



**WOKINGHAM**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Personal Transport Budget Guidance**  
**For children and young people approved by the Local**  
**Authority as being Eligible for Travel Assistance**

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## Introduction

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is a payment designed to help you to get your child to school. It is available to:

- Children aged 5-16 attending a mainstream school who have been assessed as eligible to receive Home to School transport by Wokingham Borough Council. PTBs have replaced the mileage offer in previous policies.
- SEND children who have been assessed as eligible to receive Home to School transport by Wokingham Borough Council.
- For all eligible students moving into post 16 education

For all eligible students moving into post 16 education for the first time they will need to apply for a PTB if they require Travel Assistance, as this is the standard offer. This document should be read alongside the Travel Assistance Post-16 including young people with SEND policy statement, which can be found on the Wokingham Borough Council website.

A PTB is granted at the discretion of the Council, therefore even if your child is assessed as being eligible to Travel Assistance, you may not be granted a PTB if it is not cost effective for the Council to do so (for example, if your child could be placed onto existing transport at no additional cost to the authority). The Personal Transport Budget will be reviewed annually and republished on the 31 May each year.

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is a payment to help you to get your child to school or college. You can use the PTB in any way you wish that enables your child to get to school or college.

### Why choose a personal transport budget (PTB)?

- Freedom to make your own arrangements – to suit your family
- Control over how the money is spent
- Your child may feel more secure and relaxed at school
- You can share the cost and save money by joining up with other parents
- You could use the money to help your child become more independent

## **You could use your PTB in many ways:**

You can use the PTB in any way you wish to do this, for example:

- You or someone in your family can drive your child to and from school.
- You can arrange with a friend or relative to cycle with or walk your child to school.
- Car share with other parents.
- Pay for a bus pass for your child or get a bus pass for a friend to go with your child
- You could pay for a place on a vehicle that the school organises, to take children to and from their school.
- You could pay for childcare for another child for you to take your eligible child to school.
- Work with the school to join up with other parents
- Use it towards the cost of a taxi or share the cost of the taxi with other parents

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

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

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

The Council advises you to seek your own independent legal advice on the terms of the agreement that you may be entering into and any obligations that are placed on you.

## **You will:**

- have control over how the payment is used that allows you to get your child to school/college.
- accept responsibility for the decisions made regarding the use of the payments and understand what the consequences are for misuse.

## **You cannot use your payment:**

- To buy or utilise a space on transport services from the Council.
- For any purpose that does not enable you to get your child to or from

school/college.

- For any activity that is illegal, unlawful, or unsafe.
- For other purposes that may bring the Council into disrepute.

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

If you are granted a PTB, you may wish to discuss this with your child's school/college as they may be able to put you in touch with other parents who also receive a PTB. You could look into working collectively to ensure the best use of the PTB for all the children and families.

## 1. Applying for a PTB

An application for a PTB can be made by:

- the parent, guardian, or carer on behalf of the child.
- a nominated person acting on behalf of the applicant if agreed by the applicant and that nominated person has capacity.

If you think your child is eligible, download the form that applies to your child and fill it in. If you need a paper copy of the application form, email us at [ctu.group@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:ctu.group@wokingham.gov.uk)

Apply as early as possible.

- **POST 16**

[Travel Assistance Application Form SEND POST-16](#) (PDF Opens in a new tab)

- **Children with SEND aged 5 to 16**

[Travel Assistance Application Form SEND 5- to 16-year-olds](#) (PDF Opens in a new tab)

- **Mainstream children aged 5 to 16**

[Travel Assistance Application form for mainstream children aged 5 to 16](#) (PDF Opens in a new tab)

## 2. Calculation of the PTB amount

The amount of money that is awarded is determined by the straight-line distance from your child's home address to their school. Many available maps and internet-based measuring tools will give you an indication of the distance from your home to your child's school, but this is only an indication.

### Children attending a mainstream school (aged 5 – 16)

Mainstream schools include local authority-maintained schools and academies that are not special schools, alternative provision settings or Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). If your child attends a mainstream school the Personal Transport Budget Payment will be based on **45p per mile**.

### Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a Disability or mobility problems (aged 5-16)

If your child has Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a Disability or mobility problems the Personal Transport Budget Payment will be based on **70p per mile**.

### Post-16

If your child is in Post-16 education, the amount of PTB payment that you will receive will be determined by the straight-line distance from your child's home address to their school or college.

There are three distance bands in which you would expect to receive a payment.

Band	One-way distance from home to school (miles)	Personal Transport Budget Payment
1	Up to 5 miles	£2000 per annum
2	5 to 10 miles	£3000 per annum
3	Over 10 miles	£5000 per annum

### 3. Payment of PTB

The annual PTB will be calculated using the appropriate calculations as set out above, and will be split into three payments, paid termly.

**For the Autumn term payment to be made the application must be received by 31<sup>st</sup> July. For applications received after this date, payments cannot be guaranteed before the start of term. Spring and Summer term payments will be made within 10 working days of parents' submission of the previous term's attendance.**

The attendance information must be submitted to [ctu.group@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:ctu.group@wokingham.gov.uk)

PTB payments are made based on your child attending school for 190 days per year. If your child attends school less than 190 school days per school year, or starts during the school year, Wokingham Borough Council will make your PTB payment on a pro rata basis.

If a child receives a PTB partway through the school or college year, or attends school or college on a part-time basis, the total payment will be on a pro rata basis to account for the reduced amount of time that a parent will be responsible for transport arrangements.

PTB payments will also not be made for days where your child is not required to attend school/college (e.g., study leave or other authorised absence from school/college premises). This means you may receive less than the total amount outlined above. Wokingham Borough Council will send you a schedule each year that will detail what your expected termly payments will be, based on 100% attendance (taking into account your child's timetable). Parents must confirm within 14 days if this schedule is incorrect. Failure to do so may mean that it is not possible to remedy underpayments at a later date.

Should your child be absent from school, even if this is through no fault of their own, your following term's payment will be reduced to account for the reduction in required travel. Free school transport is also not available for work experience or additional journeys that the school requires your child to take. You will be notified of the reduction that will be made in the following term's payment before that term's payment is due to be paid.

#### **4. Change of circumstances**

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

- If you move address or change school/college or school/college site.
- Change of timetable that affects your child's school hours or days.
- Long term absences (5 consecutive school days or more).

If you fail to notify the Council of any change to your circumstances, which the Council later decides would have had the effect of reducing or ending your child's entitlement to payments then the Council may terminate your PTB payments and will seek to recover any monies that you should not have received for the period in which you failed to notify.

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

If any change to your circumstances means that your child's eligibility to Travel Assistance is withdrawn, then the PTB payments will cease.

#### **5. Review of PTB arrangements**

The PTB will be reviewed on a regular basis. As part of the PTB review, the Council will review the attendance information that has been submitted to confirm the level of attendance, and that your child is able to fully access their learning opportunities. The attendance information must be submitted to [ctu.group@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:ctu.group@wokingham.gov.uk)

Once this information has been received and the review has been completed, any decision to adjust or withdraw the PTB will be given to you in writing.

There are circumstances in which the amount of PTB payment may be reviewed, adjusted, suspended or terminated. These are:

- Your child's attendance falls below 90%.
- Your child regularly arrives late at school/college in the mornings.



- Your child arrives at school/college in an unfit state to learn.
- The travel arrangements that have been put in place for your child using the PTB are deemed to be unsuitable or unsafe.
- Your child accesses short break stays away from the family home.
- There is a change to national legislation and/or the Council's policies.
- You have more than one child, or other member of the same household, each receiving a PTB and attending the same school/college or another school/college nearby

## 6. Terminating the PTB agreement

You may terminate the agreement by providing at least one calendar month's written notice to the Council but note that, when a PTB is awarded to start at the beginning of a new academic year, the earliest date that the agreement can be terminated is 31st October.

You must also tell anyone you have engaged to provide services under the PTB. The Council will provide you with at least one calendar month's written notice if it decides to terminate the PTB agreement with you.

## 7. Unsuccessful Applicants

If your child or young person is not eligible for the PTB, you may be able to **purchase a concessionary seat** on existing transport for their journey, if a spare seat is available.

You may also want to ask your college or sixth form for details of any bursary schemes they may have to help with expenses. If their application for home to school transport has been unsuccessful, they can **appeal the decision**.

## 8. Independent Travel Training (ITT)

In line with the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment, Independent Travel Training (ITT) will be expanded as an option. The Council will identify young people, and those who will be transitioning from compulsory education into Post 16, and above, who could benefit from ITT and contact their families with a view to undertaking an ITT assessment.

An ITT assessment will be carried out with the support of the family and/or school, to confirm

the suitability of the young person for the one-to-one ITT programme, considering the following criteria:

- The likelihood of the pupil being eligible for SEN transport under the 16 to 19 policy
- Existing level of independent travel skills
- The age of the pupil
- The distance between home and school
- The SEND of the pupil
- The route which the young person would need to undertake
- Journey times using public transport and the complexity of the journey
- The frequency of the journeys required.

This assessment would take place before the pupil undertakes the ITT programme, which would last for, approximately, four to six weeks. During the programme, the pupil will travel to and from their education or training provision each day with their dedicated one-to-one ITT trainer both in the morning and afternoon from the home to the school and vice versa.

During the period when a pupil is taking part in the ITT, this will be their Travel Assistance offer. At the end of the ITT programme, the Council will review the pupil's progress with the family to decide if it is appropriate for the pupil to continue to travel independently. If it is not appropriate for the pupil to travel independently, their Travel Assistance offer will be reviewed.

Although the vast majority of young people are successfully supported to achieve and benefit immensely from becoming independent travelers, it is acknowledged that for some young people, due to the nature of their SEND, ITT will not be appropriate.

## **9. Review of eligibility**

If a young person is assessed as not eligible for Travel Assistance, the Council will not be obliged to re-assess the individual for the remainder of that academic year, unless the place of residence or education changes, except where an appeal is lodged in line with the appeals procedure.

**All Travel Assistance offered is subject to annual review, in line with Education Funding Agency Guidelines, and it is at the discretion of the Council.**

## **10. Appeals and Complaints**

The Council is committed to ensuring that Travel Assistance provided is appropriate to the needs of the young person, is of a high quality and meets required safety standards.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Complaints about the provision of Travel Assistance will be investigated in accordance with the Council's Complaints Policy. This does not apply to complaints about a refusal to grant transport, which will be dealt with through the Transport Appeals procedure.

The complaints policy can be found at:

**<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments/>**.

### **Appeal Procedures**

Parents/guardians/carers or a young person are entitled to challenge the decision of the Council to refuse to provide assistance with transport as set out in this policy or when the parents/guardians/carers or young person consider that the Travel Assistance, offered by the Council, is unsuitable.

Appeals information can be found at:

**[www.wokingham.gov.uk/school-transport-appeals](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/school-transport-appeals)**

## **11. Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q. Would I receive the PTB until my child finishes at the school they attend?**

**A.** Once a PTB has been granted, you are not guaranteed to receive it until your child leaves their current school. WBC will continue to review the PTB throughout the academic year.

The review will evaluate whether it remains cost effective for the PTB to be provided and new transport options may mean this is no longer the case. The review will also check your child's attendance records to ensure your child is regularly accessing school.

If your child's attendance at school is not sufficient to continue paying you a PTB or where there is more cost- effective transport in place, the PTB may be withdrawn. If this should happen, you will be given 28 days' notice

### **Q. Would I receive a PTB for my child to attend two schools?**

**A.** No. Transport assistance is only provided to one educational establishment. If you apply for a PTB, this will only be assessed to the main school that the child is on roll at.

### **Q. Will the payments be taxed?**

**A.** The budget is a payment made in relation to the child not the parent and so should not affect your tax situation. It is used to enable your child to get to and from school each day in a safe and legal way and should not be used for any other purpose. If you have concerns that it may impact on your tax situation, you will need to seek your own advice from a tax expert in relation to your personal circumstances.

### **Q. If I have two/or more children with an EHCP, all of whom are eligible for transport assistance, can I claim a PTB for each child?**

**A.** Where more than one child is eligible for a PTB each child will be assessed separately.

### **Q. Both my child and I are happy with the current contractor and driver that transport my child to and from school. If I applied for the PTB, could my child continue to travel on the same vehicle?**

**A.** No. If you applied for the PTB, you will be responsible for making your own arrangements for transporting your child to and from school.

You could use your PTB to make your own personal arrangements with the taxi contractor to take your child to and from school, however, your child would not be able to travel on the

vehicle that the Local Authority has commissioned for home to school transport. You can use the PTB in any way you wish, for example:

- You or someone in your family can drive your child to and from school
- You can arrange with a friend or relative to walk your child to school.
- You can car share with other parents where their children are going to the same school as your child.
- You could provide a relative or friend with a bus pass in order to take your child to and from school.
- You could pay for childcare for a younger child in order for you to take your child to school.

**Q. Do I need to collect any receipts for petrol etc.?**

**A.** No. Once the payments are made to you, you can use them any way you wish to in order for your child to get to and from school every day in a safe and legal way.

**Q. What happens if my child is ill?**

**A.** Your child's attendance record will be reviewed and the payments for any days that they are absent will be deducted from the following term's PTB payment. If your child's attendance drops below 90% without reason, you will be at risk of having your PTB withdrawn.

**Q. My child is a boarder. Would this affect the size of my PTB?**

**A.** Your child will be assessed in the same way as all other children and your PTB will initially be based on one of the three payment bands, however, the final payment will be offered on a pro rata basis to account for the actual number of journeys you are required to undertake.

For example, someone who transports their own child on a weekly basis would receive a greater proportion of the budget compared to someone who transports their child once a term.

**Q. I have one child that receives transport because of their EHCP and another that is currently going through the assessment process. Would I receive a PTB for each child?**

**A.** No. You can apply for a PTB for the child who already has an EHCP, but you would have to wait until your second child had received their EHCP before you could apply for that child.

**Q. I am a foster carer for a child that receives transport, can I apply for a PTB?**

**A.** If your foster child has an EHCP, is in the care of Wokingham Borough Council and meets the criteria to receive travel assistance, then you can apply for a PTB.

If your foster child is in the care of another Local Authority i.e. outside of Wokingham, you will

not be eligible to receive a PTB. The corporate parent for the child may assist with any transport needs and carers should contact the placing LA directly.

**Q. Can I use my PTB to pay for a space on the transport services provided by the Council?**

**A.** You cannot use your payment:

- To buy or utilise a space on transport services from the Council.
- For any purpose that does not enable you to get your child to or from school/college.
- For any activity that is illegal, unlawful, or unsafe.
- For other purposes that may bring the Council into disrepute.

**Q. If I apply and am granted a PTB but find that at a later date it doesn't work with my child or my circumstances change, can I change back to the previous transport arrangement?**

**A.** No. You must inform the Council immediately of any change in circumstances whereby the PTB is no longer required, you will then be responsible for rearranging transport for your child.

**Q. What should I do if the money provided by the PTB is not enough for the arrangements I wish to make?**

**A.** Parents will initially be advised what band their child qualifies for and should consider whether it provides sufficient funding before accepting the PTB.

If parental arrangements are more expensive than the funds that are provided, parents will need to make up the shortfall themselves.