



# CLARE REGIONAL

## School Bus Transport Policy

Policy First Developed: 19<sup>th</sup> March 2008  
Last Updated: February 2016

### **Rationale:**

"Authority for the transport of school children to and from school is contained in Section 9 (8) of the Education Act which provides that, The Minister may, in such manner and to such extent as he thinks fit, provide for the transport of children to and from school and may pay the whole or any portion of the cost of transporting children to and from school". This policy is to be read in conjunction with DECD 'School Transport Policy – Version 1.2, September 2012.

**Policy Aims:** It is the intention of this policy to support students with access to school bus transport and assist them to attend educational and care services throughout the Clare region. Of particular importance, this policy seeks to enhance student attendance at both school and preschool.

### **General Implementation:**

- 1. Bus Management:** Clare High School is the local school responsible for managing bus services in the region. Clare High, through its Governing Council, will maintain a Bus Management Committee to assist with the day to day management of school bus services in the region. Clare High will appoint a Bus Manager to oversee the management of buses and the implementation of the Bus Transport Policy. Other schools/preschools in the region that use the school bus services will contribute to annual management cost of school buses. These schools will be billed up to 2 TRT days per year based on their size and the number of students who access school bus transport.
- 2. Bus Travel Approval (Automatically Eligible Students):** Only school aged students residing more than 5kms from their closest Government school have automatic eligibility to access a school bus. This includes both Government and Non-Government school users. Non-government school students are only eligible to access bus transport to their closest Government school. However, if the bus passes a non-government school of their choice without incurring additional travel, the bus may stop at the school to drop off and collect students.
- 3. Bus Travel Approval (Non Eligible Students):** Any student not meeting automatic eligibility for school bus transport can apply for 'provisional' bus access. Permission for 'provisional bus access' will only be considered if room exists on the bus using the student priority order outlined below. Provisional access is also subject to Clause 1 and 2 listed below.
  - A child enrolled in a DECD funded Preschool Program
  - Aboriginal Students
  - Guardianship of the Minister students (GOM)
  - Students with a physical or intellectual disability
  - SACE students
  - Secondary students
  - Government students who have been granted authority to bypass their local school
  - ICAN and VET students
  - Non-Government students who are bypassing their closest Government school
  - Students who reside within 5kms of their closest Government School

**Clause 1:** Preschool children can be granted 'provisional access' travel on school buses subject to the following conditions:

- The child is considered by the Bus Management School and the Preschool Director to be mature enough to travel safely on the bus and without causing difficulties for the driver (in consultation with the enrolling site leader)
- The child is met at the set-down point/s by a parent or guardian

**Clause 2:** Students, who reside within 5kms of their closest Government school, can be granted 'provisional access' to travel on a school bus using the student priority order outlined below:

- Students who reside the greatest proximal distance from their school
- Students of parents without access to private transport
- Students wishing to use school buses for out of school activities such as sports training, private visits and work after school.

#### 4. Bus Approval Process:

- a. Any student requesting bus transport must submit a new application each year to access school bus transport to the Bus Management School. This application must be countersigned by the site leader of their school/preschool and then forwarded to Clare High School. All Applications must be forwarded by the end of week 8, Term 4. (i.e. Prior to the new year)
- b. The Bus Manager (Clare High School) will then forward a list of all applications received to the Site Leaders by the end of week 9, Term 4. This list will indicate those who are eligible, those who are ineligible and those who have been given provision access to travel on the bus. A generic letter will be attached to be sent to all applicants indicating the outcome of their application for travel.
- c. Any primary-aged student who chooses to bypass their local government school for another government school must first submit an **'Application to Bypass your Local School'** and gain written approval from the Regional Director to do so.
- d. A student may travel on a school bus only when given written approval by the Bus Management School.
- e. All approved bus transport users will be notified of their permission to travel on a school bus along with any conditions that may be applicable to this permission. A formal letter to the family will be issued through the enrolling Site Leader. Eligible students will receive this letter as soon as possible but at the latest by Wednesday of Week 0 of the new year.
- f. Once approved, the student will be issued with a bus access card. This card must be shown to the bus driver upon access to the bus. Bus drivers will not permit unauthorised students to access bus transport.
- g. Student's wishing to access school bus transport, for short term or single travel events, must have this request approved by the bus management school. Parents can request this by contacting Clare High School. Such requests will only be approved if space exists on the bus and adequate time is provided to notify the school bus driver.
- h. Bus drivers will be provided with up-to-date bus rolls. They are expected to maintain accurate records of students who travel daily on the bus. The Bus Managing Site will conduct a roll audit once/term to determine any changes to seat allocations. Written contact with the identified families will allow confirmation of continuing bus access.
- i. NOTE: All Sites to inform the Bus Manager within 1 week, via email, when students leave and no longer require bus transport.

#### 5. Revoking Provisional Access For Non-Eligible Students:

- a. Provisional Access to a school bus only applies whilst room exists on a bus. This will be determined by the Bus Manager (Clare High School) once the new year has begun.
- b. All non-eligible students will be notified of their provisional access or not, in writing. This will occur in week 1, Term 1. The letters will be sent through the enrolling Site Leader. The Provisional Access will be granted from the start of week 2, Term 1.
- c. If a bus has reached capacity, those students **without automatic eligibility** for bus transport may lose their permission to travel on a bus. In considering this action, the reverse priority access of point 3 (incorporating clause 1 and 2) will apply.
- d. A 'last on, first off' rule will apply when two ineligible students meet the same priority category referred to in 5 (b).
- e. One ineligible student cannot displace another ineligible student on a bus once 'provisional access' has been granted within a current school year even if their priority rating is higher. The exception to this condition is if the new student is of a preschool age and/or the student resides greater than 5kms from their closest Government School.
- f. Two weeks' notice in writing will be provided to all students if provisional bus access is revoked.

#### 6. Student Behaviour:

- a. All students who travel on a school bus are expected to adhere to the student behaviour management processes applicable to their school/preschool.
- b. In the event of a behaviour incident, the bus driver will report the matter to leadership staff at the school/preschool concerned and notify the bus management school. The school/preschool of the student concerned will manage the incident in the first instance and forward any written follow-up to the Bus Management Site as required.
- c. Repeated incidents of inappropriate behaviour may result in a student losing their permission to travel on a bus either in the short term or for an extended period of time. This decision is made in consultation between all parties concerned.

**7. Grievance Procedures:** Any grievance or appeal against a school bus management decision must be made in writing to the site leader of the student's School/Preschool in the first instance. If the issue remains unresolved, the grievance should be forwarded to the site leader of the Bus Management School or in turn, to the Regional Director – Yorke and Mid Region, if the grievance still remains unresolved.

**Other References:**

- DECD School Transport Policy – December 2013
- Mid North Partnership – By-Passing a Local School procedures

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of a three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by the Clare Bus Committee on....	<b><i>Pending</i></b>
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