

Young Persons' Concessionary TRAVEL

The Scotland-Wide Concessionary Travel Scheme for Young People started on 8 January 2007. It allows all 16 - 18 year olds and young full-time volunteers up to the age of 25 concessionary travel on buses, rail and ferries.

The Scheme provides a third off bus and rail travel. If you live on a Scottish Island, you are entitled to two free return ferry journeys to the mainland each year.

The Accord Scheme is implementating the concessionary travel for 16 to 18 year olds in the city of Aberdeen. Until the system becomes 'smart', young people with a National Entitlement

Card will be issued automatically with a bus concessionary card and a voucher to exchange for a Scottish Youth Rail Card. These cards will be used on a show and go basis.

You become eligible on your 16th birthday and fall outside the scheme on your 19th birthday. Full-time volunteers (30+ hours a week) aged between 19 and 25 (up to your 26th birthday) who meet the criteria for Project Scotland are also eligible for concessionary travel scheme. You must also be a resident of Scotland.

If you are still at school, you can apply for the card via your Accord Administrator.



However, if you are not in school, or want to get one sooner, you will have to apply yourself.

If you don't already have an application form, you can obtain one from various locations within Aberdeen City Council, The Point, Peterculter Area Office, Bucksburn Area Office or Mastrick and Kincorth Access Points.

Alternatively call the Accord Scheme on 01224 645596 (lines open 8:30 to 17:00,



Monday to Friday) or the Young Scot InfoLine on: 0808 801 0338 (lines open 12:00 to 20:00, Monday to Friday).

For information on this scheme please go to www.givememycard.org

Goodbye to...

- **Nadir Freigoun** has left. He is now working for Primary IT Support at Summerhill.
- **David Mitchell** left on 1st June. He is crossing over to Aberdeenshire Council to become CSN Schools Support Co-ordinator at Ellon Academy.

We wish them both well in their new jobs.

National Entitlement Card

On the front will be:

- YOUR PHOTOGRAPH
- YOUR DATE OF BIRTH
- CARD EXPIRY DATE



Bus Concessionary Card

Until all buses are fitted with new electronic equipment which is able to automatically recognise your National Entitlement Card, you will need a Bus Concessionary Card - We'll enclose this with your National Entitlement Card. Show this to the driver for your 1/3 discount.

Vouchers

Rail: You will also receive a rail voucher with your photo and National Entitlement Card number printed on it, which you should take to your local rail ticket office.

Show them your National Entitlement Card and they will exchange the rail voucher for a Scottish Youth Rail card. (Check out www.firsttrail.com for more info.)

Please remember, you must always show your National Entitlement Card when travelling with your SYR Card.

Ferry: If you live on a Scottish island, you will also receive four free ferry to the mainland vouchers that have your photograph and National Entitlement Card number printed on them. Please remember, you must always show your National Entitlement Card when travelling using your vouchers.

If you need to make an inter-island journey first you can get vouchers for that too.

Call **0141 272 7175** Or email: yp@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk

The Accord Team

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Accord A Newsletter



Accord P7 Roadshow hits the secondary schools

The Accord's P7 Roadshow hits schools this month (June). It is a great opportunity for the young people visiting from their primary schools to hear all about the Accord Scheme, first hand from the staff at Accord.

Each P7 Roadshow includes a 20-minute presentation about the benefits and uses of the Accord card in and outside school. This is followed by a question and answer session. The roadshows are popular and a useful platform for the Accord Scheme to explain about the many changes that are happening to the Accord Card. It also provides an opportunity for the



pupils, and on some occasions the staff, from schools to 'grill' the Accord staff about the facilities and services provided by Accord.

At the end of the P7 Roadshow the young pupils receive their Young Scot packs, which also include for the first time a section especially about Aberdeen City. In addition, Accord will be giving away a useful school ruler, pencil set and a wallet, so pupils are all set up and ready for their transition from primary school to secondary. The Accord Roadshow will be at the following schools:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Thurs 14th June | Bankhead Academy |
| Fri 15th June | Cults Academy |
| Mon 18th June | Bridge of Don Academy |
| Tues 19th June | Aberdeen Grammar |
| Weds 20th June | Northfield Academy |
| Weds 20th June | Oldmachar Academy |
| Thurs 21st June | St Machar Academy |
| Tues 26th June | Kincorth Academy |
| Weds 27th June | Hazlehead Academy |
| Fri 29th June | Dyce Academy |

Commonly asked questions by P7 pupils:

Q: How much money can I put on the card?

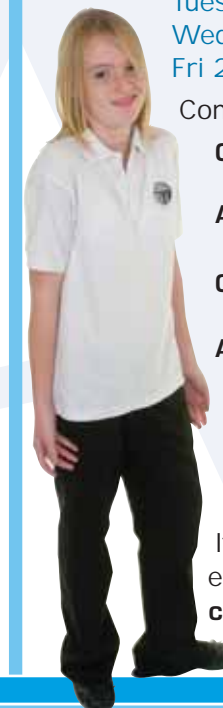
A: The answer to this question is, a maximum of £50.

Q: When can we have our cards now to get all the discounts?

A: This depends on your school, if you can be trusted to look after your card over the summer holidays and bring it into school, you can use your card in over 1800 shops in Scotland to get some great discounts.

If you have any questions for Accord, email them to:

claire@accordaberdeen.co.uk and we'll get back to you with an answer.



Accord's Summer website launch

Soon you will be able to keep bang up to date with all the latest happenings with the Accord Card.

play the fun 'Andy Accord Card Game' and guzzle-up as much healthy food as possible. See if you get the winning high score.

Give us feed-back on any new additions or ideas for the website to help us keep it fresh and interesting for all our visitors.

Try clicking on the **discount** in the menu bar, on the left-hand side of the site and see all the amazing discounts you could be entitled to if you take your Accord Card shopping with you.

We plan to keep the website updated with news, developments, services and all new benefits that we add to the scheme, so make sure you keep coming back to get the most out of your Accord Card and you don't miss out on any benefits that maybe offered on the website.



Phase One of the Accord website will be launched this summer, allowing you access to any information, news, feedback, games and interesting links about the Accord Card and Accord Scheme.

Why not log-on to the website this summer and

www.accordaberdeen.co.uk



This led on to the pupils asking us to use 'real' people in the all the marketing and publicity material used by the Accord Scheme.

ACCORD'S MODEL PUPILS

The Accord Scheme ran a survey during 2005 with 11,000 school secondary pupils. One of the outcomes from that survey was the marketing material used pre-2005/6 did not appeal to young people, and actually acted as a deterrent for using the cards is some extreme cases. Another outcome was they didn't like the design of the Accord Card and wanted a choice of colours or layouts.

Following on from this, in 2006 the Accord Scheme ran focus group meetings with various pupils at several of the local secondary schools. The purpose of these focus groups was to ask pupils what they did and didn't like about websites. One of the outcomes was the need for 'real' people to be used in the website, not stock photos.

Accord addressed this issue by offering pupils from all secondary schools the opportunity to be models for a day. A photographic session (photos taken by Aberdeen City Council's award-winning photographer Norman Adams) were held at two leading hairdressers in Aberdeen; Ispiro Estetica Hair & Beauty and A Cut Above.

Schools represented at the photo shoots:

- Ispiro Estetica Hair & Beauty;**
- Bankhead Academy
 - Oldmachar Academy
- A Cut Above;**
- Bridge of Don
 - Robert Gordon's College
 - Albyn School

We think you'll agree the photos look great - and they will be used in all the Accord Schemes future marketing, website, advertising, application forms, literature and press material. Thanks to all our models, you were all super. We hope to do the same for our senior citizens - so watch out for more information in forth coming newsletters.



You don't need cash - use a cheque

Accord would like to remind pupils they can top up their Accord Cards with a cheque. Why not bring in a cheque from your parents or guardians and avoid any queuing at your school's load terminals. The value of the cheque will be added to your Accord Card by your school's Accord Administrator.

It saves you time and prevents you losing money on the way to school. It also provides an audit trail, should there be any need to trace back any monies on your Accord Card.

So make life simpler for yourself, tell your parents to give you a cheque. It also helps with their record-keeping, as they can keep track of any money they have issued to you.

Please make sure the cheque is made payable to Aberdeen City Council.



Get the right protection for your Accord Card

You can now purchase a range of products to protect your Accord card from the ravages of everyday life. Each local authority school has been issued with a range of plastic wallets, card-holders, lanyards and pull-backs. Prices start from £1 for a lanyard and card-holder rising to £2 for a ripper wallet. All the items were selected to protect the card and for their convenience and durability - now there is no excuse for lost or damaged cards. If you are too old to attend school, you can purchase any of these items from the Point on Broad Street, the Accord Scheme Office, at Frederick Street Business Centre.

Trial of Swapits for Schools programme comes to an end

Over the academic school year 2006/7, the Accord Scheme and Direct Services trialed a reward scheme in three schools, St Machar Academy, Bridge of Don and Torry Academy.

The aims of the trial were to test a reward scheme to see if incentives encouraged more pupils to take a school meal and make healthy food choices. One school, Torry Academy also trialed rewards to replace their existing merit scheme.



The reward scheme trialed was called Swapitshop.com, an internet based site which offered young people under the age of 18 rewards.

"Swapits are rewards for under 18s! Collect them, earn them & spend them with SwapitShop and other top companies."

The Accord Scheme, Direct Services and the Healthy Eating Steering Group have now evaluated the trial and the outcome from the evaluation of the trial highlighted the following points:

- The concept of rewards was popular with pupils and teachers.
- The reality of gaining these rewards required a considerable amount of marketing by the schools, which was a resource schools didn't have and it was felt this was really Swapit's role,
- The trial was popular with pupils between S1 and S3, as over 60% signed up, but interest was almost non-existent from older pupils, who found the scheme uninspiring,
- Although around 80% of pupils indicated they had access to a computer, the reality was less than 60%, as they also required access to the internet. This excluded some pupils from being able to participate in the scheme, which goes against the ethos of the Accord Card as being socially inclusive,
- Access to computers was a stumbling block to this scheme and this was highlighted to Swapits mid-way through the trial. The Accord Scheme suggested using mobile phones to alert pupils to their rewards, but this and other suggestion were not being implemented by Swapits,
- Signing up to the scheme was not straight forward. Pupils under the age of 14 required a parental consent form, which delayed the time it took for the young people to sign-up to Swapits and start earning rewards,
- The steering group felt Swapits failed to provide the support they promised throughout the scheme, and this had been as much a learning experience for Swapits as it had been a trial for the schools,
- The steering group questioned the viability of Swapits being able to support all 12 secondary schools,
- Since the trial of Swapits in Aberdeen, a national reward scheme is now being considered by the Improvement Service. This scheme aims to offer wider benefits to all ages from 12 to 26 much in line with the Young Scot.
- The benefits of being part of a national scheme would bring economies of scale and scope that could not be matched on a local level.
- School budgets are tighter than ever and the cost of introducing Swapits' reward scheme was considered not financially viable by the steering group, especially as a national scheme is being considered by the Improvement Service.
- Therefore, the final decision regarding the outcomes of this trial is not to continue with Swapits. The following actions will take place:

Accord takes a pro-active approach to maintenance

As a preventative measure, the Accord Scheme maintenance team have decided to replace the existing Systemax PCs used in the secondary schools with new higher specification Dell Pentium 4 PCs. This is because the PCs at the schools have been permanently 'on' for the last 3 years.

Failures recently have caused the catering system to crash, which is symptomatic of their age and usage.

Installing the new PCs is all part of Accord's proactive approach to maintenance ensuring that the system is always available and less likely to crash at any future time.

"The new Dell Computers have 3.2 GHz and 1 GB of RAM meaning they are considerably less likely to fail." said Damien Bird, Accords Systems Analyst.



1. Accord will remove Swapits from the three schools over the summer holiday so from the start of the next school year all the schools will revert back to the Healthy Eating Points (HEPs). It must be noted HEPs have no reward or value attached to them at present.
2. Pupils will be advised of this change before the end of this school year. If they wish, they can still earn Swapit points outside school, via the Swapit website and competitions, but they will no longer be able to earn Swapits from making healthy food choices at their school canteens.
3. Accord to observe the progress of the potential national reward scheme, being considered by the Improvement Service.

