



ST ALBAN'S RC HIGH SCHOOL
The Park, Pontypool, Torfaen, NP4 6XG

YSGOL UWCHRADD GATHOLIG SAIN ALBAN
Y Parc, Pontypwl, Torfaen, NP4 6XG

Headteacher: Michael Coady BSc.

12 April 2016

TRANSPORT UPDATE

Dear Parent

St Alban's is one of the lowest funded secondary schools in Wales. As such we face a very difficult financial situation. The Governing Body is required to do all it can to set a legal budget. We have worked extremely hard to make efficiency cuts wherever possible.

In recent years we have had to take painful decisions to reduce the transport subsidy we pay to our non-Catholic students. In case you are unaware, the transport subsidy was introduced after the LEA changed their transport funding arrangements. The LEA decided that they would no longer pay for the transport of non-Catholic students. The Governing Body felt it was unfair that non-Catholic children would no longer receive free transport to St Alban's and so they contracted Peakes coaches to provide that transport for these students. In recent Years the Governing Body has had to ask parents to contribute towards the running of this contract. At the moment we ask parents to contribute £10 per week per family. We charge for the first child in each family and siblings travel free. We also do not charge for students eligible for Free School Meals (FSM)

We continue to review our transport budget as even with the above parental contributions in place, the costs are still substantial and the Governors pay significant amount to student transport.

We no longer have a contract with Peakes Coaches but we have made arrangements with Peakes coaches to take over the running of the transport for our non-Catholic students from September 2016. We are very pleased with Peakes Coaches particularly in terms of student safety, reliability and punctuality and we are delighted they will continue to provide transport for our students. The savings for the Governing Body are substantial and the impact on our families will be minimal.



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Peakes will soon be writing to all parents to explain the new arrangements and I am pleased to inform you that the £10 weekly charge will remain the same for the 2016/17 academic year. Parental support and the number of pupils using the service will be vital for the service to continue subsidised by Peakes. St Alban's Governing Body will continue to subsidise payments for students eligible for FSM and for all siblings not in the Sixth Form. Sixth Form students who live in Torfaen receive a transport grant from the local Authority towards their transport to school.

In addition to this, the majority of sixth form students are able to access an Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) which can be used towards transport costs. Therefore, these students will not qualify for sibling discount.

We are holding an information Evening for parents on **27 April at 6.00 p.m.** in the school hall. If you are unable to attend or you would like further information, please contact Mr Coady at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Williams
Chair of Governors