

Guide to personal travel budgets (PTB)

Directorate	Early Help, SEND and Prevention
Service Area	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
Team	School Travel Assistance
Location	Floor 5, 48 Station Road

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explain what PTB are, what the funds can be used for, and what issues parents/ carers should consider when accepting and/ or utilising them.

This document will provide a brief overview of PTBs but a more comprehensive explanation is contained within in our **'Home to school travel assistance policy'**, which can be found on Haringey's local offer website. This includes information such as how the local authority calculates the values of PTBs.

In this guide we refer to an organisation which provides care as a **'Service Provider'** and we refer to someone a parent/carer directly employs as a **'Personal Assistant' (PA)**.

What is a PTB?

A PTB is a payment designed to help parents make any of the arrangements needed to facilitate their child accessing school. **The budget should be utilised by parent's/ carers** to make the travel arrangements necessary to assist the child/ young person to travel to school or make any other arrangements that will allow parents/ carers themselves to transport the child.

If a parent chooses to receive a PTB, LBH will consider their duty of providing school travel arrangements for eligible children fulfilled and will provide no further assistance.

Who can have a PTB?

PTBs are available to parents/ carers of children or young people who are eligible for travel assistance, **based on the 'Home to school travel assistance policy'** of the London Borough of Haringey. They are granted at the discretion of the local authority, where it is cost effective for the authority to do so. There is no automatic right to receive a PTB in place of alternative travel assistance, which may have been offered.

Benefits of a PTB

Parents/ carers using PTBs often find they have more control over the services they receive, with care being provided in a more convenient and flexible way to suit them.

Using PTBS allows parents/ carers to:

- decide who is going to provide travel assistance services;
- arrange how, when and at what times any services are provided.

PTB reviews

The eligibility or value of a PTB will be reviewed as per the conditions outlined in our **'Home to school travel assistance policy'**. Parents/ carers will be notified of the date of

the review and will be informed of the outcome in writing. This is also the case for instances where PTBs are withdrawn or ceased.

We reserve the right to withdraw the PTB at any time. If we were to withdraw this support, Haringey will provide alternative forms of travel assistance.

Using a PTB

Parents/ carers can use the budget in any way they wish to ensure the child attends school every day, on time, and ready to learn. Examples of how a PTB may be used include:

- contributing towards covering the costs of running a car;
- purchasing travel passes for the parent and/ or child to use public transport;
- paying for travel arrangements for an older sibling, thus allowing the parent to accompany the younger child to school¹;
- paying for childcare arrangements for a younger sibling, whilst the parent takes the older sibling to school;
- employing a PA to accompany the child to school on public transport i.e. a travel buddy;
- employing a service provider to manage the travel arrangements for the child/ young person;
- arrange shared travel, such as a car or taxi, sharing with another family;
- purchasing bikes for children and support climate change initiatives.

However, parents/ carers **can't use** their PTB to buy services from a local authority.

Using PTBs can mean extra responsibilities for parents/ carers, since they will be more involved in arranging travel assistance services. This is particularly true if parents/ carers employ a PA to help meet their **child's needs**.

Considerations when using a PTB

When using a PTB parents/ carers to make arrangements to facilitate a child/ young person's travel to school, parents/ carers should consider the following things:

Employing PAs

Parents who decide to employ carers directly instead of using a service provider, will have all the responsibilities of an employer. As an employer, they are required to take **out a suitable employer's** liability insurance policy. Although the local authority cannot recommend individual companies, we can provide you with a list of companies who provide such cover. It would be responsibility of the parent/ carer to identify the most suitable cover required.

¹ This should be considered particularly in cases for children with SEND, with this parent taking the child with SEND themselves.

There is no national set rate of hourly pay for personal assistants (PA) although you must at least pay the national minimum wage. The rate of pay should also consider the range of different hourly rates that would need to be paid for, such as day, night, weekends, bank, and local holidays, as well as emergency cover. Please note that when determining the value of a PTB, Haringey will consider the hourly rate of pay for PAs to be the London Living Wage.

Parents/ carers should also consider the expenses the PA may incur when providing travel assistance, such as journey fares for themselves or the child. This is also factored into the calculation of the value of PTBs.

As an employer, parents will have more control over who provides care and how this care is provided for their child. They may also be able to employ someone who already knows or has previously worked with their child.

Using a service provider

Parents who decide to engage the care services of a service provider to assist in their **child's travel arrangements** will have no responsibility for employment issues, as staff will be employees of the company used. Parents may have less say in who works with their child and what arrangements are made. It may be more expensive to use a service provider than employing someone directly due to them fulfilling the role of the employer.

It is possible for parents to use a service provider to meet some of the needs of a child and employ a PA to meet the rest. The overall benefit of a personal travel budget is that the parent/ carer can decide what is best for their child.

DBS Checks

The parent/ carer must ensure anyone working with their child has a recent enhanced DBS check. They will need to see a copy of their DBS check and keep a record of this.

Childcare arrangements

Anyone who is paid to look after a child under eight years of age in their home, for more than two hours a day, must be registered as a childminder with OFSTED. This does not apply where you pay someone to look after their child in their own home.

Travel arrangements

Parents should consider using TfL's transport offer for children/ young people, as this will be a factor in working out the value of PTBs.

Payments

PTB payments are not taxed as they are made in relation to the child/ young person, not the parent. It is used to enable your child to get to and from school each day and should not be used for any other purpose.

Parents will be given a value of budget that they will receive for the academic year. This will be paid in stages throughout term times, usually on a monthly basis. Haringey will inform the parent/ carer of the schedule by which they should expect to receive payments and how much they should expect to receive during each payment.

If a parent/ care is already in receipt of some other form of direct payment from Haringey in relation to the child, they can receive the funds via the already established account information we currently hold payment method/ account. Alternatively, some parents/ carers may decide to set up a separate account to allow them to administer and keep track of the funds more efficiently. In these instances, Haringey require the same information we would if we were to set up a new vendor on our system, which includes:

- A copy of the bank statement, clearly showing the **parent/ carer's** name, address, and banking details (any transactions redacted);
or
- A letter from the bank addressed to the account holder, clearly showing the home address, and the new banking details

Vendors/Accounts Payable don't accept banking details in the body of an email for security/fraud reasons.

Age

If a parent/ carer has parental responsibility for a child, they can manage the personal travel budget for them providing they are under 16 years of age. However, as much as is reasonably possible, they should consider the views of the child with regards to the arrangements made.

Once a young person reaches the age of 16, it is possible for payments to be made to them in their own right, providing the local authority believes that they have the ability to manage a PTB themselves. This is regardless of whether that help comes from parents, a user controlled trust or a local support service. Alternatively, parents can continue to receive the payments and make the necessary travel arrangements on their behalf.