

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

FOR STUDENTS TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL
BY GOVERNMENT CONTRACT SCHOOL BUS

Public Transport Authority
School Bus Services

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

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Purpose

The Public Transport Authority (PTA) is committed to providing safe, comfortable transport for all students using our regional and Education Support school bus services.

Introduction

The Behaviour Management Guidelines have been developed to provide a framework that aims to ensure student behaviours are managed in an appropriate and consistent manner. The document outlines the roles, rights and responsibilities of students, parents and carers and others who are involved in the conduct, provision and administration of school bus services.

The overwhelming majority of students behave appropriately whilst travelling on school buses. However, on occasion a small percentage of students will misbehave for one reason or another. These guidelines set out the expected standards of student behaviour and provide guidance for the management of the varying degrees of student misbehaviour. It is reasonable for students to expect that they will travel in safety and comfort, and where a reasonable set of rules apply for the benefit of all users. The overarching aim of these guidelines is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, bus Drivers, Bus Aides and general road users.

Every person involved in the process of transporting students to and from schools owes a duty of care to those potentially affected by their actions, and must take reasonable care to avoid doing things, or omitting to do things, that would place a student or any other person at risk of injury or harm.

The specific objective of this document is to:

- provide a framework for the observance of the Code of Conduct through the implementation of Behaviour Management Guidelines,
- define the specific roles, rights and responsibilities of Drivers, Bus Aides, Bus Wardens, students, parents/carers, Bus Operators and the PTA in contributing to safe and enjoyable travel,
- communicate to students the appropriate ways in which they must conduct themselves whilst travelling on a school bus and during the periods that they are waiting at bus transfer locations or pick-up and drop-off locations,
- outline the categories of misbehaviour and establish the context and consequences for breaches to the Code of Conduct,
- establish the periods of suspension that can be applied in response to breaches of the Code of Conduct,
- provide Drivers and Bus Wardens with a mechanism to respond to situations where students act in an unacceptable manner and breach the Code of Conduct, and
- explain the rights that Bus Operators and Drivers have to refuse travel, in response to specific breaches.

These guidelines have been developed by the PTA through consultation with:

- Department of Education,
- Catholic Education Office,
- Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia,
- Western Australian Secondary School Executives Association,
- Western Australian Education Support Principals and Administrators Association, and
- Western Australian Primary Principals Association.

Code of Conduct

The PTA has developed a Code of Conduct to clearly explain the standards of behaviour expected from students. This Code applies to all students travelling on Government contracted school buses managed by the PTA. A copy of the Code of Conduct is at Annex A.

The consequences of breaches to the Code of Conduct are addressed in 'Breaches of the Code of Conduct' later in this document.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

Students have an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner that ensures both their comfort and safety and the comfort and safety of others. To assist students in understanding their obligations the PTA has developed a Code of Conduct. By its nature, the Code of Conduct is the instrument that defines a minimum standard for behaviours. It provides examples of both acceptable and unacceptable behaviours but is not intended to be an exhaustive list of either. Compliance with the Code of Conduct is a condition of travel, any breaches may result in suspension or jeopardise the continuation of future entitlement to Transport Assistance.

Students are responsible for:

- following the Code of Conduct,
- following the direction or instructions of the Driver, Bus Aide or Bus Warden at bus loading /transfer locations, and
- reporting any unsafe behaviour to the Driver, Bus Aide or Bus Warden at bus loading / transfer locations.

Students can expect:

- to enjoy a safe and comfortable journey,
- to be respected and treated fairly by the Driver, Bus Aide or Bus Warden at bus loading / transfer locations and other passengers,
- that their property will be respected, and
- to be free from bullying and harassment.

Parents / Carers

In accepting the conditions of travel, parents and carers acknowledge that they are responsible for their children's ongoing behaviour. They have a responsibility to ensure that their children understand and uphold the Code of Conduct. They also have the right to expect that their children are transported to school and home again safely.

Parents / carers play a significant role in the overall behaviour management strategy. They should expect to be communicated with following any breach to the Code of Conduct. This may be by direct communication by the bus Driver, Bus Aide, Bus Operator or officers from the PTA. The initial communication may be in the form of a Behaviour Management Notice.

Parents / carers are required to:

- understand that they are responsible for their children's behaviour and must ensure that their children understand and conform with the Code of Conduct,
- ensure that their children are transported safely to and from the bus services,
- communicate appropriately with Bus Wardens, Drivers and other officers from both the Bus Operator (Contractor) or the PTA, including instances where they are required to discuss their child's misbehaviours,
- be available to meet and discuss their children's behaviour and support decisions arising out of such discussions, and
- make their children available to attend, and accompany them to, an interview with officers from the PTA as a result of Category 4 breaches to the Code of Conduct.

Parents / carers can expect to:

- be treated fairly and with respect by bus staff, Bus Wardens, Bus Operators and PTA officers,
- receive accurate and timely information regarding their children's behaviour,
- be advised of the outcome of any investigations,
- have their concerns listened to and considered in a fair manner, and
- have the PTA review the decision to withdraw Transport Assistance, based on extenuating circumstances or in the event that the child was treated unfairly.

Parents should be aware that in the event their child causes malicious damage to a bus or property they are likely to be required to pay for the replacement or cost of any repairs. In this event, the Bus Operator or the PTA may seek compensation from parents/carers.

Bus Operators (Contractors)

Whilst specific responsibilities in relation to the management of student behaviour are outlined in all contract agreements, Bus Operators are also committed to providing safe and comfortable transport for students.

Bus Operators are responsible for managing behaviours of students travelling on government contract school buses. Bus Operators are required to implement student behaviour management strategies and use a variety of methods to encourage appropriate behaviour. Some of these strategies are outlined at Annex B.

Bus Operators are responsible for informing the PTA of outcomes as a result of breaches to the Code of Conduct and any subsequent action that's taken, including the withdrawal of Transport Assistance. Where an incident is serious or significant in nature i.e. a Category 4 breach, Bus Operators will inform the PTA to gain assistance in managing the process.

Bus Operators are generally the main point of contact for drivers, Bus Wardens, parents/carers and other stakeholders when incidents of misbehaviour occur.

Bus Operators are responsible for:

- taking action as a result of an incident, and in accordance with the Behaviour Management Guidelines, determining an appropriate penalty,
- reviewing Behaviour Management Notices and taking the appropriate action,
- determining and enforcing the penalties in line with the Behaviour Management Guidelines and issuing Suspension Notices and Interim Suspension Notices,
- working in partnership with bus staff, parents/carers and the PTA to resolve issues relating to the management of student behaviours,
- discussing individual breaches to the Code of Conduct with the school principal (where the school chooses to provide assistance), to gain a better understanding of the student's circumstances,
- communicating with parents as a result of student misbehaviours,
- lodging incident reports on-line through the SBS website,
- the management of bus transfer/loading locations where there is a direct bus to bus transfer and no Bus Warden is present to provide supervision,
- providing bus staff and students with a safe working and travelling environment,
- implementing an appropriate Incident & Investigation Management Procedure,
- with the assistance of the PTA, provide bus staff with instruction, information and training relating to appropriate student behaviour management principles,
- making bus staff available for training provided by the PTA in behaviour management,
- making bus staff available for interview as part of an investigation relating to behaviour management,

- taking the appropriate action in accordance with these guidelines where schools report misconduct by students at a bus transfer / loading locations but only to the extent there is a DoE staff member providing supervising of the students registered to travel, and
- Informing the school that a suspension notice has been issued as a consequence of a student's behaviour, which may affect the student's attendance at school.

Bus Operators can expect to:

- be treated with courtesy and respect by students and parents/carers at bus loading / transfer locations and officers from the PTA,
- receive accurate reports from bus staff regarding the behaviour of students,
- receive support from the PTA in response to actions taken whilst following the Behaviour Management Guidelines,
- be advised of the outcome of any investigations conducted by the PTA, and
- receive support and open communication from parents/carers regarding students travelling on bus services that they are contracted to provide.

Bus Staff

Drivers

Drivers of school 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 reasonable directions to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct. They are also required to respond to emergency situations in an appropriate and timely manner.

Drivers are required to:

- operate the bus in a safe manner, taking into consideration the conditions and circumstances on a day-to-day basis,
- hold appropriate Driver's licenses, permits and qualifications,
- conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner to students, Bus Aides, Bus Wardens, parents / carers and others who are affected by the conduct of bus services,
- uphold the responsibilities of the role, as prescribed by the contract under which the service is provided and also in conjunction with the Driver's Operating Guide,
- implement effective strategies that encourage appropriate behaviours and discourage/prevent misbehaviours,
- remind students of the Code of Conduct and Bus Rules and the consequences
- enforce the Code of Conduct, and take the appropriate steps as outlined in the Behaviour Management Guidelines, and
- to record and report incidents in accordance with the instructions provided by the Bus Operator.

Drivers can expect:

- to be provided with a safe working environment,
- to be trained in behaviour management strategies and incident reporting procedures,
- to feel safe and treated with respect, courtesy and be free from abuse,
- to receive support from the Bus Operators, Bus Aides parent/carers, Bus Wardens at bus loading / transfer locations and the PTA when managing student behaviours in accordance with these Guidelines, and
- to receive a timely response to the issuance of Behaviour Management Notices.

Bus Aides

Some school bus services require the presence of Bus Aides for the safety of students. Bus Aides play vital roles in the provision of school bus services, particularly those services providing Transport Assistance for students attending Education Support facilities and travelling to Respite Centres.

Bus Aides are responsible for:

- creating and maintaining a safe environment for all students on the bus,
- hold appropriate licenses, permits and qualifications,
- conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner to students, Drivers, parents / carers and others who are affected by the conduct of bus services,
- uphold the responsibilities of the role, as prescribed by the contract under which the service is provided and also in conjunction with the Driver's Operating Guide – Instructions for Bus Aides ,
- inform and discuss with the Driver any behavioural problems that may relate to self-harm, be dangerous or invasive to other students or which may pose a safety risk to other passengers,
- in conjunction with the Driver, and in so far as is practicable, devise and employ behaviour management strategies appropriate to the needs and capacities of individual students, particularly those with intellectual or emotional disabilities,
- ensure that, taking into account the intellectual and emotional capacities of individual students, all students abide by the principles set out in the Code of Conduct,
- in the event of an accident or emergency, follow the instructions of the Driver; and
- ensure harnesses are, where required, worn and correctly fastened.

Bus Aides can expect:

- to be provided with a safe working environment,
- to be trained in behaviour management strategies and incident reporting procedures,
- to feel safe and treated with respect, courtesy and be free from abuse, and
- to receive support from the Bus Operators, bus Drivers, Bus Wardens, parent/carers, and the PTA when managing student behaviours in accordance with these Guidelines.

Bus Wardens

Bus Wardens are employed by the Bus Operator to supervise bus loading / transfer locations. As part of these duties they are required to ensure student behaviour is managed in line with these guidelines.

Bus Wardens are required to:

- provide direction and instruction to students,
- conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner when interacting with students, parents/ carers, bus staff, Bus Operators, school staff and others who are involved in the conduct of school bus services,
- implement effective strategies that encourage appropriate behaviours and discourage/prevent misbehaviours and
- record and report incidents to the Bus Operator.

Bus Wardens can expect to:

- be provided with a safe working environment,
- receive cooperation from students,
- be trained in basic incident reporting procedures,
- feel safe and treated with respect, courtesy and be free from abuse,
- receive support from bus staff, Bus Operators, parent/carers and the PTA when managing student behaviours

Department of Education

The Department of Education (DoE), has no formal responsibility for the management of behaviours of students travelling on government contract school buses.

However, there is often a requirement for the PTA and the DoE to provide information between departments that may influence student behaviour management. To achieve this:

Schools may, where they choose to assist:

- provide assistance in managing breaches of the Code of Conduct by offering further solutions through their personal knowledge of a situation or the student/s themselves,
- advise their students of the Code of Conduct and the consequences of breaching the Code,
- providing an appropriate venue for conducting student interviews, conducted by the PTA where necessary.

Schools have the right to expect:

- to be informed of any issue which has occurred on the school bus that may have direct consequences in relation to a student's behaviour or safety whilst attending school,
- to be informed of any behavioural management strategies implemented to address a student's behaviour where a suspension from travel is issued and is likely to impact on their attendance at school.

Public Transport Authority

The PTA has the overall administrative responsibility for the implementation of the Student Behaviour Management Guidelines and has responsibility for the management of Category 4 breaches to the Code of Conduct.

The PTA is responsible for:

- the development of, implementation and reviewing the Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management Guidelines, in consultation with relevant stakeholders,
- ensuring that a safe environment is established and maintained for all passengers and bus staff,
- providing advice to drivers, Bus Aides, Bus Wardens, Bus Operators, parents/carers and other stakeholders on issues of policy relating to behaviour management,
- advising parents/carers of the Code of Conduct and the consequences of breaching the Code,
- providing information, advice and training on behaviour management to bus staff, who have a role in managing student behaviours, and
- investigating complaints where breaches of the Code of Conduct have not been managed in accordance with these guidelines.

The PTA has the right to expect:

- Bus Operators manage the behaviours of students travelling on their buses,
- Bus Operators and bus staff implement and fully adopt the requirements of the Behaviour Management Guidelines and to employ appropriate strategies to ensure that the Code of Conduct is upheld,
- that students will uphold the Code of Conduct and behave themselves in an appropriate manner,
- cooperation between all parties to resolve issues of Bus Operator misconduct, and
- Bus Operators / bus staff to provide safe and comfortable travel for students.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

The Behaviour Management Guidelines provide a framework for responding to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

There is an expectation that Drivers, Bus Aides and Bus Wardens will adopt appropriate strategies aimed at providing a positive environment that focuses on prevention. At any time that an incident is reportable, the Driver or Bus Warden at bus loading / transfer locations is required to complete and issue a Behaviour Management Notice to the student.

The processes for dealing with individual categories are outlined in the Process Flowcharts.

Depending on the nature and severity of the misbehaviour, the Driver may take immediate action to remove the child from the bus, and may be required to make arrangements for alternate transport. In situations where alternate transport is considered necessary, parents/carers will be contacted and are expected to make arrangements to transport their by their own y their own arrangement.

There are often complex issues associated with child misbehaviour. In deciding the appropriate response in cases of reportable misbehaviour, consideration must be given to the circumstances surrounding the event, and in particular, the extent to which the safety, security and well being of other passengers, Drivers, Bus Aides or Bus Wardens are threatened by that behaviour. Whilst these guidelines are applicable to all school bus services, special consideration must be given to students with special needs as frequently poor behaviour responses are a symptom of their disability and can be anticipated by experienced bus staff. In these cases individual strategies should be developed for ongoing management of behaviour related issues.

Categories of Breaches of the Code of Conduct

To promote consistency and fairness in responding to breaches to the Code of Conduct, specific misbehaviours have been categorised. The categories are:

- Category 1: Nuisance & Non-Compliant Behaviour
- Category 2: Threatening & Improper Behaviour
- Category 3: Dangerous & Highly Offensive Behaviour
- Category 4: Extremely: Dangerous, Destructive & Offensive Behaviour

Category 1: Non-Compliant & Nuisance Behaviour

This includes behaviours, which may be irritating, unpleasant but not physically dangerous.

Examples:

- Failing to follow the reasonable directions of bus staff or Bus Wardens at bus loading / transfer locations and other passengers, e.g. failing to reposition a school bag/equipment which is in a location where it may cause others to trip.
- Failing/refusing to wear a seatbelt where fitted.
- Distracting the Driver by persistent noise.
- Stopping others from disembarking at their stop.
- Eating on the bus (unless for medical reasons or with the permission of bus staff).
- Refusing to show a bus pass where required.

Category 2: Threatening & Improper Behaviour

This category includes behaviours where the actions of the student may cause discomfort or distress to others:

- Harassing and bullying other passengers.
- Verbally threatening bus staff or Bus Wardens at bus loading / transfer locations and other passengers.
- Using a device to obtain images or audio recordings of others.
- Using offensive language.
- Stopping others from disembarking at their stop.
- Antisocial behaviour, e.g. discussing topics of an inappropriate nature with other passengers, including possessing and/or displaying mildly explicit and/or offensive material.
- Failing to observe a socially acceptable hygiene standard, e.g. spitting.

Category 3: Dangerous & Offensive Behaviour

This category includes behaviours where there is the likelihood of significant injury and actual minor injury is caused to individuals: • Fighting.

- Allowing any part of their body to protrude from the bus.
- Deliberately making contact with the school bus, whilst the bus is approaching or departing a pickup location.
- Antisocial behaviour, e.g. discussing topics of an explicit or alarming nature, inappropriate or unwanted physical contact with other passengers.
- Interfering with emergency equipment, e.g. emergency hammers, fire extinguishers.
- Throwing objects that have the potential to cause harm or damage.

Category 4: Extremely: Dangerous, Destructive & Offensive Behaviour

This category includes behaviours that are very dangerous or offensive to individuals or destructive to property. In some incidences, substantial physical injury or extreme distress is caused.

Examples:

- Possessing, consuming, or be under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance.
- Inappropriate, sexually explicit behaviour.
- Deliberate destruction of property, including to the vehicle, personal or Government property.
- Physically attacking the Driver or other passengers.
- Pushing students out through the doors or windows.
- Lighting a fire on the bus.
- Interfering with the safe mechanical operation of the bus.
- Bringing an object or implement on the bus that is designed or has an intended use as a weapon.

Please note that the lists of examples above are not intended to be exhaustive, but used as a guide only.

Specific factors to consider as part of determining the appropriate response to the breach of the Code of Conduct include:

- The threat to the safety of passengers on the bus and the nature of the incident,
- The age and maturity of the student, and / or
- Whether the breach was a first or one of a series of repeat incidents for which the student has previously been cautioned or suspended.

Please note that all incidents of student misbehaviour are recorded against the student's personal record. Where a student re-offends within a prescribed period as outlined below, the previous incidents will be considered when determining a subsequent penalty. It should also be noted, that where a student has been suspended from a bus service the retention period will start when transport assistance is reinstated.

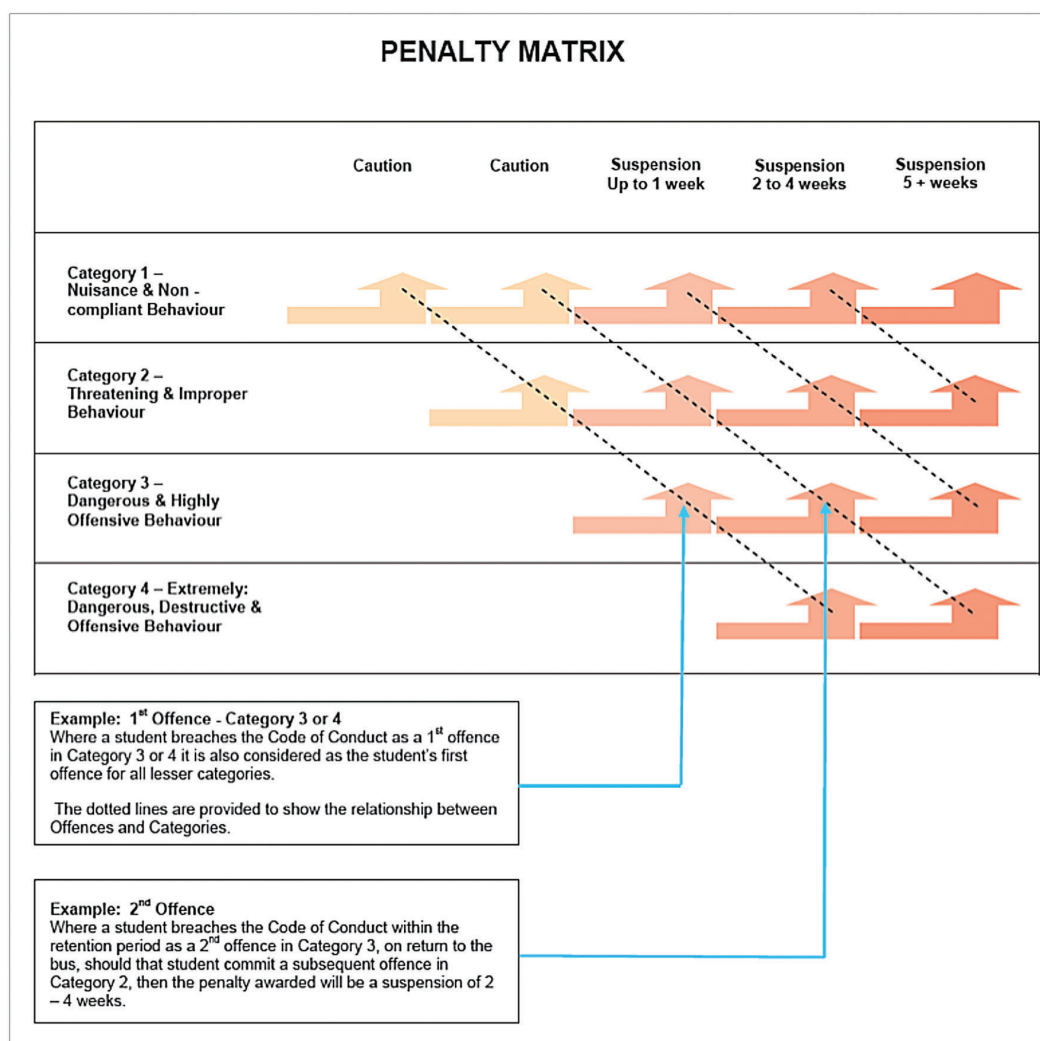
Retention Periods:

- Category 1: 3 months
- Category 2: 4 months
- Category 3: 6 months
- Category 4: 12 months

Students will always be given the opportunity to reform inappropriate behaviours and in-line with this, once the retention period is exhausted, previous incidents and suspensions will no longer be used to determine penalties.

In the event that a period of suspension falls over a school holiday period, the period of suspension will continue after that holiday period.

The following diagram shows the prescribed responses to breaches of the Code of Conduct. You will note that for the lesser categories of misbehaviour i.e. Category 1 and 2 the initial response is to award cautions, in contrast to this, initial responses to Category 3 and 4 offences are suspensions from the bus.



It should be noted that where there are extenuating circumstances responses to misbehaviour may be varied to suit the situation.

Refused Travel

The decision to refuse travel to students is given to Drivers through contractual conditions with bus contractors and only under extreme circumstances.

Where a bus contractor holds the reasonable belief that a student on the contract school bus constitutes, or is likely to constitute, a danger to the health, wellbeing or safety to the Driver, Bus Aide, the student himself or herself or any other person on the school bus, the contractor may:

- stop the school bus and arrange for the Student to be removed from the school bus and placed in the care of a responsible adult, or
- convey the student to either the school attended by that student or the student's home. and thereafter refuse to carry the student on the school bus until otherwise directed to do so in writing by the PTA.

In these circumstances, it is reasonable to expect that the PTA and the Bus Operator will be supported by the Parent/Carer in providing private transport for their child. In the event that an immediate removal of transport assistance is deemed appropriate, an Interim Suspension Notice will be issued. This will remain in place until such time as an investigation is conducted and an outcome is reached. Once an outcome is reached either a formal suspension notice will be issued or transport assistance will be reinstated.

Behaviour Management Strategies

The most effective way of dealing with poor student behaviour is to attempt to reduce the likelihood in the first instance. To this end, the PTA in conjunction with Department of Education has developed a range of behaviour management strategies which may provide an environment and level of communication that encourages better behaviour. These strategies can be found at Annex B.

General Information

In circumstances where Transport Assistance is withdrawn from a student it must be understood that travel on all Government contracted school buses and any Conveyance Allowance payments are withdrawn for the period of suspension.

Where a student transfers from one contract school bus service to another, the details of misbehaviours are maintained and may be made available to Bus Operators as a means to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all passengers.

Additional information regarding entitlement and the application of Transport Assistance can be obtained via the Operational Policy Manual through the PTA's website at www.pta.wa.gov.au

Annex A

CODE OF CONDUCT	
Behaviour	Examples of how to meet the Code
Respect other people and property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect other people and their possessions, • follow the bus Driver's directions without argument, and • do not interfere with bus property, equipment, shelters and signs by marking or damaging them.
Wait for the bus in an orderly manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the supervising teachers or other DoE representatives at bus loading / transfer locations, • wait well back from the bus until it stops and allow other passengers to leave the bus first, • stand quietly without calling out or shouting, and • do not push other people in the line.
While on the bus, behave yourself.	<p>Students must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always follow instructions from bus staff, • sit properly on a seat (in an allocated seat if directed by the Driver), • wear a seatbelt (if fitted), at all times and in the correct manner; • store school bags / equipment under the seat or in appropriate luggage areas, and • speak quietly and do not create unnecessary noise. <p>Students must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bully other passengers, • place feet on the seats, • fight, spit or use offensive language, • throw any article around or from the bus, • consume food or drink, or play music without the permission of the Driver; • use a recording device, of any description, to obtain images /audio of other passengers or the Driver; • smoke, (prohibited on all buses), • possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance, • possess, discuss or distribute any material that may be considered inappropriate or offensive, i.e. material of a violent or sexually explicit nature, • allow any part of your body to protrude out of the bus windows, • stand whilst the bus is in motion, • bring an object on the bus that is considered dangerous, or any object that may be considered as intended as a weapon, and • act in a manner that would be considered an offence under any legislation.
Use approved bus stops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will only be allowed to get on or off the bus at an approved bus stop, and • It is the responsibility of students to get off the bus at their correct stop.
When leaving the bus, do so in an orderly manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off, • Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly manner; • Never cross the road in front of the bus. Wait until the bus has moved away and it is safe to cross, and • Use crossing or traffic lights if available.
In case of an emergency or a breakdown, follow the Driver's instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off, • Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly manner, and • Wait in the area indicated by the Driver. <p>Students must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interfere with emergency equipment, unless instructed to do so by the Driver.

Annex B

Behaviour Management Strategies for Bus Guidelines

To affect a successful outcome, when managing student behaviours on school buses, it is imperative that the student's age, capacity and intellectual ability is considered. Personal issues may also have an affect on a student that would ordinarily be well behaved. In these circumstances it would be prudent to liaise with the student's parent or carer to seek understanding and cooperation in identifying a workable solution.

Students travelling on education support vehicles are expected to behave appropriately when travelling in accordance with the general principles set out in the Code of Conduct and the particular Conditions of Travel which parents/carers acknowledge when they apply for Transport Assistance. However, special consideration will be given to students with intellectual disabilities. In addition, individual management plans may be implemented for students travelling on Education Support buses.

The following pages contain constructive advice on managing student behaviours. There are numerous practical ideas for dealing with students' behaviour in school and associated settings. They transfer well to situations involving school buses and are worth considering as strategies that may be adopted to assist drivers in managing student behaviours.

The 80/15/5 rule

Any one technique/strategy for managing behaviour works great with 80 per cent of students.

- Somewhat with 15 per cent of students.
- And not at all with 5 per cent of the students.

Therefore you need many behaviour management tools, not just one. Avoid doing anything you wouldn't want done to yourself.

Giving information

Often in giving information to students we tell them what we want but not the why. Most of us like to know why we have to do things or be given a purpose to what's been asked.

- make statements short and non-judgmental
- use statements as gentle reminders before being more direct.

For example:

- 'Folks, lots of paper strewn around the bus. We need a clean up and I'd appreciate your help, thank you.' or

Brief talk

Quite often when talking to students about their behaviour, adults have a tendency to lecture at them and from the student's point of view go on and on and on. Students invariably tune out and so your message/s to them is lost. It's no different to us who tend to tune out when somebody goes on in a lecturing or nagging way. We don't like it and nor do students.

Keep corrective messages short and simple.

Instead of: 'Fiona, you're leaving the bus and chatting to your friend and you haven't even bothered to pick up your bag which is in the middle of the aisle, where you know it should not be. How many times have I told you about that and how many more times will I need to tell you? Somebody will fall over it and injure themselves. Please pick it up before that happens.'

Try: 'Fiona, your school bag.'

This technique avoids:

- nagging
- causing
- embarrassment
- negative self image
- retaliation from students
- tuning out and not listening to the message.

Short statements motivate students to:

- think about the limited information
- identify the problem
- devise a solution
- exercise their own initiative and resolve the problem.

The “What” questioning idea

Questioning students about their behaviour opens up the opportunity for communication between yourself and the student/s, and opens up a more positive opportunity for students to learn from the situation rather than telling them what to do.

“What” questions encourage students to be more precise about what has occurred and avoids making personal, judgmental statements. For example questions such as the following place the responsibility onto the student to realise what they have done inappropriately, and to reflect upon how they may react to future incidents:

- What is your understanding of what happened?
- What are/could be the consequences?
- What would you do?
- What other possibilities exist?
- What are some other ways you could approach this issue?

The above questions also:

- encourage looking at positive ways of doing something about an issue,
- develops a more positive relationship between yourself and the student/s,
- supports students (and yourself) in recognising that there is often more than one way to solve a problem,
- allows the student to take responsibility to solve the current and future problems, and
- removes the onus from you believing that you have to 'solve all of the problems' on your bus.

Avoid getting into power struggles

Do you have issues with students where they refuse to stop their behaviour when you have picked them up on it and in fact once you have, they increase the level of their misbehaviour?

It's then very tempting for you to show your annoyance, often through the raising of your voice, then the student raises the ante, and before too long you find yourself in a power struggle between yourself and the student. Also at this stage you may even have other students entering the fray and before you know it a 'verbal hell' breaks loose. What can you do?

The easiest piece of advice to give is to avoid putting yourself in the above situation as no one wins. Seek another solution by:

- recognising that student's need to feel powerful (as we all do)
- involve them in making decisions about what has to occur (use your 'what' questions)
- provide responsibilities for the student/s
- use an "I message", for example, 'I'm hearing offensive language. Would you be considerate enough to restate you opinion in more polite terms, thank you?'

Some more on the 'I' messages

If we want students to be less confrontational and more cooperative then the way you use language can help you. For instance if you were to say, "You weren't listening. You're going to get into trouble." The chances are you will then have the student challenging what you meant by that and before to long you will get into a slanging match with each other.

To avoid such an episode saying something like: "On the bus I want my students to listen closely so that they can learn important things which will enable them to enjoy their ride to school/home." You have got your message across which is inclusive of all students on the bus, but have made it clear that the student you are talking to realises that they have a responsibility to listen. You are not necessarily accusing or finger pointing the student, nor will you be forcing the student to be defensive and making excuses, but rather focuses in on what you want them to learn.

An 'I' statement states what you would like to see done, or how you feel or what you need.

Don't despair if the above doesn't work straight away as it takes practice, as well as educating the students on how you prefer to deal with them on your bus. Your modelling of how you speak to them, and indicate to them what is acceptable and not acceptable to you, starts to be taken on board by the students, over time.

Some suggestions for dealing with provocative or agitating behaviour are:

- where possible speak privately to the student
- speak calmly and respectfully (you model what you're asking of the student)
- identify the problem
- ask the student to take care of the problem
- present options and expected behaviour as a choice or decision to be made by the student, in consultation with you
- ask the student to select an option
- acknowledge their cooperation
- if the problem escalates, withdraw informing the student you'll return to the issues when calmness prevails – and don't forget to do so, or the student will see that you are not serious about resolving the issue
- to deal with the initial behaviour is a powerful way of preventing the problem escalating, and
- remember your response to a problem behaviour plays a significant role in controlling the situation.

To be proactive try:

- continual supervision so that students are aware that you are observing them
- use visual scanning to create 'with-it-ness' -
- scan students as they get on and off the bus
- anticipate and think ahead
- use your past experiences to anticipate potential problems, for example, students at particular stops, last day of term/semester, sports days, rainy/windy weather
- solving persistent problems
- gather information
- establish quick and timely responses
- manage low-level problems by catching them early.

Effective Partnerships –

Working together on managing student behaviour on school buses there are many benefits to establishing partnerships between parents and Bus Operators.

Collaboration provides a united front to both parents and students about what student behaviour is expected when travelling on school buses. By working together inappropriate behaviour on buses can be 'nipped in the bud'.

Keeping parents in the know –

Parents may not know what expected appropriate student's behaviour on buses is. It is up to you to inform them regularly (once a term/semester). Also encourage the students to tell their parents what is expected.

Some of the following are used by school bus companies and may be useful to you:

- Display the PTA's flyer outlining the rules for travelling on buses ,
- If you believe the student's behaviour is of concern, contact the parents/guardians. Inform them of your concerns and seek their support in resolving the situation.
- Use a positive approach to inform parents of problems with their child's behaviour. Explain that the situation requires the parents, the student and driver to work together towards a mutually agreed upon solution.
- Log in your diary every occasion a student has required a talk from you regarding their behaviour. You may need this later to include in a letter to parents or to use at a meeting with parents and the student.
- On occasions you may experience aggressive and persistent parents who believe their child has been wrongly accused of inappropriate behaviour on the bus. It is crucial that you inform them of the facts as you know them. Use any notes you've taken on the behaviour, your response to the behaviour and actions taken.
- Avoid the discussion ending up in a 'shouting match'. If this does occur, suggest another meeting time and consider inviting other parties whose attendance may be beneficial, in order to work through the issues to a satisfactory outcome for all concerned.
- Be prepared to listen to parents' point of view, avoid dismissing their position as being wrong or biased in favour of their child. A useful strategy is to write down each of the issues or points they dispute and then address each in turn with the facts as you understand them.

Praise positive behaviour

The students are misbehaving and it seems as though it's hopeless for you to do anything. All too often we raise issues of poor behaviour with students and focus on the negatives.

Reverse the focus and make mention of positive behaviour.

You notice one student who was not misbehaving. You say to that student, 'I appreciate the fact that way you are behaving so well Jane.'

It may just cause a chain reaction where misbehaving students stop what they are doing and behave the way you expect them to.

Praise often, not just the once.

The 10 Commandments of behaviour management

1. Always treat students with respect and preserve their dignity.
2. Always do what is in the student's best interests.
3. Seek solutions, not blame.
4. Model tolerant, patient, dignified and respectable behaviour.
5. Use the least intrusive intervention possible.
6. Connect with the students.
7. Instil hope for a successful solution.
8. Never do anything disrespectful, illegal, immoral, ineffective, that you wouldn't want done to you.
9. Never give up on a student – believe in them changing for the better.
10. Catch students being good ... a lot.

Quick Reference Guide

1. Prevent Inappropriate Behaviour

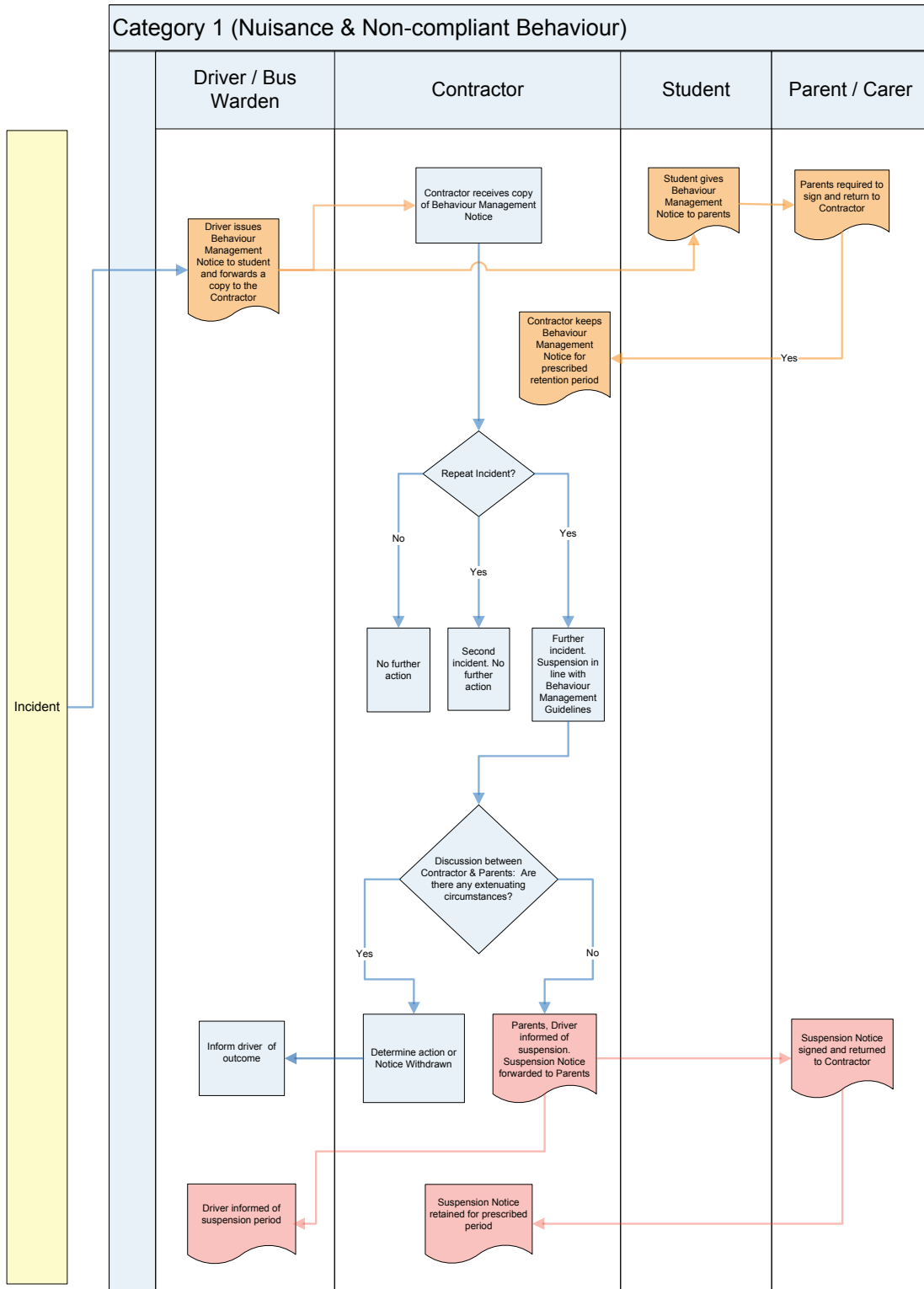
- Build a positive relationship with the students by:
 - Being Polite
 - Be interested in the students
 - Where possible learn and use their names
 - Smile
 - Use appropriate humour
- Provide positive reinforcement/incentives for appropriate behaviour
- Be prepared for misbehaviour by:
 - Planning for movements – eg single file onto and off bus
 - Demonstrating appropriate behaviour
 - Scanning frequently
 - Displaying and explaining the Code of Conduct

2. Respond to Inappropriate Behaviour

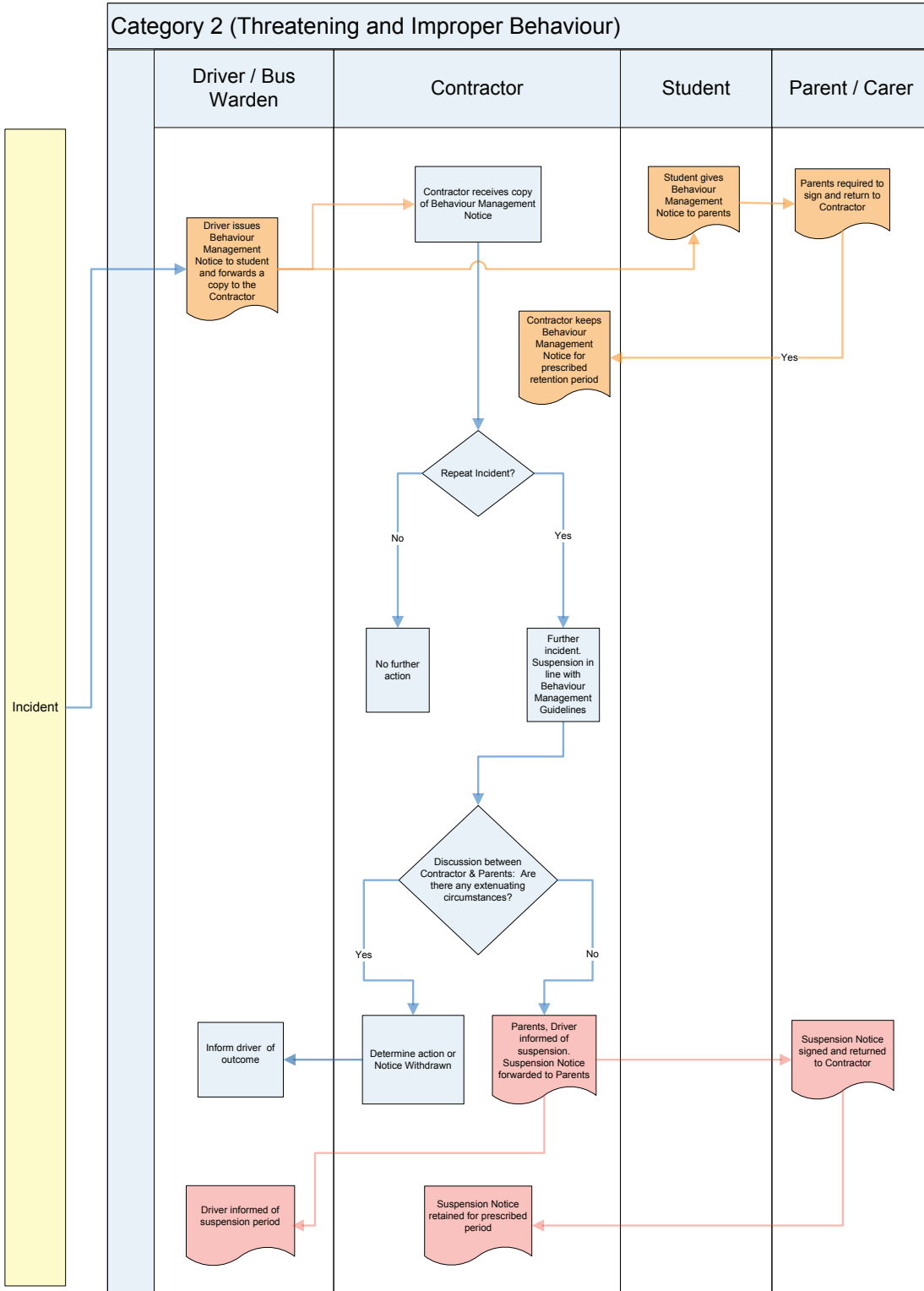
- Use Low Key Responses:
 - Eye contact
 - Talk to the student privately
 - Model appropriate behaviour
 - Stay calm
 - Deal with the problem not the student
 - Give appropriate choices e.g. please either sit next to --- or to ---- (not an ultimatum)
 - Rebuild the relationship with the student after the incident
 - Thank the student for complying

If the inappropriate behaviour continues or a serious incident occurs move to the described flowchart responses.

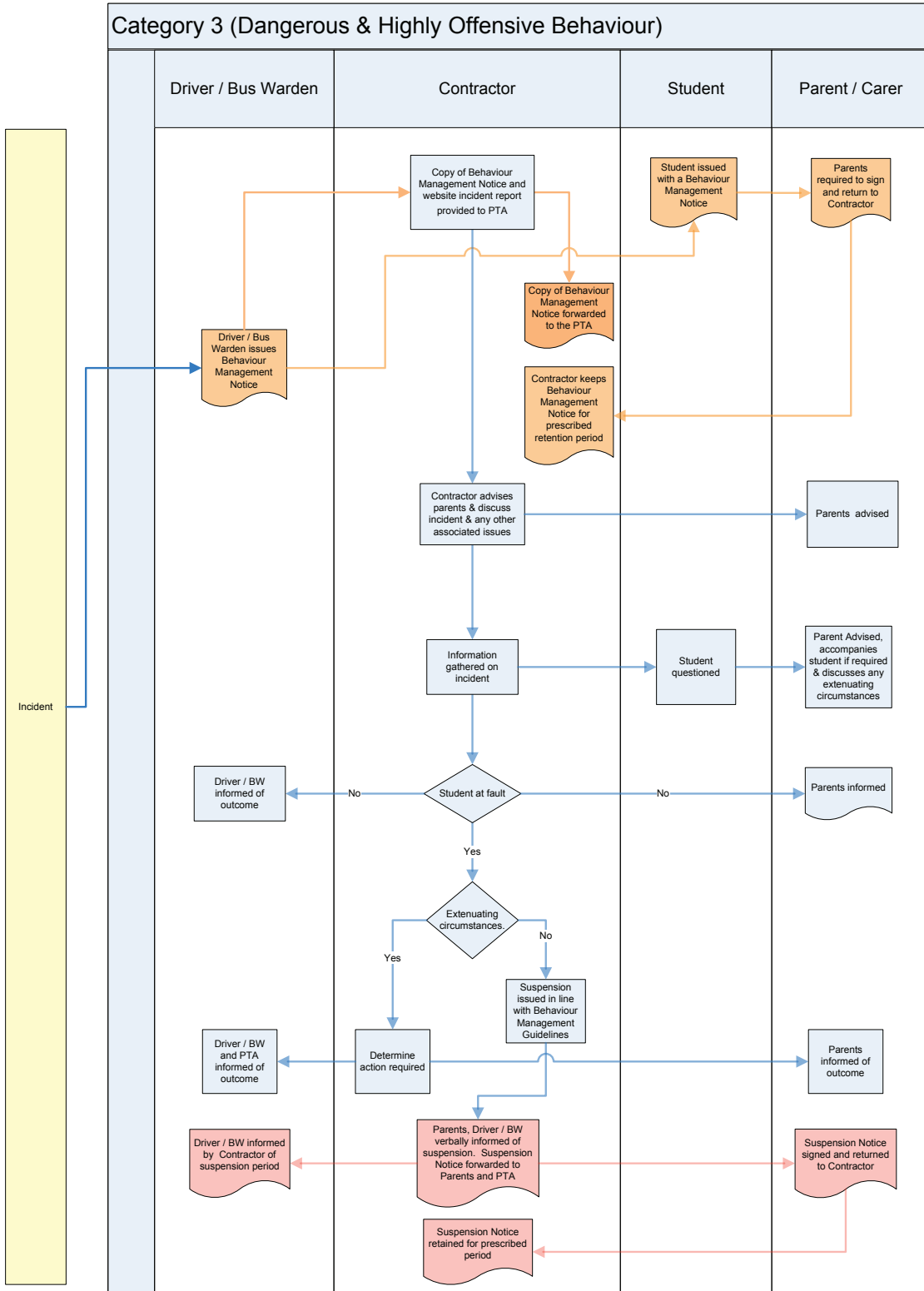
Category 1 (Nuisance & Non-compliant Behaviour)



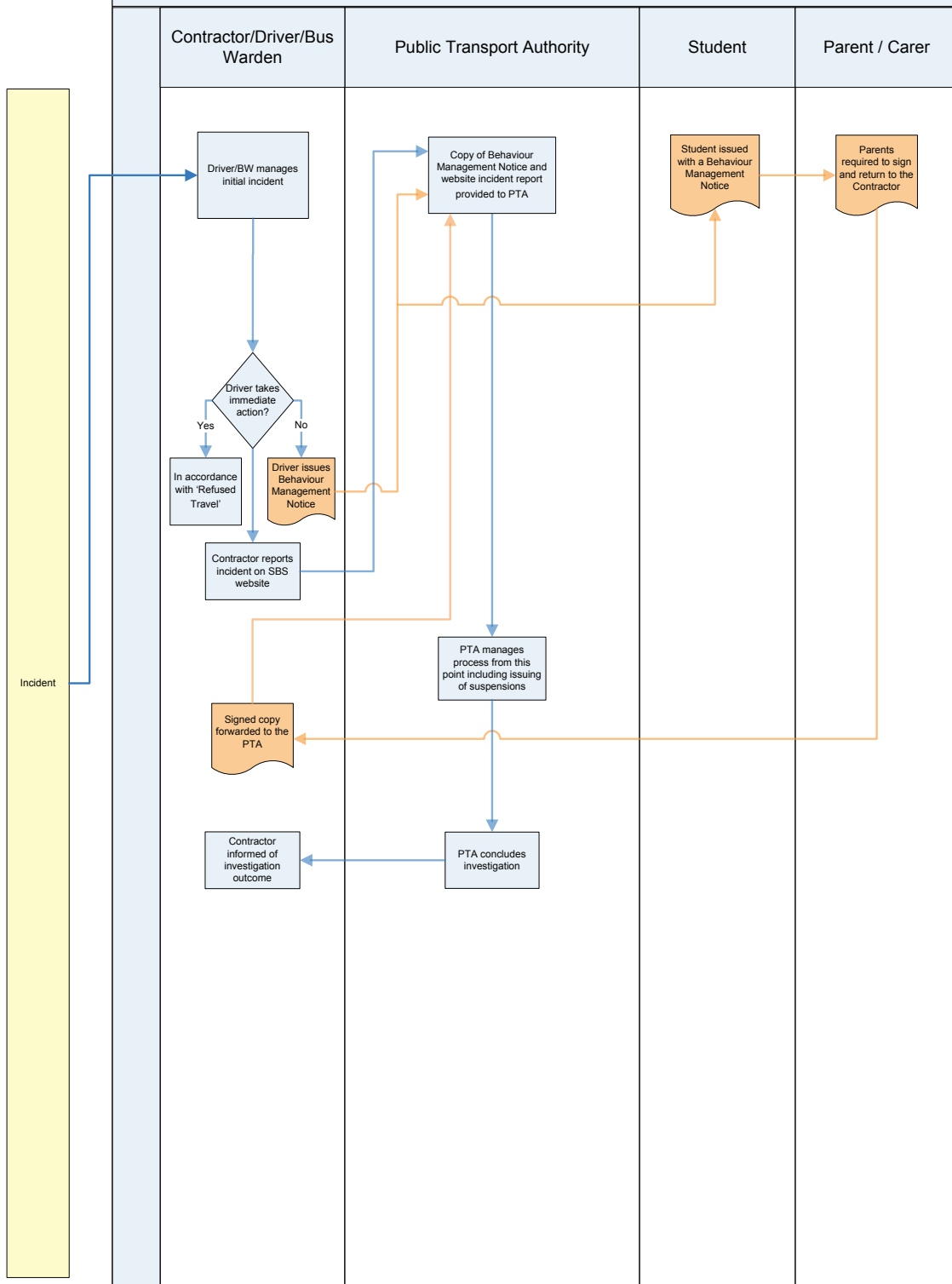
Category 2 (Threatening and Improper Behaviour)



Category 3 (Dangerous & Highly Offensive Behaviour)



Category 4-Contractor (Extremely: Dangerous, Destructive & Offensive Behaviour)



CODE OF CONDUCT

Behaviour	Examples of how to meet the Code
Respect other people and property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect other people and their possessions, follow the bus Driver's directions without argument, and do not interfere with bus property, equipment, shelters and signs by marking or damaging them.
Wait for the bus in an orderly manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the Bus Officer's instructions, wait well back from the bus until it stops and allow other passengers to leave the bus first, stand quietly without calling out or shouting, and do not push other people in the line.
While on the bus, behave yourself.	<p>Students must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Always follow instructions from bus staff, sit properly on a seat (in an allocated seat if directed by the Driver), wear a seatbelt (if fitted), at all times and in the correct manner, store school bags / equipment under the seat or in appropriate luggage areas, and speak quietly and do not create unnecessary noise. <p>Students must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bully other passengers, place feet on the seats, fight, spit or use offensive language, throw any article around or from the bus, consume food or drink, or play music without the permission of the Driver, use a recording device, of any description, to obtain images /audio of other passengers or the Driver, smoke, (prohibited on all buses), possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance, possess, discuss or distribute any material that may be considered inappropriate or offensive, i.e. material of a violent or sexually explicit nature, allow any part of your body to protrude out of the bus windows, stand whilst the bus is in motion, bring an object on the bus that is considered dangerous, or any object that may be considered as intended as a weapon, and act in a manner that would be considered an offence under any legislation.
Use approved bus stops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will only be allowed to get on or off the bus at an approved bus stop, and It is the responsibility of students to get off the bus at their correct stop.
When leaving the bus, do so in an orderly manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off, Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly manner, Never cross the road in front of the bus. Wait until the bus has moved away and it is safe to cross, and Use crossing or traffic lights if available.
In case of an emergency or a breakdown, follow the Driver's instructions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait until the bus stops before standing to get off, Leave the bus in a quiet and orderly manner, and Wait in the area indicated by the Driver. <p>Students must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interfere with emergency equipment, unless instructed to do so by the Driver.

AGREEMENT

STUDENT NAME:

I have read, understood and agree to follow the Code of Conduct.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

PARENT NAME:

I will ensure my child understands the Code of Conduct.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____