APPENDIX 1

ASSESSMENT OF SAFE WALKING ROUTES TO SCHOOL

1. The initial assessment is carried out by two Officers from the Education Transport Team of the Department of Environmental Services.

2. The general policy for assessing an available route is attached at **Appendix 2.**

   An available route is a route:-

   - along which it is reasonably practicable for a pupil/student to walk; and

   - along which the pupil/student, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety.

   In assessing the safety of a particular route, consideration is given primarily to dangers related to traffic and highway conditions. The potential for molestation and other dangers must also be considered in the assessment. The availability of a pavement or footpath will normally be taken to provide a safe route for that part of the journey.

   The availability of an accessible verge onto which the pupil/student (and accompanying adult as necessary) can step, when vehicles are passing, will normally be taken to provide a safe route for that part of the journey. On routes where there is neither pavement, footpath nor verge, consideration should be given to:-

   (a) width of carriageway
   (b) traffic speed
   (c) composition of traffic
   (d) visibility (e.g. sharp bends with high hedgerows or banks)

   Consideration should be given to the accident data for the route, with particular regard to the effect on pedestrian movements. Where the road has to be crossed, the availability of facilities to assist such crossings should be considered. In assessing the safety of a particular route, regard should be given to the age of the pupil/student and any other relevant circumstances.

3. The Local Authorities Road Safety Officers' Association Guidelines at **Appendix 3** are used in the assessment procedure.

4. As a result of the inspection, the two officers make a recommendation as to whether transport is to be provided.

   In making their decision, there are two main considerations:-

   (a) Could the pupil/student walk to school unaccompanied, with reasonable safety?

   If the answer is "yes", then there would normally be no case for the provision of free transport.

   If the answer is "no", then (b) below should be considered;

(b) Could the pupil/student walk to school accompanied by an adult, with reasonable safety?

If the answer is "yes", then there would normally be no case for the provision of free transport;

If the answer is "no", provision of free transport should be considered but the matter should be referred first to the Area Highways Engineer to investigate whether any cost-effective road improvements could be made as an alternative to the provision of free school transport.

5. If, after the inspection, the officers are unable to make a recommendation, a Road Safety Officer will be asked to assess the safety of the route using the same guidelines for assessment. A decision is then made as to whether free transport should be provided. If it is decided that free transport should be provided, the Director of Environmental Services will notify the parents and make the necessary arrangements (if the Area Highways Engineer is not able to carry out cost-effective road improvements as in 4(b) above).

6. If the parent is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Officers' initial assessment, the Road Safety Officer will be asked to assess the safety of the route, using the same guidelines. If the Road Safety Officer upholds the recommendation of the Officers' initial assessment, then the parent is informed of his/her right of appeal to the relevant Committee.

7. If the parent appeals against this decision (citing the reasons for doing so), the route may be walked by Members and an assessment made using the guidelines. As a result of this assessment Members consider, at their next meeting, whether free transport should be provided on grounds of road safety.

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