	<b>Raha International School</b>		
	<b>Occupational Safety and Health Management System</b>		
	<b>School Bus Safe Practices and Procedures</b>		
	<b>Document No: RIS-OSH-P09-SOP14</b>		



Document Name	School Bus Safe Practices and Procedures		
Document Number	RIS-OSH-P09-SOP14		
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03	School Bus Safe Practices and Procedures	03	03/05/2023	02/05/2024	Whole document
04	School Bus Safe Practices and Procedures	04	02/05/2024	01/05/2025	Revision

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## 1. Purpose

To establish and maintain a systematic plan for school bus safe practices and have operating procedures in place for any Taaleem employees, students, contractors, or other stakeholders using or involved with the operation of school buses. All persons supervising or involved in the operation of the school buses must constantly review this manual and ensure that they are properly aware of any updates and strictly comply with the practices and procedures outlined within this document.

## 2. Scope

Applicable to school management, staff, transportation coordinator, bus drivers, bus attendants, and students. This manual covers the following areas:

- Roles and responsibilities
- Resources and Equipment
- Compliance Documentation
- Bus Specifications
- Bus Inspections
- Behaviour
- Bus Emergencies
- Pickup and Drop Off Plan
- Emergency Contact Details

## 3. Definitions

**Accident:** An unplanned, unwanted event which leads to injury, damage or loss.

**Near Miss:** An unplanned event, event series or condition that occurred at the workplace which, although not resulting in any injury or illness; had the potential to do so.

**First Aid:** Any immediate (one-time) care or treatment given to a person suffering from an illness or injury, until professional medical care can be provided. Such treatment may be considered first aid even if it is provided by a healthcare professional.

**First Aid Injury:** Is a minor work-related injury or illness that calls for only simple “first aid” treatment and does not call for follow-up treatment by a health-care professional. First aid injuries do not result in lost time from work.

**Serious OSH Incident:** A work related injury that requires hospital treatment, or a hospital visit, or an incident that results in fatality, serious injuries or serious occupational injuries and may require notification to the authorities.


**Electronic Stop Rod:** The automatic device fitted to the bus used to alert other motorists that the bus is stopped and either picking up or dropping off students.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1. Executive Principal or Principal

- The Executive Principal or Principal is responsible for having bus safe practices and procedures in place.
- To ensure that high risk areas are suitably monitored by school staff during pickup and drop off.
- To approve budgets for the provision of equipment, training, and implementation of procedures.

The school Principal is solely entitled to deny any student school transport services if he/she makes any of the following offences:

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- If a student causes the school bus to be delayed more than three times during the academic year.
- If a student fails to follow instructions while onboard, violates safety rules or poses danger to others during the bus trip.
- If a student refuses to ride the bus from the student's collection point that was agreed upon in advance.
- If a student leaves the school bus before reaching his/her designated drop off point without permission.
- If a student persistently misbehaves on the school bus.

#### **4.2. Head of Business Operations / Operations Manager**

- To ensure that there are suitable procedures in place to facilitate school bus safe practices.
- To approve budgets for the provision of equipment, training, and implementation of procedures.
- To make sure that the school bus safe practices and procedures manual is reviewed and amended when updates are necessary.
- To review and confirm the receipt and validity of the required compliance documentation.
- To ensure that monthly checks are being carried out on the buses and that any concerns are raised to the transport provider and the health and safety and compliance manager.


#### **4.3. Facilities Manager (OSH Officer)**

- To oversee the daily implementation of the school bus safe practices and procedures.
- To liaise with the Principal and ensure that high risk areas are suitably monitored during pickup and drop off.
- To review and update the school bus safe practices and procedures manual when changes are necessary.
- To oversee the collection of all compliance documentation from the transport company.
- To carry out and keep a record of monthly bus inspections, any issues should be reported to the transport provider and the health and safety and compliance manager.
- Ensure there is a direct means of communication between the driver and the transport coordinator throughout the trip.
- Liaise with the transport coordinator and ensure that appropriate seating plans and bus routes are in place for all buses.
- To act as the liaison with the transport company for all issues relating to bus transport.

#### **4.4. Bus Drivers**

The most important criteria governing all decisions must be student safety. The below outlines the main duties and expectations of the drivers, duties are not limited to the list below and other expectations will be in place as per their employment contract.

- Read understand and strictly comply with the practices and procedures in this document.
- Maintain a direct line of communication with the transport coordinator at all times.
- Use the electronic stop rod when picking up and dropping off students.
- Correctly wear the official uniform while practicing school transport activities.
- Abstain from smoking, eating, and drinking whilst driving and when onboard the bus.
- Maintain the school bus in a clean condition.
- Arrive on time and inform the transport coordinator of any delay.

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- Drop off and pickup students at their designated bus stops only as per the approved route.
- Drive the bus at a maximum speed limit of 80 kph and adhere to all relevant speed limits.
- Ensure all compliance documentation is provided to the school.
- Check that the bus is not overloaded beyond its prescribed capacity.
- Ensure that students are seated in accordance with the bus seating plan wearing seatbelts.
- Quickly deal with any emergency cases and contact the concerned parties (appendix 3) to take necessary actions.
- Ensure that when the journey is finished, the bus is checked clear of all students and the 'bus checked clear sign' is displayed in the rear window.
- Report any incidents including the misconduct of students or bus attendants to the school Facilities Manager.

#### **4.5. Bus Attendants (Bus Nannies)**


The most important criteria governing all decisions must be student safety. The below outlines the main duties and expectations of the bus attendants (also known as bus assistants or bus nannies), duties are not limited to the list below and other expectations will be in place as per their employment contract.

- Read, understand and strictly comply with the practices and procedures in this document.
- Maintain safety and usher students to their seats.
- Ensure students sit in the correct seats.
- Students are to remain seated and have their seatbelt on at all times.
- Maintain an accurate register of children on the bus.
- Quickly deal with any emergency cases and contact the concerned parties to take necessary actions.
- Collect students from the agreed pick-up location in the morning.
- Help students boarding / alighting from the bus.
- Collect students at the end of the day from the agreed location, take a register and report any absentees, monitor behaviour, and take the correct safe route to the bus.
- Help students and families cross the street when appropriate and ensure they are collected by their families at the agreed drop off location with all their personal belongings.
- No child should be left without adult supervision unless they are at an appropriate age to do so.
- When the journey has finished, ensure that the bus is checked clear of all students and that they have taken their bags and personal belongings. The 'bus checked clear sign' is to be displayed in the rear window.
- Report any misconduct by students or the bus driver to the school Facilities Manager.

#### **4.6. Transport Coordinator**

In order to be able to provide transport services to an excellent standard, each school will have a qualified individual as a transport coordinator appointed by the transport provider, and they shall be responsible for the following:

- Acting as the direct point of contact to all parents and staff regarding bus transport related issues.
- Be responsible for mapping out the routes of the school's buses, subject to school management approval.
- Create seating plans for all school buses at the beginning of the academic year.

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- Quickly deal with any emergency cases and contact the concerned parties (appendix 3) to take necessary actions.
- Maintain a direct line of communication with the bus drivers at all times.
- Ensure that male or female bus attendants are assigned to each bus in accordance with the local regulations.
- Ensure that regular maintenance is carried out on the buses at the prescribed intervals, replacement buses should be sourced when necessary.
- Ensure all drivers and bus attendants wear the correct uniform when on duty.
- Facilitate monthly bus inspections in coordination with the Facilities Manager.
- Ensure all compliance documentation is collected and provided to the schools without delay.
- Ensure that all relevant licences and permits are available for presentation in each bus.
- Facilitate the provision of CCTV when it is requested by the school.

#### **4.7. Students and Parents**

Parents and students shall assume the following responsibilities:

- Parents are responsible to deliver their children to the agreed bus pickup location at the correct time (5 minutes before). If there is a delay it will become the parent's responsibility to safely deliver their children to the school.
- Parents should help in training and educating their children on the importance of traffic safety, and how to wait for and ride the school bus.
- Parents should notify the school administration of any offence or negligence from the driver.
- Parents should collect their children at the agreed drop off location at the correct time (5 minutes before).
- Students should maintain a clean bus and abide by all rules, they should inform school management or their parents if they have concerns regarding the behaviour of the driver, bus attendant or other students.

### **5. Bus Specifications**

#### **5.1. Bus Exterior:**

- The colour of the school bus should be yellow without the overlapping of any other colours.
- The phrase school bus must be written in black, in both Arabic and English. It shall be written on the upper most part on the front and the rear of the bus and in the middle on both sides of the bus.
- The bus shall be fitted with an electronic stop rod on the exterior positioned behind the driver's door.
- Window tinting of buses should not exceed 30%.
- It is strictly prohibited to place bars on windows internally or externally.
- The bus number shall be displayed.
- The mirror system shall show all sides of the bus.
- Light signal systems to be as follows:
  - Dual red-light indicator on the upper most part of front and rear side of the bus.
  - Dual yellow light indicators on the bottom part of the front and rear side of the bus.
  - All light indicators must flash when the bus stops.

#### **5.2. Bus Interior:**

- The number of seats specified by the manufacturing company must be adhered to, (collapsible middle seats should not be used).
- Each bus must have air conditioning adjusted so the temperature does not exceed 24°C.
- The doors of the bus must be fitted with handrails to assist with access and egress.
- The side armrests, ashtrays, and any other solid materials must be removed from the back of the seats.
- Windows should not be able to be opened by more than 10cm from either the top, bottom or sides and no curtains should be fixed on the windows.
- The floor of the bus must be covered by inflammable and non-slippery rubber.
- The door opening and closing mechanism must be controlled by the driver.
- The bus should be fitted with an internal camera that allows the recording of the bus, records should be kept for not less than 180 days.
- There shall be places for students to place bags without hindering movement onboard. They must also be secure and not fall on the students in case of sudden braking, accidents or during the normal movement of the bus.


### **5.3. Bus Safety Standards:**

- Operational life for school buses should not exceed 10 years, the operational life of the bus may be extended for 5 additional years subject to licencing authority approval.
- The maximum speed of the bus must not exceed 80/kph and a speed control device should be installed.
- Each bus must maintain a first aid kit proportionate to the number of seats.
- A fire extinguisher (at least 6kg capacity) should be provided. Two extinguishers should be provided on buses with over 50 passengers.
- Buses must have emergency exits proportionate to the number of passengers and clear signs should indicate exits.
- 2 buckle safety seat belts must be fitted to all passenger seats, the middle seat in the last row and the driver's seat must be fitted with a 3-point safety belt. Children of less than 4 (Pre-school/ Nursery) shall be provided with 3-point safety seat belts and a child safe seta system also known as a UAS universal anchoring system.
- Where there are emergency windows, a break hammer or suitable mechanism shall be available and should not pose any danger to passengers.
- There should be no sharp edges on the interior or exterior of the bus.
- The bus should have a reflective emergency triangle to display in the event of a breakdown.
- The bus shall contain a global positioning system (GPS), allowing the bus to be found and to record the buses speed whilst driving.
- Maximum journey times are recommended as follows:
  - Students up to 12 years – not more than 60 minutes
  - Students aged more than 12 years- not more than 75 minutes

## **6. Compliance Documentation**

All compliance documentation should be collected and provided to the school by the transport coordinator. The Facilities Manger shall oversee the collection of this documentation and conduct checks on its validity. The documents that are required to be collected are detailed below.

### **6.1. School Bus**

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- Bus registration card.
- Insurance policy.
- RTA NOC

#### **6.2. Bus Drivers**

- Emirates ID
- Occupational health card
- Driving license
- RTA permit / ITC permit
- Police clearance

#### **6.3. Bus Attendants**

- Emirates ID
- Occupational health card
- RTA permit / ITC permit
- Police clearance

### **7. Bus Inspection**

The facilities manager is responsible for carrying out and keeping a record of monthly bus inspections. Each bus should be inspected against the checklist at appendix 2 and a record of inspections should be maintained ready for presentation during an inspection or audit.

Any issues with the buses should be reported to the transport coordinator and health and safety and compliance manager. If a bus is found to be in an unsafe condition it should not be used under any circumstances and the transport company should be contacted to provide a replacement vehicle.

### **8. Behaviour Policy**

All buses should be equipped with a CCTV system to assist in monitoring behaviour on the bus. When footage is required following an incident it can be requested from the transport company to help with incident investigation.

#### **8.1. Students Behaviour**


- It is strictly prohibited to bring parents or outsiders onto the school bus.
- The bus must not be left without the driver's consent, unauthorised stop requests are prohibited.
- The instructions of the bus drivers and bus attendant's must be followed at all times.
- No part of the body should be put out of the window at any time.
- Students should enter and exit the school bus using a single queue in an orderly fashion.
- Students should remain seated and wear seat belts at all times.
- Eating and drinking on the bus is not permitted.

Any unacceptable behaviour whilst riding the school bus will be escalated to the education team within the school.

### **9. Bus Emergencies**

In the event a bus emergency such as a breakdown, accident, or other incident it is the priority to ensure the safety of all students and staff involved. The correct responses to take in the event of an emergency are detailed below.



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### 9.1. Accidents

- The driver and bus attendant should assess the damage and attend to anyone that may be hurt. They will determine whether it is safer to remain on the bus or if an evacuation is required. Keeping children on the bus is the best course of action if it does not expose them to unnecessary risk or injury, it may be more hazardous if students are asked to disembark the bus.
- The driver must position the bus in a safe location preferably on the hard shoulder or at the side of the road.
- The driver must display hazard warning lights to indicate to other motorists that the bus is in a dangerous position.
- As soon as it is safely possible to do so, the emergency services should be contacted, further support should be requested by passing preliminary information to the emergency contacts detailed in appendix 3.
- The driver must switch off the engine and remove the keys, the emergency reflective triangle should be placed at least 10 metres away from the rear of the vehicle.
- Students shall not be allowed to leave the bus unless it is absolutely necessary, students should remain seated if an evacuation is not required, under no circumstances are students to remain unsupervised.
- It is important that the bus driver and bus attendants reassure the students to keep them calm whilst waiting for help to arrive.
- The bus attendant shall liaise with the schools to provide a list of children riding the bus at the time of the accident.
- A replacement bus shall be arranged as soon as possible, this should reach the scene within 30 minutes.
- Following the event, a report must be completed in accordance with the guidance in TG-OSH-12 Incident Reporting and Near Misses. Subsequent police reports can be attached to this document.

### 9.2. Accidents Requiring Evacuation

When determining if there is a requirement to evacuate the bus, the following factors shall be taken into consideration:

- Presence of fire or anticipated fire.
- Leaking fuel or the smell of leaking fuel.
- Stability of the bus or likelihood it will tip or roll over.
- The likelihood that the bus will be hit by another vehicle.
- It may be safer to remain on the bus to keep students away from speeding traffic.

The driver and bus attendant will make this assessment considering the best course of action for the safety of the students. If an evacuation is required, the following additional factors shall be considered.

- If possible, the bus attendant shall take the passenger list to ensure all students are accounted.
- The driver and bus attendant shall inform the students of the safe route to be taken when disembarking the bus and which emergency exit to use.
- The students shall be directed to a safe location at least 100 metres from the bus, when exiting the driver shall stay at the front of the line and the bus attendant shall remain at the rear.

### 9.3. Breakdown

The following procedures are to be followed if a bus becomes inoperative as a result of a mechanical breakdown:

- The driver shall position the bus in a safe location preferably on the hard shoulder or at the side of the road.

- The driver shall display hazard warning lights to indicate to other motorists that the bus is in a dangerous position.
- The driver shall switch off the engine and remove the keys, the emergency reflective triangle should be placed at least 10 metres away from the rear of the vehicle.
- As soon as it is safe to do so further support should be requested by passing preliminary information to the emergency contacts detailed in appendix 3. The emergency services shall be contacted if required.
- A replacement bus shall be arranged as soon as possible, this should reach the scene within 30 minutes.
- It is important that the bus driver and bus attendants reassure the students to keep them calm whilst waiting for the replacement bus to arrive.

## 10. Security and Threat Awareness

School buses present an inviting target for terrorists, individuals in crisis, and people with mental or emotional disorders. Buses are appealing because they are relatively vulnerable, allow for easy access, and represent an emotional target capable of demoralising the community. Likewise, they present an easily accessible target for noncustodial parents in crisis, and mentally unstable individuals who wish to harm others. For these reasons, drivers and bus attendants shall be cognisant of their surroundings at all times along with the condition of the bus.

### 10.1. Security Readiness

- The driver shall remove keys for the ignition when the bus is unattended.
- The driver shall conduct pre-trip and post-trip inspections.
- The driver and bus attendant shall be aware of people and activities in the surrounding area and take note of any suspicious or unusual behaviour.

Possible suspicious activities include:

- Exhibiting disruptive or distracting behaviour.
- Showing unusual interest in employees and/or students.
- Soliciting information about school, facilities, buses, or schedules for no apparent reason.
- Taking photographs/video of people, equipment or facilities.
- Abandoning an item and leaving the scene quickly.
- Wearing irregular/disproportionate clothing for body type or weather.
- Carrying irregular, inappropriate, or overweight luggage/bags.

### 10.2. Reporting and Responding to Suspicious People and Activities


If the bus driver or attendant note a person behaving in a suspicious manner:

- Only approach if you are comfortable doing so.
- Helpfully challenge the person - ask if they need assistance or directions.
- If response is refusal to answer or aggressiveness, withdraw immediately.
- Notify authorities.
- Never be confrontational or attempt to physically detain anyone.

### 10.3. Suspicious Vehicles

The following are indicators of suspicious vehicles:

- Repeatedly seen in vicinity or seen following or shadowing school buses.
- Parked for extended periods in unusual places.

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- Riding low on springs, especially in the rear.
- Accompanied by unusual odours, such as fertilizer, nitro methane or other fuel-like odours.
- Occupants show signs of stress, are deceptive/reluctant to answer questions.

The SCRIM format detailed below can ensure that the correct details are captured.

- S – SHAPE
- C – COLOR
- R – REGISTRATION NUMBER, body number (Chassis Number)
- I – IDENTIFICATION MARK
- M – MAKE AND MODEL
- 

#### **10.4. Suspicious Packages and Objects**

The following are indicators of suspicious packages or objects.

- Abandoned packages or objects left by someone who quickly leaves the scene.
- Packages or objects with tanks, bottles, or bags visible.
- Items accompanied by a suspicious cloud, mist, gas, or vapor.
- Packages placed in out-of-the way locations where not easily seen.
- Objects accompanied by a threatening message.

To avoid injury from dangerous packages or objects...

**DO NOT** touch, move, or cover suspicious objects or devices.

**DO NOT** use a radio or cell phone within 300 feet of the object/device.

**DO NOT** put hands near face if package/object is accidentally touched.

**DO** wash hands with soap/water if object is touched and report to medical personnel.

**DO** move as far away from object/device as possible without being in danger from other hazards.

**DO** Stay out of object's line-of-sight.

**DO** Stay away from glass and windows.

**DO** Remain alert for additional/secondary explosive devices in immediate area.

#### **11. Review**

This document should be reviewed on an annual basis to incorporate any changes to transportation rules and regulations. The Facilities Manager should also review this document whenever there is a change to the school bus pickup and drop off plan.

#### **12. References**

- School Bus Safety Requirements, Cabinet Resolution No.56, Ministry of Interiors, UAE, September, 2021.
- RTA School Transport Technical Manual, Version 3, August 2022.
- C155 - Occupational Safety & Health Convention 1981
- ISO 39001:2012 Road Traffic Safety Management Systems




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# **Appendix**

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## **Appendix 1. School Bus Pickup and Drop Off Plan**

### **Arrival at Bus Collection Point:**

Parents and students need to ensure that students are at the bus collection point at least 5 minutes before the scheduled collection time. If there's a delay, parents will be responsible for safely getting their children to school. The exact pick-up and drop-off spots will be decided by the transport coordinator in collaboration with parents before the service starts.

### **Drop-off Procedure:**

School buses will bring students to the designated drop-off area outside gate 8. This area will be clearly marked with bays next to the sidewalk near the boundary wall. The bus assistants will help students get off the bus and enter the school safely. Students in grade 5 and above can go to their classrooms on their own, but those in grade 2 and below will be guided to their classrooms by the bus attendant and handed over to their class teacher.

### **End of School Day:**

After school, students from grade 3 and above will gather at their respective buses, while those in grade 2 and below will be collected from their classrooms. Students will line up. Once all students are accounted for, the bus nannies will accompany them to the bus for the journey home.

### **Departure Process:**

The transport coordinator will give approval and release the buses one by one when all students are on board and ready to go. Students will only be allowed to get off at the pre-arranged drop-off spots. For safety, parents or authorized persons need to be present to collect grade 4 and below students, at least 5 minutes early.

### **New Collection Arrangements:**

If a new person is going to collect a child for the first time, please inform the transportation office ahead of time. If no one is present to receive the child at the bus stop, the bus attendant won't let the child get off. In such cases, the child will be taken back to school, and parents need to arrange an alternative way to collect them.

### **Illness Notification:**

When a child is sick, please let the transport team know as early as possible. This will help them manage the situation and ensure the child's well-being



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**Appendix 2. Monthly Bus Inspection Checklist**

**School Bus Inspection Checklist**

**School:**

**Date:**

**Bus Number:**

Requirement	Please Indicate with a tick when complete	Comments
<b>General Bus Specifications</b>		
1. The colour of the bus is yellow		
2. School bus is written in black in both English and Arabic		
3. School Bus is fitted with electronic stop rod (check it works)		
4. Flasher system is in place (check its works)		
5. Window tint is not more then 30% and there are no window bars.		
6. Mirrors in place displaying both sides of the bus		
7. Tyres are in good condition		
8. CCTV is available and working		
9. The bus aisle is covered by inflammable non slippery rubber		
10. AC is working		
11. The bus is clean inside and out		

<b>Safety Specifications</b>		
12. A suitable first aid kit is available		
13. A speed control system is fitted limiting the bus to 80kph		
14. A fire extinguisher is available (should be at least 6kg capacity)		



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15. A working seat belt is available on each seat		
16. A reflective emergency triangle is available		
17. Bus registration card, drivers license and permit displayed on front wind shield.		

**Facilities Manager / Staff Member:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

## Appendix 3. Emergency Contact List



### Emergency Contact Numbers

In the event of a bus emergency, such as a breakdown, accident, or other incident it is important that the appropriate individuals are contacted so that the correct support can be provided without delay.

Following an incident, the following individuals should be notified

Role	Name	Number
Transport Coordinator	Donia Adel	052 789 2703
Health & Safety Officer / Transport Coordinator	Aysha Rababah	050 595 8354
Operations Administrator	Pieter Tepper	056 660 4591
Facilities Manager (FM)	Rudi Pretorius	050 535 0668
Operations Manager (OM)	Shah Amin	058 564 4373
The OM is only to be contacted if the FM is unavailable.		

To allow the correct support to be arranged the following key information should be relayed:

- Bus number \_\_\_\_\_
- Location of the incident \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of students onboard \_\_\_\_\_
- Brief overview of the incident \_\_\_\_\_
- Summary of any serious injuries \_\_\_\_\_
- Emergency services called      Yes / No

In an emergency stay calm, stay positive, be aware of your surroundings and call for help.