



## The Code of Conduct for students and parents/guardians

July 2019 – provided by NSW Government Transport - <https://transportnsw.info/student-code-conduct>

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITY

#### STUDENTS

The following Code of Conduct sets out acceptable standards of behaviour for students travelling on school buses and regular route buses.

Students are expected to follow these rules for the safety and comfort of all passengers, including themselves. If the rules are not followed, it may lead to the withdrawal of travel passes for subsidised travel, banning students from travelling on buses, and even police prosecution and court action.

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 touch, push or shove other people
- Do not bully or harass other passengers or the driver. This includes photographing, making lewd or suggestive comments, acting in a manner or participating in activities that may be deemed inappropriate or of a sexual nature.
- 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.

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### **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 always keep a secure hand hold
- 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
- Wait until the bus leaves the stop and you have clear vision before crossing the road
- 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

### **Guidelines School Student Behaviour on Buses**

- Do not leave rubbish on the bus, or at bus stops or interchanges.

### **Using bus passes:**

- Show travel passes or tickets to the driver on boarding and to Authorised Revenue
- Protection Officers, NSW 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

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- If issued with a School Opal card, always tap on when boarding and tap off when leaving the bus

#### **Students will:**

- Behave courteously and respectfully in accordance with the Code of Conduct
- Follow reasonable instructions from the driver (e.g. to wear a seat belt properly adjusted and fastened, where one is available; where to sit or to remain in the bus when the driver is awaiting assistance from the NSW Police)
- Report any unsafe or inappropriate behaviour to the driver/their school.

#### **Students may have the following expectations of the bus driver and operator:**

- Safe travel
- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- Travel free from verbal and physical abuse or any form of bullying, intimidation and harassment.

#### **When in possession of a school bus travel pass, students must:**

- Show it to the Driver, Authorised Revenue Protection Officers, NSW Police Officers or bus company representatives when requested
- Dip or swipe their pass in the appropriate ticket machine if available
- Always tap on and tap off if they have been issued with a School Opal card
- Travel only on the designated school bus route or, if travelling with a School Opal card, only on approved bus operators and at approved times of day
- Keep their pass for their own use – not lend to, or borrow passes from other students

Student's parents/guardians should call 131 500 or email [concessions@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:concessions@transport.nsw.gov.au) quoting the student's name, address and school if the console shows the School Opal card is not valid.

#### **Consequences for breach of the Code of Conduct:**

- Depending on the degree of misbehaviour, students may have their pass suspended or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with these Guidelines
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in criminal, dangerous or group Misbehaviour
- School Principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's policies related to student behaviour for any breach of the Code of Conduct
- NSW Police may take action against students in the case of suspected criminal behaviour.

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## Right to seek review of penalties:

If a student has reason to believe that a bus driver has treated him or her unfairly, they can raise the issue with their parents or guardians. Parents/guardians can then contact the bus operator or TfNSW for a review of the penalty. See page 23 of the of these guidelines (<https://transportnsw.info/student-code-conduct>) for details in relation to the process.

## PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

### Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child understands the Code of Conduct
- Disclosing to the bus operator and school Principal any disability or personal circumstances that may affect the student's behaviour and any plans or strategies to support students with particular needs to facilitate safe travel
- If meeting their child at the bus stop, never wait on the opposite side of the road
- Communicating with the bus operator and school Principal to discuss their child's misbehaviour and its consequences if the child's behaviour has breached the Code of Conduct and the operator has requested a meeting
- Treating bus operators and their employees respectfully and courteously.

### Parents/guardians may have the following expectations:

- Safe travel for their children and young people
- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- Receive accurate information about the behaviour of students
- Have concerns listened to and considered in a timely manner.

### Parents/guardians should be aware that:

That they certify that they have read, understood and agree to abide with the Code of Conduct for students as required as part of the online application process for inclusion in the School Student Transport Scheme and included in this certification, the parents/guardians explicitly declare that:

- they support the Code of Conduct; and that it has been explained to their child and he/she agrees to abide by them.
- TfNSW will hold records of student behaviour in accordance with these Guidelines
- School Principals may release parent/guardian's contact details to a bus operator in the event of any possible action by the operator

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- Automated ticketing can be used to assist in identifying those students who were travelling on a particular bus where a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred
- Bus operators may advise school Principals of students that have travelled on a bus that has been damaged by a student through inappropriate behaviour
- If students are refused travel, parents/guardians will need to make alternative travel arrangements and meet any costs of such transport (parents/guardians are not eligible for the TfNSW Private Vehicle Conveyance Scheme in such circumstances unless the child or young person is assessed as eligible)
- Bus operators record student misbehaviour on the TfNSW Student Misbehaviour Database
- Bus operators keep any correspondence sent to parents or the school for a one year period from the date of the incident
- Bus operators may review images derived from bus security camera systems (where installed) to substantiate claims of breaches of the Code of Conduct.

#### **If a student is refused travel:**

- The operator must first notify the child's parents/guardians, the school Principal and TfNSW of the decision in writing (including by email) and verbally before a travel ban takes Place
- Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses – July 2019
- Where a travel pass has been suspended, the bus operator will decide and advise parents/guardians of the arrangement to reclaim the travel pass at the end of the suspension period
- If parents/guardians have questions about any decisions made by bus operators regarding student misbehaviour, they should take the matter up with the bus operator in the first instance
- Parents/guardians may ask a bus operator to review a decision if a change in the child's behaviour can be demonstrated during the suspension period and parents/guardians remain dissatisfied with the operator's decision, they may contact the nearest office of TfNSW (listed at the end of these Guidelines).

#### **SCHOOL PRINCIPALS (OR DELEGATES)**

School Principals play a key role in advising students of their responsibilities and the consequences of breaching the Code of Conduct.

#### **School Principals can support the Code of Conduct by:**

- Supplying the contact details of parents/guardians to bus operators if consultation between

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- parents/guardians and the bus operator is necessary and consent has been provided to the Principal by the parents/guardians to disclose their contact details
- Disclosing to the bus operator (only with the parents'/guardians consent) any disability or personal circumstances that may affect the student's behaviour, and any plans or strategies to support a particular student to facilitate safe travel
- Providing assistance in managing breaches of the Code of Conduct in consultation with the relevant bus operator and parent/guardian
- Display the Code of Conduct brochure on school noticeboards, in newsletters and student diaries.
- Sanctions applied under these Guidelines do not prejudice further disciplinary action that schools may wish to apply to students who misbehave under their school's disciplinary code.

## TRANSPORT FOR NSW

Transport for NSW is responsible for:

- Developing the Code of Conduct for student behaviour on buses in consultation with school organisations, transport operators, parent/guardian groups, bus drivers' representatives and other key stakeholders
- Investigating complaints from parents/guardians who are dissatisfied with penalties imposed on their child by bus operators
- Reviewing any such complaint on its merits with due consideration to factors such as the record of the student's behaviour on buses, the student's special needs and disability, procedural fairness, the circumstances of the breach of the Code of Conduct and compliance with relevant statutory requirements.

Transport for NSW may:

- Ban the student from travelling on a bus where the Code of Conduct has been breached
- Suspend the student's School Opal card
- Review any penalty imposed by a bus operator, including the temporary or permanent refusal of travel on a bus service.

Transport for NSW records the details of misbehaviour and the action taken by the operator, and may inform an operator of a student's prior record of misbehaviour.

For full details on the Code of Conduct, please visit NSW Government Transport - <https://transportnsw.info/student-code-conduct>

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