

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

FOR REGIONAL STUDENTS TRAVELLING TO AND FROM
SCHOOL BY GOVERNMENT CONTRACT BUS

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Purpose

Path Transit is committed to providing safe, comfortable transport for all students using our regional bus services.

Introduction

The Behaviour Management Guidelines have been developed to provide a framework that aims to ensure student behaviours are managed in an appropriate and consistent manner. The document outlines the roles, rights and responsibilities of students, parents and others who are involved in the conduct, provision and administration of bus services.

The overwhelming majority of students behave appropriately whilst travelling on buses. However, on occasion a small percentage of students will misbehave for one reason or another. These guidelines set out the expected standards of student behaviour and provide guidance for the management of the varying degrees of student misbehaviour. It is reasonable for students to expect that they will travel in safety and comfort, and where a reasonable set of rules apply for the benefit of all users. The overarching aim of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, bus drivers and general road users.

Every person involved in the process of transporting students to and from schools owes a duty of care to those potentially affected by their actions, and must take reasonable care to avoid doing things, or omitting to do things, that would place a student or any other person at risk of injury or harm.

The specific objective of this document is to:

- provide a framework for the observance of the Code of Conduct through the implementation of Behaviour Management Guidelines,
- define the specific roles, rights and responsibilities of Drivers, students, parents/carers, and Path Transit contributing to safe and enjoyable travel,
- communicate to students the appropriate ways in which they must conduct themselves whilst travelling on a bus and during the periods that they are waiting at bus transfer locations or pick-up and drop-off locations,
- outline the categories of misbehaviour and establish the context and consequences for breaches to the Code of Conduct,
- establish the periods of suspension that can be applied in response to breaches of the Code of Conduct,
- provide Drivers with a mechanism to respond to situations where students act in an unacceptable manner and breach the Code of Conduct, and
- explain the rights that Path Transit and Drivers have to refuse travel, in response to specific breaches.

Regional Code of Conduct

Path Transit has developed a Regional Code of Conduct to clearly explain the standards of behaviour expected from students. This Code applies to all students travelling on buses managed and operated by Path Transit. A copy of the Regional Code of Conduct is at Annex A.

The consequences of breaches to the Code of Conduct are addressed in 'Breaches of the Code of Conduct' later in this document.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

Students have an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner that ensures both their comfort and safety and the comfort and safety of others. To assist students in understanding their obligations Path Transit has developed a Code of Conduct. By its nature, the Code of Conduct is the instrument that defines a minimum standard for behaviours. It provides examples of both acceptable and unacceptable behaviours but is not intended to be an exhaustive list of either. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a condition of travel, any breaches may result in suspension.

Students are responsible for:

- following the Code of Conduct,
- following the direction or instructions of the Driver
- reporting any unsafe behaviour to the Driver.

Students can expect:

- to enjoy a safe and comfortable journey,
- to be respected and treated fairly by the Driver and other passengers, that their property will be respected, and
- to be free from bullying and harassment.

Parents/Carers

In accepting the conditions of travel, parents and carers acknowledge that they are responsible for their children's ongoing behaviour. They have a responsibility to ensure that their children understand and uphold the Code of Conduct. They also have the right to expect that their children are transported to school and home again safely.

Parents / carers play a significant role in the overall behaviour management strategy. They should expect to be communicated with following any breach to the Code of Conduct. This may be by direct communication by Path Transit or the School. The initial communication may be in the form of a Behaviour Management Notice.

Parents / carers are required to:

- understand that they are responsible for their children's behaviour and must ensure that their children understand and conform with the Code of Conduct,
- ensure that their children are transported safely to and from the bus services,
- communicate appropriately with Bus Drivers and other officers from Path Transit, including instances where they are required to discuss their child's misbehaviours,
- be available to meet and discuss their children's behaviour and support decisions arising out of such discussions, and

- make their children available to attend, and accompany them to, an interview with officers from Path Transit as a result of Category 4 breaches to the Code of Conduct.

Parents / carers can expect to:

- be treated fairly and with respect by the bus driver and Path Transit,
- receive accurate and timely information regarding their children's behaviour,
- be advised of the outcome of any investigations,
- have their concerns listened to and considered in a fair manner, and
- have Path Transit review the decision to withdraw travel, based on extenuating circumstances or in the event that the child was treated unfairly.

Parents should be aware that in the event their child causes malicious damage to a bus or property they are likely to be required to pay for the replacement or cost of any repairs. In this event, Path Transit may seek compensation from parents/carers.

Path Transit

Whilst specific responsibilities in relation to the management of student behaviour are outlined in all contract agreements, Path Transit are also committed to providing safe and comfortable transport for students.

Path Transit are responsible for managing behaviours of students travelling on buses and are required to implement student behaviour management strategies and use a variety of methods to encourage appropriate behaviour.

Path Transit are responsible for informing the Public Transport Authority (PTA) of outcomes as a result of breaches to the Code of Conduct and any subsequent action that's taken, including the withdrawal of travel. Where an incident is serious or significant in nature i.e. a Category 4 breach, Path Transit will inform the PTA to gain assistance in managing the process.

Path Transit are generally the main point of contact for drivers, parents/carers and other stakeholders when incidents of misbehaviour occur.

Path Transit are responsible for:

- taking action as a result of an incident, and in accordance with the Behaviour Management Guidelines, determining an appropriate penalty,
- reviewing Behaviour Management Notices and taking the appropriate action,
- determining and enforcing the penalties in line with the Behaviour Management Guidelines and issuing Suspension Notices and Interim Suspension Notices,
- working in partnership with schools, bus staff, parents/carers and the PTA to resolve issues relating to the management of student behaviours,
- discussing individual breaches to the Code of Conduct with the school principal (where the school chooses to provide assistance), to gain a better understanding of the student's circumstances,
- communicating with parents as a result of student misbehaviours,
- providing bus staff and students with a safe working and travelling environment,
- implementing an appropriate Incident & Investigation Management Procedure,

- provide bus staff with instruction, information and training relating to appropriate student behaviour management principles,
- Informing the school that a suspension notice has been issued as a consequence of a student's behaviour, which may affect the student's attendance at school.

Path Transit can expect to:

- be treated with courtesy and respect by students and parents/carers
- receive accurate reports from bus staff regarding the behaviour of students,
- receive support from the PTA in response to actions taken whilst following the Behaviour Management Guidelines,
- receive support and open communication from parents/carers regarding students travelling on bus services that they are contracted to provide.

Bus Operations Staff

Drivers of buses have the important role of driving the bus in a safe manner as well as ensuring the safety and security of all passengers. Drivers are also required to issue reasonable directions to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct. They are also required to respond to emergency situations in an appropriate and timely manner.

Drivers are required to:

- operate the bus in a safe manner, taking into consideration the conditions and circumstances on a day-to-day basis,
- hold appropriate Driver's licences, permits and qualifications,
- conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner to students, parents / carers and others who are affected by the conduct of bus services,
- uphold the responsibilities of the role, as prescribed by the contract under which the service is provided,
- implement effective strategies that encourage appropriate behaviours and discourage/prevent misbehaviours,
- remind students of the Code of Conduct and Bus Rules and the consequences
- enforce the Code of Conduct, and take the appropriate steps as outlined in the Behaviour Management Guidelines, and
- to record and report incidents in accordance with the instructions provided by Path Transit.

Drivers can expect:

- to be provided with a safe working environment,
- to be trained in behaviour management strategies and incident reporting procedures,
- to feel safe and treated with respect, courtesy and be free from abuse,
- to receive support from Path Transit, parent/carers, and teachers/principals when managing student behaviours in accordance with these Guidelines, and
- to receive a timely response to the issuance of Behaviour Management Notices.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

The Behaviour Management Guidelines provide a framework for responding to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

There is an expectation that Drivers, will adopt appropriate strategies aimed at providing a positive environment that focuses on prevention.

At any time that an incident is reportable, Path Transit will issue a Behaviour Management notice to the school to be issued to the student.

There are often complex issues associated with child misbehaviour. In deciding the appropriate response in cases of reportable misbehaviour, consideration must be given to the circumstances surrounding the event, and in particular, the extent to which the safety, security and wellbeing of other passengers, Drivers, are threatened by that behaviour.

Categories of Breaches of the Code of Conduct

To promote consistency and fairness in responding to breaches to the Code of Conduct, specific misbehaviours have been categorised. The categories are:

- Category 1: Nuisance & Non-Compliant Behaviour
- Category 2: Threatening & Improper Behaviour
- Category 3: Dangerous & Highly Offensive Behaviour
- Category 4: Extremely: Dangerous, Destructive & Offensive Behaviour

Category 1: Non-Compliant & Nuisance Behaviour

This includes behaviours, which may be irritating, unpleasant but not physically dangerous.

Examples:

- Failing to follow the reasonable directions of bus Driver and other passengers, e.g. failing to reposition a school bag/equipment which is in a location where it may cause others to trip.
- Failing/refusing to wear a seatbelt where fitted.
- Distracting the Driver by persistent noise.
- Stopping others from disembarking at their stop.
- Eating on the bus (unless for medical reasons or with the permission of bus staff).
- Refusing to show a bus pass where required.

Category 2: Threatening & Improper Behaviour

This category includes behaviours where the actions of the student may cause discomfort or distress to others:

- Harassing and bullying other passengers.
- Verbally threatening bus operations staff and other passengers.
- Using a device to obtain images or audio recordings of others.
- Using offensive language.
- Stopping others from disembarking at their stop.

- Antisocial behaviour, e.g., discussing topics of an inappropriate nature with other passengers, including possessing and/or displaying mildly explicit and/or offensive material.
- Failing to observe a socially acceptable hygiene standard, e.g., spitting.

Category 3: Dangerous & Offensive Behaviour

This category includes behaviours where there is the likelihood of significant injury and actual minor injury is caused to individuals:

- Fighting.
- Deliberately making contact with the bus, whilst the bus is approaching or departing a pickup location.
- Antisocial behaviour, e.g. discussing topics of an explicit or alarming nature, inappropriate or unwanted physical contact with other passengers.
- Interfering with emergency equipment, e.g. emergency hammers, fire extinguishers.
- Throwing objects that have the potential to cause harm or damage.

Category 4: Extremely: Dangerous, Destructive & Offensive Behaviour

This category includes behaviours that are very dangerous or offensive to individuals or destructive to property. In some incidences, substantial physical injury or extreme distress is caused.

Examples:

- Possessing, consuming, or be under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance.
- Inappropriate, sexually explicit behaviour.
- Deliberate destruction of property, including to the vehicle, personal or Government property.
- Physically attacking the Driver or other passengers.
- Pushing students out through the doors or windows.
- Lighting a fire on the bus.
- Interfering with the safe mechanical operation of the bus.
- Bringing an object or implement on the bus that is designed or has an intended use as a weapon.

Please note that the lists of examples above are not intended to be exhaustive but used as a guide only.

Specific factors to consider as part of determining the appropriate response to the breach of the Code of Conduct include:

- The threat to the safety of passengers on the bus and the nature of the incident,
- The age and maturity of the student, and / or
- Whether the breach was a first or one of a series of repeat incidents for which the student has previously been cautioned or suspended.

Please note that all incidents of student misbehaviour are recorded against the student's personal record. Where a student re-offends within a prescribed period as outlined below, the previous incidents will be considered when determining a subsequent penalty. It should also be noted, that where a student has been suspended from a bus service the retention period will start when transport assistance is reinstated.

Retention Periods:

- Category 1: up to 3 months
- Category 2: up to 4 months
- Category 3: up to 6 months
- Category 4: up to 12 months

Students will always be given the opportunity to reform inappropriate behaviours and in-line with this, once the retention period is exhausted, previous incidents and suspensions will no longer be used to determine penalties.

If a period of suspension falls over a school holiday period, the period of suspension will continue after that holiday period.

Please note that for the lesser categories of misbehaviour i.e. Category 1 and 2 the initial response is to award cautions, in contrast to this, initial responses to Category 3 and 4 offences are suspensions from the bus.

Depot Contact Details

Geraldton	Kalgoorlie
Path Transit Pty Ltd (<i>TransGeraldton</i>) 30 Bedford Street Webborton, WA 6053 Telephone: 9968 2200	Path Transit Pty Ltd (<i>TransGoldfields</i>) 180 Boulder Road Kalgoorlie, WA 6430 Telephone: 9021 2655

Annexure A

Regional Code of Conduct

Behaviour	Examples of how to meet the Code
Respect other people and property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect other people and their possessions, follow the bus Driver's directions without argument, and do not interfere with bus property, equipment, shelters and signs by marking or damaging them.
Wait for the bus in an orderly manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the Bus Operations staff instructions, wait well back from the bus until it stops and allow other passengers to leave the bus first, stand quietly without calling out or shouting, and do not push other people in the line.
While on the bus, behave yourself.	<p>Students must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always follow instructions from bus operations staff, sit properly on a seat (in an allocated seat if directed by the Driver), wear a seatbelt (if fitted), at all times and in the correct manner, store school bags / equipment under the seat or in appropriate luggage areas, and speak quietly and do not create unnecessary noise. <p>Students must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bully other passengers, place feet on the seats, fight, spit or use offensive language, throw any article around or from the bus, consume food or drink, or play music without the permission of the Driver, use a recording device, of any description, to obtain images /audio of other passengers or the Driver, smoke, (prohibited on all buses), possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance, possess, discuss or distribute any material that may be considered inappropriate or offensive, i.e. material of a violent or sexually explicit nature, allow any part of your body to protrude out of the bus windows, stand whilst the bus is in motion, bring an object on the bus that is considered dangerous, or any object that may be considered as intended as a weapon, and act in a manner that would be considered an offence under any legislation.
Use approved bus stops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will only be allowed to get on or off the bus at an approved bus stop, and It is the responsibility of students to get off the bus at their correct stop.
When leaving the bus, do so in an orderly manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off, Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly manner, Never cross the road in front of the bus. Wait until the bus has moved away and it is safe to cross, and Use crossing or traffic lights if available.
In case of an emergency or a breakdown, follow the Driver's instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off, Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly manner, and Wait in the area indicated by the Driver. <p>Students must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interfere with emergency equipment, unless instructed to do so by the Driver.