



Brent School Streets Review

Oakington Manor Scheme Report

MP Smarter Travel

109 The Print Rooms
180 Union Street
London SE1 0LH

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Oakington Manor School Street

Background

In November 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Oakington Manor Drive, Chippenham Drive and Chalfont Avenue, as highlighted on the map below. The Oakington Manor School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside Oakington Manor Primary School, which educates students from age three 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 Oakington Manor School Street and Oakington Manor 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
- Parent & guardian 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 Oakington Manor public consultation received 25 responses in total, 5 of whom live outside of the scheme. All of these responses included a comment, all of which have been analysed thematically to highlight relevant comments.

The table below summarises the proportions of respondents 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	Location Unknown
Supports School Street	13	7	5	1
Opposes School Street	12	0	10	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. Yellow comments represent themes that are neither supportive nor oppositional.

Table 2 – Public comment themes

Code Frame	Theme	Count
Parking	Support reducing idling and poor parking due to scheme	6
	Concern about inconsiderate displaced parent parking (idling, blocking driveways, on corners, refusing to move) e.g., Wyld Way	10
Traffic Levels	Support reduced traffic/congestion due to scheme	4
	Concerns about displaced traffic on other roads	4
	Concern about efficiency of journeys e.g., time, fuel, money	1
	Displaced congestion has damaged parked cars	1
Health	Support reduced air pollution due to scheme	5
	Support scheme for safety (particularly of children)	4
	Feel scheme has brought them peace/reduced stress	2
	Feel scheme has reduced confrontations with drivers	2
	Support social distancing due to scheme	1
	Support reduced noise pollution due to scheme	1
	Feel scheme has increased confrontation with drivers	3
	Concern about increased air pollution from displaced congestion	1
General	Request to extend scheme to surrounding area	5
	Request for traffic wardens to be present in the mornings	1
	Request to not replace the barriers with cameras	1
	Parents are arriving earlier to get a parking spot	1
	Request to open up all closed roads in Brent	1
	Negative feelings towards Brent council e.g., spending, priorities	1

The most referenced themes were that respondents were:

1. Concerned about displaced inconsiderate parent parking
2. Supportive of reduced idling and poor parking due to the scheme
3. Supportive of reduced air pollution due to the scheme
4. Requesting to extend scheme to the surrounding area

Key theme one, highlighting the issue of displaced inconsiderate parent parking, reveals that there are still changes that need to be made in order to better accommodate the scheme without negatively impacting neighbouring areas. The requests to extend the scheme to surrounding areas (key theme four) is certainly worth considering as an option to resolve the issue identified key theme one.

Parent & guardian Consultation

The parent & guardian consultation yielded 28 responses, one of whom was a resident of the scheme. Table 3 shows the primary modes of transport used by the parents & guardians:

Transport Mode	Count	Percentage in Support of Scheme
Walk	11	100%
Drive	11	64%
Walk and drive	3	33%
Cycle	2	50%
Walk and public transport	1	100%

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

Table 3 – Parent & guardian consultation

Question	Response	Count
Overall, are you happy that the school participated in this scheme?	Yes	25
	No	3
Would you like the scheme to be made permanent?	Yes	14
	Yes (with changes)	6
	No	8

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
Active Travel	Supports encouraging active travel	1
Consultation	Concern about lack of consultation/warning for residents	1
Parking	Concern about displaced parking	2
	Concern that scheme has made parking difficult	1
Traffic	Supports reduced congestion due to scheme	3
Health	Support reduced air pollution due to scheme	3
	Support scheme for safety (particularly of children)	3
	Concern about having to walk in bad weather with babies/toddlers	2
Implementation	Request to extend scheme (to cover Brent Way, to corner of Vivian Avenue)	2
	Request to add a zebra crossing outside school	1
	Request to change times of the School Street	1

Parent & guardians’ view of the scheme were largely positive. The most common themes were:

1. Supports reduced congestion due to scheme
2. Support reduced air pollution due to scheme
3. Support scheme for safety (particularly of children)

These key themes indicate that the scheme is having a positive effect on the local community. It's also interesting to note that 64% of parents that drive their children to school support the scheme.

The most mentioned concern was that in bad weather it may be difficult for parents having to walk further distances with their young children and babies.

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 Oakington Manor consultations, three requests were made for specific highways changes. These are listed in table 5, below.

Table 5 – Highways changes

Highways Change	Count
Request to add a zebra crossing outside school	1
Request to extend scheme (to cover Brent Way, to corner of Vivian Avenue)	2
Request to extend scheme to surrounding area	5

Blue Badge Holders

Two of the respondents to the parent & guardian consultation identified themselves as having a disability. Both people were happy that the scheme had been implemented, and supportive of it becoming permanent, and neither one provided a comment.

Air Quality

As part of the Oakington Manor School Street scheme, Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels were monitored at Oakington Manor Primary School from November 2020 to October 2021*. Figure 2 presents this data along with the modelled annual average for 2016 ([Annual Pollution Maps](#)) for reference.

*See Appendix A for full air quality datasets.

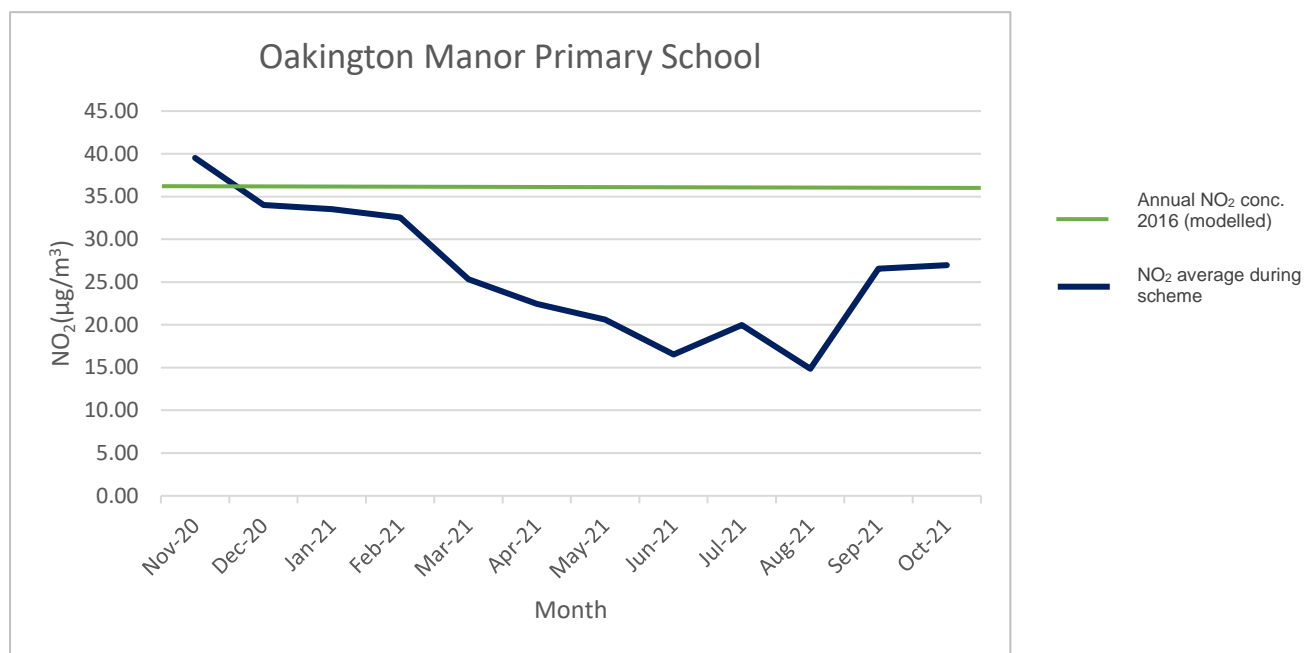


Figure 2 – NO₂ concentration at Oakington Manor Primary School

Figure 2 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.

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 Oakington Manor Primary School has had a generally positive experience of the scheme, with more details of the interview shown in the table below. The school is happy to continue the scheme.

Table 6 – Interview summary

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road safety has been improved • Positive response from the local community • Provided space for social distancing

Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some complaints from residents on surrounding roads who claim that traffic has been displaced onto their roads.
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None

Travel Mode Analysis

Students at Oakington Manor Primary School were surveyed before (May, 2016) and after (July, 2021) the implementation of the scheme, to identify any changes in travel modes.

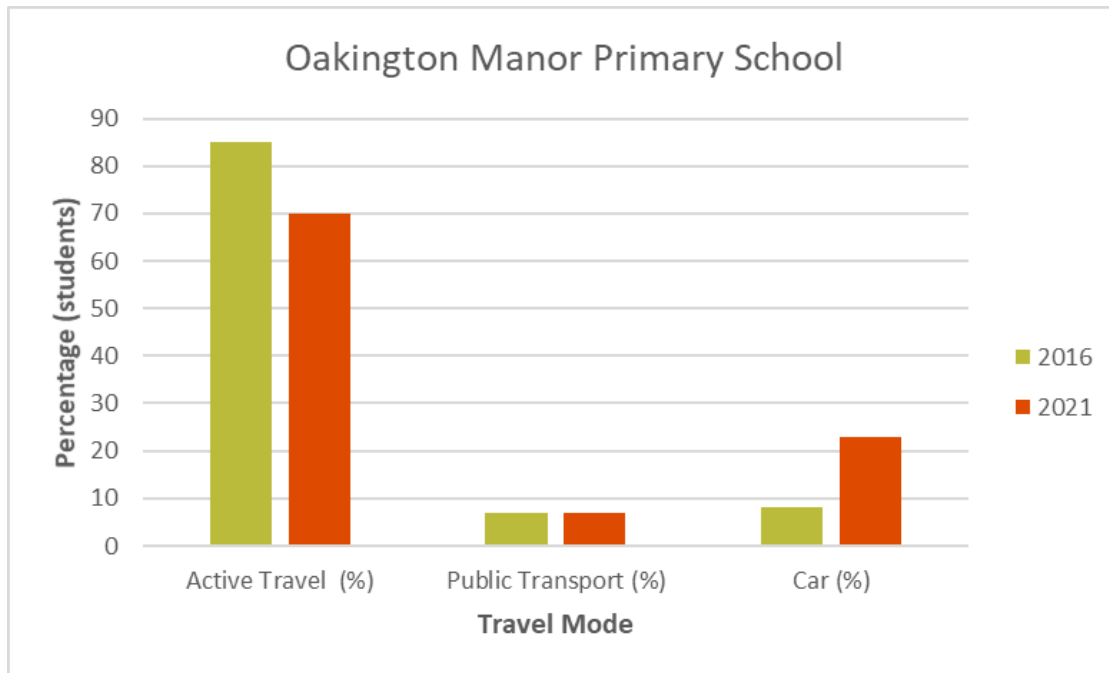


Figure 3 – Graph of travel modes of students at Oakington Manor Primary School in 2016 compared to 2021.

Active travel at Oakington Manor Primary School has decreased by 15% since 2016, while car use has increased by 15%. This could be as a result of the pandemic; parents may be preferring to drive their children and stay within their family bubbles rather than walking amongst other people or taking public transport. There is also a five-year gap between the datasets, so it is unknown if the number of students taking part in active travel has increased since immediately prior to the scheme. The Oakington Manor School Street scheme does not appear to have significantly encouraged active transport. Travel modes should be monitored over a longer period to assess the scheme's impact.

Conclusion

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

Providing Space for Social Distancing

The school said in their school interview that they feel like the Oakington Manor School Street has provided space for social distancing outside Oakington Manor Primary School. This aim's success is further supported by one person who responded to the public consultation, commenting that it is now easier to remain socially distant at the gates. This suggests that this scheme has been a success, although further observations from school or Council staff would enable a stronger conclusion.

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. Five people in the public consultation, and three people in the parent & guardian consultation said that they thought the scheme was good for improving air quality.

Encouraging Active Journeys to School

The travel mode data in figure 3 does not show an increase in students engaging in active journeys to school. However, this could be due to not having data immediately before the scheme's implementation, which would show more accurately how much of the fluctuation in travel modes is a direct result of the scheme. None in the public or parent & guardian consultation mentioned that they had observed an increase in active journeys to school, so the success of this aim remains inconclusive.

Reducing Private Vehicle Use/Resident Views

Four people in the public consultation, and three in the parent & guardian consultation, felt that the scheme had resulted in reduced congestion, which could be indicative of reduced private vehicle use. However, within the public consultation, 10 people cited concern about displaced parent parking and idling, and four mentioned concerns about displaced traffic, suggesting that private vehicle use has not been significantly reduced by the scheme, but instead displaced.

The mode split data shows an increase in car use of 15% between 2016 and 2021, although as previously mentioned, this may not be a direct impact of the scheme.

Overall, from the data available, the aim of reducing private vehicle use has not yet been met. School streets are designed to nudge road users away from using their cars for the school run, this behaviour change can take time, and therefore it is important to continue to monitor private vehicle use to map the scheme's impact.

Residents who responded to the consultation were entirely in favour of the scheme, with one responding to the parent & guardian consultation and seven responding to the public consultation. Comments included themes such as:

- Feeling peaceful, less stressed, and less worried.
- Reducing congestion and air pollution.
- Increasing safety on the road.
- Concern about people parking across driveways close to the barrier.

Recommendation

Based on the data analysed, we are recommending that the Oakington Manor School Street remain in place. Given that the primary focus of the School Street is to benefit the children at Oakington Manor Primary School, it is significant that 89% of parents & guardians are happy that the scheme was trialled, and 71% of them felt the scheme should be made permanent (either with or without changes). The school itself is also very much in favour of this scheme, further supporting this recommendation.

Public opinion is divided, with the primary concern being around displaced parent parking. Seven requests were made to resolve this issue by extending the scheme to the surrounding area (see table 5). An expansion would further decrease the likelihood of parents driving. However parents highlight that exceptions would need to be made for those with disabilities or disabled children. We recommend the option of extending the scheme is investigated by Brent Council's highways officers. If deemed viable and advantageous, then we recommend additional public consultation around the expansion. Particular areas that were mentioned to be having problems and could be candidates for an expanded scheme are:

- Western section of Oakington Manor Drive
- Wyld Way
- Southern section of Chalfont Avenue

We also recommend further data collection and analysis of the following:

- Observation of footfall and crowding at pick-up and drop-off (social distancing)

For the additional highways change of adding a zebra crossing outside the school (See table 5) we recommend consultation with highways engineers to look at the feasibility and need for this.

Appendices

Appendix A – Air quality data

Table A1 – Air quality data for Oakington Manor Primary School

Baseline LAEI 2016 Annual mean NO ₂ (µg/m ³)	NO ₂ reading from Diffusion Tube - RAW DATA (µg/m ³)											
	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.
36.13	39.52	34.01	33.55	32.57	25.34	22.45	20.60	16.53	19.98	14.86	26.57	26.98