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Pre-registration questions

Why does the bus service not cover all of Singapore?

We hardly decline, however, our bus routes are planned on a supply and demand basis. While we strive to meet all possible routes, we seek understanding that a practical approach is needed to ensure sustainability of the service route.

How soon can my child be on the bus after my registration is sent in?

Acceptance of an application is a complex process that is determined by a number of factors, including bus route coverage and seat availability for your child to ride the school bus. We always strive for efficiency and anticipate sending a communication to you between 7 to 14 working days. We aim to meet all timelines, so your early submission will be of great assistance to us.

How and when will I know the bus information like pick-up time and pick-up location?

We are mindful that preparing your child/children's schooling routine will prefer a fixed schedule. For new families, an email/SMS will be sent for you to log-in to our website to check your family information and bus details within two weeks of application. However, do note that at the start of each academic year, routing and estimated timing for buses are subjected to change and will only be finalised 1 week before the first day of school. This is to allow us to cater for applicants that have just arrived in Singapore, which is a common scenario of expatriate schools. We encourage parents to log-in two days before the school starts to check on changes if any.

Are the buses safe for our children to travel on?

Your child's safety remains our utmost priority. All of our contracted buses are required to carry out regular inspections of seat belts, first-aid kits, fire extinguishers, and also inspect for cleanliness. Mechanical checks of buses are mandatory in Singapore and must be carried out annually at an authorized inspection center, which will certify a bus is safe for travel on the road.

Is my child covered under any insurance while travelling on the bus service?

Rest assured all our buses are required to maintain Third Party Vehicle Insurance as mandatory by Singapore Transport Law. This insurance is unlimited and no bus is permitted to carry passengers on the road without having purchased this coverage. In addition, the current contracted bus service provider has purchased a Public Liability Policy that covers accident claims on our buses.

How much notice is needed if I wanted my child to be picked up or dropped off from a new address?

The Transport Office requires a minimum two weeks' notice, in writing, to make any change to the existing bus service. Families wishing to make any changes, including change of address, cancellation of use - partially or completely - should inform the Transport Office in advance.

Logistics related questions

Who will take care of my child while on the bus?

During travel to and from school, a female bus attendant will be on board each bus to take care of the children's wellbeing. Their primary duty is to maintain discipline and ensure safety during bus travel. However, our bus attendants are only allowed to verbally advise or admonish misbehaving children. Therefore, we do need parents' support to advise their children the proper norms of behaviour on board school buses so that each rider may have a pleasant ride.

Where should my child wait for the bus on raining days?

During rainy weather, the drivers have been instructed, where possible, to change the pickup or drop-off point to the nearest sheltered area, provided it is safe to do so. Please approach the Transport Office for more details.

Why is the bus taking a longer journey time than I travel by car?

There may be various reasons:

Buses are constrained to travel not more than 60 km/h, staying in the leftmost lane.

Buses are also less maneuverable and should not (for safety reasons) swerve in-and-out of traffic and change lanes at will like a car.

Time taken for embarkation and disembarkation of the children at the various locations will add to the overall journey time of the bus.

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

Bus size is mainly dependent on the number of students needing transport along the route and overall journey time, from time to time we may need to change the type of bus allocated to a particular route to accommodate new or exit children.

How are bus routes determined?

Bus routes and stops are designed to be safe, efficient, and timely in all weather and road conditions. Students typically ride a bus to and from school for 30 to 55 minutes. Riding times may be extended when there are traffic jams, breakdowns, bad weather, road construction, and particularly during the first few weeks of the academic year as riders get into a routine.

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

As a general rule, for private condominiums, all pickup and drop-off points are at the guardhouse or gate barrier. Although we always seek the best convenience for our children, our buses are not always able to provide a door-to-door service within a condominium because it would increase the travel time and also due to the size of the bus, it may not be possible to enter the condominium itself.

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, we seek for your understanding that the child/children will be picked up and dropped off at the closest point to the house that is practical and safe for both the child/children and the bus. We will advise the family of the pick-up/drop-off point.

Would the bus wait for us if we were late?

Despite our best efforts to ensure that no one misses their bus, buses will only wait for one minute during pickup. This is to ensure that other riders arrive at school on time. We have a strict protocol for young children to be received by an adult on the return trip home as part of our child safeguarding policy. Otherwise, they will be returned to school, and parents will be responsible for making transportation arrangements for their pickup at school.

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

Our bus service provider uses a highly effective route planning system. Route planning is not solely dependent on the distance of residence to or from the school. Traffic considerations and road layout have to be considered first. In order to balance the varied interests of families served by each bus, we do not implement any queuing system or fix the order that students are picked-up on the basis of distance from the school, but rather we aim to minimise overall transport time.

Why is not my child having exactly the same bus pickup and drop-off times and always being served by the same bus? Why do you change it from time to time? Why does it change at the start of every term?

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

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

At present there is no first-in-first-out, last-in-last-out policy, however we do implement it on the routes where this is possible. This is because the route set for each bus to reach school may not be the same as the route specified to bring students home. This may be due to traffic considerations and road layout.

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

Riders are only permitted to take their assigned bus to and from school. If a change is required, both the requesting and receiving parent/guardian must submit a written request to the bus office by 12 noon on the day of the change. However, Infant/Junior riders are not eligible for this arrangement.

Why are buses sometimes late?

Buses are sometimes late for a variety of reasons such as road works, traffic congestion, rainy weather and parents or guardians not being at the designated pick-up/drop-off points. Families concerned about delays should contact the school or the Transport Office at their campus. Our Transport Office can communicate with all drivers, who are instructed to inform the school of any serious delay.

Are there assigned seats?

Under normal circumstances, we do not assign seats. Seats are taken up on a first-come-first-serve basis. However, younger children will be given priority to sit at the front of the bus so that they may be more effectively monitored by the bus crew. Please help to educate your child to sit at the back if they are the first to board the bus or if they are alighting last. This will then help to expedite boarding and disembarking for the rest. Also, school bags should be placed below the seats and not on the seats.

Isn't it the school's responsibility to ensure that my child arrives at school/home on time?

We provide a service to UWCSEA families through our appointed transport provider. Our contracted bus service provider makes every effort to ensure that all students are collected and/or dropped off at approximately the same time each day. However, there will inevitably be times when circumstances beyond their control mean that there are delays to the bus service, or very rarely, that a bus route is interrupted. Please note that the school cannot be held responsible for these eventualities.

What if we're moving house?

We recommend that parents check with our Bus Service Department about bus availability before establishing residence or moving. Because bus seats are assigned based on demand, space may not always be available from your new place later in the school year. Although we will do our best to accommodate every student, "late comers" can only be assigned a seat if space is still available on the requested bus route.

Are there changes to pickup/drop off or routes during the year?

Because bus enrolment fluctuates throughout the year, the bus office must actively respond to these changes by organizing a suitable bus and rescheduling. Pick-up and drop-off times may be adjusted throughout the year if the number of students on the same bus route increases or decreases. However, every effort is being made to ensure that there are as few changes as possible throughout the year.

My child's bus arrives later/earlier than I want. Can the time be changed?

All buses follow a predetermined and tested schedule. This contributes to ensuring that the system operates safely and efficiently while bringing students to school safely and on time. Because of the number of students who require bus service and in order to ensure effective scheduling, overall bus schedules may not be adjusted to accommodate an individual request at times. You may, however, submit a change request to the bus office, and it will try to find a solution if possible.

We live on a cul de sac. Will the bus come down our street?

Buses are generally not routed down cul de sacs unless a smaller bus is assigned to the route given the risk to pedestrians, children, and property while the bus is turning around or backing up in the small area.

What if I have more than one primary address?

The bus office will only accept one primary address. However, we recognise that in some cases, special consideration for transportation needs may be required. The bus office will do its best to accommodate. Please keep in mind that if the second address is not on the same bus route, there may be additional bus fees. For more information, we recommend speaking with a staff member at the bus office.

Why no ECA bus before activities start?

It is not possible to offer an individual service after ECA due to the small number of activities, their different duration and the number of students involved. Moreover, the randomness of the addresses make it hard for us to keep the travelling time within 55 mins given by the college. Route information for the activity buses will be made available once students register for the activity.

Feedback

What do I do if I would like feedback on the bus service?

We welcome feedback as it is UWCSEA culture to strive towards achieving continuous improvement. Please do not hesitate to speak to our contracted bus service staff. Alternatively, you are encouraged to write in to UWCSEA Transport Manager and we will assist where possible.

A guide to UWCSEA Bus service can be found on the parent portal under campus services, various processes and other details are explained in the handbook. Please click on the 'Campus Services' button under the 'Parent Resources' menu.