

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council School Travel Plan Guidance Notes



December 2013

Guidance Notes for Completing your School Travel Plan

What is a Travel Plan

A School Travel Plan is a simple written document which identifies the issues surrounding the journey your pupils make to and from school, sets out agreed aims to overcome these issues and outlines a series of practical steps to reduce the number of car trips made to school by parents, children and staff and improve children's safety on the journey to and from school. A School Travel Plan benefits pupils, parents, staff and the wider community by promoting sustainable and safer transport on the journey to and from school.

A school can use its School Travel Plan to demonstrate a real commitment to the promotion of health, environmental and community issues. It will help to support and define school policies in relation to travel which can then be embedded in the ethos and ongoing development and improvement plans of the school.

In Smarter Travel, the Government's National Transport Policy Document, all schools are required to have a Travel Plan. This booklet tells you what your School Travel Plan should include, allowing you to achieve real change for your school travel habits.

Cover Page

Add the name of your school and the date you completed your School Travel Plan. You could add a photo of your school underneath, or run a competition amongst pupils to design the front cover.

Section 1: School Details

Description of school: Include the following details:

- Name, address and contact details for the Plan
- Type of school, primary or post primary or special school
- Age range and number of pupils.
- Opening times/pre-school and after-school clubs and activities/extended schools
- Existing policies regarding school travel
- Regular off-site journeys during the school day
- Other initiatives like Green Schools and Healthy Schools

Description of school's location: Make this as detailed as possible, so that the reader can gain a good impression of where your school is located. If possible, please include a labelled site plan and map of your catchment area. Also details of nearby roads should be provided, i.e. any pedestrian crossings, any traffic calming, nearby bus stops, nearby train stations.

Existing facilities: Include details like the number of school entrances; whether there are separate entrances for cyclists and pedestrians; the number of car and cycle parking spaces for staff and visitors; whether you have a school traffic warden nearby; whether you run cycle training; whether cycling is allowed inside the school gate; whether you have lockers for storing cycle helmets and showers for staff, etc. Photos of your school site would be a good idea in this section.

Section 2: Travel Issues

Give details of the travel issues or problems at your school. These can be in text or bullet form. It should be clear how these problems have been identified and when and by who, i.e. parents, residents, students etc. It would also be useful to identify future developments which may increase traffic levels or travel patterns. This section should also outline things people are interested in, i.e. setting up a walking bus, more cycle parking etc

Section 3: School Travel Team

In order to develop and promote the school's travel plan, a school travel team is needed. This should be led by a member of school staff or a parent with real enthusiasm and a willingness to champion sustainable travel. The working group should try to meet as frequently as possible whilst developing and implementing the School Travel Plan. The group should be made up of a variety of people including possibly teachers, parents, pupils and parents association representative.

In this section, give the names and roles of all those in the School Travel Team that will be responsible for implanting the School Travel Plan and a brief outline of tasks undertaken during the project.

Section 4: Survey Results

How all pupils travel to school:

A hands-up survey for each class should be used for the baseline on how all pupils travel to school, where available. If pupil numbers are high and it is not feasible to survey all pupils, a representative sample should be surveyed. One option would be to survey a minimum of one class in each year, provided the allocation of pupils to different classes is not related to factors such as socio- economic group. Alternatively, a random sample could be done based on the number of pupils on the school roll.

How all pupils would like (realistically) to travel to school: It is essential that you complete this part of the table. Please make sure that children give realistic options for travelling.

Analysis of data collection: What did you learn from the data collection about how pupils travel to school (the most/least-used mode of transport, possible reasons for this)? How does this data compare with how pupils would like to travel?

Pupils could help to analyse this data and make graphs which you could include in the travel plan.

Analysis of mapping exercise: What did you learn from the mapping exercise about where children live, how they travel and where danger spots are? Are there any obvious concentrations of families and how do these relate to travel modes? Have you gained any ideas about measures you might adopt as part of your travel plan, e.g. walking buses or car sharing?

Engage the pupils in analysing the mapping exercise and thinking about possible options for change.

Consultation with pupils, parents, staff and teacher This section should demonstrate that the School Travel Plan is the result of joint efforts by all interested parties and, as a minimum, consultation must include parents, pupils, staff and teacher. A table format could be included to outline who, when, how groups were consulted. Evidence of the consultation must be included, either as an appendix or in the main body of the plan: e.g. detailed findings from questionnaires with pupils, parents and staff, parents association, board of management meeting agendas and minutes, newsletters, displays to elicit parents' views or concerns, etc.

Once again, pupils could help with the analysis and recording of questionnaires in text and graph form.

Consultation with other parties: Who did you consult when compiling your travel plan (apart from pupils, parents, staff and teacher), and how did you consult them? (Examples might include the local authority, Gardai local residents). Attach as appendices, or include in the main body of the plan, evidence of consultation, e.g. minutes of meetings with road safety officer or school travel plan adviser, letters to local residents, parish council minutes, articles in local magazine, etc.

Note: If you have not consulted with other parties when drawing up your School Travel Plan you must include something in Section 7 about how you are going to make relevant bodies aware of your completed plan.

Section 5: Aims of the Travel Plan

This section must include clear statements of intent, which should be linked to the problems and issues that have been identified. The following are some examples of aims:

- To reduce the number of car trips made to the school at the beginning and end of the school day.
- To encourage more walking and /or cycling to school.
- To encourage more use of public transport.
- To improve the health of the school community by promoting walking.
- To create or improve opportunities for pupils to become independent travellers.
- To promote the opportunity for exercise by encouraging walking to school.
- To improve safety on the school journey for those walking and cycling.
- To raise awareness about the health benefits of walking and cycling.

You can, and of course should, come up with your own aim which link to the needs and priorities of your school.

Section 6: Targets and Action Plan

Target: What are you trying to achieve? E.g. increase the number cycling by 10%, cut back on individual cars arriving at the school gates by 10%, increase the number of children walking by 15%, improve provision for Road Safety Education. Your targets must be SMART – i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. You are advised to have one short-term target (a year hence) and a longer term target over about three years – e.g. In Year 1 reduce use of the car for the school journey by 5%; by end of Year 3 reduce use of the car for the school journey by 20%. (Where a target for mode share exceeds levels indicated in the preference survey, then the target could be considered unachievable and unrealistic and therefore not SMART. If the target is set above preference level a clear case needs to be made as to why.)

Target date: When do you hope to achieve your target? Please give a month/term and year (see above for short and longer-term targets).

Actions: What specific measures will you take to achieve this target? For example, set up a walking bus, set up cycle training at school. Any measure or action that has been identified within the body of the School Travel Plan should be included within the action plan (or a reason given as to why it is not taken forward). (See Appendix A).

Person responsible: Who will be responsible for these actions? What is their role within the school? Please make sure that you complete this section, ensuring that one person is not responsible for all actions. Spreading the load around the school will help to sustain the plan. It is advisable to identify specific individuals from larger organisations where their help and support are required to achieve actions identified.

Completion date: Make sure that you give a month/term and year for completing the action.

Target for staff travel in secondary schools: Secondary schools should set a target and devise an action plan for reducing car use amongst staff, since staff vehicles account for a high percentage of traffic to school.

Section 7: Curriculum Work and Awareness raising

Curriculum work and awareness raising you already do: Give details of curriculum work and awareness raising that are already taking place at the school. This should cover road safety education, and the health and environmental issues around travel choices.

Curriculum work you plan to do: Give details of curriculum work and awareness raising that you intend to do to help embed the travel plan ethos at your school – e.g. in Geography, Science, PSHE, etc.

How will you inform and involve the staff? How will you inform and involve parents? Give details of how you will try to raise awareness of the health, safety and environmental benefits of walking and cycling amongst staff and parents.

Section 8: Monitoring and Reviewing

Your School Travel Plan must show how you intend to monitor your progress and the process for reviewing the plan. This must include details of:

- Date of the next hands-up survey
- Date of annual review
 - Date of complete review State a month and a year. Schools should re-write their travel plans every 3 years to reflect changes within the school, progress since the first plan, and new problems and opportunities related to school travel.
- Who will be responsible for ensuring that the surveys and review will take place?
- A commitment that the review will consider pupil travel needs arising from new developments in education and transport provision.

Section 9: Signatures

The School Travel Plan should be signed and approved by the School Principal. You may wish to also have a representative from the Parents Association and the student body council to sign the plan.

Where the School Travel team or a class have played a large part in developing the School Travel Plan, please include their signatures.

You are also encouraged to include the signatures of any other parties who have contributed significantly to the development of the School Travel Plan or who will have a role to play in its delivery.

Section 10: Summary

A successful Travel Plan will address environmental and health issues and provides increased travel choices for students, parents and teachers. A good School Travel Plan will aim to do the following things:

- reduce the number of vehicles on the school run
- improve safety on the school journey
- encourage healthy and environmentally friendly travel choices

Appendix A: Useful information

School Travel Plan ideas

Here are some ideas that will help support your School Travel Plan work, raising awareness and linking it to curriculum activities.

- Hold a School Travel Plan media launch
- Set up a School Travel Plan notice board
- Organise regular walk/ cycle to school events
- Take part in Bike Week (in June)
- Take part in European Mobility Week (September)
- WOW (Walk Once a Week)
- COW (Cycle on Wednesday)
- Educational Resources
- Ask the Council Road Safety Officer to visit the school
- Car Sharing Day
- Walking Bus Day
- Park and Stride

Useful Websites

1. Toolkit for School Travel, National Transport Authority

www.nationaltransport.ie/downloads/NTA-Toolkit-for-School-Travel-Final.pdf

2. An Taisce Green Schools www.greenschoolsireland.org

3. Road Safety Authority – Road Safety and Travel tips

- a. www.safetoschool.ie

- b. www.rsa.ie

