

# The Castle secondary school and Modeshift STARS

01 December 2021

## **The Castle School, Thornbury**

Congratulations to The Castle School in Thornbury who are the first secondary school in South Gloucestershire to attain a Bronze accreditation for Modeshift, the national accreditation scheme for active and sustainable travel.

For the past year The Castle school has worked with South Gloucestershire, Living Streets and Sustrans on a range of initiatives to promote active and sustainable travel to pupils and their families, which not only has gained them Bronze accreditation but also created a live online school travel plan.

Katherine Wilson, Deputy Head of The Castle explained

“We had not previously had an opportunity to consider travel to school so working with South Gloucestershire to gain the Modeshift STARS accreditation has given us a real focus as a school community, drawing us together on a common aim to reduce the number of whole school journeys to school, improving air quality as well as the health and well-being of our young people”.

The school took part in a range of initiatives in the last academic year focusing on encouraging more walking and cycling to school. The school hosted Bikeability training for Year 7, helping them gain the confidence to use their bikes to get to and from school. They also held Dr Bike days where staff and students could get their bikes serviced free and have a dedicated bike toolkit in reception to help deal with any emergency repairs as well as installing more cycle storage.

Competitions and incentives were also included such as a Golden Lock competition where lucky bike riders could win a prize each week if they cycled to school, The Next Steps Walking Challenge and a Let's Walk photography competition that was adapted to include walking from home when schools were closed during the national lockdown at the beginning of 2021, resulting in 400 entries.

Information and promotion were also a fundamental aspect of the work with all tutor groups taking part as part of the school's PSHE programme called Lifeskills, as well as information in school newsletters and a dedicated [active travel website section](#) being created. Whilst the school was closed to the majority of students during the national lockdown information and activities continued such as 'My Walking Week' for Children's Mental Health Week in February

Katherine continued

“We are delighted to have been awarded the Bronze Modeshift STARS national award. Despite the challenges that lockdown and Covid brought, our students were able to access some very interesting and impactful activities with a real focus on active and sustainable travel to school. We now hope to build on these activities to work towards achieving the Silver award”.

The school received five books from South Gloucestershire Council that have been included in the school’s Learning Resource Centre for students, a collection of environmental books regarding climate change, nature and how children can make a difference to the planet, as a reward for being the first secondary school to reach Bronze.

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](mailto:sustravel4schools@southglos.gov.uk).



Head of The Castle, Mr Joe Docherty and Deputy Head, Katherine Wilson with pupils who won the Let’s Walk photography competition receive the Bronze Modeshift STARS award from Andy MacDonald, South Gloucestershire’s Sustainable Travel for Schools team member. Nov 2021.