



Whitburn Church of England Academy

An Academy with Specialist Status in Maths and Computing

Whitburn, Sunderland, SR6 7EF Principal: J E Crowe B.A. (Hons)
Telephone: 0191 529 3712 Facsimile 0191 529 5569 E-mail: office@whitburncofeacademy.org

'Excellence for All'

21st May 2026

School Minibuses

Dear Parent/Carer

I am writing to you to request some help regarding our school minibuses. Our 2 minibuses are used extensively every day to support both educational and extracurricular activities. Our fantastic PE department requires the use of the buses to transport our students to a huge, varied range of fixtures and enrichment activities which are far too lengthy to list in this letter.

For example, our current under 15 girls football team have just been crowned English Champions in the "Sisters n Sport" National Shield Competition held at Lilleshall National Sports Centre in Shropshire. To keep travel costs down, with the recent dramatic increase in hiring coaches, the minibus is the most economical and flexible way of transporting the students safely to all of our events.

The buses are also used for students who take part in activities at Simonside outdoor adventure, subject specific visits and music/choir performances.

Due to the demand that all of these activities bring we have always managed to keep 2 minibuses running to ensure that our students can take part and represent our school in many of the events, both locally and nationally.

Sadly, we have just had to scrap our older minibus as it was becoming unreliable and was beyond economical repair. This has already caused several fixtures to be cancelled.

We currently have one new Minibus (delivered February 26th) as a result of a new 5 year lease agreement at a monthly cost of £639. I imagine some readers will think this is surely a very small cost for a school of our size but we operate at a level of funding where it is an ongoing challenge to cover our costs and every penny counts. One bus to cater for 1200 students is simply not viable and could potentially mean we have to reduce the number of visits and sporting fixtures because of this. We have no option but to take out another bus via the lease option. This of course means approximately another £640 monthly outgoing, which is currently difficult to sustain going forward.

This is quite an unfamiliar situation that I find myself in, by having to reach out to parents and carers for help. It does anger me that other colleagues from better funded schools do not find themselves in this situation. However, we need to ensure that our children are not penalised by the current unfair funding formula and ensure we find a way of securing a 2nd minibus for the academy. If every month we received a monthly donation/contribution of just £1 from all our parents/carers then that would cover the total monthly cost of both minibuses.

Document available in large font, alternative language or audio format on request



For £12 a year from all of our parents and carers would mean that none of our students would be disadvantaged by not having access to learning outside the classroom and competing at all sports at both local and national levels.

I have spoken to my staff about this and many of them are willing to contribute themselves and give a monthly donation to help fund our 2 minibuses.

Our school, in my opinion still is very much a community school. We support one another to ensure that our children and young adults get the best start that they can in life and continue to achieve going forwards.

It is to our school community that I appeal for your help. I am hoping to raise enough money to be able to pay for one or both of our minibuses. I am aware that many families and businesses are facing hardship currently as the cost of fuel, food and goods have risen.

If you would or can help financially by donating £1 a month (or more if you wish), this will ensure that we are able to secure another minibus in time for the new academic year in September. A separate larger one-off donation would also be most welcome and would go into the same fundraising account.

We will be setting up a separate account for minibus donations only and the amount in the account will be shared regularly to all parents and carers. Any monies raised over this amount will be spent on resources, equipment and any ICT that needs replacing or updating to ensure our students do not lag behind other students in the area.

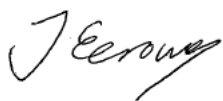
Please see details below on how to set up a monthly standing order for £1 or any other amount that will go straight into our minibus account. I really appreciate your help with this matter, and I do find it a little embarrassing that I am having to do this. I am sure that you will all agree that we cannot have our children missing out because of something that is beyond our control. Thank you in advance for your help, as collectively as a community we can make a difference.

Bank details for the account to set up either a monthly standing order or a one-off donation:

Account Name	Whitburn Church of England Academy
Sort code	55-61-11
Account number	67895034

Thank you for your continued support and kindness and I hope you have a restful and enjoyable half term break.

Yours faithfully



Mr Crowe
Principal