

TO KEEP (For your reference)

GO4it Independent Travel Training Unit (ITTU)

TP7pca

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) – ADULT/PARENT/CARER

1. What is independent travel training?

Independent travel training, or travel training, is the process of teaching you/your child/service user how to independently travel alone on a specific route (usually from home to day opportunity/work experience/place of work and the return journey) in a safe, confident and responsible way.

2. How will it benefit you/your child/service user?

Travel training will enable you/your child/service user to make a journey as a pedestrian or using public transport completely unsupported, which will enable them to commute to/from home and their centre/day opportunity/work experience/place of work safely and independently. Travel training can also help you/your child/service user to progress in terms of confidence and personal development.

3. How much does it cost? Who is travel training for?

Travel training is currently FREE of charge if you/your child/service user is eligible for SMBC day opportunities, the Life Skills Service or in receipt of local authority provided transport.

4. How long does travel training take?

This will be different from one person to the next. There is no set time limit, training will continue until you/your child/service user feel ready to travel independently and the travel trainer is satisfied the trainee is able to travel safely. This could take a number of weeks, or continue for a number of months, dependent upon the individual.

5. Who will pay for the travel fare?

Trainees under 16 or in compulsory education the ITTU will pay the travel fare. This will be in the form of a day-saver scratch card; the ITTU will not give money to any trainee. Once a trainee has successfully completed their travel training they will be considered for a travel pass at the discretion of the local authority. You will receive a letter from the SEN Service confirming if your child is eligible for a travel pass. The letter will provide details of how you can apply for their pass online using your unique code. Passes will now be sent direct to your home address each term.

Adults over 18 not in compulsory education you/your child/service user will be responsible for paying their own travel fare.

You/your child/service user may be eligible to apply for a disabled person's concessionary travel pass/card from Transport for West Midlands.

6. How many days a week is travel training?

This will be different from one person to the next and ranges between 1 and 5 days a week. Depending on the journey you/your child/service user wants to learn and how often you/your child/service user attend your/their day opportunity/work experience/place of work. If the initial assessment deems it would be beneficial for intensive training and the individual's timetable allows, travel training could take place 5 days a week. Other circumstances will mean travel training will occur once or twice a week and increase as the training progresses.

7. Does travel training take place both morning and afternoon?

Travel training is tailored to your/your child/service users timetable, it is very flexible. It can be both the journey there and the journey home at whatever time is required.

8. Who cancels transport? Who cancels transport on the days of travel training?

When travel training starts, any previous transport arrangements will cease. If you/your child/service user currently have transport provided by SMBC's in-house fleet or TAS the ITTU will cancel transport for the day(s) that you/your child/service user is travel training. If any other method of transport is currently used you/your child/service user should cancel this accordingly.

9. Do you travel train in bad weather?

The travel training programme enables you/your child/service user to possess and utilise the necessary skills for making journeys as a pedestrian or on public transport independently whatever the weather! This includes learning how to travel in rain, snow and sunshine, including what to do if a service is delayed, diverted or cancelled. In the case of severe weather warnings and closures travel training will be rescheduled.

10. Who delivers the training? Do your travel trainers have experience of working with people with disabilities, learning difficulties and social emotional and mental health? Do they have training in sensory awareness/Autism/Epilepsy?

Training is delivered by a team of qualified specialist travel trainers who have experience of working one-to-one with people who have a variety of physical and/or learning disabilities, social emotional and mental health including Autism and Epilepsy.

11. Will I/my child/service user always have the same travel trainer?

Not necessarily. Travel training is a programme intended to help prepare you/your child/service user for travelling independently and will positively encourage and provide opportunities to experience change. A number of travel trainers may work with you/your child/service user which helps provide more widespread feedback on your/your child's/service users progress and helps you/your child/service user learn how to manage appropriate interaction with new people.

12. Will the travel trainer be with me/my child/service user all of the time?

The travel training program is a six step fade out support program. You/your child/service user will be accompanied by a travel trainer to start with, and as you/your child/service user progresses the trainer will meet you/your child/service user at various points in the route (starting with being a few steps away from the house, then meeting 'up the road', then at the bus stop etc), until you/your child/service user is travelling independently. At this point you/your child/service user will be shadowed and independent observations conducted to assess your/your child's/service users skills and knowledge in practice as an independent traveller.

13. Can you teach me/my child/service user other routes/journeys?

If you/your child/service user is currently receiving transport for other journeys or accessing SMBC day opportunities, the Life Skills Service on other days of the week then we may be able to work with you/them on these routes also.

14. What do I/does my child/service user need for travel training?

You/your child/service user will need a mobile phone (fully charged and with credit on it), travel fare/ticket/card or concessionary travel pass/card, a suitably sized bag which is safe and easy to carry (e.g. a rucksack), some emergency money, appropriate footwear, emergency contact details for your centre/day opportunity/work experience/place of work and your/their travel trainer/the ITTU, medication (if applicable), I.D or emergency card (if applicable), and weather appropriate clothing and items (e.g. coat, gloves, umbrella).

15. Do I/my child/service user have to have a mobile phone?

Yes, it is a requirement of undertaking independent travel training. Mobile phones are crucial in case of emergency. A mobile phone is also essential for you/your child/service user when travel training so you/they can contact their travel trainer and keep in touch when they are travelling. If

you/your child/service user lacks experience, skills or confidence in using a mobile phone this will be included in your/their travel training programme.

16. What method of transport can you help me/my child/service user to use?

Travel training can include travelling by bus, train, metro or pedestrian routes.

17. How do you decide which route to use?

Prior to starting training, the ITTU will choose a suitable route. This is the safest route (i.e. avoiding crossings at main roads without pedestrian crossings, involving the minimal amount of bus changes), but a number of routes will be risk assessed and the safest route will be the one designated to the training. This will be agreed prior to training starting. If you have a preferred route to travel, please let the ITTU know in advance so we can plan accordingly.

18. Can my parent/carer do anything to help me at home?

Yes, if you choose for us to share information with them. You can discuss relevant information with your parent/carer prior to training beginning (e.g. stranger danger) and could make some local journeys together to help prepare you/them for being out and about in the community. This could be walking to the post box to post a letter or visiting your local bus station so you know what to expect. You could have more responsibility at home to help prepare you/them for independent travel. Things like packing your own bag yourself the night before training, charging your mobile the night before training and fastening your own coat before you leave the house can help you start becoming more independent. There are plenty of tips for parents/carers in the 'travel training tips for parents' booklet, if you would like a copy for your parent/carer or any further advice please contact the ITTU on travel_training@sandwell.gov.uk.

19. What support will my parent/carer receive?

As you will be the one undertaking the training (it is your training!) it will be your decision what information, if any, will be shared with your parent/carer. If you wish your parent/carer will receive a 'travel training tips for parents' booklet and some other information forms about the travel training process prior to training starting. Again, if you wish, at the home visit(s) and initial assessment your parent/carer will have the opportunity to speak with a member of ITTU staff who can answer any questions they may have. Alternatively, they can contact the ITTU via travel_training@sandwell.gov.uk.

20. How will I/my parent/carer find out how I am progressing with my travel training?

You will receive daily feedback from your/their trainer. If you are happy for us to share this information with your parent/carer then the travel trainer can be in contact with them also. There will also be feedback to the centre/day opportunity/work experience/place of work if you wish. The ITTU will also provide opportunities for regular reviews (this can be over the phone or at a meeting) with you/your child/service user to keep everyone informed of your progress, but if there is anything you want to discuss before a review you can contact the ITTU by phone, text or email, or contact the travel trainer you/they are working with directly (you/they will be given their direct mobile number when travel training commences.)

21. What happens if I'm/my child/service user is late due to problems with public transport?

If a travel service is diverted, delayed or cancelled, the ITTU will have all contact details for the centre/day opportunity/work experience/place of work and will be able to support you/your child/service user to let their centre/day opportunity/work experience/place of work know (using their own mobile) that you/your child/service user will be late (which is what you/they will have to do when travelling independently if there are problems with public transport).

22. 'What happens if..?'

Part of the travel training programme includes training in a number of 'what if...?' scenarios. This includes how to cope with: crowds, noise, parked cars, a missed bus, having a panic attack/seizure, stranger danger, and asking for help. If there are any 'what if...?' situations you

would like the ITTU to particularly focus on with you/your child, please let us know and we will incorporate this into the training.

23. What is a home visit for?

The ITTU arranges a meeting with you (and your parent/carer if you wish) to explain the travel training process, gather information and go through the referral form received. This is an informal 'getting to know you' meeting and you can decide where it takes place (it doesn't have to be at your home) and who can attend.

24. What is an initial assessment?

An initial assessment is when the ITTU arranges an appointment to take you/your child/service user out at the road side to conduct an assessment of your/their road safety skills and pedestrian and personal safety skills. This is NOT a pass/fail assessment and is also nothing at all to worry about. This gives the travel trainers an idea of what skills you/your child/service user has currently and in which areas improvements could be made. All findings will be shared with you and your parent/carer if you wish.

25. When do you know if I am/my child/service user is ready to become an independent traveller?

As you/your child/service user progresses through the six steps of the travel training programme, the ITTU will conduct various assessments and observations. The travel trainer working with you/your child/service user on any given day will complete a number of detailed daily recording forms to assess specific skills and knowledge, and if necessary will arrange purposeful situations to further test you/your child's/service users abilities and competence. When you/your child/service user is competent and confidently able to travel your/their route responsibly, implementing necessary safety measures with no input from the travel trainer, you/your child/service user is ready to become independent and the ITTU will arrange shadowing observations as a final measure to assess and evidence independence. You will be kept informed at all stages. A review will take place and you/your child/service user will be formally signed off the travel training programme.

26. What happens when I/my child/service user has completed travel training?

When you/your child/service user has completed travel training you/they will be able to make their specific journey independently, so will no longer need or receive local authority provided transport or travel training involvement. The ITTU will inform Adult Services/the Life Skills Service where appropriate. Any previous transport arrangements will cease.

27. How do I apply for a SMBC funded Travel Pass for my child under 16 or in compulsory education and when can they use it?

You will receive a letter from the SEN Service confirming if your child is eligible for a travel pass. The letter will provide details of how you can apply for their pass online using your unique code. Passes will now be sent direct to your home address each term. The Term plus pass can be used to travel to and from your place of education but also during evenings and weekends on National Express West Midlands Travel buses.

Please note: you will need to upload a passport style photograph as this will be shown on the Swift card.

28. Disabled person's concessionary travel pass

You/your child/service user may be eligible for a Disabled person's concessionary travel pass, they can apply via www.tfwm.org.uk

If your child is aged 16-18 years, they are in full time education and they are eligible for a disabled person's concessionary travel pass, they will be able to use this pass BEFORE 9.30am.

If you/your child/service user is over 18 years of age they will have to pay £1 for a single ticket on the bus at the time of travel or get a pre-9.30am add on ticket.

29. What is the 16-18 Photocard? Do I/does my child need one?

Some trainees aged 16-18 at school/college/centre/work may require a '16-18 photocard' for use when travel training. This will be discussed with you. For further information and to apply visit networkwm.com/16-18

30. How do I find out more? How do I contact the GO4it independent travel training unit?

Please feel free to contact the ITTU with any questions or concerns you may have via travel_training@sandwell.gov.uk

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200284/roads_travel_and_parking/3145/independent_travel_training

<https://www.facebook.com/SandwellITTU>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4vGhGcEHMwXJhVcbXZ3-Mg/about>