

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Experimental School Streets to increase active travel and support social distancing



Ealing School Streets

How will School Streets increase active travel?

The schools that are taking part are committed to encouraging walking, scooting and cycling for the school journey. They want to reduce car use, congestion and air pollution around their school to improve safety and health. They will support families to use active modes of transport to increase their physical activity and improve health.

How will School Streets support social distancing?

The scheme will provide a low traffic area, making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to use the road space and enable social distancing. With schools taking various other measures to address social distancing, the additional measure of a School Street will enable more children to safely attend school, especially older more independent pupils who travel on their own and may be fearful of the volumes of traffic and normal congestion at the school gates.

What times are the restrictions in force?

The scheme operates for set periods before entry and after exit times of the school during school term time only. It will not operate in the school holidays or at weekends. The length of each restriction is usually between 30-60 mins, often longer in the afternoon when schools may have staggered finish times. Vehicles will not be able to enter the scheme between these times unless they have been given a dispensation.

What if I am already parked inside the scheme when it comes into operation?

All vehicles already parked in the scheme before the times of operation will be able to exit without incurring a fixed penalty notice.

I am a resident living near a School Street? Can I drive in and out of the School Street during operating times?

No, residents living outside of the designated School Street zone will not be permitted to enter and leave during operating times.



As a parent/carer, can I enter the School Street?

Parents or carers dropping children at school will not be allowed to enter the School Street in their vehicle. You can enter the School Street if you or your child are a blue badge holder or a resident of the designated School Street zone.

Will school staff get a permit?

Staff will not receive permits for ANPR enforced schemes unless they are a blue badge holder.

Is this scheme a way to penalise parents and ban driving to school?

No, it is a ban on driving just on streets around school entrances; parents who feel they need to drive will have to park legally nearby and walk the last part of the journey. If available, information will be provided on locations where parents can park, such as supermarket, leisure centre car parks or Park & Stride areas. In Ealing, 84% of pupils live within 1 mile of their school. This is a 20 minute walk. 62% live within a 10 minute walk. At many schools, there are already a high proportion of pupils walking and cycling to school and a significant number of the vehicles travelling past the school are not school related traffic but are using the streets as a short cut on their journey.

This is such an unusual form of restriction, will the signage need to be large and prominent, therefore unsightly?

The signage will be kept to a minimum, with a pair of signs being erected only at the entrances to the scheme and advanced warning signs where drivers may need to change their planned route.

Could this create congestion on surrounding streets?

We will be working with school communities to identify and promote locations away from schools where parents can park; this should disperse the cars over a wider area than at present. Reward schemes could be introduced to encourage use of these 'Park & Stride' as well as pedestrian and cycle training, setting up of walking buses (groups of children accompanied by adults), and provision of additional cycle and scooter parking. Experience from other Boroughs shows that residents in surrounding roads are not adversely affected as parking by families who chose to drive will be dispersed over a much wider area and more families will be using active modes of travel.



Were other options explored to improve the traffic problem and children's safety before introducing the School Streets scheme?

Schools chosen to participate in these schemes have already tried other means of improving the road environment around the school gates. One of the selection criteria for this programme is that schools have to have achieved, or be working towards, a TfL STARS accreditation. They will have tried publicity, training and promotion activities to improve the situation, often with limited success.

Other traffic management options, like extensive parking restrictions, may have been considered, but to introduce them on a permanent 24/7 basis would penalise those residents living in the affected streets based on an issue that occurs only during school term times at drop-off and pick-up times. It would also not discourage or penalise parking on school zig zag crossings.

The School Streets project provides an opportunity to trial a new way of addressing concerns raised around school parking and congestion, whilst encouraging and enabling alternative and sustainable forms of travel to school.

How will you know if the pilot has been successful?

The road should be visibly calmer, safer and cleaner during these times. Mode of travel data will be collected from the school's STARS Survey and compared before and during the trial period. The school will update their STARS with Stories about the activities they have undertaken to support the aims of the School Street. The school community and local residents can also give their views on the scheme.

Who is paying for this?

Ealing Council's transport strategy funding is provided by Transport for London. This School Streets programme has been developed in response to TfL's request to provide measures to increase active travel and enable social distancing. It is called the London Streetspace Programme (LSP).

The Council will continue to deliver the Ealing School Streets programme with funding from TfL's Local Implementation Plan and other sources as they become available.

Who should I contact for further information?

Please contact the School Travel Team at schoolstreets@ealing.gov.uk

