

South Central Sustrans Active School Travel Programme Autumn Term 2019 Newsletter

I'd love to hear from you...

I'm Claire Lundy, Sustrans' schools officer for South 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 at St Colman's PS in Lisburn put their cycling skills to the test

Cycle Training (Rain or Shine!)

This was a bumper term for National Standard On-Road Cycle Training in the area, with five schools availing of the 3 day training course for P6 pupils. Drumlins Integrated Primary School started us off in October with a brilliant group of young people undeterred by rain. Our cycle training takes place in all kinds of weather, and I was particularly impressed by the pupils in Holy Family Primary School who came prepared with waterproof coats, trousers and spare socks and shoes. Primary school pupils have a great attitude to getting outside in all seasons - they just get wrapped up and go! We were delighted to see that 100% of places offered this term were used, and many schools reported the need to keep a reserve list. This is the largest uptake of cycle training I have had in this area since I started in Sustrans in 2018, and it shows that pupils have a keen interest in developing the skills that will enable them to travel to school by bike. With five more schools still to receive their training this year, it looks to be another busy term for our team of Cycle Instructors!

Schools at any stage of the Active School Travel Programme can develop pupils' skills and confidence on a bike by offering playground cycle skills to pupils in any class. This allows you to give children the opportunity to practice their skills during the school day and without leaving school grounds. Cycle Skills can be delivered by a Sustrans officer, or by a member of school staff or parent. Some teachers even build this into their PE or outdoor play time. Find out more by contacting claire.lundy@sustrans.org.uk

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

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JOIN THE MOVEMENT

Engine Off, Prevent the Cough

Schools across two council areas (Lisburn Castle-reagh City and Ards and North Down Borough) have begun tackling the air pollution that is caused by drivers leaving their car engines idling outside the school gates. Engine Off, Prevent the Cough helps schools organise their own No Idling



campaign through a series of lesson plans. Engine idling has a major impact on the air quality outside schools across NI, particularly at school drop off and collection time. Whilst families choosing active travel for their school run instead has the most positive impact, those who need to drive and are unable to park and stride can help improve the overall air quality by ensuring they turn their engines off when they are stationary at the school. Sullivan Upper Prep Department in Holywood joined the Active School Travel Programme in September 2019 and began looking at air pollution at the start of the year. The school helped their council launch the initiative in November.

Schools can get more information about the project, and register for free resources by heading to the council websites or by contacting Environmental Health in their area.

Knockbreda's Santa Stroll

Knockbreda PS decided to end 2019 with a Christmas themed walking bus on the last day of term. Pupils and families turned out to meet their friends and teachers at the local playing field before their walk to school. The journey took us through a busy residential part of the city, and the pupils showed off their road safety skills as they navigated crossings and shared paths and side streets. Knockbreda has a



team of four teachers who all promote and deliver events as part of the Active School Travel Programme, and they did not disappoint on their Santa

Stroll, even conspiring to provide Christmas tunes as we walked courtesy of Miss Fletcher and her boom box. The pupils were thrilled, and it brought a smile to the face of everybody they encountered! Walking buses are a brilliant way to promote active journeys to school at any time of the year. Schools can adapt their route or change the theme to celebrate school events.

Scooter Mad!

One of my most popular activities this term has been Scooter Skills, with many sessions delivered through October and November and many more booked in for schools in the coming months. Using scooters as a mode of transport for school journeys certainly seems to be on



Primary 4 pupils at Forge Integrated Primary School

the rise, at least in South Central. They're especially popular with children in Primary 4 and 5, but have benefits for pupils of all ages. Parents travelling on foot can save time on their school run if their children are scooting, allowing the younger ones to keep pace with the adults rather than the adults having to slow down to the pace of a young child. Because most scooters can be folded up and stored more easily than bikes, they are also a great option for parents and pupils who have to do the first part of their journey by car or public transport. Even easier to maintain than bikes, they can be grabbed quickly when families are rushing out the door in the morning; no tyres to pump up or chains to clean.

A Scooter Skills session in school focuses on skills rather than tricks. The Active School Travel Programme aims to increase the number of pupils travelling to school by an active mode and that's what we work on: skills for the school run. These are things like moving efficiently, steering, avoiding obstacles (like cars parked on the pavement or dog dirt) and, of course, interacting and showing consideration for other people on the street. Scooter Skills sessions in schools always fill up fast so if you haven't considered one before, why not give it a



Balance and concentration

try in Term 2 or 3?

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

- ◆ Agher Central PS
- ◆ Aghnacloy 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



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



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...

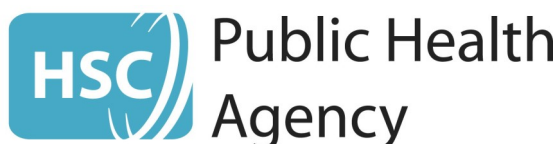
We are now recruiting 60 new schools for the final year of the current Active School Travel Programme. If you would like your school to be a part of this inspiring initiative, please visit our [website](#) where you can download an application pack today.



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 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 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!

