

Independent Travel Training

Pathway to Independence – delivered by Hampshire County Council's School Transport Service.

What is it? Travel training is designed to help children and young people develop the skills, confidence and knowledge needed to travel safely and independently.

It supports young people in preparing for adulthood by teaching essential life skills such as route planning, personal safety, using public transport, reading timetables and understanding road awareness.

Who is it for? Travel training could be offered to children and young people who are eligible for school transport, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). It is intended for students who are capable of becoming more independent in their journeys to their place of education.

For young people with additional needs, travelling within the community can sometimes feel daunting, causing anxiety or concern for both them and their parents or carers.

Hampshire County Council's travel training programme focuses on the individual needs of each child or young person, supporting them to build confidence and develop the skills required for independent travel. It is intended to enhance social inclusion and help young people participate more fully in education, work and community life.

How we train: Each student receives personalised, carefully structured training tailored to their individual needs, ensuring they have every opportunity to build confidence, develop skills and achieve success.

Step 1: Getting started

We meet with the child and their parents/carers to make sure travel training is suitable and safe. Parents/carers are involved from the start and receive regular updates throughout the programme.

Step 2: Personalised support

A tailored training plan is created based on the child or young person's individual strengths and support needs. A dedicated travel trainer is assigned to guide and support them every step of the way. This is carried out in four stages, starting with the travel trainer leading the way, to the trainer shadowing the child or young person to ensure they complete the journey safely and confidently. The time it takes is totally bespoke to the young person.

The Outcome

By the end of the programme, the child or young person has increased confidence, greater independence and the practical skills needed to travel safely between home and their place of education.

What if my child/young person is unwell and unable to travel on a scheduled training day?

If your child or young person is unable to attend due to illness (or any other reason), you would inform their trainer as soon as possible. This is important, as some trainers may travel significant distances to meet students for their training sessions.

What if my child/young person starts travel training and then feels unable to continue?

Travel training is designed to build confidence gradually and equip students with a range of problem-solving skills to help them overcome challenges they may encounter during their journeys. Progress is continuously reviewed, and training is adapted to meet each student's individual needs. We will work closely with students, parents, carer, and educational providers to explore all available options and identify the most suitable approach.

What if my child/young person experiences bullying or encounters a problem during their journey?

Students are taught strategies to recognise and manage difficult situations, including negative interactions within the community. They are also supported by clear communication plans and can contact their trainer, parent or carer, or educational setting if assistance is needed. Our aim is to ensure students feel safe, supported and confident when travelling independently.