

Available Government Funding for Return to School and College Transport

In summary in respect to additional transport:

- If the new school and college transport is intended for transporting children and young people to their place of education, then, generally Department for Education (DfE) Home to school transport (HTST) funding applies.
- Local services open to the general public may be available for Covid-19 Bus Service Support Grant (CBSSG) Restart and Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) funding. These types of funding should not be used for additional, dedicated school and college transport, except in exceptional circumstance as set out in the table below.

Note that:

- Central government already provides funding for HTST to which children and young people have a statutory entitlement - through MHCLG core local government funding and the DfE extended rights transport grant.
- The aim of the CBSSG Restart and BSOG funding is to increase local services open to the general public.

	<u>DFE HTST Funding</u>	<u>CBSSG</u>	<u>BSOG</u>
Funding Purpose	To support additional, dedicated transport for the purpose of getting children and young people to school and college, whilst social distancing reduces the capacity of existing public transport.	This is to support all public bus services, while patronage is reduced during the Covid-19 response.	BSOG is one of the key forms of existing BAU Government support to encourage the supply and demand of bus services. The Government decided to continue to pay <u>BSOG at pre-Covid levels</u> during the outbreak even if services were reduced or cancelled.
Allocation Amount & Spend Timings	More than £40 million has been allocated to Local Transport Authorities (LTA) for the period between September 2020 to Autumn half term). Allocations for each LTA are published on gov.uk . This funding will continue into the second half of the Autumn term. However, it is possible that the amount	From 4 August up to £27.3 million per week, until funding is no longer needed (reviewed by DfT each month to ensure it is within the cap and is spent on essential costs and services). This funding will be split and distributed: A) directly to bus operators to support commercial services; and	Around £200 million per year for commercial bus services. This is normally paid to operators based on fuel usage in running local services. In addition to the £200 million of commercial BSOG, £43 million of BSOG is devolved to LTAs annually who can use it to support bus services, particularly socially necessary bus services.

	distributed to a LTA will change depending on local need.	B) directly to LTAs, to support socially necessary tendered bus services.	
Who does the funding go to and what can it be used for?	Funding is allocated to LTAs and could be used for additional capacity, such as community transport vehicles, taxis, PHVs, coaches, buses, rail and SEND transport.	Commercial CBSSG goes to bus operators for services open to the general public and LTA CBSSG goes direct to LTAs to support tendered services.	Commercial BSOG goes to bus operators for services open to the general public and LTA BSOG goes direct to LTAs to support tendered services.
Under what circumstances can the claims be made for school transport?	<p>LTAs automatically received their share of DfE grant funding for the purposes of funding additional, dedicated home to school and college transport capacity.</p> <p>These funding allocations were based on the number of students in a local area and how far they have to travel, and are to support additional transport to school and college for pupils of compulsory school age and students in 16-19 education.</p> <p>LTAs are best placed to identify need in local areas, and to decide the best way to increase capacity and ensure value for money.</p> <p>All additional, dedicated home to school and college transport services, (including commercial services designated as closed school services) should utilise DfE HTST grant funding in the first instance. CBSGG should</p>	<p>This is outlined in detail in the CBSSG Terms and Conditions and is as follows:</p> <p>LTAs and bus operators agree the required service levels for services open to the general public. These discussions on public transport should consider the increase in demand brought about by the return to education. If public service levels over 100% are required this must be agreed between bus operators, the LTA and DfT.</p> <p>All planned additional, dedicated school transport services, (including commercial services designated as school transport services) should utilise DfE grant funding and CBSSG funding should not be used for that purpose.</p> <p>However, in exceptional circumstances, where a bus operator identifies an urgent operational need for additional vehicles for school transport above and beyond what could have been reasonably</p>	<p>Home to school transport services are not eligible for commercial BSOG.</p> <p>However, commercial BSOG will continue to be paid at pre-Covid levels for the duration of CBSSG Restart, even if some services open to the general public are reallocated or new services are added for school transport. During that period operators should not see any changes to their BSOG funding.</p> <p>As and when CBSSG Restart ends, commercial BSOG will stop being paid at pre-Covid-19 levels and be paid on those services only open to the general public.</p> <p>The same applies to LTA BSOG.</p>

	<p>only be used for these services in exceptional circumstances and for a short duration (see adjacent column for reasons).</p> <p>'Business as usual' (BAU) home to school transport services should be funded from existing BAU funding, such as MHCLG LA core funding.</p>	<p>assessed in consultation with the LTA (i.e. significantly more demand for school transport or an overcrowding risk which emerges at the start of the academic term), then an operator can temporarily claim, or continue to claim, commercial CBSSG funding for the vehicle(s).</p> <p>Following this, bus operators should liaise with the LTA as soon as possible to seek to agree the use of DFE HTST Funding for any extra vehicle(s). If services exceed 100% of service levels, bus operators need to notify DfT, copying the relevant LTAs. Bus operators will need to stop claiming CBSSG funding for the additional vehicle(s) from the point they start using DFE HTST Funding</p> <p>By contrast, the LTA CBSSG Restart funding, provided to LTAs for tendered services, cannot be used for school transport. LTAs should discuss with DfE their HTST funding needs, rather than claiming through the LTA CBSSG funding.</p>	
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