

# How to Plan a Successful Secondary School Transition Promoting Sustainable Travel between Y6-Y7

Transition from primary to secondary school is one of the biggest steps a pupil will take in their school life and how they choose to travel to their new school needs careful consideration and planning.

## Using a change of school to promote positive travel habits

Research shows that:

- There are decreases in physical activity during adolescence, particularly amongst girls.
- Boys are more active than girls in all years and partaking in physical activity decreases as children grow older.

Whilst there appears to be a gradual decrease in physical activity amongst boys the decrease is more acute amongst girls during the primary to secondary transition phase. Research suggests that further decline is likely throughout the remainder of secondary school life. This is one reason why Travel Planning is important as pupils move to secondary schools; because if they get into the habit of walking or cycling (where possible), from Year 7, they are likely to continue to do so. When anyone has a change of circumstances, many choices and decisions are made; travel is one element considered and pupils should be encouraged to consider sustainable travel choices before asking their parents for a lift.

School transition programmes help primary pupils to prepare for their move to secondary school and this resource explains how you can include Travel Planning in work. It is important that transition is a safe, happy and an exciting time with pupils being given the opportunity to fully explore and discuss their travel and transportation options.

## Transition Activities

Travel Planning activities can easily integrate into national curriculum planning as part of the Year 6 Personal, Social and Health programme of study as well as contributing towards Citizenship development. This lends itself towards:

- Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of abilities.
- Preparing to play an active role as a responsible citizen.
- Developing a healthy lifestyle.
- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people.

Durham County Council has produced a resource titled 'Bus Basics'. Whilst not a specific transition resource, it does cover the essentials of making journeys by bus, how to read a timetable, how to purchase a ticket, etc. Should you wish to borrow this resource, please contact the Travel Plan Team: [travelplanning@durham.gov.uk](mailto:travelplanning@durham.gov.uk)

Activities that encourage pupils to talk about what travel information they might need and how to go about finding it for themselves will help prepare a pupil to become a more independent traveller. Travel choices, timetables and journey planners can be discussed and debated amongst pupils and also alongside their parents and teachers. This will serve to identify and iron-out any barriers to active travel.

### **Ideas to help Year 6 pupils with their transition to secondary school:**

- Make a link between your school and the Transition Coordinator at the secondary school - organise activities that promote active travel. Make pupils aware of their School Travel Plan and any targets in the action plan.
- Get pupils to think about what information they need to plan a new journey and explain how they find this information.
- Discuss with pupils what active and healthy travel choices are – walking, cycling, travel by public service bus, dedicated school bus and car sharing.
- Carry out a 'Hands Up' survey of how pupils intend to travel to their new school. Ask pupils if they think their choice is a sustainable and healthy one. If their choice is not sustainable help those pupils to investigate other alternatives, there may be a bus, for example, that the pupil did not know about.
- Discuss and determine walking routes which a pupil could take.
- Consider whether it is possible to cycle and which route would be the best.
- Find out about cycle parking provision at the new school, shower and locker facilities.
- Find out about public transport services, bus fares, service numbers, route and timetable information.
- Find out information about concessionary bus fares and school buses.
- Explore the possibility of car-sharing with other pupils from your class.
- Enquire to see if the secondary school has a Park and Stride facility or a Walking Zone for those pupils who have to travel by car.
- Use a large scale map of the local area around the secondary school and discuss travelling distances from the school. Mark on your map zoned travelling distances of half a kilometre, one kilometre, two kilometres away from the secondary school and discuss the possibility of those living near to school walking or cycling.
- Allow pupils to map their routes and give a verbal explanation to their peers about their intended route and journey.
- Pupils could measure travelling distances from their home to their new school.
- Discuss with pupils travelling by public transport how to go about gathering information on bus fares, service numbers and routes as well as bus timetables – Durham County Council's 'Bus Basic' resource will assist with this – please contact us to borrow a copy, [travelplanning@durham.gov.uk](mailto:travelplanning@durham.gov.uk)
- Carry out directional activities using maps and get pupils to think about, and write down estimated travel directions and distances.
- Plan a cycle to secondary school day - organise a supervised cycle ride for all year 6 pupils to your nearest secondary school to raise awareness of any cycle routes linking to the school. Refreshments and badge-making activities promoting cycling to school could be arranged upon arrival at the school. Hold a competition relating to active travel – your local cycle dealer may sometimes donate a prize.
- Encourage transition pupils to engage with the School Travel Plan working group at their new school.

## **Ideas for Year 7 pupils to help Year 6 pupils who will be coming to their school:**

- Work in groups to design and develop promotional leaflets, maps and other resources which can be used in feeder Primary Schools to encourage Year 6 pupils to walk or cycle.
- Small groups of pupils could prepare and deliver a presentation about active travel choices to a panel of judges. The winning group could visit the feeder Primary Schools and deliver the presentation to the Y6 classes.
- Encourage Year 7 pupils to visit feeder primary schools and talk about their own travel experiences and explain what facilities are available at the secondary school, for example cycle parking.
- Create an Active Travel Transition Pack with Year 7 pupils containing useful advice and information about travelling to their school on foot, by bike, by public transport and car sharing
- Survey all Year 6 pupils and parents to find out about any travel issues and concerns – this may also help identify any travel needs or special transport requirements. Year 7 pupils may be able to answer some of the questions and concerns.

## **Raising Awareness of Active Travel Choices**

The more information you can make available to pupils about active and sustainable travel choices at this stage of development prior to their move the better.

Research suggests that habitual patterns are more likely to be examined when a major change is taking place such as moving house or indeed moving to a new school. Children can be made aware of the physical health, environmental and road safety benefits that active travel can bring - young people living near to their secondary school could be encouraged at this point to choose to travel on foot or by bicycle.