



St. Thomas More
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

St. Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy, Palace Fields, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 6AF

Headteacher: Mr D Redfern

3rd December 2020

RE: 68 Bus operated by High Peak Buses

Dear Parent / Carer,

It is with disappointment that I write to you with an update regarding the 68 Bus Service from Glossop to Buxton via New Mills and Dove Holes.

As you are aware, Derbyshire County Council (DCC) informed us that High Peak Buses would be withdrawing their service at the end of December, as the route is no longer financially viable. We have been working closely with Phil Smith, Transport Manager at DCC over the last few weeks to try and determine an agreeable alternative. Below is a summary of those negotiations:

- DCC managed to get the rail service to stop at Dove Holes as an additional stop on the Manchester to Buxton line during peak times for children travelling to and from school.
- DCC investigated a parent funded bus operating from Glossop, however the daily cost of this was in the region of £8-10 depending on demand. DCC would not be able to subsidise the cost of this service. Given that many of our families have more than one child attending STM, the cost is not sustainable for parents.
- The 61 bus service from Glossop was suggested as an alternative route for children to travel. The inward journey, leaving Glossop at 07:40 arriving at 08:40 is acceptable, however we are concerned with the arrangements for the return journey. Currently, the service operates at 15:00 or 16:15. If children left school early to catch the 15:00, on average, some of our children would miss up to 2 hours of schooling each week, 12.5 days of school over the academic year. This is not an acceptable solution. We also have concerns for our children waiting in Buxton until 16:15, particularly during the winter months.
- We asked Phil Smith to discuss the matter with Mr Mistry from Centrebus (who operates the 61 service), in the hope of moving either the 15:00 or 16:15 to a more appropriate time for our children. This meeting was unsuccessful, based on it being too disruptive to the current service.
- On the back of this, I have written directly to Mr Mistry at Centrebus, with copies of the letter sent to the St Ralph Sherwin Multi Academy Trust and Robert Largan, MP for the High Peak. To date, I have not had a reply from Mr Mistry or Robert Largan MP.

I am deeply frustrated that I have been unable to secure a better outcome for our children and their parents, but please be assured that as a school we have tried every avenue to secure a better deal. I would like to thank Mrs Waldron for coordinating and communicating our efforts with parents and external companies during this process.

If you would like any further information, please do contact Mrs Waldron at school.

Yours sincerely,

Mr D Redfern
Headteacher



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NOTTINGHAM

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy
enquiries@st-thomasmore.derbyshire.sch.uk
Tel: 01298 23167



**St Ralph
Sherwin**
Catholic Multi Academy Trust