



A Guide to the Resumption of In-Person Learning in Nurseries, Kindergartens and Public and Private Schools

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Introduction



We reaffirm that the safety and wellbeing of our students remain our foremost priority. Accordingly, all necessary preventive measures have been diligently implemented to ensure a secure and stable learning environment.

This guide provides a structured framework for resuming in-person learning in nurseries, kindergartens, and schools. Comprehensive preparations have been undertaken in full coordination with all relevant entities within the country, thereby facilitating a smooth and seamless return for our students and safeguarding the continuation of their educational journey within a reassuring and well-regulated setting.

This guide constitutes a comprehensive and systematic framework for regulating the return and safe operation of nurseries, kindergartens and public and private schools.

It establishes an integrated approach that balances the requirements of continuity of education with considerations of safety and security, standardises approved preventive and operational procedures, and organises workflows across educational institutions at all levels.

Furthermore, it enhances institutional readiness to respond promptly and effectively to emerging developments and official directives, while ensuring the provision of a safe and stable educational environment that supports the continuous delivery of services with efficiency and accountability.

The guide is founded upon the principles of prevention, proactive preparedness and swift, safe response, with an emphasis on full compliance with the directives issued by the Ministry of Education and the relevant official authorities within the country.

The implementation of this guide is regarded as a shared responsibility among school and nursery administrations, educational staff and parents, with the aim of protecting students and ensuring their physical and psychological wellbeing under all circumstances.

Scope and Mechanism for the Resumption of In-Person Learning in Nurseries, Kindergartens and Public and Private Schools

The Ministry of Education announces the resumption of in-person learning for students and educational staff across nurseries, kindergartens and public and private schools across the UAE, in accordance with measures that ensure the safety of students, their families and all educational and administrative staff, and support the continuity of the educational process efficiently.

Kindergartens and private schools shall be granted the flexibility to adopt a blended approach, combining in-person instruction with distance learning; however, a single mode of instruction (either in-person or remote) must be consistently applied to each individual class.



Initial Operational Requirements and Conditions

All nurseries, kindergartens and public and private schools are required to fulfil a set of operational requirements and conditions to resume in-person learning, with the aim of enhancing institutional responsiveness and ensuring full preparedness to address emergency situations with the highest standards of responsibility and professionalism, as outlined below:



Obtaining official approval for the building and its facilities, confirming compliance with all approved health, safety, and security requirements for the resumption of in-person learning, as issued by the relevant licensing educational authority.



Designating and preparing internal safe zones to ensure the highest levels of rapid response to various emergency situations and official alerts.



Developing emergency response plans to address different types of incidents in accordance with environmental, health, safety, and security standards, and obtaining their approval from the Ministry of Education or the competent local educational authorities.



Implementing comprehensive training programs to enhance the preparedness and capacity of all staff. This includes regular training in first aid, evacuation and emergency procedures, alert response protocols, and effective methods for supporting students—both psychologically and emotionally—during emergencies with competence and composure.



Ensuring the provision of emergency exits and clearly marked evacuation routes leading to assembly points and designated safe zones.



Ensuring the availability of first aid kits and verifying the operational readiness and validity of all fire safety systems and firefighting equipment.



Providing designated evacuation carts for infants in nurseries for immediate use in emergency situations.

General Operational Controls

The Ministry of Education considers the safety of students and educational staff to be a paramount priority. Accordingly, nurseries, kindergartens, and public and private schools are required to adhere to the following operational controls during the resumption of in-person learning, to ensure a safe and stable learning environment:



Granting operational flexibility in arrival and dismissal times between, in a manner that ensures the safety of students, educational staff, and parents.



Suspending outdoor morning assemblies and adopting suitable indoor alternatives in accordance with each school's available facilities.



Restricting activities to indoor facilities and prohibiting gatherings within nurseries, kindergartens, or school premises.



Maintaining a safe distance from windows and glass façades.



Minimizing movement in outdoor areas and between classrooms during breaks and between lessons.



Organizing arrival, dismissal, and internal movement within the educational institution in a manner that prevents overcrowding and queuing at entrances and outdoor areas.



Incorporating educational awareness content in schools during the first week of the phased return to in-person learning, tailored to different age groups and reinforcing safety procedures.

Core Specifications and Standards for Safe Zones

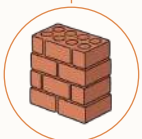
All educational institutions (nurseries, kindergartens and public and private schools) are required to designate and prepare safe zones within indoor areas on their premises. These areas shall be subject to a thorough assessment to ensure the highest levels of preparedness for rapid response to emergencies and official alerts. The selection and preparation of such zones must comply with the following standards and specifications:



Safe zones shall be located indoors and positioned away from external facades and windows.



They shall be situated in locations that allow easy access without the need to cross exposed areas, and within a maximum reach time of one minute.



They shall feature robust structural elements (reinforced concrete) that provide maximum protection against external impacts, while ensuring adequate ventilation.



They must be integrated into approved operational procedures within the educational institution's emergency response plan.



Provide enough safe zones capable of accommodating all students, educational staff, and on-site personnel within the building.

Additional Mandatory Controls for Nurseries

All licensed nurseries are required to implement a set of strict and non-negotiable additional measures and controls, as follows:



Child drop-off and pick-up shall be done exclusively at the external gates of the facility, with a strict prohibition on the entry of visitors and suppliers.



Parents' on-site presence shall be limited to essential necessity only and for the shortest possible duration.



A daily, accurately maintained log shall be kept, documenting the child's and parent/guardian's details, as well as precise attendance and departure times.



Compliance with the approved child-to-supervisor ratios is mandatory, ensuring effective evacuation capacity to safe zones and the adequate provision of care and essential needs for all children.



Continuous and direct supervision by caregivers must be maintained throughout the entire duration of children's presence, with a strict prohibition on leaving any child unattended under any circumstances.

Note: All nursery staff must be familiar with all parents' contact information.

Communication with Parents



Informing parents of all regulations and instructions outlined in this guide and ensuring their full understanding of their obligations.



Providing clear and direct communication channels with parents for emergency situations.



Roles and Responsibilities



01

Administration

The administration assumes a leading role in governing procedures and ensuring precise on-the-ground implementation. Its responsibilities include:

1. Ensuring the activation of all instructions and controls outlined in this guide.
2. Approving all emergency and evacuation plans with the relevant authorities and assessing the readiness of facilities and operational systems for immediate response.
3. Designating internal safe zones and installing directional signage and explanatory boards indicating evacuation routes.
4. Conducting continuous and meticulous field monitoring to ensure compliance with all procedures and controls outlined in the guide and promptly identifying and addressing any operational gaps.
5. Monitoring the readiness of educational staff to implement approved emergency plans and ensuring they are trained in rapid response procedures to alerts and safe zone access protocols.
6. Preparing guidance and awareness materials outlining safety and security procedures, as well as evacuation protocols.
7. Ensuring that parents' contact records are regularly updated to guarantee prompt communication when required.

Roles and Responsibilities



02

Educational Staff and Supervisors

1. Full compliance with the regulations and strict implementation of the approved procedures and instructions set forth in this guide.
2. Providing continuous support and guidance to students regarding safety procedures and the correct response mechanisms when official alerts are issued or immediate evacuation is required.
3. Offering psychological and emotional support to students, particularly upon the issuance of alerts or in the event of unfamiliar sounds, while calming and guiding them in a composed and balanced manner.
4. Organizing students, ensuring their safe evacuation to designated internal safe zones and guaranteeing strict adherence to established safety procedures while maintaining overall discipline within those areas.
5. Preparing accurate and up-to-date records of student names and attendance immediately following the end of an alert or emergency and submitting prompt reports to the administration to ensure the safety of all individuals.



03

Parents / Guardians

1. Reviewing the contents of this guide and cooperating with and responding to the administration's instructions in implementing the safety procedures outlined herein.
2. Adhering to and complying with directives issued by the relevant official authorities during alert periods.
3. Observing and respecting the designated arrival and dismissal schedules for their children in accordance with the specified regulations.

Roles and Responsibilities



04

Bus drivers and supervisors:

1. Keep students away from windows.
2. Ensure students stay calm and follow instructions.
3. Avoid dropping students in open areas.
4. Relocate to a safer area if needed.
5. Train students on safety procedures and how to take cover or evacuate on the school bus.

Approved Procedures Upon Receipt of Official Alert Notifications

In the event of receiving any official alert messages from the competent authorities, or upon hearing any unusual or elevated sounds during the period of in-person learning, all educational institutions, staff, and parents are required to respond immediately and comply with the issued instructions, as follows:



01

Prior to heading to the nursery, kindergarten, or school

Remain at home and adhere to the official directives issued



02

While on the move

In school buses:

- Do not let students get off in open areas.
- Keep them inside the bus, seated low and away from windows.
- Move to the nearest safe location.

With the parent or the students themselves:

- Follow the instructions issued by the official authorities.
- Go to the nearest safe place or return home.



03

Upon arrival at the nursery, kindergarten, or school

In school buses:

- Students should not be dropped off in an open area unless the bus is directly at the building entrance.
- If the entrance is relatively far away, students should remain on the bus, stay away from windows, and sit in a lower position.

With the parent or the students themselves:

- Do not wait at gates or courtyards; follow instructions to enter the building.



04

During the School Day

School and administrative staff:

- Stop all activities and move everyone to the nearest safe indoor area if there's an alert or danger.
- Keep students calm with simple activities once in a safe area.
- Stay calm and composed.

Bus drivers:

- If outside the bus, go to the nearest safe indoor facility.
 - If inside the bus, remain there until the alert ends.
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05

During Dismissal

In the school, nursery or kindergarten premises:

Suspend dismissal; do not release students until the alert ends, and avoid gatherings.

In school buses:

- Do not move or let students get off.
- Stay inside the bus, seated low and away from windows.

With the parent:

Avoid exposed areas; move to the nearest safe location.



06

After the End of the Alert

Communicate with parents to reassure them, and resume student pick-up and dismissal in an organized gradual manner, in accordance with the issued instructions

Unstable Situations

In cases classified by the authorities as unstable, the necessary measures shall be taken to ensure safety, including an immediate transition to remote learning and work, and the suspension of the use of educational facilities or the resumption of in-person learning, except upon obtaining duly approved official authorizations.



FAQs

1. Is the return to in-person learning mandatory for all students in the country?

Yes, all nurseries, kindergartens, and public schools follow in-person learning, while private schools may adopt a hybrid model when necessary.

2. Are schools safe for the resumption of in-person learning?

Yes. All educational institutions have completed the necessary readiness and preparation plans, including facility preparedness, training of educational and administrative staff, and updating safety and security procedures, ensuring a safe and reassuring learning environment for students and their families.

3. Why are private schools allowed to use a hybrid learning model, while public schools must follow full in-person learning?

Private schools can adopt hybrid learning to support students who are outside the country due to exceptional travel situations, ensuring their education continues without interruption. Public schools, on the other hand, rely on in-person learning because they mainly serve students who live within the country.

4. What types of hybrid learning models that private schools may implement?

Private schools may implement hybrid rotational learning models, whereby students alternate between in-person and remote learning according to a structured timetable or designated days of the week. Schools should not implement hybrid simultaneous learning models, in which students in the same class are taught in person and remotely at the same time.

5. How should parents reach the school during emergencies?

Parents can contact the school through designated direct communication channels, and they are advised to ensure their contact details are always updated.

6. Will in-person learning follow the approved Term 3 schedule this academic year?

Yes, in-person classes will proceed as planned according to the approved schedule for Term 3 of the current academic year.

7. Are there any changes to the school day or lesson timings in public and private schools?

No changes are planned. In-person learning will continue as scheduled, following the approved official school hours and class periods.