

APPENDIX 2

Parent / Carer Information Booklet

Background

An Independent Travel Training Project for Sheffield was introduced in January 2007, funded by the Sheffield Post 16 Transport Partnership Group. The aim was to develop a sustainable 'Travel Training Model' that fully supports people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to learn how to travel safely and independently, where appropriate.

Objectives of the Project

- To introduce and develop independent travel training to students and young adults.
- Identify current students and young adults to take part in developing their skills to travel safely to their learning environment.
- Increase the independence of the student or young adult and support them, with specialist training, to be able to use their own initiative.
- To work alongside schools, colleges, South Yorkshire Police, road safety team, school travel plan advisors and other partners, to give the most appropriate training for students and young adults for independent travel. Give young people the chance to experience other projects, which will help to give them new skills and confidence.

Assist young people in developing new skills, enabling them to increase opportunities in life.

Benefits of Independent Travel Training

- There will be an increase in confidence and self-belief for the students /young adults.
- An increase in social interaction.
- Increase in educational benefits such as attending after school clubs and college placements.
- Young people may eventually become trainers themselves, helping others.
- Students / young adults will receive reward and recognition.

Other Agencies Involved

As well as the local authority, schools and colleges, there are a number of other agencies that will help these young people become successful travellers:

- **Police Community Safety Officers** – these can provide advice on personal safety and security, using public transport safely and walking and cycling in safety.
- **Local Transport Officers** – these can give support and advice at bus stations when buying tickets or looking for timetables.
- **Public Transport Operators** – drivers and conductors can help with boarding and alighting the bus/tram, pay for tickets and find suitable places for individuals to sit. Frontline staff will be informed of the project and will be there to give help, reassurance and give guidance.
- **Sheffield City Council Road Safety Department** – these can work with students and young adults on road safety issues, as well as giving training on cycling safely and correctly.

- **School Travel Plan Advisors** – these can help students and young adults find the safest walking route to and from their learning destination.

Trainers

At present all trainers are either school or college members of staff, who have attended a two day training course run by Bradford College. Each trainer will have an understanding on how different disabilities affect a person's ability to travel on their own. They will understand how different environments affect a person's ability to travel independently and safely. They will deliver strategies on how to teach travel skills and other related skills that tackle the specific needs of individuals. Most importantly trainers have lots of patience, good communications skills, common sense and enthusiasm. Travel trainers will work in partnership with parents/carers; school, colleges and other professionals to enable the transition from organised transport to independent traveller become a positive experience.

Parents & Carers

Before any individual will start independent travel training a discussion will take place with parents/carers. The travel trainer will explain fully the process and aims of the training to both the parent/carer and the student/young adult. Before each stage of travel training begins the parent/carer will be asked to sign the relevant document, to ensure that they are happy for the training to begin

Parents/carers should be aware and supportive of the aims of the project, and will be asked to support the on-going training of the student or young adult. Parents/carers will be given regular feedback by the travel trainer.

Getting Started

The main part of travel training will be accompanied travel on the actual route that is to be used, providing detailed step-by-step instruction, on a one to one basis. All students/young adults will go through the following steps:

- Preparing for the journey, making sure there is enough time, wearing suitable clothes and shoes, having the correct fare or pass.
- Leaving home safely.
- Walking to the bus stop or other transport stop or station, including crossing roads.
- Waiting safely at the stop or station and queuing properly.
- Identifying the correct bus, or tram and knowing how to signal to the bus/tram driver to stop.
- Getting on the bus or tram correctly.
- Having the right money ready and asking for the fare, or showing the pass.
- Finding the most appropriate seat, or knowing where to stand if all the seats are taken.
- Sitting in a safe position and behaving appropriately.
- Recognising when to get off.
- Alerting the bus/tram driver by using the bell.
- Getting off safely.
- Walking from the bus/tram safely.
- Dealing with problems such as the transport running late, staying on the bus/tram too long and missing the stop or station, losing money or being bullied.

As repetition is essential to learning and for building confidence, all journeys will be repeated until a student/young adult is capable of making the journey to and from school/college independently. If there are any changes in circumstances e.g. change of address, additional training will be provided to enable the student or young adult to remain an independent traveller.

Shadowed Journeys

When the trainee is comfortable with travelling safely along a chosen route, making their own decision but in the company of the trainer, the trainer will then allow the student/young adult to make the same journey alone, but closely shadowed by the trainer. Shadowing will be discreet but the student/young adult will be aware that this is happening.

Shadowing will only be done when the trainer is satisfied that the student/young adult is competent and feels confident in travelling alone. Discussions will be held with the student/young adult and their parents/carers before shadowing begins. All progress will be documented and records kept of a trainee's progress, highlighting the work that has been done and the skills achieved. Shadowed journeys may involve several stages including walking at a distance behind, following in a car and meeting the trainee from the bus or tram at the end of a journey or at a destination point.

Journeys Alone

This is the final stage of the training, as the trainee will make the journey on their own. Once again discussions will be held with the trainee, and their parents / carers before the next stage.

The trainee will be shadowed, but will not be aware that this is happening. While this shadowing is taking place the trainee will be monitored on the skills they have learnt and whether they are being used. Shadowing also allows the trainer to step in if the trainee is in any danger or is having problems.

Reviewing

A trainee's progress will be reviewed constantly, and in some cases the trainee may have to repeat some stages of the training.

Throughout the training, parents and carers will be involved and will sign off every stage of a trainee's progress before they move on to the next step. All training will be documented, as this helps build confidence for everyone involved and gives evidence of what the trainee has achieved.

Success

For any trainee finishing a travel training programme and starting independent travel will, for some people represent a remarkable achievement and a tremendous milestone in a person's life.

If at any stage of the training you have concerns or would like a progress update please feel free to contact either your Childs ITT trainer, School/college or Jill Siddall (SCC) 0114 2053542