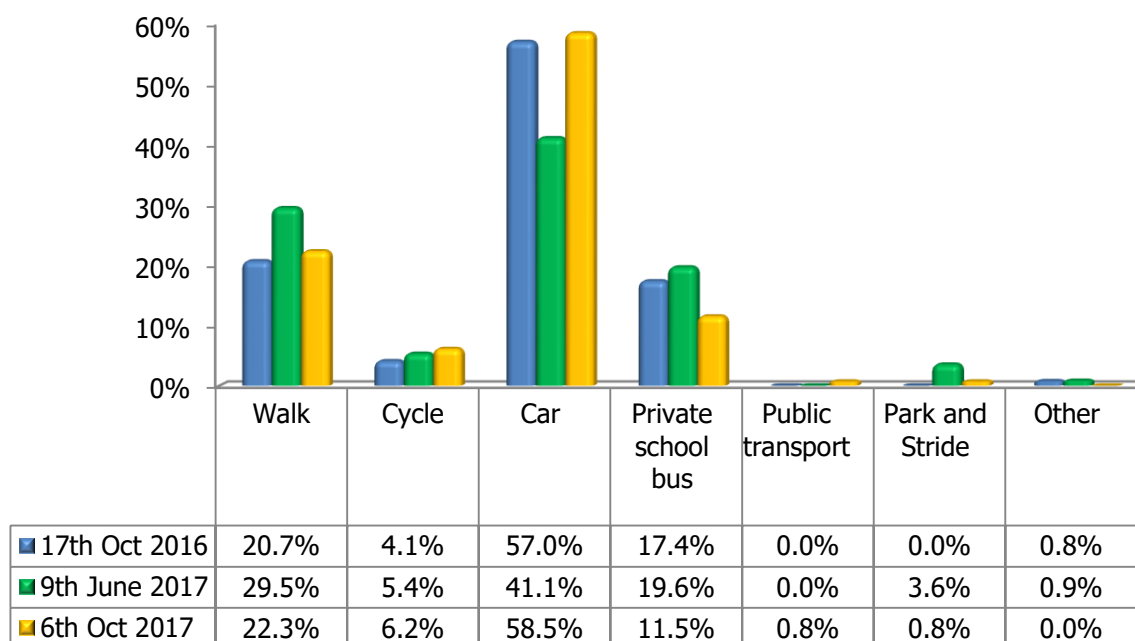




Welcome to our first Green School Newsletter! Everyone in NETNS has been working very hard over the last 2 years to help us on our journey towards achieving the Green Flag for Sustainable Travel.

Caroline (Green School Travel officer who has been working with our school over the last year) carried out a survey in October 2016 with children from 1<sup>st</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> class. She repeated this survey in June 2017 and again in October 2017. The chart below shows the results of how children travel to school each day.



The primary goal in our Action Plan for Travel is to decrease the number of children who travel by car to school. We have set ourselves the target of reducing it from 58.5% (October 2017) to 48.5% by May 2018. This will be a 10% decrease. It is achievable, but only with parental support and help.

Well done and thank you to all the families who continue to make such a super effort to walk, cycle, scoot or park n' stride to school each day. We haven't forgotten about the bus children- well done to all of you for travelling in this sustainable way.

We understand that walking or cycling may not be feasible for every family and travelling to school by car may be the only safe option. Is carpooling something which you might consider? Have a look around your estate or area and see if there is a family who you could share a journey with. Perhaps one family could drop the children in the morning and the other family could pick up in the evening. We understand that every family travelling by car may not be able to do this, but even if a few families travelled to school in this way it would mean less cars on our roads which would go towards reducing our carbon footprint.

Current and Upcoming Events:

JANUARY:

- ❖ Cycle Right Programme: The children from 5<sup>th</sup> class are currently taking part in the Cycle Right Cycling Programme with Eoin from Dr Bike. Teacher Thomas has also been helping with these workshops. The focus of the Cycle Right Programme is giving children the skills to become confident and safe cyclists.

CYCLE RIGHT is produced and supported by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, the Road Safety Authority and Cycling Ireland. Green School Ireland are also supporting our school with this programme.

#### FEBRUARY:

- ❖ Green School Expo: On Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> February the Green School Committee travelled to the RDS in Dublin for the Green School Expo. Have a look at the school website for photos from the day. The committee is made up of children from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> class and we currently have 12 children on the committee.

#### MARCH:

- ❖ Scoot to School Week will take place from 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> March. Last year the children from Junior Infants- 2<sup>nd</sup> class had lots of fun taking part in scooting events. This year it promises to be even more FUN!! The children from the Rainbow Rooms will take part in this year's Scooting events. More details to follow in next week's newsletter.
- ❖ Earth Hour: Around the globe, millions of people, businesses, and landmarks set aside an hour to host events, switch off their lights, and make noise for climate change action. This year Earth Hour is at **8:30pm on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**
- ❖ We will be sending in our application for the Travel Flag this month to Green School Ireland

#### APRIL:

- ❖ National Spring Clean: We have participated in the National Spring Clean over the last 10 years. Date of this year's Spring Clean will be announced soon. As always we will be looking for as many adult volunteers as possible.

#### MAY:

- ❖ Walk to School Week takes place from Monday 14<sup>th</sup> – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May- more details to follow

#### JUNE:

- ❖ National Bike Week takes place from 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> June- more details to follow.

#### Litter and Waste:

- ❖ Litter picking- Junior Infants, Senior Infants and 1<sup>st</sup> class are all doing their bit to help make our school a safer, cleaner, greener place by litter picking during big break. They are doing a fantastic job with the help of the children from the Green School Committee.
- ❖ Composting: This year we have made a big effort to compost our fruit peelings etc. Josefa and Niamh from 5<sup>th</sup> class have been busy emptying the compost bins from the classrooms. Fingers crossed we will be able to use our own compost over the coming months in our school garden.
- ❖ Recycling: Unfortunately it has come to our attention that our recycling bins are being contaminated with items which are not clean or dry and with some items which cannot be recycled. Items such as yogurt pots are being put in the recycling bins while they are still wet and often still dirty. As a result, we are adding to the amount of rubbish going to landfill. While every effort is being made in the classroom to ensure that only clean and dry items go into the recycling bin some items are being placed there which are not suitable. For this reason, we would like all children to bring their empty containers (drinks cartons, yogurt pots etc.) home. This will allow for children to ensure the containers are washed and dried properly and then placed in your recycling bin. We understand this may mean having to wash your child's lunchbox daily but we feel this is the only way we can lessen the contamination of our recycling bins. We really would appreciate your support in this matter.
- ❖ Finally, there has been a huge increase in the number of reusable drinks bottles in the school- this is wonderful. Let's keep it up! Together these small steps can make a big change in helping reduce our carbon footprint and making our earth a much better place for your children's future.