



Staffordshire
County Council

Home to School Travel Assistance

for Statutory School Aged Children with an
Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

What You Need To Know

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1. What options do I have to get my child to school?

Not every child with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or who attends a special school will be eligible for home to school travel assistance, so it is important to check eligibility criteria on Staffordshire County Council's website: [School transport policy - Staffordshire County Council](#)

If your child is not eligible you will need to think about how your child is going to get to and from school for the whole time they are there.

You may want to consider the following options to get your child to school:

- Walking or driving your child to school.
- Accompanying your child on public transport.
- Car share with another family.
- Arrange for a friend or family member to take your child to school, paying their fuel expenses, if appropriate.



2. How do I check if my child is eligible for Local Authority home to school travel assistance?

Children from reception up to Year 11 are eligible for home to school travel assistance if they meet the following criteria:

- They are attending the nearest suitable school as determined by Staffordshire County Council. (This does not apply when the school named in the child's EHCP is due to parental preference and has not been agreed as the nearest suitable school by Staffordshire County Council):

And

- **Over Distance Criteria** - Lives beyond the required walking distance (over 2 miles for children in year 6 and below / over 3 miles for children in year 7 to year 11)

Or

- **Under Distance Criteria** - Lives under the walking distance but the child's learning difficulty or disability means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk safely to the nearest suitable or catchment school, even when accompanied. Parents / carers are responsible for making any arrangements for their child to be accompanied if necessary.

The Local Authority does not consider work or other childcare commitments as a reason for parents / carers not to accompany their child themselves.

Once you have received notification of your child's school placement, if it is the nearest suitable school as determined by the Local Authority, your allocated SEND Keyworker will contact you to advise you of the walking distance between your child's main address to that school. The distance is calculated using the Local Authority's Geographical Information System (GIS). This will help inform your decision regarding your child's travel arrangements.

More information on eligibility criteria for home to school travel assistance for statutory school aged children can be found on Staffordshire County Council's website.

3. If my child is eligible for home to school travel assistance what options are offered by the Local Authority?

In line with the Local Authority's focus on ability, not disability, support is provided to enable learners to travel as independently as possible.

Travel assistance options are determined by the Local Authority's SEN Travel Assistance Team, based on information provided by you at the time of application and comprise of:

- A bus pass to be used on public transport.
- Where it is suitable, appropriate and an efficient use of resources, the Local Authority may offer you a payment to make your own travel arrangements:
 - Mileage allowance; or
 - Personal travel assistance budget (where there is a special transport need)
- Local Authority arranged contracted transport (private operators).

For examples of 'a special transport need', please refer to the eligibility criteria for home to school travel assistance for statutory school aged children which can be found on Staffordshire County Council's website.

If your child is eligible, travel assistance arrangements are subject to review and alteration due to continually changing circumstances. For example, new children being added to routes, children changing schools, etc. The SEN Travel Assistance Team also regularly review routes to identify cost efficiencies for the Local Authority.



4. What is the difference between a mileage allowance and a personal travel assistance budget (PTAB)?

If your child is eligible for travel assistance and where it is suitable, appropriate and an efficient use of resources, the Local Authority may offer you a payment to make your own travel arrangements:

- A mileage allowance may be offered if your child does not have a special transport need. It is based on four journeys per day, paid at the end of each term and you will be responsible for arranging your child's travel assistance to and from school.
- A PTAB may be offered if your child has a special transport need. This would need to be demonstrated at the travel assistance application stage (refer to question 6). It is based on four journeys per day, paid monthly in advance and you will be responsible for arranging your child's travel assistance to and from school.

For details of the current mileage allowance / PTAB rates, please refer to Staffordshire County Council's website.

To determine if your child has a special transport need, the Local Authority will consider recent (within the last 12 months) supporting evidence and opinions from educational settings and professional medical evidence provided by you at the application stage along with any evidence gathered as part of the EHC assessment process.

5. What are the advantages of a mileage allowance / personal travel assistance budget (PTAB)?

- You can take your child directly to school, allowing for significantly shorter journey times in some cases.
- Allows you flexibility to cover before and after school clubs, medical appointments etc., which are not covered by contracted vehicles (private operators).
- If you drive your child to school, they will not be sharing transport with other children, so the time they leave home in the morning and arrive home in the afternoon would never change, nor would the driver.

6. Do I have to apply for travel assistance if I feel my child is eligible?

From January 2024, the Local Authority introduced an online application form for travel assistance which should be completed by the parent / carer **ONCE:**

- Your child's EHCP has been agreed and the school named is the nearest suitable school with places available as determined by Staffordshire County Council. (This does not apply when the school named in the child's EHCP is due to parental preference and has not been agreed as the nearest suitable school by Staffordshire County Council.)
- Your allocated SEND Keyworker has contacted you to advise you of the walking distance between your child's main address to the school named in the EHCP. The distance is calculated using the Local Authority's Geographical Information System (GIS). This will help to inform your decision regarding your child's travel assistance arrangements.
- Your child's full-time attendance / timetable has been agreed with the school named in the EHCP. If your child is eligible, travel assistance is provided for one return journey at the beginning and end of the normal school day to match the school governing body approved session times.
- If you are applying as your child has a disability or learning difficulty which means they cannot reasonably be expected to walk safely to the nearest suitable or catchment school, even when accompanied, this will need to be demonstrated by providing recent (within the last 12 months) supporting professional information of your child's needs. The supporting information should evidence why, in their opinion, your child is unable to walk safely to the nearest suitable or catchment school, even when accompanied.
- It is the responsibility of the parent / carer to ensure that all details relevant to your child's travel assistance needs are provided in the application, together with recent (within the last 12 months) supporting professional / medical evidence, where relevant, to ensure that an informed decision is made on (a) your child's eligibility and (b) the suitability of travel assistance options (subject to travel assistance being approved).

7. What happens once I have applied for travel assistance?

You will receive an acknowledgement that your application has been received when you submit the completed application.

Once the application has been received it will be reviewed by your allocated SEND Keyworker.

You will be notified of the decision of eligibility on the Citizen Portal.

Please do not contact your allocated SEND Keyworker direct as communication regarding travel assistance will be through the Citizen Portal.

8. If my child is eligible and the application has been approved, how long will it take to arrange travel assistance?

If your child is eligible for travel assistance and your application has been approved (notified of decision on the Citizen Portal), you will be contacted by a member of the SEN Travel Assistance Team to discuss travel assistance options based on what is considered to be suitable, appropriate and an efficient use of resources.

Once you have confirmed your travel assistance option with the SEN Travel Assistance Team, it can take up to 20 working days to arrange travel assistance.

Contracted transport (private operators) is commissioned using the Local Authority's travel assistance procurement system.



9. How can I get my child to school if they are not eligible for travel assistance?

If your child is not eligible for travel assistance under Staffordshire County Council's Home to School Travel Policy, parents / carers are responsible for arranging for their child to get to school. Options you may wish to consider are:

- Walking or driving your child to school.
- Accompanying your child on public transport.
- Car share with another family.
- Arrange for a friend or family member to take your child to school, paying their fuel expenses, if appropriate.

10. What happens if I do not agree with the Local Authority's decision?

If you do not agree with the decision, you have a right to appeal based on:

- Eligibility for travel assistance
- Travel assistance arrangements offered

You will have 20 working days from the receipt of a decision to request a review / appeal. [Click here to view details of the appeals process.](#)



11. What happens if I move address?

A move of address may impact your child's eligibility for home to school travel assistance. You should contact your child's allocated SEND Keyworker with details of your new address, or any other changes which could impact their eligibility for home to school travel assistance.

12. What happens when my child is 16 and moves into Year 12?

Once the student completes statutory education, Local Authorities no longer have to provide free or subsidised Post 16 travel assistance support and the travel assistance your child has been receiving will cease.

Staffordshire County Council will annually publish its Post 16 Transport Policy Statement (which covers students aged 16 – 18 in further education, continuing learners aged 19 and those young people aged 19-24 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and / or disabilities) which sets out the eligibility criteria and application process for the Post 16 scheme.

If the student is eligible for Post 16 Travel Assistance, you will need apply / re-apply for travel assistance. [Click here to read more about Post-16 travel assistance.](#)

13. Where can I find details of Staffordshire County Council's Home to School Travel Policy / Local Offer?

Staffordshire County Council's Local Offer can be found by:

Visiting Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Local Offer / Staffordshire Connects. [Click here to view.](#)

Visiting Staffordshire County Council's website and viewing the Home to School Travel Policy: [School transport policy - Staffordshire County Council](#)

