

GREEN-SCHOOLS TRAVEL

Annual Report 2020



An Roinn Iompair
Department of Transport



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Executive Summary

2020 has been an unusual year for Green-Schools Travel, during which we had to reinvent and redesign the programme to adapt to extremely unusual circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to a collective effort the Travel team successfully continued to promote sustainable travel initiatives and keep school participation levels in the programme very high.

To overcome difficulties due to school closures, the first and most important change adopted was a total shift towards online engagement with new educational resources for students to do at home and the organization of several virtual events. 735 in person school visits still took place in 2020. Green-Schools Stay Home Project, the Primary and Secondary Schools Online Conferences and the virtual Awards for the Big Travel Challenge and Green Flag Awards were the highlights of 2020. 165 teachers also attended our summer courses and online seminars delivered in Autumn.

Other positive developments from the Green-Schools Travel team included the new app developed for walkability audits, Survey 123; the Safe to School Ideas Document; and the School Zone project - developed together with the National Transport Authority. In 2020, despite unprecedented challenges, Green-Schools Travel managed to deliver a very successful programme that kept schools engaged in sustainable travel activities throughout the whole academic year.

A WORD FROM OUR DIRECTOR, MICHAEL JOHN O'MAHONY



In the 2019 annual report I wrote "We live in a dynamic and changing world". Little did we know that 2020 would live up to this statement and be so unprecedented. The global pandemic has been truly challenging for everyone and its impact will remain with us for some time. However, it has also focussed us to look at how we do things and what is truly important. Many of us re-discovered the importance of our local environment and how it supports our mental and physical health. While we truly appreciated our healthcare and essential frontline workers we were also reminded of how important and intrinsic education is to all our lives. Restrictions around travel saw us cycling and walking more than ever and feeling the benefits. Given this unprecedented backdrop Green-Schools Travel also had a very transformative year in 2020.

The partnerships, efforts, outcomes of the last ten years have now created the settings for this transformation and development. During the last ten years the focus was on behaviour change and giving participants and communities the skills and experience to begin their sustainable travel journey.

However, there were barriers to how participants and communities could fully engage with sustainable school travel. These were mainly infrastructural. From now on Green-Schools Travel and all of the associated operational partners e.g. Local Authorities will be resourced to work together to really tackle these barriers at a school and community level. This will have a hugely transformative impact on the Green-Schools Travel Programme, its participants and their wider community. This is very exciting and positive development for all.

Green-Schools Travel is a multi-scale partnership of schools, students, teachers, parents, Local Authorities, the National Transport Authority, Department of Transport the various other local programme supporters and the Green-Schools Travel team. Without this partnership the programme wouldn't work. I want to acknowledge and thank the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the Department of Transport for their ongoing and crucial support and funding of the programme.

I am now more than ever in awe of the skills, creativity, commitment, insight, wisdom and abilities of my colleagues in the Green-Schools Travel team to make the programme what it is and to make it even more than what can be captured in a report like this one. This was particular the case in 2020 when public health restrictions meant that the team had to adapt and pivot quickly and effectively to deliver the programme. Thank you to everyone involved. You are all making a real difference and we all benefit. Stay safe and well.

2020 Participation

2020 saw participation levels in walking, cycling, scooting and other sustainable modes continue to grow. Despite the difficult circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures, schools on the Travel and Global Citizenship Travel themes continued engaging in the programme and promoting active travel by participating in different initiatives, even from home. Unfortunately, due to several months of school closures, it has been harder for the Green-Schools Travel team to exactly measure the numbers of all types of engagement as it happened in previous years. The figures below represent what we could measure this year.



- 113 Schools were invited to participate in the Travel theme and 67 Schools were invited to participate in the Global Citizenship Travel theme
- 225 Schools were awarded the Green Flag Award for Travel or Global Citizenship Travel in 2020
- 165 teachers attended training events including the Green-Schools Summer Course and Teacher Training Seminars during Autumn 2020.
- 735 School visits were carried out nationally by Travel Officers in 2020
- 145 Walkability audits were carried out by Travel Officers in 2020
- 37 schools received scooter parking in 2020
810 scooter parking spaces were installed nationally in 2020
- 24 schools received cycle parking in 2020
300 cycle parking spaces were installed, 250 of which with sheltered
- 73 schools received subsidised cycle right training
2493 pupils received subsidised cycle right training
- 37 new tutorial / educational videos were created, together with 52 individual website posts specific to new resources
- St. Colmcille's S.N.S, Kells, Co. Meath were awarded "Ireland's Travel School of The Year"
- Clean Air Week was promoted to 1700 schools nationally and potentially reached c.200,000 members of the public through national media
- 1000 entries from primary and secondary schools were submitted to the Clean Air Week Poetry Competition



2020 Participation

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

Between January and December 2020, The [Green-Schools website](#) welcomed just over 75k users; with almost 400,000 pageviews during the same time. The Resources page and Stay Home page (which contain resources linked to the Travel theme), were among the top ten pages visited on the website during 2020.

In November 2020, the [Green-Schools Twitter](#) account reached a milestone of 10k followers. The account's following is engaged and very active. A snapshot from December 2020 shows that tweets from Green-Schools were viewed over 100k times during the month. During the lockdown periods in late Spring and Autumn the Twitter account was a valuable tool for communicating the #GreenSchoolsStayHome resources and for engaging with teachers and the wider education community about our seminars, courses and events.

The [Green-Schools Newsletter](#) is issued regularly to over 7700 subscribers including schools, Local Authorities, Sponsors, Partners, Environmental Organisations, and the International FEE Network. The newsletter provides information about upcoming events, achievements, news, deadlines and competitions, and is also a chance to report on the work going on around the country in schools. During 2020 six newsletters were published. The newsletter can be subscribed to directly from the Green-Schools homepage.

The [Green-Schools Facebook](#) page enjoyed an increase of 17% in followers during 2020, from just over 4k to 4700. A valuable Facebook asset for the programme is the 780 member-strong Green-Schools Coordinators Group. The closed Facebook group allows for teachers to share ideas, ask questions and interact with each other on issues related to the environment and Green-Schools programme.

The [Green-Schools Instagram](#) profile ended 2020 with 2,300 followers, growing steadily thanks to its ability to engage with visual content using its main news feed, as well as its IGTV and Stories function. With increased video content development, Green-Schools opened the new video platform, IGTV (Instagram TV) which allows viewers to watch longer content videos on the stories section.



Supporting Schools in 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic quickly resulted in school closures and with students of all ages having to adapt to home-schooling for several months. In order to cope with the new situation, the Green-Schools team had to promptly find a way to support schools with their work towards the Green Flag award.

Green-Schools Stay Home Project was developed as a response to the unusual circumstances and saw the whole Travel team working together to design new educational resources and interactive activities that students could take part in from home. The activities presented were both fun and educational and could be completed individually or involve the whole family. During 2020, the Travel team developed a total of 57 resources, divided into nine weeks (one resource for every school day of the week). The resources presented themselves in different ways (videos, fact sheets, quizzes, surveys etc.) and covered a wide range of topics.

The target audiences of the Green-Schools Stay Home Project were students of different age categories: from Junior Primary (Infants – 2nd class), to Senior Primary (3rd – 6th class) and Secondary Schools (1st – 6th year).

In developing the Green-Schools Stay Home Project, the Green-Schools team was conscious that not necessarily everyone had access to the types of resources that they might usually find in the classroom, therefore most of the materials required to complete the activities were very simple items that could be perhaps found in the recycling bin or collected when out for a walk in the park.

The activities were aimed at helping students learn about the positives of sustainable and active travel; showing how we can improve our health and the health of the environment by reducing emissions created by vehicles.



Lesson- Cycle Safely with You

Age Group: All

...ools Travel Officer Ellen has made this video for parents and guardians w...
cycle safely with young children. Learn about proper helmet fitting and road po...
are your family cycle is safe and relaxing. There is an activity sheet below, which is...
complete to test what they have learnt about cycling safety.

Travel Officer Ellen Has Tips on How to Cycle Saf...
Cycling with our children
CYCLING

Copia link

Tuesday Activity – From the Foot Quiz

Age Group: Primary Junior and Senior

From the Foot took a walk around Ireland – can you guess where he is? There are 10 questions in this interactive quiz

Where is From the Foot?

Wednesday Activity – Exploring Bus Transport

Age Group: Junior and Senior Primary

Do you love technical drawing? Try your hand at copying some of these bus specification drawings or simply colour them in (maybe you can use your country colours!). Learn about the fleet size and capacities of local and city buses. Click on the drawing below to get started.

 Articulated Bus	 Mini-bus or Shuttle Bus
 City Transit Bus	 Coach Bus



Stay Home Project 2020

The Green-Schools Travel Stay Home Project sought to engage school communities in the travel theme through interactive online activities posted daily throughout lockdown. Below are the different weeks and activities offered during the project.

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week A

City in a Box
Bike Safety
Scooter Safety
Rush Hour Race

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week B

Interactive SDG Quiz
Helmet Fitting
Pumping Tyres
Help Tara and Seán Cycle to School
Scoot to School Week 2020

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week C

Stepping through history in Fingal
Fionn the Foot is rambling around Ireland
Discovering Nature along the Grand Canal in Dublin
Discovering the Seashore in County Kerry
Travel Officers Love to Walk

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week D

Cycle Safely with Young Children
Calculating the CO2 Saved in a Week
Adjusting the Ideal Saddle Height
Cuidigh le Tara agus Seán Rothaíocht ar Scoil
#andshecycles Campaign Launch Panel Discussion

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week E

Street Awareness Survey
Adventures with Sound Part 1
Sustainable Development Quiz - Health & Wellbeing
Air Quality Activities Message

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week F

Celebrate World Bicycle Day with 'Cycle Checks'
Ceithre Cinntiú Rothaíochta
Introduction to Food Miles
World Environment Day
World Bicycle Day & Air Quality

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week G

Fiseán faoi dul ar do scútar
Fionn the Foot Quiz
Exploring Bus Transport
Sustainable Development - Reduced Inequalities
#andshecycles Roadshow Launch

Stay Home Project 2020

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week H

#CelebrateCycling

#CelebrateCycling Interviews
Street Awareness
Bicycle Parts Crossword
How to Teach your Child to Cycle
Cycling Using a Child Carrier and Towing Bar
Bling Your Bike
Let's Draw a Bike
Mini-Bike Craft
Bicycle Safe/Unsafe Test
#CelebrateCycling RTE Ecolution Podcast
#Celebrate Cycling: Webinar
Sketch Your Cycle
Cyclability Audit
DIY Bike Rim Wreaths
Bike Craft with Recycled Stuff
Bicycle Safety Word Scramble
Obstacle Course

Stay Home Travel - Sample Week I

Balance Bikes
Create your own Travel Snacks
Adventures with Sounds II- Create a Sound Map
Food Miles II - How to reduce them
Cycling in Cuba Lesson
Sustainable Development - Reduced Inequalities
#andshecycles Roadshow Launch

Wednesday Lesson – Mini Bike Craft

Age Group: Primary

Green-Schools invites you to get crafty and create your own miniature bicycle out of recycled materials. This inspiring activity has been delivered in schools across the country since 2013 and this year we are inviting you to send in pictures of your creations. Click on the image below to get started!



Monday Activity – Street Awareness

Age Group: Primary

With our love for cycling and walking, we are asking people to look at their local streets from a cyclist's point of view. Similar to the 'cyclability audit' that Green-Schools students complete as part of their Travel Bag, we want you to cycle on your local road, your route to school or wherever you have been enjoying recently and complete the activity sheet below.

The more we are aware of the hazards and infrastructure, or lack of, that surround us, the more we can make informed choices for improved future developments. To complete the activity sheet form and show us your results on Twitter or Facebook! Happy cycling!



Cycling Infrastructure Survey



LESS TRAFFIC



MORE WALKING
& CYCLING



With the changes that have affected us all over the last few months, lots of families are enjoying their local streets to walk and cycle on with their children.

This time offers a unique opportunity to embrace our nation's new-found love of roaming in a pedestrian and cycle-friendly way.

Call to Action Events

As in previous years, during the month of February Green-Schools invited all schools to participate in The Big Travel Challenge, which asked schools nationwide to focus on one sustainable transport mode for 10 days to see if they could achieve real, lasting change in the travel behaviour of their staff and students. The successful travel competition was run in 2020 for the sixth consecutive year and saw a very high rate of attendance both from urban and rural schools.



Walking



Scooting



Car Pooling

The Big Travel Challenge



Park 'n' Stride



Cycling

St. Colmcille's S.N.S was named Ireland's Travel School of the Year 2020. As part of the competition five schools were also awarded under the following categories:

- Cycling School of the Year: Ennis N.S., Ashline, Ennis, Co Clare
- Walking School of the Year: Corpus Christi P.S., Moyross, Co Limerick
- Carpooling School of the Year: St Brendan's N.S., Blennerville, Co. Kerry
- Scooting School of the Year: Gaelscoil Sáirséal, Co. Limerick
- Two Park' n' Stride Schools of the Year: Duiske College, Graiguenamanagh, Co. Kilkenny & Rampark N.S., Dundalk, Co. Louth

More information on the award ceremony can be found in the award section.





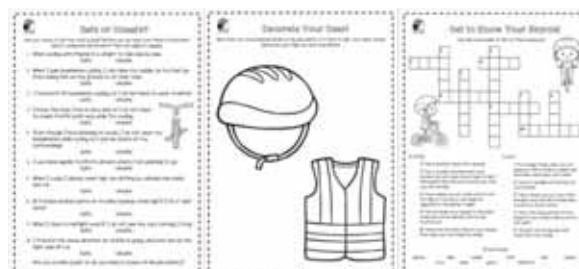
SCOOT TO SCHOOL WEEK 9TH-13TH MARCH 2020

National Scoot to School week took place from the 9th to the 13th of March. Unfortunately, due to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic Travel Officers were unable to undertake school visits at that time. The event was advertised on the Green-Schools Website and Social Media and reached a wide audience which resulted in good levels of participation.



CELEBRATE CYCLING WEEK 15TH TO 19TH JUNE 2020

Green-Schools ran a week to celebrate all new and renewed cyclists from the 15th to the 19th of June 2020. The week ran under the hashtag #celebratecycling on social media and was a great success. During the week, a great number of activities and videos were uploaded on the Green-Schools website as part of the Stay Home project and on the Green-Schools YouTube channel. The large amount of video content created featured interviews with cyclists - both young and old - online activities and cycle safety videos. Some of the Travel Officers also shared their own stories and experiences on bikes and developed inclusive and engaging videos to encourage everyone to cycle. During Celebrate Cycling Week, Green-Schools Travel Officers also released new additional worksheets and educational resources to test the knowledge of young cyclists in a fun and engaging way for kids to do at home.



CELEBRATE CYCLING WEBINAR 18TH JUNE 2020

One of the main events of Celebrate Cycling Week took place on the 18th of June. The Webinar, Celebrating Cycling: Perspectives on Health, Growth and Transition was organized and hosted by some of the Green-Schools Travel Officers. The webinar's focus was on research in relation to cycling and health, data figures showing increases in bike-share usage, and research on mobility transitions in capital cities.

The topics addressed in the webinar included:

- The health impact of cycling
- The different risks related to cycling and how to overcome them
- Bleeper Bike (now Bleeper) cycling scheme before and after COVID-19
- The transition towards mass cycling

The webinars was moderated by Green-Schools Cycling Development Officer Allison Phillips and featured speakers Hugh Cooney from Bleeper Bike (now Bleeper); Damien Ó Tuama from Cyclist.ie and Dr. Robert Egan from Green-Schools and was attended by a range of organisations and professions including councillors, Local Authority representatives, The Oireachtas, Government Departments, community groups, and others. In total the Eventbrite registration page had 993 views.



Following the webinar, an email was sent to all who registered with details of the recordings, presenter's contact details and mention of future webinars. Several individuals provided incredibly positive feedback on the webinar content and style.



HIDDEN PLACES WALK TO SCHOOL WEEK 11TH TO 15TH MAY 2020

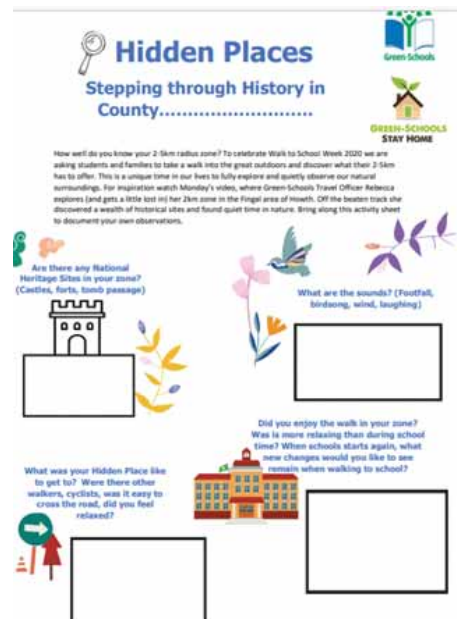
National Walk to School Week generally takes place the third week of May and its main purpose is to incentivise students (and their families) to choose walking for that specific week of the year. The main event of National Walk to School Week is normally National WOW Day (Walk on Wednesday), where the whole school community is encouraged to choose walking as their principal mode of transport. In May 2020, due to school closures, Green-Schools decided to change the traditional Walk to School Week into a similar event which could be enjoyed by all children and their families from their homes.



From the 11th to the 15th of May, Green-Schools ran Hidden Places, Walk to School Week with a twist. The focus of the week was on children, parents and teachers exploring their local areas within their permitted two to five kilometre radius.

The theme - Hidden Places - was to inspire people to look for new, unexplored places nearby during a daily walk, take a picture and share it on their social media with the hashtag #hiddenplaces.

The campaign was very well received and resulted in a huge number of mentions on Green-Schools social media channels with pictures of students, parents and teachers going for walks exploring their area.



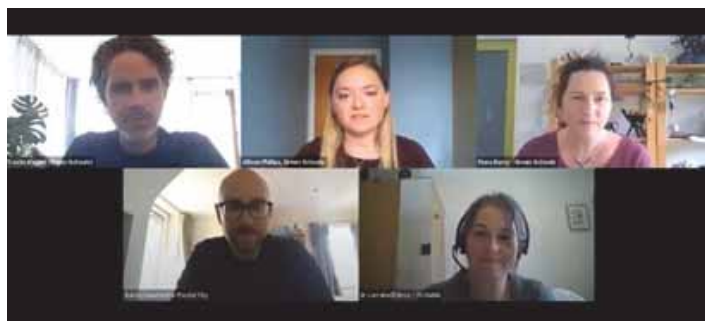
WALKABLE STREET WEBINAR 20TH AUGUST 2020

Following the success of the previous webinar during Celebrate Cycling Week, a second webinar was held on August 20th, 2020 called Walkable Streets: Theory, Possibility, and Practice. Similar to the previous webinar, this event was organised and facilitated by Green-Schools Travel Officers with four speakers participating: Dr. Lorraine D'Arcy from TU Dublin, Fiona Barry from Green-Schools, Aaron Copeland from A Playful City, and Trevor Keppel from Green-Schools.



*Walkable Streets:
Theory, Possibility & Practice*

Dr. D'Arcy gave an informative presentation focused on research and theories behind what makes streets walkable or in many cases, not walkable. Fiona Barry gave insight into how Green-Schools facilitates walkability audits with Travel and Global Citizenship Travel schools and outlined a tool in development for digitising Walkability Audit records. Aaron Copeland gave some context to the child's place in modern cities and suggested ways to make cities more child friendly and fun. Finishing up the presentations, Trevor Keppel spoke about the Safe to School Ideas Document as well as infrastructure and interventions to make school gates a safer place for children. The presentations were followed by an insightful question and answer session where all presenters provided feedback. The webinar was very topical and very well received on social media and through email promotion.



In total the Eventbrite registration page had 1,169 views. The total number of registrations for the webinar event was 160 people from a range of organisations and professions including Councillors, Local Authorities, The Oireachtas, Government Departments, community groups, schools, and others. 75 members of the public attended the webinar and is available to watch on YouTube. Following the webinar, an email was sent to all who registered with details of the recordings and presenter's contact details. Several individuals provided very positive feedback on the webinar through email and social media.

BIKE WEEK 19TH TO 27TH SEPTEMBER 2020

Bike Week 2020, which traditionally falls mid-June, was rescheduled to September 19th to 27th 2020. Bike Week is a celebration of the bicycle as a fun, healthy and eco-friendly mode of travel, and throughout the week promotional events and activities are arranged by schools, Local Authorities, community groups and cycling groups.

In order to celebrate Bike Week Green-Schools posted their Top Ten website resources created during Celebrate Cycling Week in June to be used during Bike Week, which were:

1. Webinar – #CelebrateCycling: Perspectives on Health, Growth & Transition
2. Bike M Check – English / Gaeilge
3. Cycle Check Quiz
4. Bike Stuff – Puncture Repair
5. Cycling Infrastructure Survey
6. How to Teach your Child to Cycle
7. DIY Bike Rim Wreaths
8. Mini Bike Craft
9. #andshecycles Roadshow Launch County Mayo
10. Let's Go For A Cycle with Green-Schools Cycling Development and Travel Officer

Friday: Dublin Cycling Campaign Webinar



During the week Green-Schools Travel Officers participated in a number of Bike Week webinars. Green-Schools Travel Manager Jane Hackett was invited to present and discuss School Zones and school transport – additional information on these can be found in the Infrastructure section of this report.

Green-Schools supported and promoted Bike Week through the main social media channels and ran the #bikeshedchallenge which asked schools to tweet a photo of their overflowing bike shed. The prize for the challenge was to win a bike shed. The response was very positive and resulted in many schools around the country sharing pictures of students on their bikes or their bike shed.



CLEAN AIR WEEK 23RD TO 27TH NOVEMBER 2020

This week-long event was first launched in 2019 and is focused on raising awareness of, and taking action on, air pollution at the school's gates. During Clean Air Week, Green-Schools asked students to make a pledge to #BeatAirPollution in order to create a healthy environment around the school gate by increasing the number of students who walk and cycle to school. Green-Schools ran a competition during the week, calling for schools to make a pledge to #BeatAirPollution by increasing active travel such as walking, cycling and scooting, using sustainable travel modes or starting an Air Pollution Campaign within the school or community. As part of Clean Air Week Green-Schools also launched a poetry competition with the aim of engaging both primary and secondary schools' students in some creative writing on the general theme of sustainable forms of transport.



The engagement for the week was at a high with many schools showing their no Idling signs, Air Quality toolkit worksheets, and other activities they did during the week on various social media platforms. There was some very good coverage of the week including an article in the Irish Times and coverage on Newstalk.

The topic of air quality and air pollution were also discussed in both the primary and secondary Travel Conferences, to get students thinking about the topics.



Dear Parents,
As you know Alton N.S. is taking part in the Green Schools Programme and are now working on the Travel theme. As part of "Clean Air" Week next week we have launched a "No Idling" campaign outside the school gates. All vehicle owners are asked to turn their engines off whilst they wait to help improve air quality, reduce emissions and create a healthier environment around our school gates. Thank you for your support.





CLEAN AIR WEEK POETRY COMPETITION

The theme for the competition chosen for primary schools focused on the journey to school and focused on students' voices and their reflection on travelling to school. Secondary schools were encouraged to focus on a spoken word pieces which touched on different aspects of the following Sustainable Development Goals and a personal reflection on their journey to school:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Climate Action
- Reduced Inequalities

The competition was officially launched during the Green-Schools Travel Conference on November 18th by the spoken word artist Sasha Terfous, who read her work 'My Promise, commission by Green-Schools for Clean Air Week 2020.

In total 1000 entries were submitted for the competition. Two poems were chosen as the overall winners, from primary school student Nicholas Kirby and secondary school student Josh Oyiki. Several runners-up also received prizes and a booklet of poems was printed for the winning students, their schools and families.



CLEAN AIR WEEK
Poetry Competition
Primary School Winning Entry
Nicholas Kirby, 4th Class, Scoil Realt na Mara, Co Kerry

A Thought and Feeling

When I rode to school one day,
A thought and feeling came my way,
I thought of what the world would be,
With only renewable energy.

I saw how our planet and our sea,
Is being polluted carelessly,
I heard the morning cars go by,
And heaved a long and heavy sigh.

I imagined that the trees could speak,
What they'd say and how they'd weep,
I smelt the air and felt the shame,
I knew the humans were to blame.

We're losing our future,
We're giving it away,
But let's not lose hope,
That's not our way.

CLEAN AIR WEEK
#BeatAirPollution

CLEAN AIR WEEK
Poetry Competition
Secondary School Winning Entry
Josh Oyiki, 3rd Year, Athlone Community College

Differing Similarity

Two quanta's seeds passing through the air,
One red in the wind, round in shape,
One steadfast, mighty, galloping in a horse,
Round, tortoise and hunched in its chaise.

One in the water with seaweed to grip,
All on its own, but still and motionless,
"Sweet things come to those" a fish he said,
Tossed pellets waiting, bobbing and turning,
Struggling when gliding, floating while moving,
The seaweed forms, give without words, however,
And all hope was lost and landed, this sunset,
In detached hands, straggling and stony.

In a hundred of dust, really we mourn,
A path of light of which we speak,
Four hundred feet could be here or could move,
A path to forest unable to take flight,
What could have been this wrong, not right.

Both appeared dead will never be given as being,
Be left a tree who will have faced nothing wrong,
Of a wealth so fortunate, a life given by chance,
Now full of life, green in his place.

From a hundred seeds will never be given,
Of meaning, words, movement in its light,
From the become rich, the world's generosity,
For the loss of it, not was a life subtracting.

CLEAN AIR WEEK
#BeatAirPollution

CAMPAIGNS AND PROJECTS

#ANDSHECYCLES CAMPAIGN



The #andshecycles campaign, which originated in late 2019, was developed by Green-Schools with the purpose of exploring and addressing the teenage cycling gender gap in second-level education. The inspiration for the campaign came from ongoing research and surveys which revealed a very low engagement in cycling by young girls - only one in every 250 teenage girls cycles to school every day. The campaign's recent addition – the #andshecycles Ambassador Programme – aims to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle to school.

Following the launch event of September 2019, the work of Travel Officers on the campaign continued with the implementation of qualitative focus groups with student groups across the country to explore their experiences and practices relating to cycling to understand the second-level cycling gender gap. During the first part of 2020 Green-Schools officers continued promoting the #andshecycles campaign roadshow in different parts of the country, inviting local media and local public figures to take part too.



During 2020 Green-Schools also developed a guidance document for a rollout of the #andshecycles campaign for the sustainable transport NGO, Sustrans, liaising with their Scotland and Northern Ireland teams following an expression of interest bringing aspects of the campaign to their activities across the UK.



#andshecycles

The final guide clearly and comprehensively details how to organise and moderate focus groups of good quality, thereby contributing to the continued quality of #andshecycles research. Clear guidance has been given to Sustrans with respect to referencing Green-Schools on any reproduced materials and on how to use #andshecycles in a social media context.

Following the great success of the #andshecycles campaign, during the second half of the year, Green-Schools Travel Officers started developing the #andshecycles Ambassador Programme. After drafting and finalizing the objectives, overview and application process, the #andshecycles Ambassador Programme was launched at the start of December 2020.



The programme application was sent to mixed and all-girls secondary schools and advertised on the Green-Schools website. The aim of the programme is to enable and empower teenage girls to cycle to school.

The objectives are:

1. Develop role models and leaders for school cycling amongst teenage girls
2. Empower teenage girls to shape the cycle-friendliness of their institutions
3. Provide opportunities for teenage girls to cycle

The programme targets all girls/young women attending an active Green-Schools secondary school currently working on the Travel or Global Citizenship Travel themes and involves several phases:

1. Application stage, where students apply and are selected,
2. Training stage, where students are briefed and trained in a selection of skills that will help them take action to address the cycling gender gap.
3. Action stage, where students take action to enable and empower girls to cycle to school.
4. Award stage, where each ambassador/team of ambassadors are awarded their certificate of completion and outstanding achievements will be recognized.

The programme was successfully launched and had a very positive response which resulted in 25 pilot programme participants.

CYCLE BUS NETWORK

During 2020 Green-Schools Travel Officers worked on the design and implementation of a new initiative: The Cycle Bus Network, established by Green-Schools to support the growing number of cycle buses nationwide.



Cycle Buses are parent/guardian/community-led initiatives whereby several parents and volunteers lead groups of cycling primary school students to one or more schools. Green-Schools Travel team support the development of Cycle Buses as they have a huge potential in encouraging group cycling on the way to schools, promoting exercise and supporting sustainable mobility. Green-Schools identified many benefits of Cycle Buses, for instance:

- They help to normalise cycling as a mode of transport to school
- They are a fun and social way for students to improve their cycling skills, develop road-safety awareness and build confidence
- They reduce vehicular traffic on the way to school and alleviate congestion at the front of school.

Cycle Buses have a specific route with stops along the way where students can join. The idea behind the Cycle Bus Network is to connect and bring together existing cycle bus groups all around Ireland to create a cycle bus community through the use of the online platform SLACK. The platform is managed by Green-Schools Travel Officers, but it's mostly used by the group members to share information, videos, queries and anything related to new or existing cycle bus groups.



As the goal of cycle buses is for children to cycle safely to school, Green-Schools Travel Officers envisioned this Network as a tool to unite cycle buses around the country and create more visibility. Thanks to the way the Network was organised, members of the Cycle Bus Network benefit from access to meetings, events, resources and constant support from the Travel Officers in charge. Towards the end of the 2020 Green-Schools also started designing a web page dedicated to the Cycle Bus Network, scheduled to be officially launched in spring 2021 with a social media celebration in anticipation for Bike Week.



LOVE 30 CAMPAIGN

The Love 30 Campaign is a national alliance of individuals and organisations who encourage lower speed limits in urban areas. Green-Schools support the Love 30 campaign to promote and support lower speed limits outside schools. During the initial months of 2020, prior to COVID-19, a number of Travel Officers from a cross-section of the country coordinated Love 30 workshops and Slow Down Day events at schools. Later, because of the restrictions in place regarding visiting schools, the Love 30 Campaign took a stronger focus on the recording and analysis of speed data. In 2020, the Love 30 team embarked on a literature review and analysed Travel Officer's experiences; this work led to a concise standardised methodology for the recording of speed in the vicinity of schools. Following the establishment of a standardised methodology, the ArcGIS speed data collection was developed in-house by Green-Schools Travel staff as primary tool to gather speed information.



Green-Schools Travel Officers located in the Northwest spearheaded and facilitated a new approach in County Donegal. Students from four Letterkenny schools came together to work on a local area Love 30 Campaign. Within each school students informed and educated the school population on the campaign and the issues locally regarding speed. A host school, Scoil Cholmcille in Letterkenny held a meeting of the partnering schools: Loreto Letterkenny, St. Eunan's and Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál NS. This meeting coordinated efforts between the schools in order to build a campaign for a 30km/h zone outside their collective schools. Significant correspondence and consultation was entered into by the schools and Green-Schools Travel Officers to garner community support. A deputation to go before Donegal County Council was delayed by COVID-19.



The Letterkenny experience demonstrates a significant methodology in approaching a call for lower speeds. The collaboration and success of the approach was made possible by the relentless dedication of the local Green-Schools Travel officers together with teacher and student support and subsequently the buy-in from local stakeholders.

Finally, during the year Green-Schools staff involved in the Love 30 Campaign also met with the very successful and influential speed campaigner, Rod King MBE. Rod set up the UK's very successful 20's Plenty campaign. Love 30 Green-Schools also made a series of submissions to speed limit and road safety reviews as well contributing to the RSA's Road Safety Strategy Consultation process for 2021 - 2030.

To overcome the unusual circumstances that characterised 2020, and to celebrate the continuous work of schools on their Travel and Global Citizenship Travel themes, the Green-School Travel team organized two virtual live conferences: one for primary and one for secondary schools. Despite being the first time that an online live conference was organised by the programme, both conferences had an extremely positive response and were a huge success.



PRIMARY SCHOOLS TRAVEL CONFERENCE

The Primary Travel Conference took place on 18th November, with YouTube personality Cal Arnold O’Driscoll as MC of the event, which was themed: Ireland’s 2040 Vision. The conference lasted for approximately one hour and 40 minutes and featured several notable speakers including Aaron Copeland from A Playful City, comedian Elaine Gallagher, and Climate Action Officer Gary Tyrell as “Captain Climate”.

In addition, Green-Schools Travel programme manager Jane Hackett and several Travel Officers also took part in the conference, sharing talks, presentations and engaging activities for all primary schools’ students. The main themes treated in the conference were:

- The design of cities and how they could be more children friendly and less vehicle focused
- The dos of cycling - tips and motivation for everyone to start cycling
- The benefits of cycling connected to different SDGs and cycling patterns in different parts of the world
- Unsustainable vs Sustainable cities and how to make cities as sustainable as possible
- Air quality, Clean Air Week and the poetry competition
- The Sustainable Development Goals: how to reach them and why

The whole conference had a fun and interactive vibe and was well received by attending schools. The feedback on Green-Schools social media pages was extremely positive with schools showing whole classes watching the conference live.



SECONDARY SCHOOLS TRAVEL CONFERENCE

The Secondary Schools Travel Conference, also themed as Ireland's 2040 Vision, took place on the afternoon of 18th November featuring actor and activist Aoibheann McCann as MC. Notable guests at the event included Angela van der Kloof, artist Sasha Terfous, and comedian Elaine Gallagher. In addition, Green-Schools Travel programme manager Jane Hackett and several Travel Officers also took part in the conference engaging the public with interesting talks, presentations, workshops and activities.



The Secondary School Travel Conference focused specifically on four of the Sustainable Development Goals: SDG3 Good Health and Wellbeing; SDG10 Reduced Inequalities; SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities; and SDG13 Climate Action - and how they can be used as guidelines for achieving better sustainable travel for Ireland by 2040.

The conference posed questions to the viewers such as:

- What is your vision for the future?
- How would you like your city or town to look like by 2040?
- How do you think you will travel?
- Where will you live?

These questions were addressed by the different speakers, who talked about the future in an optimistic and hopeful way by looking at the endless opportunities ahead of us. In order to make it as targeted and pleasant as possible for secondary school students, breakout rooms were utilized, and attendees were able to choose which activity to participate in. The first breakout room concepts centralized around Sustainable Development Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). The second breakout room focused on Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) and 13 (Climate Action). In total for both events there were 370 logins, with the majority of these being entire classes!





SKILLS AND TRAINING



CYCLE RIGHT TRAINING

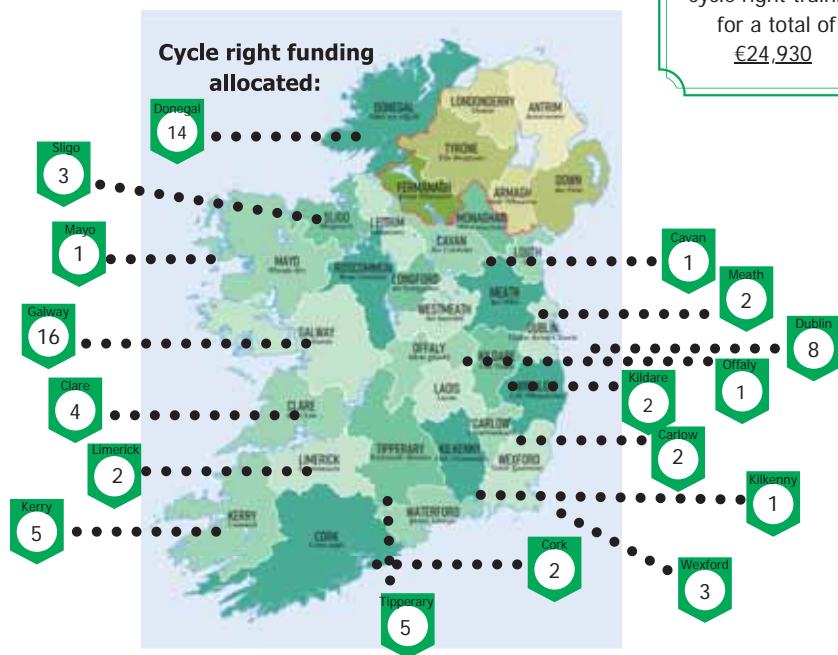
Green-Schools Travel works closely with CYCLE RIGHT, the national standard of cycle training. The CYCLE RIGHT programme for primary school pupils is an training course that provides children with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to cycle to school or for leisure. The training course provides an equal opportunity to all children participating by providing each child a helmet and bicycle for the 8-hour (4-8 sessions) training course, regardless of skill level.

The Cycle Right Training is carried out on site by two trainers, who lead students through yard-based skills and simulations to give children the confidence to cycle safely and eventually take their place on the road. Green-Schools Travel supported CYCLE RIGHT training for primary school pupils by providing schools a grant of €10 per student up to 60 students. Eligible schools were either currently working on or had received their Travel Flag. For many schools this grant provides essential support to allow all students in a class to take part in cycle training.

In 2020, due to the particular circumstances fewer schools had the chance to take part in the traditional training, as these went on just during the few months that schools were open. This also impacted the face-to-face bike maintenance workshops normally carried out by Travel Officers during the academic year.

IN 2020:
73 schools received subsidised cycle right training
2493 pupils received subsidised cycle right training for a total of €24,930

During 2020 live workshops in schools took place in the first few months of the year- before the school closures- but they were promptly substituted by a series of online tutorials that covered a wide range of bike-related information, both in English and as Gaeilge!



TEACHER TRAINING JULY 2020

The Green-Schools Summer Teacher Training Course usually takes place in person during July. The course focuses on the different themes of the Green-Schools programme and various aspects of sustainability. Recently, a stronger focus on the UN Sustainable Development Goals was introduced. Following the success of 2019's summer course, this year the course was adapted and offered online. The training was facilitated by some of the Travel Officers and covered a wide range of travel topics: from cycling support schemes and walkability audits to the correlation between sustainable mobility, Climate Change and air quality.

The training was attended by 17 teachers and the response from every attendee was excellent with comments as follows:

“

The course, the facilitators, the content, the style of delivery, the camaraderie generated using an on-line platform couldn't be better.

This is the most enjoyable, informative, practical course I have ever participated in. I am so enthused about getting back into the classroom.

”



TEACHER SEMINARS NOVEMBER 2020



During the month of November Green-Schools Travel hosted a total of 14 webinars for teachers on the Travel and Global Citizenship Travel themes. The seminars lasted one hour each and were hosted through the Zoom platform, with at least two Travel Officers present: one carrying out a presentation and one facilitating the meeting (answering questions, letting attendees in etc.) The teachers who participated in the online seminars were a mix: some were new to Green-Schools, attending the seminars to gain insights into the programme, while others were long standing Green-Schools Coordinators looking for refreshing new ideas and suggestions on different approaches to the programme in a COVID-19 / post COVID-19 scenarios.

The presentations covered the Seven Steps of the programme, gave insights on the main aspects of the two themes and provided practical tips on how to promote active travel.

This was the first year that – due to the circumstances - seminars were moved online and both the feedback and the level of attendance were impressive; hosting the seminars online and after usual schools' hours resulted in a much wider audience willing to attend. Green-Schools Travel Officers did an amazing work in carrying out online seminars, delivering – in only one hour- a great amount of information in a very engaging way.

INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPORT

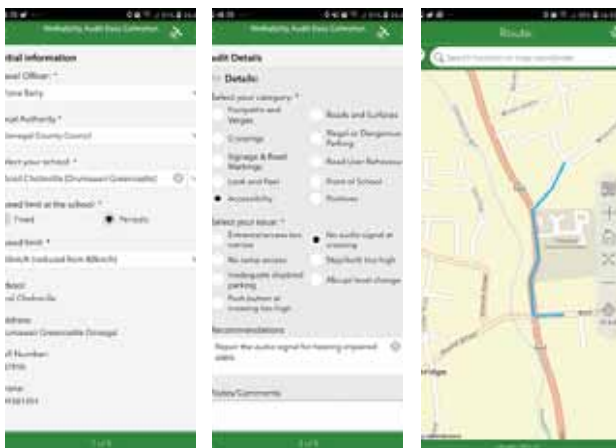
WALKABILITY AUDITS (WA)

The year of 2020 saw an unavoidable decrease in numbers of Walkability Audits carried out with students due to the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures. Despite that, several walkability audits were still undertaken by Travel Officers alone and then shared with schools through videos or pictures, as shown below.



The videos were aimed to highlight both the positive and the negatives of the infrastructure nearby the schools, providing educational content as well as the possibility for students to contribute to the audit despite not being physically present during it.

2020 also marked a very positive and innovative change for Walkability Audits as a new version of a Walkability Audit Tool was developed by part of the Travel theme and was officially launched in September. The tool was created using the ARC GIS Survey123 platform; it allows WA reports to be generated and visualises WA data through dashboards and mapping on a local, regional and national scale. The data captured is planned to be shared directly with the NTA to inform national and regional funding for active travel infrastructure and strategic policy formation. The final version of the tool includes: Geo localization and a map of the route taken by officers, speed-limit information, a full list of positive and negative issues divided in different categories, predictive test abilities for text fields and an accessibility category.



For Cyclability Audits, Green-Schools Travel has introduced 'Go-pro' video cameras to capture cycling experiences during Cyclability Audits. This enhances the student experience of visualising their cycle commute to and from school and informs the preparation of Cyclability Audits Reports for Local Authorities to address infrastructure needs.

SAFE TO SCHOOL IDEAS DOCUMENT

In the summer of 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Green-Schools Travel surveyed principals across Ireland focussed on their 'front of school' environment. The survey received approximately 270 responses from schools describing their main challenges at the front of school and preferred infrastructure solutions. This was shared with Local Authorities and the NTA and led to the development of the 'Safe to School Ideas Document'.



Published in July 2020, this document described eight key ideas that school communities could focus on to enable safe access to schools, from creative visual interventions to new or widened footpaths. The document was disseminated widely and received considerable interest across Ireland. Green-Schools Travel presented this in a 'Walkable Streets Webinar' in August 2020 and to Engineers Ireland – Local Authority Branch in October 2020.

SCHOOL ZONES



2020 saw a marked increase in the delivery of active travel infrastructure to school communities across Ireland. Green-Schools Travel was instrumental in the concept, design and delivery of the 'School Zone' concept that addresses front of school environments with the aim to give space back to students to safely access schools. The objective is to:

- Prioritise active travel
- Highlight the presence of the school to motorists
- Discourage vehicle drop off and pick up to reduce congestion at the school gate

To date Dublin City has notably delivered over 40 school zones and is planning more. Green-Schools Travel is currently working with other local authorities such as Galway City, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Mayo, Donegal, Cork County and South Dublin to develop school zones for delivery in 2021.

AWARDS

The annual Green Flag award ceremonies acknowledge and celebrate the significant effort of schools working on the Green-Schools programme. The awards, which usually take place in May each year across Ireland, had to be delayed and moved online due to COVID-19 pandemic and the school closures. As the ceremonies were held online the awards for the Green-Schools Big Travel Challenge and the awards for the Green Flags were celebrated at the same event. Green-Schools Travel Officers made the most out of the unusual situation and delivered a great live event on the 11th of November which was attended by over 238 schools, reaching potentially thousands of students.

BIG TRAVEL CHALLENGE AWARDS



In the first part of the busy online ceremony, schools around the country were honoured as Ireland's Walking, Cycling, Scooting, Carpooling and Park 'n' Stride Schools of the Year before the announcement of the year's winning Travel School of the Year. In addition to the traditional Big Travel Challenge awards, in 2020 Green-Schools decided to add two special awards to the competition.

Euan Craddock from Strandhill in Sligo was awarded the title 'Celebrate Cycling Champion'. The fourth class student dedicated a lot of his time to improve his cycling skills, going on daily cycles for 150 days in a row during school closures.

The second special award was given to a school nominated as the 'Hidden Places Champion'.

This award was given to Ballaghkeene NS, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. The school worked particularly hard on the Green-Schools Stay Home Project to celebrate what originally was Walk to School Week by promoting walking as a mode of transport with daily pictures of walks and a very catchy rap song!



GREEN FLAG AWARDS

The second part of the ceremony was dedicated to the Green Flag Awards, to recognize and celebrate the 225 schools that completed their work the Travel or Global Citizenship Travel themes. Before announcing and showing the awarded schools, Green-Schools Travel Officers representing different areas of the country (South, East, West) presented case studies to highlight some of the most impressive work carried out by schools in their region by showcasing the incredible work undertaken by schools during their time working on the Travel themes.

The awards ceremony ended with a big celebration for all schools awarded, Green Flags were posted to each school. Overall, the award ceremony had great attendance and highly positive feedback from viewers, who showed their appreciations with email and posts on social media.

CASE STUDIES



COLAISTE AINDRIU BAGENALSTOWN, CARLOW

Colaiste Aindriu is a mixed second level school, situated in Bagenalstown, Co. Carlow that completed the Travel theme in 2020. Of the 95 students enrolled, almost half of the student population travel to school daily by bus; most others are driven to the school gates. The hard working GS committee at Colaiste Aindriu was made up of representatives from the school community, from first to sixth year. The group used to meet fortnightly and worked effectively to achieve their aims as outlined in the action plan that they devised on commencement of the Travel theme.

One of the many highlights of the great work of Coaliste Aindriu on the Travel Theme is their fabulous live bar chart, developed to monitor how students travel to school daily. Students simply had to place a peg in the correct column on arrival to school. Photographs of this are taken regularly, and once a week the exact number of pegs in each column are counted by the Committee. Since commencing the theme, the numbers of students walking, cycling and taking the bus to school have increased.

SCOIL IOSAIF NAOFA GALWAY

Scoil Iosaif Naofa is an 18 teacher boys' school with 280 pupils located in the village of Oranmore, nine kilometres from Galway City. The school conducted a baseline travel survey in October 2018 which showed that 66% of students in the school used sustainable travel (walking and Park 'n' Stride) to get to school.

The Green-Schools committee and two Green-Schools coordinators decided to increase the number of students who use sustainable travel to get to school by 10% in two years. They used four different methods to achieve their goal as follows:

- Teach students, teachers and the local community about sustainable travel
- Undertake walkability and cyclability audits
- Attending sustainable travel events such as WOW and COW days
- Participating in cycle/scooter training & bike maintenance skills workshops



Some results:



- 16% increase in sustainable travel from 2018 to 2020
- Galway CoCo repainted the road markings and fixed the schools flashing lights
- Funding have been provided for footpath from local Lidl to school
- Two walking buses were formed by Green-Schools committee members
- ... And more!

CASE STUDIES

St Nathy's College is a large co-ed secondary school situated just off the N5 in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon. The school started the Green-Schools Travel theme in September 2018 and did an incredible amount of work during those two years. Other than the traditional essential actions carried out in the Travel theme, St Nathy's College included the whole school in a number of innovative curriculum linked projects. Students took part in the GLOBE citizen science programme where they monitored air quality around the school. They carried out an idling survey and provided information to bus drivers and parents on the health and environmental issues associated with idling.

ST. NATHY'S COLLEGE,
BALLAGHADERREEN, CO.
ROSCOMMON



In addition to their actions:

- Roscommon Sports Partnership provided cycle training for all students in TY and any students that were interested in cycling to school. There has since been an increase in cycling to school, including the Principal.
- A Climate Action day was held on February 27th to raise awareness in the whole school.
- Green-Schools Travel Officers Lisa McDaniel and Áine O' Loughlen facilitated an #andshecycles workshops with 5th and 6th Year girls.



KNOCKMAHON N.S.,
BONMAHON, CO.
WATERFORD



Knockmahon N.S. is a small rural school in the coastal village of Bonmahon, Co. Waterford. There are 21 students and six staff travelling to and from the school every school day.

The results of the Travel survey showed that about 70% of students travelled to school by car, for this reason the school decided to focus on promoting park 'n' stride from the village to the school as sustainable transport mode.

Some of the actions taken by the schools were:

- Attending scooter and cycling skills workshops
- Participating in the Love 30 competition
- Take part in The Big Travel Challenge and in National Scoot to School and National Walk to School Week



MEET THE TEAM

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Director, An Taisce EEU



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Team Leader Munster



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BREANNE AYALA
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MEET THE TEAM

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MEET THE TEAM

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>>> schools