

HAWEA FLAT SCHOOL

Travel to School Research Report

Based on Follow up Travel Survey

1. Introduction

Background

Hawea Flat School has been implementing a school travel plan since 2009. Its overarching aims are to increase travel choices for children and to address any road safety issues raised by the school community.

This document summarises the results of a follow up parent travel survey carried out in September 2010 and includes data from a student survey taken in May 2010. Some comparisons are also drawn to the first parent travel survey carried out in July 2009.

The School and Road Environment

Hawea Flat School is a state funded non-integrated co-educational school ranging from years 0-6 with a growing school roll which peaked 151 in 2010. In term 4 2010 at the time the follow up survey was undertaken, the school roll was 149. The school is situated in a semi-rural area bordered by Kane Rd (100 km/h), Camphill and St Ninian's Rds (initially 70km/h but lowered to 50 km/h early on in the travel plan process). A range of infrastructure measures were implemented by Queenstown Lakes District Council in 2009-2011 to aid safe walking and cycling routes into the school. These were supported by the community who were also involved in activities such as donating tussock plants and installing signs. The latest engineering project due for completion in early 2011 was the installation of a 500m walking/cycling track between Lachlan Avenue and Kane Rd, connecting to the existing path network from Hawea Flat (Windmill Corner) to the school.

Regarding crash history, the only recorded crash involving a pedestrian, cyclist or school bus was a crash involving a young adult cyclist near Lake Hawea several kilometres from the school. More detailed information about crash data is available through Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) or New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and can be investigated by the working group if this is needed at a later time.

Travel Survey and Consultation

Hawea Flat was the first school in the Queenstown Lakes area to implement a school travel plan and a parent survey was carried out in July 2009 (a separate report for this was written in August 2009). A follow-up parent survey was carried out in September 2010 which forms the basis of this document. Some key comparisons between the two surveys are given here, along with results of student 'hands up' surveys. The purpose of the surveys was to find out the main travel modes used

as well as the barriers and opportunities to active travel and use of the bus service. The follow up survey also looked at measuring travel behaviour change and reasons for this.

The survey was available for parents to complete online (only one entry was received online) and hard copies were sent out with a school newsletter. Participation numbers were boosted by offering draw prizes with the local shop/cafe offering sponsorship. The final participation rate of 61 responses (out of 100 families) represents 61% of the school roll and is a very good response - higher than the response rate for the first survey - which had participation of 48%.

In terms of community led measures to support walking and cycling, over 2009 and 2010 two cycle trains were established (one from Hawea Flat, one from Lake Hawea) and a travel card scheme was introduced to encourage walking, cycling and school bus use. Active transport week long events were trialled in term 4 2010 and are anticipated for term 1 2011.

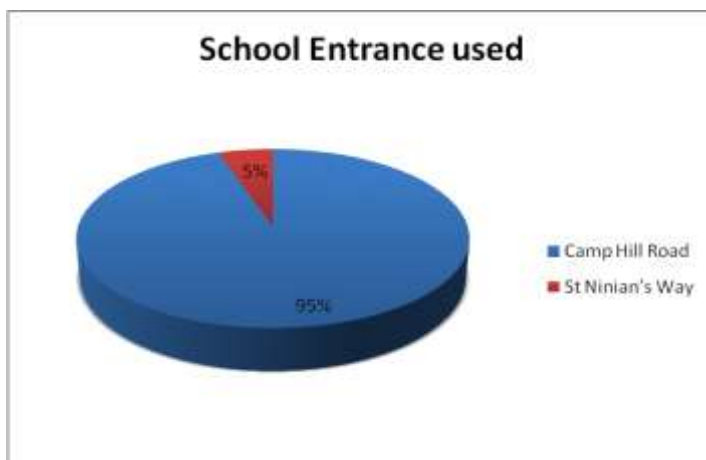
2. SURVEY RESULTS FOR FOLLOW UP PARENT SURVEY:

Note: The total number of participants taking part in the parent travel survey represented 61 families (61% of the total school population at the time). This data reflects the views of those who responded and does not reflect the views, habits or issues for the school population *as a whole*.

In the follow up survey, participants were asked if they took part in the first survey of which 46% said “yes” and 36% said “no” (the remaining didn’t respond).

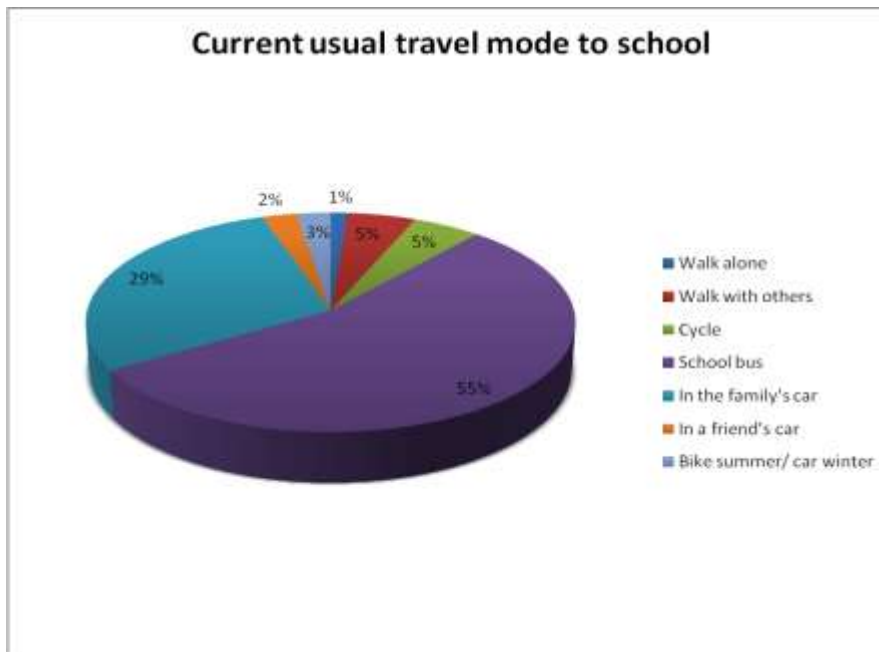
Current Travel Methods

Figure 1: What entrance participants use



Nearly all families use the Camp Hill Road entrance (where a car park facility has been installed).

Figure 2: The main mode of transport



Participants were asked what their children’s main mode of transport was to school. Over half of the participants who responded use the school bus service, with 29% driving. Relatively small numbers of children are walking and cycling to school.

Compared to the 2009 survey these figures show a slight decrease in the main transport modes of bussing and driving. In 2009 families using the school bus service was slightly higher at 57% (now down to 55%) and 39% for driving in the family car (now down to 29%). Similar numbers for cycling were recorded in the 2009 survey (4%).

Given that only 2 surveys have been undertaken so far, it is not clear whether differences represent a trend or just year to year changes in travel behaviours.

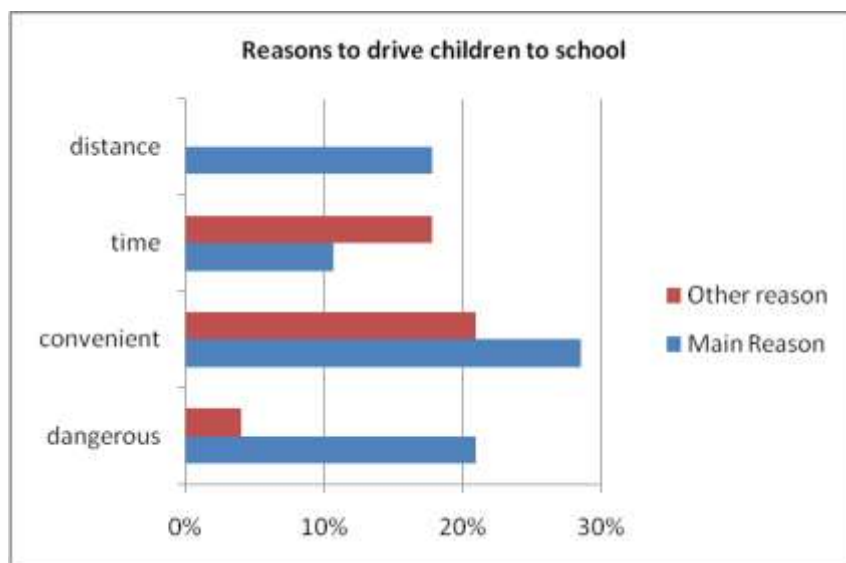
Driving To School

Figure 3: Main reason for driving to school:



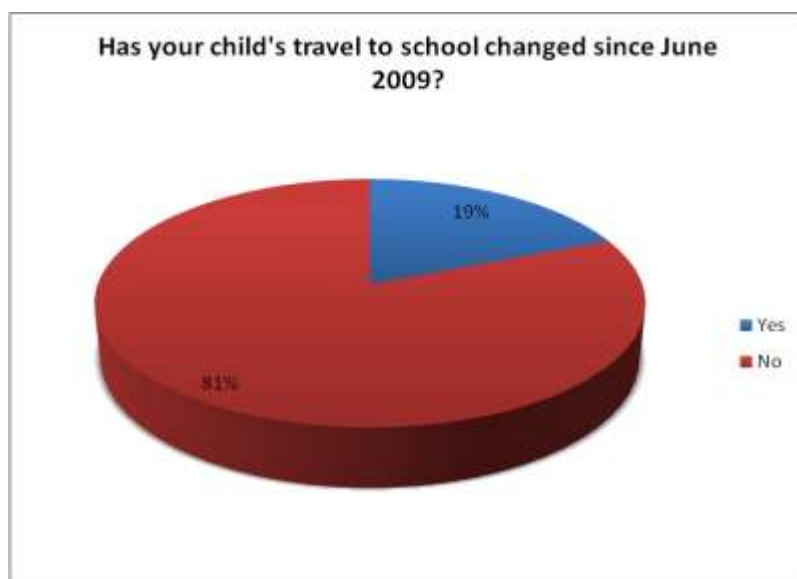
Parents were asked what the two main reasons were for driving children to school and the data in figure 3 shows the number of responses given. Results are similar to that of the 2009 survey which also identified convenience as the main factor when choosing to drive (see figure 4).

Figure 4: Participants gave two main reasons for driving in the 2009 travel survey:



Convenience is still the leading factor in making the decision to drive children to school when looking at the results of both the 2009 and 2010 surveys. Also important is the issue of distance between home and school, while road safety is a concern for parents, but proportionally this factor appears to have decreased since the 2009 survey.

Figure 5: Changes in Travel Behaviour:



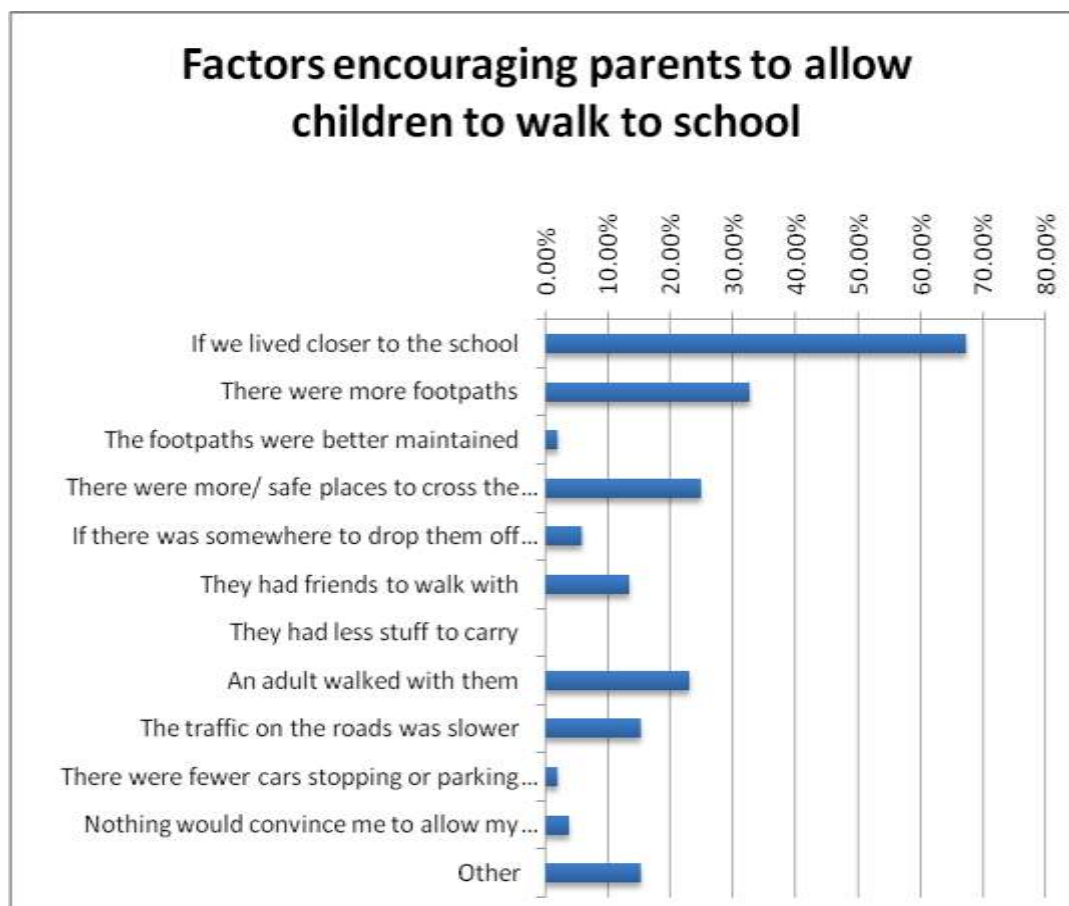
Of the 53 responses received for this question, most parents said their mode of transport had not changed in the past year. The main reasons given for *not changing* their mode of transport are given below:

Reason	No. Times this reason given
The bus service meets our needs	14
Circumstances have not changed	9
Already walking/cycling no need to change	5
Road safety hadn't improved so not biking	4
Distance still an issue	3

Of the 10 parents who said their travel habits *had* changed, the main reasons given were moving house (2 responses) or younger children now attending school instead of kindergarten (2 responses). Only 2 of the 10 parents changed their mode of transport *to* driving, the other 8 changed from car to bus, bike to bus, or biking to walking.

Walking to School:

Figure 6:

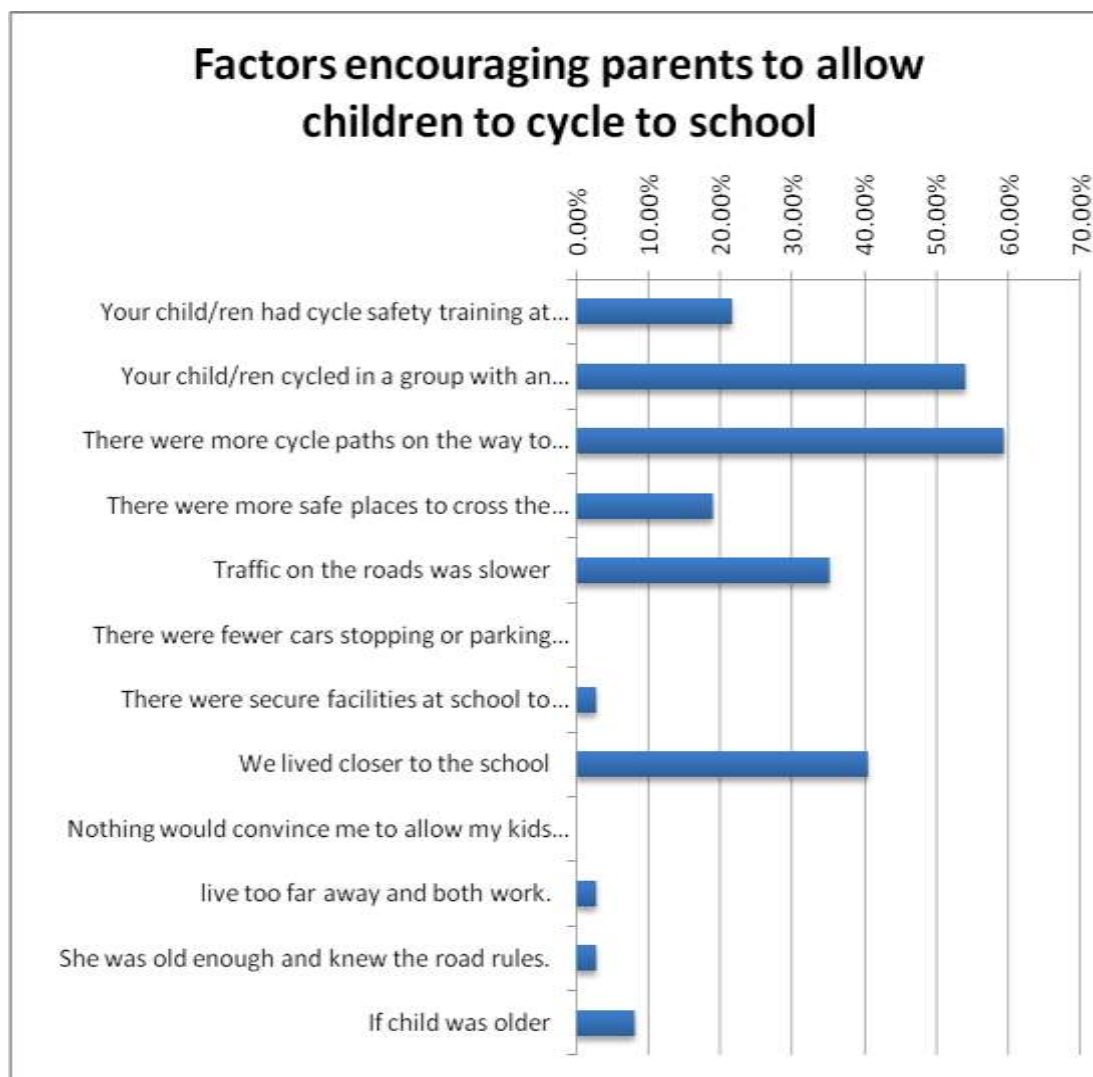


Participants whose children did not usually walk to school were asked what would allow them to walk more often. The figures shown in this graph represent the *percentage of possible responses* (note up to 3 reasons could be given by each respondent).

Living closer to the school was by far the leading factor, with safety and infrastructure provisions also being important. A small number also identified the need for an adult to walk with children. Given the recent installation of a walking/cycling path between Lachlan Ave and the school, there is scope to explore the possibility of a walking school bus from this housing area that is within close walking proximity to the school.

Cycling to School:

Figure 7:



Participants whose children did not usually bike to school were asked what would allow them to bike more often. The figures shown in this graph represent the *percentage of possible responses* (note up to 3 reasons could be given by each respondent).

The three main reasons given were; provision of cycle paths, cycling in a group, and living closer to the school.

This response will be tested with the recent provision of the shared use footpath along Camp Hill Rd.

3. PARTICIPANTS' COMMENTS:

The information summarised here groups some of the main themes raised by participants in the follow up survey.

Note: These issues reflect the views of those who participated and some concerns may be outside the scope of the travel plan programme. These ideas may or may not indicate the best solutions to problems. These ideas can be investigated in greater depth by the working group which includes parents from the school community.

Engineering:

- Need for more pathways/provision for walking cycling separate from road, eg Gladstone Rd. (4)
- Safety a concern on Camphill Road; speed, trucks. (2)
- Concern about speed and/or trucks on roads around school eg St Ninians could be 30 km/h, install speed humps on St Ninian's. (2)
- Windmill corner; safer crossing point onto path, concern about trucks proximity to path at corner (2)
- New paths are great – help encourage cycling (2)
- Safety in car park/drop off area, keep area by gate clear of cars to help with visibility. Needs exit and entry points (1)

Note: These measures are entered into Council draft work programmes and priorities alongside other infrastructure projects for the Wanaka Ward.

Buses:

- Bus works well (6)
- Better communication system/plan to deal with the unexpected, eg breakdown (3)
- Behaviour on bus a deterrent (3)
- Need for safety belts (2)
- More bus shelters and stops in right places, to protect against weather (1)
- Placement of bus shelter no longer relevant, waste of funds? (1)
- Timing sometimes an issue, esp mornings. (1)
- If bus arrangements could be more flexible, would use more (1)

Community:

- Group riding with children great idea (3)
- Dogs a deterrant on Kane Rd (1)
- Good ideas; more carpooling between Lake and Flat, fundraiser with children being sponsored for every km walked/biked

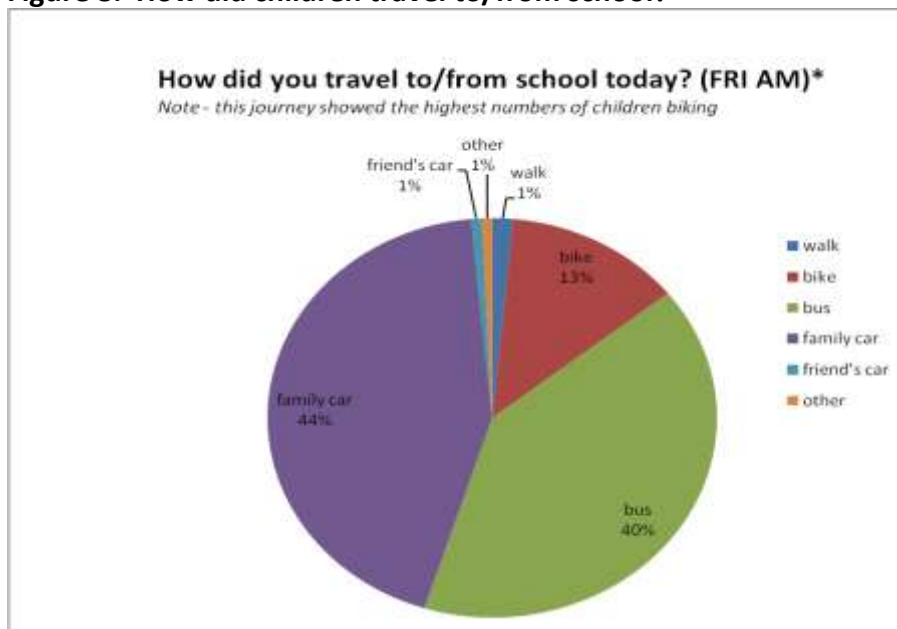
Other:

- Distance an issue

4. STUDENT TRAVEL SURVEY:

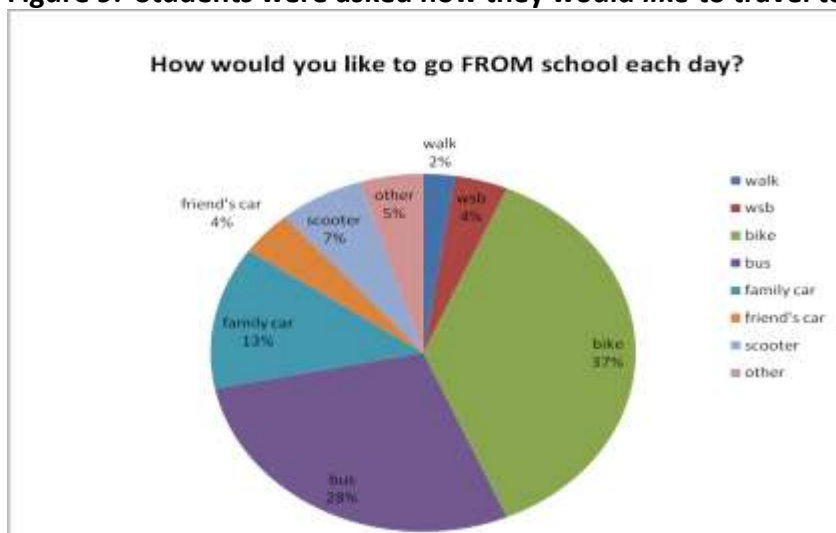
In May 2010, students were asked in a five day classroom survey how they got to and from school each day. The first pie graph gives one example of travel mode habits, which can be compared with figure 9 which shows how children *prefer* to travel to school.

Figure 8: How did children travel to/from school?



Relatively high numbers of children bike to school, with smaller numbers walking. Further data for this will be gathered in February 2011 which will provide a snapshot of travel behaviour over the summer months.

Figure 9: Students were asked how they would *like* to travel to/from school:



Biking is the most popular choice at Hawea Flat School with children wanting to bike nearly 3 times as much as they did according to the 2009 survey. Bussing is a preferred option as well, but slightly less preferred than the current usage rates indicate. Travelling in the family car is much lower on the priority list, but in reality more than 3 times this number are getting driven to school on a regular basis.

5. OPPORTUNITIES

- Engineering**
- The provision of a pathway between Lachlan Ave and the school may present opportunities for group walking and cycling to school from this area. This could be investigated further in term 4. Concerns raised in this survey around safety and speed on Camphill Rd should be addressed.
 - Speed survey investigations for Camphill Rd will be underway in term 1 2011. The results can be discussed with the school's working group and community police for enforcement if speed is indicated as an issue.
 - A crossing point between McLennan and Windmill corner pathway is an item currently in process with council.
- Buses**
- All comments relating to the bus service are shared with Central Motorways who manage the school bus service contract for the area.
 - The majority of parents find the bus service works well for their families.
 - Behaviour on the bus is something that concerns some parents from time to time. The school continues to monitor this and communicates specific issues to parents.
 - Communication systems and plans to deal with unexpected events (eg breakdowns, weather). The school bus operator requires their drivers to carry mobile phones for emergency use and that the school be informed of any changing situations to enable good communication between school and families.
 - Lack of safety belts on buses is a concern for some parents. Currently there is no legal requirement for buses to provide safety belts.
 - A list of stop requiring shelters has been obtained from Central Motorways, and these are programmed through the council's annual plan processes.
- Community**
- The 2010 follow up survey has provided new information from parents with the potential of investigating group cycling and walking opportunities. This can be taken up with the working group in Term 3 with any ideas trialled in term 4.
 - Similarly, there may be fresh ideas from new parents for community-led activities during the summer months.
 - The school could gain wider input from parents who have provided contact details in this follow up survey, by involving them in working group actions.
 - Cycle skills training has been carried out at the school over two consecutive years. The parties involved (Racers Edge, QLDC) have noticed significant improvement in children's skills and awareness around bike safety with bikes and helmets being in much better condition in the second year. Continuing to provide community-led activities in a 'real environment' (eg skills work on cycle paths around the school) are another opportunity that could be revisited, especially given the completion of Camphill Rd pathway.
 - Continue to provide incentives for children such as the travel card scheme.
- Travel Behaviour Change**
- As many as 20% of respondents indicated that their travel behaviour had changed since the 2009 survey with only 2 of the 10 parents changing their mode of transport to driving.
 - Changes in travel behaviour tend to be led by changes in personal circumstances such as residential location and younger children also attending school.
- Next steps**
- Arrange another working group meeting in term 3 to discuss possible actions from follow up survey, involve new parents based on 2010 survey responses.
 - Potential actions to be carried out in term 4 to support more walking/cycling in summer months.
 - Council to provide feedback on infrastructure improvements that will take place in the 2011/12 financial year.