

Summary of Student Travel Survey: Wanaka Primary School

Classroom Counts on Travel Choice – March 2011

Background

Wanaka Primary School has been implementing a school travel plan since 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 to work with the school community to address any road safety issues which come out of this process. Wanaka Primary is part of a geographical 'cluster' of educational facilities and is working jointly with Holy Family School. Other educational facilities within 1km include Mt Aspiring College and the Montessori Early Education Centre.

Students were asked how they got to and from school over a period of 5 days in March 2011. The data given in this report shows what these travel patterns were over the week, how they relate to each year group, and how this data from March 2011 compared with an earlier survey in April 2010. Children were also asked how they would *like* to travel to school if they had the choice.

Student travel surveys will be carried out at Wanaka Primary School at a similar time every year in order to build a profile of travel choice over time. This information can also help the school and the council monitor the school's travel plan programme.

Methodology

To collect classroom or 'hands up surveys', teachers are asked to collect data by asking students each morning how they travelled to and from school. We try and encourage teachers to oversee data collection, but some classes with older students elect a student to record this. We ask that rainy days and school trips are noted on the survey sheet.

Participation rates for student surveys are generally higher than they are for parent travel surveys. The April 2010 survey results were based on data from 385 students (approximately 90% of the school's roll), compared to the March 2011 survey which was based on data from 278 students. March was a busy time in the term with lots of competing activities and not all classes submitted data. Monday afternoon, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings were recorded as wet days for the March 2011 survey.

How students are getting to and from Wanaka Primary School in March 2011

Figure 1: All travel modes

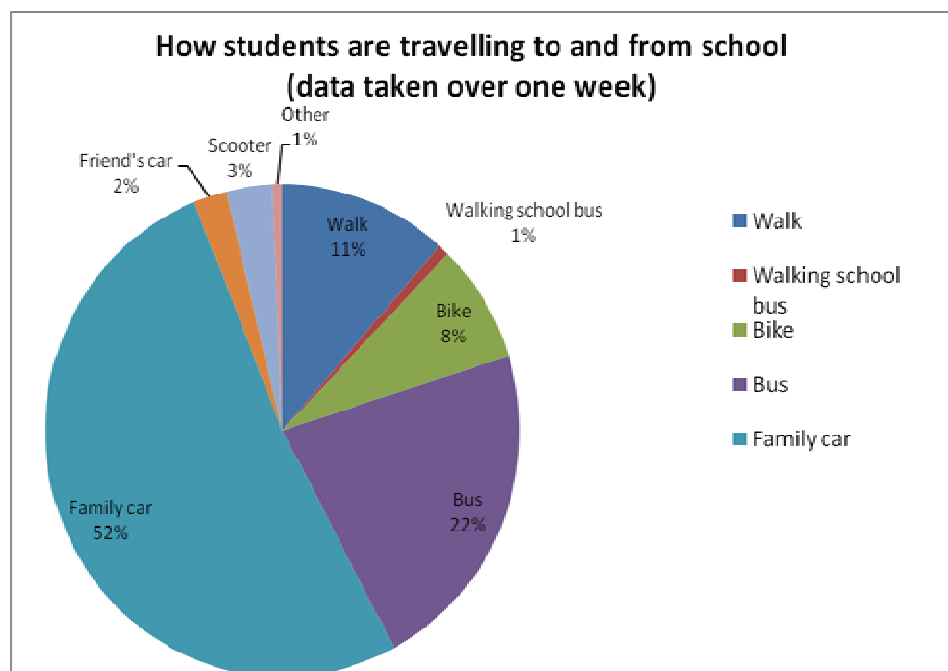


Figure 2: Mode types (comparing active transport, shared transport and driving)

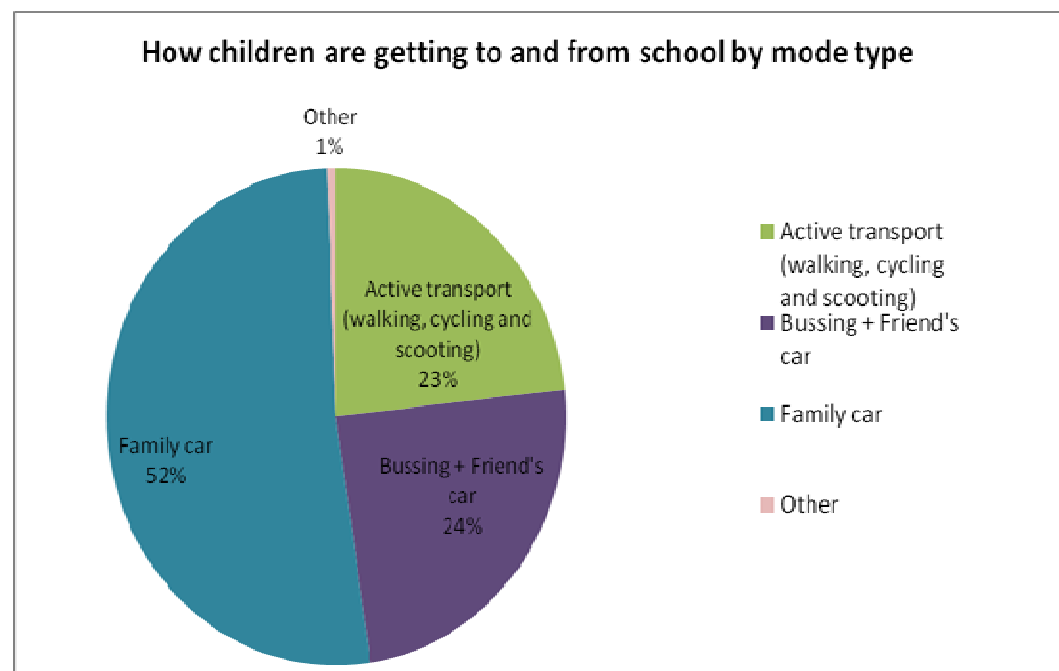


Figure 1 gives a full breakdown of travel modes for students over a 5 day period. Over half of the trips students made during this week were in the family car, with just under a quarter travelling by bus.

Figure 2 shows travel modes grouped into; active forms of transport (walking, cycling and scooting), shared motorised transport (bus and carpooling) compared to trips in the family car. This shows that around 48% of trips are via active or shared transport, with 52% coming by car.

How students are travelling to school: Comparisons of two surveys

These graphs compare data from March 2011 with an earlier survey carried out in April 2010

Figure 3: Breakdown of *all modes* in March 2011:

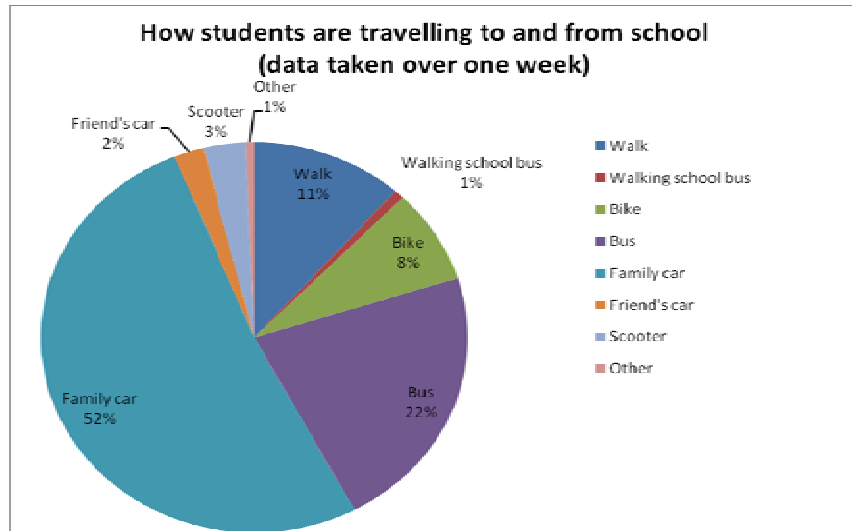


Figure 4: Breakdown of *all modes* in April 2010:

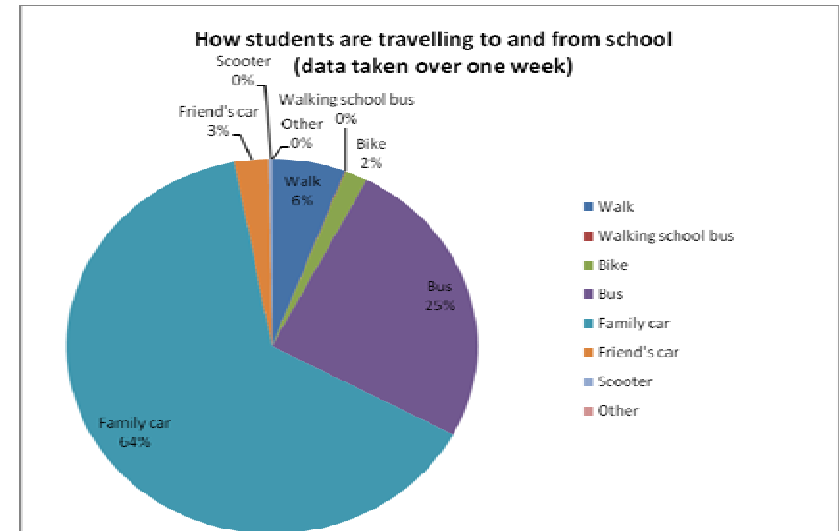


Figure 5: Groups of *transport type* in March 2011:

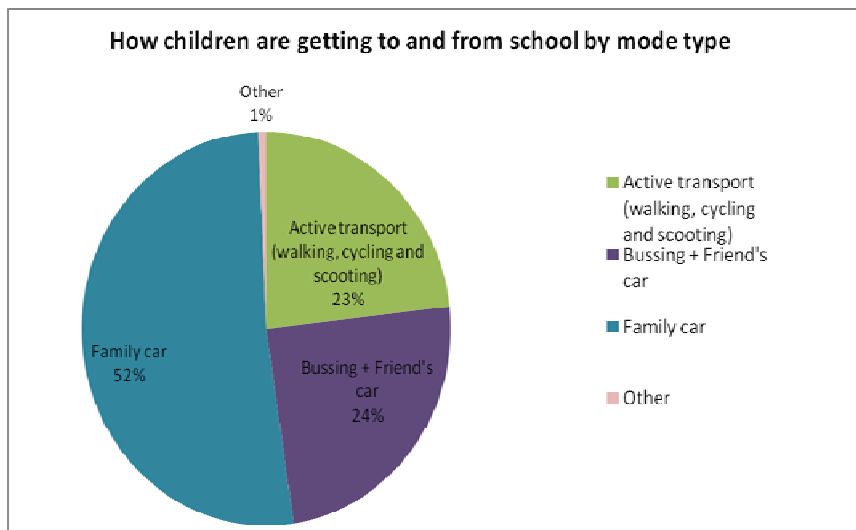
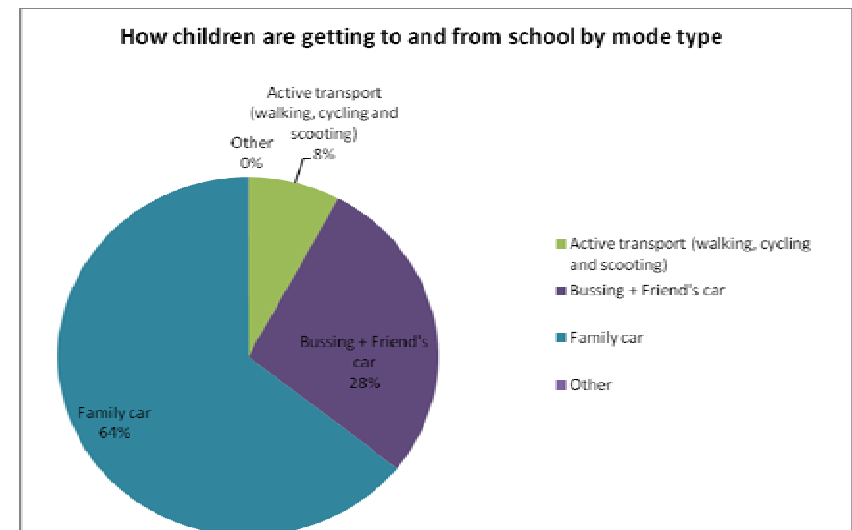


Figure 6: Groups of *transport type* in April 2010:



How children *currently* travel to school and how they would *like* to travel

Figure 7: Data from March 2011:

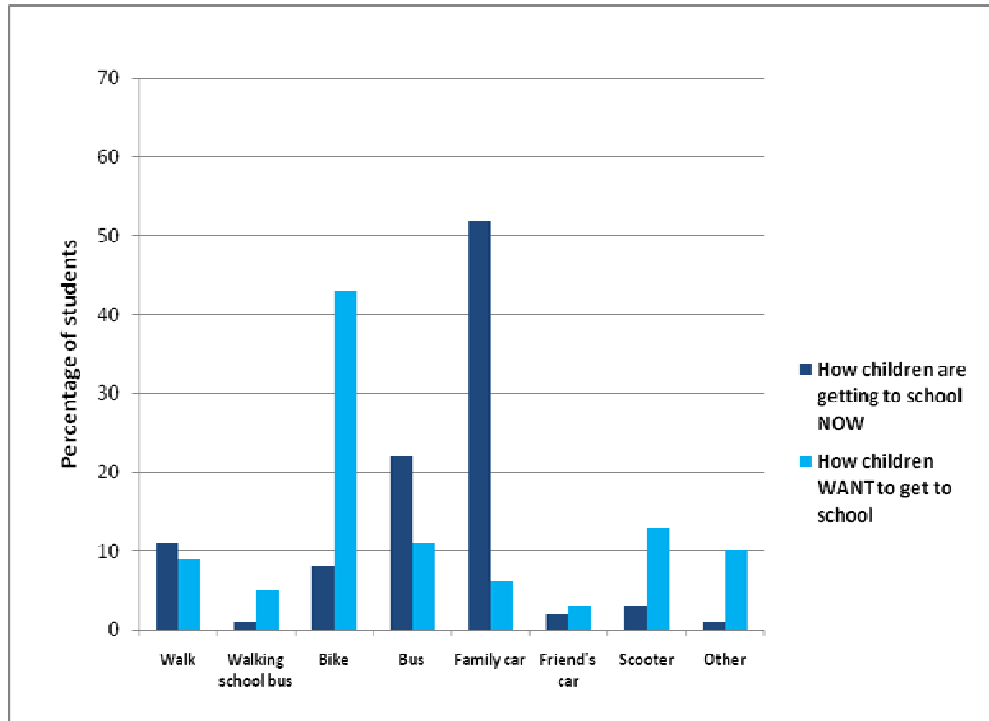
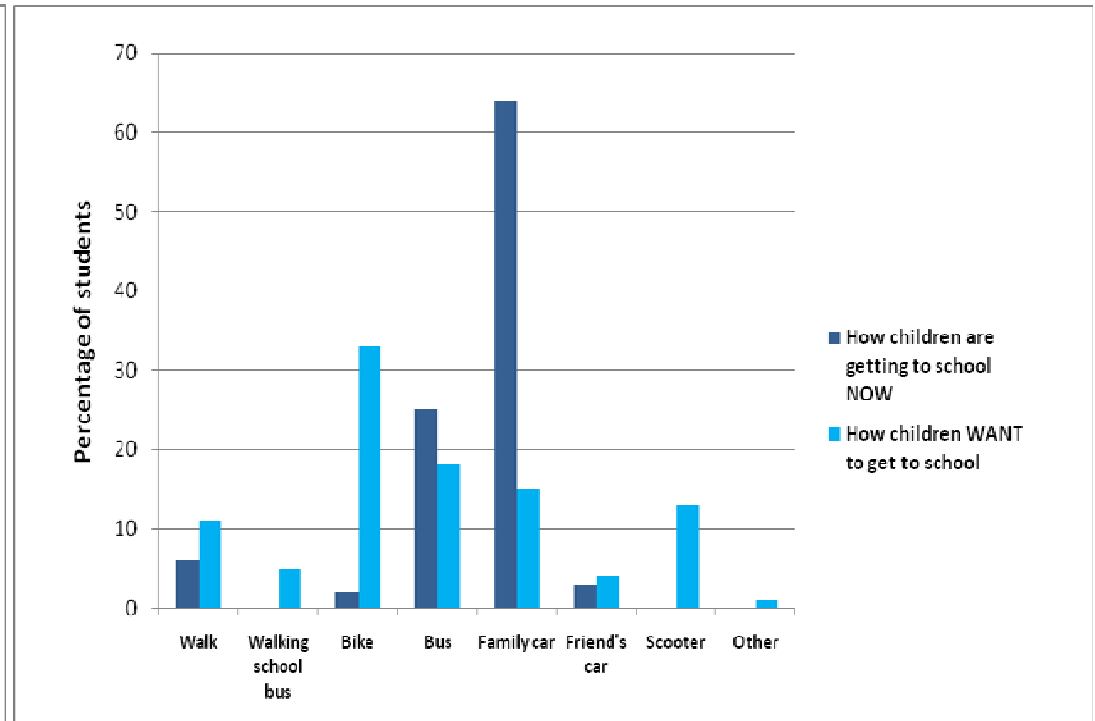


Figure 8: Data from April 2010:



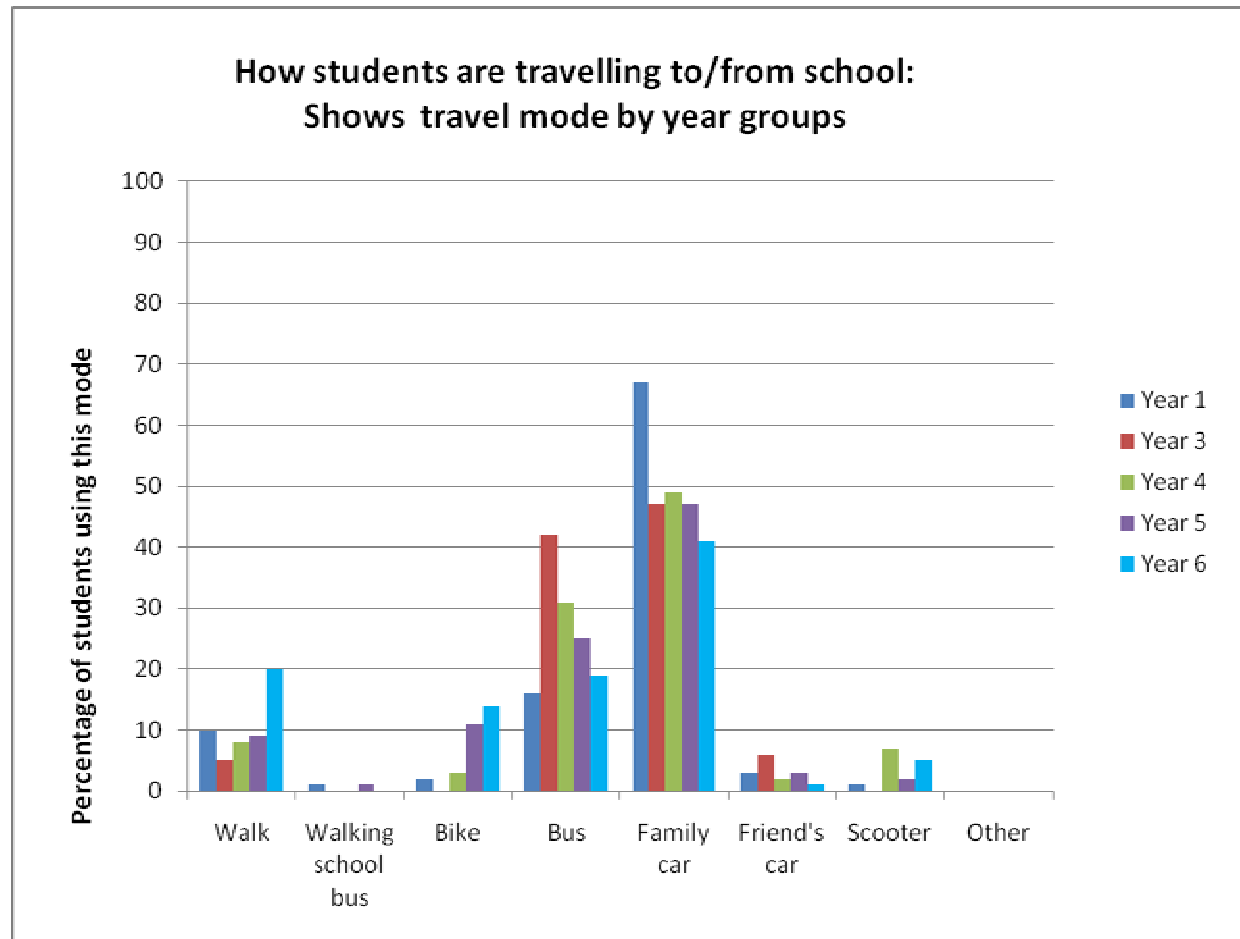
This data shows how children are *currently* getting to school compared to *preferred travel modes* in two different surveys; March 2011 and April 2010. Use of the family car and *desire* to be driven to school have both dropped in March 2011.

In both surveys, being driven to school is the main travel mode even though biking is the most preferred option (and even more popular in March than in the previous April). The biggest disparities (between how students are *currently* travelling and how they *prefer* to travel), is most marked when looking at the modes of biking and driving. There is a notable increase in the numbers of children biking and walking in March 2011 compared to 2010 data.

Differences are more likely to be attributable to the new location of Wanaka Primary rather than a difference in the time of year (there is a 6 week difference in the timing of the two surveys).

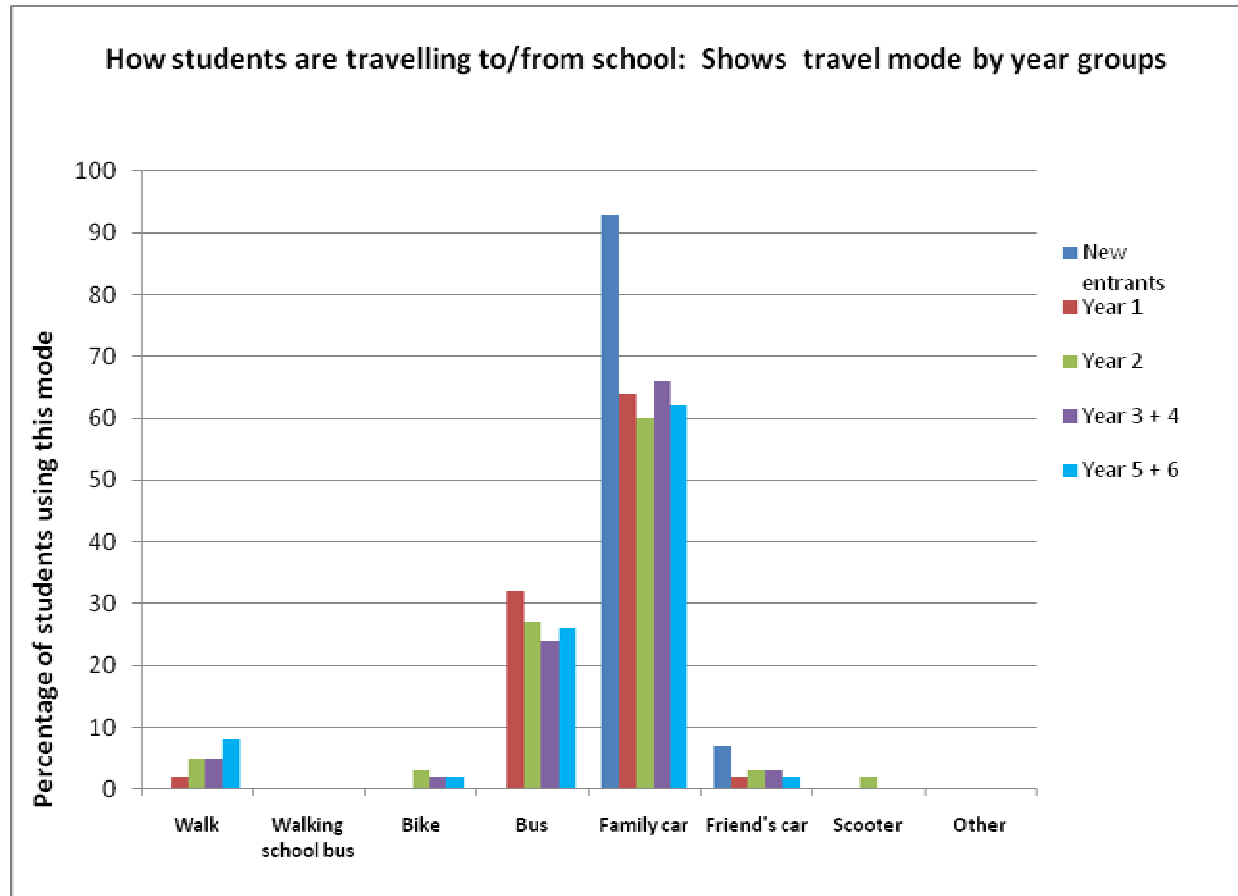
Mode of Travel for Different Year Groups (March 2011 data)

Figure 9:



Mode of Travel for Different Year Groups (August 2010 data)

Figure 10:



OPPORTUNITIES

- There is a 15% increase in active transport and 12% decrease in car use in the March 2011 survey, compared to the earlier survey done in April 2010. There is a 6 week difference in the timing of both surveys, so it is possible that some of these modal shifts are due to the time of year. However, it is more likely that the new location of Wanaka Primary has paid a significant role here in changing travel behaviour. The new location has a very different roading environment, with more safe routes connecting school to residential areas such as Mt Iron and Albert Town. There is also anecdotal feedback from the community that more children appear to be walking, cycling and scooting to school.
- Biking is a clear favourite – a preference which is typical of many primary schools surveyed in the district. Also typical is the difference between those who *do* bike and those who would *like* to bike. The same difference is noticed when looking at numbers currently being driven compared to those who would *prefer* to travel by car. Any programmes or measures which encourage biking will help address these differences and perhaps provide an alternative to being driven, particularly in the warmer months.
- There is a lot of potential to tap into students' enthusiasm to encourage safe cycling. Special bike to school days, cycle skills and bike safety checks have proved popular and can continue to support cycling as a safe travel mode.
- More children would like to walk to school than they currently do in both the April and March surveys. Similarly Holy Family School showed a marked preference for accessing a walking school bus, and there may be opportunities to help children onto current routes if this is practical. Further work can be carried out in the warmer months of terms 4 and 1.
- There is opportunity for walking school buses and cycle trains to be developed jointly by the Holy Family and Wanaka Primary Schools (following the principle that school bus services are shared)

For more information about the travel plan programme, please contact Kirsty Barr on 03 443 8609 or barrkerr@ts.co.nz. You can also contact Denis Mander at Queenstown Lakes District Council on 03 441 0499 or visit www.qldc.govt.nz.