

South East Sustrans Active School Travel Programme Spring Term 2020 Newsletter

I'd love to hear from you...

I'm Dave Wiggins, Sustrans' schools officer for the South East. 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!



Active Travel Superhero Challenge

In February and March, fifteen schools in the south east took part in the Active Travel Superhero Challenge in the run up to **World Book Day 2020**. Thousands of active journeys were made as pupils walked, cycled and scooted to school each day during the challenge. On World Book Day, lots of pupils **dressed up** as their favourite character or super hero and prize giving assemblies were held.

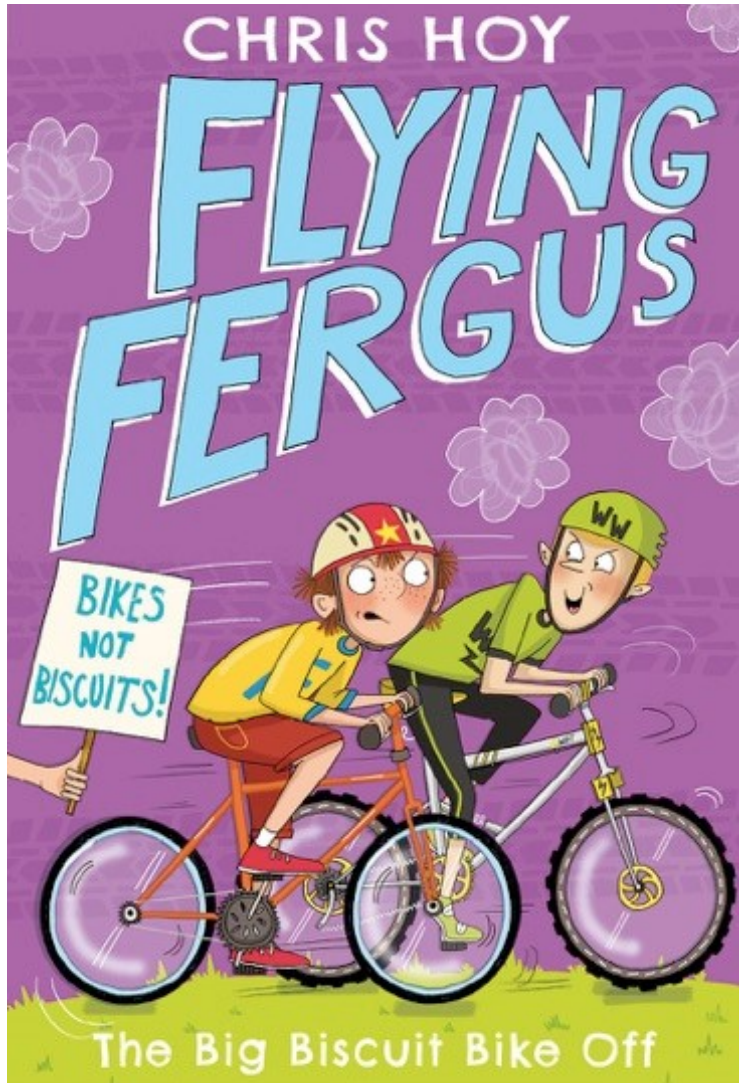
Like my son, I dressed up as 'Diary Of A Wimpy Kid' and gave out prizes of 'Flying Fergus' books at Ballyoran Primary in Portadown (see page two).

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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Continued ... 'Flying Fergus' books which were delivered to all schools taking part in the 'Active Travel Superhero Challenge'.



Snow Day

A cold and snowy day in early February did not put off these active school travellers in Portadown.



Bike Fun in Dromore

I recently spent a fun two days at Dromore Central Primary School. On Day One I presented the KS1 pupils with their Sustrans Bronze Award at assembly before delivering bike games sessions for pupils. On Day Two I was back in assembly with the KS2 pupils before delivering a couple more bike skills sessions. Well done to all of the pupils who participated really well!



A YouTube Star ... Finally



When I was a kid everyone wanted to be a doctor, nurse, footballer, teacher, ice-cream man or astronaut. Since having my own children I've discovered that most kids these days want to be a **YouTube star** when they grow up.

Anyway, I've beaten my own kids to the punch as I can now be found doing my own educational lockdown videos as '**Sustrans Dave**' on YouTube.

Each Monday I will post a short video with a link attached which will take pupils to an activity worksheet or challenge.

Week One is '**Raise Your Heart Rate**' and Week Two is '**Road Safety**' and the videos do include some wonderful juggling skills, so look out for that!

Please do get in touch if I can help you in any way or if you have any specific requests for challenges or activities for your pupils. Don't forget to subscribe!

Our Lady's, Tullysaran

I recently spent a great day at Our Lady's Primary in Tullysaran delivering some bike skills and games in this beautiful, rural setting. It was a cold day but the sky was big and blue as pupils enthusiastically increased their confidence on their bicycles.



These sessions were delivered as part of Our Lady's monthly '**Feet First Family**' days, where all of the pupils and their families actively travel to school together.

Cars are banned from the school on these days, the gates are locked and the car parking spaces are turned into an area where pupils can safely scoot or cycle around.

This really is a great example of what can be done.





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:

