

# Trafford All Age Travel Assistance Policy

## Introduction

This policy describes the availability of transport and travel assistance for children, young people and vulnerable adults who live in Trafford. It takes into account legislation and government guidance which is described in Annex 1.

The policy will come into effect on 1 June 2020 and will apply to travel assistance provided from 1 September 2020 to 31 August 2021. We review this policy every year.

Our policy aims to:

- support those most in need
- help people achieve independence
- provide the most cost effective travel assistance so we make best use of our resources
- promote and encourage the use of sustainable travel

Our Sustainable modes of travel strategy describes how we will develop and promote sustainable travel options to get to school, college or other place of education or training. These options have health benefits for children and young people and bring about environmental improvements.

The policy is split into sections depending on the age of the person who requires transport.

**Children** – home to school transport for pre-school and school age children 2 to 16 years.

**Young people** – travel assistance to education or training for young people 16 to 19 years (or up to 25 with an education, health and care plan) who started their course before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Adults** – travel assistance for vulnerable adults 18 years and over including adults attending daycare and adult learners who started a course after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

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## **SECTION A – Children**

### **1. Introduction**

This section applies to preschool and school age children age 2 to 16 years.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to make sure their child attends school. This duty applies to children of compulsory school age attending either mainstream or special school. Compulsory school age starts on the 1 September, 1 January or 1 April after a child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday and ends on the last Friday in June in the school year in which they are 16.

Travel arrangements are an important consideration when making school preferences as parent/carers have responsibility to make sure their child gets to and from school at the appropriate time each day.

In certain circumstances, we provide travel assistance for eligible children to attend their nearest qualifying school but parent/carers still have responsibility to apply for this.

In addition to providing travel assistance to children who meet the eligibility criteria, we also provide discretionary travel assistance for certain other categories of children, including preschool children.

### **2. Eligible children**

There are four categories of children of compulsory school age living in Trafford and attending their nearest qualifying school who are eligible for free travel assistance:

#### **a) Children who live outside the statutory walking distance**

Children registered at a school outside walking distance where no suitable arrangements have been made for them to attend a nearer school or for boarding at or near the school. Statutory walking distance is:

- 2 miles for children under the age of 8
- 3 miles for children and young people aged 8 to 16

#### **b) Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) or a mobility difficulty**

Children registered at a school within statutory walking distance of their home but who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their special education needs and disabilities (SEND) or mobility difficulty and no suitable arrangements have been made for them to attend a nearer school.

#### **c) Children whose route to school is unsafe**

Children registered at a school within statutory walking distance of their home but having regard to the nature of the route cannot reasonably be expected to

walk, and no suitable arrangements have been made for them to attend a nearer school.

**d) Children from low income families (extended rights apply)**

Children who receive free school meals or their parent/carers are in receipt of the maximum amount of working tax credit if:

- they are registered at a qualifying school more than 2 miles from home (for children aged 8-11)
- they are registered at a qualifying school between 2 and 6 miles from home and there are not three or more suitable qualifying schools nearer to their home (for children aged 11-16)
- they are registered at a school between 2 and 15 miles from home which is the nearest qualifying school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (for children aged 11-16)

If there are suitable travel arrangements in either direction between their home and school provided free of charge by any other person, a child will not be eligible for travel assistance.

We also provide [discretionary travel assistance](#) to other children in certain circumstances.

### **3. Qualifying schools**

The nearest qualifying school is the school nearest the child's home that has places available that provides education appropriate to the age and ability of the child, and any SEN that the child may have. If parent/carers choose a more distant school, travel assistance will not be provided unless the extended rights apply.

A qualifying school can be a:

- Community, voluntary aided or foundation school
- Community, foundation or non-maintained special school
- Pupil referral unit
- Maintained nursery school
- A city technology college, a city college for the technology of arts, an academy school or an alternative provision academy

For children with an education, health and care (EHC) plan, an independent school can also be a qualifying school where this is the only school named in the EHC plan or it is the nearest of two or more schools named.

If parent/carers choose a denominational school based on religious beliefs or a single sex school, you will not be eligible for travel assistance unless the school is the child's nearest qualifying school.

Where a child is registered at a school, but is attending a place other than that school

as a result of temporary exclusion, eligibility for home to school transport will be established based on the other place for the temporary period.

#### **4. Calculating walking distance and assessment of route**

Statutory walking distance is:

- 2 miles for children under the age of 8
- 3 miles for children aged 8 to 16

For consistency and fairness a geographic information system is used to calculate the walking distance from the child's home address to the nearest qualifying school and this is strictly applied. It references the shortest walking route that a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk safely. The route may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways as well as recognised roads.

We will assess the route at the times the child would be using it to determine if it is suitable. This will take into account factors such as:

- the age of the child
- whether risks might be less if the child were accompanied by an adult and whether you can reasonably be expected to accompany them
- the width of the road and existence of pavements
- the volume and speed of traffic

#### **5. Discretionary assistance for other children**

In addition to the categories of eligible children described, we may provide discretionary travel assistance to the following categories.

- **Children attending a grammar school**

We do not have a duty to provide free travel assistance to children attending grammar school where the grammar school is not the nearest qualifying school. However, we will provide travel assistance to a child attending the nearest grammar school for which they are eligible.

A grammar school will not be classed as the nearest qualifying school if the child is not successful in the selection process for that school or where the child is unable to gain a place due to the lack of availability of places.

Children who attend a grammar school that is not the nearest grammar school for which they are eligible will not receive travel assistance unless they are from a low income family. Children from low income families who are registered at a grammar school will be eligible to receive travel assistance.

- **Primary age children attending a denominational school**

There is no statutory duty to provide travel assistance to support primary school

aged children to attend a denominational school. However, we will provide travel assistance to children from low incomes families who are registered at a denominational school which is between 2 and 15 miles from their home if parent/carer preference for that school is based on religion or beliefs and having regard to those beliefs there is no suitable qualifying school which is nearer home.

- **Children starting reception class**

Compulsory school age starts on the 1 September, 1 January or 1 April after a child's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, most children start school in reception class in the September after their 4<sup>th</sup> birthday. Travel assistance applications will be accepted for these children if they meet the eligibility criteria for a child of compulsory school age.

- **Pre-school children aged 2 to 4 years**

Pre-school children may be eligible for travel assistance if:

- they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan  
or
- they are undergoing an EHC needs assessment and are placed at a primary special school

To be considered eligible, there must be medical or social reasons why the child cannot attend the place without travel assistance. Professional evidence to support this will need to be provided to support the application, for example from a social worker or medical professional. If travel assistance is awarded for a pre-school aged child, you will be charged for this assistance.

The charge will be £170 per term, reduced to £85 per term for low income families who meet the criteria for free school meals.

## **6. Low income families**

This refers to families who meet the criteria for free school meals because they are in receipt of a qualifying benefit. See the full criteria for [free school meals](#). We use the national eligibility checking system to find out if you are eligible.

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 receive a free school meal under the universal infant free school meal scheme but this does not automatically mean you are a low income family.

## **7. Complex physical and medical needs**

Children with complex physical or medical needs are those with diagnosed conditions requiring transport to school when the journey is longer than they can safely spend without receiving medical assistance. We will obtain individual, professional and medical advice about these children when considering applications for travel

assistance.

Please see Annex 2 Care pathways for complex physical medical needs for further information about travel arrangements for these children, including details of the emergency care pathway and the epilepsy care pathway.

## **8. Social care needs**

### **Looked after children**

Travel assistance for children will be provided following authorisation from the relevant social care panel. There is an expectation that placement providers and/or carers will provide travel assistance where possible. A range of travel solutions will be considered to best support the child's attendance at school.

### **Respite and short breaks**

Some children have been assessed as having a social care need and may attend respite or short breaks provision. For more information on the assessment process for this, see the [social care section](#) of our SEND local offer.

The child in need assessment is what will determine if a child requires travel assistance to attend respite or short breaks provision. This is a discretionary offer and each case will be considered on an individual basis. If travel assistance is awarded, it will be provided free of charge by either the respite provider or us.

### **Review**

Care plans will be reviewed annually or sooner if there is a material change in a disabled child's needs in which case a re-assessment will take place. The child's entitlement to travel assistance for respite or short breaks will be considered as part of this.

## **9. Transport solutions**

A variety of travel assistance solutions are available. These are some of the types of assistance that may be offered:

- Bus passes for public transport issued by us.
- Car mileage allowance of 45p per mile if the child is eligible but parent/carers want to make their own transport arrangements. If the equivalent cost of us arranging transport is less, then parent/carers will be paid the lower amount. Costs will be reimbursed termly, based on the child's attendance at school.
- A personal transport budget may be offered for children with SEND. This means parent/carers can organise their own travel arrangements to school, giving them more flexibility and control. The amount paid will be calculated based on the distance between home and school. Payments are usually made directly into the parent/carer bank account each term.
- Independent travel training so that children are able to travel independently to and from school and other social activities.
- Provision of transport commissioned by us for outward and return journeys

between home and school.

- Passenger assistants (PA) may be provided on transport we commission where this is necessary for the safe operation of vehicles and/or care of children.
- There may be a requirement to incorporate pick up/drop off points as part of the travel solution. If this is required, all relevant parties will first be consulted.

## **10. General information**

### **Home address**

The child requiring travel assistance must be resident in Trafford and we will make checks to verify the address. We may request further proof of address if records do not match.

Travel assistance for children with SEND will be to and from their home address. Home is defined as where the child is normally and habitually resident. Where there is shared residency between two parent/carers, either or both addresses may be considered to be the home.

For children with SEND, parent/carers may request to use an alternative address but it will not automatically be accepted. We can only consider a maximum of one alternative address and it must not be further away from school than the home address.

### **Times of day**

Travel assistance will be provided at the start and end of the school day. It is not available during the course of the school day.

### **Between schools**

Children registered at one school may visit another school for integration purposes or to access an additional educational support package or placement provided by the school at which they are registered. Where this happens, the school is responsible for making the necessary transport arrangements.

### **Childcare providers and after school clubs**

Travel assistance will not usually be provided to day nurseries, preschool playgroups, childminders, after school clubs or activity providers, unless there are exceptional circumstances. For example, a 3 year old child in receipt of 30 hours free childcare who is undergoing an EHC needs assessment at a primary special school and gets their extended hours at a childcare provider. Each request will be considered individually on its own merits.

### **Residential placements**

If the child is in a residential placement, transport will be provided as follows:

- Weekly residential placement – travel arrangements will be made to school on Monday and from school on Friday each week.
- Termly residential placement – travel arrangements will be provided at the beginning and end of each term and mid-term holiday.



- Children requiring a 52 week placement – travel arrangements will be provided up to a maximum of 3 return journeys per year.

### **Other benefits and allowances**

Travel assistance will be provided free of charge regardless of any benefits or allowances parent/carers or children receive. This includes:

- Disability living allowance (DLA)
- Personal independence payment (PIP)
- Foster carer allowance

### **Change of circumstances**

If a child moves home, changes school or there is another significant change in circumstances, this may affect their eligibility for travel assistance or the suitability of the travel assistance provided. All changes in circumstances should be reported immediately and it is the parent/carer responsibility to make a new application for travel assistance.

### **Withdrawal of travel assistance awarded in error**

If travel assistance is awarded in error, we have the right to withdraw this. We will consider the individual circumstances of each case to decide if there are exceptional reasons for the travel assistance to continue. If we decide to withdraw travel assistance, we will give 6 weeks' notice.

### **Journey times**

Every effort will be made to keep journey times to a minimum whilst making sure we make the best use of our resources. Government guidelines for a normal journey are:

- Primary school age – no more than 45 minutes each way.
- Secondary school age – no more than 75 minutes each way.

There may be times when it is not possible to meet these journey times. For example if a child attends an out of area school or due to circumstances outside our control such as traffic congestion, accidents or adverse weather conditions.

### **Charging for pre-school age children**

The charge will be £170 per term, reduced to £85 per term for low income families who meet the criteria for free school meals.

We cannot provide transport until we have received a signed payment agreement form. Charges will be made termly and parent/carers will be invoiced in monthly instalments for the term, at the beginning of each term. For example, in the summer term the invoice will be sent in April requesting payment of 4 monthly instalments for April, May, June and July.

### **Safety on transport and withdrawal of travel assistance**

We aim to maintain the highest standards of safety, security and comfort for all children travelling to their destination. Parent/carers also have a responsibility to help maintain these standards and inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Children

being transported will be expected to follow the same behaviour code as they do when in school. Head teachers can take action under the school's behaviour policy to address unacceptable behaviour on transport. We will also monitor unacceptable behaviour and it may result in exclusion from transport.

The withdrawal of transport will be considered on a case by case basis and can be:

- Temporary – this may be for a specified number of days or weeks
- Permanent – this may be for the remainder of the school year or longer depending on the circumstances. This could be for serious misbehaviour or persistent cases of misbehaviour.

Parent/carers will become responsible for transporting your own child during any period of exclusion from transport.

For more details about expected standards of behaviour, see [Annex 3 transport service standards](#).

## 11. Applying for travel assistance

### a) Without special educational needs, disabilities or mobility issues

Parent/carers of children aged 5 to 16 should contact the School Admissions Team for information about the travel assistance they may be entitled to. Email [school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk) or telephone 0161 912 5080.

If eligible, the School Admissions Team will advise of the application process. Applications should be received by 22 July so bus passes and other travel assistance can be arranged for the start of the academic year.

### b) With special educational needs, disabilities or mobility issues

Parent/carers should apply to Trafford Travel Co-ordination Unit (TTCU) for travel assistance if their child is:

- Compulsory school age 5 to 16 years with an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- Pre-school age 2 to 4 years old with an education, health and care (EHC) plan or undergoing an EHC needs assessment at a special school.

Please complete the [online application](#) or contact us by email [ttcu@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:ttcu@trafford.gov.uk) or telephone 0161 912 5055.

Applications should be received by 30 June for travel assistance to start at the beginning of the school year in September. For applications received after this date, there is no guarantee travel assistance will be in place for the start of the school year.

For applications received during the school year, travel assistance will usually be in place within 20 working days assuming the application is approved. However there may be occasions this is not possible, for example if there is a need to recruit or provide

specialist training for passenger assistants, procure additional vehicles or arrange independent travel training.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to apply for travel assistance by the due date and to make suitable arrangements during the application process. A new application form is needed at each of the following events:

- When a child is due to start school in reception class
- When a child turns 8 years old
- When a child turns 11 years old and moves to secondary school
- When there is a change in circumstances. This can include change in school, social care provision, home address, assessed eligible need or days when travel assistance is required.

Only one application for travel assistance will be accepted per school year unless there has been a significant and material change in circumstances.

After an application is assessed as being eligible, TTCU will contact the parent/carer to gather more detailed information about the child's individual needs. This informs the risk assessment and the travel assistance solution offered.

## **12. Appeals**

Appeals for children of compulsory school age (5 to 16 years) can be on the grounds of:

- child eligibility
- distance measurement in relation to statutory walking distance
- safety of the route
- transport arrangements offered

Appeals for pre-school age children (2 to 4 years) can be on the grounds of:

- child eligibility
- travel arrangements offered

For all appeals there is a two stage appeal process.

### **Stage one**

Parent/carers can request a review of our decision. Requests must be submitted in writing within 20 working days from receipt of our decision. The request should explain why the decision should be reviewed and provide any additional information about personal or family circumstances which parent/carers feel we should consider. A senior officer will review the decision and inform the parent/carer of the outcome in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the written request for review.

### **Stage two**

If the parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome at stage one, they can make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two. Requests must be submitted in writing within 20 working days from receipt of the stage one outcome letter. Within 40

working days of receiving the request, an independent appeal panel will consider written and verbal representations. The independent appeal panel will be independent of the original decision making process but not necessarily independent of the council. Parent/carers will receive a detailed written notification of the outcome within 5 working days of the panel meeting.

For more information about the appeals process, see the [statutory guidance](#).

Any appeals received just before or during the school summer holidays may be delayed if there is any information to be considered which cannot be obtained from the school due to closure.

Once the parent/carer has gone through both stages of the appeals process they cannot re-apply for travel assistance within the same academic year unless there has been a significant and material change in circumstances.

## **13. Complaints**

### **General**

We are committed to providing the best possible standard of service. If parent/carers have any concerns or problems, in the first instance they should contact Trafford Travel Coordination Unit (TTCU). If they are still unhappy, a formal complaint can be made by following our [complaints process](#).

### **Respite or short breaks**

For complaints regarding decisions to provide travel assistance to disabled children to attend respite or short breaks, parent/carers should follow our [children's social care complaints process](#).

### **Maladministration**

There is a right of complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), but only if the parent/carer considers that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled. The LGSCO will not investigate the merits of the appeal, they will simply consider if there was maladministration. See [LGSCO](#) for more information.

### **Safeguarding concern**

If there is a concern about a child, and they are not at immediate risk of harm, contact Trafford Children's First Response on 0161 912 5125 to discuss this.

## **SECTION B – Young People**

### **1. Introduction**

This section describes the arrangements and support available to help young people of sixth form age attend education or training. It applies to:

- Young people age 16 to 19 years old who start a course before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Young people up to age 25 if they have an education, health and care (EHC) plan and are continuing on a course started before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The arrangements can apply to education or training at:

- School
- Further education institution
- Local authority maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education
- 16 – 19 academy
- Any other establishment at which the local authority secures the provision of education or training

Young people are required to stay in education or training until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **2. Concessionary tickets for public transport**

There is a range of concessionary travel schemes which are competitively priced or free so these options should be explored before applying to us for support.

#### **Our pass**

Our pass is for 16 to 18 year olds who live in Greater Manchester. It gives young people free travel on local buses across Greater Manchester and half-price off peak 1 day and weekend travelcards on trams. The journey can be for any reason, not just getting to school or college.

The pass can be used from 1 September after a young person's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday until 31 August after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (or until their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday if this is 31 August).

There is a one-off administration fee of £10 to obtain a pass. Young people will need a passport style photo, proof of their date of birth and proof that they live in Greater Manchester.

For further information and to apply online, see [our pass](#).

#### **Scholar's permit**

Scholar's permit is for 16 to 19 year olds who live in Greater Manchester. Card holders can pay for child fares on buses, trams and trains in Greater Manchester for travel to and from school or college.

Young people can only use the scholar's permit in term-time, and only from Monday to

Friday up to 9pm. It cannot be used at weekends or bank holiday, or for any other journeys except those which are to and from a school or college.

The pass can be used from 1 September after a young person's 16<sup>th</sup> birthday until 31 August after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday (or until their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday if this is 31 August).

There is a one-off administration fee of £5 to obtain a pass. Young people will need a passport style photo, proof of their date of birth and proof that they live in Greater Manchester.

For further information and to apply online, see [scholar's permit](#).

### **System one travelcards**

The system one travelcard scheme includes all the major local bus companies and can also be combined with tram and train travel. Concessionary tickets are available for 7 day and 28 day passes for young people up to age 21 or extended up to age 26 if they have a student ID card.

For further information, see [system one travelcards](#).

### **Train travel**

The 16-25 railcard offers considerable discounts over standard fares but other cheaper options may be available so always check with the operator.

For further information on railcards, see [16-25 railcards](#).

For further information on rail services, see [national rail](#).

### **English national concessionary travel scheme**

Disabled young people could be eligible for a pass that gives free and low-cost travel in Greater Manchester and the rest of England. Depending on the disability, they could qualify for either a travel pass for disabled people or a travel plus pass for disabled people. The pass is free, and lasts between one and five years depending on the disability.

Within Greater Manchester travel pass holders can:

- travel for free on all buses and trams between 9.30am and midnight, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays.
- travel for free on trains on journeys scheduled to run at or after 9.30am, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays.

If pass holders travel outside of these times they must pay for a concessionary fare where available or otherwise the full adult fare.

If young people are registered blind or profoundly deaf without speech that can be readily understood they may qualify for the travel plus pass which permits free travel within Greater Manchester on buses, trams and trains at any time.

For more information, see [travel passes for disabled people](#).

### 3. Travel support from schools and colleges

#### School buses

If young people attend a sixth form at a secondary school, they may want to check if there are any school bus options suitable for sixth form age pupils. See [school bus services](#) for timetables for each local authority area in Greater Manchester.

#### The 16 to 19 bursary fund

Young people could get a bursary to help with education-related costs if they are aged 16 to 19 and:

- studying at a publicly funded school or college in England - not a university
- on a training course, including unpaid work experience

A publicly funded school is one that does not charge for attending it.

There are 2 types of bursaries.

#### Bursary for students in vulnerable groups

Young people could get up to £1,200 if at least one of the following applies:

- they are in or have recently left local authority care
- they get Income Support or Universal Credit because they are financially supporting themselves
- they get Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in their name and either Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) or Universal Credit
- they get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in their name and either ESA or Universal Credit

#### Discretionary bursary

Schools and colleges will have their own criteria for discretionary bursaries. They'll look at individual circumstances - this usually includes the young person's family income. Ask student services about their criteria and any evidence they will need.

Young people can apply for a discretionary bursary if they are age 16 to 18. They can also apply if they are 19 or over if they are either:

- continuing on a course they started aged 16 to 18
- have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Apply to the school, college or training provider. Ask student services or a tutor to explain what to do.

For further information see [16-19 bursary fund](#).

#### Care to learn – for young parents

For young parents under 20 studying on a publicly funded course, Care to learn can help pay for childcare and related travel costs while the young parent is learning. They could receive up to £160 per child per week to help with the cost of:

- childcare, including deposit and registration fees

- a childcare ‘taster’ session (up to 5 days)
- keeping their childcare place over the summer holidays
- taking their child to the childcare provider

The childcare provider must be Ofsted registered and they will be paid directly for childcare costs. Payments for travel costs go to the young parent’s school or college - they’ll either pay the young parent or arrange travel for them.

For further information and to apply online, see [care to learn](#).

#### **4. Travel assistance provided by us**

There is no automatic entitlement to free transport to school, college or a training provider once a young person is over 16. However, we consider what travel assistance and provision is necessary to help young people to access education and training. We consider the following:

- The needs of young people who would not be reasonably able to attend a particular school or college to receive education or training if no arrangements were made.
- The need to ensure that young people have reasonable opportunities to choose between different education and training providers.
- The distance from the young person’s home and the journey time to education and training providers.
- The cost of travel assistance to the education and training provider.
- How much the young person would benefit from encouragement to travel as independently as possible.
- Any alternative ways of helping young people attend the education or training provider.

To be eligible to apply to us for support, young people must live in Trafford and be attending a full-time course or training.

If young people do not qualify for our travel assistance, they will need to make their own arrangements for travel to and from their education or training provider.

#### **Eligible young people**

##### **a) Young people without an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

In the first instance, young people must apply to their school, college or training provider for bursary funding to assist with travel costs. For many young people, this is discretionary and schools, colleges and training providers may assist in different ways.

If a school, college or training provider refuses assistance and the young person can provide evidence of this, we will consider applications for assistance on the basis of financial hardship. To meet the requirements for this, the young person’s family must be in receipt of one of the qualifying benefits within the [free school meals criteria](#). We use the national eligibility checking system to check if the family is eligible.

If we provide assistance on the basis of financial hardship, it will be free of charge.



## **b) Young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan**

Travel assistance requirements will be considered during the transition planning process undertaken in school years 10 and 11. In year 11, education, health and care (EHC) plans will be reviewed before the young person transfers from school to college or training. This will be carried out by 31 March in the year of transfer.

We consider applications for travel assistance from young people age 16 to 19 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan – or up to age 25 if they are continuing on a course they started before their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. It doesn't matter if they attend mainstream or specialist provision.

To be considered eligible, there needs to be medical or social reasons supported by professional evidence stating why the young person needs travel assistance to access education or training. This could include physical or mental conditions affecting their capacity for independent travel.

If young people fall within this category, they will need to make an application to us for travel assistance.

If they are assessed as eligible for travel assistance, it will be free of charge.

### **Transport solutions**

A variety of travel assistance solutions are available. These are some of the types of assistance that may be offered to eligible young people:

- A personal transport budget may be offered if a young person has SEND. This means they can organise their own travel arrangements to college or training, giving them more flexibility and control. The amount paid will be calculated based on the distance between home and college. Payments are usually made directly into the young person or parent/carer bank account each term.
- Independent travel training so that young people are able to travel independently to and from college or training and other social activities.
- Provision of transport commissioned by us for outward and return journeys between home and college or training.
- Passenger assistants (PA) may be provided on transport we commission where this is necessary for the safe operation of vehicles and/or care of young people.
- There may be a requirement to incorporate pick up/drop off points as part of the travel solution. If this is required, all relevant parties will first be consulted.

### **Home address**

Travel assistance provided by us will be to and from the young person's home address. Home is defined as where they are normally and habitually resident. Where there is shared residency between two parent/carers, either or both addresses may be considered to be the home.

Young people or their parent/carer may request an alternative address but this will not automatically be accepted. A maximum of one other address will be considered and

the alternative address must not be further away from the education or training provider than the home address.

### **Times of day**

Travel assistance will be provided at the start and end of the school or college day. It is not available during the course of the day.

### **Between education and training providers**

Young people registered at one education or training provider may visit another for integration purposes or to access an additional support package. Where this happens, the education or training provider is responsible for making the necessary transport arrangements.

### **Residential placements**

For young people in a residential placement, transport will be provided as follows:

- Weekly residential placement – outward travel arrangements will be made on Monday and back home on Friday each week.
- Termly residential placement – travel arrangements will be provided at the beginning and end of each term and mid-term holiday.
- Young people requiring a 52 week placement – travel arrangements will be provided up to a maximum of 3 return journeys per year.

### **Other benefits and allowances**

Travel assistance will be free of charge regardless of any benefits or allowances the young person or their family receive. This includes:

- Disability living allowance (DLA)
- Personal independence payment (PIP)
- Foster carer allowance

### **Change of circumstances**

If the young person moves home, changes education or training provider or there is another significant change in circumstances, this may affect eligibility for travel assistance or the suitability of the travel assistance provided. All changes in circumstances should be reported immediately and it is the responsibility of the young person or their parent/carer to make a new application for travel assistance.

### **Withdrawal of travel assistance awarded in error**

If travel assistance is awarded in error, we have the right to withdraw this. We will consider the individual circumstances of each case to decide if there are exceptional reasons for the travel assistance to continue. If we decide to withdraw travel assistance, we will give 6 weeks' notice.

### **Journey times**

Every effort will be made to keep journey times to a minimum whilst making sure we make the best use of our resources. Government guidelines for a normal journey are:

- Age 16 and over – no more than 75 minutes each way.

There may be times when it is not possible to meet these journey times. For example, if the young person attends an out of area education provider or due to circumstances outside our control such as traffic congestion, accidents or adverse weather conditions.

### **Safety on transport and withdrawal of travel assistance**

We aim to maintain the highest standards of safety, security and comfort for all passengers travelling to their destination. Young people and their parent/carers also have a responsibility to help maintain these standards and inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated. Young people will be expected to follow the same behaviour code as they do when in college or training. Head teachers and principals can take action under the school or college's behaviour policy to address unacceptable behaviour on transport. We will also monitor unacceptable behaviour and it may result in exclusion from transport.

The withdrawal of transport will be considered on a case by case basis and can be:

- Temporary – this may be for a specified number of days or weeks
- Permanent – this may be for the remainder of the school year or longer depending on the circumstances. This could be for serious misbehaviour or persistent cases of misbehaviour.

Young people or their parent/carers will become responsible for making their own transport arrangements during any period of exclusion from our transport.

For more details about expected standards of behaviour, see [Annex 3 Transport service standards](#).

## **5. Complex physical and medical needs**

Young people with complex physical or medical needs are those with diagnosed conditions requiring transport when the journey is longer than they can safely spend without receiving medical assistance. We will obtain individual, professional and medical advice about these young people when considering applications for travel assistance.

Please see Annex 2 Care pathways for complex physical medical needs for further information about travel arrangements for these young people, including details of the emergency care pathway and the epilepsy care pathway.

## **6. Applying for travel assistance**

If a young person meets the criteria to be considered for travel assistance provided by us, they should apply to Trafford Travel Co-ordination Unit (TTCU).

Please complete the [online application](#) or contact us by email [ttcu@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:ttcu@trafford.gov.uk) or telephone 0161 912 5055.

Applications should be received by 30 June for travel assistance to start at the beginning of the school or college year in September. For applications received after this date, there is no guarantee travel assistance will be in place for the start of the school or college year.

For applications received during the school or college year, travel assistance will usually be in place within 20 working days assuming the application is approved. However there may be occasions this is not possible, for example if there is a need to recruit or provide specialist training for passenger assistants or procure additional vehicles.

It is the responsibility of the young person or their parent/carer to apply for travel assistance by the due date and to make suitable arrangements during the application process. A new application form is needed:

- For each school or college year.
- When there is a change in circumstances. This can include change in school or college, social care provision, home address, assessed eligible need or days when travel assistance is required.

Only one application for travel assistance will be accepted per school or college year unless there has been a significant and material change in circumstances.

After an application is assessed as being eligible, TTCU will contact the young person or their parent/carer to gather more detailed information about individual needs. This informs the risk assessment and the travel assistance solution offered.

## **7. Appeals**

Appeals can be on the grounds of:

- the young person's eligibility
- travel arrangements offered

For all appeals there is a two stage appeal process.

### **Stage one**

Young people or their parent/carer can request a review of our decision. Requests must be submitted in writing within 20 working days from receipt of our decision. The request should explain why the decision should be reviewed and provide any additional information about personal or family circumstances which young people or their parent/carer feel we should consider. A senior officer will review the decision and inform you of the outcome in writing within 20 working days of receipt of the written request for review.

### **Stage two**

If a young person or their parent/carer is not satisfied with the outcome at stage one, they can make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two. Requests must be submitted in writing within 20 working days from receipt of the stage one outcome letter. Within 40 working days of receiving the request, an independent appeal panel will consider written and verbal representations. The independent appeal panel will be independent of the original decision making process but not necessarily independent of the council. The young person or their parent/carer will receive a detailed written notification of the outcome within 5 working days of the panel meeting.

For more information about the appeals process, see the [statutory guidance](#).

Any appeals received just before or during the school or college summer holidays may be delayed if there is any information to be considered which cannot be obtained from the school or college due to closure.

Once a young person or their parent/carer has gone through both stages of the appeals process they cannot re-apply for travel assistance within the same academic year unless there has been a significant and material change in circumstances.

## **8. Complaints**

### **General**

We are committed to providing the best possible standard of service. If there are any concerns or problems, in the first instance the young person or their parent/carer should contact Trafford Travel Coordination Unit (TTCU). If they are still unhappy, a formal complaint can be made by following our [complaints process](#).

### **Maladministration**

There is a right of complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO), but only if the young person or their parent/carer considers that there was a failure to comply with the procedural rules or if there are any other irregularities in the way the appeal has been handled. The LGSCO will not investigate the merits of the appeal, they will simply consider if there was maladministration. See [LGSCO](#) for more information.

### **Safeguarding concern**

If there is a concern about a young person under 18, and they are not at immediate risk of harm, contact Trafford Children's First Response on 0161 912 5125 to discuss this.

## **SECTION C – Adults**

### **1. Introduction**

This section describes the arrangements and support available to help vulnerable adults. This applies to:

- Adult learners who are attending a course which they started after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, including those with education, health and care (EHC) plans.
- Adults aged 18 or over with care and support needs who have been assessed as eligible for services and/or support from adult social care.

### **2. Adult learners**

There is no automatic entitlement to free transport to an education or training provider once an adult is over 19. However, we consider what travel assistance and provision is necessary to help adult learners access education and training to help them move towards more independent living. This only applies if they are attending a course which started after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, in the following circumstances:

- An adult learner aged 19 or over attending a local authority maintained or assisted further or higher education institution.
- An adult learner up to the age of 25 with an education, health and care (EHC) plan attending education or training outside the further and higher education sectors, where we have secured the education or training and the provision of boarding accommodation in connection with it.

Eligibility for travel assistance is considered having regard to the adult learner's assessed needs. This could be through an education, health and care needs assessment or a social care assessment.

Where there is an identified eligible need for the provision of travel assistance, as a result of the needs assessment carried out by education or social services, this will be organised by Trafford Travel Co-ordination Unit (TTCU). Provision of travel assistance will be individually reviewed, along with other elements of the EHC plan or care plan, at least annually.

Travel assistance for adult learners will be free of charge.

### **3. Adults with care and support needs**

The Care Act 2014 and the National Eligibility Framework for social care has replaced various pieces of legislation and policies.

Adult social care has a legal duty to provide access to services which may in some circumstances include transporting people to locations to access services. This applies where adults are eligible for social care support.

The Care Act 2014 sets out that duty as follows:

‘The national eligibility criteria set a minimum threshold for adult care and support needs and carer support needs which local authorities must meet. All local authorities must comply with this national threshold’.

The act details that:

‘Local authorities should consider the adult’s ability to get around in the community safely and consider their ability to use such facilities as public transport, shops or recreational facilities when considering the impact on their wellbeing’.

The provision of adult social care is aimed at promoting the maximum possible independence for adults with care and support needs.

In extending this principle to the provision of transport, this policy sets the criteria that will be used to assess whether the adult’s needs to access services and community amenities and if these needs can be best met through independent travel arrangements, privately funded transport, or whether council arranged travel assistance is necessary.

This policy rests upon a general assumption and expectation that wherever possible, adults with care and support needs will meet their own needs for travelling to access and take advantage of services, or support to facilitate them.

Transport is a means of accessing other services or support. The overriding principle is that the decision to provide transport is based on a person’s individual circumstances including: needs, risks, outcomes and on promoting independence.

Travel assistance will only be provided if, in the opinion of the assessor, accessibility to transport is required to be provided by the council, in order that the adult with care and support needs is able to achieve one or more of the outcomes that the adult requires support to achieve.

This is to be determined by the assessment of the adults needs under the Care Act 2014 which forms the basis on which adult social care responds to requests for assistance and is concerned with exploring a person’s presenting needs and determining their eligibility for services.

The provision of transport will only be considered in relation to meeting the needs of adults aged 18 years and over who have been assessed as eligible for services and/or support from adult social care.

As part of the assessment and care planning process carried out by the council, the need to pursue other activities away from the adult’s home may be identified. The need for transport to any community service or activity service must be part of the assessment of a person’s needs and outcomes. For more information on social care assessments for adults, see [your assessment](#).

Assessment of eligibility for the provision of transport assistance, will be undertaken in

consideration of:

- the Care Act 2014
- the availability of existing transport
- the availability of existing sources of funding that are currently provided to the adult to meet a mobility need (e.g. mobility allowance)
- the ability of a person to travel independently with regard to their physical mobility and other factors that may introduce risk including conditions that will lead to the deterioration of a person's ability to travel without assistance.

The assessor will use this information to determine whether the adult with care and support needs:

- is capable of travelling independently on the proposed method of transport without an unreasonable level of risk;
- requires some training, support or assistance that will enable them to be capable of travelling independently in the near future;
- is not capable of travelling independently on the proposed method of transport and will therefore recommend a method of council funded transport as set out in this policy that is appropriate to their assessed needs.

Where there is an identified eligible need for the provision of travel assistance, as a result of the needs assessment carried out by social services, this will be agreed as part of the social care budget allocation and commissioned via the provider of the wider care package, or may be organised by Trafford Travel Co-ordination Unit (TTCU).

Where an individual is provided with a personal budget or requests a direct payment to meet their assessed needs for care, the same principles will apply as to those people opting to receive support directly from adult social care. The cost of transport will only be included in the personal budget or direct payment where no other suitable alternative is available and it is considered that the adult is eligible for this support to meet assessed needs and outcomes as set out above.

#### **4. Travel assistance factors for adults**

The following factors will be considered by the council when assessing the need for support services and travel assistance:

- The extent to which the applicant can travel independently including own privately funded transport; any vehicle purchased under the Motability scheme (which the individual drives themselves, or does not drive themselves); public transport; walking with or without support; or via any other independent or naturally supported means.
- Ability to travel independently and reablement options such as independent travel training.
- Whether the applicant is able to access transport provided by others (family, friends, paid carer, support worker).



- Whether they are accessing the nearest service to meet their needs.
- The applicant's disability, frailty or physical health.
- Risk to self and others.
- The individual's mental capacity.
- Communication difficulties.
- Psychological factors e.g. mental health, dementia, agoraphobia.
- Consideration of degenerative conditions.
- Benefits that the adult receives such as disability living allowance (DLA) and personal independence payment (PIP) and that use of the mobility element of these is utilised.
- Any other factors that may affect personal safety.

The council will also take into account the following factors relating to the individual's mobility:

- Ability to walk outside
- Requirement for wheelchair / other walking aid
- Ability to enter and leave a property
- Ability to get in and out of a vehicle
- History of falls
- Ability to use stairs
- Degenerative conditions

These lists are not exhaustive as the needs assessment will take into consideration all relevant factors and each case will be determined on its own merits, associated risk factors and assessed needs and outcomes that the adult is unable to achieve without council funded support.

People will be expected to access services that reasonably meet their needs close to where they live. Where it is assessed that a local service can meet a person's needs, support to travel will only be provided up to this distance and will only be provided if independent travel and public transport have been tested and agreed not to be appropriate.

If people can travel independently then they will be expected to do so. For example by walking, using public transport with help from other people, using assisted mobility which is where a person is supported to travel with an aide, adaptation, mobility allowance or mobility vehicle.

Where enablement/travel training is offered as part of the assessment this process must be completed before a final decision is made on whether the person requires support to travel to be provided by the local authority.

Refusal by the adult with care and support needs to undertake the enablement / travel training element of the assessment may bring about the end of the overall assessment process and travel assistance may not be provided.

Provision of travel assistance will be individually reviewed, along with other elements of

the care plan, at least annually.

## **5. Suitability of travel assistance**

This section describes the different types of travel assistance the Council will consider for individuals deemed eligible to travel assistance and how eligibility is determined.

Council funded transport may not be provided under normal circumstances to an adult with care and support needs. However when reaching its decision the council will take into consideration all relevant factors and each case will be determined on its own merits, associated risk factors and assessed needs and outcomes that the adult is unable to achieve without council funded support.

- The person is in receipt of the higher rate of mobility allowance, unless there are factors limiting their ability to fully utilise the benefits of the allowance e.g. geographical location, the nature of the disability, wheelchair type or carer support requirements. The support plan will determine the level of support offered in these circumstances as part of the assessment process.
- They have their own Motability vehicle which they drive themselves. In this instance there will be consideration of whether it is reasonable to expect that the adult will use that vehicle in order to travel to the required location. If it is unreasonable, the appropriateness of the provision of a Motability vehicle should be questioned and alternative available transport provision should be sought.
- The person has a Motability vehicle of which they are not normally the driver themselves. Similarly, there will be consideration of whether it is reasonable to expect that the adult will use that vehicle in order to travel to the required location. If it is unreasonable, the appropriateness of the use of a Motability vehicle should be questioned and alternative available transport provision should be sought.
- The person has carers e.g. neighbours/family/friends who are able to transport them. Where it is identified that a carer will provide transport it is important that the assessor is able to demonstrate that the impact of this has been appropriately assessed under the Care Act 2014 in an assessment of the carer's needs and outcomes. Where carers or friends have been assessed as being able to provide transport, alternative arrangements should be detailed in a contingency plan to cover periods where they are unable to do so.
- Where the individual is reliant on a relative or other carer to drive a Motability car, consideration will be given to supporting carers respite needs, including enabling them to work. If an individual or carer makes the decision that the Motability vehicle will not be used for the intended purpose the onus will be on the individual and/or carer to make alternative appropriate arrangements.
- The adult has a bus pass which they are able to use to attend the required location. In cases where the adult's ability to use the bus pass may present an unreasonable level of risk please refer to travel assistance factors for adults.
- The person lives in a registered residential care home as these are subject to the terms and conditions of the contract between the council and the care home.

However, if the individual is assessed as having the ability to travel independently, or with minimal intervention, the care home will make provision to support independent travel if they are responsible for transport arrangements. If the individual is a tenant in extra care housing, supported accommodation or an adult placement scheme, they will be subject to the same assessment and care planning arrangements as people living in their own homes or with relatives.

## **6. Travel assistance solutions**

The council will consider all travel assistance options reasonably available to the adult when deciding what support it may offer in order that the adult's assessed needs and outcomes can be met.

As part of the assessment process the assessor will determine what needs and outcomes the person is able to meet independently, what needs and outcomes they are able to meet from their own income sources, and what needs and outcomes they are able to meet through the support provided by a family member or informal carer.

Where the assessment has determined that council funded travel assistance is required in part, or in whole to meet an adult's assessed needs and outcomes it will be provided in a safe and cost effective manner taking account of the adult's specific needs and outcomes. Directly provided transport services will be provided only after other suitable alternatives have been considered.

If a person is in receipt of mobility allowance but chooses to use council commissioned travel assistance, there will be a charge for this service of £2.50 per journey and the person's ability to pay this charge will be considered when undertaking a financial assessment. This is payable by invoice which will be sent every 4 weeks after travelling.

When undertaking a financial assessment we recognise that an adult who receives care and support outside a care home will need to pay their daily living costs such as rent, food and utilities. The charging rules we use will ensure the adult has enough money to meet these costs. After charging has been taken into account, a person must be left with the minimum income guarantee (MIG), equivalent to income support plus a buffer of 25%.

When undertaking a financial assessment we will also fully disregard any income from the following sources:

- Direct payments.
- Guaranteed income payments made to veterans under the armed forces compensation scheme.
- The mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA) or personal independence payment (PIP).

Other travel options that we will take into consideration when a person applies for travel assistance are access to the following:

## **English national concessionary travel scheme**

If you are disabled, you could be eligible for a pass that gives you free and low-cost travel in Greater Manchester and the rest of England. Depending on your disability, you could qualify for either a travel pass for disabled people or a travel plus pass for disabled people. The pass is free, and lasts between one and five years depending on your disability.

Within Greater Manchester travel pass holders can:

1. travel for free on all buses and trams between 9.30am and midnight, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays.
2. travel for free on trains on journeys scheduled to run at or after 9.30am, Monday to Friday, and all day at weekends and on public holidays.
3. if you travel outside of these times you must pay for a concessionary fare where available or otherwise the full adult fare.

If you are registered blind or profoundly deaf without speech that can be readily understood you may qualify for the travel plus pass which permits free travel within Greater Manchester on buses, trams and trains at any time.

For more information, see [travel passes for disabled people](#).

## **Mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA) or personal independence payment (PIP)**

This is a financial allowance paid by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). People can qualify for this benefit depending on the degree of their mobility impairment. People qualifying for the DLA mobility component can qualify for a leased vehicle under the mobility scheme in exchange for their allowance.

## **Availability of community transport**

These are schemes that we support to transport people who are without private transport or who are unable to access public transport to make their journey. There is usually a small charge for each journey which is payable by the individual who travels. For example the Ring and Ride and Local Link schemes.

For further information on local transport services see the [getting around section](#) of the Trafford Directory.

Request for social care funding to meet an individual's transport needs will be progressed in accordance with the local process for agreeing funded support for adults with care and support needs. This process includes information about how individuals or their representatives can appeal against a decision made by the all age social care funding panel.

## **7. Charging**

If a person is in receipt of mobility allowance but chooses to use council commissioned

travel assistance, there will be a charge for this service of £2.50 per journey and the person's ability to pay this charge will be considered when undertaking a financial assessment. This is payable by invoice which will be sent every 4 weeks after travelling.

Charges will not be made for transport to access services to and from the following:

- Intermediate care and reablement services.
- An adult suffering from Creutzfeld Jakob disease for the cost of meeting their needs.
- After care services / support provided under s117 of the Mental Health Act 1983.
- Any service or part of service which the NHS is under a duty to provide.
- Assessment of needs and care planning.

## **8. Applying for travel assistance**

For adults over 18 years of age approval of transport costs must be included in the overall budget allocated for care. A financial assessment is completed for all adults in receipt of care to assess their contribution to their care. These decisions will be made as part of the transitional arrangements to adult care.

## **9. Complaints**

For complaints regarding decisions to provide travel assistance to adults receiving care and support, you should follow the council's [adult social care complaints process](#).

If you have concerns about an adult in Trafford, aged 18 or over, and you are worried that they are being harmed or are at risk of harm, please ring 0161 912 5135 to discuss your concerns. If you prefer you can complete the [safeguarding adults public concern form](#).

## **Annex 1 – Legislation**

### **Education Act 1996**

Section 508A of the Education Act 1996 (“the Act”) places a duty on local authorities in England to assess the school travel needs of all children and persons of sixth form age in their area and to assess and promote the use of sustainable modes of travel.

Section 508B of the Act sets out the general duties placed on local authorities to make such school travel arrangements as they consider necessary for ‘eligible children’ within their area, to facilitate their attendance at the relevant educational establishment. Such arrangements must be provided free of charge.

Section 508C of the Act provides local authorities with discretionary powers to make school travel arrangements for other children not covered by Section 508B but the transport does not have to be free.

Section 509 AD of the Act places a duty on the LA, when exercising its travel functions, to have regard, amongst other things, any wish of a parent for their child to be educated at a particular school on the grounds of the parents’ religion or belief. Religion or belief in this instance means any religious or philosophical belief.

This duty is in addition to the duty on the LA to make travel arrangements for children from low income families who attend the nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, where they live between 2 and 15 miles from home.

Section 9 of the Education Act 1996 provides that in exercising all duties and powers under the Education Acts, the Secretary of State and local authority shall have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with their parents’ wishes, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable expenditure. However, there is no general statutory duty requiring the local authority to provide free transport to a faith school.

S509AA and s509AB Education Act 1996 requires the Local Authority to specify what transport and financial support are necessary to facilitate the attendance of persons of sixth form age receiving education or training. S508AB requires the policy to set out the arrangements for facilitating the attendance at educational establishment of disabled persons and persons with learning disabilities.

Section 508F of the Act places a duty on local authorities to make any transport or other arrangements that they consider necessary, or that the Secretary of State directs, for the purpose of facilitating the attendance of learners who are aged 19 or over at certain educational establishments. The transport must be provided free of charge.

### **Children Act 1989**

Section 17 (1) Children Act 1989 creates a general duty on Children's Services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need

### **Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970**

Where a local authority has functions under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 in relation to a disabled child and the child is ordinarily resident in their area, they must, in exercise of those functions, make any arrangements within subsection (6) that they are satisfied it is necessary for them to make in order to meet the needs of the child.

### **The Care Act 2014**

This Act together with a number of regulations and statutory guidance is the base on which social care will develop over the next few decades. It enshrines the new statutory principle of wellbeing.

### **The Children and Families Act 2014**

This Act describes how children and young people with special educational needs or who are disabled (SEND) get the support they need. It came into force on 1 September 2014.

### **Statutory guidance**

The following statutory guidance documents apply in relation to travel provision and assistance:

- [Home to school travel and transport](#)
- [Post 16 transport to education and training](#)
- [Working together to safeguard children](#)

## **Annex 2 – Care pathways for complex physical and medical needs**

Children and young people with complex physical or medical needs are those with diagnosed conditions requiring transport to school when the journey is longer than they can safely spend without receiving medical assistance. It includes the following categories but this list is not exhaustive:

- Children and young people with continuous oxygen requirements;
- Children and young people with a tracheostomy;
- Children and young people with complex, unstable epilepsy requiring rescue medication;
- Children and young people with asthma who may require emergency treatment;
- Children and young people with stable epilepsy where rescue medication may possibly be required for unpredictable, prolonged seizures.

Where specialist travel arrangements are necessary and the young person is eligible for NHS Continuing Care, NHS funding may be applied for to provide a medically trained member of staff to accompany the young person on the home to school transport.

Passenger assistants and/or drivers are not trained to provide healthcare interventions during the journey between home and school.

Due to the individual nature of any complex physical or medical needs, the parent/carers of the child may be best placed to provide transport and will be encouraged to take the child to school themselves. In such cases, they will be eligible to receive mileage expenses.

If the parent/carers are unable to provide transport themselves, the council will offer suitable transport which enables the parent/carer (or their representative) to accompany the child in order to provide any medical assistance required. Parent/carers can nominate a representative who is a carer age 18 or over.

### **Care pathways**

In the event of a medical emergency one of the following care pathways will be followed.

#### **a) Emergency care pathway**

The emergency care pathway will be followed if there is a medical emergency. In accordance with NHS guidelines medical emergencies can include:

- loss of consciousness
- an acute confused state
- fits that aren't stopping
- chest pain
- breathing difficulties



- severe bleeding that can't be stopped
- severe allergic reactions
- severe burns or scalds
- trauma due to a road traffic accident

View the [emergency care pathway](#).

**b) Epilepsy care pathway**

For children and young people known to have epilepsy, the individual emergency epilepsy plan should be followed. Please note that all epilepsy care plans (agreed by Epilepsy Nurse Specialist, parents and school) will need to be made available as part of the travel assistance application process.

View the [epilepsy care pathway](#).

## **Annex 3 - Transport service standards**

These standards define the specific responsibilities of the council, transport providers and of parent/carers in relation to travel arrangements offered to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Underlying these standards is the principle that if the council agrees to provide travel assistance, it will be provided in a safe and cost effective manner, taking account of the specific needs of the child or young person and with regard to the best use of resources.

### **1. Transport staff**

The quality of travel assistance to and from school can often affect the emotional welfare and behaviour of children and young people. All drivers and passenger assistants (PA) will:

- show understanding and empathy for children, young people, parent/carers and school staff.
- treat children and young people with respect and dignity.
- greet children, young people and parent/carers politely and ensure that all passengers travel in comfort and safety.
- have undergone a training programme and will be in receipt of disclosure and barring service (DBS) checks.

Passenger assistants will only be provided as part of travel arrangements where a need has been assessed in order to support the safe travel and care of the children and young people on a particular route.

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to lift their child into and out of their seat if assistance is required. It is the responsibility of the PA to ensure that the passenger is fastened into their seat.

To ensure the safety of passengers, the consumption of food or drinks is not permitted on board a vehicle.

We recognise that change can be unsettling. As a result we will make every effort to ensure continuity, however this may not always be possible due to illness, holidays, retirements and changes to suppliers. Changes may also be necessary from time to time to ensure the efficient use of council resources.

### **2. Vehicles**

Transport will be provided in accordance with contractual standards and legislation.

All vehicles will be properly licensed and roadworthy, and will offer the standards of comfort and safety as prescribed in relevant legislation. Regular monitoring of quality and service standards will take place in respect of the service provider's vehicles.

Vehicles will have specialist wheelchair access and wheelchair tie down and occupant restraint systems where necessary.

### **3. Travelling times**

We will endeavour to ensure that pupils arrive at school ready to learn and recognise that the length of the journey to school, if too long, can affect this. We expect the maximum length of journey for a pupil will be no more than the statutory guidelines. On occasions there are factors outside our control which may affect this, for example unforeseen traffic congestion or bad weather.

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to vary planned routes and this may affect pick up and drop off times. Where this is the case we will always aim to provide five working days' notice to parent/carers.

These journey times do not apply where pupils are travelling to schools and colleges outside of Trafford.

### **4. Vehicle waiting times**

It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to bring their child or young person to the vehicle in the morning and collect from the vehicle in the afternoon. When a vehicle arrives at a pick up or drop off point, the horn will not be sounded.

To make sure journey times are kept to a minimum and that all passengers arrive at school or college on time, drivers have waiting time limits as follows:

- a. If your child is not ready, or not at the agreed pick up point, the vehicle will wait for a maximum of 2 minutes after the agreed pick up time and then set off.
- b. If the vehicle arrives early the driver will wait until the set time and then a further 2 minutes before setting off.
- c. If the vehicle arrives late it will move off as soon as all the passengers have boarded.

If the child misses the transport under these circumstances, the parent/carer is responsible for ensuring their child or young person gets to school or college on time.

If more than two occurrences of delay are caused by parent/carers, children or young people not being available at the official time, travel assistance will be reviewed and may be suspended or permanently withdrawn. In such circumstances

parent/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child or young person's regular attendance at school or college.

## **5. Absences**

Where a child or young person cannot attend school or college on any particular day due to illness it is the parents/carers responsibility to;

- Contact Trafford travel coordination unit (TTCU) the night before travel is required, if it is known that the child will be off school the next day or;
- Contact TTCU as early as possible in the morning of the day the child or young person is due to travel, if they have only just begun to show signs of illness. The office is open from 7am on 0161 912 5055 and you can also contact us by sending a text message to 07860 052684 or emailing [ttcu@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:ttcu@trafford.gov.uk).

When travel assistance is cancelled due to illness, it will only be reinstated when the parent/carer notifies TTCU. This notification should be given on the day before the child or young person is due to return to school.

Where there are more than two occasions of parent/carers failing to cancel travel assistance for their child or young person before it arrives, the transport provision may be suspended for a period of time or permanently withdrawn. Parents/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child or young person's regular attendance at school or college in these circumstances.

## **6. Making alternative arrangements**

In the event that a parent/carer is unable to meet their child or young person at the specified time and location, transport providers are required to take the child to the nearest place of safety and notify the Children's Social Services.

Parent/carers must provide an emergency address, located within one mile of their home address or the pick-up point, where their child can be dropped off in an emergency.

At times, parent/carers may need to make emergency alternative arrangements for the handover of their child or young person to a nominated responsible adult. In these cases parent/carers must notify TTCU in writing either by email or text message and make suitable arrangements to ensure their child or young person's safety.

Where emergency arrangements are put in place on more than two occasions, travel assistance will be reviewed and may be suspended or permanently withdrawn. In such circumstances parent/carers will be responsible for ensuring their child or young person's regular attendance at school or college.

In circumstances where vehicles are delayed or late arriving the parent/carer should contact TTCU. If there are more than 3 instances of a vehicle being late in any 4 week period please contact TTCU and we will take steps to directly address the situation with the service provider.

## **7. Extra journeys**

The provision of travel assistance only applies to journeys to and from school or college at the beginning and the end of the school day. Travel assistance is not provided on any other occasions, for example, travel between schools, sports facilities, for work experience, other curriculum activities and medical appointments.

Where a child attends more than one school, they may require additional transport. The school, which is the child's main school, will be responsible for arranging and meeting the cost of such transport.

Where a child is based full time at a school, but visits other schools or a Pupil Referral Unit, the school where the pupil is 'on roll' will be responsible for arranging transport and for the cost of such transport. Parents/carers should, in these circumstances, address any issues directly to the child's school.

## **8. Travel assistance for parent/carers to attend meetings or events**

Where a parent/carer is required to attend school or college for a meeting or event, it is their responsibility to make their own travel arrangements. Parent/carers may be allowed to travel on their child or young person's vehicle where all the following conditions are met:

- Permission is granted by TTCU prior to the journey as this is essential for insurance purposes.
- There is a spare seat available on the vehicle.
- The vehicle is not diverting from its regular route.

## **9. Medical assistance**

Passenger assistants are trained in basic first aid and epilepsy awareness. However, in the event of an emergency passenger assistants will contact 999 to request paramedic support.

For more information, see [Annex 2 care pathways for complex physical and medical needs](#).

## **10. Safeguarding children and young people**

The council's nominated Child Protection Officer will be advised of any safety issues that may be encountered during the provision of travel assistance. The nominated officer will take appropriate action to safeguard the child or young person as deemed

appropriate and in line with council procedures. The school, social workers and other agencies may be contacted depending on the individual circumstances as necessary.

## **11. Expected standards of behaviour**

A child or young person with special educational needs or disabilities may experience behavioural difficulties as a direct result of their particular needs. In these cases we will make every effort to work with the school, parent/carers and transport providers to manage instances where the child or young person exhibits these extreme behavioural characteristics. Wherever possible these considerations will be taken into account when determining an appropriate and safe form of travel assistance. Specialist advice will always be sought from the child or young person's school or college regarding whether the behaviour is directly linked to the special educational needs and appropriate action accordingly taken.

It is, however, recognised that general poor behaviour not directly attributable to a child's particular special educational needs and circumstances cannot be taken into account when determining an appropriate safe travel plan. It is paramount to have and to enforce clear standards of acceptable behaviour in the interests of ensuring a safe journey for all children, young people and staff as well as other road users.

In consultation with schools, we may be required to instigate permanent or fixed periods of exclusion from travel assistance. In the event we are unable to provide safe transport, either on a temporary or permanent basis, parent/carers will be responsible for transporting their child or young person and ensuring their regular attendance at school or college.

When considering whether to exclude any child or young person from travel assistance, we will require written statements from drivers and PAs in relation to the alleged incidents. Consultation will also take place with the head teacher and other relevant specialists.

The application of any sanctions as detailed below does not prejudice the rights of any individual to instigate criminal proceedings against a person resulting from unacceptable behaviour.

### **a) Verbal abuse**

- The first instance of offensive verbal abuse to staff, other passengers or the general public will result in a formal warning.
- The second instance of verbal abuse will result in a written warning.
- The third instance will result in a five-day exclusion from travel assistance.

**b) Vandalism**

The first instance of vandalism to a vehicle will result in five-day exclusion. The costs of making good the damage will be charged to the parent/carer.

The second instance of vandalism will result in permanent exclusion from travel assistance. The costs of making good the damage will be charged to the parent/carer.

**c) Physical abuse**

The first instance of physical abuse will result in a two-week exclusion from travel assistance pending full investigation. Travel assistance may be reintroduced when the head teacher and TTCU manager are both satisfied (and in line with school's specific behaviour policies) that the child's behaviour has improved satisfactorily. Any further occurrence of physical abuse will result in permanent exclusion from travel assistance.

**13. Feedback and questions**

We are always looking for ways to improve the quality of services and feedback from parent/carers is very important and positively encouraged. If you have any comment or a question about the provision of travel assistance or these service standards, please email [ttcu@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:ttcu@trafford.gov.uk) or telephone 0161 912 5055.