

Cash boost to get more kids cycling and walking to school

- £2 million announced to help more children to cycle or walk as part of their commute to the classroom
- in-school cycle repair scheme to ensure children's bikes are fit for the road
- comes during Bike to School Week as students and families are encouraged to cycle on the school run

Schools across England are set to benefit from new funding to get more children riding their bike or walking to school, Cycling Minister Chris Heaton-Harris has announced today (28 September 2020), as Bike to School Week gears up across the country.

A new million-pound programme will see cycle repair workshops set up in primary schools and local neighbourhoods to make sure students' bikes are fit for the road.

'Doctor Bike' clinics will be rolled out next month, targeting areas where children, including those with disabilities, are more likely to need support in getting their bikes roadworthy for regular use on the school run.

Being physically active, such as cycling or walking to school, cuts the risk of developing health issues and helps kids to be more alert and ready to learn – positively impacting their health and wellbeing.

A further £1 million has also been announced to boost the number of children walking to school. The Walk to School Outreach Programme – which has already generated 4 million new walking trips – is being extended to roll out further measures to support walking.

This includes tackling the barriers that may prevent children and their families choosing to walk to and from school, as well as providing schools with classroom materials and access to local coordinators who can help schools get new walking initiatives up and running.

Cycling and Walking Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said:

Cycling and walking is good for people and the planet's health, so we want half of all journeys to be cycled or walked by 2030. To do that, we must encourage young people to see cycling and walking as as normal as getting the bus or train.

This funding will support schools and local communities to get more children walking to school, and set up bike surgeries that will help children get their bikes ready to roll, so they can start their day healthy and happy!

CEO of Sustrans Xavier Brice said:

We're delighted to be able to run Bike to School Week again this year, after what has been a time of great uncertainty for all families across the country.

Our new research shows that the majority of UK parents support changes that have already been made to the streets and places in their local area to make walking and cycling to school easier. It has also identified that interventions, such as cycle routes separated from road traffic, safer junctions and cycling training would help families travel actively to school more.

It's fantastic that the UK government is recognising the role walking and cycling projects can play in helping families travel in a way that is good for their health and for the environment.

Today's funding comes during Bike to School Week (28 September to 2 October) and ahead of Walk to School Week (5 October to 9 October).

The funding is part of a wider plan to create safer streets for cycling and walking, following the launch of the most ambitious plans yet, backed by £2 billion in government investment, to encourage even more people to choose active travel.

Bikeability training has also recently restarted in schools across England, helping children gain confidence and boost their cycling skills.