

School Bus Handbook

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

Please refer to school website regularly at
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 ComfortDelGro Bus Pte Ltd (CDGB).

This booklet aims to provide you with information related to the transportation of IFS students with CDGB.

Parents who wish to use CDGB School Transport services must register every year with CDGB.

I hope that this handbook will provide you with all the useful and practical information you need. Should you have any unanswered questions or need assistance with the transport provider, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards,
Estelle STERN
IFS Transport Manager

Welcome to CDGB Services

CDGB has been contracted by the International French School (IFS) to ensure that appropriate standards of buses and safety standards are consistently met.

CDGB - a subsidiary of ComfortDelGro - is Singapore's largest private bus company with more than 200 buses. We have incorporated 54 electric buses to reduce our environmental impact and to provide climate-friendly transport for our clients.

To safeguard the well-being, health, and safety of our customers, CDGB works with our network of transport partners to ensure the provision of well-maintained air-conditioned buses.

We deploy transport technology to enhance the safety and efficiency of the fleet. Our buses are trackable by GPS to facilitate real-time monitoring by our staff as well as the school administrators and Parents.

Parents can use our apps to keep track of the journey of their children. We have a team of experienced operations staff that seeks to provide quality customer service and facilitate cross-cultural understanding between our expatriate customers and the local bus operators whom we work with.

Besides using our buses, we contract other private bus operators to run the IFS bus service. We hire buses that are in good and safe running order and are maintained to the high standards expected by Parents/Guardians and the school.

Role of IFS Transport Manager

- To ensure that the contractor (currently CDGB) 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 CDGB and Parents in cases where no agreement can be reached directly between parties.

Contact Details

ComfortDelGro Bus Pte Ltd

Registered Address: 600 Sin Ming Avenue Level 3 Singapore 575733

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

Phone number: (65) 68 05 00 53

Email Address: ifs@comfortdelgrobus.com.sg

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

Opening hours: Monday to Friday 7am to 5:40pm during school time

IFS Transport Manager

Contact: Estelle STERN

Email Address: transport@ifs.edu.sg

Phone number: (65) 68 05 01 10 (*)

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

IFS Parent Support

Office: 2900 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3
Level 2 block K (K214)

Email address: parentsupport@ifs.edu.sg

Phone number: (65) 68 05 00 22

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 submitting 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. CDGB will provide bus service to students, in all areas of Singapore provided the distance to IFS is within 16 km. For areas beyond 16 km, time will be subjected to negotiation with Parents or Guardians. Final approval must be received from the IFS Transport Manager before CDGB applies the new negotiated time.
2. Bus routes are set by CDGB and may change from time to time. Though CDGB does its utmost to keep travelling time to a minimum, some locations may require a longer travelling time. Please contact CDGB for more details.
3. Bus allocation is determined at the discretion of CDGB 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 CDGB 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 picked up and dropped off at their homes every day at a pre-advised schedule. Students are not permitted to alight from the bus before or after their registered address. For alternative stops, Parents are required to submit a written notice and seek clearance from CDGB at least one working day in advance, no later than 12:00 noon. 5pm buses, ECA buses and holiday camp buses are shuttles with fixed drop off points. They don't provide a door-to-door service.
7. Parents are advised to not schedule any activities for their child immediately after the expected bus arrival time, considering possible delays (bad weather, traffic jam, road work etc).
8. Students must be at the designated pick-up point at the scheduled time communicated via email or the parent app. Drivers will wait up to 1 minute after the scheduled time, after which they will depart without further notice. GPS tracking is for reference only and must not be used to determine when a student should proceed to the pick-up point. Students are expected to be ready regardless of the bus location shown. Repeated delays will be reported to CDGB and the IFS Transport Manager. CDGB reserves the right to require parents to make alternative transport arrangements.

9. Drop-off conditions:

- a. For Kindergarten students: Parents must ensure that their child is picked up by their Parent or Guardian upon arrival at their drop-off point (*).
- b. For CP/CE1: Parents must select one of the following options on the transport request form:
 - i) Drop off only in the presence of a parent or a guardian (*).
 - ii) Drop off without the presence of an adult. (Please email CDGB Transport Office in advance for record purposes).

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. Parents or guardians are required to be present at the designated drop-off point at least 2 minutes in advance of the scheduled arrival time. If the authorised adult is not present on time, the student will be brought back to the school for safety reasons.*

A flat fee of \$ 50 will be charged by CDGB. Parents will then be required to fetch their child from school as soon as possible.

Any change to the authorised parent or guardian collecting the student must be communicated to CDGB via email or WhatsApp at least 3 hours prior to the scheduled drop-off time. Requests submitted with less than 3 hours' notice may not be accommodated.

10. The registrations are nominative, and seats are not transferable to other children upon Parents' decision.
11. Children of 6ème and older taking a friend home who normally travels on another bus, must provide a written request from their Parents to CDGB to seek written approval 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 CDGB cannot use the bus service.
12. If both Parents are out of town and the child stays at another address covered by an existing bus route, Parents may request to CDGB that their child travels on that particular bus. The notice must be sent in writing to CDGB at least 3 working days prior to the change. CDGB will try to accommodate the request subject to seat availability. The fare applied during this period will be based on the farthest address, with a minimum duration of one 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 for service must be made at least 2 weeks in advance and sent by e-mail to CDGB.
- 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 playdates or sleep-over.

If your child will not be using the bus service, please notify CDGB via the Parent App or by email to avoid unnecessary delays. Please note that same-day notifications cannot be made through the Parent App and must therefore be sent by email. If your child is in Kindergarten or Elementary School, you must also inform their teacher and, if applicable, the ECA team.

14. Students residing in dead-end streets or narrow lanes will be picked up and dropped off at the closest practical and safe point designated by CDGB. The student may be required to walk.
15. Students residing in condominiums will be picked up and dropped off at a safe and practical central point designated by CDGB.
16. 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. Kindly pay within the due date to avoid late payment surcharge. A LATE PAYMENT SURCHARGE of \$10 will be imposed if payment is not received by the due date, followed by suspension of service.
17. Parents that are changing their residential address must give CDGB 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).
18. Parents who wish to terminate the bus service must notify CDGB in writing at least 2 weeks in advance. In cases whereby Parents fail to inform CDGB about any termination, a fee equivalent to 2 weeks of service from the date of notification will be charged. Otherwise, CDGB reserves the right to assume that the existing service is still required, and payment is due to CDGB accordingly.
19. If a bus rider is found responsible for damaging bus equipment or causing excessive soiling (e.g. vomit, urine, or faeces), the Parents or the Guardian and the IFS Transport Manager will be informed. Cost of repair and cleaning will be forwarded to Parents or Guardian for payment. If Parents or Guardian refuse to pay for the damages, the IFS Transport Manager will be consulted before further action is taken and this may include suspension of service with no refund of transport fare.
20. If the school bus fails to turn up, Parents are advised to contact ComfortDelGro Bus (CDGB) immediately to verify the status and location of the bus.

- a. Should the bus be unable to pick up the student as scheduled, Parents may arrange alternative transportation and submit a claim for reimbursement. A valid receipt must be submitted to CDGB within one week of the incident.

Reimbursement Guidelines:

- I. **Kindergarten and Elementary students:** Reimbursement for standard 2-way taxi fare (limousine and premium fares does not apply).
 - II. **Secondary students:** Reimbursement for standard 1-way taxi fare (limousine and premium fares does not apply).
- b. Reimbursement will not be provided if a student misses the bus due to their own lateness or other personal reasons.

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

24. Parents with any queries or problems with the bus service should contact CDGB. Please do NOT discuss the matter with the Bus Captain or Bus Attendant. Should Parents be unsatisfied with the response from CDGB, they may contact the IFS Transport Manager or Parent Support.

25. Transport Fares: Bus rates are available online on the Transport page of the IFS website. The invoices are sent 2 weeks before the term commence 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.

26. Refunds

- a. Any refunds and pro-rations of bus fares in the event of any involuntary suspension or stoppage of service, whether permanent or temporary, are not guaranteed and subject to review.
- b. No refund will be granted in case of changes on the school calendar initiated by IFS.

27. Home-Based Learning (HBL) Scheme: In case of HBL, a 70% rebate will be applied to all bus services (regular buses, ECA buses and summer camp buses), subject to the following conditions:

- a. The HBL period is announced by the Government of Singapore.
- b. The period of HBL exceeds 3 business days.
- c. The notice time given before any applicable rebate is 5 business days or more.
- d. All school buses cease to operate.
- e. Rebates will be equivalent to 70% of the chargeable bus fares for all affected business days. Under the HBL Scheme, a non-obligatory alternative transport service will be offered for those who may still require service.

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, with all buses to arrive no later than 7:45am.

(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, with all buses to arrive no later than 8:30am.

(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 on Fridays Bus leave from 3:35pm / 12:25pm on Fridays

Middle and High Schools For students registered to the 4pm bus, the buses leave at 4:15pm

For students registered to the 5pm bus, the buses leave at 5:15pm (shuttle service)

School Bus Rules and Regulations

Students who use CDGB transport represent the IFS. As such, their behaviour must be beyond reproach. The following rules have been put in place by CDGB and IFS to set the standard of behaviour and mutual respect expected from the students. These rules must 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. It is strictly forbidden for any student to enter the bus bay once the first bus is in motion.
3. Students must remain seated with their seat belts always fastened during the journey. Students are not allowed to walk in the aisle unless it is to alight at their scheduled stop.
4. 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 device and headphones.
5. The students shall abstain from vulgar or inappropriate gestures or language.
6. Each student must be protected against any form of violence. Mutual respect between students and adults, as well as among students, is fundamental to school life. No school transport user shall resort to violence or provocation, whether verbal or physical, against any other student or an adult in charge of transport supervision. Students are encouraged to report any incidents to the bus crew or any school authorities, who will inform the ComfortDelGro Transport Office immediately.
7. Students shall follow all instructions given by the bus crew during their bus journey.
8. For hygiene reasons, eating and drinking on the bus is strictly prohibited. No litter must be left on the bus.
9. Smoking on the bus is strictly prohibited.
10. 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.
11. For safety reasons students must not throw objects out of the bus or inside the bus.
12. Students covered in mud after sports activities should bring a towel to sit on in the bus and dirty shoes should be removed before boarding the bus.
13. 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.

14. Pets are not allowed at any time on the buses.
15. Access to buses is strictly limited to students and authorised personnel of CDGB and IFS. In no circumstances are Parents allowed to board or ride on the bus. It helps ensure the smooth operation of bus routes and minimizes potential disruptions. Parents are encouraged to contact the ComfortDelGro Transport Office for any assistance or concerns they may have regarding their child's transportation.
16. In the event of a breakdown, accident or other unforeseen circumstances. Students should remain calm, follow instructions from the Bus crew and evacuate the bus safely if necessary.

Disciplinary Procedure

Any infringement of school bus rules will result in actions being taken by CDGB in accordance with the following disciplinary procedures.

Any investigations will be carried out jointly by CDGB and the IFS Transport Manager, then the Parents will be informed. The student and his Parents or Guardians may be requested to meet with the IFS Transport Manager and CDGB management and depending on the situation with the Divisional Principal and/or the Vie Scolaire Manager.

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 CDGB. If the bus attendant cannot settle the problem, a CDGB representative may intervene with the student at the arrival time or departure time of buses, and the Parents will be contacted if needed.

For more severe incidents or repeated incidents, after consultation with the Divisional Principal and the Vie Scolaire Manager, CDGB and the IFS Transport Manager will decide on the appropriate sanctions. The outcome will be communicated to the Parents.

The student may be temporarily or definitively suspended from the bus service depending on the gravity of the incident.

In most serious cases, the student will be suspended from the service immediately without any warning.

In case of suspension, CDGB 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 consisting of a Bus Captain and a Bus Attendant. CDGB has issued the following guidelines to the Bus Captains and Bus Attendants:

Bus Captain is to:

- Always comply with the speed limit and drive safely at all times.
- Keep their buses always uncluttered and clean.
- Always remain courteous towards students and Parents.
- Refrain from arguing with Parents and to report disagreements immediately to CDGB office for further action.
- Must not open the door to speak with unauthorized people or allow unauthorized people to board the bus.
- Must ensure the relevant signages are displayed at all times.

Bus Attendant is to:

- Always supervise safety and well-being of students.
- Ensure that no student is standing up until the bus has come to a complete standstill.
- Ensure that students are always wearing seat belts and help young students in buckling their seat belts.
- Report to the CDGB Transport Office if a student misbehaves.
- 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 pick them up. In case there is no adult to pick up the student, CDGB will contact the Parents to make alternate arrangements. Should the Parents not be contactable, the student will be brought back to the IFS.
- Remind misbehaving students of these rules but NO punishment of students is allowed.
- In the event of a breakdown, accident or any emergency, the bus crew will inform ComfortDelGro Transport office immediately and CDGB will contact the Parents concerned as per the emergency protocols.
- Must not leave the bus until their duty is completed and check the bus thoroughly before departing from the bus

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1 - Why can't my child have the same bus pick-up and drop off times for the whole year; and always ride 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 depend on the families who ride the bus. As new families apply for transport services or when families change their place of residence, as a result, bus sizes and timing change as a result.

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

Whilst CDGB will 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 that some students only use 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 than those residing further away. The aim is to minimise overall travelling time.

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

Many families ride the bus to School and multiple stops along the way are necessary to pick up all the students; hence the bus journey takes longer than a car ride directly to school without stopping. The speed limit for buses is slower. Also, journey times are measured from the moment a child boards the bus to the moment he/she disembarks at school. In the afternoon, buses can only start leaving the campus to ensure all children have sufficient time to board the buses.

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

Several factors need to be considered: - The routes may differ from last year depending on the number of students and stops. New families signing up or moving into the area will result in route changes. The volume of traffic in Singapore has been growing consistently.

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

As a rule, for private condominiums, all pick-up and drop-off points are at the guardhouse or gate barrier. CDGB buses are not able to provide a door-to-door service to all condominiums due to space constraints in certain areas, and it would increase travel time.

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

As a rule for private houses, 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. CDGB 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?

CDGB requires a minimum of 2 weeks' notice 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 Website of the IFS (Transport section) or by contacting the CDGB Transport Office. For a change of address, please send an email to CDGB to provide your new address with essential postal code.

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

Only 6ème students 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 CDGB and seek written approval at least two days in advance. Such requests should not be on a regular basis and are subject to seat availability.

Q10 - Can students registered to ECAs take the school bus after their activities?

A shuttle bus service after the ECAs with additional fees is provided for the Primary school children. All details are available on the IFS website. CDGB also provides shuttle buses during the holiday camps.

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 school. The number and the size of the buses can change to accommodate new families and those who move, while accommodating the needs and constraints of the school. On some occasions, CDGB 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 delays caused by road works, traffic congestion, rainy weather and students not being at the designated pick-up / drop-off points.

Q13 - Which area of Singapore is covered by transport services?

The transport services to students cover all areas of Singapore. For areas more than 16 km from the Primary School or Secondary School, the pick-up and drop-off times, travel duration and bus fares shall be subject to agreement between the School Bus Operator and the Parents, approved by IFS Transport Manager.

Our policy is to provide transport service as soon as possible to every family that requires it. For areas more than 16 km from the Primary School or Secondary School, the pick-up and drop-off times, travel duration and bus fares shall be subject to agreement between the School Bus Operator and the Parents and approved by IFS Transport Manager.

Q14 - 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.

Q15 - Are the buses safe for our children to travel on?

CDGB and authorized employees from IFS perform regular inspections of the bus's safety equipment, including seat belts, fire extinguishers and first-aid kits. Vehicle periodic inspections are mandatory in Singapore and must be done every year at an LTA Authorised Inspection Centre, which can certify that a bus is roadworthy and meets emission standards.

Q16 - Who will take care of my children while on the bus?

During travel to and from school, there will be a female Bus Attendant 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 Attendants are only allowed to verbally advise misbehaving children. Therefore, CDGB requires Parents to advise their children on the proper norms of behaviour on board school buses so that each rider may have a pleasant ride.

Q17 - What modes of payment does CDGB accept?

CDGB PayNow or bank transfer. For payment made through bank transfer, the payer must pay any miscellaneous cost associated with the payment.

Q18 - 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 will remain the standing instruction until the family submits a written notice of change.

Q19 - Are there any discounts for families with more than one child requiring bus service?

Due to cost considerations and to keep the level of bus fares cost-effective, CDGB does not offer discounts for families with more than one child.

Q20 - When should payment be made?

Payments are to be settled by the due date specified on the invoice. CDGB retains the right to levy late charges or suspend bus services for families with overdue accounts

Q21 - Can my child bring medicines on the bus?

For safety reasons, no medication is allowed on the bus, either in a child's school bag or via the bus attendant.