

Primary Schools Active Travel Pilot Project



Resilient Willoughby Program

Walking to school and back home again is a great way to spend time with your children and encourage safe and healthy behaviours.

NSW Government Centre for Road Safety Fact Sheet - March 2018



Why travel actively to school?

Active travel is the term used for non-motorised travel - walking, cycling, scootering or skating.

Travelling actively to school is fun, healthy and good for the local environment.

The *Resilient Willoughby Primary Schools Active Travel Pilot Project* aims to encourage and support more active travel to schools in the Willoughby local government area.

Most families with children attending a local primary school live within 2 kms of the school and often closer. Despite this proximity, many families typically drive to school.

Evidence gathered by Bicycle Network, Sydney councils and other organisations shows that there is increasing enthusiasm amongst some school communities for students and families to walk, cycle, skate or scooter to school.

Research shows that students who travel actively to school socialise and learn better and are typically fitter, less overweight and more independent.



AUGUST 2022

What's involved?

The Project is a collaboration between local primary schools, Willoughby City Council, School Infrastructure NSW, Observatory Hill Environmental Education Centre and Bicycle Network. It is funded by Council, which means there is no cost to the school.

The Project offers an authentic learning experience, focusing on the quality teaching element of connectedness, and is aligned to the year 5 and 6 geography curriculum. It includes a staff meeting and three one-hour lessons in class which would typically be delivered during one term.

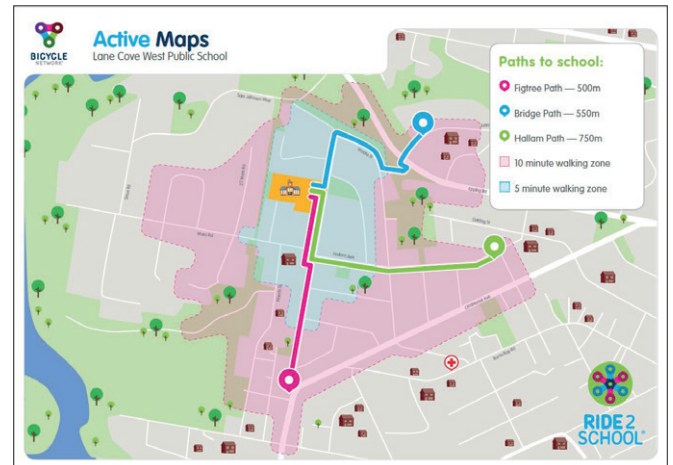
Students identify potential 'active paths' to school which are then assessed by Council for safety. Some improvements to footpaths and cycleways may be undertaken by Council where required.

“safe active travel for all children promotes physical activity and is consistent with the principles of an integrated transport system”

NSW Government Active Travel Charter for Children 2014.

An Active Map is published showing the completed 'active paths' which are waymarked with decals. Students conduct follow-up monitoring of increases in walking and cycling to school.

Cycling and road safety lessons and cycle maintenance workshops are also available. Project steps and timing are flexible and will be tailored to the school's needs and timetable.



Example: Lane Cove West Public School active map - 2016

Benefits of travelling actively to school

- Helps build a culture of street-sharing, traffic calming, walking and cycling around a school.
- Saves time for busy parents and reduces traffic volumes on local streets at peak times.
- Helps build community resilience by reducing car dependence.
- Enhances community health and wellbeing. Research shows that students who travel actively to school are fitter, more independent and socialise and learn better.
- Reduces impacts from traffic eg less noise, emissions, congestion and dangerous parking.

In Victoria and Tasmania, the introduction of Bicycle Network's Ride2School program has resulted in a 6% to 17% increase in student active travel rates at participating schools (ie) up to 70 fewer cars visiting a medium sized school at peak 'drop-off' and 'pick-up' times.

