

Home to School Transport Service (HTST) and Parent and Carers Council (PACC) Co-production: Working Agreement

Introduction

The Home to School Transport (HTST) Service is committed to working in co-producing all new policy and practice with PACC and Amaze.

The Home to School Transport Service is committed to ensuring that the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is at the heart of all we do and is the top priority in improving and developing the service.

HTST and PACC acknowledge the finding of the Independent LGA review report, published in March 2020, which says the service must:

Rebuild trust with schools and settings, parents/carers, VCS, members and officers from other departments. The council should consider having a SEND charter and agreed co-production policy (which includes HTST), between parents/ carers and the Council, setting out clear roles, responsibilities and expectations.

The new SEND Strategy sets out plans to develop a SEND charter which will cover a wider co-production policy.

As this will take some time, this working agreement covers co-production arrangements between HTST and PACC.

Agreement and Arrangements

1. BHCC is required to produce policies that are in accordance with the Government's HTST guidelines, read in conjunction with the Education Act.
2. PaCC representatives will represent B&H parent carers in shaping HTST policy and practice. Reps will feedback to the PaCC Steering Group and seek the views of the PaCC membership as required. This includes sharing information and updates on service developments. This agreement adopts a principle of transparency and openness in sharing of information.
3. All policies and developments relating to HTST will be co-produced with PACC and written in parent carer accessible language.
4. All communications of significance with parents and carers will be ~~discussed and co-~~produced with PaCC
5. Where there are consultations on new policy or practice with parents and carers, there will a pre-consultation discussion with PaCC to co-produce content, wording, analysis and use of feedback to inform developments. Sufficient time must be agreed for PaCC to comment
6. PaCC and families using transport will be fully consulted on any changes to the service and their feedback will be given full consideration and used to formulate policy and practice. Consultations should not take place during school holiday periods. PaCC will also expect that schools and colleges are similarly consulted.
7. The action plan responding to the recommendations in the Independent Review will be co-produced with PaCC and there will be joint monitoring and evaluation of progress.
8. PaCC representatives will sit on the HTST Governance Board.

9. An Amaze worker, who is also a parent/ carer, will be invited to all Transport Panels to provide a parental perspective in relation to decisions about eligibility for transport. PaCC/Amaze Reps and the LA Panel members must have training in HTST & Education Act Law
10. New systems in relation to the transfer of pupil information will be fully co-produced with PACC representatives.
11. There will be regular communications with families about arrangements for their children and young people, which are produced in consultation with PACC.
12. A PACC representative will be invited to join all interviews for new HTST posts and PACC will be invited to contribute to new job descriptions for posts in the service.
13. Co-production meetings will be held fortnightly between the HTST and PACC for the foreseeable future.
14. PACC will work in partnership with the HTST to produce an annual survey of parent/ carer satisfaction with the service and will use the results to make further improvements.
15. Where there is disagreement between PaCC and the LA about any matters relating to home to school transport, this will be made clear in associated papers and communications.

While co-production work is funded by BHCC, PaCC capacity is finite and parent carers working hours need to fit around caring responsibilities. This means that the expectations and timeline for PaCC input to the co-production of HTST should be discussed and agreed at each stage, to keep the work manageable and adequately resourced.

This agreement will be reviewed after 12 months and updated as necessary, in agreement with all parties.