

They will have to catch more than one bus / They use the tram not the bus

The journey for most young people involves changing buses at some point. We always use the safest route, not the quickest, and this is assessed at the point of referral to ensure that independent travel is a viable option. If it is safer to use the Metrolink network rather than buses, this is what we will do.

They wouldn't know what to do if they got lost

This is why the travel trainer is there in the early stages. Throughout the programme, travel trainers will be exposing each young person to a series of carefully managed scenarios to ensure they can keep themselves safe. The training also covers contacting parents or carers using a mobile phone.

They're only doing this to save money

The Local Authority will be saving money, yes. But, more importantly, there are many benefits for each young person having the skills to be able to travel independently.

They include:

- Greater options around further education
- Access to leisure opportunities
- Freedom to develop a real social network – as opposed to a virtual one
- Opportunities for work experience
- Arriving at a destination the same way as their friends

“The travel trainers get to know the young people very quickly...It's great to see the youngsters coming in on the bus...”

John Law, Head Teacher—Castle Hill High School



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Independent Travel Training

A handy Guide

What you need to know about Independent Travel Training

What is Independent Travel Training?

Delivered by Pure Innovations, Independent Travel Training is a programme designed to equip young people with the skills and confidence to be able to travel independently and safely using public transport.

The programme operates in 'real time' which means that if a young person needs to be at school or college for 09:00 and finishes at 15:30, the travel trainer will work within that timeframe.

Who are Pure Innovations?

Pure Innovations are a not for profit charity who work solely with people with additional needs. They have a range of projects across Greater Manchester. Pure Innovations have been delivering Independent Travel Training to young people since 2010.

How does it work?

Each young person is assigned their own travel trainer who works with them on a 1:1 basis for as long as it takes for them to become independent. The travel trainer will accompany their young person throughout the journey to ensure that they are safe whilst developing their skills and confidence. The first part of the process is to meet with parents and carers and the young person where appropriate to ensure that each programme is unique for the young person.

One of our unique strengths is that the programme takes 'as long as it takes', so there is no deadline in which a young person must become independent. Some young people will achieve independence quite quickly, some will take longer.

We use a four stage process to develop a young person's capability. Only at stage three would a young person ever do part of a route independently. Even then, it would be in small stages. We also shadow the young person at stage 4.

Is it a door to door service?

There is a myth that the travel trainer will put a young person on the bus at point A and meet them again at point B...this is not the case.

Initially, the travel trainer will accompany each young person from door to door; however the overall aim is for the young person to travel without 1:1 support so, when the time is right, the travel trainer will meet the young person at a designated point along the route. The point of meeting becomes longer as the young person develops in confidence and we can evidence this. The travel training programme is not, and never will be, a chaperone service. The ultimate goal for a travel trainer is to make themselves obsolete.

How do you decide if someone is suitable?

Pure Innovations have provided Independent Travel Training to young people since 2010 so have a wealth of experience in assessing the suitability of someone for the programme. We liaise closely with parents and carers, schools, colleges and other services to gather all the information required to assess if a young person is suitable for the programme. If we feel someone is not suitable, we pass this back to the local authority.

There is also the capacity to undertake some 'trial' journey's before a decision is made.

The Local Authority say that they have to do travel training!

Pure Innovations work closely with Local Authorities to ensure that young people, who are suitable, are able to access the programme. Due to our experiences, if we feel a young person is not a suitable candidate, we will relay this to the local authority and recommend that they are considered for transport either in the long-term or in the short-term pending re-assessment at a later date.

They have never been anywhere without us before

Pure Innovations recognises that there are many concerns from parents and carers around the fact that a young person has never done anything independently before. From experience, we find that parents and carers main concerns are usually:

- Personal Safety
- Road Safety
- Problem Solving Skills

As part of the programme, the travel trainer will work through a series of scenario's with the young person to ensure that they are able to deal with events which they are likely to encounter.

How can we be sure that the travel trainers know what they are doing?

All our travel trainers complete an accredited training course to ensure that they are qualified to deliver the programme. Each programme is overseen by a Co-ordinator who ensures that the travel trainer is working within our strict guidelines. All our trainers hold an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and have experience in working with young people with additional needs.

Do we get a say in the programme?

Parents, carers and professionals are key players in our programme and their fears and concerns are taken into account.

The travel trainer will always be able to evidence when, and more importantly why, it is time to move the young person on to the next stage.

But they go to different places throughout the week

Because the programme is individualised, it makes no difference if the young person accesses different providers through the week. We simply create a route to each destination. The key is to maintain as normal a routine as possible.