

## **Direct Travel Payments Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What can I use the DTP for?**

You can use the payments for anything you like, as long as your child(ren) get to and from school on time and in a way that ensures their safety, encourages their attendance and does not negatively affect their ability to learn once they are at school.

### **How are the payments calculated?**

The amount you receive is based on two return journeys per day from home to school. The distance from home to school is measured using the shortest available route from the home boundary to the nearest school gate. The current mileage rate is 45p per mile.

### **How often will I receive my DTP?**

Payments will be made half-termly in advance directly into your bank account. If the payment date has passed by the time you start claiming DTP, money owed from this period will be made in arrears at the start of the next half term.

### **What if I have more than one child to transport?**

Where more than one eligible child is to be transported in a personal vehicle the mileage rate will increase by 25%. In the event of a car share agreement between families, a written agreement from both parties will be sought before the enhanced payment is agreed. Only one DTP will be paid to a designated parent.

### **If I claim DTP can my child still use the vehicle provided by the Local Authority?**

No, by applying for DTP you will become responsible for making your own arrangements for transporting your child to and from school.

### **What if I can no longer accept a DTP?**

If you find you can no longer accept the direct travel payment, please contact us. It is expected that the half-termly payment will be used to cover the pupil's transport arrangements for the entirety of this period. At least 14 days' notice, before the next payment is due, is required for the Council to put alternative transport arrangements in place from the start of the next half term. Transport to and from school/college will remain your responsibility until this time.

### **What if I move house or my child moves school?**

You will need to reapply for transport assistance in both of these cases. We will then reassess your entitlement and let you know if the DTP can continue. Please be aware that if there is existing transport in place then this may not always be possible.

### **What evidence do I need to provide to claim my DTP?**

We require an agreement letter to be signed at the start of the school year in every instance. If this is your first claim you will also need to complete a data capture form. This is a form which gathers your bank account details to enable us to make direct travel payments to you. As DTPs are subject to audit, we may at any time request evidence from you to check that payments have been spent solely on transporting your child from home to school. If

evidence exists to show that this is not the case, then the local authority may take steps to recover the amount in question.

**What if my child is ill?**

If your child is off school for a long period of time or stops attending completely please let us know. Pupil attendance will be checked termly and payments may be stopped or amended if attendance falls to an unsatisfactory level (80% for SEN pupils or 92% for mainstream pupils).

**What if my child has never used a bus before?**

Warwickshire County Council plans to run Independent Travel Training sessions for secondary school aged children with special needs in the near future. These sessions will help to give young people the skills and confidence to travel independently. Please contact us for more information.

**What if my car breaks down and I can't get my child to school?**

The local authority is unable to provide emergency transport in these situations, it may be advisable to make contingency plans to cover you in case this situation occurs.

**Can my DTP be withdrawn?**

Yes, below are some examples of when the payments may be withdrawn or suspended;

- When you move address or your child moves school and you are no longer eligible for transport assistance, or there is existing transport in place for your child to use.
- When the arrangements you make are unsuitable (e.g. your child arrives persistently late to school or their attendance drops)
- If the direct travel payments have not been used appropriately (i.e. solely for home to school transport)
- If your child's attendance drops below a satisfactory level (80% for SEN pupils or 92% for mainstream pupils)
- A more cost effective method of WCC transport becomes available (e.g. a bus/specialist vehicle)
- When a child moves address or school but no new application for transport assistance is received.

Please note that this list is not exhaustive, but in all cases parents will be informed before any action is taken.