Road safety education
Stage 4 Bus safety - your ride, your responsibility

About this resource

Rationale

This resource has been developed in response to concerns regarding student safety while travelling to and from school on the bus. Many schools have highlighted a need to address student behaviour, awareness of safety procedures and responsibilities to maintain a safe environment while on the bus. The goal is to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to ensure their own safety and that of their peers during their commute.

Alignment to School Excellence Framework

School Excellence Framework (Version 3) -
Learning domain: Curriculum, curriculum provisions
Teaching domain: Effective Classroom Practice, Explicit teaching.

Alignments to frameworks

- NSW PDHPE syllabus (2024)
- Road Safety Education Procedures
- Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (2.1.2)

Further resources and professional learning opportunities:

- Road Safety Education website
- Road safety education Professional learning opportunities

Consulted with:

Road Safety Education team
Transport for NSW
PDHPE curriculum team

Suggested use and timeframe:

This resource can be used in Stage 4 PDHPE lessons/programs or at other times in response to concerns for student safety on buses. Duration: 45 minutes

Planning for diverse student needs:

When using this resource, teachers need to consider the local context and the needs of all students. Consider planning flexible options for every student to acquire information and knowledge:

- Curriculum planning for every student - explore evidence-based strategies to optimise learning for the full range of students.
- Support for EALD students/families – TfNSW has translated Keeping children safe in the road environment fact sheets
- Managing cognitive load – practical tips to consider when creating presentations

Research base:

- What works best in practice – explicit teaching theme
- Young people and road safety – Transport for NSW
- Road safety discussion points for high school students – NSW Department of Education
- Strengths Based Approach – NSW Department of Education

Feedback: Email questions and comments about this resource to the Road Safety Education Team

Reviewed by: Road Safety Education team.
Created/last updated: March 2026
Anticipated resource review date: March 2028
Contact: Road Safety Education Team for further support

Road safety education

Stage 4 Bus safety: your ride, your responsibility

PDHPE 7-10 Syllabus (2024) outcomes and content

Safe, active and healthy lifestyle choices
• Assesses the influence of contextual factors on attitudes and behaviours to propose strategies that enhance safety, health and wellbeing **PH4-SHW-01** **Managing risk and enhancing safety** • Investigate risk-taking, challenging and unsafe scenarios and create plans or responses to enhance safety for themselves and others • Examine road safety responsibilities and develop strategies to support the safety of themselves and others in road and transport environments, including as pedestrians, passengers, riders and drivers

Skills

Self-management skills	Interpersonal skills
Self-awareness • awareness of rights and responsibilities	**Communication** • giving and receiving feedback Additionally, if completing extension task: **Social awareness** • contributing to their community

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Resources

1. NSW Department of Education:
   - Digital Learning Selector -:
     - Brainstorming task – use Brainstorm bubble provided in slide 7 or choose template from Digital Learning Selector
     - Check for understanding (digital version) – click on this exit ticket hyperlink, then click on **Duplicate it** at the top of the quiz to make a copy for your students. If you prefer, choose a different template from the Digital Learning Selector.
   - Supporting students to provide peer feedback - resource and background information
2. Transport for NSW:
   - Bus safety – what would you do? YouTube video depicting bus travel scenario
   - Be Bus Aware webpage -:
     - Seatbelts on buses scroll down for information
     - Informal bus stops – rural and regional areas scroll down for information and videos
3. PowerPoint slides Stage 4 Bus safety: your ride, your responsibility– lesson scaffolds to be shared on classroom IWB

   Slide 1 – Cover

   Slide 2 – Contents

   Slide 3 – Resources

   Slide 4 - Learning intentions and success criteria

   Slide 5 - NSW Pedestrian casualties' table

   Slide 6 - What would you do? activity prompts and video link

   Slide 7 - Brainstorm prompt

   Slide 8 - Code of conduct prompt

   Slide 9 - Safety messaging prompt

   Slide 10 - Feedback prompt

   Slide 11 - Exit ticket prompt

   Slide 12 - Optional extension task prompt
4. Code of Conduct for School Students on Buses – page 5 (Appendix 1)
5. Code of conduct for school students when travelling – Buses (Appendix 2)
6. Consequences of inappropriate behaviour (Appendix 3)
7. Check for understanding (non-digital version) (Appendix 4)

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Teaching and learning sequence:

Consideration – Before teaching, consider negative student experiences & personal knowledge of bus injuries/casualties. Adjust as necessary.

Learning intention	Success criteria
Students will: • examine road safety responsibilities and develop strategies to promote safety	**Students will:** • recognise and describe potentially unsafe behaviours and environments encountered in bus travel • develop awareness of bus code of conduct rights and responsibilities • propose safety strategies or messages to promote their own and others' bus travel safety • develop skills to give and receive feedback Additionally, if completing extension task students will: • create a code of conduct to assume responsibility for their own and others bus travel safety

1. Introduce topic of bus safety by reviewing learning intentions and success criteria (slide 4).
2. Discuss bus travel with students. Prompting questions may include:
   a) Who catches buses?
   b) When do you catch buses?
   c) What type of buses do you catch – school buses, public buses, metropolitan buses, regional buses, coaches?
   d) Where do you travel on buses?
   e) Who do you travel with on buses?
   f) What are positives about catching buses (e.g. freedom or social)?
   g) What do you think are the main advantages of travelling by bus compared to other modes of transportation?

Teacher note – For some students, bus travel may not be a common activity. If this is the case, pose questions in a general manner as students may not have personal experiences to draw on.

3. Review casualties in bus crashes table (slide 5). Identify and discuss:
   - categories measured, including injury categories; seriously, moderately, minor
   - which categories have the highest/lowest numbers
   - do the statistics highlight the need for bus safety awareness, why/why not?

Teacher note – Further interactive statistics can be found at Transport for NSW. Injury severity definition can be located here.

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4. Ask students to consider the following questions while watching Bus safety – what would you do? YouTube video of bus travel scenario (slide 6):
   a) What potential dangers can you identify?
   b) What potentially unsafe behaviours can you identify?
   c) What would you do in this scenario to stay safe?
   d) Students discuss their responses with a partner.

Teacher note – Draw attention to signage for pedestrian crossing and highlight that this would be the safest place to cross.
Ensure key safety message is delivered –

- Wait till the bus has gone and then use a safe place to cross the road

5. Display brainstorm prompt. Ask students to consider factors that may impact safety for themselves and others when travelling by bus – consider behavioural and environmental factors (slide 7):
   - waiting for the bus – at school, at a bus stop, at the shops
   - getting on and off the bus – at school, at a bus stop, at the shops
   - on the bus
   - around buses

Teacher note – Possible answers include headphones, device distraction, being late, falling asleep on the bus, social issues with peers/other passengers, crowds, lining up, traffic, bad weather, bus stop in an unsafe location, low visibility at bus stop, no traffic lights/pedestrian crossing at bus stop, lack of seatbelts, busy road, lack of rules/organisation.
Ensure key safety message is delivered –

- Always buckle up if there is a seatbelt on a bus

Consideration - For regional/remote schools, students may use an Informal bus stop. Ensure that the unique safety challenges for these students are included in the discussion.
Bus safety information is available from the Transport for NSW Be Bus Aware webpage and includes information about seatbelts on buses and informal bus stops – rural and regional areas.

6. Explain that codes of conduct are used to support peoples' rights and responsibilities in workplaces, schools, sporting teams and other organisations. Highlight that the focus of the lesson is on codes of conduct and rights and responsibilities for students travelling on buses.
   Share examples of rights versus responsibilities:
   - An Opal card or bus pass gives students the right to travel on buses, and the responsibility to tap on and off or show the driver their pass.
   - Many students have the right to free bus travel, and along with that, the responsibility to be courteous passengers.

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Teacher note – If needed, give additional examples of rights and responsibilities to demonstrate their relevance to students. Examples may include rights and responsibilities at home, at school, in sporting teams or in the workplace.

7. Distribute copies of Code of Conduct for School Students on Buses (Appendix 1). Students read code of conduct and highlight 6 dot points that they think are important (slide 8).

Differentiation - Depending on student ability, teacher may choose to use alternate code of conduct with simpler language and less content – Bus Safety Code of Conduct (Appendix 2)

Ask students to reflect and discuss:

- how do you think a code of conduct can support young people to be safe on and around buses?

Teacher note – discuss unknown vocabulary/terminology as needed; expectant mothers, harass, reasonable directions, protrude, orderly, bus interchanges, designated stop, legal considerations, fastened, ban, vandalized, graffiti, window etching, interfere, signage, Authorised Revenue Protection Officers, bus company representatives, intended purpose, swipe or dip pass, ticket reader

8. Students choose one of the highlighted dot points they chose and create a safety message to promote safe bus travel. Safety messages should be short and positively worded (slide 9).
   Examples:
   - Instead of 'No offensive language', positive safety message could be 'Speak respectfully'.
   - Instead of 'Do not allow any part of your body to protrude out of the bus', positive safety message could be 'Keep your body inside the bus'

Differentiation - Students work in small groups or as whole class, guided by teacher

9. Students turn their statement into an infographic, poster or PowerPoint/Google/Canva slide.

Differentiation - Students deliver safety message verbally instead of creating poster/slide

10. Students share their safety message with a partner and provide constructive peer feedback using prompts (slide 10).

Teacher note – Teacher models/scaffolds peer feedback process as needed.

11. Students complete exit ticket as a check for understanding.

Teacher note – For digital exit ticket, click on exit ticket hyperlink in the resources section to create your own copy. Share the hyperlink or QR code for your quiz on slide 11. For non-digital exit ticket, print out or share quiz questions in Appendix 4.
This exit ticket will support you to collect data on student engagement and effectiveness of the lesson.

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Extension

Students work collaboratively to co-create a bus safety code of conduct for **their school** and local setting (slide 12).

Students may choose to refer to:

- Transport for NSW Code of Conduct for School Students on Buses (Appendix 1)
- Transport for NSW Bus Safety Code of Conduct (Appendix 2)
- Transport for NSW's consequences of inappropriate behaviour (Appendix 3)
- Your school's behaviour policy / student code of conduct
- Behaviour policies/codes of conduct from other NSW government websites

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Appendix 1

Code of Conduct for School Students on Buses – from Transport for NSW Guidelines for Managing School Student Behaviour on Buses, page 5

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

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Appendix 2

Code of conduct for school students when travelling – Buses – from Transport for NSW

Code of conduct for school students

Buses

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 push or shove other people
- Do not bully or harass other passengers or the driver
- 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 (for example, 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 always keep a secure hand hold
- 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
- 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, 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.

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Appendix 3

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour – from Transport for NSW Student Code of Conduct when travelling

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour

Unacceptable, dangerous or highly dangerous behaviour

Unacceptable behaviour such as using offensive or racist language, disobeying reasonable directions from the driver, smoking, eating on public transport, distracting the operator with persistent noise, and failing to show the travel pass may lead to:

- Formal warning for a first offence, loss of subsidised school travel privileges for up to two school weeks for a second offence, and up to 10 school weeks for subsequent offences.
- Permanent suspension of school travel privileges or banning from travelling on public transport may apply for repeated offences.

Dangerous behaviour such as seriously bullying or harassing other passengers, fighting, letting any part of your body protrude from the public transport service, throwing objects inside or outside the public transport service, damaging property, using matches and lighters, carrying dangerous items and group misbehaviour may lead to:

- Loss of subsidised school travel privileges for up to four school weeks for a first offence and up to 10 school weeks for subsequent offences - or if group misbehaviour is involved, permanent loss of school travel privileges.
- Permanent suspension of school travel privileges or banning from travelling on public transport may apply for repeated offences.

Highly dangerous behaviour such as interfering with safety equipment, pushing students out of the doors or windows, assaulting the driver or other passengers and destruction of public transport property may lead to:

- **Permanent loss of** subsidised school travel privileges, and possible court action or police prosecution
- Banned from travelling on public transport.

The police will be called to deal with highly dangerous behaviour.
These penalties reflect the seriousness of the misbehaviour. They ensure that all students who misbehave on public transport are dealt with in a fair and consistent manner, no matter which operator or school is involved.
If students are refused travel, parents/guardians/carers must make alternative travel arrangements and meet any costs of that transport. They will not be eligible for any Transport for NSW travel support nor payment under these circumstances.
A group of school students behaving unacceptably may risk higher penalties if their conduct puts the safety of other passengers or the driver at risk.
The operator will inform Transport for NSW of its decision. Transport for NSW may inform an operator of a student's record of misbehaviour. Please refer to the Guidelines for Managing School Students' Behaviour on Buses (pdf 727KB) for dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour as it applies.
If a student misbehaves on public transport, the operator concerned will contact the parents and the school.

- Depending on the gravity of the offence, students may be required to give up their school travel pass or may be refused travel on public transport for a period determined by the operator.
- 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 operator must provide written notification to the parents, guardians or carers before a student's school travel pass can be withdrawn.

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Appendix 4

Check for understanding

1. Name: _____

2. Success criteria: recognise and describe potentially unsafe behaviours and environments encountered in bus travel
One barrier to safe bus travel is (choose the correct answer):

- device distraction
- good visibility at the bus stop
- good weather

3. Success criteria: recognise and describe potentially unsafe behaviours and environments encountered in bus travel
A safe behaviour to adopt when travelling by bus is to (choose the correct answer):

- wear headphones at all times when getting on and off the bus
- wait for the bus to leave and then find a safe place to cross the road
- cross the road in front of the bus

4. Success criteria: recognise and describe potentially unsafe behaviours and environments encountered in bus travel
When you are a passenger you should (choose the correct answer):

- ignore the seatbelts
- use the seatbelt and buckle up on Tuesdays
- always buckle up if there is a seatbelt on a bus

5. Success criteria: develop awareness of bus code of conduct rights and responsibilities
A code of conduct is (choose the correct answer):

- the same as a code red
- a document that outlines when to use spell check
- a document that outlines rules and expected behaviour

6. Success criteria: propose safety strategies or messages to promote their own and others' bus travel safety
To be effective, a safety message should be (choose the correct answer):

- long and negatively worded
- short and positively worded
- at least one paragraph

7. Success criteria: propose safety messages to promote their own and others' bus travel safety
Give an example of a safety message to promote bus travel safety (it can be yours or someone else's)

8. Success criteria: develop skills to give and receive feedback
When giving feedback it is better to give more (choose the correct answer):

- warm/positive feedback
- cool/constructive feedback

9. Reflection:
What is one safe behaviour you will adopt next time you travel by bus?

10. **How did you enjoy today's lesson?** Rate out of 5 (1 = I wasn't a fan, 5 = it was fabulous)

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