Parents!
Your child's best road safety teacher is you

Why? Because basic road safety can best be taught in the street. Your child is out and about with you. He or she will follow your example, good or bad.

Please don't wait for the school to teach your child road safety. Teach them the basic skills yourself. These are the facts:

- over 140 children are killed and 4,200 seriously injured on our roads every year while walking or cycling;

- most serious road accidents involving children walking and cycling happen close to home, on residential roads carrying only light traffic; and

- those aged 12-15 are the most likely to be killed or seriously injured. Although they know the Green Cross Code they don't always apply it.

What can you do?

You can do a lot to protect your child. This leaflet tells you the best way to teach the skills your child needs.

Make sure that grandparents, childminders, or anyone looking after your child sets the same example as you do.

Remember that children develop at different rates. Only you can decide when your child is ready to move from one stage to the next.
Ages 1 to 4: 
Protect your child

Children under five cannot cope with traffic. Never let them out alone or even with an older child.

Choose somewhere safe for them to play; never on the pavement or in the road, however quiet. If there is nowhere else for them to go, make sure an adult looks after them.

When you go out, make sure your child walks on the side of the pavement away from the traffic, either holding your hand, on reins or in a buggy or pushchair. Never allow your child to ride a bike on the road even if you are close by.

Set a good example. Explain what traffic is. Tell your child about stopping at the kerb, looking and listening for traffic before crossing. Explain the difference between the road and the pavement - the road is for traffic and the pavement for people. Explain that sometimes traffic crosses the pavement, so your child must always watch out.

Every child should learn about traffic before going to school. Ask the road safety officer at your local council offices if they run a traffic club or other road safety programme for children under five.
Ages 5 to 6:
Teaching your child

Whenever you take your child out walking, tell them what you are doing and why. Teach the main points of the Green Cross Code:

**STOP! LOOK! LISTEN!**

These are the first points to learn. See page 14 for the full Code.

Practise on quiet roads near home. First, show what to do. Then let your child lead you across. Finally, let him or her cross while you wait behind, watching carefully.

At this age, children are not ready to cross alone. Make sure an adult is always with them when they cross. The risk of a road accident rises when children start school. Most happen when children are not with an adult. Why not set up a rota with two or three other parents and share taking the children to and from school?

Take the safest route to school, crossing roads at the safest place and explaining why. Where there is a crossing use it.
Ages 7 to 9: Now for the Green Cross Code

Explain the rules of the Green Cross Code, shown on page 14.

When you are sure your child knows and understands them, let him or her use them while crossing the quiet roads where you have been practising. Watch and test before letting your child cross quiet roads alone.

Later, start to practise crossing busier roads together. Do this many, many times before you let your child cross alone.

Many children cannot judge how fast vehicles are going or how far away they are. The age when they can use and understand the Green Cross Code is different for each child. Children learn by example, so when walking with children always use the Green Cross Code.

Being seen

Make sure your child can be easily seen. Bright or fluorescent clothes show up best by day, especially in dull or misty weather, but fluorescent clothing doesn’t work after dark. Reflective material does work well and shows up in car headlights. Explain to your child why they should always wear something bright, especially at night.