

# SMBC Travel Planning Guidance for Developers

Travel Plan Guidance for Education Sites

SMBC

December 2022

Education Sites



# Notice

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# Introduction

## What is the Purpose of This Guidance?

This guidance is both for schools working on School Travel Plans (STPs) to promote safe, active and sustainable travel to school, as well as for schools or developers preparing a STP for submission as part of a planning application.

This guidance is applicable for all educational sites, including nurseries, primary & secondary schools, and colleges, both under and outside the jurisdiction of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

SMBC requests that schools submit their STPs via Modeshift STARS. Modeshift STARS is the national awards scheme that distinguishes schools that have shown excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. The application process provides an online template that, upon completion, will generate a national standard STP.

The guidance and survey examples listed within this document should be read in conjunction with the Modeshift STARS User Guide – Getting Accredited. Together, these documents provide the information necessary to enable the production of your national standard STP or submit a STP that meets requirements of the planning process.

If you have a previous STP, you will need to consult your original document.

This document is tailored towards providing Travel Plan Guidance for Education Sites within Solihull Borough. However, it should be read in conjunction with the Master Travel Planning Guidance also produced by SMBC for further guidance on Travel Plans please contact: [travelplanning@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:travelplanning@solihull.gov.uk)

## What is a School Travel Plan?

A STP is a written document which outlines a series of practical steps for improving student and staff members' journeys to and from school. STP is written in consultation with parents, governors, staff, students, and anyone else involved with the school, and is a living document that must be updated and revised.

The STP will result in benefits for students, parents, school staff and the wider community across all education establishments, including primary and secondary schools, alongside colleges. It identifies how students would like to travel to school and the barriers that may prevent them from choosing that mode of travel. It will also assist by reducing the numbers of cars on the road at peak times and will benefit the safety of the environment around the school.

If the school is planning any building work on site, or if staff/pupil capacity is to be increased, SMBC will expect a STP to be actively implemented if not already done so.

STPs seek to:

- Encourage students, parents, and staff to think about travel choices and choose alternatives to the car when coming to school;
- Encourage 'active' travel like walking and cycling; and
- Measure change and shifts in travel behaviour.

The Sustainable Travel Team at SMBC can offer additional advice and guidance for free.

For additional information, please see the following resources:

- **Department for Transport (DfT)** - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements#travel-plans>
- **Department for Education (DfE)** - [DfE Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance](#) (PDF, 403KB)

## Why is There a Need for STPs?

There are increasing concerns about students' declining health and lack of exercise causing obesity and increasing the risks of developing future health problems. Increasing traffic congestion attributable to the 'school run' is not only a health and environmental concern, but also generates additional safety concerns. Additionally, students have fewer opportunities to develop and practice important road awareness skills when dropped off in a car.

These issues are also exacerbated at Further Education sites, often due to the additional demand for car parking stemming from the desire of students to drive, even when not necessary.

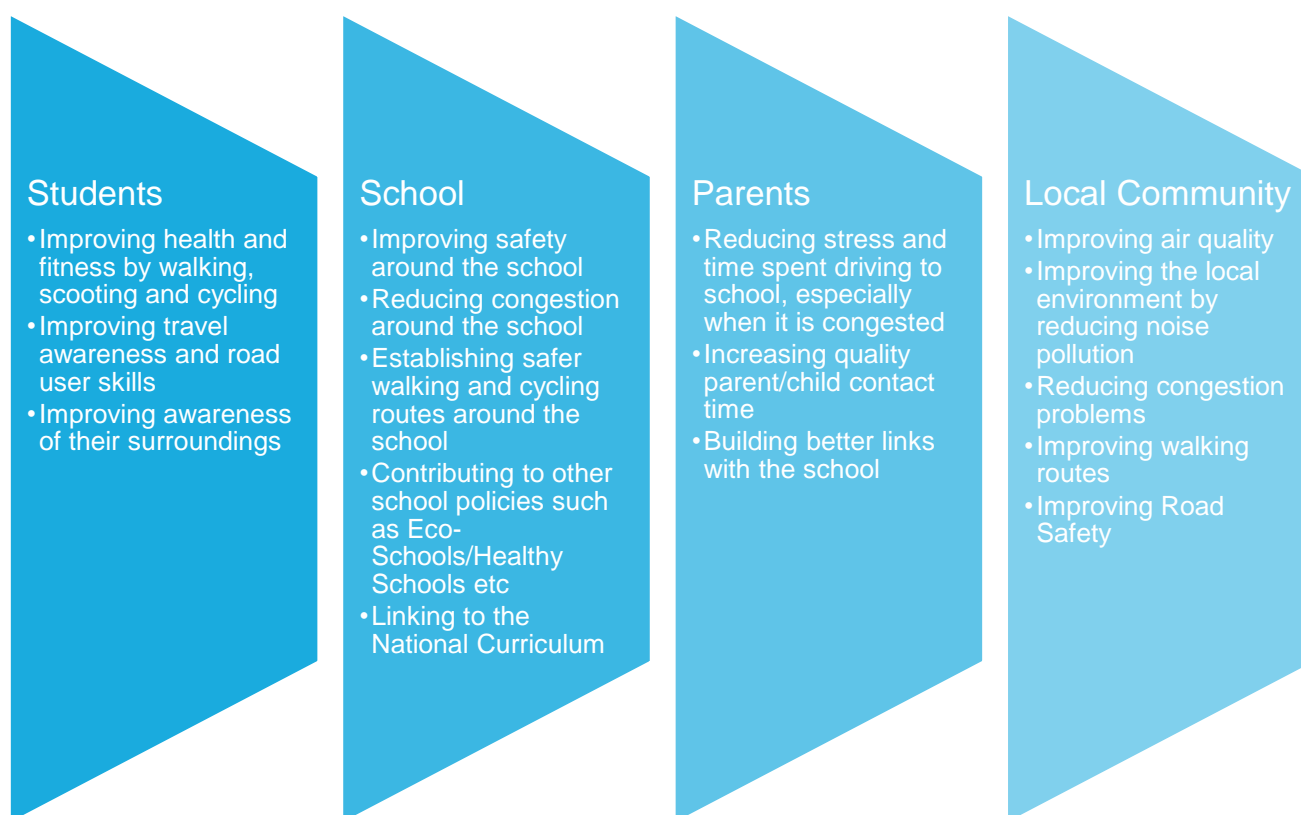
Solihull Council is committed to improving air quality. Although the borough's air is within national air quality objectives, the Council is working closely with schools to tackle this significant priority and align with both local and national objectives. School Travel Planning is an integral part of Solihull's Clean Air Strategy.

## What Are the Benefits of a STP?

Although STPs are required as part of the planning approval process for new and expanding education sites, SMBC also strongly encourage other institutions that are not currently undertaking a planning application, to also develop their own STPs, as they will also enjoy the benefits listed below.

Encouraging active travel to schools creates a wide range of benefits, both for the school community, but also for the area around the school by reducing general traffic and congestion and improving the local environment.

**Figure 1 - Benefits of having an active STP**



The guidance presented in this document is to help you produce your STP. It is important to remember that the STP must be specific to your school/college. Therefore, not all aspects mentioned here may be relevant for your STP.

## Why Modeshift STARS?

Modeshift STARS is the national awards scheme that recognises schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel.

The application process provides an online template that, upon completion, will generate a national standard STP. Modeshift STARS is free for all schools within Solihull Borough to use.

Modeshift STARS has produced a range of free resources, including guidance documents, campaign toolkits and educational resources that are suitable for both primary and secondary schools. For more information and to view the resources visit <https://www.modeshiftstars.org/>

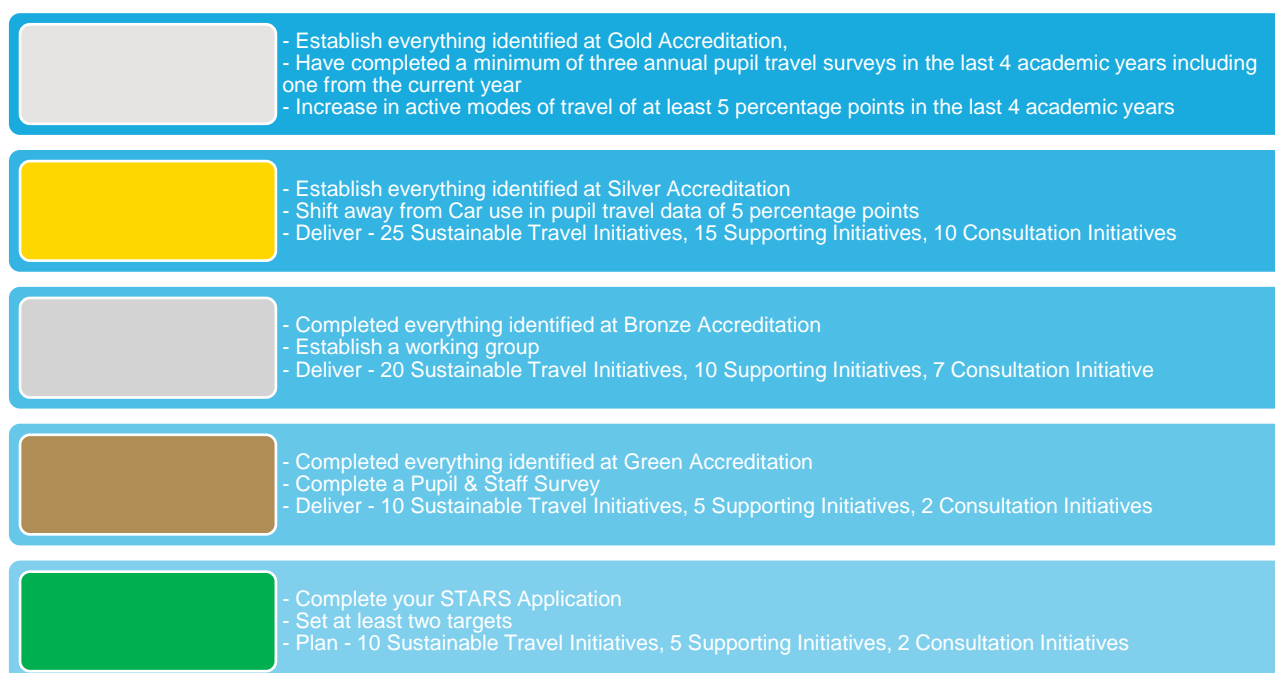
## What You Will Receive for Becoming a Modeshift STARS Accredited School

- **Healthier students** – by encouraging active, healthy lifestyles for young people through increased active travel;
- **Safer students** – identifying specific safety issues and improving the quality of the environment around your school;
- **Involving the whole school community** – children, parents, teachers and other stakeholders all working together;
- **National Accreditation** – you will receive the Modeshift STARS plaque, certificate and use of the nationally recognised logo;
- **The National STARS School Travel Awards** – a chance to be considered for the National STARS School Travel Awards;
- **Changing behaviour** – STARS will provide you with the tools to reduce car use and increase the number of students walking, cycling and using public transport; and
- **Access to discounts and practical support** - additional support is available from the Council to help schools promote sustainable travel to school.

## Achieving National Accreditation

There are five levels of accreditation that your school can achieve: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Green.

**Figure 2 - Modeshift STARS Accreditation Levels**



## Creating Your School Travel Plan

Various schools across SMBC have an active, approved STARS STP. Many more schools carry out a wide range of initiatives to support active and sustainable travel and are working towards developing a STP.

A STP is a continual process rather than a static document. It should continually evolve as travel issues are addressed and modal shift occurs.

For your first STARS application, there will initially be some work to input the information but once it is established it will be a question of updating sections and STARS will automatically generate your STP. There will be no need to produce a lengthy word processed report each time you update your STP. If you have an existing STP, you will be able to use information from this to complete your STARS application.

## The 5 Steps to Getting Started with STARS

1. Visit <http://www.modeshiftstars.org> and choose your location from the list of local authorities that appears.
2. Select the 'Register' tab from the top right corner of the page.
3. From the registration page, enter your name, select 'School' and then select the role that is most appropriate to your position in the school (e.g. School Travel Plan Champion).
4. Ensure 'Your LA' is correct and then select your school from the drop-down menu.
5. Complete the rest of the registration form and then select 'Register'.

### What next?

Your application will go to SMBC's Sustainable Travel Team for approval. As soon as they accept your registration, you will receive an automated email confirming that you have access to the system.

## Writing your STP

Writing your STP can be broken down into 6 steps:

1. Appoint a STP Co-Ordinator & Set up a Working Group
2. Carry Out Surveys and Consultation
3. Establish Overall Aims of the STP
4. Write the STP
5. Set Up/Continue with Initiatives in the STP
6. Monitor and Review the STP

### Step 1) Appoint a STP Co-Ordinator and Set up a Working Group

Every STP should have a 'School Travel Plan Co-ordinator'. Their duties will include:

- Being the main point of contact for issues regarding school travel;
- Implementing the STP; and
- Undertaking any travel surveys, analysing the results, and disseminating the relevant information.

The STP Co-ordinator will usually be a member of staff at the school but could be a School Governor or another appropriate stakeholder in a position to undertake these duties.

Once the STP Co-Ordinator has been appointed, the next step is to form a Working Group to assess school travel issues and formulate the STP. The team can include:

- Students e.g. pupil council members, prefects, Junior Road Safety Officers;
- Staff;
- School Board/Parent Council members;
- Parents; and
- Other stakeholders with an interest e.g. Councillors, community members, community groups, police, community council.

### Step 2) Carry Out Surveys and Consultation

You will need to collect and analyse key information to identify the main travel issues affecting your school. This will inform the development of the STP and the package of measures your school will introduce and deliver.

These surveys will provide information on students' existing travel patterns; their routes to school, travel modes and any concerns they have with the school journey.

**It is a minimum requirement that a pupil and staff Travel Mode Questionnaire is undertaken annually.**

Other surveys can include:

- **Travel Mode Questionnaires** - for students, teachers and parents to fill in and voice their concerns about the routes to school;

- **Mapping Exercises** - students can mark on a map their route to school and any concerns along the way;
- **Hands-Up Counts** - can be done in class at the start of the day;
- **Pedestrian Counts, Traffic Counts, etc** – students can help carry these out where needed; and
- **Engage with Student Groups/Committees** – Students at Secondary Schools and Colleges may have Sustainability Committees or ‘Green’ Organisations. It is helpful to include these groups in the survey/consultation process.

Including students in this process ensures that they are fully informed of what the school community is seeking to achieve, and often they can be enthusiastic participants in the STP process.

An example School Travel Survey is provided in Appendix A.

### Step 3) Establish Overall Aims of the STP

The results from the surveys should form the basis of the STP. The Working Group can summarise the concerns raised and determine the overall aims and main targets of the STP. These will relate to safety, health, and the environment. Links to other initiatives can also be identified within this context where appropriate.

Some questions you may wish to think about here are:

- What existing barriers are there preventing students, parents and teachers from walking or cycling to school?
- How would students like to travel to school if given the choice?
- What would enable and encourage more active travel to school?
- How can the children become involved in the production of the travel plan and implementing initiatives to change travel pattern?

The aims and targets should be **SMART**: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound.

**Figure 3 - SMART Targets**



### Step 4) Write the STP

Plan the package of measures your school will introduce and deliver through the STP.

### Step 5) Set Up/Continue with Initiatives in the STP

It is now possible to action the initiatives outlined in the STP.

Measures offering alternatives to the car on the school run and to tackle car congestion, especially at the school gates, should also be introduced where necessary.

Please see some suggested example Initiatives to include within the STP in Appendix B.

Once the STP is submitted, the Sustainable Travel Team can look into your various proposals and access funding.

### Step 6) Monitor and Review the STP

This is an important part of the STP process and crucial for success:

- To see what is working;
- To see what might need more help or a slightly different approach;



- To identify new areas needing looked at; and
- To review targets.

A STP should be a working document reviewed regularly. If a school's circumstances change the STP should also be adapted accordingly.

The Sustainable Travel Team will be happy to provide advice and assistance in relation to any of the steps mentioned above.

## The Modeshift STARS Process

For schools in England, it is free to access Modeshift STARS.

Modeshift STARS is a continuous process of planning, doing and reviewing. Each academic year your school has three opportunities to apply for STARS accreditation which fall at the end of each full term. However, SMBC prefer to review STARS accreditation in July, at the end of the school year. The Modeshift STARS Cycle displayed below sets out the process for getting accredited.

**Figure 4 - Modeshift STARS Cycle**



## School Travel Plans and the Planning Process

For SMBC to feel confident that a new or expanding school can offset any increases in students, and potential increase in traffic problems associated with the development, SMBC must be satisfied that a school is doing what they can to reduce travel by car.

The 'school run' often adds to congestion around the school gates and the surrounding area. SMBC and schools should therefore work together to provide information to make a judgment about how any potential problems could be reduced.

## Pre-application Stage

During the pre-application stage, there will be the opportunity to discuss the STP with SMBC and understand any expectations we may have regarding its content. For example, officers may advise on specific issues that they would like to see addressed, or measures that they would like to see included in the STP. This will increase the chance of a STP being approved once it is submitted.

A Transport Assessment or Statement for the development should highlight the issues that the STP will seek to address. It is good practice to include a trip-generation forecast for the development within the Transport Assessment/Statement and this will form the basis for setting targets for modal split. Officers will also be able to advise on appropriate STP targets for mode share, considering a number of factors including location, existing issues, the type of area and the school's catchment area.

## Existing Schools (Expansions)

An existing STP (via Modeshift STARS) should be submitted with the planning application. If the school does not currently have an STP, they will be required to have an approved STARS Travel Plan in place prior to occupation of the new building.

The STP should be updated and include recent pupil 'hands up' travel surveys of current and preferred travel modes. The Action Plan should also include sustainable travel initiatives that will be implemented before and after the development is completed.

In addition to this, an Interim School Travel Plan - Existing Site form will need to be completed to provide the additional information required to support the planning application. Further information may also be requested on a case-by-case basis. Once completed, the form should be uploaded to the school's STARS pages under the Planning Tab.

## New School Sites

For schools being developed on new sites, an Interim School Travel Plan – New Site form should be completed. This will direct you to the sections of a STARS application that will also need to be filled out at this time.

When the Interim STP is completed, this can be uploaded to the Planning section of your STARS pages and submitted alongside your planning application documents. Once the development is occupied, the information from the Interim STP should be transferred to your STARS application and a STARS application completed in full.

## Modeshift STARS Resources

All Modeshift STARS Education resources discussed in this guidance are available to download here:  
<https://www.modeshiftstars.org/education/>

## Financial Securities & Deposits

SMBC will seek the necessary funding from the developer for the STP to be effective.

In order to protect the council against a failure to implement the agreed travel plan, SMBC will secure a deposit to implement measures on behalf of the education establishment, which will be returned in instalments on successful completion of agreed targets within the STP.

## Can SMBC assist with the implementation of my STP?

For schools that are required to submit a STP, SMBC can take responsibility for the implementation of the Travel Plan measures if the school wishes.

Measures can be purchased from SMBC to assist with the implementation of the STP and will be commensurate to the value of the measures agreed with the Sustainable Travel Team at preapplication stage.

If this approach is taken, the bond / cash deposit from the developer will not be required, as the measures will be purchased directly from SMBC to implement.

For more information on suggested measures to include in a STP, please see Appendix B & C.

## Monitoring Fees

The funding also needs to cover the monitoring and the outcomes of a STP, which are then reported back to the local planning authority on progress towards targets.

For State or Maintained schools, the monitoring fee will be waived. For private schools and academies, the monitoring fee will be charged in line with Travel Plan contributions expected from business developments.

Monitoring fees will be dependent on the length of the monitoring period set<sup>1</sup> and the complexity of both the site and the monitoring requirements. As an approximate guide, SMBC bases the figure on approximately £1,000 per annum, which pays SMBC Officers' time to:

- Assess the Travel Plan's compliance;
- Review submitted reports;
- Record and review figures and targets;
- Maintain beneficial measures such as car share initiatives; and
- Advise coordinators.

## Implementation Costs

If the school chooses to purchase Travel Plan measures from SMBC, the following indicative annual costs have been provided by the Sustainable Travel Team. These will include up to 5 initiatives which the school can select from a package of measures developed by SMBC.

**Table 1 - Indicative Travel Plan Annual Measures Costs**

	1 Form Entry	2 Form Entry	3+ Form Entry
Primary School	£150	£150	£200
Junior or Infant School	£100	£100	£150
Secondary School or College		£200	

<sup>1</sup> Usually a minimum period of 5 years, but can be up to 10 years depending upon the nature, scale and transport impact of the specific development. For a school development, 5 years is likely to be sufficient.

# What a School Travel Plan Should Include

A STP should establish a structured strategy for promoting safe, active and sustainable travel to school. In short, the key sections to include in a STP are:

- Aims and Objectives;
- School Profile;
- Survey Findings and Current Travel Patterns;
- Action Plan;
- Links to the Curriculum;
- Publicity and Promotion; and
- Monitoring and Review.

Some of these key sections are discussed in more detail below, including a specific focus on STPs. However please refer to the overarching 'master' guidance for further details on what a STP should include.

## Links to the Curriculum

Try, where possible, to include the students in all aspects of the STP production and in the implementation of initiatives. Classroom work focused around school travel planning will help to make your travel plan sustainable and allow for regular monitoring and assessments of travel issues.

Lesson plans and resources are also available to download from the Sustrans website:  
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/>

## Publicity and Promotion

Members of the school and local community should be made aware of the STP, become involved, and be informed of its progress. This section of the STP should detail how this shall be done. Various examples include:

- Producing a STP newsletter;
- Updating students and parents on progress;
- Providing copies of the travel plan in leaflet form around the school and in welcome packs for new students and parents;
- Provide information at open evenings or parents' nights;
- Create a STP notice board;
- Make poster versions of the plan highlighting the main targets and proposed actions;
- Provide maps of safer routes to school from drop off points to make them easy to use; and
- Invite media coverage of special events.

## Helpful Contacts

If you need any further information, or assistance in starting up the STP process, then please contact SMBC's Sustainable Travel Team at: [travelplanning@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:travelplanning@solihull.gov.uk)

## Appendix A. Survey Example

School Name	
Name of your class	
Year Group	
Number of students absent today	

How do you usually travel to school?	
Usual: Walk	
Usual: Cycling	
Usual: Car	
Usual: Scooting/Skating	
Usual: Public Bus	
Usual: School Bus	
Usual: Park & Stride/Walk	
Usual: Train/Tube/Metro	
Usual: Car Share	
Usual: Car	

How would you like to travel to school	
Preferred: Walk	
Preferred: Cycling	
Preferred: Car	
Preferred: Scooting/Skating	
Preferred: Public Bus	
Preferred: School Bus	
Preferred: Park & Stride/Walk	
Preferred: Train/Tube/Metro	
Preferred: Car Share	
Preferred: - Car	
Unknown	

Any other comments:-

# Appendix B. Example Initiatives To include in a STP

## Walking Initiatives

- Walk to School Weeks – in May and International WTSW in October
- Walking buses
- Walk on Wednesdays - walking events for whole school to participate in
- Pedometer projects
- Identify and recommend safer walking routes
- Create a safe and pleasant school zone with priority given to children
- Park and stride – with drop off points away from school gates
- Demonstrate to parents and students the social advantages of walking
- Poster and leaflet campaign to create a walking culture in your school
- Promote healthy ways to get to school
- Create a safer routes leaflet
- The promotion, improvement and creation of new canal towpaths

## Cycling Initiatives

- Cycle Training
- Identify safer routes for cycling
- Bike to School Days
- Install Cycle Storage
- Cycle trains
- Hold a 'bike clinic' with a 'bike doctor' from your local cycle store
- Promote safer cycling to school through events and publicity
- Poster and leaflet campaign to create a cycling culture in your school
- Cycling events for the whole school community to participate in

## School Transport

- Bus Monitors
- School Transport Policy
- Good Behaviour Agreements/Pledges
- Enforcement of Seatbelts
- Seating Plans or Seat Allocations

## Road Safety Education

- Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs)
- Traffic Trails

## Low Cost Engineering Measures

- Improved Signage
- Traffic Calming
- Safer Crossing Points
- Improvements to Walking/Cycling Routes
- Drop Offs
- 'Footprints' and Other Pavement Markings

## Car Parking Management (Staff and Colleges)

- Introduce student parking maximums and limit permits to students inside a certain distance from the college
- Introduce pricing for students
- Encourage car sharing
- Encourage retiming of journeys with flexible permits reflecting college timetable

## Links to Other Initiatives

- Health Promoting Schools
- Eco Schools
- Active School Co-ordinators
- 20mph Limits Outside Schools

Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) provide measures to complement public transport and active travel use which can be included within School Travel Plans.

For further information on any of these initiatives, please contact the Sustainable Travel Team and we would be happy to discuss these with you.





## Appendix C. Example Education Travel Plan Offers: Primary, Secondary & Sixth Form / College

Primary Offer	
Infant	Modeshift Stars set up/support
	Assembly – One per term
	Sustainable/Road Safety Bulletins for parents. Half Termly.
	Assistance with Walking Bus/Park & Stride/5 min Walking Bubble.
	Nursery Kits
	Scootability
Junior	Modeshift Stars set up/Support
	Assembly – One per term.
	Sustainable/Road Safety Bulletins for parents. Half Termly.
	Assistance with Walking Bus/Park & Stride/5 min Walking Bubble.
	Year 3 Walk Smart Pedestrian Training.
	Scootability
	Theatre in Education

Secondary Offer	
	Modeshift Stars set up/support
	Assembly – One per term
	Sustainable/Road Safety Bulletins for parents. Half Termly
	Dr Bike lunchtime sessions
	Park & Stride/ 5 min Walking Bubble.
	Theatre in Education.

Sixth Form/College	
	Modeshift Stars set up/support.
	Sustainable bulletins for students. Half Termly.
	Dr Bike
	Sustainable Travel/ Air Quality discussion workshops. (draft lesson has been developed.
	Theatre in Education – Young Driver?

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