

Dear Principal / Eco Coordinator / PE Coordinator / WAU Coordinator / Cycle Proficiency Teacher

ACTIVE SCHOOL TRAVEL PROGRAMME

The Active School Travel Programme is an exciting initiative for schools who wish to see more of their pupils choosing an active and healthy journey to school. We have worked with over 500 schools across the country. Increasing the number of children who regularly walk, wheel, or cycle to school has numerous benefits including:

- increased physical activity levels resulting in improved health and well-being
- reduced congestion and pollution around schools
- improved academic performance and attendance rates
- increased road safety awareness
- increased confidence, self-esteem, and independence for young people.

This initiative provides schools with a **free** programme of activities over the school year, both in and out of the classroom, with direct hands-on support from a dedicated Sustrans Active Travel Officer. Subject to funding, the initiative will engage schools in a 3-level programme over three years. The fundamental aim of this award-winning programme is to provide schools with the skills and knowledge to get more children walking, wheeling, and cycling to school.

Sustrans has been delivering the Active School Travel Programme since 2013, with funding from the Public Health Agency and the Department for Infrastructure. We have been commissioned to recruit new schools to join the programme for the 2024-25 school year.

If you would like your school to be selected to join the Active School Travel Programme, please fill out the simple application form and return before the deadline of **Friday, 27th September 2024**. Please read the AST FAQs and AST School Agreement when completing your application, which can be downloaded from our website – www.sustrans.org.uk/NIschools. Alternatively, you can request the application pack by emailing schoolsNI@sustrans.org.uk or ringing 07824627674.

Please note: We reserve the right to close the recruitment early if we receive sufficient applications. Therefore, if you are interested, please submit your application as early as possible.

Due to funding and capacity, the number of schools selected will be limited. Priority will be given to schools who have not had any previous engagement with the programme and those with the most historical engagement. You should be aware that consideration must also be given to geographical clusters of schools and their proximity to where our Active Travel Officers are based to maximise the Officers' time in schools and to minimise travel time; so please encourage your neighbouring schools to join you in submitting an application.

For further information on how the programme works, please [visit our website](#) where you can watch a short video and download the recent newsletter showcasing our work with schools across NI. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

B Harding

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