



ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

BUS DRIVER'S RESPONSIBILITY

1. The **Driver's Primary Responsibility** is to transport students safely to and from school. This means that the driver's first attention will be on the ability to negotiate the condition of the traffic while transporting students.
2. Treat students with firmness but politeness and kindness.
3. Will work with students, parents and school personnel to maintain a safe environment.
4. The driver has the authority to establish a seating plan on the bus.
5. The driver shall be in the bus or at the door of the bus whenever students are in, embarking, or disembarking – except in emergencies.
6. If children are not adequately dressed, the bus driver should report the circumstances to the Principal.
7. Insist on good housekeeping and non-littering by students. The driver will involve students with clean-up when necessary.
8. The driver has full authority to determine which windows are to be open or closed.
9. If a student is misbehaving the student shall **not** be removed from the bus at any other location than at the school or at their normal pickup point.
10. The driver will report any serious student misconduct to the Principal of the school.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

1. Obey the driver's directions in all regards including directives regarding eating and drinking on the bus, prohibited materials, and protective packaging of materials.
2. Be waiting at the pickup location before the buses expected time of arrival.
3. Enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
4. Remain seated in the seat allocated by the bus driver except to enter and depart the bus.
5. To only exit the bus on school bound trips at the student's school.
6. Stay on the bus for the entire trip, unless prior arrangements are made. Note: on homeward bound rounds a student may be dropped at a place other than the student's home **ONLY** if the parents or guardian of the student has made satisfactory prior arrangements with the bus driver.
7. Students are to conduct themselves in a quiet manner by restraining their conversation to the person next to them and to be absolutely quiet while the bus is stopped at a railway crossing until the bus is completely over the railway tracks.
8. Refrain from the use of radios or tape players, excepting walkmans.
9. Keep all body parts inside the windows.
10. Refrain from littering the roadside.
11. Keep the bus clean and litter free.
12. Students will be held responsible for damage done by them.
13. Students are permitted to bring skates for school activities on a school bus, provided they are placed in some type of bag which consist of a tote bag made of heavy plastic, canvas etc. Double grocery or shopping bags may be acceptable, if no skate blades are protruding from the bag. Bags containing skates should be kept on the floor. It is suggested that students' name be placed on the carrying bag for identification.
14. The transporting of skateboards is not permitted on a school bus.
15. Scuffling, fighting, smoking and use of obscene language on the bus are prohibited.
16. Students are expected to provide full cooperation with the bus driver to ensure a safe environment and a safe bus ride.

PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. It is the Parent's responsibility to ensure their children are aware of student behaviour guidelines and regulations.
2. It is the responsibility of parents to insist that students support the driver in maintaining a safe bus.

3. Concerns about bussing should be discussed with your child at home, followed by contacting either the school office or transportation company. **PLEASE DO NOT DEBATE YOUR CONCERNS WITH THE DRIVER ABOARD THE BUS.**
4. Don't park your private vehicle anywhere near a school bus, and keep completely clear of the loading zones. Backing in and out of school parking lots is hazardous.
5. Teach your child to remain on the sidewalk – well away from the school bus while waiting to load and after leaving the bus. **If they can touch the school bus they are too close and in danger,** particularly when the school bus is approaching.
6. Students should be at their bus stop **at least 5 minutes** prior to their departure time in the morning.
7. For security reasons your child will not be permitted to leave the bus at a location other than their regular stop **UNLESS** the driver is provided with a note authorizing the drop-off.
8. Train your child to use the crosswalk. Teach them to recognize the road signs; when to hold out their arm in front to show motorists that they want to cross the road; how to use the traffic button which triggers the lighted crosswalks. Please teach them **NOT TO RUN ACROSS THE ROAD and EVEN IF YOU ARE LATE – WAIT.**
9. If you move residence inform us. A small child cannot be expected to learn his new route home or give us directions on how to get there.
10. Provide an alternate base for your child. Arrange to have a place where your child can go after school or return to if they missed the bus or if the bus was late (especially during cold weather).
11. Make certain your children are properly dressed in case of emergencies during cold or wet weather. If they are not the Board of Education may refuse them bus transportation.

CONSEQUENCES

Driver's procedure:

- A verbal warning and an opportunity to correct the problem.
- First check – a seat at the front of the bus and a record made in the Driver's Log.
- Second check – a visit to the Principal's office with a misconduct report and a record made in the Driver's Log.
- Either the school, contractor or driver will make contact with parents.
- Severe – any problem that the driver considers serious, the driver will follow the procedure outlined in step 3 above.

School's procedure:

- Consequences will vary depending on the severity of the offence. Some of the more serious offences may involve:
- Continual and persistent attempts of the student not to comply with the driver
- Fighting on the bus.
- Inappropriate language.
- Body parts out the window. With these offences the school may issue suspensions of 1,3 or 5 days. Notice in writing, of suspension of school bus privileges will be given to the parent by the principals.
- Parents and students shall be required to submit a corrective action plan to the school and driver before resuming the bussing privilege.
- Persistent attempts by the student to not resolve problems may result in a more lengthy suspension.
- The school will always respect the role of the parent to create disciplinary interventions that will fully resolve problems on the bus.

NOTE: These guidelines are based on the Highway Traffic Act, the School Act and Division Policy.

**NOTICE TO PARENTS:
PLEASE COMPLETE THIS PORTION AND RETURN TO THE BUS DRIVER**

We have read and understood the student transportation guidelines.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Student's Signature

Phone Number _____