

Bus Travel Policy

Students will be assigned to the most appropriate bus or service by the Bus Coordinator. Students who are assigned to the School Bus Program will be required to travel on that bus unless they move house or there is a major reorganisation of the bus routes.

To be eligible for the School Bus Program, students must attend their nearest school/campus appropriate to their year level. Students are expected to use public transport where a service is available within 1.6 km of their home. This applies to both students who access the School Bus Program at no cost and fare-paying students.

School bus travel is only to be used to go to and from home. The bus may not be used to travel to or from houses of grandparents or other relatives/friends or to or from work.

With some services the demand for seats can exceed the carrying capacity of the bus. This may result in students who do not attend school regularly being reallocated to public transport. Parent/guardians who apply for their child/children use the school bus service undertake that other transport arrangements will be made if seating becomes insufficient due to an increase in the number of students with a higher priority of access. If there is no longer sufficient bus seating capacity to accommodate eligible students, those who have access to a public transport service that could provide convenient access to and from their school at appropriate times, may be reallocated during the school year.

Students who miss their regular school bus are not able to catch another school bus to get home. These students, who do not have the option of using a commercial route service or special service bus to get home, will be helped by an Assistant Principal or Team Leader to get in touch with a parent/guardian so that they can get home.

The only exception occurs when students are visiting an alternative parent whose details are on the school database. The normal application and approval process apply. Once approved, these students will be able to use a school bus, if available, to travel to either home as required.

The assignment of students to buses will be reviewed by the bus co-ordinator in October of each year when the bus loadings are required by the DET for the following year. The assignment will also be reviewed after the school census at the start of March when student numbers are established. If there is an issue arising from the assignment of a student to a particular bus, the Bus Coordinator will liaise with the parent to resolve the matter.

Students must abide by this policy, as published in the first newsletter of the school year, and the conditions of bus travel as detailed on the 'Application for Permission to Travel' forms that are signed by both the parents and the students.

Fare Payers

Eligible students travel for free with the School Bus Program. Ineligible students can still access the program if space is available, their travel is approved, and a fare is paid. Fare paying students must reapply annually and are approved on a term-by-term basis. Permission to access the school bus service is not granted until the fare is paid. Failure to pay the fare promptly may result in your child's seat being allocated to another student. If demand outweighs capacity the College will keep a waiting list and students will be offered a seat as they become available. Decisions about whether or not, and who, can travel on the school bus service is at the discretion of the coordinating principal and may be reviewed at any time.

Bus travel on a Temporary Basis

A student requiring travel on a school bus on a temporary basis for emergency purposes may apply, in writing, to the Bus Coordinator.

Students seeking to use the school contract bus service on an ad-hoc basis must be eligible travellers, have completed the required paperwork, and the Bus Coordinator should be satisfied that the carriage of the student(s) will not disadvantage other passengers or result in an unacceptable loading.

Students who have an option of using a route service bus may not access a school bus.

Conditions of Bus Travel

Student Identification Cards

It is compulsory for students to carry their student identification card. Student identification cards or other identification must be shown, on demand, to Bus Drivers, Bus Captains, and any Upper Yarra Secondary College staff member.

Students who lose their student identification card may purchase a new pass from the College. Student identification cards must be retained until replaced by new ones the following year. Temporary passes for students who forget their student identification card are not issued. Students who forget their student identification card may be refused travel on the school bus if they cannot be identified. Therefore, all students are encouraged to photograph their pass and use their phone to access the school bus. Students who board buses for which they do not have a pass may lose their seat on the school bus and be allocated to public transport or special services, along with the accompanying student.

If a student does not have their student identification card on any day this may be recorded on a bus roll by the Bus Driver, Bus Captain or UYSC staff members and the student will be reminded that they must carry their pass.

After a verbal warning further consequences may apply. Students may be refused access to the school bus and need to use the route service or special service bus or be collected from school by their parents. A letter may be sent home to parents detailing student infractions. Students who continually fail to comply may be suspended from the school bus service or the student may be suspended from school. Under Ministerial Order 184, students may be suspended for failing to comply with a reasonable and clearly communicated instruction of a principal, teacher, or other staff member.

Behaviour on the Bus

If students do not behave in an acceptable fashion, they will be reported to the Bus Coordinator who will issue them with a verbal warning. If a second offence is committed, the Bus Coordinator may issue a written warning, call parents, or determine further consequences.

If a student has been warned about poor behaviour on the buses, they may be excluded from bus travel. If a student is to be excluded from bus travel, their parents will be notified by 5 p.m. the day before bus travel is withdrawn.

If the Bus Coordinator regards a first offence as sufficiently serious, they will consult with the principal and will jointly determine suitable consequences. These consequences could involve exclusion from bus travel and/or suspension from school.

It is understood that exclusion from the free bus service can be a genuine inconvenience for some students and parents, especially those who do not live near the commercial bus routes. However, the safety of all students, bus drivers and the public must be our primary concern.

Behaviour at Bus Stops

Students will wait in a safe manner at the bus stops along the routes to school in the morning. Students should arrive at their allocated bus stop 5-10 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time of the bus. Misbehaviour at the bus stops is unacceptable and can be reported to the bus co-ordinator by the bus driver, bus captain or other students.

Students must wait behind the barriers at the UYSC bus loop until the bus arrives. Students arriving from other schools to use the school bus must exit via the barrier exit nearest the bus and immediately board their next service. The bus driver may choose to delay student entry to the bus or the departure of the bus if students do not enter the bus in an orderly fashion.

Yard Duty staff are assigned to monitor student behaviour as they arrive in the morning and catch buses in the afternoon. The duty teacher may be called to assist in the case of disorderly behaviour. The bus co-ordinator will work in conjunction with other staff to do random checks of eligible travellers when students arrive in the morning or when they leave in the afternoon.

It should be noted that exclusion from bus travel is not an excuse for students to stay away from school. Parents are asked to support the school's policy by insisting that students attend school, even if they are not allowed to travel on the bus.

Liaison with the bus companies will be via the Bus Co-ordinator who will notify them of exclusions, changes which result from student Free Days, Sports Days etc.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed annually, in conjunction with the principal, after the Bus Loadings are determined for the following year.