

Transport for Students to Intensive English Unit Schools Guidelines

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Acronyms The following acronyms are used in this document	
Acronyms	Full form
IEU	Intensive English Unit
DoE	Department of Education
DIPL	Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics

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1 The service

The Northern Territory Government provides transport assistance to and from school for eligible primary (including transition) and middle school students to attend Intensive English Unit (IEU) schools where English language abilities prevent independent travel to and from school using the public and school bus network.

Student IEU status is determined by the Department of Education (DoE) through each school with an IEU program. The transport service is managed by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL) and the bus operator and is subject to their internal procedures. Service availability may be influenced by bus carrying capacity, accessibility to a bus stop/shelter and the time permitted to transport students to and from school. If a service is not immediately available, students may be placed on a waitlist or be encouraged to use available school or urban services.

The safety of students using the transport service is a priority that requires the collaborative effort of parents/carers, schools, DoE, transport service providers, school bus drivers and DIPL.

2 Applying for transport

Eligibility Criteria

Students eligible for transport must be in the IEU program, live in excess of 600 metres from their IEU school and not have reasonable access to a normal school bus service.

IEU students who wish to use the service for a period longer than 12 months are required to submit a new application form for a “Continuing Request” including justification and endorsement from the school Principal.

Approval Process

- The school Principal must endorse the application form then submit it to public.transport@nt.gov.au for processing.
- DIPL will review the application, in consultation with DoE where required, then contact the transport service provider to determine service availability.
- DIPL will advise the transport service provider and IEU school of the outcome.
- The school will then advise the student and parent/carer of the outcome.

For a copy of the IEU Transport Assistance Request form, please visit:

<https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/english-as-a-second-language/intensive-english-units>

For assistance in completing the form, please contact your school.

The following section explains the responsibilities of all parties involved in the application for, and provision of, IEU transport.

2.1 Parent/carer

- Provide relevant information and a completed IEU Transport Assistance Request Form to school.
- Read and understand the “Transport for Students to Intensive English Unit Schools Guidelines” and “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel”. Copies are available from the school or can be downloaded from the DIPL website.
- Parents/carers may seek assistance from their school or other people, in reading and understanding the Guidelines and Code and completing the IEU Form.

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- Ensure your child/children understand the “Transport for Students to Intensive English Unit Schools Guidelines” and “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel”.
- Be aware that the transport service is subject to availability.
- Be aware that the school is the first point of contact by the parent/carer for any changes to travel arrangements.
- Be aware that if students wish to use the service for a period longer than 12 months, they are required to submit a new application form for a “Continuing Request” to the school.
- Understand that applications may take up to 5 working days to process.

2.2 School

- Ensure the IEU Transport Assistance Request form is completed, endorsed and forwarded to DIPL (Public Transport).
- Inform parents/carers of the outcome of their student transport request.
- Provide copies of the “Transport for Students to Intensive English Unit Schools Guidelines” and “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel” to the parent/carer, and explain the responsibilities of all parties involved.
- Provide the appropriate coloured bag tag for students who have been approved for travel (refer section 3.1).
- Advise parents/carers that the school is the first point of contact.
- Explain where the student will be picked-up and dropped-off including the dedicated bus stop/shelter.
- Advise parents/carers and students to tell the driver if his/her parent/carer is not at the dedicated bus stop/shelter to meet them or the student does not feel comfortable getting off at an un-familiar bus stop/shelter. Refer to section 9 for further information.
- Explain that requests for transport may take up to 5 working days to process.

2.3 Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics

- Process applications with the transport service provider and DoE.
- Record and manage a database of transport arrangements.
- Advise the transport service provider and IEU school of the outcome of transport requests.
- Manage transport service delivery including resolving issues where required.
- First point of contact for the schools and bus operator.

2.4 Department of Education

- Provide advice and assist in resolving issues where required.

2.5 Transport service provider

- Assess service availability and route timing on receipt of the transport request.
- Advise DIPL (Public Transport) of service availability, including pick-up times if applicable.
- Provide the transport service.

3 What happens when travel is approved

This section explains the duties and responsibilities of all parties involved once travel is approved.

3.1 Parent/carer duties and responsibilities

- Ensure the student is ready for pick-up from the designated bus stop/shelter before the bus is scheduled to arrive. If the student is not at the designated bus stop/shelter, the driver will continue on the scheduled bus route.
- Ensure the student is competent to be dropped-off at the designated bus stop/shelter. It is the parent/carer’s responsibility to ensure their child is able to get home in a safe manner after the student gets off a bus.
- If the student attends transition, or if the parent/carer and school deem a student in a higher schooling level is not competent to catch a bus by himself or herself, a parent/carer must

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accompany the student to the dedicated bus stop/shelter until the bus arrives. On the return journey, the parent/carer must be at the dedicated bus stop/shelter to collect the student.

- Ensure the student understands that they are to tell the driver if his/her parent/carer is not at the dedicated bus stop/shelter to meet them, or the student does not feel comfortable getting off at an unfamiliar bus stop/shelter. Refer to section 9 for more information.
- Ensure the student has the appropriate coloured tag on their school bag that determines which bus they are to catch. The tag should display on one side the students' name, address and contact phone number, and on the other side the name of the school they are attending and its phone number. The coloured tags represent the following bus runs:

Yellow Tag	Bus 1	–	Palmerston
Pink Tag	Bus 2	–	City
Orange Tag	Bus 3	–	Northern Suburbs

If students catch more than one bus, the coloured tag is to correspond with the afternoon bus service. The tags are provided by the school.

- Advise the school immediately if circumstances change including if the transport service is no longer required or by submitting a new form for a "Changed Address" if a student's home address has changed.

3.2 School duties and responsibilities

- Work closely with DoE, DIPL and transport service providers, school bus drivers and parents/carers to ensure students transport needs are met.
- In consultation with the parent/carer, assess if students are competent to catch the bus by themselves and do not require the parent/carer to accompany them to and from the bus stop/shelter.
- Provide and issue each student with the appropriate coloured tag that determines which bus route they are to catch.
- Assist with the smooth operation of the service by ensuring there is supervision at the school during drop-off and pick-up times.
- Provide suitable areas for buses to drop-off and pick-up students. These areas are to be kept free from obstruction.
- Count each student as they board the bus for the afternoon bus run to ensure that every student is on the bus. Advise the bus driver that all students have boarded the bus.
- Ensure the bus driver has the relevant information on the pick-up and drop-off points for all students.
- Introduce new students to the bus driver.
- Notify DIPL of any changes to a student's travel arrangement as soon as possible including notification when a student no longer requires the transport service, or forward a completed "Changed Address" form for processing.
- Maintain open communications with parents/carers, DoE, DIPL and if necessary the transport service provider.
- Provide DIPL with a list of students wishing to continue using transport the following year and including request forms for any students using the services for longer than 12 months by the 15th of November each year.
- Provide the following year's bus timetables to students, parents / carers before the end of school term four.

3.3 Transport service provider duties and responsibilities

- Ensure that management and staff are familiar with these guidelines and the conditions of contract for the services.
- Ensure vehicles are in a roadworthy condition and are always cleanly presented.
- Only employ fully licensed drivers that also hold a Northern Territory Government issued Ochre Card.

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- Ensure telephone numbers are available for the people who should be contacted in an emergency (i.e. school, DIPL).
- Ensure bus drivers are familiar with all pick-up and drop-off points for all students and are aware which students will be met by a parent/carer at drop-off points.
- Have in place contingency plans for dealing with vehicle failures and other emergencies.
- Have in place a procedure for the reporting of incidents and recurrent problems to schools, such as difficulties at pick-up and drop-off points and student misbehaviour.
- Provide the following year's bus timetables to DIPL before the 6th of December each year.
- Ensure that all services are operated according to the agreed route and schedule.

Ensure drivers are:

- Fully aware of the requirements of the role as determined by the employer.
- Remain in the driver's seat when the bus is running and students are on the bus.
- Ensure all students have the appropriate coloured tag on their school bag to confirm they are on the correct bus route.
- Wait for confirmation from the school that all students have boarded the bus, before starting on the scheduled afternoon route.
- Keep the door closed until the vehicle is at a complete standstill. Do not allow students to open or close the doors of the vehicle.
- Always check that doors are properly closed and that nothing is trapped in them.
- Do not drive-off until all students are seated on the bus.
- When setting down, ensure that all students are well clear of the vehicle before moving off.
- Cooperate with the school staff over arrangements for parking, picking-up and setting-down within the school grounds.
- If a new student starts using the bus service, ensure you have been introduced to them by the school.
- Be familiar with all pick-up and drop-off points for all students.
- Drive vehicle in a safe and competent manner and adhere to all road rules.
- Check and ensure no students are left on the bus at the end of the run.
- In the event of a breakdown or accident, contact the employer immediately. Make every effort to stay with the vehicle and students.
- If it is not safe for students to remain on board, evacuate the vehicle in a calm, orderly manner and take the students to a safe place away from the vehicle.

3.4 DIPL Public Transport duties and responsibilities

- Process transport applications and manage IEU transport policy.
- Liaise with IEU schools and transport service provider/s to ensure the smooth running of the service.
- Contract the necessary resources and supervise the contract.
- Maintain an updated database of IEU students using the transport service.
- Provide the transport service operator with a list of students wishing to continue using transport the following year by the 22nd of November each year.
- Provide the following year's bus timetable to the schools by the 7th of December each year.

4 Application form

Incomplete forms will not be processed and will be returned to the school.

New "Continuing Request" forms are required if students wish to continue using the IEU transport assistance longer than 12 months. Please refer to Section 2.

5 Change of request for transport

If a student has changed address or IEU school and wishes to continue using the IEU transport service, the parent/carer must advise the school by submitting a new application form. The school will review and then forward the completed form to DIPL for further processing. This process should be undertaken prior to moving so that transport availability can be confirmed.

6 Processing time

As with any change, it takes time to process new and changed requests. Applications should be submitted as soon as possible to allow time for appropriate solutions to be explored. Processing time can take up to 5 working days from receipt of application by DIPL for reply back to the IEU schools. This also applies to changes of address or school. Parents/carers will be notified of the assessment outcome as soon as possible.

7 What happens if students do not comply with the “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel”

Students behave appropriately most of the time. However, misbehaviour by some students can make travel unpleasant for their colleagues, distract the driver, and result in damage to vehicles or in extreme cases put bus occupants and other road users at serious risk.

To help ensure that school students behave sensibly and safely on the buses, DIPL together with DoE, transport service providers, schools and Police, have developed the “Transport for Students to Intensive English Unit Schools Guidelines” and “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel” for students, schools, school bus drivers, transport service providers and parents/carers.

The “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel” is a set of guidelines for students and parents/carers to follow. It forms the basis for the specific rules to manage behaviour on school buses and at bus interchanges. It also includes procedures for transport service providers, school bus drivers and schools to follow and should be read in conjunction with this document.

For a copy of “Code of Conduct for School Bus Travel”, please visit:
<https://nt.gov.au/driving/public-transport-cycling/public-school-buses/rules>

8 What happens if a student is missing from the bus and/or is not dropped-off to the designated bus stop/shelter

Once it is determined that a student is missing, the following steps are to be followed:

- The bus driver is to radio into the transport service provider’s depot.
- The transport service provider is to contact the school and DIPL (Public Transport).
- If the bus is on route, the bus driver is to continue on route and drop-off the other students at their designated bus stops/shelters. This ensures that other students and parents/carers are not inconvenienced.
- The school is to make contact with the parent/carer.
- The school is to contact the transport service provider advising of the outcome after discussions are had with the parent/carer.
- The transport service provider is to contact the bus driver and issue instructions in line with advice received by the school and internal procedures.
- The transport service provider will brief DIPL throughout the process.
- DIPL will provide updates and a report to DoE.

9 What happens when a parent/carer does not meet the bus for transition or less competent students

It is the parent/carer's responsibility to collect their child at the designated bus stop/shelter.

If a parent/carer is not at the designated bus stop/shelter to collect their child and the child feels uncomfortable and asks the driver to stay on the bus, the driver will:

- radio the bus depot and advise of the situation;
- continue along normal route of travel; and
- deliver the child back to school at the end of the route of travel.

While the child is on the bus, the transport service provider will advise the school that the student is returning to school. The school will then contact the parent/carer to arrange a pickup of the student from school.

10 Review

This document will be reviewed on a three yearly basis. Minor amendments will be issued as the need arises.

11 Contacts

Department of Education

School Operation North 8901 1371

IEU Schools

Anula Primary School 8997 7500

Moil Primary School 8920 6868

Sanderson Middle School 8927 8899

Woodroffe Primary School 8983 7600

Transport Service Provider

Buslink 8944 2444

Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics

Public Transport 8924 7297