



## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THOSE INVOLVED WITH BUS TRAVEL – BUS DRIVERS**

The Queensland Transport Code of Conduct for rights and responsibilities of those involved with student bus travel applies to all primary and secondary school students in Queensland who use buses either to travel to and from school or for other school-related activities, and for bus drivers and operators. This framework was developed in consultation with the Department of Education and the Arts, Queensland Police Service, bus industry groups, parent groups, principals' associations, unions and non-state school authorities. To spare you all reading the extreme amount of rules and regulations, we have condensed the relevant information.

### **Bus drivers**

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 directions to ensure the safety of all passengers and abide by the Bus Driver Code of Conduct. Cairns Hinterland Steiner School aims to ensure high standards are maintained at all times on our school transport services. We expect the journey to and from school to be as safe and pleasant as possible for both students and drivers.

## **1 GENERAL OBLIGATIONS OF DRIVERS**

### **DRIVERS MUST:**

- 1.1 Be smart and tidy in appearance and pay adequate attention to personal hygiene.
- 1.2 Be polite and courteous to Passengers at all times.
- 1.3 Address children in a quiet, gentle but firm tone. Please refrain from raising your voice, as this is discouraged according to our school ethos.
- 1.3 Not swear or make remarks that are personal, sexual, and racist or which could be judged to be offensive in any way.
- 1.4 **Not have any physical contact with the students** other than in genuine cases of self defence, medical need or the prevention of a serious offence or threat to safety.
- 1.5 Not smoke whilst driving the Vehicle, within the school grounds, or whilst loading or unloading Passengers, or in the Vehicle shortly before commencing Contract Journeys.
- 1.6 Drive in a considerate manner at all times and avoid sharp braking, fast cornering and harsh acceleration which can be unnerving for Passengers.
- 1.7 Not use a mobile phone at any time whilst the Vehicle is in motion. The use of a hand held phone is only permitted when the Vehicle is parked and the engine is switched off. Hands-free sets may be used when the Vehicle is stationary at traffic lights.
- 1.8 Not consume any alcohol before or during Contracted Journeys (or at any time beforehand on the same day) including drinking without exceeding the legal alcohol limit for driving. It should be noted that alcohol from drinking the day before can remain in the bloodstream for up to 24 hours, and that any alcohol can affect concentration, reaction times and judgement.
- 1.9 Not drive whilst under the influence of any drugs, nor any medication which may affect their ability to drive. This includes both prescription and non-prescription medication. If taking any medication always check with your medical practitioner or pharmacist that it is safe to drive.

- 1.10 Most school bus accidents occur when children are boarding, alighting or waiting at the bus stop, therefore particular care should be taken on approaching each pickup point. Keep the doors closed until you have brought the vehicle to a complete standstill.
- 1.11 Before moving off ensure that all children are well clear of the vehicle. All doors properly closed before moving off. Check mirrors every time.

## **2 DEALING WITH CHILDREN**

### **DRIVERS MUST NOT:**

- a) hug, hold, cuddle, tickle or have any unnecessary physical contact with a **child**
- b) enter into horseplay with **children** on or off the Vehicle;
- c) discuss with a **child** anything of a personal or intimate nature;
- d) make any personal remark about, or to, a **child** even if it is complimentary;
- e) call any **child** by a nickname, pet name or endearment
- f) use bad language, innuendos or sexual comments in the presence of **children**
- g) give **children** gifts, send them cards, letters or text messages;
- h) exchange phone numbers, email addresses or personal details with **children**
- i) take photographs of **children**, including pictures using mobile phones;
- j) enter the home of a **child**
- k) look through a **child's** personal belongings, even when asked to find something;
- m) have any social contact with the **children** that they meet as Passengers, unless they are already a family friend or have the consent of the parents or carer.

This list is not exhaustive but it illustrates the type of actions which could be misunderstood and must be avoided. Any information about Passengers must be treated as confidential and not be discussed with anyone such as your family or friends. This also applies to anything that Passengers may tell you in the course of conversation.

### **ACCEPTABLE PHYSICAL CONTACT**

Drivers should note that some physical contact with Passengers may be necessary, such as:

- a) Assist a person who has difficulty in walking;
- b) Help an older person get in and out of a Vehicle;
- c) Assist someone to put on a seat belt

Drivers must ensure that they ask the person first, and keep physical contact to a sensible minimum.

These instructions have been written to help drivers understand that their actions, however well intentioned, may be viewed differently by others. The above are guidelines set by Children's Services.

## **3 DEALING WITH UNACCEPTABLE CONDUCT BY PASSENGERS.**

- 3.1 If a Passenger's conduct is such that the driver is or may be distracted while driving, he/she must stop the Vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so and continue the Journey only when order is restored.
- 3.2 Drivers must not evict authorised Passengers from the Vehicle.
- 3.3 Drivers must report any serious incidents as soon as practicable to their employer giving as much detail as possible including the name of any student involved in the incident
- 3.4 If there is continuous misbehaviour by a student, please advise the school.

## **4 VEHICLE**

- 4.1 Drivers must ensure that before moving off, exiting Passengers are well clear of the Vehicle.
- 4.2 Drivers should remind Passengers that seatbelts should be worn. Where seat belts are required to be worn by law it is the driver's legal responsibility to ensure that Passengers under 14 years of age always wear seatbelts.
- 4.3 Drivers must ensure there is sufficient fuel before the start of the Journey. They must not refuel the Vehicle when there are Passengers on board.
- 4.4 Drivers must not drive Vehicles that they consider to be not roadworthy or in contravention of any relevant regulations or legislation.
- 4.5 Drivers must report all Vehicle defects to their employer/Vehicle owner. Serious defects must be corrected immediately or an alternative Vehicle supplied.

## **5 EMERGENCY INCIDENTS**

- 5.1 Drivers must know their employer's procedures for dealing with emergencies.
- 5.2 In the event of an accident or breakdown, drivers should give clear instructions to Passengers and implement the contact/emergency procedures as advised by their employer.
- 5.3 Both the employer and the Contractor (the school) must be contacted immediately
- 5.3 Any Vehicle accident resulting in injury to any Passenger or other person/property must be reported to the Police.
- 5.4 In an emergency the driver, must give priority to the safety and well-being of the Passengers
- 5.5 Where the Passengers are children, they should not be left unattended if the driver needs to summon help.
- 5.6 Drivers must report all serious accidents/incidents (even if there are no injuries) to their employer who will notify the school.

Drivers must always maintain a strictly professional relationship with the **children** that they transport. Whilst drivers should always be helpful and polite, it is very important that they do not act in any way that could be misunderstood by a child, parent, carer or any other observer.

**Thank you for your help and hard work. We appreciate the importance of your role and the difficulties you may sometimes be faced with.**

### **Important Numbers:**

**Cairns Hinterland Steiner School: 40938809**

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Please sign below and return to the school once the Code of Conduct has been read.

I have read and understand the Bus Driver Code of Conduct and agree to abide by the obligations and adhere to the guidelines.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_