

Belfast Grand Central Station

FINAL Schools Update: Issue August 2024:

Briefing Update for Pupils, Parents, Schools and Colleges on public transport arrangements in Belfast for the academic school term - Aug/Sept 2024.

Operational Opening of Belfast Grand Central Station Bus Services commencing from Sun 8th September *Phased opening - passengers to check timetables before travelling.*

Rail Services - date to be confirmed

Construction work on the new world class Belfast Grand Central Station is at a stage which will soon allow the public to have the opportunity to see inside Ireland's largest state of the art integrated transport hub for trains, coaches and buses. This is a really exciting milestone for everyone. The new station, and associated railway, signalling and public realm is a game changer set to inspire people to use more sustainable transport options creating a better connected, cleaner and healthier region for everyone.

From next month, services will be introduced in phases with buses currently operating from the Europa Buscentre to move over first on **Sunday 8th September** followed by rail operations, date to be confirmed. Public Realm work around the station will continue in to 2025.

Over the coming weeks there will be a number of changes for passengers. These are being carefully planned:

- To facilitate completion of all the essential commissioning and testing;
- To allow services to bed in;
- To give the public time to get familiar with the new station
- To facilitate the ongoing public realm works.

Passengers and parents of pupils returning to school after the summer break are urged to plan their journey in advance, pre buy their ticket and allow extra time for their journey particularly travelling through the Belfast area.

Key messages - plan ahead, buy prepaid tickets to travel in advance where appropriate and allow extra time for your journey. www.translink.co.uk

Public Information Sessions

To ensure everyone has all the information they need to enable a smooth transition over to the new facility we will have information on our website and have a **series of public** information events in stations planned with advice to assist passengers with the changeover. You are invited to attend these public events - dates as follows:

Bus stations:

Venue	Date / Time
Europa Buscentre	Wednesday 21 st August, 7.30-9.30am
Europa Buscentre	Wednesday 21 st August, 3.30-5.30pm
Europa Buscentre	Thursday 22 nd August, 7am-9am
Europa Buscentre	Thursday 22 nd August, 4pm-6pm

Train Stations:

Lanyon Place	Tuesday 27 th August, 7am-9am
Bangor	Tuesday 27 th August, 4pm-6pm
Lisburn	Wednesday 28 th August, 7am-9am
Lurgan	Wednesday 28 th August, 4pm-6pm
Portadown	Thursday 29 th August, 7am-9am
Newry	Thursday 29 th August, 4pm-6pm
Larne	Friday 30 th August, 7am-9am
Carrickfergus	Friday 30 th August, 4pm-6pm
Antrim	Monday 2 nd September, 1pm-3pm
Ballymena	Tuesday 3 rd September, 4pm-6pm
Lanyon Place	Wednesday 4 th Sept, 4-6pm

New Bus Timetables and City Centre Bus Stop Changes – NOTE These changes were introduced on 1st July so many pupils will need to check travel for the new term.

New Ulsterbus / Goldliner and Metro timetables are currently operating to help maintain bus service reliability and performance during increased traffic pressures on the city centre network. The location of some city centre stops have also changed.

This is necessary as public realm improvements around Grand Central Station are delivered requiring road and lane closures.

More information is available at the links below:

www.translink.co.uk/metrostopchanges
www.translink.co.uk/ulsterbusstopchanges

Bus Services Only – From Sunday 8th Sept

The Europa Buscentre will close on **Saturday 7th September**. Services operating from the Europa Buscentre will transfer to the new station with the first service operating on Sunday the 8th September at 5am.

We will keep passengers updated as the project progresses.

Local Train Services arrangements until opening date (TBC)

Currently the rail line is closed between Lisburn and Belfast Lanyon Place to complete the engineering works to connect the track and install new signalling for the new station as well as take

forward the required safety testing, commissioning and training. It also facilitates the construction of the new bus stands.

Until Mon 26th August: Travelling to and from Belfast City Centre and to/from Lisburn Train Station including rail halts along Lisburn Road:

- Travelling from stations on the Bangor, Larne or Derry~Londonderry lines into Belfast, get off at either York Street or Lanyon Place Stations and either walk, cycle or use scheduled Metro or Glider services to interchange between Belfast Stations (including Botanic and City Hospital) or access the city centre.
- Botanic and City Hospital Train Stations are closed.
- Express bus substitution services operate between Lisburn Train Station and Europa Buscentre until Sat 7th September and Grand Central Station from Sun 8th Sept.
- Bus substitution services operate between Belfast Lanyon Place and Europa Buscentre serving stops adjacent to City Hospital, Queens University and Botanic.
Route as follows:
 - Lanyon Place – Northern Mall, Great Victoria Street - Bradbury Place - Lisburn Road - University Road - Bradbury Place – Bruce Street - Lanyon Place Station
- Adelaide, Balmoral, Finaghy, Dunmurry, Derriaghy, Lambeg and Hilden rail halts will be closed. Passengers for these stations can use scheduled Metro/Ulsterbus services along the Lisburn Road.
- Valid rail tickets are accepted on scheduled bus services.

From Tuesday 27 Aug until further notice

Travelling to and from Belfast City Centre and to/from Lisburn Train Station including rail halts along Lisburn Road:

- Travelling from stations on the Bangor, Larne or Derry~Londonderry lines into Belfast, get off at either York Street or Lanyon Place Stations and either walk, cycle or use scheduled Metro or Glider services to interchange between Belfast Stations (including Botanic and City Hospital) or access the city centre.
- Botanic and City Hospital train stations are closed.
- Express bus substitution services operate between Lisburn Train Station and Europa Buscentre until Saturday 7th Sept and Grand Central Station from Sunday 8th Sept.

Monday to Friday

- Bus substitution services operate between Belfast Lanyon Place and Lisburn Train Stations serving rail halts along the Lisburn Road to serve nearby schools.

Route as follows:

- *Lanyon Place Train Station*
- *Northern Mall, Gt Victoria Street (Out) Bruce Street (Rtn)*
- *Bradbury Place (Botanic)*
- *Elmwood Ave/City Hospital, Lisburn Road*
- *Adelaide, Lisburn Road*
- *Kings Hall, Balmoral*

- *Finaghy Crossroads*
- *Dunmurry, Tesco*
- *Derriaghy*
- *Lambeg*
- *Hilden*
- *Lisburn Train Station*

This shuttle service operates approximately every 10mins at peak times (morning and afternoon/evening) and every 30 minutes off peak.

Weekends only:

- Bus substitution services operate between Belfast Lanyon Place and Europa Buscentre serving stops adjacent to City Hospital, Queens University and Botanic.
Route as follows:
 - Lanyon Place – Northern Mall, Great Victoria Street - Bradbury Place - Lisburn Road - University Road - Bradbury Place – Bruce Street - Lanyon Place Station
- Valid rail tickets will be transferable to these services and passengers also have the option to buy a ticket on board.
- From Monday 2nd Sept, new smart School Travel Passes will also be transferable to the bus substitution services and pupils will simply tap on to travel.
- Regular Metro and Ulsterbus services operating along the Lisburn Road will also be enhanced.

School Travel Passes – Early Autumn

From September, school pupils will now have to tap their school bus and rail passes (issued by the Education Authority) when travelling on Translink services.

The smartcard must be presented and electronically validated for travel on each journey on a Translink ticket machine, validator, gate or presented to a Translink member of staff if requested.

This is a change from previous arrangements where bus passes only needed to be shown to Translink staff.

We would ask parents and pupils to be aware of this change in advance of the 2024/25 academic year.

Public Realm Street Works

New public realm improvement works around the new Belfast Grand Central station will enhance pedestrian safety, walking routes, accessibility and cycling.

- Look out for the safe diversionary routes in place for pedestrians
- Stay alert – eyes up and phones down
- Allow extra time for your journey

Various **bus service enhancements** as well as **pedestrian and bus passenger priority** measures are now live as we encourage modal shift to public transport and active travel.

Click here to view how the area will look once completed.

[Belfast Grand Central Station Construction - Architectural Animation Preview \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Key Takeaways:

- The railway line between Belfast Lanyon Place and Lisburn will be closed when schools return.
- There have been a number of changes to bus timetables and bus stop movements around the city.
- Most passengers will see a change to their previous timetables.
- Passengers should plan ahead, check the website www.translink.co.uk or Journey Planner before they travel.
- Allow extra time for your journey.
- Use of public transport is encouraged to access Belfast city centre.
- Road users are advised to expect some delays.
- With street works ongoing around the new station, pedestrians should take care to look out for the signage and show due care for themselves by following the safe diversionary routes in place.
- Additional traffic information at <https://www.trafficwatchni.com/>

Visit our schools' pages at:

<https://www.translink.co.uk/UsingOurServicesandProducts/OurServices/schoolservices>

The school route finder

[School Services - Route Finder \(translink.co.uk\)](http://www.translink.co.uk/SchoolServices-RouteFinder)

We advise passengers to keep up to date with all the latest news through our website

www.translink.co.uk/bgcs, follow us on social media or reach out to

feedback@translink.co.uk