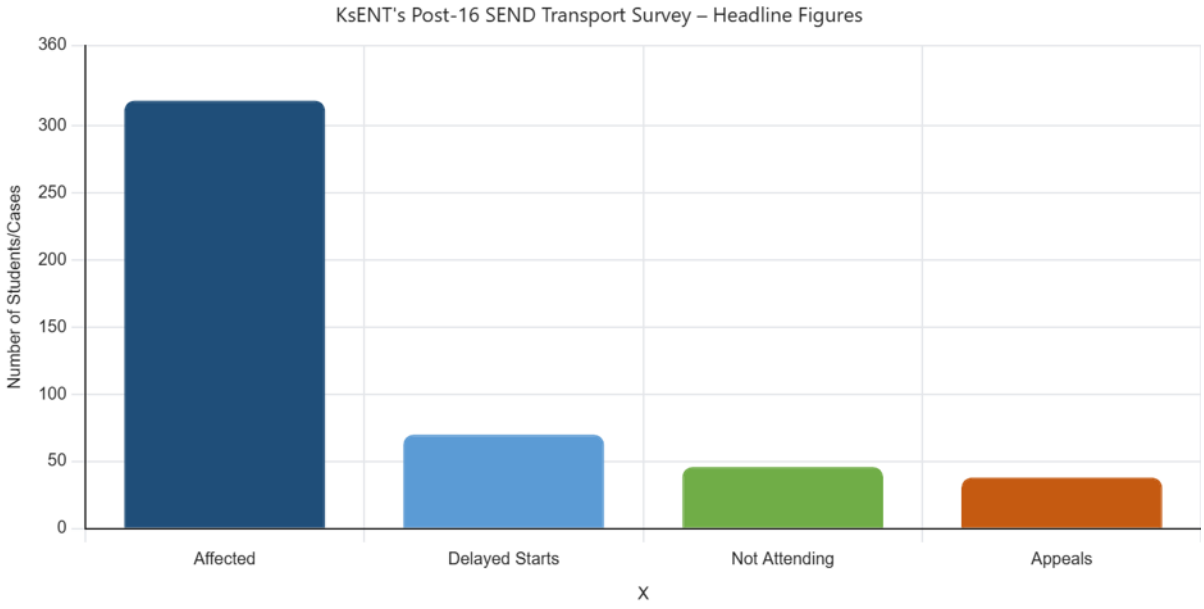
Post 16 SEND School Transport Survey Feedback – October 2026

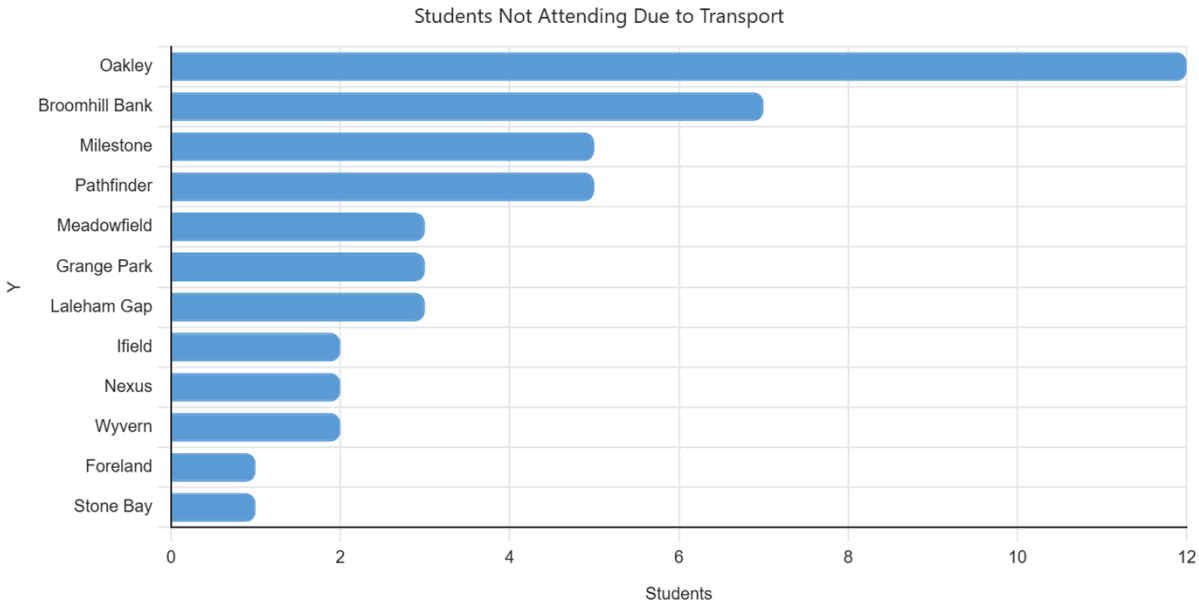
Findings from Kent Special Educational Needs Trust's (KsENT) Post 16 SEND Transport survey indicate widespread concerns regarding the impact of Post-16 SEND Transport changes. KsENT schools report that current arrangements have created barriers to educational access, increased anxiety for young people and their families, and placed additional demands on education providers. The survey highlights the requirement for a consistent and sustainable approach to transport provision that supports attendance, inclusion and positive outcomes for learners with SEND.

Responses were received from 13 KsENT schools which identified 319 students who are affected by the Post-16 SEND Transport changes. Of these, 70 students are experiencing delayed starts, 46 students are not attending education, due to transport difficulties and KsENT schools report 38 active transport appeals. The data demonstrates that transport changes are affecting safeguarding, attendance, wellbeing and educational outcomes across KsENT's schools.



KsENT schools consistently report that transport difficulties are preventing some students from accessing education altogether, whilst others are experiencing reduced attendance through late arrivals, early collections or part-time attendance arrangements. Several KsENT schools report students who have either experienced delays starting their placement or have not attended since the beginning of the academic year.

KsENT schools highlight that students have missed induction activities, course introductions, transition support and opportunities to develop relationships with peers and staff. These missed experiences are particularly significant for students with autism and anxiety, who rely on predictable routines and consistency to engage successfully with education.



A recurring theme is the impact on students' emotional wellbeing and regulation. KsENT schools report increased anxiety, distress and dysregulation as a result of uncertain or inconsistent transport arrangements. Some students with complex needs can become highly distressed when established routines are altered unexpectedly.

KsENT schools also have safeguarding concerns where students are unable to attend education, remain at home for extended periods, or are relying on temporary and unsustainable transport arrangements. In several cases, KsENT schools are undertaking welfare checks, home visits and extensive communication with families and external agencies to ensure students remain safe and engaged.

KsENT schools report considerable pressures on families. Parents and carers have shared:

- Reduced working hours or leaving employment.
- Increased transport costs.
- Reliance on extended family and friends.
- Elevated stress and anxiety levels.
- Difficulties maintaining consistent attendance arrangements.

A number of KsENT schools report that transport difficulties have affected student enrolment and retention.

All responding KsENT schools describe significant additional demands on staffing and resources.

The evidence submitted by KsENT schools identified five consistent themes:

1. Heightened safeguarding risks and responsibilities.
2. Loss of education and reduced access to learning.
3. Increased anxiety, dysregulation, mental health and wellbeing concerns.
4. Significant impact on families and carers.
5. Increased workload and financial pressures on KsENT schools.

Conclusion

The survey demonstrates that Post-16 SEND Transport challenges are having a significant and widespread impact across KsENT schools. The consequences extend beyond transportation itself and affect safeguarding, education, attendance, wellbeing, school capacity and future participation in Post-16 provision. Evidence suggests that the impact is particularly acute for young people with complex SEND who rely upon consistency, routine and specialist support to access education successfully.