

Information - how to apply - new applicants for home to school travel support academic year 2024/2025

Is my child eligible for home to school travel assistance?

If your child can be described as 1-3 below then they may be eligible for travel assistance:

1. A primary school-age pupil attending their nearest suitable school, where that school is over 2 miles from the child's home address (where the distance is determined by the council and uses the shortest walking distance along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety)
2. A secondary school-age pupil attending their nearest suitable school, where that school is over 3 miles from the child's home address (where the distance is determined by the council and uses the shortest walking distance along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety)
3. A secondary school age pupil from a low income family attending:
 - Any one of their three nearest suitable schools, where the school is between 2 and 6 miles away from their home address
 - The nearest school preferred by parents on the grounds of religion or belief, where the school is between 2 and 15 miles away from their home address
 - A pupil from a low-income family (where the pupil is entitled to free school meals, or parents receive the maximum level of Working Tax Credit where a preference has been expressed to attend a school other than the nearest available school, and that school is over 2 miles away, and is one of the 3 closest schools.

Academic Year 2024/2025 Year 7-11

Home to school travel assistance will be approved for the following eligible pupils who will be of compulsory school age during the Academic Year 2024/2025:

1. A secondary age pupil attends the nearest suitable or catchment school and that school is over 3 miles from the home address (where the distance is determined by the Council) and uses the shortest walking distance along which a child, accompanied as necessary may walk with reasonable safety A secondary aged pupil is from a low income family and attends:
 - (a) any one of their three nearest suitable schools and the school is between two and six miles away from their home address
 - Or**
 - (b) the nearest school preferred by their parents on the grounds of religion or belief and the school is between two and fifteen miles away from their home address.

A low income household is currently defined as one where the pupil is eligible for Free School Meals or whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit. The implementation of Universal Credit within the Middlesbrough area may affect your eligibility for travel assistance.

The provision of travel assistance is subject to an annual assessment or review and the type of travel assistance provided may alter during the course of any eligibility period. Notification of any changes will be given to parents and carers the Term prior to any change being made.

Before applying ask yourself:

- 1. How will my child get to school if they are not eligible for travel support or assessment of any application is delayed or my application has been returned to me?**
 - a. It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure that their child attends school. Applications for travel assistance deadlines are set and you must ensure you submit your complete application on time. If not, then your application may not be processed for your child's school start date.
- 2. Is my child attending their nearest or catchment school which is over 3 miles from our home or 2 miles if applying due to low income?**
 - a. Check the catchment zone for your child's new school. You can find a map with school catchment zones on the Council's School Admissions Webpage www.middlesbrough.gov.uk
 - b. If there is no catchment zone then the eligible school is the nearest school.
- 3. Is my child attending their catchment school or one of their 3 nearest schools which is over 2 miles from home as we are applying due to low income?**
 - a. When making your application to School Admissions did you apply for the catchment school or 3 schools all of which were the closest schools to your home address?
 - i. If not, then your child is attending a school which is not one of the 3 closest. This is classed as **Parental Choice** and your child is not eligible for travel assistance.
 - b. Check for your child's new school. You can find a map with schools on the Council's School Admissions Webpage www.middlesbrough.gov.uk
- 4. Is my child attending a school based on sibling links or for any other reason other than it being the nearest or one of the 3 nearest if on low income?**
 - a. Check the catchment zone for your child's new school. You can find a map with school catchment zones on the Council's School Admissions Webpage: <https://middlesbrough.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/school-admission-zones/>
 - b. It is your parental choice to send your child to this school, however, your child **may not** be eligible for travel assistance if they attend this school. Sibling links to other schools is not an eligibility criteria for home to school transport.

How to Apply and Required Evidence

If you are applying as you are a Middlesbrough resident and your child's home is where you live apply for New Travel Assistance using the [EIA Application Form 2024-25](#). We aim to initially assess your application within 20 working days of receipt in full. We will inform you if your child is eligible for travel assistance and inform you of what travel assistance will be offered. Please note it may take several weeks to process your application in full and start any travel support. It is your responsibility as the parent/carer/guardian of the child to ensure that they attend for school.

If you are applying as you are a Middlesbrough resident, your child's home is where you live and your child is starting a new school **from September 2024** apply for New Travel Assistance and return the form with any required documentation or evidence to support eligibility no later than **Friday 31st May 2024**. Use the [EIA Application Form 2024-25](#). Applications received after this date may not be processed in time for the start of the new academic year. It is your parental choice to send your child to this school, however, your child **may not** be eligible for travel assistance if they attend this school. It is your responsibility as the parent/carer/guardian of the child to ensure that they attend for school.

Eligibility for refund of fares starts from the start of the new academic year or from the date the application is approved mid - term. No payments will be backdated beyond this date. Bus passes will be issued within 20 working days from the date of receipt of photo and behavioural agreement.

Note: All applications for Academic Year 2024/25 will be initially assessed to ensure any evidence has been submitted within 20 days of receipt. If your application does not include the required evidence it will be returned to you and not processed further.

New Applications - What do I need to send to you?

If you are applying as your child is in receipt of free school meals

- Complete and return the New Application Form [EIA Application Form 2024-25](#) plus
- Enclose a copy of your entitlement from your Child's Free School Meals provider

If you are applying as your family are in receipt of maximum working tax credit or meet the universal credit threshold

- Complete and return the New Application Form [EIA Application Form 2024-25](#) plus
- Enclose pages 1, 2, 3, & 4 of your entitlement to the maximum level of Working Tax Credit for the year **April 2023 to April 2024** or provide evidence of Universal Credit entitlement.

Assessment for Eligibility

Once your application is received and is deemed complete an assessment for eligibility will be carried out. We aim to complete the initial assessment and email you with notification of eligibility within 20 working days of your application being received and deemed complete. Parent/Carer/Guardian: Do not rely on home to school travel support or transport to get your child to school. This is your responsibility even if at the end of the application and assessment process your child is eligible – think... How will they get to school? Are they really eligible? What if they are not eligible? How will I get my child to school then?

What Travel Support will my child receive?

If your child is eligible for home to school travel assistance there is a range of travel support offers that may be made to you. These include refund of fares or fuel costs, bus pass or seat upon designated home to school transport, journey planner or travel training. When assessing for eligibility we will also look at what offer we can make to you for your child.

If your child is to receive refund of fares or fuel costs then we will send you a bank form which needs to be returned to us.

If your child is to receive a seat on designated home to school transport we will send you a behaviour and emergency care and contact form to be completed and returned. If your child requires a bus pass then we will also ask for a passport style and sized photo of your child. We will not accept any photo that does not reflect your child's current image for example a baby photo, any photo that has a filter, pouting, sun glasses or other type of alteration made to it. We aim to get your child's bus pass issued within 20 working days from their assessment and award of eligibility. The offer of travel assistance may change during your child's time at their school. We will get in touch with you as soon as we can if this may happen.

What happens if my child is not eligible?

It is your responsibility as the parent/carer/guardian of the child to ensure that they attend for school with or without travel assistance supplied by the council.

If your child is assessed as not eligible for travel assistance you have the right to appeal.

A copy of the Home to School Transport Policy, Home to School Transport Appeals Policy, Application Forms and FAQ's can be found in the downloads and more information section below.

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/schools-and-education/home-to-school-transport/>

Should you require any further information or are required to submit any documentation/photo please do not hesitate to contact Integrated Transport Unit Team via email: eia@middlesbrough.gov.uk.

You can also find further information about Home to School Transport and how to apply for a renewal application on Middlesbrough Council's website:

<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/schools-and-education/home-to-school-transport/>