

# Written Ministerial Statement

*The content of this written ministerial statement is as received at the time from the Minister. It has not been subject to the official reporting (Hansard) process.*

## Department for Infrastructure

### SAFER JOURNEYS TO SCHOOL: CONSULTATION ON OVERTAKING AND PASSING BUSES

*Published at 12pm on Thursday 26 March 2026*

**Ms Liz Kimmins (The Minister for Infrastructure):** I wish to inform the Assembly of my decision to launch, on Thursday 26 March, a consultation to seek the public's views on potential legislative measures designed to improve the safety for children travelling to and from school by bus.

As the Assembly will be aware, I have previously set out my intention to strengthen protections for children at bus stops. Before bringing forward legislation, it has been important to ensure that proposals are evidence led, workable in practice and designed to avoid unintended consequences, including through engagement with key partners and legal advice.

The Safer Journeys to School: Consultation on overtaking and passing buses focuses on proposals for more targeted rules on driver behaviour around buses which could help reduce risk, particularly at the point when children are boarding and alighting.

Road safety is a priority for me as Minister for Infrastructure. The protection of vulnerable road users, especially children and young people on their journeys to and from school, is of particular concern.

In recent years, the risks that can arise when school children are boarding or alighting from buses have been too tragically highlighted. These incidents sadly underline the urgent need for a co-ordinated, evidence-led approach.

I have therefore established the Safer Journeys to School programme, which is progressing at pace to bring forward a comprehensive package of measures across legislation, education, engineering and enforcement.

The consultation forms the legislative element of that programme.

It sets out a preferred proposal, alongside a range of options for further development, focused on improving safety for children and other vulnerable passengers when they are boarding or alighting from buses, and immediately afterwards, when risk is known to be highest.

My Department considers that clearer, more targeted rules could help reduce risk and improve safety.

Having considered the available evidence, operational realities and legal advice, the Department's preferred approach is a two pillar framework:

- Pillar 1 sets out a legislative proposal to prohibit overtaking a stationary bus in clearly defined dangerous circumstances, focused on situations where passengers may be exposed to harm.
- Pillar 2 presents a number of options for further development designed to mitigate the risks associated with vehicles passing buses during boarding and alighting, including from the opposite direction.

The consultation will remain open until May 21, 2026. Responses will be considered alongside further analysis, legal advice and engagement with operational partners before decisions are made on how to proceed.

While the consultation is under way, motorists can already play a vital role. Drivers need to slow down, be prepared to stop, and be especially vigilant when approaching or passing a bus when children may be boarding or alighting.