

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.