



دائرة رأس الخيمة للمعرفة
RAS AL KHAIMAH
DEPARTMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

School Health and Safety Policy

Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge



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1. Introduction

All schools in Ras Al Khaimah (RAK) must develop and implement their own Health and Safety Policy, ensuring full alignment with the requirements of the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAK DOK) and relevant local and federal authorities, including the UAE Ministry of Education, UAE Public Health Authorities, and UAE Food Safety Regulations.

This comprehensive policy document provides the minimum **mandatory** standards schools must incorporate into their policies. Schools must ensure compliance with all **regulatory frameworks, health and safety laws, transportation guidelines, safeguarding protocols, and food safety regulations** applicable within the UAE.

1.1. Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Establish minimum requirements for **health and safety, safeguarding, transportation, and food safety** in schools.
- Ensure compliance with **RAK DOK, UAE laws, and international best practices** for student safety and well-being.
- Provide **clear roles and responsibilities** for all school stakeholders in maintaining a safe learning environment.

1.2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- **All private schools in Ras Al Khaimah** that are under the jurisdiction of the Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAK DOK)



- **All school staff, students, visitors, and third-party service providers** operating on school premises.
- **School-related activities, including transportation, field trips, and extra-curricular events.**
- **Food and nutrition services provided within schools**, including school canteens, vending machines, and shared events.

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
Health & Safety	Measures to protect students, staff, and visitors from harm, injuries, or health risks.
Safeguarding	Procedures to ensure student safety, well-being, and protection from abuse or neglect.
School Bus Service	Transportation of students to and from school by licensed school bus operators.
Allergens	Substances that can cause allergic reactions, including nuts, dairy, gluten, and seafood.
Emergency Plan	A structured response plan for school-related emergencies, including fire, medical, and security incidents.
Food Safety	Compliance with hygiene and food handling standards to prevent contamination and health risks.
RAK DOK	Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge is the Authority regulating private schools in RAK.

3. Health and Safety Policy

3.1. Policy Requirements

- Schools must develop and implement a **Health and Safety Policy** aligned with **RAK DOK's** and the relevant 'authorities' regulations and requirements.
- Schools must define:
 - The responsibilities of the **Principal and Governing Board** for school operations and related activities.
 - The roles of **students, staff, health and safety officers, contractors, and visitors** in maintaining a safe environment.
 - The procedures for **ensuring health and safety in school activities, including off-campus trips**.
 - The provisions for **staff training on health and safety measures**.
 - The processes for **risk assessments, maintenance of the risk register, and implementation of control measures**.
- Schools must ensure compliance with **all RAK DOK and UAE health and safety regulations**, including:
 - Submission of **periodic health and safety reports**.
 - Compliance with **emergency planning requirements**.
 - Maintenance of **valid permits and licenses related to school operations**.
- Schools shall recruit and/or appoint a **Health and Safety Officer** to oversee and monitor compliance. In cases of absence of the health and



safety officer, the school must ensure a written delegation of the responsibilities of the health and safety officer to a trusted school member.

- The Health and Safety Officer must remain on the school premises at all times during the school day. Multiple school campuses are not authorised to share a Health and Safety Officer.
- Schools shall ensure **regular safety assessments**, including fire safety, emergency evacuation drills, and security system inspections, and maintain reports on all emergency and fire evacuation training for students and staff on a regular basis.
- Schools shall ensure that every digital incident is recorded, documented, and signed by the principal and stored for auditing purposes.
- Schools shall adhere to appropriate school transportation and traffic management procedures, including maintaining school bus inspection records and acquiring relevant licenses and permits for school buses, bus drivers, and bus supervisors.

3.2. Health and Safety Requirements

3.2.1. General Safety Measures

Schools must establish a **safe and secure environment** for students, staff, and visitors by:

- **Managing hazardous materials:** Proper storage and safe handling of laboratory chemicals, cleaning agents, biological substances, and maintenance tools, following **relevant authority** guidelines.



- **Conducting regular safety checks:** Routine maintenance of school facilities and equipment to ensure they meet safety standards.
- **Ensuring security measures:** Installs advanced surveillance and security systems to monitor and prevent unauthorised activities that are aligned with the relevant authority regulations.
- **Performing fire safety inspections:** Regular checks and maintenance of fire alarms, extinguishers, and evacuation procedures.
- **Maintaining emergency response systems:** Schools must have effective fire suppression and protection systems to prevent hazards.
- **Contractors and Maintenance providers:** Schools shall ensure that maintenance work is not conducted or that maintenance providers or contractors are not present at the school premises during school hours.
- **School Bag Weight Restrictions**

To prevent spinal injuries and posture-related health issues, schools must:

- **Ensure school bags do not exceed 5-10% of a student's body weight.**
- **Educate parents and students** on proper bag-packing techniques.



- **Enforce weight limits by grade.**

3.2.2. Safeguarding

Schools should always prioritise the welfare of children by considering all the measures and practices that ensure the safety, well-being, and protection of students from harm, abuse, or neglect.

- Schools must establish and maintain a safe, nurturing environment where children feel secure. This includes physical safety and emotional well-being for students.
- Schools should have clear, accessible safeguarding policies in place. These policies must outline how staff should respond to suspected abuse or concerns about a child's welfare and provide clear guidelines for reporting.
- All staff members, including teachers, support staff, and administrators, should receive regular training on safeguarding to recognise signs of abuse and understand how to respond appropriately.
- Schools should foster an environment where students feel comfortable reporting concerns and know their voices will be heard. This includes providing clear channels for students, parents, and staff to report safeguarding concerns.
- Schools should collaborate with the dedicated UAE Ministry of 'Education's Child Protection Unit to protect students. Effective communication between schools and the relevant authorities helps to address complex safeguarding issues.
- Schools should ensure that parents are actively engaged in safeguarding practices and encourage open lines of



communication with families to address any concerns about the child's welfare.

3.2.3. Fire Safety

Schools must be equipped with **fully functional fire prevention and suppression systems**, including:

- **Fire alarms and extinguishers:** Regular inspections and maintenance in line with **relevant authority** regulations.
- **Emergency evacuation procedures:** Schools must conduct regular fire drills to ensure readiness.
- **Mandatory installation of** any system required by the **relevant Authority** for immediate emergency response.

3.2.4. Gas Safety

- Schools **may only use Liquefied Petroleum Gas for educational purposes.**
- **Gas systems must be centrally located, secured, and regularly inspected** to prevent unauthorised access or leaks.
- **All gas supply lines must be linked to the school's fire alarm system** to enhance safety.

3.2.5 Smoke-Free Campus

- **Smoking, vaping, and e-cigarettes** are strictly prohibited on school premises and surrounding areas.
- Schools must enforce a **zero-tolerance policy** on smoking for students, staff, and visitors, per relevant authority guidelines.



4. Health System

4.1 School Medical Services

- **School Clinics:** Schools must operate a fully licensed **healthcare facility** that meets **the relevant authority's** medical regulations.
- **School Nurse:** Schools must employ a **full-time licensed nurse** who adheres to strict **healthcare standards** for administering medication.
- **Medication Administration:** Schools must follow proper procedures for dispensing medication and handling medical emergencies.

4.2 Medical Records & Parental Consent

- **Maintain accurate student health records:** Schools must securely store medical records, including allergies and emergency contacts.
- **Parental authorisation required:** Written parental consent is needed for medical treatments, except in emergencies. DOK recommends all parental consents are collected in advance upon student registration/ admission.
- **Ensure confidentiality:** Medical records should only be accessed by **authorised healthcare personnel**.

4.3 Emergency Medical Response

- **First Aid Training:** Key school staff, including **PE teachers and bus supervisors, must hold a valid certified first aid and CPR training.**



- **Emergency Protocols:** Schools must implement clear response procedures, including:
 - **Immediate first aid administration.**
 - **Calling emergency medical services (ambulance)** if needed.
 - **Notifying parents promptly** of medical incidents.
- **First Aid Kits:** Schools must maintain fully stocked first aid kits in classrooms, science labs, sports areas, and school buses.

4.4 Disease Prevention & Hygiene

- **Mandatory vaccinations and health screenings:** Schools must coordinate with **public health authorities** for routine immunisations and medical check-ups according to the health authorities' regulations.
- **Preventing disease outbreaks:** Schools must have:
 - **Health checks for all students and staff.**
 - **Isolation protocols** for sick students.
 - **Develop clear guidelines on when students/ adults should stay home** due to illness.

4.5 Hygiene & sanitation measures:

- **Hand sanitisers** must be available in classrooms and shared spaces.
- **Daily sanitisation** of school facilities must be conducted.



- **Hygiene awareness programs** must be taught to students.

4.6 Mental Health & Well-being

- **Qualified school counsellor required:** An approved counsellor must be available to provide emotional and psychological support to students.
- **Bullying prevention:** Schools must implement **anti-bullying policies and peer support programs**.

5 Transportation Policy

5.1 School Responsibilities

5.1.1 School Bus Service & Student Safety

- Schools must provide a school bus service for students, ensuring compliance with RAK DOK and relevant authority transportation regulations.
- Schools must ensure the safety of students on buses, even when outsourcing services to third-party providers.
- Schools must provide training for students on bus safety, pedestrian safety, and emergency procedures.
- Schools must include student behaviour expectations on buses within their Student Behaviour Policy, treating the bus as an extension of the school environment.
- Schools must educate parents on bus safety procedures and communicate any updates regarding transportation services.
- Schools must facilitate the required transport accommodations for Students of Determination.



5.1.2 School Bus Journey Time & Pick-up/Drop-off Procedures

- Maximum travel time for students must not exceed the limits set by the relevant Authority.
- Students must be picked up and dropped off only at designated points.
- A bus supervisor must confirm the presence of a parent or authorised adult when dropping off students under 11 years old. If no authorised adult is present, the bus supervisor must inform the school and return the student after completing the route.

5.1.3 School Bus Usage

- School buses must be used only for student transportation, not for unauthorised passengers.
- Schools must not use buses for other purposes unless approved by the relevant Authority.

5.1.4 School Bus Fees

- Bus fees and any exceptional fee increases must be approved by DOK.

5.1.5 School-Owned Buses

- Schools operating their own buses must comply with all school bus safety regulations, including maintenance, record-keeping, and specifications set by the relevant Authority.



- The relevant Authority will be the primary point of contact for queries related to school-owned bus regulations.

5.1.6 Sibling Pick-Up

- Elder siblings (15 years or older) may pick up younger siblings (Grade 1 and above) if parents provide written consent.
- Parents must confirm that the elder sibling is responsible and understands the responsibility of picking up their younger sibling.
- Schools are not liable for any incidents arising from this arrangement.

5.2 School Traffic & Transportation Management

5.2.1 Traffic & Safety Management Plan

Schools must:

- Develop and regularly update a traffic management plan to ensure smooth internal and external traffic flow.
- Deploy trained staff during peak hours to manage school drop-off and pick-up areas.
- Maintain a transport emergency and communication plan, ensuring all stakeholders know the procedures.

5.2.2 School Parking & Speed Limits

- Schools must have designated parking areas for school buses and staff vehicles.
- All vehicles within school zones must comply with the speed limits set by UAE traffic laws.

5.2.3 Field Trip Transportation

5.2.3.1 School Buses for Field Trips

- Field trips must use school buses that meet technical and safety standards outlined by the relevant Authority.
- If tourist buses are used, they must meet the following safety requirements:
 - Seat belts
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Emergency exit doors
 - First aid kits
 - Automatic fire suppression system for the engine
 - Camera monitoring system (if available)
 - Comprehensive insurance for all passengers
 - Registration on the relevant transportation platform
 - Any other requirements set by the relevant Authority.
- Schools must notify the relevant Authority when using tourist buses and remain responsible for tracking student safety during field trips.
- Schools must inform parents about the type of bus being used for field trips in the consent forms.
- Field trips are exempt from the standard bus journey duration limits.

5.3 Non-School Bus Transportation

5.3.1 Students Using Private Transportation

- Only Phase 4/ Cycle 3 students (Grades 10-12) may arrive and leave school unaccompanied.
- Schools are not responsible for students using private transportation (bicycles, scooters, ride-sharing services, etc.) but must regulate their entry onto school premises.
- If private transport is permitted on school grounds, schools must ensure proper infrastructure, such as designated parking and pathways.

5.3.2 Parental Responsibility & Consent

- Parents must sign a consent form if their child uses private transportation.
- Parents must acknowledge:
 - The safety risks of non-school transportation.
 - Compliance with transport laws and pathway regulations set by the relevant Authority.

5.4 School Bus Staff Requirements

5.4.1 Bus Drivers

- Drivers must hold a valid professional permit issued by the relevant Authority.
- Schools must ensure that drivers:



- Have completed all licensing and training requirements.
- Are registered in the official transportation system with the relevant Authority.
- Sign a declaration confirming their compliance with the relevant policies and regulations.

5.4.2 Bus Supervisors

- Each school bus transporting students under the age of eleven must have a bus supervisor.
- Supervisors must be female, except when travelling on **all-male school** buses with older students (Phase 3 & 4/ Cycle 2 & 3), where a male supervisor is permitted.
- Schools must ensure that bus supervisors:
 - Hold valid permits issued by the relevant Authority.
 - They are registered in the official transportation system with the relevant Authority.
 - Sign a declaration confirming their compliance with the relevant policies and regulations.

5.4.3 School Transport Coordinator

- Schools must appoint a Transport Coordinator who:
 - Oversees daily bus operations and handles emergencies.
 - Serves as the main point of contact for parents, operators, RAK DOK and the relevant authorities.



- Can read and write in the school's language of instruction.

6. Communication & Parent Engagement

6.1 Real-Time Tracking & Parent Notifications

- **Schools must inform parents about tracking applications if available for school buses.**
- **Bus supervisors must communicate with parents regarding:**
 - Delays in bus pick-up or drop-off.
 - The absence of an authorised guardian at drop-off.
 - Student misconduct incidents on the bus.
- **Bus drivers must immediately report any on-road incidents to the Transport Coordinator.**
- **The School Transport Coordinator is responsible for handling:**
 - Delays due to weather or accidents.
 - Changes in the school bus schedule.
 - Emergency situations affecting bus operations.

7. Summary of Key Responsibilities

Stakeholder	Responsibility
Schools	Provide safe transportation, ensure staff training, educate parents & students, manage complaints, and oversee transport safety.
Bus Drivers	Follow all safety procedures, communicate with Transport Coordinators, and report incidents.
Bus Supervisors	Monitor student safety, ensure authorised pick-ups, and notify schools & parents of delays.
Transport Coordinator	Oversee bus operations, communicate emergency updates, and handle parental inquiries.
Parents	Follow transportation policies, ensure students comply with the rules, and sign the required consent forms.

8. Safeguarding Policy

8.1 Duty of Care & School Responsibility

- All school staff are responsible for students' safety, well-being, and protection during school supervision.
- As per UAE law, the principal is responsible for student safety while under school care.

8.2 Policy Requirements

Each school must establish and actively communicate a Safeguarding Policy that includes:



- Clear safeguarding procedures and expectations.
- Compliance with the relevant policies and regulations.
- A security policy for protecting students against physical and digital threats.
- A monitoring system to track and evaluate safeguarding implementation.
- Allocated resources to support safeguarding measures for all students.

8.3 Safeguarding Committee or Lead

Schools must appoint a Safeguarding Lead or Health and Safety Officer responsible for:

- Annual review and monitoring of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Informing all staff, volunteers, and visitors of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Providing parents with easy access to the Safeguarding Policy.
- Delivering safeguarding training and induction programs for staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring compliance with the DOK H&S and Safeguarding Policies.

8.4 Safeguarding Awareness & Prevention

8.4.1 School-Wide Safeguarding Strategies

Schools must:

- Create a safe, supportive, and caring learning environment.



- Enforce a zero-tolerance policy on student maltreatment.
- Identify and monitor students at higher risk of harm.
- Train staff on how to respond to safeguarding incidents and support victims.
- Ensure students and staff feel safe to report concerns about misconduct.
- Protect students from digital risks per the MOE, The Counsellor's Guide for Cyberbullying Prevention in Educational Institutions.
- Ensure all MOE child protection policies and regulations are implemented.
- Guarantee no school policy harms student well-being, including access to restroom breaks.
- Offer confidential support and counselling services to all students.
- Ensure compliance with the UAE Compulsory Education Law by monitoring excessive absences or suspicious student withdrawals.

8.4.2 Safeguarding in the Curriculum

Schools must integrate safeguarding into the curriculum by:

- Building self-esteem, character development, and emotional regulation.
- Promoting respect and empathy for others.
- Teaching communication, consent, and self-protection strategies.
- Raising awareness of online safety and responsible digital behaviour.



- Providing strategies to handle peer pressure and personal risks.

9. School Security & Safety Measures

9.1 Security Systems & CCTV Surveillance

- Schools must have a fully integrated security system, including CCTV cameras.
- CCTV systems must be installed by an authorised vendor and comply with the relevant authority regulations.
- **CCTV Monitoring & Access Rules**
- Cameras must cover entrances, public areas, drop-off zones, and security areas. Noting other areas may be included from time to time if directed by the relevant Authority (e.g., GRA).
- CCTV must NOT be installed in bathrooms, changing rooms, or other private areas.
- Footage access is restricted to the principal or a delegated member of school staff, vendor-appointed specialists, and regulators with Juridical permission.
- According to the General Resources Authority, CCTV recordings must be stored for at least 90 days.
- Copying, sharing, or unauthorised distribution of recordings is strictly prohibited.
- Security incidents requiring external investigation must be immediately reported to the relevant authorities and RAK DOK.

9.2 School Security Personnel



- Schools must have licensed security guards at all entry points.
- Guards must:
 - Maintain a log of all visitors, including ID verification.
 - Issue visitor access passes and ensure proper identification.
 - Monitor student pick-up and drop-off for safety.
 - Be trained in school safety protocols.
 - Immediately report any security breaches or unauthorised intrusions to the relevant authorities.

9.3 School Visitor Policy

- Schools must develop a school visitor policy.
- All visitors must sign in at the security gate and receive an access pass.
- Unauthorised entry into classrooms is prohibited.
- Government inspectors and compliance officers must be granted full access to school records and premises.
- Schools must verify the identity of external personnel before granting access.

9.4 Student Departure & Pick-Up Policy

- Only authorised individuals may pick up students.
- Parents must provide written notice for any changes in pick-up arrangements.
- In emergencies, schools must verify changes via parental phone confirmation.



9.5 Drop-Off & Pick-Up Timing Regulations

- Schools must provide student supervision during drop-off and pick-up times for all students in the allocated areas at all times.

10. Special Events & Safeguarding

Schools must increase security during school events by:

- Pre-registering additional guests with ID verification.
- Ensuring security personnel monitor high-traffic areas.
- Conducting background checks/ security clearance on external service providers.
- Obtain RAK DOK approval from RAK DOK for all events, extra-curricular activities, excursions, and trips before proceeding.

11. Privacy & Data Protection

Schools must:

- Keep student and staff personal information confidential.
- Avoid displaying student schedules, photos, or personal details in public areas.
- Obtain parental consent before sharing contact details.

12. Emergency Response & Security Breaches

- Schools must have emergency lockdown procedures for security threats.



- Staff must be trained in security breach response plans.
- Schools must maintain regular emergency drills and data backup systems for digital security.
- Any major security breach must be reported to DOK and relevant authorities.

13. Food Safety and Healthy Eating Policy

13.1 Policy Overview & Requirements

Each school must establish a Healthy Eating & Food Safety Policy to:

- Promote a healthy eating environment and ensure access to nutritious meals.
- Ensure compliance with food safety and hygiene standards set by the relevant Authority.
- Supervise students during mealtimes, ensuring they consume appropriate food and have daily meal access (unless fasting).
- Monitor food-related behaviours, such as eating disorders or food-related bullying.
- Provide clear food restrictions, including banned items such as allergens, pork, alcohol, and carbonated drinks.
- Support students with allergies and food intolerances to ensure their safety.
- Publish the policy on the school website and make it accessible to staff, students, parents, and vendors.



13.2 Healthy Food Culture

- Schools must promote a culture of healthy eating.
- Unsafe foods (e.g., allergens such as nuts) **are strictly prohibited** for personal consumption or distribution on school premises.

13.3 Food Services & Compliance

- Schools offering food services must provide nutrient-rich, healthy meals that meet relevant authority nutrition guidelines.
- Schools must maintain valid food service licenses and regular inspection records.

13.4 Nutrition Education

- Schools must integrate nutrition education into the curriculum through lessons, workshops, and competitions.
- Key topics should include:
 - Balanced eating habits
 - Reading food labels
 - Sustainable meal practices

13.5 Staff & Parent Engagement

- Schools must provide healthy eating guidelines for parents, including:
 - Banned food items (e.g., allergens, caffeinated beverages)
 - Healthy meal choices are recommended to prevent obesity and diet-related illnesses.



- Schools must inform parents about food safety and allergy regulations and communicate any food-related concerns on the same day.

14. Food Safety Regulations

14.1 Food Safety & Hygiene

- Schools must comply with relevant food safety laws, including proper food storage, handling, packaging, and preparation.
- Schools must have trained staff overseeing food safety and conduct regular health inspections.

14.2 External Food Delivery Restrictions

- Students are prohibited from using external food delivery services (e.g., Talabat, Deliveroo) during school hours.

14.3 Food Sharing & School Events

- Shared food during school events must meet food safety guidelines.

14.4 Special Considerations

14.4.1 Dietary & Cultural Accommodations

- Schools must respect religious, cultural, and ethical dietary needs and involve students from minority groups in food service decisions.

14.4.2 Allergy & Intolerance Management

Schools must:



- Maintain up-to-date records of student allergies and share this information with canteen staff, school clinic, and relevant personnel.
- Ensure clear food labelling for allergens in all school-provided meals.
- Require parents to inform the school of new allergies and provide necessary medications.
- Implement risk assessments and emergency response plans for severe allergic reactions.

Store student allergy medications properly and ensure trained personnel can administer them.

15. Sustainability in School Meal Services

Schools must promote sustainable food practices, including:

- Eco-friendly food choices (e.g., plant-based meals, locally sourced ingredients).
- Waste reduction initiatives, such as portion control and food recycling programs.
- Eliminating single-use plastics in meal packaging.
- Encouraging students and staff to reduce food waste through awareness campaigns.

16. Compliance

Effective Date: This policy shall take effect from the start of the Academic Year 2025/26. Full compliance by all private schools is expected by the beginning of the Academic Year 2025/26.



Enforcement and Penalties: Non-compliance with the approved academic calendar or failure to observe designated public holidays may result in accountability measures as per RAK DOK regulations. These measures could include possible fines or corrective actions. Schools must adhere to all RAK RDOK-approved guidelines, and any violations may strictly lead to intervention by RAK DOK, per UAE Federal standards.

Compliance Audits: RAK DOK reserves the right to conduct periodic compliance audits to ensure that schools comply with the approved calendar policy. The school administration must promptly resolve any discrepancies found during these audits to avoid further action.

17. Feedback and Improvement

1. Annual Review: RAK DOK will conduct a yearly review of this policy to incorporate feedback, address emerging needs, and ensure it aligns with the latest educational standards and regulatory requirements.
2. Feedback Mechanisms: School administrators are encouraged to provide feedback on this policy to RAK DOK, enabling continuous improvement based on the practical experiences of schools.

18. Contact Information

For any questions related to this policy, please contact: info@dok.rak.ae

19. Recommendation / Conclusion

By complying with the RAK *DOK Schools Health and Safety Policy*, private schools in Ras Al Khaimah ensure a safe, supportive, and culturally respectful environment that fosters student well-being. This commitment enables schools to offer enriching and meaningful extra-curricular experiences that contribute to students' holistic development, growth, and success.

20. Revision History

Policy reference no:	RAKDOK-POL-2025-14
Document name:	School Health and Safety Policy
Effective date:	01.07.2025
Version:	01
Issue date:	01.08.2025
Updated on:	-
Updated by:	-
Reviewed by:	Executive Director

Note:

This policy is issued and controlled by Ras Al Khaimah Department of Knowledge (RAK DOK) the "Authority". It is understood that this policy is to be treated as confidential and the same should not be copied. Any disclosure in whole or in part for any purpose is considered as not authorised unless prior written permission is obtained from the Authority.