

DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

The purpose of this form is to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for quarterly consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise, and will be referenced in the biannual review of progress made to the Minister and in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission.

Further advice on completion of this form and the screening process including relevant contact information can be accessed via the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Intranet site ([Equality Intranet page](#)).

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT - refer to the [Equality Intranet page](#)

When considering the impact of this policy you should also consider if there would be any Human Rights implications. Guidance is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/human-rights-and-public-authorities>

Should this be appropriate you will need to complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment. A template is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>

Don't forget to RURAL PROOF - refer to the [Equality Intranet page](#).

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

[Safer Journeys to School – Improving Safety Around Buses During Boarding and Alighting](#)

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

[New – Policy Proposal – post consultation](#)

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

[To ultimately protect and save lives by improving safety for children and other passengers during boarding and alighting from buses by consulting on clearer, more targeted and enforceable rules on driver behaviour. A consultation has been carried out to inform future policy development and legislative decisions. The Department is now seeking Executive approval to introduce subordinate legislation prohibiting a driver from overtaking, in the same direction, a stationary bus on a single-carriageway road to which the national speed limit applies \(currently 60 mph\); Regulations are being drafted to progress through the applicable statutory, Committee and Assembly procedures.](#)

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

Yes, the policy proposal aims to improve safety for all bus passengers, regardless of Section 75 characteristics.

Evidence indicates that children and young people are particularly vulnerable during boarding and alighting, especially where they must cross the road or remain close to live traffic. Older people and disabled passengers may also experience increased vulnerability due to mobility, visibility, sensory or cognitive factors. Clearer expectations on driver behaviour around stationary buses are therefore expected to have a positive safety benefit across the passenger population, with particular benefit for those groups most exposed to risk.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Department for Infrastructure – Safer Journeys to School Programme.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

Department for Infrastructure. Regulations will be subject to Executive and Assembly processes.

Background

In Northern Ireland (NI), around 350,000 pupils travel to school each weekday using a range of transport modes. While private car travel is the most common mode overall, buses remain a significant component of school travel, particularly for post-primary pupils.

The 2023/24 Continuous Household Survey indicates that 16,900 primary and 64,300 post-primary pupils use buses as their main mode of school transport. This equates to an estimated 162,400 individual bus journeys per day and approximately 32.5 million school bus passenger journeys per annum, highlighting the scale of exposure at bus stops across the network.

Although buses are generally considered a safe mode of transport, serious incidents continue to occur on the journey to and from school, particularly at the transition point where a child moves from bus passenger to pedestrian. Evidence indicates that in Northern Ireland, between 2002 and 2024, 13 children were killed and 3,553 were injured on their journey to or from school (PSNI collision statistics).

The Department's wider road safety evidence demonstrates that children remain a vulnerable road user group. Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) collision statistics for 2024/25 record that 105 children under 16 have been killed or seriously injured on Northern Ireland roads.

Risk is not evenly distributed geographically. Rural areas show a higher reliance on bus travel and are characterised by higher speed limits, reduced lighting and limited pedestrian infrastructure. Northern Ireland's road network extends to over 25,000 km with 77% classified as rural and there are over 15,000 formally recognised bus stops, many of which lack shelters or safe standing areas.

This policy proposal aligns with wider Departmental priorities, including the Road Safety Strategy to 2030, the Road Safety Strategy Action Plan 2024/25, the Active Travel Delivery Plan and the Safer Journeys to School Programme, all of which emphasise the importance to protect vulnerable road users and the need for proportionate, evidence-led interventions.

The Department therefore consulted on whether clearer and more enforceable rules governing driver behaviour around stationary buses could improve safety outcomes in a proportionate and practical manner, informed by stakeholder views and further evidence.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they (please delete as appropriate)

Legislative: Some options explored through the consultation would require primary legislation, while others could be delivered under existing powers. The Department is seeking Executive approval to introduce subordinate legislation prohibiting a driver from overtaking, in the same direction, as stationary bus on a single-carriageway road to which the national speed limit applies (currently 60 mph); Regulations are being drafted to progress through the applicable statutory, Committee and Assembly procedures.

Operational: Road layout, particularly in rural areas, may affect feasibility and proportionality. Variations in bus type, stopping arrangements, and infrastructure provision are relevant considerations.

Other: Driver behaviour, public understanding, and enforceability are key factors. Engagement with enforcement bodies has highlighted the importance of clarity, proportionality, and education alongside any legislative approach.

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

- Bus passengers, including children and young people
- Parents and carers
- Bus operators and drivers (Education Authority, Translink and private operators)
- Road users
- Enforcement bodies (PSNI)
- Education Authority
- Community and voluntary road safety organisations

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

Road Safety Strategy to 2030 (DfI)

Road Safety Strategy Action Plan 2024/25

Active Travel Delivery Plan

Safer Journeys to School Programme (DfI)

Speed Limit Review 2026 (DfI)

Northern Ireland Highway Code

Policy owners: [Department for Infrastructure](#)

Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#). Also refer to the [Equality Intranet page](#) for some evidence sources.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

General Evidence [Include any qualitative and quantitative evidence related to the policy]

General Evidence

Evidence informing this screening includes:

- Continuous Household Survey (CHS) 2023/24 data on school travel, including mode share by age group and urban/rural location.
- Safer Journeys to School Programme observational and engagement evidence highlighting risks during boarding and alighting.
- PSNI road traffic collision statistics demonstrating the ongoing vulnerability of children and other road users.
- Evidence on the scale and distribution of bus infrastructure in Northern Ireland, including rural stop conditions. Northern Ireland has over 15,000 formally recognised bus stops, with only around 1,000 providing shelters. Rural roads make up approximately 77% of the road network and are typically subject to higher speeds and limited pedestrian infrastructure. In rural areas, informal stopping points are also commonly used for school transport, increasing exposure during boarding and alighting.
- International research indicating that the greatest risk to children travelling by bus occurs when they are outside the vehicle, particularly when crossing the road immediately after alighting. International evidence consistently shows that the greatest risk to children travelling by bus occurs when they are outside the vehicle. Swedish national data (1994–2004) and Scottish reviews found most serious injuries and fatalities occur during boarding and alighting. Studies from Australia and New Zealand report that 51% of school bus-related casualties involved a child crossing the road in front of the bus, confirming the highest risk occurs immediately after alighting.
- International research on risks around buses during boarding and alighting

- Stakeholder engagement and operational feedback
- Speed and road safety evidence referenced in the Speed Limit Review

This evidence base was supplemented by responses to the public consultation, including submissions from Section 75 groups.

The public consultation did not identify any new adverse or differential impacts in respect of the Section 75 categories. Responses reinforced the particular safety needs of children and other passengers during boarding and alighting, and highlighted the importance of clear rules, accessible communication, education and monitoring of unintended driver behaviour. These findings support the existing assessment of positive impacts for age, disability and dependants, with no identified adverse differential impact for the remaining Section 75 categories.

Religious belief evidence / information:

2021 Census data indicates a diverse religious profile across Northern Ireland. In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for the main current religions in Northern Ireland: Catholic 45.7%, Protestant and other Christian (including Christian related) 43.5%, Other Religions 1.5% and No Religion 9.3%.

There is no available evidence indicating differential impact to people of different religious belief in relation to bus travel or boarding/alighting safety. Issues were not raised during consultation.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

In the General Election Results 2024 the following statistics were recorded for political opinion in Northern Ireland; 'Unionist' (40.6%), 'Nationalist' (40.2%) and 'Other' (19.2%).

No evidence is available at this stage indicating differential impact to people of different political opinion. Concerns were not raised during the consultation process.

Racial Group evidence / information:

2021 Census data indicates that minority ethnic groups comprise a small but growing proportion of the population. In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for ethnic groups in Northern Ireland: White 96.6%, Asian 1.7%, Black 0.6%, Mixed 0.8%, Other 0.4%.

There is no evidence at this stage indicating differential impact to people of different racial group in relation to the policy proposal. Issues were not raised during the consultation process.

Age evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for age groups in Northern Ireland: 0-15 years 20.4%, 16-24 years 10.6%, 25-34 years 12.7%, 35-44 years 13.1%, 45-54 years 13.3%, 55-64 years 12.7%, 65+ years 17.2%.

Age is a key consideration to this policy proposal. The Continuous Household Survey 2023/24 data shows that 16,900 primary school children, and 64,300 secondary school children used buses as their main form of school transport. This equates to a potential 162,400 individual bus journeys per day, with a potential 32.5m school bus passenger journeys per annum.

International research consistently shows that the greatest risk of death or injury for children travelling by school bus occurs during boarding and alighting, rather than while on board the vehicle. Studies from Sweden, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada indicate that the majority of serious incidents occur when children are in the immediate vicinity of the bus, particularly when crossing the road after alighting. Research also demonstrates that children's vulnerability varies by age and development, with perceptual, cognitive and behavioural factors limiting their ability to accurately judge speed, distance and driver behaviour. Risk increases at key transition points, including the move to more independent travel at post-primary age. This evidence supports intervention at the point of highest risk — the 'danger zone' immediately around a stationary bus during boarding and alighting — where proportionate measures are most likely to improve safety outcomes.

Marital Status evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.5 million (those aged 16 and over), the following statistics were recorded for marital status in Northern Ireland: single (38.1%), married (45.6 %), in a civil partnership (0.2%), Separated (3.8%), divorced / dissolved partnership (6%) and widowed (6.4%).

There is no available evidence indicating differential impact to people of differing marital status in relation to bus travel or boarding/alighting safety. Issues were not raised during the consultation process.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.5 million (those aged 16 and over), the following statistics were recorded for sexual orientation in Northern Ireland: straight or heterosexual (90%), gay, lesbian, bisexual or other (2%), prefer not to say or not stated (7.9%).

There is no available evidence indicating differential impact to people of different sexual orientation in relation to bus travel or boarding/alighting safety. Issues were not raised during the consultation process.

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for gender in Northern Ireland: females were 50.8% of the population and males were 49.2% of the population.

In respect of public transport usage, the Department's Audit of Inequalities cites evidence that fewer women than men hold driving licences and thus, may be more reliant on affordable public transport than men. The audit also notes that women are more likely to have care-giving responsibilities that can necessitate multiple short journeys during a day. In respect of road safety regulations, the Police Recorded Injury Road Traffic Collision and Casualties – 2024 Key Statistics Report highlights that those seriously injured as a result of road traffic collisions across every age category are more likely to be male. The disparity is significant across the board but can be more than twice as likely (eg in the 35-49 age category).

There is however no evidence of differential impact in relation to people of different gender in relation to bus travel or boarding/alighting safely. Issues were not raised during the consultation process.

Disability evidence / information:

Quantitative evidence indicates that disabled passengers may experience increased vulnerability in public transport environments, including at bus stops.

Census 2021 data shows that around one in four people in Northern Ireland (24.3%, approximately 463,000 people) have a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Transport Accessibility Statistics further indicate that almost one quarter (24.3%) of people whose day-to-day activities are limited do not have access to a car or van, compared with 10.1% of those without such limitations, demonstrating greater reliance on public transport.

In addition, Travel Survey data shows that people with mobility difficulties make significantly fewer journeys overall, reflecting higher barriers to safe and accessible travel. Road safety and accessibility evidence consistently highlights that people with a disability rely more heavily on predictable, consistent driver behaviour and safe stopping environments due to mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments. Environments characterised by higher speeds, close passing traffic or inconsistent driver behaviour are therefore more likely to present heightened risk for passengers with a disability when boarding or alighting from buses. No specific issues were raised during consultation.

Dependants evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census out of a population of 1.9 million the following statistics were recorded for dependents in Northern Ireland: 30.7% per cent of households in Northern Ireland contained at least one dependent child and 44.9% contained at least one person with a long-term health problem or disability; made up of those households with dependent children (10.1%) and those with no dependent children (34.8%).

Children are a key beneficiary group. The scale of school bus use (approximately 32.5 million journeys per year) demonstrates significant exposure to potential risk. Parents and carers consistently prioritise safety at bus stops, particularly where children must cross live traffic after alighting. Issues were not raised during consultation.

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

(Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below).

Religious belief

All bus passengers, irrespective of their religious belief, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Further needs, experiences or priorities were not identified during the consultation process.

Political Opinion

All bus passengers, irrespective of their political opinion, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. No further needs, experiences or priorities were identified for this s75 category during the consultation process.

Racial Group

All bus passengers, irrespective of their racial group, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. No specific issues were raised during the consultation process.

Age

All bus passengers, irrespective of their age, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Children, young people and older people require high levels of protection during boarding/alighting due to their potential vulnerabilities. Children and young people require are susceptible to risk due to developmental factors affecting judgement, visibility and risk perception. Quantitative evidence demonstrates the scale of exposure: the 2023/24 Continuous Household Survey indicates that approximately 81,000 pupils in Northern Ireland rely on buses as their main mode of school transport, equating to an estimated 32.5 million school bus passenger journeys per year. Post-primary pupils are particularly

exposed, with 41% using the bus as their main mode of travel. Road safety evidence shows that children remain a vulnerable road user group, with PSNI data recording 105 children under 16 killed or seriously injured in 2024/25. International research consistently demonstrates that the highest risk for children travelling by bus occurs during boarding and alighting, particularly when crossing the road immediately after alighting. Engagement with parents through the Safer Journeys to School Programme highlights concern about vehicles passing stationary buses during these moments of heightened vulnerability. Older people may also be at risk when boarding or alighting due to mobility, reaction time and confidence considerations.

This form will be reviewed as necessary should specific needs be highlighted.

Marital status

All bus passengers, irrespective of their marital status, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Further needs, experiences or priorities were not identified for this s75 category during the consultation process.

Sexual orientation

All bus passengers, irrespective of their sexual orientation, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Further needs, experiences or priorities were not identified for this s75 category during the consultation process.

Men and Women Generally

All bus passengers, irrespective of their gender, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Fewer women than men hold driving licences and thus, may be more reliant on affordable public transport than men. The audit also notes that women are more likely to have care-giving responsibilities that can necessitate multiple short journeys during a day. Further needs, experiences or priorities were not identified for this s75 category during the consultation process.

Disability

All bus passengers, irrespective of if they have or do not have a disability, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Passengers with a disability

require safe, accessible and predictable environments to travel safely. Census 2021 data shows that 24.3% of people in Northern Ireland (approximately 463,000 individuals) have a limiting long-term health problem or disability. Transport Accessibility Statistics indicate that people with activity-limiting disabilities are more than twice as likely to live in households without access to a car or van (24.3% compared with 10.1% of those without limitations), demonstrating greater reliance on public transport, including buses. Travel Survey data further shows that people with mobility difficulties make 44% fewer journeys per year on average than those without, reflecting barriers to safe and confident travel.

Road safety and accessibility research consistently identifies that disabled people rely more heavily on predictable driver behaviour and safe stopping environments due to mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments. Sudden vehicle movements or close passing traffic at bus stops can therefore create heightened physical risk and anxiety for passengers with a disability when boarding or alighting a bus.

Further needs, experiences or priorities were not identified for this s75 category during the consultation process.

Dependants

All bus passengers, irrespective of if they are or have dependents, have a need to be able to board or alight a bus safely. Parents and carers prioritise the safety of children and young people at bus stops.

Children, as dependants, are a primary beneficiary group for this policy proposal. Quantitative evidence demonstrates the scale of exposure; approximately 350,000 pupils travel to school each weekday, with around 81,000 using buses as their main mode of transport, resulting in an estimated 32.5 million school bus passenger journeys per year. Evidence referenced through the Safer Journeys to School Programme indicates that between 2002 and 2024, 13 children were killed and 3,553 were injured on their journey to or from school. While these figures relate to school journeys overall, international and UK research consistently shows that the point of boarding and alighting from buses represents a period of heightened risk.

Engagement with parents and carers highlights strong concern about driver behaviour at bus stops, particularly vehicles passing stationary buses while children are boarding or alighting and a clear desire for more consistent and enforceable rules to protect dependants at these locations.

Further needs, experiences or priorities were not identified for this s75 category during the consultation process.

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are

concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

Screening questions

1. **What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?**

(Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none).

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

What is the level of impact? **Minor Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

What is the level of impact? **Minor Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

What is the level of impact? **Minor Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

Children and young people require high levels of protection due to developmental factors affecting judgement, visibility and risk perception. The impact of these factors is most acute during boarding and alighting from a bus, particularly when children transition from a protected environment (the bus) into live traffic and may need to cross the road. Evidence indicates that post-primary pupils have particularly high exposure, with a large proportion

relying on buses for daily travel and travelling independently. At these points, children may misjudge vehicle speed or distance, step unexpectedly into the carriageway, or be obscured from drivers' view by the bus itself or surrounding features. Where vehicles pass stationary buses at speed or in close proximity, the likelihood and severity of harm increases. For older people, impacts may include reduced confidence, slower movement and increased difficulty responding to unexpected traffic behaviour when boarding or alighting. Predictable, consistent driver behaviour, is therefore critical to reducing risk and improving perceived and actual safety for both age groups.

What is the level of impact? **Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

What is the level of impact? **Minor Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

What is the level of impact? **Minor Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

What is the level of impact? **Minor Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category.

Passengers with a disability require safe, accessible and predictable environments to travel independently and with confidence. The impact of mobility, sensory or cognitive impairments is particularly evident at bus stops, where boarding and alighting often take longer and require greater spatial awareness and stability. Sudden vehicle movements, close passing traffic, or inconsistent driver behaviour can significantly increase physical risk, for example through loss of balance, delayed crossing, or difficulty orientating safely after alighting. Sensory impairments may reduce the ability to detect approaching vehicles, while cognitive or neurodiverse conditions may make fast-moving or complex traffic environments overwhelming or unsafe.

These impacts can lead to heightened anxiety, reduced confidence in using bus services, and, in some cases, avoidance of travel altogether. Clear, consistent and enforceable expectations on driver behaviour around stationary buses can therefore play an important role in mitigating risk and supporting safer, more inclusive access to public transport for passengers with a disability.

What is the level of impact? **Positive**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**:

The intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus, including those in this s75 category. As highlighted above, children (as dependants) experience heightened risk at bus stops and this risk directly affects parents and carers responsible for their safety.

The impact of unsafe or unpredictable driver behaviour around stationary buses includes increased fear of serious injury at the point where children board or alight, particularly where road-crossing is required. Evidence and engagement indicate that parents and carers are especially concerned about vehicles passing stationary buses at speed or in close proximity, as this reduces reaction time and increases the severity of potential collisions.

These concerns can influence decisions about whether children are permitted to travel independently, potentially increasing reliance on car journeys and reducing confidence in bus travel. Clearer and more enforceable rules governing driver behaviour at bus stops have the potential to reduce risk to dependants and provide greater reassurance to parents and carers about the safety of school bus journeys

What is the level of impact? **Positive**

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories?

Religious Belief – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Political Opinion – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Racial Group – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Age – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Marital Status – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Sexual Orientation – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Men and Women generally – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

Disability – Yes

Opportunity to consider accessibility and inclusive design at later stages of policy development, recognising that the current proposals focus primarily on driver behaviour rather than physical infrastructure.

Dependants – No

There are no further opportunities which have been identified to better promote equality of opportunity for people in this s75 category at this stage in the policy development.

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

There is no evidence of any impact on good relations between people of different religious belief at this stage as this is a policy proposal to increase safety when boarding or alighting from a bus.

What is the level of impact? **None**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**:

There is no evidence of any impact on good relations between people of different political opinion at this stage as this is a policy proposal to increase safety when boarding or alighting from a bus.

What is the level of impact? **None**

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**:

There is no evidence of any impact on good relations between people of different racial group at this stage as this is a policy proposal to increase safety when boarding or alighting from a bus.

What is the level of impact? **None**

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief -

No, the intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus and no opportunity to better promote good relations for people within this s75 category have been identified.

Political Opinion -

No, the intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus and no opportunity to better promote good relations for people within this s75 category have been identified.

Racial Group -

No, the intent of this policy is to increase the safety of all passengers when boarding or alighting from a bus and no opportunity to better promote good relations for people within this s75 category have been identified.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(Every citizen belongs to more than one group - For example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Yes

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

All people have multiple identities as they belong to more than one s75 category. This policy intends to make it safer for all passengers to board or alight from a bus in NI. However, the greatest beneficial impact of this policy may be on the young, elderly, those with disabilities and/or those who have or are dependents as outlined in the information provided in the evidence/information and needs/experiences/priorities sections above.

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

As equality issues were not raised at consultation stage, it has been decided an equality impact assessment will not be required at this time. This will be reviewed, if necessary, as policy approach continues to develop.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details of this consideration.

No significant adverse equality impacts were identified during the consultation process. Equality considerations were embedded in the consultation questions and evidence-gathering process. Any possible mitigations or alternative policy, if deemed necessary, are not considered necessary at this stage but will be considered as the policy continues to develop.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

Not applicable at this stage. Future mitigation will be considered if they are deemed necessary.

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

N/A

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion [choose 1 2 or 3 if a full EQIA is to take place]

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Social need **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Effect on people’s daily lives **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Relevance to a public authority’s functions **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

No

If yes, please provide details.

N/A

Part 4. Monitoring

Analysis of consultation responses, including from Section 75 groups;
Further screening and, if necessary, EQIA at policy development stage; and
Rural needs assessment alongside any future legislative proposals

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: [Ciara Colhoun](#)
Position/Job Title: [G7 – SJS Programme](#)
Date: [01/09/2026](#)

Approved by: [Peter Neill](#)
Position/Job Title: [G6 – SJS Programme Manager](#)
Date: [01/09/2026](#)

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

For Equality Team Completion:

Date Received: [01/09/2026](#)
Amendments Requested: Yes / No [Yes](#)
Date Returned to Business Area: [03/09/2026](#)
Date Final Version Received / Agreed: [03/09/2026](#)
Date Published on DfI's Section 75 webpage: [04/09/2026](#)