

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

Date:	Tuesday, 19th July, 2016
Time:	10.00 am
Venue:	The Ballroom, Sandbach Town Hall, High Street, Sandbach, CW11 1AX

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Public Speaking Time

A total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to make a statement(s) on any matter that falls within the remit of the Committee.

Individual members of the public may speak for up to 5 minutes, but the Chairman will decide how the period of time allocated for public speaking will be apportioned, where there are a number of speakers.

Note: In order for officers to undertake any background research, it would be helpful if members of the public contacted the Scrutiny officer listed at the foot of the agenda, at least one working day before the meeting to provide brief details of the matter to be covered.

3. Declaration of Party Whip

To provide an opportunity for Members to declare the existence of a party whip in relation to any item on the agenda.

For requests for further information

Contact: Mark Nedderman

Tel: 01270 686459

E-Mail: mark.nedderman@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies

4. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests in any item on the agenda.

5. **Call - in of the 14 June 2016 Cabinet decision relating to a Review of Available Walking Routes to School (Pages 1 - 84)**

To consider the call-in of the above decision.

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 19 July 2016
Report of: Director of Legal Services
Title: Review of Available walking Routes to School

1.0 Report Summary

This report sets out the procedure for the Call-in of the decision of the Cabinet made on 14 June 2016.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers whether or not it wishes to offer advice to the decision maker(Cabinet)in response to the Call In.

3.0 Wards Affected

- 3.1 All Wards

4.0 Local Ward Members

- 4.1 All Members for the above Wards.

5.0 Policy Implications

- 5.1 Contained within the attached report.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Contained within the attached report.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Contained within the attached report.

8.0 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 Contained within the attached report.

9.0 Background and Options

- 9.1 In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 12.3 any six or more Councillors can call in a decision. Six Members submitted a call-in

form which was validated on 20 June by the Monitoring Officer in respect the above decision for the reasons identified in Appendix 1.

- 9.2 In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 12.8 the Committee has two options in respect of any further action. The Committee may decide to offer no advice, in which case the decision may be implemented. Alternatively, the Committee may decide to offer advice, in which case, the matter must be referred to the decision maker, in this case Cabinet. In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 12.10, the decision maker is not bound to accept any advice offered to it and will have sole discretion on any further action to be taken. Such action may include:

- (1) Confirming with or without amendment the original decision; or
- (2) Deferring the matter pending further consideration; or
- (3) Making a different decision.

- 9.3 Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides to offer advice, this must be clearly documented in the minutes

- 9.4 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decides not to offer any advice, then the decision of the Cabinet can be implemented immediately.

- 9.5 Full details of the Call-In Procedure can be found at Scrutiny Procedure Rule 12

- 9.6 The Cabinet Member for Children and Families and relevant officers will attend the meeting to explain the background and reasons for the decision and to answer any questions the Committee may have.

- 9.7 The following records the decision of the Cabinet of 14 June 2016:

“That Cabinet

- 1. notes the reclassification of routes that have been re-assessed as available walking routes to school and agrees that free school transport for those routes be withdrawn from April 2017; and
- 2. authorises the Executive Director – People to spend £150,000 from the Local Transport Plan budget allocation for 2016/17 to improve further walking routes to school to bring them up to required standard so that free school transport for those improved routes may be subsequently withdrawn.

- 9.8 The Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director People considered by the Cabinet is attached at Appendix 2.

9.9 A response to the issues raised in the Call-In Notice is attached at Appendix 3.

10.0 **Appendices**

Page 5 – Call In Notice(

Page 7 - Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director People

Page 17 – Response to the issues raised in the Call-in Notice)

Page 21 - Walking Routes Policy

Page 39. Route assessments

Page 77. Two FAQ documents

11.0 **Access to Information**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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Designation: Scrutiny Manager

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Call In Request Form

Decision taken by: Cabinet

Date of Decision - 14 June 2016 Agenda Item 6 page 11

Title of agenda item/report - Review of Available Walking Routes to School

Reason for Call In**

Relevant information not considered.

Ward Councillors in who represent the seven schools noted in the report have information in relation to the walking routes that has not been considered.

Viable alternatives have not been considered.

This Review has not been given consideration at Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Members are requesting that Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee be given opportunity to scrutinise and offer advice from the new information that the Ward Councillors have received.

The decision taken by Cabinet could be open to challenge.

Recognising that there will be a twelve week notice period for parents and carers to comment on possible changes to the children's transport arrangements, this is not a consultation. It is therefore necessary, as the Chair of Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee said at Cabinet, that we should examine this Review. As good practice and in the interests of the council's responsibility within its road safety policy to our children, scrutiny should have the opportunity to comment. It must be noted that information given at Cabinet in relation to the Children and Families work programme was incorrect - at this time the committee does not have the Review of Routes to school on its agenda.

Call In Signatories (to be signed by 6 Members)

Signed Councillor Dorothy Flude Councillor Steve Hogben

Signed Councillor Arthur Moran Councillor Amanda Stott

Signed Councillor Sarah Pochin Councillor Jonathon Weston

Date of call in Notice 20/6/16

*****The Call-in rules as set out in the constitution stipulate that any 6 or more Members of the Council may submit a call-in notice in writing within 5 days of the decision being taken and recorded for one of the reasons set out below. Members should consider the following criteria AND explain how any of them apply. Failure to provide sufficient detail may lead to the call in being refused:***

- (1) Decision is taken outside the policy/budgetary framework*
- (2) Inadequate consultation relating to the decision*
- (3) Relevant information not considered*
- (4) Viable alternatives not considered*
- (5) Justification for the decision open to challenge on the basis of the evidence considered*

Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer Signature

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CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	14 th June 2016
Report of:	Kath O'Dwyer, Deputy Chief Executive & Executive Director – People
Subject/Title:	Review of Available Walking Routes to School
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Liz Durham – Children and Families Portfolio Holder

1.0 Report summary

- 1.1 In 2012 the Cabinet approved a policy for the assessment of walking routes to school throughout the Borough. Various routes were reassessed in accordance with the new policy and those parents affected received a letter from the Council giving them notice that the free transport they had thus far enjoyed was to be withdrawn from April 2013. Following significant feedback from parents and others, a decision was made not to withdraw the free transport for the time being.
- 1.2 The Council now finds itself in the situation where a small number of routes have been assessed as available under the Council's current published policy but free transport is currently provided. There is therefore a need to regularise the position for all families across Cheshire East to ensure that where routes have been assessed as available to walk our policy is implemented consistently. It is therefore proposed to notify those families who would be affected by free transport for these routes being withdrawn from April 2017. It is also proposed to improve other routes in the Borough which would result in further routes also being classified as available with the consequence that free school transport for those improved routes would also be subsequently withdrawn.
- 1.2 National and local policy specifies that parents should be given a minimum of 12 weeks notice in writing where a route that was previously unavailable becomes available and home to school transport is to be withdrawn. To ensure that schools and parents have an opportunity to comment on possible changes and to consider their future transport arrangements, it is recommended that information on the proposed changes is made available to schools and parents in the summer term 2016 for a period of at least 12 weeks (excluding August) with a proposal that free transport is withdrawn from the start of April 2017.
- 1.3 This proposal needs to be considered in the context of the mid term financial plan where a range of saving proposals will be required. The proposal to review and reclassify this group of available walking routes to school is submitted ahead of the wider package of savings in order to enable timely

engagement with schools and families potentially impacted by these proposals. This would include providing information to families who have children starting at the school in September 2016, as any final decision is likely to be taken in October 2016, or later, as part of the Council's overall budget decision making for the financial year 2017/18.

- 1.4 Cabinet is asked to note the proposal to withdraw free transport entitlement in accordance with the Council's own policy where there is an available and safe walking route, and to agree to progressing improvements to the highway so that a small number of further routes may be re-classified as available walking routes to school. The re-classification of these routes would result in pupils being able to walk safely to school and as such it would also remove their statutory eligibility for free transport to school.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Notes the reclassification of routes that have been re-assessed as available walking routes to school and agrees that free school transport for those routes be withdrawn from April 2017.
- Authorizes the Executive Director – People, to spend £150,000 from the Local Transport Plan budget allocation for 2016/17 to improve further walking routes to school to bring them up to required standard so that free school transport for those improved routes may be subsequently withdrawn.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 Councils are required by law to make travel arrangements to facilitate attendance at school where no suitable, available walking route to school exists.
- 3.2 1152 students are currently receiving free home-to-school transport because no walking route is available, which represents around 35% of children entitled to transport provision. This compares with 26.5% in Cheshire West and Chester, 10% in Staffordshire and 14.3% in Derbyshire.
- 3.3 Since October 2012, all new walking routes to school have been assessed under the Council's adopted policy on Available Walking Routes to School. The original intention was that the new policy would also trigger a review of historical routes currently deemed to be unavailable on road safety grounds. This review, which has recently been completed, has taken into account the significant improvements to the highway, footpaths and Public Rights of Way network that have occurred over the past few years.
- 3.4 This assessment has enabled all routes to be categorised into 5 phases of possible implementation:

- I. Phase 1 (2017/18) comprises routes that have been classified as an available walking route to school without any need for additional cost or highway improvement
 - II. Phase 2 ((2018/19) comprises routes that have the potential to be re-classified with some additional cost for highway improvement
 - III. Phase 3 comprises routes that have potential to be re-classified with some additional cost for highway improvement. These routes are potentially more difficult to resolve than those in phase 2.
 - IV. Phase 4 comprises routes that have potential to be re-classified but further assessment is required for feasibility of improvement schemes.
 - V. Phase 5 comprises routes that are unlikely to be re-classified, in the foreseeable future, unless there are major developments in the area that would trigger changes to the highway.
- 3.5 A list of the phase 1 and phase 2 routes and their assessment is shown in appendix 1.
- 3.6 If it is contemplated that free school transport is withdrawn, national and local policy specifies that parents should be given a 12 week notice period. To ensure that schools and parents have an opportunity to comment on possible changes and to consider their potential future transport arrangements, it is recommended that information on the proposed changes is released in the summer term 2016 with the intention that free transport be withdrawn from the start of April 2017.
- 3.7 Through the Local Transport Plan 2016/17 a budget of £150,000 has been established for capital investment to improve and upgrade existing routes that can be brought up to standard to be deemed available walking routes. To ensure the budget is used effectively, it is proposed to prioritise the improvement of routes that require minor works which will show a potential minimum 2:1 benefit to cost ratio over a 3 year period.

4.0 Background/Chronology

- 4.1 In October 2012, the Council adopted a policy setting out the assessment criteria for available walking routes to school, which forms part of the overall Home to School Transport Policy. The statutory walking distances to school are:
- 2 miles for a child who is under 8 years of age (primary age children in CEC)
 - 3 miles for a child who is over 8 years of age (secondary age children in CEC)
- 4.2 When determining whether a child's home is within the statutory distance, there must be a walking route to the qualifying school that is "available". If the nature of the route is such that it presents exceptional road safety hazards and a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school – even when accompanied by a responsible person – then the Council will deem it "unavailable". This means that the child becomes eligible for free transport to and from school.

- 4.3 The Council's adopted policy sets out the assessment criteria in determining whether a route is available based on the Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance produced by the Department for Education & Skills (DfES) in 2007 and the Assessment of Walked Routes to School guidelines produced by Road Safety GB in 2012. This report also takes into account the statutory guidance for 'Home-to-school travel and transport' that was updated in July 2014 by the Department for Education.

5.0 Benefits of the proposal

- 5.1 Assessing all routes, using the existing policy, will ensure an equitable approach in applying one set of criteria consistently across the Borough. If it is decided that free school transport should be withdrawn from any routes it may also unlock the potential for bus operators to operate a commercial service along these routes and give pupils various options on ways to travel to school. In addition there is a range of health benefits associated with walking to school.
- 5.2 Walking provides daily exercise for children. In 2014-15, 28% of Year 6 children in Cheshire East were overweight or obese. Incorporating physical activity into a child's daily routine is a good place to start addressing obesity. There are additional health benefits of walking to school including: blood pressure control; bone, muscle and joint health; reduced risk of diabetes; and improved psychological wellbeing.
- 5.3 Walking is known to improve academic performance. Children arrive brighter and more alert for their first morning class. In a UK Department for Transport survey, nine out of ten teachers said their students are much more ready to learn if they've walked to school. Walking reduces stress and increases creativity, both of which will help a child's performance at school.
- 5.4 Walking gives children good life experience and gets them outdoors - It's an opportunity for them to be independent, think responsibly, and make decisions for themselves. Some children feel less anxiety about being at school when they know how to get home; it's much harder to learn that route from the perspective of a car. If a child is still young or immature, then walking in groups with friends or siblings is a good option, as is the "walking school bus." Parents take turns collecting children from houses in the neighbourhood and accompany them to school.

6.0 Communications Plan

- 6.1 A communication plan has been developed to help manage the dissemination of information to schools and public regarding the review of Cheshire East's 'available walking routes to school' and the possible subsequent impact on free school transport. This will ensure effective communication with all stakeholders.

- 6.2 As part of this process, discussions with schools and TSS will include consideration of potential transition arrangements where that free school transport is withdrawn from any routes.

7.0 Wards Affected and Local Ward Members

- 7.1 All wards may be affected by the proposals outlined in this paper.

8.0 Implications of Recommendation

8.1 Policy Implications

- 8.2 These proposals are in line with Cheshire East Council's adopted policy on Available Walking Routes to School which was approved on 15 October 2012.

8.3 Legal Implications

- 8.4 The council is required by both the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to make suitable travel arrangements for certain students to attend school. Case law has established that local authorities are required to make school travel arrangements where a child, lives under the statutory walking distance to school but does not have a route available that can be walked in reasonable safety.
- 8.5 For a route to be available, it must be a route to school, along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety.
- 8.6 Under the terms of the Council's policy, any parent who is dissatisfied with the Council's assessed route on the grounds that it contains unacceptable road safety hazards may make a request for reconsideration on certain specified grounds. The review will be undertaken by an officer of the Places Directorate and will be completed within 20 days wherever possible. Parents who remain dissatisfied can complain to the Local Government Ombudsman or, ultimately, bring a claim for judicial review if they consider that the Council has failed to follow its published Transport Policy or review procedure.
- 8.7 Parents who may suffer particular hardship of whatever nature as a result of the withdrawal of free transport also have a right to an appeal before the School Transport Appeals Sub Committee on the grounds that they have exceptional circumstances that merit consideration on an individual basis and justify the Council departing from its published policy.
- 8.8 If free transport is not withdrawn from those routes which have been classed as available to walk, the Council may be exposed to criticism from the parents of children using other routes across the borough which are also classed as available but for whom no free transport is provided.

9.0 Financial Implications

- 9.1 A potential savings plan, associated with the available walking routes programme is outlined below. This shows the potential savings if it is decided to implement phases 1 to 3.

Financial Year	2017/18	2018/19
In-year savings	£225,100	£45,000
+ year 1 savings		£225,100
+ year 2 savings		
Total	£225,100	£270,100

- 9.2 The case for re-classification of routes is strengthened further by consideration that these savings, whilst only reported for one year, will actually recur as revenue pressures in future years if accessible walking routes are not implemented. The estimated cumulative potential savings if it is decided to implement phases 1 to 2 is £495,200 by 2019.

10.0 Equality Implications

- 10.1 This document applies to children living in the Borough of Cheshire East and describes free and assisted transport entitlement to mainstream schools, academies and colleges. This policy does not apply to pupils attending independent schools and colleges. Some children with Special Educational Needs require specific transport, for which a separate assessment of their needs is undertaken. Under the Equality Act 2010, where necessary, reasonable adjustments for children with mobility or other issues will be given consideration in relation to the type of transport or vehicle that is used, and also in the availability or otherwise of routes.
- 10.2 A full equalities impact assessment will be undertaken to inform any decision on whether or not to withdraw any free school transport.

11.0 Rural Community Implications

- 11.1 This proposal applies to pupils whose walking route to school is under 3 miles for secondary aged pupils and 2 miles for primary aged pupils. All pupils over this distance, travelling to their local or closest qualifying school would be eligible for transport.

12.0 Human Resources Implications

- 12.1 None.

13.0 Risk Management

- 13.1 Maintaining existing arrangements will result in inconsistency and inequity in the provision of transport across the Borough.

14.0 Access to information/Bibliography

- 14.1 The Cheshire East Council Available Walking Routes to School Policy can be found at:
http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/public_transport/school_transport/walking_routes_to_schools.aspx

15.0 Contact Information

- 15.1 Contact details for this report are as follows:
Name: Jacky Forster
Designation: Director of Education and 14-19 Skills
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Number of Contracts	SCHOOLNAME	Pupils allocated on contract/s	No. of pupils eligible on Hazard	Number of children still eligible for transport	Description of route/ hazard	Estimate for capital works
Phase 1						£,000
4	Tytherington High School	212	171	41	Middlewood way - off road route with some lighting	£0
1	Wheelock Primary School	72	72	0	New footpath on Hindheath lane due to housing development	£0
2	Malbank School & 6th Form Centre	105	103	2	Toucan crossing on A500 linking Willaston to Nantwich	£0
1	Poynton High School	25	25	0	Middlewood way - off- road route limited lighting	£0
1	Brine Leas High School	15	8	7	Toucan crossing on A500 linking Willaston to Nantwich	£0
	Totals	429	379	50		
Phase 2 2016 / 17						
3	The Fallibroome Academy	118	97	21	Route assessed as available but there is a recommendation for the ped refuge on Prestbury road to be upgraded to controlled crossing eg Zebra or Puffin	£80
1	Knutsford High School	37	29	8	Grass verge on Mobberley Road needs pavements for 95 mtrs or safer crossing point to access footway on opposite side of road	£45
	Totals	155	126	29		
Key for estimate of capital works £ = > £50k ££ = <£50k - £100k £££ = > £100k						

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Subject: Review of Available Walking Routes to School response to the Call-in of the Cabinet Decision taken 14th June 2016

Meeting Date: 19 July 2016

Executive Director: Kath O'Dwyer

Director of Education and 14-19 Skills: Jacky Forster

1. Background

At a meeting on 14 June 2016 the Cabinet for Cheshire East Council made the decision to;

- note the reclassification of routes that have been re-assessed as available walking routes to school and agrees that free transport for those routes be withdrawn from April 2017.
- authorise the Executive Director – People, to spend £150,000 from the Local Transport Plan budget allocation for 2016/17 to improve further walking routes to school to bring them to the required standard so that free school transport for those improved routes may be subsequently withdrawn

A route that is classified as available is one that the Council deems suitable for a child to walk in line with Councils approved “ Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy – Assessment of availability of routes to be walked” which is based on Road Safety UK Guidance.

In making this decision the cabinet noted that;

- it is the parents/carers responsibility to get their child to school.
- the child would be accompanied by a responsible person, such as a parent or other adult.
- routes are assessed on the basis of road safety and not personal safety in line with case law.

Road Safety UK Guidance (2011) states:

“Routes are assessed in terms of road safety, and not personal safety. Case law has found that assessments must look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic only. Personal safety issues of children travelling alone are not considered. Local authorities are not legally obliged to provide free transport just because parents perceive the route to be unsafe on the grounds of personal safety and security”

The Council’s Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy – Assessment of availability of routes to be walked is attached to this report.

2. Call in Submission

The Call-In submission provides three reasons for the call-in which have been responded to below.

2.1 Relevant information not considered.

Ward Councillors who represent the seven schools noted in the report have information in relation to the walking routes that has not been considered.

2.1.1 Response

Further information provided by the Ward Councillors will be considered as part of the call- in process. This specific information has not been provided with the call in. However, there have been a number of questions received since the Cabinet decision and subsequent call- in and these have been responded to in the attached Frequently Asked Questions.

The Cabinet report outlined the appeal process which parents could initiate if they were dissatisfied with the assessment on the grounds that it contained unacceptable road safety hazards and a timescale of 20 days for an officer to review, where possible.

The 'Frequently Asked Questions' and the 'Route Assessments' for the five routes in phase one are attached to this report.

2.2 Viable alternatives have not been considered.

This review has not been given consideration at Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Members are requesting that Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee be given opportunity to scrutinise and offer advice from the new information that the Ward Councillors have received

2.2.1 Response

The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review the decision with the meeting organised on 19th July 2016 to be held at Sandbach Town Hall to facilitate public attendance. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have organised a visit to the initial five routes on 18th July 2016 and will be accompanied by the Road Safety Officer and another officer. Advice offered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from the new information that Ward Councillors have received will be considered through this process.

In terms of viable alternatives, the Cabinet report outlined the potential for bus operators to operate a commercial service and the option of a "walking school bus" was provided. Information was provided on the appeal process for those families who may suffer particular hardship, and it was proposed that potential transition

arrangements would be considered with the schools affected and Transport Service Solutions.

2.3 The decision taken by Cabinet could be open to challenge.

Recognising that there will be a twelve week notice period for parents and carers to comment on possible changes to the children's transport arrangements, this is not a consultation. It is therefore necessary, as the Chair of Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee said at Cabinet, that we should examine this Review. As good practice and in the interests of the council's responsibility within its road safety policy to our children, scrutiny should have the opportunity to comment. It must be noted that information given at Cabinet in relation to the Children and Families work programme was incorrect - at this time the committee does not have the Review of Routes to school on its agenda.

2.3.1 Response

Policy requires a twelve week notice period for the withdrawal of transport. However, by taking the decision in June 2016 for the withdrawal of transport from April 2017 a nine-month notice period was being provided to ensure that schools and parents had an opportunity to comment on possible changes and to consider potential future transport arrangements.

Information provided about the role of Overview and Scrutiny was provided in good faith, as a discussion had taken place about the role of Overview and Scrutiny with the Chair. However, the agreement reached was that this would be discussed at the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting with a view to this being added to the forward plan for overview and therefore it was not on the forward plan.

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MAINSTREAM HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

Assessment of availability of routes to be walked

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Local Authority has a duty to make arrangements to facilitate attendance at schools and colleges by providing transport in certain circumstances. This document outlines Cheshire East Council's home to school/college transport policy as it relates to the availability or otherwise of routes where a child resides closer to the nearest appropriate educational establishment than the maximum distance allowed for under the overarching home to school transport policy.
- 1.2 This document applies to children living in the Borough of Cheshire East and describes free and assisted transport entitlement to mainstream schools, academies and colleges. This policy does not apply to pupils attending independent schools and colleges. Some children with Special Educational Needs – such as physical mobility difficulties - require specific transport, for which a separate assessment of their needs is undertaken. Under the Equality Act 2010, where necessary, reasonable adjustments for children with mobility or other issues will be given consideration in relation to the type of transport or vehicle that is used, and also in the availability or otherwise of routes.
- 1.3 Assessments do not determine whether a route is “safe” or “dangerous”. All roads may be thought of as presenting some element of road safety risk, whether they are heavily-trafficked urban routes, or more lightly-trafficked rural routes. Instead, the assessment determines whether transport should be provided at taxpayer expense because a particular walking route presents *exceptional* road safety hazards.

2.0 Statutory school age and statutory walking distances

- 2.1 Statutory school age means the age when a child **must** be in school i.e. the term immediately following their 5th birthday to 16 years old (i.e. the last Friday in June of the year the child turns 16). [Education Act 1997 Sec 52]
- 2.2 The measurement of the 'statutory walking distance' is measured by the shortest walking route between home¹ and nearest school gate along which a child, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult, can walk with reasonable safety. If there is no such route, the local authority must provide free transport no matter what distance the child lives from the school.

¹ Measured to centreline of the road immediately outside the normal residence of the child

2.3 The adopted policy of Cheshire East is that, generally, children are expected to walk:

- Up to and including a maximum distance of 2 miles (3.21869 km) if child is attending a primary school
- Up to and including a maximum distance of 3 miles (4.82803 km) if the child is attending a secondary school

2.4 There are additional criteria required by law to be adopted for children whose family or personal circumstances are such that they are entitled to transport even if the above general criteria are not met. These are contained in the overarching home to school transport policy.

2.5 Cheshire East Council no longer directly provides travel assistance to children of post-statutory education age. For the avoidance of doubt, no travel assistance is given to children remaining in education irrespective of the availability or otherwise of an available walking route.

3.0 Measurement of distances

3.1 Distances are measured by the shortest available walking route from the centreline of the road immediately outside the home address to the nearest school or college entrance. A route is available if it is a route along which a child, accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult, can walk with reasonable safety to school.

3.2 Distances are measured in a consistent fashion using computerised measuring systems:

- for in-borough measurements, the council's DataMap software is used.
- for distances that cross the borough boundary, a mixture of systems may be used, including DataMap, Google Maps or other equivalent system. This is because the DataMap system only currently covers addresses that fall in Cheshire East. These methods may change as new software becomes available.
- on request, we are able to provide a map of the available route and/or a list of the street/roads/footpaths etc measured in determining the distance between home and school.

4.0 Definition of Available routes

4.1 Cheshire East Council's definition of an available route:

- Distances are measured by the shortest available walking route between the middle of the road immediately outside of the home address and the nearest school or college gate. In accordance with the provisions of the Transport Policy, the shortest available walking route is the shortest route which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety.
- 4.2 Route availability is assessed using a rigorous and robust assessment process as detailed in the Appendices. Where a route is assessed as unavailable, officers will initially explore using mapping-software to investigate whether an alternative exists and is less than 2 miles (primary) and 3 miles (secondary) before allowing transport.

5.0 Withdrawal of transport / offers of transport

- 5.1 Where a route was previously unavailable and becomes available, reasonable notice of the transport provision to be withdrawn will be issued in writing to the parent. This period will be a minimum of a school term, or 12 weeks where shorter.
- 5.2 Where a parent disputes the assessment of an available route, or a request is made for an assessment where no previous assessment has been undertaken, there is a process of review (see Appendix 2.). Should an initial assessment reveal that no available route exists that presents an acceptable level of short-term risk, the council will normally provide transport until such time as a full assessment has been undertaken.
- 5.3 The council has a duty to ensure all children travel in reasonable safety and comfort. Any behaviour affecting other passengers, the public or the driver that endangers (whether intentionally or unintentionally) themselves or others may lead to transport being withdrawn from a pupil, either temporarily or permanently. In these circumstances, the arrangement and cost of transport will fall to the parent and it will remain the duty of the parent to ensure their children continue to attend school, irrespective of the availability or otherwise of a walking route.
- 5.4 Where a pupil or student has been assessed as eligible for assisted or free transport in error, reasonable notice of the provision to be withdrawn will be issued in writing to the parent. Where information has been provided that – in the opinion of the council – is both false, and has been deliberately or negligently provided, the council reserves the right to cease transport provision with immediate effect.
- 5.5 Where temporary factors are considered to be the reason for a route being assessed as not available (eg through significant planned roadworks temporarily rendering part of the route unavailable, ground conditions during winter months etc) the council may exceptionally consider provision of transport for the period(s) of unavailability. In these instances, notice periods for withdrawal may be shortened from that set out in 5.1 above.

6.0 General Points

- 6.1 All roads – urban and rural – are potentially dangerous. Provision of transport is considered and provided only where road conditions are exceptionally or abnormally hazardous, as set out in the assessment criteria. The council considers that the most appropriate means of ensuring children can safely travel to school is through road safety education, and parents and schools are expected to educate children in road safety matters from an early age.
- 6.2 Parents are responsible in law for ensuring their children receive an appropriate education which in most cases includes ensuring regular attendance at school. The law also requires parents to ensure a child is accompanied on their journey to an from school by an adult if necessary, with no age limit for the child prescribed in law for this responsibility. The council expects parents to make suitable alternative arrangements if they are unable to personally accompany the child.
- 6.3 Parents are responsible for ensuring their children have suitable clothing and footwear, reflective clothing or other visibility aids, torches etc.
- 6.4 It is expected that traffic along assessed routes will abide by all road traffic regulations, including remaining within posted speed limits, obey one-way traffic restrictions, not park in a manner which creates an obstruction to the highway etc. The council is entitled to expect that the police will undertake enforcement action.
- 6.5 In accordance with the law, the council assumes that children are accompanied by an adult as necessary. Routes are not classed as unavailable solely due to any or all of the following factors. They are, however, used to assess risks and hazards that a child may face that can be avoided if the child were to be accompanied as necessary in assessing the availability of a route:
- Lonely routes
 - Moral danger
 - Routes that pass close to canals, rivers, ditches, lakes, ponds etc
 - Routes that require railway crossings if a suitable, authorised crossing is present
- 6.6 General enquiries and specific requests should initially be addressed to:

Address: Cheshire East Transport
Floor 6, Delamere House
Crewe
CW1 2LL

Telephone: 0300 123 5012

Email: schooltransportenquiries@cheshireeast.gov.uk

If you require this information in an alternative version such as large print, Braille, tape or help in understanding it in your language, please contact 0300 123 5012, or e-mail: schooltransportenquiries@cheshireeast.gov.uk

7.0 Exceptional circumstances

- 7.1 Exceptionally, the council may consider circumstances that affect the availability or otherwise of walking routes in ways not set out in this summary of policy. Requests for consideration should be made to:

School Admissions
Children, Family and Adult Services
Cheshire East Council
Delamere House
Crewe
CW1 1LL

Further details available on our website: www.cheshireeast.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

PROCESS FOR ASSESSING WHETHER OR NOT WALKING ROUTES TO SCHOOLS ARE UNAVAILABLE

1. Definitions

A walking route is available if it is a route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school.

This process is based on the statutory guidance 'Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance' produced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) in 2007 and the Assessment of Walked Routes to School guidelines produced by Road Safety GB in 2012 which provides guidance on the interpretation of both case law and what is generally accepted by many Local Authorities as good practice in assessing various elements of the walking route between home and school.

Specifically, the DfES guidance states, in Part 3, Travel arrangements for 'eligible children' and a section covering Children unable to walk in safety to school because of the nature of the route covered the following:

- 81. Where children live within "statutory walking distance" of their nearest qualifying school (or other place where education is provided under section 19(1)), local authorities will be under a duty to make travel arrangements where the nature of the route is such that a child can not reasonably be expected to walk (accompanied as necessary) in reasonable safety.*
- 82. In assessing the comparative safety of a route, a local authority should conduct an assessment of the risks a child might encounter along the prescribed route (including, for example, canals, rivers, ditches, speed of traffic along roads, overhanging trees or branches that might obscure fields of vision for the pedestrian or motorist, etc.). The assessment of a route should take place at the times of the day that pupils would be expected to use the route.*
- 83. Route assessments should feed into the local authority duty relating to sustainable school travel [...] and may inform the local authority's plans for upgrading the infrastructure supporting sustainable school travel.*
- 84. In conducting the risk assessment, local authorities should take a range of factors into consideration, including:*
 - the age of the child;*
 - whether any potential risks might be mitigated if the child were accompanied by an adult (see also paragraph 86 below);*
 - the width of any roads travelled along and the existence of pavements;*

- *the volume and speed of traffic travelling along any roads;*
- *the existence or otherwise of street lighting; and*
- *the condition of the route at different times of the year, at the times of day that a child would be expected to travel to and from school.*

85. *Whilst it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that a child attends school regularly, the local authority should consider whether it is reasonably practicable for the child's parent/carer to accompany the child along a route which would otherwise be classified as too dangerous to walk in reasonable safety.*

86. *In conducting their risk assessments, local authorities should use data on recorded accidents along potential routes. However, a lack of such accidents should not be taken as conclusive evidence that a route is safe. It may well be that a route is potentially so dangerous that no reasonable person would walk along the route, or allow their children to do so – resulting in such a low level of pedestrian use that there were very few or no recorded accidents.'*

2. Process

- (a) A request to assess a route for availability is made to Cheshire East Transport (normally from a parent or school, but also where the council considers transport is being provided for a journey to school that has potentially become available).
- (b) The request is passed to an Assessing Officer nominated or appointed by Cheshire East Transport, who will undertake an initial desktop evaluation of walking routes from the home address to the school. Should available walking routes be identified that are shorter than the statutory walking distance based on the age of the child, then no further assessment is undertaken. Should one or more routes be identified but there is doubt over the availability of the route, initial assessment of the potential route will be undertaken.
- (c) If an initial assessment reveals that there may be hazards that require a full assessment to be undertaken, the council will consider whether to provide transport assistance as an interim arrangement until the full assessment has been completed.
- (d) Evidence already available to the Assessing Officer will be taken into account in the full assessment, and other aspects of assessment may (but will not always) include a site visit, information on traffic volumes (where required and where available) and accident history records.

- (e) A written report of site visit (using a standard format) and other information (such as accident data) will be considered.
- (f) The findings of the process above will be considered by Cheshire East Transport, who will review the assessment and provide a written report on whether the route is available. The outcome of the assessment will be communicated to the applicant.
- (g) Appeals against decisions can be made in accordance with the process set out in Appendix 2
- (h) If a route is assessed to be unavailable, then free transport will be arranged with as soon as reasonably practicable. If a route is assessed to be available, but free transport has been provided (because previously the route was assessed as unavailable and remedial works have been undertaken to make the route available), the council will give notice in accordance with the guidance set out in the policy.

3. Assessment Report Format

General

- This guidance is a general summary of the factors taken into account in the assessment of available walking routes.
- The start and end points of the assessment and the details of the route taken will be provided along with a map of the route assessed. The route will be split up into sections (note these) for the purpose of reporting.
- The time of day the assessment is undertaken will be stated
- The weather and light conditions will be noted.
- Photographs will be taken to exemplify areas likely to be of concern

Section characteristics

The Assessment will;

- record if there is a footway and if so, the general availability and condition of it. An assessment of the suitability of the footway will be made with photographs of any narrow sections. An assessment will be made as to whether it is available for walking and of sufficient width and quality. The condition and maintenance of the footway maintained and other pedestrian use will be noted.
- define length/names of the roads on the route and any relevant characteristics, for example, whether the route is rural/urban, single/dual carriageway, A/B class, one-way, speed limit, estimated vehicle speeds and whether traffic calmed.
- define road widths and any variations where there is no footway, (noting locations where the road narrows at 'pinch points'). In the absence of footways a note of the forward visibility for sighting times will be made.
- Highlight any feature along the route that may need re-assessment in the future (e.g. likely change in traffic patterns or vegetation that may compromise available footway width)
- Consider whether there are any alternative walking routes.

Crossing – assessment

The Assessment will:

- consider whether there is a need to cross a main road or significant side road or entrance on the section of route being assessed.
- Make reference to the fact that there are side roads and entrances and specifically note any that are likely to have significant traffic movements and which need to be crossed.

- where roads need to be crossed, consider if, there is at least 4 seconds' sighting time for drivers to see pedestrians and whether waiting time to cross is less than 60 seconds (keeping a record of the average timings).
- Note any crossing facilities on the assessed section (central refuges, zebras, pelicans, etc.)
- note if crossing is recommended to take place at a specific location.

Walking at the side of the road assessment

The assessment will:

- Consider whether there is a footway on the section and if there is an available walking route on both sides of the road
- Consider which side of the road the footway is situated on and whether it has a reasonably even surface and is of sufficient width (generally deemed to be 0.5m, although each case is treated on its own merits and widths may be unacceptable or acceptable if wider or narrower than this guideline.)
- Consider whether 'availability' is likely to remain the same throughout the year and in all conditions
- Consider the characteristics (length, width and 'condition') of the verge or footway. Where no footway (or no continuous footway) exists, a further assessment is undertaken in accordance with the criteria set out below:

On roads of less than 6.5 metres in width extremely hazardous routes will be seen to exist where the traffic exceeds the maximum vehicle numbers per hour shown in the table below for the relevant width of road or where potential escape/refuge from traffic falls below the level set out in the table for relating traffic volumes and individual lengths of road where escape/refuge is not possible. Its purpose is to specify a level of hazard where the council will assume responsibility for transport costs. Below this level the council assumes parents will take this responsibility themselves. The table which measures the availability of verge or refuge against traffic volumes, for roads of different widths, is shown below:

Acceptable maximum length of single sections of road without verges or refuge before broken by a verge or refuge	Acceptable number of vehicles per hour by road width			
	<3.5m width	3.5m - 4.5m width	4.5m – 5.5m width	>5.5m width
	Max	Max	Max	Max
10m	201 - 240	301 - 360	401 - 480	501 - 600

15m	161 - 200	241 - 300	321 - 400	401 - 500
25m	121 - 160	181 - 240	241 - 320	301 - 400
35m	81 - 120	121 - 180	161 - 240	201 - 300
55m	61 - 80	91 - 120	121 - 160	151 - 200
75m	41 - 60	61 - 90	81 - 120	101 - 150
120m	31 - 40	46 - 60	61 - 80	76 - 100
160m	21 - 30	31 - 45	41 - 60	51 - 75
240m	11 - 20	16 - 30	21 - 40	26 - 50
300m	6 - 10	9 - 15	11 - 20	13 - 25
500m	1 - 5	1 - 8	1 - 10	1 - 12

Footnotes

- 1 Where visibility, audibility and escapability factors for pedestrians are substantially worse or better than the norm, the acceptable length of non-verged road will be respectively reduced or increased by one step in the table (above).
- 2 A verge is a minimum area that a pedestrian could use as a refuge which is defined as 1.5 metres in length and 0.5 metres in depth.
- 3 Only single unbroken sections of non verged road will be measured and applied against the table - the cumulative effect on non-verged lengths on an entire route will not constitute the road being classified in its own right.
- 4 Where HGV (ie large lorries) numbers, in the hourly traffic count, are more than 10 and where this constitutes more than 10% of the total traffic volume, extremely hazardous routes will be seen to exist regardless of whether the total traffic volume fails to reach the levels required in the table.

4. Assessment Criteria

Whilst the following criteria are specific, professional judgement will be exercised to take account of any local circumstances and the merits of any individual case, as required.

Factor Assessed	What is Assessed	Assumptions
The age of the child	<p>The age of the children using the walking route will be assessed.</p> <p>The age of the child is assessed to distinguish between the 2 maximum walking distances from home to school i.e. 2 or 3 miles.</p>	<p>The existence of public transport (bus or rail) or farepaying places on contracted Home to School Transport is not taken into account when assessing a walking route.</p>
Whether any potential risks might be mitigated if the child were accompanied by an adult	<p>The route is assessed on the basis that a responsible adult will accompany the child as necessary.</p> <p>There may be circumstances where this may not be possible i.e. because of disability. Such circumstances would be considered by means of an appeal.</p>	<p>Existing case law about adults accompanying children remains unchanged</p> <p>It is recognised that parents may decide that accompaniment is not required as the child matures; however the legal precedent suggests that parents accompany as necessary until the child reaches normal school leaving age.</p>
The existence or otherwise of street lighting	<p>Where crossing roads or where there is no available footpath the existence or otherwise of street lighting will be considered (where visibility of pedestrians at the side of the road could be compromised).</p>	<p>The existence or otherwise of street lighting is taken into account where this will assist drivers in seeing pedestrians walking in the road or at identified crossing points where no light controlled (Pelican or Toucan) or Zebra crossings exist. If a continuous suitable footway exists then street lighting is desirable but may not be required for a route to be assessed as available.</p>
The condition of the route at different times of the year, at the times of day that a child would be	<p>Site visits will cover the whole route but focus on parts of the route with potential hazards, and will take place at the time in the morning (or afternoon) when children would be travelling to school.</p>	<p>The route will be kept well maintained by landowners and the Highway Authority. Where problems are identified, such as overgrown foliage and damage to footways we will ask landowners to repair this or the Council will repair this and recharge landowners as</p>

expected to travel to and from school	<p>Assessments when undertaken will consider seasonal variations in conditions along a route.</p> <p>Assessments may identify improvements to routes which if undertaken would make the route available, even if the route is deemed to be not available in the interim</p>	<p>appropriate</p> <p>Assessments will consider the condition of the route at different times of the year and in particular the effects of vegetation growth.</p>
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5. Frequently Asked Questions (These do not form part of the assessment process)

What time are the assessments undertaken? - Assessments usually take place in the morning during the times that children will be travelling to school but assessments may also be undertaken when returning home in the afternoon. Visits are timed, where possible, so that crossing assessments of main roads take place at the times when the number of children travelling to school is highest. Detailed timings and measurements are undertaken.

What happens if I can't walk with my child? Any adult can walk with a group of children. We will work with schools to identify other ways of travelling to school through School Travel Plans. Where the walking route is less than 2 miles for children who attend primary school and less than 3 miles for secondary age children the responsibility for ensuring children attend school remains with the parent - this is not a council responsibility.

What happens if the footpath is really narrow? There is no minimum width for a footpath to be acceptable for walking. Officers will use their professional judgement on the available width including hedgerows and verges next to the footpath to determine its availability as suitable for walking.

What if my child has to walk in the dark? Generally school start and finish times are such that children can walk to school in daylight. There will be a limited number of times when this is before sunrise and after the sun sets i.e. in twilight hours. In these cases it is the parents' responsibility to accompany their child if they feel it is appropriate. You may decide that your child can walk unaccompanied but the legal responsibility remains with parents to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that their child attends school.

What accident data will be included? The report will include a general reference to all accidents on the route, additional reference to accidents involving pedestrians, and a detailed reference to pedestrian accidents at designated crossing points.

What if there isn't a footway? Even if there isn't a footway the walking route might still be assessed as available. The assessment will take account of traffic flows and whether pedestrians and car drivers have enough time to slow down or pedestrians have time to step off the road onto a verge.

What do I do if I think the walking route is unsafe? No walking route can be absolutely safe; the term used in guidance is reasonable safety which would make the walking route available. If you think the route isn't available you have the right to appeal. You must demonstrate that there is a change to the route that would not make it reasonably safe to walk along, or other circumstances that you feel the council should take into account that it hasn't already considered.

APPENDIX 2

SCHOOL TRANSPORT REVIEW (APPEAL) PROCEDURE – AVAILABLE WALKING ROUTES

1.0 Commencement Date

1.1 This Procedure has effect from 1 January 2013.

2.0 Review of available walking route

2.1 If a parent/carers or young person is dissatisfied with the Council's assessed route on the grounds that it contains unacceptable road safety hazards, then a request for reconsideration can be made. There are two grounds for a review:

- (a) If there is a material change in relation to an existing available walking route which may affect the availability of that route; **or**
- (b) If there is a new available walking route assessment.

In either case referred to above, a parent/carers or a young person (or a group of parents/carers) may request that the available walking route be reviewed if they are dissatisfied with the assessment undertaken because it has not taken into account the published national guidance relating to route assessment in force at the time.

2.2 For the purposes of 2.1(a) above, 'a material change' means works (other than temporary works) which have been undertaken since the route was last assessed where those works significantly affect:

- the use of the highway
- the road layout
- the footpath
- the traffic volume
- the speed of traffic

2.3 Any request for a review of the availability of a walking route must be made in writing setting out the material change in question (in the case of an existing route) and why the parents/carers or young person consider that the assessed route is not available. Any supporting evidence relied upon by parents/carers or the young person must be submitted with the review request.

- 2.4 Receipt of a request for review will be acknowledged within 5 working days.
- 2.5 The review will be undertaken by a nominated officer from the Places and Organisational Capacity Directorate ('the Reviewing Officer') who will have had no previous involvement in relation to the available route assessment.
- 2.6 The Reviewing Officer will consider if there has been a material change in relation to an existing available walking route. If the Reviewing Officer is not satisfied that there has been such a material change, he or she will notify the parents/carers or young person of that fact in writing providing reasons for his/her decision.
- 2.7 In the case of new available walking route assessments or if the Reviewing Officer determines that there has been a material change in circumstances in relation to an existing route assessment then an assessment will be undertaken by the Reviewing Officer who will consider and take into account:-
- a) written material and representations submitted by the parent/carer or young person;
 - b) published national guidance in force at the time.
- 2.8 The assessment of the Reviewing Officer will wherever possible be completed within 20 working days of receipt of the review request (unless there are exceptionable circumstances in which case the assessment will be completed as soon as practicable thereafter). The review outcome will be communicated to the parent/carer or young person in writing by a representative from Cheshire East Transport enclosing a copy of the assessment and wherever possible this shall take place within 5 working days of the assessment being completed.

3.0 General

- 3.1 The decision of the Reviewing Officer is binding on the parents/carers/young person and the council.
- 3.2 There is no further right of appeal or review in relation to the processes set out in 2 above. A parent/carer or young person may refer the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman if he or she considers that the Transport Policy or this review procedure has not been correctly followed or properly applied in the case. Referrals to the Local Government Ombudsman should be submitted to:

The Local Government Ombudsman
PO Box 4771
Coventry
CV4 0EH
Telephone: 0845 602 1983
Fax: 0247 602 0001
Email: advice@lgo.org.uk

4.0 Requesting a Review

- 4.1 Parents/carers or young persons wishing to request a review under this procedure should do so by contacting:

The Transport Manager
Cheshire East Transport
Highways and Transport
Floor 6
Delamere House
Crewe
CW1

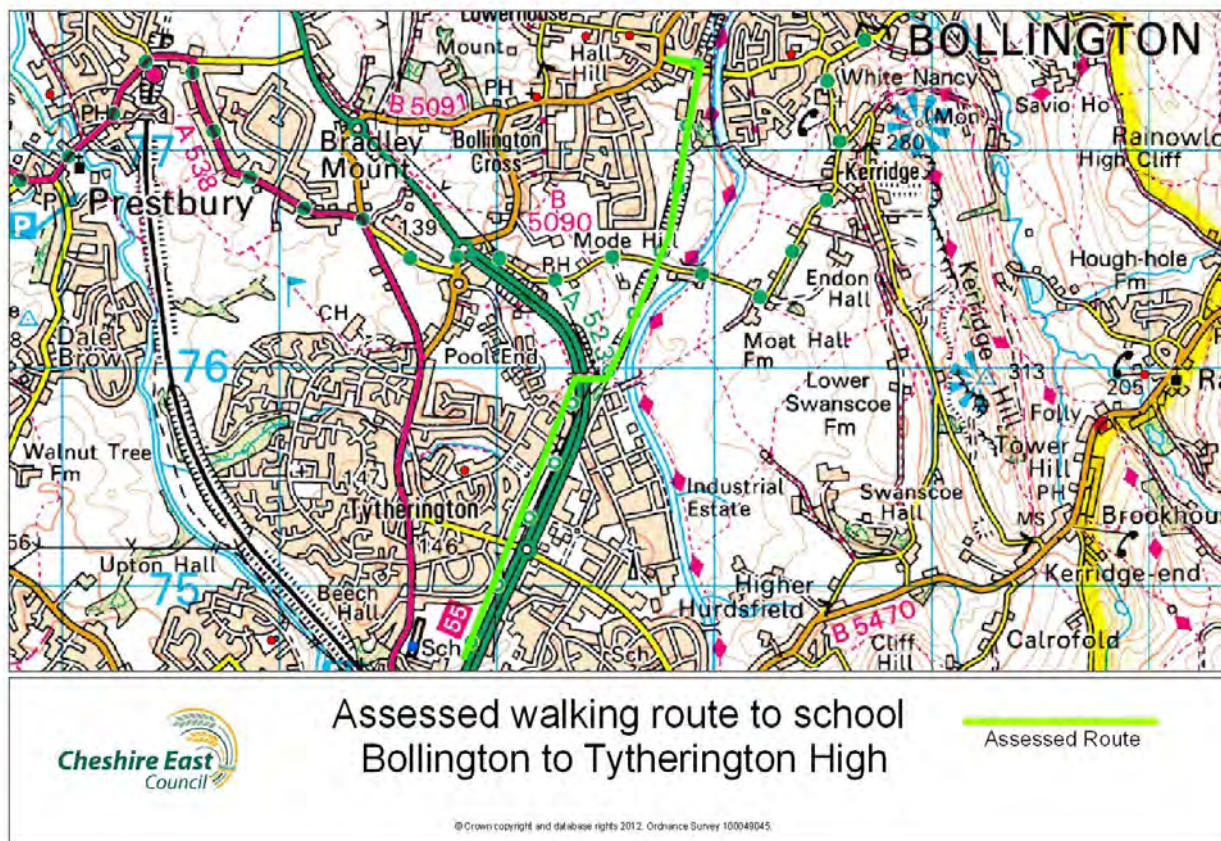
Tel: 0300 123 5012

Email: schooltransportenquiries@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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Walking Route to School Assessment

Assessment number CE 319
 Bollington to Tytherington High via Middlewood Way
 Route assessed March / October 2015



Overall Route Assessment Outcome: AVAILABLE		Weather
Dates & Times of Assessment:	5th March 2015 (am)	Cloudy
	13th March 2015 (am)	Rain
	18th March 2015 (pm)	Fine/ Cloudy
	12 th October 2015 (pm)	Fine

Site Safety Assessor:

This assessment is undertaken in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Available Routes to School Policy, which reflects guidance notes issued by Road Safety GB in 2012 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' and the Department for Education's Home to school travel and transport guidance - Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014

Any opinions expressed by the assessing officer are based on the above guidelines and the experienced professional judgement of the safety assessor.

1. Route Overview

This assessment relates to children of compulsory school age in years 7 to 11, (aged 11 to 16) walking to Tytherington High School. The assessor has not identified any factors in the assessment below which would affect the availability of the route for a young person in these age ranges. The assessment has assumed that pupils are accompanied by a responsible person.

The assessor has considered how the availability of this route might be affected at different times of the year. Except for the reference to some puddles on the Middlewood Way and the potential for some icy conditions, there are no seasonal factors that affect the availability of the route.

The assessor has also considered that pupils of the ages noted above would be expected to travel to and from school between 0745 and 0845 in the morning and 1520 and 1620 in the afternoon (1450 and 1550 – Thursdays). There are sections along the Middlewood Way that are without lighting but for the short period of time of the year when it may be dusk this does not impact on the road safety of the pupils because it is a traffic free route. The Middlewood way appears to be a well used path by walkers and cyclists at all times of the year.

2. Recorded Collision Data

In the 3 year period between 1/1/12 and 31/12/15 there were no recorded collisions involving personal injury on this route.

3. The Route

Section 1 – Junction of Wellington Road / Grimshaw Lane to start of Middlewood Way heading towards Macclesfield

Grid reference: 392886 – 377353

392911 - 377351

Distance: 135 meters (0.08 mile)

Section 2 – Continuing along Middlewood Way to Brocklehurst Road

Grid reference: 392911 – 377351

392065 – 375152

Distance: 2512 meters (1.55 Miles)

Section 3 – Continuing along Middlewood Way across Brocklehurst Road to rear entrance of Tytherington High School

Grid reference: 392065 – 375152

391837– 374714

Distance: 533 meters (0.33 Miles)

Distance on Middlewood Way – 1.88 miles

Total Distance – 1.93 miles

SECTION 1 – ASSESSMENT

Section Characteristics

- This section starts at the junction of Wellington Road / Grimshaw Lane leading to the access point of the Middlewood Way towards Macclesfield
- The route is an urban area with shops or housing on both sides of the road
- This section is on a single carriageway road, classified as a 'b' road
- The speed limit along this section of road is 30 mph
- There is street lighting on both sides of the road

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p>There are good quality pavements along this section, although to the western side of the road pedestrians need to walk on a slip road which is on a slight hill adjacent to the houses. Most pedestrians choose to stay on the eastern side of the pavement and cross in the vicinity of the access point to the Middlewood Way. The assessor noted that a number of pedestrians walk through Clough Bank to access the Middlewood Way at other access points. There are no seasonal variations to consider</p>
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	<p style="text-align: center;">No</p>



Grimshaw Lane and suggested crossing point

Crossing Assessment:

Is a crossing required?	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p>There are no identified crossing points along Grimshaw Lane and pedestrians tend to cross at various points along the road.</p> <p>A crossing assessment has been carried out on Grimshaw</p>
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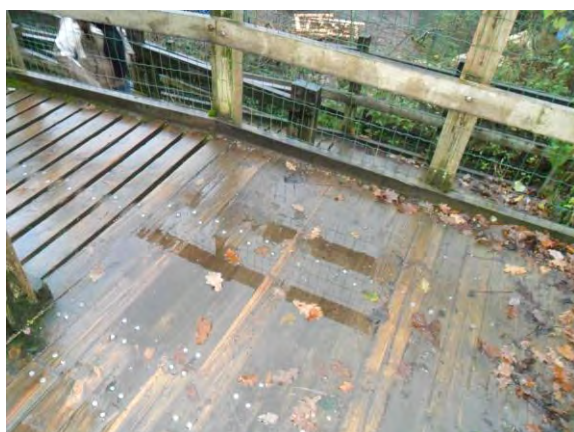
	<p>Lane between Field Close and Clough Bank at the access to the Middlewood Way. There are parking restrictions at this location; this improves visibility at this point. The road is 8.2 meters / 27 ft wide at this crossing point giving a 9 second crossing time.</p> <p>The crossing assessments were carried out on the following dates:</p> <p>5th March 2015 (0725 and 0835) 13th March 2015 (0725 and 0845) and 18th March 2015 (1530 and 1640)</p>
Sighting time	There is more than 4 seconds sighting time at this location
Traffic volume	<p>Grimshaw Lane (am) 395 passenger car units</p> <p>Grimshaw Lane (am) 419 passenger car units</p> <p>Grimshaw Lane (pm) 445 passenger car units</p>
Gap times	<p>In the mornings there were at least two 9 second crossing opportunity every minute and an average of 12 crossing opportunities every 5 minutes. The time between 0825 and 0830 had the least crossing opportunities of 7 within a 5 minute period.</p> <p>In the afternoon there were at least two 9 second crossing opportunities every minute and an average of 9 crossing opportunities every 5 minutes. The time between 1610 and 1615 and 1620 and 1625 had the least crossing opportunities of 8 within a 5 minute period.</p>

Section assessment result	Available
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SECTION 2 – ASSESSMENT

<p>Section Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This section starts at the access point to the Middlewood Way on Grimshaw Lane and continues along until Brocklehurst Way • The Middlewood Way is a traffic free greenway and is open to pedestrian, horse riders and cyclists; this route forms part of the Sustrans 55 cycle route • There is street lighting for a major part of the route but the section after the second bridge up to Brocklehurst Way does not have street lighting. Street lighting has recently been upgraded to LED.
--

Footway Assessment:	
Is there a pavement/footway segregated from traffic?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Between the access point on Grimshaw Lane and Brocklehurst Road, the path has a good surface and is generally 3 meters wide.</p> <p>There are some sections where puddles form in very wet weather but these can be avoided. Pedestrians would need to take care in icy conditions as this path is not gritted. There are two bridges on the Middlewood Way which can be crossed either on foot or cycle. The first bridge can collect water but puddles are not very deep. A mesh has recently been installed on the wooden boards of the bridge to increase friction and prevent slipping</p>
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No (go to next section)



Bridge with puddle *



Bridge over Silk Road

Crossing Assessment:	
Is a crossing required?	No
Sighting time	
Traffic volume	
Gap times	

Section assessment result	Available
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SECTION 3 – ASSESSMENT**Section Characteristics**

- This section starts at Brocklehurst Way where pedestrians need to cross the road at the Toucan crossing and continue on the Middlewood Way to the rear entrance of the school
- Brocklehurst Way is on a single 2-lane carriageway, in an urban area and is classed as a C road. The speed limit is 30mph
- There is street lighting on Brocklehurst Way
- The Middlewood Way is a traffic free greenway and is open to pedestrian, horse riders and cyclists; this route forms part of the Sustrans 55 cycle route
- There is lighting on part of the route
- The assessor noticed that the rear entrance to the school was heavily used by a high number of pupils travelling from the north and south on the Middlewood Way

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p>Between the access point on Brocklehurst Way and the rear entrance to the Middlewood Way, the path has a good surface and is generally 3 meters wide.</p> <p>There are some sections where puddles form in very wet weather but these can generally be avoided. Pedestrians would need to take care in icy conditions as this path is not gritted.</p> <p>There is access to Tytherington High school, via a gate at the rear entrance to the school; this gate is opened and closed at school starting and finishing times</p>
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	<p style="text-align: center;">No (skip to next section)</p>

Crossing Assessment:

Is a crossing required?	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes</p> <p>There is a Toucan Crossing at this location and no further assessment is required</p>
Sighting time	
Traffic volume	
Gap times	

Section Assessment Result

Available



Toucan crossing on Brocklehurst Way



Section on Middlewood Way with lighting

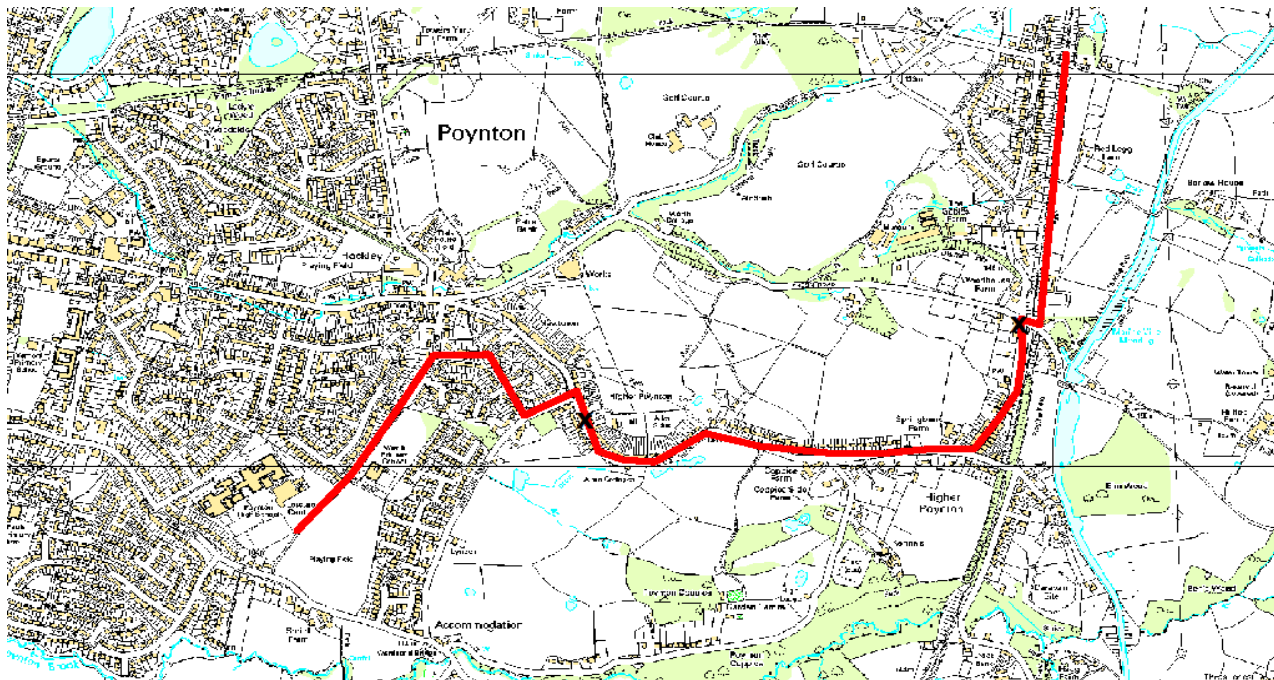


Middlewood Way showing section without lighting

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Walking Route to School Assessment

Assessment number CE 343
 Middlewood, Higher Poynton to Poynton High School
 Route assessed March 2016



Overall Route Assessment Outcome: Available		
Dates and Times of Assessment:		
Location:	Dates	Weather
Shrigley Road North	10 th March 2016- AM	Dry/ Overcast
	23 rd March 2016- AM	Dry/ Overcast
	22 nd March 2016- PM	Dry/ Overcast
Coppice Road	10 th March 2016 – AM	Dry/ Overcast
	6 th May 2016 – AM	Fine
	6 th June 2016 – PM	Sunny/ Hot

Site Safety Assessor:

This assessment is undertaken in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Available Routes to School Policy, which reflects guidance notes issued by Road Safety GB in 2012 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' and the Department for Education and Skills in 2007 'Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance'.

Any opinions expressed by the reviewing officer / safety assessor are based on the above guidelines and the experienced professional judgement of the safety assessor.

1. Route Overview

This assessment relates to children of compulsory school age in years 7 to 11 (aged 11 to 16) walking to Poynton High School. The assessor has not identified any factors in the assessment below which would affect the availability of the route for a young person in these age ranges. The assessment has assumed that pupils are accompanied by a responsible person.

The assessor has considered how the availability of this route might be affected at different times of the year and finds that there are no variations on the route

The assessor has also considered that pupils of the ages noted above would be expected to travel to and from school between 07.50 in the morning and 16.10 in the afternoon and assessments have been carried out at this time.

The route is a suggested route to Poynton High School; there may be other walking routes between Middlewood and Higher Poynton and Poynton High School which have not been assessed.

2. Recorded Collision Data

In the 5 year period between 1st Jan 2011 and 31st Dec 2015 there were 3 recorded collisions of all types involving personal injury on the route. None of these collisions involved a pedestrian

3. The Route

Section 1: From Pool House Road, Prince Road and Carleton Road via the Middlewood Way to Shrigley Road North.

Grid ref	394546	384370	Pool House Road
	394512	384017	Prince Road
	394463	383739	Carleton Road
	394410	383344	Shrigley Road North
Distance	1,722 meters		

Section 2: Shrigley Road North to Coppice Road junction with Waterloo Road.

Grid ref	394410	383344	Shrigley Road North
	393388	383151	Coppice Road/ Waterloo Road
Distance	1,076 meters		

Section 3: Waterloo Road to Poynton High School

Grid ref	393388	383151	Waterloo Road
	392764	382879	Poynton High School
Distance	943 meters		

Total Distance 3741 meters 2.3 miles

SECTION 1 – ASSESSMENT**Section Characteristics**

- This section of the route covers the Middlewood Way which can be accessed from Pool House Road, Prince Road and from Carleton Road. By using the Middlewood way pupils can avoid the current hazard on Green Lane north of the junction with Anson Road.
- There are footpaths and steps down to the Middlewood Way from each access point. Handrails are provided.
- The Middlewood Way is an old railway alignment that is now used as pathway, cycleway and bridleway. The pathway is flat with good sightlines
- There is no lighting on the Middlewood Way however for the short period of time of the year when it may be dusk this does not impact on the road safety of the pupils because it is a traffic free route. The Middlewood way appears to be a well used path by walkers and cyclists at all times of the year.
- Pedestrians can exit the Middlewood Way onto Shrigley Road North just south of its junction with Anson Road and Green Lane.
- Pupils will then need to cross Shrigley Road North.
- Shrigley Road North is a single lane carriageway with a low volume of traffic.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	There is a footway for this whole section of the route which is of adequate width and condition which is shared with cycleway and bridleway.
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:

Is crossing required? Dates assessed: 10 th March 2016	Yes
	Pupils will need to cross Shrigley Road North after exiting the Middlewood Way. An assessment was undertaken in March 2016 that recorded low traffic counts both morning and afternoon. There was an average of 130 vehicle counts in one hour which included 4 passenger carrying vehicles and 3 HGVs. A minimum gap of 8 seconds was calculated for pupils to safely cross the road at this point and there were an average of 29 gap counts in any 5 minute period.

Access from Middlewood Way up to Shrigley Road North



Shrigley Road North



Section Assessment Result	Available
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SECTION 2 – ASSESSMENT

Section Characteristics

- This section of the route follows Shrigley Road North and Coppice Road to its junction with Waterloo Road.
- Shrigley Road North and Coppice Road are both single 2 lane carriageways.
- There is a continuous footway on the west side of Shrigley Road North and the northern side of Coppice Road which is of adequate width and condition.
- The speed limit is 30 mph on Shrigley Road North and Coppice Road.
- There is no street lighting on Shrigley Road North. There is street lighting on Coppice Road.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	On Shrigley Road North and Coppice Road
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:

Is crossing required? Dates assessed in 2016: 10 th March 6 th May 6 th June	Yes
	Coppice Road needs to be crossed near to the junction with Waterloo Road. An assessment was undertaken on Coppice Road near to the junction of Waterloo Road in March and May 2016. There was an average of 222 vehicle counts in one hour which included 11 passenger carrying vehicles and 7 HGV's. A minimum gap of 7 seconds was calculated for pupils to safely cross the road at this point and there were as average of 24 gap counts in any 5 minute period.
Comments	

Coppice Road/ Waterloo Road junction



Section assessment result	Available
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SECTION 3 – ASSESSMENT

Section Characteristics

- This section of the route follows Waterloo Road, Trafalgar Avenue, Nelson Avenue, Hockley Road, Pine Road and footpath to Poynton High School.
- All roads can be classed as urban and have a single 2 lane carriageway with footpath on each side.
- There is a continuous footway from Waterloo Road to Poynton High School which is of adequate width and condition.
- The speed limit is 30 mph on this section of the route
- There is street lighting on this section of the route..

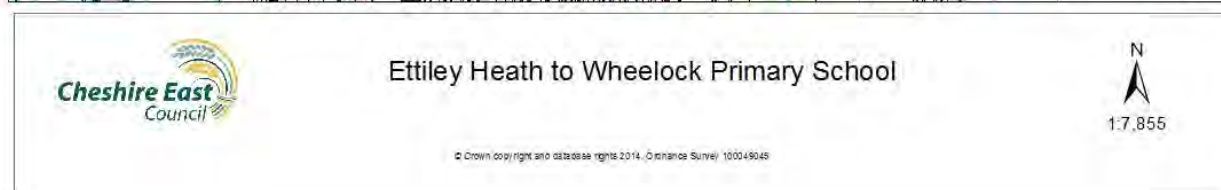
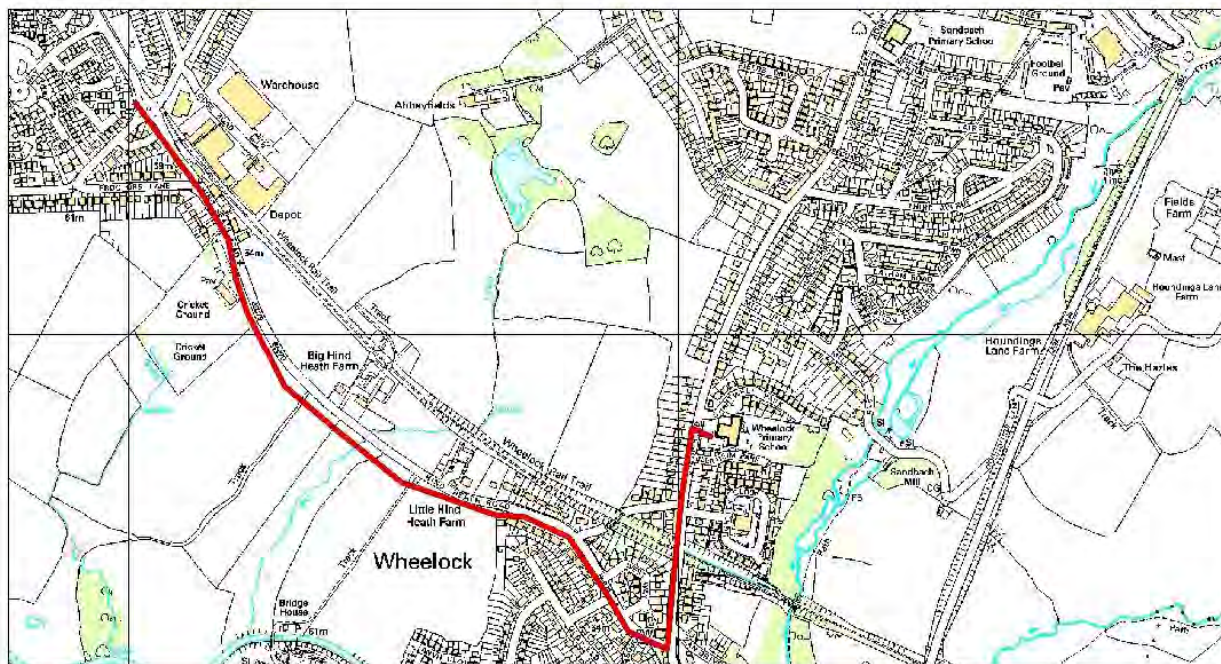
Footway Assessment:	
Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	On Waterloo Road, Trafalgar Avenue, Nelson Avenue, Hockley Road, Pine Road,
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:	
Is crossing required?	No
	.
Comments	

Section assessment result	Available
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Walking Route to School Assessment
Assessment number CE 321
Elton Road Roundabout to Wheelock Primary School
Route assessed in February, April and June 2015



Overall Route Assessment Outcome	Available
Dates and Times of Assessment	23 rd February 2015 (pm) 22 nd April 2015 (am) 5 th June 2015 (am)
Weather	Dry/ Cold – 23 rd Feb 2015 Dry/ Sunny – 22 nd April 2015 Dry/ Sunny – 5 th June 2015

Site Safety Assessor:

This assessment is undertaken in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Available Routes to School Policy, which reflects guidance notes issued by Road Safety GB in 2012 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' and the Department for Education's Home to school travel and transport guidance - Statutory guidance for local authorities July 2014

Any opinions expressed by the assessing officer are based on the above guidelines and the experienced professional judgement of the safety assessor

1. Route Overview

This assessment relates to children of compulsory school age in years R to 6, (aged 4 to 11) walking to Wheelock Primary School. The statutory walking distance for children

in this age range is 2 miles. The assessor has not identified any factors in the assessment below which would affect the availability of the route for a young person in these age ranges. The assessment has assumed that pupils are accompanied by a responsible person.

The assessor has considered how the availability of this route might be affected at different times of the year and there are no seasonal factors that might affect the availability of the route.

The assessor has also considered that pupils of the ages noted above would be expected to travel to and from school between 0745 and 0845 in the morning and 1515 and 1615 in the afternoon.

The route assessed follows the new pedestrian / cycle path on Hind Heath Road and across Crewe Road using the pedestrian facilities in the traffic light system. Parents may wish to cross at Hind Heath Lane to use the pedestrian only route over the Wheelock Rail Trail through to the school but this crossing point has not been assessed.

The route assessed in 2015 follows pavements on well lit roads. The route is less than 2 miles and assessed as available routes.

2. Recorded Collision Data

In the 3 year period between 1st Dec 2011 and 30th Nov 2014 there were 5 recorded collisions involving personal injury on this route; 2 of these collisions involved a pedestrian. The pedestrian collisions were not at a suggested crossing point
4 collisions on Hind Heath Road (1 involving pedestrian)
1 collision on Crewe Road (1 involving pedestrian)

3. The Route

Section 1 – Elworth Road roundabout from Salt Line Way to Hind Heath Road

Grid reference:	374016	360405
	374026	360391
Distance:	15 meters	

Section 2 – Hind Heath Road, Crewe Road and entrance to Wheelock Primary School

Grid reference:	374026	360391
	375018	359818

Distance: 1847 meters 1.1 miles

SECTION 1 – ASSESSMENT**Section Characteristics**

- This section of the route crosses the Elworth roundabout at Elton Road.
- There is a pedestrian refuge on this road adjacent to the roundabout.
- Elworth roundabout is a 2 lane roundabout with street lighting and there is a 30 mph limit on all roads leading to the roundabout

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	Good quality pavements of adequate width
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No



Elworth roundabout at Elton Road

Crossing Assessment:

Is a crossing required? Yes	One hour crossing assessments have been carried out at Elworth Roundabout at Elton Road on the following dates: Elton Road – 23 rd Feb 2015 (1515 – 1620) Elton Road – 22 nd April 2015 (0745 – 0845) Elton Road – 5 th June 2015 (0745 – 0845)
Sighting time	There is a minimum of 4 seconds sighting times crossing from either north or south on Elton Road
Traffic volume	Elton Road (pm) 302 passenger car units Elton Road (am) 320 passenger car units Elton Road (am) 339 passenger car units

<p>Gap Times</p> <p>The width of the road between the pedestrian refuge is 6.5 meters giving a crossing time of 7 seconds each side of the pedestrian refuge</p>	<p>For the purpose of the assessment traffic and gap counts were undertaken for traffic movements for each side of the pedestrian refuge for traffic moving towards and away from the roundabout.</p> <p>During the morning assessments there were at least 5 eight second crossing opportunity every minute and 27 eight second crossing opportunities each side of the pedestrian refuge. The least opportunities to cross were between 0810 and 0815 with an average of 22 gaps in 5 minutes and 4 gaps every minute.</p> <p>In the afternoon there were at least 4 eight second crossing opportunities every minute and 22 eight second opportunities every 5 minutes each side of the pedestrian refuge. The least opportunities to cross were found between 1535 and 1540 with an average of 10 crossing gaps each side of the pedestrian refuge.</p>
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SECTION 2 – ASSESSMENT

Hind Heath Road and crossing Hind Heath Road at traffic lights and Crewe Road at Puffin Crossing

Footway Assessment:	
Is there a pavement/footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	All pavements are in adequate condition and of sufficient width. There is a short section, between Proctor Lane and the Cricket club where pedestrians need to walk adjacent to the grass but the pavement is in good enough quality to walk on. The section between the cricket club and Crewe Road is a shared cycle / pedestrian path.
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:	
Is a crossing required?	Yes
	Pedestrians are required to cross Hind Heath Lane at the traffic lights on Crewe Road and at the Puffin crossing on Crewe Road. Both these facilities are traffic light controlled and no further assessment is required.
Sighting time	
Traffic volume	
Gap times	



Crewe Road puffin crossing

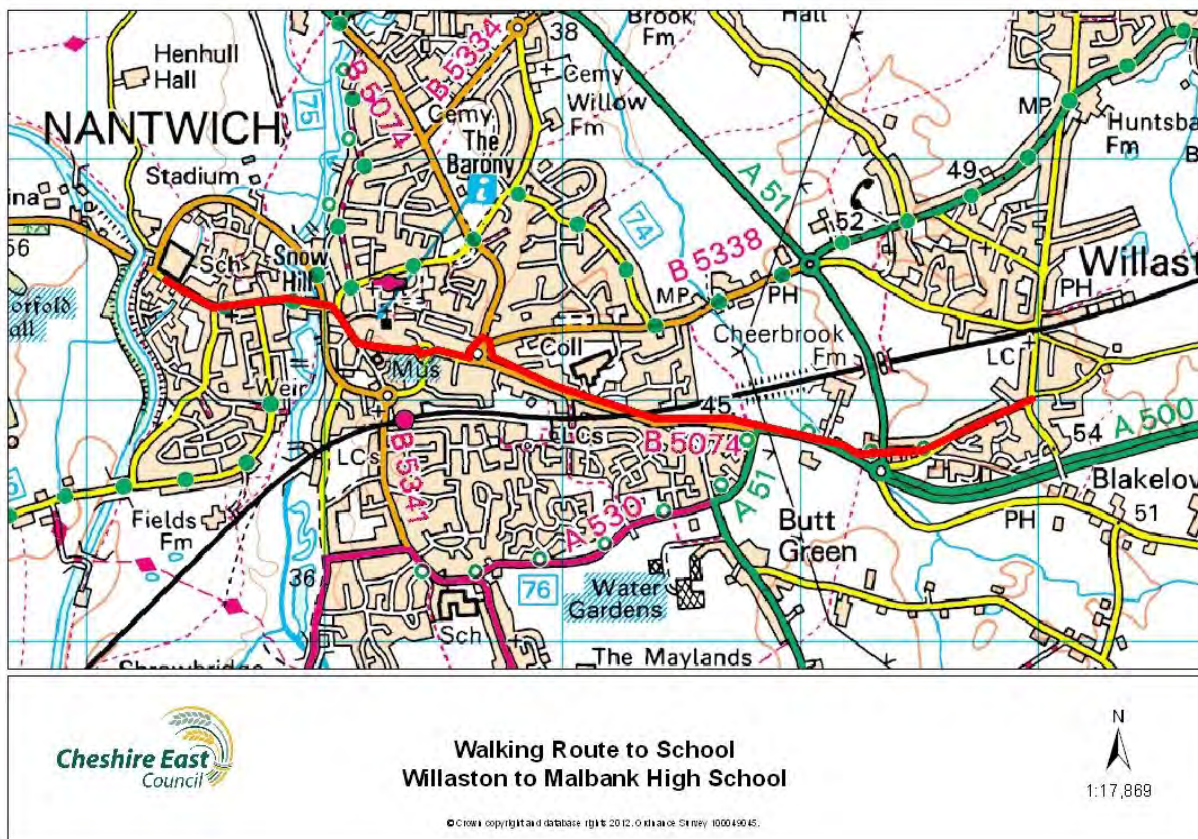
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Walking Route to School Assessment

Assessment number CE 320

Willaston to Malbank High

Route assessed November 2012 / May 2016



Dates & Times of Assessment:	2 nd , 22 nd , 28 th November 2012 and 5 th December 2012, 10 th May 2016
Weather:	November and December -Wintry Conditions May visit - Raining and wet
Overall Route Assessment Outcome	AVAILABLE

Site Safety Assessor:

This assessment is undertaken in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Available Routes to School Policy, which reflects guidance notes issued by Road Safety GB in 2012 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' and the Department for Education and Skills in 2007 'Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance'.

Any opinions expressed by the reviewing officer / safety assessor are based on the above guidelines and the experienced professional judgement of the safety assessor.

1. Route Overview

This assessment relates to children of compulsory school age in years 7 to 11(aged 11 to 16) walking to Malbank High School. The assessor has not identified any factors in the assessment below which would affect the availability of the route for a young person in these age ranges. The assessment has assumed that pupils are accompanied by a responsible person.

The assessor has considered how the availability of this route might be affected at different times of the year and finds that there are no variations on the route

The assessor has also considered that pupils of the ages noted above would be expected to travel to and from school between 0745 and 0845 in the morning and 1530 and 1630 in the afternoon and assessments have been carried out at this time

The route is a suggested route to Malbank; there are other walking routes between Willaston and Malbank which have not been assessed

2. Recorded Collision Data

In the 5 year period between 1st January 2011 and 31st December 2015 there were 21 recorded collisions of all types involving personal injury on the route. 5 of these collisions involved a pedestrian. None of the pedestrian collisions were at the suggested crossing points.

1 collision on Cheerbrook Rd

4 collisions on Newcastle Road

9 collisions on London Road, 4 pedestrians were involved in 3 of the collisions

1 collision on Hospital Street

1 collision in the town centre

5 collisions on the Welsh Row, 1 pedestrian was involved in 1 of the collisions

3. The Route

Section 1 Cheerbrook Road across A500 to Newcastle Road.

Grid ref	367952	351990
	367224	351772

Distance 778 meters

Section 2 London Road, crossing Hospital Street through town centre to Welsh Row

Grid ref	367224	351772
	365063	352380

Distance 2404 meters

Section 3 Welsh Row and along to Malbank High School.

Grid ref	365063	352380
	364336	352500

Distance 774 meters

Total distance 3956 meters / 2.45 miles

SECTION 1 – ASSESSMENT**Section Characteristics**

- This section of the route covers Cheerbrook Road then follows Old Newcastle Road which is a slip road leading to the Toucan crossing on the A51 leading to Newcastle Road. The route then follows the cycle way on Newcastle Road to London Road.
- Cheerbrook Road is an urban road with a good pavement on the southern side of the road, on the northern side of the road there are grass verges.
- This section of the road is a 30 mph.
- A51 is a single lane Carriageway with a high volume of traffic, the speed limit is 60 mph – it is classed as an A road and has lighting at the roundabout.
- Newcastle Road is classed as the A51 but changes to the B5074 after it passes Elwood Way. Newcastle Road is a wide single 2-lane carriageway.
- The speed limit on Newcastle Road is 60 mph and there is lighting along this section of the route; however, there is a section of the route along Newcastle Road where the street lighting will be switched off. This does not impact of the road safety of students as they do not have to cross the road at this point.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	There is footway for this whole section which is of adequate width and condition. Old Newcastle Road and Newcastle Road have wide pavements and there is a shared cycle way on Newcastle Road.
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:

Is crossing required?	Yes
	Pedestrians will need to cross the A51 at the Toucan Crossing. This pedestrian crossing has been installed within the last 2 years and has been fully safety audited. There is no requirement for further assessment at this point.



Cheerbrook Road



Toucan Crossing A500

Section Assessment Result	Available
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SECTION 2 – ASSESSMENT

Section Characteristics

- This section of the route follows London Road, crossing Millstone Lane to Hospital Street through the town centre to Welsh Row.
- The start of the route is on the access road into the town centre and can be classed as semi rural, as the route gets nearer the town centre there are more houses and shops and the route can then be classed as urban. The route passes through the town centre which is pedestrian zone.
- The speed limit changes from 60 mph to 30 mph when Newcastle Road meets London Road.
- Newcastle Road is an 'A' road whilst London Road is a 'B' road.
- Pedestrians are required to cross the railway crossing at a half-barrier crossing.
- There is street lighting for the full length of this section.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	On London Road the pavement is generally wide but there is a section where bushes and some damp leaves encroach onto the pavement, adjacent to St. Josephs Way; this encroachment does not reduce the width enough to create a road safety problem. The pavements on Hospital Road are also wide and in good condition. The town centre is a pedestrian zone.
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:	
Is crossing required? Dates assessed 27 th Nov 2012 28 th Nov 2012 28 th Nov 2012 28 th Nov 2012	<p>Yes</p> <p>The following roads need to be crossed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Railway line on London Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a half barrier • The Gullet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Cul-de-sac • Millstone Lane <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a Zebra Crossing • Water Lode <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a pedestrian phase within the traffic light system • Other side roads need to be crossed
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment carried out on the railway crossing on London Road, between 8.00 am and 9.00 am showed that this crossing is already used by pedestrians and cyclists—there are approximately 4 trains every hour. Although the railway is only controlled by a half barrier, the assessor saw no road safety issues with this crossing point. • The Gullet is a quiet road and has 4 seconds viewing time of traffic. An assessment was carried out on the Gullet which showed that there were 50 vehicles an hour, between 3.15 pm and 4.15 pm using this road – this is classed as very low traffic and an ‘available’ crossing point. • Millstone Lane, can be crossed using the zebra crossing; the assessor noted that the crossing was in need of some maintenance and this has been reported. • Water Lode can be crossed using the pedestrian phase which is in all 4 legs of the traffic lights. • All other side roads all have 4 seconds viewing time of the traffic.



Water Lode



Millstone Lane Zebra Crossing



Railway crossing on London Road

Section assessment result	Available
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SECTION 3 – ASSESSMENT

Section Characteristics

- This section follows Welsh Row and along to Malbank High School.
- The road is in an urban area with houses or shops on either side of the road.
- The road is classified as a 2 lane single carriageway and has street lighting for the full length of the route.
- The speed limit is 30 mph but there is a traffic management on this section of the route offering various places to cross the road.
- The assessor noted that there are already a high number of students from Malbank High walking down this road in the periods before and after school.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/ footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	There is a good footway for the full length of this route of adequate width and condition.
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:

Is crossing required?	No
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Section assessment result	Available
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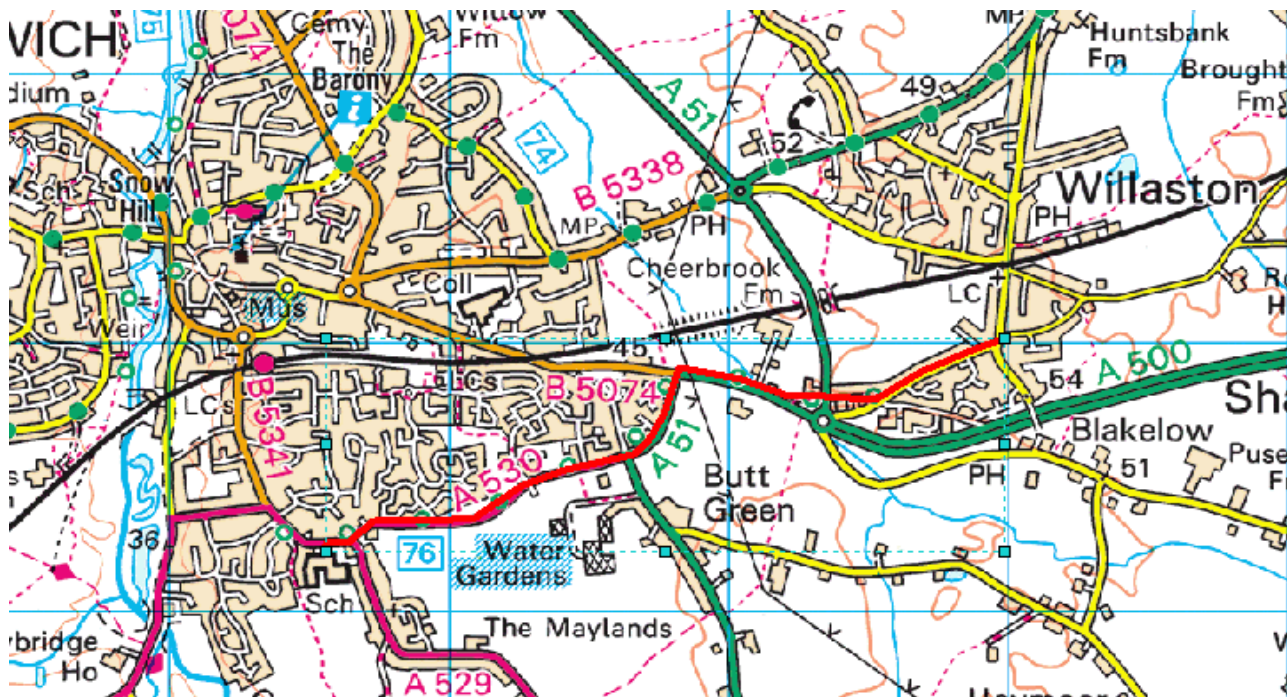


Welsh Row, showing pavement

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Walking Route to School Assessment

Assessment number CE 320
Willaston to Brine Leas School
Route assessed March & May 2016



Dates & Times of Assessment:	14 th & 16 th March 2016 / 10 th May 2016
Weather:	Dry and Sunny / wet
Overall Route Assessment Outcome	AVAILABLE

Site Safety Assessor:

This assessment is undertaken in accordance with Cheshire East Council's Available Routes to School Policy, which reflects guidance notes issued by Road Safety GB in 2012 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' and the Department for Education and Skills in 2007 'Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance'.

Any opinions expressed by the reviewing officer / safety assessor are based on the above guidelines and the experienced professional judgement of the safety assessor.

1. Route Overview

This assessment relates to children of compulsory school age in years 7 to 11 (aged 11 to 16) walking to Brine Leas High School. The assessor has not identified any factors in the assessment below which would affect the availability of the route for a young person in these age ranges. The assessment has assumed that pupils are accompanied by a responsible person.

The assessor has considered how the availability of this route might be affected at different times of the year and finds that there are no variations on the route

The assessor has also considered that pupils of the ages noted above would be expected to travel to and from school between 07.50 and 08.50 in the morning and 15.35 and 16.35 in the afternoon and assessments have been carried out at this time

The route is a suggested route to Brine Leas High School; there are other walking routes between Willaston and Malbank which have not been assessed

2. Recorded Collision Data

In the 5 year period between 1st January 2011 and 31st December 2015 there were 10 recorded collisions of all types involving personal injury on the route. None of these collisions involved a pedestrian.

- Section 1 there were 5 recorded collisions of all types involving personal injury on the route.
- Section 2 there were 5 recorded collisions, of all types involving personal injury on the route.

3. The Route

Section 1 Cheerbrook Road across A500 to Newcastle Road with its junction with A51 Elwood Way.

Grid ref	367963	352010
	366816	351890
Distance	1195 mtrs	(0.74 miles)

Section 2 A51 Elwood Way, A5301 Peter Destapleigh and A529 (Audlem Road) to Brine Leas High School.

Grid ref	366916	351890
	365615	351259
Distance	1526 mtrs	(0.95 miles)

Total Distance 2721 mtrs (1.69 miles)

SECTION 1 – ASSESSMENT**Section Characteristics**

- This section of the route covers Cheerbrook Road then follows Old Newcastle Road which is a slip road leading to the Toucan crossing on the A51 leading to Newcastle Road. The route then follows the cycle way on Newcastle Road to its junction with A51 Elwood Way.
- Cheerbrook Road is an urban road with a good pavement on the southern side of the road, on the northern side of the road there are grass verges.
- This section of the road is a 30 mph.
- A51 is a single lane Carriageway with a high volume of traffic, the speed limit is 60 mph – it is classed as an A road and has lighting at the roundabout.
- Newcastle Road is classed as the A51 to the junction with Elwood Way. Newcastle Road is a wide single 2-lane carriageway.
- The speed limit on Newcastle Road is 60 mph and there is lighting along this section of the route; however, there is a section of the route along Newcastle Road where the street lighting is switched off. This does not impact of the road safety of students as they do not have to cross the road at this point.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	There is footway for this whole section which is of adequate width and condition. Old Newcastle Road and Newcastle Road have wide pavements and there is a shared cycle way on Newcastle Road.
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:

Is crossing required?	Yes
	Pedestrians will need to cross the A51 at the Toucan Crossing. This pedestrian crossing has been fully safety audited. There is no requirement for further assessment at this point.



Cheerbrook Road



Toucan Crossing A500

Section Assessment Result	Available
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SECTION 2 – ASSESSMENT

Section Characteristics

- This section of the route follows A51 Elwood Way, A5301 Peter Destapleigh Way to the A529 Audlem Road and Brine Leas School.
- Elwood Way and Peter Destapleigh Way are wide single 2 lane carriageway.
- There is a footway on the northern side for the whole section of this route which is of adequate width and condition and is shared with a cycle way.
- The speed limit is 40 mph on Elwood Way and Peter Destapleigh Way. The speed limit is reduced on Peter Destapleigh Way to 30 mph as the road approaches the junction with Hawsley Drive. The speed limit remains at 30 mph for the rest of the route to Brine Leas School.
- There are controlled crossing on Elwood Way across London Road and on Peter Destapleigh Way across Pear Tree Field, Hawsley Drive and Audlem Road.
- There is street lighting for the full length of this section.

Footway Assessment:

Is there a pavement/footway segregated from traffic?	Yes
	On Elwood Way the pavement is wide
Is there a need to walk on the carriageway?	No

Crossing Assessment:

Is crossing required?	Yes
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Dates assessed	<p>The following roads need to be crossed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollard Drive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Cul-de-sac • London Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a pedestrian phase in the traffic lights • Pear Tree Field <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a pedestrian phase in the traffic lights • Hawksey Drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a traffic island. • Burnell Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Cul-de-sac • Audlem Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ This is controlled by a pedestrian phase in the traffic lights
Comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollard Drive is a quiet side road and has 4 seconds viewing time of traffic. Pollard drive has very low traffic and an 'available' crossing point. • London Road can be crossed using the controlled crossing. • Pear Tree Field can be crossed using the controlled crossing • Hawksey Drive can be crossed using the un-controlled crossing. • Burnell Close is a quiet cul-de-sac with very low traffic counts. • A529 Audlem Road is crossing using the controlled crossing point at the traffic lights. • All other side roads all have 4 seconds viewing time of the traffic.

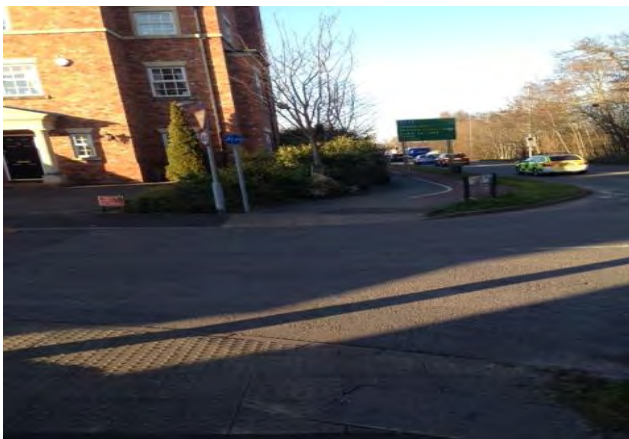
Section assessment result	Available
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Photos of route

Elwood Way traffic lights



Pollard Drive Crossing



Pear Tree Fields crossing



Hawksey Drive Crossing



Burnell Close crossing



Audlem Road crossing



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS -

1 July 2016

Available Walking Routes to School

Generic questions

At a meeting on 14 June 2016, the Cabinet for Cheshire East Council made the decision to;

I. note the reclassification of routes that have been re-assessed as available walking routes to school with the consequence that school transport be withdrawn from pupils from April 2017.

II. consult on spending of the Local Transport Plan budget allocation for 2016/17 to improve further walking routes to school.

A route that is classified as available is one that the council deems suitable for a child to walk in line with Councils approved “ Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy – Assessment of availability of routes to be walked” which is based on Road Safety UK Guidance.

In making this decision the cabinet noted that;

- it is the parents/carers responsibility to get their child to school.
- the child would be accompanied by a responsible person, such as a parent or other adult.
- routes are assessed on the basis of road safety and not personal safety in line with case law.

Road Safety UK Guidance (2011) states:

“Routes are assessed in terms of road safety, and not personal safety. Case law has found that assessments must look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic only. Personal safety issues of children travelling alone are not considered. Local authorities are not legally obliged to provide free transport just because parents perceive the route to be unsafe on the grounds of personal safety and security”

The Council’s Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy – Assessment of availability of routes to be walked Policy and Walking Routes to School Assessments for the affected routes can be found using the following link

www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/availablewalkingroutes

See separate “Frequently Asked Questions” for route specific questions.

Question	Response
What is the distance that a child is expected to walk to and from school?	The law states that the statutory walking distance is two miles for children under eight and three miles for children aged eight and over (Cheshire East Council extends the two mile distance to cover all pupils in Primary School). The measurement of the statutory walking distance is measured by the shortest route along which a child accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety. As such, the route measured may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways as well as recognised roads.
What happens if I work and don't have the time to walk with my child to school	The law states that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that a child is accompanied as necessary on the walking journey to school.
How does the assessor know if a road can be crossed in reasonable safety?	The assessments are undertaken in accordance with Cheshire East Council's "Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy – Assessment of availability of routes to be walked.", which reflects guidance issued by Road Safety GB 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' and the Department for Education and Skills 'Home to school travel and transport guidance'. All assessments are verified with traffic counts and details are recorded in a written report which contains maps and if necessary photographs. No crossing point can be absolutely safe; the term used in the guidance is "reasonable safety" which would make the walking route available.
What happens if there is no street lighting along the route, or the lighting that is there has been turned off?	The existence or otherwise of street lighting is taken into account where this will assist drivers in seeing pedestrians walking in the road or at identified crossing points where no formal crossing

	exists (such as a light controlled or zebra crossing). If a continuous suitable footway exists then street lighting is desirable but may not be required for a route to be assessed as available.
What happens if children have heavy bags to carry?	The assessment carried out is a road safety assessment and does not take into account the weight of the bags carried by an individual.
How can I be sure my children won't misbehave on the journey to and from school?	If a parent is concerned that their children may misbehave on their journey to school then it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that children, where necessary, are accompanied on the route to and from school.
What happens if the footpath is really narrow?	If a footway is less than ½ meter in width then traffic volumes and speeds are taken into account in the assessment. If the footway is over this width then it is considered to be an available route.
There is a level crossing on the route – I don't think this is safe?	The existence of a railway crossing does not prevent the route from being assessed as available to walk as long as there is a suitable, authorised crossing point present. Also, any danger that can be avoided if a child is accompanied is disregarded.
Can a route that is off-road without street lighting be assessed as available?	<p>In accordance with the law, all routes are assessed with the assumption that pupils are accompanied as necessary by a responsible person. Routes are not classed as unavailable solely due to any or all of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lonely routes • Routes that pass close to canals, rivers, ditches, lakes, ponds etc • Routes that require railway crossings if a suitable,

	authorised crossing is present.
What time are the assessments undertaken?	Assessments usually take place in the morning during the times the children will be travelling to school and assessments may also be undertaken when returning home in the afternoon. Visits are timed, where possible so that crossing assessments of main roads take place at the times when the number of children travelling to school is highest.
What if there isn't a footway?	Even if there isn't a footway the walking route might still be assessed as available. The assessment will take account of traffic flows and whether car drivers have enough time to slow down or pedestrians have time to step-off the road or verge.
What will happen if I can't afford public transport?	Families on low income may qualify to receive assistance with school transport. Information will be provided to parents on how to apply through the implementation process.
Why does the assessment not take into account the personal safety of Children?	In accordance with Road Safety UK guidelines. "Routes are assessed in terms of road safety, and not personal safety. Case law has found that assessments must look at the relationship between pedestrians and traffic only. Personal safety issues of children travelling alone are not considered. Local authorities are not legally obliged to provide free transport just because parents perceive the route to be unsafe on the grounds of personal safety and security."
Is the assessor appropriately qualified and competent to undertake the assessment?	Yes, the professional qualifications of the safe route assessors include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accident and Safety Management – Ed excel

	<p>Advanced Professional Development Diploma. (NVQ level 5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident Investigation Courses. • Road Safety Officer for over 20 years.
How do I appeal if I think the walking route is unsafe?	No walking route can be absolutely safe; the term used in guidance is “reasonable safety” which would make the walking route available. If you think the route isn’t available you have the right to appeal. You must demonstrate that there is a change to the route that would not make it reasonably safe to walk along, or other circumstances that you feel the council should take into account that it hasn’t already considered.
Why has the Council not considered alternative arrangements?	In briefings provided to Transport Service Solutions and affected schools the potential for discussions on commercial routes was discussed. However, it was not considered appropriate for this to be explored further until the decision to withdraw transport was made. A nine month implementation was proposed to enable discussions on alternative arrangements to be considered.
My child has medical issues that make it very difficult for them to walk to school.	Some children may still be eligible for transport on grounds other than the classification of the route. Applications for circumstances to be considered would need to be made through the implementation period.
Why are the council removing the buses just to save money?	The decision is about ensuring fair, equitable and consistent application of policy. Albeit it does result in savings.
Would it be possible to phase in the transport changes due to the short notice	The local authority is required by law to give 12 weeks notice of the change of any transport provision. The proposal

given for these changes?	provided up to 9 months notice so that alternative arrangements could be explored.
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**1 July 2016****Available Walking Routes to School Assessment Review.
Route specific questions.**

The following report outlines the comments raised by the community regarding the assessment of the available walking routes to school for the following locations: The document also includes questions previously raised about the availability of these routes for walking to school.

- Ettiley Heath to Wheelock Primary School
- Bollington to Tytherington High
- Willaston to Malbank School and 6th form College
- Wilaston to Brine Leas High School
- Higher Poynton to Poynton High School

See separate “Frequently Asked Questions” for generic responses.

Ettiley Heath to Wheelock Primary School

Comments made about suggested walking route	Response
The short section of road close to the traffic roundabout at the junction of Salt Line Way, Elton Road and Hind Heath Road is close to the junction of Elworth Road, Abbey Road and Lodge Road. This results in traffic from 6 different roads potentially merging at a point where one has to cross the road.	The assessment shows that there are adequate opportunities for pedestrians to cross at the suggested crossing points. During the traffic count it was noted that these roads are crossed by high numbers of students from the Sandbach High Schools and other pedestrians.
The Wheelock Rail Trail is unlit and secluded in parts.	Generally school start and finish times are such that children can walk to school in daylight. There will be a limited number of times when this is before sunrise and after the sun sets i.e. in twilight hours. In these cases it is the parents' responsibility to accompany their child if they feel it is appropriate. A parent may decide that a child can walk unaccompanied but the legal responsibility remains with parents to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that their child attends school. If a continuous suitable footway exists then street lighting is desirable but may not be required for a route to be assessed as available.
The Wheelock Rail trail is muddy and there is a potential to slip in icy weather.	As with all roads and routes, pedestrians need to wear appropriate footwear and take care in wet and icy conditions. The

	Wheelock Rail Trail has a good surface and occasional puddles can be avoided if care is taken. Any serious issues with the route can be reported to Cheshire East Council on 0300 123 5020.
The steps from the Wheelock Rail Trail on to Hind Heath Road are very steep.	Parents who may have exceptional family circumstances and would not be able to use the steps on the Wheelock Rail Trail may wish to make an appeal. Parents may only appeal if the route via Abbey Road, Middlewich Road is over two miles from their house.
The Abbey Road/Middlewich Road is too far for a four year old child to walk.	The law states that the statutory walking distance is two miles for children under eight and three miles for children aged eight and over (Cheshire East Council extends the two mile distance to cover all pupils in Primary School). The measurement of the statutory walking distance is measured by the shortest route along which a child accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety.
Double yellow lines have been installed around Chartwell Park making it difficult for parents to park near the school.	If parents choose to drive there is parking along Crewe Road on the opposite side to the school. Pedestrians can then use Toucan crossing outside the school. Alternatively, parents could park on Hind Heath Road and walk 5 minutes to school thus avoiding the congestion around the school gate.
There is a local bail hostel in the area which adds to the personal safety issues of the children.	In accordance with the law, all routes are assessed with the assumption that pupils are accompanied as necessary by a responsible person. Routes are not classed as unavailable solely due to the fact that they are a lonely route.

Bollington to Tytherington High.School.

Comments made about suggested walking route	Response
The school gates are locked during the school day so pupils would not be able to gain access to school outside of normal opening and closing times.	Pupils need to ensure that they arrive at school on time.
Why is the route assessed as available when it was deemed	The walking route between Tytherington High School and Bollington has always been

unsafe a few years ago?	assessed as available.
Existing lighting on Middlewood Way does not always work.	Any faults with street lighting should be reported to 0300 123 5020. There is currently a maintenance programme for the lights along the Middlewood Way which will take place over the next couple of months. This will ensure that the lights are switched on, for the few weeks of the year when they may be required.
There are steep steps up to a bridge on the Middlewood Way.	The route is fully accessible for cycles and wheelchair users; pedestrians not wishing to use the steps may use the accessible routes.
There are boggy water-logged ditches on either side of the Middlewood Way.	Assessments do not determine whether a route is "safe" or "dangerous". All roads / paths may be thought of as presenting some element of risk. All routes are assessed with the assumption that pupils are accompanied as necessary by a responsible person.
Some pupils may have to walk in the dark as sections of the route are not lit.	Generally school start and finish times are such that children can walk to school in daylight. There will be a limited number of times when this is before sunrise and after the sun sets i.e. in twilight hours. In these cases it is the parents' responsibility to accompany their child if they feel it is appropriate. A parent may decide that a child can walk unaccompanied but the legal responsibility remains with parents to make appropriate arrangements to ensure that their child attends school. If a continuous suitable footway exists then street lighting is desirable but may not be required for a route to be assessed as available.
Personal safety issues.	In accordance with the law, all routes are assessed with the assumption that pupils are accompanied as necessary by a responsible person. Routes are not classed as unavailable solely due to the fact that they are a lonely route. A number of pupils from Tytherington High School already use the Middlewood Way as they walk from Macclesfield Town Centre and from Tytherington to the school.
What happens if there is an emergency?	The Middlewood Way is a well used route and there are a number of access points where emergency vehicles can access the route.
Exposed bridge over a busy dual carriageway.	The pedestrian bridge over the Silk Road does not present a road safety hazard. The two existing bridges are on a current maintenance programme and anti-slip mats are soon to be installed in these two locations.
Crossing of Grimshaw Lane and entrance adjacent to Mill.	A Traffic count has been carried out at this location which shows that there are adequate

	opportunities to cross Grimshaw Lane.
Some pupils may try to cross the Silk Road rather than use the Middlewood Way.	Parents/carers are responsible for the routes their children take on the journey to school.
In winter conditions the path may be slippery from ice or snow.	Care needs to be taken when travelling in winter conditions whether it is by car, bus or on foot.

Willaston to Malbank School and 6th form College

Crossing the A51 is a dangerous place to cross and cars do not always stop when the lights of the crossing show red.	There is a toucan crossing over the A51; when this crossing was installed a full safety audit would have been carried out. Since the installation there have been no pedestrian collisions at this point. The Highway Codes states that pedestrians should always check that traffic has stopped before you start to cross the road.
There is no street lighting along the route.	The existence or otherwise of street lighting is taken into account where this will assist drivers in seeing pedestrians walking in the road or at identified crossing points where no light controlled crossing exists. If a continuous suitable footway exists then street lighting is desirable but may not be required for a route to be assessed as available. This route is covered by street lighting although some of the lighting along Newcastle Road has been turned off.
My child is 3.3 miles from the school	Statutory walking distance is two miles for children under eight and three miles for children aged eight and over. (Cheshire East Council extends the two mile distance for all pupils in Primary School). The measurement of the statutory walking distance by road. It is measured by the shortest route along which a child accompanied as necessary, may walk with reasonable safety. As such, the route measured may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways as well as recognised roads. A child who lives more than 3 miles from their catchment school would still be eligible for transport.
There is a level crossing with half barrier on the route.	National guidance states that a railway crossing may be deemed as an available walking route, if there is a controlled crossing in place. The railway crossing on London Road is controlled by a half barrier.

	<p>A traffic assessment carried out, on this particular crossing, showed that it is successfully used by pedestrians and cyclists in a rush hour period.</p> <p>If parents feel that their child can not cross the railway line safely, then it is their responsibility to ensure that the child is accompanied.</p>
The walking route is via the Cheebrook Road which is an indirect route.	As long as the route is under the 3 mile statutory walking distance then this can be considered as an available walking route.
There is heavy traffic along London Road.	The volume of traffic is only taken into consideration in a route assessment if a road is required to be crossed.
No Toucan crossing on The Gullet.	A traffic count was undertaken on The Gullet which showed very low traffic volumes.
Very narrow footpath on Newcastle Road.	The footpath on Newcastle road is considered to be of adequate width.

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