Affiliated to **University of Cambridge**, UK
Affiliated to **C.B.S.E**, New Delhi, India.
P.O.Box 80718, Al Ain, UAE
Tel: + 9713 781 0077 + 9713 781 0043
Email: info@alainjuniors.com
Web: www.alainjuniors.com

POLICY TITLE:	Transport Policy
DEPARTMENT:	Operations Department

Policy Contact: Mr. Joshy C.D	Issue Date: 07/04/2022
School: Al Ain Juniors School – Indian System	Revision Date: 12/03/2027
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Introduction

Al Ain Juniors School's vision is to imbibe our young people to be achievers with extraordinary determination, to set right goals in areas of education, morality, attitude, ethics and values. The participation and support of the parent community is vital to achieve this ambitious vision, much of which relies heavily on financial stability of the organization.

Transport for students is provided with the aim of providing quality and safe service as per the regulations of the local transport authority. Our support staff on the buses, in their capacity as conductors, will also ensure care of the students, as well as assisting with discipline. Please note that in the event of student disciplinary concerns or issues on the bus, the school is entitled to take disciplinary action where necessary.

Aims

The purpose of this policy is to emphasize the school's responsibility to ensure the safety of students during their transport to and from school by school bus, in accordance with ADEK guidelines and the Integrated Transport Centre (ITC) Safety Standards.

Areas of service

Al Ain Juniors School provides an efficient and safe transport service to all main areas of Al Ain City. The service is not provided to remote and inaccessible areas. Admission to Al Ain Juniors School does not automatically guarantee the availability of the transport service.

Starting the bus service

- **Transport Authorization Form**: Parents wishing to use the school bus service must complete the online Transport Authorization Form each academic year through the school website: www.alainjuniors.com.
- **Application Deadline**: Parents must apply for school transport before the start of the new academic year. For the Indian System, applications must be submitted on or before 5 March.
- **Annual Reapplication**: Students wishing to continue using the school bus service must reapply each academic year. Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered only subject to seat availability.
- **Validity of Transport Service**: Once approved, the school transport service is valid for one academic year only. Parents must submit a new application for each subsequent academic year.
- **New Users :** After submission of the Transport Authorization Form, the Transport Coordinator will contact the applicant to confirm service availability, provide the designated pickup and drop-off location details, and communicate the bus timings
- **Continuing Users**: After the form is submitted, a confirmation email will be sent to the parent, confirming the availability of the service, providing location details, and sharing the bus timings.
- Availing the school transport service automatically entails acceptance of the school transport policy.

- **Parent Acknowledgement:** Parents must confirm through the online application that they have read and understood the School Transport Policy and agree to comply with all its terms and conditions.

Transport fee

- The annual transport fee is payable in nine (9) instalments. The first instalment is due two weeks before the commencement of the new academic year, or as otherwise stated by the school. The remaining eight (8) instalments must be paid on or before the 1st of each month, from May through February, as per the school's payment schedule.
- Full transport fee has to be paid during short vacations such as winter/spring; post term vacation; during exam time or public holidays.
- The full monthly transport instalment is payable for any month in which the transport service is used, regardless of the number of days the service is utilized. One-way transport and prorated or partial monthly payments are not permitted.
- For students whose fee is paid by Ministries or companies, transport cannot be refunded or adjusted against any other fees or transferred to other siblings, for any reason.

Students under age 11

A parent or designated guardian must be present at the pick-up/drop-off point on time to collect their child. In the absence of an adult, the student will be returned to school after the last passenger is dropped off, and the parent will need to collect the student from school.

Picking Up Younger Siblings:

- Elder siblings (15 years or above) are permitted to pick up younger siblings in Grade 1 and in place of a parent-appointed responsible adult only when parents provide a signed consent form to the school.
- Parent(s) recognize that the elder sibling's maturity level is deemed sufficient for them to provide consent.
- Schools shall not be liable in case of any incidents resulting as a consequence of this policy.

Residence Change

- **Availability of Transport:** In the event of a change of residence requiring a new pickup or drop-off point, the school will consider the request only if the new location is covered by an existing approved bus route and seats are available. The school does not guarantee the provision of transport if the new residence requires a new route or an extension of an existing route.
- **Checking Route Availability**: To avoid inconvenience, parents are strongly advised to confirm the availability of school bus services to their intended new residence with the Transport Coordinator before relocating.
- **Submission of Updated Form**: In the event of a change of residence, parents must submit a new *Transport Authorization Form*, selecting the “Change of Residence” option and providing the updated residential address and other required location details.
- **Confirmation of Transport Arrangements**: Any change to pick up or drop-off arrangements is subject to route availability, seat capacity and school approval. School transport will be confirmed only after the revised arrangements have been approved. If no approved route serves the new location, school bus service may not be available.

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Salama Application and Communication

- Where applicable, parents are encouraged to use the approved Salama school transport application to access available journey updates, student boarding and disembarkation information, estimated arrival notifications and other transport-related communications.
- Parents should ensure that their contact information is correct and promptly report any issues with receiving notifications to the school transport coordinator

Withdrawals or stopping the bus service

- School transport cannot be withdrawn temporarily or suspended for short periods for any reason during examinations or in Ramadan.
- To cancel the transport service for the following month, the Transport Authorization Form must be submitted online on or before the 25th of the current month.
- Verbal requests to any school staff or bus drivers or bus escorts to withdraw will not be entertained.
- Once withdrawn, the school transport service may be reassigned to other students and may not be available again during the academic year.

Bus usage guidelines for students

To ensure their own safety, as well as to avoid problems arising from the use of school transport, parents and students should adhere to the following:

- The school reserves the right to determine the bus stop selection and the bus time for the students. Parent's intervention in this matter will not be entertained.
- Students shall not be transported to different stops for birthday parties, social events or any program not sponsored by the school. The same policy shall apply to an unregistered student who wishes to ride a school bus to a specific destination.
- If on rare occasions, parents want to collect their wards who normally travel by bus, they should inform the school at least half an hour before let -off time. They should not collect their children from the bus parking area without prior approval.
- Parents are requested to bring the students to the pick- up point 5minutes before the designated pick-up time of the bus, and also to be at the drop point at least 5 minutes before the designated drop-off time in order to avoid delay for the remainder of the students on the bus.
- The bus driver will not wait beyond the designated time.
- Notify the school (bus coordinator) if the parent or designated guardian is not present to collect a student and bring the student back to the school after dropping off all other students.
- Exceptional cases in delay in bus arrival due to unexpected reasons like break-down, climate conditions will be taken into account and shall be communicated to the parents.
- The distance from the pick-up/drop-off point to the school and the approximate travel time for a child will depend on the designated area, with a maximum travel time of 60 minutes.
- It is strictly forbidden for any student not registered for the transport service to use the school bus., nor can students invite other students to ride the bus home with them under any circumstances.
- It is strictly forbidden for any student to ride a different bus from the bus he/she has been assigned. Students can only ride the bus in which they have been registered.
- It is strictly forbidden for any student to be dropped off or picked up from any other location other than the registered pick-up/drop-off location.
- School bus transportation shall be considered a privilege to be used by a student only as long

as the student accepts the responsibility for his/her own conduct, carefully following all established rules and regulations, and complies with the directions of the driver and the school bus escort.

- The general supervision of the school transport system is the responsibility of the Group Operations Officer, and may be delegated to appropriate administrative and supervisory personnel of the school.
- To avoid penalizing other students who are on time, the bus driver will not wait for any child/nor the bus escort would give an alert/missed call to who is late beyond the designated pick-up time.
- If a student is found to have caused damage to the bus or the property or belongings of a fellow student in the bus; the parents will be required to compensate adequately for the repair or replacement of the damaged item.
- The students must refrain from eating and drinking in the bus, except water.

This Transportation Policy outlines the behavior in the bus that is expected of students. The consequences of violating this rule may result in a loss of ridership privileges. In accordance with the ITC guidelines, the school Principal or the Group Operations Officer may exclude any student from the school transport service in any of the following cases:

- If a student violates any safety rule and endangers the lives of others during the trip.
- If a student refuses to ride a bus from a pickup point approved by the school.
- If a student leaves the bus before reaching his/her designated destination without prior permission.
- If a student continues causing disturbance and more than three written complaints are filed against him/her during one school year.
- A general lack of respect for the co-passengers.
- If a student under the age of 11 needs to be dropped off at the designated pick-up and drop-off point without a parent present.

Policy Compliance

- The school reserves the right to review and update this policy when required by ADEK, Abu Dhabi Mobility or other applicable regulatory authorities.
- Parents and students are expected to comply with this policy and any subsequent safety instructions communicated by the school.
- The school will take appropriate action in response to breaches of this policy, consistent with applicable regulations and the school's approved procedures.

Abbreviations

- **ADEK:** Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge
- **ITC:** Integrated Transport Centre