

ENPS WALKING SCHOOL BUS PARENT INFORMATION BOOKLET

WHAT IS A WALKING SCHOOL BUS?

It's an organised group of children who walk to and from school, along a designated route, under the supervision of adult volunteers. Children are 'picked up' and 'dropped off' at specific Walking School Bus (WSB) 'bus stops'.

WSBs reduce the number of cars on the road, making our environment safer and cleaner, and they provide exercise for kids in a fun and social way. In Auckland alone, there are more than 350 active WSBs, with over 4,000 children walking to school.

Onehunga Primary School currently has three WSBs:

- Grey St WSB – From 118 Grey St
- Church St WSB (lower)- From 30 Church St
- Church St WSB (upper)- From 132 Church St

WSBs are operated by volunteer parents and caregivers, supported by the school and Auckland Transport.

WSBs can only operate if there is parent support, as an adult to child ratio of at least 1:8 must be maintained at all times.



WHY USE A WSB?

It's great for kids!

- Children enjoy meeting up and talking to their friends.
- They gain a sense of independence.
- Friendships develop across different age groups.
- They learn about road safety from a pedestrian's perspective.
- They develop a positive attitude towards walking.
- Improve their overall health and decrease obesity levels.
- Daily exercise can aid academic achievements, as it helps improve concentration, memory and learning.
- Kids just love the fun, organised activities and resources, such as the merit bag tags.

And there are so many reasons for parents to be involved too!

- Enjoy extra free time when you do not have to drop off or pick up your children every day.
- Get to know the families in your neighbourhood.
- Save on fuel costs.
- Learn new skills from the optional workshops provided by Auckland Transport, such as regular First Aid courses. All workshops have certificates that are suitable for a CV.
- Have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping your child, other children, and the school.
- Take advantage of the routine exercise walking to school provides.

HOW THE WSBs OPERATE?

- All buses run daily, morning and afternoon, rain or shine, unless advised otherwise by the WSB Coordinator.
- WSBs run with an adult to child ratio of at least one adult to eight children (1:8). The adult drivers walk at the front and rear of the bus. Children must walk in between these drivers. Additional adults are welcome to walk with the bus at any time and may walk in the middle of the group.
- Drivers are provided with hi-visibility vests that clearly identify them as WSB Drivers. These vests must be worn at all times while 'driving' the WSB.
- Drivers are responsible for ensuring the children stay together in a group, walk and cross safely, and behave well, between the bus stop and school.
- WSB Route Coordinator/s issue a roster of parent drivers. If a driver is unable to do their rostered walk, they must arrange for the backup driver to walk instead. Tip: For easy and efficient communication, set up a CLOSED Whatsapp group.
- If a child is injured while on the WSB, the bus will stop and the drivers will assess the child's condition. Should the child be unable to continue with the bus, the child's parent and the school will be contacted for further advice. Under no circumstances will an injured child be left unattended.
- Children who are in Years 4, 5 & 6 are allowed to walk independently to and from bus stops. Children who are in Years 0, 1, 2 & 3 must be supervised by an adult until the bus arrives and met by an adult at the bus stop on the return journey, unless they are accompanied by an older sibling who is in Years 4, 5, 6 or above.
- If children are walking independently to and from bus stops, they remain your responsibility. All children walking independently require a sticker on their WSB carabiner, indicating to drivers that you are allowing them to walk independently.
- If a child misses their bus at their stop in the morning and a parent is not with them, they may walk quickly and join the bus provided the bus is still visible and they do not have to cross a road. Otherwise, the child should return home.
- If a parent or guardian fails to meet their child as arranged at the bus stop on the home journey, then the child will continue on the bus to the end of the route. The driver will then try to contact the child's parent. If the parent cannot be contacted the child will be taken to the school's OSCAR programme.

WSB MERIT SCHEME

Every walk a child completes on the WSB is a step towards achieving each merit tag.

Auckland Transport developed the merit scheme with the belief that this incentive increases the longevity of children's involvement on the WSB.

Merit tags: • 50 Walks Completed 50 walks (2 complete WSB tickets)

- 100 Walks Completed 100 walks (4 complete WSB tickets)
- 200 Walks Completed 200 walks (8 complete WSB tickets)
- 300 Walks Completed 300 walks (12 complete WSB tickets)
- 450 Walks Completed 450 walks (18 complete WSB tickets)
- 600 Walks Completed 600 walks (24 complete WSB tickets)
 - Champion Walker (ultimate tag)
- WSB Leader Senior Student who regularly undertakes leadership duties
- Winter Walker Consistently walking on the WSB through Terms 2 and 3
- Road Safety Demonstrates good road safety practices .

The WSB Coordinator awards merit tags, and certificates are presented at school assemblies.



WSB PLEDGE & RULES

Every child that joins the WSB must sign the WSB Pledge, which includes the following rules:

- Listen to the walking school bus driver.
- Stop, look and listen when crossing the road.
- Walk behind the driver but keep in a group.
- Stay on the house side of the footpath.
- Walk, do not run.
- Share the footpath with others.

Other WSB rules to abide by are:

- No wheels (except adults with prams/strollers).
- No dogs unless they're friendly around other people.
- Books, balls and other toys are to be carried in bags to avoid distraction.
- Shoes must be worn for protection against accidents.
- Hats must be worn in Terms 1 & 4 for protection against the sun.
- Children are not to interfere with public or property.
- No swearing, hitting, or fighting.
- No unsafe behaviour (e.g. running onto road). Please ensure your child understands the WSB rules.

This is to ensure the bus operates in a safe manner and shows consideration for other pedestrians, road users and residents.

Behaviour action plan

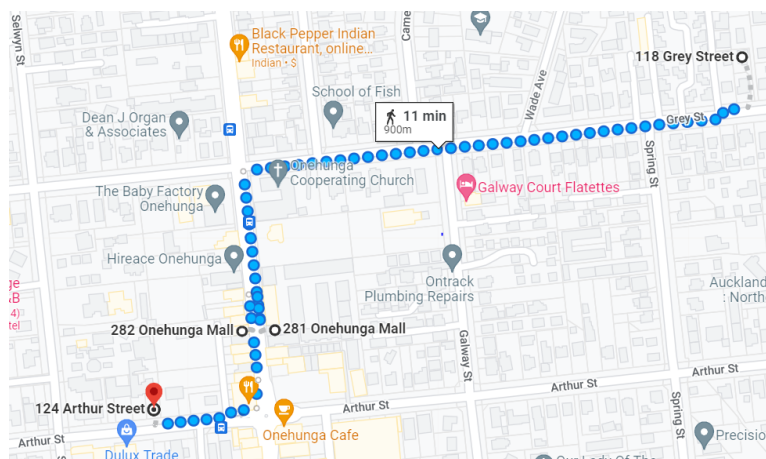
1 – Spoken to by driver.

2 – If behaviour continues, parent informed.

3 – If behaviour continues, referred to Coordinator and/or Convenor.

4 – If behaviour continues, referred to Deputy Principal and/or Principal. Note: These steps are a recommendation only and depending on the nature and severity of the behaviour, steps may be skipped

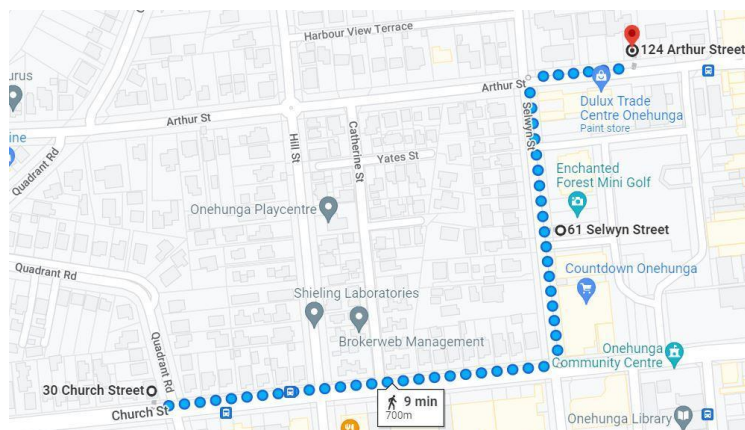
GREY ST WSB



The Grey St WSB starts at 119 Grey St at 8.20am.

Children and parents join along the way and everyone arrives at school at 8.35am

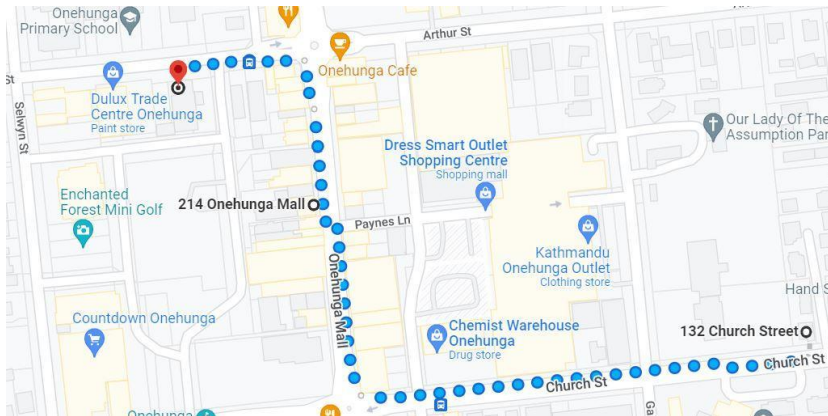
LOWER CHURCH WSB



The Lower Church St WSB starts at 30 Church St at 8.15am and arrives at school by approximately 8.30am.

Children and parents join along the way and everyone arrives at school at approximately 8.30am

UPPER CHURCH ST WSB



The Upper Church St WSB starts 132 Church St at 8.20am and arrives at school at approximately 8.40am.

Routes and Coordinators:

1. **Grey St WSB** – Starts from 119 Grey St

Anji Rambhai: anjitailor@gmail.com

2. **Lower Church St WSB** – Starts from 30 Church St

Shane Riddle: Shaneriddle@gmail.com

3. **Upper Church St WSB**- Starts from 132 Church St

Jess Cutfield: jessbp@gmail.com