

Transportation to DoD schools in Europe is a lot like that in the United States, but with key operational and safety differences:

DoDDS-E does not own buses or employ drivers, but mainly contracts with host-nation commercial companies for transportation services. In a few communities, the military provides school bus service.

Buses are not the yellow vehicles familiar to American children, but European-style tour or transit coaches marked with the international school bus sign, front and back.

Drivers are not required to speak English, only the host-nation language. Security Guides possess basic communication skills in English. Buses are equipped with two-way communications, either radio or cellular telephone, linking drivers to the contractor's central control station.

Drivers and Security Guides are not responsible for enforcing good order and discipline on the bus. Their job is to drive and keep our students safe. Drivers or Security Guides will report infractions of the bus rules to the School Bus Office. Parents are responsible for their children's behavior on the bus.

Because even one child's misbehavior can interfere with safe operation of the bus and endanger everyone on board, disciplinary action on reported infractions may be taken, to include temporary suspension or permanent revocation from riding the bus. School transportation is a privilege, not a right or entitlement, and safety is paramount.

Behavior

Parents must ensure that their children understand and follow the 10 School Bus rules listed below:

- 1) Obey the driver or adult.
- 2) Enter and exit the bus safely, and always show your bus pass.
- 3) Stay properly seated and use seatbelts when available.
- 4) Keep your hands, feet, and other body parts to yourself.
- 5) Do not throw things.
- 6) Put nothing out of the window.
- 7) Remain quiet, and do not disturb the driver or others.
- 8) No profanity, indecency, smoking, prohibited items, or vandalism.
- 9) Do not eat, drink, or chew gum.
- 10) Be responsible, be safe.

Eligibility for Transportation

It's All About Location!

The location of the family quarters and the enrollment category of the sponsor determines which school children attend and their eligibility for transportation.

Distance from the residence to the assigned school determines whether children walk to school or ride the bus. The standard for transportation of elementary students is more than one mile and for secondary students is over 1.5 miles. Slightly over one half of the 50,000 children attending DoD schools in Europe ride a school bus, with the other half walking or using other transportation.

The family residence also must be located within the school commuting area. Community Housing Referral Offices have information about each school commuting area and its boundaries, but the best way to avoid problems is to check with the Bus Office before making any final decisions.

Students enrolled in pre-Kindergarten and Sure Start programs and children with disabilities under an Individual Education Program (IEP) may receive specialized transportation services tailored to each child's special needs, based on age and/or IEP requirements.

School Bus Registration

The first step is to register children in the school.

Next is to visit the School Bus Office servicing the community schools. Both a parent and all students needing transportation need to be present to register for transportation, receive a bus pass (usually with the student's picture), and to receive information or briefings on the route(s) stops and schedule, bus safety, and behavior standards and discipline rules. It can take up to a week to create a new bus stop, so the rule is to plan in advance!