

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee – 4 December 2019

Subject: Improving journeys to and from school including an update on Red and Amber School Crossings

Report of: The Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods)

Summary

This report provides an overview of the work being carried out to improve journeys to and from school. This includes opportunities for children and schools to encourage reduced use of the car for school journeys and to encourage alternative modes of active travel, activities to reduce idling and an update on the provision of school buses, including for those children with education, health and care plans.

The red and amber school crossings programme is well underway with 46 of the 81 sites being complete and the remainder due for completion by the spring/summer 2020.

Recommendations

The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

Wards Affected: All

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Background documents (available for public inspection): None

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview of the ongoing work to improve journeys to and from school, including a further update on the progress of the red and amber school crossings programme following the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee held on 4 September 2019. The purpose of this report is to: -

- Outline activities to promote active travel to school as an alternative to cars, including walking plans;
- Provide information on the activities to address vehicle idling outside and near schools;
- Update provision of school buses / transport, including transport for children with special educational needs; and
- To receive an update on four specific issues in relation to red and amber crossings previously reported as follows: -

1. The school crossing is in the correct ward.
2. At what stage is each school crossing within the delivery process.
3. Communication with schools is taking place.
4. The time frame is correct for each school crossing.

2.0 Background

2.1 The safety of journeys for children and young people to and from school is a key consideration for the Council. This is not only in the form of road safety initiatives and suitable crossings but also in support of the clean air and climate change agendas, particularly in relation to clean air around schools and action to prevent vehicle idling.

2.2 This report provides an overview of the wide range of activity that is taking place to create improved journeys to and from school.

3.0 Activities to promote active travel and address idling near or outside schools

3.1 Over the past 12 months, a number of activities have taken place to encourage improved road safety, car users not to leave their engines idle outside schools and to promote active travel, as an alternative to driving to schools. The aim of these initiatives are not only to support a shift in the use of mode of transport but also to promote cleaner air around schools and support the city's response to the climate change agenda. Some of these activities have been aligned to national campaigns such as Road Safety Week and Clean Air Week and are driven forward by Highways and the Neighbourhood Teams in partnership with other teams from MCC and GMP. This activity has supported the delivery of ward priorities. Described below are a number of examples of activity that has taken place.

Road Safety Week

- 3.2 Each November schools are supported with Road Safety Week, which sees a variety of events to promote road safety. This work is carried out in conjunction with partners such as GMP, Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue, NHS and the walking charity Living Streets. During this year's campaign week existing Junior PCSO schemes have been supported, and new schemes have been launched. These schemes are popular and enable school children, teachers and parents to better understand the multiple issues surrounding road safety. Work continues to set up and support these schemes throughout the year in schools across the city. Pupils are provided with resources and, often with GMP, will hold regular road safety sessions, such as monitoring car speeds, handing out penalty notices to parents who have parked inconsiderately or leave their engines idling, and promoting walking to school.
- 3.3 Alongside the Junior PCSO activity, cycle training provider Bikeright! have also arranged roadshows to encourage parents and the wider community to try cycling, especially if it has been a while since they last cycled. Following the week of intense activity, officers continue to work with schools to further embed the messages highlighted during the week of action.

Red Routes

- 3.4 Red lines were established during October half term week outside Cheetwood Primary School and took effect from 4 November. They have been established to further improve road safety along Waterloo Road between Derby Street and Hoveden Street which means that all vehicles (except buses) will not be allowed to stop where there are red lines. They will be trialled for three months from this date. The Project Manager met with Barbara Oxton, the Headteacher, prior to this whereupon she confirmed to be very happy with the trial. A note was added the Cheetwood Newsletter issued to all parents on Friday 25 October.

Living Streets / TfGM

- 3.5 The Council is working with Living Streets who are working in partnership with TfGM to manage and pilot a new School Travel Tracker. This is an interactive monitoring tool which allows primary school pupils to record how they travel to school each day. The new School Travel Tracker offers opportunities to monitor school travel, providing a means of capturing school travel behaviours and evidencing modal shift as a result of other active travel initiatives. The project is in its infancy, with four schools selected to take part in this initiative. These are: -

Broad Oak Primary School (Didsbury East)
Crumpsall Lane Primary School (Crumpsall)
Ringway Primary School (Woodhouse Park)
St Margaret Mary's RC Primary School (Charlestown)

University of Manchester

- 3.6 A small group of third year students have been recruited to manage and implement a two semester project focussing on air quality around schools in priority areas. This project has the ultimate aim of improving the quality of the air our communities breathe, and will involve promoting sustainable modes of transport in primary schools, including measures to discourage vehicle idling outside schools and changing behaviours to improve local air quality for school children. Early meetings have taken place with the university and the initiative will be progressed over the coming weeks.

Clean Air Week

- 3.7 During Clean Air week (July), a number of schools were supported in encouraging pupils to walk to school, and all schools were able to download packs which contain ideas for running events during the week. In some schools pupils again handed out pretend penalty notices to parents, containing short messages and pictures to make them think about the effects of parking in the vicinity of the school and idling engines.
- 3.8 Alongside targeted action weeks, schools are supported with one-off action days, typically working with GMP and Parking Enforcement. Pupils will sometimes have the opportunity to use speed monitors and learn how the parking enforcement CCTV car functions. This is supplemented by class room activities such as informal teaching sessions, work books etc. Classroom based resources are available for schools to borrow, this includes road safety kits, and a recently developed handbook for schools and pupils to support their road safety work, and encourage schools to lead on the day to day activity.
- 3.9 A variety of the initiatives outlined above are taking place across the city - some examples are outlined below.

North Manchester

- 3.10 In a number of wards in North Manchester (Charlestown, Harpurhey, Moston, Crumpsall, Cheetham) the Neighbourhood Teams have carried out parking action in partnership with GMP and Parking Services at one school in the ward, the schools chosen were close to main roads where air quality might be poor. The schools supported the initiative through school poster campaigns that highlighted the problems associated with idling and promoted walking to school. Leaflets were distributed to parents on the day of action.
- 3.11 TfGM also continually promotes sustainable travel across schools. Their aim is to bring about long term behaviour change to make sustainable journeys a safe, attractive and convenient choice and to support the delivery of the vision for 2040 of 50:50 of all trips made by sustainable modes across Greater Manchester to help reduce congestion, air pollution and increase physical activity. An intensive programme of activity has taken place across GM over the past year. This programme has included working with Cheetham C of E Community Academy. Activities included a bespoke inter-form steps

challenge for years 4 - 6 which were developed by pupil travel champions and a learn to ride initiative for parents. A Hands Up survey was also conducted in the school to understand current and preferred modes of travel by pupils. Between October 2018 and June 2019 there has been an increase in both usual and preferred travel to sustainable modes of transport rather than use of car. Going forward TfGM are looking to build on this and work intensively with other schools across the conurbation and introduce further initiatives such as modeshift stars, a national accreditation system to incentivise more sustainable travel using gold, silver and bronze system to recognise and reward this.

Central Manchester

- 3.12 Junior PCSO schemes are in place at St Wilfrids Primary and Webster Primary in Hulme. The schools have been extremely proactive in their approach. Pupils and staff regularly go out on 'patrol', reminding parents of road safety and air quality issues. These are often accompanied by GMP PCSO's. All involved speak highly of the scheme, and that it's been running for a year demonstrates their commitment to it. Officers in the central neighbourhood team are also supporting the creation of a curriculum module with schools around creating air quality officers. Here the children learn about air quality issues, climate change, environmental issues and identify their own work to improve these in the school.
- 3.13 During Road Safety Week 2019, a scheme was launched at Rushbrook Primary (Longsight), who will follow a similar model of the school running the day to day road safety activity. These will be supported by less frequent, larger action days with MCC and partners. These schemes are all supported through resources obtained by social value, such as work booklets, road safety kits, high-viz wear etc.

South

- 3.14 Work is ongoing with TfGM (Living Streets) and schools across the area (including Manley Park, Rackhouse, St Bernard's, Beaver Rd, St Cuthbert's, St Margaret's, Broad Oak) delivering the year-round WOW "walk to school challenge" using a Travel Tracker to monitor daily journeys. This will help to look at behaviours for walking, as well as opportunities to support more pupils / parents to walk and reduce vehicle journeys (modal shift), deal with congestion and foster more clean air. Learning and good practice will be shared across the whole area.
- 3.15 Further work relates to the link with Road Safety Week and the new Road Safety Guide for schools (e.g. Rackhouse Primary in Northenden). This involved a partnership approach between the South Neighbourhood Team, Greater Manchester Police, Highways and schools. Different classes used the "Street Feet" resource to role play different road safety scenarios, and undertook traffic surveys to highlight dangerous behaviour. Rackhouse is also keen to explore the Junior PCSO programme that is being delivered in Central Manchester. Button Lane Primary School (Brooklands) piloted a School

Walking Bus on Clean Air Day, and has now mainstreamed the approach into school life with dedicated staff resources to encourage more pupils to walk and help reduce the number of vehicles coming to the site. Work has also been planned with St John's Primary (Chorlton) around no idling, road closures, walking routes and road safety awareness. Signs are being installed on school fences and lampposts to advise against idling, complemented by workshops with parents through the school's Parent & Teacher Association (PTA), Manchester Active, Public Health and Highways.

4.0 Idling

4.1 It is recognising that vehicle idling around schools remains an issue. Government guidance around enforcing against drivers who leave their engines idling is focussed on educating people. As a matter of course, the type of information shared with drivers is: -

- Leaving your engine ticking over when your car is stationary makes air pollution worse- by not ticking over we can reduce air pollution during peak travel hours by as much as 30%.
- Switching your engine off when you're at a standstill for a while can make a real difference.
- Engines will stay warm for 30-60 minutes after switching off so you needn't worry about the cold, and stopping and starting doesn't affect the lifespan of modern engines. In fact, leaving the engine running when you're parked up can actually increase wear and tear.
- Improvements in technology also mean modern batteries need less engine running time.
- Drivers and their passengers are exposed to fumes as well as people outside the vehicle.
- By not ticking over we can reduce air pollution during peak travel hours by as much as 30%.
- If you need to keep warm, your heater fan will still blow warm air for some time after you turn off your engine.

4.2 In addition to the education work outlined above, compliance and neighbourhood teams are asking people who are idling their engines outside schools to switch off their engines with which most people will comply. Enforcement on this issue is complex and a working group of officers is looking at the best way to achieve compliance. However, enforcement activity is undertaken outside of schools in relation to cars parking on yellow lines. Over the past year all wards (bar the city centre) have seen activity undertaken. In 2018/19 2221 Penalty Notices were issued across 167 school sites for breach of parking regulations.

5.0 Provision of School Buses/ Transport, including children with Education, Health and Care Plans

School Buses

- 5.1 TfGM contribute to the provision of School Transport across Greater Manchester. Total expenditure in 2018/19 across GM was circa £8m (net) and is funded by the levy payment from local authorities. While the statutory responsibility to provide school transport for journeys over a certain length rests with the Local Education Authorities, there is an agreement that TfGM discharge this responsibility on the LEAs' behalf. Across GM, there are 81 Yellow School Buses (YSBs) and 225 school contracts, approximately 14.5k pupils are transported daily, which is about 10% of the school population. Within Manchester itself there are 11 YSBs and 24 school contracts, costing £1.1m.
- 5.2 Contracts are reviewed every year, with officers liaising closely with schools to try and ensure the demand for services best meets the supply. There remains a pressure on this budget with an increased expectation, particularly from schools and parents. One such example of a service review was the 726 to East Manchester Academy. In order to maximise usage, the service was re-routed to serve Moston with the expectation that users in the Miles Platting area would be able to either walk to the school (thereby promoting sustainable transport) or use the commercial 53 service bus. However, following concerns raised by parents and local Councillors the decision was made to revert back to the original route.

Free Travel passes

- 5.3 A parent or guardian has the legal responsibility for ensuring their child's attendance at school. A local authority is only under a statutory duty to provide transport assistance if the nearest qualifying school is not within statutory walking distance of the child's home by the nearest available route as set out in the Education Act 1996 (as amended) or to certain children whose families are on a low income (Schedule 35B to the 1996 Education Act), otherwise the provision of transport is at the local authority's discretion. This means that free transport assistance is provided for pupils who reside within Manchester City Council boundaries who meet a defined set of criteria (see appendix 1).
- 5.4 In the last 2 years the number of pupils accessing a free school travel pass has reduced because of the increase in school places becoming available across the City due to the significant expansion programme and opening of new schools. In 2019, to date there has been a total of 1616 applications for a free travel pass. From these 1067 have met the criteria outlined in Appendix 1 and been issued. There is a two stage appeal process in place for declined applications and to date there have been 54 appeals from which 12 free travel passes were allocated.

Our Pass

- 5.5 A new Our Pass that for a one off £10 administration fee, allows 16 to 18 year olds to travel for free on local buses right across Greater Manchester was launched by the Mayor for Greater Manchester for a two year trial in September 2019. Holders can also benefit from half-price off peak 1 day and weekend travelcards on Metrolink, and from special offers from a range of partners.
- 5.6 Our Pass can be used for up to two years, starting from 1 September after the holders 16th birthday and is available to people who live in Greater Manchester. To date over 35,000 passes have been issued across Greater Manchester with over 7,500 being issued to Manchester City Council residents.

Home to school travel arrangements for pupils with Education, Health and Care plans

- 5.7 For pupils with an Education, health and care plan who are attending the nearest suitable school identified in their Education health and care plan and who meet any of the criteria outlined in Appendix 1, the Council will offer a travel solution to enable the pupil to access school. This approach aims wherever possible to work with the family and young person to develop a travel solution which enables the child or young person to access education in the same way that members of their peer group who do not have a special educational need or disability would access their education. This includes travelling independently for young people and family based travel solutions for younger children. The desired outcome of this approach is to actively encourage children and young people's independence, which can result in them developing a skill for life and will help to develop their confidence and social skills as well as increase their future options for continuing education/training and employment.

Travel solutions may include for example:

Travel pass - This is a free pass for use on public transport. This may also be provided for a parent/carers or another travel buddy to support the child/young person to access education.

Personal Travel Budget (PTB) - Support for meeting the costs associated with ensuring support to access education may be provided through a Personal Travel Budget. This includes a variety of flexible support options such as access to funds for parent/carers to enable them to drop earlier and collect later, paying for a family member, mileage and use of a befriending service. Family based travel solutions could also be supported by a Personal Travel Budget.

Independent travel training - where appropriate young people will be supported and encouraged to travel independently to and from school, when it is assessed as reasonable for them to do so. Where a young person is offered independent travel training the process will begin with an initial assessment of their skills and abilities. The training provided will be targeted to individual need

and development. It is expected that where independent travel training is offered as a travel solution, a young person will take up this training.

Travel Vehicles - The Council may provide a vehicle to transfer a child and young person to and from school. Vehicles and drivers are provided by a suitably qualified, registered, commercial provider working to contractual standards set by the Council. All drivers will all have an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service certificate. This could include:

- Multiple pick up Vehicles - Whenever possible, children and young people will travel together in mini-buses. Children and young people are picked up and dropped off at a convenient location, within a reasonable distance from their home, in many cases from recognised bus stops. A home pick up and drop off will only be made where it is deemed essential due to the child and young person's significant needs.
- Taxis and private hire vehicles - Under very exceptional circumstances, the Council may support children and young people to access education in separate taxis or private hire vehicles based on the assessed needs of the child or young person.

5.8 Currently, there are 1453 pupils with education health and care plans who have been assessed as meeting the criteria for a travel solution. There are 380 different transport routes provided by the Council and 115 families who access a personal budget to make their own transport arrangements. This Autumn term there have been 8 young people accessing travel training courses in addition to those accessing this through their school provision.

5.9 It is recognised there is more to do with special educational needs schools to promote active travel to and from school. However, there are examples of school initiatives that are having an impact. In June 2019, Melland school pupils led a campaign to encourage bus drivers to turn off their engines while idling near the school playground when dropping off and picking up students. The students planned and delivered the 'Cough, Cough, Cough Turn Your Engine Off' campaign. Students were then able to deliver their findings at the Skills for Life launch.

6.0 Red and Amber School Crossing Improvements Update

6.1 There are eighty-one school crossings in the programme that require improvements so that their original rating score is reduced to 50 points or less as per the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA) "Census & Site Assessment" criteria that is the national standard. The sites are located across most wards in the city.

6.2 The delivery of the improvements continues through a purposely formed highways team comprising of a Project Manager, Construction Planner, Traffic Engineer, Quantity Surveyor, and Clerk of Works who are supported by the MCC Communications team and Raydar Safety Ltd for health and safety compliance. The MCC project team is also supported by design teams at both

TfGM UTC and Amey. Most of the works on site are being delivered by Highway Maintenance (formerly known as Manchester Contracts).

6.3 The location of each school crossing has been checked and is confirmed within the table below in 2.5 for the sites completed and the table in Appendix 1 for those still to be delivered. For clarity it is also noted that several crossings are in two wards and this is because the actual ward boundary is located either directly along the centre line of the carriageway or somewhere between the centre line and the footway. Example drawings to substantiate this are available upon request.

6.4 For clarity the delivery process comprises of four stages as follows: -

1. Outline design by MCC.
2. Final design by Amey where sites include belisha beacons and/or by UTC where sites include traffic signals.
3. Purchase order issued and works to be programmed.
4. Construction on site by a combination of Highway Maintenance, North Midland Contracting, Amey and UTC.

6.5 The following table confirms the 46 sites already completed.

| School | Crossing Point | Ward |
|---|----------------------------------|-------------|
| Baguley Green Primary/Newall Green High | Holyhedge Road/Greenbrow Road | Baguley |
| Newall Green High/Primary | Firbank Road/Highdales Road | Baguley |
| St Paul's High/Newall Green High/St Peter's Primary | Greenbrow Road/Simonsway | Baguley |
| Sacred Heart Catholic Primary | Floatshall Road / Bowland Road | Baguley |
| Newall Green Primary / Newall Green High | Greenbrow Rd / Whitburn Road | Baguley |
| St Peter's RC Primary / St Paul's High | Firbank Road | Baguley |
| Sandilands Primary | Wendover Road/Sandilands Road | Brooklands |
| Button Lane Primary | Moorcroft Road/Button Lane | Brooklands |
| Sandilands Primary | Ferndown Road/Wendover Road | Brooklands |
| Greenend Primary/St Bernards Primary/Burnage High | Greenend Road/Burnage Lane | Burnage |
| Acacias Primary/Levenhulme High | Crossley Avenue / Moorton Avenue | Burnage |
| Greenend Primary/St Bernards Primary/Burnage High | Greenend Road/Broadlea Road | Burnage |

| | | |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| Alma Park & St Mary's Primary Levenshulme High | Albert Road / Marshall Road | Burnage / Levenshulme |
| St Matthews High | Nuthurst Road / Blandford Drive | Charlestown |
| Oswald Road / St John's RC Primary | Longford Road / Oswald Road | Chorlton |
| Oswald Road / St John's RC Primary | Nicolas Road / Oswald Road | Chorlton |
| St Barnabus Primary | Parkhouse Street/Wood Street | Clayton Openshaw |
| Varna Street Primary | Ogden Lane/Varna Street | Clayton Openshaw |
| Broad Oak Primary | Broad Oak Road/Outside School Gates | Didsbury East |
| Beaver Road/St Catherine's Primary | Fog Lane/ Clayton Avenue | Didsbury East |
| Abbey Hey Primary | High Bank/Cross Lane | Gorton & Abbey Hey |
| Wright Robinson High | Abbey Hey Lane/Lakeside Close | Gorton & Abbey Hey |
| Old Hall Drive Primary | Levenshulme Road / Ryder Brow Road | Gorton & Abbey Hey |
| St Francis Primary / All Saints | Gorton Lane / Gardner Street | Gorton & Abbey Hey |
| Holy Trinity/Moston Lane Primary | Moston Lane/Upper Conran Street | Harpurhey |
| St Malachy's/Saviour Primary | Rochdale Road/Eggington Street | Harpurhey |
| Pikefold Primary/Co-operative Academy | Old Market Street/Chapel Lane | Higher Blackley |
| Crowcroft Park Primary/St Richard's Primary | Northmoor Road/Sutcliffe Avenue | Levenshulme / Longsight |
| St Agnes Primary | Hamilton Road/Clitheroe Road | Longsight |
| St Wilfrids Primary | Daisy Bank/Mabel Street | Miles Platting & Newton Heath |
| All Saints/Christ the Kings Primary | Culcheth Lane/Outside School Gates | Miles Platting & Newton Heath |
| Park View Community Primary | Varley Street/Holland Street | Miles Platting & Newton Heath |
| Briscoe Lane | Briscoe Lane / Scotland Hall Road | Miles Platting & Newton Heath |
| Broadhurst Primary | St Mary's Road / Williams Road | Miles Platting & Newton Heath / |

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Moston |
| Heald Place Primary | Claremont Road/Outside School Gates | Moss Side |
| New Moston/St Margaret Mary's Primary | Broadway/Moston Lane east | Moston |
| New Moston Primary | Moston Lane East/Outside School Gates | Moston |
| Lily Lane / St Dunstons Primary | Lily Lane / Lizmar Terrace | Moston |
| St John Fisher & Thomas More RC Primary | Hollyhedge Road/Woodhouse Lane | Northenden |
| Haveley Hey/Benchill Primary's | Hollyhedge Road / Broadoak Road | Northenden / Sharston |
| Haveley Hey Primary | Broadoak Road/Nearbrook Road | Sharston |
| Mauldeth Road Primary | Talbot Road/Green Street | Withington |
| Ringway Primary/St Anthony's Primary | Portway/Cornishway | Woodhouse Park |
| Ringway Primary/St Anthony's Primary | Cornishway/Rossett Avenue | Woodhouse Park |
| St Anthony's RC/The Willows Primary | Cornishway/Portway | Woodhouse Park |
| St Anthony's RC / The Willow's Primary | Portway / Selstead Road | Woodhouse Park |

6.6 The following images illustrate two examples of completed work.



Firbank Road/Highdales Road, Baguley - Reconfigured junction/bollards/drop kerbs/tactile pavings/road markings/traffic signs/No Waiting at any time restrictions



Lily Lane/Lizmar Terrace, Moston - Raised junction/speed cushions/crossing points/kerb build outs/bollards/No Waiting at any time restrictions

6.7 The tables in Appendix 1 indicate the delivery method and expected construction period for the sites still to be completed. In summary this is: -

- 2 sites are complete with all features constructed except the additional Puffin crossings that will be installed by Highway Maintenance with support from UTC.
- 5 sites have been designed and are still to be programmed for delivery by Highway Maintenance individually or with support from either UTC or Amey.
- 28 sites are awaiting final design by either UTC or Amey to be programmed for delivery by Highway Maintenance with support from either UTC, Amey or both.

6.8 The progress since the last report and programme is summarised in the table below and the time frame for completing the remaining works is by early summer 2020.

| Site Status | At 4 September | Expected at 4 December |
|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| Complete | 17 | 46 |
| Work in progress | 27 | 4 |
| Still to be programmed | 5 | 2 |
| Awaiting final design | 32 | 29 |
| Total | 81 | 81 |

The impact of involving third parties within the delivery process has led to benefits too. For example, this has enabled the proposed zebra crossing on Abbey Hey Lane in Gorton to be upgraded to a signal controlled crossing.

- 6.9 All schools that still have improvement works to be implemented have received letters via post. In addition, our Clerk of Works hand delivers a supplementary letter to the schools whilst delivering letters to the local residents within 7 to 14 days before works commence at each site.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 It is recognised that there is still more to do to develop the significant culture shift that is required to encourage pupils to walk to school and not use cars. There still remains too much congestion around schools at the beginning and end of the school day and often irresponsible behaviours of drivers dropping off and collecting children. There are many opportunities, to drive forward behaviour change through initiatives described in the report and through work taking place on climate change to promote this more with children and young people, particularly as it is as an issue they care about.
- 7.2 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the progress made in delivering the programme of activity that promotes safer travel to and from school.