

BUS POLICY ESKDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL		
Policy Implementation Date: 2020	Policy review date: 2024	Responsible for review: Principal

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to outline the specific roles and responsibilities for schools involved in the provision and management of the School Bus Program (SBP).

Summary

- Parents/carers have primary responsibility for transporting their children to and from school.
- The School Bus Program assists families in rural and regional Victoria by transporting students to school.
- The program services both government and non-government schools.
- School principals must ensure School Bus Program services provided to students at their school are managed in accordance with this policy and the guidance.
- The Department of Transport administers the School Bus Program in accordance with this policy and the guidance, through contractual arrangements with bus operators.

Details

Schools must ensure SBP services are managed in accordance with the requirements in the [Guidance tab](#).

SBP services are coordinated by a coordinating school, with the principal of that school being the coordinating principal. The coordinating principal is responsible for the SBP services within a particular area or network. All other schools in that area are referred to as client schools. Both coordinating schools and client schools have responsibilities under this policy and the guidance.

These requirements include the following:

Co-ordinating principals must:

1. appoint a member of their school staff to be the bus co-ordinator, unless coordinating the bus services themselves
2. distribute to families, and client schools, information about SBP services running in the area they are coordinating
3. collect application forms from client schools and assess eligibility, including whether an applicant who is otherwise ineligible falls within a special category that permits them to use a SBP service
4. apply priority of placement where capacity on a SBP service is limited
5. maintain, and provide to bus operators, relevant information about SBP services including the bus roll (i.e. the list of passengers travelling on each SBP service), emergency information, seat allocations, route maps, timetables and standards of behaviour
6. ensure students are aware of the conditions of travel (set out in the application forms) and respond to incidents of inappropriate behaviour on buses

7. appoint bus captains (if required), who assist bus drivers with supervision
8. notify the Department of Transport (DoT) if students are regularly required to stand up in 80km speed zones
9. report to DoT operational issues with a bus service including driver conduct issues
10. report to DoT, Student Transport Unit (STU) and client schools any variations to services
11. escalate to STU circumstances which, in the coordinating principal's view, may establish grounds for additional services, retention of services proposed to be removed, or modifications to services
12. check a bus operator's quarterly claim for payment and either:
 1. endorse the accuracy of the claim and return it to the bus operator (who submits it to DoT), or
 2. address any inaccuracies with the bus operator
13. notify client schools, operators and families in advance of when bus services will not be running.

Client schools must:

1. distribute to families information, upon enrolment or other inquiry, about SBP services running in the area
2. collect application forms from students at their school and wanting to access a SBP service
3. forward completed application forms to the coordinating school by the end of Term 3 in the year prior to the year in which the student is seeking to access the SBP service. If new families enrol at the school after this time, client schools must forward the completed applications to the coordinating school as early as possible and apply priority of placement
4. collect fares from students at their school who are fare paying travellers
5. ensure supervision of students getting on and off buses at their school.

Definitions

Bus operator

For the purposes of the School Bus Program, a bus operator is a company or sole trader who is contracted by the Department of Transport (DoT) to operate a school bus service along a specified route. Bus operators must be accredited with Transport Safety Victoria (TSV) and meet safety obligations under the Bus Safety Act 2009.

Client school

A client school is a school whose students use school buses provided under the School Bus Program but the school does not manage the bus service (this is the responsibility of the coordinating school).

Client school principal

The principal of a client school.

Coordinating principal

The principal of a coordinating school. The responsibilities of a coordinating principal are often delegated to a school bus coordinator.

Coordinating school

A school which is responsible for the management of the local bus network in the School Bus Program.

DET or the Department

The Department of Education and Training.

DOT

The Department of Transport.

PTV

Public Transport Victoria.

School bus network

A school bus network is made up of all the services coordinated by a particular school. The network has one coordinating school and, where applicable, numerous client schools.

Student Transport and Allowances Branch

The Student Transport and Allowances Branch is made up of two units:

- the Conveyance Allowance Unit (CAU), and
- Student Transport Unit (STU)

STU

The Student Transport Unit within the Department.

Related policies

- [Conveyance Allowance Program](#)
- [Duty of Care](#)
- [Private Car Use](#)
- [Students with Disabilities Transport Program](#)
- [Traffic Management](#)
- [Vehicles \(including Buses\) – Owned or Hired by a School](#)

Relevant legislation

- [Bus Safety Act 2009 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Bus Safety Regulations 2020 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act 2010 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Health Records Act 2001 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Public Administration Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Road Safety Act 1986 \(Vic\)](#)