



19th June 2014

Dear Parents,

If you have already contacted the Bus Coordinator – contactus@nais.hk – and signed up for the buses, you do not need to confirm again! But if you've not confirmed – either yes or no – then please do get in touch.

Thank you again for your feedback and your patience while we work to develop the best possible routes for the maximum amount of pupils. As we've always said, the most challenging part of opening a new school is the buses!

As promised, we wanted to keep you up to date with the latest routes, times and costs. Despite all the challenges, we are pleased to report that more than 80 percent of parents are happy with our routes. But we know it's not perfect, and we will continue to work on it, now and in the future.

We thought it would help to give more background on our bus planning:

1. One of our first decisions was to have a direct agreement with the bus company, and to have our own NAIS staff looking after the routes and financial decision making. This was very important for us, as a not-for-profit school.
2. The Hong Kong government issued new directives for the operation of school buses in 2013. This has reduced the number of buses available for school transport, and many bus companies are now choosing not to do school routes. For example, more than 20 local bus firms said they would not be taking on any further school work. This means that fewer buses are available for this academic session.
3. Our aim is simple: to develop routes that are convenient to as many pupils as possible. We know that it may look easy to add new pick-up points, but every stop adds to the journey time and cost for all the pupils on bus.
4. We currently have the option of 55, 28 and 16 seat buses. When I took up this post just over a month ago, I immediately revised the bus schedules to use the smaller buses where possible to make the journey time shorter, by having fewer children on each bus. We only use the bigger buses as and when the pupil numbers warrant it.
5. At this stage, unless we get a lot more parents choosing the bus, we are unlikely to add many more stops. However, almost 150 of our parents have not yet given us their address in Hong Kong (many are moving to Hong Kong over July and August)

so we will continue to review bus stops and timings every day as parents give us more details.

6. We are attaching the latest routes. We have reduced the travel time so that no pick-up (even the first pupil on the bus) will be before 6.40am. Our pupils need to be at school by 7.45 so that they can be in their form rooms to start lessons at 8am.
7. We are also attaching details of the cost. As we are a not-for-profit, the fees cover the cost of the buses and no more. Of course, the more pupils we have, the less the cost will be.
8. While we're unlikely to add many new stops at this stage, the actual routes may change if more parents confirm. If we fill the buses in one area then this bus will then, of course, go directly to school.
9. Finally, it is not too late to sign up for the bus service. Letting us know (or letting us know that you will not need the bus) helps us to create the most efficient routes for every pupil in our school. The more information we have, the faster and cheaper each route will become. And we will be able to consider smaller buses for areas not presently served at the moment.

Thank you again for your patience. Please continue to come back to us at contactus@nais.hk with your updates.

A more general Parent Update with Start of Term information (invoicing, uniform, orientation days etc.) will be coming out soon. We have lots of information to share with you between now and the beginning of term!

Warm regards,

Rebecca

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