

Oaklands Catholic School and Sixth Form College

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Edith Stein Catholic Academy Trust
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8th January 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

7/7A Bus Service – Oaklands Catholic School to/from Commercial Road, Portsmouth and South Parade Pier, Southsea - Update

You will recall that I wrote to you in November last year regarding the impact of the decision to withdraw the 7A bus service to and from Commercial Road, Portsmouth, South Parade Pier, Southsea and the grounds of Oaklands Catholic School. In that letter I outlined some of the actions the school had taken to mitigate some of the risks associated with this decision but advised that the school still had some concerns about the safety of so many of our students having to use the normal public timetabled 7 bus service leaving from outside the school gates at the end of the school day.

The school commissioned a survey of all the Parents/Carers whose children use the 7A bus service towards the end of last year. The response was very good and we received 56 responses which represents about 75% of the students who use this bus service.

From some of the responses it is clear that some Parents/Carers thought that the decision to withdraw the 7A Bus Service from the School grounds was made by the School. I want to reiterate that the School had no control over this decision and despite our significant lobbying, First Bus were unwilling to reverse their decision which they reiterated had been made for financial and operational reasons.

Many of the responses advised that a number of Parents/Carers would be willing to pay increased bus fares in order that the service be reinstated to leave from the grounds of Oaklands Catholic School after each school each day. It is felt that the impact on the service in the morning is greatly reduced because of the staggered arrival of students each day.

By way of an update, we are waiting for First Bus to come back to us with confirmation of some of the other measures they were considering to help reduce the risk to students safety. This included holding the 3.30 timetabled bus at the bus stop outside the school so that the first wave could get onto that bus and relieve some of the pressure on the initial queuing for the bus. They also advised that they would look at timetabling an additional bus just after school finishing time to cater for the number of students using the service. Once we have had confirmation from First Bus on these measures we will enter into non-binding discussions about the reinstatement of the service from the school grounds in the afternoon.

I will keep you updated on the progress we make and in the meantime if there are any Parents/carers who have not completed the survey I would be grateful if you could complete the survey by [following this link](#) . The school will continue to reserve the right to make the final decision based on the responses received. Thank you for your continued co-operation.

If you have any questions relating to this matter please do so via email to d.luddy@oaklandscatholicschool.org .

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Quinn'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

M Quinn
Headteacher