

North West Sustrans Active School Travel Programme Summer Term 2019 Newsletter

I'd love to hear from you...

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Message from Sustrans ...

The Active School Travel Programme is an exciting initiative for schools who wish to see more of their pupils choosing an **active and healthy** journey to school. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of pupils walking, cycling and scooting to school.

Sustrans is being funded by the **Public Health Agency** and the **Department for Infrastructure** to continue delivering the Active School Travel Programme across Northern Ireland until 2021.

Sustrans has been delivering this successful programme for the past three years. In 2017-18 within participating schools, there number of pupils travelling actively increased from 34% to 44%.

We are currently working with over 340 schools across Northern Ireland. Please visit our [website](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) where you can learn more about the programme and download newsletters from other areas.



Schools out for summer!


Well, the 2018-19 school year flew by in what felt like the blink of an eye. I would like to thank all our Active Travel Schools for their hard work, enthusiasm and dedication to changing our daily travel habits during the past year. Inside this newsletter you will see some of the results of all that work including some incredible achievements by Northern Ireland schools making a real difference to saving our environment during Big Pedal 2019. All the smiles, thumbs up, trophies and certificates are a just reward for all the effort every school puts into the Active School Travel Programme.

We also look ahead to the 2019-2020 school year, welcome new schools and explore some of the work we will be doing over the course of the next ten months. We will participate in a whole host of activities, challenges, initiatives and assemblies all with the ambition of increasing the numbers of pupils, parents and staff choosing active and sustainable transport. We will have loads of fun on the way and we might even pick up a few awards and trophies to boot!



Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today. www.sustrans.org.uk

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JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Scoot Scoot Scooting

An excellent way to get children travelling actively is to make it as fun and simple as possible and one way to do that is on a scooter.

Here are some benefits to scooting:

- * Scooters can be used by children and adults of all ages.
- * They fit easily in the boot of a car or carried.
- * Small children scoot at an adults walking pace.
- * It teaches children better balance for cycling.
- * A child can scoot further than they can walk.
- * They are cheaper than bicycles.
- * You can park them anywhere.
- * Scooting is so much fun!

As always, look out for other people using the footpath such as pedestrians and dog walkers.



School Mark Award

We are delighted to announce that schools in the North West have had an incredibly successful term. From Big Pedal winners to School Mark awards, schools across the North West have been reaping the rewards of their active travel work this year.

We had an incredible eleven schools earn School Mark Bronze or Silver awards in the 2018-2019 school year. Congratulations to the following for their fantastic achievements and reward for all your active travel work over the past year:

- * St Theresa's PS Glebe
- * St John's PS Swatragh
- * Faughanvale PS
- * Chapel Road PS
- * Adrstraw Jubilee PS
- * Sion Mills PS
- * Artigarvan PS
- * Culmore PS
- * St Columba's PS Straw
- * St Mary's PS Gortnahey
- * Phoenix Integrated PS
- * St Matthew's PS Drumsurn



School Street Closure

Sustrans School Streets is a test programme that aims to ease congestion, poor air quality and road safety concerns that many schools experience during drop-off and pick-up times, by facilitating timed traffic restrictions on the road outside the school gates.

This approach was developed in Italy, and then brought to the UK by Edinburgh, Hackney, Camden and Solihull. It has now been picked up by a number of London boroughs, with School Streets also being known as Healthy School Streets and School Car-Free Zones.

Streets around schools are often dominated by idling cars, speeding traffic and bad parking during school run time, resulting in air pollution and an environment that is generally unpleasant for walking and cycling.

By demonstrating that closing roads outside schools at drop-off and pick-up times is achievable, measuring the impact and sharing our findings, we aim to encourage more regular street closures and inspire more schools to try this approach. Ultimately, we want to affect a permanent change in the way children travel to school.



Across the UK Sustrans has been piloting School Streets, where the street outside a school is closed for the day to show what it could be like without traffic. This year, starting during the Big Pedal, over 40 schools across the UK have taken part.

Here in Northern Ireland, our first street closure was outside Donegall Road Primary in Belfast. Pupils could enjoy safely walking, cycling and scooting to school, with no worries over crossing the road to get to school. We also used the extra space for lots of activities during the day, and at the end of the day had games and activities for families on the street as they left school.

Ten New Schools joining the AST North West Programme



In September we welcome sixty new primary schools onto the programme of which ten will be in the North West area of Northern Ireland. This brings the total number of schools currently on the active schools travel program in the North West to 30.

Our new schools in the North West are:

- Ballougry PS
- Drumrane PS
- Gaelscoil ne Daróige
- Holy Family PS
- Knocknagin PS
- Londonderry Model PS
- Newbuildings PS
- St Mary's PS Bellaghy
- St Mary's PS Draperstown
- Tobermore PS

I always look forward to September, meeting new schools, teachers and pupils with loads of assemblies, activities and new faces.

NI Schools Circumnavigate the World!!

During the Big Pedal this year Northern Ireland schools made a staggering **164,000 active travel journeys**, including:



- **25,200** bike rides
- **20,220** scooter journeys
- **118,000** walking journeys

This combines to equal an incredible **816,995 miles** during the ten day challenge, the equivalent of nearly **33 times around the world**.

That's 3.5 trips to the moon!!

All the great work done by Northern Ireland schools in this 10 day period means that we averted **421kg** of nitrous oxides and **193,630 kg** of carbon dioxide being emitted into our atmosphere.

The Daily Mile

Did you know that just **43.4%** of children in NI get the recommended **60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity per day**. This is the lowest in the UK!

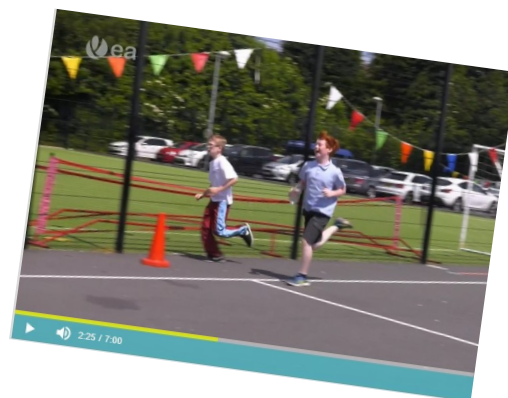
An active journey such as walking, scooting or cycling to and from school is a great way to contribute toward this daily target.



As part of our work in the Active School Travel programme we encourage schools to help pupils to be active not just on the journey to/from school but also during school time, such as through initiatives like 'The Daily Mile'.

If you'd like help to introduce The Daily Mile at your school please get in touch as I can help host introductory assemblies and class sessions. It takes just 15 minutes per session with a recommendation of classes doing 3 sessions per week, whilst some schools do it once or twice a week, others every day!

If you'd like to hear feedback directly from other schools check out EA TV for their Daily Mile promotional video to hear from teachers and Principals who have given it a go in their schools. Link — bit.ly/2NPKvYv posted on EA TV September 2018



There are 237 schools in NI registered with TheDailyMile.co.uk Check out their interactive map to see which schools are already taking part in your area.



Why Not Close Your Street?

Have you ever thought about how much space around your school grounds is dedicated to vehicles, rather than to children? Have you ever considered getting your pupils involved in re-designing the space around your school, to make it safer and more enjoyable for everyone to walk, scoot, cycle and play?



Sustrans have a fantastic resource called “Street Kit”. It’s a bit like Lego for street designers - it can be used in all kinds of innovative ways to change the shape of our streets, car parks and playgrounds. It’s fun and colourful, and a great way for children to learn about how to use and shape the spaces around us.

Over the next year, we will be delivering a number of projects in schools across Northern Ireland, working with teachers and pupils to re-imagine the school grounds. We’ll work with pupils to set up Street Kit, and it can remain in situ at the school for a few weeks - long enough to enable people to change habits and perceptions.

Does your school have problems with congestion around the school gates? Do people park where they shouldn’t? Do they clog up the turning circle, and make it difficult for children to cross roads safely? Are you concerned about air pollution with all those idling cars? Street Kit could be a really innovative way to address some of these challenges. Get in touch if you are interested in using Street Kit at your school.



Thinking of starting up a Walking bus at your school?

Involving your pupils and parents is a great way to get good support from the get-go. Eco-Council, School Council or JRSO pupils can lend a hand in the creation, running and promotion of the scheme to ensure you keep it fun, engaging and unique to your school.

Top tips:

- ⇒ Choose a day and give it a cool name like ‘Walk on Wednesdays’ or ‘Fit Fridays’
- ⇒ Reward your walkers by recording participation on a wall-chart and awarding a trophy to the class with the highest % of walkers every month. Even some light touch incentives like Sustrans slap-bands, stickers or a ‘No Homework’ pass work well!
- ⇒ Publicise it! Get the news out on your website, social media, local press.
- ⇒ Keep safe—always encourage the use of hi-vis vests when travelling actively to school. Risk assess the route, and plan how to safely navigate awkward junctions.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- World Car Free Day; Sun 22 Sept 2019
- Walk to School Month; Oct 2019
- Road Safety Week; Mon 18 - Sun 24 Nov 2019
- Sustrans Big Pedal; Wed 22 April - Tue 5 May 2020
- Sustrans Feet First Families; Friday 13 March 2020

Sustrans is grateful for the continued support of our schools work in Northern Ireland from the following:

