



**Buckinghamshire County Council Transport · Economy · Environment** 

**Buckinghamshire County Council's Getting to School Strategy** 



# Introduction

The Getting to School Strategy is fulfilling our duty to produce a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy as outlined in the Education and Inspections act 2006. It is an accompanying document to the Council's Local Transport Plan 4. This strategy is designed to set out how we will promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to schools, colleges and other education centres. It includes the transport needs of students aged 16+, and pupils with Special Education Needs or Disabilities.

Sustainable travel means forms of transport that reduce congestion and improve health. This includes buses, trains, walking and cycling. Within this strategy we discuss our current activities and initiatives, followed by the challenges we face. Finally it sets out actions and objectives for encouraging sustainable education travel and how we will work (and support others) to meet our targets.

This document has multiple purposes:

- Meeting our statutory duty to maintain a SMoTS (as outlined in the Education and inspections Act 2006) which should:
  - Promote the use of sustainable modes of travel to meet the school travel needs of Buckinghamshire.
  - Assess our school travel needs
  - Assess our facilities and services for sustainable modes of travel to, from and within Buckinghamshire
- Reducing congestion around schools and education establishments
- Outlining how schools can increase sustainable travel
- Informing parents/carers on the benefits of sustainable travel
- Improving the health and wellbeing of young people

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# **Vision and Aims**

This document supports the vision outlined in our Local Transport Plan 4:

Our vision is to make Buckinghamshire a great place to live and work, maintaining and enhancing its special environment, helping its people and businesses thrive and grow to give us one of the strongest and most productive economies in the country.

In order to help achieve this vision, the overall aim of this Getting to School Plan is to promote sustainable and active travel as the first and best choice to and from education. In order to help accomplish this, we have the following aims;

- Keep children and young people safe, healthy and happy
- Reduce congestion and air pollution on our transport network and around education establishments
- Increase the independence of children so that they obtain skills for later life

This is a live document that will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

# **Background**

In Buckinghamshire there are over 270 schools and an approximate school population of 74,062. The county is thriving and growing, so the school population is also rising. We are providing 3,500 new school places in primary schools over the period 2014-19 (1,000 in 2016-17), including two new schools in Aylesbury.

Buckinghamshire has a population of 528,000 (Buckinghamshire Strategic Plan 2017-20) and approximately 25% are children and young people. The population is projected to increase by 12% between 2011 and 2026. The number of children and young people (aged 0-19) is likely to increase by approximately 11%. It is predicted that by 2026, 69% of the population will live in either Aylesbury or High Wycombe and, to accommodate this growth, there are emerging plans to build around 50,000 more houses.

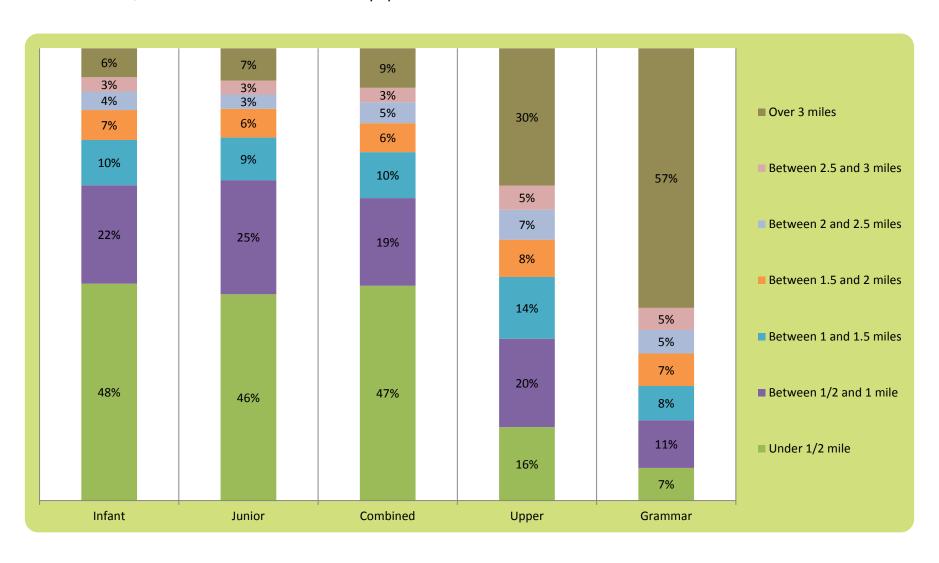
Travel to education is one of the top reasons given for travel. According to the 2016 National Travel Survey, 12% of trips in the UK are for education purposes. There are many different methods of sustainable travel to suit all abilities:

- 1. Walking Walking is the easiest way to get more activity into everyday life. It is beneficial for children and young people to walk as part of their journey to and from school and other education establishments.
- 2. Cycling Cycling is the most efficient way to travel actively for longer distances. It gives young people independence and skills they can use for later life.
- 3. Park and Stride for those that live further afield, there may be no option other than to drive. However this does not mean that active travel cannot be included. Park and Stride means driving to a place within walking distance of the school, and then walking the rest of the way. This has the added benefit of reducing air pollution and congestion around schools.
- 4. Scooting If a distance feels like it's too far to walk then for many there is the option of using a scooter, which is particularly popular with young children.
- 5. Bus There are a variety of ways to access education through bus transport. Either using local buses or the dedicated school buses that Bucks CC contract and pay for. This is explained further in the document below.
- 6. Train In rare cases we can provide home to school transport on trains, usually for secondary school and college students.
- 7. Car Sharing Although not traditionally a sustainable mode, utilising car sharing promotes social health and reduces the numbers of cars around a school. This is particularly important in rural areas where there are fewer safe walking and cycling routes.

Nationally, sustainable travel has already increased for students aged 5 -10 as 51% of these pupils walk to and from school compared to 48% in 2015.

## **Distance to School**

One of the biggest influences on choice of travel is distance. Below is a graph that shows the distance that pupils live from their schools based upon straight lines. The data is derived from the October 2017 school census. The graph clearly shows that pupils in primary schools live far closer than those in secondary education. The majority of primary school pupils live under ½ mile from the school, whereas in secondary schools they tend to live over 3 miles away. However, there is a marked difference between Upper and Grammar Schools, where 57% of Grammar School pupils live over 3 miles from the site.













# What we do

As the Education and Transport provider, Buckinghamshire County Council promote sustainable education travel and transport predominately through School Travel Plans and our contracted Home to School Transport (School Buses and Taxis).

# **School Commissioning and Admissions**

## **School Commissioning**

As the education authority, we have a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places within the county. Part of this means securing funding from developers to increase school places. With an ever increasing population this is becoming more and more of a challenge. Since 2007 primary rolls have increased by 4,650 pupils (1,000 in 2015) across Bucks mainly due to:

- Increased migration
- Increased birth rates
- Shift away from independent sector

In order to prepare for the future need, BCC have the following places planned as of 2018:

- Early Years Places 462
- **Primary Places** 2,730 (13fe) plus 9 bulge classes and 2 new schools being progressed with further planned. Mix of expansion of existing and new schools.
- Secondary Places 15fe provided through a combination of a Catholic Satellite (Quarrendon), expansion of existing schools and a new secondary school on Kingsbrook

#### **School Admissions**

Each school has an admissions policy which means it can fairly decide which children can go to the school. These policies will help parents understand how the decisions will be made in their child's case.

The policies can change as circumstances change so it is important to look at the policies for the year a child will be admitted into the school: if a child is starting part-way through a year they will be admitted according to the policies set for the previous September.

As the admission authority, BCC set the admissions policies for community and voluntary controlled primary and secondary schools. Voluntary Aided and Academy schools decide their own policies; there is usually a consultation if a policy change is proposed. Following consultation, each admission authority should make a final decision about their rules and publish them.

All the admissions policies can be found on our website so please check there for any further updates.

## **Home to School Transport**

Buckinghamshire County Council has a statutory duty to provide home to school transport for those that are eligible for free transport. Eligibility for travel is determined by the distance and safety of the route to school. There are two main types of students who use the home to school transport we provide; those that are entitled to free transport and those who have to pay. A student is entitled to free home to school transport if they:

- are between 5-16 years old (of statutory school age)
- are attending their nearest suitable school (regardless of the type of school)
- live further away from the school than the statutory walking distances (2 miles for pupils under 8, and 3 miles for those aged 8 and above)

There are exceptions to these criteria and these can be found in our home to school transport policy on our website. This policy is currently under review. The Transport Review 2018 will consider initiatives that will maximise the opportunity to generate efficiencies and facilitate the modernisation of transport services, enabling transport systems to become a Centre of Excellence. The initiative forms part of a key corporate project within the Council's Efficiency Strategy. Recent discussion within stakeholder groups have confirmed that this project will provide a unique opportunity to re-shape the approach to transport provision between organisations across the Council as a whole. Once the initial phase of identifying suitable initiatives is complete, it is anticipated that a collaborative option would be presented through the corporate management structure for approval.

The three key drivers that underpin our approach to the wholescale review of our transport offer are described below:

- <u>Sustainability</u> The current financial position is unsustainable. Even with changes to practice and improving access to earlier support in schools, the bill for transport continues to exceed the planned budget. We appreciate that residents may not be happy with some of the proposed changes, however, it is critical that we do our part in ensuring that children and young people in Buckinghamshire are able to access quality services and that we are in a position to sustain provision.
- Promoting Independence Buckinghamshire County Council is committed to fulfilling its statutory duties towards children as per
  the Children and Families Act 2014, and disabled and vulnerable adults who have eligible care and support needs, as defined
  under the Care Act 2014. Our most vulnerable must be supported and we want to be sure that they are adequately prepared for
  adulthood by encouraging and enabling them to access education, and develop their independence.
- <u>Environment -</u> As the county grows, we need to mitigate the effects of growth on our environment by introducing and enforcing environmental laws and fostering good practice. Tackling air pollution and focusing efforts on improving air quality and cleaner transport and lowering pollutants across the board are key elements of the transport strategy.

The general assumption in the legislation is that the nearest suitable school for transport will usually be the physically nearest school by age (Primary / Secondary) and type (Mainstream / Special). There is no general legislative entitlement to transport to the nearest school of a particular type e.g. by gender, faith, or catchment.

Historically, Buckinghamshire has made more generous provision than this and since October 2012 the policy began to phase out some of these local additional provisions. Admission and Transport policies are separate and not directly linked. So eligibility for a place at a school is not affected by this transport policy and obtaining a place at a school does not bring with it any entitlement to transport, even if a pupil is attending their catchment school.

The home to school transport provision can consist of:

- School buses
- Bus or train season ticket on public transport for child (and parent where necessary)
- A place in a taxi or minibus (normally shared with other children)

Dedicated school bus transport only carries school pupils; members of the public cannot board, normally to primary or secondary (mainstream) schools. Children are expected to make their own way to and from the nearest bus stop at the beginning and end of the school day.

We also provide transportation for pupils with Special Educational Needs up until the age of 19. This normally involves private or shared taxi transport sometimes with a Passenger Assistant (PA), depending on the individual needs. All of our drivers and PAs must have:

- full enhanced DBS check,
- been assessed to confirm they can communicate effectively in English
- completed a minimum of 2.5 hours Client Transport Safeguarding Training with assessment. This training specifically relates to transporting and assisting Special Educational Needs and Disabled Passengers (SEND) and Mainstream taxi and minibus passengers.

Additionally, if drivers and/or PAs are undertaking transport with wheelchairs or other specialist equipment they must undergo further training.

We also offer Independent Travel Training (ITT) within select colleges and schools. In preparation for adulthood, it is expected that the majority of young people beyond the age of 16 will travel independently to their place of education. ITT supports young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to engage in activities which support outcomes associated with growing independence.

In addition, a number of other organisations run ITT programmes within the county. Buckinghamshire County Council will work to encourage more educational institutions to either use these organisations or provide their own ITT programmes.

The agreed extension of ITT in line with changes in policy will ensure that as far as possible, pupils are supported to make their own travel arrangements.

BCC recognises that Independent Travel Training has the following immediate benefits for the student:

- Enables the student to be more independent and use his or her own initiative
- Improves self-confidence
- Enables students to access positive social, educational and professional development activities
- Reduces the student's reliance on family, friends and professionals
- Helps to improve social skills and maintain relationships
- Can have physical health benefits where the student walks all or part of the way

More information on our current provision for SEN pupils can be found on our website.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/2314/school-transport-policy-and-guidance.pdf

## **School Travel Plans**

The main aim of a STP is to reduce single occupancy car use on the school journey, by promoting and encouraging sustainable travel. Increasing sustainable travel helps to reduce congestion and pollution, as well as improving the health and fitness of children and young people. These are just a few of the many benefits of an active STP.

The best School Travel Plans (STP) are developed, maintained and monitored by the whole school community, to promote and facilitate sustainable travel for the school journey. A STP sets out practical initiatives and measures to encourage active, healthy, safe and sustainable travel as an alternative to single occupancy car use. Input from parents and students on any ideas they wish to include in their school's travel plan is encouraged. Ideas should first go through their school's travel plan officer, who will then investigate the feasibility and either include it in the travel plan or forward on to our School Travel Plan Officer. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer, either as Travel Plan coordinators for the school or as Footsteps volunteers.

A STP is developed and monitored by the school to:

- discover actual and preferred mode of travel for the school journey;
- identify issues to determine why people do not travel sustainably;
- set future targets to achieve or maintain modes of sustainable travel (for example to increase cycling; to maintain walking);
- lay out a plan of action for the tasks that the school will carry out to achieve their targets and aspirations;
- encourage the whole school community to travel in a safer, healthier and more sustainable way.

Our Sustainable Travel Team provides support, ideas and resources to schools for their travel plans. We also encourage schools to apply for recognition of their efforts through the national scheme, Modeshift STARS (Sustainable, Travel Accreditation and Recognition for Schools). Currently over 60 schools have applied for and achieved national recognition for their travel plan work. We know that nearly two thirds of schools in Buckinghamshire are engaged in promoting active travel in some way. The extent to which they are involved varies between schools and over time.

The level of car use in engaged Buckinghamshire schools has remained at **30%** for the last five years in the schools that have travel plans, which compares to 34% nationally. Given the semi-rural nature of the county, this is an excellent result.

Below is a list of the initiatives that we use as a part of our School Travel Plan process to encourage sustainable travel to and from school



## **Modeshift STARS** (Sustainable Travel Accreditation and Recognition for Schools)

Modeshift STARS is the national schools awards scheme that has been established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. The scheme encourages schools across the country to join in a major effort to increase levels of sustainable and active travel in order to improve the health and well-being of children and young people. This is measured through their School Travel plans and has 3 levels of accreditation; Gold, Silver and Bronze. More about how to achieve these can be found on our website.<sup>9</sup>

Buckinghamshire are proud to have the highest number of STARS accredited schools of any local authority. We now have 63 schools accredited (35 bronze, 19 silver and 10 gold).



## **Bikeability**

Bikeability is cycling proficiency for the 21st century, designed to give the next generation the skills and confidence to ride their bikes on today's roads. There are three Bikeability levels and children are encouraged and inspired to achieve all three levels, recognising that there is always more to learn and to enjoy on a bike. Training is provided by instructors, accredited to the National Standard, whose qualification has been approved by the Cycle Training Standards Board.



## Walk Once a Week (WOW)

Buckinghamshire County Council has partnered with Living Streets to deliver the WOW project across our schools. WOW is a year-round walk to school challenge. Pupils who walk to school at least once a week are rewarded with a monthly badge, helping build healthy habits for a lifetime. Journeys are logged by pupils on our interactive Travel Tracker or paper wallcharts, this can equate to approximately 30,000 trips a week.



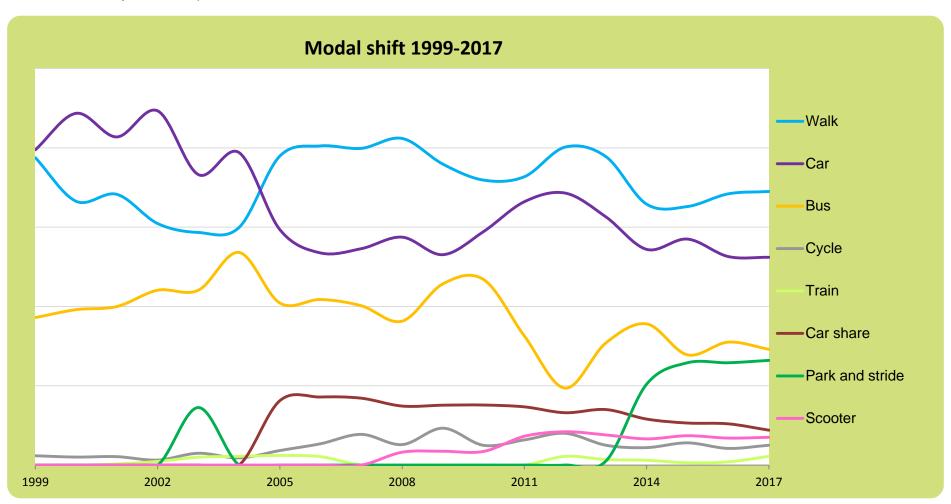
### **Footsteps**

Footsteps is a practical pedestrian training scheme for young children, which develops awareness of roads and helps them live safely with traffic. Children are taken into the local area with a trained tutor to observe the traffic and discuss road safety. It forms part of the portfolio of pedestrian training programme New Journey, which includes *First Steps* for pre-school children and *Making Tracks* which is aimed at children moving on from primary to secondary school. Parents are encourages to volunteer as trainers for this programme.

## **Achievements in 2017/18**

- 8 schools achieved STARS accreditation for the first time
- 6 achieved a higher level of accreditation
- 48 maintained their level of accreditation
- 33 schools with bronze, 19 with silver and 10 with gold accreditation
- 2,758 children trained in Bikeability in 2017/18 with a projection of over 4,300 by 2020

Below is a representation of the Modal Shift achieved in Primary Schools from 1999 – 2017. Schools are recommended to aim for a 1-2% change each year. This is individually set by each school, but this could be shown as a decrease in single occupancy car use or an increase in walking or cycling. The data is collected through Hands Up Surveys, where a teacher will ask their students how they travelled to school that day. This is the only method available since the Government removed "Travel" from the School Census. The graph shows that the car is still the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest form of transport although it has reduced since the first survey. Park and Stride was first introduced in 2013 which is why the graph shows a steep increase. Overall, the data suggests that there has been a positive modal shift away from the private car into more active travel modes.



# **Highlight: Walking Maps**

Greater Aylesbury Local Area Forum and Bucks County Council funded the 'Walking to School Maps Project', to produce walking maps for 10 schools, to encourage alternative modes of transport and build in physical activity.

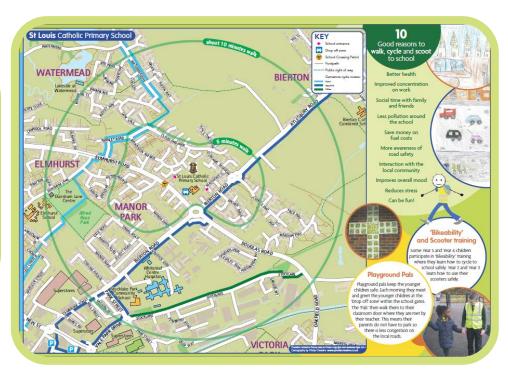
The maps, showing walking and cycling routes, will help to encourage more families to walk to school, increasing active travel, reducing congestion, reducing car use for the school journey and improving air quality in the local area.

Each school has been encouraged to engage with the school community and encourage families to participate. Schools have also been encouraged to contact the press to create local interest and invite local councillors.

St Louis Catholic School in Aylesbury was the first school to get the maps and other schools across Buckinghamshire will follow later. Each student will receive a copy of the map and further copies will be available to download via a PDF on the schools' website.







## **Wider Activities**

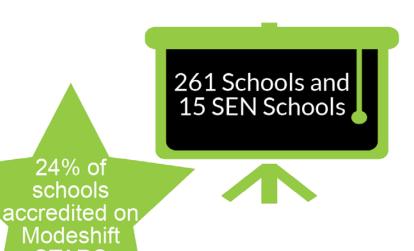
In addition to our more focussed work we also have wider activities that support the Getting to School Strategy:

- 1. Highways Transport for Bucks (TfB) are responsible for maintaining our road network. This includes road markings, signage as well as the general condition of the roads. Outside schools, this means they maintain warning markings, flashing warning lights and traffic calming. As a Council, we also look to deliver new walking and cycling links where there is the opportunity to do so.
- 2. Safety Our Network Safety team is another team within TfB who have a statutory duty to investigate the causes of road traffic collisions on Buckinghamshire County Council's roads and take measures to prevent them. It does this by analysing personal injury data, (which is supplied to BCC by the police), to decide whether behavioural or engineering improvements would be most effective. We review crashes on an annual basis countywide to draw up a priority list of sites and routes for action.
- 3. **Development Management** As a responsible highway authority we must ensure that any new development has the minimum adverse impact on highway safety, traffic capacity, environmental capacity and convenience to transport users as a whole. We are currently in the process of reviewing our Highways Development Management Policy, setting out a range of policies to inform new developments and ensure they meet Buckinghamshire's needs. It provides developers with the information they need to prepare successful proposals in Buckinghamshire. This includes:
  - The information the Council requires for different types and sizes of development.
  - How new developments can meet transport and highway requirements.
  - How the Council considers developments' transport impacts.
- 4. School Crossing Patrol Service Patrollers have an important role within the community helping children and their parents/carers to cross busy roads on their journeys to and from school. We currently have 55 School Crossing Patroller sites across the county. These are funded through BCC own funding and external sponsorship. Many of our patrollers actively engage with schools and pupils to encourage walking to school. For example, through attending assemblies highlighting the benefits of walking and road safety.

# **Facts and Figures**

Below is an infographic displaying the current data for education and transport in Buckinghamshire as of 2018:





Main Mode of Travel to School Ages 5-11

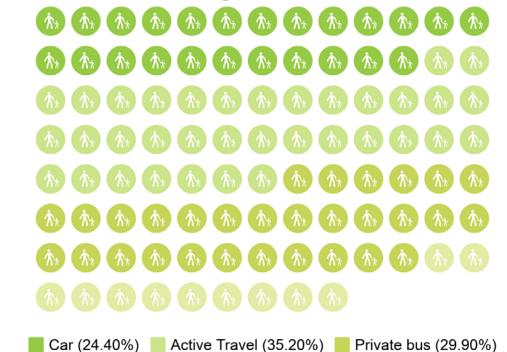


Public Transport (1.10%)

Main Mode of Travel to School Ages 11-18

24% of schools

Modeshift **STARS** 



Public Transport (10.50%)

# **Challenges We Face**

This section explores the issues that we face implementing the strategy. These have been divided into 4 categories:

- Car Dependency
- Transport User Choice
- Health and Environment
- Attitudes to Sustainable Transport
- Financial

## **Car Dependency**

In Buckinghamshire 87% of households have access to one or more cars; this is higher than the average for the South East (82%) and significantly higher than the national average of 74%. Since the 2001 census, there has been an increase in the ownership of vehicles with more households owning four or more cars and a decrease in those owning only one car. Statistics show that households that own at least one car are more likely to use the car as their main mode of travel and this increases the more cars that are owned.<sup>2</sup>

According to the reported road casualties in Great Britain annual report (2016) there were nearly 16,000 child casualties. Of these, 22% occurred between 3pm and 5pm on a weekday and 14% between 7am and 9am on a weekday.<sup>3</sup> This seems to indicate that around 36% of incidents occur during the school commute. Congestion around schools is one possible cause of road traffic incidents, particularly in more rural areas where roads tend to be narrower.

## **Transport User Choice**

### **Primary Students**

Primary school students are generally the pupils who can travel the most sustainably. Often they attend a local school that is within walking distance and can do so safely. The majority of our primary schools are actively promoting sustainable travel to their pupils and families. In general, research shows that children will be driven to school because parents are travelling on to work, live too far away to walk the whole distance or have safety concerns for their children, for example risk of abduction or dangerous traffic conditions.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/476635/travel-to-school.pdf p.8

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/648081/rrcgb2016-01.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/resources?c=1188&q=parentline

## **Secondary Students**

Buckinghamshire has a Grammar School system, which means that once students reach year 6, they can take the 11+ exam. If a child passes the 11+ they are then able to apply for education at one of the Grammar Schools. Due to this system, 11-15 year old students can often travel much further afield and it is hard to predict exactly where a secondary school pupil will attend once they leave primary school. Our Client Transport Team use historic data trends and school catchment areas to organise dedicated home to school bus transport routes.

## **Special Educational Needs and Disabled (SEND) Students**

SEND students have complex needs and sustainable transport is not always a viable option for them. We currently provide transport for students to schools across the county and beyond, generally using taxis. Where journeys are similar, we combine transport arrangements, however this does depend on the nature of a pupil's SEND. Additionally, we do endeavour to place SEN pupils on dedicated mainstream school buses where appropriate, we are not able to do this for the majority.

Where possible, we endeavour to keep journey times below the national guidelines, 45 minutes for primary and 75 minutes for secondary. However, journeys may be more complex and a shorter journey time, although desirable, may not always be possible.

More information on our current provision for SEND pupils can be found on our website.<sup>5</sup>

#### 16+ Students

16+ students are not entitled to free transport to and from their place of education unless they meet certain criteria. They may be able to buy a place on one of our dedicated bus services. Details of funding that may be available to help with home to education transport costs are detailed in our Post 16 Transport Policy.

According to the National Travel Survey, there has been a decline in car ownership for 17-20 year olds which is projected to keep falling until 2039. Of those in this age group who choose not to learn to drive, the main cause is the cost. However, there is also a slight increase in car sharing in this age group as friends who live near one another will drive their other friends to school, at least until they themselves pass their driving tests. These additional car drivers can create traffic issues at schools or in nearby residential areas due to inconsiderate parking, so it is important that we engage with schools and colleges to promote sustainable travel and educate their students about parking.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/2314/school-transport-policy-and-guidance.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/2304/post-16-transport-policy.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/633077/national-travel-survey-2016.pdf, p.10

## **Health and Environment**

In order to get some understanding of the benefits of active travel to school, in early 2018, we undertook a health and economic assessment on the levels of those walking and cycling to school within the County using the Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT). This assessment proposed to identify the degree to which pupils cycling and walking to school has varied between 2003 and 2016/17 in Buckinghamshire, the health and economic benefits of these modal shifts and the impact of financial spending focused on promoting a modal shift towards walking and cycling. That is the cost of School Travel Plans, initiatives and associated infrastructure. The assessment was split by mode (walking and cycling) and within BCC was split into the four districts; Chiltern District Council, Aylesbury Vale District, South Bucks District and Wycombe District. A total of eight assessments were undertaken.

The benefit cost ratio calculated by the model relates to the total value of reduced mortality due to the level of walking or cycling entered by the user. The benefit cost ratio for each district relating to the economic value of walking and the economic value of cycling were all positive. The benefit cost ratio of pupils walking and those cycling to school between 2003 and 2016/17 show that higher benefits were achieved in this period in Wycombe and Aylesbury Vale when compared to the districts of Chiltern and South Bucks. The table below shows the full outputs of the model for each district by mode.

District	The Benefit Cost Ratio (GBP)	
District	Walking	Cycling
Aylesbury Vale	32:1	31:1
Wycombe	40:1	16:1
Chiltern	8:1	4:1
South Bucks	8:1	8:1

For comparison a typical road project will have a cost benefit ratio of about 2:1.

### **Childhood Obesity**

Childhood obesity, and excess weight, are significant health issues for individual children, their families and public health. It can have serious implications for the physical and mental health of a child, which can then follow on into adulthood. The numbers of children who continue to have an unhealthy, and potentially dangerous, weight, is a national public health concern.

### In Buckinghamshire:

- Physical inactivity costs an estimated £84.5m per year. Currently 36% of boys and 45% of girls aged 5-15 are inactive. Only 22% of 5-15 year olds achieve the recommended level of daily activity of 1 hour a day.
- Addressing inactivity is a key priority in the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the Bucks Physical Activity Strategy. 910 We consider that the wider benefits of sustainable travel should not be underestimated.
- The health of people in Buckinghamshire is generally better than the English average. However, about 27% of Year 6 children are classified as overweight or obese (compared with the English average of 34%). Tackling obesity is an important aim of the County Council's and active modes of travel can help achieve this.

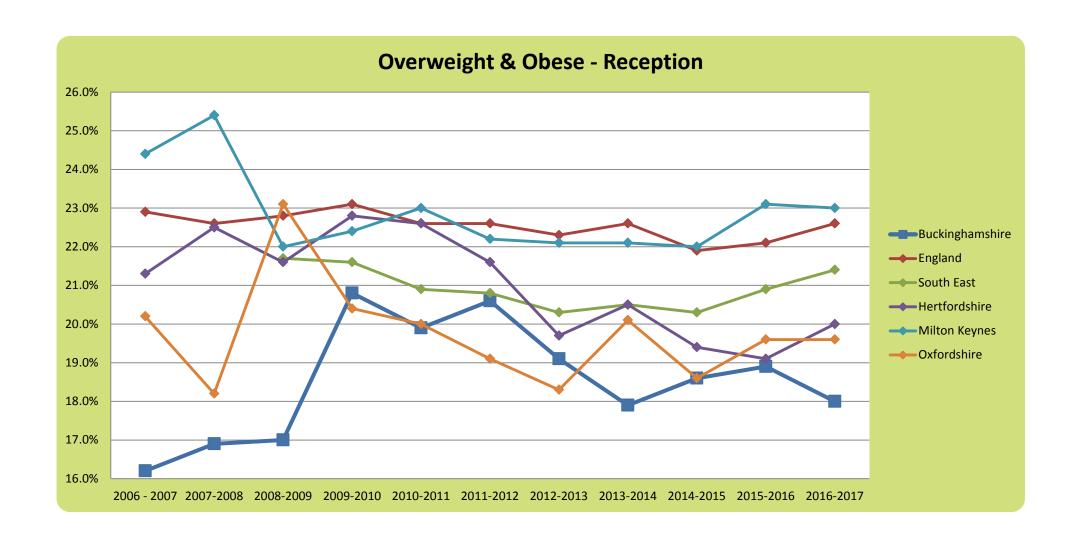
The graphs below show the trend of overweight and obese levels in Buckinghamshire and comparable counties using the NHS National Child Measurement Programme. The trend in Buckinghamshire is that numbers of overweight and obese children are falling and we currently have the lowest percentage with comparable areas. However, this does not mean we should be complacent.

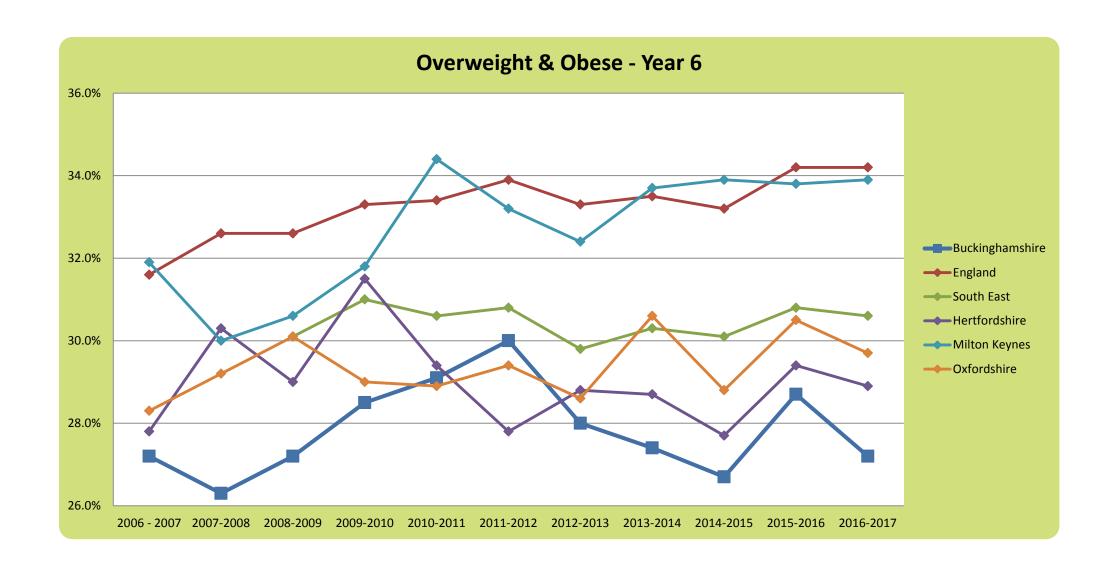
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> https://files.digital.nhs.uk/publicationimport/pub22xxx/pub22610/hse2015-child-phy-act.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> http://www.healthandwellbeingbucks.org/Resources/Councils/Buckinghamshire/Documents/Bucks-PA-Strategy-14-17.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/1131/hwb\_jhwbs-refresh\_engagement-document-oct-2016\_final.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> https://files.digital.nhs.uk/excel/5/8/nati-chil-meas-prog-eng-2016-2017-tab.xlsx





Within the national public health policy there is recognition of the benefits to health of active travel (walking and cycling).

- Inactive children become inactive adults. Investment in walking and cycling can benefit the individual and the wider community.

  The school commute can build activity into daily life that physical activity for school pupils helps:
  - o Alertness and concentration for all and improve learning for children with learning difficulties
  - o Achievement at GCSE active young people have 10-20% better results
- Those who walk or cycle to school achieve about 20 minutes extra physical activity per day than children who are driven there<sup>12</sup>
- Involvement in active travel increases children's awareness of their surroundings and gives them valuable road safety experience and experience of travelling independently.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Davidson, K, K. et al (2008) - from Public Health Wales infographic

## **Air Quality**

Air Quality is a pressing issue for the country. Nitrogen dioxide emissions from diesel traffic cause 23,500 of the 40,000 premature deaths from air pollution each year, according to figures from the DEFRA, and these are usually amongst the most vulnerable. Some studies suggest Air Pollution is linked to poorer student health and academic performance was a correlation between air quality and student performance. Schools located in areas with the highest pollution levels also had the lowest attendance rates (a potential indicator of poor health) and the highest proportions of students failing to meet some educational testing standards.

In Buckinghamshire, our air quality issues are focussed around our urban centres' Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are designated by the District Councils (who monitor and report on progress). There are AQMAs (where national thresholds are exceeded) declared in Aylesbury, Chesham, Marlow, the centre of High Wycombe and around the M40.

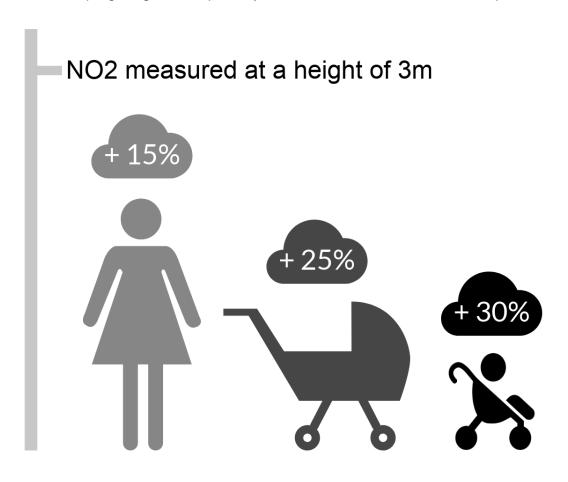
As the county grows, we need to mitigate the effects of growth on our environment by introducing and enforcing environmental laws and fostering good practice. Focusing efforts on improving air quality and cleaner transport and lowering pollutants across the board are key elements of this transport strategy. This will allow our residents to continue to enjoy the benefits our green spaces and live healthier, happier lives. This review will assist the developmental process in ensuring targets are achieved.

In order to improve air quality around schools, parents and teachers should be encouraged not to drive or to park elsewhere and walk the rest of the journey. In a recent report from ClientEarth, it was revealed that 60% of parents want traffic diverted away from schools at the beginning and end of the day.<sup>14</sup> Therefore there is clearly an appetite for this kind of intervention.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> http://stopgrayson.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Pollution-Linked-to-Academic-Performance.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/26/most-uk-parents-back-air-pollution-exclusion-zones-around-schools

In 2015, hfcyclists and Client Earth placed 33 small NO2 detection tubes around Hammersmith Gyratory and Shepherds Bush Green. They measured NO2 after a month, replaced the tubes - did this twice and analysed the data. This study also measured NOx at different heights in addition to usual 3m i.e. breathing height, pram height and push-chair height. The findings showed at pushchair height i.e. the values at 0.5m to be about 30% greater than at 3.0m. At a buggy height of 0.8m the NO2 value is about 25% greater than at 3m. Young children with developing lungs are especially vulnerable to the effects of NO2 pollution. <sup>15</sup>



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> http://hfcyclists.org.uk/2015/02/latest-issues/

# **Attitudes to Sustainable Transport**

In order to implement this strategy we need to ensure that education centres, parents and students are aware of sustainable travel and their school travel plans. According to the British Social Attitudes Survey, although the public agree that fewer people should drive in order to benefit the environment (56%) only 36% were willing to reduce their own car use. There was also an understanding by the public that for journeys of less than 2 miles that they currently make by car, 39% said they could easily cycle, 44% could easily walk and 31% could use the bus. Although Bucks will differ from these national figures, this still demonstrates that some degree of support and facilitation has potential. Parental choice is an important part of the ability to travel to school sustainably.

# **Financial Challenges**

Due to ongoing austerity, funding is an issue across most areas within the Council. It has been recommended that we do more to promote and support sustainable travel, but there is no additional funding available. Therefore any initiatives must be completed within existing budgets. In the case of Home to School transport, there is a challenge to find savings which has led to the Transport Review. It is difficult to balance reducing cost with providing good home to school travel services.

Our main challenges are summarised in the diagram below:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/586193/british-social-attitudes-survey-2015.pdf p.18

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/586193/british-social-attitudes-survey-2015.pdf p.10



# **Our Approach**

Based on the challenges, aims and vision described above, we have determined the following actions for our strategy: For the period 2018 we will continue the things in the following table:

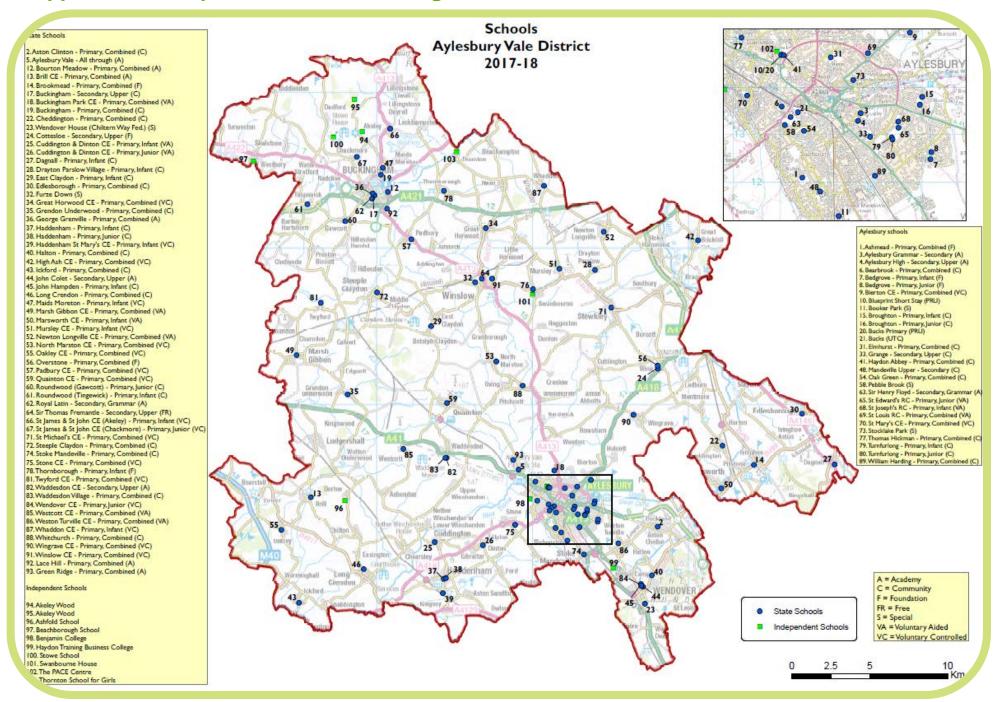
Service Area	Action
School Travel Plans	Provide travel plan support to schools from a County Council Officer to ensure that schools currently engaged maintain an active travel plan.
	Run the school crossing patrol service in accordance with the BCC policy and guidelines – include target
Home to School Transport	Providing home to school transport for entitled pupils according to our policy

Actions we will take forward in 2018/19 -

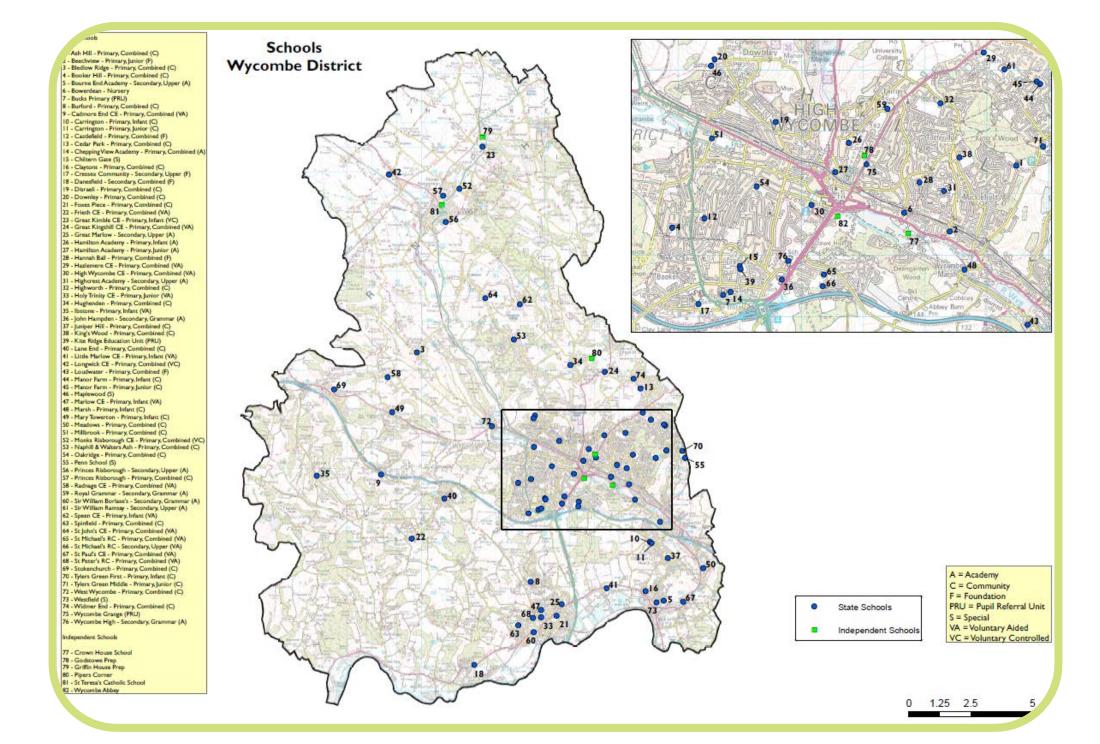
Objective	Action
School Travel Plans	Offer cycle training for 4,000 pupils through our Bikeability and Bikeability Plus programmes during the academic year
	Provide an integrated approach through the planning process to ensure that new or expanding schools address increased travel to their sites by publishing our Highways DM Guidance.
	Increase the number of schools with Travel Plans
	To increase the number of schools participating in an Active Travel Zone Mapping Project
Public Health	Implement two initiatives from the Active Bucks and the Bucks physical activity strategy and action plan

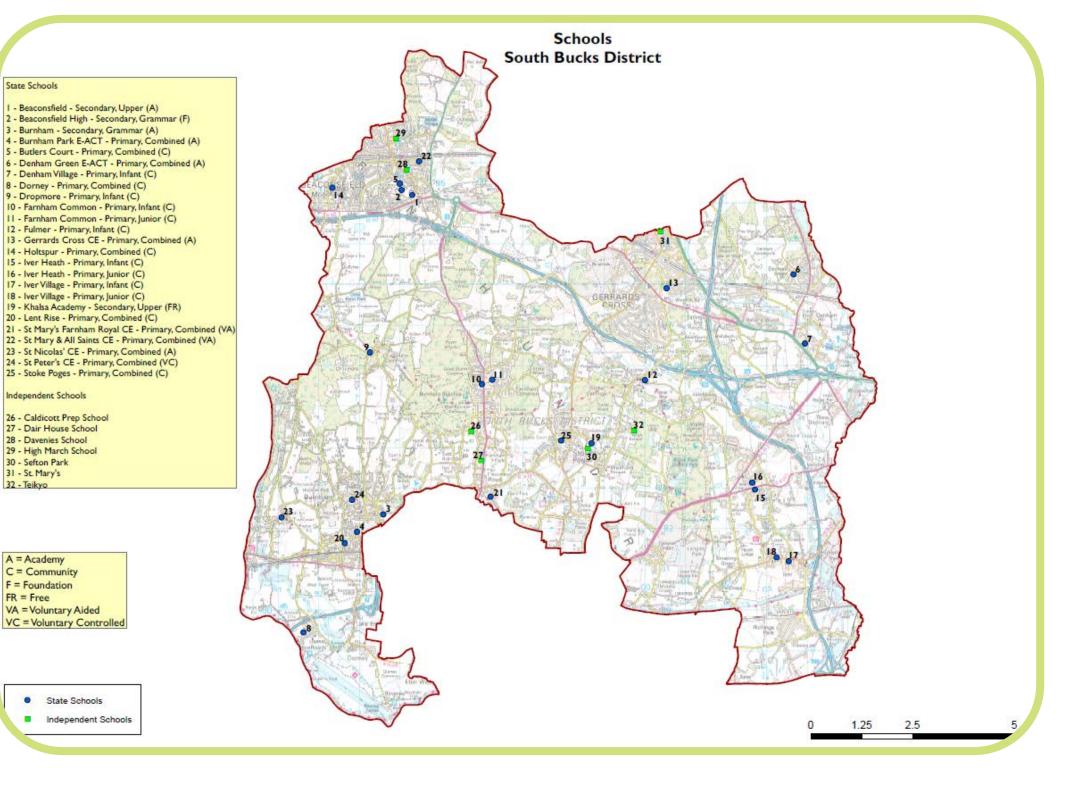
# **Appendices**

## Appendix 1 - Map of Schools in Buckinghamshire



#### Schools **Chiltern District Council** State Schools I - Alfriston (S) 2 - Amersham - Secondary, Upper (A) 3 - Brushwood - Primary, Junior (F) 4 - Buckinghamshire Primary (PRU) 5 - Chalfont St Giles - Primary, Infant (C) 6 - Chalfont St Giles - Primary, Junior (C) 7 - Chalfont St Peter CE - Primary, Junior (A) 8 - Chalfont St Peter - Primary, Infant (C) 9 - Chalfont Valley E-Act - Primary, Combined (A) 10 - Chalfonts Community College - Secondary, Upper (A) 11 - Chartridge - Primary, Combined (C) 12 - Chenies - Primary, Combined (C) 13 - Chesham Bois CE - Primary, Combined (VC) 14 - Chesham Grammar - Secondary, Grammar (A) 15 - Chestnut Lane - Primary, Infant (C) 16 - Chiltern Hills Academy - Secondary, Upper (A) 17 - Chiltern Way Academy - Prestwood (S) 18 - Coleshill CE - Primary, Infant (VC) 19 - Curzon CE - Primary, Combined (VA) 20 - Dr Challoner's Grammar - Secondary, Grammar (A) 21 - Dr Challoner's High - Secondary, Grammar (A) 22 - Elangeni - Primary, Junior (C) 23 - Elmtree - Primary, Infant (C) 24 - Great Missenden CE - Primary, Combined (A) 25 - Hawridge & Cholesbury CE - Primary, Combined (VA) 26 - Henry Allen - Nursery 27 - Heritage House (S) 28 - Holmer Green - Primary, Infant (C) 29 - Holmer Green - Primary, Junior (C) 30 - Holmer Green - Secondary Upper (A) 31 - Hyde Heath - Primary, Infant (C) 32 - Ivingswood Academy - Primary, Combined (A) 33 - Jordans - Primary, Infant (C) 34 - Lee Common CE - Primary, Infant (VC) 35 - Ley Hill - Primary, Combined (C) 36 - Little Chalfont - Primary, Combined (C) 37 - Little Kingshill - Primary, Combined (C) 38 - Little Missenden CE - Primary, Infant (VA) 39 - Misbourne - Secondary, Upper (C) 40 - Newtown Infant & Nursery (C) 41 - Our Lady's RC - Primary, Combined (VA) 42 - Prestwood - Primary, Infant (C) 43 - Prestwood - Primary, Junior (C) 44 - Robertswood - Primary, Combined (C) 45 - Seer Green CE - Primary, Combined (A) 46 - St George's CE - Primary, Infant (VC) 47 - St Joseph's RC - Primary, Combined (VA) 48 - St Mary's CE - Primary, Combined (VA) 49 - Stony Dean (S) 50 - Thomas Harding - Primary, Junior (C) 51 - Waterside - Primary, Combined (C) 52 - Woodside - Primary, Junior (C) 53 - Wycombe Grange (PRU) A = Academy 33 Independent Schools C = Community F = Foundation 54 - The Beacon School 55 - Chesham Preparatory PRU = Pupil Referral Unit State Schools 56 - Gateway School S = Special 57 - Gayhurst School Independent Schools VA = Voluntary Aided 58 - Heatherton House VC = Voluntary Controlled 59 - Maltman's Green School 60 - Thorpe House School 1.25 2.5





State Schools

8 - Dorney - Primary, Combined (C) 9 - Dropmore - Primary, Infant (C)

12 - Fulmer - Primary, Infant (C)

15 - Iver Heath - Primary, Infant (C) 16 - Iver Heath - Primary, Junior (C) 17 - Iver Village - Primary, Infant (C) 18 - Iver Village - Primary, Junior (C)

Independent Schools 26 - Caldicott Prep School 27 - Dair House School 28 - Davenies School 29 - High March School 30 - Sefton Park 31 - St. Mary's 32 - Teikyo

A = Academy C = Community F = Foundation FR = Free

VA = Voluntary Aided VC = Voluntary Controlled

> State Schools Independent Schools

# **Appendix 2 – Relevant Policy**

## **Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)**

The overarching objectives of LTP4 are as follows:

Objective 1: Connected Buckinghamshire - Provide a well-connected, efficient and reliable transport network which links to key national and international destinations helping Buckinghamshire's residents and economy to flourish while capitalising on external investment opportunities.

**Objective 2: Growing Buckinghamshire** - To secure good road, public transport, cycle and walking infrastructure and service provision, working in partnership with local businesses, the community and district councils through a range of initiatives and taking advantage of new and emerging technologies to meet the (current and future) needs of our residents as Buckinghamshire grows.

Objective 3: Healthy, Safe and Sustainable Buckinghamshire - Allow residents to improve their quality of life and health, by promoting sustainable travel choices and access to opportunities that improve health. Ensure transport systems are accessible by all, safe and allow people to make the most of Buckinghamshire whilst protecting its special environments.

Objective 4: Empowered Buckinghamshire - Allow everybody to access the educational, work and social opportunities they need to grow. Increase opportunities for residents to support themselves and their communities by enabling local transport solutions.

The SMoTS will form a supporting document to the LTP4 enabling us to deliver its Access to Education Policy:

**Policy 1** – Access to education - We will continue to encourage the development and implementation of school travel plans across all of the county's schools. Our 'Sustainable Modes of Transport Strategy' for Schools (SMoTS) will help to provide access to good quality schools, colleges and training in a way that will benefit children and young people as well as the rest of the county.

# **Buckinghamshire Strategic Plan 2017-20**

Our Strategic Plan is the key document for the authority as it sets out our key aims and priorities for the next three years. It also sets out the values that guide the council's work and where it works with valuable partnerships. The Plan has 4 aims:

- Safeguarding Our Vulnerable
- Creating Opportunities and Building Self Reliance
- Ensuring Buckinghamshire is Thriving and Attractive
- Delivering Value for Money

The council aims for all residents to be safe, happy and healthy; for children to have the best start in life, and young people to thrive in Buckinghamshire schools. We will continue to plan and deliver early interventions with our partners to drive forward and secure good jobs, good road, rail and other essential infrastructure, which will meet the current and future needs of our residents.

# **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The joint strategic needs assessment provides a picture of the current and future health and wellbeing needs of the local population.

#### The JSNA will:

- Characterise the health and wellbeing status of the local population
- Identify inequalities
- Illustrate trends
- Describe local community views
- Highlight the key findings

It is divided into 5 sections: Population, Wider determinants of health, Healthy lifestyles and Children, young People and their families, Adults, Older people.

# **School Transport Policy and Guidance**

This document sets out the policy together with many questions parents ask and guidance about school transport in one place. It sets out entitlement for free home to school transport and also what parents can do if they are not entitled. This is a description of the types of school travel services we can provide and what parents need to do to obtain a space.]

# **Buckinghamshire Children's Strategy 2016 - 18**

This document describes our ambitions and priorities for all children and young people in Buckinghamshire. This is built on the foundation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to which the UK Government is a signatory. As statutory agencies and partners, we should do all within our powers to protect and promote the rights of children as enshrined in the convention. This includes the child's right to protection, family life, a good education, proper health care and decent housing.

The vision of this strategy is as follows:

"Children and young people are safe, happy and healthy, feel valued and value others, are treated fairly, have lives filled with learning, thrive and are able to enjoy life and spend quality time with family and friends."

It focusses on three main areas to achieve the above vision:

- Together keeping our children safe
- Enabling all our children to learn and develop skills for like and empowering schools to lead the way
- Improving our children's health and wellbeing

## **National Context**

The Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy for Schools (SMoTS) was first developed by Buckinghamshire County Council in 2008, in response to a statutory requirement under the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Section 508A of the Act requires local authorities to promote the use of sustainable travel, and applies to both children at school and young people of sixth form age. The Act defines sustainable modes of travel as follows:

"Sustainable modes of travel" are modes of travel which the authority consider may improve either or both of the following-

- (a) The physical well-being of those who use them.
- (b) The environmental well-being of the whole or a part of their area.

Guidance on home to school travel and transport published in July 2014<sup>18</sup> by the Department of Education reiterated the duty on local authorities to keep their strategies up to date and published on their websites. Accordingly, this update reassesses the school travel and transport needs of children and young people within Buckinghamshire and presents a strategy to encourage and promote sustainable modes of travel to, from, and between all schools in the county.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Home to School travel and transport guidance- Statutory guidance for local authorities, Department for Education July 2014

# **Appendix 3 – Useful Information**

# **Useful Websites**

School Travel Planning Website	http://schooltravelplanning.com/
Buckinghamshire County Council School Transport Policies	http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/education/school-transport/school-transport-policies/
National accreditation scheme Modeshift STARS	https://modeshiftstars.org/
Local Transport Plan 4	http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/our-plans/local-transport-plan-4/
Joint Strategic Needs Assessment	http://www.healthandwellbeingbucks.org/s4s/WhereILive/Council?pageId=2098
Buckinghamshire Strategic Plan 2017 - 20	https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/services/council-and-democracy/our-plans/our-strategic-plan/
Buckinghamshire Children's Strategy 2016 - 18	https://www.buckscc.gov.uk/media/4509876/childrens-strategy-2016-18.pdf

# **School Travel Planning in Neighbouring Authorities**

Milton Keynes	https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/highways-and-transport-hub/cycling/families-and-children/school-travel-planning
Oxfordshire	http://schools.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/school-travel-plans
Slough	http://www.slough.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/how-to-prepare-a-school-travel-plan.aspx
Hertfordshire	https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/travel-to-school/school-travel-plans.aspx
Central Bedfordshire	http://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/school/transport/plans.aspx
Luton	https://www.luton.gov.uk/transport_and_streets/sustainable%20travel%20to% 20school/pages/school%20travel%20plans.aspx
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	https://www3.rbwm.gov.uk/info/200219/travel_schemes/750/school_travel_plans
Hillingdon	https://www.hillingdon.gov.uk/article/14230/School-travel-plans