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**Top tips for pupils heading to school by bus**

**27th August 2020**

Stagecoach West Scotland has some top tips for school children aged five and over who, from Monday (31st August 2020), will be required to wear a face covering, unless exempt, while travelling on dedicated school transport - in line with the latest Scottish Government guidance.

The safety of customers and employees is Stagecoach West Scotland’s number one priority. The following guidance which already applies to adult passengers, will help pupils, and parents, who use the bus get to school safely.

* Allow passengers exiting the bus to get off before you get on.
* Before boarding all passengers should be wearing a face covering – unless exempt.
* Do not remove your face covering until you get off the bus.
* All Stagecoach drivers will ask school pupils to sit at the back of the bus alongside other pupils.
* Please remember to ring the bell, the driver will stop so that passengers do not have to queue to leave the bus. This will help all passengers on board to maintain social distancing and keep safe.
* Passengers are asked to observe social distancing at bus stations and bus stops. Keep a safe distance from others in the queue.
* Pay by your smartcard, contactless card or smart phone or have exact change where possible.
* Buses are fitted with protective screens for the safety of customers and drivers when boarding/alighting the bus. Drivers do not need to wear a mask but if they leave their cab for any reason, including assisting a passenger, they will put on a face covering.

Fiona Doherty, Managing Director of Stagecoach West Scotland, said: “At Stagecoach we’re following the latest Scottish Government guidance and unless they are medically exempt all passengers, aged five and over, must wear a face covering.

“The safety of passengers and employees is our priority so it’s really important that passengers, where possible, wear a face covering at all times while travelling and do not take it off until leaving the bus.

“Passengers can travel on our services with confidence. Our drivers regularly and thoroughly clean handrails, bells, seats and poles – everything our passengers come into contact with. I’m really grateful to all our staff and passengers who are following the guidance to ensure that everyone can travel safely with Stagecoach.”

Before travelling, all passengers should follow the Scottish Government’s FACTS public health information <https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

For more information on Stagecoach West Scotland’s Back to School service information, visit: [https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/west-scotland/aug-20\_back-to-school-with-stagecoach#](https://www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/west-scotland/aug-20_back-to-school-with-stagecoach)

If you are medically exempt from wearing a face mask you can let Stagecoach drivers know using the Thistle Assistance card or app.

For more information, visit: <https://www.thistleassistance.com/>

**Ends**

**Further enquiries**

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**Notes to editors**

**Stagecoach West Scotland**

Stagecoach is one of Britain's leading public transport businesses, helping connect communities for 40 years. Our team of 24,000 people and our 8,300 buses, coaches and trams are part of the fabric of daily life in England, Scotland and Wales. We connect people with jobs, skills and training, bring customers to our high streets, connect tourists with visitor attractions, and draw families, friends and communities together.

Stagecoach is Britain's biggest bus and coach operator. We run megabus, the market-leading value coach operator, and Scottish Citylink, which connects 200 locations across Scotland. In Sheffield, we also operate the Supertram light rail network. We are proud to serve communities in major cities including London, Manchester, Liverpool, Newcastle, Hull, Sheffield, Oxford and Cambridge, as well as rural locations from the Highlands and Islands of Scotland to Wales and south-west England.

Our impact is about far more than transport - we support the economy, help cut congestion on our roads, protect our environment and air quality, boost safety on our roads, and contribute to a healthier nation.