

North Central Sustrans Active School Travel Programme Spring Term 2020 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.

#StayHomeStayActive



The Spring Term was shorter than we all imagined but there were still loads of brilliant Active School Travel activities and events that happened this term that we want to celebrate in this newsletter. We hope this finds you well in these difficult times. Let's all do our part by staying home and staying active. And for those of you teachers, NHS staff and other keyworkers who are heading out each day, thank you for the important work that you are doing. We have some excellent resources to support parents and carers with home schooling and ideas for staying active — please read on!

~ Take care from everyone at Sustrans!



Full to overflowing bike racks at Silverstream Primary School

Keeping moving forward

I'm sure you are missing your classes, I know I'm certainly missing getting into schools to run activities with your pupils. It's strange to see all the events in my diary that aren't happening at the moment. It will be a while before we see full bike racks in school again, but there are still some things we can be doing.

I know you are still busy preparing work for your class, and some of you are still in school. Depending on where you are at with work, family and general day-to-day life at the moment, one useful job to get you ahead could be to have a look at your progress towards your next School Mark award. If you need anything for this I can email you, or if you'd like a chat through it, please let me know and I can give you a call at a convenient time. Then when we do get back to school you'll have a plan which is ready to go, leaving you free to focus on your class and getting everyone settled back into routine.

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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Air pollution

Air pollution is very topical at the moment, with lots in the news about the levels of air pollution generally, and in particular around schools. The current drop-off in traffic levels as most of us have to stay at home has also shown how much impact our travel habits have, with most areas showing a decline in air pollution.

Earlier in the term Primary 6 pupils at Victoria Primary in Carrickfergus took part in a simple air pollution lesson aiming to help them visualise a problem that we can't see. In the classroom they looked at how much carbon dioxide is released by a typical journey to school, using balloons to show the volume given out. Then we headed out to the front of the school and used cotton wool pads to clean various hard surfaces and see how much dirt there is settling out of the air. It was surprising how black some of these ended up.



What's in the air? Swabs from areas in the school grounds

If you have noticed lots of parents sitting idling in their cars outside the school gate, get in touch and we can set up a campaign to try to reduce this. As well as making pupils aware of this as a problem through assemblies or classes, School Councils or Eco Committees can get involved, and there are various resources plus information for parents.



National Standards continues

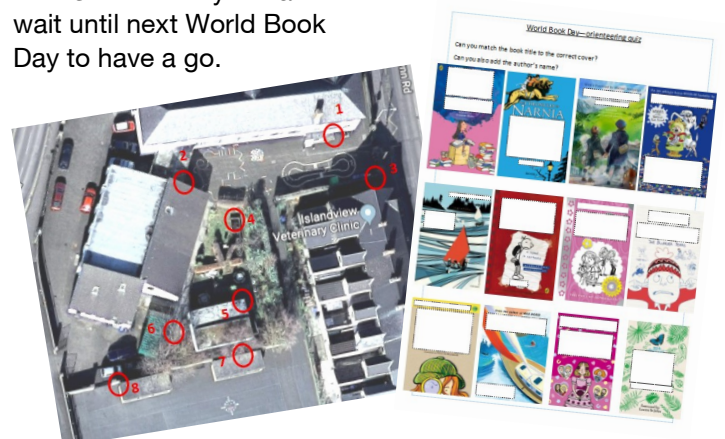
Even with only part of a term, and some not-so-good weather, it was still a busy term for cycle training. Three more schools in the North Central area completed their cycle training: Silverstream PS in Greenisland, Olderfleet PS in Larne and Dunmurry PS. For Dunmurry Primary it was second time round, as training was postponed due to bad weather. However, as you can see from the picture, this didn't put them off and 16 pupils took part. Congratulations to all the pupils from these schools, you will get your certificates, they will just be a little late.



Pupils from Dunmurry Primary taking part in National Standard cycle training

World Book Day

World Book Day is a busy day for most schools, with lots of dressing up and activities going on in school. Again this year a number of schools linked this with encouraging active travel. So some ran their dress-up day as a walk to school day, showing off their costumes on their way to school. Others used stamp cards to encourage pupils to walk to school, so pupils with completed stamp cards could enter a prize draw for a book. I also have activities which link into literacy while getting pupils out into the playground. So lots of P1-3 classes took part in a scavenger hunt based on the book 'Mrs Armitage's Wheels', where they had to listen to the story and find the weird things Mrs Armitage adds to her bike. Primary 4-7 classes did a book themed orienteering activity. You'll see a sample of some of the orienteering resources below. I've got other orienteering activities as well, so if you like the look of this don't feel you have to wait until next World Book Day to have a go.



#StayHomeStayActive

The first **Sustrans at Home** activities are now up on YouTube! Using channels created especially for this project, the Schools Team hope that we can help bring variety to the remote learning provision for your pupils and families. Each week, I will post a short video to introduce a learning activity that focuses on being active, staying healthy or active travel. There will be an accompanying PDF that contains instructions for an at-home activity. I will email the video link and the resource to you each Monday. Please consider adding this to your timetable for remote work or share to your colleagues so it can be sent to pupils and families through your normal parent communication apps. If you have any requests for specific topics or themes, please let me know.

How to access and share the resource:

Each week I will send a link to the video for the week. There is also a link to the PDF download in the video description along with the password: **'Sustrans'**

Share the video through your parent communication apps or website. I will also email you the PDF as an attachment, if you want to send this directly to parents.

If you have missed any of the videos, you can access them all using the link to the YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLgQNVLad74tGqxcFCi6FLg>

Sample Text for your Parent Communications:

Dear Parent. Our Sustrans Schools' Officer Beverley, who pupils will know from her visits to school, will be sending through a weekly video and learning activity which pupils can do at home. These activities are aimed at keeping active, having fun and learning as part of our schools' involvement in the Active School Travel Programme. Please feel free to watch this video together and use the activity sheet whilst learning at home this week. You can show Beverley how you're staying active while staying home by tagging @SustransNI on Facebook or Twitter and using #stayhomestayactive in your posts. Enjoy!

 Parkgate Primary NI
30 March at 10:18

Dear Parent. Our Sustrans Schools' Officer, Beverley, whom the pupils will know from visiting our school, will be sending through a weekly video activity which pupils can do at home. These activities are aimed at keeping active, having fun and learning as part of our schools' involvement in the Active School Travel programme. Please feel free to watch this video together and use the activity sheet (available on school website) whilst learning at home this week. Enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foCOPcxa8-4&t=10s>



YOUTUBE.COM

Sustrans Home Activity 1 - Keeping active

The first activity to keep you busy while at home is 'Keeping active' - think...

Activities from week one and two

ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL KEEPING ACTIVE

30 MINUTES NONE/ATTACHED WORKSHEET 1 IF WANTED

EXERCISE, OR NOT?

Aim: To work out which activities count as exercise, and which don't.

Instructions: Create a list of different activities—ones you normally do during the day and other things you can easily do in the house, or if you have a garden things you can do there. There are some ideas on the attached worksheet to get you started. Do each activity for 1 minute, and put it into one of the following groups:

- Inactive—doesn't get you moving
- Walk and talk—you can still chat while doing the activity
- Huff and puff—you are out of breath by the end of the minute

You can fill your activities into the table on the worksheet if you want, or just talk about your findings with an adult.

Extension: Keep adding to these groups as you do different activities during the week.

60 MINUTE CHALLENGE

Aim: Challenge yourself to try and do at least 60 minutes of activity each day. Watch out for my video next week for more ideas to keep you active.

Instructions: As you go through the day fill in the second worksheet with any exercise you do, and try to reach at least 60 minutes each day. If you go over the 60 minutes, well done, you have smashed the 60 minute challenge!

Extensions: Try to get some of your exercise from both of the groups—walk and talk, and huff and puff—so some will get you moving gently, and some will get you out of breath.

Keep this going for the rest of the week, or for as long as you want—use the third worksheet.

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 programme provides schools with the skills and knowledge to get more children walking, cycling and scooting as their main mode of transport to school.

Find out more at www.sustrans.org.uk/NIschools

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ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL SCAVENGER HUNTS ?

30 MINUTES WORKSHEET/PAPER, PENCIL, SCISSORS

BIKE SCAVENGER HUNT

Aim: To run a scavenger hunt, in the house or garden.

Instructions: There are two versions of the scavenger, to suit different age groups.

Picture scavenger (for younger children): cut up the picture of the bike on Worksheet 1, and hide the pieces round the house or garden. Younger children can find the pictures, then put them together to make a picture of a bike. If you don't have a printer, use a picture from a magazine. It doesn't have to be a picture of a bike—it's all about getting active doing the scavenger hunt.

Bike parts scavenger (for older children): either print out the words on Worksheet 2 or write them out, cut them up and hide these round the house or garden. Older children can find the words, then use them to label the picture of a bike on Worksheet 3.

Extension: Find out what each of these parts of your bike is for. This will help you with an activity we'll be doing after Easter, when we'll be thinking about how to take care of your bike.

For a short video giving an introduction to this activity: <https://youtu.be/4Z3Vj1sQvUk>

Variable PAPER, PENCIL

TIME TO GET CREATIVE

Aim: If you enjoyed the scavenger hunt, try other versions. This is a perfect activity for over the Easter holidays, with possibly a few Easter treats hidden!

Instructions: There are some ideas to get you started on Worksheet 4, including scavengers to tie in with other work you are doing at home, as a fun way to reinforce learning.

Extension: Older children could use some of these ideas to create their own scavenger hunts—either for younger brothers or sisters to try, or to swap with friends via however you are keeping in touch. Let us know what you've been up to as well—details of how to do this are below.

Enjoy this activity? Use #stayhomestayactive and tag us @SustransNI on Facebook and Twitter

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There are lots more to come—keep an eye out for the emails.



Pupils at Elmgrove Primary enjoying Feet First Families day

Feet First Families

On Friday 13 March, pupils from schools across Northern Ireland made their school a 'car-free zone', and encouraged families to use their feet first to walk, scoot or cycle to school.

With school car parks closed for the day, pupils reclaimed the space in all kinds of creative and fun ways, including parties in the parking lot. Some schools held 'bling your bike' events, coffee stands or simply turned their car parks into an extended play-ground. There were also led walks and walking buses to encourage children to travel actively to school.

Dr Hannah Dearie, from the Public Health Agency said: "We are delighted to support children and their families to actively travel to school to increase their physical activity and improve their overall health and wellbeing. Feet First Families is a fun day to highlight the benefits of actively travelling to school by showing children, parents and the wider community how easy it can be to walk, cycle or scoot to school."



Follow the Leaders

Congratulations to the following schools across Northern Ireland who have achieved **School Mark Awards** in January, February and March!

Bronze Awards

- ◆ Artigarvan PS
- ◆ Bushvalley PS
- ◆ Chapel Road PS
- ◆ Faughanvale PS
- ◆ Phoenix Integrated PS
- ◆ Sion Mills PS



Gold Award

- ◆ **Doagh PS**— see pictured below.

Active Travel Champion Mr Dowds and pupils from the Eco Committee pictured with the Mayor of Antrim and Newtownabbey, Ald John Smyth and John Blair MLA.



We *still* want you...

We don't know exactly what the 2020-21 school year will look like, but at this stage we are still intending to take on new schools in the Active School Travel Programme. If you would like your school to be a part of this inspiring initiative, please contact us or 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.

Currently, the deadline for applications has been waived. 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:

