

Summary of consultation responses

721 people responded to this questionnaire. Of these:

	Number of responses	% of total
Teacher/ Head teacher	14	2.0
Governor	21	3.0
Parent /Carer of a pupil that attends a faith school on faith grounds	211	30.3
Parent/Carer of pupil that attends their nearest suitable school	315	45.3
Parent/Care of a pupil that attends a preferred school	114	16.4
Other	21	3.0
Total	696	100.0
Did not complete this question	25	

Only 21 people lived outside Derby and of these 14 were parents of children at their nearest suitable school and 3 were parents of children at a faith school. Although these few responses came from people who do not pay Derby Council Tax they are clearly users of Derby schools and/or school bus. For the purpose of this research they have not been treated separately.

There was a mixed response to the proposed changes. The answer to the question '**Do you agree with the proposed changes bearing in mind the need for the Council to find a saving in its budget?**' was:

Agree	264 (38%)
Disagree	339 (49%)
Don't know	87 (13%)

	Agree		Disagree		Don't know	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Headteachers	8	57%	3	21%	3	21%
Governors	8	38%	11	52%	2	10%
Parents /faith schools	30	15%	171	83%	5	2%
Parents /nearest school	158	53%	92	31%	47	16%
Parent /pref school	46	41%	40	36%	25	23%

In the main headteachers agreed to the proposal and school governors were against it. However only small numbers responded and only indicate possible trends. Amongst parents and carers there are clear trends. Parents from faith schools where the proposed changes are greatest were mainly against the proposal and parents of pupils from 'nearest suitable schools' were mainly in agreement. The opinions of parents of pupils at 'preferred schools' were more evenly distributed.

Regardless of their agreement with the proposal, people were asked if they thought the service should continue with increased charges.

The response to **‘Do you think we should continue provide school buses to faith schools?’** was:

Yes	63%
No	24%
No opinion	13%

The vast majority of ‘faith school parents’ wanted buses to continue (95%) as did parents of nearest suitable schools (43%) and parents of preferred schools (64%)

There was stronger agreement for the **continuation of school buses to ‘nearest suitable schools’**, with 74% of parents from faith schools, 82% of parents from nearest suitable schools and 80% of parents from preferred schools indicating they wanted the buses to continue.

Questions 9 and 10 asked people who already pay a fare if they would **continue to use the subsidised buses when the fare was increased in September 2007, and when the fare was increased again in 2008 with payment in advance.**

	2007	2008
We will continue to use the bus	140 (58%)	91 (36%)
We will NOT continue to use the bus	38 (16%)	88 (34%)
We don’t know	64 (26%)	76 (30%)
Not Applicable	415	398
Total applicable	242	255
Did not complete this question	75	68

The table shows that many of the respondents indicated that the question was not applicable to them. The remaining figure would seem to indicate a fall in demand for school buses from people who currently pay.

Question 11 asked, **‘If your children travel free of charge on the school bus, do you think they will continue to use the bus from September 2008 when they have to pay in advance?’**

	2008
We will continue to use the bus	70 (34%)
We will NOT continue to use the bus	78 (37%)
We don’t know	60 (29%)
Total	208

Question six asked if there should be a discount for second and subsequent siblings travelling on buses. 70% of all respondents said yes, 20% said no and 10% were undecided.

Of the 483 respondents who said there should be a subsidy, 284 suggested a rate which ranged from 100% to 10% as shown below:

Suggested discount	51-100%	50%	49-25%	24-10%
N =284	42	148	46	23

Question 7 asks how people would prefer to pay in advance and gives options for once or twice a year. 593 people responded to this question:

	Number	%
Once, in July	35	6
Twice, in July and November	346	58
No preference	212	36
Total	593	100

Question 8 gives three options for methods of paying in advance. Of the respondents who had a preference, cheque or cash outweighs both credit / debit card options.

	Number	%
By cheque or cash	283	39
Online, debit or credit card	119	17
Phone debit or credit card	88	12
No preference	232	32
Total	722	100

Finally, question 12 asks, **‘If your Children stop using the school bus service, how will they travel to school?’** 440 people responded, showing a preference for using their cars.

	Number	%
Walk	104	24
Bike	12	3
Car	249	56
Other	75	17
Total	440	100

Respondents were also able to add comments on the form. A number of e-mails were also received, including 25 similarly worded comments from staff at St Benedict. The most frequent issues raised were:

Green/environmental issues	87
Congestion issues	99
General financial impact on families	100
Impact on families with more than one child	35
Many unable to afford to pay in advance	47
Would prefer to pay more frequently	27
Child safety issues	37
Discrimination against faith schools/ people with faiths	46
Freedom of choice	36
If parents decide to send child to faith school, they should expect to pay	44
Policy for faith schools and others should be the same	26
Parents at faith schools already contribute 10% of capital	31

costs	
Penalised twice as Council Tax continues to rise	26
Council should look for savings in other areas	25
Effect on inclusive nature of St Benedict's	20
Lower contribution would be acceptable	20
Stop spending this subsidy	13
Adds to Duffield Rd bus lane problem	12
Council should promote bus use	18
Will/may/would have moved child to nearer school	13
Encourage walking	14
Encourage cycling	11
Decision a foregone conclusion/already made	11
Consider rebates for illness/days when not using bus	10