



# Top Tips for sustainable school travel

department for  
children, schools and families

# 1

## Here are ten tips to help promote sustainable travel to school.

Encourage cycling by providing secure bike storage and lockers.

- Surveys in 2005 showed that 31 per cent of children would have liked to cycle to school, but only one per cent of those aged 5-16 actually did so.
- The main reason given for not cycling to school is lack of secure facilities.
- Cycle parking should be secure, visible to school staff, durable, well lit, easy to use, accessible and sheltered.
- A grant is available to all state schools that implement a School Travel Plan. More information at [www.teachernet.gov.uk?\\_doc/9532/schooltravelplanscapitalgrants.doc](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk?_doc/9532/schooltravelplanscapitalgrants.doc)
- Check out the Sustrans information sheets *Cycle Parking for Schools* and *Cycling to School*, which can be accessed via [www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk)

## 2

Set up a 'walking bus' or an alternative scheme.

- A group of children walk to or from school supervised by volunteer adult escorts.
- Both adults and children wear high visibility jackets.
- The 'bus' follows a set route with agreed pick-up points.
- Alternatively, in a 'passport' scheme pupils can earn rewards for walking to school.
- In a 'buddies' scheme pupils walk with friends, siblings and/or older/younger pupils.
- More information can be found a [www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/schooltravel/grantsforwalkingbuses/howtosetupawalkingbus](http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/schooltravel/grantsforwalkingbuses/howtosetupawalkingbus)

## 3

Incorporate sustainable travel activities across the curriculum.

- Involve pupils in monitoring your current travel-to-school practice and identifying possible solutions.
- Find ways of linking the School Travel Plan across the curriculum.
- Look for other links to sustainable travel as a topic across the curriculum.
- Involve the school council in developing the Travel Plan and/or as part of the consultation process.
- Demonstrate support for the Healthy Schools initiative by encouraging healthy ways of travelling to school.

## 4

Hold special promotions for active travel.

- Nominate one day a week as walk/cycle-to-school day.
- Once a week can later be extended to two days or a whole week.
- Devise a pedometer challenge where pupils or classes try to achieve targets or beat their personal best.
- Hold a bike MOT day with local cycle shops to service bikes and raise awareness of bike maintenance.
- Take part in an awards scheme like Sheffield's STARS or Transport for London's travel plan accreditation scheme.
- Take a look at [www.walktoschool.org.uk](http://www.walktoschool.org.uk) and [www.sustrans.org.uk/bikeit](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bikeit) for more ideas.

## 5

Arrange training for walkers and cyclists and on independent travel.

- This training could be part of PSHE or be offered as an out-of-school-hours learning activity.
- Ask your local authority road safety department what training is available.
- The Government-approved standard – Bikeability – sets out the training and skills essential for cycle trips in today's road conditions. See [www.bikeability.org.uk](http://www.bikeability.org.uk)
- The widely-used Kerbcraft model developed by Strathclyde University is designed to teach pedestrian training skills to 5-7 year olds by practical roadside training. See [www.kerbcraft.org.uk](http://www.kerbcraft.org.uk)

## 6

Liaise with feeder schools to agree guidance for transition pupils on sustainable travel.

- Encourage pupils and parents to think how they might travel to their new school.
- Help them identify sustainable methods and most appropriate routes from Day One.
- Provide all relevant information to help parents and pupils choose to walk, cycle or use public transport.

## 7

Find ways of involving pupils who are obliged to travel by car.

- ‘Park and stride’ schemes encourage parents to park a little way from the school and walk the rest of the journey.
- These schemes can be set up from local car parks, supermarkets and leisure centres where there is a convenient route to school.
- Pupils can play a vital role in encouraging parents to take part and asking organisations for the use of their facilities.
- Encourage car sharing with ‘postcode coffee mornings’ to help parents identify others who make similar journeys.
- Check out [www.school-run.org](http://www.school-run.org), the website that helps parents find other local parents with whom to share the school run by foot, cycle or car.

## 8

Work to improve bus provision and behaviour on school transport.

- Talk to bus operators about modifying services, routes and timetables so that more pupils can choose public transport for school journeys.
- Poor behaviour and fear of bullying are given as reasons for not using public transport.
- Senior pupils can act as monitors on school services, identifying and eliminating unsocial behaviour.
- Have a look at [www.wymetro.com/schoolsandcolleges/safemark](http://www.wymetro.com/schoolsandcolleges/safemark)

## 9

Work with your local authority to identify safer routes and possible highway improvements.

- Many local authorities support ‘Safer Routes to School’ projects with funding to encourage more pupils to walk, cycle or use public transport.
- Involve pupils, parents and carers in identifying the most popular routes, the main barriers to walking or cycling and any safety concerns.
- Ask your local authority School Travel Adviser how to obtain funding to address highway issues resulting in more walking, cycling and public transport use.
- Sustrans has online maps of local pedestrian/cycle routes and can refer you to your local school travel contact.

Make sure your School Travel Plan is an up-to-date, living document.

- Your School Travel Plan should be monitored and reviewed regularly to reflect pupil turnover and other changes.
- New developments in education and transport provision should be reflected in the plan.
- It should also take account of initiatives such as extended schools and extended rights to free travel, and popular trends such as scooters.
- Make sure parents receive regular information about the School Travel Plan so they can make informed choices about the school journey.
- The latest DfES information on School Travel Plans can be found at [www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sd/managers/travel/STAtoolkit/stp](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/wholeschool/sd/managers/travel/STAtoolkit/stp)

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