



Bay steps up for travel plan

■ **Andrew Bonallack**

Titahi Bay School pupils footed it with Papakowhai, Rangikura and St Pius X Schools last week to promote the Land Transport New Zealand programme Feet First.

Feet First, which is supported by the Greater Wellington Regional Council, is a campaign to recognise school children who walk to school.

The next step is to devise a school travel plan programme. Greater Wellington's school travel plan co-ordinator Simon Vincent says Titahi Bay School is the first in the Wellington region to take it up.

He says a travel plan is a set of practical actions developed by the school community that aims to improve road safety and reduce car trips to and from school.

"A plan starts off with information from surveys with all students, parents and staff.

"The survey asks how people get to school and identifies the issues.

"Some parents might see traffic as the issue, while pupils might see it as an aggressive dog on the way to school."

Next is plotting the view and routes on a large-scale plan and creating a working party



CATCHUP:

Anneliese Kirkland, 7, left, from Ranui Heights, and Britney Orpin, 7, from Titahi Bay, socialise during the walk to school.

Photo: Andrew Bonallack



to develop the strategies and implement them.

So far, Titahi Bay School has completed the surveys and Mr Vincent is preparing a report.

“This community has the desire. They see the benefits and want their children to be safe.”

Deputy-principal Kerry Delaney says children function differently at school if they walk there.

“They have already got rid of that energy. They have got a lot of information sharing and socialising out of the way earlier, and arrive feeling good – and usually earlier.

“Plus, I imagine some cars can have a

stressful atmosphere.”

She says that during her childhood everyone knew people who lived on the street.

“But when you travel by car you don’t notice.”

Joshua Maclean, 8, says he was usually a car traveller and it was the first time he had walked to school.

“I had to call my mum when I got to school, because she was worried. It was exciting, and I get to walk home as well.”

■ For more information go to www.gw.govt.nz/travelplans