



## **Policy Statement**

This document sets out the School Transport Policy for St Killian's School.

## **Scope**

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management and Staff of St Killian's School and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The policy applies to all staff/parents/pupils within the school.

## **Relationship to the School's Mission Statement**

"If this child doesn't learn the way we teach, can we teach him/her the way he/she learns, and can we extend his learning options?"

Dr. Harry Chasty

## **School Philosophy**

Each child's uniqueness is valued within the school, which fosters a secure, caring and positive environment, to enable each child to develop to their full potential.

## **Introduction**

St. Killian's provides a co-educational, inter-disciplinary educational service to children who are diagnosed with a Specific Learning Difficulty, including Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Speech and Language Difficulties, and children who have educational difficulties in one or more school based areas.

The school depends on grants provided by the Department of Education and Skills and the school operates within the regulations laid down, from time to time, by the Department.

Within the context and parameters of the Department regulations and programmes, the rights of the patron as set out in the Education Act (1998) and the funding and resources available, the school supports the principles of:

- Equality of access and participation
- Parental choice in relation to enrolment
- Respect for diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, language and ways of life.

The psychological services are provided by National Educational Psychological Services.

## **Background**

St Killian's School makes an application for school transport to the NCSE. Once the transport is sanctioned by the Department, local organisation of school transport is coordinated by Jim Stack (CIE).

## **Code of Behaviour on School Transport**

The aim of this policy is to enhance the safety of all users of the school transport to and from school. Safety is the responsibility of all who avail of the services (parents, pupils, contractors, escorts, school) and commitment to safety is a condition of use of these services. Safety is the primary responsibility of Contractor, Driver, Escort, School and Parent. Risks on a bus are higher due to confined spaces, length of journey and also complex needs of pupils. Consideration must be given to the physical and emotional well-being of all pupils using bus transport. Consideration and empathy must also be present when



dealing with escalated behaviours arising from distress, anxiety and fear. Pupils must always be treated with respect and care, peers also need to feel safe. Given the broad profile of St Killian's pupils a nuanced response to all potentially dangerous/risky situations needs to be applied.

Children using school transport must:

1. Sit in the seat that has been allocated to them by the escort/driver.
2. Wear their seat belt throughout the journey.
3. Not leave the bus without permission of the escort/driver.
4. All electronic devices e.g. iPod, phone etc. must only be used with agreement of the escort/driver. Use of devices are subject to St Killian's School Code of Conduct.
5. Be respectful towards the escort, driver and other pupils. Bad language must not be used.

Escorts/Driver will bring to the attention of the school any concerns they have for safety on the bus arising from breaching the code of conduct.

School Response Hierarchy-This depends on the child's capacity to understand the transport rules.

1. Class teacher will talk to the child about behaviour.
2. Deputy Principal will talk to the child about behaviour.
3. Deputy Principal will contact parent.
4. Principal will meet parent/escort and pupil.
5. Pupil may be suspended from the transport if behaviour is a serious health and safety risk.
6. Risk Assessment will be drawn up in consultation with the Contractor and Bus Escort/Driver.
7. Principal to consult with contractors around Health and Safety.

8. If there are ongoing concerns, the Principal will write to CIE to inform of these concerns.

\*Depending on the child's ability to communicate, discussion may begin with a child's parent/guardian. In this case the following responses apply.

1. Escort to raise concerns about child's safety on transport with the parent/guardian.
2. Escort to raise concerns about child's safety on transport with the class teacher/parent/guardian
3. Escort to raise concerns about a child's safety on transport with the Deputy Principal who will liaise with the Principal on this matter. Deputy will do an individual bus transport Risk Assessment for the pupil.

Responses- a positive behaviour plan plus interventions as needed below

1. Social Story to explain desired behaviour-Bus Escort/Class Teacher
2. 'Box of Tricks'-Preferred items/reinforcers provided by parents-effect monitored by escort
3. Seat Belt Restrictor-Review of seating-Car Seat
4. Angel Guard
5. Houdini Strap(only suitable in some circumstances)
6. Best Vest
7. Magnetic Vest
8. Crelling Harness
9. Individual Bus Escort
10. Individual Transport

\*Please note that there is no funding from the Department for assistive equipment for school transport for pupils. The BOM undertakes to purchase Angel Guards but all other equipment needs to be purchased/provided by parents/guardians.



The responses will vary depending on the level of behaviours shown, health and safety of the child/peers/escort/driver and may proceed more rapidly than outlined above. Each circumstance is different.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **Pupils**

- To adhere to safety rules and abide by Code of Conduct (or to be supported to adhere to safe travel rules as appropriate.)

#### **Parents**

- To adhere to safety rules and ensure their child abides by the Code of Conduct.
- To sign Code of Behaviour on school transport.
- To report any concerns initially to the escort, and or class teacher as necessary.
- To sign and return any communications regarding school transport including; Code of Conduct, Permission slips for pupils to travel unescorted if necessary/ Slips acknowledging need to make alternative arrangements as necessary.
- To communicate with bus escorts in the first instance regarding specific pupil needs on transport e.g. travel sickness etc, pupil absence, or if alternative arrangements have been made for a variety of reasons.
- To ensure that your child is ready for collection 10 mins prior to the agreed collection time (to allow for varied traffic conditions).
- To advise the bus escort if you are running late and therefore will not be ready for pick up-in this event the escort will give 2 mins waiting time only.

#### **Escort**

- To adhere to safety rules and ensure pupils abide by Code of Conduct, to follow School Response Hierarchy if concerns arise.
- To attend relevant training as directed by the school/BOM in line with their role as escort.
- To communicate with parents in the first instance if there is a problem/delay with school transport caused by absence/mechanical failure/weather incidents etc.
- To comply with school rules around confidentiality and discuss pupil's behaviour discreetly, this very much depends on a pupil's ability to understand the rules and how to travel safely, where a child requires supports (Social Stories/Reinforcers/Redirection Items/Activities/Physical Supports) this should always be discussed discreetly with the parent/guardian/teacher first not in front of the pupil/peers.
- To ensure that pupils enter and exit school transport safely in the designated areas for drop off and pick up.
- To ensure that all pupils are safely strapped in prior to transport moving. To ensure adequate time is given for pupils to be strapped in/or to strap themselves in.

#### **Contractor**

- To ensure safe operation of routes, subject to all appropriate guidelines/requirements set out by the Department of Education and Skills with regard to the sanctioning of school transport.
- To communicate with escorts/school in the first instance if there is a problem with school transport caused by absence/mechanical failure/weather incidents etc.
- If providing alternative transport option in case of need to ensure that the driver is familiar with the route, knows the pupils to be collected, and can confirm these details with the school before pupils go on the bus.
- To ensure they drop off and pick up from designated points beside the school (not opposite in the flow of traffic).



## **School/BOM**

- To employ bus escorts where possible on all sanctioned routes.
- To ensure that escorts are subject to all mandatory requirements as outlined by the Department of Education and Skills in working with children.
- To provide relevant training as applicable to the escort role.
- To commence a yearly audit with regard to staffing of bus routes, and to work with contractors to ascertain procedures in the event of no escort/sub-escort being available for the route.
- To advertise for bus escorts/sub-bus escorts on a bi-annual basis if required.
- To consult with the contractor/s with regard to the availability or otherwise of a bus escort/sub-bus escort.
- Where there is no escort/sub-bus escort to inform parents of this and outline alternative arrangements, which may include in the event of escort absence (no sub available), pupils may travel on school transport with parental/driver permission or make alternative arrangements to transport their child to school.
- Bus Transport Risk Assessments-Whole Bus Statutory (Deputy) Individual-As needed (Deputy)
- To delegate the communication of collection/pick up times to the Bus Escort subject to CIE Route requirements.
- Collection and pick up-Parents/Guardians are requested to ensure that their child is ready for the bus at the agreed pick up/drop off times at the location outlined. Where the bus is delayed the escort is requested to advise parents/guardians of this.
- Please note that due to the complex nature of the routes and pupils on the bus, transport is directed not to wait more than 2 minutes in the event of a pupil running late to the collection point.

## **Related Documents/Policies**

Code of Conduct  
 Child Protection Policy & Statement  
 Critical Incident-Behaviour Policy  
 Administering Medicine Policy  
 Group risk assessment/plan  
 Individual Pupil Risk Assessment  
 Incident Report

## **Additional Resources/Information**

Examples of Behavioural/Social/Emotional Correlates  
 Behaviour Management Strategies  
 Definitions of Learning Difficulties

## **Definitions/Acronyms**

NEPS	National Educational Psychological Services
BOM	Board Of Management
DES	Department of Education and Skills
NCSE	National Council For Special Education

## **Policy Approval**

## TRANSPORT POLICY 2024-2027



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This policy has been reviewed and accepted by the school Board of Management

Chairperson of BOM –Margaret O Keefe

Date: September 2024

### **Policy Review**

It is acknowledged and accepted by all parties that this policy may be revised/modified annually or more frequently as required in light of on-going evaluation of statutory requirements or situations that arise during the school year.

Next Policy Review Date September 2027