

Sheffield City Council Equality Impact Assessment



[Guidance for completing this form is available on the intranet](#)

Help is also available by selecting the grey area and pressing the F1 key

Name of policy/project/decision: Home to School Transport

Status of policy/project/decision: Amendment

Name of person(s) writing EIA: John Bigley

Date: 25 October 2012

Service: Inclusion and Learning Services

Portfolio: Children, Young People and Families

What are the brief aims of the policy/project/decision? To revise our Home to School Transport Policy to remove the discretionary provision for denominational transport .

Are there any potential Council staffing implications, include workforce diversity? No

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#), we have to pay due regard to: “Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.” [More information is available on the council website](#)

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
Age	None	Low	
Disability	None	Low	Any child that has a disability that requires them to receive assisted transport to and from school would not be affected by this proposal. The statutory duty on the Council in such circumstances would remain.
Pregnancy/maternity	None	Low	
Race	None	Low	
Religion/belief	Negative	High	<p>Currently in Sheffield free denominational transport is predominantly accessed by Catholic children as the only denominational secondary schools in Sheffield are Catholic. Families of other faiths could potentially see this as unequal and unfair, which could leave the Council open to claims for transport support for families to access other faith provision in neighbouring authorities. No children of other faiths receive free transport for attendance at their preferred schools in Sheffield unless they meet the statutory walking distance requirements. The proposed changes would ensure that all children and families are treated equally with regard to home to school transport.</p> <p>The proposed changes would directly impact on a limited number of families. Just over 1000 pupils currently receive free bus passes to attend denominational secondary schools, approximately 3% of the whole secondary school population.</p>

Areas of possible impact	Impact	Impact level	Explanation and evidence (Details of data, reports, feedback or consultations. This should be proportionate to the impact.)
			The proposed change will have no impact on families who meet the statutory “low income” criteria as the statutory requirement to provide free transport on grounds of religion or belief remains.
Sex	None	Low	
Sexual orientation	None	Low	
Gender reassignment	None	Low	
Financial inclusion, poverty, social justice cohesion or carers	Negative	Medium	<p>The proposed change will affect the Catholic community in particular, particularly with regard to their ability to access a place at a Catholic if that is their preference, or their expectation. . However, there will be no impact on families that meet the statutory “low income” definition. i.e. where the child is eligible for Free School Meals or the family is in receipt of the Higher rate of Working Tax Credit . Families meeting this criteria will still qualify for free transport on the grounds of religion and belief.</p> <p>There is a financial impact upon families that currently receive free transport, if it were to be withdrawn.</p> <p>However, the proposal to withdraw the discretionary element of this provision, will align our policy to mirror the arrangements to those where a parent who expresses their preference for their child to attend a non-catchment community school. They do not qualify for free transport.</p> <p>Any child that no longer qualifies for a free pass may still use the dedicated busses and pay the minimum fare, currently 60p a journey.</p> <p>Families who are currently in receipt of free transport may be forced to consider the current school placement of their child if they cannot afford to pay for transport. This may be perceived as divisive and creating social division whereby only those that can afford to pay for transport can attend denominational schools.</p>
Voluntary, community and faith sector	Negative	High	<p>There are some direct implications for Catholic and Church of England schools, families and both Diocesan Bodies. There may be a perception of discrimination against families wishing to attend schools on grounds of religion or belief.</p> <p>The Diocese of Hallam and Notre Dame School have explained that their understanding of the organisation of Catholic provision in the city was based on an</p>

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			<p>expectation that Catholic pupils attending the Catholic primaries would be able to transfer to the Catholic secondary schools. They make the point that if the free bus passes were withdrawn, it would be unequal for those Catholic families living three miles or more from a Catholic secondary school because they would not have zero fare bus pass to assist with their travel to secondary. Their view is that this would result in a narrower social intake at the Catholic schools which are located closer to the more affluent residential areas of Sheffield.</p> <p>Families with children already attending a denominational school applied for places under the current policy criteria. Many Catholic families would therefore be faced with a change in provision from that available at the time they applied to attend the school in the first year. One impact of this proposal could be that some Catholic families can no longer afford to send their children to a Catholic School.</p> <p>Any child that does no longer qualify for a free pass may still use the dedicated busses and pay the minimum fare, currently 60p a journey.</p>
Other/additional:	-Select-	-Select-	
Other/additional:	-Select-	-Select-	
Other/additional:	-Select-	-Select-	

Overall summary of possible impact (to be used on EMT, cabinet reports etc): Sheffield City Council is reviewing all areas of discretionary expenditure as areas for possible savings. This proposal is following the approach already taken by many local authorities. Within South Yorkshire Barnsley has already adopted a similar policy with Doncaster and Rotherham currently consulting on similar arrangements.

If you have identified significant change, med or high negative outcomes, you **must** complete the action plan.

Review date:

Reference number:

Entered on Qtier:

Action plan needed: -Select-

Approved (Lead Manager): Alena Prentice **Date:** 26 October 2012

Approved (EIA Lead person for Portfolio): Bashir Khan **Date:** 26 October 2012

Risk rating: High

Action plan

Area of impact	Action and mitigation	Lead, timescale and how it will be monitored/reviewed
Religion/belief	Consult on proposed withdrawal of discretionary denominational transport	29 October – 4 December 2012
Religion/belief	Submit responses and report to Cabinet	12 December 2012
Religion/belief	Notify prospective parents prior to their making application for school places in the 2013/14 academic year. Reception and Year 7	13 December 2012
Religion/belief	Implement new arrangements	September 2013
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		
-Select-		

Approved (Lead Manager): Alena Prentice Date: 26 October 2012

Approved (EIA Lead Officer for Portfolio): Bashir Khan Date: 26 October 2012