

Date as postmark

Dear Parent/Carer,

We have again been in positive negotiations with Go North East to ensure that our families receive the best possible home to school transport service and I thought it timely to provide you with updated information concerning the Scholars ticket price for 17/18 academic year.

I am now in a position to be able to provide you with information which explains how the bus travel to St Bede's will operate from September 2017 for all year groups.

Go North East has again provided a bespoke reduced price scholars' ticket. The main features of the Go North East offer are as follows:

- **A reduced tariff of £47.00 per month for all year groups, including Sixth Form.**
- **Ability to pay by monthly direct debits.**
- **A spread of payments, over 10 monthly instalments and with no interest costs incurred.**
- **A guaranteed deal for the full academic year.**

A reduced priced 'Get Around' ticket will be made available, priced at £470.00 for students and payable by monthly subscription (or up front if the parent prefers) to Go North East over ten monthly payments of £47.00. Application to be made to the school on our Transport Application Form; copy of the application form and direct debit mandate is attached and will be made available to download from our school website.

The ticket, issued by Go North East, will be valid for travel before 6pm Monday to Friday during term time on Go North East services – including the school buses to the school and normal scheduled services.

The ticket will again be delivered on a Go North East key smartcard, which provides greater levels of security than existing paper tickets, including the ability for lost cards to be switched off and replaced. I recommend that you submit an early application to the school so that Go North East are able to issue a ticket before the start of the school term.

As you may know, we anticipated that ticket prices would increase year on year and we have had lengthy discussions with Go North East in order to negotiate the best possible deal for you. This ticket price is again heavily discounted and in order to further support our families, the Governing Body has provided the bus company with a significant financial contribution to ensure that the price rise is as low as economically possible. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.

In addition, the Governors have agreed to allocate additional funding to provide subsidies to families, who have children attending St Bede's: please refer to the "Sibling Scheme" information on our website.

May I also remind parents of a national policy that provides extended rights to pupils eligible for free school meals or whose parents receive their maximum level of Working Tax Credit. The policy will provide free transport to our school if all the qualifying criteria are met. If you feel that you will be entitled to this free transport as a result of this national policy please contact the Local Authority Admissions Team on 03000 264444 – Transport Helpline.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again extend my gratitude to Go North East. The company has been very responsive to our collective needs and has again worked in partnership with the school to make the travel offer as affordable as possible.

I will continue to negotiate with our bus operator to provide our school community with the best possible annual transport deal. I hope you share my gratitude to our Governing Body for again releasing funds so that the price rise is discounted for you.

Keeping home to school transport affordable will continue to be a priority for the school and for me personally.

Yours sincerely,

Neville Harrison
Headteacher