Sutton VA Primary School

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Travel Plan Coordinator: Mrs Lucy Chapman, Head Teacher

School Travel Plan
September 2025

Introduction

A large proportion of journeys to school are now made by car rather than by walking, cycling or taking public transport. This leads to increased congestion on our roads, particularly around schools and colleges. As well as raising concerns over our children's health and the environment, this also raises concerns over road safety. 89% of pupils live outside of Sutton This in turn leads more parents to drive their children to school, increasing problems and the risks that they pose to their own children and others.

Part of the Government's white paper "A new deal for Transport: better for everyone" set out the reasons for highlighting the school journey as an area for action and stated its intention " to take further initiatives to encourage more children to get to school other than by car."

One way of combating car use for the journey to school is through the development of school travel plans. By considering the factors which influence travel choice we can improve the safety of the school journey and implement measures which will encourage more children to walk, cycle, park and stride or car share for school.

School travel plans can also contribute to environmental issues such as sustainability, climate change, pollution, congestion and the involvement of local communities in improving their local environment and quality of life. Additional benefits gained through implementing school travel plans include increasing travel choice, combating rising obesity levels and improving road safety awareness.

Whilst there are limitations to travel choice in rural locations such as Sutton, the benefits gained through the development of a school travel plan will help to develop skills, confidence and travel choices for pupils outside of the school and for their futures.

About Our School

Our Vision:
'Shine as Lights in the World' Philippians 2:15

Sutton School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School, which means that the education of the children is in accordance with the principles and practices of the Church of England. From September 2024, the school converted from a Lower to a Primary School, catering for children aged 4-11. The aim of all Church schools is to provide the best possible education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community. The school has strong links with All Saints Church, Sutton where the school community gathers each week for the Shine Together Service.

Sutton School is a typical village school and is set in beautiful grounds overlooking the Bedfordshire countryside. It has a playground and playing field and the quiet village setting provides many opportunities for the children to explore safely the natural environment. The speed limit through the village is 30 mph. The present building dates back to 1870, but a school has been in existence possibly since the 18th century. The Burgoyne family had strong connections with the village until the death of Lady Burgoyne in 1938.

In June 1971, the school was purchased by the St Albans Diocesan Board of Education – hence its present Voluntary Aided Status.

Since 1994, the school has been extended to create a library, a resource area, a staff meeting area, medical facilities three separate teaching areas: Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

In October 2019 the school was further extended in the form of a Modular Classroom for our 30 Key Stage One pupils. This released areas within the main school building to create the Hub and relocate the Library.

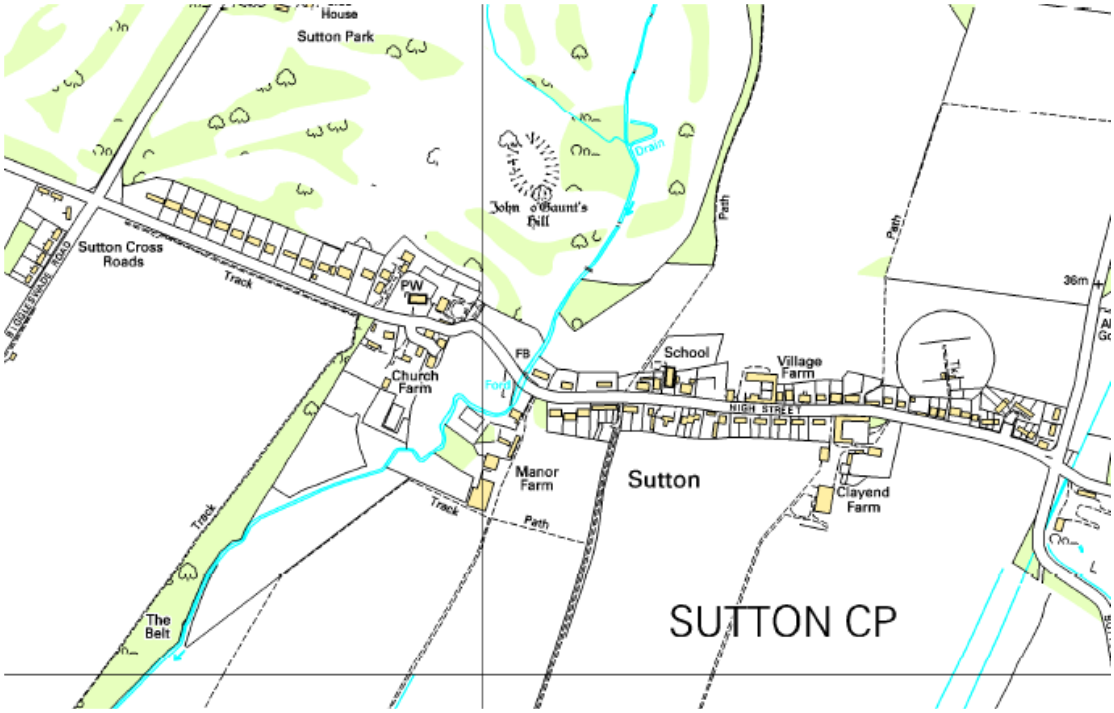
As part of the Central Bedfordshire Council 'Schools for the Future Programme', we are converting to a Primary School on our existing site from September 2024. As part of this project, we will have an additional Modular Classroom, a Hall for PE and Lunches and a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area). We will have 1 additional class teacher and 1 additional classroom assistant.

Sutton School, along with all Church schools, continues to be part of the national education system and is operated in partnership with the Local Education Authority. Being a small village school, we know the children very well and are able to cater for their individual needs within a caring environment. We liaise closely with Pre-school groups and schools within the BCUS (Biggleswade Community Union of Schools) Cluster to ensure a confident and happy transition between phases.

By September 2025, we will have capacity for 105 pupils in the school, most of whom travel into Sutton from Potton or Biggleswade, which are the nearest towns, or the surrounding villages. Currently there are 86 pupils and 17 members of staff, including teachers, support staff and non-teaching staff. Full-time staff, 8. Part-time staff, 9.

Location

Sutton School is located in the centre of the village, opposite the John O'Gaunt Public House. It faces the High Street and is bounded on two sides by private houses. At the rear of the school is Peg Nut Wood, which stretches to Potton and enables the children to undertake safe environmental studies.



School Opening Times

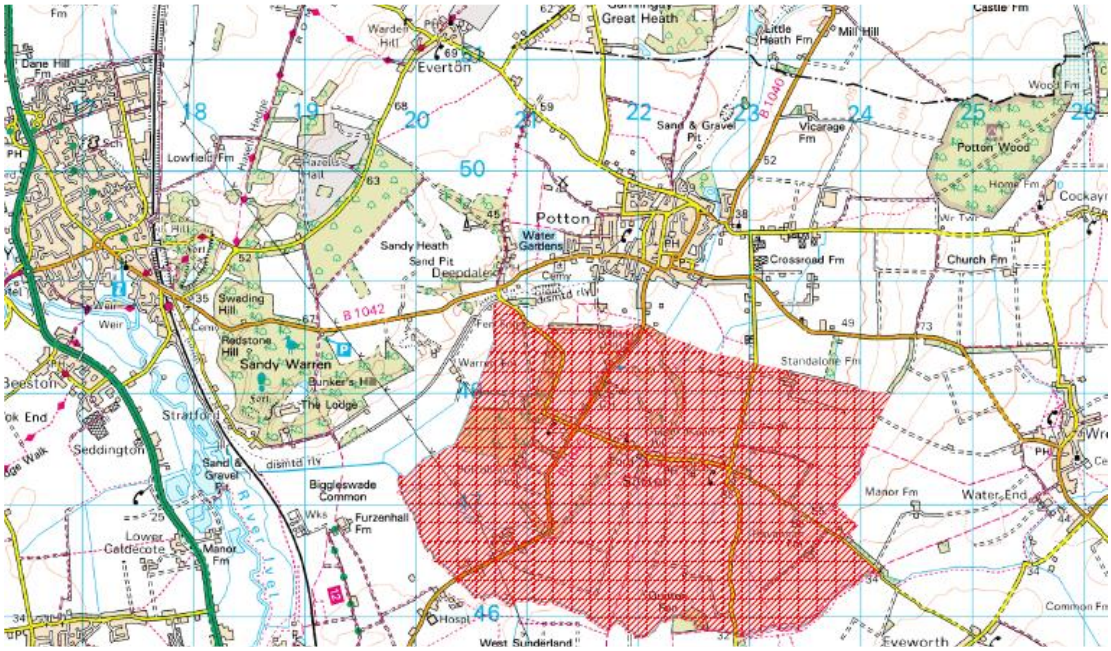
The timing of the School day is as follows:

8:00	Early morning school club
8:45	Arrival and registration
10.30 - 10.45	Break
12.00 - 13.00	Lunch
15.15 – 15:35	End of school *

* See p.10 Action Plan for Staggered collection times

School Catchment Area

The catchment area for Sutton Primary School covers 904 hectares (2235 acres) and extends as far as the dismantled railway bridge along Carthagena Road to the North-West, the boundary of Biggleswade in the South-West, along the Eyeworth and to the Wrestlingworth plantation to the South-East and North East respectively. The majority of pupils (89%) who attend the school live outside of the catchment area. Currently 7 pupils live within the catchment area with approx. 50% of the remaining pupils from Potton and 50% from Biggleswade.



Transport Links

The two main roads to Sutton Village also join Potton and Biggleswade and are the main route to the A1. Both these roads are busy at rush hour periods.
Sutton High Street joins the two main roads and there is significant congestion in the High Street at the beginning and end of the school day as parents come into the village to drop off or collect their children from school.

- **Bus routes**

The bus timetable for our buses in Sutton is here: https://bustimes.org/services/190-biggleswade-potton-gamlingay-sandy-blunham

The bus would only allow staff to travel to Biggleswade for the homeward journey.

- **Access**

Pedestrian access to the school is through the Car Park for staff who park there and side gates for pupils. Pedestrians are separated from the car park by a fence.

- **Key walking routes**

The distances involved preclude many children living outside the village from walking to school. There is a track from Baden Powell Estate in Biggleswade, however this is 2 miles and would take an adult around 45 minutes. There is no path along Biggleswade road (which is 60mph). The route through Peg Nut Wood offers the shortest option, but this is impractical in the winter months or in wet weather. The route from Bury Hill is just over a mile and a 25 minute walk. The route is shared via our 'Travel Information Leaflet' available on our website

Facilities

The building has been extended over the years to provide a Library, Catering Servery, The Hub – SEND and wellbeing space, three classrooms, two Offices and an upstairs staffroom. Under the CBC Schools of the Future Programme (due to be completed March 2025), we will have an additional classroom, a Hall for PE and lunches and a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area). The MUGA will be for school use only (not community use). We have extensive grounds with a playground and a large playing field. We have good outdoor play equipment provided by our PTA.

Car Parking

From September 2025 there will be 17 members of staff. Of these x3 job share therefore, 12 parking spaces are required by staff each day. The school has a car park at the front of the school. There is parking for 5 staff cars on the school grounds. There is one Electric Vehicle Charging Point located within the school car park – see Action Plan for location, make and model.

The Village Hall and School have an agreement whereby up to 7 staff/visitor cars can use an area of the Village Hall car park between 8am and 5pm. The Village Hall Committee are part of the Working Party.

The John O'Gaunt pub carpark is used by parents/carers during drop off and collection times for short stops. This facility is relayed to parents/carers via our 'Travel Information Leaflet' available on our website. The landlord is part of the Working Party. The pub is open at lunchtimes on Thursday and Friday.

Parents are reminded (on website and via parent mail) that considerate parking should be adhered to at all times, Engines should be switched off and cars should not block residents' driveways.

Any number of bicycles can be safely parked on our playing field. We have three scooter racks for safe parking of scooters. These are located to the rear of the school and can hold up to 30 scooters.

On Thursday afternoons, the whole school attends All Saints' Church for Worship. Parents are invited to join worship and all collect pupils from church. The Parish Council allows the Church Field to be used at this time for parking. This facility is relayed to parents/carers via our 'Travel Information Leaflet' available on our website. The Parish Council are part of the Working Party.

Before School provision results in a staggered drop off. This provision currently has average of 25 pupils per day. There is no limit to the number of pupils this provision is open to.

The school operates staggered collection times at the end of the day, between Infants (Lime and Larch) and Juniors (Hawthorn and Oak) by 20 minutes, excluding Thursdays when all pupils are collected from Church at 3:30pm.

Car share

Parents and Carers are encouraged to car share between themselves where possible. For Staff, **Liftshare in Bedfordshire** provides a matching service for all those who live, work and travel in and around Bedfordshire as well as for longer journeys to London or other locations outside the county.

https://hub.liftshare.com/regional/bedfordshire

Active Travel

The school encourages pupils to walk where they can, and suggests that parents and carers who live outside of the village, park further from the school to walk the remaining distance – taking part in 'Active Travel'. Pupils are recognised for their efforts in this through the Sutton Challenge Award. This has had a positive impact – see data comparison from 2019 – 2024.

Staff have received Bikeability training. Pupils in KS2 complete Level 2 and 2 Bikeability.

The school held a bike recycling event in the Autumn term 2024.

The School liaises with the Road Safety team re. JRSOs & Oscar.

The school has been accredited by Modeshift STARS.

Cycling Policy

The two roads that link Potton and Sutton are the main routes to surrounding towns and villages as well as being link roads to the A1. The routes are not safe for young children to cycle. We do not advocate children and staff to travel to school by bike due to the dangers however, at the time of expansion to become a Primary School, the school will provide cycle spaces as stated in https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/45/planning_policy/1504/parking_standards_for_new_developments_%E2%80%93_supplementary_planning_document_spd

SEND Transport Needs

There are no designated areas for SEN/disabled parking for parents, visitors or staff.

Early Morning Club

We currently hold an early morning club which allows children to be dropped off at school from 8am, each day we have an average attendance of 25 pupils, this decreases traffic in the morning as start time is staggered.

The building of the new hall for the Schools for the Future programme and an additional staff member would mean we will be able to increase the capacity for early morning club.

School Travel Activities and Education

The School currently undertakes road safety and environmental work about the local area by integrating these topics across the curriculum, such as:

- Collective Worship
- Active Travel
- PSHE and Global Learning
- Geography
- Mathematics
- Science
- Street Safe and Parking Buddies
- Other initiatives such as visits from Police and Road Safety Officer.
- Bikeability – delivered by trained school staff as well as by external providers
- KS2 Road Safety Officers
- Walk to School Week and the CBC Santa Challenge

Pupil Survey 15th September 2025

Broadly in line with previous year

Number of pupils on roll: 101
Number of pupils participating: 101

	Walk	Cycle	Scoot/ skate	Public bus	School bus	Park & stride	Train	Car share*	Car
Reception	3					6			6
Year 1	1					2			12
Year 2	1					3			11
Year 3	1					2			12
Year 4	1		1			6		2	6
Year 5	3					2			9
Year 6	1					3		1	6
Total	11	0	1	0	0	24	0	3	62
Overall pupil total		101							
Percentage	10.89%	0.00%	0.99%	0.00%	0.00%	23.76%	0.00%	2.97%	61.39%

Pupil Survey 18th September 2024

The increase in single car journeys aligns with pupil attendance at the number of pupils attending before school provision

Number of pupils on roll: 86
Number of pupils participating: 86

Year	Walk	Cycle	Scoot Skate	Car	Car share	Park& Stride	School bus	Public Bus	Train
R			1	4		10			
1	1			9		5			
2			1	12		2			
3			3	7		5			
4	2		1	9	2	1			
5	1		1	2	2	5			
Total	4		7	43	4	28			
%	5%		8%	50%	5%	32%			

Travel Issues

As most of our children live outside the village, they come to school by car. We are extremely fortunate that parents are able to use the John O'Gaunt Car Park, but even so, cars are inevitably parked on the road and this can cause problems for through traffic, particularly where the road is narrow.

Within the planning consent for an additional classroom (2020), a consultation for a Traffic Regulation Order outside the school took place resulting in a single yellow line traffic regulation order along the south side of High Street with parking/waiting restrictions between 08:00 to 09:00 am and 15:00 to 16:00pm. This has had a positive impact on traffic flow and increased participation of 'Active Travel' by members of the school community.

Within the planning consent for Primary conversion (2024), following extensive investigations including a Parking Beat Survey and Highways comments, further mitigations will be implemented – see planning document.

To mitigate traffic/parking problems, the school:

- Liaises with the Church and Sutton Parish Council to open the Church Field for events
- Liaises with the John O'Gaunt pub as parents use the pub car park for short stops at drop off and collection times (although we have been advised that this area is a public highway)
- Liaises with the Village Hall Committee who allow up to 7 staff/visitor cars to be parked in the Village Hall car park.
- Regularly communicates with parents via the School Newsletter, website and text messages, asking for considerate parking
- Encourages parents to park further from the school to reduce congestion
- Has before school provision which staggers the number of pupils arriving at school. Currently up to 25 pupils use this provision daily (there is no limit to places).
- From the start of the construction period 2024-25, staggered collection times between Infants (Lime and Larch) and Juniors (Hawthorn and Oak) by 20 minutes, excluding Thursdays when all pupils are collected from Church at 3:30pm.

Journeys made during the School day

Pupils undertake a number of trips off site as part of the curriculum; these can be local trips or visits further afield. For local trips, the children walk in pairs, supervised by staff, using the village footpaths. Pupils are reminded of road safety on these journeys and importance of walking safety along the footpath. Visits further afield necessitate the use of a coach. Coaches park directly outside the school to enable safe access for the children.

Journeys made after school

Sometimes staff need to attend meetings off site at the end of the school day. To avoid coinciding with parent and carer traffic/parking at the end of the day, staff are enabled to leave a few minutes early, or leave when all the children have been collected safely.

Staff and Community Travel Needs

Staff Survey 15th September 2025
Number of staff: 15

How do you usually travel to school?	Total
Walk	1
Cycle	0
Public bus	0
Park and stride/walk	6
Car Share	2
Car	6

There are 2 members of staff who live within walking distance of the school, for other staff and pupils there is a limited public transport service. There is no school bus.

Future developments

Within the CBC Schools for the Future Programme, the school is converting to become a Primary School in September 2024, this will increase pupil numbers to 105 and require two additional members of staff. This will increase the number of cars and traffic.

Action Plan Objectives and Targets

Travel Plan Coordinator: Mrs Lucy Chapman, Head teacher

Contact details: sutton@suttonprimary.co.uk

Objective	Actions	Date
Maintain a Travel Plan Working	Establish a working group with representatives of parents,	Established September 2024

Party	Governors, School parliament, staff, the Parish Council, John O'Gaunt pub, Village Hall Committee and residents to review the Travel Plan	Review at least annually and meet termly
Complete CBC annual travel survey	Each teacher to survey the year groups. Office Manager to submit data to CBC	September annually
Promote sustainable forms of transport	School to encourage staff car share. School to encourage parent/carer car share School to develop cycle skills and cycle awareness with pupils Install an electric vehicle charging point within the school car park. 	Information displayed and updated in staff room and through 'Travel Information Leaflet'. From Jan 2024 school trained staff to deliver EYFS Bikeability. KS2 pupils to be offered Bikeability June/July annually 3rd June 2024 In line with CBC Schools for the Future and CBC cycle parking.

	   Cycle spaces and stands to increase as staff and pupil numbers do.	See link on p.7
Promote road safety	The school is liaising with CBC regarding a possible crossing patrol. CBC Road Safety Officer to deliver workshops 'Be Safe Be Seen' CBC Road safety officer to support KS2 Road Safety Officers. CBC Road Safety Officer deliver road safety VR workshop to Year 5 pupils JRSOs deliver 'Street Feet' resource to all year groups. Display CBC Parking Buddies at zig zag lines KS2 'Junior Road Safety Officers' will create a Parking Code to discourage engine idling. Encourage considerate parking (especially near residents' driveways). Liaison with CBC road safety officers	October 2024 - see below response* Autumn term annually w/c 11.11.24 Autumn term annually w/c 11.11.24 Autumn term annually Summer term annually Autumn term 2024
Promote and reward those that take part in 'Active Travel'	Encourage Active Travel Remind parents/pupils of scooter racks for safe storage Take part of local active travel initiatives eg Santa Challenge Dec 2024, Sutton Green Wheel event May 2024 Encourage participation in Walk to School Week.	As part of the Sutton Challenge Award, annually. See school website for awards. Santa Challenge Dec 2024. See school website for prizes awarded. Modeshirt STARS accreditation. Dec 2024

Investigate Park and Stride opportunities in the High Street to ease procedures for on-street parking	Liaise with the Parish Council who are exploring, as part of the Sutton Neighbourhood Plan, the development of parking facilities within the village eg to the rear of the Village Hall	See Parish Council meeting schedule/agendas
Promote 'Walk to School Week'	During the National '*Walk to School Week'* hold an event to encourage active travel eg, Green Wheel Active Travel event 12.6.2024	Annually
Promote considerate, safe and lawful driving and parking in the village of Sutton	Regular communications with parents, carers, the Parish Council, John O'Gaunt Pub and Village Hall Committee and via school newsletters and website. Continued discussion re opening hours and brewery deliveries. Communications to include measures to manage the car parking on and off-site (where applicable), including the consideration of the production of a parking code for parents to discourage idling and to encourage considerate parking for existing residents.	Regularly at least twice annually (September/April Newsletters) Autumn term 2024: School parliament to discuss creating a parking code and posters. Publish parking code to school website and newsletter by Dec 2024 Ongoing reference/reminders to parents.
Investigate mitigations to minimize road parking	The school will engage with John O'Gaunt Public House regarding the provision of lining to safely manage parking, including consideration of their opening and delivery times, and the subsequent implementation of any lining agreed with the Public House and / or confirmed as being fully within the public highway	As part of the Travel Plan Working Party – established September 2024
The school has signed up to Modeshift STARS and will work towards accreditation.	Update records for our school on Modeshift STARS	Maintain at least 'good' accreditation. This was re-accredited in April 2024
Sustain Modeshift STARS 'Good Travel Plan	Update Travel Plan and school initiatives for sustainable travel.	Annually. Re - accredited April 2024

Accreditation’		
Implement mitigations to alleviate congestion at pupil drop-off and collection times	Early Morning Club daily from 8am (resulting in staggered drop off daily with an average of 25 pupils in attendance) From the start of the construction period 2024-25, stagger collection times between Infants (Lime and Larch) and Juniors (Hawthorn and Oak) by 20 minutes, excluding Thursdays when all pupils are collected from Church at 3:30pm. Staggered collection: long-term provision, beyond construction.	Monitor and review uptake and provision
Limit road parking for staff and school visitors	Maintain good communication between school, Parish Council and Village Hall Committee. Liaise with Village Hall Committee who allow staff cars to use an area of the Village Hall car park. During Construction works 2024 -25 Staff cars (from the school car park) are permitted to park in the Village Hall.	Ongoing.

*****Hi Lucy,

Hope you are well.

I attended your site on 1st October to complete the site count to review if it was justifiable to have a School Crossing Patrol outside your school.

Unfortunately, the site failed to meet criteria, this is due to all pupils were assisted across the road by a parent /guardian and because of this they are not included in the count we only include unaccompanied pupils it the count.

Also, the car numbers were mainly made up of parents who were bringing pupils to school.

If circumstances change please do not hesitate in contacting me and we will conduct another count.

Regards

Joanne Glen

Road Safety Team Leader
Highways