

Sustrans School Travel Case Study:

Ashcombe Primary School, Weston Super Mare, Somerset

website: www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk tel: 0117 915 0100 email: schools@sustrans.org.uk

Title of project: 'Healthy hearts, healthy minds' and other travel initiatives
School location and type: Primary (approx 400 pupils aged four to eleven), residential area
Local Authority: North Somerset Council
Key Features: Walking, Cycling, School Travel Plan, Curriculum, Pupil Involvement.

Summary: Ashcombe's projects aim to encourage children and families to walk, cycle or use scooters more as a means of reducing car use and congestion in surrounding residential roads.



The travel plan: Ashcombe's research has shown a progressive increase in walking and non-car mode on the school trip. In addition to prioritising and cycling and cycle storage (particularly as the school is in a level locality), their plan aims to:

- increase walking to 65% (the previous hands-up survey showed levels of 45%)
- create a 'safe school zone' by introducing a second pedestrian path at the main entrance
- decrease car use and car parking around the school
- encourage drivers to use the 'park and walk' scheme by Maple Close and Sycamore Close

Initiatives: Lively and pro-active schemes help to support walking and cycling whilst maintaining a refreshed approach. During May 2008's walk to school week, Ashcombe participated in the annual North Somerset 'Big WOW' event with over 87% of children walking to school on Wednesday 21 May. October's International walk to school month saw over 80% of children walking on at least one day in each week. Other activities include:

- WOLF – 'Walk on last Friday' of each week
- FAB – 'Feet are best' a surprise challenge on a randomly chosen day
- WOW – 'Wheels on Wednesdays' encourages bikes and scooters on the school journey.
- Road safety – visits by Police or local Police Community Support Officers
- Kerb Craft pedestrian training – initially 120 'Bright Star Passport' wallets and record cards delivered specifically for the Kerb Craft KS2 and KS3 pupils
- Cycle proficiency – during the spring term children in Year 6 are invited to attend cycle proficiency training.
- 'Healthy hearts and healthy minds' banner headline to promote walk to school
- 'Ashcombe School – the Travel Plans' information leaflet
- 'School Travel' notice board display
- Road safety and role plays for younger years to promote family walking to school
- Road safety training – Kerb Craft pedestrian training with the local authority.

School research: Ashcombe School uses various in-house methods to confirm and record the way children travel to school:

- during walk to school events a weekly, monthly or event specific passport card is used to record journeys and is collected from the children.
- since February 2008, the local authority's Bright Star Travel Passport scheme has been used to promote events, with class reps collecting and returning passport record cards.



Outcomes and sustained changes: Ashcombe School has many pro-active, school champion-led schemes to support walking and cycling to school, with regular newsletters and leaflets sent out to parents and carers. The neighbouring Children's Centre is now developing a travel plan to help raise awareness of journey planning amongst new and younger families.

Rewards are given for individual success and class participation, so that children of all ages and abilities can take ownership of the school travel plan. Typically a class will have extra library time, be first in the lunch dining room or have an extra fresh fruit/ dried fruit snack. Whole school centred projects involve personal safety and well-being, health issues as well as awareness of road safety training which together help to maintain the focus on walking to school.

Years 5 and 6 now have the opportunity to train for a basic cycling proficiency test and are encouraged to cycle in provided they have a roadworthy bike and appropriate safety equipment.

Costs and Funding:

Following the successful submission of the school travel plan in March 2005, the school in liaison with the local authority identified proposals to install cycle stands adjacent to the school entrance. The scheme included surfacing an area to accommodate twelve junior stands and to provide an additional path from the entrance running parallel to the school drive.

The local authority allocated £5,000 from the LTP safe routes to school budget towards entrance improvements in 2005-06 and also contributed £2,000 towards the installation of twelve cycle stands at the front of the school buildings. Ashcombe School used part of the DfT travel grant to support the cycle stand project.

The Bright Star Travel Passport scheme resources were provided and funded by the local authority. 400 passports cost £72.00 and hi-visibility reflectors cost approximately £30.00.

Case study contact details:

Mr Peter Turner (head teacher) and Kathie Light (learning mentor and associate governor)
Ashcombe Primary School
Earlham Grove
Weston super Mare
Somerset BS23 3JP

website: www.ashcombepimary.co.uk **tel:** 01934 620141 **email:**

www.sustrans.org.uk

Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, working on practical projects so people choose to travel in ways that benefit their health and the environment.

Registered charity No.326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)