

WILL THERE BE ANY NEW BUS SERVICES PROVIDED?

No additional services will be provided as part of the Kent Freedom Pass scheme. Where a capacity problem arises, KCC have made funds available to local bus companies in order to provide larger or additional vehicles on existing routes. Should you wish to discuss the availability of services in your area please contact your local bus operator(s).

I HAVE LOST MY KFP. HOW CAN I REPLACE IT?

You can only apply for **ONE** replacement during each scheme year. A £10 administration fee applies. To pay by credit or debit card please call **01622 605540**. Alternatively, please send a cheque or postal order, made out to Kent County Council, to the address below, along with a covering note.

**Kent Freedom Pass,
Transport Integration, Gibson Drive,
Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4QG.**

HOW LONG WILL MY PASS LAST FOR?

All KFPs issued during the scheme year 2009–10 will expire on **31 August 2010**, irrespective of the date of application. Therefore the earlier you apply the more value you will get from the pass. The annual charge of £50 and the replacement fee of £10 are also fixed and apply at all times until 31 August 2010.

CAN I GET A REFUND?

No – the KFP has been set up to be simple to administer and therefore refunds are not given. The £50 charge is to cover the cost of administering the scheme, with the cost of travel being met by KCC.

I HAVE A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – WHAT ARRANGEMENTS ARE IN PLACE TO HELP ME?

As with any child who receives free home to school transport from Kent County Council, your existing arrangements will continue unchanged, whether you apply for a Kent Freedom Pass or not.

If you are in receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, or fulfil one of 7 statutory categories of disability, you can apply for an English National Concessionary Travel Pass, which gives you free off-peak local bus travel anywhere in England. These are issued free of charge – more details are available from www.direct.gov.uk/.

District Councils can also issue discretionary companion passes, which enable disabled pass holders to take someone with them when they travel. As the conditions for these companion passes vary, please contact your district council in the first instance.

It remains a parental responsibility to ensure that a child using a Kent Freedom Pass is able to access public bus services on their own, or to accompany the child if necessary, even if the child is provided with an escort by KCC for their home to school travel.

ABUSE IT - LOSE IT

All passengers, including Kent Freedom Pass holders, are responsible for their own behaviour when travelling and KFP holders are expected to follow the KFP Code of Conduct at all times. Additionally, passengers who breach the operator's Conditions of Carriage, which are published by each bus company, may be refused travel or have their passes confiscated. In serious circumstances, the bus company may involve the Police or ban a passenger from their services. KFPs used fraudulently will be withdrawn.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

The Kent Freedom Pass does not entitle any student to travel on a particular service and does not guarantee space on any vehicle. Problems regarding the availability of bus services or space on a particular service should be directed to the relevant bus operator.

All KFPs remain the property of Kent County Council and must be shown or surrendered on request.

HOW DO I GET FURTHER INFORMATION?

This leaflet provides the basic information which you need to consider before making an application, as the charge of £50 is not refundable. Full terms and conditions, and further information about schools and participating operators, are available at www.kent.gov.uk/kentfreedompass or by written request to the address below.

If you still have a query, you can contact us in the following ways:

Phone: **08458 247 247**

Email: kentfreedompass@kent.gov.uk

Minicom: **08458 247 905**

**Kent Freedom Pass,
Transport Integration, Gibson Drive,
Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4QG**

This leaflet is available in alternative formats. Please contact **08458 247 247**.



Kent Freedom Pass

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

For the scheme ending 31 August 2010



Scheme year
2009/10

WHAT IS THE KENT FREEDOM PASS?

Kent County Council (KCC) introduced the Kent Freedom Pass (KFP) scheme in June 2007 to make travel easier and more affordable for young people. The principle aims of the scheme are to empower young people, improve safety, financially assist families, promote healthier lifestyles, encourage greater use of sustainable transport, reduce congestion and journey times (especially during the school runs), and ultimately increase quality of life across the county.

The cost of the pass is £50 for the scheme year, and allows students to travel on any **public** bus at any time, including weekends and school holidays. The scheme has been rolled out so far by districts in which the schools are located. From 2009 onwards, all schools within the boundary of Kent County Council will be covered, whether they are state or independent schools.

The KFP scheme is one of the most generous travel passes of its kind outside of London and is wholly funded by KCC.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

To apply for a KFP, students must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Attending a school or other educational establishment in Kent and approved by the Scheme
- In academic year 7–11 from September 2009 onwards
- A resident of Kent (i.e. paying Council Tax to a Kent district council for KCC services)

WHEN CAN I APPLY?

Students attending school in Ashford, Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks districts can apply for a pass from March 2009 onwards, and passes will be valid from **June 2009**. Students in all other districts can apply from June 2009 onwards, and passes will be valid from **September 2009**.

From September 2009 onwards, an application for any district can be made at any time of the year. However the charge is the same throughout the year, even if you do not apply until more than half way through the year. All passes expire on **31 August 2010**.

WHY HAS THE KFP ONLY BEEN AVAILABLE IN CERTAIN AREAS UNTIL NOW?

Introducing a scheme across the whole county in one go would have been too big a project, given that there are no similar examples elsewhere in the country. It was important that the scheme was successful from the outset and a lot of research and planning was needed.

By rolling the scheme out gradually KCC has been able to resolve problems which have arisen, and ensured that the scheme works well for bus operators, schools and students, and that the terms and conditions are fair.

WHEN CAN I USE MY KFP?

The KFP is valid at any time of day, including evenings, weekends and school holidays. There are no restrictions on the number of journeys you can make.

WHICH SERVICES ACCEPT THE KFP?

The KFP allows free travel at the point of use on virtually all **public** bus services in Kent operated by participating operators. A list of operators, and the most important service exceptions, is available at www.kent.gov.uk/kentfreedompass. You can travel over the county border provided that no change of service is made, and can return on any direct service into Kent. Please note that Transport for London bus services do not accept the Kent Freedom Pass, but young people can travel for free if they have an Oyster® Card.

ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS?

You cannot use the KFP on any service that is not a public bus. This includes private bus services, often arranged by schools or Kent County Council. These services are not available to the general public and do not accept fares of any kind. Some services which are tailored to schools are designated as special services within the scheme and there is an additional cost to travel on these services, further details of which are available at www.kent.gov.uk/kentfreedompass. You should check that the services you wish to use are part of the scheme by contacting the bus operator prior to applying.

HOW DO I FIND OUT THE TIMES AND ROUTES OF BUSES?

Public transport information is available online at www.kent.gov.uk/publictransport and more detailed information by school is provided at www.11-19travel.info.

Each local bus company will be able to provide timetables for their public services. Additionally, schools often hold copies of relevant timetables.

A journey planning facility, the Traveline service, holds details of all public bus and rail services across the county.



HOW DO I APPLY FOR THE FIRST TIME?

You can collect an application form from your participating school, or download one (after 01.10.09) from www.kent.gov.uk/kentfreedompass. Please return to the address shown on the form, along with a passport-size photo and your payment. Please do not send cash by post.

KFPs are distributed via the school. You will be sent a letter to let you know that your KFP is ready to collect. If you hold a KCC home to school bus pass you must exchange this when you collect your KFP. Please refer to the panel opposite for further details.

HOW DO I RENEW MY 2008/09 KFP?

Your KFP will not be renewed automatically. If you still meet the criteria you can renew your KFP for the annual charge of £50. Please fill in a new application form and tick the “renewal” box at the top. You do not need to send in a new photo. Your new KFP will be sent to the school in September to be exchanged for your expired KFP.

You must apply for your renewed KFP by 17 July 2009 to ensure it's available at the beginning of the new academic year.

I ALREADY RECEIVE FREE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT – HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ME?

Your entitlement to free transport is unaffected by the KFP scheme. If you decide to upgrade your existing pass you may do so for the normal £50 fee. This will then allow you to travel on any participating bus service at any time of day. If you currently travel by bus, we will print these details on your Kent Freedom Pass which you can then exchange for your current bus pass. You will not be issued with a Kent Freedom Pass until you surrender all relevant tickets issued to you by KCC. If you travel by train you will be issued with a Kent Freedom Pass in addition to your rail ticket.

If you already receive free home to school transport, the details you give on your KFP application form will be checked against your last recorded address. If the addresses are different we may need to contact you and your application is likely to be delayed. If you have moved address since you were granted free home to school transport and have not informed KCC, your application will be delayed and your entitlement will be reconsidered by KCC's Admissions and Transport office. If you decide not to apply for the scheme your home to school bus pass will be renewed as normal.

WHEN WILL MY PASS BE READY?

For Ashford, Dartford, Gravesham and Sevenoaks, you must apply by **30 April** to ensure that your KFP will be available on 1 June 2009.

An application for any area can be made at any time after 8 June but you must apply by **17 July 2009** to be sure of having your pass ready for the start of the new school year in September.

Between summer and October half-term applications can take up to 28 working days to process and you are liable for all transport costs while your application is being processed. If you apply after October half-term your pass is likely, but not guaranteed, to be processed within 10 working days.