

Shropshire Council

Covid-19 - Public Buses for Pupils and Students

In 2020 the Government introduced on-bus social distancing on public transport buses as part of measures to deal with Covid-19, which in turn significantly reduced the carrying capacity of these buses.

In September 2020 Shropshire Council, in partnership with the Department of Education and local transport operators introduced additional buses ('Shadow' buses) to carry pupils and students to school/college where their usual public bus service didn't have enough capacity.

During the 2020/21 academic year the 'Shadow' buses provided enough extra capacity to ensure that all pupils and students could travel as normal. In summer 2021 the Government began relaxing on-bus social distancing rules as the Covid-19 emergency eased, thus increasing bus capacity. Planning for the removal of the 'Shadow' buses was then begun, focused on where the extra capacity was no longer needed or to coincide with the end of the school summer term 2021.

Details of the 'Shadow' buses provided are shown in Table 1 below, along with the date of their last day of operation.

Some other public bus services were changed into 'Schools Only' services in 2020 and their operators will consider whether or not to open these up to the general public from September 2021.

From September 2021 it is not planned to provide any 'Shadow' buses or additional capacity, but Shropshire Council and bus operators will monitor passenger capacity on public buses and where needs be address any capacity issues. Any remaining tightness in capacity may be further eased by the Government's on-going Covid-19 social distancing strategy.

Passengers on public buses should continue to wear face masks and maintain social distancing as best as possible whilst travelling. Passengers should leave bus windows open to allow fresh air to circulate. Government guidance should always be followed:



Clearly, if there are viable alternatives to using public transport for pupils and students, these should be considered as a first option whilst the Covid-19 emergency continues. Active travel (walking/cycling/scooting) should preferably be the first choice. The second choice should be travel by car. Where parental cars are used, car sharing should be avoided to help reduce transmission of Coronavirus. Also, congesting school gate areas should be minimised.

Please contact your Bus Operator If you require further information regarding public bus services, or call Shropshire Council's Customer Service Centre on 0345 678 9008 or email passtrans@shropshire.gov.uk

Table 1

'Shadow' Bus Termination Dates – Summer Term 2021

Public Bus Service No.	Public Bus Service route	Schools/Colleges served	Registered Bus Operator	'Shadow' Bus Operator	Scheduled last operating date of 'Shadow' buses
53	Oswestry - Ellesmere	Lakelands Academy, Ellesmere	Arriva	Lakeside Coaches	20 st July 2021
53	Ellesmere - Oswestry	The Marches School, Oswestry	Arriva	Lakeside Coaches	23 rd July 2021
576	Shrewsbury – Oswestry	The Marches School, Oswestry	Arriva	Owens of Oswestry	23 rd July 2021
576	Oswestry – Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury College	Arriva	Owens of Oswestry	9 th July 2021
436	Bridgnorth – Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury College	Arriva	Whittles Coach & Bus	9 th July 2021
546	Pulverbatch - Shrewsbury	Meole Brace School, Shrewsbury	Arriva	Longmynd Travel	2 nd July 2021
501	Ellesmere - Shrewsbury	Meole Brace School Shrewsbury College	Lakeside	Lakeside Coaches	2 nd July 2021 (PM bus) 16 th July 2021 (AM bus)
558	Montgomery – Worthen - Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury College	Tanat Valley	Tanat Valley	9 th July 2021
64	Market Drayton - Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury College	Arriva	Lakeside Coaches Wef 14/09/20	9 th July 2021
70	Oswestry - Shrewsbury	Shrewsbury College	Arriva	Owens of Oswestry Wef 15/09/20	9 th July 2021
125	Bridgnorth Low Town via Highley to Kidderminster (Mornings Only)	Kidderminster College	Diamond Bus	Diamond Bus	2 nd July 2021
511	Higher Heath - Whitchurch	Sir John Talbot's School	Arriva	Lakeside Coaches	2 nd July 2021
9	Bridgnorth – Rudge Heath (Afternoon Only)	Oldbury Wells School	Arriva	Caradoc	16 th July 2021
9	Bridgnorth – Upper Ludstone (Afternoon Only)	Bridgnorth Endowed School	Arriva	Whittles Coach & Bus	16 th July 2021

Passenger Transport Group

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