

GEORGE STREET PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Active Travel School Plan



Every Child Matters, Every day Counts

Date: February 2025

1. Introduction

The purpose of the Active Travel School Plan helps reduce dependence on cars, creating a safer, more pleasant environment around the school, with more active pupils and engaged parents.

The staff and governors at George Street Primary School are keen to encourage more children and staff to travel to school on foot or by bicycle to reduce the number of journeys made by car.

Here are some more reasons to look at the ways we travel to and from school:

- Using cars for short journeys to school increases congestion and safety risks around the school entrances
- Increased physical activity levels of children is good for their health as well as being shown to improve alertness and attainment at school
- Walking, cycling & scooting are free, using the car each day for the school journey with the high cost of fuel can add up to £££'s a year!
- Pupils who walk or cycle to school are more familiar with their local area, and have more opportunities to talk to their friends and members of the community

Producing the Active Travel to School Plan provides a great opportunity for learning. It has been embraced within the school as part of the curriculum using twelve informative lessons and resources to deliver lessons in not only active travel but other environmental issues. Using Planning and development work for the school travel plan, it will be fitted into the curriculum in the following ways:

Subject Activity

English Written skills: Preparing questionnaires, completing daily travel diaries producing the travel plan. Speaking and listening skills

Maths Compiling and analysing results in tables and graphs. Times, distance, and length calculations for approximate speed of cars.

Geography Using maps to highlight school catchment areas, identify routes to school, and danger areas. Introducing pupils to GIS with online maps and teaching them map reading skills.

IT Using computers to produce graphs, tables, and written reports. Taking photographs using digital cameras, camera phones. Preparing slides for presentations.

Art Design posters to promote safer travel to school.

History Using historic maps children can study the area and how people would have travelled in the past.

Science Using the climate change lesson pack, children can learn the effects of climate change.

2. Description of the area and the school

The area

George Street Primary School is on the side of a steep hill, set in a busy residential area with George Street laying to the North-East of the school and providing the main entrance. The road provides access to numerous residential properties, a church, ambulance station and is on a bus route.

Outside the main entrance is a school crossing patrol at start and finish times, which is used by parents and provides access to the National Cycle Network (NCN 492) link path, leading to Pontypool and Blaenavon. There are three entrances available to be used by parents dropping off and picking up at the school.

The area is well served by bus links to and from numerous locations, the housing estate is a mixture of styles some of which date back prior to the 1900's which made up of lots of terrace houses with very narrow pavements and some areas have no pavement at all, with no scope for any to be installed due to lack of space. The majority of the pupils at the school live within the local housing estates. After the closure of Pontymoile Primary School several years ago the catchment area expanded to reach further areas.

The majority of the road network within the George Street Primary catchment area is now 20mph under the Default 20s, as introduced by Welsh Government in September 2023. It is hoped this will encourage more active travel journeys into our schools.

The school

George Street Primary School has very strong links with the local community and is a vibrant and happy place to work and learn.

Access for vehicles of parents/carers onto school site is restricted to only parents of children who have a disability and can use the disabled parking space, this ensures the safety for pupils and staff. There are car parks in nearby Pontypool Town Centre which could be available for Park & Stride with a subway and signalised crossing in situ to help with the last stage of the journey into school. The subway if upgraded would be more encouraging to be used by pupils

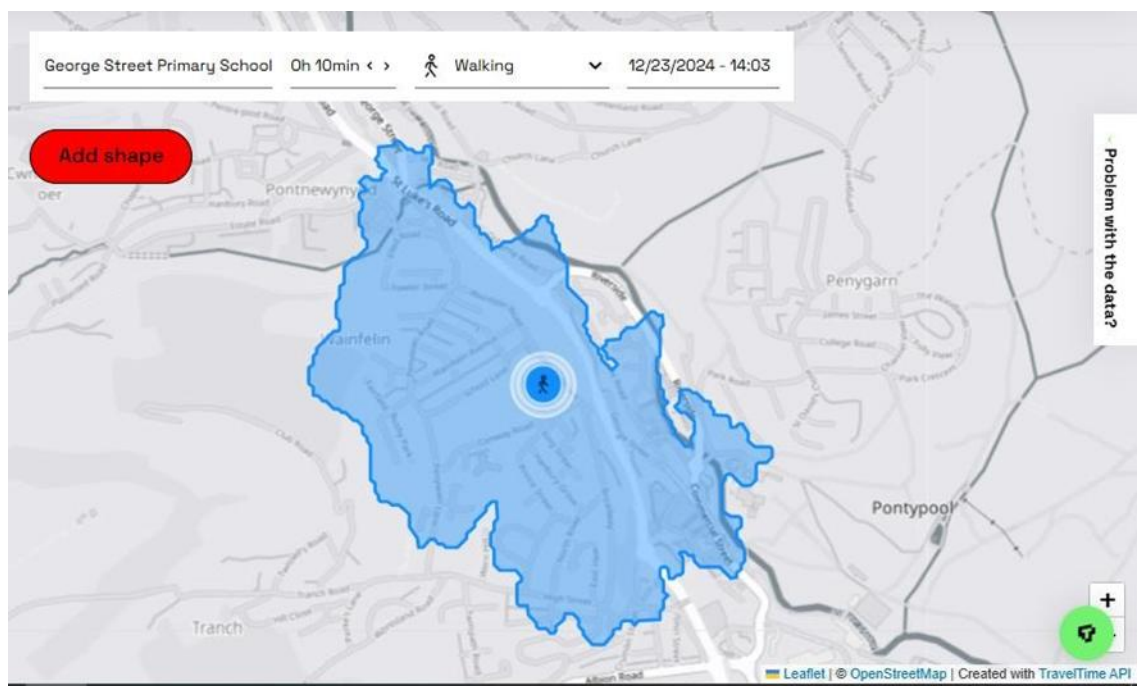
and parents and could potentially be used as a walking bus drop-off and pick up point to be staffed by parents/school staff. (Appendix 4).

Drop off / Pick up Information:

	Entrance/Exit	Start	Finish
AM Nursery	Conway Road	9.00	11.30
PM Nursery	Conway Road	12.45	3.15
Reception	Conway Road	9.00	3.05
Year 1	School Lane / Playground	9.00	3.10
Year 2	School Lane / Playground	9.00	3.15
Year 3	Drop off zone / George St ramp	9.00	3.15
Year 4	Drop off zone / George St ramp	9.00	3.10
Year 5	George St steps	9.00	3.15
Year 6	George St steps	9.00	3.10

A large number of the pupils at the school live within the local housing estates within walking or cycling distance.

The map below shows an average walking distance of 10 minutes from the school.



Within the school the ages range from 3 - 11 year-olds. The school includes a nursery unit.

The National Cycle Route 492 is located within 100M of the surrounding area of the school although there is a substantial difference in height as George Street is near the top of a hill. Improvement to the active travel connection between the school and the main cycle route have been made to make the connection to the school and the cycle route. Currently there are provisions available for cycle parking within the school, but would benefit from upgrading and expansion to include scooter storage to promote active travel to the school site.

George Street Primary celebrates and promotes the ecological achievements of young people with an Eco Committee. Pupils walk the daily mile at school within the school grounds to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Our job at George School is to look after our environment, our community and globally. We aim to help others to do the same.

We are striving towards our Platinum Flag and are developing relationships with other schools and the local community with a shared vision of a cleaner, greener world.

Our aim for this term is to make our school and the local area a litter free zone, litter picking kits have been provided by the Active Travel team from Torfaen County Borough Council funded from SPF to promote active travel and a safer environment within our community. We are designing and putting up posters about littering. As well as taking assemblies on how the school can get involved in keeping our local environment clean and striving to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill by implementing and using caddy bins for food waste on the school playground.

Active Travel assembly presenting the litter picking packs to the school.



Pupils explore learning in a variety of ways, both indoor and outdoor, being exposed to the wider community. They are engaged and challenged in their learning using a range of teaching strategies, skills and up-to-date learning resources. We create a communal family in which everyone feels safe, included and welcomed. We promote healthy values and ethos, encouraging pupil participation in a range of activities, providing a wide variety of support for pupils and their families. All children are exposed to the same opportunities and encouraged to become enterprising individuals.

The school provides a free breakfast club every morning and is a Healthy Eating school. The children are able to bring in their own snack from home if they wish.

The school has a strong school council nominated by their peers to represent the school and the Eco committee to support both pupils and staff to improve their carbon footprint.

Current clubs running include:

School Council	Story Telling and Lending Library	Sing Drawing Club
Film Club	Construction	Games Club
Digital Leaders	Dance	Football
Darts	French	Musical Theatre
Sign Language	Musical Theatre	Rugby
Netball	Choir	

As part of the new curriculum, meaningful community links are important experiences for our children, encouraging active travel methods to school means the children are learning more about the community and the environment located around us when commuting to and from school rather than viewing it through a window.

3. Main School Travel and Transport Issues Identified by Travel Plan working group Overview

The school have worked closely with the Highways team at Torfaen County Borough Council. Maps were produced and the year 4 Active Travel School Plan Groups carried out a desktop mapping exercise, which involved using paper maps to draw their routes to school and identify danger spots for the pupils and children when walking to and from school. These results were then submitted to the Highways department at the local authority for analysis.

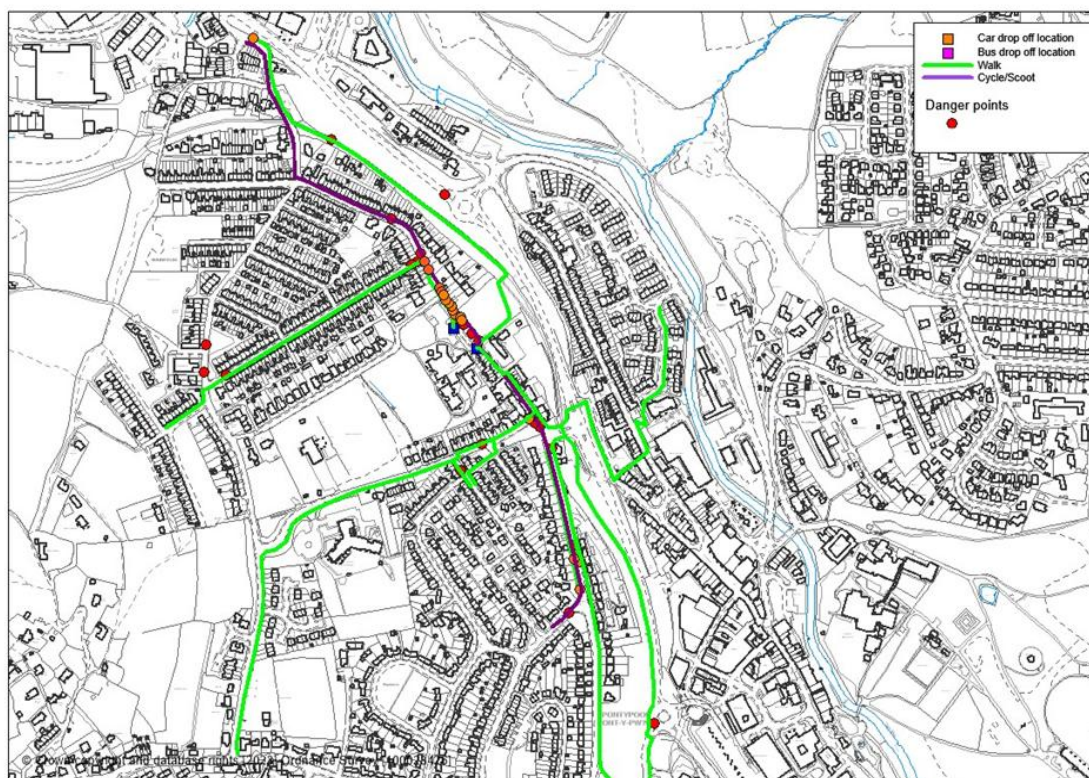
Many changes have been made over the last few years to improve the walking and cycling routes in the authority including the introduction of the Active Travel Act. However, due to the historic nature of the community many challenges to walking and cycling still remain.

Location Plan



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Results from mapping session



Turning now to the Routes and Danger spots identified by pupils

The following dangers were identified:

- Cars parked on pavements
- Cars parked close together I can't see
- Cars parked on restrictions outside school causing congestion not safe
- Dog Mess
- Cars speeding
- Slippery Leaves
- Crossing busy roads with speeding cars
- Parking on double yellow lines
- Path very narrow
- Litter

George Street Primary is a feeder school for West Mon Comprehensive school. During transition the Road Safety Officer from Torfaen attends the school and teaches road safety to the pupils to prepare them for the transition to comprehensive school.

Pupils are involved in Kerbcraft every year which teaches them how to deal with the many difficult crossing points in the area. Year 5 take part in cycle training and this year we have also introduced balance bike training for younger pupils to introduce them into cycling within our school community. We will soon be setting up our Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) with the help of the Road Safety Officer from the Highways Department at Torfaen County Borough Council.

Issues Identified by School

Some of the issues identified by the school are:

- Congestion outside the school as a result of the parking
- Difficulties crossing nearby roads as a result of the parking
- Limited cycle/scooter storage
- Dog mess
- Parents parking antisocially

4. Current School Travel Patterns and Results of Annual Travel to School Survey from Public Health Wales

A survey conducted by Public Health Wales was sent out from 17th - 21st June 2024 to all primary schools in Wales and provided a capture of the travel to school data for that day.

The results showed on the day the survey was undertaken 282 pupils took part, 76% of the pupils used active travel methods when travelling into school whilst 23.3% used a car journey to travel into school, 0.7% of pupils travelled by bus to school.

Other surveys were also undertaken to help capture current travel habits and thoughts around active travel by parents and what can be improved to encourage active travel:

- Hands up surveys were completed as part of the active travel lessons. It asked the pupils how they travelled to school that day and also how they would like to travel to school. (Appendix 1).
- Parent surveys (Appendix 2) to establish parent's views. This was available through the Council's Get Involved site where parents could take part and express their views.

Travel Survey Findings

Hands Up Survey 2024

Our school has also been put forward for the Welsh Government funded Living Streets WOW tracker in 2024. This provides a daily track of the pupil's active travel habits, and each child provides their mode of travel to school and can earn badges every month if enough active travel journeys are made. This system will hopefully encourage active travel in our school community.

Early findings of the WOW tracker show an increase in active travel journeys to school. The latest results from December are showing 73% of journeys taken to school being active travel journeys, which is an impressive increase especially in the winter months. With 505 badges being awarded this year so far.

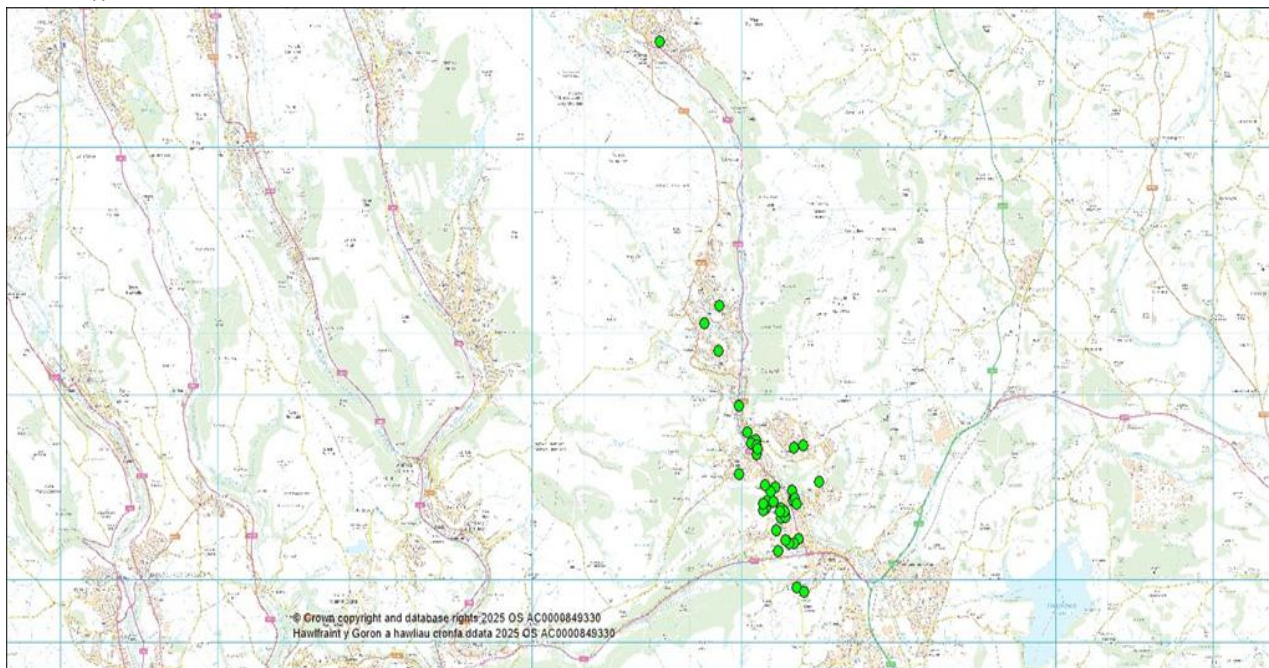
Parents Survey

A Parents Survey was also undertaken in 2024 and details can be found in Appendix 3

Parents Survey (48 respondents)

Responses to parents questionnaire

November 2024



5. School Travel Plan Group and its Aims

George Street Primary School is working in partnership with parents, Torfaen County Borough Council, and the local community to raise awareness of travel issues. Our aims and objectives are:

- To reduce the number of pupils who travel to school by car
- To improve the safety of children and parents on the journey to school
- To improve the walking facilities and promote cycling
- To raise awareness of health issues
- To alert parents to pupils concerns regarding travel to and from school
- To develop community links for better access to all

6. Actions

Years 4 were tasked to create an Active Travel to School Plan Actions (Appendix 5)

7. Outcomes and Recommendations

During the process of creating the travel plan the pupils have been involved in every step, from mapping routes to encouraging parents to complete online

surveys. It has involved working with the pupils, parents, residents, and local authority officers.

Key recommendations of this travel plan are:

- Promote Park & Stride schemes.
- Increase adequate cycle storage facilities at the school to encourage cycling.
- Encourage more parents to walk/cycle to and from school with pupils using current walking/cycle routes.
- Establish a parents, pupils, and teacher Active Travel School Plan group to determine future pledges and monitor actions, to make travel to and from school safer
- Raise awareness with parents and community about the Active Travel School Plan outcomes.
- Review the Active Travel School Plan annually.
- Monitor Actions which have been identified are being met.