

School Party Travel Scheme – Terms and Conditions – from 30 November 2021

Section 1 - Introduction to the School Party Travel Scheme

Welcome to the School Party Travel Scheme (SPTS), operated by Transport for London.

The scheme offers free off-peak travel for groups from London schools, registered on the scheme, making trips on public transport in London, for educational, sporting or cultural purposes.

These terms and conditions are for the benefit and safety of school parties and all other users of public transport in London. Participation in the scheme constitutes acceptance of the scheme's terms and conditions.

- Free travel is available on all bus, Tube, tram, DLR, London Overground and TfL Rail services. Travel is also free on most National Rail services in Zones 1-6.
- For the purposes of the SPTS, an 'adult' is anyone travelling with the group who is 18 or over and has teacher/group responsibility
- For the purposes of the SPTS, a 'child' is anyone travelling with the group who is under 18

Section 2 – Who can join the School Party Travel Scheme

Any school which fulfils the following criteria can apply to join the School Party Travel Scheme:

- Based in a London borough
- Officially open and operating for the duration of the traditional school day (08:30 – 15:30)
- Registered with Ofsted
- Following the National Curriculum or a substantially similar programme

State, independent and academy schools can apply to join the scheme.

Summer schools and nursery schools can also apply to join the scheme.

Section 3 – How to join the School Party Travel Scheme

To join the SPTS, a school needs to send a letter to the School Party Travel Scheme team confirming:

- That your school wants to join the School Party Travel Scheme
- The name and address of the school, including postcode and telephone number
- A school email address. We require an ordinary school email address, rather than a personal school email address, so that messages can be retrieved by more than one person and also so there are no privacy issues entailed in TfL storing this data
- The London borough your school is in
- Your school's Ofsted Unique Reference Number (URN)
- The number of pupils on the school roll
- That your school follows the National Curriculum or a substantially similar programme
- That once accepted on the scheme, the school will abide by all the terms and conditions of the scheme.

The letter must be on school-headed paper, in PDF format and emailed to

schoolparty@tfl.gov.uk

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The SPTS team will check the details provided against the school's entry on the Department for Education's data base of educational establishments, or the Ofsted database, to verify that the details supplied are correct. If a school cannot be found by either of these two routes, the school may be asked to submit a copy of its latest Ofsted report.

Summer schools (not affiliated to a school already registered on the SPTS) applying to join the scheme must be open for a minimum of four weeks and must also provide a copy of their last Ofsted report when applying to join the scheme.

Nursery schools (not affiliated to a school already registered on the SPTS) applying to join the scheme must also provide a copy of their last Ofsted report when applying to join the scheme.

As part of the application process, a member of the SPTS team may visit a school to check eligibility, before the school is accepted onto the scheme. We will contact a school before making any visit.

If an organisation is not confirmed as a school, then its application to join the SPTS may be refused, unless we're satisfied that the organisation is an education provider, which is substantially carrying out the functions of a school.

If any documentation that we review, such as the school's most recent Ofsted report, highlights serious safety concerns about a school, then that school will not be allowed to join the scheme until we are satisfied that these concerns have been addressed.

Once the SPTS team have completed all checks and confirmed that a school is eligible to join the scheme, a School Party Travel Scheme online account will be created for that school and the school will be provided with an account username and password and can then start to apply for travel tickets.

Please make sure that your user name and password are only shared with authorised members of school staff.

Nursery schools will not be provided with an online account. See below for details on how nursery schools should apply for tickets.

All tickets will be sent electronically and must be printed for use before travel. Showing an electronic version of a ticket will not be accepted as a basis for travel.

It is the responsibility of every school to make sure that your school contact details are correct and kept up to date.

If you become aware of any misuse of your SPTS account, you must notify the SPTS team immediately at schoolparty@tfl.gov.uk (the telephone line is currently unavailable)..

If a school closes, changes its name or merges with another school, it should notify the SPTS team immediately (contact details above). TfL will then amend the relevant accounts. Schools that have merged cannot have two separate SPTS accounts.

Failure to let us know about any account misuse, school name change or merger, could lead to a school being suspended from the scheme.

Section 4 – Applying for Travel Tickets

You must apply for travel tickets via your online account, using the details sent to you when you registered with the scheme.

Applications made online can be made up to three months before the intended date of travel and must be made **no later than 14 calendar days before the intended date of travel**, to ensure there is time to process your application.

You are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

Please make sure you include the full title of your school in your application and that the email address and telephone number used match the details from your SPTS account, otherwise, your application may be rejected.

Nursery schools and any other school without an online account should print the application form from the SPTS page on the TfL website <https://schoolparty.tfl.gov.uk> complete it, scan it and email it to schoolparty@tfl.gov.uk

Nursery school applications submitted via email can be made up to three months in advance of a proposed trip and must be made **no later than 21 calendar days before the date of travel**. You are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

All children travelling on a particular trip must be enrolled at the school which is making the application for that trip. If any child is enrolled at a different school or learning provider and wants to take part in the same trip, that child's school or learning provider should make a separate ticket request.

Once an application has been submitted, the date of travel cannot be changed.

The SPTS team will process applications in the order in which they are received and may contact a school to clarify details if something is not clear.

Each application will be assigned a unique reference number, which will appear online after an application has been submitted. Please make a note of this reference number in case of future queries.

If, four working days before the proposed date of travel, a school has not received an email with their tickets, or has not been advised that their application has been rejected, they should contact the SPTS team at schoolparty@tfl.gov.uk (the telephone line is currently unavailable). It is the school's responsibility to do this. If the application had been approved, the SPTS team will email the tickets to the school.

Always check your junk/spam email folder for emails from the SPTS team. The email address that all emails are sent from is admin_spts@tfl.gov.uk

TfL is not liable for any emails and/or ticket applications that are delayed or not received from or by a school.

Please note that applying for tickets does not mean that tickets will be issued.

If an application is approved, TfL and the train companies cannot guarantee that space will be available on services at the times stated on your travel tickets, or that the service will operate. (Note that your permitted travel times may be different to those applied for, and you must only travel at the times stated on your ticket. If you don't, you may be prevented from travelling or risk suspension from the scheme.)

Section 5 – Permitted Places to Visit

You can apply for free travel tickets to educational, sporting (see definition below) or cultural venues and the trip must support an area of the National Curriculum or the teaching programme your school is following.

If your intended trip doesn't comply with the criteria above, your application will be rejected.

For the purposes of the SPTS, sport is defined as:

- an Olympic or Paralympic sport
- any sport practised or followed in the UK and recognised by a UK sports council
- any sport or activity that involves beneficial exercise or promotes health and fitness.

If it is unclear how a proposed trip meets the criteria above, the SPTS team may contact you to clarify the purpose of a trip and you will need to respond within five working days. The application will not be processed until clarification is received and accepted and will be rejected if no response is received within the five days.

If a venue a school wants to visit is not already in the system, a school can make a request for that venue to be added to the system, via the 'suggest venue' option in their online account. The SPTS team will then consider the suggestion and will let the school know the outcome within five working days. Please bear this time frame in mind when suggesting a new venue. If it is accepted and there are then fewer than 14 calendar days before the proposed trip, there will not be enough time to process an application.

Trips for recreational and leisure purposes, e.g. to a theme park, are not permitted, and if it is deemed that a proposed trip is for such a purposes, the application will be rejected.

Tickets will normally only be issued for travel to venues in a London borough or the City of London. At TfL's discretion, we may allow travel to a venue outside a London borough, as long as the venue is within two miles of a Tube, London Overground or TfL Rail station.

Tickets will not be issued for part travel, i.e. for a journey which forms one leg of a longer journey, where the final destination is outside a London borough or the City of London. E.g. if a group is travelling by train from Bromley South to Canterbury, to visit Canterbury Cathedral, SPTS tickets will not be issued to get the group from school to Bromley South or from Bromley South back to the school again.

TfL recognises that applications relating to children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or disabilities may be for the purpose of learning life skills and such applications will be assessed based on the nature of the proposed trip. The above criteria still apply, so please provide as much information as possible as to how the proposed trip supports the teaching programme being followed.

Section 6 - Group Size and Adult to Child Ratio

Groups can be any size up to a maximum of 60 children and 12 adults. There must be a minimum ratio of one adult for every 10 children travelling together. The scheme allows for up to two adults to travel (for free) with every 10 children.

The ratio for nursery school children is five children for every one adult.

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If more adults than the permitted adult to child ratio are travelling, they will need to pay for their travel.

If you're making a trip with SEN children or children with disabilities and require additional adult assistance, we may be able to increase the ratio of adults to children travelling for free. You should contact the SPTS team to discuss.

If your trip involves a **bus** journey, a maximum of 10 children and two adults can travel together on the same ticket, so your group may be issued with more than one ticket.

If your trip involves travel on **Tube, DLR, London Overground, TfL Rail or National Rail**, a maximum of 20 children and four adults can travel on the same ticket, so your group may be issued with more than one ticket.

For large groups we may need to stagger your travel times to make sure that it's safe for everyone and that there is enough space for your group and for other passengers. This means that your whole group may not travel at the same time. You will be issued with separate tickets for each separate departure time. (If you try to travel before the times permitted by your ticket, you will not be allowed to travel.)

A group may travel with fewer people than shown on their ticket, however, they cannot travel with more adults or children than the numbers shown on their tickets.

If the group wants to split up at any point, anyone no longer travelling with the main group will need to pay for their travel.

Section 7 - When to Travel

You can travel:

- on Mondays to Fridays, but not at weekends or on public holidays.
- any time after 09:50 for your outward journey if your Tube or rail journey starts in zones 1 or 2
- any time after 09:30 for your outward journey if your Tube or rail journey starts in zones 3 to 9
- from 09:30 if your first journey is by bus or tram
- before 16:30 for the last leg of your return journey.

If you want to travel before or after the times above, you will need to pay for all your travel.

Section 8 – Using Your SPTS Ticket

Schools must print the tickets and show them when they travel. Confirmation emails, photocopied tickets or tickets presented on a 'phone or other device will not be accepted. If there is any doubt about the authenticity of a ticket, free travel may be refused.

The group leader/ticket holder should present the travel ticket(s) for inspection, before the group attempts to board a bus or enter a station.

Always check the times on tickets issued, as they may be different from the times applied for. Schools must adhere to the times printed on their travel tickets, even if they are not the times that were originally requested.

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If a school travels or attempts to travel at times other than those shown on their ticket, the group leader will be advised that they need to pay for the group's travel. The group leader may also be liable for a penalty fare.

The group must follow any instructions given by TfL staff and all SPTS tickets must be produced for inspection when requested. A ticket must be given up when requested by ticket inspection staff.

TfL will not tolerate any abuse of its staff or its agents, by any member of a school group. Any abuse may lead to the suspension or removal of a school from the SPTS.

Section 9 - Number of Trips per Term

Under the SPTS, two trips per child per term are allowed; this includes travel to and from swimming lessons. If it is found that schools have taken more trips than permitted in one term, all future applications for that term will be rejected and the school may be suspended or removed from the scheme.

Section 10 – Service Information

At times, stations, bus routes or tram stops may be unavailable due to planned improvement or engineering works. If planned works affect your chosen route, the SPTS team will amend your route accordingly whilst processing your application and may contact you to discuss. You must stick to the route stated on the travel ticket issued.

You can check for information on planned engineering works on TfL services:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/status-updates/planned-track-closures>

and here for future planned engineering work on National Rail services:

https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/service_disruptions/currentAndFuture.aspx

There may also be last minute changes to services due to unforeseen events, so it's wise to double check your route on the day of travel, either via:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/tube-dlr-overground/status/>

or



<https://twitter.com/TfLTravelAlerts>

and for on the day National Rail disruptions:

https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/service_disruptions/today.aspx

If there are disruptions, curtailments or cancellations on the day due to unplanned works, bad weather, operating or technical issues, industrial action, or other reasons, you may be permitted to use a different route or mode of travel from the one(s) stipulated on your tickets. You should speak with station staff on the day for guidance.

In some circumstances, e.g. on National Rail, you may be asked to pay for travel.

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If a school party trip is called off at the last minute, because of bad weather, cancellation by the venue, industrial action, or any other reason, tickets cannot be reissued for a different date. If you do not travel on the specified date, you will have to make a new application.

If applications are for a day when there are already many school groups travelling, or services are predicted to be very busy, or there are planned engineering works, an application may be rejected, or travel times and/or stations changed. This is to manage travel demand and allow as many groups as possible to still travel and to travel safely.

Section 11 - Enforcement

The issue and use of SPTS tickets is subject to TfL's and/or National Rail's Conditions of Carriage.

Find out more at: [Conditions of Carriage](#) (this includes TfL's and National Rail's).

Tickets must be used in accordance with the details printed on the ticket.

Groups should:

- Travel on the date shown on the travel ticket
- Travel at/within the times shown on the travel ticket
- Use the station(s) and routes(s) shown on the travel ticket
- Not exceed the permitted number of adults and children per ticket.
- Travel together at all times

School groups may be refused free travel if they do not abide by the above conditions

Additionally, if a group travels or attempts to travel:

- without a valid ticket
- on a date other than the date on the ticket
- with more children or adults than stated on their ticket
- outside the permitted times
- on a route and/or at a station not permitted by their ticket

station staff and/or ticket inspectors may take the details of the school and pass these details on to the SPTS team.

The SPTS team will then contact the head teacher of that school to advise them of what has happened. Depending on the circumstances, TfL may suspend a school from the scheme, either temporarily or permanently.

If any member of a school group does not follow instructions given by TfL or train company staff, or threatens or abuses staff (including members of the SPTS scheme team), either physically, verbally or in writing, TfL may suspend that school from the SPTS.

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At its discretion, TfL may decide not to suspend a school from the scheme, or reduce the length of the suspension, providing it receives a written assurance from the head teacher that their school will adhere to **all** the rules of the scheme on any future trips.

If there is a further breach of the terms and conditions of the scheme, a school may then be suspended from the SPTS or removed permanently.

Section 12 - How We Use Your Data

The SPTS team will use the information you provide to assist in administering the scheme.

The SPTS team may contact you with other travel-related information, for example:

- To make you aware of disruptions to services, due to planned works or strike action, that could affect your journey
- To provide you with other information linked to your specific trip, especially if you are attending a major event
- To make you aware of significant changes to these Terms and Conditions.

The SPTS team may share data about schools who have not complied with the terms and conditions of the scheme with other teams across TfL and with the Greater London Authority (GLA) where appropriate and relevant. This is so that TfL and the GLA can work with schools to ensure full compliance with SPTS terms and conditions.

TfL may use aggregated, depersonalised data for research purposes or to analyse and evaluate the use of the SPTS. Individuals cannot be identified from this data.

Section 13 - Privacy Notice

Transport for London (TfL) and its subsidiaries and services providers will use your personal information for the purposes of administering the School Party Travel Scheme. This includes the provision of customer services, travel related information relevant to schools, customer research and fraud prevention. Your personal information will be properly safeguarded and processed in accordance with the requirements of privacy and data protection legislation.

Calls to the School Party Travel Scheme are recorded for the purposes of monitoring and training.

Section 14 - Notification Provision

TfL reserves the right to change these terms and conditions from time to time, as it sees fit and your continued use of the site will signify your acceptance of any adjustments to these terms and conditions.

TfL reserves the right to suspend or terminate the scheme at any time.

The most up-to-date terms and conditions will always be available at:

<https://schoolparty.tfl.gov.uk>