

## Walking Bus checklist

- ✓ Initial letter to parents: outlining the details of the scheme, which days it is available etc.
- ✓ Walking Bus Leaflet: advertising and explaining the scheme – send home to all parents in satchel-mail and keep on display at reception
- ✓ Road Safety Guidelines for Volunteers
- ✓ Parent/Guardian Consent form – include an agreement that they have read and agree to the parent/guardian guidelines
- ✓ Parent/Guardian Guidelines
- ✓ Children's Walking Bus Guidelines
- ✓ Volunteer Contact List – keep contact details of volunteers, their availability, DBS status etc.
- ✓ Walking Bus registers
- ✓ 'Passenger' List
- ✓ Accident reporting – in line with your school's policy
- ✓ Information letter to parents

Consider displaying the code of practice and children's guidelines with other information about your Walking Bus scheme.

For more information see the Walking Bus webpage on Cornwall Council website [www.cornwall.gov.uk/walkingbus](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/walkingbus)

## Further information

Strategy, Economy, Enterprise and Environment Service  
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If you would like this information in another format or language please contact:

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jn 41129 08/16

# How to set up a Walking Bus

To enable more children to walk to school in a volunteer-led group



[www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk)

A Walking Bus aims to enable more children to walk to school, by walking in a group led by volunteers along a set route.

The brief guidelines below are designed to enable you to set up a Walking Bus scheme at your school; rather than being prescriptive, it aims to give an outline of the considerations you need to address to make a scheme work for your school community.

## Benefits

- Alleviating traffic congestion, pollution and parking issues around the school gates
- Providing part of the hour of daily exercise recommended for children
- Improved behaviour and academic performance
- Potential for social time outdoors

## Steps to setting up a Walking Bus

- Appoint a Walking Bus co-ordinator within the school
- Ascertain interest from parents and recruit volunteer (and/or staff) leaders
- Arrange a meeting with interested parents
- Ensure that volunteers are DBS-checked
- Establish route and potential bus stops
- Carry out risk assessments
- Train volunteers and provide fluorescent tabards
- Sign up passengers
- Devise a Walking Bus timetable, including who the volunteers are, what day the bus will run, and which children will use it
- Publicise and launch the Walking Bus scheme!

## A few hints and tips

- Appoint a keen Walking Bus co-ordinator to be responsible for the process from start to finish
- Recruit volunteers from parents who already walk their children to school
- Recruit enough volunteers to run a rota system
- Start with one route as a trial. Consider laying on additional routes if there is sufficient interest and support

- Carry out a risk assessment of the route with at least one volunteer, so that concerns can be raised. The risk assessment should be carried out during a school day at the time of day that the walking bus will operate in order to get a realistic picture of volume of traffic. Give each volunteer a copy of the final risk assessment
- Schools should satisfy themselves that volunteers are suitably trained in road safety
- Consider incentivising regular use of the Walking Bus with house points, stickers etc.
- Launch the Walking Bus to coincide with Walk to School Week or a challenge such as Sustrans' Big Shift

## Potential Pitfalls

Unless there are sufficient people to share the responsibility, the scheme can be vulnerable to fluctuations in availability of volunteers. Some schools have considered extending the contracted hours of e.g. teaching assistants, to provide consistent levels of walking bus cover. Plans must be in place to communicate between leaders to provide cover should the nominated volunteer become unexpectedly unavailable. Likewise a system must be established to communicate with parents if the walking bus is unable to run at short notice.

