

# WALKING BEARS CAMPAIGN

Healthy, active children learn faster, perform better and increase their life prospects into adulthood. The Walking Bears campaign is an initiative whereby schools hold special walking days where no parent should be driving to school.

The program primarily targets key stage 1 & 2 pupils and promotes walking to school, supports literacy learning and generates a competitive spirit in the school around levels of walking and keeping fit. It also provides a creative platform for the teaching of road safety (Walking or Cycling) and incentivises pupil's parents to choose a healthy active mode of travel for the journey to school.

Special walking days within the program allows pupils to get some exercise by walking, cycling or scooting to school whilst promoting learning and encouraging children to appreciate that their local environment is healthier and more sociable. The Walking Bears program encourages participation of both children and parents and has been very successful with local council's working in partnership with schools.

The success of the Walking Bears campaign requires pupils to be incentivised to engage and enjoy the merits of the program and this requires each pupil to have a cuddly Walking Bear mascots dressed in their school's very own school uniform made out of recycled school uniform clothing. With the support of nominated supplier Cuddly Bear Wear, schools can order their very own Walking Bear mascot packs via their nominated Council school's travel advisor/co-ordinator.

The pack explains how teaching resources are allocated in running and supporting the program and how the Walking Bear mascots are an integral part of the program in incentivising pupils as classes get the chance to compete for or be given a Walking Bear mascot for the month. The program allows the pupils to take home the Walking Bear mascot and for them to complete a Journey Diary together as the Walking Bear campaign encourages participation.

To find out more about the Walking Bears program for your school, including our Walking Bear mascot packs, and how to engage with your schools travel advisor/co-ordinator within your local council then contact us on: 01279 432 060. Learning about and appreciating the local environment is seen as a healthier and more sociable fun activity for pupils.

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## Promoting the Walking Bears Campaign to Key Stage 1 & 2 Pupils

Whole class story time.

"Little Bear loved school and being with his school friends, but was bored by the school journey. Every morning, Mummy Bear used to drive Little Bear to school on her way to work. Even though Little Bear could look out of the window, he couldn't really see anything, and Little Bear wanted to be outside rather than stuck in the car for the ten-minute journey.

One day at school, Mrs. Panda, Little Bear's teacher, told the class that the school were holding a special Walking Day where no-one should be driving to school. This day would be a good chance for everyone to get some exercise by walking, cycling or scooting to school. Little Bear was very excited because it would mean that he could be outside and could look at leaves, trees and speak to Mummy Bear. Little Bear thought 'It will be more fun if he/she could talk to his mum about things on the way to school, instead of her just driving.'

The special day was approaching, and Little Bear asked Mummy Bear 'Please can we walk to school tomorrow?' Mummy Bear said 'Ok, but we will have to leave a lot earlier.' But, Little Bear wasn't so sure it would take that long. Each day, on the way to school, they were only in the car for ten minutes, and most of that time they were in a traffic jam.

The special Walking Day arrived, and Mummy Bear

woke Little Bear up extra early. They had their breakfast and then left the house half-an-hour earlier than they usually did, to get to school. They walked along the road from home towards school. Little Bear was really happy, 'Mum, look at the leaves and trees' he said. But Little Bear thought that there was something missing. 'Where are my school friends?' he thought. 'They said that they would be walking today.'

After a short time, they arrived at the school, but the school gates were closed. Little Bear and Mummy Bear realised that they had arrived at school really early. 'I can't believe it, we got here so early.' Mummy Bear said 'I thought it would take a lot longer to get here, because it takes 10 minutes by car every morning.' Little Bear smiled and said 'But Mum, we are always waiting in traffic on the way to school, maybe we can start walking more instead. I knew it wouldn't take very long.' Mummy Bear thought about this and said, 'If the journey is this quick, then no problem, we just have to leave home a bit earlier and then we can make it to school, and I can also get to work on time.'

Every school day since then, Little Bear has walked to school, rain or shine, getting exercise and enjoying seeing the changing seasons. From that day on, Little Bear became known as Walking Bear, and now he is here, in your class, to share the journey to school with you."