

**WESAIL**

**Information for Parents and Carers**

**Independent Travel Training**

Independent Travel Training is a travel training programme designed to run in a school or college. Primarily work is with students in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan in Years 10 and 11 usually on 'Assisted Transport'.

**Why consider independent travel training?**

The training aims to equip young people with the skills needed to travel to and from school or college by themselves on public transport.

It has been found that it can be better to start training young people sooner as part of the child's education with Years 7-9, as it promotes wider travel choice for a much longer period and reduces long term demand on specialist transport

Independent Travel Training produces a "win-win" situation for the students. The personal gains for the students are enormous including: personalised support, increased self-esteem, self-confidence and social skills. The favourable long term effects include increased potential to access education, employment and leisure opportunities.

The ability to travel independently is of fundamental importance to all aspects of life, whether a person has a disability or otherwise. A lack of independent travel could ultimately create one of the most significant barriers to personal success and satisfaction. Travel Training helps prepare the students for the adult roles of pedestrian, passenger and citizen.

**Benefits for Parents and Carers**

Parents and carers are often fearful that travel training will place their child in danger by exposing them to the outside world. The Travel Training Team works hard to allay these fears by visiting parents at home and by keeping them fully informed of what the training will consist of at any given time and to see the changes as benefits:

* The students no longer need escorting to places
* The parents gain more respite time to do their own thing e.g. study or employment
* Broadens the horizon of the learner away from the family
* Travel Training changes family roles in a positive manner as it changes the way they interact with one another
* Overall increased confidence and independence for transition into adulthood

**Are there any children/young people exempt to complete travel training?**

Some students can be assessed to be unsuitable for Independent Travel Training if their needs are too great. For example:

• On regular medication (the travel trainers are not trained to administer medication)

• Visual Impairment (these students are referred to the VI Mobility Team)

• Mobility Issues

• Severe Learning Difficulties

• Behavioural Problems (depending on the individual these students can sometimes pose a danger to themselves or others)

• Vulnerability (Personal Issues) (depending on the individual these students can sometimes not be aware of personal danger)

**How do you access this service?**

Referrals for independent travel training are received from a variety of sources however the main source of referrals is the Assisted Transport Panel following a request by a parent for assisted transport.

A number of services such as schools, colleges, Connexions and Social Workers can also contact the Independent Travel Training Team to make a referral.

Highfield School, Pinderfields Hospital School, Featherstone Academy and Wakefield College include independent travel as a goal for many of their students with SEND. Highwell School have also agreed that independent travel to/from school should be a goal for their students.

When the team receive a referral contact is made with that person to introduce the team and explain the travel training process. A referral form and assessment questionnaire are sent to the parent/carer together with a consent form which needs to be completed and returned to the Independent Travel Training Team before training can commence.

If necessary a meeting is arranged with the young person in school or at home to introduce the travel trainer who will be working with them and to develop an individual training plan for that young person. In some cases this may also include work with parents to re-assure them about the process and benefits.

Where children are under the age of 16 years of age there is no charge if they are in receipt of assisted transport.

**To find out further information;**

<https://www.wakefield.gov.uk/schools-and-children/schools/going-to-school/travel-transport/sen-independent-travel-training>

<http://wakefield.mylocaloffer.org/independent-travel-training>

**Who do I contact for further information?**

• Home School transport; 01924 306348/ hst@wakefield.gov.uk

• Discuss with your child/young person’s school/college

• Your allocated social worker

**If you need to ask any questions or for further advice, please contact:**

**Barnardo’s SENDIASS on 01924 304152**

**or email wesail@barnardos.org.uk**

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