



Lacon Childe School Travel Plan 2006



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School Travel Plan

Introduction

Lacon Childe School is a **specialist sports college** situated in the small market town of Cleobury Mortimer in south Shropshire close to the Worcestershire border. Its pupils live in the town & in hamlets in a **200 square kilometre catchment area**. It works closely with 6 partner primary schools in Cleobury Country and in a wider primary & secondary partnership with schools in Ludlow, Bishops Castle, Bridgnorth & Church Stretton. Many of these schools travel to Lacon Childe for specialist coaching & holiday academies.

The School opened its state of the art **outdoor facilities** in December 2005 which greatly extended the school site, shared with the community after school hours. Re-designation as a Sports College was confirmed in March 2006 encouraging the school to proceed with additional building works in summer 2006 to improve changing and internal sports hall facilities. It is essential that everyone using these shared facilities is able to do so comfortably and safely. The Buildings Manager works closely with the Head teacher & the Governors to ensure that safety is a foremost consideration as it was throughout Phase 1 of 'Sport 2000' programme.

This fits completely with Lacon Childe's **declared objectives** to:

- foster a safe and supportive environment in which every child can achieve their full potential
- create a friendly and supportive environment which enables children to become self sufficient caring adults

In subscribing to the ethos of **Healthy Schools** and **Safer Schools** we expect pupils to understand their own responsibility to travel safely to and from school and conduct themselves safely on the premises. The school's duty to support them in this is fully accepted. Asking the School Council (which has representatives from each tutor group) to research the content & make recommendations for the direction of the school's travel plan contributes to this.

The school is also aware that Cleobury Country Partnership transport theme group has been working closely with the primary school with the support of SCC Transport Officer to achieve a **walking bus scheme** within Cleobury Mortimer. The School Council also contributed to the community consultation on the Cleobury High Street Enhancement scheme, commenting in detail on the proposals for safer crossing routes. Their recommendations for cycle parking and litter bins adopted in preparation for the final 'appearance scheme'.

The need for a **live practical school travel plan** is clearly demonstrated by all of the above.

It aims to promote healthier and more environmentally friendly forms of transport and to improve safety on the school journey both through information and in practice. As a specialist Sports College our curriculum already reflects this healthy focus.

General description of the School

Lacon Childe School has existed in Cleobury Mortimer since 1740 when it's first building was endowed by William Lacon Childe. It transferred to its current site on Love Lane in the 60's which is north of the main road through the town centre. Its partner primary is just further along Love Lane round a sharp bend. Roads around the site are reasonably modern but school buses exiting the site to the southeast use a narrow lane since the main street through the town can be even more difficult to negotiate.

Currently 570 **pupils** attend the school, aged 11-16. **80%** of them arrive on designated school buses from rural hamlets and farms across Cleobury Country. A few come by taxi. The remainder largely arrive on foot, as currently governors do not permit children to cycle to school. School hours are from **8.50 a.m. to 3.30 p.m.** There are extensive after school clubs with some recently a Breakfast Club has started through the Living for Sport Scheme.

The accompanying catchment maps show the location of pupils' homes.

A small proportion of the 62 full time and 4 part time **staff** live locally but most travel by car to school from a wider area outside Cleobury Country. The school's sports facilities shared with adults again show this mix of locals and people travelling by car from a wider area. The majority of locals walk to use the fitness suite, some on GP referral. Children using the suite after hours and at weekends generally walk there.

There is no space to increase **pupil numbers** on the site with 6 old demountables and dining room and assembly hall overcrowded at key times during the school day. Any extension of pupil numbers would require additional buildings on a site that is already short of yard space. The housing scheme at the rear of the demountables which helped fund the new sports facilities provides no other opportunities for site expansion. Pupil numbers will however remain stable with this and other new build schemes in the town.

Overview of the travel facilities at the school site

The accompanying site plan shows entrances to the school:

1) The **main entrance** is from Love Lane with a footpath which tapers into the 2 disabled parking spaces in the front of the entrance (often occupied by the school minibuses). To the right of the vehicle entrance is the staff/visitor 30 place car park which is also used for deliveries to the kitchens and the main school.



2) To the left of the main entrance is a **footpath** which leads along the edge of the school site to the Catherton Road, which is planned to be upgraded to a joint use cycleway/footpath soon. Half way along this path is an entrance for sports site maintenance vehicles. There is pedestrian access off this path into the school site.



An unsurfaced right of way through the top end of Mortimer Gardens leading onto this footpath is permanently muddy in winter through overuse on its steep gradient.



3. Further along Love Lane is the **entrance to the sports facilities** - the access for pupil transport coaches and for the community sports and social club and the recycling containers.



Vehicles enter this car park from the right and exit at the left of the photograph beyond the re-cycling bins. White lines indicate car parking spaces, whilst yellow delineate spaces for bus parking at the beginning and end of the school day. Staff supervise the arrival and departure of the school transport. Adults can enter at all times via the Sports Centre. There are 3 disabled parking bays.



There is a one-way system in this car park with entry from the south, and exit from the north. There are also parking spaces here for 2 minibuses. There are markings on this car park for the 9 contract buses to park at the end of the school day, with notices informing the public about timings for avoiding parking in certain places to facilitate their manoeuvring.



The main pupil pedestrian entrance to the school is adjacent to this car park to the rear of the Sports Hall, as more than 60% of pupils arrive by bus. The various routes serving the school are shown in the Appendix, and the Pupil Addresses map shows the children eligible for free transport on each route.

School minibuses are used to transport children home from after-school clubs and sports events, in order to reduce the need for car travel.

A new cycle parking facility for sports centre users is located opposite the Sports Centre entrance.



There are a number of service buses that pass through Cleobury Mortimer, but none of these have services that coincide with school hours. They run to Kidderminster, Ludlow, Tenbury Wells and Worcester, and there is a “Demand Responsive” service to Bridgnorth – all used by pupils at weekends. The bus stops are on High Street near the Tenbury Road end of the town and these will be replaced by bus islands as the enhancement scheme progresses in 2006/07.

Other uses of the site

a) During the school day

Fitness Suite – access from the Sports Centre car park.

Peter Rabbit Nursery – access by the Main Entrance. This is held in an older demountable classroom in the middle of the school buildings. Parent bring children to this at the start and end of sessions, including the middle of the day.

Primary schools use the sports facilities quite often.

b) After school

After school sports clubs use the Sports Centre and facilities. L@fter Club – the school's after school club is busy Tuesday to Thursday and for which the school currently funds transport. The town junior reading and drama clubs are held at the school early evening.

Adult evening classes use the school's facilities accessing the Hall, Dining Room, Resource Centre and Meeting Room via the main entrance.

Individuals and groups use the extensive sport facilities shown in the opening times for indoors and outdoors in the Appendix with available facilities increasingly hard to book.

There is ample parking provision for these activities, and space for parking of buses for special sports events and for school visits elsewhere during the school day.

The real problems occur when large school events, such as Parents' Evenings, clash with community events so large numbers of people are trying to park at the same time in the school grounds. On occasions this causes overspill into Love lane.

Issues raised by the site assessment

a) On the site

Parking congestion does occur in the staff car park, but there is now ample provision in the Sports car park and further plans to designate an area soon to be cleared as additional staff parking in the next school year. Visitors try to park as close to the main entrance as possible which can lead to congestion in the current staff car park especially at delivery times. Pedestrian safety on the school site has improved with the new parking arrangements for the buses. It could be further improved if the school minibuses were primarily parked in their new parking garage behind the new sports centre car park.

b) Around the site

Parents who deliver pupils by car do sometimes park in Love Lane but this rarely causes congestion. The photo below shows Love Lane, with the school entrance on the left in the middle distance.



There is a lot of traffic movement along Love Lane with most buses returning this way to the main road, but speeds are relatively low on these back roads. The main road in Cleobury Mortimer is a busy east-west thoroughfare, and carries a lot of heavy traffic. Speeds are high on both approaches to the town, and pupils walking to school experience difficulty in crossing it. The new plans for crossing points on this road in the High Street Enhancement Scheme & the proposed Walking bus from the top of the town are very welcome.

How pupils usually travel to and from school – our baseline

The annual County School Travel Survey in November 2005 survey of 545 pupils responding to the question “How do you usually travel to and from school?” gave the following results:

Pupil’s travel mode	to school	from school
walk	142	147
cycle	0	0
Car – single pupil occupancy	18	18
Car share with siblings	44	42
car share with other pupils	9	4
bus	327	328
other	6	6
TOTAL	545	545

Figures in %	Walk	Cycle	Total Walk and cycle	Car alone	Car share with other pupils	Total Car	Bus	Other
2000	25.2	0.2	25.4	7.6	8.5	16.1	58.5	
2002	24	0	24	7	9	16	60	
2003	25.9	0	25.9	8.2	7.9	16.1	58	
2004	25	0	25	6.7	7.4	14.1	59.5	1.3
2005	26.5	0	26.5	3.3	9.1	12.4	60.1	1.1

The percentages of pupils walking to school have stayed remarkably constant since 2000. It is pleasing to note the slight increase in bus numbers and the subsequent drop in car use over the past three years.

Detailed Survey Findings for Lacon Childe

A 10 % sample of pupils from all years with an equal gender balance completed a more detailed survey. It covered a range of transport issues, not just travel to school, as this school is located in a very rural area, and many of the young people live in remote areas.

The results from this sample for their **journey to school** were as shown below, with a clear interest in cycling to school. The School Council is keen to challenge the previous governors' policy not to allow this in the near future, especially as cycle storage has been provided as part of the new sports facility.

Mode of travel to school	Actual	Preferred
Walk	34%	26%
Bike	0	25%
Bus	53%	25%
Car	13%	25%

Bus is obviously the main mode of **travel to school**, as Shropshire County Council has a statutory duty to provide transport to school for those living more than 3 miles from the school. A small group of children living just under this distance from school have to be brought by car as roads have no footways and are unsafe for pedestrians.

For **leisure journeys** bus is not much used, simply due to the location of many pupils' homes and the difficulty of running buses on a regular basis on such sparsely populated routes.

Most popular modes of travel for other journeys were:

Visiting friends	61% are taken by car
Clothes shopping	72% by car, 25% by bus
Leisure activities	75% by car, 27% walk

Many young people would like to be able to travel more independently to these activities, rather than being reliant on their parents for lifts, but that is often impractical. The School Council was pleased that Philip Dunne, the school's constituency MP, invited them to write to him about rural transport issues when he visited the school in mid March.

Reasons for not using their preferred mode of transport

Sometimes I do, but maybe I might not have time or money to go on the bus.

Sometimes, but don't always have enough money for the bus.

Because it is too expensive and they don't go close enough to the place.

Lack of buses coming to my area.

Because I live too far away to use my preferred form of transport.

Because it is too far. Or if the weather is bad.

Because I live too far away

Too far away to where I want to get to.

We are not allowed to use the bike rack at school.

Because I have no where to put my bike and can't get a lift.

Because when going to school they do not let us use the bike racks.

Because my family may be busy.

Because I do whatever is easiest for my mum.
 Because it's inconvenient for my mum.
 Dad works when I go to school and Mum has to look after my brother.
 The bus goes through the village so it's easier.

The picture that emerges is that the **school bus** is very well used as it is so convenient, whereas at other times of the day, or at weekends buses are not readily available. The most popular bus route used for **leisure time** is the 292 Cleobury to Kidderminster route. Some also travel to Ludlow, Hereford, Worcester and Tenbury Wells by bus, and some then use the bus to connect to trains to travel on to Shrewsbury or Birmingham.

64% of the pupils using buses made **positive** comments about them, but a number commented that the buses were quite often late, and were sometimes not very clean. All respondents except one felt safe on the buses, and it was the lack of seatbelts that this pupil identified as being the item that caused concern. Suggested improvements were to do with:

More comfortable seats (9) Radios/DVD players/TV (14) Cleanliness (2)

Pupils would prefer having both earlier and later buses, and increased frequency on their routes.

Most pupils in the survey (71%) **cycled** sometimes, mostly on country roads, or on roads within town. There are no dedicated cycle routes in this part of the county. Only one said that he felt unsafe, and that was when negotiating corners because *"the cars cannot see you"*. Provision of cycle paths would encourage pupils to cycle more but most local roads are too narrow to accommodate these. Four cycle routes developed by the Cleobury Country Tourism Group with the county's cycle transport officer will start from the Sports Centre car park. A leaflet is currently being printed to advertise the routes which vary in length from 10-35 miles across Cleobury Country on quieter country lanes and bridleways.

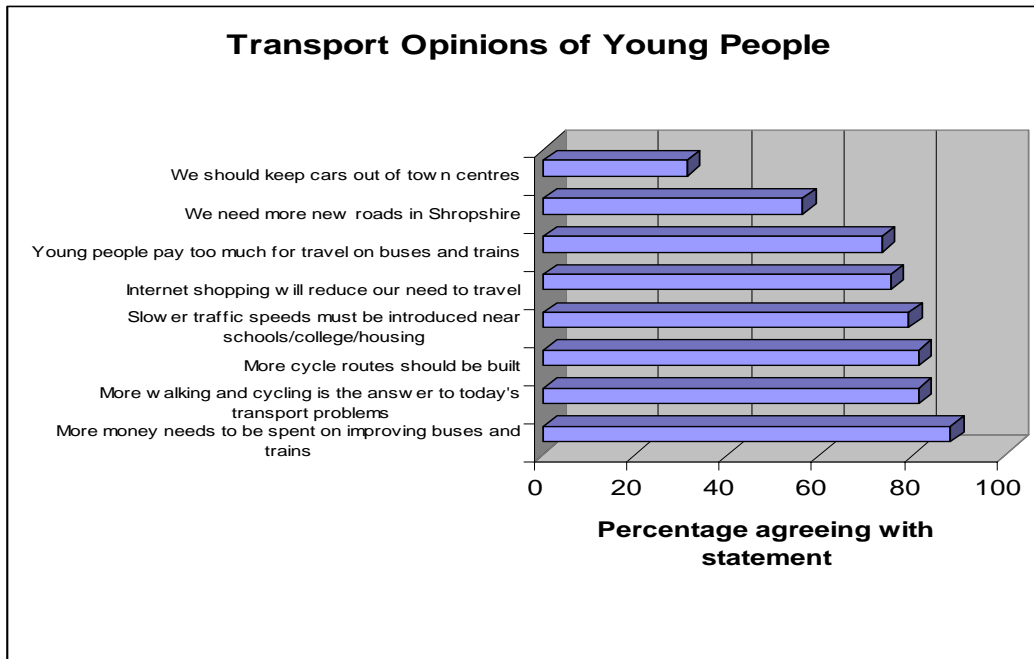
The majority felt safe or very safe when **walking**, although 2 mentioned they did not feel safe walking at night, or on the main road, when large lorries are going past. Having more street lighting and better pavements would make some pupils feel safer. The usual problem about dog dirt on pavements was brought up by a number of pupils but the town is fortunate that this is not a major problem.

The School Council visit to the High Street Enhancement Scheme consultation process brought several recommendations for improved paving along the High Street. Additional benches and litter bins would be appreciated by pupils out of school hours but would also be available to Year 11 at lunchtimes.

PUPIL OPINIONS ON TRAFFIC ISSUES

	Agree	Disagree
Slower traffic speeds must be introduced near schools and colleges, and in areas with houses	41	11
Young people pay too much for travel on buses and trains	38	14
More money needs to be spent on improving buses and trains	46	6
We need more new roads in Shropshire	29	23

More cycle routes should be built	42	10
Internet shopping will reduce our need to travel	39	13
We should keep cars out of town centres	16	36
More walking and cycling is the answer to today's transport problems	42	10



Main School Travel and Transport Issues

- The importance of bus transport for young people is clear
- The problems of accessibility for pupils living in remote communities are highlighted
- Some footpaths around the school need re-surfacing & widening for dual cycle/pedestrian use in the future
- The wish of many to cycle to school emerged from the surveys
- The need to increase awareness about on site parking for adult evening use
- The desirability of continued partnership working with the local transport group to improve pupil safety in the journey to school and to help promote this process

Our Action Plan

1. Develop cycling & walking as the safe option for school travel wherever feasible
2. Engage pupils in campaigning for improvements in safe, sustainable and affordable transport for young people
3. Promote road safety and sustainable education within the citizenship curriculum
4. Raise awareness of on site safety using the findings of the site audit in this travel plan

Objective 1: Develop cycling & walking as the safe option for school travel

Target 1: To increase the % of pupils living in Cleobury Mortimer walking to school.

Target 2: To have some pupils cycling to school by November 2006

	Action targets	Lead person/group	Target date	Progress
1	To represent the case for cycling to school to Governors to argue the case to amend current policy	School Council	July 2006	Report in Lacon Link & on the School website
2	To establish a set of rules for cycling to school	School Council + staff	Autumn 2006	
3	To promote walking (+ cycling) to parents living in Cleobury at Induction and via the School Prospectus	Head	June 2006	(Many new houses currently being built in Cleobury may well increase numbers of pupils in local catchment)
4	To monitor the condition of walking routes to school	School Council	Spring 2007	
5	To progress the upgrading of the link path to Catherton Lane for dual cycle/footpath use	Julie Potter	April 2006	

N.B. Survey of all Cleobury pupils needed in September 2006, to monitor improvements by July 2007

Objective 2: Engage pupils in campaigning for improvements in safe, sustainable and affordable transport for young people

Target 3 : *To sustain bus use at least 60% at current levels by November 2006*

	Action targets	Lead person/role	Target date	Progress
1	To develop the role of the new bus prefects to include monitoring punctuality, overcrowding, behaviour on the school buses	Deputy Head	Summer Term 2006	
2	To monitor the effectiveness of the bus prefect system	Deputy Head	Spring Term 2006	
3	To promote via the prospectus and induction the availability of the Temporary Seats Payment Scheme for pupils within the 3 mile limit	Head	June 2006	
4	To produce a press release and invite the press in to hear pupils' views on rural transport	School Council	Autumn Term 2006	
5	To meet with Philip Dunne MP to report pupils' views on rural transport	School Council	Autumn Term 2006	Follow-up to meeting held in March 2006

Objective 3: Promote road safety and sustainable education within the citizenship curriculum and in other ways

	Action targets	Lead person/role	Target date	Progress
1	To ensure all pupils going on school visits are made aware of relevant road safety issues	Educational visits co-ordinator	On-going	
2	To include road safety awareness within PSHE curriculum	Key Stage co-ordinators	Autumn Term 2006	On-going liaison with Malcolm Farrar – Road Safety Officer 01743 253263
3	To continue collaboration with the CC Partnership Transport Theme group	School Council + CC members Val Simpson and Tom Brettell	On-going	
4	To produce a summary of the School Travel Plan on the website to inform pupils and parents	School Council + Resources Team	Spring Term 2007	

Ideas for use of School Travel Plan Grants

The use of the Travel Plan Grant will be discussed by the School Council and the Headteacher in the future when some of the objectives have been concluded. Any decision will need to wait until after the Governors decision about cycling to school, as this would be a relevant area for expenditure

Objective 4: Raise awareness of on site safety using the findings of the travel plan site audit

	Action targets	Lead person/role	Target date	Progress
1	Review footpaths near the school site	STP Adviser to liaise with relevant SCC departments	Autumn 2006	
2	To develop a code of practice for cycle users on the school site if agreement reached on their use.	AG + School Council	Autumn Term 2006	
3	To produce an updated leaflet showing parking areas for staff, visitors, buses, people with disabilities, cyclists, etc.	AG + Resources Team	September 2006	
4	To inform users of the school facilities about parking and site safety issues, via leaflet, booking system and website, etc.	School Admin.	Autumn Term 2006	

Consultation and Stakeholders

2004	Preliminary work on travel plan done by Richard Meredith
April 2005	Market Towns Initiative meeting – Julie Potter gives presentation on School Travel Plans
November 2005	Whole school participated in Annual County Travel Survey
December 2005	Meeting with Headteacher, Richard Meredith, Tom Brettell, Viv O'Connor about Travel Plan
January 2006	Launch of School Travel Plan with School Council, Val Simpson and Alan Gilhooley
February 2006	School Council members conducted detailed survey and collected data for Travel Plan
February 2006	School Council visited exhibition of plans for High Street Enhancement Scheme and gave feedback on these
March 2006	Possible initiatives for plan discussed with the School Council.

Monitoring and Review of Our School Travel Plan

We recognise that this plan is a start and we need to monitor and review our objectives and planned initiatives.

How we will monitor/review our travel plan	When	Who
Take part each autumn in SCC's School Travel Survey – a "hand-count" travel survey to monitor any changes in travel behaviour including use of 'Park and Stride'.	<i>November each year</i>	<i>School Council</i>
Gain feedback following participation in events and campaigns	<i>Ongoing</i>	<i>School Council</i>
Ensure that the School Council, in consultation with the Headteacher, report annually on progress made with numerical targets and travel initiatives to Governing Body.	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>Head's report to Governors</i>
Review and update the STP each year. Our next review will be April 2007	<i>April 2007</i>	<i>Head & School Council</i>
Continue to maintain links with the Shropshire CC on road safety and sustainable travel issues.	<i>Ongoing</i>	
Review STP and pupil travel needs arising from new developments in education and transport provision	<i>Annually</i>	<i>Head</i>
Update meeting with MP on youth rural travel issues	<i>Autumn 2006</i>	<i>School Council</i>

This agreement is an expression of commitment and goodwill on the part of the stakeholders to achieve a positive outcome for the pupils and the local community.

Signed.....Date.....
Headteacher

Signed.....Date.....
Chair of Governors

Signed.....Date.....
School Travel Plan Council rep

Signed.....Date.....
Cleobury Country Partnership

Signed.....Date.....
School Travel Plan Adviser, Shropshire County Council

Signed.....Date.....
Assistant Director, Children and Young Peoples' Services Shropshire County Council

Signed.....Date.....
Assistant Director, Economy and Environment, Shropshire County Council