

FREEPOST RSBU-HJUK-LSSS  
Research and Consultation  
The Pavilions  
Clydach Vale  
CF40 2XX

Dear Madam / Sir,

Re: RCT Home to School Transport Consultation

I want to express my concerns over the changes that RCT is proposing to make in relation to school transport and in particular the impact that this will have in relation to pupils at Pontypridd High School. It is very likely that charging for school transport will reduce pupil attendance rates, impact on pupil standards and also the numbers remaining in post-16 education. Having made significant progress in these areas, the ability of our School and many others to maintain progress with improving literacy, numeracy and overcoming the cycle of social deprivation that so many of our young people find themselves in will prove increasingly challenging. Like RCT as a whole, the geography and patterns of deprivation within our school catchment are unique and as such any 'blanket' decision related to distance travelled pays little regard for the impact it will have.

Having considered the information provided by the Local Council, I feel that the proposals are unfair and have outlined my reasons for this below;

- The proposals will place a huge burden on a working family. A family with two children in Pontypridd High would have to pay £665 per year. They would have to earn in the region of £1000 before tax to pay for this.
- Even with a discount, parents of those pupils receiving free school meals are going to find it increasingly difficult to afford their child's transport to school.
- Pontypridd High School is not easily accessible by public transport. The removal of discretionary transport would result in pupils travelling on several public buses, catching a train to the nearest station (approximately 1 mile away) or walking along the Taff Trail, which is very dangerous during the dark winter months.

Standards and academic outcomes within the Local Authority are improving yet this proposal will take away one key aspect of provision that ensures every child gets to school safely to learn. In many cases, the very pupils who are going to support further improvement will be the ones who are disadvantaged by this proposed policy change. As such, the momentum of improvement and the significant investment in resources and improved systems and procedures in our School and across the Local Authority will be significantly compromised.

I would urge Councillors to reject these proposals.

Yours faithfully,