Hedgestown National School
Lusk
Co.Dublin

Phone/Fax 01-8438372
office@hedgestownns.com
www.hedgestownns.com

Scoil Baile Fálbhach
Lusca
Baile Átha Cliath

Roll No: 17472M

SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

School Transport

The Department of Education & Science endeavor's to provide suitable transport for pupils attending the ASD classes in Hedgestown National School. The scheme is administered by Bus Éireann as an agent of the Department of Education & Science.

Application for School Transport

Parents / Guardians of students accepted for enrolment in Hedgestown National School are required to complete *'Application for School Transport for Children with Special Educational Needs for School Year concerned* 'NCSE Form (see attachment). The Principal completes the *'Declaration of Principal'* section and submits the application form to the Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) together with relevant professional reports to support the application. The SENO completes the application form and makes certain recommendations to the council (NCSE) e.g. type of transport required, requirement for an escort, wheelchair access, etc. Transport may be refused if there is a school nearer to the student's home that meets the student's special education needs. The NCSE forwards its decision to School

Transport Section, Department of Education & Skills. School Transport forwards its decision to Bus Éireann. Bus Éireann organises transport and notifies the school.
The contractors hired by Bus Éireann to provide transport contact the parents.

When your child is offered a place in Hedgestown National School, the school will endeavour to provide all information necessary to facilitate a smooth transition for your child to our school. The school passes on all contact details re your child to Bus Eireann. The bus inspector and his/her team plan to include all new students (If required) on bus lists for the following September. Bus Eireann invites contractors to tender for the different routes and this is finalised where possible before school opens for the new school year.

The bus driver allocated to the route on which your child will travel will make contact with you in the days before school opens.

Arrangements will be made between you and the driver regarding times of collection and drop-off. Flexibility is necessary especially for the first few days until the driver has a clear view of how the route

will work best for the comfort of all. It is important for you to have the number for both the driver and the escort and that a good working relationship is maintained.

You are asked to please give as much notice as possible if your son or daughter will not be attending school for any reason. If you need to collect your child early from school please text the bus staff so that they know not to wait for your child at home time.

Equally if your child is not on the bus in the morning and subsequently he/she is dropped to school please text bus staff to make sure they are aware they need to bring the student home.

A student is insured to travel only on the bus allocated to them and may not travel on a different bus. 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.

In the event of your moving to a new address, notice should be given, to the school as early as possible. The Dept. of Education needs to sanction a place on a new bus. There is a three-step process that happens: school contact the SENO and sends on the appropriate form; the SENO sends the form to the Dept. of Education for sanction and the Dept. sends it finally to Bus Eireann who try to find a new bus.

Note. Please be aware that occasionally a bus may not run for a variety of reasons, Mechanical failure, illness of bus staff, emergencies etc. Many of these situations will be outside of the control of the school. On such occasions, parents will need to make alternative arrangements.

Safety on school buses is of paramount importance to all involved in school transport.
The Department of Education provides schools with a grant to pay salaries of escorts to supervise the students on the bus and ensure their safety and comfort. The bus escort gets to know the children and learns how to manage them in a respectful and caring way. See appendix "Responsibilities of an escort."

There is a legal requirement to wear seat belts on buses, and failure to wear the seat belt provided is regarded as a serious breach of safety and a disciplinary matter. For further information on this and for information on 'Behaviour on School Transport' see appendix 4.
Most behaviours of concern that arise on a school bus can be managed in a low-key fashion. Open communication between driver/escort /parents and school staff will assist in highlighting any worries a student has relating to bus transport and managing to allay their concerns and lead to a solution

Given the importance of safety on the school bus, parents should be aware that any serious misbehaviour, such as vandalism, or bullying, will lead to sanctions that may include an extended period of exclusion from the school transport service or in a more serious situation, permanent exclusion. The bus inspector is the person who makes the decision to suspend or exclude a student from school bus transport. It is unusual for such a situation to occur.

For Bus Éireann 'Guidelines for Discipline and Procedures for Dealing with Alleged Misbehaviour on School Transport' see appendix attached.
This should be read by parent / guardian and explained to your son / daughter.

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Home Time /Collection Time

- All school staff need to know the parking area of the bus for each student in their classroom.
- Classroom staff leave their classroom with the students at 1.50 or 2.50 pm to accompany their students to their bus and ensure safety of students en route.
- Classroom staff hands over student to bus escort.
- Classroom staff informs bus staff if a student has been collected early and will not be using the bus.
- Students who are travelling in the buses wait inside the door with their classroom staff until the bus arrives. They walk in single file to the bus with the SNA/ teacher.
- Bus parks outside the door in the evening.
- The Principal/ Deputy Principal is responsible for the overall supervision of transport. She/ he needs to be a visible presence in the mornings and afternoons at drop off and collection times.

Morning Drop Off for Students from Buses

- Hedgestown National School accepts responsibility for students arriving in school at 09:30am.
- Buses drop off students outside the door at the front entrance
- Should a bus arrive in the school prior to 9:30am the bus staff wait with the students on board until 9:30am.
- Bus pulls up at the door. SNA's are waiting. Students are facilitated by escort to alight safely from bus and proceed down the steps.
- The SNA'S oversee the students alighting from buses and provide assistance if needed descending the steps.
- Principal/ Deputy Principal will be in attendance for the arrival of buses and students and available to deal with queries and supervise the procedure.

Note to bus drivers and bus escorts:

Any documentation requiring signature should be presented, completed in full, to the Deputy principal or secretary in the office. Undated / incomplete documentation will be returned for completion before signature.

Contact details re School Transport.

Department of Education: Fionnuala Hickey *School Transport Section* Department of Education
Portlaoise Rd, Tullamore, Co. Offaly, R35 Y2N5.
Email fionnuala_hickey@education.gov.ie +353(0)57 932 5461
Schools_ transport@education.gov.ie

Bus inspector, 2025/26 Tony Joyce. Tony.Joyce@buseireann.ie Contact schools.dublin@buseireann.ie or phone 01 8302222.

SENO Address National Council for Special Education,4th floor Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street Dublin D01 K0YB Tel 01 6033248.
John.carron@ncse.ie

Responsibilities

The School:

- submits applications for transport for each new entrant to the Special Educational Needs Officer (SENO), stating number of wheelchair users
- 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

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 behaviour or for other reasons
- **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.

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The Bus Escort:

- meets the parent and child at the bus entrance
- assists the child to board
- secures the child's seatbelt
- watches over the safety and well-being of the children
- informs the school if aware of a child causing danger to themselves or others on the bus journey.

The Parent/Guardian:

- **provides a booster seat** if required for a child's safe travel

- **brings the child to the bus each morning** •
- **receives 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**, i.e. when a child is collected from school.

*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 home.*

Bus Transport: Changes or Concerns

- **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.

JOB DESCRIPTION OF BUS ESCORT

In addition to the listed duties the Bus Escort will undertake other duties pertaining to the role as may be decided/directed by the School Principal and/or the Board of Management and/or as may be dictated by the needs of the Employer/School. It is expected that the Bus Escort will on his/her own initiative, identify tasks/duties that need to be carried out as part of the role subject to the authorisation of the School Principal/Board of Management as appropriate.

The duties listed are not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive

1.00. The Bus Escort must:

1.01. Ensure that s/he is on the school transport at the time of the first pick-up and last set down.

1.02. Is responsible for the safety of children when opening and closing doors prior to "stop" and "move off".

1.03. Assist children to board and alight safely from the school transport.

1.04. Ensure that all children are seated with appropriate straps and harnesses where provided.

1.05. Ensure that each pupil is received by some responsible person at the set down point.

1.06. Supervise the children travelling on the school transport and alighting from the bus.

1.07. Maintain a good working relationship with the driver of the school transport.

1.08. Act as liaison between the School Principal and/or class teacher and parents when required i.e. conveyance of messages and letters to parents.

1.09. Observe confidentiality in all aspects of work.

1.10. Be aware of particular disabilities of children on the school transport and be briefed by the School Principal and/or Deputy Principal on how to deal with same i.e. epilepsy etc.

1.11. Perform any other duties relevant to the position of escort which may be assigned by the School Principal from time to time.

1.12. Not leave the school transport unless under exceptional circumstances.

1.13. **Ensure that his/her position on the school transport is where maximum control of the children is achieved.ie at the back of the bus**

1.14. Report all concerns to the School Principal, Deputy Principal and/or Class Teacher.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AN ESCORT

- Watches over the safety and well-being of the children
- shows reasonable flexibility in relation to hours of attendance to meet the needs of the work. Work during unsocial hours may be required
- Identifies training needs with your Board of Management and participate in training opportunities appropriate to the role.
- participates in the efficient flow of information within the organization by sharing and seeking information as appropriate
- undertakes other duties as may be requested by the Board of Management from time to time.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is the escort's employer and who should the escort report to?

The Board of Management concerned is the employer of the Escort(s).

The Department Grant aids the Board of Management of special schools and classes to assist in defraying the cost involved in engaging a suitable person to act as escort on transport.

The Board of Management of the school to which the escort grant has been allocated has responsibility for employing the escort. The escort should report any problems on transport to the Principal/Deputy Principal of the school in which she/he is employed and the matter should then be communicated to the Principal of the school concerned. However, it is also considered that in the course of day to day work of the escort there will be informal contact with the staff/Principal of each school served by the transport service.

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Signed: _____ Signed: _____

(Chairperson, Board of Management) (Principal)

Date:22nd October 2025.

Date for review: November 2026

Major/Minor Incident on the Bus

Major Incident

- Fall on bus leading to concussion
- Fracture of a limb
- Major cuts/bites – might need stitching – A&E attendance
- Bus stopped immediately in safe place
- Bus driver dial 999/112 wait for ambulance assistance
- Basic First Aid carried out by escort – appropriate to incident
- Contact School Principal immediately
- Contact Parents
- Re assure other pupils on bus.

Dealing with a Major or Minor injury to pupil/staff while on transport

Minor Injuries

- e.g.: cut, graze, bite to any part of body
- Fall – hit head etc.
- One pupil hitting another
- Stop bus do not continue journey
- Escort deals with injury – using Basic First Aid Kit on bus
- Re assure other pupils
- Have Bus Driver contact school to explain delay
- When injury dealt with and all parties are content – sitting and safety belts on proceed to school • On arrival to school, Escort can give full explanation to School Principal/Deputy Principal/SNA
- Incident form to be filled out and parents contacted.

Hedgestown National School
Escort Report Form

Escort: _____

Student: _____ Date: _____ Time: A.M. P.M.

This student was involved in incident / incidents of:

☐ Hitting ☐ Screaming

☐ Spitting ☐ Refusing to sit on assigned seat

☐ Abusive / inappropriate language ☐ Other _____

_____

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_____