

WHAT CAN I DO?



There are many actions which the school community can take to support the new School Street. When a school community supports the implementation and operation of a School Street they are supporting children to access school safely, independently, sustainably and actively by enabling them to walk, cycle or scoot to school in a traffic-free environment.

Families who live a short journey to school are being encouraged to travel to school actively with children and where possible to leave the car behind. If families are driving a child to school, they could consider parking at a nearby Park'n'Stride location and continue the onward journey to school actively.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Implementing traffic-free School Streets engenders independent active travel in children. Students and communities have the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of better air quality, improved health and well-being, social opportunities and a calmer environment around the school.

The national average distance to primary schools in Ireland is just 1.5km, a distance which can be undertaken in under 9 minutes by bike, or in 25 minutes on foot/wheeling with younger children. Yet nearly 60% of primary school children in Ireland are being driven to school daily. While many adults remember walking and cycling to school as a standard part of childhood, the Central Statistics Office statistics show walking and cycling, has halved, from just under 50% of primary school students in 1986 to just 25% in 2016. Those active trips have been mainly substituted by car trips.

SRTS aims to reverse the declining trends of active travel to school by creating calmer and safer environments outside the front of schools and on routes to schools by providing infrastructure which supports walking and cycling.



HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL STREET?

School Streets are being implemented at a number of schools across Ireland and there are many ways in which a school community can support a School Street so that children can access school safely. Operating a traffic-free street outside a school during specific timed closures provides the safest possible environment for students to access school. This brochure aims to answer questions on how a school community can support a School Street.

- Why is traffic at the school gate a problem?
- How do we encourage students to walk, cycle and scoot to school?
- How do we use the new School Street?



SRTS

SRTS

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

The SRTS Programme launched in March 2021 and was open to all schools in Ireland to apply for front of school upgrades which provide walking, cycling and safer access to school. The programme is an initiative of the Department of Transport and supported by the Department of Education. It is operated by the Green-Schools Programme in partnership with the NTA and local authorities. A dedicated SRTS Infrastructure Officer works with schools and local authorities during the process.

SCHOOL TRAFFIC

Traffic at the front of school presents a safety hazard and contributes to poor air quality. Traffic/parked cars can make it difficult to see children crossing the road. If a car parks on a kerb it can block access and cause overcrowding, forcing children, prams and wheelchairs onto the road. Leaving an engine running (idling) creates unnecessary air pollution at the school gate and is harmful to the health of children.

USING THE SCHOOL STREET

A School Street will be either fully pedestrianised or restrict vehicular access during term-time at fixed drop-off and pick-up times. It is important for the school community, as well as those bringing children to school, to be aware of the fixed closure time of the School Street. Parents or guardians should be mindful not to distract a School Warden or volunteer who is operating a School Street and always observe road signs and any traffic barriers which are in place.

ACTIVE TRAVEL

By implementing a School Street at schools there is great potential for a significant mode shift in how students travel to school. Prioritising the safety of children by creating a traffic-free front of school environment can make a difference in families choosing to walk, wheel, scoot or cycle to school.



Artists Impression

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