

# GETTING TO SCHOOL

Information for Pupils, Parents and Schools



**think smart**  
travel:active

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# Entitlement to Free Transport

A pupil is legally entitled to free transport to school if:

- they're under 8 and live more than 2 miles from their catchment school or
- they're over 8 and live more than 3 miles from their catchment school

However, Fife Council currently provides free transport to all primary pupils living more than one mile and all secondary pupils living more than two miles from their catchment area school.

A GIS mapping system is used to determine entitlement for free school transport. Distances are measured using the shortest available walking route from the entrance of a pupil's registered home address to the nearest school entrance. It is assumed that a pupil is accompanied until parents decide their child is able to walk on their own or with a group of friends.

All school buses (with more than 16 passenger seats) are registered as local service buses, allowing anyone to board the bus and pay a fare for travel. Any pupil who is not entitled to free transport can still travel on the school bus and pay a fare to the driver. However, fare paying pupils are not guaranteed a bus to school and are not guaranteed a seat on any available bus.

Parents, who choose to send their child to a different school other than their catchment area school, will need to make a placing request and will have to pay to transport their child to that school.

Any parent, who believes there are exceptional circumstances, should write to:-

**Carrie Lindsay**  
**Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)**  
**Rothesay House**  
**Rothesay Place**  
**Glenrothes**  
**KY7 5PQ**

# School Travel Passes

We assess entitlement for primary 1 and primary 7 pupils each spring and arrange for a travel pass to be sent to entitled pupils' home addresses near the end of the summer holidays. If a taxi is required, details will be sent separately at the end of the summer holidays.

Myfife cards are still used at high schools to pay for school meals, to obtain library services as well as for obtaining discounts etc. However, travel entitlement is no longer shown on the myfife card. Call the myfife team on 08451 550066 or email them at [myfife.card@fife.gov.uk](mailto:myfife.card@fife.gov.uk) if you require more information about the myfife card.

Travel passes must be shown to the driver when travelling to and from school. Pupils are responsible for carrying their pass with them when travelling to school. If a travel pass is lost, damaged or stolen, it should be reported to the school office immediately. An administration charge of £5 is payable to the school office, which will issue a temporary travel pass and order a replacement from the School Transport Team.

When travelling outwith normal school times for authorised activities, pupils are expected to obtain a coloured supplementary voucher from the school office. This will allow them to travel home later on an alternative bus. Pupils who don't have a voucher will have to pay a fare to the driver. Vouchers are only issued to entitled pupils and travel passes must be shown to the driver when handing over the voucher.

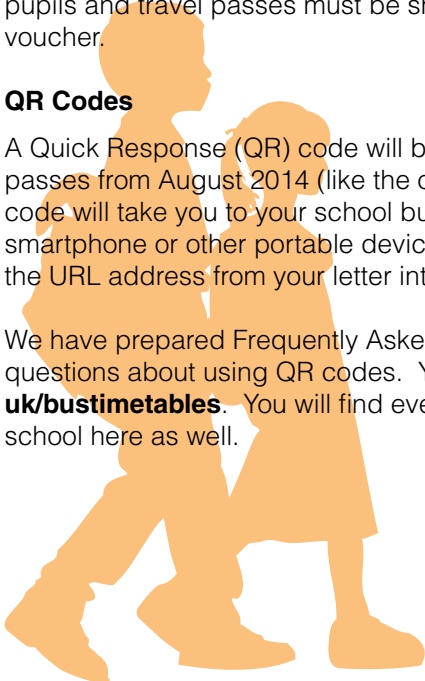
## QR Codes

A Quick Response (QR) code will be printed on school travel passes from August 2014 (like the one shown here). This QR code will take you to your school bus timetable if scanned by a smartphone or other portable device. Alternatively, you can type the URL address from your letter into your web browser.



[www.fifedirect.org.uk/  
bustimetables](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/bustimetables)

We have prepared Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to help answer your questions about using QR codes. You can read the FAQs at [www.fifedirect.org.uk/bustimetables](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/bustimetables). You will find everything you need to know about travelling to school here as well.



# School Transport Discounts

## **Under 14s Scholars' Discount Scheme**

Pupils are entitled to a discount on their bus fare if they are:

- under 14
- attending their catchment area high school and
- living between one and two miles from school

Transportation Services will send a letter every summer to eligible pupils confirming that they are eligible and authorising them to obtain a discount from the bus company of their choice. 4-weekly or term time ticket at 30% of the adult fare can be purchased with the discount. Bus company contact details are listed at the end of this guide.

The bus company will need to see proof of the pupil's age e.g. a passport or birth certificate, as well as the discount letter from Transportation Services. You will have to pay for transport in advance by purchasing a ticket for a month or the whole term. There will be a replacement charge of £5 if you lose your discount letter. Contact your school office who will order a replacement letter from the School Transport Team for you.

Letters of authority are sent every year at the end of the summer holidays but the expiry date on the letter will depend on when the pupil reaches 14 years of age. It may not, therefore, last for the whole term or year.

If you don't want to purchase a monthly or term time discount ticket you can still pay a fare daily to the driver but you won't receive the discount.

## **Standard Child Fares**

Pupils at high school, aged up to 16 years old, can travel to and from school by bus at half the adult single fare. They can choose to purchase travel weekly, four weekly or for a whole term from the bus company or pay a daily fare to the driver.

## **National Entitlement Card (Young Scot Card)**

Transport Scotland has removed the Scottish Youth Rail Card but discounts can still be obtained by using your Young Scot NEC. However, discounts are still issued to young people aged 16 to 18. Students are entitled to 1/3 off adult single fares on almost all local and long-distance buses in Scotland. To get your discount, book in advance in person or just jump on the bus. Simply place your Young Scot NEC on the bus Electronic Ticketing Machine and state your destination to the driver and

your discount will be automatically calculated. You will no longer have to present a separate Young Person's bus concession card.

Please be aware, from 1 April 2014, there are also changes to the process that allows young people to access concessionary rail travel. Separate rail vouchers will no longer be sent. You can still receive your rail discount by simply presenting your Young Scot NEC when purchasing a rail ticket at stations, or on board trains where no ticket issuing facilities are available. Discounts available are:

- 1/3 off most rail fares
- 50% off all weekly or monthly tickets
- 1/3 off most advance purchases

## School Bus Allocation

School bus routes and travel passes are colour coded to avoid problems with overcrowding. Colours are allocated depending on a pupil's registered address and availability of seats on each bus.

It is imperative that pupils travel on the bus colour allocated to them, otherwise it could cause overcrowding issues. Travel pass colours will be shown on the destination screen on the front of each school bus. Drivers will only accept pupils with the correct pass colour. Pupils wishing to travel on a different bus colour for personal reasons should pay a fare to the driver for their journey as their travel pass will not be valid for travel on an alternative bus. Pupils who regularly try to use school transport without the correct travel pass will be reported to the school by the driver.

When pupils are late, and have missed their usual school bus, they will have to pay a fare to use an alternative bus as their travel pass will not be valid for travel on alternative buses.

It is not possible to change bus pass colours simply to allow pupils to travel with their friends. If a pupil is experiencing a problem on school transport, they should report it to their School Guidance Teacher, who may recommend a bus change after carrying out an assessment.

School bus timetables are available online, attached as a publication to each school's webpage, at [www.fifedirect.org.uk](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk). If pupils are using local service buses, timetables are available at **[www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com)**

# Safety on School Transport

Safety on school transport is a high priority for Fife Council;

- we aim to provide a seat for every entitled pupil
- we only deal with reputable operators
- all vehicles are checked regularly for roadworthiness by the appropriate agency. We also arrange independent checks when required
- seatbelts are provided in all vehicles up to minibus size and in coaches, where required by law
- all drivers carrying out school transport contracts undergo criminal records checks
- most school buses have CCTV.

All drivers of school transport are required to have their criminal record checked. From 28 February 2011, the PVG Scheme replaced the previous arrangements for checking a person's suitability to work with children. There is now a legal requirement for employers to check their employees are not barred from working with children by making sure they are PVG Scheme Members. The Council has procedures in place to ensure that drivers are PVG Scheme Members and do not have a criminal history that would make them unsuitable for this type of work.

Parents are responsible for making sure their child gets to/from their school transport pick-up point safely and on time. It is assumed that children will be accompanied by an adult until parents decide their child is able to walk on their own or with a group of friends.

# Behaviour on School Transport

Most pupils travelling to and from school behave well. Those who don't can make the journey very unpleasant or dangerous for other passengers (pupils and members of the public), the driver and other road users.

Parents are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of their child(ren) when travelling on school transport. A pupil's ability to interact with the driver, escort and other passengers is essential. The driver and the bus company are responsible for the safety of passengers but both schools and the Council should ensure that any transport provided is safe and stress free.

All incidents should be reported to the school, who will investigate, and parents may be required to come to school to discuss incidents involving their child. The Police are notified of incidents and Transportation Services staff work closely with a dedicated Safer Transport Liaison Officer. The Education Service is also informed.

## **Smoking is not allowed on school transport as it is a criminal offence.**

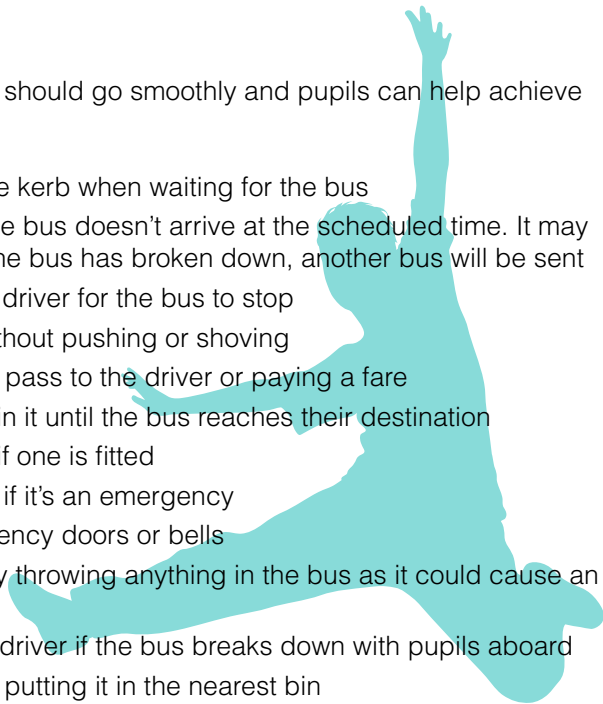
Fife Council operates a no smoking policy on school transport and, if a child is caught smoking, their parents will be called to the school to discuss the matter.

Most school buses have CCTV cameras and footage is used to assist investigations. Incidents, such as vandalism or smoking, could lead to pupils being excluded from school transport and parents would then be responsible for transporting their child(ren) to and from school each day. Operators may charge parents for the repair costs in the event of vandalism.

## **Bus Rules**

The journey to and from school should go smoothly and pupils can help achieve this by:

- standing well away from the kerb when waiting for the bus
- waiting at the bus stop if the bus doesn't arrive at the scheduled time. It may be late but it will arrive. If the bus has broken down, another bus will be sent
- giving a clear signal to the driver for the bus to stop
- getting on one at a time without pushing or shoving
- showing their school travel pass to the driver or paying a fare
- finding a seat and staying in it until the bus reaches their destination
- always wearing a seatbelt if one is fitted
- only speaking to the driver if it's an emergency
- not playing with the emergency doors or bells
- not distracting the driver by throwing anything in the bus as it could cause an accident
- following the advice of the driver if the bus breaks down with pupils aboard
- taking litter off the bus and putting it in the nearest bin
- getting off the bus carefully and calmly
- moving away from the bus and kerb once they have alighted
- waiting until the bus has moved away before crossing the road.





## Further Information

All queries regarding school transport should be directed to the school during term time.

During school holidays you should contact the school transport helpline, during office hours, by phoning 01592 583219.

Problems with behaviour on school transport or enquiries about discretionary transport should be directed to the Education Service on 03451 555555 extension 444220.

### **Other useful websites:**

**[www.fifedirect.org.uk/myfife](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/myfife)** - for information on the myfife card

**[www.fifedirect.org.uk/learning](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/learning)** - to obtain details on education options in Fife

**[www.fifedirect.org.uk/schooltravelplans](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/schooltravelplans)** - for information on travelling to school

**[www.fifedirect.org.uk/news](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/news)** - for information on the latest school closures and disruptions, it is now possible to register to receive text/email alerts about school closures at this website.

**[www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com)** - or call 0871 200 22 33 for Scotland-wide public transport information

**For information on fares or to recover lost property, you must contact the relevant bus operator from the list below;**

Rennies of Dunfermline	Tel: 01383 518660
Moffat & Williamson (North-East Fife)	Tel: 01382 541159
Moffat & Williamson (Glenrothes area)	Tel: 01592 774785
Stagecoach (Dunfermline Bus Station)	Tel: 01383 621249
Stagecoach (Glenrothes Bus Station)	Tel: 01592 610686
Stagecoach (St Andrews Bus Station)	Tel: 01334 474238
Stagecoach (Leven Bus Station)	Tel: 01333 426038
Stagecoach (Kirkcaldy Bus Station)	Tel: 01592 642394
Prentice Westwood	Tel: 01506 871231
First Scotland East	Tel: 01324 602200
Festival Travel	Tel: 0131 333 4231
Bay Travel	Tel: 01383 516161
Hamish Gordon	Tel: 01592 620202
A1 Minibus and Coach Services	Tel: 01592 713443
National Express/Explore Dundee	Tel: 01382 340015
Vision Travel	Tel: 01506 845407
Merlin Travel	Tel: 01383 665009
E & M Horsburgh	Tel: 01506 432251