



Neuadd y Sir / County Hall, Llandrindod, Powys, LD1 5LG

QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME TO CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Response by the Cabinet Member:

Many thanks for your question. There are several elements to this question which make it difficult to provide you with the exact data requested. This is especially true as the law states that a parent has a right to choose which school they feel most suitable for their child. If there is space in the school, then they will be allocated a place. However, if this is not their nearest or catchment school, they may not be entitled to free school transport.

The transport policy refers to nearest or catchment schools, because sometimes the catchment school is not always the closest, but we transport learners to this particular school to strengthen the transition processes between the cluster primary and secondary school, cultural and physical reasons. For example, learners from Upper Chapel are transported to Cradoc CP school however, their nearest school would be Irfon Valley Primary school in Garth. The reason for this is because Upper Chapel sits at the top of the Honddu Valley and traditionally, the culture of the area has been that people have always 'flowed' down the valley towards Brecon and Cradoc School is on the way to Brecon. The other physical reason is the geographical topography of the area is such that in order to travel between Upper Chapel and Garth, it would require you to travel over a single track, mountain road across a live military firing range. There are numerous examples of this type of arrangement across the county.

At the beginning of 2022, School Service consulted on preparatory work to amend the catchment areas to take into account nearest school, but also the local geography and topography of the area. This work is still underway.

As discussed above, parents have the right to choose the most suitable school for their child; this may not be their nearest or catchment school. In these situations, the parents / guardians may choose to transport their children independently to school.

To ascertain the exact numbers of learners would take a considerable amount of officer time, when they are busy in making the transport arrangements for learners transferring from Primary School to Secondary school and making arrangements for learners returning to do A levels after receiving their GCSE results.