

# SEN Home to School Transport

## A Guide for Parents



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?

The County Council provides home to school transport assistance to children with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who attend the nearest suitable school to their home address as named on their EHCP and resides:

- Two miles or more from that school if the child is under the age of 8.
- Three miles or more over the age of 8 (Year 4 onwards).

Or where a young person is 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 request.

## Low income policy

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

## Primary Schools

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 may be able to get free home to school transport.

## Secondary Schools

Transport is provided to the nearest suitable school as named on the EHCP and to one of the three nearest between 2-6 miles.

## What if I prefer a school further away?

Transport is provided to the nearest school as named on the EHCP, under the criteria on page 2.

The assessment and decision as to the nearest school that can meet a young person's needs is made by the SEND Team.

The SEND Team's decision on the nearest suitable school that is able to meet a child's needs may not always be the one a parent feels is the best school for their child.

### Parental Preference

Parent/carer may prefer a different school that is further away than the nearest school that is able to meet the young person's needs.

**However**, if the parent/carer preferred school is named in the young person's EHCP, the parent/carer must accept full responsibility for arranging transport and any costs that go with this and will be required to sign a transport disclaimer.

**If this is something that you are considering, it is very important that you take this into account.**

## What type of transport is provided?

Where an entitlement to transport exists, the County Council will ensure that suitable transport support is arranged to enable a young person to access their education and return home at the start and 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** - four journeys per day at 45p per mile for parent/carers to take their children to and from school. If parent/carers would like to apply for this they should apply via email to; [schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto: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.

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 the arrangements with the driver and offer advice on any helpful information so that 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, a parent or young person may have some concerns over the travel arrangements, this is understandable, especially at the start of the year or if there are changes throughout the year.

Where this is the case, there are a number of ways in which concerns may be addressed:

- Parents should first raise their concerns with the operator directly so that they may work together to resolve any difficulties. Operators will often include the school so that further support can be provided between all the parties that work with the young person on a daily basis.
- If difficulties persist, you should inform the County Council. 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 an expected solution and are rarely agreed.**

## Can I make my own arrangements and be paid instead?

Many parents prefer to make their own arrangements to take their child to school rather than they travel to school in a contracted vehicle. The County Council will pay mileage reimbursement costs in the form of a Personal Travel Budget (PTB). If you want to apply for a PTB please contact the SEN School transport team via email to [schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

If a PTB is agreed the County Council pay parent/carers four journeys per day at 45p per mile to take their children to and from school.

For example, where a family resides 10 miles from the school, four journeys, one to school in the morning and one to school in the afternoon is 20 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 child directly to school, 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 child to school, they will not be sharing transport with other children, 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 schooling. It assists and encourages people 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 son/daughter 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 children with an EHCP require a residential placement following assessment:

For Termly boarders the County Council will provide assistance for travel to and from home to residential school at the beginning and end of each term and half term.

For 52 week residential placements: the County Council will provide assistance for travel to and from home to a residential school for eight visits throughout the year.

## Behaviour

Your child will be expected to conform to reasonable standards of behaviour which allow others 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 at their own expense.

Please see the Pupil Behaviour Guide available at:  
[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://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 child to get to school.

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

- Walking or driving your child to school.
- Accompanying your child on public transport.
- Arranging Travel Training so that they may travel to school independently.
- Contacting any local school contractors to explore whether you are able to make a private arrangement for your child to travel in the vehicle (i.e. spare seat).
- Car share with another family.
- Arrange for a friend or family member to take your child to school, paying their fuel expenses if appropriate.

