



Policy and guidance notes

You should only fill in this form if you live in Tower Hamlets.

Tower Hamlets Council can provide travel assistance for children and young people who live in Tower Hamlets and are attending schools and sixth form/colleges where there is no suitable alternative available.

If you live outside of Tower Hamlets you should contact your home council for travel assistance.

Before making an application for travel assistance, please ensure that your travel needs cannot be met by the provisions offered by Transport for London (TfL), which operates a scheme of free and/or discounted travel for children under the age of 18 in full-time education.

Under this scheme, with a valid Zip Oyster photocard:

- 5-10 year-olds can travel free on all TfL and most National Rail services in London
- 11-15 year-olds can travel free on buses and trams and travel at half adult rate on all other TfL services and most National Rail services in London
- 16 and 17 year-olds in full-time education or on a work-based learning scheme eligible can travel free on buses and trams and travel at half adult rate on all TfL services and most National Rail services in London.

Please visit tfl.gov.uk/fares or call the Oyster helpline on 0343 222 1234 for further information and advice on how to apply for a Zip card.

The council expects residents of Tower Hamlets to make use of the concessions offered by TfL.

If what you require is outside the scope of free travel arrangements and any other alternatives, you can make an application for travel assistance. **Please note that you will only be eligible for assistance if you are registered at the 'qualifying school'. Please refer to the section 'who is eligible?' for further information.**

Travel assistance claims will not be backdated. Please check whether you are eligible by reading the policy advice and following guidance.

Please submit the completed form with any relevant (original) supporting documentation to the Pupil Services team.

Postal address:

Pupil Services

Tower Hamlets Council
Town Hall
Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London
E14 2BG

Tel: 020 7364 5006

Fax: 0207 364 4311

Email: school.admissions@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Website: https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/advice_and_benefits/grants/school_travel_support.aspx

Full details of the Children's Travel Assistance Policy, the application form and guidance notes are all available on our website (see above).

COMPLETING THE FORM FOR TRAVEL ASSISTANCE

Section A must be completed for all applicants. You should then complete either Section B or C as follows:

- Section B should be completed for children in primary or secondary school.
- Section C should be completed by/for students who are attending sixth form/college.

The declaration in Part 9 must be signed and dated by the parent/carer and/or the student (if over 16).

If you would like an acknowledgment of your application please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR CHILDREN IN PRIMARY OR SECONDARY SCHOOL

This policy is based on the legal duty on Local Authorities ‘...to make such suitable free travel arrangements as it is considered necessary to facilitate attendance at school for eligible children.’ (‘Section 508B of the Education Act 1996, amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006) .

Who is eligible?

The council can provide assistance for eligible children of compulsory school age who meet the following criteria:

1. Statutory walking distance

Children who are attending a school that is beyond two miles for a pupil under the age of 8 or three miles for children aged 8 or over.

2. Special educational needs, disability or mobility problem

Children who cannot be reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special educational needs (SEN) or disability, including temporary medical conditions.

If your child has an Education, Health or Care Plan (EHCP) you should contact the SEN team first on 020 7364 4880 or visit http://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/lgs/1-50/40_transport_for_pupils_with_s.aspx to find out more about school travel for children with special education needs.

3. Unsafe route

Children who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school in safety because of the nature of the route

4. Extended rights eligibility

Children entitled to Free School Meals, or whose parents are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit and:

- the school is beyond two miles (for children over the age of 8 and under 11)
- the school is between 2 and 6 miles (if aged 11-16 and there are no suitable nearer schools)
- the school is between 2 and 15 miles and is the nearest preferred on the grounds of religion or belief (aged 11-16).

We will also consider whether there are any medical reasons affecting the parent/carer’s ability to accompany the child to and from school along a walking route which can be considered safe.

The council’s duty to provide home to school travel arrangements applies to travel between home and the relevant educational establishment for a child.

The relevant educational establishment for a child will be:

- The ‘qualifying school’ or alternative educational establishment at which the child is registered and receiving education.
- ‘Qualifying schools’ are community, foundation or voluntary schools; Community or foundation special schools; Non-maintained special schools; Pupil referral units and maintained nursery schools (attached to a mainstream school); If a child has an EHC plan, an independent school can also be a ‘qualifying school’ if it named in the child’s statement.

TRAVEL ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS ATTENDING SIXTH FORM/COLLEGE

The council also has a duty to make arrangements for the provision of transport or otherwise to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training, called the 16-18 Transport Duty (Section 509AA of the 1996 Education Act)

Who is eligible?

The council is responsible for ensuring that learners of sixth form age are able to access and attend the education and training of their choice. This includes providing assistance with travel.

Young people can apply for travel assistance if they:

- are aged 16-18 or a continuing learner who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday
- live over three miles from the school or college to be attended
- their parents’ taxable income was £30,810 or less in the period 6 April 2017 to 5 April 2018
- do not receive a 16-19 Bursary
- receive a 16-19 Bursary, but are taking a specialist course* and have to pay fares of £10 or more per week to attend it.

More favourable conditions apply to students with special educational needs (SEN)/Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

*A specialist course is one that ends with a nationally-recognised vocational qualification. This does not include GCSE, AS, A2 or A-level courses that cannot be taken locally.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

All applicants must provide proof of address, eg a recent Council Tax bill.

If you have any medical/social reason you would like to be considered with your application then please provide evidence with this application that is supported by a professional (such as a doctor's report).

Please also provide the correct proof of parental income as required.

Parental income

When completing Section C please provide the correct documentation as below:

Source of income	Documentation required
Employment	Copy of P60 ending April 2018 or last three month's payslips
Income Support	Photocopy first three pages of DWP book, including the page which states what the benefit is, or a letter from DWP
DWP Benefits	P60U or benefit statement or use the Benefits Information form to obtain details of any taxable benefits or pensions between 6 April 2017 and 5 April 2018
Working Families Tax Credit/ Universal Credit	Confirmation letter from Tax Credits Office
Income from Company and Private Pension	Copy of P60 ending April 2018

Further information is available on the support available for students in further education, please see our Transport Policy statement at

https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/advice_and_benefits/grants/school_travel_support.aspx

Please note that failure to provide the necessary documents may delay the assessment of your application.

PROCESSING YOUR APPLICATION

Children will usually only be eligible for travel assistance if the council cannot offer a place at a suitable alternative school. Therefore please ensure that you have made an application to three of your local schools before submitting an application.

We will send you an acknowledgement letter confirming receipt of your application.

It can take up to 30 days to complete the processing of your application, and we may write to you again during this time to request further information which is required to make a decision, such as:

- does the child have a freedom pass?
- does the child receive the Disability Living Allowance Mobility Component (high/low)?
- the nature and complexity of any disability or illness relating to the parent or child and how this affects their ability to travel to school independently or via public transport.
- are there any other siblings in the family and, if so, what are their ages?

If your application for travel assistance is successful, the council will decide on the most suitable provision, taking into account the child's specific needs, the statutory criteria and the most effective use of the council's resources.

The range of options include:

- **travel pass:** for the parent or child
- **parental reimbursement:** reimbursement to parents for using own vehicle to transport their child to and from school.
- **transport vehicles:** in exceptional circumstances the council may provide a vehicle to transport a child to and from school, such as a bus.

You will be informed in writing of the outcome of your application. If your application for travel assistance is **refused**, or you are unhappy with the **type** of assistance offered, then you will have a right of appeal against the decision and you will be advised of this in the decision letter.

Appeals under the LA's' travel assistance policy are administered in two stages. Further details of the appeals process are available on the appeal form.

CONTACTING US

Please contact us immediately if there are any changes to your circumstances which may affect your entitlement. If you fail to do so, this may result in the assistance being withdrawn and you incurring costs.

ANNUAL REVIEW

A child or young person's eligibility for travel assistance will be reviewed annually. The parent(s) or young person will be required to complete a review form and may need to attend a review meeting.

Travel assistance may also be reviewed or removed in the following circumstances:

- failure to provide information which is requested
- when there is any significant change in circumstances, such as a change in home address or a change in the child's needs
- on the written request of the parent who, if necessary, has made alternative arrangements for their child's travel to school
- change in the policy or statutory legislation
- assistance obtained via a fraudulent application.

Any changes will be implemented from the beginning of the next school term, or sooner by mutual agreement.