



ABERDEEN HALL
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

TRANSPORTATION: School Bus Guidelines



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ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR BUS SAFETY

To ensure a safe, positive environment the school has developed a set of guidelines outlining the expected behaviours, roles and responsibilities of all concerned. The school bus is an extension of the classroom, and as a result all administration, drivers, parents and students must adhere to the expectations outlined below.

ABERDEEN HALL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

- Provide safe and efficient transportation services
- Ensure buses are maintained and working efficiently
- Create and update guidelines for determining the roles and responsibilities of all parties concerned
- Have policies, procedures and safety measures available and communicated to parents
- Maintain contact with the bus driver and principles to ensure safety
- Support bus drivers and the school in maintaining student conduct on the bus
- Respond to all parental, driver and school based enquiries and requests in a professional manner

BUS DRIVER

- Be courteous and professional at all times when dealing with students, members of the school community and parents
- Consistently enforce rules and expectations set out for students
- Respect students and parents based on the expectations outlined in the British Columbia Human Rights Code
- Safe operation of the bus which includes carrying out the safety checks required by the Motor Vehicle Act and the National Safety Code and for enforcing the guidelines of behaviour for students.
- Responsible for reporting any breaches of the bus guidelines to the transportation coordinator
- Work with administration to ensure the bus is maintained and working efficiently

TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR AND PRINCIPALS

- Be responsible for students after the arrival and before the departure of the bus
- Communicate to students and parents that the School Code of Conduct applies to the bus
- Investigate incidents of student behavior or safety concerns.
- Ensure that bias-free positive discipline is applied appropriately to minimize the chances that another incident will occur and to ensure bus safety.



COACHES

- Responsible for ensuring all bus-riding students extend the same courtesies and behaviour to the bus driver and the bus as they would expect in the classroom.

HOMEROOM TEACHERS

- Teachers of students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 are expected to supervise their students onto the bus. Students in Grade 4 and up are expected to get themselves to the bus on time.
- During field trips teachers are responsible for ensuring that students understand and follow the bus safety rules.

PARENTS : It is important that parents work collaboratively to support the expectations outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, including bus safety and acceptable behaviour of students on the bus.

- Be responsible for student safety and conduct prior to pick-up and after departure from the bus.
- Recognize that student transportation is a privilege, not a right. A student may be suspended from ridership if expectations are not met
- Cooperate with the bus driver, transportation coordinator and principles to ensure that their child conducts himself or herself in an appropriate manner on the bus
- Reinforce with their child the expectations for safe behaviour on the bus based on the Student Code of Conduct
- Pay for damages resulting from vandalism and/or willful damage by their child to the school bus should the need arise
- Remind students about respecting private and personal property when waiting at the designated bus stop
- Be courteous and respectful to the bus driver at all times. The parent is responsible for raising any concerns with the transportation coordinator or principals; not directly with the bus driver
- Notify the transportation coordinator of any situation occurring at a stop or on the bus that may have compromised student safety
- Report any misconduct they hear about to the transportation coordinator.
- Ensure that students arrive at the designated bus stop a minimum of 5 minutes prior to the scheduled pick-up time. Due to tight bus schedules, our drivers cannot wait for late or tardy students. Parents also must ensure that they are on time to pick up students at the end of the day. Parents are required to be at their child's bus stop 5 minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. In the event that the parent or guardian is not at the designated drop off when the bus arrives, the driver will contact the school.



- The school will make every effort to contact a parent to make an alternate arrangement. The driver will keep the child on the bus and carry on with the scheduled journey. If the school is unable to contact the parents, the driver at the end of the route will return the child back to the school
- Ensure all contact information is kept up to date and that any changes (e.g. bus routines, stop changes, bus changes, etc.) are mailed to transportation@aberdeenhall.com

STUDENTS

- Respect other people's property and belongings while waiting for the bus
- K-Gr 3 student's will be accompanied to the bus at the end of the day. Gr 4-12 students must be on the bus prior to 3:30pm and once on the bus all students must remain seated.
- Treat the driver with respect and follow their instructions
- Do not walk in front or behind the bus unless instructed to do so by the driver
- Arrange for the transport of live animals, insects or reptiles to or from school by other means than on the bus
- Refrain from transporting hazardous or destructive objects of any kind (e.g., weapons, glass objects or containers, explosives, sharp or pointed objects, skate boards or baseball bats)
- Be courteous and respectful to others on the bus at all times
- Do not engage in any activity that interferes with the safe operation of the bus
- Remain seated at all times, facing forward until the vehicle comes to a complete stop. Students who do not sit properly in the seats may be seriously injured
- Keep hands, arms, feet, head and belongings inside the vehicle at all times
- Avoid distracting or speaking to the bus driver except in the case of an emergency
- Do not bring alcohol, drugs or weapons on the bus
- Be liable for any damage done deliberately to the bus
- Realize that when you are on the school bus, you are representing the school and that any improper behaviour is considering to be a misrepresentation of the school and will not be tolerated
- Listen to the bus driver; they are in control of the bus
- Cooperate with the bus driver when asked to do so
- Try to speak quietly. Excessive noise, loud singing and shouting can be a distraction to the bus driver and to the safe operation of the bus
- Keep belongings, including backpacks stowed under the seat or on your lap. Do not place items in the aisle. It is important to keep the aisles clear to prevent tripping, and to allow for a safe evacuation of the bus if required



- Do not bring large/bulky items on the bus unless approved by the school, e.g., musical instruments
- Do not engage in the use of abusive language, profanity, yelling, throwing items (inside and out of the bus), smoking, vaping, fighting or any other activity that may interfere in the safe operation of the vehicle and/or endanger the safety of others
- Do not engage in any activity that may interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle
- No eating or drinking. This may pose a choking hazard or it may impact the safety of a student with an allergy
- Do not attempt to distract other vehicles on the road
- Unsafe behaviour may result in loss of bus privileges

CREATING A SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT ON THE BUS

Aberdeen Hall works hard to create a positive bus environment. A positive school environment or climate can be defined as “the sum total of all of the personal relationships within a school. When these relationships are founded in mutual acceptance and inclusion, and modelled by all, a culture of respect becomes the norm” (Safe Schools Action Team Report, 2006)

Aberdeen Hall believes the following are important characteristics of a positive, safe environment on the bus:

- Healthy relationships are promoted among all those who ride the bus
- Everyone feels safe, welcomed, accepted and included
- Equity and diversity is honoured and respected
- Students are encouraged to be leaders and positive role models
- School employees, students, drivers and parents work collaboratively to develop and sustain a positive safe environment on the bus
- Expectations for positive, safe behaviour are clearly communicated, modelled and followed

STRATEGIES TO FOSTER A SAFE, POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT ON THE BUS

The following outlines suggestions for fostering a safe, positive environment on the bus:

- Communicate the behavioural expectations to students, school employee and parent on a regular basis.
- Seek to understand the potential reasons for student misbehaviour on the bus in order to help determine the most appropriate intervention
- Create and implement a bus seating plan for all students



- Assign leadership roles to students, e.g., “Bus Buddies,” when appropriate
- Implement a variety of preventative proactive strategies, e.g., using the Code of Conduct to collaboratively develop expectations for bus safety with students, and then communicating these expectations to parents
- Build positive relationships with students and parents, and working in partnership to address behavioral issues
- Foster the development of self-regulation strategies for students as a proactive measure. Provide students with the self-regulation tools they need to successfully ride the bus and facilitate their use, e.g., allowing the student to wear noise cancelling headphones and/or use “fidget toys”
- Ensure that employee provide appropriate supervision while loading and unloading the bus and during the bus ride, and respond to and report to the transportation coordinator and/or principles concerning behavior
- While supervising, employee should model appropriate, positive behaviors. Examples include:
 - Addressing situations from a place of calm, care and support
 - Noticing and recognizing desired behaviour
 - Parents should understand how the Student Code of Conduct was applied to address the incident that occurred on the bus

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY RULES

WALKING TO AND FROM THE BUS STOPS

1. Plan the safest route with the fewest streets to cross
2. Cross streets and corners, using crosswalks if available. Look in all directions before crossing and when safe walk across the street. Always obey traffic signals
3. Watch for vehicles that might be making a turn
4. Do not dart from between parked cars or shrubbery
5. Never accept a ride from a stranger
6. If possible, face traffic when walking on roads without sidewalks and always use caution
7. Be extra careful during times of sunrise and sunset, bad weather and during darkness
8. Leave home early enough so you don't have to run



CONDUCT AT SCHOOL BUS LOADING ZONE & BUS STOPS

Stand in lines or a group facing traffic so you can see the bus approaching. Stand back 6 feet from where the bus will stop. Do not approach the bus until the driver opens the bus door.

1. When loading at the school, follow the directions of the driver and/teacher on bus duty. Stand back the required 6 feet until the bus driver opens the bus door. Remember, there may be several cars to watch out for; not just your bus
2. Never go under any bus to retrieve something you've dropped. Ask the driver or teacher to assist
3. Never run to a bus; always walk
4. Destroying property, playing in or running across the street or any type of horseplay at a bus stop is dangerous and prohibited
5. When the bus is stopped to load or unload, the students are the direct responsibility of the bus driver and the driver's directions must be followed
6. The school bus can only stop at designated bus stops. If you miss the bus, have Mom or Dad take you to another bus stop or directly to school and remember to never run after your bus once it leaves
7. When waiting for the bus in a car, be sure your car is not parked in the bus loading/unloading zone

WHEN CROSSING THE STREET

1. Be sure to tell your bus driver that you cross the street so they can safely prepare the bus for the crossing procedure
2. Always let your bus driver be the first person off the bus. The driver needs to activate the bus (red) lights that flash on the outside of the bus to warn cars to stop for children crossing the street
3. Once your driver is off the bus, you can walk down the bus steps and wait on the sidewalk, next to the bus, for your bus driver to direct you to cross the street. Never go out into the street without the bus driver telling you to do so!
4. Always walk between the bus and the bus driver as you cross the street
5. Once you are on the other side of the street, stay on that side of the street. Do not play in the street. Go directly home.

If a serious incident occurs during the time students are on buses on route between home and school:

1. If the bus is on the road, the driver will continue to their original destination if possible, or report to the school, at which time the front office employee will assume responsibility for the students



2. If the bus is in the process of picking up a load of students, the driver will continue loading and proceed to their original destination, or report to the school
3. If the bus is on the road delivering students to their homes, the driver will continue to the regular bus stop or try to get as close to their homes as possible. If the driver doubts anyone is home and there is no one in the neighborhood to assume responsibility, the students will be returned to Aberdeen Hall.
4. During a field trip, the driver and a employee member of the school will guide the students to maximum protection and when possible, proceed back to Aberdeen Hall, or if possible, the school bus' destination

STUDENTS AND PARENTS AT BUS PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF POINTS

Students and parents are expected to conduct themselves in the following manner at bus pick-up and drop-off points:

- Be at your bus stop at least 5 minutes prior to the scheduled time. Students must be at the bus stop waiting for the bus to arrive.
- Due to tight bus schedules the bus driver cannot wait for late or tardy students. If a child misses the morning bus due to late arrival it is the parent's responsibility to drive the student to school and they must report it to the front office.
- Do not wait in a vehicle. If the bus is departing, do not attempt to stop the bus
- Stand back from the road when you see the bus coming and wait for the bus to come to a complete stop
- Conduct yourself in an appropriate, safe manner prior to the arrival of the bus, e.g., be respectful or community members and of the property of others
- Follow safety procedures when crossing the roadway, and when students are loading and unloading the bus
- Travel to school and return home on the assigned bus. Board and disembark at the assigned bus stop location
- Enter the bus in single file, do not push and take your seat as quickly as possible
- K-3 students are to remain with their parents at the bus stop and **MUST** be met by a parent when dropped off unless permission has been given in writing to the school that their child can leave the bus without a parent/guardian. Students in grade 4 and up are permitted to walk home on their own with parent permission
- Parents must notify the school if there is a change to the planned bus schedule
- The Aberdeen office will contact the parents in the event of the bus breaking down or traffic issues. The transportation coordinator will make every attempt to contact parents via SMS text messaging system. Please ensure contact information is up to date.



EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY

Aberdeen Hall will work with A1 Bus Ltd. to ensure Emergency Evacuation Drills are performed (3) times within each school year. September, December and March

Bus Drivers will perform the Emergency Evacuation Drills with their riders in the Junior School Roundabout. The Transportation Coordinator will schedule these drills in advance and be outside to supervise the drills as they happen.

The objective is to get the students off the bus safely in the shortest possible time and in an orderly way. The standard emergency exits are:

- Front Exit
- Rear Exit
- Both Front & Rear
- Roof hatches and side push-out windows (they provide additional exits when needed; a Driver must be aware of their use and operation).

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

1. Assess the situation. Generally, the quickest method is to use both Front and Rear doors. If those Exits expose students to other dangers such as fire or traffic, choose the safest Exit.
2. Remain calm. Speak loudly, but slowly. Ask the students to move calmly to the Exit you choose.
3. Assign a responsible leader to count the students as they leave and lead them to a safe area away from the bus. The leader should keep everyone together.
4. Assign some taller students to wait at the Rear Exit on the ground at either side of the door to help as the students swing down. Another student inside tells the exiting student to "Watch your head, put your hands on the helper's shoulders and swing down."
5. While the other students remain in their seats, the students closest to danger should leave one seat at a time by walking to the Exit.
6. All articles such as lunches, books and so on should be left behind.
7. As the last student leaves, walk the length of the bus to be sure everyone is out, and then exit yourself. Begin first-aid treatment if necessary. Assign (2) responsible students to go for help, if needed, and organize helpers to put out warning flares or reflectors as required.

Practice cannot eliminate all injury, but it will certainly reduce the possibility of unnecessary injury to yourself, your passengers and other motorists.



POSITIVE DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE FOR THE BUS

Riding the bus is a privilege. Students are expected to abide by the above mentioned guidelines. Failure to do so may result in a letter of conduct to the parent or in extreme cases, a loss of riding privileges.

STUDENT POSITIVE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

Bus behaviour expectations are clearly outlined to students both through guidelines provided to parents and through homeroom teachers. Students who violate any of the rules and regulations will go through the positive discipline process outlined below. The goal is to work with the student to change their behaviour to ensure everyone on the bus is safe and respected.

The Director of the Senior or Junior school or their designee is responsible for notifying the parent of all violations. The normal progression of penalties for violations of the rules and regulations on the bus are:

1st Offense: Verbal counsel – Driver will advise the transportation coordinator of the offense and inform the teacher and/or division principal. Division principal or homeroom teacher meets with the student/s.

2nd Offense: Student will receive a Letter of Conduct and parents will be informed by the division principle or their designee. The student will be placed in a seat at the front of the bus (unless any health orders or restrictions are in effect) so that their behaviour can be monitored by the bus driver and to remove them from the possibility of an escalating situation.

3rd Offense: Student will lose the privilege of riding the bus for a set period of time. Student will be placed on a behavior agreement when they are allowed back on the bus and seated at the front of the bus.

4th Offense: Students will lose the privilege to ride the bus for the remainder of the school year.

If the initial behaviour is violent or poses a severe risk to the safety of those travelling the bus a meeting will immediately be held with the division principal, the parents and the student to discuss the situation..



Appeal:

If a parent requests an appeal on the bus suspension, the following people should be present:

- Division Principal(s)
- Parent or Guardian

Appeal Procedures:

All students and their parents have the right to appeal. Appeals will be made to the Head of School. The division Principal will review the facts of the case, including consultation with the Transportation Department, and based on their findings, will render a final decision on the appeal.

BUS DRIVER REPORTING PROCESS

When a student engages in a violation of expectations for safe, respectful and responsible conduct:

1. Bus driver warns the student
2. Bus driver fills out a School Bus Behaviour Report within 24 hours and submits it to the transportation coordinator
3. Transportation coordinator speaks with the student's teacher and/or principals
4. Teachers and/or principals speak with the student and follow up with the transportation coordinator. The student's parents may be contacted at the discretion of the professional involved
5. Transportation coordinator fills out the rest of the School Bus Behaviour Report and updates the driver and/or owner of busing company
6. School Bus Behaviour Report signed off on and kept on file in Junior School office