

30 June 2010

Dear Principal and School Travel Plan coordinator

Chaos at the school gates

As a result of the meetings that we have had with schools involved in the School Travel Planning initiative, the Sustainable Travel Team have found that many schools experience concerns / road safety issues regarding child safety exiting the schools, particularly in the afternoon.

In response to this issue, and working in conjunction with Hamilton Police, we will run a "chaos at the gates" campaign. For this to be a success and provide continued improvements after the campaign, your school will need to be actively involved in the campaign in order to show the parents that you are serious about road safety.

Education

This week you will have received 'Being Roadsmart for School' pamphlets to be sent home to your school families as the first step in the campaign.

For Staff - Attached is a checklist of unsafe road behaviour to watch out for. It is essential for schools to have staff assigned to entry/exit points during Week One of Term 3 to discuss this behaviour as it occurs and educate on expected improved behaviour.

For Parents - We will also provide an information sheet for the school to issue to those parents observed to be exhibiting unsafe road behaviour — this can be done how the school see fit:

- either at the time of the infringement, or
- to go home with the child that day.

This could be an opportunity for the school to track trends of behaviour:

- is it only particular parents/is it widespread?
- is it recurring/one-off incidents?
- is it only at one site/is it at all exits/entrys?

(The school can either supply us with specific information eg number plates of offenders, or general information eg trends).

Enforcement

During Week Two, Term 3, the Hamilton Police will be visiting your school neighbourhood to enforce any illegal parking, speeding, and any other road safety issues that arise, during school peak times and forward their findings to us.

Education

The Sustainable Travel Team will provide you with feedback from this campaign in Term 3, and continue to work with you to improve the safety for the children at the school gates.

Regards,

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Checklist for Schools

'We tell children how to be and they keep mirroring what we are. Children learn by example...' - Joseph Chilton Pearce

What are you Looking For?

Illegal Behaviour

- Parking on the yellow lines
- Parking in bus stops
- Parking on the berm
- Overstaying time limited car parks
- Parking over driveways
- Not crossing at marked pedestrian crossings when within 20metres of one
- Exceeding 40 k's

Unsafe Road Behaviour

- Double/triple parking
- Not crossing at marked pedestrian crossings when available
- Letting children out on the road side (instead of the kerb side)
- Not accompanying children across the road
- Beckoning children across the road and encouraging them to cross unaccompanied

Discourteous Behaviour

- Parking in people's driveways
- Reversing into traffic
- Executing a 3 point turn manoeuvre outside school gates
- Executing illegal or unsafe road behaviour
- Not giving way to children and pedestrians
- Ignoring school signs
- Disrupting the free-flow of cars through drop off/pick up zones

What Do You Tell Them?

1. Explain the behaviour eg "I see you are parked on yellow lines"
2. Explain the result of the behaviour eg "When you park there the visibility of the children crossing the road is reduced putting them at risk"
3. Explain the appropriate behaviour eg "Please park in a appropriate car park and walk your child to the/from the gate"

How long does it take to see improvement?

This can be negotiated with the Sustainable Travel Team and the school within a 'reasonable and realistic timeframe'. For any improvement to be achieved a sustained and consistent approach needs to have been maintained.

Further Action If Needed

If unsafe/illegal/discourteous behaviour continues the school may feel it necessary to

- call on support from Hamilton City Council Staff in the Sustainable Travel Team. The Team will take a similar approach to the school in emphasising undesirable behaviours at the school gates to parents
- advise the Sustainable Travel Team/Parking Enforcement Officers/Police of car number plates for further action to be taken. A warning letter or an infringement notice may be issued