

# South Wilts Grammar School for Girls

A Specialist Science, Maths and Computing College

Stratford Road, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3JJ

Company Registered Number: 07451741

VAT No: 114 6429 30

Email head@swgs.wilts.sch.uk

Tel 01722 323326 Fax 01722 320703

RECEIVED  
16 OCT 2014  
PASSENGER TRANSPORT



Headteacher Michele Chilcott BSc Deputy Headteacher Carolyn Stammers BA MA

14 October 2014

Education Transport Consultation  
Passenger Transport  
Wiltshire Council  
County Hall  
Trowbridge  
BA14 8JN

Dear Sir/Madam

## Proposed changes to education transport for post 16 students, grammar school pupils, and the 'continuity transport' policy.

I would like to raise the following points in response to the changes planned to education transport for post 16 students, grammar school students and the 'continuity transport' policy

### 1. Post 16 charges

It is clear from your documentation that you plan to raise the charge, for post-16 transport, from £446 to £625 and that there would be a reduced rate for those students who reside in a household, where the income is less than £20,819 per annum. An increase in the cost of post-16 transport may deter some students from choosing the sixth form provider which best suits their needs. This is a concern when there is a need to ensure that we are meeting the requirements of RPA.

What is not clear from your documentation, is why the cost to attend a grammar school is £51 more than to attend an alternative provider. Both South Wilts Grammar School for Girls and Bishop Wordsworth School are state funded and as such provide a free education. It appears that a blanket charge has been applied in this instance, which discriminates against grammar school students and is not equitable. Both grammar schools, are inclusive in their entry requirement and it is not uncommon for up to 90 girls and 70 boys to attend this sixth form provision, who were previously educated elsewhere. Although I have sought to gain clarification on this matter from Wiltshire Council, to date this has been unsatisfactory.

I am also perturbed concerning the availability of subsidised transport, for low income families, for students attending one of the county's grammar schools, when this is available if a student was to attend another institution. In an email I received from Ian White on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2014 he states:

*There would be no reduction in the charge for low income families, although as the schools are able to offer bursaries to individual students we would hope that they would be able to use this to enable students from low income families to benefit from attendance where the cost of transport would be an issue.*



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This move discriminates against grammar school students and is not equitable. All sixth form providers receive additional funding in terms of the Sixth Form Bursary. Why is it that a student attending a neighbouring institution, would be eligible for the subsidy of £156, but not if they attend either South Wilts Grammar School for Girls or Bishop Wordsworth School?

## 2. Grammar school transport

The proposed grammar school charge of £676 for all students aged 11-18, is higher than the proposed cost to travel to an alternative sixth form provider. The document does not provide the cost charged to attend other schools in Wiltshire, when the named school is not their nearest school and the student is aged pre-16. This results in this being an arbitrary figure, without any forms of comparison. The document also states that schools would be encouraged to provide bursaries for individual cases of need for pre-16 travel. School funding has been reduced and continues to be impacted by cuts. This school, just like other schools, does not have the funding available to subsidise students, from normal funding streams. Has this request been made of other secondary providers?

I hope that the points I have raised will be taken into account when this consultation is discussed in full.

Yours faithfully



Michele Chilcott  
Headteacher

Enclosure

