

# Current Home to School Transport Survey; Executive Report

**Our Voice**

**6<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

Final



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# Background

- Since the autumn of 2014, the quality and reliability of the Home to School Transport service has at best, been inconsistent, if not poor.
- Despite raising a number of issues regarding late arriving buses, buses breaking down, staff going off sick not being properly covered, and poor, or, in many instances, no communication, the overall situation has not perceptibly improved.
- Since 2014 there have been four Heads of Transport/Transport Leads.
- The service is under immense pressure to reduce costs significantly.
- Senior Leadership and Council Members have been aware and have been trying to address the issues, however, the service continues to be problematic.
- Following a Transport meeting with Des O' Donoghue, we explained a number of complaints continue to be raised by parents but do not seem to be logged.



# Background continued

- Due to a lack of hard evidence/examples, both Des O' Donoghue and Janet Leach explained we needed to provide this.
- Therefore, Our Voice asked staff at Special Schools and parent/carers to monitor the pick up and drop off times of their children over a period of 1 - 2 weeks and up to 2 months for Waverley.
- Data collected was over the month of October/early November.
- We were able to collect data from parent/carers and 5 schools.
- Variations of lateness, up to 10 mins were not included, accepting there will always be an approximate time of pick up and drop off.
- Three types of lateness are recorded: Pick up from home, arrival at school, as well as drop off to home, all of which can vary by child.



# Response data

Surveys completed:

## Parent/Carers

- Durants – 26
- Waverley – 28
- Russet House – 12
- West Lea – 15
- Oaktree - 36
- Pinewood – 2

Total: 119

## Schools

7 routes  
5 routes  
8 routes  
8 routes  
7 routes  
No data



# School start and finish times

- Waverley – 9.20am – 3pm (note am time is registration time)
- West Lea – 9am – 3pm
- Durants - 8.50am – 3pm
- Russet House - 9.10am – 3pm (\*\*Note, school has moved registration time to 9.30)
- Oaktree – 9.00am – 2:50pm (\*\*Note, due to continuing lateness of buses, the school has adjusted the start of the first lesson of teaching time to 9.25am)
- Pinewood – 8.40am – 3.30pm

\*Please note: for this survey, a school bus is considered late if it arrives less than 10 minutes before school start time.

\*\* Where a school has moved its registration time, calculations are based on the original start time.



# Executive Summary - quantitative

- Total of 119 parental surveys (103 over 10 days, 16 over 5 days) and 5 school surveys completed.
- Of the 119 parental responses, 80 (67%) identified at least 1 late pick up and/or drop off during the period, with 6 children being picked up late every morning over that period.
- School data identified problematic bus routes with 1 school reporting one route late every morning over the 10 day period and another school had one late 9/10 days, in addition to buses for Waverley which were late every day as noted below.
- Waverley logged **over 478 hours in total** of lost teaching time with 9 students late every morning for 23 days and 8 students late every morning for 41 days.
- Oaktree logged lost teaching time of **over 78 hours in total for all students across all routes** over 5 days.
- West Lea logged lost teaching time of **over 82 hours in total for all students across all routes** over 10 days.
- Russet House logged lost teaching time of **over 44 hours in total for all students across all routes** over 15 days.



# Executive Summary quantitative

- The higher the number of students on the route, the higher the likelihood of lateness.
- Some schools have a set bus arrival time, so buses sit waiting until this set time, before pupils are allowed off the bus.
- Of 6 Our Voice board members in receipt of transport:
  - 3 report good service
  - 3 report very poor service
  - = 50/50 split.
- Parents also gave some very positive feedback (including specific examples of very good drivers and PAs, which are highlighted in the 'parent comments' slides.





# Executive Summary - qualitative

Current policy states parents/schools should contact Transport Office to report any issues. Parents have described ongoing difficulties:

- No- one picking up the phone/returning messages.
- Emails going unanswered.
- Some examples of good communication between PAs and families but this seems to be sporadic.
- Parent details not being passed from PA to office and vice versa.
- Schools not always receiving up to date Route Sheets



# Executive Summary - qualitative

- Some parents describe the damaging emotional impact transport disruption is having on the wellbeing of their children.
- It is raising issues that previously did not exist including increased anxiety and one case of self harming.
- Parents have spoken about the knock on effect of late transport on their ability to get siblings to school or get to work on time.
- There is a significant impact in terms of lost teaching time for the children using transport.
- There is disruption to classes which have already commenced.
- Concerns have been raised regarding the reliability and safety of some vehicles used e.g. broken ramps, doors not closing properly.
- When good communication occurs between transport and the escort this helps to mitigate some of the impact caused by the delay.



# SURVEY RESPONSES

Special Schools

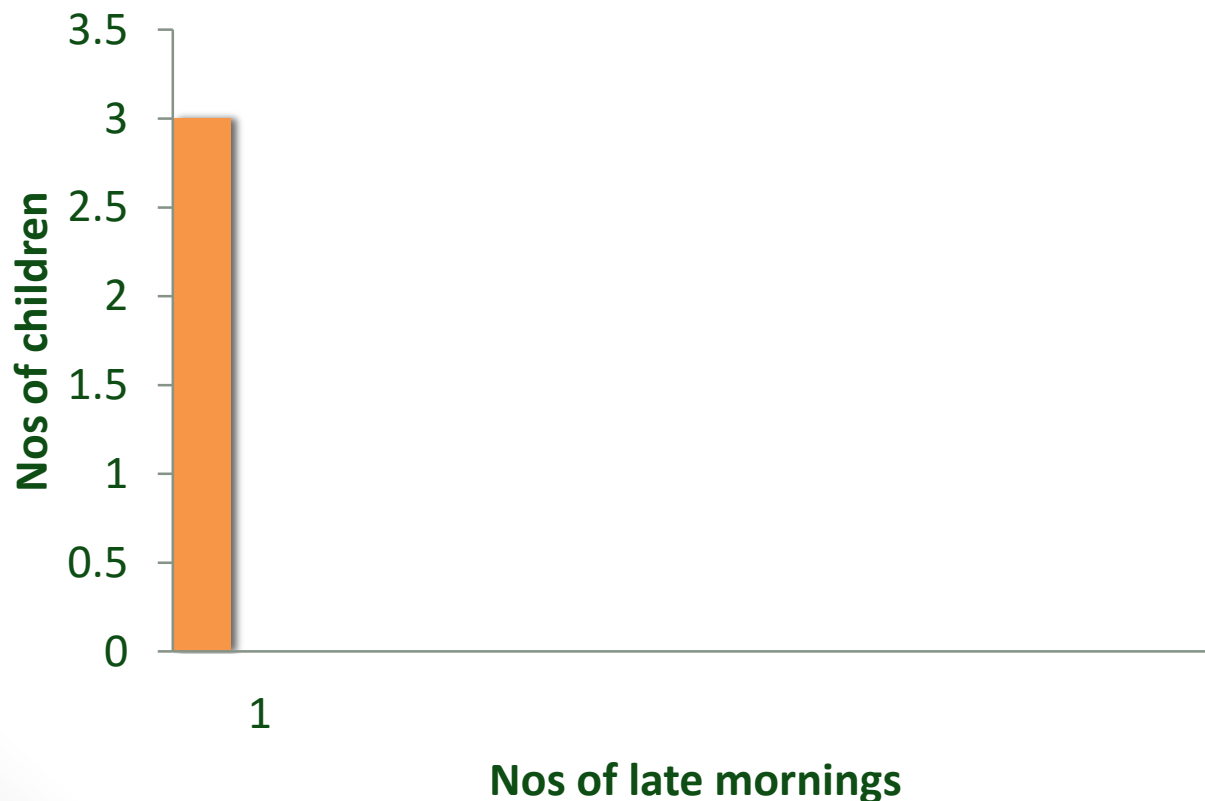
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# Oaktree parent/carer responses

## Parent/carer responses – **over 5 days**

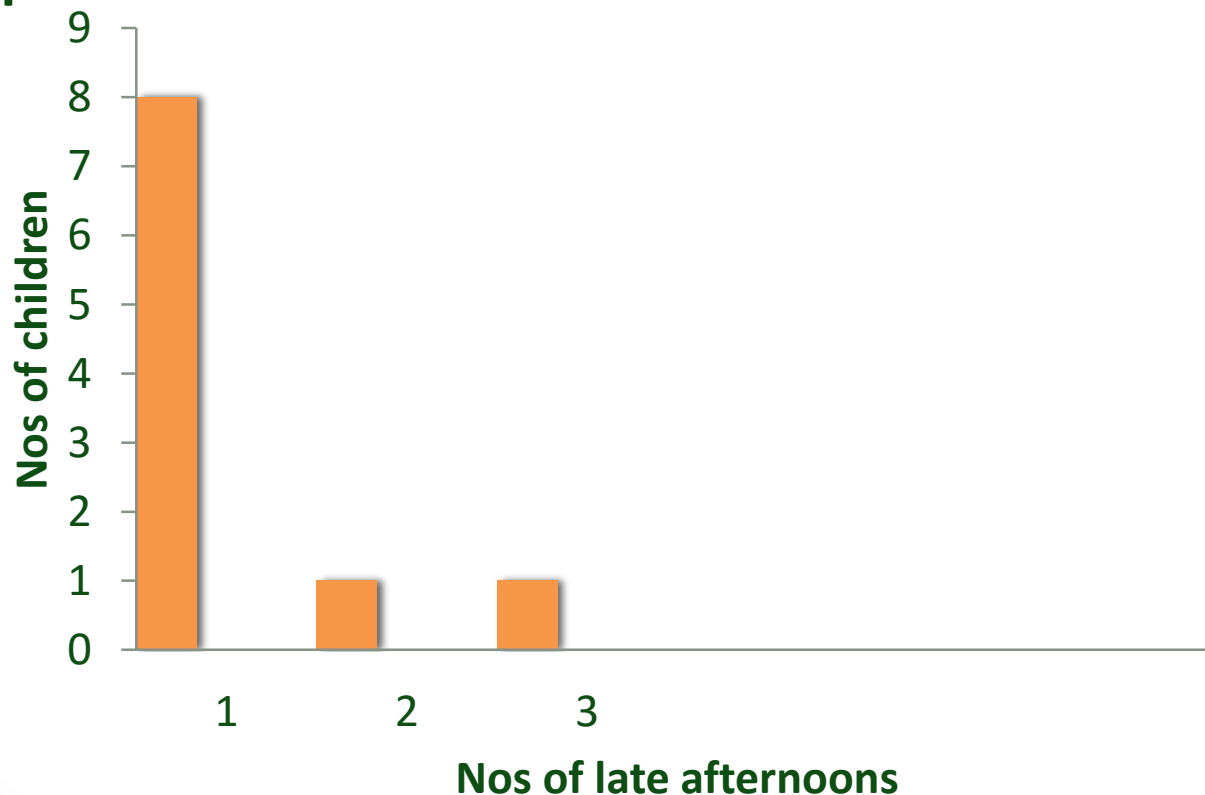
- A total of 3 children (out of 16) – **19%** were **late being picked up at least once in the morning**. Of these:



# Oaktree parent/carer responses continued...

## Parent/carer responses – over 5 days

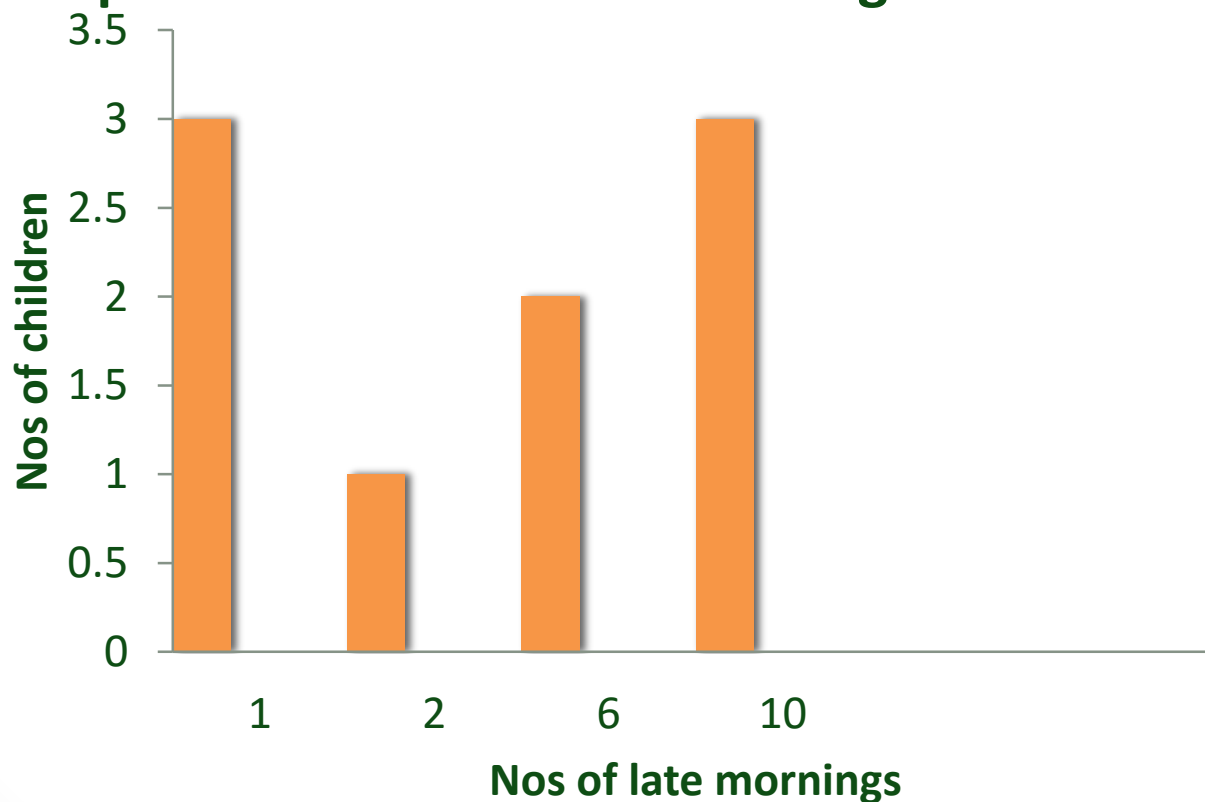
- A total of 10 children (out of 16) – 62% were late being dropped off at least once in the afternoon. Of these:



# Oaktree parent/carer responses continued...

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

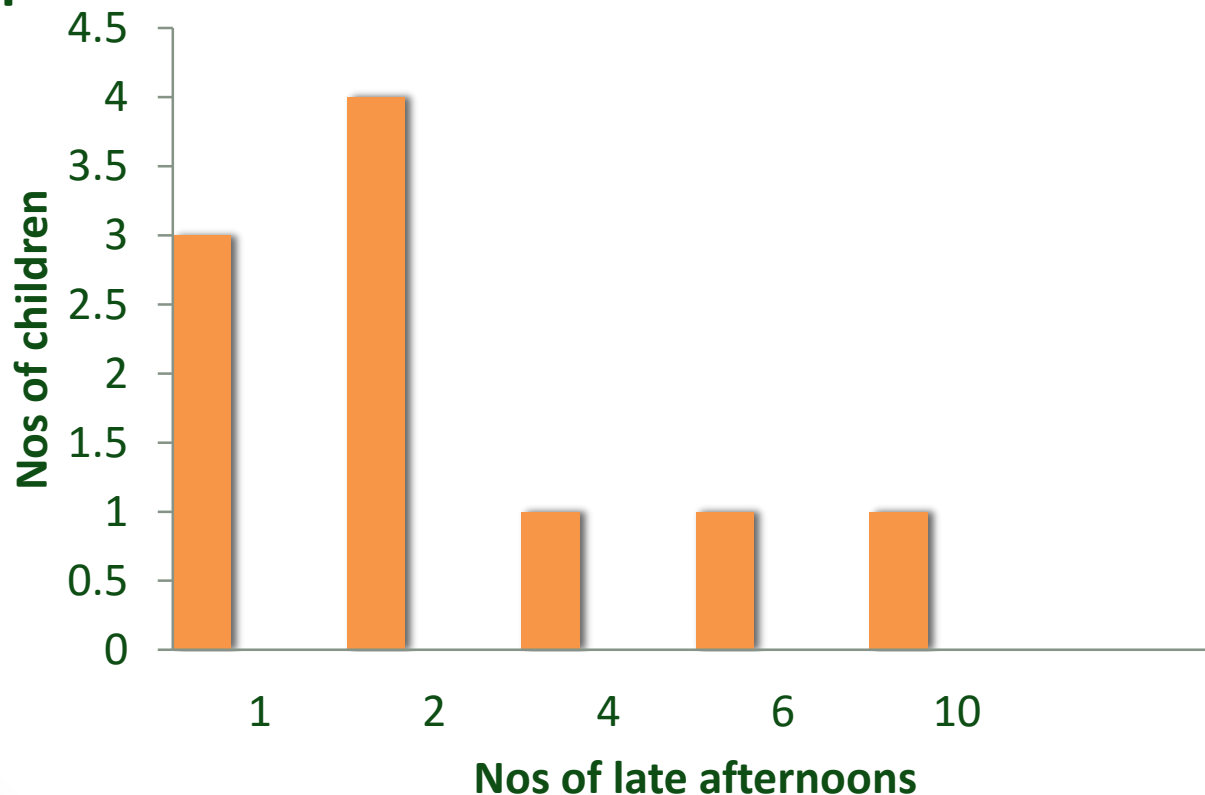
- A total of 9 children (out of 20) – 45% were late being picked up at least once in the morning. Of these:



# Oaktree parent/carer responses continued...

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

- A total of 10 children (out of 20) – 50% were late being dropped off at least once in the afternoon. Of these:



# Oaktree School responses

- 7 routes identified over 5 day period arriving and leaving school

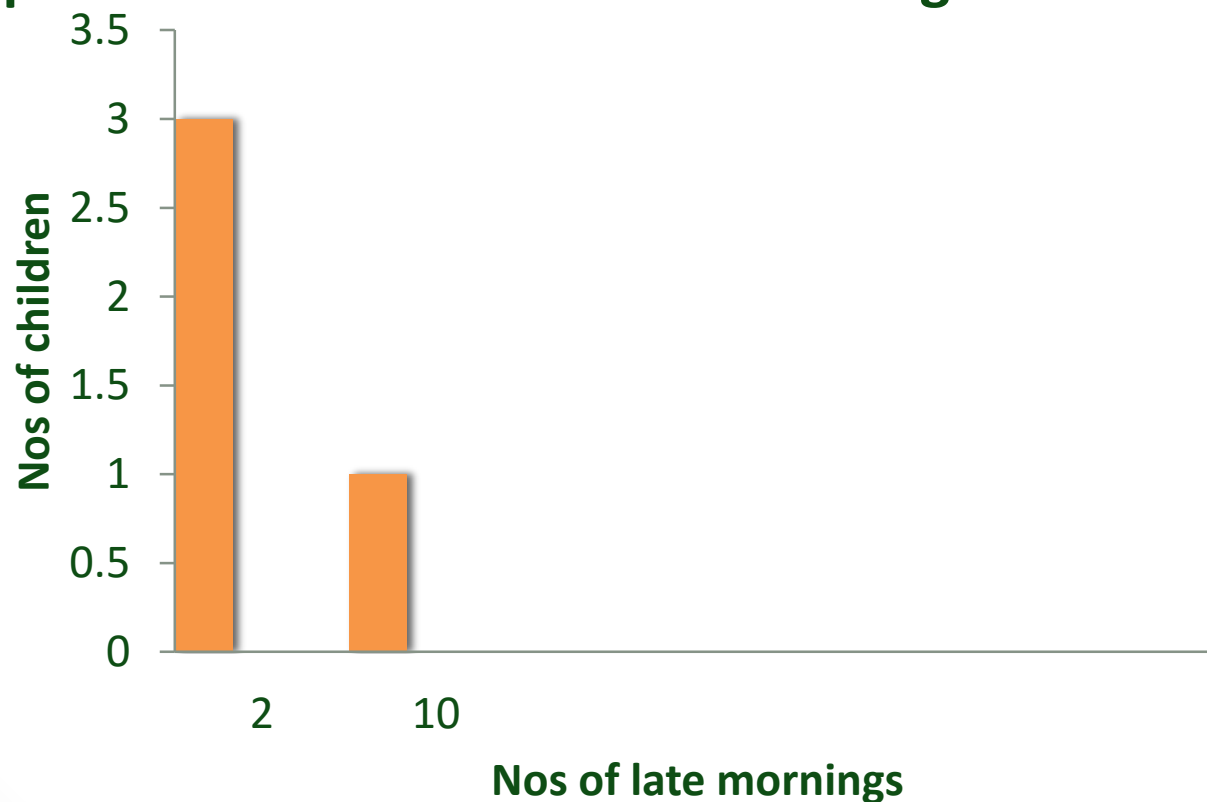
Route	Route 1/A (14)	Route 2/B (11)	Route 3/C (14)	Route D/39 (6)	Route E/40 (5)	Route F/41 (9)	Route G/42 (11)	Avg
AM late	5 out of 5 days	5 out of 5 days	5 out of 5 days			5 out of 5 days	1 out of 5 days	60% of journeys were late
PM late		1 out of 5 days	1 out of 5 days	2 out of 5 days		2 out of 5 days	1 out of 5 days	20% of journeys were late
LTT per student per route	1 hr 2	1 hr 33	1 hr 28			2 hrs 48	15 mins	
LTT Total	14 hrs 20	18 hrs 15	19 hrs 2			24 hrs 57	2 hrs	<b>78 hrs 34</b>



# West Lea parent/carer responses

Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

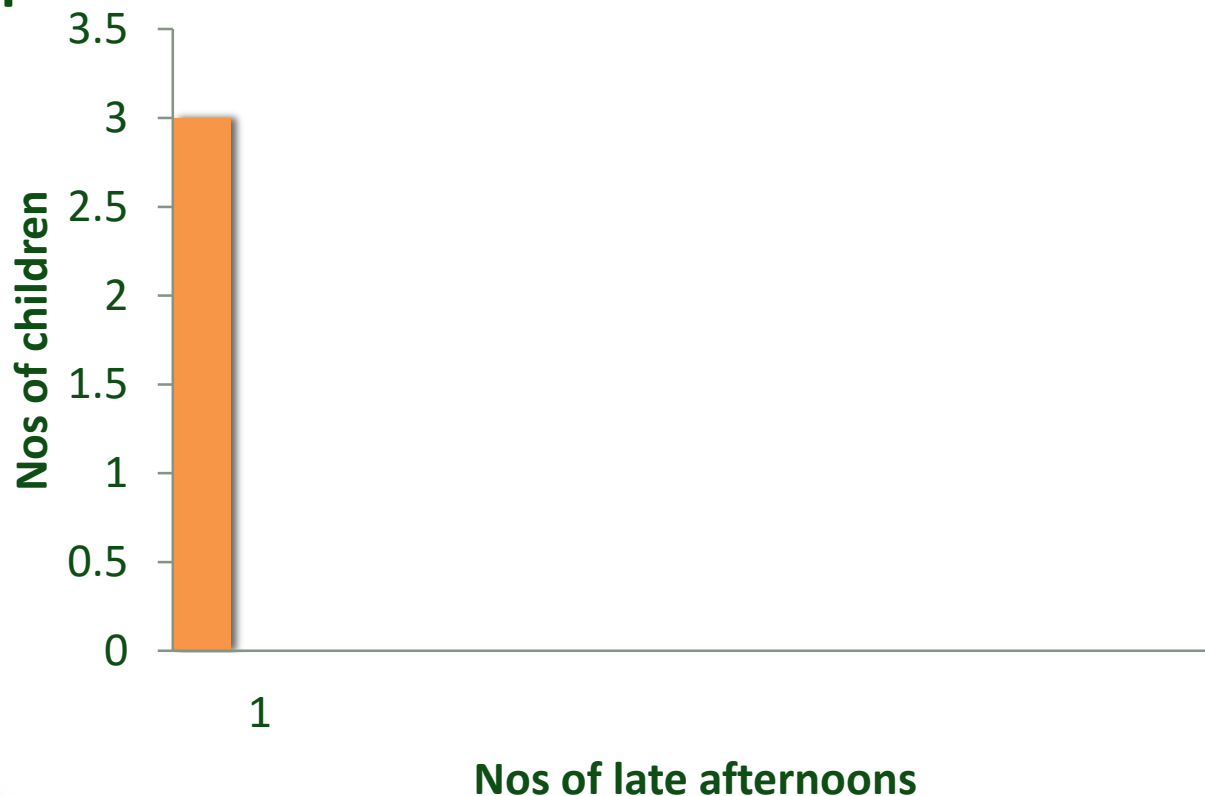
- A total of 4 children (out of 15) – 27% were **late being dropped off at least once in the morning**. Of these:



# West Lea parent/carer responses continued...

Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

- A total of 3 children (out of 15) – 20% were **late being dropped off at least once in the afternoon**. Of these:



# West Lea School responses

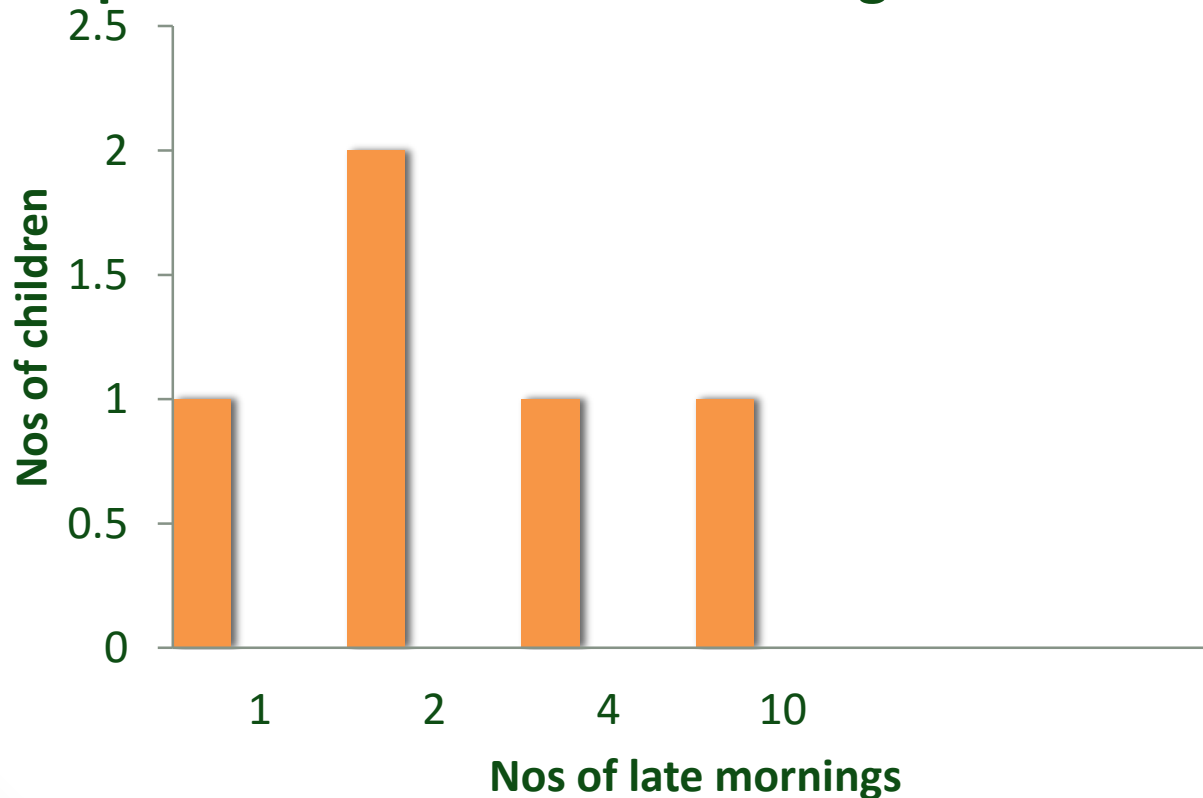
- 8 routes identified over 10 day period arriving and leaving school.

Route	Route 4 (11)	Route 6 (9)	Route 7 (14)	Route 16 (10)	Route 20 (7)	Route 26 (5)	Route 27 (8)	Route 32 (7)	Avg
AM late	5 out of 10 days		10 out of 10 days	3 out of 10 days	1 out of 10 days		3 out of 10 days		22% of trips were late
PM late	3 out of 10 days	7 out of 10 days	9 out of 10 days	6 out of 10 days	3 out of 10 days	3 out of 10 days	7 out of 10 days	2 out of 10 days	40%
LTT per student per route	50 mins		3 hrs 44	1 hr 41	10 mins		20 mins		
LTT Total	9 hrs 10		52 hrs 16	16 hrs 50	1 hr 10		2 hrs 40		82 hrs 6

# Russet House parent/carer responses

Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

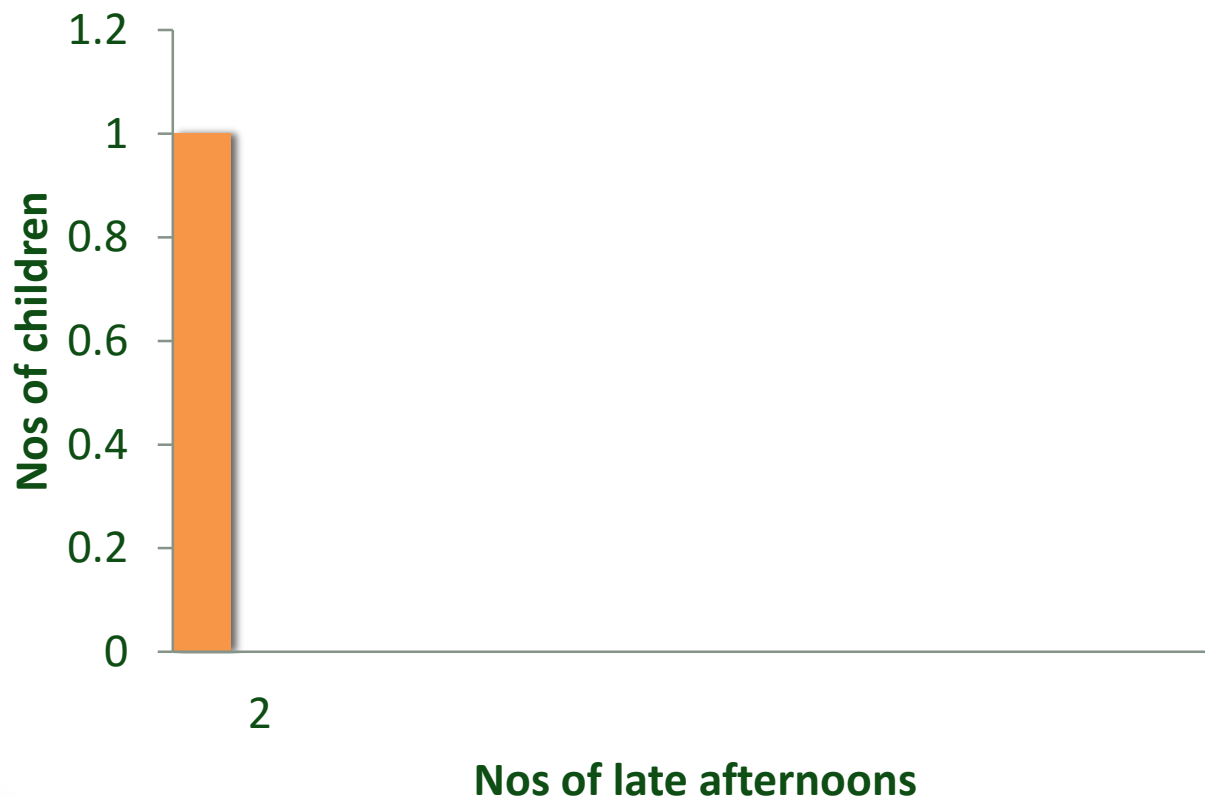
- A total of 5 children (out of 12) – 42% were **late being picked up at least once in the morning**. Of these:



# Russet House parent/carer responses continued...

Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

- A total of 1 child (out of 12) was **late being dropped off at least once in the afternoon**. Of these:



# Russet House School responses

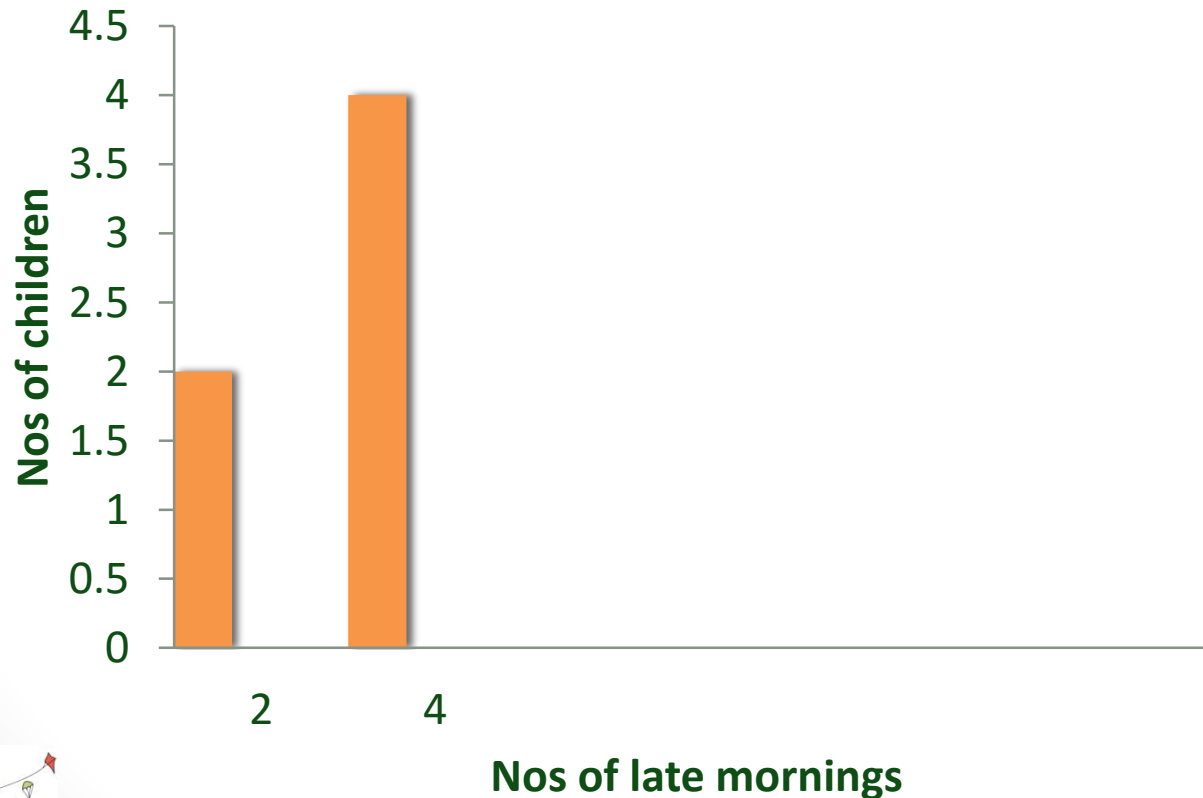
- 8 buses identified over 15 day period arriving and leaving school.  
Buses 1 and 4 on time each day during the period.

Bus/ Route	Bus 2 (10)	Bus 3/ Route 22 (7)	Bus 5 (8)	Bus 6 (11)	Bus 7 (6)	Bus 8 (7)	Avg
AM late	5 out of 15 days	7 out of 15 days	2 out of 15 days	3 out of 15 days	2 out of 15 days	1 out of 15 days	17% of journeys were late
PM late					2 out of 15 days		
LTT per student per route	1 hr 30 mins	1 hr 47 mins	25 mins	28 mins	25 mins	50 mins	
LTT Total	15 hrs	12 hrs 29	3 hrs 20	5 hrs 8	2 hrs 30	5 hrs 50	<b>44 hrs 17</b>

# Durants responses – Route 7 - am

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

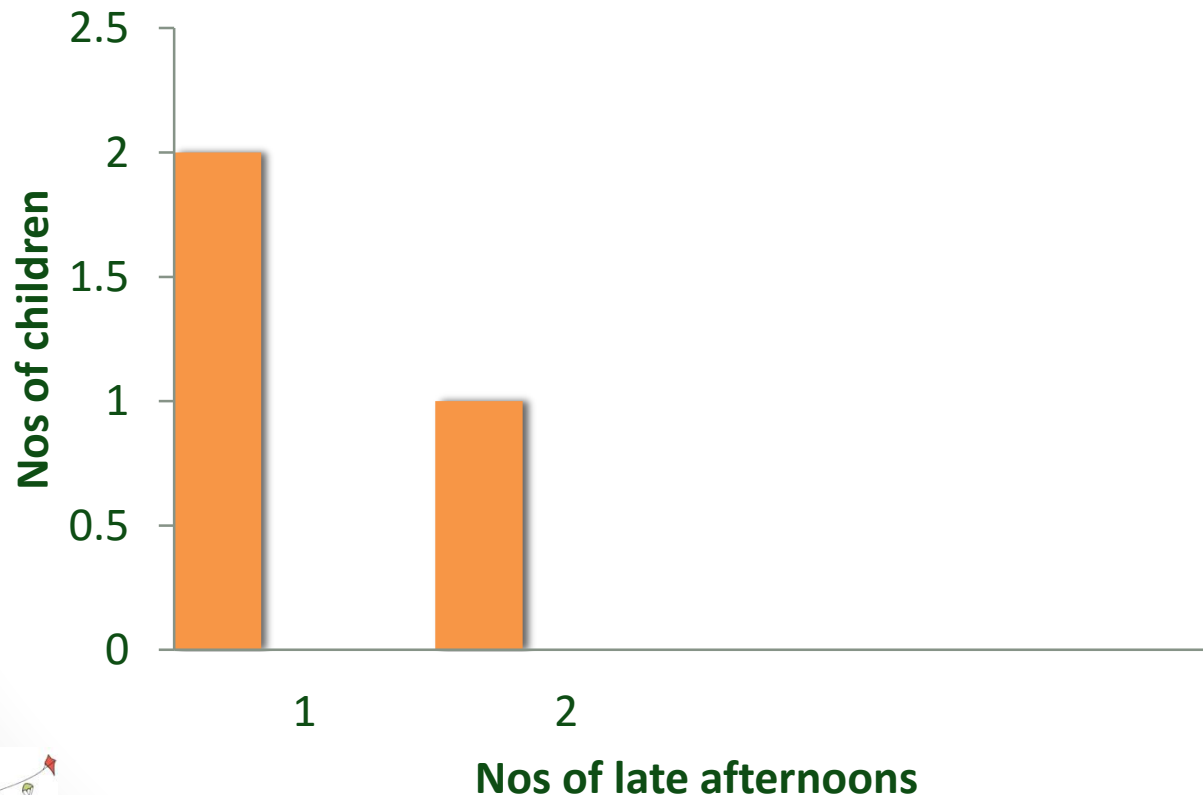
- A total of 6 children (out of 6) – 100% were late being picked up at least once in the morning. Of these:



# Durants responses – Route 7 - pm

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

- A total of 3 children (out of 6) - 50% were late arriving home at least once in the afternoon.

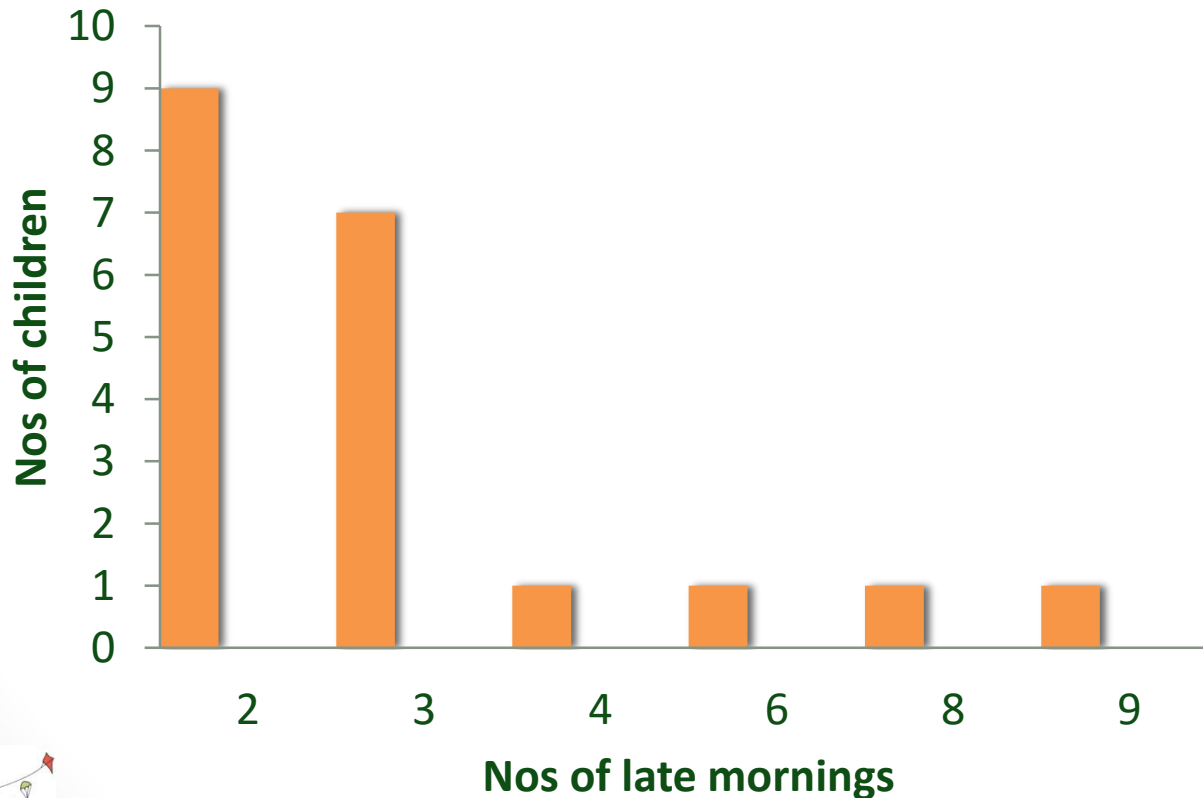




# Durants responses other routes - am

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

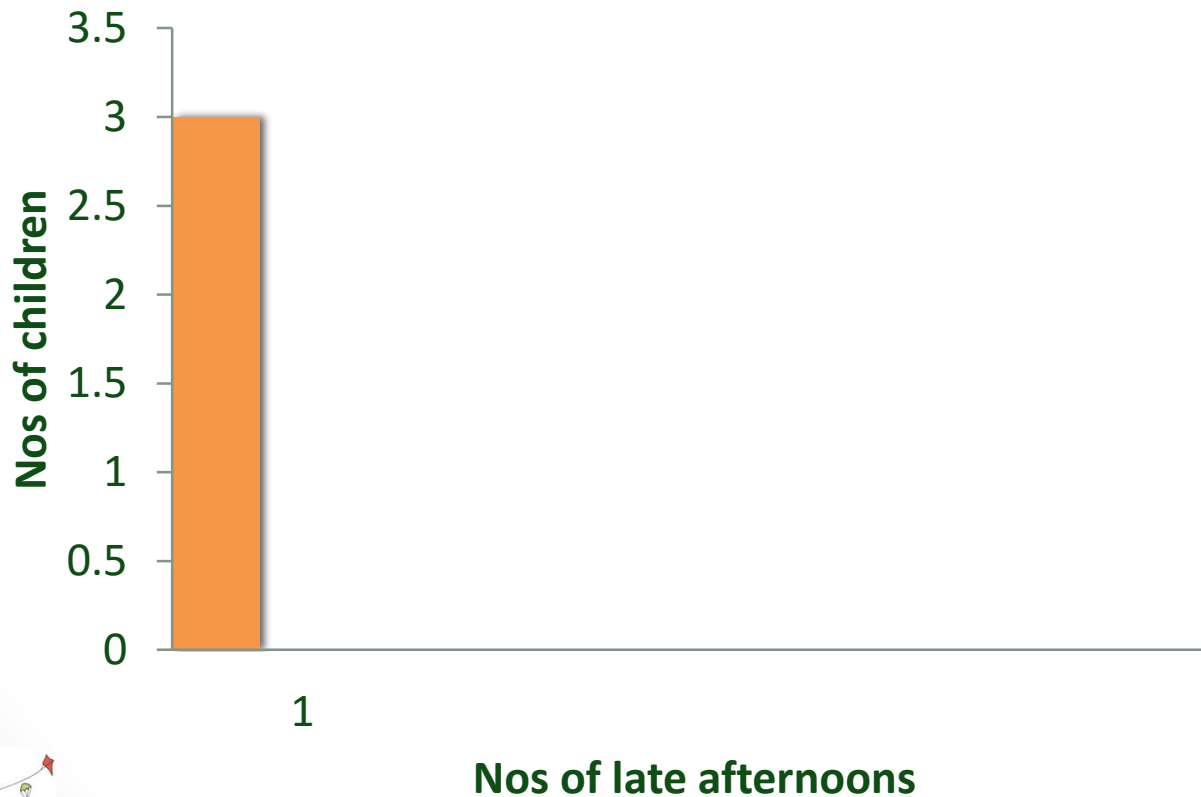
- A total of 20 children (out of 20) – 100% were late being picked up at least once in the morning. Of these:



# Durants responses other routes - pm

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

- A total of 3 children (out of 20) - 15% were late arriving home at least once in the afternoon.



# Durants School responses

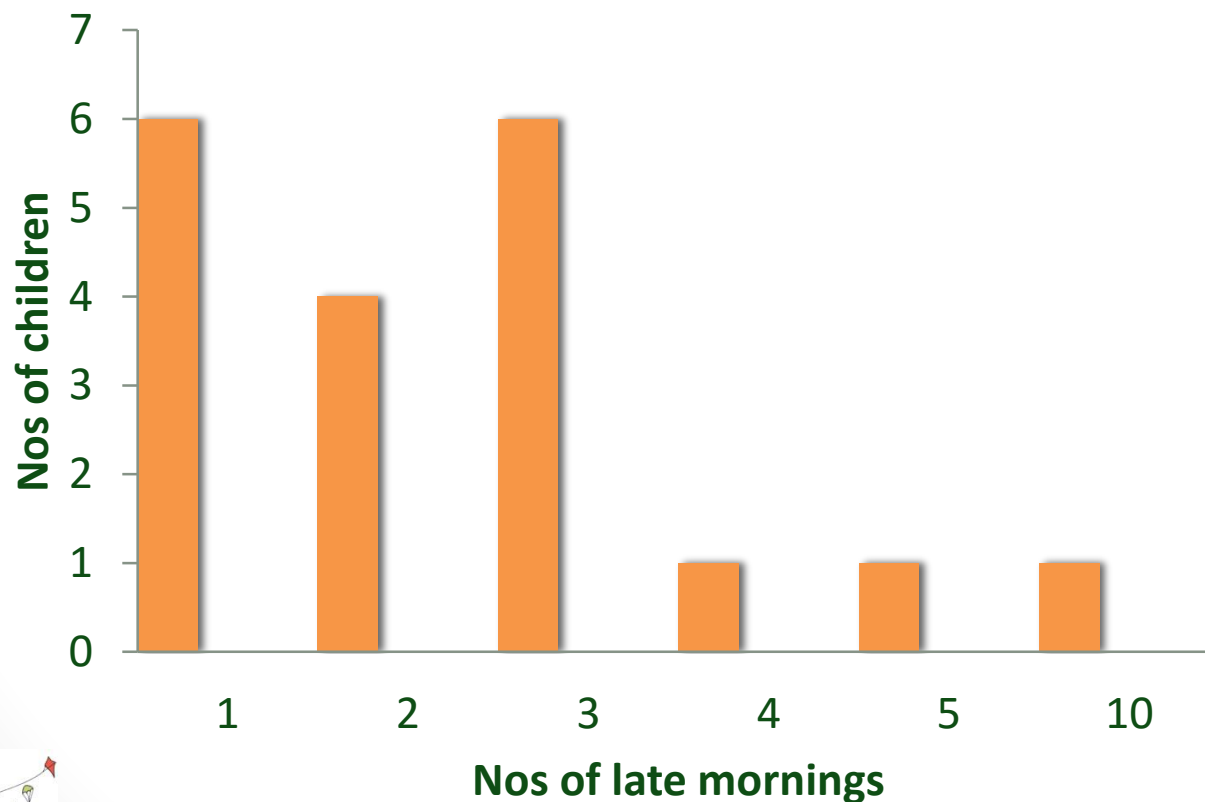
- 7 routes identified over 10 day period arriving and leaving school
- We were unable to calculate total lost teaching time as we do not know the numbers of students using each bus route.

Route	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4	Route 5	Route 6	Route 7	Avg
AM late	7 out of 10 days	7 out of 10 days	5 out of 10 days	9 out of 10 days	3 out of 10 days	7 out of 10 days	4 out of 10 days	60% of trips were late
PM late	1 out of 10 days							
LTT per student per route	1 hr 55	1 hr 51	50 mins	4 hrs 20	25 mins	1 hr	1 hr 55	<b>Not known</b>

# Waverley responses- am

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

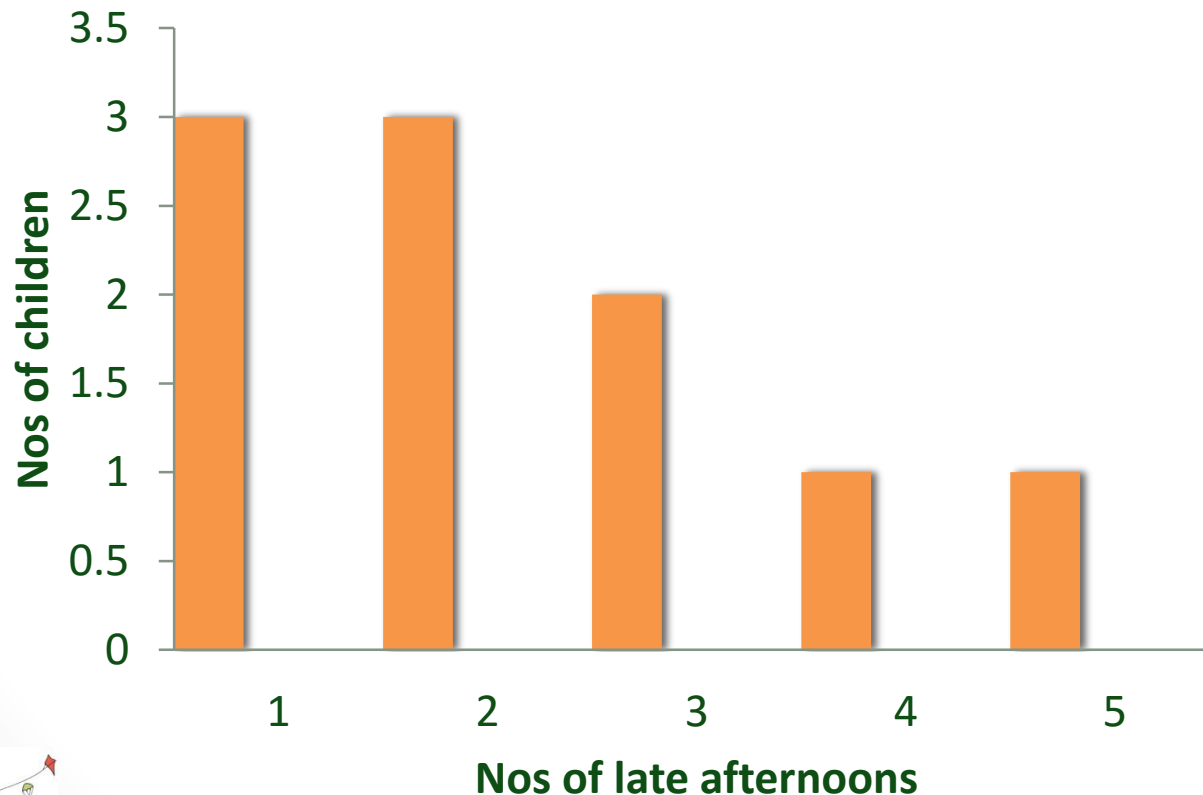
- A total of 19 children (out of 28) – 68% were late being picked up at least once in the morning. Of these:



# Waverley responses - pm

## Parent/carer responses – over 10 days

- A total of 10 children (out of 28) – **36%** were **late arriving home at least once** in the afternoon. Of these:



# Waverley school responses

- Waverley logged 5 routes over a period of 2 months and noted average arrival/departure times in that period per route.
- Route 14 – students reduced from 13 to 9.
- However there is an expectation that number will increase again to 13 despite school objections re increased length and risk to journey.
- Note: There have been no reports of late buses to the Pre-school Bell Lane site from Cavendish Cars.



# Waverley school responses

## 43 students (over 1 – 2 months)

Route	R42 (5)	R14 (9)	R31 (5)	R12 (8)	R13 (8)	R13 (8)	Totals
Date	Oct 3	Sep 5 – Oct 5	Oct 31	Sep 5 -7 Nov	Oct 11	Oct 12	
Time arrived/left	10.23am	10.30am approx	12.30pm	9.35-9.50 am	Left at 4pm	11.05am	
Reason for delay	Broke down	Route too long. Too many passengers to collect	Driver absence	Route too long	Mechanical problems	Mechanical problems	
LTT per student	1 hr 13	30 hrs 40	3 hrs 20	20 hrs 30		1 hr 55	
LTT total	6 hrs 5	276 hrs	16 hrs 40	164 hrs		15 hrs 20	<b>478 hrs 5</b>

# Out of borough school (Pinewood) parent/carer responses

2 parent/carer responses over 9/10 days

- Bus late to **pick up** from home:
  - 2 children 6 morning out of 9\*
- Bus late to **drop off** back home:
  - 2 children 8 afternoons out of 10
- On the 10<sup>th</sup> morning the children were both on a school trip so needed to be at school on time.
- Parents took time off to take their children in themselves, because they could not rely on the bus arriving on time.



# QUOTES FROM PARENTS

Special Schools

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# Parent comments

'Bus lady Stav very good with my son' parent, Durants School

'We are happy with current transport services- always on time.' parent, Durants school

'Everything is perfect. Thank you transport worker.' Parent, Waverley school

'D didn't feel well on way home, Mo and Jackie were excellent reassuring him. Excellent driver and escort. Always keeps us informed and looks after D so well.' Parent , Waverley school

'I am happy with the service.. They are so kind and I am happy.' Parent, Russet House

'Mary and Len are great. Even if they are after 8 will text me. We have always been happy with PAs and drivers. Anne-Marie and Ash, also Derek and Marie were good – right people in the right job. Thanks for all they do.' Parent, West Lea.



# Parent comments continued...

'Just wanting to add my praise of Gavin (driver) and Grace (PA) who never fail to communicate with me regardless of how large or small the issue or change to the usual service. I feel confident that my son is safe and happy whilst travelling to and from school with this team. They are an excellent example of how it should be done'. Parent West Lea school

'All fine. PA and driver very pleasant. Couldn't wish for a better team. No issues at all' Parent, Oaktree

'Good phone contact. Very good. I am aware when they arrive' Parent Oaktree.

'Excellent service. Very friendly, helpful' Parent Oaktree

'I am happy with the service. What is a very fast service. They are so kind and I am happy' Parent Russet House

# Parent comments continued.....

'Bus seems to be late every Monday. ... Driver overslept so picked up S late so I took him [son] in. Not happy because I had a meeting and was late.'

Parent, Durants

'C goes on bus 4, but whenever our driver Dana is asked to go and drive the big bus our children are always late. C is toilet training so whenever she is late she gets to school wet'.

Parent, Waverley

'Morning collection is far too late' Parent, Waverley school (pick up time of 9am for school start at 9.20am)

'I asked for my daughter to be picked up as late as possible as I struggle to get her up. The offices told the escort to pick her up 1<sup>st</sup> at 7.50. I emailed Monica at the beginning of term. Have had no response. Although my daughter is sleeping better at the moment, so not such a problem, the lack of communication is shocking!' Parent, Waverley

A has been agitated in the mornings waiting for bus when it was coming late. .. He was then getting upset when arriving at school.' Parent, Durants school.

**'There should be regular surveys of transport department as this is a long standing problem... Lady escort does not help parents load and unload kids – definitely does not help us. Does not even hand J's bag over. We have to manage everything ourselves. I provided the bus with a stool for my J to rest his feet on. Because bus has been changed we have lost the stool'.** Parent, Waverley school.



# Parent comments continued ...

'I have a younger child to take to school... new times very difficult for us as a family. Our PA always phones a few minutes before arriving in the morning and at the end of the day so we can get ready to meet the bus. If she is off bus is very late, we get no calls to inform us and driver does not have the phone.' Parent Oaktree school.

'Too many children on the bus. The escort Nomna is very nice. The driver is very nice. But the bus is late because there are lots of children on the bus - 14 children.' Parent Oaktree

Waited till 9.20 and took him in myself. When I arrived at school bus still hadn't arrived at 10. Found out later bus came to my house at 9.45  
Parent Russet House

'The extreme delays make him quite anxious because he waits for almost 1 hour from the time he is ready in his uniform, which is quite a lot. He then thinks it is time to go but the bus has not yet arrived. There is also no communication on change of time or notice of delays.'  
Parent Russet House.

'Since this term started the bus has been so late on occasions that we have been standing waiting while his lessons have started.'  
Parent Oaktree

'Unfortunately the service from transport is not so good - there is no contact from the office and when T. is ill or returning to school I can never get to speak to someone at the office.'  
Parent Oaktree.

Wednesday: Coming up to 8.40 and no call to say running late. Means she's late for school, not good at all because she has to wait for food and it upsets her because she gets sick on the bus. Tuesday: get a text message saying they are going to be late again. Is getting out of control. Something should be said to the manager – it is a joke – this is always late for my A.' Parent Oaktree.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Our Voice

Our Voice



# Key Principles

When considering resolving these issues, we believe the following principles should be of paramount importance:

- Safety/Security of children/young people & their Health and Well - Being
- Maximising their learning opportunity/Education
- Developing their independence where appropriate
- Cost effectiveness/financial sustainability
- Reliability/consistency/quality/flexibility
- Good, open two way lines of communication
- Effective collaboration amongst all parties

# Recommendations – Individual Routes

There is a willingness from schools, parent/carers and the LA to work together to resolve the challenges. Therefore,

Re-examine the efficiencies of particular route numbers regularly arriving late. E.g. minimally more than once a week?

- Durants
- Oaktree
- Russet House
- Waverley
- West Lea
- When looking at parental preferences/choices by school, the problem routes should be tackled first.





# Recommendations

- Develop and implement effective feedback/monitoring mechanisms including regular surveys to monitor quality.
- There should be termly one/two week sampling of the special schools by route numbers.
- This data should be analysed, monitored and shared transparently.
- Transport system needs to be fit for purpose, and flexible to take account of the complexities of children's needs.
- Formal complaints procedure required and must be communicated to parents and monitored/followed up by LA.
- Hold Transport/Transport providers to account.

# Recommendations continued

- Escorts should be the main communication channel for parents and as such should have up to date contact details. E.g. Driver late; Transport communicates with PA and PA communicates to all their parents and vice versa.
- Robust handover process needs to be implemented when escorts are absent/on sick leave.
- Drivers need to be fully aware of their routes prior to setting off.
- Proper review should be undertaken before extra children added to routes to ensure it will not affect timings.



# Recommendations – Oaktree & Russet

- “At Oaktree, we always have a medically trained member of staff to accompany children with medical needs when a group of children go out on a school trip. Any medication required is taken with them.
- All escorts should be medically trained and any medication should be on the bus morning and afternoon. Such as Asthma pumps, epileptic medication etc.”
- At Russet, they are constantly requesting up-to-date route sheets.
- They, and all schools, need to be informed in advance, when children are being added or removed from a bus.
- Transport need to have excellent, open and two way communication with the Schools.

# Recommendations - Summary

## Ensure:

- Robust communication channels are implemented consistently.
- There is sufficient and effective cover for drivers and escorts, especially drivers who have special licences.
- There are effective/timely contingencies for bus break downs.
- Schools and Transport work on staggered arrival times prior to 9am.
- Overall teaching time is comparable to mainstream schools.
- Children's education, health and well being are put to the fore.

# Next steps

- Obtaining this data from parents and schools has created expectations on the part of those participating, and we risk losing credibility if timely, visible and effective action is not taken.
- It is important that we are able to feed back to our members with a clear action plan including immediate actions and timelines.
- Transport is intended to be a key element at the Our Voice parents' conference planned for 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017 and we would wish to be in a position to give some tangible feedback at that point.

# Appendices

Appendix 1 – Parental / school response spreadsheet

Appendix 2 – Waverley School response data

Appendix 3 – Russet House response data

Appendix 4 – Durants School response data

Appendix 5 – Oaktree School response data

Appendix 6 – West Lea School response data

Appendix 7 – Assumptions and Approach



# Appendix 7: Assumptions and approach

We have had to make a number of assumptions when interpreting the data in our spreadsheet, and underpinning this report. Key points are:

- Late pick up from home in the morning has been shown when either the parent has said that pick up was late, or where there is a significant variation from the usual pick up time (at least 10 minutes) or where the time of pick up is after or within a few minutes of school start time, so that there was clearly insufficient time for the bus to reach school.
- Note that this means we are likely to have underestimated in many cases due to incomplete data – for example if a child was picked up 15 minutes before school start we would not have automatically assumed it was late but it may be that the child lives at least 20 minutes or more drive from the school and would therefore have been late.
- Where we felt it was possible a particular pick-up was late, but could not be sure, we have shown highlighted in yellow on the spreadsheet, but have not included in our final numbers.
- For drop off home we have shown the journey as late when either the parent has included this in their comments, or where a particular journey is significantly later than the 'usual' time. We have allowed a margin of at least 15 minutes.
- When assessing late arrival at school, we have assumed a margin of 10 minutes from the bus arriving at school to children being at their desks. We have therefore deemed buses to be late when they arrive less than 10 minutes before school start time. Similarly, we have considered buses picking up in the afternoon to be late if they arrive more than 15 minutes after school finish time.