

SCHOOL BUS POLICY

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Purpose

To outline the guidelines and procedures for the Bright International School bus service, ensuring the safety, efficiency, and convenience of our students.

Service Description

- Route personalization Service: The Bright International School bus service endeavours to provide route personalization based on the registered home address of the students. This may mean that there is a designated bus stop close to the students' home to allow for multiple students to be picked up/dropped off.
- Until the established date for initial school bus registration, bus routes are defined considering the registered students' home addresses. However, some adjustments might be necessary (opposite street, designated stop) to optimize routes and maintain a maximum duration of 1 hour.
- Academic Year Coverage: The service operates throughout the academic year, excluding school breaks and holidays.

Safeguarding Statement

We are committed to the safety and well-being of all students using our school bus service. To ensure this, we adhere to the following rigorous standards:

- Vehicle Standards: All buses and vans are IMTT (Institute of Mobility and Transport) certified, fully insured according to national standards, and undergo regular inspections to ensure safety and hygiene regulations are in place. Buses meet all necessary safety features, including seat belts, emergency exits, first aid kits and fire extinguishers, which undergo yearly inspections. Age specific car seats are available for the students who travel with us.
- Driver Qualification and Training: All bus drivers undergo criminal record checks and hold valid commercial driver's licenses, as well as the required license for the collective transportation of children (Transporte Coletivo de Crianças).

Registration and Commitment

- Registration: To ensure the students' address is considered for the establishment of the bus route, registration must be complete by the 15th of August prior to the start of the Academic Year. Registration is done online in the following form [[link to registration](#)]. For registration to be complete, Parents/Guardians must also sign the [Bright International School Bus Terms and Conditions](#). Any registrations following this date will be subject to confirmation and, whenever possible, accepted within the already established bus routes. The school reserves the right to deny late registrations.

- Minimum Commitment: Registration requires a minimum commitment of one term.
- Annual Registration: Annual registration is encouraged for consistent service.
- Cancellation Policy: To cancel the service, parents/guardians must provide notice by the 1st of October or the 1st of February of the current academic year if they wish to cancel the school bus service for the following term. This notice must be given to the school in writing to the Office team at office@bright-is.com. If no communication is received by the school, it will be assumed that the service will continue for the next term, and Parents/Guardians will be invoiced accordingly.
- No Refunds: No refunds will be issued for unused trips or early cancellation.

Cost and Payment

- Payment Options: Payment can be made per term or annually.
- Fee Coverage: The fee covers the entire academic year (37 weeks).
- Price Adjustments: Prices are subject to change due to external factors, with prior notification to parents/guardians.
- Current School Bus fees:
 - 600€/term/student
 - Sibling discount: 5% discount on the second and subsequent siblings

Routes and Scheduling

- Route Establishment: Routes are established at the beginning of the academic year based on the student's addresses registered by the 15th of August of the current academic year and available fleet.
- Route Optimization: Routes are designed to minimize travel time, with a maximum of 1 hour for 50km routes.
- Schedule Adjustments: Routes and pick-up/drop-off times may be adjusted throughout the year to optimize efficiency.
- Morning Pick-up Times: Morning pick-up times vary based on zones and the number of students on the route. Pick-up times are agreed with parents/guardians prior to start of the service.

- Afternoon Departure Times: The school bus will depart every day at 4:10 PM. Students who are enrolled in After-School Activities (ASA) will not take the bus on those days. Parents or guardians are responsible for picking up their child directly from school after the activity finishes.

Stop Requests and Availability

- Service Area: Service availability outside current zones is subject to confirmation.
- Address changes: If a student currently utilizing bus transportation experiences a change of address, the parent or guardian must notify the school at least three weeks prior to the change. The school will make every effort to accommodate the change in address within existing bus routes or stops. However, if the new address falls outside the current bus service area or if there are no available seats on any relevant route, the school reserves the right to deny the change of address request. In such cases, no refunds will be issued.
- Late Registrations: Requests received after the registration deadline (August 15th) will be accommodated, whenever possible, based on existing routes, published route map, and seat availability.
- The school strives to accommodate additional students who register for the service after the initial route establishment or for those on longer routes. When considering additional students, the school will prioritize safety, minimize disruptions to the overall route schedule, and ensure efficient bus utilization. Factors such as distance between stops, traffic conditions, and the number of students at each stop will be carefully evaluated, prior to accepting late registrations. Nevertheless, the school reserves the right to deny late registrations.
- The school will communicate any changes to the route schedule to affected parents in advance.

Student and Parent Responsibilities

- Punctuality:
 - Morning service: Students must be at the pick-up point on time. Buses will wait no longer than 2 minutes in the morning routes. Parents/Guardians are responsible for ensuring their own means of transportation to school, should a student miss the bus in the morning.
 - Afternoon service: Students must be at the designated meeting point within their respective school building by 4.05PM to be accompanied by the bus drivers to the respective buses. Students not meeting the driver on time will remain at school until parental pick-up.

- Parental Responsibilities: Parents/Guardians are responsible for:
 - Accompanying students to the bus stop in the morning and waiting for them in the afternoon (unless students are deemed old enough to be unattended).
 - Ensuring student transport to school in the morning, should the student miss the bus.
 - Picking up students from school if they are not at the stop or designated meeting point at the designated meeting time for afternoon pick-up.
 - Informing the bus driver directly in case of unexpected situations, such as a student being absent at the last minute.
 - Informing the school (s.tymchuk@bright-is.com) of any schedule changes with at least 2 working days' notice.
 - Ensuring students treat all occupants with respect and follow the driver's instructions and always keep to the school's rules.

Additional Guidelines

- Sibling Policy: Siblings must travel on the same route and at the same time (5% discount in second and subsequent siblings).
- Bus Etiquette:
 - Wearing the seatbelt during operation is mandatory. Age-appropriate car seats will be provided by the School.
 - Eating, drinking, and damaging the bus are prohibited.
 - Walking around in the bus during the trip is prohibited.
 - All school rules apply during the bus service.

Communication

- Day to day communications and unplanned changes must be done directly with bus drivers.
- Bus drivers are equipped with school mobile phones, and the respective numbers will be shared with Parents/Guardians upon registration to bus service and assignment to a specific route.

- Alerts if any specific bus is experiencing delays due to traffic, an automatic alert will be sent via the school bus app.
- Bus drivers are not expected to take calls, read or write written texts, should they be driving.

Contact

For any questions or concerns regarding the School Bus Policy, please contact s.tymchuk@bright-is.com.

Bright
International
School
Algarve

