



Brent School Streets Review

OLOG Scheme Report

MP Smarter Travel

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OLOG School Street

Background

In September 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Dollis Hill Avenue, as highlighted on the map below. The OLOG School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School (OLOG), which educates students from age four to age seven. This School Street also aims to ease the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, by providing extra space for social distancing.

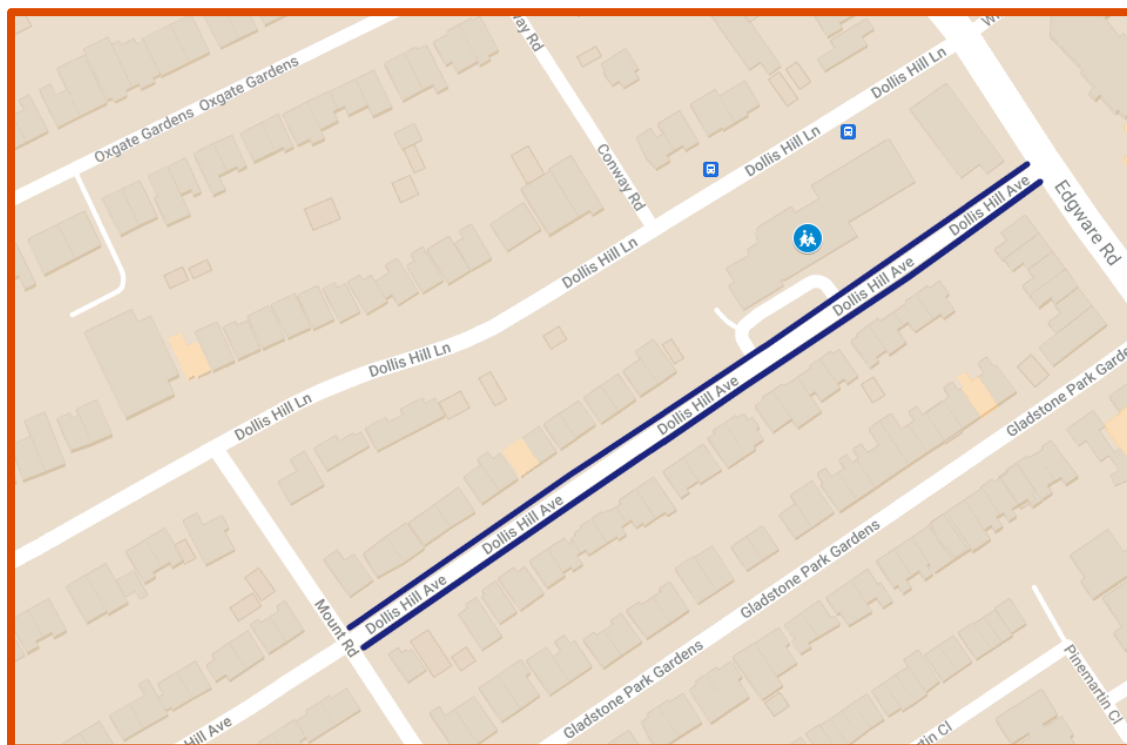


Figure 1 – Map showing location of the School Street, and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School.

Summary of Data Analysis

As part of Brent Council’s Emergency School Street consultation process, the council collected multiple datasets including:

- Public consultation
- Air quality data
- School interviews

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 OLOG public consultation received 22 responses in total, 19 of whom live outside of the scheme. 19 of the responses included a comment, all of which have been analysed thematically to highlight relevant comments.

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	9	22%	78%
Opposes School Street	13	8%	92%

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	Concerns about access to vulnerable people/of vulnerable people to healthcare facilities	2
	Concerns about access to school of parents who live further away	5
	Concerns about impact on bus services	1
Parking	Supports reduction in inconsiderate parking/idling	2
	Concern about displaced parent parking	1
Traffic Levels	Support reduced traffic/congestion due to scheme	3
	Concerns about displaced traffic on other roads	8
Health	Supports cycling/walking for health and wellbeing	2
	Support reduced air pollution due to scheme	2
	Support low-traffic streets for safety (particularly of children)	2
	Concerns about increased air pollution from displaced traffic	2
	Concern about safety of children on school street	1
	Concern about social distancing along main roads	1
General	Support scheme for environmental/climate benefits	1
	Concern about implementation and enforcement of rules	2
	Feels that scheme is unnecessary	2
	Complaint about making public thoroughfare private	1
	Request to make road one-way instead of imposing a closure	1
	Unclear to drivers if scheme operates in term time only	1

The public response to the OLOG scheme was more negative than it was positive, with most parents feeling it is causing more problems than it is solving.

The most referenced themes were that respondents were:

1. Concerned about displaced traffic on other roads
2. Concerned about access to school for parents who live further away

Key Concerns

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

Highways Changes

Within the public OLOG consultation, some requests and suggestions were made for specific highways changes, these are shown in table 3. Requests included calls for an extension of the School Street scheme, and a request for traffic calming measures on Dollis Hill Lane.

Table 3 – Highways changes

Highways Change	Count
Implement another School Street for Our Lady of Grace Junior	1
Speed bumps on eastern section of Dollis Hill Lane, leading to the A5	1
Scheme should be extended to include Gladstone Park Gardens	1

Blue Badge Holders

Of the 22 public consultation responses, two people identified themselves as having a disability, and both opposed the OLOG School Street scheme. One person stated that it makes life difficult for parents who have more than one child to collect from different schools. The other respondent said that they support the objectives of the scheme but not the implementation, as social distancing will not be necessary in the long term, and the replacement of the barrier with a camera would seem to them to be for income generation purposes for the council.

Air Quality

As part of the OLOG School Street scheme, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) 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](#)) for reference.

Figure two shows an initial rise in NO₂ concentration around the winter months, and then a downward trend into summer, which is in line with seasonal trends for NO₂. 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 air quality datasets.

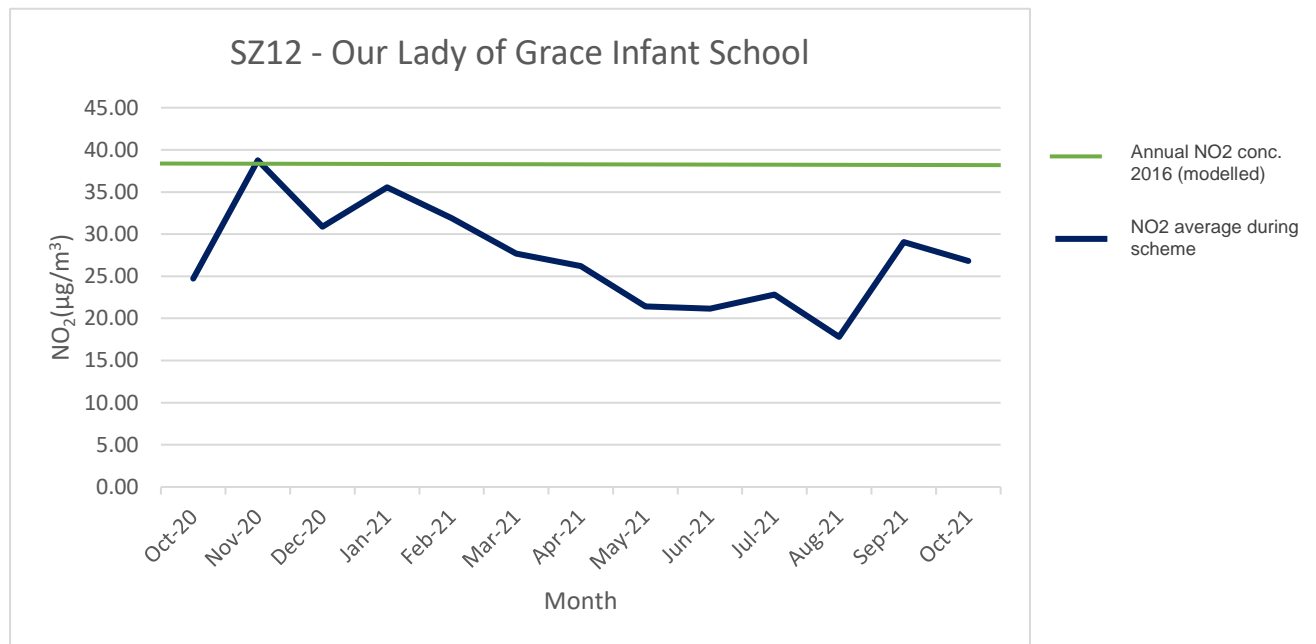


Figure 2 – NO₂ concentration at Our Lady of Grace Infant School

It is important to note that this data represents NO₂ 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 Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School has had a generally positive experience of the scheme, with more details of the interview shown in the table below. The school requested that a permanent barrier or traffic cameras be installed to support enforcement.

Table 4 – Interview summary

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive (changes needed)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safer environment for pupils, parents, and staff• Encourages active travel• Reduced pollution and idling• Provided more space for social distancing
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responsibility of staff to set up cones• Staff do not have time to monitor cones throughout restricted times so sometimes they are moved and not replaced• Restriction times could be reduced to minimise impact on residents
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review restriction timings, possibly reduce scheme to 45 minutes at the start and end of the school day• School would like to replace barrier with camera• If cameras are installed, school requests further engagement to inform people of the changes, and improved signage to ensure drivers are aware

Conclusion

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

Providing Space for Social Distancing

Two people in the public consultation mentioned that they appreciated the scheme for its positive impact on social distancing. The school interview with Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School also shows that they feel social distancing has been improved. Therefore, this aim can be classed as a success.

Improves Air Quality

Air quality monitoring completed outside of the school shows a general decline in NO₂ concentration throughout the spring and summer of 2021, in line with seasonal trends for NO₂. 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

From the school's perspective there appears to have been an increase in active travel which is a positive impact of the scheme. Unfortunately, very few respondents mentioned active travel in the

public consultation responses, and without mode shift data, it is hard to draw a clear conclusion as to whether this aim has successfully been met.

Reducing Private Vehicle Use/Resident Views

There is little evidence of people reducing their private vehicle use or being willing to do so.

Only three residents responded to the public survey, two being in favour and one being opposed, citing issues like people being fined and traffic being displaced to other roads like Gladstone Park Gardens and Dollis Hill Lane.

Recommendation

Based on the data analysed, we are recommending that this scheme remains in place while additional investigations can be conducted. Data suggests the school itself seems positive about the scheme. The public consultation results were not predominantly positive, however, we feel that many concerns can be satisfied through additional education, resources and investigation from the Council.

In order to address the public's greatest concern that the scheme has 'displaced traffic on other roads' we recommend that the Council:

- Gather observations of the scheme's surrounding roads while the school street is in operation. Use these observations to identify whether traffic levels are particularly high on surrounding streets.

The concern of displaced traffic and the impact of the scheme on parents who travel from further away can also be addressed through School Travel Plan work and specific educational resources shared through the school. These resources and School Travel Plan support would help show students, parents and staff alternative ways of getting to school other than using a car. The school could also set up designated drop off points or start a structured ride-sharing programme.

For highways changes (See table 5) we recommend:

- Further public consultation for any scheme extensions or additional temporary road closures in the area
- Consultation with highways engineer about the installation of speed bumps on the easternmost section of Dollis Hill Lane

Appendices

Appendix A – Air quality data

Table A1 – Air quality data Our Lady of Grace Catholic Infant School

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m ³)												
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
38.19	24.74	38.76	30.89	35.54	31.92	27.69	26.20	21.44	21.15	22.83	17.81	29.08	26.83