

Dear Parents and Carers

Bus strike, Thursday 19th and Monday 30th October

I am advised that drivers of Arriva buses may be taking strike action on the above dates. Since we have received a number of queries from parents about the implications for attendance at school, I thought it might be worth clarifying our position.

Firstly, both strike days are normal school days; lessons will be taking place as usual; if your child's transport plans are affected by the strike action, we would expect every effort to be made to seek alternative transport arrangements. We will not be closing the school because of the strikes.

We have checked the Government regulations about the recording of pupil absence under circumstances such as these. If a pupil is not present at school on either day because of the strike, this has to be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless:

- the pupil's home is not within walking distance of the school (this is not defined in the guidance but we would expect most children to be able to walk around 1½ miles unless they have medical condition preventing them from doing so); and
- the pupil would normally travel on a route affected by strike action; and
- no reasonable alternative arrangements can be made (even allowing for the possibility that the pupil might arrive at school late).

If your child is unable to attend school on a bus strike day and you believe these conditions might be met, please let us know (by letter or by e-mail); if your child is absent and we do not hear from you, we will have to assume the conditions above are not met, and your child's absence will be classified as unauthorised.

The same principles apply to the afternoon session on Thursday 19th October. In line with previous years, the advice given in the September edition of *SMArtTalk* and my letter of Monday 16th October, the afternoon session on Thursday 19th October will be our Prizegiving ceremony in the Cathedral (I can remind you that boys should report to the Cathedral for 6:30pm). If the bus strike prevents your child travelling to and from the Cathedral, please let us know if the above three conditions are met. (Given that the ceremony will end at about 8:30pm when it is dark, we would not expect younger pupils especially to walk home).

I have also been advised that if pupils have a pre-paid Arriva ticket (weekly, annual, or student ticket), they will be able to use it on the Merseyrail network. Arriva tickets will also be accepted on Stagecoach Quality Network Routes – services 10A, 14, 53, 82, 86, 471 and 472.

If you have any questions about this matter please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Brierley
Principal