

## Detail of Responses from Consultation – Appeals Process Suggestions/comments

1. Needs to be fair and consistent. Treat everyone same . No different treatment for one versus another.
2. Parents should be listened to not the schools view - often parents are put in a situation that add stress to the family with little clear support to help them.
3. I think the council needs to look at where schools and children are located, for example if you end up bussing loads of Billingham kids to North Shore it's pretty obvious we need another school or more places at existing schools.
4. Should encourage waking to school as main option and then encourage parental responsibility Should only provide service for children in care as a duty of care but we should encourage walking if distance is reasonable
5. I would remove the need for passes because so many are lost or forgotten and causes inconveniences on both mornings and afternoons
6. I can only relate to the issues residents in I.B. face having school age children myself (both Primary & Secondary). I feel that school transport arrangements need to look wider than the statutory guidance where local demographics dictate that children, by necessity, end up having to attend schools some way from where they live due to reasons completely outside of parents control. By way of example, my eldest daughter attends Conyers, we moved from an area of IB where transport would have been provided free of charge (Roundhill) to the Eggescliffe catchment area (The Rings). When we moved there were no spaces at Eggescliffe so we left her at Conyers and now pay Â£2 per day for school transport. My primary age daughter attends Ingleby Mill and we transport her every day across IB and back which simply adds to the congestion as I'm sure we are not an insignificant minority. Again, at the time, moving schools was not an option so we left her where she was and now fight our way across IB twice on a morning. Simply developing a school transport policy based upon the nearest eligible school criteria is unfair on parents in places like IB when finding a place at a secondary school in IB is very difficult indeed.
7. After reading the transport policy I am a bit confused as transport for children dosent start till the age of 5, children start school at the age of 4. The government on both parties are always going on about get everyone in to employment and children into care or school as early as possible. Bit confusing. Sorry go of draft, I don't think you should bother appealing if you don't meet the criteria what the point.
8. Stop lining your own pockets and think of childrens education. Its hard enough for young children these days as it is without you penny pinching, and making it more difficult.
9. consistency of approach, clear processes that stand up to scrutiny.
10. We would like to be well informed what is happening, as we have had three meetings at St Josephs RC School Norton, which were very quickly arranged due to the time window up to 5th July. We feel we should have had a lot more time notice on the veiwing of revised draft policy. Also we feel that the School Transport Department should have directly contacted all parents and carers of children at the Primary Schools involved about this revised policy. This could have so easily have been missed and have an enormous impact on our faith families. Our RC faith does matter and all families should have the right for their children to attend their RC feeder schools with their friendship groups. You should always think of the children who will only be 11years of age when they will be subject to the seperation of their friends. Think also of families who have a few children with some at St Michaels and some still in St Josephs Primary how will they manage when their children may be seperated into up to three schools.
11. Any appeals process is a stressful experience. It would be helpful if a named contact was available for discussions throughout the process, that this person was readily available and if rejection of ultimate appeal was the outcome then further support given.
12. I know very little about this to comment. As a consultation process I would have expected every primary school feeding to the secondary schools affected by the draft policy to have have been made aware of it by the local authority and it has not happened. How can i expect to see an appeal process when consultation is box ticking and minimal.
13. I FEEL THAT THE COUNCIL ARE DISCRIMINATING TOWARDS FAITH SCHOOLS. THERE HAS BEEN 2 PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS ON ST.MICHAELS SCHOOL, HOWEVER, IF ST. MICHAELS WAS A LOCALS OWN SCHOOL IT WOULD HVE BEEN LEFT ALONE. ST.MICHAELS IS OUR FAITH LOCAL ZONE SCHOOL, NOMINATED ON THE COUNCILS OWN FORMS. TRY TO SAVE MONEY ELSEWHERE INSTEAD OF USING PUBLIC FUNDS ON LUXURY ITEMS THAT DO NOT EVEN BENEFIT THE PUBLIC.
14. Continuing support of free transport to preferred faith schools where there is no suitable faith school located within the distance where free school transport is not deemed necessary.

15. This is purely discrimination of faith schools, most local council tax payers would not agree with this change. The children are our future, assist them all we can, as without them how would we move forward together in hope of a great future for our children.
16. leave the cost with the Local Authority
17. equality fairness for all
18. Children who are catholic should not be penalised nor should their parents. The cost to parents would in the region of £330 each year and if there is more than one child in the family attending this is multiplied. Councillors know that Norton is not an affluent area nor is Stockton and they should be mindful of the immense pressure this will put on parents.
19. Take into account people who pay community charge and feel strongly about children. Often, school is the one place children have continuity and a place to feel valued. If they are told they are part of the church family but only until they reach secondary age, what message are we giving them?
20. Your existing policy and pledge - believe this should be upheld 7.3 Religion or belief From September 2008, where a parent has expressed a preference for a school based on the parents religion or belief, then a child/young person aged 11 to 16 from low income families will be provided with free transport to the nearest suitable school preferred on grounds of religion or belief, where they live more than 2 miles, but no more than 15 miles from that school.
21. Reevaluate the position concerning Free transport to faith schools. Our children and grandchildren are the future ,all children from what ever faiths or backgrounds deserve the same consideration.
22. Go fully public. Announce your intentions on National TV, announce your intentions openly. As far as I can tell Stockton Council have not been transparent in their practice. I would say Stockton Council have been downright underhand bordering on sinister in the way it has put out to consultation their plan to remove free school transport for faith schools. If Stockton Council were transparent in their policies and so called good practices they would be open and honest and announce to a wider audience than those that just happen to have a computer or just happen to stumble across the web site where the policy was on show. If Stockton council announced changes to any other faith other than Christianity there would be total uproar. The 'racism' card would be shown and Stockton council would have to prove they are not being racist. We do not live in a dictatorship.
23. Why try to fix something thats not broken, leave the free transport systems in place
24. Why do you not consider saving money in other areas that are not going to impact on a child's education.
25. Carry on with this system it works.
26. This sounds very much like this 'consultation' is not actually about considering your residents views but will simply go ahead as you see fit. All appeals should be judged on the stability and mental well being of children being allowed to maintain relationships with their friends and individuals within their communities.
27. Pupils from St. Joseph's Primary have transferred to St. Michaels since 1972 St Josephs has never been a feeder school for North shore or either of its previous schools therefore all children should have transport provided SBC is proposing to charge £330 pa as approx. 35 pupils per year transfer to St. Michaels SBC would recoup in excess of £50,000 pa with a profit of £30,000. The decision to opt for a Faith school is based on the rights to freedom of worship and Christian formation, which would not be available at North Shore
28. You should always treat people fairly, particularly children. Would you withdraw this essential service if it involved people of other faiths? We think you would not! Remember this is still a Christian country.
29. Subsection 4 which seems , appropriately, to be enshrined in the law and has worked for many years.
30. Please take into account children travelling to their nearest faith school. Why should they be discriminated against when other children travelling to their nearest non faith school are not. This really screams discrimination against children traveling to their faith school. Disgraceful.
31. I would like you to look carefully at children traveling from Norton to St Michaels School in Billingham. This is a journey of 5.2K which would take at least 50 minutes walking at a very fast rate. In reality it would be nearer to one and a quarter hour. This would not be a safe journey, pupils would be tired and stressed and in no way ready to begin learning. In addition, parents choosing to drop pupils at the school would create further difficulties in an area already experiencing traffic congestion in the mornings and early evenings. Did the council take this traffic disruption into consideration when the new school was being built?
32. Education should not be a burden to families and should be upheld as free to attend and necessary transport provision provided to ensure young people can attend their school of choice, particularly when this is a faith based school. I would strongly advise that the existing provision be maintained, that education is free to young people and more importantly, free transport is provided to ensure young people attend the school of their choice.
33. I believe that it is very important for a child who has attended a faith school during their Primary School Days to be able to continue to be educated at a faith school during their years at Secondary School. The grounding of

- their faith needs to be built on and I think that will be achieved at a faith school. I think that the council are discriminating against faith school just to save a small amount of our council tax.
34. Where children have a faith, the term nearest school should refer to the nearest school of that faith
  35. There can only be one policy which does not discriminate against minority groups and that is free transport for all. Would the council consider defunding other minority groups, e.g., disabled people, for their transport requirements
  36. I should be grateful if you would consider the importance of supporting faith schools and not promoting secular schools in an unfair manner.
  37. Consider the distance and routes. I can think of a two mile route, but it is absolutely not acceptable for an 8 year old.
  38. We must keep our catholic children in a church school
  39. I have not yet been through an appeals process so I don't feel informed enough to pass judgement.
  40. I would like to see more detail on how the safety of school transport routes is to be assessed.
  41. Catholic children should not be discriminated against for wanting to attend their local catholic school by having the paid transport stopped. Why is this happening to only catholic schools?
  42. St Micheal's Catholic School covers the whole of Billingham and Norton, it is vital the children in Norton-- especially-- continue to be able to get to school free of charge.
  43. Choice is important particular when it comes to religious belief
  44. Although it may seem very sensible to suggest a national policy, Stockton is a very unusual place in terms of its layout and also its cohort / inhabitants. There are no other places in the country with such a wide demographic population or situation. Therefore, the policy needs to be a "best-fit" for Stockton and the appeals process should consider this.
  45. The nearest 'suitable' school is still too far a distance, along a main road, for an 11 year old to get to. Transport would still be required.
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46. All circumstances need to be taken in to consideration. As I said earlier, abolishing the free 'faith' transport puts a tremendous amount of stress on a single low income parent who wishes for their child to move from 1 faith school to another.
  47. Parents of children currently at St Joseph's Norton (i.e. those most affected) were not notified at all and only discovered your plans when the Headteacher informed them - which was not until three weeks before the appeals deadline. Also, people with limited ICT skills or no internet access have little or no chance of expressing their views on this matter due to this being the only means.
  48. There appears to be a discriminatory aspect to this proposed change, intentional or not, that I feel needs to be addressed. How can it be right to just target the faith community across Stockton? The links with the primary feeders are well established and indeed the government policy is where there is well established links that these are not disturbed. This is the second time I have visited this online response and I can see the first question has changed. I feel the process should be restarted so the data you are collecting can be fairly evaluated. With the up and coming summer holidays I would suggest this restarts in September.
  49. The amount of money saved by removing this service is a small drop in the ocean. I would ask the council to reconsider this decision as it removes another option for parents to send their children to faith schools.
  50. Parents should be given the chance to work with the council and the school (in our case Ian Ramsey) in order to fund a bus service for the pupils who would have qualified for transport in the past
  51. I believe that the proposed policy is fundamentally flawed and the Council should take no further action in connection with this policy at this time. The Council should seek very specific legal advice about the provisions of the ECHR and the specific interaction in international law as between the provisions of English Law and the provisions of the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church and allied canonical provisions.
  52. Need to take account where local schools are over subscribed and children have to attend out of area schools which is the next nearest school but this falls just slightly under the three mile radius ie Ingleby Barwick- trip to Conyers is 2.9 miles.
  53. see response to Section 4
  54. The appeals process will be void as this whole policy is discriminatory and is designed to ensure that faith families ONLY will be paying towards Local Authority savings. This policy and the consultation process is flawed, unjust and breaches equality principles. This policy should be subject to Judicial Review.
  55. Large families and what will you do to help families with costs? The choice of secondary school is taken away due to costs. Faith schools and destroying a long partnership between two faith schools. How many children over the years have attended any other school apart from St Michaels Billingham? Discriminating against a child's Catholic faith and unable to continue and develop their faith
  56. None

57. The guidance given by the government, is just that, Guidance. Other councils in this area have not discriminated against Faith Schools in their decision. If the council really believed in diversity, they would not be targeting Faith schools in this discriminating way. In a Christian Country, I find this an unbelievable attack on people of Faith.
58. I feel before you overly consider the appeals process you should look at the consultation process. There has been a lack of due diligence and the process has shown a lack of alternative options and a lack of communication with key stakeholders to explore the sustainability of the policy. Therefore before planning for numerous appeals try to get the policy right in the first place. Please note Cabinet Papers prepared for a neighbouring Council meeting (due to be held on 5.7.16) - <http://www.redcar-cleveland.gov.uk/cabpap16-17>. Redcar and Cleveland Council consultation has clearly taken into account alternative viable options making those affected by the changes more likely to accept them. Stockton Council should perhaps mirror this as good practice.
59. You need to concentrate on the consultation process first and the policy being put forward. Get this part right then the appeals will be reduced. To have a consultation process that gives the impression the decision has been made already, or is being rushed through before an employee involved in the process leaves will naturally increase the number of appeals. However I hope that the appeal is heard by somebody who has local knowledge of area and the school links, knows of the journey that children are expected to make and lack of crossing opportunities.
60. No discriminates against faith schools only.
61. The only good outcome to this is the parents who want to send their children to a school with transport and those who are concerned and want a catholic education will pay!. Your now ensuring that it goes back to the 60/70's era and segregating classes!!. Well done to our bend council!
62. subsidised transport costs Is this a option
63. Allow students a free choice of school. Including faith school as faith is a huge part of many people's life. Cost should. It be a consideration when the future is the next generation is at stake.
64. There is currently existing transport provided with funded passes. This transport will continue to be provided during the phased transition, it therefore makes sense to offer any spare spaces on this transport to pupils who start from September 2017 (whether funded or not) and the removal of this transport should be avoided at all costs. Where this is considered a problem consultation must be made with the School / Academy and parents concerned.
65. Recognise the historical relationship of St Josephs Norton being a feeder school to St Michaels Billingham. No safe route on foot from Norton to St Michaels Billingham. St Michaels is the only suitable secondary school for faith families in Norton, and has been for decades.
66. The Council should I believe, take into consideration and allow parents and children to choose a school which allows continuity of their faith or religion into school. Only then will some children and their parents feel they are truly following their faith or religion. Withdrawing free school transport is effectively preventing some children being able to choose a faith school there by discriminating against them on the grounds of religion. It is immoral if not illegal. In this consultation you talking about the implementation of the draft policy and not whether those filling in this document agree with the draft policy. Therefore I will send a copy of this document (with my answers) to the Local Government Ombudsman for an adjudication on whether this survey is a proper consultation on proposed school transport policy (the intended purpose) or merely a consultation on how to implement the policy when it is approved.
67. You need to look at your expenditure more closely and see in which other areas you can save money. The amount you will be saving by taking our transport away cannot be justified when you have spent money on fountains in Stockton which really weren't needed as they just attract kids on bikes riding through and parents coming down and bathing their kids in there. Not something that should be encouraged in a town centre. And a large yellow duck to sit in it when they aren't on. Yet you want our children to be deprived from going to their Catholic secondary school to continue their faith led education. You also spend a lot of unnecessary money on up keep of roundabouts. Plants are replaced and turf take up and replaced regular. This is a total waste when the plants and grass is perfectly fine but no it is dug up and disposed of and replaced by more. I'm sure cuts could be made elsewhere with not so much of an impact. I do hope you will take this on board.
68. Firstly I only know about this policy and change from another parent at the school. I think you should of contacted everyone that this is going to impact on. I have only learnt about this today (on the closing day). As I have previously mentioned I have 4 children and 3 of my children have already used school transport and my fourth child will be needing school transport from September 2017. Rather than remove transport all together charge a termly fee for a school bus pass
69. The right for a child to be educated in a faith school.

70. All students, regardless of background, should have access to free/reduced cost transport to and from school.
71. All students should have their transportation provided by the council or none at all. It is unfair to discriminate this by faith.
72. Please look at how integral Catholic Schools are to the lives of Catholic families and children. It is not a preference or choice it is who we are. Please look historically at the bus form Norton to St.Michael's Billingham and the fact there is no Catholic Secondary School in Norton.
73. It's no good looking at walking distance if the route is not safe. Also travel time should be considered.
74. pupils who live in the villages will qualify for transport however consideration should be given to where that transport is provided, if the distance is shorter or negligible to a faith or non faith school rather than admission zone school the parents wishes should be met, i.e. Ian Ramsey or Eggescliffe rather than North Shore for the villages (Stillington, Thorpe Thewles, Carlton, Redmarshall)
75. we live in the rural village of Stillington and my youngest daughter will attend Ian Ramsey from Sept 2017. I will, as I have previously, chosen this school as a faith school, but additionally, realise that there is no school my child can walk to safely, not a school within 3 mile radius. I would ask you to have flexibility as your duty is to make sure that children can get to school safely.
76. no further suggestions to add