

Back to School Travel Pack

St Thomas More High School

Stay Safe  Stay Apart

Plan ahead: www.southend.gov.uk/returntoschool

Background

Getting young people back to school is a top priority and with current social distancing guidelines, how students travel to and from education sites may well have changed.

The number of people who can get on public transport is limited (due to social distancing) and if too many people drive, delays around the schools will increase and affect the wider transport network.

Parents, students and teachers' journeys will be affected when returning to school, so we need to encourage everyone to think about their travel options.

This travel pack provides advice for Southend schools and further education colleges to ensure that students can return to school safely in September.



How are we helping

We are here to help you navigate your way through the latest government advice on travel and to help you, your staff and students plan ahead.

We are reviewing capacity on the network and supporting the development of school transport services.

All buses and trains will be out on the network from September, providing as much capacity as possible to get you to and from school or college.

Keeping everyone safe is our top priority so operators have increased cleaning on board and have added measures to support social distancing.

We are using travel data to develop a travel demand management strategy identifying where we can increase capacity or provide measures that can help keep people moving.

We are encouraging walking & cycling to school to reduce congestion and improve local air quality.

You can access further information along with FAQs on our dedicated [Back to School Page](#).

How you can help

We need your help to ensure that your staff, students and parents are as prepared as possible for their journeys in September. There are a number of ways you can help:

- Ensure there is a key point of contact at your school to manage all travel related queries and issues as they arise. At St Thomas More please email gmason@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk or mwalford@st-thomasmore.southend.sch.uk
- Ensure any data is shared to help understand where the pressure on the transport network is occurring as students return to school.
- Get in touch if you need any advice, support or if you need to raise any issues at AnneWarburton@southend.gov.uk

Back to school travel advice

All buses and trains will be in use, operating on the Southend-on-Sea network, ensuring that there is as much capacity as possible to support travel to and from school or college. However, capacity on board will be reduced to support social distancing measures.

- **Plan ahead**, with limited space on board buses and trains there is less space for passengers.
- **Leave more time for your public transport journey** as there may be a longer wait than usual, you may not be able to get on the first service and have to wait for the next one.
- **Walk** or **cycle** if you have a **shorter journey**.
- If you have to travel by car, **drop off away from school** if possible. Consider parking a few streets away and walking the last part of your journey.
- Make sure you are aware of the particular travel hot spots that can affect your journey.
- **Busiest hours** for students are expected to be between 7.30 – 9am and between 3 – 4.30pm.



St Thomas More High School

Student Numbers	1030
Term Start Date	Thursday & Friday 3rd & 4th September (Year 7 & Year 12 only)
% pupils outside catchment Area	Monday, 7 th September (all years) No Information
Bus Routes	Local Stop: Leigh-on-Sea, o/s St Thomas Moore School: 21, 21A, 21B, 25, 27, 29, 502, 509, 511, 512, 514, 560, 625, 725, 814, 822, 825, 827
Is the school on a “busier than usual” route?	No

Bus Travel

This school is on four routes that are expected to be “busier than usual”, routes: 21, 25, 27 and 29. Some bus routes around the area will have duplicated services, that may affect the journey to the school.

Additional vehicles will be allocated to the following designated school services:

- 625 Chelmsford to Westcliff & Southend Schools
- 725 Basildon to Westcliff & Southend Schools
- 822 Canvey to Westcliff & Southend Schools
- 825 Basildon to Westcliff & Southend Schools
- 827 Canvey to Westcliff Schools

Walk & Cycle

Consider walking if you can. Journeys within 2km or so may be quicker/more reliable.

Consider cycling if you can. Journeys within 5km may be quicker/more reliable.

Rail Travel

Chalkwell Station will be busy at School Entry and Exit times and C2C is running a slightly revised timetable, so allow extra time and plan your journey ahead. Longer trains are being used where possible to aid social distancing.

Private Car Travel

Only drive if necessary. Roads are expected to be very busy at school drop-off / pick-up times.

Consider parking a few streets away from school gates and walk the last part.

Walking & Cycling

There are numbers of reasons to consider walking or cycling back to school this September.

- Walking and cycling **can help tackle some of the most challenging issues we face as a society** – improving air quality, combatting climate change, improving health and wellbeing and addressing inequalities
- Roads and **Public Transport will be busy at peak times**
- Walking will be **faster and more reliable** for journeys under 2km if you need to travel in the peak
- **Cycling may be quicker**/more reliable for journeys under 5km if you need to travel in the peak
- It is important to **leave space on the bus/train for children who need to travel further**

There is a Southend map available which details not only cycle routes (and bus routes) but also helps to plan your journey.

[Cycle Southend](#) & [Southend Map](#).

With so many people now taking up or renewing their enthusiasm for cycling this is a great opportunity for you to play your part in supporting staff and students who wish to cycle and encouraging these shorter trips to be made by bicycle rather than car.

Staff cycling to school or college

Cycle to Work scheme is a UK Government Tax exemption initiative introduced to encourage healthier journeys to work and to reduce environmental pollution. It allows employers to loan cycles and cycle equipment to employees at a tax-free benefit with the option to buy outright at the end of the loan term.

Details are available at [Cycle to Work Scheme](#)



Using Public Bus

Due to social distancing protocols and local school / college trips increasing, there may be limited space onboard – **buses are typically running at half their normal available capacity.**

Plan your journey in advance and allow more time for travel, changing the time you travel even by 10 or 20 minutes, will help keep everyone moving. **Busiest hours for students are expected to be between 7.30 – 9am and between 3 – 4.30pm.**

Public buses will be busier than usual due to reduced capacity. If you do use them to travel to school please leave additional time if possible. You may not be able to get on the first service and have to wait for the next one.

There are a few particular routes that are known to be most affected by the return to schools: 7, 8, 9, 21, 25, 26, 27 & 29. So, always look at live updates from the Operators.

The [Arriva app](#) is available to download and helps to plan your journey. It is possible to see in real time where the next bus is on a particular route.

The [First Bus app](#) is also available and gives information about live bus capacity updates and it is possible to see in real time where the next bus is on a particular route.

Consider buying **tickets in advance** either online or through the app. All operators in Southend offer savings for dedicated term tickets on school routes when buying in advance.

We are committed to your safety, all buses operators are following all cleaning protocols, so if you need to use the bus, it is safe.

Face coverings are mandatory on all bus services (except for those who have medical conditions / relevant exemptions).

Buses will not be overcrowded, as there are mechanisms to record number of passengers on them throughout service. Drivers are always in contact with control centre and can advise if the bus is full. Where bus routes are busy operators will strive to provide additional services to meet demands reducing journey delay.



Using the Trains

Plan your journey in advance and allow more time for travel. Additional measures, such as one-way pedestrian routes, may be in place at some stations.

The main student flows into Southend will be in the opposite direction to the main commuter flow to London and at certain stations there will be extra colleagues on duty, where appropriate, to manage flows.

Additional staff will be on site in order to monitor crowds entering/exiting station. They will be also positioned on platforms to ensure social distancing and offer assistance where required.

Trains are the main mode of transport for many of Southend's students, so services at the start and end of the school day may be busy.

We are committed to your safety, all train operators are following all cleaning protocols, so if you need to use the train, it is safe.

Face coverings are mandatory on all rail services and at all stations (except for those who have medical conditions / relevant exemptions).

Greater Anglia / Abellio – are running a full service again on the Southend Victoria line (since 6 July). At the moment passenger numbers remain much lower than before the pandemic, so social distancing should not unduly affect the return to school transport needs.

Student season tickets for Greater Anglia / Abellio are available for students travelling to Southend Victoria only and for the following schools: Southend High School for Boys, Southend High School for Girls, St Bernard's High School and South Essex College.

Apply for it in advance, as it can take up to 5 days to arrive. For more information visit [Greater Anglia Website](#).

C2C are running a slightly revised timetable and are using longer trains where possible to aid social distancing.

C2C offers a Smart Student card that can be obtained in advance for full time students aged 16+ travelling along the c2c line (e.g.to Southend East / Central, Chalkwell and Westcliff) for the following schools: Southend High School for Boys, Southend High School for Girls, St Bernard's High School, St Thomas More High School, Westcliff High School for Boys, Westcliff High School for Girls & South Essex College.

Apply for it in advance, as it can take up to 15 days. Students who are under 16 can take advantage of existing half price Adult Season tickets.

For more information visit [C2C Website](#).



Using Private car

It is anticipated that congestion will increase on the network as schools and colleges go back, and as the wider economy continues to reopen.

If you live within 2km of the school, consider walking or cycling/scooting, only drive if you need to.

Walk the last section if you can, consider parking a few streets away from the schools, as school gates will be busy.

Check before you travel – local arrangements for drop-off and pick up might have changed.

Allow more time – some schools may request that you arrive at a particular time.

Expected congestion hot spots are Blenheim Chase, Kenilworth Gardens, Prittlewell Chase, Norwich Avenue (Temple Sutton PS), Rayleigh Road - Kenthouse Corner to Eastwood School, A127.

———— If possible, avoid those routes and consider a different route to avoid schools at peak times.

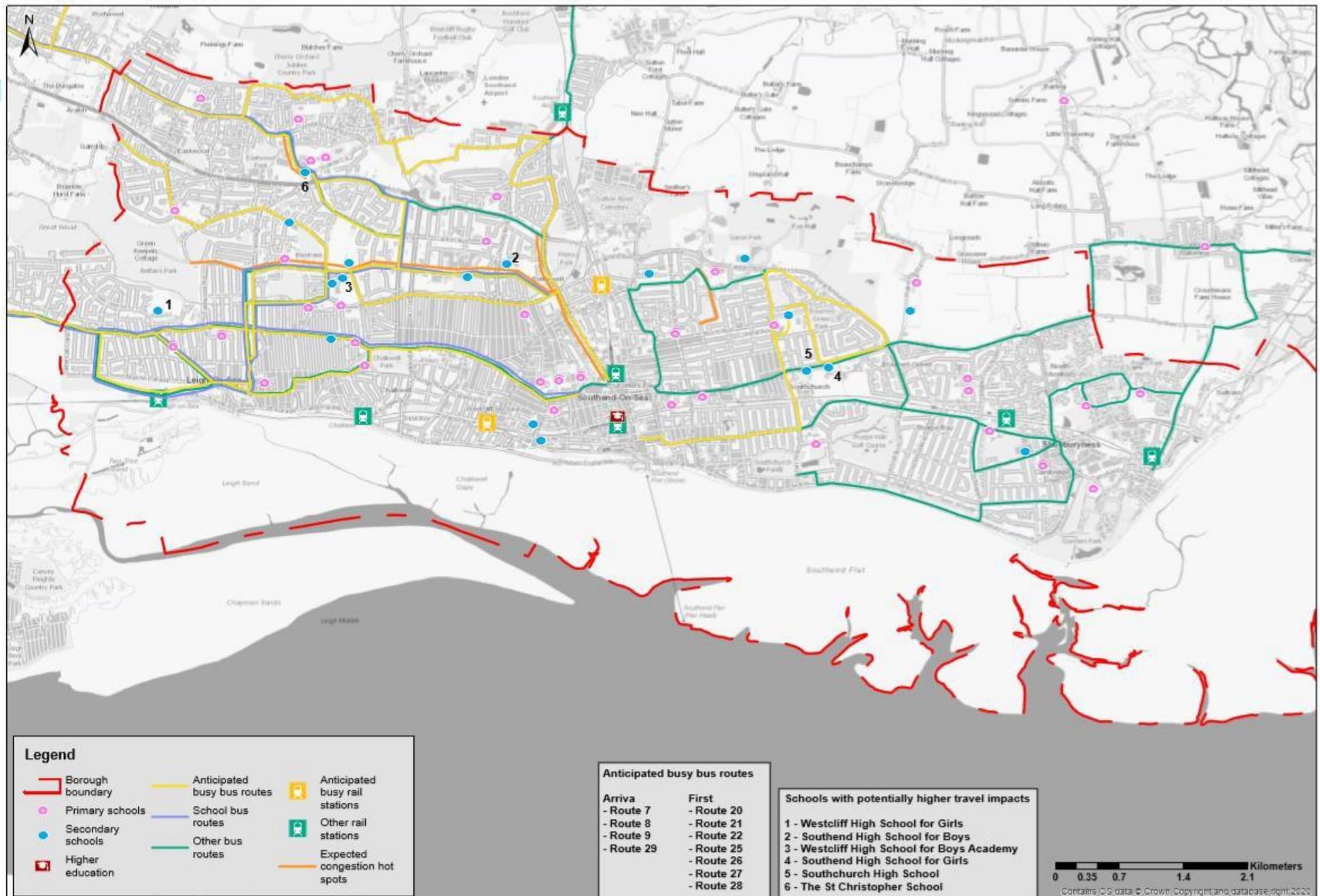
If schools identify congestion around the school area during school start/finish times, please report it to Southend BC: richardbackhouse@southend.gov.uk and johnlee@southend.gov.uk and mitigation measures may be put in place.



Southend-on-Sea Map

This map highlights the schools with potential higher travel impacts.

It also shows the bus routes, train stations and roads that are expected to be “busier than usual”



Contacts & Information

Get in touch if you need any advice, support or if you need to raise any issues at AnneWarburton@southend.gov.uk

To report Congestion around the network during school start/finish times, please contact richardbackhouse@southend.gov.uk and johnlee@southend.gov.uk

We are here to help and ensure that back to schools goes as smooth as possible!

Useful links:

[Southend Back to School Page](#)

<https://forwardmotionsouthessex.co.uk/>

<https://www.firstgroup.com/essex>

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk/herts-and-essex/bus-travel-in-southend-on-sea>

<https://www.c2c-online.co.uk/>

<https://www.greenrailtravel.co.uk/>

<https://www.16-17saver.co.uk/>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-safer-travel-guidance-for-passengers>