

Brentside Active Travel Challenge and Walking App

Excellence in Walking

The Brentside High School Youth Travel Ambassador students have demonstrated a remarkably integrated and innovative approach to increasing walking to school. Utilising Smartphone technology, the students designed their own Walking App (with Pedometer and Route Planning features) as a tool for their campaign, encouraging their peers to get active and get to know their local area better. An Active Travel Month encouraged healthy competition amongst all Year 7 and Year 8 pupils as they walked, cycled or Skateboarded to school for the chance to win prizes. These initiatives were further supported by assemblies and workshops to both their own and feeder Primary schools about the health, social and environmental benefits of walking and also Road Safety awareness. Assemblies have been presented twice to over 600 KS3 students and the workshops are taking place in July. Hands-up surveys reveal an increase in numbers of students walking to school and a decrease in both bus and car use.

Local Authority

Michael Kitchen TFL Youth Travel Ambassador Coordinator London Transport Museum Covent Garden
London WC2E 7BB michael.kitchen@ltmuseum.co.uk 020 7379 6344 07972 049283

Who Was Involved

The school has a Youth Travel Ambassador team consisting of 12 KS3 students. Their role is to research, develop and deliver their campaign initiatives to their peers. They are supported by 2 teachers Latifa Al-Subaydi and Zac Newman who monitor the team's progress, facilitating arrangements within the school and maintaining regular contact with TfL via updates sent to their YTA Coordinator.

Budgeting

The students pitched their campaign idea to a panel of Sustainable Travel experts at Transport for London's annual Dragon's Den event 'Campaign Junction'. The students were successful in securing £250 to fund their project: Sports voucher prizes for their walking challenge and a trip to the Olympic VeloPark to further promote healthy and sustainable travel choices.

Project Development

The students conducted surveys from which they discovered that overcrowding on buses was a key issue but that the majority of KS3 students did in fact care about the impact of their travel choices. With the support of their YTA Coordinator they devised a campaign to tackle these issues and pitched their idea in Dragon's Den. Following detailed feedback from the panellists, the YTAs divided into 3 sub-teams to organize their work:

Map, Pedometer and App teams. Using the App Shed software available to them in their ICT lessons, the students developed the App to have 3 features: a pedometer (with print and save your steps option), route planning (5 key route options described) and a Walking Zone map. The map itself was produced in collaboration with Ealing Council's GIS department and is displayed around school to raise awareness about the local area and walking times to various locations. Students can download the App by scanning the QR code displayed on the Campaign posters.

What Was The Outcome

Throughout the whole school, beyond their target audience, hands-up surveys reveal walking has increased by 4%, bus use has decreased by 3% and car use has decreased by 1% - a clear modal shift from bus and car travel to walking for 2015-16. Since the Brentside YTA students first began working on Sustainable Travel projects in 2014 there has been a year-on-year increase in walking (10% up) and a year-on-year decrease in bus and car use (8% and 3% respectively) – a highly commendable result! Assemblies have been presented twice to over 600 KS3 students: one on Road Safety awareness in preparation for the walking challenge and one on Active Travel Benefits. Following the success of this year's campaign, Brentside and their YTA team plan to make the Active Travel Month an annual event. Next year, they plan to include cycling as a key feature of their campaign, increasing the App functionality to include cycling.

How Does This Project Meet The Criteria

The activities that took place throughout the campaign, in particular the development of a bespoke App, showed great creativity. Being a youth-led project meant there was a peer to peer element of promotion which was effective in reaching the target group. The school successfully worked in partnership with the key stake holders (Ealing and TfL) who provided support and resources free of charge. Monitoring was done throughout the campaign and the figures described above prove a positive impact. The team plan to repeat and expand the scheme next year to include more cycling. It's a project which could easily be replicated by other schools. The YTA students themselves have shown initiative, tenacity and creativity in designing and delivering this campaign. They have been personable leaders in workshops and assemblies and set a great example to their peers. 6 of the 12 team members have now been in role for 3 years!

