

# School Bus Handbook 2020/2021

This handbook has been prepared by the Transport Team in consultation with Parents Committee, IFS and Woodlands Transport (WT). All information contained within this handbook is subject to change.

Please refer to school website regularly at  
[www.ifs.edu.sg](http://www.ifs.edu.sg)

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## **Foreword**

Dear Parents,

IFS (International French School (Singapore)) is a private company dedicated to education and does not intend to provide transportation services. However, IFS facilitates access to transportation services for its students by selecting an official transport provider based upon criteria defined with the Parents Committee.

The transportation provider selected for the present academic year is Woodlands Transport Solutions Pte Ltd (WT). This booklet aims to provide you with information related to the transportation of IFS students with WT.

Parents who wish to use WT School Transport services have to register every year with WT.

I hope that this handbook will provide you with useful and practical information. Should you have any additional questions, do not hesitate to contact me. I will also assist you in your relationship with the transport provider.

Best Regards,

Sylvie Castellan  
IFS Transport Manager

## **Introduction**

### **Role of Woodlands Transport**

- Woodlands Transport Solutions Pte Ltd is a premier school bus transportation service provider in Singapore.
- WT won in April 2018 a competitive tender to continue to provide IFS with transport services for students and field trips from September 2018 onwards.
- WT has a team of professional, experienced and safe Bus Captains and Bus Mothers to look after overall bus discipline and ensure that the bus riders have a safe and comfortable ride.
- WT's fleet of modern buses is fully air-conditioned and all seats are fitted with seat belts to enhance the children's safety during travel. Buses are inspected yearly to ensure they comply with safety standards. All bus riders are fully insured.

### **Role of IFS Transport Manager**

- To ensure that the contractor (currently WT) provides a safe and efficient transport service to the students, in line with the contract signed between IFS and the contractor.
- To ensure that IFS rules are fully respected by the students and the contractor.
- To liaise between the contractor's representatives, IFS staff and Parents to ensure a transport service of high quality and an open communication channel.
- The Transport Manager can act as a facilitator when issues arise between WT and individual Parents in cases where no agreement can be reached directly between parties.

## **Contact Details**

### **Woodlands Transport**

Mailing Address: (for payments only) Woodlands Transport Solutions Pte Ltd  
8 Gul Circle  
Singapore 629564

Transport Office: 2900 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3  
Level 2 block K (K205)

Telephone number: (65) 68 05 00 53

Email Address: [ifs@woodlandstransport.com.sg](mailto:ifs@woodlandstransport.com.sg)

Website: <http://www.woodlandstransport.com.sg>

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 07h00 to 17h40 during term time

### **IFS Transport Manager**

Contact: Sylvie Castellan

Office: Office K401  
2900 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3

Email Address: [transport@ifs.edu.sg](mailto:transport@ifs.edu.sg)

Phone number: (65) 68 05 00 52 (\*)

(\*): Please note that at bus departure & arrival times, the Transport Manager may be assisting in the bus bay.

## **Terms and Conditions of Transport**

Parents should use the online registration service to register their children to the school bus (see details on the School Website, section “Transport”). By validating the Transport Request Form, Parents or Guardians accept all the Terms and Conditions below, as well as the School Bus Rules and the Disciplinary Procedure that you can find further in the handbook.

1. WT will provide bus service to students in all areas of Singapore provided the distance to IFS is within 16 km. For areas above 16 km, time will be subjected to negotiation with Parents or Guardians. Final approval must be received from Transport Manager before WT can apply the new negotiated time.
2. Bus routes are set by WT and may change from time to time. Though WT does its utmost to keep travelling time to a minimum, some locations may require a longer travelling time. Please contact WT for more details.
3. Bus allocation is determined at the discretion of WT based upon existing bus routes. Students may be moved from one bus to another to accommodate changes in pick up routes, in which case Parents will be informed of the new bus numbers, pick up and drop off times.
4. Seat allocation may take up to 2 weeks to process. Parents will be notified by WT once seats have been allocated.
5. Seat allocation is based on a first come first serve basis regardless of one or two way transfer.
6. Students will be collected and dropped off at their homes at a pre-advised time window each day. Students are not permitted to alight from the bus before or after their registered home address. For alternative stops, Parents must give notice in writing and seek clearance from WT with copy to the Transport Manager at least one working day in advance .
7. Parents are advised to avoid making arrangements for an afterschool activity too close to the scheduled drop-off time because of some delays that may occur (bad weather, traffic jams, road works,...).
8. Students must be on time at their pick-up point. If they do not show up, the driver will leave without notice 1 minute after the allotted pick-up time. If a Bus Driver is consistently kept waiting by a specific child, a report will be made to WT and the Transport Manager. If the situation persists, Parents may be asked by WT to make alternative transport arrangements

9. Drop-off conditions:

- a. For Kindergarten students: the Parents must insure that their child is met by their Parent or Guardian upon arrival at their drop-off point (\*).
  - b. For CP/CE1: the Parents must select one of the following options on the Transport Request Form:
    - 1) Drop off only in the presence of Parent or Guardian (\*).
    - 2) Drop off without the presence of an adult.
  - c. Students from CE2 onwards are allowed to alight at the designated point whether or not there is an adult meeting them.
- (\* Important note: No students will be allowed to alight without the presence of an adult, even accompanied by an older sibling. Children not met will be returned to school and a flat fee of \$ 40 will be charged by WT. Parents will then be required to fetch their child from school as soon as possible.

10. The registrations are nominative and seats are not transferrable to other children upon Parents' decision.

11. Children of 6ème and older taking their friends home who normally travel on another bus must provide a written request from their Parents to WT with copy to the Transport Manager and seek written approval from the Transport office at least one working day in advance. Such requests will be subject to seat availability and should not be on a regular basis. Students who are not registered with WT cannot use the bus service.

12. If both Parents are out of town and the child stays at another address with an existing bus service, Parents may apply to WT for their child to travel on another bus. The notice must be sent in writing to WT with copy to the Transport Manager at least 2 working days before the change. WT will try to accommodate the request subject to seat availability. The price applicable during that time will be the one corresponding to the furthest address, for a minimum of 1 week. No provision will be made should the child stay at an address with no existing bus service.

13. Provision of ad hoc bus service for non registered students:

This is applicable only under the following conditions:

- For overseas students on exchange program who are hosted by a family of bus riders or for students of IFS, only when both Parents are out of Singapore,
- The requests are subject to seat availability,
- The place of residence must be an existing designated point,
- The request of service must be made at least 2 weeks in advance and sent by e-mail to WT with copy to the Transport Manager,
- Minimum fee of 1 week will be charged for a request of 7 days or less, and thereafter, daily rate will be charged from the 8th day onwards,
- This is not applicable for play dates or sleep-over.

14. If your child is not using the bus service in the morning, please notify WT to avoid unnecessary delay.
15. If your child is not using the bus in the afternoon, please notify in writing WT with copy to the Transport Manager before 09h00 on the day concerned. You must also inform your child's teacher if he/she is attending Kindergarten or Elementary School.
16. Students residing in cul-de-sacs or narrow lanes will be transported so far as practical and safe. The student may be required to walk to a pick-up point designated by WT.
17. Students residing in condominiums will be picked up and dropped off at a safe and practical central point designated by WT.
18. Invoice will be sent out approximately 2 weeks before the start of each School Term and payment due 2 weeks from the date of invoice. Overdue charges of \$ 10 will be imposed for all late payment. If no payment is received after the due date, bus service will be suspended until full payment is received.
19. Parents that are changing their residential address must give WT 2 weeks notice in writing before the date of the move. In case the family is moving to an address beyond the 16 km range, the time will be renegotiated (refer above to point 1).
20. Parents who wish to terminate the bus service must notify the Transport office in writing at least 2 weeks in advance. In cases whereby Parents fail to inform the Transport office about any termination, a fee equivalent to 2 weeks of service from the date of notification will be charged. Otherwise, WT reserve the right to assume that the existing service is still required and payment is due to WT accordingly.
21. If a bus rider is found guilty of damaging any bus equipment, the Parents or the Guardian and the Educational Manager of the IFS ("Educational Manager": Kindergarten Principal / Manager of "Vie Scolaire" Elementary School / Principal of the Elementary School Cycle 2/ Principal of the Elementary School Cycle 3 / Education Counsellors) will be informed. Cost of repair will be forwarded to Parents or Guardian for payment. If Parents or Guardian refuses to pay for the damages, the Transport Manager will be consulted before further action is taken and this may include suspension of service with no refund of transport fare.
22. If a bus fails to turn up, Parents should contact WT immediately to check on the bus whereabouts. Should the bus be unable to pick up the students as usual, the student may claim from WT the cost of a one way, non-limousine taxi fare to the IFS (a receipt must be presented within a week). If a student misses the bus, no taxi fare can be claimed.

23. It is strictly forbidden for Parents to board the bus and/or to scold bus riders or the bus crew.

24. Parents with any queries or problems with the bus service should contact WT. Please do NOT discuss the matter with the Bus Captain or Bus Mother. Should Parents be dissatisfied with the response from WT, they should contact the Transport Manager.

25. Transport Fares 2020-2021:

All bus services will range from \$2117 to \$4011 per annum for 2 way transfers and \$1376 to \$2607 per annum for 1 way transfer.

All rates are given on per child basis before GST and regardless of number of riders per family. The invoices are send at the beginning of each term according to following proration:

Term 1: 40 % of total annual fee

Term 2 and Term 3: 30 % of total annual fee for each term

Invoicing is based on the official first day until the official last day of the school term.

For later commencement of the bus service, the first day of invoicing will be the first day of the week of commencement of the service.

For earlier termination of bus service, the last day of invoicing will be the last day of the full notice period, which is 14 days.

## Arrival and Departure Times

### Morning

#### Middle and High Schools

School starts at 7:50am

1st pick-up as from 7:00am (1)

1st arrival at school at 7:30am

(1): as from 6:50am for Sentosa and for a few exceptions approved by the school / as from 7:05am for less than 4 km / decide on a case-by-case scenario for more than 16 km.

#### Kindergarten and Elementary Schools

School starts at 8:35am

1st pick-up as from 7:30am (2)

1st arrival at school at 8:05am

(2): as from 7:20am for Sentosa / as from 7:35am for less than 4 km / decide on a case-by-case scenario for more than 16 km.

### Afternoon

#### Kindergarten and Elementary Schools

School ends at 3:25pm / 12:15pm

Bus leave as from 3:35pm / 12:25pm

#### Middle School (6ème and 5ème)

School ends at 4:05pm

Bus leave as from 4:15pm

#### Middle School (4ème and 3ème) and High School

School ends at 5:05pm

Bus leave as from 5:15pm (shuttle service)

## **School Bus Rules**

Students who use WT transport are expected to act as representatives of the IFS. As such their behaviour must be beyond reproach.

The following rules have been put in place by WT and IFS to set the standard of behaviour and mutual respect expected of the students. These rules have to be followed by all students to enable everybody to enjoy a comfortable and safe journey.

1. Students must board the bus in a peaceful and orderly manner.
2. At the end of the school day, the students must board the bus immediately and not leave the bus even if the departure is delayed.
3. It is strictly forbidden for any student to enter the bus bay once the first bus is in motion.
4. Students must remain seated with their seat belts fastened at all times during the journey. Students are not allowed to walk in the aisle unless it is to alight at their scheduled stop.
5. Students must not shout or be loud while on the bus. If they wish to listen to music, they may do so using their personal player and headphones.
6. The students shall abstain from vulgar or inappropriate gestures or language.
7. Everyone is entitled to respect and protection against any form of violence. Mutual respect between students and adults and among students is the basis of school life. No school transport user shall resort to violence or provocation, be it verbal or physical, against any other student or an adult in charge of transport supervision.
8. Students shall follow all instructions given by the bus crew during their bus journey.
9. For reasons of hygiene, eating and drinking on the bus is strictly prohibited. No litter must be left on the bus.
10. Smoking on the bus is strictly prohibited.
11. The use of sharp or any potentially dangerous objects such as compass, scissors, pens, colour pencils, marbles, lighters, etc... is strictly prohibited in the bus.
12. For safety reasons students must not throw objects out of the bus or inside the bus.
13. Students participating in sports activities should bring a towel to sit on as muddy clothes are not allowed. Muddy shoes should be removed before boarding the bus.

14. The students are expected to use the bus facilities with care. In the event of any damage caused by a student, the Parents will be held responsible and financially liable for the cost of the repair.

15. Pets are not allowed at any time in the buses.

16. Access to buses is strictly limited to students and authorised personnel of WT and IFS. In no circumstances are Parents allowed on board or travel on School buses.

17. Any infringement of the aforementioned rules will result in actions being taken by WT in accordance with the following disciplinary procedures; Any investigations will be carried out jointly by WT and the Educational Manager, who will advise WT via the Transport Manager on its conclusions. Interviews of students will be carried out exclusively by the IFS and the parents will be informed. The student and his Parents or Guardians may be asked to meet with the Educational Manager, the Transport Manager and WT management.

## **Disciplinary Procedure**

In case of breach of the above rules, sanctions will be taken in accordance with the following procedure:

The first level of answer is under the responsibility of Woodlands. If the bus attendant can not settle the problem, a person of the Transport Office can intervene with the student at the arrival time or departure time of buses, and the parents will be contacted if need be.

For more severe incidents or repeated incidents, Woodlands will contact the Educational Manager in charge who will handle the incident according to the usual procedure of the School.

The student may be temporarily or definitively suspended from the bus service according to the recommendations of the Educational Manager in charge depending on the gravity of the incident. In most serious cases, the student will be suspended from the service immediately without any prior warning.

In case of suspension, WT reserves the right not to reimburse the bus fees.

## **Bus Crew Guidelines**

The bus crews are committed to transporting IFS students as safely and comfortably as possible. Each bus has a bus crew comprising of a Bus Captain and Bus Mother. WT has issued the following guidelines to the Bus Captains and Bus Mothers:

Bus Captain is to:

- Comply with the speed limit at all times.
- Keep their buses uncluttered and clean at all times.
- Remain courteous towards students and Parents at all times.
- Refrain from arguing with Parents and to report disagreements immediately to WT office for further action.

Bus Mother is to:

- Supervise students at all times.
- Ensure that no student is standing up until the bus has come to a complete standstill.
- Ensure that students are wearing seat belts at all times and help young students in buckling their seat belts.
- Report to WT should a student misbehave.
- Help the PS (Petite Section) students to alight from the bus and escort them into their classrooms in the mornings.
- Ensure that Kindergarten students are seated at the front of the bus and, if necessary, reserve seats for this purpose.
- Prohibit Kindergarten, and CP and CE1 students who are not authorised, from alighting in the afternoon if an adult does not meet them. In case there is no adult to meet with the student, WT will contact the Parents to make alternate arrangement. Should the Parents not be contactable, the student will be brought back to the IFS.
- Remind misbehaving students of these rules, but are NOT allowed to punish.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 - Why can't my child have exactly the same bus pick-up and drop off times for the whole year; and always be served by the same bus? Why do you change it from time to time? Why does it often change at the start of every term?

Bus sizes and pick-up/drop off timing are dependent on the composition of families that are served by the bus. This will change as new families apply for transport services or when families change their place of residence. As a result, bus sizes and timing change accordingly.

Q2 - Why is my child picked up first and dropped off last?

WT try to implement the principle of first on/first off but it is not always possible and there may well be occasions when a student is first on and last off. The route set for each bus to reach School may not be the same as the route to bring students home. This may be due to traffic considerations, road layout or the fact that some students only take the bus one way.

Q3 - Why is my child not the last to be picked up even though we reside nearest to the school?

Traffic considerations, road layout and the number of children within a given area determine the bus route. Therefore, students living near the school may not always be guaranteed the last pick up or a shorter journey time than those residing further away.

Q4 - Why does the bus take longer to get to School than it takes travelling by car?

The buses serve many families travelling to School and there are many bus stops along the way to School to pick up students; hence it takes longer than a car that travels to IFS without stopping.

Also, journey times are measured from the time a child boards the bus to the time that he/she disembarks at the school or home.

In the afternoon, buses start to leave the campus 10 to 15 minutes after dismissal time to allow children sufficient time to board the buses.

Q5 - Why is the travel time longer than last year?

Different items have to be taken into account:

- The routes may differ from last year depending on the number of students and stops,
- The traffic in Singapore has become heavier and heavier.

Q6 - Where is the pick-up and drop-off point at my condominium?

As a general rule, for private condominiums, all pick-up and drop-off points are at the guardhouse or gate barrier. WT buses are not able to provide a

door-to-door service to all condominiums due to space constraints in certain areas.

Q7 - Where is the pick-up and drop-off point for my house?

For private houses, as a general rule, all buses pick-up and drop-off at the gate of the house. However, certain private housing estates have narrow roads or a dead end that prevents our buses from making a U-turn. In such cases, students will be picked-up and dropped-off at the closest point to the house that is practical and safe for both the students and the bus driver. WT will advise the family of the pick-up and drop-off points.

Q8 - How much notice is needed if I wish to register my child/children to the bus service or if we move to a new address?

WT requires a minimum of 2 weeks notice in order for them to organize the service or to make any change to the existing transport service. Online registration is available for new registrations. You can find all the details on the Web site of the IFS (Transport section) or by contacting the Transport Office. For a change of address, please send a mail to WT to provide your new address.

Q9 - Is my child allowed to take a different bus for a “sleep-over” or “play date” at a friend’s place?

Only children of 6ème and older are allowed to travel on another bus for “sleep-over” or “play date” at a friend’s house. The child must be a regular bus rider and the Parents must send a written request to WT with copy to the Transport Manager and seek written approval at least one day in advance. Such requests should not be on a regular basis and are subject to seat availability.

Q10 - Why is it not possible for students participating in ECAs to take the school bus when their activities finish?

Woodlands Transport takes in charge the students only after the official dismissal times. It is not possible to offer an individual service after ECA due to the number of activities, their different duration and the number of students involved. However, a carpool service is proposed by the Parents Committee – all the information can be found on the IFS website (AES section).

Q11 - What determines the size of the bus used for each route?

Bus size depends on the number of students along any route and the overall time journey. Furthermore, the overall number of buses is limited due to the size of the car park at the school. As a result, it is not possible to have a fleet of only small buses or large buses to serve the school. The number and the size of the buses can change in order to accommodate new families and

those who move, while respecting the needs and constraints of the school. On some occasions, WT may need to change the type of bus allocated to a particular route.

Q12 - Why are the buses sometimes late?

Buses are sometimes late for a variety of reasons such as delay caused from road works, traffic congestion, rainy weather and students not being at the designated pick-up / drop-off points.

Q13 - Is my child covered under insurance while travelling on the transport service?

Yes. Singapore Transport Law requires that each bus owner maintain Third Party Vehicle Insurance coverage. No bus is permitted to carry passengers on the road without having purchased this coverage.

Q14 - Are the buses safe for our children to travel on?

WT and authorized employees from IFS do regular inspections of the safety items of the buses, including seat belts, fire extinguishers and first-aid kits. Mechanical checks of buses are mandatory in Singapore and must be done every year at an independent government approved inspection centre, which can certify that a bus is safe for travel on the road.

Q15 - Who will take care of my children while on the bus?

During travel to school, there will be a female Bus Mother on board each bus to supervise the children. Their primary duties are to ensure the children remain safe and maintain discipline on the bus during the entire travelling time. The Bus Mothers are only allowed to verbally advise misbehaving children. Therefore, WT requires Parents to counsel and advise their children on the proper norms of behaviour on board school buses so that each rider may have a pleasant ride.

Q16 - What modes of payment does WT accept?

WT accepts cash, cheque, credit card or GIRO payment. For payment made through bank transfer, the sender must pay any miscellaneous cost associated with the payment.

Q17 - My Company is paying for the bus fare. How do I arrange for the invoice to be sent to my company?

Please indicate when registering that the company is to be invoiced. You will then need to provide all relevant details. This information will be taken as the standing instruction until notified otherwise in writing by the family.

Q18 - Are there any discounts for families with more than one child requiring bus service?

In order to keep individual bus fares as economical as possible for all students, WT does not offer discounts for families with more than one child.

Q19 - When should payment be made?

Payment should be made by the due date as stated on the invoice. WT reserves the right to impose late charges or discontinue transport service to families that do not make payment promptly.

Q20 - Can my child bring medicines in the bus?

It is strictly forbidden to carry medicines on the bus, either in a child's school bag or through the bus mother.

Q21 - If my child from college finishes earlier than the official schedule, can he use the bus of primary school?

Students finishing earlier than the official schedule on a regular basis (every week) may benefit from a seat in the bus of primary school provided that they have been authorized beforehand by the Transport Manager. This additional service, that is subject to seat availability, is organized by the school a couple of weeks after the first day of school, and there is an adhoc communication to all the Parents concerned before it starts.

### **Appendix: summary of main obligations of Woodlands Transport Solutions Pte Ltd**

- Service provided to all areas of Singapore and reduced journey time for short distances.
- Fixed, contractually binding price no matter how many students per segment of 2 km, for distances of up to 18 km and fixed price above 18km.
- Bus Attendants in ALL buses (except for the shuttle service at 5:15 pm).
- 3-point seat belts in all buses and adjustable belts in buses with fewer than 15 seats.
- Billing: invoices sent out 2 weeks before the beginning of term with a due date of 2 weeks from the date of the invoice.
- For change of address, 2 weeks notice required (changed from one month notice).

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