

Summary of Student Travel Survey: Arrowtown School

Classroom Counts on Travel Choice – March 2011

Background

Arrowtown School has been implementing a school travel plan since early 2010 and is one of five travel planning schools working in partnership with Queenstown Lakes District Council. The main goal of the programme is to increase safe travel choices for children and to work with the school community to address any road safety issues which come out of this process.

Students were asked how they got to and from school over a period of 5 days in March 2011. The data given in this report shows what these travel patterns were over the week, how they relate to each year group, and how this data from March 2011 compared with an earlier survey in August 2010. Children were also asked how they would *like* to travel to school if they had the choice.

Student travel surveys will be carried out at Arrowtown School at a similar time every 12 months in order to build a profile of travel choice over time. This information can also help the school and council monitor the school's travel plan programme.

Methodology

Each classroom was asked to collect data by carrying out a 'hands up' survey, which involved the teacher asking students each morning how students travelled to and from school over five days. Teachers were encouraged to oversee data collection, but classes with older students sometimes elected a student to record data. Rainy days and school trips were noted on the survey sheet where relevant.

In this survey, it was noted that Monday, Tuesday and possibly Wednesday morning were all wet days. As expected this resulted in a higher number than usual travelling by car, with lower numbers walking or biking.

Participation rates for student surveys are generally very high, with nearly all children present in the classroom having their answers recorded and most classes at a school taking part. Similar questions on travel mode in parents' surveys are useful, but don't have the same high participation rates (the last parent survey had 53% of the school's families participating). This is compared to the results of the 'hands up survey' which collected data for a total of 377 students.

How students are getting to and from Arrowtown School in March 2011

Figure 1:

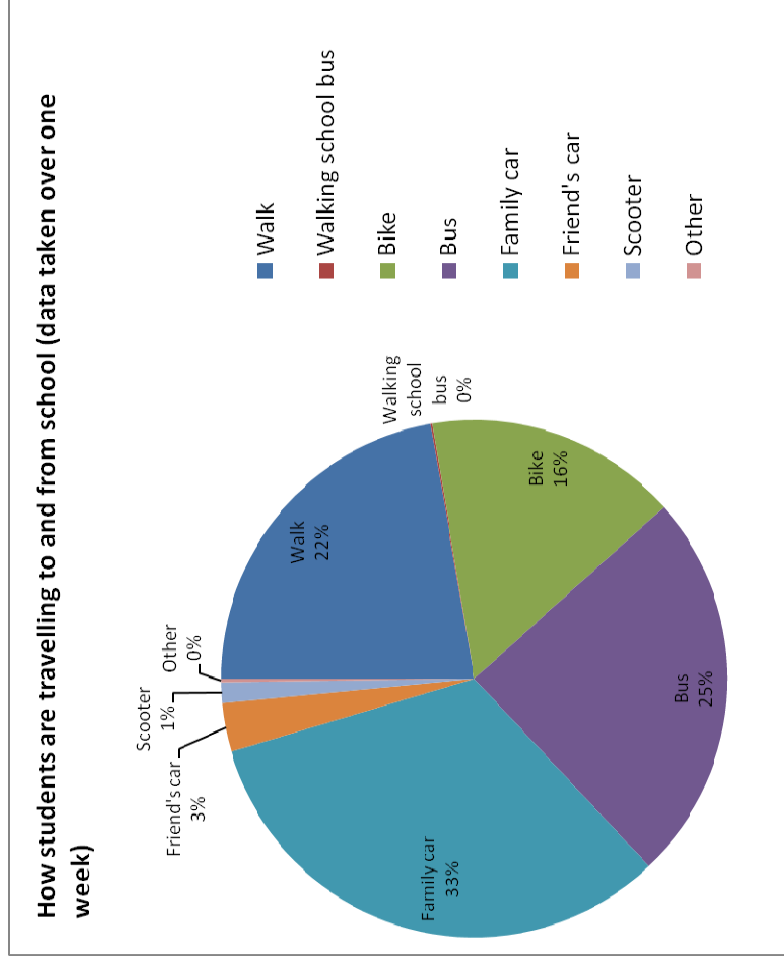


Figure 2:

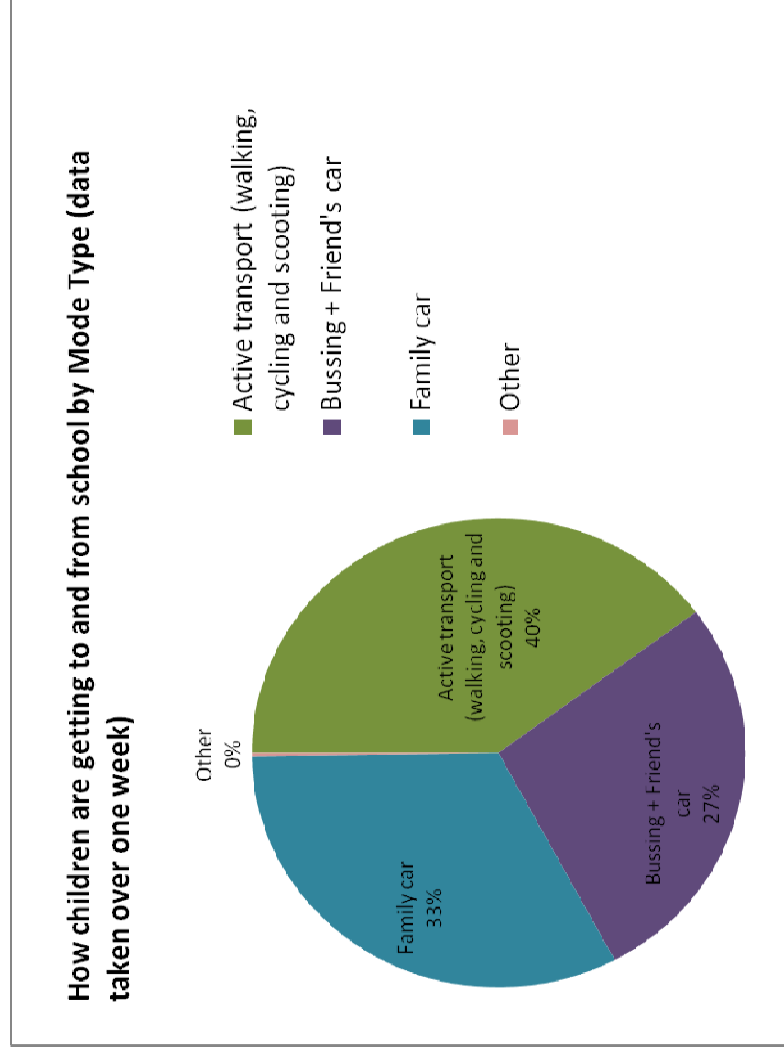


Figure 1 gives a full breakdown of travel modes for students over a 5 day period. During warmer months such as March, a quarter of children at Arrowtown School take the school bus while just over a third travel in the family car. Figures 5 and 6 on page 4 compare March and August data, with August showing slightly more car trips (an increase of 2-3%).

Figure 2 shows travel modes grouped into; active forms of transport (walking, cycling and scooting), shared motorised transport (bus and carpooling) compared to trips in the family car. Looked at this way, around 40% of children are using 'active transport' compared to 33% who travel by car.

How children *currently* travel to school and how they would *like* to travel

Figure 3: Data from March 2011:

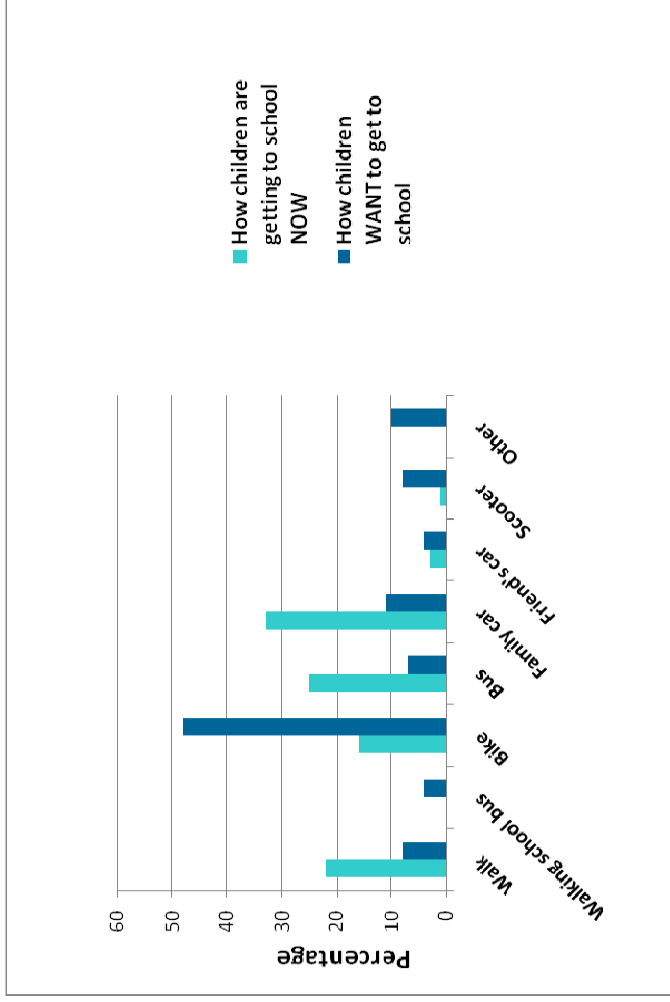
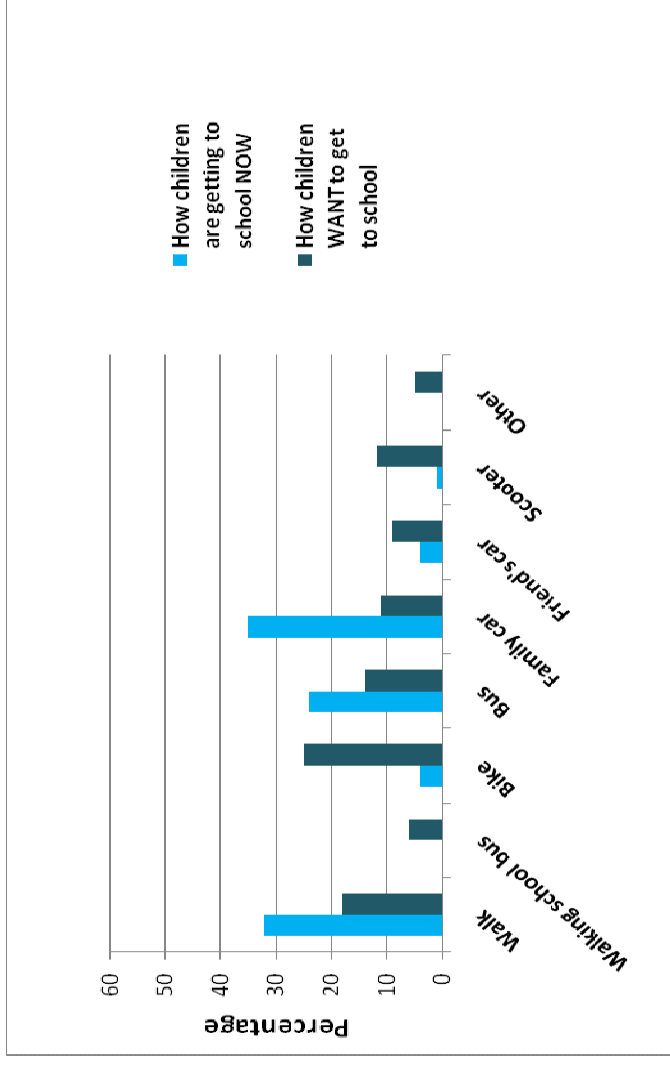


Figure 4: Data from August 2010:



This data shows how children are *currently* getting to school compared to *preferred travel modes* in two different surveys; March 2011 and August 2010.

In both surveys, being driven to school is the main travel mode even though biking is children's most preferred option. Data in March shows nearly half of students *would like* to bike, compared to 16% who are *currently* biking. Similarly, over a third of children are being driven to school in March, even though there are just 11% of students who would *choose* to get to school this way.

While there are some small differences between March and August data, this may be partly due to warmer months being more conducive to cycling.

How students are travelling to school: Comparisons of two surveys

Figure 5: Breakdown of all modes in March 2011

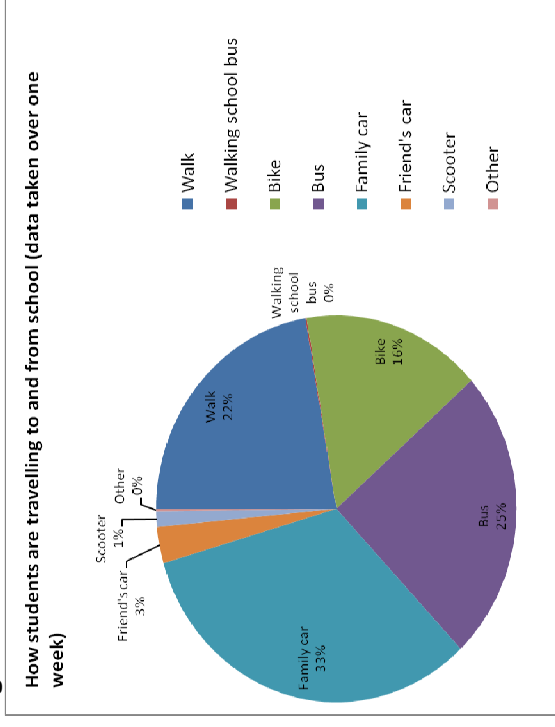


Figure 6: Breakdown of all modes for August 2010

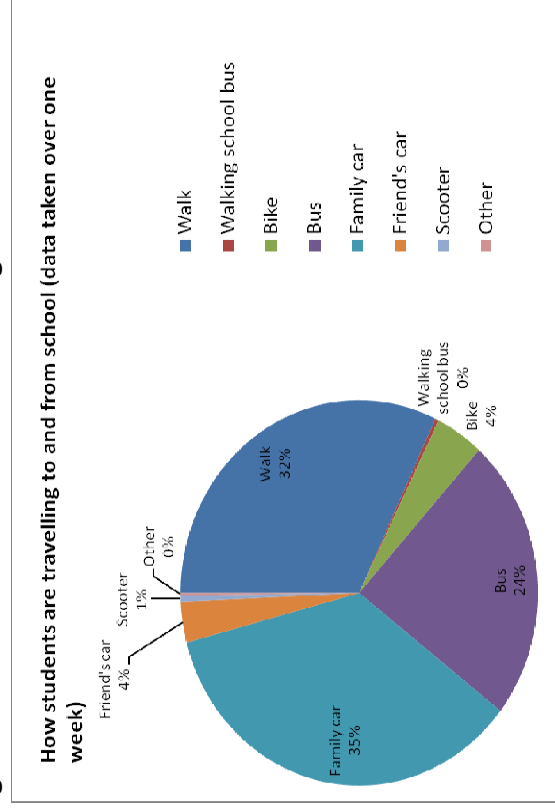


Figure 7: Groups of transport type in March 2011

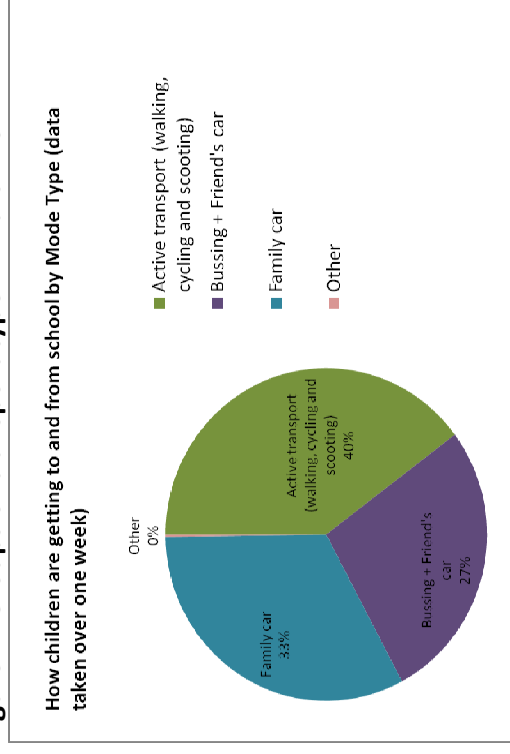
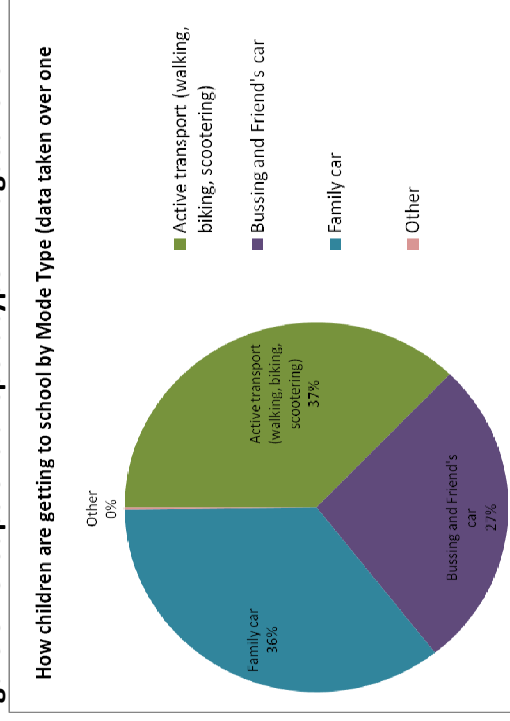
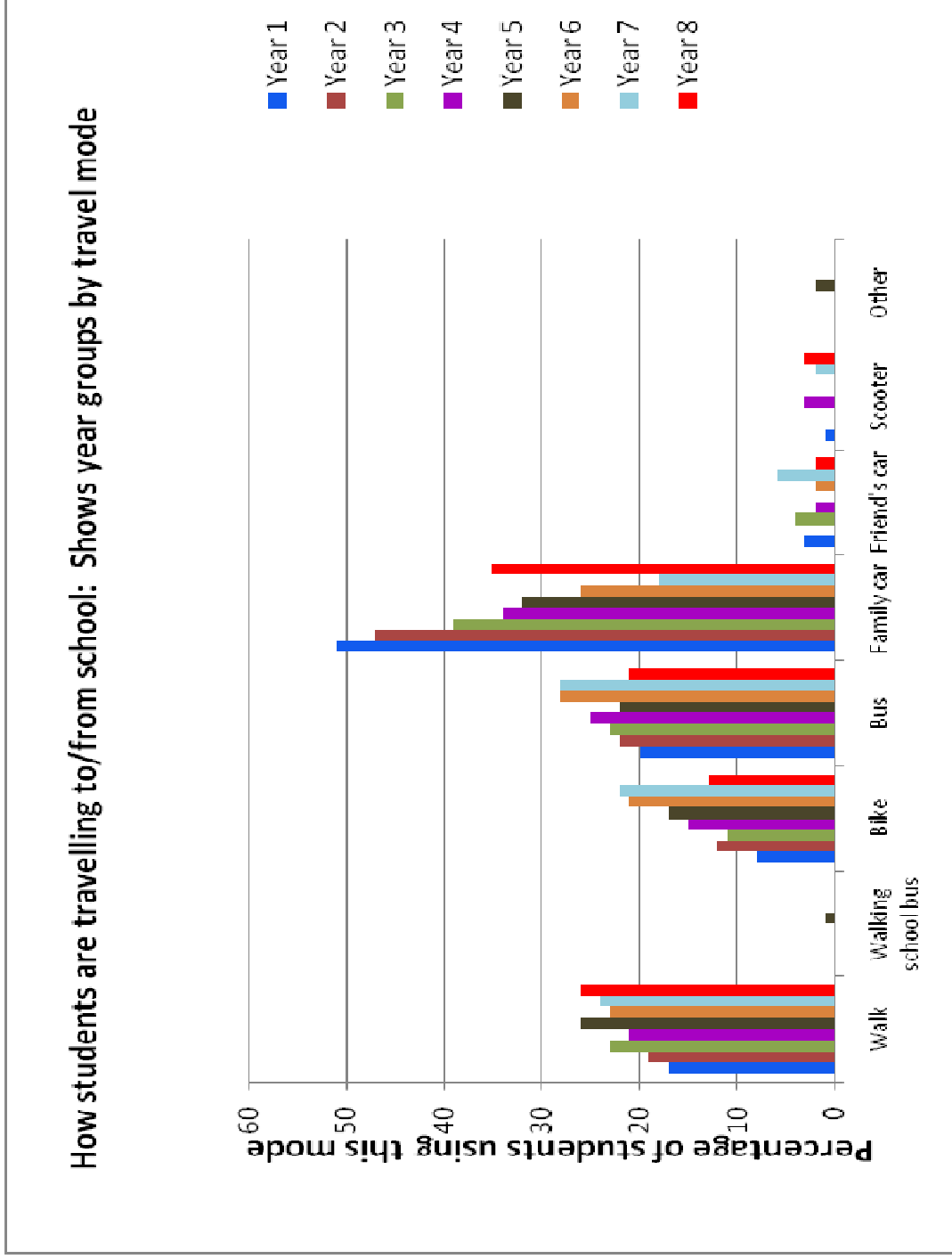


Figure 8: Groups of transport type in August 2010



Mode of Travel for Different Year Groups (March 2011 data)

Figure 9:



Note: Year 1 group included one Year 1/2 combined class

Figure 10:

How students are travelling to/from school: Shows travel mode by year



OPPORTUNITIES

- Relative high numbers of children choose to walk or bike at Arrowtown School when compared to other Queenstown Lakes District schools. The proportion of children choosing active forms of transport is relatively consistent when comparing data from August 2010 to March 2011. The numbers of cyclists however has shown to decrease over the colder months.
- Biking to school is a clear favourite with children – a trend which is typical of many primary schools surveyed in the district. There is a lot of potential to tap into this enthusiasm and encourage safe cycling, particularly in the warmer months. Special bike to school days, cycle skills and bike safety checks have proved popular and can continue to support cycling as a safe travel mode.
- While Arrowtown generally has high numbers of children walking and cycling to school, given the close proximity that many families live in relation to the school, some would view the rate of 33% driving as being unnecessarily high. Implementation of the travel card scheme in terms 4 and 1 may help encourage parents to use the car less and support children in getting to school using sustainable modes.
- The Arrowtown School working group has prioritised infrastructure needs with council which it hopes will improve walking and cycling access for the school. These measures are being considered by council as part of the annual plan process for 2011.

For more information about the travel plan programme, please contact Kirsty Barr on 03 443 8609 or barrkerr@ts.co.nz. You can also contact Denis Mander at Queenstown Lakes District Council on 03 441 0499 or visit www.gldc.govt.nz.