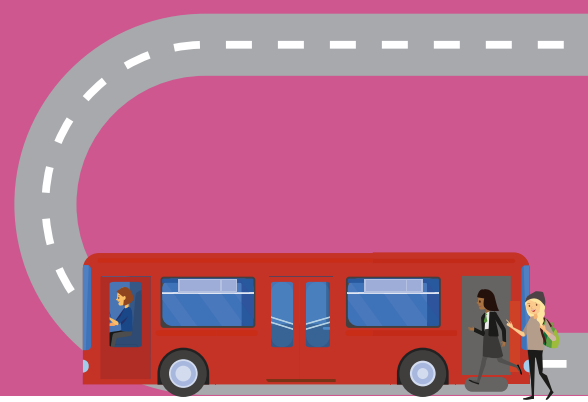


NEXT STEPS

Independent Travel Training Newsletter

JULY 2025 EDITION



We're proud to share that 68 young people across Warwickshire have successfully completed our free Independent Travel Training programme and are now confidently travelling to school, college, volunteering placements or work completely independently.

ITT is available for students:

- with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP)
- aged between 11 and 25
- who have a Warwickshire address
- who are currently using (or are entitled to) transport assistance (either free or paid)

Please be aware:

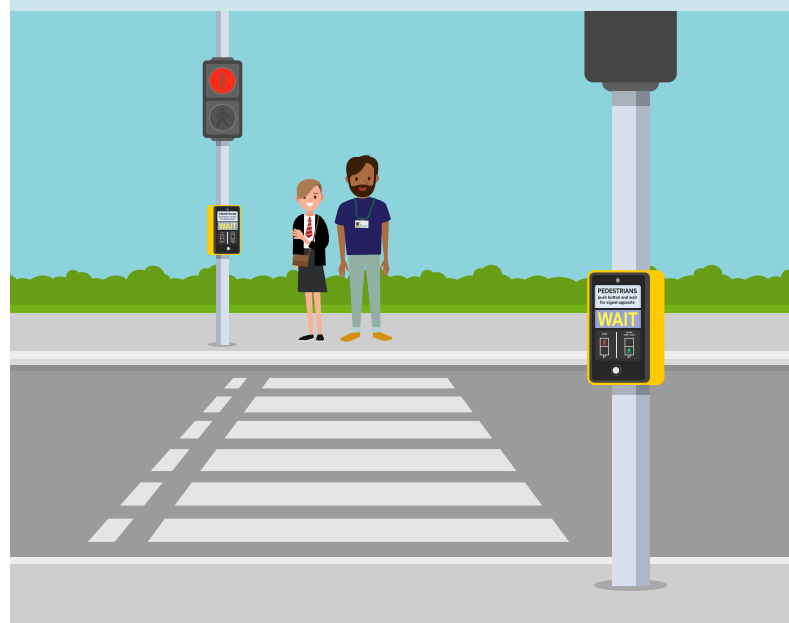
- Journeys must be from home to school/college/work placement/training provider by using public transport within Warwickshire.
- Journeys will usually be no longer than one hour.
- Successful completion of ITT will result in the withdrawal of specialist transport assistance. A bus pass will be provided in the form of a free concessionary or a free commercial bus pass.

We work closely with each learner to help them:

- Understand road safety and journey planning
- Use travel apps, maps and timetables

- Navigate public transport with confidence
- Prepare for 'what if' scenarios to build problem solving skills
- Know who and where to ask for help

Every learner we support receives a newly developed learner portfolio which guides them through the key skills they need to travel step by step. Upon completion, they receive their free bus pass (concessionary or commercial) and travel wallet to celebrate their success and mark the start of many independent journeys.



We'd love to visit your school, college or event!

The team has worked hard to develop and create an ever-expanding network of contacts.

During the 2024/2025 academic year, we have attended:

- 12 different specialist establishments for career/future fair/conference events – we loved attending and meeting the young people

In addition to 1:1 training, we offer engaging workshop sessions that help young people explore the benefits of ITT in a supportive, familiar setting. As a result of these workshops, we are aiming to work with education staff to

identify groups of young people where ITT could be of benefit. Once identified, we aim to take small groups of students out with their staff during the school/college day to teach some of the travel training skills and inspire the young people to be independent in future.

We also attend career events and transition fairs across the county, where we speak with students, parents and professionals about the life changing benefits of travel training.

If you are hosting a transition event, careers week or SEND specific fair, we would love to come along and support your students in learning about the practical steps towards independent travel.

**Please feel free to contact the team
tt@warwickshire.go.uk**

Why Independent Travel training matters - Long term benefits

This isn't just about accessing public transport. By developing the ability to travel alone young people unlock:

Increased confidence and a stronger sense of self

Greater access to education, employment and social opportunities

Reduced reliance on family or support services

These skills open the door to a more empowered future, one where young people can take control of their own routines, choices and paths in life.



Meet the team

We currently have four Travel Trainers and a Team Manager in Warwickshire.

They are...

**Hello
I'm Liz**



I have been one of the Travel Trainers here at Warwickshire County Council since 2018. I mostly cover South Warwickshire which includes Warwick, Leamington and Kenilworth but, really, I can be anywhere that's located in Warwickshire. What I most enjoy about my role is seeing young people thrive and gain confidence whilst gaining individual skills to carry out a journey to school, college or work placement independently.

**Hello
I'm
Georgia**



I joined the team in November 2022 and have supported lots of young people to independently travel on public transport. I find the job extremely rewarding and love to see the young people I work with grow in confidence and self-belief. I believe this service is important in allowing young people to gain their own independence and open doors that may have been closed for them before. It is a privilege to help them along their journey and I look forward to training many more young people in the future.

**Hello
I'm Tom**



I have been the team manager for the team since January 2023 and it's been great to see how much the service has grown. The team is passionate about helping young people around Warwickshire, so please reach out if you think it would benefit any young people in your lives. We want to grow the service without losing any of the quality. I have loved getting out with the team to watch as the young people learn the skills they will use throughout their lives, in education or work.

**Hello
I'm Nicola**



I have worked as a Travel Trainer since 2021. I enjoy seeing the young people's confidence and self-esteem grow as they progress through the stages of travel training. The role is rewarding, and no two days are the same

**Hello
I'm Jude**

My background knowledge of SEND gained whilst working for Warwickshire Integrated Disability Service and the Specialist Teaching Service since 2010, plus previous SEND employment with students with Autism and Communication needs has helped me to best support and train my learners in using public buses and in road safety awareness.

With understanding, direction and encouragement my learners have gained in confidence to use public services, communicate effectively and be proud of their achievements.

My favourite part of the job is helping Young People develop their skills to the point that I am not needed anymore or more importantly reliance on carers is not needed for them to travel within the community. They have become independent.



GVC Overcomes worries to travelling alone

GVC was eager to travel to his educational placement without the reliance or putting pressure on his Mum to take him. He had many worries and concerns using public transport.



He found timetables confusing and had difficulty reading the print. He needed support to understand destinations, electronic timetables and where to get on and off the bus.

GVC also worried about buses being too noisy, what if he missed his stop, getting distracted in new environments and getting involved with injustices that may happen whilst travelling independently. He needed strategies and encouragement to support this.

GVC can become over stimulated especially before a journey. During training he found that carrying his bag and guitar grounded him and he liked the rocking motion of the bus; these proprioceptive activities helped improve his self-regulation, sequencing of his speech, coordination and balance. He also liked to listen to his music whilst travelling which blocked out any noises on the bus and was calming for him.

GVC became efficient at checking the app and setting off on time for the bus. He learnt how to follow the bus using the live journey on the Stagecoach app, so he knew he had not missed

the bus and the exact time it was due. GVC was able to accept if a bus was late and change plans accordingly.

Over the weeks of training GVC became very confident to make plans so he could have breakfast before college or meet friends afterwards. GVC shared his location using WhatsApp, this has helped to build his confidence when travelling alone.

GVC watched the video on Safe Places in Warwickshire, he identified the posters and locations in Leamington. He also looked at an evening location should he ever find himself stuck in Leamington after 11pm.

On completion of training GVC confidently communicates with other passengers and the drivers. He will now sit upstairs if the bus is too busy downstairs. He has become more resilient and able to rationalise, and problem solve. Well done, GVC to becoming an independent traveller.



Case study 2

My next adventure!

After finishing school last year EN decided to enrol on a course at college. We received a referral and went out to meet EN and her parents at home. She explained that she wanted to become more independent traveling to and from college and going out socially

Previous travel arrangements

EN has always relied on her parents taking her where she needed to go.

The travel training journey

Despite the British weather not being kind EN has had a can-do attitude during every travel training session. She is positive, enthusiastic and always tries her best. She has gained new skills in road safety. Her confidence has grown with each session. She has a good knowledge of how to handle unexpected situations should they arise.



Over the duration of the independent travel training course EN has learnt skills to support her to safely get to and from college independently. We have talked about various scenarios that could occur and what to do to keep herself safe. She has worked on skills that include judging traffic, looking for safe places to cross roads, using crossings safely, remembering to text her parents that she has arrived, so they don't worry.

Parents are kept up to date of her progress throughout the journey and any concerns shared. Over the weeks targets are made and updated regularly giving a clear picture of progress. This is all evidenced and shared with EN and her parents.

"Travel training has helped me to become more confident when I am out and about. I was nervous at the beginning, but Nicola soon put me at ease, and we had a good fun while I was learning. By completing the course, I can see I have more choices and don't feel so restricted. I am looking forward to using my new skills over the summer holidays to go shopping!"

Case study 3

HT takes another step to becoming her most independent self!

Meet HT, HT is a young lady who currently has a volunteering placement.

HT does this Monday-Friday and really enjoys getting out of the house and helping others. HT also enjoys going on walks with her dog and making sandwiches! HT uses a taxi service to get her to and from the hospital but she felt it was time to take the first step in travelling independently. HT started travel training a few weeks ago and is doing very well, she remembers the numbers of all her buses (there are 4!) and is growing in confidence as she gets more familiar with

her route. HT is keen to learn more as the weeks go on and is already feeling more positive and reassured about travelling on the bus. HT has started leading the way and will complete certain bits of her journey on her own and then get feedback on how it went. This is a great way for HT to feel supported whilst she begins to trust herself and her abilities. With the skills Hannah has learnt and is learning the sky is the limit and I have no doubt she will be able to travel to the hospital on her own in the very near future! HT says 'I was nervous and worried at the start but I enjoy getting the bus now'



The WCC Travel Training Journey:

10 Start travelling independently



FINISH

09 Receive a concessionary or commercial bus pass



07 Distant Shadow travel training



08 Independent travel training complete



06 Close shadow travel training



05 Accompanied travel training



03 Route check is good



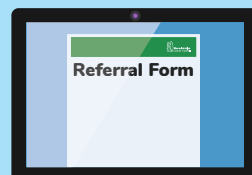
04 Initial assessment/ Meet and greet completed



02 Student meets eligibility criteria



01 Referral made and assessed



START

Reassurance for parents and carers

We understand that the thought of your child travelling alone can feel daunting – especially if they have always relied on support. That's why our approach is always gentle, person centred and never rushed.

Our team in most cases work one on one with each learner, gradually building up their skills and confidence at a pace that suits them. Safety is at the heart of everything we do, and we keep open communication with parents/carers throughout the training.

There is no pressure to complete the full programme if your young person still does not feel ready, but often, just trying the first steps opens up incredible possibilities.

You are not alone in feeling nervous, we are here to support every step of the way!

How to make a referral

Are you or do you know a young person that could benefit from learning how to travel independently? We have a waiting list so get in as quickly as possible!

Visit:

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/sendtransport

Or scan the QR code

Lets work together to give more young people the skills and freedom to thrive beyond the classroom!



We are proud to have received referrals from the following establishments

Alcester academy

Aylesford school and sixth form

Brooke School Rugby

Coleshill school

Chipping Campden

Exhall Grange

Harris Academy

Henley in Arden High school

Hereward college

Kenilworth School sixth form

King Edward V1

Lawrence Sheriff School

Leamington LAMP

North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College

Oakwood school and sixth form

Southam College

Stratford College

The Queen Elizabeth Academy

Trinity Catholic School Leamington

Vineyard Learning Centre

Warwickshire college (all campuses)