

COACH AND MINIBUS SERVICES

INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS OF USE

FOR

PARENTS AND STUDENTS

Updated September 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Welcome to the NLCS Coach and Minibus Services. The School operates over 20 routes across London carrying more than 500 students at NLCS.
- 1.2. Additionally, the School also runs a free minibus shuttle-service to Edgware and Canons Park tube stations at the beginning and end of each day, as well as to Harrow on the Hill in the evenings (only). Our aim is to encourage as many students as possible to use these sustainable services.
- 1.3. The coaches are scheduled to arrive at School between 8:20 - 8:25 am to provide time for students to get to their first lesson at 8.40am. The Operations Team monitors traffic conditions daily to check if disruption is likely due to road works, but we encourage you to call us if you find out about ad-hoc road works in your area, which could impact the coach service.
- 1.4. The coach schedules are adjusted annually to reflect changing demand for the services as students leave or join the School. We avoid making changes at other times, if at all possible, but may do so for road works or to improve journey times. Please note this is at the discretion of the School only, and any changes will be communicated in a timely manner to all parents concerned.
- 1.5. The [HomeRun App](#) has replaced the Travel Buddy Scheme and our annually published list of home addresses. This independently developed App provides an innovative, secure digital platform that allows parents to search for both Junior and Senior NLCS families living nearby (by distance from your home location, rather than by address which remain private) to coordinate journeys and to share information. Full details are available on the School's website.
- 1.6. Your child's time spent on the coaches is important and is a great way for her to make friends, relax after a long day at school or even catch up on homework. The aim of the School is to ensure that our coach operators provide an efficient, safe and reliable experience and we hope that your child has a great experience whilst travelling to and from school.
- 1.7. These Conditions of Use should be read in conjunction with the School's Terms and Conditions, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices, which are available on the School's website.

2. Using the Coach (& Shuttle) Services

- 2.1. Students may only use the coaches for journeys for which they are normally scheduled for unless prior agreement has been given by the Operations Team.
- 2.2. Students may bring home from school another NLCS student who is not a member of the scheme, provided that prior arrangements have been made with the Operations Team, at least 24 hours in advance. Any agreement for additional passengers will be subject to sufficient space being available on the coach and students will be charged the appropriate rate.
- 2.3. Students who are not registered to use the coach service and are found to be travelling without authorisation will incur the charge for that journey, and this will be added to the fee account.
- 2.4. First School students **may only travel to school using the 'main' coach service** if they are paired with a 'Coach Pal' who can either be an elder sister or another NLCS student. Upon arrival at school, First School students will be escorted by an adult chaperone from the Loop Rd to the First School Hall. They will be escorted to the 'Early' coach in the afternoons by an adult chaperone. Lower School students will be expected to make their own way to board and take the afternoon coach home.
- 2.5. First School and Lower School students may not sit in the front two rows of the coach.

- 2.6. Other than on the 3.35pm and 3.40pm 'Early' afternoon coaches, there is no formal supervision of students by the School. Students are expected to behave in a responsible and appropriate way, obeying the instructions of the driver, any sixth formers and any members of staff.
- 2.7. Where parents want to register their child on two different routes, they will only be able to register on the second route if there is spare capacity, as this ties up two seats on two different routes and may prevent another child using the second route as their primary means of getting to and from school. If a child wishes to join the coach service on a route that is currently being used by another student as a secondary route only, the school reserves the right to remove the student from the secondary route. Please note this will only be done in exceptional circumstances and parents will be given 3 weeks notice of the change.
- 2.8. The Operations Team must be informed if parents wish to change their coach route to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and so that passenger numbers can be accurately monitored.
- 2.9. In the event of a breakdown the default response is to provide a replacement coach. Coach routes will also be merged, where this is practicably possible.
- 2.10. Electronic registration cards may be used to ensure the safety of students and to monitor service usage.
- 2.11. The School reserves the right to modify the routes and alter the terms and conditions of the scheme without prior notification.**

3. The Kura Coach App

- 3.1. A coach app has been developed to track students using the 'Main' coach and minibuses services to ensure that the School knows who is present on the coaches and minibuses at any time. This is an important safety measure as it allows the School to respond in a timely manner to enquiries concerning students who may have got on the wrong coach or who may have missed a pickup.
- 3.2. The technology that drives the Kura Coach App has been developed and is operated by Kura (formally known as CoachHire.com/Transport2) in agreement with NLCS. It requires the transfer of data (including registered students' and student/parental contact details) from the School's student management information system (SchoolBase) to the Kura App. Kura's systems and all data transfers are encrypted.
- 3.3. The drivers only have access to student' names and pick-up / drop-off locations for the current journey for their route so that they may recognise and confirm the presence of each student. The Parent App requires a two-stage authentication process using details held by the School to register to use the App. Parents can then view the location of their child(ren). Parents cannot view the location of any other child.
- 3.4. The use of data in this manner conforms with the School's Data Protection policy and Privacy Notices, which are available on the School's website.
- 3.5. For further information about the Kura App please contact the Operations Team.

4. The NLCS Travel Card

- 4.1. All students that use the coach service will be issued with an NLCS Travel Card to ensure the safety of students. The NLCS Travel card operates like an Oyster card and is easy to use.
- 4.2. Students **must** remember to travel with their NLCS Travel Card at all times and have it ready to 'swipe' on and off the coach **every** time they travel on the coach.
- 4.3. Students **must** report any issues with their NLCS Travel Card to the Operations Team as soon as possible.
- 4.4. If students forget their NLCS Card, the driver will have to manually log the student on and off this App, so that parents do not receive an alert stating that their child has not boarded the coach. This will cause

delays in the students boarding and alighting and could **increase** the journey time to and from school, which may result in the **late arrival** of the coach to school and coach stops for the return journey.

- 4.5. If students lose or damage their NLCS Travel Card, they must notify the Operations Team as soon as possible, so that the card can be de-activated.
- 4.6. The Operations Team will arrange for the 1st replacement NLCS Travel Card at no cost. However, if the student loses or damages her card for a 2nd time, **there will be a charge of £10** to cover the administration costs. For every subsequent loss or damaged card, **a further £10 charge** will be applied. Charges will be added to the parent's fee account.

5. Paying for the Coach Service

- 5.1. Charges for the coach services are on the basis of a full week, either am and/or pm. Those parents who choose to use the service for less than 5 days are still required to pay the full weekly amount. The exception is for girls in Reception, who may take fewer regular journeys each week and will be charged pro-rata.
- 5.2. There will be a supplementary charge of £9.50 per journey for students using the 'Late' coach services.
- 5.3. The coach service operates on a termly basis. Charges are billed on the School fee invoice termly in advance. No rebate can be given for journeys not taken. Any additional charges incurred will be applied in arrears.

6. Cancelling the Coach Service

- 6.1. Parents must give **no less than half a term's written notice** to the Operations Manager if they wish to withdraw their child from the NLCS Coach Scheme. This **notice must be given** at or **before half term** to become **effective from the start of the following term** (Notice given before the start of a term will not take effect until the start of the following term).

7. The School's Responsibilities

- 7.1. The School will endeavour to ensure that the services run to time whenever possible, however, journey times and stop times are indicative and may be affected by traffic and other factors outside of the School's control.
- 7.2. The School will ensure that the coach operators are approved and that all drivers meet the requirements set out in the School's safeguarding policies.
- 7.3. The School will ensure that the operators conduct risk assessments for all stops to ensure that they are safe to use. Coaches are not permitted to wait at TfL stops and may only wait at bus other stops if this will not cause traffic congestion. Minibuses are not permitted to use the TfL bus stops but may use bus lanes.
- 7.4. The School **does not provide adult supervision on any of the 'Main' or 'Late' coach services.**
- 7.5. The School will ensure that an adult chaperone accompanies First School students travelling home on the 'Early' coach service.
- 7.6. The School does not accept responsibility for accidental injury or loss of property whilst students are using the service unless a member of NLCS staff has been personally negligent.
- 7.7. The School is responsible for students once on the School premises.

8. Coach Operator and Driver Responsibilities

- 8.1. Coach operators are responsible for ensuring that all drivers are competent to drive and meet the requirements set out in the School's safeguarding policies.
- 8.2. Coach operators will provide a suitable vehicle and ensure that all drivers and vehicles are licensed and insured for the transportation of students.
- 8.3. Coach operators are responsible for the safe transportation of students between the designated stops and the School. The driver cannot wait for girls if they are late and will leave promptly at the expected departure time.
- 8.4. Coach operators conduct risk assessments for all stops to ensure that they are safe to use. Coaches are not permitted to wait at TfL stops and may only wait at other bus stops if this will not cause traffic congestion.
- 8.5. Coach operators are responsible for the safety of all passengers whilst on their coaches. They will remind students that it is their responsibility to comply with the law by wearing safety belts but will not be able to enforce the wearing of safety belts whilst they are driving.
- 8.6. CCTV may be in use on the coaches for the safety of students.
- 8.7. The driver will be presentable and courteous at all times.
- 8.8. The driver will open and close the luggage compartment of the coach at the request of the passengers.
- 8.9. The driver will not deviate from the designated route unless forced to because of the presence of road works or other restrictions and will comply with the instructions as outlined by the School.
- 8.10. The drivers will not drop students off anywhere other than the designated stops unless forced to do so by congestion at that stop, in which case they will drop the student off at the nearest safe point.
- 8.11. The coaches will endeavour to stick to the schedules. A text message will be sent to parents in the event the coach is running at least 10 mins behind schedule. Please note Parents will need to have downloaded the Kura App in order to receive these messages.

9. Parents / Guardians Responsibilities

Please ensure that:

- 9.1. Your child arrives at the stop safely and at least 10 minutes before the published departure / arrival times in the mornings, as the driver cannot wait for girls who are late and will leave promptly at the expected time of departure. Should the coach be delayed, you must ensure you have an agreed plan with your child
- 9.2. Your child has and uses her NLCS Travel Card with her every time she travels on the coach.
- 9.3. The route taken by your child to/from home to a coach stop is suitable and safe.
- 9.4. You are familiar with the coach stops for the morning and afternoons schedule.
- 9.5. If your child is in the First and/or Lower School, they are not left unattended and are always collected from coach stops. Parents / guardians are advised to contact other parents sharing the same drop-off points so that they can ensure that there is always an adult available to meet their child off the coach. You must make yourself clearly visible to your child as they alight the coach.
- 9.6. Your child has clear instructions as to what to do should you be delayed. Parents/guardians are advised to provide their child with a mobile phone, so that they can make direct contact as required.

- 9.7. You do not negotiate or enter into any agreement with the coach operator or driver for any pick-up or set-down point other than those designated by the School.
- 9.8. Your child knows not to get off the coach in an area unknown to them. If your child leaves the coach unsure of where they are, **neither the driver nor operator is responsible for your child**. Please note that the driver cannot hold a student on board if they insist on disembarking.
- 9.9. Your child knows what to do in the rare event that she misses the return coach. Students in the First and Lower School are to return to the Junior School Reception and Senior School girls should make their way to the Operations Team Office, so that parents may make alternative arrangements.
- 9.10. Whomever is meeting your child in the afternoon arrives at least **10 minutes** early as the afternoon schedules are indicative only as they are affected by the traffic conditions at the time and coaches cannot wait for more than 3 minutes at TFL bus stops.
- 9.11. You park considerately at pick up points so as not impede the coach driver's ability to pick up and drop off safely.
- 9.12. You remind your child to adhere to the safety and conduct protocols required whilst travelling on the coach, and to always wear her seatbelt and to remain seated whilst the coach is in motion, as the coach driver may need to stop the coach until all students are safely in their seats. This is likely to delay your child's journey to school.
- 9.13. You fully understand the risk associated with your child not wearing her seatbelt and/or moving about the vehicle whilst it is in motion.
- 9.14. **If your child is a Junior School student** and suffers from any potentially life-threatening condition that may require the use of an auto-injector/medicines, **she can only travel on the 'main' coach services if she is able to self-administer** her auto-injector/medicines, as the coach drivers are **only** able to call for an ambulance in the event of an emergency. Your child can travel on the 'early' afternoon coach services, as these routes have an adult chaperone who will be able to assist. If you need advice on whether your child is ready to travel independently, please contact the Operations Team.
- 9.15. If the coach is delayed to a stop in the morning, you have an agreed plan with your child as to whether they await the coach or make their own way to school. If they are making their own way to school using public transport, your child knows their route to school.

10 Students Responsibilities

- 9.16. Students are expected to be at the coach stop at least 10 minutes before the scheduled arrival of the coach, as the coaches will leave on time from the designated coach stops in the mornings.
- 9.17. Students **may not** ask the driver to pick-up or set down at any point other than those designated by the School.
- 9.18. Students **must**:
 - have their NLCS Travel Card with them **every** time they travel
 - must 'swipe' on and off the coach for **every** journey
 - **wear their seatbelts at all times** whilst on the coach.
 - remain seated whilst the coach is in motion
 - not leave their seats until the coach is stationary – particularly when approaching the school or their home stop.
 - not attempt to speak to or distract the driver whilst the coach is moving.
 - not place the bags on the seats as these will be required by other students.
 - not consume any food or drink on the coaches. Smoking is also forbidden.
 - be polite and respectful at all times, as any abusive language will not be tolerated.

- use the designated walkways and crossing points at school when disembarking from or boarding coaches.

- 9.19. Students who do not observe the safety and conduct protocols above will be putting themselves and potentially other passengers at risk and may not be allowed to continue to use the service.
- 9.20. Students are responsible for their own belongings. The coach company will deliver any items left on the coach to the Operations Team who will return these items to the Junior School or Senior School Receptions for collection.
- 9.21. Older students should act responsibly and are encouraged to look after the welfare of the younger girls.
- 9.22. Students are expected to behave in a responsible and appropriate way, obeying the instructions of the driver, any sixth formers and any members of staff who may be travelling on the coach.
- 9.23. Students who suffer from any potentially life-threatening condition that may require the use of an auto-injector/medicines, **must be able to self-administer** their auto-injector/medicines, as the coach drivers are only able to call for an ambulance in the event of an emergency.

11 In the event of a Medical Emergency during a Coach Journey

- 11.1 When an ambulance is called to a student needing urgent medical attention whilst travelling on a coach the coach escort will not travel in the ambulance with the student needing medical attention, as they must remain with the other students on the coach.
- 11.2 The student needing medical attention will be transported to the designated hospital by ambulance staff who, as well as being medically trained, are all DBS checked and familiar with safeguarding protocols for children.
- 11.3 Parents will be notified at the earliest opportunity of the emergency and will be able to make their own way to the hospital to connect with their child.

12 Operations Team - Contact

- 12.1 If you have any enquiries, complaints, or suggestions on how we can improve the coach service, please email the Operations Team on travellingtoschool@nlcs.org.uk or telephone 0208 951 6490.