



North
Northamptonshire
Council

Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy

Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy 2024

www.northnorthants.gov.uk

Document Version Control

****Complete this section, making sure to include the following information**:**

Author (Post holder title): Sally Crew, Interim Transport Strategy Manager

Type of document: Final version

Version Number: 1.0

Document File Name:

Issue date: 21/02/2024

Approval date and by who (CMT / committee):

Document held by (name/section):

For internal publication only or external also?: Internal/external

Document stored on Council website or Intranet?: website

Next review date: August 2024

Change History

Issue	Date	Comments

NB: Draft versions 0.1 - final published versions 1.0

Consultees

Internal	External
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners / Organisation(s)

Distribution List

Internal	External
e.g. Individual(s) / Group / Section	e.g. Stakeholders / Partners /Organisation(s)

Links to other documents

Document	Link

Additional Comments to note

****Make any additional comments as might be relevant here****

Contents

Section	Page
1.0 Introduction	6
2.0 Introduction of the strategy	9
3.0 Travel to Education in North Northamptonshire	10
4.0 Delivering Change	13
5.0 Bringing it all together	24
6.0 Monitoring framework	25
Appendix A Policy context	26

Executive summary

This strategy supports schools, pupils and parents/carers to travel more sustainably for all journeys to school. It supports healthier and more active lifestyles for staff, pupils and parents/carers improving their health and emotional wellbeing whilst bringing the whole community the wider benefits of higher footfall for local businesses, tackling school parking issues and reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions.

North Northamptonshire Council has developed the Sustainable Travel to Education in line with the requirements outlined in the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Developed in partnership across the authority this strategy underscores the need for a co-ordinated approach across the council and beyond if we are to achieve the targets and objectives we have set ourselves. The strategy will be reviewed regularly and update as required.

The strategy sets four targets which are:

1. Children and young people aged 5 to 18 should average at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity everyday
2. Every school should have a school travel plan by 2033
3. All schools should have AQ below WHO air pollution limits
4. 55% of primary school-aged children walk to school by 2025

The delivery plan sets three principles to deliver the strategy, to be collaborative in a child led manner and to follow the avoid, shift, improve approach and follow the safe systems principles. This supports a programme of travel planning, education, road safety, training and infrastructure improvements. By working together with schools and colleges, parents and guardians and with children and young people themselves we will encourage more journeys to be undertaken actively or sustainably.

Introduction

Everyday children, young people and their families pack bags, walk, wheel, cycle, get the bus, train or car to nursery, school or college. A ritual that bookends the school day.

Travelling to nursery, school or college by walking, wheeling, bus or train is good for children's health, wellbeing and the environment.

Walking, wheeling or cycling to school wakes up the mind and body¹. It allows children to chat to family or friends and arrive healthy, refreshed and ready to learn. The walk to school with parents and carers also provides an opportunity for children to learn road safety skills in an interactive and safe environment. For most children it is the preferred way to get to school.

The whole community benefits when more children walk to school from higher footfall for local businesses, to tackling school parking issues, reducing traffic congestion and carbon emissions.

Making a change to active and sustainable journeys is not possible for many people and requires all parts of the school community to support this type of travel. It requires local understanding and knowledge, considered measures and ongoing support to change to active and sustainable transport.

This strategy sets out how we will work with others to encourage to travel to school or college in a healthy, sustainable and safe way.

This strategy is a living document and should be considered alongside the education, land use, travel and transport policies and strategies emerging or adopted by the Council.

In this strategy we use the general term school to encompass all the different learning establishments.

We know that children travel to school with a variety of different guardians, including parents, grandparents, childminders and friends. In this strategy, we will use the term 'parents and carers' to refer to any adult accompanying a child to school.

Why do we need a Sustainable Travel to Education strategy?

Nationally we can see that even with the benefits, the number of children walking to school has remained relatively static despite the government's target of 55% of primary school-aged children to walk to school by 2025.²

In North Northamptonshire most children and young people already use active (walking, wheeling and cycling) and sustainable (public transport) travel options to get to school. The 2011 school census from NNC schools shows that 61% of pupils walk to primary school and 46% walk to secondary school.

We have seen an increase in children entitled to free travel arrangements on grounds of distance and/or income, or if they have individual needs due to special educational needs, disability or mobility problems. With busy lifestyles, changes in travel habits and the fact that children no longer necessarily go to the nearest school means that many are dependent upon free travel arrangements or on parents driving them every day.

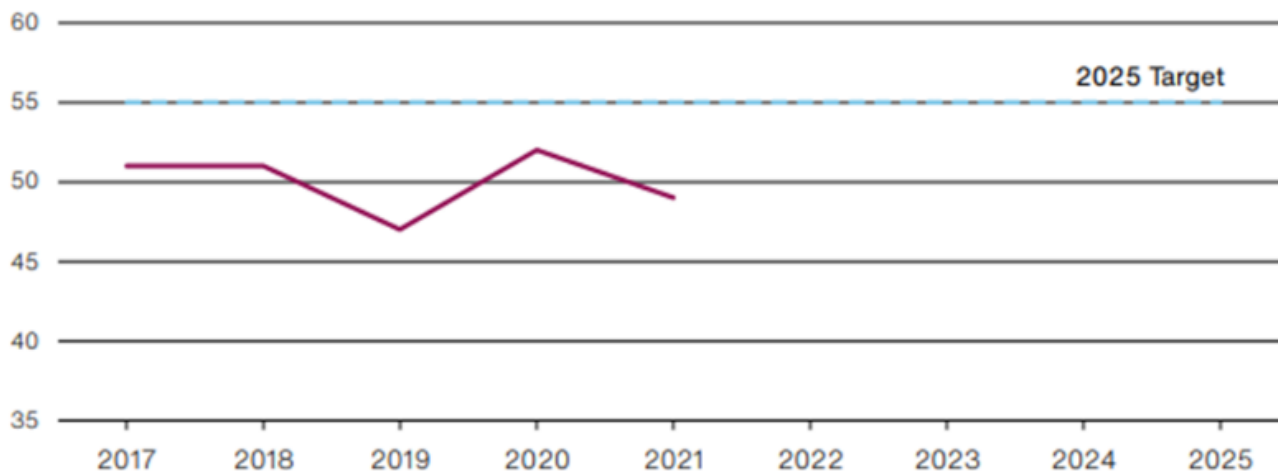
¹ [Children who walk to school concentrate better \(sciencenordic.com\)](https://www.sciencenordic.com)

² Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (2017)

Figure 1

Progress against DfT's objective to increase the percentage of children aged 5 to 10 walking to school

Children aged 5 to 10 walking to school (%)



Our Responsibilities

As a local authority with educational responsibilities, we support children and their families to access education in North Northamptonshire.

The Education and Inspections Act (2006) placed a range of duties upon local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport, intending to support the choices and flexibility of educational provision across the country.

The Act outlined four main elements to promoting sustainable modes of travel, including the assessment and audit of sustainable travel options within the local authority, the development of a strategy for the promotion of sustainable travel to schools and other educational or training facilities. As such, North Northamptonshire Council is required to produce, publish and maintain its Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy (SMoTS).

North Northamptonshire Council are required to arrange free, suitable, home to school transport for children of compulsory school age, who are eligible, to their nearest suitable

qualifying school in line with section 508B of the Education Act 1996 and the Government's statutory guidance 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age' (June 2023).

Additionally, to support all children and young people (aged 0 to 25) with special educational needs and disabilities we are required to have a Local Offer according to the following legislation:

- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014 (0 to 25 years)
- Department for Education Regulations

The Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) Home to School Transport Policy (April 2020) has been consulted to inform the acceptable walking and cycling distances for journeys to schools in the county. The Policy defines the appropriate walking distances for pupils under the Education Act 1996, stating:

"Section 444(5) defines walking distance as 2 miles for pupils under 8, and 3 miles for older pupils, in both cases measured by the nearest available route."

Post-16 pupils may be eligible for other sources of financial help, depending on household income, to help with education costs including travel. There is no legal obligation to provide free home to school or college transport to students over the age of 16 or for those who do not meet the statutory requirements through the Education Act. However, there is a requirement for the local authority to consider unmet demand through the Transport Act 1985.

Section 63(1)(a), explains that local transport authorities must: "... secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the Council consider it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the county which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose."

This is considered as part of the North Northants Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which outlines the authority's approach to facilitating commercial bus operators to meet the current and unmet demand. The current provision sees that the non-statutory travel to school plays a substantial part in terms of funding of the commercial services and some tendered services within the local authority area. This is facilitated through commercial bus ticketing arrangements.

How did we develop the school travel strategy?

To develop this strategy, we looked at current evidence, policies, local travel trends and behaviours.

We focused on how children and young people's journey to and from nursery, school and college. Starting with where they go to school, the distance travelled, how they travelled to school, the current infrastructure to support this and the infrastructure within the school when they get there.

We also reviewed recent surveys of how children travel to school and a sample of school travel plans prepared by local schools.

We listened to local concerns from the school community from previous engagement.

We identified opportunities and initiatives to further increase the number of children using active and sustainable modes to travel to school.

Introduction to the strategy

‘Children and young people improve their health and emotional wellbeing through sustainable travel.’

This is our vision, an aspiration. It is our long-term ambition. It is something that we have set our sights on, a vision that we will strive to achieve.

Our Values

Our vision sets out, at the highest level, what we are aiming to achieve. Our values on the other hand, are like a set of guiding principles. They help guide us in the way we provide services and how we will achieve our vision and deliver our priorities for the future.

North Northamptonshire Council’s values, as chosen by its staff, state that the Council and its staff will be:

- Customer-focused
- Respectful
- Efficient
- Supportive
- Trustworthy

Our Objectives

1. Promote and encourage healthier lifestyles for children and young people and create active and sustainable journeys to education
2. Develop and embed lifelong road safety skills in children and young people
3. Contribute to creating safer environments and improve active and sustainable travel options
4. Work with children, young people, parents/carers, educational establishments and the school community to understand travel challenges and promote the options available
5. Support and encourage educational establishments to develop and maintain travel plans
6. Build and strengthen relationships with stakeholders by collaborating with everyone to deliver the sustainable travel to education strategy

Our values make us who we are:



North
Northamptonshire
Council



Customer-
focused



Respectful



Efficient



Supportive



Trustworthy

Travel to Education in North Northamptonshire

Learning in North Northamptonshire

North Northamptonshire has 4 maintained nursery schools and many private nurseries, 113 primary schools, 20 secondary schools and 8 special schools. There are currently approximately 117,000 children attending primary and secondary schools.

According to the latest performance data, 73% of primary schools in the area are rated as good or above, below the government target of 85%. (In contrast the secondary schools are performing above the Government target, with 78% being rated as good or above, 7% over the national aim).

There are just over 70,000 young people aged 15 years or under living in North Northamptonshire. This is set to increase with our growing and changing community. The latest Local Housing Need for North Northamptonshire is 1,784 net additional dwellings per annum which would equate to 35,680 dwellings over the period 2021- 2041. We need to make sure that we have the right infrastructure in place for this new population, and to support future growth including transport links, schools and health facilities, as well as activities for residents.

In addition, with 21% of the authority's population being under 16, access to education, employment and training will increase in importance over the coming years.

There are plans for additional schools across North Northamptonshire, especially places for those pupils with special educational needs and disabilities.

Journey to/from school

With over 115,000 children and young people attending education every day, the journey to and from pre-school, school and college has a significant impact on the community.

Most children walk to school, the 2011 school census from NNC schools shows that 61% of pupils walk to primary school. Walking to school benefits children's health, as 3 in 10 children in North Northamptonshire do not achieve their minimum recommended physical activity level of one hour per day.³ The next most common way to travel to primary school was being driven, with a small percentage (3%) taking public transport and/or accessing school transport.

For secondary schools, walking to school falls to 46%, with greater levels of public transport and or school transport followed by being driven to school. Cycling to school rises from 0% to 2% as pupils move through the education system.

Table 1, North Northamptonshire Travel to School, School Census 2011

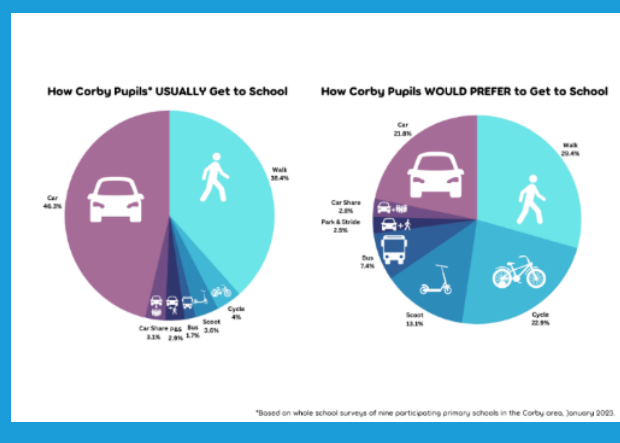
	Walk %	Bi cycle %	Car %	PT/school transport/ other %
Secondary Schools	46	2	18	19
Middle Deemed Secondary	51	0	12	4
Primary Schools	61	0	34	3
Other	44	2	14	36
Total	54	1	26	13

³ [Physical activity guidelines for children and young people - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://www.nhs.uk)

School Travel Survey 2021 - Corby

Over 2,000 pupils from nine schools across the Corby area took part in our School Travel Survey in 2021. To better understand how pupils currently travel to school - and find out how they would like to.

Overall, rates of walking to school are lower in the Corby area than the UK average of around 50%. The results show that pupils have a strong preference to cycle or scoot and not be driven to school.



Most children and young people in North Northamptonshire live close to their school. With consideration to all primary schools in North Northamptonshire, around 75% of pupils lived within 1 mile of school, except in mainly rural areas where this reduced to 66%, still a significant proportion.

The main rural primary schools have around double the pupils living beyond 2 miles than all other areas at 23⁴%.

Table 2, Distance to Primary School in North Northants

		< 0.5 mile	< 1 mile	< 2 miles	>2 miles
Total number pupils travel distance	Urban	20,197	8,029	4,860	7,141
	Rural	5,797	1,814	1,245	2,298

For secondary's, again schools within mainly rural areas were again lower at just 36% of pupils living within in 1 mile of their school compared to 43% in urban areas, 51% areas with significant rural areas, and 47% in largely rural areas.

Mainly rural areas at secondary level had around 50% of pupils living beyond 2 miles, approximately 20% more than the other areas.

Nationally, the average distance between home and school for primary school aged children has steadily increased: in 2002/3, the average distance travelled to school by primary school children was 1.5 miles, compared to 1.7 miles in 2018 (NTS0615, National Travel Survey, 2018).

Time and distance are strongly related as factors contributing to falling rates of walking to school. Not only have schools, on average, moved further away from where people live, but parents report having insufficient time to walk their child to school.

Many pupils who can walk to school are doing so and only a very small proportion of those within a reasonable walking distance from school are being driven to school or are taking public transport or school buses.

⁴ TDM report

With over 115,000 children and young people travelling to school and college, despite the majority walking and wheeling to school, there is a significant number of pupils taking sustainable travel, primarily buses to school.

Every day NNC provides transport for 4,133 mainstream students to and from 54 schools. Ten schools alone account for 3,614 of those pupils. In addition, there are a further 173 students using the Home to School Service under the Post 16 Policy. The local bus network in North Northamptonshire has 80 buses providing 2,800 seats as part of the journey to school as part of the commercial bus network.

In 2021, 16% of households in North Northamptonshire have no access to a car or van, 40.4% have one car or van, 32% have two and 11.6% of households have access to 3 or more cars or vans. It is important to ensure that individuals can access key services and facilities through ensuring that passenger transport alternatives are available to serve areas where car ownership levels are low.

Traffic speeds have a direct relationship with the actual and perceived safety of a street. In North Northamptonshire, we have 51 schools that have 20mph limits in the immediate vicinity, 43% of all schools. Achieving slower speeds, through a mix of slower speed limits, engineering and enforcement is an important part of making the streets around our schools safer and more attractive places to walk.

The infrastructure to support active travel such as shelters, cycle and scooter parking can impact on how people travel and prefer to travel to school. It is important that this

infrastructure is provided to support active travel to education.

You said, Home to School Policy

In early 2023, the Council consulted on the Home to School Policy. As part of this consultation, we asked the community for their view of possible travel options for the journey to school.

Suggestions included park and ride, car share schemes, offering a discount for bicycles and cycling proficiency courses. There was also an indication that better cycle and walking routes were required too, with meeting points for children to ride to school together.

Regarding bus use, further suggestions were a free pass or reduced cost for public transport and a percentage contribution towards driving lessons for Post-16 to be able to transport themselves.

Some options centered around changes to admissions with children only being offered a place at their nearest school and withdrawing an option of attending a school more than three miles away.

It was also suggested that bus routes could be combined and/or the size of buses used altered, to be more cost effective, supported by more bus stops and logistical support for children, for example at zebra crossings.

For those using home to school transport and not at their nearest school, it was suggested there could be a charge per mile for the difference between the nearest and chosen school so that costs could be recouped.

Delivering Change

This section provides a range of interventions to ensure that children and young people across North Northamptonshire can fully benefit from travelling to school actively and sustainability. It includes initiatives and interventions supported by a monitoring framework.

The strategy follows children and young people through the following stages:

- 0 to 5
- 5 to 11
- 11 to 16
- 16 to 18
- Post 18

The main school-related transitions, when children and young people move into, between and from schools are the:

- home to school transition, which is the move from home or early years settings into primary school
- move from primary to secondary school
- moves between schools, particularly in-year transfers

This strategy hopes to deliver change for children and young people. Interventions are intended as being engaging, collaborative and transformational with a children and young people first approach.

We follow the Avoid, Shift, Improve Model; we will look at actions that can help us avoid travelling. Then actions that can shift journeys onto public transport and active travel, and finally actions that can help us improve the technology we are using to emit less carbon.

When delivering change, we will embed a Safe Systems Approach with a particular focus on reducing risk and managing speeds to reduce collision.

Getting the basics right

It is important that we have the right support, understanding and infrastructure to deliver change. By establishing strong connections with partners, working with schools to develop school travel plans, to design in active travel in our new schools it is imperative that we get the basics right.

Supporting Healthy Schools

The Northamptonshire Healthy Schools Award is a set of evidence-based standards designed to improve the health and wellbeing of whole school communities. It promotes a whole school approach to the following areas:

- mental health and wellbeing
- healthy eating
- physical activity
- personal, social, health and economic education

Teaching about the importance of physical activity, ensuring a supportive school culture and physical environment and engagement of the wider community is key to the healthy school's programme.

Target one - Children and young people aged 5 to 18 should average at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity everyday

Schools should mainstream active travel into the school day, looking for opportunities for children and young people to experience their local area on foot, to normalise walking for short trips and learn road safety skills interactively within the school day, for example as part of geography lessons.

This benefits the children whilst contributing to the outcomes of the Healthy Schools Framework whilst supporting the delivery of the School Travel Plan process which is set out below.

Delivering School Travel Plans

A School Travel Plan (STP) is a document which is led by the school that sets out how a school will promote safer, active and sustainable travel, with the main emphasis on reducing the number of journeys made by private vehicles.

It is vital that any school seeking to embed active travel and the walk to school into their culture brings children and families along on the journey, so that the whole school community has had the opportunity to be involved.

Children will have unique insights and should be actively sought. Schools must also ensure they engage with pupils with additional and/or access needs, so that any initiatives undertaken meet the needs of the whole school community.

With school budgets under pressure, it can be hard to find the resource to support active travel schemes. In the current climate of high demands on teacher time, investing in the walk to school allows schools to reap the rewards of physical activity without impacting on lesson time whilst contributing to the health and wellbeing of pupils.

Transport needs of schools

From pupils, to staff, to visitors, deliveries, servicing and waste collection many people are accessing schools every day and supporting its operation. It is important to consider all the travel needs of a school and this is an important part of the school travel plan process.

We will support schools to manage school deliveries and servicing.

A key part of a STP is the School Route Audit. This assesses streets from the perspective of school children, parents with buggies and people with limited mobility. This helps to build evidence about the condition of pathways and the roads, safety issues and convenience, which can be used to propose ways to improve the walking environment and make walking a more attractive option.

By improving the physical environment in and around education settings, we can impact positively on both the physical and mental wellbeing of children and young people.⁵

Target two -Every school should have a school travel plan by 2033

All schools will be encouraged to develop or update their travel plan. This will become a key requirement before any consideration of highway investment can be considered by the authority. The STP is supported by the authority providing a travel advisor to work directly with schools. As schools undertake STPs this will create a more comprehensive data set to inform future investment and interventions.

⁵ Each intervention would require an evidence based business case to demonstrate value for money their would be the need to secure approvals from local stakeholders, statutory consultees, politicians and senior leadership team of the authority.

Modeshifts Stars (Sustainable Travel Accreditation and Recognition for Schools Programme) is a national school awards scheme to recognise schools demonstrating excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. Schools can be awarded with a Bronze, Silver or Gold star if they choose to participate in the scheme.

As part of the STP process schools will be encouraged to complete the Modeshift STARs mode of travel survey annually to provide information on how pupils travel to school, what active travel infrastructure is in and around the school and to record their progress towards achieving the national Modeshift STARs Award and to inform resource decisions.

Forming a relationship between the two accreditations systems, Modeshift STARs and Healthy Schools supports a wholistic approach to supporting active travel and its outcomes.

New schools

As a local authority with education responsibilities, we understand the education need and plan accordingly, particularly with the planned growth in North Northamptonshire.

Designing new schools sustainably, focusing on low carbon design, is crucial for futureproofing, given the long lifespan of schools and education buildings typically have. Supporting these new schools should encourage active and sustainable travel to improve the health and wellbeing of young people.

When designing new schools, it is essential that the integration of a new school into the surrounding area is considered. This is the first step towards encouraging active and sustainable travel to school.

When designing facilities children and young people and staff needs should be engaged as the ultimate users of the school. There are many ways to do this from surveying what already exists and how people feel about it,

through the development and implementation of the strategic (or master) plan, to the ongoing development, management and use of the space.

A zonal approach to school entrances can assist in encouraging active travel; providing a quality entrance to the school, then a traffic-free zone closest to the school, followed by a drop off or public transport zone.

High quality facilities such as secure cycle sheds, scooter parking, parent shelters and well-designed access routes should be provided. These can all contribute to promoting sustainable transport. These should be supported and maintained through a School Travel Plan.

Developer contributions

Where a new school is required because of development, the full cost of its design, construction and fit out will be sought, in addition to which land will be required to be provided to the Council at nil cost.

The anticipated cost of the school will be provided at the time of planning application and secured through a S106 agreement.

Developments may also be required to contribute towards school transport or the provision of safe routes to schools.

Working together

The wider community through local community groups and social enterprises play a vital role in supporting active lives and encouraging and supporting active travel. It is vital to build on existing knowledge and collaborations to bring the most benefit and accessing the tools that support this collaboration.

Sharing knowledge and best practice through accreditation schemes such as Healthy Schools is one of the best ways to ensure that schools can learn from outstanding examples.

Government initiatives to increase active and safe travel to school such as Bikeability for children, their families and carers, Walk to School Outreach and School Streets are central to improving the take up of active and sustainable travel.

Developing an integrated approach to how we engage with schools and encompass work streams such as the Daily Mile, air quality monitoring, playable streets and spaces is the foundation of clear communication.

Target three – All schools should have AQ below WHO air pollution limits

Tested during the pandemic, staggering school starts can improve air quality, reduce carbon emissions and costs for the local authority, schools and parents.

Working with the North Northamptonshire Enhanced Partnership we can explore how to make bus services accessible, reviewing routes, capacity and timetables. Additionally, information from bus ticketing technology can be used to determine usage for school travel, i.e. smart ticket logging or similar informing decision making. Moving travel onto local bus services away from discreet transport provision could make attendance at after school activities more inclusive.

Explore the potential for switching journeys from car travel and “closed” bus provision to the local bus network to give students and parents more choice within the current economic expenditure through the Enhanced Partnership.

Many communities working together to share the journey to school through car sharing happens and this may be an option for families travelling from a similar direction, especially to rural schools where the car may be the primary mode of travel. This can help to cut congestion outside the school gates.

Where issues are identified we will continue to work actively with the Police partners to increase visibility and awareness of parking risks around schools.

Early Years

What we will do

Adopt a whole family approach and work with established programmes such as Strong Start, social and community groups to encourage active and safe travel, introducing healthy habits early and contributing to children's wider learning journey.

Why

The transition to parenthood, from conception to age 2, is widely recognised as a crucial period in the life course of a developing child. It is also a critical time for families a study by the British Red Cross found that more than 8 in 10 mothers (83%) under the age of 30 had feelings of loneliness some of the time, while 43% said they felt lonely all the time.

Integrated services such as Strong Start offer the opportunity to access a broad range of support and services. Strong Start is a local service, staffed by skilled professionals, who give advice and support to families with babies and young children in key areas of development. The team works closely with health and children's services and supports any parent who contacts them.

As children grow in early years, they are beginning to learn by doing things for themselves, by exploring and investigating, watching and listening, talking and discussing, creating, and communicating.

It is important that all families are offered the opportunity to consider what will meet their needs. From baby carriers, buggies with ride along boards, bike child seats or adapted bikes there are many tools to support active travel as children grow.

Teaching young children the rules of the road is essential. It's important they're able to make their own decisions and understand what keeps them safe.

By law, children under 3 must be in a child car seat and it is important that they are installed correctly.

How

- Work with existing programs such as Strong Start
- Support active travel within the community through locally focused events and activities
- Support learning to wheel (scooter, balance bikes, etc) working with local partners
- Support programmes to provide adapted bikes, cargo bikes to support families to cycle together
- Promote road safety through working with the Northamptonshire Road Safety Alliance to promote and support car seat fitting
- Facilitate early years settings to develop and deliver travel plans

Support the transition to Primary School

As a local authority with education responsibilities, we support children and their families to access education in North Northamptonshire. Through this process we encourage families to consider active travel when choosing their preferred school in the registration process.

In April 2022, 3,857 reception places were allocated for pupils to start in September 2022 in North Northamptonshire. We recognise that transition to primary school can evoke emotions in children which places more emphasis on a well-prepared transition to school. Aspects of the transition preparation will include support for the school run, which may include walking, scooting or driving in the car to school.

5 to 11 year olds

What we will do

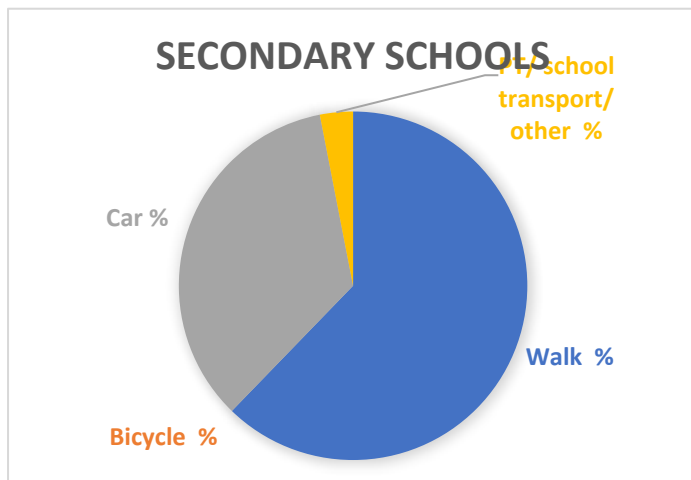
We will build on the skills learnt in early years, building skills and independence when travelling, whilst focusing on walking and wheeling to school.

As part of the Healthy Schools system, we will support schools to develop school travel plans.

Why

In North Northamptonshire there are 113 schools which include infants, primary and junior schools. On average in NNC 61% of pupils walk to school⁶. Whilst cycling to school represents 1% of primary school children.

Figure 2, North Northamptonshire Travel to School, Primary Schools, School Census 2011



The statutory walking distances for a child under the age of 8 is eligible for free travel to their nearest suitable⁷ school if it is more than 2 miles from their home. This rises to more than 3 miles from their home when the child turns 8.

Target four - 55% of primary school-aged children walk to school by 2025

There can be local factors and perceptions that will influence the decision on how a child travels to primary school. Road safety is often cited as a significant barrier, 24% of respondents as to why they do not cycle more and too much traffic was also cited by 16% of respondents⁸ just 14% of parents feeling very confident to use the Highway Code to teach their children to cycle on the road.

It is important to increase the activity levels in children as just under 1 in 4 (24%) of children in reception class were overweight or obese in 2019/20 rising to just over a third (34%) of children in Year 6.⁹

How

- Support the development of school travel plans and through STPs to work with schools on School Route Audits and their implementation.

⁷ Suitable as defined in the 'Travel to school for children of compulsory school age' (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁸ Department for Transport: Walking and Cycling Statistics, England: 2019

⁹ [Director of Public Health Annual Report 2020-22 \(1\).pdf](#)

⁶ School Census, 2011

- Support high quality active travel infrastructure in schools such as shelters, scooters and cycle parking.
- Investigate Park and Stride involves parents parking at a designated location away from the school and members of staff walking the children, in a walking bus to the school.
- Support active travel within the community through supporting active travel events, led cycles recognising the role of the community in supporting active travel to education.
- Cycle Training
 - Year 3 -This course is for children who are still learning to start, stop and balance. We prioritise children aged 8 (school year 3) and above. Training is held in the safe playground area.
 - Year 6 and 7 students identified as those who would most benefit from the Level 3 Bikeability training and who would therefore be encouraged to cycle to school and facilitated to cycle to secondary school at the transition point.
- Promote road safety issues to school pupils and the wider community through programmes through;
 - The road safety heroes programme and/or
 - The Junior Travel Ambassador (JTA) scheme invites primary schools to recruit a small group of children from years 5 and 6 (Key Stage 2). These children will lead an annual programme of road safety, including assemblies and competitions.
 - Take an integrated approach to engaging with schools and encompass work streams such

as the Daily Mile, air quality monitoring, playable streets and spaces.

Collaboration with school programmes

School budgets are under pressure, and it can be hard to find the resources to support active travel schemes. **PE Pupil Premium** may provide opportunities to look at ways active travel can contribute to the school curriculum.

The **Daily Mile** is a fully inclusive, free and simple initiative which improves the physical and mental health of children. It's a social activity where the children run or jog, at their own pace, for 15 minutes every day and it improves focus in the classroom.

The **Eco-Schools** Programme is designed to be pupil-led, every day the Eco-Schools team have the privilege to learn about impactful environmental actions that have been completed by forward-thinking and innovative young people.

SAMHE is a collaboration between five UK universities and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). The SAMHE research team aims to establish a school-based network of air quality monitors which is representative of the UK's schools.

Supporting the transition to Secondary School

It is important that children and their carers plan out their journey to secondary school. It may be their first time traveling to school alone and so practicing the journey can be an important part of preparing them.

In addition to taking steps towards independence to build up their confidence and independence in preparation for this new and exciting phase of their life.

We will work with schools to support school transitions.

11 to 16 year olds

What we will do

We will support independence and travel choice when travelling to school.

For secondary schools in urban areas, we will focus on active travel and journeys less than 2 miles. For rural secondary schools we will focus on bus services.

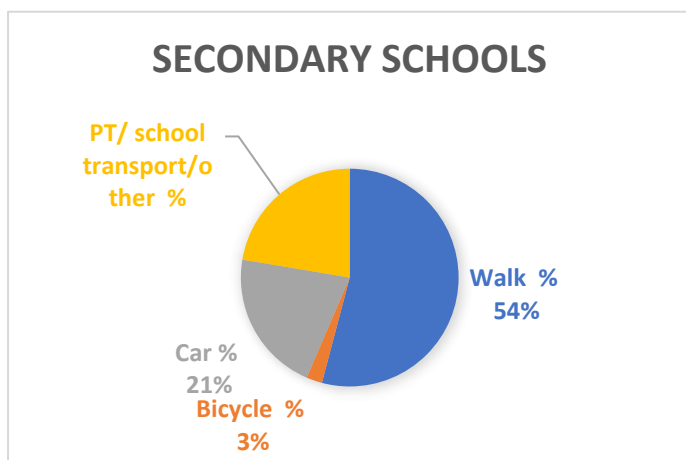
As part of the Healthy Schools programme, we will support schools to develop school travel plans.

Why

There are 21 secondary schools in North Northants with over 47,000 pupils.

They are in Corby, East Northants, Kettering and Wellingborough

Figure 3, North Northamptonshire Travel to School, Secondary Schools, School Census 2011



Schools within mainly rural areas were again lower at just 36% of pupils living within 1 mile of their school, and around 50% of pupils living beyond 2 miles.

Secondary school students have more flexibility to travel longer distances than primary pupils, with many confident travelling on a variety of modes of travel and enjoying greater independence in all aspects of their personal lives.

Independence is an important part of preparing for adulthood and will help them lead fulfilling adult lives.

With their school day becoming less uniform, the benefits of facilitating this independent travel extend not only to parents/guardians but also to school transport services which could reduce the numbers of students having to be transported.

The demand for transport (both entitled and discretionary and including Post-16) is in some geographical areas, bordering on commercial service levels and there is therefore potential to work with operators and other stakeholders to move responsibility for provision of this service to the commercial market rather than relying on the Council. This would also benefit other residents in the same areas by providing an increased public service for other users.

Independent travel training

Independent travel training is a tailored programme to help children with special educational needs or disabilities travel independently, for example by public transport or walking.

Independent travel training will be tailored to children with special educational needs or disabilities who are eligible for free travel to school and who are able to complete the programme.

How

- Support the development of school travel plans and through STPs work with schools on an implementation measure such as:
 - Route Audits
 - School Streets

- Park and Stride involves parents parking at a designated location away from the school.
- Cycle training
 - Year 7 students identified as those who would most benefit from the Level 3 Bikeability training and who would therefore be encouraged to cycle to school.
- Cycle maintenance skills – how to maintain your bike – make it fun, etc.
- Teaching public transport skills – working with the public transport operators to provide an introduction to public transport, etc.
- Bus service review - review local bus service operation, work with the schools and operators to improve bus travel to school
- Develop and deliver independent travel training initially to children with special educational needs or disabilities to travel independently.
- Support the First Gear Programme - The First Gear Pre-Driver Training Day gives trainees their first experience behind the wheel of a car, in a safe, controlled environment, with fully qualified driving instructors. The pre-driver training days are available for young people aged 15 to 17
- Take an integrated approach to how we engage with schools and encompass work streams such as the Daily Mile, air quality monitoring, playable streets and spaces.

16 to 18 year olds

What we will do

We will support independence and travel choice when travelling to education.

For secondary schools in urban areas, we will focus on active travel and journeys less than 2 miles. For rural secondary schools we will focus on bus services.

As part of the Healthy Schools Programme, we will support schools to develop school travel plans.

Why

Independence is an important part of preparing for adulthood and will help them lead fulfilling adult lives.

The local bus network, as facilitated through the Enhanced Partnership, provides more flexible accessibility to Post 16 Education establishments. This allows students to travel more appropriately as timetables do not necessarily align to session times and to other locations for work experience.

There is no provision for reduced fares for 16 to 18 year olds as there is neither a commercial arrangement nor a concessionary pass arrangement in North Northamptonshire. However, from September 2023 the predominant local bus operator has introduced a local bus pass for under 18 years olds called "Study Rider". This allows

for unlimited travel within the former county of Northamptonshire, Wellingborough and Kettering & Corby areas.

There are currently 173 students using the Home to School Service under the Post 16 Policy which will need to be subject to a separate review later in the year.

How

- Support the development of school travel plans and through STPs work with schools on their implementation measure.
- Promote safer use of roads through:
 - Delivering the CarKraft programme. This programme features lifesaving practical driving skills/workshops and is held at the Porsche Experience Centre, Silverstone.
 - Delivering My Pink Trainers (aimed at year 12's) - A road safety educational film called My Pink Trainers to raise awareness of the causes of collisions and the serious consequences these collisions could have.

Post 18

What we will do

We will support independence and travel choice when travelling to education.

Why

Whilst many young people have established travel skills and are able to travel independently there may be some cases where young people particularly those with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) may be entitled to free transport through the authority.

An EHCP is for children and young people aged up to 25 who need more support than is available through special educational needs support. The plans identify educational, health and social needs and set out the additional support to meet those needs.

How

- Work collaboratively with the Local Offer to ensure active travel and road safety information is accessible.
- Develop and deliver independent travel training initially to children with special educational needs or disabilities to travel independently.

Bringing it all together

Table 3, Delivery Plan 2023/24

All	School travel planning	Community active travel events	Cycle security training	Cycle loan and hire scheme	School streets
0 to 5	Car seat fitting	Strong start	Early years road safety information		
5 to 11	Junior Travel Ambassador	Cycle training	Cycle proficiency holiday camps	Park and Stride	Road safety heroes
11 to 15	First gear	Cycle maintenance training	Independent Living and Transport Skills	Teaching transport skills (bus)	Review bus routes and services
16 to 18	My pink trainers	CarKraft	Independent Living and Transport Skills		Review bus routes and services
Young people					

Monitoring framework

This strategy sets our vision and priorities for action. In order to track our delivery against those actions and targets we will publish annual updates including a yearly review, including progress towards targets and status of key actions in this strategy.

Our targets	Every school should have a School Travel Plan by 2033	All schools should have AQ below WHO air pollution limits	55% of primary school-aged children to walk to school by 2025	Children and young people aged 5 to 18 should average at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity everyday
By measuring	No. of current School Travel Plans	Air quality thresholds near schools	Mode of travel through hands up surveys	National Child Measurement Programme – Reception and Year 6 obesity levels
	No. of healthy schools	No. of school route audits undertaken	Participation in cycle training	

Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
AQ	Air Quality
BSIP	North Northants Bus Service Improvement Plan
Council	North Northamptonshire Council
Early Years	Children under the age of 3 years
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan
JTA	Junior Travel Ambassador
Key Stage 1 (KS1)	Children in education who are aged 5 to 7 years old
Key Stage 2 (KS2)	Children in education who are aged 7 to 11 years old
Key Stage 3 (KS3)	Children in education who are aged 11 to 14 years old
Key Stage 4 (KS4)	Children in education who are aged 14 to 16 years old
NNC	North Northamptonshire Council
Post 16	Young people in education who are 16 years and over
Post 18	Young people in education who are 18 years and over
SMOTS	Sustainable Modes of Transport Strategy
STP	School Travel Plan

Appendix one - Policy context

The national context

The Education and Inspections Act (2006) placed a range of new duties upon local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport, intending to support the choices and flexibility of educational provision across the country.

The Act defines sustainable modes of travel as: “those that may improve the physical wellbeing of the individuals who use them, improve the environmental well-being of the local authority’s area, or a combination of both”. The sustainable modes referred to include walking, cycling, the use of public transport (bus and rail), and car-sharing.

The Act outlined four main elements to promoting sustainable modes of travel, including the assessment and audit of sustainable travel options within the local authority, the development of a strategy for the promotion of sustainable travel to schools and other educational or training facilities.

In line with the requirements of the Education and Inspections Act (2006), North Northamptonshire Council is required to produce and publish its Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy (SMoTS) annually by 31st August.

Gear Change (2020)

The Gear Change plan describes the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation. It sets out the actions required at all levels of government to deliver this vision, grouped under four themes. The plan highlights that the UK needs to see a step-change in cycling and walking in the coming years.

Cycle Infrastructure Design, Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN 1/20) (2020)

LTN 1/20 provides guidance and good practice for the design of cycle infrastructure, in support of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. The scope of the document is limited to design matters. The guidance contains tools that give local authorities flexibility on infrastructure design and sets a measurable quality threshold to achieve when designing cycling schemes.

Transport Decarbonisation Plan (2021)

The Transport Decarbonisation Plan sets out the government’s commitments and the actions needed to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. This includes the pathway to net zero transport in the UK, the wider benefits net zero transport can deliver and the principles that underpin the government’s approach to delivering net zero transport.

The document identified six strategic priorities to deliver a vision of a net zero transport system:

- Accelerating modal shift to public and active transport (this reinforces the commitment to walking and cycling targets as set out in Gear Change);
- Decarbonisation of road vehicles;
- Decarbonising how we get our goods;
- Place-based solutions;
- UK as a hub for green transport technology and innovation; and
- Reducing carbon in a global economy.

Great British Railways and the Integrated Rail Plan (2021)

The Department for Transport (DfT) is the franchising authority for the rail network and is responsible for designing and procuring new and replacement rail franchise services on the national rail network.

In 2013, an independent review of the rail franchising programme was published by Richard Brown¹⁰. In 2022 the Government passed legislation “to modernise rail services and improve reliability for passengers” following the publication of the Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail in 2021.¹¹

Great British Railways (GBR) was set up in response to the Williams-Shapps report, to make the railways simpler for passengers and operators. GBR will own most, if not all national railway stations and infrastructure, currently owned by Network Rail.¹²

The franchise process, along with the rail industry, is currently undergoing a review and reform as part of the Governments reforms, in addition to the setting up of GBR.

The Integrated Rail Plan (2021) outlines proposals to bring the rail network under single national leadership, a new public body called Great British Railways. It has also published plans for rail projects in the midlands, which have some links to our rail aspirations.

National Disability Strategy (2021)

This strategy sets out the actions the government will take to improve the everyday lives of all disabled people.

Bus Back Better: national bus strategy for England (2022)

The National Bus Strategy sets out the vision and opportunity to deliver better bus services for passengers across England.

Highway Code updated (2022)

¹⁰ [The Brown review of the rail franchising programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-brown-review-of-the-rail-franchising-programme)

¹¹ [Great British Railways: Williams-Shapps plan for rail - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/great-british-railways-williams-shapps-plan-for-rail)

¹² more details about the GBRs powers are due to be published in Summer 2023

The aim of the Highway Code is to promote safety on the road for all road users. The update in 2022 included key changes:

- Introduced a ‘Hierarchy of road users’ – ‘those who can cause the greatest harm to have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they pose to others’;
- Change in priority for those crossing at junctions – pedestrians have priority.
- Walking, cycling or riding guidance for those using shared spaces such as shared cycle/pedestrian paths;
- Cyclist guidance on positioning on roads, at junctions and on roundabouts;
- Horse riding guidance on positioning;
- Updated guidance on safe passing distances and speeds;
- Leaving vehicles – guidance on exiting vehicles by using the hand opposite side to the door being opened (being described as the Dutch reach method).

Active Travel England (2022)

Active Travel England is the Government’s executive agency responsible for making walking, wheeling and cycling the preferred choice for everyone to get around in England.

The regional background

England’s Economic Heartland Transport Strategy (2021)

North Northamptonshire Council is a part of England’s Economic Heartland (EEH) sub-national transport body. EEH covers 11 Local authorities, including all of the Oxford to Cambridge arc. EEH published a transport strategy for the region in February 2021. The strategy sets out that a step-change in approach is required to address the challenges our transport system already faces and to realise the region’s economic potential and deliver sustainable growth. The

transport strategy sets out how the region will deliver this step change.

Sets out how the region can reduce its reliance on the private car by investing in strategic public transport infrastructure, alongside investment in digital infrastructure to better connect our communities, and how that needs to be complemented by investment in active travel measures locally. The five-point plan of action includes the following:

1. Focus on decarbonisation of the transport system by harnessing innovation and supporting solutions that create green economic opportunities
2. Promote investment in digital infrastructure as a means of improving connectivity
3. Use delivery of East West Rail and mass rapid transit systems as the catalyst for the transformation of our strategic public transport networks
4. Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport solutions to improve local connectivity to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential
5. Ensure that our freight and logistics needs continue to be met whilst lowering the environmental impact of their delivery

England's Economic Heartland Regional Bus Strategy (2022)

Build upon regional cross-boundary collaboration the strategy supports the development of the bus network and strengthens key links across the region.

The strategy presents six ambitions to:

- More frequent and reliable services
- Improvements to planning and integration with other modes
- Improvements to fares and ticketing

- Higher specification buses
- Decarbonisation
- Improvements to passenger engagement

Northamptonshire Road Safety Alliance (NRSA), Strategic Road Safety Plan (2021)

This plan sets out the priorities and key actions of the NSRA for the next two years to improve road safety in the County and explains how the work of the NSRA will help road users stay safe and reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on the County's roads.

The local background

North Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (2021)

The current Local Plan for North Northamptonshire includes the Joint Core Strategy and supporting area-based plans. The Joint Core Strategy adopted in July 2016 provides the strategic planning policies for the future development of the area from 2016 to 2031.

Local Plans

These strategies guide future growth and outline future sites that are permitted for housing and employment development.

North Northamptonshire Corporate Plan (2021)

The Corporate Plan sets out the Vision for North Northamptonshire: "A place where everyone has the best opportunities and quality of life" In addition to its Vision, the Corporate Plan sets out the six key commitments (priorities) the Council is making to North Northamptonshire residents.

North Northamptonshire Equality Strategy (2021)

The Equality Strategy sets four objectives for delivering greater equality these are:

- To lead by example within the community
- Ensure that our services are accessible and inclusive
- Create a fair and inclusive workplace culture
- Reduce inequality in our community

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022)

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out how the NHS, Local Government and Healthwatch will work together to improve residents' health and wellbeing.

Community Safety Plan (2022)

North Northamptonshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP) bringing together the local council, emergency services, NHS providers, probation service, voluntary and community-based organisations, businesses and local and parish councils to work together to help create safer places and works to protect vulnerable people from crime. The community safety plan helps support this by:

- identifying and understanding the kind of community safety issues that North Northamptonshire is experiencing now, and is likely to, in the future
- setting out specific outcomes that will make a difference to people's safety, lives and wellbeing

- deciding what actions it can take collectively, using shared resources to achieve those outcomes

Carbon Management Plan (2022)

The Carbon Management Plan is the first step on the Council's journey to reducing carbon neutral by 2030 and focusses on the carbon emissions produced directly as a result of the Council's actions.

North Northamptonshire Vision (2023)

The proposed vision for the best life in North Northamptonshire in 2050 has been based around three key priorities under which sit the suggested goals for our vision.

The proposed priorities to achieve our vision are:

- **A Proud Place:** A place with clear goals and a plan of how to get there, where people feel inspired and safe.
- **A Prosperous Place:** A place full of thriving businesses and a skilled population who can achieve their ambitions.
- **A Proactive Place:** A place which understands the issues its people face and how to address them early, so everyone can live the best life.

