



Post 16 Transport to School or College

An Information Guide for Parents
www.kent.gov.uk

Introduction

Since the government raised the participation age for learners to 18 years, there has been a common misunderstanding that local authorities have a duty to provide transport to a pupil's place of learning beyond age 16. This is not normally the case.

Raising the education participation age did not require learners to remain in school or college, and consequently legislation in regard to the provision of transport remained unchanged. Young adults have the option to choose work based learning or an apprenticeship if they wish and this access to paid employment during their post 16 studies means there is no direct access to free transport in the same way as there might have been for pre 16 learners of statutory school age.

Authorities do not have identified government funding to support post 16 travel, but recognising how important this is to Kent's young adults KCC at its discretion have agreed to subsidise the 16+ Travel Card for all Kent's learners in education or work based learning. Kent boasts a rich and diverse mix of learning opportunities across the county and consequently subsidising a significantly discounted Travel Card available for use 24/7 has been the chosen approach for KCC to help support access to further education.

KCC spend in the region of £1.7m on transport for post 16 learners. A significant portion of this subsidises the Kent 16+ Travel Card. Because the Kent 16+ Travel Card is an uncapped scheme, it is not possible to provide an exact figure in relation to the level of subsidy provided as this will vary based on usage patterns.

The card is available to any Kent resident of eligible age attending a recognised learning establishment and is distributed through the learning providers. Students should check with their learning provider to establish if they would be eligible for additional financial support through the school's or college's bursary scheme (this replaced the Education Maintenance Allowance) as this funding can be used to discount the price of the travel pass to the learner.

Hopefully this guidance will give you all the information you need to make an informed decision about how you access your continued post 16 learning. Further information on the Kent 16+ Travel Card is available from the link below:

www.kent.gov.uk/kent16plustravelcard

Kent 16+ Travel Card

Kent County Council provides the opportunity for all education and training providers to secure a Kent 16+ Travel Card for their learners.

The Kent 16+ Travel Card is subsidised by Kent County Council and is available to be used by young adults 24 hours, 7 days a week on all Kent's registered public bus services. The criteria to apply for a Kent 16+ Travel Card is:

- The student must be over 16
- Lives in a house that pays Council Tax to a Kent council
- Attend a participating school, college or work based learning provider.

The travel card costs £400pa and is applied for directly to Kent County Council by visiting www.kent.gov.uk/kent16plustravelcard. When the applications are processed the cards will be distributed to the college where payments will be taken and the cards issued.

Some establishments offer the option to pay for the pass in installments or offer students a further subsidy on the cost of the pass. Parents should contact them for more information on the available support.

It is expected that those education and training providers who have benefitted from the government's new 16 – 19 Bursary Scheme may be able to provide further support to low income families to obtain the travel pass at a further discounted rate.

For further information on Kent's 16+ Travel Card, please follow the link below:

www.kent.gov.uk/kent16plustravelcard

Or email: **kent16plustravelcard@kent.gov.uk**

16+ Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

In the first instance, students with an EHC plan should apply to their learning provider for a Kent 16+ Travel Card.

However, if the students needs are such that they are unable to walk to and from their learning establishment or access public transport, then they should apply to the Local Authority for transport assistance by completing an application form AW3, and returning it to the address below by 31 July.

Along with the form, parents should provide, if possible a copy of the EHCP, the student's start date and timetable and any other evidence that would support the request for transport. The application form can be found on the following website:

www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport
or contact **03000 412121**

or from Transport Eligibility Team
Rm 2.24, Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone Kent ME14 1XQ

The Local Authority will assess the student's eligibility in accordance with Kent's Transport policy. The student must attend their nearest appropriate school, college or learning provider and be living the statutory distance from the education or training establishment to be eligible.

Once the assessment has been carried out, the Local Authority has the discretion as to how it chooses to meet its transport obligations and may consider several options such as:

- Providing Independent Travel Training to allow the student to travel on public transport
- Granting a Personal Transport Budget at its discretion for the parents or students to make their own arrangements to travel
- Direct transport provision due to the student's needs and/or disability.

Before any or all of these options are considered, the student's EHCP will be viewed to understand their needs and further supporting evidence may be required. Parents should note that whilst a student may have received transport assistance previously, there is no automatic right for students to continue to receive assistance or to be provided with the same mode/type of transport. Post 16 applications should therefore be made at the earliest opportunity to allow for a proper assessment to be made.

For further information on transport assistance for children with an EHCP, please follow the link below:
www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

Alternative Means of Support

Where students have no access to a public bus network, students can appeal for assistance with other means of transport and this will be considered by the Local Authority. It should be noted that provision is discretionary and if it is possible to use the public bus network, other means of accessing school/college are unlikely to be supported.

Independent Travel Training

Independent Travel Training (ITT) helps young people (up to 24 years old) with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan learn how to travel to school, college or their learning provider by public transport (bus, train or both).

Being able to access public transport provides important life skills for students. The training will empower the students to make their own decision about how they live and what they want to achieve and build their confidence in other aspects of their life such as:

- Future job opportunities
- Accessing new hobbies
- Social skills.

To be eligible for Independent Travel Training, the student must:

- Attend their nearest appropriate school, college or learning provider
- Have an EHC plan
- Live more than 3 miles from the nearest appropriate school, college or learning provider.

It is expected that students will undertake ITT where possible. Not engaging in this where appropriate, may affect any request for transport in the future.

Parents, schools and the student's SEN Officer can make a referral to the team online for the student to be considered for ITT at:

www.kent.gov.uk/independenttraveltraining
or by emailing the team at: **itt@kent.gov.uk**

An initial meeting will be held with the parents, student and their personal trainer. The training is 1:1 and the student's personal trainer will support them through their training and is their contact for support afterwards. The training is delivered at the pace of the student and is not limited to a set number of sessions or a set amount of time.

Training takes place at the time the student will need to travel to and from school, college or their learning provider. When the student starts to travel independently they will be assessed by another trainer to ensure that they are competent and confident on the journey.

After this, a meeting with the parents, the student and their personal trainer will be arranged to discuss the training and to complete the paperwork confirming that the student has successfully completed their ITT and are able to travel independently from their home to their educational establishment.

The student will be issued with a bus or train pass by Kent County Council for the dedicated journey to school, college or learning provider and the trainer will continue to offer support if it is required.

The bus and/or train pass is issued for the full academic year. The following academic year, parents will need to apply directly for the Kent 16+ Travel Card to the student's school, college or learning provider in accordance with Kent County Council's Post 16 Policy.

Independent Travel Training can also be delivered over the summer and school holidays for the start of a new term or academic year.

Further information can be found on the following website:

www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

Or by contacting the team on 03000 416106 /412121

Email: **itt@kent.gov.uk**

Personal Transport Budgets (PTB)

The student must be eligible to receive transport assistance in accordance with Kent's Transport policy and consideration will be given to their needs and inability to access public transport when assessing them for a PTB. The PTB is granted at the discretion of the Local Authority where it is cost effective to do so. The Local Authority will investigate whether there is any hired transport or public transport availability that the student could travel on and that would cost less than providing the parents with a PTB. If this is the case, the PTB would not be granted.

The PTB is provided to the student/parents in order for them to make their own arrangements to travel to and from their place of learning. The budget can be used towards the costs of running the family car or arranging with a friend or another member of the family to support them with other family commitments whilst they take their child to school. Its use is not prescribed, but parents are required to ensure their child can access school in a safe and legal way and arrive in a fit state to learn.

The annual PTB amount is paid over 11 months and is assessed by distance measured in a straight line to the place of learning and bears no relationship to the cost of the journey, be that in a taxi or hired vehicle or on a public bus.

To apply for a PTB online, please follow the link below:

www.kent.gov.uk/personaltransportbudget

Parents/students can also indicate on the application form AW3, whether they wish to be considered for a PTB. The application can be found on the following webpage:

www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

For further information, please email:

personaltransportbudgets@kent.gov.uk

General Information

Frequently Asked Questions

My son/daughter is staying on at the same school for Yr12, will he/she still be eligible for free home to school/college transport?

No. All students attending a mainstream or special school should, in the first instance, apply to Kent County Council for a Kent 16+ Travel Card in order to access public transport. In some instances where transport had been in a hired vehicle, it may be possible to purchase a seat under the Vacant Seat Payment Scheme. For further information on this scheme please follow the link below: www.kent.gov.uk/vacantseatspaymentscheme

The only transport available from my area to my child's school/college is a train and they are unable to use the Kent 16+ Travel Card – will the Local Authority help?

In the first instance, you should see if a closer establishment offers broadly similar courses. It is unlikely you will be supported unless your child is attending the closest school/college offering similar courses. If this is the nearest appropriate school/college, you should discuss whether the education or training establishment that your child attends can offer you any further subsidy towards the cost of a train pass through its bursary funding.

If no further subsidy can be offered to you by the education or training establishment, you can complete an application form (AW3) and send it to the Transport Eligibility Team requesting their consideration for transport assistance. Whilst the team will consider your request, if they are unable to provide any assistance, you will be informed in writing of their decision and you will be responsible for making your own transport arrangements. If you are still dissatisfied, you can appeal to:

Democratic Services
Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone Kent ME14 1XQ

or email appeals@kent.gov.uk

If you are unhappy with the Panel's decision, you can refer your case to the Secretary of State.

My son/daughter has special/medical needs special/medical needs and/or a disability that means he/she is unable to access public transport – what do I do?

Apply for transport assistance from the Local Authority by completing an application form AW3 which can be found on the following website: www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

Send this to the Transport Eligibility Team with a copy of their EHCP and/or any evidence/supporting information relating to the disability or illness. You should include with your request for transport assistance a letter from your consultant, which confirms their inability to walk or to travel on public transport.

My son/daughter receives free transport via a taxi, will this continue in Yr12?

Not necessarily. It will depend on your child's medical/special needs, their accessibility to public transport, the availability of registered bus networks in your area and the nature of the route between your home and their education or training establishment. There is no guarantee that the mode of transport will remain the same.

My son/daughter will be at their education/training establishment on a course for 2 or more years, do I need to apply every year?

Yes. If your son/daughter is attending a mainstream or special school and has a Kent 16+ Travel Card, you would need to apply every year they attend that education or training establishment. If they have undertaken independent travel training and their ability to access public transport has changed, please advise the Transport Eligibility Team on 03000 412121 or, email homeschooltransport@kent.gov.uk

If your son/daughter attends a special school that accommodates students until they are 19, you would not normally apply for transport every academic year unless the student changes education or training establishment or moves home. However, if the student is staying on for any additional years past the age of 19, please advise the Transport Eligibility Team at:

homeschooltransport@kent.gov.uk

My son/daughter has changed schools – do I need to complete another application form?

No. However, you must inform the Transport Eligibility Team in writing of this move, or email homeschooltransport@kent.gov.uk and provide your child's full name, date of birth, the new school/college they will be attending, their timetable and the course name.

Their eligibility to receive transport assistance will be reassessed and you will be informed of the decision. Please be aware, that if transport is granted, until such time as it is in place, it will be parent's responsibility to make any arrangements for them to attend their new school/college. It is therefore recommended you inform the Transport Eligibility Team of a pending school move at the earliest opportunity.

My family have moved, do I need to complete another application form?

No, but you must inform the Transport Eligibility Team of the move and provide your child's name, date of birth, your old address and your new address with any new contact numbers.

Whilst your son/daughter may have received transport previously there is no guarantee that this will continue and their eligibility to receive assistance will be reassessed and you will be informed of the decision.

Please be aware, that if transport is granted, until such time as it is in place, it will be parent/carers responsibility to make any arrangements for the learner to attend their new school/college. It is therefore recommended that an application is made as soon as you are aware of a move date.

I am in the care of Kent County Council, can I have the Kent 16+ Travel Card at a discounted rate?

No. However, Kent County Council has extended the age range of the Young Persons Travel Pass for Kent Children in Care. This is valid up to age 18 for this group of students.

Alternative formats

If you require this document in any other format or language, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call: 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553).

This number is monitored during office hours, and there is an answering machine at other times.