

To: Cardinal Newman Catholic School

Date: June 2022

Subject: Alternative routes for students affected by the cancellation of the S36 bus

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 This note follows confirmation that the Council will stop at least two of the 10 dedicated school bus services it currently funds from the start of the 2022/23 academic year. This includes the S36 which serves both Coundon Court and Cardinal Newman schools. This decision was previously communicated to the affected schools in April.
- 1.2 This note provides further information for the pupils who currently use the S36. It identifies alternative bus services which most pupils could use to travel to school from September and provides links to further information on timetables and ticketing for those services.

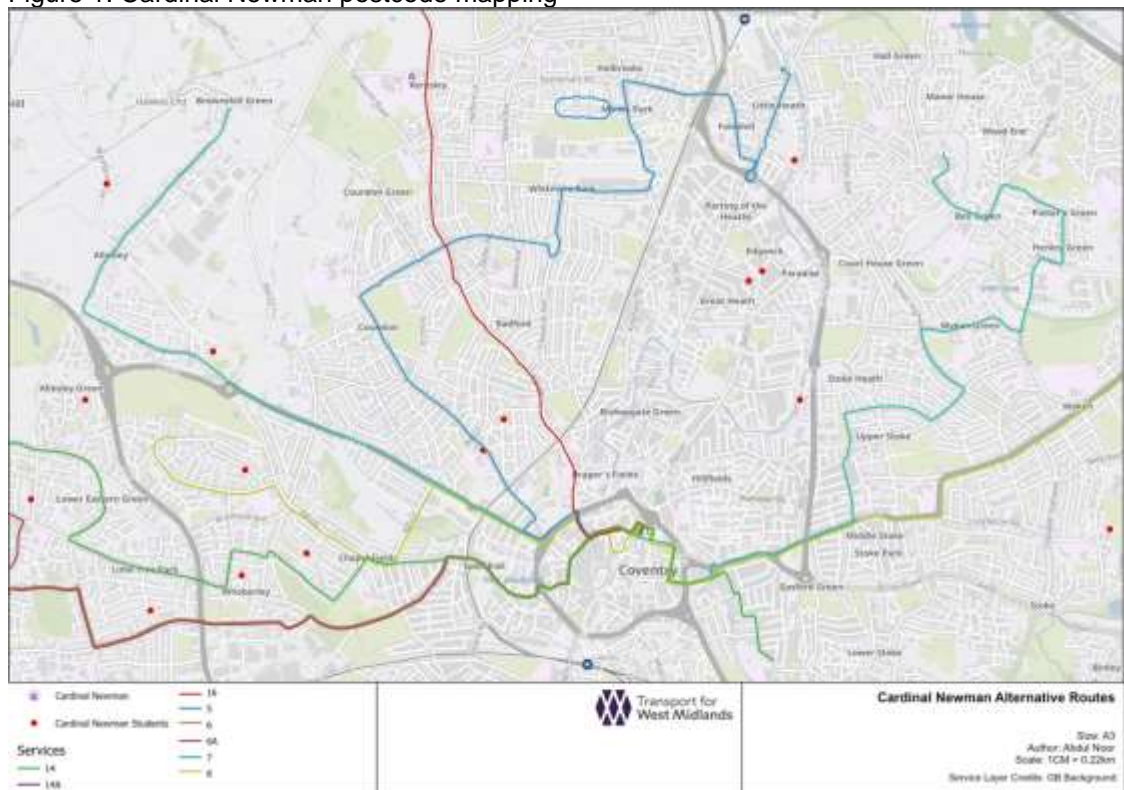
2 Background information

- 2.1 The Council's previous note on this subject sets out the reasons for stopping this service. However, in summary, there is a need to reduce the cost of funding dedicated school bus services, which cost the Council around £300,000 for the current academic year.
- 2.2 These services are not a statutory requirement. However, together with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) the Council has been supporting them since the previous provider, bus operator Travel De Courcey, went into administration in August 2020.
- 2.3 Over the Autumn and Spring terms an average of 34 passes were sold to pupils for the S36. Based on postcode information provided by the school, 22 of those currently using it are pupils attending Cardinal Newman. Therefore, from September, these students will need to take an alternative route to school.

3 Alternative bus routes for affected pupils

- 3.1 The Council and TfWM have analysed the home postcodes of the pupils who current use the S36 and, in most cases, have been able to identify public bus services which they could use in the absence of a dedicated school service.
- 3.2 These alternatives are shown in Figure 1, below. However, in summary, the largest group of students live in the Whoberley/ Lower Eastern Green/ Allesley Park areas. There are several services running into central Coventry from these areas, including the 6/6A, 8 and 14/14A. From there students will need to change to the 16, which passes up Bennetts Road, with a stop close to Cardinal Newman School.
- 3.3 In addition:
 - a small number of students live in the Coundon/ Radford area. This group may be able to catch the 16 directly or may wish to take the 5 as far as the junction of Norman Place Road and Wallace Road before also changing to the 16
 - a further small group of students live in Allesley. This group will need to catch the 7 into central Coventry before also changing to the 16.

Figure 1: Cardinal Newman postcode mapping



3.4 Alternative routes have not been identified for a small number of affected students. These are pupils who do not live close to the route of the current dedicated service and who are already either using a connecting service or being dropped off somewhere on the S36 route. Therefore, while their home postcodes are shown on Figure 1, we have not sought to identify alternative routes for them.

4 Timetables

4.1 All the services shown in Figure 1 are provided by National Express. Timetables for each of them are available on the National Express website at <https://nxbus.co.uk/coventry/services-timetables>

5 Ticketing

5.1 As pupils will no longer be using a dedicated school bus service, they will not need to purchase a dedicated pass for the 2022/23 academic year. Tickets can instead be purchased via TfWM or directly from National Express and, depending on the type of ticket purchased, these will also be valid on other bus services operating within the city.

5.2 Both TfWM's 'pay as you go' Swift card and their nBus pass, which allows for unlimited bus travel, can be used on all these services. Further information about these ticketing options is available on TfWM's website:

- Swift card - <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/swift-and-tickets/>
- nBus pass - <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/swift-and-tickets/nnetwork-nbus-and-ntrain-tickets/>

5.3 Free travel passes are available from the Council in some cases. This applies where:

- a student lives over 3 miles from Cardinal Newman and it is their nearest school with places available
- a student is from a low-income family (defined as those receiving free school meals or maximum working tax credit), Cardinal Newman is one of the 3 nearest schools with places available and it is over 2 miles from their home, or

- a student is from a low-income family, Cardinal Newman School is the nearest school preferred due to the parent's religion or belief and it is over 2 miles from their home.
- 5.4 Applications for free travel passes should be made by the end of July to guarantee that they are processed by September. Parents can apply online via the Council's website - https://myaccount.coventry.gov.uk/service/Free_travel_pass

6 Next steps and further information

- 6.1 It is recommended that Cardinal Newman disseminates the details of the potential alternative routes identified in this note, including the links to further information on timetabling, ticketing and free travel passes, to pupils who will be affected by the cancellation of the S36.
- 6.2 If any further information is required, or if the school has further queries or concerns about any of the travel options referred to in this note, please contact Rachael Sugars (Rachael.sugars@coventry.gov.uk) or David Pipe (David.pipe@coventry.gov.uk).