



Parents Take the Lead

School Travel Plan Case Study – A medium/large rural primary

Dartington C of E Primary School

Size: 373 pupils, 61 staff TravelWise Award: Silver (2006)

1. Background and Location

The school is situated at the junction of two busy 'A' roads, the A385 to South Brent and the A384 to Buckfastleigh, and Cott Road, which runs through Dartington itself. The site is opposite the Cider Press Centre, an arts and crafts venue that has a constant flow of traffic in and out of its car park. The surrounding area is largely rural to the west, north and east, but the town of Totnes is just 2 miles away to the south.

2. Main Issues and Problems

Most pupils are driven to school from the direction of Totnes; however, the majority of those who live within the village of Dartington walk to school. While there are adequate public transport links along the main road from Totnes to Dartington, there are many children attending the school who live in more rural areas or from 'suburbs' of Totnes which are not served by public transport. Many stretches of road in the vicinity of the school have no pavement.

In the morning and afternoon, the car park adjacent to the KS1 side of the school site is always full to capacity, with many cars parked in undesignated spaces. Opposite the KS2 side of the school site there is a petrol station and a village stores/post office. The cars coming in and out of these cause additional hazards for pedestrians.

Cott Road, leading down to the school through the village, is access only; however, many cars use this as an alternative route to and from Totnes, increasing the traffic flow. This road has no pedestrian pavement along most of it and many children from the village walk along it to school.

3. The Travel Plan (First Travel Plan 2005)

Aims & Targets

The main aims of the travel plan were to reduce the number of cars used for the school journey and increase the number using sustainable forms of transport; to improve safety around the site; reduce congestion and pollution; increase the fitness of pupils and promote health and environmental education through travel.

Key Strategies & Actions

A. Educational

- Reward scheme for walkers – "Walking the Wizard Way"
- Update of School Travel Plan at monthly Parent Representative meetings; report circulated to all parents
- Support Walk to School Week
- An article in the New Parents Pack on green travel
- Curricular links to the journey to school (i.e. Poetry Competition)
- Introduction of cycle training
- Cycle train from Totnes
- Supervised bus travel
- Safe Travel to School Week

B. Engineering

- Zebra crossing has been replaced by a Puffin Crossing
- New cycle storage
- Footpath to link Brimhay Nursery to the school
- Travel notice boards

4. Outcomes

Travel Modes Survey Results – Past to Present

Travel Modes	2005		2006	
	No.	%	No.	%
Walk	60	15	59	27
Cycle	36	9	17	8
Car/Van	276	70	60	27
Car Share			72	33
Public Service Bus	12	3	2	1
School Bus	12	3	6	3
Train			2	1
Total	396		218	

How well the school met its original targets and how the travel plan has developed since

In the first year the school hoped to increase walking by 5%, cycling by 5%, public/school transport use by 2% and to reduce car use by 12%. By May 2006 walking had increased by 12% and car use reduced by 9%. The percentage of pupils cycling had reduced by 1% as had those using public and school transport. Although the cycling target was not met, the school hopes to achieve this by 2007 when cycle training is to be offered to children in Year 5 and 6.

What went well and what could have been done differently

The driving force behind the creation of the plan and its constant high profile within the school community is a very dedicated team of parents who have led the plan from the start. They have been wholly responsible for organising surveys, events and publicity and for ensuring that the whole school knows about the aims of the Travel Plan. The children too have had an important part to play, mostly taking responsibility for organising the 'Walking the Wizard Way' scheme, which they intend to repeat in the Spring Term.

The school has included a section on Green Travel in the induction pack for new parents and the Parent Representative Group includes an update in their monthly meetings, which is in turn fed back to other parents through their report.

Comments from children/headteacher/parents about the travel plan

Many parents have commented on the quality time spent in a short walk with their children to school, chatting about their day and noticing the seasonal changes to the environment. The children have enjoyed seeing things like the river in spate, and spotting animals such as squirrels, deer and cormorants. The cyclists using the NCN link from Totnes have reported an increase in their skill levels with children from across the school age range.

5. Future Direction of the Travel Plan

Targets for 2007 include:

- A further 7% walking to school
- 5% increase in cycling
- 3% increase in use of public and school transport

The school intends to continue to promote walking during Walk to School Week and through 'Walking the Wizard Way'. Cycle training will be introduced in the spring term and the Parent Reps will continue to promote the Cycle Train.