

Barley Close Primary and Modeshift STARS

07 July 2021

Barley Close Primary School, Mangotsfield

In 2019 Barley Close Primary in Mangotsfield was the first school in South Gloucestershire to achieve Bronze accreditation with Modeshift STARS. Within a year, they achieved their Silver accreditation.

The school have fully embraced promotion of active travel and have engaged with South Gloucestershire Council's support since 2017. As a result, they have achieved a 14% increase in the number of children travelling actively to school from 80.2% to 92% (March 2020).

Whilst their original active travel rate was good, the school wanted to improve it as the small cul-de sac outside the school was still very congested at drop off and pick up times.

With support from the Sustainable Travel for Schools team, they registered with Modeshift to create a live, online school travel plan which formed the focus for planned activities throughout the year.

The school started by surveying both pupils and staff using the Modeshift portal to understand the barriers to travelling actively to school. They used the information to plan a range of activities and initiatives to encourage more pupils to actively travel to school, with a focus on cycling which many children said they would prefer to travelling by car.

The school increased cycling training including Bikeability and Balance Bike, as well as Dr Bike sessions. They also held security marking sessions with Avon and Somerset Police, entered bike competitions with other schools and volunteered pupils to assist Bikeability officers to carry out the new Covid safe Bikeability training sessions during July 2020.

The school carried out many other activities to promote active travel to school:

- developed their Active Travel Policy
- stopped parents using the school car park
- placed signs in the road discouraging parking near the school
- recorded bad parking outside the school to name and shame offenders with support from the police
- engaged in Living Streets WOW Walk to School Challenge
- booked and ran scooter and pedestrian training
- road safety sessions and journey planning for year 6 to their new secondary school
- launched Burst the Bubble, an initiative to promote park and stride to school.

Effectively communicating with parents and pupils to promote the activities was essential to encourage support of the school's active travel aims. The school created an active travel noticeboard and dedicated page on their website, publicised the five and ten minute walk to school map (provided by South Gloucestershire Council), included regular updates and information in newsletters and held regular assemblies on initiatives such as Walk to School and Be Bright Be Seen.

The efforts of the school and support from parents and pupils have helped the school to quickly achieve their Bronze and Silver accreditations as well as winning the 'School of the Local Authority' award at Modeshift STARS regional awards (July 2021).

Jo Williams, Head, said

"Being part of Modeshift STARS has been a great addition to our school. We had noticed that travelling by car was the easier option for families, but the children wanted to use bikes and scooters. By joining this award scheme, we gave the children a reason to 'nag' their families to allow them to walk, scoot or bike to school.

Children arrive in school energised, rosy checked and raring to get going for the day's learning. They often meet up on route with friends and the chatting and buzz around the site at the start of the day is lovely to hear, it really sets everyone up for a good day.

We have also noticed that more children are on bikes and scooters after school and at weekends as they have had that practice on weekdays and are much more aware of road safety."

Our Sustainable Travel for Schools Team can provide advice and support for your school throughout your Modeshift STARS journey. Contact us to find out more at sustravel4schools@southglos.gov.uk.



Pupils and teachers from Barley Close Primary receiving their Bronze Modeshift STARS accreditation with staff from South Gloucestershire Council and Living Streets (2019).



Pupils from Barley Close receiving their Silver Modeshift STARS accreditation (2020).