

## A successful School Travel Plan (West Midlands, UK)

Car use for home-school trips more than halved

*How mobility management at schools can result in a significant reduction of car use for home-school trips. The success story from West Midlands (UK).*

**Type of school:** Rural Primary School

**Region:** West Midlands

**Country:** UK

**Implementation body:** Head-teacher in collaboration with teachers, parents and volunteers

**Level of implementation:** site specific

**Topic:** Home-school mobility management

**Target group(s):** school children and their parents

**Stakeholders involved:**

- Headteacher
- Teachers
- Pupils
- Parents
- School travel adviser<sup>12</sup>



### INTRODUCTION

This example is related to a primary school located in a rural area in the West Midlands, UK. At the time of the initiative the school had between 120 and 150 pupils (aged between 3 and 11 years) the majority of which were driven to school by their parents, resulting in traffic and parking problems in the school area.

### OBJECTIVES

- Encourage the use of more sustainable modes of travel for home-school trips.
- Obtain an Eco-School status.<sup>13</sup>

### MEASURES IMPLEMENTED

- "Walk to School Week" prior to the development of the School Travel Plan (STP) with the aim of encouraging pupils and parents to participate in walking initiatives and then get involved in the development of the STP.
- Development of STP, which involved:
  - An analysis of the origin of the pupils with the help of postcodes
  - Survey targeted to parents in order to identify mobility issues
  - Survey targeted to pupils collecting information on current and preferred modes of travelling to school

<sup>12</sup> The figure of the School Travel Adviser was created during the "Travelling to School Initiative" and its role was to develop, promote and coordinate the delivery of School Travel Plans, and provide support to schools to assist the implementation of actions and initiatives resulting from them.

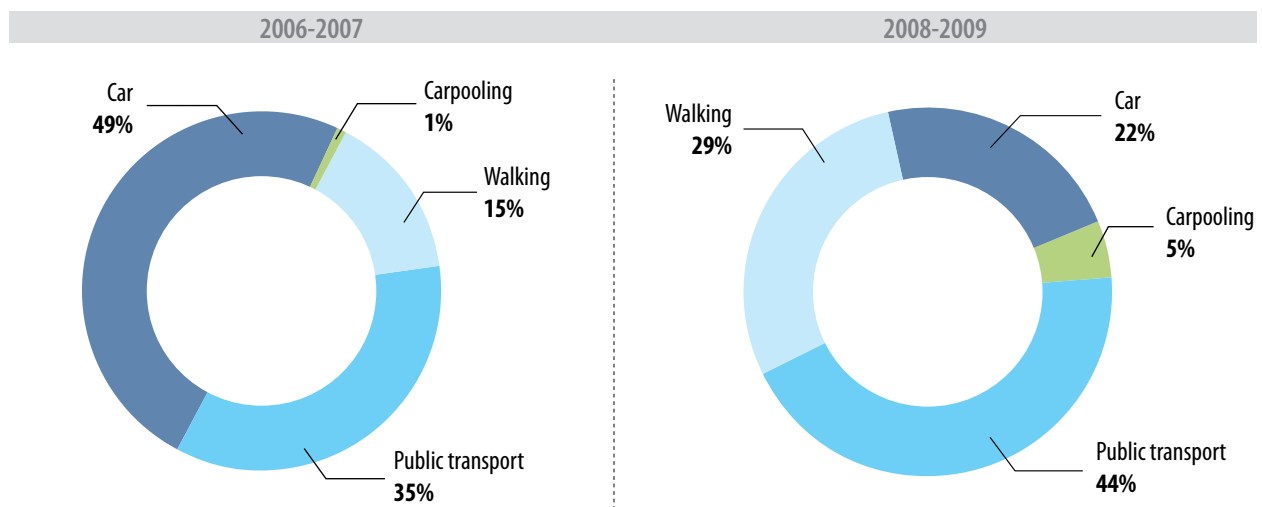
<sup>13</sup> <https://www.eco-schools.org.uk>.

- Review of best practices regarding Walking Buses
- Continuous communication with the parents
- Implementation of two Walking Buses.
- Following the development of the STP the school implemented the following initiatives:
  - Walk on Wednesday scheme that led to the development of two Walking Buses
  - Park and Stride scheme: pupils living outside the village could be dropped off at the village hall and walk to the school for part of the Walking Bus route
  - Pedestrian and cycling training for year 3 and 4 pupils and distribution of badges and cards encouraging children to walk and cycle to school
  - Organization of wider community meetings providing information on the initiatives
  - Communication: articles in the weekly school newsletter to parents with information and updates on initiatives.

### RESULTS

Following the implementation of the STP the school managed to achieve an important modal shift, that is a considerable reduction in car use from 49 per cent in the school year 2006-2007 to 22 per cent in 2008-2009.

**CHART 3. CHANGE IN MODAL SPLIT**



The most significant contribution to this modal shift was through the Walking Bus initiative that was initially introduced once per week and was gradually extended to every day with approximately a third of the children participating.

### SUCCESS FACTORS

- Involvement and continuous communication with the parents.
- Support received from the School Travel Adviser including ideas and resources.

### BARRIERS AND OBSTACLES

- Parents’ reluctance to stop driving their children to school and allow them to carry out the trip on foot or bike.
- Convenience issue related to both parents’ and pupils’ lifestyles, for example working hours and after-school activities.