

TRANSPORT INFORMATION

March 2017

Dear Parent,

Please find enclosed information relating to the two bus companies that the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE) has made an agreement with. The Consortium Transport Office (CTO) is based in the CSSE office and only deals with ticketing for **Stephensons of Essex and First Bus Essex**. We are unable to offer a ticketing service for any other bus company.

NB We are unable to issue tickets for First Bus Services to Chelmsford which are operated under contract to Essex County Council. Please refer to www.firstgroup.com to ascertain if the route you are interested in is under contract to Essex County Council.

You will be invoiced termly for your child's ticket. **Invoices will be sent in the term prior to the one in which your child will be travelling. Invoices must be paid in full within thirty days of the invoice date.** We always require a ten working day clearance period for cheque payments and cheques received after our cut off date will not be processed. At this stage you will be required to pay by debit/credit card or by direct bank transfer.

The Terms of the Agreement made between the CSSE and First Essex and the CSSE and Stephensons

The main points of the agreement are as follows:

The agreement firstly safeguards parents' money, as far as is possible, by the Consortium Transport Office (CTO) acting as an agent on behalf of First Essex and Stephensons, taking termly payment in advance from parents, and then making monthly payments in arrears to the bus companies during the term. This means that, in the unlikely event that there be any future difficulty with a bus company ceasing to operate (and I hasten to add that we have no reason to presume this would occur, as the two companies and the CSSE are committed to operating a stable and continuous service) then parents' money would be held by the CSSE and could be either returned or used to engage a different bus company as necessary. Parents would have received the services that they had paid for up to date. The CSSE is clearly not responsible for the continuing viability of the bus companies, nor could the CSSE guarantee to find another provider.

The bus companies would undertake as a priority to accommodate all CSSE students from Consortium member schools whose parents wish them to travel to and from school on one of the specified bus routes and who pay the required fee to the CSSE for a place on one of the companies' buses.

The bus companies would set the price per term and the zone charges for their routes. Tickets for these routes would be sold through the Consortium Transport Office on behalf of the two companies, and the tickets would carry either the First Essex logo or the Stephensons logo. The price of routes would therefore not be set by the CSSE but by the bus companies and would therefore be subject to market forces as would be the case for any bus company.

The Consortium Transport Office will charge a £39 **(non-refundable) annual** administration fee. This administration fee will be in addition to the Autumn Term ticket price charged by the appropriate bus company.