

Code of Conduct for School Students Travelling on Buses

Information for Parents/Carers

What is the Code of Conduct for School Students Travelling on Buses?

The Code outlines expected standards of primary, middle and secondary school student behaviour while travelling on buses so that bus travel can be safe and enjoyable for everyone. The Code encourages all students to be safe and responsible passengers, provides clear processes for dealing with misconduct, outlines categories of inappropriate behaviour, consequences for students who misbehave and the rights and responsibilities of those involved in school bus transport.

How can I help my children to be safe and responsible bus travellers?

Parents/carers need to ensure that their children have the necessary skills and knowledge to be safe and responsible bus travellers and are capable of travelling independently on the bus. You can support your children by talking about the Code to ensure that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities and the consequences of misconduct on the bus.

Who is involved in implementing the Code of Conduct?

Ensuring the safe transport of each and every child is a shared responsibility which brings together the efforts of students, their parents/carers, schools, bus drivers and bus operators. If there are any bus conduct issues involving your child it is important that you cooperate with the bus operator and the school principal in discussing reported incidents of bus misconduct and in implementing agreed consequences. As a parent/carer you play a leading role in influencing and guiding your child's behaviour. Therefore, your involvement in this process is essential to ensure a satisfactory resolution and to help your child understand the importance of safe and responsible bus behaviour.

What are my responsibilities under the Code of Conduct?

Parents' and carers' roles

To actively support bus safety with their school aged children.

Parents' and carers' rights

- Safe and comfortable travel for their children.
- To be respected and treated fairly.
- To be consulted and to receive accurate information about the bus behaviour of their children.

Parents' and carers' responsibilities

- To ensure that their children are capable of travelling independently on the bus.
- To ensure their children have an understanding of the Code and the bus rules.
- To communicate respectfully with the operator, school and transport staff.
- To teach their children about bus safety and consequences for misconduct.
- To demonstrate appropriate bus travel behaviours to their children.
- To co-operate with the school and bus operator in managing bus misconduct.
- To ensure the safe travel of their children to and from the bus stop.
- To be available for discussions about the behaviour of their children.

Parents' and carers' expected behaviours

- To provide their children with the correct bus fare.
- To cooperate with their children's school and the bus operator in discussing behaviour incidents and in implementing any agreed disciplinary action.
- To communicate with the bus operator and the school about their children's bus transport and respond to phone and written communication.
- To address concerns about their children's bus travel by promptly contacting the bus operator so that relevant issues can be managed using the procedures outlined in the Code.

What if a student does not pay the bus fare?

Unfortunately, the incidence of fare evasion by school students has increased in recent times. Some students have exploited the framework for safe travel of school students by not paying the correct fare, thinking that they will not be refused travel. As a parent/carer, you need to let your children know that they cannot expect to travel on the school bus unless they pay their fare and that there are consequences for fare evasion. Therefore, you must ensure that they have the required bus fare for their school bus travel.

What about bullying on the bus?

Bullying is a complex societal issue which is not the responsibility of just one individual or group. Everyone, especially those who have responsibility for the care of children, need to cooperate in managing bullying.

Physical bullying which affects the safety of bus travel can be easily observed and is dealt with under the Code. However, other forms of bullying, while being totally unacceptable, can be very difficult to identify as threats to passenger safety. When the bus driver has concerns, either observed or reported, of bullying issues the bus operator will be advised and will then inform the school of the situation.

Useful information about strategies to identify and to deal with bullying is available for parents/carers at www.bullyingnoway.gov.au.

What can I do if I am dissatisfied with the bus service?

If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of the service provided by the bus company you should contact the bus operator to lodge a complaint and to attempt to resolve the issue. If you are not able to resolve the matter effectively with the operator you can consider referring the issue to the nearest Department of Transport and Main Roads Translink regional office (school transport) (for list of locations refer to www.translink.com.au/schooltransport) to investigate according to the Department's complaints management process.

What can I do if I am dissatisfied with a decision made by the bus operator?

After implementing the processes outlined in the Code, an operator may decide to refuse a student travel on the bus or to implement alternative consequences. If you are dissatisfied with this outcome you may request that the operator review the decision.

If attempts to resolve your dissatisfaction with the operator's decision are unsuccessful and you wish to take the matter further, more formal procedures are involved. In these circumstances you may contact the nearest Department of Transport and Main Roads Translink regional office (school transport) (for list of locations refer to www.translink.com.au/schooltransport) and request, in writing, a review of the decision.

What are the possible consequences for not following the Code*?

Category 4: The behaviour is immediately life threatening

- Refused bus travel for a defined period (school weeks) plus behaviour agreement (agreement period up to one school year) or
- Permanent refused travel.

Category 3: The behaviour is dangerous/destructive and highly likely to cause immediate harm to property and others

- Refused bus travel (maximum 10 school weeks) plus behaviour agreement (agreement period up to one school year).

Category 2: The behaviour is unsafe where there could be harm to property and others

- First Report – refused bus travel (maximum five school days).
- Repeat Report within 10 school weeks – refused bus travel (maximum 10 school days) and/or behaviour agreement (agreement period up to 10 school weeks).

Category 1: The behaviour is irresponsible but not likely to cause harm

- Report of single incident – written caution considered.
- Report of repeat of incidents in single journey – written caution and/or one to two days refused travel.
- First Repeat Report in 10 school weeks (repeat incidents across multiple journeys) – written caution and/or one to two days refused travel.
- Second Repeat Report in 10 school weeks – maximum five days refused travel and/or behaviour agreement for up to 10 school weeks.
- Third Repeat Report in 10 school weeks – maximum 10 days refused travel and/or behaviour agreement for up to 10 school weeks.

** In some circumstances an alternative consequence may be considered appropriate.*

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Information for Students

What is the Code of Conduct for School Students Travelling on Buses?

The Code outlines expected standards of primary, middle and secondary school student behaviour while travelling on buses so that bus travel can be safe and enjoyable for everyone. The Code provides clear processes for dealing with misconduct and outlines consequences for students who misbehave. The Code encourages all students to be safe and responsible passengers.

How can I be a safe and responsible passenger?

If you follow these guidelines for student expected behaviours you will be a safe and responsible passenger:

Students' role

To be a safe and responsible passenger.

Students' rights

- To be safe
- To be respected and treated fairly

Students' responsibilities

- To act safely and responsibly by:
 - following driver instructions
 - following the bus rules and the Code
 - respecting self and others
 - respecting own property and the property of others
 - communicating respectfully with others
 - accepting consequences for bus misconduct.

Students' expected behaviours

- Hail the bus and wait in an orderly manner.
- Respect other people and their property.
- Behave in a way that ensures a safe bus journey for all passengers by:
 - following bus rules
 - staying in the right place
 - behaving in a calm, non-aggressive way
 - keeping hands and feet to self
 - speaking politely
 - storing all objects safely
- Get off the bus in an orderly manner.
- Follow the driver's safety instructions.

Description of students' expected behaviours

Hail the bus and wait in an orderly manner

- Stand in a visible location or at a designated bus stop
- Stand well back from the edge of the road when waiting for the bus
- Hail the bus as it approaches
- Remain quiet and calm without pushing or shoving
- Be patient and wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before getting on
- Have bus pass, ticket, card or money ready
- When the bus stops, move quietly to the bus

Respect other people and their property

- Speak respectfully to the driver and other passengers.
- Respect other people's belongings and personal space.
- Ask for permission before touching other people's belongings.
- Keep hands, feet and belongings to self.
- Follow the driver's directions.
- Follow the bus rules.
- Look after the bus and bus equipment by making sure students:
 - leave the bus and bus equipment tidy and undamaged
 - report any damage to the driver.

Behave in a way that ensures a safe and enjoyable bus journey for all passengers

- Show the driver bus pass, ticket or ID upon request.
- Pay the correct bus fare.
- Show care, courtesy and common sense while on the bus.
- Sit properly on the bus (if a seat is available) and make sure to:
 - place feet on the floor
 - keep hands and feet out of the aisle
 - face the front of the bus
 - wear a seatbelt at all times, if one is available
 - store belongings under the seat or in an appropriate luggage area
 - remain seated until the bus has come to a complete stop and the door is opened
 - keep entire body inside the bus.
- If required to stand:
 - remain in the area designated by the driver
 - face the front of the bus
 - hold the rail firmly.
- Avoid distracting the driver and remember to:
 - speak quietly
 - use calm voices and polite language
 - use headphones or mute options when using hand-held computer games or electronic devices.
- Keep doors and aisles clear.

Get off the bus in an orderly manner

- Get off the bus at the designated stop.
- Press the stop button once to signal the intention to get off at the next bus stop or raise hand and say "next stop" to the driver.
- Begin to move to get off the bus when the bus has come to a complete stop and the door is opened.
- Gather belongings and leave the bus in a quiet, safe and orderly way.
- Remove headphones so that the traffic can be heard.
- Wait in a safe location until the bus has moved away before making a decision to cross the road.

- Cross the road safely
 - look to right, left, right again
 - make sure the roadway is clear
 - walk, don't run.

In case of an emergency or a breakdown, follow the driver's safety instructions

- Follow the driver's instructions at all times.
- Wait until the bus stops before standing up to get off.
- Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly way.
- Wait in the area indicated by the driver.

What are the possible consequences for not following the Code*?

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