



May 2024

TRANSPORT INFORMATION

Dear Parent,

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.

You will be invoiced termly by email in the term prior to the one in which your child will be travelling. The email will provide you with a secure link to pay. Payment can be made by debit card, credit card, Apple Pay, Google Pay or via the Pay By Bank app. We do not accept cheques or payments made by corporate or international credit or debit cards. Invoices must be paid in full within 30 days of the invoice date.

The Pay By Link service utilised by CSSE operates via a https secure weblink, powered by DNA Payments Ltd. DNA Payments Ltd are a Level One secure Gateway and are licenced by the FCA. Open Bank payment services are provided by Ecospend Technologies Ltd, who are also licensed by the FCA and powered by DNA Payments Ltd. From a data protection standpoint, DNA Payments Ltd can ensure that sensitive customer card data is never exposed to the CSSE. All payments will be handled online, and customer card data is only visible to DNA Payments Ltd. Pay-by-Link allows all online payments to move through the latest fully SCA (Strong Customer Authentication) compliant 3D Secure v2 process. This limits exposure to fraud and chargebacks.

Both Bus companies issue electronic travel cards using smart card technology. Further information on their use will be supplied by the bus company and sent to you with your child's first ticket. Information can also be viewed on our website www.csse.org.uk/transport

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 Stephenson's 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 £45 (**non-refundable**) **annual** administration fee. This administration fee will be in addition to the Autumn Term ticket price charged by the appropriate bus company.

The CSSE and the bus companies will review at least annually the bus services, to discuss the numbers travelling on those services, the prices set by the bus companies, and the configuration of the routes and pick up and drop off points, to make them the most effective routes possible. If a route became financially non-viable because numbers dwindled, parents would need to accept the possibility that, through mutual agreement, it would have to be discontinued, amalgamated, or altered as to exact route or timing.

Parents would need to accept also that, with appropriate notification, routes might need to have pick-up and drop off points altered from year to year if circumstances made this appropriate.

The bus companies will be entirely responsible for the health and safety of passengers while they are using the transport provided, and all aspects of operating a safe and reliable bus service. The CSSE could accept no legal liability in this regard. Where a discipline problem is experienced in respect of students travelling on buses, the bus companies would consult with the relevant Headteacher before any decision is taken about withdrawing the services from that student. This would not preclude an immediate response by the driver or the company if the safety of other passengers or road users is judged to be at risk. All passengers are in any event carried subject to the PSV Conduct regulations and the Company's Conditions of Carriage. The bus companies will ensure meeting their requirements under the Public Passenger Vehicles Act and other legislation with regard to vehicle safety, maintenance, driver hours and standards and other legal obligations under these regulations.

If there is a continuous non-rectified problem concerning the reliable operation of the bus services on the part of one of the companies the Consortium Transport Office would reserve the right to refuse to renew the annual agreement with that company as appropriate.

The bus company customer service numbers are the point of contact for any day-to-day enquiries regarding the running of buses themselves (poor weather affecting the services, unavoidable late running because of accidents, etc.). **The CTO is unable to assist with these enquiries. Bus contact information will be sent with the tickets and can be viewed on the CSSE website. The bus company's Code of Conduct will be enclosed with your child's Autumn term ticket.** The CTO office is closed during school holidays and you should contact your bus company if you have a query during school holidays in relation to bus schedules or lost bus passes.

The Consortium Transport Office will be a point of contact for parents regarding any matters concerning the administration of tickets, student and parent details. **The CTO telephone line can be used for any such enquiries: (01245) 281194.** Route and price information can be found on our website: www.csse.org.uk (click on transport option). **Please contact the bus company's customer service department if you have a complaint in respect of their services. Full details can be found in their code of conduct and in the contact information which will be sent with the ticket.** The CSSE request that a copy of any written complaint that you send to either of the bus companies is copied to the Consortium for our records and for discussion at future transport meetings.

Transport Contact Information

Contact Addresses for customer services:

First Essex Buses Ltd	Stephensons of Essex Limited
Westway Chelmsford Essex CM1 3AR	Stephensons Ticketing Office & Customer Care Unit 2, Boreham Industrial Estate Waltham Road Boreham Essex CM3 3AW
First Bus Customer Service Contact Form: www.firstbus.co.uk/essex/help-and-support Live Chat & Phone Lines: 03456 460 707 08:00 – 18:00 Monday-Friday Twitter: @FirstEssex Between the hours of 07:00-19:00 Monday – Friday 09:00 – 17:00 Weekends and Bank Holidays	Telephone for Lost Property/Complaints/ General route enquiries: Telephone: 01376 503050 Email: customerservices@stephensonsofessex.com Most of Stephenson's routes offer live tracking. Please refer to www.stephensonsofessex.com and select the relevant service number.
	Email: ticketing@stephensonsofessex.com (for bus stop location queries only)
Website: www.firstbus.co.uk/essex	Website: www.stephensonsofessex.com

Contact Details for Ticketing and Registration Queries Only

Consortium Transport Office
PO Box 3087
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 3SY

Telephone 01245 281194
Email: transport@csse.org.uk

Opening Times 9:30am – 4:00pm term time only

Useful Contact Details

Traveline Public Transport Information

Bus stop & route queries

Website: www.traveline.info