

COVID-19 Walking and Cycling Emergency Response Measures: Proposed Measures at Boroughmuir High School, Bruntsfield & South Morningside Primary Schools to aid safe travel to school

Response from Spokes – the Lothian Cycle Campaign, August 2020

This response considers the proposals shared by the Spaces for People Team on 4th August 2020

General comments

We welcome the measures being taken to create safe spaces around the school gates of the schools and these measures seem to reflect the wishes of the Parent councils are each of these schools. However we see this as only a first measure.

Although many pupils currently walk or cycle/ scoot to each of the primary schools in this cluster, some arrive by car and cause problems in the roads around and there is a risk that the numbers of parents dropping off by car could increase because bus travel may be avoided in the short term.

Enabling more pupils to walk / cycle may require changes to the Travel Route to School (we think all schools have Travel Plans) to make them safer as well as the proposed spaces at the school gates. We have included some pointers but these will not be complete.

We're generally pleased by the proposals put forward, but we urge the council to review our detailed comments carefully.

Detailed comments

Boroughmuir High School:

- *Revoke parking on NE side of Viewforth (approx. 6 spaces)*
- *Extend footway on NE side of Viewforth for 1.5m*

Around the school entrance

We support the proposals to remove parking from and extend the foot way on the NE side of Viewforth (although the plan as indicated seems to remove more than the 6 spaces planned).

Routes to school:

The timing of the lights at canal bridge on Viewforth in the uphill direction makes it difficult for a slower cyclist to get across in time. Is there a way to trigger a longer sequence when there are bikes crossing uphill (e.g. by a bike wheel triggered pad or even a Neatbox app triggered crossing. Is the street to be closed as a school street longer term?

Currently many pupils from Buckstone take the bus to High School which might mean many parents crossing to drive pupils to school instead at the moment. To date there hasn't been a safe opportunity to cycle instead but there is a real opportunity with segregation on A702 and some work on quiet streets around Woodhouse Terrace and Canaan Lane to encourage cycling. We would welcome a very early appraisal of this.

Bruntsfield Primary School:

- *Close Montpelier to vehicles at the junction with Montpelier Park except for residents*
- *Close Bruntsfield Avenue at the junction with Bruntsfield Place whilst allowing for waste collections South*

Around the school entrance:

The closure of Montpelier to vehicles at the Junction with Montpelier Park and Bruntsfield Avenue (except residents) are very welcome. We are assuming they would remain open via a modal filter to cycles to encourage cycling to school and protect quiet streets as a safe alternative to the Southern end of Viewforth.

Closing Bruntsfield Avenue a short distance from Bruntsfield rather than at the entrance may become an awkward drop off zone for dropping off by car.

Routes to school:

Bruntsfield PS uses an After School club at Barclay church so have to cross Whitehouse Loan junction with Bruntsfield Place. This is a difficult wide junction with two junction close together acting as one. It is particularly difficult for the return journey especially by bike with poor visuals. We suggest narrowing crossing place at least.

South Morningside Primary School:

- *Close Canaan Lane to vehicles except for residents*
- *Cut back vegetation at Greenbank Drive/Greenbank Terrace*

Around the school entrance:

We welcome the closure of a section of Canaan Lane (open to cycles we presume as well as residents) for arrival at the new school building.

For the school building on Comiston Rd, which is a very busy site with a bus stop we are surprised that more measures won't be taken. There is an entrance on Craiglea Drive which could be used for those cycling/ walking from streets on the West side of Comiston Rd. Alternatively it could provide a quiet place (if partially closed) for car drop off. There has always been some cars dropping off on the roads on the east side of Comiston Rd which could get much worse and may be alleviated if crossing the main road could be safely enabled at more than one place so that big groups don't use the pedestrian Crossing.

Routes to school:

We agree cutting back vegetation at Greenbank would improve pavement width.

Additional comments

Buckstone Primary School:

Around the school entrance:

No plans were included for Buckstone which is in the Boroughmuir Cluster but we understand no special measures were requested by the school entrance

Routes to school:

Any safe routes should be connected to enable safe access between schools within the catchment area.

St Peter's Primary School:

Around the school entrance:

No plans were included for St Peter's PS which is adjacent to part of South Morningside Primary. We therefore support the measures for Canaan Lane as they will benefit this school as well.

Routes to school:

Any safe routes should be connected to enable safe access between schools within the catchment area.