



Grange Academy

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Article 23: *You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.*

School Travel Plan

Policy Status: Advisory

Review Cycle: Annually

Owner: Rachel Timms - Headteacher

Date: January 2026

Approved by: SLT

Date: January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

Grange Academy is a Special School. Our school has a maximum capacity of 162 pupils, all of whom have Education Health and Care Plans to support their special educational needs and 78 staff (plus additional agency staff as needed). A new building of 10 classrooms opened in September 2022 however, this replaced old classrooms and did not increase the school size in terms of staff and pupils. A block of three new classrooms also opened in September 23, replacing two hut classrooms and adding 12 pupils.

Due to their needs and the distance travelled, we need to be mindful of the appropriateness of travel methods for our pupils. We do not have a localised catchment; our pupils come from across Bedfordshire and beyond.

At Grange Academy we encourage pupils, families and staff to travel actively to school by walking, cycling and scooting wherever possible. We acknowledge that many of our pupils need to travel by vehicle due to distance, special needs or vulnerability. As such we encourage pupils to access shared minibus transport as a more sustainable option. For most, a shared minibus is the safest and most environmentally responsible option. Buses have a minimum of 4 up to 15 pupils on board. Many of our pupils either live too far away to cycle (some have 45-minute car journeys) or, due to their special needs cannot cycle a distance. Due to their complex needs, some pupils need 1:1 transport.

We aim to minimise single occupancy car trips associated with the school, by promoting and encouraging the use of more sustainable alternatives through our curriculum and current school Eco priorities.

What are the benefits of active travel?

- Improves mental health leading to improved attendance and academic success
- Improves physical health, helping pupils to achieve the recommended minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity per day
- Promotes independence and improves road safety awareness
- Reduces congestion and noise in the community
- Improves the local environment's air quality
- Contributes to our Eco Schools ethos

Why have a School Travel plan?

Encouraging active travel at school has a wide range of benefits, both for the school community, but also for the area around the school in terms of less traffic and congestion. The benefits of having an active School Travel Plan include:

For the pupils

- Improving health and fitness by walking, scooting and cycling
- Improving travel awareness and road user skills
- Improving awareness of their surroundings and their role in positively impacting them
- Improving safety around the school
- Reducing congestion around the school
- Establishing safer walking and cycling routes around the school
- Contributing to other school policies such as Eco- Schools/Healthy Schools amongst others.
- Linking to the National Curriculum learning

For parents and carers

- Reducing stress and time spent driving to school, especially when it is congested
- Increasing quality parent/child contact time
- Building better links with the school for the local community
- Improving the local environment by reducing air and noise pollution

- Reducing congestion problems
- Improving walking routes
- Improving road safety

To ensure as many pupils as possible are given the opportunity to realise these benefits we each have an important role to play:

Staff

We will encourage travel to and from school and within the school day, more safely and actively by:

- Promoting the benefits of active travel through the curriculum and assemblies
- Celebrating the achievements of those who travel actively
- Raising awareness of the air quality benefits of active travel
- Providing a new sheltered cycle and scooter storage on the school site.
- Working with our Borough school travel and road safety officers to deliver interventions and activities that promote active, safe and responsible travel to school

Pupils

To make active travel a positive experience for everybody concerned, we expect our pupils to:

- Behave in a sensible, safe and respectful manner and to consider the needs of others
- when travelling
- Use lights and high-visibility clothing where appropriate and consider wearing a cycle helmet
- Check that their bicycle or scooter is roadworthy and well maintained
- Follow the rules of the road (Highway Code) when travelling
- Behave with Grange Values when accessing shared transport

We support this by engaging with Bikeability safety training, teaching around healthy lifestyles and travel training: supporting pupils to access public transport as independently as possible according to individual needs.

Parents and carers

For the wellbeing of our pupils, we expect parents/carers to:

- Encourage their child to travel actively to school; but we do acknowledge that due to their SEND needs many need to use minibuses or their family car due to social difficulties, medical or sensory needs.
- Consider walking, cycling or scooting with their child.
- Encourage their child to take up opportunities to develop their competence and confidence in walking cycling and scooting, for example participating in Bikeability.
- Provide their child with safety equipment as appropriate, which may include high-visibility clothing, lights, cycle helmet and a lock
- Ensure that the bicycles and scooters ridden to school are roadworthy and well maintained

Parents and carers are reminded that they are responsible for the safety of their child on the journey to and from school. The decision as to whether a child is competent to cycle or scooter safely to and from school rests with the parent(s)/carer(s). The school has no liability for any consequences of that decision. Parents are advised to take out appropriate insurance cover for bikes (check home insurance) as the school's insurance does not cover any loss or damage to bicycles and scooters.

Impact

Each year the school's Travel Plan will be reviewed using surveys from pupils, staff and

parents. Opportunities for parents and carers to engage in the discussion of improving sustainable methods of transport will be given. Promotion of sustainable and active methods of travel will be shared through teaching and school newsletters.

SLT will ensure that they:

- Undertake annual pupil and staff Travel Surveys over five consecutive years and supply evidence of this.
- Oversee the development and implementation of the School Travel Plan on a day-to-day basis
- Design and implement effective marketing and awareness-raising campaigns to promote the School Travel Plan
- Act as a point of contact for all pupils, staff and parents requiring information
- Ensure the travel information available is always up to date
- Liaise with external organisations, e.g. local authority transport team
- Co-ordinate the monitoring programme for the School Travel Plan, including target-setting and make necessary changes if the targets are not being met.
- The local cycle network is to be promoted to parents and staff for the Bedford and Kempston area.

Our Travel Working group (consisting of staff, parents, pupils and a governor) support ideas for encouraging sustainable travel. As travel to and from school can be restricted by distance and pupil needs, their focus has been increasing use of public transport and walking. This academic year, each class has attended more than 3 walking based local trips and older students have practised bus use. 38 pupils have undertaken travel training this year.

Current methods of travelling January 2026

Pupils: 161 out of 161 took part.

Method of transport	Number	Preferred method (if there is a change)
School shared transport (minibus or group taxi)	123	No
Public transport	0	No
Walk	6	No
Cycle	1	No
Car with families	31	No

Staff (50)

Method of transport	Number	Preferred method (if there is a change)
Public transport	2	Walk, taxi
Walk	6	
Cycle or scoot	0	
Car	40	Car share, Hybrid, Cycle, Electric Bike
Car share	2	

1 staff member wished to alter travel method to cycling in the summer and is confident that school will support him to do so.

Comparison Survey based on January 2025

Pupils: 152 out of 152 took part.

Method of transport	Number	Preferred method (if there is a change)
School shared transport (minibus or group taxi)	118	0
Public transport	0	0
Walk	5	0
Cycle	0	7
Car with families	29	5

Although 7 pupils wished to cycle, all live too far away to make this viable (average distance is 25 in a minibus) however, we will try to increase cycling opportunities within school by providing cycles that can be used and teaching cycle repair to engage interest. This is currently a weekly lunch club.

Staff (55)

Method of transport	Number	Preferred method (if there is a change)
Public transport	2	1 (car)
Walk	6	0
Cycle or scoot	1	1 (walk)
Car	42	11 (cycle or walk)
Car share	4	2 (walk)

1 staff member wished to alter travel method to cycling in the summer and is confident that school will support him to do so.

As such this indicates that the bike shed size housing 10 bikes which we currently have is suitable, **however we do intend to provide a new sheltered cycle store with space for 12 bicycles with Sheffield Loops. In addition, a new scooter store will also be provided to facilitate this travel mode for local students. This will be built in Spring 26.** We therefore demonstrate that a scheme for cycle parking (with access thereto) in accordance with Bedford Borough Council's Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities: Design and Good Practice 2014 is in place however due to the unique nature of our school, the demand to increase this is low with the majority of students using mini-buses or requiring to be driven. We are therefore exceeding requirements by installing new secure cycle stores.

Initiatives

- Anti-idling promotion
- Road safety teaching
- Bikeability teaching
- Teaching around environmental impact
- Use of walking or pupils transport for local trips rather than the minibus.
- Provide parents / staff access to the digital Bedford and Kempston cycle map through school website and QR codes on posters as well as printed versions available in the staff room and at reception.
- Continue to promote the use of cycle route planners to parents and staff
 - o www.cyclinguk.org/journey.planner
 - o www.web.bikemap.net/plan

The measures to reduce single occupancy car use:

- Staff are actively encouraged to car share and the number doing so has quadrupled from September 25 to Feb 27 indicating the effectiveness.
- Staff travelling to events in our other Trust schools almost always car share.

The Travel Plan below shall be carried out in accordance with the timetable contained therein and shall continue in force for as long as any part of the development is occupied.

School Travel Plan Grange Academy January 2025 (this will be monitored for 5 years)

Where are we now?

The large majority of pupils travel on funded minibus routes which support their safety and SEND. These are preferable to individual cars and meet our pupils' unique needs. For most, travel by bike or scooter would be unsafe or present too great a distance.

The large majority of staff travel in independent cars due to arriving at different times and living in wide locations, some do car share on occasions but not as their daily commute. If attending training or events, staff car share as a matter of course.

IN 2022, 3 months after occupancy of the new build, as part of surveys all participants were asked how they would prefer to travel: three pupils indicated they would prefer to cycle and three said they would prefer to scoot, the rest were unchanged; in 2022, 21 pupils travel in individual cars – we intended to target this figure and encourage other methods however, many of these children travel this way as they cannot cope with the shared transport to which they are entitled so cannot access any alternatives. **Update 25/26:** As a result of the support given to pupils to manage their needs, only 12 now travel in individual cars indicating the success of the support given.

School have promoted safe parking and have a clear policy about turning engines off and parents not parking in certain areas – families and transport drivers are responsible and adhere to this. School staff reinforce this at the beginning and end of the day and work alongside the Bedford Borough Transport team to support this.

What do we want to change?

As a school we are mindful that whilst we would like to promote more active transport to and from school, this may not be safest for our pupils. As such, our focus is on increasing active methods during the school day and reducing individual use of vehicles wherever feasible.

Our targets

1. Purchase a new bicycle & scooter shelter which is covered.

In order to meet Condition 5

A scheme for cycle parking (with access thereto) in accordance with Bedford Borough Council's Parking Standards for Sustainable Communities: Design and Good Practice 2014 shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented and made available for use within 6 months of the date these details are approved and the cycle parking areas shall not thereafter be used for any other purpose.

2. Increase walking trips within the school day, rather than using vehicles (this has been increased by over 50% in 24/25) so we wish to build on this.

3. Increase use of public transport for school trips and for pupils at home by at least 3 trips per pupil per year.

What can we do to reach our targets?			
Action	Rationale	Expected impact	Review
Source bike shelter. Hold a 'cycle to school' event for staff and pupils as appropriate in July 26. Provide cycle maps (both digital and hard copy) and inform via school newsletters / website. Promote the use of online bicycle journey planners and phone apps.	Developing the covered bike and scooter storage will encourage families and staff to utilise this. Making staff and parents aware of the excellent local cycle routes in the Bedford and Kempston area.	An increase in the number of staff and families using this method will be seen over the Summer term 26	Review March 26 Quotes and planning permission being obtained for new facilities.
All local trips e.g. to BILTT schools or local amenities to be walked to wherever possible (linked to SEND needs).	Reducing use of vehicles for local trips will have positive impact on - Our environment - Pupil health	At least 50% local trips will be walking based. Pupils will feedback positively.	Target exceeded, pupils now walk to swimming, Sainsburys and Boxing when they would otherwise have been driven.
We will increase the use of public transport during trips and actively teach pupils to use it. We will support pupils in applying for the free bus passes which they are entitled to.	Developing pupil confidence in using public transport is a useful life skill and will help them to use shared transport rather than family cars at home.	An increase of pupils using buses when travelling to and from home.	All pupils in Red Kites have been supported to apply for bus passes and taken to travel training trips.
We will establish a working group involving pupils, staff and parents to discuss and plan next steps for active travel. This will link with our current ECO work and focus on use of active travel within the school day.	Ensuring all stakeholders have a clear voice will help to ensure that everyone feels included so are more likely to engage.	A clear stakeholder led action plan will be agreed and reviewed annually over the next 5 years leading to long term change.	Travel Group members: Mrs Timms (Staff) Mrs Floyd (parent) Mrs Pacey (Governor) X3 pupils

What can we do next?

Our largest group of single car users are staff; by improving incentives to cycle we could reduce this.

We are exploring a Bike2work scheme that enables tax free purchase of a bike and also e-bikes; in addition to providing extra cycle parking spaces

Provide staff with the ability to have adult cycle training from SusTrans

(<http://www.cyclebedford.org.uk/cycletrainingcb.htm>)

Provide the Bedford and Kempston cycle maps to staff (in staff room) and digitally via posters and the school website whilst also highlighting the benefit that e-bikes can provide to assist extended urban travel.

Promote basic bicycle maintenance through discounted services with local bike store.

Promote national events like Cycle to Workday and Bike Week as well as the National Cycle Challenge to encourage staff to take up cycling.