

**REPLY BY THE PRESIDENT OF
THE COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION, SPORT & CULTURE
TO QUESTIONS ASKED PURSUANT TO RULE 14 OF THE RULES OF
PROCEDURE BY DEPUTY LE BRUN**

The Health Improvement Commission's Active Travel Officer has stated that every child should have access to a safe, car-free route to school. The Associate Director of Public Health has highlighted the importance of active travel in promoting children's health and wellbeing, and active travel forms part of the wider development of a new Food, Nutrition and Activity Strategy for the Bailiwick. At the same time, schools have identified traffic and road safety concerns affecting pupils and devote staff time, estate space and resources to managing vehicle access, drop-off and collection arrangements. The provision of on-site vehicle access, parking and staff to supervise vehicle volumes demonstrates that educational estates play an important role in accommodating current travel patterns and therefore have a role in shaping future travel choices.

Question

Does the Committee accept that, as the Committee responsible for education and educational estates, it has a role in influencing travel choices to and from school, reducing barriers to active travel and ensuring that children have a meaningful voice in decisions affecting their safety, health and access to school and, if so, will it develop a framework encouraging each States school to establish an Active Travel Group comprising pupils, parents and staff, with a formal mechanism enabling children to raise concerns, share their experiences and develop proposals relating to active travel, road safety and access to school, ensuring that the voices of children, as some of the most vulnerable users of the transport network, are meaningfully represented in the development of government policy and the creation of walking, wheeling and cycling networks that not only enable but encourage active travel, reduce reliance on private vehicle journeys and lessen the demands placed on school resources, staff time and educational estates?

Answer

The Committee agrees that it has a role in influencing active travel solutions in respect of journeys to and from school, and recognises the importance of the voice of children and young people in the development of active travel solutions.

It is important to recognise and acknowledge that finding active travel solutions for school-age children and young people requires a whole-island response. For example, in addition to the role that the Committee can play under its mandated responsibilities:

- the education estate is the responsibility of the States Property Unit, overseen by the Policy & Resources Committee, with whom operational staff working with education have a close relationship;
- the strategic and operational matters relating to the road network, including traffic, cyclists and pedestrian management, decisions over timed road closures to enable school streets etc., are the responsibility of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure, and it is helpful that the Vice-President of the Committee is also a Member of that Committee;
- the development of strategies related to healthy and active lifestyles is the responsibility of the Health & Social Care Committee, albeit with significant input from other arms of government, which is why the President of the Committee has agreed to participate in a new workstream related to this, and it is also helpful that a Member of the Committee is the Vice-President of that Committee, and is also a Member of Living Streets Guernsey;
- land in close proximity to school sites, and that could be used either for drop and stride solutions or to create walkways away from road networks is often in private ownership, and the extent to which landowners are willing to support active travel initiatives is a personal matter for them;
- the extent of employers' flexible working arrangements often influence the decisions parents make when managing their child's school travel arrangements which are, in many cases, dictated by the pressures on those parents to then manage their own onwards travel to work.

The Committee is also mindful that the Policy & Resources Committee has responsibility for the co-ordination of cross-committee workstreams. A relevant example of this is the Children & Families Political Oversight Group, established under the actions arising from the Government Work Plan and whose membership includes a Member of the Committee, which has direct role in ensuring that the voice of children and young people is heard in policy development processes.

With regard to how best to make further progress on the matters you refer to, as stated in our Education Strategy, the Committee believes strongly in empowering its leaders to lead, and this includes the management of the day-to-day operations of their schools and settings. Where we have seen the most success in respect of sustainable active travel solutions, these have been 'bottom up' rather than 'top down' initiatives, that have included walking buses, drop and stride, school streets, pedestrian only walking routes alongside supporting cycling proficiency training for learners in our primary schools.

The Committee also recognises and respects the role of the Governance Board of each school or setting when it comes to 'local' initiatives. The Committee has very recently discussed with the Chairs of the Governance Boards whether one of the Governors on each board should take responsibility for championing active travel, recognising that some sites lend themselves more readily to the adoption of active travel solutions than others. This suggestion has been warmly received by the Chairs, and we expect it to be taken forwards.

The Committee's Work Plan includes workstreams relating to the long-term location of the Sixth Form Centre, and the Transformation of Primary Education, and the Committee hope it is reassuring for you to know that it has already agreed that the ability to facilitate active travel solutions will be a key consideration in its policy proposals.

Finally, the Committee is grateful for your personal enthusiasm on this subject, and would welcome the opportunity to connect you to school leaders and Governors to explore new active travel solutions for our children and young people.

Date of receipt of the Question: 4th September 2026
Date of Reply: 18th September 2026