

**Issue Date:** 12/05/2010

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

Photo call

When: 8.45am on Tuesday, May 18

Where: Knypersley First School, Newpool Road, Biddulph

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.

Knypersley First School 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 a walking bus which meets at St John's Road before being guided to the classroom by parent helpers. It 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 any other local authority area.

Local county councillor Ian Lawson hailed the initiative an overwhelming success.

He said: "The walking buses are a fantastic phenomenon and have so many benefits for the children who take part. They are a great way for the pupils to enjoy some fresh air and exercise and have the added bonus of reducing the number of cars that have historically lined the streets around schools which is a big boost to road safety and drastically cuts CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The scheme is a winner all round."

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

