

## APPENDIX A: Written Responses

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## Responses from those in support of the proposal

The written comments included with those responses received that were in favour of the proposal are shown below

Where necessary, comments have been anonymised by removing direct, identifiable references to individuals.

### **From groups and organisations:**

- *“There will many children in FHS affected by the changes proposed. However, we appreciate the difficult financial position the Council is facing and in the light of what is proposed, we see no option but to accept these unpalatable proposals. Pupils affected will be able to take advantage of the free bus travel given to Young Scot card holders. We do not welcome the proposals but recognise that savings need to be made within the budget.” (Falkirk High School Parent Council)*

### **From individuals:**

- *“Not affected, but believe with the current budget constraints, this is a sensible proposal” (PARENT)*
- *“The council has a shortfall, more children should walk to school. The money saved might help swimming pools stay open. Children attending Roman Catholic schools should not have free transport either as this is parental choice. (PARENT)*
- *“We will have to pay transport costs for 2 children as we are within 3 miles of the school. However I understand our boys are entitled to free bus transport through the Scottish government scheme and young scot.” (PARENT)*
- *“My child has free bus pass as part of Young Scot card so council should not subsidise school travel.” (PARENT)*
- *“More than happy and able to pay for them to board if and when they need to. Encourages so many more to walk where they have become reliant on bus for shorter distance.” (PARENT)*
- *“Not affected but it seems sensible to bring it into line with the minimum requirements and benefit health by encouraging walking. Kids from families unlikely to be able to walk them in safely or consistently on time should get free bus passes. The teachers should be able to give them out if they notice attendance slipping as a result of the change. Most people will no doubt grumble but find a way to adjust.” (PARENT)*
- *“I sympathise and understand the financial predicament. I am glad that children with additional support needs remain unaffected by the proposed changes.” (PARENT)*
- *“Not affected by this proposal, and with catchment areas for schools I can't see this being an issue” (PARENT)*
- *“I agree in principle but feel that other measures should be brought in to help parents transport their children. I do not drive (this proposal will increase the number of cars at the school) but there is no direct bus from Camelon to Bainsford to help me with travel when weather is not appropriate to walk the children (they will not learn well if they arrive at school soaking and freezing). If the circular bus was brought back then this would help as could jump on and get off at Bainsford Main Street. I feel it is fair, as savings have to be made, but there needs to be a way for me to transport the children and right now I would have to get on the bus and stop at Falkirk to get a different bus. This is not an effective transport choice. Please bring back the circular or a bus from Camelon to Bainsford and this would really help” (PARENT)*
- *“I'm not directly affected. However, I do find it terrible that there is free transport anyway. Surely as a parent it's our responsibility to get our kids to and from school safely and on time. If this means walking everyday with them, allowing them to walk themselves, taking public transport, taxi or driving them ourselves then so be it. I chose to have kids therefore I make sure they can get to school on time. So, I agree with it” (PARENT)*
- *“Westquarter PS bus is too full and less children on bus would save thousands a year from parents who are able to get their kids to school themselves.” (PARENT)*

- *"We can get a public bus to and from school if they are regular" (PARENT)*
- *"It won't affect me I'll continue as a parent to ensure my child gets to school safely and on time." (PARENT)*
- *"I'm not directly but I'd rather see a cut here than the swimming pools" (PARENT)*
- *"I'm not (affected) as my daughter is not entitled to free travel, however she does use her young Scot card and I think that other people could use this for high school children." (PARENT)*
- *"Though I agree with the proposal there are knock on impacts that will need to be considered: if pupils cannot take free buses then presumably they can pay to use the bus? That should be publicised. A consequence of fewer pupils catching the bus (if they have to pay) is that they will be chauffeured to school in a car. This impacts on my family and neighbours by increasing traffic, emissions and general congestion at specific times. As we are residents of a private road (near a school) said parents use our private road as a car park or turning point - they block the private road, drop litter etc - and when using the junction as a turning point, constantly erode the entrance to our street - which we have to maintain, yet the damage is constantly being done by school related populations. Pick-up cars park on the bends on the main street blocking vision up and down when exiting our street. The Council declined to add yellow lines on the blind corners and have not repainted the white line on the main street to signify the exit point from our street. So, whilst we support the changes proposed, it is deemed essential that the Council then considers and implements some measures to control the abuse of private property by the car users and to mitigate the impacts on local residents" (OTHER)*
- *"Live and work in catchment so know that far more of our children could walk/cycle to school and this would have a positive impact on their general health and those of the carers with them. Walking/cycling 'buses' could be organised with some encouragement. My understanding is that we have a very small number of children who actually use the bus regularly hence the money could be better spent in other areas of education. The downside is that there are already too many children arriving by car and this causes issues in the surrounding streets. Parking is a problem and roads are busy for everyone crossing. Removing the bus may well add to this. Also, there are a number of narrow pavements in the school vicinity and this is a safety concern already." (STAFF)*
- *"Environmental and traffic safety benefits but should go further introducing vehicle free zones around every school (except for those requiring reasonable adjustments and access)." (OTHER)*
- *"My son will be going to High School in a few years (he is currently in p4). This won't impact him directly as he would walk to High School anyway. My concern is for the parents and children in the affected areas. The council could roll out a safe cycling initiative with safe cycle lanes and walking routes. I completely support the removal of 40% of the school transport, as it will encourage health and wellness in our children - please capitalise on this opportunity to make their physical exercise a priority" (PARENT)*
- *"Currently I am not affected by the proposal my children are of primary school age and when the time comes for high school I would expect them to walk." (PARENT)*
- *"My child gets a bus from Maddiston - it is a reasonable walk in the winter, but I hope they will manage and feel fitter for walking/ cycling" (PARENT)*
- *"I am appalled that my council tax is used to pay for some families who are fully able to provide transport for their own children to and from school. These people choose to stay where they are and should be prepared to transport their children to school. The children are of High School age and I'm sure could walk or take advantage of the free bus pass that the government provides." (PARENT)*
- *"My child who's a young carer & physically disabled would be entitled to home-school transport but I've only accessed this (for medical reasons) because I feel as a parent it should be my responsibility to get my child to school. This means driving them myself and currently the car parks always overflowing with taxis. Often 1 person per taxi which seems a waste and it would make more sense each car dropping off several pupils. I believe this service has been taken advantage of. If you chose to send your child to a school that isn't your local nearest school, why should you expect others to cover this cost. (PARENT)*

- *"I walked over 3 miles to my high school. Never did me any harm. Kept me fit and made me appreciate car journeys." (PARENT)*
- *"I think some children would benefit from walking to school" (OTHER)*
- *"Proposal prevents further unnecessary increase in Council Tax" (OTHER)*
- *"Not affected personally but aware of: necessity due to council finance position; Falkirk currently generous with transport, this brings us in line with national criteria; will impact on some families, but line needs drawn somewhere; might encourage children to walk. (OTHER)*
- *"I think it's a fairer system that everyone is in same boat. The route the bus goes and where it picks children up is safe to walk and has one main road for children to cross. I think scrap buses or change the routes to pick up more children" (PARENT)*
- *"This will create additional car traffic around schools as the affected children are driven and picked up from school. Extra provisions and parking wardens will be required to deal with this." (PARENT)*
- *"I think there may be some serious issues with this however. The parents of pupils living at the furthest reaches of the zones are far more likely to transport the pupils to school by car. This will lead to further congestion around schools in the mornings and at school closing times. In many cases, there are serious dangers involved in this. Accidents are all too common, pupils being hit by cars and the police have to attend as parents queue to get in to car parks where drop-off zones are located. (They should not be located in staff car parks!). The drop-off zones are simply not adhered to, nor enforced, and in many cases the one-way systems designed to ensure the safety of pupils are ignored. Many of my colleagues have felt the need to invest in dash cams to record the often ridiculous and dangerous behaviours of parents who insist on driving their children to the school entrance. School staff are only trying to get in to their work place, on time, whilst being hampered by traffic and lack of adherence to safe driving practices. This is likely to become worse and more dangerous for all users. (STAFF)*
- *"The Scottish government are giving free bus pass for all children in Scotland so if it would save council money providing buses etc then I think it is a great idea" (PARENT)*
- *"The cost of transporting children to school is very high and transport costs of transporting children for school trips is equally burdensome. I wonder if the council might consider purchasing a single school coach that can be booked by schools allowing a single class to go on a trip for example? Just an idea at saving more money but still making sure than young people are not disadvantaged here compared to other places in Scotland." (PARENT)*
- *"While I broadly agree with the proposal, I have a few concerns. Would the provision of safe crossings be checked, and where appropriate lollipop people be employed? I'm not sure how a primary school pupil of over 8 would cope with a potential 5km (3m) walk to school, given that it is likely to take them up to an hour, based on a reasonable walking speed. An hour is a long walk for your average 8-year-old. I do however think that more pupils walking to school would be beneficial from a health point of view, given the current levels of inactivity and obesity in our society. Also, not all our pupils currently always have a waterproof outdoor jacket (sometimes through personal choice but also through poverty). Would schools be supported financially to ensure pupils have suitable clothing for inclement weather?" (STAFF)*
- *"I think Falkirk are a shambles with their catchments and this will impact on the feedback you get on this proposal. At Wallacestone I'd be interested to learn what % of kids are within the school that aren't catchment. I think half my child's class are outwith their catchment - at least. There are kids at Wallacestone who stay nearer Westquarter, Laurieston and Hallglen Primaries, yet go to Wallacestone. That's incredible. Maddiston is bursting yet areas of Brightons and Rumford still go to Maddiston. Why don't you move all of Brightons (Ercall Road etc) and Rumford into Wallacestone - where there is clearly capacity - and take the pressure of Maddiston. Surely this would save £ as you wouldn't have to extend Maddiston? The vast number of kids living in the newbuild estates in Redding (Westquarter catchments) can go to Westquarter - where there must be capacity also. This must be linked to school transport as you will have pupils having to travel a fair distance to get to Wallacestone that live out with the catchment. You will probably get a lot of negative feedback from those parents over this proposal for that very reason. Rumford and all areas of Brightons are within 2 miles from Wallacestone PS so you'd have no problem making this*

*change. If your approach to catchments is as bad elsewhere I think you'll have many upset parents. However it could be avoided in my opinion if you just sorted the catchments.” (PARENT)*

- *“Parents need to start being parents and not being given support financially and socially left right and centre” (PARENT)*
- *“Understandable saving. Would prefer this proposal compared to some others e.g. swimming pool closures.” (PARENT)*
- *“Stop hiring buses for secondary schools as all over 12s can use the Young Scot card. Teaches them independence for world of work.” (PARENT)*
- *“We need to: keep the crossing patrols that we have; ensure people are parking safely; identify & promote safe walking/cycling routes in a three mile radius; actively encourage parents to walk children to school or use public transport; consider whether a soft start to the school day would help with the congestion issues e.g. school open at 8 50 for a 9 am start; reduce the speed limit to 20mph within safe walking routes; look at where roads need to be crossed and consider how to improve safety.” (STAFF)*
- *“Time to cut back to the basics.” (OTHER)*
- *“Rather than completely cutting the services is there an option for them to be subsidised by the schools involved or parents themselves?” (PARENT)*
- *“I approve if it is more consistent with other council approaches.” (PARENT)*
- *“It would be helpful to see what the positive impact of the money saved and not having an overspend has. Just saving money going into a black hole does not help people understand.” (PARENT)*
- *“Money should be spent directly on education and on things that support the majority not just a small percentage.” (PARENT)*
- *“A needs-based assessment would prevent better off parents benefiting from the scheme.” (PARENT)*
- *“If all eligible kids apply for the free bus pass from the government then they can access the usual service buses. Then the local bus company just needs to manage the timetable to suit additional passengers at school times. (This means) the local bus service (is) being used more and the government (are) not requiring to pay for both a school bus service and support local services. Therefore, the government are only paying out once for a bus service rather than twice currently. That way we still encourage public transport rather than more parents driving kids to school and causing more parking issues in areas where there is often very limited access. (PARENT)*
- *“Encourage cycling” (PARENT)*
- *“Means tested pupils should go free.” (OTHER)*
- *“This is an opportunity to PROPERLY embrace safe, green travel opportunities. Encourage cycling running and walking by investment in the infrastructure to support it. Falkirk’s roads, including those with cycle lanes are an absolute disgrace in terms of safety and viability. A white line does not provide sufficient delineation between cars and bikes. Get some lighting on footpaths that aren't lit just now, use solar energy, show some forward thinking” (PARENT)*
- *“As a positive there has been a significant amount of work undertaken on safe routes to schools so that’s a benefit. Additionally, the opportunity for teaching children about their health and well-being and fitness by walking to school is a significant benefit.” (PARENT)*
- *“I think if the school is in your home town you should get your child to and from school yourself” (PARENT)*
- *“Free travel should not be paid for Catholic pupils to attend a school outwith their catchment area. This should be paid for by the Catholic Church.” (OTHER)*
- *“Transport should only be provided to nearest school not "school of choice" eg denominational school.” (PARENT)*
- *“We need to maintain vital services. This cut is not a vital service but a luxury.” (PARENT)*
- *“Maybe it’s about time high school pupils walked like we did!” (OTHER)*

- *"This is a way of saving money without having a direct impact on school staffing." (OTHER)*
- *"Parents should be responsible for taking their children to school." (OTHER)*
- *"As there is an overspend of c £700k and Falkirk Council goes beyond statutory requirements in the provision of school transport then it seems to me that making a saving in excess of £600k by restricting current provision but remaining within requirements is the obvious course of action." (OTHER)*
- *"Maybe parents could form walking groups" (OTHER)*
- *"I found it very hard to decide. I swung in favour as you say this will be more in line with what other councils do. I do think the increased distances are too far for children of that age to walk. However the vast majority will have access to cars through their parents including car shares. This is one of the very hard decisions the council will need to make to "balance the books"" (OTHER)*
- *"It needs to happen, to achieve savings especially with teacher numbers being protected" (OTHER)*
- *"I would much rather cost savings are made in this way (even if it affected my son) than closing school swimming pools. Swimming, in my opinion is a life skill and the closure of school swimming pools will severely limit access to learning this skill for many children and young people. Considering many primary schools have adopted the "daily mile" I don't think walking up to an additional mile is too much of a hardship although I do realise time constraints may be an issue for some families where parents/carers have to drop children at school (primary school children) before heading to work." (PARENT)*
- *I think it would be better to make savings with school transport rather than closing school pools." (PARENT)*
- *"May be offer alternate arrangements like lists for car sharing at local school or walking/cycling together groups arranged via school list /app for example cycle lanes." (PARENT)*
- *I appreciate the challenges the council face making a budget that balances. (STAFF)*
- *"I think living in the country is a lifestyle choice and parents should be responsible for getting their children to school rather than council providing transport." (PARENT)*
- *"Perhaps using smaller buses would save money rather than large coaches for a handful of children. Perhaps walking buses could be encouraged and used. Would this not save money also?" (PARENT)*
- *"All schools must make an active commitment to enable children to get their Young Scot travel cards to help these kids and other kids closer to the school." (PARENT)*

## Responses from those who are not in favour of the proposal

The comments made in the responses that were not in favour of the proposal are shown below.

Where necessary, comments have been anonymised by removing direct, identifiable references to individuals.

### From groups and organisations:

#### Parent Councils

- **HEAD OF MUIR PS PARENT COUNCIL**

*"Most parents affected feel it is unfair to remove access to a free school bus when it has only been in place for a short time. Also, comments made about safety of kids expected to use public transport with drivers without PVG checks done etc*

*Proposal is unclear regarding where the boundary is. Parents would like to see clarification as to whether it is calculated in regards to 'how the crow flies' or if it is to be 'safest route' they seek clarification as to what that route looks like.*

*The bend along the Drove Loan road is a concern for parents of children that are considered to have to walk that route as the pavement is too narrow and cars are dangerous at the bend. In the winter months it will be dark in mornings and at nights and safety is a concern."*

- **ST MUNGO'S HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL**

*"Parents raised concerns e.g. how safe walking routes to school had been assessed, what the impact on attendance would be? What has the impact been in other authorities where this change has already been made? Since this change greatly disproportionately affects Catholic young people, whether it had been considered to make a commitment to continue to bus Catholic young people, otherwise they felt this could be seen as depriving them of their UNCRC right to worship.*

*Other parents questioned whether this constituted indirect discrimination under the 2010 Equalities Act since the proposal disproportionately affects Catholic young people compared to the comparator pool (non-denominational young people). From the proposal it can be seen that 47% of primary pupils affected are Catholic, in secondary it is roughly 30%. Another parent asked a question about what constitutes vulnerability as it states that vulnerable young people will be protected, but there is no definition of this.*

*Other concerns raised included, if a parent did not wish their S1 child to walk a 6 mile round trip to school every day, can they enrol in a closer non-denominational school? (Only if they submit a placing request if they are baptised Catholic since their catchment school is deemed to be St. Mungo's. The parent felt that this could greatly impact on transition for her child since they would not then know if this would be accepted, and her child would not know which schools transition programme to be part of. They also then raise a supplementary concern that since they have older children already at St. Mungo's, would they also have to submit placing requests for their children to attend the same school as the younger one (yes they would), is there capacity in other schools to accept them (absolutely nine in S2 or S3, all schools in those year groups are pretty much full)).*

*Another parent raised concerns about the inequality as she saw it of this decision on poorer families, potentially without a car and no other means to transport young people to school. Another raised concern over the already congested traffic between 8.40-9am between St Mungo's and St. Francis. They were concerned for the safety of children if potentially another 200 St Mungo's parents, and another 40 St Francis parents were trying to drop their children off. They also raised concerns about the environmental impact of this and how this would appear to fly in the face of the local authority sustainability policy.*

*The also raised concerns about the impact of poorer young people who had to walk an hour to school potentially not being able to get in on time to attend the breakfast club which runs from 8.30, and how this may doubly disadvantage them. Concerns also were raised over pupil safety as routes would take*

*them past other high schools, and parents were concerned about their children getting attacked fir being in their St. Mungo's blazers.*

*They were concerned about the impact of this proposal on attendance and therefore attainment. Also that going forward, a drop in school roll would effect a change in staffing which could result in a decrease in the curriculum that could be offered to pupils.*

*2 main walking route choices use footpaths either via Tophill Entry & Kilns Road - poorly lit, arguably NOT safe for teenage girls to walk down in darkness, no CCTV coverage - or via Bog Road down from Benny T's into the Bog - some comments as for Tophill Entry above.*

*How will a walking route be 'safe' in the heart of winter when the vast majority of footpaths are not gritted to prevent ice formation?"*

- **ST MARY'S PS PARENT COUNCIL**

*"Children living further away than 2 miles may have to walk unaccompanied to and from school each day due to parents working and not being able to accompany across busy roads that are not staffed anymore by lollipop people - that service has been decimated too!*

*A lot of children directly affected will have to walk to and from during dark winter months due to there not being an alternative bus service going past the school they are attending."*

- **ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S PS PARENT COUNCIL**

*"As our entrance is situated directly opposite St Mungo's High School we have a huge volume of traffic around the school at the beginning and end of the school day – more than most schools, as traffic is effectively doubled. We already have an issue with parking and congestion. A reduction in buses would result in more children travelling to school by car, causing issues for the local community and increasing the amount of congestion on the road network around the school.*

*There is a legal requirement for baptised Catholics to be able to access Catholic schools in an authority area.*

*There is not necessarily safe walking routes for some of these children and young people to walk to their school. Many of the Catholic schools are near busy main roads. I am sure that you would not want children and young people taking short cuts through parks, subways and other routes which put them in a vulnerable situation as they walk or cycle to school, especially during the winter. Additionally, due to their work commitments, not all parents are able to walk their child(ren) to school, especially when they have children attending both primary and secondary school.*

*In many situations, there is no alternative local transport to make it possible for the children and young people to travel to their school. Additionally, even if available, the local bus companies do not run timetables that co-ordinate well with the school day. This will mean that some children will have to leave home very early to get to school on time or they will be regularly late. Again, at the end of the school day, many children will get home much later than they do at present which will, naturally, have an impact on their ability to do homework. It could also exclude some children from attending after-school clubs.*

*You also state in your proposal that no child could access the remaining buses on the planned reduced school bus service, even on a fare-paying basis. For parents who might be able to afford this, you are still eroding parental choice about where to send their child(ren) to school if you are denying parents the chance to pay for their child to journey on buses that will take them directly to school. As you know, local bus services do not necessarily take a child close to the school they attend.*

*The result of this proposal can only mean that more parents will drive their children to school leading to increased congestion around schools. As a Council, surely you are trying to encourage people to use their cars less, not make decisions that will encourage greater car usage. It is unlikely that the*



*statements in the proposal about the benefits of active travel to school, reducing traffic and carbon emissions and increasing safety around schools, will happen as a result of this proposal.*

*Many children attend breakfast clubs – the proposed reduction in school transport entitlement will mean some pupils will not get to school in time to attend the breakfast club. A child who has not had a good breakfast in the morning will be tired and not able to concentrate on their studies.*

*Many parents will want to keep their child(ren) at their present school but will struggle to be able to pay for alternative transport. At a time when families are already struggling due to the cost-of-living crisis, does the Council really want to add to the financial burden on families?*

*Is there a saving to be made by reducing the bus entitlement as, surely, a consequence of more children walking or cycling to school is the need for more crossing patrols?"*

- **AIRTH PS PARENT COUNCIL**

*"10 pupils currently attending Airth Primary will lose their free bus entitlement. These are all members of low income families living in Letham who have no other way to get to school.*

*The service bus running between Letham and Airth is completely unreliable and nowhere near regular enough when it does run to be of practical use.*

*To walk between Letham and Airth is a considerable distance for a P1 and is via a narrow pavement alongside the busy 60mph A905. The hedges are poorly kept and when they are trimmed back the resulting debris causes multiple punctures for bikes and pushchairs as it is not cleaned away properly. Furthermore in bad weather the road is liable to severe flooding and it is unacceptable to expect a child to walk through that and then spend the rest of the day in school in wet clothes.*

*The bus is already travelling this route to take Airth children to and from Larbert High school, and will continue to do so given the distance to Larbert. Therefore it makes no sense not to utilise it in the best way for all children concerned.*

*The email address to enquire about safe walking routes should have been published at the start of the consultation so that accurate routes could be considered for comment. I only found out about it after attending the final public meeting in Denny as I was unable to make any of the previous meetings. A week has passed since I emailed regarding this route with no reply, therefore I am having to make comment here without knowing the full details as the consultation closes tomorrow."*

- **ST ANDREW'S PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL**

*"Falkirk Council's current Town Planning strategy results in St. Andrew's RC Primary having a large catchment area with more than half of our pupils arriving at school by bus. While this is a proposal that will impact the majority of schools in the authority, this will, affect all the Catholic schools to a greater extent. This proposal will, have a disproportionate impact on Catholic families as their children often travel further to attend their chosen school.*

*There is a legal requirement for baptised Catholics to be able to access Catholic schools in an authority area. Would the Council then be building more Catholic Schools within the authority to cater for Catholic families or is the plan for all children to go to the school closer to their home, ignoring this legal requirement?*

*Most parents work and the hope of a better environment/ healthier kids as stated in the proposal is frankly not going to happen with most of our parents stating they will have to take their children by car. A lot of parents are concerned with the "safe" routes to St. Andrew's RC Primary School as all of them encounter very busy roads some that are 40 miles an hour and some walking routes by parks. Another concern for parents is time as walking to school for 2 miles with a child is very different to the Transport Adults walking the same route and deeming it suitable. For parents to accommodate the time it will take them and their child(ren) to walk to and from school will be too big an ask, with work pressures and making sure their child(ren) are School ready and not exhausted/wet/cold after the walk to school.*

*This proposal will also cause problems for St. Andrew's RC Primary wider community that sits alongside Graeme High School as a potential 187 more cars will choose to park in the already congested streets when dropping off and collecting pupils. Potentially it could overspill onto Callendar Road a main artery road for many travelling from one side of the town to the other.*

*St. Andrew's RC Primary school is also set within a housing estate with only one way in and one way out. This could result in teachers not being able to get to work on time due to the additional cars if this proposal gets signed off. The additional cars will also cause the air quality to decrease as with more cars near the school results in more fumes from exhausts. With more cars on the streets around the school children will have to be more vigilant when crossing the roads as I have witnessed some poor decision-making skills by those who drop off their children as near to the school gates as possible without regard of other children on the pavement and residents trying to get to work. The pavements into the school would have to be widened to accommodate the additional pedestrians and community Police will have to be available to direct the flow of traffic on the public roads around the school.*

*You also state in your proposal that no child could access the remaining buses on the planned reduced school bus service, even on a fare-paying basis. For parents who might be able to afford this, you are still eroding parental choice about where to send their child(ren) to school if you are denying parents the chance to pay for their child to journey on buses that will take them directly to school. As you know, local bus services do not necessarily take a child close to the school they attend. A lot of our Parents/Guardians did not realise that is what the proposal proposes and therefore are angry as in many situations, there is no alternative local transport to make it possible for the children and young people to travel to their school. Additionally, even if available, the local bus companies do not run timetables that co-ordinate well with the school day. This will mean that some children will have to leave home very early to get to school on time or they will be regularly late. This will no doubt have an impact on the hard work achieved by St. Andrew's RC Primary and across the authority in reducing the attainment gap. Again, at the end of the school day, many children will get home much later than they do at present which will, naturally, have an impact on their ability to do homework. It could also exclude some children from attending after-school clubs.*

*There are very few safe walking routes to St. Andrew's Primary School. Young children would have to cross busy main roads and a heavily congested town centre which poses an added risk to the children walking or cycling to school, especially in the winter. More Lollipop Personnel to accommodate pupils crossing Callendar Road as the only pedestrian crossing is at the Laurieston end of the road.*

*Lack of gritted streets during the winter months as several streets around St. Andrew's Primary School do not get the winter sun on them making them very slippery which could result in more injuries to both parents/guardians and children.*

*Streets littered with leaves along Callendar Road resulting in pavements becoming narrower will the Park Department clear the leaves or will they chop the trees to accommodate the pupils walking to school.*

*Widening of pavements in and around the school to help stop pupils from walking on the road. Better lighting on Roads e.g. Kemper Avenue whereby pupils are walking beside woodland/parks. More Police personnel walking the streets making the pupils feel safer especially when the high school pupils are entering/exiting the school at the same time."*

- **BRAES HIGH SCHOOL PARENT COUNCIL**

*"We have heard from Parents and Pupils who will be impacted by this proposal.*

*As a parent council we are concerned that if the proposal were to go ahead that attendance by young people in the affected areas would decrease and that attainment would suffer as a result.*

*Pupils themselves have pointed out to us that the areas impacted are less like to have cars available or have parents available to take young people to school. They feel that they are being punished for the successive years of financial mismanagement and that is unfair on them.*

*Parents in impacted areas have raised concerns that despite the letter of the law in terms of safe routes to school the roads and pavements are not safe particularly because of the behaviour of other road users including drivers and delivery vehicles. They are also concerned about the impact on their young people from walking to/from school in adverse weather.*

*There are no appropriate alternative bus services that can be utilised and therefore the Under 22 bus pass cannot be viewed as a mitigation to this change.”*

### **Roman Catholic Church**

- **ARCHDIOCESE OF ST ANDREW'S & EDINBURGH**

*“As Vicar Episcopal for Education in the Archdiocese of St. Andrews & Edinburgh, I speak on behalf of Archbishop Cushley on educational matters. I am aware that Falkirk Council is presently considering how it can make budget cuts across all the Council departments. I appreciate that savings have to be made and difficult decisions made to allow the Council to balance the budget. I am concerned, however, about the current Consultation regarding the proposal to change the entitlement to bus travel – ‘Changes to Free Transport Entitlement for Falkirk Schools.*

*While this proposal will impact the majority of schools in the authority, it will undoubtedly affect all the Catholic schools to a greater extent. This proposal will have a disproportionate impact on Catholic families as their children often travel further to attend their chosen school.*

*I would ask you to vote against this proposal for the following reasons:*

- *There is a legal requirement for baptised Catholics to be able to access Catholic schools in an authority area.*
- *There are not necessarily safe walking routes for some of these children and young people to walk to their school. Many of the Catholic schools are near busy main roads, and, due to their work commitments, not all parents are able to walk their child(ren) to school, especially if they have children attending both primary and secondary school.*
- *In many situations, there is no alternative local transport to make it possible for the children and young people to travel to their school. Additionally, even if available, the local bus companies do not run timetables that co-ordinate well with the school day. This will mean that some children will have to leave home very early to get to school on time or they will be regularly late.*
- *The result of this proposal can only mean that more parents will drive their children to school leading to increased congestion around schools. As a Council, surely you are trying to encourage people to use their cars less, not make decisions that will encourage greater car usage.*
- *Many children attend breakfast clubs – the proposed reduction in school transport entitlement will mean some pupils will not get to school in time to attend the breakfast club. A child who has not had a good breakfast in the morning will be tired and less able to concentrate.”*

### **Community Councils**

- **AIRTH PARISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

*“On behalf of Airth Parish Community Council and the residents of the parish we would like to make comment on the proposal to change the distances required for free transport for children attending Airth primary. Within the parish children from Letham and Dunmore would be most affected by these changes. For Letham the children have to walk down the very busy A905 which is a fast-moving trunk road with large and heavy rigid bodied vehicles as well as general traffic past one of the worst junctions in the parish Light-bodies corner at Burgoyne's Garage, the opportunity for a fatal accident here are clear and we do not consider there is any safe walking route for Primary children from Letham. Dunmore is also on the busy A905 where again large vehicles travelling at high average speeds have the opportunity to cause fatal accidents, the path to Airth Primary school crosses over the A905 at Dunmore and again at the Parsonage neither crossing has a proscribed safe crossing mechanism, we can see no safe walking route for primary children from Dunmore and would expect the current arrangements to remain in place.”*

- **BANTASKINE, CAMELON & TAMFOURHILL COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

*“The members of the community council have concerns over the environmental impact the change will make. Parents who normally use school transport will be tempted to use their own vehicle to transport*

children to, and from school, causing congestion around the schools, as well as the increase in vehicle emissions from the increased number of private cars cropping off / waiting to pick up at the school.

There is not a suitable walking / cycling route from Tamfourhill to Bantaskin / Falkirk High/ St Francis / St Mungo's, with a partial cycle route to the area at the former Barrs factory, which then goes to a narrower pathway down to Westburn avenue, where the cycle path resumes. This infrastructure must be in place, prior to these changes, to ensure that a safe cycle / walking route is available. There is no alternative, paid public bus route covering any of these schools, to give parents the option to pay for the child / children to get to school. A lot of parents have employment whilst the children are at school, and this change would mean that their start / finish times would need to be adjusted, causing a loss of earning, or some may be unable to change their working hours, thus forcing them to give up work.

We feel that this proposal will also have an impact on attendance / attainment, with parents who cannot get their children to school, keeping the child at home. In addition, on days of in bad weather, parents will be tempted to keep children off school, rather than walk the distance to and from school in poor weather. We feel that children's education will fall behind, causing overall attainment to fall."

- **BANKNOCK, HAGGS AND LONGCROFT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

"Can you tell me exactly where is affected in the Banknock , Haggs & Longcroft area".

"The first is the issue of taxis. There are some children who do get taxis in Longcroft for Bankier Primary but it looks like it is within the less than 5 number affected but I wonder if you can advise of where any taxis would be removed from. The paper at ECYP said minimal and I know that ASN is not affected.

The second is partial streets included e.g. the odds on one side affected and the evens not. Folk are finding it a bit confusing the rationale."

- **GRANGEMOUTH (INCLUDING SKINFLATS) COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

"As we have no access to any empirical data in relation to pupil numbers and locations we will make no comment in relation to the impact of the proposals in that context.

We are content that the opportunities for parents and parent councils to comment are adequate.

We seek assurances that assessments of designated safe routes to school are current and that they will be regularly assessed to take account of any local developments that may impact upon them.

We note the aspiration that the proposed changes may encourage more forms of active travel to and from school. That aspiration may require some encouragement and we would wish to see practical proposals to support that aspiration."

**From individuals:**

- *“As a member of school staff, we try to encourage our kids to have good attendance in school. If the distance for free transport is extended, I really feel the percentage in attendance will drop dramatically. This will have a detrimental effect on young pupil's education.” (STAFF)*
- *“Work in school affected, and also have a child that does not live far enough away to get free entitlement, but yet faces a 30 min walk to school and home every day.” (PARENT)*
- *“It's 3.5mi to the school from home and the first 45 minutes would be along a busy national speed road with no paths. Surely this proposal would not affect the rural communities attending the high school?” (PARENT)*
- *“The number of disadvantaged and poor families who rely on the school bus is very high within our catchment. The majority of my day just now is spent trying to get young people to attend school and have some form of education provision. If you change this, it will mean the majority of our young people who are already finding it difficult to attend will simply stop attending at all. These families do not have the funds to transport their children to attend school or the ability to support them to walk 3 miles to school in the dark on the back, dangerous roads with lack of safe ways to travel.” (STAFF)*
- *“Personally, my child will not be affected by this proposal as we live 4.5 miles from his school however it is concerning that children over the age of 8 could be expected to walk 2 miles every day to school and back. It is written in the proposal that you think this will encourage pupils to walk/cycle to school however it is more likely you will have more parents/carers driving their children to school so it has an environmental effect which affects everyone.” (PARENT)*
- *“We live right on the edge of Banknock & my child is currently entitled to free school transport. If that was taken away, we would be left with 3 options: 1 to walk to school, this would take my child an hour each way. Add to that dark winter mornings (which would be unsafe, there are far too many unscrupulous people out there) the ever-changing weather could see my child soaked to the bone & have to stay at school with wet clothes. The 2nd option would be to use service buses. This option is a hit and miss as the bus service to Banknock is patchy at best, very often it is unreliable & would mean my child gets to school either far too early or too late meaning they would miss class time. The 3rd option would be to drive my child myself. As a working parent not all bosses care or can allow flexible hours to allow this. It would mean having to work a job that would allow it & very often these jobs are low paid & insecure employment. It would also mean a rise in household expenditure to cover the fuel costs at a time when every working person is being pushed to breaking point financially. So many people depend upon school buses to ensure their children arrive at school safely. I understand the financial black hole Falkirk council face but to change these vital services right now especially when we're all struggling would be a travesty to these children & their families.” (PARENT)*
- *“My child would have to walk home from Denny High School to Bonnybridge since the overall distance would fall under 3 miles. However, the time that this would take an S1 pupil would be significant and especially during winter months it would be dark for walking to and from school. This is putting children in danger with potential road traffic accidents. As full time working parents, we would not be available for school drop-off and collections. In addition, by removing the free bus service you run the risk of more pupils getting dropped off, increasing traffic at schools. In Bonnybridge there was an accident just last week where a little boy was hit by a car at school due to lack of visibility because of cars.” (PARENT)*
- *“My son attends Falkirk High and no transport means it will take him around 50 minutes to walk to school, crossing main roads with no safe crossings, not to mention bad weather & dark mornings, he will be soaked to the skin by the time he arrives at school & I'm certainly not happy for him to have sit in wet clothes and be expected to learn! He would also have to leave the house much earlier than he does now & arrive home much later which will have an effect on after school activities he takes part in! Absolutely ridiculous proposal, we should be able to feel confident our kids will arrive & come home safely to & from school!” (PARENT)*
- *“My son would have to walk for over an hour home which is fine in the summer but not ideal in the winter months.” (PARENT)*
- *“I live 2.4 miles from the high school and heavily depend on the school bus as my child has some issues with mental health and I currently rely on the school bus to make sure they get safely to school without any meltdowns or dramas so I can get on with (my other caring responsibilities). If this bus was to stop, I really don't know what that would mean regarding my child's education. It's already a daily struggle to get them to attend school never mind if they had to walk for 50 mins before arriving. I don't*

- drive and have another child with additional needs who attends the local primary and also relies on the school bus. I only moved to my area recently in the knowledge my kids were entitled to transport to school and back. I don't want to have to uproot my kids to move closer to a school after waiting many years on a property I thought was suitable for my family." (PARENT)
- "Cost of living is increasing for everyone. I am a working parent and having the free bus service allows me to get to work in time. I have had no wage increase and if anything, I have had to take a pay cut. I would not be able to afford to pay for a bus pass for my child. If I take my child to high school, I can just imagine the chaos with traffic congestion, more likely to cause accidents, that will bring as other parents would have to do the same. Traffic would increase immensely which I thought councils were trying to reduce?" (PARENT)
  - "My child would be unable to walk to Denny High as this is as the shortest route is 3.8 miles according to google maps and there are no safe routes to take from High Bonnybridge to Denny High. He would be in constant fear. My child has additional needs (awaiting an assessment) and he would struggle to walk to school." (PARENT)
  - "My daughter will be starting high school in August 2023 at age 11 and there are main roads all the way to the school. I will not be happy with her walking this distance before school and as a single parent added financial burden for bus fares to school will affect me as I work and unable to take her to school." (PARENT)
  - "The average person walks 3 miles between 50 mins to an hour. Adults don't walk this to work. Can't believe the council would expect children to walk an hour to get to school and then concentrate on their schoolwork. Equally in the winter children walking an hour in the dark surely should not be an option" (PARENT)
  - "My children live 2.6 miles from the school. We rely on this service to get kids to and from school. There is no way kids can safely walk this route twice a day." (PARENT)
  - "My children live in the old town of Grangemouth and my 11-year-old starts the high school in August. Beancross Primary is a 36-minute walk crossing many busy roads. To get to school they would need to leave at 8:25 or earlier in the morning. My oldest would need to walk for 47 minutes to and from school again crossing many busy roads. I work 5 days a week starting at 8am till 4pm. I really, really hope that you are not willing to risk a child's life to save (money)." (PARENT)
  - "In terms of global warming this will result in more individual car journeys to and from the school and put more pressure on the inadequate parking around the school. With more children walking this is placing children in danger on our roads in and around our school. My children have suffered enough the last 2 years through covid. The council are cutting services for children when it's children's services that should be getting extra funding to help support them achieve. When they go to Graeme High School they will have a 2.9 mile walk twice a day. This is totally unacceptable along dangerous roads in all weathers and in the dark. The average walker would take about an 1hr to walk this distance and this would be 2 hours walking each day in all weathers. How is this meant to help provide a learning environment? Children will be exhausted and soaked by the time they get to school. Other services should be cut instead of raising the council tax more to cover this cost." (PARENT)
  - "My child would not be eligible for free bus to St Mungo's as we stay just under 3 miles from school. This would mean her walking alone (which I've concerns about) or myself or wife having to drive her which would have an impact on our work patterns and would not be good for environment!" (PARENT)
  - "As a mother of 2 pupils, one who is in Primary 1 and the other is Primary 5, they regularly use the school bus provided. I would not be happy having them walking to school from the distance we stay as there are a lot of main roads with busy traffic as well as deep water which could result in accidents. Losing access to this service would mean my children and I would have to pay for transport for the week as I do not drive & being a single mother this is just not cost effective especially with the cost of living crisis and the price of everything going up, this is an added stress that I do not need." (PARENT)
  - "If the school transport was cancelled, I'd be unable to work. It's around half an hour walk there & half an hour back. One of my neighbours watches my child on the days I work for 30 min so he can go to the bus stop but I'd have to quit my job so I could take him if this happened or have him stay off on those days. I'm also a carer for somebody so I'm unable to leave them for 10 to 15 hours a week walking to and from school." (PARENT)
  - "We live in Larbert and it is unfeasible to even consider my children walking to St Mungo's each morning and then returning in the evening. There is a safety issue, as roads leading into Falkirk are extremely busy. The time it would take for my children to walk there would add a considerable amount of time onto their day. In the winter, my children would need to walk in the dark. We are not in a position to drop and pick up our children." (PARENT)

- *"It doesn't affect us as we don't get free transport anyway but I think 2 miles each way for a small child is too far to walk and therefore will increase the number of cars being used to transport the kids. The traffic situation is already complete chaos around the school and I don't think they could cope with even more cars."* (PARENT)
- *"There is absolutely no way that this should ever be allowed. This is completely affecting the safety of our kids. My child would have over an hour to walk from Banknock to Denny High School and there is absolutely no way I'm allowing that to happen. Banknock is already neglected with the terrible bus service, one bus an hour and that's if it even shows up, and now you want to take the school bus away as well? Shocking."* (PARENT)
- *"I am a parent to a child in first year at Graeme High. It is absolutely absurd to think that she would be expected to essentially walk to school. We stay just over 2 miles from the High School. Where is the safe route to do so? She already leaves home at 8am to get the school bus on time. What time would you expect a 12-year-old to leave to walk that distance to get to school? Particularly in the winter when it's dark and the weather horrendous. She is currently still finding her feet getting to and from school on the normal school buses. Is the alternative (rather than the Council expecting her to walk) to try and use a public bus to get to school. I would not be comfortable in her doing so. The school buses are a safe transition to and from school."* (PARENT)
- *"I will have two children attending High School from August. I will not allow them to walk that distance on their own, especially my youngest (who has additional needs). I won't be able to afford public buses as I'd be looking at £40 per week! I'm a single parent and work only part time, I struggle enough as it is. I think this idea is absolutely ridiculous! It's selfish to our children who need to get to school. Surely cuts can be made elsewhere."* (PARENT)
- *"We live 2.1 miles from the school. Which is still a 45-minute walk. Taking away the free bus would mean we would have to drop children off to school thus taking their independence away and their ability to develop key life skills such as navigating public transport. The alternative is to walk the 45 minutes to school."* (PARENT)
- *"I think I would require to pay for my daughter's transport to school as it appears we are 2.7 miles from the school. If I have to pay I will most likely drive her to school in the mornings rather than her getting the bus. We would try to pick her up from school more often too. This is adding another car to the already busy carpark. She is not confident on a bike, and doesn't have one, and from Google maps it would take her 52 minutes to walk to school."* (PARENT)
- *"If there is no school bus for my daughter to get to school, we don't drive and also have a young child to pick up from primary school. My child would have at least a 40 min walk to and from school and not a direct route for public bus either. Why should our children be put at risk to attend their school to save money?"* (PARENT)
- *"So the expectation is to have any children that live 2-3 miles from the school, make their way on foot? I do not feel (it is) safe allowing my 12-year-old girl to walk from my address to the school by herself, let alone my 15 year old son. The alternative would be the bus. Given I am a single parent of 2 kids at high school, that's a huge new outlay during the cost-of-living crisis. If it is £1 per journey, that's an extra £20 per week I need to find (£80 per month) on top of all the other increases I, and many others are facing right now."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will fall into the category of having no transport to the high school as we will be 2.7 miles from Graeme High School. I think this is a disgrace. Does that mean that I will need to put my hand in my pocket again to pay for transport or will the transport be removed all together? This then forces all parents to find an alternative and you will be forcing more cars onto the road, traffic will be heavier and increased emissions in the Falkirk area as parents will have to drive kids to school. The alternative is to walk. This will take him approx 40 mins to walk to school, so this is not a reasonable request and also the walking route is unsafe as he would need to cross Polmont road, with no crossing and cars travelling 40mph. You are putting more pressure on parents when budgets are already tight in households around Scotland."* (PARENT)
- *"We live 1.9 miles away from school. To walk safely to school from the old town in Grangemouth (to Beancross PS) would mean a walk considerably further than that as there are no pedestrian crossings at a very busy roundabout on the direct route to school."* (PARENT)
- *I have a 15 year old son that lives 2.2 miles from his secondary school, and the walk to school would take him over an hour along a busy main road. In the winter months the walk to and back from school would be in the dark, and this is not only worrying for his personal safety but also extremely unpractical. He would need to leave home at 7.20am in the morning to get to school at 8.30am, and likewise on return home he wouldn't get in from school on later days until around 5.30pm. The public buses in the*

- area a few and far between and unreliable at best, so if he used them to get to school he would 1 - have to leave very early and 2 - may be late as buses do not run on time. I feel this would have a major effect on his schooling and safety." (PARENT)
- "I am a widow with 3 children who does not qualify for any benefits. I just get by, but your proposal will have a huge impact on us. My son also does a paper round every morning before school so has already clocked up many miles of exercise before the beginning of the school day. So an additional just under 3 mile walk would be too much." (PARENT)
  - "Not safe for kids to walk that far to school." (PARENT)
  - "Myself and my husband have both arranged our working hours around a school bus being available. There is insufficient parking available at Westquarter Primary School to allow children to be driven to school. The village is already very busy with cars from parents who pick up/ drop off their children. The school no longer has someone to help the children cross the road safely and additional cars will mean the main road through the village being even busier. An increase in cars also means an increase in pollution for the Westquarter residents and school pupils. Myself and my husband do not have time to walk our child to school then walk home in time to start work." (PARENT)
  - "We live at the very top of Maddiston, 2.3 mile (from school) so my daughter is expected to walk that distance there and back every day. My daughter has after school activities twice a week on her long days at school and if she has to walk home she won't be home in time to be picked up and taken to these activities. To be honest I am not happy for my daughter to be walking to and from school each day as most of the route is along a main road and I feel our children's safety is being compromised. This means I would need to pay each day presuming there is still going to be a school bus as the public buses don't do this route. So, if there was a school bus this will be another expense that we simply cannot afford. I think this is an absolute disgrace and if this does go ahead then shame on Falkirk council. What I'll do is I'll deduct the weekly bus fare from my council tax!" (PARENT)
  - "If the proposed changes go ahead my children would not be entitled to free school bus travel. They would have to walk along the Drove loan which I do not consider safe for them. The cars travel at speed, the footpath is narrow and there isn't adequate lighting. The walk would take 45min-1hr in all weathers so on wet days they would be soaked. Public transport is unreliable and would result in lateness for school also there isn't a direct bus from Bonnybridge to Denny High and they would have to walk 15 min from the nearest bus stop to the school. One of my children has difficulties walking and struggles to keep up. The changes would have a serious detrimental effect on my household's health and income." (PARENT)
  - "My children use school transport to get to and from school every day. I feel walking for over 2 miles for 45-50 minutes every morning before school will negatively impact their school day. Winter mornings especially being dark with weather unpredictable. The additional cars on the road at peak school run times adding to congestion and increased chances of accidents happening - also not really great for the environment! I think as parents we worry enough for our young people, and knowing a bus has dropped them off at school ensured they arrived safely and mostly on time." (PARENT)
  - "My daughter will have to walk to Falkirk High School which will take her about an hour." (PARENT)
  - "Honestly I think it's an utter disgrace. My child is 2.4 miles from my house to Denny High and would need to leave the house about 7.30 to walk there. The cost of living is sky high and very hard at the minute, and you want to charge for a school bus?? I totally disagree." (PARENT)
  - "My son would have to walk over 2 miles to Denny High which would take at least an hour." (PARENT)
  - "My son (P4) would need to walk home alone on days I don't finish working in time to collect him. He currently gets the bus home from school every day and to school occasionally." (PARENT)
  - "This would involve a much longer commute across two towns in rush hour traffic to take children to Denny to then get back to Bonnybridge to take younger children to primary school." (PARENT)
  - "I have two children that would be affected. It is not feasible to say that 3 miles twice a day is ok for a child in Scotland to walk to and from school. The main road to school from Polmont is a fast road and there are a number of substantial crossing points. This will lead to a child being injured or worse. This is not worth the £625k saving. Children's safety is more important." (PARENT)
  - "This would remove the free bus pass that my children currently have access to, to travel from Polmont to Graeme High. My concern is that in the winter months parts of the walking route to Graeme High pass by areas of wood/non- residential and there is a safety concern. In contrast it is a shorter and easier walk to Braes High, and if you change the bus transport you may need to consider whether the imposed catchment areas are appropriate. As a parent the easy solution is that kids should attend their most local high school and not be expected to walk over 2 miles in dark conditions. Also, the most



direct route to Graeme High is via the Salmon Inn Road and along the A803. However, the footpath on the hill down the A803 is narrow and crossing the road at the bottom is difficult due to the crossroads/traffic. There are numerous car accidents at this point and the proposal puts kids at risk crossing a dangerous section of the road. The alternative 2.3 miles via Westquarter. In contrast, Braes high school is a 1.2 mile walk taking just over 20 minutes. Can the council adequately justify sending the kids in St Margaret's catchment to Graeme High if there are these proposed changes to the transport?" (PARENT)

- "I would be around 0.2 miles away from the 3-mile cut off and so my children would no longer be entitled to a free bus to school. I would not be happy about them walking in the dark at 8am in the morning to enable them to walk just under 3 miles to school. The cost to myself would be considerably high and would have a financial impact on our family." (PARENT)
- "My children stay in Polmont 2.7 miles from high school it would take them over 50mins to walk on a very busy main road, and cross over near Grand Sable cemetery road which is very difficult to cross as a very busy junction, which has seen numerous accidents. It's ridiculous to think that my children will walk too and from school every day," (PARENT)
- "I live 2.4 miles from Denny High School and 1.8 miles from Antonine Primary and the walking route is not a safe route for young (under 16) children. Under this proposal both of my children (10 and 12) will no longer qualify for transport to school and will have to walk alongside very busy main roads for 3.6 and 4.8 miles respectively each day to and from their school. This is complete unsafe." (PARENT)
- "As the parent of School aged children, I believe asking a child to walk 3 miles each way to school is complete unreasonable. If parents have no means to provide an alternative method of transport, this would mean kids walking up to 6 miles a day, potentially in dark, cold conditions to get to school." (PARENT)
- "My son is due to transition to secondary school in August and we live more than 2 miles away but less than 3 miles from the school. He will be a 1st year pupil in August. My husband and I are both school teachers in different authorities and I think this is an outrageous expectation that he should walk almost 3 miles to and from school every day." (PARENT)
- "There is no way my 2 daughters can be walking from Polmont to Graeme high. They will be expected to cross Grandsables crossroads where there are multiple accidents that happen at those crossroads and it's a 4 way crossing. I'm actually shocked that the council thinks it's acceptable to allow children to walk 3 miles to school. What about in winter months when it's dark and wet, the kids will be soaked before they even start school and will be expected to then sit in wet clothes most of the morning. Their days are long enough without then adding an extra hour each way on journeys and this then has an impact on after school activities if they are expected to walk home and if you don't have access to transport to collect and you will then find an increased traffic going to and from school for parents that can drop them off and pick them up." (PARENT)
- "My child needs to go to school. If you do this, it's unfair on my child. It's not our fault there isn't a school closer to the old town. Some people can't afford the bus." (PARENT)
- Working hours (so) can't drop children at school. Far too far for them to walk. No suitable paths and lighting in the winter months and a danger for my children." (PARENT)
- "Our town (Bonnybridge) falls within the 3 mile radius of Denny High however I do not consider the path that my Daughters will have to follow to be safe (a very narrow path beside a busy road (Drove Loan), then a walk through Chacefield Woods. Any other route would add considerable time to the journey. This is not a suitable route to walk during the dark nights/mornings." (PARENT)
- "My son would potentially have to walk to school every day depending on how you measure the distance. A 48-minute walk to and from school each day. This is completely unacceptable and a completely outrageous proposal. It would impact my work. Why does this need to happen when free bus passes are being given out to all youngsters? I hadn't applied for one before as I didn't need it but I certainly will now. Young people are always the scapegoat for Falkirk Council. Cutting education costs when the young men and women are our country's future. Absolute disgrace." (PARENT)
- "That is some distance to be making children walk to and from school especially in the cold, dark winter months. No considerations for children's safety and no consideration for anyone with a medical condition including type 1 diabetes. I understand that Falkirk council require to make cuts however they need to start putting money into the communities instead of squandering millions on a new council building. Start listening to the public for once!" (PARENT)
- "If school buses are removed due to distance from home to school, we will be impacted as a family in ensuring my son's safe travel to school. He currently uses the under 22 Young Scot card on the school bus but if the school bus is removed public buses go nowhere near the school." (PARENT)

- *"My 3 children attend Larbert High. This is a ridiculous suggestion that any of the children from Torwood make the 1 hour journey twice a day down an extremely dangerous route to the high school. (To use) the thin single foot path that is in disrepair, zero lighting or any safe crossings is an absurd suggestion."* (PARENT)
- *"My children will have a 75-minute walk twice a day on a totally unsuitable pedestrian route. The distance as the crow flies is under 3 miles but the reality is the walk is over 3 miles each way. The time spent walking would be better spent studying. As working parents, we don't have the capability of dropping them off or picking them up. As young people under 22 now have free bus travel it seems ridiculous that you would remove a bus service for these very people! There can be no comparison to other local authorities school transport costs as this is a much more rural area covering a widespread community. To penalise them is totally unfair. Glasgow and Edinburgh etc have minimal transport costs as most students live much closer to the school."* (PARENT)
- *"My son currently gets the bus from Bonnybridge to Denny, I think we live approximately 3 miles from the school. If the proposal were to go ahead it would mean a significant walk for him to go to and from school daily. Firstly, it would mean a very early start to make sure he is at school on time, and then a significant amount of time after school too. I also feel that there is not a completely safe route for this walk, going up the Drove Loan seems the quickest route, but this is in no way fit for a massive number of pupils to walk up and down daily. I fear that this would be an unsafe route and could lead to an accident, particularly in the winter months, when it is dark/icy. As an alternative, it could mean that there are significantly more cars travelling to, from and within the school grounds in order to ensure children arrive at school safely. My son is in 4th year currently and the prospect of him walking every day is a worry but I also have a younger son in primary, I would be petrified to let him walk this route as it is just not safe."* (PARENT)
- *"I think lots of children from Catholic schools will be affected that proposal. Baptised Catholics should have access to Catholic schools, but that means long travel (distances). This proposal hits all children, but the ones from Catholic schools even more so. There are limited walking routes and that could affect the choice parents will make when choosing school for a child. Reducing free transport will have impact on a lot of families being able to choose Catholic schools as they will not be able to pay. That removes entitlement to going to Catholic schools. Additionally, there are limited to no safe walking routes for a lot of pupils from Catholic schools. Encouraging students to cycle to school only make sense when there is a safe route. Unfortunately that is not only the case. I strongly believe that this proposal will mostly hit pupils and parents from Catholic schools and that makes me very upset and disappointed."* (PARENT)
- *"This will take away the opportunity for my daughter to take the school bus which I was planning for her to start doing twice a week. It is too much to expect a 5-8 year old to walk 2 miles to school and back. I may not have access to bring her myself by car for those 2 days in the near future. This will effect our income as a family as I will have to cut my hours at work. It will affect my daughters independence and her energy levels. This in turn could affect attainment in school. We're supposed to be supporting kids from low/mid income families, not making life harder for them. The cost saving vs benefits of providing this service don't seem significant enough to me. I don't see a lot of uptake for the school bus, perhaps it isn't required to have a double decker school bus from St Joseph's. Perhaps a minibus would be cheaper?"* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter gets free transport as we are 2 miles from the high school. I think it's disgraceful to expect any child to walk 3 miles to and from school!"* (PARENT)
- *"We would fall just under the proposed 3 miles so would no longer get free school transport. All costs for households are soaring at the moment and this would be an additional one to burden ordinary working households with who are already at breaking point."* (PARENT)
- *"My 12-year-old daughter would be one of the worst affected living on the cusp of the 3 mile boundary. Expecting her to walk an hour to school along a busy and dangerous road is irresponsible and our current full-time work requirement for both parents commuting to Glasgow and Renfrewshire respectively would make dropping her at school impossible. My other child, currently in primary, would be placed into the same unsafe and unreasonable position soon as well."* (PARENT)
- *"I have 2 children (age 6 & 9 years). I am already affected by the (Westquarter) school bus due to there being too many children for the school bus & the council refusing to put on another bus to cope with the number of children. The council runs a first come first served for getting on the bus I, which creates a free for all to get on. The school says that p1-p3 get priority for getting on but their 9-year-old sibling doesn't. The distance is not acceptable to walk never mind the safety of this road. It is not an option & I certainly wouldn't be giving my 9 year old the responsibility of walking my 6 year old either to or from*

- school. We rely on the school bus due to work or family not driving. We have the free school bus pass that you can apply for through the Young Scot application that all children under 22 years get free bus travel and I would hope that this would still be allowed to be used on the school buses?" (PARENT)
- "I am exactly 3 miles from Denny High School walking, so this would mean I would have to walk an hour and a half every day to and from school. I would have to leave at 7:15 daily and not get home until 5:05 on a late day. This would mean I get less time to study for my highers and will hence get less sleep as I need to study more as I am missing out on essential time as I return from school" (PUPIL)
  - "Antonine primary pupils can live some distance from both the primary school and their local high, Denny High. Cutting travel may have consequences for those who live slightly further - high Bonnybridge, Allandale, Greenhill etc. Certainly for families who live in Glenyards Road there is no safe route for children to walk. They must be accompanied by an adult to walk under the bridge at Glenyards and then over the rail bridge which has no pavement and is only for single lane traffic." (PARENT)
  - "Our 2 Children will have to walk for 55 mins to school each way or we will have to drive them." (PARENT)
  - "I have 2 children currently at Graeme High soon to be 3 and another child at primary school. The walk to Graeme High from Polmont is either along a very busy main road or through wooded areas and I would not feel my children would be safe." (PARENT)
  - "I am concerned about the safety of pupils and time walking the extra distance. Especially in the winter months where it is dark, wet and often icy. Pupils already turn up to school soaked. The position the school I work in is on a hill and even at a brisk walk of 3 miles would take 45 mins." (STAFF)
  - "I will have to drive my 2 children to school as it's too far and too dangerous for them to walk it." (PARENT)
  - "My young people will both be adversely affected by proposals to cancel the school bus from Maddiston to Braes. Without the bus, it will take my young people an hour to walk to high school and an hour back. This not only makes the day extremely long and tiring for them but also for most of the year, these walks are done in the dark. It would be easier if there was a bus route that operated on the journey and have a regular bus service from Maddiston to the high school arranged or I would be happy to pay for bus transport for my young people (even though they are entitled to free transport)" (PARENT)
  - "We live 2.9 miles away from high school. It would take 35 mins to walk to school and longer to walk back. Children and students are entitled to free transport with their Young Scot Card so I am not sure how this would be allowed under Scottish Government guidance." (PARENT)
  - "I am not able to drive my son to high school and as I stay in Langlees, it is too far to walk to on a cold dark morning. He doesn't have a bike to cycle. The cost of living is bad enough without have to find funds to send your child to get an education." (PARENT)
  - "This will cause issues with getting our daughter to school given the distance and safe walking route." (PARENT)
  - "Once my son is in high school there is no safe way to walk and to walk 3 miles in dark etc is not acceptable or safe." (PARENT)
  - "When my son attends Denny High School he will either need to pay for a bus or walk 50 minutes, or longer, each morning. I am a keen supporter of children taking part in physical exercise, however, I feel walking 50 minutes each day (on days in the winter when the weather will be very wet) is not acceptable. My son already actively takes part in various sports regularly and does not need to walk to school to be active. As such I will end up paying bus fares each day which I will not be happy about." (PARENT)
  - "I have 2 daughters at Graeme High. Myself and my husband both work and rely on the girls being able to get the current bus to school. Walking would take them 45 minutes each way and although I totally understand the need for physical exercise, I am not totally convinced that a 45-minute walk followed by a full school day and then another 45 minute walk is as conducive to learning as it may seem. Turning up for school soaked to the skin is also not a great start to the day for any child and our lovely Scottish weather often means this would be the case. I also have concerns about their safety, especially if they end up walking alone for part of this route if one or the other is absent from school. During the winter months this journey would be done in the dark both ways due to the school finishing times, and the length of time it takes to walk there and back. There is of course the option of taking a local service bus. My concerns here are the poor frequency of these buses, and the sheer number of school pupils from our area who would also be taking the bus - I doubt the number of buses passing in time for children to make it to school would be sufficient to cope with the number of children wishing to use them." (PARENT)

- *"My children would not be entitled to use the school bus if this change goes ahead. This would result in a long walk home and in the winter months they would be walking in the dark. My daughter will be 12 when she starts high school in August and I do not believe this to be safe. Living semi-rural she would have to walk dark quiet paths. I wouldn't want to do this myself, never mind being 12 years old!" (PARENT)*
- *"I have 3 children currently in primary school who use the school bus service daily. We live just over 1.5 miles from the school. The two younger children at present are entitled to free bus travel and are too young to walk the 25 minutes to and from school every day. They would be unable to make this journey on their own due to the number of busy roads and potential hazards including fast moving traffic on main roads, heavy good vehicles going in and out of a builders yard nearby, the canal, a train line and a complete lack of any crossing patrols on their route to school. At present the area surrounding the school is extremely congested with traffic dropping off at both St Mungo's and St Francis. This already poses a real threat to children walking in and around the area, and it has a knock-on effect to traffic passing on the main roads. If these proposals are put in place then this will increase the volume of traffic exponentially and it is my belief that this will result in an accident causing serious harm or a fatality. This is completely unacceptable and any and all liability will lie firmly with Falkirk council. As a working parent this impacts on my ability to get to work on time due to being stuck in traffic in and around the school. If buses are completely removed then this will result in more cars going to the school. This will have a significant negative effect on the environment with more cars on the road and an increase in car emissions. Working families simply do not have time to walk children to school, return home (potentially travel to work) all before starting work. In our case, that would mean the walk to and return from school in the morning would take 40-50 minutes. This would not fit in with my working pattern and would result in me having no choice but to drive to school." (PARENT)*
- *I find it's far too far for 8 year old to be expected to walk to school. What if parents that work couldn't afford the bus fare. The current cost of living crisis has shown so many working parents are struggling." (PARENT)*
- *"If my child doesn't get free transport it's extremely difficult to take my child to Denny High as we have other children in primary school and nursery. There are also no safe routes or paths on which my child can walk or cycle to school." (PARENT)*
- *"My son is due to start Graeme High School this August. No school transport would mean: 1. A 42 minute (2.1 mile) walk to school there and back, which is fine for nice dry days however not at all practical or safe for winter months with dark mornings and winter storms. 2. The route my child would have to walk involves crossing busy main roads with no pedestrian crossing which is a huge safety concern. 3. Cycling could be an option however there are no cycle lanes and the roads to the school will exceptionally busy with traffic and I worry about road safety. 4. If/When I would be able to drive him to school, I can only imagine the horrific traffic congestion due to every other parent having to drive their child to school. A double decker bus can escort over 80 passengers so this could potentially mean an additional 80 cars trying to escort their child to school. And that's for only one bus. How many buses will be lost due to these cuts? And what is the environmental impact of all these extra cars having to do school drop offs/collections? There are no adequate parking/drop off facilities at Graeme High school to allow safe drop off/pick-ups for this volume of traffic. All pupils are entitled to free bus travel. The impact on normal running public buses will be huge with the general public unable to use these services due to them being inundated with school pupils." (PARENT)*
- *"My 12-year-old child would have to walk home 3 miles after school crossing busy roads, dark roads, unsafe areas alone! This is a huge risk to young children particularly those that are vulnerable with parents that have no other means to get them home safely." (PARENT)*
- *"The quickest walkable route to Denny High school from our home would mean my sons would have to walk on the Drive Loan. This is a notoriously bad road with no lighting. This would be very dangerous in the winter months" (PARENT)*
- *"This would result in my 2 young daughters having a 45 minute walk to school morning and evening along a very busy road which is on a large and 1 mile long hill. This puts the safety of children greatly at risk, especially during inclement weather. This would result in lateness to school and most likely some people's kids just wouldn't attend regularly. School is already a daunting and tiring experience for some kids without giving them a round walking trip of 90 minutes every day up and down a very busy road on a hill. Due to the elevation of the Braes, there is routinely windy, rainy, icy, snowy adverse conditions during winter. This must be one of Falkirk councils most ridiculous, dangerous, and inconsiderate ideas yet." (PARENT)*

- "We live about 1.5 miles from school which is about a 30 minute walk or more because of the route we would need to take on paths including over 2 busy roads. It's a long way for young kids to go alone safely." (PARENT)
- "I live 2.4 miles away from my school which would take me an hour to walk to school" (PUPIL)
- "My daughter would not have a bus to get on as the only bus on our estate is the council funded school bus, therefore she would need to walk 50 mins to school and back every day. Disgusting. As a nurse I am away to work and not back to provide her transport" (PARENT)
- "Half the week we use the school bus for my 5 year-old to get to and from school. I myself have health issues and can't walk her to and from school as I can't walk that far and she is far too young to walk on her own especially if we have her 3 year old sibling with us as well." (PARENT)
- "We live at the very top of Maddiston, my husband and I both work so will not always be available to pick up or take our daughter to school. Where we live is an hours walk to and from the school." (PARENT)
- "I will not be affected as my child would still get transport. I feel it is too far for children to walk. Especially in the winter when it is dark and cold." (PARENT)
- "My son will be due to go to Graeme High School and I think we are under the 3 miles from home to school. I am unsure what will be classed as a safe walking route but I believe it's too far for an 12 year old to walk twice daily safely." (PARENT)
- "Both my daughters will be going to Denny High and I am not happy with the thought of them walking for miles in the dark mornings/afternoons to and from school." (PARENT)
- "When child reaches high school age will have to leave the house an hour before having to be there. Safe walking route is not safe in the dark winter months. As a single working parent I am not able to drop at school." (PARENT)
- "We are a family of 5 with 3 kids. Our oldest is at High School, middle and youngest, who is non verbal, in primary. At the moment we have peace of mind that our oldest can get the bus at 8am and safely get to school, allowing dad to go to work for 830 in Glasgow and mum to focus on getting the youngest ready to support her to primary School. With this change our oldest who is only in S1 and new to the school will have to leave the house at about 0730 and walk in various weather conditions, darkness and potentially be sat in school soaking wet... and that's if they make it there on time with no incident along the route. This has to be repeated coming home, now on the longer days at school this could potentially see them leave the house at 0730 and not getting home till 1730. This is longer than most adults working days." (PARENT)
- "My children will have to walk three miles to get to school in all weathers. Besides the huge distance, the route they would have to take is not safe. They would have to cross multiple roads and walk along Drove Loan which has a narrow path and cars racing by. Walking along there on anything but a bright, dry day is a recipe for disaster. You can't possibly expect children to walk three miles to and from school along a dangerous route on dark, wet/frosty/snowy morning/afternoons." (PARENT)
- "My daughter would have to cross numerous busy roads and walk for 3.1 miles to get to school. This would take over an hour and is incredibly unsafe. She is 12 years old & should not be expected to walk such a distance to gain her education each day. I work as a teacher within Falkirk Council and I am appalled that pupils will be asked to walk such distances themselves. I believe that if this proposal goes through the absence rates will rise & attendance will be affected as pupils will struggle to get to school or be late. There will be many who have to walk this distance alone which is so unsafe and completely unacceptable." (PARENT)
- "My two children would have to walk from Bonnybridge to Denny in all weathers which would likely take them an hour to get there. To my knowledge there is no safe path or walking route to Denny high school and if weather is bad kids are stuck in wet cold weather for up to an hour before getting to school." (PARENT)
- "I find absolutely unbelievable that this is even being considered. How can you expect someone 9 years old to walk to a bus stop, watch there 8 year old siblings get on a bus then walk to school. The council seem to think they are the only ones with trying to meet targets. What about parent and carers who don't get the wonderful wages MPs get?" (PARENT)
- "A walk to secondary school will take 48 minutes for our soon to be S1 son. There is no 'safe route to school' for cycling to GHS. This makes travelling to/from school unsafe for him, particularly in the dark winter evenings and the poor pavement provision between our house and the school." (PARENT)

- "I have a daughter who will be expected to walk over an hour each morning and over an hour home after school every day. What about the dark mornings and winter evenings? Who's going to be responsible for the safety of these children?" (PARENT)
- "According to the proposal, high school pupils who live less than 3 miles from the school will be expected to walk - that is up to a just under 6 MILE ROUND TRIP 5 days a week, in all types of weather. As an adult, I would absolutely not be walking 6 miles a day to get back and forward to uni or work so why on Earth are kids as young as ELEVEN expected to walk this journey if their parents cannot afford to pay for transport? This is absolutely ridiculous and it's blatantly discriminatory towards families on lower incomes. We are not living in a 3rd world country where young children are having to walk miles and miles every day for clean water, except your proposal will be forcing young children as young as 11 to walk miles and miles for an education! Never mind reducing the amount of children eligible for taking the bus, the real concern here is there needs to be more school buses taking the kids to school - that is the issue here as the buses my daughter takes going to and from Falkirk High are consistently overcrowded and dangerous. I have heard repeated complaints from my child of rude and abusive drivers shouting and swearing at the children and it is unacceptable." (PARENT)
- "My son would have to walk 6 miles a day in all weathers crossing busy roads just so he could get to school. As working parents we would be unable to drop and collect him." (PARENT)
- "I have 4 kids . 1 has left for college, 1 in S2, 1 coming up in august and 1 still to come up to attend Denny high in future years. I work full time I don't have time to drive them over to school as well as sort the wee one. I also can't afford to pay for transport and it's far too far and unsafe to walk that distance from High Bonnybridge." (PARENT)
- "It would take my child 1 hour & 15 mins to walk from home to school & again for returning meaning she would spend 2 & half hours each day to get to school & back. This would also be in the winter months when it would be dark along back roads." (PARENT)
- "My children will be outwith this new perimeter and I do not feel the walking route is appropriate for before and after school and is not an acceptable distance for young children to be making alone each day." (PARENT)
- "Both my girls get the bus to school just now and we have no other way of getting them to school as both myself and my husband work full time. They would be walking over 3 miles to school on busy roads and it would take them well over an hour each way. This is not acceptable for 12 and 14 year old girls to do each day." (PARENT)
- "This will have a negative impact on the environment and net zero ambitions. Has an environmental impact study been undertaken? For those now not able to get the bus what assumptions have been made around how many will now use cars? Will extra drop off spaces be made available? Jason the impact of more cars around the school at busy times been considered from a safety point of view? And traffic assessment undertaken? To walk to the school would be 45mins each way. As a working parent I would have no option but to drive as i do not have an hour and a half in the day to be able to walk to and from the school. It is also not practical when I have 2 year old twins who would have to come too. And this would also apply when reaching secondary age. I also feel it disadvantages people attending catholic schools more so as they have a greater catchment area and are therefore likely to have more students impacted by the rule change especially for primary schools. How has the proposed impact of the changes been measured? I understand the need to save money but at what cost? And who is going to be impacted the most? Will it already be people from some of the poorer areas in falkirk?" (PARENT)
- "My child stays in Bonnybridge. He would need to walk to High School as my work begins at 7am my partner begins work at 8am. The route he works need to take would be from high Bonnybridge through Drove Loan. Several years ago the council tried to cut school buses and he trialled out the route which he deemed to be unsafe for the children. Due to cost of living we are already struggling to meet costs of food, gas, electricity, petrol etc and would find it difficult to meet the cost for bus travel for our child" (PARENT)
- "My daughter is due to start S1 after the summer holidays and will be affected by these changes. It would take 1 hour and 5 minutes to walk to Denny High School and back from my address and this route is not safe for a child to walk." (PARENT)
- "I think the proposal will negatively impact many families and children/young people. We live just under 3 miles from the location of Denny High and this would mean my son would not be entitled to a free bus to attend statutory education. The high school, unlike primary, is not a suitable walking distance for my son. The unprecedented cuts to children's services like this proposal will negatively impact on children and young people." (PARENT)

- *"My daughter would have to cross numerous busy roads and walk for 3.1 miles to get to school. This would take over an hour and is incredibly unsafe. She is 12 years old & should not be expected to walk such a distance to gain her education each day."* (PARENT)
- *"My child would need to walk 2.9 miles, which would take 58 minutes, to get to the high school, along a section of road which I feel is unsafe, especially in winter. For my daughter's safety, I strongly disagree with the proposal to withdraw school transport for her and her peers."* (PARENT)
- *"We live in High Bonnybridge/Greenhill and our postcode is one that will be affected. We cannot see a safe route for our sons to walk to school, either busy main roads, which are longer (1hour and 10minutes) not viable, especially in winter. I'm not willing to risk their safety and what will be more likely 2 and a half to 3 hours a day just walking to and from school, never mind the homework the school gives them, the kids will have no time to be kids. So that means we will drive them to school, which for people living in Denny would mean more congestion around Denny Cross which can already be at gridlocked at rush hour. Bad enough as very frustrating but also a dangerous issue for the more local children who do walk. Then we have the environmental issue, with more cars going to and from school, the pollution caused go against everything we are trying to teach our children. Bottom line is my kids walk almost every day to primary school, but the distance is just too far to be fair for all children to have the same oportunities of study and play."* (PARENT)
- *"I do not drive and my 12 year old child will not be walking to school on their own, they would need to leave the house about an hour earlier than usual, not appropriate."* (PARENT)
- *"Without the bus service my child will be expected to walk which would take approx 40/45 minutes along the only "safe route" that doesn't involve country roads with no pavements or woodland walkways with no lighting. (great place for bullies to act out when they are out of view.) As most people, both parents work and are not always around in the morning to drive. Have the council thought about a small contribution from parents towards bus fees to help with costs? I love the idea of walking more for health but a 45 minute walk means leaving and coming home in the dark during winter too. If everyone started to cycle, scooter etc is there a safe space for all these modes of transport to be left during the school day?"* (PARENT)
- *"As a teacher in a Catholic school, our catchment area is wider than others and this proposal will affect Catholic schools more than non-denominational schools. This proposal will affect many families in the school and may result in children having to attend a school that is not linked with their religion. This will also prevent some children growing up in the Catholic faith and prevent others from practising their faith. We should be asking ourselves if this is meeting the UNCRC children's rights. There are several Articles that we could be taking away from the children affected by this proposal ( 2, 14, 12, 29)."* (STAFF)
- *"My granddaughter and later grandson will have no means to get to school as their house is isolated and not near a bus route."* (GRANDPARENT)
- *"My child's safety would be compromised if she were no longer entitled to transport from Fankerton to Denny High School. The pavement is narrow and of poor standard and requires pedestrians to cross from one side to the other just below Strathcarron Hospice. Much of the traffic using the B818 does not adhere to the speed limit. There are log lorries, farm vehicles and other traffic greatly exceeding the 30mph limit. In winter, the pavement between Fankerton and Denny (Nethermain Road) is not gritted. Pedestrians have to walk on the road."* (PARENT)
- *"My three children would need to walk 5.8 miles every day along busy roads. Completely unacceptable."* (PARENT)
- *"The changes would mean my daughter no longer gets a dedicated school bus. If she is expected to walk it would take 45minutes and there is not a safe route for her to walk. The public buses here do not take her anywhere near to the school and are so infrequent and unreliable that this is not an option. It would therefore be up to us to drive her there increasing traffic on the roads and around the school."* (PARENT)
- *"My child stays too far from the school to walk alone. We are working and wouldn't be able to walk with him."* (PARENT)
- *"My child is at Denny high we stay in Bonnybridge he gets a bus at Greenhill. I also have drop off kids at Antonine Primary so for me to get my child in on the early day, I'll never be back in time for nursery at 2.45 if need get him at 2.45 - just not possible I have no other help so means need take my child out of education early on these days and have kids up out house a lot earlier to get all to school for 9"* (PARENT)

- "When child starts at St. Mungos he will be age 11 and we will live (by my reckoning) 3.5 miles by the closest semi-safe route. I have virtually no doubt that that council will believe there is a shorter route. Expecting a child who is healthy but still has (some health issues) to walk OVER an hour to school and OVER an hour back is simply ludicrous. Expecting an 11 year old in any circumstances to walk (potentially alone) for those distances is somewhat insane too." (PARENT)
- "My child is due to attend High School (St Mungo's) in August. With the proposed change to 3 miles he will be required to walk for 1 hour each way to access his education. Taking a Council bus will take 30-40 mins at inconvenient times. This is particularly problematic on the return journey as it will leave him unsupervised at a bus stop waiting for his bus. It is not acceptable to have 11- and 12-year-olds making journeys of 45 mins to 1 hour alone. Particularly in winter when the journeys will take place in the dark. It is simply unsafe for 11- and 12-year-olds. 20-30min walk, fine. 1 hour is ridiculous. This will then result in parents taking their children to school instead affecting traffic and carbon emissions. Any suggestions that parents could walk or bus with their child is laughable - who has the time to walk 2 hours each way to pick up their child! I understand that saving need to be made but please come up with sensible proposals." (PARENT)
- "Our child is due to start secondary school in August 2023 and this proposal would mean that she would not have safe transport to school. My husband and I both work nowhere near the school vicinity and this would create a difficult situation for us in getting her to school. It would take her two hours every day to walk you and from school, and we feel that it is not safe to do so." (PARENT)
- "I have two children at St Mungos. I do not believe it is safe for them to walk the 2.5 miles Google maps suggest is the distance between home and the school. There are several busy roads to cross and in the winter they would be walking to and from school in the dark. Both my husband and myself work full time so we are unable to drive them to and from school." (PARENT)
- "My child gets the bus to and from school and I think changing this from 2 miles to 3 is disgraceful. How are children going to be safe if they can't afford the bus and need to walk say 2.8 miles to school." (PARENT)
- "I feel it is unacceptable for children to walk for 45-50 minutes to get to school and the same again to walk home along busy roads with very narrow pavements. Bad enough in fair weather & even worse in rain, snow and ice conditions. Additionally, my children attend after school activities in Glasgow & would not make it home on time from school to get to these on time." (PARENT)
- "I would not expect my daughter of 7 years old to walk 2 miles to primary school via a busy main road. This would take her over an hour to walk and would you advise that a 7-year-old walks? Where is the consideration for a child's health and safety or indeed her concentration for the school day, being affected due to fatigue from walking/ getting up an hour earlier to walk to school and therefore not getting enough sleep? Also, in the future when she will attend St Mungos, I would not expect her to walk 2.5 miles to a high school and back home. This would take her around 1 hour each way. In reality all that will happen is that more parents will find time to drive their kids to school, thus creating a bigger carbon footprint, more congestion and generating more frustration due to lack of parking at schools, thus upsetting local home owners." (PARENT)
- "My child would need to walk 2.2 miles to get to school which would take approx 1.5 hours each way. I would not be comfortable with this especially during winter months. I just don't feel she would be safe. If I drop her off by car I think this would add to the congestion around the schools. It's really dangerous at present with the existing cars so I dread to think how worse it would be." (PARENT)
- "Our child currently uses the Horsburgh coach to get to and from school. As working parents we are unable to take our child to school and back each day. He will have to walk each way totalling a minimum of 3.8 miles of walking and a total of at least an hour and a half, 5 days a week, via extremely busy roads in all weathers. This is Victorian and a ludicrous suggestion." (PARENT)
- "My child attends a Catholic school so needs to travel further, and could not manage the walk, it's too far especially in recent weather conditions and the weight of bag they are expected to carry with iPads in them. My child also has a health condition which they take medication for, which makes them very tired. I am very concerned about this proposal as I know other families will be worse off than mine." (PARENT)
- "My daughter has mobility problem so wouldn't be able to walk the distance home. She likes getting the bus with her friends as it makes her feel independent and "normal. Taking that away from her would mean getting a car/taxi to come and drop her off and pick her up adding to congestion and pollution at a time when we are trying to lower our emissions". (PARENT)
- "Currently not affected however with children that will be attending Braes HS in the next few years I am terribly concerned. I strongly encourage sport/ physical activity/ active travel however cutting school



transport services to out lying villages is extremely concerning. I fear for the safety of young people with the clear lack of infrastructure for a safe commute, which will be even more hazardous in the winter months. Expecting children to set off for school in the dark( possibly wet) weather and walk for 45+ mins alongside busy roads with narrow pavements is not the best start to the day to encourage learning.I appreciate that cuts are required however the proposal is short-sighted. YP investment should be a focus and I fear will result in school attendance dropping. Ensuring pupils get to school safely is surely fundamental" (PARENT)

- "My son starts Denny High after the summer and as a resident of the Greenhill area of Bonnybridge his commute to Denny High by walking is too far and not safe with all the busy roads he would have to cross. Buses around the area are not reliable and are only available once every hour or so and none of them go direct to Denny which would result in my son getting two buses and having to leave a lot earlier in the morning. During winter and dark mornings I just don't feel it is a safe option for him. The commute for him walking alone is one I just can't allow my son to do as it would take at least one hour and to follow the walking route to Denny High he would need to go the long way through the town to arrive there safely." (PARENT)
- "My daughter starts at Graeme High School in August 2023. She will be 11 years old shortly to be 12. It is entirely unrealistic and dangerous to her safety to expect her to walk one hour each way for the 2.5 miles from home to school and back along the A803. This is a busy road with fast moving cars and difficult junctions to cross. The Grandsable/Salmon Inn junction is notorious accident blackspot. The stretch of pavement between there and Laurieston village is isolated, narrow, poorly lit and badly drained. There are no houses along most of it. In the summer it is often overgrown and in the winter it is largely impassable on foot. In short it does not represent a safe walking route to school. There is no sensible alternative route. For example, a detour up through Redding onto the B805 would involve a journey of more than 3 miles and take an extra 30 minutes each way which is unrealistic. As both parents work outside the Falkirk District we are unable to offer her a lift to or from school and there are no alternative means of transport available to her." (PARENT)
- "Oldest child will attend Braes High school in 2 years with no access to transport. It's around 2 miles of steep hills with no way of avoiding busy main road to support cycling. Walking would add around 1 hour 20 minutes to the school day. The result is likely to be more cars dropping off/ picking up rather than less" (PARENT)
- "To attend school my child would have more than a one hour walk, alone and in the dark during the winter months crossing several busy roads. This would be a risk to her safety particularly in the winter months both morning and night. Sustainable transport is only sustainable if it is safe, and the infrastructure exists. I am particularly concerned for those children and families on lower incomes. This proposal is an avoidable risk to the health and safety of children, particularly those from low-income households." (PARENT)
- "My daughter will be affected we live 2 mile away from St. Mungos which will be difficult for her to go to school, and we are Catholic and it's the nearest Catholic school." (PARENT)
- "My son currently takes the school bus to and from Maddiston to Braes High every school day. Without the school bus, the walk to school is prohibitive in terms of both time and distance. Paying for the bus to school would stretch household finances, causing financial difficulty and if the bus isn't even to be run as a paid service this puts our kids at an unacceptable disadvantage, having to get up and leave considerably earlier in the morning and arrive home considerably later in the afternoon, causing tiredness that will impact on their ability to learn. In winter months, much of this journey would take place in poor light/darkness which I do not consider safe." (PARENT)
- "I am not happy about an S1 and S3 pupil having to walk over 2 miles to and from school in all weathers and in the dark. I work in Edinburgh and will need to leave for work before I can drop them off at school. This doesn't just affect children, it affects working parents." (PARENT)
- "My daughter has learning difficulties and autism but has been successful at getting the school bus rather than a taxi provided through transport planning like they did last year. There is no way at all she would walk and feel safe from our home to the high school. It would take well over an hour. She doesn't walk to the local shop herself never mind walk to school herself. This would mean I would end up applying for a school taxi again at more costs to yourselves." (PARENT)
- "Depending on the walking route the council says is acceptable my son would be required to walk to and from school if this took effect. According to maps it is over 1 hour there and 1 hour back. I do not find this acceptable for any child in the dark." (PARENT)

- "My daughter in S2 and my other daughter going in to S1 would have to walk to school! It would take approx an hour on unsafe roads and in the dark in winter. I work full time and do not have the capacity to drive them and we can't afford to pay for the buses" (PARENT)
- "My daughter takes the bus everyday to school as we're 2.5 miles from the school. The bus is so handy as it's a long distance to walk there and back before and after school, especially when it's terrible weather which is most of the time. So, if it's pouring my daughter has to walk not far off 3 miles in that weather to then sit at school soaked all day, Or indeed when it's very hot. My daughter has a lot of textbooks and things like PE kit to carry. I find it terrible that it is proposed this service will stop. It takes her 50 mins to walk each way. I know it's a busy bus at Maddiston so would find it unfair to cancel this, these people take the bus for a reason. The bus being on puts my mind at ease that my daughter and her friends get to school and back safely. So my feelings on the matter are anger and disappointment that when things are getting cut back it's children who have to pay for it." (PARENT)
- "The roads are not safe, they are busy. Multiple kids walking to school that length of distance is easy for them to get distracted and not pay attention at the roads. I do not allow my 7-year-old out to play in the street but I am expected to trust him to walk to and from school. There will still be a bus from the old town to Sacred Heart so it will still be stopping off to pick up kids for Sacred Heart as it's the only drop off. Surely if you have a contract with the bus service to still collect and drop off at the same point how much extra will it be for that one additional stop or pick up?." (PARENT)
- "My 11-year-old will be forced to use public transport to get to the nearest Catholic high school when he joins S1. This will necessitate a lengthy walk due to the very limited routes followed by public buses. This feels unsafe and also discriminatory- Catholic families are being unduly targeted by this proposal. Furthermore, the charity First4Kids would be unable to transport children from St Bernadette's PS to Stenhousemuir PS if school transport is abolished. This will affect working parents and will probably cause the closure of this childcare provider." (PARENT)
- "My children live around Hallglen. If we are to use the public bus we need to take 2 buses which always affect the children getting to school on time, and when getting to school they feel tired and restless. In addition to this, the public bus sometimes don't function well because they sometime don't operate. The school is not a walking distance and I don't have the money to take a taxi if the public bus is not available. My children are now used to the school bus and it will definitely affect their mental wellbeing." (PARENT)
- "My son gets the bus to and from school. It is not feasible for him to walk over 3 miles to school each day in different weather conditions. I work full time and him getting the bus means I can get to work on time. I feel that cutting this service would open up truancy, dangerous conditions to walk in. The road from Polmont to Falkirk is long and I don't feel this is a safe option." (PARENT)
- "I currently have 2 children at high school, soon to be three, and live 2.9miles from the school (measurement taken from google maps). Currently they get the bus to school but if the proposal comes into effect £2 per day per child=£30 per week! Both parents work so cannot take them to school and I think it's unacceptable for them to walk this distance there and back! I cannot afford to pay this along with a lot of parents! How does Falkirk Council think this is acceptable?? Especially with the rise in cost of living!" (PARENT)
- "My son will be attending Braes high school after the summer, we live in Maddiston which is quite far. It will affect me as I am a single parent of 3. I have two little ones to get to breakfast club and myself to work for 9, and I would feel safe if my child was to get a bus to and from school. I believe Maddiston to be a little too far out for my child to walk and if I was to take him in the morning it would be too early. I don't believe this to be helpful at all and Maddiston to the Braes High School is quite a distance for a young person in his first year to walk which is just short of 3 mile, it's 2.1 miles and would take approx 41 minutes to walk." (PARENT)
- "My daughter relies on the school to get her to and from school, her journey would take her an hour round trip to walk and I don't feel that in the darker mornings and nights it would be safe. The way my daughter would work is not a safe environment to walk herself. Due to work commitments its not feasible for us to drop her off." (PARENT)
- "Our 2 children would have to walk over 6 miles per day. Our street is highlighted as inside the 3 mile limit, but actually the only safe walking route is 3.4 miles." (PARENT)
- "We don't receive funding however there will be families who will struggle in the current financial climate. Walking from Lionthorn / Hallglen which is at top of a hill can involve going through Callender woods / park as short route which for a younger single child I would not be comfortable with as a parent. Particularly during the darker mornings and evenings. A 3 mile walk uphill in severe weather to get home for a young child sometimes 5 days a week is excessive." (PARENT)

- *"We are 1.9 miles from school, and both our daughters will be affected by this proposal. We want them to have the independence of travelling to school on the bus and this proposal means they will have to be taken to school, often driven which is not as environmentally friendly. If they were to walk as suggested this is a long challenging walk for children their age (currently 3 and 5) at approx. 50 minutes along a main road and up a steep challenging hill and to expect them to make this journey twice per day is a crime plus an inconvenience to our family who need to work and cannot afford to take such time out to walk them to school- hence driving being the only option. The cost saved by this proposal doesn't seem much of a saving when it will affect such a large proportion of the school population."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter relies on the school bus to get her to and from school. Without this service she would have to walk over 30 mins there and back which just isn't practical at all especially in winter where she would have to go about all day in wet clothes. I feel removing this service will increase the absence in schools as not everyone is able to drop their kids off, not everyone has cars to do this."* (PARENT)
- *"From what I understand of your proposal it not just removing free bus passes, you will be removing the school bus completely (which by the way is very sneakily worded). I have a child starting high school who cannot independently walk to high school so I would need to walk with them. Even your 'safe routes' are based on an adult accompanying them. I have younger children at primary school who I also have to care for and accompany to school, and I don't understand how it is even physically possible to walk 2 different sets of children to 2 different schools at the same time. I will either need to leave young children alone, outside a primary school to wait for nearly 2 hours at drop off and pick up times or choose which child is going to be over an hour late and picked up over an hour early from school each day so I can ensure that all my children are safe."* (PARENT)
- *"My child attends a Roman Catholic primary school. We live exactly 2 miles from her school, St Francis. My child boards the bus at 8:15 every morning and I start work at 8:30. My child then travels home from school on the bus. If the bus did not run it would take my child about an hour to walk to school (google maps states 41 mins but let's keep in mind children have small legs). And would then have to walk home so their school day would start at 8am and finish at 4pm. There are two different routes they could walk. The first being down through the streets and onto the main road in Camelon past Tesco etc which is extremely busy at peak times or along the Forth and Clyde canal which comes out at the Rosebank. I won't insult your intelligence by referring to all the different safety concerns on that route; traffic, water etc. As we live in Scotland it is very rare that the weather conditions are fair to us. Should we be allowing children to take these risks?"* (PARENT)
- *"This will affect finances as we can't afford living as it is, never mind finding other ways for our child to go to school as a working parent this will effect a lot of aspects of our living. Also, the distance of travel for the children is terrible to expect any child to travel probably by foot, the dangers of this is unbelievable and now a days these roads are not safe at all no matter what ages a child is. This proposal is going to cause the education of our children to suffer and you will find the attendance of these pupils deteriorate drastically. What is more important I think for our young people is the education to lead them to successful living."* (PARENT)
- *"My son isn't at school yet but I am speaking out as I think it's absolutely insane to consider making primary school kids walk more than a mile and to make secondary school kids walk more than 2 miles, particularly in the depths of winter. It isn't safe and not every parent can drop off and pick up their kids. It's just going to lead to more cars on the road for those who can drop off their kids and that's not great for the environment or stress on commuter routes."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter who is 9 years old would have to walk 30 minutes every morning to school. Since I start work very early in the morning, there is no way I could drive her to school and ensure she is safe. I think the proposal is unfair to young children who have no other way of transport."* (PARENT)
- *"Live too far away and unable to take daughter to school. For her to walk to school she would need to leave at 740am just to make it on time."* (PARENT)
- *"My son travels on the Westquarter Primary school bus. Walking him to and from school would involve a 50-minute round trip and impact my ability to work. I would therefore need to find and pay for additional childcare before and after school. The parking and traffic situation at the school is already unmanageable and dangerous."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will not be entitled to free school bus travel from August 2023 to secondary school. He will be starting secondary school at this time. Before the proposed changes he would have been able to get the school bus from the end of our estate to and from school. Now he would be expected to walk to school along a very busy route, crossing main roads and walking near the canal. The walk would take at least 40 minutes."* (PARENT)

- *"I would be affected by it because my parents are split up and the two buses I have to get on would be cancelled and my parents can't drop me off because my dad is busy with work and my mum is most of the time either night shift or early shift so she's either too tired or not even there in the morning. Another thing is that I already have to wake up early to catch the bus and if you go through with this I'll probably have to leave as early as 7:00."* (PUPIL)
- *"I don't agree with this proposal because it really isn't your fault you live far from the school and a don't think just because people are under 3 miles away from the school it really shouldn't matter."* (PUPIL)
- *"All my children are at denominational schools - 1 at a primary and 2 at a secondary. Proposals may affect my children's ability to get to / from school if bus services are reduced. Currently, your proposals are lacking in significant detail about which bus services would be stopped, making a reliable individual assessment almost impossible. I don't have issues with charging a small fee from a personal point of view, but if no bus service is subsequently available this makes getting to school via a safe route largely impossible. Your lengthy documents listing street names which fall under a 2 or 3 mile distance according to primary or secondary school respectively, appears inaccurate as some streets listed are long and should not be included as an entire street e.g. Polmont Road in Laurieston listed as being within 3 miles of St Mungo's high school - we live at the far end of this road and are definitely greater than 3 miles away via any walking route (let alone 'safe' in darkness for teenage girls) to St Mungo's High school entrance (google maps lists 3 routes between 3.1 and 3.3 miles from our house)." (PARENT)*
- *"I continue to get free bus travel as I live 4 and a half miles away from the school, but I do find it unfair as people need to get to school and are not always able to get a car ride, etc and are far walks away compared to a five/ten minute bus journey. Taking away free bus travel for some pupils who live within a certain distance could mean needing to leave for school up to an hour before hand to make sure you arrive at school on time if unable to get driven by parents/carers, take a taxi or any other available option. Young people in Scotland are able to apply for a Young Scot card which allows them to have free bus travel, which in all honesty doesn't make complete sense to me if school travel isn't free when education is pretty much compulsory for all people until the age of sixteen. Yes I understand that the free travel part of having a Young Scots card could be used to travel as close to the school as possible and then walk, but the buses in our area aren't the most reliable and times don't usually line up to school starting hours if you take the walking into consideration too. For example, whenever I take the public bus due to running late in the morning or sleeping in, the public bus comes around 8.33am which is 10 minutes after my school bus arrives. Public buses seem to run late a lot even by a mere five minutes, but it affects school arrival greatly. By getting on the 8.33am bus, I arrive at the closest place possible for me to get off between 8.55am and 9am, which is then followed by a ten/fifteen minute walk to the school building which then leads to me losing out on almost twenty minutes of learning, which - although small - is deemed as a valuable amount of learning by schools."* (PUPIL)
- *"I am not affected because it take 5 Miles to get to school, however, I think many Students and my Friends could be affected by this change and would make it much more difficult for them to get to school on a daily basis. Although it would save money, it may create some difficulties."* (PUPIL)
- *"I would not be able to get to school and it would take me twice as long to get home."* (PUPIL)
- *"I would no longer be able to get a free bus to school, meaning my parents would have to spend £10 a week on me and another £10 for my brother to get to and from school every day. This is something my parents cannot afford. I cannot also realistically walk an hour every morning and afternoon to get to and from school, my parents would not expect me to walk when its dark at 8pm to school so why is when it's dark at 8am any different?"* (PUPIL)
- *"My sons in S1 and S4 would struggle to get to school. It's too far for them to walk. If I was required to give them a lift to school this would impact my earnings."* (PARENT)
- *"My child will have to walk 50 mins there and back to school. Not a good route, secluded, dimly lit. They also suffer from a heart condition and feel this is unsafe walking alone especially in the dark as this would be the case. As a single parent I also can't afford to buy a bike for my child."* (PARENT)
- *"I live 3 miles away, although I currently am not sure if I am allowed to take the bus for free. This is very unfair as i live 3 miles and it will be very hard to get to school without the free transport our school provides me. I think I should get free transport to the school and back as there are people who live a few houses away from me, get on and off at the same stop and will get free transport."* (PUPIL)
- *"Removing the option for my child to travel to school via the school bus leaves me and many others in an impossible position: 1. It's far too far to walk each day and there a no safe routes to permit unsupervised walking. 2. There are no appropriate cycle routes to permit him to cycle un-supervised. 3. There are no appropriate services busses to use as an alternative. 4. Both parents are working hard*

to provide for our family and neither job permits twice daily school runs. 5. We have additional children to consider who's transport is equally under threat. When we moved to the area we ensured that our new house was either within walking distance, or was well served by school transport, to ensure we would not be adding additional cars to the morning and afternoon traffic burden. Removing the school transport in this way is extremely short sighted and unfair. Is it the Council's suggestion that all the children now excluded from school transport need to be driven to school? Surely the safety and environmental impact caused by the increased traffic on roads and around schools is not worth the cost saving? As Roman Catholics we have a legal requirement for baptised Catholics to be able to access Catholic schools in an authority area. St Bernadette's is our closest Catholic school but not our closest school. Is it the Council's intention that I now must submit a placing request to move my child to a closer non-faith school as I would find that to be a totally unacceptable answer." (PARENT)

- I am widower who does not drive. My daughter is at St Mungos HS. If this change comes in to place I will need to change her school which will have a massive effect on her. She would need to get a bus into town and another bus out to Camelon to remain at the Catholic school. She's just turned 13 and this just isn't fair expecting her to make this journey herself to a from school. My son is at St Andrews primary. He would need to walk up the back roads to Laurieston then along to St Andrews. Again this is unsafe as is crowded with high school children heading to Graeme High.
- "My kids go to Falkirk High. We are working parents leave really early so rely on family and family to put our kids to school. We can't rely on the public bus service cause they never turn up on time. To walk it would take 45-60mins and loads of busy roads and having to walk next to the canal no lighting there and plus my girls don't feel safe walking up to school and home, plus there loads of weirdos about" (PARENT)
- "I need the bus service (free or option to pay) for my child to get to school. We are not within reasonable walking distance." (PARENT)
- "My children will no longer be eligible for free school transport and they can't possibly walk to school in a safe and timely manner." (PARENT)
- "My children would not have available transport to get to school. We live exactly 3 miles away and it would not be reasonable to expect them to walk this distance each day." (PARENT)
- "We live 2 miles away and there is no alternative bus going to st. Mungos school this would greatly affect my daughter going to school and there is no alternative Catholic school for her." (PARENT)
- "My sisters can't get home to my Grans as they pay for the bus just now. They will need to walk on their own." (PUPIL)
- "My son is first year and daughter in P6. Removing bus service would mean walking for 40 minutes, in poor weather this is infeasible. After school activities would become impossible as walking in the dark would be dangerous." (PARENT)
- "I would have my bus pass taken away from me which would make me walk about 50 minutes to school." (PARENT)
- "My children will have to walk a long distance to school and will be unsafe in the cold dark winter days." (PARENT)
- "My grandchildren, age 13 & 15 would be required to walk 2.7 miles ( at least an hour's walk) leaving before 8am, in darkness in winter... and all weathers... sometimes rain, wind, ice or snow. Then another hour ... in the dark & extreme cold in winter to get home again.... Hopefully arriving home before 5pm (having walked more than 2 hours over the day). This is not acceptable to expect these kids to do this... and give their best to their school work after having to hike nearly 3 miles in all weathers before even starting lessons! Would the teachers do it? I understand cuts need to be made... but this is extremely unfair to the children. They cannot cope with this on a daily basis ... it is downright cruel! Please think of other ways to save money... this can't be right." (GRANDPARENT)
- "Over one hour for my son to walk to school. Utterly ridiculous!" (PARENT)
- "Both my children will be pupils by Aug 2023. Whilst we stay within the 3miles radius we are at the outer edges. Meaning a 1hr walk each way to get to school - that's at a decent pace. Both children are actively involved in after school activities - both play football as well as the other sports. One is currently signed with an sports club and requires 3 trips to out of the Falkirk area each week. Not only with the removal of a bus service impact their energy levels to partake in these activities, the time impact will mean they will be forced to forego meals to make training in time which will impact their health. I'm concerned that the quickest route may not be the safest route. Not only is it across fields, they are unlit. To walk the lit paths down the main roads the journey becomes longer than 3miles. My other concern is the co2 emissions and traffic gridlock around drop off and pick up times. Residents currently complain

- about parking and volume of cars in the area at this time. It's only going to get worse as parents will be left with no option but to drive kids to school as it's only way to ensure safety." (PARENT)
- "My daughter attends St Mungos. We live in Larbert and it would take her over an hour each way to walk to school every day. This is extremely concerning, given that school finishes at nearly 4pm. Some days meaning she would be walking in the dark. This is not acceptable when the bus stop she has to use for the school bus is over 3 miles away anyway." (PARENT)
  - "Both my wife and I work shifts and the free bus service currently provided is the only safe option for our S1 daughter to get to and from school safely. This proposal would see our daughter with an hour walk to and from school in the morning and afternoon, in the dark during winter months. This is a quick route using unlit paths away from main roads and houses. Not at all safe in my opinion. Otherwise her walk would be up to an hour and a half using pavements alongside busy roads." (PARENT)
  - "Based on the new proposal, my daughter will need to walk 6 miles a day to get to/from school. Living in Larbert and checking the distance we are 3 miles from St Mungo's. The bus stop she normally would use in Kinnaird Village is more than 3 miles." (PARENT)
  - "My 13 year old will have to walk to school and it will take an hour each way!" (PARENT)
  - "My children are not affected as we live less then 2 miles from school but I have huge concerns re the children and families that cannot afford to pay for transport to school and ultimately how this will affect the Catholic school community who are disproportionately affected if this proposal executed." (PARENT)
  - "My parents don't have the money to pay for the bus to and from school every day and it's over half hour walk to school." (PUPIL)
  - "I live less than three miles away however I get the bus because it takes me 30 to 45 minutes to walk which would be fine to do in the summer but when it gets to winter months it is snowy and cold." (PUPIL)
  - "I think it's unfair that we would have to get up more early to walk which means less sleep for teens even though we need it most. Sleep is an important part of improved mental health and it's important even if we get that extra half an hour. It's also unfair on pupils that don't feel safe walking into school, or parents that don't trust their kids to walk." (PUPIL)
  - "If this was to happen many others and myself would not be able to get home on a bus, we are very angry about the proposal and want this to change, we feel like children should not even have to pay to get home, it's not fair on those who can't afford the bus everyday and cancelling the buses would be even worse, a lot of these children live a far walk away. This is not fair." (PUPIL)
  - "I will have to walk 6 miles a day due to this even though my house is 3 miles exactly away from the school it is still making me take another type of transport even though I am in the 3-mile radius which I think is unfair. I think that the walk is unsafe as there are numerous main roads and I may miss out on education if weather is not ideal, and I would also have to leave my house before 7:30 to make it to school on time. My mum works in the morning before 8 o'clock and my dad works shifts so it could be hard for me to find a lift every day. The suggested walking routes are also showing as 3 miles and are not safe for someone to walk due to the dark and busy roads. The bus stop I get on as of now will still have a bus as some streets are in the 3 mile radius so I personally do not think it's fair to me if people who get on the same stop as me are able to get in the bus but I am not even though it's not even a kilometre walk to the bus stop." (PUPIL)
  - "Me personally I am not effected, but it is outrageous that pupils have to walk a long distance to get to school in the morning, because personally if I was in that situation I would be outraged, having to walk. My parents work early so I am unable to get lifts every day, and it is unsafe for me to walk especially walking in the dark areas alone! There are numerous main roads, the weather isn't always reliable so depending on the weather I could be late to school and miss out on my education." (PUPIL)
  - "The fact that you are wanting all pupils to attend to school every day unless they are seriously ill, well removing transport for most pupils ain't going to help. They will stop attending as much due to walking to school for a long time or even due to the weather. I can't afford money every day to get the bus or train." (PUPIL)
  - "As I live more than 3 miles away from the school I would have to walk seeing as I wouldn't be able to get a lift. I PERSONALLY DONT FEEL SAFE WALKING BY MYSELF TO SCHOOL IN THE DARK! i also would have to walk alongside the main road where lots of road accidents happen!" (PUPIL)
  - "My friends won't be able to get to school, they would have to walk an hour to and from school every day. Parents / carers won't be able to drive them and the weather and the time is unpredictable which would make it difficult to get to school safely." (PUPIL)

- *"I'm affected by not being able to get to school or home every day since my parents are working. It would take me an hour to get to school/ home each day with the weather in Scotland it is always raining and in the winter with it getting dark. This is why I do not agree."* (PUPIL)
- *"If buses will be removed it will leave my child to walk to and from school for about an 1h to and from school 5 days a week (in the rain in the dark in not very safe places) - how is that ok?"* (PARENT)
- *"Under the proposal my children would require to walk to school as no school bus would be provided. There is no public bus available and dropping them off would not be feasible due to myself and my wife working full time. My children would have to leave the house at an exceptionally early time in order to walk to school, exposed to extreme elements (-5 on winter mornings and +35 walking home from school in summer) and potentially put in dangerous situations with no appropriate support."* (PARENT)
- *"I will have to walk 4 miles each day if no bus."* (PUPIL)
- *"My 3 children rely on the school bus to get to & from school. They are young carers for both myself & their sibling. The removal of this bus service would mean that they would either be potentially late for school or not be able to help at home as much in the morning. It would also mean that they wouldn't be able to be home as quick & therefore be late for their work (1 of them) & again reducing their time at home. This will impact their time for homework/exam preparation/free time."* (PARENT)
- *"Our child would have to walk from the highest area of Maddiston to the high school and back daily. Adding approximately 1 hour 20 onto their day in good conditions. In summer months when there is lots of daylight and the weather is good, it would be no issue. However, the thought of this in winter is terrifying. The thought that this would be suitable for cycling is ludicrous."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter would no longer be able to get the bus to school, we live at the very top of Maddiston and feel it's much too far to have to walk from here to the Braes High School, I especially wouldn't be happy with my daughter walking in the winter when it's darker mornings and evenings."* (PARENT)
- *My daughter and son (have physical disabilities) and to expect them to walk to school is crazy as it's a 40 minute walk there and back. Other than that, in the wet weather and dark mornings the children will be arriving at school wet and not ready to learn and I think this will have an impact directly on their education. I feel children suffer enough as it is with budgets cuts are already being made in schools. I as a working parent am not able to take my children to and from school so I would be expecting my 8-year-old to walk on their own with a medical condition and not be supervised also near the canal. What if they fell. I don't feel this has been thought through and all children been considered. We talk about children's rights and it's their right to an education and to be able to give it their best shot arriving at school wet and cold doesn't set anybody up for a good day. This proposal needs scrapped it is not in anyone's best interests to do this. Children's safety and education should be a top priority."* (PARENT)
- *"I will have to walk to school it is a long walk for me. I have (a physical condition) and it hurts to walk far. It is a 40 minute walk to school there and back and my mum works early so we normally get the bus. It makes me worried how I will get to school as I have no other way than to walk but my (physical condition) won't let me."* (PUPIL)
- *"We live over 1 mile from our son's primary school and we have a bus pass. Myself and our son's dad both work full time, currently hybrid working but office based (some distance away) half of the week. Having the bus service saves us using our car for drop off, which saves us time as the bus stop is a 2 minute walk from our home. For my husband who does not drive, he walks my son to school and this can be a 40 min round trip walk. Starting at 9am, he is unable to start work on time if we walk our son to school. The school is already overloaded with cars on drop off and pick up, with cars having to park on grassy areas and within the housing estates. When my son eventually goes to Graeme High, again it will be under the new 3 mile threshold. Are you seriously expecting teenagers as young as 11 to walk just under 6 miles per day? We wouldn't expect that of adults on their way to work let alone children. Myself and my husband will not be able to walk to and from school with him (and our youngest who is not yet at school) every day due to us both working full time. Again this will mean us dropping our children off via car, which again will add to the amount of pollution in Falkirk. It feels like we are going back in time not forward!"* (PARENT)
- *"We already live outside the current zone but our child gets the bus free with his young Scot card. It takes 25 minutes to walk to school from our house. It could take double that for kids at the edge of the new proposal. It's unacceptable to ask kids as young as 11 years old to walk 50 minutes to school (and back again). Many parents will be unable to afford the price of the bus (circa £10 per week) especially in the current financial climate."* (PARENT)
- *"Personally this proposal doesn't affect my children as we live just over the threshold, but the roads to be walked between Bonnybridge and Denny High are not safe to be walked as Drove Loan and the Larbert Road way have no safe footpath for the children to walk. This proposal will cause more*

hardships to families also as it would take money away from other essential bills. Maybe if the council reduced plans for their fancy new municipal buildings to actually care about the children and maybe pigs will fly.” (PARENT)

- "Walking from Maddiston to Braes is some length of walking. For parents who work or who are disabled, rely on the school transport. This service shouldn't be removed." (PARENT)
- "I live just under 3 miles away from school therefore I would have to find another way to get to school as I get the bus every day to and from school. Both of my parents have jobs and aren't able to give me a lift to school so I would either need to walk an hour to and from school every day, pay for a train to Falkirk every day or try and find another bus that goes to and from Falkirk at the same times that school starts and finishes. This is extremely inconvenient and dangerous for me as I would not feel safe walking to school through parks and graveyards in the dark as a 14 year old girl. Also it would be very expensive for me and my family to pay for a train twice a day especially in the cost of living crisis." (PUPIL)
- "Putting this into place would mean my daughter having to walk at least 30 minutes to and from school everyday. This isn't safe, especially in the winter when it's dark when she would bother leave for school and come home There are no other means of transport for my daughter so she relies heavily on the school bus to get her there and back safely." (PARENT)
- "We live at the top of Maddiston and it takes my 13 year old daughter about 45 minutes to walk, it's absolutely ridiculous to expect children to walk that distance twice a day in all weather. I also have a younger child at primary school who I need to collect making it impossible for me to be at the high school to pick up my daughter at the same time. A bigger concern for me is the safety of all these children as young as 11 years old walking this distance in the dark and bad weather, there has been at least one boy run over walking from the Braes to Maddiston and it definitely won't be the last if this proposal goes ahead." (PARENT)
- "We do not qualify for free school transport as our walking distance door to door is 2.4miles. This would take my son 48 minutes to walk, which is not an impossible distance in nice weather but let's be realistic in our temperate, wet climate that brings us a lot of rain could be very unpleasant. We made the decision that walking this distance every day is lot of time but instead of driving him to school every day we would pay for him to use the school bus system. We did so by buying the term long pass. When the Scot Gov entitlement card came out we were no longer able to purchase a bus pass and were advised to pay as we go or apply for the free travel card. Really for convenience we applied for this instead of having to source endless pound coins. This proposal would push us to drive our son to school, and in our estate (as all high school children use the bus system) I can see them all driving their children to school too. The implications on local traffic, traffic management around the school and the environmental impact of all these additional school runs will be high. Already pressured roads such as Denny Cross and Larbert Road will become even busier and worse logistical nightmares. I am more than happy to pay for school transport as it environmental friendly, teaches out children be independent and means that 2 hrs of their day can be used for study, extra-curricular activities and in bad weather that my child is comfortable and not starting their day wet and cold." (PARENT)
- "I will have a 12 year old who will have just started high school who will need to walk 2 miles to and from School in varying weather and in the dark in the winter. We only have one car and only I drive, I also work shifts which would mean that I would only be available to provide transport on a limited number of occasions. This proposal would mean after-school clubs etc would be missed, cancelled or re-arranged and would have knock on effects to childcare. This proposal also means that my child would be getting up even earlier to attend school, the bus currently collects kids from Maddiston around the back of eight to get them to school on time, going forward we are looking at getting up and ready at 7, this would then have to happen earlier which impacts the whole family." (PARENT)
- "Where we live, there are no service buses to Denny, it is a 15-minute walk to the bus stop for Denny. It would take over 1 hour to walk to the school. My children require school transport to get to school." (PARENT)
- "My child will have to walk at least 2 miles to get to school and 2 miles to get home in all weathers and it would take at least 45/60mins depending on how slow they walk that's on top of doing a fully day education then due to my child having out of school classes on every night, if he had to walk he wouldn't be home in time to go to the classes so would have to arrange for someone to collect him from school or cancel classes" (PARENT)
- "My son would have to walk an hour each way on an unsafe route. I have to walk my daughter to primary school so can't also walk my son to high school." (PARENT)



- *"I am affected by this as I have a very long walk home from Braes High School to my home this walk take about 45mins and a majority of this is up hill. As Secondary School Pupil I am very busy so I take a bus home to shorten the journey and allow myself time to complete tasks such as homework or revision, however I cannot ask parents or most around me to drive me home as they are unavailable at that time because of things like the cost of fuel, work and other daily tasks. Even if I do get the bus the cost of getting on it will eventually add up and become unaffordable for my parents this will also happen to most around me. As I have already stated I am extremely busy so walking home isn't an option but that's not the only reason, another is because of the weather. As you know Scotland isn't very well known for good weather especially around this time of year it gets extremely windy, rainy and cold and that kind of weather is very difficult to walk home in and can cause pupils to develop illnesses or colds meaning that we will miss out on more education. Along with being cold and rainy in the winter-time it gets very dark at the end of the school day and for pupils like me that will be forced to walk home because of this proposal it will be very dangerous to walk home. Some of the dangers include not being able to see well because of the lack of light and drivers will have a harder time seeing me or any other pupils crossing roads which may result in people being hit and injured. I hope you will understand my concerns and realise that taking away access to free bus travel is not the best way to handle this crisis and I hope you will be able to find a better alternative. Thank you for listening to my argument and please consider that this is not a good way of solving this situation."* (PUPIL)
- *"My daughter won't be walking to school as it's too far away if it was about 5/10 mins away that would be ok but not like half an hour 45 mins away walking, and dangerous walking to school if it's a dark morning or afternoon and if she went the quickest way to school waking it's far too dangerous too many cars near a motorway and small bridge with no footpath only big enough for a car."* (PARENT)
- *"It's a 45 minute walk for my son from home to school. Too many busy roads to cross. I pay for the school bus for school to home and the mornings I work he uses the bus. The roads are treacherous around Maddiston during the winter and I don't want him walking all that way in -8 degrees as we have seen this year! Absolute disgrace you are thinking of scrapping this service!"* (PARENT)
- *"Worried about safety of children i.e. my grandchildren walking from Polmont to school. walking in all weathers then sitting in wet clothes with no access to hot showers or to change clothes. It will take over an hour to walk under 3 miles making child too tired to concentrate at school, walking to school is winter when dark and home again in standard school dress code which is black very worrying. Who will police children when leaving school. In extreme wet weather they all want on bus home. With the volume of traffic on roads and expecting an 11-year-old to walk under 3 miles crossing extremely busy roads ie Grandsable road where there has been numerous accidents, safety of children walking to and from school makes me highly concerned. Public transport is very unreliable and worrying for children sitting exams and need to attend school and might not be able to get on bus service due to volume of children and public using the services. This is the next generation of our future and my grandchildren's future I am worried about, plus their health and safety you are playing with."* (GRANDPARENT)
- *"We live in High Bonnybridge some distance from Denny High School, there is no direct public bus route where we live to the school if the school buses were removed. Which my daughter would need to walk a route that is unsuitable. Busy roads, no crossing and when it comes to dark morning/nights it would 100% not be safe for her to walk. There must be other ways that cuts can be made and keep the safety off our children a priority."* (PARENT)
- *"Having a child just started first year at Braes High School. I find it disgraceful that Falkirk council have set the proposal to stop all school transport for pupils and only provide for pupils living 3 miles plus from the school. This should not be a luxury but a priority, enabling all children to safely access their education on a daily basis. Living a considerable distance from Braes High School, but my child would not qualify for school transportation under the new set guidelines. I find this quite alarming and with it comes a whole lot of additional anxieties!"* (PARENT)
- *"My son is still at Primary School however he will soon be at high school. I am not happy with putting an extra 45mins on to his day by walking to and from school every day. (My work commitments mean) I will not be able to drop off or collect all of the time. I would like to know that he has gotten home safely."* (PARENT)
- *"I would lose my ability to consistently get to school from my main residence as I live more than 2 miles away from school most of the week, I would be made to live with my grandparents all week and only see my parents on the weekend. This would just all round negatively affect my journey to school and my home life."* (PUPIL)

- "I have 1 child at nursery, 1 at primary school and 1 at high school. Removal of the bus service would mean my son would not get to high school on time. I also do not consider that there are any safe walking routes from my home to the school, and the walk would take him over an hour." (PARENT)
- "Firstly, the proposals are not very clear. I didn't realise until now that the school bus from Maddiston, where I live is under threat. I live nearly two miles from Braes High School. I take the bus to and from school. Most days I have my coat and school bag containing my blazer, my school books, pencil case, outdoor PE kit (trainers, top, jumper and joggers), ipad and anything else. One day a week I have my musical instrument, a trombone. The walk to and from school takes me 50 minutes each way. The walk to and from is along the Braes, and the crossings are not always manned. Taking the bus means that I am not tired all week, I get home to pick up my sister from primary school and walk her home. I have time to do my homework and study and go to clubs. My mum said that she is happy to pay for the bus. Unfortunately, there is no alternative public bus that travels from Maddiston to the high school." (PUPIL)
- "We live 3.2 miles from the school, but under the council mapping system, it would appear we live within the new range. There is no safe walking route from Torwood to Larbert High school, as the road speed is, 50mph, with a narrow unlit footpath, which floods on a regular basis." (PARENT)
- "My grandsons will have to walk over 3 miles each way to Graeme HS, including significant journeys in the dark during the winter months. This is placing these youngsters at significant risk to their safety and I cannot believe the Council will take responsibility for the consequences." (GRANDPARENT)
- "My youngest daughter attends St. Andrew's RC Primary School and if the bus service was to be cut she would have to walk downhill 1.9 miles to school and from school. As she has (a medical condition) and both fatigue and stress are factors, walking to and from school and be ""School Ready"" would be problematic. She is aware of this proposal and is already stressing about the outcome. We live quite a hike from St. Andrew's RC Primary School at the top of the hill. For my wife or I to walk her to and back from school daily would potentially be 4 hours a day out of our routine. Our other children go to St. Mungo's RC High School and they too would lose their bus pass/service. My main concern with their walking route to school is the potential flash points with other High School pupils as their route would cross pupils going to Falkirk High and Graeme High Schools." (PARENT)
- "Our daughter currently has free school bus transport from Lionthorn to Graeme High School. I understand that our distance to school is 2.38 miles if going through town; and longer if going via Hallglen (although that's not a route that I'd want my daughter to walk - see below). This would mean that my daughter's free school transport would be lost if this proposal goes ahead. It is a long way to walk through town or through Hallglen. I'm very concerned that the school transport will be cut altogether - it doesn't say in the proposal whether the current school bus routes will continue, but just be chargeable?? Getting the bus to school has been an important independence step for my daughter and I'd really like her to continue to get a bus to school." (PARENT)
- "I have 3 Children at St Mungo's school who travel by bus, there is not a safe route from my home to St Mungo's by foot, and I would have to find the money to finance 3 children's travel." (PARENT)
- "My daughter takes the school bus to Denny twice daily. We live approx 2.9 miles from the school. My understanding is the criteria is already set at 3 miles however the young scot bus pass now renders her bus travel free of cost. So the criteria is already there. This appears to be an attempt to render the bus pass null and void for school travel. Additional we work and would struggle to drop my daughter off she would have to walk." (PARENT)
- "My child currently gets a bus herself and lack of a service will mean either myself or my wife will have to drop her off at school which is not practical because we both start work early in the morning. This could lead to a potential drop in earnings if our employers do not let us cover this journey in work time." (PARENT)
- "I live in the Lionthorn area and have two children. 1 currently attends St Andrew's Primary and the other St Mungo's. The child at St Andrew's is currently not entitled to free bus travel as according to Falkirk Council we live less than 2 miles, however, I have measured this distance myself and we are in fact just over 2 miles. Regarding St Mungo's travel, I believe the proposed changes will potentially stop the entitlement for bus travel to the school. The distance by car is just over 3 miles, however, I suspect the council's identified walking route will be less than 3 miles therefore transport will stop. This will significantly affect my children as a bus service to and from the school is essential. Walking to St Mungo's from this area is not feasible, especially in the winter months. There must be well over 30 children living in this area that will be affected by this change. No bus service will give rise to more parents driving children to and from the school giving rise to significantly more cars on the already congested roads around the school. I fully appreciate and understand the reasons for considering these proposed changes in terms of budget restraints. However, although the council may not be entitled to

provide free transportation, surely, there must still be an option to offer or ensure that there is a means of transport, for example providing a service that parents can pay for. It is highly likely that the existing poor service bus system in Falkirk will not be able to pick this up. Please do not fully cut off the option of public transport for children travelling to school as walking up to 3 miles is not an option. If cuts must be made then there should still be an option for a paid service, otherwise a number of children will effectively be cut off from attending school. I have been informed by a number of people that, although other councils have increased the mileage criteria for free school transport, they still offer a fee paying service." (PARENT)

- "My family will be severely affected by this. Both my wife and I work full time and were planning to rely on the school bus to transport both my children to St Mungo's HS. We stay almost 3 miles away and it is unreasonable to expect my children to walk just short of 6 miles every day (in all different types of weather) to school and back." (PARENT)
- "We have two children attending Denny High School who currently use school transport to travel to and from school every day. The distance from where we live to school is too much for the children to walk to school alongside a busy main road especially if weather is poor, in dark mornings or dark afternoons. There is no cycle route to school therefore cycling is not an option for commuting." (PARENT)
- "My 11-year-old is too young to be walking along very narrow pavements, across dangerous junctions and passed quiet areas where predatory men could be lurking just to get to school. She would have to walk for about an hour in the morning & then another hour in afternoon with a heavy school bag, in all weathers & in the dark of winter in a mandated black uniform" (PARENT)
- "My son starts Graeme High in August and if the bus service was removed he would need to either walk or use the public bus service. Both my husband & myself work full time therefore would be unable to walk or drive my son to school. I want my son to arrive at school safely and on time." (PARENT)
- "My son is in S1. The proposed change would make him ineligible for school transport resulting in a 45 minute walk to and from school. This would greatly affect his ability to take part in extra curricular activities and have a detrimental effect his quality of life. Both myself and my wife are employed full-time away from home and we are not able to support his commute to and from school. I understand the financial pressures on the council but this is an important service that could have a detrimental effect on my son." (PARENT)
- "We live in Carronshore and the change would mean that my daughter would be required to walk 45 minutes there and back adding an extra hour and a half on to her day in all sorts of weather." (PARENT)
- "We live 3.7 miles away from the school so hopefully our daughter would be unaffected but asking children to do this is outrageous. How can they be expected to walk over 2 hours each day and still maintain a healthy level of learning? Many children will be forced to walk, as their parents can't drive them. Attendance will be affected, as many children will be late or simply won't bother." (PARENT)
- "Children at Roman Catholic schools tend to have to travel further to school as the catchment areas are wider. But even expecting a child from any school under 8 to be able to walk to and from school which could be a round trip of 4 miles is unfair. If buses are no longer available even on a fare paying basis the number of cars travelling to schools will increase. I am not aware of any school that has enough parking to accommodate this not to mention the increase in emissions." (PARENT)
- "I will have two children who attend St Mungo's high school in August. We live just under 3 miles from the school. The school bus is essential for them and a large number of other pupils in our area (Lionthorn). There is no real alternative other than parents driving as it would take around 50 minutes each way to walk and no safe cycle routes. It's not feasible for most working parents to drive their kids to school every day." (PARENT)
- "I currently use the provided school transport to get to and from school each day. If this proposal is to go through, I will either have to use the public bus or walk over 2 miles to get to school each day. I believed this is a ridiculous demand to ask of young pupils, and will not only affect the attendance rates of many students but the general attitude towards education within the Falkirk district. It is unfair to expect children to walk up to 3 miles to get to and from a 6-7 hour work day and expect a positive outcome. Personally, I know if this goes through it will affect my desire to attend school every day and take away valuable time I would otherwise be spending on my studies or extra curricular activities." (PUPIL)
- "My child will be starting High school in August. We live in Bainsford and if this goes ahead my child will be walking to and from school (quickest route 1.8 miles 40 min walk each way) along the canal or very busy roads which for a 1st year could be very dangerous especially in winter so I think this wrong to go ahead." (PARENT)

- "No safe cycle routes available. Pedestrian safety also poor. Concern over safety of young pupils being asked to walk such a distance. In reality, this will increase car trips and congestion around the schools." (PARENT)
- "I am 14 years old, I live in High Bonnybridge. There is not a safe walking route to school for me. The Drove Loan road is not well lit and is very narrow at the corner. Even the cars stop and let one go at a time, squeezing up as near to the kerb as possible. It is an already busy road and would be much busier if more people had to be driven to school. It would take me an hour to walk to school, I would need to leave at 7:40 to get there on time. If my friends are not walking, am I expected to walk that through a wood on my own? What about in the winter time, paths are not gritted, it is hard enough walking to the bus stop let alone walking an hour in those conditions - this would take much longer meaning I would be late. On days of torrential rain are we expected to sit in wet clothes all day after walking an hour? After school I do homework so the hour would eat into that time, impacting my studies. I have exam year coming up in 2023/2024 and am really worried if I can't get to school or may miss school due to the weather etc." (PUPIL)
- "My son would have to travel from Greenhill to Denny High and either walk over 1 hour each way or walk down to the toll and get a bus from there or get 2 buses. The time added to his day because of this proposal is unacceptable. My wife doesn't drive and works in Denny. She has done all 3 of the above options. The problems she has encountered include buses not turning up or being late and also treacherous paths and roads in the winter which are not gritted. This is bad enough for her never mind a child. It is my understanding that all routes to school are priority 1 for gritting. However when our son attended Antonine Primary School the area locally known as 'The Pad' was hardly ever gritted and even when it was it wasn't done the whole way. We were in constant contact with the council and at one point even contacted our MSP about this issue. Despite being assured that it was a priority 1 route and should always be gritted it most often wasn't. I assume now that the gritting priority areas will need to be changed and all areas where children are expected to walk to school will be gritted properly? We were at the meeting in Denny High last night. It would be interesting to know if McGills have been asked about this proposal. We have 1 bus an hour from Greenhill to Bonnybridge Toll, how on earth are all those children meant to get on 1 bus. There are 2 double deckers which go from Greenhill to Denny High, these are both full. 2 double deckers worth of kids on 1 service bus that just doesn't make any sense! Also thinking about the winter, how is walking in the pitch black on the way to and from school for over an hour each way an acceptable option." (PARENT)
- "My granddaughter attends Denny High School. I'm horrified that such a proposal is even being considered bearing in mind the world we live in now. She lives in High Bonnybridge and would be expected to walk for an hour to get to school every day in all kinds of weather and possibly when it's dark in winter. I'm sure that there has to be other ways to save money instead of taking away travel to school by bus for many pupils who live in High Bonnybridge. On certain days of the week I would be forced to walk her to school when her parents are at work. I am 76 years old and would find it quite daunting to say the least!" (GRANDPARENT)
- "The journey from Bonnybridge to Denny High carrying the items required for a school day is not a reasonable undertaking to expect of school children who are expected to arrive in school for 8.55, ready to learn. Adult walking pace is 20 minutes per mile, so almost an hour, carrying a rucksack up the Drove Loan which would be dark from October to March does not set a child up for a day's learning. Scottish government introduced free bus travel to young people to ensure parity for all for education and training - withdrawing bus services completely negates this. My children walked to primary school as the distance involved was a 15 minute walk with 2 crossing patrols. Centralised high schools serving a wider community have to be treated differently. We paid for school bus passes until SG bus passes were available. The removal of a bus service will have a detrimental effect on attendance and attainment for our young people." (PARENT)
- "We are at the golf club end of Bonnybridge and it is a ridiculous distance to walk to and from school everyday! I can't commit to driving as I have a younger child who I need to take to primary logistically/timing it wouldn't work. Kids are going to be late, car congestion is going to be horrific outside schools. No doubt a lot of parents are going to have to rethink work arrangements and have the worry about their kids walking some routes. So many safety issues, It is absolutely ridiculous!" (PARENT)
- "I have not seen the proposed walking route for my daughter, however we live in Hags. A walking route that I would consider safe (well lit, paved and populated) would be over the 3-mile limit, yet we have been informed my daughter would not receive a bus pass with the new proposal. I can only assume that the proposed route for children from my area is through Chacefield Woods. I did not consider this safe when we lived in Bonnybridge and I still don't. I don't know anyone that does. Not

only that, the last thing she needs is to arrive at school wet and muddy before even starting her day. There is absolutely no way I can expect her to walk through the woods alone for an hour at each end of the day. I need to know which bus she would be able to use as an alternative to the school bus in plenty of time for us to take the route with her so she gets used to the change. I also need assurances that the bus will actually show up as they often do not. In August my youngest daughter will also be heading to Denny High. There is absolutely no way I will allow an 11 year old girl to walk that route alone. Assurances on public transport are essential for this to even think about going ahead."  
(PARENT)

- "My daughter gets the bus to comely park primary school and back every day, we don't drive and I work full time. This is going to create great difficulties getting her to school and back." (PARENT)
- "My 13-year-old son attends Denny High School. He stays in High Bonnybridge which is 2.8 miles away. That is a 1 hour 10 min walk. He will have to leave the house at 7:20 to get to school on time. 5 months of the year will be walking to and from the school in the dark in cold wet icy and sometimes snowy conditions. The route he is expected to take is very dangerous and in part has no pavements. Outrageous that the council is proposing this. No consideration for the health and safety of the children."  
(PARENT)
- "My children will have to walk for 45minutes to one hour to school in the morning and then home. I have no ability due to work commitments to drive them there. The route is not safe for numerous children at the one time. I understand the criteria is that path is suitable if accompanied by an adult. That would mean I would need to give up my job, and walk 12 miles a day. I note in the previous Drove Loan assessment it is stated as safe, in part, due to the volume of footfall being reduced as 93 children were eligible for free transport. It is clear to all local residents that Drove Loan is not safe, especially in bad weather, and the dark. Also, if you take into account a massive increase in children, and as assumed, accompanied adults this hugely increase the risk. I would expect a massive increase in traffic in this road also. Again massively increasing the risk. Please also take into account that in practical terms, the children will not be with adults, it is very likely that children will take a shortcut through Chacefield wood as this is much shorter. This is in no way a safe route, especially in the dark. I understand any assessment leverages national guidelines, however using these assumptions does not in any way ensure safe passage for the school children." (PARENT)
- "In the future when my 2 children attend Denny High School they will be expected to walk there and back. The walking route is not safe, in my opinion, and will take them over 1 hour to get there and 1 hour to get home. This would mean walking in the dark in winter months along an unsafe route (Drove Loan) my youngest also has difficulty walking long distances and would not manage, meaning he would need driven to school and back every day. The increase in the number of parents driving to school will cause a lot of congestion which in turn increases the risk of danger to kids around the school area who are on foot and also pollution to the environment." (PARENT)
- "I don't want to go to High school next year because I will have to walk along a busy road that is scary in the dark. My mum leaves for work early so I can't get a lift." (PUPIL)
- "I will be affected by the proposal as I will need to get my son to primary and my daughters to high school by car. It is not feasible for an 8-year-old to walk 4 miles to get to and back to primary school. To get to St Mungo's it is under 3 miles and my daughters will not walk 6 miles to get to and from school. The idea that we will "scoot" to school is unrealistic and a patronising proposal. I hope the members of the council "scoot" or walk to work every morning and evening! Whilst we are not eligible for the free bus travel we do use the Young Scot card as this is useable on the bus. But I would happily pay for my children's passes if it meant that they would get to school safely. The fact that the council are thinking of not offering this option and just removing the buses altogether should not be an option. Ultimately parents will drive and the residents at St.Andrews and St. Mungos have already raised concerns about the level of cars around the school. This proposal will just add to the congestion."  
(PARENT)
- "Having 2 children at Denny High School and not able to get a bus would mean they would need to walk 3.3 miles to and from school. This will fully disrupt school life and my work life as due to the distance and route my children would need to walk possibly alone. As proposed at your meeting that an adult could walk with them could potentially mean I could lose my job due to not being able to work my contracted hours." (PARENT)
- "Having attended the meeting at Denny High there are a few points I wish to clarify and add to my additional response. Despite our house being 2.4 miles from Denny High by the walking route on google maps our son has not qualified for free school transport as this was deemed less than 2 miles by the measurement system used by the council. We happily paid for him to use the school bus system to get

back and forward from school. It is scientifically interesting how two measurement systems can have such a difference in distance, being 21% different in this distance calculation. Google maps is deemed good enough to be used for distance measurement and mileage claims for organisations such as the NHS but not accurate enough to calculate a walking distance between schools and home for a child. This is very unacceptable. Since the meeting I have been planning my son's alternative journey to school. As the council is promoting safe walking routes for children as an alternative we have considered the option of him walking 2.4miles to Denny High and then 2.4miles back. This walk is estimated to take 48 minutes. Now, given that I now appreciate that the walking route up Glasgow road is only deemed safe by the council with parental supervision, if I delay my working day (for the NHS) to support this walk I can take 48mins there and 48 minutes back off me starting work and then either my husband and I do the same at the end of the day. I know for certain the flexible working policy of my employer and clinic pressure could not support this. Another option is to use the current public bus services, which would be the x36. My son would need to walk for 10 minutes to the Crown Hotel to catch this bus at 8:14 this would drop him off at Denny Cross at 8:23 and just give him enough time to walk to Denny High which takes 15 mins. However my concern here is that due to the stopping of several buses that pick children up from this area, according to your estimated numbers there could be 197 pupils displaced from the school buses going for this single decker bus. Is the x36 going to be able to accommodate all of these additional passengers? It seems to me it will be uncertain if he will get on this bus which then means as the next bus is not until 9:17 he will need to make the decision to walk to school. From this point according to google it is a 2.2mile walk taking 44mins. If this becomes the reality my son will then be late for school and missing part of his education. This would also be a very stressful start to the day with uncertainty on how his journey to school will progress. If we have to take the shift from independent school travel to one that we support so unfortunately we will potentially have to drive our son to and from school and contribute to the already congested routes to Denny High. My husband has his own business which he opens at 8am so as he has to leave our home at 7.30am he will not be able to do the morning school run. As I also work full time I will need to try and accommodate the school run into my working day which will impact on my clinical and professional role. Having to start work late everyday will mean working late every day and then impossible to pick my son up at the end of each day. As he enters S3 and study time becomes important I see my son being robbed of an hour of homework and study time as he has to face the 2.4 miles walk from school. Our son being environmentally conscious and aware of the multi legged and unpredictable journey he will potentially face every day has offered to cycle to school. I admire his offer and optimism but at 13 I will not allow him to cycle up Glasgow road and via Denny Cross to get to school." (PARENT)

- "Once she reaches High School age, my niece would need to walk to the 2.8miles from her home to Denny High School if the proposed changes go ahead. In this day and age when we are seeing more and more women and young girls being attacked or worse when out in the street, I find suggestions to cut school bus services unacceptable." (OTHER)
- "I think it is appalling to expect children to walk this distance and to then be ready for a day of learning. Parents who do drive often work and therefore rely on the buses to get their kids to school. Falkirk Council appear to be the worst council area to live in. Appalling what you are doing to kids in order to save money. They have suffered enough!" (PARENT)
- "I am deeply concerned about the proposal to change the entitlement to school bus travel and strongly disagree with it. I believe that asking children to walk such a long distance to school every day will have negative impact on their education, and is simply not safe and tiring." (PARENT)
- "If there was no bus service my daughter would have to walk 4 miles a day along a dangerous road to school." (PARENT)
- "My son is currently in P6 at St. Margaret's jn Polmont and will be attending Graeme High following this. The new proposal would directly affect him as we live 2.5 miles from the school. This distance would take 50minutes to walk which is not feasible." (PARENT)
- "From Maddiston it can take nearly an hour to walk from my home to my school if weather isn't good and traffic etc can hold me back and make me miss school. This would also mean waking up about an hour later for not just me but all those who live in Maddiston." (PUPIL)
- "We live 1.9 miles from my daughters primary school, although we make sure our daughter is active we do not feel it is reasonable for a 6 year old to walk this distance to school, particularly in bad weather. My husband and I are both full time teachers in secondary schools and so are unable to drive our daughter to school as we cannot get the flexibility in our hours to do this. Since starting primary our daughter has travelled to and from school on the bus, this we feel sets good habits and promotes independence. To have more pupils travelling by bus is surely preferable to adding to the numbers of

parents sitting with their engines on congesting school gates. If the school bus is lost either my husband or myself will have to look for alternative employment that allows us to drive our daughter to school. In staff room discussions with colleagues it is apparent that many teachers would have to reconsider their employment if school buses are axed." (PARENT)

- "If the proposal gets put into action and the buses are taken away that means I will need to walk roughly 50 minutes as I live in Maddiston, which is not very helpful as after a long day at school. I don't want to have to walk that long also when it's dark in the mornings and after school it isn't very safe to walk home and especially when the weather is bad." (PUPIL)
- "I am not affected directly but can't understand why kids have been getting on the bus since I was a girl but now kids are going to have to walk rain, hail, sleet or snow. It's not going to cut the number of buses needed by that much and kids won't walk that distance to the school. Let whatever idiot that put this idea forward walk to Denny High and back from Longcroft every day no matter what the weather is." (PARENT)
- "Realistically my children cannot walk the 2.5 miles to school everyday, they would be walking in the dark to school in winter mornings and home in the dark on long days along the busiest road in the area putting their safety at risk. Not to mention how are they supposed to have maximum concentration at school when they are already shattered from an hours walk in the morning with heavy backpacks to get there. My wife and I are both working full time we cannot take them or pick them up. School transport is a necessity not a luxury and our children shouldn't be punished for short comings elsewhere in the system. They've already lost enough due to lockdowns and teacher strikes just let them get on with their schooling and transport them there safely." (PARENT)
- "Children living in Haggis have been told they will need to walk when the actual distance is over the 3 miles in this proposal, the majority of the route is along a busy main road and quite frankly it is ridiculous to suggest children have to walk that route potentially having to cross busy dangerous junctions of said route and likely take around 1 hour to walk there and 1 hour back, in winter time this would be highly dangerous as likely walking to and from school along this road in the dark. Find other ways to save money as opposed to this outrageous plan." (PARENT)
- "My children are going to be subjected to walking 6 miles per day, and I would be expected to walk 12 miles a day to accompany them, on an unsafe route. It will affect their ability to learn and achieve at school, and I would no longer be able to continue with my job. The traffic around the school will increase markedly and cause further risk." (PARENT)
- "My child is over 3 miles from the high school, however I had read that our house number is in the half of the street that will lose out on the school bus. The school buses aren't great as it is and we have one bus an hour heading to Denny (x36)." (PARENT)
- "My 15 year old child currently qualifies for free school transport. If the new proposals come into force it appears that he will no longer qualify for free school transport and we will not even have the option to pay to use a school bus service. We seem to be on the very edge of the 3 mile limit. This will mean my child walking in all weathers for almost an hour each way. The public bus service is unreliable and also only goes part of the journey. The only other option would be to drop my child off at school but due to work commitments we would have to drop him off at the latest 7.50am. Will the schools be opened early to accommodate parents and pupils who have to drop off early? The lack of the option to even pay for a school bus seems ridiculous. There really should be that option at least as the walking and dropping off early are just not viable options. Many of the routes cannot be deemed safe routes as for much of the year pupils walking up to 3 miles will be walking in the dark both to and from school. I think it's just ridiculous that you are expecting children as young as 11 to do that." (PARENT)
- "Currently not directly impacted as we currently walk my son to school as under 0.5miles from St Bernadette's. However when he moves on to St Mungo's this proposal would affect him as he would have to walk almost 3 miles to school. To have a close to 6 mile walk to and from school each day is just not acceptable. I have been told that he would not have the option to even pay to get on the school bus and would be excluded from doing so. If this is indeed the case then it is very short-sighted as far as budgeting is concerned, the Council should be trying to generate money, all too often the budget is centred around cost cutting rather than generating growth and letting the town prosper. I believe the young scot card would enable my son to travel on public transport free of charge, which in theory could cut the journey he has to make quite significantly but the public timetable is not reliable, as well as no guarantee if the bus would have capacity to carry him on any given day. The take up of this young scot card in Falkirk is one of the lowest in Falkirk and as a Council we should be promoting this more widely or be in consultation with bus provider to encourage routes to schools so this can be utilised. Although this change will only have a direct impact on me and my family once my son goes to high school. The

proposals just now will indirectly impact me as there will be a larger number of children walking to school, therefore making the pavements roads busier and therefore more hazardous for driving due to the unpredictability of children crossing roads. Driving around any number of schools at start or end of day or lunchtime is an accident waiting to happen. Walking to school also sounds like a great idea when children are physically able to do that or when the weather is nice, however as we live in Scotland the weather is usually wet. So kids end up in school all day soaked from walking, which could in turn have an impact on health and therefore future attendance. Or parents will take the cars to the road, impacting on their ability to start at set times and therefore having a negative impact on their ability to accept certain jobs at some workplaces. These parents would also be clogging up roads, increasing pollution and creating more hazards around schools for other parent, teachers and pupils travelling to the school. If the child plays any kind of instrument or has extra equipment for sports it is highly unlikely they would carry that whilst walking to school, you are therefore putting barriers in the way of our future musicians and sports people of the future." (PARENT)

- "If school buses from Maddiston to Braes high school are stopped then children have a substantial walk of over 30 minutes in adverse weather to get to and from school." (PARENT)
- "Safe transport to school for young people is essential. It is not safe for any child to walk up to 3 miles every day to reach school. By removing or drastically reducing school bus provision for children (All of whom are vulnerable) you increase the risk presented to those children by expecting them to cross several busy roads. You encourage parents to drop off children by car, increasing congestion around all schools. The environment is negatively affected because public transport is better for the environment. Local public transport (non-school) buses will be affected which will affect other users of local buses if the children get these instead. Nicola Sturgeon introduced free bus travel for young people but you're going to try and remove school buses locally? This is a terrible, unsafe, quite frankly disgusting proposal." (PARENT)
- "More pupils will be brought to school by car which will add to the congestion and unsafe parking already causing issues at school. This increases staff workload and danger to pupils and their families." (STAFF)
- "My son attends Westquarter Primary School, we currently have the Scottish Government free bus travel card for him which he can use on school transport. If school transport is cut he will be able to walk to school however will have to cross an extremely busy road which is not manned by crossing patrol." (PARENT)
- "Would make travel less safe for children who live in my estate, will increase traffic going to school and make the school run less safe as more cars will be used. The routes to the school are also main roads and very busy with cars. There are also less crossing patrols" (PARENT)
- "My children attend St Josephs and get the bus on a regular basis. Due to the safety concerns over Broomhill Road and there being far too much traffic already, I choose not to drive my kids to school. The number of cars on that road is crazy. The council should be encouraging people not to drive and for kids to take bus or walk which we do during the summer but not ideal in winter." (PARENT)
- "My son would need to walk both ways as he refuses to cycle because bikes are routinely vandalised at school. I am unable to change my work hours to take/collect him. I am concerned about the safety of the walking route not only for my son but particularly for younger and female pupils. If he takes the most direct route there is no street lighting on the final part of the route on the path beside the town hall/builders yard. The walk to/from school would add considerable additional hours to his day where he could be more usefully studying or attending extra curricular activities." (PARENT)
- "I have 2 kids in primary and one in high school, me and my partner do not drive not to mention the safety of my kids and their well being. It's just not safe or sustainable, and to even consider making young kids walk such a distance to get to their education is just downright ridiculous. We now live in a world that isn't really safe and anything could happen. These kids are the future - how much more do they need to lose to all these cuts to save money. I am sorry, but my children and everyone else's children safety should come first, end of." (PARENT)
- "I am a single parent in full time employment. I am unable to afford school transport. I do not feel it is safe for my 10 yr old daughter to walk to school on her own! If you looked at the way people drive nearby the school you would understand. So many other ways in which money can and is being saved! I don't agree that primary school children should be expected to walk up to 2 miles home. In winter it gets dark so quickly and besides that it is NOT SAFE! It should be based on parent's financial circumstances rather than distance from school." (PARENT)
- "You will be forcing school kids to obtain public transport externally to the school which may lead to issues with child safety. As you are aware, children with a young scot card under the age of 16 get free



- bus transport, this will only result in a mass increase of pupils trying to get on public transport just outside of the school gates for which I have great concerns over pupil safety." (PARENT)*
- *"Extremely stressed and concerned at the prospect, this does impact on provision of my child's education as other than the school bus, there is no other safe or indeed affordable means of her getting to school. There is no safe 2.5 mile walking route to a Denny High which doesn't involve walking alongside busy roads or through an out of sight wooded area. You are risking my daughter's safety here. Diabolical to consider putting this burden and worry on pupils and parents given the disruption to education over the past couple of years and the current financial climate." (PARENT)*
  - *"My son attends Westquarter primary and has started using the bus this year. The bus allows him to travel to school safely. It is not possible for him to walk there and back as the route from our house is on several main roads and is dangerous. My daughter who is 4 is due to attend come August and would be unable to travel to school safely for the same reason at such a young age. The congestion at the school at the moment is ridiculous with parents already dropping children off. That would mean an additional 90 children and parents descending on the school, with the infrastructure already unable to cope. I fear for the safety of children and vulnerable families who will not attend school at all." (PARENT)*
  - *"Children's safety should be first not money! How are the children safe standing waiting on a public bus and who is watching them getting on and off the same public bus every night !" (PARENT)*
  - *"My child travels to school on the school bus under the current system. As he is only 6 years old, I feel it would be unsafe for him to walk to school alone. I have no one to accompany him to school in the morning due to work commitments. I feel that this is going to put a lot of young children at risk on busy roads in the morning. I totally understand that the council has to make cutbacks, but I don't think this should be done where it affects the safety of children." (PARENT)*
  - *"Currently both of my children use the school bus service for going and returning from school. They currently use their free government bus passes for this service. My working hours are 8 to 3:30 everyday. I am unable to drop my children off at school. To do so I would need to reduce my hours. even if my work would agree to this it is not an option that I can afford. For my eldest daughter it will be an hour walk to the high school every day there and back if no bus service is available. For my youngest it will take her 30 minutes to walk to the school along busy roads. I would also have safety concerns for both of my girls walking alone during the darker / winter months." (PARENT)*
  - *"It is totally unreasonable for young children to be expected to walk 4 miles a day to and from school - sometimes in the dark, sometimes in cold & wet weather. Primary school pupils in particular could be easily targeted for violence, exploitation or worse. It is also unreasonable for older pupils to walk 6 miles - what about those with additional needs such as disability; ADHD; mental health needs or those who are emotionally or socially vulnerable and could find themselves in very difficult circumstances. It is a safeguarding issue." (OTHER)*
  - *"Free bus travel will be withdrawn for my 3 children who are too far away to walk from Lionthorn to St Mungo's High School everyday and rely on using the school bus to get them there safely and return safely home. The price for a season ticket for all 3 children would just be too expensive to afford." (PARENT)*
  - *"My child would no longer be able to get to school by bus. As I work I would be unable to take and collect them from school. During bad weather walking to and from school is not an option. Finding a safe way to walk to school is also a problem as I would not want my child walking alone along certain routes to St Mungo's." (PARENT)*
  - *"The safety of our children is significantly compromised with the proposed changes. Based on where we live and the distance to Graeme High School, we feel strongly as parents that this change would pose challenging in getting to school safely for our son who moves to S1 in august and our daughter that will follow in 3 years. . There is no bus route that is direct from where we live and the other waking routes pose issues no matter what route is picked. Therefore, we would be left with very little option in terms of travel to school that wouldn't cause knock on issues for work." (PARENT)*
  - *"3 miles is far too long to expect a child to walk before and after school. It's a dangerous walk (the Drove Loan only has a single file path). During the winter the walk to and from school will be dark! We hear far to many stories about bad things happening and children walking to school will lead to more unnecessary bad things happening!" (PARENT)*
  - *"Single parent who works full time in Edinburgh, I rely on the school bus to get my children to school. It is not feasible for a child to walk from Polmont to Falkirk to get to school on time. It would also mean walking along dark, busy roads, so I would be concerned about their safety." (PARENT)*
  - *"My son has epilepsy and takes anxiety attacks therefore walking to school would not be safe for him. He feels safe on the bus and knowing that he can get the bus to and from school puts both our minds*

- at ease. If you took this away from him it would not be safe and I would need to home school him as I have no other means of transport to get him up to high school." (PARENT)
- "Absolutely disgusting, how are pupils supposed to attend school without transport? Not all parents/carers etc have access to their own transport. I am not comfortable with my child taking public transport due to safety. Also, you are already considering removing the pools and now this? Why should the young people of Falkirk suffer so you can build an HQ and road that we don't need?" (PARENT)
  - "My children would need to walk to/from school taking over an hour each way or rely on public transport which I don't believe is fully reliable/always on time. As a safety concern there is no monitor for other adults travelling on the bus putting children's safety at risk." (PARENT)
  - "My daughter who is 12 would not feel safe walking to and from school. There are busy roads making it dangerous. The school finishes at 16.00 two days a week when it is dark in the winter months. The school car park is already extremely busy on the occasion I do collect her if she is going somewhere after school. This will be dangerous and add to pollution as more parents will drive to collect their pupils rather than letting them walk. There are no cycle paths and the route is busy with fast moving vehicles." (PARENT)
  - "Don't believe that a child living 2 miles away should have to make their own way and don't believe the council is thinking about their safety especially at primary school age also think 3 miles a bit far to walk when dealing with busy roads if they need to walk to secondary school." (PARENT)
  - "I have one child in 1st year at Denny High School and one who will begin Denny High School in Aug 2024. If this were to go ahead it would mean that the children would need driven to school by me as my husband due to his work commitments could not do this. In addition my own work commitments would not always make it possible for me to do this. It would also dramatically increase the level of transport around Denny High School which is already at breaking point. Walking to school for these children all affected by this proposal is just not an option, apart from the time it would take them to get there, the weather and their safety needs to be taken into account." (PARENT)
  - "Safety of the children of all ages! That seems to have been forgotten about! What if they need to walk in the pouring rain are you go to provide more dry clothes for the children?" (PARENT)
  - "Daughter would need to walk for over an hour to get to school- not acceptable or safe on dark mornings/afternoons. Otherwise she will need dropped off or picked up which impacts on our working schedules and will cause more congestion around school."
  - "Indirectly affected by the proposal as we are fortunate to live relatively close to our school however, understand the difficulties with current public transport services. As someone who administrates travel funds to older students I hear everyday the problems with free under 22 travel. Falkirk services are already poor locally and the wider forth valley routes are a disgrace. In an age where parents are more concerned for their child's safety away from home, this is something that should not be questioned. Not every parent lives close to the schools and nor do all parents drive or have a safe route to walk to school." (PARENT)
  - "My child cannot "safely" walk or cycle from Greenhill in Bonnybridge to Denny High School. That is absolutely absurd..! Not to mention it's a hard 2+ miles journey there and back which would take over an hour each way. In line with financial costs our children are entitled to free education and parents penalised for non attendance. If parents cannot afford to pay for transport nor afford to put their child's safety at risk more importantly, what is the solution to that? This is a joke." (PARENT)
  - "My son will now have to pay for bus transportation to and from school using unreliable public transport which is not fit for purpose. There's also a safety issue here with children using public transport along with random adults." (PARENT)
  - "I wouldn't feel safe walking the routes I have to take to get to school, during winter the paths will be icy and it would be dark. It would take around 45 minutes to get to school every day, I would have to go through the woods or near busy roads." (PUPIL)
  - "My child will need to walk to school either via an unsafe route or get an unsupervised bus with strangers at 11 years of age." (PARENT)
  - "The free bus is a free and safe way for the children to get home safely. I feel once again money is being put in front of our children's health and safety!" (PARENT)
  - "My children would have to walk to school. My oldest son has ADD and struggles in the mornings required assistance to get ready and get to school. My youngest son has been experiencing bullying which I feel could be escalated with walking to and from school." (PARENT)

- *"I just want to add that I am not affected by the proposal but I have many friends who are. Some parents need to leave for work early and can't take their kids to school. Also, not everyone can cycle to school whether that is due to not having equipment or physically able. There is also the issue of safety here, as the world in which we live in has changed drastically. Many, many cases of assault, rape, abduction that simply puts every child at risk. I would not feel comfortable sending young children/teenagers out at before 8 in the morning to make their way to school on a cold dark morning. Why should those kids suffer at the hands of the consistent failings of the council budgets? Of course a new Council hub will fix all this won't it?" (PARENT)*
- *"My child, and all affected school children are at an increased risk of harm should these proposals proceed. Falkirk Council have a duty of care to provide safe, and free at the point of use bus travel for all school children, regardless of distance from the school. Additionally, there should be absolutely no mixed primary and secondary school buses. The mixing of primary and secondary, and those between faith and non faith schools poses a further risk of harm to pre-high school children." (PARENT)*
- *This would affect a considerable amount of children and make them have to walk to and from school. This would put them at risk of harm not only from traffic but could possibly lead to more fights (OTHER)*
- *"There is no service bus that my daughter can catch we are on universal credit so we can't afford to get a taxi. It's too far for her to walk in the winter months as it will be dark. As for the proposal I think it is irresponsible of the council to allow this to happen and putting children at risk" (PARENT)*
- *"My daughter would require to walk to attend and return home from school again just losing out due to the walking distance being proposed. The route required to walk is not safe enough and would require my child to add more than 1hr on to her day just to attend school." (PARENT)*
- *"My daughter will attend Graeme High School from August 2023 and I think the removal of school transport for those who stay over 2 miles from the school is unacceptable. The route to school from Polmont is along a very busy main road where there have been fatal accidents in the past and I believe is unsuitable for young children to be walking along, especially during dark mornings/nights. In addition, it would make the school day incredibly long for these pupils if transport options weren't provided. The alternative options of cycling etc are flawed as I doubt there are enough provisions at school for a substantial number of children to travel in this way before the school day starts and it isn't a realistic option in adverse weather. And the alternative of parents providing transport by car will lead to additional and unnecessary congestion around the school. To me a bus service provides the more logical solution." (PARENT)*
- *"I have 3 children who will attend Denny High School in the future - the rule change will mean that they will now have to walk approx 5.2 miles to and from school every day. I don't believe it is acceptable to expect an 11-year-old kid to walk this distance throughout the winter, in dark, rain sleet and snow etc. I have grave H&S concerns. The rule change also does not support working parents. There may be an option of using free public transport - however this clearly still has a cost. Has this cost been looked at as a comparison? Or does it come from central government funding so not a concern for Falkirk council? Seems disjointed." (PARENT)*
- *"My son would no longer be entitled to the bus. And would now either need to walk along the main road from to Graeme or get a lift. The dark mornings will now result in him walking in the dark for large parts of that journey and for a large part on his own before he would be able to meet up with friends. As an S1 pupil I feel that is unsafe as a regular occurrence and so I will drive him many of those days. That is adding an unnecessary car journey in a time when we should be looking at public transport options to reduce car journeys." (PARENT)*
- *"My address falls under the new proposed area for payment for a school bus to Denny High. This will result in yet another cost, from an already tight budget every month. The alternative to walk is not an option from our house as this journey takes over 1 hour each way and is not acceptable for a young person to have to do this twice a day in all weather! The options for free public buses are also not an option as they only stop at the opposite end of the town and don't drop the kids off anywhere near the school. The safety of our children needs to be priority above the cost of the buses!" (PARENT)*
- *"In regards to safety this not only affects high school kids but primary kids that have no choice but to walk along busy main roads during rush hour times in all weather and in winter times in darkness having to leave home possibly 45 minutes earlier than same journey home, the risk of road accidents or a child being taken is much higher. The distance is far too much for primary children and think this should be kept the same. High school pupils depending on area can be adjusted. My daughter already leaves for school at 8.10am for the bus but my issue is in winter times St Mungo's don't allow winter jackets to be worn so would have to walk in snow sleet heavy rain in a shirt and blazer - this I do have a problem with so no I don't think bus should change." (PARENT)*

- *"Luckily my son lives more than 3 miles from high school so won't be affected, however I worry about children that are. Getting to school may be ok however getting home when numerous children from different schools are going to get buses, I feel may cause issues like fighting etc."* (PARENT)
- *"Currently the limited after school care provision that we have for this school relies on this transport. Removing the provision has the potential to compromise my ability to work as the after school care will no longer be viable. Furthermore, compromising Children's safety to save money is abhorrent. In a world where sexual violence toward children is ever increasing, the concept of allowing a young child to walk for 35minutes alone to get to primary school is shocking. It's also unfairly prejudicial toward the catholic schools in this area who's children will be affected greater than other schools."* (PARENT)
- *"My 3 boys currently get a taxi to and from school. The proposed changes affect my kids as the route we would take the school backs on to a very busy main road. With 3 young children walking to and from school this isn't safe, as I don't have a car available to escort the boys to school. This also means that a lot of parents will have to make changes to their work commitments as well. Children shouldn't be the ones affected in these budget cuts. There are plenty other avenues that could be explored. Such as the amount of council vehicles that are unnecessarily on the road."* (PARENT)
- *"The road to school my kids would have to walk because if this proposal puts their life's at risk every single day. It's a disgrace that money cutting comes before the welfare and safety of our kids."* (PARENT)
- *"My children often get the bus to and from school. One qualifies for free transport at the moment and one not. Bus transport to school is a massive help on days when I'm unable to drive or walk them to school. My youngest may no longer qualify for free transport, and I wouldn't allow my child to walk to school alone as it is not safe."* (PARENT)
- *"My child would have to walk over 2 miles to school - 45 minutes in the dark in winter. This would be unsafe and therefore I would drive her to school meaning congestion at the school as I would definitely not be the only person to start using my car to transport my child. As a teacher, I already face issues parking at my school due to parents dropping off children to breakfast club. We are now going to find that teachers are unable to park anywhere close to their workplace due to parents using their cars to transport children to school. This may result in schools being impacted by staff late coming due to congestion around schools."* (PARENT)
- *"Massively affected in a negative way. Single working parent. Unable to afford bus prices, Unable to collect my child from school without leaving work. I am a hybrid worker therefore work from home 60% of the week. To do school runs I will need to reduce my hours. Roads are nowhere near safe for 8yrs + to be walking. People drive like maniacs around that school. Too many roads to cross! Really annoyed at this proposal to change AGAIN. I believe if anything, bus costs should be considered against parent income rather than distance!"* (PARENT)
- *"My son will need to walk along Drove Loan, and during winter months this will be in darkness. The path is narrow at most parts and with the increase in pedestrian traffic it will be dangerous and I feel it would be a matter of time before someone is hurt. The alternative is more young people will be driven to schools and again making the car park a dangerous place to walk."* (PARENT)
- *"My son trying to get to his place of education in a safe way to ensure he isn't sitting in class with wet clothes from the walk to get there in the Scottish weather! Can you guarantee he won't get bullied on the way home? Although we fall outwith the free bus pass for him, he should still have an option to get a bus to and from school to ensure his well-being, which we will pay for! Every child deserves the right of being able to get to school (which is a legal obligation) safely and without putting their Health at risk from the Scottish weather! I cannot run my child to school every time the weather is awful as I work, as does his father!"* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter attends St Mungo's High School and travels on a private bus tendered by Falkirk Council. She receive a free pass for this as will live in Bonnybridge. I also have nieces and nephews who attend St Mungo's High and have to travel by bus to school. I am worried this proposal will affect my daughters travel to school. It is not safe for my child to find alternative ways to travel to school. I also worry for my nieces and nephews having to find alternative ways to travel to school. I do not agree with this proposal. It's my child's safety."* (PARENT)
- *"My son really needs to get the bus to school in the morning as it is not suitable for us to walk him to school and the congestion caused by driving to school to drop him off is terrible. He cannot walk to school on his own as he has only just turned 8 and walking to school involves walking along a very busy road. As of August he will no longer be entitled to a free bus pass but he has his free under 22 bus pass. Then for high school currently there is a bus and it's free from our estate which again is necessary as we live so far away from Graeme High School. If the free bus is removed then we would*

- have to consider trying to move him to the Braes which is only half a mile walk from our house. But so would many on our estate and the Callendar rise estate I would guess, as it's much safer if the kids have to walk." (PARENT)
- "Child starting school next year, we live over 1 mile but under 2 from nearest catholic school, school transport is the only safest method of transport for young children, public transport is not a safe option unless accompanied by an adult. It will also increase the amount of parents choosing to drive to school gates as it is not safe for children to walk that distance on their own." (PARENT)
  - "My children would have to walk to school each morning and at night. I have real safety concerns for children walking along busy streets and roads. It would be particularly bad during the winter months as it would be dark in both the morning and evening. I do not feel this is safe for children. Children deserve the best education and transportation to their school should be available. On the rare occasions I have driven my children to school or picked them up, the school is extremely busy and this would only be made worse if no buses were available. It would cause accidents between vehicles and even worse, our children." (PARENT)
  - "I bring my little P1 brother to school every day on the bus and to bring him on public transport would be too risky and the walking route is main roads and his wee legs would be so sore as well as the fact I would have to be up as early as 5:30am to ensure we get to school on time. I work as well as attending high school and don't get home till 11:30pm most nights then I still have to shower, do homework, study etc so I need all the sleep I can get." (PUPIL)
  - "Children in Tamfourhill/ Bantaskin area of Falkirk cannot get a normal bus to St Mungo's as local buses do not go near St Mungos nor St Francis. There is only one bus per hour from Newmarket Street, an F16 or F14, so therefore kids would need to try and get to Newmarket Street or next to petrol station at dollar park. No way kids can get there safely. Your job as a council is the protection and safety of our children. How can taking free buses off them ensure their safety especially with known paedophiles in the area. Never mind the dark mornings and nights in the autumn/winter! They were giving a free bus pass up until they are 22 by the Scottish Government not by Falkirk Council. So if you can't afford the buses with your ever increasing budget every year then maybe your wages should be cut especially the top ones. Falkirk council is a disgrace and an absolute joke." (PARENT)
  - "We live 2.17 miles away from our children's proposed High School. At this time in our children attend primary school and live near it so can walk to school with their grandparent. All their friends will be going to and hopefully so will my children attend St Mungo's. Secondary School is a very daunting experience for any child and ultimately it is important to have their friend's network for support especially at this time of transition from Primary to Secondary. Children's mental health has already been affected by the pandemic and there is so much pressure on children that it is important they have their peers who they know for support. The denominational education system that they have had at St Andrews is important to us as they concentrate on faith within their curriculum which has valuable lessons that can be applied to all areas of life and we hope carries on in Secondary school. Our main worry is that Secondary school is 2.17 miles from home to school and that safety is ultimately our priority for our children. We need to know that they get there safely. We are open to paying for school bus so we know our children will get there safely. Both myself & my husband work full time and our shift patterns will not allow us to drop off the children. Grandparents do not drive and physically would be unable to walk that distance. Walking that distance, will mean leaving/returning walking in the dark in Autumn/Winter/ early Spring which concerns me for their safety. We know that Falkirk Council priority is financial savings but this will never take priority over our children's safety. Therefore we cannot agree with this proposal." (PARENT)
  - "Less school buses available will lead to increased numbers of cars on the roads around schools leading to increased pollution and lower air quality in school playgrounds. It will also increase the number of parked cars around schools due to the extreme lack of parking and drop off zones near schools making it less safe for children who are walking to school and crossing the many junction roads around the schools." (PARENT)
  - "My children pay for the bus to get to their grandparents who are my childcare. They are disabled and can't drive. This will affect my work life and I would need to pay for childcare. My children pay for the bus and are too young to walk on their own across a busy road or use the underpass especially in winter which is not safe." (PARENT)
  - "It will have an effect on the pupils I work with daily. Their time at school is important without having to worry about how they are going to get there or worrying about their parents having to find extra money." (STAFF)

- *"My bus that I get every day has the chance of being cancelled, meaning I would have to walk uphill for around 2 hours to be able to get home. I have clubs after school which are very good for me and my mental health. These clubs and after school activities also benefit my academics e.g. math tutor and not being able to go to these will affect my grades. I am also under the age of 16 and would feel scared to walk home alone after school especially on cold and dark nights."* (PUPIL)
- *"I will struggle to get my child to school safely and on time ,as we work and we have another child we need to get to school. The route she would need to take to school is also very busy, poorly lit in many areas."* (PARENT)
- *"Both my children use school bus services and I believe would fall into the group who would lose access to free school bus service. In poor weather or darker mornings/evenings the bus service is the only safe way for them to travel to and from school."* (PARENT)
- *"The safety of schoolchildren is paramount! Presently surrounding areas of many schools at start & end of the school day is chaotic & dangerous because of cars & buses many parked on pavements & no action appears to be taken. Any increase on pedestrians is just going to make this worse!"* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter will be unable to travel to school by bus. I agree money has to come from somewhere but what I can't agree on is not allowing the kids to pay for the bus to travel back and forward to school. Kids have already been knocked down on the main road trying to walk back home. Thankfully they are alive to tell the tale but what happens next time with more of them walking back!"* (PARENT)
- *"I'm not directly affected but I certainly wouldn't want my child not to have a safe journey home if our home was not within a short walking distance from the school. I get panicked enough if she's home 5 mins later than expected."* (PARENT)
- *"Personally I am not affected. I do however have friends with children and find the proposals*
- *Frightening. I agree walking is good exercise and beneficial to all ages. However, find it difficult to understand the logic in the reasoning to save money in this way. Surely the children's safety comes first .....the quickest way for a child to get from home to school may not be the safest. Also in inclement weather what about the child's health ? Walking in rain/snow ....where do they have an opportunity to get dry clothes or change into same? Sitting in class in wet clothes /shoes is not good for their health, causing sickness , time away from school and surely that is not the best recipe for education. As far as the parents are concerned, increased worry about child's safety, health and also care"* (OTHER)
- *"If I did not have the Scottish Government free bus pass, Falkirk Council would expect me to walk miles to and from High School each day. In the winter time I would be walking in the dark and cold on my own and I would need to get up extremely early each morning to get to school on time and wouldn't be home till much later, which would mean less time to do any homework assigned. I think the safety of pupils should be more important to Falkirk Council."* (PUPIL)
- *"My child will eventually go to Brae's High School and not having transport to and from the school is not ideal, and I know many parents will be thinking about this including parents who it has not affected yet but will impact them in the future like me. We want to know there is going to a safe form of travel to the school and make sure they are getting to their school on time and not worried about the long walk to the school especially in weather conditions."* (PARENT)
- *"I am leaving this year, but it will affect my little sister. I do not trust a 12 year old to get two public buses and then walk to school."* (PUPIL)
- *"My children are still at primary school but the older one will be leaving in a couple of years. Although the route to walk to the high school would be well open and well populated, it's worrying, as a parent, at the thought of an 11/12 year old child walking that twice a day. If free bus travel continues and there was a bus they could get on even part of the way there, that'd put me more at ease but the best option would be a school bus that gets them safely to and from the high school."* (PARENT)
- *"My children attend St Bernadettes and we live at the border of 2miles from the school - if this comes into effect there may be no bus for them. They are too young to take the public bus to school themselves, there are NO safe walking or cycling routes for children in the Falkirk area - this alone needs to be addressed as a separate issue. If this comes into effect we will have no choice but to drive our children to and from school. This takes away their ability to learn a life skill by taking a school bus themselves, it relies on parents having a car to get them to school daily and pick up, it will add to congestion on the roads thus making them even less safe for children and other pedestrians. This is very short sighted and will have huge implications into the future."* (PARENT)
- *"My grandsons will face a 3 mile walk from Polmont to Graeme HS and then back home again each day. This is a ridiculous ask in the dark winter months. Would your council members be happy doing*

*that in the dark when it could be raining or snowing in the dark winter days? I don't think so. I can't believe that council members would like to feel accountable for the safety and health consequences of this risk." (GRANDPARENT)*

- *"Have two children who attend Larbert High, 1st & 3rd who both regularly use the school bus, I think stopping this service would be dreadful for parents in Torwood who require this service to get their children to and from school safely. Larbert High is our catchment school and I therefore believe Falkirk Council have a duty to provide adequate transport." (PARENT)*
- *"As a family, we live close to the primary school but one of my children is soon to be in primary 7 and was intending to use the free school bus when attending Graeme High School. My child (has a condition that) affects balance and co-ordination, so is unable to ride a bike so this will not be an option to get to and from school. To walk to school would take longer than other children and would be stressful trying to keep up with friends as it is a distance my child would not normally walk. This would impact my child's day and would be tired from this walk and would also have to leave our home very early to get to school in time as mentioned this will take longer. Both my husband and I work therefore are unable to drive my child to high school. We are also being encouraged to be more environmentally friendly so this proposal will undoubtedly cause more traffic in the local school areas causing problems for local residents and safety issues for the children trying to get to the school area with extra traffic on the roads. Both my children, when the time comes would need to also need to walk down the Salmon inn road and cross a busy 40mph road to access the pathway along Polmont road to the high school. This is something I am very concerned about especially in the winter as pedestrians are often difficult to see and there is often accidents on this road. We are also concerned that the public buses are not reliable and there won't be enough buses to take the children to and from school so they may possibly have to wait for a subsequent bus to come which may be sometime. I feel that this is putting our children at unnecessary risk." (PARENT)*
- *"I have 2 teenage daughters who would have to walk in all weathers at least 45 minutes to school & back each day including in the dark mornings & nights through the winter. This is totally unacceptable from a safety perspective & also as they will often arrive at school wet & not ready to learn." (PARENT)*
- *"I have a daughter that attends St Mungo's. There is not a safe travelling route from our house to St Mungo's. Any route is along very busy main roads with minimal to no crossing areas. With a minimum travel time of an hour. In winter this will mean travelling in the dark along roads that have variable speed limits, limited street lighting and dangerous crossings. My child will be directly at risk of fear and injury." (PARENT)*
- *"As a working parent I feel that we are always getting affected by actually earning a living and having to pay for things that are essential to our children's lives and yet thinking we can afford every single thing when the truth is we are struggling more than the non-working parents. My child is not confident getting a public bus and then walking to somewhere away from the house is not easy for her." (PARENT)*
- *My son takes the bus to school and I feel this is the safest way for him to travel. I work and would not feel comfortable leaving my son to walk to school and walk home while I am at work.*
- *"My son will need to walk a route to school which is unsafe during dark mornings and nights and 3.7 miles long each direction. I feel this is unfair to ask the children to do, if there was a safe direct route I wouldn't be against him walking." (PARENT)*
- *I have kids 14,7,4 this would affect me about as my partner has (a medical condition and can't be alone with the) kids. My 14 year old gets bus and this takes a lot of stress off as he can get ready go to school so I can take other two to school and nursery as nursery start at the same time as high school. It would be a lot of stress me trying get nursery run done and high school run. It will also be same when youngest and middle get older and go to high school." (PARENT)*
- *"My child will attend Denny HS and I am not willing to let her walk an hour every morning to get to school! It's unsafe, dangerous and far too long journey for a 12 years old girl. I'm a working parent who is paying tax (while others only living on benefits!) and I can't afford to drop her off every morning at school. Anyway, Denny HS won't cope with the high volume of the cars who will try to drop their kids off if bus won't be available. That would put a massive pressure on traffic in Denny!" (PARENT)*
- *"There is no safe route to walk from Bonnybridge at the busiest times of day for pupils from Bonnybridge to walk to the school site. The Drove loan may have been deemed suitable in 2009 however this is no longer the case. It may also route pupils through Chasefield woods, causing erosion to the paths and damaging woodland. Plus, I don't feel it is safe for girls to walk this route. I am a working parent commuting to Edinburgh so walking my daughter or driving her to school is out of the question." (PARENT)*

- *"This will affect children in my area walking an unsafe route of the Drove Loan to school. I still need to wait for confirmation if this will affect my daughter. I am not happy about any child being expected to walk 3 miles to school especially the cold and dark winter months. What happens when it's snowing or very heavy rain. Children's safety should not be put at risk to save money."* (PARENT)
- *"I have two children. My daughter is currently in the P2 class, my son starts high school in August 2023 in St. Mungo's. From where we live, there is no safe route for children to get to school. In addition, my daughter (7 years old) would have to pass a skatepark where teenagers who are under the influence of alcohol and other drugs are staying. I can't imagine a little girl getting in their company. On the other hand, my son would have to walk the whole city, where he is exposed to traffic jams, traffic lights, where it is very dangerous during downpours, winds or other weather conditions. I am not able to escort my children safely to 2 different places at the same time, and I certainly will not choose whose safety is more important to me."* (PARENT)
- *"A lot can happen within just walking to and from school there was one day I decided to walk home and I ended up getting hit by a 19 year old and I'm frightened it could happen again"* (PUPIL)
- *"I find it deplorable that an overspend by Falkirk Council will have an undisputed risk to the children of Forth Valley. My daughters are facing an hour walk to school every morning and every evening after school. Travelling on foot, where main roads are treacherous and insufficient pedestrian crossings and lighting. Where a school bus designated to pupils of Denny High (who will be out of the 3mile radius) will pass my children on their route to school. I find these proposals very unsafe for the children of forth valley. I believe safeguarding issue for children could be breached. The volume of children walking the main roads in all weathers will be a hazard in itself!"* (PARENT)
- *"I am not directly affected and am fully in favour of green/active travel, however there are not enough safe walking/cycling routes over the distances specified to make the proposal feasible. As a minimum I feel buses should be provided on a fare-paying basis."* (OTHER)
- *"I'll have to walk in rain, snow across busy main roads or public transport which puts me in danger or could make me late which would impact on my learning."* (PUPIL)
- *"I already lift share every morning with my neighbour as the morning bus is unreliable and often unsafe and overcrowded. I currently rely on the bus to bring my son home as I work full time"* (PARENT)
- *"My eldest daughter gets the school bus and this really helps as I have two other children to collect at similar times in other locations"* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter travels on the bus 3 days a week, getting the bus ensures I can leave the house and be at work by 9am. A cancellation of this service is going to cause disruption to my working week, which I will have to ask my employer to accommodate."* (PARENT)
- *"There are known paedophiles in the locality. I cannot take her to school as I do not drive (due to) medical conditions, and my daughter also suffers from social anxiety so taking the bus off her would be out of the question. It is 3 miles from my house to the school. It is not a safe journey with speed of cars and the long road with no houses."* (PARENT)
- *My children get the bus to primary school and will to secondary school. As a working parent I rely on this service to get my children to school on time and safely. As it's a school bus, I know it is a safe environment unlike a public bus. Withdrawing these services would massively impact our life, particularly when I have children at secondary and primary schools. I don't have time to run them to both!"* (PARENT)
- *"I'm a foster carer and I would be unable to put any of my LA children on a public bus. I don't drive."* (PARENT)
- *Children use the school bus to allow me to work."* (PARENT)
- *"I currently have 1 child in High School and a 2nd child that will be attending from August 2024. This means that I will have 2 kids to pay to take a bus to school. I am unable to work due to health reasons, so with the cost of living being as high, council tax rising but council services reducing (which is a disgrace), this will leave a lot of families, mine included, with extra expense just to send my children to school. I pay £200 a month for council tax and I am at a loss as to what I actually pay for! This proposal will cause an uproar, people are already up in arms about the proposed closure of so many council buildings eg, swimming pools, the dobbie hall etc."* (PARENT)
- *"I don't drive so my child wouldn't be able to go to school as its too far with no safe way to walk."* (PARENT)
- *"As both myself and my husband work full time, using the bus provision makes sure our daughter gets to school safely as we are not in a position to drop her off."* (PARENT)



- *"Both my partner and I work full time and receive no benefits. We also pay full community charges. The roads are far too busy for my son to cycle from our home to the High School and he uses the school bus every day. So this proposal will increase our monthly expenses, this is just one of many increases that we will have to contend with. Please also note that my son is already going to suffer as a result of cuts in funding as he is a keen swimmer and attends a swimming club which uses school pools. I think that there should be no funding cuts with regards to children." (PARENT)*
- *"I have 3 children who all attend different schools and have different starting times. How am I, as a parent/carer to more than one child supposed to be at each school within the same time frame? I shouldn't have to cut my child's school day short just to be able to collect them." (PARENT)*
- *"We live just over a mile from the school. My son will be 8 next month and we would not qualify for school transport. What other means would he get to school on time every day? He is too young to walk alone or with friends and it is unrealistic to expect parents to walk to school and back twice a day every day especially in bad weather with no means to another form of transport. What century do we live in? I thought the education of our children and safety was important?" (PARENT)*
- *"Walking in the winter weather would be dangerous. I'm away to work so can't run them & an extra cost for a bus service that I don't need!" (PARENT)*
- *"My husband has chronic pain in his body it's hard for him to drive and sometimes he works part-time. It's hard to take responsibility for every day to pick and drop the children. It's a great blessing for us school transport. In the morning I don't know of any bus service to Denny High School. We live in Bonnybridge. It's very hard for us and don't know how I can manage it." (PARENT)*
- *"If the school bus is removed I can no longer leave my daughter at her Gran's to get to school in the morning as I drop her at her Gran's who is in her 80's and doesn't drive. I therefore cannot work as I have no option to leave her in the house on her own and I am not comfortable letting her go by public transport alone at 8. She would then need to cross (a main road) on her own to get home to her Grans. It leaves me very little option for winter especially crossing the roads in the dark at 8 years old." (PARENT)*
- *"My husband works away. My mother supports a great deal but is already doing the most she is able to given her ill health. My daughter gets the bus home 3 times per week. This proposal would mean she wouldn't be entitled to get the bus home anymore. We are practising Catholics and want her to attend St Andrews but this proposal would make that more difficult." (PARENT)*
- *"Please explain how full time working parents can safely get their children to school without free school buses. The public transport in this area is atrocious and doesn't even go near Denny High. There is also not a safe walking route, a 5 mile round trip either through unlit woods or busy roads is disgusting." (PARENT)*
- *"We are 2.5 miles away from the school, and as a working parent I cannot drop my child off at school so rely on the bus. I think it's too long a walk for the children especially on cold and wet days, they will then be expected to sit in classes for the rest of the day in wet clothes and shoes, also their bags/school work etc will get wet." (PARENT)*
- *"My children would no longer be entitled to transportation to school. Work commitments of myself and husband do not allow drop off/pick up. Walking is absolutely not an option." (PARENT)*
- *"My 2 children attend Graeme High and changing the distance I find really hard. With both parents working we rely on the buses to get them to and from school, on time!" (PARENT)*
- *"We live on a farm. Our daughter is due to start high school in August. Currently she would qualify for transport to and from school. The new proposal means she would not. This would have a negative effect on the whole family as both parents work at the time of school pick up / drop off and we have no other means to get her to school." (PARENT)*
- *"I am disabled and don't drive so this will make it extremely difficult for my 6 year old daughter to get to school and home and believe it will put my son in a dangerous situation walking to school and getting to school on time and the time getting home will be a lot later making a difference in study time getting reduced." (PARENT)*
- *"My son will start high school next year and would use the bus to travel to and from school. I am now worried that he will not have a school bus to take him straight to school on time. At the moment the bus stop is at bottom of our hill and drop off is also near to where we live, so he can safely walk home. I understand that he could get public transport but at the moment the public buses that are provided are not running a reliable service for locals. Where buses are cancelled last min or just don't turn up. I don't drive and my partner has a car, but he uses it for work and will have left before school starts. Using public transport will mean kids will need to get a bus from Hallglen to Falkirk Asda and then another*

*bus to the high school ( which aren't reliable) - this would impact on kids being late for school. I am also worried as my child will have to navigate all this when he is starting high school for the first time. This can be a scary and worrying time for all children. I am really against this proposal as I feel there is so many things the council waste money on and this is not one."* (PARENT)

- *"I work and my I don't like my kids walking home as it gets dark and it is near a canal."* (PARENT)
- *"My son has ADHD and ASD tendencies and having the bus removed means he may struggle getting to school and home safely each day. There is no way for me to take him to school as I work full time."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter is due to join Graeme High in August 2023. I don't believe there is a safe walking route to the school from Polmont. She would need to cross the Salmon Inn junction which is a notorious accident spot with no method of safe crossing. The walk also passes through quiet dark areas, all of which are on a fast road with narrow pavements and a constantly flooded underpass at Laurieston. I think it is completely irresponsible to assume a child would walk this route every day, especially through winter and the darker days. Given the distance of over 2.5 miles she would also need to allow an hour every morning and evening to cover this distance which again seems ridiculous, particularly in the morning. Given both of her parents work outside of the Falkirk area we will be unable to take her to school personally or pick her up so we are reliant on the school transport. I believe savings can be made elsewhere rather than putting the lives of children in danger by trying to cut safe modes of transport."* (PARENT)
- *"My family lives in Polmont. There is no safe, appropriate walking route to Graeme High, especially for a 12 year old. My husband and I work full time and not available to transport our daughter to school each day. We only have 1 car. I understand the council need to make cuts, so i initially accepted this proposal until I read fee paying children can't get on the school bus. How are children from Polmont and other areas over 2 miles away meant to manage? There is a bus at 8:05am but I've heard it is not that reliable and if that's the only option, it won't have the capacity to manage. This will result in parents having to transport children to school (if they have the means) and that is definitely not environmentally sustainable. And traffic will be a nightmare and potentially a risk to children's safety. Are there discussions with private bus companies to increase their capacity and children can use their scots travel card? Can these companies claim back from the Scottish govt for children using for free?"* (PARENT)
- *"I have children at Braes High who get the bus home. They provide childcare for younger sibling after school. Removing the school bus will mean they will walk home and will not be back in time for the younger child. This will be an additional cost to me to provide childcare while I am at work. Or I will need to reduce working hours. The other issue is that removing the buses will increase the traffic to and from the school as parents drop off and pick up. Have the council considered this? Not all children will walk. Especially in poor weather. It is already extremely busy. Can't imagine local residents will be happy with that."* (PARENT)
- *"My children both get the bus to school and I rely on this having no access to a car and unable to walk the children due to work commitments."* (PARENT)
- *"My son would become ineligible for a school bus pass, which means that he'd need to get to school some other way, walking is too far, cycling would involve extremely busy roads and local bus routes do not go past the high school. My husband and I both work so drop off and collection not an option."* (PARENT)
- *"We live over 2 miles from the school but not 3 therefore our son would lose entitlement to the free bus. Given the amount of pupils from the Polmont area, it would cause chaos for them trying to reach the school via public transport. Both my wife and I work and on some mornings our son makes his own way for the bus therefore we would not be in a position to drop him off at school. Also, this proposal could lead to a high volume of cars trying to drop off at the school = more chaos, also not very environmentally friendly! The school bus offers us assurance that our son can get to and from school safely an assurance we would not get via public transport."* (PARENT)
- *"My son would have to get his own way to and from school, which would mean him walking along the busy main road between Polmont and Falkirk. I don't see how this is a safe route. It would also take a long time to walk there and back. He doesn't have a bike, but I wouldn't want him cycling on that busy road anyway. As a working parent, I am unable to take him to and from school and this idea would only contribute to increased traffic and congestion at and around the school. This wouldn't help the environment either. Taking vital services away from children should not be a priority. This would also mean more placement requests to Braes High which is easier to get to."* (PARENT)

- *My children use the school bus and will no longer be able to, meaning that it will be difficult for us to arrange drop offs and pick-ups as we are at work, full time. The school is quite far away and they would not be able to walk (this takes the road safety and weather into consideration)."* (PARENT)
- *"My child currently pays for school transport and I do not have an issue with this, I am happy for her to continue to pay, however if the cuts are stopping transport for anyone living under 2 miles then my daughter has no way of getting to and from school."* (PARENT)
- *"My son has autism and I am a single parent who works and am disabled. If the bus is taken away I don't feel safe letting my son walk to high school past the busy roads particularly on mornings where quite frequently it is still dark when he needs to leave. Due to my job and my disability I am unable to accompany him to school so what would be the proposed options for parents in my situation?"* (PARENT)
- *I work full time. If my 2 children do not have access to the bus, how will they get to and from school? If the expectation is to drive them to school the volume of traffic at St Mungo's and St Francis is going to be really dangerous. It already is on bad weather days."* (PARENT)
- *"School transport is important to me in everyday life. Often my shifts end at 3pm so I can pick up my child from the bus stop. My daughter cannot return from school alone because her distance is 1.4 m from home. It's too busy a street (King Street) to go back on her own. If school transport is abolished, I will have a problem with picking up my daughter from school."* (PARENT)
- *"My parents will have to miss the start of online work or just won't be able to take us if they are too busy."* (PUPIL)
- *"I live just under 3 miles from the school. I have two parents that work full time and can't take my brother and I to school. it takes us 40 minutes to walk to school. My grandparents also can't always take us, the proposal is not ideal for our family. I am affected in a bad way because i could struggle to get to school."* (PUPIL)
- *"I have 2 other siblings who travel by bus with me by every day, to and from school. This means £6 per day, £30 per week. This is unacceptable. With the recent financial crisis this will impact greatly on my parent's financial ability. We have no way to school as our mum cannot take us and pick us up from school every day. This proposal greatly affects my family and it should be reconsidered."* (PUPIL)
- *School transport is very important to me as I have 2 children who go to school by bus. I work until 2:30 p.m. and I cannot pick them up at 3 p.m. Returning by bus guarantees that I will be on time to the bus stop. The youngest child is 5 years old and there is no option for him to walk back on his own or go to school in the morning. Unfortunately, I can't afford a babysitter to pick up and get home safely with my children."* (PARENT)
- *"I don't agree because cost of living crisis, it's not affordable to pay for buses all the time. Some people who do live 1 mile away and can't walk everyday due to weather etc and can't always get driven to school because their parents work, so a free provided bus by the school makes their lives easier and instead of making people pay for buses up the price on products that are less important."* (PARENT)
- *"We are over 3 miles from St Mungos and just below 2 miles from St Bernadettes. My children have no other means of getting to school due to work commitments and their safety of getting to school would be affected."* (PARENT)
- *"My children will lose the transport that ensures them a safe and fast way to school. Unfortunately, as working parents, we are unable to drop off or pick up our children from school."* (PARENT)
- *"The proposal isn't clear as to whether this service will still be available and if pupils using the transport will be able to pay for this service? If there was no bus service available to my children this then as a working parent this would have a significant impact, we live 1.1 miles from the school and the walking routes are extremely busy. The B805 Redding Road has narrow pavements and is a wide road therefore the 30mph speed limit is often ignored. Safety of children getting to and from school must be top priority for the council and the cost of providing transport in the form of a school bus could be passed onto the pupils and therefore the parents in order to ensure the safety of the children getting to and from school. The catchment area of Westquarter primary is significantly large and this must be reviewed in terms of who is eligible for transport, the eligibility cannot be determined by age only."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will start High School after the summer. My son suffers from Epilepsy (Clonic Tonic Seizures) therefore walking to school isn't an option. I work full-time so this will end up having a huge impact on my job as I will no longer be able to work my hours as I would have to start after school drop off and finish work before school pick up as I will have no other alternative. This in turn will cause financial*

- hardship to my family. Getting my child to school safely is paramount along with ensuring he has a roof over his head and food in his tummy.” (PARENT)
- “My granddaughter currently uses the bus to travel to and from school. I do not have any transport available to take her myself.” (GRANDPARENT)
  - “I have 3 younger siblings who all attend school, both high school and primary. My parents and myself can't take them back and forth from school due to work hours. I would dread to see my siblings walking to school in the pouring rain, snow or in the dark due to the fact school buses have been stripped from them. School is a compulsory event that kids must attend or they lose out on education and parents/caregivers face fines. Not everyone has the opportunity to give their children lifts into school or even get them a bike so they can make their own way safely. When I attended school, myself and other students were told we weren't to wear jackets to school because it wasn't a part of their uniform policy. You have schools like this and you're expecting kids to walk to school and then face consequences due to them wearing basic clothing to keep them dry and warm.” (SIBLING)
  - “I'm not affected, but I appreciate that many families who are unable to walk children longer distances for various reasons and cannot afford to pay for them to be taken on public transport will be affected. This is likely to prevent some families sending children to Catholic Schools when they should be able to exercise their right to have a faith-based education, which shouldn't be based on affordability.” (PARENT)
  - “My son currently gets the school bus to High School and back. Both myself and my husband work in Edinburgh so cannot take him to and from school. He is only 12 but would be expected to walk 3 miles along the busy main road. He is asthmatic and has anxiety and the thought of him trying to get to school every day appals me, especially having to walk next to traffic all the time when he has asthma.” (PARENT)
  - “My son will have to walk 2 miles to get to school and back again. There are also numerous roads to cross. I cannot pick up my son or drop him off due to work commitments and primary school commitments.” (PARENT)
  - “Removing the option to pay for a school bus from Maddiston to Braes High will impact my ability to easily get my daughter there. I have a full time job.” (PARENT)
  - “My daughter would not receive school transport, as a single parent I have no one else to rely on to take her or pick her up and don't have 2 incomes to afford additional services, the road through California is so dangerous, speeding, traffic lights due to road works, 2 large hills to walk down/up and this will be especially dangerous in winter conditions.” (PARENT)
  - “My son travels to and from school by bus some days. He suffers from a degenerative long term health condition and only travels by bus on the days I can't run him to school due to my full time job which is shift based. These changes would affect him on the days my shifts do not permit him to go to and from school by car. My son's condition is classed as a disability however we do not access any help from the council with regards to that, as he is able most days to get the bus.” (PARENT)
  - “My child will not be able to go to school as I work from very early to late in the day.” (PARENT)
  - “My child currently receives a bus pass to get the school bus. When FC change the mileage, my child will no longer be entitled to the bus pass and it means walking as there is no direct public bus route to High School. My child suffers from (a medical condition) which means constant pain and they would not be able to walk 5 miles each day. As both my husband and I work - Glasgow it means it will not be possible for us to transport my child to and from school. So overall, unable to attend school. We don't have the money for proper walking shoes, my child is very ill and you are expecting children to walk in the dark winter early mornings and after school. I don't think so. I'll just get my child to claim the dole/benefits. Why bother trying.” (PARENT)
  - “I have 2 children that attend DHS, we live in high Bonnybridge which is over 3 miles to DHS. Personally I would be able to drop my children at school each morning as I don't start work until 9.30 but would be unable to pick them up after school due to me working until 8.30pm.” (PARENT)
  - “My grandchildren are at risk having to walk all the way from Greenhill to Denny High. It's not safe due to the high volume of traffic between these routes and unsafe walking route via the Drove Loan. I would be affected as my grandchildren would need to be picked up if I had access to a car or walked back and forth to school so in order to allow my daughter to work. This is not something I would like to have to do at the age of 70.” (GRANDPARENT)
  - “This proposal seriously affects my ability to do my job. I am a single parent with an elderly mother, and work full time in Glasgow with a requirement to be in our Glasgow office 50% of the week. It is not possible for me to walk my child to St Mungo's (a 45 min walk each way) due to work commitments

and I do not have anyone else who can accompany my child. I also have a child at St Andrews Primary. I do not consider there to be a safe walking route so I could not expect my child to walk home alone. My children attend a Catholic school, and there are no alternative bus routes in our locality. I see no alternative local transport for my children to attend a catholic school." (PARENT)

- "A fare paying bus service is the only safe available means of transport for my child to get to Denny High School as both parents are full time working parents. This proposal may save the council money and result in potential health benefits but in reality this will only encourage late time keeping and higher truancy." (PARENT)
- "The cost of living is already going up. Families are struggling and you are not wanting to add extra pressure to families by asking kids who stay in langlees to walk over 2 miles to school or have struggling families who can hardly pay bills & feed their kids now have extra worry of paying for school bus. Why can't they use young Scot card? Absolutely ridiculous proposal. How about you stop affecting kid's education!" (PARENT)
- "A teenager would have no transport to school unless paid.. in these times this is not going to be an option for many parents.. raising it by a whole mile is far too much and 3 miles is by no means a safe walking distance for any child by busy busy roads which would be the option for struggling families." (PARENT)
- "If I cannot afford to pay the fares I am left with the choice of 1hr10min walk in each direction or my child missing education, as there is no direct service to the school so using a young scot card is not an option either." (PARENT)
- "Times are hard for people, families are struggling financially. If the proposed changes are taken forward it will make it harder for families who will have to provide extra cost for transport to school. Or, parents who may have to make alternative work arrangements to get kids to school, which may affect income. Not all walking routes to school are safe or practical! Whilst it is the ideal to encourage walk/bike to school, not all children feel confident or safe to do this and not all parents are able to accompany them." (PARENT)
- "My 2 children will have to pay on public transport to get to and from school each. Time used for homework would be spent commuting on public transport." (PARENT)
- "My son has autism and attends a mainstream school. As off next year he will be in his final year of school. We are single parent family on benefits, with these changes under the current circumstances regarding the cost of living is going to have a big effect on on our household. And find that the council have not taken in to consideration the fact that (my area) is classed as a deprived area and doing this is not thinking of those who are already struggling." (PARENT)
- "I currently stay in Polmont and send my daughter to Graeme High School. This currently means I get free transport to school. My second daughter will be attending after the summer as well. Under your unsafe proposals my daughters will not get transport to school. This leaves me with a few options: 1. Pay for the transport myself which I see is just another stealth tax from the council onto of the brown bin situation. Increases in the cost of living, increase in council tax and additional stealth taxes are getting too much for people; 2. Drive my daughter to school, this is just adding more cars to the road and increasing my commute time for work. Removing free transport will add more traffic and congestion to the roads and will 100% encourage more people to drive their kids. On occasion when i have to pick my daughter up from the school the traffic around the school is awful and is just an accident waiting to happen; 3. Let my two daughters walk to school. The quickest way to get to the school would be down to the junction at Gransable road near the cemetery. This junction is not safe for lots of children walking to school, I know of taxi drivers that avoid that junction as it's so bad. The pavement down to this junction cannot support groups of children regardless of how good their road safety is. This journey is also going to take around 30minute to make. Avoiding this route would add at least 15minutes to the walk. Cycling is not an option as there are no good cycle paths around Polmont to take to the school. The safest way would be the canal which is not safe for a 12y/o girl in the dark. What is the councils definition of a safe route as this would need to be defined, I don't see there being a safe route at 08:00 or 15:30 for a little girl between Polmont and Graham High. Also with a young Scot card my daughter can get free public transport anywhere in Scotland with the exception of the bus to school?" (PARENT)
- "If kids can't continue to use their bud passes to get to and from school it's going to have a huge impact on parents/carers on low wages/benefits. People are already having to choose between eating and heating without this on top of it all." (PARENT)
- "My children would need to pay for the bus to school and also later to St Mungos. It seems odd to me when there are the free travel bus passes. It seems to affect most Catholic schools which may be further away." (PARENT)

- *"It would affect my 2 teenage children who currently get the bus to Denny High School. It's not fair to make our family pay for the bus transport. It's too far for my daughters to walk to Denny High from where we live and in winter weather (which lasts about 5 months)."* (PARENT)
- *"My child could potentially have to walk 1.7 miles to school from age 8 if the cost of the bus is unaffordable. The route from our home to the catchment school is over extremely busy roads, via Earls Gate roundabout. It is unreasonable to expect a primary age child to walk this dangerous route."* (PARENT)
- *"Children will be forced to walk in the dark and rain to school. The journey to St Francis Xavier's can be very isolating and put children at risk such as through Sunnyside Park. It is unacceptable that any financial obstacle is put in the way of a child attending school. This will put another financial pressure on families and have a negative impact on attendance and attainment. Doing this is NOT getting it right for a child."* (PARENT)
- *"I think the proposal needs to be changed to consider keeping it at the 2 miles for areas of deprivation. Families living within the lower quintiles are unlikely to have the additional income to pay for school travel and may not have their own transport. For those pupils who will have to walk 3 miles to and from every day it will no doubt negatively impact attendance. Getting good attendance from areas of deprivation is always challenging and this would be an additional barrier. I feel a review of the areas to be distance increased based on excluding the areas of most deprivation would be a more equitable than a blanket increase."* (STAFF)
- *"We stay 2 and a half miles away from my daughters school and to walk would take her a good 30 minutes crossing busy roads, we are going through a cost of living crisis so I really don't think extra costs to send our kids to school are going to help at all."* (PARENT)
- *"My son is in 4th year and takes a bus as it's outwith the catchment area. when we moved we didn't want to move him school so late in year especially with exams etc. He can get a school bus or first bus but I think if parents can afford to then they should pay for transport if not within a safe walking distance."* (PARENT)
- *"I look after my 2 grandkids who go to primary. The reason they get the school bus is that I am on crutches for I can hardly walk for pain in my knees and hips and spine. The bus is good for my 2 grandkids so they can get to school and back and it saves me taking them. I can't afford taxis all the time and the school bus is perfect for them. The kid's dad works night shift that why I put them to school and they get the bus home again. The kids are not very confident with the roads as they have only recently came to stay full time with their dad. The school bus is a good idea for them as it gives them some confidence and security for them going and coming home from school."* (GRANDPARENT)
- *"I am a single parent and that I have a daughter going to Denny high and it means she would have to walk the 2,8 miles to school as I couldn't afford to pay for bus pass. I work hard but it's enough the bills are high without an added bill of a bus pass"* (PARENT)
- *"We are struggling to pay bills as it is just now. This will certainly not help us financially. We couldn't afford the bus prices each day on top of school lunches. Certainly too far and not safe to expect a child age 12 to walk 6 mile round trip each school day. Especially in Scotland in the bad weather. We as a family don't have a car. We had to sell car due to financial hardship."* (PARENT)
- *"We live in an area that is not served by a school bus, and just miss the 2 mile cut off by 0.1 miles. I don't feel that walking along a canal, particularly in winter is a safe walking route therefore he already walks over a mile to the closest school bus stop. If I have to pay for my 2 children (previously £1 per journey), this adds about £80 per month onto my transport costs."* (PARENT)
- *"My high school age child currently qualifies for free transport and would lose this if the proposal went ahead. I cannot drive and public transport is limited. Nor do I have the money to finance public transport. My youngest child is also due to start school soon and will be affected by this proposal too."* (PARENT)
- *"We are exactly on the 3 mile mark from school to home. We would struggle to afford to pay for the bus if my daughter was allowed to use the school service and 3 miles is too far to walk along main road routes twice a day especially in winter months when it goes dark earlier."* (PARENT)
- *"We will have to take time out of work to commit to driving to and from schools meaning less money coming into the household and with the rising costs of living we couldn't afford to lose those hours and fork out for private hire."* (PARENT)
- *"I am fortunate that I am certain that paying won't be a problem however Bainsford/ Langlees was or still is an area under an area of regeneration and a lot of residents are not going to like or even be able to pay . This action is going to have a reverse on any sort of regeneration as parents that could be struggling to feed their families will not be sending their kids to school if they can't afford it."* (PARENT)

- *"This proposal expects children under 8 years of age to walk circa 4 miles a day, if their parents cannot afford to pay their bus fare or drive them to school. This comes at a time when household budgets have been stretched past their limits with minimal wage growth. One can only imagine how tired and distracted such children would be after walking such distances! Older children who would have paid fares will also need to be driven to school, should these changes be made. Walking 20 miles a week is not active travel; it is an arduous task! Falkirk Council argues that this change will yield environmental benefits. On the contrary, most parents will have no other option but to drive their children to school, increasing traffic on the roads, environmental pollution. The poorest children who will not be driven to school will have to walk in a polluted environment to school. It can be anticipated that lateness will increase, as a consequence of road traffic due to the number of cars which will be on the roads. This proposal is not environmentally friendly and mainly considers cost benefits; it will be detrimental to health and will pose more challenges to families. While it is prudent to ensure judicious use of funds available to The Council, it needs to review other projects which it plans to spend on, and reduce spending on expensive and perhaps over-bloated projects."* (PARENT)
- *"My two children would either have to walk to school or we fund public bus tickets, on an already overstretched bus service."* (PARENT)
- *"I am a teacher and am aware that many of my pupils who will be negatively impacted by this proposal most come from some of Falkirk's areas of highest deprivation. At a time when some of these families are already significantly challenged by the cost of living crisis, adding to their financial burden further with the cost of daily transport to school will undoubtedly result in attendance being affected."* (STAFF)
- *"I am a low income parent that is just over the cut off for free school meals. At current I have 3 children in primary 5,6 and 7. Paying for school meals is already a significant struggle for me and I am in £300 debt on ipay for the children that I am trying to pay back before my son starts high school in the summer but can't afford the meals some weeks so never seem to get anywhere. This is causing me a great deal of stress and worry. I really don't know where I can find the extra money to pay for the school bus as well as I really don't know of anything else we can cut back on as food and heating are struggle and costs are still rising."* (PARENT)
- *"When my child goes to high school we will need to pay for transport and with everything going up in price this will be hard to deal with."* (PARENT)
- *"Pupils on many areas cannot afford travel costs, areas of deprivation should be considered with this plan and those most affected be catered for."* (PARENT)
- *"Can't afford to get children to and from school with changes."* (PARENT)
- *"It does not personally affect me, but I can empathise with others that will be affected. This will put financial pressure on parents to pay public transport for their children when finances are already so tight in a cost of living crisis. Parents and their children are being penalised for their postcode."* (PARENT)
- *"My son would have no other realistic way of getting to school, other than paid transport, which would put yet further strain on family finances which have increased significantly over the last year. This would have a severe negative impact on our family."*
- *"I work with high tariff vulnerable young people & families who struggle with engaging with school life & learning. The impact of the proposal could have a negative impact on attendance for a young person & therefore attainment. The service of a school bus for the majority of young people & families helps to ensure young people attend school & attend on time. If this service is removed, for some that are under the x3 mile limit, it is likely to impact on the young person attending, particularly where families do not have the affordability to bring their child to school or the family is struggling to sustain attendance. At the moment some of the young people who attend my programmes are able to maintain consistency due to being transported to school by the school bus. In addition, the provision of transport to school offers young people important social time to spend with their friends, prior to starting their day & learning. With this removed some young people in areas could potentially fit in the criteria for travel, while others are then removed. This can massively impact on the social contact time for young people as they come to school & leave to go home. Young people in some areas will be divided who have received travel support before, to now have that removed & no longer be able to travel with their peers."* (OTHER)
- *"I live 3miles away therefore we would need to pay for our daughter to attend Denny high and also school dinners as we don't qualify for benefits so having to pay for transportation to and from school and don't know how we will manage to do so, don't want her attendance affected because we can't afford to send her to school."* (PARENT)

- "Change in free school transport could potentially affect my ability to send my children to school due to financial implications and being the sole earner in my household already receiving government assistance. This could potentially mean changing schools and there are no closer denominational school for children to walk to. This could in turn have a massive impact on my children's mental health and wellbeing due to stress caused by changing schools at such a pivotal stage in their education. This is shocking considering that Scotland and Falkirk council areas in particular have one of the highest number of children living in poverty in the country. This would only add to it having to fund school transport if the zones and rules change." (PARENT)
- "My child who attends Denny high lives 2.8 miles walking distance. This is over an hour walk! 4 months out of the year he would be expected to walk in the dark and leave the house at 7:20am. As a responsible parent I will not allow him to. There are no buses so do not have the option to pay for him to get a bus. The only other option is a taxi to and from school at a cost of £75 a week....something I cannot afford." (PARENT)
- "We live in the in between band of 2 to 3 miles and have a child with special support needs (but does not have private transport option), along with many many other children who live on the similar housing estate to us in the area. The buses that transport the children to school are always full and I think we would prefer to pay rather than have no bus option. Surely this will just increase parent car traffic which is bad for the environment and although the option to walk is a good one for health reasons the roads enroute see traffic speeding and the paths frequently narrow. Furthermore in cold weather the paths create more dangers for children so close to the roads. There must be other options and ways to progress this without the children being the ones that suffer for the financial reasons imposed by adults. This cannot be the legacy the councillors and people of Falkirk leave for future families. Please read 'How to be a good ancestor'. Let us reconsider, consult. Also important to note the wording of these changes makes it sound like the current bus situation will continue for children so I think many parents won't be coming forward . This is so very concerning." (PARENT)
- "My daughter would be affected by this as i don't drive and have no one to ask to take my daughter to school if the bus was to stop running. I myself have medical issues that would make it very difficult to walk her to and from school. I dont have the finances to pay for taxi's or the 25 pounds a week extra for the public bus, and if we were to walk witch I'm not able to do the routes we would have to take to get there well if it rains the main road gets flooded also its very dangerous strip of road as it's over grown and we would have to walk single file to even go down the path and some parts of the path you actually have to go out on the main road to get by the overgrowth, and also the back path floods as well which is just horrendous. I wouldn't let my 6 year old daughter go either of these ways on her own not to mention how early the kids would have to leave to get to school, the extra things they would have to take, clothes and boots in case they get wet if it's raining and flooded, and it would put my household costs up also as I would have more washing and drying to sort. I can barely afford to live at the moment in this house as the boiler systems are very very expensive to run. So yes this would have a huge impact on myself and my child cos if the bus stops my daughter just won't be going to school." (PARENT)
- "Extra cost to families changing the distance parameter. Impact on co2 emissions as increase in private car usage. Greater wear and tear to roads with heavier traffic, costing more for council road repairs. Street lights and pathways need to be better and potentially more road crossing/patrol to support children of all ages walking to schools. Will pathways be better gritted to allow people to walk safely when needed? Increased traffic going in and out of school and potentially more unsafe parked cars at school gates. Benefits would be saving to the council putting local firms out of business with less usage and higher cost to families already struggling families" (PARENT)
- "My daughter got the school bus to school and would have been affected by this change, it will also have a negative impact on the pupils I teach. It will lead to more poverty, lateness and missed education." (STAFF)
- "As the cost of living crisis is hitting us all hard. Free travel to school is a bit of a weight lifted off a lot of parent's shoulders. I can't afford to pay for school buses. I feel 2 miles is a long walk for kids on the cold, wet winter weather. It's busy with traffic and busy roads to cross." (PARENT)
- "I work and my children would need to start walking 4 miles to go school and home every day and in torrential rain and snow this isn't possible. I have 2 children and can't afford to pay bus fares there and back every day for them both on top of everything else." (PARENT)
- "Both of my son's live in the area where at the moment they get free school travel. With the increase in distance this is an extra cost which we cannot afford although we will not be entitled to any help with our household income our outgoings have increased so much and my children do not have a safe route



- to walk to school. This is not a cutback I feel the council should make and come up with other areas where cuts can be made without affecting families.” (PARENT)
- “I have 2 children one at primary and one in secondary school. If bus fare is £2 per day per child that would be £80 per month. I am on universal credit due to disability and it's not affordable for me.” (PARENT)
  - “I have 4 kids and also work so the cost of transport to school would be very high. My mum who helps look after my kids also doesn't drive.” (PARENT)
  - “If the distance is changed I think my son would no longer qualify for free school bus travel. This will take away the independence we are trying to allow him while adding more financial strain to our already stretched household budget.” (PARENT)
  - “I have nearly been refused free transport for my son who has severe asthma, We just moved back to our catchment area and we're delighted that he can take the bus and not suffer attacks every single morning but the council claimed we lived less than a mile away. When I argued this with proof they have finally agreed that our house is indeed more than a mile away and awarded him the bus pass for this year but not getting it any more would mean loss of income for our family by me needing to take nearly 2 working hours away from every day to be able to escort him to and from school and also him needing his reliever all the time because it's a very long uphill walk that takes him nearly half an hour in all weathers. I was in fact proposing to change the rule back to 1 mile for all primary kids! It's a postcode lottery as it is. We can't afford taxis and I don't have a car. School runs literally took over my entire life. Little ones can't walk unattended. Encouraging them to walk translates to forcing the parents to walk, have you considered the loss of income to families if you go ahead with this proposal?” (PARENT)
  - “Many of the children I teach travel to school by bus and would be adversely affected by this proposal. Many come from families who cannot afford additional transport costs, and who cannot afford to travel by car. They will be left without any option but to go to their nearest school, therefore depriving them of their right to catholic education.” (STAFF)
  - “I could not afford to pay for my children's bus fares. As a working single parent, I would be unable to accompany my children on the long walk to school so I would have to change their schools which would be detrimental to their wellbeing and education.” (PARENT)
  - “Personally I'm not affected but I know that I have friends that might have to move schools and spend extra money to buy uniform so that they can actually get to school. Imagine having to walk to school every day for 3 miles that would be a very long and hard walk, or to have to pay for a bus every day there and back would be quite expensive especially with rising electricity bills. 2 miles is already quite a walk but manageable depending on where about you have to walk and the conditions, but 3 miles is out of bounds to get to school on time and home before it gets dark in the winter nights.” (PARENT)
  - “My children currently use their young Scot card to travel between home and school. It is unclear whether this they will no longer be able to use their cards now. If they are not able to use them under the new proposals then they would need to pay for the bus or walk 1.8 miles which is the safest main road route (ie NOT walking through wooded area and canal). Assuming the bus would cost £1 each that could be £20 a week which is a considerable cost.” (PARENT)
  - “Already finding the pinch on costs and this is an added extra cost that I could do without” (PARENT)
  - “I sit exactly on the 3 mile mark however I am sure the council will make the criteria suit them to reduce the passes. I would feel very uncomfortable about my 11 year old daughters safety walking to and from school during dark morning and nights. We would be limited to public transport which would arrive at school after the start of the day or significantly early. Being early would incur additional financial costs so that she was able to have breakfast as there would be no time to eat prior to leaving for the earlier bus.” (PARENT)
  - “It would give me and many people I know a harder time to get home. I'm aware you have to raise money but this would affect many people. I don't have any strong arguments, yet I believe that we still need the buses.” (PUPIL)
  - “In the current climate it would put financial pressure on me being a disabled single parent. Also those in low incomes would be affected.” (PARENT)
  - “I have two daughters and won't be able to afford the extra cost alongside other bills and utilities of running a household alongside then adding in bus fare. It will put immense pressure and added stresses to finding another source of income when my partner and I already work full time jobs as it is.” (PARENT)

- *"My daughter attends Denny High. At this time she would still be able to get the bus, however I really need to move house to have an extra bedroom for a new baby. This proposal is massively affecting where I could get a house as there will be areas where I wouldn't be comfortable letting my daughter walk to school if it isn't an area where a bus would be accessible."* (PARENT)
- *"As a practising Catholic, I do not believe that the families of faith who often have to travel far to attend a Catholic should be penalised due to attending a faith school. Many of these families will struggle financially due to the increased cost in transport and may now have no option but to change their children to a secular school."* (PARENT)
- *"I want the school bus to stay and I can pay."* (PARENT)
- *"This change will have a negative impact on many children and their families. In addition will have a financial impact on families. The change will greatly impact children attending denominational schools and this change by the council seems to be focusing on penalising Catholic children attending their schools which is protected by legislation. Falkirk Council with this proposal are targeting Catholic families and putting financial barriers in place to prevent them from attending the denominational school."* (PARENT)
- *"This proposal will affect those Roman Catholic families like ours who choose to send our children to a denominational school. For the Larbert/Stenhousemuir families this is St Mungo's High School for secondary school. I have 2 children who attended both St Francis Xavier's (as there was no local Catholic school at the time) and St Mungo's High School in Falkirk. They both received free bus transport to/from school. If this was taken away it will be very difficult for families to pay for bus transport due to the current cost of life crisis - this would prevent them from fully fulfilling their faith within the family."* (OTHER)
- *"The increase of miles before qualifying for free transport will affect our pupils who travel to allow them to access their Catholic education. This is a right for every Catholic child and they should not have to pay to travel."* (PARENT)
- *"My children will have to cycle to school as it is too far away for them to walk, e.g. it will take more than 30 min to get to St Mungo's by bike. It will not be safe at all. It will be difficult to get to school during winter, I can't afford a taxi to get my children to school. Children will be tired after that journey to school, this will affect their ability to learn and do homework."* (PARENT)
- *"There are limited Catholic schools in Falkirk central area and children need to have safe access to these schools and providing transport is the best way to do so, also there are no direct public transports to these schools, the roads are too busy and schools are also in deprived areas and parents struggle financially."* (PARENT)
- *"This will severely impact on my ability to send children to school and also attend work. Financially for us the purchase of bus passes is not feasible and there is no safe route for children to walk to school. Having to walk to school over that distance would also impact on their overall learning and education. Impacts to health and safety are also a concern."* (PARENT)
- *"I have three girls at high school and I have been told that I stay 2.9 miles from the school so don't qualify for free travel. I cannot afford to pay this on top of the extra I am now paying for basics like gas and electricity also on top of that the hike in council tax may I remind you that it's one of the highest in Scotland."* (PARENT)
- *"In order to ensure both our children attend school (1 primary /1 high school) which is a legal requirement. We will have no option, in order to accompany our child to high school, my husband will no longer be able to work as he will be required to walk 4hrs a day to and from school twice. Our younger child will have to attend breakfast club at primary school which will involve an additional cost to ourselves. This will have a significant impact on our finances and our children's lifestyle."* (PARENT)
- *"It is unclear how we are affected as there is not enough information. My daughter is currently distance entitled and would not be. It is not clear whether the bus will still run or will be deleted. Similarly my son gets the Westquarter bus but is no longer distance entitled. Is this bus still going to run? We would be happy to pay for both to get the bus to school but can't be in two places at once. If the buses are simply removed there will be huge traffic congestion at school."* (PARENT)
- *"My child would need to take the public transport bus to school. These are irregular. There are three buses leaving Polmont for Graeme high. Majority would need to use public transport. No information is being provided on how this would work. How could the awful bus service cope with this demand? Their irregularity poses an issue for being on time for school. This is a shambolic idea - the free bus passes that kids would use is public money so no money is being saved, it's a case of whose pocket is coming from. We need more information about the detail and potential impact of This proposal"* (PARENT)

- *"I will have a 5 year old child in primary one who will need to get to school daily, it is not feasible for the level of vehicles which would now travel from the Reddingbank estate to take children to and from school that the bus currently takes. I am happy to pay for my child's bus fares however the removal of the bus would even remove this solution as there is no local bus that goes to the school." (PARENT)*
- *"No other mode of transport to get my daughter to school. Also the footpath from Letham to Airth is not exactly safe for primary school kids to be walking to school." (PARENT)*
- *"My daughter attends Catholic school, and there is no choice for me for any other Catholic school. In my opinion, this is discrimination against children who attends Catholic schools which are usually not within walking distance from their home. My daughter is in P2 right now. The distance from home to the school is just below 2 miles. There is no safe walking route for her! In my opinion, walking almost 2 miles 2 times a day, usually during rainy weather plus 6 hours that child is in school is too much for such a young person. If she is not entitled to free school transport, she'll be dropped at school by car. That causes worse traffic around the school, higher pollution and also, as you probably know, the school car park is very limited. I am sure that most parents will decide to drop their child at school by car." (PARENT)*
- *"If you remove the school bus service, it will be extremely difficult to get my children to and from school. They both have the under 22's free bus travel pass, however, I would be willing to continue paying (£1 each way per child as was the previous fare) for the coach company to provide a direct service to school. To use the service buses, would require 2 buses (one into Falkirk and another to the road passing the school). This would be inconvenient in regards to the length of time this would take, as well as impossible to guarantee their arrival at school on time or ability to get home. The current bus company regularly fails to deliver on its timetable and so my children would likely be regularly late to school." (PARENT)*
- *"Both my children would not be able to get to school or home safely from the Old Town to Beancross. We have no safe routes that my children would be able to walk. Beancross does not even have any crossing patrols never mind having to walk across Earlsgate roundabout and along many dangerous main roads with many lorries, tankers etc. Many others in the area would also be in the same situation being unable to get their children to and from school safely, the bus is well used and due to no closer schools since zetland primary was closed down many many years ago then bus is the only option - no direct bus routes from here to the school also using the normal local buses. The cost if living is also increasing at the moment too meaning it is also much higher than before. Instead of cutting all these bus services why not ask parents to apply or contact for bus passes if they are required.... That would save on postage and printing of bus passes for people who are not actually using these when entitled to. Saving a little I understand but at least keeping children safe and in education rather than being knocked down and killed on an hour walk to school and home, or just completely missing out on school attendance! Children shouldn't have to miss out for councils mismanagement of finances." (PARENT)*
- *"Would be unable to move if this change came into place. NEC cards would not cut it as no additional provision would be provided and would cause animosity between families in local communities." (PARENT)*
- *"For Braes High the only public transport close to school F25 runs only 2 hourly and goes only in one direction. Therefore no suitable public transport to take pupils to and from Braes High from the many small Braes communities which feed school. The removal of supported buses will increase the use of private cars to transport pupils. Those without own transport will face long walks or cycles in an area of narrow roads which as name of school suggests is in area of hills. Many pupils may in times of bad weather miss going to school. For those who may walk will increase footfall on busy Shieldhill Road. An option is to make a charge for pupils who are over 2 miles from home to pre purchase tickets/tokens which allow them to travel on school buses, as the drivers do not take fares. The change in free transport should be on a school by school basis. Also remove Catholic schools and only have non denominational schools which will avoid pupils travelling to schools outwith their home area. I went to Catholic secondary school in Edinburgh and had to travel half across Edinburgh when I had 2 other secondary on close proximity." (PARENT)*
- *"My children will go to Denny High School when they are older. Possible walking routes from our current house are at least 1 hour if not more, along many roads that I would not deem safe for pedestrians, especially in winter, such as the Drove Loan. There is no public service bus that connects High Bonnybridge to Denny High meaning they will either have to get on multiple buses to and from school (the bus route planner is suggesting 3 different buses for the journey) or again face a lengthy walk to a bus stop, then the bus, then another lengthy walk. They are also then at the hands of the public bus times meaning they could be in school long before their peers or face a substantial wait after school."*

*As a mother of a child awaiting diagnosis of additional support needs and a mother of a daughter I do not feel that would provide my children with safe travel to and from school.” (PARENT)*

- *“We rely on the school bus as there is no other form of public transport available. The school bus also allows me to start work on time, otherwise I would incur breakfast club expense (and there isn't enough spaces at the breakfast club), or taxis.” (PARENT)*
- *“My son will have 2 get 2 buses to school, one of which is only every hour.” (PARENT)*
- *“I have pupils who would not be able to attend school if there were no longer a school bus service. It is ridiculous to think that children should travel into the centre of town and get a further bus. I believe the bus service in Falkirk is not up to scratch so it could take the children a disproportionate amount of time to travel to and from school and I doubt they would make continued efforts to get to school. That then lends itself to more poverty and unemployment within your council.” (STAFF)*
- *“The route which my child would need to take to go to school would take her over 1hr and there is no public transport which goes from near our house to the school therefore I would need to transport my pupil to school myself which would have an impact on my work timings, and I am a teacher.” (PARENT)*
- *“The Scottish Government have invested in the Scottish Youth by providing free bus travel throughout Scotland. It seems madness therefore to exclude School travel from this entitlement. There is no alternative bus route between Larbert and St Mungo's High School therefore this would unreasonably add a huge amount of private cars onto the roads during an already very busy peak period. The effect on the environment would be completely unacceptable in the middle of a climate crisis.” (PARENT)*
- *“Our child has to get to Braes High School, which is just over 2 miles. This proposal would prevent my child getting the bus, and there is no credible public transport. My child has a (physical condition) making walking more difficult. The main road has a lot of traffic moving at speed making it dangerous to cross, particularly in winter when it is darker. My child is also ASD so not always aware of risks. This proposal would make it more dangerous and difficult for my child to get to school.” (PARENT)*
- *“My two children will now have now easy way to get to school. Their options are being taken in the car or a service bus and hanging about for around 30 minutes before and after school. Taking the car is clearly not environmentally responsible and the service bus would increase their safety risks.” (PARENT)*
- *“It is likely to increase lateness to school, therefore impacting their attendance. This can impact the mental health of some pupils as their anxiety levels are likely to increase. If they are going to rely on public transport to get them to school then if and when it doesn't show, then they may choose just not to attend. This again is going to increase absenteeism. Which in turn will increase anxiety levels. The above will affect attainment in St Mungo's as it highly dependent on school buses to get the majority of pupils to school.” (PARENT)*
- *“We live under the 3 mile cut off but have no form for public transport that travels near the school from our village. Public transport is very unreliable up our way. I feel proposing a fee for a bus pass or to travel on a school bus is absolutely reasonable. I wouldn't feel happy about my son walking to and from school.”*
- *“My children would have to walk to High School during all seasons. My daughter currently walks and also takes the bus when the weather is bad. We stay 1.5 miles from the school and having the school bus enables my kids to have the option. With normal bus services also being cut they would have no options left other than to walk in all weathers .” (PARENT)*
- *“We live in Grangemouth by using google maps we are 3.8miles from the school. The new proposals should not affect us but it all depends on how miles are calculated. If it means there will be no school buses available my daughter would have to use public transport. There is no public transport that takes her straight to school. Public transport has deteriorated over the last few years as well. As with everything it will be the poorest that this affects.” (PARENT)*
- *“My child is due to start high school and we live in a rural area near Denny with no public transport . The transport of taxis to and from school is essential.” (PARENT)*
- *“My teenage daughter will be unable to safely get to school within a reasonable amount of time. There are no direct bus routes to St Mungo's.” (PARENT)*
- *“My youngest child who will be 7 by August 2023 will no longer be able to travel to school with the school bus. The ‘safe’ route to school involves crossing a very busy road with a 30mph speed limit and no crossing patrol in place. However, I regularly witness vehicles travelling over the speed limit on this road. My oldest child who will be almost 11 in August 2023 has an NEC card. However there is no public transport bus stop for either child to use near to our home. Should I take my children to school*

- in our own vehicle this only adds to the already heavily congested road way at the school and no doubt cause further annoyance to the residents in the street." (PARENT)*
- *"This would mean the safety of children travelling to and from Falkirk High are at risk. I have 2 children currently using the bus service and 1 to use it in the future. This service changes would effectively mean no school service would run where we live. It would mean that times for work starting and children leaving on time would clash. This would potentially mean that children would be left to go to school late if there is no room on public buses and also one of my children currently have health concerns and is unable to walk long distances. We do not currently mention this as a disability but if these changes come in, we will go to get a medical certificate to put forward to Falkirk council for private taxi service to and from school as proposed." (PARENT)*
  - *"Both my children will be unfairly disadvantaged by the proposals. Our house to their high school is 1.9 miles, a 40 minute walk each way along main roads and crossing with no crossing patrollers present. Taking the school bus means he is not walking in the dark (mornings or evenings), arrives home with time and energy to do their home work and attend clubs. They were paying to use this service before being allowed to us their bus passes. If they walk to and from school, they will be exhausted. They won't be able to carry heavy musical instruments all that way either. The proposals are unfair and will adversely affect my children, especially as there is no public transport links to the high school from where we live available to use." (PARENT)*
  - *"Pupils at the school may not have a safe route to walk to school. Buses are not regular and pupils may be left waiting in bad weather. Pupils carrying PE equipment and musical instruments will have to carry these to walk to school. Pupils will have to walk home in the dark in the winter months. Public buses may get very busy in the mornings and when pupils are coming home and not allow some pupils on. This will cause safety issues. Parents will drive their pupils to school adding to an already busy car park and possibly leading to accidents. The extra traffic on the road will cause more damage to the environment." (PARENT)*
  - *"I could lose my transport, and would have to rely on a train because the public bus doesn't arrive on time where I live." (PUPIL)*
  - *"1 Public transport bus is only available for my daughter to make school on time unless we send her for a bus at 07.50 in the morning. Also at night she will not be able to attend some of her after school activities as they align with school drop offs, which again will now be affected as we don't know when she will get home as public buses will be very busy / full and I'm not sure what time buses are." (PARENT)*
  - *"I have 3 children at Graeme High School, including one with additional support needs and does not have a transport provision. The walk from the St Margaret's area of Polmont where we and many other Graeme students live would mean large numbers of students navigating the narrow pavement down Salmon Inn Road and crossing the notorious junction at Grandsable with no traffic lights or crossing to do so safely. This is an inevitable accident waiting to happen. If there were frequent, reliable public buses this would not be such an issue but this is not the case. One public bus will not hold all of these children and the service on this stretch of road is frankly terrible. Buses regularly do not turn up." (PARENT)*
  - *"No bus services at all. No public transport runs to Graeme High. My kids pay/use young Scot card so a bus service should be provided. Are you going to put lights in Callander park woods for kids walking in the winter. Just think this is a cost saving gone to far to be honest, no thoughts at all. Get rid of free bus pass but you need to keep a school bus service." (PARENT)*
  - *Unable to travel to school, there is no local alternative public service that can be used therefore we will need to drive which isn't particularly environmentally friendly. I don't believe that the walking route is safe and on days where weather is poor my daughter would need to sit in wet clothes during lessons.*
  - *"My son suffers from ill health and would not be able to walk over 4 miles each day (to and from school) this is really concerning that the children are being targeted yet again. I am furious to say the least. My child attended Langlees primary and it was the council who stipulated that Falkirk High school is our catchment school whereas Larbert High school is actually nearer. In fact St Mungos is the nearest. If you are going to put these proposals into place then I think you need to make St Mungos the catchment high school for those of Bainsford and Langlees irrespective of what faith/religion pupils are. The public bus services in Falkirk are ridiculous, don't run on time or don't run at all, there is no direct route to Falkirk High , would mean at least 2 buses, late for school, interrupting class work. Where's closing the attainment gap now and getting it right for every child? This proposal is far from getting it right. The traffic on the roads is downright dangerous as it is, crime is high and you expect my child and other children to walk the route from Falkirk High School, cross extremely busy roads - no lollypop ladies,*

walk up the side of a canal, slippery, no CCTV, perverts and paedophiles about and then cross an extremely busy part of the road at the befeater. Then let's look at winter, pavements are never gritted, my child could fall, serious accident and then think how many people would sue the council then. Also in extremely bad weather, rain, snow and wind - if my child actually did make it to school in one piece they are then going to be sitting around all day in wet clothes - hypothermia in the extremely cold days and won't heat up due to windows open in school and non-existent heating (also ridiculous rule about blazers and coats - only allowed to wear a blazer in class which will be saturated, not allowed to wear coats need to take them off) and then get home and parents can't afford to have heating on - lung problems etc resulting in many visits to doctors etc - an already crippled NHS. Parents in Bainsford and Langlees will just not bother sending their child to school - impacting on their education, unable to get qualifications, unable to get a job, families never get out of the vicious circle of poverty. Increase of benefits being claimed, crippling the benefit system, increase in poor mental health as unable to get out of the bit. CHILDREN HAVE RIGHTS and I think this proposal by FC is not in the best interests of the child." (PARENT)

- "My daughter currently uses school transport to get to school using a school bus card. I think we may live just under 3 miles from her school (2.9) and this is too far to walk, especially with a ridiculously heavy school bag, in the dark and in extremely bad weather. I don't drive so we rely on public transport. The public bus service (x38) is only a 5/10 min walk away but is unreliable and does not have the capacity for all the school children who will now need it. The bus service is even busier on the way home so again there isn't the capacity for all the children to use the x38 to come home. I am worried my child (and my youngest child who will move to this school in the future) will miss out on education due to unreliable public transport." (PARENT)
- "Under the proposal my daughter would have to use public transport from Bonnybridge to travel to Denny. As there is only one available bus route and given its route the likelihood is that the bus will be full before even reaching any of the available stops. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that numerous children will be late for school on a regular basis, or they may not attend at all with parents having already left for work at this time. How will the Council explain to the Scottish Government that their attendance levels and ultimately attainment levels have dropped massively due to a short sighted and potentially damaging decision to the children of this area." (PARENT)
- "I am not directly affected by this proposal as we are over 3 miles and my child is still entitled to free bus. However my understanding is that it's not just that living under the 3 miles means you have to pay but that there will be no bus available for the children at all. As there is no direct bus from Greenhill to Denny the children would have to take 2 buses having to walk in between to get the second OR walk from Greenhill to Denny. I presume the council think the 'safest' route they expect our children to walk is up Drove Loan. Have you seen how narrow the pavement is for the number of children who will be walking this route and the speed, number and size of vehicles which use this route not what I would deem the safest. Also what time in the mornings the children would need to leave is ridiculous. The extra time for both there and back makes for a very long day."
- "My daughter's will be affected by the current proposal, they will be required to walk or attempt to get a spot on the only unreliable bus that runs from Bonnybridge to Denny cross. By the time it has reached her pick up stop the bus will be full as currently the bus is almost full with no increase in the users never mind once more people are required to use the service, therefore if she can't get that once an hour bus she will be required to walk which will mean she will be late after waiting on the bus only to be denied a seat. The walk long it may be, will also be treacherous in winter and dark at the time my daughter will be required to leave the home, the route suggested was last assessed for safety in 2009, since then the population has grown the amount of people and cars on roads has increased however the council feel the assessment from 2009 is still acceptable to use, will it take a fatality before this route is deemed unsafe, it's not wide enough! The pavement narrows the further up Drove loan you walk to the point where it is hardly wide enough for 1 person, and what happens if you have someone walking in the other direction, someone will be forced onto the road to get passed. I have another daughter at primary who I am able to drive to school however I won't be able to drive both and get to work on time, so what do I do - drop my high school child at school at 8 am? Will the school be opened early to accommodate children that perhaps will have to arrive considerably early? And what about the increased traffic on an already overly used route, and the increased emissions due to running of more cars. The much anticipated DEAR road designed to alleviate the heavy congestion is still to be commenced, almost 18 years after its initial idea, so we can be sure that this can't be relied upon to help with congestion, not only that, the school bus is safe for children where only school children can get on, my daughter will have to get on a public bus with god knows who and exposed to all sorts without any adult looking out

for her, we are continually reminded on the news of females being attacked by predators. These are usually grown women, yet we are placing young vulnerable children in danger by having no chaperone on buses or asking them to walk considerable distances. It's impossible to have every child chaperoned to school by an adult we have commitments such as work, but even if we didn't, how do you propose I get two children to school at different schools in different towns both for 9am walking or driving, it's not possible, driving would again mean my oldest would be at school at 8am." (PARENT)

- "There is not a suitable and safe walking or cycling route to school from/to Polmont, so a bus is the only viable option. The junction at Salmon Inn Road with Polmont Road is very difficult to use and there are often accidents there as you will already be aware of. The footway widths on Salmon Inn Road are also a substandard and there is a concern that overcrowding, particularly at the foot of Salmon Inn Road, could lead to accidents there if there are lots of pupils gathering there. The existing service bus frequency is insufficient to allow pupils to use them too. If it's a cost saving exercise, then why not ask parents to contribute to the travel instead?" (PARENT)
- "We live in Allandale which is not in a safe walking route and is more than 3 miles to school. One of the proposed services is the Allandale bus. There is a limited and unreliable bus service for Allandale. If this service is withdrawn this will affect the attendance of both my children at Denny High School due to lack of transport and parents not always available to transport/pick up potentially leaving them either stuck at home or at school." (PARENT)
- "Children from villages such as Banknock, Haggs and Longcroft do not have a reliable public bus service to commute to Denny and not everyone has a car." (PARENT)
- "I feel this would ultimately be detrimental to children's engagement in education as of adequate transportation links are not provided this will discourage children from attending if their parents are unable to take them. It also raises safety concerns for me as I do not feel there is adequate infrastructure (suitable paths, road crossings, traffic calming measures, etc) in place to make the journey safe for my children to get to school from my house without a transport option"(PARENT)
- "I would need to walk to school and take risks when crossing roads and it would result in me taking public transport which can impact my learning and my attendance which in future can affect my work life as my future employers may be concerned about absence this could also result in me taking public transportation which could put me in danger as the people in the public bus may be a threat to school children." (PUPIL)
- "The number of children in our setting entitled to school transport would drop. This proposal disproportionately affects children who attend Catholic schools and makes it harder for them to access a Catholic education which is something that they are entitled to if they so choose. The routes proposed as safe walking routes are not safe for primary children to walk and place children at greater risk. The added time onto each child's day will be difficult for young children to manage." (STAFF)
- "You cannot expect primary school children to walk 1+ miles to and from school on their own. Especially when they either need to walk by a main road that cars do not stick to the speed limit, or they need to walk through a woodland area that even I as an adult don't feel comfortable walking through. My daughter who is 8 uses the bus, I'd happily pay a cost for her to use the bus, but to get rid of it altogether is outrageous." (PARENT)
- "I have a 5 year old who would either have to walk along a 60mph road or through woods to get to school he would have to leave at 8.15am every morning to be there on time he suffers with bad asthma and is affected in the winter and summer with it, the bus that currently picks the children up from Letham is large bus that's not needed. A mini bus or large taxi would be more economic, regardless what transport is in place the Council cannot expect kids to walk from Letham to Airth primary or Larbert high as it's not safe and therefore would have to also put in more crossing patrols for, which is more or less going to cost the same as running transport." (PARENT)
- "I have two children who attend high school and they get the bus to school and back from school. Surely getting the bus is better sustainable alternative than driving children to school. Additionally, does the legislation not put the duty on the council to provide services to educate my children. I think the bus would be considered an essential service here. Is it also a statutory requirement to ensure my children get to school safely? I think more should be done encourage kids to travel bus etc instead of reducing services and increase costs." (PARENT)
- "My child will be starting high school in August, the roads from our house to the school are very fast and very busy - I don't feel it is safe for her to walk. She intended getting the school bus. I appreciate the need to reduce costs, but not at the expense of our children's safety." (PARENT)
- "There is no safe walking route for my children from Fankerton. I have transport for three kids one to St Patrick's and two older kids who get transported to Denny to get the bus to St Modan's."

- *"Myself and my daughter are both very active and I always encourage physical activity and outdoor time. When I am able to supervise my child she walks, cycles or I jog to school with her in a trailer. However, when I'm at work and not able to supervise her to and from school she uses the school bus.*
- *The reason for this is there are several roads in Larbert that I really feel are often unsafe for kids to cross, there is often no "safe route" and there is no one employed near St Bernadette's to help kids safely cross roads. There have been several incidents in Larbert/Stenhousemuir of people being knocked down. I feel it's important to give my children freedom and responsibility but risks have to be assessed. Both walking routes from my house to St. Bernadette's involve crossing Tryst Rd, a very busy road with no traffic lights. I don't think the proposed changes will increase kids cycling or walking to school unless measures are taken to make road crossing safer for pedestrians in the area. I don't drive so am always on foot either walking or running so am extremely familiar with crossing roads in this area and how dangerous it can be. My daughter is mature for her age but I don't feel all 8 yr olds would feel confident to cross roads such as Tryst Rd. I feel the proposed changes will simply result in more people using cars to drop and collect children from school, which will be worse for pollution and traffic problems. Also worth considering that often school uniforms are not designed in quick-drying, active wear fabrics. Pupils will not often have time to get changed once reaching school and this is another barrier to pupils choosing to walk, run or cycle to school." (PARENT)*
- *"My son attends Denny High School and without knowing how a safe walking route will be assessed it is impossible to know if I will be affected by this proposal. As a working single mother I get none of the cost of living support available to parents who are having money thrown at them via Household Support Funds, Scottish Child Payments, free school meals and clothing grants, bridging payments etc." (PARENT)*
- *"My children would lose entitlement to the service however we no safe walking route to the school for the first part of the journey as there is no pavements or street lighting as we live rurally." (PARENT)*
- *"Means my children won't be attending school as there is no safe way for my kids to walk to school as one way has a road that is 60mph and paths not maintained, and second way is through woods where strangers walk plus road floods every time it rains and I'm not giving them a change of clothes each day to get to and from school - that's more money I need to put in power as I'll have more washing and more power to dry as I stay in a no gas area and I'm paying 30 pound a day just now to keep my kids clean and warm." (PARENT)*
- *"We've no safe option to walk to school as there are no pavements as we live in the country. It's a very fast road they would have to walk with no pavements and they also would have to walk the farm road first. I don't see how young children could be expected to do this." (PARENT)*
- *"There is no safe walking route for a young child from where we live. Lots of housing estates and main roads and crossings (not school crossing patrols). On busy roads where cars drive very fast. The bus has been life changing. Losing the bus service would increase my petrol costs and pollution because I would be forced to take the car. This would also affect my ability to work." (PARENT)*
- *"This affects our current work massively. My wife and I are both essential government employees and current school transport gives us a lot of flexibility either side of the school day to negotiate work commitments. Like many, our child is too young to walk alone/with friends unsupervised to school and back so you are forcing ourselves and hundreds, possibly thousands of parents/carers alike to drive their kids to school. This also, in turn, will have a huge environmental effect having this volume of vehicles travelling to and from each school instead of buses. This also poses a further safety risk to kids who are walking and pedestrians alike. Can I also add that the village of Westquarter often comes to a standstill as it is just now never mind with this increase. My wife and I have personally been victim to many instances of 'road rage' in this area at school times. Under your proposal, my child would have to cross an open waterway over a single lane bridge with little pavement, a very busy main road and two other roads which are busy at these times. We have no option but to find some alternative transport which as mentioned would affect work. Speaking from experience of having family members with disabilities, you are also disadvantaging disabled parents. You are forcing such parents who cannot walk with their children to school to drive to school. That is, of course, assuming that such parents are able to drive and have access to a vehicle. If neither apply, how are these kids to attend school? I have no suggestions to alternative budget saving for Falkirk Council. I am, however, under the opinion that the Scottish Government is severely underspending. They have no financial transparency nor the willingness to let any independent body investigate this. It's my opinion that all Councils should be funded appropriately to operate as they are and have been, and not to sacrifice the standards currently set for our children's safety and wellbeing. Why should our children pay for a government spending deficit?" (PARENT)*



- *"Increased traffic around the Bantaskine area - already way too much & has been raised with Council. No safe walking routes from Tamfourhill as no safe crossing on Windsor Road. No safe walking routes from Langlees other than up the canal? Westburn Avenue already clogged on school days, no safe place to park there to drop kids off No cycle lanes on any of the roads around these schools. No safe crossing of Glenfuir Road on way up from Camelon. We would urge the council to stop putting our kids lives in danger to alleviate the financial situation regarding the budget deficit."*(PARENT)
- *"My 14 yr old daughter is in 3rd year at Denny high school. We live around the 3 mile mark from the school. There is NO SAFE walking route to the school for my daughter. It would take over an hour to walk on an unsafe route, parts of the paths are not wide enough, in the winter paths are not adequately lit and unwalkable as not gritted."* (PARENT)
- *"Grandson lives in greenhill and there is no safe way to walk to school (aged 5)."* (GRANDPARENT)
- *My concerns centre on the children and families it would affect. Our catchment's area of highest deprivation (is the area affected by this proposal). The majority of the children and families we support through our pupil equity fund come from (this area) and use school transport. Using SIMD one of the biggest areas of inequality is transport as the transport links for (this area). Many of the families affected do not have a car in their household and the 1.5 mile walk is as far as I am aware either alongside a busy 60 mile road or through a dirt track through a field and woods. This is simply not feasible for 5,6,7 or 8 year olds in my opinion. This would impact on my current role of responsibility for transport and aspects of the PEF fund in our school.* (STAFF)
- *"I drive along Ronades Road which is very busy and parking at St Francis is extremely busy. Changing bus distance could put even more cars on the route and trying to get parked making things more congested. With the two schools so close together the traffic bottlenecks so this will worsen with more cars. I sometimes walk to school and there are no pedestrian crossings which is a concern at best of times on such a busy road without more cars adding to this."* (PARENT)
- *"My children currently get the school bus home. The bus provides essential transport to and from school. It allows the children to have independence and reduced congestion at the school. Westquarter PS has no capacity for all children to be taken to school by cars, bearing in mind some parents are working and rely on the bus provision to facilitate their working hours. The roads are busy main roads that are poorly lit in winter. I would not allow my children to walk the 1.8 miles to school. The bus provision has already been an issue for the school this year which I raised with the local MSP regarding bus capacity. Our children should not be affected by council budget cuts."* (PARENT)
- *"My child is P2 - there is no safe walking route as far as I am concerned. The route has ridiculous amounts of traffic and at a distance of just over 1.5 miles is excessive for a primary school child to walk in all weathers twice a day. It's also not practical for parents who work to accompany a small child to school by foot therefore the alternative is using cars which puts means additional traffic. The kids & parents have had enough disruption through the last few years between Covid and strikes without throwing this into the mix."* (PARENT)
- *"My son would have no choice but to walk a particularly treacherous route via the Drove Loan, Dennyloanhead as we live in high Bonnybridge. There would be a very real risk of being hit by cars, particularly on dark mornings."* (PARENT)
- *"I always have to pay bus fare as didn't meet the criteria. However my concern is that the bus wouldn't be provided for my area? The 'safe' walking route in my opinion isn't safe I wouldn't walk it myself as an adult far less let my primary age child walk it. I rely on the bus to bring my children home and also to take children to school when I need to work from the Office. Congestion around our schools is horrific. If these buses are removed it will be absolutely ridiculous levels."* (PARENT)
- *"It will affect my children going to and from school, as a parent I rely on the bus service for my children to go to school. Also my oldest is due to start high school and I do not agree that my child would be safe walking to Grahame High School from my home. In the winter time it will be even more dangerous! I DO NOT agree with this proposal, surely this cannot happen!"* (PARENT)
- *"Our daughter is 12 years old and currently is allowed a taxi to and from school, shared with other children. Our house is not on a bus route and my daughter could only access a bus stop by either going up an unlit road with no pavement or down a narrow pavement in close proximity to the canal, neither of which I would consider safe options."* (PARENT)
- *"As a member of staff at one of the schools affected by the proposed change, my view is that it would have a significant impact on our young people and families who are already impacted by deprivation and poverty and this move would provide further challenges to attendance. Additionally, the routes pupils would be required to walk during winter could pose a risk to themselves on busy pathways and roads."* (STAFF)

- "Walking route to Denny high is not safe especially walking up the Drove Loan pavement – it is not wide enough and not properly lit and not safe enough to have that amount of children walking especially winter mornings." (PARENT)
- "My son would have to walk all the way through Bonnybridge High Street, through Dennyloanhead, and up Drove loan. This is clearly not a safe passage." (PARENT)
- "There isn't a route that I would be happy for my kids to walk to school on a daily basis, particularly in the winter when it would be dark." (PARENT)
- "My child once going to high school will no longer be able to get a bus and expected to walk 3 miles to school from Bonnybridge to Denny and there is no safe walking route from Bonnybridge to Denny and especially in the winter months." (PARENT)
- "Pupils in my class will now be expected by the council to walk to class via a 'safe walking' route. However, many of these routes would not be safe and would take a significant amount of time. This will result in many more parents driving their children to school. The roads around our school are already highly congested and this will only worsen." (PUPIL)
- "My Son may have to walk 3 miles to school and back next to extremely busy and dangerous roads, I think it's a ridiculous expectation." (PARENT)
- "So my child would be expected to walk up an extremely busy road in the morning to get to school and at night to get home since breakfast and after school clubs are now limited due to more budget cuts." (PARENT)
- "This is just really unfair. We are hard working parents - we pay our way in tax and council tax - but squeezing us more for a service that has been the lifeblood of allowing parents to run a working life, is seriously unfair. We are 2.7 miles from the school - how can you expect us to be ok for that. It's the only catholic school in our vicinity yet we get penalised. You want me to make my child to walk or cycle along a dangerous stretch of road, during the darker nights season? Come on. How much do you fork out on taxis for people that abuse the system - and here again is another policy to squeeze families." (PARENT)
- "Son would require dropping off at school for his own safety, which in turn means taking his 2 siblings with ASN out of their routine to do so. Technically there is not a fully safe walking route without crossing very busy especially at the times of day to cross and walking through the woods on a dark winters morning I think not" (PARENT)
- "No safe route for my child to get to school, and in winter it's too dark to leave as early to walk and return....Also i dont feel safe for them to cross the amount of busy roads and it would make it longer to go via other routes....no direct safe walking route from Polmont." (PARENT)
- "I have three children at two schools, none are eligible for free bus travel from the local authority but all use the designated school buses to travel to and from school. If the distances are changed then the availability of these school buses may also be altered. The walks to both schools by the shortest routes possible are not safe. They are along the main roads through Falkirk at some of the busiest times of the day. There are few places to cross safely and too many sets of roadworks set up randomly which can change the route completely. We must keep our children safe, at all times." (PARENT)
- "My children live two and half miles from the school by the shortest walking route. This would take 50 minutes, take them through an industrial estate, along the canal, and through a public park. This is unrealistic and unsafe." (PARENT)
- "I am concerned about the potential negative impact on pupil attendance, attainment (if attendance is impacted, or school roll decreased as a result which could have potential impact on curriculum offering), pupil safety (safe walking routes to school, length of journey and having to walk past other schools), and traffic congestion and the environment at the point of pick-up and drop-off." (PARENT)
- "My daughter would be forced to walk 3.2 miles from our house, along a very dangerous busy road to get to school and then do the same back again. There is only a very narrow path on one side of the road as you come out of Torwood, it is a busy main road of 50mph."
- "I just miss the cut off so when my children go to high school, they are going to have an hour walk to and from school. It's very unsafe for them and primary children. A lot of parents are going to have to give up work as I know my own employer will not allow me to change my hours." (PARENT)
- "My daughter would lose her entitlement to free bus transport to school and would have to walk. This is through a busy town and along extremely busy roads... far too dangerous for a young girl to walk especially on winter days when it's not light until after school starts and is dark as it finishes. She would have to walk through the 'bleach fields which as you may be aware are dark and badly lit and although

- used by many are still terrible rutted and badly potholed which poses another danger for her. The bus pass is imperative for her safety." (PARENT)
- "We live a 40min walk from Braes High School with many main roads and crossing points. While this isn't the worst in the summer for the kids, having to walk in the dark in the winter over these main roads is ridiculous. It also allows the school bullies free time to cause trouble with other children while walking (this has already happened and it's a long way to be away from home attacked by other trouble makers). Having the bus travel allows my kids to get to school safely and allows me to go to work-to earn money - to pay Council tax. My children should be entitled to free school travel since you hand out free travel/taxi's to those who's parents cannot be bothered to work without complaint!" (PARENT)
  - "I have one child on s3, another about to go into S1 and a primary 5 child who will go to Braes. It is imperative we know they have a safe way to travel home. The roads home are not pedestrianised all the way and there are multiple busy and dangerous junctions where they have to cross." (PARENT)
  - "Daughter will need to walk to school via busy road that has already seen some terrible accidents. My daughter will not be safe." (PARENT)
  - "I think getting to children to school safely is the main priority. Right now, the speed at which cars travel on the roads here, I wouldn't allow my 11-year-old to walk to school herself. I don't even allow her to walk to the bus, as its too dangerous crossing the road at Gilston Crescent Polmont in the am. Also buses cut down on the need for more cars on the road and is better for our environment." (PARENT)
  - "I have a child starting school in August and the walk to school isn't safe. There is a busy main road to cross with no safe way to cross. Traffic lights would need to be installed as there are a lot of children who use this route from my estate." (PARENT)
  - "Children will have to walk from Shieldhill where only one side of the road for part of the way which single pavement, which is on the main road where the speed limit is 40mph large groups of children all walking on the pavement at the one time. Pavement is not wide at certain parts and concerns for children's safety walking near such a busy road." (PARENT)
  - "If this proposal comes into action i will no longer receive free school transport to Graeme High School as i have done the last five years. This implementation would take place in August 2023 whilst i join S6 and my brother joins S4 – these are two crucial learning years for us. We live 2.1 miles from the school. The walk to school is across many busy and main roads. This is dangerous. Not to mention the fact that most of the time in Falkirk it is pouring or freezing. Leaving us attending school ill. I have (a medical condition) and this would heavily effect my quality of life. Our parents work and are not available to bring us to school in mornings or pick us up. Walking in the morning would mean us being late for school. Which our school policy is very strict against. After school i have timings worked out for after school clubs and work that would be affected if I had to walk home from school. I understand this proposal would be to save money but i feel it had more negative consequences. If implemented in august, nights are becoming dark and eventually so will mornings too. Our school uniforms are black. This leaves us invisible to drivers in the dark. I do not wish to lose my life in a situation that does not need to be necessary." (PUPIL)
  - "There would be no school bus for us to use. Even if not eligible we would pay for our children to use the bus as they get older. My children need to cross a couple of road, one of which is very busy in order to walk to school. The after-school club is held in another school and my son uses the bus to get there on the days I work. I'm concerned about high school and how we would manage that in the future if there is no school bus." (PARENT)
  - "There are not enough safe routes and Pedestrian crossings for the children to get home safely. Public transport is also really poor. Therefore, the children will be put in danger if this is to go through. With government over the years pushing both parents out to work, where do they think parents have the time to walk their children to and from school. And if they drive them then this leads to more congestion on the roads, and a higher chance of accidents especially around the school drop of points." (PARENT)
  - "I live 3.1 miles from Larbert high school but can find no specific details that tell me how the distances are calculated. My road is not listed on the list of affected streets however the road where the bus picks my daughter up is listed. There is a walking route to school however it is a very narrow footpath along a 60mph road and much of that path has no streetlights. Cars and lorries regularly mount the pavement and the road floods regularly along the footpath and there is no other route. It floods on the side of the footpath and cars swerve around. As an adult I am fearful of that walk. Making children do that walk with such a narrow path, no street lights for winter and 60mph traffic is ridiculous. In addition to the road speed, it is bordered by remote wooded areas. It is NOT a safe walking route." (PARENT)

- *"This would mean that my young daughter would have to walk 2 miles to school. This is not only dangerous in the winter months as the sun is setting very early and she would be walking to school in the dark. This is absolutely unacceptable."* (PARENT)
- *"My 7 and 5 year old will have to walk home and whilst there are crossings, it is a very busy road and another pupils parent has actually been run over while crossing this crossing with their pram while it was a green man and safe to walk! I would be terrified for my kids on their own."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter is due to start St Mungo's high school in August 2023 we currently stay 2.7miles from the school and therefore come August wouldn't qualify for free travel however a school friend that stays 3/4 min walk will as they reach the 3miles. There is no safe route for my daughter to walk to school and in fact would take 1 hour 30 mins to walk there and the same back. This would mean she would need to leave around 7am (in the dark) and won't be home until around 5-5.30pm."* (PARENT)
- *"Torwood is at the limit where some children will not qualify for the school bus. Roads / footpaths need to be examined. Proper pedestrian crossing needs to be installed across A9 within village. Footpath to Glenbervie needs to be widened and street lighting installed full length of road. Drainage needs to be improved and Road speed reduce to provide safe walking along road."* (PARENT)
- *"In the first instance, there is absolutely no safe travel route for my 7 year old child to walk/cycle to school without crossing a very busy main road with a speed limit of 60 km/hr. In addition to this, my child also has underlying health conditions. I myself as a single parent do not drive and I highly depend on his school's public transport system every day. This new proposal would have an extremely detrimental impact on ourselves. Please rethink this proposal and how many families this would affect."* (PARENT)
- *"My oldest son is in p7 and will be then going to St Mungo's High and with this new proposal my son will have no form of safe transport to get to school. Yes he could walk but... 1. It will take him about 1 hour before and 1 hour after school to walk, this will then start to affect his learning as he's going to be tired, it will also then affect his after school clubs 2. Which is the most important and really is probably a huge thing to all parents. NO SAFE WALKING PATHS. From here to the high school not any way you can think of actually has a safe walking ways regarding traffic lights, zebra crossings etc on busy roads. My son's grandparents live next to carron works and I wouldn't allow to walk to theirs so why on earth would I allow him to walk to St mungo's which is even further with busy roads and which if you stop the school bus these roads are only just going to become even more unsafe as how many parents are going to the drive kids to school that are probably in a hurry for work and stressing about, so more accidents are then going to happen."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter would have to either pay to use the school bus or walk to school along a very busy road with, in parts, narrow pavements from Polmont to Graeme High. At a distance of 2.5 miles from home this would take her around 50 minutes each way, adding on substantial time to her school day, therefore affecting after school activities, homework and family time. I think increasing fresh air and exercise is a positive move but it is not as simple as this. My main concern is the reduction in buses, if we wanted to buy my daughter a bus pass, there may not be a bus for her to take to school. Environmentally this will increase the number of cars at school dropping students off who are further away and cause potential hazards around the school to students walking due to limited parking, an increase in traffic and potentially drivers being in a rush for work."* (PARENT)
- *"My children would be walking an unsafe route to Denny High School via Drove Loan. Crossing busy roads, walking for an hour at a time - not to mention in the dark for a good chunk of the year. This would impact my children negatively compared to children living close to school - they would lose an hour's study, relaxation or sport time at either side of the school day which doesn't feel fair. In addition to how this would impact us personally, I have concerns at the impact this would have on traffic on the road to Denny High - increased carbon footprint across the area too."*
- *"I feel there is no safe walking route from Langlees to Falkirk high school, especially in the cold, dark winter months."* (PARENT)
- *"My children will be forced to walk a dangerous route causing them to cross 3 lanes of traffic at a busy crossroads where there is a 40mph speed limit. There is also no traffic calming at these crossroads (salmon inn road where it meets the A803.)"* (PARENT)
- *"Our children will be progressing to high school and will be unable to get to school safely. There is no safe walking / cycling route for our children to walk to Falkirk High School. This will encourage us to drive to school and drop off our child increasing emissions and congestion, potentially placing more children at risk within the vicinity of the school."* (PARENT)
- *"My girls currently use the school bus to get to primary school & home safely, without the bus I would need to adjust my working hours & collect them from school as the route home is across two busy*

roads. One of my daughters is also autistic so requires additional supervision than a 'normal' child." (PARENT)

- "When they move to Graeme HS, in the next few years. we are currently entitled to bus travel as live over 2 miles away. I do not believe there is a safe route for them to walk , not to mention it would take 45 minutes , in all weather conditions. I can't even think how I would get my daughters to high school if there was no bus service, this would hugely impact my ability to remain in employment as I would need to drive them & collect them, limiting the hours I can work & support my family financially." (PARENT)
- "Once again our kids are taking the hit for ridiculous planning. How can you possibly expect primary school kids to walk or cycle 2 miles to school? Have you seen the state of the roads? There's no cycle paths, no calming measures, so many drivers up the Braes continuously drive way above the speed limit. This proposal is going to increase child RTA 10-fold. The council have not spent the money putting in cycle or walking paths to make it safe for our kids. My daughter is in p2 at the moment but there is no way when she is p5 or p6 would I let her walk from Reddingmuirhead to Wallacestone, the road is dangerous in a car never mind walking. Absolutely ridiculous proposal." (PARENT)
- "Both of my children using school transport at the moment to come back from school. I am working full time and school transport is helping me so much. If school transport won't be available anymore I am not able to stay at my work. If they would have to walk to and back from school it takes 35mins and it's through the busiest road in Larbert - bellsdyke road. I don't feel it is safe for primary children..." (PARENT)
- "Currently we are lucky that our son lives a relatively short distance from his school so he can walk back and forth along well-lit, safe paths with only minor roads to be crossed. He has never had to use the school bus, however, for pupils who reside in Allandale the bus service is a vital life line for families who do not own a car. For families living in Allandale there is no direct, safe pathway to school. The only possible route would be along the canal side which is not safe for young children. The path is not well-lit and could not be undertaken independently by young children. For young children too this would be a considerable walk. Winter conditions would make this particularly unsafe. The most concerning issue for our family is that my son will soon leave Antonine and start to attend Denny High School. Unfortunately the location of our house would mean that my son is not eligible for transport to and from DHS. I find this a staggering proposal as the walk to and from DHS would be considerable. However most notably there are only two real walking routes. The first would take the children up via the Drive Loan. This road is particularly narrow with the pavement only really suitable for single file. With the volume of pupils needing to use this route and the unsafe driving and speeds undertaken on this road this makes this route dangerous. The second possible route would take the children along the larbert road and in to the high school from the roundabout at Roughmute. The children would have to walk alongside a road which is national speed limit and there is no consistent pavement. Again this route is entirely unsafe. I'd be very concerned about the children having to walk this distance in the dark, winter mornings and in heavy rain. The children would have to set out extremely early and whilst I support a healthy, active lifestyle, this is a considerable walk to and from school five times a week." (PARENT)
- "My son would be required to walk for an hour to get to school and I don't believe the route is a safe route especially on the winter mornings and evenings. Due to work commitments I won't be able to drop him off at school. I understand cuts need to be paid but not the safety of our children!" (PARENT)
- "We live just under 3 miles from the school. There are no cycling lanes to allow my children to cycle. They would need to walk through a park that is not lit properly. Their walk or cycle would be unsafe in the dark of winter with no cycle paths. Scotlands winters are harsh - would you walk under 3 miles twice a day to work. This is not acceptable. Please allow our children to use a school bus" (PARENT)
- "We live in Lionthorn Estate Falkirk which is 2.5 miles from my son's school who uses school transport every day. He is very active within and outwith school, but uses the time traveling to and from school to relax/decompress from the school day in a safe environment." (PARENT)
- "Pupils struggling to get to school on time. Pupils having to walk longer distances in the dark/cold. Pupils arriving to school soaking wet & more tired than others which will affect their learning experience. Lack of clarity regarding what defines a 'safe road'. We pay more and more council taxes and we get less and less services which is very concerning"(PARENT)
- "Well it could affect staffing levels at my work if parents decide to send their children to a closer secondary school, which will then put additional pressures on those schools. I am more worried about the impact on my pupils. What is deemed a safe route? What might be a safe route in the summer and autumn might not be safe in winter, with the weather changing and the darkened. I cannot help but think that this proposal discriminates, albeit unconsciously, against Catholics as we have by far a bigger

- catchment area than other schools. While many still qualify for free buses, it is disproportionately unfair on those in the new cut off." (STAFF)
- "My child is currently at a Roman Catholic school. I believe the council are discriminating against Catholics as we have to travel further afield to get to school compared to other schools. By making these changes the council are making it unsafe for kids to travel to school as they will now have to walk whereas previously they would be using public transport." (PARENT)
  - "I will have to pay for transport that I shouldn't be since I have a young scot's card. The weather gets very bad over winter and a lot of my route to school is downhill so there are a lot of concerns for safety. It is a lot of money to be spending a year for school transport alone." (PUPIL)
  - "There is no safe route to walk for my children. The road they have to cross is known for high speeds despite being a 30mph road. Forcing them to cross this road is scandalous and will almost certainly lead to a tragedy." (PARENT)
  - "Not directly affected, but as a member of the community who cares about the safety of school pupils, I don't think it's worth the risk to children. Affluent families will continue to be able to fund transport for their kids; the proposed change will disproportionately affect families with lower household incomes. Has an Equality Impact Assessment been done for this change?" (PARENT)
  - "We have one child attending high school at the moment and another due to join. The change would affect all families in our area that fall just short of the proposed distance change. Which is not fair as there are no real safe routes as they have to travel next to a main road or through a private estate. We have children that have autism and the bus is the safest mode of transportation" (PARENT)
  - "Personally not affected, but many in my community are. My daughter walks 50mins/hr each day from Polmont to Braes High and I know what that entails - meeting some challenging characters, getting soaked before reaching school, crossing busy roads, walking home in the dark. This is something we deal with because we're out of catchment and because my youngest is in primary and gets priority in terms of lifts to and from school, but it makes me understand the impact on pupils from Maddiston (where my youngest still attends primary). Removing bus travel for kids there will undoubtedly impact child safety and well-being and result in far more traffic on local roads due to kids having to be dropped off in cars." (PARENT)
  - "The proposal states that for secondary pupils it is 3 miles via the nearest available safe walking route. For at least the last 5 years parents from the Woodlea Estate in Bonnybridge have been contesting the "safe" walking route for our children which we are informed is up the Drove Loan and through Chasefield woods rather than the actual safe walking route that would then mean that we are over 2 miles away from the school. On questioning the new proposal we have been informed that it is 3 miles "as the crow flies" not actually the safe walking route as is in the proposal (which is the historical answer we have continually received regarding the old 2 mile cut off). The lack of transparency and inaccurate information received from Falkirk council on what is essentially the safety of our children informs my decision that I do not support this proposal as it will now put more children from Bonnybridge at risk." (PARENT)
  - "I live 2.2 miles from my school, on a busy main road which log lorries and other careless drivers drive on every morning. They drive on the pavement and go well over the speed limit. I rely on a taxi to get to school as it is unsafe and too far for me to walk." (PUPIL)
  - "Puts children at risk walking from Graeme high school to Polmont. Long walk along poorly lit and poorly paved route. I appreciate the road is 30 through Laurieston and 40 between Laurieston and Polmont however vehicles travel much faster than this. High risk to kids lives. (I am an essential worker and) this change will affect my ability to dedicate myself to my job as much as I do now. Being less available at the start and end of the day to do runs to and from school. This change will make roads busier and impact the environment increasing green house gas emissions from cars through surrounding areas. Buses are the most cost effective and sustainable transport solution." (PARENT)
  - "My son lives over 2 miles from school with no viable bus route to Falkirk High. The logical walking route is along the canal however this is less than safe during winter months." (PARENT)
  - "My son currently uses the Maddiston Bus Service to Braes High. My daughter is currently at Maddiston Primary but will progress to Braes High in August. The proposal to change the distance criteria for the buses takes no account of the gradient. The return Journey from Braes High is mostly uphill. I would be happy to pay for bus tickets but there are no other suitable buses available. School can be very tiring for the children and I don't think a slog uphill afterwards will be good for my childrens morale." (PARENT)

- *"My eldest is in grade 5 at the moment- when she starts high school, there are no pavements all the way to school in either direction. Some people can't afford bikes/scooters- with the way money is. I have another 2 kids to take to school at the same time."* (PARENT)
- *"My children would be unable to walk safely to primary school. There are three routes to school, 2 are on broken and partial pathways alongside busy roads, the third is through Calendar Woods which is not a safe option alone, certainly not in Winter months or poor weather."* (PARENT)
- *"My children at St Mungo's would be unable to walk due to the long distance nor catch public transport as it is unreliable and would require 2 buses or a bus and a walk. Please reconsider the proposals for those children who rely heavily and consistently on the school transport bus to ensure that they arrive in time and in state of readiness to learn to their school."* (PARENT)
- *"I can walk my little one to primary school but do not drive so my other child who is at Graeme high would have to walk .We live right at the end of polmont she is only 14 and there is no way i would let her walk that distance on her own and what happens in the winter when the weathers terrible the main roads from Polmont into Falkirk are really busy and the pavements very narrow. I'd happily pay for the school bus but think it's a disgrace to expect kids to walk that far to and from school especially in the dark mornings and nights."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will only be starting 2nd year when these new proposals come into force and it causes real concern as a parent if he is having to walk from Bonnybridge to Denny High School. The route goes by roads with heavy traffic on them and in terms of distance it will take children considerable time to walk this. Then there is the issue of poor/inclement weather and dark mornings in the winter months. While I appreciate the budget constraints the council face, who ever came up with this ridiculous suggestion has not clearly thought through the huge problems this will cause parents and children."* (PARENT)
- *"Son currently uses the bus to get to school. If there is no bus I'm concerned on a number of fronts. Cycle routes to Denny high aren't great/non-existent and walking would take over an hour, close to 2 hours each way. Fine on a dry day but on a wet miserable winter day this tgen means kids being in school soaked. Also it means kids have less time to do homework and my son currently in s4 has been impacted every year since going to secondary either by covid, strikes and now this. This year group need support and more help not less time and more pressure. Interested to see what safe routes exist from high bonnybridge for walking or cycling and the survey reports detailing such."* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter would be impacted as she will be unable to travel by bus to school and have to walk along a dark path/busy road to get home. Otherwise she will have to be picked and there is extremely limited parking at westquarter primary."* (PARENT)
- *"Child will have to walk from end of Bonnybridge to Denny high a poor and at times unsafe route made worse by increased traffic. You should organise a walk of all routes by all councillors rather than them just looking at it on maps. Let them experience these paths and inevitable unsafe shortcuts the kids will take."* (PARENT)
- *"Both children would be expected to walk to school with a responsible adult (As advised after meeting at Denny high) as I do not agree that it's safe for my children to walk the suggested route alone. This will not only effect the children but myself and how I can spend my day and try to work around the school times! The report that was conducted in 2009 about the safety of the drove loan is out of date and the facts will all change with the volume of children and parents that are expected to now walk this route due to the proposals, so needs to be looked at again. The volume of traffic in this area will also change due to the proposals, and the traffic along the whole route that my children are expected to walk along busy main roads all the way from Greenhill to Denny high twice a day is a worry. The impact on my children having to spend over a 2.30 hours a day walking to and from school (alongside an adult) means that they won't want to be at school especially during the wilder weather we have in Scotland so attainment and lateness will be an issue for the school and us parents, then they are expected to come home and complete homework!"* (PARENT)
- *"My daughter lives 2.1 miles away from the school along a main road. I have safety issues on this and unable to transport my child to school. Any child will suffer as weather would leave them misreable all day while Learning, safety issues from main road users. Also children with extra needs, this could be a dangerous walk."* (PARENT)
- *"As a school pupil myself, there is no safe route to walk to the school if the buses were to be stopped. It is also quite a long walk and especially during winter time when it is still pitch black in the morning meaning we would have to walk down in the dark."* (PUPIL)
- *"I know I would have to pay for the bus as it stands just now. I didn't realise that come August there would not even be a bus that he could pay for to travel safely to and from school."* (PARENT)

- "My children use the bus service. This will mean I will drive back and forward from school to drop off and pick my kids up. I will need to reduce hours at my work to do this which I would not like to do in a cost of living crisis." (PARENT)
- "My child getting the school bus allows me to do my job, but it also allows me to support my dad who is terminally ill. I drop my child at the bus, go to my parent's house to help them get set up for the day and travel to work. I have no other support in the area to help me." (PARENT)
- "We live in the Bainsford/Langlees area and our catchment school is Falkirk High school (despite Larbert High school actually being nearer) thus as we are over the 2 miles and we benefit from a free bus pass, however if you change that to 3 miles then unfortunately this is not something we are going to be able to afford to pay for. I feel that this is really going to hit families in the most deprived areas. There has been no real thought put into this. Our salaries mean that both my husband and I are just over and are not entitled to claim anything. This is definitely going to put a barrier in place for those kids/families in the Bainsford/Langlees area. Maybe catchment areas should be looked into." (PARENT)
- "This would mean my two children who currently meet criteria would no longer have access to bus travel. As an FC employee this impacts my ability to get into work for 9am as I have no other childcare." (PARENT)
- "This affects both my children , one at St Bernadette's and one at St Mungo's. To lose this option of the bus would seriously affect my household. When I have work, my children have no other way to get to school other than the bus. My son at St Mungo's uses the bus every single day. I cannot be 2 places at once to collect them both. And we live just under the mileage for the new proposal. I wouldn't be happy with my son having to walk that twice a day" (PARENT)
- "A working parent cannot possibly manage to walk a child 35 minutes to school and be at work on time - so I will have to drive my child to and from school every day - as my employer does not have possibility to offer me flexible working hours. This will obviously cause more intense traffic at school areas." (PARENT)
- "As a parent whose child attends St Bernadette's Primary School, this proposal will significantly reduce the number of children at the school who are entitled to a free bus pass. This is very worrying due to the number of parents who would be unable, due to work commitments or personal circumstances, to walk their children to/from school. Additionally, the First 4 Kids after school care currently use the school bus, which I believe will not be permitted if this proposal goes ahead. Currently, we live within walking distance from the primary school, however, the long term impact of this proposal means that my child will not be able to access bus transport to attend St Mungo's High School. It is not feasible or safe for my child to walk 2.5 miles each way to high school. Due to the removal of bus transport, my child may then need to attend Larbert High School in order to be able to safely walk to school. This is not my choice as my child is a baptised Catholic, and we would like our child to attend St Mungo's High School to both further their education and help them learn more about, and practice, their faith." (PARENT)
- "My children use the free transport so I could increase my hours at work. Using the transport means I can work an extra hour per day as I don't need to travel to drop off and collect and worry about parking. There is not enough parking at the school." (PARENT)
- "It's really going to affect my work if the bus is removed from Torwood. I also think the bus encourages independence and unfortunately due to the road, walking would not be an option. I honestly can't believe this is a possibility." (PARENT)
- "I previously completed this survey thinking that services would still be available but payable. These plans would mean that both my husband and myself would have to amend our current working hours as we would be unable to access pre-school care for our children." (PARENT)
- "My girls will no longer be able to use the free school bus as planned for p2 onwards to allow for me to increase working hours to support family." (PARENT)
- "I'm a single mum and can't work any hours my work needs to suit to school hours and if we can't have school bus than I can't get to work in time so will lose the job." (PARENT)
- "Working parent. Rely on school transport to get high school child to school also have primary aged children to get to school. Can't be in two placed at once. When it's inclement weather 2 and 3 miles is a long walk for a child am I meant to let them get soaked then sit at school freezing all day." (PARENT)
- "If agreed, my children would be required to walk to and from school. This affects their safety and wellbeing. As a FT working parent, I am unable to drop off/pick up." (PARENT)



- *"My daughter currently receives a bus pass, we live just over 2.8 miles from the school and removing this will add unfair pressure to our ability to get her to school in the morning without altering my working hours."* (PARENT)
- *"2 kids who rely on the bus every day. This allows both parents to work. This change will impact our employers who are not flexible."* (PARENT)
- *"I would need to give up my full time job to walk my kid to school as I don't drive. Career down the drain."* (PARENT)
- *"Having 2 children at the school I see this as shocking. I work away from home 8 months of the year and my wife works full-time in another council district in education. Doing this would put a huge strain on my wife and children ."* (PARENT)
- *"My son is in 1st year at Braes High School and daughter is in primary 6. Cancelling the bus service would make it difficult to get to school in the morning. Whilst walking is an option, in poor weather conditions this would not be practical. There needs to be at the very least a fare paying service."* (PARENT)
- *"This is going to affect a lot of people in wider Falkirk area. In my opinion this is going to bring school attendance down dramatically. This is because parents will be working and not able to get their children to school in the morning. This happening is going to affect them in their later life. Children have already had enough disruption in the last 3 years with covid 19 and now it's the teacher strikes which children are losing significant time in school."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will either need to walk to school or be late while we take my daughter to primary school first."* (PARENT)
- *"This proposal doesn't directly affect myself yet but will in 2 years' time I think our children deserve to get to school safely and some children simply can't afford to pay for transport. Public transport and walking is unsafe from Langlees to Camelon moving from 2 to 3 miles is ridiculous that means that almost all the children that attend the school by bus lose the opportunity to get to school safely. If the school bus is still to run at a cost to the children then so be it, but to remove it completely is not right, too much bullying and fighting happens on the way home from school as it is also the road from Falkirk High to Langlees. It is either a busy main road or along the canal path which I find extremely dangerous as it isn't well lit for the kids on dark mornings. To remove a safe service is not on maybe those at the top could take a pay cut to get some of the money back instead of putting our kids at risk the cuts are getting ridiculous now so many people are being put at risk just to save some money"* (PARENT)
- *"I currently don't use the bus for daughter as she is only in P1 but I had every intention of using it in the future. The school bus service is well used at our school. I believe around 70 pupils use the bus which is almost half of the school roll. I believe it's been calculated that under the new provision only 10 of those using the bus would qualify. I would be happy to pay a contribution to the bus, but I feel that the provision and organisation of the bus should be coordinated by the council & not left to parents or the school to try to organise. The environmental impact of this change of policy should also be considered. It is a complete backwards step."* (PARENT)
- *"My children will eventually both attend St Mungo's High School and as a Catholic parent I choose a denominational education for my children. If these decisions go ahead, this choice will be taken away from families like ours."* (PARENT)
- *"My son currently attends the nursery school at Beancross and will be moving into Primary 1 in few years and we live in the old town so my son will need access to this service as I am a single working mother."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will attend Graeme High School next year and the new proposal will mean he has to walk to school as the "safe" walking route will be under 3 miles. The walking route is unsafe and takes the children down a narrow pavement at the Salmon Inn forcing children to be nearer to moving traffic. They then have to navigate a crossing of 3 lane traffic on a 40 mph road which is a notorious black spot for accidents. All this while contending with hours of darkness and inclement weather. The route is unsafe and the children will be exhausted, wet and anxious from walking such a dangerous route to school. For children who will be 11 this is unacceptable."* (PARENT)
- *"My son will go to St Mungo's in the future and will no longer get free school transport. I am a teacher at Braes high school & this is no equity for pupils! Taking this away is another barrier to learning and increasing the poverty gap."* (PARENT/STAFF)
- *"My child is due to start Braes high school this summer. We will be relying on the bus for my child to be at school safely and on time. We currently live 1.6 miles from Braes high school and I don't want my child to walk that far especially in winter months. It gets dark early, and the mornings are just as*

- dark. Given the Scottish weather can be unpredictable its best for my daughter to get the bus.” (PARENT)
- “Whilst the primary service is of little impact, my son will attend Graeme High School session 2024/25. The new stipulations are ludicrous as 3 miles is too great an expectation for children to do without a bus service before and after a long day in school. The route is busy and unsafe to Graeme High from Polmont and it does not put pupil safety at the heart of any planning. We do not have a community high school, so to lose a service like this will have massive implications for families in time and money. As a teacher myself, I would be concerned about inevitable lateness which impacts the school day not to mention overall wellbeing and learning but as is mother I am disappointed that cuts continue to impact children and families. School is mandatory and this change will create problems and undue stress for everyone.” (PARENT)
  - “I am furious at the underhand and frankly sneaky ways the council has worded this proposal to such effect that most parents I know are: - happy to pay for school bus services; - have absolutely no idea about these proposals or the fact that they mean the removal of school buses altogether; - have missed out on the chance to attend the consultation meetings because of the above point - I myself have only found out today and am furious. Had the council highlighted the removal of buses altogether then you can bet the public noise in relation to this matter would have been fifty fold. It shows a foul contempt for those of us working very hard and paying high council taxes. Unforgivable attempt to force through unpopular change whilst avoiding public due diligence and scrutiny. You should be ashamed of yourselves.” (PARENT)
  - “I am affected by the decision as I live in the Gilston Park area of Polmont. And I cannot expect my youngest son to walk to Graeme High in the future. Currently my older son attends Braes High School (we moved from Maddiston). My older son walks to Braes High every day and it takes him 15 mins walking. I am proposing that Braes High becomes the catchment area for Polmont as this is a justified walking distance. This would save money and be a lot more green and safer to the environment than kids travelling by bus into town everyday weekday.” (PARENT)
  - “My immediate concern on a personal level is what behaviours will this drive. I currently observe in appropriate parking in a residential area at the bottom of Demorham Avenue. My suspicion is that these changes will encourage additional private transfer of pupils to/from schooling. As we as being inconsiderate there are clear safety issues around this , including speed, and well as environmental consequences.” (PARENT)
  - “My 11yo son will be attending Graeme High from August 2023. We live in Polmont, 2.6 miles from Graeme High, so my son will no longer be entitled to board the school bus which stops at Gilston Crescent. I do not believe that the 2.6 miles represents a 'safe walking route'. Or a safe cycling route. The roads are busy, the pavements are narrow and there are dangerous roads / junctions with no light operated pedestrian crossings. There is an X38 bus which he could board on Main Street, scheduled for 8.05 which will get him to Graeme High, if he is allowed to board, but given the number of pupils affected by this proposed change, will he be able to do so? Will there be enough room in the social hub to accommodate all these extra pupils who will arrive early due to the lack of choice of public transport at that time in the morning?” (PARENT)
  - “Both of my children will be affected by these changes, meaning they will not be provided with transport to High School and will be reliant on Public transport buses which a currently unreliable and will be too busy to hold all the children from one area. Currently there are two double decker buses picking up all the children from the Gilston Area and around Polmont so there is clearly the requirement. Not all of these children will fit in public buses making it harder for them to get there. This is likely to result in children not attending school due to being unable to get there, as the road that the children would have to walk along in the morning is subject to numerous car crashes and unsafe for large groups of children to walk along.” (PARENT)
  - “This proposal disproportionately affects children attending a Catholic setting and affect children's access to a Catholic education as it will made it more difficult for families.” (PARENT)
  - “At present, one of my children attends High School and relies on the bus service to get them to school. After the summer break, one of my other children will be attending. This child has long term mobility issues due to surgeries, etc on their leg. If the free bus service was taken away, there would be no way that my children could get to school on time. They would be unable to walk there and cannot rely on the normal bus service either.” (PARENT)
  - “I am a single mum and both my children are using the school transport for their safe school route. We live in Camelon and my children would often stay at their dad's in (another part of the district). I think as kids can now use the public transport for free as an alternative it might be useful to consider an

additional service for public transport in Falkirk area to run around the schools in the morning and afternoon so children can use to get to school safe.”(PARENT)

- “I feel that as a teacher at one of the Catholic schools this would be disastrous for many of our pupils. There are many children from the school I work in who rely on school transport to attend school and I feel that they would be adversely affected by this as they may not be able to attend the Catholic school if this new proposal is upheld.” (STAFF)
- “This will mean my 14 year old will have to walk to school an back meaning she would have to leave home before 8am. In winter this would mean walking along the canal in the dark on her own! I'd be very very concerned for her safety given the high rate of sex offenders that Falkirk council like to place in our area! Not to mention the increase in road traffic accidents. One of the roads she would have to cross has seen 2 people hit within the last week alone! How about taking free travel away from the local addicts and keeping our kids safe instead?” (PARENT)
- “As a teacher I would expect a greater degree of late coming as students have to make their own way to school on public buses.” (STAFF)
- “I would have to take my daughter to school as she hasn't got the understanding of the dangers ie looking when crossing the road she is awaiting to be seen by CAMHS to see if there's a learning disability/ autism. I struggle with poor mental health and there's days where I can't leave the house because of this so I if there no bus for my daughter, she would miss school if I wasn't able to get her to school.” (PARENT)
- “Roads around the school are busy enough and parking is already a nightmare. I live c0.75miles from the school and even at that have trouble convincing my 7 year old to walk when it's raining and windy. When we do walk it's polluted by car fumes and there's no crossing near us and despite many pleas to the council - we've been told there is an alternative route - the council need to look at where the people are crossing and not try to herd us like sheep in a different direction. All this proposal will do is add more cars to the roads - making the situation worse for people like me and my family.”(PARENT)
- “My assumption is that you will reduce the bus size afterwards. If this is the case both my children will not get a seat as although the are not entitled to the free school transport they still pay and take the bus. If the bus is reduced no space for them this in turn means I will need to drop my youngest off and possibly some days my eldest. The parking at Westquarter is awful and is an accident waiting to happen. Some parents like myself have no option to walk their kids due to work commitments. By taking away the bus you are making this 10 times worse” (PARENT)
- “I believe it will impact pupils and families of the school if they no longer have access to free bus travel. The school includes high levels of poverty and deprivation which rely on the current bus service to transport the pupils safely to and from school. It may also affect attendance during poor weather and the dark mornings during winter which have an impact on pupil attainment.”(STAFF)
- “There are a good number of our children who live outwith the area proposed, including a significant number of children from deprived households. This would seriously negatively impact their attendance in school and therefore their education and life chances, as well as potentially place their health and safety in jeopardy during inclement weather conditions.” (STAFF)
- “This will affect the children currently in my nursery class who will be moving up to Primary One. This particular area of our catchment is identified as being an area with the highest level of deprivation. I feel this would directly impact on the attainment gap due to cost of living and being able to attend regularly.” (STAFF)
- “We are working incredibly hard to maintain good attendance at school, which is directly linked to being able to get to school. Putting a barrier in the way such as the transportation to school will directly impact many of our young people's ability to access education. I personally know of families who will not be able to get their young people to school without the transportation availability and who have likely chosen their housing based on the arrangements that were in place.” (STAFF)
- “Young people in our school who already face barriers to their learning due to deprivation will be significantly impacted by this. During a cost of living crisis, for families who are already living in poverty, having to come up with the cost of bus travel to school will cause a significant pressure. The outcome of this is likely that children from these families, who often do not hold much value for their child's education due to their own experiences in school, will have lower attendance. Low attendance significantly reduces that young person's chance of achieving in school and reaching a positive destination, increasing the burden on our country and our council to provide for them.” (STAFF)
- “I believe the impact on the pupils and families of Falkirk High School will be significant as it means the pupils living in these areas would no longer be entitled to free school bus travel. My view is that it would have a significant impact on our young people and families who are already impacted by deprivation

and poverty and this move would provide further challenges to attendance. A suggestion on reviewing the distance entitlement with due consideration of deprivation rather than a blanket increase could be made." (STAFF)

- "The pupils at Falkirk high school will be affected and our catchment has a high percentage of pupils in deprived incomes/homes so this will increase their expenditure and may result in parents allowing their children to stay at home. This would cause them to fall behind in their work." (STAFF)
- "Pupil attendance is already a concern. Removing free transport will only make this issue worse and would adversely affect many families who are already struggling with cost of living." (STAFF)
- "School pupils could come to school later as a result of not having access to a reliable bus service and therefore miss out on essential learning time. For those who have further barriers to coming to school, this is yet another obstacle between them and the classroom. Furthermore, it may increase the congestion around St Francis Primary School and St Mungo's at school times which is already very busy." (STAFF)
- "I am concerned that this proposal will disproportionality affect those with a 'protected characteristic' under the Equality Act 2010. That is, religion or belief. The changes will disproportionately affect those of the Catholic faith, as they are a group that on average have to travel further for education and therefore will incur the greater proportion of additional costs as a result of this change. It would be interesting to see the school-by-school breakdown of pro rata additional costs. I imagine Falkirk's denominational schools will all be at the top of the list of those affected. I assume an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out?" (STAFF)
- "A massive proportion of our school cohort arrive by bus. This is because pupils come from as far as Bo'ness and Grangemouth. Our school car park is overwhelmingly busy as it is at pick up and drop off times but with this change in bus entitlements then this will make it even busier. At the moment, it is almost unmanageable. Furthermore, many of our pupils who get the school bus do not have other options to get to school therefore if this change is implemented then attendance will become an issue for these pupils. This will then have a knock on impact on their attainment and engagement in school." (STAFF)
- "Free school transport is a life-line for many of our pupils. Taking away free travel means that some pupils will not attend school as they have no other way of getting there. Taking away transport is not supporting children to access education and will exclude them further from society." (STAFF)
- "My kids started to use school buses since early primary age and still do every day. It taught them independence. It's more eco friendly way of getting to school (something they've been taught at school on numerous occasions), as not everyone is able to walk their kids to school. It will affect our day-to-day life and schedule a lot." (PARENT)
- "St Mungo's already has significant traffic problems around the school at the start and end of the school day. I believe more pupils are likely to travel to and from school by car if the proposal were to go through. This will have a negative impact on journey times, pupil safety and air pollution around the school." (PARENT)
- "Many pupils are currently experiencing higher levels of anxiety around attending school, since reopening fully after covid. Reduced attendance rates are a problem that schools are currently trying to tackle. Taking away certain pupils' transport provision is likely to have a negative effect on attendance rates." (STAFF)
- "I like my kids to use the bus. I feel it gives them a more living experience and brings them on both socially and emotionally. The question should be how it effects the children. It, of course, would affect parents as they need to find alternative methods to transport the children. As for the savings, I'd like to know how exactly this saves money?" (PARENT)
- "Pupils in my classes will not attend school if they do not have school transport. We have a low SIMD school community and with the public transport links also being cut and unreliable - these pupils will become non-attenders." (STAFF)
- "My daughter and many other children from the area use the bus to and from the high school the fact there is sometimes 3 or 4 buses needed shows the amount of kids that use the service. Yes the children can walk as my daughter does sometimes but as the school policy is no jackets in school only blazers and they don't want to carry a bulky winter coat around all day on winter days the bus is essential as I'm sure the school don't want 4 bus loads of children individually being dropped off in cars." (PARENT)
- "I have one child who attends Braes High and uses the bus service and another child who will attend Braes in the future. Having the bus service available means we know he has a safe way of getting to and from school in all weather. I'm all for encouraging kids to get more exercise and will encourage my

son to alternate how he gets to and from school, but to remove one of the options with no alternative, I feel, is unfair. My son is able to walk to and from school and has done it, but with this walk taking around 50mins each way and including crossing some very busy roads, having to do it every day would be a worry. I feel this would lead to an increase in traffic around the school and on the roads at that time as more children would be picked up. This will increase the pollution the children are exposed to and increase the risk of traffic accidents, especially in dark, rainy weather. With lots of children walking at the same time complacency among them will increase again leading to more traffic accidents. The recent changes to the Highway Code giving pedestrians the right of way isn't understood, or remembered, by many drivers. Again, this will lead to more traffic accidents as children cross roads. I understand the council have to save money but I would rather my Council Tax was increased than have this service removed. With no suitable public bus service available, at the very least, an alternative should be looked at in conjunction with the bus service. I feel this is an easy way of the council saving money rather than looking at other ways, which may be a bit more difficult." (PARENT)

- "Both my children walk to/from school, (both primary and high school) so I am not directly affected. However, there are masses of cars at both schools everyday so if bus transport was more promoted and encouraged this may lead to a reduced need for so many cars to be at both schools." (PARENT)
- "It affects my daughter she would either need to walk or get a bus into town then walk from there to school in her own and in winter usually it will be dark so unsafe for a young child to walk on her own. Also she has some health issues and winter affects this so walking down in the cold would most likely make her unwell." (PARENT)
- "I have a deaf, autistic child who attends a mainstream school therefore is not entitled to taxi transportation. She cannot decipher the direction of traffic due to her hearing. She cannot safely navigate roads. She has very little danger awareness. We live 2.4miles walk to school. That's an hour walk at each end of the day. That is in my opinion against her rights as she would no longer have access to her education." (PARENT)
- "Should this proposal go through, it will put more traffic on the road, which must fly in the face of every single environmental target we face locally, nationally and globally. As a local resident who lives close to a primary school, I am already shocked by the amount of traffic, as well as illegal and inconsiderate parking. Removing safe, dedicated transport will only add to this issue across the whole of the council area." (PARENT)
- "My child would need to walk over 2 miles just to get to school! I start work before she goes to school and I have no other family members that can take her. She's only first year in high school she's far too young to be walking that herself especially in the darker morning/nights. Unacceptable when Langlees and Bainsford are seen as an under privileged area! How many children will lose out as parents can't afford to get they're child(ren) to school." (PARENT)
- "I am a teacher very involved in the lives of our pupils and families. I am dealing with pupils/families regularly who are looking for support for clothing, toiletries etc and this proposal will mean that a large number of our pupils will no longer be able to travel to school for free. I am concerned that this will impact hugely on attendance. In terms of poverty, these pupils would then miss out on a free school breakfast and lunch and a warm place to study. Pupils who do then walk to school because they can't afford the bus travel are more likely to arrive late, possibly cold/wet. There are of course safety issues for our young people walking to school" (STAFF)
- "While this is a proposal that will impact the majority of schools in the authority, this will affect all the Catholic schools to a greater extent. This proposal will, undoubtedly, have a disproportionate impact on Catholic families as their children often travel further to attend their chosen school and they rely on the provision of school transport." (PARENT)
- "My children both get the bus due to distance from our home and both myself and my husband work. Both my children would require to walk or bike a 45 minute to primary school journey and an hour and 15 minutes journey to high school. This is going on busy roads, dark mornings and bad weather. This proposal will cause absence, accidents and an increase in mental health/stress for parents who have to find a way of getting their kids to school safely." (PARENT)
- "A number for current/future families will be impacted by this change and it may place barriers to their decision to send their child/children to a denominational school." (STAFF)
- "Me and many of my Maddison peers are affected due to the current budget deficit. Our route is in jeopardy. I and many others rely on this route and in my opinion this proposal has many faults. Not only do you use climate change as a pretext but it is not true. The lack of this service will actually add more cars to are already busy main roads, which I might add would increase the chance of an accident. On the impacts on the climate - that may not effect Maddison as much because many children could not

even take a car to school as Maddison is one of the lowest car owning areas in Falkirk council. This would most likely result in missed school time and tardiness. The Maddison area is also uphill and is covered in busy roads. It is the most popular of the Braes (bus) routes and is relied on more than you think, I have read agenda item 7 of this proposal and it is shown how mismanagement has plagued this council. I believe and many of my peers do as well that you should make an amendment to the bill to add Maddison to the list of unaffected areas. Maddison is sadly one of the poorest places in Falkirk, so for the sake of those who need it most, make an amendment." (PUPIL)

- "It is not only the pupils who are eligible to free transport that are affected by this proposal. The reduction or lack of buses will also affect pupils that have an U22 pass that currently take the bus. This will lead to more traffic on the roads and increase pollution and traffic issues around the school." (PARENT)
- "My child regularly gets the bus from Maddiston to Braes High School using her govt funded bus pass. If you stop the buses she will have to walk back and forth to school which really concerns me in the autumn and winter when the mornings and evenings are very dark. Can the service not be seasonal for the safety of the children which will also save some money?" (PARENT)
- "My daughter will be attending Braes High school soon and knowing that there is a bus which gets her there and back, especially in the dark evenings/mornings gives peace of mind. It also gives her independence but ensures her safety." (PARENT)
- "My 2 children use the bus on a daily basis to get back and forth to school. The proposed plan would mean myself and many other parents to take car to school causing even more congestion than is already there. This is an accident waiting to happen with kids jumping out of cars and other cars abandoned in unsafe places. Currently cars are parked anywhere as there is no sufficient parking at school." (PARENT)
- "As a practising Catholic, I worry that people of my faith will be penalised financially for choosing to attend a Catholic school and these schools will have to close. My whole family will be affected (nieces / nephews)." (OTHER)
- "As a Catholic my child will be attending St Mungo's High School and I believe that this proposal is very unfair. This may potentially stop kids from attending St Mungo's because they may not be able to afford the bus fare. This will have a major impact on people who have multiple children. This will stop children receiving a Catholic education which their parents want but may not be able to afford. Pupils from the likes of Grangemouth High would not need to pay it and I find it very unfair. I am against this proposal." (PARENT)
- "This disproportionately affects Catholic children who are more likely to be affected by the cut in free school transport due to larger catchment areas." (PARENT)
- "Teacher at high school. This will see more pupils arriving late and not ready for learning first thing in the morning. It is very hilly around the school and the weather is often inclement. Pupils arriving wet, cold and tired will not be in the right mindset to get the most from their learning. Inevitably parents who can, will drive their children to school, increasing the inequity between pupils and also raising carbon emissions. While the notion that school pupils should be able to walk or cycle to school, it might even be beneficial to their physical and mental wellbeing, the reality is that it will likely also lead to more school refusers." (STAFF)
- "I would not be comfortable having my child walk 2 miles there and back each day to primary school. It would be dark and with the canal / train / prison along with busy roads, it would be an unnecessary risk" (OTHER)
- "Kids up to 22 are entitled to free bus transport through their young Scot's card yet you are expecting them to walk up to 3 miles there and back no matter what weather for their education. Bags are full enough without adding extra clothes (no lockers) in case they get soaked and I for one would not have my children sitting for over 6 hours in wet clothes. All you are going to do is add more congestion into schools with parents dropping their kids off. Will school buses still be running for people wanting to pay! If so, what is then the point on this as they will get on free with their young Scot's card" (PARENT)
- "There are very few safe walking routes around St Mungo's High School. Not sure how much money this is likely to save. It doesn't seem very sensible to risk the safety of the children to make their own way to school when a school bus from over 3 miles away will be driving past them. Has anyone drilled into the actual numbers and where all the pupils are affected are coming from as we bus from all over Falkirk district and possibly the majority of these buses will still have to run to accommodate those over 3 miles." (OTHER)
- "Some routine buses do not stop to pick up children travelling to school, my daughters have been left standing at a bus stop as the driver hasn't stopped as they are in school uniform. (PARENT)

- "I think this cost cutting idea has not been thought through. The busses will pass the pupils home locations anyway. Not only will this put pressure on parents to spend money on bus fares, but it will put extra pressure on pupils. I find that children are under enough pressure at school without having to walk for up to an hour in the pouring rain/snow/dark etc. Also, some of the routes that would have to be taken are not on suitable pathways or don't have any pathways etc." (STAFF)
- "This will not affect myself we live 1 mile away, but asking children to walk an hour to and from a school is too much, I know there is a push to get kids fit lord knows we are looking at cutting everything but PE from schools for some reason. ½ the year they will be arriving tired late, wet, and cold - not good for learning. I understand the need to cut cost but this one is just bad idea. I mean think about it you are asking a 5 or 6-year old to walk 4 miles a day and an 12 year old 6 miles a day, and that is only if they take the direct route not the best or safest" (PARENT)
- "I understand the council need to make savings but to make children walk 3 miles before they even start school is detrimental to their wellbeing, particularly if they are unable to have breakfast beforehand. The school itself is having to constantly fundraise and look for alternative funding for various activities including a breakfast club (which DOES NOT run every day) to support children from less well-off homes. In addition, the rising cost of living and the challenges in now paying to heat homes makes this proposal thoughtless at best and making those most vulnerable in our communities, bearing the brunt of these cost saving measures." (PARENT)
- "I think the council should be trying to cut the money from somewhere else and leave our children's education alone". (PARENT)
- "This is not the place to save money. It will have a massive impact on school attainment (STAFF)
- "On average it takes 20 minutes for an adult to walk one mile, now imagine how long it will take a child with legs half the size to walk up to 2 miles. Now imagine it's raining, and they have to sit all day in wet clothes. And likewise high school children will need to walk for up to an hour to reach school, then an hour home. I don't think a child's health, well-being and safety should be compromised over saving money." (PARENT)
- "Whilst I fully agree that cuts and savings must be made ensuring our children's safety and accessibility to education must be a priority." (PARENT)
- "Parents will be more debt with having to pay for travel to school and if they cannot afford it children will need to walk and this could cause more accidents." (OTHER)
- "I don't drive & can't rely on normal buses are they are never on time so this isn't an option either, he will be late for school!" (PARENT)
- "This is a huge concern for my family." (PARENT)
- "Walking to Larbert High School from Airth would mean walking on a very busy Bellsdyke Road which is extremely busy and fast road which I say is unsafe for a lot of children to be walking to school every day." (PARENT)
- "On days of bad weather my children will not be attending school as I will not be walking them in rain frost wind or snow for them to be ill with colds and flu. School don't help children to get changed therefore giving them additional clothing would be pointless." (PARENT)
- "The traffic around the school will become ridiculous and more dangerous for those kids who have the luxury of a lift. Kids arriving late will increase. It is not clear if buses are still to run but be paid for if 'free' travel is to go. But the kids all have a free bus pass?" (PARENT)
- "3 miles is too far to walk before & after school. In snow, wet weather etc. How can kids concentrate to learn if they are soaked through & cold." (PARENT)
- "Although the proposal says 3 miles, I assume this is 'as the crow flies ' but it means that children are required to walk further than that. Walking distance from our house to Denny High School is 3.3 miles." (PARENT)
- "Rather than just looking at miles, it should be considered if the areas excluded from free transport are still safe to walk from. Is there sufficient lighting, safe crossing areas, is the road too busy. I am thinking for instance the walk from Torwood to Larbert is not safe currently for children to walk to school." (PARENT)
- "I think it's appalling that the council think it's acceptable to consider bus cuts. There are plenty of other areas that could be focused on to cut. These are our children and the safety of our children the council is playing with. Especially for children that are now in a routine getting to school by bus as it's their only safe way to get to school. How on earth the council expects kids from further away villages to walk safely is beyond me." (PARENT)
- "Surely there is another way to save money." (PARENT)

- "I think 3 miles is long journey by foot (taking around 1 hour each way). Our weather conditions would also make this a difficult walk when conditions are poor and daylight unavailable during winter journey times. Given my concern over weather conditions and road safety (little to no cycle paths), I would have strong concerns over my child cycling to school." (PARENT)
- "I think this is an absolutely abhorrent proposal!" (PARENT)
- "How would this proposal, or does it affect travel for children using the Young Scot card?" (PARENT)
- "Additionally, there is more risk associated with children walking to school. I object to any changes in the distances. If there is statutory requirement to provide this service, it should remain in place to ensure pupil safety and ensure the councils position on climate change is not compromised by adding additional vehicles to the school run." (PARENT)
- "Bus transport is now free for young people under 25 with young Scot card. Whilst my child could use the local bus service the stop is not in front of the school. This service has also been greatly reduced to 1 per hour making travel within Falkirk extremely difficult for children and young people." (PARENT)
- "My son has only recently been diagnosed with his condition meaning we now have a disability badge. However up until now this means he would have struggled to get to school even within the 1-mile area. This would mean taking a car to the school twice a day everyday increasing the number of cars not decreasing it. My son attends an RC School, these have a different catchment area to non-denominational school as you know. This means the non-denominational school are closer to the RC catchment area, even within the distances you've suggested. It is ridiculous to ask a 4-year-old (P1) to walk 2 miles twice a day and you will force people to choose a closer school resulting in families not being allowed to go to a denominational school which they are entitled to." (PARENT)
- "I would not be averse to contributing towards bus fare - provided it was a reasonable amount." (PARENT)
- "Children attending Sacred Heart come from all over the town, there is not appropriate crossing patrols in the town for children to get there safely. You are putting extra financial pressure on families already struggling. Keep the children safe and make the cuts elsewhere! Falkirk council spends obscene amounts of money on irrelevant things and makes cuts to services that are relied upon!" (PARENT)
- "I would have concern about pupils staying in rural areas without paths to walk to school and no street lighting being safe for cycling or walking so I think this would make a suitable exception. However, for most pupils, they are allowed free public bus travel so could use timetabled buses. This will have an impact on the economy of the area though by making some bus drivers unemployed." (STAFF)
- "I think this proposal is absolutely disgraceful and I understand we need to make cuts in places to save money, but when it compromises children's safety there is a big issue." (PARENT)
- "Be clearer in stating if eligible for NEC then no real change to situation for many." (PARENT)
- "Of probably even more concern is the fact that many of those who financially rely more on free school transport (such as people in certain Glen Village or Hallglen postcodes) are going to be the ones most adversely affected with the new criteria if their children attend St Andrews or St Mungos." (PARENT)
- "While we are within comfortable walking distance and any changes won't affect us personally, I am concerned for those with young children who are otherwise reliant on the transport and may have to adapt working arrangements/childcare arrangements to be able to take their children safely to nurse or school. There will also inevitably be an impact on the volume of cars driving to and parking in Westquarter at the start and end of the school day. This is already challenging (for residents and for those dropping off and picking up children) and will be made worse if this proposal is implemented. Creation of additional parking in the vacant spot where the club used to be would help with this (rather than this sitting empty in the hope to build more houses)." (PARENT)
- "Falkirk council should stop and think of the impact this will have on parents and pupils this will indefinitely lead to pupils unable to attend school on a regular basis if the parents cannot afford the extra cost of school transport." (PARENT)
- "I think 2 miles for any child to walk before and after school is too much. They're already tired with having a long day at school. No child can walk 2 miles on their own so I'm sure lots of parents would be in the same position with work. In the winter the kids would have to leave in the dark & get back when it's dark too." (PARENT)
- "Falkirk Council are cutting so many services in our community, that it is becoming disheartening being a resident here." (PARENT)
- "When it comes to Braes school, I cannot see that much saving being made. As soon as you get to 2 miles from Braes catchment, you're in majority rural areas where there are no pavements and therefore no safe walking routes so transport will still have to be provided." (PARENT)



- "Let me ask you this. How would you feel having to get up extra early every single morning to walk or cycle an hour to your job and then do the same once you have had a long day at work. Just because our kids aren't adults and don't have jobs doesn't mean they can't have bad days or days where they don't feel too great and just can't be bothered walking an hour or more to school. Not to mention the safety risk this puts on the kids. It's preposterous." (PARENT)
- "The roads and parking outside St. Joseph's are a real problem. Taking away the bus will mean more cars, more traffic, and more danger for the children. How there hasn't been more accidents is quite frankly a miracle. The decision was made to close the school gates at 8.45 making the turning circle non accessible because the risk overwhelmingly outweighed the benefit of keeping it open. The layout of the road is too narrow, there is a pedestrian crossing across the staff car park and there just isn't enough space at all, it is very dangerous. I think that this serious issue runs side by side with the removal of the bus service as this will only heighten the problem" (PARENT)
- "How can the safety of our children be monitored? Where is the duty of care for our children. Without a school bus driver, who monitors the children in relation to bullying etc." (PARENT)
- "I have a child at another school and I work full time. I cannot safely get both children to school on time and still get to my work." (PARENT)
- "What about kids with additional needs who are in mainstream school. They can't be expected to walk to school or pay money to get to school safely." (PARENT)
- "I think expecting any primary school child to walk 2 miles to school and 2 miles back is preposterous! A 4-mile round trip!" (PARENT)
- "Scottish Government has given all young people free bus transport so some of that funding should be allocated to school transport." (PARENT)
- "This proposal suggests that it's reasonable for children to walk three miles in the morning, and three miles again in the afternoon. Often in inclement weather, often in the dark. Having googled it, the average person takes 45-60 mins to walk 3 miles, each way, and that's not accounting for the fact that these are children. I think this will leave children exhausted. I also always worry about safety, particularly for young women, although not exclusively. This risks extra exposure to danger. I'm sure you'll find a large increase in single vehicles, which will undoubtedly impact your environmental targets too." (PARENT)
- "It will raise an anxiety and worries for the parents if they children would need to walk to schools instead of using the buses." (PARENT)
- "We need clarity on what the proposal means beyond the removal of bus passes. Are the buses still running. Have you considered a model where we pay to use the bus. If there is no bus, you are looking at 100+ additional cars at Westquarter in the morning. Not good for residents or environment. Everyone has jobs and don't have time to walk kids there and back every morning so it will be car drop offs. We can't combine due to car seat issues. I would urge you to look at income generating models where we can book a space on the bus. Ditto for Graeme high. The school buses are the only full buses in the Falkirk council area." (PARENT)
- "Under 22's are entitled to free bus travel should this not be applicable to school bus. If more kids have to be driven to school this will increase the number of cars around school. Its not as simple as walking or cycling when you are further away from school. The extra cost may be too much for families" (PARENT)
- "I would be concerned if the school transport was removed completely depending on walking distance to school. Walking distance is not an issue, the issue would be unmanned road crossing. As many working parents do, we rely on school transport to allow myself and my husband to attend workplaces at our start time and transport changes will affect my ability to attend my workplace, which is also a primary school, on time." (PARENT)
- "I of course appreciate the financial constraints of the council but please don't penalise the most vulnerable children. High school is challenging enough for care experienced children without the added stress this would cause (PARENT)
- "The council needs to consider congestion around the schools when they change this as people will just take their children to school by car if they are not willing to pay the bus fare. Will the Scotcards still be accepted on the school buses that currently take them." (PARENT)
- "I'm absolutely fed up with the conservative party underfunding councils especially when it affects children and families. They have designed a system that makes it impossible to provide for our families on a one household income. Therefor as much as I agree with the benefits to the planet and health from walking, working families do not have time to walk their children 2.9 miles to and from school in

*the mornings/afternoons. These cuts will likely increase congestion at schools as more families would drive instead. Congestion is already bad at St Margaret's Primary as there is no dedicated parking for parents. This would also likely increase costs for families in a cost-of-living crisis with bus/taxi fares. This is not a practical idea by any means. There are plenty of other ways to cut spending starting with purchasing." (PARENT)*

- *"A 45-50 min walk to school is not acceptable for any child especially during winter and considering the state of pavements etc. drive loan is not a safe walking route for anyone never mind children as pavement is extremely narrow at several points." (PARENT)*
- *"They have already been affected getting their free bus pass removed when we moved house, literally across the road so still using the same bus stop. Went from 1 mile away to 0.9." (PARENT)*
- *"I have concerns about the environmental impact - many parents will choose to drive pupils to school instead increasing traffic congestion and pollution. If a paid bus service was the alternative many parents would not be able to afford bus fares particularly if they have multiple children." (PARENT)*
- *"Surely there are other areas of the council where you could save money rather than putting children's safety at risk." (PARENT)*
- *"I think it is unsafe to let 4-year-olds and their older peers walk to school when they live a fair distance away." (PARENT)*
- *"Children under 21 get free bus travel in Scotland. This will only result in increased travel on public buses, resulting in public complaints and more work for the children. Or it will result in more traffic than necessary at school drop offs which are not up to scratch as it is. More frustration and more accidents. This is such an ill-thought-out plan. The same children will get on the reduced buses because the children are entitled to free bus transport in Scotland. In relation to the primary school this will mean the school bus isn't needed at all as it's under 2 miles, so children will be put on public transport or driven. Causing further traffic at school pick up/drop off. How many children's life will Falkirk council put at risk to save a bit of money. Maybe stop paying for buses for children whose parents CHOOSE to send them to RC schools further away and leave those of us that send our children to local school alone. Or taxis for children who live within walking distance of St Margaret's but are in Westquarter catchment, so you pay for taxis for them as it's an unsafe walk to Westquarter - just let them attend St Margaret's." (PARENT)*
- *"This is discrimination against Catholic pupils." (PARENT)*
- *"I agree if there is a safe walking route that the change would be manageable however this is not the case, and I would like to think this is taken into account." (PARENT)*
- *"Whilst 3 miles may not seem much in the summer months. The darker winter months combined with bad weather would be unachievable and unsafe for a child to walk there and back. I find it extremely unfair to expect this of them." (PARENT)*
- *"The walking route home is not safe for young children. The main road in Polmont is continuously affected with speeding drivers and there are no pedestrian crossings anywhere near Gilston Park end of the town. It's incredibly dangerous to expect young children to walk 2miles+ on busy main roads with narrow pavements." (PARENT)*
- *I think the Council need to look at themselves internally rather than focussing on essential things for children and their families to sort out their budget issues (PARENT)*
- *"Children are entitled to apply for free transport on buses, unfortunately Braes high school is not on a public bus route from Maddiston, so this is not even an option for our children." (PARENT)*
- *"Will they have school transport and they will have to pay if they fall within 3mile radius? Or can they use their Young scot card as it entitles kids to free transport on buses and public transport, I am guessing not. This needs to be reviewed seriously as asking kids to walk 40 mins into and back from school, especially when there are dark nights and unsafe walking paths is ridiculous." (PARENT)*
- *"Most of the town of Bonnybridge is 2.5 miles from Denny High School via a suitable walking route; therefore, nearly the whole town will be affected by the change with children then being expected to walk for 45-55 minutes at each side of the school day. This is a long walk, along Drove Loan which is dangerous at the best of times. The proposal needs to take into account the safety of the routes available and the volume of children affected in areas which are only just nudged out of eligibility." (PARENT)*
- *"I think it is a disgrace that with everything else the council is closing; you are yet again impacting on the children of Falkirk. How much more can you take away from this generation until there is nothing left for them." (PARENT)*

- "If the distance for free transport for high school children is increased to 3 miles, I fear it may lead to an increase in absence for those kids who for whatever reason can't/won't walk/bike to school! The pandemic has caused too much disruption to schooling already and has also resulted in an increase (worldwide) of school anxiety/phobia and refusal. Falkirk council should be doing EVERYTHING possible to get kids to school and to reduce the impact of Covid and disruption to schooling not making it harder!" (PARENT)
- "Young kids forced to walk to and from school in the dark during winter. Kids turning up soaked to the skin. Walking in the rain. Safety concerns kids walking in high winds or when there's ice on the ground. Putting even more pressure on parents who are already struggling. Attendance rate will drop I'm sure as hell not making her walk to school when temps are in the minus's or there 60mile an hour wind. Are the council going to cover the costs of new footwear due to all the added wear a tear walking to a from school? I could go on but I'm sure you'll have 1000 others adding to the very long list of why this is a terrible and quite frankly dangerous idea" (PARENT)
- "I have 2 kids in primary and one in high school me and my partner do not drive, not to mention the safety of my kids and there wellbeing. It's just not safe or sustainable and to even consider making young kids walk such a distance to get to their education is just downright ridiculous. We now live in a world that isn't really safe. Anything could happen these kids are the future how much more do they need to lose to all these cuts to save money. I am sorry but my children and everyone else's children safety should come first." (PARENT)
- "More info is needed on your plans and how it actually makes inefficiencies and ensures safety of our young people." (PARENT)
- "This will increase pressure on public bus services as children will use these with the NEC card to travel to school. Many more parents will choose to drive their children to school without access to a school bus. Falkirk geography is different from other local authorities and a 3-mile journey can cover very rural-urban routes and make it unsafe to walk these routes. School children wear dark clothes and will refuse high-vis further making it dangerous for them to walk these routes in the dark. Children will end up being late or absent from school more without being able to travel on a school bus." (PARENT)
- "It would take well over an hour to get to school. This is far too long to get to school." (PARENT)
- "This is a ridiculous proposal to expect children to walk 6 miles each day in Scotland with our weather." (PARENT)
- "Maybe the council should try saving money elsewhere! For example, not giving drug addicts and alcoholics free bus travel! That's a start. Maybe look at the numerous buildings the council occupy with council staff (that all seem to be busy doing nothing) one central building one heating and electricity bill! Maybe start a maintenance job (roads) and finish it as quickly as possible instead of allowing your staff to waste as much time as possible dragging out a task to get paid overtime! Swimming pools and bus travel is an easy target for you instead of actually looking at the big picture." (PARENT)
- "I understand all local authorities have to cut budgets but limiting free school buses to a lot of families who are really struggling financially in this economic climate is not something I would propose. Again, parents are therefore making a hard decision to either pay for the bus they can't afford or get their children to use the free public transport with the increased safety concerns." (PARENT)
- "As above this is a ridiculous plan to a service that is needed." (PARENT)
- "The bus might be late then that makes my daughter late for school and if missed bus would have to walk which I think is a long way to walk." (PARENT)
- "I find that the council have not taken into consideration what the knock-on effect this is going to have on families that are really struggling during the hardship of current cost of living where some families are having to struggle with heating their homes or eating. And then to do this to add to the extra costs." (PARENT)
- "The Scottish Government advertises free bus travel; the priority should be to the place of education. The costs involved for parents is just too much." (PARENT)
- "Is she expected to get on a public bus now?" (PARENT)
- "Route is unsafe as recorded in recent council surveys." (PARENT)
- "This will result in more lateness for pupils, pupils arriving soaking wet whenever it rains. Dangers to pupils walking in the dark winter months." (PARENT)
- "I'm in two minds about this. If the focus is to save money, then this is an excellent proposal. I would rather it was trialled and reviewed after one year to see what adverse effects (if any) it had on the pupils. It may mean a 6-mile round trip walk for some pupils every day. For younger, smaller high

school pupils carrying heavy bags, it might prove unhealthy. Some of the girls are very small and would not have the energy reserves." (STAFF)

- "This proposal will impact parents unable to attend work if they have to transport children to and from School safely. It will also be bad for the environment as more vehicles will be on the road due to some schools not being entitled to school buses." (PARENT)
- "I feel Falkirk Council are making so many negative changes to schools and many other services that there are no benefits to be gained from any of these. The cost-of-living Crisis affects everyone and potentially parents might not be able to afford school transport if affected. Roads aren't particularly safe to cycle as so many potholes or poorly repaired roads." (PARENT)
- "If you decide to cut the bus services then many students will be forced to get up early to go to school dealing with the harsh Scottish conditions and sleep deprivation once in school they are then expected to work at their normal capacity as they would before the cuts. I understand that most pupils will be able to pay but bear in mind pupils that are unable to will fail in their classes, unable to get jobs therefore not able to pay taxes" (PUPIL)
- "Even with the use of the public bus system - can you guarantee these services will be reliable? Not threatened with cancellations or route changes that may not go near to the school or scrapped altogether?" (PARENT)
- "Absolutely counterproductive to remove cars from the road. This is just going to be an accident waiting to happen and clearly children's safety is not being prioritised." (PARENT)
- "I don't mind paying for transport but feel it's wrong that it isn't even going to be an option to pay for my child to get a school bus." (PARENT)
- "In that case we will have to use a car instead which will affect air pollution." (PARENT)
- "I have concerns that some very young children would have a long walk to school. Also, our weather will result in many young people arriving in school soaked and not fit to begin their day." (PARENT)
- "I'm sure there are other cost cutting measures that can be made instead of putting youngsters at potential risk getting to and from school every day. Education has suffered enough over recent years with Covid measures and teachers strikes. Adding in an extra difficulty for kids getting to school is not the answer." (PARENT)
- "I do not agree with this proposal and think the only outcome will be gridlock around Graeme high which is already extremely busy at drop off and pick up points. There is no obvious safe walking / cycling route to Graeme high from our area, and there are additional concerns about children having to walk this route alone on dark mornings / evenings. This will have environmental impacts and could lead to an increase in road traffic accidents. This is a terrible proposal." (PARENT)
- "Why can't we use the free bus pass that the Scottish government has put in place to run the busses just ask everyone to use the bus pass or pay for it." (PARENT)
- "Being in a rural community would mean children walking for close to an hour and three quarters each way, along very busy main roads and often in the dark. It is ridiculous to expect older or younger children to walk this, and most parents cannot afford this either." (PARENT)
- "If more parents were to drop their children off it adds to the already highly congested area outside the school, which already has minimal parking provision." (PARENT)
- "There is no alternative bus service that me or my children would be able to use to allow them to attend safely. There is no bus service where we live. Only the school bus that comes this way." (PARENT)
- "I have huge concerns about the safety of children walking from Denny to Bonnybridge. The footpaths are not safe or suitable for large volumes of children to walk home safely. Winter months with extreme weather- ice, snow, rain. The kids would be soaked through by the time they walked from Bonnybridge to Denny." (PARENT)
- "I think this is outrageous and is completely going against government policy which is specifically trying to encourage young people into using buses. My son has his NEC card entitling him to free bus travel. if you're proposals go ahead you will be cutting off a whole generation from using buses once again because you'll be forcing parents to drive their kids into school. increasing traffic and pollution putting the safety of kids trying to get into school at risk. more stressed parents rushing to drop off kids to school then get to work will increase chances of accidents as well" (PARENT)
- "The school bus system as it is works well for working parents and those of young children who can't walk to school on their own. I feel that the council should look for other alternatives to save money rather than compromise on children's safety." (PARENT)
- "Silly to even think about doing this" (PARENT)

- "I may have considered a placement request if this proposal had been open at the time. Even accessing a service bus would include a walk. I suspect this proposal would significantly increase traffic from Polmont to Graeme High. This does not help the sustainability/environmental agenda and would increase the risk for those pupils walking." (PARENT)
- "I would be extremely unhappy if this proposal went through as other pupils who get the same bus stop as my child (and live 3.1 miles from school) would get a pass for free but us at 2.9 miles would need to pay, even though they get the same bus stop." (PARENT)
- "Making kids walk may have health benefits, but what about the increased risks that come in to play in the winter months. 40-60mins walking in the rain and then having to sit in wet clothes all day is not acceptable." (PARENT)
- "Free school travel should be means tested. This will probably increase truancy among less well-off families as 2/3 miles twice a day is too far to travel on foot, especially in winter where children will end up walking in the dark." (PARENT)
- "I have big safety concerns too, as the road to school is a main one and she's too young to walk herself or with friends. Would it be possible to drop my daughter at another bus stop? We are 1.7 miles from the school. This school offers no breakfast club, so I can't drop a 6-year-old off early, there are no available child minders with availability in the area as I've looked in the past." (PARENT)
- "If you are removing this service, what are you replacing it with? What other options are being considered? is there an option to offer a subsidised service instead of removing the service completely. e.g. parents pay half. will the schools be open longer hours to accommodate children being dropped off early / or having to change into dry clothes from the walk. will the normal service buses be putting on additional services / buses to accommodate the additional children in the morning and afternoon?" (PARENT)
- "This proposal is by far the worst suggested yet, the life of kids are now in danger. Laurieston to Polmont is NOT suitable for walking let alone the salmon brae or through Grey Huchanan park !" (PARENT)
- "Families should be encouraged to apply for Young Scot card which entitles them to free travel. There need to be a definition for a "safe walking route" I have a daughter and I would be very worried with her walking home in her own especially in the dark. As I have experienced very recently, public transport is very unreliable." (PARENT)
- "What is the expectation in other areas of Scotland, UK & in other similar countries. Has the council considered weather & hours of darkness." (OTHER)
- "By looking at bus routes and pick up points the number of taxi's the council currently pay for could be reduced and a significant saving made." (PARENT)
- "I am a single parent and full-time carer, I don't drive and I'm afraid to learn. Without free school transport I would struggle to get my children to and from school. Education is a massive part of their young life's and very important." (PARENT)
- "My daughter also has health issues and is classed as disabled and may not always be able to walk to school." (PARENT)
- "Think it's ridiculous to expect children to walk 3 miles to school and back especially in the winter weather and darker nights." (PARENT)
- "I understand the council needs to save money, but it should not be at the expense of children." (PARENT)
- "I understand why there is a need to cut back but St Mungo's High School is not on a bus route where it is easy to get public transport to/from Lionthorn. Your policy is unreasonable and not safe for my children." (PARENT)
- "The only reason my child does not get a free bus is due to the way measurements are taken, for example, a direct line. Using this method my child would need to swim River Carron." (PARENT)
- "Considering the Scottish Government are desperately trying to 'close the gap' when it comes to attainment, how on earth will charging for school transport help encourage pupils from lower decile postcode areas to attend school? Schools will find attendance will dip towards the end of the month when parents start to run out of cash" (PARENT)
- "The thought of children as young as four potentially having to walk up to two miles to get to school first thing in the morning is quite worrying. Three miles from age eleven is also not particularly reassuring. A parent might have to walk up to around six miles twice a day to drop/pick up a child. That's if they manage to drag their child to school in the first place. If driving, the cost over a school year would be considerable. Some parents wouldn't be able to make it to work on time. School is not only a right but

also compulsory and as such whether transport for children who live far should be provided should not even be discussed. Perhaps the government should be asked to better and manage/distribute taxpayers' money. For example, by cutting expenditure on illegal, economic migrants to accommodate them in hotels/ private accommodation with all expenses paid. Ultimately, if I lived within two miles and wasn't provided with a pickup, my son wouldn't make it to school." (PARENT)

- "I can see why you are trying to save money however by doubling the distance is not the answer it effects way too many children and parents making it unsafe for the children effected and the ones who already go to school in other means." (PARENT)
- "Unsafe footpath to school. 60mph roads." (PARENT)
- "My child could not access a service bus to take her to school as there is not a route that would take her to school from our school." (PARENT)
- "This proposal has provided considerable safety and financial concerns for myself and my child. My child is anxious about walking the proposed route and to provide taxi journeys twice per day would have a huge financial impact on our family, additionally my child has concerns about travelling in a taxi with a stranger." (PARENT)
- "All Scottish children get free buses with young scot card why can this not apply to school buses?" (PARENT)
- "The weight of my child's schoolbag is really heavy with iPad, exercise books, lunch, gym kit, pencil case, etc. My daughter also has a musical instrument to take to and from school - this is difficult enough on the school bus, never mind walking. She certainly couldn't take it on a bike! Children can't be expected to walk this kind of distance both to and from school at any time of year in my opinion, but particularly when it is dark in the winter both going to and coming home from school. You will find that many more parents will just drive their child to school if they can. Anyone who drives past Graeme High at school start or finish time will know it is already very busy/dangerous." (PARENT)
- "There is no service bus my child could access that would take them to school." (PARENT)
- "It would be interesting to see what the council would regard as "safe walking routes" for children that would involve them walking up to 3 miles to and from school. These should be published so parents can make an informed decision as to whether as a parent I would also regard these as safe walking routes!" (PARENT)
- "You will have kids not at school just because you need to do cut backs." (PARENT)
- "I know that lateness and attendance are becoming concerning issues. Cutting back on free transport could exacerbate these issues and become a barrier to learning." (STAFF)
- "I am disgusted that Falkirk Council are extending the distance from which children can access free travel to and from school. If anything, they should be making all bus travel to and from school free. Falkirk Council need to take a look at their own spending and consider whether fancy new offices are more important than the safety of children." (PARENT)
- "It's madness to think that it's safe for a child to walk 2 miles to primary school and back each day, or 3 miles and back for high school." (PARENT)
- "Let's also remember the Scottish weather and the number of times it's pouring rain. A 20-30 min walk in the rain at the start of the day then kids sitting wet in clothes all day. The kids have free travel via the government scheme but there's no way I would let him go on a public bus and not actually a service that would take him there." (PARENT)
- "This cannot go ahead it's not fair we all pay our council taxes where is the money going?" (PARENT)
- "We feel that other considerations need to be made including contribution to costs of travel from parents. We would be keen to understand if this has been considered and what this could look like." (PARENT)
- "I have had to pay for my child to travel to school. It was infeasible to carry the number of schoolbooks the distance required and when the weather was bad, who would ask their child to walk 40mins each way to school. The council are adding more pain onto working parents with this extra cost." (PARENT)
- "Please keep the current criteria and try to save money another way." (PARENT)
- "This proposal will have a negative impact on so many families. There are no safe routes to schools for primary or secondary pupils. Many of the routes are next to busy main roads, underlit and narrow paths. The proposals would result in increased traffic. School drop offs are already congested and an accident waiting to happen. Don't amend the current policy and review and negotiate bus contracts instead to ensure value for money. It also seems inappropriate to compare Falkirk Council to Highland and Dumfries and Galloway which are large rural areas." (PARENT)

- *"I don't believe that the distance can be the only factor in this change. The specific route should be considered. When a child reaches high school, this becomes less of an issue. Potentially this could be considered from this age." (PARENT)*
- *"I feel that there are other avenues first that savings could be made on rather than the schools being the first target. It might be an idea to advise the cost to travel by school bus to see how this may affect parents. It would also be interesting to have the number of kids which stay 2 miles or more from St Margarets School or a current map showing the distance in which you must live to qualify for this. It may be more realistic to say that these will no longer be free instead of changing the distance as the bus only runs from the Main St to Gilston then to school and I don't believe that is 2 miles." (PARENT)*
- *"Removal of transport is likely to result in increased traffic and congestion around affected schools. Active and sustainable travel routes should be developed to help reduced private transport to school." (PARENT)*
- *"You said 'In the past, schools have not had to achieve the same level of savings as other services. Our current financial position means that must change.' A school is not a building but the community within it. What you are saying is children, the most vulnerable in our society must do without and I find that unpalatable." (PARENT)*
- *"This will disproportionately affect the less well-off children and will increase already dangerous parking difficulties at schools." (PARENT)*
- *"I think lots of children from Catholic Schools will be affected that proposal. Baptised Catholics should have access to Catholic schools, but that means long travels. That proposal hits all children, but the one from catholic schools even more so. There are limited walking routes and that could affect the choice parents will make when choosing school for a child. Reducing free transport will have impact on a lot of families being able to choose catholic schools as they will not be able to pay. That removes entitlement to going to catholic schools. Additionally, there are limited to no safe walking routes for a lot of pupils from catholic schools. Encouraging students to cycle to school only make sense when there is a safe route. Unfortunately, that is not only the case. I strongly believe that this proposal will mostly hit pupils and parents from catholic schools and that makes me very upset and disappointed" (PARENT)*
- *"I understand there has to be cuts but doing this to the transport will make myself and so many other parents struggle with the situation of trying to pick more than 1 child up. I have children that attend a high school and 2 different primary schools. All in Enhanced Provision settings & have additional needs. Being close to the schools doesn't matter as that isn't the only issue regarding requirements for school transport. My eldest doesn't stay too far from the high school yet her needs mean she cannot walk to school without great pain, no matter how far or close we are from the school. Distance from school should not be the only thing taken into consideration in my opinion." (PARENT)*
- *"This is a shocking way to cut money! Children suffer enough what with covid and strikes! It's unfair to put this on them too" (PARENT)*
- *"Families are also heavily impacted by the cosy of living crisis. As it is a mandatory entitlement to receive an education increased travel costs will impact families and may lead to more truancy or put children at risk on unsafe walking or cycle routes." (PARENT)*
- *"School transport could have been useful for August when the youngest child is of school age. This would avoid the horrendous parking situation at the school currently. Google maps thinks this journey would take 27 minutes. I know it would take my 5-year-old considerably longer than that and leave her in no fit state to endure the entire school day plus the journey home again." (PARENT)*
- *"This should not go ahead. I'm disappointed in the council to have the complete disregard for the safety and priority of the children and families in our community." (PARENT)*
- *"Very unimpressed with the proposals to close school swimming pools and now take away the school buses." (PARENT)*
- *"Yes, I don't know how the council can even think about suggesting this when the Government brought in the Young Persons Free Bus Travel Scheme in January 2022. Or is the Council trying to push all pupils onto public transport, which would be free, so they can get away with cancelling the private bus contracts? This would come with its own set of problems including that there would likely not be sufficient provision/space on public buses. Parents aren't going to willingly start paying for their child's transport to school, they're going to move to public transport." (PARENT)*
- *"We would rather pay higher taxes for all kids to continue to benefit from transport to and from school. Kids health and safety should not be anywhere near Council budget cut decisions." (PARENT)*

- "Claiming children will not be affected because "it does not directly impact on educational provision" is a lot of rubbish! If they can't get to school, the. Of course, their learning will be affected if buses are removed. Children are required to be educated, and most are in receipt of their education in a school setting. ALL children regardless of the distance they live from school should be eligible for free transport to school. Finally, if big cuts are required, then those earning the most should seriously consider if their job is worth significantly more per hour (pro rata) than their colleagues. Elected persons need to remember that they work for us (especially those elected to a position of power)." (PARENT)
- "The proposal is also unsafe especially on dark mornings and afternoons, the route would take over and hour of walking meaning children would have to leave home very early still in the dark" (PARENT)
- "I think there needs to be a survey to look at who actually uses the busses. Look at parking space for parents to drop of their kids. Not enough parking around schools. If people have to pay for transport does this have a knock-on effect for parents." (PARENT)
- "Particularly, asking a primary child to walk that far is ridiculous. Children have a long enough day at school and are often physically active within this too. In addition, the bus route still must cater for those beyond the time so giving free access to those others should not make a massive budget cut. For my child's safety, the route would be unsafe to walk. Finally, many parents/Carers use this service to enable them to access work - with breakfast club not starting until 8.30am now and the high volume of traffic at school drop off/collection the bus is used to support parents within families like mines to be able to get to work as well as contributing to the reduction in cars/people driving to and from school." (PARENT)
- "Proposal should be reviewed to consider the impact on areas of deprivation. The proposal could be reviewed to allow an increase travel distance from areas above a certain deprivation quintile to make it more equitable for families in the community." (OTHER)
- "Perhaps the proposals could have been clearer in respect of free bus travel for under 22s in Scotland. Perhaps negating the need for some of the high school age pupils to come by car and preproposal consideration should have been given and agreement sought with local bus operators as to ensuring a local public transport provision is in place." (OTHER)
- "I'm not sure how my children are meant to get to school if the bus service isn't even going to be available if they were to pay. It would take them about 45 - 60 minutes to walk this distance to school. Cycling isn't an option as it is mainly uphill and the road is unsafe enough for walking, never mind cycling." (PARENT)
- "Parts of the paths on the route to the school are not wide enough, in the winter paths are not adequately lit and unwalkable as not gritted. One route is through a wooded area which I would not want my daughter walking on her own." (PARENT)
- "You need to seriously reconsider the rationale. 40% of those currently using the service would no longer be eligible. That clearly indicates the service is well used and offers good value for money when compared against other benefits that you have not considered or are not calling out in the consultation. What happens to those 40%? You really think they are all going to be walking or cycling to school, primary school children? You have not: 1 - given any indication of safety implications 2 - considered how many will be dropped off by car - that's going to be the vast majority (convenience/time/bad weather/unsafe routes or just the plain fact they are only 7 years old!). All those extra cars in an around the school (which is frankly already an absolute disgrace, people double parked, over yellow, lines, up on pavements, grass verges etc. 3 - presented an all or nothing option. What other option savings been sought? Have you considered funding from elsewhere, if so, where? Would (parent) contribution to the cost be an option instead of just free/removed? "The proposal to alter who is eligible for free school transport is being put to Councillors because it does not directly impact on educational provision", but it does directly impact on safety and parent's ability to pay. "School bus services would be reduced and would no longer be available to pupils, even on a fare-paying basis". So, by saving this money you would remove services, even if we wanted to pay meaning all the downsides happen anyway? The detail in this "consultation" is a disgrace. Why don't you just say "it saves us money". Full stop!" (PARENT)
- "I feel the withdrawal of the school buses, will not only put extra strain on the existing bus services, but will also create a lot of additional cars on the road resulting in more pollution and congestion. The free school buses are already full to capacity, so I can only imagine what a negative impact this would have on the existing bus services." (PARENT)
- "This would have a huge impact on working families using the safety of school busses to transport young kids to and from school." (PARENT)



- "Using the school bus means less cars using the roads around the schools and less cars trying to park near the school. This is already an issue at St Andrew's and is unsafe for children. Using one school bus is more environmentally friendly than using dozens of cars. I would not feel comfortable allowing my 8-year-old to walk 2 miles to school. If this proposal goes ahead, you must ensure there are adequate road crossing patrols for the safety of our children. Roads are busier than ever, and patrols are less than ever." (PARENT)
- "I think some money could be saved using one taxi for additional support children to share, instead of one taxi per child. There is going to be a higher volume of traffic at the school if every child gets dropped of separately instead of getting the bus." (PARENT)
- "Appreciate looking to reduce costs but surely other options can be looked at." (PARENT)
- "There is no safe walking route from Langlees to Falkirk High School. You need to think about kids with disabilities and hidden disabilities." (PARENT)
- "If the kids already get a free bus pass till there 21 does that not just defeat the purpose?" (PARENT)
- "Absolute shambles." (PARENT)
- "Pupils have to carry so much equipment to and from school it is not feasible for them to walk up to 3 miles each way. Our IMS pupils carry instruments, some of which are both bulky and heavy. I do not feel it is safe for pupils to walk to and from school in the winter when it is dark in the mornings and afternoons. Pupils are likely to be late to school if they are relying on service buses in the current climate - that is if there is a bus route from where they live to their school." (OTHER)
- "Even if public transport is operational and on time there would be a number of children trying to get on the same buses, potentially already full of public passengers - would extra buses be provided for peak times of the day?" (PARENT)
- "I don't feel this is a good idea or safe at all. Especially for children from Skinflats or the old town who live far too far away from Beancross primary and who will not be able to safely walk the distance each day. Also, the cost of trying get to school by alternative transport is already far too high." (PARENT)
- "Young people have a right to an education (UNCRC Article 28), putting a barrier such as the ability to access this education by increasing the distance of free transport and taking away the support towards education. Many young people live further than 1 or 3 miles from their catchment school, why are you putting barriers up to education, and allowing the children to suffer?" (PARENT)
- "I understand that the council need to make savings, however I feel there would be many 'knock on effects' arising if this proposal were to go ahead. I have outlined the effect on my own family, and I'm sure many other families will have similar concerns. In addition, I fear that the areas surrounding schools would become even more congested with cars with children being dropped off in even larger numbers than they are currently - and I would say that congestion at school drop off and pick up times is already a major problem. This then becomes not only an issue of safety but also an issue in terms of the environment. Even if many children decide to take a local service bus, have any of the local bus companies been asked to consider the impact on the vast increase in customer numbers will have on their routes. I would foresee there will be an increase in the number of children arriving late to school (or not at all) after missing a bus or not being able to fit on a bus! If walking then there will be a large increase in the number of children on some very narrow pavements or cycling on the roads at rush hour." (PARENT)
- "This proposal has many issues; how many parents can afford to take 2hrs 20 minutes out of their day to walk to school and back in the morning and afternoon with their primary aged child/ren. I agree walking is a great form of exercise and is good to instil in our children as a great start to the day but realistically how many parents and children will walk. With the proposal of 1174 bus passes being removed from pupils that is potentially 1174 additional cars on the road during "the School Run", with the average car being 4.5 m long this would mean 3.2 miles of additional cars on the road at School drop off and pick up. Do the finances of this proposal look at the potential costs that the additional traffic on the road will cause for the Roads Department from additional stress on the roads in Falkirk, pothole claims, pollution levels around schools, and congestion? A solution could be you the Council could change the bus routes so that current pupils would share buses; like what happens just now with St. Andrew's RC Primary 695 bus. In the morning both St. Andrew's RC Primary pupils share the bus with Comely Park Primary pupils. At the end of the school day, it is not unusual for both the Lionthorn/Hallglen pupils from St. Andrew's RC Primary share a bus and with Graeme High pupils on occasion usually when buses have failed to show. As this is already happening surely the Council could reroute the routes to maximise the number of pupils onto 1 bus. e.g. Hallglen/Lionthorn/Slamanan Road combination bus. Are the Council going to step up road sweeping/removal of dead leaves from pavements and roads/salting pavements on icy/snowy days? Has the cost been accounted for by this

- proposal for the additional requirements by the Roads Department for the Health and Safety of the pupils? Another concern I have with this proposal is for High School pupils meeting on their way to school different High School Pupils, the use of school transport removes these issues." (PARENT)
- "If the bus pass is withdrawn this will then mean that more cars will be at the school causing more congestion and making the area around the school more dangerous than it already is. A child was knocked down at Antonine PS last week and to be honest when I am collecting my child from nursery at 2.45pm the car park is already congested, and the surrounding streets are full of cars. To add more cars to this already busy situation would only exacerbate matters. Further it is only the children in Ochil Gardens and Allandale Cottages who actually receive a bus pass which basically amount to two streets, not large housing estates and is therefore hardly a huge money saving option." (PARENT)
  - "Please consider child safety." (PARENT)
  - "Parents do not have time to walk 4 miles to accompany their children to school before they can go to work. This will cripple many families who are already struggling." (PARENT)
  - "Kids who will cycle will be at risk during rush hours. Especially in dark winter days." (PARENT)
  - "I am sure changes can be made elsewhere. Would it be possible to keep busses running but charge fares" (PARENT)
  - "I think that Falkirk Council should prioritise cuts in other areas. Attendance at primary and high schools will be directly affected by this, impacting on local and National educational attainment and the overall resilience of our children. (PARENT)
  - "I feel that the parking situation will be damaging for the residents of Westquarter" (PARENT)
  - "I would be great full if you can let the kids keep going to school with the bus and back home." (PARENT)
  - "It is absolutely shambolic that this is even being considered." (PARENT)
  - "I would like to see how the proposed cash savings relate to the increase in CO2 emissions from personal vehicles which many parents will choose to use and how this aligns with Falkirk Councils proposed reduction in overall CO2 emissions for the area. People will not walk if they have a car." (PARENT)
  - "The children shouldn't be affected" (PARENT)
  - "Public services are also unreliable, so let's be honest there will be even more children either not attending or late, which the parents would be blamed for when the council want to cut services for our children to go to and from school safely!" (PARENT)
  - "Where I stay is not an option for my kids to walk to school given the busy roads they would need to cross. The additional costs I would incur with bus travel would add extra expense to my already stretched finances. Take into account the time it would take my kids to walk to the High school they would need to leave the house at 730" (PARENT)
  - "Will cause chaos with lots of parents driving to school. Have you checked if you could get on a school bus with a Young Scot card. Then no change to parents but Scottish Government will pick up that part of the bill." (PARENT)
  - "Putting extra pressure on parents to save not a lot if money is disgusting. look for savings to be made closer to home e.g. in your own offices, work better and smarter. Making cuts to children's welfare and Education once again is a complete disgrace." (PARENT)
  - "Children's safety should be priority" (PARENT)
  - "This must be protected for the safety of our children" (OTHER)
  - "I am not personally affected but I know people who are. And it would make it difficult for them to get their children to school." (PARENT)
  - "Surely Falkirk Council can reduce other areas of spend which are not critical to the development of our children." (PARENT)
  - "The Scottish Government launched national free bus travel for children, for the very purpose of getting them to work/school/college etc. Falkirk Council should not be taking this away from our children!" (PARENT)
  - "These proposals disproportionately affect children who are protected by the age category of the Equality Act 2010." (PARENT)
  - "I would suggest reviewing the distance entitlement with due consideration of deprivation rather than a blanket increase could be made." (STAFF)
  - "I feel this will increase the car traffic in our area and cause even more unnecessary congestion, example if you cut 4-5 single decker buses to that school this could mean the possibility of 100 - 200 extra cars dropping pupils off morning and picking up after school. this is also an increase on vehicle

- emissions which I am sure you will agree isn't environmentally acceptable, now times that by how many busses you remove from each school." (PARENT)*
- *"The Scottish Government has given free transport to young people, but you can't use this on certain school buses. I don't think school buses should be excluded. As a female I am scared walking for any distance for fear of verbal or physical attack. Young people and children are vulnerable and should have access to free transport on buses" (PARENT)*
  - *"Article 28 - a child's right to an education, this barrier to learning is impacting on a right to an education. This is not families choosing to live a distance away from an educational establishment, this is boundaries being changed which will impact directly on the young people." (STAFF)*
  - *"Unsafe conditions to force children to walk. Adding to financial strain for working parents." (PARENT)*
  - *"Expecting these children to walk to school, particularly in the winter months, is dangerous to their health and wellbeing." (STAFF)*
  - *"Additionally, the routes pupils would be required to walk during winter could pose a risk to themselves on busy pathways and roads." (STAFF)*
  - *"Understand save money but stopping buses that are the only bus to an estate is just horrific." (PARENT)*
  - *"A lot of young children from where we are from use the school bus. and to remove this it's unfair to both parents and children, especially the younger ones who will more or likely be tired from walking to school to actually do good." (PARENT)*
  - *"I'm concerned that if transport became a major issue, I'd have to home school my children and I'm not qualified enough to do so. I feel that STEM subjects would especially suffer." (PARENT)*
  - *"Can the children use their NEC cards on these services?" (PARENT)*
  - *"Surely this will increase the amount of parents their cars to take kids to primary and high school which is already a challenge." (PARENT)*
  - *"3 miles is quite a distance to walk to school each morning, especially in the winter months when temperatures drop for instance the last few weeks temperatures have been below 5°. I understand that the under 22 bus pass will support bus travel but public transport can be unreliable at times." (PARENT)*
  - *"My children will go to Denny High School when they are older. Possible walking routes from our current house are at least 1 hour if not more, along many roads that I would not deem safe for pedestrians, especially in winter, such as the Drove Loan. There is no public service bus that connects High Bonnybridge to Denny High meaning they will either get on multiple buses to and from school (the bus route planner is suggesting 3 different buses for the journey) or again face a lengthy walk to a bus stop, then the bus, then another lengthy walk. They are also then at the hands of the public bus times meaning they could be in school long before their peers or face a substantial wait after school. As a mother of a child awaiting diagnosis of additional support needs and a mother of a daughter, I do not feel that would provide my children with safe travel to and from school." (PARENT)*
  - *"I just find it shocking." (PARENT)*
  - *"During the dark, winter months I strongly feel that this proposal is putting kids' lives at risk due to the distance and route having to be taken. The narrow foot paths combined with 60mph roads and lack of road safety measures is an accident waiting to happen to due to the sheer volume of people that will have to use these routes. My oldest is in S1, a young female, and I am genuinely concerned that she will be put in harm's way, along with other kids, with this proposal. We have a duty of care to ensure our kids safety and wellbeing and I have a strong feeling that should this proposal be put forward that there will be a significant risk and undoubtedly an incident that may well be sever which could have been avoidable." (PARENT)*
  - *"Perhaps rather than pulling transport you subsidise it in some way with families who can afford it to contribute towards cost." (PARENT)*
  - *"Why can't we be given the option to pay small amount towards the bus service to get our kids to school safely." (PARENT)*
  - *"Why is all the money being saved in children services. It seems to be Falkirk Council is hitting hard on the children." (PARENT)*
  - *"How can people start work at 9am when they are being forced to walk just under 2 miles to school, and how are they meant to get to school at 3pm when the school is in a different position to their work. Appreciate the budget issues bit this is totally unfair on children and parents." (PARENT)*
  - *"This will definitely increase traffic in and around the school putting children at risk. If safe walking route is only safe if child/ren are accompanied by an adult, then many parents will be late for their work and due to working hours probably will be unable to accompany the children home. Many parents affected*

- also have younger children who also need to be taken to a different school. How do you get them to school on time if you are walking almost 3 miles with older children to high school? During winter months these children will be walking in the dark - again putting them at risk." (PARENT)
- "With Covid these children have had enough of their education messed about with there is not a bus that goes this route on a normal bus paid route and kids have free bus travel surely better options for budget cuts that will actually make a difference to the deficit is what's needed." (PARENT)
  - "Due to the cost of living crisis - we at the moment have to juggle between heating or eating and now you are asking us to also decide between paying for a bus pass - what you are going to find now is that a lot of children from this area will not go to school or will finish at the end of 4th year. You've mentioned that children can cycle, have you checked the route from Langlees to Falkirk high school? Complete maniac drivers in the road, not very well lit and if decide to take the canal route - no cctv - so paedophile town - fantastic choice you are giving to children and parents. Well done Falkirk council " (PARENT)
  - "If the Scottish Government are rolling out free bus travel up to age 25, I am at a loss as to how and why there would be no allocation for school travel." (PARENT)
  - "A three-mile walk will take most school children an hour. Is this acceptable to the council?" (PARENT)
  - "I think it is a disgrace. Also, what about the bus companies who probably depend on this work to keep them in business." (PARENT)
  - "Concerns over the impact this could have on young people's attendance and attainment." (PARENT)
  - "It's unacceptable to expect children to walk these distances to attend school. Especially from a safety point!" (PARENT)
  - "First get the paths and cycle lanes sorted. Maybe start fining people for littering etc." (OTHER)
  - "School bus allows families of all incomes and ability to get their children safely to school. Additional costs would add additional strain to families who are already struggling during this cost-of-living crisis. Has there been an appropriate EQIA carried out? Surely this would identify the needs of those in poverty and on the tipping point. This will lead to decreased attendance and outcomes for pupils" (PARENT)
  - "I'm beyond disgusted that Falkirk Council is putting the lives of children at risk. Furthermore, parents will have to drive their children to school who live in Bonnybridge/High Bonnybridge, causing pollution and congestion. That's those parents who have the luxury of being able to drive their children to school." (PARENT)
  - "It's just going to push kids to use the young Scot cards on public transport" (PARENT)
  - "I feel that this would be dangerous for the children from Bonnybridge trying to get to school safely." (PARENT)
  - "Retain the existing service level, look to balance budget in a different way (for example by increasing revenues through encouraging growth). One way to encourage growth would be to invest in our young people, for example by providing a free at point of use, sustainable method of transport to schools." (PARENT)
  - "All children are entitled to a free bus pass out with school no matter the distance. I do not see why they should not be able to use free transport to school unless they live further away than 2 miles!" (PARENT)
  - "The safety of children from across the district is priceless. I wouldn't want it on my head if a kid walking an extra mile to school was involved in an accident or anything else." (PARENT)
  - "Do not all children travel for free as part of the government's scheme using the young Scot's card so don't understand this proposal" (STAFF)
  - "I understand the council need to make cuts, but this is an essential service for many children which will leave lots of families in a difficult situation if it is removed." (PARENT)
  - "There is no straight route to walk to the school. The area where the school is more isolated and has a very busy main road at the entrance. After the recent road traffic accident at a local primary, it's every worrying the council is cutting costs rather than thinking about the children safety." (PARENT)
  - "What happens to pupils during winter if it rains or snows if their parent or guardian doesn't drive?" (PARENT)
  - "As well as safety concerns for children this goes against all the policies to try and reduce the impact of air pollution from traffic. We are encouraged as much as possible to use public transport, but this cut will simply mean many more cars at drop off and pick up which will increase emissions." (PARENT)
  - "This is very bad for the environment by putting extra cars on the road instead of a single bus." (PARENT)

- *"This proposal will unfairly impact families who cannot afford to pay for bus or have the ability to drop children off at school. Is it realistic to expect secondary school kids to walk for approximately an hour each way to get to school in all weathers? This policy has the potential to adversely affect many children's ability to attend school"* (PARENT)
- *"I think it is ridiculous the council would look at affecting any part of a child's education that would affect said child to attend school furthermore it is appealing that you would expect the taxpayers to take the brunt even more than we already have due to the rise of costs of living"* (PARENT)
- *"It's unfair to expect primary aged kids to walk 1.9 miles each way and secondary kids to walk up to 2.9 miles each way to school they'll be exhausted, and parents are finding it hard enough to pay for their kids without paying additional fares so their kids can get to school safely"* (PARENT)
- *"You are seriously putting kids' lives at risk. You can't expect kids to walk to school along busy Earls Gates or Docks roundabout in dark and wet morning and nights. Everyone is finding paying for things hard at moment and finding money for bus fares is an added problem. There is no safe route to school. What are we paying council tax for. Great idea Councillors take a pay cut and let them walk to work."* (PARENT)
- *"Ridiculous that this is even being considered. Our taxes should be spent wisely and this is a waste of money."* (STAFF)
- *"I do not see how cutting school transport fits with the current climate crisis by removing communal transport and putting more cars on the road. It also appears that the proposal will have the greatest impact on Catholic pupils. That raises the question of discrimination."* (STAFF)
- *"Along with free school meals, free bus travel should be means-tested. In the same way access to school clothing grants is assessed. Children should not be walking 2 or 3 miles to and from school each day, particularly in rain and cold. It is often the case that those children who cannot afford bus fares, cannot afford appropriate clothing and footwear for such lengthy walking in adverse conditions, or potentially the food to support a 6-mile daily walk. I understand the limited budget makes choices very difficult, but targeting funds towards those facing true difficulties makes the most sense, both financially and morally."* (PARENT)
- *"Quick find on google, The Bainsford and Langlees area has once again been recognised as one of Scotland's most deprived areas according to the latest figures. The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) publication ranks around 7000 small areas covering the length and breadth of Scotland from most to the least deprived."* (PARENT)
- *"It's a 45 min walk from my home to Braes High School. This may be ok in the summer months and in warmer weather, but I don't find it acceptable to suggest kids walk that in winter/cold/wet weather"* (PARENT)
- *"With all these big new estates being built in the area with higher bands for council tax, where is the money going from these homes? Certainly not to benefit the community that's for sure. We parents are already squeezed to breaking point financially."* (PARENT)
- *"Encouraging more cars on the road."* (PARENT)
- *"I think it's appalling that the council think it's acceptable to consider bus cuts. There are plenty of other areas that could be focused on to cut. These are our children and the safety of our children the council is playing with. Especially for children that are now in a routine getting to school by bus as it's their only safe way to get to school. How on earth the council expects kids from further away villages to walk safely is beyond me."* (PARENT)
- *"I do not agree at all with the proposal, too much to expect from our children and also could potentially put them in danger with road accidents etc."* (PARENT)
- *"It maybe won't have as much of an impact of 'catchment areas' but for Roman Catholic schools this is going to be extremely concerning considering some of them maybe stay further away."* (PARENT)
- *"Things to consider - Children / young people whose attendance is already a cause for concern. How will an additional transport cost support get them into school? Do you not think this is creating yet another barrier for families/children & young people? How are low-income families going to manage this additional cost? How do you predict this will impact on children's attainment data? Particularly if there is an increase in absence or lateness due to children not attending school or being late due to walking?"* (PARENT)
- *"1 mile and 2 mile is sufficient. A 3-mile walk will take 1 hour. I urge the elected members to take a 3 mile walk in the rain and wind on a dark winter morning and provide honest feedback. Please define safe route. Poor pavements, unlit sections, busy road crossings, potential secluded parts of route. I don't think any elected member can agree that our pavements were safe and suitable during periods"*

*of freezing weather this winter. I have great concern for children as this has been the case for years now and I see no change in the future. I appreciate the opportunity to take part in this consultation however let's be honest it is lip service as this decision is already made. I would suggest that as it stands just now with cuts all over council services the current system of local and national government is broken and in need of radical overhaul. As an SNP controlled council, I would ask that you petition the Government to release ring fenced money for independence debates and stop fighting pointless court battles. Represent the people not your own agenda. Thanks" (PARENT)*

- *"Cutting out the wasteful middle management in Falkirk Council would save much money rather than putting children at risk." (PARENT)*
- *"Perhaps cutting out wasteful middle management in Falkirk Council would save money rather than putting children at risk and asking parents to pay more money when families' finances are already overstretched." (PARENT)*
- *"How do the council propose that my children get to school if the bus is not provided. It's not practical or safe for them to walk or cycle. 45 min walk. Would mean being late for work driving them and adding to pollution and congestion on the roads. Short sighted solution from the council without offering an alternative." (PARENT)*
- *"A safe route and crossing needs to be put in place. Children cannot walk this route in current condition. A serious injury or fatality for children walking this road is a reasonably foreseeable risk and should be prevented." (PARENT)*
- *"Use less taxis." (STAFF)*
- *"Think it is ridiculous as public bus services are full of drugs and drunks then there's peer pressure into not going to school as its too far to walk from local bus stop so will encourage truanting. Bullying will get worse. There are paedophiles walking about so where is our kid's protection when putting them out to school" (PARENT)*
- *"If the free transport is to be taken off then why don't they charge all kids a set amount per week and keep the transport on." (PARENT)*
- *"There are many busy roads around the school, and this would potential cause more accidents with children walking in all weathers or more cars on the road. We are trying to stop air pollution however this proposal would result in more cars on the road." (STAFF)*
- *"A couple of points: Our neighbour's child attends St Modan's High School in Stirling. A taxi collects him daily at 7.30 which then allows him to get the bus to school opposite the First Down in Denny. Who meets the cost of this taxi? Will this continue? If we chose to send our child to Gaelic Medium provision in either Stirling or Cumbernauld, am I right in thinking that Falkirk Council would foot the bill? (I say that as a Gaelic speaker)" (PARENT)*
- *"Children dropped off by parents at school will arrive early. This will need to be supervised which would bring an extra cost. 2 miles radius should be kept as it is." (PARENT)*
- *"There is not a suitable alternative bus service that could be used from our area. This change will result in more parents driving their children to and from school increasing the traffic on the roads and causing congestion at schools." (PARENT)*
- *"If the weather is bad then they will be affected, having to be in school if he's soaking wet is not what I would like for my child." (PARENT)*
- *"Weather as well as safety is a big issue and concern for me." (PARENT)*
- *"I think this is seriously dangerous and unsafe option. Not every parent has access to cars to drive their kids to school and some parents are unable to drive their kids due to work anyway." (PARENT)*
- *"Just not possible and going to cause a lot more stress in morning. A lot more cars on roads, more cars trying get in and out of car parks, not enough space for parking as it is. Just most crazy proposal ever. My son may not be at school because you want stop buses. It is not safe for him walk at that time morning no matter weather" (PARENT)*
- *"It's utterly ridiculous. That's it. Get more people paying tax and treat everyone fairly. You are going to cause a serious amount of backlash with this policy." (PARENT)*
- *"Falkirk council should be doing the opposite, run more buses. Show kids that using the bus and not the car is the right thing to do. Instead, we are teaching the opposite that it's ok to cut down on public transport and we should all just make our own way." (PARENT)*
- *"Although this proposal "does not directly impact on educational provision" it has a massive indirect impact on education. The additional stress caused to families and pupils from getting to and from school will impact on the child's ability to learn. Many children will be arriving at school late, tired, soaking wet and sore because their parents cannot afford to give them another option than walking to school. That*

is no way to start a school day for a child and going to be detrimental to their learning. There is also the additional cost of footwear as children cannot be expected to walk such long distances in badly fitting supermarket school shoes but again that is unfortunately going to be the only option for some families. Going to school should not be a financial struggle for families." (PARENT)

- "Personally feel our kids have suffered at the hands of the council enough. Leave their buses alone!" (PARENT)
- "Were there a lovely green route to St Mungo's then you might talk me round - but when we are talking about incredibly busy roads at these times of the day. I'm afraid I think you are aiming your cost cutting very unfairly in the wrong direction. Child school transport is as essential a service as they come, and these proposals are an insult to the residents who fund the council. Final point - your green "hopefully the darlings will cycle" undertones are just rubbish. You know that working parents will have no choice but to use their cars to further clog up the streets to get to school and then have a chance of getting to work on time. This is far from green - it will have the opposite effect and increase car mileage." (PARENT)
- "I cannot understand why Falkirk Council would compromise the safety of children by making them walk further to and from school, in order to save money. It is dark for half of the year and the weather can be very snowy/icy and paths are not well maintained/gritted. Falkirk council will also be contributing further to climate change and carbon emissions if this proposal does go ahead as those children at the boundary of the limits will have to be driven to school (they shouldn't be expected to walk in the dark or ice/snow covered paths that are not very well maintained) rather than in one or two buses taking them all." (PARENT)
- "Changing the school transport will create pressure and stress for children and parents. Not all parents living in the area work within it and have commitments to being elsewhere each day. Falkirk area is not safe to walk round. There are major and minor roads to cross and high traffic volumes to navigate. Public transport is poor, and it is not guaranteed that there will be buses running at suitable times to take pupils from a bus stop near their homes to outside the school. Our child struggles with anxiety and this will add to her worries. There are safety elements to consider especially in the winter in Scotland for example, the darkness and icy paths. The cost to parents when there is a cost-of-living crisis. This is a stupid, selfish idea and surely there are other ways to save money than putting children and young people's health, well-being, and safety at risk. How do we as parents and careers stop this?" (PARENT)
- "Abolish this proposal which will, if approved, have a massive detrimental impact on many families and their children's education." (PARENT)
- "It will be a massive safety issue if children have to walk." (PARENT)
- "This proposal is ridiculous. From Hallglen there is no safe walking zone which will mean parents will drive children to school, causing more chaos in the streets surrounding the schools, which people are already not happy about. Luckily my children are older (15 + 13) but these new proposals are going to allow children in primary school to walk 3 miles to their nearest Catholic primary. Not every parent drives and we cannot rely on the bus service as it is non-existent at present." (PARENT)
- "Our children are the future of this world and how the council can even propose this is ludicrous. They should support all children to be at school not just help the non-working. Working families are penalised at every turn, simply for setting good standards and being good role models to their children. It's disgusting." (PARENT)
- "The Support from council should be a continuous one." (PARENT)
- "As all young persons are entitled to free bus travel with the national entitlement card, why are these not able to be used on all school bus services. The impact that making the distance further, means that if bus services are withdrawn, pupils may not attend." (STAFF)
- "There is no safe in place to drop kids at St Mungo's. I take it you've dropped your Green targets and no longer care about car emissions and air pollution." (PARENT)
- "As a teacher who works in a school that the majority of pupils are bused in, I think this action will add additional financial pressure on to parents and carers. This will comprise pupil safety. Safe walking routes to school, length of journey and having to walk past other schools. And will cause traffic congestion at the point of pick-up and drop-off." (STAFF)
- "I am happy to pay for bus service if it means my child will get to school on time and safely." (PARENT)
- "I think it's ridiculous to expect young high school kids to walk 2.5 miles to and from school. It will mean myself and other parents driving our kids to school. Increasing the already dangerous levels of traffic coming in and out of Denny at school times." (PARENT)

- *"The First bus service is not reliable so this proposal doesn't make any sense, loads of kids will be attending school very late." (PARENT)*
- *"I believe ALL children should be entitled to free bus travel to and from school. It is our RESPONSIBILITY as adults to make sure our children are safe. There are children as young as 5 walking to school by themselves because they are not entitled to free travel and their parents are at work. Teenagers, walking dark, quiet routes to try and get home quickly because they are not entitled to free bus travel. It is sickening that any council member would agree to letting this happen by not giving ALL CHILDREN free travel but even more so by causing more children to be forced into this." (PARENT)*
- *"I believe there are other things which Falkirk council spend on that can be reassessed instead of cutting the school transport. Children have a right to an education and rely on this to get to and from school each day to achieve this." (PARENT)*
- *"I understand that savings are required in local government budgets, however I feel that in recent years, our young people have borne the brunt of the upheaval in society through Covid, teachers strikes as well as ongoing anxieties that exist due to current living conditions. I genuinely feel that savings should be found elsewhere and that as a society we should be looking to protect our young people in such turbulent times, not compiling stress and uncertainty by subjecting them to yet more restrictions (i.e., having to worry about how to get to school if their family is struggling for money)." (PARENT)*
- *"Public bus times are not guaranteed to coincide with school times & none provide a direct route to the school building. This could mean young people have to public bus into the town centre & either walk from town or take second bus to the school building. This could cause a number of problems: Children & young people hanging about town, unsupervised & at risk of harm or antisocial behaviour. Children & young people who struggle with anxiety disengage from school life completely as the journey to school becomes difficult & a risk to their safety, protection or wellbeing & therefore creates another barrier to attendance Children & young people are unsupervised walking up to x3 miles to school, where families cannot afford transporting their children to school, effectively older siblings could be becoming young carers of their young siblings. Children & young people are at an increased risk of being approached, led astray or be approached by strangers Children & young people attending a denominational school are no longer protected by a school specific bus & could possibly be open to risks attending a public bus from sectarian bullying. Where families have only primary children they would have to accompany them to school & then walk back twice a day, which could potentially be up to a x3 mile distance. This would impact on a parent being able to take up employment or sustain employment, if they are having to journey twice a day to school & return home x5 days a week it would make it extremely difficult to sustain any full-time working hours. This is highly likely to impact on women as the main carers & therefore raise issues of gender balance to parenting as many male employment roles are less flexible in terms of working hours. During winter months for a young person to walk up to x3 miles to school it could potentially be dark when they leave their home & dark by the time they arrive home at the end of the school day again. This drastically increases the risks of being approached by strangers or not arriving at their destinations at all. Children & young people are at a higher risk of accidents as they negotiate main roads travelling to school, that are unsupervised & have negotiate heavy rush hour traffic. Some families do not have the affordability to equip their children with adequate walking footwear for all weather conditions & walking in different temperatures for up to x3 miles increase this to up to x6 miles a day & the impact on clothing & adequate snacks to accommodate increased exercise is not affordable for many families, particularly alongside the rise in the standard of living on top. For families where affordability is not an issue, there would be an increase of traffic on the roads, increased traffic around the school for parking & dropping off their children, which will add to morning rush hour traffic, alongside increasing the risks to children & young people on foot. The parent of a vulnerable child at school could be left feeling more anxious & uncomfortable allowing their child to use public transport, or walk alone for up to x3 miles. A child or young person using public transport could alight at any stop without any provision in place to prevent that happening. It would be very difficult to feel confident that a vulnerable child or young person would arrive at school at all (& this would not be realised until the first period of school registration after 9am). Not all vulnerable children & young people are of a high enough tariff or have received diagnosis to benefit from transport to school provision by taxi, this would have an increase in referrals for this service of support, therefore putting more pressure on other stretched services." (OTHER)*
- *"Environmentally, I see this proposal as detrimental. Whilst the Council's ambition to encourage walking and cycling is laudable, the reality is that this means more cars dropping and picking up surrounding the schools." (PARENT)*



- "No although consideration should be sought at children's welfare at this number crunching pound saving exercise." (PARENT)
- "Falkirk council has given ever pupil an iPad at a huge expense but cannot afford for children to get to school safely! Really think this is outrageous." (PARENT)
- "I am not opposed to the distance for free school bus passes but strongly disagree with children having to walk such distances on poorly maintained narrow footpaths along main roads." (PARENT)
- "I understand the financial situation we are currently facing and that cuts have to be made. My concern is that buses would not be available even on a payment basis. If travel was means tested (linked to FME /clothing grant) and other families could pay to access transport, I would be more inclined to agree. Taking away the bus could lead to more families driving children to school - increasing congestion at schools in the morning and afternoon." (PARENT)
- "By car it is 3.1miles from my home to school. This is a significant distance for a walking journey, especially given the levels of vehicle traffic in Falkirk. My child is type 1 diabetic. I already have concerns about her management of diabetes, and this is an additional concern I can do without. We have recently begun self-funding her treatment at considerable expense - NHS Scotland won't provide - and your proposal is yet more expense. You have not stated the proposed cost. Assuming bus travel is still required it is much better and cheaper to devise a single common solution, for maximum benefit to the majority." (PARENT)
- "Winters in the Braes area can cause quite treacherous conditions to roads and pavements. The children will experience many hazards on their journey including slips, trips, and falls. Other Falkirk secondary schools have public buses that pass the school. Public buses do not go between Maddiston and Braes High. This means there will be no alternative for the children to walking removing their choice to do so." (PARENT)
- "I'm also a working parent and I don't have time to walk my kids to school as I need to get to work on time (same as many other parents concerned about this proposal I've spoken to). I will be forced to change my working hours and drive my kids to and from school every day. I can't imagine increase in traffic and parking at residential areas near schools if this proposal will go through." (PARENT)
- "The proposal will encourage more traffic on the road - parents running their children to school rather than paying for bus. This in turn will cause more congestion on the roads and is environmentally unfriendly. What is the criteria for 'safe walking' route and what road crossing proposals are they council looking at providing?" (PARENT)
- "I find it very hypocritical to be promoting walking and cycling as healthy options when there are minimal bike lanes and infrastructure, and the council is talking about closing pools. Where is the argument on health benefits there. Children are being made to suffer for the poor management by Falkirk councillors." (PARENT)
- "I would not expect my daughter of 7 years old to walk 2 miles to primary school via a busy main road. This would take her over an hour to walk and would you advise that a 7-year-old walks? Where is the consideration for a child's health and safety or indeed her concentration for the school day being affected due to fatigue from walking/ getting up an hour earlier to walk to school and therefore not getting enough sleep? Also, in the future when she will attend St Mungo's, I would not expect her to walk 2.5 miles to a high school and back home. This would take her around 1 hour each way. In reality all that will happen is that more parents will find time to drive their kids to school, thus creating a bigger carbon footprint, more congestion and generating more frustration due to lack of parking at schools, thus upsetting local home owners." (PARENT)
- "This proposal is an out and out disgrace for all affected children. The Scottish government gives under 22's free travel, yet from Maddiston to Braes High there is no public bus, the only ones that go anywhere near are entirely unreliable as you will know. Furthermore, I do not want my 12-year-old on a public bus when the local authority should be providing safe and reliable transport. Cut the budget somewhere else and stop putting thousands of kids at risk." (PARENT)
- "I think I've wrote everything in the previous box, I have medical problems and can't walk my daughter to school there is just no way, if there is no school bus then my little girls education is over in primary 2 (PARENT)
- "This is an absolutely shocking way to try and save money. You are putting children's lives on the line to save a buck. Yes, we are in the middle of a large financial crisis, I understand you need to save money but not by doing this. The number of parents out there that are just surviving each month is doubling every month, and you the council, want them to choose to either pay money they don't have to send their child to school or to allow their young child to walk nearly 3 miles to get there. Every time

you turn on the television or go onto social media you see a child gone missing, the amount of sick people out there is frightening, you are potentially setting these kids up to be another statistic. People just don't have the money to pay for school transport so they will have no option to allow their child to potentially walk it alone. Children these days do not respect the road like they did 20 years ago. They bury their heads in mobile phones and pay little attention to their surroundings. In my career I have had the unfortunate job of dealing with a log of pedestrians being struck/killed by motor vehicles and it's something I would not wish anyone to go through. I would implore you to seriously reconsider this as an option and look elsewhere for budget cuts before a child loses their life due to the cost of a bus ticket" (PARENT)

- "Is this the best saving with Infrastructure that needs implements for safety of children getting to school as well as potential damage to atmosphere with CO2 emissions." (PARENT)
- "I am a teacher at St Mungo's and know that around 200 pupils will be affected with this change and in a cost-of-living crisis this is completely unacceptable. There is also the concern about safety as pupils from as far away as points in Grangemouth may need to choose to walk so extremely busy roads and leave at least 50 minutes earlier to be on time for school no child should be asked to walk that far especially in the winter months." (STAFF)
- "If this proposal goes through, I am like to drive for safety reason which ideal and has negative impact in other ways" (PARENT)
- "The fact that they are not even able to pay for the bus is disgraceful. The normal buses in this area cannot be relied on so the only option is parents taking the children themselves which is not always possible." (PARENT)
- "While this proposal will impact the majority of schools in the local authority area, this will undoubtedly affect Catholic school pupils to a greater extent. This proposal will have a disproportionate impact on Catholic families as their children often travel further to attend their chosen school. Many families will feel they have no choice but to move their child(ren) to a non-denominational school which is within a safe walking distance. Overall, this seems to be an erosion of the rights of Catholic families to send their children to Catholic schools in the authority. While it is preferable to walk to school, if possible, in very bad weather or where distance and/or physical limitations are an issue, this is not always possible. This proposal will have a significant impact on lower-income families, as well as those with disabilities, who do not have access to car transport and/or cannot safely walk to school. This proposal will undoubtedly cause an increase in the volume of traffic in the local authority area, particularly on Edward Avenue, which is already very busy at school drop off/pick up times and does not have a safe/supervised crossing. At the recent council meeting at Larbert Library to discuss the Strategic Property Review and the proposed closure of Stenhousemuir Gym, the Dobbie Hall and Larbert High School swimming pool, one of the reasons cited by the council for the proposed closure of many leisure facilities in the local area was the negative environmental impact of these facilities and their contribution to carbon emissions. I find it startling therefore, that the council would therefore remove an environmentally friendly way for children to get to/from school. The council can promote safe walking routes as much as they like, however, the sad fact is, walking a great distance to/from school is not always safe (especially in the dark winter months) and many families will drive their children to school instead, significantly contributing to an increase in carbon emissions - the very thing the council says it wants to prevent." (PARENT)
- "Would be happy to pay a fee for the school bus." (PARENT)
- "Expecting that it is acceptable for a child to walk 3 miles to school, in Scotland, in winter months, through dark streets and crossing main roads enroute is utterly irresponsible and a ridiculous concept. Child safety is clearly NOT a priority as part of this proposal - what happened to GIRFEC? It's certainly not 'getting it right' for the c1700 children you are affecting with this ridiculous idea. Health and wellbeing of our children is clearly being dismissed and aside from being ridiculous that a bean counter thinks that this is ok to propose, it's embarrassing that the people we place in charge of ensuring our children's safety throughout their education, are proposing to place more stress and strain on young people, when trying to get to and from school. The average adult doesn't commute to work in Scotland in terms of the length of time it would take to walk 3 miles, on what you deem to be 'the safest route'. Therefore, why on earth does anyone with an ounce of sense think it's acceptable for a child to walk 3 miles to school in the morning and 3 miles back home which is potentially an hour each way? When did Falkirk Council become a Third World region? Maybe we should ask our children to carry a pitcher of water on their heads in addition to the books and iPad and gym kit they'll be carrying in their bags? The stress and strain this will add onto parents who are trying to get themselves to work to pay for food and bills, during a cost-of-living crisis, is also something that cannot be ignored. If those parents are

having to commute themselves to work, they will leave home hoping their child is safe 'walking' 3 miles to school - wait until the paedophiles and thieves get hold of this news - they'll be lining up along the dark routes thinking their Christmas' have all come at once. Please don't dismiss this fact - as soon as the first child is attacked after some idiot has noticed their routine, walking for miles. This will be on Falkirk Council decision maker's heads. They will be responsible for the harm that comes to the first child that's attacked!" (PARENT)

- "I like my kids to use the bus. I feel it gives them a more living experience and brings them on both socially and emotionally. The question should be how it effects the children. It, of course, would affect parents as they need to find alternative methods to transport the children. As for the savings, I'd like to know how exactly this saves money?" (PARENT)
- "If I was affected, I'd be concerned about my child walking so far, especially in adverse weather, dark mornings and nights. I personally would not be able to afford to pay for the bus and there is not a direct route for public transport either. I'm sure there are many in this circumstance" (PARENT)
- "There are no other buses that comes to the old town that would take my son to school, he would need to get 2 buses. (PARENT)
- No safe walking route, all busy roads. Part of the road from Torwood also has no street lighting. We have one bus service the 38 which runs through Torwood, it is not a reliable service. (PARENT)
- "I'd rather pay prescription charges and consider many other cost saving alternatives to keep our children safe when travelling to and from school. We should keep our children at the very forefront. They've been through enough recently with covid." (PARENT)
- "This proposal is short sighted and puts children at risk. Your proposal does not consider the abysmal level of service buses in the lower braes area and the lack of safe crossing points. Your proposal will result in 1) more parents driving their children to school, increasing congestion in already busy areas 2) disproportionate impact on mothers who will have reduced working availability due to having to walk/drive kids to school 3) disproportionate impact on lower income families who will not be able to afford alternate solutions." (OTHER)
- "At St Mungo's there is already terrible congestion at drop off and pick up especially with St Francis being so close. This will have a massive impacted on congestion in the area. I've notice lots of Falkirk council electric cars, so I'm presuming Falkirk council is trying to dramatically reduce its emissions so having far more cars on the road will nullify this" (PARENT)
- "This council really needs to wake up! I really am struggling to see what we get for the council tax we pay. Cutbacks on refuse collections, closure of sports centres, a town centre on its knees, roads a disgrace and now cutbacks to school bus services. Absolute joke! A review of the internal workings of the council is what is needed. As an accountant I can assure you I could find millions of pounds of cost savings without impacting the general public. So many pen pushers and jobs for the boys. It's a disgrace and a total insult to the public." (PARENT)
- "If the free school bus needs to be taken away. Introduce fees to cover the costs. I'm sure parents/carers in more rural villages wouldn't mind paying these fees." (PARENT)
- "I feel more needs to be done to bring awareness of children crossing for buses. Some signs, traffic calming, as in Gilston Crescent, it is a big concern to parents." (PARENT)
- "It seems that the council are proposing several cuts that will impact the welfare of our children, not only transport but the closure of school swimming pools with the proposal to then bus pupils to schools where the pools are still open. Surely this is counter intuitive to the above proposal and a waste of existing resources. Why don't the council open the pools to the wider public and earn more income towards providing safe school transport." (PARENT)
- "I think it's quite underhand to provide details of this proposal after the school placements dates have passed, when this information could have been a deciding factor on which High School I would have preferred my daughter to attend. Can the council confirm if they are in discussions with the companies that run the paid for buses in Falkirk to understand whether additional services will be added to compensate for the lack of school transport if this proposal is passed?" (PARENT)
- "This proposal represents a dangerous derogation of the council's responsibilities towards the younger members of its community and is literally an accident waiting to happen. If the elected members place £625k per annum above a life (or lives) of a school pupil, perhaps they should consider a different path than one of public office." (PARENT)
- "I feel very strongly that we should be encouraging everyone, and especially young people to use public transport. Since regular bus services are now free for under 22s, surely the schools could invest in a program of encouraging children to use public transport. Then, instead of "taking something away", as

*this proposal is being presented, you would be enabling children to develop a useful life skill and habit (using public transport). So, I think a broader look at how children get to school is required: how to encourage children near a public bus route onto public buses (especially if their parents don't use the bus) and also to continue to provide transport for children whose homes are not served by public buses even if they are within your 1/2/3-mile limits." (PARENT)*

- *"I feel this is unsafe. Secondary Pupils from the age of 12-18 walking three miles to school and back, in all weathers. I think this might discourage people from coming to school if they must travel a distance. For example, if it is raining you may find many don't have the resources to afford a proper waterproof or rather that many do not have access to a car- meaning if the weather is too bad then they simply cannot get to school, thus hindering their academic progress which is simply unfair. I feel there must be other areas the council can cut back on rather than hurting the future generations. Additionally, the school busses we have at the moment regularly arrive late on certain days of the week- leaving many of us freezing or soaking." (PUPIL)*
- *"By removing this bus service will be detrimental to the children and more parents will be inclined to drive their children to and from school to ensure their safety, causing addition traffic in and around the school area and inconvenience to local residents." (PARENT)*
- *"Langlees is one of the poorest areas within Falkirk North as identified by FC poverty group - this is contrary to child poverty agenda to support families in need." (OTHER)*
- *"Can the bus service be retained but be paid for by the under 22 bus pass scheme or paid for by parents if they don't have the bus pass?" (PARENT)*
- *"My son, who uses the service, also has concerns about what would happen to the bus drivers. If they would lose their jobs." (PARENT)*
- *"Both routes have artic lorry's, which means it's unacceptable to expect children to walk unattended." (OTHER)*
- *"Exceptions need to be made for deprived areas and when areas don't have a direct bus route to the school." (PARENT)*
- *"Withdrawal of the free bus service will inevitably push more cars onto the road as parents opt to drive kids to/from school rather than have them walk excessive distance in the dark/poor weather. This is going to drive the opposite to a green transport and health policy. This policy is all about council finance and nothing about what is best for children and families in the area." (PARENT)*
- *"Absolutely disgusting that they expect young children to walk that far in winter and dark nights." (PARENT)*
- *"With the energy crisis, families cannot be expected to afford this bus travel to school." (PUPIL)*
- *"There is no public transport that is adequate for the children to utilise the free travel provided by Scot Gov due to changes and limited routes throughout the Braes in Falkirk. In addition, Wallacestone primary doesn't offer breakfast club which limits times for children going into school and those working parents rely on the school bus to gain valuable minutes in getting to work in the morning. Especially as Wallacestone primary has restricted access and often the road getting to school can become grid locked which is not good for environment, local community or working parents who can then end up late for employment. In addition, not everyone can walk to school, again for timing, to walk 2 miles and back takes time. Or for those parents with disabilities walking is not a viable option due to the negative impacts it can have on their disability." (PARENT)*
- *"A lot of children would not be able to get to school places like Bonnybridge are too far from Denny." (PUPIL)*
- *"I fully understand the need to save money, but it can't be done by putting children's safety at risk." (PARENT)*
- *"How are pupils expected to walk 3miles when streets are not safe (uneven paths/poor lighting/next to main roads). It would also take approximately 1hr each way so how would that work in winter? There is no proposal of cost. When families are struggling with the cost of living this will be an extra £xx per month. They pupils have free public bus passes but there is not a direct bus route. How would extra pupils affect current passengers on these services. Why do the kids/families take the hit. All paying extra but getting less and less for our taxes" (PARENT)*
- *"I think if cuts need to be made it shouldn't be the kids transport to school that's looked at there should be a bus available to take them safely to and from school, I also think it's going to be really unsafe for kids that are going to have to walk to school because the road at school will get even busier than it already is because more parents will have to drop their kids at school, I honestly think it's a ridiculous idea." (PARENT)*

- "This is a thoughtless knee jerk reaction which will put the safety of children at risk. I also think there is a high chance of some pupils not making it to school as a result. The council needs to look at reducing wasteful spend not cutting costs around education." (PARENT)
- "This appears to be a step towards abolishing free transport altogether and to relive the burden on the council of effectively managing transport. Why is the consultation only focussed on revising the distance criteria, and not considering other options such as part funded travel?" (PARENT)
- "There are no safe footpaths for walking journey. Roads are unsafe with fast moving traffic (numerous complaints re speeding on roads, with no council resolution). Death trap for children." (PARENT)
- "At a time when the government are trying hard to reduce negative impact of vehicles on the road, the council has decided to pull busses, therefore more cars will be travelling to and from schools, not only would that cause congestion but may also put those that live nearby and walk at a higher risk of an accident." (PARENT)
- "I think it is ridiculous and irresponsible for Falkirk council to expect children to walk over 2 miles in all weather conditions to get to school which they are made to attend. Mine simply won't be attending in harsh weather conditions." (PARENT)
- "Unacceptable to ask a child to walk 2.7 miles to school and another 2.7 miles after school." (PARENT)
- "It seems to me the cuts being proposed for school buses are detrimental to the children's education. How will they get to school? Will they be on time? Not every parent, myself included drives. As for those parents that do drive and will drop their child at school, will this affect their employment? Also, traffic around Denny at school opening and closing times is bad enough, this proposal will only make it worse. First swimming pools now school buses. Do you care at all about our children?" (PARENT)
- "This will only encourage more cars onto the roads as parents that can drive their kids to school will do so. The congestion caused at schools can only bring problems." (PARENT)
- "It's not as if the council will actually listen to any opinions that contradict their own goals of cutting useful and necessary services to save a few pounds instead of looking inward and finding other ways to cut costs, such as wages of council employees that produce nothing and cannot be fired..." (PARENT)
- "If an adult can get run over when the crossing is green man what hope do we have? The crossing is in the wrong place." (PARENT)
- "This isn't good for the safety of the children" (PARENT)
- "While the proposal doesn't not directly affect me it is unacceptable in terms of children's safety I disagree with the proposal for younger children aged 4-8 years." (PARENT)
- It should be a priority that we can get our kids to school safely. Also getting the bus reduces people taking cars up to school and helps with the environment which should be something taken into consideration. (PARENT)
- "Westquarter Primary does not have a safe route for children walking to school. There is a very busy road for them to cross. Yes there is traffic lights, but they are situated too far away from where children cross! If free transport is taken away, then this needs to be looked at!" (PARENT)
- "New council buildings but no money for the safe transportation of children? Priorities seem more than a little skewed!" (PARENT)
- "Kindly discontinue the proposal, so the kids and parents can have rest of mind." (PARENT)
- "Traffic speeds are horrific along the road, due to lack of road cleaning, some day it is impossible to walk along footpath (PARENT)
- "The bus is needed. The number of children who use this service shows how much it is needed." (PARENT)
- "My son is Asthmatic waiting too long in the cold during Winter will affect is health. I will plead If this is look into." (PARENT)
- "Westquarter school is very poorly situated. There has been a massive increase in houses built recently and the school and area around it is too small to cope. The school bus alleviates a lot of the traffic around the school which is unsafe. If the school bus is cancelled more parking infrastructure and additional crossing points would need to be installed as the vast majority of pupils do not come from Westquarter but from the Callender rise estate in Redding." (PARENT)
- "Don't feel it is safe for kids to walk to school, there is too many nutters going about, having free transport to school is way more safer for kids, are you going to be held responsible if something happens to one of our kids on the way to school" (PARENT)
- "If you choose to move the criteria. You will simply be enabling low to no attendance in some of the most vulnerable children." (PARENT)

- "I used to live outside the 1-mile boundary and had to send my P1 to school in a taxi provided by the council. I would not have been able to afford public transport every day as that would have been 4 trips there and back. I would not have put a P1 on a bus themselves. I would not have let them walk that route by themselves as it involved a busy main road. I do not have a problem with the high school being changed as I would feel more comfortable with a teenager being able to deal with road safety. I think this proposal will lead to more parents taking kids to school in cars, which is already an issue in most areas." (PARENT)
- "From hearing people talk about the changes from my own area think it needs to be made clearer that it is a parents responsibility to get child to school if walking through the route available." (PARENT)
- "My child is in the senior phase of high school. I agree that walking to school is beneficial and in better weather that is fine but during winter months a bus service should be available as children will be soaked by the time they have walked 3 miles to school. I also worry about younger children walking on their own to school, potential for bullying which would be an out of school problem and ultimately children not attending school at all. There are lots of parents who work, the school bus is a safe way for them to get to school on time most of the time, although bus times have been much poorer this year compared to previous." (PARENT)
- "It is ridiculous that parents are having to cope with the stress of this." (PARENT)
- "More information is needed. Will full bus routes be taken off? Will the buses still run the routes that are borderline distance, giving those pupils who are just either the boundary the option to pay for travel or use their Young Scot travel card?" (PARENT)
- "I would like the transport bus to be available for my son for health and safety reasons as it would be too far from him to walk that distance especially if the weather is serious. Also I wouldn't like the thought of him going missing." (PARENT)
- "I put my child on the bus home from school to help relieve the congestion that happens down in Westquarter, I believe also, by taking cars away from the area makes it safer for all the children but also to the local residents who have to constantly put up with school drop off times. Walking is not an option as I do not believe that the route to school is safe for a child to walk without an adult. Redding road is an absolute race track most mornings. Why give children bus passes then take away from them almost immediately it makes no sense. Surely, it's of benefit to keep buses for all to enable less congestion around the school areas and is more environmentally friendly than having umpteen vehicles driving to and from school. We've already had enough disruption with Covid and upheaval due to teachers striking." (PARENT)
- "How are you expecting families to get their children to school daily? If you are wanting parents to take their children to school by car, that would cause more pollution and congestion at and near the school." (PARENT)
- "It is outrageous the council would consider a proposal that would affect the safety of children. I understand cuts need to be made, but not to the disadvantage of children." (PARENT)
- "Can the young Scot's card not be used for school transport?" (PARENT)
- "I thought that the young scot card would enable him to travel on the school bus for free. It seems ridiculous he can travel on every other bus for free but not the bus that is designed to take him to school." (PARENT)
- "I see 2 different taxis come up to my area picking up 3 children each morning to take to the same school. Covid restrictions are now minimal so why do these children still have to travel separately. Surely having one taxi would be more cost effective. If this same thing is happening all over Falkirk, then it will of course be costing more money so get our children in 1 taxi or a bigger taxi and this will be much more cost effective." (PARENT)
- "A meeting at the school with an MSP present." (PARENT)
- "Will school buses still run with a charge, or will pupils need to use public service bus?" (PARENT)
- "Since bus transport is free for all under 21 anyway, what is even the point to this? Most families can just go ahead and apply for the other card and the kids can use those on the school bus if they live "too close". Or does this proposal mean there will be more kids and less bus space so those with the Young Scots card like my daughter will be refused to be let on board?" (PARENT)
- "I don't propose the 3-mile radius, people living in Maddiston will have to walk 41 minutes to school. I believe Maddiston to be too far out." (PARENT)
- "The only way the council will realise that this was a mistake is when there will be a child injured or worse from having to walk such an unsafe route to school. The scheduled bus routes will become

congested and school pupils will be the first denied by bus drivers during busy times resulting in them not being able to rely on this service." (PARENT)

- "Have steps been taken to ensure all school children have been supported to apply for free travel cards which would allow them to use service buses to travel to and from school without charge?" (PARENT)
- "The school bus will still have to drive through Geenhill for the pupils out with the distance so it makes no sense why they can't stop for all the pupils who currently use them." (PARENT)
- "To take away a safe method of transport for children to attend school is not putting a child's best interest first. It's putting council finances before their safety. Families who cannot afford to use the service-excess financial pressure. Their children will be negatively affected. When the local environment is only getting more dangerous. The roads are busier, cars are quieter with electric engines, strangers pose dangers, bullying which follows children home due to social media. To take away a measure which helps our children access education and provides a protective method of transport in order to save money...is harmful in many ways." (PARENT)
- "People can't afford these extra costs due to cost of living some can't afford food how can they now afford bus fares, it's the kids that will suffer as they won't get to school." (PARENT)
- "I would urge you to reconsider this with a long-term view as opposed to a short term money fix. We should invest in our children's future and study and transport is an element to this." (PARENT)
- "Yes, the services for children should be councils' priority. Parents are struggling. 2 years of covid damaged the kids enough. There was hardly any lessons for kids, during lockdown no buses so , council should have saved money. I think we need transparency of Falkirk council budget as it seems our tax money are being wasted." (PARENT)
- "I feel it's not safe for all the kids who will no longer be entitled to free transport." (PARENT)
- "Making kids walk over an hour each way to school in the Scottish weather and in the dark isn't practical or safe. Having kids turn up for school wet and cold, won't help their ability to learn." (PARENT)
- "Removing the school bus will not encourage more to walk to school it will cause many more cars to be outside of schools and cause even more chaos. Roads outside of schools are dangerous enough without more cars being thrown into the mix." (PARENT)
- "I appreciate cuts have got to be made so no choice is going to be popular or easy but anything which might affect safety or wellbeing of children has to be given serious consideration." (PARENT)
- "Will any form of transport be provided? Or are you seriously proposing that my 12-year-old child should make a 4-mile round trip to school every day, including in the dark during winter? If so, that is outrageous. What is the fee likely to be?" (PARENT)
- "Our son has additional support needs and chronic pain syndrome, and we agreed to allow him to use the bus instead of a taxi to help with his social skills. Also, why are midland bluebird busses free to children and younger adults? Does the school bus services not come under the Scottish government transport for children and young adults." (PARENT)
- "I live in Polmont and my children will be attending Graeme High School and will be affected by the proposed Falkirk Council cuts to school bus services. I am a serving Roads Policing Officer with Police Scotland and work in the Forth Valley area. Falkirk Council have proposed the following route 4531.47m or 2.81 miles as safe for my children to walk to Graeme High School along Rodel Drive, left onto Lewis Road, right onto Gilston crescent, left onto Station Road, right onto Salmon Inn Road at pelican crossing and along Salmon Inn Road, past the medical practice and St Margaret's School down Salmon Inn Road where it meets the crossroads at the A803 Polmont Rd. In my role as a local Roads Policing Officer, I can tell you at first hand that this junction is notorious for bad accidents and is unsuitable for children crossing, especially from the Salmon Inn Road. There is a pedestrian footpath only on one side (west) of the Salmon Inn Road from its junction with Main Street Redding down to the crossroads with A803. It is also insufficient in width to make to ensure the safety of children bringing them closer to moving vehicles on a steep incline at this location. The crossroads are especially hazardous from the Salmon Inn Road side as there is no pedestrian safe haven island or other traffic calming in the middle of the road for pedestrians to safely cross to the north side of the A803 where the cemetery is. The council have proposed it is safe for children to cross here and I would like to understand their rationale behind this? There are three lanes of traffic that need to be crossed at this location to get to the pedestrian footpath on the north side of the A803 at the crossroads. Traffic travelling east from Laurieston towards Polmont can turn right into Salmon Inn Road and there is an extra filter lane to allow this which results in 3 lanes of traffic at this location. This effectively means the children would have to cross all three lanes of traffic at a busy intersection at busy times and I conclude that this route is therefore unsafe. The speed limit is 40mph at this location for traffic on the A803

between Polmont and Laurieston and the higher speed limit adds to the danger caused to pedestrians due to the higher speeds of moving vehicles. As a relatively, fit person, I have personally run the councils proposed safe route described above and the distance is 2.81 miles door to door which is under the proposed 2.9 miles cut-off proposed by the council. So, we are talking 0.09 miles. The only other route I can see which would be relatively safer would be as follows; Right on Rodel Drive, left onto Lewis Road, right onto Gilston crescent, right onto Station Road, left onto A803 towards Polmont crossing at either traffic pelican controlled lights or multiple pedestrian traffic islands in the middle of the road scattered along the A803 Polmont towards Laurieston. At the crossroads with the Grandsable Road there is a safe pedestrian island halfway making it safer for children to cross. The route would then continue down through Laurieston as the council propose towards Graeme High. This safer route is 3.02 miles from door to door as per my morning run today using Apple Watch GPS please see below. It is over the 2.9 miles cut off and I would argue provides more than enough evidence that a school bus should be provided under the current criteria proposed by the council. The 2.81 mile route is unsafe due to the crossroads where the Salmon Inn Road meets the A803. The only other alternative is 3.02 miles and is over the 2.9 miles cut off for the council providing a school bus. Additionally, I would like to know if the school will be providing hot showers for children having to walk this distance as they will potentially be soaked freezing and exhausted in inclement weather? All this before they start a day of learning. Not conducive for a good learning environment. I personally look forward to a response from each one of you and hope this provides enough data to ensure that my children and other children living in Gilston area of Polmont are provided a school bus to ensure their safety going to high school." (PARENT)

- "The impact on attendance would be huge and as a teacher I am aware that the Covid generation, who are now also impacted by teacher strikes can ill-afford any further issues affecting their education. I am also aware, as an educator, that children who have walked an hour to school will not be ready to learn for 6 hours and then face another hour walk home, 5 days a week." (PARENT)
- "Many of the young people and families I work with will be directly impacted by this proposed change. It will make getting young people out to school in the morning so much more difficult, when we already know that this can be a problem for our poorest families. At a time when there is such a focus on school attainment, this proposal runs the risk of having a direct and adverse effect on these targets due to decreased attendance." (OTHER)
- "I feel for some families who don't have a car, these kids' attendance will drop as adults won't want to walk kids, which means these kids won't have the same chance at education as the people with cars, I worry for kids with not the best parents, they won't make school as easily, and will suffer" (PARENT)
- "Are there provisions for children to pay to use the bus?" (PARENT)
- "My daughter and subsequently my son when he starts high school will have walk over 2 miles to and from school. They are fit and healthy which is not the issue, but they will have to cross a dangerous road and the time this will take will impact after school clubs." (PARENT)
- "School transport should still be a service, even if it is a paid service. Every child should have the right to a school bus, it doesn't have to be free but there should be a service available. I could appreciate if the service wasn't used but I find hard to believe there are any bus services at any school that aren't used." (PARENT)
- "Build more schools, more provisions and make them more accessible." (PARENT)
- "I know I will not be the only parent in the same situation of having younger children at primary school but there are many other reasons that parents will be unable to walk their children to high school such as other caring responsibilities, work hours, parents health conditions and poor parenting. Children who have additional needs who were able to manage the school bus will likely be applying for funded taxis instead which I imagine would cost the council a lot more than running school buses. There is also the issue with children who come from difficult households being the ones who suffer the most when they already have significant barriers to accessing education due to their home situation." (PARENT)
- "There is no safe walking / cycling route for our children to walk to Falkirk High School. This will encourage us to drive to school and drop off our child increasing emissions and congestion, potentially placing more children at risk within the vicinity of the school." (PARENT)
- "I honestly feel that with Covid our children have suffered enough." (PARENT)
- "Perhaps look at individual job roles. See where savings can be met. Work from home etc sell off office space." (PARENT)
- "This school is over the busy Bellsdyke Road for Kinnaird families where at the end most families would cross coming from Kinnaird would need to cross without a zebra crossing or with the help of traffic



lights. That is an accident waiting to happen if they expect pupils to walk to school from Kinnaird/The Inches. Whereas the bus drops them off in the inches where there are quieter roads and ease of crossing." (PARENT)

- "Yes, I'd like to know the "safe walking route" from for instance, Castlevue Terrace in Haggs. Making kids walk an hour each way to school is ridiculous. Especially as the shortest route from Castlevue Terrace by road is 3.6 miles. If you are suggesting school kids should walk along the canal, when adults are going missing along canals and there are potential other dangers, please think again. There is real anger at this proposal." (PARENT)
- "I also feel that this is an attack on catholic education. Also, what about the fact that the country has been trying to reduce the number of cars around schools. Do you think that by taking away bus schools this is not going to increase the amount of traffic? St Francis and St Mungo's has been in the local paper recently as residents of Symington Estate and Merchiston Avenue have aired their concerns about traffic so taking away the buses will only increase the congestion." (PARENT)
- "I think my daughter would still get a free school bus as we live 3.7miles. However, I think the walking route should be considered as well as the miles. Make it clear, will the busses still run the same routes? Can we pay or are the buses being cancelled completely. A lot of Parents are confused." (PARENT)
- "Providing services that keep our children safe on their journeys to and from school while allowing parents and carers the best opportunity to be working full time is important. This is for both family income and the current fight against recession." (PARENT)
- "Revoke the free bus pass for people that are claiming job seekers and disability due to drug miss use! Better they walk to pharmacy and job centre than kids to school." (PARENT)
- "Falkirk Council are an absolute disgrace - how did it get to this stage between attacking schooling and public buildings? You're jeopardising jobs, income levels, child safety to name a few by proposing to inflict this additional pressure on parents by removing access to school transport. If anything, why not ask those who live further away to contribute, not those who live closer!" (PARENT)
- "As a family who pay our taxes each month this proposal again is a let-down. We as hard-working parents don't qualify for any support with anything, this is the only thing currently that reduces our monthly outgoings to be able to live each month. Being able to use the transport this ensures my child gets to school safely and the reassurance that he gets to school safely." (PARENT)
- "When my p6 starts high school in Aug 2024 there will be no public bus for him to get to school. We just miss the free bus, which is fine I work, I will pay. This option isn't even available to him. Yes, the roads are "safe" if he is not being bullied or the weather is good. In the Scottish winter it is dark when they are coming to and from school, it doesn't feel safe or healthy to walk that distance twice a day in all weathers! Scottish Government are meant to be investing in the children and young people of Scotland - this is another example of local councils not investing at all in Falkirk's young. Sports centres closing, green areas being used to build more housing - no sign of another school though - no they are just getting bigger and bigger! I want my son to be safe getting to and from school! Both his parents work so dropping him off and picking him up is not a fair / easy option either. Falkirk Council are certainly aiming their cuts at children and young people." (PARENT)
- "I can't understand how "walking, cycling, wheeling" can "resulting in potential health, wellbeing, and environmental benefits" when is windy, cold, and rainy? We live in Scotland, not Italy! Especially when some people live in villages, roads are without pavement and is a sinter. Ridiculous!" (PARENT)
- "Please reconsider this change. It will not save money in the long run. You will force working families into unemployment as they need to get their children to school. You will be saving money on the bus service but then giving more money out in benefits." (PARENT)
- "Why give all that money to Dollar Park! Surely education is more important than a park. Such a waste of money." (PARENT)
- "Many parents would be willing to pay towards a bus service, as we did in the past, but this does not appear to be an option." (PARENT)
- "The free bus should always be continued for Carrongrange. Children with special needs desperately rely on this transport." (PARENT)
- "My daughter would struggle to get to school without transport provided. As she is in 4th year and sitting exams this would be a huge concern (PARENT)
- "This change will affect only people who don't drive and can't afford to run a car. I'm one of them." (PARENT)
- "I appreciate Falkirk Council is facing significant budget constraints and must find ways to make savings, but I feel that this is not the right choice. I would be supportive if the Council would

communicate with the providers of public transport to ensure that there are sufficient buses on the routes affected to enable the children affected to get to and from school and not have to hang around too long before and after school starts / ends. Walking this route is estimated at 43 minutes each way - I am a working parent, how can I walk him to and from school and still work full time? If we were to purchase a new car to drive him to school, the already congested road outside Graeme High would become even more so - which will not help the Scottish Government's carbon emissions target. Not to mention the cost-of-living crisis - we can't afford to buy a new car! Over 1,000 pupils will be affected by this change. Will public transport be able to cope? At the moment my son could get on the x38 but will there be room? I see lots of pupils being late for school and their already covid-disrupted education will suffer. I would even be supportive of paying to board a school bus - it flies in the face of the Scottish Government initiative that all children should have free bus transport, but I just want my son to be safe. But this is not an option in the current proposal." (PARENT)

- "My concerns about this proposal are that many parents will not be able to take their children to school therefore the child will have to make their own way to school which a) I think is too long to expect children to walk this distance before and after school b) if they take public transport the times of this service might not be suitable and where the bus service terminates might still be a distance from school c) in the winter months the times they would have to leave the house to get to school on time and returning from school will be dark and I am sorry but an 8 year old walking to and from school on a cold, dark winters day for 2 miles I just feel is unsafe." (PARENT)
- "Previously I lived in Redding with my child attending St Andrews Primary School with a child already discriminated against and having to pay for a school bus while the Catholic children next door got to use the school bus for free! There is no way any child should be walking that road. How can an 8-year-old walk from Redding down past Westquarter, through Maddison and along the main road safely! Disgraceful The roads in and around Falkirk are not safe! Children shouldn't be subjected to walking 6miles too-from school every day. An institution forced on them which is mandatory to attend! Attending school in Falkirk is unaffordable as I'm being forced to pay for an expensive uniform I. You cannot now force struggling families struggling to feed and eat to now pay for transport in addition." (PARENT)
- "My son is currently being referred to CAHMS for ADHD diagnosis. This as well adds to the stress of worrying about the school bus no longer being available." (PARENT)
- "Is the council proposing that the bus would still run but pupils would need to pay to use it? (PARENT)
- "I think that this is a very bad proposal as the current public bus service in this area is very unreliable. The public bus service is proposing to make buses smaller in my area when they are already overcrowded at peak times. The school buses have cameras on them and have better information Sharing between Falkirk high and the current company than what would happen between Falkirk high and public services. I think it is important for the segregation of school pupils and the public also as large groups of children on public buses can be very intimidating towards an older generation and can be very noisy even for lone parents with a small child already struggling. This also can mean that children travel to and from school alone are at risk from adults that they would never be in contact with whether it be drunk people, mentally unstable people, paedophiles or even users of drugs who could even go on to offer children drugs. These routes to walk are at best hours walk but in groups there is probably a higher chance this would take longer and so this means with no set time a child is due home from school it could potentially take longer for anything happening to be flagged. Also, not everyone can afford to purchase and maintain bikes and have somewhere to keep them. Also where are large numbers of bikes to be kept at the schools during the school days? And who is responsible for them during the day while locked up at school because previous knowledge of this tells me the schools will take no responsibility for them" (PARENT)
- "Perhaps the areas of deprivation could be considered for free bus travel?" (STAFF)
- "This service offers a safe passage to school for our young people." (PARENT)
- "I fully understand cuts need to be made but children's education is the future of our society and without buses our children are at physical risk and also risk of reduced attendance thus affecting life chances." (PARENT)
- "I think in all honesty it's a stupid idea because if some pupils get it and others don't that's just over all externally unfair." (PUPIL)
- "There's no need to take away the buses because if there's no buses people won't come to school, and schools will lose money." (PUPIL)
- "I think this could be a bit unfair against Catholics who only really have 1 Falkirk high school to go to but there are quite a few primary schools that are just less than 3 miles away." (PUPIL)

- *"My previous comments are from a personal point of view. In my role as parent council chair, I enclose the following views from parents of the school: Parents raised concerns eg how safe walking routes to school had been assessed, what the impact on attendance would be? What has the impact been in other authorities where this change has already been made? Since this change greatly disproportionately affects Catholic young people, whether it had been considered to make a commitment to continue to bus Catholic young people, otherwise they felt this could be seen as depriving them of their UNCRC right to worship. Other parents questioned whether this constituted indirect discrimination under the 2010 Equalities act since the proposal disproportionately affects Catholic young people compared to the comparator pool (non-denominational young people). From the proposal it can be seen that 47% of primary pupils affected are Catholic, in secondary it is roughly 30%. Another parent asked a question about what constitutes vulnerability as it states that vulnerable young people will be protected, but there is no definition of this. Other concerns raised included, if a parent did not wish their S1 child to walk a 6 mile round trip to school every day, can they enrol in a closer non-denominational school? (Only if they submit a placing request if they are baptised Catholic since their catchment school is deemed to be St. Mungo's. The parent felt that this could greatly impact on transition for her child since they would not then know if this would be accepted, and her child would not know which schools transition programme to be part of. They also then raise a supplementary concern that since they have older children already at St. Mungo's, would they also have to submit placing requests for their children to attend the same school as the younger one (yes they would), is there capacity in other schools to accept them (absolutely nine in S2 or S3, all schools in those year groups are pretty much full)). Another parent raised concerns about the inequality as the saw it of this decision on poorer families, potentially without a car and no other means to transport young people to school. Another raised concern over the already congested traffic between 8.40-9am between St Mungo's and St. Francis. They were concerned fir the safety of children if potentially another 200 St Mungo's parents, and another 40 St Francis parents were trying to drop their children off. They also raised concerns about the environmental impact of this and how this would appear to fly in the face of the local authority sustainability policy. The also raised concerns about the impact of poorer young people who had to walk an hour to school potentially not being able to get in on time to attend the breakfast club which runs from 8.30, and how this may doubly disadvantage the. Concerns also were raised over pupil safety as routes would take them past other high schools, and parents were concerned about their children getting attacked fir being in their St. Mungo's blazers. They were concerned about the impact of this proposal on attendance and therefore attainment. Also that going forward, a drop in school roll would effect a change in staffing which could result in a decrease in the curriculum that could be offered to pupils." (PARENT)*
- *"I don't think it's right because that might be the only way that some people are able to go to school." (PUPIL)*
- *"I believe this is a huge hassle for parents as well as the students." (PUPIL)*
- *"In my opinion, I believe that the 3-mile cut off is too far. Many of my friends and other classmates are greatly affected by this and some people have no way of getting to school other than bus, like me. If you would like to present this proposal, I think you should reconsider the distance you plan to cut off." (PUPIL)*
- *"I understand that cuts need to be made, however, these proposals affect some of our youngest members of society. The proposals suggest that pupil safety has not been properly considered, putting our children's lives at risk." (PARENT)*
- *"I believe it is unfair to expect those who live such a distance away from the school to have to pay. It is extremely likely that people cannot afford to spend £10 a week to travel to their free education. For families with multiple children this will become a massive expense. With a lot of pupils only other option to be walking it will put pupils at risk, having to cross numerous busy and unsafe roads as well as having to leave what could be over an hour before school begins. During winter, extreme weather is common and young people are being expected to walk in these conditions? Same goes for the summer months." (PUPIL)*
- *"I think this is unfair on all of the school children that will have no way of getting to school. Most parents that work don't have the time do walk an hour with their kid, cannot drive them due to work. I think it's unfair of the council to take this away from literal school kids when there are so many aspects which the council and government could be cutting back on. It honestly feels like the council are not thinking about how this will affect people and just wanting to save the money. Why should I have to pay to get the free transport which was originally given in order to receive my free education." (PUPIL)*

- *"It will affect many people and it is unfair on those who are on a lower income especially during the cost-of-living crisis. Children under 8 should not be expected to walk between 1 and 2 miles every day possibly twice." (PUPIL)*
- *"I think it's terribly unfair that children can't pay for the school bus. If you need extra money, let the transport be paid, not abolished." (PARENT)*
- *"These reforms to school transport will disproportionately affect those families and children in the most deprived areas of our region. Parents who cannot afford to pay for transport for their children or cannot take time out to drop them off at school will become increasingly stressed and worried about something as simple as their children receiving education, which in fact is part of the UN's rights of the child. The government consistently lets families down with means tested benefits which may be the councils half-assed answer to our concerns. It always results that those just outside the means tested level will be hit the hardest. After the last few years of financial uncertainty this is a ridiculous proposal to implement on what is essentially an extremely deprived area. Jobs are becoming increasingly difficult to fill and parents only want the best for their children but how can they give their child encouragement and support in their education if they can't even send them to the school building. The Scottish Government has always prioritised education and promotes it as free. For example, introducing free school meals to all primary school children. This proposal by the council is a massive violation of that philosophy and walks all over the manifesto set out by the government before the 2021 Scottish parliament election. The school community and I are extremely disappointed in the council's action plan regarding school transport and will fight for our school transport to remain free to as many of our pupils and indeed as many of the pupils of other schools in the area as possible. In conclusion this policy will widen inequality between families in the Falkirk region and will do irreversible harm to the mental and financial wellbeing of parents and guardians." (PUPIL)*
- *"Children have a right to free education. Introducing travel costs to children and families to get them to school is unfair and will lead to further widening of the socioeconomic gap in society. Many families will absorb the costs easily of the transport, however many will not and added to an already difficult financial climate is very worrying. Also, I'd like clarification on whether the young Scot travel card will still be accepted on the school bus as I feel this has not been made clear." (PARENT)*
- *"The idea that my 14-year-old daughter could potentially have to walk up to 3 miles to school in a Scottish winter is horrifying. There should continue to be dedicated school transport that could potentially have to be paid for. Normal service buses are not adequate for St Mungo's." (PARENT)*
- *"The traffic is already awful in the morning around the school. I would imagine it would get much worse if the proposal was to come into effect." (PARENT)*
- *"Why not stop the free bus pass for all children up to the age of 21 and focus on school children getting safely to and from school. Surely this should be priority!" (PARENT)*
- *"There is not necessarily safe walking routes for some of these children and young people to walk to their school. Many of the Catholic schools are near busy main roads. I am sure that you would not want children and young people taking short cuts through parks, subways and other routes which put them in a vulnerable situation as they walk or cycle to school, especially during the winter. Additionally, due to their work commitments, not all parents are able to walk their child(ren) to school, especially when they have children attending both primary and secondary school. In many situations, there is no alternative local transport to make it possible for the children and young people to travel to their school. Additionally, even if available, the local bus companies do not run timetables that co-ordinate well with the school day. This will mean that some children will have to leave home very early to get to school on time or they will be regularly late. Again, at the end of the school day, many children will get home much later than they do at present which will, naturally, have an impact on their ability to do homework. It could also exclude some children from attending after-school clubs. You also state in your proposal that no child could access the remaining buses on the planned reduced school bus service, even on a fare-paying basis. For parents who might be able to afford this, you are still eroding parental choice about where to send their child(ren) to school if you are denying parents the chance to pay for their child to journey on buses that will take them directly to school. As you know, local bus services do not necessarily take a child close to the school they attend. The result of this proposal can only mean that more parents will drive their children to school leading to increased congestion around schools. As a Council, surely you are trying to encourage people to use their cars less, not make decisions that will encourage greater car usage. It is unlikely that the statements in the proposal about the benefits of active travel to school, reducing traffic and carbon emissions and increasing safety around schools, will happen because of this proposal. Many children attend breakfast clubs – the proposed reduction in school transport entitlement will mean some pupils will not get to school in time to attend the breakfast*

club. A child who has not had a good breakfast in the morning will be tired and not able to concentrate on their studies. Many parents will want to keep their child(ren) at their present school but will struggle to be able to pay for alternative transport. At a time when families are already struggling due to the cost-of-living crisis, does the Council really want to add to the financial burden on families? Is there a saving to be made by reducing the bus entitlement as, surely, a consequence of more children walking or cycling to school is the need for more crossing patrols?" (OTHER)"

- My route would not be easy to walk, It would take me 50 minutes to walk to school and back. I do not feel safe walking by myself and 3 miles. Especially when it is dark and cold, I am only 13 years old. (PUPIL)
- "My son suffers from anxiety. We have worked very hard over the last few years to empower him to be a safe and independent traveller on the school bus. Withdrawing it in a way that we cannot rationally explain to him will have an immediate and lasting negative impact on his mental health. The school bus is seen as a "Safe Space" for our young travellers. The public busses are not, I do not consider it appropriate for young children to travel unsupervised on public busses from a Safeguarding perspective." (PARENT)
- "The shortest walking route according to Google Maps would be 2.8 miles, roughly a 60-minute walk in good weather conditions." (PARENT)
- "The other excuse made by Falkirk Council that walking improves health of child is very low down in my priorities when it comes to safety. It is just an excuse to validate their reason for taking a safe mode of transport to and from school away." (PARENT)
- "I think this will cause increased traffic to the area if fewer pupils are able to get free buses, particularly for families with more than one child, it may be cheaper for people to drive their kids to school. More traffic in an area where people already park on pavements etc means it feels less safe for many children to walk or cycle to school so more likely to drop them off. Additionally given the strict uniform policy at st mungos and pupils wearing blazers rather than jackets the weather will heavily influence whether kids walk to school" (PARENT)
- "In theory I do not object to the proposal but we do not have the infrastructure to deal with the consequence of increased car traffic near schools. Creating larger drop and walk zones near to schools (keeping cars away from the school playgrounds and entrances but only a short distance away with safe crossing places) would be one way to resolve this and perhaps mean we could reduce the bus service later on." (PARENT)
- This proposal if adopted would have a significant negative impact on the attendance and education of pupils. (PARENT)
- Free bus travel for those aged 5-22 to anywhere in Scotland. Unless it is to your school. Falkirk Council and Scottish Government not doing joined up thinking again. (PARENT)
- I am extremely concerned about these changes. Will make an awful impact on my children. Especially with giving to change my daughters schooling. (PARENT)
- I think school transport should remain free to the pupils who already qualify. This is not equity for all pupils and will put so much strain on already struggling families. Shame on Falkirk council (PARENT)
- I feel this may mean I can no longer send my children to a Roman Catholic High School which is extremely unfair (PARENT)
- I think this is a disgrace. (PARENT)
- Your safety assessment assumes an adult with them when there is no adult as my gran is disabled and can't drive to get them and can't walk. They get the bus. (PUPIL)
- "I would not feel comfortable or safe at all walking to and from school. Especially in the winter when it's dark in the morning and dark at night. It would cause me additional stress as I would worry if I was going to get to school on time or not. My parents couldn't drop me off because my Dad is at work and my mum has a medical condition. The public service bus is not reliable enough so if it doesn't arrive, I couldn't get to school on time. I'm a Catholic and this school is the closest Catholic school in my area so I need to go there. I would need to walk down a 40mph road in which there has been a significant number of accidents and people being knocked down. Also due to weather conditions I would need to wear a thicker coat which won't fit in my locker. My bag is heavy with schoolbooks, my iPad, lunch and water bottle so I would have to carry my thick jacket around as well as my heavy bag. It's a 51-minute walk to school, so I would have to wake up at 6am to get ready, then work for 6 hours at school, sometimes nearly seven, walk for 51 minutes home and then still do whatever homework I have and study. This would hugely impact my mental health and would apply additional stress and pressure to me. I think it's unreasonable to expect me to do all of these things every day, 5 days a week." (PUPIL)

- *"Unable to walk with my children to school as I am a working parent with a full-time job!" (PARENT)*
- *"What happens when it is inclement weather are my children meant to be at school soaked through because they've had to walk to school? Full time working parent. Unable to be in several places at once. Issues of safety and knowing if my child gets to school." (PARENT)*
- *"Again, we need to find cuts but not at the expense of our children! The mental impact this will have on our children is huge! As adults we would never be expected to walk an hour to work and back each day and I can 100% guarantee that if this was a criteria of the role there would be minimal people willing to do so. Therefore, why expect this of our children!" (PARENT)*
- *"The proposal must give focus to all important factors for the welfare and safety of our children. Is the decision based upon monetary value only? The safety of a child at the age of 12 years old walking home in winter, the safety of young girls with short skirts being subjected to danger. Providing opportune moments for criminals and unnecessary stress to the pupil. The increase in children not attending school or arriving late, being considered. The cost-of-living rise, many households may have no car or reduced to one vehicle which is difficult for parents to take their child/children to school. The lack of car parking facilities currently and sufficient safe drop off points for parents in their own vehicles. May cause more vehicle damage and detrimental to children's road safety especially located adjacent to a primary school. Why is this being applied, more so to Roman Catholic schools when they cover a larger catchment area. Is this a way of losing catholic schools, as many parents may opt to send their children to the local non denomination secondary school to avoid travel difficulties. The increase in free breakfast club members, how will school staff cope with the additional numbers as children may be drop off at school earlier to allow the parent to travel to their workplace. In the event this decision is passed, what will the future travel cuts be? The equivalent of a 12-year-old child, may suffer from learning difficulties, expected to walk from Laurieston to St Mungo's RC High School in the winter months! So much funding and teachers time is allocated to the mental health and additional welfare requirements of their pupils, responsibilities which at times should be adopted by parents. Yet their journey to school is being retracted. Do the members of the groups suggesting these travel changes have children of their own, to associate the drastic implications associated with safety, mental health, welfare, and nurture? On a final point, for many years individual children have been given the opportunity of commuting to school by private taxi, when located out with the catchment zone, a far larger cost than the provision of a communal school bus." (PARENT)*
- *"Please do not implement this proposal. The young people of Falkirk should not have any barriers put in their way to access education. They should not have to pay this price and suffer because of spending cuts." (STAFF)*
- *"Young Scots Cards should be eligible on current school transport, and this should remain in situ." (PARENT)*
- *"Why can't those who can afford it buy a bus pass and continue on school bus Do not put the health and safety of children at risk by suggesting cycling when there are no proper cycle lanes. Walking is not an option either - it's too far and the route is not well lit I am a Physiotherapist and a strong advocate of healthy lifestyles but this proposal disadvantages many." (PARENT)*
- *"To not even allow the option to pay when the bus will be collecting other children is outrageous. Our kids at high school especially have gone through two years of covid and missing their last primary years, to strike action cutting short their school week and now no transport to school which for some kids will be their only option of whether they go to school or not! This is the next generation of nurses, teachers, doctors etc and we should be doing all we can to promote a safe and accessible way of going to school to make sure they get an education." (PARENT)*
- *"I don't think it's fair or safe to expect young children some younger than 8 years old to walk up to 2 miles to and from school. Especially in the world we live in today. Safety for our kids should be paramount not budgets." (PARENT)*
- *"If this does go ahead then it's an incredibly brave decision by the council. Young people's safety should be paramount." (PARENT)*
- *"Our daughter does have one of the U22 entitlement cards for use on bus transport in Scotland, but we have been made aware that these are not permitted for use on school services? The other option is for pupils to use these cards on local service buses to get to school but the main issue here is the unreliability of the service buses that a lot of pupils may find they are late for school most days. Also, while using these services pupils will also find themselves having to cross one of the busiest roads in Falkirk and still have up to a 10-minute walk to get to school." (PARENT)*
- *"The safety on our children are at risk. My daughter is unable to be dropped at school as both parents' work. I would be willing to pay for transport if this was an option. Local bus service is unreliable, this*

- should be looked at before implementing any changes if this is the 'back up' for transport to school" (PARENT)
- "Local buses not turning up so more people will take kids to schools in the car causing more congestion." (OTHER)
  - "I do think walking has some excellent health benefits that should not be passed over but a walk of 2 hours each day seems very excessive, and it would be hard to fit in other activities and studying. I very much support a half hour walk each way to school though. Would there be a solution that the two Larbert buses could be merged and only pick up those in the peripherally areas and not stop at those places closer to the school?" (PARENT)
  - "Additionally, I am concerned that when they go to high school, they will have to find transport to and from there which is also going to prove very difficult for them." (PARENT)
  - "Expecting kids to walk up to 3 miles twice a day, in the dark is a danger to their safety and welfare. The current parameters should remain unchanged." (PARENT)
  - "I have some major concerns about how this policy will disproportionately affect pupils from Catholic Schools across Falkirk due to their bigger catchment size. Under the Equality Act, I believe this is classed as indirect discrimination against Falkirk's Catholic school population as it will make it harder for pupils to attend and practice their faith. Furthermore, St Mungo's provides a free breakfast club for all pupils, and by forcing pupils to walk or get a public service bus, it can result in pupils being too late. If pupils miss the breakfast club, they will be unable to fully focus in class, this will have an impact on their attainment." (PUPIL)
  - "This is unfair on the children going against all our government stands for - GIRFEC- it will make the children's safety and feeling included in the community be in question. It also penalises working parents who will have to let their children walk long distances in the dark (during our long, cold winters) to and from school. Even if parents could buy bus passes this would help. It also seems unfair when under our government these children can get free bus travel at all other times." (PARENT)
  - "I feel like budget cuts could be made in areas that aren't so impactful as cutting of transport that hundreds of children are dependent upon in order to learn. I feel like this proposal coming into effect may lead to many children missing out on key education across all school levels, leading to people struggling to learn. this also further increases any pre-existing inequalities in our community. children who are already at a disadvantage will be further impacted by this cut." (PUPIL)
  - "Cutting transport from home to school, means my children won't be able to get home safely, and I don't mean road safety. Children will be exposed to danger from their peers or people who may want to hurt them. Currently, my children are exposed to a small degree of danger from their peers as after finishing school they get on the bus which brings them practically to the door of their home. In the absence of school transport, after leaving the school premises, safety is not guaranteed because children who bully other children will have easier access to hurt, intimidate, or attack children on the way home, which in the case of my children will take up to 27 minutes. Especially in the winter when it gets dark quickly children are more vulnerable." (PARENT)
  - "It's unsafe especially in winter will take 45 minutes to an hour each way to walk." (OTHER)
  - "The results of this proposal do not take the children into consideration at all."
  - "Yet another example of Falkirk Council putting the mighty pound before the good of the people they purport to serve! Since when was the safety of kids something to be scrimped on?" (PARENT)
  - "It seems that's it is expected that pupils would possibly be expected to walk 2 or 3 miles to and from school. This is adding on a significant amount of time to both ends of their school day." (STAFF)
  - "By removing this I think children will not go to school. In our community there are lots of children who will have to walk a long distance to school and their parents could not afford the bus fare." (PARENT)
  - "We currently have a 410m journey to get to the school bus stop. This footpath is currently a substandard width. (PARENT)
  - "The speed reducing measures on the entrance to our street (leading into Larbert high (Carrongrange avenue for reference) are incredibly inefficient at reducing speeding drivers. It is already a nightmare leaving our street in the morning when school is starting - I can share with you dash camera footage of how drivers mistreat the road - they selfishly pull out to the wrong side of the road far too early and there ends up being congestion for drivers like the residents trying to leave the street with the volume of teachers/parents racing into the school. If the buses are cut, then there will most definitely be an increase in car traffic coming into the school, making our life more stressful and dangerous. It's unfair equally as we will be forced to drive our daughter to school if her bus pass is removed." (PARENT)

- *"Falkirk council should find other ways to not overspend other than targeting school children as a way to make up for problems they have made." (PUPIL)*
- *"I am S1 and even I know that this would only have a negative impact on Falkirk." (PUPIL)*
- *"While savings need to be made putting our children at increased risk or families in financial hardship is not the way to go about it." (PARENT)*
- *"The criteria does not appear to take into consideration the safety of the child. How many roads must be crossed? How busy is the route? Are there enough safe crossing points? Are all the roads safe to walk with suitable pavement provisions?" (PARENT)*
- *"I think there must be other ways for the council to save money and quite honestly cannot see where our council taxes are spent When I look around the Falkirk area. I would think children's safety in these difficult times would be paramount." (PARENT)*
- *"I am very angry; I hope you would change this policy you guys have put in place." (PUPIL)*
- *"The decision Falkirk council are making on young people shouldn't be about money. It should be about what's best for us." (PUPIL)*
- *"I think the transport thing should got back to normal because I think that's not fair on people that must walk half a mile just because the bus won't go that far this is ridiculous. What's the point it has to go back to normal pupils struggling how to come home because their parents are working, I don't think that's fair think about it." (PUPIL)*
- *"If anything was to happen to kids walking to school because of your stupid bus proposal it would be your fault, and you would be held accountable!" (PUPIL)*
- *"This proposal must be rejected to ensure the safety of school children. There are multiple ways the council could save a significant amount of money; school transport is not one of them." (PARENT)*
- *"Despite the budget crisis affecting the council and it's taxpayers, I do not support this measure given my concerns around the environmental impact this may have from an increase in cars being used to drop off children who are no longer eligible for transportation. I would be concerned that there would be an increase in traffic around schools and given that I live near California Primary and see the roads incredibly congested around drop off and collection times, I would not wish to see this made worse." (OTHER)*
- *"Decision that affects children should only be made if they affect the child's best interest." (PARENT)*
- *"Rather than sit and look at how you can implement these crazy cuts, push back, call out the Scottish government for not allocating proper funds. This government has been a disaster for Scotland." (PARENT)*
- *"Where are parents, who often work, expected to get time to walk children safely to school, perhaps drop other children at nursery and still be at work on time? The Council's idea that this will aid climate change is so far-fetched, there will simply be an increase in car traffic to already busy school areas as parents try to juggle life's demands." (PARENT)*
- *"Ask people to pay a small amount and use electric busses or you end up with increased cars." (OTHER)*
- *"Practical wise we should see proposal for each school, for example, Hallglen to Graham High." (PARENT)*
- *"This could impact whether a child goes to school or not if finances are low." (PARENT)*
- *"I would prefer to see the council reduce the number of taxis being used to transport pupils to and from school, particularly for pupils who live outside their school's catchment area. Where the parents have made a choice to send pupils to a non-local school then the council should not be obliged to provide transport by taxi." (PARENT)*
- *"Savings should not be made at the expense of children." (OTHER)*
- *"Having lived in Letham in the past I know how important a bus is to get your kids to school (Airth) and I feel this could be a big disadvantage to the children who currently still take the bus from Letham. With no safe walking route for kids to get to school this is something that can't happen." (PARENT)*
- *"When my 3 kids got on the Blackness Primary School bus, as soon as my youngest child hit 8 years my other 2 children would not have qualified for the bus. When youngest was 8 the others were 10 and 12. Therefore youngest could go on bus and I'd have to drive the other 2 to Primary. Just thinking of the unnecessary environmental impact with fuel pollution." (OTHER)*
- *"Any kids who have more than a mile to walk to go to school should be provided with transport to school as you don't know what type of people are lurking about who could abduct them off the street." (OTHER)*
- *"It's OK in some cases if the child is accompanied otherwise not." (OTHER)*



- *"As usual the poorest people in society are discriminated against. Why not means test free travel to ensure people who are able to pay do so?" (OTHER)*
- *"It's not the school's fault but some parents would take their cars into the classroom!"*
- *"It would have been clearer to list the volumes of pupils no longer entitled by bus route so that it parents could understand the impact." (PARENT)*
- *"These distances seem quite excessive for children to have to walk prior to school." (OTHER)*
- *"So many issues raised. Define safest alternative route? Will there be more investment in school crossing staff to ensure safe access to road crossings? Would you let your 10-year-old walk a couple of miles up and across multiple busy roads to the shops and back of an evening whilst you are away from home (given many parents do have to start work at 9am)- would that be responsible parenting in today's times? Will there be extra school/police staff employed to Marshall safe drop off and parking within and around schools? For some schools this could equate to more than 100 extra vehicles morning and afternoon. Is local infrastructure in place to support this access across all schools? What will the impact on local residents living next to schools be? What research has been done into the local environmental impact across the area and how does this meet local environment policy and targets? Will there actually be less buses or just more buses with spaces on them?" (PARENT)*
- *"Primary school children should not be expected to walk over a mile to reach school. Parents with less money will need to either ask their children to walk or need to find extra cash to pay for alternative transport". (OTHER)*
- *"I find the proposal a very disappointing move from Falkirk council. Safety and wellbeing should be a key issue, for every child. Not how many pennies can be saved. From an environmental perspective to it is awful. This will only encourage more parents to drive kids to school (if they can) along with clogging up roadways/unsafe parking for drop off/pick up. This will be an accident waiting to happen. I 100% do not agree with the proposal." (PARENT)*
- *"This is an exceptionally poorly thought-out proposal that will disproportionately impact on young people, their learning and safety. No even providing a school bus that requires to be paid for is not acceptable. You must provide a safe way for students to reach their schools. Additionally pushing the burden onto parents will result in a greater number of cars making on the road, congestion around school and nearby areas as parents' resort to driving their children to school. Falkirk does not have the infrastructure to support majority of pupils being driven to school. Falkirk council must scrap this proposal. Walking from Polmont to Falkirk is a long route and would take at least an hour which is a completely unreasonable distant to ask children from age 11/12 to walk. They will also be carrying a large bag with books, PE kit etc. The route would require them to cross several roads without pedestrian crossing and accident black spots such as the crossroads at Grandsable cemetery. The road along the route is not well maintained, with numerous potholes and loose debris causing a potential danger to children walking the route. How is a child to be expected to achieve their full potential at school if they are arriving tired from getting up early to walk an hour to school in the pouring rain? I am also concerned about the physical safety of my children walking the route if they end up having to walk alone for any reason, either being followed, approached by unsavoury characters, or opening the potential up for grooming. Additionally having to walk home from school will potentially limit some of their after-school actives as they will return too late from school to attend, assuming they still have the energy after two 1hr long walks in a day." (PARENT)*
- *"Happy to pay for bus fares if needed." (PARENT)*
- *"Will the school bus still run this morning route at all so that children can board with their young scot cards or pay?" (PARENT)*
- *"We need clear information how this will affect all children currently taking the bus, regardless of the free transport issue. Is there an option to consult on paying for the bus, this hasn't been discussed." (PARENT)*
- *"Costs would be reduced further if children who were allocated with EP needs actually went to a school in their catchment rather than being taxied from other towns. Not only this, but they would also be less tired as they are leaving earlier than necessary and additionally, it would improve their mental health as they would develop better relationships with peers outside school." (STAFF)*
- *"The route to school is along a busy road and will be dark in winter." (PUPIL)*
- *"With all the cuts that are happening this should not be one of them, the safety of young people should be top priority." (PARENT)*

- "It's ridiculous that this is even a part of the question. Don't take things away from children to save money. School is hard enough for kids, no need to start throwing travel issues into the mix of stress that they go through on a day-to-day basis. It's unfair and wrong." (OTHER)
- "This policy will have serious consequences on attainment gap and attendance figures. Children walking up to 3 miles taking about an hour to and from school in pouring rain and freezing conditions simply won't go. Primary children who can't walk to school alone with parents pushing younger siblings in pushchairs or even wheelchairs will not walk up to 2 hours to and from school in poor weather conditions. Parents who can afford cars or work hours that can accommodate school travel won't be so badly affected. This policy will have huge impact on families in poverty." (PARENT)
- "The fact that these buses are extremely overcrowded and there aren't enough seats for the kids that are allowed on it to sit on. From what I'm led to believe that on some occasions not all the kids are even allowed to get on the bus as they are overcrowded. So be expected to pay for this is just ludicrous." (PARENT)
- "Consider a charged/subsidised model." (PARENT)
- "Adding costs of bus to travel to/from school, especially when they have bus passes from government allowing free travel on buses, onto working parents in this time when cost of living is going up is not fair on the working class. This could cause more financial stress on these families." (PARENT)
- "A lot of our students cannot afford to be brought to school and get private transport so could encourage them to not attend school further." (STAFF)
- "I feel cutting the bus route is going in the opposite direction of progress where we should be encouraging our young people to see the benefit of good public transport. My husband is an Edinburgh native and was appalled the first time he used Falkirk buses, with how late and unreliable the service is. His exact comment was 'there's no point in a timetable!' Due to the terrible bus service and the complex country roads surrounding Falkirk and the villages, learning to drive is a must. This will only raise another generation of young adults who will not reap the benefits of a good public transport service." (PARENT)
- "There's a lot more cuts that can be made elsewhere, maybe too many staff." (PARENT)
- "Instead of compromising the safety of our children the council should maybe look at cutting back on the number of workers to do a job, sending 3 or 4 men to do a job when only one man gets out van to carry out said job and the rest read the daily newspaper is a big waste of money,"
- "I think where we live should be able to get free bus for daughter as it's a bit distance from school" (PARENT)
- "Please don't take away a service that parents rely on as do the pupils." (PARENT)
- "Walking routes to and from schools are not particularly safe in the Larbert and Stenhousemuir area either. There are several busy roads to cross and not many safe or convenient crossing points, especially on Bellsdyke Road." (OTHER)
- "Could we not be given the option of paying for the buses to school in the mornings and evenings? I'd rather do that then expect them to walk in all weathers." (PARENT)
- "As long as help was given to families in order to apply for the already free travel for under 22s then I personally feel this could work. What I would say is the application for the above is quite time consuming and not everyone is computer literate or has the identification required." (PARENT)
- "Too many things are being cut back." (OTHER)
- "Could parents pay a subsidy to help continue the bus service?" (PARENT)
- "Children's safety should not be impacted due to council budget cuts. The proposal should be scrapped." (PARENT)
- "For my sons' safety, convenience and to reduce environmental impact of excess car use I would be more than happy to pay for school transport." (PARENT)
- "Money is not wasted on the safety of our children it's a necessary need." (PARENT)
- "The council do not care about the welfare of children, especially those who have additional medical or support needs like my child. Am I expected to give up work so I can take my child to and from school?" (PARENT)
- "I would worry about the children's safety. I certainly would not allow such a young child to cycle to and from school." (PARENT)
- "I feel that the proposal only looks at the financial gain to the council and not the health and safety of some of the most vulnerable members of society. With added foot traffic on our paths the potential for accidents increases, will the council be providing additional crossing patrols? The walk from my house to the school is 40 minutes for an adult, my child is likely to take an hour at best, given the recent

coverage of missing persons in the news this furthers the risk of children potentially being exposed to an unsafe situation." (PARENT)

- "My daughter currently pays to travel on the school bus from Maddiston to Braes HS. If this bus service is withdrawn it will result in a 4 mile + round trip for her daily. The roads are busy and notoriously bad for pedestrian - vehicle accidents. Not to mention the safety aspect of a young girl walking that route in all weathers / day light or dark afternoons - vulnerable to assault and / or worse! Extremely disappointed and quite frankly disgusted at the contemplation of withdrawing these bus services. Safety and security for our children should not be down to 'cost'" (PARENT)
- "How would this system work. How many busses would run, how would the driver know who to let on." (PARENT)
- "Sad times when our children can't even get transport to get an education something everyone is entitled to." (PARENT)
- "Our employers have twice previously refused requests for flexible working. This change, if implemented, will be catastrophic to our family." (PARENT)
- "This is a terrible proposal from Falkirk council which I disagree with wholeheartedly." (PARENT)
- "Public transport not meeting needs of upper braes area. I would be willing to pay towards transport as did prior to introduction of passes, to ensure safe journeys." (PARENT)
- "Limiting free bus travel will affect people who cannot afford to send their children to or from school on buses. It will also affect pupils who are unable to walk home and pupils who have lots of work to do after school." (PUPIL)
- "I understand the financial constraints for the council but seriously putting children at risk and parents under even more pressure is not acceptable." (PARENT)
- "If the proposal goes ahead, I will bring my son into school by car." (PARENT)
- "It is a 45-minute walk (by google maps) from our home to the school. Are children expected to walk that distance in terrible weather? What provisions will be made to provide storage for outdoor clothes and shoes, and allow children a safe space to change? I also think that you have hidden the information that "School bus services would be reduced and would no longer be available to pupils, even on a fare-paying basis." in the outcomes of this survey rather than being transparent in the introduction. I was aware my daughter will not qualify for free transport but would rely on being able to pay for the bus for her. I think it's shocking that it's being removed." (PARENT)
- "Would you walk under three miles to work every day in extreme weather in which Scotland has its fair share of? Walking in the dark in winter crossing very busy roads, would you sit in wet clothes for 7 hours with no access to hot showers, and can you give 100% when at work? Would you then walk home exhausted and wet for three miles crossing again very busy roads?" (OTHER)
- "I would be concerned with more pedestrians and/or kids on cycles coping with the level of traffic on Denny's roads at the times required to get to and from school." (PARENT)
- "Keep the buses the way they are and the current distance, keep our children safe, it's a must." (PARENT)
- "Dark mornings & evenings with a considerable walking distance to and from school in all extremities! Falkirk council you are jeopardising children's safety, attendance, and attainment." (PARENT)
- "Air pollution with additional traffic frequenting the school at drop off and pick up." (PARENT)
- "If a good cycle infrastructure was in place, I think the plans would be acceptable, but this is not the case." (PARENT)
- "I think children should be entitled to free bus access to and from school to ensure they can get there and home safely." (PUPIL)
- "The proposal will put more cars on the road, cause parking issues at schools and leave children vulnerable taking themselves to school." (PARENT)
- "I am concerned about what is considered the safest route. I do not feel the route between Limerigg and Slamannan is safe. I think council officials should walk it themselves and decide based on their experience." (PARENT)
- "Council need to do a better job of working out how to prioritise cuts instead of consulting on each potential cost cutting exercise individually. The cumulative effect of each different cut can have many impacts on local families and people should be allowed to vote for what matters most. If the choice is can, I get my child to school safely or can they maintain their sports lessons in a council building, I know what most people would choose." (PARENT)
- "Is calculation of 3 miles from home post code to school post code. So, if I use google maps I can find out if I need to pay." (PARENT)

- *"Disgraceful proposal from the council. Asking large numbers of children to walk to school up Drove Loan is an accident waiting to happen especially in winter when conditions are worse. Absolutely pathetic that this is even being considered. Child safety clearly hasn't even been considered because if you think the road from Bonnybridge to Denny high is acceptable for large number of children then you are delusional. What makes this proposal even more of a joke is that a school bus will still stop at the same bus stop every morning as half of our estate are still entitled to a bus pass as they live a few yards further back. So why can't kids still use it? Make it make sense! Shame on the council for this proposal. Find your cuts somewhere else. Maybe you could start with the people at the top as they are clearly not fit for purpose." (PARENT)*
- *"What time would children need to leave Banknock to walk to Denny High?" (PARENT)*
- *"Short term solutions to years and years of financial mismanagement by the council and once again it's the children who suffer." (PARENT)*
- *"Expect a serious increase in the volume of traffic in our community due to the proposal." (PARENT)*
- *"Leaving these children without a method of transport to get them safely to school is ridiculous. Children and their families who do not live close enough to safely walk to school should not be penalised for where they live." (OTHER)*
- *"From the Council's proposed budget, I see 13 new signs in 13 locations could cost the Council £238K is that really essential when the Council has such a large amount of money to save." (PARENT)*
- *"The distance and the roads kids would travel would take a long time for kids to get to school that they would be more tired and cold and if they didn't have friends to walk with, they would be alone anything could happen, they might get bullied or worse it's not safe" (PARENT)*
- *"Make cuts from other non-essential areas in the council, safety of children must take priority." (PARENT)*
- *"The Scottish Government provides free bus travel to all young people under 21. This proposal goes against the grain of this policy. Is there any possibility of accessing specific funding from the Scottish Government for school transport? I'm unsure what public bus would take my daughter from Lionthorn to Graeme High School directly." (PARENT)*
- *"This proposal will impact very unfairly on families who have children attending RC schools as they have far bigger catchment areas and children who travel further. It will also limit the choices for families on lower incomes who do not have their own transport to get children to school safely, or the income to pay additional costs on public transport." (STAFF)*
- *"Whilst I understand that savings need to be made within the local council, I think it is disgusting that our children are being made to suffer. Not only are there cutbacks which are currently occurring an education level already, that you feel it is necessary to introduce yet more cutbacks. The consultation meetings which were held highlighted the fact that the public do not understand the full extent to proposals and some of the questions put the speakers were not fully answered." (PARENT)*
- *"I do not agree that a primary aged child should have to make a potential 40-minute walk from the Old Town in Grangemouth to the catchment school of Beancross Primary crossing very busy roads (Earls gate roundabout) on route. You are looking at a 50-minute walk for a secondary pupil. I do not agree that that is a fair expectation, especially during adverse weather." (PARENT)*
- *"This is a disgusting proposal brought forward to the council, there has been no consideration given for the children's wellbeing or safety. Quite frankly to save 625K each year for the next 4 hours against the 65 million to be saved this is a drop in the ocean, what other services do intend to cut? Falkirk Council have been unable to provide an adequate service for years, yet they have agreed to more houses being built and have squandered 2 million on an HQ building that's not necessary at this time." (PARENT)*
- *"This is not just about cost, this is about the safety and duty of care to our children, as well as the environmental impact. The details so far revolve around cost saving and having children walking to school, when in fact a good number of parents would resort to driving their children to school. This would increase congestion, harmful emissions, and the risk to those that do chose to walk because of increased traffic at that time of day. This is also another action that would have a greater impact on children in less affluent households, where there may be no choice but to walk, people who already find it difficult to clothe their children, would now have to find additional clothing to protect them in winter. This will affect their health also increasing the demand on the health services. And what clothing they can afford is unlikely to be high visibility, again reducing the safety of those children on their walk to school. In my opinion this is a short-sighted step that is being looked at because it is easy to achieve but would only move the burden elsewhere." (PARENT)*

- *"This is less about cost and more about the lack of public transport." (PARENT)*
- *"I don't understand. Given there is free bus travel for under 22 what is the issue exactly?" (PARENT)*
- *"This appears to be an attempt to render the young Scot bus pass null and void for school travel." (PARENT)*
- *"Absolutely disgusting when we are already going through the cost-of-living crisis." (PARENT)*
- *"The safety of the children walking this distance isn't being considered also you are not taking into account what route they have to walk only as the crow flies which definitely isn't safe. If the weather is bad the child would be soaked or freezing affecting their schoolwork especially if they are unwell because of this. Girfec is not being looked at just the financial side" (PARENT)*
- *"Walking distance considerably too far – will take almost 1 hour. Fastest walking route to St Mungo's will likely be through a secluded area – safety issues in winter months when dark. Children arriving at school in wet clothes with limited options for changing (St Mungo's strict uniform policy will impact on this as uniform not appropriate for walking long distances in adverse weather. Consideration should also be given to the energy issues – children currently living in homes where heating and hot water may be restricted due to energy costs. Walking long routes in the cold and rain then returning to cold / unheated houses with no hot water. Reduced bus service will increase road traffic in terms of cars dropping children at school – already busy road in vicinity of St Mungo's and St Francis schools will be much increased. Has Falkirk Council conducted a traffic assessment on this and subsequently an air quality Impact assessment. Falkirk Council have made some progress in recent years in terms of reducing national air quality objectives for key air quality pollutants such as Nitrogen Dioxide. Increasing the number of cars in already busy routes may impact on these objectives. The road network around St Mungo's High school such as the A9, Camelon Road and the Rosebank Roundabout will likely be significantly impacted." (PARENT)*
- *"Legislative basis, the proposal document, the papers to the Education, Children and Young People Executive, and indeed the discussion at the Executive meeting which approved the consultation show a misunderstanding of the legislation and guidance on school transport. Because of the misunderstanding of the legislation, the nature of the proposal is misrepresented. The walking distance has been repeatedly referred to as a recommended national distance entitlement, a legislative entitlement, or similar, and that the current transport arrangements are more generous than the national entitlement. In fact, the legislation does not provide any entitlement to school transport. The distances that are referred to relate to when a parent would have a reasonable excuse for their child's non-attendance at school, not an entitlement of the parent or obligation of the council. The Scottish Government School Transport Guidance states, "Legislation does not prescribe the distance beyond which [Local Authorities] must, nor distance below which they must not, provide transport" The mischaracterisation of the legislation means that the proposal is presented as a movement away from an over-generous provision to a provision closer to a legislated entitlement. The local authority's legal obligation is to provide such school transport as it considers necessary, regardless of distance. The proposal is therefore a movement from what it previously considered necessary, to what it now considers necessary. In none of the documentation or discussions is there any explanation regarding why the affected children have previously needed transport, but now do not. The reduction in need for school transport could, for example, be because safe cycle routes are now in place, school crossing patrols extended, pavements widened, paths improved, or street lighting installed. Presenting the proposal as a roll-back from overgenerous provision to an entitlement, rather than as a reduction in need makes the proposal seem much more reasonable than it in fact is. If the proposal detailed why the perceived need for school transport has reduced, it would allow a better understanding of the implications of the change and encourage the engagement of those affected to consider walking routes and whether they are indeed safe for their children. Walking distance, I would also highlight one other misunderstanding of the legislation that has arisen in the papers and the executive meeting. It has been stated that a safe walking route is in legislation a route that is safe for a child accompanied by an adult. This is inaccurate. It is the obligation of the parent to ensure that their child attends school, and the parent has an excuse for nonattendance if they are out with walking distance and no free transport is provided. The discussion of walking distance in the legislation in this context states that it is "by the nearest available route" without reference to the child being accompanied by an adult. The addition of adult accompaniment of the child by Falkirk Council clearly changes the nature of a safe walking route but is an imposition of parents that is without basis in legislation or national guidance. It may be reasonable for young children to be accompanied (as is implied by the national guidance). It is, however, unreasonable for a safe walking distance to be set in the context of an imposed obligation on parents to walk 12 miles per day (2 x 3-mile return journeys) to accompany pupils to high school. If the*

Council's policy is to remove transport based on routes which are safe only because it is assumed they will be accompanied by an adult, it makes it much more likely that parents will simply take children to school by car. We should instead be creating genuinely safe routes around our community. Alternative approach to the proposal which would be more likely to achieve the wellbeing and active travel benefits hoped for in the proposal would be to properly follow the SG School Transport Guidance. The Guidance is clear that "Ministers expect local authorities to keep their criteria for providing school transport under review and be flexible enough to take into account factors, relative to the nature of the route, which might affect pupil safety." The Guidance goes on to suggest that Local Authorities define recommended walking routes which they deem safe for pupils to follow on a walk to school and lists a range of factors to be considered. At present the proposal would apply a blanket policy across all localities, and hope that any safety issues surface during the consultation rather than when a pupil is hurt after the policy is applied. If the guidance is followed, the criteria could be set but transport services only switched off for localities who have a recommended safe walking route created by the Council and agreed by the relevant Parent Council. This would ensure that walking routes are genuinely considered safe, improving safety, improving engagement and the likelihood that pupils actively travel to school rather than simply switch the bus for the car. It might also encourage improvements to the routes to benefit the wider community. Climate Change The proposal document states, under educational benefits, that "Encouraging more active travel to school can also reduce traffic around schools, increasing safety and reducing the carbon emissions associated with road traffic." The executive paper goes further stating that reducing the number of school buses "will reduce current levels of transport emissions which will have a positive impact on Falkirk's commitment and progression to meet Climate Change targets. In addition, if more children become engaged in active travel, this would also lead to fewer parental car journeys being undertaken." In reality carbon emissions would only reduce if almost all pupils now walk or cycle to school. The UK government's BEIS states that an average bus emits 1.30497 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/km, and an average smaller-medium sized car 0.143 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e/km. A car journey is double the length of the bus journey as the parent will usually return home after dropping off or picking up. Using the BEIS numbers above, if only 5 pupils from a bus travel by car after the bus is removed, the overall emissions have increased, and contrary to the proposal the volume of traffic at schools has also increased (with a commensurate reduction in safety). Knowing the difficulties with the route faced by children in my locale, 5 additional cars per bus seems a very low estimate. It is hard to believe that in 2022 a local authority genuinely believes that reducing public transport options would be good for the environment and the response to the climate emergency." (PARENT)

- "Seems odd all the taxis can be put on for school kids, but the buses are not." (PUPIL)
- "Children cannot be expected to cycle to school when there are no identified cycle routes. This would be too dangerous alongside a main road. The distance is too long for kids to walk twice per day (up to 6 miles per day) and parents without transport who live 3 miles away who would walk kids to school would need to walk up to 12 miles per day to ensure their child gets to school safely." (PARENT)
- "If there were good cycle routes or a good public bus service to Denny high, it would be ok. But none of these things are in place so this creates a problem. More parents doing school drop offs is bad for the environment, unsafe in school grounds and discriminated against working parents" (PARENT)
- "I find the proposal will affect a higher proportion of families that attend catholic schools in the area. This will make it more difficult for children to attend their faith school and continue/start their catholic education. I feel this discriminates families who wish for their children to attend a faith school." (PARENT)
- "The "safe" route identified from Polmont to GHS is a predator's dream as well as having extremely narrow pavements & dangerous junctions. The public service buses won't be able to cope with the demand & parents cannot be relied upon to drive their kids to & from school. Has an impact assessment been done on public transport, on the uptake in traffic, on the effect to the clean air & climate targets? What if kids arrive at school soaking, can they get warmed up & changed, will they all have a locker, so they don't have to carry very heavy bags daily?" (PARENT)
- "It seems that the proposal is at cross purposes with the Scottish Government pledge to provide children with free bus travel. That advantage is deemed less valuable when some of the same children are having to pay to travel to and from school. With the cost-of-living crisis, everyone is having to tighten the purse strings. This is something else that parents will have to find money for. If that is not possible, children will have to walk, which is fine in most cases, however those with health concerns and conditions will be exhausted by the time they get to school. In addition, with the weather in this country, walking is not always feasible, children will be drenched before the school day starts." (PARENT)

- "Here are suggestions as to how issues may need to be tackled should the proposals go ahead: 1/ More frequent, reliable public busses along the F25 and X38 route at times to match the school day with an understanding of the volume of school pupils that will require this service 2/ Full risk assessment of all walking routes carried out and published. Perhaps council staff could walk the existing bus routes to gain a better understanding of what will be expected from pupils. 2/Better crossing facilities at the Salmon Inn Road crossroads which is a notorious spot for accidents. This could be a crossing guard or a traffic light system, which may also help reduce car accidents 3/ Widening of pavements along the suggested walking routes to ensure they are safe for pupils to walk on 4/ Review of street lighting to ensure all routes are well lit and reduce likelihood of attacks on pupils. 5/ Lockers available to every single pupil at school (free to those who cannot afford to pay) where they can store a change of clothes in case of getting soaked on the long walk/cycle to school or after being sweaty after their long walk/cycle as well as to store any outdoor clothing and coats they need. This may also allow them to store jotters they might not need at home too, meaning their bags would be slightly lighter. 5/ Update/change school uniform requirements in order to allow children to wear more suitable clothes for walking to and from school (leggings, tracksuit bottoms, hoodies, polo shirts etc instead of shirts & ties) 6/ Understanding from teachers that children may be tired in the morning after their long walk/cycle 7/ Understanding from teachers and schools that lateness and absences may increase due to unreliable public transport and that pupils should not be blamed for this 8/ Teachers and school staff to be encouraged to travel to school by walking, cycling and public transport. Teachers could be charged for parking. Most working people have to pay for parking so this isn't unreasonable and could also provide an additional revenue stream. 9/ Catchment areas to be reviewed so pupils attend the school within the closest walking distance. (E.g. Braes High is 1.6 miles away from Polmont rather than Graeme High which is 2.9 miles). 10/ Option to pay for contracted bus services - I would happily pay for a school bus pass and have done so in the past." (PARENT)
- "I have concerns that if this proposal does come into fruition and as an alternative to walking the public bus service is used, there will not be the capacity to cater for all the children wanting to use this service. The bus route via Polmont Main Street is not a reliable service and is serviced by a single decker bus. The children could end up having to wait whilst numerous buses drive past due to being full or the driver not wanting to pick up school children, causing last arrival at school and delayed journeys home." (PARENT)
- "As parents, we won't be able to walk with our son as we both work." (PARENT)
- "It will affect the area as lots of families will have to walk to school or will take their car. The parking at the school is already horrendous so this will just add to it. As a working parent there are days, I have to take the car to school to be able to get to work in time and it is complete mayhem." (PARENT)
- "I think this change is unnecessary. We have no other method of transport to get my daughter to school and rely on the school bus." (PARENT)
- "Parents may be forced to make adjustments so that they can take their children to school by car if there is no bus service. This will result in increased traffic congestion and pollution in the surrounding area. This seems like a backwards step. (PARENT)
- "Catholic pupils will be the most impacted by this decision. There must be free transport for schools." (OTHER)
- "I think it is outrageous that children and being punished because the council don't make good decisions with the money they get. Our children need an education if they stop the buses how are our children going to get educated." (PARENT)
- "This is a dangerous idea for a cost cutting option. This option comes at risk of direct harm to children. We have unreliable public service buses as an alternative, meaning my child will miss vital time in education." (PARENT)
- "I think with the additional £25 for grass cutting and an increase to 7 per cent for Council Tax these changes are penalising the poorest in society especially those who attend a faith school. We cannot offer families the opportunity to attend a faith school and charge them for transport." (PARENT)
- "It is unreasonable to propose pupils walk to and from school for up to 6 miles each day. The reality means those than can will drive, increasing traffic and parking issues. It is contradictory to the aims of sustainable transport." (PARENT)
- "All travel to and from places of education should be free." (PARENT)
- "If you are increasing our council tax and charging extra for bin collections that should be enough. Stop squeezing families who are just trying to survive the cost-of-living crisis." (PARENT)

- "The education of our young people has already been badly impacted by covid and strikes, this proposed change is yet another impact on our young people and their education as well as creating unnecessary worry for their parents/ carers given the current cost of living crisis" (OTHER)
- "I actually can't believe the council are considering this as an option to save money. Surely our children's education and safety should be treated as priority. Please explain to us what alternative will be offered for pupils living just under 3 miles away if school buses are no longer available." (PARENT)
- "Kids are getting everything taken off the already- swimming pools. Community Centres. Look at the people that can't keep in budget." (PARENT)
- "I understand the financial pressures that the authority is under, however education is already an extremely underfunded aspect within the Falkirk council, and it is not ethical or fair to continue to reduce the funds and resources education has access to. It is important to value the youth within Falkirk and provide everything you can to ensure the improvement of our area. Please do not continue to take away from our schools and find other more just solutions." (PUPIL)
- "I think this is a disgrace and will put loads of children at risk due to the busy roads and being vulnerable with having to walk such a distance." (PARENT)
- "If you are stopping the free buses, you could have pupils pays for the buses instead again to stop them walking to school in the cold wet rain in winter and have them then feel miserable at school." (PUPIL)
- "Falkirk Council have a duty of care to school age pupils to ensure safe travel to and from school without a cost." (PARENT)
- "I want to underline that the only way to walk to Denny High from Bonnybridge goes past roads with heavy traffic. When you then factor in dark mornings, regular poor weather conditions and the length of time it will take pupils, this is not a realistic or well thought out proposal. Without doubt, it will lead to far higher absence levels for many pupils." (PARENT)
- "I understand the need for the council to save money but cannot understand why adding a mile to both provision as they stand at the moment is deemed to be a fair solution. Surely this could become another barrier to children getting to school at all, especially if they don't live on a safe route to school and come from a family who don't own transport?" (STAFF)
- "Mapping software used by council is a secret apparently and not available to public. Works out around 0.4miles less than the worldwide mapping service supplied by Google. Safe walking routes are determined parents walking with their children. This then requires employers allowing staff to come in later or leave earlier. Putting jobs at risk in an already hard time. No consideration made for winter seasons. Appears council are putting budgets ahead of safety of our children." (PARENT)
- "Please note that there are very little safe routes from Bonnybridge to Denny. Also, there seems to be no exception made for winter. Ultimately, what is councils main concern, budget cuts or child safety?? It looks like budget is the main concern." (PARENT)
- "I understand the need to save money and would support the introduction on a reasonable (possibly means tested) fayre for school transport. But I disagree with removal of transport under the terms of the proposal." (PARENT)
- "Working with operators is key, to simply lay blame on the cuts on the operators need to increase rates due to their need to cover fixed costs is wrong." (PARENT)
- "My child is being persecuted for attending a non-denominational school. Had my child attended the local Roman Catholic School they would get a school bus. This policy also creates inequality amongst children at a time when your government has pledged to close the attainment gap. Freezing council tax for all those years to win votes was short-sighted, irresponsible and was always going to cause funding gaps" (PARENT)
- "In times of economic crisis, I understand cuts have to be made but this does not include putting our children's safety at risk. Not to mention the increased financing parents will need to find if public transport is the only option as not every parent drive and many also work. The new DHS was built away from the town centre- making it unsafe during wintertime or poor weather for children to walk. Not to mention the increased traffic and pollution to the area as parents have to use their own cars." (PARENT)
- "Have councillors cycled or walked these routes in the dark winter nights and happy they are safe for cycling and walking?" (PARENT)
- "This flies in the face of current government policy and guidance encouraging greater use of sustainable transport options. Without question this will result in a great increase in car trips to and from school which in turn will have a negative impact on air quality and congestion levels around schools. To



- suggest that kids should cycle or walk instead is unrealistic given how poor cycle infrastructure is across the district. I would question how many of our elected representatives would be willing to walk or cycle these journeys on a daily basis let alone young schoolchildren being expected to do so." (PARENT)*
- *"The Drove Loan Road is not well lit and is very narrow at the corner. Even the cars stop and let one go at a time, squeezing up as near to the kerb as possible. It is an already busy road and would be much busier if more people had to be driven to school. What about in the wintertime, paths are not gritted, it is hard enough walking to the bus stop let alone walking an hour in those conditions- this would take much longer meaning I would be late. On days of torrential rain are we expected to sit in wet clothes all day after walking an hour? After school I do homework so the hour to get hour would eat into that time impacting my studies. I have exam year coming up in 2023/2024 and am worried if I can't get to school or may miss school due to the weather etc. There is only one local bus service an hour from Bonnybridge to Denny. I would need to walk to the toll and then walk from Denny cross. Every other school child in Bonnybridge would also be trying to get on that bus. What if I don't get on, I'd be late for school." (PUPIL)*
  - *"The people who have the power to vote on this ridiculous proposal should have a wee think and put themselves in the shoes of our children. Would you like to walk over an hour to your work in the morning? How about in the pitch black? In the freezing cold? Along treacherous ungritted pavements? Along the dangerous Drove Lone? Then do the same for over an hour on your way back home again. I think not! This is an accident waiting to happen and the fact this is even being considered is ludicrous!" (PARENT)*
  - *Parking at the school is a nightmare, I have witnessed several confrontations with local residents and parents over parking. The school bus has been a great way of allowing my son to have some independence getting to/from school on his own. (PARENT)*
  - *"I worry about my grandson losing his right to attend a catholic school for fear of being unable to afford the transport. (OTHER)*
  - *"Not every individual had a driving license which means if they can't afford the fees, they will miss out in the chance to go to the school of their preference. In this day and age, this should not be a concern. (PARENT)*
  - *"Have McGill's been approached as to capacity levels on their limited current bus services. Do they have sufficient additional drivers available now or being trained to guarantee that the limited service runs and on time. Will they invest in providing larger capacity buses running on a more frequent basis at peak times to be able deal with these additional passengers?" (PARENT)*
  - *"How is it possible for hundreds of pupils that usually take different buses to school to all pile on to one or two buses in their area to get to school? These buses are usually single decker, making the issue even worse. Many walking routes from areas surrounding Denny are unsafe or would take too long for pupils to get to school on time, causing their attendance to drop, thus, effecting their education. Proposing that a parent/guardian accompany pupils on their walk to school to ensure that they are safe is extremely illogical, as many parents work and do to have the time to take their children to school. Cutting so many buses will negatively impact pupils and parents all across the Falkirk district and pupils' education should not have to suffer because of the council's poor quality financial decisions." (PUPIL)*
  - *"Public bus service unsuitable. Currently 2 double decker buses pick up /drop off in Maddiston and the effect would be significant. Could there be an option to make a payment for travel to/from school which was the case prior to introduction of government free bus travel passes" (PARENT)*
  - *"I'm just disappointed I'm a working mum, I pay tax and National inside and again this is another service that we are losing" (PARENT)*
  - *"If google maps shown my house is 3.4 miles from school via walking route does this mean I get free transport." (PARENT)*
  - *"I'm disgusted that the council would rather save money first before putting children's health and safety first!" (PARENT)*
  - *"I would be concerned about the risk of accidents/ general increased congestion at schools if services are cut." (PARENT)*
  - *"I feel that taking the buses off will mean more cars going to the school to drop off kids which will not be good for the environment. The higher number of cars could be a safety issue for the children too. We are supposed to be encouraging children to attend school and this would then create a barrier which is not in the children's best interests." (PARENT)*
  - *"The volume of parents that will need to drop off in cars at Denny high will increase congestion in an already congested area causing further danger. There are 3 double decker busses leave Bonnybridge*

- to go to Denny high. The local bus service has no direct bus link there and the busses to Denny are not enough to transport all of the school children." (PARENT)
- "Would be happy to pay daily/weekly for a school bus to be provided. The children have lost a lot of school time over the last few years and this risks it continuing due to lateness. It is approximately a 40 min walk from our house so would result in children leaving before 8am to ensure arriving on time school starting" (PARENT)
  - "You fail to say that you are scrapping the routes, not just the entitlement. We do not get the entitlement; we rely on the Scottish govt u23 "free" travel. Scrapping these routes means either our child must walk on unsafe routes to Denny high unless we can get changes to own commute (unlikely). Alternative bus route is not direct and unreliable. This change will put lives at risk, increase pollution with more car journeys and cause increased congestion around schools. A disgraceful proposal." (PARENT)
  - "If there was a charge for a bus service I would be willing to pay, I think other parents would so be willing to pay." (PARENT)
  - "Cut benefits for those who were never working and support those who try to bring up kids to become active member of our society by paying tax when they work!" (PARENT)
  - "My son has autism spectrum disorder and ADHD so going to high school was a big life change for him and we have been happy with the way he has settled into high school with the support of the school. One of the big challenges for him was getting the bus but for his independence we thought it would be a good idea, so he doesn't feel alienated from the other children his age, which he has done so well with and has given him more confidence. Now with the proposed cuts to school transport this will be taken away from him which he is very upset by taking away independence from mentality challenged child. Additionally, there were no alternatives offered even though through the Scottish government children travel free on public transport." (PARENT)
  - "The council appears to have increasingly focussed attempts on cost cutting measures as a way to plug their gaps and challenges. Those of us working in private business are very well attuned to the need for cost optimisation / reduction measures to be balanced out with revenue generating ideas and initiatives. One cannot be exclusive of the other. Your approach removes any trust in your abilities, proposals, and as we have seen it just continues to erode the once prosperous and exciting council area in which we lived. It's a good job there is relatively affordable housing in Falkirk which keeps people here - don't be blind to the fact that affluent and wealth creating professionals have no desire to settle down in any meaningful numbers locally. I will be encouraging my children to move onward and upward as soon as they can. Such a shame." (PARENT)
  - "Can I go to the Braes as it is nearer to walk." (PARENT)
  - "Why can we revert back to the policy from last year when parents can pay for the school bus service on a means test basis? Reducing the bus service and the lack of reliable public transport is a huge concern. Our children deserve better from Falkirk Council and should be looking elsewhere for their budget cuts. I'm sure most parents would go back to paying for the transport if this was an option but it wasn't raised at the meeting at DHS so I presume this isn't a route you do not want to go down." (PARENT)
  - "Save money on something else not taking bus off the children." (PARENT)
  - "I feel this is a service which is fundamental to a child's education. It also puts extra stress on families who do not have the capability to ensure children are getting to school in a safe way. Getting rid of this service is not following GIRFEC and certainly not getting it right for each child. I currently do not use this service, but I am looking to move to another part in Grangemouth. As a single parent who works this transport would be so beneficial to ensure I can work and provide for my children." (PARENT)
  - "If you're closing the high school swimming pools and a child falls into the canal on the way to school. They won't be able to swim and will drown. No thanks, if you're not transporting my son to school on a school bus then I'm keeping him safe at home." (PARENT)
  - "3 miles is way too far to expect children to walk twice a day" (PARENT)
  - "I cannot agree with children walking from High Bonnybridge and Greenhill and outlying areas to Denny High School. Not safe especially with Scottish weather." (OTHER)
  - "The council need to look to save money elsewhere and not pick the easy target of school transport. It is mentioned in the proposal that it takes the distance in line with other Scottish councils, but Stirling and Clackmannanshire are still currently the same as Falkirk Council. Which councils have changed?" (PARENT)
  - "The proposed walking route to school is extremely unsafe, Drove Loan is renowned for accidents and the pathway is very narrow. I don't allow any of my children to walk this way even out with school hours

to meet with friends due to their safety. The quickest way would be through the woods at the top of Drove Loan but this area is not ideal especially on darker nights when schools close at 4pm, my worry is for young girls in this area and all children walking home from school could be subject to being abducted. Not all parents are able to drop and pick up their children from school every day, not everyone has access to a car, this also puts stress on parents for higher fuel costs in a very difficult time with rising household bills" (PARENT)

- "I understand the council need to make cuts and save money however, I don't believe these are the correct cuts we are making at the expense of our children's safety and wellbeing. I would be willing to pay something towards there bus pass to ensure there safe getting to and from the school each day, I don't agree with the service being removed all together. Walking from Greenhill to Denny high is not safe for children at any time of the year especially during the winter months." (PARENT)
- "There is no safe walking route for us." (PARENT)
- "There is a lot to consider with this proposal. Perhaps first thing would be asking for a lower price from bus contractors for their service. Failing that then their agreed service should be terminated, and a new tender should be put out. It is a huge worry for me that you want to potentially expose vulnerable and young children to an area that has an increase in the amount of sex offenders living within our community, having children leaving the house and schools to walk in the dark on their own sometimes is not safe in any form." (PARENT)
- "Due to no buses, there will a higher volume of traffic using these routes which are already in our opinion unsafe. Very unfair for children to have to walk this distance as this is going to influence their willingness to go to school and the potential for regular lateness due to the walk there and back. What will be the school's duty of care going forward if this is the case. For example, Children arriving soaked wet through and or cold. Will there be pupil drying rooms for clothes or hot drinks available upon their arrival or additional lockers for keeping dry clothes. The added risk of clashing with other school pupils who don't get along so possibly confronted and bullied by these daily or even worse. Lastly, I don't think the cuts that are being proposed are the right ones. The council are showing no duty of care to our children and when something happens to a child who will be at blame. Is there anything else that could be done to cut these budgets. Still having buses but maybe 1 or 2 pickup points? Parents/carers paying a little towards a bus passes?" (PARENT)
- "I think it is crucial that the school buses continue to run as if they are removed it will be putting a lot of children at risk of many risks. Children could go off on their own, fall and hurt themselves, children could be abducted, children who are subjects of being bullied at school may find this escalates on a walk to and from school. In short I think it is very irresponsible of the council to remove these buses." (OTHER)
- "So not only are you increasing the distance for free travel but also decreasing the bus service. This is unfair as even if I wish to pay for bus passes there would be no option available. You are now forcing kids to walk. You can say all you want about wellbeing and fitness which is fine on sunny warm days but where will the benefits be in wintertime when kids will be missing their education due to illness?" (PARENT)
- "The fact is children still need to get school. We do not how much this change will save the council however what it will do is put children's lives at risk, cause more traffic to be pushed through an already congested Denny and children whose parents do not have cars or can walk them to school will be left disadvantaged by this change." (PARENT)
- "This campaign has been falsely advertised and promoted as a review of free transport right which most parents in our situation have ignored, not realising the impact this will have on their children. Speaking to several parents in out street that have children that use the current system, they do not realise that this will take the bus they rely on being taken off the road. So, if this proposal is accepted on the first day of term in August many children and parent will be in a difficult situation of trying to get their child to school. Or perhaps this was a deliberate tack by the council to get is past by dressing the wolf in sheep's clothing! Maybe if no one notices the true impact of this proposal we can indeed sneak it in. This should go back out to all parent using school transport systems for their attention. The council need to be transparent, honest and not use underhand tactics to ensure that this consultation reaches the correct people and it therefore a real consultation." (PARENT)
- "Use money to ensure that children are transported to and from school safely and not to fund sectarian marches." (OTHER)
- "The Drove Loan is not safe and the report from 2009 is well out of date that was already completed so needs re looked at as the volume of traffic on foot and car will be a lot more if proposals go ahead." (OTHER)

- "There is a legal requirement for baptised Catholics to be able to access Catholic schools in an authority area. This proposal has a disproportionate impact on our family as my children must travel further to attend a Catholic school. I am aware that a precedent has recently been set in Stirling Council that children from denominational schools have been granted an exemption from increasing the minimal distance for free transport. If this proposal, which I strongly object to, does go ahead, I hope there will be an exemption for our family, and those in similar circumstances to allow us to send our children to a Catholic school." (PARENT)
- "I don't think walking up the Drove Loan should be counted as safe. That road is just as dangerous as going in through Larbert road." (PUPIL)
- "Westquarter school does not have available car parking space to safely drop/pick up children using a car. The walking route is not safe." (PARENT)
- "St Mungo's High school caters for children from the whole of Falkirk Council area, whilst all other non-denominational High Schools are placed much more locally and within walking distance for their pupils. Catholic children only have one school they can attend and are being unfairly treated if they have to pay for school buses to attend their school." (OTHER)
- "The Council state that this would not impact upon learning, but I wholeheartedly disagree as many children are likely to have to walk a significant distance, in all weathers and will take much more time. The additional time spent travelling will be time they can't spend studying out with school hours and will impact on their life balance." (OTHER)
- "My children are baptised and has the legal right to have a safe access to St. Bernadette's RC Primary and St Mungo's High School where they can learn more about and practice their faith." (PARENT)
- "There is a legal requirement for baptised Catholics to be able to access Catholic schools in an authority area. I do not consider changing school as being a baptised Catholic, I want my children to attend St. Bernadette's RC Primary and St Mungo's school to both further their education and practice their faith." (PARENT)
- "It's just another cost lumped onto families at this really stressful time." (PARENT)
- "Why are you targeting kids! SNP government have given airmiles Angus Robertson £350million to travel the world but you can't pay for the kids to get to school!" (PARENT)
- "Whilst the economy is in turmoil a suggestion to not take on new building projects and parks etc and continue with providing the services currently at hand." (PARENT)
- "Please retain buses for those that need it. There are plenty of council buildings that are empty or have minimal staff that could be sold or demolished and rebuilt on to save and gain money." (PARENT)
- "By cutting on children's transport to school I feel is of huge impact to children's rights. The right to education and the rights to be safe and protected, placing my children at a severe disadvantage." (PARENT)
- "The new S1's are who I am mainly worried about. They won't have time scales of how long it takes to get to school and they're more likely to be later, along with usually other young year groups. As well as if the day is icy, it can become unsafe for those especially the top of Maddiston to reach school and possibly many more will have to stay off school at times due to not being able to safely reach school." (PUPIL)
- "As a teacher it concerns me that the most at risk of low attendance, those in the lower quintiles will be disproportionately affected by this policy." (STAFF)
- "If your changing free transport does that mean young Scot cards will not work on the bus to school?" (PUPIL)
- "This doesn't really feel like a joined up approach between central and local government either regarding free bus travel for all under 22s. Would it not have been simpler to retain the bus for those that need it, rather than extending it to older children who don't?" (PARENT)
- "I am worried and unhappy about this as my children may have to walk to school and I find that the route they will take will be far too dangerous during the winter months and are at risk of something happening to them, I have no other way of getting my children to school which is a real worry for me." (PARENT)
- "Walking in winter is an option for my girls it will take around 1 hr of constant walking to get home in the rain and snow more like 1&1/2 hrs , the path into Polmont isn't wide enough for multiple people walking along it ." (PARENT)
- "I have had to do that walk on several occasions and it's unrealistic to expect pupils (regardless of age) to undertake this on a daily basis. The walk would take over an hour ONE way. That puts over TWO HOURS onto the children's day- walking on a busy main road most of the way. How is this ensuring

- children's safety? I honestly believe the people who have suggested this idea try it themselves including the school day itself!" (OTHER)
- "It is unthinkable to expect children to walk that distance in winter conditions before and after school especially when some children may not have suitable clothing, footwear or even having had breakfast given some families financial circumstances in the current economic climate." (PARENT)
  - "I think this proposal is ridiculous and playing a very dangerous game with the lives of our children." (PARENT)
  - "It is extremely dangerous; it will affect children's learning if they can't make it to school because of weather or safety of pupil on route which is shocking." (PARENT)
  - "If Hags is 4.7 miles from Denny high and Longcroft is right next to the hags how can this affect Longcroft." (OTHER)
  - "I am worried that I'll be wet and cold when I arrive at school, I will be late. I am worried the roads aren't safe to cross. I am worried my parents will have to drive me to school and there will be lots more cars. (PUPIL)
  - "I am concerned for several reasons: there are not necessarily safe walking routes for some pupils to walk to their school; in some cases, there may be no alternative local transport to make it possible for pupils to travel to school; if parents have to drive their children to school, this could result in increased congestion in the school areas; longer travelling time to school may mean that children miss breakfast clubs; many parents may experience financial hardship if they want to keep their children at their present school and they have to pay for transport. I am worried that the proposal would erode the rights of Catholic families to send their children to Catholic schools in the Falkirk Council area." (OTHER)
  - "I am concerned that the proposal would damage the rights of Catholic families to send their children to Catholic schools in the local authority area. Some children might not have safe routes to walk to their school. For some children, there might not be any alternative local transport for them to travel to school. If parents must drive their children to school, this could cause more traffic congestion in the school areas. If children have a longer travelling time to school, then they might miss their breakfast clubs. I think that many parents would want to keep their children at their present school but would find it difficult to pay for their children to travel to school." (OTHER)
  - "The amount of litter, dropped within this area is momentous, the paths are littered with rubbish which are unsafe to walk. Can preventions be provided from an eco-standpoint? With large volumes of walking traffic through the streets, can council provide sustainable ways of keeping the streets clear? The upkeep on the pavements?" (PARENT)
  - "I have grave concerns for my sons physical and mental well-being walking this distance especially in darkness and in all weathers." (PARENT)
  - "Putting children at risk is not acceptable." (PARENT)
  - "Treat others how you'd want to be treated yourself. Don't expect someone to do something you wouldn't want to do. If you won't walk the routes, you expect children to walk then don't expect them to do the same. Would you let your children walk? I hardly think so." (PARENT)
  - "I think that putting money before children's safety is terrible and we should be doing all we can support children in reaching school safely." (PARENT)
  - "Please confirm the "safe" route to my address as requested. I find the proposals totally detrimental to the many children and their families affected. It is likely to adversely affect attendance at school and punctuality too." (PARENT)
  - "This appears to be a rather elitist policy as it will negatively affect the poorest and most vulnerable students who may not have parents with the finances or inclination to support their journey to school. Schools should be a free and easy to access places for all children. Has this been viewed with GIRFEC on mind or by using the Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)?" (PARENT)
  - "Even if there was a small charge to keep the service running, I believe many parents would contribute the bus costs." (PARENT)
  - "The increasing the distance of walk for pupils, not only with regards to weather conditions, but also in the fact that the school patrol crossings were also cut drastically, would increase the risk of injury/accidents happening. It will probably also impact on late arrivals and therefore disruption to classes." (PARENT)
  - "If Falkirk Council want to take a green stance, we should be encouraging the use of buses, by either strong public services going via schools or having school bus services. If funding is an issue, you can mean test travel and tie it in to the qualifying conditions for Free School Meals and clothing grants

nationally or more local schemes such as Council Tax Reduction or Go card. Most parents who can afford it will be happy to pay a small nominal fee for a season ticket to allow their child to travel safely to school. The Council has ring fenced a sizeable budget for signage etc for the 20mph zones, most of this will likely be used around schools or unsafe points where children are walking to school. There is very little evidence of drivers slowing down and certainly around St Bernadette's it is almost entirely ignored. Even if drivers do slow down it is a proven fact that children struggle to judge the speed of cars when they are changing speed, therefore having changes in limits close to these areas is not a clever idea. There is little scientific evidence that it is also greener for the environment. Using the money ring fenced for 20mph zones would be far better placed in school transport, getting kids from safer bus stops to outside the school gates." (PARENT)

- "Cycling to school would be beneficial during better weather conditions however, I do not feel the A803 is a safe cycle route to school significant improvements would be required to make this viable. Living in an area where inclement weather is common, we have been made aware at a public meeting there will be no facilities for children who have had to walk a significant distance to school to be able to change. Are they expected to spend all day in wet clothes?" (PARENT)
- "People might not turn up to school because they can't walk to school because it is a long way to walk, I think you should reconsider the proposal as it could hit children as random people run red lights and the ice and rain in the winter could be dangerous to other pupils. Maybe you could part-subsidised the route and the rest can be run by a company for example, McGills Scotland East, E & M or Prentice Westwood?" (PUPIL)
- "The lack of transport is detrimental to those who require a routine to arrive at school, children may not have others to walk to school with become more isolated, for some kids having others on the bus, or a driver is a safety mechanism and a means to get to school safely, not all children have warm or waterproof clothes and will not be suitably comfortable in inclement weather" (PARENT)
- "Cutting all school buses to and from Maddiston will have a huge effect on pupils in the area. The upper Braes area (as the name suggests) is between 110 and 220m above sea level which often results in inclement weather not seen in other areas. Changing the criteria means that children could be walking to school for up to 2.99 miles in wet, icy, snowy and freezing conditions for part of the year. They are likely to arrive at school cold and wet with of means of storing their wet clothes (both outer and inner wear). This is no way to start a productive day at school. Maddiston has several areas classed as deprived (level 1) on the SIMD grading. These areas are the areas in which children will lose their entitlement to home-school transport. In these areas car ownership is low as is school attendance. Removing the home-school transport will only encourage truancy further and thus increase the attainment gap that so much work has gone into over the past few years. Whilst volunteering in the community hub we have seen cases of young people with inadequate footwear, outdoor clothing, and little food due to the cost-of-living crisis. These are not just children from the deprived areas on the SIMD gradings- they are now from all areas; most families are being affected. Expecting these young people to walk just short of 6 miles a day is unrealistic. Several families in the Maddiston area rely on school transport to get home ASAP due to young caring roles. Extending the time of travel to school from 10-15 minutes each way to 45 minutes to 1 hour each way will have a huge impact on these families and may put at risk several cared for adults and children. Similarly, I know of several families who have young people who have additional support needs who have not been provided with taxi transport to Braes High as it was deemed that although incapable of physically walking to and from the school, they were able to get to the local bus stop and board the "safe" school buses taking them directly to the school grounds. If the buses are removed, again these young people will have no means of getting to school, unless a taxi is provided (at further cost) or unless dropped off by a (parent), thus increasing congestion nearer the school. The upper braes does not have a reliable bus service to even take the pupils part route to the school. Firstly, the buses are nowhere near big enough to carry the 100+ pupils that currently get the bus from Maddiston to Braes high and secondly the bus is timetabled as being every 30 minutes however more often we wait 1 hour on the bus and on occasion have even waited 1 and a half hours. Public transport is not an option." (PARENT)
- "The roads often flood and cars passing by always soak us. Sometimes because of flooding we can't even cross the road. Also, when we get to school our bags are soaked the same with everything inside. The walk to school is tiring especially with everything we need inside them. By the time we get to school we're exhausted. Being tired when getting to school doesn't set us up for a good school day. The public bus service is terrible, meaning we can't even get a bus half of the way. Most of the time these buses are late, or they don't even show up. Also, with the buses getting cancelled, the rise in traffic will go up, making the roads even less safe. Prior to this the roads are already busy, I have seen cars

*drive through crossings, not indicating and pull out of driveways without even looking. How could this be considered safe? I am also a young carer and often need to be home to care for my brother. With the buses being cancelled I will have to walk home so I would not be home to do this." (PUPIL)*

- *"Disgraceful to target vulnerable young people like this. A move backwards to Dickensian times." (OTHER)*
- *"Although I acknowledge that you have now reflected the estimated 89 pupils who would be affected as they use their Under-22 bus pass in your proposal documentation in addition to those pupils who would lose their entitlement due to the home to school distance, I know from attending one of the consultation meetings that there was not originally any acknowledgement that these pupils would be affected, with the meeting concentrating only on the 51 who would lose entitlement due to distance. I'm therefore concerned that any impact assessments you may have done on safe walking routes, environmental impact of additional cars transporting children to school etc will not have taken these pupils into account - there's a big difference between the assumption that 51 pupils would need to find an alternative way to get to school and the reality which is that an estimated 140 pupils will need to find an alternative. Although your proposal states the supposed benefits of pupils finding alternative ways to get to school (walking, cycling, wheeling), given the regular inclement weather we get in Scotland, in reality this proposal is just going to significantly increase the number of pupils being transported to school by car, leading to further traffic issues in and around the school, negatively affecting air quality, and access for neighbouring properties e.g. in an estate near Braes High, where access is only via the road past the school, and they already have issues accessing their estate at school drop-off and pick-up times as cars regularly queue out the school, and up and round the roundabout. This will just get worse when potentially hundreds of extra car journeys will be made to and from the school. I also think that lack of facilities at the school will discourage a lot of the more sustainable alternative transport options - you are looking at a large number of pupils being asked to walk up to 6 miles a day, and potentially arriving at school soaked if it's raining or snowing, but having nowhere to store their wet clothes as no locker facilities are made available to the majority of pupils. I would challenge your assertion that "Pupils travelling actively will arrive at school ready to learn with an increase in concentration levels" if they are regularly arriving soaked after a 3 mile walk in heavy rain. Finally, I can't speak for some of the other schools, but one thing that certainly affects those travelling from Maddiston to and from Braes High is the lack of any alternative public bus service. The only route (F25) that goes direct to the school has a 2-hour frequency, and the alternative route (1) does not go directly to the school and is particularly unreliable. Has any engagement been made with McGills buses to see if they might be able to offer alternative routes with better frequency and reliability?" (PARENT)*