



## **The Travel Assistance Spare Seat Offer**

**May 2022**

You may be able to purchase spare seats on "Education route" buses and coaches that we run across the borough, if there are any available. Education route buses and coaches only transport pupils who qualify for free travel assistance under our current home to school transport policy. They don't run to every school. This spare seat offer scheme doesn't include public or commercial bus routes.

### **Who can apply?**

If there are spare seats once all eligible pupils have been allocated, they will be offered in the following order:

- a) statutory school-aged pupils
- b) Nursery aged children under 5 where there is already a Passenger Assistant on the vehicle
- c) students aged 16-19.

If we receive more applications than spare seats available, we'll allocate seats based on the following criteria:

- a) Children Looked After, children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabled pupils who don't have a statutory entitlement to transport but may benefit from a spare seat as a result of their SEN or disability. In either case, this is on the basis of a particular medical or social need to travel to this school.
- b) Children of low income families, but are above the level for free transport. See the home to school travel assistance policy for more details about our definition of low income.
- c) Siblings of those entitled to free transport.
- d) Distance from school, giving priority to those living furthest away.

We can't guarantee seat availability each term, and you won't have a continued right to purchase spare seats. Availability depends on the number of children who have a statutory entitlement to travel assistance and that might change throughout the year. When withdrawing a spare seat, the process of 'last on, first off' will be followed

Over time it may be that we will have a reduced number of eligible children for a particular route and may need to reduce the size of the bus. We will consider if the

seats taken by spare seat travellers support the route financially to remain and if not, we will notify you at least a term before the bus size is reduced and you may lose your seat.

### **How to apply?**

Email us at [transport@telford.gov.uk](mailto:transport@telford.gov.uk) to enquire about the spare seats scheme.

We will need to obtain further details and carry out a risk assessment with you, the parent /carer, and the child who will be using the spare seat before progressing the request.

After we have processed the applications for eligible passengers, which we aim to do by the last week in September, we will look to process spare seat applications in date order.

If we have a seat available, we will call you to take payment over the phone at this point. This is likely to be at the beginning of October, so please do make sure you have alternative travel arrangements in place for September.

### **Costs**

You can pay for a spare seat annually or termly. Costs are based on the average cost for a bus/coach seat and are reviewed annually.

#### **Cost for Academic Year 2019/2020**

**Full Year: £600**

**Termly: £200**

We also offer a 50% sibling discount.

Once a spare seat has been agreed, we'll send you a letter or email confirming the seat and asking you to pay. You are able to pay by **credit or debit card** over the phone with our Transport team by calling **01952 384545**

Tickets will be issued on a termly basis but can be withdrawn if:

- a) payment has not been received for the following term
- b) an eligible pupil joins that route and a seat is required. In these circumstances, seats will be withdrawn in reverse criteria order and a minimum of 2 weeks' notice will be given.

### **Appeals**

Parent/carers/ have no right of appeal as regards any seat allocated or withdrawn under this offer.