

# Hampstead Hill School



## GREEN TRAVEL HANDBOOK 2018-19

A safer, greener journey to school

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### 1) Why Walk?

#### Active living

Children need to take part in regular physical activity to stay fit and to develop active lifestyles for their future health. An hour a day is the recommended minimum - and the school journey can help towards this. In the long term, being active helps protect against many health problems such as heart disease.

#### Easy breathing

On busy roads children riding inside the car are exposed to more pollution than at the roadside. Good ventilation of the car or the use of air conditioning doesn't significantly alter pollution levels.

### **Time to talk**

The journey to school is a great time to chat to your child, find out how things are going at school and talk about things you see on the way. You can notice seasonal changes and meet up with other families as you walk.

### **Better road sense**

By walking with your child, you can help them build up their pedestrian skills over time, so that when they start making journeys alone they will be better prepared for coping with traffic.

### **Growing confidence**

Being physically active reduces stress and raises self-esteem. Once children are ready to make their own way to school, then the journey becomes a chance to gain independence and self-confidence.

### **One less car on the roads**

We have to reduce the amount of traffic on the roads. If we go on as we are, we can expect traffic to rise by more than a third over the next twenty years. That's more fumes, more road danger and tighter limits on children's freedom. Here at Hampstead Hill School, we have reduced the percentage of families travelling to school by car by 40% over the last 10 years. This compares to an average 6% decrease in schools across London for the same period. We hope to continue this downward trend by continuing to apply all of the initiatives laid out in our School Travel Plan which is available from the School Office.

- 40% less pupils are driven to school since 2007
- 10% more pupils are walking for all or part of their journey to school
- Twice as many pupils are scooting and cycling

We are very proud of these achievements at HHS, and encourage every generation of parents to strive to achieve healthier journeys to school.

## **2) More walking**

### **Children's freedom and the car**

Although pedestrian casualties have fallen in the last 10 years this is probably because children are increasingly kept away from traffic. Children using roads are at their most vulnerable when they first gain their independence, but may not have the road skills to match. Overall, they are most likely to become pedestrian casualties at 11, 12 and 13, (though the chances of a boy being killed as a pedestrian also peak around the age of eight). Pedestrian training can help children to act more safely on the roads, but no child gets it right all the time. We have to make roads safer for children, and that means slower speeds and less traffic. Walking is such an everyday activity that it is easy to take it for granted. Yet we don't walk nearly as much as we used to - about a fifth less than 20 years ago - and the loss of this exercise is a health concern. Walking to school helps children to keep fit now, and makes it more likely that they'll stay active when they are older. Younger children who walk to school with a parent or carer have the chance to build up their road sense over time, making them better prepared for independent journeys later on.

### **Walking to School**

Parents may have difficulty in finding time to walk to school. One option is to arrange an escort rota - so that two or three families take turns in accompanying children. Some schools have taken this idea much further by setting up a 'walking bus'. This is a group of children, walking to school with two parent volunteers - a 'driver', who leads the way, and a 'conductor' at the rear.

The walking bus follows a set route, stopping at agreed pick up points in the neighbourhood. Volunteers and children are kitted out with reflective clothing and a trolley can be used to carry bags. A number of safety checks are used in setting up schemes, for example:

- volunteers receive training in road safety and follow a route worked out by a road safety officer
- a ratio of at least one volunteer to eight children is recommended for junior age children
- parents sign a consent form and make sure their child understands a set of road safety guidelines
- volunteers are vetted by police to check they have no criminal background
- arrangements are made for volunteers to be covered by public liability insurance.

We are actively seeking to set up a Walking Bus. If you would like to join us or if you would like to set up a Walking bus please email:

[walkingbus@hampsteadhillschool.co.uk](mailto:walkingbus@hampsteadhillschool.co.uk) for more details or to sign up. for the Journey Share pages on the school's website in the Parent Section.

### **3) Walking Initiatives at HHS**

#### **Walk to school events**

Here at Hampstead Hill School we promote walking by taking part in national Walk to School Week when parents are encouraged to accompany their children on foot. Badges, stickers and other materials are displayed in the run up to this important week. In addition to the National Walk to School Week, we engage in several other Walk to School and Walk to Work initiatives throughout the year, please watch the School website for details. We also support **Walk once A Week** and ask that you try to support this initiative and join us in encouraging the habit of walking for all our pupils.

#### **Pedestrian training**

We work with road safety officers to provide practical pedestrian training for children as part of Personal, Social and Health Education. Effective training involves sessions at the roadside, rather than being purely classroom based. It's important to convey to parents that children who have completed series of sessions are not automatically 'roadworthy'. Pedestrian training should be a long-term process with frequent, short sessions at different ages.

#### **Traffic-free entrances**

Children need to be able to walk safely into school without having to weave between vehicles coming in or out. All pedestrian and bicycle traffic should use the main school gate, and should not attempt to use the school driveway which is for motor vehicles only.

#### **Visible school clothing**

The School outdoor coat and homework bags are all marked in high-visibility safety markings, making it much easier for our children to be seen by other road users. Please ensure your children are wearing safety reflectors, especially when travelling by bicycle, or in the winter months when it is dark early.

#### **Road Safety**

We have also requested help from Camden's engineers in reviewing pedestrian safety around the school. We have fed back your road safety suggestions from your Annual Surveys and will let

you know how we progress with Camden.

### **Car Free Days**

In line with our support for **Walk Once a Week** we also strongly support the improvement to the environment that we experience in the Car Free days that take place in Walk to School Week. We hope that you will join us in appreciating the difference that we can make if we all act together.

## **4) More cycling/scooting**

Regular cycling protects against heart disease, stroke and other illnesses, and raises self-confidence and wellbeing. Most children own bicycles and many would like to use them for the school journey, but very few do. Traffic danger is the main reason, with cyclists among the most vulnerable road users. But where schools have the benefit of a network of cycle routes and slower speeds, the whole picture changes, and cycling can become a popular choice for travel to school. Cycling gives children more freedom and has great benefits for health: regular cycling can add years to life.

### **School cycle/scooter racks**

Hampstead Hill School provides a covered area for bicycle and scooter storage adjacent to the main entrance. Our cycle racks allow for the frame of your bike to be locked using a 'D' lock for security. Smaller stands are available for smaller bikes. Scooter storage is available for all children who wish to Scoot to School!

While providing the facilities to store your bikes and scooters, we must also make pupils and parents aware that if a bike or scooter is stolen the school will not be held liable. Many insurance companies will cover bicycles under a standard household contents policy, provided they are locked securely. Separate insurance may be necessary for more expensive bikes.

### **Cyclist/Scooter training**

Young cyclists need training to prepare for riding on roads. As most children would not be expected to cycle on their own cycle on the roads at Nursery/Keystage 1 age, we have decided to concentrate on making Scooter training available to all children at Hampstead Hill School. As part of the curriculum, we now incorporate "Scootsmart" scooter training programmes into Physical Education classes for all children from Pre-Reception onwards. This means your child will be better equipped to make a safe walk/scoot journey to school with you.

### **Free Cycle Training**

You may be interested to know that Camden offer free cycle training for children, families and groups as well as individual lessons for regular urban cyclists who want to make their journeys safer and more enjoyable. Camden staff can teach families to ride together and can show you how to ride protectively with your children and how to encourage them to use their bikes more. For more details contact the Transport Strategy Team by phone on 020 7974 5543 or at:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/transport-and-streets/cycling-and-pedestrians/cycle-training-in-camden/>

Alternatively you can also contact Cycle Training UK <http://www.cycletraining.co.uk/> or Bikeability <http://bikeability.org.uk/>

There are also cycle maintenance courses available detailed on Camden's site:

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/content/transport-and-streets/cycling-and-pedestrians/cycle-training-in-camden/>

### **Safety gear and advice**

Children walking/scooting/cycling to school are safer if they are more visible. Please use your School Coat which has reflective patches on it for high visibility. Children are advised to wear helmets as they can reduce the severity of head injuries in accidents (though their effectiveness diminishes with speed). Helmets should be properly fitted, have a 'CE' mark and should meet either the European standard BS EN1078:1997, or the American standard SNELL B95.

## **5) Better Buses**

Travelling to school by bus or coach has a better safety record than travel by car. Around a fifth of all journeys to school are made by bus, and some schools have had great success in promoting and improving bus services. Public transport has seen major improvements in recent years. Our area is served well by London Transport bus routes, including: 13, 168, 268, C11, 24 and the 46.

## **6) Tubes & Trains**

The school is served by Belsize Park Tube Station on the Northern Line a short walk from the School.

- Plan your journey using the Transport for London website: <https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/>

Hampstead Heath Station is on the North London Line and operated by Silverlink, which connects Richmond, Kew, Acton and Willesden with Camden, Highbury and Islington. It is a ten-minute walk to the School.

## **7) Sharing the ride**

*Car journeys to Hampstead Hill School have reduced by 40% thanks to car sharing, minibuses and greater use of public transport.*

At Hampstead Hill, we actively encourage parents who insist on driving to school, to participate in car sharing to reduce the impact on the environment and on parking around the School area. Families often make their own car sharing arrangements informally, but the school set up an online Journey Share for parents who wish to find other parents who are interested in sharing the school run with others living nearby.

## **8) Safety sense**

*Since 1985, on average, six children a year have been killed by strangers, while more than six children a week have been killed on the roads.*

Fears for children's safety out of doors have grown over time. The area in which today's children are free to explore outside their own homes has declined dramatically. While rising traffic has had a major impact, fears about strangers are also prominent in parents' minds.

The journey to School is a vital time to reinforce all the safety and road awareness topics that are

covered in School, such as:

STRANGER DANGER ROAD-CROSSING and TRAFFIC LIGHTS

### **Planning to cope**

Safety messages are often very negative - focusing only on what not to do. Our teachers encourage children to brainstorm common sense ideas about ways to stay safe and deal with difficulties. These might include:

- walking with a friend or a group of friends: choosing well used routes and avoiding out-of-view short-cuts
- crossing the road if you think there is trouble ahead: having a plan for what you would do if you missed your bus home
- identifying your own safe places along the route - such as the homes of families you know well, or public places where you could stop and ask for help if you felt unsafe
- knowing how you would refuse a lift or sweets from an adult you don't know
- being prepared to shout confidently and loudly if you feel threatened by an adult (practice helps!)
- talking about anything that worries you with a teacher or a parent
- trusting your own instincts when you feel nervous about a situation.

## **9) Eco Driving**

On those occasions when you do need to drive to school:

### **Care for your car**

Check tuning, tyre pressure and fuel consumption – regular servicing helps keep your car efficient.

### **Road rage**

Be respectful of the community and environment around you. If you can't be patient and calm for others, consider your own heart. Stress means a person may be at a greater risk of developing coronary heart disease.

### **Kill your speed**

Just five miles over a 30-mph speed limit can increase stopping distance by a further 21 feet. You should always be able to stop within the distance you can see ahead. Is it worth gambling that there isn't a child around the corner? The area around the school is now a 20mph zone.

Increased speed means increased fuel use. If you stick to the speed limit, you will find little difference in journey time, and a lot of difference in your stress level! And after all, what's the point in rushing to join a queue?

### **Lighten up**

Roof racks add drag and other unnecessary weight increases fuel consumption. Air conditioning and other on board electrical devices increase fuel consumption and cost you money.

### **Cold starts**

Avoid leaving your engine ticking over for long periods. Drive off as soon as possible after starting as the car will warm up quicker and more efficiently when moving.

### **Idling**

If your engine is idling you're not moving and therefore getting 'zero miles per gallon'. If you have to wait in a traffic jam or at a level crossing, it's best to switch your engine off. In hot weather this is particularly important as it will help stop the engine overheating.

### **Eco-driving**

Hard, fast driving results in using more petrol and wearing tyres – leading to more pollution and higher motoring costs. It is entirely inappropriate to accelerate and break hard in villages, towns and cities – where most road accidents occur. Safe and controlled driving is actually far harder and demonstrates considerable skill. It also saves wear and tear on the engine, clutch, gears, brakes and tyres – leading to better fuel economy and preventing unnecessary expenditure.

### **Drive smoothly**

Accelerate gently and avoid heavy or sudden braking. As well as polluting the air, tyre and brake lining residue and exhaust pollution fall onto the road and pollute surface-water drains.

## **10) Green Zone**

We are dedicated to setting up a Green Zone around our School. A Green Zone is an area around the school where we can have a positive impact on the environment and reduce emissions. In order to help us increase the quality of air in and around our School, PLEASE do not park on Pond Street or Hampstead Hill Gardens. Park and Walk!

### **PARK & WALK**

We have a policy of promoting Park and Walk to minimise the traffic around the school and to decrease congestion. Please park as far as you can from the school. Many parents use Hampstead Heath car park.

Pay and Display bays may be available in the school vicinity, but there are very few of them. Additional meter parking bays are available on Rosslyn Hill. Parking restrictions operate between 9am and 6.30pm from Monday to Friday and on Saturday mornings.

As you know we have had a policy of encouraging parents to drive with care and attention for some years now. We ask that you:

- Keep your speed down
- Drive with care and attention
- Do not park across our neighbours' drives
- Park as far away from the school as you can. These roads are congested, and right outside our school gates.

IF YOU CAN, please park a few streets away, ample parking is available on Lyndhurst Road, Thurlow Road, Hampstead Heath Car Park, among other places. If you park a few streets away, you will have the opportunity to walk the last few minutes to School with your child, and at the same time, contribute to making our School a healthier, quieter place.

PLEASE SUPPORT THE GREEN ZONE AROUND OUR SCHOOL. A map of the Green Zone is available on the parents' noticeboard in the main school lobby.

THANK YOU