

19 August 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

## **Public transport to and from school - September 2020**

We have been asked by Buckinghamshire Council to forward on the information below (in blue text) to you in preparation for the new school term. Please be aware that:

- the Loudwater bus and Carousel Number 5 (please see 21 July email about the student number restrictions on the Number 5) are classed as dedicated school-only buses
- all Arriva and any other Carousel buses except the Number 5 are classed as public transport.

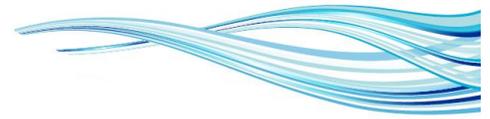
We would like to alert you to the fact that, owing to government guidance on social distancing, there is a reduced seating capacity on public buses. Those children that use public bus services to get to and from school may therefore be affected by this when they return in September.

Government guidance on school transport makes a clear distinction between dedicated school-only buses and public transport on requirements for social distancing. As the risk of infection is lower on dedicated school-only transport than on public transport, there are no mandatory government requirements for social distancing on school-only buses. However, parents may wish to discuss with their children the benefits of maintaining social distancing where this is possible. All passengers aged 11 years or older are legally required to wear face coverings on public transport. On dedicated school buses, although face coverings are not compulsory, we would still encourage their use.

Public bus companies will enforce government guidance on social distancing, which is 1m plus wherever possible. This means that there will be significantly reduced capacity on all public buses across the county, and parents need to understand that their children will not be able to board public buses which are at capacity. Parents who still wish their child to use public transport should be made aware that they have the responsibility for their child until they reach school. Not only should they consider how their child manages social distancing, but they will need to have contingency travel plans in place in case there is not capacity on the bus.

## **Eligible students on public transport**

There are a small number of students who are eligible for free home to school transport and who receive free travel on a public bus. We are writing to those parents/carers to alert them that we cannot guarantee that their child will be able to get a seat on a public bus due to the reduced capacity on public transport.



To support parents/carers of those eligible students who can take their child to school by private car, we are offering the opportunity for them to claim mileage from the council for the whole of autumn term instead of using their public transport, and we are asking schools, wherever possible, to encourage parents to take up this option.

Parents can find out more about what is meant by eligibility on our web page [Eligibility checker](#)

Parents of eligible students may make a mileage claim in lieu of free transport via our contact form [Buckinghamshire Contact Form](#)

As a school, we are aware that the public buses used by our students to get to and from school are normally full. We would therefore very strongly urge parents/carers to, wherever possible, consider alternative options such as car, lift shares, walking and cycling.

For the current government guidance on school transport buses, go to [Government Transport Guidance](#)

Kind regards.

Christine McLintock  
Headteacher