

# WALKING

# BUS



The Road Safety Unit is promoting and encouraging all primary schools to consider arranging a Walking bus within their school.

## WHAT IS A WALKING BUS?

A 'Walking Bus' lets a group or 'bus' of children walk from home or a designated safe and named area to school each morning and/or afternoon safely under the guidance of trained adult supervisors.

It is an ideal alternative to the school run in the car, and is a perfect fit with the government's aim to reduce road traffic, congestion and provide safe walking routes.

At Flintshire we think the Walking Bus deserves our support because it's beneficial in so many ways; not only does it take pressure off parents in the morning, but it also provides children with a healthy, educational and environmentally sound way of getting to school each day.

You may also be interested to learn that research has shown that walking to school in the morning is great preparation for the day ahead.



**CHILDREN ARRIVE AWAKE, ALERT AND READY TO LEARN!**

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Walking Buses are a way of escorting primary school children to and from school.

### By participating in a Walking Bus Scheme your child will be helping to:

- Enhance road safety at the school gates
- Enable other children to get more exercise and learn pedestrian skills
- Develop friendships and conversation amongst the children on the walking Bus
- Encourage less use of the car for short trips

### Routes

Walking Buses follow routes planned with the help of road safety and transport engineers. The routes incorporate as many participating children's homes as possible. They will keep the need to cross roads to a minimum and make use of safe crossing places where possible.

### Helper/Child Ratios

A helper co-ordinator will ensure that on each bus there will be a minimum of two adult helpers, one at the front (the 'Driver') and one at the rear (the 'Conductor'). The overall ration will be one helper for each five children.

### Being Seen

At all times, children and adult helpers will wear fluorescent/high visibility waistcoats, as part of the School's Walking Bus Scheme. This is not only for safety reasons, enabling the group to be seen from a distance, but also to enable the children to feel they 'belong' within the Walking Bus.

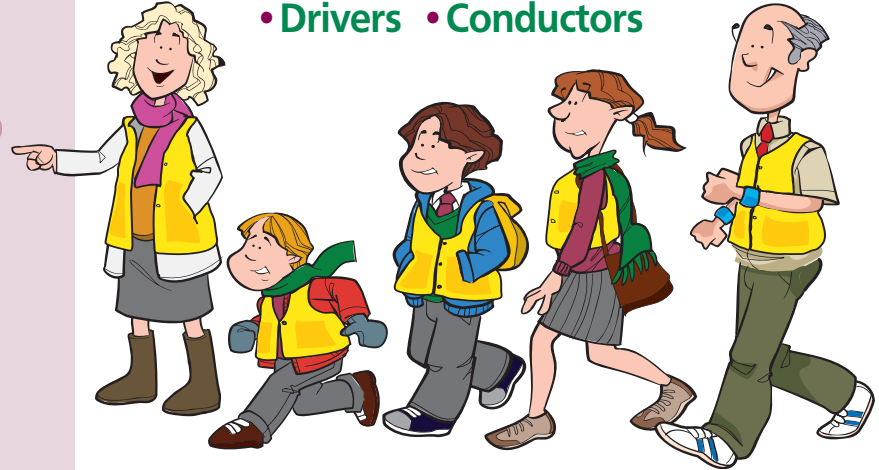
### Training

It is recommended that your child receives Road Safety Training before they start; this should continue as part of their journey on the Walking Bus. Your child should also be expected to complete and sign a 'Permission Note and Pupil's Promise' stating they will behave sensibly and follow the instructions of the adult helpers. Any child who proves to be disruptive, or a danger to themselves or others, will be asked to leave the Walking Bus Scheme. Adult helpers should also receive Road Safety Training and will be issued with Walking Bus Guidelines. Routes need to be police checked in accordance with the local police for child safety.

- 1 Road Safety Training needs to be arranged independently by the school and involve the council
- 2 Permission Notes and Pupil's Promise may differ depending on the discretion of individual schools

Three types of adult helpers are needed to support your Walking Bus Schemes:

- Co-ordinators
- Drivers
- Conductors



These Guidelines explain the above roles.

### Co-ordinators:

The co-ordinators role is to liaise between the school and the other helpers to ensure the smooth running of the scheme, they might also be a Driver or Conductor (explained below). For larger schools, it might be more appropriate to have a co-ordinator for each route.

### DRIVERS:

Drivers are helpers who lead the Walking Bus.

**REMEMBER - WALKING BUS HELPERS HAVE NO FORMAL POWERS TO STOP TRAFFIC**

### CONDUCTORS:

The Conductor must always walk at the back of the group of children. As the Driver is primarily concerned with the route and checking for hazards, the Conductor must at all times be aware of the children's behaviour, and ensure that the directions and instructions given to the group by the Driver are carried out. Points to watch out for are:-

- Keep children away from the kerb.
- Make sure children do not lag behind, particularly when crossing the road.
- Any arguments should be nipped in the bud before pushing and shoving starts.
- Relay unheard messages from the driver.
- Ensure children do not damage property.

For further information or you would like to consider arranging a walking bus in your local school, please do not hesitate to contact Claire Parry in the Road Safety Unit, Flintshire County Council on **01352 704529**.