



St Mary's Catholic High School
School Travel Plan

Updated : January 2021

This document will set out how the school will promote safer, active and sustainable travel to school, with the main emphasis being on reducing the number of children being driven to and from school.

Measures will be put forward as follows to:

- reduce the number of private vehicles on the journey to school
- improve safety on the journey to school
- encourage more active and sustainable travel choices

Encouraging active travel to school has a wide range of benefits, not only for the school community, but also for the area around the school and for the whole area in terms of less traffic and congestion.

The benefits of having an active School Travel Plan include:

For the pupils

- Improving health and fitness by walking, scooting and cycling
- Improving travel awareness and road user skills
- Improving awareness of their surroundings

For the school

- Improving safety around the school
- Reducing congestion around the school
- Establishing safer walking and cycling routes around the school
- Linking to the National Curriculum

For parents

- Reducing stress and time spent driving to school, especially when it is congested
- Increasing quality parent/child contact time
- Building better links with the school

For the local community

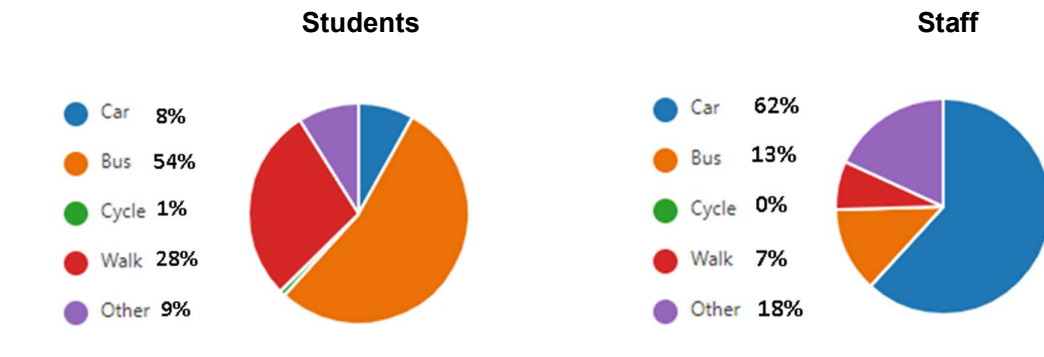
- Improving the local environment by reducing air and noise pollution
- Reducing congestion problems
- Improving walking routes
- Improving road safety

The more schools in the area which are developing and implementing the measures in their school, the greater cumulative effect there will be across the borough, reducing the reliance on and impact of cars on the school journey, leading to less traffic and congestion in Croydon around the 'school run' period.

How do St Mary's Students and Staff Travel to school?

Based on the information that we have students and staff travelling quite varying distances to school, there are a number of different methods of travel that are used. A new school travel survey taken in January 2021 concludes the following results.

Students and staff were asked how they travelled to school prior to the March 2020 lockdown.



Over half of students (54%) travelled to school by bus, 28% walked to school 9% used either the tram or train 8% were brought to school by car and just 1% cycled.

Staff have significantly higher car usage at 62% as would be expected with staff as many travelling greater distance. 18% used the tram or train, 13% travelled by bus and 7% walked.

Students and staff were also asked whether or not they have changed how they get to and from school since the Lockdown in March 2020

Students

26% answered Yes

74% answered No

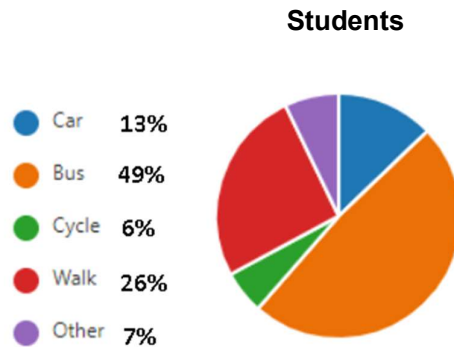
Staff

24% answered Yes

76% answered No

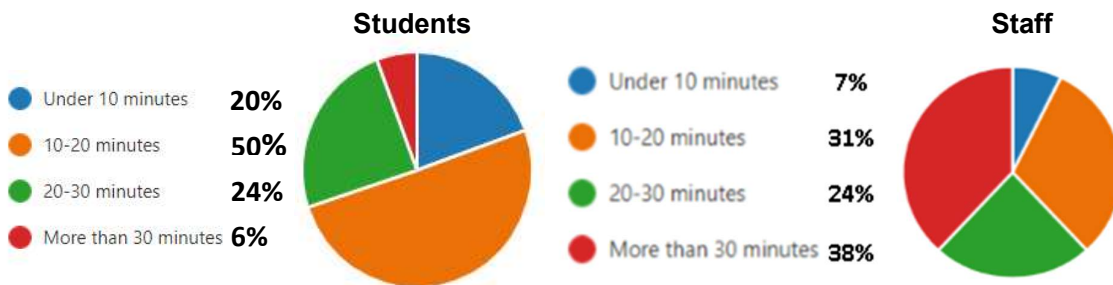
Of those that have changed how they travel the reasons given for this were public transport restrictions, parents working from home so could come by car which they felt was safer in the pandemic, that they started walking as felt safer and it was a bit healthier.

Students and staff were asked to confirm the mode of transport used when school returned to site in September 2020



Staff confirmed that of the 24% that have changed their mode of transport, many are now travelling by car or walking due to not wanting to use public transport whilst the transmission rate for Covid 19 is still high. A few staff members said they would possibly cycle if the right facilities were available to be able to shower before starting the working day and lock their bike securely on site.

The time it takes to get to school by both students and staff was also asked as part of the survey.



Students were also asked would cycling to school be an option for them if the appropriate bike park facilities were available at school.

A very encouraging 37% of students responding to the survey said they would consider cycling to school if the facilities were available at school.

They were also asked if they would be interested in becoming a Youth Travel Ambassador and helping to put in place initiatives to promote active travel to school.

24% of students said yes they would like to be involved, 26% said no they wouldn't be interested and a huge 50% said they were not sure but they would definitely be interested to find out more about being a Youth Travel Ambassador.

Survey Conclusion

The most popular student mode of travel to school before March 2020 was the bus at 54%, this decreased slightly to 49% when pupils returned in September 2020. This decrease is mostly due to transport restrictions.

As part of the action plan going forward will be to look at reducing this transport use if possible and moving students who live closer to school to perhaps looking at cycling (when suitable facilities are in place at school and with the support of Croydon Council for this to be looked at with the safety of students as the top priority) or walking where feasible.

The number of students walking to school is also quite high at 28% before March 2020 and 26% now this is due to these students living in close proximity to the school making a less than 10 minute walk each way to and from school a very viable option.

Results would indicate that the number of student journeys being taken by car was low, there has been a 5% increase in car journeys since returning in September 2020 but this is hopefully a temporary increase due to Covid 19 restrictions on transport and parents feeling it is currently safer to bring students to school by car. We will monitor this. Generally low car usage is very likely due to our central location in Croydon and the availability of good public transport close to school (St Mary's being located less than 5 minutes walk from West Croydon Bus Station, less than 10 minutes from West Croydon mainline Station and with trams also run along the Wellesley Road which is very close to the school)

What is very encouraging is that the percentage of students traveling by bike has increased very slightly from just 1% to 6% but that 37% of those surveyed said they would be interested to look at cycling or scooting to school in the future and 74% would possibly like to be involved in the Youth Travel Ambassador programme if this is put in place.

The results of our latest survey have enabled us to put together the below action plan that can help us work towards STARS accreditation in 2021-22

Action Plan

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	TARGET DATE	COMMENTS
Increase the number of pupils walking to school	Travel plans shared through PSHE Healthy Schools	Summer Term 2021	A focus for when students return to school post January lockdown 2021
Increase the number of pupils cycling/scooting to school	Investigate the feasibility, funding and installing of bike park facilities at school.	September 2021	We would be looking for Croydon Council to actively support us in this initiative

Reduce the number of pupils using the bus and move them to a more 'active' form of travel	Once the YTA programme is established, initiatives to be put in place to encourage students to reduce bus journeys where feasible	January 2022	This reduction will depend on the distance students travel and the speed of which cycle facilities are introduced
Reduce the number of pupils who are driven to school	aim for a noticeable reduction in car journeys to school	September 2021/January 2022	This target will depend on when Covid Restrictions are lifted
Actively promote sustainable travel to the whole school community	Have nominated walk to school/work days	First one by July 2021 Then half termly	Factored into the calendar planning 2021-2022
Recruit Youth Travel Ambassadors to help implement the STP objectives	School Council - Community	Summer Term 2021	There may be a need for a new Ambassador programme in 2021-2022, but utilising this student council platform would help recruitment now.



STARS – Sustainable Travel: Active, Responsible, Safe

In order to help achieve the above objectives St Mary's have signed up to be part of STARS, TfL's accreditation scheme for London schools and nurseries. We aim to become STARS accredited school during the 2021-22 academic year.

STARS inspires young Londoners to travel to school sustainably, actively, responsibly and safely by championing walking, scooting and cycling. STARS supports pupils' wellbeing, helps to reduce congestion at the school gates and improve road safety and air quality.

Why STARS?

The average journey to school is less than one kilometre, that's around a 10-minute walk. However, many of these journeys are made by car leading to congestion and an unsafe and polluted environment for us all. By swapping some of these car journeys for active travel, we aim to make a difference to the streets around our school by making them safer and healthier and supporting the Mayor's vision for Healthy Streets.

Benefits

The benefits of us joining STARS are:

Our pupils

- Improve pupils' emotional health and wellbeing
- Contributes to pupils' 60 minutes a day of physical activity
- Increases attendance and attainment
- Build young people's influencing skills
- Encourage healthier travel behaviours and habits such as walking, scooting and cycling to school

Our school

- Develop our School Travel Plan providing solutions to school's travel issues
- Create positive travel behaviour change and provides access to funding
- Bespoke professional guidance and support from Croydon Council
- Raise the profile of our school, help gain external recognition and contribute to Healthy Schools London Awards Programme

The wider school community

- Reduce congestion around the school site and improve air quality
- Encourage positive travel behaviour change in parents/carers and local residents
- Help develop relationships with community stakeholder groups



Youth Travel Ambassadors

In order to help us on our way to STARS accreditation we aim to recruit Youth Travel Ambassadors across the school when school returns to learning on site.

The Youth Travel Ambassadors (YTA) programme is for young people aged 11 to 19. We aim to recruit between 6 and 12 YTA students who will help put in place and deliver behaviour change campaigns to their peers over the course of the academic year.

YTA teams research and develop campaigns to change people's behaviour. They focus on walking and cycling, road safety and improving passengers' experiences.

Campaign initiatives can include:

- Themed assemblies
- Walking and cycling competitions,
- Creative workshops
- Community events.

Supporting the Curriculum

The YTA programme can link to curriculum subjects in a variety of ways:

YTA ACTIVITY SUBJECT	CURRICULUM LINKS
Creating and presenting a persuasive Dragons Den style pitch in an assembly	English
Collecting, analysing travel data including air quality data collection and analysis	Maths and Science
Being a responsible citizen. Working together to improve the school community	PSHE /RSE and Citizenship
Using technology to create campaign materials such as PowerPoints and posters	IT and Art
Creating apps to aid and track behaviour change in school	IT
Using GIS and maps to interpret current and desired travel behaviours of the school community	Geography
Bikeability cycle training	Physical Education
Writing, directing and editing campaign films	Drama Performing Arts and English

Our objectives and Initiatives will be revised again once school returns to site and life begins to return to normal.