

What is a walking bus?

A walking bus is a fun way to walk to school as a group. Children, accompanied by adults, walk together along a chosen route, joining at planned stops.

Joining a walking bus?

Walking as a group has a lot of benefits. Not only is it great for connecting with others, it can also help make children feel safer and more confident navigating roads – and it's fun!

More advice on how to stay safe can be found in the Road Safety Champion Handbook.



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Your guide to setting up a walking bus



Transport for Greater Manchester



Get inspired!!

Find out how RL Hughes Primary School in Ashton-in-Makerfield started their wonderful walking bus.

What are the benefits of a walking bus?

Walking buses are a simple and fun way of helping to create long-term behaviour change. They help show children, parents and guardians that there is a healthier and easier way to travel, and children often arrive at school feeling happier after their morning walk to school alongside their friends.

How did the school set up their walking bus?

Here in Wigan the Walking Activation Team works with schools, pupils, parents and guardians to help get the walking bus started. Our aim is for the walking bus to run weekly, encouraging children to get more active each school week.

“

We normally drive to school, so it was nice to be with all my friends walking to school.

child

”



Wigan Council

Anyone can set up a walking bus!

Whether you are a parent or guardian, member of the PTA, schoolteacher, local authority officer or you're a member of your school's school's Eco Council, why not give it a go?



“

We'd recommend all other schools start a walking bus! It's helping our planet but it's also a lovely way to start our school day.

”

teacher

Put your best foot forward!!

Every walking bus is a little different, but with the right support, it's easy to get started and it makes a big difference to children's health, confidence, and the school community.

Here are five top tips, to help get your walking bus off on the right foot.



1

Start small and build up

Connect with others by forming a small team of people that are passionate about travelling actively to school and would like to walk as a group. Work as one team alongside the school and local authority, letting them know your plans, and don't be afraid to start small and build as you go.



2

Plan a safe route

Pick a nearby location such as a car park, church, or quiet street where families can gather. Take advice from the school and walk the route yourself to check for safe crossings, avoiding busy roads where possible.

3

Set a regular time and spread the word

Choose a start time that allows plenty of time for children to reach school. Share the plan with families using WhatsApp groups, social media, or leaflets. Encourage children to join in through assemblies, making posters or talking about it in class and involve the School Council.



4

Launch the walking bus

Make it fun and safe – bring high-visibility vests if you can and consider giving out stickers or small rewards to encourage participation. Take photos to celebrate and share the success.

5

Recruit more people and keep it going!

After the first walk, thank everyone who joined and ask for feedback. Plan another walk and make it a weekly event. The more families join, the safer and more fun it becomes!

Get in touch with **Transport for Greater Manchester** to request a free map, showing what's within a 5, 10, or 15 minute walk from your school.

Email active.travel@tfgm.com for more information.