

Sráideanna Scoile School Streets

Public Consultation

Information for Parents, Residents and
the School Community



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Comhairle Cathrach na Gaillimhe
Galway City Council



Pilot School Streets Project - Scoil Iognáid

Public Consultation – Information for Parents, Residents and the School Community

1. Introduction

Scoil Iognáid is working with Galway City Council, the National Transport Authority and Green-Schools to create Galway's first 'School Street', as part of a pilot project running in 2020/2021.

We are excited to work with our partners to create a safer space for our children, residents and school community!

2. What is a 'School Street'?

A 'School Street' is a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times¹ - creating a calm, safe space for children, parents and residents to walk, scoot or cycle.

We are inspired by School Streets projects around the world, including a pilot in Malahide which began in late 2019. The project is still on-going, but initial results published by Fingal County Council showed a 43% shift from car travel to active modes² - with positive feedback from parents, residents and the school.

3. When and Where will the Pilot take place?

Galway City Council intends to pedestrianise Palmyra Park, Palmyra Avenue and Raleigh Row, as part of the 'School Streets' pilot in Scoil Iognáid, Raleigh Row. Our School Street will be pedestrianised from³:

- Monday to Friday, during school term times only
- Commencing 2nd November 2020, until 25th June 2021 inclusive
- 8.15am to 9.15am
- 1.15pm to 2.45pm

The supplementary plates proposed by Galway City Council will be the timings plate and 2 Exception plates - one for "Except Cyclists" and the other for "Except Local Access".

All signs are proposed in line with Chapter 5 of the Traffic Signs Manual, with the exception of the replacement of the word 'pedestrianised zone' to 'school zone'.

Residents will still have access to their homes during these times, as will 'blue badge' holders needing access to the school. *Residents, please see page 6 for more information.*

The start date for our proposed School Street pilot is subject to public consultation in October 2020, and statutory signage being in place.

¹ <http://schoolstreets.org.uk/>

² <https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2020-03/20200302-300548-school-streets-pilot-review-1-issue-1.pdf>



4. Why are We Doing a School Streets Project?

Scoil Iognáid is located in an old Galway street, from a time when more people walked, cycled, and maybe even used horses and carts.

Approximately 160 cars travel down Raleigh Row to get to school between 8.15am and 9.00am (Q1 2020).

The street isn't physically wide enough for cars to interact safely with the volume of vulnerable road users coming to our school by bike, or on foot.

Child Safety

Our most serious concern is the safety of our children – we have had a number of potentially very serious 'near misses' with children interacting with cars. We cannot wait for a child to be injured by a car to act.

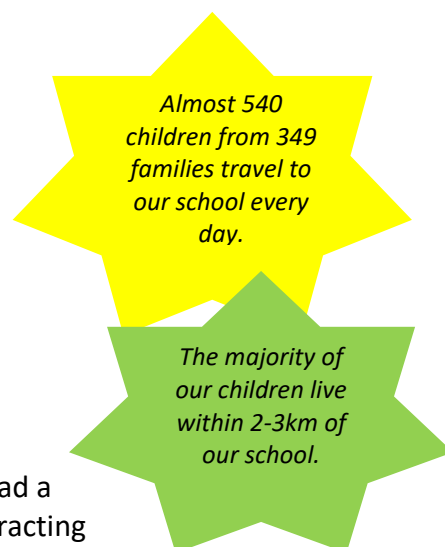
Children coming to school on foot/ by bike, and children with mobility issues experience significant difficulty accessing the school, with cars blocking their safe access.

If the school ever needed a fire brigade or ambulance to attend in the morning or afternoon, we have very serious concerns about whether they would get to us in a timely manner.

Drivers dropping children off at our school have been observed –

- Double parking on yellow lines and in front of private driveways/ homes;
- Pulling up in the yellow box at the front of our school, blocking access;
- Creating three lanes of cars on the road - two lanes dropping off children, in front of a row of parked cars, with cyclists and pedestrians arriving between the opening doors;
- Reversing into the 'lanes' with no driver visibility of children walking behind them into school.

These driver behaviours are dangerous, and risky.



Our Community

Our local community tell us that they have difficulty getting out of their homes, with school traffic blocking their entrances, as well as fumes from idling cars right outside their windows. We have a good relationship with our local community, and we want to maintain that, as we pass by their living rooms and kitchens every day of the week. We are neighbours, and good neighbours look out for each other.



Benefits of Physical Activity

Walking, cycling and scooting from home or adding in 5 or 10 minutes' walk at the end of the commute by car can make all the difference - It's not just the kids who'll be getting fresh air, a stretch of their legs and some time to chat with their favourite people, you'll be getting some exercise too! The World Health Organisation recommends that children should get at least 60 minutes of exercise each day. It is fun, free, and provides a wonderful start and finish to your school day!

Caring for our Environment

Scoil Iognáid is a Green-School, with a number of flags awarded for our environmental actions. There have been a number of stories in the news over the past year that have caused concern for our children, and parents, including wildfires in Australia, and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Taking part in the School Streets pilot helps our school community to feel good about taking a proactive approach to our health and our environment. We want to encourage our children to engage in the world as global citizens, ready and able to achieve change and face the challenges of their lifetimes.



Less Idling!

As part of our School Streets pilot, Scoil Iognáid is encouraging all parents to stop idling vehicles on the school run.

Idling vehicles contribute to air pollution and emit air toxins, which are pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects. Monitoring at schools has shown elevated levels of benzene, formaldehyde, acetaldehyde and other air toxics during the afternoon hour coinciding with parents picking up their children.

Children's lungs are still developing, and when they are exposed to elevated levels of these pollutants, children have an increased risk of developing asthma, respiratory problems and other adverse health effects.

Limiting a vehicle's idling time can dramatically reduce these pollutants and children's exposure to them.

See <https://www.epa.gov/schools/idle-free-schools-toolkit-healthy-school-environment>



5. Can I Still Come to School By Car?

We understand that many children travel by car because they have no other alternative, whether it's because of distance, lack of public transport, or travelling with siblings to different schools or crèche.

While we encourage our school community to walk, scoot, cycle and use public transport where they can⁴, for those who need to drive to school, you can still 'Park and Stride' as part of School Streets.

Park and Stride is where parents park a short distance away from the school, and finish the last leg of the journey on foot. As we are in a busy city centre location, parents/ guardians are encouraged to park a couple of streets away.

*We have already shown **we can do this** when our children returned to school in September 2020!*

Galway City Council has a Park and Stride scheme, where parents and guardians can park for free in over 20 car parks in the city. Parents/ Guardians must register for the scheme, to receive a permit to park in these locations. See www.galwaycity.ie/parkandstride for information, and to register.

Locations near our school include:

- Crescent Court/ Joyce's Supermarket (*part of GCC Park and Stride*)
- The Cathedral (approx. 13 mins walk) (*part of GCC Park and Stride*);
- The Prom (approx. 15 mins walk) (*part of GCC Park and Stride*);
- On street - Parkavera (less than 5 mins walk, by the Canal, Pay and Display);
- On street (Pay and Display) - in The Crescent, Sea Road or Father Griffin Road, for example;

Cars will need to 'spread out' from our school, so that the congestion is not moved one street over.

Please note that once the street is pedestrianised, as part of our School Streets pilot, there will be no through traffic during the designated times. **Access for blue badge holders and residents will still be permitted.**

Over the course of the pilot, Community Wardens will monitor our area to ensure that parents and guardians park safely and legally in the local streets, and Gardaí will monitor access on the pedestrianised streets.

It is imperative that you have a plan in place, and have tried it, the week before School Streets formally commences, on the 2nd of November (commencement date subject to public consultation, and statutory signage being in place).

⁴ In line with government advice on use of public transport, in light of Covid-19 measures.



6. What else will the School Streets Pilot involve?

Workshops

Green-Schools will be engaging with our school to do workshops with parents and children, to support our community to walk, cycle and scoot safely to school - this will be done remotely initially, but we hope to welcome our Green-Schools Travel Officers, Caitriona Cunningham and Tiarnan McCusker, into the school, as government restrictions change.

Surveys

Parents will be invited to complete a survey about how their child travels to school. This survey follows the national evaluation format, and we would encourage parents to take 5 minutes to fill it in.

7. Infrastructure

As part of our School Streets pilot, Galway City Council is proposing a number of infrastructure improvements in our area, with funding from the National Transport Authority.

These improvements will take place over the course of the pilot, and beyond. Please note that the programme is dependent on government restrictions in place at a given point in time, but will include (*work in progress, and subject to consultation*):

Phase 1 (2020):

1. Delineation (Road Markings) to provide a temporary buildout of the kerb at the Small Crane. With the inclusion of bolt down bollards to restrict turning movements against the flow of traffic along Raleigh Row.
2. Bollards where the planters are at this point, to create a safe walkway towards the school
3. Coloured spots on the road, to draw drivers attention to the fact that they are driving into a school environment (this is based on 'School Zone' design guidance coming from the National Transport Authority)
4. Signage at the ends of the three roads indicating the pedestrianisation and times applying
5. Bollards on the corner of Palmyra Park and Raleigh Row to stop cars parking on that corner
6. Concreting of the grassed area at the front of the school and provision of 2 cycle stands
7. GCC will seek to resurface and reline Palmyra Avenue and Raleigh Row
8. Topographical Survey to inform the final kerb locations – designed under phase 2

Phase 2 (2021):

1. Formalisation of the kerb build outs with concrete footway, uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at the junction of Raleigh Row and the Small Crane, and
2. Formalisation of the kerb build out with concrete footway at St. Marys Road / Palmyra Avenue

You can see the work in progress drawings at www.galwaycity.ie/schoolstreets



Separately, but complementary, GCC will look to progress a crossing on Henry Street, and a scheme at the junction of St Mary's Road/ The Crescent, down to Sea Road.

These schemes will take time to see on the ground, but will complement the School Streets pilot.

Cycle networks are also progressing on the West and East of the city, with Stage 2 including 8 routes on the West, on Threadneedle Road, Dr. Mannix Road, Salthill Road Lower, Salthill Road Upper, Clybaun Road, Bóthar Stiofáin, Bishop O'Donnell Road, and Canal Road (funded by the NTA and URDF).

Longer Term

Longer term, pending consultation and funding, a permanent design can be progressed *if required*. This would include realignment of the road to provide a pedestrian crossing, with car parking reallocated/ rationalised to facilitate this.

8. Teachers and Visitors

The majority of our teachers park off site, and will continue to do so as part of the School Streets Pilot. School Visitors will also be advised that they must walk, cycle, use public transport or park away from the school if travelling by car, during hours of pedestrianisation. The school will liaise with all scheduled deliveries to ensure they are aware of the hours of pedestrianisation.

9. Residents Access

Residents will still be able to access their homes during the School Streets pilot. However, we would ask residents to avoid using their car during the periods of pedestrianisation, if at all possible – as more children and parents will be on the street on foot, on scooters, and on bikes.

If you do need to use your car during the hours of pedestrianisation, residents are invited to display a School Streets sticker in their windshield in a visible location. This will help patrolling Gardaí identify that you are accessing your home. ***Please contact Galway City Council to get this sticker.***

10. More information

For more information on the School Streets pilot project, please contact:
Galway City Council Transport Section – 091 536 400
Email roads@galwaycity.ie

We Need You!

The School Streets proposal (pedestrianisation and infrastructure) is now at the public consultation stage. ***It is essential that the support and feedback of our school community is captured***

Please fill in the feedback form at
www.galwaycity.ie/schoolstreets



Sráideanna Scoile School Streets

Please share your *feedback and support* for this proposal as soon as possible, as we hope to commence our pilot in *November 2020*.

Go Raibh Míle Maith Agat!

Please fill in the feedback form at
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