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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8 September 2015</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Angela Edwards, Head of Inclusive Education, Culture and Corporate Policy</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/73/15/AE</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Schools Transport Policy Review Update – Equality in Provision of Schools Transport for Inverclyde schools</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Education and Communities Committee on progress with officers' work on the Schools Transport Policy Review. The Education & Communities Committee decided in March 2014 to continue with interim transport arrangements for St Columba's High School. The interim arrangements are to continue until appropriate options can be developed and finalised to ensure equality in the provision of free schools transport within Inverclyde.
- 1.2 This report outlines options for Education and Communities Committee discussion and recommends approval of officers' recommendations.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council presently operates an enhanced transport policy. Secondary-aged children who live more than 2 miles from their local school receive free transport and primary aged children who live more than 1 mile away from their local school receive free transport ("2/1") This exceeds the provision by most Scottish local authorities and lies well within the statutory requirements of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 for secondary and primary pupils of 3 miles and 2 miles, respectively ("3/2").
- 2.2 In Scotland, 19 Councils provide free transport at the statutory requirements. Most recently, both Glasgow and West Dunbartonshire moved to the statutory limits. South Lanarkshire has recently completed their consultation on this issue.
- 2.3 While St Columba's High School was in a 'decant' situation at the site of the former Greenock High School, all pupils there had been able to access free transport, in line with standard Council procedures during any school decant.
- 2.4 St Columba's Parent Council and Members of Inverclyde Council raised concerns on the transport arrangements for St Columba's High School when it re-located to its newly refurbished building on the previous Gourock High School site. Parents were concerned that some of the designated safe walking routes were not safe and that the application of the transport policy would result in increased placing requests from associated primaries to other secondary schools. Issues were also raised regarding the fact that for a small amount of children zoned to attend St Columba's High School, Notre Dame High School was geographically closer. With the continuation of the interim transport arrangements, current placing requests are in line with officer expectations. It is impossible to guarantee trends but given the assurances about safe walking routes and the attractiveness of St Columba's the interim transport arrangements are certainly not thought to be critical to its sustainability.

- 2.5 The walking routes to St Columba's High School are assessed as safe. These have been re-assessed by officers as recently as May 2015.
- 2.6 Approximately 75% of pupils currently travelling on school transport to St Columba's School live less than 1.5 miles from the school. Placing requests out of the school are not particularly high. Officers cannot fully anticipate the future placing request trends. St Columba's High School will continue to be an attractive option for many parents due to its performance, size and reputation.
- 2.7 During the time of the interim transport arrangement being available to St Columba's High School, additional transport anomalies had emerged in other areas which officers are unable to address because of the sensitivities in this issue. These anomalies exist in Inverkip and Clydeview.
- 2.8 Officers have been assessing the needs of pupils living in areas of multiple deprivation (Decile 1 and 2) as a potential reason for subsidising transport. This is not a practical means by which to allocate the entitlement to free transport due to the high pupil numbers involved across the authority area.
- 2.9 This report considers the following range of issues for the developing of future options:
- **Cost of the school day**  
As part of tackling poverty measures a number of Councils are looking at the issue of inequity around the ability of parents from lower income families to drive children to school, pay bus fares etc.
  - **Changes to the Benefits System**  
The impact of Universal Credit and further anticipated changes in national benefits policy are likely to have an additional impact and may adversely affect those with a free meal entitlement
  - **Healthy Living**  
The Inverclyde Alliance health and wellbeing policies recommend increased physical activity for all and encourage children and young people to be more active.
  - **School roll projections and placing requests**  
Current projections show a falling school roll for St. Joseph's Primary School which lies within the St Columba's catchment area at present. It is expected that the roll will drop significantly by 2017 to approximately 44% below capacity with a trend of further reductions. Despite this, St Columba's High School is a viable and sustainable school in the long term.
  - **Consultation**  
The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Councils to consult on any discontinuation of schools transport arrangements in denominational schools. During the budget consultation exercise there were very few recorded comments in regard to protecting school transport from the Council's recent budget consultation.
  - **Council Budget Pressures**  
It is evident that revenue budgets will reduce sharply across the next 5 years.
  - **Safety and walking routes**  
There are safe walking routes to St Columba's High School and these have been assessed and re-assessed recently.
  - **Benchmarking Existing Provisions with other Councils (Appendix 1)**  
Out of the 32 Councils in Scotland as of June 2015, 19 provide schools transport at the statutory levels of 3 miles for secondary schools and 2 miles for primary schools. It is expected that these limits will change as other Councils also deal with increasing budget pressures.

- **Mileage limit options**

Officers have looked at a range of mileage limits which address issues associated with school travel affordability and the cost of the school day. This would require implementation across Inverclyde as a whole, addressing current inequalities inherent in the continued interim arrangements.

- **Historical Concerns**

The historical concerns relative to St Columba's High School in respect of pupil access and safe walking routes have all been resolved and there is no justification for continuation of present arrangements on these grounds alone.

- 2.10 With reference to these key issues, the outline options are described in section 6.0 for Education and Communities Committee discussion. The assessment of options presently indicate: (1) there is no justification for the continuation of interim transport arrangements for St Columba's High School; and, (2) with regard to the MBWG's focus on the Budget Workplan, this is the proper time to achieve equality in the provision of school transport. It is proposed there be a review of policy provision to increase limits with the introduction of poverty-based criteria for enhanced access to schools transport.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

- 3.1 Considers this report and Officers' recommendations that, as a Council, we agree to terminate interim arrangements and return to policy with immediate effect. Following communication, full implementation would take place by August 2016, to give time to prepare all stakeholders for the change. Additionally we would propose to undertake a full formal consultation on moving to 2.5/1.5 mileage limits across Inverclyde, with a poverty element included. The poverty element would be set at 1.5/1 miles. This would mean consulting in 15/16 and preparing for change 16/17. Officers' recommendations are therefore, options 1 and 3 together.

**Angela Edwards**  
**Head of Inclusive Education, Culture and Corporate Policy**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On 11 March 2015 the Education and Communities Committee considered a report on the Council's Schools Transport Policy Review. The Committee decided to approve the continuation of the interim arrangements for St Columba's High School until the current policy relating to mileage limits and/or appropriate proposals for charging could be fully reviewed and appropriate options developed and finalised for consideration. The Members' Budget Working Group received an update report for their meeting on 29 June 2015 with the full report required for the meeting in August.
- 4.2 Inverclyde Council operates an enhanced transport policy, whereby secondary aged children who live more than 2 miles from their local school receive free transport and primary aged children who live more than 1 mile away from their local school receive free transport (2/1). This is a more generous policy than almost all local authorities and lies well within statutory requirements of 3 and 2 miles respectively (3/2). Any transport policy is based on parental responsibility for ensuring their child arrives at school safely. Free transport does not remove this responsibility.
- 4.3 The background to this issue centres on a desire to ensure implementation of a consistent and equitable transport policy in line with national policy and trends. The majority of Scottish Councils either have, or are planning to provide, free transport within the statutory limits (3/2). St Columba's High School currently has an interim and enhanced transport provision. Following the relocation of the School to the former site of Gourock High School and prior to completion of the rebuild project, St Columba's High School had been decanted to the former site of Greenock High School on Inverkip Road. During any decant situation all pupils receive free transport. St Columba's High School had been decanted for 4 years, with all pupils receiving transport during this time.
- 4.4 Prior to the decant, in the period to the late 1990s officer decisions were taken for free transport to areas situated within the 2 mile walking limits. These routes had been considered unsafe but the records for the processes involved are not available.
- 4.5 On completion of the new St Columba's High School and in accordance with normal procedure, officers arranged for an assessment to be undertaken by colleagues in Safer Communities of the walking routes to the school to confirm that they are safe. Following this process, a number of the routes previously declared unsafe were now declared to be safe e.g. a path running parallel to Clydeview Academy has now been fully paved and lit, and an area described as being excessively prone to flooding in Larkfield Road adjacent to the Cemetery has been rectified to resolve the problems and is now assessed as safe.
- 4.6 Prior to the end of the St Columba's High School decant arrangements in 2012, officers communicated with parents to tell them about the application of policy and entitlements to free transport. This was met with a number of concerns being raised by parents and Members around route safety, historical decisions, volume of traffic, local weather, appropriate public transport and the risk of increased placing requests to schools located at a closer distance to some families from certain associated primaries.
- 4.7 In response to these concerns officers met with parents and made site visits on numerous occasions. Officers also arranged additional work in the form of a multi-agency assessment of the routes causing concern. This additional professional safety assessment including consultation with Police Scotland declared the walking routes as safe. Despite this outcome parental and Member concerns remained high.
- 4.8 As an interim response, the decision was taken to maintain free transport for the routes causing concern as originally agreed by the Policy & Resources Executive Sub Committee on 12 June 2013 until a sustainable and equitable solution was agreed.
- 4.9 Officers have been considering a number of issues and areas of concern in reviewing the Schools Transport Policy. This review also needs to address the equalities issues in relation to

the continued interim arrangements.

## 5.0 KEY ISSUES FOR REVIEW OF SCHOOLS TRANSPORT POLICY

Meantime, the following issues are all relevant to the developing of a modern, resilient schools transport policy. This updated report has considered the key issues in order properly to inform the outline options appraisal (below section 6.0). These issues are all relevant for consideration in the review and shape the Council's response both to the site-specific concerns at St Columba's High School and also the wider, general provision, of schools transport by the Council:

### Cost of the School Day (Appendix 2)

- 5.1 The cost of the school day is an important factor. Inverclyde currently has the highest rate of child poverty next to Glasgow. The correlation between poverty and poorer attainment is well researched and evidenced. Inverclyde Council is part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge due to high areas of multiple deprivation and the gap which exists between our highest and lowest attaining pupils. Glasgow Schools are currently working with the Child Poverty Action Group to consider "the cost of the school day", which many feel is a vital consideration as the Council seeks to address and mitigate child poverty. Transport issues have been highlighted within this work as a particular pressure.
- 5.2 Inverclyde Council at its meeting on 4 June 2015 considered an update report on local Strategies to Alleviate Child Poverty. As part of tackling poverty measures, a number of Councils are looking at the issue of inequity around the ability of parents from lower income families to drive children to school, pay bus fares etc. This can result in lowered attendance rates and consequently poorer outcomes for more vulnerable children. Parental income should not be a potential barrier to attending school
- 5.3 Officers looked at pupils living in areas of multiple deprivation (Decile 1 and 2) as a means of subsidising transport. This was not a practical means by which to allocate the entitlement to free transport because of the high number of pupils involved across the authority area.
- 5.4 The cost of the school day is a critical issue in determining any enhanced provision for free schools transport for pupils. The Council's approach has been to ensure that vulnerable groups within our community should be protected and it is for this reason that considerable scrutiny has been focused on ensuring there are poverty-based criteria upon which to deliver an enhanced provision and still meet equality standards required for the whole Inverclyde area.
- 5.5 The Council currently authorises privilege passes for pupils who wish to pay for school transport where spare capacity exists on existing school bus routes. Officers previously considered the option of charging at different levels subject to pupils' circumstances but this was rejected because of the complexities of deciding on charging levels and the associated administrative costs. The costs of additional buses required would not be covered by the income from charges. Feedback from other Local Authorities (LA) indicated that 1 LA charges for privilege passes and the others are opposed to charging.

Duties and powers relative to charging: Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 requires the Council to make arrangements it considers necessary for the provision of school transport. For any surplus capacity on transport so provided, it is certain that Councils may now charge at a cost that the Council decides the parents of pupils taking up such vacant places. The Council is empowered with these vacant places to make different charges for different cases and the Council should have regard to the financial circumstances of the parents. To this end, Inverclyde Council charges £1 for a Privilege pass. The spaces are balloted for where necessary. The vacant places must relate to a best value provision for the type of fleet utilised (i.e. the capacity of the vehicles must match the level of entitled demand).

Outwith any surplus capacity, the Council does not have clear legislative powers to provide and charge for additional spaces. Any such approach to provide and charge for additional capacity is likely to expose the Council to risk of legal challenge, particularly from private bus operators.

From research undertaken, it is known that at least one other local authority does utilise different legislative provision within rural communities in order to operate scheduled bus services of limited commercial viability. This legislation may be of relevance if this option is to be pursued but detailed review of the legislative background would be necessary before any steps could be taken on this aspect. In general, the Council is not empowered to act in any way that is seen to be as or in competition with a commercial bus operator.

With regard to the legal implications of charging, the preferable method to develop any such policy, is through contact with SPT to request that they encourage bus operators to run services with the guarantee of income to be provided through bus passes for entitled pupils on such routes. The Council has power in terms of Section 51 of the 1980 Act to pay the whole or any part, as the Council thinks fit, of pupils' reasonable travelling expenses.

- 5.6 The position at St Columba's High School, has been acceptable, as an interim arrangement, but is not justifiable in the long term. It differentiates those pupils and their parents' concerns in a way that cannot be justified as there is no sound policy basis for this.
- 5.7 A key aspect of the ongoing work on the schools transport review is to restore this equality and to ensure that enhanced provision is made on an informed, policy-led, basis. The benefit of this aspect of the review is that it also gives the Council an opportunity to review the general provision and to consider the impacts of implementing a new policy which increases mileage limits (providing poverty-based criteria for enhanced provision) and conforms to equalities requirements.
- 5.8 If the Council does not have a fair and consistent application of policies it may mean that the Council is liable to claims from children currently attending Clydeview Academy who have to walk the same route and distance. The Council may also be open to similar claims which could arise in other areas of Inverclyde, where children have to walk similar distances in similar conditions.

### **Changes to the Benefits System**

- 5.9 In the context of paragraph 5.2 above, the impact of Universal Credit and further anticipated changes in national benefits policy are likely to have an additional impact and may adversely affect those with a free meal entitlement.

### **Healthy Living**

- 5.10 The Inverclyde Alliance health and wellbeing policies recommend increased physical activity for all and encourage children and young people to be more active including walking where possible especially when evidence suggests an increase in sedentary life styles. 41% of Inverclyde's secondary pupils currently use public transport to get to school. Only 34% walk, or travel actively to get to school.
- 5.11 From a health point of view, it is important that the Council encourages a higher proportion of young people to make active choices within their lifestyles – including encouraging walking to school as a viable travel option. Creating a situation where taking the bus is the mode of transport that is seen as being endorsed or promoted by the Council will not positively impact on increasing the physical activity levels for the 65% of secondary pupils who do not meet the guidelines for physical activity each week. (60 minutes or more of physical activity on 5 or more days per week – a target that walking to / from school would count towards).
- 5.12 In the longer term, a change in schools transport policy from a prevention perspective that encourages more walking will positively assist in the health of the local population. SUSTRANS (**Appendix 3**), a national organisation, has analysed the evidence based of the benefits of active travel for young people. Active travel to school can increase concentration by up to 4 hours. Nationally almost 20% of children are overweight/obese. In Inverclyde 25% of children are overweight/obese. Active travel to school (even part way) makes children more alert and ready to learn.

## **School Rolls Projections and Placing Requests**

- 5.13 St Columba's High School is a viable and sustainable school in the long term. It is a popular school and has a reputation for adopting a nurturing approach within an ethos of high expectations. This has resulted in St Columba's attainment remaining in line with their comparator schools. Positive school leaver destinations are above their comparators. Exclusion figures have dropped dramatically and attendance is well above the national and local average. St Columba's High School became the first secondary school in Scotland to receive a Rights Respecting Level 2 Award. The School works extremely well with the associated Primary Schools and involves them in transition work from P5 onwards. This year, 5 placing requests into the school have come from NDHS (3), St Stephen's (1) and Inverclyde Academy (1). St Columba's High School will continue to be a very attractive choice in schooling for families in Inverclyde irrespective of enhanced transport arrangements.
- 5.14 Current projections show a falling school roll for St Joseph's Primary School which lies within the St Columba's High School catchment area at present. It is expected that the role will drop significantly by 2017 to approximately 44% below capacity with a trend of further reductions. It is considered that St Columba's High School will remain a viable school with/without pupils from St Joseph's.

## **Consultation**

- 5.15 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Councils to consult on any discontinuation of schools transport arrangements in denominational schools. Officers consider that any change to the interim arrangements at St Columba's High School would be a variation to service and not a discontinuation as described in paragraph 7.3 below. Although new legislation does not require us to consult formally, this would still be best practice across both denominational and non-denominational schools.
- 5.16 In addition, there were very few recorded comments in regard to protecting school transport from the Council's recent budget consultation, with some comments asking whether parents could contribute to costs. These responses were received as part of the Education Services budget consultation event. All Parent Councils were represented at this consultation and it was a view expressed by within each of the groups although there is no detailed break-down of individual Parent Council responses. However, there were concerns from the Parent Councils that children from some families would not be supported to get to school. Some parents suggested that a means test be applied to ensure that the most vulnerable children are not disadvantaged. It is considered the proposed review of the schools transport policy to include poverty-based criteria will meet these concerns. Comments about climate have been separately received: a few parents have expressed concern about the weather conditions in Inverclyde which can lead to children arriving at school damp and uncomfortable. These weather conditions exist across the whole of Inverclyde

## **Council Budget Pressures**

- 5.17 It is evident that revenue budgets will reduce sharply across the next 5 years. Some estimates suggest that the real terms reduction will be 10-14% and 6-8% in cash terms. Inevitably, education will be protected through conditions on grant allocations and social and personal care expenditure will need to grow to meet the needs of an ageing population through the new integrated delivery model. Between them, these account for 60% - 65% of Scottish Councils' spending and at a local level, Inverclyde Council is projecting a further net savings target requirement overall of £6.4 million for 2017/18.
- 5.18 The cost of school transport for 2014/15, including the current enhanced policy for Clydeview, St Columba's and Inverkip was £1,222,354. The cost of the interim arrangements was £274,911 of this total - £150,417 for St Columba's, £69,836 for Clydeview and £54,658 for Inverkip.

## **Safety and walking routes**

- 5.19 As stated earlier in this report, professional assessments were carried out in accordance with the current Road Safety West of Scotland Walking Routes to School Guidelines, which assume that the parent/carer has arranged for the child to be accompanied as necessary by a responsible person. The assessments consider the road safety risks resulting from possible pedestrian and vehicle conflict and/or safety hazards resulting from defects within the road. Any associated personal safety issues are considered by Police Scotland. All routes to St Columba's High School have been professionally and objectively assessed against West of Scotland Guidance. **(Appendix 4)**
- 5.20 Three walking routes to St Columba's High School, Gourock have been of particular concern, the section of Larkfield Road at the Cemetery, the path from Mallard Crescent, Greenock to Reservoir Road, Gourock that runs along Clydeview Academy School boundary and the exit road from the foot bridge at Branchton railway station leading to Gleninver Road Greenock. These routes have all been assessed on their particular merits and are deemed acceptable walking routes as per the approved guidelines; There is no Council assessment to suggest that these routes are unsafe to walk.
- 5.21 The Road Safety West of Scotland Walking Routes to School Guidelines have recently been revised in line with Road Safety GB guidelines to provide a more up-to-date version which later this year will be considered by the Council. The new version is not substantially different from the current version and should have no impact on the two walking routes mentioned.

## **Benchmarking Existing Provision with other Councils**

- 5.22 As at July 2015, 19 Scottish Councils provide school transport at the statutory levels of 3 miles for secondary schools and 2 miles for primary schools. Six Councils, including Inverclyde, have provision at 2/1 miles and 8 have varying provision between these two levels. It is expected that these limits will change as Councils wrestle with increasing budget pressures. Dundee City recently incorporated a poverty element into their mileage limits.

## **Historical Concerns**

- 5.23 The historical concerns in respect of safe walking routes to St Columba's High School involve a range of concerns in relation to flooding issues and busy road junctions and health and safety considerations (such as woods and reservoirs) in proximity to walking routes. These concerns have all been directly addressed and thorough scrutiny assures the Council that there are safe walking routes to St Columba's High School and there is no justification in the deviation from policy on this misperception.



## 6.0 OUTLINE OPTIONS

6.1 Officers have looked at a range of different options. These options comprise: implementing policy by terminating interim arrangements; revising mileage limits and, amending policy to include a poverty element. This consideration is in line with the Council's approval of the actions to address Child Poverty as agreed at its June 2015 meeting.

Option	Description	Summary	Financial Impact*	Implementation Date**
Option 1	Limits – unchanged Stop current arrangements for St Columba's, Clydeview and Inverkip	Avoids the current additional cost; Restores transport budget Addresses inequalities.		Communicate and prepare for change 15/16.  Full implementation August 2016.
Option 2	Limits – unchanged Stop current arrangements for St Columba's, Clydeview and Inverkip (include poverty element at 1.5 miles for all secondary schools)	Avoids the current additional cost; Restores transport budget Addresses inequalities. Supports pupils living in poverty		Communicate and prepare for change 15/16.  Full implementation August 2016.
Option 3	Limits – change to 2.5 and 1.5 miles for Secondary & Primary respectively following consultation. (include poverty element at 1.5/1 miles)	Increase current mileage remaining above statutory requirements Supports pupils living in poverty		Involves formal consultation. August 15/16: consultation process August 16/17: preparation for full implementation in August 2017.
Option 4	Limits – change to 3 and 2 miles for Secondary & Primary respectively following consultation. (include poverty element at 1.5/1 miles)	Increase current mileage to meet statutory requirements Supports pupils living in poverty.		Involves formal consultation. August 15/16: consultation process August 16/17: preparation for full implementation in August 2017.

\*Pupil numbers (**Appendix 5**) (financial analysis of these numbers to follow).

\*\*Process as detailed in Gantt Chart (**Appendix 6**) in supporting pack which details the timeline for each option, this will include CMT; Education and Communities Committee; consultation with Parent Councils and wider school communities; analysis and development of a report; scrutiny by Education Scotland and return to Education and Communities Committee for approval.

### 6.2 Option 1: Maintain current mileage limits and stop current arrangements for St Columba's, Clydeview and Inverkip

The impact of this option avoids the current additional budgeted cost and returns the transport budget to the expected level and this option addresses inequalities.

**6.3 Option 2: Maintain current mileage limits, stop current arrangements for St Columba's, Clydeview, Inverkip and invoke poverty element at 1.5 miles for all secondary schools.**

This would be less costly than the current St. Columba's High School budgeted interim arrangements. However, it may be difficult to change limits at a later date and is difficult to justify in policy terms within the current economic climate.

**6.4 Option 3: Change mileage limits to 2.5 and 1.5 miles for Secondary and Primary, respectively and invoke poverty element at 1.5/1 miles**

Amend policy to revise limits to 2.5/1.5 miles while still introducing the 'poverty' element at 1.5/1 miles. This could result in savings at a more moderate level, yet support our more vulnerable families.

**6.5 Option 4: Change mileage limits to 3 and 2 miles for Secondary and Primary, respectively and invoke poverty element at 1.5/1 miles**

Amend policy to revise limits to 3/2 miles while still introducing the 'poverty' element at 1.5/1 miles. This could result in savings yet still support our more vulnerable families.

**7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

**Finance**

**7.1 Financial Implications: Full analysis to follow.**

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Proposed Spend/Save	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
<u>Option 1</u> Schools	SPT School Buses	2016/17	Finance details to follow		
<u>Option 2</u> Schools	SPT School Buses	2016/17	Finance details to follow		
<u>Option 3</u> Schools	SPT School Buses	2016/17	Finance details to follow		
<u>Option 4</u> Schools	SPT School Buses	2016/17	Finance details to follow		

**Legal**

**7.2** The current and proposed policy options sit within legislative requirements for free transport to school. The School Transport Policy is to be implemented fairly across Inverclyde and the continued interim arrangements are an exception that requires consideration. areas in Inverclyde have similar circumstances to St Columba's e.g. topography, weather, lack of direct bus routes e.g. Gibshill to the shared campus, which therefore means we are at serious risk of breaching Equalities legislation.

- 7.3 Consultation: The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Councils to consult on any discontinuation of schools transport arrangements in denominational schools. Paragraph 156 states that varying transport arrangements with the effect of reducing the numbers of pupils who would be eligible for free transport would not necessarily be considered as a proposal to discontinue transport arrangements. Officers do not consider the proposed changes to constitute a discontinuation and therefore the Council would not be required to undertake a formal consultation in terms of the Act. However, it is acknowledged that in terms of good practice it would be helpful to consult fully on this issue across both denominational and non-denominational schools and it may be Members' preference so to do. This process will be resource intensive but important in terms of openness and transparency.
- 7.4 Duties and powers relative to charging: Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 requires the Council to make arrangements it considers necessary for the provision of school transport. For any surplus capacity on transport so provided, it is certain that Councils may now charge at a cost that the Council decides the parents of pupils taking up such vacant places. The Council is empowered with these vacant places to make different charges for different cases and the Council should have regard to the financial circumstances of the parents.

The vacant places must relate to a best value provision for the type of fleet utilised (i.e. the capacity of the vehicles must match the level of entitled demand).

Outwith any surplus capacity, the Council does not have clear legislative powers to provide and charge for additional spaces. Any such approach to provide and charge for additional capacity is likely to expose the Council to risk of legal challenge, particularly from private bus operators.

From research undertaken, it is known that at least one other local authority does utilise different legislative provision within rural communities in order to operate scheduled bus services of limited commercial viability. This legislation may be of relevance if this option is to be pursued but detailed review of the legislative background would be necessary before any steps could be taken on this aspect. In general, the Council is not empowered to act in any way that is seen to be as or in competition with a commercial bus operator.

With regard to the legal implications of charging, the preferable method to develop any such policy is through contact with SPT to request that they encourage bus operators to run services with the guarantee of income to be provided through bus passes for entitled pupils on such routes. The Council has power in terms of Section 51 of the 1980 Act to pay the whole or any part, as the Council thinks fit, of pupils' reasonable travelling expenses.

## **Human Resources**

- 7.5 None.

## **Equalities**

- 7.6 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes The recommendations in the report promote an equitable approach to free transport across the authority.

No

## **Repopulation**

- 7.7 The School estate and access to the high quality educational environment is crucial for repopulation of Inverclyde.

## **8.0 CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 This update report has been discussed by the Corporate Management Team and MBWG
- 8.2 Comprehensive consultation proposals will be developed for schools and parents as part of any proposed policy change in schools transport provision.

## **9.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 9.1 This is a complex issue but it is clear that the interim arrangements at St Columba's High School cannot continue indefinitely. The options and considerations raised in this paper provide a policy basis to move this issue forward.

Key issues are:

- Ensuring equity in the provision of free transport across Inverclyde
- Addressing current transport anomalies
- Changing mileage limits
- Introducing poverty criteria

Officers' recommendations are that, as a Council we agree to terminate interim arrangements and return to policy with immediate effect. Following communication, full implementation would take place by August 2016, to give time to prepare all stakeholders for the change. Additionally we would propose to undertake a full formal consultation on moving to 2.5/1.5 mileage limits across Inverclyde, with a poverty element included. This would mean consulting in 15/16 and preparing for change 16/17. Officers' recommendations are 1 and 3 together.

## **10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 10.1 School Transport Policy Review, Policy & Resources Executive Sub-Committee 12 June 2013  
School Transport Policy Review, Education & Communities Committee 11 March 2014  
School Transport Policy Review, Education & Communities Committee 10 March 2015  
Update on Local Strategies to Alleviate Child Poverty, Inverclyde Council 4 June 2015

## **11.0 APPENDICES**

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Benchmarking Existing Provisions with other Councils  
Appendix 2 – Cost of the School Day  
Appendix 3 – Healthy Living – Sustrans  
Appendix 4 – West of Scotland Guidance – Safe Walking Routes  
Appendix 5 – Pupil Numbers  
Appendix 6 – Gantt Chart

Entitlement to free school transport		BY AGE OR STAGE - 1		BY AGE OR STAGE - 2	
STATUTORY REQUIREMENT	Up to age 8	Age 8 +	2 miles	3 miles	
INVERCLYDE	Primary 1 mile	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	
ABERDEEN CITY	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	CONFIRMED BY PHONE
ABERDEENSHIRE	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
ANGUS	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
ARGYLL & BUTE	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
CLACKMANNANSHIRE	Up to age 8 at start of the session 1 mile	Age 8+ at the start of the session	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY	Up to age 8 at start of the session	Age 8+ at the start of the session	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
DUNDEE CITY	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles (if receipt of free school meals)	3 miles	WEBSITE
EAST AYRSHIRE	Primary 1.5 miles	Secondary	1.5 miles	3 miles	PHONE
EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE	Primary 1 mile	Secondary	1 mile	3 miles	PHONE
EAST LOTHIAN	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
EAST RENFREWSHIRE	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
EDINBURGH CITY	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	PHONE
EILEAN SIAR	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
FALKIRK	Up to age 8 1 mile	Age 8 +	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
FIFE	Primary 1 mile	Secondary	1 mile	3 miles	WEBSITE
GLASGOW CITY	Primary 1.2 miles/2	Secondary	2.2 miles/2	3 miles	WEBSITE
HIGHLAND	Up to age 8 at start of the session	Age 8+ at the start of the session	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
MIDLOTHIAN	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	PHONE
MORAY	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
NORTH AYRSHIRE	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
NORTH LANARKSHIRE	Primary 1 mile	Secondary	1 mile	3 miles	WEBSITE
ORKNEY ISLANDS	Easter to October Up to age 8 2 miles	Age 8 + All ages	3 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
PERTH AND KINROSS	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
RENFREWSHIRE	Primary 1 mile	Secondary	1 mile	3 miles	WEBSITE
SCOTTISH BORDERS	Primary 2 miles	Secondary	2 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
SHETLAND ISLANDS	Easter to October	October to Easter			
SOUTH AYRSHIRE	Up to age 8 2 miles	Age 8 + All ages	3 miles	3 miles	WEBSITE
SOUTH LANARKSHIRE	Primary 1 mile	Secondary	1 mile	3 miles	WEBSITE
STIRLING	Up to age 8 2 miles	Age 8 +	2 miles	3 miles	OUT TO CONSULTATION
WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE	Primary 1 mile/2	Secondary	1 mile/2	3 miles	WEBSITE
WEST LOTHIAN	Primary 1.5 miles	Secondary	1.5 miles	3 miles	TELEPHONE

# Cost of the School Day

*listening to children and young people in Glasgow schools*

**WELCOME TO THE SECOND COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY NEWSLETTER**

How do the ways in which schools do things impact on children and young people from low-income households? And how can schools ensure that all children and young people, regardless of family income, are protected from stigma, receive the same opportunities and are able to make the most of the school day?

Cost of the School Day is a **Glasgow Poverty Leadership Panel** project, hosted by **Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG)** in Scotland and working with Glasgow City Council's Education Services. The project is inspired by the success of **Poverty Proofing the School Day** from Children North East in England.

## **WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING SINCE THE LAST NEWSLETTER?**

Just under 100 Cost of the School Day workshops and focus group sessions have now been held in the eight Glasgow schools taking part in the project. In total, 339 children and young people and 116 staff members have taken the time to share their thoughts and experiences with us.

Using characters and scenarios, mixed groups of children from P5 to S6 explored the day in their schools from start to finish. From getting dressed, travelling to school and eating at school to spending time with friends, learning in the classroom, events, trips, clubs and homework – what would school be like for a child who had less money at home? Are there parts of the school day where there is a risk that he or she would miss out on something or feel bad? What is currently done about this and is it working? If not, what should be done?

## **WHAT ARE PEOPLE SAYING ABOUT THE COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY?**

Full findings will be published in August 2015, but, for now, here are some insightful words from children, young people and staff which offer a snapshot of some of the emerging themes.

**CHILD  
POVERTY  
ACTION  
GROUP**  
in SCOTLAND

**P** **PLP**  
POVERTY LEADERSHIP PANEL

## **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND STAFF ARE AWARE OF A RANGE OF COSTS AND BARRIERS FOR LOW-INCOME PUPILS**

### **UNIFORM**

"There's a set uniform, obviously, trousers and shirts, but you can still tell like who's richer and poorer by like the jackets, the shoes, the bags."

"Shoes and bags, that's one of the biggest things...There's some people you get that are nasty and pure heavy cheeky." (S3)

"Sometimes you notice because some people have changes of uniform all the time and some people don't at all."

"Not everybody can afford it and that's why some people don't look as... nice as some people." (P6)

"He [character used in sessions] would want to fit in with the other kids and if those were the school rules on uniform he'd feel like he had to afford it." (P7)

### **TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL**

"Half an hour in snow, rain, sleet, hailstones?"

"And then you get to school all wet, your uniform's all wet. See, even if you don't live far away from the school enough to get a free bus pass you still take the bus, you wouldn't walk because let's say the weathers really bad - it's raining a lot and all that." (S5)

"Sometimes my mum can't pay for petrol so we walk." (P6)

"Sometimes we get phone calls - not every single week, but occasionally - to say that they've not been at school because they've no money for bus fare. That has happened, you do get those phone calls." (Staff)

### **FRIENDS**

"A lot of people, I think, that have maybe got a lower income, round about the school, seem to be isolated and they've no got a lot of friends." (S4)

"You can't really just have friends at school and not do anything else with them, any other time."

"I think it's all the other things as well, like being able to go on trips."

"(Hang about together at) Lunch as well." (S4)

## LEARNING

"Obviously the ones who have all this equipment at home, they can go home and get on with the work, get it done, bring it in, and that's it." (Staff)

"It's hard to get to school every day and then go up (to the school library or to ICT) to do homework or something. If you're busy and you can't get to them, then..." (S5)

"Some parents can't read, so they find it difficult to help their child with their homework... Homework's the last thing that they're thinking about, because they have such a difficult life." (Staff)

"Aye, I didnae want to pay 50 pence on Home Eccles, I didn't want to pay that because I couldn't be bothered because then that takes money off my lunch money, and I was like, nah."

"And would you have wanted to do it (as a certificate course)?"

"Aye." (S4)

"The honest black and white truth is that kids from high-income families are better set up to succeed. And we can't overcome all those barriers." (Staff)

## LUNCH

"Sometimes it's cheaper to go out the school and get lunch because I have to pay for my lunches and it's cheaper to go out to Greggs and get something most of the time." (S1)

"Depends who your friends are, doesn't it. Like I can get a free meal and don't mind but if my friends all go out for lunch and I'm sitting by myself getting a free meal, I wouldn't like that." (S2)

## TRIPS

"Big trips like that, without a doubt (young people will be missing out on). As I say, there are some kids who wouldn't even look at a thing. No point in me putting my name down. Not in a million years will they get to go." (Staff)

"You know how sometimes people might misbehave? Like - see how you're not allowed (to go on trips) because of behaviour? Like sometimes people can act all bad and then kid on they werenae allowed to go."

"It covers it up. I'll just misbehave and get sent home."

"And then folk are like 'why arenae you going?' 'oh I'm not allowed.'"

"Cos I'm bad." (S3)



## SCHOOL CLUBS

"I had just said for first year this year, because I thought they can come along and ones who are maybe vulnerable can maybe make friends, but then if I want to do things then I'm like, 'You got a pound?'. 'No', 'Well, you can't come.' Then it's like you're almost just giving-- only if you can pay you can come type thing, so that's quite hard." (Staff)

"And there's some contest with the dancing and that's the reason I couldn't go because it cost too much to go to the concert."

"And buy the clothes and the shoes..."

"... I couldn't afford to go there." (P6)

## FUN EVENTS

"See if you come in and there's all this stuff like Beat the Goalie and there's all the stuff but you cannae do it and you're walking around with your pals and they're doing it but you cannae do it cos it's like 50p or a pound." (S1)

"Here, see Prom, it's 50 pound just to go and then you've got everything."

"You've got to first put down the deposit then you've got to buy your dress..."

"And then your hair and make up."

"And it's no like you can miss that cos that's like --"

"It's an important milestone." (S4)

"Aye, because the attendance really dips (on non-uniform day)"

"People just come in and they're wearing their uniform so you can tell who cannae afford it." (S6)

## **SCHOOLS ARE DOING LOTS OF GREAT THINGS ALREADY TO REDUCE OR REMOVE COSTS AND BARRIERS**

"We can say wee Johnny's mammy's been ill, not got any money, or we know the reason why they've not been here, we'll put the name in (for trips). And again, it would be subsidised. We'll think well, they won't pay... we'll just pay his. So that all happens. The kids don't really know that." (Staff)

"See with like the blazer and that, there's this thing if you say to them that you're on benefits or that or you don't get that much income you say to them and they either reduce the price or if like somebody gives in their old blazer cos it's too wee for them then you can maybe get it." (S1)

"Some of the times if you don't have any pencils in your house or anything the teacher gives you some pencils to borrow and you then bring them back to school." (P6)

At one ASL school, staff support parents to take up entitlements, offering help at Parents' Evenings with form filling and information on benefits and grants.

## **... BUT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND STAFF HAVE LOTS OF IDEAS ABOUT WHAT MORE SHOULD BE DONE. HERE ARE JUST A FEW...**

- Offer resources to everyone and then nobody would stand out
- More talking about poverty in school so people understand it - "It would make you more aware of it. It would make them realise what they say affects people." (S3)
- Make sure that everyone entitled to a free meal signs up for them
- Should be allowed to handwrite homework instead of on the computer
- School library should be open every day for computer access
- Help us but keep it quiet
- Don't ask for money for fun events - It's embarrassing if you don't have it
- Take family income rather than just distance from school into account when allocating free transport
- "They should make the trips free for one thing, because it's embarrassing for people that wouldn't be able to afford them to go up and ask. We could do fundraising... (the Council) could provide us with money to start the fundraising, you could buy things and sell them on to make profit. Something like that. That'd be a good learning opportunity as well." (S3)

## **NEXT STEPS: RESPONDING TO WHAT WEVE FOUND OUT**

Over the next couple of months, findings will be shared with schools so that they can decide on their top priorities and how they want to respond to what children, young people and staff have been saying. Findings are also being shared with relevant departments within Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government and with other stakeholders able to take forward plans to improve low income learners' school experiences.

## **REPORT LAUNCH**

Full findings will be launched at an event at the start of the next school year 2015/16 in a report focusing on:

- key issues affecting low income children and young people at school
- actions which currently help in schools
- new ways forward to overcome poverty related barriers and stigma
- practical 'ask these questions in your own school' guidance.

## **OTHER PROJECT UPDATES**

### **COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY INSPIRED PROJECT DUE TO START IN EDINBURGH NEXT YEAR**

"Inspired by the work that is taking place in Glasgow, Edinburgh has started work on its own project to 'poverty proof the school day.' With rates of child poverty rising, especially for children in extreme poverty, and the damaging effects it has on children's life chances, Edinburgh's Children's Partnership has made actions to mitigate the impact of poverty a high priority."

(John Heywood, Lead Officer for child poverty, Edinburgh City Council)

Edinburgh City Council's new Cost of the School Day inspired project will take place in 6 Edinburgh schools over the coming school year. Part of the city's Child Poverty Strategy, the project will work with pupils, staff and parents next year, looking at what more can be done to reduce or remove school-related costs for parents on low incomes, to reduce stigma and raise understanding of poverty and its causes.

If other local authorities or schools in Scotland are interested in taking forward a project like Cost of the School Day and are keen to learn about the process behind it then get in touch with Sara Spencer, Cost of the School Day Manager at [sspencer@cpagscotland.org.uk](mailto:sspencer@cpagscotland.org.uk) for an Informal chat.

## **COST OF THE SCHOOL DAY IN THE NEWS**

- Just before Christmas, STV Glasgow came along to Smithycroft Secondary to film S5 pupils taking part in a Cost of the School Day workshop - see interviews with the young people [HERE](#) along with a studio interview with Fiona Crawford from Glasgow Centre for Population Health.
- The Evening Times followed up on the project in January this year with an article: **Youngsters help to tackle stigma in new city project**
- On the day of the new £100m Scottish Attainment Challenge announcement, Sara Spencer took part in a Scotland 2015 panel discussion on BBC 2 along with Professor Sue Ellis of University of Strathclyde and Councillor Mike Holmes from Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission (film no longer available).
- Just last month, we spoke to the TESS about Cost of the School Day as part of a school costs story: **When the poorest families are priced out of school life.**

## **KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE PROJECT**

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Please feel free to circulate this e-newsletter to colleagues who might be interested and would like to keep up to date with the project.

If you have any questions or comments or if you would like to contribute to the project in any way please contact Sara Spencer, Cost of the School Day Manager at [sara.spencer@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:sara.spencer@glasgow.gov.uk) or [sspencer@cpagscotland.org.uk](mailto:sspencer@cpagscotland.org.uk).

## RECENT POVERTY AND EDUCATION NEWS FROM ACROSS SCOTLAND

### 100 MILLION FUND ANNOUNCED TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN SCOTLAND'S MOST DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

In February, First Minister Nicola Sturgeon announced a new Scottish Attainment Challenge, backed by an Attainment Scotland Fund of more than £100 million over four years.

The Attainment Scotland Fund will be targeted initially at schools in the local authorities with the biggest concentrations of households in deprived areas. It will focus

on improving literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing in primary schools in these areas, drawing on schemes with proven track records such as the London Challenge.

The first tranche of funding will see £20 million made available this year to support children and young people in a number of Scotland's most disadvantaged communities.

<http://news.scotland.gov.uk/News/Smart-money-on-attainment-15d2.aspx>

### STATUTORY DUTY PROPOSED FOR COUNCILS TO NARROW ATTAINMENT GAP

In March, Education Secretary Angela Constance announced that the Education (Scotland) Bill will place a legal duty on local authorities in Scotland to introduce measures which will narrow the poverty attainment gap and to report on their progress.

Launching the bill, Ms Constance said: "Our bill underlines our expectations of local councils in the process of addressing educational inequality."

An additional £1m for councils to buy textbooks was also announced.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-32032925>

### REDUCING SCHOOL COSTS A PRIORITY, SAYS RENFREWSHIRE TACKLING POVERTY COMMISSION

Renfrewshire Tackling Poverty Commission, the first local commission of its kind in Scotland, has reported on its year-long inquiry. It named closing the poverty attainment gap as a key priority for the Community Planning Partnership and recommended that Renfrewshire Council addresses financial barriers to school education by reviewing the cost of school

day and support available for the cost of uniforms and school meals.

**Read more about this and their other recommendations in the full report.**

From here, the Commission will develop a strategy to support delivery of the recommendations and recommends the Community Planning Partnership reports annually on its progress for the next five years.

## RECENT POVERTY AND EDUCATION NEWS FROM ACROSS SCOTLAND

**CHILD  
POVERTY  
ACTION  
GROUP**  
in SCOTLAND

**P**  
POVERTY  
**PLP**  
LEADERSHIP  
PANEL

## POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION FILM ABOUT SCHOOL TRIP COSTS

Commissioners from the Poverty Truth Commission have chosen school costs as one of their key campaigns this year. Take a look at a **1 minute film on Facebook**, made for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, in which two mothers on low incomes talk about what school trip costs mean for them and their children.

The Commission brings together Scotland's key decision makers with those living at the sharp end of poverty to ensure that those affected by decisions are central to decision-making.

## POVERTY: SEE IT CHANGE IT - NEW YOUTH CAMPAIGN TACKLING THE STIGMA OF POVERTY

POVERTY: See It Change It is a new campaign from the Scottish Youth Parliament, the democratically-elected voice of Scotland's young people aged 12-25. The campaign will engage with children and young people from across Scotland to combat poverty related stigma, raise awareness about child poverty and challenge elected leaders to uphold the UK-wide commitment to tackle child poverty by 2020.

Nairn McDonald, Trustee and Board member of SYP says that "Young people deserve to know that it is their right to live free from poverty and to have the same opportunities

as their peers. This is the basis for part of our POVERTY: See It Change It campaign, and it's an issue close to me heart. I grew up in an area with poverty levels to rival the worst in Scotland and I saw first-hand the effect it has on young people's chance in life. I saw close friends struggle to achieve in school because of the burden and stereotypes poverty put on them, and this broke my heart. Every young person should have the scaffolding needed to succeed and no child or young person should have to do without this basic structure."

**Find out more about the campaign here.**

**CHILD  
POVERTY  
ACTION  
GROUP**  
in SCOTLAND

**P** **PLP**  
POVERTY LEADERSHIP PANEL





## Mental alertness and motivation

The benefits of active travel are not just physical. Measurable increases in concentration, positivity and academic performance are further advantages arising from active journeys.

- A 2012 study of 20,000 children in Denmark found that those who cycle or walk to school demonstrate a measurable increase in concentration that lasts for up to four hours

- Adolescents who regularly take part in physical activity are more resistant to drug and alcohol addiction and display less social behavioural inhibition than their less active counterparts<sup>8</sup>

- The reduction in levels of physical activity due to increased car use affects children's stamina, alertness at school and academic performance<sup>7</sup>

- Physical activity is associated with psychological benefits in young people by improving their control over symptoms of anxiety and depression<sup>9</sup>

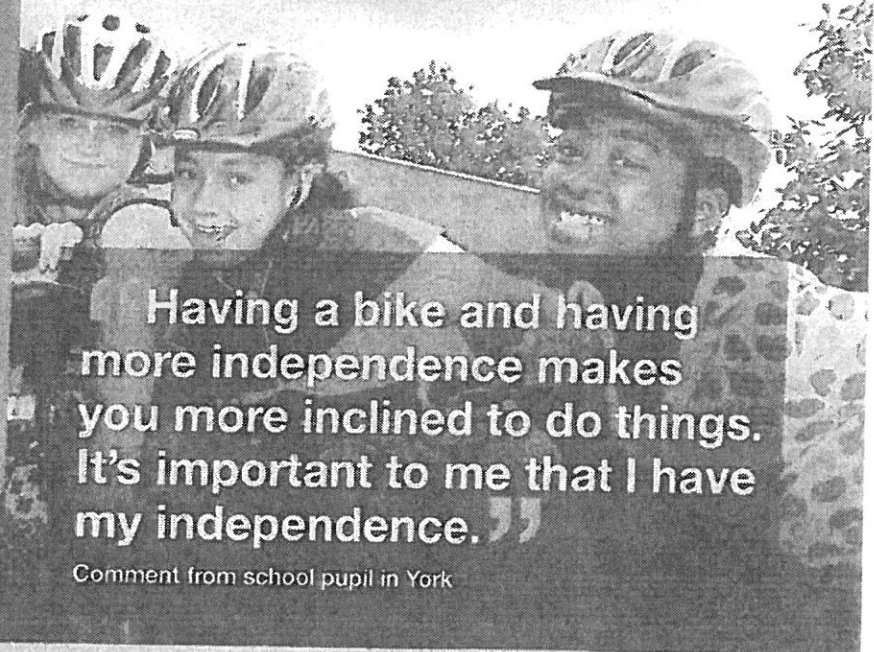
- Research indicates that children who travel actively to school have wide social networks and are more actively engaged with their community than those who travel by car<sup>2</sup>

- Independently negotiating the school journey is thought to develop children's responsibility, decision making, and time and risk management skills<sup>10</sup>

- The range of skills children can develop through interacting with their local community and environment could enhance their job prospects – a study by the Higher Education Authority revealed that 54% of employers will be looking to employ people who are socially and environmentally responsible in the future<sup>11</sup>

## Encouraging independence

In addition to the physical, emotional and academic benefits, making an active journey to school has been shown to increase the independence of participants, teaching them valuable life skills.



**Having a bike and having more independence makes you more inclined to do things. It's important to me that I have my independence.**

Comment from school pupil in York



## Benefits of active travel for young people



- Children who walk to primary school develop road safety awareness and are less vulnerable when they walk independently to secondary school<sup>1</sup>

- Studies have found that children who travel actively to school have better spatial awareness and more road sense than children who are driven to school<sup>2</sup>

- There is consistent evidence to show that motorists are less likely to collide with pedestrians and cyclists if more people walk or cycle<sup>3</sup>

## Road safety

Children who walk, scoot and cycle to school from an early age develop a greater awareness of traffic and the ability to travel independently and safely.

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- 13 Jacobson, P. L. (2003) 'Safety in numbers: more walkers and bicyclists, safer walking and bicycling'. *Injury Prevention* 9:205-209

## Further information

Visit the Sustrans website  
[www.sustrans.org.uk/youngpeople](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/youngpeople) for:

- free resources and guidance, such as our guides to increasing active travel to school and working with older students, as well as further information sheets
- curriculum materials, including our Big Street Survey and Suss It Out activity sheets
- access to our free Big Shift online challenge to increase active travel
- national events, such as our annual Big Pedal competition
- details of our active travel award scheme, the School Mark
- our StreetHeroes skills and incentive scheme for pupils
- tours and events for each of the UK regions, including sign-up to our free e-bulletins

## About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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**WEST OF SCOTLAND ROAD SAFETY FORUM**

This document produced by the West of Scotland Road Safety Forum gives guidance on the identification and assessment of road safety hazards to pedestrians on route to school.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Each Education Authority has a policy on the provision of free school transport within council areas. Where provision is denied under this policy, parents may appeal on the grounds of road safety if they consider the route to school unsafe to walk.
- 1.2 In considering any appeal the Education Authority arrange for a road safety assessment to be carried out by the council service responsible for road safety. The Education Authority must specify the route to be assessed. This assessment considers the road safety risks resulting from pedestrian and vehicle conflict or safety hazards resulting from defects within the road such as tripping points. Personal security issues are not addressed by this assessment.

**2. THE ROUTE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE**

- 2.1 In carrying out the assessment, it is assumed that the parent or carer has arranged for the child to be accompanied as necessary by a responsible person.

**3. WALKING ALONG A FOOTWAY**

- 3.1 The assessment will require the route to be walked in both directions on a school day and where practicable at a time when the child or children would be expected to walk.
- 3.2 During the assessment, any hazards that present unmanageable road safety difficulties be noted.
- 3.3 Where a footway is provided it should be continuous – excluding gaps of up to 20m – or be an acceptable local equivalent e.g. dedicated part of road sectioned by white lining.
- 3.4 Areas where children are expected to congregate such as bus pick up points should be of adequate size to safely accommodate the required number of pedestrians.
- 3.5 Some routes may lie along roads that have neither footway nor verge. On such roads, consideration must be given to the width of the carriageway, traffic speed and composition (such as frequent long / heavy goods vehicles) and to both pedestrian and driver visibility. (i.e. sharp bends with high hedgerows or other obstructions to visibility). Refer to the flow chart over for guidance.

**4. ROAD CROSSING ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 Where pedestrians are required to cross a road the availability of any facility (e.g. central refuges, pedestrian crossing, traffic signals etc) to assist such crossing should be taken into consideration. Where no crossing facility exists, a suitable location should be identified and an assessment of the risk generated by crossing the road should be made.
- 4.2 If a crossing manoeuvre is required, the gap time in traffic should be measured to ensure child pedestrians have frequent and sufficient time gaps to cross the carriageway. The assessment procedure is detailed below.
- 4.3 Crossing Time and Visible Gap Time  
The crossing time required for a child pedestrian to safely cross a carriageway should be calculated as;  
Crossing time (seconds) = Thinking time + Carriageway width / Walking Speed  
This is based on 1 second thinking time and a walking speed of 0.9metres per second  
e.g.  $1 + 7.3 / 0.9 = 9.11$  seconds

The visible gap time in traffic is the time between approaching vehicles in either direction to reach the crossing point. At sites where visibility is limited a measure of time should be taken from when a vehicle comes into view until it reaches the crossing point and that should exceed the time required for pedestrians to cross the road.

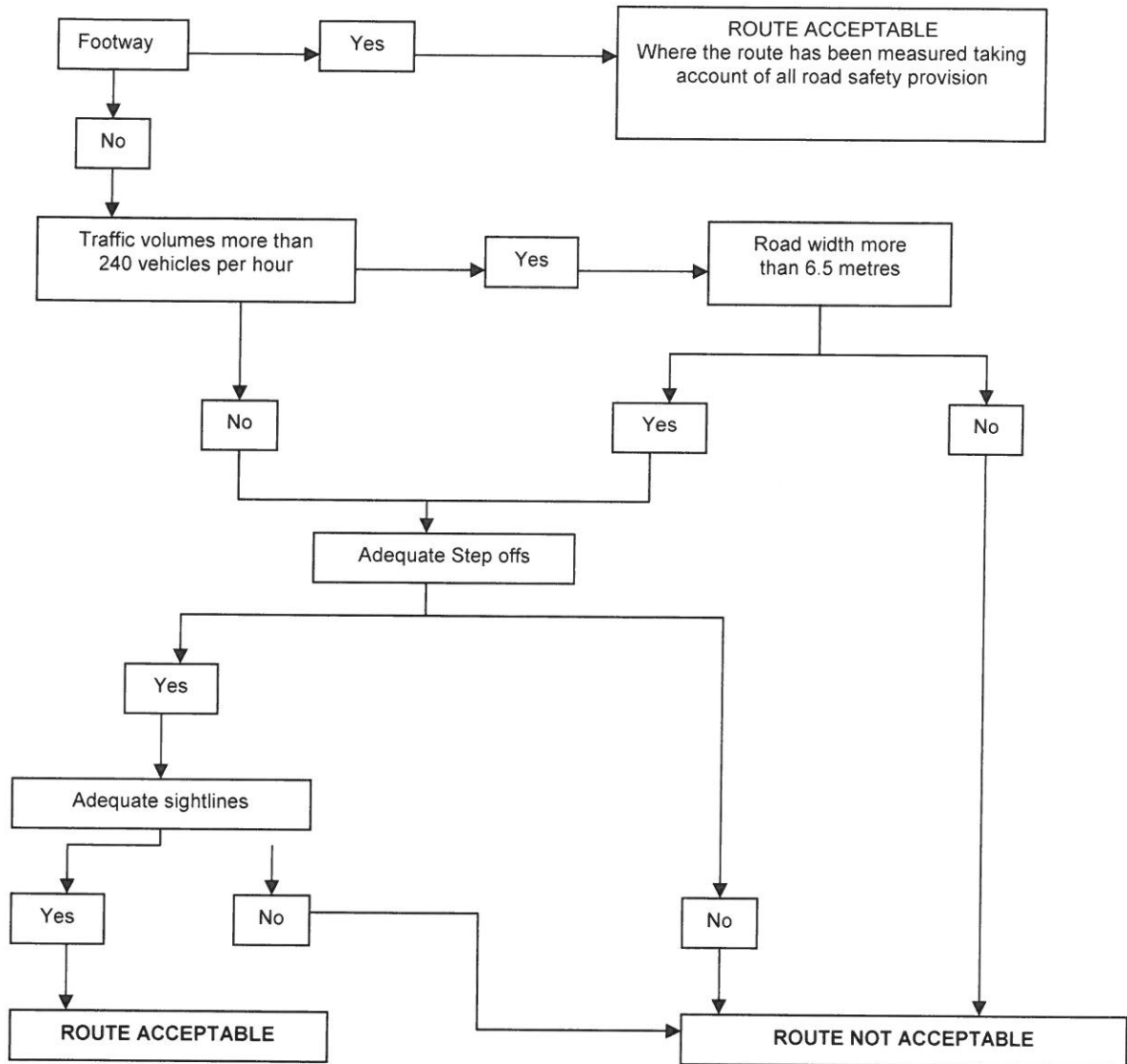
For a crossing to be considered acceptable, 4 visible gap times each greater than the crossing time is required in each 5 minute period.

- 4.4 Site Survey.  
The heaviest vehicle flows usually occur during the morning journey period. Therefore, the site surveys should generally be conducted during this period, unless it is proven that the afternoon period is the busier. The crossing should be walked in both directions to ensure adequate visibility from both sides of the road.
- 4.5 Traffic Counts  
There is no need to classify vehicles as pedestrians do not consider vehicle classification when determining whether to cross or not.

**5. REPORTING ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 A completed road safety assessment should be reported to the Education Authority stating whether the route is considered acceptable to be walked or not.

5.2 If hazards are identified that are unreasonable for supervised, child pedestrians to cope with these should be listed along with any recommended measures required to mitigate them.



	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Number of pupils impacted	Cost of implementation	Number of pupils impacted	Cost of implementation	Number of pupils impacted	Cost of implementation
<b>Option 1</b> Limits unchanged and stop current arrangements for Clydeview, St Columba's and Inverkip	2148		(501)		As per 2016-17	
<b>Option 2</b> Limits unchanged and stop current arrangements for Clydeview, St Columba's and Inverkip	2148		(501)		As per 2016-17	
Poverty element implemented at >1.5 miles for all Secondary Schools	2148		118		As per 2016-17	
<b>Option 3</b> Limits changed to 2.5 miles / 1.5 miles following consultation	2148		As per 2015-16		(885)	
Poverty element implemented at >1.5 miles for all Secondary Schools and >1 mile for Primary Schools	2148		As per 2015-16		244	
Maintain current arrangements for Clydeview, St Columba's and Inverkip	2148		As per 2015-16		(501)	
<b>Option 4</b> Limits changed to 3 miles / 2 miles following consultation	2148		As per 2015-16		(984)	
Poverty element implemented at >1.5 miles for all Secondary Schools and >1 mile for Primary Schools	2148		As per 2015-16		283	
Maintain current arrangements for Clydeview, St Columba's and Inverkip	2148		As per 2015-16		(501)	

