

Starting SCHOOL



The journey begins

As your child is now starting school, we're taking this opportunity to send you some information and a great poster to work on together. It's all about road safety and getting to school.

Children seem to grow up in no time! It's important to remember that the skills they learn with you today, on their journey to school, will help keep them safe for the rest of their lives.

Protect them

Starting school is a major event in every child's life. Unfortunately, being safe on the roads isn't the first thing that will be on their minds.

- When you're out together, keep them away from traffic and always walk with the road on your side whenever possible.
- Always hold their hand when you're out together and don't let them run ahead or lag behind. Many drivers don't



even notice young children at the roadside.

- Children need to learn to look out for dangers including cars starting up or reversing, pulling out of driveways and crossing at junctions or bends in the road.
- Young children cannot judge the speed and distance of traffic.
- They are easily distracted and may act impulsively near roads without warning.
- School car parks can be dangerous. Children may feel safe but drivers can't always see them, especially when reversing.



FUN activity poster inside!

The poster on the other side is for you and your child to complete together as they start primary school.

There are lots of fun activities covering important road safety topics for you both to think about. Why not pin it up at home so that you can talk about it together?



stop,
look
and



LISTEN

Young children like routine so it's important to **Stop, Look and Listen every time you cross the road together. When it becomes a habit, they will do it automatically for the rest of their lives.**



Stop

Many accidents happen when children either run into the road or walk out from behind parked cars so it's important to always find the safest place to cross. Children need to learn that **roads are for traffic and pavements are for people** so they must always stop at the kerb before they even think about crossing the road.

Look and listen

Encourage your child to look all around and listen with you before you start to cross. Ask them the question "Is it safe to cross yet?" This will help them to think about safety for themselves. They must also keep looking and listening as they cross as traffic can appear unexpectedly.



take a look

AROUND



Children love to tell you all about what they can see and what they can hear! So talk about what's going on around you when you're out together. This will help them to become more observant and to develop their own road safety knowledge and skills.

It's good to talk

We know it's all too easy to get engrossed in our mobile phones. So it's probably a good idea to put yours away when you're out together. This provides the opportunity to talk about what's going on around you and also sets a good example for the day when they will inevitably own a mobile of their own!



Playing I-spy can be great fun! You can also talk about road safety as you go e.g Can you hear the bicycle? Why must you be careful at the bus stop?

Cut out
this great
bookmark!

**ALWAYS
HOLD
HANDS**



small steps

BIG STEPS



Children love to copy their parents so you are the best person to teach them how to be safe on the roads.

You can set a good example even when you're in a hurry. If your child sees you crossing without looking or ignoring the safer crossing places, they will assume that it's ok for them to do the same.

Older brothers or sisters can also be invaluable role models but shouldn't be allowed to supervise young children on their own.

Small steps, BIG steps

Let's make a promise to always be careful near roads...

Can you name your own name?

We promise to always STOP, LOOK and LISTEN

green out

blue

Children will copy what you do - be set a good example when you cross the road!



Making a promise

This promise gives you the opportunity to find out what your child understands about Stop, Look and Listen and why

we do it. By signing it, you are both promising that you will always Stop, Look and Listen before you cross the road.

SAFER CROSSING PLACES

Plan a safe route

It's important to plan a safe route to school with your child in mind. This may not be the fastest but it should always be the safest and make as much use as possible of any safer crossing places such as zebra, pelican and puffin crossings or the school crossing patrol.

Use the crossing places

Show your child how to use the safer crossing places, for example, let them push the button on the pelican or puffin crossing. Never cross until the green man is lit. Where there is a school crossing patrol, always wait until they have called you on before starting to cross.

Remind them that they must still hold hands and Stop, Look and Listen every time they cross the road.

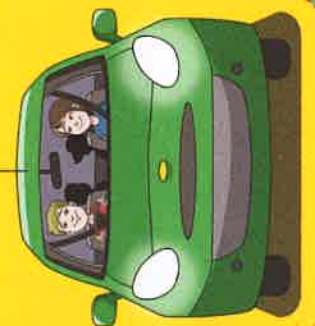
Point out the dangers of crossing between parked cars, at junctions, roundabouts etc.



Hang this up in your car or inside your front door!



BELT UP in the car



in and out of **CARS**

Walking to school

It's a great idea to get children into the habit of walking all, or at least part, of the way to school. It's not just good exercise but also helps them to become familiar with the roads as a pedestrian. For some children the first time they walk to school, without the supervision of an adult, is when they start secondary school.

School gate parking

If you drive your children to school, it's too easy to try and park as near to the gates as possible. However, if everyone does the same it can cause major problems.

So let's all work together to keep our children safe by keeping our speed down and not parking or dropping off children at the school entrance. Please look out for other children crossing and think about the school's neighbours who often find they cannot access their own driveways during the busiest times.



Why not park and stride?

Have you ever thought of driving part of the way to school and walking the rest? This means you can avoid the congested areas around school and also enjoy some time walking and talking together.



BELT UP in cars

Children must be restrained in the correct car seat on every journey. By the age of four to five years, most children should be in a high backed booster seat fastened by an adult seat belt. Make sure it's fitted correctly and the seat belt is comfortable and isn't slack or twisted.

Let them see that you always fasten your seat belt so that they understand that it is part of the routine for every journey.

Whilst child locks are often inconvenient, they need to be switched on as they stop children opening the door while the car is still moving or dashing out unsupervised.

It's also important to always get the children out of the car on the pavement side.

For information on child restraints:
www.childcarseats.org.uk

