

## **School Newspaper Snippets to consider**

### **Walking To School**

- Walking to School is a great way for children to start the day as they will arrive at school fresh and alert. Smaller children can enjoy chatting with their parents during the walk and older children will enjoy the company of their friends. Socially and emotionally this can be an advantage.
- Children who walk to school with an adult have more opportunities to practice their road safety skills.
- Walking is an excellent way to build up regular exercise. Research shows that lack of exercise as a child can lead to ill health later in life as an adult.
- Young children should always be encouraged to hold your hand and walk away from the kerb.
- Parents of young children can share the duty of getting them to school by setting up a Walking Bus. A walking bus is a group of children walking to school under the supervision of at least two trained adults, one leading the group (driver) and one at the rear (conductor). If you wish to take part in this scheme with your school please contact your Head Teacher.
- Not everyone lives close enough to cycle or walk to school but most areas have a great local bus service. Try using the Traveline Journey Planner to organise your preferred route. Using the bus to travel to and from school is a fun, healthy way to get around. It reduces pollution and congestion by having fewer cars around school.

### **Be Safe Be Seen**

- Even through the cold of winter it can still be a fun time for everyone to walk to school. Child pedestrian casualties though are most likely to happen in the darker mornings and afternoons. Encourage your children to keep to well-lit areas and wear bright and reflective clothing so they can be safe and be seen.
- Pedestrians and cyclists may see drivers but the drivers may not see them even during daylight hours because the sun is lower in winter.
- Ensure you and your children are visible to other road users. Wear reflective clothing at night: it shows up in car headlights. Florescent clothing is not so visible after dark.
- Cyclists should always use lights after dark, when it is raining, or if the weather is overcast. It is illegal to ride a bike on the road without lights after dark; a white light is required at the front of the cycle and red at the rear.

### **School Travel Plans**

- A School Travel Plan is a set of agreed measures to encourage a reduction in the number of car trips to and from school by parents and staff. In turn this will improve the safety of pupils on their journey to and from school.
- School Travel Plans aim to contribute to better air quality and reduce congestion. A range of measures such as walking buses and safer routes to school can be suggested for this purpose.

## **Cycling**

- Cycling is a fun, environmentally friendly way to journey to and from school and helps to keep you fit. Parents can ride with younger children and older children will enjoy the independence cycling offers. It is important to stay safe when cycling, so make sure the right safety gear is worn and that the bike has been checked and is fit for the road.
- Safer Cycling courses are available for delivery within school to ensure children receive proper training. If you or your children cycle, read the [Highway Code](#) – it is not just for drivers! Road signs and traffic lights apply to cyclists too. Pavements should not be ridden on unless signs specifically indicate otherwise.

## **Car**

- If it is unavoidable for you to transport your child to and from school by car, consider sharing the journey with a friend. Car sharing is a great way to reduce congestion, share costs, cut stress and reduce wear and tear on your car whilst reducing parking problems around school.
- Parking a little distance away from school and walking the last part of the journey with children helps them arrive at school fresh and alert. Younger children can enjoy chatting to parents during the walk and older children will enjoy the company of their friends.

## **Travelling in Taxis**

- If you have to travel by taxi, make sure it has seat belts. Ask whether a child restraint can be provided or whether you can use your own. Some black cabs have an integral booster cushion in the rear for older children.
- If the seat belts cannot be used (because the buckle is hidden under the seat, for example) ask the driver to fix it. If it cannot be fixed, do not use the vehicle – ask for a replacement.