



Brent School Streets Review

Sudbury Scheme Report

MP Smarter Travel

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Sudbury School Street

Background

In November 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Perrin Road, as highlighted on the map below. The Sudbury School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside Sudbury Primary School, which educates students from ages five to 11. This School Street is also intended to provide more space for social distancing, to help to ease the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

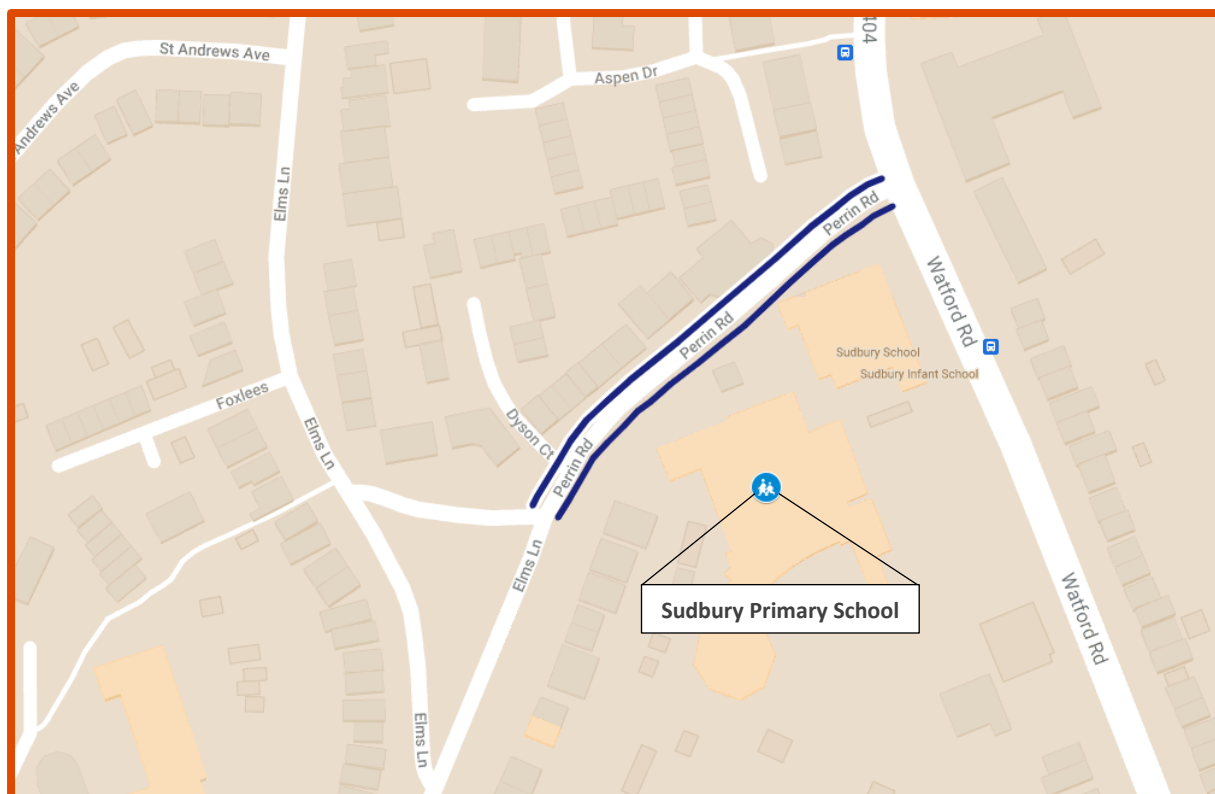


Figure 1 – Map showing location of the School Street and Sudbury Primary School.

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
- Travel mode data
- Site observations

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

Public Consultation

From November 2020 to July 2021, members of the public were invited to provide feedback on the experimental scheme. The Sudbury public consultation received 36 responses in total, 34 of whom live outside of the scheme. 32 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	26	8%	92%
Opposes School Street	10	0%	100%

Table 2 displays the key points 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. Yellow comments represent themes that are neither supportive nor oppositional.

Table 2 – Public comment themes

Code Frame	Theme	Count
Active Journeys	Supports children doing active journeys to school	3
	Observed increase in active journeys	1
Access	Concern about parents who need to drop kids off in the car to then go to work	1
	Concern about access of tradespeople to resident homes	1
Parking	Support reducing idling and poor parking	3
	Concern about inconsiderate displaced parent parking (blocking driveways, on corners, refusing to move)	3
	Concern about parents still stopping illegally on Watford Road near Perrin junction	1
Traffic Levels	Support reduced traffic/congestion due to scheme	3
	Concerns about displaced traffic on other roads (St Andrew's Avenue, Watford Road, Elms Lane)	8
	Concern about journeys taking longer	2
	Concern that accidents will be caused by cars suddenly being unable to turn off Watford Road	1
	Concern about parent traffic disrupting residents around Watford Road	1
Health	Support scheme for safety (particularly of children)	14
	Support reduced air pollution due to scheme	3
	Feel scheme has improved community feel/calmness	2
	Supports increased space for social distancing	2
	Supports scheme for environmental benefit	1
	Concern about increased air pollution from displaced congestion	4
	Complaint about pre-scheme traffic noise pollution alarming pets and waking children	2
General	Drivers have now become used to the scheme	1
	Request to include school section of Watford Road in scheme	1
	Request for restriction times to be reviewed (feels they are too long)	2
	Request for enforcement camera to also capture common fly-tipping zone (Dyson Court/Perrin Road/Elms Lane)	1

	Suspects the scheme has not been implemented (June)	1
	Request for enforcement by traffic officers	1
	Request for Elm's Lane junction with Harrow Road to become two-way	1
	Concern scheme will make life harder for parents/residents	2
	Scheme is too inconvenient	1
	Concern about scheme running even in school holidays	1
	Negative feelings towards Brent council e.g., spending, priorities	1

The most referenced themes were that respondents:

1. Support the scheme for safety (particularly of children)
2. Have concerns about displaced traffic (St Andrew's Avenue, Watford Road, Elms Lane)
3. Have concerns about air pollution from displaced traffic

Despite the latter two of these key themes being oppositional points, 72% of respondents were in favour of the Sudbury School Street scheme. This suggests that the public area largely happy with the scheme, but would like to see changes. 39% of respondents mentioned that they appreciate the scheme for improving the safety of the school road for children, parents, and residents.

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 the public Sudbury School Street consultation, two requests were made for specific highways changes. These are listed in table 3, below.

Table 3 – Highways changes

Highways Change	Count
Request to include school section of Watford Road in scheme	1
Request for Elm's Lane junction with Harrow Road to become two-way	1

Blue Badge Holders

One respondent to the public consultation identified themselves as having a disability. They voted in opposition to the scheme but did not provide a comment as to why.

Air Quality

As part of the Sudbury 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](#)) and the NO₂ concentration recorded in 2019 as part of the Breathe Clean programme, just before the scheme was implemented for reference.

*See Appendix A for full air quality datasets.

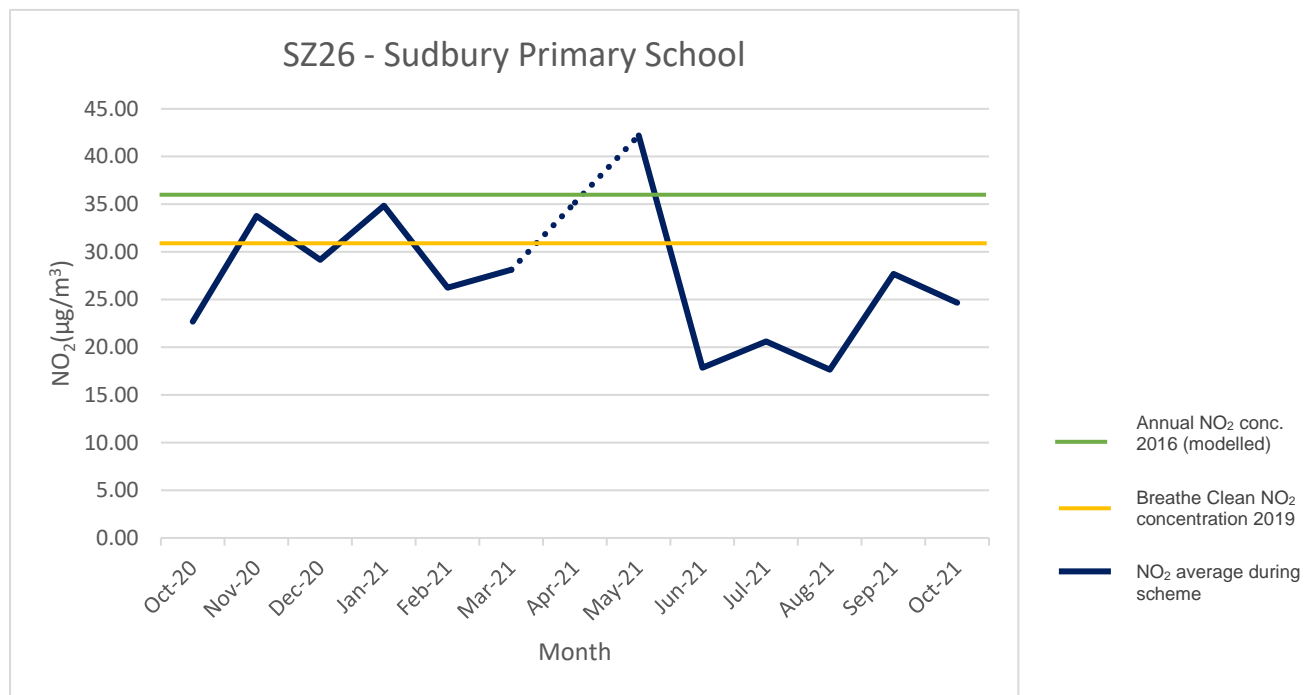


Figure 2 – NO₂ concentration at Sudbury Primary School

Due to the missing data in April, the inconsistency of the readings and the lack of any clear trend, no firm conclusions can be made based on this air quality data. Furthermore, 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

Through interview, MP Smarter Travel found that Sudbury Primary School has had a generally positive experience of the scheme, with more details of the interview shown in the table below. The school requested a camera to be installed as the primary method of enforcement, as a way of protecting staff safety and resources.

Table 6 – Interview summary

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Huge reduction in number of vehicles outside school gates • Improved road safety outside school gates • Increase in pupils walking, cycling, and scooting
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have received racial abuse while monitoring the barrier, shown no signs of improvement • No process in place for admitting visitors, causing confusion • Monitoring the barrier has huge cost to school in terms of human resource • Extra space for social distancing is not used by parents, who still crowd
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera used as main method of enforcement

Travel Mode Analysis

Students at Sudbury Primary School were surveyed before (July, 2019) and after (May, 2021) the implementation of the scheme, to identify any changes in travel modes.

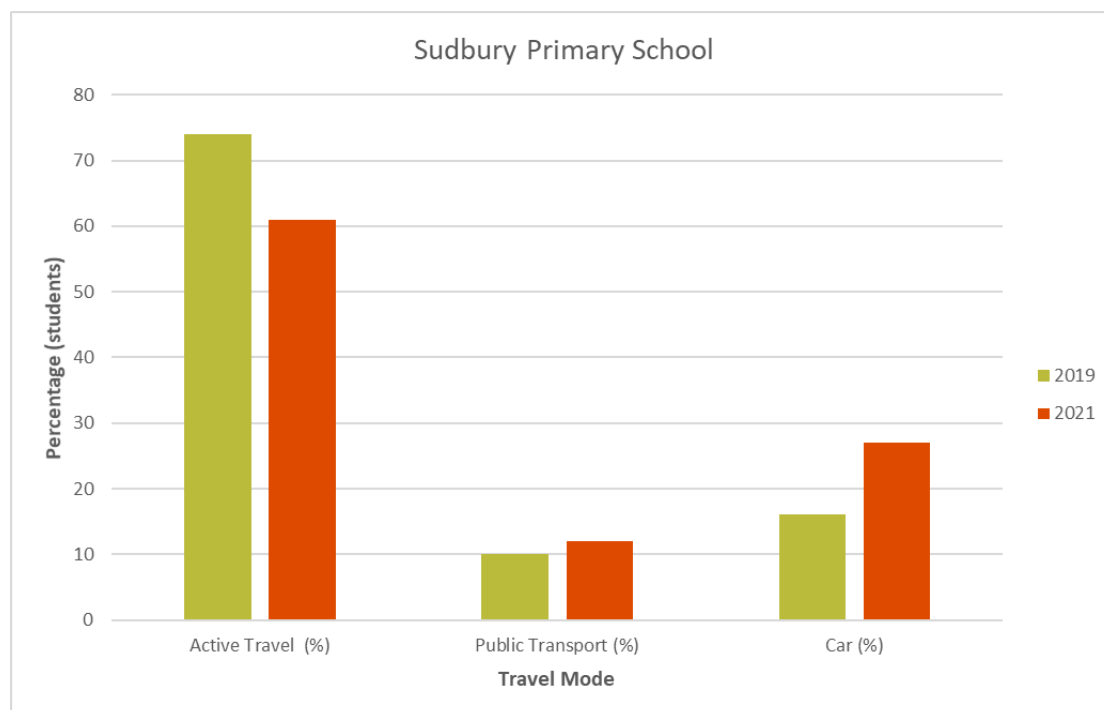


Figure 4 – Graph of travel modes of students at Sudbury Primary School in 2019 compared to 2021.

Active travel at Sudbury Primary School has decreased by 13% since 2019, while car use has increased by 11%. This could be as a result of the pandemic; parents may be preferring to drive their children and stay within their family bubbles. The Sudbury School Street scheme does not appear to have significantly encouraged active transport.

Site Observations

The Brent Officer site observation of the Sudbury School Street scheme was carried out in July 2021. The following observations were made:

- Parents are encouraged to use Vale Farm Car Park – a raised table has been installed on road leading to it to slow down traffic
- Parents are still parking illegally on Watford Road
- Barrier on Perrin Road has improved safety and parking

The recommendation made by the officer was to have parking enforcement on Watford Road to stop illegal parking and encourage more Vale Farm use. They also recommended that the council discuss the parking arrangements with the school to establish long-term parking solutions.

Conclusion

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

Providing Space for Social Distancing

The school stated that space for social distancing has been provided, but that it is not being used by parents, who are choosing to gather and crowd outside the school gates. Two individuals in the public consultation said that they felt social distancing had been improved by the scheme. As a result, the aim of providing space has been a success, even if the opportunity to social distance is not being taken up by the parents.

Improves Air Quality

Although three people in the public consultation said they supported the scheme for providing better air quality, the success of this aim cannot be assessed at this time. This is due to the NO₂ data being too ambiguous to draw a clear conclusion. Furthermore, more pre-implementation data would be required.

Encouraging Active Journeys to School

One person in the public consultation said that they had observed an increase in students taking active journeys to school, and the school itself said they had seen an increase in students walking, cycling and scooting. The mode split data does not reflect these findings, so this aim can be labelled as only somewhat successful.

Reducing Private Vehicle Use/Resident Views

Private vehicle use does not appear to have been significantly reduced by this School Street scheme. The observation by the Brent Officer mentions that many parents are now parking their cars either in Vale Farm car park or illegally on Watford Road, suggesting private vehicle use is still prevalent. The mode split data reveals that car use has increased by 11% since 2019, further supporting the assertion that this aim has not yet been achieved.

Two residents responded to the public consultation, both being in support of it. One listed the reduced road noise as a key benefit, saying previously it had been disturbing pets and children, and the other raised concern about parents parking their cars inconsiderately near the barrier.

Recommendation

Based on the data analysed, we are recommending that the Sudbury School Street scheme remain in place. The public consultation showed that people are largely in favour of the scheme (72%), as it provides improved safety and calmness at pick-up and drop-off.

In order to help the scheme meet its aims, we recommend further steps to deter parents from driving, for example a scheme extension, or parking restrictions in the immediate area. We also recommend that Brent Council continue to monitor air quality at the school to build a consistent record of data to be compared with previous years, allowing the Council to better assess whether this aim has been met.

We also recommend that ANPR cameras are installed for monitoring, to save on staff time and to protect staff from the verbal abuse they have been subject to when enforcing the scheme.

For highways changes (See table 3) we recommend that Council highways officers assess the viability of a scheme extension and conversion of Harrow Road to a two-way road.

Appendices

Appendix A – Air quality data

Table A1 – Air quality data for Sudbury Primary 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.
36.69	32.2	22.70	33.76	29.18	34.84	26.24	28.12	X	42.21	17.87	20.61	17.65	27.69	24.68