

Wanaka Primary School

Research Report

Follow up Parent Travel Survey – September 2012

A. INTRODUCTION

Wanaka Primary School has been implementing a school travel plan September 2010 and is one of five travel planning schools working in partnership with Queenstown Lakes District Council. The main goal of the programme is to increase safe travel choices for children and with the help of the school community, address road safety issues where possible. Wanaka Primary is part of a geographical 'cluster' of educational facilities and is working jointly with Holy Family School.

A key part of the school's travel plan is to carry out travel surveys. This document summarises the results of the school's follow up parent survey which was run in September 2012, following on from the first parent survey which was completed in May 2010 when the school was located at Tenby Street. Classroom data is also collected by the school once a year to provide quantitative information on students' travel modes and preferences.

This follow up parent survey report presents data from the survey which shows travel choice, barriers and opportunities around active transport, use of the school bus service and changes in travel behaviour between 2010 and 2012. This information was collected through paper and web-based questionnaires.

The Road Environment, Infrastructure and Community Road Safety

In September 2010 Wanaka Primary School moved from Tenby Street (near Wanaka CBD) to Scurr Heights where other educational facilities are located, such as Holy Family School, Mt Aspiring College and the Montessori Early Education Centre. These facilities are all within a 1km radius. Wanaka Primary is bordered by Aubrey Road, Kings Drive, Totara Terrace and Plantation Road and all have a 50km/h speed limit.

Council introduced a range of infrastructure measures to aid safe walking and cycling access either prior to the opening of Wanaka Primary's new location, or in response to needs that were identified once the school moved. These included:

- Upgrading of Aubrey Road shared pathway
- Installation of shared pathway along Beacon Point Rd and some of Aubrey Rd to connect to Holy Family
- Pedestrian crossing points with either kerb build outs or traffic islands (on Aubrey Rd outside HFW, on the intersection of Anderson and Aubrey, on Kings Drive and Ironside, and 2 on Anderson Rd itself) and pedestrian/speed ramps on Totara Terrace..
- Active school signs were installed around the geographical cluster, including Holy Family School and are activated at school commuter times (approaches of Aubrey Rd, Kings Dr and Plantation Rd).
- Sealed footpath down Rata Street and along Aubrey Rd to connect to Holy Family School

Educational and community initiatives have also been implemented since 2010 to support safe walking, biking and bussing to school in this area. Many of these have been run jointly with Holy Family School such as; cycle skills courses and competitions, Walk n Wheel events, developing safe route and parking maps, coordination of the Mt Iron walking school bus, road safety quizzes and the installation of rural bus shelters in partnership with Total Span's Undercover Kids programme.

Road Safety – Crash Statistics

The recorded crashes in the vicinity of the school between 2005 and 2012 that involved a pedestrian, cyclist or school bus were reviewed. It was found that during school weeks and during school travel times (7am-10am and 2pm-5pm) there were 3 minor injury crashes and 1 serious injury crash involving school aged pedestrians or cyclists. More detailed information about crash data is available through Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) or New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) or can be investigated by the working group if this is needed at a later time.

What the Survey Data Will Tell Us

The purpose of this survey is to give an overview of student travel patterns while the purpose of school travel planning is to encourage and facilitate active and safer travel choices. By analysing travel choices and the reasons for these choices, QLDC can monitor issues and safety concerns to improve the roading network to better serve the school and the surrounding community. The survey acts as a forum for parents to discuss any roading concerns with Council. All submissions and suggestions will be considered in school travel and network engineering action planning.

Participation Rates and Promotion of Survey

A total of 157 surveys were received. With a roll of 352 families this represents a response rate of 45% of the school's population. This compares with a 38% response rate for the 2010 parent survey.

To promote the survey, posters were given to the school, a press release was done and spot prizes provided by *New World*. Parent newsletters and a classroom competition also helped encourage parents to respond (by rewarding the class with the highest number of returned surveys).

In this report, the research data is summarised in the following way:

- Section A: Introduction and background information
- Section B: Travel Results (travel choice, changes in travel, walking, cycling, bussing and carpooling)
- Section C: Parents' Comments
- Section D: Summary and Opportunities
- Appendix 1 and 2 (Travel mode maps)

B. TRAVEL SURVEY RESULTS

Note: The total number of parents in this survey (totalling 157 out of a possible 352 families) equates to a 45% response rate. This report only reflects the views of the parents who took part in the survey.

1. PARENTS' RESPONSES - 2012 TRAVEL SURVEYS:

Parents were asked if they took part in the school's first survey run in May 2010:

- Around one third said "yes"
- Around two thirds said "no". Of these parents it is not known how many answered "no" because they had no children attending the school in 2010, or how many didn't take part.

2. CURRENT TRAVEL CHOICES – 2012:

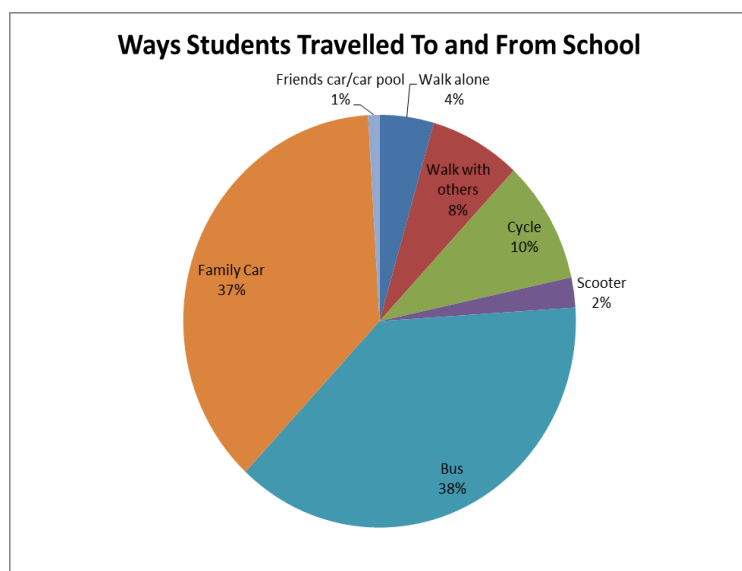


Figure 1: Comparison of **MAIN MODES** of transport 2012

Parents were asked what their children's main mode of transport was to and from school.

Over a third of respondents used the family car or school bus as a main mode of transport. Some walked with others (8%), while 4% walked alone, 10% cycled and 2% used a scooter. Just 1% carpooled.

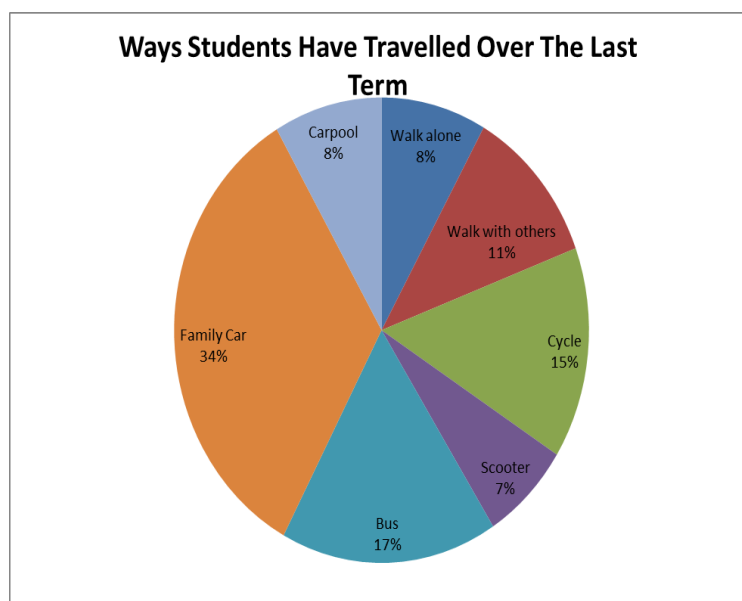


Figure 2 : Comparison of **ALL MODES** of transport – Term 3, 2012

Parents were also asked to identify *all* the transport modes their children used in term 3.

When looked at in this way, it can be seen that more trips involved walking, cycling, scootering and carpooling to school. However while these increased, the numbers of car trips only decreased slightly, whereas the use of the school bus more than halved. This suggests that increases in active transport probably replaced trips usually made in the school bus.

3. Distance Travelled By Mode

Appendix 1 and 2 (see page 14-15) shows transport modes based on where students live. The colour of the road defines how far away students live from the school. This is useful in helping to understand how distance from school dictates transport choice. As would be expected, most of those who walk, cycle or scooter to school live within 2km of the school, whilst those who travel by bus or car mostly live more than 2km from the school.

4. Changes in Travel Behaviour:

Parents were asked whether the ways their child/ren travelled to school had changed since the first survey. For those parents who completed the survey in May 2010 (when the school was at its Tenby Street location) a quarter said their travel mode had changed and 3 quarters of those surveyed said it had not.

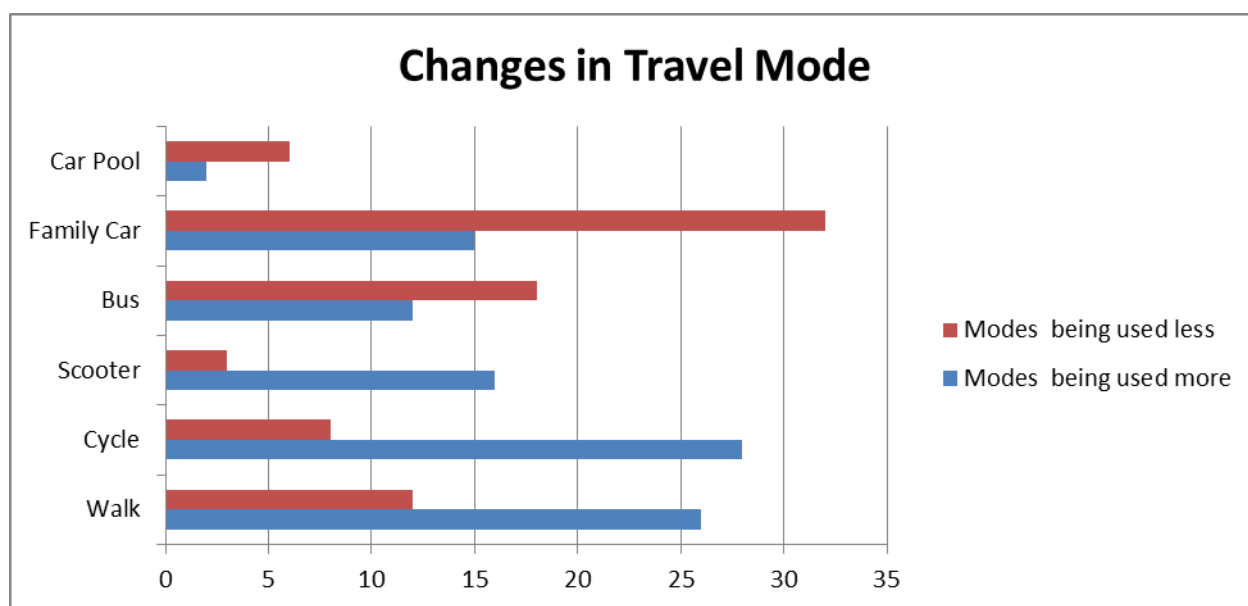


Figure 3: Changes in Travel Modes

Figure 3 shows that overall; out of those who have changed their travel modes, more are walking, cycling or scootering to school indicating a marked increase in active transport modes. There is also a large decrease in the use of a family or friend's car and the school bus.

Table 1: Actual Changes in Travel Modes

For those whose travel choices had changed, the modes being used *more* or less were:

	Walk	Cycle	Scooter	Bus	Family Car	Car pool
Modes used more	26	28	16	12	15	2
Modes used less	12	8	3	18	32	6

5. Driving to School

Parents were asked what the two main reasons were for driving children to school. Convenience and distance were the main factors when choosing to drive. The travel plan work aims to reduce concerns around road safety issues to make modes other than driving more attractive.

“Other” reasons given for driving include there being no bus service, or concerns about bus safety (2 responses), work commitments (3), extra-curricular activities (2), age needs of students (4) needs of other siblings (1) and weather (3).

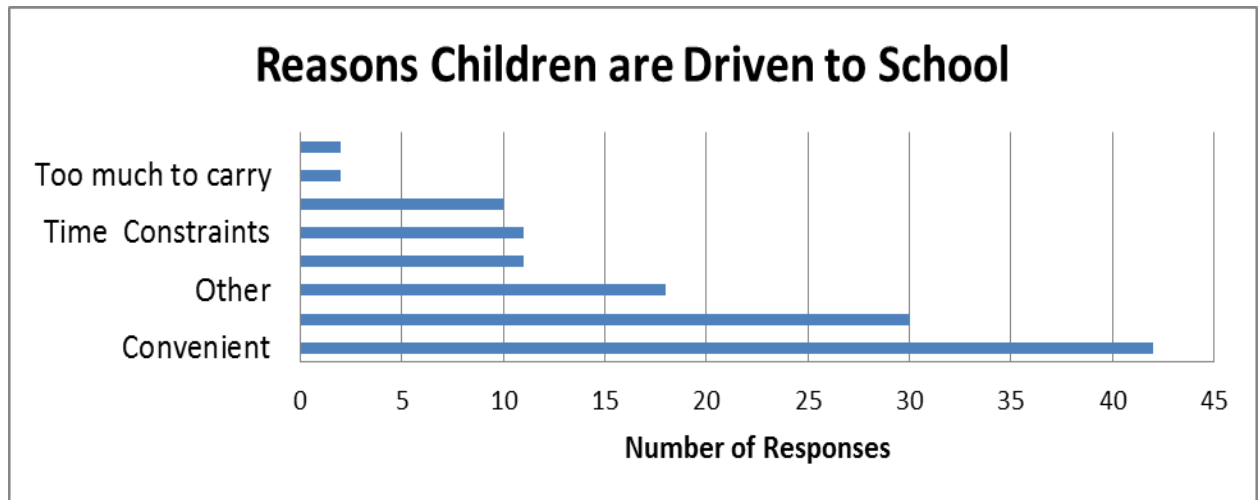


Figure 4 : Reasons Children are Driven to School

6. Walking to School

Parents whose children did not usually walk to school were asked what would allow them to walk more often:

Factors that Would Influence Parents Decisions in Child/ren Walking

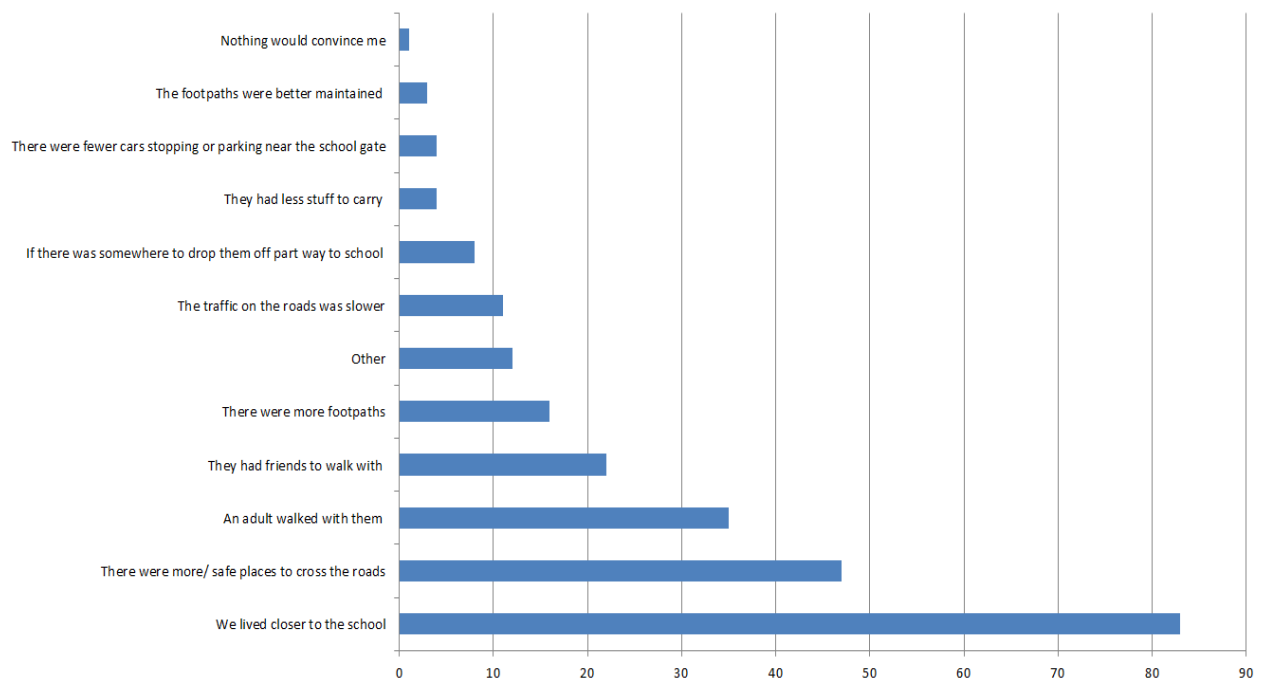


Figure 5: Factors to Get Children Walking More

Figure 5 shows the number of responses, (up to 3 reasons could be chosen). Living closer to the school was by far the leading factor influencing walking choice, followed by the need for more/safe places to cross the roads. Having an adult or friends to walk with them were also important factors.

7. Cycling to School

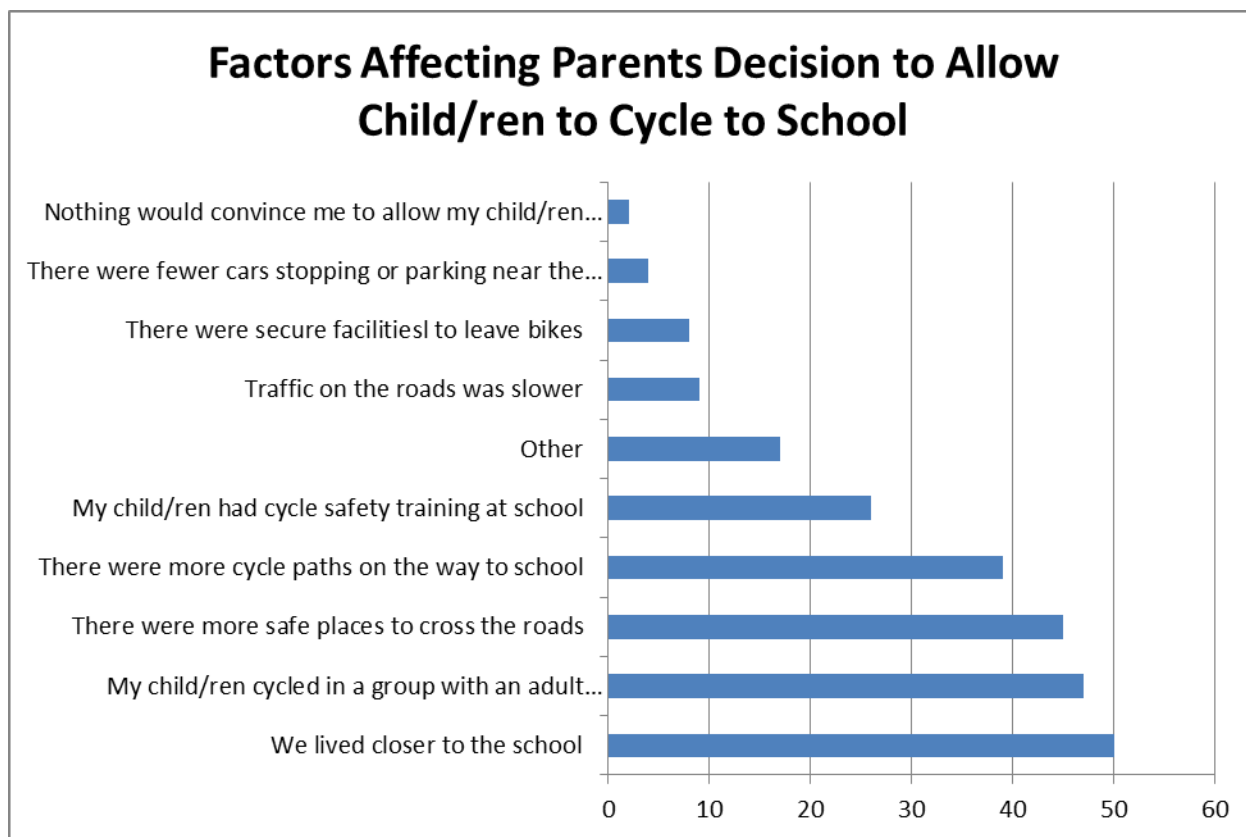


Figure 6: Factors to Get Children Cycling More

Parents whose children did not usually bike to school were asked what would allow them to bike more often. Figure 6 shows the number of responses (up to 3 reasons could be chosen). Similar to the results in the walking question, the most important factor affecting parents' decisions to let their children bike was living too far away from the school. The second most important factor was the need for an adult to cycle with children. Safe places to cross roads, more cycle paths, cycle safety training and the speed of traffic were also important factors.

8. Bussing to School:

Around 43% of families stated that they were not eligible to use the bus service; the **actual** number of those not eligible could be higher. The most common reason for not being eligible is living outside the required area to qualify for access (the Ministry of Education requires families live a least 3.2kms away from the school).

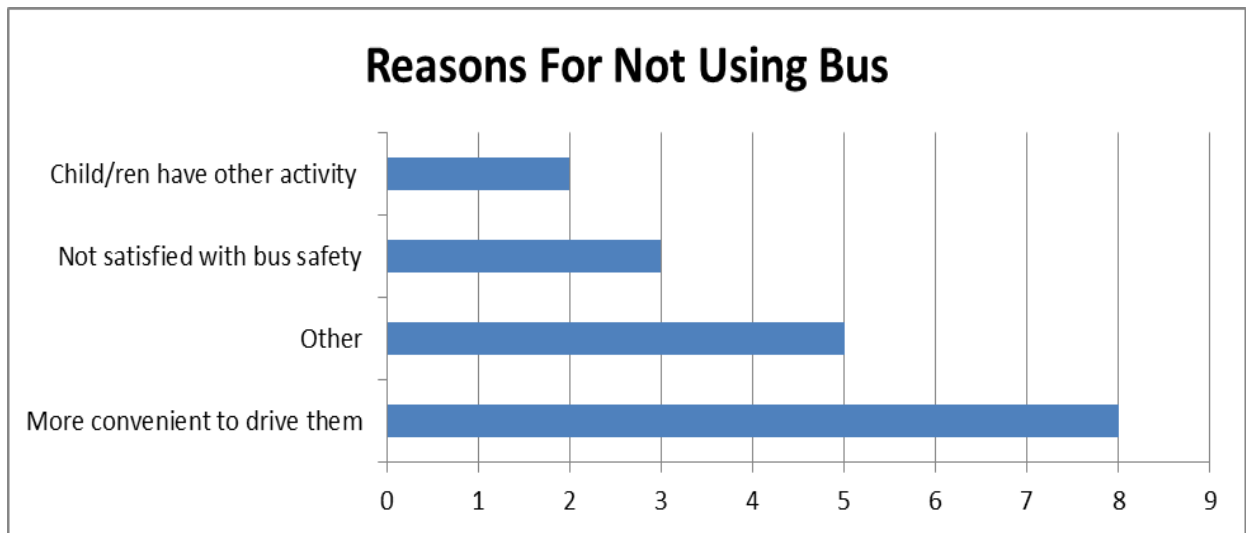


Figure 7: Reasons for not using the bus service even though eligible

Figure 7 shows some reasons why children are not using the bus service even though they are eligible to use it. Reasons for these parents not using the bus service include; it being more convenient to drive, safety concerns and extra-curricular activities. Other reasons for not using the bus service include the length of the journey, age of the children involved and the need for adult supervision.

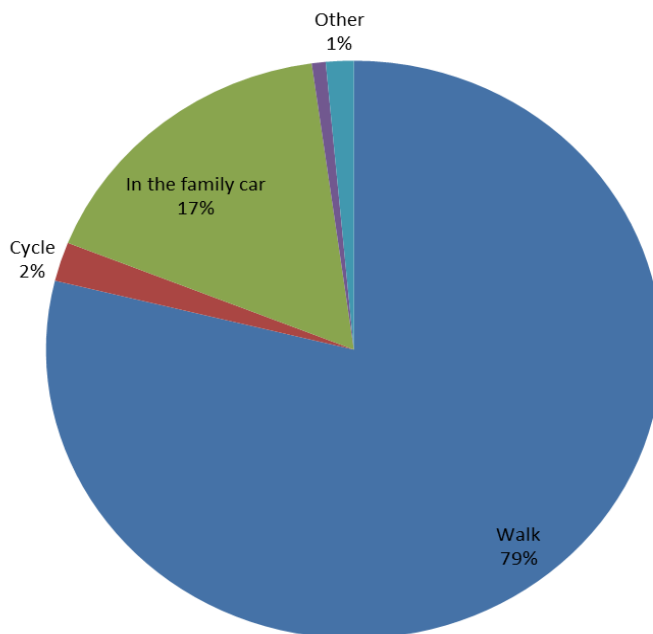
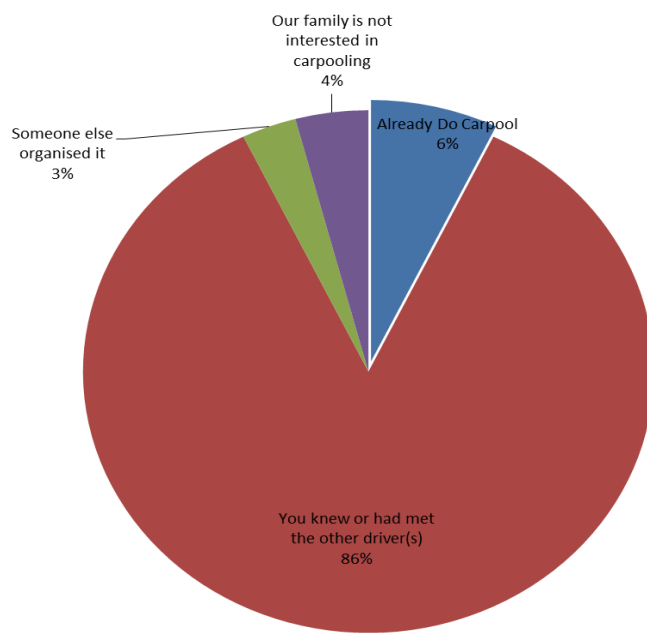


Figure 8: Travel Modes to and from the bus stop

Figure 8 shows families' travel modes to the bus stop averaged over morning and afternoon journeys. Generally there was not a big difference in mode choice between morning and afternoon journeys, except:

- More children were driven to the bus stop in the morning (24%) compared to the afternoon (10%).
- Conversely, walking was higher in the afternoon with 88% walking home from the bus stop (instead of 69% in the morning).

9. Carpooling to School:

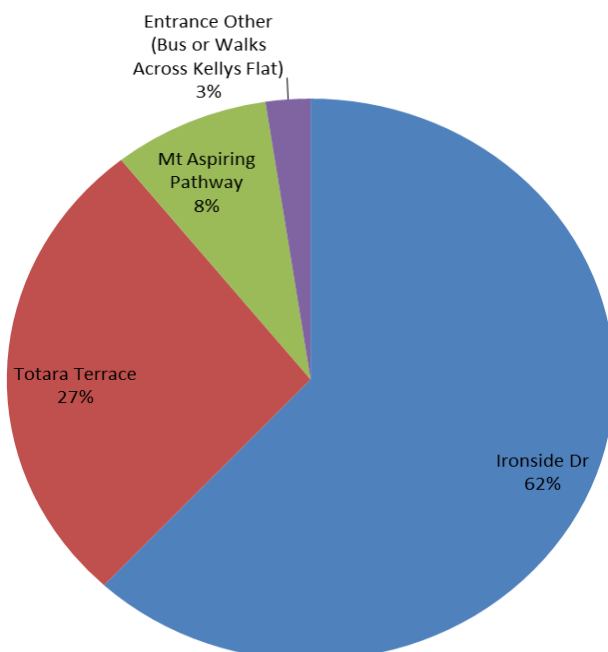


When asked about carpooling, only 6% of parents already carpool, 4% are not interested, 86% would carpool if they knew or had met the other drivers and 3% would if someone else organised it or had more room in the car.

A total 'other' reasons for not carpooling included; timing and circumstances, space in the vehicle, and the need for child restraints.

Figure 9: Reasons to carpool

10. Entrance used



The majority of families in the survey said they used the Ironside Drive Entrance, 27% use the Totara Terrace and 8% use the Mt Aspiring College Pathway.

A smaller number (3%) selected used other entrances such as walking across Kelly's Flat and being dropped off at the school by the bus.

Figure 10: School entrance used

C. PARENTS' COMMENTS:

Below is a list of parents' views, when asked if they had general comments relating to their child/ren's journey to and from school:

Issue or Theme	No of times mentioned
CYCLING	
Promote cycle safety, need more skills education/promote use of helmets (scootering)	3
More cycle routes/paths (especially at new subdivisions)	2
Cycle path on Aubrey (especially Aubrey needing sealing)	2
Ensure connection on council land is protected between Mataraki and McLeod	2
Cycle lane (on road) on Kings Dr	1
Concerns about scooter/cycle safety	1
Like cycle infrastructure that's there already	1
Need path on Riverbank between Ballantyne & Orchard (would service 10 + families)	1
Need more cycle infrastructure generally	1
CROSSING POINTS, WALKING AND FOOTPATHS:	
Want zebra crossing on Aubrey outside Holy Family	2
Need more footpaths/safe crossing points generally	2
Need footpath on Matai	1
Studholme Rd path has helped safety	1
Want zebra crossings at Aubrey/Anderson	1
Want zebra crossing on Anderson	1
Not enough zebra crossings between south Meadowstone & school	1
We like the zebra crossing on school grounds	1
Want crossing point/zebra crossing one on Kings drive near Aspinall	1
Crossing points on Totara: kids mistake these speed bumps for crossing pts	1
Need footpath on Rata/Aubrey	1
Want supervised crossing on Kings	1
Stranger danger education needed	1
Support walking school bus	1
Concerns that children not using crossing points on Anderson	1
SPEED:	
An issue down Totara	1
Around school entrances	1
Down Beacon Point Road	1
Past school buses	1
BUS:	
Like bus service	5
Want to use but not eligible	5
Behaviour issues/intimidation barrier for using	3
Concerns overcrowding	3
Great communication between bus company and school	3
Bus timings an issue	2

Issue or Theme	No of times mentioned
Concerns no seat belts	2
Children blocking aisle an issue	1
Bus shelter needed Stone St	1
Too hot, need ventilation	1
shelter for Stone St kids (up to 15 kids)	1
Concerns re safety at stop	1
SCHOOL DROP OFF AREA:	
Want school to have zebra crossing at BOTH entrances	1
Conflict in car park where pedestrians/cyclists using bike area and cars manoeuvring in car park	1
'chaos' at drop off zone parents need educating,	1
more safe crossing places to encourage walking/biking	1
more parking needed	1
want to use a drop off zone away from school	1

D. OPPORTUNITIES:

Change in School's Location and Travel Choice:

The change in the school's location between the first parent travel survey (May 2010) and the follow up survey (September 2012) has undoubtedly had an influence on families' travel choices. The numbers of students walking or cycling to school has increased at the Scurr Heights location, although this seems to be at the cost of fewer bus trips rather than fewer car trips. A number of infrastructure measures were put in place prior to the school's move anticipating this increase, and the surrounding residential area is within easy walking, scootering and cycling distance of the school. Since the survey was implemented, the interest in the Mt Iron walking school bus has increased significantly and is particularly popular amongst younger students.

While convenience continues to be the determining factor behind driving, distance is the main reason why students don't walk to school. The distance between home and school is the main barrier for cycling as well, but not as great a factor as it is for walking. Having good infrastructure, educating students to have the right skills and having others to walk or bike with are all important factors in encouraging more active transport.

Infrastructure:

More crossing points (in particular zebra crossings) is probably the main infrastructure suggestion from parents that they believe would aid safe journeys for walkers, cyclists and scooterers. Some wanted more zebra crossings, and some parents suggested having crossing points monitored. Council did explore this idea in depth late in 2012 but unfortunately not enough volunteers came forward to support this idea. Parents see crossing points as being important in areas where students are already crossing (such as Anderson Rd, Kings Drive and Aubrey Rd) as well as on the school grounds themselves.

The parking and drop off area at any school presents a challenging mix of pedestrians, cyclists, buses and vehicles in a concentrated space. Parents like the 'zebra crossing' in the school's car park, some want more of these and others would like to see their peers educated on how and where to park, and to have a greater awareness of distractions such as cellphone use.

Bus:

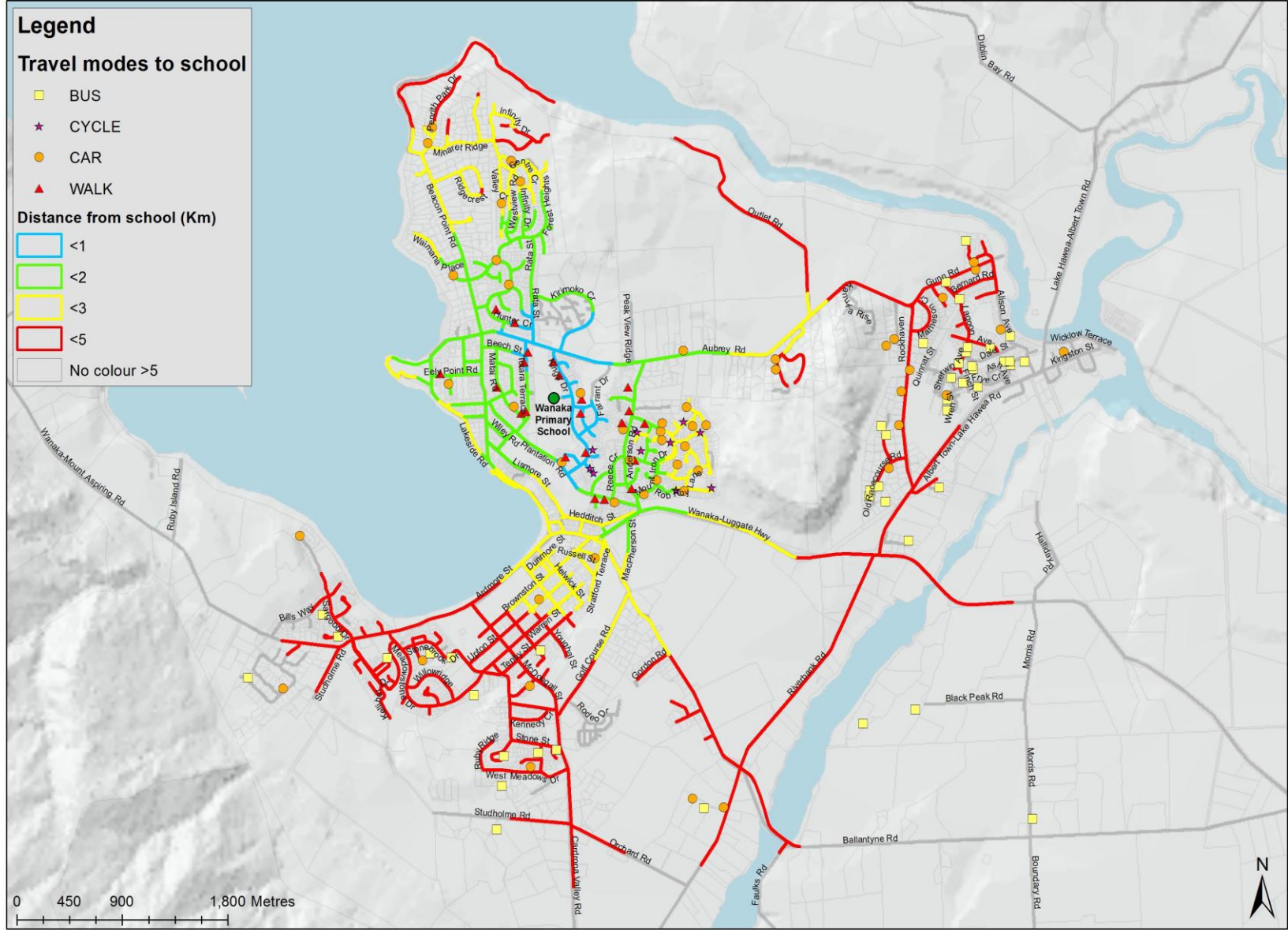
Nearly 40% of students in this survey use the school bus service and understandably some parents have strong views on the safety and convenience of this transport mode. Most are happy with the service and a good number think there is excellent communication between the bus company and the school and good education around safety. However factors such as; the behaviour of students on the bus, not being eligible to use the service, 'overcrowding' and lack of seat belts are barriers for some. Bussing is as an important travel choice and the ways in which children's safety can be supported (for example through the use of monitors to ensure safety of younger children and checking on behaviour) could be explored by the School or the School Bus Contractor at the next working group meeting. A report collating parents' comments about the bus service will be forwarded to the bus contractor in due course.

Next Steps:

- The travel survey report will be discussed with the School and main findings will be made available to parents.
- A working group meeting to develop an action plan addressing concerns and opportunities will be carried out later in the year and will be open for all parents to attend.
- Council will consider any potential infrastructure measures or actions in future work programmes where relevant.

APPENDIX 1a: Travel Mode Map to School - Close Up

(See pg 4, section 3 for related comments)



APPENDIX 1b: Travel Mode Map to School - Overview

