



7 October 2020

Dear Parents/ Guardians

School Streets Consultation

As you are aware, the traffic and safety of students and residents on Crescent Road has been a major concern over the past few years. Over the last 5-6 years, our institutions have grown in size and between us, we now see over 2,000 children and young people daily – the majority using Crescent Road to get to school.

Given the busy traffic, we share the very real concerns of residents and parents about the safety risks of the current situation.

We send out regular reminders to our school community to park considerately and safely but this, at best, only results in temporary improvements. We also spend time teaching road safety and awareness with our pupils and students, but we sincerely believe that more needs to be done.

We have been in communication with Reading Borough Council, and would now like to understand your views on a proposed trial of a 'school street' scheme to make it easier and safer for children to walk and cycle to the schools in the Crescent Road area.

Under this scheme, the area of Crescent Road between Wokingham Road and Bulmershe Road would temporarily become a pedestrian and cycle only zone for 45 minutes at the beginning and end of the day. We are proposing that the closure times would be 8.15-9.00am and 2.45-3.30pm, Monday to Friday term time only. It is hoped that this will encourage parents to walk their children to school instead of driving, resulting in safer roads and improved air quality for both students and local residents.

Residents within this proposed zone will be able to register for an exemption so that they can still get to and from their homes by car during these closure periods. Barriers will be erected but will be manned by volunteer marshals, recruited by the schools/college in order to facilitate access and exit for residents and emergency vehicles. You will have the opportunity to indicate if this is of interest to you in the consultation survey referred to below.

We have included some additional information relating to the scheme below and would be extremely grateful if you could complete a survey available at the following link by 28 October 2020 to share with us your views on this proposal:

<https://forms.gle/d98i1JbHM95PENPD6>

We are aware that there may be some concerns with traffic being shifted to neighbouring streets, however we aim to limit this through encouraging parents to use dedicated Park and Stride sites (which provide suitable parking within a 5-10 minute walking distance), encouraging further uptake of Bikeability courses, ensuring there is cycle parking available at each school and signing up to Modeshift STARS (a national sustainable travel programme) which will help support making changes to our long term travel behaviour.

We would like to thank you for your patience with the traffic issues and safety concerns you have faced and to thank you in advance for your participation in this consultation. Once we have collated the responses, these will be summarised and forwarded to Reading Borough

Council as part of our application submission. There will also be further opportunity for you to comment during the trial.

Should you have any further questions or wish to discuss this further, please contact us via meroffice@maidenerleghtrust.org "school street" in the subject line (communications will be shared between the schools).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Johnson', with a small flourish at the end.

Mr A Johnson
Headteacher
Maiden Erlegh School in Reading

Why are these changes being proposed?

Reading Borough Council is committed to making Reading's roads safer for everyone living in, working in and visiting the area to create an environment that will encourage more walking and cycling.

The schools/ college on in The Crescent Road area have been selected to take part in this trial because due to safety and traffic issues in the road.

Encouraging fewer car journeys to school should lead to:

- reduced danger from traffic;
- less anti-social behaviour from inconsiderate and dangerous driving;
- an increase in walking and cycling and more active lifestyles for pupils/ students and their parents/carers;
- reduced congestion and pollution from vehicles waiting with their engines running.

What is the proposed scheme?

More information about the scheme is available on the Reading Borough Council at the following link:

<https://www.reading.gov.uk/schoolstreets>

For the proposed Crescent Road scheme:

- Crescent Road (between Wokingham Road and Bulmershe Road) will be made a pedestrian and cycle only zone between 8:15-9:00 and 14:45-15:30 Monday to Friday, term time only;
- Access for residents to enter the zone will be maintained for vehicles that register an exemption;
- Other vehicles driven by visitors, parents and delivery drivers will not be permitted to enter the zone during the closure;
- All vehicles that already in the zone during the operational times will be able to exit;
- Signage will be erected in the area;
- If approved, the trial will be implemented around 4 January 2021 and will run for 6 months;
- After the trial, a decision will be made on whether to make the scheme permanent.

It is likely that the trial will operate under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order ('TRO'), this means that there is a statutory 6 month period in which objections must be considered, and within 18 months a decision must be made on whether to make the changes permanent. As part of the TRO process, the Council will advertise the TRO with notices on-street and an advert in the paper.

What happens next?

At the end of the consultation period, your responses will be sent to Reading Borough Council with our application to start a trial scheme. If the application is successful, residents will receive a letter to inform them about the start date for the scheme with details of how to register vehicles for exemption.