

My ref: ESE/SEN
Telephone No:
Date: 16th July 2020

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you today through your school communication pathway and this letter is only applicable if your son/daughter is eligible for, and currently receives home to school travel assistance in the form of taxis or minibuses.

It is not applicable if your son/daughter is currently in receipt of a bus pass and is not currently being transported by the Local Authority.

As the schools prepare to open to all pupils in September 2020 following the COVID-19 pandemic I would like to introduce a mode of assistance which you may not have been aware of previously. We have been looking at our current travel assistance and exploring ways in which we could improve the service and help students with their journey to independence while providing a greater choice for parents/carers and young people. The additional offer is a Personal Transport Budget (PTB) which is explained in the attached parent/carers information sheet.

A PTB will provide more choice and flexibility to meet the needs of the traveller and the needs of the family. The offer is a lump sum per academic year paid equally over 11 monthly payments from September to July. It is based on your mileage from your home address post code to your son/daughters learning establishment post code using the RAC route planner <https://www.rac.co.uk/route-planner/> You will need to use the shortest driving distance to determine which payment band you would be offered. This mileage is different from the eligibility criteria to qualify for transport which is the shortest walking distance.

The bandings for the payments are as follows:

PTB Banding Rates 2020/21				
Miles	0-3	3-6	6-9	Over 9
PTB Payment Academic Year	£2,000	£4,000	£6,000	£8,000
Monthly Payment	£181.82	£363.64	£545.45	£727.27

If you are interested in the PTB scheme, please complete the attached application form and return it to the address at the bottom of the form as soon as possible, but by 7 August 2020 at the latest. If you have received this communication electronically you can email the completed application form to SEN_Transportofficer@sandwell.gov.uk. A member of the SEN team will contact you to confirm if a PTB option is agreed and go through the agreement and details required to set up the payments.

Yours faithfully

SEN Service - Transport

Education, Skills & Employment
Chris Ward - Director:
Learning and Inclusion
SEN Service
Connor Education Centre
Connor Road
West Bromwich
West Midlands
B71 3DJ
Telephone: 0121 569 8240
e-
mail: children_families@sandwell.gov.uk
Web: www.sandwell.gov.uk

Personal Transport Budget Information Sheet

Sandwell Personal Transport Budget (PTB) Information Sheet for Parents/Carers

The PTB scheme will not alter your entitlement to travel assistance.

What is a PTB

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is a payment designed to help you make arrangements which will enable you to facilitate your son/daughter accessing school/college.

Where parents use a PTB to make their own arrangements, they often find that it results in their son/daughter being more relaxed and ready to learn compared to when they use transport organised by the Local Authority. It also provides parents with a regular link to their son/daughters learning establishment and allows for more frequent opportunities to discuss their progress. A PTB will allow you the freedom of choice.

The PTB OFFER

The offer will be the payment of a lump sum of money spread over 11 equal monthly instalments (excluding August)

The amount of funding will be based on the distance from home to the main learning establishment

You will not be required to provide monthly claim forms

You will not have to provide evidence of what it has been spent on

You will not have to repay anything if your son/daughter is ill

What are the benefits?

- freedom and flexibility for your family to choose the most appropriate travel arrangements that best fit your circumstances so pick up and drop offs can be arranged to suit daily life
- choice and control over how funding is used to ensure your son/daughter attends their learning establishment on time in a way that suits you, your son/daughter and your family.

- Allowing you to explore opportunities to share with other parents and potentially increase your buying power if you are able to pool the budgets with other parents.
- Providing an alternative to the traditional services that the council can provide. The choice of taxi or payments to relatives, friends, trusted adults etc
- Providing parents with a direct link to the learning establishment and more frequent opportunities to discuss a child/young person's progress with teachers/lecturers that they may not have previously had.
- Opportunity for you son/daughter to attend extra-curricular / college activities Like after school clubs, breakfast clubs, College clubs etc
- More flexibility around other child care duties and taking other siblings to other learning establishments

What can it be used for?

You can use the budget in any way you wish, some examples could include but is not exhaustive are:

- help towards covering the costs of running a family car
- paying other members of the family or friends to assist with transporting you son/daughter to school/college if/when you are unable to do so
- to cover childcare costs for a younger sibling whilst the older sibling is transported in the family car, or by a trusted adult
- to pay for breakfast clubs or after school clubs which allow more flexibility for you to take you son/daughter to school/college.
- Purchase a travel pass for yourself, your son/daughter or a trusted adult to accompany on public transport if appropriate
- Arrange shared travel arrangements with other parents, such as shared driving responsibilities, walking buses or joint taxi arrangements
- Overcoming barriers that may prevent you accompanying your son/daughter to their learning establishment, e.g. travel / childcare arrangements for siblings

Will it affect and other Benefits I may receive?

The PTB will not impact on other benefits - The payments are not taxed and will not impact on other benefits that you may receive. This is because the PTB is a payment made in relation to your son/daughter not you as the parent/carer and is a grant that can be used in a variety of ways not just a 'mileage allowance'.

Can the PTB be removed?

Attendance will be checked periodically to make sure students are attending their learning establishment. If it is felt that attendance is unsatisfactory and there is no reasonable justification i.e Illness etc the PTB may be removed and your entitlement to travel assistance may be affected.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018
(GDPR)
Privacy Notice**

The SEN Service may collect some personal information about you, we want you to be reassured that we will handle it responsibly and legally. Should you wish to view our privacy notice please follow the link below:

<http://www.sandwell.gov.uk/privacynotice>

**Application for a Special Educational Needs
and Disability Personal Transport Budget**

SEND Personal Transport Budgets (SEND PTB) are provided at the discretion of the Local Authority and the PTB may not be automatically granted to you upon request

Child/Young Person's Name	
Date of Birth	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Mobile Number	
Parent/Carer Name	
Contact e-mail Address	
School/College/Setting Attending from September 2020	
Full Address of School/College, including Postcode	
School/College contact if known	

I have read and understood the eligibility criteria to receive a Personal Transport Budget

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please complete and return this form to:

SEN_Transportofficer@sandwell.gov.uk

Or post to:

SEN Transport Officer

Connor Education Centre

Connor Road

West Bromwich

B71 3DJ