

## Student behaviour on buses

### Overview

New Zealand enjoys an excellent safety record in school transport. Everyone involved in school transport is very keen not just for this record to be maintained, but for risks and hazards to be minimised at all times.

Because the Ministry of Education is committed to maintaining this high level of safety, it requires safe behaviour from everyone using school buses.

### What sort of behaviour is expected of students using buses?

Students who travel on a school bus may continue to do so while they behave in a safe and reasonable manner. The next page lists the behaviour expected from school bus students, as well as some safety tips. Caregivers and students should take time to read and understand these behavioural expectations.

### What happens if a student behaves unsafely or inappropriately?

If a student behaves in an inappropriate or unsafe manner the school takes steps to manage this behaviour, as in any other area of school life. It is important to note that a student not meeting behavioural expectations risks losing their place on the school bus either temporarily or permanently.

### Can a driver remove a student from a bus before they have reached home or school?

No. Where a student is not meeting behavioural expectations on a bus, the bus driver cannot simply pull over and remove the student from a bus. In the interests of safety, the bus driver must finish the route and deliver the student to their usual stop. In extreme cases, where the bus driver judges that it is no longer safe to continue the route with the student on board, the driver will pull over and contact the police or the school to remove the student.

### Can a student's place on a school bus be taken away?

Yes. Where a student's behaviour is an ongoing or serious problem, the school and the bus operator may decide to withdraw the privilege of a place on a school bus. This could be a temporary measure, or in more serious cases, a permanent one. In such circumstances it is up to the caregiver to make their own arrangements to ensure they are meeting their legal obligation to get their child to school.

### School Transport: What You Need To Know

The following fact sheets about school transport are available:

1. Who is eligible for school transport assistance?
2. What if a student doesn't attend the nearest school?
3. What if the nearest school doesn't offer education in the desired language?
4. What types of assistance can a student get?
5. How is transport assistance provided for students with special needs?
6. Information about school bus services
7. Student behaviour on buses
8. Information about conveyance allowances
9. School bus safety: standards for bus operators and their buses
10. School bus safety: safe practices
11. Questions and complaints

[www.minedu.govt.nz/  
goto/schooltransport](http://www.minedu.govt.nz/goto/schooltransport)

## Safety tips

### Getting on the bus:

- Wait in the designated place – well back from the road.
- Wait until the bus has stopped before getting on.
- Carry your bag in front of you so it does not get caught in the door.
- If seated, put your bag (and anything else you are carrying) on your lap or under the seat in front of you.
- If there are no empty seats, fill the bus from the back first. Put your bag on the floor and hold on to a seat-back or handrail.

### Getting off the bus

- Wait until the bus has stopped.
- Carry your bag in front of you so it does not get caught in the door.
- Get off the bus through the front door if possible.
- Get off the bus carefully without pushing.
- Wait well back from the road until the bus has moved away.
- If you need to cross, find a safe place, wait until the bus has moved away and you can see clearly up and down the road, and then cross.

## Behavioural expectations for students using school buses

Students who travel on a bus may continue to do so while they behave in a reasonable and safe manner. The following behaviour is expected of students using buses to help make sure the bus is a safe place for everyone:

1. Seated passengers sit down straight away and remain in their seats for the whole journey.
2. Standing passengers stay behind the driver at all times, stand quietly, and do not push or move around the bus.
3. Passengers do not eat or drink in the bus.
4. Passengers do not throw objects inside or out of the bus.
5. Passengers use socially acceptable language when talking to the driver and/or other students, and speak quietly so they do not distract the driver.
6. Passengers respect the bus operator's property at all times (e.g. refrain from standing on seats or vandalising the bus in any way).
7. Passengers do not harass, bully, or abuse other passengers or the driver in any way, whether verbal or physical.
8. Passengers respect others' property and do not interfere with it in any way.
9. Passengers listen to and follow the requirements and instructions of the bus driver and the teacher/s on duty at all times.
10. Passengers do not engage in any behaviour that could put other passengers, the driver, or themselves at risk.

**Students who choose to behave in an unsafe and/or unacceptable manner risk losing their place on the school bus**