

School travel plan

A school travel plan is a simple document that a school creates that outlines how journeys to and from school can be more active, safer and better for the environment.

The plan sets out practical ways to encourage and support pupils to walk, scoot, cycle and use public transport and car sharing to reduce the number of vehicles doing the journey to and from school.

Each school creates its own bespoke travel plan with support from Essex County Council and ideally with input from children, as well as parents, staff and the community to make sure it reflects local needs and addresses ways to overcome specific barriers.

What are the benefits of a school travel plan?

Reducing the number of vehicles helps to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety on the routes around the school. It also improves the quality of air everyone has to breathe as well as reducing noise pollution.

The way children travel to school can have a significant impact on their physical and mental health and wellbeing as well as their behaviour in the classroom, with pupils who walk, scoot or cycle arriving more alert and ready to learn. It can also help children to develop road use skills and supports school policies such as Eco-Schools and Healthy Schools and the national curriculum.

Links to the national curriculum

A school travel plan can be linked to everyday learning:



- **Science and maths:** pupils can collect and analyse data and create tables and graphs



- **English and drama:** pupils can use the topic of travel to learn about persuasive writing and discussions



- **Art:** pupils can create a map of the school based on the site audit and active travel posters



- **PSHE:** pupils can take on the role of Travel Ambassador to promote active travel to the wider school community including parents

It also provides pupils with the opportunity to develop skills in presenting and public speaking, marketing and promotion, project management and leadership.

Support from Essex County Council

Essex County Council can provide free support and guidance to schools to prepare a school travel plan. If you would like some extra support or inspiration please email travelplanteam@essex.gov.uk or ring **0333 013 9390**.

National accreditation

Modeshift STARS is a national accreditation scheme which recognises schools that show excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable and active travel. It is supported by the Department of Transport and more than 1,400 schools have achieved accreditation.

Schools can register for free and gain access to an online system that provides guidance through each step of a travel plan with user-friendly instructions. Register your school at <https://modeshiftstars.org>

Modeshift also run the Active Travel Ambassador programme to support pupils aged 11 and over to develop school based campaigns on active travel and road safety.

Creating your school travel plan

There are three basic parts to a travel plan all of which your pupils can help to create:

- A site audit
- A travel survey
- An action plan

Site audit

Ask pupils to walk around the school site and record the answers to the questions. If you have a large class, split them into groups. They can create tables and graphs with the results and compare their findings.

- How many car park spaces can you count?
- How many bike and scooter parking spaces can you count?
- How many pedestrian crossings can you count?
- How many bus stops can you count?
- Can you see any cycle paths nearby?
- Are there pavements leading to your school?
- Can you see a speed limit sign? What speed is the road?
- Are there any speed bumps on the road?

Extending the activity – ask pupils to:

- *Draw a map of the school including all the features they have found.*

Travel survey

Ask pupils to conduct a survey of their class/year about how everyone makes their journey to school and how they would prefer to travel to school. It can be done as a simple ‘hands up’ activity.

The template on page 35 can be used to record the results.

Repeat the survey each term/year and compare results to see if there has been an increase in the number of pupils actively travelling to school and if you have reached your targets.

Extending the activity – ask pupils to:

- *Make graphs and charts showing the results*
- *Turn the numbers into percentages*
- *Compare results against last year’s data (if available)*



School travel survey sheet

Use this sheet to record your findings about how pupils and staff currently make their journey to school and how they would prefer to travel each day.

Current way to travel to school	Number of pupils	Number of staff	Preferred way to travel to school	Number of pupils	Number of staff
Walk			Walk		
Cycle			Cycle		
Scoot			Scoot		
Bus			Bus		
Park & Stride from agreed location			Park & Stride from agreed location		
Train			Train		
Car Share with pupils from other homes			Car Share with pupils from other homes		
Motorcycle			Motorcycle		
Car			Car		

Action plan

Ask pupils to use the data from your audit and travel survey to suggest practical ways to encourage your school community, including pupils, teachers and support staff, to travel to school more actively. You could also set targets for the changes you want to happen.

Think about the following to help inform your action plan:

- How can you help people to cycle or scoot to school? Does this include providing more secure bike and scooter storage?
- Is there a bus stop close to your school that you could promote? Could you set up a 'walking train' from the bus stop to the school gates?
- Are you promoting the health benefits of actively travelling to school?
- As well as reducing the number of cars travelling to school, how else could you help to improve air quality around the site?

Use the sheet on the next page to develop your action plan and then make sure you share it with everyone at school. You could do this at a whole-school assembly or present to individual classes.

Your school might already offer Bikeability training, provide bike/scooter parking and communicate with parents about parking, so make sure you include this information in your action plan.

Examples of other travel initiatives you could include:

- CAREless Pollution no idling campaign
- National Clean Air Day activity
- Parent parking campaign/park and stride scheme
- Bikeability training
- Bike/walking bus



School travel plan sample sheet

Use this sheet to set out your action plan to help pupils, teachers and support staff travel to school more actively. Be as specific as possible about the activities, who is responsible and by when it should happen. Some example ideas have been provided but you can add more and replace with your own.

Action	Description	Key milestones	Person responsible	Target completion date
Create a walking map	Encourage more walking to school by creating a map of the local area showing all available footpaths			
Schedule regular themed assemblies: air pollution, road safety				
Encourage staff and parents to car share				
Provide 'bus buddies' for younger pupils starting at the school				
Host bike maintenance training for staff and parents				
Host Bikeability cycle training				
Participate in national active travel initiatives such as Living Streets WOW, Walk to School Week/Month, Sustrans Big Walk & Wheel, Bling Your Bike Day, Catch the Bus Week, Road Safety Day/Week				
Work with Council on parking and idling enforcement				
Ask new parents to sign up to a Travel to School Agreement				

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