

Dear Parent/Guardian



**PARK SMART**

As your child is due to start school in August I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself on behalf of the School Travel Team. We aim to increase the use of Active Travel (such as walking and cycling) and to reduce some of the problems of car use such as traffic congestion and dangerous parking.

Walking to school is usually the healthy choice for your child (and for you!). Doctors recommend 30 minutes of moderate exercise each day for adults and 60 minutes each day for children. Walking to and from school can help provide this. In addition it gives children the chance to learn valuable road safety awareness, it is a sociable way to travel, makes them aware of their local neighbourhood and it helps reduce carbon emissions. Also, once they get to school, children who have exercised are more alert to learn. The more people who walk or cycle, instead of using cars, the better it is for all of us. If your child is entitled to a school bus service then we would encourage you to use it – this also helps with our overall aim of less private vehicles parking at the school gate. If you are coming to school from out with catchment please consider Park and Stride, parking approx. 5 mins. from school - allowing your child to benefit from a short, healthy walk and not adding to traffic congestion in front of school. Every Midlothian school has a 5 min. walking zone map which shows areas that Park & Stride may be suitable from.

We do recognise that for some people/sometimes it may not be possible to walk your child to/from school. If you do have to bring your child to school by car, please park beyond the immediate school zone and 'park smartly'. Do not stop on yellow zigzags/keep clear markings. Obey parking restrictions/yellow lines and do not block residents' driveways. Some schools have drop-off areas and these are for dropping-off only – not parking and waiting. If you need to park, find somewhere safe and walk the rest of the way. Bad parking causes congestion and road safety problems with dangerous manoeuvres such as reversing, turning in the road, and driving/parking on the footway putting everyone in danger. It also creates an unsafe and unhealthy environment for children arriving at the school.

Your Ref:  
Our Ref:

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Throughout the year, Midlothian schools participate in many initiatives to encourage walking to school, discourage school-gate parking and improve road safety. Initiatives include Walking Buses, Park and Stride schemes, Walk to School Weeks/Events, Park Smart campaigns and Kerbcraft infant road safety training. We are very pleased with our results to date with most children walking to school and Midlothian better than the national average. With your help we can do even better and we would like to ask you to start pupils off as we'd like them to continue – with the healthiest, safest possible journey to and from school.

Thank you for your anticipated support and I hope to meet many of you in the near future volunteering/supporting our many events! In the meantime, should you require any advice about safer routes, road safety or drop-off zones, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Regards



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