

Home to School Transport

Information for parents and carers



www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and for arranging their safe arrival at school and journey home at the end of the day.

For some that might mean using a bus on a daily basis and the council provides assistance to those families through funding a scheme which enables children to travel at a discounted rate of 50p per journey. See details of the 'All-in-1 Card' on the back of this leaflet.

However, under some circumstances, the council has a legal duty to provide home to school transport at no cost to parents and carers. This leaflet tells you more about these circumstances.

In general

- For those children who do qualify for free home to school transport, the council reserves the right to decide on the type of transport that is provided.
- The maximum travelling time to or from schools that is considered reasonable by the council is 45 minutes for children of primary school age and 75 minutes for young people attending secondary school.
- The qualification criteria described in this leaflet apply regardless of the type of school attended. There is no difference between travel to maintained, denominational (voluntary aided and voluntary controlled), special and academy schools, as well as personal education centres and pupil referral units.
- Parents and carers need only apply for transport for their child at the start of school, where there is a subsequent change of school or a change of address. For parents and carers applying prior to the start of a new school year, an application should be submitted by early July. Late applications may result in transport not being available in time. At other times of the year, parents and carers should try to give at least three weeks' notice.
- A parent's right to express a preference for a place at a particular school does not necessarily mean that assistance with home to school transport will be provided by Milton Keynes Council. If transport costs are an important factor in your decision to accept a school place, please take this into account.

There are two grounds on which children qualify for home to school transport.

Criteria 1 - Distance grounds

To be eligible for **free** home to school transport on **distance** grounds, you must live over the statutory distance from your child's nearest qualifying school. The statutory distances are:

Age	Statutory distance from home
Children who are between 4 and 7 years	Two miles or more miles from the nearest qualifying school, measured by the shortest available safe walking route, provided they attend school all day.
Children who are between 8 and 16 years (or for children up to and including Year 11)	Three miles or more to their nearest qualifying school, measured by the shortest available safe walking route.
Entitlement for Children with Special Education Needs	Transport assistance will be assessed on an individual basis. More detail is given below.

To apply for free home to school transport on **distance grounds**, please complete the Home to School Transport Eligible Children Application Form available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

If a child lives within the statutory walking distance to their nearest qualifying school, but the route is not safe (even when accompanied), the council will make free transport available.

Criteria 2 - Distance and low income grounds

To qualify for **free** school transport on **distance and low income** grounds, you must meet the following criteria:

Age	Statutory distance from home
Children who are between 8 and 11 years	Receive free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum level of Working Tax Credit; and attend the nearest qualifying school and live more than two miles but less than six miles from that school.
Children who are between 11 and 16 years (school years 7 to 11 inclusive)	Receive free school meals or whose parents receive the maximum level of Working Tax Credit; and attend one of their three nearest qualifying schools and live more than two miles but less than six miles from that school.

To apply for free home to school on **distance and low income grounds**, please complete the Home to School Transport – Low Income Application Form available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

We expect a good standard of behaviour at all times from pupils travelling on the school transport that has been provided. Parents / carers must make sure that their child(ren) follow our Code of Conduct for School Pupils available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

Special educational needs, disability or mobility difficulties

The qualification criteria set out in this leaflet apply to all children, including those with special educational needs, a disability or mobility difficulties. Special educational needs, disability or a mobility difficulty do not give an automatic right to free home to school transport, even if the school attended is a special school.

However, there will be exceptional circumstances where a child is unable to walk to school due to their specific needs. Where parents and carers feel there are good reasons why free home to school transport should be provided, there is a process for making an application on exceptional grounds.

Post 16 students with a special educational need or disability

Post 16 students who have a transport need identified in their statement of special needs or transition plan may receive additional travel assistance. Post 16 students without a statement of special needs, but who have a medical condition or learning difficulty or disability, may also be considered for travel assistance. Requests for assistance with transport will be assessed on an **individual** basis where:

<p>A student is 16, 17 or 18 years of age before 1 September and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lives three or more miles from the proposed school or college• attends full-time the nearest appropriate school/college that meets their needs• had a statement of special education need and received free home to school transport before they reached the age of 16• could not reasonably be expected to walk or travel on public transport due to a temporary or long term medical condition or disability
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To apply for transport for a post 16 student with special education needs, disability or mobility difficulties, please complete the Post 16 Application Form available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

We expect a good standard of behaviour at all times from SEN pupils travelling on the school transport that has been provided. Parents / carers must make sure that their child(ren) follow our Code of Conduct for School SEN Pupils available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

Post 16 students and those on a low income

The Department of Education has introduced a new bursary scheme for 16-19 year olds to be administered by schools and colleges themselves. If you are eligible for access to this bursary scheme, any funding you receive can be used towards transport costs. For further information relating to financial support, contact the student finance/welfare offices of your school or college.

Transport exceptions and appeals

It is possible to apply for free school transport on exceptional grounds. Please complete the Exceptions and Appeals Form available at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport. These cases are considered on an individual basis, by a council panel.

The council panel will review any decisions made in relation to these applications, where parents/carers are unhappy.

Appeals process

A further formal process is available should you wish to appeal against any other home to school transport decision.

Mileage rates available for parents/carers of children entitled to free transport

For those children who qualify for free home to school transport there is an option for parents or carers to use their own vehicle to provide the home to school transport or reach agreement for another person to provide the transport. In these circumstances the council pays a mileage allowance of 45p per mile.

To express an interest in claiming mileage, please complete the Home to School Transport Mileage Application Form for Parents available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

Privilege fares scheme

It may be possible for parents or carers to pay for travel on a home to school contract bus as a fare payer, but only if there are spare seats available once entitled children have been allocated seats. This is known as the Privilege Fares Scheme. Fare-paying seats are very limited and we cannot guarantee their availability or continuation. To find out more about how the Privilege Fares Scheme operates, please visit www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport and refer to the guidance.

To request a seat via the Privilege Fares Scheme, please complete the application form for the Privilege Fares Scheme available at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport.

All in 1 MK Card

The council funds substantially discounted transport via the 'All in 1 MK Card'. It enables young permanent residents of Milton Keynes or those who attend school/college/training establishments in MK, aged 5 to 19, to travel on local public transport at discounted rates of 50p per journey. This could result in a saving of as much as £2.25 per journey.

For more information about the All in 1 MK Card please visit www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/transport or call the Milton Keynes Council Bus Card Section on **01908 252558**.

More information

Please visit www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schooltransport for more information, the relevant forms and documents and to read the council's **Home to School Transport Statement**.

To make enquiries about school buses, routes, the Privilege Fares Scheme, seat availability and so on please contact the Integrated Passenger Transport Unit:
passenger.transport@milton-keynes.gov.uk or Tel. **01908 252526**

You can also write to us: Milton Keynes Council, Integrated Passenger Transport Unit, Saxon Court, 502 Avebury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes MK9 3HS

Quality of service

Milton Keynes Council is committed to providing a high quality Home to School Transport service. If you would like to compliment, comment or complain about our service, please visit www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/complaints.

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