

Eich cyf / Your ref

Ein cyf / Our ref

Dyddiad / Date

Rhif union / Direct dial

MM/EPE

5 November 2015

01824 706129



Edwina Hart MBE CStJ AC / AM
Minister for Economy, Science and
Transport
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff
CF99 1NA

Dear Minister

I write in regard to your correspondence dated 9th October 2015.

At Denbighshire we have recently undertaken a full review of schools transport to ensure we are meeting the requirements of The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008. This process was originally driven by our 'Freedoms and Flexibilities' programme which is examining how the organisation responds to the financial challenges we face. This review ensured we are making 'suitable arrangements' which are fully risk assessed in-line with the Guidance, but are also delivering an efficient and economically viable transport solution for the Authority. In regard to the changes made I note these have not impacted on Primary and SEN transport and have primarily focused on Secondary School travel.

In making suitable arrangements for our pupils it is clear that the Measure does not specifically address certain aspects of the transport process, although we have sought to apply the Measure and Guidance in a fair and proportionate way. For the Policy changes made at Denbighshire we have taken Legal guidance as well as having due regard to recent case law on the subject of school transport. This has led us to develop a network of pick-up points for [Secondary School](#) transport, and where this has resulted in changes to previous arrangements there is a reasonable expectation that parents / carers will ensure their children get to the pick-up point in a safe and timely manner. From consultation with the other Authorities across Wales the use of pick-up points in this way is generally accepted as a method of meeting this requirement.

In regard to assessment of routes, we have re-assessed routes previously designated as hazardous using the updated Guidance and I attach the return information from 2014-15 which showed 73 routes assessed. We have also undertaken risk assessments on all the new designated pick-up points used across Denbighshire.

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.

As part of the consultation exercise we did correspond with parents who were using our transport services, as well as all schools. This was done with the expectation that the views of children and young people would be accounted for in any consultation responses received.

On a positive note the changes made to Denbighshire's Schools Transport Policy have been broadly accepted by most parents / carers, and we have also received positive feedback in this regard. As a percentage of those transported, the total number of formal complaints / appeals received has been extremely low, and the Authority is estimating potential savings in excess of £200,000 from the changes made.

I trust this has been of assistance and if you should require any further information please contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mohammed Mehmet

Prif Weithredwr

Chief Executive

Swyddfeydd Cyngor
Neuadd y Sir
Ffordd Wynnstay
Rhuthun,
Sir Ddinbych
LL15 1YN

Ffôn: 01824 706129

Symudol: 07771 774965

e-bost: mohammed.mehmet@sirddinbych.gov.uk

Gwefan: www.sirddinbych.gov.uk

Council Offices
County Hall
Wynnstay Road
Ruthin
Denbighshire
LL15 1YN

Phone: 01824 706129

Mobile: 07771 774965

e-mail: mohammed.mehmet@sirddinbych.gov.uk

Website: www.denbighshire.gov.uk