

Park & Walk

Park & Walk simply means driving some of the way to school, parking and walking the rest of the way. It is ideal for families who live a long way from school and can't walk the whole way. It also reduces congestion around the school entrance, making it safer for children to walk and ride to school.

Park & Walk is a brilliant way to encourage parents and carers and their children to add some exercise to their journey to school, learn road safety skills and socialise with other families. It's also a great opportunity for parents and kid's to spend some quality time together before and after school.

How does it work?

There are two ways in which Park & Walk can work:

1. Parents/carers are encouraged to find a suitable parking spot away from the school gates. They then walk the rest of the way.
2. Alternatively, schools can choose official Park & Walk meeting spots that are 5-10 minutes from school. This makes it easy for parents to take part, especially if there is a shortage of car parking around school. It's also a great opportunity for parents/carers and their children to meet with others, walk together and chat.

Park & Walk meeting points

The ideal meeting points are empty car parks near the school which are on a safe walking route. Options include car parks at local parks, ovals, sporting clubs, churches or local supermarkets.

You could even map where your students live in order to choose meeting point/s that are on their way to school. See enclosed School Mapping Activity.

Ask permission to use the car parks as necessary. You'll find a sample letter at the end of this document that you can send to the car park owners requesting permission. If you're struggling, ask your local government road safety, sustainability or community development officer for help.

Promote and celebrate your Park & Walk scheme

To be successful, it's important to let your school community know the details of your Park



& Walk scheme. Order some Meeting Point signs for your Park and Walk meeting points, and put up posters around the school to promote the scheme. You'll find a sample letter at the end of this document that you can send home to families. Also include information in the school newsletter, on your website and school notice board. The Walk Zone activity and bin stickers can also complement your Park & Walk scheme.

Launch the scheme by holding an event day and inviting the Mayor, a local hero or your local government officer. Thank everyone for participating by providing faction points or a healthy breakfast for students, and tea and coffee for parents. Post stories at www.yourmove.org.au about your Park & Walk scheme to earn points to spend on rewards.

School mapping activity

A whole class or school map will show how far your students live from school, where they travel from and where Park & Walk points could be located.

Alternatively you can create a simple whole class or school map with BatchGeo software. Ask your school office for the list of student addresses. Copy and paste these into the online software. Go to www.batchgeo.com/ and follow these steps:

1. Make sure your address data is separated by columns like in an excel spreadsheet or with commas. Example: 10 Winnacott Street, Willagee, 6156.
2. Copy and paste your class/school addresses into the box provided.
3. Click on the "Map Now" button
4. Click "Save and Continue" under map and fill in details
5. Please ensure that the "unlisted" option is checked, otherwise the map will be made public. Then click on "Save Map" button
6. A link to your map will be sent to your email address!

Source: *Walk to School, Living Streets, UK*

Sample letter to car park owners

Dear [add name of contact],

I am writing to you on behalf of [add name of school].

As you may be aware, the school is working very hard to try and reduce congestion at the school gates. It is hoped that by doing this, the school area will be safer, thus encouraging more parents/carers to walk their children to school.

One way in which we are hoping to do this is by setting up a “Park and Walk” scheme. This is a simple initiative, where parents are encouraged to park their car a 10 minute walk from school and then walk the rest of the way.

We are currently looking for areas where parents may park and wondered if you would be happy for them to use [enter name and location of car park].

We feel this would be a great opportunity for [enter name of company] to support the local community and your organisation would be perceived as a company concerned about the safety of local school children and the environment.

If you are happy to be advertised as a “Park and Walk” drop off point, please can you contact me on [add your contact details] to discuss the scheme in more detail.

Thank you in advance for your support.

[Name of person responsible for Park & Walk scheme]

Sample letter to families

Dear Parents/Carers,

As you may be aware, the school is working very hard to try and reduce congestion at the school gates. It is hoped that by doing this, the school area will be safer, thus encouraging more parents/carers to walk their children to school.

One way in which we are hoping to do this is by setting up a “Park and Walk” scheme. This is a simple initiative, where parents/ carers are encouraged to park their car a 5-10 minute walk from school and then walk the rest of the way.

We appreciate, however, that some children are unable to walk to school either due to parental work commitments, distance or a variety of other reasons. This is why we are creating a ‘Park and Walk’ meeting point – somewhere where you can park your car and walk the last part of the journey to school. This will provide children who have to be driven to school with the opportunity to walk part of their school journey.

We are therefore asking parents to park **[enter name of designated location here]** and walk the rest of the way to school. If for some reason this is not a suitable parking place we would still encourage you to park 5-10 minutes from school and walk your children the rest of the way.

If you have any queries regarding the Park and Walk meeting point, please don't hesitate to pop in and speak to **[enter the name of the school champion]**.

Thank you for your continuing support.

[Name of Principal]