

27 August 2020

Dear parent/guardian,

We are writing to confirm the situation around buses for school children for the coming academic year. We obviously don't need to explain how the Coronavirus situation has caused a huge amount of uncertainty around many elements of children returning to school and we apologise for the lateness of this information.

Now that we know more about how things look like progressing with regards to schools reopening, and the legislation around school buses, we can confirm our plans for the new year to ensure that we can still provide services to get students to and from school safely.

Our plan for your school for September is this:

From September, Highdown School students will temporarily no longer be able to use school routes 82 and 84 as these will now be private services for other schools - however, our records show that very few Highdown students use these routes anyway. There will, however, be a temporary new service, numbered 984 which will operate as a private service for Highdown pupils, departing Friar Street at 7.48am and St Barnabus Church at 3.20pm. The route will run via Nire Road, Caversham Centre, Caversham Heights and Rotherfield Way.

Students can still use the existing berry 23 and 24 buses, but as these are public services, they will be operating at 50% capacity. Please see our website for full details: www.reading-buses.co.uk/schools

The fares will remain the same as last year and can be bought online at www.reading-buses.co.uk/shop. Your child will need a 'Boost' ticket which can be found under the travel area that they need (for Highdown School, this would either be simplyReading or, if you live outside of the Reading area, simplyNetwork. Please check our website for details.) There are a number of options, with the best value being the annual ticket which can be bought in instalments via Direct Debit. This ticket allows your child to travel for the entire year and is valid on any bus within the specified area, not just school buses.

We are advising that if students are travelling on a public service, they should allow more time to travel to school as these capacities are limited - in fact, we

recommend that they travel earlier than normal to guarantee getting to school on time if using public services.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss the transport situation with us directly, please email customerservices@reading-buses.co.uk

Yours faithfully,

Reading Buses