

## **Southampton School Streets Permits and Access Guidance**

### **1. Background**

Southampton City Council (the Council) is committed to increasing active and sustainable travel and improving road safety for our city's children, their families and local communities during peak school travel hours.

Our Safer Routes to School (SRtS) programme aims to achieve this through education, enforcement, and engineering solutions.

To date, the Council has implemented 19 permanent School Streets in the city to help facilitate safer journeys to and from school.

This guidance document shows the criteria by which the Council will consider applications for permits to allow vehicles access to a School Street. It also explains the application process.

### **2. What are School Streets and why do we have them?**

A School Street sees a road directly outside a school temporarily closed motor vehicles at the beginning and end of the school day. These allow people walking, wheeling and cycling, and where on a bus route, buses to use the road.

Closing the road space outside schools at drop off and pick up times provides a much safer environment for everyone at these busy times and helps those who are able to walk, cycle, wheel and scoot to school.

In Southampton, the standard School Streets operating times are between the hours of 08:00 to 09:30 and 14:15 and 15:45. There may be some that operate slightly different times, such as morning or afternoon only – the signs will provide the details of each School Street restriction.

Access is maintained for residents who live within the School Streets area, emergency vehicles and others by way of General Exemption, Permit or Authorisation. See section 5 for more information.

### **3. How will I know which streets are School Streets?**

A School Street is identified with 'pedestrian and cycle only zone' or 'bus gate' signage detailing the operational timings and the specific School Street permit number. There may also be advanced warning signs on approaches to alert road users to a nearby School Street.

Image 1 and 2 – Examples of Pedestrian and Cycle Only Zone signage



Image 3 – Example of Bus Gate Signage



A School Street will have a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in place and you can find details of where our School Streets are on our [website](https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/atf/school-streets-managing-the-school-run/).

<https://transport.southampton.gov.uk/atf/school-streets-managing-the-school-run/>

#### **4. Enforcement of School Streets**

To operate the School Streets, we have relied on School Street volunteers and school staff to steward the closures using retractable barriers and signs. This approach has its benefits; however, we have seen that this type of operation becomes unsustainable over time. We are very grateful to all past and present School Street stewards who have made the School Streets programme a success.

Where a School Street is unmanned the restrictions are detailed by the signs only and rely on driver compliance. However, these 'Sign Only' School Streets tend to have a higher contravention rate. This increases the safety risk for people using the School Street as they may not be expecting vehicles to be travelling through the closure, and undermines the effectiveness of the School Street.

In 2023, the Council was granted powers by the Government for Moving Traffic Enforcement (MTE) powers. This enables the enforcement of restrictions such as School Streets by using cameras or on the ground enforcement officers.

The Council does not wish to have to actively enforce School Street restrictions through its MTE powers but the safety of some of our city's most vulnerable residents continues to be put at risk by continuing contraventions of the School Street restrictions. As such, the Council will exercise those powers where it considers it appropriate to do so. In such cases, enforcement cameras will be installed at the entrance and exit points of the School Street.

Where a School Street is enforced, vehicles entering the restriction will receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) unless a permit in respect of that vehicle has been issued by SCC.

School Street restrictions operate Monday to Friday all year round and therefore can be enforced all year round. However, we will turn off enforcement cameras during the school holiday periods that are stated on Southampton City Council's website - [School term dates and school holidays](#). On a date when there is an INSET day, the School Street restrictions will be enforced.

For 2025-26, enforcement dates will be:

Term	Starting	Ending
Autumn one	3 September 2025	24 October 2025
Autumn two	3 November 2025	19 December 2025
Spring one	5 January 2026	13 February 2026
Spring two	23 February 2026	27 March 2026
Summer one	13 April 2026	22 May 2026
Summer two	1 June 2026	22 July 2026

## 5. Exempted, Authorised and Permitted vehicles

Restricting the volumes of traffic using the School Street to a bare minimum enables the School Street to be successful and creates the safe environment that children and adults walking, wheeling or cycling through it expect.

We want to encourage everyone to avoid driving in School Streets during the restricted hours, however we recognise that a blanket ban on all vehicles entering the School Street would be unfair, particularly for residents who live within the closure.

We operate a system that allows certain vehicles to access the street during operation hours. These vehicles will either be Exempted, Permitted or Authorised.

### **5.1 Exempted vehicles**

These vehicles are automatically exempt from the restriction, such as emergency service vehicles. Further details of exempted vehicles can be found in this document in Section 7 – Criteria for School Streets Access and also in Part Six, section 6.1 of the Moving Traffic Restrictions 2022 Order.

### **5.2 Authorised Vehicles**

These vehicles are detailed in Schedule B of the Moving Traffic Order 2022 and are authorised to enter School Streets operating under a Bus Gate Traffic Regulation Order only. Examples of such vehicles are taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) licensed by Southampton City Council.

### **5.3 Permitted Vehicles**

For vehicles that meet our Permit Criteria, a School Street Permit may be issued by SCC in respect of these vehicles to allow them to access the School Street during operational hours without receiving a PCN.

A School Street Permit is simply a digital record of a vehicle's registration number plate and is specific to a School Street and is not transferable. A paper permit will not be issued. A School Street permit for residents will last for a period of 3 years, and a new application for a permit will need to be made to the Council for access for an additional 3 years. Residents will be reminded by email towards the end of the 3 years that their permit is due to expire soon.

Permits for school staff, support staff and businesses will be reviewed on a yearly basis. Permits issued to medical practitioners, carers, district nurses, support workers and Blue Badge Holders will initially be issued for a maximum 3-month period. For access beyond

this period, a new application will need to be made to the Council for access. It is the responsibility of the person wishing to access the School Street to apply for a permit in a timely manner.

Where a user requires a permit for multiple School Streets, then a School Streets permit will need to be applied for against the criteria in this section in respect of each School Street.

Each application will be considered on its own merits, and the issuing of a permit for one School Street does not guarantee that an exemption permit will be issued for other School Streets where applied for. Successful applicants will be notified that a School Streets Permit has been issued in respect of their vehicle and the date the School Streets permit will take effect and expire. The vehicle's number plate will be added to the SCC list of permitted vehicles.

## **6. Scope of and limitations of School Street Permits**

The School Street permits only apply to vehicles entering a School Street. Vehicles already parked within the School Street during operational times can leave the School Street without the requirement for a permit.

Where permitted vehicles, or those already within the School Street and leaving, are travelling through a School Street we advise travelling at a low speed and with due care and attention, as there may be children and their families walking, scooting, wheeling or cycling in the carriageway.

If a resident living within the School Street or other permitted person has an existing Residents Parking Zone (RPZ) permit that is also within a School Street, they will still need to separately apply for the School Street permit. Likewise, if they have a School Street permit and park within a School Street that falls within a RPZ, they need to ensure their vehicle is permitted to park for the duration of your stay.

The School Street permit does not entitle the driver of the vehicle to park in contravention of existing parking restrictions such as school zig zags, single yellow lines, double yellow lines. These restrictions can still be enforced when the School Street is in operation.

People who receive a PCN for contravention of the relevant TRO in respect of the School Street may appeal to the Council. The Council will consider such appeals on a case-by-case basis against the criteria in this policy.

## **7. Criteria for School Street access**

### **General Exemptions**

The following are automatically exempt from being issued with a School Street PCN, when there is an operational need to access the road during the restriction period:

- fire and rescue authority
- ambulance
- providing a response to an emergency at the request of an NHS ambulance service
- bomb or explosive disposal
- special forces
- police
- National Crime Agency
  
- A vehicle being used by or on behalf of a statutory undertaker in pursuance of a statutory power or duty where the observance of one or more provision of the Moving Traffic Order 2022 would be likely to hinder the use of that vehicle for the purpose for which it is being used.
- A vehicle being used by or on behalf of the Council in pursuance of a statutory power or duty where the observance of one or more provision of the Moving Traffic Order 2022 would be likely to hinder the use of that vehicle for the purpose for which it is being used.
- The vehicle is complying with a direction of a Police Officer in uniform or a Civil Enforcement Officer.
- The vehicle is being used in accordance with a waiver issued in writing by the Council which exempts that vehicle from one or more provisions of the Moving Traffic Order 2022 provided that any terms and conditions specified are complied with.
- The vehicle has undertaken a movement or action which would otherwise be in contravention of the Moving Traffic Order 2022 due to circumstances beyond the drivers control or in order to prevent an accident.

### **School Street Permit Criteria**

There are two types of School Street TROs – Pedestrian/Cycle Only Zone and a Bus Gate. In general, permits will not be issued for vehicles transiting through the School Street; they

must have a genuine reason that meets the criteria below, such as accessing a property within the School Street.

The following criteria for a School Street permit for a vehicle applies to School Streets that operate under a Pedestrian/Cycle Only Zone TRO:

1. Residents who live within the School Street. The vehicle must be registered or insured at an address within the School Street.
2. Authorised school staff and school support staff requiring access to a school car park or Resident Parking Zone, for which they have a permit for and is within the School Street, and School service vehicles (i.e. minibus or coach hired by the school). Only the relevant school may apply for a permit. A permit will only be issued in respect of vehicles used by school staff and school support staff to enable them to park in the school car park or RPZ for which they have been issued a permit. Where SCC obtain evidence of parking of such vehicles on the School Street, the permit will be considered for revocation.

School support staff includes people such as after-school club staff, school nurses, agency staff and specialist teachers who require access to the school car park during School Street hours.

For infrequent visitors (i.e. OFSTED), the school must apply in advance so a permit can be issued. A permit may be granted at the discretion of SCC in exceptional circumstances, such as temporary mobility injury and safeguarding concerns.

3. School Travel Service transport contracted by a Local Authority picking up a pupil from a property within the School Street or servicing the affected school. The number plate provided by the contract operator to the School Travel Service will be added to the permitted vehicles list for the School Street that vehicle will be accessing. The PHV/taxi operator is responsible for ensuring that the vehicle numberplate, that is being used on the contracted route, is kept up to date.
4. Staff working at businesses within the School Street. The business must provide evidence of the person working at the business.
5. Medical practitioners, district nurses and support workers attending a property within the School Street. This includes Dial-a-ride or a hospital/patient



transportation vehicle that is collecting or dropping off a resident at an address within the School Street.

6. Carers - NHS registered and unregistered carers to a property within the School Street providing suitable evidence of a duty of care is required. This could be in the form of a GP letter.
7. Blue Badge (disabled) holders who provide proof they require access to the street during the specified times. A permit will not be issued for transit through a School Street by a Blue Badge holder. For parents/carers with a Blue Badge or a child with a Blue Badge, the Council will first work with the school to ascertain whether another entrance can be used that doesn't require a School Streets permit.
8. Vehicles used by the Universal Postal Services Provider defined in the Postal Services Act 2011 to collect and deliver postal packets (letters and parcels) from within the School Street. The current and only Universal Postal Services Provider is Royal Mail. **(PROPOSED – TRO CONSULT IN SEPTEMBER 2025)**
9. Local buses operating registered public bus routes through the School Street and buses on contracted school/college routes. **(PROPOSED – TRO CONSULT IN SEPTEMBER 2025)**

The following criteria for a permit for a vehicle applies to School Streets that operate under a Bus Gate TRO:

1. All of the above general exemptions and permit holders.
2. Local buses operating registered public bus routes to or through the School Street and buses on contracted school/college routes.
3. Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) licensed by Southampton City Council. Taxi/PHV drivers should not enter the bus gate to drop off or pick up their own children or for other personal business.
4. Between the hours of 07:00 – 09:30, taxis and PHVs licenced by a local authority other than Southampton City Council, providing they meet the criteria specified in

## Schedule B of the Moving Traffic Order 2022.

### Exceptional criteria for a School Streets permit that may be considered at the discretion of SCC

There may be some circumstances whereby access is needed and is not covered by the above criteria. SCC will consider these on an exceptional case by case basis, pending receipt of an application or an appeal (in the case of emergency works set out below) with supporting evidence. These may include:

- Emergency works – such as flooding at a residential/commercial/school property, gas leak, broken boiler and structural damage. No permits will be issued before works; instead, the vehicle's owner must appeal this after the PCN has been issued and provide satisfactory evidence of the works that had to be carried out at that address at that time.

### Vehicles not eligible for a School Streets permit

The following are not eligible for exemption (unless they meet the criteria set out above) and will be liable to a PCN if they enter the School Street during the operational times:

- Visitors - Visitors will not be granted exemptions for their vehicle to arrive at the times of the School Street. Instead, residents and businesses are expected to let planned visitors to their street know about the School Street so that they can make suitable transport arrangements. It is advised that any planned visitor either chooses to walk or cycle their journey, park their car in a nearby street and walk the short distance to the school/property, or arrive outside of the hours of the School Street.
- Trade Workers – those who are not on an emergency call out
- Deliveries – Grocery, business and home deliveries should be timed to avoid operational times. Our School Streets are small and therefore, during operational times, delivery personnel can make the last part of the journey on foot. If this isn't possible, then it's the resident's responsibility to ensure the delivery company are aware and retime their delivery outside of the operational hours of the School Street.

- All other vehicles unless they meet the criteria for a School Street permit.

## 10. Permit Costs

There is no charge for the application or issuing of the School Streets Permit.

## 11. How to apply for a School Streets permit

A School Street Permit can be applied online at <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/travel-transport/apply-pay/moving-traffic-area/>

Where a resident or business cannot access the online form, or needs to be provided in an alternative format (e.g. large print, Braille, audio, language other than English etc.), please contact the School Travel Team at Southampton City Council by phone, email or post.

Address	School Travel Team, Planning & Transport, Southampton City Council, Civic Centre, Southampton, SO14 7LY
Email	<a href="mailto:school.streets@southampton.gov.uk">school.streets@southampton.gov.uk</a>
Phone	023 8083 3008

Supporting evidence to show how the criteria has been met must be accompanied with the application.

SCC aims to process applications within 5 working days. All applications for permits must be made at least 5 working days in advance of when the permit will be required from. Until an email from the Council has been received by the applicant to confirm a successful application, the applicant must not enter the School Street area. Entering a School Street without a valid permit will lead to a PCN being issued.

## GDPR statement

As a Local Authority, Southampton City Council (SCC) must meet its contractual, statutory, and administrative obligations. We are committed to ensuring that the personal data of our residents and service users is handled in accordance with the data protection principles. Please visit <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/contact-us/privacy->

[cookies/privacy-policy/](#) to find out about how we collect, process, store and retain your data.

Data processors are third parties who provide certain parts of our services for us. We have contracts in place with them and they cannot do anything with your personal information unless we have instructed them to do so. Our current data processors for School Street permit applications is Verint System. Their privacy notice can be read by visiting the following webpage - <https://www.verint.com/our-company/legal-documents/global-privacy-notice/>

### Proof of address

The Council will accept the one of the following documents as proof of address within the School Street. It needs to clearly show your name and address.

- A utility bill or financial statement dated within the last three months.
- A Council Tax document for the current tax year.
- A fully signed, termed tenancy agreement. We only require the pages that show the tenant names, property address, tenancy term dates and signatures.
- A driving licence
- An official letter from an organisation such as HRMC, NHS, benefits agency, or the local council - dated within the last three months.
- A payslip dated within the last three months.

### Proof of address of user of vehicle

The Council will accept one of the following to prove that that the applicant is the user of the vehicle at the address being applied for. Documentation must clearly show the applicant's name, address and vehicle registration. You can provide one of the following documents:

- Front cover of your vehicle registration document (V5C).
- For company cars - a signed and dated letter of authorisation from your employer, on company headed paper, confirming that you are the main driver.
- Long-term lease agreement.
- New keeper supplement.
- Sales invoice.
- Lease agreement registered to your employer.

## **12. Misuse and withdrawal of School Street Permits**

With reference to the Moving Traffic Restrictions 2022 Order and Part Seven – Permits, Southampton City Council may withdraw a permit if it is being misused.

- Schools, the public and all stakeholders are expected to comply with the exemption processes in place to help ensure the effective operation of the School Street and improve the safety of the people walking, cycling and wheeling within the School Street.
- If it is found that an application for a permit has been made on a false premise, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the School Street Permit and consider a prosecution for fraud.
- Similarly, if it is found that a permit has been knowingly misused, i.e., not for its intended purpose, the Council reserves the right to withdraw the School Street permit and consider a prosecution for fraud.

In the event of misuse of a permit, a warning letter will be sent to the permit holder advising them of the incident(s) and to make alternative arrangements for accessing a property within the School Street. If the misuse of the permit continues, a letter detailing the new incident(s) will be sent to the permit holder to advise that the permit will be cancelled 14 days after the date of issue on the letter.

Section 7.11 of the Moving Traffic Restriction 2022 Order states ‘the Council may serve notice of the withdrawal of a permit in writing to the permit holder at the address given on the application or at any other address believed to be the permit holders residence or place of business; on receipt of this notice the Permit holder must surrender the Permit to the Council within 14 days’. School Street permits are digital, so the permit will cease to be valid 14 days after the date of issue on the letter.

If the permit holder wishes to appeal the decision, they must write to Southampton City Council via email or post to the relevant address listed in Section 11. A Service Manager will review the appeal, and a final decision will be made within 10 working days of the appeal being made. If the appeal is successful, a new permit application will need to be made.

Should SCC amend the Traffic Regulation Order and remove any criteria on which a permit in respect of a vehicle has been issued, the School Street permit will remain in effect until it expires. The person who applied for the School Street permit in respect of such vehicle will be informed via email and letter.

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