



## Ballinlough NS

### Policy for School Bus Transport

Bus transport is provided for the children to and from Ballinlough NS Stepping Stones Autism class by the Department of Education through Bus Éireann. Once your child has been granted transport (in line with the Department of Education circular 02/05) they will be assigned a bus route.

**Rationale:** It was necessary to devise a policy to

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

**Aims of the policy:**

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

### Responsibilities

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
- Liaises with the Bus Inspector in relation to incidents (e.g behaviour/child protection/safety concerns)
- Responsibility for compliance with Child Protection Procedures
- Provision of safe bus parking space in the school carpark
- 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.
- Link with Bus Escorts regarding the needs of particular children.
- 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.
- Notify Principal if a pupil is unwell and leaves school early and will not travel home on bus in order for principal can notify bus escort in good time.

### **Responsibility of the driver**

- Safe transport of those on board the bus, informing the school for any dangers due to behaviour, safety etc
- Link with bus escort to arrange meeting times, routes and drop offs.
- 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 and pick up of pupils.

### **Responsibility of the Bus Escort**

- Meets the driver at an agreed time and place each morning.
- Meets parent and child at the allocated address at the door of the bus.
- Assists the child to board safely and alight safely.
- Secures the seatbelts/ car seats as needed.
- Follow all child protection procedures and inform the DLP if they have any child protection concerns.
- Supervises and watches over the safety and well-being of the children travelling on the bus
- Informs the school if they are aware of a child causing danger to themselves or others on the bus journey.
- Must observe confidentiality in all aspects of work
- Must maintain a good working relationship with the driver of the school transport
- Ensure that the principal and driver are informed as soon as possible if a child is causing danger to themselves or others on the bus journey.

### **Responsibility of the Parent/Guardian:**

- Must accompany the child to the bus each morning
- Must be home each afternoon to receive the child.
- Informs the bus escort directly in advance if their child will not be attending school.
- 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
- 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 there is a family emergency you must contact the the school that a named adult will be at your home to receive your child when bus arrive.

### **Bus Éireann Inspector:**

- • gives contracts to bus companies to provide school transport
- assigns children to bus routes and gives contact details to the contractors
- • 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.

### **The Bus Contractor:**

- 
- assigns a driver to the route
- informs parents of the time of morning collection and drop off time in the evenings.
- 

### **Time Keeping**

A discretionary 5-minute wait period is permitted if you inform the driver/ bus escort that you are running late due to unforeseen reasons. Otherwise, the bus will drive on to pick up the next child and you will need to make your own transport arrangements to Ballinlough NS. For the afternoon drop off, if the parent is not at home to receive the child and hasn't contacted the driver/bus escort the bus driver is obliged to drop the child to the nearest garda station as the other children on board need to be dropped at their homes.

### **Bus Transport: Changes or Concerns**

- Changes: Transport is provided from school to the home address as stated on the application form. Alternative pick up/drop off addresses must be sanctioned by the Department of Transport. The driver is strictly not allowed to leave a child at a different address unless arrangements are made in advance through Bus Eireann.
- If there is a family emergency, you must arrange that a named adult will be at your home to meet your son or daughter when the bus arrives. Please inform the bus escort.
- If you are planning to move house, please contact Bus Éireann as soon as possible. It can take Bus Éireann a few weeks to arrange transport to and from the new address.
- If you have any concerns about the safety of your child when on the bus/taxi, please speak first to the driver. If you are still unhappy, please contact the school.

## Health and Safety

All concerns of health and safety should be reported to the bus company and the school principal who will work directly with the bus inspector to resolve and put all necessary procedures in place.

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Ballinlough NS on 19/05/25

Signed: Chairperson Pauline Plunkett

Signed: Principal Tanya Farrelly