



Travel Training Programme at Woolston College

How can Travel Training help your young person at Woolston College?

At Woolston College, we believe that Independent Travel Training is a vital life skill that supports long-term independence and confidence.

This training empowers your young person to make informed choices throughout their life journey. While there's no perfect time to start, beginning early offers the best foundation for building independence.

Independent Travel Training is more than just a way to get to college—it's an investment in the future. It helps to:

- Build confidence and self-esteem
- Increase independence
- Expand social opportunities and connections
- Broaden future horizons and life chances

By supporting Travel Training at Woolston College, we're helping young people gain the skills they need to lead fuller, more independent lives.

The Benefits of Travel Training

Travel Training helps to build lifelong skills that bring greater independence and confidence to your young person.

- It reduces the need for daily care and support, giving your young person more freedom and giving you greater peace of mind.
- It opens up more opportunities for education, employment, and leisure activities, helping them live a more active and fulfilling life.
- It provides reassurance that your young person has learned essential life skills, including road safety and personal safety.
- It allows them to gain independence while giving you confidence to go about your day, knowing they are managing theirs.
- Most importantly, it helps them to feel included, in control, and able to make their own choices about their future.

Travel Training – What to Look For

Travel training helps young people build the skills they need to travel safely and independently. Here's what to consider when supporting them through this learning process:



1. Preparation

While parents often take the lead, encouraging the young person to take responsibility builds independence and self-esteem.

Key skills include:

- Bringing everything they need for the journey (e.g. bus pass, money).
- Checking the weather and dressing appropriately.
- Knowing the time—both reading the current time and understanding how long things take.
- Deciding when to leave to arrive on time.

2. Route Planning

- Do they know the route to the bus stop and from the stop at the other end?
- Can they identify the correct bus number or train?
- Are they aware of the fare and how to pay it?
- Do they know a safe walking route to and from stops or stations?
- Have they practised the journey at the actual time of day they'll be travelling?

3. Road Safety

- Can they choose a safe place to cross the road?
- Are they using the Green Cross Code: Stop, Look, Listen, and Think?
- Do they understand different types of crossings (e.g. zebra, pelican, puffin) and how to use them?

4. Recognising the Right Stop or Station

- Can they identify their bus stop, train platform, or roadside stop?
- Do they know where to wait and how to spot the correct vehicle?
- Can they read timetables or information boards?
- Do they understand money value, count out fares, and check their change?
- Are they confident enough to ask for help if needed?

5. Boarding the Transport

- Can they manage queues or crowded spaces calmly?
- Do they know to let others off first?
- Are they prepared with their fare or travel pass?
- Can they speak to the driver independently?
- Do they know where to sit safely—e.g. downstairs and towards the front of the bus?



6. During the Journey

- How do they stay occupied during the journey?
- Do they stay alert or tend to fall asleep?
- Are they able to notice key landmarks along the way?
- Are they easily distracted or do they stay focused?

7. Getting Off

- Can they recognise the right point to get off (e.g. a landmark or stop name)?
- Do they know how to press the stop button or signal to get off in time?
- Do they remember to take all of their belongings with them?

What does Travel Training include?

Skills & knowledge	✓ ? ? or NA	Comments
Is aware of basic dangers outdoors		
Responds appropriately to basic dangers		
Good position on pavement		
Negotiates obstacles e.g. lampposts		
Recognises driveways		
Crosses quiet roads safely		
Uses designated/controlled crossings safely (e.g. School crossing, Zebra, Pelican, Puffin, Toucan and Pegasus).		
Recognises basic numbers		
Recognises basic colours		
Recognises basic road markings		
Recognises basic road signs		
Responds correctly to verbal instructions		
Remembers short instructions		
Asks for information when unsure		
Safely steps up/down kerbs		
Adopts appropriate social behaviour		
Makes appropriate and safe decisions e.g. road crossings		
Can recognise different money values, can pay for purchases/tickets independently.		
Keeps time independently		
Remains focused throughout		
Adapts to changes		
Solves everyday problems		



Travels unescorted		
Additional comments:		

Travel Training Tips: Do's and Don'ts

✓ Do:

- **Use permanent landmarks** (like buildings or shops) to help your young person learn the route.
- **Practice the route repeatedly** together—repetition builds confidence and reinforces learning.
- **Stick to the same route** each time and, where possible, practice at the actual time of day they'll be travelling.
- **Keep consistent travel rules**, even when travelling as a family. This consistency helps create a reliable routine.
- **Talk about personal safety** and explore “what if” scenarios to help build coping strategies for unexpected situations.
- **Be positive and take small steps**—gradually build up the journey if needed.
- **Praise progress** at every stage. Encouragement boosts confidence and motivation.
- **Stay calm and confident.** Your attitude can strongly influence how your young person feels.

✗ Don't:

- **Don't rely on seasonal landmarks** (e.g. trees that change or holiday decorations), as they may not always be there.
- **Don't change the route frequently**—it can cause confusion and reduce confidence.
- **Don't share negative stories about public transport.** Focus on the positives and possibilities.
- **Don't rush the process.** Allow your young person time to adjust and grow at their own pace.
- **Don't show worry or anxiety**—your calm and reassurance will help them feel more secure.



Personal safety tips for independent travel

Helping your young person understand and manage personal safety is a vital part of becoming an independent traveller. Here are some key points to consider:

General Safety:

- Teach them not to share personal information, such as their name, address, or school, with strangers.
- Encourage them to sit downstairs on the bus, ideally in an aisle seat close to the driver—but not in disabled seating.
- Discuss “stranger danger” and what to do if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- If your young person has additional needs, make sure they carry an information card that explains who they are and how to help them.

Phone Safety:

- Ensure they carry a mobile phone with important contact numbers saved (family, friends, emergency contacts).
- Make sure they know how to use their phone confidently, including how to make a call or send a message in an emergency.
- Consider setting up parental controls or restrictions with your phone provider to limit who they can contact or access online.

Emergency Money:

- Give your young person a small amount of spare cash in case they lose their wallet or need to take an alternative route home.

Medical Needs While Travelling

If your young person has a medical condition, make sure they are prepared for any situation while away from home.

Medication and Equipment:

- Always ensure they carry any necessary medication or medical equipment, such as an inhaler or insulin kit.
- Pack items in a clearly labelled bag that is easy for them to access.

Emergency Identification:

- Provide them with an emergency ID card or bracelet that clearly states their condition and includes:
 - What to do in an emergency
 - Emergency contact details
 - Any important medical instructions



“What Ifs” – Preparing for the Unexpected During Travel Training

When helping your young person learn to travel independently, it’s important to prepare them for things that might go wrong or not go as planned.

You can’t cover every possible situation, but discussing a few common “what if” scenarios helps build their problem-solving skills, confidence, and resilience

How to Use “What If” Scenarios

- Tailor the questions to your young person’s age, needs, and abilities.
- Include specific fears or anxieties they may have.
- Choose quiet moments to ask questions—like when walking together—not at busy or stressful times.
- Avoid overwhelming them. Ask just one or two at a time and talk through possible answers together.
- Revisit the questions over time as they gain more experience and confidence.

Example “What If” Questions

Here are some scenarios to get you started:

- What if your bus doesn’t come?
- What if you get on the wrong bus or train?
- What if your phone runs out of battery?
- What if you lose your bus pass or money?
- What if someone makes you feel uncomfortable or scared?
- What if you miss your stop?
- What if your friend doesn’t meet you as planned?
- What if there’s a loud noise or something that upsets you?
- What if you feel unwell while travelling?
- What if you need to ask someone for help—who would you choose?

By gently exploring these situations, you’re helping your young person think ahead, build independence, and feel safer when you’re not there.

What Would You Do If...?

Thinking ahead helps you feel more confident and prepared when travelling independently.

You forget something?

- Ask yourself: How important is it?
- If it’s something essential (like your phone, travel pass, or medication), you may need to return home.
- If not, keep going and let someone know when you arrive.



You become frightened or feel unsafe?

- Try to stay calm.
- If you can't cope alone, ask for help from someone safe.
- Use your phone to call a trusted adult.
- Talk about it when you feel ready—don't bottle it up.

You lose your way?

- Ask a bus driver, shop worker, police officer, or street warden for help.
- Use your phone's maps or call someone you trust.

Your bus or train doesn't arrive?

- It's not your fault.
- Call someone to explain what's happened.
- If you're late, let your school, college, or work know when you arrive.

Something is stolen from you?

- Report it straight away to:
 - The bus driver
 - A trusted adult (like a teacher or staff member)
 - A police officer

You feel unwell?

- Decide how bad it is.
- If you're too unwell to continue, go home or call someone to collect you.
- Tell someone what's happened.

You don't have enough money?

- Check if you have enough for a single fare.
- Can you borrow from someone you trust?
- If not, you may need to return home.

You get on the wrong bus?

- Get off at the next stop.
- If it's safe, cross the road and wait for the correct bus going the other way.
- If unsure, ask the driver for help or directions.

A stranger approaches you?

- Be polite but keep walking.
- Don't share personal information or go anywhere with them.
- Stick to busy, well-lit areas.



You can't find someone to ask for help?

- Keep walking toward a busier place—a shop, station, or bus stop.
- Use your phone to call for help or check information.

You have a minor accident?

- If you're okay, carry on.
- If not, ask for help or call someone you trust.
- Always tell someone what happened as soon as you can.

Travel Training – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Supporting young people in gaining independence through safe, confident travel.

What route should we start with?

Start with a route your young person will use often—such as the journey to college. They'll travel this route hundreds of times a year, making it a great starting point. Once confident, they may want to learn new routes that support friendships, hobbies, or leisure activities.

Resources to Help Plan a Route:

- www.traveline.info – national journey planning
- www.warringtonsownbuses.co.uk – for Warrington's bus routes, timetables, and fares

What if my young person can't remember things?

- Provide written prompt cards with key steps or emergency contact info
- Break the journey into small, manageable stages
- Practice each section until confident, then build up to the full journey

Can other family members help with Travel Training?

Absolutely. Any responsible adult can support the process, as long as they:

- Are patient and encouraging
 - Stick to the same route and routine being taught
- Consistency is very important for building confidence.

Can we choose not to Travel Train our child?

Yes, the choice is yours. However, independent travel is a lifelong skill that helps your young person develop:



- Confidence
 - Independence
 - Freedom to make choices
- Without learning these skills, independence later in life may be more difficult to achieve.

Is there any help with travel costs?

Yes. There are several forms of support available:

- **Disabled Person's Bus Pass**
Offers free off-peak travel on local buses across England, including Warrington's Own Buses.
Apply via www.warrington.gov.uk/disabled-bus-pass
- **Student Discounts**
Warrington's Own Buses offer reduced fares for young people and students. Check details here:
www.warringtonsownbuses.co.uk/tickets
- **Post-16 to 19 Bursary Fund**
This can help pay for transport, meals, and course materials.
Visit: www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund

Can we get help with resources to support Travel Training?

Yes. Warrington Borough Council offers resources and guidance through its **Local Offer** for families of children and young people with SEND.

Visit: www.mylifewarrington.co.uk

What if my young person has additional needs (e.g., visual, hearing or mobility impairments)?

Warrington Borough Council supports inclusive Travel Training and provides tailored advice and resources for young people with:

- **Visual impairments**
- **Hearing impairments**
- **Mobility challenges**

Contact Warrington's SEND Local Offer team or speak with a member of the travel team at Woolston College for individual support:

👉 www.mylifewarrington.co.uk

How can Woolston College help?

Woolston College supports Travel Training by:

- Providing guidance and practical support for students learning independent travel
- Offering personalised travel training plans for students with additional needs



- Acting as a contact point for families needing advice or assistance with Travel Training

Contact Woolston College Travel Training Team: