

LIVSMILJÖ GÄVLE



School mobility

Local action plan 2020-2021



Project: School Chance

Partner organisation: Gävle municipality

Country: Sweden

Contact: Trafik och tillstånd, Livsmiljö
Gävle

Email address: trafik@gavle.se

Phone number: (+46)26 178000

Name of the policy instrument addressed:
Trafikstrategi Gävle kommun - The traffic strategy
of Gävle municipality

This action plan has been developed with the
support of the European Union through
Interreg Project School Chance 2017-2021.



School mobility in Gävle municipality

Gävle municipality applied for partnership in the School Chance project in 2016. The underlying reason being a need to improve the traffic situation around schools and increase the number of sustainable travels. For a long time, it has been clear who is responsible for what but not where and how the responsibilities meet and how the sectors of Gävle municipality need to cooperate more on issues concerning school mobility.

Livsmiljö Gävle, Utbildning Gävle and Gavlefastigheter appointed staff, local stakeholders and policy makers to be part of the School Chance project in 2017-2019, gather the inspiration and information necessary to create a local action plan. The commitment also includes trying to achieve change in a local policy in order to give more attention to school mobility and soft measures. For Gävle the targeted policy document is the traffic strategy.

The indicator set for Gävle to evaluate if the project has been successful is % increase of sustainable school travels by 2021 and a survey on mobility behaviour was done in 2017 to determine the modal split of the children who attend the schools in Gävle municipality. Two actions have been adopted from other partners in the School Chance project. They have been inspired by the good practice "Bicibus & Pedibus" from Reggio Emilia and "Road safety label and school zones" from Utrecht.

The action plan has been developed by Livsmiljö Gävle in consultation with Utbildning Gävle and Gavlefastigheter and will be implemented in Gävle in 2020-2022.

Date:

25/11 - 19

Signature:

Gva Jack

Stamp of the organisation:



Background

School mobility is a hot topic: in a framework where transport related CO₂ emissions continue to increase, school traffic accounts for about a 15% of the total traffic at urban level. Researches in different EU countries show that kids driven to school by car range from 30 to 60% according to country and school grade.

Compared to the other Nordic countries Sweden has the lowest proportion of active children and young people, at the same time as fewer and fewer students are walking or cycling to school. Research shows that physical activity is both important for, and has a positive effect on, learning ability.

Gävle municipality aims to increase the proportion of trips by foot, by bicycle and by public transport as it is good for health, traffic safety and the environment.

By having more children and pupils traveling sustainably to school, we achieve:

- Increased proportion of independent mobility in children.
- Improved health through physical activity.

- Safer traffic environment at schools and preschools.
- Reduced climate impact.
- Improved learning ability.
- Improved school results.
- Increased social security through stronger relationships between the children and guardians who travel to school together.

Gävle municipality's general plan for the city of Gävle 2025 states that new schools should be built in connection with public transport and that the pedestrian and bicycle paths leading to schools must be safe. In addition to this, the importance of the influence of children on measures in the physical environment is described and that children should have the opportunity for independent, sustainable travel.

Gävle municipality decided to apply for partnership in the School Chance project in 2016. The underlying reason being a need to cooperate more to improve the traffic situation around schools and increase the number of sustainable travels. Previous to the project the work of Livsmiljö Gävle, Utbildning Gävle and Gavlefastigheter had mainly been planned separately and therefore the bigger picture was missing.



The main purpose of the project is to influence children's active and sustainable trips to and from school in local and regional policies through impact work. In addition to policy work, all project partners have exchanged good examples of measures that promote active school trips and developed action plans for how the municipality/region should continue to work with these tools. Livsmiljö Gävle, Utbildning Gävle and Gavlefastigheter appointed staff, local stakeholders and policy makers to be part of the project during 2017-2019, gather the inspiration and information necessary to create a local action plan.

A short description of the three partners and their responsibilities concerning school mobility in Gävle follows:

Livsmiljö Gävle (LG)

– Urban planning, permits, culture and leisure. This department is responsible for building and maintaining public space including infrastructure for traffic. Livsmiljö Gävle is the coordinating party of the local School Chance group.

Utbildning Gävle (UG)

– Education. This department is responsible for administration and coordination of the schools in Gävle municipality. Utbildning Gävle is the link between the municipality and the schools and in charge of strategic projects concerning education.

Gavlefastigheter (GFAB)

– The municipal property company. Manages public properties and buildings including schools. Develop and sustain suitable school yards and decides how the school premises should be used.

Other participants in the project include other departments of the municipality of Gävle, Region Gävleborg and the organization Håll Sverige Rent (Keep Sweden Tidy).

The set indicator for Gävle is % increase of sustainable school travels by 2021. A survey on mobility behaviour was done in 2017 to determine the modal split of the children who attend the schools in Gävle municipality. The results of survey is the benchmark to which the indicator will be compared.

The traffic strategy of Gävle

Policy instrument addressed

The traffic strategy of Gävle municipality (Trafikstrategi, Gävle kommun).

Further details on the policy context and the way the action plan should contribute to improve the policy instrument:

To ensure that the municipality of Gävle works with a common vision of how strategic traffic planning process work, Gävle municipality's traffic strategy was developed. The first part of the strategy, "Vision and goals" was adopted by the City Council in March 2008 and the follow-up part, "Action Plan" was adopted by the Executive Committee in 2014. The traffic strategy is a type of Sustainable Mobility Plan, English abbreviation SUMP. The second part of the traffic strategy aims to specify how Gävle municipality will continue to work on these issues and what needs to be done to achieve the goals and visions that exist. In the traffic strategy a change in behaviour among car drivers is declared to be the biggest challenge of all. The reason being that habits are hard to break and that our society fundamentally is built for car users. The traffic situation around schools is mentioned as a problem that needs to be tackled from multiple fronts. This requires an extended collaboration since the three parties in Gävle (GFAB, UG and LG) have very separate responsibilities concerning school mobility. The local action plan therefore needs to be implemented in the traffic strategy to achieve that goal. The action plan for school mobility will determine the process of implementation of two actions inspired by two of the other partners in the School Chance project. These actions will be part of a bigger cooperation between the Livsmiljö Gävle, Utbildning Gävle and Gavlefastigheter.

The process of revising the traffic strategy of Gävle will begin in 2020, the responsible party being Livsmiljö Gävle. The lessons learnt from the school chance project will provide to the content, foremost regarding school mobility.

Eco-certification Grön Flagg

A part of the project objective of the School Chance is to have a certification methodology to award sustainable mobility friendly schools, according to the modal split of students and the engagement with sustainable mobility activities. Instead of developing a whole new certification method Gävle municipality collaborates with the foundation Håll Sverige Rent (Keep Sweden tidy) and their work Grön Flagg (Eco Schools).

Grön Flagg, the Swedish name for Eco Schools, is both an educational tool and a certification for schools and preschools that work actively and long-term with sustainable development in teaching and in daily activities. The work is a part of the global network with 67 countries. 1770 schools in Sweden are today active participants, whereof 74 in Gävle Municipality. The schools involved are reviewed and certified according to Grön Flagg guidelines. Grön Flagg is thus a quality assurance of the work on learning for

sustainable development. With the help of a digital tool, Håll Sverige Rent reviews and assesses that the criteria for the Grön Flagg certification are met.

Each school pick topics to work with within a year, for example garbage, energy, chemicals etcetera. For the purpose of promoting sustainable school mobility there will be a specific topic on school mobility that the schools can choose from. The activities related to this topic are:

- Picking litter on the way to school
- A safe road to school
- Health and welfare

Gävle Municipality will promote this new topic for the schools involved in Grön Flagg and communicate the certification to schools that are not yet involved.

<https://www.hsr.se/gron-flagg>
<https://www.ecoschools.global/>



Actions

Action 1: Starter kit for walk-train & bike-train

A walk-train or bike-train is a group of children walking or cycling with adults to/from school. Guardians take turns escorting the children in the group between the different gathering points, which gives the individual guardian spare time the days that they are not responsible. In addition to the time gained for guardians, the activity contributes to unity between the children and guardians who participate while the children learn how to walk or ride a bicycle safely.

The activity is already used in many places and in Reggio Emilia in Italy, the activity has been used actively for several years and engages hundreds of children and guardians. In Reggio Emilia, the children say that they love walking and cycling, or "Pedibus & Bicibus" as it is called there, because they enjoy travelling together with their friends. Children who are active in the morning usually find it easier to focus in school and studies show that the sooner we start walking and cycling as a mean of transport, the higher

Walk-trains or bike-trains can then be used as an action throughout the year but should primarily be communicated in conjunction with information going out about the selection of school and school transfers so that guardians have an opportunity to plan and start immediately when the semester starts. The action should also be communicated in connection with other activities conducted by the municipality of Gävle on the theme of walking and cycling, for example the bicycle day and information on meetings with guardians in school.

Starter kit

Anyone who wants to start a walk-train or bike-train needs to prepare the activity in several different ways in order for it to work out smoothly. The guardians must decide upon a responsible person for each day, someone that fills in if someone is prevented to participate and someone that should be contacted if something happens. In addition to this, it also makes it easier if times, gathering places and rules of conduct are determined in broad terms in advance.

To facilitate all preparations for the guardians, Gävle Municipality will assist with ready-made templates that can be used, including:

- Template for contact list
- Proposal for weekly schedule
- Proposal for rules of conduct
- Information on traffic rules and behaviour in walk-trains & bike-trains for children

In addition to digital material, Gävle Municipality also provides physical materials that can be used by guardians and children when walking or cycling. Examples of such material are:

- Reflector tag
- Bicycle pennants
- Seat covers
- Hats (to create a sense of togetherness)



Action 2: Creating school zones

A school zone is a traffic environment around a school that differs from other traffic environments in terms of design, appearance and traffic regulation. The purpose of the school zone is to improve road safety for children and young people moving in the area. In order to achieve the desired result, the physical traffic environment must be very clear and recognizable. As a motor vehicle driver, you should easily perceive that you are coming to or passing a school. In some cases you should even be forced to adapt the driving accordingly. Although, a school zone should not always be designed in the same way since the traffic situation varies in different areas and sometimes even on the different sides of a school building.

A school zone adjacent to a school located next to a *main road* should be designed to calm traffic, mark intersection points (e.g. crossing points) and prevent motor vehicle drivers from stopping or parking in inappropriate locations.

A school zone adjacent to a school located at the *end of a street* is designed with the main purpose of preventing motor vehicles from continuing into the school yard or pedestrian and cycle paths, and to separate pedestrians and cyclists from motor vehicles.

Planning and implementation

In the year 2020, Livsmiljö Gävle will finish school zones at three municipal schools that will then be evaluated. If the desired result is achieved, another three school zones will be created during the year of 2021.

In conjunction with the establishment of school zones, information on school mobility should be communicated. It is important that the school, guardians and pupils receive information about why the school zone is being built and what they can do to improve the traffic situation in proximity with the school.

The soft measures described in the School Mobility Action Plan can be advantageously used in communication with the purpose of school zones.

Traffic regulation

Roads where many children walk to and from school should have a speed limit of maximum 30 km/h. Repetition of road signs should generally not be used, but in a school zone the reminder serves a different purpose and should

then be used in combination with the warning sign "child" and the additional text "SCHOOL"



The school zone can be made into a pedestrian area where motor vehicles are also allowed at the pedestrians' terms. For that to be possible it is essential that the premises of the school comply with the overall design so that it is obvious where motor vehicles are not allowed.

Short-term parking for guardians who pick up and leave by car should be near the school but should not interfere with the roads used by children walking or cycling. Time limits during the pick-up and drop-off periods are necessary for the car parks to be used by more people and be shared with residents in the area.

Kiss-and-ride zones should be available at schools where children can walk the last bit themselves, if there is a kiss-and-ride zone, the number of short-term parking can be reduced.

Physical design

In order to increase compliance, the physical environment adjacent to the school should be designed as clearly as possible. The colour scheme should be recurring in school zones and the traffic devices used should be yellow when possible.

Speed-reducing measures should be used to ensure a low speed around schools. This is particularly the case at pedestrian crossing points, bicycle crossings and pedestrian and/or bicycle passages, since this is where pedestrians and cyclists are referred to share space with motor vehicles. But speed barriers also have a dampening effect on the speed of traffic in general, which is desirable when designing street environments around schools where children move independently. In conjunction with the introduction of a school zone, the need for speed-reducing measures should therefore be reviewed and where appropriate, speed

barriers should be built. Passages, pedestrian crossings and bicycle crossings can be advantageously marked extra at schools by means of yellow traffic devices in refuges or on both sides of the street.

Bollards are used to delineate and prevent traffic of various kinds from passing but can also be used to mark, for example, with a different colour or reflectors. When bollards are used in the traffic environment, operation and maintenance should be considered. It must be possible to clear snow while it should not be too far between the obstacles. Construction is done in consultation with a street engineer.

Entry barriers can be used to delimit the school yard or to prevent unauthorized traffic on pedestrian and bicycle paths adjacent to the school. It is important that a barrier does not prevent the unprotected road users from accessing and who should be able to open and close the bar must be investigated in advance before construction.

The height of the curb stone can make it clear where it is permitted to drive and not. Should the curb be raised, accessibility should always be considered and, if necessary, 1.5 meters of the curb should be zeroed for pedestrians and cyclists to be able to connect to the surface inside.

Deviating surface and surface marking is expensive to maintain and difficult to restore after excavations unless clear guidelines for restoration are available. Painted text "school" or "school zone" on the street can be used where it is appropriate but must be repainted every other year which can be costly.

How do these actions contribute to policy change?

The project group that was formed in Gävle through School Chance will continue to be active even after the end of the project. In addition to this action plan, the municipality will work with several measures linked to sustainable school mobility in a Swedish version of an extended local action plan. The additional actions are partly already in line with current work, but the action plan will clarify responsibilities and merge all the actions concerning sustainable school mobility in an approach of becoming more holistic. The fact that the project has led to collaboration platforms between the different departments in Gävle Municipality is a great gain for planning, executing and communicating safe school roads and sustainable travel habits.



Action 1	Starter kit for walk-train & bike-train
Relevance and source of inspiration	<p>Gävle municipality will create a start-kit for parents who are interested in starting a walk-train or bike-train. The start-kit will include information and materials needed to get started and maintain the initiative. The action is inspired by the good practice “Bicibus & Pedibus”, introduced by School Chance partner Reggio Emilia.</p> <p>The action will be included in the traffic strategy together with other soft measures that Gävle municipality will implement to achieve sustainable mobility behaviour.</p>
Planned activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitoring to find good examples from other Swedish initiatives. 2. Create a digital material about walk-train & bike-train that can be communicated to guardians. 3. Purchase physical material and put together a starter kit that can be given to guardians who wants to start their own walk-train or bike-train. 4. Create guidelines for the use of starter kits. Who gets one? What obligations do they have? What documentation and follow-up is needed? 5. Find a pilot. A family or families that wants to go first with help from the mobility office. Let them evaluate and use their experience for the rest of the activities. Also use them as a good example. 6. Find other activities that can be combined with action. For example, competitions, challenges or educational activities. 7. Communicate this action to the guardians in all schools in Gävle through all possible channels. Use the pilot family. 8. Evaluate. How can the action be improved and what needs to happen to increase the number of participants? Ask the participants and other guardians what they think.
Involved parties	<p>Livsmiljö Gävle is responsible for implementation of the action with help from Utbildning Gävle. Livsmiljö Gävle will do research, create the starter kit and act as the advisory part towards guardians in need of guidance. Recurring contact with schools is crucial to reach out and find guardians willing to try the action and Utbildning Gävle needs to be the link between Livsmiljö Gävle and the schools. All parties must take part in the evaluation.</p>
Timeframe	<p>2020-2021. Final evaluation in 2022.</p>
Costs for implementation	<p>The starter kits will cost approximately 2000-5000 SEK each, depending on how many children and adults are participating.</p>
Funding resources	<p>Funding will be covered by Livsmiljö Gävle’s annual budget for soft measures for sustainable mobility.</p>
Monitoring indicators	<p>Number of participants. Number of participants being driven to school before and after participating.</p>

Action 2	Create school zones
Relevance and source of inspiration	<p>School zones are used to calm traffic and increase road safety around the school. The inspiration comes from School Chance partner Utrecht and their good practice “Road safety label and school zones”.</p> <p>School zones can clarify how the municipality should work with safe traffic environments around schools. The traffic strategy will ensure that the municipality continues to work with school zones.</p>
Planned activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create guidelines for School zones. How should they look and what kind of traffic regulations should we use in the zone? Start by creating school zones around 3 schools in Gävle. Staffansskolan, Solängsskolan and Nynässkolan. 2. Evaluate step number 2. What works and what can be better? 3. Determine which soft measures will be offered to schools when creating a school zone to increase the effect. 4. Create a material that can be used when communicating school zones. “This is a school zone” Pictures, statistics and interviews with parents for example. 5. Plan for eligibility for school zones. Which schools should we focus on if not all schools? Should there be any requirements? 6. Create school zones at 3 more schools 7. Evaluate step 1-7.
Involved parties	Livsmiljö Gävle is responsible for implementation of the action with help from GFAB. Evaluation of the action will be done by representatives from Livsmiljö Gävle, Utbildning Gävle and GFAB.
Timeframe	2019-2021. (In 2019 some of the ideas for school zones were tested outside of Staffansskolan in Gävle in order to get an idea of what it would look like and to make a pedestrian crossing safer)
Costs for implementation	Each school zone is different but can cost up to 500'000 SEK depending on what kind of changes in the physical environment are needed to increase pedestrian safety.
Funding resources	Funding will be covered by Livsmiljö Gävle’s annual budget for traffic safety.
Monitoring indicators	Number of deviations from the traffic rules (e.g. driving on the sidewalk, speeding, parking violations etc.) during school hour.