

Stride Guide

How to... get the striding started!



The average primary school journey is an easily-walked 1.5 miles. By walking this short distance every day, young people can help prevent obesity and reduce the risk of serious illness in later life. With 1 in 5 cars on the road during the morning peak on the school-run, encouraging walking can greatly improve traffic congestion around the school gate. The walk to school is also a brilliant opportunity for children to develop crucial road safety skills, helping them learn to manage risk and grow into healthy, resilient adults.

Q. So, how do you encourage children to walk to school?

A. organise a walk-to-school event!

As a leading UK charity, Sustrans has drawn on 16 years of experience of working with schools to create this free **guide to running a walking-related event**, full of tips and advice on how to get pupils, staff and parents striding to school.

The recipe for success

Try the following ingredients to whip up a walking frenzy:

- **A walkers' breakfast** – Breakfast offering bacon butties, veggie sausages, fresh fruit and juice to the pupils and parents who walk generates bucketloads of enthusiasm! Try and persuade local supermarkets to contribute. Rewarding walkers with hot chocolate in winter is a good incentive too.
- **Walking passport** – Each pupil gets their 'passport' stamped when they walk to school. Pupils with the most stamps at the end of the week win prizes!
- **Bling your boots** – Challenge pupils to decorate their shoes for a day, or to transform an old shoe into something new, using recycled materials in an Art lesson.
- **Walking bus** – Launch a walking bus where meeting points are arranged at various points on the walk to school and parents meet and join forces. Pupils who live further afield could 'Park and Stride': this is where parents park a distance away from the school and walk the rest of the way.
- **Fancy dress** – Encouraging pupils to walk in fancy dress adds creativity and excitement to the school journey. Don't forget to obtain parental permission so you can take photos of the pupils walking in all their finery!
- **Walking verse** – Ask pupils to use the sights, smells, sounds and emotions experienced during their school journey to write poetry in a Literacy lesson or as homework.

TOP TIP:
BE SURE TO ASK PUPILS FOR IDEAS OF ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR WALKING WEEK – THEIR IDEAS ARE BOUND TO BE MORE CREATIVE AND FUN!

Sustrans is the charity that's enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day.

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Going the extra mile

To make your walk-to-school week go with an even bigger bang, try the following ideas:

- **Invite special guests and VIPs** – invite local dignitaries, celebrities, MPs or local walking “heroes” along to inspire the pupils
- **Hold an awards ceremony** – reward the efforts and enthusiasm of walking pupils by delivering a short speech and presenting them with certificates
- **Family walks** – involve parents and carers by organising a walk taking in the local scenery and green spaces after school or on a weekend
- **Tot up the mileage** – hold a virtual walking race within school. The first class to walk sufficient miles to reach, for example, Paris earns a reward.



You'll never walk alone...

...we're here to help! Sustrans' School Travel team offers information, best practice advice, and resources including information sheets on walking to school and funding opportunities.

Visit www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel to find out more.

Living Streets organises an annual Walk to School Week and Walk to School Month and have resources on their website. Visit www.walktoschool.org.uk for all the details.

MAKE YOUR WALKING WEEK WONDERFUL!

THINK ABOUT TIMING

– Will it conflict with any other events? Are key people available? Is the weather likely to be ok?

FIND FUNDING

– Approach local businesses to see if they can offer funding or prizes. For more ideas, check out our **Finding Funding** information sheet.

PUBLICISE THE EVENT

– Shout about your event from the rooftops! Hold a special assembly to get the pupils excited. Include details about the event in your school newsletter and on information boards. Ask children to design posters and banners so staff, parents and the local community know all about your walking event and how they can get involved.

CONTACT THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER

– Give your local media details about the event and invite them to attend. Having a photo and a story in the newspaper raises awareness and makes the event even more memorable.

MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE

– Maintain enthusiasm and excitement for walking by making an element of your walking week into a regular weekly or monthly event.



Stepping in the right direction

Many people organise walking events during National Walk to School Week but you can do it whenever suits you best. Organise as many or as few activities during the week, but be sure to plan carefully and recruit staff, pupils and parents to help! A sample timetable might look something like this:

5 weeks to go

- **confirm dates** and have the event approved by school management
- **decide on the budget**
- **recruit volunteers** to help organise and run the event.

4 weeks to go

- **ask your local authority** if they can help with information and resources
- **invite members** of the local community to attend
- **ask local businesses** for prizes and donations.

3 weeks to go

- **consider a contingency plan** for bad weather
- if providing food, **organise catering**
- pupils begin designing posters and banners.

2 weeks to go

- **publicise the event** in school newsletters, put posters up and send letters home with permission slips for photographs
- **hold a planning meeting** with volunteers to delegate specific tasks, taking photos for example
- confirm how many pupils will be involved.

1 week to go

- **notify the local press** about your event
- **hold a special assembly** to get the pupils excited
- complete a risk assessment if necessary
- make sure all prizes have been acquired
- **count how many pupils** walk before the event so you can judge how successful it has been.

★ During the event

- **take lots of photos**
- **count numbers** of walkers each day
- try and integrate walking to school into lessons
- **stay calm**, positive and focused on the goal – to increase the number of pupils who walk to school.

★ After the event

- **tell everyone** how the event went and shout about your success!
- **review the event** and lessons learnt for future events
- **thank all pupils**, parents and volunteers involved
- **maintain walking levels** by holding a weekly or monthly walking event.






One small step. One giant leap.

Visit the School Travel website www.sustrans.org.uk/schooltravel for:

- latest news and information on sustainable school journeys
- specific information on each of the UK regions
- downloadable resources including other information sheets
- case studies, curriculum materials and newsletters

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