



Travel Guide 2025 -2026

(Infant, Junior, First & Primary Schools)

Active Travel for Schools

Walking, cycling, scooting, wheeling & sustainable travel - training, information, and resources guide for schools

Foreword

Welcome to the 2025 – 2026 Academic School Year Active Travel Guide.

The Active School Travel Team have produced this guide annually since 2021 to help schools plan their school calendar to link physical activity into daily school life. Our guide includes a review of our previous academic year with mini case studies from schools that have made a difference to their pupils and local community with our support.

There are many reasons for school staff to think about the journey to and from school. Childhood obesity and inactivity along with a lack of independence and road awareness continues to be a concern in many of our county areas. Encouraging walking, wheeling and cycling to school increases daily activity with children happier, more alert and less stressed when arriving for lessons.

A range of resources and expertise are on hand with additional opportunities that we share how to get involved via your ESchool Newsletter as campaigns are released. Resources are aimed at specific themes and outcomes which include:

- Walking to School
- Cycling, scooting training and safety
- Health improvements
- Local area – improvements
- Pupil Power – Eco and School Council

*“from a health point of view, activity is **one of the best things you can do** for both physical and mental health.”*

Professor Sir Chris Whitty

Please share copies of this guide sent to you with your teaching and wider staffing group to ensure they are aware of the support we can offer. Pop it in the staff room and raise active school travel at a staff meeting or inset day!

Thank you from the Active School Travel Team



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Meet the team

Who we are, what we do and why

Staffordshire's School Travel Advisors, Debbie, Jess, Angie, Tasha and Max (*image shown*) have a vast background of working in schools, with children and the community. They provide the link to wider teams and partners to bring support and activities directly to your school to increase safe and active travel on the school journey.

Team Leader Ryan Procter and Project Manager Cath Stephenson make up the wider team bringing years of experience and local knowledge.

The benefits of increasing physical activity are known and listed on the following page. However, the benefits to the local community and environment are felt, smelt, heard and can make the daily transition from home to school feel positive to a pupil. Cleaning the streets of unnecessary vehicles and poorly parking cars will make a real difference to your community which the new Active Travel Inspectors pupil activity addresses. See page 13 for how to get involved in

this new activity where our team and your pupils can help your school identify issues and find solutions to making local improvements. Every activity and campaign within this guide is delivered or facilitated by your School Travel Advisors. Working with wider partners to bring the right activities to suit your needs. Your mode of travel survey results along with school site audits help to provide the evidence. School Travel Plans continue to provide a long term plan for the school using Modeshift STARS, all our advisors deliver travel plans to schools across the county.



Over 125,000 pupils attend Staffordshire Schools with just over 8,800 eligible for home to school transport that leaves a huge 115,000 pupils on the "school run". Across the many schools in the county the local need can be very different.

New to 2025/26 the School Travel Advisors will be working with schools that have a travel plan to introduce Active Travel Inspectors, a Primary resource to inspect the area around the school with opportunities to feed information to Community Highways teams.

Last year the team reviewed our Walking Bus schemes which will continue into this year, along with additional support for Transition between schools where good active travel habits need to be reinforced.

Training, resources, support and guidance are on hand throughout the school year.



**Scan this QR
to Contact the
School Travel
Advisors**

Let's get active get moving get involved

Benefits

It is proven that children who travel actively to school by walking, cycling and wheeling will be happier, more alert and ready to learn. They will also have greater independence, improved social skills, better road safety awareness and will be fitter and healthier overall.

Even families that live further away and must use the car for part of the journey can get involved by parking away from the school and walking the rest of the way to school. The benefits to the pupils, staff, residents and families will be less congestion, safer school entrances and cleaner air.



Health and physical activity

for children and young people (5-18 years)

Be physically active and spread activity throughout the day. All activities should make you breathe faster and feel warmer. Include muscle and bone strengthening activities 3 times per week.

Builds
**confidence &
social skills**

Develops
coordination

Improves **sleep**

Improves
**concentration
& learning**

Strengthens
muscles & bones

Improves
health & fitness

Maintains
healthy weight

Makes **you**
feel good

Sit less. Move more



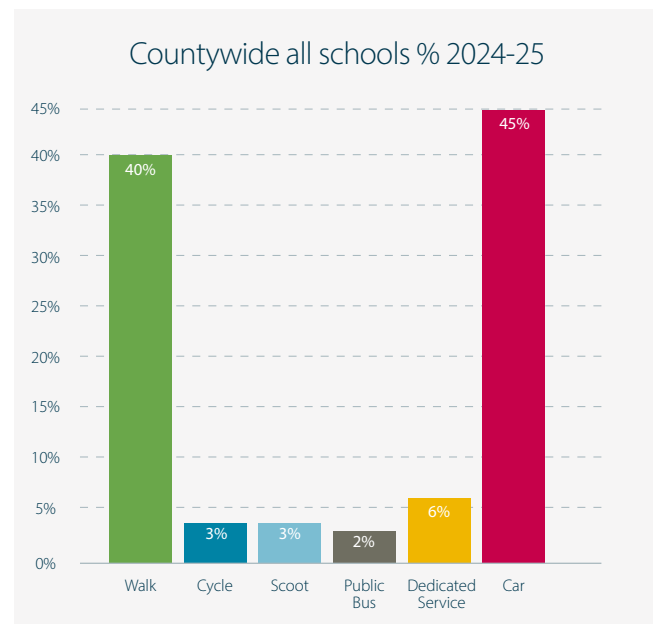
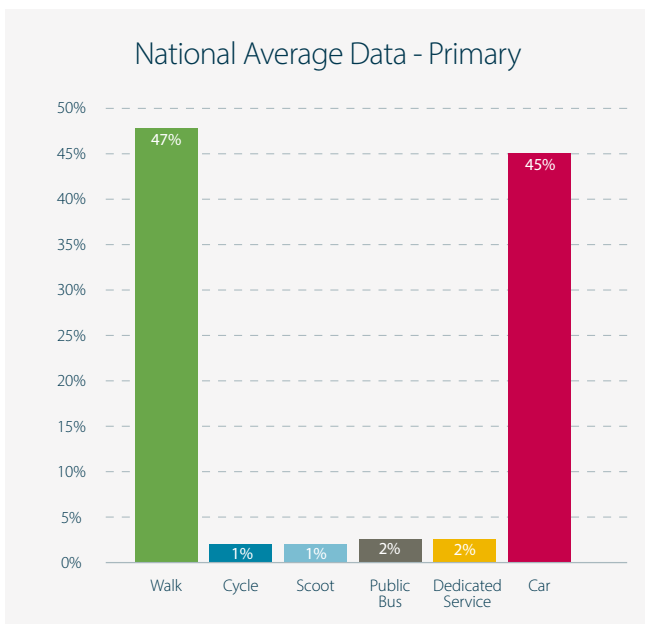
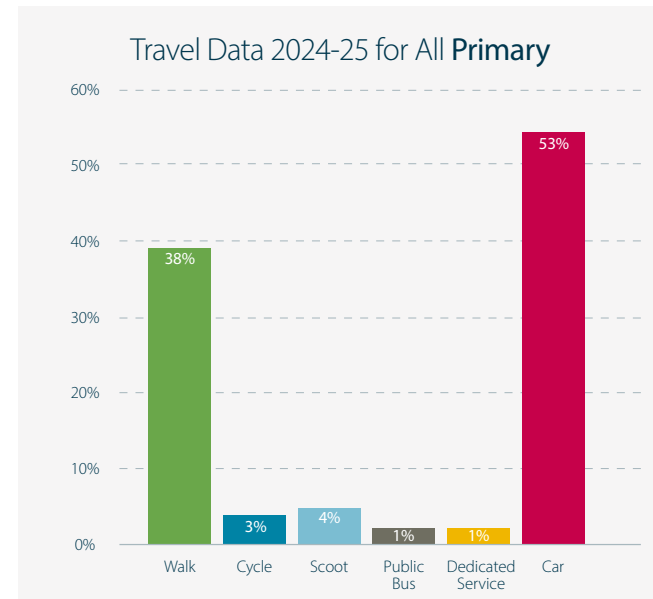
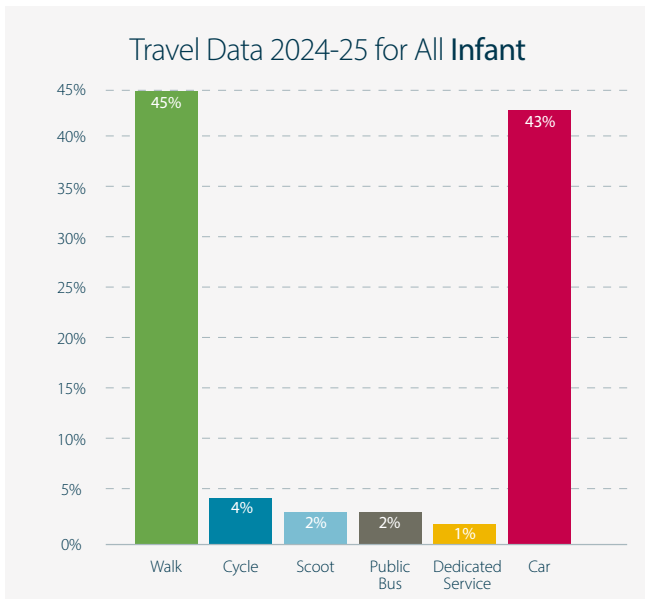
**Aim for
at least
60 minutes
everyday.**

2024 – 2025 Active School Travel – Year in Review

89% of schools responded to the annual census in 2024. This data provided has been used for funding bids for a variety of projects. Thanks to all schools that responded with this valuable data.

Car use has remained the same for the third consecutive year whilst walking rates have risen slightly but is still below the national average.

Please complete the 2025 Mode of Travel Survey as part of your Annual School Census in the Autumn Term 2025-26.



Year in Review - continued

Be Bright Be Seen Campaign

The popular Be Bright Be Seen Campaign has been embraced by many of our Primary Schools across the county including Anker Valley Primary Academy in Tamworth which opened as a new school in 2023 and has been dedicated to promoting active travel from the start. They have a Travel Plan, and they take part in many of the different campaigns we offer, including Be Bright Be Seen.

At Anker Valley Primary Academy, *"as part of the Be Bright Be Seen Campaign, the children listened to an interactive assembly and then they were all given bookmarks and activity booklets to highlight the importance of being visible in the darker winter months."*

Mrs Horlor the Headteacher.



Walk to School Week 2025

For 2025 our Walk to School Week Campaign was themed as "Walking Warriors" and over 120 schools signed up from around the county. They received posters, railing banners, digital leaflets for parents, digital resources to promote the campaign on their websites, on social media and to use in e-mails to parents. They also received activity sheets, bookmarks and stickers for pupils as rewards.

Outwoods Primary in Burton on Trent had a themed walk into school each day from a set location and were met by staff members in fancy dress. This was supported by dozens of parents and pupils each day who joined them on a walk to school. They collected the data on the way pupils travelled that week and saw a 20% increase in the number of pupils walking to school.

The image below shows pupils from St John The Evangelist Primary School showing off their new banner.



Anti-Idling Campaign

One of the schools that accessed our Anti-Idling Toolkit in 2025 was St Leonard's Primary in Stafford, who had witnessed cars producing poisonous fumes around their school.

Mrs Callaghan from St. Leonard's said, *"We have loved doing this campaign and it has had a positive impact. This morning, we only spotted 2 cars idling and had 450 balloons worth of pollution, which is a huge improvement from the start of the campaign where there were 2200 balloons worth of pollution."*

"Our Active Travel Ambassadors have developed confidence and have taken pride in promoting the message of 'switch off when you drop off'. They have been educating parents by giving out leaflets and using the megaphone to highlight the impact of idling in our local area"

One of our Active Travel Ambassadors said, *"This is really important for the environment, we need to look after it and reduce pollution, I could smell the pollution, I don't want to breathe that, and I feel happy that we made a difference."*

A parent said: *"The children were so polite and knowledgeable when thanking us for turning our engines off."*

To request an anti-idling toolkit or download lesson plans and resources, check out our Air Quality Pages.



Year in Review - continued

Love Your Journey

Lack of exercise and overexposure to air pollution are two of the main contributing factors leading to heart disease.

Staff, pupils and parents at Fulfen Primary School decided to get involved by using their heart on their journey to school on St. Valentine's Day.

The school wanted it to be a fun and exciting event to encourage active travel, because air pollution is a problem around most urban schools, but even semi-rural schools like Fulfen record higher levels of pollution at pick up and drop off times.

All children who had either walked or wheeled, were rewarded with a packet of love hearts for their efforts.

You can do your bit to help improve air quality, raise activity levels and together reduce the risk of heart disease.

Email – AirAware@staffordshire.gov.uk for more information.



Easter Bunny Walk

On Thursday, 10th March, Etching Hill CE Primary Academy held its second themed walk to school event - the Easter Bunny Walk - following the success of their Christmas Santa Walk.

The event was a fantastic success, with 120 children and families joining them in the spring sunshine. Many children wore Easter bonnets, bunny ears, and other themed outfits, creating a fun and festive atmosphere.

The walk promoted active travel and community engagement, aligning with our ongoing commitment to encourage walking to school as part of the WOW - Walk to School Challenge (in partnership with Living Streets).

"We're proud to say it was a joyful, well-attended morning that further strengthened our school's active travel initiatives."



Big Walk & Wheel

Barnfields Primary School signed up to the Big Walk and Wheel 2025 and had great participation across the school.

Head Teacher; Graham Ball, said about their involvement: *"We are always delighted to support initiatives that get the children active and outdoors. Our school sits in the middle of a housing estate and the roads are always busy at drop off and pick up times, anything we can do to reduce the volume of traffic will not only benefit the children, but the neighbours too. The children love the competitive nature of the scheme and we regularly update the journeys so they know who is leading. Our Eco-Warriors love to get involved and they run the scheme for us and they take great pride in supporting each class."*

Barnfields were the only school in Staffordshire to win one of the daily prizes. They chose to accept £600 worth of bikes to create a bike library for student use.



Living Streets WOW Campaign

"Pupils from over 50 schools in Staffordshire are getting active with WOW - the walk to school challenge. Want safer, cleaner streets and happier, healthier pupils? Join them!"

Living Streets are offering schools across Staffordshire the opportunity to take part in their Walk to School Outreach Programme for their WOW campaign.

Schools would normally have to pay for this resource which includes a FREE Travel Tracker that records how children travel to school, and free badges at the end of each month to reward those that make the effort to walk, wheel, park and stride or other active means of travelling to school. This year's theme is Walk with Joy.



If you would like to know more about this campaign or to sign up immediately, please scan this QR code below. Please hurry though as ideally, Living Streets would like all new schools signed up as close to the start of the school year as possible.

You can also email: grace.boyle@livingstreets.org.uk directly to sign up."



The Walking Bus

During the last year the Active School Travel Team have refreshed and relaunched our Walking Bus scheme. Including launching a competition to name our Walking Bus character. **Woody The Walking Bus** is our winner.

78 schools last Autumn expressed an interest in setting up a Walking Bus route for their school 15 routes are ready to go in the Autumn Term, with a further 21 in the final stages of route audits.

A Walking Bus isn't always suitable for all schools, our process to check is thorough with the support of the Community Highways teams. If you are interested in setting up a route to reduce the number of vehicles and bring about the many benefits of walking to school for your pupils get in touch.

Why have a Walking Bus?

- ✓ Reduce congestion
- ✓ Increase physical activity
- ✓ Increase pupil alertness and attendance
- ✓ Improve road safety skills and socialisation
- ✓ Its also lots of fun....so why not!

Want to know more about setting up a Walking Bus at your school click on the link below or email us at walking.bus@staffordshire.gov.uk



The year ahead 2025-2026

Autumn Term



September

Modeshift Month

Mode Shift Month is a month-long celebration dedicated to all things walking, wheeling, cycling, and journey sharing by public transport or car.

It provides the perfect opportunity to enable people to choose the way they travel, and present realistic travel alternatives to employees, students, and the wider public. This will ensure we can all live in happier, healthier, and more inviting communities.

Mode Shift Month is all about working together, to inspire individuals to try something new, be it cycling to work, walking to school, car sharing, or using public transport for longer journeys, by providing people with the tools and inspiration to make a Mode Shift.

To find out more about Modeshift Month and to sign up for free resources scan the QR code below



October

Walk to School Month & Cycle to School Week

Walk to School Month is a National Campaign delivered by thousands of schools nationwide. To request free certificates to promote this campaign please email us at

INTO@staffordshire.gov.uk and check out the Living Streets Webpage for more great ideas and how to take part.

October also sees **Cycle to School Week** take place between the 13th and 17th October. For more information visit the Bikeability Webpage by scanning this QR code



November

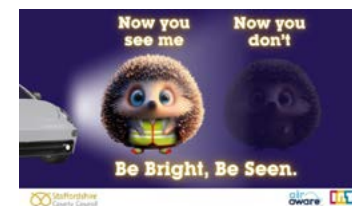
Be Bright Be Seen

When the clocks go back in Autumn, and it gets darker much earlier it is time to think about the Be Bright – Be Seen campaign. This campaign encourages pupils to be safe on their journey to school by making themselves visible to road users.

If you would like to know more about this campaign you can request resources by emailing us at into@staffordshire.gov.uk

and if you have a Travel Plan and are already working with one of our School Travel Advisors and would like a Be Bright – Be Seen Assembly delivered in your school then please contact your School Travel Advisor directly.

You can also check out the THINK.Gov website for educational resources for Road Safety Week 17th – 23rd November 2025



The year ahead 2025-2026

Spring Term



February

Love Your Journey

Lack of exercise and overexposure to air pollution are two of the main contributing factors leading to heart disease. Every year around Valentines Day we invite Pupils, Parents and Staff to get involved in the "Love Your Journey" campaign.

The week before Valentines Day which this year falls on a Saturday is the perfect time to run the campaign.

Every school in Staffordshire will experience greater levels of air pollution around schools at pick up and drop off times but for those in urban areas it is even worse. Encourage parents, pupils and staff to try an alternative mode of travel that week which will help increase activity levels and reduce air pollution.

Scan the QR code below for more information about how air pollution and inactivity can lead to an increased risk of heart disease.



March

Sustrans Big Walk and Wheel

The Big Walk and Wheel is a national campaign run by Sustrans aiming to increase physical activity on the journey to school and reduce congestion at the school gate.

Free resources are available on the Sustrans website by scanning the QR code below.

Last year Barnfields Primary in Stafford took part and ended up winning a fleet of bikes for their school which you can read more about on page 7 in this guide.



April

Air Aware Anti-Idling

The Anti-Idling campaign is back for 2026 to reduce idling engines around our county. For schools we have signage, posters, banners, digital support, and classroom activities.

There is so much to access, and the benefits are massive.

Don't fume at the fumers, let them know to "turn if off", remember 1 minute of idling can fill approximately 150 balloons with pollution. The pupil led Anti-Idling campaign is informative, raising awareness of the harm of idling, delivered in a positive way. To request an anti-idling toolkit or to download lesson plans and resources check out our Air Quality pages.



The year ahead 2025-2026

Summer Term



May

Walk to School Week

Walk to school week is back again for 2026. Last year we sent railing banners, posters, bookmarks, activity sheets and digital resources to over 130 schools around Staffordshire and we would love for you to take part again this year.



The railing banners do not have campaign dates on them so if you still have them from last year, please reuse the same one to keep the campaign more sustainable.

Watch out for our email with the link to sign up for this year's campaign in the Spring Term. We will again be offering bookmarks as rewards for anyone who has made the effort to walk all or some of the journey to school.

June

Clean Air Day

Clean Air Day takes place Thursday 18th June 2026. You can access the anti-idling toolkit to raise awareness across the week and download and use our lessons from our Air Aware Schools page by scanning the same QR code on page 9 for Clean Air Day.

Also check out the Clean Air Day website for more information by scanning the QR code below.

If you require additional support contact us at AirAware@staffordshire.gov.uk



July

The School Run Revolution

New families can develop active and sustainable travel habits right from the start which will continue throughout their time at your school. Help them understand how important this is from the very start.

Hard copies are available to those schools who have a **Modeshift STARS school travel plan** and are working more closely with their School Travel Advisor.



Transition – Yr6-Yr7

WAY 2 GO! is a lively activity book, packed full of ideas and activities surrounding the transition from primary/middle to secondary school. This resource would provide an opportunity to discuss during a planned lesson, the issues, and points to consider relating to transition.



To request any of these resources email us at INTO@staffordshire.gov.uk

Pupil Power

"We encourage children to walk and get fitter. It improves the quality of air around the school and makes our street much safer"
Finley - Year 6 pupil

Active Travel Ambassador

What is an Active Travel Ambassador?

This exciting initiative gives pupils the opportunity to lead and support campaigns that promote walking and wheeling to school and engaging with parents and peers about active travel.

As an Active Travel Ambassador, pupils can:

Promote Active Travel highlighting the importance of walking, wheeling, and reducing car use to their peers. Plan & Lead Campaigns and hold regular meetings to discuss ideas, initiatives, and campaigns they wish the school to take part in.

Support School Initiatives and support national and local campaigns such as the living streets WOW campaign and Anti-idling campaigns to reduce pollution around school gates.

Collect data to track active travel progress and collaborate with their school travel advisor who can support them with resources, ideas and campaign toolkits.

If you want to get involved and you, would you like to introduce this empowering programme to your school, please email us at INTO@staffordshire.gov.uk to request more information or a free starter pack.



Parking Toolkit

The Active Travel Ambassadors at Samuel Allsopp Primary School, kitted themselves out with hi-vis jackets, polite parking notices and bundles of enthusiasm to target drivers who illegally park on double yellow lines or the zig-zag markings near their school! One pupil said, "We feel like the Police and it's making a difference!"

Having children deliver this campaign proves to be hard hitting with parents. Following the success of this campaign, the pupils can't wait to do more. Deputy Head Miss Keyworth-Edwards said, *"Parking has always been a serious issue at Samuel Allsopp Nursery and Primary school, it has been exciting to see our pupils rise to the challenge of highlighting illegal parking. They were all so enthusiastic and made us very proud."*

Would you like to run this campaign?

Speak to your School Travel Advisor or email us at INTO@staffordshire.gov.uk



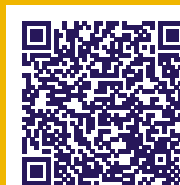
Active Travel Inspectors

NEW

Aimed at Key Stage 2 pupils, to inspect their school neighbourhood, identifying ways to make walking, wheeling, and cycling easier and more enjoyable for school journeys.

In this brand-new campaign for 2025/26 Pupils, supported by school staff and your School Travel Advisor, will become Active Travel Inspectors, tasked with assessing what supports or limits them from travelling actively.

As a group, they will rate different aspects of the area and share ideas for improvements. Findings can be shared with local authorities and Modeshift in order to contribute to improving everyday journeys for everyone.



Woodcroft Academy - reducing car use by 50%

Woodcroft Academy in Leek started working with our team in 2022 when the Headteacher got in touch about the number of cars parked around the school and explained she was concerned about the safety of the pupils arriving at school, especially those using the school crossing patrol. At the time car use at the school was over 50% with active travel rates well below 40%.

The school developed their school travel plan with the support of their School Travel Advisor and identified some of the issues and barriers which may have inhibited active travel. Together they set realistic targets and came up with a plan of campaigns and initiatives to help facilitate and promote walking, cycling and wheeling to school.

The plan included –

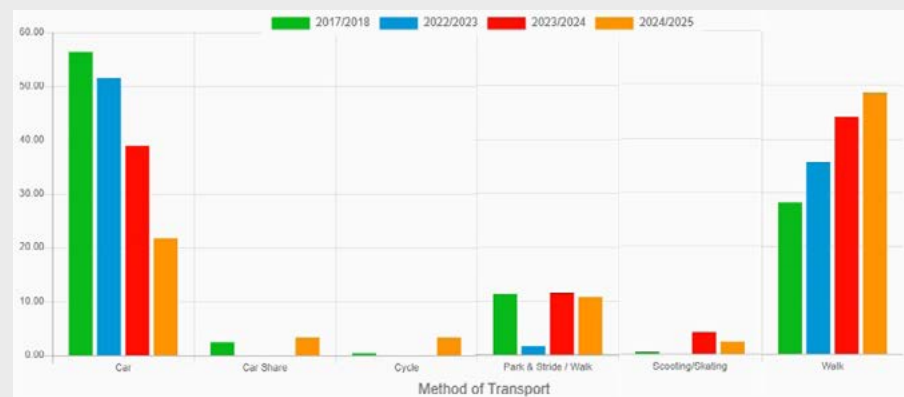
- Installation of scooter storage
- Scooter promo days
- Park and stride promotion
- Regular messaging to parents
- Assemblies and lessons

They promoted Park & Stride and issued every parent with a travel map which had information and advice on travelling to school along with a series of campaigns to promote active travel throughout the year. Regular messaging to parents and promotion on social media gave the message to parents and pupils that walking, cycling and wheeling were the preferred methods of travel to school and assemblies delivered by the School Travel Advisor supported and celebrated their efforts.

The school also signed up for the Living Streets WOW campaign which rewards pupils who choose active travel every month with a badge, and they also have class competitions to see which class has the best active travel rates. The school are now aiming to launch a Walking Bus in this academic year to further support parents who live a bit too far away to walk all the way.

The Results

In three years car use has fallen from 68% to 34% whilst 6% of pupils either cycle or scoot to school and over 48% now walk to school on a regular basis.



"At Woodcroft, we have made incredible strides in promoting active travel that not only prioritises safety and enjoyment but also champions a healthy lifestyle for our students as they navigate their time at school and eventually transition into adulthood.

We utilise various platforms and letters to parents to disseminate information about our travel initiatives. For instance, we launched our WOW initiative with a letter aimed at helping parents understand the concept of 'Park and Stride', emphasising the benefits for both children's health and the safety of our local community by reducing car traffic. Social media plays a pivotal role in our outreach, where we celebrate events like our scooting days and Walk to School with a Character Day, creating excitement around active travel.

Our school is dedicated to enhancing children's cycling and scooting skills! A trained member of staff runs an after-school Bikeability club. On scooter days children have had time to develop their skills during PE sessions.

Our hard-working travel ambassadors are a vital part of our active travel plan. They particularly enjoy advocating for our WOW campaign. This not only motivates them but also fosters a sense of community engagement, and they regularly meet with the school council to discuss and promote our school travel plan.

We have also featured on top of the leaderboard several times for Staffordshire and the West Midlands."

Miss C Wright, Principal Woodcroft Academy,

Bikeability

Staffordshire County Council offers FREE Bikeability Training to every school in Staffordshire. If your school are already taking part in Bikeability that is fantastic, but if not, we would love to bring you on board.

To see what training is on offer and to book in Bikeability training for your school please visit our Staffordshire County Council Bikeability Webpage by scanning this QR code.



Scan this QR to watch a short video about Bikeability is Staffordshire

What is Bikeability training?

Funded by Active Travel England through Staffordshire County Council to encourage more children to cycle more regularly, improving skills, health and wellbeing. From the first pedal to independent journey planning and riding the following modules are available.



Bikeability Level 1

Is an exciting gateway to starting your cycling adventure which takes place off-road, normally on the school playground. This means that children can learn in a traffic-free environment and prepares pupils for Level 2.

Most children take part in Level 1 at school during Year 3 or 4. This is when they are between 7 and 9 years old.



Bikeability Level 2

Teaches children how to grow more confident with each turn of the pedal. Our expert instructors will lead riders onto quiet roads, to experience “real” cycling, and with our instructors on hand, your child will feel confident and safe in no time at all.

Most children take part in Level 2 during Year 5 or 6. This is when they are between 9 and 11 years old.



Balance Bike Training

Is aimed at Reception to Year 2 pupils (aged 4-7) to build confidence and prepare them for Level 1 developing handling and awareness skills. Places for this training is limited and can only be offered to selected schools this year.



Learn to Ride Training

Is for children can balance but can't pedal. It can be delivered alongside any of the Level 1 or Level 2 courses for those not able to complete those levels.

Suitable for pupils Year 4 and above, before taking part in Level 1 or Level 2 training.



Modeshift STARS Travel Plan

A School Travel Plan (STP) is a document which sets out how a school will promote safer, active and sustainable travel, with the main emphasis on reducing the number of journeys made by private vehicles.

An effective School Travel Plan should contain an action plan of initiatives to reduce the number of vehicles on the journey to school, encourage more active and sustainable travel choices, and improve safety on the journey to school.

School Travel Planning is supported by the Department for Transport through the Modeshift STARS accredited scheme. Schools benefit from a range of additional funded activities to help them achieve award levels from Green to Platinum which non-participating schools would be unable to access.

We currently work with around 60 schools in Staffordshire with a Modeshift STARS school travel plan.



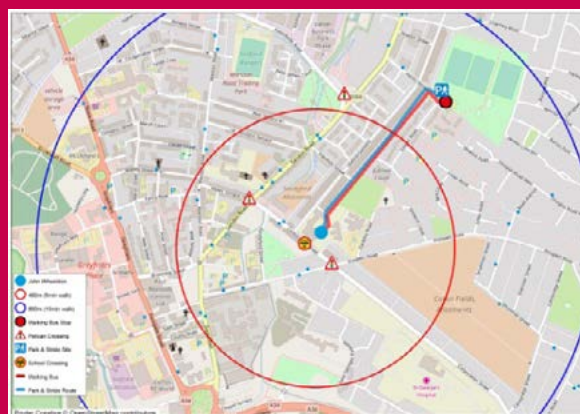
Sustrans

Sustrans are a national charity behind such campaigns as The Big Walk and Wheel featured earlier in this guide. They also offer several resources to schools to encourage active travel. If you would like to know more about Sustrans and the work that they do follow this weblink to get more information and see what resources are on offer.



Pindor Maps

Would you like a bespoke map for your school to help promote Active Travel? If so then get in touch with us and we can produce a digital map for you free of charge. You can include details such as Park & Stride locations, Walking Bus Routes and safer walking routes to school.



Road Safety and Think.Gov

At Staffordshire County Council we have a dedicated Road Safety Team who work with a priority list of schools to deliver campaigns such as Stepping Out. Whilst they cannot offer this level of training to all schools they will offer any school in Staffordshire resources for Road Safety Sessions delivered by school staff. To check out all of the resources available to KS1, KS2 and KS3 pupils check out their page by scanning this QR code or search online for Staffordshire Road Safety Education.



There is also a suite of Road Safety Education Resources on the THINK.GOV website. These cover all age ranges from Nursery up to School Leavers. Just type **think.gov.uk** into your web browser to discover what resources are available for your school.



Get in touch with the team



The best way to contact the team
is by email in the first instance:

into@staffordshire.gov.uk

Active School Travel Team

Then get in touch with us or check out our webpages

Staffordshire County Council:

www.facebook.com/yourstaffordshire



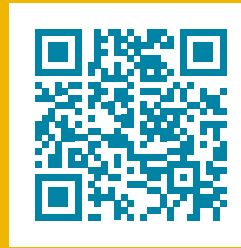
School Crossing Patrols:

www.facebook.com/schoolcrossingpatrols



Air Aware:

www.facebook.com/AirAwareStaffs



Staffordshire
County Council



www.staffordshire.gov.uk/activeschooltravel

