

Walking School Bus – Step-by-step guide

The City of Moonee Valley has produced a useful step-by-step guide for working with schools to develop and implement a WSB program. Note that local conditions may mean that slightly different procedures need to be followed in your area.

- Initial contact is usually made by a parent or a school representative as a direct result of promotion or word of mouth. The WSB officer then meets with stakeholders including parents, principal and teachers involved.
- The school is provided with a WSB brochure to distribute to each family.
- Council presents WSB information session to the school.
- Volunteer training/induction sessions are held at council offices and at the school for all participating volunteers. This includes a 1-hour session including safety training and overview and explanation of volunteer duties.
- All volunteers get a free passport photo for their compulsory 'Working with Children' check.
- Volunteer application forms, agreements, guideline booklets and the health declaration form are printed.
- Council provides audits of all new WSB routes – undertaken by the WSB officer, a traffic engineer, and risk management officer.
- Council launches the program for each new school. The Mayor, council staff and guests attend. A fully funded breakfast is provided.
- WSB signage is presented to each school and erected by council. All participating children receive a free show bag prepared by the council.
- Council provides equipment for all new routes including bags, first-aid kits, hats, water bottles and sunscreen.
- Folders, templates of route details, rosters, attendance sheets and contact details of children and volunteers are provided to volunteers.
- Records are kept by council on all matters relating to volunteers, children and the schools involved.
- Support is given to the schools on an ongoing basis, and can include creating documents for publication, attending information sessions, presentations at assemblies, additional information and training sessions, and support for school administration staff.
- Support and advice is given by council as requested and usually on a daily basis to parents, schools and volunteers.
- An annual recognition dinner is provided to volunteers by council. Many other incentives and events occur throughout the year for the WSB volunteers.