

SEND Home to School Transport

A Guide for Parents/Carers



This information is published by Hertfordshire County Council

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/school-admissions/home-to-school-transport>

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Who is entitled?

This guidance is for parents/carers who have children of statutory school age with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Parents/carers of young people with SEND but without an EHCP should apply for transport in the normal way. Initial queries can be sent to

transfer.admissions@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Home to school transport assistance is not provided to pre-school children.

Distance

Young people with an EHCP will be eligible for transport support if attending the nearest suitable school to their home address as named on their EHCP and living:

- Two miles or more from that school if the child is between the age of 4 and 8 (Reception-Year 3)
- Three miles or more aged between 8 and 16 (Year 4 -Year 11)

Individual Need

A young person will also be eligible if unable to walk the required distance due to their SEN or mobility needs, even when accompanied by a suitable adult. In these cases, applicants are required to submit independent professional evidence to support their application for transport.

Low income

Your young person may be able to get free home to school transport if your family has a low income. That's if your young person is entitled to free school meals or you get the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

- Children aged between 8 and 11 who are eligible and

- living more than 2 miles and less than 3 miles from their nearest suitable school
- Children aged between 11 and 16 to one of the three nearest between 2 and 6 miles.

What if I prefer a school further away?

Transport is provided to the nearest suitable school named on your young person's EHCP, under the criteria on page 1.

Officers in the SEN Assessment Team make the decision about which is the nearest suitable school that can meet your young person's needs.

Parental Preference

The Assessment Team's decision about the nearest suitable school may not always be the same as the school you would prefer your young person to attend. You may prefer a school/college that is further away.

If your preferred school is named in your young person's EHCP and is further away than the school identified by the SEN Assessment Team, you will usually be responsible for arranging transport and for meeting any travel costs.

If you are considering asking for your preferred school/college to be named, it is very important that you take your transport responsibility into account.

You will be required to sign a transport disclaimer.

What type of transport is provided?

We will arrange suitable transport support to enable eligible young people to access their education placement and return home at the end of the usual school day.

Potential modes of transport

Public transport passes – for young people able to use public transport to get to school. Travel Training can be provided free of charge for students aged 16+.

A seat on a shared vehicle – with other young people traveling to school.

Where there is an available vehicle running to a school and there is space, this will be considered first and where possible the young person will be added. If there are no available vehicles, a larger vehicle may be provided.

Personal Travel Budget (PTB) - four journeys per day at 45p per mile is provided for parent/carers who prefer to arrange their own transport. If you would like to apply, please email: schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Free Travel Training – The County Council is committed to promoting and supporting the delivery of independent travel training (ITT), with its partners to enable more young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to gain independent travel training skills, in preparation for and during their transition into Post 16 education and training.

Independent travel training enables young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to engage in activities which support outcomes associated with growing independence.

Is a Passenger Assistant provided?

Passenger Assistants (PA) are not automatically provided. When considering whether a PA is necessary, we take account of the following:

- A young person's medical needs, particularly where rescue medication is required.
- Where an individual young person's needs create a clear danger or health and safety risk to themselves and other passengers on the vehicle.
- Where a PA is required to help manage the journey and support all passengers on the vehicle.

Passenger Assistants are not medical professionals and, in an emergency, will call for help from the emergency services, via 999.

The transport operator is required to contact families before travel commences and families can arrange a 'meet and greet' to familiarize themselves with the driver and/or passenger assistant.

This is your opportunity to discuss transport arrangements with the driver and offer helpful advice and information so your child can get off to a good start on the vehicle.

Some parents arrange with the driver for their children to take a soft toy or music and headphones to listen to, at the discretion of the operator. This can be a very useful method of enabling children to enjoy their journey to school in cases where they may otherwise have been anxious or nervous.

What if I have concerns about what is happening on the vehicle?

From time to time, you or your young person may be concerned about travel arrangements. This is understandable, especially at the start of the year or if changes are made throughout the year.

There are a number of ways for you to express your concerns:

- You should first raise concerns directly with the transport operator so they can work with you and the school to resolve any difficulties. Operators will often involve the school in discussions so further support can be provided for the young person on a daily basis.
- If difficulties persist, you should inform the HCC Contract Management Team on 0300 123 4050. We will offer support and consider what reasonable adjustments have been made and any further options that can be explored.
- **New vehicles or solo travelling are only agreed in very for exceptional cases.**

Can I make my own arrangements and be paid instead?

Many parents prefer to make their own travel arrangements rather than use HCC contracted transport.

The County Council will pay travel costs in the form of a Personal Travel Budget (PTB). If you want to apply for a PTB contact the SEN School transport team via email:

schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk

If a PTB is agreed, the County Council pays for four home-school journeys per day at 45p per mile.

For example, where a family resides 10 miles from the school, four journeys, one journey to and from school in the morning and one to and from school in the afternoon, is 40 miles:

4 journeys = 40 miles x 45p = £18 per day.

Based on an average term of 65 school days = £1170 per term.

Benefits of a Personal Travel Budget

- You can take your young person directly to school/college, allowing for significantly shorter journey times in some cases.
- Allows you flexibility to cover before and after school clubs, medical appointments etc. which are not covered by contracted vehicles.
- If you drive your young person to school/college, they will not be sharing transport with other students, so the time they leave home in the morning and arrive home in the afternoon would never change, nor would the driver.

Travel Training

The Council has a Travel Training team who work with young people with special educational needs or disabilities to provide them with the confidence and skills to travel on buses and trains.

Being able to travel on public transport is a key life skill even after leaving education. It assists and encourages young people to make choices about how they live, go about daily life independently and fulfil their potential into adulthood.

How does it work?

Our team of travel trainers train young people on a one-to-one basis. This is usually on a home to school or college journey.

They will arrange to visit you at home to talk through the training to make sure you and your young person are happy with it.

The trainer will create a training plan for the young person that meets their needs. This will take into account suitable routes.

Initially, the trainer will accompany the young person on their journey, giving encouragement and guidance, until the young person develops the skills to travel on their own. This can be a gradual process at the young person's own pace.

Our trainers work during the school and college holidays.

They will provide regular feedback on their progress so you will always know how things are going.

Boarders

Where young people with an EHCP require a residential placement following assessment:

- For termly boarders, we will provide travel assistance to and from home to the residential placement at the beginning and end of each term and half term.
- For 52-week residential placements, we will provide assistance for travel to and from home to the residential school for eight visits throughout the academic year.

Behaviour

Your young person will be expected to conform to reasonable standards of behaviour which allows all on the vehicle to travel safely.

Any behaviour which affects the safety of other travellers or the operation of the vehicle will not be tolerated and offenders may have their travel support removed.

If travel support is removed parents/carers will be responsible for getting their child to and from school/college and will be provided with a Personal Travel Budget.

Please see the Pupil Behaviour Guide available at: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport

What can I do if I am not entitled?

Where there is no entitlement to transport under Hertfordshire's Home to School Transport policy, parents are responsible for arranging for their young person to get to school/college.

Whilst it is not the responsibility of the County Council to facilitate any arrangements, you may wish to consider:

- Walking or driving your young person to school.
- Accompanying your young person on public transport.
- Arranging Travel Training so that they may travel to school independently – a guide to Travel Training is available on the Local Offer page [SEND home to school transport \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/SEND-home-to-school-transport)
- Car share with another family.
- Arrange for a friend or family member to take your young person to school/college, paying their fuel expenses if appropriate.

