



Manley Park Primary School Street

A report by
Walk Ride Whalley Range
September 2023

PEDESTRIAN
and CYCLE
ZONE



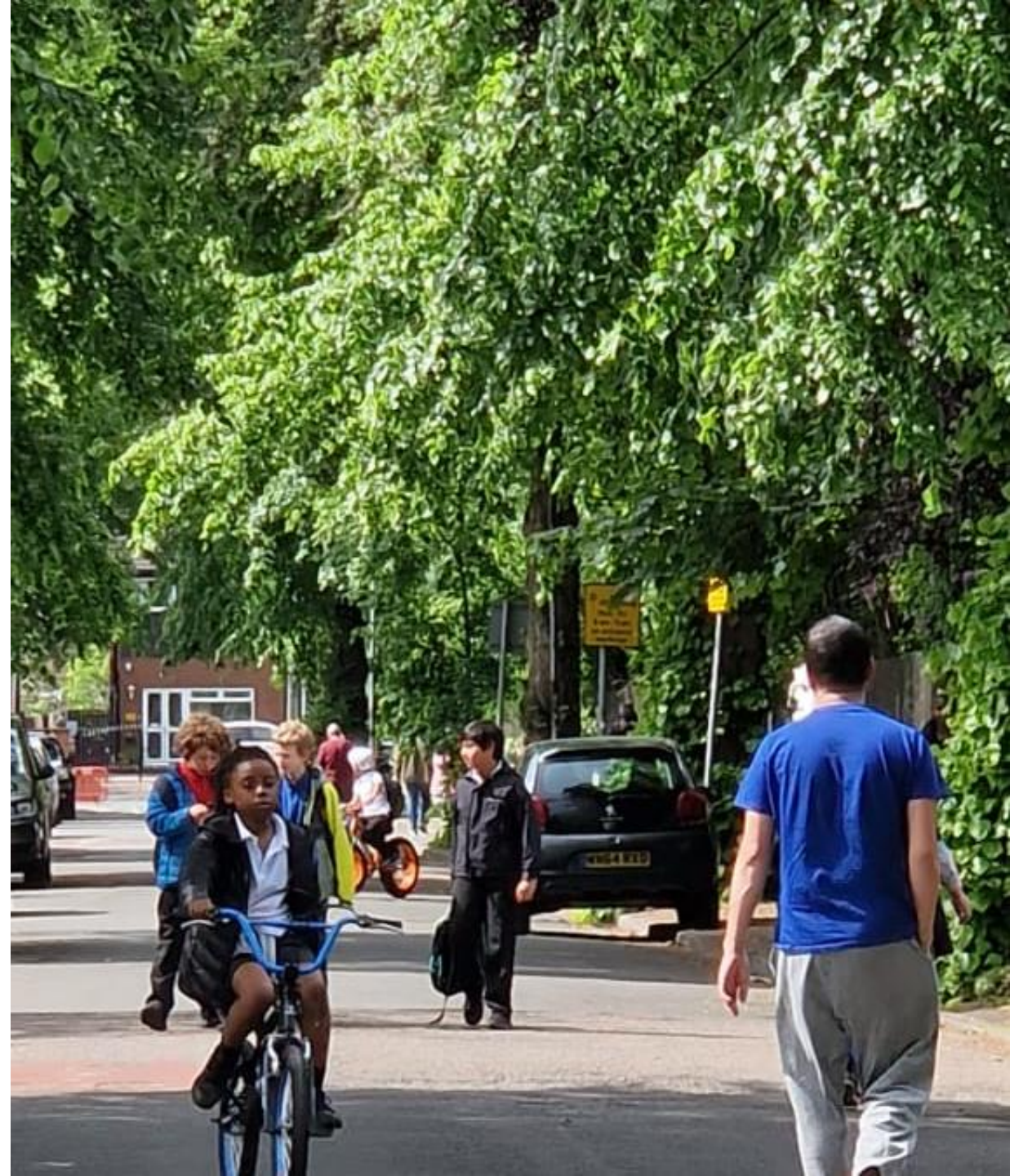
Mon - Fri
8 - 9am
2.00 - 3.30pm

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Introduction to School Streets

Introduction

A **School Street** is a road outside a school with a temporary restriction on motorised traffic at school drop-off and pick-up times. They are still open to pedestrians and cyclists.

Over the last few years, **Walk Ride Whalley Range** has been supporting schools in Whalley Range to find ways to reduce traffic outside the school gates as well as encourage parents and carers to walk, wheel or cycle to school, where they are able.

This report outlines our experience of supporting **Manley Park Primary School** in Whalley Range with their School Street. It sets out the opportunities and challenges of having a School Street and our ask from **Manchester City Council** for the future.



About School Streets

Although there are no permanent School Streets in Whalley Range, **Walk Ride Whalley Range** has supported 4 of our local schools with ad hoc School Streets over the last few years – Manley Park Primary, St Margaret’s CoE Primary, Our Lady’s RC Primary and William Hulme’s Grammar School. Each school was able to have up to 3 School Street days a year (with 3 extra if applying to the Secretary to State).

In 2022, **Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM)** agreed to provide funding around 40 schools across Greater Manchester (including 7 in Manchester) to have a School Street every school day as part of a trial scheme for 6 months. Both Manley Park Primary and Our Lady’s RC Primary applied and were successful in joining the scheme, which was to be delivered through **Manchester City Council**.

If successful, the aim of the project is that some or all of the School Streets may become permanent. The funding provided resources for the Council and the School to run the School Street (such as signage, barriers and council officer time).

about our
SCHOOL STREET

You might be wondering why this street has changed.
We're transforming the school run!

We want to create a safer, greener and more sociable environment for everyone around our school.

At school start and finish times, this street is open to pedestrians, cyclists and exempt vehicles only.

This is helping to tackle congestion, improve air quality at the school gates and make it safer to walk and cycle to school.

To find out more visit tfgm.com/beeactive



 Transport for Greater Manchester

 **GMCA** GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY

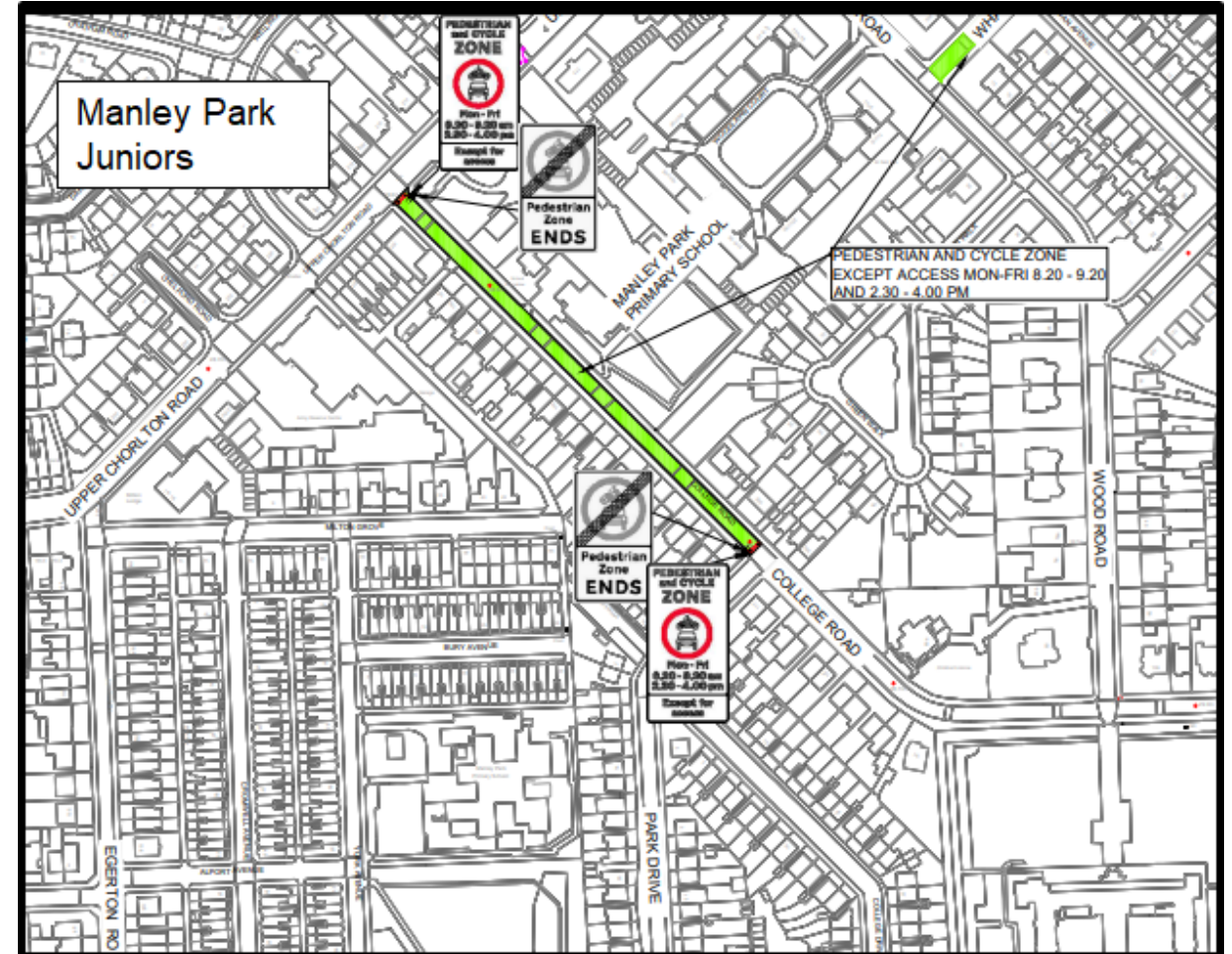
 **DISTRICT LOGO GOES HERE**

Manley Park Primary (College Road) School Street

This report is focused on **Manley Park Primary (MPPS)**. This school is split across 2 sites – Infants and Juniors. The School Street is situated outside the Junior site on College Road, Manchester, M16 0AA.

The designated School Street area is around 250m long between the junction of College Road with Upper Chorlton Road and the junction with Park Drive.

There are 28 residential households situated within the School Street, plus access to the school car park. There is also an alleyway on College Rd which is sometimes used to access two local garages or as a thoroughfare. There is a main road with bus route and cycleway at one end, and a give way junction at the other.





Setting up the School Street

Resourcing the School Street

- TfGM provided various resources for the MPPS School Street including **barriers, banners and posters, hi-vis jackets and leaflets**.
- Manchester City Council created the legal traffic order for the School Street. They also **installed signage and some removable bollards** at both ends of the School Street.
- Manley Park Primary School carried out communication with parents about the School Street and gave permission for some staff to volunteer during their working hours.
- Walk Ride Whalley Range **recruited and supported volunteers**, set up a volunteer rota, created training materials, liaised with residents, installed traffic counters and generally took responsibility for managing the School Street (with permission from the School).
- The Council stated that this would be a school-led initiative in Manchester, so they would take a 'hands-off' approach once the order was in place.



Starting the School Street

The legal order for the School Street came into effect in October 2022, after a mandatory consultation period. Although hundreds of letters were sent to residents in the area, there was very little negative (or positive) response to the proposed School Street, so the Council took the decision to proceed.

| School Name | Wards | Area | No. of Letters sent | Responses received | Support | Object | Comment/Query |
|--|---------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------|--------|---------------|
| Manley Park Primary School, | Whalley Range | South Manchester | 397 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| % | | | | | 50.00% | 25.00% | 25.00% |
| Our Lady's R.C. Primary School, | Whalley Range | South Manchester | 585 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| % | | | | | 57.15% | 28.57% | 14.28% |

No guidance was given as to when to start, so the School and Walk Ride agreed on a date of 23rd January 2023 to allow for a full 6 months trial before the end of the school year in July 2023.

A forum for information sharing between the 7 Manchester schools was promised early on by the Council but to date this has not been delivered. In lieu of this, Walk Ride Whalley Range set up a fortnightly meeting and a Slack channel for schools from Whalley Range and Chorlton in the pilot to share information and keep up to date with the information available.

Enforcing the School Street

Whilst there was a legal order put in place to prohibit moving traffic on the road during certain times, **there was no physical or automated enforcement of this**. It was stated that, on occasions, GMP might attend and could issue penalty notices for contravention (although this did not happen).

It was expected that the School Street would be enforced by volunteers, using **physical barriers to close the road**. Walk Ride took on the role of setting up and managing the ongoing rota of volunteers. Walk Ride already had some volunteers from previous School Streets; new volunteers were recruited through school, our networks, and word of mouth. Walk Ride also **created a [training package](#)** for all volunteers on behalf of Manchester City Council.

The bollards and permanent signage were installed on 17th January. The barriers only arrived a day or two before starting. Cones were not provided by the Council or TfGM. However, as they are a necessary addition to the barriers, these were supplied by Walk Ride.



Exemptions

The legal order states that **some vehicles will be exempt from the closure** and will be allowed to drive and park within the closure. There may also be vehicles that need to leave the enclosure. However, the order did not clarify which vehicles would be exempt and this guidance was also not provided but the Council, who stated this would be up to the School to decide.

It was decided that, to make it easier to see which vehicles were exempt, schools would give residents and exempt parents **a permit badge to display** (though they could still be allowed to enter without their badge). These were designed and laminated by Walk Ride Whalley Range.

Refuse collection was also informed and were asked not to pass through during School Street times (although this still often happened).

| Exempt Vehicles | Not Exempt |
|---|--|
| Residents of closure | Through traffic (except emergency vehicles) |
| Emergency services | |
| Utilities and refuse collection | |
| Royal Mail vehicles | |
| Taxis dropping off or picking up inside closure | Visitors to residents or the school (unless they have a Blue Badge) |
| Deliveries and tradespeople for houses inside closure | |
| Care/health workers visiting houses inside closure | |
| Parents and school staff with disabilities | Any other parents or school staff |



Our volunteers

One of the Walk Ride members took responsibility for the rota, using an online app. Initially we tried to fix the rota for the coming week in advance. However, this soon became a daily call for volunteers, with many hours spent trying to cover the rota.

Each morning and afternoon shift required 3 volunteers – one at each end and one to escort exempt vehicles in and out. To start with, we needed at least one “lead” (experienced) volunteer on each shift, but, as volunteers gained experience and confidence, this became unnecessary.

From **37 volunteers recruited**, we now have a core group of around **20 regular marshals**, including teaching assistants, local residents and parents, with occasional assistance from others, including our local councillors. They covered **73.2% of possible shifts** – this was higher than expected, but dropped slightly as the trial went on. Volunteer marshals donated **369 volunteer hours** over the 6-month trial; when administration time from Walk Ride co-ordinators is included, the total is approximately **470 hours** or nearly **70 days**.





Initial learnings

Overcoming initial issues

There were a number of initial hurdles to overcome when the School Street started:

- **There was a discrepancy between the legal order** for College Road (had been made for 2-3pm) **and the signage** (which stated 2-3.30pm). This meant that the order had to be reissued and the mandatory consultation period had to pass before we were legally allowed to close the road between 3-3.30pm; this is the time when the closure is most needed, because the school finishes at 3.15pm. It took 2 weeks for the order to be changed, during which time we carried on so as not to lose the momentum we had gained.
- **The bollards proved to be difficult to lock and unlock** - on more than one occasion they got stuck and had to be left in place overnight, protected by barriers and cones – so we stopped using them. Towards the end of the trial, we experimented with using them unlocked, instead of barriers.
- **No signage was provided at the alley which leads from Milton Grove to College Road**, making it hard to convince drivers that they weren't allowed in that way. Walk Ride leafleted Milton Grove to make sure residents knew about the School Street, and marshals started placing a barrier there during the closure.

- As expected, **it took at least a month for parents and residents to understand how the School Street worked.** Walk Ride provided a detailed explanation which was put through doors and shared on the residents' WhatsApp groups, which helped to make things clearer. Things also became easier once most of the residents had permits.
- There was **no useful information to direct people to on either the TfGM or Council website.** Walk Ride designed a School Streets page for the school website, but it never went live.
- To start with, the volunteer marshals generally gave the benefit of the doubt to drivers who said they needed to drive into the closure. Inevitably, some of them drove straight through, either through misunderstanding or deceit. **Volunteers gained more confidence to address this issue as time went on,** so it happened more rarely.
- Some delivery drivers chose to park outside the closure and complete their delivery on foot. However, **there have also been occasions when they have seen the closure and left without trying to deliver,** including (once) the recycling van for the Nip & Tipple bar.

Most of these issues have been resolved as the trial progressed by a combination of improved communication and experience.



Evaluation and feedback

Evaluation and Monitoring

Monitoring of the School Street has been largely led by Walk Ride.

Schools were asked by TfGM to carry out a weekly **hands-up survey** with children to ask them how they had travelled to school, and to record this on the [Mode Shift STARS](#) platform. As this proved too difficult to use, **Walk Ride provided the School with a simple online form** to use instead.

Funding was also secured for a collaboration between the Tyndall Centre and Walk Ride to do some **monitoring and evaluation of traffic behaviour and resident perceptions** of the School Street. This has been carried out using [Telraam](#) traffic counters and manual traffic observations. Resident interviews are planned for the Autumn term, so full results are not yet available.

TfGM will be carrying out some parent and carer focus groups for their evaluation of the pilot (6 schools will be chosen out of the ones in the pilot across GM) during the 23/24 Autumn and Spring terms. As it was not known if MPPS would be one of these schools, **Walk Ride carried out a number of their own consultations with parents, children and residents.**



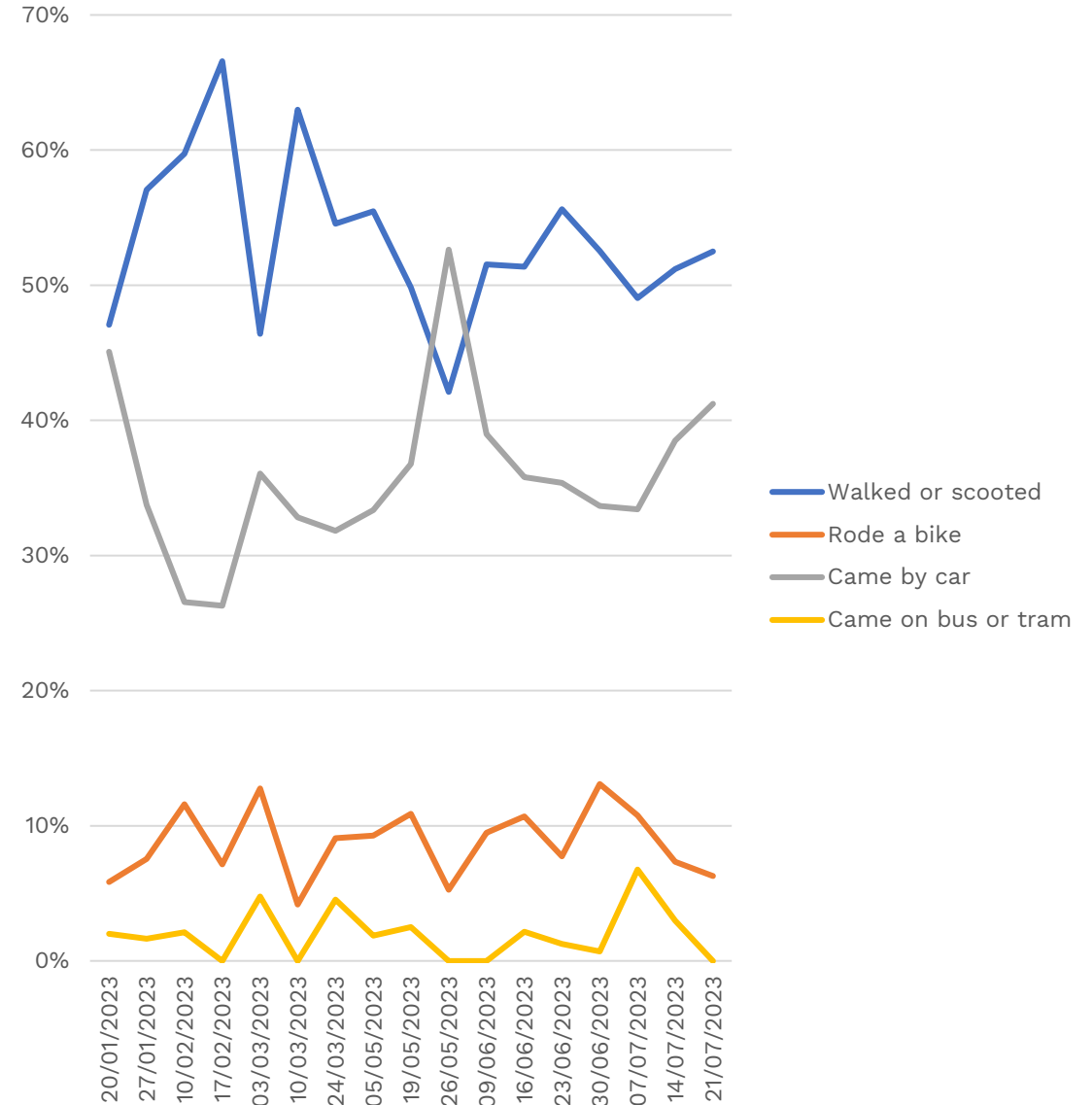
Hands Up Survey - Mode of school travel

There is anecdotal evidence that some families have started walking or cycling to school instead of driving as a direct result of the School Street.

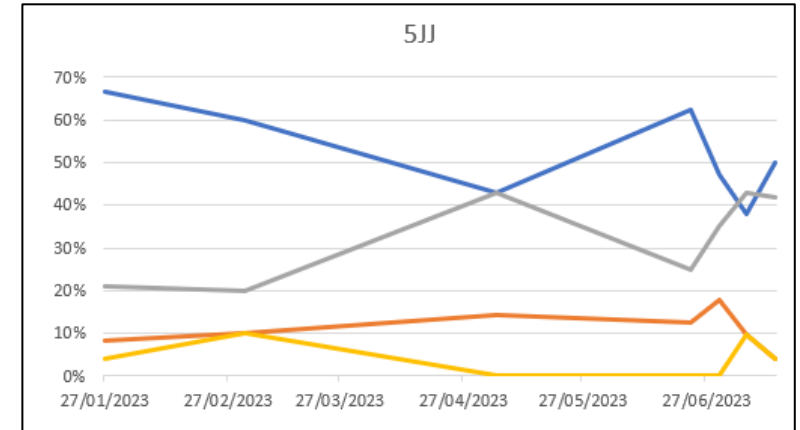
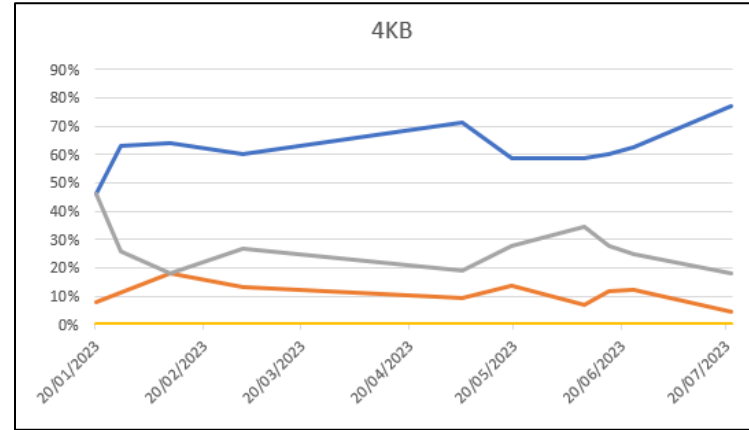
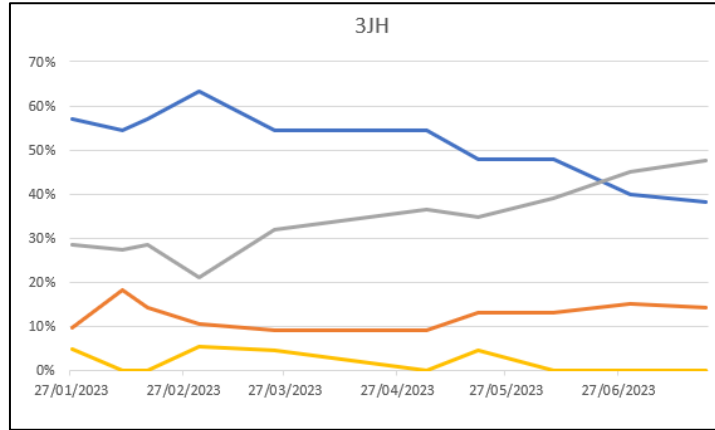
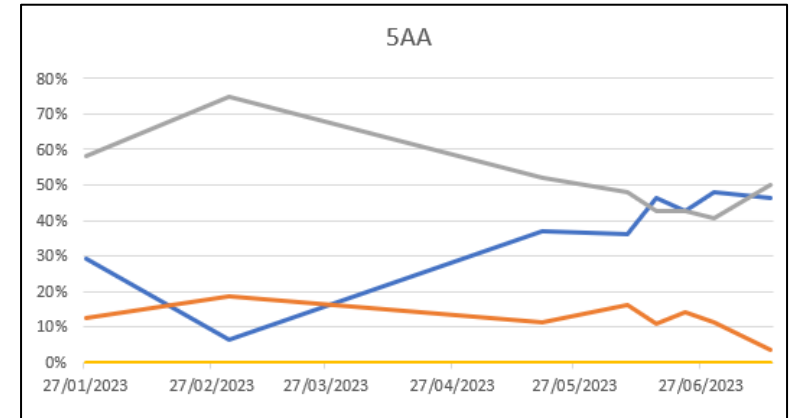
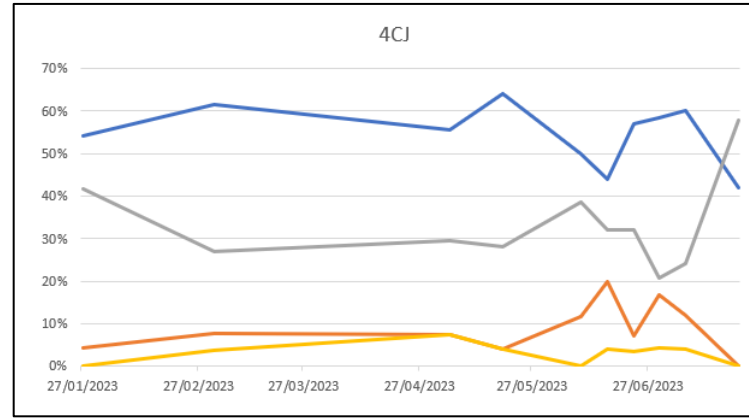
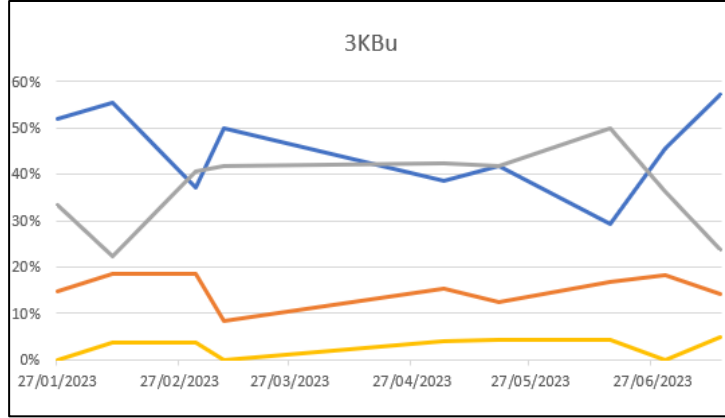
However, the **hands-up survey** carried out every Friday by teaching staff shows that overall, the majority of parents who drive their children to school have continued to do so and have adapted to the closure by parking further away.

Some still escort their children to the school gate, and others just to the end of the closure; some just let them out of the car, sometimes without parking.

Looking at the hands-up survey by class gives a **very mixed picture with no clear trends**. It should be noted that not all teachers carried out the survey every week so the results are not as comprehensive as we would like. However, from the data we have, it is clear that more qualitative research is needed to fully understand travel behaviours by class

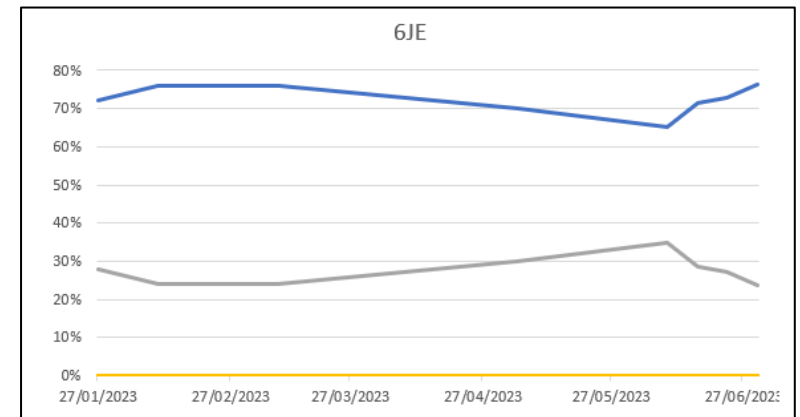
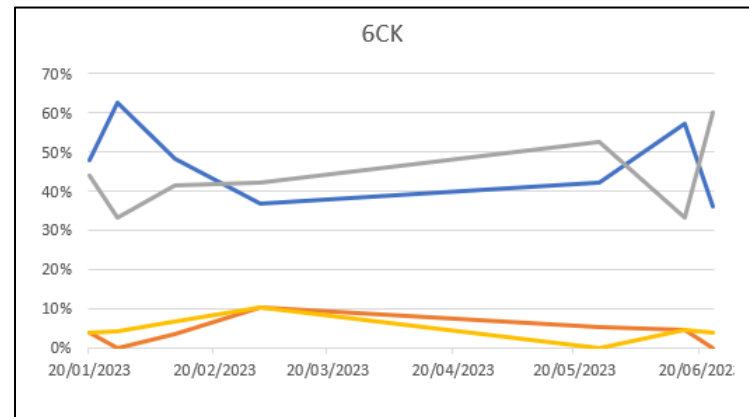


Mode of travel to school by class



KEY:

- Walked or scooted
- Came by car
- Rode a bike
- Came on bus or tram



Feedback - Parents

115 comments were received from parents with children at Manley Park (some of whom are also residents of affected streets). These were collected from an online form, at Parents' Evening, and at School Street celebration event, and mainly provided towards the end of the trial. Of these comments, less than 2% were wholly negative, 67% were wholly positive, and 31% were positive with reservations.

The positive comments mentioned **improved safety and air quality**, and **an increased willingness to let their children walk to school independently**. The comments from parents do show that there has been some shift towards active travel to school, though some respondents suggested that **the school should be doing more to encourage active travel**.

In terms of issues, many were concerned that crossing Park Drive was less safe during the School Street, and one family said (verbally, comment not recorded) that they felt less safe cycling now because of the congestion and dangerous manoeuvring at the Park Drive junction.

The **lack of a safe crossing near the school on Upper Chorlton Road** was mentioned often.

The other main concern from parents was that they and their **children weren't always clear when the School Street was being marshalled**, meaning that they sometimes thought the street was closed to motor traffic when there was no enforcement.

"I have found it has moved our family from 50/ 50 walk/drive to 90/10 walk or cycle/drive. The journey into school is now one of my favourite parts of the day and a time where I go a little slower, talk with the kids and have a moment or two for balance in the morning. It has taken reshuffling in other areas of our life but I personally am glad to move the balance in favour of going a bit slower. In the car might have been quicker but always felt more rushed and hectic and didnt actually mean we got anywhere any earlier!"

Year 3/4 parent

"Not only has it reduced traffic and made the area immediately outside the school safer and less polluted, it has also made me change my own behaviour. I now ride a bike with my daughter on the way. This has helped increase my daughter's cycling confidence, given us quality time together and helped my own fitness. "

Year 5 parent

"It's provided a safer, cleaner environment to approach the school, and has had a positive impact on many families. I know of several who now walk / cycle rather than drive to school."

"We are grateful for the School Street as it enables our children to walk or scoot independently. Previously we would not have had confidence to allow them."

Year 3/6 parent

"I think it has been great as we're able to give our son more independence to come to school without a parent as he is now safe crossing the road."

"The school street is great but I wonder whether it has made a difference overall to modes of transport to school. Sometimes it feels the problem has just been moved to Park Drive. It is best if it is consistent too - my son walked into the road without looking as he assumed it was on as normal."

Nursery, Year 2/4 parent



Feedback - Children

During the hands up survey and at the celebration event, we asked children what they thought about the School Street.

We received **57 comments** from children. Of these comments, 33% were wholly negative, 23% were wholly positive, and 44% were positive with reservations.

Negative comments included being late, having to run (which exacerbated their asthma) and not being able to find their parents' car. Some children seemed to be quoting their parents (*"It has closed up my parents' route to work"*)

The positive and mixed comments largely mirrored those from parents: mentioning **safety, clean air, and independence**, but also **concerns about displaced traffic** and **the difficulty of crossing Upper Chorlton Road**. Children were more concerned than adults about the **inconsistent marshalling**, and about the closure not benefiting children in breakfast club or after school club.

"I really love how everybody gets to hang around and see each other. It is very jolly and happy"

"It is good but there is now greater traffic where we live and our road is more dangerous"

"Sometimes it's shut and sometimes it's not - are you allowed to drive on the road when there are no barriers?"

"School road closure is great because it is safe - I'm able to walk to school independently."

"I do not like it - I walk to the car but now it is harder to find the car as it is further away."

Feedback - Residents

Nearby residents who don't have children at the school were invited to comment. From the **25 responses** received, **8%** were negative, **16%** were positive and **72%** were positive with reservations (the remaining response was only a question).

Many of the residents within the closure welcomed the School Street, because it has made the closure area quieter and safer, and **they are no longer blocked into their drives** by parents parking. However, some wanted the **closure hours to be shortened**; for access to their homes via Upper Chorlton Road to be allowed; and for **exemptions to be extended to all their visitors** rather than just Blue Badge holders.

Residents within the closure did sometimes find **the attitude of volunteers challenging**.

Some residents just outside the closure – on College Road between Park Drive and the College – **complained about problems being displaced to their houses**. However, at least one of these residents said that these problems already existed there, and that she appreciates the volunteers putting cones out to try and stop parents blocking her drive.

One College Drive resident (also a parent at the school) has been very critical of displaced parking. However, the residents who live directly opposite the College Drive junction feel that this problem already existed and has not become significantly worse. There has been no discussion of the School Street on the Park Drive or College Drive residents' WhatsApp groups.

"I think the scheme is fantastic. I am a new resident in the College Road closure area and it is immediately obvious how beneficial the closure is for the children arriving and leaving school in terms of safety and reduced pollution. The quiet road is also much more pleasant for residents - it is wonderful to hear the birds singing in the morning rather than the sound of car engines."

"We thought the Street School was a great way to protect children from the great amount of traffic (with a percentage of which speeds in the area) and hope it can continue. It did add to traffic in the street that we live on (Park Drive) but understand this will happen in the surrounding areas is if anything, congestion may actually add to more people deciding to walk or cycle in the area."

"As a local resident who walks my child to a different school via College Road I think the school street has been a big success and I hope it will continue. It feels much safer. I also suffer from asthma so welcome any improvements in air quality."

"Manley Park school street is excellent. I really hope it continues. My 4 year old and I cycle past daily on our way to nursery, and the reduction in pollution, congestion and hazard is a real relief. Other schools we pass without a school street are choc-a-bloc with cars pumping out fumes, causing a hazard while manoeuvring and blocking the road. The only improvement I can suggest is; I've observed cars running the school street when it hasn't been manned, so a camera and ANPR system, if the bollards can't be lifted."

"So delighted to see the pilot school street thanks to huge work of volunteers. Will need to be independent of volunteers in the future"

"Overall, the trial seems to be progressing well. We live opposite the school and there has been a significant improvement in the issues around parking, congestion and air pollution which have been associated with school drop off and collection for many years. I do appreciate, however, that many of these issues have simply been moved to outside the barriers. Our experience of the volunteer Marshalls has been positive, they have been friendly and helpful. However, there have been inconsistencies in interpretation of the guidance, which, particularly in the early days, caused some problems."

Our volunteer experience

Throughout the trial, volunteers kept a field diary to record their experience.

Generally, **their experience was very positive**, especially as the trial went on and people got used to the School Street being there. This was very different to their experience of ad hoc School Streets, where people aren't always expecting it and can therefore become frustrated.

Parents and cyclists were often very complimentary about the difference the School Street made to their journey to school.

But this wasn't always the case. **Volunteers were sometimes verbally abused** and **put in danger** when drivers drove across the pavement to get past the barriers.

One of the most positive and unexpected outcomes of the School Street was that **it has increased community cohesion**, especially between the volunteers who got to mix with a range of people from their neighbourhood that they wouldn't usually meet. Parent volunteers also mentioned that they got to meet parents from other years, again not something which normally happens.

"Met three boys walking towards the school gates and asked them why they were walking so slowly. "We're not used to walking, we usually come by car" I asked whose decision it was for them to walk - theirs or their parents and they said it was theirs because of the environment and the School Street (must have been because of School Street assembly!)."

"A man just cycled past and said 'Thank you, you've created heaven!'".

"I was very moved by a MPPS pupil, who approached me and we had the conversation along the lines:


Boy: When is the school street?

Me: Every school day, morning and afternoon (explained the times)

B: Well, it wasn't there this morning

M: It's always there, just not always the street is closed


because we do not have enough adults to come and volunteer

B: (he looks at me with that ) Cars were here

M: ...were they going fast?

B: Very. One almost squashed me.

M: I'm sorry to hear that. Thank you so much for sharing this with me and I hope we'll have enough adult volunteers to come over and be here when you need us. Do you like school street?

B: Yesssssss 

Me: how about your friends?

B: some of them! "

"We had someone determinedly cut through at the Upper Chorlton Road end by driving round on the pavement by the Nip and Tiddle. We added some cones onto the UCR pavement corners out of the way of bikes and visible to pedestrians, hopefully this will discourage any future attempts."

"A driver forced way through barriers while we were letting someone through at Park Drive. We stopped her and she claimed that she had to get to the chemist because she was having an allergic attack. "

Traffic counting and observations

As part of the Tyndall Centre monitoring and evaluation project, **Telraam traffic counters have been installed at 3 different locations** near Manley Park Primary – one on College Rd itself, one on Park Drive and one on Wood Road. This has enabled us to look at traffic (volume and speed) both on the School Street itself but also on the adjacent roads.

The Telraam data collected is open to all and can be viewed from their [website](#).

As well as counting the traffic, **traffic observations** were carried out at either end of the School Street on different days - during marshalled closures, when only bollards were in place and also with no barriers or bollards in place.

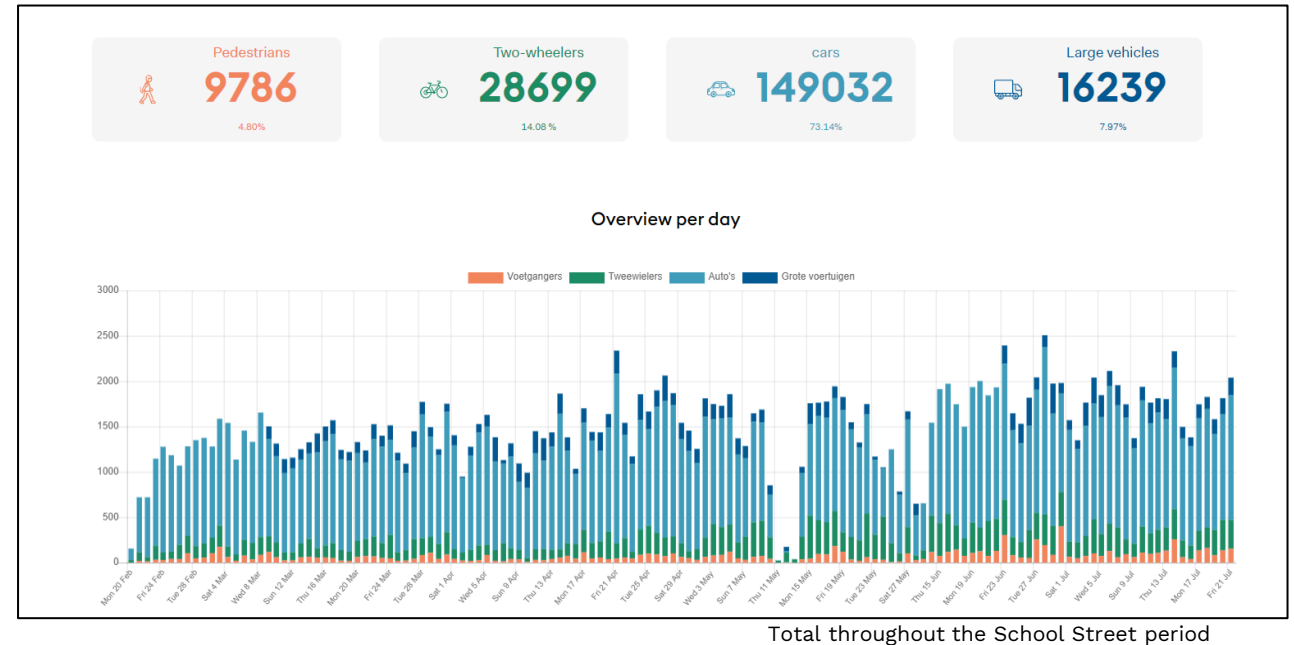
This data will be analysed and form part of a wider report being produced by the Tyndall Centre. However, we have been able to include some initial observations in this report.



Telraam – College Road

The following observations were made for College Road:

- The average number of **active travellers** on the school street is **higher** on days when the closure is enforced than when it is unmarshalled.
- The average number of **active travellers** has **increased** over time since the trial began; this may be due to warmer weather as well as the School Street.
- The **number of cyclists** significantly **increased** in the months of June and July, especially when the street is marshalled.
- The school street has facilitated the start of **a weekly bike train to school** which has encouraged more to travel on cycles and this may be contributing to this finding.
- There are a lot more cars on the School Street when the closure is unmarshalled.
- The **percentage of cars driving within the speed limit is less than 30%**; this seems unaffected by marshals and has not improved over the trial period.
- Bollards on their own have an impact on reducing traffic on the School Street, but not as much as marshals.



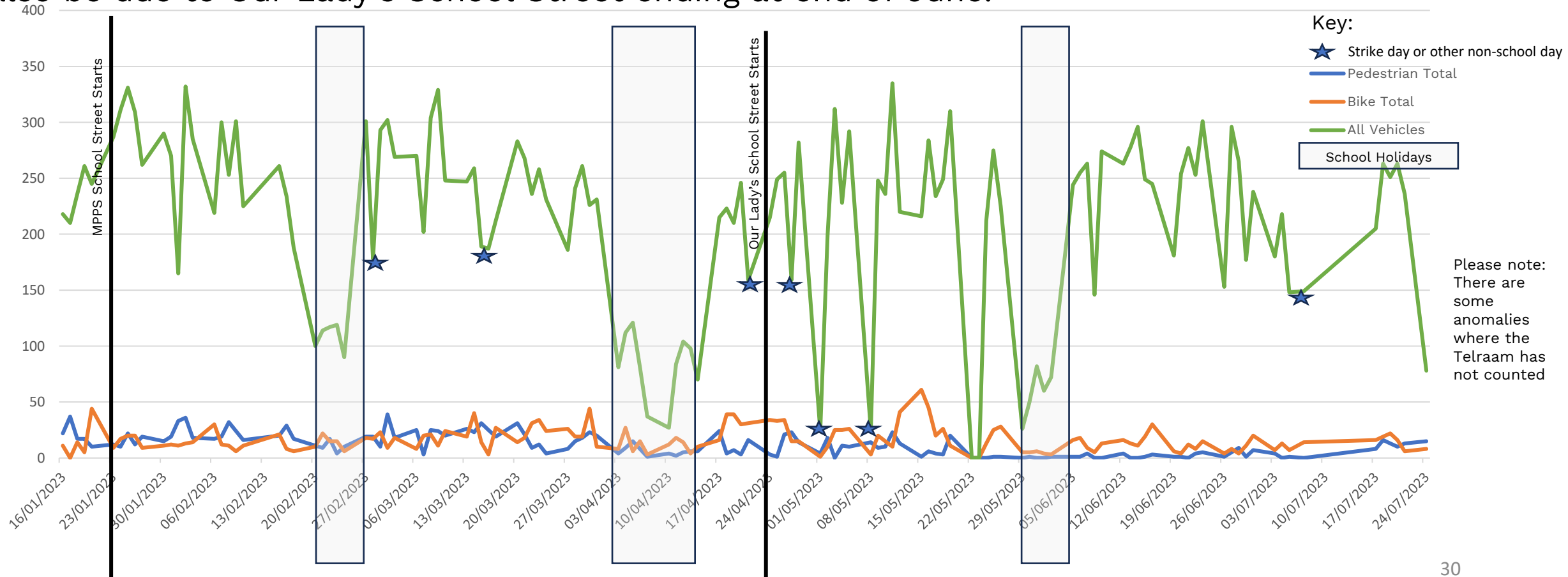
Telraam – College Rd

Average figures show number per hour term time only (not including weekend, strike and other non-school days between 8-9am and 3-4pm only)

| | Jan | Feb-March | Apr-May | June-Jul | Whole period |
|---|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Total shifts | 14 | 48 | 52 | 68 | 168 |
| Fully marshalled %(n) | 100(4) | 70.8 (34) | 78.8 (41) | 54.5 (37) | 66.7 (112) |
| Not marshalled %(n) | 0 (0) | 29.2 (14) | 21.2 (11) | 29.4 (20) | 26.8 (45) |
| Bollards alone %(n) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 0 (0) | 16.2 (11) | 6.5 (11) |
| | | | | | |
| Number of pedestrians | | | | | |
| Total average during School Street | | 17.5 | 12.7 | 27.0 | 18.1 |
| Average when marshalled | | 21.8 | 17.1 | 34.8 | 24.6 |
| Average when unmarshalled | | 13.2 | 8.3 | 13.5 | 11.7 |
| Average with bollards | | N/A | N/A | 32.6 | |
| | | | | | |
| Number of bikes | | | | | |
| Total average during School Street | | 38.2 | 34.4 | 45.4 | 39.3 |
| Average when marshalled | | 36.6 | 39.2 | 56.7 | 44.2 |
| Average when unmarshalled | | 39.7 | 29.6 | 35.8 | 35.0 |
| Average with bollards | | N/A | N/A | 43.9 | 43.9 |
| | | | | | |
| Number of active travellers (walking and riding) | | | | | |
| Total average during School Street | | 55.7 | 47.0 | 72.4 | 58.4 |
| Average when marshalled | | 58.5 | 56.2 | 91.5 | 68.7 |
| Average when unmarshalled | | 52.9 | 37.9 | 49.3 | 46.7 |
| Average with bollards | | N/A | N/A | 76.5 | 76.5 |
| | | | | | |
| Number of cars | | | | | |
| Total average during School Street | | 79.1 | 56.7 | 67.5 | 67.8 |
| Average when marshalled | | 50.9 | 36.8 | 48.3 | 45.3 |
| Average when unmarshalled | | 107.4 | 76.6 | 111.2 | 98.4 |
| Average with bollards | | N/A | N/A | 42.9 | 42.9 |

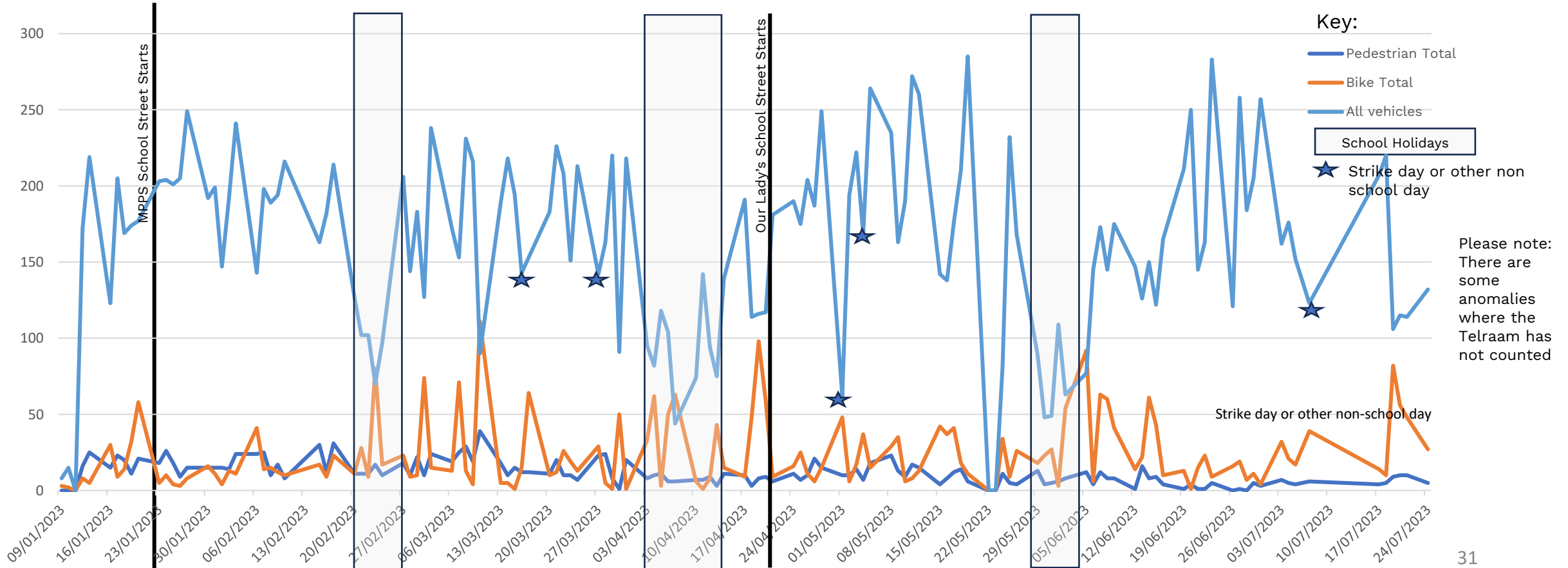
Telraam – Wood Rd – 8-9am

Analysis of the data between 8-9am from the Telraam on Wood Road (between Carlton Road and Whalley Road) suggests that the number of motor vehicles using Wood Road during closure times increased after the start of the School Street and then drops to pre-school street volumes. There is some increase in May which seems to coincide with the start of Our Lady's School Street on 24th April. This seems to drop back down in July to pre-school street levels. This may also be due to Our Lady's School Street ending at end of June.



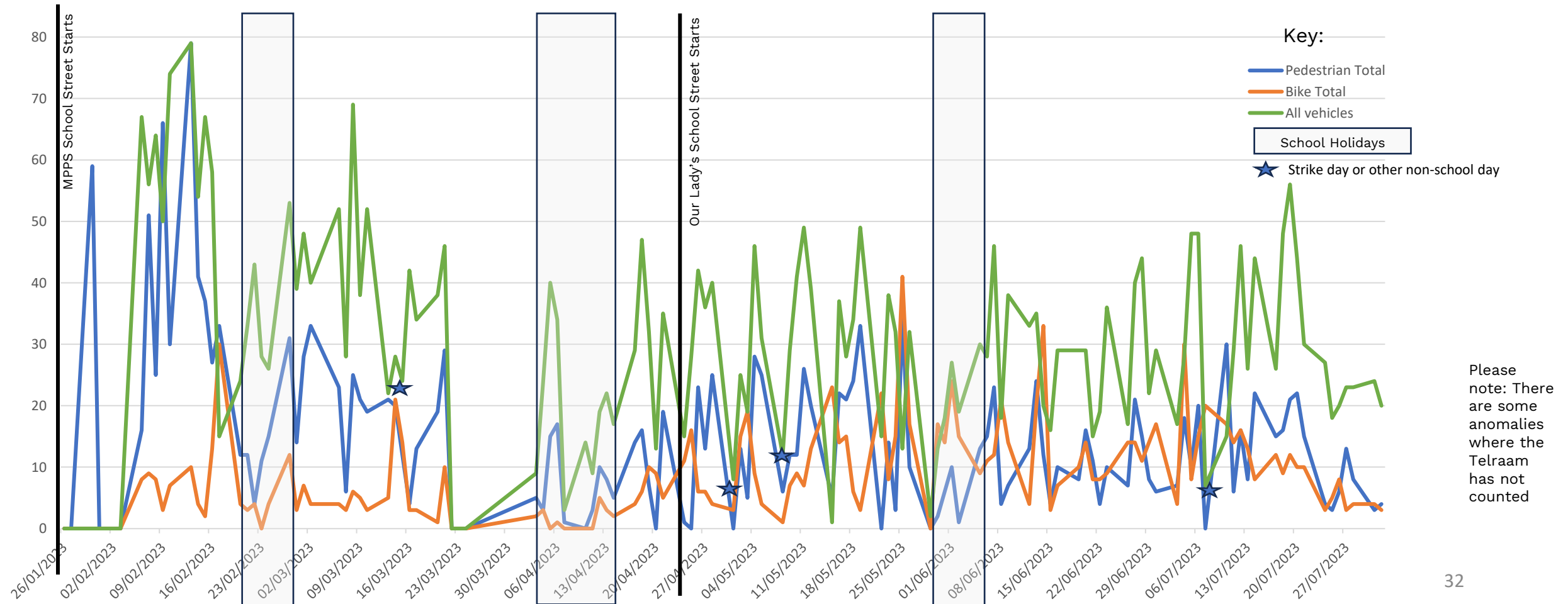
Telraam – Wood Rd – 3-4pm

Analysis of the data between 3-4pm from the Telraam on Wood Road (between Carlton Road and Whalley Road) shows similar results and suggests that the number of motor vehicles using Wood Road during closure times increased after the start of the School Street and then drops to pre-school street volumes. There is some increase in May which seems to coincide with the start of Our Lady's School Street on 24th April. Traffic does decrease during non-school days. We also see some peaks of traffic around Eid in June and on Fridays when prayers take place at the BMHC.



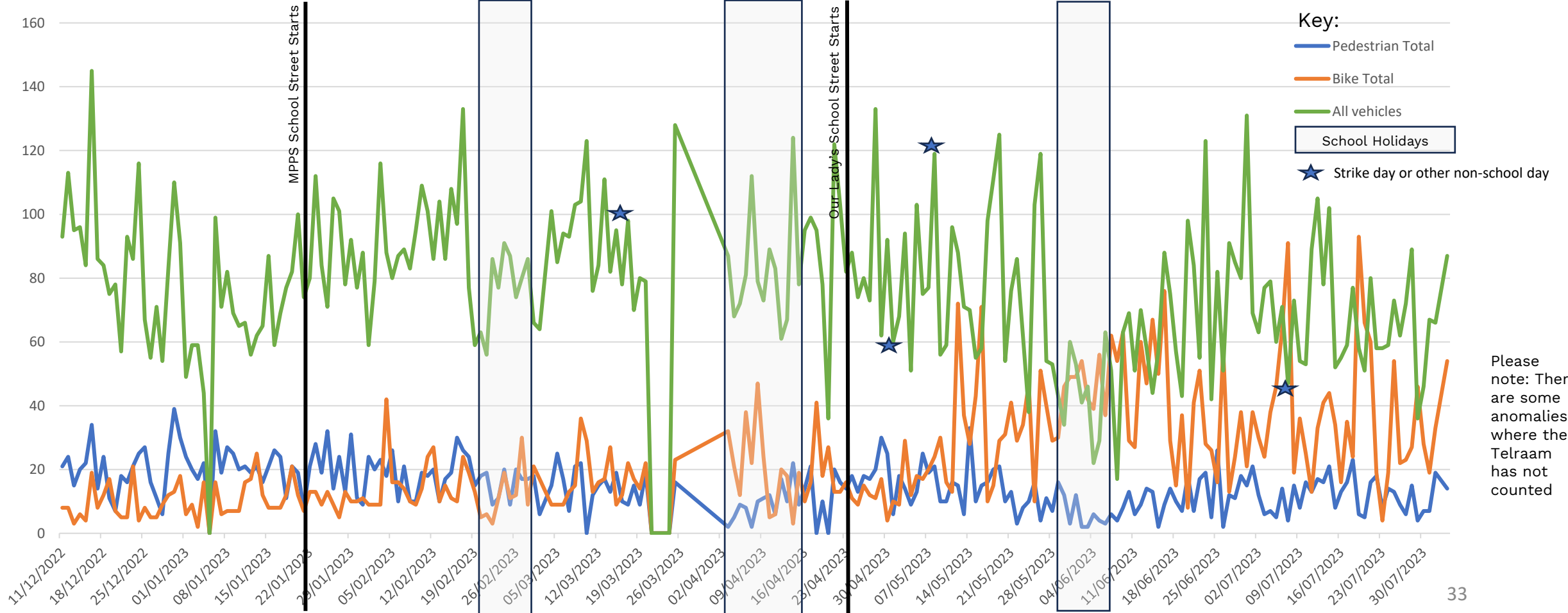
Telraam – Park Drive – 8-9am

Analysis of the data between 8-9am from the Telraam on Park Drive is quite hard to interpret. This is partly due to traffic stopping rather than moving which make it harder for the Telraam to device to count. However, generally we can see that there is not an increase in traffic due to the School Streets – in fact there is a decrease. The camera has not been able to pick up enough data during January due to lack of light. Traffic does decrease during non-school days.



Telraam – Park Drive – 3-4pm

Again, analysis of the data between 3-4pm from the Telraam on Park Drive is quite hard to interpret. And again, generally we can see that there is not an increase in traffic due to the School Streets. There is also generally more traffic on a Friday afternoon. Traffic does not seem to always decrease during non-school days such as strikes but does generally during holidays. We are also seeing more bikes on the street from the middle of May.



Observed driver behaviour - Parking

A number of parents still arrived by car to school. This meant that parents were inclined to **park as close to the barriers as possible**, often **causing an obstruction**. This included parking in the cycle lane on Upper Chorlton Road, which was a particular problem.

Parking at the Park Drive/College Road junction reduced visibility for pedestrians, making it **harder to cross Park Drive safely**.

To counteract some of the issues, cones (provided by Walk Ride) and 'Children Signs' (provided by the Council) were placed along College Rd and Park Drive to prevent parking too close to the barrier and also to stop pavement parking.

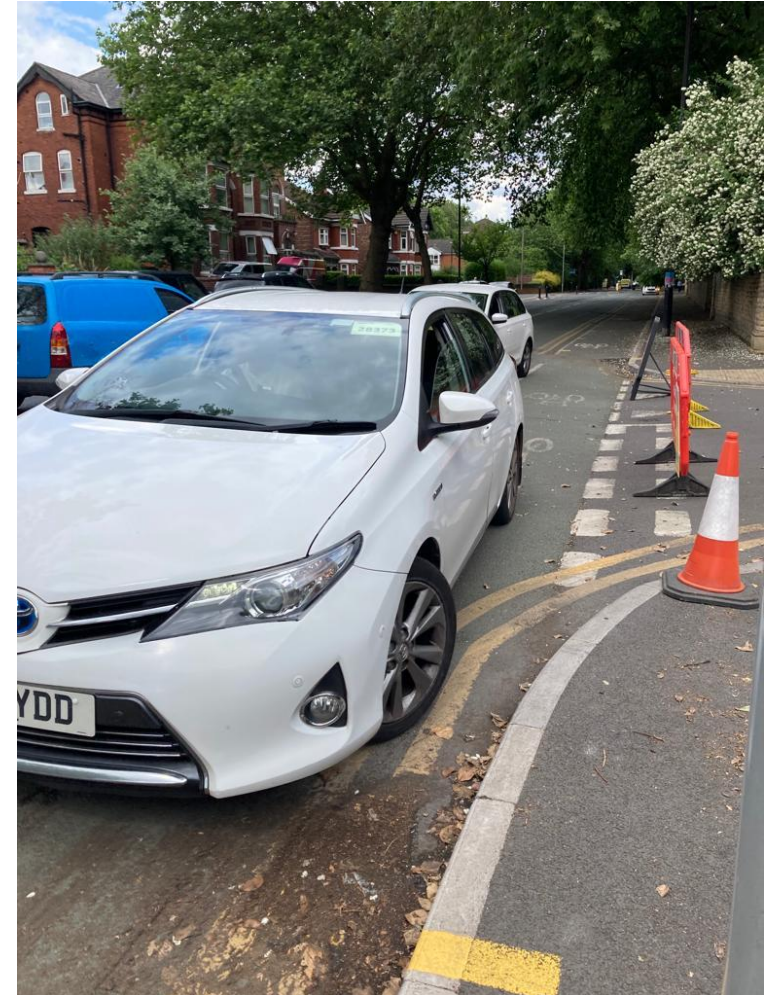
There were many occasions where parents **parked on the north side of Upper Chorlton Road** and, rather than escorting their children across the road, they stayed in the car and **put the children in danger by allowing them to cross by themselves**.



Observed driver behaviour – General

These issues have been observed by volunteers and/or raised by residents and parents:

- **Congestion at the College Road/Park Drive junction**, due to traffic volumes and obstructive stopping/parking, endangering children crossing Park Drive
- **Drivers u-turning and doing 3-point turns** at the junction and on College Road, including using the pavement, causing conflict with other drivers and endangering cyclists and pedestrians
- **Pavement parking** (including blocking drives) and **idling**, particularly on College Road between Park Drive and the British Muslim Heritage Centre.
- Parents dropping off children stopping in the Upper Chorlton Road cycle lane on the south side or **blocking the entrance to the cycle lane** on the north side
- A small number of drivers use the alley to access College Road, which also **endangers parents and children using the alley** to get between the two school sites



- If neither bollards or barriers are used, **most drivers ignore the signage**. When bollards are used without marshalling, fewer cars drive through the School Street, but a significant number still ignore the signage. Those that do tend not to be parents, and many are taxis. Walk Ride created extra signage for the bollards to make it clearer, which reduced the number of drivers who came through.
- When there were no marshals present, **the great majority of parents did not return to driving in**, having presumably got used to parking further away.
- Those that do park, have **adapted to the closure in different ways**. Some still escort their children to the school gate, others just to the end of the closure: some just let them out of the car near the barriers, sometimes without parking. The **antisocial parking, idling, and dangerous manoeuvres by parents** which used to happen outside the school gates still happen.
- There are **no consequences for drivers** who drive over pavement, move barriers themselves, abuse volunteers, or lie to get through



Observed enforcement issues

Barriers, bollards and signage:

Using the removable bollards provided by the Council without volunteers **has not proved to be very effective**. At the Upper Chorlton Road end, they are **not visible** until after drivers have turned into College Road, so that they then have to either reverse/u-turn out across the continuous footway and cycleway onto the main road or continue between the bollards onto the School Street. At the Park Drive end, they were more effective, but due to the lack of visible signage, were often ignored by drivers who continued through onto the School Street.

The **most effective enforcement was to have barriers** at the both Give Way line on Upper Chorlton Road and in line with the Park Drive kerb (so that they were visible to approaching traffic), attended by volunteers.

Barriers and cones had to be taken back and forth between the school for each shift. We trialled leaving them near the closure points, but cones were stolen and, in one instance, barriers accidentally taken by Cadent.



Other observations on barriers bollards and signage by volunteers and residents are as follows:

- **Bollards are not suitably placed**, and do not work reliably
- **Signage (and bollards) are not visible** enough for drivers
- There is **no signage at the alleyway**, which is acting as a rat-run
- **“Except for Access” on the signage is not an adequate explanation**: many drivers think they are still allowed access if they are going to school, or gaining access to a property on the other side of the closure
- The signage **doesn’t specify term time only**

Volunteer Marshalling:

- **Marshalling depends on a limited number of dedicated volunteers**, making the scheme vulnerable to individuals’ circumstances – illness, childcare, work, holidays etc. As time went on, the number of regular volunteers decreased.
- Because there are not enough volunteers to cover every shift, there is **inconsistency and uncertainty about whether the road is closed** to motor traffic or not.



Other observations

- Because **mapping apps do not show the road as being closed** at the specific times, drivers (especially taxis and deliveries) are still directed to pass through the School Street when it is closed. This creates unnecessary extra traffic that could be avoided.
- This is exacerbated by the **lack of publicly available information** on the Council or TfGM website.
- The **afternoon closure is unnecessarily long** – the problems that we anticipated with people parking early haven't materialised. Traffic peaks between 2.40-2.55pm, so a closure between 2.30-3.30pm would be adequate
- A clearer understanding is needed from parents and children about what the **School Street is - not a traffic-free play street**, but a quiet street which will still have some (possibly unescorted) traffic
- When marshalling at the Park Drive junction, marshals noticed how many of the drivers were heading to/from St Margaret's School. They might be expected to use Clarendon Road and Withington Road to get to the school, but because of the difficulty of parking and dropping off on Withington Road and Burford Road, they prefer to approach and drop off on College Road. Along with the significant number of cars carrying high school children, **this makes it clear that the problems caused by school run traffic cannot be solved by one school in isolation.**

Summary of evaluation and feedback

- **The limited travel to school data available shows no clear trends**, but anecdotal evidence suggests that some families are switching to active travel to school.
- A large majority of parents, children and residents who commented were at least partly positive about the trial, mentioning **safety, quiet, and clean air** as benefits. The main issues raised in comments were concerns about **safety, displaced traffic, congestion and dangerous parking and manoeuvring** at the College Drive/Park Drive junction. Also, the **lack of a safe crossing** of Upper Chorlton Road and **inconsistency in physical enforcement** of the School Street.
- The School Street marshalling was generally a **positive experience for volunteers**, particularly in terms of **increasing community cohesion**. However, they did also often experience **unacceptable verbal abuse and aggression**.
- **Numbers of pedestrians and cyclists** on College Road during closure times have **risen** over the length of the trial, but this could be partly due to improving weather and the Bike Train.
- **Traffic on adjacent roads** (Wood Road and Park Drive) **does increase** after the start of the School Street trial at drop off and pick up times, and then again after the start of the Our Lady's trial. However, it **drops back to pre-School Street levels** in July. This could also be due to the early termination of the Our Lady's trial at the end of June.

- **Traffic speeds** on College Road **have not changed** as a result of the trial or marshalling.
- There is **more traffic generally on a Friday afternoon** on all roads. This could be due to Friday prayers at the British Muslim Heritage Centre, but further observations would be required to evidence whether this is the case.
- Automatic traffic count data on Park Drive is harder to interpret because of queuing traffic but suggests that there **was not an increase in traffic** due to the School Street.
- **Inconsiderate or dangerous driver behaviour** continues to be an issue, especially around the areas where the School Street barriers are placed, including **anti-social parking, engine idling and dangerous manoeuvres**.
- The **most effective enforcement** was to have **barriers marshalled by volunteers**. Using the **bollards unattended** by volunteers **did to some extent act as a deterrent to entering the School Street** but also caused drivers to carry out **dangerous manoeuvres** at the Upper Chorlton Road end.
- **Inconsistent marshalling** led to confusion about whether the School Street was in place or not.
- However, **marshalling depends on a limited number of dedicated volunteers**, making the scheme vulnerable to individuals' circumstances.
- By the end of the trial, **compliance by parents was good** even without physical closure and marshalling. However, marshals and physical barriers were still needed to ensure compliance by through traffic, particularly taxis and delivery vehicles.

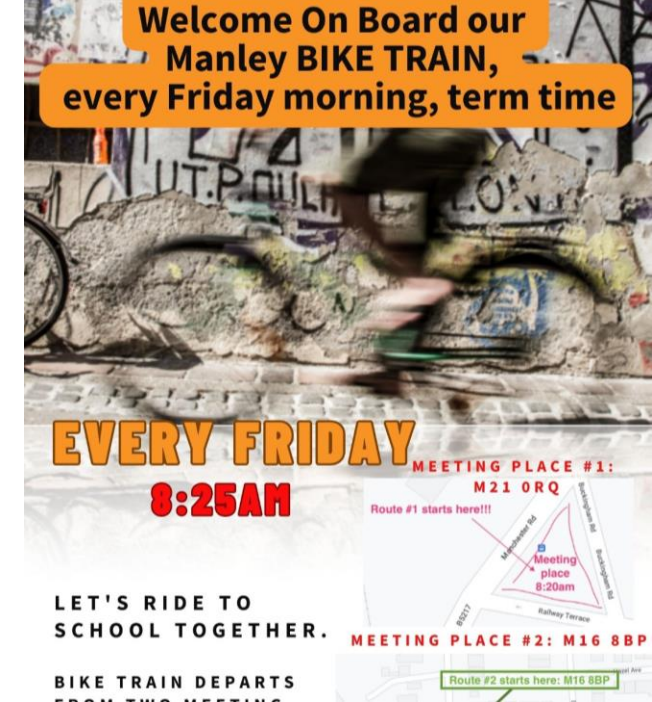


Events and activities

Bike Train

Whilst we have not seen a significant change in general travel to school behaviour, we have seen a number of parents grow in confidence because of the School Street (often due to their volunteering as marshals), and they are now **leading some of the change of behaviour** that needs to happen.

A group of parents have undertaken ride leader training and now lead **a weekly bike train to school** along 2 separate routes. This has been a very successful and visible sign to other parents of how things can be done differently, and is enormously popular, **with up to 50 parents and children joining in.**



Visit from Sarah Storey

On March 10th, **Dame Sarah Storey**, GM Active Travel Commissioner came to visit the School Street.



*“The commitment to the Manley Park School Street is impressive. 29 volunteers manning the filters during drop off and pick up to keep children safe and make it easier to walk, wheel or cycle. **The permanent solution is camera enforcement which must be worked towards as soon as possible**”*

- Dame Sarah Storey



School Street Celebration

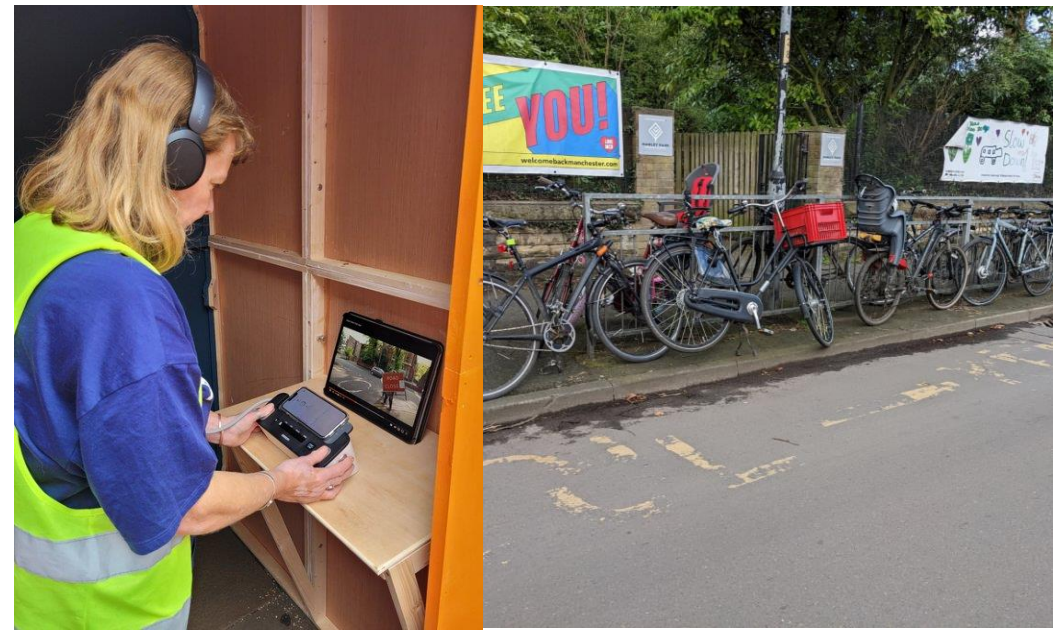
Despite the rain, Friday 30th June saw our very well attended **School Street Celebration event**. This was not only a chance to celebrate but also to get views from parents and children about the trial.



Other events and activities

Other successful events and activities linked to the School Street include:

- A group of Whalley Range parents joining the **Kidical Mass Bike Ride** on 14th May
- Numerous parents and children **coming by bike on Earth Hour day** on 24th March
- An immersive experience **collaboration between Walk Ride and Clean Cities** for people to experience what it feels like being on a School Street compared to being in traffic and how it affects your heart rate
- **Regular litter picks** on the walking/cycling route between the two school sites, to make the route safer and more attractive
- **A Scooter Library** (starting in September) to help families try scooting to school instead of driving. Refurbished scooters were donated by [Microscooters](#).





Summary and recommendations

Benefits

- Nearly all parents and residents who have responded to the consultation **feel positive about the School Street** and have **suggested improvements** where they have identified problems.
- Anecdotally, some families have **started walking or riding to school instead of driving**.
- Where children do walk or ride, parents are happier to **let their children travel independently**, at least for part of the journey
- Volunteers and parents reported **increased community cohesion and building relationships** with a more diverse range of people that they normally would have the opportunity to meet
- The School Street has been the **catalyst for several other initiatives around active travel** that would not have happened otherwise.
- The School Street and these activities have been a **very visible sign to everyone that change can happen**



Challenges

- **Recruiting and retaining enough volunteers** to provide consistently marshalled physical closure in the long term is not feasible. Inconsistent marshalling leads to confusion about whether most motorised traffic will or should use the road. This becomes a safety issue for children, especially if they are travelling independently
- Whilst traffic volume has not generally increased on the roads adjacent to the School Street, the closure has **exacerbated the pre-existing problem of poor driver behaviour** including dangerous manoeuvres and inconsiderate parking, particularly near the Park Drive end of the School Street
- Because parents cannot drop their children on College Road, the School Street has further **highlighted the danger children face because of the lack of safe crossing points** on Upper Chorlton Rd
- Whilst there has been some modal shift, **the School Street alone is not enough to bring about a significant increase in levels of active travel to school**

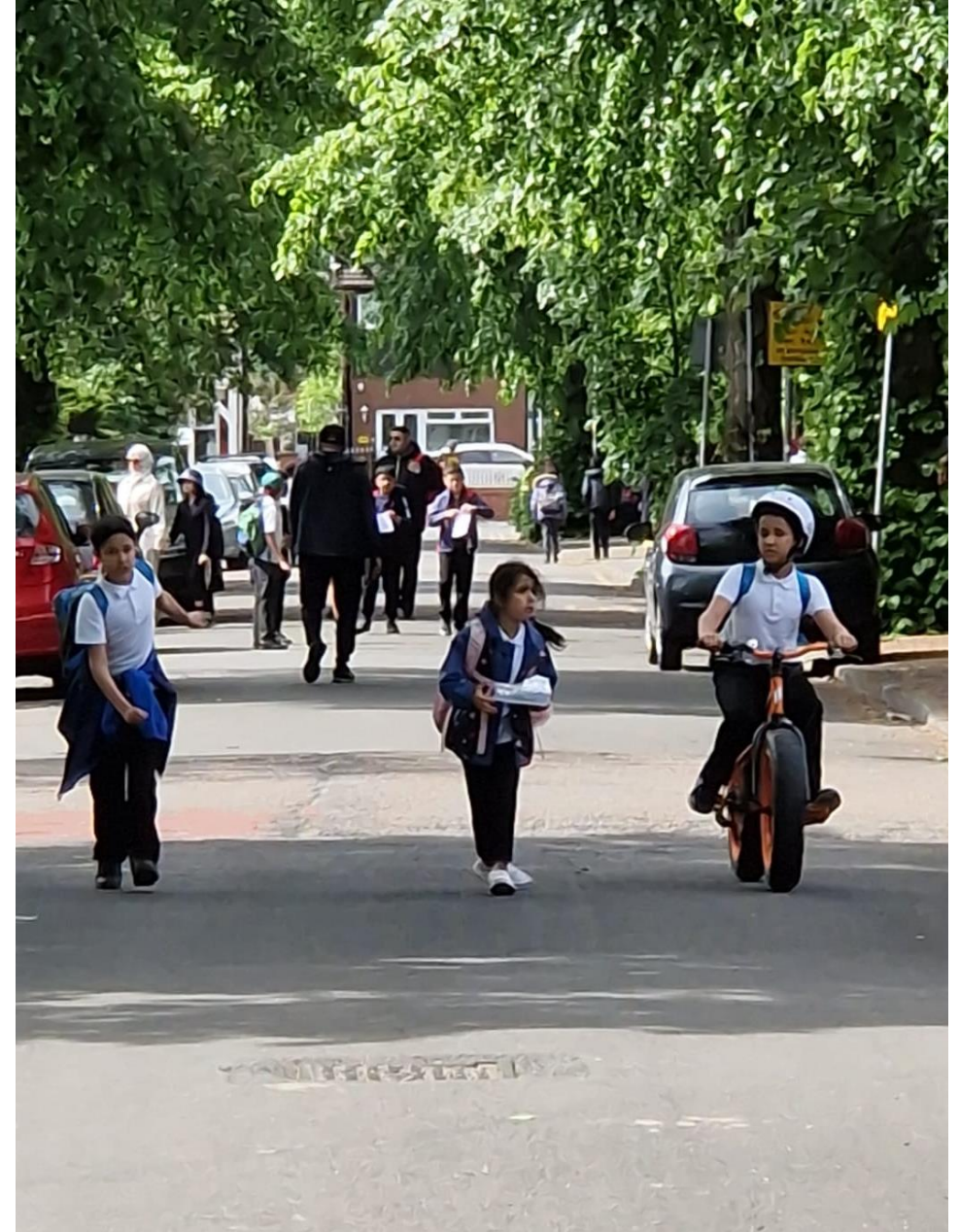


The future

The success of the Manley Park School Street has largely been down to the willingness of Walk Ride Whalley Range to co-ordinate the trial and engage with residents and parents. **Neither the School, TfGM nor the Council has been able to provide sufficient resources to invest in this process.**

The College Road trial has made clear **the level of positive support for the scheme** as well as identifying challenges and potential solutions.

If the School Street is to continue, with a view to eventually becoming permanent in 2024, there are now **a number of actions** that we believe the Council and TfGM should take to address the issues raised in the consultation and to improve the scheme.



Recommendations - short term

The following actions are recommended in the short term (next 6 months of the trial). They are dependent on commitment from volunteers to continue to marshal the closure and from Walk Ride to continue managing the volunteer rota:

- Amend the order and signage to **reduce the afternoon shift to 2.30-3.30pm**
- **More communication to parents** from the School and a clear visible difference between when the road marshalled and when it is not. This means not using the bollards or barriers without marshals in attendance
- **Make signage clearer and more visible** including advanced warning signs, to try and keep through traffic away from the College Road/Park Drive junction. Signing on Park Drive could also be provided to encourage parents to park further from the school, rather than continuing to/through the junction
- **More support from GMP** for enforcement and poor driver behaviour



- **More support for the School from the Council and TfGM** to implement schemes that encourage behaviour change including reward schemes, walking/bike bus, bike/scooter storage and bike/scooter trial/loan/swap schemes. The School is supportive but doesn't have the capacity to administer these without help.
- **Install bollards at the Milton Grove end of the alley**, which has been expected for more than two years, to prevent it being used as a rat-run and endangering families walking or cycling between the school sites.
- **Add the closure to mapping apps**, such as Google Maps and Waze, so that drivers (especially taxis and delivery drivers) are not directed through the School Street. The [Hackney School Streets Toolkit](#) gives instructions for how Council officers can do this.



Recommendations – medium to long term

In order for the School Street to become permanent, the issues raised during the trial need to be addressed through the actions suggested below. We recognise that these actions will take time and resources, and may require some level of consultation with residents and parents:

- **Measures at or near the Park Drive/College Road junction**, possibly including a continuous side road zebra (when feasible); parking restrictions, particularly at the corners and opposite the junction; bollards to prevent pavement parking on College Road; and consideration of road narrowing on Park Drive to lower speeds
- **Consideration of a crossing (controlled or uncontrolled) on Upper Chorlton Road** near the College Road junction. This would mean that children could cross safely from the north side, whether walking or being dropped off, and would also serve the shops and bus stop nearby.
- **Priority given to this School Street (and others) in the Council's rollout of ANPR cameras.** With the Council's new powers to enforce moving traffic offences, this would enable exempt vehicle access at Upper Chorlton Road, which would benefit residents and their visitors, deliveries and taxis. It would introduce consistent enforcement without the need for volunteers, help to address the issues that residents have raised about conflict with volunteers, and remove any danger of bias on the part of marshals.

Conclusion and next steps

The vast majority of comments received from residents and parents have been positive.

Where reservations have been expressed, most have concerned the effect on children's safety due to poor driver behaviour adjacent to the School Street, and the uncertainty on when the School Street is in place due inconsistent marshalling.

The feedback shows that **the School Street is popular**, and that it is **making parents and children feel safer and more confident about walking and cycling to school**, either as a family or independently.

The high proportion of closures over a long period has made the **School Street into a normal part of school life** and has led to a small number of families to start walking/cycling instead of driving.

But maintaining a **volunteer rota for enforcement is not practical** in the longer term.

A School Street in isolation does not necessarily lead to significant changes in active travel to school. However, this trial has been **the catalyst for the Bike Train and Scooter Library schemes**, which are likely to create further mode shift. **Significant mode shift will require much more practical and financial support from the Council and TfGM.**

Both Walk Ride and the School are keen to continue the School Street (and are still supporting it during the Autumn term). But this will require the Council to work with the School and ourselves to put in place some of our suggested mitigations in the short term and to **develop a longer term, more sustainable solution which does not rely on volunteers for enforcement.**

The Council is **arranging a meeting** during the Autumn term for all 7 schools in the Manchester pilot to share information about the next steps for School Streets. Walk Ride will be invited, along with staff from the Council's Highways and Neighbourhood teams and TfGM. We will be presenting this report at the meeting, together with **our recommendations for the future.**

Walk Ride is campaigning for:

- ✓ More School Streets, where feasible, and faster rollout
- ✓ More support to schools to encourage active travel to school
- ✓ Camera enforcement of School Streets, not volunteers

As well as this report, we've made a [film](#) about our experience.

Every child deserves a School Street.



walk
ride