



HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT 2020 - 2021

TERMS & CONDITIONS

1. BENNETTS COACHES AGREEMENT

- 1.1 **Our Commitment:** Bennetts Coaches is committed to providing daily Home to School Transport for specific schools in Gloucestershire. That service requires understanding on our part to provide routes which are reliable in operation and beneficial to the user. A revenue generating bus service should always be capable of promoting what must essentially be a commercially viable interest for the operator to sustain operational safety standards and provide a quality arrangement that parents have a right to expect for their children.
- 1.2 **Applications: ALL applications will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis.** This also applies to students renewing their bus pass who, in previous years, may have had priority over new applications. You must submit a renewal application as we do not operate an automatic renewal system.
- 1.3 **Bus Stop:** We will transport your child to and from school from the bus stop selected on your completed application form. We cannot accommodate different pick up and drop off points and are unable to guarantee your child travels with friends, unless they request the same stop. We advise students to be at their selected bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the time stated on the finalised timetable.
- 1.4 **Route:** The route each bus takes will be determined by the bus stops requested and the numbers of children requesting those stops. Once routes are finalised, your child will be able to board/alight the bus at any stop on the route that falls within the same pricing bracket. Your child must only travel on the route they have a bus pass for. They are not permitted to travel on any other route.
- 1.5 **Route & Timings:** Please note that we reserve the right to make adjustments to routes and timings at all times to ensure arrival at school in time for the beginning of the day and to accommodate as many children as possible with their transport to and from school. This may mean your child travels on a different route to what they may have been on previously, however, their bus stop will be as you requested.
- 1.6 **Payment Deposit: A £105.00 non-refundable deposit** will be payable at the time you apply on-line for your child's bus pass. This payment forms part of the overall total cost of the bus pass and is in addition to all other payments due. The deposit paid at the time of applying is **non-refundable** and will not be refunded if a bus pass application is subsequently cancelled.
- 1.7 **Payment Options:** In addition to the £105.00 non-refundable deposit payable at the time of application, we will also require one of the following:
- **A one off payment** for an Annual Bus Pass payable on 1st August 2020.
 - **A one off payment** for Year 11 students only for an Annual Bus Pass payable on 1st August 2020.
 - **Nine monthly payments** for an Annual Bus Pass. The first payment is due on 1st August 2020 and all subsequent payments will be due on the 1st of every month to 1st April 2021 inclusive.

We no longer offer the option to pay Termly in three payments.

- 1.8 Payment:** Payments will be automatically deducted when due from the debit/credit card details given at the time of application. The payments are not set up as a Standing Order from your bank account. All payments will be automatically processed using the on-line payment application Stripe. It is expected that parents/guardians will ensure sufficient funds are available for the payment of the school bus pass when due and the card details given remain valid. You can log in to your account to change your card details if required.
- If payment fails, the system will attempt a re-try 12 hours later. If that payment fails, you will be notified accordingly and an attempt to take payment will occur again within 3 days. If the third attempt fails, you will receive notification that you are now required to make a manual payment to us within 3 days. If that payment is not received within 3 days your son/daughter's bus pass is at risk of being withdrawn and travel may be refused.
- 1.9 Year 11 Students:** A payment option is available for students starting Year 11 in September 2020 as we are aware many students will be on study leave from May 2021. If there are any discrepancies in birth year, we will require evidence of Date of Birth to be presented.
- 1.10 Sixth Form Students:** If your child wishes to enter Sixth Form, but their place is grade dependent, you may decide to apply for a bus pass before GCSE results day. If your child ultimately attends a different Sixth Form to the one you originally booked transport for, we will, where possible, transfer your booking to that service/school if vehicle capacity allows. If, however, your child does not take up their Sixth Form place and you cancel their bus pass application, **the £105 non-refundable deposit paid when you applied will not be refunded.**
- 1.11 Single fares:** Single fares are not available on any of our school services.
- 1.12 Confirmation of receipt:** Once your application has been completed and the £105 deposit paid, you will receive electronic confirmation that your application has been successful and your child has been allocated a place on the school bus.
- 1.13 Oversubscription/Waiting Lists:** We anticipate reaching full capacity on many of our routes. Once applications are received by us, it can take several weeks to collate the information and produce route timetables. Please be assured we do our very best to accommodate all applications, however, we are unable to predict from year to year which areas may be oversubscribed. You will be contacted by us as soon as it becomes evident we are unable to offer your child a place on the bus. At that time, your child can be added to our waiting list as places can become available at a very late stage once GCSE results are known (20th August 2020).
- 1.14 Days of Operation:** Our vehicles will operate on school term dates only at the times advised by us. If any school chooses to close early (e.g. at the end of term or for open evening preparation) we cannot guarantee we will be able to pick students up at the earlier finish time.
- 1.15 Service PA 1: School bus service PA 1 will operate to the Pate's Grammar School term dates and timetable requirements only.** If your child uses PA 1 for either Sir Thomas Rich's School or Denmark Road High School, we will where possible give you advance notice of term dates and early finish times for Pate's. Parents should, however, also check via the Pate's School website their operational days. Bennetts Coaches will not be held liable for any additional travelling costs that may be incurred on days when the school bus does not operate.
- 1.16 Bus Passes:** We operate a bus pass system on all our school routes to ensure we do not overload any of our vehicles. Bus passes will be posted out to all successful applicants, along with the finalised route timetable, around mid-August ready for the Autumn Term to start in September. Upon receipt of the bus pass, it is your responsibility to ensure the stop detailed on the pass is as you requested. If you believe this to be incorrect, please contact the office immediately on 01452 527809. Your child must have his/her bus pass with them for each journey and bus passes must be kept in a presentable condition at all times. There will be a £5.00 charge payable for the replacement of a damaged or defaced bus pass. Bus passes are non-transferable and your child is not permitted to travel on any vehicle other than that stated on his/her bus pass. Bus passes remain the property of Bennetts Coaches at all times.

- 1.17 Lost Bus Passes:** As a company we have taken steps to ensure that no child need be left stranded at a bus stop or at the school if a bus pass has recently been lost. Children who have lost their bus pass can request a form from the driver for a duplicate pass. However, it must be made clear that the child/parent is liable for the duplicate pass fee of **£5.00**. The scheme is for **EMERGENCIES** only, abuse of which will not be tolerated.
- 1.18 Re-issue of Bus Passes:** Bus passes may be re-issued at least once throughout the school year at a time determined appropriate by the company.
- 1.19 Timetables:** The finalised route timetable will be posted to you along with your child's bus pass. We aim to operate services to the timetable advertised, however, we cannot be held responsible for journeys that take longer than expected due to factors beyond our control e.g. road traffic accidents, traffic congestion, road works, adverse weather conditions etc.
- 1.20 Refunds:** Refunds will only be considered for students who have opted to pay the one off payment for an Annual Pass and who will no longer be attending the school of their travel choice. Refunds will not be given to those who opt to pay either by nine monthly payments or the already discounted Year 11 payment. Any decision taken by management regarding refunds is final.
- 1.21 Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles:** If you require a wheelchair accessible vehicle for your child's transport to school, you must notify us of this at the time of application using the tick box option shown.

2. PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

- 2.1 Payment:** It is expected that all parents/guardians will ensure sufficient funds are available for the payment of the school bus pass when due and that the card details given remain valid. If payment fails, you will be notified accordingly and an attempt to take payment will occur again within 3 days. If the second attempt fails, you will receive notification that you are now required to make a manual payment to us within 3 days. If that payment is not received within 3 days your son/daughter's bus pass will be withdrawn until payment is made and they will be refused travel.
- 2.2 Parental Support:** We expect parents to support our efforts to preserve a worthy standard of behaviour and orderly form of conduct by all students who travel on school transport. Observance of this rule is a fundamental principle by which we transport your child and is central to the idea that you will accept responsibility for the actions of your child.
- 2.3 Withdrawal of Bus Pass:** If our expected standards of behaviour are not met, disregarded or opposed in any way by your child, their bus pass will be withdrawn by the driver and a member of the management team will contact the parent/guardian, and school if necessary, to seek a remedy for the situation in hand. Failure of the parent/guardian to accept this obligation could result in the company refusing to continue to transport the offending student. The decision of the company will be binding on all parties to this agreement.
- 2.4 Code of Conduct:** Parents/Guardians and students are informed that the following code of conduct is called for on all our services:

Seatbelts	Where seatbelts are provided for use on a coach these must be worn at all times whilst the vehicle is underway on the public highway. Students must remain seated at all times whilst the vehicle is in motion.
Bus Passes	Bus Passes must be prepaid and are only valid for the route shown. Students should clearly show the driver their bus pass for inspection at the commencement of every journey as proof of the student's right to travel. No bus pass may mean travel is refused.

Bus Stops	Students should form an orderly queue at the bus stop prior to the bus arriving. Under no circumstances should they attempt to rush the bus entrance or make any attempt to board the bus before it is fully halted.
Timetables	These are produced as a guide to show the expected time of the service at each stop along the route. The finalised route timetable will be posted with your child's bus pass. We aim to operate services to the timetable advertised, however, we cannot be held responsible for journeys that take longer than expected due to factors beyond our control e.g. road traffic accidents, traffic congestion, road works, adverse weather conditions etc. Students are advised to be at the bus stop five minutes prior to times stated .
Rubbish	Students must take their litter with them before leaving the school bus or place their rubbish in bags if provided.
No Smoking	We operate a No Smoking Policy on all school transport no matter what the student's age. Infringement of this rule will cause us to seek an immediate exclusion of the offending student.
Bad Language	Swearing by students to other students or bus drivers will not be tolerated . The offence could result in a bus pass being withdrawn.
Noise Levels	Excessive noise on a school bus becomes a distraction for drivers. Students must keep noise levels to a minimum for the safety of themselves and other passengers. (e.g. no shouting, no loud music or videos played from mobile phones).
Distraction	Drivers should not be distracted in any way whilst driving unless there is an emergency on board the vehicle.
Damage	Wilful damage or disfigurement of any fittings relating to the vehicle will not be tolerated and will result in the right to travel being withdrawn.
CCTV	CCTV may be fitted to our vehicles for added security. If it is deemed necessary by management to aid an investigation or complaint, CCTV footage will be viewed in accordance with our CCTV Procedure. This footage may be shared with the School, Police, DVSA and other authorities as appropriate.
Emergency Exits	There will be no tampering with the emergency exits unless in the case of a genuine emergency. This offence could result in a bus pass being withdrawn.