

NEWS

Camden school closes road for rush-hour drop-offs

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St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Covent Garden says the school run is now safer

A narrow road outside a central London school is being closed during rush hour to protect children from traffic and pollution.

Bollards are put up either side of Macklin Street in Camden from between 08:30-09:15 and 15:15-16:00.

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School said the 800m (2,600ft) long road was too dangerous for the school children.

The school said it had made the combination of "small children and really narrow pavements" much safer.

Deputy head Nicola Scott-Phillips said there had been a "really positive reaction" from everyone to the pilot, which she hoped would become permanent.

The school, which has 300 pupils, said there had been about a 50% reduction in children arriving by car.



Analysis, BBC London transport correspondent Tom Edwards:

What's happening here can be seen as part of a wider picture we're seeing in London where space is being taken away from vehicles and given to people for cycling and walking.

It's called healthier streets and not everyone likes it.

But what often happens in central London often spreads to other towns and cities.

Parent Michelle Zini-Lopes said she had been anxious walking her child to school in the past because lorries got too close to the pavement.

"I've witnessed parents being clipped by large vans and lorries that shouldn't be coming down this road anyway because they end up getting stuck," she said.



Camden Council said it believed it was the first time in the country a road had been closed during school rush hour.

Phil Jones from the council said: "Hopefully it'll spread. We've got a lot of problems in London with pollution and car domination so this is one way we can tackle those problems."

In January, the school's head teacher had **co-signed a letter** to London's mayor Sadiq Khan, who has made tackling air pollution **a priority**.

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