

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 1 – Under 16 School Transport – Catchment School

Introduce for new applicants, as of September 2015, eligibility for free transport based only on distance (over the statutory walking distance) from home to the nearest qualifying school. Free transport is currently provided to pupils to either their nearest or catchment school, where their home address exceeds the statutory walking distance, as defined in the current transport policy.

Under the new proposed policy, free transport would only be provided for pupils who are attending their nearest qualifying school, where their home address exceeds the statutory walking distance. This would mean that from September 2015, pupils starting in reception or school year 7 or transferring into another year group at a new school would not be eligible for free transport for their catchment school if there is another school that is nearer. There is also an additional change for primary aged children, see equality analysis 'Proposal 2 – Under 16 School Transport – Statutory Walking Distance' for further details.

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 that still meets the authorities statutory responsibilities.

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.)	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of ethnicity.</p> <p>People who have English as an additional language may have less awareness and understanding of transport and admission policies, therefore</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.</p>	<p>Changing residence more frequently may lead to more changes in schools which may lead to more transport implications.</p> <p>A lack of established support network for newly arrived families in particular.</p>

	<p>increased potential for school placement could 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>Young people from ethnic backgrounds, including Gypsies and Travellers, are more likely to be bullied or harassed due to their ethnic background.</p> <p>Children from Traveller sites may be affected by this proposal due to the geographic position of some sites.</p> <p>Medium – close working with Gypsy, Roma, Traveller Advisory Service to minimise impact.</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 adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities)</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of disability.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.</p>	<p>Access to suitable alternative transport may be more limited for disabled young people depending on their individual needs.</p> <p>Pupils who may not be eligible under SEN but could have difficulties walking or accessing 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</p>

			<p>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 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>
Gender/gender reassignment	The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of gender/gender reassignment.	Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.	
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 11.	<p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice</p> <p>Medium impact - Pupils from low income families aged between 11 and 16 would continue to receive transport to the nearest school preferred by reason of a parent/carers religion or belief if it is more than two miles by the shortest available walking route and not more than 15 miles away.</p>

			<p>The authority would continue to monitor admissions to ensure the proposal did not have a detrimental impact on individual school intake.</p> <p>Officers would continue to assist and support schools in developing travel plans in order to promote sustainable travel solutions.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual)</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of sexual orientation.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.</p>	<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 to bullying or harassment.</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 11.</p>	<p>Could raise issues regarding safety and vulnerability of pupils.</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 proposal would be implemented in suitable time in order to allow any new applicants the ability to consider all options available to them when expressing a preference for a school as part of the admissions process.</p> <p>The proposal would protect those pupils that had expressed a preference to attend their catchment school under the current policy would continue to receive free transport.</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</p>	<p>Young people in rural areas may have more limited access to public transport.</p>

		school year 11.	<p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice</p> <p>Medium impact - The authority would continue to provide travel assistance to those pupils who are legally entitled to receive it.</p> <p>Officers would continue to assist and support schools and communities in developing travel plans in order to promote sustainable travel solutions and mature the market.</p>
Areas of deprivation	The proposal should have no immediate impact on the basis of living in an area of deprivation.	Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.	<p>Removal of this provision could limit choice of school placement for those who could not afford to make their own transport arrangements.</p> <p>May restrict accessibility to school of choice for those families just above the low income threshold.</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>

<p>Human rights</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on human rights.</p> <p>Medium impact - parents would continue to be able to express their preference for a particular school. Parents and carers are responsible in law for making arrangements for their children's attendance at school. They should therefore consider transport requirements when deciding which school to apply a place at.</p>	<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.</p>	<p>The proposed change would conflict with the Schools Admissions Policy. Ensure parents are fully informed of both policies.</p> <p>Removal of this provision could limit accessibility to the school of choice for those who could not afford to make their own transport arrangements.</p> <p>Medium impact - the authority would continue to provide travel assistance to those pupils who are legally entitled to it.</p>
<p>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)</p>		<p>Those currently in receipt of the provision would continue to receive it up until the end of school year 11.</p> <p>The proposal would encourage pupils to attend their nearest school which could allow more opportunity to walk or cycle there.</p>	
<p>Procurement/partnership (if project due to be carried out by contractors/partners etc, identify steps taken to ensure equality compliance)</p>	<p>The proposal should have no immediate impact on procurement/partnership.</p>		

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 receiving free transport to their catchment school. 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 would continue to 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 assist in 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>