



Independent Travel Training

Carshalton College Travel Training



Promoting Independence
2011 - 2012

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This is an example of the letter you will receive when your Son/Daughter is referred for Independent Travel Training.

Date.....

Dear Parent/Carer

Your Son/Daughter has been put forward for Independent Travel Training.

Please read through the following information, this will explain how the Independent Travel Training process works and what is involved.

Independent Travel Training is a free service offered by Carshalton College. Everything is organised and put into practice by the Travel Training Coordinator.

Before the training commences the Travel Training Coordinator will contact you to arrange a start date and an agreed route.

If you have any concerns or queries, please do not hesitate to contact the relevant member of staff.

If you agree to your Son/Daughter accessing the travel training programme please complete and detach the details below and return to me at the college. It would be very useful if you could also provide any information that you feel is relevant to the travel training.

A member of staff will contact you regarding arrangements.

Thank you

Bonnie Chandler

Work Experience Officer

Ext 4436

[Type text]



I give consent for (student name) _____ to undertake travel training.

Name of parent/ carer _____

Signature _____

Date _____

The Process - What we do

Carshalton College Skills for Work and Life Department promotes independent travel training to learners with learning difficulties/disabilities. The training is free of charge for parents/carers, conducted on a one to one basis and follows a unique learning programme specifically designed to meet the individual requirements of each learner.

The Skills for Work and Life Department have the following objective in regard to Travel Training:

“We believe that safe, responsible, independent travel helps reduce the impact of exclusion on disadvantaged groups and supports their integration into education, employment and society in general.”

We attempt to follow this objective at all times, and keep to the dual principles of social inclusion and equal opportunities in all the work we do.

Travel training is the process by which a person learns to travel a specific route, between two different places, on their own and in a safe and responsible way.

When the person undertaking travel training has a learning disability there are likely to be many barriers to consider and consequently the whole process can be far more complex.

The training programme therefore, has to be thoroughly planned and well supported, and must take into account all the variables (or the “what ifs” as we call them) that might occur during the training period. Assessing risks and making sure that all travel training is safe is **the** most important part of all the work we do.

So how does the process of travel training work? Firstly, we need to identify our prospective learner. This person can be referred to the Travel Training Coordinator by College staff,

[Type text]

similar professional, a parent or carer, or by the individual themselves. Initially, the learner is invited to attend a meeting to outline the process. This would include: a brief summary of their skills, experience and the specific journey they would like to learn.

Once the learner has been identified we can then begin to form our action plan. Care is taken at this stage, to communicate with everyone involved, especially families and carers to ensure everyone understands what is happening and is committed to the success of the travel training.

The Travel Training Coordinator will carry out an assessment of the proposed journey looking at such things as safe routes, which bus, tram or train to catch, the time of the day when the travel is required and different ways of paying fares. Wherever possible, training will take place around the learner's timetable (real time).

Following this the Travel Training Coordinator will then allocate the learner their own personal Travel Trainer, taking into account staff availability. Also at this stage, and as a part of routine safety procedures, the learner will be issued with their own unique, personal emergency card. The learner is instructed in its use and told how to show it to certain designated people should they ever find themselves in difficulties. It is continually emphasised to learners and families alike that **all travel training is flexible** so throughout the entire training process the various components are monitored and reviewed regularly and can be modified if necessary. The whole point of travel training is for the individual to succeed and experience has shown that being fully transparent and working together with everyone involved is the key to success.

The Health and Safety of learners coupled with an effective assessment of potential risks involved, forms the foundation of what travel training is all about. Because all travel training is carried out on a one-to-one basis the Travel Training Coordinator is able to devise and operate a risk assessment process that identifies a wide range of factors and matches ideally the individual with the route they intend to travel.

The process the Travel Training Coordinator uses for its risk assessment is based on a checklist of prompts:

- 1 – We meet the individual and look at factors such as motivation, vulnerability, communication skills, attention span, money skills, looking after personal property and any physical limitations there might be.
- 2 – We assess the route and look at factors such as complexity of route, distance travelled, frequency of transport, accessibility, contact with others, availability of road crossings and any significant landmarks there might be.

When this process is complete we are then able to assess the risks there might be to **that individual** when travelling **that particular route**.

It is important to note that the Travel Training Coordinator considers this risk assessment process never to be fully complete: a learner is always developing and the environment has always the potential to change. Consequently we recognise the risk factors can be either increasing or decreasing in severity as the training progresses. We always take this into account and adjust our training accordingly.

The learner will undertake their journey from college to home, for one week with support. This often means that the learner will continue with their regular form of transport for the journey into college. We have found from experience that this type of process helps the learner to gradually and over a period of time, become used to what can be a worrying and anxious time. We call this our assessment period and it allows the whole training programme to be delivered in the most meaningful and effective way. The next stage involves the learner undertaking their journey both to and from college with support. The designated Travel Trainer will complete daily assessment sheets, they will also take pictures of public transport the learner uses and landmarks that the learner can recognise on the journey. These are then



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put onto a digital key ring which the learner will be given. Subject to the success of this learning process the learner can then be judged as being able to travel **this particular route** safely, responsibly and on their own.

When training is complete (at each learner's pace) the Travel Training Coordinator will contact parents/carers to discuss any final concerns they may have and to ensure that they are satisfied, next the individual's tutor and community transport will be contacted and necessary arrangements will be made.

It is important to note that although that we only report on travel training issues and the particular route that the learner has learnt. We do not comment on matters outside our remit and **we never state that a learner is now an independent traveller.**

Pre-requisite skills

Before embarking upon a travel training programme a trainee needs to demonstrate certain abilities i.e.

Trainee needs: -

- ⓐ To have an awareness of dangers when out and about and the ability to respond appropriately to them
- ⓐ To be able to identify basic colours and numbers
- ⓐ To be aware of their own personal space
- ⓐ To be physically able to negotiate stepping on and off kerbs/buses
- ⓐ To be able to communicate needs to bus driver/train conductor
- ⓐ To be able to make decisions and act upon them
- ⓐ To be able to ask for help
- ⓐ To be able to respond appropriately to verbal directions
- ⓐ To understand the need for appropriate social behaviour
- ⓐ To have a sense of personal safety, security of belongings etc
- ⓐ To be motivated
- ⓐ To follow step by step instructions including pictorial

Travel Training staff need to be made aware of any physical problems i.e. poor eyesight, tunnel vision, poor hearing, phobias (fear of animals, birds etc), allergies (i.e. plasters), epilepsy, communication and/or behavioural problems. To meet this, trainers will be given access to the learner's medical forms.

Initial assessment

The initial assessment is undertaken and involves: -

- ⓐ Talking with person who has referred the individual
- ⓐ Completing Travel Training questionnaire (to evaluate the individuals present skills level)
- ⓐ Meeting and talking with the individual learner at college
- ⓐ Meeting and talking with learners parents/carers (if it is felt appropriate)
- ⓐ Judging whether individual has pre-requisite skills
- ⓐ Observing individual's road safety skills during a community based lesson (The road safety programme)
- ⓐ Looking at feasibility of suggested journey