

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**Subject: TRANSPORT ENTITLEMENT UNDER CONTINUED ATTENDANCE**  
**Meeting: EDUCATION EXECUTIVE**  
**Date: 29 October 2013**  
**Author: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

**1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 Falkirk Council's current Continued Attendance policy allows for free home to school transport to be provided for secondary age pupils when:

- they move to a different secondary school catchment area within the Falkirk Council area but remain at their current school;
- and they are studying towards national qualifications.

This policy is called 'Continued Attendance' and reduces the risk of the move impacting on a pupil's education and learning at a critical stage of their education.

1.2 The introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence has meant that studies towards national qualifications begin in year stage S4 in all secondary schools from 2013/14. Previously this could take place at year stage S3, and at S2 in schools that offered 'early presentation'.

Curriculum for Excellence stipulates that all pupils should follow a broad curriculum until the end of S3 at all secondary schools.

1.3 Given the clear change with the Curriculum for Excellence, there is no longer a reason to provide free school transport to S3 pupils under Continued Attendance if they move to a different area.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to seek agreement from the Education Executive to revise the wording of the Transport Policy with respect to Continued Attendance to reflect the current Curriculum for Excellence policy on studying for national qualifications.

**3. CURRENT ENTITLEMENT UNDER CONTINUED ATTENDANCE**

3.1 During the school session 2012/13, 46 pupils were provided with free school transport under the Continued Attendance policy at a cost of £45,000. Most of these pupils were provided with season tickets for public bus services, but where these are not available a taxi was provided. Of these 46, 4 pupils were in S3.

#### **4. RECOMMENDED WAY FORWARD**

##### **4.1 Continued Attendance Policy**

Free transport under Continued Attendance is not a statutory entitlement, it is a discretionary entitlement that Falkirk Council offer. As it is discretionary, any alteration can be agreed without the requirement for a consultation.

##### **4.2 Transport Policy**

This change would mean that the wording of section 6.1 of the Transport Policy will need to be changed so that entitlement to discretionary free school transport under Continued Attendance is only available to pupils in year stages S4, S5 and S6.

Appendix 1 shows the current wording and the proposed change.

##### **4.3 Effective Date of Change**

It is recommended that this change takes effect immediately and will apply to all new requests for free transport under Continued Attendance.

#### **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **5.1 The Education Executive are asked to agree:**

- (i) the change to the Continued Attendance Policy**
- (ii) the recommended change to the Transport Policy with respect to continued Attendance (as detailed in Appendix 1); and**
- (iii) that these changes takes place with immediate effect and apply to all new transport requests.**

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**Joint Acting Director of Education**

**Date: 29 October 2013**

Contact Officer: Richard Teed, ext 6621

#### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Nil

## **CONTINUED ATTENDANCE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TRANSPORT POLICY**

It is proposed that the wording of **Section 6.1 of the Transport Policy** is changed as detailed below so that entitlement to discretionary free school transport under Continued Attendance is only available to pupils in year stages S4, S5 and S6.

### **Current Wording**

'Once a child has secured a place at their catchment area school, they are entitled to continue to attend that school even if their family moves outwith the catchment area but remains within Falkirk Council boundaries. Transport is not normally provided for children living outwith their catchment area, except where a child is at secondary school and has commenced courses towards their national qualifications. This will depend on the school, but can be in S2 and/or S3 and all subsequent years (S4, S5 and S6), and is generally from the Start of June when the child is still technically in S1 or S2, but has started their S2 or S3 studies. These stages at school are considered by Falkirk Council to be essential to the continuity of the child's education and transport may be provided in this circumstance to minimise disruption. Transport entitlement to assist continued attendance is not provided for children moving outwith the Falkirk Council boundary. Distance entitlement and safety criteria apply in these cases.'

### **Proposed Wording**

'Once a child has secured a place at their catchment area school, they are entitled to continue to attend that school even if their family moves outwith the catchment area but remains within Falkirk Council boundaries. Transport is not normally provided for children living outwith their catchment area, except where a child is at secondary school and has commenced courses towards their national qualifications. This will be in S4 and both subsequent years (S5 and S6), and is generally from the Start of June when the child is still technically in S3, but has started their S4 studies. These stages at school are considered by Falkirk Council to be essential to the continuity of the child's education and transport may be provided in this circumstance to minimise disruption. Transport entitlement to assist continued attendance is not provided for children moving outwith the Falkirk Council boundary. Distance entitlement and safety criteria apply in these cases.'