

MEARNS PRIMARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN VOLUME 2 - APRIL 2011



INTRODUCTION

The way we travel has a huge impact on our economy, health, environment, and the resources available for future generations. In 2007 road transport in Scotland accounted for approximately 25% of Scotland's carbon dioxide emissions. The transport sector also generates other environmental impacts like airborne and waterborne pollutants. For these reasons it is easy to understand why encouraging more efficient, convenient and sustainable travel is important.

It is estimated that one-fifth of all vehicles on our roads at 08.50am are involved in school travel and of course, the challenge is to put sustainable transport measures into practice - for example; by providing the information, support and infrastructure to help those travelling to and from school to choose to walk, cycle, take public transport, or trip share more often than they currently do.

MEARNS PRIMARY

Mearns Primary School is a non-denominational primary school run by East Renfrewshire Council. The school teaches Primary 1-7 pupils from age 5-11. Opened in 2001, Mearns Primary is one of the biggest Primary Schools in Scotland with a school roll of 816 pupils. It is associated with Eastwood and Mearns Castle High Schools.

Mearns has a strong Eco Schools committee which is very popular amongst pupils and the school is working towards its third Eco School's green flag and was awarded with the 'Go Greener Eco Education Award' in 2009. The school has an 'Active Schools' team made up of Barry Cook and Ross Sweeney who's role it is to encourage and support opportunities for pupils to take part in regular physical activity.

Mearns has also appointed six enthusiastic Junior Road Safety Officers who have assisted in the revision of this plan and are helping the school run a 'Cut Congestion - Walk to School' week which will run termly beginning in May 2011. These initiatives are supported by an active Parent Council who meets regularly.

ACCESS TO SCHOOL

Mearns Primary School can be accessed on foot, by bicycle, public transport and by car, or by a combination of these modes of transport.

Pedestrian provision within Newton Mearns and in the immediate vicinity of Mearns Primary School is generally good. Local streets have well lit and well maintained pedestrian footways.

Mearns Primary School is situated on the south-west corner of the built up area of Newton Mearns.

The local traffic distributor road, Ayr Road lies to the south of the school and carries a large volume of traffic throughout the day. School Crossing Patrollers currently operate on Netherplace Road at its junction with Castle Road, Barrhead Road at its junction with Castle Road and Ayr Road at its junction with St Vigeans Avenue.

WHAT IS A SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN?

A School Travel Plan (STP) is a document written by the school with input from interested parties, such as teachers, pupils, school travel co-ordinator, police, local councillor and parents. The document outlines the school's needs and problems regarding travel to school with the aim to address related issues.

School Travel Plans are not just about transport though, they are also about improving health, broadening educational opportunities, improving the environment and contributing to the local community. Improvements may therefore cover a range of aspects including physical changes to the area around the school, curriculum work, promotional events and awareness raising.

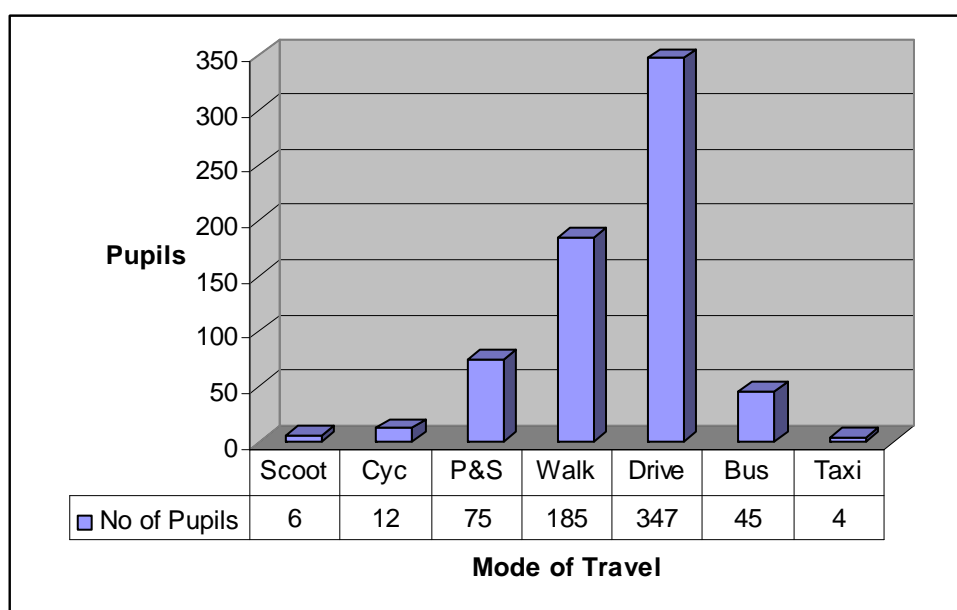


PARKING AROUND THE SCHOOL

Mearns Primary suffers from significant congestion around the school at peak periods. Cars regularly park on the footway and over road markings at Fairweather Place. There is also congestion on St Vigeans Avenue, Hunter Drive and in the school car park. There have also been reports of parents parking over the zebra crossing markings in the school car park and not stopping to let pupils cross.

Inconsiderate parking and congestion not only creates an unsafe environment for children walking to and from school, but it also teaches and reinforces poor road safety skills by necessitating children cross between parked cars.

CURRENT TRAVEL TRENDS



The above table shows results of the 2010 'Hands Up' survey data. The data is collected over one day in September providing a snap-shot of travel habits.

The data shows that 185 (27%) of pupils walked to school on the day of the survey, 12 (2%) cycled, 75 (11%) parked remotely from the school and walked the rest of the way (park & stride), 347 (51%) were driven to school and 45 (7%) were bussed.

Compared to the data collected in 2004 for the schools first travel plan, walking rates have increased by 4% and cycling rates have quadrupled. Whilst this is encouraging, the walking rates are still around half and driving rates around double the national average.

The above table will be used as base figures to set targets and objectives for the travel plan. The annual 'Hands Up Survey' will be used to monitor progress that has been made.

PARENTAL SURVEY RESULTS

A recent parental survey has flagged up some interesting results. This section will provide a short analysis of this.

- Sustainable Travel
62% of parents would prefer their children walk to school and 17% would prefer their children cycled to school. This latent demand to walk and cycle is shared by the pupils as 66% of pupils would like to walk or cycle to school. The actual figure for combined levels of walking and cycling to school is 29%.
- Car Sharing
Parents were asked about car-sharing and encouragingly some parents drive other parents children to school. The survey has shown that a lot of cars are arriving at school with only one pupil on board and that most cars have spare capacity for an extra pupil. 30% of parents would consider using a car share scheme.

Encouraging parents to share the school run with other parents is a great way to help reduce car traffic outside the school gates.
- Problems on the School Run
70% of parents noted parking at the school is a problem, 49% mentioned parking near the school is an issue and 51% said congestion is a problem.

- Walking Bus
53% of parents were interested or possibly interested in their child participating in a walking bus / cycle train with 20 parents willing to volunteer with 55 parents willing to consider volunteering.

Action:- approach 20 willing volunteers to further discuss setting up a walking bus(es) for the school.

Aims of the Mearns Primary School Travel Plan

- To improve pedestrian safety in and around the school.
- To encourage more local pupils to walk and where feasible cycle to school.
- To ensure parents who drive to school park responsibly and do not park on footways.
- To raise awareness amongst pupils, parents and staff of the wider health and environmental problems associated with increased car use and the health benefits of walking, and cycling to school and ensure those pupils, parents and staff are supported and encouraged to make positive, healthy travel choices.
- To improve the local environment for everyone by reducing pollution, congestion and addressing safety issues around the school and the school's car parks.

Proposals to Improve Road Safety

- 'Park and Stride' - Parents who drive to school are encouraged to drop pupils off remote from the school to reduce congestion levels around the school gates (improving road safety for other pedestrians) and to improve the fitness of the children.
- The school is currently attempting to set up a walking bus. A walking bus can increase levels of walking to school and, in turn, reduce traffic congestion around the school gates. Walking Bus stops are potential 'Park and Stride' sites.
- Pupils to design banners to hang from the school railings to remind parents to park responsibly.
- Ensure road markings are in good order.

Summary of Objectives and Proposals

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>How</u>	<u>By When</u>	<u>Who</u>
Improve and sustain number of pupils passing cycling proficiency test at over 80%.	* Teachers and parent helpers will assist pupils with training prior to cycling proficiency test. Improve trainer to pupil ratio.	Ongoing	Teacher and Parent helpers
	Cost:- N/A		
To encourage an improvement in the number of pupils walking to school to over 30% and 'Park and Stride' levels to 15% by September 2012.	* Consider setting up a 'walking bus' to serve school.	Ongoing	Siobhan McColgan, Parent Volunteers
	* Identify 'Park & Stride' drop-off and collection zones.	Ongoing	Siobhan McColgan
	* Whole school take part in 'Walk to School' week events.	Twice annually (May and October).	Pupils
	* Supply pedometers for walking club and walking projects.	Achieved	Active Schools Co-ordinator (ASC), Teachers
	* P5 will take part in 'Travelling Green'	Ongoing	P5 pupils and teachers.
	Cost:- To be met by East Renfrewshire Council		

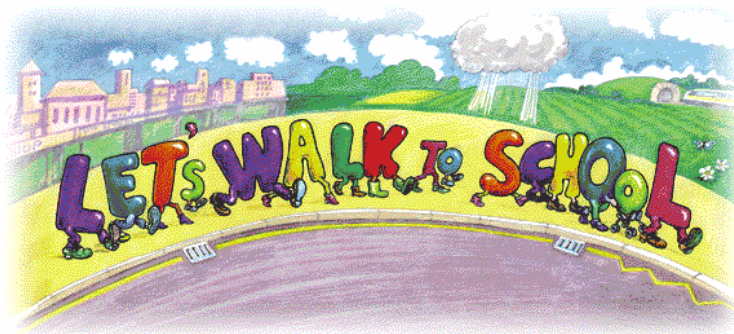
<u>Objectives</u>	<u>How</u>	<u>By When</u>	<u>Who</u>
Park and Stride	* Identify locations where pupils can be dropped off to walk remainder of way to school eg. The Avenue or Albertslund Hall.	Ongoing	Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSO's), Siobhan McColgan.
	Cost:- To be met by East Renfrewshire Council		
To reduce level of traffic congestion around school at the beginning and end of the school day.	* Encourage use of 'Park & Stride' initiative and car sharing.	Ongoing	Whole School.
	* Discourage parking on footways surrounding school.	Ongoing	East Renfrewshire Council, Community Police
	* Pupils to design posters and banners to hang on gates to discourage poor parking practice and promote sustainable travel.	Ongoing	JRSO's, Pupils
	* Undertake a 'cut congestion' week to include:- park and stride, walking bus, car pooling and monitoring of car park.	May 2011	JRSO's, Siobhan McColgan
	* Promote car sharing.	Ongoing	Whole School.
	Cost:- To be met by East Renfrewshire Council		

<i>Objectives</i>	<i>How</i>	<i>By When</i>	<i>Who</i>
Increase cycling levels to school. Target 4% by September 2012.	* Install minipod cycle stand and visitor parking.	Summer 2011	Greg Brown - STC
	* Provide reflective tabards for regular cyclists.	Ongoing	Greg Brown - STC
	* Continue with P5 'Cycle Skills' training.	Ongoing	P5 teachers & pupils
	* School to register for Cycling Scotland "Cycle Friendly School" award.	Completed	Siobhan McColgan
	* Register for 'Bike Week' and undertake a cycle to school event.	20 th -24 th June	Siobhan McColgan
	Cost:- To be met by East Renfrewshire Council		
Primary to Secondary Transition:- Ensure effective continuity for P7 pupils and S1.	* Campus Police Officer at Eastwood High to discuss travel and personal safety issues involved in moving to High School.	Ongoing	Campus Police Officer at Eastwood High.
Link Travel Plan activities with Eco-school project.	* Liaison between Eco-school and Travel Plan staff to ensure continuity.	Ongoing	Siobhan McColgan, Eco-Schools co-ordinator.

<u>Objectives</u>	<u>How</u>	<u>By When</u>	<u>Who</u>
To encourage pupil, parent and teacher awareness of road safety and safe sustainable travel to and from school.	* Continue to promote school policy and programme of study for P1 to 7 on road safety and link with Health Promoting School, Eco-Schools and Curriculum for Excellence.	Ongoing	Whole School, Greg Brown - Road Safety Training Officer.
	* Continue the 'Junior Road Safety Officer' scheme.	Ongoing	Teachers, Pupils, Road Safety Training Officer
	Cost:- To be met by East Renfrewshire Council		

Evaluation and Monitoring

- Subsequent years 'Hands Up' survey data will be used to record trends in travel behaviour and assess progress that has been made.
- Following each annual survey, a meeting will take place between all interested parties and a report compiled to assess the Travel Plan and revise it as necessary.



Appendix

Links to national programmes and initiatives that are supportive (e.g. in terms of provision of advice, information and other resources) of the goals of many of the recommendations put forward in this document:

- Bike Week: www.bikeweek.org.uk
- Paths to Health: www.pathsforall.org.uk/pathstohealth/
- Road Safety Scotland: www.road-safety.org.uk
- Choose Another Way: www.chooseanotherway.com

Links to websites that provide a range of useful information:

- Public Transport Info: www.travelinescotland.com
www.transportdirect.info
- Sustainable Transport www.sustrans.org.uk
- Walk It Glasgow www.walkit.com/glasgow

