

# North Central Sustrans Active School Travel Programme Autumn Term 2019 Newsletter

## I'd love to hear from you...

I'm Beverley Gaston, Sustrans' schools officer for North Central. Please get in touch if you have any great school stories or would like to find out more about our schools work.

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## Message from Sustrans...

The Active School Travel Programme is an exciting initiative for schools who wish to see more of their pupils choosing an **active and healthy** journey to school. The aim of the programme is to increase the number of pupils walking, cycling and scooting to school.

Sustrans is being funded by the **Public Health Agency** and the **Department for Infrastructure** to continue delivering the Active School Travel Programme across Northern Ireland until 2021.

Sustrans has been delivering this successful programme for the past three years. In 2018-19 within participating schools, the number of pupils travelling actively increased from 35% to 53%.

We are currently working with over 400 schools across Northern Ireland. Please visit our [website](#) where you can learn more about the programme and download newsletters from other areas.



Pupils from Moyle PS taking part in cycle training

## Cycle Training

The National Standard cycle training for Year 6 pupils has gotten off to a flying start this term, with three Level 1 schools taking part. Pupils from Springfield PS, St Clare's PS and Moyle PS all got out on their bikes to learn how to safely make short journeys on local roads. Being on the road gives them the opportunity to practise in a real situation what to do when they are sharing the road with cars, with two trained instructors giving step-by-step instructions. Congratulations to all the pupils: 45 took part, with 11 achieving Level 1 and 33 going on to get the Level 2 certificate.

We are looking forward to more schools taking part in the next two terms.



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. It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

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# Ditch the Dark



Pupils and staff from Parkgate Primary looking fantastic for their ditch the dark day

'Ditch the dark' days were again a very popular event over the Autumn, with thousands of pupils across the area walking to school wearing their brightest outfits. Promoting the road safety message of wearing bright and reflective clothes is important, especially in the darker winter days; and this is a fun way to get the message across. There are more schools planning ditch the dark days for January, so expect to see lots more bright pupils walking to school.



To ensure pupils understand why this is so important, schools held assemblies and lots of 'be safe, be seen' lessons. There were even a number of super bright crafts made by classes to take home and remind them to keep wearing something bright. Pictured left is one of the super bright Halloween monsters made by Primary 4 at Edenbrooke Primary. If you are interested, ideas can be sent for schools to run

these activities themselves or invite your schools officer in.

## Champion Training

Seven champions got together at Mercy Primary School in October for one of our champion training workshops. This is a great chance to have a chat with other teachers in the same role, sharing challenges and ideas to encourage active travel in school.

There are two more training events coming up in the Spring term in the North Central area, based at Mossley Primary, Newtownabbey and Olderfleet Primary, Larne. There are also a number of other workshops in other areas, and you are very welcome at any of them—choose one local to your school or maybe there might be one closer to where you live.

All the dates will be sent round at the start of January, so watch out for this and please come along.

## Dr Bike



Many schools also took part in Dr Bike sessions this term. Some were in the lead up to the National Standard cycle training, to ensure bikes were roadworthy for this. Others schools like to offer this as an annual service for pupils and parents. Good Shepherd Primary in west Belfast ran a Dr Bike on the last day of their Bike to School week in September, and an amazing 70 odd bikes and scooters turned up! So many that they couldn't all be checked in the one day, even with some of the P7 pupils getting stuck in pumping the tyres up. Next time the bike checks will have to be a two day event—a good sign of a successful event!

This is a great activity to run in Spring term, giving pupils the chance to make sure their bikes are safe to ride as the weather gets better and they are more likely to be out on them. If you would like to organise a Dr Bike in your school, get in touch with your schools officer. You can also get some pupils trained up as 'junior Dr Bikes' so they know how to do a basic safety check on their own or others' bikes and do simple jobs like pump up tyres.



## Safer School Streets

Pupils at Cumran PS in Clough have found their journey to school much safer and more pleasant thanks to innovative traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures that Sustrans set up immediately outside their school over five weeks. Street Kit is a bright and colourful alternative to bollards and barriers that can be used to protect pedestrian walkways from traffic or reduce traffic volume around the school gates.



Active Travel Officer, Claire Lundy said: "This was the first time we have placed Street Kit outside a school for an extended period of time and it was a real pleasure to support Cumran with their ideas for creating a more positive environment for pedestrians in the school grounds and on the paths outside the gates. Over the last two years the school has seen an increase in the number of pupils who travel to school by active modes and their designs for the Street Kit project reflected the need to promote a safe environment for pupils to do this."

Cumran Principal Rhonda Moles said: "We are delighted to be the first school to trial this type of project in Northern Ireland and have seen a really positive reception from parents and families towards the road safety initiatives taking place in Cumran."

If you have ideas of how Street Kit could be used at your school, please speak to your Active Travel Officer.



## Follow the Leaders

Congratulations to the following schools across Northern Ireland who have achieved **School Mark Awards** in recent months!

### Bronze Awards

- ◆ Augher Central PS
- ◆ Aughnacloy PS
- ◆ Ardstraw Jubilee PS
- ◆ Ballyoran PS
- ◆ Carnmoney PS
- ◆ Carrick Burren PS
- ◆ Corran Integrated PS
- ◆ Culmore PS
- ◆ Dromore Central PS
- ◆ Dunclug PS
- ◆ Edenderry PS, Banbridge
- ◆ Forge Integrated PS
- ◆ Gilford PS
- ◆ Greenisland PS
- ◆ Grey Abbey PS
- ◆ Kilcooley PS
- ◆ King's Park PS
- ◆ Larne and Inver PS
- ◆ Millington PS
- ◆ Millquarter PS
- ◆ Mossley PS
- ◆ Old Warren PS
- ◆ Rosemount PS
- ◆ St Brigid's PS, Mountfield
- ◆ St Columba's PS, Kilrea
- ◆ St Columba's PS, Straw
- ◆ St Ita's PS
- ◆ St John's PS, Swatragh
- ◆ St John the Baptist PS, Belleek
- ◆ St Joseph's PS, Killough
- ◆ St Malachy's PS, Armagh
- ◆ St Mary's PS, Banbridge
- ◆ St Mary's PS, Glenview
- ◆ St Marys PS, Gortnahey
- ◆ St Mary's PS, Portglenone
- ◆ St Matthews PS, Drumsum
- ◆ St Patrick's PS, Armagh
- ◆ St Theresa's PS, Glebe
- ◆ Tandragee PS

### Silver Awards

- ◆ Braidside Integrated PS
- ◆ Cumran PS
- ◆ Dickson PS
- ◆ Grange Park PS
- ◆ Knockbreda PS
- ◆ Macosquin PS
- ◆ Our Lady's PS, Tullysaran
- ◆ Sacred Heart PS, Dundrum
- ◆ St Martin's PS, Garrison
- ◆ St Mary's PS, Killyleagh
- ◆ Fane Street PS
- ◆ Mercy PS
- ◆ St James' PS, Newtownabbey
- ◆ St Anthony's PS, Larne

### Gold Awards

- ◆ Bocombra PS



# Active School Travel is Up

The results are in—children have been voting with their feet to show us that active journeys to school are on the rise!

At the end of the 2018-19 school year, **the number of children walking, cycling and scooting to school at Active School Travel schools increased from 35% to an incredible 53%**. At the same time, the number of pupils being driven to school fell from 58% to 41%.



More 2018-19 Active School Travel results:

- over **85,000** pupils, parents and teachers took part in more than **1,700** active travel activities
- **825** pupils completed National Standard cycle training
- the number of children completing physical activity for at least 60 minutes each day increased from **27% to 38%**
- while 53% of pupils now usually travel actively to school, as many as **83%** would like to - potential for more active travel!

## We want you...

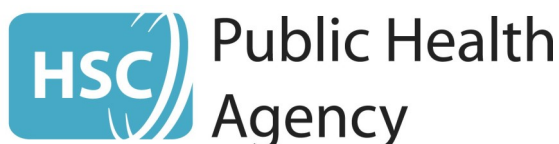
We are now recruiting 60 new schools for the final year of the current Active School Travel Programme. If you would like your school to be a part of this inspiring initiative, please visit our [website](#) where you can download an application pack today.



If your school is already part of AST, please help us spread the news and encourage teachers at new schools to get on board with this exciting opportunity.

Deadline for applications is 8th April. Please get in touch with any questions—[schoolsNI@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:schoolsNI@sustrans.org.uk) or 02890434569.

**Sustrans is grateful for the continued support of our schools work in Northern Ireland from the following:**



Department for  
**Infrastructure**

An Roinn  
**Bonneagair**

## Save the dates in 2020!

Daily Mile Launch Event :: 14 February

Feet First Families :: 13 March

Eco-Schools Youth Summit :: 25 March

Big Pedal :: 22 April - 5 May

For more info about any of these events, please email us at [schoolsNI@sustrans.org.uk](mailto:schoolsNI@sustrans.org.uk) or speak to your Active Travel Officer.

## Feet First Families

On 13th March 2020, your school can be a part of an exciting day called Feet First Families, which aims to inspire families to put their feet first by walking, cycling or scooting to school and making their school a car-free zone.



Schools all across the country will be encouraging families and staff to ditch the car and use their own steam to travel to school. Some schools will be hosting a 'Party in the Parking Lot' on the day! Please put this date in to your school's calendar. Come along to one of the School Champion Training workshops in the new year for more information and resources. In the meantime, check out this [video](#) to see Feet First Families in action!

