



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Ein cyf/Our ref MA – P/KS/2482/17

Lynne Neagle AM  
Chair - Children, Young People and Education Committee

26 July 2017

Dear

*Lynne,*

Thank you for your letter of 5 July 2017 regarding the Committee's interest in examining the development of learner travel in Wales and the compliance of Local Authorities with learner travel legislation and guidance.

Welsh Government is committed to ensuring the safety of learners on their home to school journey as well as promoting their well-being through a healthy active lifestyle.

The Learner Travel Measure was made in 2008 and since that time Welsh Government has made further legislation which interacts with the Measure, in particular the Active Travel Act 2013 and the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013. In 2014, Welsh Government also developed new guidance for the risk assessment of walked routes to school which extended the criteria by which walked routes are judged to be unsafe. We have continued to monitor the effectiveness of the risk assessment guidance and are currently reviewing the Travel Behaviour Code. There was a full scale consultation as part of this review which actively sought the views of learners.

The guidance is subject to continual monitoring. Where this identifies that revisions are required, the guidance is updated and re-issued. This happened most recently in January 2016, to make minor improvements. My officials will be reviewing the guidance again shortly in the light of the Additional Learning Needs legislation and subsequent guidance to ensure a consistent approach.

The Travel Behaviour Code, which is a statutory measure under the Learner Travel Measure, aims to promote good behaviour on the home to school journey in the interests of safety and pupil well-being. During the review of the learner travel guidance it became apparent that learners were not aware of the current Code and as a consequence Welsh Government have been preparing a refreshed version to raise awareness of expected behaviour, reporting mechanisms and sanctions against breaches of the Code. Learners have been actively engaged in the review of the learner travel behaviour code.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswilt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Ken.Skates@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Ken.Skates@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

I have now launched the new All-Wales Travel Behaviour Code, which includes the behavioural standards expected of learners. It is accompanied by revised Travel Behaviour Code statutory guidance which includes the framework of actions to enhance the effectiveness of the Travel Behaviour Code. I have also issued a parental Guide to the Travel Behaviour Code to help parents support safe and comfortable journeys for learners.

The 'Active Journeys' and 'Walk to School in Wales' projects also support schools to review and improve active travel options in their areas. A Toolkit has been produced to allow schools, local authorities and community groups to independently carry out reviews of the walking routes in their area, offering a sustainable way of assessing and identifying ways of improving the active travel infrastructure in Wales. This will give learners more opportunities to travel actively to and from school, enabling them to obtain the health and well-being benefits of physical activity.

With regards to compliance, following the previous Minister's correspondence to Local Authorities reminding them of their duties under the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure I am satisfied that all Local Authorities are complying with their duties. My officials last conducted a survey of how local authorities carried out risk assessments for walked routes to schools in June 2016. I intend to hold another survey over summer 2017 to monitor how local authorities are considering the walked to school elements of learner travel.

Where I have received an indication that there may be non-compliance, for example, in a letter from a parent raising concerns, I have written to the local authority in question to remind them of their duties and obligations and seek assurances from the local authority that they have followed the relevant guidance and legislation. The responses that have been provided to me by the local authorities have assured me that the final position they have adopted complies with their obligations and duties.

There are several options open to me in the event of non-compliance, including a power of Direction under s.15 of the Learner Travel Measure. I have considered making a Direction in a small number of cases, but in each case the situation has been resolved through correspondence and/or the local authority's own procedures.

*Yours ever,*



**Ken Skates AC/AM**

Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros yr Economi a'r Seilwaith  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy and Infrastructure