

Safe Routes to School Programme



What is the Safe Routes to School Programme?

The Safe Routes to School programme will support active travel infrastructure for schools around the country.

The programme is funded by the Department of Transport through the National Transport Authority (NTA) and is supported by the Department of Education. An Taisce's Green-Schools is co-ordinating the programme.

The programme will provide funding to support walking and cycling to primary and post-primary schools.

Over €15 million will be allocated to the Safe Routes to School Programme in 2021 and circa. 120 schools will be selected nationally.

The Safe Routes to School programme aims to:

1

Improve safety at the school gate by providing 'front of school' treatments to alleviate congestion and improve access

2

Improve access routes to school by improving walking and cycling infrastructure

3

Increase the number of students who cycle to school by expanding the amount of cycle parking

Key Stages of the Programme:

Stage 1	In March 2021 schools were invited to participate in the programme.
Stage 2	Schools complete and submit an Expression of Interest by 16 th April 2021.
Stage 3	Green-Schools will undertake a selection process based on agreed criteria.
Stage 4	Green-Schools will inform selected schools and will liaise with schools and LAs.
Stage 5	Green-Schools will produce an outline delivery plan for each school. LAs will engage with Green-Schools in preparing the outline delivery plan.
Stage 6	The outline delivery plan will be submitted to LAs to take forward for further design & implementation. The LA can then access dedicated funding from the NTA for the projects.
Stage 7	The school will act as a local champion of the proposed measures to ensure community buy in for the proposals.
Stage 8	LA will undertake agreed and funded interventions. Green-Schools will deliver cycle parking.

How will schools be selected?

The programme is open to all schools and various criteria will be used to select schools for participation in the programme in 2021, including:

- **Mix of school type** - primary, post-primary, other;
- **Mix of location** - urban (village, town, city), suburban, rural;
- **Socio-economic mix** - non-DEIS, DEIS schools;
- **School's commitment to sustainable travel** - (a) the school is interested in promoting walking and cycling to school or (b) has already demonstrated a commitment to walking, cycling and other active modes by running initiatives such as: Walk on Wednesday, Cycle Bus, Park 'n' Stride etc.;
- **Cluster of schools** - if schools are located on the same campus or street/section of road.

The role of the Local Authority

Local Authorities will be involved right through to implementation of initiatives on the ground. The stages of Local Authority involvement include:

1. Green-Schools will liaise confidentially with the Local Authority executive on Local Authority capacity and any local authority schemes or proposals, in order to inform the final list of selected schools

2. When the schools are selected, Green-Schools Infrastructure Officers will conduct site visits with the school principal and relevant Local Authority professional staff

3. Local Authority input will inform the outline plan of possible proposed interventions at or near the school, which may include measures such as: traffic calming, signage, crossing facilities, and upgraded walking and/or cycling facilities

4. The Local Authority will apply to the NTA to fund the measures in an outline delivery plan (or bundle of plans if there are a number of schools in the local authority area).

The next steps

- ▶ All schools have now been invited to participate in the programme and have submitted an Expression of Interest.
- ▶ During April 2021 the NTA and Green-Schools will hold a briefing webinar for Local Authorities on the programme and will produce outline guidance on the suite of infrastructural interventions that may be applicable in different locations; e.g. urban (city, town, village), suburban and rural schools.
- ▶ The selection process will be carried out thereafter.

