

Re: Bus service update for September 2020

In preparation for our students returning to school in September, we have been pro-actively working in conjunction with the Public & Community Transport Team at Warrington Borough Council (WBC) to ensure our students and parents have the most up to date information on safe travel.

In addition to the Government guidance, which is detailed below from WBC, and in recognition of parental feedback to improve the bus service from the New Bold area, I am delighted to inform you that we have now secured a change to the service which will improve the access for students travelling from New Bold. Please note that times have changed as a result of this.

Details of the specific timetables and bus routes, which have been amended to reflect the change in end time of our school day to 2:40pm can be accessed via the following links:

**Link 1 = Link Network service 268 / 269 / 270 / 271 Late Bus

<http://www.greatsankey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/268-270-Timetable-09.2020-New-Bold-Final-TT-1.pdf>

** Link 2 = Hiltons service 271

<http://www.greatsankey.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/271-Timetable-09.2020-Hiltons.pdf>

Both of these services are dedicated school buses and as a result the wearing of face masks is not obligatory (as explained in the guidance below).

As part of this revised and updated service, there has been a review of the travel prices resulting in a slight price increase. However, to best support you, our families, we have worked tirelessly with the Transport Team to ensure that the overall cost is kept as low as possible and we are grateful for the fact that this remains lower than other local High School services.

As part of our planning for safe travel, we have also been liaising with the Department for Transport and their 'Travel Demand Management' system to ensure that our students' journey to school is as safe as possible. In our '**Reopening Guidance**' Booklet we have asked parents to complete an online survey in order to support NHS track and trace. The survey can be accessed via this link: <https://forms.gle/ikdPV3qi2XoXtVE86>

Should any further changes be announced we will be announced from the DFE we will ensure that we share this with you.

Government guidance for safe travel from WBC Transport Team:

'Government guidance for travel to school by bus in September continues to be updated with further detailed guidance expected shortly. Current guidance is that a distinction can be made between dedicated school bus services and public local bus services because on the school services only pupils to a specific school are normally carried and the same pupils will travel each day, so that random contact with additional people is unlikely. For these reasons the requirement for passengers to wear face coverings on public transport does not apply to school transport services – although if students choose to wear one they will not be deterred from doing so. In addition, the dedicated nature of the services make the 'Track and Trace' process much easier for identifying those who may have been in contact with someone who has subsequently tested positive to Covid-19.

Ordinary public transport services are different from school bus services as they carry the public in general, with many journeys being made at random and the wearing of face coverings is now mandatory for most passengers. Whilst a small number of passengers may be exempt for very specific reasons (details can be found on the Government website), high school pupils in general are not exempt and must wear face coverings in line with Government instructions.

At the present time the Council is reviewing Government guidance as it is received and is identifying strategies that can be adopted. Information is being collected on expected demand and this will be followed by engagement with operators and schools over the detailed transport requirements for September, taking into account Government guidance on social distancing on both these types of bus service and the effect that different scenarios may have on available capacity for each service.'

ADDITIONAL SAFETY STEPS TO TAKE WHILST TRAVELLING

- At the bus stop please maintain the recommended social distancing from other passengers not in your household.
- Wait for passengers to get off first before you board the bus
- Ensure you maintain social distancing, where possible (including at bus stops)
 - Certain bus companies may have cordoned off certain seats which you should not use in order to maintain social distancing
 - On board please ensure that you keep social distancing, the exception if you are travelling as a family group you may sit together
- If the bus capacity is reached the bus may display "Sorry bus full" on the destination.
- Purchase tickets using contactless methods
- Respect other people's space while travelling
- Avoid consuming food and drink on public transport, where possible
- Be aware of pregnant, older and disabled people who may require a seat or extra space
- Be aware that some individuals may have hidden disabilities
- Arrangements for disabled passengers have not changed however you may find drivers or staff providing assistance will be wearing a face covering, possibly gloves and may sanitise their hands before and after providing assistance. They may also ask you to wear a face covering. Please note that it may take longer to provide assistance.

ADDITIONAL PRECAUTIONS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN BY BUS COMPANIES

- Additional cleaning of buses throughout the day and evening
- Treating vehicle interiors with a anti-viral fog cleaning device
- Installation of Airbubbl filtration units to remove virus particles, bacteria and pollutants from the air
- Social distancing precautions throughout our workplace to protect our teams and customers from the risk of spreading the virus
- Providing appropriate PPE to staff