

From:] On Behalf Of Mohammed Mehmet
Sent: 24 November 2015 08:42
To: Hart, Edwina (Ministerial)
Subject: Denbighshire School Transport Policy

Dear Minister

Denbighshire School Transport Policy

We have recently been responding to complaints received in regard to Denbighshire's School Transport Policy from , and would gratefully receive your views on the following.

In their most recent response they have provided an excerpt from a letter you had written to them; shown below:

I am clear that there is a duty on all Local Authorities to risk assess all walked routes between home and central pick-up points as such routes are part of the overall home to school journey. There is also a duty on local authorities to ensure that all travel arrangements for learners are safe, do not cause unreasonable stress or take an unreasonable amount of time. I have written to the Chief Executive of Denbighshire County Council to remind the authority of this duty. I have made it clear that the safety of children is paramount.

I note in your e-mail of 9 November to the local authority the reference to gritting part of the walked route to the pick up point and thus to school during very cold periods. You may wish to ask the local authority to undertake a further risk assessment of the walked route in light of this important information. I would be grateful if you could let me know the outcome of your request.

In regard to your correspondence dated 9th October 2015 (referenced above), I did respond on November 5th and requested clarification on the following point:

In regard to the wording in your letter, I would seek clarification on the expectation for Local Authorities to assess every potential route to the pick-up points if changes have been made to the previous arrangements. As mentioned Denbighshire has taken the view that parents / carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend the pick-up point and that every potential route may not necessarily have been assessed; neither is there an expectation that children should be walking to the pick-up points. This is an important point and one which is not specifically addressed in either the Measure or Guidance, but one which will impact on any Authority using pick-up points.

I would gratefully receive your comments regarding our request for clarification since the complainants excerpt, if accurate, would seem to suggest that Welsh Government's position is that we need to assess all potential walk routes to the pick-points; which is not what the Measure or Guidance stipulates for those over the distance criteria. This, by implication, is a very significant point for any Local Authority in Wales who uses pick-up points for school transport.

I would be grateful if this would receive your immediate attention and should you require any further details then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Mohammed

Mohammed Mehmet
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive