North Lanarkshire Council
Report

Education, Children and Families Committee

Does this report require to be approved? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Ref AMcP / MOWG **Date** 09/09/25

Report on Member Officer Working Group Review of Acceptable Walking Route Policy

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Executive Summary

Following a motion agreed at Full Council on 3 October 2024, a Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) was established to review the Walked Routes to School Policy for home to school transport.

An interim report was submitted to the Education, Children and Families Committee on 25 February 2025 which provided an overview of the proposed revisions to the Walked Routes to School Policy. Approval was also granted at this meeting to undertake a consultation on the revised draft policy.

This report provides a summary of the feedback received during the consultation period on the proposed revisions to the policy. The report also provides a summary of the infrastructure works and costs which would be incurred to ensure existing walking routes comply with the updated revised policy.

In addition, the report provides details of the benchmarking exercise undertaken to compare the revised policy with current guidance and approaches adopted in other authorities.

A copy of the revised policy (The Assessment of Walked Routes to School Process) is attached for review and approval. As previously indicated, if approved, the revised policy would be formally implemented in August 2026 for the start of the 2026/27 academic year.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee: -

1) Reviews the content of the report and the work undertaken by the Member Officer Working Group.

2) Approves the revised Walked Routes to School Policy.

3) Agrees the revised policy will be implemented in August 2026.

4) Reviews the potential capital and revenue financial impact of introducing the revised policy from August 2026.

The Plan for North Lanarkshire

Priority	Enhance participation, capacity, and empowerment across our communities
Ambition statement	(20) Improve the involvement of communities in the decisions, and development of services and supports, that affect them
Programme of Work	Sustainable Futures

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1. Background

1.1 Following the approved changes to secondary school transport distance eligibility criteria from August 2024, a motion was subsequently agreed by Full Council on 3 October 2024 to establish a MOWG to review the existing Walked Routes to School Policy. The policy was previously reviewed and approved by the Infrastructure Committee in February 2018.

1.2 The full motion agreed on 3 October 2024 is highlighted below:

'Council Notes:
• Section 51 of the 1980 Education (Scotland) Act [6] requires local authorities to make such arrangements as they consider necessary for the provision of school transport for pupils residing, and attending schools, in their area.
• Local authorities have a wide level of discretion in this regard.
• When considering whether to make arrangements for the provision of school transport, local authorities are further required to have regard to the safety of the pupils.
• Legislation does not prescribe the distance beyond which they must, nor distance below which they must not, provide transport.
• It is for local authorities to determine the nature of the provision they offer.
Council Understands:
• Local authorities are expected to keep their criteria for providing school transport under review and be flexible enough to take into account factors, relative to the nature of the route, which might affect pupil safety.
• North Lanarkshire Council has not undertaken a review of criteria for providing school transport since May 2018.
Council Agrees:
• A member/officer working group is set up to thoroughly review and update the criteria used to provide school transport being flexible enough to take into account factors, relative to the nature of the route, ensuring at all times child safety is placed as the number one priority.
• The recommendations of the member/officer working group to be submitted to the appropriate Committee of the Council to allow the updated criteria to be agreed and implemented in sufficient time to ensure necessary transport provision is in place before further changes are made to primary school provision.'

1.3 The working group was established on 13 November 2024 and thereafter confirmed governance procedures including a Terms of Reference, scope of work, and core objectives. The key activities of the MOWG included:

- The review and update of the walking route assessment criteria with a focus on ensuring child safety.
- A benchmarking of similar policies within other local authorities to ensure the North Lanarkshire Policy reflects best practice.
- Ensuring the preparation and submission of future MOWG reports and recommendations to the Education, Children and Families Committee.

1.4 The MOWG requested and reviewed technical and operational information, data and reports from officers. The group also received a presentation from AtkinsRealis, the independent roads and infrastructure consultants, who were engaged to support the walking route assessment process. The presentation included an explanation of how a walking route assessment is undertaken with reference to criteria and metrics incorporated within the current Walked Routes to School Policy.

2. Report

2.1 The MOWG has undertaken a comprehensive review of internal information and prevailing national legislation and policies including the '*Scottish Government - School Transport Guidance 2021*', comparative data from other local authorities and where necessary has sought additional technical responses and reports from NLC officers and external partners.

2.2 The MOWG have recommended a number of revisions to the existing policy taking into consideration the areas of concern raised within the original motion. A revised draft policy is attached at Appendix 1. The key changes included in the updated policy are as follows:

- **Lighting** – to enhance confidence and personal security the MOWG agreed there should be a consistent lighting standard applied across all walking routes. The revised policy references that all sections of a walking route must be illuminated to be considered an acceptable.

- **Footpath Condition** - To ensure footpaths are suitable for walking, wheeling and cycling, it is proposed that the standards adopted are consistent with other relevant North Lanarkshire guidance. Both the Council's 'Active Travel Strategy (2021)', and 'Paths for All – Surfacing Guide for Path Projects (2019)' highlight that both bound and unbound surfaces are suitable walking routes. However, unbound surfaces will only be considered acceptable if the material is suitably compacted. For clarity, compacted earth would not be considered a suitable walking route and similarly areas that have experienced significant stone loss would not be considered suitable.

- **Watercourses** - As part of the review, the MOWG also concluded that the danger associated with rivers, canals and lochs was not fully captured within the existing policy. Consequently, it is proposed to specify the water incursion risk tolerances that would be considered acceptable within the new policy. In practice the incursion risk must either be mitigated by an adequate barrier e.g. bridge parapet, fencing, or the footway/footpath must be set back a minimum of 3 metres from any of the aforementioned water hazards, for the route to be considered acceptable within the revised policy

- **Crossing Islands** – The revised policy clarifies that pedestrian crossing islands must be a minimum width and depth of 1.5 metres to enable a 2 stage gap

acceptance assessment to be undertaken. If this criterion is not met, the assessment must be undertaken as a single stage crossing.

- **Footpath Width** – The revised policy also clarifies an acceptable footway/footpath would be defined as one a least 1.5 metres wide, have an even surface and be suitable for walking on. Reductions to a minimum width of 1 metre will be considered acceptable over short distances (up to 30 metres) to account for street furniture or where additional road safety infrastructure such as vehicle safety barriers or pedestrian guardrails are provided. The footway/footpath should be continuous or be an acceptable equivalent such as having a dedicated part of the road sectioned by white lining.

Consultation on Revised Policy

2.3 The consultation period on the revised policy began on 4 April 2025 and ended on 30 May 2025. To encourage participation and feedback the consultation was supported by the following activities:

- An Education Newsletter article was prepared to inform headteachers and schools of the consultation and request assistance from staff to facilitate Pupil Council meetings.
- Targeted emails to Parent Councils' and Community Boards.
- An online survey was arranged.
- A proforma was issued to schools to help encourage participation and submission of Pupil Council feedback.

2.4 In total 291 responses were received via the online survey, with a further 37 Pupil Council returns submitted via a dedicated mailbox.

2.5 Analysis of the online survey identified the breakdown of the 291 respondents as follows:

- 23% Parent Council Members/Chairs
- 1% Community Board Members
- 76% Others

The 'Others' category included:

- 84% Individual Parents/Carers,
- 14% Pupils/Students,
- 1.4% Education Staff
- 0.6% Miscellaneous Respondents

2.6 The survey set respondents two specific questions in relation to the proposed revisions to the policy.

2.7 Question 1 was: *Do you agree with the proposed changes to the Walked Routes to School Policy?*

The online survey responses to question 1 are highlighted in the table below:

Question 1	Response Actual	Response %age
Yes	90	31
In part	71	24
No	130	45

2.8 Question 2 was: *Do you feel the proposed changes to the policy will improve the Walking Route assessment process?*

The online survey responses to question 2 are highlighted in the table below:

Question 2	Response Actual	Response %age
Yes	96	33
In part	79	27
No	116	40

2.9 There were 30 Primary School and 7 Secondary School Pupil Council responses.

The Pupil Council responses to question 1 are highlighted in the table below:

Question 1	Response Actual	Response %age
Yes	24	65
In part	11	30
No	2	5

The Pupil Council responses to question 2 are highlighted in the table below

Question 2	Response Actual	Response %age
Yes	25	68
In part	10	27
No	2	5

2.10 The Service received a further 8 written submissions during the consultation period. The written submissions raised issues around individual routes, general safety matters, the walking route assessment model and the consultation process.

Review and Potential Impact of Revised Policy Changes

2.11 A desktop review of primary walking routes has been undertaken by the Service. This exercise has not identified any existing routes which would be classified as non-compliant when assessed against the revised policy. The Service will also instruct AtkinsRealis to undertake a formal review of primary walking routes to ensure there is a consistent and robust approach to assessment across both primary and secondary sectors.

2.12 A similar desktop review highlighted a number of secondary routes would be potentially non-compliant when assessed against the new policy prior to mitigation. AtkinsRealis were thereafter directed to undertake a detailed review of 46 secondary school walking routes against the revised criteria to verify pavement widths, lighting availability, and footpath conditions. This exercise also helped to identify possible mitigations or remedial works, including the adoption of amended walking routes, which would result in a route be assessed as compliant against the revised policy.

2.13 The table below highlights the outcome of the assessment of the 46 routes undertaken by AtkinsRealis against the revised policy.

Action Required To Comply With Revised Policy	Number of Routes
1. Minor Upgrades Required	22
2. Infrastructure Improvements Required	15
3. Compliant Following Amendment to Walking Route	2
4. Compliant Following Completion of Scheduled Capital Works	5
5. Ongoing Non-Compliant (Bus Service to Continue)	2
Total	**46**

2.14 Where route improvements or mitigations are not deliverable, the Service will engage with SPT to identify replacement transport contracts to commence from August 2026

2.15 In relation to the assessment of the revised policy, AtkinsRealis identified the majority of non-compliant routes resulted from the absence of, or requirement to upgrade footpath lighting. Three routes require footpath widening/upgrades, two watercourses require repairs to safety barriers, and a single crossing island does not meet the revised width requirements.

2.16 The Service has undertaken an initial assessment of the costs of the minor works and infrastructure improvements linked to categories 1 & 2 in the above table. Summary financial data is highlighted in the table below:

Activity / Mitigation	Cost (£)
Lighting Projects	860,000
Footpath Upgrades	141,000
Footpath Widening	54,000
Total	**1,055,000**

2.17 Following assessment the ongoing non-compliant routes are:

a. Croy / St Maurices HS.
b. Glenmavis / Airdrie Academy HS.

These walking routes have been classified as 'ongoing non-compliant' due to the range and complexity of infrastructure works which would be required to comply with the revised policy. A home to school bus service will continue to operate on these routes.

2.18 For comparative purposes the revenue costs of providing home to school transport in academic year 2023/24 for the 37 routes in categories 1 & 2 was £1,903,414. It is highly likely that these costs would increase due to inflationary pressures if they were tendered in future academic years.

2.19 The Service has recently outlined the potential capital and revenue funding impact of implementing the revised policy to the Strategic Capital Working Group (SCWG). The Service is preparing both capital and revenue funding plans alongside officers from Finance & Technology, which will be fully developed following committee consideration of the recommendations contained within this report.

Benchmarking Exercise

2.20 AtkinsRealis were asked to undertake an independent benchmarking exercise comparing the proposed revised policy against 21 other local authorities (see Appendix 4).

2.21 Three national or regional guidance notes have been referenced by AtkinsRealis which are typically employed by local authorities. These include:

- Road Safety GB – Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2021).
- Local Authority Road Safety Officers Association – Identification of hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000).
- West of Scotland Road Safety Review – Guidance for Assessment Walked Routes to School (2014).

2.22 The benchmarking exercise recognised that there are various Local Authority assessment criteria, some of which are pertinent to the individual locality, rurality and diversity of the geographic area in which the assessment is undertaken.

2.23 The AtkinsRealis benchmarking report concludes the draft revised North Lanarkshire Council Walked Routes to School Policy addresses and is in accordance with the key assessment principles recommended within the national and regional guidance outlined above.

3. Measures of success

3.1 An updated Walked Routes to School Policy is approved and implemented by August 2026.

4. Supporting documentation

Appendix 1: The revised Assessment of Walked Routes to School Process

Appendix 2: Assessment of Walked Route to School – Route Inspection Form

Appendix 3: Assessment of Walked Route to School – Gap Analysis

Appendix 4: AtkinsRealis - Benchmarking Exercise

Andrew McPherson
Depute Chief Executive

5. Impacts

5.1	**Public Sector Equality Duty and Fairer Scotland Duty** Does the report contain information that has an impact as a result of the Public Sector Equality Duty and/or Fairer Scotland Duty? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? If Yes, has an assessment been carried out and published on the council's website? https://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/your-community/equalities/equality-and-fairer-scotland-duty-impact-assessments Yes ☐ No ☐
5.2	**Financial impact** Does the report contain any financial impacts? Yes ☒ No ☐ If Yes, have all relevant financial impacts been discussed and agreed with Finance? Yes ☒ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact? Information is provided in body of report.
5.3	**HR policy impact** Does the report contain any HR policy or procedure impacts? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant HR impacts been discussed and agreed with People Resources? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.4	**Legal impact** Does the report contain any legal impacts (such as general legal matters, statutory considerations (including employment law considerations), or new legislation)? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, have all relevant legal impacts been discussed and agreed with Legal and Democratic? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?
5.5	**Data protection impact** Does the report / project / practice contain or involve the processing of personal data? Yes ☐ No ☒ If Yes, is the processing of this personal data likely to result in a high risk to the data subject? Yes ☐ No ☐ If Yes, has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) been carried out and e-mailed to dataprotection@northlan.gov.uk Yes ☐ No ☐
5.6	**Technology / Digital impact** Does the report contain information that has an impact on either technology, digital transformation, service redesign / business change processes, data management, or connectivity / broadband / Wi-Fi?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Where the impact identifies a requirement for significant technology change, has an assessment been carried out (or is scheduled to be carried out) by the Enterprise Architecture Governance Group (EAGG)?

Yes ☐ No ☐

5.7 Environmental / Carbon impact

Does the report / project / practice contain information that has an impact on any environmental or carbon matters?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

5.8 Communications impact

Does the report contain any information that has an impact on the council's communications activities?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact?

Not at present but any changes to any acceptable walking routes as a result of the new policy will be communicated to all affected parents/ carers.

5.9 Risk impact

Is there a risk impact?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the key risks and potential impacts, highlighting where the risk(s) are assessed and recorded (e.g. Corporate or Service or Project Risk Registers), and how they are managed?

5.10 Armed Forces Covenant Duty

Does the report require to take due regard of the Armed Forces Covenant Duty (i.e. does it relate to healthcare, housing, or education services for in-Service or ex-Service personnel, or their families, or widow(er)s)?

Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the provision which has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the particular needs of the Armed Forces community to make sure that they do not face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public services.

5.11 Children's rights and wellbeing impact

Does the report contain any information regarding any council activity, service delivery, policy, or plan that has an impact on children and young people up to the age of 18, or on a specific group of these?

Yes ☒ No ☐

If Yes, please provide a brief summary of the impact and the provision that has been made to ensure there has been appropriate consideration of the relevant Articles from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

If approved, the revised walking routes policy will be communicated to Parent Councils, shared with pupils and a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) will also be completed during this time period.

If Yes, has a Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) been carried out?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Appendix 1

The Assessment of Walked Routes to School Process

Principles

1.1 The safety of children is the guiding principle for determining whether or not a walked route is deemed acceptable, however, due regard must be given to the following further principles upon which the assessment process is based.

Route

1.2 The route to be assessed will be determined by the Council's Education and Families Service. To calculate whether the route falls within or outwith the distance thresholds, the distance assessed will be from the home address to the nearest available school gate with pedestrian access. The walked route will ordinarily be the same as the distance assessment, although in some cases where a route has been declared acceptable from a pick-up point to the school gate, the route from the home address to the pick-up point would then be assessed. It is the prescribed route which is being considered during the assessment, not the child.

1.3 The route to school assessment considers the road safety risks resulting from potential pedestrian and vehicle conflict or safety hazards resulting from the physical condition of the route. Safety inspections and work to rectify defects such as trip hazards will be undertaken in line with the Council's road and path maintenance policy

1.4 Route assessments will be conducted on the basis that the children will be accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult. As such, personal safety issues are not addressed by the route to school assessment.

Time of Assessment

1.5 **The route will be assessed during the school term and, where practicable, at a time when the child would be expected to make the journey. Normally route assessments will be conducted in the morning unless it can be evidenced that the afternoon journey would be more problematic.**

1.6 **The assessment can only be based upon normal conditions and not extremities. Parents/guardians or carers will be required to decide on appropriate alternatives where extreme events or extremities of weather are experienced.**

Accompaniment of Children

1.7 **When carrying out a walked route to school assessment, the assessor will assume the roles and responsibilities outlined in the statutory legislation and accompanying national guidance are adhered to. In particular the Scottish Government's School Transport Guidance 2021 states '*Parents remain responsible for their child's journey to and from school or, where the authority is providing school transport (either through a dedicated service or local bus service), between home and the designated pick-up/drop-off point*'. It is also presumed that all persons will exercise reasonable caution and comply with basic road safety rules.**

Accident Data

1.8 **A history of pedestrian accidents on any route would not automatically conclude that the route is unacceptable. Any data will be analysed to determine the type, nature and relevance of pedestrian accidents to the route assessment. Most weighting will be given to incidents recorded within term times, involving children of school age during travel times to school.**

2.0 <u>Route Assessment Procedure</u>

2.1 **These guidelines cannot cover every eventuality and situation as there are many subtle variations in features of routes. Each route will be considered on its individual merits.**

2.2 **A map of the route to be assessed should be attached to the written record of the assessment.**

2.3 **The pedestrian accident record for the route over a minimum period of three years will be taken into consideration.**

2.4 **In carrying out the assessment, it will be presumed that parents/guardians or carers have arranged for the child to be accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult.**

2.5 **In carrying out the assessment, it will also be presumed that all persons will exercise due care and adhere to basic road safety rules.**

2.6 **The route will be assessed on a school day and, where practicable, at a time when the child would be expected to make the journey.**

2.7 **The route will be assessed against the identified criteria and any points of concern out with the criteria will be noted by the Education and Families Service. For example, other defects and suggestions for network improvements could be forwarded to the Council's Road's Maintenance or Transportation Teams for consideration.**

2.8 **The identified route will consist of a footway/ footpath/ roadside verge or shared space/ surface of a reasonable width and condition. In terms of surface condition, bound and unbound surfaces are suitable for all users. However, unbound surfaces will only be considered acceptable if the material is suitably compacted e.g. no significant stone loss. Compacted earth would not be considered a suitable alternative. All sections of a walking route require to be illuminated to be considered acceptable.**

2.9 **An adequate footway/footpath would be defined as one at least 1.5 metres wide, even in surface and suitable for walking on. Reductions to be a minimum width of 1 metre will be considered acceptable over short lengths (up to 30 metres) to account for street furniture or where additional road safety infrastructure such as vehicle safety barrier or pedestrian guardrail is provided. The footway/footpath should be**

continuous or be an acceptable level equivalent e.g. dedicated part of road sectioned by white lining.

2.10 The incursion risk to water dangers such as rivers, canals and lochs, must either be mitigated by an adequate barrier e.g. bridge parapet, fencing etc, or the footway / footpath must be set back a minimum of 3 metres from any of the aforementioned water hazards for the route to be considered acceptable.

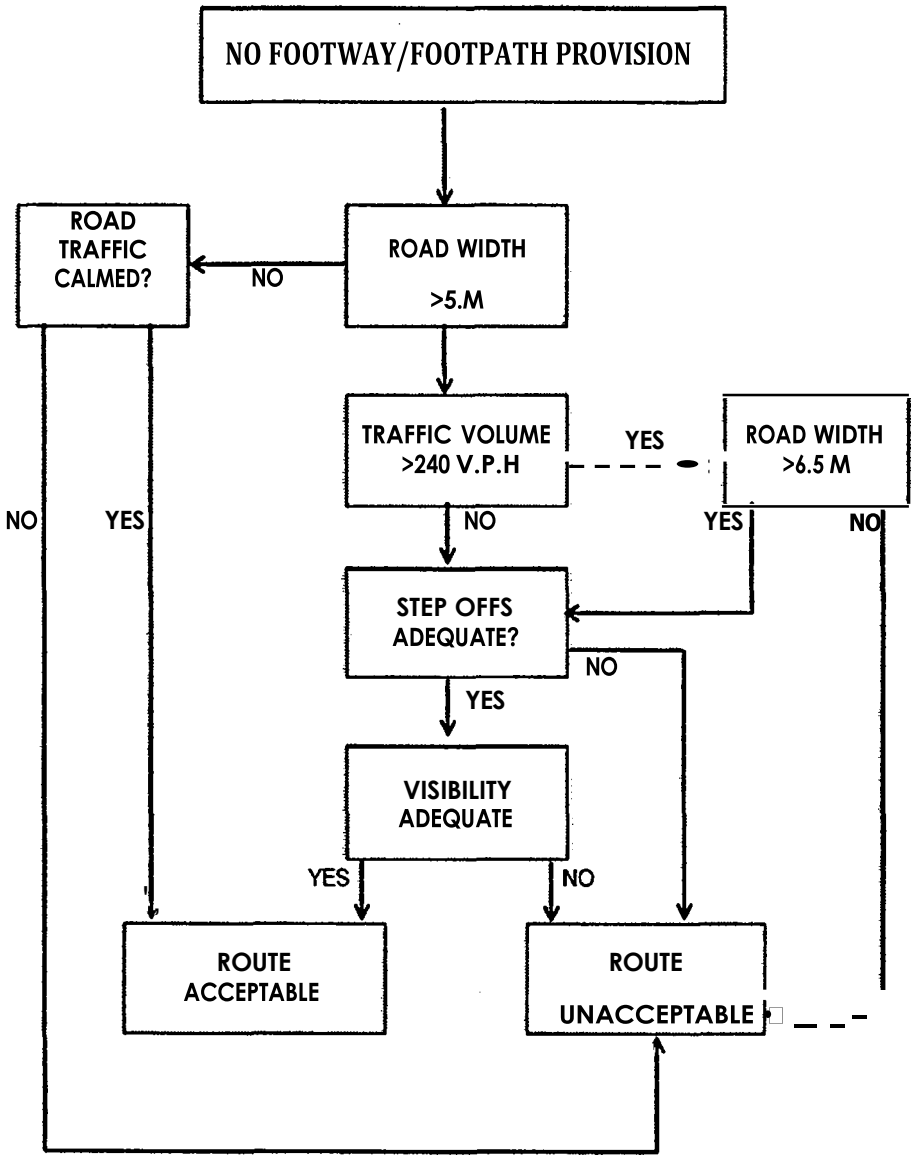
2.11 The assessor will determine the suitability of shared surface streets. Streets with shared vehicular and pedestrian space tend to have low traffic flows and speeds due to their urban nature and specific street design. Similar principles will also be applied within older towns and villages that have no dedicated footways or demarcated pedestrian provision.

2.12 On a road with light traffic flows (less than 400 vehicles per hour), a verge that can be stepped on by a child and accompanying adult when traffic is passing can normally be assumed to provide an available route. This is known as a "step off'. This would not include roads (shared surface/ spaces) where the function of the design is to have pedestrians and vehicles using the same area.

2.13 Where roads need to be crossed, the availability of controlled crossing facilities such as pedestrian crossings or traffic signals will be taken into consideration. In the event that no crossing facilities are available, sufficient and suitable opportunities for pedestrians to cross will be assessed.

2.14 Some routes may lie along roads that do not have a footway. On such roads, consideration will be given to the width of the carriageway, traffic volume and to both pedestrian and driver visibility, i.e. sharp bends with high hedgerows or other obstructions to visibility. The term 'Visibility' means the distance of unobstructed vision from the driver to pedestrian when measured from the eye point of a driver (usually taken as being 1.05 metres above the road surface).

2.15 The flow chart below will be used to determine the acceptability of a route where there is no footway or footpath:



3.0 Road Crossing Assessment

3.1 **Where the following facilities are provided, it will be assumed that these provide an acceptable crossing opportunity for pedestrians:**

- **Crossing facilities e.g. zebra, pelican, puffin crossing etc.**
- **Pedestrian phase at traffic signals**
- **School Crossing Patrols**

3.2 **Where no crossing facility exists a suitable location should be identified and an assessment of the risk generated by crossing**

the road should be made. This will be achieved by determining the gaps in traffic flow through measurement to ensure that the pedestrians have frequent and sufficient opportunities to cross the carriageway. On roads that have central pedestrian refuge islands this will be assessed in two parts with each carriageway being assessed separately. These islands must be a minimum of 1.5 metres wide and same depth to be considered suitable as a refuge area. The assessment procedure is detailed below.

Crossing Assessment

3.3 **Should a crossing assessment be required, this will be carried out when traffic flow is at its heaviest. For most routes, this will be during the morning journey unless evidence exists to provide this would be best done in the afternoon. The crossing should be walked in both directions to ensure adequate visibility from both sides of the road.**

3.4 **There is no need to classify vehicles, as pedestrians do not consider vehicle classification when determining whether to cross or not.**

Crossing Time and Visible Gap Time

3.5 **The crossing time required for a child pedestrian to safely cross the carriageway will be calculated as:**

Crossing time (seconds)= Thinking time+ Carriageway width/walking speed

For example based on 1 second thinking time, a carriageway width of 7.3m, and 0.9m walking speed the calculation is as follows:

1 +7.3/0.9 = 9.11 seconds crossing time.

3.6 **The visible gap time in traffic is the time between approaching vehicles in either direction to reach the crossing point. At sites where the visibility is restricted, a measure of time should be taken from when a vehicle comes into view until it reaches the crossing point and that should exceed the time required for the pedestrians to cross the road.**

3.7 **For a crossing to be considered acceptable, four visible gap times greater than the minimum crossing time should be**

recorded in five-minute intervals. Longer gaps could be classified as multiple gaps rather than one gap.

3.8 If a crossing point fails the assessment consideration will be given to identifying what controlled crossing measures could be installed to mitigate the need for additional bus travel.

3.9 Two assessment forms will be used as shown in appendix 2 and 3:

- **Route inspection form**
- **Gap Analysis (if required)**

4.0 Assessment Reporting

4.1 Completed walked routes to school assessments will be reported to Education and Families Service stating whether the route is acceptable.

Appendix 2

Assessment of Walked Route to School – Route inspection form

Assessing Officer:

Date of assessment:

Start time:

Start address:

End address:

Route Walked

Route Findings

Footway / Footway Widths	**Acceptable**		**Unacceptable**	
Footpath / Footway Surface Condition	**Acceptable**		**Unacceptable**	
Water Protection	**Acceptable**		**Unacceptable**	
Lighting	**Acceptable**		**Unacceptable**	

Comments if Unacceptable

Appendix 3

Assessment of Walked Route to School – Gap Analysis

Assessing Officer:

Date of assessment:

Start time:

Location:

VISIBLE GAP TIMES

Crossing time(sec)=Thinking time + Carriageway width/Walking speed (0.9m/sec) 1 + _____/ 0.9 = Minimum gap required ____

4 or more visible gap times greater than the crossing time is required in a 5 minute period

Time (5 min period)	Measured gaps	Total number of acceptable gaps
07:50 - 07:55		
07:55 - 08:00		
08:00 - 08:05		
08:05 - 08:10		
08:15 - 08:20		
08:20 - 08:25		
08:25 - 08:30		
08:30 - 08:35		
08:35- 08:40		
08:40 - 08:45		
08:45- 08:50		
08:50-08:55		
08:55-09:00		
09:00 - 09:05		
09:05 – 09:10		

TECHNICAL NOTE

School Walking Routes Assessment Policy and Process Review

CLIENT	AUTHOR	DATE
North Lanarkshire Council	KG	June 2025

Document history

Revision	Purpose description	Originated	Checked	Reviewed	Authorised	Date
1.0	For Issue	KG	CC	JM	CC	03/06/2025

Client signoff

Client	North Lanarkshire Council		
Project	School Walking Routes Assessment Policy and Process Review	**Project No.**	100104291
Client signature / date			

School Walking Routes Assessment Policy and Process Review

1. Introduction

AtkinsRéalis has been commissioned by North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) to undertake a review and comparison of their amended assessment of walked routes to school policy and processes undertaken by NLC against walked routes to school policies and processes followed by other Local Authorities across Scotland. School walking route assessments are undertaken to determine if a route to school is acceptable in line with a Council's adopted policy if applicable.

NLC have recently drafted an amended Walked Routes to School Policy and associated assessment reporting templates. This review is being undertaken to inform and determine how NLC's amended policy and assessment process compares to national and regional guidelines and local assessment policies and processes. To support this, NLC requested relevant information from other Scottish local authorities. 21 local authorities responded to the request for information on their respective school walking route assessment principles and processes. This review is based solely on the information provided by these authorities.

This comparative review of the walked routes to school policies and processes is structured as follows:

- An overview of the various national and regional school walking route assessment guidelines
- An overview of the local authority responses provided
- An overview of additional local authority specifications if varied from the national or regional guidance
- NLC draft amended policy comparison against the identified assessment criteria from the above reviews.

2. National / Regional Guidance and Process Review

A review of the local authority responses provided has identified that the undertaking of school walking assessments is commonly based upon national and/or regional guidance. National and regional guidelines, outline the principles of walking route assessments and the assessment criteria upon which a route is considered acceptable.

The national and regional guidance notes listed below are either used wholly or in part to form the basis of the assessment policies and processes undertaken by the local authorities identified in this review.

- Road Safety GB – Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)
- Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)
- West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014).

A review of these guidelines has been undertaken and can be found in Appendix A. Appendix A includes the key principles and criteria as stated in the guidelines.

Key commonalities and differences between the 3 national/regional guidance documents are summarised below in Table 2-1, subdivided in line with the main assessment criteria of the guidelines.

Table 2-1 - National and Regional Guidance Comparison

Guidance Criteria/ Category	Comparative Summary
Assessment Principles	▪ All three documents specify the assessment considers road safety risks, created by traffic and highway environment. ▪ The WoSRSF notes that the assessment should note identified unmanageable road safety difficulties. ▪ Road Safety GB notes the presumption that all road users will follow the highway code, and that continuous judgement should be exercised particularly in rural areas or at obstacles.
Route	▪ Both LARSOA and Road Safety GB note the assessment must cover the whole route from the child's home. ▪ WoSRSF guidance requires walking the route in both directions.

Accompaniment	▪ All three documents specify that the assessment assumes the child is accompanied as necessary.
Time	▪ All three documents specify undertaking the assessment(s) during the morning as heaviest vehicle flows usually occur during this period unless proven the afternoon is busier. ▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB both note undertaking a minimum of three surveys (one morning, one afternoon and another during the busiest period) with data recorded in 5-minute consecutive periods. Note: this assessment process differs from WoSRSF as traffic counts form part of these guidance's.
Footway	▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB note that where a footway, footpath, bridleway or roadside strip of reasonable width and condition is available it is generally assumed to provide an available route. ▪ WoSRSF notes a footway should be continuous, excluding gaps up to 20m or a local equivalent such as a dedicated part of road with white lining. ▪ WoSRSF notes expected congregation areas should be of adequate width (i.e. bus pick up locations). ▪ All three documents specify that where neither a footway or verge is provided, consideration must be given to road width, traffic speed, traffic composition and visibility. ▪ All three documents note that a verge enabling step off may be suitable where a footway is not provided. ▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB note the assumption that walkers will cross the road to utilise footways / roadside strips. ▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB note that where an adequate footway is provided across the route and there is no need to cross the road, the route is deemed 'safe'.
Lighting	▪ WoSRSF and LARSOA note that the provision of lighting is not a considered factor. ▪ Road Safety GB notes that the absence of lighting alone does not make a route unsafe.
Road Crossing	▪ All three documents note that where no crossing facilities exist (central refuge, pedestrian crossing, traffic signals), an assessment of the risk of generated by the crossing should be made. ▪ All three documents determine crossing difficulty / acceptability by considering the number of gaps in

	traffic flow within 5-minute periods and a walking speed of 0.9m. ▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB note that for a crossing to be crossed without undue delay four gaps greater than the calculated road crossing time are required. ▪ WoSRSF notes that crossing acceptance requires four visible gap times greater than the calculated road crossing time. ▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB note that longer gaps could be classified as multiple gaps. ▪ WoSRSF notes the assessment will consider visibility for both pedestrians and vehicles and consider factors such as speed and carriageway width. ▪ Road Safety GB and LARSOA note where a road needs to be crossed the visibility should allow a vehicle to stop given the 85%ile speed. Stopping distances should be taken as those in the Highway Code.
Traffic Classification	▪ WoSRSF notes that there is no need to classify vehicles as pedestrians do not consider vehicle type when determining whether or not to cross. ▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB recommend traffic counts are recorded as 'light vehicle' / 'passenger car' (PCU) equivalent values.
Traffic Volume	▪ Road Safety GB notes that where the two-way (one-way on dual carriageway) traffic flow is less than 240 the road is assessed as safe to cross. ▪ LARSOA notes where the half hour two-way (one-way on dual carriageway) traffic flow is less than 240 the road is assessed as safe to cross. ▪ WoSRSF notes that where vehicle volumes per hours are less than 240 vehicles there will be suitable gaps in traffic to allow safe crossing.
Accident Record	▪ LARSOA and Road Safety GB note the consideration of the route's accident record with Road Safety GB adding this should cover a minimum period of 3 years. Both note the existence of an accident record does not necessarily indicate that the route is unsafe. ▪ WoSRSF does not reference accident records

In reviewing the national and regional guidance it has been identified that generally there is consistency in the criteria considered as part of the assessment. Although there are some variations in the specific assessment processes, such as the number of assessments required and the requirement for traffic data collection/classification, the assessment principles and the factors assessed in determining route acceptability are largely consistent.

3. Local Authority Policy and Process Review

Appendix B compiles information from the 21 responses received from local authorities regarding their approach to assessing walked routes to school. This appendix identifies which respondents conduct school walking route assessments and details the national or regional guidance that informs their respective assessment processes, where applicable.

Of the 21 respondents, 6 either do not reference national or regional guidance when conducting walking route assessments or do not conduct assessments. 1 local authority is in the process of drafting a policy, while 1 has an established local-level process in place.

15 of the 21 respondents conduct school walking assessments using the national/regional guidance documents noted above. Of these, 6 indicate that they apply additional or amended processes and criteria beyond the national or regional guidance. Where a local authority assessment process varies from the specified national/regional guidance these amendment or additions are outlined in Appendix C. For ease of comparison these are sub divided against the identified key assessment criteria.

4. NLC Policy and Processes Comparison

A review of national and regional guidance and local authority policies and processes has enabled the identification of recommended assessment criteria when undertaking walked routes to school assessments. All identified criterion has been compiled and compared against NLC's amended walked routes to school policy to determine if these variables form part of NLC's amended assessment policy.

Table 4-1 below compares NLC's amended policy against the criteria provided within the national and regional guidance documents noted above.

Table 4-2 confirms if NLC's Draft amended policy covers the criteria identified where the local authority have additional criteria over and above the national and regional guidance that they have adopted. If applicable a comparison on the inclusions has been provided.

It is noted that assessment criteria have variable weightings in determining route acceptability. For completeness, this comparison exercise accounts for all identified criterion, both those that alone impact the assessment outcome and those to be considered holistically in determining the assessment result (acceptable or unacceptable).

Table 4-1 Comparison of NLC amended policy against criteria identified within National and Regional Guidance

Assessment Criteria within National and Regional Guidance	NLC Amended Policy
Assessment Principles	In line with national / regional guidance recommendations.
Route	In line with national / regional guidance recommendations.
Accompaniment	In line with national / regional guidance recommendations.
Time	In line with WoSRSF guidance recommendations.
Footway	Generally, in line with national / regional guidance recommendations, with amended Policy specifying footway/footpath minimum width requirements, the need for barriers if minimum width is unachieved and required surface conditions.
Lighting	Exceeds national / regional guidance recommendations, with updated policy specifying the route should be illuminated to the Council's current standards.
Road Crossing	Generally, in line with national / regional guidance recommendations, particularly the assessment considerations / processes of WoSRSF.
Traffic Classification	Generally, in line with national / regional guidance recommendations, particularly the assessment considerations / processes of WoSRSF (No requirement to classify vehicles).
Traffic Volume	In line with national / regional guidance recommendations.
Accident Record	In line with national / regional guidance recommendations.

Table 4-2 Comparison of NLC Draft Amended Policy against additional criteria identified within Local Authority process.

Local Authority Assessment Criteria	Additional Local Authority Criteria Considered in NLC Amended Policy (Yes/ No)	Additional Criteria Detail
Accompaniment	Yes	NLC's amended policy In line with national / regional guidance recommendations. In addition to the above national / regional assessment assumption that children will be accompanied as necessary, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands Councils specify that the process assesses the routes suitability in account of one pupil being accompanied (not multiple).
Time	Yes	NLC's amended policy specifies that assessments are undertaken in the morning unless evidenced the afternoon would be more problematic. This is in line with WoSRSF guidance. Fife Council specifies that routes are assessed in the hour before the morning bell and the hour after the afternoon bell as per in line with LARSOA and Road Safety GB guidance.
Footway	Yes	As outlined above, NLCs amended policy specifies minimum footway widths 1.5m with reduction to 1m acceptable up to 30m. conditions. The policy identifies required surface conditions. In addition to the above national / regional assessment considerations regarding footways / footpaths Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands and North Ayrshire Councils specify the normal minimum width is defined as one metre wide. West Lothian Council specify that the route must be paved. Fife Council notes that where footways are less than 1m consideration is given to multiple factors (see Appendix C)

Verge Widths / Shape	Yes	NLC's amended policy specifies the footway / footpath / verge conditions required to be suitable (these are in line with other relevant guidance). It also specifies a verge on a road with light traffic flows can be stepped on when traffic is passing. The amended policy outlines width and condition criteria for route sections to be walked along. This is identified as an assessment consideration for Orkney Islands Council noting grass verges are generally not suitable for walking on but can provide refuge (step-off). Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands Councils specify that on roads with low or very low traffic flows a verge providing step-off is considered suitable for a school walking route as long as visibility is adequate. Additionally, Shetland Islands Council notes that where traffic flows are low but 85%ile speeds exceed 53mph they normally require a footway / roadside strip with minimal breaks.
Off-Road Paths	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. Fife Council specifies that for off road routes, assessing officers will consider the interaction of site-specific factors (surface, lighting, visibility/sightlines, surrounding walls, vegetation or other barriers, advice from Police Scotland). Routes through cemeteries, graveyards, crematoria and places of worship will not be considered available for the route assessment.
Lighting	Yes	Requirement for routes to be lit. East Dunbartonshire and Fife Councils note that the provision of lighting should be considered and noted respectively. Inverclyde and West Lothian Councils specify the route must be lit.
Roundabout Crossing	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically.

		Fife Council notes that when crossing an exit road on a roundabout, assessors should record any observed uncertainties caused by vehicles movements on the roundabout.
Refuge Island Dimensions	Yes	NLC are the only authority to outline specify minimum dimensions for refuge islands.
HGVs / Large Vehicles	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference HGV/ Large Vehicles specifically however the policy outlines that classification is not needed as pedestrians do not consider vehicle classification when determining whether or not to cross (in line with WoSRSF guidance). HGV's/ Large Vehicles are specified as an assessment consideration for Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands Councils where HGV's/ Large Vehicles exceed 10 in the hourly flow in which the assessment is undertaken.
Traffic Speed	No	NLC's amended policy does not identify speed limit specific criteria. North Ayrshire Council noted that routes adjacent to roads with a speed limit above 40mph are not considered acceptable.
Accident Data	Yes	NLC's amended policy specifies that most weighting is given to collisions involving school aged children within school term time and school travel times. North Ayrshire Council noted that in reviewing collision data for a route particular consideration is given to those recorded at school times and school aged casualties.
Watercourses	Yes	NLC are the only authority to outline assessment criteria specific to watercourse protection.
Weather	Yes	NLC's amended policy specifies that the assessment is based on normal conditions and that parent's / carers are responsible in deciding suitable alternatives where extreme events are experienced.

		East Dunbartonshire notes varying weather and seasonal conditions should be considered. Fife Council notes the impact of weather on a route's availability may be taken into account e.g. flooding. Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands Councils both note that their process considers average conditions. The assessment considers suitability of the route in both summer and winter, taking into consideration the significant differences in daylight between seasons and exposed route sections.
Structures (bridges, cattle grids, retaining walls, culverts)	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. This is identified as an assessment consideration for Orkney Islands Council noting these may pose a hazard.
Ditches	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. This is identified as an assessment consideration for Orkney Islands Council.
Signage	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. This is identified as an assessment consideration for Orkney Islands Council.
Trunk Road	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. Fife Council notes that where a route is along and / crosses (at surface) a trunk road, assessors will liaise with Transport Scotland.
Gradient	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. Fife Council notes that the presence of a road gradient should be noted but does not make a route unavailable. Path, ramp or step gradients are not considered.

Air Quality	No	NLC's amended policy does not reference these features specifically. Fife Council specifies that unless recommended through an Air Quality Action Plan, air quality is not considered.

5. Conclusion

This review has identified that NLC's amended walked routes to school assessment policy is in line with the key assessment principles recommended within national and regional guidance, particularly in its alignment with the principals and processes in WOSRSF.

Whilst it has been identified that the NLC amended policy does not specifically reference all of the additional assessment criteria given within the 21 local authority responses, it is recognised that these variations in criteria amongst local authorities may reflect the diverse geographical environments within which the assessments will be undertaken.
Additionally, these criteria are noted as considerations as part of the assessment process and do alone determine a routes acceptability.

Although these additional criteria may not be specifically referenced in NLC's amended policy, it is outlined that it 'cannot cover every eventuality and situation as there are many subtle variations' emphasising that 'each route will be considered on its individual merits'. It also notes that 'any points of concern out with the criteria will be noted by the Education and Families Service'.

TECHNICAL
NOTE

Appendices

Appendix A. National / Regional Guidance Review

Appendix A

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Assessment Principles	*This assessment considers the road safety risks resulting from pedestrian and vehicle conflict or safety hazards resulting from defects within the road such as tripping points. Personal security issues are not addressed by this assessment.'*	*In assessing the safety of an available route consideration is given only to the potential risk created by traffic, highway and topographical conditions, not personal safety* *It is essential that each case be considered objectively on its merits'*	*When assessing the safety of an "available route", only the potential risk created by traffic, the highway and topographical conditions should be considered (1).* *Each case must be considered on its own merits. Where possible the assessment should be carried out on foot.'*
	Varying weather and seasonal conditions are considered within the assessment; however, the result can only be based upon "normal" conditions and not extremities. In such cases, parents/guardians will have to decide on appropriate action.'		
	During the assessment, any hazards that present unmanageable road safety difficulties be noted.'		
			The presumption is made that all road users follow the highway code and drive to the conditions of the road.'
			In many rural areas, the exercise of continuous judgement is likely to be required. No criteria can provide all the guidance or answers to every situation that may be encountered.'
			Where there is an obstacle such as a narrow bridge along the route, professional judgement will have to be used to assess the relative risk of passing it. The gap criteria given above may be useful and assist in this type of situation.'
Route		*The assessment must cover the whole route from the child's home i.e. gate to the gate of the school. If a traffic calming scheme or 20 mph zone for example, has been introduced in the vicinity of the school, it is unlikely to mean that the whole route can be assessed as 'safe'.'*	*The whole route from the child's home to the school should be assessed at a time children would normally be travelling to and from school.'*
	The assessment will require the route to be walked in both directions on a school day and where practicable at a time when the child or children would be expected to walk.'		
Accompaniment	*In carrying out the assessment, it is assumed that the parent or carer has arranged for the child to be accompanied as necessary by a responsible person.'*	*It is assumed that the child is accompanied as necessary by a responsible parent or carer.'*	*It is assumed that children are accompanied as necessary by a responsible parent or carer (2).'*

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Accompaniment	*'If hazards are identified that are unreasonable for supervised, child pedestrians to cope with these should be listed along with any recommended measures required to mitigate them.'*		
Time	*The heaviest vehicle flows usually occur during the morning journey period. Therefore, the site surveys should generally be conducted during this period, unless it is proven that the afternoon period is the busier. The crossing should be walked in both directions to ensure adequate visibility from both sides of the road.'*	*The heaviest vehicle flows usually occur during the morning journey period. Therefore, the site surveys should generally be conducted during this period, unless it is proven that the afternoon period is busier, in which case assessments should be carried out during that travel time sector. A minimum of three one hour site surveys must be conducted, the data being recorded in 5-minute consecutive periods. The minimum of a one hour survey in the morning immediately before the school day commences and another immediately after the end of the school day. In addition, a further survey should be conducted during the busiest period, which may be either in the morning or afternoon.'*	*Site surveys should usually take place during the period before schools starts in the morning as this is when traffic flow is generally heaviest, unless it can be shown that the afternoon flow is heavier.* *'Further surveys should take place at the end of the school day and again at whichever period has the heaviest traffic flow, giving a minimum of three surveys. Data should be recorded in 5 minute consecutive periods.'*
Footway	*Where a footway is provided it should be continuous – excluding gaps of up to 20m – or be an acceptable local equivalent, for example, dedicated part of road sectioned by white lining.'*	*Where there is a footway or roadside strip of reasonable width and condition, public footpath or a bridleway, this will normally be assumed to provide an available route for that part of the journey.'*	*A footway, roadside strip of reasonable width and condition, a public footpath or bridleway will all normally be assumed to provide an available route for that part of the journey (3)*
	Areas where children are expected to congregate such as bus pick up points should be of adequate size to safely accommodate the required number of pedestrians.'		
	Some routes may lie along roads that have neither footway nor verge. On such roads, consideration must be given to the width of the carriageway, traffic speed and composition (such as frequent long / heavy goods vehicles) and to both pedestrian and driver visibility. (that is, sharp bends with high hedgerows or other obstructions to visibility). Refer to the flow chart for guidance (Appendix 1).'	*Many available routes may lie along roads that have neither footway nor verge. On such roads, consideration must be given to the width of the carriageway, traffic speed and composition (such as frequent heavy goods vehicles) and to visibility (i.e. sharp bends with high hedgerows or other obstructions to visibility).'*	*Many available routes may lie along roads that have neither a footway nor verge. On these roads the width of the carriageway, traffic speed and type of traffic (e.g. frequent long or heavy goods vehicles) as well as visibility/sight lines that may be affected by sharp bends, high hedgerows or other obstructions must be considered. It is likely that if a route is found to be lacking in 'step offs' then it is also likely to have issues with adequate visibility – the features that affect the availability of 'step offs' often impact on visibility – hedges, gradients etc. However, there may be exceptions to this.'*

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Footway	*A dedicated footway or footpath is not required for a route to be deemed suitable. The availability of "step-off" areas from the carriageway e.g., a grass verge may be deemed sufficient.'*	*Where a verge exists, on a lightly trafficked or narrow road, which can be stepped on to by the child and accompanying person when vehicles are passing, it can normally be assumed to provide an available route for that part of the journey. This is what is referred to in these guidelines as a 'step-off'*	*On a road with light traffic flow a verge that can be stepped on by a child and accompanying parent when traffic is passing can normally be assumed to provide an available route. This is known as a "step off" (4)'*
	Any faults will be picked up by the normal inspection procedures of the Roads authority.'		
		These guidelines assume that the walker will cross the road to utilise the footway or roadside strip.'	*It is assumed that the road or side roads will be crossed to use a footway or road side strip (5)'*
		If there is a Footway of adequate width throughout the whole length of the journey, and there is no need to cross the road, then the route is 'safe'. *(Informed judgement by the professional may be necessary, dependent upon traffic flows and the nature of the route)'*	*If there is an adequate footway throughout the whole length of the journey, and there is no need to cross the road, then the route is "safe". (Informed judgement by the professional may be necessary depending on traffic flows and the nature of the route)'*
Lighting	*Guidelines state the presence or absence of street lighting on a route is not considered to be a factor.'*	*The presence or absence of street lighting on a route is not considered to be a factor.'*	*On its own the absence of street lighting does not make a route unsafe'*
Road Crossing	*Where pedestrians are required to cross a road the availability of any facility (for example, central refuges, pedestrian crossing, traffic signals etc) to assist such crossing should be taken into consideration. Where no crossing facility exists, a suitable location should be identified, and an assessment of the risk generated by crossing the road should be made.'*	*Where road crossings are necessary, the availability of any facility (e.g. central refuges, pedestrian crossings, traffic signals etc.) to assist such crossing should be taken into consideration. Where no crossing facilities exist an assessment of the risks which may be generated by crossing the road (bearing in mind the traffic speed and flows, sight lines etc.,) should be made.'*	*Where roads need to be crossed, the availability of crossing facilities such as central refuges, pedestrian crossings or traffic signals should be taken into consideration. Where no crossing facilities exist the risk assessment of the route should include consideration of each road crossing, bearing in mind traffic speed and flows, sight lines etc.'*
		The difficulty of crossing at a site can be assessed by considering the number of gaps in the traffic flow which are acceptable to pedestrians.	*The difficulty of crossing at a site can be assessed by considering the number of gaps in the traffic flow that are acceptable to pedestrians.*

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Road Crossing	*Crossing time and visible gap time* *The crossing time required for a child pedestrian to safely cross a carriageway should be calculated as:* *Crossing time (seconds) = thinking time + carriageway width / walking speed* *This is based on 1 second thinking time and a walking speed of 0.9metres per second for example, 1+ 7.3 / 0.9 = 9.11 seconds* *The visible gap time in traffic is the time between approaching vehicles in either direction to reach the crossing point. At sites where visibility is limited a measure of time should be taken from when a vehicle comes into view until it reaches the crossing point and that should exceed the time required for pedestrians to cross the road.* *For a crossing to be considered acceptable, 4 visible gap times, each greater than the crossing time, is required in each 5 minute period.'*	*Where vehicles enjoy free-flowing conditions the gaps between successive arrivals are randomly distributed and the waiting time for an acceptable gap may be found to be relatively short. However, in such conditions speeds are likely to be higher than normal and in consequence the length of the gap required to facilitate a safe road crossing will be longer.* *An acceptable gap in which to cross, from kerb to kerb varies from person to person. The majority of pedestrians will accept a gap of 4-6 seconds at normal urban vehicle speeds to cross two lanes of traffic and even shorter gaps at slow vehicle approach speeds. Other groups may require somewhat larger gaps, of around 10 to 12 seconds or even longer.* *(The above is an extract from Local Transport Note 1/95)'*	*Free flowing traffic may provide gaps randomly and fairly frequently but speeds tend to be higher and gaps would need to be longer in order to cross the road safely.'*
		The survey should record the number of gaps, in each 5-minute period, which are greater than the road crossing time (using 3 feet per second as the walking speed). Four gaps in each 5-minute period indicate a road, which is reasonably able to be crossed without undue delay. It may be necessary to analyse the gap lengths, since long gaps could be interpreted to be, and classified as multiple gaps. *Further information about methods which might be used to determine gaps which would facilitate safe road crossings can be obtained by referring to Local Transport Note 1/95 which deals with the assessment of sites for proposed pedestrian facilities.'*	*The survey should record the number of gaps in each 5 minute period that are longer than the road crossing time, using 0.91m per second as the walking speed. Four gaps in each 5 minute period indicate a road that can be crossed without too much delay. Longer gaps could be classified as multiple gaps rather than as just one gap. Transport Note 1/95 (Department for Transport) gives further information on assessing gaps in traffic flow for road crossings.'*
		When there is a need to cross the road in order to use the opposite Footway, or to improve sight lines, it may be necessary to identify the safest crossing places. It may be helpful to provide advice about the safest crossing places.'	*If roads have to be crossed to use a footway or to improve sight lines then it may be necessary to give advice about safe crossing places.'*

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Road Crossing	*The assessment will consider the visibility of both the pedestrian and the vehicles as well as considering factors such as carriageway width and vehicle speeds.'*	*If a crossing manoeuvre is required on the route, the available visibility at the location should allow for a vehicle to stop given the 85%ile speed of the flow of traffic and the stopping distances required for vehicles as stated in the Highway Code*	*If a road needs to be crossed the visibility at the location should allow a vehicle to stop, given the 85%ile speed (the speed at which 85% of the vehicles travel below) of the traffic flow. Vehicle stopping distances should be taken as those given in the Highway Code.'*
Traffic Classification	*There is no need to classify vehicles, as pedestrians do not consider vehicle classification when determining whether to cross or not.'*	*(i) It is recommended that the traffic counts be recorded as 'light vehicles' equivalent values, by using the following multiplication factors:* *Standard Vehicle Units (SVU's) For Recording Purposes* *3 pedal cycles = 1 SVU* *2 motorcycles = 1 SVU* *1 car = 1 SVU* *1 light vehicle = 1 SVU* *1 HGV/PCV = 2 SVU's* *(ii) Where the half-hour two-way [one-way on dual carriageways] traffic flow is below 240 the road is assessed as safe to cross'*	*It is recommended that traffic counts are recorded as "passenger car" equivalent values (PCUs), by using the following factors:* *Passenger Car Units* *3 pedal cycles = 1 PCU* *2 motorcycles = 1 PCU* *1 Car = 1 PCU* *1 light goods vehicle (up to 3.5 tonnes gross weight) = 1 PCU* *1 Bus/Coach (over 3.5 tonnes) = 2 PCUs* *Goods Vehicles (over 3.5 tonnes) = 2 PCUs* *Goods Vehicles (over 7.5 tonnes/multi axle lorries) = 3 PCUs*
		A special assessment may be required to determine whether or not there are special factors, which will enable the road to be crossed in reasonable safety. These factors may include for example traffic interrupters.'	
Traffic Volume	*This is covered in the measurement of traffic volume. Vehicle volumes of 240 vehicles per hour and under indicate there will be suitable gaps in traffic to allow safe crossing. This will be used as a guide where deemed necessary by the assessing officer. More detailed investigations will only be made where this is considered necessary for example, road crossing times and visible gap times.'*		*Where the two way (one way of a dual carriageway) traffic flow is below 240 vehicles per hour the road is assessed as safe to cross. This is based on the original County Road Safety Officers Association criteria and is equivalent to 1 vehicle every 15 seconds and allows a reasonable gap time to cross a 7m wide road at a walking speed of 0.91 metres per second. A written record of any vehicle counts should be kept.* *If the site assessment shows that traffic flow is greater than 240 vehicles per hour and limits the opportunities to cross, then a gap count assessment could also be carried out.'*

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Traffic Volume			*The traffic flow can vary from very low on some country roads to very heavy in urban areas. It will also vary on individual stretches of road depending on the time of day and in some cases time of year and day of the week.* *Suggested flow levels:* *Low traffic flow – up to 400 vehicles per hour* *Medium traffic flow – 400 to 840 vehicles per hour* *Heavy traffic flow – over 840 vehicles per hour*
Accident Record		*The assessor will wish to be aware of the accident record for the route in question, as it relates to the school journey.* *Note: The existence of an accident record on the route does not necessarily indicate that the route for the purpose of the school journey is 'unsafe'. Referral may need to be made to appropriate colleagues within the Local Authority to determine the type, nature and relevance of the accident record in order to establish whether or not recognition should be given to the data, and to what extent.'*	*The accident record for the route over a minimum period of 3 years should be taken into consideration.* *The existence of an accident record does not necessarily indicate that the route is unsafe for the journey to school, this would depend on the type, nature and relevance of the incidents. Advice from colleagues working with road casualty data may need to be taken.'*

	National and Regional Guidance		
Guidance Criteria	**West of Scotland Road Safety Forum (WoSRSF) - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School (2014)**	**Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School (2000)**	**Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (2012, latest update 2021)**
Reporting	*A completed road safety assessment should be reported to the Education Authority stating whether the route is considered acceptable to be walked or not. If hazards are identified that are unreasonable for supervised, child pedestrians to cope with these should be listed along with any recommended measures required to mitigate them.*	*For a route to be classed as non-hazardous there needs to be:- Both* ***A*** *A continuous adequate footway on roads which carry normal to heavy traffic or "Step offs" on roads which have light traffic flow but adequate sight lines to provide sufficient advance warning to drivers and pedestrians. or on roads with very light traffic flow, no "step offs", but sufficiently good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning. And* ***B*** *If there is a need to cross roads there must be:- Sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunities to cross safely. or Crossing facilities (eg zebra, pelican crossings) Pedestrian phase at traffic lights (including necessary refuges) School Crossing Patrol Pedestrian refuges*	*For a route to be classed as non-hazardous there needs to be:- Both* ***A*** *A continuous adequate footway on roads which carry normal to heavy traffic or "Step offs" on roads which have light traffic flow but adequate sight lines to provide sufficient advance warning to drivers and pedestrians. or on roads with very light traffic flow, no "step offs", but sufficiently good sight lines to provide adequate advance warning. And* ***B*** *If there is a need to cross roads there must be:- Sufficient gaps in the traffic flow and sight lines to allow enough opportunities to cross safely. or Crossing facilities (eg zebra, pelican crossings) Pedestrian phase at traffic lights (including necessary refuges) School Crossing Patrol Pedestrian refuges*

Appendix B. Local Authority Respondent Information

Appendix B

Local Authority	Local Authority Information				
	National / Regional Guidance Used/ Referenced	**Local Authority Guidance / Policy Used**	**Local Authority Assessment Process Specifications**	**Local Authority Assessment Reporting Specifications**	**Additional Information**
North Lanarkshire Council	West of Scotland Road Safety Forum - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School	North Lanarkshire Council - The Assessment of Walked Routes to School Process (2025, draft)	Yes - see Appendix C	Assessment recording document - *'Route Inspection Form Gap Analysis'*	
Aberdeenshire Council	LARSOA - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	Aberdeenshire Council - Home-to-School Transport (2018) *'Any parent/carer who has concerns over the safety of the walk route to their child's PUDO or, alternatively, the safety of the PUDO itself, may bring the matter to the Passenger Transport Unit who will instigate an appropriate safety assessment. Parents/carers should, however, be aware that in determining the safety of the walk route and/or PUDO, it is presumed that the child is accompanied by a responsible adult.'*	No	N/A	
Argyll and Bute Council	West of Scotland Road Safety Forum - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School	N/A	No	N/A	
Ayrshire Roads Alliance	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	Response notes that a review of several walking routes was recently undertaken with pupils and elected members to establish what routes would actually be taken identify any issues such as lack of safe crossing opportunities or missing footway links.
Clackmannanshire Council	N/A	N/A	No	N/A	Response notes that assessments of 'walked routes to school' are not undertaken

Local Authority	Local Authority Information				
	National / Regional Guidance Used/ Referenced	Local Authority Guidance / Policy Used	Local Authority Assessment Process Specifications	Local Authority Assessment Reporting Specifications	Additional Information
Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar	N/A	Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar - Home to School Travel Policy *'Where the safety of a walking pupil is in question, parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring their child's safe arrival at school. Where the parent of a pupil who is not entitled to Home to School Transport maintains that it is not safe to walk to the pupil's school, the education authority will take a decision on the matter considering:* *- The responsibilities of the parents* *- The age of the pupil(s) The width of the carriageway* *- The presence or otherwise of footpaths* *- The presence of lighting* *- The presence of crossing facilities* *- The existence of a public service* *- The presence of high banking, ditches or other roadside features* *- Any temporary road conditions which may exist at the time* *- Any home to school travel plans in operation in the vicinity (see 12.1)* *- Any other factors which may exceptionally be relevant.'*	No	Assessment recording document - *'Comhairle Nan Eilean Siar - School Transport Route Assessment'*	

Local Authority	Local Authority Information				
	National / Regional Guidance Used/ Referenced	Local Authority Guidance / Policy Used	Local Authority Assessment Process Specifications	Local Authority Assessment Reporting Specifications	Additional Information
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	Dumfries and Galloway Council - School Transport Policy (2023) *'Any request to review on the grounds of road safety on a Council adopted public road will consider the suitability of the route and road environment, as well as the specified Pick-Up /Drop-Off points, on the assumption the child is accompanied by a responsible person (refer to para 2.3). This will generally apply to all pupils using that route and will be carried out by the Roads Service 'Network Strategy and Road Safety Team'*	No	N/A	
Dundee City Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	Dundee City Council - Travel Assisstance Policy and Guidance (2022) *This applies to specific rural situations within the city boundary only.* *Designated school bus services will be provided (for the unsafe element of the route as a minimum) if the route to school is deemed unsafe because:* *- the child or young person has to walk a route which does not comply with Road Safety GB 'Assessment of Walked Routes to School' guidance and,* *- the alternative safe route is beyond the walking distances specified above*	No	N/A	
East Dunbartonshire Council	West of Scotland Road Safety Forum - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School LARSOA - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School	East Dunbartonshire Council - Guidelines on Assessing Walking Rotues to School (2010)	Yes - see Appendix C	Assessment recording documents - *Route Inspection Form* *Traffic Census & Gap Count Form*	

Local Authority	Local Authority Information				
	National / Regional Guidance Used/ Referenced	Local Authority Guidance / Policy Used	Local Authority Assessment Process Specifications	Local Authority Assessment Reporting Specifications	Additional Information
East Lothian Council	N/A	East Lothian Council - Walking routes to schools, Route assessment guidelines (Date N/A)	No	N/A	
East Renfrewshire Council	West of Scotland Road Safety Forum - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School	N/A	No	N/A	
Falkirk Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School (Internal assessment)	N/A	No	N/A	Response noted that internal assessments are based upon the Road Safety GB guidance. External assessments are undertaken by a consultancy and no baseline guidance referenced
Fife Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	Fife Council - Walked Routes to Schools Assessment Policy (2019)	Yes - see Appendix C	Assessment recording document - *Walked Route Assessment Form*	
Glasgow City Council	West of Scotland Road Safety Forum - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School	N/A	No	Assessment recording document - *WoSRSF Walking Route Assessment Checklist*	
Inverclyde Council	West of Scotland Road Safety Forum - Guidelines for Assessing Walking Routes to School	N/A	Yes - see Appendix C	N/A	
Midlothian Council	N/A	N/A - at the time of writing, in the process of updating policy	N/A	N/A	
North Ayrshire Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	N/A	Yes - see Appendix C	N/A	Information provided via Teams call with North Ayrshire 19/05/2025
Orkney Islands Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	Orkney Islands Council - Assessment of School Walking Routes Policy (2021)	Yes - see Appendix C	N/A	
Perth & Kinross Council	LARSOA - Identification of Hazards and the Assessment of Risk of Walked Routes to School Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	N/A	No	Assessment recording document - *Route Assessment Form*	
Scottish Borders Council	Road Safety GB - Assessment of Walked Routes to School	N/A	No	N/A	

Local Authority	Local Authority Information				
	National / Regional Guidance Used/ Referenced	Local Authority Guidance / Policy Used	Local Authority Assessment Process Specifications	Local Authority Assessment Reporting Specifications	Additional Information
Shetland Islands Council	Not specified. Briefing note provided outlines 'The audit framework is based on our current understanding of national guidance and best practise amended as appropriate for Shetland.'	Shetland Islands Council - School Transport Policy (2024) Appendix A: Briefing Note - Assessment of School Walking Routes	Yes - see Appendix C	*A report on the route is prepared after it has been walked and driven by the assessing Engineer. This report summarises the salient features and details of the route and identifies any particular points of concern. Where particular improvements or maintenance works would significantly enhance the safety of the route these will be noted.'*	
West Lothian Council	N/A	West Lothian - School Transport Policy (date N/A)	Yes - see Appendix C	N/A	

Appendix C. Local Authority Process Specifications

Appendix C

Local Authorty Assessment Specifications	Local Authorities							
	North Lanarkshire	East Dunbartonshire Council	Fife Council	Inverclyde Council	North Ayrshire Council	Orkney Islands Council	Shetland Islands Council	West Lothian Council
Assessment Principles	*The safety of children is the guiding principle for determining whether or not a walked route is deemed acceptable, however, due regard must be given to the following further principles upon which the assessment process is based.'*							
		In carrying out the assessment, it is also assumed that all persons will exercise due care and adhere to basic road safety rules.'						
							The adopted policy in Shetland provides each walking route a 'Pedestrian Suitability Factor' or PSF. This is an arbitrary ranking number in the scale of 1 to 4 and is used to compare pedestrian safety on one route against another - the higher the number, the less suitable the route. Currently, routes with a PSF of 1 or 2 are suitable; routes with factors of 3 and 4 are not suitable, and will require pupils to be provided with school transport.'	
Route	*To calculate whether the route falls within or outwith the distance thresholds, the distance assessed will be from the home address to the nearest available school gate with pedestrian access. The walked route will ordinarily be the same as the distance assessment, although in some cases where a route has been declared acceptable from a pick-up point to the school gate, the route from the home address to the pick-up point would then be assessed. It is the prescribed route which is being considered during the assessment, not the child.'*							
	The route to school assessment considers the road safety risks resulting from potential pedestrian and vehicle conflict or safety hazards resulting from the physical condition of the route. Safety inspections and work to rectify defects such as trip hazards will be undertaken in line with the Council's road and path maintenance policy.'					*The main parameters considered during the process are as follows:* *-Traffic Speed - Consideration is given to both the average and 85% speeds. Attention will be given to excessive speed during the walking periods.* *- Verge Widths and Shape - Grass verges are generally not considered suitable for walking along but are used to provide refuge when meeting oncoming vehicles.* *- Structures along the Route - Bridges, cattle grids, retaining and boundary walls and culverts may pose a hazard in certain circumstances.* *- Existing signage* *- Footway / Streetlighting Provision* *- Ditch Location, Width and Depth* (Ony notes those variable from baseline national guideance)		
Accompaniment	*When carrying out a walked route to school assessment, the assessor will assume that parents/guardians or carers have arranged for children to be accompanied as necessary by a responsible adult. It is also presumed that all persons' will exercise reasonable caution and adhere to basic road safety rules.'*		*Parents/carers may want to consider additional appropriate measures, for example, the use of fluorescent or light-coloured clothing etc. It is assumed that all children walking a route will be accompanied by their parent/carer or another responsible adult where appropriate; that they wear suitable clothing and footwear; remain vigilant and alert at all times and that they will comply with all aspects of the Highway Code relating to pedestrians.'*			*The assessment process is to be used to assess the suitability of a route for one accompanied pupil It is not practical to consider all potential variables for example the presence of a pram or buggy. double buggy or additional children.'*	*The audit process does not consider a circumstance where the accompanied child is further accompanied. This is because it may not be the case, and if it is then by what – one other child, a pram or buggy, double buggy and additional children? It is not practical to take into account all of the variable and changing circumstances of each household accessing school walking routes. Therefore, the process considers the standard requirement of an accompanied child.'*	
Time	*The route will be assessed on a school day and, where practicable, at a time when the child would be expected to make the journey.'* *'The route will be assessed during the school term and, where practicable, at a time when the child would be expected to make the journey. Normally route assessments will be conducted in the morning unless it can be evidenced that the afternoon journey would be more problematic.'*		*Walking routes are assessed by a core team of Assessing Officers who will walk the route on a school day, in the hour before morning bell time and the hour after afternoon bell time, to observe and note the features of the route and to gather additional information as required. They use a walked route assessment form (Appendix B) to record their findings.'*					
Footway	*The identified route will consist of a footway/ footpath/ roadside verge or shared space/ surface of a reasonable width and condition. In terms of surface condition, bound and unbound surfaces are suitable for all users. However, unbound surfaces will only be considered acceptable if the material is suitably compacted e.g. no significant stone loss. Compacted earth would not be considered a suitable alternative.'*							*The route must have an all weather surface.'*

Footway	*An adequate footway/footpath would be defined as one 'At least 1.5 metres wide, even in surface and suitable for walking on'. Reductions to be a minimum width of 1 metre will be considered acceptable over short lengths (up to 30 metres) to account for street furniture or where additional road safety infrastructure such as vehicle safety barrier or pedestrian guardrail is provided. The footway/footpath should be continuous or be an acceptable level equivalent e.g. dedicated part of road sectioned by white lining.'*		*For all sections of road where there is a footway or roadside strip of greater than 1 metre in width, capable of being walked along, the route is considered to be available for that part of the journey. Verges and other unsurfaced strips at the side of a road will only be considered available if they can be walked without hindrance from vegetation or other obstacles and are free from undulations.'*		Information provided via Teams call - *footways / foopaths / verges are to be a minimum of one metre.*	*Footway and roadside strips are those surfaces which are considered to provide an adequate width and a reasonable surface condition to facilitate walking. The normal minimum width is defined as "at least one metre wide".'*	*Footway and roadside strips are those surfaces which are considered to provide an adequate width and a reasonable surface condition to facilitate walking. The normal minimum width is defined as "at least one metre wide". For the reasons given previously this surface is not considered in relation to prams or buggies, only walking.'*	*The route must be paved and of adequate width, or be a shared roadway.'*
			Where a footway or roadside strip exists, but is less than 1 metre in width, assessing officers will consider the interaction of site-specific factors, including the following, to determine availability: - length of footway less than 1m width - ability to step off onto an adjacent verge - any necessity to step off onto the road itself - traffic flow and speed limit - sightlines/visibility - additional footway obstructions - accident data.'					
	Some routes may lie along roads that do not have a footway. On such roads, consideration will be given to the width of the carriageway, traffic volume and to both pedestrian and driver visibility, i.e. sharp bends with high hedgerows or other obstructions to visibility. The term 'Visibility' means the distance of unobstructed vision from the driver to pedestrian when measured from the eye point of a driver (usually taken as being 1.05 metres above the road surface).'		*Where there is no suitable footway or roadside strip on roads where the two-way traffic flow (one way of a dual carriageway) is less than 240 vehicles per hour, the route may still be considered available if: - there are verges which provide a "step off" for pedestrians when vehicles are passing, or, - the width of the carriageway, observed speed, volume, composition of traffic and visibility deem the route as available.'*			*A verge is considered to be an area of ground adjacent to the road carriageway that is not considered suitable for walking along. This area may however provide space for "step-offs". The normal minimum requirement for a step-off is a reasonably firm and even surface with a minimum width of 0.5 metre over a 1.5 metre length.'*	*A verge is that area of ground adjacent to the road carriageway that is not considered suitable for walking along. This area may provide space for "step-offs". The normal minimum requirement for a step-off is a reasonably firm and even surface with a minimum width of 0.5m over a 1.5m length.'*	
			For off-road routes, which include parks, wooded areas, grassland and public spaces, assessing officers will consider the interaction of site-specific factors including: - surface - lighting - visibility/sightlines - surrounding walls, vegetation or other barriers - advice from Police Scotland. Routes through cemeteries, graveyards, crematoria and places of worship will not be considered available for the purposes of route assessment.'					
	Judgement will be used to assess the suitability of shared surface streets. Streets with shared vehicular and pedestrian space tend to have low traffic flows and speeds due to their urban nature and specific street design. Similar principles will also be applied within older towns and villages that have no dedicated footways or demarcated pedestrian provision.'							
Lighting	*Routes will also need be illuminated to the Council's standard.'*	*The presence or absence of street lighting on the route is a considered factor.'*	*Street lighting or its absence should be noted but does not make a route unavailable on its own.'*	Response outlines - *'Route must be lit.'*				*The route must be lit.'*
Road Crossing	*Where the following facilities are provided, it will be assumed that these provide an acceptable crossing opportunity for pedestrians: - Crossing facilities e.g. zebra, pelican, puffin crossing etc. - Pedestrian phase at traffic signals - School Crossing Patrols*							
	Where no crossing facility exists a suitable location should be identified and an assessment of the risk generated by crossing the road should be made. This will be achieved by determining the gaps in traffic flow through measurement to ensure that the pedestrians have frequent and sufficient opportunities to cross the carriageway. On roads that have central pedestrian refuge islands this will be assessed in two parts with each carriageway being assessed separately. . These islands must be a minimum of 1.5 metres wide and same depth to be considered suitable as a refuge area.'							
	Should a crossing assessment be required, this will be carried out when traffic flow is at its heaviest. For most routes, this will be during the morning journey unless evidence exists to provide this would be best done in the afternoon. The crossing should be walked in both directions to ensure adequate visibility from both sides of the road.'							
			Where a crossing point is required on an exit road from a roundabout, assessors will observe and record any potential uncertainties, caused by vehicle movements on the roundabout itself, which could cloud the decision to cross at the crossing point.'					

			Where a walk route is along or crosses (at surface) a trunk road, the assessors will liaise with Transport Scotland as to any specific, additional requirements for consideration.'					
Road Crossing		*If a crossing manoeuvre is required on the route, the available visibility at the location should allow for a vehicle travelling at the 85%ile speed of the flow of traffic and the stopping distanced required for vehicles as stated in the Highway Code. Varying weather and seasonal conditions should be considered. As a rough guide, visibility should be:- - Urban Area (30-40mph) - 7 seconds - Rural single carriageway - 8 seconds - Rural dual carriageway - 9 seconds'*						
Traffic Classification	*There is no need to classify vehicles, as pedestrians do not consider vehicle classification when determining whether to cross or not.'*	*When traffic counts are conducted as part of any assessment, traffic counts will be recorded as "passenger car" equivalent values (PCUs), by using the following multiplication factors: Passenger Car Units 3 pedal cycles = 1 PCU 2 motorcycles = 1 PCU 1 Car = 1 PCU 1 light goods vehicle (up to 3.5 tonnes gross weight) = 1 PCU 1 Bus/Coach (over 3.5 tonnes) = 2 PCUs Goods Vehicles (over 3.5 tonnes) = 2 PCUs Goods Vehicles (over 7.5 tonnes/multi axle lorries) = 3 PCUs If an automatic vehciles counter is used that does not privde vehcile classification data, then some observation of the traffic flow and vehicle composition will be conducted.'*						
							HGV and other large vehicles are only considered relevant where their numbers are greater than 10 in the hourly flow corresponding with the walking period and where this constitutes more than 10% of the traffic volume. Routes that present abnormal or exceptional road safety hazards will be seen to exist regardless of the total traffic volumes.'	
Traffic Volume/ Speed	*On a road with light traffic flows (less than 400 vehicles per hour), a verge that can be stepped on by a child and accompanying adult when traffic is passing can normally be assumed to provide an available route. This is known as a "step off'. This would not include roads (shared surface/ spaces) where the function of the design is to have pedestrians and vehicles using the same area.'*					*On roads with low and very low traffic flows a verge providing sufficient "step-offs" is considered suitable for a school walking route, as long as there is also adequate visibility.'*	*On roads with low and very low traffic flows a verge providing sufficient "step-offs" is considered suitable for a school walking route, as long as there is also adequate visibility.'*	
							In Shetland many of our main and improved roads carry low levels of traffic flow but at a high speed. Therefore, along roads where flows are defined as low (less than 400 vehicles per hour two-way) but 85% speeds are greater than 53mph, we normally require the walking route to be provided by way of footway and roadside strips with minimal breaks.'	
						The assessment of traffic flows and speeds is carried out using data collected at peak morning and afternoon travel periods during a minimum of three school days.'	*The assessment of traffic flows and speeds is undertaken from count information covering the morning and afternoon travel periods of at least 3 school days. This is accepted nationally as allowing a reasonable approximation of the typical scenario for travel to and from school.'*	
						HGV and other large vehicles are only considered relevant where numbers are greater than 10 in the hourly flow corresponding with the walking period, and where this constitutes more than 10% of the traffic volume.'		
					Information provided via Teams call - *roads subject to a speed limit above 40mph are not considered suitable for the route to go along.*			
Accident Data	*A history of pedestrian accidents on any route would not automatically conclude that the route is unacceptable. Any data will be analysed to determine the type, nature and relevance of pedestrian accidents to the route assessment. Most weighting will be given to incidents recorded within term times, involving children of school age during travel times to school.' 'The pedestrian accident record for the route over a minimum period of three years will be taken into consideration.'*				Information provided via Teams call - *collision data is reviewed with particular consideration given to school travel times and casualty age.*			

Watercourses	*The incursion risk to water dangers such as rivers, canals and lochs, must either be mitigated by an adequate barrier e.g. bridge parapet, fencing etc, or the footway / footpath must be set back a minimum of 3 metres from any of the aforementioned water hazards for the route to be considered acceptable.'*							
Weather	*The assessment can only be based upon normal conditions and not extremities. Parents/guardians or carers will be required to decide on appropriate alternatives where extreme events or extremities of weather are experienced.'*	*Varying weather and seasonal conditions should be considered.'*	*Weather is not considered in the assessment of walk route availability. However, the impact of weather on a route's availability may be taken into account e.g. regular flooding making a route impassable.'*			*Adverse weather can occur at any time of the year and, as such, the process takes into account average conditions. In the case of Orkney, the assessment considers the suitability of the route separately for summer (return from Easter break through to October break) and winter (return from October break through to Easter break), taking into consideration the significant differences in daylight between these seasons. Weather conditions may be considered as a factor in the winter months' assessment for particularly exposed sections. However, it remains the parent's responsibility to decide whether or not it is safe for their child to travel to school in bad weather, either by transport or on foot. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their pupils have suitable clothing, footwear, reflective clothing or other visibility aids, torches etc. appropriate for the walking route and weather conditions.'*	*Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children have suitable clothing and footwear, reflective clothing or other visibility aids, torches etc. as may be appropriate for the walking route and weather conditions. Poor weather can occur at any time of the year and as such the process considers average conditions. However, in Shetland the assessment goes beyond the national guidance in considering the suitability of the route separately for summer (April to October) and winter (October to March). This is in recognition of the significant differences in daylight between the different seasons. Extreme weather conditions may be considered as a factor in the winter months assessment for particularly exposed sections, but ultimately it is the parent's responsibility to decide whether it is safe or not for their child to travel to school in bad weather, either by transport or on foot.'*	
Gradient			*The presence or absence of a road gradient should be noted but does not make a route unavailable on its own. Check the list of road lengths >=12% (1 in 8) and >=100m (provided by Roads & Transportation) held on file. Path, ramp and step gradients are not considered as part of an assessment.'*					
Air Quality			*Unless recommended through an AQAP (Air Quality Action Plan), air quality will not be considered as one of the criteria for defining walk route availability.'*					