The **Walking School Bus** is an Australia-wide program designed to encourage children to keep active and walk to or from school. In WA, it is run by the Department of Transport and currently 40 schools across the State participate in the initiative.

At PLC we run the Walking School Bus on Friday afternoons, departing from the Junior School Rotunda and walking as a supervised group of 15-20 students. It is a very pleasant 15 minute downhill walk down Forrest Street, quickly across The Esplanade, then down designated paths to the river and along the foreshore, finishing at Freshwater Bay Park. It is an opportunity for your children to be physically active, for friendships to evolve and relieves some traffic congestion at the school. Some parents find the later pick-up very useful in allowing them to collect their other children from school and make their way leisurely to the park instead of the usual North Cott to PLC Dash, Scotch to PLC Sprint, or what have you! Once at the park, any children and their parents stay on in the beautiful surrounds of the playground... a relaxed and friendly way to end a busy week.

**HOW TO JOIN**

Please fill out the Parent Consent Form and send with your daughter when she joins for the first time. These are your daughter’s ‘tickets’ to join the WSB. It is a legal requirement that these forms have been filled out, signed and returned. You must include an email address for correspondence and a mobile or other contact number where you can be reached on Friday afternoon if need be.

**The WSB operates as follows:**

- It will commence on the second Friday of Term 1 and will run every Friday throughout the year.
- The WSB travels in all weather except where persistent rain is forecast for the afternoon. This will be confirmed with Junior School Reception by 2pm, and participating girls will subsequently be advised. It is the parents’ responsibility to check with Junior School Reception if the weather looks doubtful and to make arrangements for their daughter’s collection should cancellation have occurred.
• Students of all ages are welcome...it is advisable, however, to let your child’s class teacher know that he/she will be taking part, to ensure the younger students are prompted to go to the departure point rather than the slipway. Parents of very young students should check directly with the WSB Coordinator so he/she can be collected by the parent on duty each week.
• All children are required to wear their panama or sports hat.
• A roll call of regular walkers is taken each week, but parents do not need to advise the WSB Coordinator each week in advance whether their child will be walking.
• The WSB departs at 3.25pm. This provides ample time for Year Six students, who finish latest, to be present at the Rotunda. It does mean the younger students have to wait with their friends for up to 25 minutes, but this has never proven to be a problem.
• All school bags/musical instruments/laptops are packed into a parent’s car and driven to the destination point for collection.
• There will always be a minimum ratio of one volunteer parent escort per 10 students.
• If a girl joins the WSB without a consent form on record, such as if they are going home with a regular walker, naturally they will be allowed to join the walk. However if any students intend to join the walk on an irregular basis, a parental consent form must be signed and submitted.
• Most importantly, parents must collect their daughters at the café (Cappuccino by the River) by 3.45pm. Any parents running late should either make direct arrangements for another parent to wait with their child (or collect), or contact the WSB Coordinator directly. Children of parents who are significantly delayed and cannot be contacted will be delivered to PLC After School Care by a volunteer parent.
• Lastly, the Walking School Bus relies solely on parents volunteering to walk with the students or transport the luggage - if you are keen to help out in either capacity, please contact Gill (details below). The more parents we have on roster, the fewer times each parent needs to be rostered on. Ideally your help would only be required a couple of times per term. Several of our current volunteer parents like to walk regularly but it is always helpful to have some extra names on the book.

Looking forward to welcoming you on the PLC Walking School Bus in 2012...

Gill Fairweather
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