

# School Travel Planning and the Planning Process

A guide for Ealing Schools and  
Developers incorporating the  
use of STARS to create School  
Travel Plans and support  
planning applications

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EALING COUNCIL

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# Introduction

## What this guidance does

The Council's adopted Sustainable Transport for New Development Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) requires all schools submitting a planning application to have an approved school travel plan (STP)

The purpose of this guidance is to provide clarity to schools, local authority officers and developers involved in either expanding school sites or building brand new schools on what the processes are in order to implement a successful STP once the development is completed.

Ealing requires schools to submit their STPs via STARS. STARS – **Sustainable Travel: Active, Responsible, Safe** is Transport for London's school travel plan accreditation and awards scheme. It recognises schools that have shown excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. The STARS application process provides an online template that, upon completion, will generate a school travel plan.

If you have a previous STP, you can consult your original document for information on past activities.

## What is a School Travel Plan?

A School Travel Plan (STP) is a document that sets out how a school will promote safer, active and sustainable travel to school, with the main emphasis being on reducing the number of school related car trips. A good STP should be based on consultation with staff, parents, pupils and governors and other local people. In order to ensure that the plan remains relevant and appropriate to changing circumstances it is essential that the plan is reviewed and updated regularly.

An effective school travel plan puts forward a package of measures to:

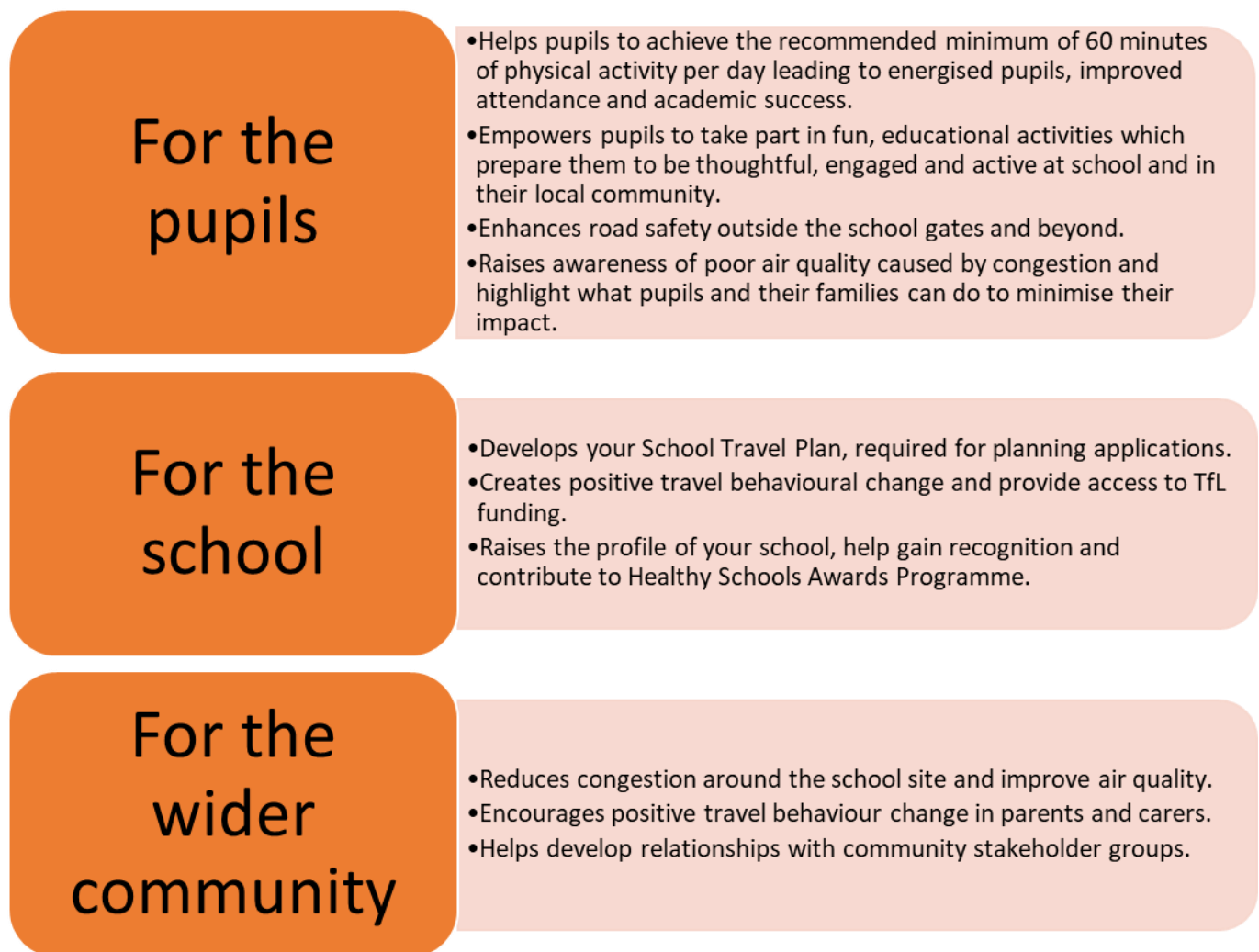
- reduce the number of vehicles on the journey to school
- improve safety on the journey to school
- encourage more active and sustainable travel choices

## What are the benefits of having a School Travel Plan?

Encouraging active travel to school has a wide range of benefits, both for the school community, but also for the area around the school, as well as the whole borough, in terms of less traffic and congestion.

Details on the benefits can be found in Figure 1.

Fig1: Benefits of having an active STP



## Why STARS?

STARS is Transport for London's accreditation scheme for schools and nurseries. STARS inspires young Londoners to travel to school sustainably, actively, responsibly and safely by championing walking, scooting and cycling.

STARS supports pupils' wellbeing, helps to reduce congestion at the school gates and improve road safety and air quality. It helps to inspire young Londoners to think differently about travel and its impact on their health, wellbeing and the environment.

The STARS application process provides an online template that, upon completion, will generate a school travel plan. STARS is free to all London schools, nurseries and colleges who are supported by Borough Officers.

TfL has produced a range of over 125 inspiring travel Activity Cards that can be adapted to match your pupils' needs and your school's travel concerns. For more information and to view

the Activities visit [the STARS website https://stars.tfl.gov.uk/](https://stars.tfl.gov.uk/) and the TfL Schools and Young People webpage <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/schools-and-young-people/>

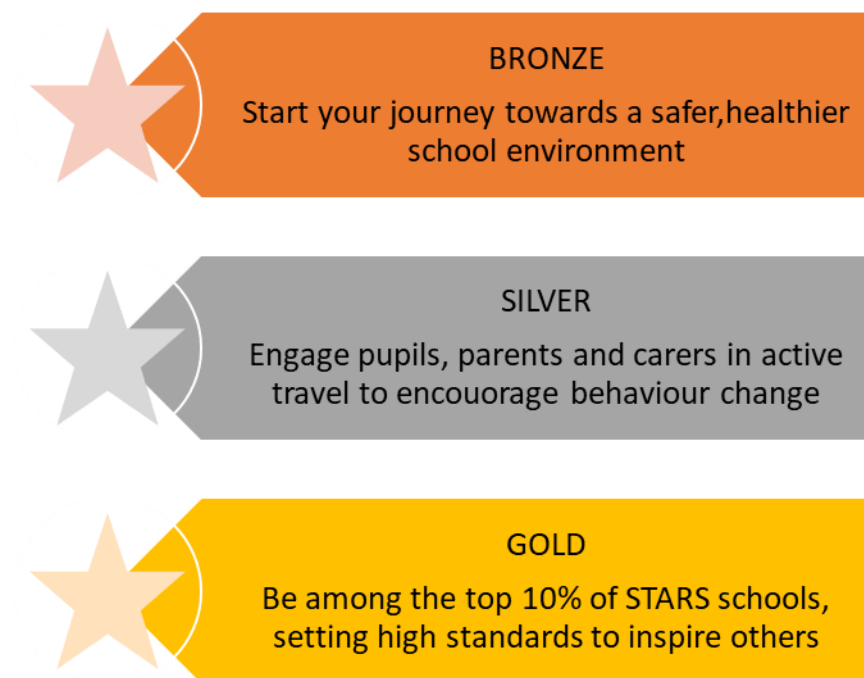
### ***What you'll gain from becoming a STARS school***

- **School Travel Plan** – automatic generation of a new School Travel Plan which will deliver significant time and costs savings
- **Accreditation** – you will receive the STARS plaque, certificate and be able to use the STARS logo on your school literature and website
- **TfL STARS Awards** – a chance to be considered for the Top School, School of the Region and School of Excellence Awards
- **Behaviour Change** – STARS will provide you with the tools to reduce car use and increase the number of children walking, cycling and using public transport on the journey to and from school.

## **Achieving STARS Accreditation**

There are three levels of accreditation that your school can achieve.

Figure 2. Levels of STARS accreditation



# Creating your School Travel Plan

Over 40 education providers in Ealing have an approved STARS Travel Plan. Many more schools carry out a wide range of initiatives to support active and sustainable travel and are working towards applying for accreditation and developing a travel plan.

## ***Four steps to getting started with STARS***

1. Visit <https://stars.tfl.gov.uk/> and create an account.
2. Please notify your Borough Officer that you have created an account.
3. Your application will be approved by your local authority. As soon as they accept your registration you will receive an automated email confirming that you have access to the system.
4. Then you are ready to begin your STARS journey.

We understand that there are many demands on people's time and keeping an STP maintained can add to the workload. We believe that there are real benefits to a school having an active STP and hope that you will see the time given to maintaining your STP as a valuable investment for your school.

For your first STARS application there will initially be some work to input the information but once it is established it will be a question of updating sections and STARS will automatically generate your STP. There will be no need to produce a lengthy word processed report each time you update your STP. **If you have an existing STP, you will be able to use information from this to complete your STARS application.**

## **The STP Process**

An STP is a continual process rather than a static document. It should continually evolve as travel issues are addressed and modal shift occurs.

Through completion of a STARS application you will have included all the information required to produce an STP. A summary of the process that you will follow is given below.

Please note additional information is required for STPs submitted through the planning system. See page 8 for details.

The appointment of a School Travel Champion and the setting up of a working group at an early stage are important for establishing a strong basis for your plan.

## **Appoint a STARS Champion**

The STARS Champion will usually be a member of staff at the school, but could be a School Governor or another appropriate person in a position to undertake these duties

## **Set up a STP Working Group**

To include a range of members e.g. member of senior management team, teachers, governors, parents and pupils.

More information on setting up a working group is available as an Activity Card in the STARS Activities tab, under Consultation. You can also access this document from the Explore tab of the website

## **Collect key information**

Through surveys and consultation collect and analyse key information to identify the main travel issues affecting your school including:

- Actual and preferred mode of travel for pupils and staff
- Identification of travel and transport issues
- Audit of school facilities

## **Set targets for sustainable and active travel**

Set future targets to achieve or maintain modes of sustainable travel (for example to increase cycling; to maintain walking)

## **Write an Action Plan**

Plan the package of measures your school will introduce and deliver through the STP.

## **Deliver travel initiatives**

Carry out and record your active and sustainable travel initiatives.

## **Review**

Is your STP achieving the results you want and is it still relevant? Adjust initiatives and targets accordingly.

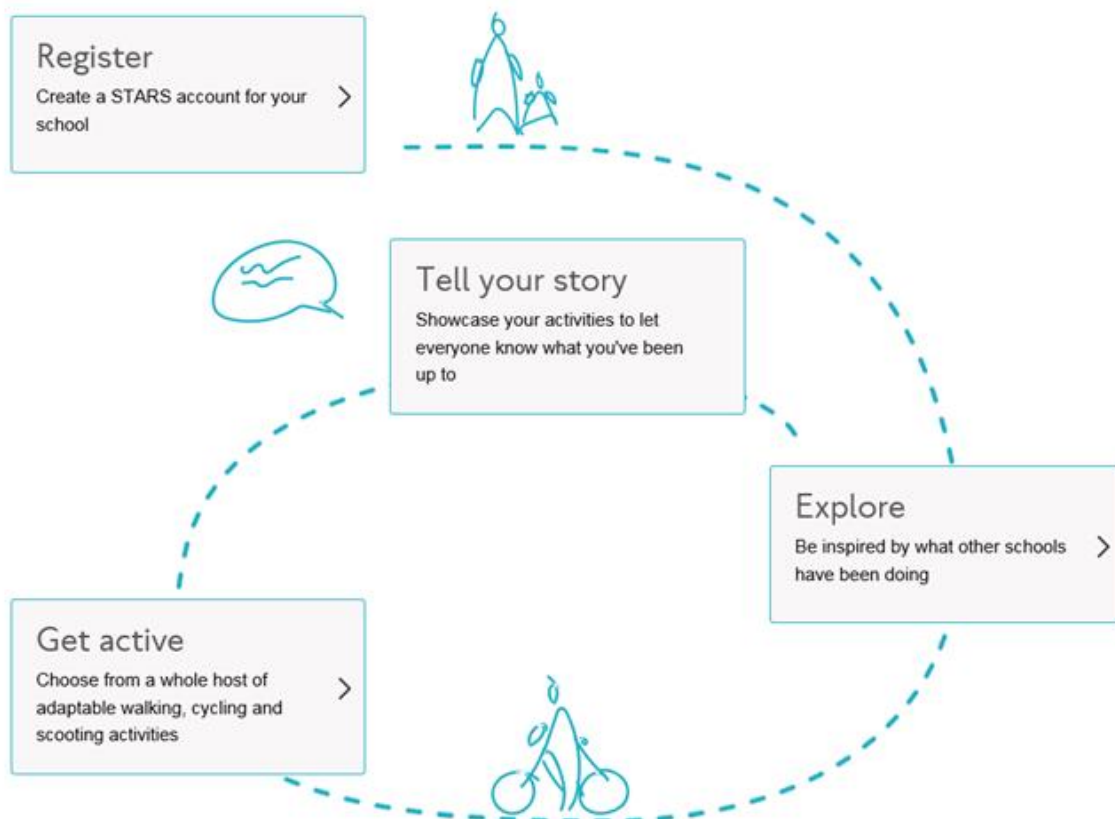
## **The TfL STARS Cycle**

STARS is a continuous process of planning, doing and reviewing. Schools apply for STARS accreditation towards the end of the summer term. Bronze level schools apply every year, Silver every two years and Gold every three years to maintain their STP. Ealing Council require schools to upload their Pupil and Staff surveys and add new travel related activities every year, to show that they continue to promote and encourage active and sustainable travel.

The STARS Cycle, figure 3, sets out the process for completing a STARS application and getting accredited.

Figure 3 Starting your journey

## Starting your journey





## School Travel Plans and the Planning Process

To offset concerns about increases in pupil numbers and the associated rise in traffic we need to be satisfied that the schools are doing what they can to reduce travel by car.

The school run often adds to congestion around the school gates, increasing the risk of accidents. Schools should therefore work closely with developers to provide adequate information and make judgments on how to mitigate potential problems.

The STP must address the impact of the development; even small increases can have an impact on the local area, so it is important to plan and provide facilities to encourage sustainable travel.

### Incorporating STARS into the planning application process

The travel planning information required to support a planning application should be submitted via an **Interim School Travel Plan** form. The form is designed to enable information to be transferred easily to the school's STARS account. The STARS account will then become the live school travel plan, making it easy for the school to adopt and maintain following completion of the development.

The information contained within an Interim SPD will need to be consistent with any Transport Assessment/Statement submitted as part of the application

Existing schools **will** be able to complete a STARS application prior to occupation.

A new school **will not** be able to apply for STARS accreditation prior to occupation as they need to have completed initiatives involving the school to be eligible for STARS accreditation. The new school's Senior Management Team must complete the STARS application and apply for accreditation within 12 months of occupation, or the timeframe specified as a condition of planning permission.

The Interim STP form is available from the School Travel Team at Ealing Council [sta@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:sta@ealing.gov.uk)

### Pre-application stage

During pre-application there will be opportunities to discuss the Interim STP with Ealing Council School Travel Team, who will advise on content to strengthen the likelihood of approval following submission. This will include advice on appropriate STP targets for modal share, taking into account factors such as location (including proximity to public transport), existing travel problems at the school and catchment area.

### Existing schools (same site expansions)

Existing schools undergoing expansions may have an approved STP (via STARS) in place which can be submitted along with the Interim STP, as part of the planning application process. Prior to submission, STARS can be updated to include the results of recent pupil and staff mode of travel survey ('hands up survey').

If a school does not have an existing STP in place, then a completed Interim School Travel Plan must be submitted with the planning application. An 'Action Plan' (forming part of the Interim STP) will also need to be produced; detailing sustainable travel initiatives to be implemented before and after the development is completed.

The Interim STP must be reviewed and approved by officers in LBE School Travel Team; once approved, the Interim STP can be submitted alongside planning application documents.

Following approval of the planning application, the school will incorporate the Interim STP into STARS to become the live school travel plan, making it easy for the school to adopt and maintain following completion of the development.

## New school sites

A travel plan **is** required as part of the planning application process for new schools. The format of the travel plan should follow that of Ealing Council's adopted ***Sustainable Transport for New Developments (SPD)***, see link below..

An interim STP is **also** required and will need to be submitted alongside planning application documents. It will provide relevant information that will be added to STARS once the development is occupied. It will be reviewed and approved by officers in LBE School Travel Team.

Following occupation, the Interim STP will be handed over to the new school's Senior Management Team. They will create a STARS account and transfer the data from the Interim STP to STARS to achieve the accepted level of accreditation. This is required within a specified timeframe, typically 12 months and is often a conditional requirement of planning permission.

When the STP has been approved the school should follow the STARS cycle (see page 6) to monitor and review their plan. In some cases, the council may specify that a more frequent monitoring schedule.

Figure 4 Flow chart of school travel plan process



Please refer to [Ealing Council's guidance Sustainable Transport for New Development, Supplementary Planning Document](#), section 5.

## **Review by the School Travel Team**

Ealing Council's School Travel Team will review your Interim STP and provide relevant feedback.

They will review all STARS applications and approve Bronze level accreditation. Silver and Gold accreditation is Quality Assured and approved by Transport for London.

Ongoing support is available to help schools implement their planned activities. The School Travel Team will continue to provide advice and guidance on measures to promote and encourage active and sustainable travel to support the school to maintain their STARS STP as will usually be required as a condition of the planning permission.

## **Contact Details**

School Travel Team

Transport Planning and Policy Service

Place Delivery

London Borough of Ealing Council

Perceval House, 14-16 Uxbridge Road

Ealing, W5 2HL

Email: [sta@ealing.gov.uk](mailto:sta@ealing.gov.uk)

For information about online school travel plans please see <https://stars.tfl.gov.uk>

## **Acknowledgment**

Reproduced with thanks to Bristol City Council