St. Francis Xavier Senior National School

Bus Escort Policy

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

Introductory Statement

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

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

Aims

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

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 the last 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.
- A list of all students with relevant contact numbers should be available on each bus.
- School begins in St. Francis Xavier Senior School at 8:40am and finishes at 2:20pm.
- Should there be an urgent need to stop the bus, the escort should advise the driver, who will stop at the nearest safe place.
- Escorts are required to work each day the school is open.
- The Escort is expected to attend training which will be provided from time to time.
- 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 enroute.
- 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.
- If the school bus for any reason did not operate in the morning, there will be a service in the afternoon (weather permitting).
- A change of address of a child requires 6 weeks advance notice at least.

Responsibilities of the Escort

- To 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.
- Opening and closing doors of the bus.
- 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.
- Ensures that each student is received by a staff member at school.
- Ensures that each student is received by a responsible person, where necessary, at the set down point. If in doubt, please consult the Principal.
- Is a model of good, respectful behaviour.
- Follows the school's Child Protection Policy Duties of an Escort
- Before beginning to work with any new child, familiarise themselves 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.
- Maintain a good working relationship with the driver of the bus
- Act as liaison between Principals and parents when requested.
- Where relevant, take responsibility for any medication going from home to school and school to home e.g. give medication to relevant person; 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.
- Act as a liaison as required for conveyance of messages and letters between home and school and vice versa. Escort must ensure personal belongings are not misplaced, e.g. in some cases students' belongings may need to be handed to school staff.
- Observe confidentiality in all aspects of work.
- Be aware and use positive behaviour strategies.
- Report any concerns about the bus to the Bus Driver.
- Report all concerns to the Principal.
- 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.

Ratification and Communication

The Board of Management of St. Francis Xavier Senior School drew up this policy on 27th May 2024.

These procedures will be reviewed by May 2026.

The Bus Escort Policy is communicated to teaching staff via the shared drive and to the SNA team and Ancillary Staff in their policy folder. It is made available to parents through the school website.

Signed _____ Date 29/05/2024

Chairperson

Signed _____ Date 29/05/2024

Principal