

Students with Disabilities Transport Program: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

|  |
| --- |
| The purpose of this MOU is to formalise roles and responsibilities of specialist schools and bus operators in relation to engagement, expectations and communication between the school and the bus operator which in turn, supports the safe bussing of students being transported under the Students with Disabilities Transport Program (SDTP).The development of this MOU references the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures (June 2018) document and the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Emergency Management Operational Guidelines (2015).  |
| **An updated MOU is required to be submitted prior to services commencing each year.****This is an obligation under the Special School Bus Services Contract.** |

This Memorandum of Understanding is between:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| School Name |       |

**And**

| Bus Company |       |
| --- | --- |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| This MOU is effective from  | DD /MM/YYYY |

|  |
| --- |
| This MOU will be reviewed during the school year. An updated MOU will be required prior to the commencement of the school year. |

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities of all parties are clearly outlined in the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, June 2018.

|  |
| --- |
|  The School will: |
| * Ensure all staff involved in school bus services have read, and are familiar with, the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, June 2018 and in particular the ‘Responsibilities of Schools’ section.

Additionally, but not limited to, * Acknowledge that Principals have overall responsibility for the day to day management of Department provided services within their school
* Provide service providers with traveller information including individual travel plans, up-to-date bus roll, bus stop information, emergency contact details and approved persons to collect students from service
* Provide service providers with school emergency management procedures and school contact information
* Involve bus operators in risk management processes
* Provide parents/guardians/carers with agreed travel arrangements including pick-up and drop-off times, bus operator information and emergency management procedures
* Check, verify and endorse claims for payment as submitted by bus operators and return to operator.

Bus arrival and Departures* Appoint a bus coordinator to supervise student arrival and departures at school

For the **Morning** service as bus services and students arrive at school:* The bus coordinator will be responsible for accepting travel rolls from the bus supervisor, which may include:
	+ Signing bus paperwork or marking an electronic manifest to ‘accept’ students into the school’s care
* Verifying that all students have exited the morning bus service. This is completed by a walkthrough of the bus, checking each seat is vacated
* Reporting any attendance issues/information through the schools reporting systems

For the **Afternoon** service as bus services arrive and students are ready to depart the school:* The bus coordinator will be responsible for preparing students for travel at the end of the school day
* Providing the bus service travel rolls to the bus supervisor
	+ This may include signing bus paperwork or marking an electronic manifest that identifies all students have boarded the bus for the afternoon service; effectively handing the students to the care of the bus contractor.

In addition to bus supervision activities, the school will: * Provide regular information/training sessions for bus staff outlining school processes and positive behaviour strategies (with a particular focus on specific school student cohort requirements)
* Advise of any relevant training sessions and invite service provider staff to attend (giving ample notice)
* Provide service/ traveller specific information to assist the bus operator in completing their service requirements.
 |

|  |
| --- |
| The Bus Operator will: |
| * Ensure all staff involved in provision of school bus services have read, and are familiar with, the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, June 2018 and in particular the ‘Responsibilities of Bus Operators’ section.

Additionally, but not limited to, * Provide the school and Student Transport Unit with details of the bus, driver and supervisor on each service at the start of each year (this should match those named on the contract with DET)
* Ensure the safe passage of all students
* Ensure an appropriate approved vehicle is used at all times
* Adhere with the agreed timetable for all buses and designated routes in accordance with best practice
* Advise the school if a bus is running late for any reason
* The bus company will make a decision regarding the transport of any equipment, with the school and the parent
* Inform the school (Principal) of any inappropriate behaviour by students while travelling in the bus via phone or e-mail by providing an incident report to the school within 48 hours (or immediately as appropriate)
* Develop an emergency management plan with the school
* Be contactable if parents/guardians/carers need to advise that their child will not be requiring pick up on the AM service
* Discuss any issues with the principal that may affect the ongoing operation of services
* Ensure drivers and supervisors participate in relevant training offered by the school or as required by the department
* Submit claim for payment forms for verification and endorsement to school principal within 10 working days from month end. Once signed and returned, operator to forward to STU for payment
* Respect the privacy and right to confidentiality of all parents, students, staff and school complying with the Privacy and Data Act 2014 and the Health Records Act 2001.
 |

|  |
| --- |
| The Driver will: |
| * Ensure they have read, and are familiar with, the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, June 2018 and in particular the section pertaining to bus drivers in ‘Responsibilities of Bus Operators’ section.

Additionally, but not limited to, * Drive the bus in a safe and professional manner over the designated route
* Remain seated behind the wheel at all times while the bus is running.
* When assisting the supervisor with students, the driver must ensure the vehicle is stationery and safely parked
* Wait no more than the allocated time of three minutes at each address in order to maintain the approved time-table
* Arrive at the school at the designated times in accordance with best practice
* Ensure one staff member remains on the bus while students are on board, the staff member must be focused on supervision of the students – the vehicle is not to move without two staff boarded when students are on the vehicle.
* Verifying that all students have exited the morning and afternoon bus services,
	+ This is completed by a walkthrough of the bus checking each seat is vacated
 |

|  |
| --- |
| The Supervisor will: |
| * Ensure they have read, and are familiar with, the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, June 2018 and in particular the section pertaining to bus supervisors in ‘Responsibilities of Bus Operators’ section.

Additionally, but not limited to, * Manage and assist the boarding and disembarking of students
* Mark the travel roll as students board and disembark the service on both the morning and afternoon services
* Upon arrival at the school, responsibility for the students remain with the supervisor until a school staff member takes over the direct responsibility for the students
* On arrival at school in the morning, provide completed travel rolls to school staff enabling checking and verification of attendance. Ensure all student absences are passed onto the school
* Bus supervisors will receive travel rolls back from the school at start of the afternoon service
* Ensure students seatbelts or safety restraints are properly fastened and adjusted (prior to travel)
* Ensure students are seated at all times
* Ensure no food or drink is consumed on the bus
* Supervise students and manage behaviours of students whilst on the bus
* Direct any queries from parents to the Transport Coordinator/Principal
* Report behavioural issues to the principal via the bus operator
* Ensure one staff member remains on the bus while students are on board, the staff member must be focused on supervision of the students – the vehicle is not to move without two staff boarded when students are on the vehicle.
* Verifying that all students have exited the morning and afternoon bus services,
	+ This is completed by a walkthrough of the bus checking each seat is vacated
* Participate in relevant training sessions offered by the school
* Understand medical management plans and emergency management guidelines and procedures
* In case of emergency or accident the role of the bus supervisor is to assess the situation, call the emergency services if necessary, notify the school office (phone number) and the bus company (phone number)
* The bus supervisor will follow directions of emergency service personnel when attending emergencies.
 |

**Emergency Management**

|  |
| --- |
| All Parties will: |
| * Ensure they have read and are familiar with the Emergency Management information documented in the Students with Disabilities Transport Program Policy and Procedures, June 2018
* Ensure they have read and are familiar with the SDTP Emergency Management Operational Guidelines
* Familiarise themselves with the school’s Emergency Management Plan (EMP)
* Understand their obligations in relation to all types of emergencies including forecast emergencies, such as bushfires or floods, and rapid onset emergencies, such as bushfires and floods. Other emergencies to be considered are break downs, accidents and medical
* Inform parents/guardians of the school’s/bus operator’s emergency management plans for its bus services.
* As needed – please attach a copy of the school’s emergency management plans for bus services
 |

### General

Parent/guardian and student/traveller understandings and expectations are detailed in the ‘conditions of travel’ section in ‘Application for Transport Assistance’, and specific travel requirements recorded in the students ‘Individual Travel Plan’.

These Department of Education approved forms should be completed and signed by the parent/guardian (and student where suitable). Schools should complete their section and retain on file (updating as appropriate) whilst the students continue to travel.

See: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/transport-students-disabilities/resources>

### Dispute Resolution/Good Faith Discussions

A Party claiming that a dispute or disagreement has arisen under this MOU must give a Dispute Notice to the other Party, specifying the nature of dispute.

A Dispute Notice may be withdrawn at any time by the Party that gave the Dispute Notice.

Within 10 business days from the date of issue of the Dispute Notice, the representatives from each Party will use their best endeavours to resolve the dispute between themselves at an operational level.

If the representatives of each Party are unable to resolve the dispute with 10 business days from the date of issue of the Dispute Notice, representatives from each Party agree to refer the dispute for resolution to the persons occupying the relevant director/principal position of each Party.

If, after a further 10 business days from the dispute being referred to the director/principal, the director/principal are unable to resolve the dispute, the Parties may refer the dispute to the Student Transport Officers of the Student Transport Unit for resolution.

### Variation or Amendment

No variation or amendment of this MOU is binding unless agreed in writing between the Parties.

### Review

This memorandum of understanding will take effect from the date endorsed by the Student Transport Unit and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### Bus Routes provided to named School

This MOU is applicable to the contracted services below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Contract # | Service Name | Vehicle Reg. |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |
|       |       |       |

### Signatures and Endorsement

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Principal Name: |       | Bus Operator representative |       |
| School |       | Bus Operator/ Company |       |
| Signature |       | Signature |       |
| Date |       | Date |       |
| Submitted to Student Transport Unit | Yes | [ ]  | No | [ ]  | Date Submitted |       |

|  |
| --- |
| STU OFFICE USE ONLY |
| Name (STU representative) |       | Date received |       |
| MOU endorsed by STU | Yes | [ ]  | No | [ ]  | Date endorsed |       |
| Signature (STU representative) |       | Returned endorsed MOU to school/operator | Yes | [ ]  | No | [ ]  |