The Safe Cross Code

1. Look for a safe place to cross.
2. Don’t hurry! Always STOP and WAIT.
3. LOOK all around before you cross the road.
4. LISTEN for any traffic.
5. If traffic is coming, let it pass. Then look around again.
6. When there is no traffic, walk straight across the road.
7. Look and listen for traffic while you cross.

Walking to School

- Children under 7 should not cross roads on their own.
- They cannot decide how far away a car is or how fast it is going. They should be taken to school by a responsible adult.
- Children walking on country roads should wear reflective arm bands and vest.
- Choose a safe route to school and keep hold of your child’s hand at all times.
- Don’t allow your child to cross the road between parked cars. This is very dangerous as a driver will not be able to see your child. Show your child how to cross the road by example. Choose safe places to cross and explain the reasons why your child i.e. footbridges, zebra or pelican crossings, with a guard, an adult ex-boarder or parent school warden.
- Ensure that your child always stops at the edge of the footpath, and always put the Safe Cross Code into practice.
- After some needs assess your child’s understanding by asking him/her to bring you across the road.
- The best person to teach your child to cross the road safely is you. But remember, a child will do as you do, not as you say. So set the good example yourself!

Travelling by bus

- Teach your child to take special care when getting on or off public transport.
- While waiting for a bus, get them to stand well back on the footpath or grass verge.
- Before crossing the road, they should wait until the bus has moved off and they can see clearly in both directions.
- On the bus your child should remain seated until the journey is complete.
- If seatbelts are provided, they must be worn.
- Place school bags under the seat.

Cycling

- Research shows that children under 12 do not have the skills and experience required to be safe in traffic on their own and should only cycle accompanied by an adult or responsible person.
- Parents should decide whether their child is fit to cycle on public roads. When doing so they should be confident that their child possesses the appropriate skills and training. It is important that your child understands and operates against potential hazards.
- Children should be taught that a bicycle is a vehicle and must follow the same rules as other road users. Impress on your children that traffic lights apply to cyclists too and that they mean stop.
- Dedicated cycle tracks must be used if available. Footpaths are for pedestrians and not for cyclists.
- Ensure the bicycle is a suitable size for your child and that handlebars can comfortably apply the brakes.
- Check that the bicycle’s brakes, lights, reflectors, Tyres and bell are in good working order.
- Make sure your child is highly visible and wears a reflective belt and bright clothing. The higher the visibility, the lower the risk.
- Because of their vulnerability, cyclists should, in their own interest, wear protective headgear at all times. While it is not a legal requirement it is strongly recommended that cyclists wear a helmet suitable for their head size and ensure it is fitted correctly.
- For more information on safe cycling see the booklet ‘Cycle Safety’, which is available from the Road Safety Authority.