

# Diversity impact assessment

<b>TITLE</b>
Medway School Streets schemes
<b>DATE</b>
28/10/2024
<b>LEAD OFFICER.</b>
Ruth Du-Lieu – Deputy Director of Place
<b>1 Summary description of the proposed change</b>
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
<p>Medway Council are proposing to introduce tranche 2 of the School Streets programme at nine schools across the borough. A School Street is a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on most motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times, enabling and encouraging more people to walk, scoot or cycle safely for the school journey.</p> <p>Proposals have been developed to implement School Street schemes at nine schools. These are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crest Infant School / Delce Academy, Rochester</li> <li>• Cliffe Woods Primary School / Cliffe Woods Pre-School and the City of Rochester School, Cliffe Woods</li> <li>• Fairview Primary School, Rainham</li> <li>• High Halstow Primary Academy, High Halstow</li> <li>• Hilltop Primary School, Frindsbury</li> <li>• Horsted Primary School, Chatham</li> <li>• The King’s Pre-Preparatory School and Nursery, Rochester</li> <li>• St Margaret’s Church of England Junior School and St. Margarets Infant School, Rainham</li> <li>• St William of Perth Catholic Primary School, Canon Close, Rochester</li> </ul> <p>School Streets aim to improve safety and transform often busy and polluted school roads into safer, cleaner, and healthier environments for everyone.</p> <p>By limiting motor vehicle access outside schools, we can improve road safety at pick-up and drop-off times and create safer walking, cycling and scooting routes to and from school. Restrictions only operate at certain times of the day during the school term and don’t impact local residents or emergency services vehicles. Residents and businesses who live and work on a School Street will be able to register for an exemption as well as Blue Badge holders. The scheme will not operate during school holidays and weekends.</p> <p>By adopting this approach, roads are made safer for students, pedestrians, and encourage more sustainable modes of transport in our community.</p> <p>Currently motorists can park close to the school gates at all nine locations. Most of the exception is where there are existing School Keep Clear markings, that are enforceable during school drop-off and pick-up and waiting restrictions which are located outside some of the schools.</p>

# Diversity impact assessment

## 2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment

E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user.

E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile

Following the successful implementation of Tranche 1, Medway Council considered a potential list of additional sites for a School Street. The following was considered when determining the final nine sites proposed for Tranche 2:

- Schools with known road safety/parking congestion issues, particularly during drop-off and collection times
- Council officers, local knowledge of the school settings. This included whether the school was already working with the Council on sustainable transport initiatives, such as the zig-zag banner campaign, walk to school and road safety education delivery.
- Locality and/or suitability of a School Street: i.e., those largely located within cul-de-sac locations and not on the main transport network, etc
- The potential of encouraging modal shift, based on pupil mode of travel data.

An informal consultation commenced on Monday 16 September 2024 and ended on Sunday 27 October 2024. A total of 1,231 survey responses were received across the nine School Streets proposals.

The following key findings have been identified through analysis of the consultation responses.

Of the nine proposed school streets, it is recommended that six are taken forward to statutory consultation as per the original designs. These include:

- Cliffe Woods Primary School, Cliffe Woods Pre-School and the City of Rochester School, Cliffe Woods
- Fairview Primary School, Rainham
- High Halstow Primary Academy, High Halstow
- Hilltop Primary School, Frindsbury
- St Margaret's Church of England Junior School and St. Margarets Infant School, Rainham
- St William of Perth Catholic Primary School, Canon Close, Rochester

Based on feedback received and key issues raised, we are proposing to take these 6 schools forwards to the next stage of statutory consultation, with the following considerations:

**Concerns around timing** - Some respondents felt that restriction times should be reviewed to better suit school drop-off and pick-up times. This will be considered in discussion with each school and changed as required to suit individual school needs appropriately.

**Concerns raised about impacts to visitors in particular for vulnerable members of the community** - Further communications with residents regarding exemptions policy, outlined paragraph 3.3 which enables assistance for care functions to resume as normal.

# Diversity impact assessment

**Impacts to families outside an immediate catchment area and must drive some of the journey to school** - Council will investigate the establishment of park and stride locations, or waling bus initiatives alongside any implementation. This could include allowing use of council car parks if appropriate and would operate in line with the school street restrictions (weekdays, only during school term)

**Some responses were concern about displacement traffic** - Where appropriate, Medway will investigate further traffic calming measures alongside proposed school streets. Options may include realignment of the central hatching, to help manage footway parking issues, as well as ongoing traffic and air quality monitoring to ensure any scheme implemented does not have any unintended impacts.

For the remaining three school streets, it is recommended that designs are amended based on stakeholder feedback and taken forward to an extended statutory consultation. These schools include:

## **Crest Infants School / Delce Academy, Rochester**

During the school pop ups, teaching staff from Delce Academy raised concerns that the current proposal didn't address the main area of concerns for the School along The Tideway. We are therefore proposing several changes to design including:

- extension of the school street to include The Tideway, from Hawser Road to Barnaby Terrace. The proposed static School Keep Clear camera would be removed, and pedestrian area expanded to improve pedestrian safety near entrance more regularly used by this school.
- Extension of school street zone to include Windward Rd and Leeward Road, down to The Fairway. This is to stop additional traffic accumulating at the entrance to Crest Road during operational hours.

## **Horsted Primary School, Chatham**

While in support of a School Street, the Head Teacher and school governors raised concerns that current design is not extensive enough to address problems faced by the school. To better improve child safety and journeys to school it is proposed to:

- extend the school street zone along Binland Grove, Barberrry Avenue to Watson Avenue
- introduce camera enforced school keep clear markings along Crescent Way

## **The King's Pre-Preparatory School and Nursery, Rochester**

The King's School has raised concerns about the proposed School Street and introduced timed restrictions on Lockington Grove. Further feedback from

# Diversity impact assessment

residents along Roebuck Road, raised concerns of displacement, given the pedestrian pathway that connects Roebuck Rd with King Edward Road. Base on this feedback it is proposed that:

- Lockington Grove remain within the school street zone to ensure objectives of reducing traffic out the front of school gates can be achieved
- Roebuck Road between Watts Avenue and St Margaret's St be included within the timed restriction

### 3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?

Is it likely to:

Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups

Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't

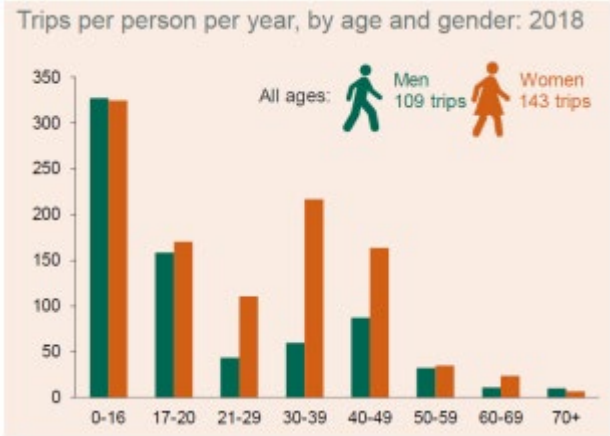
**(insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)**

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
Age	No	Yes	No
Disability	No	Yes	No
Gender reassignment	No	Yes	No
Marriage/civil partnership	No	Yes	No
Pregnancy/maternity	No	Yes	No
Race	No	Yes	No
Religion/belief	No	Yes	No
Sex	No	Yes	No
Sexual orientation	No	Yes	No
Care experience	No	Yes	No
Other (e.g. low income groups)	No	Yes	No

# Diversity impact assessment

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<b>4 Summary of the likely impacts</b> Who will be affected? How will they be affected?			
<p><b>All groups</b> – The overall equalities impact of School Streets is generally positive. While students, parents, staff and those living in close proximity will be the primary beneficiaries, School Streets can also have positive impacts for the wider community, particularly in terms of road safety outcomes and air quality improvements from less vehicles outside the school, and improved health and wellbeing from potential increases in walking and cycling.</p> <p>The positive impacts School Streets can deliver include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved road safety outcomes and safer routes to and from the school due to a reduction in vehicles at school drop off and pick up times, reducing road danger risk.</li> <li>• More opportunities to walk and cycle in the area of the school, enhancing public health and well-being outcomes.</li> <li>• Improved air quality outside the school gate due to reduction in vehicles at drop off and pick up times, improving public health outcomes.</li> <li>• A nicer environment on the School Street for everyone using it, especially children.</li> </ul> <p>Reductions in vehicle numbers create immediate road safety benefits, by reducing the risk and opportunity for collision between motorised vehicles and more venerable road users. <b>All groups</b>, including those with protected characteristics, will benefit from a reduced risk of vehicle / pedestrian collision.</p> <p>By implementing the School Streets Programme, we can create a safer road environment to encourage more people to use more sustainable forms of transport, providing benefit from the other positives of active travel, such as the associated health benefits.</p> <p>Creating temporary pedestrian and cycling zones will therefore benefit <b>all groups</b> by improving road safety outside schools, as well as allowing for improvements to air quality through the reduction of motorised vehicles.</p> <p>Those who could be most <b>positively</b> impacted by the implementation of the School Streets include:</p> <p><b>Age</b> – young children attending the school, who will benefit from reduced risk and exposure to both air pollution and road danger. <a href="#">Data</a> on air quality shows that it is particularly harmful for children and elderly people. Children under the age of 12 have the <a href="#">highest percentage</a> of pedestrian fatalities. The peak time for pedestrian injuries from vehicles is during the morning rush hour, which includes the school run. Therefore, young children will benefit most from the road safety improvements.</p>			

# Diversity impact assessment

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations																											
<p><b>Age</b> – older local residents who are at greater risk of experiencing negative health impacts of air pollution will benefit from reduced exposure to air pollution during the restriction times. <a href="#">Data</a> on air quality shows that it is particularly harmful for children and elderly people.</p> <p><b>Disability</b> – By reducing the number of vehicles near school gates and introducing / ensuring proper enforcement of parking and moving traffic restrictions, we can ensure access pathways to and from schools are prioritised for people and not vehicles. This reduction in traffic will ensure footpaths can be made safer for all, including those with impaired movements or disability to travel in and out of school gates.</p> <p>The scheme will also ensure those who need to access to the area or blue badge parking opportunities will be given priority to do so. This will be managed through the programme’s exemptions policy which ensures those who need to park in close proximity to each school are still able to do so.</p> <p><b>Deprivation</b> - 2023 research by The Runnymede Trust showed 20 per cent of the UK’s most deprived areas experience some of the worst impacts of air pollution. Interventions like School Streets, designed to reduce exposure to poor air quality, can help reduce the impacts of air pollution and advance equality, particularly with regard to public health outcomes.</p> <p><b>Sex</b> – Data from <a href="#">Scotland</a> and the <a href="#">UK Transport Survey</a> finds that women were more likely to escort children to school than men. We can assume that this is also true in Medway.</p>																														
<p><b>Trips per person per year, by age and gender: 2018</b></p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Trips per person per year, by age and gender: 2018</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Group</th> <th>Men (trips)</th> <th>Women (trips)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-16</td> <td>~320</td> <td>~320</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17-20</td> <td>~150</td> <td>~170</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21-29</td> <td>~40</td> <td>~110</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-39</td> <td>~60</td> <td>~210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40-49</td> <td>~80</td> <td>~160</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50-59</td> <td>~30</td> <td>~30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60-69</td> <td>~10</td> <td>~20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>70+</td> <td>~5</td> <td>~5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Group	Men (trips)	Women (trips)	0-16	~320	~320	17-20	~150	~170	21-29	~40	~110	30-39	~60	~210	40-49	~80	~160	50-59	~30	~30	60-69	~10	~20	70+	~5	~5			
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<p>The graph above, from the UK Transport Survey, demonstrates that women between 21-49, who are the group most likely to have primary school aged children, make more trips on average than men. When taken with the data showing that women are more likely to accompany children on the school run, this suggests that women are making more of the school run trips in Medway</p>																														

# Diversity impact assessment

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<p>than men. Therefore, women are more likely to be positively impacted by improvements to air quality and safety outside the schools than men. This would also apply to <b>pregnant</b> women.</p> <p>Some could be <b>adversely</b> impacted by the implementation of the School Streets. Section 5 includes recommendations and possible mitigation measures for groups who may experience some challenges if schemes are implemented. These include:</p> <p><b>Age</b> – older local residents may be negatively impacted by the School Street as it could affect relatives / unofficial carers coming to care for them during the times of restriction, taxis coming to collect theme (e.g. for hospital appointments) during the times of restriction, and access to good and services during restriction times.</p> <p><b>Disability</b> - School Streets have the potential to impact disabled resident’s access to their road or property. It may also affect any person with a disability who needs vehicle access to the road for other reasons, such as disabled pupils being driven to the school. Those persons with a disability and who do not possess a blue parking badge may need to park outside of the School Street zone to walk / wheel into the zone. They will also not be allowed to drive through the zone during the periods of restriction.</p> <p><b>Sex</b> – As per the above data, it is statistically likely that women will be making more trips to school than men. Therefore, women will be more affected by this proposal than men, as they may have to change the way they get to school which could have negative impacts on their daily routines.</p> <p>Additional potentially negative impacts of School Streets could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local residents: travelling into the School Streets to get to their homes. Residents will be eligible to apply for an exemption permit.</li> <li>• Local businesses on the School Streets: employees, visitors and suppliers travelling into the School Streets to access the businesses. Deliveries will need to be made outside of the restriction times.</li> <li>• Parents of school children –driving into the School Streets to drop off and pick up children.</li> <li>• School staff –driving to and from the schools included in the School Street schemes. School staff will have an exemption to the School Street for access to the school car park only.</li> <li>• Formal and informal carers: driving to visit patients in the School Street schemes. Registered carers will be eligible to apply for an exemption permit.</li> </ul> <p><b>The mitigations identified for these in section 5.</b></p>			

# Diversity impact assessment

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<p><b>5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?</b></p> <p>What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?            Are there alternative providers?            Can demand for services be managed differently?</p>			
<p>The following actions have been identified to mitigate against adverse impacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring School Streets are only in operation during school drop-off and pick-up times, and school terms, minimises the impact on other residents, and their ability to access homes and services, including specialist carers</li> <li>• Providing local residents in the zone with exemptions means they can access their property at any time, including during restricted hours.</li> <li>• School transport strategies can be put in place to promote safer commutes to school, cycle safety provisions and to promote with the school and the community on School Streets and sustainable transport.</li> <li>• Providing exemption permits for specific groups of people, for example Blue Badge holders, means people who need to travel through the street at the restricted time can do so without receiving a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).</li> <li>• Provide necessary arrangements for emergency permit provision.</li> <li>• Ensure timely and clear communications in preparation of the School Street schemes and for signage and information once the School Street schemes are implemented.</li> </ul> <p>Exemption permits would be provided for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Services</li> <li>• Residents within the zone</li> <li>• Blue badge holders needing access</li> <li>• Carers of vulnerable residents needing access</li> <li>• Utility providers attending emergencies</li> <li>• School buses</li> <li>• Parents/ carers dropping off or collecting students with special educational needs or disabilities</li> <li>• Bicycles</li> <li>• Postal Service</li> <li>• Refuse vehicles</li> <li>• School staff who are entering the school car park only</li> </ul>			



# Diversity impact assessment

## 6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Ensure communications regarding the introduction of the School Street schemes is completed in a timely manner using plain English and offer all relevant materials in different languages and formats, as required.	TBC	TBC
Ensure information is provided to all those eligible regarding the School Streets Programme exemption permit process in a timely manner	TBC	TBC
Clearly communicate intentions to implement the School Street schemes to affected residents and schools, as appropriate.	TBC	TBC

# Diversity impact assessment

## 7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

It is recommended that the ten school streets listed below are taken forward to statutory consultation, the schools are:

- Crest Infant School / Delce Academy, Rochester
- Cliffe Woods Primary School / Cliffe Woods Pre-School and the City of Rochester School, Cliffe Woods
- Fairview Primary School, Rainham
- High Halstow Primary Academy, High Halstow
- Hilltop Primary School, Frindsbury
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The implementation of the schemes provides clear benefits, as detailed in Section 4 above, including a better street environment, improved road safety outcomes and localised air quality, safer and quieter routes for children travelling to school and more opportunities for everyone to walk, cycle or wheel in the School Street area.

No other alternatives have been considered as the School Street schemes are bespoke to addressing the issues experienced by schools with high traffic at drop off and pick up time and the subsequent impacts of poor air quality, potential road traffic accidents and a generally poor environment for children travelling to and from school. There are actions that can be taken to mitigate any negative impact from the School Streets implementation as listed in Section 5.

## 8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

**Assistant Director**

**Date of authorisation**