

Fare Payer Scheme for School Travel 2016/17

Introduction

Spare seats on existing school transport contracted by the Council are made available through the Fare Payer Scheme to school pupils and post-16 students. Passes will be valid for journeys to and from school or academy between Monday and Friday only.

Eligible Pupils/Students

This Scheme is open to school pupils/students who are resident in West Berkshire and attend either a West Berkshire maintained school or academy, or their nearest school if the school is outside of West Berkshire. It does not apply to independent schools.

Where places are still available on 24 September each year, these can be made available to non-West Berkshire pupils/students attending West Berkshire schools.

Pupil/Student Guarantee

Where the pupil/student is attending their nearest or catchment school, they are guaranteed a place on an existing school bus route provided by West Berkshire Council. In line with statutory guidance, students aged 16-19 are also guaranteed a place. In order to qualify for the guarantee, the student must apply by 20 June 2016 and pay the relevant fee by 29 August 2016.

The guarantee will not apply to applications made after 20 June 2016 (late applicants).

For other students/pupils, there is not an entitlement to a place or a guarantee that a place would be available.

How to Apply

Applications should be made online - application forms are available on the West Berkshire Council website at www.westberks.gov.uk/schooltransport from 1 June 2016.

If you do not have computer access, please contact us for advice on how to proceed on 01635 519777.

Applicants will receive email confirmation that their application has been received and their unique identification number.

Where there are more applications than available places, successful applications will be drawn at random from those received by midnight on 20 June 2016, using the unique identifiers and a random number generator.

Late Applications (received after midnight on 20 June) will be added to the waiting list, unless spaces remain, in which case a space will be allocated.

Banding/Prices (per academic year)

The Scheme is based on a banding system for all routes:

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| • Nearest or Catchment school – flat rate | £250 |
| • 6 th form students – flat rate | £250 |
| • Other – up to 6 miles | £450 |
| • Other – over 6 miles | £800 |

Invoices will be raised by West Berkshire Council for the amount owed. Families can pay in up to 6 instalments, on request. Either full payment or the first instalment of an agreed repayment schedule must be made before the pass is issued.

Sibling Discount

Fares will be discounted by 10% for children in Years 7-11 who have an older sibling in the school, including a 6th form sibling. Sibling discount does not apply to 6th form students. Therefore, for example, 6th form twins would both pay the flat rate.

Waiting List

A waiting list will be kept for any unsuccessful applicants. These will be ranked as follows:

- Siblings of successful applicants who are attending their nearest or catchment school (in order of random allocation draw ranking)
- Other applicants (in order of random allocation draw ranking)
- Late applicants

Spaces on Contracted School Transport

Assistance is strictly limited to existing contracted school transport where spaces are available after those pupils eligible for free home to school transport and post-16 students eligible under statutory guidance have been accommodated.

Once the fare payer allocation for an existing school bus route has been filled, no further allocation will be made unless additional provision can be made at zero net cost.

Withdrawal of places on Contracted School Transport

The Council reserves the right to withdraw a place if it is required for a pupil who is entitled to free home to school transport or post-16 transport under the Council's statutory responsibilities. Any places (except post-16 guaranteed seats) which are available can be withdrawn if the seat is required for a pupil entitled to free transport; the contract ceases to operate; the contract is re-routed; or seating capacity is reduced.

The order of withdrawal will be Non-West Berkshire resident pupils/students in order of allocation ("last in, first-out" principle), followed by West Berkshire resident school pupils in order of allocation ("last in, first-out" principle).

A refund will only be made if the Council withdraws a fare payer place. West Berkshire Council operates a 6-term year. The refund will be calculated for the remaining complete terms. Please note: If a pupil is withdrawn for behaviour reasons, no refund will be made.

Subsidised Train Passes are available on some routes, and to apply for a pass, use the online application form. Train passes are charged at the rate determined by the train company, except post-16 students where, in line with statutory guidance, the Band D flat rate fee will apply.