



Brent School Streets Review

Leopold Scheme Report

MP Smarter Travel

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Leopold School Street

Background

In September 2020, a School Street scheme was introduced through an experimental traffic order on Hawkshead Road, as highlighted on the map below. The Leopold School Street was created to reduce air pollution and improve road safety outside Leopold 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.

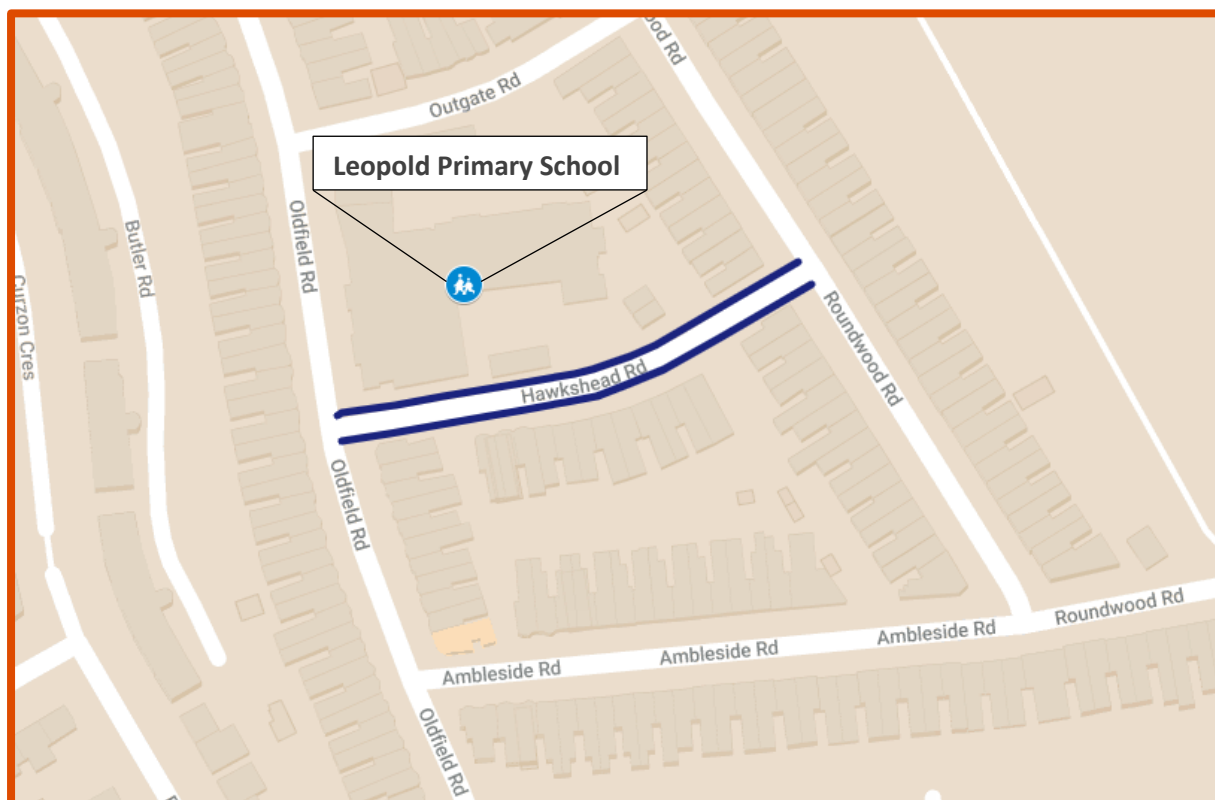


Figure 1 – Map showing location of the Leopold School Street and Leopold Primary School.

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 August 2020 to July 2021, members of the public provided feedback on the experimental scheme. The Leopold public consultation received 10 responses in total, nine of whom live outside of the scheme. Eight 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	10	1	9
Opposes School Street	0	0	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
Active Travel	Supportive of encouraging active travel/changing car-focused attitudes	2
Health	Support scheme for improved air quality	5
	Support scheme for safety (particularly of children)	3
General	Request for cycle lanes (+low traffic roads for walkers and clear, good quality pavements)	3
	Request for more public engagement and information on the scheme	1
	Concern about school staff being able to monitor the barrier	1
	Concern about uneven pavements and gravelly road surfacing on Hawkshead Road	1

The most referenced themes were that respondents:

- Support the scheme for improving air quality
- Support the scheme for improving the safety of roads
- Would like more cycle lanes to be installed, alongside more low traffic roads and good quality pavements.

There were no negative themes mentioned in any comments, and all respondents supported the Leopold School Street.

Parent & guardian Consultation

Only one person responded to the parent & guardian consultation for the Leopold scheme, they were not in favour of the scheme or the prospect of making it permanent. This individual is not a resident of the scheme, and their most regular form of transport is driving. They commented only that their local school is not on the list on the online form they filled out. It is unknown how close to the scheme this person lives.

Key Concerns

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

Highways Changes

Within the public Leopold consultation, a number of requests and suggestions were made for specific highways changes, as shown in the table below. Requests for more cycle lanes in the area was the most common comment.

Table 3 – Highways changes

Highways Change	Count
More cycle lanes	3
More low-traffic roads	1
Improvements to pavement surfaces	1
Resolving loose stones on Hawkshead Road surface	1

Blue Badge Holders

None of the respondents in this consultation identified themselves as having a disability.

Air Quality

As part of the Leopold 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.

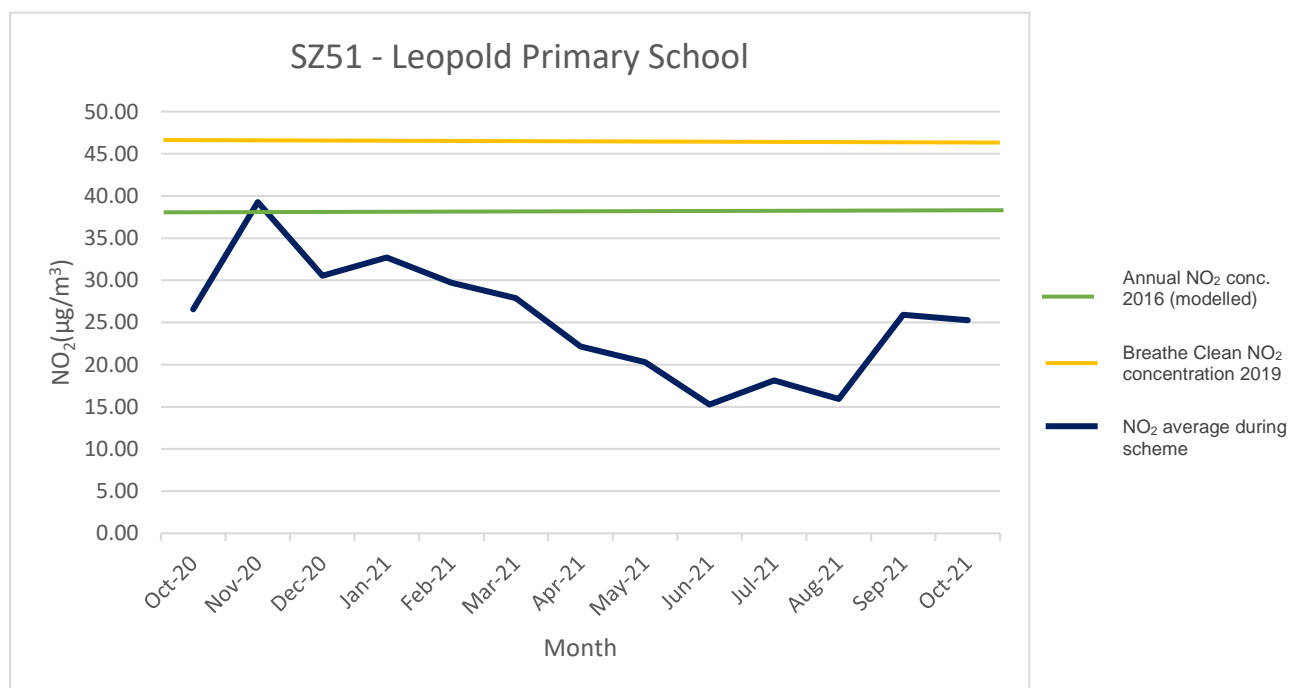


Figure 2 – NO₂ concentration at Leopold Primary School

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, with all readings remaining below the baseline averages from previous years. 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 Leopold 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 that the scheme have camera monitoring added to it, as well as a change to its extent to account for the school's two new entrances.

Table 6 – Interview summary

Overall Opinion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Street is much safer for children and parents • Parents and pupils really like it and have provided very positive responses • A lot fewer vehicles on the School Street
Concerns/drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School does not have provision to monitor the cones, and when they have, they have been confronted by angry and aggressive drivers • Most cones have been stolen, leaving only one cone • Current restrictions are making traffic worse at the two new school entrances
Requests for continuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera monitoring • Change extent of restrictions to cover new school entrances on Oldfield Road and Outgate Road

Travel Mode Analysis

Students at Leopold Primary School were surveyed before (June, 2017) and after (July 2021) the implementation of the scheme, to identify any changes in travel modes.

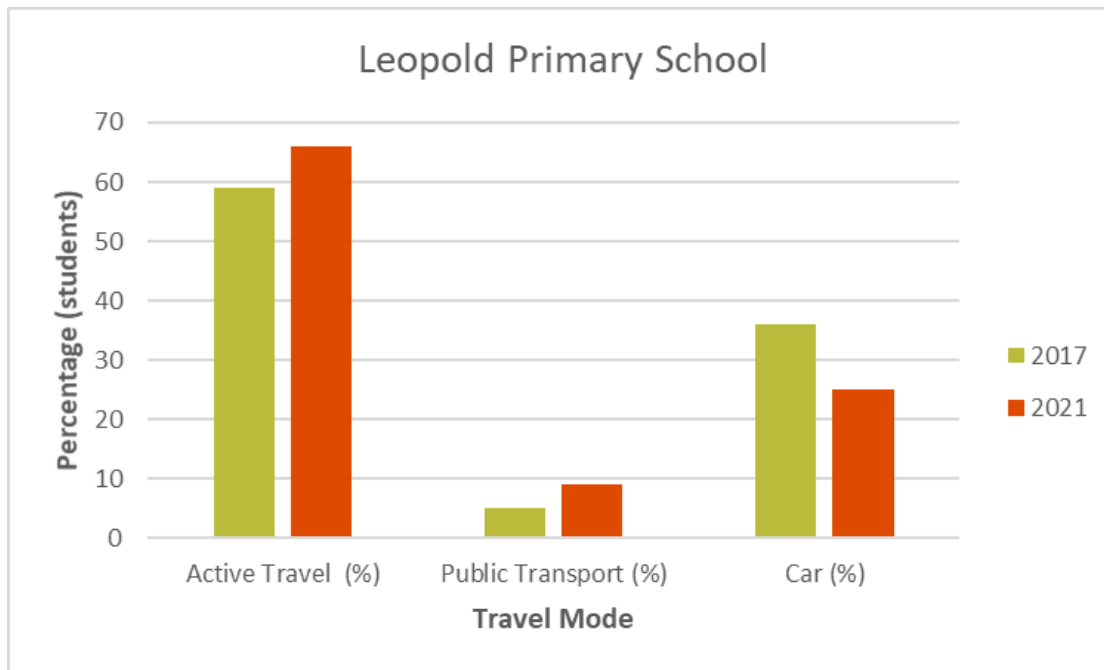


Figure 4 – Graph of travel modes of students at Leopold Primary School in 2017 compared to 2021.

Figure 4 shows that active travel has increased by 7% since 2017, accompanied by a 4% increase in public transport use, and an 11% decrease in car use. This cannot be entirely attributed to the School Street with certainty, but it does suggest that the Leopold School Street scheme has been effective in facilitating active travel.

Site Observations

A Brent Council Officer carried out a site observation of the Leopold scheme in May 2021. The following observations were made:

- Some congestion on Roundwood Road at Roundwood Road/Hawkshead Road junction
- A couple of drivers ignored the closure and moved the cones.
- More children were walking to school than had previously been

The officer stated that extending the school street would likely cause more congestion on Church Road.

Conclusion

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

Providing Space for Social Distancing

In their interview, the school said that the scheme has provided more space for social distancing, but that parents still cluster at the gates, in spite of the school's attempts to stop this. This indicates that

the scheme has been successful in providing the space for social distancing, even if parents are choosing not to utilise it.

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

Based on the school's mode split data, the Leopold scheme does appear to have helped encourage active journeys to school, as they have increased by 7% since 2017.

Reducing Private Vehicle Use/Resident Views

Private vehicle use seems to have been reduced, as the percentage of students being driven to school has decreased by 11% since the 2017 survey. Two people in the public consultation commented that they are supportive of encouraging active travel and changing car-focused attitudes. The reduction in car use and the public support for it are indicative of this aim being a success.

Only one resident responded to the consultation. They were in favour of the scheme for improving road safety, and mentioned concerns about the road surface of Hawkshead Road, saying children are falling over and injuring themselves.

Recommendation

Based on the data analysed, we are recommending that the Leopold School Street scheme is made permanent as it has met the aims of Brent Council's School Streets initiative. The public response to the scheme was entirely positive, with no negative comments being submitted and every respondent voting in support of the scheme.

For highways changes (See table 3) we recommend consultation with highways engineers, particularly on the issue of cycle lanes, which seems to be a priority for local people.

Appendices

Appendix A – Air quality data

Table A1 – Air quality data for Leopold 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.	March	April	May	June	July			
38.12	46.9	26.57	39.27	30.55	32.69	29.72	27.90	22.15	20.28	15.27	18.15			