

PERSONAL TRAVEL BUDGETS

**LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES
HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT TEAM**

What is a Personal Transport Budget?

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is a sum of money provided to parents or carers of children with Special Education Needs (SEN) who are eligible for travel assistance. PTBs enable families to arrange their child's home to school travel arrangements in a way that suits their circumstances best. The budget allows families to make flexible arrangements, monitor the quality of their child's transport directly and, if they choose, to work with other families to achieve the best possible travel arrangements for their children.

What are the benefits of PTBs?

PTBs:

- ➡ Provide freedom and flexibility for you to choose the most appropriate travel arrangements for your child that best fit with your personal circumstances.
- ➡ Provide choice and control over how funding is used to get your child to and from school/college on time in a way that suits you, your child and your family.
- ➡ Ensure resources are distributed in a fair way.
- ➡ Allow you to explore opportunities to share with other parents and potentially increase your buying power.
- ➡ Offer families an alternative to the traditional services that the council can provide.

How much will my PTB be?

The PTB is calculated based on the distance between home and school/college for the days that your child attends school. This means each PTB will be tailored to the needs of each family. The Council will only offer a PTB where it is cost effective to do so. For details of how much your family is eligible for, please contact the Home to School Transport Team.

The amount of PTB is different for every family based on individual circumstances i.e. distance between home and school/college, cost to LA to transport on assisted transport, type of vehicle etc. The PTB is subject to review at any time throughout the year. When deciding to offer a PTB we will look at your child's attendance.

Charges apply to all post 16 learners where they require help in travelling to school or college regardless of whether they are living in the parental home or sheltered/residential accommodation. The charges are based on the cost of a school plus metrocard at £9.25 per week. Where a PTB is paid the cost of the post 16 charges will be deducted (plus a small admin fee) prior to the PTB being allocated.

How do I get a PTB?

- ➡ Based on the information that we know about your child's current travel requirements, the Home to School Transport Team will calculate a PTB for you. If you have any questions about how this amount is calculated, then please contact us.

- ➡ If you decide to take up the PTB we will ask you to sign an agreement letter. This sets out your role and the council's role in the PTB process to keep your child safe and ensure that their attendance and ability to learn are not negatively affected by their travel to and from school. This agreement will be subject to review if/when the PTB is reviewed (normally on an annual basis).
- ➡ The council will then make the arrangements to transfer the PTB to your bank account.
- ➡ You will then be free to arrange and manage your child's travel arrangements in a way that best suits you, your child and your family.
- ➡ If your circumstances change (e.g. your family moves house), please ensure that you contact the council so that your PTB can be re-calculated.

What can I spend the PTB on?

You have control how you spend the PTB on transporting your child to school/college, as long as your child gets to and from school/college on time and in a way that ensures their safety, encourages their attendance and does not negatively affect their ability to learn once they are at school/college. Some ideas for how you could spend the PTB include:

- ➡ Purchasing a travel pass for yourself or a trusted adult to accompany your child on public transport.
- ➡ Paying for an escort for your child to walk to school or to travel by public transport, or arrange to do this yourself.
- ➡ Covering the cost of driving or cycling with your child to school.
- ➡ Arranging shared travel arrangements with other parents, such as shared driving responsibilities, walking buses or joint taxi bookings.
- ➡ Overcoming barriers that may prevent you accompanying your child to school, e.g. travel / childcare arrangements for siblings.

How will the PTB get paid?

Payments will be made from the council into your designated bank account to coincide with the start of the PTB. You will need to provide us with the appropriate bank details when you sign the agreement.

Am I totally committed? Can I stop the PTB if it doesn't work out?

Participation is completely voluntary.

Should you find that a PTB no longer works for you we can work with you to arrange a return to travel assistance. We will however need at least ten working days' notice to arrange replacement assistance.

Will the PTB continue in future years?

The school and council are committed to providing the best and most appropriate travel assistance for your family. We will evaluate on a regular basis whether PTBs are a viable alternative for travel assistance in Wakefield.

In the future, if the circumstances are right, other forms of Travel Assistance may be more appropriate for your child such as Independent Travel. If your child is assessed as being ready to learn to travel independently then our dedicated team will work with your family to ensure a smooth transition takes place where appropriate.

As your child grows older, it's likely they will wish to become an independent traveller. Independent travel is an important life skill and can help your child to access the social and employment opportunities they wish to. You can start supporting or training your child to travel independently, or you can talk to your school or the Home to School Transport Team about Independent Travel Training.

Will I regularly need to show the council how I am spending the PTB?

No. We want to keep the flexibility and control with you, and we will keep monitoring to a minimum. We will pick up any potential issues through the school's recording of your child's attendance and fitness to learn once at school. The school also will be checking that your child is arriving and leaving school on time because the school does not have the arrangements to look after your child if they are arriving early or leaving late.

Of course, if you have questions, concerns or ideas you can contact us at any time.

Who can I contact for further information or advice?

You can contact us, the team for more information or advice:

Wakefield Council
Children and Young People
Learning Support Services (Home to School Transport Team)
Room 42
County Hall
Burton Street
Wakefield WF1 2QL

Tel : 01924 305628 / 306980