

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)****DATE:** 11 December 2014**LEAD OFFICER:** Duncan Knox**SUBJECT:** ROAD SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOLS REPORT – CORDWALLES JUNIOR SCHOOL**DIVISION:** CAMBERLEY EAST

<b><u>SUMMARY OF ISSUE:</u></b>
Concern has been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Cordwalles Junior School. This report outlines investigations into the nature and extent of the concerns and possible highway and road safety education improvements to reduce them. These have been developed in accordance with the County Council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy.
<b><u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></b>
<b>The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to agree that:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Cordwalles Junior School be asked to undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities. This will include take up of Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills courses, Park SMART and the setting up of a Walking Bus. The school will be supported in these activities by the County Council's Sustainable Travel Team.</li> <li>(ii) Timing plate signs be installed to ensure that the existing school keep clear markings are enforceable if necessary.</li> <li>(iii) The Local Committee will decide whether to include the suggestion for two raised road tables on Berkshire Road within their forward programme for highway improvements. The committee will then be able to decide whether to allocate funding to these in future years depending upon prioritisation against other schemes throughout Surrey Heath.</li> </ul>
<b><u>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></b>
The recommended school travel plan and road safety education improvements would help to improve road safety and reduce reliance on the car for the school journey. The provision of timing plate signs will make the existing school keep clear markings enforceable if necessary and so may act as an additional deterrent to reduce anti-social parking. The provision of raised road tables would help to provide crossing facilities and will provide reassurance over road safety concerns for those walking, scooting and cycling to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion. However the option for raised road tables will need to be prioritised alongside other schemes proposed throughout Surrey Heath. There have not been any road casualties on Berkshire Road outside Cordwalles Junior School and speeds are already comparatively low, so the local committee may consider that there are other sites in greater of need of investment of the limited budget available to them.

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 One of the most frequently expressed road safety concerns is that of the safety of children outside schools. At school drop off and pick up times the roads in the immediate vicinity of schools are especially busy and there is usually a higher level of vehicle, pedestrian, scooter and cyclist activity. This causes slower vehicle speeds and congestion and very often leads to frustration from residents and motorists at the apparent chaos caused by parents and children arriving or leaving the school.
- 1.2 Concerns have been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Cordwalles Junior School in Camberley. As a result of this a petition was brought to Surrey Heath Local Committee in March 2014.
- 1.3 This report describes the results of investigations into these issues and presents possible highway and road safety education improvements to address the concerns. These have been developed in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy approved by county council Cabinet on 24 June 2014

## **2. ANALYSIS:**

### **Site Description and Existing Infrastructure**

- 2.1 Cordwalles Junior School teaches children from ages 7 to 11 (years 3 to 6) and is a two-form entry school. It is worth noting that there are also other schools nearby on the Old Dean Estate including Pine Ridge Infants, Collingwood College and Lorraine School. The school has two pedestrian entrances (though one does not appear to be routinely used) and one vehicle entrance on Berkshire Road, which has a 30 mph speed limit. Berkshire Road does not have any traffic calming, whereas a number of other roads on the Old Dean estate do.
- 2.2 There is a lay-by on the opposite side of the road to the school with room for approximately six cars. An entrance for the local doctor's surgery is located within the lay-by and consequently the lay-by is often occupied by vehicles belonging to people visiting the surgery.
- 2.3 There are good footways on both sides of Berkshire Road. There is guard railing positioned in front of both pedestrian entrances to reduce the risk of any pedestrians proceeding out of the school straight onto the road without stopping and looking. There are school keep clear markings positioned in front of the pedestrian accesses and a further school keep clear marking on the opposite side of the road to the main pedestrian entrance. There is no timing plate indicating the times that the school keep clear markings are in operation which means that the markings are not currently legally enforceable.
- 2.4 There are yellow backed school warning signs on Berkshire Road on the southbound and northbound approaches to the school. There are "SLOW" carriageway markings with a red contrasting background alongside the upright school warning signs.

- 2.5 A school crossing patrol operates on Upper College Ride just to the west of the junction with Berkshire Road. This is a busier and more difficult road to cross compared with Berkshire Road and is a pedestrian desire line for children and parents visiting the other nearby schools too.

#### **Perceived problems**

- 2.6 A petition was brought to Surrey Heath Local Committee in March 2014 that highlighted concerns over the safety of children attending Cordwalles Junior School:

"We, the parents, residents and concerned members of this community are urging the Council to assess the lack of road safety measures outside Cordwalles Junior School, Berkshire Road, Camberley. It is becoming increasingly dangerous for our children making their daily journeys to and from school. It is indeed an accident waiting to happen. Therefore we would like the council to implement improved road safety to provide our school children with the safer environment they deserve."

- 2.7 A site meeting was held with the Divisional Member County Councillor Bill Chapman and Borough Member Councillor Rodney Bates on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014. A subsequent site visit with police colleagues, road safety team, sustainability team and local highway engineers took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The concerns that were raised included the following:

- Inconsiderate parking on Berkshire Road outside the school
- A lack of crossing facilities on Berkshire Road outside the school

#### **Analysis of Road Collision Data**

- 2.8 A plot of personal injury collisions recorded by the police covering the period from 1 January 2011 to May 2014 is attached within Annex 1. This does not include collisions resulting in damage only as this is not systematically reported to, or recorded by the police. Information on personal injury collisions throughout Great Britain is available to view via [www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk) or <http://road-collisions.dft.gov.uk>
- 2.9 From the plot can be seen that there have been no personal injury road collisions reported to the police on Berkshire Road in the immediate vicinity of Cordwalles School in the last 3 years. Instead only one collision took place on Berkshire Road at the junction with Horseshoe Crescent. This collision involved a car emerging from Horseshoe Crescent colliding with another car on Berkshire Road and did not involve children and did not take place at school journey times.
- 2.10 Although there have not been any road casualties in the vicinity of Cordwalles School it is acknowledged that road safety fears as expressed by the petition presented by local residents is a genuine concern to local people and can deter more walking, cycling and scooting to school.

### Speed Survey Data

- 2.11 A one week speed survey was undertaken outside the school during October 2014, and the data is summarised in Table 1. It can be seen that the average speeds of about 24 mph are well within the existing speed limit of 30 mph.

**Table 1: Speed Survey Data Berkshire Road**

Location	Date	Direction	Mean Mph	85th percentile* mph
Berkshire Road	7 to 13 October 2014	Northbound	24.5	31.2
		Southbound	24.3	31.4

\* The 85th percentile speed is the speed above which the fastest 15 per cent of vehicles were travelling.

### Road User Behaviour Observations

- 2.12 A site visit involving county council highway engineers, road safety team, sustainability team and police colleagues took place on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The following observations were noted.
- There were a large number of children that walked to school unaccompanied.
  - There isn't a single clear desire line for pedestrians crossing Berkshire Road. Pedestrians crossed at either end and at a variety of different locations along the length of Berkshire Road outside the school. Therefore it is unlikely that one single crossing facility would be used by all the pedestrians visiting the school.
  - There were at least three vehicles that stopped on the advisory school keep clear markings to drop children off.
  - There is a bus stop opposite the school used by a small number of pupils. After being dropped off the bus driver remained stationary intentionally to allow school children to cross the road in front of the bus.
  - There were at least 30 people using the school crossing patrol on Upper College Ride. The school crossing patrol expressed concern over her location as there were often parked cars obscuring the visibility between her and on-coming vehicles. Some of these were parked legally on the north side and others were parked illegally on the south side of Upper College Road. Consequently it was decided there and then to move the location of the crossing patrol to be closer to the Berkshire Road junction so as to be further away from the legally parked cars on the north side of the road. There are a number of vehicles that are parking illegally on the south side of Upper College Ride. This will be reported to the Borough Council parking enforcement colleagues.

### **School Travel Plan and Road Safety Education**

- 2.13 The county council provide resources for schools to encourage pupils to choose sustainable transport choices wherever practical. The following are the road safety, travel planning and sustainability activities that Cordwalles Junior School currently undertake:
- Bikeability Training Level 1 & 2. This is an on and off road cycle training courses carried out in years 5 and 6 (9 and 10 year olds). There is a £11 charge for level 1, and £22 for level 2 courses, and a reduced rate for those eligible for free school meals. The vast majority of the children at the school take up this training.
  - School Travel Planning. The school first produced a travel plan in 2007 and this would have made the school eligible for a government grant to purchase equipment to encourage sustainable travel to and from school. The school travel plan will need to be reviewed and updated.
- 2.14 The following are other road safety, travel planning and sustainability activities that are made available by the county council but Cordwalles School have not previously undertaken:
- Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills course. This enables the school to be able to provide pedestrian awareness courses for years 3 and 4 (8 & 9 year olds). This would include practical training within the area immediately surrounding the school.
  - Park SMART. This is carried out by the county council's Sustainability Team and the Casualty Reduction Officer from Surrey Police. A number of children from the school are taken out prior to the afternoon peak to look at parental parking behaviour. They identify with the help of officers vehicles that are parking inconsiderately or obstructing residential properties and then an advisory leaflet is filled out by the children and left on the windscreen of the car or given directly to the driver.
  - Walking Bus. This is a measure used to encourage walking to school consisting of a coordinated line of children wearing high visibility tabards operated by parent volunteers.

<b>3. OPTIONS:</b>
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#### **Possible Highway Improvements**

- 3.1 The existing school keep clear markings are not currently legally enforceable due to the absence of any timing plate signs erected on the footway to indicate the times of operation. Although the flouting of the advisory markings did not appear to be a chronic problem, making the markings enforceable may act as an additional deterrent. Following the latest parking review for Surrey Heath, it is understood that timing plates are already scheduled to be installed in the spring of 2015.

## ITEM 7

- 3.2 Two raised tables could be provided, one at either end of Berkshire Road. One could be positioned in the vicinity of the existing school warning signing at the northern end, south of the junction with Wimbledon Road. The other could be positioned in the vicinity of the existing school warning signing at the southern end of the road to the north of the junction with Hampshire Road.
- 3.3 Positioned alongside the school warning signs the raised tables would create a gateway to emphasise the need for careful driving as well as slowing vehicles on both approaches to the school. Being on a bus route the road tables would have plateau at least 6m long. A different coloured surface could be provided on the top of the raised table to highlight the crossing point. It would be preferable to provide two raised tables on both approaches to the school rather than a single crossing facility due to the fact there was no single clear pedestrian desire line. The road tables would cost about £30,000 and would be subject to formal public consultation.
- 3.4 Alternatively it would be possible to proceed with providing timing plates so that the school keep clear markings are enforceable without the raised road tables. There haven't been any road casualties on Berkshire Road and the existing speeds are fairly low. It may be considered that there are other schemes in Surrey Heath area that have more casualties and a greater road safety problem that may be in greater need of investment by the local committee using the limited budget available to them.
- 3.5 A 20 mph scheme would provide benefits in helping to encourage even slower vehicle speeds and encourage more and safer walking, cycling and scooting. However a 20 mph scheme would only be worthwhile if implemented across a wider area of the Old Dean estate rather than only on a limited stretch of Berkshire Road. For a 20 mph scheme to be successful across a wider area of the Old Dean estate some roads may need traffic calming, whereas it is likely that the vast majority of roads would not require traffic calming as the average speeds are probably already at or below 24 mph. This option would require a more detailed feasibility study including speed surveys. The cost of any such scheme would depend on the extent of the scheme and number of roads requiring traffic calming, but would be likely to be substantially greater than the proposed road tables for Berkshire Road.

### **School Travel Plan and Road Safety Education**

- 3.6 It is recommended that the school undertake the following school travel plan and road safety education activities:
- Complete a School Travel Plan
  - Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills course
  - Park SMART
  - Walking Bus

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 A meeting was held with the Divisional Member Councillor Bill Chapman and Borough Councillor Rodney Bates to understand the perceived problems on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Site visits were subsequently undertaken with the Divisional Member Councillor Bill Chapman and Borough Councillor Rodney Bates, police colleagues, local highway engineers, road safety team and sustainable travel team. The Divisional Member has subsequently been presented with the proposed options.
- 4.2 The School Leadership have been presented with the options within this report and are welcoming of the fact that timing plates will be installed so that the school keep clear markings will be enforceable if necessary. They are also supportive of the suggestion for two raised road tables on Berkshire Road. The School Leadership have indicated that their ideal scenario would be for the entire Old Dean estate to become a 20mph zone but are understanding of the fact that this would be a costly undertaking.

#### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 The recommended school travel plan and road safety education activities could be delivered using existing staff resources. Estimated costs of the highway improvements are about £30,000.
- 5.2 There would be substantial financial savings to society through investment in highway improvements that successfully reduce road collisions. There would also be benefits to the local economy if the measures successfully encourage more walking, scooting and cycling and hence reduce road traffic congestion on local roads. Research has shown that people walking and cycling are more likely to visit local shops.
- 5.3 The proposals presented here would need to be prioritised alongside other potential schemes within Surrey Heath using the scheme assessment process to ensure value for money. This will take into account the likely effect of the proposals on congestion, accessibility, safety, economy and future maintenance liabilities.

#### **6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 This report has been created in accordance with the council's Road Safety Outside Schools Policy which has been subject to Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment. Highway improvements are subject to independent road safety audit which take into account the needs of all road users including those with mobility impairment.

#### **7. LOCALISM:**

- 7.1 The proposals presented within this report have been developed following consultation with the local Divisional Member, Borough Councillor and School Leadership. If implemented they would help to reduce local fears over road safety and may therefore encourage more walking, cycling and scooting to Cordwalles Junior School. This may help reduce car journeys, anti social parking and congestion which have a negative impact on the local community.

**8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	Set out below.
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report.
Public Health	Set out below.

8.1 Crime and Disorder implications

The proposals would contribute to reduced anti-social driving and parking.

8.2 Sustainability implications

The proposals would reduce road danger and encourage more sustainable modes of travel. This would result in fewer carbon emissions and less air pollution.

8.3 Public Health implications

The proposals would encourage active travel which improves the health of the participants.

**9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 9.1 Concern has been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Cordwalles Junior School. Investigation has been undertaken in accordance with the county council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy. This has included assessment of the history of road collisions, traffic speeds, site observations and assessment of the school travel plan and road safety education activities delivered by the school.
- 9.2 Consequently it is recommended that Cordwalles Junior School will be asked to undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities. This will include take up of Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills courses, Park SMART and the setting up of a walking bus. The school will be supported in these activities by the county council's Sustainable Travel Team.
- 9.3 Timing plate signs to ensure that the existing school keep clear markings are enforceable are already scheduled to be installed in the spring. An option to provide two raised road tables at either end of the scheme has been suggested. These would help to reduce traffic speeds, and would provide improved crossing facilities. This would improve the road environment to encourage more walking, scooting and cycling to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion. However there haven't been any road casualties on Berkshire Road and the existing speeds are fairly low. It may be considered that there are other schemes in the Surrey Heath area that have more casualties and a greater road safety problem that may be in greater need of investment of the limited budget available to the local committee.

[www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyheath](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/surreyheath)

## Recommendations

- 9.4 The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to agree that
- (i) Cordwalles Junior School will be asked to undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities. This will include take up of Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills courses, Park SMART and the setting up of a Walking Bus. The school will be supported in these activities by the county council's Sustainable Travel Team.
  - (ii) Timing plate signs will be installed to ensure that the existing school keep clear markings are enforceable if necessary.
  - (iii) The Local Committee will decide whether to include the suggestion for two raised road tables on Berkshire Road within their forward programme for highway improvements. The committee will then be able to decide whether to allocate funding to these in future years depending upon prioritisation against other schemes throughout Surrey Heath.

## 10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 The Sustainable Travel Team will work with the school to introduce the recommended additional school travel plan and road safety education activities.
- 10.2 Timing plate signage will be installed in the spring so that the existing school keep clear markings will be enforceable if necessary.
- 10.3 If the local committee agree with the proposals, then the Area Highways Team will incorporate these into the forward plan scheme assessment process to compare them with other schemes throughout Surrey Heath. This will take into account the likely effect of the proposals on congestion, accessibility, safety, economy and future maintenance liabilities.

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### Contact Officer:

Duncan Knox                      Road Safety Team Manager  
0208 541 7443

Rebecca Harrison                Sustainability Community Engagement Team Leader  
01483 517515

### Consulted:

Divisional Members, Surrey Police, School Leadership

### Annexes:

Annex A:                      Collision plot

### Sources/background papers:

Surrey County Council's policy Road Safety Outside Schools

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