

Citywest Educate Together National School

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School Transport

Rationale

These guidelines were compiled to:

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

Aims

- To ensure the safety of all on the bus
- To ensure that each individual is aware of their responsibilities
- To provide clarity around systems and procedures

Provision of school transport

Some pupils who attend one of our special classes or have additional educational needs, receive bus or taxi transport from the Department of Education and Skills.

Bus Éireann provides the bus contractors and Drivers. Citywest ETNS provides Bus Escorts and plays no role in the provision of transport.

Child Protection

Any concerns in relation to child protection should follow the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. All concerns of this nature should be reported to the DLP as soon as possible.

Roles & responsibilities of the school:

- Send NCSE [School Transport Form](#) to relevant families to complete.
- Once complete, submit applications for transport for each new entrant to the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO).
- Employ Bus Escorts, as sanctioned by Department of Education.
 - Arrange substitute Bus Escorts, in the event of absences.
 - Inform Driver and Parents in the event that a substitute cannot be found and the bus cannot run.
- Inform Bus Éireann of a new home address or other changes.
- Inform parents of any incidents or behaviours of concern that have been flagged by the Bus Escort.
- Pass on reports of any safety concerns to the Bus Éireann Inspector.
- Inform the Bus Escort of particular disabilities/ medical needs of the children who use the bus. (Class teacher or AEN coordinator should brief the Bus Escort.)
- Share a copy of these procedures with the following people at the start of each school year:
 - All Bus Escorts and sub Escorts
 - Parents of all children accessing the service
 - Staff members working with a pupil availing of the service
 - Nicola - in her role in front of house
 - Romy - processing the applications and communications with Bus Eireann

Roles & responsibilities of Bus Éireann:

- Give contracts to bus companies to provide school transport.
- Assign children to bus routes and give contact details to the contractors.

The Bus Company/ Driver:

- Schedule and sequence bus runs and pick-up points.
- Ensure that the bus runs every day that the school is open, at the designated times.
 - In the event that the bus cannot run, the bus company should inform Bus Éireann and the school, with as much advance notice as possible. Bus cancellations should never be notified directly to parents without the school being made aware.
- Inform parents of the time of morning collection.
- Maintain a list of all students with relevant contact numbers on each bus.
- The Bus Escort and Driver must retain contact details for each other.
- School buses must call to collect every student every day unless explicitly told not to by the parents/ school.

- Ensure the safe transport of those on board the bus/taxi, informing the school of any dangers due to behavior or for any other reason.
- Drive safely at all times, particularly in the school carpark and in the school environs. If the route is blocked by a parent or a child, safety is the first priority. If the route is frequently blocked, inform the school so that steps can be taken to address the issue. Never mount a path. Never drive forward when there is a child on the road.
- Ensure that the bus is equipped with a First Aid kit.
- Ensure all children have an appropriate booster seat for use while on the bus.
 - Refuse passage to children whose parents have not provided an appropriate booster seat.
- Take equipment like wheelchairs, etc. onto the bus and ensure they are properly secured.
- Time-keeping: If a child is not brought to the bus within 2-3 minutes of the bus arriving, the Driver must drive on to collect the next child and parents/guardians will need to make their own transport arrangements that day.
- The Driver is the main point of contact for parents - Bus Escorts should not communicate with parents on their personal phone.
- If, due to extenuating circumstances, the school bus is severely delayed en route, or unable to run on a given day, and no replacement bus can be found, the Bus Driver is responsible for
 - contacting the Escort, to make the Escort aware of the situation.
 - making contact with the parents and the school.

Roles & responsibilities of the Bus Escort:

- Work each day the school is open.
- Attend training which will be provided from time to time.
- The Bus Escort and Driver must retain contact details for each other.
- Meet the Driver at the school or at another designated point before the route begins.
 - The Bus Escort can be picked up along the route as long as it happens before the first pick-up point.
 - 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 last school and vice-versa.
- The Bus Escort must be the first passenger on the bus and the last person to get off, once all children have been delivered safely to their destination.
- Meet the child at the door of the bus - Escorts do not leave the bus to walk a child to/from their collection or drop off point. Parents/guardians must walk their child to and from the door of the bus.
- Assist the child to board and get off the bus safely.

- Secure the child's seat belt/harness and close the door before the bus moves.
- Watch over the safety and well-being of the children for the duration of the journey.
- Record any notable behaviours or incidents in a book that is kept on the bus, so that patterns or escalations in behaviour can be seen.
 - Any particularly unsafe/ concerning behaviours should be reported to school staff and parents, and a note made to this effect in the book.
- Give/ take a brief verbal handover in relation to the child's form on a given day
- Inform the school (class teacher and/or AEN coordinator) if they are aware of:
 - a child causing danger to themselves or others on the bus journey.
 - any other concerns
- Be aware and mindful of particular disabilities of children on the school transport following briefing by the class teacher/AEN coordinator
- Observe confidentiality regarding the children they work with each day.
- Should there be an urgent need to stop the bus, the Escort should advise the Driver, who will stop at the nearest safe place.
- Bus Escorts should ensure their own safety on the bus at all times:
 - Fasten their seatbelt before the bus moves
 - Wear comfortable clothes
 - Be mindful of jewellery which may be pulled and cause injury
 - Ensure they have their phone* on them at all times. School phone number is 01-4124060
 - *The Driver is the main point of contact for parents - Bus Escorts should not communicate with parents on their personal phone.
- Maintain routine:
 - discourage children from changing seats so as to maintain continuity for other children
- Seek consent from parents before introducing rewards or sanctions, including the use of devices
- Make a judgement as to the child's fitness to board the bus. In cases where a child is extremely dysregulated and may represent a danger to themselves or others, the Escort should refuse admission to the bus.
- In the event of unexpected dangers, use their own best judgement to take action that is reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances they are intending to prevent.

Absences

In the event that a Bus Escort is absent, they must

- text the Bus Driver to inform them of their absence and update the Bus Driver regarding further absences and/or return to work.
- inform the school of any absences and via staffing@citywestetns.ie or by text message to 083-4368896.

If the school cannot arrange substitute cover, the bus will not run. The Escort will inform the Driver and the school will inform the Parents.

Roles & responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian:

- Provide a booster seat (if required) for the child's safe travel.
- Bring the child to the bus each morning and receive the child at the door of the bus in the afternoon.
 - If the child is extremely dysregulated, it may not be safe to put the child on the bus. Parents are asked to consider this as they bring their child to the bus. The bus escort may refuse admission to the bus if they deem the child to be a potential danger to themselves or others.
- Ensure that the child is school-ready each morning - breakfast eaten, fresh nappy (where applicable), etc.
- Inform the Escort/Driver in advance if their child will not be attending school so the bus does not make a wasted journey. Please also notify the Escort/Driver if you will be collecting your child from school or if they go home early and will not need to go on the bus.
- Notify the Driver/Escort in advance, in the event of a different adult meeting the child off the bus on a given day.
- Provide a number of contacts to the school, so that we have people to get in touch with in the event that we cannot contact you.
- If you are planning to move house or are arranging new collection/drop off points, please inform the school as soon as possible so that they can contact Bus Éireann. It can take Bus Éireann 1-2 months to arrange transport to and from the new address.
- Provide a verbal handover to the Bus Escort in the mornings, letting them know about the child's form that day.
- If you have any concerns about the safety of your child when on the bus/taxi, please speak first to the Driver and Bus Escort. If you are still unhappy, please contact the school.

Appendix 1: Risk Assessment - to be updated as and when required

Risk Assessment - Bus transport to and from school (Autism Classes Transport)

The control measures listed below are suggestions - in a live situation, the Bus Escort and Driver should exercise their own best judgement

Likelihood	x	Impact	
Almost Impossible	1	Insignificant (minor injury, no time off)	
Unlikely	2	Minor (non-permanent injury, up to 7 days off)	
Possible	3	Moderate (injury causing more than 7 days off)	
Likely	4	Major (death or serious injury)	
Almost certain	5	Catastrophic (multiple deaths)	
Low = 1-3	Moderate = 4-7	Significant = 8-14	High = 15-25

Identified situation	Risk/ hazard	Risk Rating, Risk to whom	Control measures	Action/ Notes
Nobody home to receive child at end of day	Child not adequately cared for	2x4=8 Pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Driver attempts to contact parents and all other listed contacts. Deliver all other children. In the event that no adequate care can be found, Bus Escort informs the school Child is taken to the nearest Garda station. 	
Parents not fit to take care of child at end of day	Child not adequately cared for	1x4=4 Pupil	Bus Driver calls the Gardaí.	
Child is very dysregulated	Child may lash out, hurt themselves or others	4x2=8 Pupils Escort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual behaviour plans in place Interventions for individual pupils made known to Bus Escorts by the school 	

Identified situation	Risk/ hazard	Risk Rating, Risk to whom	Control measures	Action/ Notes
		Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incidents on the bus recorded and reported to school and Parents Bus may return to point of origin, where necessary, to remove the child from the service. Child must be handed over to a safe adult at point of origin. 	
Child absconds - leaves the bus without permission/ accompaniment	Passing traffic, fall	2x4=8 Pupil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventative measure: Driver only opens the door when the Bus Escort is fully ready to minimise opportunity for a child to bolt 	
Bus breakdown	Children become anxious, dysregulated Children need to be transferred to another bus	3x1=3 Pupils Escort Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Driver contacts bus company to arrange alternative transport Bus Escort informs the school - school deploys staff to the bus to support with regulation. Children remain on the bus (with safety belts on), where safe to do so Where it is deemed unsafe to stay in the vehicle, the Bus Escort and Driver escort the children to a safe position - indoors, if possible 	
Traffic accident	Children become anxious, dysregulated	3x1=3 Pupils Escort Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus Driver contacts emergency services immediately. Bus Escort contacts school immediately. School alerts parents with update. Children remain on the bus (with safety belts on), where safe to do so Where it is deemed unsafe to stay in the vehicle, the Bus Escort and Driver escort the children to a safe position - indoors, if possible 	
Child refusing to get on bus	Child may become anxious, dysregulated if they are forced to board	4x2=8 Pupils Escort Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child is not forced on to bus. If in the morning, child stays with parents, they can drop child to school If in the afternoon, child stays at school, school contacts parents to collect 	

Identified situation	Risk/ hazard	Risk Rating, Risk to whom	Control measures	Action/ Notes
Child regularly so dysregulated as to cause danger to self and others	Ongoing danger to self and others. Anxiety of all	3x2=6 Pupils Escort Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School seeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ another Bus Escort or ○ individual transport for that child 	
Medical emergency	Medical emergency	3x3=9 Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bus escort stays with the child ● Bus driver pulls over and calls emergency services 	