



مدرسة الإتقان الأمريكية  
ALITQAN AMERICAN SCHOOL

# SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION POLICY

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

From Flexebee (2021), there are 6 principles in mind when safeguarding children.

1. **Empowerment.** “It is important for health staff to create an environment that empowers children to have autonomy over their own decisions, allowing them to say 'no' or speak up when faced with uncomfortable positions.”
2. **Protection.** “Children, especially those who are victims of abuse, need to be provided with the support they need to prevent further abuse. These need to be key measures such as access to healthcare, provision of social workers and other key child protection services.”
3. **Prevention.** “All school staff need to ensure that they prevent abuse or harm of any kind from happening to children in their care. This can be done through training staff, raising awareness of abuse and making sure that there is enough information and it is easily accessible.”
4. **Proportionality.** “Similar to risk assessment, proportionality ensures that all individuals in the school are taken into account when dealing with issues of abuse and safeguarding. Some individuals may face different levels of risk and this needs to be understood and mitigated as much as possible in order to create a safe space and prevent further abuse.”
5. **Partnerships.** “Safeguarding and ensuring successful child protection requires more hands-on deck. By forming partnerships with key stakeholders, local communities and relevant entities (child protection units, social workers, health care etc.), abuse, and those guilty of it can be more easily identified, aiding towards the prevention of further abuse. Partnerships allow for everyone to work together in creating a safe environment within and beyond the organisation.”
6. **Accountability.** “Partnerships also reinforce that we are all accountable for the safety of the children around us. Everyone has a role to play towards ensuring the safeguarding and protection of the most vulnerable members of our communities. As such, accountability is about taking responsibility for our actions and ensuring that we remain aware of abusive actions, not only to identify them but also to not inflict the same violent behaviour on those around us.”

## **SAFEGUARDING DEFINITION**

“Safeguarding is set of policies, procedures and practices employed to actively prevent harm, abuse and distress.” On the other hand, child safeguarding “is specifically focused on preventative actions to ensure that all children are protected from deliberate or unintentional acts that leads to the risk or actual harm” (Child Safety, n.d.)

## **A SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

“A safe learning environment covers the physical and cyber spaces students engage in for school activities. Schools develop school wide rules and consequences in collaboration with their school community. A positive learning environment supports students' personal and social development and staff wellbeing. Schools provide rich learning environments that are open, respectful, caring and safe”. (*Supporting student health and wellbeing policy statement, 2019*)

## **POLICY INTENT**

The policy is developed to serve as guide for the development and implementation of programs and activities that are designed to promote a safe environment in school. All stakeholders are expected to have their commitment over the implementation of the policy stated herein.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

1. [Child Rights: Wadeema Law](#)
2. [Child Protection Dimension](#)
3. [Child Safety](#)
4. [Regulations for the School Transport Activity in the Emirates of Sharjah](#)

## **POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy is implemented along with the wellbeing and e-safety policy of the school. All stakeholders are expected to adhere to this policy with full fidelity.

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed periodically and not less frequently than once a year.

Date of Completion:	30 September 2020
Date of Current version:	15 March 2022
Date of Next Review:	15 March 2023

## AIAS SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE

1. The committee who will develop, implement and monitor the implementation of the policy shall be named as AIAS Safeguarding Committee spearheaded by a EHS Coordinator appointed by the school through the school Principal.
2. EHS Coordinator
  - a. Takes lead responsibility for safeguarding in the school in strong coordination with the section / educational supervisors and social workers / guidance counsellor.
  - b. Is alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and for all children in school.
  - c. Keeps written and digital records of all documents related to safeguarding, ensuring that such records are stored securely, flagged and monitored.
  - d. Monitors the delegation of staff duty in the morning and afternoon and coordinates with the section/educational supervisors of any concerns related to it.
  - e. Takes the lead in risk management procedures in school.
  - f. Has a working knowledge of relevant UAE laws, education inspection, process, and inter-agency support.
3. The committee includes subcommittee for the following areas to be headed by position indicated herein:
  - a. Health Services: School Doctor
  - b. Child Protection: Child Protection Coordinator
  - c. School Transportation: Transport Coordinator
  - d. Online Safety: E-Safety Coordinator

## GENERAL POLICIES

### Section 1. Risk Assessments and Risk Management

1. It is mandatory for the school staff to perform risk assessment prior to the (a) opening of the school in each term of the academic year, (b) field trip outside the school and (c) conduct of the school events / activities.
2. Risk assessment should be assigned by the school appointed Event and/or EHS coordinator.
3. The commencement of and trips or events in and out of the school will only be allowed if the team has identified it as safe for children and staff. Risk assessment report should be attached to the event proposal prior to the approval. No event or activity be conducted without it approved by the Principal.
4. All activities must promote the safety, inclusion and equitable participation of all children across all of their intersecting identities, including but not limited to disability, racial & ethnic heritage, national status, tribal affiliations, religious beliefs, languages, gender or gender association, medical/physical conditions.

All programs and activities shall be assessed to ensure consideration of such factors from its inception through delivery. This is not an exhaustive list.

## Section 2. Electrical Safety

To ensure students and teacher's safety in the classroom; it is mandatory to avoid electrical wires or extension cords from the teachers' laptop or device hanging across the classroom including those near the doorways that may cause an accident. When connecting laptop's charger to electrical socket, teacher's table must be pushed to the wall. Laptop charger can be connected to the same electrical outlet of the TV through multiple input adapter which can be requested when needed. Electrical safety is monitored by the supervisors each section.

## Section 3. Emergency Code

1. AIAS must use the color code below shall be used when identifying the emergency case:

Code	Description
BLUE	Medical emergency
BLACK	Fire and/or smoke
ORANGE	Hazardous materials
BROWN	Severe weather condition

2. This code can be declared by the EHS supervisor depending on the emergency case. Medical staff such as nurse and school doctor can declare "BLUE" by themselves if it merits the situation.
3. Any staff who identify an emergency case as indicated in the code above should notify the EHS supervisor who will in turn identify the emergency code. In the absence of the EHS, staff should notify the reception who will call the emergency team to further assess the situation.
4. Once the emergency case is assessed and the code is determined. The EHS supervisor or the school nurse, as in the case of BLUE, should immediately notify the reception of the emergency status. As soon as the reception staff receive this, she is required to alert the bus coordinator, EHS supervisor and the SLT to be in the school lobby to further assess the situation.
5. Emergency team shall comprise of the EHS Supervisor, Bus Coordinator and the members of the SLT. All staff must know the contact number of the EHS Supervisor in case of emergency. In the case of FIRE ALARM, Evacuation shall be implemented as per school procedure.
6. All offices with access to outside calls must have a list of emergency hotline numbers. The reception counter in the school lobby should always have a person on duty during school hours. This counter should not be left unattended from 7:00 am to 3:00 pm daily.

7. Bus coordinator should ensure that there is always available stand-by-car in the school to be used for emergency cases during school hours. Principal permission needs to be secured if this car will be used for any other school related business.
8. Any violations in this instruction will subject the staff for a strict- disciplinary sanction or can be further penalized by salary deduction depending on the severity of the offense.

#### **Section 4. Partnership**

Schools facilitate collaborative and productive partnerships with and between students, teachers, parents and carers, support staff and community groups, and engage a range of school-based services and external agencies to support the health of students and their families.

#### **Section 5. Training**

All staff should receive training and contextualize support in order to prevent, report and respond to safeguarding concerns. The number of training hours related to safeguarding should be based on the needs but must not be less than 10 hours (10 Credit Hours) in for safeguarding committee and not less than 5 hours (5 Credit Hours) for teachers and administrators in an academic year.

#### **Section 6. Dissemination / Awareness Raising**

1. School staff, teachers, administrators, parents and students must be made aware of the procedures for reporting concerns, complaints and violations of this policy.
2. A monthly bulletin of information must be released through the school social media and class dojo in a different section as against the performance indicators to make the entire stakeholders aware of the progress of the section.

## **SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

#### **Section 1. Responsibilities and Accountabilities**

- a. Parents
  - Adheres to the transportation policy as indicated herein
  - Read any updates related to transportation and abide by the instruction stated therein
  - Inform the transport coordinator of any change of personal details such as phone number and or email address so the team can contact them in case of emergency
- b. Students
  - Come on the designated pick up and drop off points ready and prepared for the bus at the time specified.
  - Sit in the place allocated by the bus nannies.
  - Buckle the seatbelt.

- Abide by all school rules and keep the bus clean. No eating or drinking on the bus.
- Always keep their head and hands inside the bus.
- Not improper language used on the bus or school
- Be polite at all times.
- Not speak to the driver.
- If assistance is needed, ask the bus nanny.
- Wear school uniform when using the bus service.

#### c. Bus Nannies

- ensure that all children have exited the bus upon arrival at school, and after all home drop offs. If a student has not been collected on the return to home journey, the nannies must ensure to return the students back to school.
- Use MAAMAN system with the school gadget to enter the attendance record.
- keep accurate records of attendance, and submit daily attendance sheets to the Transport Coordinator.
- assign a student a seat in the bus which the student must use. They should strictly observe the seating arrangement.
- are responsible for ensuring the safety of all students, and do this by enforcing the Bus Behaviour Policy
- record and report any incidents of behaviour that threatens the safety of others on the bus to the Administration
- ensure no child is left behind at anytime
- follow the COVID-19 health guidelines as mandated by SPEA and must be updated from time to time

#### d. School Drivers

- ensure that their bus is fully compliant as per guidelines and regulations of the relevant authority, including the length of time students are riding buses.
- follow the route determined by the Transport Coordinator.
- ensure that their bus is clean, tidy and safe at all times.
- ensure the safety of the bus riders including the bus nannies while on the road.
- follow the COVID-19 health guidelines as mandated by SPEA and must be updated from time to time
- ensure all rules are abided by Sharjah transport
- ensure that all students in the bus are safe in case of emergency

#### e. Transport Coordinator

- ensure that Bus Nannies, School Drivers are qualified, trained and licensed.
- supervises Bus Nannies and School Drivers to ensure that they are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities at all times.

- determines the transportation route of each bus, and the student allocation to each bus.
- checks the accuracy of the attendance record in MAAMAN and Orizon
- ensure that Parents have access to the Mobile Phone corresponding with the students bus number and Bus Nannies.
- liaise with parents regarding any request for permanent changes of drop-off or pick-up location. Such requests will be approved or refused at the discretion of the Administration on a case-by-case basis, but cannot be guaranteed.
- will liaise with parents regarding any request for temporary changes of drop-off or pick-up location. Such requests will be approved or refused at the discretion of the Administration on a case-by-case basis.
- supervise Bus Escorts to ensure that all children have exited the buses upon arrival at school, and after all home drop offs.
- is responsible for the collection and collation of information from the Bus Nannies daily attendance sheets.
- liaise with any parent and the school social worker and supervisor who raises a complaint regarding the buses as per complaint policy procedure.
- receives, addresses and resolves complaints related to bus transport.

## **Section 2. General Provisions**

- a. AIAS has the right to organize the bus route as per the school rules. The school provides round-trip transportation services for all the students and apologizes for unavailability of one-way service.
- b. Bus Nannies and school Drivers must have their appropriate licenses from relevant local authorities such as Sharjah Transport Authority and Ajman Transport Authority (for buses moving to Ajman) .
- c. Bus nannies should put the sign “NO STUDENT ON THE BOARD” when all children have exited the bus upon arrival at school, and after all home drop offs.
- d. Only students registered in the school bus are allowed to use the school bus service in any circumstances. Students should refrain from transferring from one bus to another without permission. In case it is deemed necessary, a letter of request should be forwarded to the transport coordinator for review and further approval.
- e. Attendance of the students in the bus must be recorded daily upon their entry to school bus using MAAMAN system. They should also obtain another attendance checklist in paper which will be used to record in the Orizon system.
- f. Students will be dropped off or picked up on the location where they registered. Temporary change of these will require submission of request for approval within at least 24 hours of the required change. Request must be forwarded to the transport coordinator if a change is inevitable due to acceptable reasons Such



requests will be approved or refused at the discretion of the administration on a case-to-case basis.

- g. The transportation coordinator shall be informed within a weeks notice at least if the residential address is changed. To change the bus for the student, **the school is not committed to providing the service at the new address in case of unavailability.**
- h. The school has the right during the academic year and without prior consent at any time, to transfer the student from one bus to another, or change his/her seat, or change the bus route and its timings if there was a need, upon the management discretion.
- i. The school behavior policy is applied to the school bus. Any students who break the rules or behaves in a manner that threatens the safety of others on the bus will be reported to the administration by the bus nannies and will receive a disciplinary warning after investigation. AIAS can deny the privilege to use the school bus services permanently if has been decided upon by the Discipline Committee and in consultation with SPEA.
- j. Complaints in the bus at any forms must be communicated to the transport coordinator and the complaint will be dealt with appropriately as soon as possible and the parents will be informed of the results.
- k. Upon arrival to the pickup and drop off points, bus nannies should move out of the bus to assist the student and ensure students are safe as they alight in or out of the bus.
- l. If the parents desire to take their children early from school due to an emergency; they should notify the bus supervisor ideally a day before or at least one hour before.

### **Section 3. Pick-up and Drop-Off Arrangements**

- a. In the morning, students and parents or guardians should be ready for their school bus to arrive at their designated pick-up areas at the allocated time. In the same manner, parents or guardians in the afternoon should be in their drop-off points to receive their children. Bus users of until grade 3 should be received by their attending parents / guardians registered in school, otherwise students will be sent back to the school.
- b. Bus users in KG1 to Grade 4 who are scheduled to take the bus home will be escorted from their classrooms to the bus with their assigned duty teachers.
- c. Bus nannies are stationed in the bus with children until they arrive at the designated drop-off areas.

- d. The school has the right to identify the area where the students be dropped off or picked up in consideration of the safety of the children particularly in two-way streets. Parents have to follow strictly these identified areas while the nannies have to escort students when coming up or going down from the bus.

#### **Section 4. Conditions when using the School Bus**

- a. Everyone is enjoined to respect the staff operating the bus service including transport coordinator, bus nannies and school drivers. Students should be committed to observe ethics on board, not to extend hands outside the bus windows, not to make noise, no fighting or any form of altercation with anyone, no standing and transferring seats or any action that might destruct the driver.
- b. Parents accept that the bus accommodates a mix of gender. KG students are given the priority to sit in front of the bus followed by junior students, girls and then the students in the boy's section.
- c. The school shall ensure that buses are always in a good condition before and after use. Students are responsible to keep the cleanliness of the bus while using it.
- d. Bus drivers are not allowed to answer calls during the duration of the trip. Notably, the traffic law of the country prevents the driver from using a mobile phone during driving for safety concerns.
- e. Parents are off-limits inside the bus for any reason nor are allowed to talk to any other students in the bus.
- f. Parents should remind their children to stay in their assigned seats during the trip, be courteous and respectful to the drivers and bus attendants, and shall respect and abide by the bus rules.
- g. Parents may permit the students to bring a bottle of water and they can consume them while on the bus, however, their children must throw their trashes in the bins.
- h. The school bus will wait not more than 3 minutes from the assigned pick-up points. Otherwise, the school has the right to leave after that duration.
- i. Parents of KG to grade 3 should take their children from their drop off points and will not be allowed to leave the bus on their own. Otherwise, the school shall send these students back to the school and the parents are required to take them from there.
- j. Students are liable to pay any damage they have made on the school (damage on seat cover, broken windows and the like) bus upon judicious investigation.

#### **Section 5. Parental Agreement on Bus Service**

Parents that have registered their son/daughter with the bus service of AIAS

therefore accept the rules and regulations of AIAS, as well as the relevant local authority of the Emirates.

By registering, Parents pledge full compliance with the following:

- a. fully committed to the policy of school transportation as stipulated herein;
- b. accept that the bus will not wait more than three minutes from the assigned pick-up time for their son/daughter in the morning.
- c. will notify the Transport Coordinator of the new residential address if changed at least with one month notice. **The school is not committed to providing the service at the new address in case of unavailability**, Parents need to provide clear and accurate data (contact numbers, home address, email accounts) and update these if changes arise.
- d. fully understand that for the safety and convenience of all the students and parents, buses will move no later than 2:00 pm and late students will be left in the school. Parents accept that it will be their responsibility to collect their son/daughter from the school if he/she does not go to the bus on time and is left behind. KG and junior section students are escorted to the bus by the duty staff and therefore will not miss the departure of the buses.
- e. are fully aware of, and accept, the fees for the transportation services and the payment deadline.
- f. accept that they must apply to the Transport Coordinator in writing to cancel a bus service, and understand that their son/daughter's bus registration is only cancelled from the date of the application.
- g. accept the refund policy of the School for bus cancellation.
- h. submit an official complaint to the Transport Coordinator if any bus issue arises. Complaints should not be discussed directly with the Bus Driver. Should a complaint not be resolved, parents should then follow the Complaints Policy.
- i. fully aware that the safety of their son/daughter while waiting for or coming from the bus is their responsibility.
- j. fully aware of the rules and regulations regarding living in a compound. It is parental responsibility to wait for their son/daughter near the main gate, knowing that many compounds do not allow school buses to enter their premises.
- k. fully aware that AIAS has the right to ban any child from using the school transport service if they repeatedly violate the safety regulations or endangers himself/herself or others while on the bus.
- l. fully aware that parents have no right to step onto the bus at any time, to

address another child for any reason, or to threaten the bus nannies or school driver at any time.

## REFERENCES

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