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Local Authority Leaders

08 December 2014

Dear Leaders

Earlier this year I published the new Learner Travel Operational Guidance, which I produced in collaboration with the Children's Commissioner for Wales, to ensure the views of pupils and young people can be heard on learner travel matters.

There are clear health, social and educational benefits for children who walk to school, so this new guidance puts particular emphasis on ensuring children have the opportunity to do that safely. The guidance contains a new chapter on the risk assessment of walked routes to school which extends the criteria by which walked routes are assessed.

The Children's Commissioner and I are committed to working together to ensure that the views of children and young people on learner travel matters are taken into account.

I attach a monitoring form for the risk assessment of walked routes to school which I expect local authority risk assessors of walked routes to fill in every six months. The purpose of the form is to record evidence to test that due regard is being paid to the new risk assessment guidance and that the views of children and young people on the safety of walked routes between home and school are being listened to.

I would ask that the completed monitoring forms are returned by the end of June and end of December each year and be sent to the following mailbox LearnerTransport-RiskAssessments@wales.gsi.gov.uk. My officials will issue reminders prior to the deadline.

In addition I have enclosed forms for parents and learners to enable them to express their views to local authorities on the safety of walked routes between home and school, which your officers may find helpful.

Edwina Hart