

Stokes Wood Primary School Travel Plan

January 2018



What we do today, matters tomorrow.

Stokes Wood Primary School Travel Plan

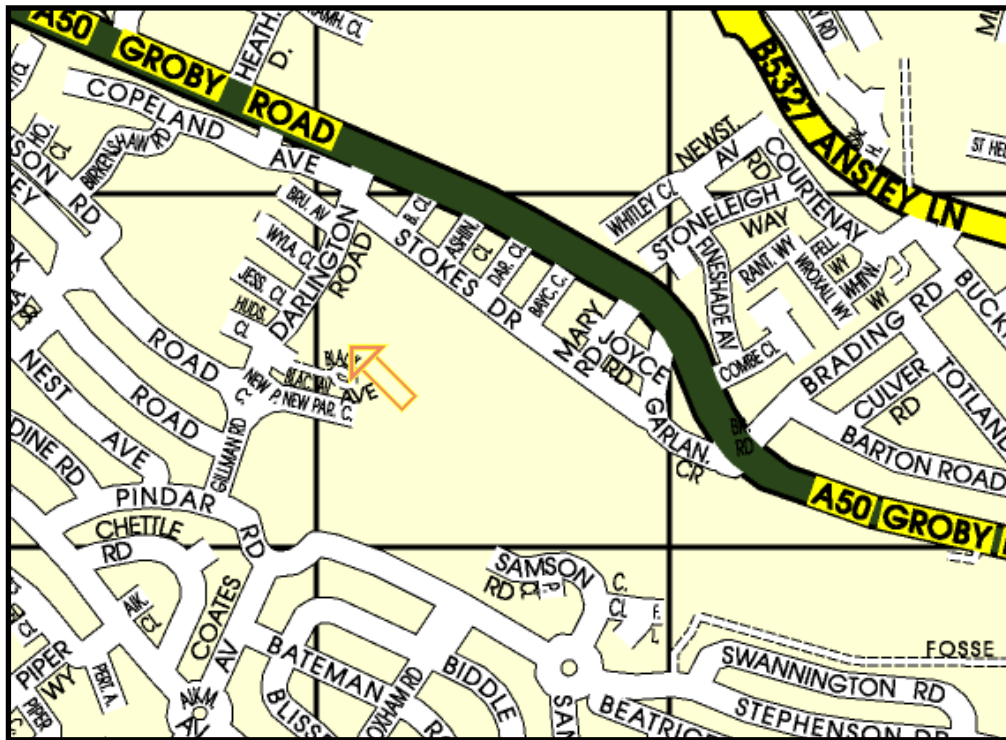
Version of travel plan:

Date: January 2018

Type of school: Primary

School address: Blackett Avenue, Leicester LE3 9BX

Location of the school: Stokes Wood Primary is a suburban school situated in the New Parks area of Leicester, approximately 2km west of the city centre.



The location of Stokes Wood Primary is marked by an orange arrow

Number of full-time pupils: 455

Number of part-time pupils: 30

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Number of staff: 78

Contacts for the school travel plan:*School contact:*

Jane Gadsby
Head Teacher
c/o Stokes Wood Primary (address as above)
Tel: 0116 287 5305 (school)
Fax: 0116 232 1032 (school)
Email: jgadsby@stokeswood.leicester.sch.uk

Local authority contact:

Mark Korczak
School Travel Plans Officer
Leicester City Council
Environment, Regeneration & Development Department
New Walk Centre
Welford Place
Leicester LE1 6ZG
Tel: 0116 223 2104
Email: mark.korczak@leicester.gov.uk

The key objectives of the travel plan are:

To reduce the proportion of pupils making school journeys by car
To increase the proportion of pupils walking and cycling for school journeys
To improve road safety in the vicinity of the school

The benefits of the travel plan will include:

Improvements in pupils' health and fitness
Enhanced pupil independence and social development
An opportunity for pupils to learn road safety skills
A chance for pupils to get to know their local environment better
Environmental improvements around the school

How the school travel plan has been developed:

In 2003, Stokes Wood Primary applied for assistance from a consultant under Central Government funded scheme to assist schools to develop travel plans. The school's application was successful, and Stokes Wood Primary was awarded five days of free consultancy advice. The consultant appointed to work with the school carried out a variety of research, the results of which form the basis of the 1st travel plan. In summary, the research involved: a teacher-led questionnaire for pupils; a parent questionnaire survey; observations of the school and its catchment at pupil arrival and departure times; map work and discussions with pupils from years 5 and 6; and consultation with parent governor Dawn Chapman.

Since January 2011 several projects have been undertaken to promote walking and cycling to school as well to encourage parents to park more safely and use appropriate seat belts/ car seats for themselves and their children.

This has been done through the Star Walker Project, a reward scheme for pupils who walk to school or at least part walk to school. It involved pupils thinking about how they could encourage their parents to park safely, a little further away to allow some walking and safe places to park (Travel Detectives project). Year 5 and 6 pupils take part in Bike-ability training each year, each year group has pedestrian training each year and Year 6 have transition/school bus training each year. These are all done through Leicester City Council: Lyn Rowe, Judy Hill and Colin Cheyney. In addition, 2 members of the School Council are Junior Road Safety Officers and they promote road safety through competitions and little events in assemblies. Since an increase in the number on role at Stokes Wood with the addition of 5 classrooms, further projects have been undertaken to promote active travel to school rather than by car: WOW, park and stride, Sustrans, pupil made parking tickets to promote safer parking.

Brief description of the current situation

The school was built to serve the 'Stokes Wood' neighbourhood of the New Parks area of Leicester. The school continues to rapidly increase in numbers and draws the majority of its children from the New Parks Council Estate. In addition, children from the adjacent private housing and from the Heathley Park housing estate attend the school. There are also a number of children who travel a greater distance, either from choice or because their local schools are full.

The busy A50 Groby Road runs a few hundred metres to the north of the school grounds. Pupils from the Heathley Park estate need to cross this dual carriageway, if they do not travel by car. The A50 has very poor pedestrian crossing facilities in the vicinity of Stokes Wood.

There are two entrances to the school grounds, both off Darlington Road. The main one, Blackett Avenue, at the brow of a fairly steep incline on Darlington Road, provides both pedestrian and vehicular access. Once through the school gates, this road descends a slope and terminates with a roundabout outside the school buildings. For added security, the gates are now controlled from the office. During the busiest times at the beginning and the end of the school day, the school gates are closed to vehicles unless it is an emergency. No vehicles can access the grounds between 8.30am and 9.15am and between 3pm and 3.30pm. This is adhered to 99% of the time. The other access is solely for pedestrians, and is located further north on Darlington Road, opposite Wylam Close, with a surfaced path linking it to the school buildings.

There is no access to New Parks Crescent and to the estate at the top of Darlington Road to prevent motorists using it as a rat-run, or an escape route onto the A50. However this means motorists, unfamiliar with this find themselves having to turn round opposite the school gates which can cause additional congestion and possible issues at busy times. In the past, but not so much recently, there have been incidents of damage and vandalism to parked vehicles owing to space constraints and frustration. More frequently it is the parents' vehicles parked in the vicinity of Stokes Wood Primary which annoy local residents as inconsiderate parents can park across driveways.

The school has a 35 space car park for staff and visitors. The school has a CCTV surveillance cameras to dissuade local youths from coming onto the school grounds and therefore keeping vandalism, theft, arson and break ins to the bare minimum.

Parks Primary, is situated no more than a few hundred metres from Stokes Wood, and both schools share a number of common problems. When considering solutions and measures to be taken to address issues of road safety, it is appropriate to consider them in a way which would have benefit for both schools.

Generally, parents choose a method of travel to school which is convenient, takes least time and is safe. Parents know that walking or cycling in preference to travelling by car is preferable and more healthy, but do not always chose these due to the other stated considerations.

Measures to promote walking or cycling for school journeys

- Reactivate and re-energise the WOW reward scheme.
- Walking bus which picks up vulnerable children to improve punctuality and attendance.
- Continue work with the community police in encouraging safe and considerate parking, through the school newsletter.
- Continue with annual pedestrian training.
- Continue with annual Year 5 cycle training
- Introduce Sustrans project.
- Remind parents of safe places to park a short distance from the school to encourage park and stride through pupil produced posters and newsletters. Put these on the school website.
- Add questions to the annual school surveys to ascertain parents' and pupils' opinions on how we can further promote walking or cycling to school and make it easier for families to walk.
- Continue with the Junior Road Safety Officers as members of the School Council.
- Apply for available funding to construct child friendly bollards to prevent parents parking on the pavement. (Initial application was turned down.)

Other measures to promote walking and cycling among pupils

To support the initiatives by the school to encourage walking and cycling for school journeys, improvements to the wider physical environment – such as pedestrian/cycle crossings, traffic speed reduction features, new and improved routes, etc – may be necessary. These will need to be considered by Leicester City Council, which has primary responsibility for implementing such measures. The extent to which the City Council is able to meet the needs and expectations of Stokes Wood Primary will depend on the availability of resources, spending priorities and, to some extent, the level of commitment to the travel plan process demonstrated by the school.

- Zebra crossing at the bottom of the hill, on Darlington Road, by the small gate.

- Speed reduction measures in the vicinity of Stokes Wood Primary. (20 miles an hour limit/speed bumps.)
- Clearer road markings and priorities at the Bonney Road roundabout. On Bonney Road there is a roundabout which does not have priority signs and cars go round in both directions which makes it difficult to cross.
- Create a more pleasant and attractive physical environment for walking.
- Enforce parking restrictions around Stokes Wood Primary access gates.
- Create a more pedestrian-friendly layout around the Blakett Avenue school access gates.
- Tackle footway parking, which is prevalent throughout the local neighbourhood.
- The school improvement plan should also include reference to the school's travel plan objectives.
- As the school population is continually changing, reference should be made to the aims of the School Travel Plan in the School Prospectus and the Department handbooks as well as on the school website.

Monitoring progress

- Add several questions to the annual school survey to monitor issues about travel to school.
- Assess whether progress is being made towards increasing the % of pupils walking or cycling to school and ascertain the continuing or new barriers.
- If/when targets are attained, review the need for new – perhaps more challenging – targets.
- Inform parents of the progress towards travel plan targets through survey feedback summaries and the school newsletter which will also be placed on the school website.
- The travel plan should be updated annually.