



Sustainable School Travel Strategy

Updated August 2019

1. Introduction

The Sustainable School Travel Strategy, first written in 2010, sets out how Shropshire Council promotes sustainable travel to, from and between schools. This document highlights the work the authority has undertaken in 2018/19 to promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of the area.

2. Why are we promoting sustainable travel to school?

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to promote sustainable modes of travel and transport and provide extended provision of free school transport for the most disadvantaged families. The Act defines 'sustainable modes of travel' as those which the authority considers may improve either or both of the following:

- The physical well-being of those who use them, and
- The environmental well-being of the whole or part of the area.

The promotion of sustainable travel to school contributes towards many current priorities including:

- The reduction of carbon emissions and improvement of air quality;
- The improvement of public health and reduction of child obesity levels, and
- The reduction of congestion and of road traffic casualties.

These are reflected in a number of Shropshire Council policies including the Local Transport Plan, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and School Transport Policy (see Section 6: Further information).

Shropshire has a mix of urban and rural schools which poses particular challenges in providing opportunities for sustainable travel to school. At the end of June 2019, there were 91 local authority maintained schools, 58 academies and one Free School. There are 127 schools in the primary phase and 19 in the secondary phase. There is also one all through school having both phases. There are 3 sixth form and further education colleges delivering education from 6 sites.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of Schools in Shropshire:

Table 1: Maintained and Academy/Free Schools in Shropshire (at June 2019)

Phase	Maintained	Schools	Academies/	Free Schools	Totals
Infant	1	20%	4	80%	5
Junior	1	20%	4	80%	5
Primary*	85	73%	32	27%	117
Secondary	2	10.5%	17	89.5%	19
All Through	0	0%	1	100%	1
Special/PRU	2	67%	1	33%	3
Totals	91	61%	59	39%	150

*Reduced by two following the amalgamation of Hope, Worthen and St Mary's Westbury into Long Mountain.

Many children live more than the statutory walking distances (two miles each way for children of eight years old or younger and three miles for children over the age of eight years) from school. In some cases, they are eligible for free - home to school transport.

2019/20 saw a continuation of the trend in overall aggregate growth in the Shropshire school population. Housing development, the most significant for a generation, is putting considerable pressure on school places in Shrewsbury and other market towns across the county, in particular Market Drayton, Shifnal and Whitchurch. The potential therefore for increased congestion caused by the school run is considerable and efforts to promote sustainable travel need to be targeted at these locations.

In response, 8 primary schools in these locations, together with Hadnall and Baschurch, will have extra classrooms for the 2019/20 academic year. Shifnal Primary School has already added two new classrooms this year.

With the need for further expansion of primary provision in Shrewsbury, there are plans afoot for a new two form entry (420 places) primary school at Bowbrook alongside a new 120 place special school.

Shropshire Council forecasts, when taking into account the effect of new housing, are for a:

- 4.14% rise in primary school pupil numbers (by 2023).
- 10.35% rise in secondary school student numbers (by 2026).

However, some schools particularly in rural areas in the south and south west of the county, even with some new local housing, will experience a downward trend in pupil numbers.

School Transport

Rights to free school transport in Shropshire have been extended for low income families:

- The two mile limit is extended for those aged between eight and eleven years old so that there is no requirement to differentiate between those who are from low income families and those who are not.
- For secondary school pupils, assistance (normally a bus pass) is provided to the three nearest schools that fall within a two to six mile distance from a pupil’s home, as measured by the shortest walking distance.

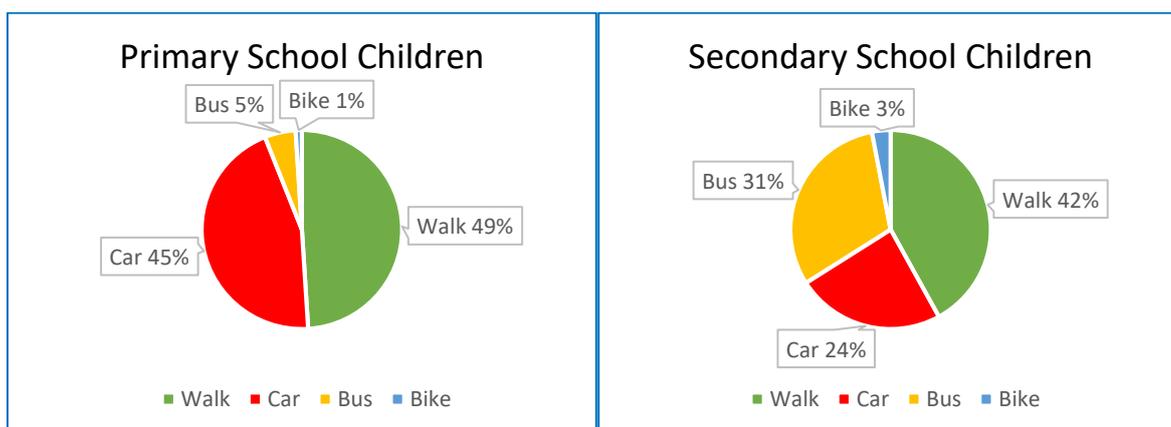
Table 2 shows the numbers of pupils that received free home to school transport in Shropshire in 2019 and how this compares with previous years.

Table 2. Numbers of Shropshire pupils receiving free home to school transport

Pupil group	Jan 2017	Jan 2018	Jan 2019
Primary school	1,108	1097	1032
Secondary school	3,831	3997	3795
Post - 16 years education	214	241	107

How children travel to school

In June 2019, the split of modes of travel for the journey to school in Shropshire was as follows:



In 2017 nationally for children aged 5 to 10 it was car at 41%, walk at 51%, cycle at 2% and bus at 4%. (National Travel Survey, DFT).

In 2017 nationally for children aged 11 to 16 it was car at 26%, walk at 35%, cycle at 3% and bus at 31%. (National Travel Survey, DFT).

N.B. The Shropshire travel mode share data is taken from over 17,000 individual pupil records on school's SIMS computer system. However as this is now a voluntary field, not all children have a travel to school record. 22% of pupil records lacked a travel to school entry. It is also not possible to confirm if the records are up to date. For these reasons, they should be used as an indicative guide only.

Road Safety

Although there has been a downward trend in both child pedestrian and cyclist casualties in recent years, addressing road safety remains a core element of this strategy. Table 3 provides a summary of reported road traffic accident casualties relating to children on Shropshire roads in 2019.

Table 3: Shropshire: Reported road traffic accident child casualties in 2018 (Provisional Figures)

Pupil age group	Child Pedestrians			Child Cyclists		
	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Fatal	Serious	Slight
0 to 4 years			3			
5 – 15 years	0	2	18	-	1	7

Child Car Passenger	0	0	23
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*Shropshire roads include both Shropshire Council and Highway England managed roads.

Shropshire continues to have a good safety record in relation to young active travellers and there has been a downward trend in child road traffic casualties in recent years. Public satisfaction levels with access to services in Shropshire was measured as part of the 2018 National Highways and Transport (NHT) Public Satisfaction Survey. The most significant trends in improvement in satisfaction since 2012 have been with the road safety education and local bus services. At 54%, road safety education has the highest satisfaction recorded across the West Midlands region (shared with City of Wolverhampton Council).

3. Our vision, aims, objectives and targets

Where schools, transport infrastructure and public transport can reasonably facilitate, support children and young people being able to access education in a healthy, sustainable and safe way.

Our objectives are:

Objective 1 Increase levels of walking, cycling and public transport usage to schools and support the promotion of healthy, safe and sustainable travel choices for children and young people.

Objective 2 Improve infrastructure and facilities on and around school sites to encourage safer and sustainable travel choices.

Objective 3 Provide safe, sustainable and independent travel choices for parents and young people and equality of access for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Objective 4 Maintain strong links with schools, local transport teams and services through the development of this strategy.

Objective 5 Influence and inform the design and development of new build and extensions to schools to support safe and sustainable travel.

Progress with 2018/19 targets:

Target 1 To involve children attending the special schools in tailored road safety education and training.

Children at Severndale Special School took part in a road safety walk to a nearby supermarket and learning support students at Priory School took part in pedestrian training.

Target 2 To involve more rural primary schools in practical pedestrian training at nearby towns.

Practical training provided for the first time in Market Drayton for children at Lower Heath and Stoke on Tern primary schools.

Target 3 To increase the number of secondary schools agreeing to receive multiple presentations on the same day.

In addition to the Focus Days already established as an annual feature at Corbet, Mary Webb, Grove, Idsall, Belvidere, Ludlow School, Lacon Childe and Marches 6th form, Thomas Adams Year 10 also took part in a Focus Day.

Target 4

In 2018/19 (financial year) to train 704 children to achieve Bikeability Level 1 cycle training, 1405 level 1 and 2, 195 Level 2 and 313 Level 3 during 2018/19. Also, to train 75 on Bikeability Ride, 125 Bikeability Transition, 10 Bikeability Parent, and 63 Bikeability Fix.

Most targets were met. Level 1 cycle training was delivered to 794 children, Level 1 and 2 to 1494, Level 2 to 148 and Level 3 to 336. 64 children took place in Bikeability Ride, 84 in Bikeability Fix, 128 Transition and 3 Parent.

Bikeability Balance for reception and Key Stage 1 children continued to grow in popularity with 527 children trained. All participating schools benefitted from a Public Health funded fleet of balance bikes, small pedal cycles and helmets.

4. What have we been doing?

The following section provides an overview of our activities over the last year (2018/19) and Table 4 shows how these link to our objectives.

School Travel Planning

Shropshire Council offers schools support in reviewing their school travel plans and implementing a range of travel initiatives such as park and stride, wakening buses and participation in national walk and bike to school campaigns and events.

Primary schools in Shifnal and Market Drayton where there has been significant growth of pupil numbers have had their travel plans reviewed. Year 5 children at Longnor CE Primary ran a 'Walk Safe, Park Safe' campaign promoting use of the local Church and village hall car park for park and stride, switching off engines (anti-idling) and not parking on pavements.

Highway infrastructure improvements

Many schools have benefited with road safety and pedestrian/cyclist safety infrastructure improvements since the original Strategy. Due to current financial constraints, Shropshire Council has had to suspend the Road Safety Policy and restrict design and implementation of road safety schemes to accident cluster sites only. However alternative sources of funds have been sourced to help children's safety.

A new zebra crossing has been funded by a developer at Cleobury Mortimer. 'Harry's crossing' named after the young WSP project engineer was built just in time for inclusion in the Year 7 road safety sessions at Lacon Childe School and Stepping Out pedestrian training at the primary school.



'Harry's Crossing' Cleobury Mortimer

'Stepping Out' child pedestrian training

This practical pedestrian safety training scheme also provides an opportunity to promote the benefits of walking to school and prepares primary school children for when they are old enough to travel independently. In 2018/19 Shropshire Council delivered Stepping Out child pedestrian training to 2,874 children at 71 primary and junior schools across Shropshire.

"This programme is a crucial part of the children's time at primary school".

Teacher, St Laurence CE Primary

Bikeability cycle training

Training provider Learncycling continues to deliver Bikeability cycle training across Shropshire on behalf of Shropshire Council. A new delivery model introduced in 2017/18 is working well with more younger children in primary school benefiting from Level 1 Bikeability training and Bikeability Balance. Learning to ride a bike at a young age can help more children access Level 2 on road training in years 5 and 6.

There has been a dramatic increase in the numbers taking the advanced Level 3 training both in the final year of primary school and secondary school. The numbers trained at level 3 has risen from 55 in 2017/18 to 336 this year. A letter featuring a case study of training at Thomas Adams School in Wem was sent to other secondary schools and PE departments responded positively requesting Bikeability training for their students.



Bikeability Level 3 trainee, Wem

“In conclusion this was a great course, very well ran, very efficient and organised and something we will definitely be looking at doing again next year”.

The Marches School, Level 3 Training

Road Safety and Sustainable Travel education

In 2018/19, two road safety officers continued to engage with primary school pupils, secondary school and college students, and their staff, delivering road safety and sustainable travel education through practical training, presentations and provision of a variety of education resources.

During Walk to School Week at Market Drayton Junior School, an average of 219 out of 355 (62%) children walked, cycled or scooted to school each day. This was up from 123 (35%) on each day prior to the Week.

Partnerships

Contacts were made with the Police and Crime Commissioners’ Office and the West Mercia Road Safer Roads Partnership. This has included; assistance with promotion of ‘mini officer’ signs outside schools to promote slow speeds and no parking on school keep clear markings, attendance at a series of Road Focus events and issue of hi vis giveaways for young cyclists and children on walking buses.



St Laurence CE Primary Walking Bus



13 schools have benefitted from 'Daily Mile' tracks funded by the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund (Sugar Tax Levy) and designed by WSP. Travel plan discussions at Criftings Primary School considered how the tracks could also be used for cycle skills development and what markings on the track might support this.

New 'Daily Mile' track, Criftings Primary School

Table 4: Road Safety and Sustainable Travel Activities 2018/19

Theme	Activities	Objectives met
School Travel Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance provided to 11 schools in reviewing their school travel plans. • Support given to Woodside Primary School and Harlescott Junior School to help set up new Walking Bus schemes and continued monitoring of 7 established walking buses. • Independent Travel Training provided for 7 children and young people with special needs since January 2019. • Assemblies and presentations made during 2018 national Road Safety Week on the theme of cycle safety. • 'Self-help' resources provided on the theme of air quality for schools taking part in national 2019 Walk to School Week. 	1,3 and 4
Highway infrastructure improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifnal – investigations into network of cross town pathway improvements linking new and existing housing developments with schools and other amenities. To incorporate proposal for new entrance into St Andrew's CE Primary school off the A 464. • Temporary build out on Couriers Lane, traffic calming measure. • Zebra crossing at Cleobury Mortimer on Ludlow Road benefiting primary and secondary school children. • Investigating upgrade of zebra crossing in Hinstock to a puffin (as part of Safer Roads Fund – A 529 Improvements Works). • Upgrades to controlled crossing on Shrewsbury Road near Market Drayton Juniors from pelican to puffin. • Investigation of footway and road crossing improvements in Market Drayton urban area also as part of Safer Roads Fund – A 529 Improvements Works. • School Keep Clear markings at Sundorne Infants and Harlescott Junior School made mandatory. 	1,2,3,4 and 5

<p>'Stepping Out' child pedestrian training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical training at nearby towns provided for Stoke on Tern and Lower Heath. • New and more challenging walk routes used at Bowmere Heath, West Felton and Woore. • Greater emphasis on watching out for quieter EVs (electric vehicles) • Simplified worksheets for children with SEN. 	<p>1,3 and 4</p>
<p>'Bikeability' cycle training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 1 delivered to 795 children in 2018/19, Level 1&2 to 1494 and Level 3 to 336. • 84 children received Bikeability Fix training, 64 took part in Bikeability Ride and 128 in Bikeability Transition. • 49 children in their final year at Oxon CE Primary School in Shrewsbury followed their Level 2 training with a Bikeability Transition ride to their local secondary schools. This promotes and helps the safety of children when they cycle to Meole Brace and Priory secondary schools. Large numbers cycle to school (15% and 12% of the school roll respectively). • Primary schools without recent involvement successfully re-engaged including Belvidere, Greenfields, Mount Pleasant and Martin Wilson in Shrewsbury and Holy Trinity in Oswestry • Training delivered in out of school settings e.g. the Refugee Action Group and 1st Monkmoor Scouts. • 527 children trained in Bikeability Balance (442 in 2017/18). • Updated Bikeability Guidance for Schools document. 	<p>1, 3 and 4</p>
<p>Road Safety Education and sustainable travel education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged with 3,707 primary age school children and 9,382 students and their staff attending 253 presentations at secondary schools and colleges. • 19 of the 20 secondary schools took part in road safety education in 2018/2019. • Following the results of the longitudinal survey with year 9 and 10 students, presentations on the theme of seat belts, speed awareness and peer pressure / speaking up were introduced a year earlier in year 8 rather than year 9. • Support given during Road Safety Week 2018 on the theme of 'Bikesmart', safe cycling through the autumn and winter. 	<p>1, 3 and 4</p>

5. What will we be doing over the next year?

In 2019/20 Shropshire Council will:

1. Continue to make road safety and sustainable travel education available to all Shropshire schools and colleges.
2. Maintain support for schools who require help with their school travel planning and the development and operation of school travel schemes and initiatives.
3. Continue to encourage and promote sustainable travel choices.
4. Continue to promote awareness of entitlements to free school transport.
5. Continue to promote school transport route reviews to ensure best value for money and that routes are accessible to pupils.
6. Continue to influence and inform the design and development of new build and extensions to schools to support safe and sustainable travel.
7. Review the Road Safety and Sustainable Travel Education service delivery to ensure provision of a clear direction to schools.
8. Ensure that new developments likely to generate significant levels of traffic be located in accessible locations where opportunities for walking, cycling and use of public transport can be maximised.
9. Promote and monitor residential travel plans for all new developments when appropriate.

All activities are subject to the continuation of available funding and resource.

2019/20 targets:

Target 1: Target schools with new - additional classrooms due to significant growth in pupil numbers for review of their school travel plans.

Target 2: Sustain the increase in Bikeability cycle training take up at Level 3 by secondary school Students.

Target 3: Develop a programme of Focus days and visits for the Shrewsbury Colleges Group as part of PSHE.

Target 4: Build on links with partners e.g. Shropshire Council and air quality team - Walk to School Week and Police and Crime Commissioner/Safer Roads Partnership - safety outside schools / Road Safety Week.

6. Further information

School Transport Policy

<https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/school-transport/our-obligations/>

Shropshire Parent's Guide to Education

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/school-admissions/parents-guide-to-education/>

Local Transport Plan

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/public-transport/local-transport-plan/>

Shropshire Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/media/830904/shropshire-core-strategy-2011-reduced.pdf>

Local Plan

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy>

Road Safety Policy

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/plans-policies-strategies-and-reports/road-safety-policy/>

Road Safety Education, Training and Resources

<https://new.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/road-safety/>

Admissions policy and arrangements for primary and secondary schools

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/school-admissions/>

SEN Transport

<http://new.shropshire.gov.uk/the-send-local-offer/parentcarers/education/sen-transport/>

Sustainability Environmental Climate Change

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/sustainability/sustainability-policy-communications/sustainability-environment-climate-change-strategy/>

Air Quality

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/environmental-health/environmental-protection-and-prevention/air-quality/shropshire-council-air-quality-reports/>