

Appendix 1

Home to School Transport Consultation Summary

Visitor Highlights	
MAX VISITORS PER DAY	156
NEW REGISTRATIONS	94
ENGAGED VISITORS (Submitted a response)	97
INFORMED VISITORS (Downloaded the consultation, but did not submit a response)	308
AWARE VISITORS (Clicked on the consultation site)	419

List of Stakeholders
A range of internal and external individuals/partners including, among others, Headteachers, Chairs of Governing Bodies, Thurrock Council's CEO, Leader of the Council, Children's Services Portfolio Holder, Elected members, CaPa (support service for Disabled children and their families), Residents via the Thurrock Council Consultation Portal, Transport operators, Internal TBC services (Communications Team, Passenger Transport Unit, Children's Social Care, Admissions Team, Awards and Benefits Team, SEND Team etc.

Respondent Demographics	
Disability	The majority of those responding identified their disability as a long term medical condition, this was followed by those who identified mobility issues (but not a wheelchair user) and then mental health condition.
Ethnicity	The majority of respondents identify as White English, Welsh, Scottish, Irish, Northern Irish, British (84.1%), Black or Black British: African (7.1%), Black or Black British: Carribean (1.8%)
Gender	Respondent's gender breakdown is as follows: Female (78.4%) Male (19.8%) "Prefer not to say" 4.5% Transgender (0.9%)

Q1: Should the Council make families living in temporary accommodation for more than 3 months apply to a school near the accommodation in order to avoid long journeys to school?



Yes: 37.1% (36)

No: 62.9% (61)

Summary of the 'Yes' responses

The majority of those supporting a move to a local school after 3 months in Temporary Accommodation felt that children should become settled in a local school as soon as possible for their well-being, friendship building and academic success. Others noted that travelling back to a local school added to the length of the school day and could affect their studies; some also noted the additional cost to the Council and the impact of travel on the environment.

Summary of the 'No' responses

The majority of those who felt pupils in Temporary Accommodation should not move to a local school after three months noted that such children have already experienced high levels of instability and moving schools could affect their studies, mental health, general well-being and confidence. Some were of the view that the Council should offer local housing options and a few felt the decision to move children after three months was financially motivated by the Council. A few mentioned that it should depend on the family circumstance, which should be assessed, and if the circumstances are appropriate then a move should be required.

Q2: Should the families of students aged 16 – 18 with SEND that have a need for transport to and from college or other post 16 facility pay for their transport?



Yes: 27 (27.8%)
No: 70 (72.2%)

Summary of the 'Yes' responses

Respondents were of the view that charging should be implemented, but that it should be means-tested and the young peoples assessed to ensure those with complex needs are offered free travel. Some were of the view that it is unfair to expect mainstream parents to pay and suggested that even if parents of SEND do not pay the full cost of transport/ travel they should contribute. Others felt that PIP or Mobility allowance should be used by young people with SEND to support the full or partial cost of their transport.

Summary of the 'No' responses

Respondents noted that disability was not anyone's fault, but that parents of children and young people with disability face higher living costs due to the higher level of care required. Also, because of the greater amount of time spent caring for young people they often have to reduce their capacity to work meaning less income. Paying for transport could then place further financial strain on the family.

Q3: Should the Council make it clear to parents that transport will only be provided where parents have applied to the nearest three schools to their home address in the case of applications for a primary school place and to the six nearest schools from their home address in in the case of applications for a secondary school place?



Yes: 75 (77.3%)
No: 22 (22.7%)

Summary of the 'Yes' responses

Respondents were of the view that parents who choose a school outside of their local area that requires transport should be made to pay for such transport. It is worthy of note that the question had not specified that SEND children are not involved in the Admission round being considered. Therefore, there were a number of comments around the distance of most special schools. A respondent's comment reflects a view from the SEND perspective: "The point is children with SEN are rarely in the vicinity of the best school for them. Not everyone lives down the road from Treetops. Transport should be provided for SEN children regardless of where they go." The Council does not apply this particular requirement to SEND children, but it does apply separate criteria when assessing an SEND child's eligibility for transport.

Summary of the 'No' responses

The main reasons why respondents were against a child having to move back to a local school were that it might destabilise their schooling what might be the one stable aspect in their lives. Also, noted was the emotional impact of the move on the child i.e. the breaking up of friendships, pupil-staff relationships and the fact that the move to that school in the first place was due to a lack of an available place locally. Some respondents see themselves as disadvantaged as they work and cannot take the child to school or are on a low income and could not afford the transport if they chose to remain at the school that is further away. Also, some respondents mentioned SEND children; as with the summary above the process for SEND transport is carried out separately.

Q 3a: If a place later becomes available at a suitable school near their home address, should the Council expect the child to move back to their neighbourhood school and stop paying for the transport?



Yes: 31 (32.6%)

NO: 64 (67.4%)

Summary of the 'Yes' responses

The majority of respondents in favour of a child moving back to a local school when a place becomes available noted that it was better for the child as less travel time, local friendships from the local school. Also, better for the environment in terms of emissions and traffic. However, many placed the caveat on the option stating that children in exam years (Years 6, 11), children with SEND or safeguarding issues should not be expected to move as it may have a detrimental effect on their studies and/or well-being.

Summary of the 'No' responses

Respondents were of the view that a child should not move back to a local school when a place becomes available because of the emotional, academic, and financial impact of such a move upon the child and their family.