



Brent School Streets Review

John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine's Scheme Report

MP Smarter Travel

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John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine's School Street

Background

In September 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Crownhill Road (NW10 4EB), from Manor Park Road to Harlesden Gardens, as highlighted on the map below. The Crownhill Road School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside John Keble School (ages 3-11) and Maple Walk Prep School (ages 4-11). This School Street also aims to ease the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, by providing extra space for social distancing.

The St Claudine's Catholic School also has an entrance within this scheme, and they became engaged in the scheme shortly after its implementation. Maple Walk Prep School ultimately dropped out of the scheme due to the level of verbal abuse being received by their staff when manning the barriers. Despite some issues, for which we include recommendations for resolving, the Crownhill Road School Street was well-received by the public overall.

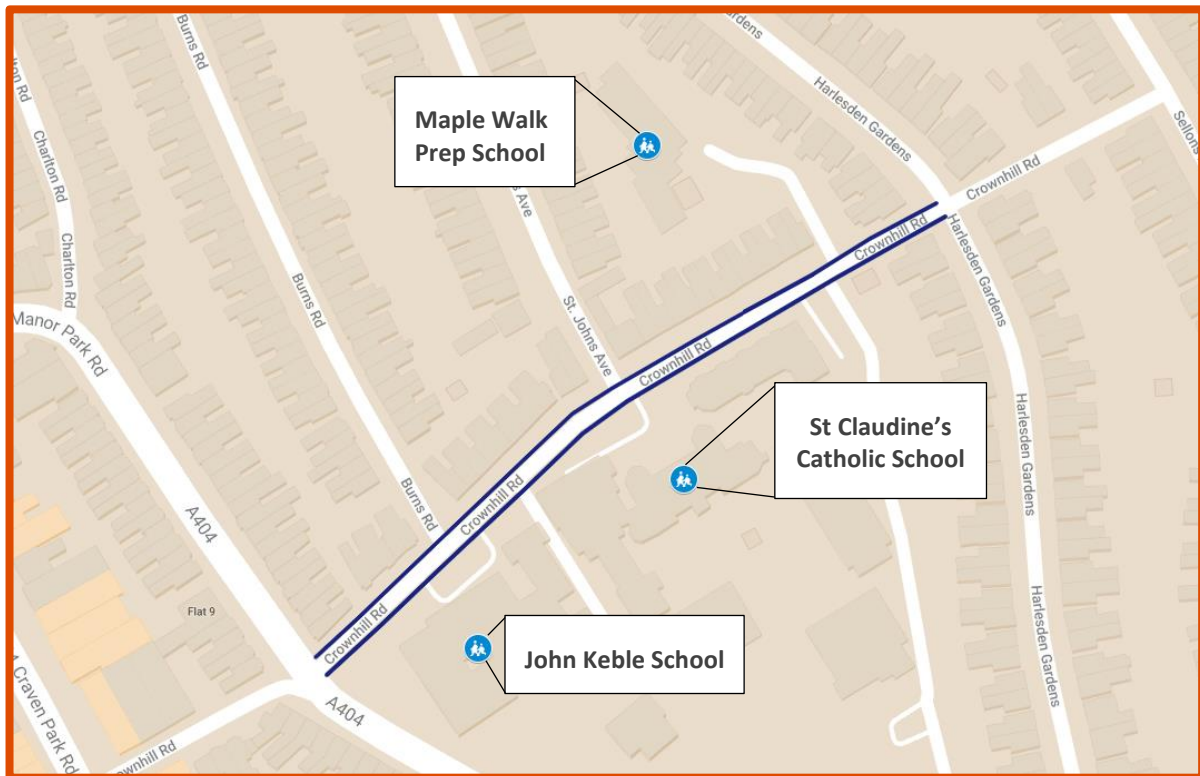


Figure 1 – Map showing location of School Street, John Keble School, Maple Walk Prep School and St Claudine's Catholic School.

Summary of Data Analysis

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

- Public consultation
- Parent & guardian consultation
- Air quality data
- School interviews
- Travel mode data
- Site observations

It should be noted that both the public and parent & guardian datasets were not split by school, so in most cases, unless a specific road was named, it is not possible to determine exactly which part of the scheme they are referencing. These comments have been interpreted as talking about the scheme as a whole.

Below we present our analysis of these datasets, along with a recommendation for any changes to the scheme and whether it should be permanent.

Public Consultation

From August 2020 to July 2021, members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the experimental scheme. The John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine’s public consultation received 81 responses in total, 80 of whom live outside of the scheme. 76 of these 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	73	0%	100%
Opposes School Street	8	12%	88%

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	Support hierarchy of modes	6
	Concern about feasibility of people walking/cycling	3
	Concern about residents’ access to homes	2
Consultation	Concern about perceived lack of information for residents	2
Parking	Support reducing idling and poor parking	1
	Concern about personal safety travelling further to parked car/moving barriers	1
	Concern about resident and teacher parking	1
Traffic Levels	Support reduced traffic/congestion due to scheme	9
	Concern about increased traffic on other roads (particularly Harlesden Gardens)	15
	Concern about efficiency of car journeys	2
Health	Support low-traffic streets for safety (particularly of children)	37
	Support reduced air pollution due to scheme	33
	Support increased social distancing due to the scheme	8
	Feel the scheme has improved quality of life and/or community spirit (reduced road-related aggression and tension)	3
	Support cycling/walking for health and wellbeing	1
	Concern about safety of children on School Street	4
	Concern about pollution along other roads	2
	Concern about social distancing along main roads	1
General	Support stricter measures and penalties for reducing car dominance (particularly wardens and fines)	8
	Feel inconvenience is outweighed by benefits	8
	Support scheme for environmental/climate benefits	4
	Concern about implementation and enforcement of rules	9
	Request to extend scheme (spatially)	3
	Feel road closure lasts too long in the day	1
	Scheme seen as confusing	1

The most referenced themes were that respondents:

1. Support low-traffic streets for safety (particularly of children)
2. Support reduced air pollution due to the scheme
3. Concern about increased traffic on other roads (particularly Harlesden Gardens)

Key themes one and two are in support of the School Street, indicating that benefits are being felt by the public in the key topic areas of air pollution and pupil safety. 37 people support low traffic streets for increased safety, making it the most

Key theme three, the most common oppositional theme, was concern about displaced traffic on other roads, with 15 people stating this as an issue. The road most mentioned was Harlesden Gardens, with eight people highlighting it as a problem area for displaced traffic and displaced parking, including one person whose car was hit twice in one week as a result (Response ID ANON-V7EF-91E1-R).

Parent & Guardian Consultation

The parent & guardian consultation yielded six responses, none of whom were residents of the scheme. Three of these people use public transport to travel to the school, one drives, and one uses a mix of public transport and walking.

The table below shows the responses to the key questions of the parent & guardian consultation.

Table 3 – Parent & guardian consultation

Question	Response	Percentage
Overall, are you happy that the school participated in this scheme?	Yes	83%
	No	17%
Would you like the scheme to be made permanent?	Yes	50%
	Yes (with changes)	17%
	No	33%

The table below presents the results of a thematic analysis of responses to the question: “Do you have any comments about the scheme? E.g., what has worked well or not so well.”

Table 4 – Parent comment themes

Code Frame	Theme	Count
Enforcement	Concern about promptness of cones being put out	1
Traffic	Concern about displaced traffic on other roads	2
Health/Safety	Support safer roads for children	1
	Concern about air pollution from displaced traffic	2
	Concern about social distancing	1
Accessibility	Concern for access of children with additional needs (e.g., disabilities, safeguarding risks)	2

Parent & guardians’ view of the scheme was largely positive; however, the parent & guardians raised a number of concerns in the comment section of the survey. Two of the themes most referenced by parent & guardians were concern about displaced traffic on other roads (unspecified), and the

resultant increase in air pollution. Another point raised was concern that children who may have additional or specific needs may not be accounted for in the scheme.

Key Concerns

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

Highways Changes

Within both the public and parent & guardian John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine's consultations, a number of requests and suggestions were made for specific highways changes. The most commonly cited issues were centred around Harlesden Gardens and the traffic it has been experiencing since the implementation of the School Street. This was an issue that came up eight times, five people suggested highways changes to resolve it, three simply identified it as a problem.

Table 5 below shows a summary of the highways changes suggested, and how many people suggested them.

Table 5 – Highways changes

Highways Change	Count
Extend School Street to all of Crownhill Road – junction of Harlesden Gardens and Crownhill Road is dangerous, and parents park illegally at Harlesden Gardens	3
Make Harlesden Gardens a one-way system	2
Close St John's Avenue where it meets Harlesden Gardens – prevent people from speeding down it then turning around when they reach Crownhill Road	1
Install speed large speed bumps (like those on Drayton Road) on St John's Avenue	1

Blue Badge Holders

Of the 87 combined public and parent & guardian responses, one person considered themselves to have a disability. This individual, who is also a resident, supports the scheme for making them feel safer when riding on their mobility scooter. They also highlighted one issue they had experienced. The person monitoring the cones would not allow their taxi driver to drive into the scheme, despite the respondent having very limited mobility. The respondent stated that this was a one-off issue.

Air Quality

As part of the John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine’s School Street scheme, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels were monitored at the schools 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 NO₂ concentration recorded in 2019 as part of the Breathe Clean programme, just before the scheme was implemented, for reference. The Breathe Clean data was not available for John Keble, and so the modelled average for 2019 was included in figure 3 instead ([LAQN Monitoring Statistics](#)).

*See Appendix A for full air quality datasets.

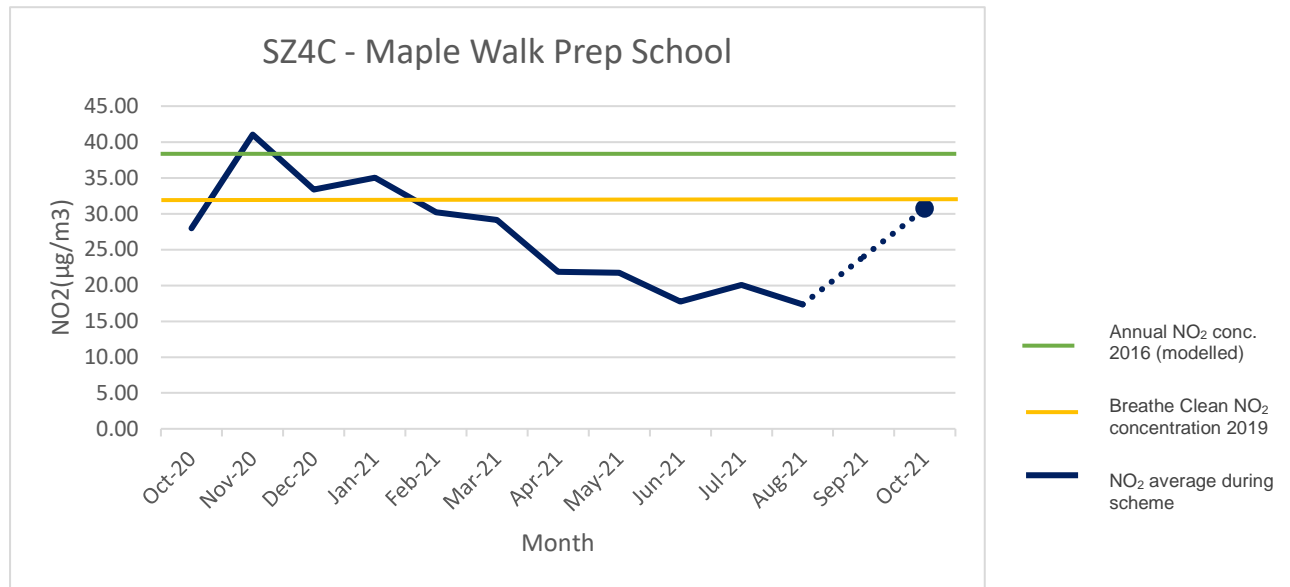


Figure 2 – NO₂ concentration at Maple Walk Prep School

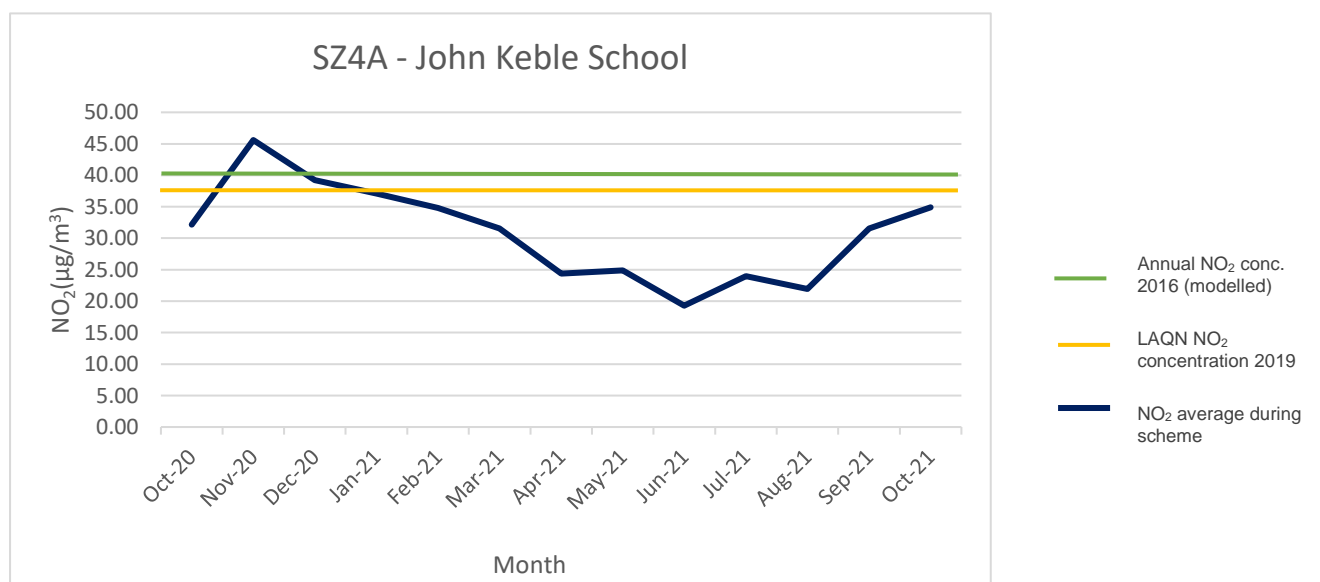


Figure 3 – NO₂ concentration at John Keble School

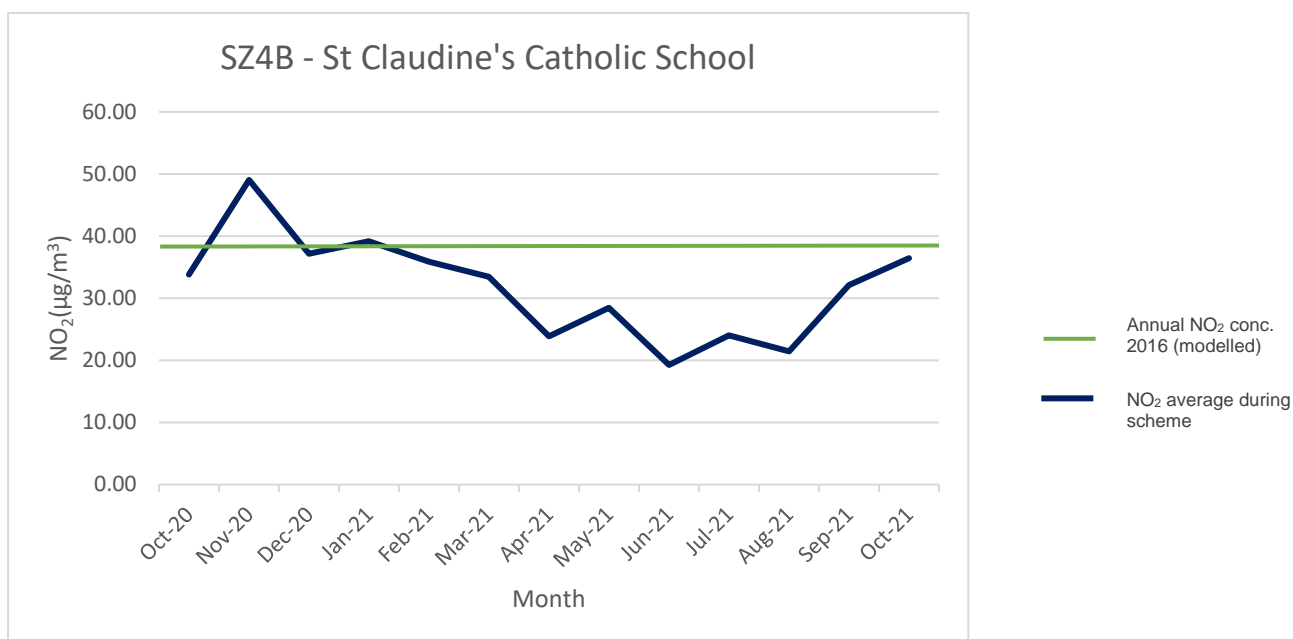


Figure 4 – NO₂ concentration at St Claudine’s Catholic School

Figures 2, 3 and 4 show 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.

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

MP Smarter Travel’s interview with John Keble School revealed a generally positive experience of the scheme. Table 6 below shows a detailed summary of the interview. The school also requested that a traffic camera be installed if the scheme should continue.

Table 6 – Interview summary (John Keble)

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive (adjustments needed)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space for social distancing • Better community feeling • Reduced air pollution (anecdotal) • Improved road safety • Implementation was smooth and supported • Increase in cycling/walking
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drivers ignoring/moving cones • Teachers in conflict with drivers
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera monitoring

MP Smarter Travel’s interview with John Keble School revealed a generally positive experience of the scheme. Table 7 below shows a detailed summary of the interview. However, they also emphasised

the difficulties being faced by staff in trying to enforce the scheme, with negative impacts upon the mental health of the staff being a key priority. Maple Walk Prep School is unlikely to continue the scheme without further support from the council, including a traffic camera.

Table 7 – Interview summary (Maple Walk Prep School)

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive (adjustments needed)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council engagement and prior information were good • Increase in walking/cycling/scooting • Reduction in vehicles • Improved road safety
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff feel at risk (temporarily stopped scheme due to abuse from drivers) • Limited support from council since implementation • High amount of staff time required
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera monitoring • Permanent barrier • Traffic warden support

MP Smarter Travel’s interview with St. Claudine’s Catholic School revealed a positive experience of the scheme in terms of impacts, however, the school did also highlight some issues they have had with implementation and monitoring the barrier.

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive (adjustments needed)
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space for the pupils to enter and leave the school site in a safe and healthy manor. • A better atmosphere outside the school. • Reduction in school-related traffic
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some drivers are verbally aggressive to staff • In rare cases drivers have ignored staff at the barriers and driven down the road (these are not parents or residents, but people using the road as a rat run)
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cameras and improved signage • Permanent barrier

Travel Mode Analysis

Travel mode surveys were completed at both John Keble (July 2018) and Maple Walk Prep School (September 2019) before the school street was implemented and after the implementation of the scheme (November 2020), to identify any changes in travel modes.

At both John Keble and Maple Walk, the number of students undertaking active travel slightly decreased, while car use slightly increased. This may be due to the fact that the first surveys were performed in July and September respectively, while the surveys during the scheme were both carried out in mid-to-late November. Students are less likely to undertake active travel when the weather is colder and wetter.

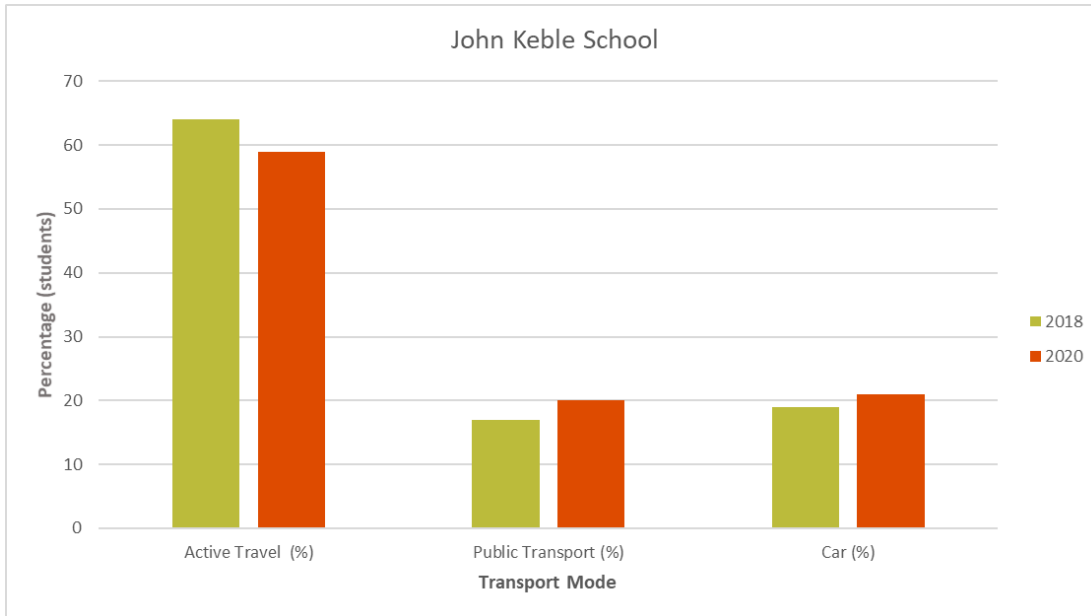


Figure 4 – Graph of travel modes of students at John Keble School in 2018 compared to 2020.

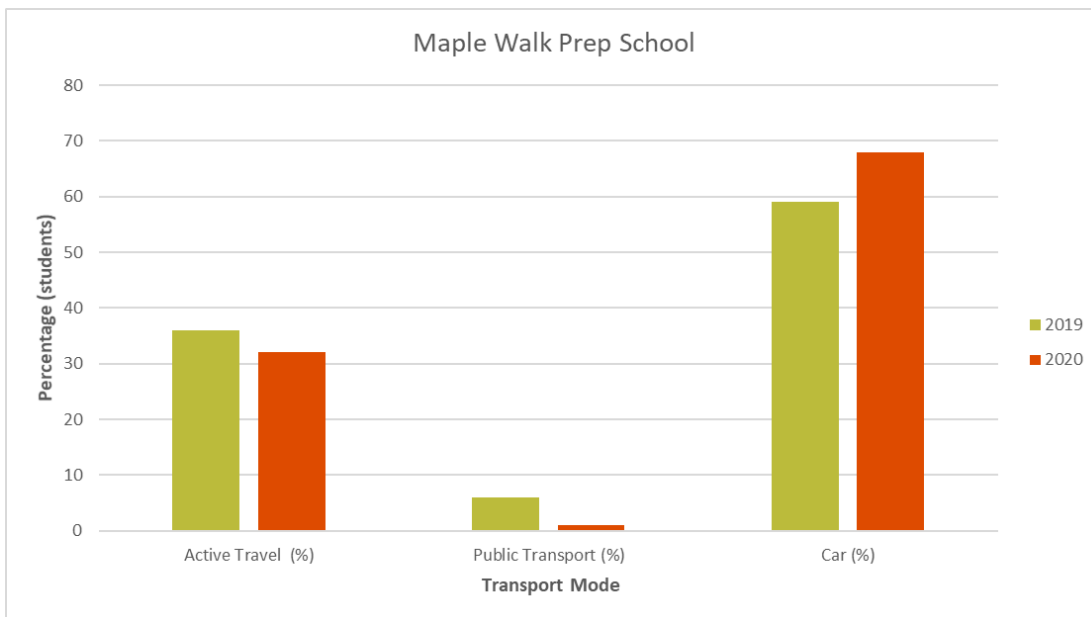


Figure 5 – Graphs of travel modes of students at Maple Walk Prep School in 2019 compared to 2020.

Site Observations

Brent Officer site observations of the Crownhill Road scheme were carried out on the 20th of May 2021. This was after Maple Walk Prep pulled out of the scheme due to staff distress, so at this time the other barrier was outside St Claudine’s Catholic School. The following observations were made:

- Congestion at Harlesden Gardens (mentioned frequently in public survey responses)
- Parent parked over driveway at Harlesden Gardens
- Parent parked on corner at junction of St Johns Rd

The recommendation made by the officer was to close off roads up to Ashdon Road, including closing Harlesden Gardens. However, there is hesitancy as this may simply displace the traffic to Drayton Road.

Conclusion

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

Providing Space for Social Distancing

The social distancing aim of the scheme appears to have been a success. Eight people in the public consultation specifically mentioned that they feel it has made social distancing easier on the school run. There are those who disagree, with one parent saying the scheme has not improved social distancing, and one member of the public voicing concern over lack of social distancing and people gathering in groups on the pavements.

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. John Keble School stated that they feel the scheme has reduced the levels of air pollution around their site.

Encouraging Active Journeys to School

Based on the data in figure 4, the number of active journeys to school has not been enhanced by this scheme, with small increases in both public transport and car use being observed. As mentioned, this may be due to the time of year the surveys were undertaken, so further data may need to be gathered at similar times of year for the data to be directly comparable.

Reducing Private Vehicle Use

The public consensus was overwhelmingly positive, with 90% of respondents in favour of the School Street. Reduced congestion and increased safety for pupils were key factors in this positive feedback. Only one consultation respondent was a resident within the School Street on Crownhill Road and they were not in favour of the scheme, saying it causes displaced congestion and dangerous driving, and that the time periods of operation are too long.

Support for the School Street was reflected in the results of the parent & guardian consultation, with 50% responding that they would like the scheme to continue in the future, and 17% saying they would like the scheme to continue under the condition of minor changes being made.

The school interview solidifies the positive impression of the scheme, highlighting impacts like improved road safety and reduced traffic. The Maple Walk Prep School interview also emphasises the importance of further support with implementation going forward, in the form of provisions of cameras, sturdier barriers or wardens.

Recommendation

Based on the data gathered, we are providing a recommendation for the John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine's School Street to remain in operation, with some changes to implementation and

monitoring practices, and further investigation into a proposed closure of Harlesden Gardens. In both the public consultation and school interview, wardens and more secure barriers were requested to take pressure off school staff. We recommend that ANPR cameras are installed instead of barriers or wardens, as it will eradicate the need for a person to be monitoring the scheme, as well as acting as a deterrent for those intending to disobey the scheme.

We recommend that the council work with Maple Walk Prep School to address their problems and re-engage them in the scheme.

We are recommending further data collection and analysis of the following:

- Mode split data at a similar time of year to the baseline data
- Observations of footfall and crowding at pick-up and drop-off (social distancing)

For highways changes in the areas of Harlesden Gardens and St John's Avenue (see table 5) we recommend:

- Further public consultation into the extension of the John Keble, Maple Walk and St Claudine's scheme to cover Harlesden Gardens, or to make Harlesden Gardens one-way
- Consultation with highways engineers for adding speed bumps on St John's Ave.
- Public consultation on closing off St John's Ave./incorporating it into the School Street scheme

Appendices

Appendix A – Air quality data

Table A1 – Air quality data for Maple Walk Prep School

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	Breathe Clean data (4-8 week snapshot) (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m ³)												
		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
38.23	32.9	27.95	41.03	33.39	35.04	30.18	29.14	21.90	21.78	17.74	20.05	21.92	31.55	34.89

Table A2 – Air quality data for John Keble Primary School

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	LAQN modelled data 2019 (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m ³)												
		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
40.5	37	32.17	45.6	39.24	37.07	34.79	31.46	24.37	24.89	19.28	23.96	17.35	X	30.70

Table A3 – Air quality data for St Claudine's Catholic 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.
38.18	33.82	49.04	37.16	39.16	35.89	33.47	23.86	28.44	19.26	24.01	21.46	32.10	36.43