-to-date parent/carers and emergency contact details

Early submission is strongly encouraged to avoid delays caused by the system migration.

Renewal Applications Zoom Zero Travel Passes

Renewal applications are required every academic year, including when no circumstances have changed.

Key Information

- The 2025/26 renewal window is now open
- All renewals must be submitted for assessment by **Friday 29th May 2026**

- Applications received after this date cannot be guaranteed to be processed in time for September

Please note:

The Local Authority does not have a statutory duty to provide free transport for pupils once they leave compulsory school age (post-Year 11).

Therefore, Zoom Zero passes cannot be renewed for any pupil entering school-based sixth form.

SEND Travel Assistance Review Applications

The review process will also be impacted by system downtime.

A new application **must** be submitted where any of the following apply ***at any point in time:***

- The child/young person is moving home
- The child/young person is moving to a different educational setting
- A parent/carer wishes the Local Authority to consider an alternative travel solution
- **The young person is currently in Year 11 and moving into post-16 education (including staying at the same establishment and home address)**
- **The young person is in Year 12 or above as they will require a re-assessment of entitlement**

Transport cannot be reinstated where any of the above apply **without a new application being received and entitlement re-confirmed.**

Deadline for review applications: Friday 29 May 2026

System Downtime – Advance Notice

While systems are unavailable:

- Applications **cannot** be accepted or processed
- Changes to existing transport arrangements **cannot** be recorded
- Contact with the Transport Team will remain open, but responses may take longer
- Transport operations will continue via manual contingency arrangements
- Safeguarding and incident procedures will remain fully active

Future Changes to the Application Process

Once the new Education System is implemented, the application process for the following areas may change:

- SEND Travel Assistance
- Zero Fare (Zoom Zero) Passes
- Post-16 travel assistance
- Post-19 travel assistance
- Renewal and reassessment processes

Guidance will be issued to all families and education providers ahead of these changes.

Where to Find Updates

All updates regarding Home to School Transport, SEND travel assistance, **Zoom Zero bus passes and other concessionary travel** will be available on the



Rotherham SEND Local Offer: the SEND Local Offer:
[Transport/Getting Around – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](#)



This will include system downtime dates, application timelines and information about the new system once operational.

There will also be an eligibility checker available in the future which may help parents/carers prior to submitting an application for a travel solution for consideration.

Contact Details

For enquiries relating to:

Applications, eligibility, reimbursement payments, Independent Travel Training:

education.transport@rotherham.gov.uk

Transport operations, safeguarding, incident reporting:

R&E-Passengertransport@rotherham.gov.uk

Thank you for your cooperation, patience and support as we modernise our systems to improve services for children, young people and families across Rotherham.

Home to School Transport & Travel Service