



# Robert Bloomfield Academy

## School Travel plan

Current Version	September 2023
Minor changes made	
Significant changes made	
Ratified	
Validity	1 year
Next Review	September 2024
Author	J Linehan, Principal

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Name of school: Robert Bloomfield Academy

School address: Bloomfield Drive, Shefford, Bedfordshire, SG17 5BU

Principal: John Linehan

Chair of Governors: Mr Craig Smith

Telephone Number: 01462 628800

Email: [RBA-Enquiries@Bestacademies.org.uk](mailto:RBA-Enquiries@Bestacademies.org.uk)

Website: [www.robertbloomfield.beds.sch.uk](http://www.robertbloomfield.beds.sch.uk)

Staff: Currently we have over 120 staff working on the premises at one time (Teachers, Learning Support Assistants and Office Staff, Cleaners, Cooks, Peripatetic Teachers).

Location: The School is located on a residential road where the speed limit is 30 mph. It is close to the T-junction with Ampthill Road which brings additional dangers to the area. There are footpaths to the school which are in reasonable repair. There is a pedestrian footway along one side of the entrance to school and along the front of the school. Outside the entrance to the school there are zig-zags painted on the road to discourage parking immediately adjacent to the school entrance. There is also a drop off zone, but unfortunately this is often parked in. There are "No Stopping" signs between 8am and 4.30pm outside school and on one side of Bloomfield Drive leading down towards Ampthill Road.



### *School Location*

Robert Bloomfield Academy is a purpose built middle school situated in Shefford serving the town and surrounding villages. The pupils are aged 9 to 13, we share the same site as Shefford Lower School. Currently we have 980 pupils on roll. The school was constructed in 1938. The popularity of the school has increased. Pupils and staff travel from a wide area of surrounding villages. A number of local parents tend to use their cars to transport their children at both ends of the day due to a number of factors like, distance, time of day, split families or work issues. The site is large with very generous playing facilities but travel issues along Bloomfield Drive and George Street give us great concern about traffic and safety as does bus travel as the vast majority of our pupils travel to school on one of 12 scheduled bus routes.

## THE PLAN

Our aim is:

- To understand the existing travel patterns on the journey to and from school
- To increase the number of journey's to and from school using a sustainable mode of travel

The objectives of this plan:

- To reduce the number of cars parked on the surrounding roads at the start and end of the school day
- To increase the number of pupils walking / scooting / cycling to school

How can these objectives be achieved?

- Encourage car sharing through Parent / Staff communications
- To promote park and stride
- To encourage pupils to take part in Bikeability courses run at the school
- To take annual travel surveys from staff and pupils

The School Travel Plan provides Robert Bloomfield Academy the opportunity to work closely with our feeder lower school, Shefford Lower, based on the same site, to look at issues that affect our children and to look at the travel problems and the local school community.

In preparing this plan the Governors, staff, children, parents, neighbours and other stakeholders have had the opportunity to reflect on the ways of getting to and leaving school. We have considered possible solutions to some of our problems and how this impacts on the residents neighbouring the school.



*Site Plan*

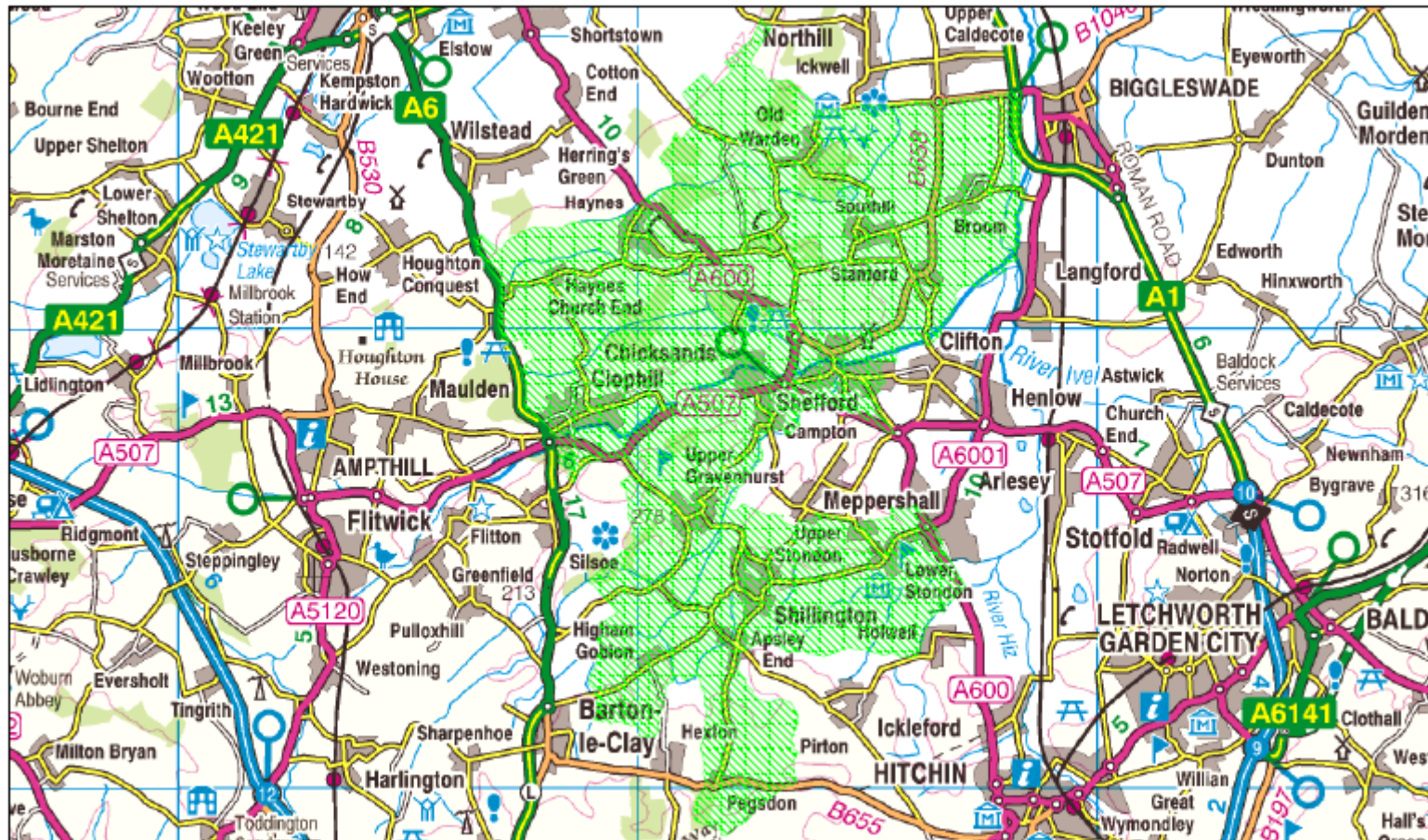
Catchment Area:

Our catchment area extends from the village of Haynes to the North, Lower Stondon to the South, Clophill to the West and to Broom in the East. This includes several other villages such as Campton, Shillington, Southill, Stanford and over 24 other Lower schools (*see map 3*).

The area the school catchment covers is predominantly rural. There are several school buses which transport pupils from Wilstead, Cotton End, Haynes, Clophill, Shillington, Stanford, Broom, Southill, Old Warden, Stondon, Chicksands and Campton.



Robert Bloomfield Catchment Area



Catchment Area

Home location of pupils: Children come from a wide area – many outside the catchment area.

The number that come from outside the catchment is increasing and is over a wide distance and the pupils can only get to the school by car or a paid for bus service.

Numbers on roll: There are currently 980 pupils on roll (September 2023)

Facilities on Site: The school is used for outside activities such as Gymnastics clubs, Trampolining clubs, MUGA facilities are used weekdays between 4pm and 10pm and Shefford Saints FC use the site every weekend. The school runs an extensive range of extra curricular activities which take place before and after school. These clubs involve parents collecting their children from the site. The numbers involved vary, depending on the activity, but on a school production or open evening there can be up to 200 cars on the school site. In addition, at a weekend when Gymnastics and Shefford Saints Football are on there are 300+ people and 200+ cars. Some weekends there are school activities that can push this to 500+ people and 300+ cars.

School Hours: The school day starts at 8.50 am and finishes at 3.30 pm although many children arrive well before this time for Clubs or for social interaction with their friends. Breakfast club starts at 8.00am and after school clubs usually run until 5pm. Staff arrive anytime from 7.30am and generally leave by 6pm.

Contacts: Contact personnel for this plan:

John Linehan, Principal  
Co-Ordinator – Tracey Watson, PA to Principal

## **CAR PARKING**

The school has some car parking for visitors and staff. We have 1 disabled bay and 3 visitor bays. The bus lane is used exclusively by school buses from 8.20am – 9am and 3pm – 4pm. During large school events one or both of the school's playgrounds have to be used for car-parking. Visitors are able to use the school parking facilities for events outside school hours. Currently we have cycle parking for up to 14 bikes. We can park 80 scooters in the pods supplied by CBC. Pupils lock their helmets to their bikes when parked. We have no facilities for charging electric vehicles.



## **ACCESS**

Pedestrian access is available via Bloomfield Drive and Kingfisher Road. There is also an entrance for pedestrian access for Shefford Lower School.

There is an unpatrolled Zebra crossing on Ampthill Road.

## **TRANSPORT LINKS**

The main roads through Shefford are the B507 and B568. These two roads are the main routes to Sandy, Bedford and Henlow. The A507 bypasses Shefford to the West and provides access to the A1(M). The town of Shefford is used as a through route to Sandy, Clifton and to the A1. Shefford is a vibrant community with numerous small businesses and a small industrial estate. As a result, the roads are busy at peak times and a large number of heavy goods vehicles use the local routes along with farm traffic.

The local bus service stops on Ampthill road and some pupils use this service.

<https://bustimes.org/localities/shefford>

The nearest train station is at Arlesey.

<https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/travel-information/plan-your-journey>

The school is also served by 12 CBC organised bus routes and 3 private taxis.

## **CURRENT SITUATION**

The vast majority of children at our school are bussed in to school. The rest live locally and can walk or use bikes/scooters to get to and from school. However, there are a considerable number of children who are driven to school for a variety of different reasons.

We do offer Bikeability courses to our Year 5's every year.

The car drivers who bring children to school vary in their approach to safety and there is often congestion around Bloomfield Drive and George Street. There is no onsite parking at the school for parents. Parents sometimes use the old bus bays at the front of the school and the grass verges along Bloomfield Drive for parking. Despite letters/newsletters, Police patrols and surveys, parents still park in these areas adding to the hazards of pupils and staff leaving the school premises. We do regularly promote car sharing to staff and families. We communicate and encourage this via Parentmail and Facebook.

Parking is at a premium and with the distance (over fifteen miles in many cases) and quantity of material brought into school necessitates car use by staff. Few staff live locally.

## **TRAFFIC INCIDENTS**

Fortunately, any serious incidents which involve travelling to or from school are few and far between. The school is in constant contact with families and regularly remind them how journeys can be made safer. Police have patrolled the area on occasions, but this is not a regular thing.

## **SEN/DISABLED TRANSPORT NEEDS**

There is one designated area for SEN/disabled parking for parents and staff. Some patrolling of the car park, Bloomfield Drive and George Street takes place by the Senior Leadership Team at Robert Bloomfield but this has little effect on the number of people parking without permission.

## **JOURNEYS MADE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Pupils make a number of trips off site as part of the curriculum or for sporting fixtures against other schools. When visiting local sites like the church, market square or the river, they walk in pairs supervised by the teachers or volunteer helpers.

Coach access to the site is made easier by the bus lane but is very difficult when coaches return from a trip and cannot be park due to cars parked in the bus lane. There are 2 “No Parking” signs in the Bus Lane.

## **JOURNEYS MADE AFTER SCHOOL**

Often the site is used for training, meetings or for matches against other schools. Teachers may also need to leave the school promptly at the end of the day to attend meetings. Due to the number of parents / carers parked on the adjacent streets this can make leaving the car park time consuming and hazardous. On the odd occasion when staff have to return to school at the end of the day it can take up to 20mins to drive up Bloomfield Drive. One possible solution to combat this problem would be to make the Bloomfield Drive/George street loop a one-way system at certain times during the day. This was implemented for a short time in 2021 but has unfortunately now been changed back to a two-way system and the problems have returned.

## **ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

In compiling the Robert Bloomfield School Travel Plan, the main routes which pedestrians use to access the school have been identified. In doing this there are several areas that have been identified as 'hot spots' where people find it difficult or perceive the location as dangerous.

### **'Hot Spots'**

1. Ampthill Road Pedestrian crossing
2. Crossing Ampthill Road near the Fish and Chip shop
3. Bloomfield Drive
4. George Street / New Street
5. Crossing the A507 at the roundabout
6. Kingfisher Road estate

## **INFORMATION AND LINKS TO TRAVEL INITIATIVES**

All the information below can be found on our RBA website

<https://www.robertbloomfield.beds.sch.uk/rba-life/transport-to-school>

For more information about Central Bedfordshire Council's Liftshare scheme, click here...

<https://liftshare.com/uk/community/travelchoicescbc>

A free online public transport journey planner along with public bus and train timetable information, can be found here

<https://www.traveline.info/>

Details of National cycle routes and a cycle route planner can be found here

<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/>

<https://www.cyclestreets.net/>

RBA run Bikeability courses every year for Year 5 students and encourage walking or cycling / scooting to school where possible.

Central Bedfordshire Travel Choices website has lots of useful information on:

- Health and well-being benefits of walking / cycling
- Organised health walks
- Walking / Cycling guides
- Bus maps
- Cycle clubs
- The Cycle to Work scheme

The website can be found here:

<https://www.cbtravelchoices.co.uk/>

## APPENDIX A

### September 2023 Travel to School Survey results – Pupils and Staff

#### Annual school travel survey 2023

Staff summary



SCHOOL NAME: .....Robert Bloomfield Academy.....

	Walk	Cycle	Car	Car Share	Park & Stride	Public Bus	Train
HOW STAFF <u>USUALLY</u> <u>TRAVEL TO SCHOOL</u> FOR THE MAIN PART OF THEIR JOURNEY?	5		67	5			

Comments:

77 members of staff completed the survey

# ANNUAL SCHOOL TRAVEL SURVEY 2023

Central  
Bedfordshire

SCHOOL SUMMARY - please collate information from each class onto this form

School: Robert Bloomfield Academy

School contact name and email: Tracey Watson TLWatson@bestacademies.org.uk

Number of pupils present: 904

Number of pupils absent: 76

Date of survey: 17th October 2023

	Walk	Cycle	Scoot/ skate	Car	Car share*	Park & stride	School bus	Public bus	Train
Nursery									
Rec									
Year 1									
Year 2									
Year 3									
Year 4									
Year 5	54	3	7	39	12	22	87		
Year 6	63	2	22	37	3	4	95		
Year 7	39	4	31	45	6	8	95		
Year 8	68	6	9	34	11	10	88		
Year 9									
Year 10									
Year 11									
Year 12									
Year 13									
Total	224	15	69	155	32	44	365	0	0

Overall total 904

\* Car share is defined as 'travel in a car with a pupil from another household'.