



A guide for parents, carers and pupils

Home to School Transport

2014 / 2015

Transport from Home to School

The Home to School Transport Team is responsible for assessing applications made by parents for home to school transport, including children with statements of special educational needs (SEN).

The Home to School Transport Team is based at:

**Sessions House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ**

The phone number for our contact centre is 03000 41 21 21. They will be in a position to answer general enquires and put you through to the Home to School Transport Team if more detailed information is required.

You can email the Transport Team at:
homeschooltransport@kent.gov.uk

We will not accept application forms if you fax them to us.

To find out if your child is eligible, please complete the Home to School Transport Application form and send it to the Transport Team at the above address. You must complete one form per child. Each application is assessed on an individual basis. Please be aware that, although one child in your family may have been approved to receive transport assistance, this will not automatically guarantee that a younger or older sibling will also be granted transport assistance.

Please be aware that the Transport Team are unavailable to assess eligibility over the phone. Applicants can only be assessed upon receipt of a valid application form.

If your child has lost their pass or they want to replace it, please ask to speak to the Transport Integration Unit at Aylesford.

East Kent – 0300 333 5689
North Kent – 0300 333 5697
West Kent – 0300 333 5691
Mid Kent – 0300 333 5688

If you want to talk about the transport arrangements for children with Special Educational Needs, please call the contact centre on 03000 41 21 21 and ask to speak to the Transport Team.

The information given in this booklet is about the 2014-2015 school year and the details were correct as of March 2014.

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Home to school transport is for children

who:

- Attend the nearest appropriate school for transport purposes and;
- Live more than 3 miles, for a child over the age of 8, from the school using the shortest available walking route
- Live more than 2 miles, for a child under the age of 8, from the school using the shortest available walking route.

The nearest appropriate school for transport purposes is the nearest geographical school that is suitable for your child's age and ability.

Age appropriate relates to attendance at a primary or secondary school

Ability appropriate relates to attendance at a mainstream or special school.

Because a child is assessed suitable for a grammar school, it does not mean that a wide ability school is unsuitable. In most circumstances transport assistance to a grammar school will only be appropriate, if it is the nearest secondary school (and the child meets the entry requirements).

Can you help my child with transport to school?

If your child goes to the nearest appropriate school for transport purposes and you live more than three miles from this school, you can apply for free home to school transport.

For a primary aged pupil to be entitled to home to school transport, you must have named on your primary application form, your nearest school as your preferred school and live more than two miles from the school via the shortest available walking route.

For a secondary aged pupil to be entitled to home to school transport, you must have named on your secondary application form, your nearest school as your preferred school and live more than three miles from the school via the shortest available walking route.

Academies, Foundation and Free Schools are treated in the same way as other schools.

If your child has not been offered a place at any of their preferred schools and we have offered them a place at another school, you may apply for

help. But please remember that your child will not automatically get transport to and from any school that offers them a place.

Children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Your child will be assessed against the criteria mentioned previously but if, as a result of their special needs, their journey to and from school is difficult, they may still be eligible to receive transport assistance.

Having a statement does not automatically give your child the right to free transport. There is an expectation that a responsible adult or parent would accompany the child to and from school. Parents must apply for home to school transport using the T1A/T1B application and send it to the Transport Team with any information that will assist the team in assessing the child's eligibility. This could be a copy of their EHC plan (statement) and/or correspondence from the child's GP and/or Consultant.

For further information, please go to www.kent.gov.uk and view the Getting to School with SEN webpage.

Do I qualify for help with transport if I am on a low income?

To qualify to receive transport assistance under the low income criteria, your child must be entitled to receive free school meals or you must be in receipt of one of the benefits listed below:

- Income Support
- Income based jobseekers allowance
- Child Tax Credit (TC602 for the current tax year with a yearly income of no more than £16,190)
- Guaranteed element of state pension credit
- Income related employment and support allowance.

If your child attends a primary school and is aged 8 but under 11 years, they must also:

- attend their nearest appropriate school for transport purposes

- be living between 2-6 miles from the school

If your child attends a secondary school and is aged 11 years and over, they must also:

- they attend one of their three nearest appropriate

schools for transport purposes

- be living between 2-6 miles from the school.

For primary and secondary aged children going to a church school, they must (in addition to receiving the benefits listed above):

- live between 2 – 15 miles from the school
- have the application form signed by a vicar/priest of the same denomination as the school stating that the child is a regular and practising member of a church of the same denomination as the school.

The parent will also need to explain why their religion or belief makes it desirable for the child to attend that particular school rather than a nearer school, where the preferred school is not of the same religion or denomination as that practiced by the parent.

In addition children in the care of Kent County Council and children from low income families who are entitled to free school meals, will receive transport assistance to the nearest grammar school provided that:

- they have met the entry requirements of the school
- they have been offered a place at the school
- it is the nearest school of that type to their home
- the distance from their home and the school is between 2-15 miles.

Where a child is unable to secure a place at their nearest grammar school but has named their nearest, transport will be provided to the next nearest grammar school providing it is not more than 15 miles from their home.

Children in Local Authority Care are children under the age of 18 years for whom the Local Authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who is the subject of a care order under Part IV of the Act. This applies equally to children who immediately after being looked after by the Local Authority become subject to an adoption, residence or special guardianship order. (As defined by Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 or Section 8 or 14A of the Children Act 1989)

The 2 and 3 mile statutory distance is measured in the same way as the statutory walking route i.e.

shortest available walking route. However, the 6 and 15 miles upper limits to a school are measured using vehicular road routes.

Transport that is granted under the low income criteria is reviewed on an annual basis and renewal forms (T1R) are sent to parents/carers by the Local Authority normally in April, to ensure that the pass will be ready in September for them.

Parents should return the T1R to this office by 31st July each year along with proof of benefit. Please note refunds for cost incurred will not be given if an application is received after this date.

What is meant by the nearest appropriate school for transport purposes?

The nearest appropriate school for transport purposes is the nearest geographical school that is suitable for your child's age and ability. Age appropriate relates to attendance at a primary or secondary school and ability appropriate relates to attendance at a mainstream or special school.

When we are deciding which is the nearest appropriate school for transport purposes, we do not take into account your preference for a single-sexed, mixed, specialist or particular type of school. Whilst you can give your preference for the school you want your child to go to, this does not mean that your child will automatically get help with transport.

Just as a grammar school assessment does not guarantee entry into a grammar school, an offer of a place at a grammar school does not determine that transport will be provided if an alternative mainstream school or academy is closer to the home. Unlike other secondary mainstream schools able to cater for children across the entire ability range, grammar schools are not able to accommodate pupils below the top 25% of the ability range. Consequently where a child's nearest school to home is a grammar school but they have not been assessed suitable for grammar school, for transport purposes the grammar school will not be considered as the nearest school.

How are distances between home and school measured?

Distances are measured by the shortest available walking route. This may take into account public footpaths where they are available. The shortest available walking route is one where your child, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult or parent, can walk safely.

What does free transport mean and what type of transport will my child use?

Free transport means that your child will usually be given a pass for public transport or be offered a seat on a bus or vehicle we hire. Unfortunately, you are not able to choose which bus, vehicle or other form of transport your child will travel on.

The routes and types of transport are chosen by Transport Integration, who are based at Aylesford and who provide the mode of transport that is the best value for money.

I have heard about Personal Transport Budgets (PTB), what are they?

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is only available to SEN children who have been assessed as eligible to receive home to school transport. It is a sum of money paid to you as the parent/carer to make your arrangements to take your child to and from school and is paid at the discretion of the Local Authority.

For further information please contact the Home to School Transport Team on 03000 41 21 21.

What is the Vacant Seat Payment Scheme (VSPS)?

Children who are not eligible for help with transport because they do not go to their nearest appropriate school for transport purposes or because they live less than the statutory walking distance from their school for their age, can apply for a seat under the Vacant Seat Payment Scheme (VSPS) on vehicles hired by Kent County Council. Access to a seat under this scheme is not guaranteed and may be taken away at a later date if the places are needed for pupils who are entitled to free transport or if the County Council decides to run a smaller vehicle. VSPS is not available on public transport.

The 2014–2015 charge is £165 for the autumn and spring terms and £160 for the summer term for each pupil (this may vary). The charge must be paid in advance. Part payments and pro-rata payments cannot be accepted. For more information and to apply for a seat under the scheme, please phone the numbers below.

If you live in the East Kent area 0300 333 5689

If you live in the West Kent area 0300 333 5691

If you live in the Mid Kent area 0300 333 5688

If you live in the North Kent area 0300 333 5697

When will I know if you can offer my child a VSPS seat?

VSPS seats can only be offered after all applications for pupils entitled to receive assistance have been processed. This means that we are usually unable to offer access to VSPS until several weeks after the term has started especially if there is a large number of children who are eligible for free transport and will use that vehicle. If this is the case, you must make your own arrangements to get your child to and from the school until such time as we contact you with a decision

Once my child has a VSPS seat, will it always be available?

No. We will only offer these seats if they are not needed by a pupil who is entitled to free transport. It is possible that a VSPS seat may have to be taken away at a later date if it is needed for a child who is entitled to free transport, if we decide to stop

running the vehicle or if we decide to run a smaller vehicle. If the seat is taken away, you will be given until the end of the academic year when you will have to make your own arrangements. The situation will be reviewed again at this time.

Where can I get an application form from?

At the time of going to print, KCC are in the process of making applications for transport available to parents online but does not have a fixed date. In the interim you can get application forms (T1A) from primary schools, secondary schools and the Admissions and Transport office, from the beginning of the summer term 2014. There is also a (T1A) form at the back of this booklet and you can print the application form from www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport.

If you complete a paper application, you must send the forms for children starting school in September to the Home to School Transport team no later than 31 July 2014. You must also provide a passport-sized photo of your child. If the team receive applications after this date, the train or bus pass, which your child may be entitled to will not be ready for the start of term. If this is the case, you will not be refunded for any train or bus fares and you will have to make your own arrangements to get your child to and from school.

Where will you send the pass if my child is eligible for one?

If your child is eligible for help with transport, we will send their pass to the school for the first day of term. Transport Integration will send you a letter to tell you what type of transport they will be using on the first day of term. Pupils should take this letter with them, so that they can get on the bus or train. Please make sure that your child gets on the right vehicle or train.

What happens if my child needs to use more than one type of transport?

We will only give your child help to use more than one type of transport, if it is not possible to carry out the journey by one type.

Can my child get help with transport if they travel to two different schools or travel to a different address in the morning or afternoon, for example, their grandparents or childminder's home including medical appointments and work experience?

No. We only give help to and from your child's permanent home and one establishment.

Can my child use their pass to get home if they want to stay at an after school club?

No. The pass is only for one journey to and from school and must be used at the beginning and end of normal school hours.

My child has medical problems, should I tell the Home to School Transport Team?

If these medical problems affect your child's ability to travel to and from school, you must give the team a medical report from your child's GP or consultant. To qualify for assistance on medical grounds, your child must be attending their nearest school. We will review your case on a regular basis.

If your child has a statement of special educational needs, please include the EHC Plan (statement) and any other information you feel will be helpful.

I have medical problems and I cannot take my child to and from school.

Can I get help?

If you have a young child and have medical problems that stop you from taking them to and from school, we may, exceptionally, give your child home to school transport. We will need to see evidence of your medical problem from your GP or consultant. We will review your case on a regular basis.

What happens if I move address or school?

You must notify the Home to School Transport Team in writing, of any change of address or school. The team will re-assess your child's eligibility and notify you accordingly. Please allow a minimum of 10 working days for the team to re-assess your child's eligibility and to make any appropriate arrangements to their transport if necessary. Parents are responsible for making their own travel arrangements during this time.

Can I apply for help with transport if I live outside of Kent, but my child will be attending a Kent school?

If you pay your council tax to another council other than us, you must apply to your own Local Authority (LA) for help with transport. The phone numbers below may be of help.

East Sussex County Council	0345 6080190
London Borough of Bexley	020 8303 7777
London Borough of Bromley	020 8464 3333
Medway Council	01634 331110
Surrey County Council	08456 009 009
West Sussex County Council	01243 777100

If we don't give you help with transport, it's usually because:

- your child is not going to the nearest appropriate school for transport purposes
- you live less than two or three miles from the school (depending on the age of your child)
- you or your child do not qualify as a low income family
- the application form for transport to a church school (for low income applications) has not been signed by the appropriate official or it has not been signed by a vicar or priest of a church of the same denomination as the school
- you require travel assistance to a work placement or an after school/breakfast club
- You have requested travel assistance to more than one establishment
- You have requested travel assistance to an address which is not the registered home address e.g. grandparents/child minder
- You are requesting travel assistance for or as a foreign exchange student
- Transport requested on a temporary basis.

Home to School Transport Appeals Procedure

How and when do I appeal?

You are entitled to appeal against decisions by the County Council refusing your application for free or subsidised transport for your child to a school maintained by Kent County Council or to an Academy or Free School in Kent.

In order to appeal you must put all the reasons which support your appeal in writing and send it to the Transport Appeals Team, Democratic Services, Room 1.99, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ. Or email your appeal to appeals@kent.gov.uk

Upon what grounds can I appeal?

You can appeal for any reason or combinations of reasons that you wish. The Members of the County Council's Regulation Committee Appeal Panel ("the Members") will consider any arguments that you wish to put to them.

Common grounds for appeal include, but are not limited to:

1. Financial considerations (I can't afford it)
2. Unsuitability of route (I live within the statutory distance to the school but the route, in my opinion, is too dangerous for a child accompanied by a parent or responsible adult to walk in safety)
3. Ill health/disability of parent or of the child (I live within the statutory walking distance to the school but my child cannot walk to school with me or a responsible adult because of my or my child's ill health or disability)
4. Religion or philosophical belief (I have a religious or recognised philosophical belief which means that I would like free/subsidised transport to enable my child to attend the school in question, because of the nature of that school or the nature of the teaching provided at that school).
5. Error of law (my child is entitled to free transport by law and the Council made an error of law when they rejected my application).

What other information must I include in/ with my appeal letter?

In your letter of appeal you must include:

- your reasons for appealing
- your name and address
- your telephone number and if possible an email address
- your child's name and date of birth,
- the name of the school to which you would like free/subsidised transport
- all evidence that supports your appeal. (For example letters from doctors, social workers and schools).

If you are appealing because you are on a low income and have been refused transport to a church school you may wish to provide evidence with your appeal letter that you hold that religious or philosophical belief (for example a supporting letter from a priest, vicar or cleric).

Is there any fee for appealing?

No, but you must meet any costs you incur for preparing your appeal or attending the hearing, such as photocopying or transport costs, yourself.

What happens once I have lodged my appeal?

Once your appeal has been received by the Transport Appeals team in Democratic Services you will receive an acknowledgement in writing.

We will then offer you a date and time to hear your appeal. You may, if you provide a good reason reject the first hearing date. If you reject the second hearing date or if you fail to attend a hearing on a date that you have accepted you will not, except in exceptional circumstances, be offered a further hearing. The Members will, however, consider your appeal in your absence, based upon the information that you have provided in writing. Please note that it is not possible to hold appeals in the evenings or at the weekend.

At least 5 days before the hearing date we will send you and the Officer presenting the Council's case a copy of each other's written case and supporting documentation.

Can I bring witnesses to the appeal hearing?

You are welcome to bring a witness, but you must advise the Transport Appeals team at least one day in advance who this will be. You may wish to provide a written summary of the witnesses' evidence on the day of the hearing as this may be helpful to the Members considering your case.

Please note that the Members hearing your appeal have the right to refuse to listen to witnesses produced by you or by the Officer presenting the Council's case if they believe that the evidence given is irrelevant to the appeal.

Can my witnesses claim any fee, allowances or expenses from the Council?

No fees, expenses or allowances will be paid to your witnesses by the Council under any circumstances.

Can I be accompanied by a friend at the hearing?

Yes, providing you let us know his or her identity at least 1 day prior to the hearing date.

Can my friend represent me and/or present my case at the hearing?

Yes if this has been agreed in advance.

Can my friend be a lawyer?

Yes, but only if they are not acting as a lawyer as part of a lawyer/client relationship.

Can I have legal representation at the hearing?

No, this is not allowed. The Officer presenting the case on behalf of the County Council will also not be allowed to have legal representation. The Members deciding your appeal have the right to have a legal adviser if they so wish.

Can I bring my own video or audio recording device to the hearing?

No, this is not allowed. There will be an official note taker at the hearing provided by the Council. Any attempt by you to record the hearing will lead to its immediate termination and the dismissal of your appeal.

Can I bring new or last minute evidence to the hearing?

As far as possible all evidence should be sent with your appeal letter. Any additional evidence should be sent to the Transport Appeals team at least 2 days before your appeal hearing. Written evidence produced on the day of the appeal hearing will be considered at the absolute discretion of the Members hearing your appeal and may lead to your hearing being adjourned to a later date.

What is the procedure to be used at the hearing?

There will normally be a panel of 5 Members considering your appeal. There will also be a clerk to advise Members and take notes of the appeal hearing. At the beginning of the appeal hearing the Chairman elected by the Members will introduce everyone present at the hearing and explain the procedure. The procedure is as follows:

1. A Presenting Officer will explain the reasons that have prevented the County Council meeting your wishes up to this stage.
2. You and the Members may then ask the Officer questions.
3. You and/or your representative (who can be a Member of the County Council) explain the grounds of your appeal and its desired outcome.
4. The Presenting Officer and the Members will ask you and/or your representative questions.
5. The Presenting Officer is asked to summarise the case for the Council.
6. You and/or your representative will then be asked to summarise the grounds of your appeal.
7. You and the Presenting Officer will be asked to leave the room and the Members will make a decision.

The Members may ask anyone questions at any time or may alter the order of steps 3 and 4 at any time. Members may agree to consider only written evidence for either or both parties.

The Decision

In reaching their decision the Members must have regard to the County Council's policy on Home to School Transport. They will need to satisfy themselves that the policy has been applied correctly. They will then look at the specific circumstances to determine whether they are sufficiently strong to enable them to use their discretion to make an exception. The Members have a responsibility to consider the most cost effective and appropriate mode of home to school transport taking into account the family circumstances at the time of your appeal

The Members may decide to:

- uphold your appeal in all respects or
- not uphold the appeal or
- they may decide to partially uphold the appeal. This can include meeting your wishes in part or for a time limited period. At the end of the time limited period the Members can review the circumstances again and may ask that additional information such as up to date medical records or school attendance records be made available at the time of the review.

You will receive a decision in writing within 5 working days of your appeal hearing. Decisions cannot be given over the telephone.

Is there any further appeal against the decision of the Members?

No, there is no further appeal within the Council's procedures. If you believe that you have suffered injustice as a result of maladministration by the Panel then you do have the right to pursue your complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman. This is not a right of appeal and has to relate to issues such as failure to follow correct procedures or failure to act independently and fairly, rather than just that the person making the complaint thinks that the decision is wrong. If you have a complaint of this sort you should refer it direct to the Local Government Ombudsman, PO BOX 4771, Coventry CV4 0EH. Advice on Lo-Call: 0845 6021983

Can I repeat my application for free or subsidised transport for the same child at the same school at some time in the future if my appeal is rejected?

No, you will not be able to make any further applications for free or subsidised transport in relation to the same child at the same school unless-

- you can demonstrate a significant and material change in your circumstances since your previous appeal was decided; or
- the County Council changes the criteria for offering free or subsidised transport under the Council's published Home to School Transport Policy and that change is relevant to your case; or
- there is a relevant change to the law.

If any of the above grounds apply you will need to write a fresh appeal to: Transport Appeals team, Democratic Services, Room 1.99, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ setting out your reasons in detail. You will then be informed whether the Council will be prepared to consider your new application.

There is no appeal against this decision under the Council's policy.

For any further information, please go to www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransport

Who is responsible for what in regard to Transport?

Admissions and Transport

Rm 2.24, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ.

1. To assess transport applications in accordance with Kent County Council's transport policies.
2. To provide publications with appropriate information for parents to be aware of eligibility criteria and on how to apply for transport assistance.
3. To advise parents of the decision to grant or refuse transport assistance and the reason why.
4. To assess the route taken between a child's home and a school against Kent County Council's guidelines.
5. To arrange and reassess any review of transport assistance made under the Low Income criteria and the appropriate mainstream or SEN Home to College policies.
6. To process appeals for parents who are in dispute with a decision refusing their child transport assistance.
7. To investigate reports of misbehaviour on transport.
8. To report to parents on the outcome of those investigations and the sanctions taken to address the behaviour.

Transport Integration

Aylesford Highways Depot, St Michael's Close Aylesford, Kent ME20 7TZ

1. To plan and procure hired transport.
2. To negotiate contracts and ticket discount prices for the bulk purchase of season tickets from commercial public transport.
3. To arrange retender of existing contracts.
4. To undertake regular surveys of children carried on school transport services.
5. To undertake regular checks on vehicle provision and time keeping.
6. To maintain a record of licensed and approved operators for use as transport contractors.
7. To maintain records of insurance for approved operators and police checks for their staff.
8. To receive approved transport applications from Admissions & Transport and to determine the

mode of transport and allocate children to the appropriate route.

9. To advise parents of their child's transport arrangements.
10. To order/issue appropriate passes.
11. To investigate complaints from parents regarding operational issues.
12. To obtain from operators reports of accident or damage and to forward any letters or claims to the insurance Section.
13. To manage parents claims for Cash Allowance.
14. To determine mode of transport and allocate children to routes under the Vacant Seat Payment Scheme.

Parents Responsibilities

1. To ensure child is taken to the appropriate bus stops/train stations for journeys to and from the school.
2. Should the mode of transport be a taxi, to ensure that a responsible adult or parent is at home to place the child into the vehicle and to be available upon their return from school.
3. To make own transport arrangements should a child finish school early before the normal departure time.
4. To make own transport arrangements should a child stay at breakfast clubs or after school club.
5. To make own transport arrangements for transport if a child is on work experience.
6. To make own transport arrangements for transport if a visiting relative or foreign student stays with the family.
7. Should the mode of transport be a taxi, to contact the operator when advised which company will be collecting/dropping off your child to make the necessary arrangements.
8. To ensure sufficient notice is provided to the Transport team to reassess their child's eligibility and to receive transport if the family move home or child changes schools.

If the child is eligible to receive transport, parents are responsible for making their own arrangements until such time as the transport is arranged.

Lost Passes

If you lose your pass, if it is stolen or is damaged/defaced, you will need to pay for a replacement. If the pass is issued by Kent County Council including

travel on Arriva, Stagecoach and South Eastern Trains, you must contact Transport Integration immediately on the following numbers for the area you live in.

If you live in East Kent area: **0300 333 5689**

If you live in the West Kent area: **0300 333 5691**

If you live in the Mid Kent area: **0300 333 5688**

If you live in the North Kent area: **0300 333 5697**

Where possible, students will be given a pass to travel on public transport. The pass is valid only on the days that the school or college is open. The transport does not include after school or college activities. You cannot use your passes to travel at weekends or holidays. Please remember that to make sure public funds are spent wisely, we do not offer a choice of transport.

Help with transport for young adults (aged 16 and over)

Kent 16+ Travel Card

(At the time of going to print, there is a proposal for the cost of the Kent 16+ Travel Card scheme to be reduced to £400 for unlimited travel. For further information, please look at the following link www.kent.gov.uk/news_and_events/news/2014/february/kcc_proposes_alternative_optio.aspx)

If your child is a student who will go into Year 12 in September 2014 or has entered onto a recognised apprenticeship, in the first instance you will need to contact the school, college or employer/trainer in order to receive support with transport. The way government is funding post 16 learners has changed and schools and colleges receive bursary funding which they can use to support their learners in a number of ways including transport.

The duty on local government to provide support with home to school transport ceases for children at the end of the term in which they turn 16. (other than for children with a statement of special educational needs). Despite there being no legal obligation, Kent County Council has historically provided assistance with a subsidised Post 16 Transport

In its continued drive to support young adults in Kent with access to learning, KCC will provide the opportunity for all education and training providers to secure a **Kent 16+ Travel Card** available for use on all registered public bus services (subsidised by Kent County Council). It is subject to any published exceptions.

From the start of the new academic year 2014/15 all new year 12 learners will be able to apply for a pass through their employer (if in a recognised apprenticeship), or their college or school sixth form.

The pass will be available to schools and colleges and training providers for an annual fee of £400. Many institutions are offering staged payments but you will need to check with your preferred school or college. It can be further subsidised by the education and training providers for their registered students.

The changes in government funding will mean that students will buy the passes directly from the

education providers but it is expected that schools and colleges who will have benefited from the government's new 16-19 Bursary scheme, can use elements of this funding to further support the cost of their students' travel.

If bus travel is not the most appropriate form of transport for a learner, it will be up to the learning provider to facilitate an alternative if it wishes. KCC will, where required, continue to act as a broker to procure other transport at attractive rates, as a paid-for service to learning providers but not directly to students.

Any learner in education or training who is not eligible for a contribution from their provider or employer is expected to pay the full cost of the Kent 16+ Travel Card at £520. KCC provides no direct support with transport assistance for Post 16 learners. (Other than in exceptional circumstances and where there is a statutory duty to do so in relation to a learners special educational needs.) KCC will fund a Kent 16+ Travel Card for all Kent Looked After Children for whom the LA is the corporate parent, at no charge to the learner.

If you feel you qualify for assistance because of your exceptional circumstances, you may write to the Head of Fair Access for further consideration.

It will be for learning providers to determine the level of subsidy they wish to introduce, however KCC recommends that providers model their support structures along the criteria set out below:

Eligibility Criteria

- a) A learner whose family income is not more than £16,190, who is on Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, Guaranteed Element of State Pension Credit, Income Related Employment and Support Allowance or Child Credit, but not Working Tax Credit; it is recommended that they pay no more than 50% for the Pass. This would result in providers reducing the cost to the learner of their Pass to between £0 and £260.
- b) A learner whose family income is between £16,190 and £20,817. It is recommended that they may receive a learning-provider contribution to the cost of the Pass, at a level set by the learning provider. This is to be in addition to the

KCC subsidy. For example learners may benefit from a further subsidy payable by, and at the discretion of, their learning provider, reducing the cost to the learner of their Pass to between £260 and £520.

- c) A learner whose family income is above £20,817. It is recommended that they pay the full cost.
- d) Where a 16-19 year old apprentice falls outside these criteria, but can demonstrate hardship caused by travel-to-learn and travel-to-work pressures, then they can be treated as category (b) above. Training providers and employers should be approached for additional funding support.
- e) All eligible learners must demonstrate to their institutions that they have a genuine travel-to-learn need.
- f) While the learning-provider funding or employer funding that could be used to further subsidise each Pass is entirely discretionary, the guidance in (a) to (e) above is designed to assist in ensuring a standard level of subsidy for all learners in Kent.

To access your Kent 16+ Travel Card please contact your school, college or training provider and ask for more information.

Or go to www.kent.gov.uk/kent16+travelcard

SEN 16+ students attending school, college or work based learning providers

For SEN students who are transferring onto further education and will have received a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) Plan or an Education Health Care Plan (EHC) following the end of their statement, must in the first instance, apply directly to the school, college or learning provider for a Kent 16+ Travel Card.

However, if their needs are such that they are unable to access public transport, parents can apply for transport through the Local Authority completing the AW3 SEN application form. This should be completed and sent to the Home to School Transport Team who will assess the application.

For further information, please go to www.kent.gov.uk and view the Getting to School SEN webpage.

Kent Freedom Pass

(At the time of going to print, a proposal has been put forward for the KFP scheme to alter to provide unlimited weekday travel between 6:00am - 19:00pm for 11 - 16 year olds at a cost of £200. For further information, please go to the following link after the word optio.aspx)

www.kent.gov.uk/news_and_events/news/2014/february/kcc_proposes_alternative_optio.aspx

Whether you are eligible or not for free home to school transport, as a resident of Kent you can access the Kent Freedom Pass scheme.

The Kent Freedom Pass enables young people in academic years 7-11 (and those put forward to year 12) who live in Kent to make unlimited travel on virtually all public buses in the county, at any time, for a single fee per academic year. The standard fee is expected to be £200 per academic year after which travel is free, except for a small number of bespoke bus services where an additional charge applies.

The Kent Freedom Pass scheme gives young people the independence to travel to and from school, at evenings and weekends, and throughout the school holidays. Full details and terms and conditions, including a list of participating bus operators and service exceptions, are provided at www.kent.gov.uk/kentfreedompass

To apply, pupils must be:

- Attending a school or other educational provision (inside or outside Kent) recognised by the scheme
- In academic years 7-11 (students who would be in year 11 but have been put forward to year 12, are also eligible)
- A resident of Kent (i.e. paying Council Tax to a Kent district council for Kent County Council services)

Children in receipt of Free School Meals pay a reduced fee of £50 per academic year. Young Carers, Kent County Council's Young People in Care and Kent County Council's Care Leavers are exempt from a charge, but need to have their application validated before submitting it to the Kent Freedom Pass office – please check the website for further details.

If you are paying the standard fee of £100 you can apply for the first time and renew online at www.kent.gov.uk/kentfreedompass. You can also download the application form from the website or

pick one up from your child's school. Whether you apply online or by post, you will need to pay the whole amount when you apply.

As noted above, the Kent Freedom Pass does not affect your child's entitlement to free home to school transport, and you can apply for both. If your child already receives free home to school transport and you have changed your address since you applied, please let the Admissions and Transport office know. Otherwise, it is likely that your application for a Kent Freedom Pass will be delayed while your entitlement is reconsidered.

The Kent Freedom Pass is not valid on hired school taxis, minibuses, coaches or trains. If your child loses, damages, or has their Kent Freedom Pass stolen, you will be charged for a replacement, which is £10 for the first replacement. You can have three replacements in any scheme year at a cost of £10 each before you have to re-apply to the scheme and pay the original application fee (of £100 or £50).

If you have any questions which are not answered by the information provided on the website, please email kentfreedompass@kent.gov.uk

Code of Conduct for Students while Travelling

Many thousands of pupils and students in Kent will receive transport or help with travel costs each year. The vast majority of them will travel on public transport services and will therefore travel with large numbers of other young people, as well as members of the general public. Whilst almost all of them travel responsibly but there can be occasions when behaviour falls short of acceptable standards and it is the responsibility of all parties – pupils/students, parents, schools, transport operators, other passengers and the Council's staff involved in arranging transport – to take steps to avoid this happening and to intervene if it does.

Students boarding buses or trains must:

- Arrive for their transport on time and with a valid travel pass with them
- Behave in a responsible way when waiting for the vehicle
- Get on the first available vehicle they have a valid pass for
- Show their passes to the driver or other officials if they ask
- Follow all instructions from the driver, inspector or other official at all times especially in an emergency
- Wear seatbelts at all times (if they are fitted); and
- Get off safely at the right stop and cross roads carefully.

The following behaviour is not acceptable and if reported, parents will be contacted by the Local Authority as to the appropriate action that will be taken.

Nuisance or offensive behaviour (Category 1)

This includes irritating and unpleasant behaviour which, whilst not necessarily a threat to safety, may significantly impair the comfort of others. Such behaviour includes:

- Failing to respond to the driver or inspector appropriately for example, not showing a valid travel pass.
- Eating or drinking on the vehicle
- Smoking
- Spitting
- Using bad or abusive language

Dangerous behaviour (Category 2)

This includes behaviour which may present some potential or actual threat to the physical safety of the child and others and includes:

- Standing on the vehicle steps or in the doorway
- Leaning out of the window or door whilst the vehicle is moving
- Harassing or verbally abusing other passengers or the driver
- Bullying
- Running around inside the vehicle or running up, running down or climbing the stairs.

Destructive or Very Dangerous Behaviour (Category 3)

This category includes behaviour which causes or has the potential to cause physical injury to others and damage to the vehicle and includes:

- Fighting
- Threatening physical violence
- Breaking windows
- Interfering with the opening of the doors
- Causing graffiti including scratching glass
- Spraying aerosols
- Damage to seats, seatbelts or other equipment

Extremely Dangerous or Life Threatening Behaviour

This category includes behaviour which is likely to cause serious injury to others and includes:

- Physical assault on the driver or other passengers
- Lighting fires including igniting aerosols
- Threatening physical violence with a dangerous weapon
- Interfering with the vehicle controls.

School Transport and the environment (Sustainable Transport)

Tackling the school run

We are committed to working with schools, parents and pupils to reduce congestion caused by the school run (the busy period when parents drive their children to and from school). It's estimated that at least one in five vehicles on the road at 8.45am are taking students to school which has a huge effect on how we all get around. The school run also adds to pollution and carbon emissions that affect air quality and climate change.

We are also working to develop healthy schools and to encourage young people to take part in more physical activity. Walking and cycling to school is a good way to get more exercise and is proven to benefit health and wellbeing, attendance and pupil performance.

School Travel Plans

Nearly all of Kent's schools now have a School Travel Plan. This is a strategy and action plan, tailored to the school, which seeks to encourage and facilitate sustainable travel choices by pupils, adult carers and staff. We continue to offer advice and support to schools in order to help increase and sustain the proportion of active, healthy, safe and sustainable journeys to and from school. Details of all the materials, resources and initiatives can be found at www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/Policy/schooltravel_useful_resources.cfm

You may also wish to contact the head teacher of your school and find out what's included in their action plan. You can also view the plan and other Safer Travel to School information via the Kent School Database: www.kent.gov.uk/KCC.SchoolSearch.Web.Sites.Public/Default.aspx

Enter the name of the appropriate school, scroll down the school's individual page and click on View Safer Travel to school information.

How you can help

Using some of the ideas explained below, you and your children can help to tackle congestion on the school-run and help to create a cleaner, greener, healthier school and community.

Walk to School

KCC enjoys a unique partnership with Medway Council and the Kent and Medway Charity Team in promoting and encouraging walking to school.

The Charity organises a range of activities to help the charitable sector with its fundraising and supports initiatives to promote health and wellbeing, particularly amongst primary school children.

The charity works in partnership with the KM Group, Kent's biggest media organisation. You can find more information about Walking Buses and walk to school incentive schemes on the charities website at www.kmwalktoschool.co.uk

Even if you can't walk to school every day or you live too far away, you could consider walking just once a week or 'park and stride' by parking a short distance from the school and walking the last bit of your journey.

Cycle to school

Cycle training is a very important way to increase confidence and safety. We deliver National Standard Cycle Training otherwise known as Bikeability. There are 3 levels of training that aim to give people the skills and confidence to ride their bikes on today's roads. We deliver Level 1 and 2 training to children in year 6. In addition, we will pilot Level 3 training to secondary school children. Bikeability will either be provided by KCC, or if the school is part of a School Games Organisation partnership, training will be arranged via School Games Organisers (SGOs). We are working with SGOs to make sure every year 6 child has access to level 2 training.

Children will need to:

- be at least 10 years old for level 2 training
- be able to ride their bike
- have an appropriate cycle helmet
- have a bike that is roadworthy

From September 2013 the training costs £10 per child. However, this may vary in some schools because they have paid to enter a partnership with a School Games Host Organisation to access a range of different activities, including Bikeability.

We are working hard to improve cycle routes across the county. For information about cycle routes in your area visit www.kent.gov.uk/cycling

Printed maps are available for some locations and can be found in libraries, Gateways and Tourist Information Centres.

Public Transport

Buses and trains may prove to be a good option for some pupils. For information about available services in your area, together with discounted tickets and incentive schemes visit www.kent.gov.uk/publictransport

Car Sharing/Buddy Scheme

You can reduce the cost and time involved in the school-run by sharing cars with friends and neighbours. You can find out more about sharing cars in Kent on the website www.kentjourneyshare.com, or ask your chosen school if they can match you with parents travelling from the same area. If half of UK motorists received a lift one day a week, congestion and pollution would be reduced by 10%.

Park Safely

Inconsiderate parking and manoeuvring in the vicinity of school entrances can present a significant safety hazard. Please support your school, other road users and local residents by avoiding parking on 'Keep-Clear' markings and, where possible, park or drop-off a safe distance from the school and encourage pupils to walk to the school gates. KCC work with schools, Kent Police and Local Civil Enforcement teams to take action against inconsiderate and dangerous parking.

This publication is available in other formats and
can be explained in a range of languages.

Please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or
call 03000 41 21 21 for more information.