

School Streets FAQs

Our aim is to work with local communities to introduce Low Traffic School Safety Zones (School Streets), to improve road safety and air quality around schools.

Low Traffic School Safety Zones sees a designated section of the road directly outside of the school is closed to any through traffic during drop off and pick up times.

What are School Streets?

School Streets is a traffic management scheme, which improves road safety and air quality outside schools. The school road is closed to vehicle traffic at the start and end of the school day. This helps reduce congestion and air pollution, making it easier and safer to walk or cycle to school.

Why is this being introduced?

The School Streets scheme aims to:

- Reduce traffic and parking pressures outside schools
- Discourage car journeys to school and encourage active travel – walking and cycling
- Make the streets outside schools safer at the start and end of the day
- Improve air quality and create a more pleasant environment for everyone

How long will this scheme last?

Milton Keynes Council is trialling this initiative with a number of schools for six months.

How is this implemented?

This scheme is being delivered using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO). This can stay in place for a maximum of 18 months. We will monitor and assess the impact of these changes to decide whether they should be made permanent.

How does it work?

Streets around those schools identified will become a Pedestrian & Cycle Zone for agreed times (of between 30 minutes and 1 hour) at the start and end of the school day. Motor vehicles cannot drive in this zone between these times unless they have a permit.

What times do these restrictions apply?

Times of the closure may vary across schools due to different start and finish times. The times for each individual scheme will be included on the signs at the entrance to each zone and will be widely publicised locally. Details of the times and locations for the pilot schools can be found online at www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/school-streets.

How will people know where this applies?

At the entrance and exit of the closure there will be signs detailing times the restriction is in force and that it is a violation of this is an offence.

How will it be enforced?

Driving in the zone is a moving traffic offence, so it is the police who are the enforcing body. They are able to issue a £50 fixed penalty fine to anyone caught driving in the zone without permission when this restriction is in place.

Will there be any physical barriers?

The required infrastructure for enforcement is signage which will be placed at the entrance and exit of each zone. As this is a pilot, we are not planning to install any permanent physical barriers such as bollards. We may work with schools to support the closure with cones or banners.

Where do I park?

If you do have to drive to the school then we are asking for individuals to park responsibly, safely and to be considerate to local residents when parking in the surrounding streets. Please ensure you are not parked on the pavement, blocking or parked on a resident's driveway.

What if I have to drive a child to school?

Parents and others who do have to drive are asked to park (legally) nearby and walk the last part of their journey. Where possible, we are working with schools to identify suitable locations for Park & Stride schemes and/or to develop Walking Buses.

Won't this just move parking problems somewhere else?

It is generally the area nearest to the school gates that sees the most problems with parking, and it is hoped that this scheme will disperse cars over a wider area than at present and to more suitable locations. Also, by making it safer for people to walk, scoot or cycle to school there should be fewer people feeling that they have to drive for this journey.

Will residents be able to access their homes when the streets are closed?

Residents living on streets included in this scheme will be able to access their property during the restriction times. However, we are asking for residents to limit their movements during the restriction times.

How will you know who are residents, visitors, and parents?

For the first four weeks of the pilot a traffic management company will be in place to help educate road users that new restrictions are in place. The traffic management company will also monitor who it is driving down the restricted road. This will be reduced after four weeks, with the enforcement becoming reliant on CCTV cameras, capturing movements in the restricted area.

What about visitors to my property?

Any visitors are asked to arrive outside of the times this is in operation or to park outside of the zone (and move once the restriction ends).

Are any other vehicles permitted to access the zone?

Some vehicles belonging to identified groups are automatically allowed to drive in a School Street. These include emergency services; utility companies; refuse collectors; postal services providers and any other exemptions stated in the Highway Code. Blue badge holders are also exempt.

What about school staff and deliveries?

We are working with the schools involved to try to arrange for anyone that needs to drive to the school to do so outside of the times that this is in operation or to gain access via alternative routes where this is possible.

What else can be done to tackle problem parking and improve road safety?

The schools chosen to take part in this scheme have already carried out other things to improve the environment around the school gate. They are all part of the Modeshift STARS scheme and have in place or are developing a School Travel Plan. This includes education, training and promotional activities to encourage safer, greener and healthier travel to school and this will continue in support of the School Streets pilot.

How will this scheme be monitored?

Surveys will be carried out with pupils, parents, and local residents at the start of the pilot and later on to follow up on this to get feedback on any changes resulting from this. There will be a number of other monitoring processes to capture air quality and traffic data.

How will you know if it has been successful?

The road should be visibly calmer, safer and cleaner during the times this is in place. We will collect data and capture feedback to identify if this has been achieved during the trial period. School Streets projects in other parts of the country, Leeds and Birmingham City Council have shown that schools and local residents are generally in favour of this continuing as they have seen a reduction in parking problems and more children walking or cycling to school.

How is this being funded?

The scheme is being delivered as part of the Council Plan Budget.

How can I give my views on this scheme?

There is an online survey where residents, parents, school staff and the wider community can feedback on School Streets.

Find out more here: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/school-streets