



# ACTIVE TRAVEL

## Toolkit for Schools



Now is the time to be bold and revolutionise the way we all travel. Lots of families drive to school, which adds to congestion on the local roads and the negative effect on our environment.

Covid-19 provides us with an opportunity to rethink the school run, one of the bigger trip generators. We know that not all students can travel actively all the way to school, mainly due to distance, so all families, local to the school and not so local, need support to make the travel choices which benefit us all. For those living nearby, walking, scooting or cycling should be the default. For those a bit further away, public transport, car sharing and 'park-and-stride' are all worthwhile options to explore.

Behaviour change underpins everything; sustainable transport must be made easy, so that it becomes the norm.

Schools also require some support to implement the different measures, and encourage pupils and their families to take part, and this is where the toolkit comes in – providing a flavour of the initiatives available and where teachers can go to get the information they need.

We need to be brave and embrace a new way of thinking about transport – one which puts our vision of safer, greener, healthier at the forefront.

“

**Foreword by  
Cllr Lee Scott**

**Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport**

Physical activity for children and young people may never have been so important, with evidence revealing that Covid-19 unsurprisingly, caused significant disruption to their lives. Schools have worked tirelessly to welcome children back to the start of the new term and to embrace the new normal; however, local intelligence (alongside national statistics) indicates that many children have returned to our schools deconditioned from being physically inactive and with decreased mental health.

The Chief Medical Officer Guidelines (Sept 2021), state that Children and young people age 5-18years should engage in physical activity for an average of at least 60 minutes per day across the week. This can include all forms of activity such as physical education, active travel, after-school activities, play and sports.

The proportion of children walking and cycling to school has been declining in England since 1995, however research has shown that 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 boost independence in children.

The need for action against climate change is also a factor that must not be ignored. The average UK car emits 1kg of CO<sub>2</sub> every 3.5 miles. If a family drive half a mile and back at either end of the school day, that's over 500g of carbon in the atmosphere; or, more positively, if they walk, scoot or cycle instead, that's 500g of carbon not in the atmosphere.

This toolkit has been created as a collaborative offer to education settings across Essex. It provides easy to access information and support on how you can improve the health and wellbeing of your school community by introducing or improving active travel opportunities and creating active environments.

Active travel to school benefits us all, as it ultimately means there are fewer cars on the road, resulting in cleaner air and less congestion outside the school gates and in our communities. We are committed to supporting our schools and communities to evolve and thrive and by working together believe that enjoyable physical activity that becomes habitual in childhood will lead to a healthier, happier lives through to older age.

Tracey Vickers, Head of Sustainable Transport says...

“Essentially 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.

Dr William Bird, GP and Physical Activity Advisor says...

“This toolkit reflects the importance of physical activity which is an essential part of school life for every child. The time spent walking and cycling to school gives precious time when they can talk with their parents or catch up with their friends. It is also time to experience the seasons, notice nature and engage with the local people and culture in their neighbourhood. This lays down memories and provides security of belonging to a place. The excellent suggestions and ideas in this toolkit are key to creating a healthier child in the fullest sense.

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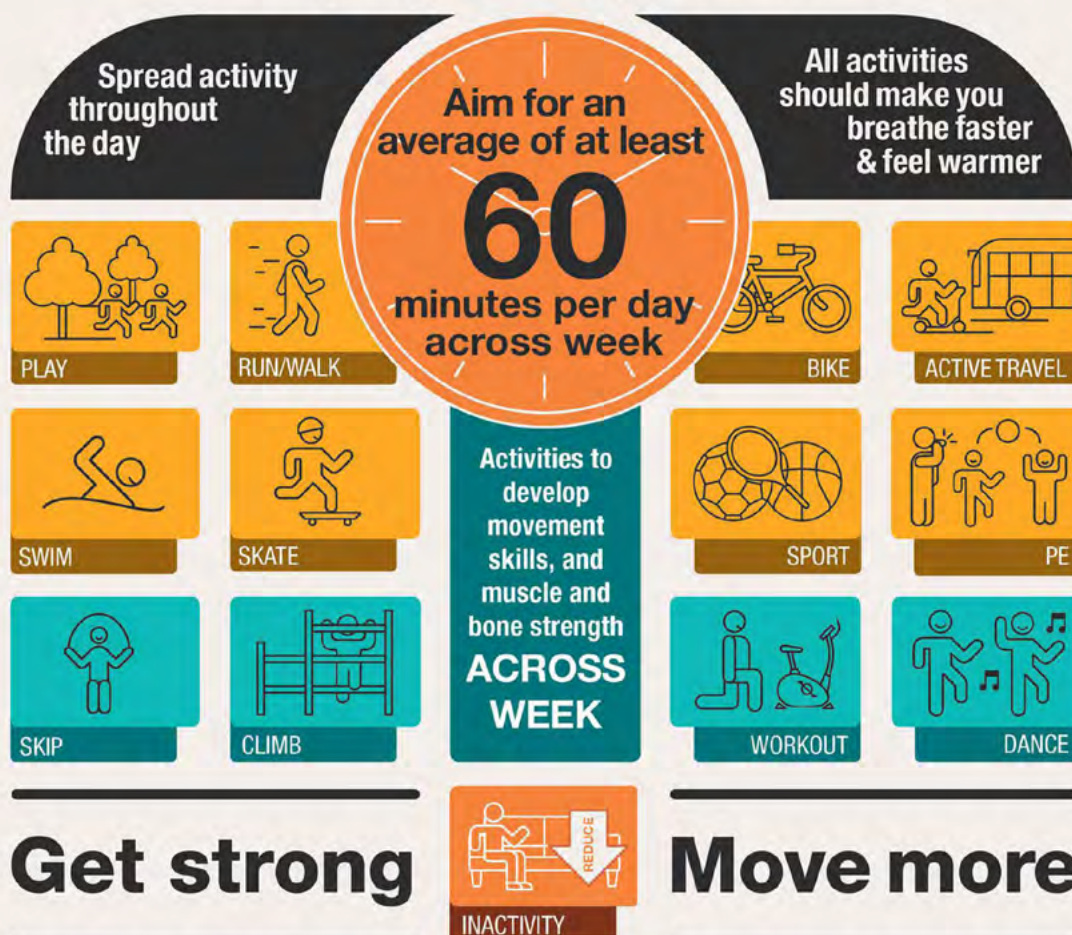
# DID YOU KNOW?

The UK Chief Medical Officer released updated Physical Activity guidelines for Children and Young People in September 2019. Young People aged 5-18yrs should aim to participate in physical activity for an average of 60mins per day across the week.

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



## Be physically active



**Find ways to help all children and young people accumulate an average of at least 60 minutes physical activity per day across the week**

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

### Active Essex Contact Information:

Active Essex is one of forty-three Active Partnerships nationally, funded by Sport England and hosted by Essex County Council.

For more information please visit: <https://www.activeessex.org/children-young-people/>

Or contact: Active Essex Thematic Lead for Children and Young People: [Dawn.Emberson@activeessex.org](mailto:Dawn.Emberson@activeessex.org)

# Physical Activity for Disabled Children and Disabled Young People

Getting and staying active is about



Equality



Inclusivity



Finding what's  
fun



Exploring what activities  
make you  
feel good

## Benefits of physical activity

Meet new  
people



Mental  
health



Muscles  
and motor  
skills



Confidence  
and  
concentration



Sense of  
achievement



Calmer, less  
stressed



Balance and  
coordination



How much physical activity should I do?

**When starting  
build up slowly**

Ask: Can you do this today?

**Do bitesize chunks**  
of physical activity  
throughout the day

For good health  
benefits do

**20 mins**

of physical  
activity per day

**Do challenging  
but manageable**  
strength and balance  
activities 3 times per week

**Small amounts  
of physical activity**  
are good for you as well

# School Travel Plans

School Travel Plans, owned by the school but fully supported for free by Essex County Council, address the traffic issues schools experience by encouraging and enabling safer, greener and healthier modes of travel. This might be “active travel” – walking, scootering or cycling – or, if you live a bit further from your school, 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 is specific to the school in question, and consists of three parts:

1. Profile of the school, its neighbourhood and the particular 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.

Over **200,000** school pupils in Essex

Over **60%** live less than a mile from their school – an ideal walking distance

All kinds of actions can be adopted to achieve this: road safety, scooter training and Bikeability lessons; bike and scooter parking; working with your local councillor to improve the infrastructure; parking and active travel reward schemes, earning badges; learning the science behind healthy living; and term time discounts on public transport. There's also a national accreditation scheme, where schools can earn themselves a bronze, silver or gold plaque.

## Case Studies

Woodville Primary School in South Woodham Ferrers have done loads to support their pupils in travelling actively. They've introduced scooter training, worked with a local councillor on getting a side gate, and embraced the 3PR scheme to reward more responsible parking. Woodville have now achieved the top Platinum level of accreditation.

Sweyne Park is a secondary school in Rayleigh, and they've worked closely with the public transport providers to support their students who live outside town get to school sustainably. They've also got the Cycle to Work scheme in place to help staff buy bikes.

Leigh Beck Infants on Canvey Island did their travel plan in order to get enhanced Healthy Schools status. Among their initiatives is a 'park-and-stride' arrangement with the local football club, meaning pupils who are driven most of the way can still get the physical benefits of walking.



**Contact:** Nicholas.Hill@essex.gov.uk

## Further Information:

<https://www.modeshiftstars.org/education/>  
<https://www.essex.gov.uk/sustainable-travel>

## 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

# The Three Parking Rules

3PR is an Essex-wide mission to make school parking safer and less stressful for children, parents, teachers and residents.

It helps everyone follow the three parking rules:

**Care, Consideration, Caution**

120,000

primary school pupils in Essex

450

primary schools in Essex



If everyone of them were driven to school, it would be chaos!

## Case Study

- Wyburns Primary in Rayleigh is located at the end of a residential cul-de-sac. By designating a large section of the road a 3PR Zone (advisory no-parking zone), they've incentivised more walking, scooting or cycling onto the school grounds. This has meant fewer cars trying to do the tight U-turn at the school gates, thereby improving pedestrian safety.
- Stanway Fiveways Primary in Colchester is located on the same short road as three other schools. Fortunately, the 3PR team has negotiated car park spaces at a nearby shopping parade. Families are now able to park legally and considerately and walk the remaining distance to school along a safe off-road footpath.



## Opportunities

- Fewer cars outside the school means safer roads and cleaner air
- Pupils get the health benefits of active travel
- 3PR can form a vital part of a school's travel plan.



## Further Information

For more information visit:  
<https://schoolparking.org.uk/>

## Contacts

<https://www.parkingpartnership.org>  
[schoolparking@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:schoolparking@chelmsford.gov.uk)

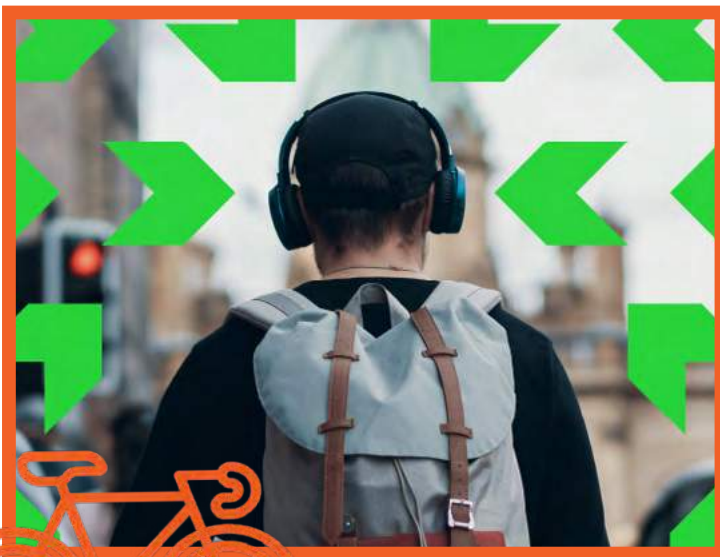
# Stop.Swap.GO!

## Getting to school or college

Stop.Swap.GO! is a behaviour change campaign aimed at encouraging more school and college students to use active travel modes on their journeys to and from their place of education. Designed to help them avoid the traffic, stay healthy and help the environment.

A dedicated website provides a raft of information and advice for parents and students to help them swap to more active options, such as walking, cycling or using the bus. Also included are walking and cycling maps to individual schools and colleges, with suggested drop off and pick-up points which are a short walking distance from the school gates.

Other elements covered by the campaign are cycle training opportunities and regulations to follow when travelling on a school or public bus. There is something for everyone including a 'how to' guide on swapping plus a regular e-newsletter.



**Contact:** [Stop.swap.go@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Stop.swap.go@essex.gov.uk)

**Further Information:**

[www.stopswapgo.co.uk/getting-to-school/](http://www.stopswapgo.co.uk/getting-to-school/)

Stop.Swap.GO! have an active community on Facebook, with daily posts encouraging active travel to school and college. Visit their page [here](#).

## Opportunities

- Fewer cars directly outside the school or college, means less congestion and a safer environment
- More physical exercise for children and young people, contributing to their mental health and wellbeing
- Supports independence and social skills, through wayfinding and interaction with friends, empowering children to be in control of their own journey
- Opportunity to learn new cycling skills and road safety awareness
- Increase school or college's reputation of being an important part of their local community.

# Bikeability Training

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.

Developed in consultation with schools, teachers and Bikeability instructors, Tools for Schools is a suite of resources to help schools (EYFS - KS3) to engage with Bikeability more easily, thus enabling more children and young people to cycle safely and develop a lifelong love of cycling.

Bikeability is a cycle training programme. It will help you to gain the skills, knowledge and understanding to cycle safely on the roads. Bikeability provides children and young people the confidence for all kinds of cycling in the future.



**"I've just got my Level 1 Bikeability Badge! I learnt lots of new skills, like how to signal and how to look for dangers. I know how to look after my bike now too and it makes me feel safer."**

Jessica, aged 8, Heycroft Primary School

## Why is cycling good for us?

### Health:

- It is good for our hearts and lungs
- It can increase our physical activity levels
- Cycling rather than being in a car can reduce air pollution and carbon emissions

### Social:

- We can spend time with friends. We can explore new, different places independently

### Thinking:

- Improves our decision making
- Helps us with planning & organisation
- Increases our independence

### Physical Benefits:

- Helps us to develop strong muscles (including our largest muscles)
- Helps with our balancing skills and spatial awareness

Bikeability Level 1 aims to develop cycle handling in an off-road environment and prepare riders for cycling on the road. Riders must be able to cycle (i.e. pedal and glide) to participate in Bikeability Level 1.



Bikeability Level 2 will develop riders' skills and confidence for cycling on single-lane roads and simple junctions with mostly moderate motor traffic flows, preparing riders to deal with short journeys such as cycling to school or the local shops.



Bikeability Level 3 equips riders with the skill and confidence to ride in more challenging roads and traffic situations – busier streets, queuing traffic, complex junctions and roundabouts. It also includes planning routes for safe cycling.



## Further Information:

<https://bikeability.org.uk/>

<https://saferessexroads.org/road-users/cycling/>

**Contact:** [saferessexroads@essexhighways.org](mailto:saferessexroads@essexhighways.org)

# Healthy Schools Programme

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.

A two-stage process is offered to help schools identify and develop the approaches that will assist them with health improvement. This process is based on the national framework.

**The Foundation Stage** enables schools to gain and maintain Healthy School status against a criterion that supports all aspects of health including the PSHE and SRE agenda. It also helps to provide the first step in identifying priorities for Enhancement. Schools are able to use a locally produced benchmarking tool against which they self-evaluate. Schools are supported with this process by the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service.

The Foundation Stage is revalidated every two years, again using the benchmarking tool. A school can choose to stay at foundation level but must revalidate every 2 years and evaluation using the benchmarking document should reflect some progress.

**Enhancement** has been designed to help schools develop the wider thinking and planning they will need to do in order to achieve better outcomes around health and well-being for children and young people.

It has also been designed to help schools to strive for lasting health and wellbeing behaviour changes in children and young people, with particular focus on providing targeted support for those who are most at risk.

The model follows a needs-led outcomes focused approach to ensure schools put in place the most appropriate services and meet the needs of their own children and young people.

Schools are supported to achieve this stage through the commissioned coordination service and will receive additional support from the commissioned health improvement services to achieve their targeted outcomes (where available).

419

schools hold foundation status

74

schools hold enhanced status



## The range of support offered to schools includes:

- Local needs assessment/school data
- Identifying priorities and outcomes – universal and targeted
- Assisting with development of action plan – Action Plan workshops
- Interventions to support delivery of the targeted part of the action plan and achievement of outcomes
- Supporting monitoring procedures
- Supporting evidence of impact
- Supporting the writing of the 'school story'

# How **Active Travel** contributes to Healthy Schools status



**Aims** Aim to reduce number of pupils who travel to school by car

## Strategy:

- Communication to be sent to all parents on alternative travel options to school if they usually travel by car
- Encouraged to walk to school or park further away and walk the rest of the way (Park and Stride). Local Supermarket agreed to their car park being used
- Assemblies and PHSE lessons to encourage pupils to be 'healthier' and walk to school
- Bikeability classes for year 5 / 6 to allow them to cycle safely and independently to school if they had a permit and parent approval, other children cycle under supervision
- A pedestrian gate was opened onto school , this resulted in children being able to walk , cycle or scoot along the cycle path to school with no roads to cross, or to use the Park and Stride facility
- Bike and scooter racks installed
- Safer Parking signs near school.

## Outcome:

A decrease in number of children who travel by car from

# 45% to 34%

in a year and expected to continue to decrease

# 54%

of children walked all or part of the way and more KS1 children scooting /KS2 cycling or scooting



## Contacts

Katie Polhill  
Health Improvement Programme Lead  
vcl.essexpublichealthandhealthyschools@nhs.net



## Opportunities

- Personal, social and health education
- Emotional health and wellbeing
- Healthy eating
- Physical activity
- Pupil voice
- Parents, carers and community

## Further Information

<https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/service/healthy-schools/>  
<https://schools.essex.gov.uk/pupils/HealthySchoolsProgramme/>



"The Daily Mile gives a get up and go and kick-start learning for the day. It promotes a sense of wellbeing – pupils come back into the classroom energised, focused, sharp and with vigour." – Year 2 Teacher – Magna Carta Primary Academy

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. With their classmates, when the teacher chooses, making them fitter, healthier, and more able to concentrate in the classroom.

## What are the benefits of The Daily Mile?

- ✓ Physical activity which improves children's health and wellbeing
- ✓ It takes place in 15 minutes, with most children averaging a mile
- ✓ It's social, non-competitive and fun
- ✓ Children run at their own pace outside in the fresh air – the weather is a benefit, not a barrier!
- ✓ It's fully inclusive; every child, whatever their circumstances, age or ability
- ✗ No staff training is needed and there is no extra workload for teachers
- ✗ There's no set-up, tidy up, or equipment required
- ✗ Children run in their school clothes, so no kit or changing time is needed

## What are the Core Principles of The Daily Mile?



It's fun!



It's 100% inclusive - every child!



The weather is a benefit, not a barrier



It only takes 15 minutes!



No track required



Teachers decide when to go



It's safe



Children run and jog at their own pace

## Why does The Daily Mile Work?

### Improves attention span. How?

Physical activity stimulates area of brain responsible for resisting distractions (Postal, 2014)

### Improves memory and concentration. How?

Regular physical activity triggers release of key brain chemicals required for memory, concentration and mental sharpness (Peipmeier & Etnier, 2015)

### Improves capacity for learning. How?

Hippocampus (brain's learning and memory centre) grows as fitness increases (Chaddock et al, 2010)

### Improves behaviour. How?

Physical activity stimulates neurotransmitters which can help improve self-regulation and emotional control (Bowling, 2017)



Sign up to the Daily Mile at: [www.thedailymile.co.uk/school-signup/](http://www.thedailymile.co.uk/school-signup/)



# The WOW Challenge

The Walk to School Challenge is our award-winning behaviour change scheme that is available fully funded to Essex Primary Schools!

Pupils log their daily journeys to school each day on the WOW Travel Tracker- our pupil friendly online platform to log journeys. Those who travel actively to school by walking, cycling, wheeling in a wheelchair, scooting or parking then striding, at least once a week for a month earn a WOW badge, with 11 to collect across the year. It's as easy as that!

**We have over 50 schools in Essex currently taking part and, on average, WOW schools see a 30% REDUCTION IN CAR JOURNEYS taken to the school gate and a 23% INCREASE IN WALKING RATES**

Schools in Essex can sign-up to take part for FREE!

Register your interest here [www.livingstreets.org.uk/freewow](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk/freewow)



To hear how de Vere Primary school in Essex are loving WOW, watch their short video [here](#)





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 and even workouts to follow along and resources to use.

[www.activeessex.org](http://www.activeessex.org)