



PROCEDURE: Code of conduct for school students on buses

UPDATED: 2022

REVIEWED BY: Senior Executive

It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers. This includes:

Behaviour on buses

- Use appropriate language not offensive or racist language
- Fighting, spitting, feet on seats, throwing things in or from the bus is not permitted
- No eating or drinking (other than water) - unless for medical reasons or the bus operator gives written permission.
- Offer seats to adults including people with a disability, elderly or expectant mothers
- Do not push or shove other people
- Do not bully or harass other passengers or the driver
- Avoid attracting the attention of the driver except in the case of emergency
- Do not play music at such volume that it may distract the bus driver or other passengers.
- Wear face mask when public health orders issued by NSW Health

Safety on and near buses

- Obey reasonable directions from the driver (e.g. where to sit or to remain in the bus)
- Remain in your seat - do not move around the bus unnecessarily
- If standing, remain behind the front passenger seat and keep a secure hand hold at all times
- Keep bags and other items clear of the aisle
- Do not allow any part of your body to protrude out of the bus at any time
- Wait for the bus in a quiet and orderly manner - including at bus interchanges
- Stand away from the roadside until the bus comes to a complete stop
- Allow other passengers to leave the bus before stepping onto the bus in a single line
- Wait until the bus stops before moving to get off the bus at your designated stop
- Cross the road where and when it's safe to do so, use crossings/traffic lights where available.

Legal considerations on buses

- Wear the seat belt properly adjusted and fastened, if one is available
- Obey the law that bans smoking on buses
- Ensure that buses are not vandalised - report any damage, e.g. graffiti and window etching, to the driver
- Do not interfere with bus property, equipment and signage
- Do not leave rubbish on the bus, or at bus stops or interchanges.

Using bus passes/Opal Cards

- Show travel passes to the driver on boarding and tap off when leaving.
- Police Officers or bus company representative when requested
- Use the travel pass only for its intended purpose - do not lend your pass to other students or borrow a pass from them
- Swipe or 'dip' passes in ticket readers if available when boarding
- If issued with a School Opal card, always tap on when boarding and tap off when leaving the bus

Disobeying these rules may lead to the withdrawal of bus travel passes, banning students from travelling on buses and/or police prosecution and court action.

Unacceptable behaviour such as using offensive or racist language, disobeying reasonable directions from the driver, smoking, spitting, damaging property, eating on the bus, distracting the driver with persistent noise and failing to show the travel pass may lead to:

- Loss of subsidised school travel privileges for up to two school weeks for a second offence, and up to 10 school weeks for subsequent offences.
- Permanent suspension of school travel privileges or banning from travelling on buses may apply for repeated offences.

Dangerous behaviour such as seriously bullying or harassing other passengers, fighting, letting any part of your body protrude from the bus, throwing objects inside or outside the bus, using matches and lighters, carrying dangerous items and group misbehaviour may lead to:

- Loss of subsidised school travel privileges for up to four school weeks for a first offence and up to 10 school weeks for subsequent offences - or if group misbehaviour is involved, permanent loss of school travel privileges.
- Permanent suspension of school travel privileges or banning from travelling on buses may apply for repeated offences.

Highly dangerous behaviour such as interfering with safety equipment, pushing students out of the doors or windows, assaulting the driver or other passengers and destruction of bus property may lead to:

- **Permanent loss** of subsidised school travel privileges, and possible court action or police prosecution
- Banned from travelling on buses.

The police will be called to deal with highly dangerous behaviour.

These penalties reflect the seriousness of the misbehaviour. They ensure that all students who misbehave on buses are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner, no matter which bus operator or school is involved.

If students are refused travel, parents/guardians/carers must make alternative travel arrangements and meet any costs of that transport. They will not be eligible for the Transport for NSW Private Vehicle Conveyance Scheme under these circumstances.

A group of school students behaving unacceptably may risk higher penalties if their conduct puts the safety of other passengers or the driver at risk.

The operator will inform Transport for NSW of its decision. Transport for NSW may inform an operator of a student's record of misbehaviour. Please refer to the Guidelines for Managing School Students' Behaviour on Buses for dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents and the school.

Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator.

- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the code of conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents, guardians or carers before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

What to do if you disagree

If parents, guardians or carers don't agree with a decision, they should contact the bus operator. If they are still not satisfied, they can contact the nearest Transport for NSW office on one of this number, Newcastle: **1800049983**

