



More help and support

For general queries on Travel Care for children and young people with additional needs please call the Travel Care Team on:

Phone: 0191 433 7484

Email: travelcare@gateshead.gov.uk

For a round-up of the information and support offered by Gateshead Council visit our 'Local Offer' pages on the council's website www.gateshead.gov.uk/localoffer

Personal Travel Budget

Information for parents/carers of children and young people with additional needs

Introduction

A Personal Travel Budget can offer parents and carers a different way of managing how they organise the transport needs of their child(ren) to and from school. Applications are assessed on an individual basis, and are usually only provided where this is cost effective for the council. This booklet provides a brief introduction into what a travel budget is, how it works and how it may be beneficial to you.

If you have any other questions about Personal Travel Budgets not covered in this booklet, or you would like this information in a different format (such as large print, Braille, on CD/MP3), please contact:

Gateshead Council's Special Education Needs and Disabilities Team on 0191 433 3626 or email senteam@gateshead.gov.uk

What is a Personal Travel Budget?

The Personal Travel Budget is optional and can be offered instead of the travel that the council organises. It is a sum of money offered to parents/carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities who are eligible for home to school/college travel.

What are the benefits?

Having a Personal Travel Budget gives you choice and flexibility in the way your child travels to school or college; giving you the control over how you do this in a way that suits you. This could include transporting your child individually or you might consider pooling your budget with other families to find an alternative way of getting your child(ren) to school or college.

How much will my budget be?

The budget will be calculated based on the shortest journey to and from your home to school/college.

For school age children, the costs will be based on 190 school days per year. For college students, it will be the number of days your child attends college each week based on 39 weeks.

What kind of things can the Personal Travel Budget be used for?

You can use the money any way you want as long as your child is safe, gets to school/college on time and is able to learn once they arrive. Some ideas could include:

- Taking your child to school/college in your own car
- Buying a travel pass for you (or a trusted adult) and your child
- Helping you to overcome problems that might prevent you taking your child to school/college, such as paying for childcare
- Making travel arrangements with other parents, such as car sharing, joint taxi booking, walking buses etc.

How will the Personal Travel Budget be paid?

You must set up a separate bank account for the Personal Travel Budget to be paid into. You will receive 11 monthly payments to reflect the number of school days in the month. This will be pro rata from the start of your Personal Travel Budget.

What happens if my child is off school/college?

Every term, we ask the school/college for details of your child's attendance. If they are absent for any time, we will deduct that number of days from the payment the following term.

What happens if I want to cancel my Personal Travel Budget?

If things don't work out, and you want to cancel, you can do so, but you must give us 30 days' notice. This will give us time to arrange transport for your child; stop your budget payments, and allow us to recoup payments for any absences occurred.

Can the council cancel my Personal Travel Budget for any reason?

Yes, good attendance must be maintained for your budget to continue. If we hear from the school/college that your child is regularly arriving late or leaving early, which will have a detrimental effect on your child's education, we may stop your payments and arrange for a taxi to collect your child. We'll discuss this with you before we change any arrangements.

Does having a Personal Travel Budget affect my benefits?

No, it will have no impact on any benefits that you receive.

Do I have to tell you anything?

You need to tell us if you move house, so your Personal Travel Budget can be recalculated.

REMEMBER

If you take up the option of a Personal Travel Budget, it is your responsibility to get your child to school/college safely and on time.

What you should do next

If you are interested in a Personal Travel Budget, please contact:

Phone: 0191 433 3626

Email: senteam@gateshead.gov.uk

If you then decide to take up the option of a Personal Travel Budget, you'll need to sign an agreement with the council, so everyone is clear what their role is. You will also need a bank account that is **only for your Personal Budget Payments.**

