

**Transport Policy**

**Introduction**

This document sets out the School Transport Policy for Scoil Mochua. This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management and the Staff of Scoil Mochua and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management.

**Rationale**

Scoil Mochua requires the highest standards of care in the bus service provided for our students. The roles of escorts and bus drivers are crucial in facilitating our students attending the school.

This policy aims to ensure that the appropriate procedures are in place to enable the school.

* To ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students boarding and disembarking the bus
* To ensure the safety of children while travelling on school transport

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The following people have set roles and responsibilities to ensure the safe transport of pupils between school and home.

**Students**

* To sit in the seat or space that has been allocated to them by the escort/driver.
* To wear their seatbelt throughout the journey
* To ensure that wheelchairs have breaks on/are powered off both on the tail lifts and while the bus is driving.
* May use electronic devices e.g. iPod, phone etc only with the agreement of the escort/driver.
* To be respectful towards the escort, driver and other pupils

**Parents**

* To adhere to safety rules and ensure that their child abides by the Code of Behaviour.
* To report any concerns relating to the bus initially to the escort, and/or class teacher as necessary. *It should be noted that any issues regarding school/classroom etc are taken directly to the teacher or principal, not the bus escort.*
* To communicate with the driver regarding absence or if alternative arrangements have been made.
* To ensure that change of address is notified to the school office with as much notice as possible to ensure smooth changes of bus routes.
* To ensure their child is ready to leave at the set time given by the driver.
* To ensure a suitable adult is at home when the bus returns in the afternoon.
* To ensure that their child has all emergency medication as needed when boarding the bus.

**Escorts**

Escorts are expected to supervise students whilst they are being transported from home to school and vice versa. This includes:

* Ensuring that students being transported do not distract the driver whilst the vehicle is in motion.
* Ensuring that the students abide by the code of behaviour while on the bus, following the school response hierarchy, if concerns arise.
* Maintaining appropriate physical contact with students to enable comfortable entry and exit from the vehicle.
* Remaining in the bus at all times to supervise, parents are expected to escort their child to and from the vehicle each day.
* Sitting in the back of the vehicle with the students, and not in the front with the driver. (This will be waived for single wheelchair taxis where there is no appropriate seating in the back.
* Using emergency medication if a situation demands it. Emergency medication training will be provided by the Board of Management. All emergency medication will be clearly labelled with the student’s name and clear written instructions on the administration of the medication.
* To notify the secretary and principal if a bus is not running.
* Informing the driver if any student is not safely seated before the bus leaves or while the bus is in motion.
* Making sure that the students on arrival at school or home are supervised by a member of school staff/parent. On no account should a student be left unattended on a vehicle.
* Making sure that all bags are stored safely.
* Making sure that emergency medication is handed over to school staff at the start of the day and back to parents in the afternoon.

**Drivers**

* Ensuring all seatbelts are fastened before the vehicle moves.
* Making sure that all doors are securely closed before the vehicle starts to move.
* Securing students into their harnesses or car seats if they have been provided.
* Ensuring students are at school for a 9.00 am unloading
* To not begin unloading until the 9.00 am unloading time or to leave before 2.40pm unless otherwise indicated by staff.

**Other School Staff**

* Children must be walked to the bus by a member of their class team.
* The staff member who brings a child to the bus must wait with the child until the escort is present.
* While bringing students to and from the bus, staff should only be carrying belongings of the students.
* No staff should return to their cars before all busses have left to ensure suitable staff numbers present in cases of an emergency.

**Contractor**

* To ensure safe operation of routes, subject to all appropriate guidelines set out by the Department of Education and Skills with regards to the sanctioning of school transport.
* To communicate with escorts/school/parents if there is a significant problem with school transport caused by absence/mechanical failure/weather incidents etc.
* To liasse with the school in the case of any grievance arising

**Board of Management**

The School and Board of Management are responsible for

* Employing bus escorts for all sanctioned routes.
* Ensuring that escorts are subject to all mandatory requirements as outlined by the Department of Education and Skills.
* Provide relevant training as applicable to the escort’s role.

**School Response Hierarchy for Problems/Queries**

Please ensure that any problems or queries are directed as follows:

1. Escort will report concern to class team. The class team will implement an appropriate intervention to improve the situation. Any serious incidents should be reported to the principal using the Serious Incident Form.
2. Escort will report any ongoing issues to the principal.
3. The principal will talk with the escort and then contact the parent if required.
4. The principal will facilitate a meeting with the parents and escort if required.
5. If there are ongoing concerns, the principal will inform Bus Eireann of these concerns.

**Collection of Students**

* When collecting students, please wait outside the home address for approximately 3 minutes.
* If the parent fails to bring the student out to the transport, the driver or escort should phone the parent if no absence has been notified.

**Drop-off of Students**

* The driver will return a student to their home address. It is not possible to facilitate drop-offs to multiple addresses during the week.
* If a Parent/Guardian is not at home the child will be returned to the school?
* No children under the age of 12 will be permitted to let themselves into the house without an adult present. For children over 12, parents must notify the school if their child is allowed to enter the house without the escort seeing the parent.
* If parents are not in attendance at drop-off consistently, this will affect their child’s space on the bus.

**Illness**

In the event of illness there is a chance that despite efforts to find a relief escort or driver, the bus may not run. In this case, parents should arrange to drop and collect their child from school.

It is the escorts responsibility to:

* Notify the driver, principal and secretary of their absence.
* Provide the appropriate certification for sick leave.

**Leave of Absence**

Leave of absence will not be granted except in exceptional circumstances and escorts should make a written request to the school at least six weeks in advance. The Board of Management will assess each request on its own merits in line with Employment Legislation.

**Contracts**

The contract between the escort and the school is based on the following.

* The escort has read the job description and familiarised himself/herself with the job requirements.
* The escort has undertaken the necessary training as outlined by the school.
* The escort has agreed to the fixed term contract from \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_

It should be noted that routes are liable to change, and the school cannot guarantee the renewal of contracts from year to year as these are determined by outside agencies.

**Related Documents**

This policy was written in conjunction with the following documents.

* Code of Behaviour
* Child Protection Policy
* Administering Medication Policy
* Safety Statement
* Grievance Policy

**Ratification of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed regularly in the light of experience. It will be reviewed by the full staff and Board of Management every three years. Any staff member, board member, parent, guardian or student who is unhappy with the content or the implementation of any school policy may request a review at any time and such a request will be dealt with as quickly as possible. The next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year 2026/2027.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management in April 2024

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew Swain

Chairperson of BoM

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Sophia Casey

Principal/Secretary to the BoM