CIRCULAR

Dear Parents,

13th January 2025

Greetings and good wishes from The Westminster School – Dubai!

As you know I stand on the school gates every day welcoming students to school and monitoring arrival and dispersal. Recently I have noted some safety concerns that I would like to draw to your attention and ask for your support in addressing them.

Electric scooters

We do not allow electric scooters on campus at GEMS schools as we are concerned about the safety of students who have not been trained properly. I have noticed, however, that a number of students use electric scooters and park them outside the school. This week I have seen students on electric scooters narrowly missing collisions with cars because they were not following the normal rules of the road and were not aware of the vehicles around them. In each case I addressed the matter with the individual child and reminded him of how to stay safe on the roads. If your child rides a scooter, I ask that you spend some time with him or her training them on using it safely.

I would like to remind you that the law in the UAE states that electric scooters may only be used by people aged 16 or over and that they must have a licence to use one. This can be either a driving licence for a car or a dedicated electric scooter licence obtained from RTA. The law also states that safety equipment (helmet and hi visibility vest) must also be worn whilst using a scooter. If we see students under the age of 16 arriving at school by electric scooter, we have a duty to report them to the authorities. As part of this we may confiscate their scooter and keep it in school until a parent comes to collect it.

Finally on the subject of scooters we have been asked by RTA to remind parents that they may only be parked in designated areas. I have noticed some chained to trees outside the school and these are likely to be removed if the authorities do a clamp down which they do from time to time. The school takes no responsibility for scooters or bicycles parked outside of the school campus.

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Pedestrian safety :

I have also noticed this week a number of times where students have crossed the road without looking or walked behind cars reversing from parking spaces. Again, in each case I have reminded the student about the dangers of doing this. Please can I ask that you spend some time with your children talking to them about crossing the road safely and being aware of moving vehicles when walking around a parking area.

We will also do some reminders of road safety in school but do rely on parents to also teach their children about this important matter. We will always have plenty of staff outside of school at arrival and dispersal to support safety but they cannot see everything and we do rely on students and parents to take responsibility for their own safety.

Driving near schools :

I am grateful that most of our parents and visitors are mindful of children crossing the roads when they drive their cars near our school. I thank you for your patience and understanding and for following the direction of our staff. I also thank you for following the one-way system near gates 2 and 3, which was introduced in collaboration with Dubai Police, as this makes it much easier for us to keep children safe. Normally the traffic is such that cars have no choice but to drive slowly but at quieter times I ask that you keep your speed to a minimum when entering the drop of and pick up areas. Research shows that even a 10 km/h increase in speed significantly increases the risk of serious injury or death in the case of a collision with a car.

I thank you in advance for working with us to make sure our children stay safe on their way to and from school.

Best wishes.

CARL ROBERTS
EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL/CEO

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