

# Travel Assistance Policy for 0–25 year-olds in Education

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# Introduction

This document sets out the policy of Luton Council (“the Council”) in relation to the provision of travel assistance for 0–25 year-olds in education who are resident within Luton. It is available on the Council’s website at:

[Luton Council Travel Assistance web page](#)

It is intended to provide clarity for children, young people, adults, parents and carers facing a wide range of circumstances. We are always looking to improve the information we make available and will use any feedback provided to us to develop this statement. If you wish to provide any feedback on the policy, please contact:

For children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP): [travelassistance@luton.gov.uk](mailto:travelassistance@luton.gov.uk)

For students without an EHCP: [mainstreamtravelassistance@luton.gov.uk](mailto:mainstreamtravelassistance@luton.gov.uk)

This policy is divided by the following age groups as the relevant legal provisions are grouped this way:

**Part 1:** Pre-compulsory school age (0–4-year-olds) – someone in this category is referred to in this policy as a pre-school age child. This also applies to someone in the Reception Year that has not yet reached compulsory school age.

**Part 2:** Compulsory school age (5–16-year-olds) – someone in this category is referred to in this policy as a child. Children become of compulsory school age at the start of the next term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Children cease to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they turn 16.

**Part 3:** Young persons of sixth form age (16–19-year-olds) – someone in this category is referred to in this policy as a young person. The legal definition is a person over compulsory school age but under the age of 19, but this definition also includes a person who began a particular course of education or training at a school or college before turning 19 and continues to attend that course.

**Part 4:** Adult learners (19+) – someone in this category is referred to in this policy as an adult.

**Part 5:** then sets out how to apply for travel assistance and how to appeal against decisions about travel assistance.

This policy will come into effect from September 2025, for all new applicants starting a new course/key stage. However, for children of compulsory school age the additional discretionary assistance, set out in the previous policy, will be available until the end of term in July 2026.

# Key Principles

The following key principles apply across all age ranges covered in this policy:

**Admission to a place of education does not confer automatic entitlement to travel assistance:** Admissions and travel assistance are separate matters and acceptance at a particular school or other institution, or the naming of a school/institution in an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), does not automatically entitle the child or young person to travel assistance.

**Budgetary considerations:**

The Council has a limited budget for the provision of travel assistance to those in education. Any discretionary decision about the provision of travel assistance will take account of this and the number and type of competing claims that are made upon it.

**Changes in circumstances:**

Parents or carers (in the case of those aged under-18) of children in receipt of travel assistance and recipients of travel assistance themselves (in the case of those aged over-18, or any person acting on their behalf) must tell the Council immediately of any change in circumstances which may affect their entitlement to travel assistance.

**Independent travel training:**

Applicants for travel assistance will be assessed for independent travel training (ITT) and recipients of travel assistance will be expected to undertake suitable ITT as part of their education to help them develop their independence.

**Other means of travel:**

When taking discretionary decisions about the provision of travel assistance, the Council will consider all other ways and means for the applicant to get to or from the school or institution in question.

**Personal Transport Budgets:**

The Council promotes the use of personal transport budgets wherever appropriate as this helps individuals and families to have the most control over their travel arrangements. This will also include the provision of mileage reimbursements.

**Parental involvement:**

Parents are expected to accompany their children and young people to school or college where necessary unless there is a compelling reason why it is not reasonable to expect them to do so.

**Reviews of travel assistance:**

All grants of travel assistance will be reviewed on a regular basis and in all cases where there is, or may be, a significant change in circumstances affecting eligibility for travel assistance (e.g. change in school or home address, change in personal or family circumstances, change in recipient's needs). If you are unsure whether the changes will affect eligibility, please contact the relevant travel assistance team as laid out in the introduction above. Any changes to travel assistance following a review will be implemented from the beginning of the next academic term, or sooner in the case of a house or school move.

**Travel concessions, bursaries, state benefits etc:**

The Council expects young persons of sixth form age and young adults who apply for travel assistance to have applied for and/or made use of all travel concessions, bursaries, state benefits for which they are eligible.

**Travel for other purposes:**

When taking discretionary decisions about the provision of travel assistance the Council may consider how the applicant travels (or is able to travel) for non-educational purposes, e.g. recreation, shopping, family visits etc.

**Eligible journeys:**

Transport between sites, during the school day, is the responsibility of the schools/colleges involved.

**Independent special day or residential school:**

If the child/young person is attending the school named in his/her EHCP and the local authority agrees that a nearer school is not appropriate to meet their needs, suitable travel arrangements will be made.

Certain levels have been set for different types of placements; if a child is attending a termly residential placement, transport will only be provided at the beginning and end of each term and at the beginning and end of the mid-term holiday.

If a child is attending a weekly residential placement, two journeys per week will be supported under this policy.

For pupils requiring a 52-week placement, the LA will make travel arrangements up to a maximum of three return journeys per year.

**Behaviour**

The responsibility for ensuring that students behave safely and responsibly whilst travelling is the collective responsibility of students, parents, carers, schools and other learning/training providers, transport operators and Luton Council.

Where there are repeated instances of unacceptable behaviour, or a single incident of extreme unacceptable behaviour, Luton Council reserves the right to temporarily or permanently withdraw travel assistance. This will be determined in consultation with the pupil's school or learning/training provider. However, the final decision rests with the Council's Passenger Transport Unit.

For students with EHCPs, discretion will be given where unacceptable behaviour occurs as a result of the pupil's individual needs. However, where it is determined such behaviours are unresolvable and/or compromise the Council's duty of care to its staff and other pupils, the Council reserves the right to temporarily or permanently withdraw provided transport. In such circumstances, the Council may only be able to offer a mileage reimbursement to the family. Such decisions will only be determined in consultation with the child/young person's school, the statutory SEND Assessment Team and the Passenger Transport Unit.

## **Passenger Assistants**

Luton Council employ Passenger Assistants on some routes. All members of transport staff have received emergency first-aid training. Although there is no statutory duty for transport staff to administer medication, they are expected to ensure the health and safety of all pupils in their care. Luton Council will ensure that every driver and passenger assistant is able to respond to an emergency situation; however, they will not normally be expected to administer medical assistance. Every parent, as part of their application, is required to provide detailed information directly to the SEND Transport Team about their child's SEND and medical needs. This information forms the basis of the pupil's transport arrangements. In some cases, where a child has very specific and complex needs, an additional care plan from medical professionals may be required.

Members of transport staff are not permitted to carry or administer medication or to replace medical accessories (for example, gastrostomy or tracheotomy tubes) on board a vehicle. This exception to this is pre-loaded EpiPen devices as these devices are loaded with the correct dosage of medication and do not require members of transport staff to accurately measure medication within a confined and possibly moving space.

Where it is assessed to be unsafe for a pupil with complex or acute medical needs to travel with a passenger assistant, the council will work with appropriate health services to secure a medically trained professional such as a nurse, to accompany the pupil of the vehicle. A risk assessment will be undertaken to ensure the correct level of medical support can be arranged.

In the event of an emergency on board a vehicle, the procedure is for the passenger assistant or driver to seek guidance from medical professionals by calling 999 and asking for a paramedic crew to attend the scene. It is for parents or carer to decide whether they wish to their child to travel on regular transport in these circumstances.

# Definitions

## **Compulsory school age:**

Children become of compulsory school age at the start of the term following their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Children cease to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they turn 16.

## **Nearest suitable school:**

The nearest school qualifying school (with places available) that is suitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. If a pupil has been permanently excluded from school or has been placed under the In-Year Fair Access Protocol, the nearest suitable school becomes the nearest school (or pupil referral unit/alternative provision if necessary) that can offer the child a place.

## **Qualifying school:**

This means a school (or nursery) maintained by the Council, a pupil referral unit, a non-maintained special school, academy, or a place where a child is receiving education arranged by the Council otherwise than at school.

## **Statutory distance:**

Where the distance from home to the nearest suitable school is:

- greater than 2 miles for children up to age 8
- greater than 3 miles for children aged 8 and over

The distance is measured by the shortest walking route that is considered safe. Routes are measured from the front of the child's house to the school gate on well-lit roads and footways using a specially designed computer software package.

## **Faith school:**

A faith school is a state funded school that the Secretary of State for Education has legally designated as having a religious character.

## **Home address:**

Is the place where the child is habitually and normally resident. Travel assistance is assessed/provided from one main home address only. There is no requirement for the Council to consider or provide travel assistance to or from multiple addresses. Whilst each family will have their own living/care arrangements, the Council does not consider or provide travel assistance from multiple addresses resultant of those arrangements. If a child spends time during the school week at more than one parental or other address due to a formal or informal care arrangement, parents will need to decide which is the main address (this would

usually be the address used to allocate the school place). When it is unclear which is the main address, or there is no agreement between the parents, the address identified on the child's registered General Practitioner (GP) records, and for which supporting evidence can be provided, will be considered as the home address for assessment of travel assistance. Parents may be required to supply additional documentary evidence to satisfy the Council that the child lives at the address put forward by the parents.

## Types of Travel Assistance

This policy uses the phrase 'travel assistance' because the form this takes will vary and often does not involve the Council providing transport. The Council will determine what is appropriate in each case, taking account of its legal obligations, the needs of the applicant, safety considerations, the best use of the Council's resources, any other relevant matter. As a guide, the following are the types of provision made in most cases:

- **Bus pass/ticket or funding for weekly/monthly travel** – This is a free pass or ticket for use on public transport or funding for the parent/carer to purchase a weekly or monthly bus pass (whichever is the most cost effective). Funding for bus tickets is paid half termly (6 payments across the academic year) in advance, however, should attendance fall below 95%, the following half term payments are reduced to the parent or carer (in the case of those under-18) or the individual or a person acting on their behalf (in the case of those over-18). The parent/carer or adult individual then assumes full responsibility for the travel arrangements and getting the child, young person or themselves to their place of education on time and achieving good attendance at a minimum of 95%.
- **Mileage Reimbursement** – This is based on the distance measured between the home address and the educational establishment, it is paid at a rate of 45 pence per mile. Mileage can be claimed for walking, cycling or driving. The mileage reimbursement will be calculated based on the mode of travel i.e. if it is being used to drive a child to school the route will be measured on a driving route by the Council. Mileage reimbursement will be paid half termly (6 payments across the academic year) in advance, however, should attendance fall below 95%, the following half term payments are reduced to the parent or carer (in the case of those under-18) or the individual or a person acting on their behalf (in the case of those over-18). The parent/carer or adult individual then assumes full responsibility for the travel arrangements and getting the child, young person or themselves to their place of education on time and achieving good attendance at a minimum of 95%.

- **Personal Transport Budget (PTB)** –This is the usual offer of travel assistance for those not of compulsory school age. A PTB will be paid half termly (6 payments across the academic year) in advance, however, should attendance fall below 95%, the following half term payments are reduced to the parent or carer (in the case of those under-18) or the individual or a person acting on their behalf (in the case of those over-18). The parent/carer or adult individual then assumes full responsibility for the travel arrangements and getting the child, young person or themselves to their place of education on time and achieving good attendance at a minimum of 95%. It is anticipated that the use of personal transport budgets can meet most individual and family's needs, and it is the Council's policy to provide travel assistance in this form wherever possible. Please refer to Appendix D on how Personal Transport Budgets are calculated.
- **Transport vehicles** – The provision of a vehicle to transport a child, young person or adult to and from their place of education. Vehicles and drivers are provided by the Council or a suitably qualified, registered, commercial provider working to contractual standards set by the Council. Individuals will travel together in a suitable vehicle, specially adapted as necessary to meet their needs. Each route will be planned based on the main start and finish times of the place of education and the shortest possible route for all passengers on a particular vehicle. Passengers will be picked up and dropped off at a location that is agreed in advance, within a reasonable distance from their home, in many cases from recognised bus stops. Pick up and drop off at the home address will only be made where it is deemed essential due to the individual's significant needs.
- **Provision of a walking escort** – A walking escort may be provided to accompany a child, young person or adult to their place of education which may be using public transport. Walking escorts will usually only be provided in very exceptional circumstances where parents/carers/family members/friends are not reasonably able to accompany them.
- **Other** – The Council may provide any other form of travel assistance which is considered suitable and will consider any reasonable requests from applicants about other forms of travel assistance.

## Part 1: Pre-schoolers aged 0-4 (pre-compulsory school age)

For pre-school aged children not in the Reception Year, the Council's policy is not to provide travel assistance except where the pre-schooler has an EHCP, and the circumstances are said to be exceptional. This would be considered a discretionary decision. Any discretionary travel assistance will only be offered in the form of a Personal Transport Budget or Mileage Reimbursement (see Appendix D).

The Council will consider all information provided in the application but will have regard to the following:

- Distance and journey time from the pre-schooler's home to their place of education and the cost of providing travel assistance.
- What alternative means of facilitating attendance there may be.
- What alternative placements or options there may be.
- The content of any EHCP (including anything about travel).
- The best use of the Council's resources and the competing claims upon them.

Travel assistance applications for children in the Reception Year, who have not reached compulsory school age, will be assessed against the statutory school age eligibility criteria. Eligible pupils will be offered a Personal Transport Budget or Mileage Reimbursement (see Appendix D)

If your pre-schooler is considered eligible by the travel assistance team but you feel that the offer of a Personal Transport Budget is unsuitable based on your exceptional circumstances, please follow the process outlined in [Part 5](#) of this policy.

## Part 2: Children aged 5-16 (compulsory school age)

The Education Act 1996 sets out the categories of children and young persons of compulsory school age who are eligible for free travel assistance. The Council's policy is to provide travel assistance to these categories of eligible children in accordance with its legal obligations, but not otherwise unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Where travel assistance is provided it will be whatever the Council considers is necessary and suitable for the purpose of facilitating the child's or young person's attendance at school for the normal school day. A list of the most usual types of travel assistance is set out in the [Types of Travel Assistance](#) section above.

There are four categories of eligible children to whom the Council is obliged to provide travel assistance free of charge, as set out below.

### **Category 1: Distance**

Travel assistance will be provided for children who attend their nearest suitable school that has places available and the distance between their home address and school is over the statutory walking distance. The distance is measured by the shortest safe walking route from the front of the child's house to the school gate on well-lit roads and footways using a specially designed computer software package.

Below these distances the responsibility for the journey to school rests with the parents or carers. The statutory walking distance is measured along a route that a child might reasonably be expected to walk to school accompanied where necessary by a parent or carer.

Where a parent or carer chooses a school for the child but there is a qualifying school nearer to home, which he or she could attend, then travel assistance is not available under this heading. In the case of children with an EHCP there may be cases where a school that is not the nearest qualifying school is named on the basis that the parents will be responsible for transporting them.

### **Category 2: Low-income families**

"Low-income family" means one where the child is entitled to free school meals or where one or both parents (with whom the child lives) are in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit. Children in such families who do not qualify for travel assistance in category 1 (distance) above are nonetheless entitled to travel assistance if they satisfy the following criteria:

- Primary Aged Children: Children aged between 8 and 11 years of age from low-income families are entitled to free travel assistance where they are attending their nearest suitable school, and that school is more than 2 miles from their home.
- Secondary Aged Children: Children aged 11-16 (in year groups 7 to 11) from low-income families are entitled to free travel assistance if they meet either of the following criteria:
  - any one of their three nearest suitable schools, providing the school

- they attend is more than 2 miles and less than 6 miles from their home.
- Where a parent has chosen a qualifying school on the grounds of their religion or belief and if, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer their home. The child must have been admitted to the school based on the family's religion or belief. Evidence of the parent's religious affiliation must be provided to either the school or the Travel Assessment Team to support the claim for transport. Travel assistance will be provided where they live more than 2 miles but not more than 15 miles from the school.

For secondary schools, the 6-mile upper limit to the three nearest schools and the 15-mile limit to a school preferred on grounds of religion or belief will be measured along road routes.

### **Category 3: Unsafe walking route**

Travel assistance will be provided for all children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to the nearest suitable school because the nature of the route is deemed unsafe to walk, even when accompanied by a parent or carer.

The safety of a particular route will normally be assessed by an officer from the Travel Assistance Teams in conjunction with an officer from the Council's Transport Department.

### **Category 4: Special Educational needs or disability**

Children who do not qualify for travel assistance under category 1 (distance), category 2 (low income) or category 3 (unsafe route) above are nonetheless entitled to travel assistance if they are attending the nearest qualifying school to their home which is suitable for their needs but have special educational needs, a disability or mobility problem and for this reason cannot reasonably be expected to walk to that school, even if accompanied by a parent or carer.

As noted above in relation to category 1, in the case of children with an EHCP there may be cases where a school that is not the nearest qualifying school is named on the basis that the parents will be responsible for transporting them.

## Part 3: Young persons aged 16-19 (sixth form age)

This section of the policy contains the Council's Transport Policy Statement, as required by the Education Act 1996. Each year, the Council must publish details about the travel assistance available to young people for the upcoming academic year (2025/26). This assistance is intended to help students attend their educational or institutions, including schools, further education (FE) colleges, 16-19 Academies, and other approved settings where the Council arranges education or training.

The policy applies to young people aged 16 to 19 who have started their course before turning 19. To qualify for this assistance, students must also reside in Luton for the entire duration of their course. The purpose of this support is to ensure these students can access the education or training they need without facing unnecessary travel challenges.

The Council expect applicants to have applied for and made use of all other sources of assistance before applying for travel assistance from the Council. Financial assistance may be available from (or by applying through) the school or further education institution in question and Appendix A sets out full details of these schemes. In addition, there are various concessionary travel schemes in Luton which may be available, and these are set out in Appendix B.

There are 2 categories of eligible children as set out in the section below. The 2 categories of eligible children are as follows.

### **Category 1 – Students from low-income families**

Students meeting **all** of the following criteria are eligible to receive assistance with travel costs from Luton Council:

- Students from low income\* families and learners in local authority care or those that have recently left local authority care.
- Students must be resident in Luton throughout the duration of the course.
- Students enrolled on and attending a full-time course engaged with learning or training at:
  - a further education institution (e.g. Luton Sixth Form College, Barnfield College, Central Bedfordshire College).
  - a school or academy (e.g. Cardinal Newman Catholic School).
  - a local authority maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education.
  - at any establishment (not falling within the above categories) at which the authority secures the provision of education or training under section 15ZA of the Education Act 1996.
- Students must be over compulsory school age but not aged 19, or over, on 31 August in the year in which their course of study began.
- Students must live further than three miles (walking route) from the nearest institution to offer their chosen course.
- Where a student opts to attend an institution other than their nearest college the chosen course must differ by at least 50% to that offered by nearer institutions. For example, a student may be studying 4 A Levels and 2 of these may not be

available at nearer colleges. In this case assistance with travel costs will be provided. However, if 3 of the A Levels are available at a more local institution then assistance will not be provided.

\*Low income is defined as students whose parents meet the criteria used for assessing eligibility for free school meals (the current criteria is set out below) or where their parents (with whom the child lives) receive maximum working tax credit:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

The Council will provide eligible students with half termly payments direct into their bank account.

The Council will pay half (50%) of the cost of a weekly bus ticket up to a maximum value of £7.50 per week. For example, if a weekly bus ticket costs £10 the Council will provide £5 towards these costs. If the weekly ticket costs £17 the Council will provide a subsidy of £7.50 and the student will need to contribute the remaining £9.50.

Further information:

- Applications will not be approved when a place in a nearer college was not offered due to late application or missed interviews.
- Applications for transport assistance must be received by 16th September 2025 to qualify for financial assistance in the first half of the Autumn Term.
- Half termly cash payments will only be made if the student's attendance is 95% or above.

## **Category 2 - Special Educational needs or disability (SEND)**

It is expected that students with SEND will have explored all available bursaries prior to making an application for travel assistance.

Young people who do not qualify for travel assistance under category 1 (low income), above may be eligible for travel assistance if they are attending the nearest education institution to their home which is suitable for their needs but have special educational needs, a disability or mobility problem and for this reason cannot reasonably be expected to walk to their place of study.

In the case of children with an EHCP there may be cases where a school/college that is not the nearest qualifying school/college is named on the basis that the parents/carers will be responsible for transporting them.

Where a young person opts to attend an institution other than their nearest college the chosen course must differ by at least 50% to that offered by nearer institutions.

Students with an EHCP on a supported internship are eligible for travel assistance. Other pupils on a traineeship, internship or apprenticeship will not be eligible for travel assistance.

A young person with SEND meeting the eligibility criteria for travel assistance will be provided with a Personal Transport Budget (see Appendix D) or a Travel Pass including support with Independent Travel Training.

The Council's 16-19 travel assistance provision is a subsidised offer and the young person and/or their parents or carers will be required make a £450 contribution towards the cost of this, which in the case of Personal Transport Budgets will be deducted from the Personal Transport Budget offer (see Appendix 4). In exceptional circumstances where a young person is provided with council organised transport, the payment of £450 would need to be paid in 3 equal payments of £150 (payable at the start of each term).

The amount of contribution will be reviewed annually and will take account of any change in the relevant Council budget. Any changes will be notified to the affected young persons and their parents or carers. This transport policy statement will be amended and re-published where any costs are changed.

Appendix A lists sources of travel support available to young people through schools and further education institutions. Enquiries and applications in respect of these should be made through the young person's school or institution.

Appendix B is a list of travel concessions which may be available to young people.

If the young person is considered eligible by the travel assistance team but you feel that the offer of a Personal Transport Budget is unsuitable based on your exceptional circumstances, please follow the process outlined in [Part 5](#) of this policy.

## Part 4: Adults aged 19+ with an EHCP

This part sets out the Council's transport policy statement as required by section 508G of the Education Act 1996 in respect of academic year 2025/26 for adults, that is to say persons who are not of compulsory school age or sixth form age. Section 508G of the Education Act 1996 requires the Council to specify in this document:

- a. any transport or other arrangements, and any payment of travelling expenses, made or to be made in relation to the academic year under section 508F in relation to adults (Post-19) with an EHCP; and
- b. any travel concessions which are to be provided to adults (Post-19) with an EHCP receiving education or training at certain places of education.

This policy statement also sets out the Council's arrangements under section 508F in relation to adults without an EHCP.

The Council expect applicants to have applied for and made use of all other sources of assistance before applying for travel assistance from the Council. Appendix 3 sets out a list of travel concessions and other sources of support for adults aged 19+.

The Council is only required by law to provide free transport for adults in education when it is considered necessary. The Council also has the option to pay for travel expenses in certain situations, but this is not mandatory. The Council will only consider paying for travel expenses if the adult has an EHCP or if the circumstances are exceptional.

Young people with an EHCP may be eligible for travel assistance if they are attending the nearest education institution to their home which is suitable for their needs but have special educational needs, a disability or mobility problem and for this reason cannot reasonably be expected to walk to their place of study.

The default offer of travel assistance for eligible adults is a Personal Travel Budget.

If the adult is considered eligible by the travel assistance team, but you feel that the offer of a Personal Transport Budget is unsuitable based on your exceptional circumstances, please follow the process outlined in [Part 5](#) of this policy.

## Part 5: How to apply for travel assistance and appeals against decisions about travel assistance

A formal application must be made to the Council's Travel Assistance Teams for all travel assistance in this policy, and all applications must be made on the prescribed forms. The forms are available on the internet at [Luton Council Travel Assistance Page](#).

For pre-schoolers and children, the application should be made by a parent or carer. For young persons with an EHCP attending a special school or college, applications should be submitted by the young person or adult, or by a person acting on their behalf.

Each application will be processed as quickly as possible but during the application process, parents of a child of compulsory school age remain under their legal duty to ensure the child attends school regularly, and all other applicants for travel assistance remain responsible for their attendance.

Consideration will be given to everything said in applications and all evidence provided in support as well as all matters to which the Council is required by law to have regard, to determine whether to provide travel assistance and if so, what form that assistance should take.

If an application for travel assistance is not approved by the Council, or the applicant disagrees with the type of travel assistance offered, in the first instance, speak to the relevant travel assistance team that made the decision on the numbers below, who will be able to assist you further in the matter. Should you still be dissatisfied with the decision, there is a right of appeal as set out below. During the appeal stages, travel assistance will not normally be provided and changes to existing travel assistance will not normally be made.

Appeals should be made within 20 working days of the decision being received by the parents or carers and on the appropriate form which can be obtained by contacting Travel Assistance as follows:

For students with an EHCP:

- o Telephone: 01582 548098
- o Email: [travelassistance@luton.gov.uk](mailto:travelassistance@luton.gov.uk)
- o Website: [Luton Council Travel Assistance Page](#)

For students without an EHCP:

- o Telephone: 01582 548227
- o Email: [mainstreamtravelassistance@luton.gov.uk](mailto:mainstreamtravelassistance@luton.gov.uk)
- o Website: [Luton Council Travel Assistance Page](#)

The appeal will need to set out the exact nature and grounds of the appeal. The appeals process has two stages:

### **Stage 1**

A Senior Council officer, that did not make the original decision, will consider the appeal and the applicant will receive confirmation that the appeal is under review. A decision and notification will be made within 20 working days from receipt of the appeals form. If the applicant remains dissatisfied with the outcome, they should notify the Council in writing within 20 working days of receiving the appeal decision and the appeal moves to stage 2.

### **Stage 2**

Stage 2 is a review by a panel of three Council officers independent of the original decision-making process which will take place within 40 working days. The panel will consider written and verbal representations from (or on behalf) of the applicant as well as from a Council officer involved in the case and provide the applicant with written notification of its decision within 5 working days. This can be carried out in person or via video conferencing.

If the applicant remains dissatisfied, the further options are to submit a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, a complaint to the Secretary of State for Education and legal proceedings but it is for applicants to decide which of these, if any, they wish to pursue.

No further applications can be made within the academic year unless there has been a material change in circumstances.

## **Other complaints**

Complaints about the transport service being provided (e.g. punctuality of school transport, or a delay in responding to correspondence) should be made using the Council's Corporate Complaint Procedure, after working to resolve the issue with the Passenger Transport Team in the first instance. The Council's Corporate Complaint Procedure can be accessed at the following website link:

[Comments, compliments and complaints](#)

## **How we use your data**

Luton Council respects your rights and is committed to ensuring that it manages your data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You can find out more about how we manage your data using the following link:

<https://m.luton.gov.uk/Page/Show/privacy-cookies/privacy-notice/service/Pages/Children-families-education.aspx>

# Appendix A - Links to travel support available from schools and further education institutions for young persons of sixth form age

## Local to Luton:

[Barnfield College - Finance](#)

[Luton Sixth Form College - Finance](#)

[Cardinal Newman Catholic School - Finance](#)

[Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form - Finance](#)

[The Bedford College Group - Finance](#)

[The Sixth Form Advantage Schools - Finance](#)

## National:

[16-25 Railcard | Only £35 | Railcards](#)

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Eligibility - GOV.UK](#)

[TOTUM UK | The #1 UK Student Discount Card and App](#)

# Appendix B: Travel concessions which may be available for young persons of sixth form age

## **Local to Luton:**

[Bus Passes for Students | Student Travel | Arriva Bus](#)

[Student Ticketing | Centrebus](#)

[News | Grant Palmer](#)

[Home | Uno \(unobus.info\)](#)

[Concessionary fares](#)

## **National:**

[16-25 Railcard | Only £35 | Railcards](#)

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Eligibility - GOV.UK](#)

[TOTUM UK | The #1 UK Student Discount Card and App](#)

# Appendix C: Travel concessions and other sources of support for adults aged 19+

## **Local to Luton:**

[Bus Passes for Students | Student Travel | Arriva Bus](#)

[Student Ticketing | Centrebus](#)

[News | Grant Palmer](#)

[Home | Uno \(unobus.info\)](#)

[Concessionary fares](#)

## **National:**

[16-25 Railcard | Only £35 | Railcards](#)

[16 to 19 Bursary Fund: Eligibility - GOV.UK](#)

[TOTUM UK | The #1 UK Student Discount Card and App](#)

# Appendix D – Personal Transport Budgets

## Summary

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is a payment given to those with an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP), who are eligible for travel assistance to help with the cost of travel to and from an educational institution.

The value of a PTB is dependent on the distance between an eligible person's home and their place of education. A PTB is granted at the discretion of the Council, therefore even if a person is assessed as being eligible for travel assistance, they may not be granted a PTB if it is not cost effective for the Council to do so.

Those accessing and using a PTB must meet the eligibility requirements of the *Travel assistance policy for 0–25-year-olds in education* and agree that they will use this funding to make their own travel arrangements to facilitate attendance at a place of education. There is no separate application for a PTB. PTB's will be considered by Luton Council's Travel Assistance Team as part of the travel assessment process.

Whilst parental agreement is necessary for children of compulsory school age, who meet the eligibility thresholds for free travel assistance, it is not required for others who are not of compulsory school age.

## Using the PTB

The PTB must always be spent in a way that ensures the eligible person attends their place of education. The PTB can be used to pay for a variety of non-council transport services, for example:

- Family member or responsible adult is paid to drive the eligible person to and from their place of education.
- Car sharing with others.
- Purchase a bus pass (or public transport ticket) for a relative or friend to travel with the eligible person.
- It could be used to pay for childcare for a sibling, at breakfast clubs or afterschool clubs to enable the parent/carer to travel with the eligible person.
- To pay a relative or responsible adult to walk with siblings to school, so that the parent/carer is able to travel with the eligible person.

If you accept the PTB, you are taking full responsibility for organising the travel to and from the eligible person's place of education.

If you use the PTB to employ someone yourself, then you will be responsible for complying with relevant rules regarding Tax and National Insurance, Employment Law, Insurance, Health and Safety or any other relevant rules or legislation in force at that time.

The Council always recommends that you have a check carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on anyone that you are thinking of employing.

If you use the PTB to enter into contracts with organisations e.g. after school clubs, or individuals: you are responsible for complying with the terms and conditions of those contracts e.g. payment arrangements, notice of cancellation, etc.

You will:

- have control over how the payment is used that allows you to get the eligible person to and from their place of education
- accept responsibility for the decisions made regarding the use of the payments and understand what the consequences are for misuse

You **cannot** use your payment:

- To buy or utilise a space on transport services from Luton Borough Council
- For any purpose that does not enable you to get the eligible person to and from their place of education.
- For any activity that is illegal, unlawful or unsafe
- For other purposes that may bring the Council into disrepute

Although you have control over how payments are spent, the money can be reclaimed by the Council if it is not used in accordance with this guidance.

If you are granted a PTB, you may wish to discuss this with your child's place of education as they may be able to put you in touch with others who also receive a PTB. You could look into working collectively to ensure the best use of the PTB.

### Calculating the value of a PTB

The value of the PTB is determined by the distance of the eligible person's home address to the education establishment they attend. The payment is a fixed amount, based on proximity, and bears no relationship to the cost of a taxi or hired vehicle.

The distance will be calculated based on the mode of travel i.e. if it is being used to drive a child to school the route will be measured on the shortest driving route.

Payments are made based on the eligible person attending their education establishment for the number of days in each school year. PTB payments are not made for work experience or additional journeys the school/college require pupils to take.

The following four distance bands are used to calculate the value of the PTB.

Distance (one way home to school/college)	Annual PTB Offer
0 – 2.49 miles	£2,100
2.5 – 4.99 miles	£2,625
Between 5 - 9.99 miles	£3,150
Over 10 miles	£5,250

If the PTB is awarded partway through a school year or if the eligible person attends on a part-time basis, the value of the PTB will be adjusted on a pro-rata basis to reflect the less frequent travel needs.

Parental contributions of £450 per academic year are required for young people who are in post 16 education. The contribution will be deducted from the PTB payable each half term. The contribution will equate to £75 each half term.

## **Payment of PTBs**

The PTB will be paid into the nominated bank account of the parent/carers (in the case of those under-18) or the individual or a person acting on their behalf (in the case of those over-18). Payments will be made in advance of every half term, which means the academic year value above will be split into 6 equal payments.

If there is more than one eligible person from the same household attending the same education setting, only one PTB will be paid.

The payment arrangement and value will be reviewed at the end of each half term and may be adjusted, suspended or terminated if:

- The eligible person's attendance falls below 95%
- The eligible person accesses short break stays away from the family home.
- There is more than one eligible person, or other member of the same household each receiving a PTB and attending the same school or another school nearby.

## **Change of circumstances**

You must notify the Council immediately in writing or by email about any change in your circumstances that may affect your eligibility for travel assistance and/or your PTB payment, for example:

- If you move address or change education establishment or campus.
- Change of timetable that affects the eligible person's school hours or days
- Long term absences (5 consecutive school days or more)

If you fail to notify the Council of any change to your circumstances, which the Council later decides would have had the effect of reducing or ending the eligible person's entitlement to payments, the Council may terminate your PTB payments. The Council may also seek to recover any monies that you should not have received.

If you are unsure about whether a change of circumstances will affect the PTB payments, you are advised to discuss this with the Travel Assistance Team.

If any change to your circumstances means that the person's eligibility for travel assistance is withdrawn, then the PTB payments will cease.

# Appendix E - Independent Travel Training – How Does it Work?

Independent Travel Training (ITT) is a free service available to children and young people with SEND who are eligible for travel assistance to school or college.

Once the child or young person has successfully completed the training, it is expected that they will be able to undertake the journey from home to the education setting using the route/journey they have been trained to undertake. The Council will continue to evaluate and assess the child/young person after the training to identify if/when ongoing support is required.

## What is Independent Travel Training?

ITT is provided by a team of dedicated trainers who work one to one with children and young people to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding to be able to independently access different activities within the community.

The team of trainers focus specifically on developing skills to keep children and young people safe when accessing their communities, incorporating stranger awareness and appropriate interactions with safe strangers, developing social skills including communication and reflection/decision making and what to do when things don't go to plan.

Each training plan will be individual and bespoke to the child or young person, reflecting their specific needs, development areas and circumstances. Individual's development, learning and retention is different and therefore the duration (number of sessions) will be different for every child or young person that undertakes the training.

The travel training journey will usually start with a home or school visit followed by an initial assessment to make sure it is appropriate for the child or young person to be considered for the training and that the training planned accurately reflects the support needs and circumstances of the child or young person. This visit will be a great time to discuss any questions that the child/young person or parents/carers might have. The trainer will work along with the parent/carer throughout the course and will keep them up to date with progress along the way.

Training will be conducted in four stages and on a one-to-one basis:

**Stage one** begins with a dedicated known trainer accompanying the student for their entire journey, often beginning by travelling with the child/young person to the bus stop, sitting and travelling with them on the bus and then accompanying them to their education setting. At this point the trainer will be demonstrating the different stages to the child/young person, who will be able to observe the trainer.

**Stage two** will be a natural progression, as the child/young person becomes more confident and capable. During this stage, support from the trainer will gradually reduce over time, facilitating the child/young person to take the lead and behave independently under the supervision and care of the trainer.

**Stage three** is where the young person will travel independently, whilst being shadowed by the trainer for either whole or part of the journey, the trainer will only intervene in emergencies, this is continued until their trainer is confident, they are ready to travel safely and independently on their

own. Once the trainer is confident that the child or young person is competent travelling alone, without any need for intervention from the trainer, they will progress to the final stage.

**Stage four** is the final stage, at this point, the training program will involve the trainer handing over to a different trainer and a coordinator to shadow the student for an impartial assessment of competency. Once training is complete, the child/young person will unlock the benefits of becoming an independent traveller. This includes:

- Promoting and developing independence to enable children/young people to access education settings and social activities
- Increasing confidence and helps children/young people feel safer in their community
- Helping to improve social skills and maintain relationships
- Developing decision making and problem-solving skills
- Opening routes to further education, employment or leisure as they progress and continue into adulthood

A successful Independent Travel Training service is dependent on building trust with the child/young person and their family, working together (including the school) to break down barriers to traveling independently, supported through open and transparent communication and engagement with families, schools and other key individuals in the child's/young person's life. The trainers will ensure that they keep all relevant parties up to date with progress, so that all involved can support the child/young person.

### **Identification of children/young people for Training**

The identification of suitable children/young people for independent travel training will be undertaken using several channels.

When applications are made to the Council requesting support with travel arrangements to schools and colleges the Travel Assessment Team will consider whether a child/young person has the potential to become an independent traveller.

If it is identified that a child/young person may have the potential to become an independent traveller, this will be explored further by the independent travel training team, with both the school and family to determine if training is appropriate for the individual.

Direct referrals can also be made for training and will be assessed for suitability. It is expected that as the service demonstrates successful outcomes for young people, that direct referrals will be received from families and schools.