



St. Ultan's Special School

Bus Escort Policy

19216E

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

1. Introductory Statement:

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

2. 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
- Establish expectations of respect and collegiality between all relevant parties

3. Aims:

- a) To ensure the safety of all on the bus.
- b) To enhance the journey for all.
- c) To create and maintain an atmosphere of respect, calmness and order for all.
- d) To ensure that each individual is aware of his/her responsibilities.
- e) To establish a system and support structure for students and staff.

4.1. General 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 pickup 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 school and vice versa

- School buses must call to collect every student every day unless explicitly told not to by parents/school.
- The bus driver and the escort work together at all times. The driver has ultimate responsibility to ensure the safety of all on the bus and the Escort must assist by ensuring all students adhere to safety guidelines.
- Should there be an urgent need to stop the bus, the escort should advise the driver, who will stop at the nearest safe place.
- A list of all students with relevant contact numbers should be available on each bus.
- School begins in St. Ultan's Special School at 8:50am and finishes at 2:30pm. Members of the school supervision team will accompany students to and from the bus and school building in the morning and afternoon respectively
- Escorts are required to work each day the school is open. (Please see guidelines for leave and absences below at 4.2).
- On occasion, when the school bus does not operate, the Bus Driver is responsible for contacting the Escort 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 en-route.
- Where a student does not come to school in the morning, the parent should make contact with the Escort to make them aware of their plans for the evening service. The Escort can then communicate this to the Bus Driver.
- A change of address of a child requires 6 weeks advance notice at least.
- The Escort is expected to attend mandatory training which will be provided from time to time. This will be held during school hours and Escorts will be paid for hours attended. If an Escort cannot attend the school-based training, they must source and pay for training of their own accord.
- Any queries of a non-urgent nature must be emailed to the school transport email address schooltransport.office@stultansnavan.com If a detailed discussion with the Principal/Deputy Principal/transport secretary is required, the Escort must contact the school office/email to arrange an appointment.
- On occasion, the school may carry out a 'Child Welfare Audit' whereby a member of school management will accompany the Escort on the school bus run to observe the Child's experience on their journey to/from school. *Please see template for audit in the Appendices.*

- SNA's/Teachers who are contracted to work in St. Ultan's School are not permitted to undertake a contracted position as Bus Escort, owing to a clash in contracted hours. Employees of St. Ultan's School are permitted to act as substitute for a Bus Escort for a period of no longer than 6 consecutive weeks.

4.2. Guidelines on Sick Leave and Other Absences

- Where the Escort is unable to attend work on the **morning of work**, he/she must inform the Bus Driver and Parents immediately that the bus will not operate, followed by a courtesy email to schooltransport.office@stultansnavan.com or courtesy text to the school transport phone on **0830993157**.
- Where the Escort knows **in advance** of the working day that he/she is unable to attend work, he/she must contact the school transport email or phone as above to discuss the required procedure (ie: sub cover, liaison with parents, etc)
- Where the Escort needs to **avail of leave**, he/she must send a request to the Board of Management in writing to the school postal address or via email to the school transport email address as above, outlining the nature of the leave (ie: medical appointment, certified sick leave, unpaid day etc)
- Where there is no sub to cover the Escort's absence, the bus will not operate and it will be the Escort's responsibility to contact the relevant parties involved (Parents, Bus Driver, School etc).
- It is the responsibility of the Escort to document and record all hours worked on the timesheet provided by the school. Timesheets must be collected from the middle building by the Escort and posted into the black post-box labelled "Timesheets" once filled in.

5. Responsibilities of the Escort

In all cases, the Bus Escort will:

- Maintain good order and a happy atmosphere on the bus.
- Ensure that he/she is on the bus at time of first pick-up and last set down.
- Be responsible for the opening and closing of the bus door
- Ensure the safety of students 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.
- Ensure that each student is received by a staff member at school.
- Ensure that each student is received by a responsible person, where necessary, at the set down point. If in doubt, please consult the Principal/Deputy Principal.

- Follow the school's Child Protection Policy and be aware of the DLP - Designated Liaison Person (Principal) and DDLP - Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy Principal).
- Conduct themselves in a respectful and professional manner when completing their duties and whilst interacting with all parties involved in the daily process (ie: Students, Parents, Bus Driver, School Staff, School Management Team).
Please also consult St. Ultan's School Policies 'Dignity at Work' and 'Professional Code of Conduct for SNAs' as found on www.stultansnavan.com.

6. Duties of an Escort

- Before beginning to work with any new child, familiarise self with medical needs as well as care needs of the child.
- Be aware of particular needs of students on the bus and be briefed by the Principal on how to deal with same e.g. some students with autism may need to sit on the same seat each day.
- Supervision of all students travelling on bus. This means that when there are students on the bus the escort should remain at the bus to receive a student from parent/staff member. Unless there are exceptional circumstances the Escort should not move away from the vicinity of the bus while students, under their care, remain on board.
- The Escort's position on the bus should be such as to facilitate maximum supervision of all students.
- The Escort will maintain a good working relationship with the driver of the bus
- The escort will endeavour to develop a rapport with the students, interact in a friendly manner with them, encourage communication (verbal, Lámh, AC device etc) and respond to any needs that the child may have while on the bus.
- Where relevant, take responsibility for any medication going from home to school and school to home e.g. give medication to relevant person; in accordance with the student's medical care plan, ensure that medication is clearly marked with student's name. Medication should not be left in bags where it could be accessed by other students.
- The Escort must ensure personal belongings are not misplaced, e.g. in some cases students' belongings may need to be handed to school staff/Parent/Guardian.
- Observe confidentiality in all aspects of work.
- Be aware of and use positive behaviour strategies.
- Report any concerns about the bus to the Bus Driver.
- Report any concerns regarding the safety/welfare of students to the Principal/Deputy Principal (Designated Liaison Person/Deputy Designated Liaison Person), preferably in writing/via email.
- Be aware of and use positive behaviour strategies.
- Perform any other duties relevant to the position of escort which may be assigned by the Principal from time to time.

7. Significant Medical Conditions and Emergency Medication

- Where a Student has a significant medical diagnosis such as Epilepsy or Diabetes, the Escort will follow guidance provided by the Parent/Guardian, GP/Medical Professional and/or Principal/Deputy Principal where applicable
- Where a student must carry emergency medications such as Buccal Midazolam or Insulin, the school will provide appropriate training for the Escort and will furnish the Escort with a copy of the student's Care Plan as devised in conjunction with the Parent, Class Teacher and SNA.
- The Escort is responsible for keeping him/herself informed on all procedures relating to the medical condition/emergency medication
- The Escort will closely monitor the Student on the bus and will communicate any observations or concerns to the Parent/Guardian or School Staff as appropriate
- If an incident occurs on the bus relating to the medical condition, the Escort will follow the Care Plan and phone the Parent/Guardian or Emergency Services if so recommended. An incident report should be completed by the Escort under the guidance of the Parent/Guardian or Principal/Deputy Principal as appropriate

8. Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified on the date indicated below by the Board of Management of St Ultan's Special School and will be review as necessary to include any new or updated information.

Signed: 
Chairperson Board of Management

Date: 09-11-22

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Child Welfare Audit – School Transport

Bus Number:		Date:	
Escort:		Driver:	
Students Present on the Bus:			
Pick Ups	Student	Information	
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
Time of Arrival at School:			
How was the time spent waiting for the school bell:			
Any Other Comments:			

Signed: _____ (School Management) _____ (Bus Escort)

Date: _____