

# Stepping Up to High School

## A Safety Leaflet for Parents



**This leaflet sets out to ask parents to help their child decide on the most appropriate way to travel to and from their high school. It also suggests ways you can help them stay safe whether walking, cycling, using public transport or travelling by car.**



# The next step

on your child's journey  
to high school

Moving from primary to secondary school can be a major step for your child. The journey they undertake may be longer and more difficult. As a parent you want to know that you have helped make your child's journey to high school as safe as possible while striving to give them the independence and confidence they need in order to learn essential life skills. While some car journeys may be necessary it is crucial that you consider other options first.

Please think carefully about how your child will get to and from high school and why that choice has been made. Consider the following to help you decide:

- Most children of high school age do not expect to be taken to school by an adult.
- Walking and cycling are great ways for your child to benefit from physical exercise.
- Higher levels of walking and cycling go hand in hand with a reduction in road user casualties.
- Walking and cycling are two of the key ways children can be involved in reducing the amount of carbon we produce.
- Children who are driven to school gain very little road safety awareness.
- Using buses is a better option than travelling by car.
- Children enjoy travelling with their peers and mixing socially.



## It may help to ask your child if they know:

- the route they will take to school and why;
- where to cross roads safely and how to use crossings correctly;
- where school crossing patrols are situated;
- how to check their bike is safe to use;
- how to read a bus timetable;
- how to behave on public transport;
- what to do in an emergency or if late leaving school;
- how to use their mobile phone in a responsible manner.

The web links provided on the back of the leaflet will help with these questions. They will also offer general road safety advice.

In a recent study of schools in the east of England, it was found that children who were driven to school had the lowest levels of physical fitness, being less fit than walkers, cyclists and even children who took the bus.



# How can I help

with my child's journey  
to school?

There are lots of things you can do to help make your child's journey to high school safer. Below are some ideas to assist.

- Use the mapping system on Google and ask your child to locate their home and high school. You will be able to overlay names of roads on the satellite image and discuss routes, danger spots, safe crossing points, use of cycle lanes etc.
- Discuss with them the best way to travel to and from school (this can be done with or without access to the internet).
- Plan a route with your child.
- Walk, cycle or take the bus together and be willing to change your route even it means choosing a longer one.
- Do not let your child take a short cut unless it is the safest route to take.
- Do the route with them on a weekday, if possible, and in school hours when traffic will be similar and timetables for buses will be the same as on a school day.
- Let your child lead and you supervise.
- Have as many practise runs as your child needs – do not rush them.
- Let them bring a friend who is going to the same school and will follow an identical route. They are more likely to feel more confident and safer with a travel mate.
- Always help them to be organised and on time as accidents are more likely to occur when rushing.
- If you know an older, responsible, pupil who lives nearby then they may be willing to accompany your child on their planned route.

Tales of the Road is a highway code for young road users. A copy can be obtained by calling DFT free literature on: 0300 123 1102

## Parental Tips for Road Safety

- Always be a consistently good role model (do not say one thing and do another!).
- Try to ensure different family members do not give mixed messages.
- Use any opportunities to teach road safety when walking, cycling or driving with your child.
- Let your child travel independently when they have proved they can use the road safely and not just because they have reached a certain age.
- Check the correct road safety procedures by using the Highway Code.





# Important questions

## you might want to ask your child's high school

- Does the school actively encourage children to walk and cycle?
- Do the children do any road safety work at the school?
- Is cycle training offered to those children who want to cycle to school?
- Does the school offer bike checks for those who want to cycle to school?
- Is there adequate cycle storage at the school?
- Can I, as a parent, help or be involved in any way?

### Travel Pack Information

Each pack contains extra information on different ways of travelling to school.

#### Walking

#### Cycling

#### Public Transport

#### Car Travel

All these packs contain important road safety information and messages. They can help to keep your child safer and healthier and can be downloaded at:

**[www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport / roadsafety](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/transport/roadsafety)**

If you do not have internet access and would like a paper copy of the travel packs sent to you, please contact us on the number below.

### Other useful websites

**[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)**  
(for national and local cycling news)

**[www.bikeforall.net](http://www.bikeforall.net)**  
(lots of useful cycling tips including cycling to school or work)

**[www.dft.gov.uk/think](http://www.dft.gov.uk/think)**  
(for road safety advice and facts)

**[www.rospa.co.uk](http://www.rospa.co.uk)**  
(click on road safety then advice and information)

**[www.thinkseatbelts.com](http://www.thinkseatbelts.com)**  
(links to national campaigns and TV adverts)

**[www.stoppingdistances.org.uk](http://www.stoppingdistances.org.uk)**  
(try the simulator activity)

For more information or if you would like this document in another language or format, e.g. large text, please contact us on: (01785) 854035

Email: [roadsafety@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@staffordshire.gov.uk)



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