



School Bus Policy

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Policy Statement

Strathcona Girls Grammar School ("Strathcona") is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all staff and students. Hazards and risks to health and safety will be eliminated or minimised, as far as is reasonably practicable. Strathcona is also committed to a culture of continuous improvement where systems and process reflect the appropriate level of risk at any given time.

This policy covers the guidelines, responsibilities and procedures for safe conduct and operation of the School bus.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to document the School's approach to maintaining and operating a safe bus operation under the Victorian Bus Safety Legislation.

Scope

This policy applies to all School owned buses as defined under the Bus Safety Act 2009 (Vic) – "BSA".

A **bus** means:

- (a) a motor vehicle that has been built—
 - i. with seating positions for 10 or more adults (including the driver); and
 - ii. to comply with the requirements specified in the Australian Design Rules for a passenger omnibus (within the meaning of those Rules); or
- (b) a motor vehicle prescribed to be a bus; or
- (c) a motor vehicle which Safe Transport Victoria has declared to be a bus under section 7(1) of the BSA

but does not include:

- (d) a motor vehicle prescribed not to be a bus; or
- (e) a motor vehicle which Safe Transport Victoria has declared not to be a bus; or
- (f) a vehicle known as a Hummer.

Examples

1. A passenger car modified to have more than 9 seats (for example, a stretch limousine) is not a bus.
2. A motor vehicle that is built as a bus, but which has had seats removed so that it seats less than 10 adults is still a bus.
3. A motor vehicle built overseas as a bus is a bus unless it is a motor vehicle built to be a Hummer.

Strathcona's bus safety obligations

An operator of a bus service must be accredited with Safe Transport Victoria under Part 4 of the BSA to provide bus services, unless an exemption applies.

Strathcona owns and operates a bus that is used only to transport students and staff on school excursions, activities and events, where passengers are not charged for the service. Strathcona does NOT provide to and from school transport services. This is classified as a **community and private bus service** under the BSA.

Strathcona's bus safety obligations under Victorian Bus Safety legislation include:

- Obtaining and maintaining accreditation as a bus operator with Safe Transport Victoria.
- Ensuring that the bus service complies with vehicle and safety standards.
- Ensuring each bus used to provide a bus service undergoes the required safety inspections, both annually (Annual Safety Inspection - ASI) and at prescribed intervals (Vehicle Safety Inspections – VSI).
- Documenting the systems in place for managing information about the operation of the bus service in a **Management Information System (MIS)**.
- Establishing and maintaining a system for ensuring that the buses used to provide a bus service are maintained in accordance with a **Maintenance Management System (MMS)**.
- Ensuring that the maximum number of passengers is clearly displayed in characters at least 25 millimetres high and of proportionate width for each bus with seating positions for 13 or more passengers (including the driver).
- Completing a yearly audit, at minimum, of the MIS and MMS.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure that any chartered bus services procured by the School are accredited and the service is safe, including the installation of functional seat belts for all passengers.
- Ensuring all drivers of the bus service are appropriately licensed and trained.

Roles and responsibilities

Responsible person:

The responsible person is appointed by the School Board to act as its representative to bind the School and to act on its behalf in all matters relating to the accreditation of the school bus operations in accordance with the BSA.

The responsible person will:

- implement and maintain the school bus accreditation documents
- apply risk management processes to maintain a safe operational work environment.

At Strathcona, the School Board has appointed the Principal as the responsible person.

The Principal may delegate bus safety tasks to appropriately qualified persons.



Management

Management will:

- Ensure Strathcona complies with all legislation relating to health and safety.
- Eliminate or minimise all workplace hazards and risks as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Provide information, instruction, and training to enable all staff to work safely.
- Supervise staff to ensure work activities are performed safely.
- Consult with and involve staff on matters relating to health, safety, and wellbeing.
- Provide appropriate safety equipment and personal protective equipment.
- Provide a suitable injury management and return to work program.

Staff

Staff will:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety.
- Follow safe work procedures, instructions, and rules.
- Participate in safety training.
- Report health and safety hazards.
- Report all injuries and incidents.
- Use safety equipment and personal protective equipment as instructed.

School bus drivers

School bus drivers will:

- Drive within the legal speed limit at all times.
- Not consume alcohol and/or drugs while driving a school bus and comply with the drug and alcohol laws at all times.
- Not use mobile phones while driving.
- Minimise distractions while driving.
- Wear a seatbelt.
- Not exceed the maximum seating capacity of the bus.
- Check weather conditions prior to departure.
- Report all incidents/accidents using the School's online incident reporting system.
- Comply with all road rules as they apply at any given time.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the School Board, or on an ad hoc basis by the Finance and Risk Committee, following any legislative and operational changes as deemed necessary by the School. Any changes to this policy as a result of a review will be referred to the Board for reapproval.

This policy is made available to all staff on the School's intranet and publicly available on the School's website.