

Equality analysis is a valuable tool to help embed equality into everything we do

Evidence based equality analysis – can include documents, quotes, and web links for photos and videos

Policy decision:

Home to School Transport Review – Proposal 2 – Under 16 School Transport – Statutory Walking Distance

The statutory walking distance from home to school is two miles for children aged under eight and three miles for children aged eight and over. The measurement of the statutory walking distance is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. It is measured by the shortest route along which a child and young person, accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety. Eligible children who have to walk further than this must be provided with free home to school transport. Cheshire West and Chester Council currently provides, on a discretionary basis, free home to school transport for all children up to the age of 11/end of school year 6 where the distance is over two miles.

The proposal is: from September 2015, any pupils transferring into school years 4, 5 and 6 (age eight onwards) to a new school will only be offered free transport if that is their nearest qualifying school and it is over the statutory three miles walking distance from their home address. The proposal would potentially impact on a small number of children in primary schools (we currently provide eight children with transport under this criterion). For pupils that are currently in primary schools or entering/transferring to primary school up to August 2015, they would continue to receive free transport where their nearest school exceeds the walking distance of twomiles (up to the age of 11 years/end of school year 6) in line the existing discretionary policy (as long as they remain at that school).

Main aims, purpose and outcomes and how does it fit in with the wider aims of the organisation:

The purpose of the review of the current Children and Young People’s transport policies is to determine if services can be provided in a more efficient and cost effective way, making the best use of the resources available to ensure high quality service may be delivered in a more personalised and flexible way.

We want to use the review as an opportunity to work closer with service users and our wider communities in order to help build sustainable transport solutions that enable each child and young person, irrespective of need, have the opportunity to achieve their full potential and gain independence in travelling where possible.

Lead officer: Claire Gregory, Senior Manager School Planning

Stakeholders: See consultee list accompanying the Executive papers

While process is important, equality analysis is essentially about outcomes.

Lack of evidence of discrimination is not evidence of a lack of discrimination.

It is not acceptable to say that a policy is applied uniformly to all groups and is therefore fair and equal. Applying a policy or procedure consistently may result in differential outcomes for different groups.

For each of the areas overleaf, an assessment needs to be made on whether the policy has a **positive, negative or neutral impact**, and brief details of why this decision was made and notes of any mitigation should be included. Where the impact is negative, this needs to be given a **high, medium or low assessment**. It is important to rate the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

High impact – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

Medium impact – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

Low impact – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

	Neutral	Positive	Negative
Target group / area			
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers, asylum seekers etc.)	The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of ethnicity. People who have English as an additional language may have	Those currently in receipt of the provision (as at August 2015) would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.	Changing residence more frequently may lead to more changes in schools which may lead to more transport implications.

	<p>less awareness and understanding of both transport and admission to school policies and therefore increased potential for school placement to have unforeseen transport implications for parents.</p> <p>Medium impact – ensure policies and supporting information is accessible and plain English for all customers to understand. Ensure documents can be translated if required.</p> <p>The proposal would bring policy into line with national legislation.</p> <p>Young people from ethnic backgrounds, including Gypsies and Travellers, are more likely to be bullied or harassed due to their ethnic background.</p> <p>Medium – close working with Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Advisory Service to minimise impact.</p>		<p>A lack of established support network for newly arrived families in particular.</p> <p>Children from Traveller sites may be affected by this proposal due to the geographic position of some sites.</p>
<p>Disability (as defined by the Equality Act - a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of disability.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision (as at August 2015) would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.</p>	<p>Access to suitable alternative transport may be more limited for disabled young people depending on their individual needs.</p>

<p>adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>			<p>Pupils who may not be eligible under SEN but could have difficulties walking or accessing transport.</p> <p>Medium impact – children registered at a school within walking distance of home who, by reason of their SEN, disability or mobility problems, cannot reasonably be expected to walk there, and no suitable arrangements have been made for them to attend a nearer school will be eligible for transport.</p> <p>Potential impact on disabled parents/carers who may be unable to accompany/transport non-disabled pupils who would not be eligible for free transport under the new proposal.</p> <p>Medium impact - for those pupils with additional needs attending educational establishments, as deemed necessary by the authority, arrangements for transport would continue to be made.</p> <p>Free transport to the nearest suitable school would be provided</p>
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			<p>under the distance limit in exceptional circumstances in line with current policy, for example pupils with severe mobility difficulties or for whom no viable public transport is available.</p>
<p>Gender/gender reassignment</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of gender/gender reassignment.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.</p>	<p>Individuals are more likely to be bullied or harassed.</p> <p>Young women/girls are more likely to be concerned about personal safety when travelling alone, including walking to and from travel points (e.g. bus stops, train stations)</p> <p>Young men/boys are more likely to be involved in incidents, including personal attack, both as victims and perpetrators. This would also apply to travelling on public transport.</p> <p>Specific personal safety issues for transgender young people. – may be targeted bullying.</p> <p>Medium impact – legislation assumes all children and young people up to the age of 18 will be accompanied as necessary when considering the statutory walking distances (two miles for pupils aged under eight and three miles</p>

			<p>for pupils aged eight and above).</p> <p>Medium impact – close partnership working between CWAC and Cheshire Constabulary to ensure safety within the community.</p>
Religion and belief	The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of religion and belief.	Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.	<p>Restricted access to faith schools</p> <p>Medium impact – the policy applies to children of faith and of non faith equally.</p> <p>Medium impact - Officers would continue to assist and support schools in developing travel plans in order to promote sustainable travel solutions.</p> <p>The authority would continue to monitor admissions to ensure the proposal did not have a detrimental impact on individual school intake.</p>
Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)	The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of sexual orientation.	Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.	<p>There is no evidence a particular impact on young people or parents/carers in relation to sexual orientation. There may be potential risks for lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) young people choosing cheaper alternatives such as walking or cycling which could make them more vulnerable</p>

			<p>to bullying or harassment.</p> <p>Medium impact – legislation assumes all children and young people up to the age of 18 will be accompanied as necessary when considering the statutory walking distances (two miles for pupils aged under eight and three miles for pupils aged eight and above).</p> <p>Medium impact – close partnership working between CWAC and Cheshire Constabulary to promote safety within the community.</p>
<p>Age (children and young people aged 0 – 24, adults aged 25 – 50, younger older people aged 51 – 75/80; older older people 81+. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of age.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.</p>	<p>Could raise issues regarding safety and vulnerability of pupils</p> <p>Medium impact – legislation assumes all children and young people up to the age of 18 will be accompanied as necessary when considering the statutory walking distances (two miles for pupils aged under eight and three miles for pupils aged eight and above).</p> <p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice</p> <p>Children may be unable to attend sibling’s school</p>

			<p>In addition, younger parents who, on average, have lower incomes may also be impacted by affordability issues.</p> <p>Medium impact – The Council currently provides eight children with free transport on the grounds of being aged between 8-11, attending a school that is over two miles walking distance. These children would continue to receive free transport on these grounds up until the end of school year 6.</p> <p>The proposal would be implemented to allow any new applicants the ability to make informed choices and to consider all options available to them when expressing a preference for a school.</p> <p>The authority would continue to provide travel assistance to those legally entitled to it. This will enable continued equality and opportunity to access educational provision for those families.</p>
<p>Rural communities</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of living in a rural community.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.</p>	<p>Young people in rural areas may have more limited access to public transport.</p>

			<p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice due to the limited number of schools in geographic proximity.</p> <p>Medium impact - The authority would continue to provide travel assistance to those pupils who are legally entitled to receive it.</p> <p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.</p>
Areas of deprivation	<p>The proposal would allow fairer transport access to a school, regardless of living within its catchment area.</p> <p>There will continue to be assistance to those who qualify under the current hardship criteria in relation to the policy options. This will enable continued equality and opportunity to access educational provision for those families.</p>	Those currently in receipt (as at August 2015) of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.	<p>Increased costs for families</p> <p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice</p> <p>Medium impact - There will continue to be assistance to those who qualify under the current hardship criteria in relation to the policy options. This will enable continued equality and opportunity to access educational provision for those families.</p>
Human rights	Parents would continue to be able to express their preference for a particular school. Parents and carers are responsible in law for	Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.	<p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice</p> <p>Medium impact - the authority</p>

	making arrangements for their children's attendance at school. They should consider transport requirements when deciding which school to apply a place at.		would continue to provide travel assistance to those pupils who are legally entitled to it.
Health and wellbeing (consider both the wider determinants of health such as education, housing, employment, environment, crime and transport, as well as the possible impacts on lifestyles and the effect there may be on health and care services)		Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 6.	Support of health and wellbeing agenda by encouraging families to adopt alternative methods/options for travel arrangements
Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)	The proposal should have no immediate impact on procurement/partnership.		

Evidence (see guidance note for details of what to include here):

Statutory legislation is less generous than the current CWAC home to school transport policy in respect of children aged eight and over. This and any other impact will be assessed through formal consultation in the Autumn 2013 prior to a decision being made in March 2014, to take effect for the new applicants from September 2015. Some groups may be positively discriminated under the distance limit in exceptional circumstances for example, those children with special educational needs and those children with mobility problems who meet the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria. A thorough 12 week consultation process, as outlined in a separate Equality Assessment, will take place between 30 October 2013 to 24 January 2014 in order to capture responses that will inform the decision making process in March 2014.

Action plan:

Actions required	Key activity	Priority	Outcomes required	Officer responsible	Review date
Monitor impact on school intake	Support schools in developing their travel plans		School travel plans to promote sustainable travel solutions		
Community safety issues	Continue working in partnership with Cheshire Constabulary		Monitor safety issues/incidents		

Sign off	
Lead Officer:	Claire Gregory, Senior Manager School Planning
Approved by Head of Service:	Mark Parkinson Achievement and Wellbeing
Moderation and/or scrutiny	
Date: 27.02.14	
Date analysis to be reviewed based on rating (high impact – review in one year, medium impact - review in two years, low impact in three years)	

Please forward the completed Equality Analysis to the Equality and Diversity Managers for publishing on the Council's website

Please go to the Executive webpage to see the documentation.

<http://cmttpublic.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=443&MId=3916&Ver=4>