



CETSS Carrigaline-Douglas-Griffith College Bus Service

In the coming year, CETSS will facilitate a bus service to Griffith College. This route has been heavily subsidised by the Department of Education and Skills, for which we are very grateful. The route is intended to accommodate those parents who live in or near the catchment area, due to the school's temporary displacement to Griffith College.

At a recent meeting with parents, the following concerns re. transport were raised:

1: Public buses (from Carrigaline in particular)

- Frequency and timing of public buses
- Existing capacity of buses
- The location of some drop-off points

2: Private buses

- Cost in general and for siblings in particular
- Departure times
- Route options

3: Car-pooling

- Lack of certainty in some cases

Over the past week, parents have been surveyed to ascertain their level of interest in using a school bus. Approximately 80 parents stated their interest. To meet the needs of as many of these families as possible, it was necessary to sign a contract for either a bigger bus or a second bus.

I have decided to go with the option of a single larger bus for the following reasons:

1. It is impossible to know if some parents will continue to use the service for the full year at this stage. Any changes would have meant increased costs for other students (if two buses had been engaged).
2. The cost of a second bus would have been (at least) tripled for all students.
3. The bus driver suggested a similar start time from Carrigaline regardless of whether there were one or two buses.
4. If, in the unfortunate event that students were denied continued access to the bus for reasons of behaviour, the cost would have increased for others.
5. If a second bus somehow became unviable during the year, the school could have been liable for tens of thousands of euro.

Whilst the details of the exact locations and times of bus pickups will be decided later, the following are the broad parameters of the route:

Bus company provider: Martin Twomey Coaches

Legal arrangement: Annual contract (and therefore guaranteed service)

Bus type: Double decker

Route: Carrigaline-Douglas-Griffith College and back

Morning departure time: 7:30am in Carrigaline

Afternoon departure time: c.3:35pm

School day: 8:30-3:25

Half Day: Friday (preferred choice of 60% of respondents)

Payment schedule: 3 trimester fees of €80, the first to be payable in June 2018. This must be paid on VSWare, the school's admin system ASAP to secure your child/ren's place/s and to make the process manageable for the school.

Please note that trimester payments are non-refundable if you choose to stop using the service or if your child is prevented from using the bus due to poor behaviour.

Cost per family per week (return): c.€7 (subject to the Department fulfilling their promise, which we fully expect them to do)

This cost has two functions:

1. To pay for the additional cost of the larger bus
2. To take account of any students who fail to use the service, having committed

Should any money remain at the end of the year, it will be ring-fenced to subsidise/fund transport in the future.

Conditions of use:

To confirm your place, please do both of the following before the 29th June:

1. Payment

Payment of the first (of three) trimester fees should be made on VShare- follow the link and instructions in the text that you should receive today. If you are unsure how to do this, please contact the office on 021 4357030.

2. Behaviour on the bus

It is a condition of use that all students behave in a **Safe, Orderly** and **Respectful** way on the bus.

Parents and students must therefore read the School Bus Plan and Bus Rules (below) and state that they and their children both understand and accept it. These Rules do not replace the school's general Code of Behaviour but are rather an extension of it.

I have created a simple form online for this purpose. Please click here and complete the form [here](https://form.jotformeu.com/81687480741364) or copy and paste the following into your browser: <https://form.jotformeu.com/81687480741364> It will take just 2 minutes.

Please note: If a student's behaviour fails to meet the standards set out below, their right to use the bus will be reviewed and possibly revoked (either temporarily or permanently). In this instance, **it**

will be the parents' sole responsibility to find and fund an alternative transport solution, a task that may be difficult from some directions.

Consideration should be given to this fact below applying for a place, particularly so, if an alternative method of transport to the school would be untenable.

Summary

Given the concerns outlined above, and given the Department's refusal to help until recently, I think that this is a very robust and affordable solution.

An outcome such as this did not seem likely 4/5 weeks ago and is the result of the hard work of the school management and Educate Together alike.

That said, the solution is not perfect; the bus will depart from Carrigaline a little earlier than it did this year. This decision is based entirely on the advice of the bus company, who have vast experience of school bus routes and traffic patterns around the city. It should also be noted that the price may change next year, as it will depend on the level of subsidy that the Department are willing to give towards an expanded bus service.

Overall, I think that this is a very reliable, safe and affordable solution and hope that it offers parents a high degree of reassurance. I shall now hand the admin of the bus over to the secretarial staff so that I can continue with the other aspects of the move.

Kind regards and enjoy the summer,
Colm

CETSS School Bus Plan

To protect the safety (physical and emotional) of each individual student on the bus, and to develop bus-riding behaviours that will be relevant and meaningful when the student is out in the community, student behaviours are expected to be **safe, orderly and respectful**.

To ensure this, we shall operate a three-part program that uses steps to help the student to achieve that goal by developing and maintaining appropriate behaviour on the school bus.

It consists of: 1) Prevention Steps 2) Intervention Steps and 3) Consequences.

Prevention: Prevention steps are used by the school to educate the students about safe and appropriate passenger behaviours, clarify the bus driver's expectations for the students and assist students to understand how to successfully demonstrate safe passenger habits every day.

Intervention: Intervention steps are used by the school to help the student stop unsafe or inappropriate behaviours or habits while assisting students to identify the appropriate habit or behaviour. Intervention steps may also provide notification to the parent/guardian so that the parent can be involved in assisting their child to change unsafe or inappropriate passenger habits.

Consequences: If prevention and intervention steps are unsuccessful at improving the student's behaviour or safe passenger habits, the school will assign appropriate, effective consequences for the student's inappropriate behaviour in an effort to affect the necessary improvement. This will follow an investigation drawing on the comments of the bus driver and/or other students and will operate on the 'Balance of Probability' as the only remote way of judging what happened.

School Bus Rules:

PREVENTION

School management will explain expectations to students during the first week of school. Practical examples will be used to help the students to understand the rationale for these rules.

We encourage all parents to review these rules with their children and help instil in their children the importance of safe, orderly and respectful bus behaviour.

- Students should follow directions of their bus driver. (This demonstrates **respect** to those who are trying to transport students in a **safe** manner).
- Students should be at the bus stop 10 minutes before the bus arrives, waiting in a **safe** place, clear of traffic and 3m from where the bus stops.
- Students will wait in an **orderly** manner and avoid playing (when waiting at property belonging to others, we should **respect** that property and take care to leave it undamaged.)
- If students cross the roadway in front of the bus after the bus has stopped, they should have look at the driver for a hand signal and have looked in both directions for traffic; left, right, left (This a **safe**-walking habit that protects students while traveling to their bus stop.)
- Students will signal the driver with a waving motion if something is dropped in front of the bus and wait for the driver to give a signal before picking up the object (Never, ever lose sight of the driver or do anything that would make her/him lose sight of you! This is a procedure that can never be broken in order to keep you **safe**.)
- Students will go directly to assigned seat when entering the bus and keep the aisles and exits clear (This is **orderly behaviour**. An **orderly** bus minimizes distractions and is **safer** for students a) walking down the aisle or b) in the case of a sudden stop or emergency evacuation).
- Students will remain properly seated, back against the back of the seat, bottom against the bottom of the seat (**safely** seated within the compartment,) and keep hands to themselves (**respectful** to others and their personal space.).
- Students will not eat, drink, chew gum, or bring tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or any controlled substances on the bus (Helps us to maintain a neat and **orderly** environment and is consistent with the code of conduct which keeps us **safe**.)
- Students will not carry any illegal, dangerous or nuisance items onto the bus (maintains a **safe** environment for all passengers, even in case of an emergency or accident.)

- Students may carry only objects that can be held in their laps (This helps us maintain an **orderly** environment and reduces **safety** issues that would occur in the event of a sudden stop or emergency evacuation.)
- Students will refrain from using loud voices, profanity, and / or obscene gestures, and **respect** the rights and safety of others.
- Students will not extend head, arms, or objects out of the bus windows (This is important to student **safety** in every circumstance. This is a non-negotiable **safety** issue and a major offense when broken.)
- Students will stay seated until time to get off the bus. The driver will signal when to get up from the bus seat if you are at your stop. Use classroom voices until the unloading (or loading) process is complete. It is an **orderly** way to unload and increases **safety** by minimizing distractions.)
- Students will not photograph/film/record whilst on the bus and may not watch/show others any material that contravenes the school's Acceptable Internet Usage Policy.
- Students will help keep their bus clean and in good, safe condition (This helps us maintain an **orderly** and **safe** bus and is **respectful** to the next group of passengers who will use it.)

INTERVENTION

A minor offense is considered inappropriate or unsafe student behaviour that may be improved with minor assistance from the driver.

Verbal Reminder: Bus drivers/ teachers will remind the student of the bus rule(s) not being followed.

Seat Reassignment: A student assigned seat may be changed by the bus driver when such change may help the student to demonstrate appropriate passenger behaviours and/or allow the driver to more effectively monitor that student behaviour. *(The assignment of seats at the beginning of school is part of the prevention step.)*

Talk individually with student & Parent / Guardian Courtesy Call: School management/ class tutors may talk individually with the student to determine what steps could be taken to help the student demonstrate appropriate and safe passenger behaviours. School management will also call the parents / guardian to notify them of the student's inappropriate behaviour, with a request for help to achieve appropriate behaviour.

Parent / Guardian notified in writing: A formal written warning. The school may write to parents/guardians detailing any inappropriate behaviours, with any steps taken by the school to the bus (where appropriate) to affect a change in the student's behaviour. The form will be taken home by the students to be signed by parent / guardian and returned to the school within two school days. A phone call to the parent / guardian should be made if form is not returned by the second day.

Any or all of the above steps may be bypassed when a student's actions are illegal or judged by the driver/school management to be so unsafe or disrespectful that immediate corrective action is required.

CONSEQUENCES

When student behaviour escalates beyond a driver control or is not improved by the use of the aforementioned appropriate intervention steps, more serious consequences may result.

Behaviours that should be considered major offenses include, but are not limited to the following:

- drugs (includes alcohol, cigarettes, lighters)
- throwing objects around/off the bus
- fighting
- weapons, dangerous items
- threats/bullying (verbal and physical threats)
- Sexual harassment
- Inappropriate use of digital media

Such violations should be reported immediately to the School.

The School Management will assign appropriate consequences based on a) the severity of the misbehaviour and b) number and frequency of reported student bus incidents.

Sanctions at this level will consist of temporary exclusion from the bus service. School Management may tailor consequences to account for individual circumstances in each situation. The goal of assigning consequences is to bring about the desired student behaviour on the school bus.

In cases where extreme behaviour is demonstrated, or where earlier sanctions have failed repeatedly, the School Management reserve the right to permanently withdraw a student's access to the service, in order to ensure a safe and comfortable service for the other students.