



Danny Chambers MP

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Mr Gary Westbrook
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19 November 2025

Dear Gary

I am writing to you to express my concerns with regard to the removal of school transport routes to/from Henry Beaufort School.

Over the past 24 hours, I have been contacted by many concerned parents and guardians about the removal of this bus service. While I understand that the Council is under significant amounts of financial pressure, depriving children of a safe way of getting to school cannot be the solution.

The Council will be aware that there is no safe cycling or walking route to the school. The decision to remove this service may have been made in summer, but we must now look at the effects this will have in colder, darker months where children will be walking three miles to school. While this is legal - under Department of Education guidelines - it is simply not safe for children to have to walk this route with no clear pathway which is also unlit and near a very busy junction.

We also know that children will, inevitably, be carrying musical instruments, PE kits, food technology provisions and all sorts of other items required for their lessons. To carry such items on a route with no clear walkway, next to a busy main road would be extremely risky especially when we consider the amount of students that rely on the current service.

If these plans go ahead, some local residents have also expressed concerns about the potential increase in traffic to the area surrounding the school as more guardians seek to drop their children off individually. On Sunday, I will be walking with parents and carers on this new route so that we can demonstrate how dangerous this new route will be for the local children that will be forced to make their own way to school.

My questions, then, to the Council are:

- What estimate has the Council made of the safety of the routes that will be used by children to get to school and;
- Do these routes meet acceptable, safe standards so that no student is put at risk?

I implore the Council to rethink this measure and listen to the local parents and carers who are rightly very concerned about this proposed cut to services.

Yours sincerely

Dr Danny Chambers MP

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