

EDITOR, NEWS DESK

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**URGENT ACTION NEEDED TO GAZETTE AND IMPLEMENT THE 30 KM/H SCHOOL
ZONE SPEED LIMIT**

KUALA LUMPUR (28 OCTOBER 2026) - The Children's Commissioners (CC) express grave concern over the reported incident on 26 October 2026 involving an 11-year-old pupil who sustained serious injuries after being hit by a car while crossing the road in front of Sekolah Kebangsaan Darau in Menggatal, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The pupil's serious injuries are deeply concerning. The CC extend our sincere concern to the child and the child's family and wish the child a full recovery.

This is not the first reported road-related incident involving a pupil in 2026. Other reported incidents include:

- i. **12 April - Kota Bharu, Kelantan:** A Form One schoolgirl was killed in a vehicle-related incident within the compound of Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Tanjong Mas.
- ii. **5 May - Batu Pahat, Johor:** An eight-year-old pupil died after being hit by a van at the main entrance of Sekolah Kebangsaan Seri Maimon.
- iii. **2 July - Kemaman, Terengganu:** A six-year-old pupil sustained serious head injuries after a car-related incident while crossing the road in front of Sekolah Kebangsaan Seri Geliga.
- iv. **23 September - Permatang Pauh, Penang:** Two schoolgirls, aged eight and nine, sustained minor injuries after being hit by a motorcyclist while crossing the road in front of their school.
- v. **30 September - On the way to school:** An eight-year-old pupil died in a road accident while travelling by motorcycle with her grandmother, who was seriously injured.

These reports do not, by themselves, establish a statistically proven increase in school-related road accidents or show that speeding caused each incident. Nevertheless, preventive action should not wait for a pattern of deaths and serious injuries to emerge.

Protecting children in and around schools is consistent with Malaysia's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), including the duties to make children's best interests a primary consideration, protect their rights to life and development, and safeguard their health and prevent accidents. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends a 30 km/h speed limit where pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users share the road with motorised traffic. Lower speeds give drivers more time to react and reduce both stopping distances and the severity of collisions.

The 30 km/h school-zone policy was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Road Safety and Traffic Congestion on 15 July 2024. On 22 October 2026, the Minister of Transport said the Ministry of Transport Malaysia (MOT) and the Ministry of Works were in the process of gazetting the limit, covering 250 metres before and after a school entrance. The CC welcome this development and the Safe School Zone interventions announced and therefore urges the Government to clarify the remaining steps and publish a commencement date and implementation timetable.

In light of the above, the CC call on the Government to:

- i. **Complete the necessary legal and regulatory amendments** to gazette and implement a maximum speed limit of 30 km/h in designated school zones nationwide.

- ii. **Define school zones around children's actual routes**, including access through other school gates and routes to bus stops. Clarify operating hours, enforcement responsibilities and application across different road jurisdictions, ensuring protection during afternoon sessions, co-curricular activities and other school-related journeys.
- iii. **Coordinate implementation through a Ministry of Transport-led plan** involving the Ministry of Works, Ministry of Education, PDRM, state governments, local authorities and relevant road authorities. While gazetting is completed, proceed with urgent safety improvements and enforce existing traffic laws.
- iv. **Prioritise schools and locations according to risk**, including those beside busy roads, without safe pedestrian facilities, or where serious incidents or other risks have been identified. Measures should include raised crossings, continuous footpaths, refuge islands, traffic-calming features such as road humps along school stretches to reduce speeding, clear signs and road markings, and safe pick-up and drop-off areas. Provide crossing wardens and strict, targeted police enforcement against speeding and other traffic offences, with police monitoring during critical school arrival and dismissal hours. Ensure children and families have accessible ways to report hazards. Only through consistent police enforcements will there be effective deterrence to potential offenders; not the often-resorted to knee-jerk reactions to tragedies that had already taken place.
- v. **Apply a child-centred Safe System Approach**, drawing on international best practices. Children may find it difficult to judge vehicle speeds, distances and traffic risks, and should not bear the main responsibility for their safety on the road. Road-safety education should complement, not replacing the safe road design, appropriate speed limits, pedestrian infrastructure and effective enforcement. The Government should examine and adapt relevant measures from South Korea's child-protection zones and Japan's Zone 30 Plus programme, which combine speed limits with safety facilities, enforcement and traffic-calming measures.
- vi. **Provide dedicated funding and report progress regularly**. The rollout should be time-bound and prioritised by risk, with basic protection available to all schools regardless of private sponsorship. Reports should identify schools covered, safety works completed, vehicle speeds and compliance, and deaths and serious injuries; authorities should use these findings to improve implementation.

Every child must be able to travel to and from school safely. The CC urge the Government to translate its commitment into enforceable protections, adequately funded safety improvements and measurable results, and hope these measures will be implemented without delay. The Government must act now to prevent further deaths and serious injuries involving children on their journeys to and from school.

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Children's Commissioners (CC)
Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM)
28 October 2026