

**Baugh, Ben**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 09 January 2014 20:39  
**To:** Baugh, Ben  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Withdrawal of Free Bus Service to JMHS

Dear Mr. Baugh,

As a parent of a child that will be affected by the council's recent decision to withdraw free transport to John Masefield High School from Cradley village I am writing to ask you to consider the following points and answer some questions that remain unanswered.

Firstly, I am the mother of a child who joined Year 7 at John Masefield High School in September 2013. Having submitted comments to the council during the consultation process I was suprised not to receive any direct notification from the council regarding the decision that was made and would ask that you reply to this e-mail to acknowledge receipt.

My immediate reaction on receiving the information last Monday that my child will no longer be eligible for free transport to school was to ask myself why the council finds itself in this position? While I fully realise that Herfordshire Council is under pressure to save money and make cuts in many areas I have yet to see any proof that taking this action will offer a solution. Having done a little of my own analysis I have so far been unable to justify the council's decision when taking into account that there would still need to be a bus provided to transport children to school in a neighbouring county. I would therefore like to ask to see the detailed cost analysis upon which your decision was based.

Secondly, I would like to ask what alternative solutions were considered before arriving at this decision? I believe that Herefordshire is not alone in having to find ways of saving money and that Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Shropshire have all found alternative ways to implement cost effective, appropriate and rational repsonses to similar issues regarding school transport. Could you please explain in detail why Herefordshire has chosen to ignore the approaches taken by other authorities?

In addition to this, we are a single income family and I earn £300.00 over the amount that would entitle me to any tax credit support. As is the case for many families in the present economic climate I struggle to keep my family fed, clothed and warm and in the event that I should be asked to pay an extra £720.00 a year to transport my child to school I would be faced with a very difficult situation. In order to pay for my child's school uniform prior to her start at John Masefield last September I had to borrow money to meet the costs and am still repaying that debt. I would like to know if the council will be able to pay for a new uniform should my child be forced into changing schools?

In conclusion, I would also ask you to consider the impact that moving schools will have on, not only my child, but the community as a whole. Our village has a strong connection with John Masefield and we have spent the last seven years building relationships between the school and our children through a number of transition days, sports days, dance and drama days. Are we to believe that the time and effort of the teachers, parents and, most importantly, the children involved over all these years was all for nothing? Also, children in Year 7 will have been fully immersed in the curricuum of John Masefield High School and any transition to another school could have serious implications on their progress. Could you please explain and show me detailed evidence of what measures the council intends to implement in order to ensure that my child's learning is not affected?

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns and I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience,

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]