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# **1. Provision of Home to School Transport**

## **Terms & Conditions**

(Applicable to all parents/guardians/legally responsible persons and students who use the bus service)

### **Organisation**

Parents acknowledge that the bus service is organised and arranged by Roberts Travel Group and not by the school attended. The service is open to all students attending either their catchment school or by choice or faith to a school out of their catchment areas. All applications will be dealt with in the same way on a first-come-first-served basis.

### **The basis of Your Agreement with Us**

Roberts Travel Group agree to carry you on our vehicles solely upon and subject to the terms and conditions set out below and the Code of Conduct & Advice to Parents & Students, also shown below, and any additional terms and conditions which may be amended from time to time.

Together, these terms constitute the entire understanding between you, the passenger and Roberts Travel Group & set out your legal rights and obligations and form the basis of our legal contract to you.

These Terms and Conditions do not affect your statutory rights.

### **Duties of a Parent/Guardian/Responsible Person**

If you are the parent, guardian or legally responsible person who purchases a pass or accepts the declaration on behalf of someone else, you undertake that you have the authority to act on behalf of the other person. You also acknowledge that you are responsible for ensuring that the person travelling has read and fully understands these terms and conditions, the code of conduct and any applicable terms and complies with them.

### **The Bus Service**

We shall make reasonable efforts to provide the service we advertise. However, parents acknowledge the right of the Roberts Travel Group to change any aspect of the bus service including timetables and routes, or to discontinue the bus service, giving in each case, such prior notice as is reasonable and practicable. If the service is discontinued, parents will be entitled to any such pro-rata refund of any advance payment as it deems applicable

We also reserve the right to arrange alternative transport as deemed by us to be appropriate at any time to meet our commercial needs and the need of our passengers without notice.

### **Payment**

Any person entering into this agreement does so upon the understanding that they are committing to payments for the whole of the school year from August of one year to July of the next. Seats on a vehicle are allocated to a student for the full school year and cannot be cancelled except under the strictest of circumstances (see "Cancellations & Refunds").

Parents will be required to pay in advance with an agreed instalment method, by selecting of one of the terms offered. However, even though we provide payment methods of up to 10 separate payments, upon payment of the first amount, you will become immediately liable to Roberts Travel Group for the full price of the pass upon it being issued to you.

You also accept that the monthly instalments do not relate to any particular period of time but are simply contributions in respect of the total annual fee. We reserve the right to recover the full amount upon written notice to you at any time during the school year, such discretion to be exercised

reasonably.

From time to time at our discretion, we may refuse to issue a pass and under no circumstances will we issue a pass until all sums owing have been received by us in full as cleared funds. This can also include the payment of monies owed to us for previous school years.

We also reserve the right to ask for the full yearly amount of the transport fee in advance (plus any outstanding monies from previous academic years) if you have persistently defaulted on school or college transport payments.

Applications received after the 30th June will be treated as late and there is no guarantee that transport will be arranged before the start of the autumn term.

Late applications, particularly those received in August and September could incur a wait of at least a week for transport to be arranged. If this happens, you will need to make your own arrangements for your child/ren to get to and from school. No refund of fares, expenses incurred, or pro rata reduction of charges will be made for late applications.

Failure to complete payments for transport fees will result in pupils being excluded from school transport and from making any further transport applications.

Please note the transport charge is calculated on an annual basis and there will be no reduction for any periods where transport isn't required e.g. exam leave or sickness, or for any occasions when due to unforeseen circumstances transport is not available e.g. snow days, vehicle breakdowns / lateness, school closures / early finishes.

### **Ad-Hoc Accompanied Travel**

Sometimes students who are not entitled to use the bus may wish to travel on a service, perhaps to collaborate on homework or simply to visit on an odd occasion. If this occurs, the pupil concerned can either contact Roberts Travel Group to gain permission, which is then granted at our discretion. At DeLisle College, a temporary pass can be obtained from the school office who are allocated passes for spare seats on each transport. There will be a charge made for this service.

If the person already travels on another service to the school that is operated by Roberts Travel Group, there will be no charge, but you will still be required to seek permission prior to travel.

### **Bus Passes**

Bus passes are issued each term or year upon receipt of payment. All passes are bar coded and will be scanned on entry to the vehicle. If the pass has been cancelled or withdrawn for any reason, it will be shown on the scanner and travel **WILL BE REFUSED** by the driver. It is important that lost passes are replaced immediately as we have a **NO PASS NO TRAVEL** policy. Replacement passes can be requested from Roberts Travel Group at a cost of £10 per pass, full details of which are on our website.

### **Failure to present a pass to the driver**

It is understood that from time to time, students will mislay rather than lose a pass. If a student fails to present the driver with a pass for a period of 3 days, it will be assumed to be lost. Once this happens, the pass will be cancelled and a new one issued at a cost of £10.00. If your child has not found it after 2 days, please contact us so that a decision can be agreed on finding or replacing it.

### **Passes lost during the college day**

Any student who loses a pass during the day will still be eligible to travel home in the afternoon. Drivers are issued with a passenger list of eligible students who can travel on that route. This will only be allowed on the return journey home and on the return to school the next morning. A replacement pass must then be requested next morning from Roberts Travel Group at a cost of £10.00 full details of which are on our website.

The pass will then be sent with the driver for collection that afternoon.

Failure to do so could see travel declined until a new pass has been purchased.

### **Damaged Passes**

As in the item above, damaged passes will be treated in the same way.

### **Cancellations and Refunds**

Cancellations will only be considered under the following circumstances;

- You move out of the area of any of the services provided to the school.
- The child changes school.
- The inability of the student to attend school long-term due to medical problems.

All requests must be given in writing to Roberts Travel Group and include supplementary evidence to back up the reasons given for the cancellation request. In agreeing to any refund, we will refund the amount that we, in our sole discretion, deem to be reasonable. The price paid for travel includes charges other than the travel element. Refunds are therefore not made on a pro-rata basis to the number of days of travel remaining as at any time, the minimum period of notice required for cancellation is 8 weeks. No refund will be made for cancellations received after 1<sup>st</sup> February for any circumstances.

### **CCTV**

By accepting these Terms and Conditions and/or using our services, you consent to the use of CCTV surveillance being used on our vehicles and to the recording of images to protect the safety of our passengers and our employees, officers, agents and third parties, to prevent and detect crime and to apprehend and prosecute offenders.

You therefore consent to the disclosure of any recorded images of your children to the police, other law enforcement agencies, the school, other schools, school authorities, legal representatives, the media (where considered reasonably necessary to identify victims, offenders and/or witness to a possible crime) and/or to any other relevant authorities.

### **Pickups/Drop Offs/Stopping Places**

Parents are responsible for making satisfactory and safe arrangements for delivery and collection of their child to and from the pickup and set down points, such as they would if the pupil were travelling by public transport. A young child must be accompanied to the pickup point and seen onto the bus by an adult or where appropriate by an older pupil or sibling and similar arrangements must apply at the end of the journey.

Buses will only stop for passengers to board and alight at bus stops designated on the timetable or other agreed locations. Buses will only stop if the driver reasonably believes a person at that point is eligible for travel. At all times, intending passengers should indicate their requirement for the vehicle to stop in a manner recognisable by the driver, such as putting an arm out as would happen at a standard bus stop. Buses will not stop to pick up or drop off if the bus driver reasonably thinks that to do so will present a risk to safety.

It is advised that at times of poor weather conditions, passengers wait at stops along main roads as side roads and some villages may be impassable.

### **Personal Data**

You must notify Roberts Travel Group in writing of any changes of your name, address and telephone number, e-mail address, banking details or changes of card (i.e. a replacement). When purchasing a pass from us, we require you to provide us with the personal information requested, including but not limited to your name, contact details and other information.

In providing your personal data to us, you give your consent for us to record and retain it, to use it in all subsequent correspondence between us and you and for us to disclose it to your school, the police and to other parties as we deem appropriate. We reserve the right to disclose anonymous information (by which you cannot be identified) to third parties at any time for any proper purpose.

### **Carriage of personal property**

We will only carry your personal property at our sole discretion. We reserve the right to prohibit articles, which can include, but are not limited to the following:

1 - Food or drinks or other fluids in non-spill proof or open containers (cleaning cost may be payable in the event of spillages).

2 - Articles which we deem unacceptable due to their size, weight, shape or character;

3 - Any items which we consider may cause damage, offence or harm to our employees, vehicles, other passengers and/or third parties and any other items which may be referred to as being prohibited from time to time.

Passengers are solely responsible for the safety and security of their personal possessions and will be liable for any damage or delay caused by it or the passenger to our employees, vehicles, property, to passengers and/or third parties by any personal possessions carried on our vehicles or placed at our premises.

We do not accept any liability for any personal possessions, except in respect of damage suffered to such permitted possessions whilst on board one of our vehicles which has been caused by our negligence. In such cases, our liability:

- 1 - shall be excluded in respect of such items as jewellery, money (or equivalent), bank cards and fragile objects
- 2 - shall be limited to a total maximum payout of £300 per passenger per annum for all damages, such sum only payable upon us assessing and agreeing the value of the alleged damage.
- 3 - notwithstanding the above, no action shall lie against us in the case of damage to any personal possessions unless you make a detailed complaint to us in writing within seven (7) days of the alleged damage.

### **Lost Property**

If any discarded articles on our vehicles are found, the person finding it must notify and hand the article to the driver in the same condition in which it was found.

We reserve the right to charge for the return of lost, misplaced or discarded property on our vehicles, except where an article is returned to the owner during the course of the same journey in which case, on being satisfied that the claimant is bona fide, the driver will return the article to the claimant without payment or reward.

We reserve the right to open letters, packages, bags and other containers left on our vehicles or premises as we deem necessary. The application for the recovery of any lost property should be made to us in writing. If you fail to claim any article within one (1) calendar month of losing it, the property shall be deemed to have been abandoned and we may destroy or dispose of it immediately without notice.

Perishable goods shall be kept for no longer than forty-eight (48) hours following the time they were found. We reserve the right to dispose or destroy potentially dangerous articles immediately and without notice. We will not be liable for any damage however caused to any articles coming into our possession or arising in connection with our custody or return of such article.

### **Damage to vehicles**

Where a vehicle is damaged because of vandalism, we will seek to recover the full cost of repairs from the parents/guardians of the student/s responsible. If the amount is not paid, the travel pass will be withdrawn until the amount is settled.

### **Damage Liability**

We accept no liability for any damage suffered by the owner or other parties caused by;

- 1 - vehicles not running on time or at all.
- 2 - timetable alterations, delays, early running, detention, lack of punctuality, suspension, withdrawal, cancellation or deviation of any vehicle or service whatever, including but not limited to vehicles breaking down or being defective, inadequate planning, inclement weather or driving conditions, flood, strike, lockout or other industrial action, other act or omission of Roberts Travel Group, orders of a public authority, military action, riot, commotion, the provision by us of inaccurate or misleading information or by force majeure.

We accept no liability for indirect or consequential damage however caused. Nothing in these terms and conditions excludes our liability for death or personal injury insofar as the same is caused by our negligence or fraudulent misrepresentation.

We accept no liability for damage caused to, or by, any personal possessions carried by us except in respect of death or personal injury caused by our negligence. Such liability rests solely with the accompanying passenger. As expressly stated in these terms and conditions, we accept no liability for any damage suffered by passengers relating to our services.

### **Code of Conduct**

By making payments for the service, parents/students agree to comply with the Code of Conduct. Roberts Travel Group will contact parents of any child involved in the case of a complaint or bad behaviour. If the complaint is of a serious nature, such as vandalism or bullying, then transport will be withdrawn. If three complaints are received about the same child, the coach operator can and will refuse to allow the child to continue using the service and no refunds will be made. If damage is caused to a vehicle by a passenger, an invoice for the full cost of repair will be sent to the parent and transport will be withheld until payment is made.

### **Supervision**

No formal arrangements are made for the supervision of pupils when on the bus. There will not normally be a member of staff travelling on the bus other than the driver.

### **Drivers Discretion**

The driver of each bus has the authority to refuse to convey or carry a pupil whose behaviour appears to the driver to give rise to a risk of personal injury to him/herself or another or damage to property or vehicle

### **Concerns or Complaints**

A parent who has any concern or complaint relating to the bus service must notify Roberts Travel Group in writing ([schools@robertstravelgroup.co.uk](mailto:schools@robertstravelgroup.co.uk)) and by telephone in an urgent case (01530 817444). If the concern or complaint relates to a matter that could have pastoral or disciplinary implications within the school, the school should also be notified in writing

### **Responsibilities of Roberts Travel Group**

Parents agree that the coach driver is not expected to

- 1 – check that every pupil has boarded the bus that is entitled to do so
- 2 – ensure that a pupil has descended from the bus at the correct stop
- 3 – see that the pupil has been met
- 4 – contact parents or make alternative arrangements for a pupil who misses the bus, alights at the wrong stop, or is not met at the stop

## **2. Code of Conduct & Advice to Parents & Students**

**Our school services currently have over 1000 students travelling each day safely to schools and colleges.**

These guidelines have been produced with students, parents, schools and Roberts Travel Group in mind to provide a statement to describe in detail what to expect from Home to School Transport and to help provide safe and reliable school transport for all young people. Parents must ensure that their children are aware of these guidelines.

### **Parents; Understanding your responsibilities**

- Your child remains under your care until he or she is accepted for travel on the school bus and when they get off the school bus at the end of the school day.
- If you are concerned about your child's sense of road safety, you should accompany him or her to the stop and wait with him or her until the bus arrives. Similarly, you should ensure that young children are met when the bus returns from school.
- If your child is unaccompanied, make sure that he or she knows and follows the safest route, uses the safest crossing places and knows how to behave responsibly whilst waiting for their bus.
- Please make sure that you have discussed with your child what to do if the bus does not arrive or if he or she fails to catch the bus for any reason.
- In poor weather conditions, you are advised to take your child to a bus pick up point on a main (treated) road as some points with poor access may not be served. Local radio stations are a good source of information to find out if your child's school is open and/or the roads to it are passable.
- If you take your child(ren) to their bus pick up point in a vehicle, do not 'Block in' school buses by pulling in front of the bus. It is dangerous to do so, and your child is not guaranteed to board if the doors have been closed for departure. Instead, take them to the next available pick up point.

### **Specific Responsibilities for parents of young pupils**

#### **In the morning**

- Please make sure that your child is at the pickup point 5 minutes prior to the advertised time and is supervised as necessary.
- Encourage your child to wear the seatbelt if provided. Please note that the driver is not expected to instruct the passengers to wear their belts and are also not permitted to fasten your child's belt.
- Parents are discouraged from boarding the bus other than to fasten their own child's seat belt and it is expected that parents will show their children how to fasten the belt for themselves to help promote the child's involvement in this aspect of safety.
- At school, drivers will get as close as possible to the school (sometimes within the school grounds) and observe as children walk into the school grounds.
- Routes are designed so that the requirement for any public roads to be crossed, by pupils going into or coming out of schools is minimised.

#### **At the end of the day**

- Parents of young students will want to meet their child or decide for their child to be met, others will be happy for their child to make his or her own way home as they get older. Parents will make their own decision based on local circumstances and knowledge of their own child.

- Please make sure you are there to meet your child in plenty of time. Some days it may arrive slightly later depending on a variety of circumstances that may affect the operation on any day, but you should be there at least 5 minutes prior to the earliest time the vehicle is expected.
- When the bus arrives at any drop-off point, it will not wait for parents who are late.
- Please discuss with your child what to do if they are expecting to be met and you are delayed for any reason.
- Remember that the driver will not know whether your child is being met or not. If there are a number of children getting off and adults waiting to meet children, the driver may reasonably assume that your child is being met by one of these adults.
- If there is no one to meet your child at the stop or no responsible person he or she can go with, the driver will not leave a child who is expecting to be met. In these circumstances the driver will continue his journey but keep the child on the bus and inform Roberts Travel Group that the child is still on the bus who in turn will try and contact the person nominated on our booking system or if they have a local authority pass, we will contact them.
- If the driver thinks that there is another responsible person, e.g. another parent or neighbour collecting other children, he will permit your child to go with that person. As a last resort if all other options fail, your child may be taken to the nearest police station. Please remember that the bus may have other work to do after the school run and may not therefore be able to return to school or wait until you are able to collect your child.

## Specific Responsibilities of Older Pupils and Students

### Using School Buses; The Do's

- **DO** make sure that you arrive at your stop **5 minutes** before the scheduled departure time. Only get on or off the bus at the pick-up/drop-off points listed on your timetable. If you must cross the road after getting off, allow the bus to move off before doing so (use a pedestrian crossing where possible).
- **DO** stay alert while waiting for your bus, face the direction from which your bus approaches and be ready to board and show your bus pass.
- **DO** show your bus pass to the driver every time you travel. All students are issued with bus passes. If you cannot show it, the driver may refuse to carry you. You should discuss with your parents what to do if this happens. The bus pass is not valid if defaced or damaged and its misuse may lead to the holder being excluded from the transport. You have a responsibility to get a replacement pass as soon as possible (fee payable).
- **DO** have the correct change available on services where a pay-on-the-day is offered (currently 838 & 850). Not only does giving change slow down the loading process, but the drivers may not have sufficient of the type of coins needed to give change. In these circumstances, the driver may take the whole amount offered and give a receipt for change that may have to be repaid at a different time or date.
- **DO** behave responsibly always when waiting for, getting on, travelling on or getting off a school bus. If you misbehave you may be excluded from the transport.
- **DO** travel only on the bus you have been allocated to (the number is shown on your timetable or bus pass) - if you travel on any other bus you might be taking the place of another entitled student. Students attempting to travel without authority from Roberts Travel Group may be excluded from the transport.
- **DO** sit down when you board your bus and remain seated until you arrive at your drop-off point.
- **DO** wear a seat-belt if one is fitted to the vehicle. It is a requirement for all pupils to wear a seat belt if they are fitted to the bus. It is not the bus driver's responsibility to ensure that pupils wear a seat belt.
- **DO** discuss with your parents what your plans will be if the bus fails to turn up or if you fail to catch it for any reason. Very occasionally the bus may fail to arrive on time. If it is late you should wait for 20 minutes after the bus was due to arrive at the pick-up point. If the bus fails to turn up after this time, options include travelling to school using public transport, travelling to school with a responsible adult e.g. your parent or friend's parent. Roberts Travel Group will always replace a vehicle that is unexpectedly unavailable to travel the route.

### Using School Buses; The Do Not's

- **DO NOT** play about near the road while waiting for the bus and move away from the edge of the kerb as the coach pulls up at the stop..
- **DO NOT** get on or off the bus until it has stopped moving.
- **DO NOT** push or rush for the door when the bus has stopped.
- **DO NOT** take up more than one seat.
- **DO NOT** block gangways and exits, or take up seats, with bags.



- **DO NOT** distract the driver's attention as this could cause an accident. Only speak to the driver when he or she is not driving, or in an emergency.
- **DO NOT** smoke on school buses. If you do, you will be excluded from using the bus. This also includes e-cigarettes

## **What to do in a breakdown; Advice to Parents and All Students**

### **In the event of a breakdown or accident**

- **DO** follow the advice of the driver. He/she will normally seek help by telephone and arrange alternative transport if necessary.
- **DO** stay on the bus unless it is unsafe to do so.
- **DO NOT** make your own arrangements to get to school or home. Experience has shown that if pupils make their own arrangements it may lead to confusion and possible distress.

## **Use of CCTV on School Buses**

Parents and pupils should be aware that CCTV or other recording methods are used on many school contract buses to support initiatives against anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Vehicles using CCTV or other means of recording will have notices displayed to this effect.

Recorded images may be shown to school staff to identify individual pupils.

## **Damage to vehicles**

Where a vehicle is damaged because of vandalism, Roberts Travel Group will seek to recover the cost of repairs from the parents of the pupil or the student responsible for the damage. Failure to pay for the damage will lead to exclusion from the transport.

## **Exclusions**

- Regrettably, from time to time it is necessary to exclude pupils from the school bus if they are unable to behave responsibly and follow the reasonable instructions of drivers. Suspensions from transport are notified in writing from Roberts Travel Group. In all cases of exclusion, no refunds will be made for travel not taken.
- If a pupil is found to be travelling without entitlement, parents should expect that they will not be carried.
- Pupils may also be excluded if payments for school transport are outstanding.

## **Lost, stolen or damaged School Bus passes**

If your pass is lost, stolen or damaged you should immediately contact Roberts Travel Group to obtain a replacement pass. An administration fee of £10 is applicable. When a pass is lost or stolen or damaged, you will be allowed travel on the first morning to school, the return home and the journey back to school the next day. After that point, no further travel without a pass will be allowed.

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the services it relates to please telephone:

**01530 817444**

or write to: Roberts Travel Group, The Limes, Midland Road, Hugglescote, Leicestershire, LE67 2FX

Email: [schools@robertscoaches.co.uk](mailto:schools@robertscoaches.co.uk)

or visit our website: [www.robertstravelgroup.co.uk](http://www.robertstravelgroup.co.uk)

## **3. Anti-Social behaviour on school buses**

### **Introduction**

The vast majority of students travel to and from school every day in safety and without incident. However, antisocial behaviour on school buses by a small number of pupils is a growing problem. This is a national trend and not confined to Leicestershire.

### **Some of the implications of anti-social behaviour are:**

**For pupils and parents** - the safety of those directly involved and other pupils on the bus and the inconvenience when buses are delayed because of antisocial behaviour.

**For Roberts Travel Group** - the cost of repairing damage and the loss of income while a vehicle is out of service being repaired.

**For the School** - visible anti-social behaviour may diminish the reputation of the school in the community.

### **What is Anti-Social Behaviour?**

Anti-Social behaviour includes a range of problems.

#### **Some examples of anti-social behaviour on school buses are:**

- Fighting, bullying, intimidation of other pupils
- Verbal abuse of drivers and harassment of other pupils
- Vandalism, graffiti and criminal damage to vehicles
- Smoking, including the use of e-cigarettes
- Moving around the bus, distracting the driver
- Misuse of bus passes
- Opening emergency exits on the vehicle in a non-emergency situation
- Throwing objects from the vehicle.

### **What happens if anti-social behaviour is reported?**

As well as Roberts Travel Group carrying out its own investigations using witnesses, driver reports and any CCTV footage, we would also ask the school to carry out an investigation into the incident, as they know the pupils involved. It is for the school to determine how to carry out the investigation, but it would normally involve taking written statements from pupils who witnessed the incident and interviewing individually those pupils named or identified as being involved.

Any information given is treated in confidence. The investigation will seek to establish, as far as possible, exactly what happened and who was responsible. CCTV is fitted on many vehicles. Where CCTV recordings are available, they will be shown to the school to identify those pupils taking part in anti-social behaviour. In very serious cases, Roberts Travel Group may call the Police, particularly if there has been damage to the vehicle. The Police may carry out their own investigation and might also wish to interview those pupils involved.

### **What action is taken against pupils involved in anti-social behaviour?**

Following an investigation, any sanctions against pupils are decided by Roberts Travel Group. However, we will consult with the school, but our decision will be final. This is usually in the form of exclusion from transport for a defined period, although disciplinary action may also be brought by the school.

The action taken will depend on the severity of the incident and whether a pupil has previously been involved in anti-social behaviour.

**However, the following can be used as a guideline:**

- For a minor incident (e.g. misuse of bus passes, moving around the vehicle) - warning letter on the first occasion
- on the second occasion, exclusion from school transport for 1 to 5 days
- on subsequent occasions, exclusion from transport for 5 to 10 days

- For a serious incident (e.g. bullying, physical or verbal abuse of driver or pupils, smoking, any action threatening the safety of individuals or the vehicle, vandalism or damage to the vehicle)
- Exclusion from transport for a minimum period of 5 days up to 1 term depending on circumstances and previous history. These are guidelines and the action agreed in any particular case will consider individual circumstances and the views of the school.

Repeated serious incidents will lead to permanent exclusion from transport.

Parents are urged to contact Roberts Travel Group if they feel that their child has problems travelling on school transport.

### **What happens if a pupil is excluded from transport?**

When exclusion from transport has been agreed, parents will normally be notified in writing via email and given details of the exclusion period. During the exclusion period, it remains the parents' responsibility to ensure their child's continued attendance at school.

In very serious cases, where it is considered that the safety of the vehicle and other pupils would be put at risk by allowing a pupil to continue to travel, exclusion from transport may start immediately and without written notice, even where the child has been taken to school.

In such cases, either Roberts Travel Group or the school would attempt to contact the parents to make them aware of the situation and arrange for them to collect the pupil from school.

### **What if there has been damage to the bus?**

Roberts Travel Group will seek to recover the cost of repairs from the parents of the pupils responsible. The cost of repairs must be paid (or a payment plan agreed) before allowing the pupil back onto transport – even if the period of original suspension has been served.

### **What happens when a pupil returns to transport?**

After a period of exclusion has ended, a pupil will normally be allowed to travel on the school bus again. However, Roberts Travel Group may require certain conditions (e.g. that the pupil must use a specified seat at the front of the bus) or the pupil may be transferred to another school bus.

### **What other help is available if there is bullying on the bus?**

If there is bullying on the bus, it may be happening in school as well. The school should always therefore be involved in dealing with any bullying incident.

### **Refund of unused travel costs.**

Under no circumstances are any refunds given for periods of exclusion from travel.

## **For further help or information;**

**01530 817444**

or write to:

Roberts Travel Group, The Limes, Midland Road, Hugglescote, Leicestershire, LE67 2FX

Email: [schools@robertscaoches.co.uk](mailto:schools@robertscaoches.co.uk) or visit our website: [www.robertstravelgroup.co.uk](http://www.robertstravelgroup.co.uk)

## **4.Guidance on Transport to Schools and Colleges** **closing early/not opening**

### **Guidance**

This guidance is for home to school transport provided by Roberts Travel Group as to their position regarding such transport when either Roberts Travel Group or the school requires a 'one off' change to transport— most frequently because of poor weather conditions or does not operate due to pre-arranged closures.

### **Pre-agreed Closures**

When a school decides to close early, and it is not pre-agreed / programmed in the term dates announced prior to the start of the academic year, the school's responsibility is to contact Roberts Travel Group to request that their school transport services operate early to fit with the earlier finish time. Although in most cases there is no contractual onus on Roberts Travel Group to meet the earlier finish time, we will always endeavour to do so unless we have other commitments which would prevent them.

### **Ad-Hoc Requests for Early Departures**

Whilst it might be both reasonable and sensible for schools to close early it is also reasonable that Roberts Travel Group might not be able to alter the pattern of their operations to comply with the request, but we will provide transport if it is logistically possible. If a school shares transport services with one or more other schools, we would request that all schools agree to manage their early closures to allow the shared transport to cater for all students, otherwise transport may have to operate at the normal time.

### **Early Operation due to Poor Weather.**

From time to time Roberts Travel Group may require to operate return journeys earlier due to poor weather conditions outside of the school area (for example on certain very exposed routes). The schools will be contacted and returns arranged. In all circumstances of an early return, it remains the responsibility of the parents to have agreements in place for their children to be able to return home early.

If schools decide not to open due to adverse weather they will advise us either directly or via an agreed method as soon as they are able, and also to parents via an agreed method. Roberts Travel Group will use twitter as the fastest means of contact to parents, although you can contact us directly if you wish.

Wherever it is safe to do so, Roberts Travel Group will try to ensure that home to school transport is operated at all times during severe weather. We will, however, rely on weather reports and those of our members of staff out on the roads to judge whether any route or part of route is unsafe to operate in inclement weather and parents should be advised of the need to have contingency arrangements for the care of children who cannot be transported by us. The absence of transport on its own does not determine whether a school is open or close.

Please be aware that in cases of inclement weather, it may not be possible to serve all the stops and buses may only be able to travel on the main roads. Parents should have agreements in place for their children to be able to return home safely.

**For further help or information;  
01530 817444  
or write to:**

Roberts Travel Group,  
The Limes,  
Midland Road,  
Hugglescote,  
Leicestershire,  
LE67 2FX

**Email:** [schools@robertscoaches.co.uk](mailto:schools@robertscoaches.co.uk)

**or visit our website:** [www.robertstravelgroup.co.uk](http://www.robertstravelgroup.co.uk)

## **5. Frequently asked questions; Bus Passes**

### **Q. Under what terms and conditions are passes issued?**

**A.** For our full T&C's please refer to the "Provision of Home to School Transport, Terms and Conditions" on our website, which you will have read and agreed to prior to the purchase of the pass. Passes are issued for a period from the start of the school term in August one year, to the end of the school year in July of the next. Persons entering into an agreement are aware of their commitment to pay for the entire school year as cancellations can only be considered under the strictest of circumstances, and a minimum of 8 weeks' notice is required. All refunds given are at our sole discretion and would not be on a pro-rata basis of the number of days left for travel as the costs include charges other than the travel element. No refunds will be made for cancellations received after 1<sup>st</sup> February.

### **Q. How are passes recorded for travel?**

**A.** On vehicles where we issue bus passes, drivers have a hand-held scanner that records the data on the pass and authorises them to accept that pass for travel, as well as the time and date of travel. If the pass for any reason has been cancelled (e.g. For non-payment) the scanner will show that travel is to be refused. However, on vehicles where the driver does not have a scanner, they will carry out a visual check of the pass. Any problems with passes will be reported to us and appropriate action will be taken.

### **Q. Why do students have bus passes to travel on contract buses?**

**A.** Apart from the control of revenue, the bus pass system ensures that loadings on the bus are regulated so that everybody has a seat. Without this management there is a risk that students, who are entitled to travel and who board at the last pick up point in the morning, would not have a seat on the bus. The bus pass can also help the driver to identify any child whose behaviour is unacceptable. Experience shows that poor behaviour is encouraged if children feel that they cannot be identified.

### **Q. What guidelines do bus drivers have?**

**A.** Drivers are instructed to check bus passes on every journey in order to get children into the habit of showing a bus pass. The same driver might not drive the bus every day or in the morning and afternoon. The driver will not necessarily therefore know whether a child is entitled to travel on the bus or not.

### **Q. Do drivers have to bring students to School in the morning?**

**A.** We recognise that sometimes children will not have their pass with them. Drivers on buses where fares are charged will charge the correct fare for the journey. On vehicles that are not pay-per-day services, on the first morning occasion that a child does not have a bus pass, the child's name will be noted, and travel allowed. Travel will also be allowed the next morning to school only. After this, the driver will refuse to allow travel without a pass. Parents also need to discuss with their child what to do if he or she fails to catch the bus for any reason in the morning.

### **Q. Do drivers have to take students home in the afternoon?**

**A.** If a student boards in the first morning without a pass, the driver will note the name and allow travel home that afternoon only.

**Q. Can School staff or students ask drivers to allow a student to travel without a bus pass?**

A. As all parents have paid to have their child(ren) travel, it would simply not be fair to allow travel to non-farepayers. We do appreciate that from time to time this may be required, but in all circumstances the parents of the child should contact us to make arrangements for this to happen, except at DeLisle College who have additional passes for each service to allocate. A fee will be payable.

**Q. Why is there a 'no pass, no travel' rule?**

A. A 'no pass, no travel' rule must be applied, as not only is it fraudulent to try to gain travel which has not been paid for, but also buses may be overloaded and therefore unsafe because of the number of students travelling who should not be on the bus.

**Q. What happens if a student loses a bus pass?**

A. A new pass should ideally be ordered on the first day of the loss, but certainly by the next day to avoid travel on buses being refused, or on the pay-per-travel buses, a charge being made for travel. A fee of £10.00 is made to replace passes and any additional costs of travel will not be refunded.

**Q. When can the School issue a temporary bus pass?**

A. A temporary pass cannot be issued by a school. All passes are controlled by Roberts Travel Group.

**Q. Can any exceptions be made?**

A. There are no exceptions to this rule, as we are the issuing authority for all passes.

**Q. What happens if I misplace my pass?**

A. It is accepted that passes can be misplaced rather than lost. However, after 3 days of not presenting the pass, it will be cancelled and a new one issued at a cost of £10.00. It is important that you contact us after 2 days to allow a decision to be made as to how long can be given to replace find it.

**Q. Can students get a permanent transfer to another bus?**

A. Students are normally allocated a place on the nearest available bus to their home address. In some instances, it may be the only vehicle available. Once a permanent bus pass has been issued, it is not possible to transfer to another available bus to accommodate personal preferences without first consulting Roberts Travel Group. Sometimes, transfer requests are received because of bullying. In these cases, we would launch an investigation along with the school to deal with the cause of the bullying in the first instance, but a transfer may be considered in exceptional circumstances, provided the bus is not overloaded.

If you have any comments about this information or the services it relates to or if you require further information:

**Please call: 01530 817444**

**or write to:**

Roberts Travel Group,  
The Limes,  
Midland Road  
Hugglescote  
LE67 2FX

**Email:** [schools@robertscoaches.co.uk](mailto:schools@robertscoaches.co.uk)

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