



Herne Bay High School

Specialist Sports College

Bullockstone Road, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 7NS
☎ 01227 361221 ✉ principal@hernebayhigh.org



Dear Parent/Carer

School Transport Arrangements

As the start of term approaches, we have received a number of updates regarding travel to school. This letter is designed to compile all of that information into one so that you have (hopefully) the most up to date information in one place. If further updates are sent into school then we will of course share these with you promptly either prior to, or after the start of term.

Update from the KCC Home to School Transport Team, received 26 August 2020 Local Bus Services

- Guidance remains that whilst it is safe and permissible for children to use buses, alternative means of travel such as walking, and cycling should be chosen where possible.
- Use of local bus services for home to school transport is considered safe where arranged in accordance with the guidance i.e. taking account of social distancing requirements, and the use of face coverings, etc.
- Services used by the general public must maintain 1m (plus) social distancing and so these services will typically be letting only about half of the usual numbers travel to allow for socially distanced seating plans will be in place.
- The use of face coverings is a legal requirement on public transport for all passengers over 11 years of age and is advisable for younger children, but with some exemptions exist for passengers with certain medical conditions. We have applied the same principle to all our transport even though this is not a strict requirement outside of public bus services.
- The Guidance makes provision for “school day only” bus services and for journeys to be re-designated so that they can only be used by school children.
- ‘School children and college student only’ services will accept all usual pass types but will not be available to other (Adult) passengers. Re-designating them in this way means that the buses can then be treated like a dedicated (closed door) service (detailed below) reducing the need for social distancing. These services can then make use of all forward-facing seats, but will not carry standing passengers or make use of side facing seats. This will increase the available capacity on these services to around 65-70% of usual levels.



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Dedicated Home to School Transport

- This constitutes all vehicles that solely support students for their journey to school (including those re- designated as school day only as outlined above).
- 1m social distancing is not a requirement on these services, but should be maintained where possible.
- It is recommended that all passengers wear a face covering wherever possible.
- KCC will try to ensure that different schools are not mixed on this transport where possible, but this will likely be limited to smaller vehicles due to the limited availability of additional large vehicles within the network.
- Children to use the same seat on the vehicle each time they travel where possible.

Common principles that apply to all transport types:

- School transport will be running, predominantly to usual timetables.
- There will be heightened cleaning regimes paying attention to high contact areas.
- Increased ventilation, i.e. keeping all windows open where possible.
- Where we have been advised of staggered school timing we have attempted to support this as much as possible, however, it is only really practicable where transport is not shared between schools and if the same stagger applies to all children on the vehicle.
- All public bus services will observe the social distancing guidelines and have seating plans in place.
- Many school day only services have been restricted to be used only by school children so that we can make more space available.
- We have encouraged children to travel via alternative means where possible and have reduced the number of children that will be travelling so that space is available where it is needed.
- We are working with operators to provide extra vehicles on busier services and will continue to do this so that everyone can travel. Around 80 additional vehicles have already been identified and this work will remain a priority throughout the school year.
- The use of face coverings for all transport staff unless they are separated by a Perspex screen.
- We will continue to monitor all services and any new guidance so we can continue to make schools transport as safe as possible.



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There are also ways in which passengers can help (although it is understood that not all guidance will be suitable for every child, dependent on their needs):

- By planning their journey and if travelling by bus, consider using less busy stops and use contactless payments (including Kent Travel Savers and other pre-paid passes) or have the correct change where possible.
- By wearing a face covering.
- By following all instructions and only using designated seats and complying with any instruction/information provided by the driver.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before and after completing your journey.

StageCoach Update – received on 14 August NO CHANGE ISSUED ON BUSES

At this difficult time our priority is to protect the safety of your children, our passengers and colleagues. We've been listening carefully to feedback on what extra steps we can take to help people feel safe onboard our buses. One of the measures we have taken is to minimise cash handling by not issuing change on the bus. To confirm, we are continuing to accept cash on our buses, but our drivers are unable to give change back. Any overpayments are donated to Demelza Hospice Care for Children. Some of you will have purchased a KCC pass for your child, this can be scanned on the bus as usual. However we know some of you didn't want to commit to a long term ticket in such uncertain times.

Don't worry, we still have lots of options for you.

1. Pay with the exact change
2. Buy a monthly ticket on our website: <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/tickets>
3. If your child has a mobile phone, you can download our app and buy day or weekly tickets straight to their phone: <https://www.stagecoachbus.com/app>

Thanks for bearing with us on this.

FACE-COVERINGS

The Government require all passengers using public transport aged 11 years or more, to wear a face-covering unless medically exempt. Our drivers will remind passengers of this requirement, but it is the responsibility of your child to comply. Our drivers will not refuse travel or apply any enforcement measures, but we appeal to students and parents to ensure that this is taken seriously and that a face-covering is worn at all times when on the bus.



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BUS SERVICE LEVELS – Update Received 25 August 2020

All our school services will be running as usual albeit with a reduced capacity.

Some of our bus journeys will be running as ‘dedicated schools services’. This means they will only be available for young people to board if travelling to and from their place of education. The general public will not be able to use them, and, in accordance with government instructions, the current capacity limits will not apply. We will be able to carry any young person on these services up to nearly the maximum seated capacity of the bus (no standing and no use of seats close to the driver or rear-facing). It is really important that students take a seat as soon as they get on board. A “dedicated school service” means that the bus will only drop off students at the school/s, the bus won’t drop off at other regular stops. If a bus usually serves more than one school it will drop students off at each school, as usual. KCC are happy for these services to carry students from more than one school.

The following services that serve schools in Canterbury are being treated as “dedicated school services”:

901	914	951
903	915	953
904	916	954
905	917	955
906	918	956
908	919	653
911	921	654
912	922	
913	925	

Unfortunately, when these services are full students will need to make use of the other services that serve your school. These services, which are open to the public will still have to adhere to the current strict social distancing rules with a much reduced capacity. However, some of these bus journeys will be shadowed by another bus running behind. These shadow buses maybe be operated by a different bus company. They will be there to provide back-up capacity if needed. We are currently working with the County Council to decide which journeys will be shadowed, but we may need to swap and change depending on where the busiest journeys are.



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SouthEastern Guidance for using the Railway: Update received 25 August 2020

SouthEastern have provided two documents which are attached with this letter:

- A letter with key guidance for both schools and parents/guardians and links to useful websites.
- A infographic with a cut-out checklist for parents/guardians whose children use the railway.

If your child is intending to use train services to travel to school, please ensure you have read this through with them.

Keeping Up to Date regarding Home to School Transport.

KCC have put together a dedicated website which will be updated with any changes. The website also includes a video to watch with your child to help them understand what will be involved with getting the bus to school and hopefully to alleviate any associated anxieties they may have. The website can be found here: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/returning-to-school-using-transport#tab-1>

You will also find attached with this letter a guidance leaflet shared by KCC on safe travel to school, which includes discussion points for safe walking and safe cycling to school.

I hope this compilation of information is helpful to enable you to plan a safe journey to school for your child. We will be working with Stagecoach and the KCC Home to School Transport team to provide feedback and pass updates on to you as parents as we receive them over the coming weeks. Please can we ask for your support as well as parents, in impressing upon your son/daughter the even greater importance of responsible and kind behaviour toward others on the buses to ensure that everyone keeps safe as we return to school.