

14 July 2022

Dear parents and carers,

Following on from our communication yesterday, I would like to update you on the bus service situation and confirm that:

- The 403 from Otford is being covered by the Arriva 402a service.
- The 208a and 230 services will be covered by the Go Coach 208 from Pembury and the Autocar 288 from Rusthall. However, this will leave Fordcombe and Langton Green not directly served.

In addition, we believe that the following services will be in place for September, but their feasibility will be monitored. Therefore, it is likely that some services may cease from October.

222 Autocar service between Wrotham and Tunbridge Wells
224 Autocar service between St MC school and Tonbridge
235 Autocar service between Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells
T3 Go Coach service between Knockholt Station and Tonbridge Schools

I appreciate that you may be feeling cautious about buying the KCC Travel Saver Pass for the named services. It is clear from all discussions that schools have attended, that the future of the services will be determined by the demand for the service and the financial viability. To secure the services moving forwards, it must be clear that there is a strong need, therefore the passes need to be bought and the students need to be on the buses. KCC have stated that they will refund the KCC Travel Saver Passes that are bought where the services are cancelled, so whilst inconvenient, there is limited financial risk. This would be a proportional refund based on the point in the academic year of the cancellation. KCC will not refund any passes bought directly with the providers i.e. Arriva.

A group of Tonbridge schools have investigated the feasibility of managing non KCC organised buses on the routes in question. There has been limited-minimal interest from bus companies and the cost would be almost quadruple the cost of the Kent Travel Saver Pass, as the significant subsidies that KCC provide for school bus services would not be in place. We therefore believe that this is not a viable alternative.

As schools we have expressed our concerns through the travel forum, that has representatives from across the bus and train providers, local councillors, Tom Tugendhat's office and KCC and in subsequent communications with KCC.

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Please find below a list of contacts to lobby for support and express your concerns:

KCC:

Mr Stephen Pay: public.transport@kent.gov.uk

Tonbridge council:

Mr Matt Boughton: matt.boughton@tmbc.gov.uk

Mr Mark Hood: mark.hood@tmbc.gov.uk

Members of Parliament:

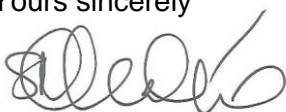
Tom Tugendhat MP: tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk

Laura Trott MP: laura.trott.mp@parliament.uk

Greg Clark MP: greg.clark.mp@parliament.uk

Attached with this letter is a list of changes by KCC. Please be reassured that we are doing everything in our power to secure the services and find viable alternatives.

Yours sincerely



Mrs S Clark

Acting Headteacher

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