

School Transport Guidance 2021

September 2021

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Background

1. This document updates the guidance to local authorities¹ about the provision of school transport and replaces the School Transport Guidance Circular issued in 2003 (Circular No 7/2003²).
2. The establishment and delivery of an effective school transport system is an important responsibility for all local authorities and supports the Scottish Government's commitment to ensure that every child has the best start in life and is able to fulfil their potential.
3. Local authorities have functions in law³ relating to travel to school and many parents rely on the school transport provided by their local authority to get their children to and from school.
4. This guidance deals only with school transport and travel to and/or from any place where school pupils receive education or training in general. It does not deal with travel arrangements for pre-school children, travel in connection with extracurricular activities, or travel between school and college of further education.
5. This guidance should be read in conjunction with the 'Guide to Improving School Transport Safety 2010'⁴.

¹ The term used in the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 is "education authority" however that term is defined in section 135 of that Act to mean a council constituted under section 2 of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994 – which is a local authority when they are exercising education functions. The term which is used in this document is "local authority".

²<https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20170106194918/http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Education/Schools/Parents/transport/transport-guidance>

³ Section 51 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980:-
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/section/51>

⁴ https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/6116/improving_school_transport_safety_-_guide_-_final.pdf

Section 1 - Duties on parents and local authorities

1.1 - Duties on parents

6. Section 30 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980⁵ (“the 1980 Act”) places a duty on parents to provide an efficient education for their child, suitable to the child’s age, ability and aptitude, either by sending him/her to a public school or by other means.

7. The majority of parents send their children to a school managed by their local authority and identified by the authority as their catchment school.

8. Parents remain responsible for their child’s journey to and from school or, where the authority is providing school transport (either through a dedicated service or local bus service), between home and the designated pick-up/drop-off point.

1.2 - Duties on local authorities

9. Section 51 of the 1980 Act⁶ requires local authorities to make such arrangements as they consider necessary for the provision of school transport for pupils residing, and attending schools, in their area. Local authorities have a wide level of discretion in this regard and the arrangements they establish can include the provision of free school transport for some or all of the journey, making bicycles or other suitable means of transport available to pupils on such terms and conditions as they may arrange (or for paying allowances in lieu), and paying some or all of travelling costs.

10. When considering whether to make arrangements for the provision of school transport, local authorities are further required to have regard to the safety of the pupil, as well as to ensure that access to transport which meets the child’s needs is provided. This may mean an alternative vehicle, such as a minibus or taxi, however there is no requirement to alter vehicles such as school buses to meet a person’s needs.

1.3 - Seat belt legislation

11. The Seat Belts on School Transport (Scotland) Act 2017⁷ came into force on 1 August 2018. The purpose of the Act is to improve road safety for school children by imposing a duty upon school authorities⁸ to ensure that each motor vehicle which the authority provides, or arranges to be provided, for a dedicated school transport service has a seat belt fitted to each passenger seat, i.e. one seat belt per pupil.

⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/section/30>

⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/section/51>

⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2017/7/enacted>

⁸ School authorities are defined in section 3(1) of the 2017 Act as an education authority, the managers of a grant-aided school, or the proprietor of an independent school.

12. The Act imposes a duty on Scottish Ministers to publish national guidance⁹ which promotes best practice for seat belt wearing and monitoring. In addition, this guidance gives school authorities and other interested parties technical explanations in relation to seat belt fitting. This guidance was issued in June 2018.

13. The Act does not affect the law on the wearing of seat belts on school transport, which remains a matter of law reserved to the UK Government. The law which covers when persons must wear seat belts is currently contained in the Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) Regulations 1993 (S.I. 1993/176)¹⁰. Local authorities have general duties of care for pupils using school transport under both statute law¹¹ and common law, and there are a range of legal duties on a driver of any vehicle. Children under the age of 14 are currently not legally responsible for the wearing of a seat belt where one is provided. Road Safety Officers, Road Safety Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland, schools, local authorities and parents can reinforce the importance of seat belt wearing

⁹ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/seat-belts-on-school-transport-scotland-act-2017-guidance/>

¹⁰ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1993/176/contents/made>

¹¹ The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 and the Schools (Safety and Supervision of Pupils) (Scotland) Regulations 1990:- <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1990/295/contents/made>

Section 2 - What does this mean in practice?

2.1 - Walking distances

14. In making their arrangements for the provision of free school transport, local authorities will take into consideration the distance between a pupil's home and the pupil's catchment school. Legislation does not prescribe the distance beyond which they must, nor distance below which they must not, provide transport, although the legislation does specify that, where a local authority fails to provide transport to a child living beyond walking distance to the nearest public school willing to accept the child, a parent will be deemed to have reasonable excuse for not ensuring the attendance of that child at school.

15. In general therefore, local authorities may make free travel available to pupils who live beyond the statutory walking distance¹² and are attending the school designated as the nearest appropriate catchment school¹³. The statutory walking distance is defined in section 42(4) of the 1980 Act as being two miles for children aged under eight, and three miles for children aged eight or over.

16. It is for local authorities to determine the nature of the provision they offer, taking into account local circumstances and a combination of factors - including distance - and they may choose to provide free transport over shorter distances.

2.2 - Distance and Safe Walking Routes

17. There will be instances where authorities conclude that the route a pupil, or group of pupils, would have to walk to school, accompanied as necessary, is unsafe and that transport should be provided even though the distance falls short of their normal criteria. Local authorities may define "recommended walking routes" which they assess as safe to their schools to help parents and pupils.

18. Ministers expect local authorities to keep their criteria for providing school transport under review and be flexible enough to take into account factors, relative to the nature of the route, which might affect pupil safety. For any part of the route which includes a public road, relevant factors, where appropriate, could include: volume and speed of traffic; visibility distances for drivers at a particular location; availability of safe crossings and "step offs"; sufficiency of footways, footpaths and subways; adequacy of waiting areas; built-up and wooded areas, and; adequacy of street lighting.

2.3 - Medical Conditions and Additional Support Needs

19. Local authorities are also expected to consider medical conditions and both visible and hidden disabilities affecting a child's ability to walk or travel by bus or,

¹² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/44/section/42>

¹³ The appropriate catchment school may be the catchment of Gaelic Medium Education or denominational school.

exceptionally, affecting a parent's ability to accompany a younger child on the walk to school.

20. If a child or young person cannot attend their local school because of a short-term or long-term medical condition, the local authority may decide to provide free transport to where education is being provided. It will normally consult the relevant health board when making its decision.

21. Local authorities and other agencies have duties under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended) to identify, provide for and review the additional support needs of their pupils. An additional support need can arise for any reason and be of short or long term duration. Additional support may be required to overcome needs arising from the learning environment; health or disability; family circumstances or social and emotional factors. Local authorities should consider if a pupil has been assessed as having additional support needs whether this would also include a need for transport.

22. School transport also needs to be accessible to all and thought should be given to how public transport, including school transport, fits within wider national aims. Some children and young people will require supported transport arrangements because of their additional support needs. Many children and young people with additional support needs will be able to make use of mainstream transport where it is necessary, which ensures their inclusion and encourages independence.

23. In determining individual transport needs, recommendations from school staff, Psychological Services, community and allied health professionals should be considered as well as information from parents or carers.

24. Getting school transport right and making it accessible to all can be an enabler for many young people to reach their full potential and live fulfilling and independent lives. We should not underestimate the role that the school journey can play in building confidence in young people to travel independently, which may help them access higher and further education and, ultimately, employment.

2.4 - Pick-up/drop-off points

25. School transport is not required to be a door-to-door service. Local authorities may therefore require pupils to walk to and/or from a central pick-up/drop-off point, provided that the pick-up/drop-off point is no further from the pupil's home than the authority's normal distance criterion for a child of that age. Parents are responsible for making their own arrangements for their children's travel to and from pick-up/drop-off points, but appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that pick-up/drop-off points are safe and accessible.

2.5 - School Transport and Placing Requests

26. Pupils are not eligible for free school transport if their place at school was allocated as a result of a placing request. Authorities have, however, discretion to

offer such pupils any vacant seats there may be on school transport, and to charge them for any such seats.

2.6 - Vacant seats

27. Where there are vacant seats on dedicated school transport services, local authorities must make them available to other pupils, including pupils who do not meet their criteria for free school transport. Local authorities may charge for use of vacant seats. However, in determining charges, local authorities should have regard to the financial circumstances of the parents and whether the charges would cause undue hardship.

2.7 - Denominational Schools and Gaelic Education

28. In the case of denominational schools and Gaelic Medium Education (GME), local authorities' assessment of eligibility for free home to school transport (based on reasonable walking distances) should take into account the relevant catchment areas which such schools use. In the case of GME schools, this reflects the relevant statutory guidance.¹⁴

¹⁴ <http://www.gaidhlig.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Statutory-Guidance-for-Gaelic-Education.pdf>

Section 3 - Safety of Pupils

29. Local authorities have a responsibility to ensure the safety of pupils travelling on school transport. There are a range of guidance and advice materials available which local authorities may find helpful in shaping their transport services, including 'Health and Safety on Educational Excursions'¹⁵ and 'Minibus Safety – A Code of Practice'.¹⁶

3.1 - Pupil supervision and behaviour on school transport

30. Inappropriate behaviour can take a variety of forms and jeopardise individual safety or, in the case of bullying, undermine pupils' willingness to use school transport. The safety of pupils using school transport, particularly when boarding and alighting a bus, could be jeopardised as a direct consequence of inappropriate behaviour. Parents and school staff have a key role in encouraging pupils to behave responsibly whilst on school transport. For example, local authorities and/or schools may wish to develop a Code of Conduct for pupils travelling on school transport to support efforts to improve behaviour.

31. In November 2017, the Scottish Government published updated anti-bullying guidance entitled 'Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People'¹⁷. This guidance is for everyone working with children and young people and provides a holistic approach to anti-bullying. The guidance applies to bullying incidents which would include those that take place travelling to and from school, such as on school transport.

32. The Scottish Government expects that all schools develop and implement an anti-bullying policy, which should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis. The policy should indicate how any issues of bullying will be raised and how incidents will be dealt with and recorded. Schools, local authorities and transport providers should work together to ensure the safety of children and young people on school transport.

33. Respectme¹⁸, Scotland's national anti-bullying service, provides direct support to local authorities, youth groups, and all those working with children and young people on preventing and addressing bullying effectively.

34. Children and young people should be educated about the harms of substance misuse, both to themselves and others, and all schools are expected to address this through the Health and Well-being curriculum area within Curriculum for Excellence. It is for individual local authorities to work with schools to ensure that appropriate measures are put in place to deal with incidents of substance misuse, such as smoking on school transport, based on local needs in the area.

¹⁵<https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180519084136/http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2004/12/20444/48969>

¹⁶<https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/practitioners/minibus-code-of-practice.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/respect-national-approach-anti-bullying-scotlands-children-young-people/>

¹⁸ www.respectme.org.uk

35. There is no statutory requirement for local authorities to provide supervisors on school transport under the 1980 Act. While the supervision of pupils is unnecessary on many journeys, it may be desirable in some circumstances where it could address issues such as inappropriate behaviour or bullying. Supervision can be exercised by arranging for a teacher or parent to travel on the bus or by employing an individual to accompany the pupils. Other strategies that have been successful in promoting positive behaviour include seating plans and giving older pupils responsibilities for supervising their peers.

36. It is for local authorities themselves to determine, in light of local circumstances, when and how to provide supervision, and the Scottish Government expects authorities to keep this under review.

3.2 - Accessibility

35. Delivering accessible travel, including accessible school travel, is a responsibility shared with the UK Government. Transport providers have legal duties under the Equality Act 2010¹⁹ not to discriminate, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people. It requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments²⁰ for all disabled people. Since 1st January 2020 all buses and coaches designed to carry over 22 passengers on local and scheduled routes have had to comply with the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000²¹, in order for accessibility standards to be consistent across the UK. A temporary exemption is in place until 31st March 2022 for closed door home to school services.

36. Although the Equality Act 2010 is largely reserved, it gives Scottish Ministers powers to supplement the Public Sector Equality Duty with specific duties on Scottish public authorities. Consequently Scottish Ministers have supplemented the general duty in the Act by placing detailed requirements on Scottish public authorities through the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (as amended)²².

37. Regulation 5²³ of those regulations sets out an obligation on public authorities to assess the impact of any policy or practice on people who share one or more protected characteristics, and that the assessment should include consider relevant evidence from those affected.

38. The Scottish Government has made clear its expectation that Scotland's transport providers and public services will continually improve their performance to help disabled people make better journeys. Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework²⁴ is about improving the journeys that disabled people make, whilst also working to remove the barriers which prevent them from travelling.

¹⁹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

²⁰ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/multipage-guide/reasonable-adjustments-practice>

²¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2000/1970/contents/made>

²² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2012/9780111016718/contents>

²³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/sdsi/2012/9780111016718/regulation/5>

²⁴ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/20113/j448711.pdf>

39. The vision articulated in the Framework is that all disabled people can travel with the same freedom, choice, dignity and opportunity as other citizens. This means taking steps over and above those actions identified in the Framework to ensure that people's experiences are as good as they can be, and working in partnership to make sure this happens.

40. In the context of school transport, this means authorities can do a number of things. For example, they should work with providers to ensure that accessible vehicles, such as buses which are fully suitable for people with visible and hidden disabilities, are used in the provision of school transport. Consideration should be given to whether school transport can be accessed easily from all stops along a school bus journey. Pupils should also feel safe and secure whilst waiting for transportation to and from school. However, accessibility is about more than physical infrastructure. For example, staff should have appropriate levels of competency when working in the field of disability awareness. Positive interactions with staff can help build the confidence of disabled people to travel. In all this work, carrying out suitable equality impact assessments which obtain the views of disabled people about their needs and wishes is especially important. In their work on school transport, authorities should also strive to make sure that any unmet need for information or assistance about using public and accessible transport outside school is included.

Broader issues relating to safety

3.3 - Speed restrictions

41. Though not specifically related to school transport issues, the Scottish Government is committed to reducing risk on Scotland's roads and recognises that vehicle speed is a crucial factor in this endeavour. We are committed to improving road safety for everyone and [Scotland's Road safety Framework to 2030](#), published in February 2021, has a renewed focus on pedestrians and people who cycle, including specific casualty reduction targets for children and cyclists. We have published guidance for local authorities to help reduce speeds in residential areas. The Good Practice Guide on 20 mph speed restrictions²⁵, updated in 2016, was produced in partnership with the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland.

42. The Guide aims to ensure greater consistency on setting 20 mph speed restrictions throughout Scotland and encourages local authorities to introduce them near schools, in residential zones and in other areas of towns and cities where there is a significant volume of pedestrian and/or cyclist activity. The Scottish Government wants to see 20 mph limits and zones implemented in Scotland where they are appropriate and is keen to encourage initiatives that cut speed, particularly near schools and in residential areas.

²⁵ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/38640/20-mph-good-practice-guide-update-version-2-28-june-2016.pdf>

3.4 - Banning vehicles from the vicinity of the school and markings outside of school

43. Local authorities have a duty under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984²⁶ to manage and maintain local roads in their area as well as duties under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984²⁷ to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic.

44. Authorities can use traffic regulation orders to restrict parking around schools or to exclude vehicles at particular times. For example, by installing retractable bollards to prevent vehicles from entering the school grounds or approaching too near to schools, or introducing yellow line road markings to prohibit vehicles from waiting.

45. Powers of parking enforcement can either be Police Scotland or the local authority, depending on whether or not the local authority has Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE). DPE is a regime which enables a local authority to administer its own parking penalties, including the issuing of Penalty Charge Notices to vehicles which a local authority that has DPE, can enforce. However, if the local authority has not decriminalised parking enforcement, Police Scotland would be responsible for enforcement. If the parking is still criminalised, Police Scotland could issue fixed penalty tickets within the appropriately marked areas.

46. The 'School Keep Clear' markings indicating a school entrance are mandatory ("must not stop") if they are accompanied by a vertical sign, but only advisory ("should not stop") if laid on the road. This is set out within the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.²⁸ This marking is enforceable by the Police without a traffic regulation order (as a moving traffic offence). In order to enforce waiting on the marking as a waiting offence (enforceable by local authority parking attendants), an upright sign with the restrictions and an associated Traffic Regulation Order is required.

²⁶ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/54/contents>

²⁷ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/27/contents>

²⁸ <https://tsrgd.co.uk/pdf/tsrgd/tsrgd2016.pdf>

Section 4 - School Transport Contracts

4.1 - The Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme: school transport services

47. Many children travel to school on dedicated school buses or by taxi/private hire vehicle. In terms of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 (“the PVG Act”), drivers of dedicated school transport and any person engaged by the transport provider or the authority to accompany or supervise children travelling on such transport are eligible for PVG scheme membership, as they are carrying out ‘Regulated work’ with children. This involves supervision of, or being in sole charge of, children as part of the normal duties of the position. Where an authority provides its own dedicated school transport, it is therefore expected it will employ as drivers and escorts or supervisors only individuals who are members of the PVG Scheme.

48. Individuals who are members of the PVG Scheme may sometimes be asked to allow someone other than their employer to see their disclosure record. In general, to make such a request is not allowed. However, certain exceptions have been made including where organisations provide transport services to take children to school. The detailed provisions are set out in regulations²⁹.

49. If a local authority or a school is contracting for services involving the transport of children to and from schools, it can ask for sight of a driver’s PVG disclosure. Only councils or schools have the power to make this request and only for school transport services they have commissioned. Requests can only be made to those employees of contractors who will be driving the bus, coach or taxi/private hire vehicle. The service can be either a dedicated school transport service, or a public service that includes a requirement to transport children to and from school.

50. The contractor can only show the disclosure record to the local education authority or school if the employee concerned has given their consent in writing to the contractor. The consent should be given freely and not under duress. The contractor must make clear to the employee that, if they give their consent, the local authority or school will have an opportunity to give their opinion on whether the employee is suitable to be used for the transport service contract.

51. A PVG disclosure record application must be countersigned. Countersigning can be done by the employing organisation or a third party (some councils and transport authorities do this for transport companies). Once the employer receives their copy of the PVG disclosure, they must make appropriate arrangements to allow the local authority or a school to see the disclosure record, bearing in mind the sensitive nature of the disclosure and the very tight legal restrictions the PVG Act places on who is allowed to see it, namely, those involved in decisions about the contract.

²⁹ [The Protection of Vulnerable Groups \(Scotland\) Act 2007 \(Unlawful Requests for Scheme Records\) \(Prescribed Circumstances\) Regulations 2010 \(SSI 2010/194\).](#)

52. The local authority or a school is not allowed to make or keep a copy of the PVG disclosure. They must return it as soon as the relevant decision is made. In cases where the PVG disclosure is provided via an email, the local authority or a school must not hold or store that disclosure; it should be deleted permanently.

4.2 - Type and Standard of Vehicle

53. The type of vehicle used for school transport should be suitable for the purpose intended. It is open to authorities, for example, to exclude use of double decker buses where they consider that to be appropriate and to specify that minibuses must be used on certain routes, such as narrow and difficult roads. Authorities may also wish to consider the potential advantages of stipulating that buses used on some or all of the routes be fitted with CCTV.

54. The duty in the Seat Belts on School Transport (Scotland) Act 2017 to ensure that seat belts are fitted on dedicated school transport services includes vehicles that a school authority owns and directly provides for such a service, and vehicles which are indirectly provided via contractual arrangements with a third party transport operator. In order to fulfil the duty, a school authority must ensure that any vehicles used on its school transport services which were not fitted with seat belts have these fitted to the vehicles. Alternatively, school authorities have the option to use, or contract for the use of, vehicles which already have seat belts fitted.

55. The associated national guidance³⁰ includes an example of best practice for seat belt specifications, which may be followed by school authorities when specifying their school transport contracts.

56. It is for local authorities to set appropriate contract conditions when letting contracts for school transport, which take full account of the circumstances of particular journeys, such as distance and the nature of the route. It is a legal requirement that vehicles be in a fit and roadworthy condition, regardless of their age. Authorities may wish to consider stipulating a maximum age of vehicles used for school transport in their contracts and seek assurances from operators that such vehicles be of the highest possible standard.

57. In addition, local authorities should also consider the impact of vehicles on air quality and Government's net zero commitments and ensure, where possible, that the most efficient vehicles are used.

4.3 - School Bus Signs and Hazard Warning Lights

58. In terms of the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989 as amended by the Road Vehicles Lighting (Amendment) Regulations 1994³¹, designated buses and coaches that are used for journeys to and from school are required to display distinctive retro-reflective yellow school bus signs fitted to the front and rear of the bus. These signs must be plainly visible to road users ahead of, and behind, the bus.

³⁰ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/42287/seat-belts-on-school-transport-scotland-act-2017-guidance.pdf>

³¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1994/2280/made>

Vehicles displaying school bus signs are also permitted to use hazard warning lights when the vehicle is stationary and children are boarding or alighting.

59. The purpose of the school bus sign and hazard warning lights is to make other road users aware that, when the vehicle is stationary, children are likely to be getting on or off the bus and may be crossing the road. Other road users should, therefore, be very cautious when passing a school bus in those circumstances. There is no statutory requirement to remove the school bus signs when the vehicles are not being used to transport children, or to use hazard warning lights when the vehicle is stationary and children are boarding or alighting. However, local authorities may wish to stipulate in their contracts that the signs should only be displayed when children are being transported and that hazard warning lights should be used when children are getting on or off vehicles.

4.4 - Prohibiting Access by Certain Vehicles to School Transport Routes

60. Local authorities may consider it desirable to prohibit access by certain vehicles to some routes in the interests of school transport safety. For example, they may consider it desirable to prohibit large goods vehicles (“LGVs”) on narrow country roads during times when school buses are likely to be running on these routes.

61. Local authorities can achieve this by exercising powers available to them under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, which allows authorities to make Traffic Regulation Orders preventing the use of local roads by vehicular traffic of a kind or in a manner which is unsuitable, having regard to the character of the road. Mandatory restrictions can cover small lengths of a road, or large area networks, and can be based on gross vehicle weight, axle weight, length, height, width, or any other readily understood characteristic of the vehicles.

62. One of the most cost-effective traffic management measures is the signposting of suitable alternative routes, where appropriate, to direct LGV traffic away from particular parts of a road network at certain times, such as when a road is likely to be used by school buses.

63. When considering schemes to control LGVs, the local authority should bear in mind the need to maintain a balance between the protection of the community against the effects of heavy lorry traffic, and the maintenance of an effective road freight distribution system essential to a healthy local economy.

Section 5 - Promoting greener, healthier travel choices

5.1 - Active Travel

64. The Scottish Government is committed to a long term vision for active travel³² that encourages promotes walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing in preference to single occupancy car use for movement of people, and encourages efficient and sustainable freight.

65. Support is available through a variety of initiatives, such as:

- Safer Routes to Schools - Sustrans³³ will help fund and deliver improvements to school routes to make them safer and better places for people to walk and cycle
- Bikeability³⁴ - Cycling Scotland deliver cycling training to school children to give them the skills and confidence needed to cycle safely to school
- WOW³⁵ (Walk Once a Week) is a programme run by Living Streets that encourages and rewards children to walk to school
- I Bike – a series of interventions at local authority school clusters to support and encourage cycling to school
- Cycle / Scooter storage – Sustrans provide grants to allow schools to build secure cycle and scooter parking areas

5.2 - Road Safety Scotland

66. Road Safety Scotland³⁶, in its education function, has developed a suite of learning resources for 3-18 year-olds made freely available across Scotland. In collaboration with the Scottish Government's Marketing and Insight Unit and a number of partner agencies, it also ensures that major at-risk groups or behaviours are tackled through publicity and/or social marketing campaigns.

67. Road Safety Scotland develops and maintains high-quality resources written by teachers for teachers and linked to Curriculum for Excellence, made available online to allow access to resources for use with children and young people aged 3-18. These include:

- For Early Years, the 'Out and About' buggy book for 0-3 years and 'Go Safe with Ziggy' resource for 3-6 years;
- For Primary (First and Second Levels), 'Streetsense2' and the 'Junior Road Safety Officer' scheme, which operates in most of the 32 local authorities across Scotland;
- For Lower Secondary (Third and Fourth Level), the main resource is 'Your Call';
- For Upper Secondary (Senior Phase), the main resource is 'Crash Magnets'.

³² <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/33649/long-term-vision-for-active-travel-in-scotland-2030.pdf>

³³ <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/about-us/our-work-in-scotland/>

³⁴ <https://www.cycling.scot/bikeability-scotland>

³⁵ <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/about-us/scotland>

³⁶ <https://roadsafety.scot/>

- Additional digital resources include: a section of the website for pedestrians with additional support needs; a section for those about to embark on a driving career; a reaction timer; and an app which uses a gaming platform to enhance child pedestrian training.

68. Current or planned social marketing activities includes campaigns relating to speeding; country roads; motorcyclists; young drivers; drink-driving; drug-driving; fatigue; seatbelts and driver distraction.

69. Road Safety Scotland also produces leaflets aimed at parents of young or new drivers and is a key partner in the Scottish Good Egg In-car Safety Campaign, which seeks to ensure that all children travelling in cars are properly restrained.

5.3 - Eco-Schools

70. The Eco-Schools Scotland programme comprises seven elements incorporating eight environmental topics, one of which is transport.³⁷ Participating schools can apply for a bronze, silver or green award, depending on how many of the seven elements they have achieved.

71. Objectives of the transport topic can include:

- encouraging and enabling parents and children to walk, cycle and use public transport;
- setting up a working group with school, parent, local authority, community, police, and transport representatives to run a school travel or 'safer routes to school' project;
- writing and implementing a school travel plan;
- running an effective road safety awareness programme for pupils;
- raising awareness of the damage caused by transport to the environment and people's health, and;
- providing adequate support and information about travelling to school for pupils and staff who wish to walk, cycle or use public transport.

5.4 - Clean air

72. Not only does reliance on private cars contribute significantly to traffic congestion, it also has an impact on overall levels of air pollution. All but two of the current Air Quality Management Areas in Scotland have been declared on the basis of transport-related emissions of air pollutants, and any reduction in private car/vehicle use for travel to school could play a useful role in improving local air quality.

73. Vehicle idling outside schools whilst dropping off or picking up pupils also has air quality implications. Under regulation 98 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986³⁸ it is an offence to leave the engine of a parked vehicle

³⁷ <https://www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/education-and-learning/eco-schools/green-flag-award/ten-topics/transport/>

³⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/1986/1078/contents/made>

running unnecessarily. The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (Scotland) Regulations 2003³⁹ provide local authorities with powers to enforce this legislation and to issue fixed penalties to drivers of parked vehicles who refuse to comply. The Scottish Government has issued guidance to local authorities on making use of these powers.⁴⁰

74. 'Switch Off and Breathe', an initiative operated by the East Central Scotland Vehicle Emissions Partnership, provides useful information and guidance on air pollution for members of the public. The Partnership's website has a section dedicated to schools, with a particular focus on discouraging idling in the vicinity of schools.⁴¹

75. Further air quality information developed specifically for schools is available on the websites for Air Quality in Scotland⁴² and SEPA⁴³, and the Scottish Government's overall approach to air quality policy is set out in its air quality strategy 'Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 – Towards a Better Place for Everyone'.⁴⁴

5.5 - Zero Emission Transport

76. The transport sector is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in Scotland. In the context of a global climate emergency, and youth climate strikes taking place across Scotland and the world, the Scottish Parliament set legally binding targets to reduce greenhouse gases by 75% by 2030, and 100% by 2045, compared to 1990 levels⁴⁵.

77. As the average life of a new diesel vehicle is around 15 years, action needs to be taken now to ensure Scotland meets its climate targets and ends Scotland's contribution to climate change. Local Authorities have a key role to play and are working to reduce corporate emissions as well as taking action locally through the range of services they deliver and procure. Local Authorities are encouraged to consider ways to remove greenhouse gas emissions from school transport, recognising the public sector is a significant consumer and therefore local policy is an important factor for influencing vehicle choice among operators. Zero-emission buses are increasingly price competitive with their diesel counterparts over their whole lives and that this trend is expected to continue.

5.6 - Planning for new schools

78. The Scottish Government publishes a range of guidance for local authorities to help promote well-designed schools. The publication 'Learning Estate Strategy'⁴⁶.

³⁹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ssi/2003/212/contents/made>

⁴⁰ <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20180205223701/http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2003/04/16936/21248>

⁴¹ <http://switchoffandbreathe.org/schools/>

⁴² <http://www.scottishairquality.scot/education/>

⁴³ <http://www.learnaboutair.com/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/cleaner-air-scotland-2-towards-better-place-everyone/>

⁴⁵ [Climate Change \(Emissions Reduction Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2019/12/section/1)

⁴⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-learning-estate-strategy-connecting-people-places-learning/>

and its guiding principles provide a platform for investment in the learning estate across Scotland and set out our strategic approach for managing the learning estate, including consideration of the transport needs of local communities who will use the school site.

79. The Scottish Government has also published guidance for local authorities reporting on the condition⁴⁷ and suitability⁴⁸ of the school estate. These documents seek to further improve the consistency and robustness of the reporting of the Condition and Suitability Schools Core Facts data.

80. Scottish Futures Trust⁴⁹ and Architecture and Design Scotland⁵⁰ have produced a wealth of information available for use when planning for new schools. The [Planning \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)⁵¹ was passed by the Scottish Parliament in June 2019. This will determine the future structure of the modernised planning system.

6.1 - Coronavirus Pandemic

81. Guidance for local authorities, schools and transport operators on requirements during the Coronavirus pandemic is available on gov.scot⁵²

Complaints

82. A complaints system which is transparent, accessible, and easy-to-use is essential and can assist both parents and authorities in getting the best out of school travel. It is for local authorities themselves to determine how best to deal with complaints, but in all cases procedures should be user-friendly.

⁴⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/condition-core-facts-publication/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/suitability-core-facts-publication/>

⁴⁹ <https://www.scottishfuturestrust.org.uk/page/education>

⁵⁰ https://www.ads.org.uk/schools_designservice/

⁵¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/13/contents/enacted>

⁵² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-reducing-the-risks-in-schools/pages/overview/>



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