



APS Minibus Policy and Procedures

This policy applies to all pupils from Year R to Year 8, and refers to use of the minibuses to and from school (Years 1-8) as well as for trips (Year Reception to Year 8).

Introduction

It is always the parents' responsibility to ensure that their child gets to and from school every day.

Abingdon Preparatory School operates a number of minibus routes which may be used by pupils in Year 1-Year 8.

Travel to and from school on the school minibuses is taken for the whole term and billed in equal amounts per term.

Notice to change arrangements must be made in writing to the School Office at least one term in advance. Failure to do so will incur fees in lieu of notice.

Children may only board and alight at the bus stops allocated.

If changes are made to the timings or stops, parents will be notified in advance by email if this is a permanent change or possibly by telephone if a temporary change.

The Cost

The cost of travelling by school bus varies according to where a pupil gets on and off during the journey. Prices can be obtained from the School Office.

Preference will always be given for those who wish to use the buses both ways.

There will be no other change in rate i.e. if pupils only use the bus 3 days per week travelling both ways, they will still be charged the full amount.

Occasional bus users may only use the bus in agreement with the School Office and after giving notice in writing of their request to do so. This will be charged at fixed rates per day for travelling either both ways or one way.

Under normal circumstances, the cost of the bus will be added to your school bill and paid in advance

Use of buses

Pupils are advised to arrive at their pick up point 5 minutes before the departure time.

Parents are reminded that drivers will only collect and drop off at the designated stops.

Pupils remain the responsibility of the parent/guardian until they are placed on the bus.

The parent/guardian is responsible for meeting the pupil off the bus if they are in Year 6 or below. When the bus driver sees the adult who is responsible for meeting the pupil off the bus they are then allowed to let the child off the bus. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 (and Year 6 at the Headmaster's discretion following a request by parents) may be allowed to walk home unaccompanied if this has been agreed between the bus driver and parents. If parents have not agreed to this, then the same procedure is to be adopted as for pupils in Year 6 and below.

Bus drivers cannot wait for parents who are late. If there is no parent/guardian at the bus stop (for pupils in Year 6 and below OR for pupils in Year 7 and 8 (or Year 6 where the Headmaster has agreed that they can ordinarily walk home) where the bus driver is expecting the parents to collect the pupil) the bus driver must telephone the parents and speak to them or leave a message saying the child is being taken back to school. The bus driver must also phone the school to notify them that the child is coming back to the school. When the bus driver returns to school with the child he/she must take them over to After School Club (if before 6pm) or hand them over to the duty LT member (if after 6pm).

If a parent is unable to collect a pupil and an adult not known to the bus driver will be collecting, parents are asked to let the bus driver know the name and contact telephone number of the person collecting the pupil. The driver will use the contact number as a means of verifying identity.

Pupils, on entering a school mini-bus or coach, must place their mobile phones in the box provided and it will be kept with the driver for the duration of the journey. If the pupil is arriving at school, he must collect the device from the driver as he leaves the bus and hand his device in at the office on arrival and collect it on departure.

Pupils must sit in their seats with their seatbelts on throughout the journey.

Gangways and emergency exits must be kept clear at all times.

Noise should be kept to a minimum and nothing done to distract the driver.

Food or drink should only be consumed on the buses at the individual bus drivers' discretion. They should be healthy food snacks in accordance with the Nutrition

policy. If a driver has any queries regarding the consumption of food or drink, they should consult the Assistant Head Pastoral.

All buses should be cleared of kit bags and litter by the pupils before they go into school.

Pupils travelling by school bus, whether on the journey into or home from school or to fixtures or on trips, are representing the school and, as such are expected to behave in an exemplary fashion.

Any behaviour which contravenes any of the Abingdon Preparatory School's Code of Conduct or reflects badly on the school in any way will be dealt with in accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and could result in the pupil(s) involved being suspended from, or in extreme cases, withdrawn from, the bus. This could include the exclusion from the bus for travelling to away sports fixtures and trips. Bus drivers are entitled to ask pupils to sit in specific seats in order to maintain order on the minibuses if appropriate.

Buses may have a Bus Prefect (at the discretion of the driver) who is responsible for ensuring standards of behaviour and cleanliness on the buses is maintained. Any problems will be reported to the school secretary and then to Louise Batho (Assistant Head Pastoral) and/or Rachel Pairman (Deputy Head).

In the mornings bus drivers will escort pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 into the school and take them to Early Birds or their classroom and hand them over to the care of an appropriate member of staff.

Unusual occurrences

Whilst the school will endeavour to ensure the buses run every school day there may, in very exceptional circumstances, be occasions on which the school is unable to provide a bus service. If this is likely to happen the school will inform users of the bus by email or telephone giving as much notice as possible.

In the morning, if a bus is more than 10 minutes late arriving at the stop, the parent should please try to ring the school office or leave a message with the office and with the driver to find out what has happened. Please see section on 'Communication' below with regard to contacting drivers. If the parent decides to leave the bus stop and drive their son to school, they should leave a message on the driver's mobile phone to notify him/her that they have done so.

Communication

Minibus drivers will hold a list of contact numbers for parents/guardians of all the pupils in their bus and drivers will provide parents/guardians with their contact number.

Contact with bus drivers may be made directly in cases of emergency or through the school office.

Bus drivers are not permitted to use their mobile phones whilst the bus is moving and may only do so when they have stopped at a bus stop. If parents wish to contact the driver they will need to leave a message on the driver's phone and the driver will access the message when they are safely allowed to do so.

Information to parents on changes to bus routes will be sent by email.

There will be a half termly meeting between the bus drivers, Assistant Head Pastoral and the Deputy Head to discuss any bus related matters.

Booking a place on the school bus

If a parent would like their child to travel on any of the school buses they should e-mail the school secretary (school.sec@abingdonprep.org.uk) who will be able to provide details. If there is insufficient demand for a particular bus route it may be necessary to withdraw it from the list of routes offered. The school will, of course, notify anyone who had applied for that route in advance of the start of term.

Once a place on the bus has been allocated to a pupil, you will be notified by the school office.

Should a parent wish to withdraw their son from the bus they must give one term's notice in writing. If they do not give a term's notice in writing, they will be asked to pay a term's fee in lieu of notice unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Questions, Complaints or Concerns

If parents have any questions, complaints or concerns about the buses they should contact the school office as soon as possible or email school.sec@abingdonprep.org.uk. The school will investigate comments and action will be taken.

If a parent or pupil is not satisfied with a decision or course of action, reference should be made to the Complaints Procedure Policy.

Assistant Head Pastoral

Last internal review: February 2019

Last governor review: May 2019

Next governor review: May 2020