



6th December 2024

Dear Parents

DURHAM CITY CENTRE CONGESTION CHARGES

As many of you will be aware, Durham County Council has announced plans to introduce significant new traffic restrictions on the Bailey. These plans will affect access to the Chorister School Cathedral site. Proposals include extended restrictions on vehicle access between 10am and 2am and an increased congestion charge fee rising from £2 to £5. While the council aims to reduce congestion in the area, we are deeply conscious of the challenges these changes impose on the Foundation community.

At Durham Cathedral Schools Foundation, the safety and well-being of our pupils remain paramount. We have engaged extensively with the council to raise concerns, particularly regarding safeguarding and the practicality of wintertime drop-offs and collections. Unfortunately, despite our advocacy, the council is firmly committed to these changes.

In recent months we have implemented several initiatives to support our families who need access to the bailey:

1. Walking Buses

We now operate walking buses at the start and end of each school day. These are safe, supervised walking groups designed to help pupils travel from designated drop-off points.

2. Free Parking Permits

Recognising the financial burden the increased congestion charge could place on families, we have coordinated a scheme offering free pick-up and drop-off permits for parents. We have issued around 400 of these since September – and are still available from the Foundation's Parent Hub <https://hub.dcsf.org.uk>

How you can help

We remain in active discussions with the council, advocating for additional concessions to mitigate the impact of these proposals on the Foundation community. While our dialogue has been constructive, your input in opposing the scheme would be invaluable at this critical time. Please note that all feedback must be submitted by **19 December 2024**.

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Full details of the proposed scheme, along with guidance on how to raise objections, are available on the Durham County Council website. We strongly encourage all parents to review the information and share their concerns directly with the council. You can access the details here: [Durham City Road User Charging Scheme Amendment](#).

We fully understand the frustration these restrictions will cause. However, with the collective efforts of our community, we remain hopeful that further concessions from the council can be secured to reduce the disruption for our pupils and families.

We welcome your suggestions on how we can navigate these changes together. Please email principal@dcsf.org.uk with your thoughts and ideas.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding as we address the imposition of these changes.

Yours sincerely

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