

Bell's Brae Primary School

Travel Plan

July 2006

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Introduction

The Scottish Executive wish to improve the health and safety of pupils travelling to and from schools in Scotland.

This school travel plan has been written as part of Bell's Brae School's health promotion work. This highlights the concerns relating to school travel and proposes some possible solutions which highlight safer routes and encourage exercise thus addressing the Road Safety and Healthy Living areas of the curriculum.

Aims

- To encourage pupils to travel to school safely
- To improve the safety of journeys to and from school
- To reduce traffic in the local environment
- To help reduce traffic congestion around the school
- To raise awareness of healthy, eco-friendly possibilities

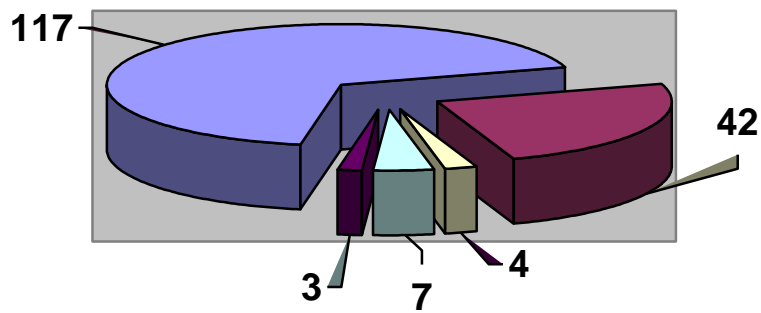
School

Bell's Brae Primary School is situated in the centre of Lerwick and dates back to 1957 when car use was much lower than it is today. It is the largest primary school in Shetland with 300 primary pupils. In addition there are 2 nursery classes catering for a total of 60 children and a Special Department with approximately 30 pupils all of whom are transported to and from school. Between 70 and 80 staff are employed at the school (including part-time and visiting staff). Staff park their cars in the staff car park and in the roads surrounding the school as the staff car park is too small.

The roads around the school are very busy especially at the beginning and end of the school day when parents/carers drop off and collect their children. A number of pupils use the Town Service bus which is re-routed to suit the start and finish of the school day. During the summer months more pupils walk to school than during the winter. At present pupils are not allowed to cycle to school.

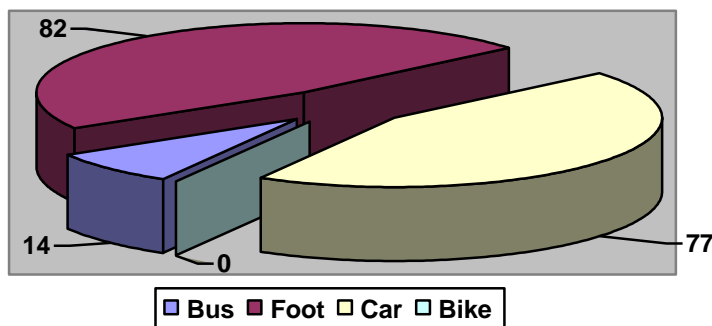
Most pupils (68% of respondents) live less than 1 mile from the school. (See pie chart on the next page)

Distance from school



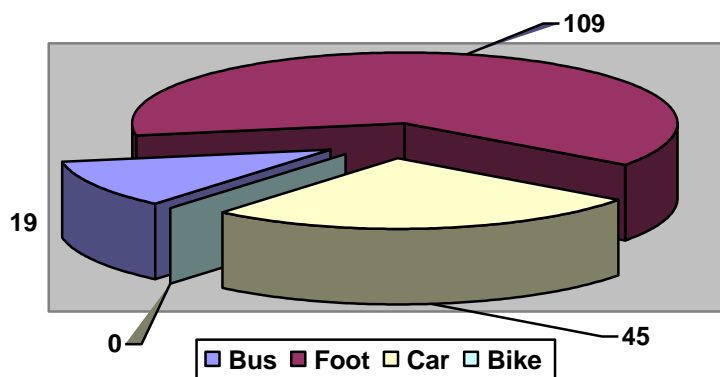
How pupils travel to school

Morning travel



Of the 77 children who travel to school by car, **39 (51%) live less than 1 mile from the school.**

Afternoon travel



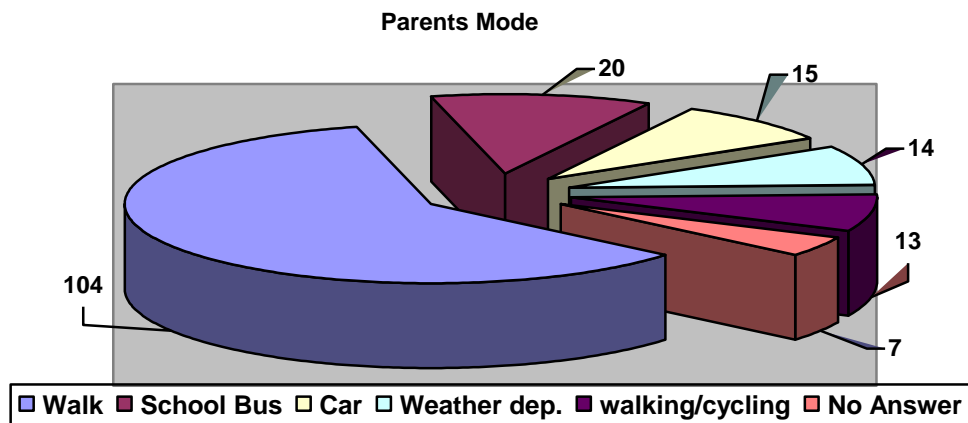
Of the 45 children who travel from school by car, **16 (36%) live less than 1 mile from the school.**

Parents were asked what factors might affect their decision whether or not to allow their child to walk or cycle to school

Responses from parents' survey:

Safe crossing facilities	128 respondents
Vehicle speed reducing measures	89 respondents
More Road Safety education for children	86 respondents
Knowing other children were also walking	61 respondents
Knowing that adults were walking the same route	45 respondents
More information on the health & environmental benefits	27 respondents

Parents' preferred mode of travel for their child



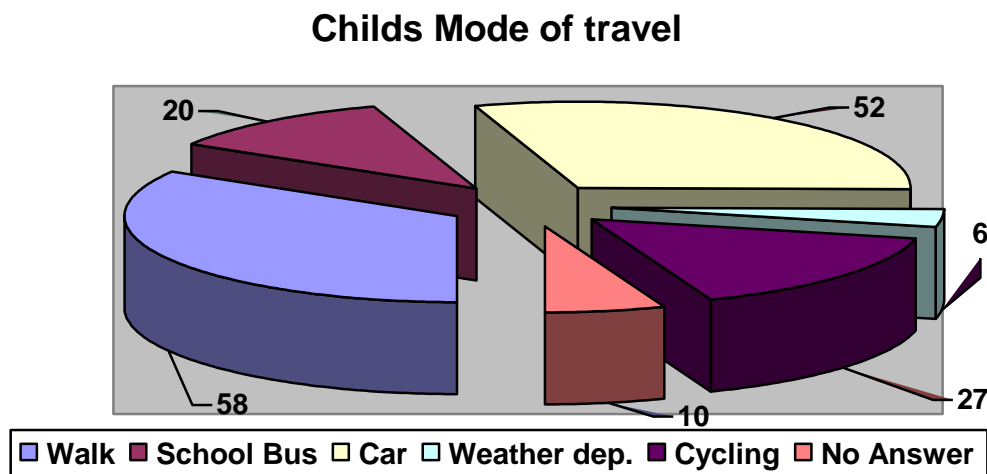
60 % of parents stated that their preferred mode of travel for their child was walking.

Parents stated that they wanted a dedicated school bus for their child to use instead of the Town Service bus.

Weather dependent means that the parents want their child to walk in the summer months and then either use a car or bus in the winter.

31 parents responded that the weather deterred them from allowing their children to walk to/from school.

Child's preferred mode of travel to school



33.5 % of children gave walking as their preferred mode of travel.

16% wanted to be able to cycle to and from school.

Weather dependent means that they want to walk in the summer months and then either travel by car or bus in the winter.

Concerns raised by parents, staff, pupils and School Board members

Major road safety concerns are:

Roads in Lerwick are very busy
Concerns about children crossing busy roads in the town which do not have crossing patrol officers or pelican crossings
The severe congestion around the school
The severe problems with parking at 9am and 3pm
The speed of cars in the roads surrounding the school
Problems caused by parents/carers using the staff car park as a drop off point

Concerns over children's behaviour:

The children not using the Green Cross Code
Being unaware of hazards
Crossing at inappropriate places.
Bad behaviour on the bus

Bad behaviour by parents/carers was highlighted as:

Irresponsible parking
Too many people driving their children to school
Inappropriate use of the staff car park

Personal safety concerns were:

Town service bus
Lighting in the staff car park
Lack of a suitable drop off point
Shortage of parking

Specific behaviours by drivers were:

Speeding
Bad parking
Parents driving into, then manoeuvring, in staff car park
Impatience of drivers
Drivers not following the Highway Code
Drivers not considering pedestrians or cyclists

General comments:

Some parents prefer to walk with their child or have a few children to organise in the morning
School bus needed and parents are willing to pay – some parents suggested having a supervisor on the bus
SIC and contractors need to be more aware of children crossing etc at road works and make provision for them
Parents should set a good example
Police need to be more pro-active
3 parents requested a walking bus

What the school can do

Short term targets

- The health and ecological benefits of walking to school will be highlighted through assemblies, newsletters, posters etc
- Pupils in P6 and P7 will be allowed to cycle to school once they have completed their cycling proficiency training and have their parents' permission
- Organise cycling proficiency training for the beginning of P6
- Ensure that the lighting in the staff car park is effective and works properly
- Pupils to be encouraged to wear appropriate clothing for walking to school (also necessary when classes go on outings during the school day)
- Investigate the establishment of a walking bus during the summer months (funding to be sought to pay for a co-ordinator to organise this)

Long term target

- Investigate a drop off point in Burgh Road (so that children can walk through Montfield)

How the SIC could help

- The SIC Safety Officer to carry out a risk assessment of the staff car park
- Provision of cycle racks at the school
- School Travel Plan co-ordinator to investigate the provision of a school bus
- Establishment of cycle tracks in Lerwick
- Investigate painting double yellow lines on the school side of Gilbertson Road to discourage parking
- Install a pelican crossing on King Harald Street
- Ongoing driver education to make drivers more aware of pedestrians and cyclists

Safety measures already in place

- There is a 20 mph speed limit around the school
- There is a designated drop off point in Bell's Road for parents/carers dropping off and collecting children
- Gilbertson Road and South Road have supervised crossings
- Work has been carried out recently in Bell's Road to make this area safer for pupils (pedestrians)
- Traffic calming measures have recently been installed in Bell's Road

What the school is already doing

- Problems of traffic congestion are discussed regularly at School Board meetings; the local councillor, council officials and the police have been involved in these discussions
- Pupils receive road safety education as part of the Health Education programme
- P6 pupils receive cycling proficiency training. During 2005-06 P3 pupils received a cycling awareness course
- Parents/carers and taxi drivers are reminded not to park in the staff car park or near the school crossings
- Pupils are encouraged to walk to school – particular emphasis is put on this during the annual school Health Week
- A walking bus operated as a pilot for one week in May 2006 (photo below)



Monitoring and evaluation

This Travel Plan will be reviewed during session 2008-09