



## ***Brent School Streets Review***

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### **Brentfield Primary Scheme Report**

**MP Smarter Travel**

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# Brentfield Primary School Street

## Background

In September 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Meadow Garth, as highlighted on the map below. The Brentfield Primary School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside Brentfield Primary School, which educates students from ages 5 to 11. This School Street also aims to ease the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, by providing extra space for social distancing.

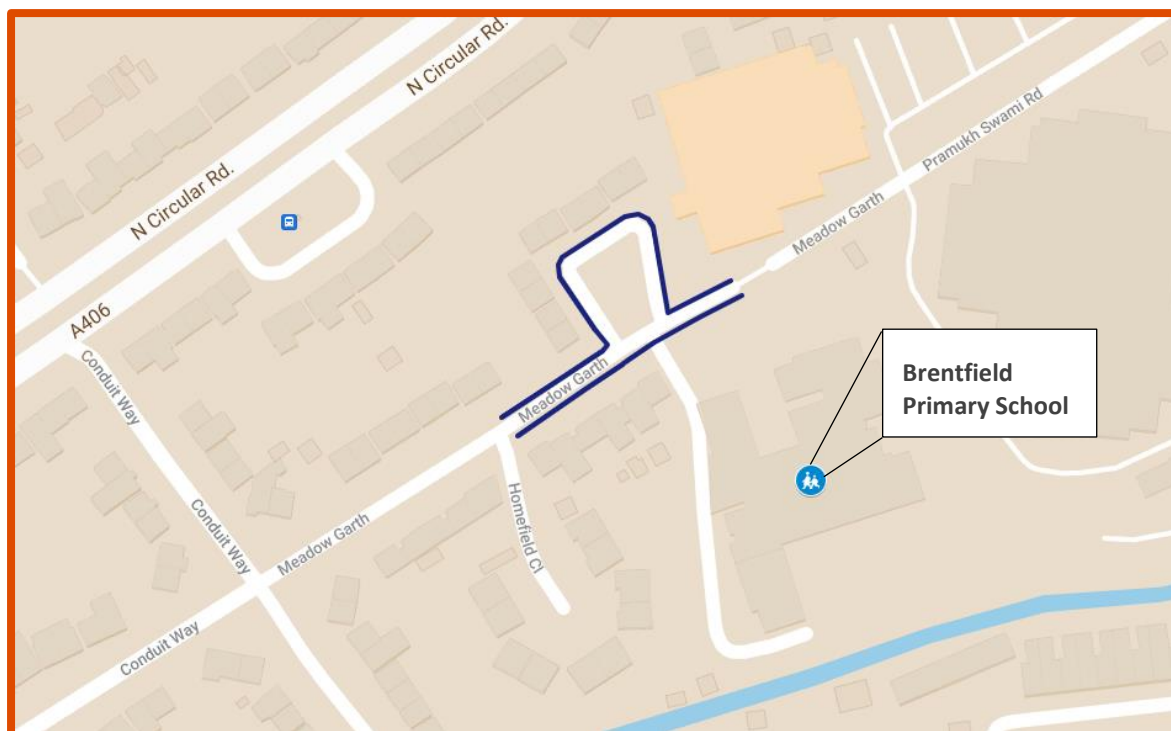


Figure 1 – Map showing location of the School Street and Brentfield Primary School.

## Summary of Data Analysis

As part of Brent Council's Emergency School Street consultation process, the council collected the following data sets for this scheme:

- Public consultation
- Air quality data
- School interviews
- Travel mode surveys
- Brent Officer observation

Below we present our analysis of these datasets, along with a recommendation as to whether the scheme should be made permanent.

## Public Consultation

From August 2020 to July 2021, members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the experimental scheme. The Brentfield Primary public consultation received four responses in total, two of whom live outside of the scheme. Two of these responses included a comment, both of which have been analysed thematically to highlight relevant points.

The table below summarises the proportions of responses who were either for or against the School Street. Responses are then broken down into those that live in or outside of the scheme.

**Table 1 – Overall responses**

Response	Count	Lives within scheme	Lives outside of scheme
Supports School Street	3	1	2
Opposes School Street	1	1	0

Table 2 displays the key issues pulled from the public comments, first split into code frames then themes. The themes have been colour coded to indicate whether they are in support or opposition of the scheme.

**Table 2 – Public comment themes**

Code Frame	Theme	Count
Access	Concern about access for private hire vehicles and medical professionals making house visits	1
	Concern about parents and children blocking driveways by queuing on pavements	1
Parking	Complaints about parking and traffic pre-scheme	1
Traffic Levels	Feels traffic/congestion has not been reduced	1
Health	Support low-traffic streets for safety (particularly of children)	1
Implementation	Would like barrier on road at all times	1
	Feels the scheme starts too late in the morning	1

The majority of public comment themes centre around making changes to the way the scheme is operated, like the start time and access for private hire vehicles, rather than fundamental issues with the presence of the scheme. There are limited conclusions that can be drawn from the responses of just four individuals, but the response is generally supportive of the scheme.

## Key Concerns

Following analysis of the public responses, the following topic areas have been identified as key concerns.

### Blue Badge Holders

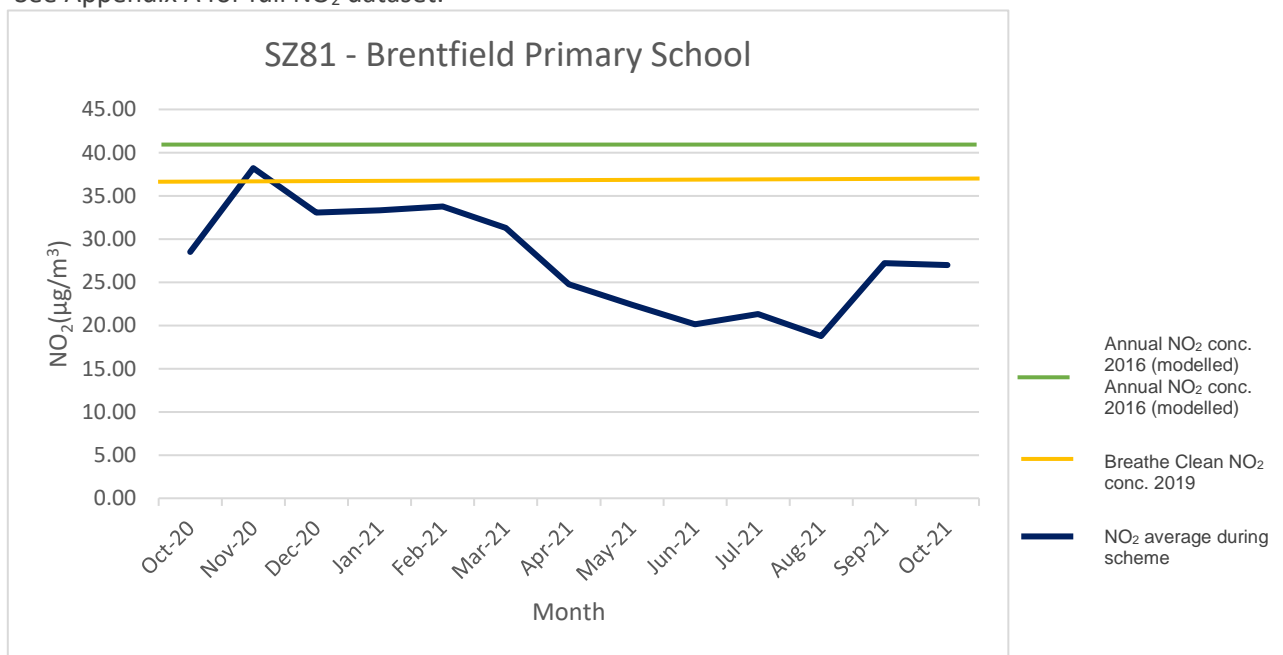
Of the four public responses, one considered themselves to have a disability. This person was in favour of the Brentfield Primary School Street, but cited issues such as the start time being too late because parents already start arriving at 8am, and that the current barrier is broken and needs fixing. This response suggests that there are no particular concerns that the scheme negatively affects those with disabilities.

## Air Quality

As part of the Brentfield Primary School Street scheme, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) levels were monitored at the school over a twelve-month period from October 2020 to October 2021\*. Figure 2 presents this data along with the modelled annual average for 2016 (Annual Pollution Maps) and the NO<sub>2</sub> concentration recorded in 2019 as part of the Breathe Clean programme, just before the scheme was implemented for reference.

Aside from a spike in November, NO<sub>2</sub> average after the implementation of the scheme is notably lower than the baseline concentrations, decreasing steadily from November to August. This downward trend into summer is in line with seasonal trends for NO<sub>2</sub>. Ideally, data would be collected for at least a year before and after the implementation of the scheme. This would enable changes to be identified and more reliably attributed to the School Streets scheme. However, for this set of implementations, this was not possible.

\*See Appendix A for full NO<sub>2</sub> dataset.



**Figure 2 – NO<sub>2</sub> concentration at Brentfield Primary.**

It is important to note that this data represents NO<sub>2</sub> levels over the course of the scheme post-implementation, rather than being proof of scheme impact. There are multiple factors at play including meteorological conditions, school holidays and COVID-19 restrictions, which will have impacted the data.

## School Interview

Through interview, MP Smarter Travel found that Brentfield Primary School's experience of the scheme was generally positive, as detailed in the table below. The school has requested the addition of traffic cameras within the scheme, as a way to remove the element of conflict between school staff and the public.

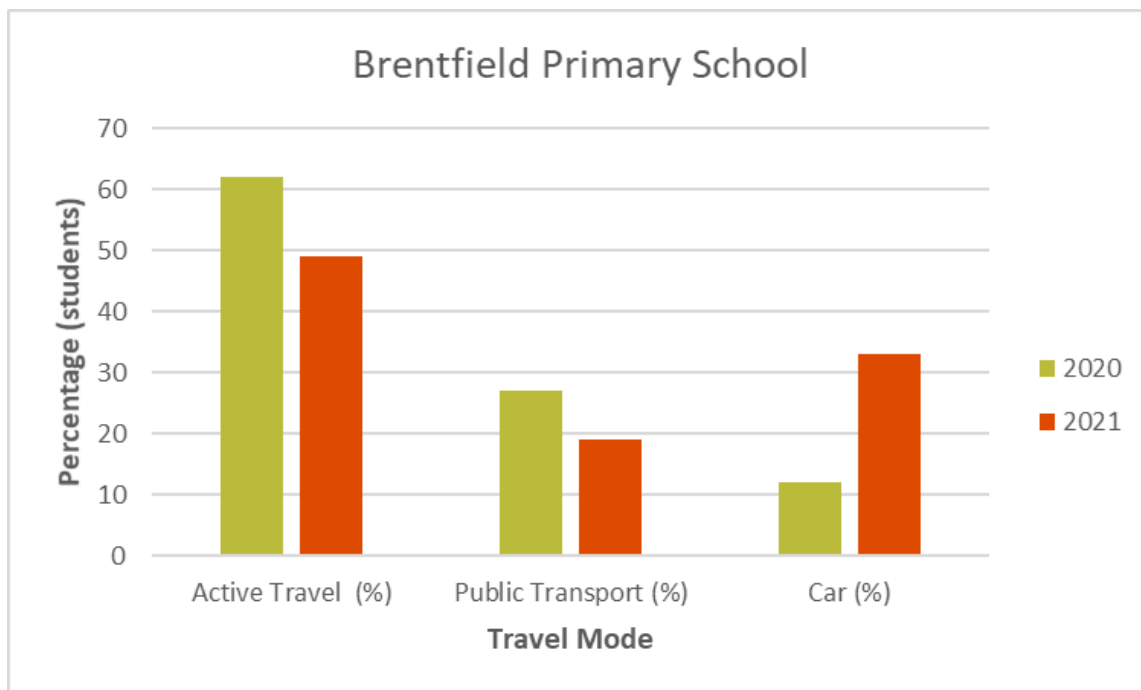
**Table 3 – Interview summary**

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive (changes needed)</li></ul>
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase in number of pupils scooting, walking and cycling.</li><li>• Felt well-informed by the council</li><li>• Street felt healthier and safer for the students</li><li>• Reduction in idling</li><li>• Space for social distancing</li></ul>
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implementation was last-minute</li><li>• Road safety issues with delivery scooters ignoring the restrictions and sometimes driving on pavements</li><li>• Dangerous situations between staff and those ignoring restrictions</li></ul>
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ANPR Cameras</li><li>• PCNs for those breaking restrictions</li><li>• Staff not having to monitor and come into conflict with people</li></ul>

## Travel Mode Analysis

Students at Brentfield were surveyed before (February 2020) and after (July 2021) the implementation of the scheme, to identify any changes in travel modes. By comparing the two travel mode surveys, we can see the number of students undertaking active travel and using public transport slightly decreased, while car use increased by 21%.

Unfortunately, the data is not particularly reliable as the first survey had a sample size of 26 students, while in July 2021 there were 502 student responses gathered. This makes it difficult to directly compare the two datasets. From the data available, the School Street does not appear to have encouraged active travel to school. However, the reduction in public transport use and increase in driving is to be expected, as the COVID-19 pandemic deterred people from trains, buses, and underground travel.



**Figure 2 – Travel mode analysis of Brentfield Primary School students in 2020 compared to 2021.**

## Brent Officer Observations

The Brent Officer site observation of the Meadow Garth scheme was carried out on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2021. The following observations were made:

- Some parents come early and congest the cul-de-sac opposite the school.
- Other parents congest over the other side of the emergency barriers on Pramukh Swami Rd.

There was no recommendation made by the Brent Council Officer, other than a comment stating that the headteacher would like to know when enforcement cameras will be installed.

# Conclusion

The summaries below assess how effectively the aims of the scheme have been met.

## **Providing Space for Social Distancing**

Social distancing was not mentioned in any of the public consultation responses, however, the school interview did highlight extra space for social distancing as one of the benefits the school has experienced. This is indicative of this aim being met, although further observations may be needed to confirm this point.

## **Improving Air Quality**

In terms of air quality, NO<sub>2</sub> concentration readings show a downward trend. This is in line with seasonal variations in NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations. A conclusion about the impact of the scheme on air pollution could be drawn if more pre-implementation data was available.

## **Encouraging Active Journeys to School**

While the school interview suggested that there has been an increase in active travel, the mode split survey indicates the opposite. This could be due to there being only 26 students surveyed in 2020, and 502 in 2021, so the results are not directly comparable. Due to the data available, it is hard to draw a clear conclusion as to whether this aim has been met.

## **Reducing Private Vehicle Use**

Within the limited public consultation response, one respondent highlights that road safety has increased due to a reduced number of cars and another suggests that the scheme has helped resolve issues around heavy traffic and unsafe parking. Mode split data however shows a different story, suggesting that private vehicle use has increased. As discussed, this data is not particularly reliable. As such, we remain inconclusive as to whether the scheme has achieved this aim.

# Recommendation

Based on the data gathered, the scheme appears to have public approval and the approval of the school. The number of public responses is low, however, given that members of the community had almost a year to submit their feedback on the Brentfield Primary School Street Scheme, it can be assumed there are no further problems with it to be addressed. We recommend that this scheme be made permanent and continues to be monitored by the Council.



# Appendices

## Appendix A – Air quality data

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO <sub>2</sub> (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	Breathe Clean data (4-8 week snapshot) (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )	NO <sub>2</sub> reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m <sup>3</sup> )												
		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
37.86	36.6	22.54	X	X	34.93	29.96	28.68	X	21.81	18.96	20.44	18.77	27.21	26.99