

# HIGHGATE

## **The Highgate School Coach Service Guidance On The Responsibilities Of Parents, Carers & Pupils.**

### **1.0. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Highgate School Coach Service (referred to as "The service" and in turn relates to "School Coaches" in this guidance) operates on a return service all school days during Highgate School term time.
- 1.2. The service is a private pre-paid mode of passenger transport which is contracted out by Highgate School to approved & authorised coach companies. Designated coach drivers have enhanced DBS accreditation and have undertaken safeguarding training arranged by The School.
- 1.3. The service is administered & managed by the Highgate School transport office for the benefit of parents, carers & pupils of Highgate Senior & Junior schools only ("The School") who must agree to abide by the responsibilities in this guidance on registration. The service is not available to pupils in the Pre-Prep.

### **2.0. Registration, Proposed Fee & Allocation of Places.**

- 2.1. The service run as a "not for profit" mode of transport, with the cost being charged by the coach companies equally divided by each user. The resulting cost is the "fee".
- 2.2. Prior to each term, a form is made available to all parents/carers to register interest for coaches for the forthcoming term. The aim is to ascertain the number of places required and to formulate prospective routes.
- 2.3. The transport office will collate the responses submitted by these forms only to ascertain demand & viability for services. Coaches will be sourced & routes planned together with timings & location of stops subject to feasibility.
- 2.4. Priority for places on board will be given to all current Highgate School pupils already using the service together with new pupils starting at Highgate School as well as all those transitioning from the Pre-Prep to Junior School or from Junior to Senior School.
- 2.5. Any remaining places will be made available to the remainder of Senior & Junior School pupils currently not using the service.
- 2.6. Places are allocated on a "first come, first served" basis. Submission of the registration of interest form does not guarantee a place. In the case of a route being oversubscribed, a waiting list will be established.

### **3.0. Allocation of Places.**

- 3.1. Approximately 1 month prior to the start of each term, allocations of places on board will emailed to the address entered on your form. Parents/carers are provided the opportunity to review the proposed route, provisional timetable & estimated fee. The place can be accepted or declined at this stage.
- 3.2. Prior to the start of each term, a confirmation of the route, timetable & fee will be emailed. Unless communicated by email (to the transport office) by return that a parent/carer wishes to withdraw from the service, the place and fee are deemed accepted.
- 3.3. After the commencement of each term, an invoice for the fee will be sent by The School. Payment is not required until the invoice has been sent.
- 3.4. 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. School coaches will only permit boarding & disembarking at the stops agreed by The School & detailed on the timetable. It is advised that all parents, carers & pupils familiarise themselves with their designated stop, route letter & designated seating area. (Junior pupils to the front of the and seniors to the rear). Siblings (from either School) may sit together if preferred. Additionally, all Senior School pupils must be taught the safest route from their home to the location of their designated School coach stop. (For Junior School pupils, please refer to S4.5).
- 4.2. Parents / carers are not permitted to park vehicles on or obstruct access to the designated School bus stops. Pupils should arrive at their stop at least 5 minutes prior to the allocated departure time.
- 4.3. School coaches will not delay departure due to the lateness of pupils. If a pupil misses the coach, 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 companies 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 designated time. All timings provided are dependent on traffic conditions. Use of the coach tracking system should be made to check progress prior to contacting the transport office. Information on how to access & use the tracking system is shown on each timetable.
- 4.5. **Highgate Junior School pupils** must be accompanied, by a parent or carer to and from their stop. (Unless consent has been granted by the Junior School Principal – this is subject to review and may be withdrawn during the school year) 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 departure time for that stop, the pupil will remain on the coach. The coach will then continue as scheduled and an alternate collection point will need to be arranged with the Transport office. If this is not possible, the pupil will be returned to the School and remain in the care 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, unauthorised persons, or pupils may not board or ride on School coaches at any time.
- 4.7. School coaches do not provide chaperones. As there is no chaperone on board, the service is unsuitable for Pre-prep pupils. If an authorised coach company employee or member of Highgate School teaching or support staff is travelling, they are present for operational or driver monitoring reasons and not as a chaperone or supervisor of 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. Pupils are required to check that they have taken all their belongings from the coach in the mornings and afternoons. If a pupil leaves their personal property on School coaches, the parent/carer is advised to contact the transport office, which will liaise with the relevant 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, 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 or removed from the service after commencement of a term, the full term's fee remains payable & no refund is available.
- 4.11. If a Junior School passenger is not taking the return journey home that day, the parent/carer must inform the Junior School via email by 2.30pm. [jsoffice@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:jsoffice@highgateschool.org.uk) (This is NOT required for Senior School pupils.)
- 4.12. Senior pupils, whose last period is at the lower (Bishopswood Road) site may board at Caen Wood Hall in the afternoon but must allow the Juniors to board first. Alternatively, if their route has an additional 'request' stop for senior pupils only at TfL stop 'N' on Hampstead Lane by Athlone House. When crossing Hampstead Lane, pupils must use the pedestrian crossing opposite Athlone House to access this stop.
- 4.13. Ad-hoc travel for a pupil's friend is subject to consent & must be applied by the parent/carer to the transport office only. (Not School offices). Application by email only ([transport@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:transport@highgateschool.org.uk)) & must be sent at least 3 school days prior to day of travel. Please note that all School coaches run at or close to capacity, parents/carers should refrain from planning before consent has been confirmed. Consent is only available subject to sufficient notice, space on the coach & all safeguarding protocols can be adhered to.

## 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 coach at stops and when on board at all times.
- 5.2. During the journey, the pupils must follow the driver's instructions at all times and:
  - A: To stay seated and wear their seatbelts at all times during the journey. Not to board or disembark School coaches whilst they are in motion.
  - B: 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 from stops;
  - F: Not to use inappropriate or crude language, discuss topics which others may find upsetting, offensive, tease or threaten other passengers or the driver in any way.
  - G: Not to eat or drink (except water), whilst on board & not to damage the vehicle in any manner.
- 5.3. Any breach of the standards listed in S5.2 could result in The School suspending the pupil from travelling on board. Continued or persistent breaches may result in the place being withdrawn & the fee for the remainder of the term is payable. No refund will be provided.
- 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 to cover the cost of cleaning or repairing the vehicle as required by the coach company.

## 6.0. Communications

- 6.1. General communications and non-urgent enquiries concerning the Highgate School bus, between parents/carers and the School Transport Office (or vice versa) should be via Email: ([transport@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:transport@highgateschool.org.uk)). Parents / carers must not communicate through the driver or coach companies.
- 6.2. For a change in a Junior School pupil's schedule, please contact the Junior School office at the earliest opportunity: ([jsoffice@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:jsoffice@highgateschool.org.uk)) 020 8340 9193.

### **Urgent Enquiries:**

- 6.3. If you need assistance with urgent enquiries such as medical supplies left on board, locating a pupil or have behaviour concerns, please contact: **Stephen Monk (Transport & Sustainability Manager)**: 020 8347 4468 / Mobile: 07377 735948 Available term-time: 7am - 4.30pm (8am - 4.30pm out of term)

**Urgent enquiries for Senior School: 020 8340 1524.**

**Urgent enquiries for Junior School: 020 8340 9193.**

- 6.4. If you have any **concern about the safety of your child** on the coach or their interactions with coach drivers then please contact the relevant member of our safeguarding team:

**Senior School:** Cleo Lawrence, Director of Safeguarding: [cleo.lawrence@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:cleo.lawrence@highgateschool.org.uk)

**Junior School:** Emma Duong Saka, Deputy Principal, Junior School: [emma.doung@highgateschool.org.uk](mailto:emma.doung@highgateschool.org.uk)

In an emergency use the School contact telephone numbers above in S6.3.

- 6.5. To provide all Parents / Carers (only) with urgent, or essential travel information, the mobile telephone numbers you provide to The School will be entered into the "Schoolpost" SMS text messaging service. The transport & School offices are unable to respond to replies or enquiries through this service. This is not available for pupils.
- 6.6. Parents & carers will be provided with access to track progress of their designated School coaches. 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 for the coaches are shown on each timetable.