



Environment & Innovation Millfield Primary School, UK

Summary

A project by Millfield Primary School to promote schools' innovative environmental problem-solving. The project is the final winner from the Environment & Innovation Project, 1st Cycle (2005 - 2007), a project organised by the Eco-Schools International Programme Coordination with the support of Toyota Motor Europe via Toyota Fund for Europe.

Creation of a long-term and sustainable incentive for children to walk-to-school, by installing permanent checkpoint machines where children stamp a token on every 'green' school journey. Called 'Stamp Stanley', the smiley face stamped on tokens is children's proof of the green journey they have made. Tokens are saved up and exchanged in school for a wide range of rewards, used to 'buy' items, and also entered into prize draws to win family treats.

Establishing strong relationships between businesses, neighbours, parents, staff and children, this project has a real and significant impact, with wide-reaching benefits for the school and community.

End-user area

- New buildings
- Refurbishment of buildings
- Transport and mobility
- Financial instruments
- Industry
- Legal initiatives (regulations, directives, etc)
- Planning issues
- Sustainable communities
- User behaviour
- Education
- Other

Target Audience

- Citizens
- Households
- Property owners
- Schools and universities
- Decision makers
- Local and regional authorities
- Transport companies
- Utilities
- ESCOs
- Architects and engineers
- Financial institutions
- Other

Technical

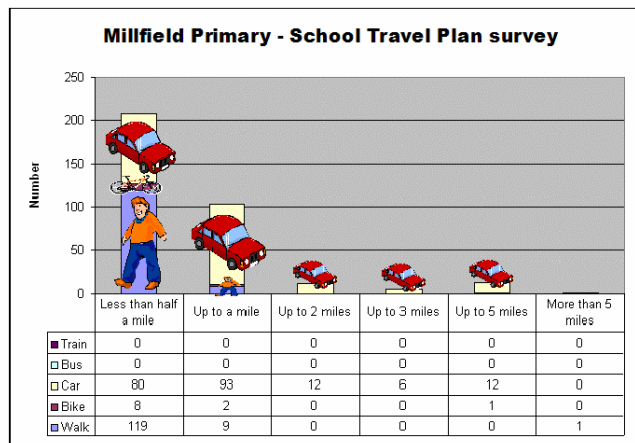
- Energy efficiency
- Heating
- Cooling
- Appliances
- Lighting
- CHP
- District Heating
- Solar energy
- Biomass
- Wind
- Geothermal
- Hydro power
- Other

Context

The aim of our project was to reduce traffic congestion associated with the daily school-run, by cutting the number of car journeys from the 55 % figure revealed in a whole-school survey in February 2005.

In the past, we had obtained increases in eco-friendly journeys of up to 77 % across the school during walk-to-school and jambuster weeks, but we found these were not sustained once the focus weeks were over.

We wanted to create a long-term solution to get children walking to school nearly all of the time, resulting in a significant reduction in car journeys, which would be sustained.





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Statistics gathered for one week, just before the launch of our project, confirmed that school travel habits were still unchanged since our first survey, with only 46% of children making 'green' journeys to school. (March 2007)

Objectives

The aim of the project was to reduce traffic congestion associated with the daily school-run, by cutting the number of car journeys from the 55 % figure revealed in a whole-school survey in February 2005.

The planned outcomes we aimed to achieve were:

- permanent reduction of vehicle congestion near school
- lowered emissions due to school runs
- eco-aware generations being educated in the importance of sustainability and the benefits of walking to school

Process

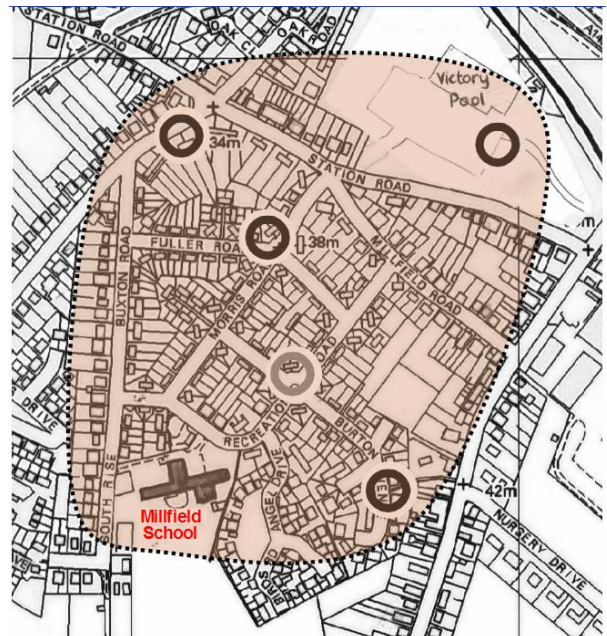
Five checkpoint units were installed, each around ½ mile away from school, except for one which was provided nearer to school only for local children (but which makes a different imprint on the tokens). We also have one checkpoint unit in school, which is used primarily by children in our Learning Support Centre, who cannot walk to school because they arrive by taxi. These children have been earning reward tokens for their eco-friendly activities in school, including tending their organic garden.

The scheme has been running for four weeks now, and 96% of children in the school have taken part.

Innovation:

The innovation of our project resides in the use of checkpoints and tokens to give evidence of green journeys made, and the promotion of long-term commitment to green journeys by providing the children with flexible rewards and incentives which keep up their enthusiasm to collect and save up tokens. Our checkpoint system is certainly unique (we are considering applying for a patent to avoid the idea being taken and then charged to us or other schools) with nothing like this having been done in schools before. As well as offering children rewards in exchange for tokens, entering all spent tokens in an additional prize draw also gives family incentives too.

Manufacture of the checkpoint units themselves has broken new ground in use of waste materials. The checkpoints have been carved out of solid 'purgings' of waste plastic that are produced when moulding machines are cleared out at the end of a production run. These would normally be thrown away, but provided for us an ideal material from which the solid plastic shoe units could be carved.





Financial resources and partners

Millfield Primary School and Toyota Europe is running the project in co-operation with the following:

- **Berry Plastics UK Ltd** (partner with us on product design and development; manufacturer of checkpoint units)
- **Interconnector UK** (financial sponsor)
- **Keys Estate Agent** (minor financial sponsor)
- **Victory Swim and Fitness Centre** (provider of Park-and-Stride car parking, and donations of swim vouchers)

The financing come from the following actors:

Source	£
Interconnector	£300.00
ENCAMS/Toyota Europe	£900.00
Keys Estate Agents	£50.00
Total	£1250.00

Several additional actors are providers of donated prize draw incentives, family session tickets, in-store vouchers etc.

Results

The project has been a huge success so far. **96%** of children in the school have taken part in the scheme, and 64% of the children have made every journey a green journey since the project began.

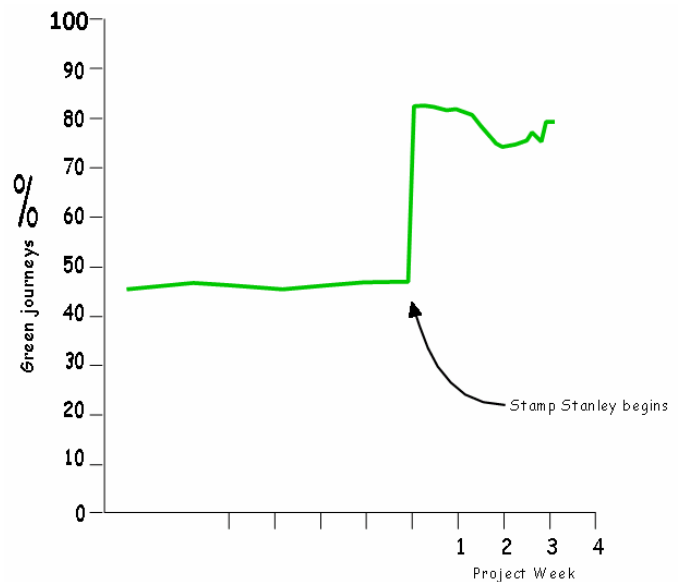
We have raised the overall percentage of 'green journeys' made from 45% to up to 82% (of all journeys made to and from school), and sustained this over the four weeks the project has been running so far. Note that the majority of these 'green journeys' are zero-carbon because the whole journey is on foot or bike; however, a proportion of these journeys are made partway by car, with the children walking at least the distance from a checkpoint to the school.

Although the number of green journeys being made dipped slightly after the first week, it started climbing again following the first rewards session and prize draw.

The planned outcomes we aimed to achieve were

- permanent reduction of vehicle congestion near school
- lowered emissions due to school runs
- eco-aware generations being educated in the importance of sustainability and the benefits of walking to school

The first two have certainly been achieved in the running of the project so far. The third outcome is a longer-term aim, but even so there is some evidence already of success here too – for example, we have done work in year 4 literacy on advertising, and we used the idea of advertising the benefits of this project to other schools. In their work, it was interesting to note that the majority of the children created persuasive arguments based not on the rewards they are getting, but on the part they are playing in helping save the environment and in becoming fitter and healthier.





Lessons learned and repeatability

Some of the positive aspects are described above. Other benefits we aimed for were:

- Improving children's health and fitness
- Exercise energising children's minds to improve learning each day
- Increasing children's contact with the environment and elements, and their appreciation of their part within the natural world.

Other unexpected benefits we have found so far are:

- Parents using walk-to-school as their daily fitness routine
- Children gaining life-skills in the saving-up of their tokens, even planning ahead how to spend their tokens and how many they need to earn by a certain time. Some Year 6 children have dubbed the tokens 'Millfield Money' – and it is in fact responsibility and budgeting skills they are exercising, similar to those needed in the financial world of later life.
- Increased opportunities for personal and social learning in school, through the rewards sessions – where children meet, work and play with others from different classes and other year groups

Important for success of the project has been the possibility to sustain the interest from the children, as well as the close co-operation with other actors in Millfield.

There is a large potential for replication of the project in other parts of Europe as the project is possible to carry out with a relatively small budget and at almost any primary school in Europe.



Photos taken before the project launch show the busyness of the roads around the school.

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