

# BELMORE SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

## 4.10 TRANSPORT POLICY

### Background

Belmore School caters for students with physical disabilities and complex care needs that reside in the designated catchment zone. Because of the nature of the students' disabilities, many require specialised transportation to and from school. Because of the geographical spread of the catchment area, travel time to and from school varies from student to student.

The majority of students travel to school using the chartered bus service provided by Mee's Bus Company. This is a tendered contract between the DEECD and Mee's Bus Company.

Other forms of transport to school for Belmore students include taxi and private vehicle.

### PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

To provide clarity and guidelines for the Belmore School staff and parents in relation to transport of students to and from school.

### Bus Transportation via Mee's Buses

#### The Role and Responsibility of Parents

- Parents need to have their child ready for loading promptly at the designated pick up time.
- Parents need to have someone responsible to receive their child at the drop off time.
- Parents/carers to ensure that children travelling in wheelchairs need to be positioned correctly with all necessary wheelchair adaptations fastened and adjusted correctly, e.g. straps, head rests, pommels, foot, hip, thoracic restraints, etc.
- Non-secured trays removed from chair.
- Mee's need to be notified of absences as soon as possible
- Communication for school should be directly to school via child's book or phone. Mee's staff should not be used as messengers.
- Parents provide booster seats and special seat belts which are compliant with current standards.

#### The Role and Responsibility of Belmore School

- To provide Mee's with information about student locations in order to determine routes and drop off/pick up times.
- Belmore School will advocate strongly for students and their families so that where necessary specific needs be considered/taken into account when determining bus routes.
- To provide Mee's with relevant information and documentation about students' conditions, equipment, medical plans, alerts, allergies and specific manual handling requirements. This information will be provided annually and updated as required.
- To communicate with families about the designated routes, pick up/drop off times and expectations of the families regarding these, i.e. to be ready at the allocated time, communication to the bus company if absent from school, etc.
- To roll call and document all students arriving and departing via the bus transport service.
- Supervision of students in the bus bay area is the responsibility of Belmore staff.
- To update bus staff daily of students' condition should it differ from the norm.
- On departure from school, Belmore staff are to ensure that students are seated correctly and all necessary wheelchair adaptations are fastened and adjusted correctly. Detachable trays should be removed and handed to bus staff for appropriate secure storage on buses.

### EXPECTATIONS OF MEE'S BUS COMPANY AND STAFF BY BELMORE SCHOOL

#### Information and Documentation

Ratified by School Council 8 / 9 / 2010

To be Reviewed / / 2014

- It is expected that Mee's staff will attend information sessions about students and their conditions/care needs at the beginning of each school year and as required.
- It is expected that Mee's staff have an understanding of the students' needs and are competent in safely managing the students while in transit.
- It is expected that the documentation pertaining to each child is kept on hand in the bus and referred to as required. It is expected that staff seek clarification about anything that is not understood.

### **Confidentiality**

- It is expected that all Mee's staff keep student information confidential at all times. It is expected that Mee's staff adhere to confidentiality protocols to reflect this.

### **Safety**

- It is expected that all vehicles are well maintained, serviced and that regular safety checks to vehicles and wheelchair restraints are carried out according to industry standards.
- It is expected that seat belts are secured directly as per manufacturer's standard and the ancillary equipment that accompanies each student in a manner compliant with Bus Company Policy & Procedures and manufacturer's recommendations.
- It is expected that wheelchairs are secured by engaging the brakes while lifting or lowering on the chair lift, as per manufacturer's specifications. (Seek clarification NB) ????
- It is expected that when an electric wheelchair is on the hoist, the wheelchair power is turned off. In order to move it from the hoist to the bus, wheelchair power may be turned on. The supervisor **always** assumes direct supervision of the wheelchair at all times during this procedure.
- It is expected that all wheelchairs are secured with appropriate restraints on all four corners of wheelchair base and that equipment is stowed away safely any as per OH&S (i.e. trays and school bags or anything that could become a projectile).
- It is expected that trays be removed from wheelchairs **unless** secured with a device such as a drop pin or bolt and nut.
- It is expected that trays, bags and other items be secured correctly.
- It is expected that staff provide support for students to maximise their travelling comfort.
- If a student is having a seizure, supervisors must monitor the duration of the seizure and be familiar with the procedure to follow if intervention is needed and follow emergency medical plans.
- Student seating position needs to be monitored and adjusted as necessary to ensure comfort and safety. It is expected that supervisors need to watch students in order to ensure their comfort and safety.
- Students **must not** eat or drink on the bus – many students at the school are at risk of choking.

### **First Aid Training and Competency**

- It is expected that Mee's staff are competent in the care needs of Belmore students whilst in transit and that staff are able to follow student medical plans and intervene as appropriate.
- In order to have the skill set required to provide competent care to Belmore students, it is expected that Mee's staff are supported and provided with the opportunity to complete basic first aid and basic life support training. This training can include, but is not limited to, the use of equipment (e.g. epipen, anapen) in the event of known anaphylaxis.
- It is expected that all bus staff have First Aid education and certificates. It is expected that these are current and updated as per the schedule of accreditation.

## **Conduct**

- It is expected that Mee's staff conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. It is expected that they adhere to the DEECD policy on no smoking whilst in sight of students or on school property.
- Whilst in transit it is expected that supervisors sit in a position where they can observe the students at all times.
- It is expected that staff are sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities.
- It is expected that staff read and interpret applicable documentation.
- It is expected that staff help with the loading and unloading of students.

## **Transportation via Taxi**

- It is the responsibility of the school staff on departure from Belmore, and parents/carers on departure from home or respite, to ensure that any student travelling by taxi is correctly positioned and restrained in their wheelchair.
- If the student sits on the taxi seat, as they are handed over to the taxi driver, school staff/parents/carers, should observe that the driver follows all safety procedures. If there is any relevant information, e.g. communication, behaviour, etc., this can be passed in general terms to the driver, whilst at all times maintaining the confidentiality of private information.
- If a student is travelling by taxi with a chaperone from Belmore School, the chaperone assumes duty of care until the student is handed over to parents or carers.

## **Transportation by Private Vehicle**

- We expect that parents and carers will endeavour to maintain the highest of safety standards when transporting their child to and from school.
- Students who travel in a wheelchair should arrive at the classroom seated and harnessed correctly.
- On arrival, Belmore staff assume duty of care of the student when handed over by the parent or carer.
- When the class staff hand the child over to the parent or carer on departure, it then becomes the parent or carer's responsibility for all aspects of their child's care.