

Scoil Naomh Iosaf (SNI) Baltinglass

Bus Escort Policy



Introductory Statement:

This policy should be read in line with the terms and conditions of the role of Bus Escort as determined by the department of Education and Skills. (DES)

Rationale:

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

1. Ensure safe and smooth transitions on journeys to and from school.
2. Clarify duties and responsibilities.

Aims of Bus Escort Policy:

1. To ensure the safety of all on the bus
2. To create and maintain an atmosphere of calmness, order and respect for all.
3. To ensure that each individual is aware of his/her responsibilities.

The Principal

- Submits applications for transport for each new entrant to the Special Educational Needs Officer
- Employs the bus escorts, as sanctioned by Department of Education
- Informs Bus Éireann of a new home address or other changes
- Passes on reports of any safety concerns to the Bus Éireann Inspector
- Contacts parents if a child's behaviour is causing ongoing danger to himself or others. In this case, parents will be asked to make their own arrangements for getting the child to and from school, until the situation is resolved.

Bus Éireann Inspector:

- Gives contracts to bus companies to provide school transport
- Assigns children to bus routes and gives contact details to the contractor
- Assigns a driver to the route
- Informs parents of the time of morning collection

The Driver:

The driver is responsible for

- The safe transport of those on board the bus/ taxi
- Informing the school of any dangers due to behaviour or for other reasons
- Wheeling the wheelchairs/ buggies up the ramp and securing them safely
- The Safe delivery of pupils' home: If a parent/ guardian is not at home to receive the child in the afternoon, the driver/escort will ring the parents. In the event of no response the bus will wait a maximum of 15 minutes and the driver/escort will continue to try and make contact with the parents. If after this time the parents cannot be contacted or a reasonable adult is unavailable to receive the child the driver will have no alternative but to leave the child at the nearest Garda Station.
- Posting a note through the letterbox informing parents of where the child has been taken to since there was no one at home to receive the child and no contact could be established

- Contacting the escort if the school bus is not operating that day.
- Adhering to the school policies to ensure the wellbeing and safety of children on board the taxi/bus including, Anti- Bullying Policy, Health and safety Policy and Child Safeguarding Statement

Duties/Responsibilities of The Bus Escort

The Bus escort is responsible for

- Joining the bus at an agreed point with the bus operator each day that the school is open and remaining on the bus until last set-down. This schedule of bus runs and pick up points are subject to change.
- Signing in daily once the children have been handed over to the staff in the morning and after the children have been escorted home. This should be kept by the escort along with the incident book.
- Contacting the parents and the school if the bus is not operating that day or if there is a long delay en-route.
- Acting as liaison between the parents and class teacher /SNAs /Principal for conveyance of messages and letters between home and school and vice versa when requested.
- Communicating any absenteeism or alternative transport arrangements to the bus driver.
- Having an up to date list of all the students with relevant contact details.
- Observing confidentiality in all aspects of their work.
- Recording any issues of concern in an incident book.
- Having and maintaining a first aid bag containing essential items: hand sanitizer, sick bags, gloves, wipes, tissue, plasters, disinfectant on the bus each day.
- Collecting the child at the home / school
- Reporting any concerns about the bus to the driver.
- Reporting any concerns to the Principal.
- Encouraging good behaviour in the bus through using positive behaviour strategies and reinforcement.
- Informing the school if he/she is aware of a child causing danger to themselves or others on the bus journey
- Using a mobile phone only when necessary for school business during the transfer of children to and from the school
- Adhering to the school policies to ensure the wellbeing and safety of the children on board the bus: , Child Safeguarding Statement , Anti- Bullying Policy, Health and safety Policy
- Attending any training which may be provided from time to time
- Informing the transport company/driver/principal of their inability to attend due to sickness as soon as possible so that a replacement escort can be found.
- Supplying the appropriate certification for sick leave to the Principal /school. The school and transport company should be kept informed of an absence from work and notified of the return to work of the escort.

The Bus Escort is responsible for the following **Safety Checks**:

- Assisting the child to board and alight safely from the bus while using appropriate physical contact.
- Ensuring that all students are seated with the appropriate seatbelt/ straps/ harnesses secured
- Informing the driver when all pupils have been safely seated before the vehicle sets off.
- Making sure that doors are closed properly before the vehicle starts to move.
- Ensuring all bags are stored safely e.g. placed under the seats.
- Supervising and watching over the safety and well-being of the children during the journey.

- Sitting with the children in the body of the bus to support any needs they may have, and to facilitate maximum supervision if a vacant seat is available.
- Informing the driver if there is an urgent need to stop the bus.
- Ensuring that each student is received by an appropriate staff member (teacher or SNA) upon arrival at school
- Making sure the pupils being transported do not distract the driver while the vehicle is in motion.
- Remaining in the vicinity of the bus while students under their care remain on board. Unless there are exceptional circumstances the escort should not move away from the bus.

The Parent/Guardian:

The Parent/Guardian is responsible for:

- Following the school medication procedure by informing the school of the child's medical needs on the enrolment form and requesting and filling in the schools 'Administration of Medicine' and Indemnity Forms.
- Providing a booster seat if required for a child's safe travel
- Bringing the child promptly to the door of the taxi/bus each morning. Ideally, you and your child should be waiting for the bus to arrive and be ready to walk out of the house. The bus is on a tight schedule and will wait three to five-minutes maximum for your child.
- Receiving the child at the home in the afternoon from the door of the bus.

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE: For safety and insurance reasons, neither driver nor escort are allowed to leave the bus to knock on your door in the morning time to collect your child or to deliver your child to the door at home time.

- Informing the escort/driver in advance if their child will not be attending school so the bus does not make a wasted journey
- Informing the escort/ driver in advance if their child will not be returning home on the bus, i.e. when a child is collected from school, when a student is going to be absent/late.
- If the parent is dropping the child to school themselves it is the parent's responsibility to contact the escort to inform them of the required bussing arrangements that day/evening.

Success Criteria:

Feedback from the escort, the driver, parents, Principal and class teacher.

Implementation, Ratification, and Communication

From September 2020. Review date: Annual

Ratification by the Board of Management

This policy was approved and ratified by the Board of Management on December 21st 2020

Signed: 

Signed: Catherine Burke (Chairperson BOM)

