



مدرسة التفاحة العالمية
The Apple International School

SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

Terms, Conditions and Safeguarding Standards for School Transport Services

Academic Year 2026-2027

Ref No:	AIS/TRANSPORT-POLICY/2026-2027		
Policy Owner:	Manager, School Operations & Health and Safety Compliance		
Approved By:	Principal	Reviewed By:	MSO, SMSO, Transport Coordinator, H&S Officer
Implemented By:	All Staff, Transport Operator, Parents/Guardians	Applies To:	FS1 - Year 13, Both Campuses
Reviewed Date:	September 2026	Next Review Date:	September 2027 (or earlier if regulations change)
Regulatory Alignment:	KHDA, RTA Dubai, Dubai Police, Dubai Civil Defense, DHA		

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND COMMITMENT

The Apple International School ("AIS" or "the school") regards the safety, security and wellbeing of every student travelling on school transport as a non-negotiable priority and an extension of the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This Transport Policy sets out the standards, roles, responsibilities and procedures that govern the operation of School transport for all students from Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) to Year 13, across both campuses.

This policy has been developed to meet and, where possible, exceed the requirements of the regulatory authorities governing school transport in Dubai, and to reflect the standards expected of a school working towards and sustaining an "Outstanding" judgement under the Dubai School Inspection Bureau (DSIB) framework operated by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA). The School's transport provision is treated as a core safeguarding function, not merely a logistical service.

This policy replaces and supersedes all previous versions of the School Transport Policy and the Transportation Policy 2024-25, and forms part of the suite of statutory and operational policies maintained by the Manager of School Operations and Health & Safety Compliance.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to:

- All students using School transport services, from Foundation Stage 1 (FS1) through to Year 13, across both AIS campuses;
- All bus drivers, bus attendants/monitors, transport coordinators, and any third-party transport operator contracted by the school;
- All parents, guardians and authorised carers of students who use, or apply to use, School transport;
- All School staff are involved in the supervision, coordination, monitoring or emergency management of transport services; and
- Governors and senior leaders with oversight responsibility for transport safety and compliance.

Because the developmental, supervisory and safeguarding needs of younger children differ materially from those of older students, this policy is structured to apply consistently throughout the whole school while setting out differentiated, age-appropriate provisions for:

- **Primary Phase — Foundation Stage 1 to Year 3** (children requiring continuous, hands-on supervision and direct adult-to-adult handover); and
- **Secondary and Upper Primary Phase — Year 4 to Year 13** (students who may, with written parental consent, travel or be released with a greater degree of independence).

3. REGULATORY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The School's transport operation is designed and audited to operate in strict compliance with the guidelines, licensing conditions and inspection standards of the following regulatory authorities. Where any authority listed below revises its requirements, this policy will be updated within 30 days of publication of the revised requirement.

Authority	Relevance to School Transport
Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA)	School Inspection Framework standards on safety, security, staffing and premises; Child Protection and Safeguarding requirements applicable to all School activity, including transport.
Roads and Transport Authority (RTA), Dubai	Licensing and permitting of school buses; Vehicle specification, speed governance, GPS tracking and driver conduct standards for student transport.
Dubai Police / Ministry of Interior	UAE Federal Traffic Law compliance; Child restraint and vehicle safety requirements; driver conduct and licensing.
Dubai Civil Defense	Fire safety equipment, evacuation readiness and vehicle safety certification.
Dubai Health Authority (DHA)	Health clearance for contagious disease; medical emergency response on transport.
Ministry of Education (MoE) / Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs & Port Security	National curriculum and child welfare alignment; identity verification standards.

Compliance Assurance

- This policy is reviewed at least annually, and immediately upon any change in RTA, KHDA, Dubai Police or Civil Defense requirements, by the Manager of School Operations & Health and Safety Compliance in consultation with the School's legal and regulatory advisors.
- The School reserves the right to amend operational arrangements at short notice where required by a regulatory directive, with parents notified as soon as reasonably practicable.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Key Responsibilities
Principal	Ultimate accountability for the safety and regulatory compliance of School transport.
Manager, School Operations & Health and Safety Compliance	Owns this policy; oversees the transport operator contract, safeguarding standards, incident management and regulatory liaison (KHDA, RTA, Civil Defense, DHA).
Transport Coordinator / Transport In-Charge	Day-to-day management of routes, driver and attendant rostering, parent queries, registration, area changes and daily reconciliation of manifests.

Role	Key Responsibilities
Bus Drivers	Hold a valid RTA-approved heavy bus licence; drive to the designated route and schedule; complete daily vehicle safety checks; conduct end-of-route empty-bus checks; report all incidents immediately.
Bus Attendants / Monitors	Present on every route carrying FS1-Year 3 students and on all other routes as a mandatory safeguard; conduct boarding/alighting roll calls; administer first aid; maintain behaviour and safety on board; verify identity of collecting adults where required.
Section Heads / Class Teachers	Reconcile daily transport lists against classroom attendance; escalate discrepancies immediately to the Transport Coordinator.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Receives and investigates any safeguarding concern arising on transport; liaises with KHDA/authorities where statutorily required.
Parents / Guardians	Ensure children are at the pick-up point on time; keep consent, medical and emergency contact information current; collect children promptly and safely; model and reinforce safe transport behaviour.
Students	Follow the Code of Conduct on Transport (Section 13); treat drivers, attendants and fellow students with respect; follow safety instructions at all times.

5. VEHICLE, DRIVER AND EQUIPMENT STANDARDS

5.1 Vehicle Standards

- Every vehicle used for School transport holds a current RTA school-bus permit and inspection certificate, displayed on the vehicle at all times.
- Vehicles are fitted with a live, continuously monitored GPS tracking system, speed limiter, and interior/exterior CCTV, with footage retained for a minimum of 30 days and made available to the school on request.
- Vehicles are equipped with a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency window hammers, a functioning public address/communication system, and a fully operational air-conditioning system.
- Seating capacity is never exceeded; standing passengers are not permitted under any circumstances. Seat belts and, where age or height requirements, appropriate child restraints are fitted and must be used.
- A documented daily pre-trip and post-trip vehicle safety checklist is completed and signed by the driver and is auditable by the Transport Coordinator and the Manager of School Operations at any time.

5.2 Driver Standards

- Holds a valid, RTA-approved heavy/public transport driving licence appropriate to the vehicle class.
- Has undergone police clearance (Good Conduct Certificate) and a satisfactory background check prior to appointment, refreshed periodically in line with operator and regulatory requirements.
- Holds a current medical fitness certificate and undertakes not to drive under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication that impairs driving ability.

- Completes defensive driving and child-safety awareness training prior to appointment and annually thereafter.
- Adheres to maximum permitted driving hours and rest-break requirements under UAE labour and traffic regulations.
- Wears company uniform and a visible identity badge at all times while on duty.

5.3 Bus Attendant / Monitor Standards

- Completes School-approved Child Protection and Safeguarding training before commencing duties and annually thereafter.
- Holds current First Aid and CPR certification.
- Has undergone the same police clearance and background-check process as drivers.
- Is responsible for headcounts, seatbelt checks, behaviour management, and the end-of-route empty-vehicle check (Section 6.5).

6. SAFEGUARDING ON TRANSPORT

School transport is treated as an extension of the School environment for safeguarding purposes. The following minimum standards apply to every route, without exception:

6.1 Mandatory Attendant Coverage

- A trained bus attendant is present on 100% of routes carrying any FS1-Year 3 student, for the entire duration of the journey.
- A trained bus attendant is present on every other School bus route, regardless of the age group carried, as a standard safeguard rather than an exception.

6.2 Roll Call and Manifest Reconciliation

- A named roll call is conducted by the attendant at the point of boarding and at the point of alighting for every stop, cross-checked against the daily transport manifest.
- Any discrepancy between the manifest and the physical headcount is escalated to the Transport Coordinator within five minutes and, where a child cannot be accounted for, the School's Emergency Response and Missing Child procedures are activated immediately.

6.3 Identity Verification and Release of Children

- No child is released from School transport to any adult whose identity has not been verified against the Collection Authorisation Form held by the School (see also the Arrival and Dispersal Policy).
- For FS1-Year 3 students, release is by direct hand-to-hand handover to a named, pre-authorised adult only; a child is never permitted to alight unsupervised or unaccompanied.

6.4 CCTV, Monitoring and Anti-Bullying

- Interior CCTV footage is available for review by the Manager of School Operations and the DSL in the event of a reported concern, complaint or incident.
- A clear anti-bullying and respectful-conduct expectation applies on board every vehicle, with reporting routes for students and parents set out in the School's Anti-Bullying Policy.

6.5 "No Child Left Behind" End-of-Route Check

- At the end of every route, the driver and attendant jointly walk the full length of the vehicle to confirm it is empty, and both sign a same-day confirmation log. This check is non-negotiable and is audited termly by the Transport Coordinator.

6.6 Emergency Preparedness

- Evacuation drills are conducted on School transport at least once per term, with records maintained by the Transport Coordinator and reviewed by the Health & Safety Committee.
- Every vehicle carries an emergency contact card for the driver/attendant to use in the event of a medical emergency, accident or breakdown.

7. AGE-DIFFERENTIATED PROVISIONS

The provisions below apply in addition to, and do not replace, the general standards set out elsewhere in this policy.

7.1 Foundation Stage 1 to Year 3 (Primary Phase)

- Supervision by a trained bus attendant is mandatory and continuous for the entire journey, with no exceptions.
- Every child wears a School-issued identification wristband or card showing their name, class, route number and an emergency contact number.
- Children travel using an age- and height-appropriate seatbelt or child restraint in line with UAE traffic law.
- Drop-off is always by direct, hand-to-hand handover to a named, pre-authorised adult; independent or unsupervised drop-off is never permitted for this age group, under any circumstances, regardless of any request from a parent.
- A "buddy" or paired-seating system may be used for the youngest travellers to support settling and reassurance during the journey.

7.2 Year 4 to Year 13 (Upper Primary and Secondary Phase)

- Where a parent wishes their child to be dropped off without the presence of a receiving adult, a signed Unsupervised Drop-Off Consent Form must be submitted, accompanied by a copy of the guardian's Emirates ID, and renewed annually.
- Students scan their School ID card on boarding and alighting to create a digital record of travel for safeguarding and attendance purposes.
- Students are expected to follow the Code of Conduct on Transport (Section 13). Repeated or serious misconduct is managed through the School's graduated behaviour procedures; wherever possible, sanctions preserve the student's access to learning (for example, a review of transport privileges) rather than removing the student from lessons.

8. REGISTRATION FOR TRANSPORT SERVICES

1. Any student requiring School transport must be registered using the prescribed application form, available on the School website or from the Transport Office.
2. The form must be completed in full by the parent/guardian, including all mandatory fields, accompanied by current medical, emergency contact and (where applicable) unsupervised drop-off consent information.
3. Registration is confirmed only once the required payment has been made at the Accounts Office and seat availability on the relevant route has been verified by the Transport Coordinator.

9. ROUTE ALLOCATION, STOPS AND CHANGE OF RESIDENCE

- Buses operate on fixed, pre-approved routes with designated pick-up and drop-off points only; requests for non-standard stops are not accommodated except under Section 9 exceptional circumstances below.
- Travel times may vary depending on student numbers, traffic conditions and route adjustments; parents are advised to allow a reasonable margin either side of the scheduled time.
- In the event of a change of residence, continued transport is subject to seat availability on an existing route serving the new area; fees are adjusted in line with the applicable fee structure for that zone.
- Where a drop-off is requested at a location other than the designated stop, a written request signed by the parent/guardian is required and is subject to School approval on safety grounds.

10. FEES, PAYMENT, DISCONTINUATION AND REFUNDS

10.1 Fees and Payment

- The transport fee applies from the effective date of enrolment in the service to the end of the Academic Year, and is charged on a termly advance basis; monthly payment is not available.
- Payments are made by cash, card, or online via the School's approved payment application; cheque payments are not accepted for transport fees.
- The termly transport fee applies regardless of the number of school days or holidays falling within a term (including absence, exams, public and School holidays, or closures due to circumstances beyond the School's control), as the annual fee is calculated across the full year and divided termly.
- A charge of AED 25 applies for the re-issue of a lost transport ID card.

10.2 Direct Payment by Employers/Companies

Where a parent's employer will pay the transport fee directly, this must be declared at registration. The employer should remit payment by the 10th of the first month of the term, failing which the service will not be available until payment is received. A Pro Forma invoice is issued to parents seeking employer reimbursement, and standard invoices are available from the Accounts Office.

10.3 Discontinuation of Service

- A minimum of 30 days' written notice, using the Service Discontinuation Form available from the Transport Office, is required to discontinue transport services.
- Where the Discontinuation Form has not been submitted, the service is treated as continuing and fees will be charged accordingly.
- The transport fee is payable up to and including the month in which the service is used or the student leaves the School; where fees have been paid in advance for the full term or year, any balance for the remaining full months is refunded.
- Exam periods do not qualify for a transport fee waiver or refund.
- Temporary discontinuation for extended medical or comparable leave of more than one month requires a letter to the Principal alongside the Discontinuation Form, for approval by the competent authority. Temporary discontinuation is not permitted in December or June.

10.4 Refunds

Approved refunds are settled within 30 days of submission of the completed Discontinuation Form, paid to the parent (or the employer, where the employer paid the original fee) by the School's standard payment method. No refund is provided where the interruption, discontinuation or suspension of transport arises from circumstances beyond the

reasonable control of the School, including restrictions imposed by Government or regulatory authorities such as KHDA or RTA.

11. HEALTH, MEDICAL AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ON TRANSPORT

- Students with a diagnosed contagious disease are not permitted to travel on School transport until a medical clearance certificate from a licensed medical professional has been provided to the School Clinic.
- Known allergies, medical conditions and emergency action plans are shared confidentially by the School Clinic with the relevant driver and attendant, on a need-to-know basis, prior to the student commencing travel.
- Eating and drinking on board is not permitted, with the exception of water, for hygiene, allergy-management and safety reasons.
- In the event of an accident, breakdown or medical emergency, the attendant/driver immediately contacts the Transport Coordinator, who activates the School's Emergency Response Plan; parents are notified as soon as possible and in any event within 30 minutes of the incident becoming known to the School.

12. INCIDENT REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RECORD-KEEPING

- All transport-related incidents (accidents, near-misses, injuries, safeguarding concerns, behavioural incidents) are logged in the School's Incident Management System within 24 hours of occurrence.
- Serious incidents are reported immediately to the Principal and the Manager of School Operations, and to KHDA or other relevant authorities where required by regulation.
- Incidents involving alleged driver or attendant misconduct are investigated formally, with the individual stood down from duties pending the outcome where the nature of the allegation warrants it.
- Incident records, CCTV footage and investigation outcomes are retained in accordance with the School's Data Protection and Records Retention arrangements.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT ON TRANSPORT

All students using School transport are expected to:

- Remain seated with a seatbelt fastened for the duration of the journey;
- Follow the instructions of the driver and attendant at all times;
- Treat the driver, attendant and fellow students with courtesy and respect, and behave in a manner consistent with the School's Behaviour Policy;
- Refrain from eating or drinking (other than water), and refrain from any action that could distract the driver or endanger passengers;
- Report any concern, incident or act of unkindness to the attendant, driver, or a member of School staff at the earliest opportunity.

Liability for damage: Parents/guardians are responsible for compensating the School or transport operator for any damage caused to the vehicle or to other passengers arising from the inappropriate behaviour of their child. The School is not liable for consequences arising from such behaviour.

Insurance: All vehicles, drivers and passengers are insured. In the event of a claim arising from an accident, liability is limited to the compensation payable under the applicable insurance policy.

14. COMMUNICATION PROTOCOLS

- Parents must inform the Transport Coordinator or School Administration in advance, in writing or by email, of any planned student absence or non-use of the return trip.
- The School uses parents' registered email addresses and mobile numbers to send transport-related updates, delay notifications and circulars, including via the School's parent communication application.
- Where available, live bus-tracking is provided to parents via the School's approved parent application to support transparency and reassurance.
- Any change to route, timing or stop allocation is communicated to affected parents with as much notice as reasonably possible.

15. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Personal data collected for transport purposes (including student identity, medical information, addresses, and guardian identification documents) is processed and stored in accordance with the UAE's applicable data protection legislation and the School's Data Protection Policy. Access to such data is restricted to staff with a legitimate operational or safeguarding need.

16. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Consistent with the School's drive towards an Outstanding standard of provision, transport services are monitored and improved through:

- A termly Transport Safety Committee meeting, chaired by the Manager of School Operations, reviewing incident data, on-time performance, complaints and driver/attendant compliance;
- A termly parent satisfaction survey on the transport experience, with findings and resulting actions shared with the School community;
- Key performance indicators tracked monthly, including on-time arrival/departure percentage, incident and near-miss rates, and complaint resolution time;
- An annual internal audit of vehicle compliance, driver/attendant documentation and safeguarding practice, benchmarked against KHDA and RTA expectations;
- Unannounced spot-checks of vehicles and routes by the Transport Coordinator and/or the Manager of School Operations.

17. COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Any concern or complaint regarding transport should be raised in the first instance with the Transport Coordinator, either in person, by email, or through the School's parent portal. Concerns are acknowledged within one School day and investigated in line with the School's Complaints Policy. Concerns of a safeguarding nature are escalated immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead regardless of how they are received.

18. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- The School reserves the right to decline or withdraw transport services where seat availability, route viability, student behaviour or safety considerations require it.
- This policy should be read alongside the School's Arrival and Dispersal Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Health and Safety Policy, and Emergency Response Plan.

19. POLICY REVIEW AND VERSION CONTROL

This policy is reviewed at least annually by the Manager of School Operations and Health and Safety Compliance, and approved by the Principal/CEO, to ensure ongoing alignment with KHDA, RTA and other relevant regulatory requirements, and with the School's ambition to achieve and sustain an Outstanding standard of safety and care.

Version	Date	Summary of Change	Approved By
1.0	August 2024	Original Terms and Conditions — School Transport	Principal
2.0	August 2025	Transportation Policy 2024-25 update	Principal
3.0	September 2026	Full merger and revision: age-differentiated (FS1-Y3 / Y4-Y13) safeguarding provisions, regulatory framework, vehicle/driver/attendant standards, monitoring and KPI framework added to support an Outstanding standard	Principal