



COUNCIL OF THE ISLES OF SCILLY

HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL ALLOWANCE GUIDE

THE DUTY

This duty applies to “home to school” travel arrangements at the start of the day, and “school to home” travel arrangements at the end of the day. It does not relate to travel between educational institutions during the school day.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. However, section 444 of the Act outlines the situations in which a parent may have a defense in law against a prosecution by a local authority for their child’s non-attendance at school. Section 444 (3B) provides a parent with a defense if he or she proves that:

- the qualifying school at which the child is a registered pupil is not within ‘statutory walking distance’,
- no suitable arrangements have been made by the local authority for boarding accommodation at or near the school,
- no suitable arrangements have been made by the local authority for enabling the child to become a registered pupil at a qualifying school nearer to his/ her address,
- the local authority has a duty to make travel arrangements in relation to the child under section 508B and has failed to discharge that duty.

HOW DO I CHECK IF MY CHILD IS ELIGIBLE FOR HOME TO SCHOOL TRAVEL ALLOWANCE?

If you live beyond the statutory walking distance from the Five Islands School by the shortest walking route, your child will be entitled to home to school travel allowance. You can check the distance of your home from the relevant Five Islands School site by telephoning 01720 423 680 or by emailing childrensservices@scilly.gov.uk.

STATUTORY WALKING DISTANCE

The statutory walking distance is two miles for children under eight and three miles for children aged over eight. The statutory walking distance is measured by the shortest route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety. As such, the route may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways, as well as recognised roads.

ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS?

Travel costs may be awarded to pupils where there are exceptional circumstances such as medical or social considerations that may require special attention.

Travel costs may be awarded without charge to children who live within the statutory walking distance if a route is considered to be exceptionally hazardous or on medical grounds, including temporary medical grounds such as a broken leg.

HOW ARE THE DISTANCES MEASURED?

Walking distances are measured by the safest, shortest available walking route. This may include recognized footpaths and bridleways. The measurement is made between the nearest entrance to your house (for example: the front gate) and the nearest entrance to the school grounds. Private driveways to homes and within schools are not included in the measurement. Distances are measured using an electronic geographical information system (GIS).

AM I AUTOMATICALLY ENTITLED TO FREE TRANSPORT IF I AM ON A LOW INCOME?

If you live more than two miles away from your primary school or between two and six miles away from your secondary school and you are entitled to free school meals or your family receives the **maximum** level of working tax credit then you will be entitled to the home to school travel allowance.

Proof that you are receiving the maximum level of working families tax credit will need to be produced, you should also be aware that this would be an annually reviewed entitlement.

WHAT IF MY CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE?

This entitlement has to be re-applied for each year so you should not assume that you will continue to have support i.e. if your child is no longer entitled to free school meals or you are no longer entitled to the maximum level of working families tax credit you would need to let the authority know as it may affect your entitlement to home to school travel allowance.

SO, WHAT DO I DO NOW?

If you believe that you live more than two miles away from the school site for children under eight and three miles for children aged over eight via the shortest walking distance then you should fill in a home to school travel allowance application form and submit it to the home to Children's Services.

If you are eligible for home to school travel allowance you will receive a letter informing you of your entitlement, you will then receive a payment for the value of your allowance each term. As there is no Council registered taxi on the Isles of Scilly there is not an option to provide transport and so a travel mileage allowance will be paid to the parent who is driving their eligible child to school. Mileage allowance for this authority is currently 40p per mile.

DO I HAVE TO APPLY FOR SCHOOL TRANSPORT FOR MY CHILD?

Yes, a transport application form must be completed for each child requiring home to school travel allowance.

IS TRANSPORT PROVIDED FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?

Home to school travel allowance is not an automatic entitlement for children who are attending the Five Islands School. The normal entitlement criteria above apply.

ESCORTS

Escorts may be provided for children who have severe medical or social needs. The need for an escort will be periodically reviewed, any escort being used will have the relevant safeguarding checks in place.

MEDICAL TRANSPORT

A transport allowance may be provided without charge to children within the statutory walking distance on medical grounds. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian/ carer of the child to provide written evidence from a GP or hospital of the need for medical transport. There should be an indication of the length of time the medical transport is likely to be required. The travel allowance will be reviewed regularly.

ARE POST 16 STUDENTS ELIGIBLE FOR TRAVEL TO AND FROM COLLEGE ON THE MAINLAND?

Please see the Moving On website for more information or contact Children's Services.

TRANSPORT PROVISION

Home to school travel allowance on the Isles of Scilly will be by way of a payment to the parent or guardian/ carer of the eligible child at 40p per mile made by the Council of the Isles of Scilly. Parents can then use this money to pay for petrol or to use a privately hired vehicle, as there are not any Council registered taxi's on the Isles of Scilly the Council can not hire vehicles for eligible children to use.

COMPLAINTS

If you are not satisfied with any aspect of the support with home to school transport as detailed in this policy by the Council of the Isles of Scilly or a decision made with regard to the level or type of support being offered then please write to;

Director of Children's Services
Council of the Isles of Scilly
Town Hall
St Mary's
Isles of Scilly