



Department
for Transport

Vernon Everitt
Transport for London
Palestra (11th Floor)
197 Blackfriars Road
London
SE1 8NJ

Baroness Vere of Norbiton
Minister for Roads, Buses and Places

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: baroness.vere@dft.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dft

Our Ref: MC/297327

31 July 2020

Dear Vernon,

Thank you for your letter of 26 June 2020 regarding the temporary suspension of free travel for under 18s in London. I am now writing to set out the Government's timetable and criteria for temporarily suspending the under 18s concession.

I can confirm that we would like the temporary suspension of free travel for 11-17 year olds to be implemented **immediately after October Half Term**.

In your letter, you asked for clarification on the eligibility criteria for continued free travel. The following children will remain eligible for free travel:

- Children aged 10 and under
- Children aged 11-17 who live more than two miles from their school/college
- Children aged 11-17 who live less than two miles away from their school/college if they:
 - have a social worker
 - have an Education, Health and Care Plan
 - are in alternative provision (i.e. educated in a pupil referral unit, or an alternative provision academy/free school)
 - do not have a safe walking route
 - cannot walk due to a medical condition or lack of mobility

You also asked for an update on progress with the Equality Impact Assessment. My officials continue to work on this document and will share it with Transport for London (TfL) ahead of its publication.

In order for the temporary suspension of free travel for under 18s to be successfully implemented immediately after October Half Term, it is vital that

DfT and TfL continue to work closely and collaboratively together, and with other key stakeholders, including the Department for Education, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and London Councils. My officials stand ready to work with TfL to commence the work required immediately.

As part of this, I would be grateful if TfL could confirm what needs to be true in order to meet this deadline and what my officials can do to facilitate this. Our very strong preference is for an Oyster smartcard solution and we would ask that TfL explores all possible avenues with regards putting that in place. Exceptionally, we would consider a flashcard solution for some age groups only if absolutely necessary.

I would like to thank Shashi Verma, Andrew Anderson and their team for the proactive work they have undertaken in order for us to be able to implement the temporary suspension of free travel for 16 and 17 year olds by 6 September. However, this work should now be stopped and reversed in order to ensure that free travel is still available in its current format until the end of October Half Term.

Finally, I understand from my officials that TfL has made excellent progress in developing plans for managing demand in September when schools return. I look forward to receiving further information on these soon and thank you and your colleagues for your work on this.

Yours,
Charlotte

BARONESS VERE OF NORBITON