



Goldfield Travel News - June 2008

Following the Goldfield Travel Survey in February we now have a better understanding of the issues faced by our children, parents and staff travelling to and from school. We have used this information to compile a Travel Plan which has been approved by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC). The Department of Education & Skills and Department of Transport are jointly providing one off grants to schools who complete such a plan and we are expecting to receive around £5,000 soon!!

A copy of the full Travel Plan is now available to be viewed on the website. We haven't included all the appendices but if you would like to see them please ask at the Office.

Key Issues

From your responses we have identified 3 key issues which we need to address:

1. Inadequate parking facilities
2. Lack of a cycle/scooter storage
3. The infrastructure around the school i.e.:
 - lack of a drop pavement at the Goldfield Road entrance
 - lack of zebra crossing between Christchurch Road and the High Street
 - lack of a zebra crossing facility on Miswell Lane
 - poor quality of path across the recreational ground
 - dog excrement on most of the approaches to school

Objectives

In order to address these issues we have set ourselves some objectives:

1. To reduce the number of cars parked inconsiderately near the school
2. To reduce the number of unnecessary car journeys to school
3. To encourage more children to cycle, scoot or walk to school
4. To contact the relevant HCC departments to make them aware of the infrastructure issues for our school

Actions

A detailed action plan is included in the Travel Plan on the website. However, the key action areas involve:

1. Raising awareness of the issues
2. Encouraging more road safety & pedestrian skills training in the school curriculum
3. Purchasing a bike shed

Raising Awareness

- Our first step towards meeting our objectives is to try to raise general awareness of the issues. We all know what it is like when you are rushed in the morning and have to get the kids to school on time. However, we are trying to promote a safe environment for our school and would ask everyone to spend a little time thinking about how you can help this. We need to reduce the speed of vehicles, park considerately and become more aware of the pedestrians in the roads surrounding our school. Small changes will be of huge benefit for all of us.
- As you will be aware, we have been able to increase the number of school staff over the past few years and we do need to provide spaces for them to park. The car park accessed from Christchurch Road is now too small for our staff and we have had to stop them double parking there to ensure the delivery vehicles can obtain access to the school. As such, we have asked the staff to use the car park accessed from Goldfield Road if the other is full. Therefore, you may find that this car park is busier than usual.
- As a result of this extra demand for spaces it may be necessary to park elsewhere. Previously we have received complaints from local residents regarding the parking around the school and would hope that you would consider their needs when parking outside their homes.
- The access roads to the school are for the use of emergency vehicles so we must ensure that we allow adequate access for them if required. A few weeks ago, an ambulance was needed at Goldfield Park and it was just by sheer luck that a parked car had not blocked access. We have been advised that it would be very difficult for an emergency vehicle to fit through the access road when it is full of parked cars. Please try to leave the space at the very end of the road so that an emergency vehicle can swing in if required. This will also assist pedestrians when they are trying to cross this road to school.
- In line with Bishop Wood, we would like to encourage parents to "park and stride", - parking in a less congested road (or the public car park next to the library) in order to make it safer for pedestrians in the immediate vicinity of the school. This also has the added benefit of providing a little extra exercise for both you and your children! Often, this can be quicker option than parking closer to the school and having to wait to get out of the area once the bell goes!!

Road Safety & Pedestrian Skills Training

- Whilst our children do receive some training in these areas at Goldfield, we are all keen to ensure we make this a priority for the school.
- As you are aware, we participate in many initiatives; such as National Walk to School week. We want to continue to do this.
- There are many more opportunities for us to reinforce these essential road safety messages to our children and these are being investigated.
- Look out for more news in the Autumn!

Bike Shed

- As our Travel Plan has been passed for funding we intend to use this money to purchase a bike shed which we hope to have ready for next term. This was the overwhelming request from the Travel Survey and we hope that it will make it much easier for you and your children to cycle or scoot to school.
- We will be asking the children to create a set of 'Safe Rider' rules so that they will all understand when bikes and scooters can and should be used within the school grounds.
- We hope to have a week of activities to support the launch of the new bike shed.
- More to follow after the summer holidays!

Topkidz

- In line with the improved facilities for extended schools which will be available from September we will be allocating a designated parking space for the Topkidz; After School Club minibus. This will ensure that your children can be delivered and collected safely from school when attending the Club

Infrastructure

- Hertfordshire County Council has a dedicated group of experts; the Safer Routes to School (SRTS) group who are able to pull together all the necessary departments to make real improvements. SRTS can only work with a limited number of schools during each year and have submitted a bid for help in 2008/09. If we are successful, we will be able to benefit from their expert assistance in identifying and addressing the various infrastructure issues around the school area. If unsuccessful this year we will still lobby the necessary departments- it just may take us longer to achieve our aims!

Dog Mess

- We know that this is of particular concern to many of you and there have been some conflicting messages about who to contact.
- As a school we have written to the Council expressing our concern about the particular problems in our immediate vicinity.
- We would like to encourage you to voice your continued concerns about this matter to: environmental.health@dacorum.gov.uk

Other Initiatives

- Some of you have expressed an interest in setting up a walking bus and/or a car sharing database. If you are interested in either of these options please contact the school office and we will arrange a meeting to discuss how to proceed.

We would like to thank everyone who participated and contributed to our Travel Survey, including our pupil survey and School Council input. As we're sure you would agree our main aim is to help ensure that our staff, pupils and visitors stay safe and healthy. If you have any further comments or would like to be more involved please do not hesitate to make contact through the school office.

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