

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



LOCAL COMMITTEE (ELMBRIDGE)

DATE: **16 November 2020**
 SUBJECT: **Pedestrian Crossing Outside St Lawrence School petition**
 DIVISION: **East Molesey and Esher**

PETITION DETAILS:

A petition with 979 signatures has been received relating to St Lawrence School, East Molesey. The lead petitioner is Jim Davison. The petition reads as follows:

Pedestrian Crossing Outside St Lawrence School Molesey

This 4 way junction between Vine Road and Church Road / Kent Road outside St Lawrence School in Molesey is an accident waiting to happen during school drop off and pick up times. Traffic habitually speed here and do not adhere to the stop lines on Vine Road entrances to the junction. Cars drive in a hurry and speed here as drivers drop off children and speed off to get to work on time.

Pedestrian children and parents naturally approach the school via this junction and need to cross the road in this area. There is no pedestrian crossing anywhere near the school or this junction. Without a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity they cross at or near the junction. As a parent taking my child to school I have lost count of the near misses I have seen. My own child was nearly hit here by a speeding car whilst crossing the road to get to school. It was that close!

Traffic calming measures are desperately required and a pedestrian crossing for the school is necessary to avoid a child becoming a traffic victim. As it stands the junction between Vine Road and Church Road / Kent Road is an accident waiting to happen. The current Elmbridge policy is reactive instead of proactive. So basically a child will have to be killed here before the council do anything. Please sign my petition for traffic calming measures outside St Lawrence School and a Pedestrian Crossing near this hazardous 4 way junction.

Please sign to save a life near the school. It is not a question of if, it's a question of when an accident happens, unless something changes. It could be someone from your family who suffers an accident at this location.

RESPONSE:

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 high level of vehicle, pedestrian, 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.

Consequently, the county council has a Road Safety Outside Schools policy which can be viewed via this link:

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-safety/outside-schools>

www.surreycc.gov.uk/epsomandewell

The purpose of the Road Safety Outside Schools policy is to set out the process that will be used by Surrey County Council for investigating and responding to concerns about road safety outside schools. The aim is to reduce the risk of collisions, and to make the road feel safer in order to improve the attractiveness of walking and cycling to and from schools. The county council would like to encourage safe walking and cycling to school, as this is better for the health of children, and reduces congestion and pollution. The perceived danger to children on busy roads on the school journey, especially in the vicinity of a school, can prove to be a barrier to more walking and cycling. This then results in more car journeys and more congestion.

It is not the case that there has to be accidents before “something is done”. For example, a Road Safety Outside Schools assessment on the roads in the vicinity of Hinchley Wood School resulted in a £250,000 CIL funded scheme to create improved pedestrian crossing and cycling facilities.

The roads in the vicinity of St Lawrence School have previously been investigated following the process within the Road Safety Outside Schools policy in response to a previous petition, and the results were reported to the Elmbridge Local Committee on 3 October 2016, which can be seen via this link:

<https://mycouncil.surreycc.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=156&MId=5168&Ver=4>
(item 39).

Within the 2016 report officers advised that due to the congestion, speeds were already very low at school drop off and pick up times, so it was not recommended that traffic calming would be very worthwhile. It was also advised that there was not one clear desire line for pedestrians crossing Church Road. Therefore, the provision of a zebra crossing would not be likely to cater for all the pedestrian movements at the site for those approaching from different directions. It was noted that with the slow vehicle speeds the difficulty in crossing the road was not that great compared to most other school sites in Surrey. It was noted that the cars parked immediately outside the pedestrian entrance caused an obstruction and impeded visibility. Therefore, the Local Committee resolved that

- St Lawrence C of E Junior School already undertakes a range of road safety education and training activities. The school will be supported by the county council’s Sustainable School Travel Team to maintain these and to update their School Travel Plan.
- It is proposed that the “School Keep Clear” markings will be amended to deter parking across the pedestrian entrance to the school. This will be implemented following consultation with local residents.

The recommended amendments to the “School Keep Clear” markings were subsequently implemented in 2018.

Since the last assessment in 2016, the school has been redeveloped. There is also greater encouragement from central government for local authorities to support more walking and cycling through the creation of “Active Neighbourhoods” using point closures and modal filters (whereby vehicles cannot pass but pedestrians and cyclists can), and school streets (whereby roads are closed to motor traffic during school journey times). With the latter, the government have not yet given local authorities outside London the power to enforce school street closures, but have promised to do so.

Therefore, officers propose that another site assessment will be undertaken to consider the latest situation outside the school, and that as part of this consideration will be given to the feasibility of point closures and school street measures. The site visit will be scheduled in the coming months (subject to COVID-19 restrictions). An assessment will also be made of the status of the school's travel plan. The aim will be to assist the school to ensure that their travel plan is up to date and ideally registered on the national online school travel plan portal [Modeshift STARS](#). The results of the Road Safety Outside Schools assessment (including any recommendations for highway measures) will be reported to a future meeting of the local committee.

RECOMMENDATION

The Local Committee is asked to note that:

- (i) Officers will undertake an assessment of the road safety concerns on the roads in the vicinity of the school with reference to the county council's Road Safety Outside School's policy and will report the findings (including any recommendations for highway measures) to a future meeting of the local committee.
- (ii) This process also includes an assessment of the status of the school's travel plan. If required assistance will be provided to the school to ensure their travel plan is up to date and ideally registered on the national online school travel plan portal Modeshift STARS.

Contact Officer:

Duncan Knox, Road Safety & Active Travel Team Manager

This page is intentionally left blank