



Active Travel Toolkit

FOR SCHOOLS



FOREWORD

As part of our #MoveWithUs campaign, we're relaunching this active travel toolkit for schools to utilise, when encouraging their pupils and families to engage with active travel.

With a huge range of initiatives available, as well as events, competitions and simple techniques to adopt, we can help get our communities moving. It's important that we embrace this way of thinking about transport – one that puts our vision of a safer, greener and healthier Essex at the forefront.

“

DR WILLIAM BIRD MBE:

“For Active Essex, and as part of my role as a GP, I fully endorse the importance of creating an active school environment, connecting our pupils and their families with their place and the wider community. Safe, resilient neighbourhoods can be designed utilising active travel, and our schools play such a significant role within this.”

“

TRACEY VICKERS, HEAD OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT:

“Children are our blueprint for the future, so if we can encourage them now to lead active lives, whether that be during the school day or on the journeys they do every day, they're more likely to continue with these behaviours into their adult lives, also encouraging their own children to do the same.”

“

CLLR TOM CUNNINGHAM, CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT:

“Engaging our children in the recommended 60 minutes of activity a day, can be tough. But active travel provides an excellent solution to this. The need for action against climate change is also a huge factor that must not be ignored. Consequently, this toolkit has been created as a collaborative offer to educational settings across Essex, providing easy access information on how you can improve the health and wellbeing of your school community, by introducing or improving active travel opportunities to create active environments.”





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CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER GUIDELINES

The UK Chief Medical Officer has stated in the Physical Activity guidelines for Children and Young People that young people, aged 5-18yrs should aim to participate in physical activity for an average of 60 mins per day across the week.



OVER 1 IN 2

children and young people across Essex do not take part in the recommended 60 minutes of activity a day.



25%

of young people report zero positive attitudes towards physical activity and sport (Active Lives 2023).

Physical activity for children and young people (5-18 Years)

- BUILDS CONFIDENCE & SOCIAL SKILLS
- DEVELOPS CO-ORDINATION
- IMPROVES CONCENTRATION & LEARNING
- STRENGTHENS MUSCLES & BONES
- IMPROVES HEALTH & FITNESS
- MAINTAINS HEALTHY WEIGHT
- IMPROVES SLEEP
- MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD

Be physically active

Spread activity throughout the day

Aim for at least 60 minutes everyday

All activities should make you breathe faster & feel warmer

PLAY, RUN/WALK, BIKE, ACTIVE TRAVEL, SWIM, SKATE, SPORT, PE, SKIP, CLIMB, WORKOUT, DANCE

Sit less (LOUNGING) **Move more**

Include muscle and bone strengthening activities **3 TIMES PER WEEK**

Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate at least 60 minutes of physical activity everyday

UK Chief Medical Officers' Guidelines 2011 Start Active, Stay Active: www.bit.ly/startactive

- ▶ Physically active children achieve higher levels of academic attainment than their less physically active peers.
- ▶ Physical activity means that children are better able to concentrate, which can enhance learning.
- ▶ Physical activity supports better health and wellbeing among young people, which in turn means they are more likely to achieve better academically. (YST, Link between Physical Activity & attainment evidence paper, March 2022)

54.8%

of young people aged 17 to 25 years reported being worried about the impact of climate change.

(Natcen, Mental Health of Children and Young People (MHCYP) survey, 2023)

53%

of trips to and from school were made by walking, by children aged 5 to 10.

40%

of trips to and from school by children aged 5 to 10 were by car.

(National travel survey, 2022)



BENEFITS TO PUPILS

Physical activity can increase mental alertness, energy, positive mood and self-esteem, as well as reducing stress and anxiety, according to the Mental Health Foundation. Teachers find that pupils who cycle, walk or scoot arrive at school more relaxed, alert and ready to start the day than those who travel by car. Cycling, walking or scooting to school also increases awareness of road safety as well as boosting independence for children.



BENEFITS TO SCHOOLS

The burden to deliver the majority, or even entirety, of physical activity directly is eased when pupils are actively travelling to school. It's also easier to encourage them in to other forms of activity when it's already a part of their everyday routine, underpinning a physically active school culture alongside more formal provision. Staff benefit from pupils demonstrating better behaviour and higher levels of concentration, as well as a reduction in the stress of busy drop-off and pick-up times with heavy levels of local vehicle traffic.



PHYSICAL LITERACY AND CREATIVE ACTIVE SCHOOLS

Every Essex child should have the best start so they can lead a healthy, active, happy and resilient life. Positive experiences of being active at an early age are much more likely to mean an active adulthood. We are born to be active, but to continue with this lifelong behaviour, we must make sure that experiences are fun, positive, and safe for children and young people.

Understanding and supporting Physical Literacy is key. Physical literacy is our relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life.

Physical literacy is our relationship with movement and physical activity throughout life

A personal relationship

Having a positive and meaningful association with movement and physical activity.



Movement and physical activity

How we move (physical), connect (social), think (cognitive) and feel (affective) during movement and physical activity plays a crucial role.



Throughout life

Influenced across the lifecourse by individual, social and environmental factors.



The new academic year will see the launch of an Essex Transformation Partnership project, focused on a testing a whole school approach to Creating Active Schools (CAS).

Working across directorates, with a sample group of schools, this project aims to identify the needs and current practices of individual schools and works through a 4-step cycle to create bespoke solutions for school improvement. The CAS Framework supports schools to embed healthy behaviours in policies, systems, behaviours and environments, utilising existing and/or developing new interventions and practices, ensuring that it becomes everyone's responsibility, from pupils, to staff, parents and governor.

SCHOOL ACTIVE TRAVEL

School Travel Plans are owned by the school but fully supported for free by Essex County Council. Modes to support and encourage can include walking, scootering or cycling – or, if you live a bit further from your school, suggest car sharing, public transport or “park-and-stride”.

The school travel plan aims to knock down the barriers for students and their families to travel by these modes.

A travel plan should be specific to the school in question, and consists of three parts:

1. Profile of the school, its neighbourhood and the issues arising from travel to and from.
2. Surveys with the pupils and staff, measuring current travel habits and what their aspirations are.
3. An Action Plan, full of all kinds of exciting initiatives to help meet those aspirations.



There's also a national accreditation scheme, where schools can earn themselves certificates at “Approved”, “Good”, “Very Good”, “Excellent” or “Outstanding”.

CASE STUDIES



Woodville Primary School South Woodham Ferrers support their pupils in travelling actively, by introducing scooter training, park-and-stride with a local supermarket, and embraced the 3PR scheme to reward responsible parking.

Gosbecks Primary Colchester recognised the problems at their main entrance and opened up two extra entrances for walkers, scooters and cyclists. This means more children can actively travel from more directions, including from their local pub for a park-and-stride.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Fewer cars directly outside the school, with safer roads and cleaner air
- More physical exercise for children, supporting their daily step count
- Bikeability and road safety lessons
- Alternative parking opportunities
- National accreditation
- Free professional support





BIKEABILITY

Cycling is far more than just a physical activity with all the benefits that brings - it is also a key life skill providing an opportunity to develop social skills, thinking skills, resilience, perseverance and independence.

Bikeability is a cycle training programme to help students gain the skills, knowledge and understanding of cycling safety on the roads, providing young people with the confidence for all kinds of cycling in the future.

Bikeability gives everyone the confidence to cycle and enjoy these skills for life.

- For all levels of experience
- Qualified, expert instructors
- Available all year round across England



Why is cycling good for us?

- It's good for our heart and lungs and increases our physical activity levels.
- Cycling, rather than being in a car can reduce air pollution and carbon emissions.
- It gives us time to spend with friends/family, and the ability to explore new and different places.
- Improves our decision making, helps us with planning and increases our independence
- Helps us to develop strong muscles, and improves our balance skills and spatial awareness.
- It's good for our brains too!

ESSEX HEALTHY SCHOOLS

The Essex Healthy Schools Programme is a school health improvement strategy which builds on the commitment within Essex schools to better the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

We provide a strategic framework for schools to reflect on the relationship between health and achievement. This maximises the potential for development and innovation at a local level to improve health and wellbeing.

We are proud that most of our schools have been engaged with the Essex Healthy Schools Programme for a long time and we know that all schools are clear about their commitment to the health and wellbeing of their children and young people. **ESSEX SCHOOLS ARE HEALTH PROMOTING!**

Our approach allows schools to focus on the specific needs of their school community built around 6 key expectations:

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Food and nutrition
- Pupil voice
- Trauma informed and trauma reducing practice
- PSHE education
- Physical activity



All schools are offered a minimum of an annual profile visit which actively supports the identification and delivery of needs led, outcome-based health and wellbeing projects to support children and young people. **This also acts as an opportunity to celebrate successes, identify good practice and share what works well.**

Awards and achievements are celebrated at our annual events to showcase all the amazing work Essex schools are doing!

The range of support offered to schools includes:

- Provide needs led offer of support with PSHE/RSHE projects in schools linked to the Essex Healthy Schools Programme; as either a whole school approach or targeted to pupil needs.
- 1:1 support for Headteacher/senior school lead, PSHE Lead, Healthy Schools Coordinator
- Support in meeting the Healthy Schools Expectations
- Termly universal workshops and training for school staff in response to identified need.
- Facilitate Community of Practices linked to specific public health/ early intervention areas
- Link with other/cluster schools to share best practice
- Provide a Peer Education Programme to Secondary Schools
- Provide School Nurse Support

OTHER INITIATIVES

These pages provide initiatives for your school to get involved with and sign up to. With plenty to choose from, select a few to add to your active travel plan, try one or give them all a go!

STREET TAG

Street Tag is a gamified healthy lifestyle app that promotes and enhances community-wide participation in physical activities (walking, cycling and running) and turns your local areas into a virtual playground. This makes it super popular with school aged children and their families. Using the Street Tag app, users can record their distance, steps, and points earned from collecting tags at various locations, creating a sense of friendly competition in order to climb up the School Leaderboard rankings.

Teams can have up to 250 participants, including children, parents, carers and staff, who will all collectively compete against other teams on the Leaderboard for prizes.

Further information: <https://streettag.co.uk/schools>

THE DAILY MILE

The Daily Mile™ is simple, free and gets children out of the classroom for fifteen minutes every day to run or jog, at their own pace in a non-competitive and fun environment. It is fully inclusive whereby every child can take part whatever their circumstances, age or ability.

Further information:

<https://thedailymile.co.uk/school-signup/>



OTHER INITIATIVES

WALKING BUS

A walking bus is a supervised group of children walking to or from school along a set route and picking up or dropping off 'passengers' at specific points along the way. It's a fun, healthy and sustainable way of getting to school. Two responsible adults (a 'driver' and a 'conductor') who are known by the school walk a group of children to school along an agreed route.



Funded by Active Travel England, WOW is a pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every day using the interactive [WOW Travel Tracker](#). If they travel sustainably (walk/wheel, cycle or scoot) once a week for a month, they get rewarded with a badge. It's that easy!

It's simple to run and children love taking part. Each year, the collectable WOW badges are designed by pupils in our annual badge design competition. On average, WOW schools see a [30% reduction in car journeys](#) taken to the school gate and a [23% increase in walking rates](#).

To check if your school is eligible to sign-up for FREE or for further information visit: <https://tinyurl.com/joinwowforfree>

SCOOTER TRAINING

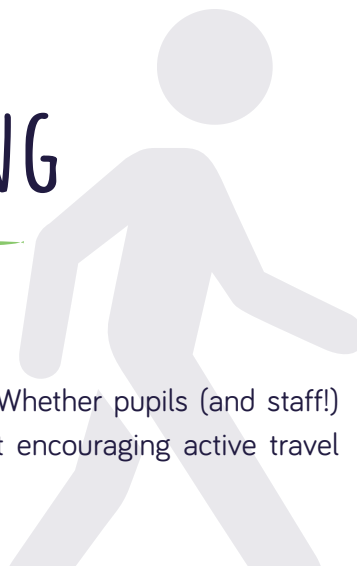
Essex can provide a free scooter training pack to any primary school or nursery, to help their children become more confident and safer on their scooters.

With full instructions for how staff can deliver the training on the playground, pupils can work towards earning certificates.

Contact Travel.PlanTeam@essex.gov.uk for more info.



WALKING, SCOOTING & SKATING



WHEELIE WEDNESDAY

Wheelie Wednesday is exactly as it says on the tin – travel via wheels. Whether pupils (and staff!) choose to travel via skateboard, cycle, scooter or rollerblades, it's about encouraging active travel whilst having some fun!

WALK AND TALK RESOURCES

Although not specifically just to encourage active travel, Active Essex's walk and talk resources put particular emphasis on supporting children's mental wellbeing, whilst encouraging them to get fresh air and move. Resources include walk and talk question cards for pupils to support one another, as well as guidance for teachers when organising.

Further informatio <https://www.activeessex.org/children-young-people/childrens-mental-health/>

MICRO SCOOTERS

Micro was created to make every day journeys better. Better for today's families. Better for our world. Micro scooters are made for adventure and built to last. Active Essex have developed a new partnership with Micro scooters to introduce scooter training, workshops and free scooter trails for schools.

Contact Lee.Monk@activeessex.org for more information.



MOVE WITH US AMBASSADORS AND ADVOCATES

Developing on the Find Your Active campaign, #MoveWithUs is focused on enhancing children and young people's activity levels across Essex, providing them with the motivation, opportunity, and capability to get moving. #MoveWithUs is here to change things. We want you to get involved and help us inspire, motivate and encourage young people to find what's right for them, supporting them to try new activities, whether that be traditional or more informal movement. In our eyes, all movement is good movement.

Further information: www.activeessex.org/move-with-us/

SAFER, GREENER, HEALTHIER

We want to give all our residents and their children a choice in how they travel. Whether it's walking, cycling or using public transport, most of us could travel more sustainably, especially for shorter journeys. This will then free up the roads for those that really have to use them and reduce pressure on the road network.

Did you know?



OVER 800,000
cars in Essex



46%
of journeys by these cars are
shorter than two miles

If we travel more sustainably, our streets will become less busy and congested. Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of pollution so fewer cars around the school gates will improve air quality.



Walking and cycling will also help us all become healthier both physically and mentally. This is especially important for children - physical activity has been shown to:

- Improve cardiovascular fitness
- Contributes to a healthy weight
- Reduced risk of anxiety

Our Safer Greener Healthier team is working with schools across the county to help them encourage more active travelling. This includes:

- Running Bikeability sessions at school to give children the confidence and ability to cycle safely.
- Offering adult and family cycling sessions for any parents or carers - who may be a bit rusty on two wheels - or maybe have never cycled before! More information can be found at: <https://letstalkessexsustainabletravel.co.uk/cycling-courses-for-beginners-child-adult-family>
- Working with schools on their travel planning eg helping them introduce Park and Stride options which involves parking a short distance from the school and walking with the children the rest of the way.
- Introducing safety features on the roads around schools to encourage slower driving such as 20's Plenty signage, pencil bollards, raised cushions and much more.

DATES TO ADD TO THE DIARY

Sometimes it's easier to add elements of this work into your lesson plans. So, we've collated a number of awareness days, big weeks and moments for you to be aware of.

Lots of the below have great resources for schools to utilise, so save them down, and check back!

16th-22nd September

[TravelWise Week](#)

22nd September

[World Car Free Day](#)

23rd-27th September

[Cycle to School Week](#)

10th October

World Mental Health Day

17th-23rd November

[Road Safety Week](#)

March

[Big Walk and Wheel](#)

May

[Walk to School Week](#)

3rd June

[World Bicycle Day](#)

9-16th June

[Bike Week](#)

For more ideas on how you can keep your school active, check out Active Essex's website for full information on all of our Children and Young People work and support for schools.

This includes our webinars, school games, funding offers, workouts to follow along to and resources to use.

Visit: www.activeessex.org or scan the QR code below!

SCAN ME

