

KCC Travel Saver

Share the fare with Kent County Council and save up to 50% off the cost of bus travel for students in years 7-11.



**Must-know information
for parents and students
for the school year**

2020 / 21

Get your pass on line at:
kent.gov.uk/travelsaver



**share
the fare**

**- £ -
spread
the cost**
pay by instalments
from August
2021



How will Covid affect the scheme ?

The scheme itself will not be affected. The Council want to offer the same financial support towards the cost of bus travel for students that need to travel to and from school by bus.

Government advice is to avoid the use of Public Transport where possible. Currently the capacity available on buses is very restricted and we want to try and ensure that the space that is available is kept for those that really need it. Children who live closer to school should consider walking or cycling to school and those who have the option to be dropped by car should do so. For those that do still need to use the bus to get to school, the schemes will work in exactly the same way as in previous years and with normal use, will continue to save parents about half of the cost of bus travel against what you would otherwise pay.

More than ever, parents need to carefully consider how Government Guidance and possible changes might affect use of the pass to work out if it still represents good value.

As the Council knows that this will be a difficult decision for parents to make at the moment, when the current restrictions on public transport are lifted, we will make a part year pass available. This will be reflected in the cost. For example, if we make a Travel Saver available that will be valid from January then the fee would likely be £230 reflecting reduced period of travel that it provides. In this instance we would open for applications as soon as possible towards the end of the year. In the meantime, parents could buy tickets from the operator or make different transport arrangements. Details will be confirmed when the situation changes.

What's going to be happening with Schools and how does this affect the scheme ?

Central Government are currently indicating that schools will be operating as usual from the start of the new school year. However, this has the potential to change and it is possible some schools will need to change attendance patterns or schools times. We recommend that parents check with your school or college as if this happens, it could change the amount of bus travel that children will need to make, which might affect your decision about how your child might travel and the value that the scheme represents.

Are all buses going to run ?

KCC have been supporting operators throughout the pandemic to ensure that they all remain in a position to provide school buses again when they are needed so we do not expect this to be a problem. However, the financial impact on bus services and operators has been significant so it could be that more services than usual are subject to change or cancellation. In addition, at the moment, operators are only able to let about half of the usual numbers of passengers on their buses and if this remains the case, then providing enough space for all passengers could be a problem, and so students that can travel in a different way should do so at the moment.

How will this affect my application ?

Because of the disruption caused to the Travel Saver team and whilst we have been trying to understand what the position with schools is going to be, we have had to delay opening for applications this year. For the same reasons, this year you will not be able to apply by post and all applications must be made on-line. By making these and some other changes, if you apply by 9th August then we should be able to ensure that passes are available for collection on the first day of term. If you qualify for the sibling offer then you can apply for these passes by post but will need to email us for an application form.

Should I apply ?

Yes. If your child needs to use the bus to get to school and they will still be traveling regularly then the pass will still save you money. However, before you apply, we are suggesting that parents understand how any changes to schools, bus services or intended travel habits could change the use made of the pass. If children are travelling less frequently then you may want to consider buying tickets directly from operators on a daily or weekly basis instead.

Will you be making any changes to the scheme because of Covid ?

Not really. The scheme will basically work in the same way and offer the same benefits. It is the use of the pass that could get changed by all of the issues identified and it is therefore vital that parents really consider how any changes might affect the way that children travel to school and the value that the scheme provides to them in light of that.

When the current restrictions on public transport are lifted, we will make a part year pass available. This will be reflected in the cost. For example, if we make a Travel Saver available that will be valid from January then the fee would likely be £230 reflecting reduced period of travel that it provides. In this instance we would open for applications as soon as possible towards the end of the year. In the meantime, parents could buy tickets from the operator or make different transport arrangements. Details will be confirmed when the situation changes.

What is the KCC Travel Saver?

The KCC Travel Saver (and the KCC 16+ Travel Saver) are bus passes provided by Kent County Council (KCC) which can save parents and pupils up to 50% on the cost of travel for children and students to and from school and college against what you pay if you were buying tickets on the bus.

Once you have bought the card you will then be sharing the fare with KCC, who will meet the rest of the costs of bus travel to get you to and from school or college. The pass is valid on any public bus service in Kent on Mondays to Fridays between 0600 and 1900 from September to the end of July.

Students in 6th form or college could benefit from our KCC 16+ Travel Saver. Visit: kent.gov.uk/16plustravelsaver.

Why do KCC provide it?

The only children that are legally entitled to transport assistance are those that get free home to school transport because they meet rules set by government. Most of the time this only applies to children going to the nearest school to where they live, and some councils only provide help to these children and no one else.

In Kent we want to do more to help all parents by providing a subsidy to help with costs of bus travel, thereby giving you a greater choice in which school you choose for your child.

What does it save me?

With regular use, for most children's journeys, this pass will save you around 50% of what you might otherwise pay if you bought an annual season ticket from a bus operator. If you are unsure whether it works for you, check with your bus operator and if it doesn't save you money then buy the ticket direct.

Who can get one?

To apply for a KCC Travel Saver for the 2020 / 21 school year every applicant **MUST**:

- be a resident of Kent (whose household pays Council Tax to a Kent district/borough council for KCC services)
- be at school in years 7-11, whether they go to school in the county or outside.

Residents of Medway Council and London boroughs that have a Kent postal address (e.g. Bromley and Bexley) are not eligible to apply and should contact their own council to find schemes in those areas.

How much does it cost and how can I pay?

The cost of the KCC Travel Saver is £360 for the year and you can pay online in full or spread the cost in monthly instalments with our new direct debit option.

Some lower cost passes and free ones exist for children and families meeting certain criteria.

To help parents make decisions later in the year, when the current restrictions on the use of Public Transport are lifted, we will make a part year pass available later in the year. This will be reflected in the cost. For example, if we make a Travel Saver available that will be valid from January then the fee would likely be £230 reflecting reduced period of travel that it provides. In this instance we would open for applications as soon as possible towards the end of the year. In the meantime, parents could buy tickets from the operator or make different transport arrangements. Details will be confirmed when the situation changes.

A summary of all pass types, costs and payment options is below.

Product	Summary	Cost	Application methods	Payment methods
KCC Travel Saver	Full Cost Pass Paid up front	£360	Online only	Credit / Debit Card
KCC Travel Saver Instalments	As above but paid for by instalment	£370	Online only	Direct Debit
KCC Travel Saver Low Income	Reduced cost for Low Income Households	£110	Online only	Credit / Debit Card
KCC Travel Saver Low Income Instalments	As above but paid for by instalment	£110	Online only	Direct Debit
KCC Travel Saver Sibling Offer	Households with 3 or more applicants get the 3rd and 4th pass for free	£720	Postal Only (please email us for an application form)	Cheque / Postal Order
KCC Travel Saver Sibling Offer	As above but paid by instalment	£730	Postal Only (please email us for an application form)	Direct Debit Instalments
KCC Travel Saver Care	Free Pass for children in Care and Young Carers	£0	Online only	No Payment Required
KCC Travel Saver Care Leaver	Free Pass for post 16 Care Leavers	£0	Online only	No Payment Required

How to apply for instalment payments

All applications this year can only be made online. Apply in exactly the same way as if you were paying up front. If you apply on line then when you have completed the first part of the application you will be redirected and asked to provide your Bank Details to set up the Direct Debit Agreement. This is all done on-line, you don't need to send us any paper or emailed copy.

If you are applying for our Sibling offer (buy 2 and get further passes for free) then please email the team and we will send you a Application and Direct Debit form for you to return).

Instalment examples

The cost of the pass remains the same whenever you apply. The earlier you apply the longer you can spread the cost and get the most use out of it! If you apply later in the year the cost is split by the number of months left until March 2021.

Standard pass examples

- Apply by 9 August 2020: 1 x instalment of £55 followed by 7 x instalments of £45 (total cost £370)
- Apply by 1 November 2020: 1 x instalment of £82 followed by 4 x instalments of £72 (total cost £370)

Low income pass examples

- Apply by 9 August 2020: 8 x instalments of £13.75 (total cost £110)
- Apply by 1 November 2020: 5 x instalments of £22 (total cost £110)

Sibling (3 or 4 passes) examples

Apply by 9 August 2020: 1 x instalment of £100 followed by 7 x instalments of £90 (total cost £730)

Apply by 1 November 2020: 1 x instalment of £154 followed by 4 x instalments of £144 (total cost £730)

How do I apply?

All applications must be made on-line at kent.gov.uk/travelsaver.

This year we cannot accept postal applications except for those applying for our sibling offer.

Please email the team and we will send you an application and Direct Debit Form which can be returned to **FREEPOST KCC TRAVEL SAVERS**.

When can I apply?

Applications can be made from 13 July 2020 until 23 May 2021.

If you want your pass ready for the start of the school year in September, you need to apply by **9 August 2020**, as it can take up to six weeks to process applications during the busy summer months.

Applications made after the deadline date - 9 August 2020 will be processed as quickly as possible but we cannot guarantee that they will be ready for the start of term.

Please remember, the pass costs the same no matter when you apply for it, so the earlier you apply the more value you get and the longer the period available to spread the payments if you are paying by direct debit.

When the current restrictions on public transport are lifted, we will make a part year pass available. This will be reflected in the cost. For example, if we make a Travel Saver available that will be valid from January then the fee would likely be £230 reflecting reduced period of travel that it provides. In this instance we would open for applications as soon as possible towards the end of the year. In the meantime, parents could buy tickets from the operator or make different transport arrangements. Details will be confirmed when the situation changes.

What proof do I need?

You do not need to provide any other information for Standard and Low Income passes other than the detail that you provide as part of your application. We will

complete basic eligibility checks based on your address, school, date of birth etc to ensure that you are able to have a KCC Travel Saver pass.

Low Income Passes are available to children who are registered with KCC as eligible for Free School Meals. Select this option when applying. No other information is needed. We will check that you are in receipt of Free School Meals.

If you are applying for a free pass in any of our are Categories, KCC will carry out the necessary checks to ensure that the student is registered with the Young Carers Organisation. If we cannot gain confirmation, your application will be cancelled and a pass will not be issued.

Buy two full cost KCC Travel Saver passes and get the third and fourth for free. Our sibling offer is available to households who have 3 or more siblings living in the same address and applying for a KCC Travel Saver (does not include the 16+ Travel Saver scheme).

Can I get a refund?

No. Once you have collected your pass then we cannot issue a refund. If you cancel your application **before** you have collected the pass then we can normally refund what you have paid minus a £10 administration fee.

How long will it take to get my pass, where will it be delivered and what do I do in the meantime?

We try to provide passes within 3 weeks, but at busy times of the year (such as the start of the new school year) this can take longer, possibly up to 6 weeks.

Once your pass is available, you should be able to collect it from the school office.

While you are waiting for your pass, you will be responsible for buying a ticket from the bus operator.

We are unable to send letters or other proof of application that enables you to travel without payment and we cannot consider requests to reimburse fares incurred while you are waiting for your pass.

Using my KCC Travel Saver pass

When can I use it?

The KCC Travel Saver pass is valid from the point of issue until 31 July 2021. You can use it on any public bus service in Kent on Mondays to Fridays between 6am and 7pm. Passes can be used in the school holidays but not in August.

Can I use the bus pass at any other times?

Some bus operators usually allow you to use your pass outside the core Monday to Friday, 6am to 7pm limit. However, at the moment some of these offers are suspended by these operators because of the Pandemic. Please check before traveling.

Stagecoach

Stagecoach allows pupils to use their KCC Travel Saver pass on all evenings and weekends all year round.

Arriva

Arriva allows KCC Travel Saver pass holders to use their pass at evenings and weekends for the majority of their services.

Chalkwell

Chalkwell offers a flat fare of £1 to KCC Travel Saver pass holders for evening and weekend bus travel, except from 31 July to the start of school term in September.

The bus operators are providing these extra services voluntarily and are not paid by KCC. We try to encourage other bus operators to make similar offers but cannot demand that they do.

Which services accept the KCC Travel Saver?

The KCC Travel Saver allows free travel on virtually all public bus services in Kent. A list of participating operators and the most important service exceptions are available at kent.gov.uk/travelsaver.

You can use the pass to travel out of the county if your journey starts or finishes in Kent. For example, you can travel from Kent into Medway (e.g. Chatham,

Gillingham, Rochester) and vice versa but would not be able to travel on a bus that started and finished its journey all within Medway.

Transport for London services do not accept the KCC Travel Saver but young people can travel for free if they have an Oyster Card.

Are there any other exceptions?

You cannot use the KCC Travel Saver on any service that is not a public bus. This includes private bus services and coaches, often arranged by schools or KCC. These services are not available to the general public and do not accept fares of any kind.

Some bus services tailored to schools are designated as “special services” within the scheme and there is an additional cost to travel on them. More information is available on our website **www.kent.gov.uk/travelsaver**.

KCC does not run bus services in Kent. As such, we cannot guarantee that services or journeys will not be subject to change or withdrawal.

How do I find out the times and routes of buses?

You can find this information on our website – **kent.gov.uk/publictransport**. More detailed information of routes and timetables by school can be found at **11-19travel.info**. Each local bus operator also provides timetables for their services and schools often hold copies of local bus timetables. You can also use the national journey planner **traveline.info** which holds details of all public bus and rail services in Kent.

Will there be any new bus services provided?

No new bus services will be provided as part of this scheme.

If you are experiencing overcrowding on your local bus, please contact your local bus operator. KCC has made money available to local bus companies to provide larger or additional vehicles on existing routes.

My KCC Travel Saver bus pass is lost/stolen/damaged. How do I replace it?

You can order a replacement pass on-line at kent.gov.uk/travelsaver or by calling us on 03000 418484. You will need a Credit or Debit Card to pay a £10 administration fee.

If you lose the replacement card, you can get two further replacements each school year (at a cost of £10 each). After this, you will have to reapply and pay the full application fee again.

The bus driver won't accept my KCC Travel Saver bus pass. What can I do?

Check that the bus service is one on which KCC Travel Saver is valid. If it is a private bus then your card will not be valid.

If your bus pass has been damaged, the smart chip in it might not work on the ticket machine on the bus, which means the driver will assume it isn't valid and you will have to pay for your fare. Please make sure you look after your bus pass carefully by not bending, biting, bashing or breaking it.

Passes that have been damaged in this way, or those where the photograph, name or KCC logo are not clear, or there is something else about the card that causes the driver to question its validity, will need to be replaced and will incur a £10 administration charge.

KCC is not liable for any costs incurred by students when the pass is not deemed to be valid by the operator. The standard replacement charge applies in all such circumstances. We will issue a temporary replacement to your home address within 10 working days and the permanent replacement will be sent to your school shortly after. You can order a replacement pass on-line at **kent.gov.uk/travelsaver** or by calling us on **03000 418484**.

Abuse it – Lose it

All KCC Travel Savers are expected to follow the Code of Conduct (published on our website). In addition to these, all bus operators publish their Conditions of Carriage.

Bus operators will refuse travel or confiscate bus passes of any passenger breaching these conditions. In serious circumstances, the bus company may involve the Police or ban a passenger from their services.

If a KCC Travel Saver bus pass is used fraudulently it will be withdrawn and people who make and/or allow fraudulent travel will be banned from the scheme.

Passes will also be confiscated immediately if the pass holder lives outside Kent and no refund will be offered.

What else do I need to know?

We do not have overall control over bus services or bus operators. The KCC Travel Saver does not entitle any pupil to travel on a particular service, does not guarantee space on any bus and cannot be accountable for problems with bus reliability. Problems about bus services should be directed to the relevant bus operator for resolution.

However, you can let KCC know of any general issues experienced by using our online feedback form (**www.kent.gov.uk/busfeedback**). We use this information to spot problem areas in our regular discussions with bus operators.

All KCC Travel Saver bus passes remain the property of Kent County Council and must be shown or surrendered on request.

How do I get further information?

Full terms and conditions and further information about schools and participating operators are available on our website kent.gov.uk/travelsaver or in the following ways:

- by emailing kcctravelsaver@kent.gov.uk
- by calling us on **03000 41 84 84** (Text Relay: 18001 03000 41 84 84)

This leaflet is available in alternative formats.
Please contact **03000 41 84 84**.

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