



**SAINT AUGUSTINE'S RC HIGH SCHOOL**

**DRAFT SCHOOL BUS POLICY**

**Date approved by Governors:**  
**Review Date: September 2021**

## **School Mission Statement**

At Saint Augustine's we believe that every person is made and loved by God. This is why we respect one another. Within our school community our young people will learn to act justly, love tenderly and recognise God in their lives.

Our school helps families to educate their children in accordance with the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church in an environment which inspires, encourages and supports the development of our pupils through nurturing their gifts and talents.

Our school community will keep alive the memory of Jesus through the Eucharist and through the practice of our Faith. We want everyone at Saint Augustine's to experience the joy of the Gospel in their journey through school and beyond.

Together we will work to make a difference in our community and in the wider world. We follow the example of Saint Augustine by stepping out in faith and celebrating our reasons for living and hoping.

## **School Buses are an Important Part of our School Life**

Did you know that there are very few schools in Lancashire which rely on buses as much as Saint Augustine's? Over 90% of you travel on special school buses.

This policy tells you:

- i] what to do if your bus doesn't turn up;
- ii] what to do if you're late to school;
- iii] how to get ready for catching your bus at the end of the school day;
- iv] how we expect you and other pupils to behave on the bus so that you can all feel safe and relaxed on your journey to and from school.

You enjoy an excellent reputation with the drivers and bus companies who carry you to school and bring you back home. This is why any behaviour which spoils bus journeys for other pupils or puts people's safety at risk is not acceptable.

### **What should I do if my bus doesn't turn up?**

If your bus doesn't turn up, school will realise this fairly quickly after 8.45 am. So don't panic! Remember, if a bus hasn't come for you, it hasn't picked up any of the other pupils along the same route either. Here's what you should do:

1. If your bus doesn't arrive on time, wait for at least another 15 minutes.
2. If there are only a few of you, one of the older pupils should phone school for instructions. The rest of you should wait at the bus stop until this person gets through to school and is given advice on what to do next. [Put our number into your mobile phone: 01254 823362]
3. If you can't get through to school and the bus still hasn't arrived, return to your own home or to the home of a close relative or neighbour who is trusted by your parents and who they have said that it is safe for you to go back to.
4. Only go to another pupil's house if you can't get back inside your own home or if you can't go to a close relative or a trusted neighbour whose name your parent has given you. Whichever house you go to, phone your parents to tell them where you are and what the problem is. Phone school as well to let us know where you are.
5. You must not go back to your own home or to anybody else's house without phoning school to let us know where you are. This is truancy. If you have gone to another pupil's house, and we don't know about it, you could cause real anxiety to your parents who may ring the school to see if you have arrived safely.
6. Walking to school: Please discuss this option with your parents and follow their advice at all times. If there are problems with buses, they'll know better than the teachers whether you are safe to walk to school. Our advice is that lower school pupils [Years 7, 8 and 9] should not walk to school unless they live

nearby. Upper school pupils [Years 10 and 11], who have their parents' permission to walk to school, should use their common sense.

7. If the weather is very bad, don't put yourself at unnecessary risk. Keep on pavements and avoid walking across fields or on roads. Under no circumstances should you risk walking over Whalley Nab or on the "Devil's Elbow" towards Padiham where there is no pavement.

8. Never, ever accept a lift from a stranger. Politely refuse the offer however friendly, concerned, respectable or safe the driver may appear to be.

9. If you arrive late for school, report immediately to the office. You will be issued a 'late slip', which must be shown to your next class teacher.

## **Catching buses and lining up for them**

In the morning it is your responsibility to be at the right bus stop at the right time according to the bus route schedule. Arriving to school on time is really important. If the bus is late it is not your fault, but if you miss the bus - especially if you make a habit of it - you are responsible. Not caring about arriving to school on time is an attitude which will damage your education and your future prospects. Our Attendance and Punctuality leaflet can be downloaded from our website and has more to say about this. If you weren't given a bus pass at the start of the school year then you must pay the fare.

At the end of the school day please make your way to your bus queue and join it at the back without pushing in. You should not leave your queue. Pupils who mess about often miss their bus and it is not the school's responsibility to get you home if you have not been following these instructions. Pupils who run around on the yard or disobey teachers' instructions risk an after-school detention. When your bus number is called you should keep in line and follow the teachers' instructions and this is where you can now turn your phone on to allow you to open the bus pass app. The reason we do not want you to run to the bus or bunch up together is to avoid an accident happening. You must not enter a bus without being escorted on to it by a teacher on duty. After school detentions are always given if you break this rule.

As you get on the bus you must show your pass or pay your fare. Please do not break, chew or deface your pass, otherwise the driver may refuse to accept it. You should sit down and remain in your seat throughout your journey. Please do not walk around the bus or ring the bell. The driver will know where and when to stop. If a seat belt is fitted you must wear it. If you're 14 or over, it's your responsibility to wear the seat belt and if you don't you could be prosecuted. If you're under 14 you will be told by the driver to wear the seat belt. If you refuse, the driver can, in turn, refuse to let you travel on the bus.

When there is heavy rain we follow "wet exit" arrangements from the school hall. If you hear six bells ringing at the end of registration go straight to the hall. Because there are so many of you together at the same time we have to insist on absolute silence. This is really important for safety reasons. When the teacher on the school hall stage tells you to stop talking there is no excuse for continuing. If you do so, you have only yourself to blame if you are called to the front and given an after-school detention.

If the hall is already in use we have wet exit arrangements from classrooms.

1. If six bells ring, Period 5 will finish a little earlier to let you get back quickly to your form.
2. You'll be called to your own bus between 3.15 and 3.30 pm. Your Form Teacher will have the bell number for your bus written on their register. They will tell you when you can leave to go to the dining room or the foyer. They will remain with your form class during this time until the last bus is called. On Fridays the six bells will ring at 2.20 pm. You'll be called to your own bus between 2.25 and 2.40 pm.
3. Other teachers will supervise you from the foyer and onto the buses. Again, we want you to join your queue quietly and follow instructions.
4. If you're walking home, being collected by parents or catching any other public service bus, you leave your form room at 3.15 [2.25 pm on Fridays].

## **Behaviour on the buses**

Almost every bus journey to and from school is problem free which is why our pupils enjoy such an excellent reputation with the different bus companies. Those companies, your parents and your teachers want you to be able to travel to and from school feeling safe and comfortable. Unacceptable behaviour includes:

1. Smoking, use of matches, e-cigarettes or any other harmful or dangerous material;
2. Making people give up seats they are already occupying;
3. Pushing people or throwing objects around or outside of the bus;
4. Swearing, hurtful language or shouting out of windows;
5. Not sitting down and wearing seatbelts where these are provided. If you move around the bus when it is in motion you put yourself and others at risk.

Please will you, or your parent, report any bad behaviour directly to Mrs Juriansz, Mr. Wright or your Year Leader. We won't give your name away to anybody else and we always act straight away on the information we are given. Bullies always love using that word. This is standing up for your right to travel safely and comfortably.

Lancashire County Council has set up a Safer Travel Unit to tackle bad behaviour on public transport. They deal very firmly with anyone found damaging bus stops, shelters and buses. CCTV cameras now operate on most school buses. The Safer Travel Unit works closely with schools and, if necessary, puts poorly behaving pupils on Acceptable Behaviour Contracts. Failure to comply with these contracts may result in the pupil being suspended from travelling on a particular route for a fixed period of time.

Children who make other children's lives a misery must learn that their behaviour won't be tolerated. They risk after-school detentions, letters or phone calls to their parents, time in the Seclusion Unit, a fixed term ban from travelling on the bus, or even a fixed term or a permanent exclusion from school.

If you have any concerns about any aspect of your bus journey, such as, for example, not enough seats, the driving of the bus or bullying please see Mrs Juriansz or ask your parent to give her a call.

Line up. Get on the bus in an orderly way. Sit Down. Stay sitting down. Be kind to each other. Enjoy your journey!