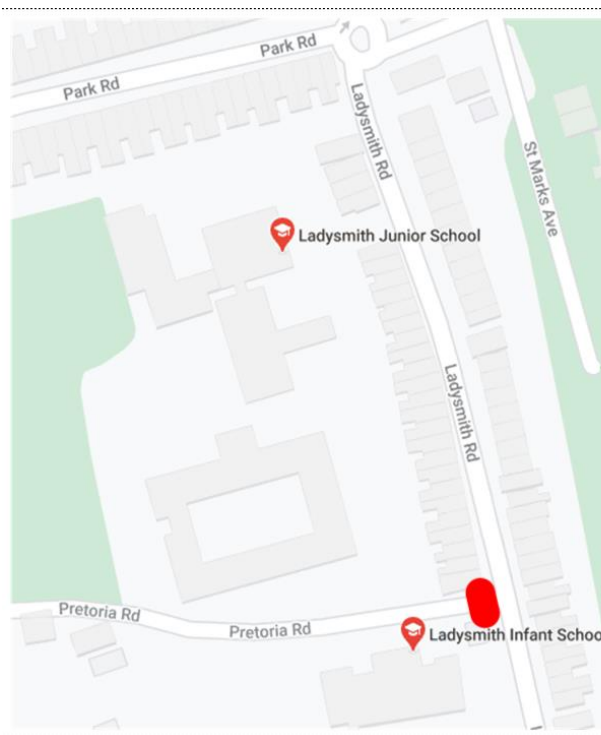


Dear Parent / Carer

## Re: Ladysmith Federation School Streets Closures

Now that we have welcomed all of our pupils back to school we wanted to let you know about a new initiative that our school will be taking part in after Easter.

In order to provide a safe space for all of our parents and children during drop off and pick up times, we are working with Devon County Council and Sustrans to introduce **School Streets**. School Streets are streets that become pedestrian and cycle-only zones for a limited period at school start and finish times every day (except weekends and holidays).



From **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April**, Pretoria Road will be closed to motor vehicles at the junction with **Ladysmith Road (see map)**. Staff will be available throughout the closure to allow access for emergency vehicles and residents.

By removing traffic from the road it can be used safely by families who travel on foot, by bike or scooter to school and provide space for social distancing, especially for parents congregating at pick-up time.

We encourage all families to leave the car at home where possible. Fewer car trips will help to improve local air quality, encourage more exercise and reduce congestion around the school at peak times.

- We understand some parents rely on the car for their journey. For those who need to travel by car we would encourage you not to drive

along Ladysmith Road but to park responsibly and considerately at least a 5 minute walk from the school.

The School Street will start on **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April** where Pretoria Road will be closed to motorised traffic between **08:30 – 09:15** and **15:00 – 15:40** Monday to Friday during term time. We plan to run the School Street until at least **22<sup>nd</sup> July 2021**, when we will then review if it should continue.

If you do have any specific access needs then please do contact the school as soon as possible. If you have any queries we will be adding a page to the school website with information on School Streets including a frequently asked questions section.

We really hope you like the idea. If you would like to help with stewarding, or are interested in finding out more, please do get in touch.

Kind Regards

Mark Wilkinson

## School Streets Frequently Asked Questions

### **Is this legal?**

Yes. Local authorities can implement Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to control traffic in their area. These are legal powers and can be temporary or permanent. The Department for Transport has issued statutory guidance to all local authorities in England to help them adapt their streets quickly and cheaply to provide safe space for walking and cycling and to enable social distancing. This is part of the UK government's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Why haven't we been consulted?**

The School Streets are being implemented as emergency measures to enable social distancing and help families travel to school safely. Depending on the type of TRO, and because the UK government has relaxed TRO regulations as part of its Covid-19 response, local authorities are able to implement road closures quickly and flexibly. This does not mean consultation will not take place. Children, parents, residents and local businesses will have their say as to how the scheme might develop, what might be changed and whether it becomes permanent.

### **Could this create congestion on surrounding streets?**

We will be working with Sustrans and Devon County Council to identify and promote locations away from schools where parents can park safely without obstructing residents on neighbouring streets. Any displaced traffic will be dispersed over a much wider area than at present meaning the impact on individual streets will be minimal. During previous School Streets trials in 2019, a study revealed that 58% of parents, carers and residents at 40 participating schools thought the surrounding streets were in fact less congested. This is because active travel rates (walking, scooting and cycling) during the closures increased from 59% to 66% and car trips decreased from 26% to 13%. Longer term studies of School Streets have consistently shown an overall reduction in traffic volumes in the surrounding area.

**Haven't parents and carers been told they need to drive their children to school and to avoid public transport during the Covid-19 pandemic?** This is not the case. The UK government has advised schools that they should be "encouraging parents and children and young people to walk or cycle to their education setting where possible." Parents may be concerned about letting their children on public or school buses. So, if walking or cycling is not possible because of distance, Park & Stride locations should be used as an alternative.

**Who is paying for this?** The UK government has provided local authorities with funding for short-term measures that can quickly be implemented to allow for social distancing and encourage walking and cycling. Subsequent rounds of funding will be made available where consultation reveals a desire for a more permanent scheme.