

School travel plan coordinator's guide



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Introduction

Congratulations on getting this far in setting up a school travel plan. A school travel plan brings together a package of measures that aim to reduce the congestion caused by the 'school run', reduce traffic danger and support students already travelling by more sustainable modes.

Land Transport New Zealand has prepared this material to help you get a school travel plan underway. Though there will be some variation across the country, dedicated staff members employed by regional or local councils will coordinate most school travel plans. This guide is written for these people – the school travel plan coordinators.

Under law, we must allocate resources and undertake functions in a way that contributes to an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system. (Note: this is in line with walking school bus guidelines.)

By assisting schools to develop travel plans, Land Transport NZ is contributing to the government's vision as set out in the New Zealand Transport Strategy. The objectives of the strategy are:

- assisting economic development
- assisting safety and personal security
- improving access and mobility
- protecting and promoting public health
- ensuring environmental sustainability.

A school travel plan provides an opportunity for parents, schools and the community to work together to improve safety. Considering safety at every stage is a fundamental priority of all successful school travel plans.

This guide does not cover school selection, funding for design and implementation, or programme monitoring. These areas are not generally the responsibility of school travel plan coordinators but are managed by other (regional or local) council employees.

Land Transport NZ has had support from many agencies in developing this guide and would particularly like to acknowledge the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) (who developed earlier versions of this document), New Zealand School Trustees Association, New Zealand Police, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, North Shore City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council and all the councils involved in school travel planning in New Zealand.

Good luck with setting up your school travel plan. Please let Land Transport NZ know how you get on, and visit our website (www.landtransport.govt.nz/travel/school/walk-to-school/travel-plans.html) for updates and information.

1 Introduction to school travel plans





Today, more than half of New Zealand primary school children are driven to and from school – that’s nearly double the number from 10 years ago. At some schools, nearly 90 percent of students are driven. And nearly one-third of New Zealand children get very little or no exercise.

This increase in car use creates traffic congestion, extra vehicle costs for parents and many adverse environmental effects. It also affects the children themselves. Extra traffic activity at the school gate makes for an unsafe environment and being driven to school means children are less active. International research shows children who walk or cycle to school are more inclined to have healthier lifestyles than those reliant on cars (and their parents).

Travel planning involves five phases:

- 1 set-up
- 2 data collection
- 3 action planning
- 4 implementation
- 5 monitoring (note: the national monitoring database is currently under development and is intended to be operational in the 2007/08 year).

Figure 1 The five phases of school travel planning – resources and outcomes for school travel plans

Phase	Who’s involved	Outcomes
Set-up phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council, school, Land Transport NZ’s regional staff (advice) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selected school committed to being part of the travel plan project
Data collection phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator, council (GIS, data analyst), wider school community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Results of data collection compiled and issues summarised to take to working group
Action planning phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working group, occasionally invited experts or specialists, such as traffic engineers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plan with timeframes signed off by all stakeholders
Implementation phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The stakeholders responsible for each action as per the action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed action points and ongoing actions agreed
Monitoring phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator and funding agencies (eg councils, Land Transport NZ) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successful monitoring of changes to journey to school, vehicle kilometres travelled and mode share (transport types used)

1.1 The benefits of a school travel plan

Schools generally become involved in school travel plans for the following reasons:

- **safety** – addressing and alleviating concerns about road traffic danger for children on the journey to and from school
- **health and fitness** – parents are becoming increasingly aware of the negative health consequences of their children’s sedentary lifestyles, and so are often receptive to walking or cycling options for the journey to and from school
- **congestion** – reducing the number of cars at the school gate and preventing problems resulting from a high proportion of parents bringing their children to school by car
- **environmental awareness** – addressing travel issues at a school can help enhance the local environment, reduce pollution, improve air quality and save energy, while also being fun for children to talk about in class.

1.2 Successful school travel plans

Experience has found seven key factors present in successful school travel plans.

- 1 **School community ownership.** The school travel plan must be owned by the school community. In other words, it needs to be seen to be the school’s plan developed by the school community for the benefit of its students.
- 2 **Benefit for schools.** Successful school travel plans have generally been implemented where the school has pressing issues that need to be addressed (eg congestion at the school gate, safety black spots). The school travel plan becomes a way of resolving these issues and ensuring a safe, sustainable programme is in place.
- 3 **Tailored to the school’s needs.** Each plan must be tailored to meet the needs of a particular school rather than an attempt to impose a standard response.
- 4 **School travel plan champions.** ‘Champions’ are needed within the school community to provide the internal impetus to go through the planning process. The champion is usually a senior staff member or parent representative committed to the project. The principal also needs to be kept informed.
- 5 **Coordinator.** School travel plan coordinators actively support the school in developing and implementing its travel plan. They provide an essential link between the school and the council.
- 6 **Outcome-based approach using a specific model.** A school travel plan should focus on achieving outcomes rather than methodologies. Different schools will action different parts of the process in different ways. As long as all bases are covered, this process will generate a solution owned by the school.
- 7 **Positive relationships and commitment of key stakeholders.** There needs to be a positive relationship between the school community and the school travel plan coordinator. Frequent, clear communication is essential.

1.3 Resources to run a school travel plan

The impact of a school travel plan within a community is determined by the level of human and financial resources committed to the programme.

Table 1 Resources required to run a school travel plan

Coordinator's skills	Essentially, the coordinator needs to manage complex relationships, understand local community needs and traffic issues, be aware of regulations and legislation, and have the ability to tap into council resources and build networks as needed.
Working group	The working group needs to be representative of the school, its community and appropriate transport agencies (see the steps for the action planning phase on page 25 for more detail). The time needed for the working group will vary and depend on the findings for each school. As a guide, three to four meetings may be required during the action planning phase, with a meeting each term during the implementation phase.
Project costs	<p>The source and amount of funding for a school travel plan are critical issues to consider when initiating a project. Operating costs will be incurred throughout the plan's development (eg for administrative support and survey data collation). Generally, councils fund the cost of the plan. Depending on the overall size of the programme, project costs may be able to be incorporated into transport budgets or specific funds may need to be allocated.</p> <p>Funding for school travel plans is made available from Land Transport NZ to approved organisations (eg local and regional councils). Up to 75 percent of the total cost of a project will be funded through its National Land Transport Programme.</p>
Costs to stakeholders	The time required for participating in the project is a significant cost for stakeholders. For schools, this may include teacher release time so staff can attend working group meetings, coordinate school activities and communicate with board members who may be also be involved in the working group.
Ongoing time and resource costs	Schools are generally encouraged to develop policies and rules regarding transport and road safety that can be clearly communicated to parents and children for use within school time. These policies can also be recommended to parents and children on the journey to and from school. This can be time consuming and schools should be aware that being committed to the school travel plan will require them to continue to input time and resources once the plan is developed.

1.4 Responsibilities of a school travel plan coordinator

While the specific tasks of the coordinator will vary between programmes, there are certain responsibilities attached to the position that are likely to be found in any school travel plan programme.

Table 2 Responsibilities of a school travel plan coordinator

Overall project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining commitment to the school travel plan model, including the rationale for the programme, and ensuring all relevant parties are informed and/or involved. • Managing the overall project within stated timeframes and budgets. • Monitoring implementation, troubleshooting where necessary, and ensuring evaluation and reviews take place.
Stakeholder management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the stakeholders (along with the school) and communicating the essential components of the programme to them, including the benefits. • Gaining ongoing commitment from stakeholder groups. • Empowering stakeholders to develop the skills and networks to address ongoing road safety issues and sustain the school travel plan once implemented.
Working group management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating a working group, and clearly identifying responsibilities and a process for working together. • Providing ongoing effective facilitation of the working group.
Results management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising and overseeing all aspects of data collection. • Analysing data (or ensuring it's analysed) and determining results. • Writing up results in report format. • Overseeing communication of results to stakeholder groups. • Coordinating development of action plan. • Coordinating and managing action plan implementation. • Monitoring implementation and recommending changes where needed.

1.5 Support for school travel plan coordinators

Table 3 Support within the council for school travel plan coordinators

<p>Road safety coordinators</p>	<p>Many councils employ road safety coordinators who often play significant roles in school travel plan programmes. Road safety coordinators may undertake or share many of the responsibilities outlined on page 5. The level of assistance provided will vary, depending on availability.</p>
<p>Traffic/ transportation engineer</p>	<p>The council traffic or transportation engineer is critical to a school travel plan programme. They are responsible for advising on the plan’s design and implementing any engineering changes (such as footpath repairs or upgrades, pedestrian crossings or refuges, and cycle lanes). In practice, this usually means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in a working group to represent and provide traffic engineering expertise • participating in relevant aspects of data collection (eg onsite investigations) • reporting and making recommendations to the council on school travel plan requirements • helping to provide relevant resources (eg crash-site data, injury data, maps) • helping to develop an action plan, especially regarding engineering requirements • ensuring all engineering improvements agreed in the action plan are installed, maintained and monitored • liaising with schools on an ongoing basis to address new issues.
<p>Geographic information system (GIS) expert</p>	<p>Most councils have access to a GIS – a mapping tool that can be used to plot students’ residences on a map. Involving the council’s GIS expert to plot this information map is invaluable and saves time plotting this information manually.</p> <p>Note: the privacy of individuals must be respected whenever specific addresses are used. Maps may only be used for the school project and should be destroyed when no longer in use.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education Local Area Roll Projection System may also be useful in determining future (long-term) actions in the school travel plan.</p>
<p>Data entry and analysis</p>	<p>It’s usually more cost effective to outsource or arrange for an administration officer to do the data entry of the travel surveys.</p> <p>The travel plan coordinator should analyse the data, with council officer assistance if possible, and produce graphs in a form that is easily read and understood.</p> <p>More information on the survey and data analysis process can be found in the section outlining the data collection steps on pages 15–23.</p>

Table 3 cont.

<p>Parking officers/ wardens</p>	<p>Parking officers are an additional group of council personnel who may make a significant contribution to the programme. This could include, for example, monitoring compliance of drop-off zones outside the school. Not all councils employ parking officers, so their involvement will vary between communities. Their responsibilities in a school travel plan may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assisting with developing an action plan, especially regarding enforcement strategies • ensuring aspects of enforcement strategies are carried out as agreed in the action plan • liaising with the working group on an ongoing basis to address new issues.
<p>Specialists</p>	<p>It's sometimes possible to engage specialist local or regional council staff where these exist and where there is an identified need for specialist input.</p> <p>Examples are engineers and transport planners who have an interest in, or dedicated role, related to walking, cycling, school buses or public transport. Transport planners have a role in determining in which schools to establish a school travel plan. Parks and recreation staff may need to be involved if walking or cycling routes go through parks.</p>

Table 4 Support within the school and community for school travel plan coordinators

<p>School principal</p>	<p>School principals generally decide their own level of involvement in a travel plan. Specific roles the principal may undertake include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approving teacher time and school resources • appointing a school travel plan liaison person/lead teacher from the staff (may self-appoint) • participating in the working group, if necessary • supplying information to the coordinator to generate a school profile.
<p>Board of trustees</p>	<p>It's useful to secure as much board involvement as possible. Specific roles for the board include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approving school participation in the programme (or delegating this authority to the principal) • providing a representative to participate in the working group • reviewing and endorsing the action plan and overall school travel plan • getting involved in monitoring and reviews of the travel plan.

Table 4 cont.

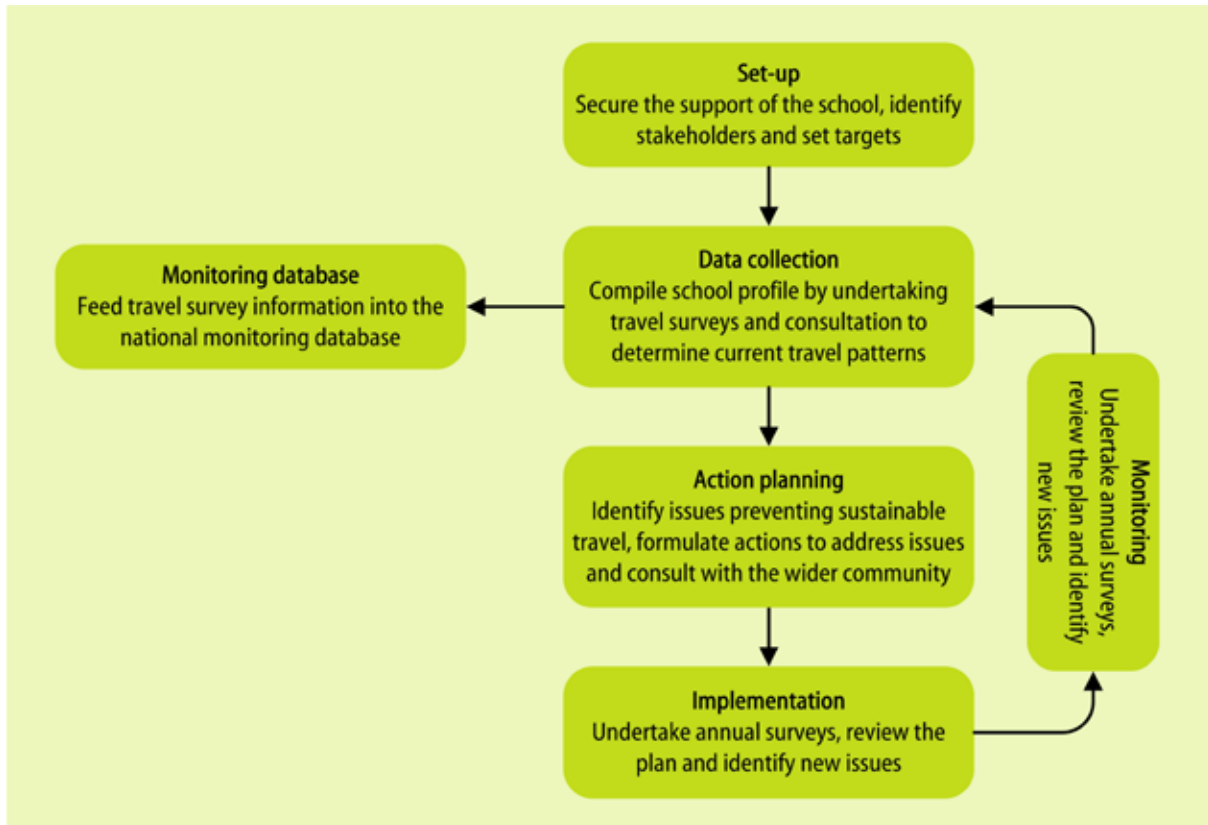
<p>Lead teacher</p>	<p>If the principal doesn't have time to be heavily involved in the travel plan, it's essential to have a key staff member contact at the school. Their role involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in the working group • helping with relevant aspects of data collection (eg distribution and timing of travel survey, onsite investigations) • providing specific information for data collation, as needed.
<p>Other staff</p>	<p>All staff will need to be aware of the travel plan and what it's about, and it's likely they will need to be involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data collection, eg travel survey • police traffic education sessions, if recommended in the action plan • distributing school travel plan resources and communications, as required • developing and delivering integrated transport and road safety programmes • promoting and encouraging transport choices.
<p>Police education officer</p>	<p>The police education officer's role may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in developing an action plan • participating in traffic safety education as agreed by NZ Police in an action plan • training and monitoring school traffic safety teams (school patrols, traffic wardens, bus wardens, kea crossings) • providing education and engineering advice. <p>Make contact with your local police education officer as early as possible so the following year's road safety education can target the school at the best possible time. Your local Land Transport NZ regional office can help you contact your local police education officer.</p> <p>Police education officers don't generally undertake enforcement duties as well. If they're required for both education and enforcement, it's usually necessary to involve two officers.</p>

Table 4 cont.

<p>Other police staff</p>	<p>Other police staff may be involved, including road policing officers, community constables and iwi liaison officers. Consulting with the local police at an early stage in the process will help establish which officers are appropriate and available in the area. Their role may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in the working group to provide expertise • participating in relevant aspects of data collection (eg onsite investigations) • reporting and making recommendations to police management on programme requirements • helping develop an action plan, especially regarding enforcement strategies • ensuring all aspects of enforcement strategies are carried out as agreed in the action plan • liaising with schools on an ongoing basis to address new issues.
<p>Others</p>	<p>Schools may identify a range of other stakeholders they wish to be involved in the working group or other aspects of the school travel plan process, such as coordinators from any other local health, physical activity or nutrition initiatives.</p>

2 Phases of a school travel plan

Figure 2 Phases of a school travel plan



2.1 Set-up phase

2.1.1 Overview

Table 5 How to establish the foundations of the school travel plan

Objectives
The objectives of the set-up phase are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• gain confirmation of a school's commitment to participate in the programme• establish a list of relevant stakeholders, make contact with them and clarify roles and responsibilities• determine an appropriate timeline covering data collection, action planning and likely start date for implementation.
Steps
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Contact the principal and discuss the benefits for their school having a travel plan.2 Gain principal and/or board commitment to participate in the programme.3 Identify stakeholders and possible working group members and their roles.4 Determine the overall aims and how achieving them would be measured/evaluated.5 Prepare a timeline for the school travel plan process.
Important themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engaging the stakeholders in a collaborative process.• Managing participants' expectations to ensure they are realistic.
Indicative timeframe
The set-up phase usually takes from one to three months, but may be delayed to fit into the school calendar or other major events (eg change of key staff).
Completion of set-up phase
The coordinator has completed the set-up phase once the school agrees to participate and an overall timeline has been determined, aims have been set and an evaluation framework agreed to.

2.1.2 Steps

1 Make contact with the school

Note: it's a good idea to make contact with the council traffic engineer before contacting a school to discuss their involvement. They can alert you to any traffic issues associated with the school.

At your first meeting with the principal, it's useful to:

- provide them with
 - a written document summarising what a school travel plan is
 - an overview of the school travel plan process (use the flowchart on page 10 as an aid to discussion)
 - an overview of how their school can benefit from the school travel plan
- gain an overall impression of the school
 - number of students
 - breakdown of students
 - decile rating
 - special features
 - perceived issues
 - involvement in Roadsense Ata Harae, Enviroschools or any other extracurricular programmes.
- determine the next step in gaining commitment to the travel plan process, which may be a presentation to staff or the board of trustees.

The sample section contains a template 'School summary recording sheet'. This information forms the basis of an overall school profile. (See the section on the data collection phase on pages 14–23.)

2 Gain principal and/or board agreement to proceed

The principal/board will discuss and agree the overall objectives and timeline. Obtain written commitment of the principal or board to continue, as this will help if there is a change in personnel during the creation of the plan and/or its implementation.

3 Identify stakeholders and possible working group members and their roles

Involve the principal, and possibly some or all of the trustees, in identifying the school's key stakeholders. Apart from parents, students and staff, does the school have other stakeholders that should be included? For example, does the school want the local business association involved? Who is the local police education officer? Are there iwi or other community-based groups with strong connections to the school?

Make a note of these stakeholders and the best way to contact and approach them.

4 Determine overall aims and evaluation process

It's important to establish the school's overall aims for the school travel plan. These can be revisited at the action planning phase, but discussing them at this stage helps focus the whole process. The evaluation process and aims are strongly linked. Aims should be written so they can be measured by the intended evaluation process.

The following are example aims and evaluation methods.

- Reduce the number of children arriving by car by 10 percent in the first year. (Evaluated by re-surveying all students and parents one year after the initial survey.)
- Create a school travel policy by the end of term 2, 2008. (Evaluated by the school travel plan coordinator at the end of term 2, 2008.)
- Integrate road safety and environment learning into classroom exercises that relate to the travel plan within the first year. (Evaluated by the lead teacher at the end of the travel plan's first year of implementation.)

Objectives and actions will be added to these aims after the travel surveys and site assessment have been completed.

5 Prepare a timeline for the school travel plan process

A timeline is critical for ensuring the school is prepared for their involvement in the various steps of the process. This also allows for school events to be integrated into the process. For example, integrating part of the consultation process into a planned parent-teacher evening ensures a maximum number of parents (and students) are involved.

The timeline does not have to be detailed but should contain:

- a list of the actions or tasks that need to be completed (eg writing the travel plan document)
- an indication of when school events (eg sports days) occur and how the travel plan ties in with them
- the names of the people responsible for completing each task (eg the travel plan coordinator aided by the working group)
- the timeframe (ie how long each task should take and when each phase should be completed).

2.2 Data collection phase

2.2.1 Overview

Table 6 How to compile data that identifies transport and safety issues concerning the school

Objectives
The objectives of the data collection phase are to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• gather information about the school and school community• gather, collate and analyse the data from the travel survey• ensure the community has sufficient opportunities to consult on travel plan issues• compile a summary report for the working group.
Steps
1 Complete school profile.
2 Inform the school community.
3 Conduct travel and stakeholder surveys.
4 Carry out further consultation.
5 Undertake traffic and pedestrian counts.
6 Compile and analyse data.
7 Carry out site assessment and school policy analysis.
8 Prepare a report that shows such things as current transport arrangements/data.
Important themes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gaining and developing the active participation of the wider school community.• Selecting data collection and communication methods appropriate to the community.
Indicative timeframe
The data collection phase usually takes about one school term.
Completion of data collection phase
The coordinator has completed the data collection phase when the wider school community has been provided with an opportunity to comment on the survey results.

2.2.2 Steps

1 Complete school profile

The school profile brings together the following information:

- names and contact details of key people associated with the school (eg staff, board of trustees, lead teacher/school travel plan liaison, kaumātua)
- student residence data (see below)
- demographic information about the school community, including decile rating, cultural breakdowns and other relevant student information
- other relevant details regarding classroom structure, teaching approaches and resources available within the school
- operational details (eg timetables, assembly times and format, staff meeting times and format)
- communication channels between school and home
- special event days in the school calendar
- information relating to transport and road safety policies, practices and programmes
- information about major roads, students travelling in from outside the school zone and any recent environmental changes that impact on road safety
- involvement in Roadsense Ata Harae, Enviroschools or other initiatives
- any additional information that will contribute to the overall knowledge of the school's culture.

Student residence data

A list of student addresses is essential for the school profile (names of individual students are not required). Most schools can provide student residence data in an Excel spreadsheet. This data can be used very effectively by council GIS staff to show where students live in relation to the school and the transport options available to them. Some coordinators have found it best to request this information at the outset (ie at the set-up phase).

The school profile document should be kept as user friendly as possible, eg a simple short summary of key points with appendices for data. Its importance to the process should be explained and a copy of the completed document should be offered to the school.

The school profile can be completed by the principal or the coordinator from information provided by the principal. The profile builds on the initial information gained in the set-up phase.

Tip: some schools produce a prospectus containing useful information about the school's aims and structure. School newsletters, new entrant information brochures or packs, new enrolment kits and ERO reports may also provide additional useful information about the school community.

2 Inform the school community

This step is about informing the wider community of the travel plan and the part they will play in its development (such as completing travel surveys). Communication options include the following.

- **School newsletter.** Some schools have used the general school newsletter as the vehicle for informing parents about the school travel plan. The school newsletter also provides a way of conveying frequent travel plan and road safety messages to parents and students.
- **Special meeting/presentation.** It can be useful to hold a special meeting or series of meetings to announce the programme, introducing the aims and main components along with an outline of what will happen.
- **Regular school event** (eg parent-teacher night). Piggybacking on another school event that involves parents is a useful way to interact and raise awareness of the school travel plan.
- **School websites.** The coordinator could provide information for the school's website or create a page for the travel plan. This would keep the school updated on results and upcoming events and involve the students.

3 Conduct travel and stakeholder surveys

The most common method of gathering the information required is to provide children with a survey questionnaire, along with a local area map that they fill out in class time or as a homework exercise. Different surveys have been designed for junior classes that the teacher fills out on behalf of the class.

A survey for parents is also sent home with the children, including a covering letter explaining the survey's purpose and how the information will be used.

Travel surveys aim to gather five main types of data about the journey to and from school.

- a **How students currently get to school.** This data shows the extent to which sustainable travel options are currently being used. It also provides a baseline for future surveys, which provides a measure of the impact of the travel plan on students' travel behaviour.
- b **How students would like to get to school.** This data will provide insights into potential sustainable travel options if current barriers and issues are removed or resolved.
- c **The reasons why students don't currently use sustainable travel options.** This provides information on current barriers to, or issues about, sustainable travel options.
- d **The likely response of students and parents to different travel measures.** This provides an initial response to common travel plan measures, such as a walking school bus or monitored pedestrian crossings.
- e **The change in parental driving patterns.** Discovering changes in parental driving habits as a result of the travel plan is fundamental to evaluating the plan's environmental benefits. If parents no longer drive their children to school, they may also no longer drive to work (thereby further reducing congestion and pollution).

Tip: Use incentives to gain a better survey return – a response rate of more than 50 percent is good and less than 30 percent is poor. Incentives can be aimed at the children or families. In some cases, a hierarchy of incentives has worked well (eg a road safety bookmark for all children who return their homework survey, or a prize draw for sports equipment or bike helmets for families who do).

Further techniques and tips for conducting the school travel surveys are provided in the resources section at the back of this guide on page 36.

4 Carry out further consultation

Further consultation is required to increase awareness and give people the opportunity to comment on issues. At the very least, the school community should have the opportunity to review the collated data and provide the coordinator and/or working group with their comments and suggestions.

The coordinator should work with the school to devise the best form of consultation for the circumstances. Some schools may wish to carry out Planning for Real ® (described below), while others may find it more appropriate to consult in a less intensive manner during a school event. One school created display boards to show ideas formulated by the working group. This has worked well in the past and is described in the action planning phase.

Planning for Real ®

In some New Zealand schools, a mapping technique called Planning for Real ® has been used to consult with students and parents on the range of issues affecting their journey to and from school. This technique involves creating a 3D map of the school and wider road network. Children mark their houses, routes to school and where they've identified problems. Parents are then invited (usually during a parent-teacher evening) to add their ideas and issues to the map. This technique is resource and time intensive, but has proven useful at increasing community involvement and identifying all travel issues.

Case study – North Shore City Council and Planning for Real ®

As part of its TravelWise¹ project, the North Shore City Council uses the Planning for Real ® 3D mapping technique to add another dimension to its community consultation. The TravelWise team has found this exercise immensely successful in gaining community buy-in and understanding the feelings of the community towards transport issues in their area.

Here's how it works. First, the TravelWise team gets their council's GIS department to generate four A0-sized maps of the area around each school, ensuring the area incorporates the majority of the students' home locations. The maps are then set up for a day in the school library.

In groups of six, the children are invited to come in and colour in the location of their home on the map, adding a coloured sticker beside their house to represent how they get to school the majority of the time (red = car, blue = walk, green = walking school bus).

The TravelWise coordinators then ask each child if there are any issues on their journey to and from school, and whether they'd like to be part of a walking school bus.

Beside the map are a number of different cards with particular issues, such as 'angry dog' or 'pedestrian crossing needed' which the children can stick to the map at the location of the issue. Often the children have different issues which the TravelWise coordinators can discuss with them and then write on a blank card and stick to the map.

The children love the interaction with the map and it's a very visual way to see where they live, where the issues are and how they currently travel to and from school.

The maps are then rebuilt at the school in the evening, usually coinciding with parent-teacher interviews or a similar school event. Parents are invited to find their house, which their child has coloured in on the map previously and add to the map any issues they have about their child's journey to and from school, in the same way their children did.

By talking directly with parents or residents, the TravelWise team are discovering major issues first-hand, along with possible solutions. They also have the ability to market the walking school bus and engage potential 'bus drivers'.

When completed, the map represents a holistic visual display of all the travel issues faced by the children of that school.

1 TravelWise is the name given to a programme run by the Auckland Regional Transport Authority (ARTA) in partnership with the local councils in the region.



TravelWise travel plan coordinators Megan Farrington and Alison Johns discuss school travel with pupils of Devonport Primary

5 Undertake traffic and pedestrian counts

Another possible investigation method is to carry out traffic and pedestrian counts. These counts provide a useful baseline of travel activity and involve counting the number of:

- cars parked in the streets around the school
- bikes in the bike stand
- vehicles travelling past key points around the school
- students and adults walking past key points around the school.

If traffic and pedestrian counts are to be used for assessing the impact of travel plan policies over time, they should be carried out at least twice yearly to take account of seasonal fluctuations.

Tip: an easy student survey can be carried out over a week by doing a hand count of each class (or sample of classes). Children are asked to raise their hands if they walked, cycled, bused or came by car. This can take just a few minutes per class and can be done by the teacher. A sample recording sheet for this exercise is provided in the resources section at the back of this guide on page 41.

6 Compile and analyse data

Experience suggests that, while the coordinator is likely to undertake this task, it's helpful to have some assistance. It's possible that the task or parts of it could be shared with members of the working group or outsourced. This especially applies to data entry.

All the information from the surveys and any other consultation should be analysed. In recording the routes walked and cycled by children, each road and street is assigned a separate tally sheet to give an individual profile of use and problems.

The main objectives are to identify the:

- number of children using each road
- number of children crossing intersections at peak times
- hazards or safety concerns.

If this information is entered into a spreadsheet, it is relatively easy for a GIS expert to convert it into a printable map (or series of maps). Discussions with council staff (GIS or corporate services) will enable the coordinator to best plan this.

Once this information is summarised, it's possible to identify the most frequently used routes and intersections, and assess appropriate travel options and issues that should be resolved (eg addressing major hazards).

7 Carry out site assessment and school policy analysis

The site assessment provides a description of the school's physical environment in terms of its travel-related facilities and infrastructure. It also outlines the school's travel policies.

The following are the key elements of a site assessment.

- **A plan of the school and surrounding road networks.** This locates the school within its environment and how it fits within the surrounding road network. This plan should also include information on bus, cycle and pedestrian routes, car parking areas and their designation, and any traffic problems arising from the school journey. Mention should also be made of current planning applications or construction work, including start and completion dates.
- **School entrance description.** This description of the 'school gate' includes information relating to housing, parking, vehicles, pedestrians, road markings (eg clearways) and other road users.
- **Crossing the road.** It is useful to locate any school crossing patrols and other crossing facilities, and observe how these facilities are being used by children, as well as record any issues for people crossing the road where there are no crossing facilities. Police education officers could be consulted regarding information about school patrols, as they train the school traffic safety teams.
- **School travel policies.** The site assessment should also include an analysis of any current school policies that may impact on the travel plan. For example, policies regarding school uniform should be reviewed to ensure uniforms are appropriate for children who want to walk or cycle to school. Further information about school policies is found on page 43.

Tip: site assessments are particularly useful for observing safety-related issues. The involvement of a traffic engineer or other trained professional is invaluable. Photos of key issues (eg double parking, unsafe crossing points) are useful communication tools for community consultation and action planning.

8 Prepare a school travel report

The school travel report details all the transport and road safety issues identified in the data collection phase. The report format should organise the data to be easily interpreted and used by the working group to develop the action plan.

A draft of the report should be fed back to the school community using some form of consultation process.

The following report format is suggested as a guide:

- introduction – outlining the purpose of the report and how the data was gathered, and noting the response rate
- modes of travel – summarising the various modes of travel and percentage of children using these (graphs are an effective way of presenting this information)
- danger spots/key sites – summarising the key sites (eg intersections and crossing points), highlighting danger spots and describing the dangers (maps and photos are particularly useful)
- road safety issues – summarising concerns from the perspective of children, parents/caregivers and other key informants
- action points to be addressed – listing suggested issues for the working party to discuss and prescribe actions for.

Some coordinators have prepared detailed reports, while others have found it useful to keep the report to a couple of pages.

The coordinator presents this information to the working group once it has been formed. Again, the most appropriate format will depend on the group – some may only want an informal chat, while others may appreciate a presentation by the coordinator. It can be easy for the working group to focus only on the environment immediately outside the school. Therefore, it's important to write and present the report in such a way to help it look at the broader community and road environment.

A school travel plan is sometimes implemented in a context where problems have long been identified but not addressed. Sometimes there has been a build up of expectations and ideas about what needs to happen, and strong feelings about who is responsible for these things not happening. It may be useful to consider at this time whether you'll be likely to encounter resistance from any members of the working group when addressing issues.

The coordinator will often be required to introduce new ways of looking at issues and moving people beyond their comfort zones. It is useful and necessary to identify when this might be required and develop strategies for it.

It can also be useful to have preliminary discussions with individual working group members so they are well informed. This can be particularly advisable where a report highlights the probable need for major engineering works. Giving the council traffic engineer an opportunity to prepare can be very important.

When the draft report has been formulated and reviewed by the working group, it's important to show it to some of the wider school travel plan stakeholders. These stakeholders may include the following.

Local government

It's assumed that school travel plan coordinators will have been engaged by either regional or city/district councils. Liaising with city/district council transport staff and road safety coordinators will be essential for successfully implementing school travel plan measures. These relationships should ideally be established before engaging with schools in developing travel plans. Timely communication of progress being made by schools with their travel plan will help council staff to schedule their resources effectively.

Every effort should also be made to engage with the council's community board (or equivalent) for the area in which the school is located. Assisting the school to secure political support for their proposed travel plan initiatives will be particularly helpful in the implementation phase.

Residents

Any changes made to how students get to and from school will impact on those who live in the immediate vicinity of the school. For example, any reductions in peak-time traffic levels will benefit these people. Residents will often have opinions about safety measures and be able to provide useful supplementary information or ideas to avoid costly mistakes.

The easiest approach is a letterbox drop with a simple questionnaire asking residents whether they feel there are any dangerous roads or locations within the local road network. You should also ask what makes them dangerous and what improvements they would suggest. Be sure to include your contact details should they have questions.

Police

Consulting with the police is an important step in the process, as there are many parts of the school travel plan that involve police staff. Consult with them early in the process to discuss ways they could be involved, and establish which officers are appropriate and available in the school's area. This will include the police education officer and maybe other staff, such as road policing officers, community constables and iwi liaison officers.

Other community members

An ideal way to make sure the ideas and concerns of local community groups are considered is to include representatives from these groups in the travel plan working group.

Other groups

There are a number of other groups that could also be involved in the school travel plan. These include health agencies such as the Heart Foundation and Sport and Recreation New Zealand (SPARC).

These groups don't need to be consulted when identifying problems or issues, but consulting with them at the beginning of the project (and on the draft action plan) will encourage collaboration, consistency and information sharing among projects.

2.3 Action planning phase

2.3.1 Overview

Table 7 How to generate actions to address identified transport issues and establish action plans

Objectives
The objectives of the action planning phase are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop an action plan that uses engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement and policy interventions to address the identified issues• ensure the action plan is acceptable to the school community and council, and is achievable.
Steps
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Bring together the working group, and identify roles and responsibilities (formalise commitment).2 Formulate an action plan.3 Seek feedback from the school community and stakeholders on the action plan.4 Finalise the school travel plan, and communicate to the school community and stakeholders.
Important theme
The quality of the action plan will depend on the level of participation of the working group. The programme is designed with collaboration as a key component and its success relies on full participation from the relevant groups. The coordinator is likely to need to monitor participation levels and intervene where necessary to ensure full involvement.
Indicative timeframe
In New Zealand, coordinators have found that the working group usually needs to meet two to four times over a period of a couple of months to discuss the data and develop an action plan. This may take longer if issues or solutions require further technical input or are more complex.
Completing the action planning phase
The coordinator has completed the action planning phase when the wider school community has been informed of the content of the approved action plan, and actions have been signed off in the written travel plan document by the stakeholder responsible for their implementation.

2.3.2 Steps

1 Bring together the working group

It's the coordinator's role to bring together the working group members and clarify the group's purpose and an agreed way of working together.

How well the working group functions is key to the school travel plan's success. It becomes the primary vehicle to ensure the issues identified are translated into appropriate solutions that are agreed and implemented.

Working group membership need not be fixed, as it may be useful to bring in specialist input at various points.

The groundwork for the formation of the working group will have taken place by this time. Key stakeholder groups will be clear about the overall programme design, and the respective roles and responsibilities of each group involved.

A typical working group has about six members and is likely to include:

- the school travel plan coordinator
- the lead teacher/school liaison staff member (and/or principal)
- board representatives
- the police education officer – likely to be limited to one or two meetings
- a traffic engineer (from the local council) – likely to be limited to one or two meetings
- any other person the school deems appropriate (eg parent representative, student representative, road safety coordinator, parking enforcement officer, iwi representative, representatives of community groups).

Tip: it's important for the coordinator to organise the working group meetings effectively. It helps to have a set agenda and circulate any necessary information before the meeting. It's also important to keep the working group members happy – providing refreshments is a good idea (eg one working group held evening meetings and the coordinator provided dessert for the members).

Tasks

The working group's tasks are to:

- prioritise the travel and road safety issues faced by the school community, using the travel survey results, onsite assessment and other information
- devise an action plan focused on environmental change, education, promotion and sometimes enforcement strategies to address the identified issues
- ensure the agreed strategies are approved by relevant authorities (eg principal and board of trustees, and local council)
- ensure approved strategies are implemented
- update the school community regarding progress at appointed stages in the programme
- liaise between the working group and wider stakeholder groups as necessary throughout the programme.

Initial working group meeting

The initial meeting is particularly important and the coordinator needs to ensure a clear structure is in place to enable the group to function efficiently and effectively.

Some important points to cover are:

- clarifying the working group's purpose
- setting up a schedule of meetings for the programme's duration
- allocating administrative roles within the group (eg chair, note taker, and responsibility for circulating notes and reports)
- accountability to the group (eg expectations around attendance, reporting back, completing tasks, dealing with absences)
- setting up a working schedule for the group.

It's worth documenting the working agreement carefully and ensuring everyone is on board. Summarise frequently to ensure everyone shares the same understanding of agreements made. If group members are absent from the initial meeting, meet with them as soon as possible and go over the detail carefully.

2 Formulate an action plan

The working group formulates the action plan by:

- reviewing the data report, results of any consultation and any coordinator recommendations
- reaching agreement on the priority issues
- exploring all possible solutions using engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and policy strategies (refer to page 43).

The action plan should be based on objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited (SMART). We suggest using headings that cover:

- the aims for each objective
- the actions required
- who is responsible for each action
- a time (estimated, if necessary) when each step will be completed
- sign-off by the appropriate stakeholder on each action.

The action plan is usually laid out in a table so it is easy to read and fits in all the information needed.

Table 8 Example of an action plan

Aim – increase the proportion of children walking to school by 10 percent in the first year				
Objective	Actions	Stakeholders	Timeframe	Sign-off
Initiate engineering treatments	Repair footpath and prune trees on X road	• Council	By <year>	• School • Council
	Investigate installing a kea crossing on X road	• Council	By <year>	• School • Council
Increase classroom road safety	Introduce 10 minutes a week of road safety teaching into each class	• School • Police education officer	By <month>	• School
Assist students to walk safely	Initiate a walking school bus from X road	• School • Council	By <month>	• School • Council

3 Seek feedback from the school community and stakeholders on the action plan

Once the working group has developed a draft action plan, it's important to gain further buy-in and support from the whole school community and other stakeholders.

Generally, this step includes notifying the school community that a draft school travel plan is available and that the working group is keen to gain feedback before finally approving it. This period also allows the working group members to seek feedback from their respective organisations or other networks. (See the consultation step in the previous phase for ideas on undertaking consultation.)

Tip: creating a display using photos of key issues with a simple feedback mechanism (such as green sticky dots for agreement and red sticky dots for disagreement) is a simple but effective means of gaining feedback. Publicise the display and ideally run it during a school event, such as a parent-teacher evening to maximise participation. (See the case study on page 28 on the Fruitvale Primary display boards for more information.)

At least four weeks is usually allotted for receiving feedback from the school community and other stakeholders. The working group then meets to finalise the school travel plan and begin implementation.

The working group needs to remain flexible about the proposed actions and be prepared to alter the draft plan based on feedback from the school community and other stakeholders, especially the local council. Failure to do this will jeopardise implementation.

Case study – Fruitvale Primary

Display boards at parent–teacher night

Sue Kendall, the travel plan coordinator for Fruitvale Primary in Waitakere City, came up with this idea to help assess support for its working group’s draft action plan among the local community and achieve further community buy-in.

With help from the road safety coordinator, Sue set up display boards in the library to coincide with parent–teacher interviews. The boards contained photos of particular issues alongside the suggested action the working group had developed for resolving each issue.

For example, near the school is a rundown and overgrown walkway through a local park. This arose in the school’s surveys as a significant deterrent to walking. The working group planned an action to lobby the council and have the path fixed and trees cut back. On the display boards was a photo of the path and description of the action suggested to fix it. Parents were then asked to place either a green (agree) or red (disagree) sticker underneath the action to show their view.

This exercise proved to be very useful at engaging the community and giving the coordinator a chance to chat to people face-to-face about travel issues. Sue also found, when people didn’t agree with a proposal, that there were always suggestions and many good ideas were received.



Parents at Fruitvale Primary place green (agree) or red (disagree) stickers under possible actions to address travel issues identified by the school travel plan working group.

4 Finalising the school travel plan, and communicating it to the school community and stakeholders

The working group should meet to finalise the action plan and compile the overall school travel plan. While the plan forms the body of the school travel plan, it is also useful to include background information and supporting materials (eg school policies, monitoring tools).

The school travel plan is then usually tabled at the next board meeting for approval, and subsequently circulated to appropriate stakeholders.

Tip: the school travel plan is a living document that will develop as implementation occurs. Once actions have been completed and targets reached, it will be important to update the school travel plan to ensure it remains relevant and useful.

Writing the school travel plan document

A school travel plan document can be detailed, or very simple and straightforward. We suggest the following information is included whichever approach you take.

Introduction:

- location and description of the school (possibly including maps)
- school catchment area and number of students
- school ethos and vision.

Body:

- policy background/why the school travel plan is necessary
- aims identified in the set-up phase
- expected benefits (including who will benefit and how)
- reference to school travel policies
- who is involved in the project (school, community and other stakeholders)
- survey and consultation results
- current travel patterns (local and any links with regional or national patterns)
- key issues and obstacles that have been identified.

Action plan:

- what the school is doing already
- what else the school community can do (action plan in table format)
- selected measures to be implemented (prioritised)
- safety considerations.

Monitoring and evaluation (see section 2.2.2):

- how the plan will progress and the changes to be monitored
- the targets and indicators to be evaluated
- the frequency of the monitoring
- how the changes will be reported.

Table 9 Local school example

Issue
Less than 30 percent of current students walk to school, including 40 percent of students who live within one kilometre of the school. Parents report that traffic fear (crossing a particular road) is the key reason for not walking their children to school. A site assessment has shown there are insufficient traffic gaps for children to cross at the uncontrolled crossing points during morning peak traffic. The council traffic engineer has indicated that at least one signalised crossing is possible if sufficient funds can be obtained in the next financial year.
Aim
To increase the percentage of students walking to school to more than 50 percent after safe crossing points have been installed.
Objective
60 percent of all children living within one kilometre of the school will walk to school by June 2008. Overall, more than 50 percent of all students will walk to school at least twice a week.
Performance indicators
A hand count of students walking carried out for one week in February and June each year.
Actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Support the council to seek funds to install a signalised crossing. Contact the local police education officer, who may also support the application.2 Organise parent volunteers to supervise pedestrians for 15 minutes in the morning and afternoon to ensure children cross as safely as possible until a signalised crossing can be installed.
Steps
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Board writes a letter of support to the council regarding a signalised crossing. Principal to follow up progress with council each term.2 Request for volunteers placed in school newsletter. Roster of volunteers organised by deputy principal. Deputy principal monitors once a week. Volunteers thanked at a morning tea once a term (by principal).

2.4 Implementation and monitoring phase

2.4.1 Overview

Table 10 How to implement the actions specified in the action plan and maintain the momentum of the school travel plan

Objectives
<p>The objectives of the implementation and monitoring phase are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• facilitate the implementation of all aspects of the action plan• formally review the action plan with the working group, signing off the tasks that have been completed• inform the school community of the impact of the implemented strategies.
Steps
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Launch action plan.2 Implement engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement and school policy strategies.3 Review or update.4 Continue or adjust implementation.5 Prepare annual report, and decide ongoing implementation and monitoring requirements. <p>Note: steps 3–5 may not be the role of the school travel plan coordinator.</p>
Important themes
<p>Important themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reviewing the implementation of the strategies as the programme progresses• maintaining a commitment to implementation and adjusting strategies where necessary• empowering the school to address future travel and road safety issues. <p>The main body of the programme draws to a close in this phase. A key role for the coordinator is to prepare the school to address future travel and road safety issues without the coordinator's intensive involvement.</p>
Indicative timeframe
<p>The implementation and monitoring phase usually spans at least one year but may extend beyond this if major engineering measures are planned. The school travel plan should become embedded in the school culture and a dynamic part of the community, updated and modified to achieve continuous improvement.</p>

2.4.2 Steps

1 Launch action plan

Implementation begins with announcing or launching the school travel plan. Some schools choose to launch the plan to their community by holding an event. This is a good way to promote some of the planned initiatives and draw further attention to the issues. Representatives from the key stakeholders should be present, and parents, residents and other community or business members invited.

If a school wishes to launch the school travel plan, consider these ideas:

- Encourage maximum participation at the launch by holding it during a regular assembly.
- Involve students in the launch by organising a performance of a transport-related skit.
- Invite VIP guests, such as the mayor, to make a short presentation that will add further weight to the plan.
- Get key stakeholders to sign the plan at the launch. This is a good way of ensuring ownership and formalising the agreement between the parties that the actions outlined will be implemented.

Some schools simply announce the commencement of the school travel plan through the school newsletter or a special flyer. Either way, it's important to generate ongoing publicity about the progress of the plan. Some examples include:

- school assemblies
- school newsletters
- PTA meetings
- school open days
- the school's website
- community noticeboards
- leaflets or letters sent to residents
- local free newspapers
- media statements sent to larger newspapers and radio stations.

2 Implement engineering, education, enforcement, encouragement and school policy strategies

This part of the programme marks the period when the bulk of strategy implementation takes place. The activity undertaken will depend on the nature of the issues identified and the education, engineering, enforcement, encouragement and policy strategies chosen to address the problems.

The coordinator is likely to have a range of tasks, eg:

- overseeing the implementation process
- undertaking tasks allocated in the action plan
- convening the ongoing meetings of the working group
- reviewing and updating the action plan with the working group at regular intervals
- ensuring all stakeholder groups are updated on programme progress, as necessary
- identifying and removing obstacles to programme implementation
- organising milestone celebrations in conjunction with the working group.

Implementing travel plan measures may take longer than set out in the action plan. This is particularly true for measures that require input from other groups, such as councils, or higher-level permission from the school board. Don't be discouraged if things aren't going according to the timing set out in the action plan but do update the action plan when timeframes change.

Tip: some measures should be implemented immediately after the travel plan is finalised to maintain impetus. However, it's important to remember that safety is the key consideration of any school travel plan. Actions should be implemented in the order necessary to ensure travel is safe. For example, it isn't appropriate to encourage walking to school along routes requiring engineering treatment to make them safe. Identifying safe routes and then encouraging children to walk with their parents, or on a walking school bus, is one way of getting children active before the action plan is completed.

The working group will need to meet regularly (usually at least once a term and maybe more frequently in the initial stages) to monitor progress. This is also a good time to discuss and solve any problems that have arisen with particular measures.

Celebrating or marking milestones in the implementation process can be a useful way of maintaining the plan's profile and recognising people's input. Such celebrations may be large or small, eg:

- a notice in the school newsletter announcing completion of a task
- a morning tea for the working group
- an article in a community newspaper
- a special school event
- a large event involving a cluster of schools, local celebrities and/or dignitaries and media.

3 Review the travel plan

It's likely that, at this stage of implementation, most strategies are well underway and the working group meetings will be less frequent. In some instances, the working group may have ceased to meet. However, we recommend that some or all of the working group continue to meet two to four times a year throughout the life of the travel plan to maintain focus and momentum.

The review will generally occur yearly and will involve the coordinator (with the support of the working group) to ensure that:

- any loose ends can be identified and properly attended to
- a plan is in place for completing any strategies that haven't been implemented (eg major engineering works)
- annual travel surveys are carried out
- there is a clear plan in place for the continued implementation of ongoing strategies (eg annual education of children on the correct use of a crossing facility)
- any future role for the coordinator is clarified (eg monitoring beyond the first year).

Initial travel survey techniques, such as surveys and hand counts during the data collection phase, need to be repeated to assess the shift to walking/cycling and any new sustainable transport issues. These methods need to collect essentially the same data without being too time consuming or resource intensive.

If there is no shift towards sustainable transport options at this point, the coordinator and working group need to determine reasons for this and address the key issues.

As part of the review, the coordinator and working group should prepare a short progress report highlighting achievements, outstanding issues and plans to resolve these, and outline actions for the year. This report can be made available to the school community and other stakeholders.

It is often appropriate at this point to celebrate and publicise successes.

4 Continue or adjust implementation

The travel plan should be a fluid document that adapts according to changes in travel issues and patterns.

A record should be kept of all actions. Note how each initiative has helped (or failed) to achieve the aims and objectives of the plan. This will help in identifying best practice for future use.

If the evaluation has identified areas where no change has occurred, then the related school policies and measures need to be revised.

For example, if new parking controls at the school gate haven't decreased the number of cars parking illegally (and dangerously) during pick-up and drop-off times, parking policies need to be revised (eg a new policy could be instigated where the council is notified of illegally parked cars and owners receive a ticket).

5 Ongoing monitoring

Ongoing monitoring usually needs to be handed over to the school and council once the major work of the working group is completed. In some cases, the school travel plan coordinator will continue overseeing this role.

Monitoring is likely to focus on the issues addressed in the action plan, any incomplete or ongoing strategies, and the resulting shift towards sustainable transport options (identified through ongoing surveying of students). It may also extend to new issues that have arisen.

The form that monitoring takes will depend on the nature of the community and issues involved. If the project is part of a larger council programme, there will be specific tasks attached to that programme to consider. Requirements of the national monitoring database (ie providing data from survey results) will also need to be met annually. More information will be made available as the monitoring database is developed.

Low-key monitoring

This is appropriate when the action plan has been implemented smoothly and the impact has been high. For example, it may be agreed that the coordinator or another council staff member contacts the school every six months and talks with or meets with the principal and/or the lead teacher/liaison staff member. It may also be useful to maintain six-monthly contact with other key members of the working group, eg the council traffic engineer or road safety coordinator.

More intensive monitoring

This is appropriate where there have been problems with implementation, or where the school is in an area of high development or rapid change. It may be agreed that the coordinator takes a more active monitoring role. This can be done by a variety of methods, eg:

- a meeting with the principal and lead teacher/liaison staff member
- a meeting with other key members of the working group
- interviewing some of the key stakeholders
- onsite assessment of previous trouble spots.

It may be necessary for the coordinator to intervene where problems become evident. In this case, the working group members will be an important resource in resolving issues.

Tip: providing the school with an updated list of relevant contact names and telephone numbers can be a useful reminder to school staff of the community resources available.

At this stage, some coordinators may be focusing on helping the school utilise the contacts and skills learned through the intensive phases of the programme to resolve any new problems. In this situation, the coordinator takes on more of a coaching and supporting role for school staff or parents, rather than intervening directly.

3 Resources for the coordinator

3.1 Travel survey information

3.1.1 Overview of the survey process

Timing and frequency of all surveys

The initial surveying of all three groups (children, parents and staff) should occur early in the school travel plan development process, as this provides important base information for determining some of the plan's content and targets. Ideally, the students should all be surveyed in the same week to ensure that any external factors affecting responses (eg the weather, road works, special events, time of the term) are the same for the entire population. Similarly, the parent and staff surveys should coincide with the student surveys so any bias due to external factors can be minimised. However, it may be necessary to provide parents with a wider window of opportunity for completing the survey.

The first of the follow-on surveys would generally occur one year after the plan has been initiated. Ideally, this survey would be undertaken in the same week as the initial survey, again helping to compensate for possible variations in travel patterns due to weather or other external factors.

It has been suggested that student surveys be conducted in the same week of every term to capture seasonal variability. This is a good idea, especially if there is support in the school to ensure it happens. In this case, it may be possible to consider including only one or two classes at each year level to establish the seasonal trends. This could then be extrapolated out to represent the whole school.

The student surveys

The student surveys are quite simple in their structure and content. Any difficulty stems from the wide range of ages they are expected to cover and the relative ability of very young children, in particular, to understand what information they are to provide.

Who should be surveyed?

Surveying the entire school population is the most desirable, as children of different ages travel to school by different means. It also gives good, statistically reliable information to supplement the parental surveys if their response rate is not so good. When undertaking surveys, it's worthwhile noting the weather conditions on the days that surveying is undertaken, as this can significantly influence the mode of transport used.

How should the survey be conducted?

As noted previously, the most problematic aspect of the student survey is how to carry it out, particularly with younger children. There have been concerns that asking children to recall how they usually travel to and from school on a given day may be too much to ask of them. This may be true in some cases, but we feel reasonably confident that this problem can be overcome.

It may be worthwhile considering adding a column to the survey or a separate question that asks students to note down any before- or after-school activities they have on each day. This might act as a more concrete reminder for children that, say, on a Monday, they go to dance class and mum has to drive them, whereas on Tuesday they walk straight home. (Wording for the questions needs to be targeted at an age level of eight to 10 so most children understand it.)

For intermediate (years 7 and 8) and secondary students, it should be reasonably straightforward to explain what they are being asked to do, to remind them that on different days they may have activities that affect how they travel to or from school, and to have them complete a survey form for the entire week at one sitting.

For younger children, there are a range of possibilities:

- For eight to 10 year olds, it may be possible to have them complete the questionnaire themselves, either all in one sitting or each day, with the help of their teacher and possibly another adult (such as the school travel plan coordinator or parent).
- The survey could be completed during mat time, using the hands-up method, eg 'How did you come to school on Monday? Hands up those who walked to school. Now, hands up, those who rode their bikes'. It could be done on a daily basis for the entire week, eg on Monday morning ask about Monday; on Tuesday morning ask about Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning.
- It could be assigned as a daily homework task to record how they travelled to and from school. Parents could then help them fill it out at home. While this may not result in a 100 percent response rate from each class, the rate would probably still be quite high.
- The year 7 and 8 students could undertake the survey as part of their unit on statistics, assisting all the classes to gather the information for the survey and analysing the data for the whole school. One idea that has worked well is to have the senior classes help the juniors fill out their travel surveys. This increases the student interaction, and the senior students enjoy the responsibility.

This probably does not cover all of the possible options for collecting the data from the students. However, it offers some ideas. The main point is to collect the same information in the same week from all of the students – and to provide whatever support is necessary to ensure that the information collected is as accurate and complete as possible.

3.1.2 The parent surveys

Who should be surveyed?

Every family unit or household with children attending the school should be included in the survey distribution. If every household receives a copy of the questionnaire, the response rate will be higher than if only a few are selected at the outset of the process.

How should the survey be conducted?

In primary schools, where school newsletters are generally distributed via the children, questionnaires can be distributed with the regular weekly or fortnightly newsletter. This ensures each household receives at least one copy of the questionnaire. Spare copies can be made available at the school office.

The initial announcements by the school (usually via the school newsletter) could helpfully alert parents that there will be a survey coming home for them to complete and return to the school.

Parents probably shouldn't be given more than two weeks to complete the questionnaire, otherwise there is a propensity to put it aside and forget about it. For this reason, we suggest asking them to return it by the end of the following week – with a reminder just before it is due inserted in the school newsletter (if it's distributed weekly, otherwise a separate notice might be useful).

Table 11 Possible timeframe for parent survey

Through the school newsletter (let's say it goes out on Wednesday or Thursday)	
Weeks 1 and 2	Announce (week 1) and then remind (week 2) that a survey will be happening as part of school travel plan development. Explain the survey's purpose.
Week 3	Distribute the survey and note its due date as Friday of the following week.
Week 4	Place a reminder in newsletter that the completed survey is due in on Friday. Make spare copies available in the office.
Week 5	Stragglers received.

The same process can be use for the follow-on survey.

Staff surveys

Clearly, there will be far fewer staff surveys completed than either student or parent surveys. It should be possible to distribute the questionnaire at a weekly staff meeting, explain how to complete it and respond to any immediate questions about its content and purpose.

3.2 Example introduction newsletters

3.2.1 Greenhithe School newsletter

Travelwise school programme

A year ago surveys were sent home seeking support for starting Walking School Buses in the area. It was unfortunate that all the work this involved and information collected didn't result in walking school bus routes being established – mainly due to the lack of footpaths and safe crossing points around Greenhithe. At the time, North Shore City Council recommended that Greenhithe School take on the Travelwise to School project. The project focuses on all travel modes, rather than just walking school buses.

The Travelwise to School project is a joint initiative between Greenhithe School and the North Shore City Council to mainly identify and implement ways of improving walking and cycling networks to and from school. The council has appointed a travel planner to work with our school to identify current travel patterns, design ways to reduce the congestion around the school and improve the safety of our children's school journeys.

A parent survey will be sent home with the next newsletter to assist us with the project. Please fill it out and return it to the school by the due date. There will be information about a prize draw in the next newsletter.

3.2.2 Nelson primary schools

Do you allow your children to walk or cycle to school? If not, why not? If so, are you worried about their safety?

Victory Primary School, Nelson Intermediate School and the Nelson City Council are starting a Safe Journey to School project to find this out.

We need you and your children to tell us what makes it unsafe to walk around this community. If there is a dangerous crossing point, trees that make it hard to see what traffic is coming, dogs that scare you, etc, we want to know about it! During the next few months local residents will be given the chance to tell us through questionnaires and meetings.

Stage two of the project is where you get the chance to help us work out what we can do to improve things. Help us to make our community safer, get our children fitter and our air cleaner by becoming involved in this project.

For more information, contact Krista Hobday, Safe Journey to School Coordinator, Nelson City Council.

3.3 Example timeline

Table 12 Example timeline – Greenhithe Primary School

Month	Task	Responsible
11 February	Contact school. Meet principal and lead teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator
23 February – staff & board 3 March – PTA	Present programme to staff, board of trustees, PTA and any other important group to market programme to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator/ lead teacher
March	Parent and child questionnaires delivered to school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator to deliver and collect School to distribute
March	Questionnaires collected	
April	Data input of questionnaires	
April	Analysis of questionnaires	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research analyst officer
May	Feedback of results to the community, eg media, community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator
May	School mapping classroom exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead teacher/ travel plan coordinator
May	Distribution of residential questionnaire door to door, key community locations, local paper inserts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator
Term 2	Open Day – 3D map. Showing of children’s work and inviting parents/residents to express their concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lead teacher/ travel plan coordinator Children Parents/residents evening
June	Input of results and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator Research analysis officer
June	Feedback of results to the community, eg media, community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator
July	Establish monitoring group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School/ travel plan coordinator
July/August	Developing the school travel plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring group
August	Audit of draft plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator/ traffic services manager/ infrastructure manager
August	Feedback of results from plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School/ travel plan coordinator
September	Launch of plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School/ travel plan coordinator
2007–08	Implementation of engineering measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic services manager
2007–08	Educational/promotional measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator
Jan/Feb 2008	Meeting with school to assess progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation and monitoring Distribution of second parent questionnaire Monitoring group meeting to assess aims and objectives of school travel plan Review and amend as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel plan coordinator/ school

3.4 School summary recording sheet

Table 13 School summary recording sheet

School summary	
School name:	Street address:
Principal's name: Main contact: Other key staff:	Postal address: Phone: Fax: Other phone:
School roll: Student breakdown: Year 1 Year 2 Year 3 Year 4 Year 5 Year 6 Year 7 Year 8	Roll: stable/increasing/decreasing Special features:
Decile rating: Ethnicity breakdown:	
Current road safety programmes:	
Road safety/travel policies: Yes/No	
Special events, ie sports day, parent-teacher interviews (include dates):	
Communication options, ie newsletters (weekly/fortnightly?) website?	
Perceived issues:	

3.5 Sample implementation strategies

Implementation strategies can include a combination of the following.

3.5.1 Engineering or road treatments

Engineering strategies are very important in the school travel plan model because they have a high potential to provide lasting positive impact. Consider all available measures to enhance pedestrian/cyclist safety when developing engineering strategies. Possible engineering treatments can include:

- a range of pedestrian crossing or cycling facilities
- speed-reduction devices
- road markings
- improvements to facilities and signage.

Some environmental problems requiring engineering treatments may occur within the school grounds (eg developing a drop-off and pickup bay, providing multiple gateways to a school or making changes to the car parking area.) The school or the Ministry of Education are primarily responsible for finding the resources to address these issues.

3.5.2 Road safety education

RoadSense Ata Haere is a national professional development and support strategy for primary and intermediate schools, funded by Land Transport NZ. It is a joint partnership with the NZ Police, which builds on and supports the work of police education officers. The strategy aims to reduce death and injury to children on and around New Zealand roads. RoadSense includes a sustainable transport unit for teachers to deliver.

Police school road safety education programmes offer a comprehensive range of activities for students of all age levels that are linked to the New Zealand Curriculum Framework. Research indicates children learn best in real situations, which means that the most effective road safety education takes place out of the classroom and in the road environment. The police programmes include practical road safety education lessons in the road environment.

3.5.3 Enforcement activities

The enforcement strategies specified in the action plan will depend on the problems identified. Enforcement strategies are likely to be appropriate in situations where traffic speeds are consistently above limits, where cars are not stopping for pedestrians on pedestrian crossings, where there are parking infringements impinging on child safety, and where other unacceptable and unsafe driver behaviours have been identified. Most councils have parking officers who can enforce parking infringements. Police can carry out other enforcement strategies as part of their normal duties.

3.5.4 Public education

Road safety training can be integrated into personal, social and health programmes at all levels. It's very important that children receive road safety training at an early age to ensure they learn street skills before attending secondary school. Parents can be educated about their travel choices. For example, they can be notified which buses to catch, who to car pool with and where walking school buses operate, and receive student-focused maps of safe walking routes. They can be informed about where to park if they are driving and reminded of the need to approach the school vicinity with

caution. Families new to the school need to be made aware of these things too. Schools can adopt a healthy school ethos, with a commitment to walking and cycling advertised in the school's website, prospectus and newsletters.

3.5.5 Rewards and awards

This is a great way to maintain interest in the school travel plan. Goals can be set and the school can monitor its own progress and achievements. The school can run internal events such as Walking Wednesday, where each Wednesday is designated as walk-to-school day. Inter-class competitions can be held where classes take a register each day of how children arrived at school. The results are then plotted on a chart for comparison with other classes. Using this information, a large, artistic colourful graph can be created illustrating children's travel patterns. An example of this is the 'grow a forest' chart where paper trees are stuck on the chart representing children who travelled to school other than by car. The school can participate in national events (such as Walk to School Week and Cycle Week) and international events.

3.5.6 Policy

The school needs to formalise its policy on travel to and from school. Some schools, for example, have an unwritten policy that prohibits, or discourages, cycling to school. This may be evidenced by a lack of cycle facilities. Other schools may encourage car travel (and thereby discourage cycling and walking) by making large parking areas available right at the school gate.

School travel policies to support sustainable travel choices could include, for example, the following types of policies:

- All children living within 2 km of the school will be encouraged to walk to school and measures to assist them will be introduced.
- Children over 10 years of age will be permitted to cycle to school. (The police may have recommendations regarding proficiency requirements to ensure safety.)
- Measures to encourage cycling will be introduced and appropriate facilities will be provided on site.
- No onsite parking space for student drop-offs will be provided, and the local council will be approached to control parking within 500 m of the school gates.
- Staff will be encouraged to use alternative travel modes, where appropriate.
- Sustainable travel choices will be promoted as part of school activities, and this will be linked to curriculum activities.

3.6 Some strategies from overseas schools

3.6.1 Farnham Royal CE Combined School

Aim – to improve pedestrian safety in school vicinity

- 1 Registration numbers of cars found parked illegally or dangerously are published in the school newsletter.
- 2 Residents association has advised members to avoid driving down the school road at drop-off and pick-up time.
- 3 Increased parking warden time has been arranged with the council.

3.6.2 St Peters School

Aim – to double the number of staff and students using bikes and public transport, and increase the number of staff and students walking

- 1 Provide information to help parents organise carpooling.
- 2 Work towards a park and walk scheme.
- 3 Provide secure, sheltered bike parks.
- 4 Run cycle proficiency courses.
- 5 Improve pedestrian/cycle links around school.
- 6 Encourage walking/cycling by providing secure storage spaces for bikes.

3.6.3 John Stocker Middle School

Aim – to improve the physical environment for cyclists and pedestrians

- 1 Put in signalled pedestrian crossings linking up with cycle tracks.
- 2 Re-phase lights to prevent traffic queues, cars overtaking at lights, etc.
- 3 Bring in speed restrictions.
- 4 Move bus stop to prevent congestion.
- 5 Upgrade pavements, cycle paths.
- 6 Improve and light paths.
- 7 Recommend park and walk laybys for quick drop off and pick up.
- 8 Pilot a cycle programme, years 6 and up only, cycle permits compulsory.

3.6.4 Drakes Primary School

Aim – to promote a 'safer/healthier ways to school' ethos to encourage walking and cycling, and to develop exciting learning opportunities

- 1 Children kept travel charts and registers. The information was collated and computer software used to tabulate their findings.
- 2 Inter-class competitions were held, with rewards for travelling by foot, cycle or shared car journeys.
- 3 There was a road safety theme for an art competition.
- 4 There were annual bike days in school to learn about maintenance, safety and road procedure.

3.6.5 Warrnambool East Primary School

The five minute bell – children get extra incentive to walk or cycle

At 3.25 pm, a bell is sounded for walkers and cyclists only. At 3.30 pm, another bell rings for the rest of the school. This way, children are encouraged and rewarded for walking and cycling, and also manage to get clear of the school grounds before the majority of cars begin to leave, thus making their environment safer. This is one of a number of strategies being implemented by schools in Warrnambool under the Victorian TravelSmart School programme. More ideas can be found at www.travelsmart.vic.gov.au.

3.6.6 The IWALK Club

IWALK is an international organisation initiated in 1994 (New Zealand first joined in 1999) with the goal of increasing safe and sustainable journeys to school. The IWALK club is an initiative to connect children across the world via the internet. Schools can register their sustainable transport details on the site, including the number of children walking and distance walked, learn about walking initiatives in other countries and become part of international Walk to School Day each year. Their website is www.iwalktoschool.org.

Our contact details

For general enquires, or more information about
Land Transport New Zealand, please email

info@landtransport.govt.nz

www.landtransport.govt.nz/travel/school/walk-to-school/travel-plans.html

National Office

Telephone 04 931 8700 Fax 04 931 8701
PO Box 2840, Wellington

Northern Region

Auckland Office

Telephone 09 969 9800 Fax 09 969 9813
Level 6, 1 Queen Street
Private Bag 106602, Auckland

Midland Region

Hamilton Office

Telephone 07 958 7840 Fax 07 958 7866
183 Collingwood Street
Private Bag 3081, Hamilton

Central Region

Wellington Office

Telephone 04 931 8900 Fax 04 931 8929
Master Builders House
234 Wakefield Street
PO Box 27249, Wellington

Napier Office

Telephone 06 974 5520 Fax 06 974 5529
Level 3, Dunvegan House
215 Hastings Street
PO Box 972, Napier

Palmerston North Office

Telephone 06 953 6296 Fax 06 953 6203
Level 3, IRD Building
Cnr Ashley and Ferguson Streets
PO Box 1947, Palmerston North

Southern Region

Christchurch Office

Telephone 03 964 2866 Fax 03 964 2855
Level 5, BNZ House
129 Hereford Street
PO Box 13364, Christchurch

Dunedin Office

Telephone 03 951 3009 Fax 03 951 3013
AA Centre, 450 Moray Place
PO Box 5245, Dunedin

Transport Registry Centre

Telephone 06 953 6200 Fax 06 953 6411
Level 3, IRD Building
Cnr Ashley and Ferguson Streets
Private Bag, Palmerston North

Call centres

General enquiries	0800 699 000
Driver licensing	0800 822 422
Road user charges	0800 655 644
Motor vehicle registration	0800 108 809
Overdimension permits	0800 683 774