

The Highgate School Bus Service

Guidance On The Responsibilities Of Parents, Carers & Pupils.

1.0. Introduction

- 1.1. The School bus service operates on weekdays during School term time (with the exception of bank holidays)
- 1.2. The School bus service is contracted out to a duly authorised coach company. The drivers have undertaken safeguarding training and enhanced DBS accreditation arranged by The School.
- 1.3. The School bus is a private pre-paid service, administered & managed by the Highgate School transport office on behalf of Highgate School for the benefit of parents, carers & pupils of Highgate Senior & Junior schools only. Parents & carers of a pupil/s using the service must agree to abide by the responsibilities contained within this guidance.

2.0. Registration, Proposed Fee & Allocation of Places.

- 2.1. The Highgate School bus is run as a "not for profit" service, with the cost being charged by the coach company equally divided by each user. The resulting cost will be the "fee".
- 2.2. Prior to each term, a registration form is sent to all parents & carers to register for the bus, to ascertain the number of places required and to formulate routes. Parents will be asked to agree to abide by the responsibilities contained within this guidance.
- 2.3. The School will collate the registration forms to ascertain demand & viability for services. The buses & routes will be planned together with timings & location of stops subject to feasibility.
- 2.4. Priority for places on board will be given to current Highgate School pupils already using the service & pupils new to Highgate School before the remainder of The School on a first come, first serve basis. Return of the form does not guarantee a place on the bus. In the case of a route being oversubscribed, a waiting list will be established.

3.0. Confirmation of Place.

- 3.1. Subject to the availability of routes & spaces, a confirmation of a place on board the bus will then be issued to parents / carers, who have registered. Parents/carers will have the opportunity to review the proposed timetable, estimated fee & routes. Parents / carers will have the opportunity to withdraw their registration at this stage.
- 3.2. Once the number of passengers is finalised, the fee will be confirmed. An invoice will be raised & payment will be requested. (Not payable until the commencement of the service).
- 3.3. Use of the service by a pupil may be withdrawn during the course of a term if the fee is not paid.

4.0. Timetables, Stops & Journeys

- 4.1. The School Buses will only permit boarding & disembarking at the stops agreed by The School & outlined on the timetable. It is advised that all parents, carers & pupils familiarise themselves with their designated stop, bus route letter & designated seat. Additionally all pupils should be taught the safest route from their home to the location of their designated School bus stop. A plan showing designated seats will be displayed on entry to each bus.
- 4.2. Parents / carers are not permitted to park vehicles on, or obstruct access to School bus stops. Pupils should arrive at their stop at least 5 minutes prior to the allocated departure time.
- 4.3. School buses will not delay departure due to the lateness of pupils. If a pupil misses the School bus, parents / carers are expected to have a contingency travel plan to arrange transport of the pupil to or from School. Neither the School nor the coach company will delay the journey or arrange for a diversion to return to the pupil's stop to collect them.
- 4.4. Every effort will be made by drivers to adhere to the published timetable & are instructed not to leave a stop before the published time. All timings provided are dependent on traffic conditions. Use of the tracker should be always made to check progress of the bus prior to contacting the transport office.

- 4.5. **Highgate Junior School pupils** must be accompanied; by a parent or carer to and from their School bus stop. (Unless written permission has been provided by the Junior School Principal.) For the afternoon return journey; If a Junior School pupil is not collected from their stop by a parent or carer within 5 minutes of the School bus departure time for that stop, the pupil will remain on the bus. The bus will then continue as scheduled and an alternate collection point will have to be arranged with the Transport office. If this is not possible, the pupil will be returned to the School and remain in the presence of the Junior School senior leadership team until collected by the parent or carer. (This does not apply to Highgate Senior School pupils.)
- 4.6. Parents, carers and unauthorised pupils may not board the School bus at any time.
- 4.7. The School bus service does not provide chaperones. As there is no chaperone on board, the service is unsuitable for Pre-prep pupils. If an authorised adult, teacher or support staff member is travelling on the bus, they are there as a private individual and not as a chaperone, supervisor or monitor for the pupils.
- 4.8. Senior & Junior School pupils, boarding at the first collection stop in the morning or disembarking at the last stop in the afternoon will travel on board unaccompanied aside from the presence of the driver.
- 4.9. If a pupil leaves their personal property on the School bus, it is advised to contact the transport office, which will liaise with the coach company. If the property is located, the parent, carer or pupil will be informed and it will be their own responsibility to collect the item/s.
- 4.10. The service may be subject to adjustments and The School retains the right to change routes, bus stops or timetables. The School may also suspend or cancel the Service at any time. In the case of cancellation or suspension, a refund will be provided to all passengers for each complete week that the service is cancelled or suspended. If a pupil is withdrawn from the Service during a term, the full term's fee remains payable & no refund is available.
- 4.11. If a Senior School or Sixth form pupil used the School bus for the morning (home to School) journey, the parent / carer is requested to Email (transport@highgateschool.org.uk) or text (07377 735948) by 3pm If their child will be absent for the return (afternoon) journey. (Not required for Junior School pupils.)
- 4.12. Senior School & Sixth form pupils may board the bus for the afternoon return journey at the Junior School departure point at Caen Wood Hall & must ensure that they are aware of the departure time & location.

5.0. Pupil Behaviour

- 5.1. Pupils are reminded that they are ambassadors for The School & as such, The School expects all pupils to abide by the same standards of behaviour and conduct as they do within the School's premises. This includes whilst waiting for the bus at stops and when on board at all times.
- 5.2. During the journey, The pupils responsibilities are:
 - A: To stay seated and wear their seatbelts at all times during the journey. Not to board or disembark the School Bus whilst in motion;
 - B: Use the designated seat, not to reserve seats, or ask others to reserve seats for them;
 - D: Not distract the driver by shouting, asking the driver questions whilst driving, or playing music or videos on board without headphones;
 - E: Not to ask the Driver to delay the departure from the School, or bus stops;
 - F: Not to use inappropriate or crude language, discuss topics which others may find upsetting, offensive, tease or threaten other passengers in any way;
 - G: To check that they have taken all of their belongings from the bus in the mornings and afternoons;
 - H: Not to eat or drink (except water), whilst on board & not to damage the vehicle in any manner-
 - J: To follow the Driver's instructions at all times.
 - K: Use the provided hand sanitiser on entry & exit of each journey.
 - L: To wear a face covering at all times if aged 11 or over.
 - M: Requested only to converse only with other pupils seated adjacent or within their year group.



- 5.3. Breaches of these standards may result in the pupil not being permitted to travel on board.
- 5.4. In the unlikely event of a pupil causing damage or create a mess or spill, The School reserves the right to apply any reasonable charge to a parent or carer. This charge will be to cover the cost of cleaning or repairing the vehicle as required by the coach company.

6.0. Communications

- 6.1. Communications concerning the Highgate School bus, (other than daily service updates & urgent information) will be made by the transport office to parents & carers via Email. Parents & carers who wish to contact the Highgate School bus service are requested to use Email to the transport office only (details below) & not to the driver or the coach company. Please refer to: 6.5 & 6.6 below for urgent enquiries.
- 6.2. The mobile telephone number provided by a parent or carer to The School will be registered onto the bus SMS text messaging service. This will be used to provide important daily journey information when required. The transport office is unable to respond to replies or enquiries through this SMS Text service.
- 6.3. Parents & carers will be provided with access to track progress of the school bus. Please refer to the tracking system prior to contacting the transport office for matters concerning daily progress or checking for delays. Details on accessing the tracking system are provided on each timetable.
- 6.4. Ad-hoc travel for pupil's friends is currently suspended unless this is for an existing bus user from another route. This is subject to space and consent must be obtained from the transport office prior to travel.
- 6.5. If you have behaviour concerns, need assistance with urgent enquiries such as medical supplies left behind on board, or need to notify the transport office in advance of any change in your child's schedule or assistance in locating a pupil, please contact:
Stephen Monk (Transport & Sustainability Manager) transport@highgateschool.org.uk in the first instance.
 Transport office telephone Nos.: 020 8347 4468 / Mobile: 07377 735948
Available term-time: 7am - 4.30pm (8am - 4.30pm out of term) For any general information or enquiries please use Email. For changes of schedule, please email or text the mobile number.
Urgent enquiries for Senior School and Sixth Form: 020 8340 1524.
Urgent Enquiries for Junior School: 020 8340 9193.
- 6.6. If you have any **concern about the safety of your child** on the bus or their interactions with bus drivers then please contact the relevant member of our safeguarding team:

<u>Senior School:</u>	Graeme	Robertson	Deputy	Head	(Pastoral)
	graeme.robertson@highgateschool.org.uk				
<u>Junior School:</u>	Matthew	Foley	Deputy	Principal	Junior School
	matthew.foley@highgateschool.org.uk				

 In an emergency use the contact above.

7.0. Coronavirus (Covid 19) Protocol.

- 7.1. All pupils will be assigned a specific bus route & seat. Pupils may only travel in the designated seat. Pupils are not permitted to change seats before or during a journey. Plan showing the assigned seats will be displayed on entry to each bus.
- 7.2. All pupils aged 11 & upwards must provide their own face covering which must be worn correctly before boarding the bus. The face covering is to be worn during the entire journey and may only be removed upon disembarking the bus.
- 7.3. Pupils having a re-usable facemask should have a plastic bag or similar for storage of the face covering.
- 7.4. If using a disposable covering, the waste disposal receptacle provided should be used on disembarking the bus.
- 7.5. All pupils must sanitise their hands by using the hand sanitiser provided upon boarding & disembarking the bus.
- 7.6. Parents, carers or pupils are not permitted to arrange for friends to travel to or from home with them on the School bus on an 'Ad Hoc' basis. Please refer to S6.4 for exceptions.
- 7.7. Guidance contained within this section (7) will come into effect from 1st September 2020 & will remain in practice until notified otherwise by Highgate School.