

November 2024



Wallace Hall 2 - 18

School Travel Plan

## **Introduction**

### **What is a School Travel Plan?**

The purpose of our School Travel Plan is to identify and address problems associated with the school journey and to encourage safer, healthier and more active travel choices for our journeys to and from school. The key focus being on encouraging walking, cycling or scooting to school.

Pupils, parents and carers were consulted in the preparation of the School Travel Plan to assess their travel characteristics and opinions in relation to their children's journey to and from school.

Key focus of Wallace Hall School travel plan:

- To identify and address any problems associated with the school journey.
- To encourage and enable children, families and staff to walk or cycle to school where possible.
- To promote safe routes for children travelling to and from school.
- To reduce the number of car journeys being made to the campus.
- To reduce the amount of traffic outside the school gates and surrounding area.
- To raise awareness of healthy, environmentally friendly alternatives to the car.

## About our school:

Wallace Hall 2 -18 School serves the town of Thornhill and the surrounding area. The campus comprises of Wallace Hall Nursery, Wallace Hall Primary and Wallace Hall Academy.

Our current school role is:	Nursery	36
	Primary	150
	Academy	578

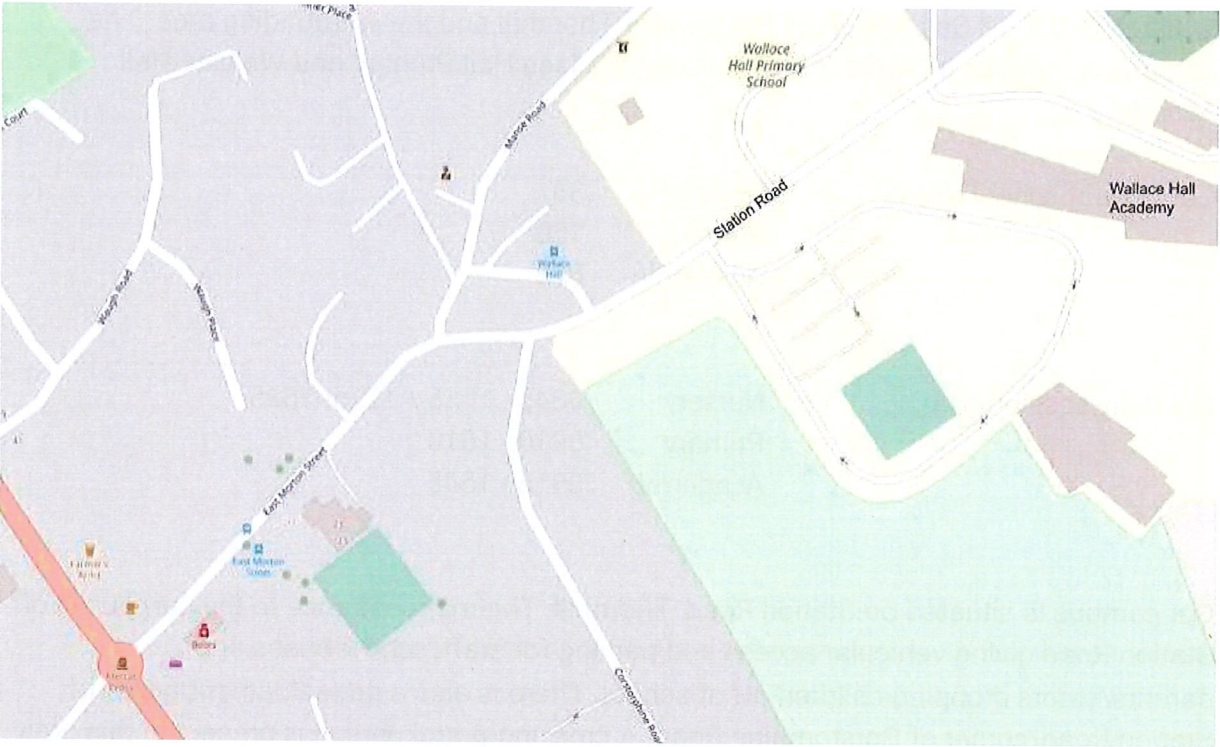
Our daily sessions are:	Nursery	0845 - 1155 / 1215 -1525
	Primary	0910 - 1510
	Academy	0915 - 1545

Our campus is situated on Station Road, Thornhill. The main entrance to the campus is off Station Road giving vehicular access and parking for staff, school buses and parents/carers dropping children off at school. There is also a pedestrian entrance off Station Road/corner of Corstorphine Road. A crossing patrol person is present in this area at the beginning and end of each school day.

There is a 4-way junction/roundabout feeding into our main walking route on the A76. This junction also has a crossing patrol person at the start/end of the school day during term time.

At present we have a secure cycle rack area for bikes and scooters at the Primary School entrance which serves primary pupils. There are also 30 bike rack spaces available within the main Academy playground.

Map of School:



## How we travel to School:

At the start of this process our school community took part in various surveys which highlights how we travel to school, what issues we face and how we look to address these issues to improve our school journey.

### Our Primary and Academy pupil surveys results:

	Primary	Academy
Pupils who travel to school by bus	11%	69%
Pupils who travel to school by car	43%	13%
Pupils who cycle to school	10%	1%
Pupils who walk to school	32%	17%
Pupils who scoot to school	4%	n/a

Mostly all our Primary children said their preferred method of travel would be to cycle, walk or scoot to school. However, they felt it was not safe to cycle or scoot.

88% of our Academy pupils felt safe with their current mode of transportation whilst 12% did not feel safe.

79% of our Academy pupils said their preferred method of travel would be by car or bus with only 21% preferring to walk or cycle. This may be due to travel distances as more than 50% of our pupils live 3 or more miles from the school. However, 34% of our pupils felt there was no safe route to either walk or cycle.

### What our Primary and Academy parents said:

- Asked if people felt safe walking or cycling to school:
  - 57% NO
  - 15% YES
  - 28% n/a as too far
- Asked how good our route is for walking or cycling to school:
  - 65% said there was no safe route
  - 3% said the route was safe
  - 32% n/a as too far

- Road and pathway improvements were needed to enable more walking to and from school in a safe environment.
- A designated cycle route was required to enable more cycling to school.
- Rural bus service could at times be unreliable / non-existent.
- Overcrowding on school buses
- Some parents were not sure of our school bus timetable.
- Some pupils felt uncomfortable or afraid on our school buses.

## **Our problems:**

Parents have raised concerns with regards to the school journey of Wallace Hall pupils travelling to and from school and within the school campus. The main walking route into school is felt to be unsafe due to narrow pavements, heavy traffic, parked cars causing visibility issues and vehicles driving too close to pedestrians. Various issues were also raised with regards to other parents driving habits within the campus itself.

### **Walking route areas of concern:**

- Footpaths are too narrow and are damaged in areas.
- Footpaths are not suitable for the volume of people using them and can become very congested.
- Cars are not adhering to the 20mph speed limit and driving too fast and too close to the footpath.
- School buses at times are having to drive too close to the footpath due to cars being irresponsibly parked.
- Too many parked cars causing visibility issues and traffic congestion at a time when many children are crossing the road.
- Overhanging trees/bushes reduce the walking area of pedestrians.
- 20mph signage faded and dirty.
- "No waiting" sign missing and others unreadable.
- Double and single yellow lines faded along all roads, which means police cannot enforce parking restrictions.
- Speed bumps are so degraded they have become ineffective.

### **Cycling concerns:**

- No cycle path at all on route to school and roads are felt to be too dangerous for cyclists.
- Where pupils do cycle or scoot to school, they tend to do so on the pathway which is obviously safer for the cyclist but adds to the congestion of what is already a busy pathway.

### **Campus concerns:**

- Cars are driving too fast within the school campus and not adhering to the 5mph speed limit.
- Too many parents are parking in the disabled bays outside the Primary School.
- Parents are not adhering to the access signage of where you should and should not be driving at between 0850 - 0915 and 1500 - 1600 hrs
- Parents are dropping off/ picking up children in non-designated areas within the carpark causing congestion and visibility/ safety issues.

## Ideas for improving problems:

- An additional School crossing patrol person.
- Speed bumps to be reintroduced on East Morton Street to slow down the traffic.
- Double yellow lines to be repainted to allow police to enforce parking restrictions.
- Missing / faded signs and road markings to be repaired/ replaced where appropriate.
- Trees and bushes to be cut back to allow better visibility of signs and to increase pavement space.
- No parking or waiting on East Morton Street from Pharmacy to Garage between 0830 and 0915 and 1500 1600 hrs on weekdays.
- Wider footpaths at the expense of parking spaces.
- Designated cycle route required to enable more cycling to school.
- Designated cycle /scooting path within School Campus
- Increased police presence on Morton Road / Station Road during School journey times.



## What we are doing:

Parent Council representatives have raised these concerns and issues with Dumfries and Galloway Local Authority and Thornhill Community Council.

We have been liaising with Dumfries and Galloway local authority over the last 18 months to discuss the issues around signage and road repairs. The following action was agreed for East Morton Street.

- Speed Bumps to be replaced
- 20mph roundel and red strips to be installed
- Double / Single yellow lines to be repainted
- Replace "No waiting sign" opposite the bowling club (which would allow police to address current/ ongoing traffic and parking issues).
- Trees to be cut back coming into East Morton Street from the A76 roundabout as they are obscuring the 20mph signs.

## Update – September 24

- Trees have been cut back coming into East Morton Street making the 20mph signs more visible.
- Path approaching new school crossing has been cleared of overhanging vegetation and branches.
- The double yellow lines have now been repainted, this has helped alleviate the double parking outside the bowling green and is also discouraging parking outside Boots/ Thomas Tosh. Whilst we were hoping for yellow lines on both sides of the road, this is still an improvement on what we had before and has eased some of the congestion.
- The missing signage no longer needs replacing as the double yellow lines now cover this area.
- Potholes on the road were repaired over the summer break.
- Road signs have been cleaned and are now more visible.
- The council have also confirmed that they added a section of East Morton Street to their proposed re-surfacing sites for consideration in the 2024-2025 financial year.
- Letter drop was completed in February to local residents to advise of new school crossing.

We will continue to liaise with the Community Council, our community police officer, and the local authority to help with any ongoing problems.

## What can the school do to help?

- Encourage pupils, parents, and staff to walk/cycle or scoot to school where possible.
- Encourage safe, sustainable, and active travel to school.
- Logging of issues within campus with a view to discussing / resolving with our community police representative.
- Encourage responsible parking and communicate with parents over appropriate parking in the school car park to create a safer campus environment.
- Continue to provide appropriate storage for children to safely store their scooters and bikes.
- Keep parents up to date with School bus schedules
- Ensure school buses are not overcrowded, and any incidents dealt with appropriately.
- Support a designated walking/cycle route to enable more walking and cycling to school.
- Continue to engage and participate in national events such as Walk to School Week, bike week, road safety week.
  - The ELC and Primary participated in the Sustrans' Big Walk and Wheel. 2440 schools across the UK took part, we placed 85<sup>th</sup> for the UK, 27<sup>th</sup> in Scotland and 3<sup>rd</sup> in D&G for the small primary category.

## What can our parents, families and local community do to help:

- Become more active in approaches to travelling to and from school.
- If parents do need to bring children to school by car:
  - If age appropriate, drop your child off at a suitable point in the village to reduce the traffic coming into Station Road and allow pupils some active time as they travel to school.
  - Adhere to guidelines within the school campus:
    - 5mph speed limit
    - No parking in the disabled parking bays
    - Follow the access information signs on where you should and should not be driving between 0850 - 0915 and 1500 - 1600 hrs
    - Only park/wait in designated parking spaces within the school car park.
- Dog mess cleared up by dog walkers on pavements and grassed areas within the school vicinity and surrounding area – ***Additional signage has now been installed by the local authority and dog waste bins are located across from the playpark on East Morton Street.***
- The local community could try to reduce parking where possible on East Morton Street between the hours 0830 - 0915 and 1500 - 1600 hrs.

## What can our local authority do to help:

### Suggestions from our school community:

- Review parking and road layouts in East Morton Street
- Consider widening footpaths at the expense of parking spaces
- Consider implementing parking restrictions on East Morton Street
- Consider residential parking only
- Consider a “no parking or waiting” restriction on East Morton Street between 0830 - 0915 and 1500 -1600 hrs on weekdays. ***It is worth noting that there are already two areas on East Morton Street which already have this signage in place however these restrictions are frequently ignored by drivers.***
- Support a designated rural walking/cycle route to enable more walking and cycling to school.
- Look at possible designated walking / cycling routes between villages.
- Improvement to rural bus routes

## **Other information:**

Throughout this process many parents/pupils have identified a need for a designated walking / cycle path, this is due to the problems they face on the current route to school. There is currently an ongoing project headed up by the KPT development trust and the Thornhill Active Travel Group, working with Sustrans to achieve the Penpont to Thornhill Active Travel Path.

### **Penpont to Thornhill Active Travel Path – update Jan 24**

We are delighted to see work finish on the first phase (Phase 1A) of the new Nithsdale active travel path between Penpont and Thornhill. The route has created a vital traffic-free space for walking, wheeling and cycling, making it easier and safer for residents and visitors to the area to travel actively.

- Phase 1A – the first in a multi-stage project – has created a traffic-free path which stretches from Penpont to the Drumlanrig access road.
- Phase 1B will continue for 0.5km up to Nith Bridge and Phase 1C for 375m up to the Gill Road Triangle. Once complete, a 4km path will connect Penpont and Thornhill, enabling communities to safely walk, wheel and cycle safely between the two villages.

### **Thornhill Active Travel Group**

The Thornhill Active Travel Group is looking at Thornhill as a whole, with a view to addressing barriers to walking, wheeling, and cycling in our village. A lot of the issues they are looking at tie in directly with our School Travel plan and supports what we are trying to achieve on East Morton Street. The group have held various community events and have now completed their Community Survey.

Below are some of their findings, which align with our School Travel Plan.

- Uneven pavement surfaces
- Lack of yellow lines
- Parking issues
- Traffic speed coming into Thornhill with a view to reducing speed limit
- Increasing signage on entering the village
- Drop off areas on A76 for school pupils
- Consideration for an extension of the Penpont to Thornhill Cycle path to bring cyclists safely in the centre of Thornhill, but key concerns would need to be addressed for the community to accept this.

A copy of the full Summary of Findings from the Survey is available by contacting the group on <https://www.oldschoolthornhill.com/travel>

## **Update – November 24**

The Thornhill Active travel group are currently in discussions with Amey with regards to the speed limits through the village.

They are also looking at the possibility of “drop off” areas within the village on the A76 to reduce school traffic on East Morton Street.

The Thornhill Community Council are currently trying to have the yellow lines on East Morton Street reviewed.

## **Monitoring and Evaluating:**

The School Travel Plan will be reviewed on a yearly basis to assess how pupils are travelling to and from school, how trends change and consider what factors are influencing these changes.

The school will continue to participate in annual walk to school weeks, cycle to school weeks and encourage children to develop active approaches to getting to/from school and an overall more active lifestyle.

Our Parent Council representative and the school will continue to monitor the traffic issues on Station Road/ East Morton Street. We will continue to liaise with local authorities on existing issues and any new issues that may arise.

Our Parent Council Road Safety representative will endeavour to meet with our Primary Road Safety Group on a termly basis to take account of any issues or concerns they may have. They will also arrange to get together with the Primary Road Safety group periodically to walk the school campus area at the start or end of the day to review any issues.

Our Parent Council Road Safety representative will also meet with the headmaster from time to time to walk the school route to review / address any issues.

Our senior management team will continue to monitor any issues with regards to parking and vehicular access within our learning campus.

We will continue to liaise with Community police to monitor traffic congestion/ parking issues on Station Road/ East Morton Street.