

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

To: Education Resources Sub Committee	Subject: WALKING BUS: GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND SCHOOL BOARDS
From: Director of Education and Director of Planning and Environment	
Date: August 2000	
Ref: KF/CG	

Purpose of Report

This report indicates the action being taken in response to enquiries from school boards and parents on the setting up of a walking bus.

Recommendations

The committee is asked to:

- 1) approve the report which details guidance to parents and school boards for setting up a walking bus.
- 2) request regular progress reports on this initiative.
- 3) refer this report to the planning and environment committee for approval.

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Members wishing further information should contact:

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Murdo Maciver, Head of Educational Provision on 01236 812269

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**Walking Bus : Guidance for Parents and School Boards****1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 At the meeting of the education resources sub committee in June 2000 a report was approved detailing the action by the departments of education and planning and environment in response to the governments advice on safer routes to schools.
- 1.2 Following interest in setting up a walking bus parents in Eastfield Primary School, Sacred Heart Primary School, Bellshill, Whitelees Primary School, St Margaret of Scotland Primary School and Woodlands Primary School, the departments of education and planning and environment agreed to provide notes of guidance and assistance with training to parents and school boards.

2 ACTION PROPOSED

- 2.1 In response to enquiries from parents and school boards in Cumbernauld and Bellshill it is proposed to issue the guidance in appendix 1 on the setting up of a walking bus.
- 2.2 The departments of education and planning and environment will meet with interested parties to discuss training and assist parents and school boards in setting up a walking bus.
- 2.3 The department of education will provide the school co-ordinator with relevant SCRO documentation and undertake to carry out SCRO checks of volunteers and issue identification badges.
- 2.4 The setting up of walking buses will be undertaken on a phased pilot basis to enable any teething problems to be dealt with and to allow a revision of advice to future projects.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The education resources sub committee is asked to:

- 1) approve the report which details guidance to parents and school boards for setting up a walking bus.
- 2) request regular progress reports on this initiative.
- 3) refer this report to the planning and environment committee for approval.

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Notes on Guidance for Parents and School Boards
for Setting up a Walking Bus

1. Ratio of Pupils

The recommended ratio for pupils to volunteers is:

1 to 4 for under 8

1 to 8 for over 8

2. Walking Routes

The assessment of walking routes is undertaken by the department of planning and environment in accordance with the council's policy on "Safer Routes to Schools". Before setting up a walking bus the department of planning and environment will undertake the assessment of the proposed route.

3. Walking Bus Co-ordinator

Each walking bus will require to have a co-ordinator. The co-ordinator will be responsible for advising parents of collection and drop off areas for pupils on the walking bus. The co-ordinator would also keep a register of all pupils travelling on the walking bus.

4. Volunteers

Volunteers will require to undertake a Scottish Criminal Record Check before being approved as a suitable volunteer. The department of education will provide documentation to parents/school boards to enable the check to be carried out. Volunteers who are deemed suitable by SCRO will be given an identity badge by the department of education.

5. Training

Volunteers will have to undergo ½ day training on the requirements expected of them on the walking bus. Training will be carried out by the department of planning and environment.

6. Equipment

6.1 The department of planning and environment recommend that all pupils wear fluorescent vests. The department of planning and environment would assist with providing the vests.

6.2 Parents may also wish to be in contact with volunteers and co-ordinators by telephone. Therefore the departments of education and planning and environment would recommend that mobile phones are used by the co-ordinator and volunteers.

7. **Role of School**

The head teacher in a school would hold a list of names passed on from the co-ordinator of the pupils travelling on the walking bus.

8. **Misbehaviour of Pupils**

It would be the responsibility of each parent to ensure their children do not misbehave whilst using the walking bus. Misbehaviour of pupils will result in them losing the right to travel on the bus.

9. **Adverse Weather**

Parents of children using the walking bus would require to contact the walking bus co-ordinator to ascertain if the bus would operate during adverse weather. If in the event that the bus was not undertaking the journey to or from school it would be a parent's responsibility to undertake this duty.