

# Information for non-state schools

The Code exists to support safe bus travel for students and to manage their behaviour on their journey to and from school. The Code is approved under Section 272 of the *Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Regulation 2018*. It is important that your school supports the Code.

The Code applies to all primary and secondary students travelling on the bus to and from school, or for other school related activities like school sports, excursions or camps. It outlines behaviour expectations and provides a framework for dealing with student misconduct. Misconduct processes include consequences, and these increase with the severity and frequency of behaviour.

The Code sets out the roles, rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders, including:

- students
- parents/guardians
- schools
- bus drivers and bus operators
- Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Everybody has a role to play in promoting and enforcing the Code.

## Schools' role in the Code

### Schools' rights

- Safe and comfortable travel for their students.
- To be consulted and to receive accurate information about their students' school bus behaviour.

### Schools' responsibilities

- Collaborate with stakeholders in implementing the Code.
- Support bus operators in application of the Code's procedures and processes.
- Consider requests from bus operators for the disclosure of student personal information to support administration of the Code in line with established procedures.
- Reinforce safe and respectful bus travel and the Code's messages in school-based processes.
- Facilitate effective communication between bus operators, students and parents/guardians.

## Schools' expected behaviours

- Provide information on the Code to parents/guardians.
- Support the bus operator in implementing consequences for students who breach the Code, which can include refusal of travel.
- Collaborate with bus operators and parents/guardians in relation to their students' travel behaviour.
- Ensure a suitable level of supervision at school bus collection points, where appropriate.
- Reinforce with students the need for safe and responsible behaviour on buses and the expectation to present a valid bus pass or pay a fare when required.

## Understanding the Code

For consistency in implementing the Code, there are four categories of unacceptable behaviour.

- **Category One: Irresponsible behaviour**  
Examples include fare evasion, offensive language and littering in the bus.
- **Category Two: Unsafe behaviour**  
Examples include verbal abuse, repeatedly moving around the bus and ignoring the bus driver's instructions.
- **Category Three: Dangerous/destructive behaviour**  
Examples include vaping or smoking on the bus, vandalism and physically attacking others.
- **Category Four: Life threatening behaviour**  
Examples include threatening with or being in possession of a weapon or replica (which can include items used as a weapon such as sporting equipment), and hitting, pushing or interfering with the bus driver while driving.

## How misconduct is handled

If a student does not follow the Code, the bus driver may report their behaviour to the bus operator. This report is reviewed by the bus operator. The bus operator will also review all available evidence. This can include statements from other students who were on the bus. Many buses have cameras on them and any footage will be reviewed as part of the investigation.

When an incident occurs on the bus and the bus operator is unable to identify the students involved, they may seek the support of schools. It is important that schools collaborate with the bus operator in such situations and consider the disclosure of

student personal information to support administration of the Code. This helps to ensure the safety of all passengers onboard the bus.

The bus operator decides which category the behaviour comes under and what the consequences will be. This includes repeated behaviour. Repeated behaviour from any category can mean eventual refusal of travel for a student.

Consequences can include:

- a written caution or warning to the parents/guardians advising of the behaviour. A copy may also be sent to the school.
- a student not being allowed to travel on the bus for a set time, for example, five school days or one month.
- a behaviour agreement which requires the student and parent/guardian to commit to certain conditions.
- other consequences agreed by stakeholders.

In some circumstances, the bus operator may consult with the school on reported behaviour incidents. Schools should cooperate and assist the operator where possible in implementing the Code and appropriate consequences.

Bus operators must apply the principles of natural justice when making decisions related to the Code. This means they must align the consequence with the offence. They are also required to clearly communicate any decision made and the reasons to parents/guardians.

## Resources available

The Code website has been updated and includes the following resources for use by schools:

- Factsheets for students and parents/guardians
- Posters
- DL brochure
- Website graphic.

## For more information

- Scan the QR code to learn more about the [Code](#)
- Talk to your bus operator

