

# Transportation Policy



**Date of Issue:** 15 August 2025  
**Next Review:** 14 August 2026  
**Policy Owner:** Principal

## School Transportation Policy

GEMS United Indian School is committed to ensuring the safety of all students during their transport to and from school.

The school has developed and implemented this Transportation Policy, which sets out our obligations regarding the provision of safe, high quality, and efficient school bus service. The policy:

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

## Regulatory Compliance

### Applicability of Policy

This policy is applicable to GEMS-appointed bus transport service company, Bright Bus Transport (BBT), and school bus service staff. In case of any contradiction between this policy, or ADEK and the ITC policies, ITC policies shall prevail.

BBT and school bus service staff should ensure compliance with ITC requirements listed in the Executive Regulation Concerning School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi (DMT, 2017) and the *Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*. Additionally, BBT must ensure compliance with the requirements of *Federal Decree law No. (21) of 1995 on Traffic and its Executive Regulations* and their amendments.

## Obligations of our school

### Provision of School Bus Service and Rider Safety

1. **Mandatory Provision of School Bus Service:** GEMS United Indian School provides school bus service to our 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, GEMS United Indian 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 a school bus service to individual students, we will request the ITC to grant an exemption.
2. **Rider Safety:** GEMS United Indian School acknowledges its full responsibility for the safety of all students and individuals on school buses during the journey, even though the school is relying on a third-party operator.
3. **Training Students for School Bus Service:** GEMS United Indian School will ensure that safety and pedestrian safety training for students is provided by BBT in line with Section 9.3 of the *Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*.
4. **Student Discipline:** Our Student Behavior Policy includes 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:** GEMS United Indian School communicates with parents and provides educational information in line with Section 9.3 of the *Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*.

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

1. **Maximum Journey Time:** The duration of a journey for a school bus does not exceed the period specified by the Integrated Transport Center from the pick-up point to the final delivery point and vice versa.
2. **Designated Pick-Up and Drop-Off Points:** Students are picked up and dropped off at designated pick-up and drop-off points in accordance with *Section 9.4 of the Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*.
  - a. The bus supervisor ensures that the parent/parent-appointed responsible adult of a student under the age of 11 is present to receive the student at the drop-off point. If the parent is not present, they inform the school and return the student to school after dropping off the rest of the students at their destinations.

### **Exclusive Use of School Buses**

School buses are not 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*.

### **School Bus Fees**

The school bus fees are proposed by BBT based on the ITC School Bus Fee Framework and approved by ADEK. Requests for exceptional fee increases would be coordinated with ITC before approved by ADEK.

### **School Buses Owned by Schools**

For any school-owned buses, GEMS United Indian School will adhere 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.

### **Picking Up of Younger Siblings by Elder 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 must 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 responsibility to the elder sibling and that the latter is aware of what it entails.
- c. Schools shall not be liable in case of any incidents resulting as a consequence of this policy.

### **School Transportation and Traffic Management:**

GEMS United Indian School maintains effective school transportation and traffic management, including:

1. Maintain and regularly update the school's Traffic Management Plan, detailing internal/external traffic flow to ensure the safety of the school community, specifically during peak hours (drop-off/pick-up timings).
2. Deploy a trained task force, composed of sufficient numbers of current staff that are assigned the task of directing traffic flow during pick-up and drop-off timings to effectively manage the daily traffic operations on or near the school grounds.
3. Maintain and regularly update a transport emergency and communication plan which is communicated appropriately to all stakeholders.

### **Grievances and Complaints**

GEMS United Indian School has an established process for handling parent concerns in line with *Section 9.7 of the Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*. The final decision-making authority rests with the Principal or the Governing Board. Safety is the primary consideration when evaluating a complaint, and not personal circumstances or convenience.

### **Parking in Schools and Speed Limits in School Zones**

1. **Designated Parking Lots:** GEMS United Indian School has designated parking areas within school premises for school buses, as well as for staff vehicles, in line with the *ADEK School Buildings and Facilities Policy*.
2. **Speed Limit of Other Vehicles:** Vehicles must adhere to the speed limit of the school zone as set out by the *Federal Law No. (21) of 1995 on Traffic and its Executive Regulations* and amendments.

### **Bus Services for Field Trips**

1. **Vehicle Specification:** Students are transported by school buses for field trips in accordance with the technical requirements outlined in the *Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*, including for trips where the distance traveled exceeds 80 kilometers. Where it is necessary to use tourist buses, the following technical requirements are met:
  - a. Seat belts
  - b. Fire extinguishers
  - c. Automatic system for extinguishing engine fires
  - d. First aid kits
  - e. Availability of emergency exits
  - f. Cameras, if available
  - g. Providing comprehensive insurance for the driver and passengers
  - h. Registering tourist buses in ITC's Asateel platform
  - i. Any other technical requirements requested in the future.
2. GEMS United Indian School will inform the ITC when using tourist buses and shall bear responsibility for tracking such trips, and will also inform parents of the type of bus that will be used on the field trip consent forms.
3. **Duration of Journey:** The maximum journey duration for school buses that are stipulated in the *Duration of Journey, and Associated Pick-up and Drop-off Points* section above does not apply to field trips.

### **Non-School Bus Transportation**

1. GEMS United Indian School ensures that only students in Cycle 3 (not younger) are authorized to arrive at and depart from school unaccompanied without a parent/parent-appointed responsible adult using non-school bus transportation, in line with the requirements in the *ADEK School Safeguarding Policy*.
2. **School's Liability:** GEMS United Indian 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. If the use of such vehicles on premises is accepted by GEMS United Indian School, we will ensure the necessary infrastructure, including tracks and parking spaces.
3. **Consent Form:** GEMS United Indian School collects a consent form signed by parents stating that they shall uphold their roles and responsibilities, and 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 from distance traveled to school using other non-school bus transportation such as scooters, bicycles, etc.,
  - b. Parents are responsible for ensuring compliance with the relevant ITC regulations regarding permits, usage of pathways, etc.

**Transportation Requirements:** GEMS United Indian School informs parents that the use of non-school-bus transportation is subject to ITC requirements.

## School Bus Service Staff

### 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*. BBT will ensure the following:
  - a. Drivers have obtained an ITC permit to practice their profession.
  - b. Drivers sign off on acknowledging the *ADEK School 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 of the *Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization*. BBT and GEMS United Indian School will ensure the following is adhered to:
  - 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 must have obtained an ITC permit to practice their profession.
  - d. Bus Supervisors sign off on acknowledging the *ADEK School Student Protection Policy*.
  - e. Bus Supervisors are registered on PASS. The long processing time for the licensing procedures will be taken into consideration and school bus services will be planned accordingly.
  
3. **School Transport Coordinator:** GEMS United Indian School will appoint one member of staff to be the School Transport Coordinator. It will be ensured that this person has signed off on acknowledging the *ADEK School Student Protection Policy*, and can adequately speak, read, and write in the language of instruction at the school.

### Communication with Schools and Parents

1. GEMS United Indian School informs parents that the Salama application can be used to track their child's school bus.
2. **Bus Supervisor:** The role entails regular communication with the parent(s) and 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.
  
3. **Driver:** The role entails reporting to the School Transport Coordinator any incidents while driving the school bus and misconduct by students.
  
4. **School Transport Coordinator:** GEMS United Indian School provides BBT and parents of students with the contact details of the School Transport Coordinator and ensure 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 emergencies or system-wide issues that may arise.

## References

### Internal

- School Health and Safety Policy
- School Emergency Response Plan
- School Transport Management Plan
- GEMS Health and Safety Policy

### External

- ADEK Health and Safety Policy
- Abu Dhabi Quality and Conformity Council (QCC). (2023). Abu Dhabi Guideline for School Bus Route Regularization. (ADG 37, 1st ed.)
- Department of Municipal Affairs and Transport (DMT). (2017). Decision of the Chairman of Department No. 259 of 2017 on the Issuance of Executive Regulation Concerning the School Transport Service Regulation in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- Federal Decree law No. (21) of 1995 on Traffic and its Executive Regulations and their amendments.
- Federal Decree Law No. (31) of 2021 Promulgating the Crimes and Penalties Law and its amendments.

  


K George Mathew  
Principal/CEO  
GEMS United Indian School