

<b>Meeting of:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>23 JULY 2024</b>
<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>LEARNER TRAVEL POLICY</b>
<b>Report Owner / Corporate Director:</b>	<b>CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION, EARLY YEARS AND YOUNG PEOPLE</b>
<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	<b>ROBIN DAVIES GROUP MANAGER STRATEGY, PERFORMANCE AND SUPPORT</b>
<b>Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:</b>	<b>The is no effect on the policy framework and procedure rules</b>
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	<b>This is a report on the outcomes of the public consultation exercise regarding proposed changes to the local authority's current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy.</b>

## **1. Purpose of report**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- report on the outcomes of the consultation exercise approved by Cabinet regarding the proposed changes to the local authority's current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy;
- seek Cabinet's decision on whether or not it should progress with any of the proposals; and
- identify how the proposals would contribute to the overall savings target as part of the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

## **2. Background**

2.1 The Council's statutory responsibilities in relation to home to school/college transport are set out in the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 (the Measure).

2.2 The Measure states that local authorities must:

- assess the travel needs of learners in their authority area;
- provide free home to school transport for learners of compulsory school age attending primary school who live two miles or further from their nearest suitable school;

- provide free home-to-school transport for learners of compulsory school age attending secondary school who live three miles or further from their nearest suitable school;
- assess and meet the needs of 'looked after' children in their authority area;
- promote access to Welsh-medium education;
- promote sustainable modes of travel; and
- where learners are not entitled to free transport, local authorities have the power to provide transport on a discretionary basis.

- 2.3 In Bridgend, the term 'nearest suitable school' applies to the local English-medium 'catchment school', the nearest Welsh-medium school or the nearest voluntary aided faith school of the relevant denomination. Pupils admitted to special schools are considered on an individual basis.
- 2.4 Section 2 of the Measure requires local authorities to assess the travel needs of all learners under the age of 19 who receive education or training and who are ordinarily resident in the local authority's area. This includes those who have reached the age of 19 but started a course when under the age of 19 and continue to attend that course.
- 2.5 However, there is no statutory duty in the Measure to provide free transport for the following learners:
- Those who are not of statutory school age, and this includes Nursery pupils as well as Post-16 learners; or
  - Those who, by parental preference, attend a voluntary aided (VA) school, where the school is not the nearest suitable school.
- 2.6 The Learner Travel Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance 2014 (the operational guidance) was published in June 2014. This guidance includes statutory provisions which local authorities must consider in undertaking their responsibilities under the Measure. This guidance includes statutory guidance on risk assessing walked routes to school.
- 2.7 The Measure also provides guidance on circumstances in which local authorities may choose to make their own discretionary arrangements.
- 2.8 The Learner Travel Policy is closely aligned with the local authority's 'School Admissions Policy' although it does not form part of the admission arrangements. Nevertheless, the Council's Home-to-School/College Transport Policy will be a material consideration in respect of the choice of school for many parents and is therefore detailed in the local authority's Admissions Policy, which is the 'Starting School Booklet' for parents, which is revised annually in line with the relevant School Admissions Policy.
- 2.9 In September 2015, Cabinet determined changes to the local authority's Home-to-School/College Transport Policy in order to meet MTFs savings identified from 2016-2017 to 2019-2020. The policy change and corresponding MTFs budget reduction proposals were implemented in September 2016. However, initial savings were predicated on the full implementation of a change to statutory distances of 2 miles for primary school-age children from the previous 1.5 miles and 3 miles for

secondary school-age children (including Post-16 learners) from the previous 2 miles. No change was proposed to the Nursery eligibility of 1.5 miles. On implementing the policy change Cabinet determined to protect the entitlement of all pupils currently benefitting from home-to-school transport at the former distances until they moved schools or moved from one phase of education to another. Furthermore, protection was provided for siblings of children already in receipt at the former distances, where they too would benefit from free transport at the same distance.

- 2.10 Cabinet was not minded to remove the discretionary arrangements for Post-16 learners, who would therefore continue to benefit from home-to-school/college transport at the 3-mile distance.
- 2.11 The 'in-receipt' and the 'sibling rule' entitlement has meant that, year-on-year, the number of pupils the policy change has applied to, is relatively small. However, parents have challenged this inequality and have been critical of its intention, especially as children without siblings are disadvantaged.
- 2.12 Parents who have been aggrieved that their child has been at detriment in comparison with their peers (that is, a child without siblings in the same school, entering their statutory education in Reception, or transitioning from primary education into secondary education in Year 7) have typically challenged the safety of walked routes to school in order to address this inequality. Without sufficient formal assessments under the requirements of the operational guidance, it has been difficult for the local authority to contest much of the challenge on the availability of walked routes to school.
- 2.13 Without adequate assurances that routes considered as available by the local authority had followed the procedure outlined in the aforementioned operational guidance, the local authority was not be able to fully implement its policy decision made in September 2015.
- 2.14 Therefore, in August 2017, the local authority agreed to progress the formal assessments of walking routes in accordance with the operational guidance. These formal assessments did not include all possible walked routes, as such an assessment would be unfeasible, but included an assessment of all major arterial routes across the county borough from the main residential areas to local schools. Routes that were generally considered as 'well-travelled' as part of the 'public realm' (for example, modern streets through new or mature residential estates where sufficient pavements/footways were present with good street lighting, were considered to be 'available' as per the operational guidance, or as per previous assessments undertaken by the local authority). More recent investment in active travel, in particular the significant increase in financial investment of £70m across Wales by Welsh Government has allowed the local authority to implement the necessary changes on Bridgend roads to facilitate active travel. For example, the widening of footways along sections of the A48 and A473 for shared use facilities, with vegetation clearance, additional traffic signs and street lighting improvements have meant that more of the urban realm has been considered to be 'available' to learners to walk to school.
- 2.15 The physical assessments of the main routes were progressed by an independent consultant. Physical assessments were undertaken before routes were deemed

available, taking into consideration the statutory provisions contained within the Operational Guidance. An officer of the local authority was appointed to progress statutory consultations with schools, learners and parents, to ensure that their views were heard as part of the assessment and engagement process.

- 2.16 Twelve reports were produced covering the following geographical areas/school catchments:
- Abercerdin Primary School
  - Blaengarw Primary School
  - Brynteg School
  - Bryntirion Comprehensive School
  - Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen
  - Cynffig Comprehensive School
  - Garw Valley
  - Maesteg School
  - Nantymoel Primary School
  - Ogmere Vale Primary School
  - Pencoed Comprehensive School
  - Porthcawl Primary School
- 2.17 All assessments undertaken fully followed the statutory requirements outlined in the aforementioned operational guidance.
- 2.18 Section 5 of the local authority's current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy identifies the local authority's response to the identification of available routes and states that in determining the comparative safety of a walking route where routes are reviewed, 'provision may be withdrawn where for example, identified hazards have been mitigated against'. This will then be classed as an identified and available safe walking route. Parents will be given at least one term's advance notice of the withdrawal of transport and any withdrawal will normally be implemented to coincide with the start of an academic year.
- 2.19 Following these assessments officers identified that the impact of fully implementing the available walking route assessments on those learners currently benefitting from free home-to-home-to-school transport, where routes had previously been challenged by parents as 'unsafe', would be significant. However, maintaining this legacy provision and not withdrawing free home-to-school transport for those learners where there are available walking routes to school has created significant inequality across Bridgend. In some parts of the county, pupils who are able to walk to school on a route identified as 'available' are still in receipt of home-to-school transport where they reside under the statutory and policy distances of two miles for primary school pupils and three miles for secondary school pupils respectively, whereas in other parts of the county, pupils living within the same distances are not eligible for free home-to-home-to-school transport and walk to school.
- 2.20 Therefore, in July 2019, Cabinet agreed to undertake a full 12-week public consultation on a new set of proposals that would both address the inherent inequality in the current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy (principally the 'sibling rule' and 'in-receipt' protection) and to provide sufficient savings to support the £1.869m of budgets savings made since 2014.

2.21 The public consultation took place over a 12-week period from 14 October 2019 to 5 January 2020.

2.22 Five proposals were detailed in the public consultation document and are summarised as follows:

**Proposal 1**

Withdrawal of transport for all learners benefitting from an available walking route to school, in line with statutory distances of two miles for primary school-age pupils and three miles for secondary school-age pupils.

**Proposal 2**

Removal of escorts from all taxis and minibuses of less than 8 passengers.

**Proposal 3**

Removal from the local authority's Home to School/College Transport Policy of specific examples of the special circumstances where the local authority will provide discretionary transport.

**Proposal 4**

To stop providing free transport for learners aged 16 or over, who go to school or college other than those pupils who attend a Welsh-medium sixth form at a school within Bridgend or who wish to pursue a faith-based education in a sixth form at a voluntary aided school within Bridgend.

**Proposal 5**

To stop providing free transport for nursery-age pupils (aged three and four-years-old).

2.23 In August 2020 Welsh Government announced its review of learner travel in Wales and there was high expectation that the review would potentially amend the current statutory distances in new legislation. Therefore, when Cabinet considered the outcome of the 2019-2020 consultation in September 2020, it determined to accept proposal 3 above only and to defer any decision on the remaining proposals pending the outcome of Welsh Government's review.

2.24 However, the outcome of Welsh Government's review did not progress as expected, and there have been no changes to the Measure. The statutory distances remain unchanged, although five recommendations were made by Welsh Government as follows:

**2.25 Recommendation 1**

Update Learner Travel: Statutory Provision and Operational Guidance document to align with legislative changes; promote and strengthen collective responsibility across local government, schools, parents and learners; and improve consistency of delivery across Wales.

**2.26 Recommendation 2**

Commission a piece of work to update the All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code, resources for schools and update to accompanying statutory guidance.

### **2.27 Recommendation 3**

Promote best practice, resources and collaboration across local authorities.

### **2.28 Recommendation 4**

Explore options to develop a match-funded grant programme to seed-fund independent travel training.

### **2.29 Recommendation 5**

Increase opportunities for active travel and use of public transport network.

2.30 Therefore, given that the learner transport budget has been under significant financial pressure for many years, new proposals to support MTFS budget reductions have progressed to public consultation, which were approved by Cabinet in March 2024.

### **2.31 Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013**

2.32 The council needs to have due regard to the Welsh Government's Active Travel Action Plan for Wales and the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013.

2.33 This responsibility includes actions to changing the way we travel, the need for fewer cars on our roads, and more people using public transport, walking or cycling.

## **3. Current situation / proposal**

3.1 In March 2024 Cabinet determined to progress a 12-week public consultation on five proposals as follows:

- Withdrawal of legacy transport for all learners benefitting from an identified and available (safe) walking route to school, to fall in line with the statutory distances of 2 miles for primary age pupils and 3 miles for secondary age pupils.
- Removal of legacy 'sibling' protection for pupils.
- Removal of all transport for nursery pupils (excluding pupils attending their nearest suitable Welsh-medium or faith school).
- Removal of all Post-16 transport (excluding pupils attending the following schools:
  - Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd
  - Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School.
  - The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School
- The offer to parents/carers of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) the option of a 'personal transport budget' providing a mileage allowance of £0.45/mile.

3.2 The outcome of the consultation is as follows and is detailed in the Consultation Report (see Appendix 2) and in the thematic 'Emerging Themes' summary (see Appendix 3). However, the main issues from the responses are summarised below.

**3.3 Proposal 1 - Withdrawal of transport for all learners benefitting from an identified and available (safe) walking route to school in line with statutory distances of two miles for primary school pupils and three miles for secondary school pupils**

- 3.4 There were four main areas of concern relating to this proposal (for a full breakdown see consultation report in Appendix 2).
- 70.5% of all respondents did not agree with the proposal while 29.5% did agree.
  - 62.8% of pupils did not agree with the proposal while 37.2% did.
  - 73.1% of parents did not agree with the proposal while 26.9% did.
- 3.5 The main areas of feedback in respect of concerns regarding the implementation of this policy proposal (see Appendix 2 for a full breakdown) were as follows:
- 3.6 **Safety and wellbeing** - in particular, pupils being required to walk to school along routes they perceive as unsafe with lots of traffic and poor lighting, especially in the winter months. Increased exposure to anti-social behaviour and the impact on health, both physical and mental, of the journey to school. The impact on a pupil's ability to learn after such a potentially long journey, especially for secondary school pupils walking up to six miles per day.
- 3.7 **Cost** – a significant proportion of responders felt that the options available as alternatives to home-to-school transport (other than walking to school), were that many did not have a family car, that families were already finding the cost-of-living difficult and that public transport options had been reduced over many years and especially more recently, and that the cost of public transport was a distinct barrier to getting their child to school safely.
- 3.8 **Environment** – many responders stated that the proposal would likely have a negative impact on the environment close to schools and this was primarily because it was highly unlikely that younger pupils would walk to school and there would therefore be more cars on local roads and the consequential impact on the local environment. Some responders also identified the net zero carbon agenda as important considerations and the impact on this ambition.
- 3.9 **Social impact** – the current policy arrangement facilitates many families to go to work and any change or reduction in eligibility may mean some families not being able to do so.
- 3.10 Proposal 2 - Removal of 'sibling' and 'in-receipt' protection for pupils**
- 3.11 There was some confusion regarding this proposal in that many responders as impacting siblings of different ages misinterpreted it. However it is important to clarify that it is proposing to remove the 'sibling' and 'in receipt' eligibility from the current policy, so all pupils are equally eligible for home-to-home-to-school transport based on the statutory distances. Therefore, there would not be a situation where one sibling retains eligibility where another pupils loses such eligibility if this proposal were accepted and if both siblings lived together at the same address.
- 3.12 A summary of the outcome of the consultation responses was as follows:
- 47.9% of all respondents did not agree with the proposal while 52.1% did agree.
  - 35.8% of pupils did not agree with the proposal while 64.2% did.
  - 50.6% of parents did not agree with the proposal while 49.4% did.

- 3.13 The main areas of feedback in respect of concerns regarding the implementation of this policy proposal (see Appendix 2 for a full breakdown) were as follows:
- 3.14 **Social Impact** – principally that all siblings should be able to travel together. That if siblings travel at different times this could affect families and that siblings are important for support and helping younger pupils transition into higher stages of education.
- 3.15 **Safety and wellbeing** – that younger children are often supported by older siblings on home-to-school transport. There was also concern expressed over more vehicles and congestion outside schools and how unsafe the roads may be, especially at pick-up and drop-off time. The impact on health, both physical and mental of the journey to school and pupils’ ability to learn after such a potentially long journey, especially for secondary school pupils, was also raised.
- 3.16 **Cost** – a significant proportion felt that the options available as alternatives to home-to-school transport (other than walking to school), were that many did not have a family car, that families were already finding the cost-of-living difficult and that public transport options had been reduced over many years and more recently, and that the cost of public transport was a distinct barrier to getting their child to school safely.
- 3.17 **Expectation** – As well as identifying the unfairness of the policy in general, some respondents identified that there should be some protection in respect of this proposal for existing pupils if this is brought in.
- 3.18 Proposal 3 - Removal of all transport for Nursery pupils (excluding Welsh-medium and faith-based education)**
- 3.19 There was significant discontent with this policy proposal, in particular that responders strongly disagreed that there should be protection for pupils seeking a Welsh-medium or faith-based education.
- 57.5% of the respondents did not agree with the proposal while 42.5% did agree.
  - 53.3% of pupils did not agree with the proposal while 46.7% did.
  - 58.3% of parents did not agree with the proposal while 46.7% did.
- 3.20 The other main areas of feedback in respect of concerns regarding the implementation of this policy proposal (see Appendix 2 for a full breakdown) was a mix for and against the continuation of this policy arrangement, as follows:
- 3.21 **Social impact** – That this would negatively impact some working parents. However, this needs to be seen in the context that currently only 19 Nursery pupils would lose their eligibility, a figure that the wider public would be unaware of. However, many other responders suggested that eligibility should be removed for all Nursery pupils or should at least be means tested.
- 3.22 **Safety** – There were concerns raised that pupils of such a young age should not be being transported as this was unsafe and that walking children of such a young age to school was also unsafe.



- 3.23 **Cost** – Many responders suggested that the money spent on non-statutory Nursery transport would be better used to prevent other home-to-school transport cuts being made, while others proposed that this policy eligibility supports working families and to remove it would negatively impact those families' ability to work.
- 3.24 **Expectation** – Responses ranged from a suggestion that a change of policy would present a barrier to working families, to the acknowledgement that nursery education is voluntary and should at least be needs assessed/means tested.
- 3.25 **Proposal 4 - Removal of all Post-16 transport (excluding Welsh-medium and faith-based education)**
- 69.8% of all respondents did not agree with the proposal while 30.2% did agree.
  - 58.8% of pupils did not agree with the proposal while 41.2% did.
  - 70.9% of parents did not agree with the proposal while 29.1% did.
- 3.26 The main areas of feedback in respect of concerns regarding the implementation of this policy proposal (see Appendix 2 for a full breakdown) was a mix for and against the continuation of this policy arrangement, as follows:
- 3.27 **Distance** – there was concern expressed that the distances from many parts of Bridgend to Bridgend College in particular was significant and would likely impact on the choice of sixth form versus further education at college. The policy proposal was seen likely to impact those not living in close proximity to their nearest English-medium sixth-form or college, so pupils of similar academic potential living in different parts of the county would be impacted differently as a result of this policy proposal. For some living very close to their schools, the impact would be minimal, for others living some distance away, the impact would be significant.
- 3.28 **Responsibility** – feedback from some pupils identified that they accepted their own responsibility as emerging young adults, for the journey to school, to access their place of education. However, others responded by suggesting that such a policy change would likely mean fewer young people taking up sixth-form or further education, as the lack of transport would be a barrier.
- 3.29 **Welsh-medium and faith-based education** – there was significant feedback that the protection of Welsh-medium and faith-based education afforded by this proposal would be inequitable. Other feedback pointed to lack of protection for other faiths other than Christianity.
- 3.30 **Cost** – the costs to families was considered to be significant if this policy offer was removed. With the feeling that lo-income families would suffer the most, it was clear that with not all families having access to a private motor car, the impact on those pupils and their families would be significant. Others pointed to the recent changes to public transport in Bridgend and the now more reduced availability and increased costs of public transport.
- 3.31 **Expectation** – Many responders suggested that without other choices being available children could be deprived of their education.

3.32 **Environmental** – many responders identified the potential for significant local impact in respect of additional traffic movements and parking issues around schools.

**3.33 Proposal 5 - The offer to parents/carers of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) the option of a 'personal transport budget'**

- 52.6% of all respondents did not agree with the proposal while 47.4% did agree.
- 48.4% of pupils did not agree with the proposal while 51.6% did.
- 54.1% of parents did not agree with the proposal while 45.9% did.

3.34 There was considerable confusion regarding this policy proposal. A significant proportion of responders assumed that this was a mandatory proposal and that either the local authority was forcing this policy arrangement on parents, or that the local authority would charge parents 45 pence per mile for the provision of school transport for their child. Very few responders understood this was only an offer, and if parents rejected the offer of a personal transport budget, their child's current eligibility and associated transport provision for free home-to-school transport, would not be impacted. Those that did understand the proposal were generally supportive and understood it was not mandatory.

3.35 Those who did understand the offer did not object to it and many suggested it as an offer only it was a generally positive offer by the local authority.

**3.36 Assessment of the impact of the policy proposals**

3.37 It is clear that the current home-to-school/college transport policy is complicated.

3.38 The policy has been subject to change but not consistently applied due to:

- nuances in policy (sibling rule and 'already in-receipt' retention of eligibility);
- historic insecurities in up-to-date assessments of availability of walking routes (now resolved);
- nursery transport provided at 1.5 miles and over;
- primary school transport - a mix of over 1.5- and 2-miles eligibility (dependent on local challenges over the availability of walked routes to school, as well as the 'sibling' and 'in-receipt' rules); and
- secondary school transport - a mix of over 2- and 3-miles eligibility (dependent on local challenges over the availability of walked routes to school as well as the 'sibling' and 'in-receipt' rules).

3.39 Some historic anomalies also exist where there is no eligibility under any previous or current policy, but transport is provided for pupils in those areas (for example, North Cornelly to Cynffig Comprehensive School) and therefore for many years, there has been a legitimate expectation that such an arrangement will continue.

**3.40 Assessment of impact of the implementation of the following proposals**

- **Proposal 1** - Withdrawal of transport for all learners benefitting from an available walking route to school, in line with statutory distances of two miles for primary school-age pupils and three miles for secondary school-age pupils.

- **Proposal 2** - Removal of 'sibling' and 'in-receipt' protection for pupils.

- 3.41 The majority of all school transport provided to learners in both primary and secondary schools is provided by 'big bus' transport. A 'big bus' is defined as having 22 or more seats. These two proposals have been assessed together, as they primarily impact pupils on big bus (coach) transport.
- 3.42 Some 3260 Bridgend pupils travel to school on a 'big bus' (June 2024).
- 3.43 Big bus transport is provided for 22 schools (12 primary schools and 10 secondary schools). The 12 primary schools are largely Bridgend's 8 Welsh-medium and Catholic primary schools (along with 3 English-medium primary schools in Bridgend and to out-of-county bilingual/Welsh-medium schools).
- 3.44 Big bus transport is provided to Dolau Primary School, Tonyrefail Community School and Ysgol Llanhari in Rhondda Cynon Taf because of the eligibility for pupils to attend these schools under the local authority's previous and current Schools Admission Policy and arrangements. Although some of these arrangement ended with effect from 2020 for new admissions, pupils admitted to Dolau Primary School and Ysgol Llanhari prior to this date are still eligible until they finish their education. Transport to Tonyrefail Community School continues in line with current School Admission policy arrangements for pupils previously attending Abercerdin Primary School.
- 3.45 Table 1 below identifies the numbers of pupils on 'big bus' transport in June 2024 and the estimated impact on eligible pupils travelling if proposals 1 and 2 were implemented. The estimated reductions in pupil number concern pupils of statutory school age only. The impact on Post-16 pupils in sixth forms is not included at this time and is considered later in this report under proposal 4.
- 3.46 Cohorts of learners and their address/geographical location can vary dramatically year-on-year and such an analysis is therefore meant to be representative only. However, a large number of learners benefitting from transport currently are predicted to lose their eligibility if these two policy proposals were to be implemented. This is because there are a large number of primary and secondary school pupils in some schools where they live between the former 1.5- and 2-mile distance for primary eligibility and the 2- and 3-mile distance for secondary eligibility implemented in 2016, for example, Brynteg School and Cynffig Comprehensive School. These pupils have retained eligibility even though they do not meet the current policy distance criteria. Many of these pupils have benefitted from the 'sibling protection' inherent in the current policy. For other secondary schools, the change is insignificant, for example, Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen, as the majority of learners travelling from the valley communities travel much further distances already and remain eligible for free home-to-home-to-school transport under local policy and the requirements of the Measure.
- 3.47 Table 1 below provides an estimate of this impact based on known cohorts of learners.

**Table 1 – Number of pupils on big buses June 2024 and estimated reduction following the implementation of Proposals 1 and 2**

		Proposals 1 and 2	
Primary School	Eligible pupils (June 2024)	Estimated eligible pupils (September 2025)	Estimated percentage reduction in pupil numbers (following the implementation of proposals 1 and 2) based on 2023-2024 cohort of pupils
<b>Welsh-medium school</b>			
Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	35	25	28.6%
Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr	208	157	24.5%
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	123	122	0.8%
Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	106	59	44.3%
Dolau Primary School	5	5	0.0%
<b>Faith school</b>			
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	89	48	46.1%
St Mary's and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School	24	21	12.5%
St Robert's Roman Catholic Primary School	46	37	19.6%
<b>English-medium school</b>			
Coety Primary School	8	0	100.0%
Coychurch (Llangrallo) Primary School	19	19	0.0%
Ogmore Vale Primary School	71	71	0.0%
Pencoed Primary School	40	40	0.0%
Secondary School	Eligible pupils (June 2024)	Estimated eligible pupils (September 2025)	Estimated percentage reduction in pupil numbers (following the implementation of proposals 1 and 2)
<b>Welsh-medium school</b>			
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	628	578	8.0%
Ysgol Llanhari	22	22	0.0%
<b>Faith school</b>			
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	493	446	9.5%
<b>English-medium school</b>			
Brynteg School	67	0	100.0%
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	800	800	0.0%
Cynffig Comprehensive School	103	0	100.0%
Maesteg School	114	2	98.2%
Pencoed Comprehensive School	118	111	5.9%

Porthcawl Comprehensive School	25	9	64.0%
Tonyrefail Community School	81	81	0.0%

3.48 As can be seen in Table 1 above, there would be a significant impact on the number of pupils eligible for free home-to-school transport attending the following schools:

- Brynteg School
- Cynffig Comprehensive School
- Maesteg School
- Ysgol Cynwyd Sant
- Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr
- St Mary's Catholic Primary School

3.49 The impact on pupils attending schools on smaller vehicles such as minibuses and taxis would be more limited, as these pupils tend to live in parts of school catchment areas where there are no available walking routes. For example, in farms or other geographically distant parts of the county, or where the community is small and geographically isolated such as pupils living in Coytrahen travelling to Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen or pupils in Heol Y Cyw travelling to either Pencoed Primary School or Pencoed Comprehensive School.

3.50 If Cabinet are minded not to implement these policy proposals, it must determine a point in time by which the assessed routes become considered as available. Whereas the sibling rule and in receipt policy elements would remain in the policy, if Cabinet are minded to not accept any of the proposals in section 9 of this report, Cabinet must accept the identification by local authority officers of the available walked routes to school utilising Welsh Government guidance and therefore approve their implementation as an operational procedure. If these routes are not implemented, parents/carers or pupils, could continue to challenge whether any walked route is available. This is partially why, as is identified in Table 1 above, a significant proportion of learners in the schools are currently eligible for free home-to-school transport and who will lose that eligibility if these proposals are accepted by Cabinet. Therefore, the options available to Cabinet in respect of policy proposals 1 and 2 are detailed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Proposals 1 and 2 – Policy elements options**

Policy element	Option
Implementation of walking route assessments identifying all routes now considered to be 'available' and all pupils are only eligible where they attend their nearest suitable English-medium (catchment), Welsh-medium or faith school and reside over the statutory distances of 2 miles for primary school pupils and 3 miles for secondary school pupils.	1.1 Full implementation from September 2025
	1.2 Removal from policy but a delay in implementation of the change of eligibility to coincide with the end of the pupil's current phase of education (that is, primary or secondary).
	1.3 No change to policy
Sibling protection and in receipt rule	2.1 Removal from policy from September 2025

	2.2 Removal from policy but a delay in implementation of the change of eligibility to coincide with the end of the pupil's current phase of education (that is, primary or secondary).
	2.3 No change to policy

- **Proposal 3** - Removal of all transport for Nursery pupils (excluding Welsh-medium and faith-based education)

3.51 Education for nursery pupils at age 3 or 4 is non-statutory.

3.52 The local authority has a statutory duty to promote the Welsh language, and this is enshrined in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.

3.53 The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 identifies that local authorities are required to assess the travel needs of learners under the age of five but there is currently no legal duty to provide free or assisted transport arrangements for nursery learners.

3.54 As home-to-school transport for nursery pupils is non-statutory, the local authority provides this by discretion.

3.55 There are currently (June 2024) 38 Nursery pupils on dedicated free home-to-school transport and 19 Nursery pupils on mixed age group vehicles of taxi or minibus size. The cost of running the dedicated Nursery transport vehicles is shown in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: Dedicated Nursery pupil numbers and contract prices (June 2024)**

School	Number of Nursery pupils	Daily contract price	Annual price
Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd	15	£415	£71,250
Ysgol Cynwyd Sant	7	£160	£30,400
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	13	£335	£63,650
St Robert's Roman Catholic Primary School	2	£120	£22,800
Ysgol y Ferch o'r Sgêr	1	£69	£13,110
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>£1,099</b>	<b>£208,810</b>

3.56 As all the pupils identified in Table 3 above attend either Welsh-medium or faith schools, the current proposal would not remove this eligibility and therefore, there would not be any significant efficiency savings from this proposal or any impact on those families/pupils benefitting from this policy arrangement. There may be some efficiencies linked to the remaining 19 pupils where a small number attend English-

medium schools and occupy space on taxis and minibuses with pupils of statutory school age, although given the cohort of Nursery pupils changes annually, it is difficult to quantify the extent of any actual efficiency savings at this time. Nevertheless it is possible that through the removal of eligibility for these pupils and a reduction in size or consolidation to a smaller number of vehicles that there could potentially be a small reduction in cost of possibly £30k per annum.

- 3.57 Therefore, it is important to note that there is unlikely to be any significant efficiency savings year-on-year as a result of this proposal, as the majority of pupils making use of Nursery home-to-home-to-school transport, attend either Welsh-medium or faith schools.
- 3.58 It is likely that this policy offer may positively impact the take-up of Welsh-medium Nursery places, given that the attendance at these schools would be facilitated by free home-to-home-to-school transport, while in English-medium schools there would be no such offer for Nursery pupils. Such a policy arrangement would support the local authority’s desire to grow Welsh-medium education in line with its Welsh-in-Education Strategic Plan 2022 -2032 ambitions and the local authority’s statutory duty to support and promote the Welsh language under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011.
- 3.59 Therefore, the options available to Cabinet in respect of policy proposal 3 are detailed in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Policy proposal 3 – Policy options**

Option	Policy options
3.1	Removal of transport for Nursery pupils (excluding Welsh-medium and faith schools) from September 2025
3.2	No change to policy

• **Proposal 4 - Removal of all transport for Post-16 learners (excluding Welsh-medium and faith-based education)**

- 3.60 An outcome from the consultation identified this proposal as the most contentious of all the proposals, as the impact is likely to be significant.
- 3.61 There are currently 1,451 pupils studying in Year 12 and 13 in secondary schools in Bridgend. There are currently 275 pupils currently benefitting from eligibility for free home-to-school transport. However, 24 attend secondary schools in other local authority areas. This is shown in Table 5 below:

**Table 5: Post-16 pupil numbers at secondary schools benefitting from free home-to-school transport – June 2024**

School	Post-16 pupil numbers on school transport
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School	74
Brynteg School	1
Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen	91
Pencoed Comprehensive School	11
Porthcawl Comprehensive School	3

Tonyrefail Community School	12
Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd	71
Ysgol Llanhari	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>

3.62 Therefore, this policy proposal would see the removal of all of the learners identified in Table 5 above from transport, other than those attending Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd, Ysgol Llanhari and Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School. Therefore 118 pupils would lose their eligibility for free home-to-home-to-school transport, although the actual number may change as the Post-16 cohort of learners at the point the policy is proposed to be implemented in September 2025, will be different to that used for this analysis in June 2024.

3.63 Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) provides £40/week support to families who are eligible, to support a young person's continuing education. In Wales, a family's income must be below £20,817 or less, or £23,077 or less, if there are other dependent children in the household who qualify for child benefit, to be eligible for EMA. If a household income is over £23,078 or more, there is no eligibility for EMA.

3.64 Pupils also raised similar issues regarding the insufficiency of public transport in the area, the potential negative impact the change will have on their life outside of school, as well as questioning how sufficient the current school facilities are in supporting the introduction of the proposal (for example, locker spaces, coat drying areas and facilities to support active travel to and from school).

3.65 Further details on all the consultation responses are available in Appendix 2.

3.66 Pupils attending sixth forms utilise the same buses as those learners of statutory school age. However, students attending Bridgend College benefit from a free pass for use on public transport bus services across Bridgend.

3.67 Students are required to register their passes electronically on a termly basis. As can be seen in Table 6 below, the maximum number of students registering a pass for Bridgend College gradually falls from 712 at the start of the college year (autumn term), to 460 at the end of term 3 (summer term). This means that, at most, 712 students are accessing public transport to access Bridgend College.

**3.68 Table 6 – Current cost of providing free transport to Post-16 students at Bridgend College**

Term	Number of registered bus passes (termly)	Cost of passes
Autumn term	712	£138,202.81
Spring term	549	£73,870.01
Summer term	460 (at June 2024)	£69,453.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>£212,072.82</b>

3.69 Tables 7-10 below shows the dynamic utilisation of the passes. There have been 75,425 uses of the passes provided to students since the beginning of the college



year starting September 2023. It is important to note that each student must register a new pass for each of the three terms in the college year.

3.70 There is a higher use of passes early and mid-week than at the end of the week although students do benefit from weekend use of the passes. The majority of students use the passes regularly and 83% use their passes at least twice daily. There is a significant reduction in the use of passes from the start to the end of the college year from 49% of journeys being made in Term 1 (autumn term) compared to 30.6% in term 2 (spring term) and 20.4% in term 3 (summer term).

3.71 The use of Welsh Government's 'mytravelpass' that reduces the cost to the local authority by students by one-third is disappointing, as only 12.6% of journeys were made by students using a mytravelpass. This was following heavy encouragement by the local authority on the provision of the passes to students of the financial benefits to the local authority of one-third savings against each journey made.

### 3.72 Table 7 – Daily split of college passes use

Day	Percentage use
Monday	20%
Tuesday	21%
Wednesday	22%
Thursday	18%
Friday	13%
Saturday	4%
Sunday	2%

### 3.73 Table 8 – College passes daily usage

Daily usage	Percentage use
Used more than twice	17%
Used twice	43%
Used once	40%

### 3.74 Table 9 – Termly college pass usage (including passes registered with 'mytravelpass')

Term	Percentage usage
Term 1	44.8%
Term 1 (with mytravelpass)	4.2%
Term 2	25.3%
Term 2 (with mytravelpass)	5.3%
Term 3	17.3%
Term 3 (with mytravelpass)	3.1%

### 3.75 Table 10 – Bus service use

Bus Service	No. of journeys	Percentage usage	Route details
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Bridgend & Maesteg 68	1471	2.0%	Bridgend - Cefn Glas (Circular) via Bryntirion - Cefn Glas - Ystrad Fawr
Bridgend & Maesteg 69	695	0.9%	Bridgend - Cefn Glas (Circular) via Ystrad Fawr - Cefn Glas - Bryntirion
Bridgend & Maesteg 70	3721	4.9%	Cymmer - Bridgend via Maesteg
Bridgend & Maesteg 71	6334	8.4%	Cymmer - Bridgend via Maesteg
Bridgend & Maesteg 72	5883	7.8%	Bridgend - Blaengarw
Bridgend & Maesteg 73	1684	2.2%	Bridgend - Blaengarw
Bridgend & Maesteg 74	8918	11.8%	Bridgend - Nantymoel via Sarn - Bryncethin - Blackmill - Ogmores Vale
Bridgend 63	26763	35.5%	Cardiff City Centre - Radyr via Llandaff - Danescourt - Morganstown
Bridgend 64	2356	3.1%	Bridgend - Talbot Green
Bridgend 76	2806	3.7%	Bridgend - Bettws via Sarn - Ynysawdre
Cymru Clipper X1	1708	2.3%	Swansea - Bridgend
Cymru Clipper X2	11166	14.8%	Porthcawl - Cardiff
Cymru Clipper X3	144	0.2%	Port Talbot - Maesteg
Other	1776	2.4%	Other routes

- 3.76 If this proposal were implemented, no student attending Bridgend College would be eligible for free transport and, therefore, a potential 712 students would lose their entitlement to free public bus services. As identified in paragraph 3.69 above, there have been 75,425 journeys using the bus services identified in Table 10 above from September 2023 to June 2024. There is, at this time, no indication that the sustainability of public buses services would be impacted by the removal of this funding from the transport operators. However, although there is an expected efficiency of at least £212k annually for the local authority, given the significance of the number of journeys to Bridgend College let alone those utilising transport to sixth forms, this proposal is likely to significantly increase the number of private journeys to school and college on our roads, increase local road congestion and impact the local environment around both Bridgend College campuses and schools.
- 3.77 Furthermore, although there would be an immediate efficiency saving to the local authority, there would likely be a corresponding impact on the numbers of young people not choosing further education. This is because the more geographically distant someone is away from Bridgend College, the likely higher the cost of transport would be. Although the local authority would be unable to sell a pass to a student on the basis of the negotiated contract price currently in place with public transport providers, a student could still benefit from the one-third reduction in the cost of a fare if they had subscribed to Welsh Government's 'Mytravelpass Cymru' and would also potentially benefit from the aforementioned EMA allowance of £40/week if they were from an eligible household.
- 3.78 The cost of an annual season ticket for learners travelling with First Cymru is £290/annum for students age 16-21 showing a valid 'Mytravelpass'. Although EMA allowance can theoretically cover this cost, for some learners where the household earning is above the threshold for benefits as identified in paragraph 3.63 above,

such a daily cost may still influence the ability of a family to support their child's further education.

- 3.79 It could be considered that on this basis, those students living outside of Bridgend town area, in the valleys communities to the north and towns and villages to the west of the county borough, would be disproportionately impacted by the removal of free transport provision for Post-16 learners. This in turn could significantly increase the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), at a time when the local authority has made significant progress in reducing the number of NEET to 1.4% (2023-2024) of Year 11 leavers from schools in Bridgend, below the all-Wales average of 2%.
- 3.80 The impact on Bridgend College should also be taken into consideration. There may be a potential significant decrease in the take-up of further education places which in turn could affect the financial viability of the college or the viability of many of its courses as a result.
- 3.81 Therefore, the options available to Cabinet in respect of policy proposal 4 are detailed in Table 11 below:

**3.82 Table 11: Policy proposal 4 – Policy options**

<b>Option</b>	<b>Policy options</b>
4.1	Removal of transport for Post-16 sixth-form pupils and college students (excluding those attending Welsh-medium and faith schools) to be implemented from September 2025.
4.2	No change to policy

- **Proposal 5 - The offer to parents/carers of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) the option of a 'personal transport budget'.**

- 3.83 Some direct payments are already made to parents of pupils with ALN where the local authority, in collaboration with parents, have determined it is in the child's best interest that they transport their own child to school. As reported to Cabinet in March 2024 it is difficult for the local authority to quantify any efficiency savings as a result of this proposal. However, the local authority is often faced with difficulties in sourcing appropriate transport provision for some pupils with ALN and for some pupils the cost is excessive when transport is eventually sourced. For example, currently the most expensive taxi journey for a single child with additional learning needs is currently £295/day (£56k/annum) in a private taxi. If the parent of this child were able and willing to transport their child to school by way of an example only, the costs to the local authority would be significantly less. In this example, a saving of £210 per day (£40k) would be possible.
- 3.84 It is important to reiterate that this would be an offer only and there would be no change to eligibility or provision of school transport for their child from any parent/carer rejecting this offer.
- 3.85 There is also the possibility that this proposal could invoke additional costs due to the potential need to maintain some contracts even though there may be less pupils using them. Therefore, while there may be some efficiency savings these are not guaranteed. However, the proposal could potentially create large numbers of

vacant seats that would be available to support the transport needs of other pupils with statutory eligibility for free home-to-school transport.

3.86 It is important to note that any personal tax implications would be the responsibility of any parents/carers wishing to accept this offer.

### **3.87 Summary of potential impact of the implementation of the policy proposals**

3.88 In determining any combination of the policy proposals Cabinet should be minded to consider, in particular, the following:

- The potential positive impact on parents/carers seeking a Welsh-medium education or a faith-based education in lieu of an English-medium education and the support that these policy proposals bring to the local authority's statutory duty to promote the Welsh language under the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 and the local authority's Welsh in Education Strategic Plan 2022-2032 ambitions.
- The potential impact on Post-16 pupils, in particular those attending English-medium sixth forms and Bridgend College and the potential increase in young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) as the lack of free transport could be a significant barrier to these pupils continuing beyond Year 11.
- The potential impact on school attendance and educational outcomes as a result of more children walking to school, in particular in inclement weather and their readiness to learn.
- The potential impact on the local environment around schools, in particular, congestion, parking, noise, air quality and road safety as a result of more private vehicle movements
- The potential lack of suitable public transport as an alternative to local authority provided free home-to-school transport, especially in the harder to reach valley communities and in the west of the county.
- The potential financial impact on families if they become responsible for transporting their own child to school, including the impact on their ability to maintain their own employment commitments as 'working families'.
- A potential future skills shortage if more young people do not progress into further and higher education.
- The impact of a greater burden on other public services and the welfare state if more young people become NEET.
- The disproportionate distances to some English-medium schools as a result of the geographic distribution of schools across Bridgend and many outlying small communities (for example, Heol-y-Cyw and Glynogwr),

### **3.89 Feedback to the Cabinet from Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 held on 18 July 2024**

3.90 Due to the timing of this report and that of the meeting of Scrutiny on 18 July 2024, verbal feedback will be provided by the chair of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee 1 to this meeting of Cabinet on any recommendations which are consistent with their challenge and support role in light of the proposals and the consultation responses.

### **3.91 Implementation of policy changes**

3.92 If Cabinet are minded to change the policy in line with any combination of the above five proposals, the earliest a policy change could come into force would be September 2025. This is because the local authority is required to publish its policy and arrangements by 1 October in the year preceding the school year in which the changes will come into force, in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

## **4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)**

- 4.1 A full equality impact assessment (EIA) has been carried out as part of the development of this policy proposal. The full EIA considers the impact of the strategy, policy or proposal on the nine protected characteristics, the socio-economic duty and the use of the Welsh language.
- 4.2 Age is the only likely negatively impacted group with a protected characteristic. This is because there is potential that the proposals will impact those of non-statutory school age more than those of statutory school age. In particular those, in English-medium schools in Nursery and in Post-16 education. However, there will also be some impact on pupils of statutory school age also.
- 4.3 Areas of socioeconomic disadvantage may be impacted more than those less disadvantaged, as these geographic areas are typically less well served by public transport with greater distances to travel to reach a place of education. Therefore, families in these areas may incur increased transport costs, which may place greater financial strain on families and households than in other parts of Bridgend.
- 4.4 The removal of the free college bus pass for college students will incur potentially significant additional costs for young people. The consultation feedback indicates that enrolment numbers and attendance rates for young people attending college from these areas is at risk of decreasing with potentially more young people becoming NEET.
- 4.5 Children and young people in these areas, whether attending school or college, may also be reliant on public transport. Its availability, timings and capacity have changed in recent years since the pandemic and there are now more limited and less frequent public bus services throughout much of Bridgend, especially in the valley communities and West of the borough.
- 4.6 However, the proposed removal of the 'sibling rule' removes any inequality that has impacted communities in the past from the current Home-to-School/College Transport Policy.

- 4.7 The local authority has sought to protect those pupils seeking or already benefitting from a faith-based education.
- 4.8 The local authority supports diversity and the choice of education. Having faith schools offers a good choice for parents/carers and pupils seeking a faith-based education.
- 4.9 The preservation of free home-to-school transport, in particular for pupils attending faith schools, may lead to a greater number of parents/carers considering a faith-based education for their child, as geographical distance is often a significant barrier for parents considering faith-based education. Therefore the local authority considers that this policy proposal positively impacts on those families seeking a faith-based education.
- 4.10 The full EIA is attached as Appendix 4.
- 4.11 A Welsh Language Impact Assessment has also been completed as part of this duty and is included as Appendix 5.
- 4.12 The local authority has sought to protect the Welsh-language in proposing the retention of free home-to-school transport for Nursery and Post-16 pupils attending Welsh-medium schools. It is hoped this will encourage and promote Welsh-medium education in Bridgend schools.

## **5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives**

**Long-term** Ongoing reliance on the local authority to provide free home-to-school transport where this is not supported by national policy will have a significant impact on the ability of the local authority to support and sustain other critical services long-term. National government policy supports active travel and the reduction in the reliance on vehicular transport. Benefits include the reduction in emissions, less dependence on fossil fuels and improvements to health and wellbeing.

**Prevention** The proposal to remove elements of discretionary transport is not taken lightly. However, there are current tensions in respect of the inequity in the current policy and the requirement of the local authority to maintain support for and to promote the Welsh-language. The proposal, therefore, is to address the inequity in the local authority's Home-to-School/College Transport Policy, to support and promote the Welsh language, to support faith-based education and to ensure that further budget efficiencies are available at a time of significant financial and operational pressure on public services.

**Integration** The local authority has a strategic role in facilitating the attendance of pupils to school where they are eligible for free home-to-school transport or where it is provided under the discretion of the local authority.

**Collaboration** The local authority works closely with schools and pupils to ensure that the needs of learners are taken into consideration in the identification and delivery of transport services.

**Involvement** The local authority intends to involve all sectors of society in consulting on its proposals. This will involve sufficient time and resources to fully identify, understand and respond to the issues identified for individuals and their communities.

## **6. Climate Change Implications**

- 6.1 The impact of climate change is considered significant at a national and local level. Therefore, one of our biggest challenges faced by the Council is preparing for and tackling the impact of climate change. The steps to meet this challenge are complex and interconnected. However, it is important that we are committed to reducing carbon emissions by changing the way we deliver services either ourselves or via third-party providers. We must embed energy saving and carbon reduction into everything we do.
- 6.2 The local authority can make an important contribution to tackling the Welsh Government declared climate and nature emergencies. This includes the goods and services we buy or commission and in our work with local, regional and national partners.
- 6.3 The proposals contained in this report will likely significantly reduce the number and frequency of dedicated transport funded by the local authority. However, it is unlikely to impact the number or frequency of transport provided by public transport service operators. Nevertheless, there is a strong likelihood that the number and frequency of local car journeys will increase as the eligibility of pupils attending schools and students attending further education colleges decreases. The reduction in local authority commissioned transport, mostly buses, taxis and minibuses will not likely offset the potential increase in journeys undertaken by parents/carers to ensure that their children are transported to school safely.

## **7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications**

- 7.1 The proposed policy changes contained in this report could potentially impact children and young people looked after by the local authority. This is because the same age and distance criteria apply to children looked after as to children who are not looked after. However, if the Council determines that a child looked after should attend a school other than the nearest suitable school, then transport will be provided in accordance with the Council's agreed policy on walking distances and available walking routes. Where a child looked after by the local authority does not meet the distance criteria, consideration of their eligibility for free home-to-school transport will be made on case-by case basis.

## **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1. The pressure on the home-to-school/college transport budget is significant. The potential efficiency savings associated with this public consultation are shown in Table 12 below.
- 8.2. The learner transport budget has been under significant financial pressure for many years. Home-to-school/college transport spend has increased from £6.021m at the end of 2020-2021 to £10.4m at end of 2023-2024. The budget has also increased, from £5.86m in 2020-21 to £9.819m in 2024-2025, but this is still not sufficient to meet the rising costs.
- 8.3. Therefore, while there has been additional annual budget growth, this has only addressed the additional costs brought about primarily through increased contractor prices, changes to eligibility for pupils and additional costs associated with transporting pupils with ALN and those looked after by the local authority. Since the pandemic, the transport market has been depressed with significantly higher prices year-on-year. Even with the significant increase in the budget between 2020-2021 and 2024-25, there is still a projected overspend of £1.2m at the end of the 2024-2025 financial year.
- 8.4. The Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2024-25 to 2027-28 includes an indicative budget reduction proposal in respect of home-to-school/college transport of £792,000 for 2025-26. Should this not be realised then alternative savings proposals will be required.
- 8.5. Table 12 below identifies the potential savings associated with each of the five policy proposals being put forward for consideration.

**Table 12 - Approximate annual savings for learner transport policy proposals**

Proposal	Potential annual savings
Withdrawal of legacy transport for all learners benefitting from an identified and available (safe) walking route to school, to fall in line with the statutory distances of 2 miles for primary school-age pupils and 3 miles for secondary school-age pupils.	£200k
Removal of legacy 'sibling' protection for pupils.	£300k
Removal of all transport for nursery pupils (excluding pupils attending their nearest suitable Welsh-medium or faith school).	£30k
Removal of all Post-16 transport (excluding pupils attending the following schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd;</li> <li>• Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School; and</li> </ul>	£500k



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School.</li> </ul>	
The offer to parents/carers of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) the option of a 'transport budget' providing a mileage allowance of £45p per mile	Unknown. Dependent on take-up of offer.
<b>Total potential savings</b>	<b>£1.03m</b>

## 9. Recommendation

9.1. It is recommended that Cabinet makes a determination on which of the following five proposals it wishes to progress:

- Proposal 1 - Withdrawal of transport for all learners benefitting from an identified and available (safe) walking route to school in line with statutory distances of two miles for primary school pupils and three miles for secondary school pupils.
- Proposal 2 - Removal of the 'sibling' and 'in-receipt' protection for pupils.
- Proposal 3 - Removal of all transport for Nursery pupils (excluding Welsh-medium and faith-based education).
- Proposal 4 - Removal of all Post-16 transport (excluding Welsh-medium and faith-based education).
- Proposal 5 - The offer to parents/carers of pupils with additional learning needs (ALN) the option of a 'personal transport budget'.

## Background documents

None