

What happens if I sign up for a PTB and then can't get my child to school?

PTBs are voluntary and if you find that you can't keep up the commitment, you will be able to leave the scheme at the next half term holiday. You will need to give notice of at least 4 weeks (in term time) to exit the scheme. This allows sufficient time for alternative travel arrangements to be made by the Council. If you find you are having difficulties with your travel arrangements, we would encourage you to discuss the problems with us before deciding to leave the scheme, as we may be able to help.

As long as you give 4 weeks' notice, you can cancel your contract with the Council if you are unable to continue organising your child's transport.

Can the Council withdraw my PTB for any reason?

The Council could cancel your PTB if:

- Your child's attendance is unacceptable and/or they are late for school
- You move home and your child is no longer eligible for travel assistance
- You have not made safe travel arrangements for your child
- Your child leaves the school
- The PTB scheme is discontinued

Will it have an impact on other benefits?

No, PTBs do not affect any other benefits you might receive and they are not subject to tax.

Extension of the Personal Transport Budget Scheme

The scheme currently applies only to children attending The Castle and Brookfields Schools. The scheme may be extended to children who are eligible for transport assistance and who attend other settings in future.

If you require this information in an alternative format or translation, please call 01635 42400 and ask for the SEN and Disabled Children's Team.

West Berkshire Council SEN and Disabled Children's Team

West Street House
West Street
Newbury
Berkshire
RG14 1BZ

T 01635 42400
www.westberks.gov.uk

Personal Transport Budgets: Information for Parents / Carers



What is a Personal Transport Budget?

A Personal Transport Budget (PTB) is a sum of money paid to parents or carers of children with Special Education Needs (SEN) who are eligible for assistance with travel to school. Having a PTB gives families the freedom to make their own decisions and arrangements about how their child will get to/from school each day.

Who can get a PTB?

From September 2015 you can apply for a PTB if your child is eligible for assistance with travel to school and attends (or will attend) a maintained special school in West Berkshire, either The Castle School or Brookfields School. You will need to be a West Berkshire resident and your child will be currently travelling to school by taxi or minibus (or you may be receiving a mileage allowance).

Children who are eligible for transport assistance and are able to travel to school independently using public transport are not eligible for a PTB; in these cases a bus or train pass will be funded.

If you apply for a PTB, the Council will need to be satisfied that you have a suitable plan in place to get your child to/from school. Additionally, the Council will need to check that your child's attendance at school is acceptable (they are meeting the average attendance level for a child of their age group). A suitable plan is one that provides appropriate transport that allows your child to get to school on time, safely and ready to learn. The Council reserves the right to decline applications if no suitable plan is in place or there is a risk that a child's attendance at school could be adversely affected.

What are the benefits of PTBs for families?

- ✓ Freedom and flexibility to make travel arrangements that best meet their family's needs and circumstances
- ✓ Choice and control over how funding to support their child's needs is spent
- ✓ Opportunities to share with other parents and potentially increase buying power
- ✓ A new alternative to the traditional services that the Council provides
- ✓ More opportunities to meet with other parents and school staff (if the family uses the PTB to transport their child to school themselves)

How much will my PTB be?

The PTB will be based on the distance from your home address to your child's school.

A formula will be used to calculate the PTB. The amount you receive will be the same regardless of how you plan to get your child to school.

What sort of travel arrangements should I make for my child?

You can make whatever travel arrangements you like as long as you meet your responsibilities under your contract with the Council. Your options include any (or a combination of) the following:

- Purchasing a travel pass for you and your child and using public transport
- Walking with them to school
- Cycling with them to school
- Drive them using your own vehicle

- Arrange for a family member, friend or someone else you trust to take your child to school, or pay someone such as a childminder to do it for you
- Arrange shared travel arrangements with other parents, such as shared driving responsibilities, walking buses or joint taxi bookings
- Overcome other barriers that may prevent you accompanying your child to school, e.g. make travel / childcare arrangements for siblings

You may also have other ideas on how to use a PTB to get your child to school, which we will be happy to consider.

It is important that you ensure the arrangements you make for your child's travel are reliable. Your child's education will suffer if they are regularly late for school and schools do not have the facilities to look after children at the end of the day if they are not collected on time.

How will the PTB get paid?

Payments will be made from the Council into your designated bank account in eleven monthly instalments between September and July. You will need to provide us with your bank details when you sign the contract.

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 therefore keep monitoring to a minimum. We will monitor your child's attendance and check to see that they arrive at school on time and fit to learn.