



School Bus Policy

Introduction:

Doha Academy (DA) is dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of its students during school transportation. This School Bus Policy underlines the critical requirement that a bus assistant must be present on all school buses. Moreover, it specifies the assignment of female bus assistants for Foundation, Primary, and Secondary girls, and male assistants for Secondary boys.

DA offers school transportation services for a restricted number of students through dedicated DA school buses and employed drivers. Eligibility for this service is determined based on various factors, including the application process, payment, the presence of siblings, geographical location, and availability, with consideration for each academic year. During this time, DA acknowledges its responsibility for the students' well-being and assigns bus supervisors to ensure their safety.

Policy Statement:

It's important to note that DA is not just a place for education during a specific period; it is an institution committed to providing both boys and girls with an education for life. We firmly believe that schools should foster a positive and purposeful environment where children are not only encouraged but also empowered to excel in all aspects of their lives—spiritually, morally, socially, intellectually, and physically.

Policy Objectives:

Safety: To prioritize the safety of students, staff, and drivers during school bus transportation.

Efficiency: To ensure that school bus operations are conducted in an organized and efficient manner.

Communication: To establish clear communication channels between parents, students, school staff, and bus assistants.

Accountability: To enhance accountability by implementing a standardized logbook format and inform of any change or alteration to respective supervisors.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Bus Assistants:

A bus assistant is assigned to each school bus and must be always present during transportation of students. The bus assistant's presence is checked by both the bus driver and bus supervisor. The bus driver is prohibited from departing the school with children on board without a bus assistant.

A standardised logbook format with four sections: In (Morning Pickup), Out (Morning Pickup), In (Afternoon Drop-off), and Out (Afternoon Drop-off) for better monitoring and accountability is implemented.

2. Gender-Specific Assignments:

Female bus assistants will be assigned to buses carrying Foundation, Primary, and Secondary girls.

Male bus assistants will be assigned to buses carrying Secondary boys.

Only students on the bus register, issued to drivers, are permitted to enter the bus.

3. Logbook Format:

The School Bus Logbook will consist of primary information and in relation to latest requirements to be added into four sections:

The additional four sections are:

- a. In (Morning Pickup): Recording details for morning bus pick-ups.
- b. Out (Morning Pickup): Recording details as the bus departs after morning pick-ups.
- c. In (Afternoon Drop-off): Recording details for afternoon bus drop-offs.
- d. Out (Afternoon Drop-off): Recording details as the bus departs after afternoon drop-offs.

4. Conduct on Buses:

Bus assistants are expected to support the bus driver in ensuring students' safety and adherence to rules.

4.1 Students must:

- Wait at the bus stop in an organized manner, adhering to all safety guidelines. Do not engage in any activities on the road or approach the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
- Make sure to be punctual and arrive at the designated pick-up location on time.
- Always fasten their seatbelt while on the bus.
- Do not attempt to board or exit the bus while it is in motion.
- Enter and exit the bus quietly and in an orderly fashion.
- Immediately take their assigned seat and keep their seatbelt fastened throughout the entire journey. Always keep their feet on the floor.
- Not extend any part of their body to extend outside the bus or throw any objects from inside the bus, including spitting.
- Avoid distracting the driver or other road users. Maintain a normal speaking volume and refrain from calling out to others on the bus or to passing vehicles.
- Do not engage in conversations with the driver while the bus is in motion.
- Only consume water while on the school bus and be sure to dispose of any waste responsibly.
- Always listen to and follow the instructions of the bus assistant and driver.
- Do not cause any damage to the bus or any property belonging to the school or other stakeholders.
- In the event of an emergency, follow all provided instructions, including remaining on the bus if directed to do so.

4.2 Failure to do so will result in:

Failure to act in an appropriate and safe manner such as remaining seated, damage, wearing seat belts, being quiet, not distracting the driver or other road users and following orders immediately and in an appropriate manner are fundamental to their and others safety. Any students who fall short of the expected high standard of behaviour could result in the following:

- Contact home to parent/guardian informing them of any incident.
- Referral to Behavioural or Pastoral line manager.
- Subject to sanctions (refer to behaviour policy).
- Suspension of seat reservation (time dependent upon pastoral/behaviour manager's decision).
- Ban from seat reservation for the rest of the academic year. Non-reimbursement of any transport fees paid.
- Ban from future seat applications. Parent/guardian billed for any damage repair or replacement.

The bus assistant is required to inform the Facilities Manager of any rule infringements, who in turn will inform the relevant academic Head as appropriate.

5. Communication:

Bus assistants will maintain open communication with the school and the bus service provider.

They will assist the school secretary in communication with parents or guardians regarding pick-up and drop-off points and updates from the log of attendance.

There are instances where modifications to current arrangements may become necessary. Should such situations arise, DA will try to contact and inform parents or guardians. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of parents or guardians to notify the school of any changes, such as a change in residence (please be aware that DA may not be able to accommodate new pick-up locations) or exceptional circumstances. Any specific requirements should be conveyed to DA's Head of Operations for proper consideration, and this information should be shared prior to 11 am each day. Additionally, please note that DA retains the right to refrain from dropping off students at unattended residences, and parents or guardians must ensure that an adult is available to supervise the student.

6. Safety Measures:

Bus assistants will assist in ensuring that safety measures, including seat belt use, are followed.

Bus assistants will also make sure that no eating/drinking are allowed during travel time from pick up to drop and return to home.

The bus driver is required to ensure no students are left on the bus upon route completion.

7. Emergency Procedures:

Bus assistants will be trained in emergency procedures and will assist in evacuations or emergency situations during both morning and afternoon routes.

8. Review and Verification:

The School Bus Logbook should be reviewed and verified regularly to ensure compliance with the assigned bus assistant requirements. Any discrepancies or issues should be reported promptly to the school administration.

Approval:

This School Bus Policy, emphasizing the importance of bus assistant assignments and the standardized logbook format, is approved by DA and is effective from Y2023. All bus drivers and assistants are responsible for adhering to the guidelines outlined in this policy and logbook format.

This policy was last review: September 2023
Next review: August 2024 or in light of subsequent directives.

