



Terms of Reference

Home to School Transport/Travel Assistance Service

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<p>Our key question:</p>	<p>What are the impacts of the Home to School Transport application process, and its subsequent outcomes, on the parents/carers and child's capacity to access their education and how does that fit with the aspiration for Birmingham to become a child friendly city?</p>
<p>1. How is O&S adding value through this work?</p>	<p>Rebuilding relationships and trust with parents, carers and families involved by putting their experience and legitimate concerns at the centre of the inquiry and by using that evidence to establish the main areas of concern where the current service needs to be improved.</p>
<p>2. What needs to be done?</p>	<p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascertain the travel assistance eligibility criteria as set out in the relevant legislation for 0-25 the process, procedure and decision making practices (including EHCPs). • Examine the information requested to be provided by applicants on application forms. • Investigate the various stages of the travel assistance application and assessment process including but not limited to:- the level of and training provided to staff involved, numbers of applications and breakdown of numbers approved/declined, decision making criteria, how decisions are communicated to applicants, how routes are planned and communicated including how safe pick up points are assessed. • Establish the criteria for provision of and incidence of travel assistance training provided for service users. • Clarify the stages of the appeals process. • Ascertain the monetary costs of administering the travel assistance application, assessment and appeals process. • Establish the incidence of children who are not in education as a result of being declined and how any resulting potential harmful impact on the child involved is minimised. • Clarify the interpretation of what constitutes "exceptional circumstances." • Identify areas of and seek examples of evidence of good practice from elsewhere nationally and locally. • Identify the main areas for improvement emerging from the evidence provided to the inquiry to explore what can be done to improve the service being delivered in the future.



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<p>3. What timescale do we propose to do this in?</p>	<p>A call for evidence with Terms of Reference attached will be circulated in September 2019. An informal planning meeting of the scrutiny committee members will take place in October 2019. An evidence gathering session will be held on 13th November 2019 with a view to taking a report to City Council setting out the findings from the Inquiry in early 2020.</p>
<p>4. What outcomes are we looking to achieve?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A rebuilding of relationships and trust with parents and families. • Ensure that their legitimate concerns are taken into account. • Develop a report to City Council highlighting the findings from the inquiry. • Identify proposals for how the service can better meet the needs of users going forward.
<p>5. Proposed Witnesses</p>	<p>Birmingham City Council:- Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing Community Groups including Autis and West Midlands Parents United Against Autism Parent Carer Forum Parents with children attending Special Schools across the City. City of Birmingham School (COBS) Birmingham Children's Trust Travel Assistance applicants and Service Users at other schools across the city via school noticeboard. Schools. Parent & Carer Forums. PTA's.</p>