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**Consultation on the proposal to cease school bus services to:**

- Meriden CE Primary School
  - St Alphege CE Junior School and St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
  - St George and St Teresa Catholic Primary School
  - St Patrick's CE Primary Academy
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**Consultation period:**

13 March 2017 - 28 April 2017

## The proposal

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On 16 February 2017 Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children, Education and Skills reviewed bus routes that are commissioned to Solihull primary schools.

From this review he agreed to publicly consult on a proposal to cease bus routes to the following schools as of 25 July 2017 as they do not provide value for money to the Council.

- Meriden CE Primary School
- St Alphege CE Junior School and St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
- St George and St Teresa Catholic Primary School
- St Patrick's CE Primary Academy

The current data for these routes is shown in the table below. The total cost to the Council of these four bus services is approximately £112,000, which is an average cost of £28,000 per route.

Route	Number of pupils	Pupils qualifying for assistance	Income from payers
Meriden CE Primary School	20	20	£0
St George and St Teresa Catholic Primary School	22	4	£3,855
St Patrick's CE Primary School	13	0	£2,390
St Alphege CE Junior School and St Augustine's Catholic Primary School	17	0	£3,690
<b>Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>£9,935</b>

- **Meriden CE Primary School**

On its inception, the walking route to this school was deemed 'unsafe', so the Council provided travel assistance. To discharge this assistance, the Council provided a specially commissioned bus service.

The Council is undertaking a re-assessment of this walking route.

If the route is declared to be a safe or "available" walking route, then free travel assistance would no longer be provided.

If the route is deemed unsafe or "unavailable" then the Council would provide a free bus pass in the event that the Council-commissioned service is removed.

The Council is aware that this route is served by two public buses - the X1 and 82. The Council believes that the existence of these services removes the need for the Council to commission a separate service.

Children who live more than the statutory walking distance from their qualifying school would be entitled to a free bus pass or the cash value of a bus pass.

- **St Alphege CE Junior School and St Augustine's Catholic Primary School**

This service operates around Solihull town centre. None of the children using this service qualifies for free travel assistance. All the children live within 2 miles of their school.

- **St George and St Teresa Catholic Primary School**

(Also used by students attending St Peter's Catholic School and Arden)

This service operates in a rural area. Three of the 22 children who use the service qualify for free travel assistance.

Of the 22 children, using this service in the afternoon, 12 are secondary school pupils attending St Peter's Catholic School and Arden returning home to the Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath or Balsall Common areas. The public service route 87 leaving Solihull town centre at 15:30 would offer these pupils a timely alternative way to travel home.

- **St Patrick's CE Primary Academy**

This service operates in a rural area. None of the 13 children using the service qualifies for free travel assistance.

### **When would this happen?**

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If the proposals are implemented, it is intended that these bus routes end on the last day of this academic year - on 25 July 2017.

### **Consulting you:**

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You should respond to the consultation if you want to express your views. You have until 28 April 2017 to reply to the consultation process.

If you are directly affected by the proposal you should respond to the consultation. You can explain the impact on you and your family and describe what alternative arrangements you would have to make for your child to attend school.

Online survey:	Online response form can be found on the Council's website <a href="http://www.solihull.gov.uk/consultation">www.solihull.gov.uk/consultation</a>
Write to us:	School Transport, Council House, Manor Square, Solihull B91 3QB
Email:	<a href="mailto:edtrans@solihull.gov.uk">edtrans@solihull.gov.uk</a>

**Timeline:**

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This timeline is for guidance and could be subject to change as a result of the consultation process.

13 March - 28 April 2017	Consultation period
1 June 2017	Cabinet Portfolio Holder will consider the responses to the consultation
25 July 2017	Proposed end of named school bus services

**Contact us:**

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E: [edtrans@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:edtrans@solihull.gov.uk)  
T: 0121 704 6610  
W: [www.solihull.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/schooltransport)

**Transport policies:**

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Home to School Travel Assistance policies can be found on our website. The policy is not changing. Any child on an affected bus service who qualifies for travel assistance based on the distance from their home will qualify for a bus pass or the cash value of a bus pass.

<b>Statutory walking distance to nearest qualifying school</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Statutory walking distance</b>
Under 8	2 miles
8 or over	3 miles
8 or under 11 low income family	2 miles
11 or over low income family	2-6 miles (one of the three nearest)
11 or over low income family	2-15 miles (nearest school of belief or religion)
Low income family = eligible for free school meals or in receipt of the maximum level of Working Family Tax Credits	