



Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**  
**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council

# Independent Travel Training

An Information Guide for  
Parents / Carers

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## What is Travel Training?

Travel training aims to help those who need extra assistance and support to make journeys safely on their own. This will help to develop the necessary skills to become a more independent learner.

**Travel training can include a wide range of support by:**

- Providing short term training to familiarise learners with how public transport works in their area and giving them the confidence to use it; or
- Providing longer term, regular, intensive one-to-one training to also learn important road safety and personal awareness skills.

## Who is it aimed at helping?

Travel training can assist learners of all ages, abilities and needs, who suffer from a lack of road safety awareness and knowledge of how to travel by public transport. Travel training is particularly beneficial to individuals who have Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

Such individuals are often transported by arranged taxi until the need is no longer required. Access to further education, work placements, training and other life opportunities can then become very daunting because they have no prior experience in preparing and planning journeys independently. Many will be unfamiliar with where to find the information or advice, or even the skills to make journeys themselves.

Travel training can also be useful for individuals who are having difficulties getting around due to a recent disability or illness.

**Note:** Individuals who are partially sighted or blind will require specialist navigation and orientation skills which are not covered in the realm of travel training. However, there is a specialist mobility officer who can provide assistance. Should this service be required please can you contact Lisa Beattie. [Lisa.Beattie@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Beattie@merthyr.gov.uk)

## 2. AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

Once the learner has successfully reached independence and can travel alone, arranged transport / taxis will stop and be replaced with bus / train passes. These passes can be used to travel to and from school, college, training, day centre and work placements, thus making full use of the new skills and the opportunities to become more independent.

Please note that bus passes will only be issued in line with the eligibility for free transport (i.e. based on the transport policy). Some learners may be entitled to a companion or disabled pass to travel free on all public bus services in Wales.

For further details please contact the **Contact Centre on 01685 725000**

It would be an expectation that an individual's travel needs would be identified as part of their annual review, which would be developed into targets in their IDP, as appropriate to the needs of the learner.

## Independent Travel Training

### Objectives

- To engage with schools to promote a sustainable culture of independence across Merthyr Tydfil by making relevant curriculum links.
- To motivate young people to want to travel independently and encourage the long term development of life skills.
- To train and support young people with ALN in the field of independent travel; an essential skill of independent living.
- To provide a safe learning environment where young people can gain independence and knowledge.
- To encourage the use of public transport.

### Benefits for Individuals

- Greater independence, resilience and self-esteem.
- Personal safety awareness.
- Social inclusion, choice and equity.
- Ability to enjoy travelling on their own or with friends around Merthyr Tydfil. Health and wellbeing – walking, and bus use, promote active living and exercise.
- Improved quality of life, social and personal development; breaking barriers.
- Access to further education, work, training and other life opportunities, irrespective of ability.
- A smooth transition into adulthood.
- Key skills gained will be wide ranging and transferable; handling money, understanding time, interacting with other people, dealing with new situations and the unexpected, planning and preparing for journeys.

### Benefits for Parents/Carers

- The learner is being trained by a Key Worker or worker who they already know and trust. This could be a class teacher, somebody in the educational setting or a parent/carer etc.
- Travel training is delivered on a one to one or group basis, taking into account the trainee's personal needs, confidence and skill level.
- Travel training would be delivered as part of the curriculum and would be dependent on the development of the learner, making it stress free and enjoyable.
- The learner will be trained to a high standard, understanding key skills and tasks that will enable them to walk and use public transport safely.
- The learner will be able to make the most of their adult life in an independent capacity.
- More personal independence for parents/carers, as learners become more confident and able to travel independently.

As parents / carers you will be involved from the start and would play an integral part in the re-enforcing of these skills. The Key Worker will consult with you at all stages of the process, so that you have a full understanding about what the training involves and how it is progressing. Should you have any questions or concerns throughout the process your identified Key Worker would be happy to assist

### 3. WHAT IS INVOLVED WITH PRACTICAL TRAVEL TRAINING?

#### Classroom/Home

**Targets:** Before practical training starts, Key Workers will establish some goals with each learner. These include areas which at first they may not feel comfortable, such as understanding time, raising confidence, resilience, improving communication skills.

**Travel Behaviour:** Every learner will be asked to identify clearly what they think is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relation to walking, bus use, and communication and interaction with members of the public.

**Travel Plan:** An individual Travel plan detailing each learner's return route will be prepared by the Key Worker and the learner. Together they will discuss how to prepare for a journey, taking into account the route and mode to be taken, as well as considering what footwear and clothing to wear in certain weather and at times of the day. They will also plan the journey to be taken together, looking at how to obtain information about the journey, how to decide the most appropriate mode of travel, time management, reading bus timetables and maps, dealing with the unexpected, and communication skills. **(Appendix 1)**

#### Practical – Step by step instruction

The practical training will follow the three stages below, but the detail and time spent at each level will be individually set to fit each learner, in line with parental / carer's agreement. Responsibilities will be clarified at the early stage of the Travel Plan.

**1. Accompany:** The initial stage of travel training involves the learner being accompanied to and from a destination. This is from their home address or agreed meeting point.

**2. Shadow:** The second stage involves the learner's journey being shadowed from a safe distance, in order to assess their skill level and capabilities; crossing roads safely, the green cross code, getting on and off the bus, and communicating with the bus driver. The learner will be supported at their home address, or agreed meeting point, to make sure that they are confident and prepared for the journey.

**3. Meet and Greet:** At the third stage, the learner will be met at their home address, or agreed meeting point, to make sure that they feel safe and confident to travel the route. The learner will then independently travel the entire route to the destination and will be met at the destination before entering the establishment.

Learners will not be left to travel alone until those responsible feel that they are capable of travelling without becoming lost or late. Learners will have been shadowed along this route several times before undertaking it alone.

## **4. GETTING THERE SAFELY**

It is very important that the learner is trained in a safe environment, gradually becoming accustomed to being out and about in the community, using public modes of transport and moving towards independent travel.

The three stages of practical training detailed above aim to gradually improve the skill level and self-esteem of individuals by training them to make a regular journey to and from their destination independently.

Each learner's progress is monitored on a regular basis. When those responsible believe that the learner is ready to continue to the next stage of training, this will be agreed with the learner and parent / carer before moving forward. Regular contact between parents / carers and school will ensure that everyone knows what is happening on a regular basis, avoiding confusion and unnecessary worry.

## **Risk Assessments**

An overarching risk assessment has been prepared to evaluate any possible risks for all involved e.g. learner, Key Worker, members of the public and / or bus operators during the travel training process. Practical measures have been put in place to control and reduce the risk rating.

Once a route to and from the destination has been identified for each learner, it is essential that the learner and where appropriate, members of the Road Safety Team, undertake an individual risk assessment before training can start. The Road Safety Team could assist with the availability of the walking route. This could potentially be the full route to the school or to the nearest available bus stop. During this the Key Worker would also walk the route as they would understand the needs of the learner. Normally the most direct route will be identified, however, it is important to ensure that this route is the safest.

## **Safety Accessories**

To facilitate travel, specific accessories can be provided to the learner, such as:

- Bus pass;
- Extra care card (orange wallet) – created individually for each trainee, detailing contact numbers for the Key Worker, School, College, Day Centre, Work Placement, Home. Details of how to obtain travel information will also be shown i.e. Traveline Cymru and local bus (Stagecoach, Edwards, NAT) or train operator.
- Travel plan - detailing times, bus information, and map with landmark recognition;
- Reflective arm bands, where necessary;
- Personal safety alarm, where necessary.

## Lateness, Sickness and Emergencies

In the event of any of those involved in the Travel Plan being late, sick, or in the event of an emergency, a number of emergency procedures have been put in place. These are designed for all parties to follow and will help to avoid confusion and unnecessary panic. Specific information, such as the start and finishing times of the training, will be dependent on the learner and route. This will be agreed and signed by all parties.

Before training can commence, parents / carers will be asked to provide the emergency contact details for the Travel Plan. Up to three different contact persons should be listed, where practicable. Any medical information / conditions will also be detailed in the Travel Plan. Please note that all involved are responsible for updating these details.

The Travel Plan would identify the learner's particular needs and as such those working with the learner would be appropriately trained.

## Responsibility for each trainee on the journey

The responsibility for the learner will be outlined, at each stage of the journey, in the Travel Plan.

## Incidents

In the event of an accident (trips, slips, minor injuries etc.) those responsible will be required to complete an incident and prevention form in accordance with the Health and Safety plan of the school or setting. Parents / carers will be advised of any incidents and agreement sought for travel training to continue.

## **5. PARENT AND CARER INVOLVEMENT**

Those responsible will be working extremely hard to ensure that parents / carers are kept up to date throughout the training. This will help parents / carers to see the potential end results and life changing benefits that can be gained. All decisions will be made in partnership with those responsible to ensure the best outcomes for the learner. There will be an expectation that parents/carers will continue to re-enforce the Travel plan outside of school hours. This will support the success of the Travel Plan.

## **6. MONITORING AND AFTERCARE SERVICE**

All monitoring will be developed and discussed as part of the annual review process, at regular IDP meetings and/or at Parent Evenings. This will help to ensure that independent travellers continue to travel in a confident and safe manner once their training is complete. At this stage the need for ongoing home to school transport will be reviewed.

## 7. CONTACTS

- Lisa Beattie ALN Team Leader
- Beattie, Lisa [Lisa.Beattie@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Lisa.Beattie@merthyr.gov.uk)
  
- Danielle Jones, Statementing Officer
- Jones, Danielle [Danielle.Jones@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Danielle.Jones@merthyr.gov.uk)
  
- Paul Lewis, Home to School Transport
- Lewis, Paul [Paul.Lewis@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Paul.Lewis@merthyr.gov.uk)
  
- Steve Lewis, Home to School Transport
- Lewis, Steve [Steve.Lewis@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.Lewis@merthyr.gov.uk)
  
- Key Worker: \_\_\_\_\_
- Work Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- For further advice and guidance please contact Vicky Jefferson
- [Vicky.Jefferson@merthyr.gov.uk](mailto:Vicky.Jefferson@merthyr.gov.uk)

Appendix 1  
 Travel Training Plan: Stage 1  
**Accompany**

Name of Learner:		
Date of Birth:		
School/FEI:		
<b>Planned Route</b>		
Start:		Finish:
Travelling by:		
I will need to wear/take:		
<b>Step:</b>	<b>Responsibility:</b>	
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		





Agreement of Training Plan

(Must include the agreement of the Learner, Guardian/Carer and the Travel Trainer)

Name	Signature

Review of Travel Training Plan Stage 1: (Assessment form to be completed prior to review)

Review Date:

People Present:

Record of Review:

Next Steps:

## Travel Training Plan: Stage 2

### Shadow

Name of Learner:			
Date of Birth:			
School/FEI:			
Planned Route			
Start:	Finish:		
Travelling by:			
I will need to wear/take:			
Step:			Responsibility:
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Shadow Reduction:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 2:

**Agreement of Training Plan**  
**(Must include the agreement of the Learner, Guardian/Carer and the Travel Trainer)**

Name	Signature

Review of Travel Training Plan Stage 2: (Assessment form to be completed prior to review)

Review Date:

People Present:

Record of Review:

Next Steps:

## Travel Training Plan: Stage 3

### Meet and Greet

Name of Learner:	
Date of Birth:	
School/FEI:	

#### Planned Route

Start:

Finish:

Travelling by:

I will need to wear/take:

Step:	Responsibility:
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Agreement of Training Plan

(Must include the agreement of the Learner, Guardian/Carer and the Travel Trainer)

Name	Signature

Review of Travel Training Plan Stage 2: (Assessment form to be completed prior to review)

Review Date:

People Present:

Record of Review:

Next Steps:

Once a learner is able to travel independently, they should be awarded a certificate of accomplishment.