

# **SPRINGFIELD CONVENT**

## **SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

### **GUIDELINES/POLICY**

#### **AIMS**

The aims of this policy are to:

- Clarify entitlement to, and the extent of school transport provision.
- Set out the standard of service expected from any persons or organizations in providing safe and reliable school transport.
- Deal with the responsibilities of parents, pupils and schools in ensuring safe school transport.

#### **THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

- It is the responsibility of those who provide school transport whether voluntarily or as part of a paid agreement to ensure that pupils are transported in a safe, comfortable, and secure environment. The vehicles used must be suitable for the purpose and drivers must be adequately trained and qualified.
- Parents using cars (or vehicles which carry eight passengers or less) to take pupils on school outings must ensure that they have a valid driver's licence.
- Parents or contractors transporting pupils to and from school outings using vehicles that carry more than eight passengers must ensure that that have a valid Public Driver's Permit.
- Springfield requires that all forms of transportation used to transport school children must be fitted with seat belts when carrying children. A forward facing seat fitted with a minimum of a full seat belt must be available to every child. Children under the age of 12 may not sit in the front seat of a vehicle. Although there is no legal responsibility on the driver to ensure that seat belts are worn for school transport Springfield requires drivers to ensure that seatbelts are worn by pupils when being transported for school activities. In addition, parents and school staff members should encourage pupils, for their own safety, to wear seat belts at all times.
  - In addition to ensuring that seat belt regulations are adhered to staff members, parents and transport contractors offering school transport must comply with all current road traffic and any other applicable legislation relating to the licensing, operation, construction, fitness and safety of vehicles. Each vehicle used

for school transport provision must have a policy of insurance endorsed to indemnify the authority against legal liability for personal injury or damage to property arising out of the use of the vehicle for the conveyance of school pupils.

- Vehicles must have sufficient seating and provide adequate comfort for the number of pupils to be conveyed.
- Each pupil must have one full seat in the vehicle for the duration of the journey.
- Contractors must ensure that they have contingency plans acceptable to the authority to deal with vehicle failures, staff unavailability and other emergencies. Any driver employed by the contractor should be aware of issues involving pupil safety and behaviour and who to contact in an emergency. As school transport drivers are deemed to have “substantial opportunity for access” to children contractors, if requested, must provide the necessary details of all persons who may drive their vehicles when carrying out school transport contracts.

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## **SCHOOL TRANSPORT**

### **GUIDELINES for Drivers who transport Springfield pupils**

- Drivers of school transport bear much of the responsibility for the safety of pupils. However, parents remain responsible for the behaviour of their children at all times and they should encourage their children to follow the instructions of the driver. Pupils must realise that failure to act responsibly will compromise their own safety and the safety of other pupils.

#### **The following is recommended as a suitable code of conduct for all those involved in driving school pupils on school trips/outings:**

- Do not drive a vehicle which you are not suitably licensed or insured to drive.
- Do not drive a vehicle you suspect of not being roadworthy or in contravention of relevant regulations or legislation.
- Follow the scheduled route and use pick-up and set down points designated by the contractor or agreed by the authority.
- Approach each stop slowly and carefully and keep doors closed until the vehicle has stopped.
- Do not drive off until all pupils are seated, the doors are closed and you have checked that no pupils are in the vicinity of the vehicle.
- Remind pupils to fasten their seat belts before driving off.
- Do not smoke whilst carrying school pupils.
- Do not use a cellular telephone at any time while driving the vehicle.
- Know who to contact in the event of an emergency, such as a breakdown, an accident, adverse weather conditions, an unforeseen delay or other hazard.
- Report any discipline or behaviour problems to the school or the local authority but never eject a pupil from the vehicle under any circumstances. In the event of extreme or persistent misbehaviour the authority reserves the right to suspend school transport provision for the pupils responsible. Transport arrangements will then become the responsibility of their parents.
- Be aware that the safety and welfare of all pupils on the vehicle is of paramount importance and a considerable degree of responsibility rests with the driver on each journey.

## **ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS:**

The safety of pupils using school transport, particularly when boarding and alighting a bus or car, could be jeopardised as a direct consequence of inappropriate or unruly behaviour. School staff members have a role to play in educating and encouraging pupils to adopt responsible attitudes whilst using school transport.

It is highly unlikely that drivers will have the training and experience necessary to deal effectively with behavioural problems and the support of school staff is sought in monitoring the conduct of pupils.

This does not imply any supervisory responsibility but it would be appreciated if staff would report to their deputy principal or school principal if they become aware of any problems on school transport vehicles.

Behaviour on school transport should be dealt with in accordance with the school code of conduct policy dealing with behaviour and discipline.

School staff can assist in the operation of safe and efficient transport to and from outings/trips by:

- Ensuring that pupils understand the rules for safe travel in cars, min-busses or on school buses, including the consequences of misbehaviour and moving about the vehicle and tampering with the emergency doors/windows.
- Encouraging pupils to stand back from the edge of the kerb when waiting for the vehicle.
- Warning pupils about the danger of distracting the driver's attention by misbehaving on the vehicle.
- Establishing good lines of communication with parent drivers and transport operators to assist in dealing with contingency plans for bad weather or other emergencies and in cases of problem behaviour.
- Ensuring that pupils understand the rules that apply for when the transport leaves and arrives at school.

## **WHAT PUPILS CAN DO TO HELP**

The behaviour of pupils on school trips/outings whether, as a pedestrian or as a passenger in a vehicle has a direct bearing on their safety. Pupils should be given sound advice on what constitutes responsible and safe behaviour and they should be encouraged to develop their own road safety skills.

Pupils should be encouraged to adopt the following as a code of conduct in relation to their journey on a school outing/trip:

- Act responsibly and don't be persuaded by others to act foolishly as this could compromise your own safety and the safety of others.
- Stand back when the vehicle arrives.
- Get into and out of the vehicle one at a time and do not push or shove.
- Sit still in the vehicle and fasten the seat belt.
- Do not open or play with emergency doors or windows.
- Always obey the instructions of the driver.
- Treat other people with respect.
- When you get out of the vehicle do not cross any road until the vehicle has moved off and you are given instructions by the driver or teacher.
- Between the vehicle and the school entrance keep your eyes open for other vehicles near the drop-off point.
- If you have left anything in the vehicle do not run after it but tell your teacher or the driver.