



Our Lady of Good Counsel School

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Chairperson of the Board of Management: Harold Brooks

Policy: Transport to/from School Policy

Date of Issue: 2008

Amendments / Reviews

Reviewed: Mar '09

Reviewed: Jan '12 – Slight name change to clarify policy.

Jan 16 – Chairperson change.

Sep16 - Change to pupils travelling without escort.

Sep 17 – Chairperson Change

Aim of Policy: To provide guidelines regarding school transport.

Bus Escorts are provided by the Board of Management from a Department of Education & Skills grant to assist and supervise pupils using school transport. The following guidelines apply:

1. To avoid delays in the morning children should be ready in good time and waiting to board. *Transport cannot wait if your child is not ready and staff been instructed to wait no longer than five minutes before driving off.*
2. In general, escorts wait in or at the vehicle.
3. If children are not travelling for any reason, escorts and drivers appreciate being informed in advance if possible
4. The school must be provided with named persons to whom children may be handed over in the evenings.
5. Escorts are not permitted to drop pupils off at empty houses.
6. Any items in the possession of a pupil which may be regarded as a hazard to themselves or others will be removed.
7. Pupils are expected to wear the seatbelts provided. Some pupils may require a harness to ensure that they remain seated. The Principal will arrange for same in consultation with parents.
8. Persistent disruptive or challenging behaviours which might potentially affect the safety of others may result in that pupil's removal from the service until the situation can be resolved.
9. Any concerns should be reported to the Principal
10. Consuming food/sweets on the bus is not permitted but for the comfort of children who are travelling longer distances bottled drinks in plastic containers are allowed.

RELIEF ESCORTS

Every effort is made to ensure that escorts travel on each vehicle in order to assist the pupils and safeguard their individual safety. All our regular escorts are Garda Vetted. In general this system works very satisfactorily but there are rare occasions when an escort is not available to travel on the route and at short notice it can be difficult or impossible to arrange a substitute escort **who is Garda Vetted**. This situation is unavoidable and despite our best efforts there may be occasions where we simply cannot arrange for a suitable substitute escort. In the event of an escort not being available for transport, the bus/taxi **cannot travel** and it is up to individual parents to bring their child to and from school.

It is parents' responsibility to ensure that the transport provided each morning is suitable for their child and it is important to remember that parents inform child-minders or other guardians who might have responsibility for children in the mornings of these guidelines. Please remember that transport can wait no longer than 5 minutes before driving off if your child is not ready to board.

NEW ENROLMENTS

Following formal acceptance of an offer of enrolment by letter from parents, the Principal applies for transport via the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO). This application is then processed by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Please note that we have recently been informed by the School Transport Section of the Department of Education & Science that *'there is no onus on the Department to either arrange for a transport service or to pay a grant towards the cost of private transport arrangements to any school other than the nearest recognised mainstream school, special class school or unit.'*