



## SCHOOL BUS OPERATION 2014

### **Definitions**

*School Buses:* buses provided by private contractors to transport students between school and home and elsewhere as arranged.

*School operated bus:* a bus owned and operated by this College.

*Track bus or Public bus:* any bus operating as part of a public bus service.

*Coordinating School:* the school or college which manages the operation of school buses for the schools of a particular area, in this case, Whittlesea.

### **Operating Procedures**

School bus procedures will be in accordance with Department of Education and Department of Infrastructure Regulations, Instructions, procedures and advice. In particular, this includes the following documents, any amendments, and any superseding documents:

- a. Department of Education: "Instructions to School Principals" 1990
- b. Department of Education: School Operation Manual
- c. Department of Education and Department of Infrastructure memoranda
- d. \* Transport Regulations Road Traffic Regulations \*
- e. Operating Procedures of Bus Contractors
- f. College Welfare and Discipline Policy

### **Student Conduct**

Student conduct on all buses will be in accordance with the published travel condition (attached Annex A) and instructions and other requirements issued from time to time by this College or other authorities (attached Annex B).

In particular, (and in accordance with Departmental Instructions), students travel on school buses is to be regarded as a privilege and not a right.

### **Student travel on Public Buses**

College requirements relating to student travel on public bus transport will be similar to those on school buses as far as is practicable and appropriate.

### **School Bus Suspension**

The Principal or staff member with delegated responsibility may suspend students (who breach instructions and travel conditions) from travelling on school buses for a period of time. As school bus suspension is quite separate to suspension from attendance at the College, the student's attendance at school is still required. Bus suspension cannot be a valid reason for lawful absence from school.

### **Safe Operation of Buses**

Any breach of requirements relating to safety will be dealt with seriously.

## **Issue of Instructions to Students**

Instructions and directions relating to school buses may be issued from time to time by the Principal or his/her delegate.

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## **School-operated Bus**

The school-operated bus will be operated by Whittlesea Secondary College in accordance with the following:-

- a. its Private Omnibus Licence
- b. the authorised Quality Assured Maintenance system
- c. the directions of the College Principal or his/her representative
- d. appropriate laws and regulations
- e. when carrying passengers, the driver will always have an appropriately endorsed licence and possess a valid Driver's Certificate
- f. the Department of Education rules relating to the conduct of school excursions
- g. student conduct complying with all school requirements, including this School Bus policy
- h. the driver is responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle

## **School Bus Co-ordination**

Whittlesea Secondary College will act as the co-ordinating school for all school buses operating to Whittlesea schools.

## **Miscellaneous**

- a. The College will have contingency plans and procedures to deal with bus accidents and incidents, emergencies involving school bus travel, and like situations.
- b. This policy will be reviewed not less frequently than biennially.

## **STUDENT SAFETY NEAR BUSES : REQUIREMENTS FOR WHITTLESEA SCHOOLS**

*Reference: Department of Education Memorandum from the  
Director of Schools dated 14th October, 1996*

Students must wait at bus stops and interchange in an orderly fashion and must not approach the bus until it has stopped: at Whittlesea Secondary College students must keep to the footpaths.

Students are required to arrive at their bus stop five (5) minutes before schedule departure times.

Boarding and alighting from buses must be conducted in an orderly manner: this means NO pushing and shoving!

Alighting passengers must immediately move away from the vehicle and must wait on the same side of the road until the bus has moved off.

Students must not attempt to cross the road until after the bus has departed and they have a clear view of the road in both directions.

Students must under no circumstances approach, run beside or attempt to touch the bus either as it pulls up at or moves away from a stop.

Parents waiting for students at a bus stop are asked to wait on the same side of the road as the bus, in order to eliminate the risks of pupils running across the road.

### **Implementation in Whittlesea**

Drivers are asked to assist and report safety concerns, including instances of breaches of the above.

Teachers on duty or conducting excursions or present in bus areas are asked to take action when safety is risked.

Action options include:-

- drivers not loading buses until requirements are complied with
- supervising teachers requiring compliance

- groups of students and/or individual students being counselled

- teachers requiring buses to be re-boarded correctly

- breaches of safety being reported promptly

- students not being permitted to travel (after other processes have been followed through) for some time

- reporting of incidents and accidents, with record-keeping and investigation as necessary/if possible

Implementation with effect from now.

## **TRAVEL CONDITIONS - as NOTIFIED TO PARENTS and to BUS TRAVELLERS**

Your child has been allocated a seat on a school bus for which the timetable and route map is available on request. Your support in ensuring that he/she is at the bus stop indicated at least five minutes before the stated time and that all rules and instructions are complied with, would be greatly appreciated.

It should not be necessary to remind all concerned of the following matters:-

Students at State and Registered Schools may be permitted to travel on a school bus service subject to the conditions set out in the Education Regulations, 1998. It should be noted that permission to travel on a school bus is a privilege and not a right. Permission to travel may be withdrawn if a student's behaviour is unsatisfactory.

School bus services are designated to ensure that students arrive at school in sufficient time to prepare for classes, etc. To ensure that schedules are maintained it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that students are not late for their bus. If a student misses a bus, it will be necessary for parents to make arrangements for transport them to and from school.

Considerable responsibility rests on all concerned to ensure that bus travel is as safe as possible. Thus the following rules apply and are enforced:-

- Students must wait at the bus stop in an orderly fashion. This includes not playing on the roadway, and not attempting to approach the bus until it has stopped.
- On leaving a bus, students must wait on the same side of the road until the bus has moved on, and they must have a clear view of the road in both directions before attempting to cross the road.
- Parents waiting for students at a bus stop should wait on the same side of the road as the bus in order to eliminate the risk of student running across the road.
- No student is to attempt to board or leave a bus while it is in motion.
- Students must wait for, and board and leave the bus in a quiet and orderly fashion.
- If a student rides a bicycle to the bus stop it needs to be left in a safe place where it will not cause an inconvenience. The student and his/her family must accept sole responsibility for the bicycle.
- Bus captains are appointed to assist with supervision. They have authority and responsibility, are under the driver's direction, and are required to report unacceptable conduct including misbehaviour or vandalism.
- Students must remain seated for the whole of the journey. No student should, under any circumstances, have any part of his/her body protruding from a bus, or throw litter, etc., from a bus.
- Boisterous conduct or "horse-play" and any action which could distract the attention of the driver will not be tolerated.
- While it is not expected that students will remain silent throughout the journey, there may be times when absolute quiet will be requested by the driver in the interests of safety. Students may talk quietly at other times and must refrain from calling out to passing traffic.
- Students should not talk to the driver when the bus is in motion.
- Smoking, eating food, drinking and chewing gum are not permitted on school buses. This also complies with Public Transport Regulations which apply in transport to and from Whittlesea school, including this Secondary College.

In the unlikely event of a student not complying with any of the above rules of travel, the following may result:-

- The driver stops the bus and records the student's name and full details of the particular situation.
- The offender may be carried to his/her school and/or back to his/her bus stop.
- The offender will be reported to the Principal or School's Bus Co-ordinator at the first opportunity, for further action.

Where it is considered that an offence warrants it, a pupil may be suspended from using the bus for a specified period. When this occurs, students are still required to attend school, so parents will need to make other arrangements for the student's travel to and from schools for the period of suspension. Suspension for an indefinite period may be imposed if a pupil is a persistent offender or a certain other circumstances. Other action may also need to be taken.

It is necessary also to emphasise that in all cases of vandalism, those responsible will be required to meet the cost of repairs.

School Bus travel is to and from a student's home. Bus travellers not returning home by bus or desiring to leave the bus at a stop other than the normal one, must seek approval. Also buses cannot be delayed while messages are picked up or delivered. In addition students are permitted to travel on a school bus only on days when they attend school. Thus school buses may not be used for travel to temporary employment or for social or sporting purposes.

Finally, the bus driver is not permitted to carry any other passengers or goods.