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## **Thousands of pupils get ready to stroll to school as part of a national campaign**

Photo call

When: 8.45am on Monday, May 17

Where: Littleton Green Community School, Stafford Road, Huntington

More than 34,000 pupils across Staffordshire will be strolling to school in the sunshine as part of a high profile campaign.

Youngsters across the county will be putting their best foot forward as part of National Walk to School Week which kicks off on Monday, May 17.

The eco-friendly Littleton Green Community School, which opened last autumn, is one of 160 schools that have pledged to do their bit to reduce their carbon footprint by walking from home to the classroom.

It recently launched its first walking bus which meets at the site of the old Huntington Infants School on Stafford Road before being guided to the classroom by parent helpers. The initiative has already proved to be popular, with around 20 children regularly taking part.

Staffordshire County Council's Road Safety Unit is spearheading the scheme which promotes the health benefits of leading an active life as well as the positive impact it has on the environment.

Reducing the number of cars travelling to school helps to combat climate change but also means there are fewer cars around schools making it much safer for cyclists and pedestrians.

Staffordshire is the leading light when it comes to the initiative in England and Wales with 148 walking buses currently in operation across the county – more than in any other local authority area.

Local county councillor Veronica Downes hailed the initiative an overwhelming success.

She said: "This is a really positive national campaign and Staffordshire is at the forefront of it with an impressive 34,200 children expected to take part across the county.

"It is a healthy way for the pupils to start the day and the exercise definitely clears their minds so that when they arrive at school they are in the right frame of mind to enjoy and understand their lessons. There is also the added bonus of reducing the number of parents that drive to school which has an impact on road safety and the environment."

Walk to School Week has been growing from strength to strength year on year with more and more parents and children joining the movement for healthy kids and a healthy environment.

In 2009, around 26,000 children from 121 schools took part in Walk to School Week in Staffordshire.

Ends