

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL  
LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)**



**DATE:** 2 July 2015

**LEAD OFFICER:** Duncan Knox & Rebecca Harrison

**SUBJECT:** ROAD SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOLS REPORT  
PINE RIDGE INFANT SCHOOL

**DIVISION:** CAMBERLEY EAST

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Concern has been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Pine Ridge infant School. This report outlines the nature and extent of the road safety problem and possible highway and road safety education improvements to address the problems identified. These have been developed in accordance with the County Council's Road Safety Outside Schools policy.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to agree:**

- (i) Pine Ridge Infant School undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities including Park SMART, "Pedals" cycle/ scooter training, the Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness course, a Walking Bus and the "Golden Boot Challenge". The school has begun implementing these activities, supported by the County's Sustainable Travel Team.
- (ii) The Headteacher reopen the combined vehicle and pedestrian entrance on Esher Road at lunch times for use by parents of children attending the nursery, on a trial basis.
- (iii) Whether to include the suggestion for mandatory School Keep Clear markings on Mitcham Road within the annual Surrey Heath parking review.
- (iv) Whether to include the suggestion for improved dropped kerb crossing points described within this report within their forward programme of highway improvements. The committee will then be able to decide whether to allocate funding depending upon prioritisation against other schemes in Surrey Heath.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

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 reopening of the school entrance at lunchtimes will reduce the congestion and risk of collision with the very youngest nursery pupils on Mitcham Road. The recommendation to provide School Keep Clear markings on Mitcham Road would help to reduce antisocial parking in the vicinity of the school entrance and 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 vehicle congestion. The introduction of dropped kerbs would make it easier to cross the road, especially for people in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and parents with children in a pushchair. It may also discourage antisocial parking that would otherwise block the crossing point.

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

- 1.1 One of the most frequently expressed road safety concerns is 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 Pine Ridge Infant School in Surrey Heath. As a result of this a petition was brought to Surrey Heath Local Committee in October 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 problems identified. 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 Pine Ridge Infants School teaches children from ages 4 to 7 (years 1 to 2) and has a nursery school for children aged 3 to 4 years old. It is a one form entry school and is located within a 30 mph residential housing estate with little through traffic.
- 2.2 There are two entrances to the school. One is a pedestrian-only gate on the south side of the school site that opens on to a vehicle access road to a garage block behind local houses. There is a narrow footway along the vehicle access road which ends in a T-junction with Mitcham Road.
- 2.3 The other entrance to the school is located on the east side of the school site and provides both vehicle and pedestrian access to the school via the Cul-de-Sac Esher Road. There is a footway on Esher Road leading to a pedestrian entrance alongside the vehicle entrance gate. Esher Road ends in a T-junction with Mitcham Road. There is a pedestrian alleyway linking Esher Road with a Cul-de-Sac off Mitcham Road.
- 2.4 There are school children crossing warning signs on Mitcham Road on both approaches to the vehicle access road to the pedestrian only entrance.
- 2.5 Other than Surbiton Road and Kingston Road, there were no dropped kerbs for crossing any of the side roads in the vicinity of the school on Mitcham Road.

### **Perceived problems**

- 2.1 A petition was brought to Surrey Heath Local Committee in October raising concerns over the safety of children attending Pine Ridge Infant School:

"We, the parents, residents and concerned members of this community are urging the council to assess the lack of road safety measures outside Pine

Ridge Infant & Nursery School, Esher Road, Camberley. It is becoming increasingly dangerous for our children making their daily journeys to & from school. It is indeed an accident waiting to happen. 4yr old Finley Fitzpatrick was involved in an RTA on the 1st May 2014 while crossing Mitcham Road due to instruction from the school to only use the entrance from Mitcham Road & the lack of school warning signs. Therefore we would like the council to implement improved road safety to provide our children with the safer environment they deserve”.

- 2.6 Officers had been made aware of public concerns a number of months before the submission of the petition at the October Local Committee meeting and a meeting was held with the Divisional Member 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.
- 2.7 It is understood that the school changed its access arrangements last year whereby the pedestrian gate on Esher Road was closed and the pedestrian only gate on the south side of the school site is being used instead. It is thought that this was due to issues concerning safety within the school site. Consequently parents are now parking on Mitcham Road which in some cases is partially blocking the road (which is also a bus route) and some are also parking on and partially blocking footways. A new Headteacher started work at the school in January 2015, consequently a meeting took place with the Headteacher on 19 March 2015 to discuss these issues.

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

- 2.8 The county council's database of personal injury collisions recorded by the police has been checked. As highlighted by the petitioners there was a collision resulting in injury to a four year old school child on 1 May 2014 on Mitcham Road between the junction with Surbiton Road and the junction with the vehicle access road to the school pedestrian only entrance. It is understood that the driver of the vehicle did not stop and has not been traced. Other than this there has been only one other road casualty in the last 20 years on this stretch of road. This involved a pedestrian tripping over when crossing the road in 2004.
- 2.9 Although any one collision resulting in road casualties is one too many, the collision history around the school does not represent a very concentrated pattern of collisions compared to many other sites across Surrey. (Information on personal injury collisions throughout Great Britain is available to view via [www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk)). None-the-less the fear of road danger, irrespective of the number of collisions, is a concern to the school and local community and can deter more walking, cycling and scooting.

#### **Speed Survey Data**

- 2.10 One week speed surveys have been conducted on Mitcham Road using pneumatic tube equipment during October 2014. The equipment was attached to the “school children crossing” warning sign near the junction with Kingston Road. The following Table 2 summarises the data collected. It can be seen that the mean speeds of 20 mph and 85th percentile speeds of about 25 mph are well within the 30 mph speed limit.

**Table 2: Speed Survey Data**

Location	Date	Direction	Mean mph	85 th percentile* mph
Mitcham Road	October 2014	Northbound	20	25
		Southbound	20	24

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

### Road User Behaviour Observations

- 2.11 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:
- All the school children and parents were using the pedestrian only gate on the south side of the school which resulted in a concentration of pedestrians emerging onto Mitcham Road at the junction with the access road to the garage block at a similar time.
  - A number of cars belonging to parents were parked on Mitcham Road in the immediate vicinity of the junction with the access road to the garage block. Some cars were parked half on the pavement causing obstructions to pedestrians. The concentration of parked cars on this stretch resulted in pedestrians crossing in-between and being masked by the parked vehicles.
  - Vehicle speeds were very low, partly due to the parked cars reducing the width of the road to one way running.
  - The Esher Road entrance was not being used.

### School Travel Plan and Road Safety Education

- 2.1 The following are the road safety, travel planning and sustainability activities that are offered to infant schools in Surrey. Apart from "Pedals" these resources are offered free of charge and provided by the county council's sustainable school travel team. At the meeting with the new Headteacher in March 2015 it was established that previously the school had not taken up the road safety education resources offered by the county council.
- Pedals. This is a 2 hour off road cycle/ scooter training session for year 2 (6 and 7 year olds). There is a small £2 fee to take part.
  - School Travel Planning. This is a plan that enables to school to look at how their pupils are coming to and from school and to encourage sustainable travel. It is one tool that can be used to tackle the problem of congestion outside of schools, and is a requirement when a school is expanding as part of the planning application. These plans are supported by the sustainable school travel team and monitored by a travel plan officer.
  - Park SMART. This is carried out by the county council's sustainable school travel 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

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

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 supervised by parent volunteers.
- Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills Course. This enables the school to be able to provide pedestrian awareness courses for year 2 (6 & 7 year olds). This would include practical training within the area immediately surrounding the school.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 The following measures would help to reduce antisocial parking in the immediate vicinity of the school. This would improve the 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.

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Install mandatory School Keep Clear markings on both sides of Mitcham Road in the vicinity of the pedestrian entrance. This would include a timing plate to show the times of operation at the back of the footway and advertised traffic order so that the markings could be enforced if necessary.	The Keep Clear markings would help to deter parking in the vicinity of the school pedestrian entrance on Mitcham Road. This would reduce the obstructions currently being experienced by pedestrians (especially those with pushchairs or mobility scooters), and would reduce the risk of pedestrians being masked by parked vehicles when crossing the road.
Estimated Cost: This would be included in the Surrey Heath annual parking review	
Install dropped kerbs and tactile paving across the mouths of three nearby side roads: Surbiton Road, and two side roads to the north of the main Mitcham Road parallel to the alleyway access to the school pedestrian entrance.	The introduction of dropped kerbs would make it easier to cross the road, especially for people in wheelchairs, mobility scooters and parents with children in a pushchair. It may also discourage antisocial parking that would otherwise block the crossing point.
Estimated Cost:£3,000	

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

- 3.1 In addition to the above highway measures it is recommended that the school undertake the following school travel plan and road safety education activities:

Proposal	Rationale
Pine Ridge Infant School will be invited to take up Park SMART, "Pedals" cycle/ scooter training, the Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness course, set up a Walking Bus and take part in the "Golden Boot challenge".	These activities will help address anti-social parking, provide children with pedestrian road safety skills, and will promote walking, cycling and scooting to school. These will be provided by the county council's sustainable travel team within existing resources.

3.2 At the meeting with the Headteacher in March 2015 it was established that the combined vehicle and pedestrian entrance on Esher Road had been closed last year because:

- There were concerns over the safety and behaviour of children and parents within the school grounds when mixing with traffic.
- Damage to staff vehicles parked within the school grounds.

3.3 Following the discussion it was agreed that the combined vehicle and pedestrian entrance on Esher Road would be reopened at lunch times to allow access by parents of children attending the nursery on a trial basis. The school have already begun to implement the school travel plan and road safety education measures described above.

#### **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 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014. Site visits were subsequently undertaken on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014 with police colleagues, local highway engineers, road safety team and sustainable travel team. A meeting was held with the new school Headteacher on 19 March 2015. The Divisional Member and School Headteacher have subsequently been presented with the proposed options.

#### **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 detailed in section 3 above.

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.

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 and School Leadership. If implemented they would improve road safety and encourage more walking, cycling and scooting to school and would 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 help to reduce anti-social parking and possible confrontations between parents and residents.

### 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 Pine Ridge Infants School and the associated congestion caused by school journey traffic. 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 Pine Ridge Infants School will be asked to undertake additional school travel plan and road safety education activities. This will include take up of Park SMART, “Pedals” cycle/ scooter training, the Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness course, set up a Walking Bus and take part in the “Golden Boot challenge”. The school will be supported in these activities by the county council’s Sustainable Travel Team.
- 9.3 It is also recommended that the School Keep Clear marking proposals are included within the annual Surrey Heath Parking review and the proposals for dropped kerb crossing improvements be added to the list of possible schemes that could be funded by the local committee. The committee will then be able to decide whether to allocate funding to implement the proposal compared with other schemes in Surrey Heath.
- 9.4 These highway measures would help to reduce antisocial parking and so 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. The recommended school travel plan and road safety education improvements would also help to improve road safety and reduce reliance on the car for the school journey.

#### **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 If the local committee decide to proceed, then the Area Highways Team will incorporate the highways measures described within this report within the Local Committee forward programme of highway improvements.

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#### **Contact Officers:**

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#### **Consulted:**

Divisional Members, Surrey Police, School Headteacher

#### **Sources/background papers:**

Surrey County Council’s policy Road Safety Outside Schools

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