

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**LOCAL COMMITTEE (SPELTHORNE)****DATE:** 7 December 2015**LEAD OFFICER:** Rebecca Harrison, Sustainable School Travel Manager**SUBJECT:** ROAD SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOLS REPORT
ASHFORD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**DIVISION:** Staines South and Ashford West

<p><u>SUMMARY OF ISSUE:</u></p> <p>Concern has been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Ashford Park Primary School and the associated congestion caused by school journey traffic. 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.</p>
<p><u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></p> <p>The Local Committee (Spelthorne) is asked to agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To add the parking proposals presented within this report to the list for the next annual review of parking and waiting restrictions; (ii) To ask Spelthorne Borough Council to amend the entrance to the car park adjacent to the school, and also to mark formal parking spaces in the car park, as described within this report.
<p><u>REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:</u></p> <p>These suggested parking measures and changes to the car park would help to reduce anti social parking and so would reduce risk of collisions and improve the road environment to encourage more walking and scooting to school. A successful increase in these modes would contribute to fewer car journeys and less motor vehicle congestion. The 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.</p>
<p><u>1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:</u></p>

- 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.

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- 1.2 Concerns have been expressed over the safety of children arriving and leaving Ashford Park Primary School following concerns raised by the borough councillor and residents. There have also been ongoing concerns over the behaviour of parents parking inappropriately on Station Crescent and Windsor Drive and the congestion caused by school journeys.
- 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. This report also highlights the existing plans being implemented as a result of planning conditions associated with the expansion of the school.

2. ANALYSIS:

Site Description and Existing Infrastructure

- 2.1 Ashford Park Primary School teaches children from ages 4 to 11 (Reception to year 6). This is a very large primary school which has begun expansion to double in size. They currently have 447 pupils on roll. It is worth noting that there are several other schools close by, including Ashford C of E Primary School, Echelford Primary School and Clarendon Primary School, all within a short distance of each other. Ashford Park is a three form entry primary school situated at the west end of Ashford, close to Ashford Hospital, Heathrow Airport and the M25 motorway. The school is situated at the end of a cul-de-sac on a residential estate; there is a turning circle immediately outside the school entrance with an access point to a park owned by Spelthorne Borough Council. There is a car park for people visiting the park which can be also used by parents dropping off and picking up from the school. Station Crescent is a residential road with footway on either side; most houses do not have adequate parking, resulting in many vehicles being parked on the road and footway. This causes the road to be significantly narrowed, reducing it to single carriage way width which leads to congestion during peak times.
- 2.2 There are school keep clear markings immediately outside the school on the turning point, which have a timing plate indicating a traffic regulation order therefore making them enforceable. There are no other parking restrictions on Station Crescent or Windsor Drive.
- 2.3 Station Crescent has street lighting and is a 30mph road with traffic calming to the east end of Station Crescent.
- 2.4 There is also guard railing protecting the exit of a footway that runs along the outside of the park onto Station Crescent.

Perceived problems

- 2.5 A meeting was held with the Borough Member Councillor Joanne Sexton, Police colleagues and Engineers on 2 July 2015. The concerns that were raised included the following:
 - Inconsiderate parking on Station Crescent and Windsor Drive, where vehicles were blocking residents' driveways, obstructing footways used

by parents and children and parking on the junction of Station Crescent and Windsor drive.

- A lack of crossing location outside the school entrance across Station Crescent.
- Conflict between vehicle and pedestrian in the turning circle and access point to the borough council car parking in the local park.
- Apparent congestion caused at the beginning and end of the school day.

Analysis of Road Collision Data

- 2.6 The county council's database of personal injury collisions recorded by the police has been checked. This shows that in the last five years there has been just one slight injury to a 12 year old cyclist on the nearby roads of Station Crescent, Windsor Drive and Queens Walk. The collision took place at the junction of Windsor Drive and Queens Walk on 2 June 2014. This does not include collisions resulting in damage only, as this is not systematically reported to, or recorded by, the police. Following site visits, it is not considered that speeding is a problem on these local residential roads.
- 2.7 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).

Post Code and Sustainable Travel Data

- 2.8 A survey conducted as part of the School Travel Plan review in 2015 shows that currently over half the school population travels to the school by foot with the majority of the other pupils travelling by car. 60% of pupils live within 1 kilometre of the school, 5% live within 2-5 kilometres and the remainder live over 5 kilometres from the school.

Road User Behaviour Observations

- 2.9 A site visit involving county council highway engineers, road safety team, sustainability team, the local councillor Joanne Sexton and police colleagues was undertaken on the morning of 2 July 2015. The following observations were noted:
- Parents were seen to not be observing the school keep clear zigzag markings immediately outside the school entrance and this area was used as a drop off and pick up facility. Strictly speaking any stopping setting down or picking up is illegal on these markings. However, it was considered that this was not unsafe and provided a useful facility for parents to use to drop off older children who do not need supervision to then walk into the school. The current situation did cause some tailbacks and congestion at the access point to the borough council car-parking adjacent to the park and on Station Crescent.
 - There were a number of parents who turned right within the turning circle to access the borough council car park. However, the entrance to the

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park is only single vehicle width and there were many occasions when there was conflict between vehicles trying to enter and exit.

- Numerous vehicles were seen parked half on the footway on Station Crescent, making it impassable for pedestrians with buggies or mobility scooters.
- Due to the number of vehicles parked on both sides of Station Crescent, the width was restricted to one way flow only resulting in conflict and congestion.
- Vehicles were parked opposite and on the junction of Windsor Drive with Station Crescent, reducing visibility for road users.

3. OPTIONS:

3.1 As part of the school expansion proposal there have been a number of highway measures agreed as part of their planning conditions. These include the following:

- New pedestrian access into the school from Queens Walk
- Additional scooter parking
- Additional cycle parking adjacent to the new Queens Walk access
- Refreshing/replacing give way markings at junctions in the vicinity of the school
- School warning signs to be placed/replaced in Station Crescent and Queens Walk
- No through road signs to be placed at the junction of Queens Walk and Windsor Drive
- Parking restrictions to be placed at the majority of junctions in the vicinity of the school
- Dropped kerbs and tactile paving at the junctions of Station Crescent with Avondale, Portland, Dorset, Salcombe and Thetford Roads and Connaught Avenue
- Dropped kerbs and tactile paving on Hengrove Crescent
- Dropped kerbs and tactile paving plus bollards to prevent illegal parking at the junctions of Sandringham Drive and Windsor Drive, Windsor Drive and Station Crescent
- Park and stride/walking bus schemes between the school and Queens Walk, Hengrove Crescent and Woodthorpe Road
- Informal parents' one-way drop off system whereby parents approach from Queens Road and children are dropped off at the new Queens Walk

entrance and then parents exit via Windsor Drive and Sandringham drive to avoid the main school entrance

- School Travel Plan has been submitted as a framework document and will be upgraded to a full travel plan once children are in situ
- The highway works have been agreed in principle and are all subject to detailed design; the submitted travel plan was an Atkins Framework and is to be updated prior to occupation of the scheme to include details of park and stride schemes, walking bus schemes and informal one-way drop off system which has been completed by the county council Sustainable School Travel Team

3.2 The following are the highway measures that could be implemented in addition to those described above to further mitigate the impact of the school expansion.

Proposal	Rationale
i) Remove the school keep clear zig-zag markings in the vicinity of the school main gate on Station Crescent, and replace with double yellow lines.	This would allow this area to be used as a 'kiss and drop' facility (allowing parents to stop temporarily to drop children off). This would formalise what is already happening and could help reduce congestion and relieve parking elsewhere. Longer term stopping and waiting would still be illegal and subject to enforcement.
Estimated Cost: It is suggested that this would be undertaken as part of the annual parking review for Spelthorne.	
ii) Consult with borough council colleagues to enhance the drop off zone immediately outside the school by widening the road into the adjacent borough council park and car park entrance. Also increase the width of the car park entrance to allow more than one vehicle to pass at a time.	This would improve the traffic flow through the proposed 'kiss and drop' facility and to and from the adjacent borough council car park. This proposal is not within the gift of the county council and would require the agreement of the borough council.
Estimated Cost: The cost and feasibility would need to be agreed with the borough council who own the park and adjacent car park.	
iii) Consult with borough council colleagues to provide white line carriageway markings to delineate the parking bays within the borough council car park.	This would help optimise the capacity of the car park for use by parents during drop off and pick up times.
Estimated Cost: The cost and feasibility would need to be agreed with the borough council.	
iv) Replacement of the pedestrian guard railing on either side of Station Crescent (the existing panels are wobbly).	This would ensure longer term protection for pedestrians exiting the paths onto Station Crescent near the school entrance.
Estimated Cost: £500	

Proposal	Rationale
v) Provide double yellow line parking controls on the north side of Station Crescent between the school and the junction with Windsor Drive.	This would reduce the blocking of resident's driveway accesses on this stretch. It would deter parking on both sides of the road on this stretch too, which would help reduce congestion for vehicles accessing the 'kiss and drop' outside the school and the borough council car park. It would also reduce blocking of the footway for pedestrians, scooters and mobility scooters by vehicles and would improve the visibility between vehicles on Station Crescent and pedestrians crossing outside the school.
Estimated Cost: It is suggested that this would be undertaken as part of the annual parking review for Spelthorne.	

School Travel Plan and Road Safety Education

3.3 The following are the road safety, travel planning and sustainability activities that Ashford Park School undertake at the time of the initial assessment:

- Following the initial road safety assessment the county council Sustainable Travel Team has already worked with the school in providing Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills Courses. This enables the school to be able to provide pedestrian awareness courses for years 1, 3 and 4 (6, 8 & 9 year olds) including practical training within the area immediately surrounding the school; this has been well received.
- The school leadership has also committed to working with the county council Sustainable Travel Team on setting up Park & Stride initiatives. This enables parents to park at the nearby prison or tennis club off Woodthorpe Road while they walk their children to school using the alternative field gate, helping to reduce the number of vehicles using Station Crescent, Windsor Drive and Queens Walk and the subsequent congestion.
- A Park SMART initiative will be considered in the future, especially in support of any changes to parking restrictions. 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 officers, vehicles that are parking illegally, inconsiderately or obstructing residential properties and then an advisory leaflet is filled out by the children and left on the windscreen or given directly to the driver.
- Year 5 and 6 - Bikeability Level 1 and 2. Bikeability is cycling proficiency for the 21st century, designed to give the next generation the skills and confidence to ride their bikes on today's roads.
- Year 2 – 'Pedals' - Basic Road safety training on Scooters and bikes with a road safety and sharing space theme.

- The school has registered for Surrey's 2015 annual green travel event, the Golden Boot Challenge, having taken part in previous years. Each summer around 250 schools take part in the Golden Boot Challenge. It promotes healthy and sustainable travel and is run in a way that makes it possible for everyone to take part. Each class gets a point for each pupil who walked, scooted, cycled, or travelled by public transport to school. We don't forget pupils who have no alternative to the car and each pupil who used car share or park 'n' stride also scores a point. Classes compete against each other to win the coveted Golden Boot Trophy.
- 3.4 Consequently it is clear that the school are already undertaking and committed to a range of road safety education and training activities, and the county council's Sustainable School Travel Team will continue to work with the school to maintain this. The school's travel plan will also be monitored on an annual basis.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 Site visits were undertaken on 2 July with the borough council Member Councillor Joanne Sexton, police colleagues, local highway engineers, Road Safety Team and School Sustainable Travel Team.
- 4.2 The Borough Member and School Leadership have been consulted on the proposed options.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 The highway proposals presented here would need to be prioritised alongside other schemes within Spelthorne 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. The recommended school travel plan and road safety education activities could be delivered using existing staff resources.
- 5.2 There would be benefits to the local economy if the measures successfully encourage more walking and scooting and hence reduce road traffic congestion and risk of collisions on local roads.

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 Borough Member and have been discussed with the School Leadership team. If implemented they would improve road safety and encourage more walking, 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 contribute to reduced numbers of anti social driving offences. They would also help to reduce anti social parking and potential confrontations between parents and residents.

8.2 Sustainability implications

The proposals would reduce fear of 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 Ashford Park Primary 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 Ashford Park Primary School has already been provided with Teaching Assistant Pedestrian Awareness Skills courses. The school has updated its school travel plan and will be supported by the county council's Sustainable Travel Team in the setting up of other sustainable travel initiatives like a Walking Bus and Park SMART.
- 9.3 It is also recommended that the highway measures described within this report are added to the list of possible future highway improvements for Spelthorne. The Local Committee will then decide whether to allocate funding from their future annual budget for highway improvements. This will depend upon the extent of the problem and the estimated costs compared with other schemes, and the funds made available to the Local Committee.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 The Sustainable Travel Team will work with the school to introduce the recommended additional sustainable travel and road safety education activities agreed as part of the school expansion planning conditions.
- 10.2 If the Local Committee agrees with the proposals, then the county council Area Highways Team and Parking Team will incorporate these into the countywide scheme assessment process to compare them with other schemes throughout Spelthorne. This will take into account the likely effect of the proposals on congestion, accessibility, safety, economy and future maintenance liabilities.

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