



## **Caherline N.S School Transport to ASD Unit Policy**

Bus or taxi transport is provided for the children to and from Caherline N.S ASD Unit by the Department of Education and Skills, through Bus Éireann. Once your child has been granted transport to the Unit (in line with the Department of Education and Skills Circular 02/05), they will be assigned to a bus route. The bus/ taxi contractor will contact you to arrange collection and drop off times. Please note, the bus or taxi can only collect and drop children to the address on the bus ticket. The driver is strictly not allowed to leave a child at a different address unless special arrangements are made in advance through Bus Éireann. Brothers or sisters of pupils in receipt of the school transport scheme are not allowed to travel on the bus.

### **Responsibilities**

#### ***The School:***

- 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
- informs Bus Éireann of a new home address or other changes
- pass on reports of any safety concerns to Bus Éireann Inspector
- Responsibility for compliance with Child Protection Procedures.
- Provision of Safe Bus Parking Spaces at School Buildings.

### **Responsibility of the School Principal:**

- Link with the Bus Escort regarding School Transport
- Ensure that SNA staff/ Teachers are at collection points in good time to receive pupils
- Notify parents/school staff if unavoidable delays in Transport and/or cancellation of transport due to weather conditions.
- Link with Bus Escorts regarding the needs of particular children.
- Draw up a list of substitute escorts.
- Assign and review the duties of Bus Escorts.
- Link with Bus Éireann, DES and NCSE re School Transport.
- Sign forms regarding School Calendar etc for submission to Bus Éireann

### **Responsibility of Class Teacher:**

- Link with Bus Escort regarding Children travelling on bus.
- Have children ready in good time for collection.
- Notify Bus Escort if a pupil is unwell and where possible contact parents in good time if child unfit to travel home by bus.

### **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

### **The Driver:**

- safe transport of those on board the bus/ taxi, informing the school for any dangers due to behavior or for other reasons. They will not operate any handheld devices while driving the bus.
- wheels wheelchairs/ buggies up the ramp and secures them safely

- time-keeping: a 5-minute wait period only is allowed at each house. If a child is not brought to the bus within the 5-minute period, the driver must drive on to collect the next child and parents/ guardians will need to make their own transport arrangements that day
- safe delivery home: if a parent/ guardian is not at home to receive the child in the afternoon, the driver is obliged to leave the child at the nearest Garda Station.

### **The Bus Escort:**

- meets the parent and child at the bus door
- ensures that each pupil is received by a designated person at the set down point
- must remain on the bus at all times unless under exceptional circumstances
- is responsible for the safety of the children when opening and closing doors
- assists the child to board safely and alight safely
- secures the children's seatbelts
- supervises and watches over the safety and well-being of the children traveling 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
- must inform the parents of a change in Escort or driver in advance of collection of pupils

### **The Parent/Guardian:**

- must bring the child to the bus each morning
- Must receive the child at the bus in the afternoon.
- informs the escort/ driver in advance if their child will not be attending school so the bus does not make a wasted journey
- informs the escort/ driver in advance if their child will not be returning home on the bus
- inform the escort/driver in advance when their child is returning to school after a period of absence

- Supply Bus Escort with names and contact details of TWO named adults who will bring child to pickup point and collect child at set-down point every day. If a pupil is not collected at delivery point, bus continues to next house where parent/named adult can meet pupil. If at end of route a pupil is not collected, then Driver brings that child to nearest Garda Station.
- Ensure that child is handed over safely to bus escort for morning journey and that child is received safely by named adult on the return journey.
- Make sure that child is ready for morning journey, has all necessary school requisites, has gone to the toilet and has eaten breakfast. NO EATING OR DRINKING permitted on school transport.
- Supply booster seats, harness etc if these are required.
- Teach children BASIC RULES for Travelling on Bus Transport

NOTE: Please note that, for safety and insurance reasons, both driver and escort are *not allowed* to leave the bus to knock on your door or to deliver your child to your home. Parents/ guardians must bring their child to and from the bus. Pick-up and Set Down points are always AT the BUS, either at pupil's home or at school.

#### Bus Transport: Changes or Concerns

- If you need to change transport arrangements for any day, please contact the school office well in advance and your request will be forwarded to Bus Éireann.
- If there is a family emergency, you must arrange with the school that a named adult will be at your home to meet your son or daughter when the bus arrives.
- If you are planning to move house, please let the school know as soon as possible and they will contact Bus Éireann. 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. Pupils are not allowed to use mobile phones in the bus/taxi.