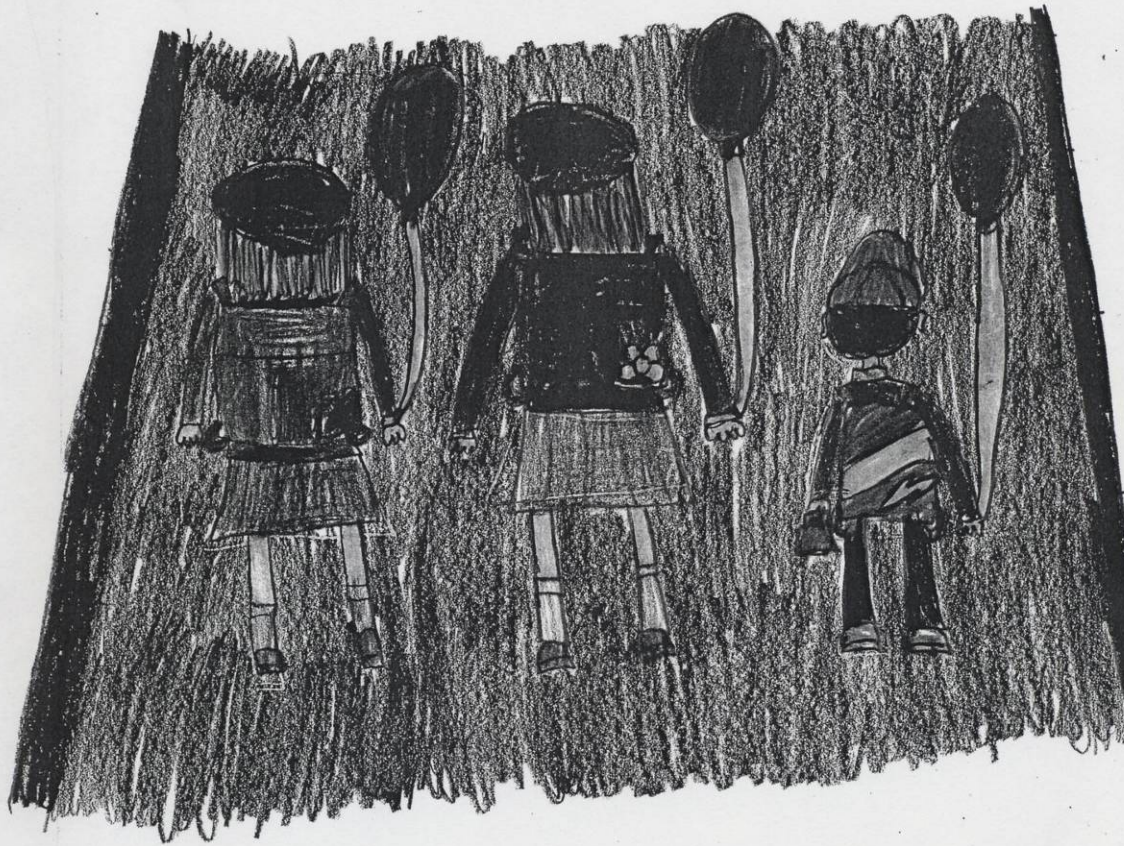


ST. Mary's P.S.



Cushendall  
Sustrans



# **St Marys Cushendall School Travel Plan**

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## Section 1: Introduction and photograph of the school.

St Marys Cushendall School Travel Plan  
Middlepark Road  
Cushendall  
Co Antrim

St Marys, Cushendall is a Catholic Maintained Primary School (CCMS) in the small coastal village of Cushendall. The school has 148 pupils and a nursery unit with 52 children. The age range of children is between 3 and 11.

The school is located in a residential area, set back from the main road through Cushendall. It is very close to the town centre, being only a 5 minute walk away.

The road which the school is on is quiet, apart from school times when a voluntary one way system is operated and encouraged by the school. There is limited parking outside the front of the school apart from a few lay bys which parents currently use. There is some parking in the grounds for staff. There are old bike shelters at the school but these would not have a locking facility.



The school is on the right hand side of the picture.

You can see the street is quiet at non school times.

There is limited parking for parents and they would generally park along the road or up on the kerb.

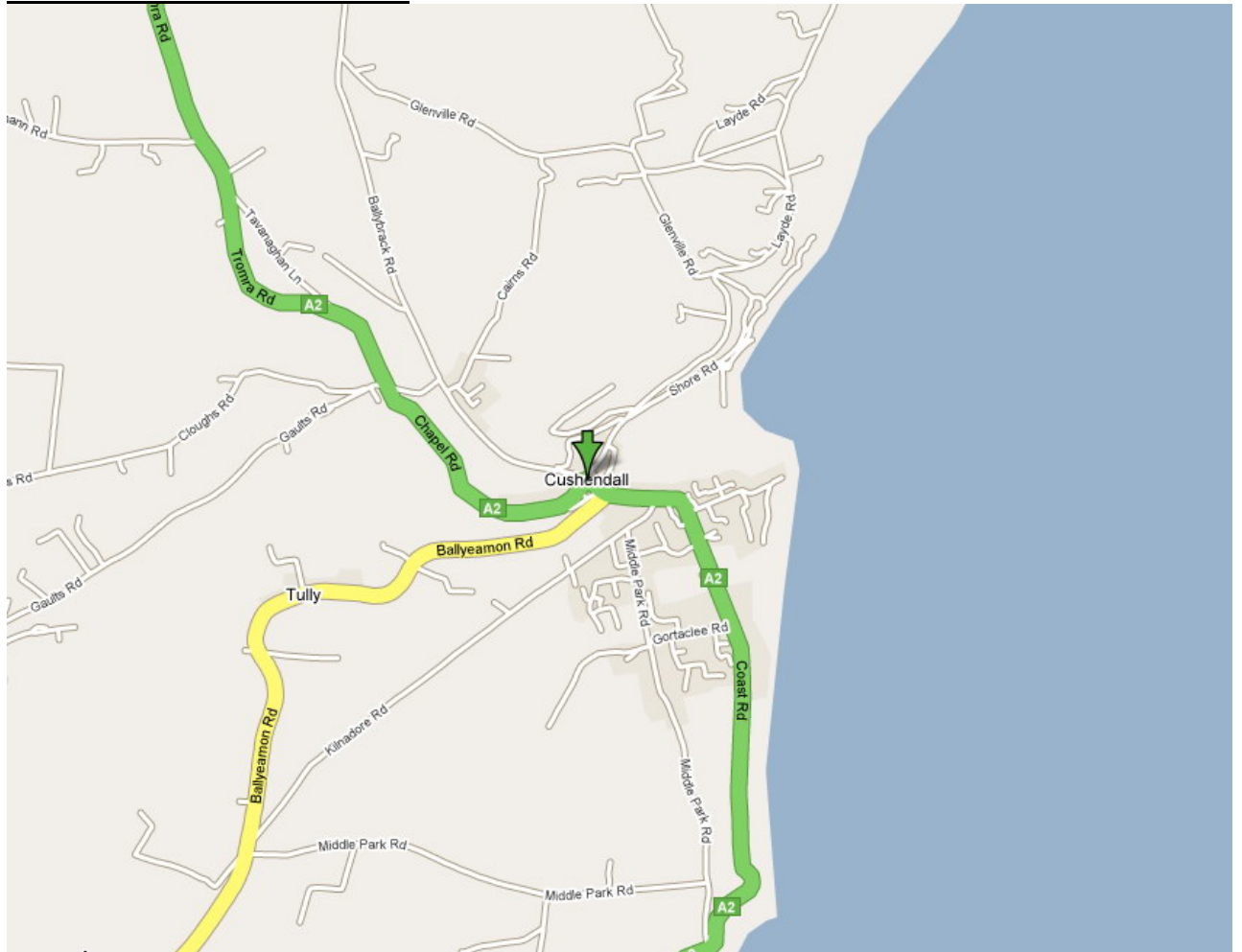
The school is very keen to promote sustainable travel in order to reduce congestion around the school, making it safer for pupils and parents. This will also offer a more healthy lifestyle choice for children who can walk or cycle to school.

St Mary's are involved with the Healthy Breaks 'Brighter Bites' initiative and everyday is a healthy break day - no crisps, chocolate, only milk and water available to drink. No fizzy drinks.

Healthy eating is further promoted in the school through the 'Catering for Healthier Lifestyles' scheme which operates everyday within the canteen. This has recently been extended to include a healthy lunch box day which has implement once a week.

The school is also involved in the 'Heart Start' initiative which delivers a structured programme to all pupils from P1 to P7 and includes training for all staff and senior pupils in CPR.

## Section 2: Location of the school.



Map showing Cushendall.

The school is located on Middlepark Road, parallel to Coast Road. Please see Postcode Map Data which is in the Appendix.

Most of the pupils come from the developments around the school – Dalriada, Ardmoyle, Bellisk, Kilmadore. Over 75% of children live within 2 miles of the school.

Rural Safe Routes to School so far;

We have been working with Sustrans since March 2007 when they came to the school as part of the selection process. Since then we have been promoting walking and cycling within the school. We have been organising walk to school days with some parents helping as volunteers. We have been involved in the Cycle or Walk around the world initiative since 1<sup>st</sup> October and the whole school has really been enjoying it. Alastair Humphreys is due to visit the school 11<sup>th</sup> February to congratulate the school on coming fifth in this challenge and to present a certificate of participation. Since taking part in the Walk or Cycle around the world initiative we have been actively encouraging and promoting walking to school and we are seeing an average of 78 children walking everyday to school (but not on days where there is very heavy rain, wind or ice). We are confident that these figures can be improved to 70% of all children walking by June 2008.

We have been informed that DRD Roads Service will be putting in Flashing Lights and on road Red Surfacing outside the school on the Middlepark Road. There is further discussion ongoing about road humps outside the school at two places to act as a crossing point and to slow traffic down. The school have agreed to put together a proposal of support for the raised flat top humps.

### **Section 3: The travel issues and challenges:**

1. The school is heavily congested at 9am and 3pm everyday. All available parking is taken up outside the school and there is considerable risk to children because cars make the street less visible especially around the crossing point. Children must also cross between cars and this is a risk for children.
2. There is one particular route into the village – at the end of the Middlepark Road where there is no footpath and where children now walk on the road down to the crossing patrol. It puts the children in danger as there is no pavement and the road is narrow – it is also in front of peoples driveways.
3. There is a crossing patrol person but they are located away from the school close to the police station.(At the bottom of the hill where there is no pavement –see above) This is used by approx 10 children each day. The crossing patrol is not in an ideal position for visibility and the future of crossing patrols generally is not secure.
4. There is no suitable crossing point outside the front of the school. There is no crossing patrol at this point and no raised platform to act as a crossing. This is a serious concern as there have been a few near misses where teachers who are crossing children over the road have been almost hit by local 'boy racers'.
5. There is a huge emphasis within the school for the healthy schools initiative, the school promotes physical activity and healthy eating – and is concerned with healthy lifestyles for its children.
6. The habit of driving to school is strong – because it is seen as more convenient and comfortable than walking, even though it may take less time in a lot of cases.



## Working group dates in 2008

February	- Friday 1 <sup>st</sup>
March	- Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup>
April	- Thursday 3 <sup>rd</sup>
May	- Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup>
June	- Friday 6 <sup>th</sup>

### Section 5: The Survey Results (see Appendix 1)

We issued surveys to all pupils, their parents and all staff at the school to begin to explore the reasons for people choosing to travel the way they do to school in the morning. The results of the surveys were centrally analysed and the following responses were issued back to the school. (for the full breakdown of figures, please see Appendix 1 containing Pupil, Staff and Parents Baseline reports as well as text on opinion based questions)

#### How children currently travel to school?

The results of the survey showed that 53.7% of children currently walk to school, with 45.6% of children coming by car, and 0.7% coming to school by bus. No one currently cycling.

#### How children would like to travel to school?

54.1% of children would like to walk, 9.6% of children would like to cycle. 8.9% would like to come by bus, and the rest, only 27.4% would like to travel by car.

The biggest reason for not wanting to walk or cycle amongst the children was bad weather. Other reasons for not wanting to walk or cycle included living too far away, not being allowed by parents, a perception of stranger danger and roads too busy.

#### Parental Opinion

Some of the key themes which emerged from parents were that children need more regular road safety messages around the risks and dangers there are with regard to fast moving traffic.

Parents felt that walking and cycling in groups should be encouraged and that more parents could get involved with the school to organise regular walking buses and cycle trains. It was felt that there was far too much traffic around the school and some felt only essential traffic should be allowed in the area in the morning or evening.

Parents generally recommended the following areas which may be suitable for a park and ride option;

- Red Bay Boats as a drop off point.
- Hurling Club Car Park.
- Village Car Park.
- Various other suggestions.

- **Staff Opinions**

For staff within the school, the issues are sometimes slightly different, reasons for not walking or cycling are;

- Too much to carry.
- Day time work business.
- Security of parking – teachers feel their cars are safer at school.
- Some don't want to walk or cycle.

The school staff are very health conscious and eat healthily and take regular exercise outside of school hours.

The same park and stride locations were suggested.

All of the above issues must be addressed in order to promote healthier lifestyles throughout the school environment.

**Please see the Appendix for a more detailed analysis of questionnaires.**

**Section 6 & 7: The School Travel Plan Aims Objectives and Targets and Action Plan (including list of events over the coming terms of 2008)**

Aim
To increase the proportion of school journeys undertaken on foot, by cycle or public transport
Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Start, support and continue a regular walk to school campaign.</li> <li>• Hold a walking bus once per term to keep momentum going.</li> <li>• Increase walking and cycling facilities within and outside the school.</li> <li>• Walk to school campaigns such as International Walk to School Month (October), Walk to School Week (May), or Walk on Wednesday (Alongside 'Healthy Wednesday' lunchbox).</li> <li>• Cycling awareness campaigns such as a cycle to school day and sponsored rides. (Included in this will be cycle training)</li> </ul>
Targets
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To increase the number of children walking, cycling or catching the bus to school to 70% by June 2008.</li> <li>2. To reduce car usage by a further 20% at the school by June 2008</li> <li>3. To take part in 3 cycle to school days between now and June 2008 to be facilitated by Sustrans.</li> </ol>

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
<p><b>Start, support and continue a regular walk to school campaign.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charts recording children who walk to school each day.</li> <li>Regular walking highlighted at each assembly.</li> <li>Teachers actively encouraging children to walk in the morning and evening.</li> </ul>	<p>Working group</p> <p>Teachers and classroom assistants</p> <p>Teachers and classroom assistants.</p>	<p>March April May June 2008</p> <p>October 2007 and on going throughout 2008 and beyond.</p>
<p><b>Increase walking and cycling facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustrans to follow up with DFP on progress of cycle shed. To report back at next school meeting.</li> <li>Agreed that cycle shed will be updated to include a ten cycle shelter.</li> <li>Work outside the school to include flashing lights and possible raised flat top ramps.</li> </ul>	<p>Working group, Sustrans and DFP technical division.</p>	<p>25<sup>th</sup> January 2008</p> <p>By end of March 2008.</p>
<p><b>Hold a walking bus event each term to keep momentum and enthusiasm going for regular scheme within the school.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers will be at certain points and the school will identify parental volunteers from monthly Parent Information Newsletters.</li> <li>Hold a working group meeting with parents, staff and pupils every month.</li> <li>Schedule dates into school diary</li> </ul> <p>Record numbers taking part each walking bus day on school run log.</p>	<p>All school co-ordinated working group</p> <p>by</p>	<p>To begin in first term 2008.</p>
<p><b>Take part in Walk to School Week (19<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> May)</b></p> <p><b>Walk to school month (October)</b></p> <p><b>Carbon Saving Day (February)</b></p>	<p>All school co-ordinated working group</p> <p>co- by</p>	<p>19-23<sup>rd</sup> May</p> <p>October 2008</p> <p>February 2008</p>
<p><b>Cycle training for all P6 P7</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mrs Smart to contact DOE to discuss the need for cycle training throughout P6 and P7.</li> <li>Before Easter organize training timetable to begin in Term 3 for P6 and P7 children to include some on road training.</li> <li>This will go before the 'Bike to School Days' in April/May and June.</li> </ul>	<p>Cycle proficiency teacher</p> <p>DOE</p> <p>Sustrans</p>	<p>Phonecall by 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 08</p> <p>Training during early April</p> <p>Bike to school days April, May, June 2008</p>



**Events List**

January – Regular walking is being recorded on charts within each class. Average walking per day since 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 is 78 children per day (52%).

February – Walking Bus once per term event – 6<sup>th</sup> February Carbon Saving Day

March – tbc

April – Early April Cycle Training  
Late April 'Cycle to School Day'

May – Bike Maintenance sessions  
Cycle to School Day / Walking Bus Event

June – Walking Bus Event  
Cycle to School Day

**Section 8: Ways forward; monitoring and review of the scheme**

How will we monitor and report on what has been done?

Monthly school run log to Sustrans is part of the process.

Also the questionnaire process which will be repeated in May or June.

Monthly meeting of the school travel working group will help to review what is happening within the school.

Targets will be reviewed once per month.

The travel plan will be reviewed at beginning of September each year as part of the schools planning days.

**Section 9: Signatures of Support**

..... Principal

..... Board of Governors

..... PTA

..... Sustrans

..... Pupil representation

..... Staff within school