



School Transportation Policy (AY 2024-26)

Introduction

Schools must ensure the safety of all students during their transport to and from school. This policy sets out the minimum obligations by schools with regard the provision of safe, high quality and efficient school bus service.

Purpose

- Outline the responsibility of the school to ensure the safety of students related to transportation.
- Establishment of roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders.

Definitions

Additional Learning Needs	<p>Individual requirements for additional support, modifications, or accommodations within a school setting on a permanent or temporary basis in response to a specific context. This applies to any support required by students of determination and those who have special educational needs and/or additional barriers to learning, access, or interaction in that specific context (e.g., dyslexic, hearing or visually impaired, twice exceptional, or gifted and/or talented).</p> <p>For example, a student with restricted mobility may require lesson accommodations to participate in Physical Education and building accommodations to access facilities but may not require any accommodations in assessments. Equally, a student with hearing impairment may require adaptive and assistive technology to access content in class and may also require physical accommodations (e.g., sit in the front of the class to be able to lip read) to access learning.</p>
Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC)	<p>The authority responsible for ensuring the quality of school bus service provision is in line with global standards. They are responsible for providing and certifying training of school bus personnel and are involved in their licensing processes.</p>
Bus Supervisor	<p>The person responsible for supervising the students on the school bus during the journey.</p>
Driver	<p>The person responsible for driving the school bus during the journey.</p>
Drop-Off Point	<p>A designated location where the operator drops off the student and is absolved of his/ her responsibility.</p>
Integrated Transport Center (ITC)	<p>The authority responsible for regulating the operation of transportation in Abu Dhabi, including school buses.</p>
Journey	<p>Process of transporting students from a pick-up point to a drop-off point using a school bus or other vehicles, regardless of whether it is a free or paid service. This includes journeys to and from schools, as well as to and from school-related events (such as excursions, inter-school competitions, etc.).</p>
Non School Bus Transport	<p>Any mode of transportation that is not a school bus such as scooters, e-scooters, bicycles, etc.</p>
Operators	<p>Any entity licensed by the ITC to provide school bus services, whether it be the school itself or an external entity appointed by it.</p>
Parent-Appointed Responsible Adult	<p>Adult(s) appointed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) to be responsible for their child(ren) in their absence, such as nannies, drivers, etc.</p>

Pick-Up Point	A designated location where the operator picks up the student and assumes his/ her responsibility.
School Bus	A vehicle authorized by the Integrated Transport Center (ITC) to transport students to and from school and/or any other location while under the school's supervision.
School Bus Service	The service of providing school buses and has the same meaning as the term 'School Transport Service' mentioned in the Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
School Transport Coordinator	A school-based role coordinating between the operator, school, and parents to monitor the school bus services.
UAE PASS	A national digital identity and signature solution that enables users to identify themselves to government service providers in all emirates through a smartphone-based authentication.

Policy

1. Scope of Policy

- 1.1 Applicability of Policy: This policy is applicable to all operators and school bus service staff. In case of any contradiction between ADEK and the ITC policies, ITC policies shall prevail.
 1. All operators and school bus service staff shall comply with ITC requirements listed in the Executive Regulation Concerning School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and the *Guidelines for Movement Paths and Starting and Stopping Points for School Transport*. Additionally, operators shall comply with the traffic law requirements of the Abu Dhabi Police.

2. Obligations of Schools

2.1 Provision of School Bus Service and Rider Safety

1. Mandatory Provision of School Bus Service: BRS provides school bus service to the students in line with Article No. (2) of the Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. In addition, the school provides any required support or related aids and services for students with additional learning needs to avail of school bus services. In exceptional cases where it is not feasible to provide school bus service to individual students, the school shall request the ITC to grant an exemption.
2. Rider Safety: BRS is ultimately responsible for the safety of all students and individuals on school buses during the journey, even if the school relies on third-party operators.
3. Training Students for School Bus Service: BRS ensures that operators provide bus safety and pedestrian safety training for students in line with Section 7.2 of the *Guidelines for Movement Paths and Starting and Stopping Points for School Transport*.
4. Student Discipline: BRS ensures that student discipline policies include provisions for student behavior during the journey. Students are expected to treat the school bus environment as an extension of the school environment and to abide by the school rules on student behavior during the journey.
5. Educating Parents about School Bus Service: The School communicates with parents and provides educational information in line with Section 7.1 of the *Guidelines for Movement Paths and Starting and Stopping Points for School Transport*.

2.2 Duration of Journey, and Associated Pick-up and Drop-off Points

1. Maximum Journey Time: The duration of a journey for a school bus shall not exceed 60 minutes from the pick-up point to the final drop-off point in line with

Article No. (10) of the Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in Emirate of Abu Dhabi unless otherwise agreed to by the parents of the students by signing an undertaking.

2. Designated Pick-Up and Drop-Off Points: Students shall be picked up and dropped off at designated pick-up and drop-off points in accordance with Section 3 of the *Guidelines for Movement Paths and Starting and Stopping Points for School Transport*.

2.3 Exclusive Use of School Buses

1. Use of School Buses: School buses shall not be used to transport passengers other than students in line with Article (10) of the Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.

2.4 School Bus Fees

1. School Bus Fees: The school bus fees is proposed by operators based on the ITC School Bus Fee Framework and approved by ADEK.
2. Exceptional Fee Increases: Request for exceptional fee increases shall be approved by ADEK.

2.5 School Buses Owned by Schools

1. School-Owned Buses: BRS adheres to all the ITC regulations and policies that apply, including school bus specifications, maintenance, and record-keeping requirements. The regulator of school bus requirements is the ITC and hence the ITC shall be the authority for related queries.

2.6 Picking Up of Younger Siblings by Elder Siblings

1. Picking Up Younger Siblings: Elder siblings (15 years or above) are permitted to pick up younger siblings (grade 1 and above) in place of a parent-appointed responsible adult only when parents provide a signed consent form to the school. The consent form shall state the following:
 - a. Parent(s) recognize that the elder sibling's maturity level is deemed sufficient for them to provide consent.
 - b. Parent(s) have explained the responsibility to the elder sibling and that the latter is aware of what it entails.
 - c. The school shall not be liable in case of any incidents resulting as a consequence of this policy.

2.7 Grievances and Complaints

1. Handling Parent Concerns: BRS follows a process for handling parent concerns in line with Section 7 of the *Guidelines for Movement Paths and Starting and Stopping Points for School Transport*. The final decision-making authority rests with the Principal or the governing board. Safety shall be the primary consideration when evaluating a complaint, and not personal circumstances or convenience.

2.8 Parking in Schools and Speed Limits in School Zones

1. Designated Parking Lots: BRS has designated parking areas within the school premises for school buses, as well as for staff vehicles, in line with the *BRS Buildings and Facilities Policy*.
2. Speed Limit of Other Vehicles: Vehicles shall adhere to the speed limit of the school zone as set out by the Traffic Law of the Abu Dhabi Police.

2.9 Bus Services for Field Trips

1. Vehicle Specification: Vehicles other than school buses are permitted to transport students for other school-related activities (such as field trips, etc.) only with approval from the ITC.
2. Speed Limit: Vehicles shall adhere to the speed limitations of the road and the vehicle in case of non-regular transportation of students, such as field trips, inter-school activities, etc.
3. Duration of Journey: The 60-minute maximum duration of a journey shall not apply in these cases.

2.10 Non-School Bus Transportation

1. School's Liability: The school is not responsible for the use of non-school bus transportation by students since the school does not have supervisory oversight over the journey. In such cases, the school's supervision begins the moment the student enters the school's premises, and the school has the right to regulate the admissibility, usage of appropriate pathways, and parking of such modes of transportation.
2. Consent Form: The school shall collect a consent form signed by parents stating that they uphold their roles and responsibilities, and the school shall not be liable in case of any incidents resulting from the use of non-school bus transportation.
Additional aspects to be outlined in the consent form based on the type of non-school bus transportation are outlined below:
 - a. Parents understand the implications of distance traveled to school using other non-school bus transportation such as scooters, bicycles, etc.,
 - b. Parents shall ensure compliance with the relevant ITC regulations regarding permits, usage of pathways, etc.
3. Transportation Requirements: The school shall inform parents of the latest requirements regarding the use of non-school bus transportation. The following examples illustrate the criteria that may be applicable to the usage of each of the following modes of transportation during the journey, and they may be subject to change based on the ITC regulations:
 - a. Scooters: Scooters and E-scooters shall only be allowed for students who are at least 16 years old on cycling paths at a speed limit of 20km/h.
 - b. Bicycles: Bicycles shall be used on cycling paths. Appropriate parent/adult supervision shall be required for students under the age of 12 who use bicycles as a mode of transportation to and from schools.

3. School Bus Service Staff

3.1 Staffing Requirements

1. Driver: The requirements for Drivers are as per Article (6) of the Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. BRS ensures the following:
 - a. Drivers have obtained a QCC license followed by the ITC license.
 - b. Drivers are familiar with the [BRS Student Protection Policy](#).
 - c. Drivers are registered on PASS.
 - d. They have considered the long processing time for the licensing procedures and planned their school bus service accordingly.

2. Bus Supervisor: The requirements for Bus Supervisors are as per Article (7) of the Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi and Section 4.3 of *Guidelines for Movement Paths and Starting and Stopping Points for School Transport*. BRS ensures the following:
 - a. Appoint a Bus Supervisor for each bus used for transporting students aged 11 years or below.
 - b. Only female Bus Supervisors are employed, except for all-male school buses with Cycle 2 and 3 students where a male supervisor may be employed.
 - c. Bus supervisors shall have obtained a QCC license followed by the ITC license.
 - d. Bus Supervisors are familiar with the [BRS Student Protection Policy](#).
 - e. Bus Supervisors are registered on PASS. Schools shall consider the long processing time for the licensing procedures and plan their school bus services accordingly.

3. School Transport Coordinator: BRS has appointed one member of the staff to be the School Transport Coordinator. The School ensures that this person is familiar with the [BRS Student Protection Policy](#), is registered on PASS, and can adequately speak, read, and write in the language of instruction at the school.

3.2 Communication with Schools and Parents

1. Bus Supervisor: The role entails regular communication with the parent(s) and the school regarding the following aspects:
 - a. Notifying the parent-appointed responsible adult regarding delays of the school bus for pick-up and drop-off.
 - b. Notifying the school and parent in case of the absence of the parent-appointed responsible adult at the drop-off point.
 - c. Notifying the School Transport Coordinator of any misconduct by students.
 - d. Other aspects related to the daily journey as required.

2. Driver: The role entails reporting to the School Transport Coordinator any incidents while driving the school bus and misconduct by students.

3. School Transport Coordinator: The school provides operators and parents of students with the contact details of the School Transport Coordinator and ensures that he/she is the point of contact for parents on matters beyond the remit of the Bus Supervisor, such as an emergency or system-wide issues outlined as follows:
 - a. Delays related to fog or accidents.
 - b. Changes in the schedule of school buses.
 - c. Other emergency or system-wide issues that may arise.

4. Compliance

- 4.1 This policy is effective as of the start of the Academic Year 2024/ 25 (Fall term). The school is expected to be fully compliant with this policy by the start of the Academic Year 2025/ 26 (Fall term).

Approved By:

Dr.Rishikesh Padegaonkar
Principal
Bright Riders School

Next Review: AY 2026-2027

