

Policy for Bus Escort

Version	Date First Ratified/Amended by BOM	Date Reviewed by BOM
V1.0	27.04.23	

This should be read in line with terms and conditions of the role as determined by the Dept of Education and Skills (DES)

Introductory Statement:

All references in this document to “bus” relate to buses and all other vehicles engaged to provide school transport.

Rationale:

It was necessary to devise a policy for bus escorts to:

- Ensure safe and smooth transition on journeys to and from school
- Clarify duties and responsibilities

Aims:

1. To ensure the safety of all on the bus.
2. To enhance the journey for all.
3. To create and maintain an atmosphere of respect, calmness and order for all.
4. To ensure that each individual is aware of his/her responsibilities.
5. To establish a system and support structure.

Guidelines:

- The Escort is required to join the bus either at the initial starting point of the bus or from the pick-up point of the first student, whichever is the most convenient or alternatively at an agreed point with the bus operator. However, where no extra cost is involved, the escort may be picked up along the route of the bus provided that he or she is on the bus at the pick up point of the first student. The scheduling and sequencing of bus runs and pick up points are subject to change and consequently any arrangements for picking up and setting down escorts are subject to change as well. Payment starts from the first pick up until arrival at the school and vice versa.
- The bus company is nominated by Bus Eireann subject to tender to provide the transport service. The school does not have responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the bus company.

- The bus driver and the escort must work together at all times.
- A list of all students with relevant contact numbers should be available on each bus.
- School begins at 9.20am
- Should there be an urgent need to stop the bus the escort should advise the driver who will stop at the nearest safe place.
- If in doubt ask for advice.
- Escorts are required to work each day the school is open
- The Escort may be invited to attend training which will be provided from time to time.
- On occasion when the school bus does not operate the responsibility is with the Bus Driver to contact the escort and to make the escort aware of the situation. Subsequently the escort should make contact with the parents and the school. This would also be the situation if there is a long delay enroute.
- Where a student will not be availing of bus transport in the morning the responsibility lies with the parent to inform the bus escort. The parent should also clearly indicate their plans for the evening service. The escort can then communicate this to the bus driver.
- If the school bus for any reason did not operate in the morning, there will be a service in the afternoon (weather permitting).

Responsibilities of The School Principal/ SEN co-ordinator:

- Submits applications for transport for each new entrant to the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO)
- Employs the bus escorts, as sanctioned by Department of Education
- Informs Bus Éireann of a new home address or other changes
- Pass on reports of any safety concerns to Bus Éireann Inspector
- Responsibility for compliance with Child Protection Procedures.
- Provision of Safe Taxi Parking Space at School Buildings
- Ensure that SNA staff/Teachers are at collection point in good time to receive pupils Notify parents/school staff if unavoidable delays in transport and/or cancellation of transport due to weather conditions or if unable to secure cover for absence.
- Assign and review the duties of Bus Escorts in line with contract.
- Sign forms regarding School Calendar etc. for submission to Bus Éireann.

Responsibility of Class Teacher:

- Meet and link in with Bus Escort regarding children travelling on bus.
- Have children ready in good time for collection.
- Link with Bus Escorts regarding the needs of particular children.

Responsibility of the driver

- Safe transport for those on board the bus.
- Link with bus escort to arrange meeting times, routes and drop off. Links with bus contractor for information on assigned pupils and route details. They will not operate any handheld devices while driving the bus. Safe delivery home: if a parent/ guardian is not at home to receive the child in the afternoon the driver will contact the school principal immediately.

- School buses must call to collect every student every day unless explicitly told not to by parents/school.

Responsibility of the Parent/Guardian:

- Must accompany the child to the taxi each morning and must be home at the agreed time each afternoon to receive the child.
- Where a student does not travel to school in the morning the parent should make contact with the escort to make them aware of their plans for the evening bus service. The escort can then communicate this to the bus driver.
- Must notify the bus escort if a pupil is unwell and leaves school early and will not travel home on bus.
- Informs the bus escort in advance if their child will not be returning home on the bus.
- Inform the escort in advance when their child is returning to school after a period of absence
- Must supply booster seats, harness etc. if these are required.
- If there is a family emergency, you must arrange with the school and the bus escort to inform them that a named adult will be at your home to meet your son or daughter when the bus arrives.
- If you have any concerns about the safety of your child when on the bus, please speak first to the bus escort & driver. If you are still unhappy, please contact the school.
- Inform the school if there is a change of address (6 weeks advance notice at least).
- Must be aware that the School Code of Behaviour extends to school transport.

Responsibilities of the Escort:

- Foster a happy and positive atmosphere on the bus
- To maintain good order, ensure that the School Code of Behaviour is adhered to. Ensure that he/she is on the bus at time of first pick-up and last set down.
- Opening and closing doors of bus.
- Safety of student when opening and closing doors prior to stop and move off.
- Assist students to board and alight safely from the school bus.
- Ensure that all students wear their seat belts.
- Ensure that all students are seated with appropriate straps and harnesses where provided.
- Informs the school if they are aware of a child causing danger to themselves or others on the taxi journey.
- Must observe confidentiality in all aspects of work
- Ensures that each student is received by a staff member at school
- Ensures that each student is received by a responsible person, where necessary, at the set down point. If in doubt please consult the principal.
- Is a model of good, respectful behaviour.
- Ensure that the principal and driver are informed as soon as possible if you are unwell and unable to work on any given day.
- To follow schools' Child Protection Policy

Responsibilities of the SNA:

- Be ready to receive the children from the bus door in the mornings and afternoons

Date of ratification

Signed:

CHAIRPERSON OF BOM

Date: