

Travel Plan  
Swiss Cottage School  
DfES number: 2027205

## **Introduction**

This Travel Plan is for Swiss Cottage School, Camden. We recognise the importance of building transport-related issues into life at our school, and intend this travel plan to help in that process.

Swiss Cottage School mission statement affirms our commitment to providing our pupils with skills and strategies that they will be able to take with them and use outside of the school context. One important area of development is in making safe and responsible travel choices. Through helping us to develop and maintain a variety of transport-related initiatives in the school, we hope that this Travel Plan will be a useful tool in this aspect of our stated mission.

It is also recognised that staff travel choices will have an impact, both on conditions in the immediate locality of our school and on the wider environment. We therefore plan to use the Travel Plan to provide a framework within which to address any transport issues that may arise for staff.

At Swiss Cottage School there are a number of travel initiatives already in place for staff and, most notably, for pupils. We are taking this opportunity to consolidate these into a Travel Plan to provide a reference for what is in place, what is still under development, and how we wish to continue developing transport-related initiatives at our school.



## Context

### *The School*

Swiss Cottage School is an LA special school located in Swiss Cottage on Avenue Road (see map in 'transport' section below). It has 232 pupils ranging from 2 to 19 years old, with a variety of special needs. The majority of our pupils are resident in Camden, but we do also provide for pupils from other boroughs. The following table gives numbers of children travelling in from other boroughs.

Islington	3
Haringey	1
Kensington & Chelsea	6
Westminster	7

Being a special school, Swiss Cottage School would be expected to have specific transport patterns that will, to some extent, be dictated by the needs of the pupils. Thus, a large proportion of the pupil body (approximately 71%) travel to school on school buses, or using transport provided by their boroughs. This is largely because they live outside of the 2 or 3 mile radius (for primary and secondary pupils respectively) beyond which they are entitled to free transport, but in some cases it will be as a result of their special needs.

Independent travel for those pupils for whom it is appropriate is actively encouraged at Swiss Cottage School. However, as ours is a special school, the average age of those pupils who are able to travel to school independently is higher than at a mainstream school and this is therefore an option that will be available to relatively few of our pupils. At present we have approximately 16 pupils who are independent travellers, of whom 7 are in year 11.

Of those pupils who travel in with parents, carers etc. most use public transport or walk. Car travel associated with the pupil body is therefore minimal (only 17 children) and those aspects of this travel plan that aim to minimise car use will be aimed at staff rather than parents.

The staff body at Swiss Cottage School numbers 184 people plus 20+ therapists and includes teachers, teaching assistants and administration/management. There are a small number of staff who work part-time, but with the exception of the therapists, the majority of staff are onsite throughout the school day.



The school day for pupils runs from 09:30 to 15:30. Staff arrive at or before 08:30 and leave no earlier than 15:45 (and often later depending on meetings and other commitments) so the arrival and departure of staff does not coincide with that of the children. This helps keep congestion outside the school to a minimum, and makes the car park safer for children getting on and off school buses.

There are a small number of pupils who stay after school on certain days for after school clubs. These pupils are generally collected by their parents or carers afterwards. It is hoped to expand after school activities in the near future. At present, transport problems are a significant barrier for children wishing to stay for clubs so it is hoped to be able to provide some form of transport for children staying on after school.

On occasion, the school will also be open after school hours or at weekends for single events such as, for example, family days, Home School Association events, training sessions etc. , and is open during the school holidays

### *Policies*

There are a number of areas of school life into which this Travel Plan will fit.

Swiss Cottage School is a Healthy School. A number of initiatives ranging from providing fruit in the classrooms to termly 'health weeks' are in place to encourage children to make healthy choices both at school and in other areas of their lives. As part of this, pupils are encouraged to take daily exercise and to walk as much as possible, be it around the playground, or to get from A to B.

The school trip policy at Swiss Cottage School is to use public transport, where possible, for all outings. This also ties in with our objective of promoting independence amongst our pupils, and exposing them to situations that are relevant to their lives outside of school, and to experiences that they will be able to draw upon when they leave school.

It is part of our mission statement that pupils will develop the ability to use the skills and strategies that they learn at school in all aspects of their lives. The fostering of independence is therefore an extremely important part of the teaching at Swiss Cottage School. This includes being able to travel around independently. Older pupils in the school are given 'travel training' to enable them to become independent travellers (be able to walk or use public transport safely and on their own). Considering the consequences

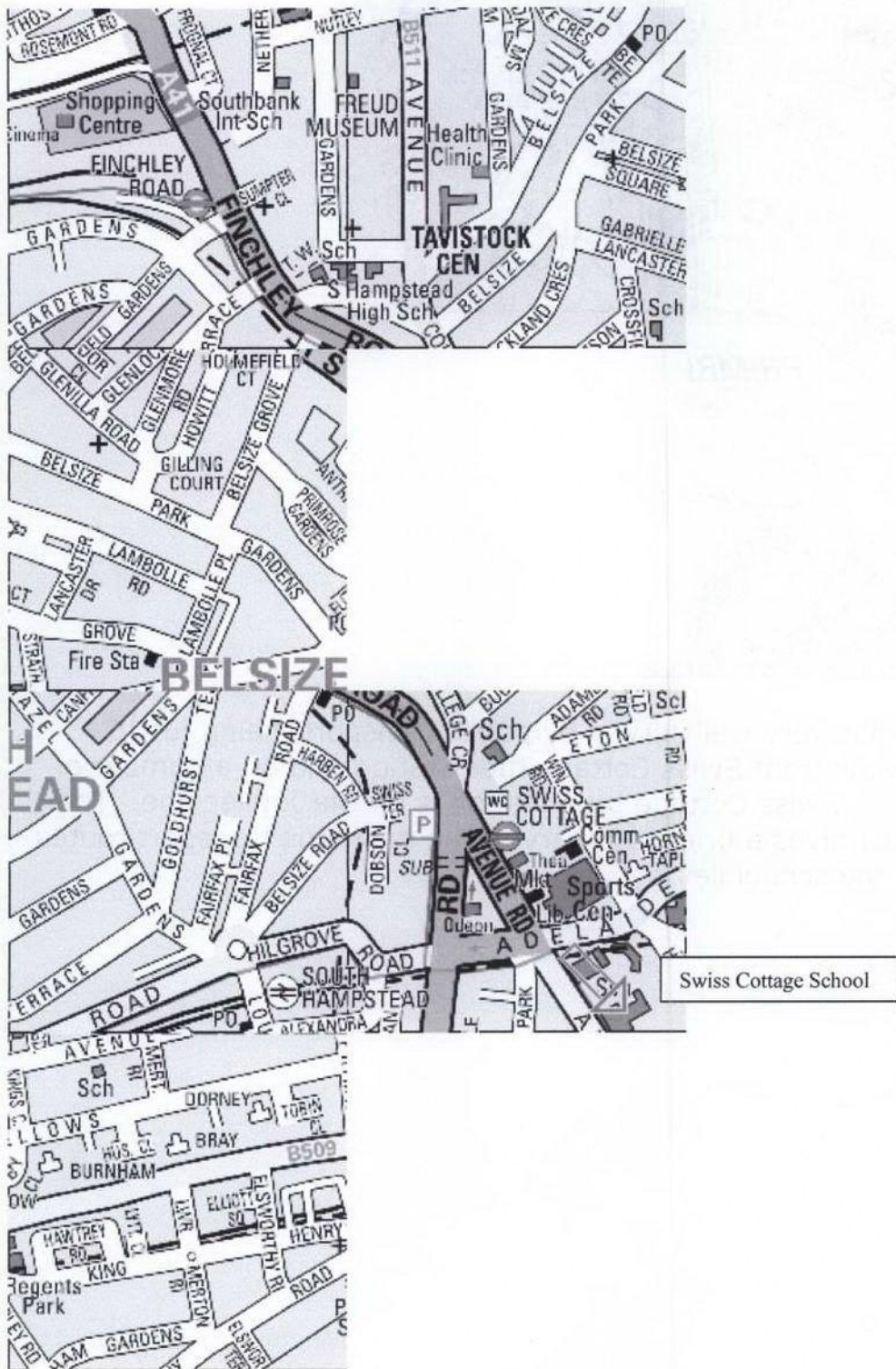
of choices and exploring other issues surrounding decision making in all aspects of life is something that is addressed with pupils throughout the school at the appropriate levels. Travel-related choices can be built into this framework.

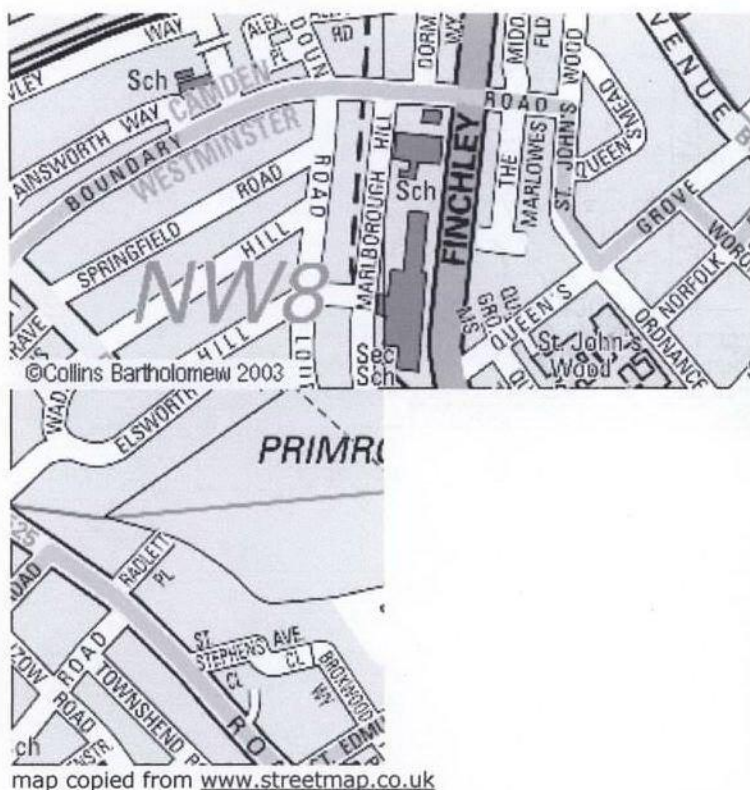
As for all organisations working with children, Swiss Cottage School now operates within the Every Child Matters framework. Many of the key outcomes within this framework could in some form involve transport. Thus, work done with the children on being healthy, staying safe and achieving economic well being (for example on issues of access) could contain a transport element.

### *Transport*

Swiss Cottage School is a special school situated on Avenue Road, just South of Finchley Road. It's main entrance is onto Avenue Road, where there are two gates for the entrance and exit of vehicles.







The school is very well served by public transport, being just 5 minutes walk from Swiss Cottage tube station and on a number of bus routes. Swiss Cottage tube station is on the Jubilee line. The table below gives a brief summary of the main bus transport routes on which the school lies.



<b>Bus</b>	<b>Route</b>	<b>Frequency (morning peak)</b>
13	Aldwych - Golders Green Station	7-8 mins
31	Camden Town Station/Greenham - Notting Hill Gate	6-7 mins
46	Warwick Avenue Station - Farringdon St / Stonecutter St	8-11 mins
82	Victoria - North Finchley/Tally Ho Co	6-8 mins
113	Oxford Circus - Edgware Station	8-10 mins
187	Park Royal Asda - Finchley Road / 02 Centre	11-12 mins
268	Finchley Road / 02 Centre - Finchley Road / 02 Centre	11-12 mins
771	Moorgate/Finsbury Sq - Brent Cross Coach Stop	
772	Moorgate/Finsbury Sq - Brent Cross Coach Stop	
773	Moorgate/Finsbury Sq - Brent Cross Coach Stop	
C11	Archway Station / Macdonald Rd - Brent Cross Shopping Cen	9-10 mins

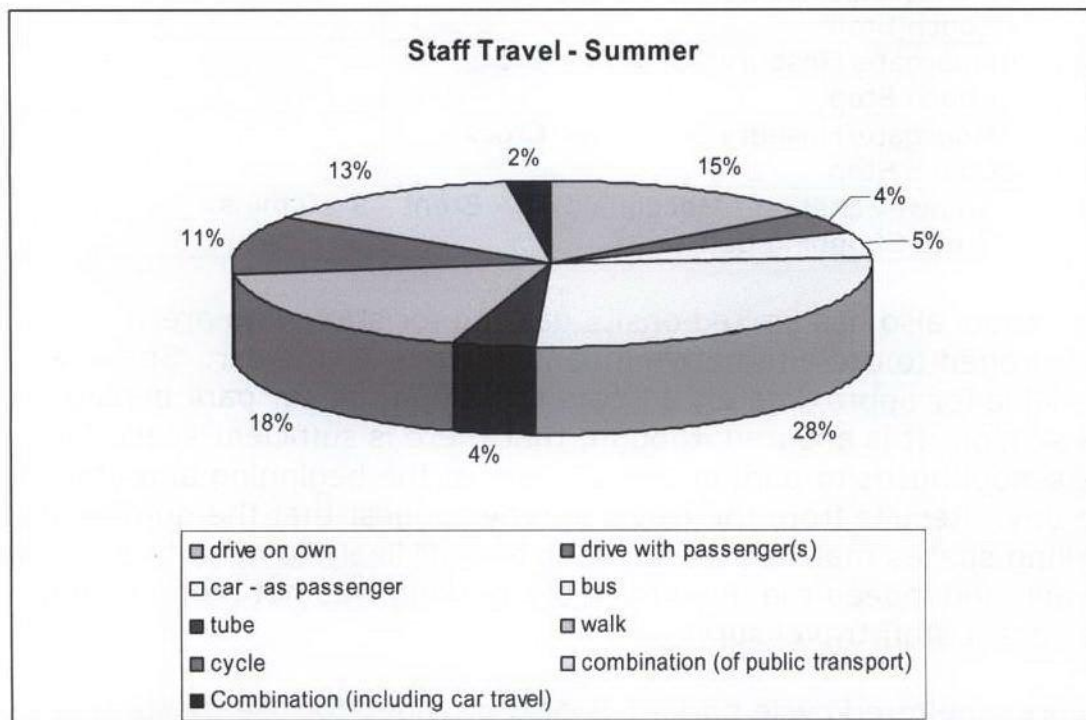
The school also has limited onsite parking for staff, who are encouraged to use alternative means of travel to the car. Space is available for approximately 11 cars to park in the car park behind the school. It is ensured, though, that there is sufficient space for the school buses to park in the car park at the beginning and end of the day. Results from the travel survey suggest that the number of parking spaces matches the number of staff likely to need to park at school, and indeed the need for more parking was not mentioned in the recent staff travel surveys.

Secure, sheltered cycle parking is also provided for use by staff. There are 8 Sheffield stands provide parking for approximately 17 bicycles. It is always possible to find space to park one's bicycle, but the stands are close to capacity, and any significant increase in the numbers of staff choosing to cycle to work would be likely to necessitate the provision of further cycle parking spaces.

## Travel Survey and Mode Share

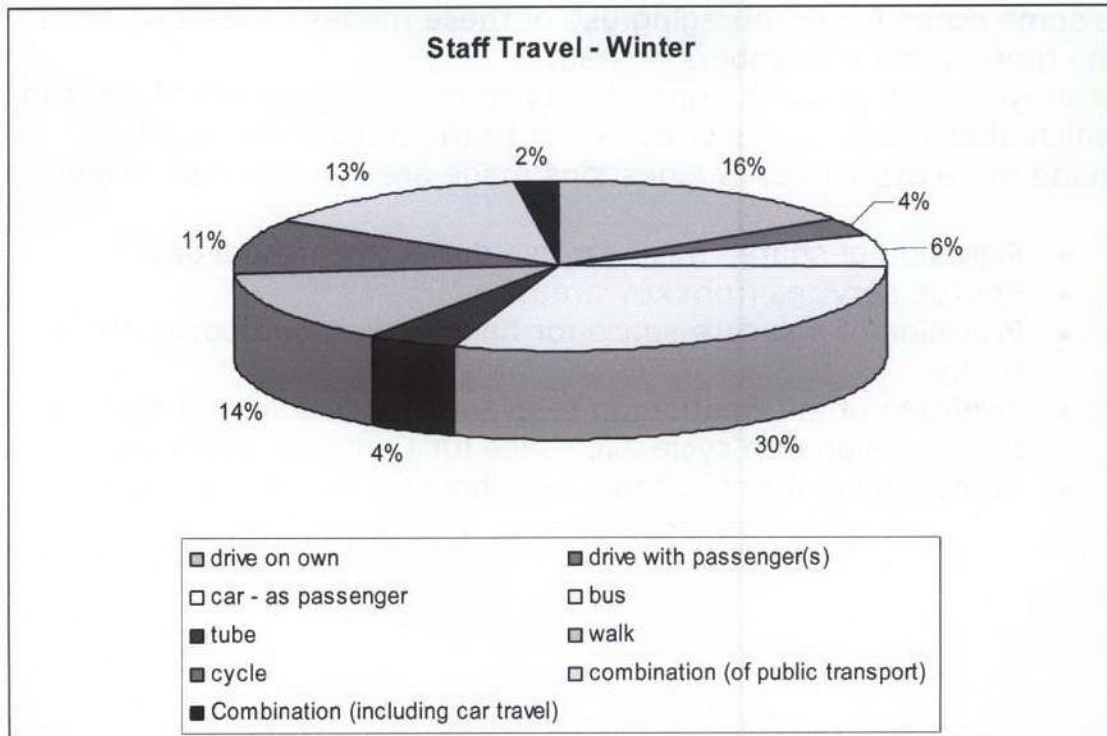
### Staff Travel

A travel survey of staff at Swiss Cottage School was carried out, through which mode share figures were collected, along with reasons for chosen means of travel. Suggestions were also collected for improving the transport situation at the school. 45 responses were received, giving a response rate of approximately 56%. The proportion of staff journeys made to the school by each mode of transport is summarised in the figures below. A new survey will be carried out when all staff are appointed and in place in September 2012.



(Mode share data was split into summer and winter as it was known that a significant proportion of staff walk to school, and it was felt that patterns might therefore change in the colder, darker months.)





NB Percentages shown in the graphs are for trips made, and not for the proportion of staff travelling by each mode as many people will travel by different means depending on a variety of factors (for example the need to drop off dependents, carry equipment, travel elsewhere during the day, etc.)

As can be seen by the graphs above, public transport is the most common form of transport chosen by staff, accounting for a total of 45% and 47% of all trips to the school in summer and winter respectively. Within this category, bus travel is the largest section, with 28% and 30% of trips being made by bus.

Car travel accounts for a relatively small proportion of trips made to and from the school, with only 15%-16% of trips made being in single occupancy cars. Informal car sharing is known to take place at Swiss Cottage school with 9-10% of trips being made either carrying passengers, or as a passenger.

Reasons given for choosing to drive included distances travelled, equipment carried, and the time taken by alternative modes as well as their reliability.

A significant proportion of staff at Swiss Cottage school walk or cycle to work (18% and 11% respectively in summer and 14% and 11% respectively in winter). This is clearly an option only for staff living within walking or cycling distance from the school, but there

is some scope for encouraging use of these modes at least some of the time by more members of staff.

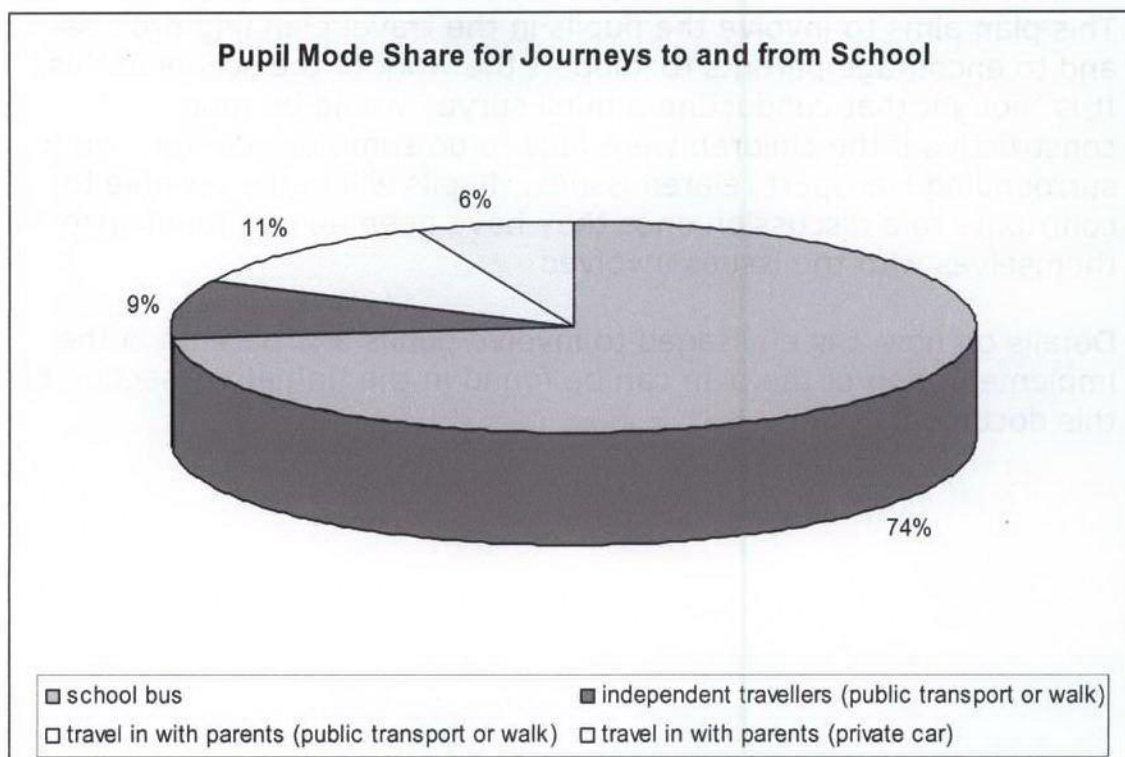
Staff were also given the opportunity to make suggestion of ways in which alternative means of transport to the private car might be made more attractive. Suggestions made are summarised below:

- Provision of shared a car for use during the school day
- Shuttle services from key areas
- Provision of a secure space for hanging wet outdoor clothing to dry
- Provision of information on relevant council schemes such as the provision of a cycle allowance for Camden employees
- Campaigning for affordable local housing for key workers



## *Pupil Travel*

At this stage, a pupil travel survey was not carried out as the transport patterns of the pupil body are known (see chart below). This data will be updated when the school opens in Sept 2012. Involvement of the pupils in the Travel Plan will take place through the measures implemented as part of this plan, and a full pupil survey can then take place as part of a planned and structured discussion on transport issues.



## *Conclusions*

Although there is always scope for improvement, current levels of car use at Swiss Cottage School do not cause great concern. We expect that to remain the case. In view of survey findings then, it is felt that the best of use of the travel plan at this stage would be to focus on awareness raising, for both staff and pupils, and on building travel-related activities into the life of the school.

Once the travel plan is an integral part of school life, more detailed surveys can be carried out amongst staff to investigate the possibility of reducing car travel further still.

With respect to pupil and parent surveys, it is felt that the primary objective of these at this stage would be to establish pupil travel

patterns. As the mode share for pupils is already known, surveys were not necessary for this.

Further uses of surveys include raising awareness, encouraging pupils to think about the issues involved, bringing parents into the travel planning process, and identifying successes and failures of the travel plan and possible ways to move it forward. Given the nature of our school, and the fact that the plan is in its initial stages, it was not felt that this would not be the most appropriate or constructive time to undertake a pupil or parent survey.

This plan aims to involve the pupils in the travel planning process and to encourage parents to support the work of the school in this. It is thought that conducting a pupil survey would be more constructive if the children were able to do some preparatory work surrounding transport related issues. Pupils will be better able to contribute to a discussion once they have been able to familiarise themselves with the issues involved.

Details on how it is envisaged to involve pupils and parents in the implementation of the plan can be found in the 'Initiative' section of this document.



## Objectives

In line with Camden Councils objectives for school travel, the objectives of this Travel Plan are:

- To raise awareness amongst staff, parents and particularly pupils of the school about the transport alternatives available for the journey to school (and other journeys) and about potential consequences of a given transport choice
- To minimise where possible the number of journeys to and from Swiss Cottage School made by private car and to encourage journeys to be made by alternative means such as public transport, walking and cycling

In addition to these, the main focus of travel-related projects at Swiss Cottage School is:

- To foster independence in travel for those pupils for whom this is possible
- To familiarise pupils with safety and other issues surrounding travel choices

Given the nature of our school, the specific needs of our pupils must be foremost in our minds at all times. In many cases, the transport alternatives available to pupils will be limited by their special needs, and increasingly so as our pupil population become more complex. Mode share percentages will therefore be relatively inelastic and transport initiatives will focus on a building of awareness and understanding of the issues surrounding transport choices, rather than on achieving mode share targets.

## **Initiatives**

### Already in Place

#### *Pupils*

- Travel training is provided for those pupils for whom independent travel is an option
- Pupils of an appropriate age are encouraged to apply for free travel on public transport in London. The school provides the necessary support in the application process.
- Where relevant pupils are involved in transport-related issues. For example the school council recently visited Camden Transport Depot where they were involved in a consultation on the replacement of the Camden bus fleet. The children were looking at which buses would best meet their needs.
- Cycle training will be provided, to the appropriate level, for all children in the school. Swiss Cottage School is taking part in a cycle training scheme which follows the new national standard and through which it is hoped all students in the school will learn to ride a bicycle or tricycle. Sessions will be run on a weekly basis and will also provide training on bike control skills as well as skills for cycling on road where appropriate. The school will also be used as a centre for weekend training sessions and cycle maintenance sessions for both children and adults. Cycle training will also be included in the school's Family Days which are held on a regular basis for pupils at Swiss Cottage School and their families. This will be removed when we return to our site in September 2012.
- Parent Council members have met regularly with Camden Transport to share needs and constraints and to 'clarify possible solutions'.

#### *Staff*

- Secure, covered bicycle storage provided for use by staff
- New staff are encouraged to use means other than the private car for their journey to work. Swiss Cottage School is advertised as a car free school to new starters.
- Parking provision is limited

### Possible areas for expansion/development

#### *Business Team*

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- It will necessary to identify an individual or a group who will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the travel plan. This group/individual will oversee the implementation of travel-related initiatives, apply for funding where relevant, coordinate the gathering a distribution of travel information, and be responsible for updating the travel plan.

### *Curriculum*

- Explore the potential for building travel-related topics into the curriculum. Possible areas of relevance include humanities, PSHE, work done surrounding Health Week, etc.
- Teachers to be encouraged to plan sessions where children will be taken out on public transport. The aim is to expose pupils to the experiences and to better equip them to make travel choices outside of school.
- Expand existing travel training programme to include key stage 3 to help raise awareness of issues faced when travelling in London
- 'Every opportunity is a learning opportunity'. Ensure that an awareness of different transport options and of issues surrounding travel is encouraged for all trips off-site. Time should be taken after all outings for pupils to record observations from their experiences. Where different students have travelled by different modes a comparison can be made.
- Each class to keep a running record of trips made off-site, including destinations and mode of transport used. This can then be used to assess what is being done and to create opportunities to build on existing travel experiences. The aim would be to involve pupils in this assessment to develop their ability to make judgements on the different transport choices.
- Support parents in building on their children's travel experiences at home. For example, parents could be invited to 'ghost travel training', accompanying the child and staff member on travel training so they then feel able to continue travel training work with their child outside of school.
- Encourage parents to consider the benefits and challenges of using different means of transport with their children.
- Work done across the school on pupils' travel experiences and on staying safe will begin and end every term. The beginning of the term will be an opportunity to find out what travel experiences pupils are having. It will then be possible to document progress by the end of term. End of term sessions will also be used to recap on safety issues with a view to



equipping pupils with the necessary tools to make safe travel choices during school holidays.

- Create a travel display board where pupils' work on transport issues as well as evidence of their travel experiences can be displayed. This will help keep travel issues in the forefront of pupils' minds.
- Obtain and make available to staff information on special travel-related days such as, for example, Walk to Work Week, National Bike Week, In Town Without my Car Day, etc. including information on what is being organised in Camden. Plan how these days could be brought into the school and made relevant to our children.

### *Travel Tool Kits*

- Start compiling a 'Travel Plan Pack', to be made available to all staff, with ideas and resources for involving the pupils in the travel planning process where appropriate, and for exploring relevant issues with the children. This would be built upon as the Travel Plan develops and the school gains more experience with the process.
- Include in the staff pack a list of links where further resources can be found which would help support those wishing to build a transport element in to their work with pupils.
- Develop a 'Travel Tool Kit' for distribution to children at the end of the school year. This could include information on different means of transport, for example bus and tube maps, suggestions of places that are safe to walk. Information on family days out accessible by public transport could also be included.
- Liaise with popular destinations to explore the possibility of providing free or discounted tickets for pupils of the school should they travel to these attraction with their families during the holidays.
- Support parents in the use of these Tool Kits. Encourage them to work with their children, discussing transport issues and to use different means of transport. Also encourage parents to collect and send into school evidence (photos, leaflets, ticket stubs etc.) of trips made outside of school.
- At the start of the school year provide an opportunity for pupils to share their travel experiences from the holidays. Compile evidence of these experiences.
- Build up evidence of travel experiences to which pupils are exposed. Document successes and chart progress.

### *Staff*



- Provide shower facilities in our new school for use by staff who walk or cycle into work.
- Provide more storage space for use by staff, including bigger lockers for the storage of equipment, and a secure space to hang wet outdoor clothing to dry. Look into obtaining special drying cupboards.
- Provide information to all visitors and potential new staff on public transport provision to the site.
- Provide staff with relevant and up to date information on borough-wide initiatives pertaining to travel to work.
- Obtain and make available to staff information on special travel-related days such as, for example, Walk to Work Week, National Bike Week, In Town Without my Car Day, etc. including information on what is being organised in Camden and elsewhere in London.

### *Consultation*

It is recognised that to be successful the school Travel Plan must involve all parties in its implementation. The above measures therefore include actions to include pupils and parents in the travel planning process. It is felt that pupil consultation will be most constructive if conducted as part of a planned programme of teaching and activities for pupils. Once the travel element has been established in the curriculum, therefore, and pupils have been introduced to the issues at play through work done in class, a pupil survey can take place. Parents can then also be brought into the process to enable them to further develop their child's understanding of the issues in support of work done at school.

## Action Plan

action	person/org responsible	Timeframe for implementation *
<i>Administration</i>		
Appoint a travel plan coordinator	Senior management	April/May 2013
Review PSHE&C rolling plan	Senco in each department	Summer 1
Review School Trip Policy	Senco and Joe	In process
Consider the feasibility and cost effectiveness of suggestions made in the staff travel survey (those feasible at present already included in action plan)	Senior tea,	As opportunities arise
Develop evaluation sheet to be filled in after every outing. Discuss with teachers.	Senco	Summer 1
Hold meeting with teachers and teaching assistants to introduce new transport initiatives	Heads of Schools	Summer 1
Provide information to all visitors and potential new staff on transport alternatives for accessing the site	Business TEam	ongoing
Conduct pupil and parent surveys	Senco	Autumn 1
<i>Pupils</i>		
Travel to be on taught curriculum (PSHE&C) at least once a term	Class teachers	ongoing
Launch travel element of curriculum with pupils. Emphasis: being safe and staying healthy. Reflect of holidays experiences	Class Teachers	Summer 1
Start and end each term with discussion of travel and staying safe	Class teachers (plus management for whole school activities where appropriate)	Ongoing Start Summer 1
Put up travel display board for displaying pupils' travel-related work	Travel Plan Coordinator Pupils and teachers to provide display material	Summer 1 Renew display regularly
Compile travel tool kit for pupils	Senco	Summer, 1 & 2
Keep record of trips made by pupils, as well as reactions to their travel experiences	Class Teachers/ Business Team	Ongoing Start Summer 1
Include in planning for trips off site time to focus travel experiences	Class Teachers	ongoing
Start cycle training scheme	Joe	Summer 1
Expand travel training programme to include Middle and Upper Schools (include parents where possible)		Summer 1
Where possible, include parents in travel-related initiatives (through communication and direct involvement if appropriate) to	Class teachers	ongoing



enable them to further support their children		
Distribute travel tool kit to children	Class Teachers	Summer 2, end
Explore further possibilities for building travel and the travel plan into the curriculum, at the appropriate level, throughout the school	All staff	ongoing
<b>Staff</b>		
Research and make available to staff information of relevant council initiatives relating to the journey to work (including national days and special events). Keep information updated.	Senco	Summer 1 Ongoing
Provide showers for use by staff in new school	Principal	Summer holidays
Provide more appropriate storage space for outdoors clothing and equipment	BAM	Summer holidays
Compile and contribute to travel plan resource file for use by staff with children	Senco to establish All staff to make contributions if possible	Summer 1 Ongoing

\*NB Many actions will take time to put in place as they will involve the development of an initiative or the building up of resources. Timeframes are therefore given in terms of the half term over which it is aimed to implement them. Thus, for example, 'Summer 1' means that the action should be completed during the first half of the summer term. 'Summer 2' refers to the second half of the summer term.

## **Monitoring and Review**

It is recognised that a Travel Plan is a dynamic document and that it will need to be monitored and updated as the transport situation both inside and outside the school changes and develops.

A record of the achievements of the plan will be kept on a continual basis. Information provided through the plan will also be kept up-to-date, and resources provided through the plan will be continually built upon.

The Travel Plan will therefore be reviewed on a regular basis, information on travel patterns will be updated, and new measures will be added to the action plan according to what has been achieved and what new opportunities have arisen. A brief survey of how pupils travel to school will be made at the beginning and end of each academic year to highlight potential areas of focus throughout the year and to track any changes in overall transport patterns amongst pupils.

A more detailed review of the Travel Plan will also be undertaken every two years at the end of the school year, with the first one planned for the summer of 2012.

Swiss Cottage School is continually evolving as it strives to provide the best possible service to its pupils. It is expanding its pupil numbers and widening pupil need. IT moves into its new accommodation in September 2012. Clearly, this will alter the transport situation at the school, creating new issues that will need to be addressed but also providing new opportunities for transport-related initiatives. It is recognised that it will be necessary to monitor the transport situation as changes take place, so that full advantage can be taken of any new opportunities that may arise to improve travel to the school for staff, pupils and visitors.

June 2012