



Transport
for NSW

Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses

The Code of Conduct for students, bus drivers,
operators, school Principals and
parents/guardians

Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Student Code of Conduct.....	5
3	Roles and responsibilities	7
3.1	Students.....	7
3.2	Parents/guardians	8
3.3	School Principals (or delegates).....	9
3.4	Transport for NSW	9
3.5	Bus drivers	10
3.6	Bus operators.....	11
3.7	Operators of rural and regional bus services	13
4	Special circumstances	14
4.1	Students not covered by the School Student Transport Scheme.....	14
4.2	Students with disability	14
4.3	Students who travel on more than one bus	14
4.4	School excursion buses	14
5	Categories of inappropriate behaviour	15
5.1	Category 1 – Unacceptable behaviour.....	15
5.2	Category 2 – Dangerous behaviour.....	15
5.3	Category 3 – Highly dangerous or life-threatening behaviour	15
6	Dealing with inappropriate behaviour	17
6.1	Category 1 – Unacceptable behaviour.....	18
6.2	Category 2 – Dangerous behaviour.....	19
6.3	Category 3 – Highly dangerous or life-threatening behaviour	20
7	Use of seatbelts on rural and regional bus services	21
7.1	Wearing seatbelts on the bus	21
8	Review Process for Students Suspended for Travel	22
9	Glossary	24
10	Transport for NSW Offices.....	25
	Appendix A to H - Sample Code of Conduct letters to parents/guardians.....	27

Author:

Date: July 2019

Version: 4

Reference: Reference

Division: Customer Strategy and Technology Division

Review date: July 2021

1 Introduction

The *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses* and associated Code of Conduct are lawful requirements published under the *Passenger Transport Regulation 2007*. The Code of Conduct applies to all school children enrolled in a government or non-government school, whether they use a government or private bus, and irrespective of whether they travel under the School Student Transport Scheme.

The Guidelines were originally developed and published in July 2006 to make clear to students and parents/guardians that courteous and responsible behaviour is expected when students travel on buses. They aim to ensure the safety and well-being of school children, other bus passengers, road users and bus drivers. The Guidelines are consistent with the objectives of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)*.

In addition, the Guidelines set out the responsibilities and requirements of bus drivers, bus operators, school Principals and Transport for NSW in relation to school students who behave in an unacceptable manner when travelling on buses. The Guidelines identify categories of misbehaviour and establish appropriate periods where bus operators may suspend or refuse travel in response to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

In April 2011 the School Bus Safety Community Advisory Committee was established by the NSW Government to examine school bus safety in rural and regional NSW.

The Committee's Report, released in October 2012, provided 41 recommendations and sub-recommendations with the aim of identifying opportunities for improvement in school bus safety.

Recommendation 13 of the Committee's Report required Transport for NSW to revise the NSW School Student Code of Conduct in consultation with parent and carer groups and BusNSW in light of the recommendations of its report, including clarify the rights and obligations of school bus travel stakeholders. The NSW Government supported Recommendation 13 and noted that the NSW School Student Code of Conduct required updating.

These revised Guidelines have been developed through consultation with BusNSW, TfNSW Ticketing and Concessions, TfNSW Centre for Road Safety, Department of Education, Catholic Schools NSW, Federation of Parents and Citizens' Associations of NSW, Council of Catholic School Parents, NSW Parents Council, Association of Independent Schools of NSW, and the Isolated Children's Parents' Association of NSW.

Transport for NSW will support action taken in line with the Guidelines for dealing with inappropriate behaviour outlined in Section 7 of this document.

For more information on the School Bus Safety Community Advisory Committee and its full report and recommendations go to:

https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/media/documents/2017/m236-school-bus-safety-report_web.pdf

2 Student Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct sets out acceptable standards of behaviour for students travelling on school buses and regular route buses.

Students are expected to follow these rules for the safety and comfort of all passengers, including themselves. If the rules are not followed, it may lead to the withdrawal of travel passes for subsidised travel, banning students from travelling on buses, and even police prosecution and court action.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL STUDENTS ON BUSES

It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers. This includes:

Behaviour on buses:

- Use appropriate language not offensive or racist language
- Fighting, spitting, feet on seats, throwing things in or from the bus is not permitted
- No eating or drinking (other than water) – unless for medical reasons or the bus operator gives written permission
- Offer seats to adults including people with a disability, elderly or expectant mothers
- Do not touch, push or shove other people
- Do not bully or harass other passengers or the driver. This includes photographing, making lewd or suggestive comments, acting in a manner or participating in activities that may be deemed inappropriate or of a sexual nature.
- Avoid attracting the attention of the driver except in the case of emergency
- Do not play music at such volume that it may distract the bus driver or other passengers.

Safety on and near buses:

- Obey reasonable directions from the driver (e.g. where to sit or to remain in the bus)
- Remain in your seat – do not move around the bus unnecessarily
- If standing, remain behind the front passenger seat and keep a secure hand hold at all times
- Keep bags and other items clear of the aisle
- Do not allow any part of your body to protrude out of the bus at any time
- Wait for the bus in a quiet and orderly manner – including at bus interchanges
- Stand away from the roadside until the bus comes to a complete stop
- Allow other passengers to leave the bus before stepping onto the bus in a single line
- Wait until the bus stops before moving to get off the bus at your designated stop
- Wait until the bus leaves the stop and you have clear vision before crossing the road
- Cross the road where and when it's safe to do so, use crossings/traffic lights where available.

Legal considerations on buses:

- Wear the seat belt properly adjusted and fastened, if one is available
- Obey the law that bans smoking on buses
- Ensure that buses are not vandalised – report any damage, e.g. graffiti and window etching, to the driver
- Do not interfere with bus property, equipment and signage

- Do not leave rubbish on the bus, or at bus stops or interchanges.

Using bus passes:

- Show travel passes or tickets to the driver on boarding and to Authorised Revenue Protection Officers, NSW Police Officers or bus company representative when requested
- Use the travel pass only for its intended purpose – do not lend your pass to other students or borrow a pass from them
- Swipe or 'dip' passes in ticket readers if available when boarding
- If issued with a School Opal card, always tap on when boarding and tap off when leaving the bus.

3 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Students

Students will:

- Behave courteously and respectfully in accordance with the Code of Conduct
- Follow reasonable instructions from the driver (e.g. to wear a seat belt properly adjusted and fastened, where one is available; where to sit or to remain in the bus when the driver is awaiting assistance from the NSW Police)
- Report any unsafe or inappropriate behaviour to the driver/their school.

Students may have the following expectations of the bus driver and operator:

- Safe travel
- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- Travel free from verbal and physical abuse or any form of bullying, intimidation and harassment.

When in possession of a school bus travel pass, students must:

- Show it to the Driver, Authorised Revenue Protection Officers, NSW Police Officers or bus company representatives when requested
- Dip or swipe their pass in the appropriate ticket machine if available
- Always tap on and tap off if they have been issued with a School Opal card
- Travel only on the designated school bus route or, if travelling with a School Opal card, only on approved bus operators and at approved times of day
- Keep their pass for their own use – not lend to, or borrow passes from other students

Student's parents/guardians should call 131 500 or email concessions@transport.nsw.gov.au quoting the student's name, address and school if the console shows the School Opal card is not valid.

Consequences for breach of the Code of Conduct:

- Depending on the degree of misbehaviour, students may have their pass suspended or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with these Guidelines
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in criminal, dangerous or group misbehaviour
- School Principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's policies related to student behaviour for any breach of the Code of Conduct
- NSW Police may take action against students in the case of suspected criminal behaviour.

Right to seek review of penalties:

If a student has reason to believe that a bus driver has treated him or her unfairly, they can raise the issue with their parents or guardians. Parents/guardians can then contact the bus operator or TfNSW for a review of the penalty. See page 23 of these guidelines for details in relation to the process.

3.2 Parents/guardians

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Ensuring that their child understands the Code of Conduct
- Disclosing to the bus operator and school Principal any disability or personal circumstances that may affect the student's behaviour and any plans or strategies to support students with particular needs to facilitate safe travel
- If meeting their child at the bus stop, never wait on the opposite side of the road
- Communicating with the bus operator and school Principal to discuss their child's misbehaviour and its consequences if the child's behaviour has breached the Code of Conduct and the operator has requested a meeting
- Treating bus operators and their employees respectfully and courteously.

Parents/guardians may have the following expectations:

- Safe travel for their children and young people
- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- Receive accurate information about the behaviour of students
- Have concerns listened to and considered in a timely manner.

Parents/guardians should be aware that:

- That they certify that they have read, understood and agree to abide with the Code of Conduct for students as required as part of the on line application process for inclusion in the School Student Transport Scheme and included in this certification, the parents/guardians explicitly declare that:

they support the Code of Conduct; and

that it has been explained to their child and he/she agrees to abide by them.

- TfNSW will hold records of student behaviour in accordance with these Guidelines
- School Principals may release parent/guardian's contact details to a bus operator in the event of any possible action by the operator
- Automated ticketing can be used to assist in identifying those students who were travelling on a particular bus where a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred
- Bus operators may advise school Principals of students that have travelled on a bus that has been damaged by a student through inappropriate behaviour
- If students are refused travel, parents/guardians will need to make alternative travel arrangements and meet any costs of such transport (parents/guardians are not eligible for the TfNSW Private Vehicle Conveyance Scheme in such circumstances unless the child or young person is assessed as eligible)
- Bus operators record student misbehaviour on the TfNSW Student Misbehaviour Database
- Bus operators keep any correspondence sent to parents or the school for a one year period from the date of the incident
- Bus operators may review images derived from bus security camera systems (where installed) to substantiate claims of breaches of the Code of Conduct.

If a student is refused travel:

- The operator must first notify the child's parents/guardians, the school Principal and TfNSW of the decision in writing (including by email) and verbally before a travel ban takes place

- Where a travel pass has been suspended, the bus operator will decide and advise parents/guardians of the arrangement to reclaim the travel pass at the end of the suspension period
- If parents/guardians have questions about any decisions made by bus operators regarding student misbehaviour, they should take the matter up with the bus operator in the first instance
- Parents/guardians may ask a bus operator to review a decision if a change in the child's behaviour can be demonstrated during the suspension period and parents/guardians remain dissatisfied with the operator's decision, they may contact the nearest office of TfNSW (listed at the end of these Guidelines).

3.3 School Principals (or delegates)

School Principals play a key role in advising students of their responsibilities and the consequences of breaching the Code of Conduct.

School Principals can support the Code of Conduct by:

- Supplying the contact details of parents/guardians to bus operators if consultation between parents/guardians and the bus operator is necessary and consent has been provided to the Principal by the parents/guardians to disclose their contact details
- Disclosing to the bus operator (only with the parents'/guardians consent) any disability or personal circumstances that may affect the student's behaviour, and any plans or strategies to support a particular student to facilitate safe travel
- Providing assistance in managing breaches of the Code of Conduct in consultation with the relevant bus operator and parent/guardian
- Display the Code of Conduct brochure on school noticeboards, in newsletters and student diaries.

Sanctions applied under these Guidelines do not prejudice further disciplinary action that schools may wish to apply to students who misbehave under their school's disciplinary code.

3.4 Transport for NSW

Transport for NSW is responsible for:

- Developing the Code of Conduct for student behaviour on buses in consultation with school organisations, transport operators, parent/guardian groups, bus drivers' representatives and other key stakeholders
- Investigating complaints from parents/guardians who are dissatisfied with penalties imposed on their child by bus operators
- Reviewing any such complaint on its merits with due consideration to factors such as the record of the student's behaviour on buses, the student's special needs and disability, procedural fairness, the circumstances of the breach of the Code of Conduct and compliance with relevant statutory requirements.

Transport for NSW may:

- Ban the student from travelling on a bus where the Code of Conduct has been breached
- Suspend the student's School Opal card

- Review any penalty imposed by a bus operator, including the temporary or permanent refusal of travel on a bus service.

Transport for NSW records the details of misbehaviour and the action taken by the operator, and may inform an operator of a student's prior record of misbehaviour.

3.5 Bus drivers

Bus drivers are responsible for the general operation of buses, including:

- Driving in a safe manner and taking reasonable care for the safety of all passengers in accordance with the provisions of the *Road Rules 2014 (NSW)*, *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)* and any relevant provisions of the *Heavy Vehicle National Law (NSW)*
- Holding a current Working With Children Check
- Holding a Bus Driver Authority and complying with the conditions and the requirements of the *Passenger Transport Regulation 2007* and *Passenger Transport Act 1990*
- Behaving with civility and propriety towards all passengers and providing reasonable directions to ensure the safety and comfort of all passengers, including students. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure that passengers are made aware of the need to wear seat belts when travelling on the bus. **Under no circumstances should a driver physically intervene when a student refuses to wear a seatbelt**
- Respecting the privacy of personal information provided to them regarding the disability or personal circumstances of any student
- Taking steps to mitigate potential unacceptable behaviour and to facilitate safe travel, particularly where the driver has been notified in advance of a disability or personal circumstances that may affect a student's behaviour
- Ensuring that all incidents of misbehaviour (even minor ones) are reported to the bus operator in a manner required by the company
- Notifying the bus operator of any safety hazards whilst picking up or dropping off students
- Contacting the bus operator for clarification of correct procedures if there is any uncertainty in relation to student misbehaviour.

Bus drivers have the following expectations:

- Be treated with courtesy and respect by students, parents/guardians and school staff
- Receive help and support from the bus operator, parents/guardians and schools as required.

Where a student breaches the Code of Conduct the bus driver will:

- Not physically handle or touch any student
- Advise the student that their behaviour was inappropriate and of the consequences of the offence, e.g. that the pass may be withdrawn
- Obtain the student's name and school or School Opal card number (directly from the student or from the travel pass)
- Issue an interim pass in place of the school bus travel pass if the bus operator has a system of interim passes in place
- Advise the student that their behaviour will be investigated by their bus operator
- Record the incident as part of the driver's own record in a situation where a formal warning is to be issued

- Report breaches of the Code of Conduct to the bus operator
- Report to the bus operator when repeated attempts by the driver to control misbehaviour have been unsuccessful.

When an incident of misbehaviour is considered life threatening, the bus driver will stop the bus in a safe area and contact the NSW Police on 000 and/or the bus operator and await instructions. Students should be advised to stay in the bus, unless they are in danger (e.g. a fire on the bus, toxic fumes or other potential threat), until assistance has arrived or in accordance with the bus operator's emergency procedures.

For the purposes of these Guidelines, a formal warning is considered issued when the driver obtains the student's name and school or School Opal card number.

How bus drivers may handle travel passes:

A driver may confiscate a school bus travel pass issued by them or suspend/cancel a School Opal card if:

- An interim travel pass is issued in lieu (where applicable)
- A student's behaviour is highly dangerous or life threatening
- It is damaged or faulty, or they believe that it is fraudulently used.

3.6 Bus operators

Not all operators of school bus services in NSW issue passes to students travelling on their services. However, all bus operators are obliged to refer to these Guidelines which include the Code of Conduct when managing misbehaviour by students on buses. In particular, the processes for communicating with students, parents/guardians and school Principals must be followed.

Bus operators or their nominated officers are responsible for:

- Ensuring drivers are appropriately licenced and authorised by Roads and Maritime Services (RMS) to drive public passenger vehicles and hold current Working With Children Checks
- Providing a safe work place for bus drivers in accordance with the provisions of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)*
- Establishing a set of procedures relevant to their operational practices in accordance with the Guidelines provided by Transport for NSW for drivers to manage school student misbehaviour on buses
- Treating students, parents/guardians and schools with courtesy and respect
- Ensuring they apply the principles of procedural fairness when dealing with any inappropriate behaviour
- Liaising with schools, parents/guardians and bus drivers to ensure that bus drivers can adequately facilitate safe travel when carrying a student with a disability or with other special circumstances
- Providing their drivers with training:
 - a) to ensure that their passengers are not unduly exposed to risks while travelling on their buses, in accordance with the provisions of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)*
 - b) in managing behaviour involving students and groups of students

- c) to ensure their drivers know the company policies and procedures to be followed when students breach the Code of Conduct.

Bus Operators or their nominated officers have the following expectations:

- To be treated with courtesy and respect
- To receive help and support from the bus drivers, parents/guardians and schools as required
- To receive accurate reports from drivers about behaviour of students.

Where a student breaches the Code of Conduct, operators will:

- Advise parents/guardians of the incident and its consequences where a verbal warning is issued, with a written copy provided to the school Principal explaining the Code of Conduct breach (**Appendices A to H**)
- Advise the school Principal immediately where students are exhibiting dangerous or highly dangerous behaviour and where the NSW Police have been contacted
- Determine whether a student's misbehaviour is serious enough to refuse the student travel on the bus
- Determine the appropriate penalty in accordance with the Guidelines
- Ensure that every effort is made to communicate with parents/guardians and the school Principal within the period specified in the Guidelines, where the operator is considering refusing a student travel on a bus due to a breach of the Code of Conduct
- Advise parents/guardians, the school Principal and TfNSW in writing before suspending a student from travel (including advice on how to appeal against the decision), so that alternative travel arrangements can be made
- Decide on the appropriate arrangement for returning the travel pass to the student and advising parents/guardians in writing of the arrangement on expiry of the interim travel pass or at the end of the period of suspension. (The arrangement may include returning the pass by post or reclaiming it from the bus operator or the school, where there has been agreement with the school)
- Retain records of action taken to deal with reported incidents
- Record the incident in the TfNSW Student Misbehaviour database
- Ensure that any refusal of travel on a bus is appropriately enforced
- Consider requests by parents/guardians for a review of any decision to refuse travel to their child
- Assist TfNSW to review appeals of any decision made in relation to a breach of the Code of Conduct by providing relevant information

Operators may advise school Principals of the names of students who have travelled on a bus that has been damaged by inappropriate behaviour.

Factors for determining action:

Factors to consider as part of determining the appropriate response to a breach of the Code of Conduct include (but are not limited to):

- The age of the student
- The threat to the safety of all those in and around the bus, including the driver
- The nature of the incident (e.g.; it would be expected that a more serious response would be required where a student is throwing things from or in the bus than if a student was eating on the bus)
- Whether the breach was a first or one of a series of incidents about which the student has been previously cautioned (according to the operator's own records)
- Whether the student has any existing medical condition, e.g. behavioural difficulties or emotional disturbances (according to the operator's own records)
- Whether the student has a disability or other special circumstances that may affect their behaviour
- The student's account of the incident.

Use of bus security camera systems:

Bus operators may review images derived from bus security camera systems (where installed) to substantiate claims of a breach of the Code of Conduct. However, bus operators must comply with any code of practice established by TfNSW for the use of bus security camera systems. In the case of the State Transit Authority, compliance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* is required.

Use of contact details encrypted in any electronic ticket:

Where electronic ticketing is involved, operators can use the details on any travel pass to assist in identifying those students who were travelling on a particular bus when a breach of the Code of Conduct occurred.

Student Misbehaviour database:

One of the requirements of the Code of Conduct is to advise TfNSW of any instance of misbehaviour that is likely to result in suspension of the students' travel. Since 2008, this has been done electronically via TfNSW's Student Misbehaviour database.

Operators shall record the misbehaviour on the TfNSW Student Misbehaviour Database and keep any correspondence sent to parents or the school for a one year period from the date of the incident.

Operators can request an account and access the database through the TfNSW Services Portal: <https://appln.transport.nsw.gov.au/portal/home>

3.7 Operators of rural and regional bus services

Not all operators of rural and regional bus services issue passes to students travelling on their services. However, rural and regional bus service operators are obliged to refer to the Code of Conduct and these Guidelines when managing misbehaviour by students in buses.

In particular, the processes for communicating with students, parents/guardians and school Principals must be followed.

4 Special circumstances

4.1 Students not covered by the School Student Transport Scheme

Students who have paid for term passes or for a journey are also subject to the Code of Conduct.

School students can be penalised for misbehaviour (like all other bus passengers) whether or not they are participants of the School Student Transport Scheme, as provided for in the *Passenger Transport Regulation 2007*.

4.2 Students with disability

Parents/guardians, schools and bus operators should work together to ensure that the bus driver is aware of all actions that they might take to ensure the safety of all students on the bus and to ensure that students with disability travel free from verbal and physical abuse or any form of bullying. In relation to behaviour that does not threaten the safety of other passengers but would otherwise constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct, bus drivers should consider whether a student's disability (including behavioural disorders where parents/guardians have advised the operator) contributed to the behaviour. In such cases the application of penalties may not be appropriate.

4.3 Students who travel on more than one bus

Where students use the bus of more than one operator to travel to school, there may be circumstances where they are refused travel on the bus services of one of the operators and their school bus travel pass confiscated. [In the case of a School Opal card, the entitlement may be amended, suspended or cancelled depending on the category of inappropriate behaviour and required to be returned to TfNSW.]

The student's travel pass will not be returned to the student until the period of suspension is lifted. In these situations the student will be suspended from all travel entitlements under the School Student Transport Scheme.

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to make alternative transport arrangements and/or to meet the associated travel costs for the student on any bus service.

4.4 School excursion buses

The Code of Conduct penalties do not apply to students on school charters.

5 Categories of inappropriate behaviour

To promote consistency and fairness in responding to breaches of the Code of Conduct, inappropriate behaviour has been divided into three categories.

If students are refused travel, parents/guardians must make alternative travel arrangements and meet any associated travel costs of that transport. They will not be eligible for the TfNSW Private Vehicle Conveyance Scheme under these circumstances (unless the child or young person is assessed as eligible).

5.1 Category 1 – Unacceptable behaviour

This category includes minor offences, but is not limited to behaviour that may be irritating or unpleasant. Examples include:

- Distracting the driver by persistent noise or calling out to the driver
- Displaying materials of an offensive, obscene, pornographic, threatening, abusive or defamatory nature on a device such as mobile phone, iPad or laptop computer
- Failing to wear the seat belt properly adjusted and fastened, if one is available
- Failing to show a travel pass (except where passes are not issued)
- Eating or drinking (other than water) on the bus, unless for medical reasons or with the written permission of the bus operator
- Smoking a product e.g. tobacco or a similar substance, including e-cigarettes
- Using offensive or racist language
- Pressing the stop button continually
- Behaving so as to adversely affect the comfort or safety of other passengers such as
Not offering seats to adult passengers including people with a disability, elderly or expectant mothers
- Playing music loudly and being a general nuisance
- Other.

5.2 Category 2 – Dangerous behaviour

This category includes more serious offences, but is not limited to behaviour that may cause an element of danger to individuals. Examples include:

- Bullying, intimidation and harassment of other passengers
- Allowing any part of their body to protrude from the bus while the bus is in motion
- Stopping others from disembarking at their stop
- Verbally threatening the driver
- Standing on steps or in areas not set aside for standing and refusing to sit down
- Pushing and shoving when boarding or exiting the bus
- Swinging on bus handrails
- Throwing things inside or out of the bus
- Fighting with other passengers
- Causing damage to property in buses
- Spitting or discharging other bodily fluids (including urine and mucous)
- Exposing body parts
- Other.

5.3 Category 3 – Highly dangerous or life-threatening behaviour

This category includes major offences, but is not limited to highly dangerous behaviour. Examples include:

- Pushing students out of the doors or windows
- Interfering with the driving controls or the emergency door release
- Assaulting the driver or other passengers
- Acting in a manner or participating in activities that may be deemed inappropriate or of a sexual nature
- Interfering with safety equipment
- Recklessly or negligently endangering the safety of other passengers or themselves
- Destruction of bus property
- Carrying a weapon (including replica weapons) or dangerous items
- Using matches, lighters or other flammable items
- Other.

The list of examples above is not intended to be exhaustive, but should be used as a guide by drivers and operators in relation to the management of behaviour on their buses.

If appropriate, the bus driver and operator should report any incident involving criminal, highly dangerous, life threatening behaviour to the NSW Police.

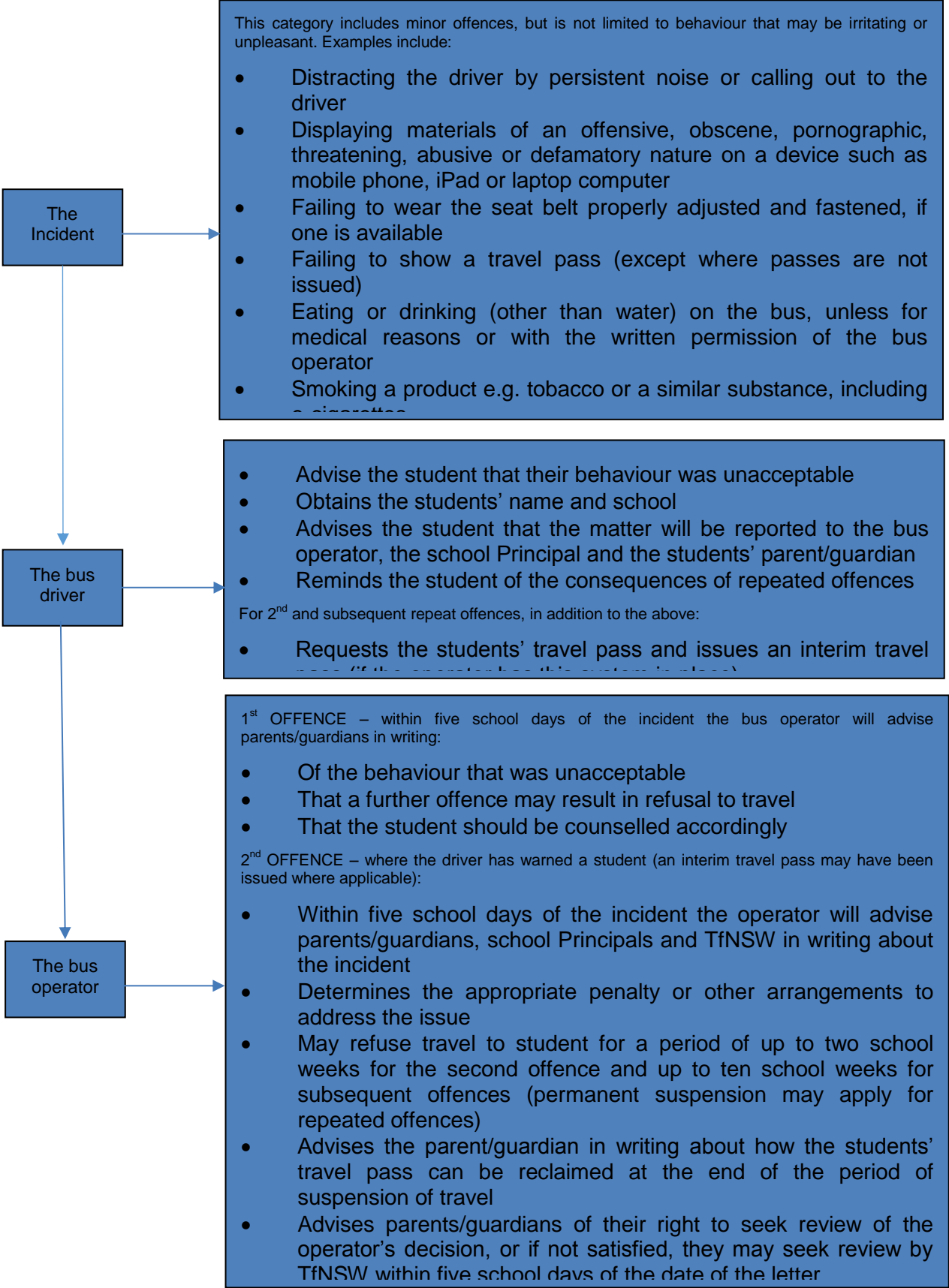
6 Dealing with inappropriate behaviour

The penalties in the table below reflect the category of misbehaviour, offence and penalty. They ensure that all students who misbehave are dealt with in a fair and consistent matter regardless of which bus operator is involved.

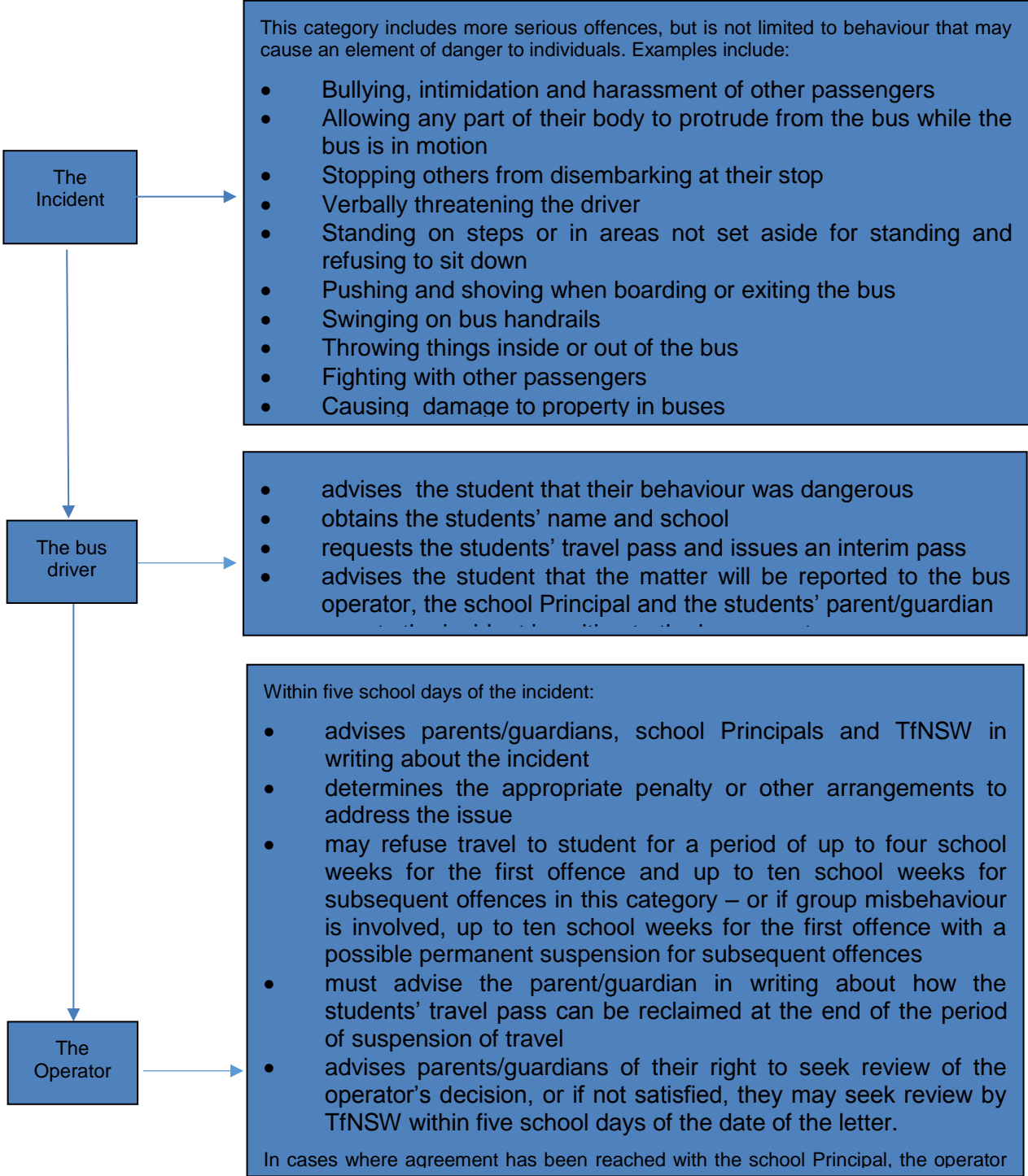
Table of penalties for school student misbehaviour

Category of misbehaviour	Type of offence	Penalty
Unacceptable Behaviour	First Offence	Warning (no penalty)
	Second Offence	Up to 2 weeks suspension
	Subsequent Offences	Up to 10 weeks suspension (permanent suspension may apply for further offences)
Dangerous Behaviour	First Offence	Up to 4 weeks suspension
	Second Offence	Up to 10 weeks suspension
	Subsequent Offences	Possible permanent suspension may apply
Highly Dangerous/Life Threatening Behaviour	First Offence	Up to 12 months suspension (or in the most extreme cases, permanent suspension)
	Subsequent Offence	Up to 12 months suspension (or in the most extreme cases, permanent suspension)

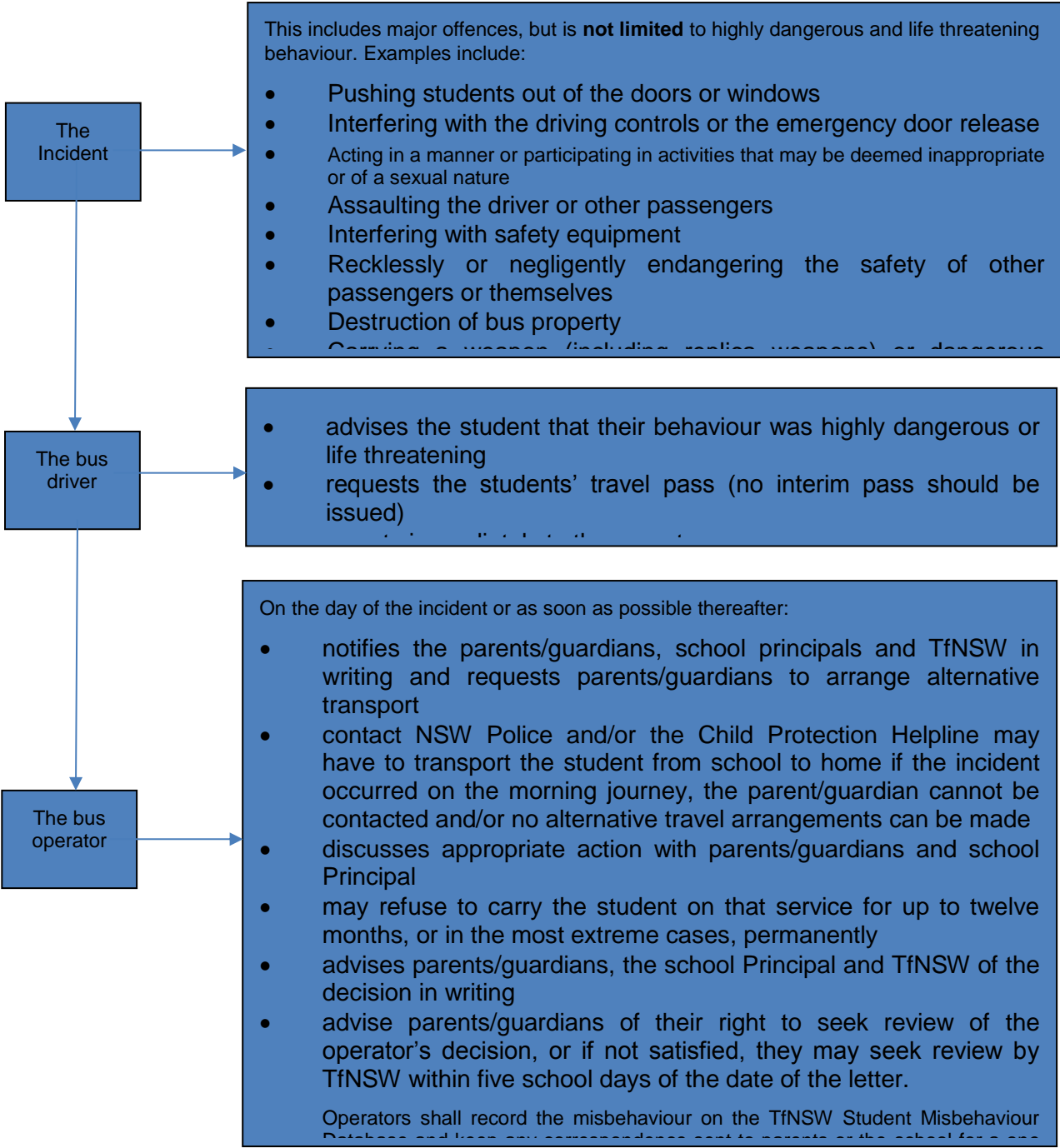
6.1 Category 1 – Unacceptable behaviour



6.2 Category 2 – Dangerous behaviour



6.3 Category 3 – Highly dangerous or life-threatening behaviour



Drivers will stop the bus in a safe location while calling NSW Police to assist in managing life threatening incidents.

Students are to be advised to remain in the bus until assistance has arrived **unless they are in danger (e.g. a fire on the bus, toxic fumes or other potential threat)**

7 Use of seatbelts on rural and regional bus services

7.1 Wearing seatbelts on the bus

Requirements:

Unlike car drivers, bus drivers are not accountable under law if passengers, including school students, fail to use the seatbelts provided. Rather, the obligation of contract holders and drivers under Clause 89 of the *Passenger Transport Regulation 2007 (NSW)* is to take reasonable steps to ensure that passengers are *made aware* of the need to wear seatbelts when travelling on the bus.

Where a school bus is fitted with seatbelts, appropriate signage must be displayed inside the bus, to remind students of their obligation to wear the seatbelts provided. The wearing of seatbelts on school buses will be a new experience for many school students. Bus drivers need to remind students to wear their seatbelts. This may be done:

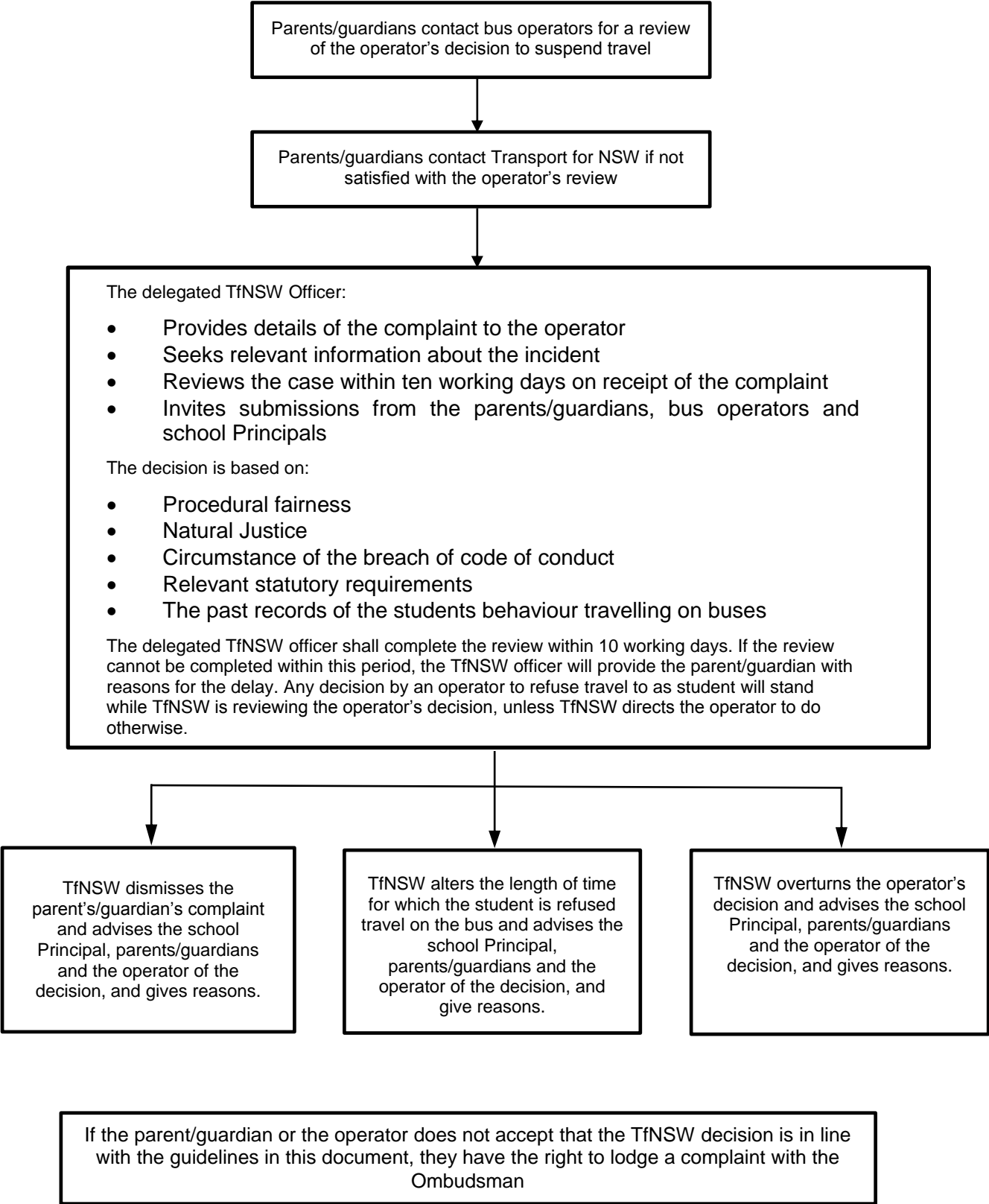
- periodically e.g. to individual students
- as a general announcement e.g. where a public announcement system is fitted to larger capacity buses
- visually e.g. a flashing sign fitted on the bus which automatically operates for a period after each bus stop pick-up. Or a fixed sign in the bus.



Example of 'flashing' seatbelt sign

Under no circumstances should a driver physically intervene when a student refuses to wear a seatbelt.

8 Review Process for Students Suspended for Travel



Parents/guardians seeking a review of the decision of the bus operator, or if not satisfied with the process taken, may seek a review by Transport for NSW within five school days of the date of the letter from the bus operator.

The review of a decision to suspend a student from travel or the process applied is conducted by the Customer Strategy and Technology Division of Transport for NSW.

Parents/guardians should submit their request (and any supporting documents) online at:

<https://transportnsw.info/contact-us/feedback/passes-concessions-feedback>

9 Glossary

Bus operator	An entity or person that operates or holds a service contract with Transport for NSW to provide a bus service or their nominated delegate
School Principal	A person who is responsible for the management of a school, college or other educational facility or their nominated delegate.
Interim travel pass	An “interim travel pass” is a temporary pass issued (where appropriate) in circumstances where an incident of misbehaviour occurs and a bus driver or operator considers it appropriate to revoke the student’s school bus travel pass.
School bus travel pass	A “school bus travel pass” is a paper based pass or School Opal card issued to students eligible to receive subsidised travel under the School Student Transport Scheme.

10 Transport for NSW Offices

Transport for NSW

Information and Ticketing Services
Customer Strategy and Technology Division
PO Box K659
HAYMARKET NSW 1240
Phone: 131 500
Email: concessions@transport.nsw.gov.au

Service Delivery Centre South

PO Box 5215
WOLLONGONG NSW 2520
Phone: (02) 8265 6600
Fax: (02) 8265 6633
Email: wollongong@transport.nsw.gov.au

Service Delivery Centre North and West

PO Box 871
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300
Phone: (02) 4962 9900
Fax: (02) 4962 9356
Email: newcastle@transport.nsw.gov.au

This document is published on the Transport for NSW website at
www.transport.nsw.gov.au

Disclaimer

While all care is taken in producing this work, no responsibility is taken or warranty made with respect to the accuracy of any information, data or representations. The authors (including copyright owners) expressly disclaim all liability in respect to anything done or omitted to be done and the consequences upon the reliance of the contents of this information.

© Transport for New South Wales

Users are welcome to copy, reproduce and distribute the information contained in this work for non-commercial purposes only, provided acknowledgment is given to Transport for New South Wales as the source.

Appendix A

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Unacceptable Behaviour Warning

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** displayed Unacceptable Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. As this is a first offence, I am obliged to provide a warning that a repeat of this type of misbehaviour may lead to the suspension of **(insert name of school student)** from the school bus for up to two weeks.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Should you wish to learn more about the Code of Conduct for Students on Buses visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. **(Insert name of School Principal)**

Appendix B

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Unacceptable Behaviour Second Offence

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator time in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** displayed Unacceptable Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while traveling on the school bus. As this is the second time **(insert name of school student)** has displayed Unacceptable Behaviour, and in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – up to two weeks)** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the suspension of travel for a longer period, with possible permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses (page 22)*, a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. (Insert name of School Principal)

Appendix C

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Unacceptable Behaviour Subsequent Offences

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** again displayed Unacceptable Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. As you are aware **(insert name of school student)** has displayed Unacceptable Behaviour on the bus on a number of previous occasions. Therefore, in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – up to ten weeks)** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses (page 22)*, a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. **(Insert name of School Principal)**

Appendix D

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Dangerous Behaviour First Offence

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator time in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** displayed Dangerous Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. In view of the serious nature of this behaviour, and in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – up to four weeks)** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the suspension of travel for a longer period, with possible permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses (page 22)*, a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. (Insert name of School Principal)

Appendix E

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Dangerous Behaviour Second Offence

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** displayed Dangerous Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. In view of the serious nature of this repeated misbehaviour, and in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – up to ten weeks)** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the suspension of travel for a longer period, with possible permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses* (page 22), a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. (Insert name of School Principal)

Appendix F

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Dangerous Behaviour Subsequent Offences

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** displayed Dangerous Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. In view of the serious nature of this continuing misbehaviour, and in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – possibly permanent suspension may apply depending on the circumstances)** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the suspension of travel for a longer period, with possible permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses (page 22)*, a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. (Insert name of School Principal)

Appendix G

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Highly Dangerous/Life Threatening Behaviour First Offence

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses..
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** displayed Highly Dangerous/Life Threatening Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. In view of the serious nature of this misbehaviour, and in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – up to twelve months (or in the most extreme cases, permanent suspension))** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the possible permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses (page 22)*, a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. **(Insert name of School Principal)**

Appendix H

Sample letter to parent/guardian: Highly Dangerous/Life Threatening Behaviour Subsequent Offence

(Insert Name)

(Insert Address)

Dear Parent/Guardian

When travelling between home and school, students must adhere to various regulations regarding passenger behaviour and the codes of conduct for travel using public transport. It is every student's responsibility to behave in a manner that ensures the safety and comfort of passengers and drivers.

If a student misbehaves on a bus, the bus operator concerned will contact the parents/guardians and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school bus travel pass or may be refused travel on the bus for a period of time determined by the bus operator in accordance with TfNSW's Code of Conduct for Students on Buses.
- Heavier penalties may apply to students involved in group misbehaviour.
- School principals have the right to take additional disciplinary action against a student under the school's discipline code or student welfare policy for any breach of the Code of Conduct.

The bus operator must provide written notification to the parents/guardians before a student's school bus travel pass can be withdrawn.

This letter is to advise you that on **(insert date)**, **(insert name of school student)** again displayed Highly Dangerous/Life Threatening Behaviour by **(insert type of behaviour by referring to page 15 of the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses*)** while travelling on the school bus. In view of the serious nature of this continuing misbehaviour, and in the interests of safety **(insert name of school student)** will be suspended from school bus travel for **(insert period of suspension – up to twelve months (or in the most extreme cases, permanent suspension))** from **(insert date suspension commences)** to **(insert date suspension is lifted)**. Any further instance of misbehaviour may result in the possible permanent suspension of school bus travel.

Please contact me on **(telephone number of Contract Holder)** if you would like to discuss this matter.

Under the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses (page 22)*, a parent/guardian has the right to seek a review of the process that was followed to suspend a student's travel. Should you wish to seek a review, please contact Transport for NSW on 131 500.

Should you wish to learn more about the *Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses and Code of Conduct of Students on Buses* visit the following website: <https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/#/studentCodesOfConduct>

Yours sincerely

(Insert Name of Contract Holder & Position)

cc. **(Insert name of School Principal)**