**Spare Seats Scheme Application**

#

**(Paid for Transport) for travel during**

**the 2021/22 academic year**

Please ensure that you have read and understand the information provided about the Spare Seats Scheme and charges before completing this form (see page 3 and 4 of this document).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Student Surname: |  |
| Student Forename: |  |
| Date of Birth: |  |
| Year Group September 2021: |  |
| Address: |  |
| Postcode: |  |
| Parent/Carer Details: |  |
| Phone: |  |
| Email: |  |
|  |  |
| Transport Required to:(name of school/college) |  |
| Requested Start Date: |  |
| Details of any specific request:(e.g. preferred route or pick up point, would like to travel on same bus as sibling) |  |
| If there is no seat available to purchase under the Spare Seats Scheme, do you wish to join the waiting list? Please indicate Yes/No |
| Does your child qualify for free school meals? If yes, please provide evidence to confirm this  |

**Charges**

The cost of purchasing a seat under the Spare Seats Scheme for the 2021/22 academic year will be: -

**Under 3 miles from home to school/college £386.00 per annum**

**3 miles and over from home to school/college £719.00 per annum**

Invoices will be sent three times per year as follows: -

Invoice 1 in August to cover Term 1 (Autumn Term - September to December)

Invoice 2 in December to cover Term 2 (Spring Term - January to March)

Invoice 3 in March to cover Term 3 (Summer Term - April to July)

Spare Seats Scheme charges will be waived for the following low-income groups for statutory school aged students:

* students who are aged 8 to 16 in the relevant academic year in which travel is required who are eligible for Free School Meals; or
* students who are in Key Stage 1 in the relevant academic year in which travel is required who would have been eligible for Free School Meals on income grounds; or
* students aged 5 to 16 in the relevant academic year in which travel is required whose parents are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit

Fees cannot be waived for students aged 16-19. Students aged 16-19 should contact their school or college direct to check if they are eligible for funding towards travel under the Governments 16-19 Bursary Fund.  Information on the 16-19 Bursary Fund, including who may qualify, can be found at [www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund).

**Evidence is required to confirm entitlement to one of the above benefits and will need to be provided at time of application. Evidence will also need to be sent each term to show the entitlement is still valid and the fee can be waived.**

A copy of the complete ‘Tax Credits Award Notice’ is required to confirm receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.   To confirm eligibility for Free School Meals based on your income, confirmation will be required from your child’s school confirming that they have completed the necessary checks within the academic year in which travel is required.

**Declaration:**

**I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the information given above is correct. In consideration of Oxfordshire County Council providing my child with paid for transport to attend school I undertake as follows:**

* **That I will pay the paid for seat fare as requested**
* **That I understand the place cannot be guaranteed throughout the time my child attends the school**

…………………………………………………………… ………………………………….

(Signature) (Date)

**Completed forms should be signed and returned by post to: Oxfordshire County Council, Supported Transport Service, Spare Seats Scheme, PO Box 867, Oxford, OX1 9NR or by email to:** spareseatsscheme@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Please do **NOT** send payment with this form. If your application is successful you will be sent an invoice for the seat which will need to be paid in advance before any travel pass can be issued.

It will not be possible to travel without a valid pass – **NO PASS NO TRAVEL**

**Spare Seat Scheme**

The “Spare Seat Scheme” operates, where spare capacity is available, on contracted routes that are operated for the benefit of those who are entitled to free transport to and from school, and where the sale of seats would not result in a breach of the PSV Accessibility Regulations.

Although no guarantee can be given that the transport will continue to be operated throughout the time a student needs or wishes to travel to the school/college, or that the place on the transport will not be withdrawn at some future date, Oxfordshire County Council will always endeavour to provide one term’s notice if a place is to be withdrawn.

Transport cannot be diverted or additional stops arranged for the benefit of travellers who wish to travel on seats purchased under the Spare Seats Scheme.

Transport can only be provided at the beginning and end of each school day.

There is no right of appeal if it is not possible to purchase a seat under the scheme.

The key points regarding this scheme are set out below:

1. The council cannot guarantee that a young person will keep the seat for longer than one full term (based on a three-term academic year).
2. Fare prices are reviewed annually.
3. The parent, or in the case of Years 12 and 13, the student, must complete an application form.
4. Parents are required to pay in advance for one full term’s travel.
5. The price charged covers a return journey for every school day of the relevant period.
6. There will be no rebates for those deciding to travel for less than the maximum number of possible journeys per term, for example there is no rebate if a young people decides to use his/her bus pass for morning travel and returns by some other private means in the afternoon or for emergency school closures.
7. If a seat is available a bus pass will only be issued on receipt of a completed application form, and correct payment. Your child should not travel until in receipt of the bus pass as they may be refused travel.
8. There is no guarantee that the bus will continue to run throughout a young person’s time at a school, or that the place on the bus will not be withdrawn at some future date if the place is required for a young person who is entitled to free travel.
9. The Spare Seat charge will be waived for those of statutory school age who are eligible for free school meals, or in the case of those aged 5,6 or 7 would be eligible for free school meals on income grounds, or whose parent is in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit
10. If there are more applicants than places, a parent will be able to add their child’s name to a waiting list. Any waiting list for a specific route will operate for no longer than one academic year.
11. If there is an available home to school transport route operated on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council, students who are not of statutory school age and who are aged 16 to 18, may use the Spare Seat Scheme to purchase a seat on that route to enable access to their school or college.
12. When there are more requests to pay for seats on a specific route than there are seats available, they will be allocated in the descending order of priority shown in the table “Priority for Spare Seats”.

**Priority for Spare Seats**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Priority | Category |
| 1. | Those with an Education, Health and Care Plan naming the school |
| 2. | Looked After Children |
| 3. | Years 12 and 13 (if there is no available service bus route) |
| 4. | Children in receipt of Free School Meals or whose parent /parents are in receipt of the maximum of Working Tax Credit |
| 5. | Those who travelled on the route the previous term |
| 6. | By year group, in ascending order of priority from Reception to Year 11 (or to Year 13 if there is an available service bus route  |

*\*Where there are more applicants than places in any of the above categories priority will be given to those living closest to the destination school (measured using the shortest designated route on Oxfordshire County Council’s Geographic Information System)*

If no place is available to purchase under the scheme parents may place the student’s name on a waiting list. Should a place become available it will be allocated using the priority shown above. The order of the waiting list can change if new applications are submitted. If no place becomes available within the academic year of application, a new application will need to be submitted for the new academic year.

If seats purchased under the Spare Seats Scheme must be withdrawn this will be done in the reverse allocation order of the table above.

If a pass has been lost or stolen, a replacement can be issued by Oxfordshire County Council. A small administrative charge of £10 may be levied. Please visit <https://concessioncard.net/qpp/Login_input.action> to order and pay online for the replacement bus pass. Please select the replacement pass tab.

Oxfordshire County Council’s Home to School Travel and Transport Policy can be read at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport).