Leicester City Council Play Street Guidance and Requirements for Schools

School Run traffic and parking is becoming a huge issue that many schools are having to deal with daily. One way of encouraging less driving up to the school gates, is to close the streets around the school on a temporary basis, from time to time, and encourage more walking and cycling to the school on those days. Some schools even take the opportunity to arrange some lessons or play on the street whilst the road closure is in place.



Play Streets enable children to play outdoors freely and safely in the street close to their own home. This is a school led initiative which Leicester City Council supports. The process which allows schools to formally close their local street to through traffic for up to three hours is administered by Leicester City Council. This guidance has been prepared to assist Leicester schools who wish to organise regular or one-off play street sessions.

Who can apply to close their road for a play street?

Leicester schools can apply to the council for a 'Temporary Play Street Order' however some roads within Leicester might not be suitable to be used as play streets. It may not be possible to close main roads or roads which are on a bus route. The most suitable roads are cul-de-sacs or quiet residential streets where an easy alternative route for through traffic can be provided.

To discuss the suitability of your street and the dates \ times you are considering please contact: Jogs Singh, Traffic Operations Team on 0116 454 3715 or via email on Joginder.Singh@leicester.gov.uk.

There will be a number of things to consider before making a formal application for a street closure:

1. Talk to your neighbours and parents and carers.

Before submitting a 'Play Street' application, it is important to discuss the idea with the residents and business proprietors on your street to see what the level of interest and support is. Consultation can offer the opportunity to answer any questions or concerns and can encourage neighbours to be fully involved.

As part of the application process, evidence of consultation with all the residents and businesses who will be affected by the proposed road closure must be provided. All properties that may be impacted by the road closure sought must be contacted by the organiser in writing. An example contact letter is attached to the official application form on the council website. Proposed dates and times for the Play Streets events should go on the letters.

A significant number of residents and businesses must support the scheme and if organisers cannot prove that neighbours are in agreement, then the scheme will not be able to go ahead.

Following a positive consultation process it would be beneficial to hold a meeting to confirm the dates of the play street sessions and discuss the different roles and responsibilities required to ensure the play street sessions are well organised and safe for everyone involved. It is important to identify the play street organiser and stewards to manage each point of closure and make sure through traffic is diverted safely.

Parents and carers should also be fully informed of the proposed closure and encouraged to walk or cycle with their child to school.

2. Complete the application form

To put the street play plans into action the organiser will need to complete the application form and provide any required supporting paperwork. Applications will only be accepted if they are made on the appropriate form which can be found on the councils' website, the Extranet or via this <u>link</u>. The standard charge for a school application is £170, this can include repeat closures over any 12-month period on one application. For example, it could cover

- Closing road A every Wednesday between 8 9am and 2.45 3.45pm
- Closing road B on last Friday of every month 2.45 5pm

You don't **have** to close the roads at those times, but once the application has been approved it means that you **may** close the road, if you choose to.

2.1 Insurance and liability

Under no circumstances will the Council be held liable for any injury, loss or damage arising from the organisation of a street play event. Any claims made against Leicester City Council with regard to damage or injuries caused by play street events will be passed on to the relevant organiser(s). Play Street organisers should be aware that there may be circumstances in which they would be held liable for any accidents. Leicester City Council encourages everyone involved to be sensible and respectful about other people and their property. You are required to show that you are covered by at least £5 million Public Liability Insurance. This can be an email conversation with your insurance company to confirm that your organisation is covered. It may be that you will need to pay an additional premium for this cover. If a certificate is issued, please send a copy of this when you have it.

If you are a Leicester City Council School and covered by the Leicester City Council corporate insurance, please contact Stephen White in our Risk Management Team on 0116 454 1641 or via email on Stephen.white@leicester.gov.uk about the sort of event you are planning so that he can check with our insurance providers about any additional premiums that might be required.

2.2 Noise Nuisance

Consideration should be given to those living or working nearby and excessive noise should be minimised.

3. Organisation

3.1 Signage

City Highways will provide appropriate signs and barriers necessary to affect the closure. The school will be expected to erect the signs in the agreed locations at the time of the approved road closures. This includes a 'Road Closed' sign and barrier at each point of closure, and any appropriate diversion signs for the alternative route, details of which will be supplied on the Legal Order. Each closure point must always be supervised and maintained by a responsible and clearly identifiable adult. Contact Jogs Singh, Traffic Operations Team 0116 454 3715 for more information on delivery and collection of signing.

3.2 Risk Assessment

In practice Play Streets are usually very low risk events, but Leicester City Council strongly advise that you carry out a risk assessment. The need for a risk assessment is to ensure that the session runs smoothly without incidents. Conducting a risk assessment does not guarantee that an incident will not happen but can significantly help to reduce the probability.

A risk assessment requires you to identify **hazards** which are anything that you think may cause harm to any of the participants during the street play session. Then you need to assess the **risk** which is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed. Though there is no set way of writing a risk assessment, it is a good idea to clearly document what the hazards and risks are, how serious they may be

and what action will be taken to reduce or eliminate them. An example risk assessment is included at the end of this guidance.

Agree in advance with everyone involved that participants should take responsibility for themselves and watch out for each other, especially children.

Please remember:

- a) It is the organiser's responsibility to do the risk assessment and Leicester City Council will not accept responsibility for it.
- b) More information about 'play street' risk assessment can be obtained from Playing Out via www.playingout.net

3.3 Publicity

Organisers may wish to publicise the event by distributing notices, posters, leaflets and flyers to residents. To avoid anyone 'gate-crashing' your Leicester City Council recommend keeping publicity within the school and any streets affected.



4. What to do on the day

4.1Supervising the session

Whilst parents and careers will remain responsible for the supervision of their children during the session the aim of play streets is to give children the freedom to play out on their street and help to promote their independence. To encourage children to make their own decisions about how and what to play organising adult led games and providing lots of toys and equipment is not necessary.

Supervision of the road closure points is essential, there must be sufficient stewards to position themselves by the road closure signs to answer any questions from motorists and also to stop non-residents from "gate-crashing" the event. Stewards must be fully informed of their responsibilities so that they can carry out their role correctly. Stewards must be an adult and clearly identifiable i.e. wear hi-visibility clothing.

It is strongly advised that steward's responsibilities are discussed before the play street session begins. The stewards have an important job and should be clear on what their respective roles are.

4.2 Closing the Road

It is important that motorists approaching the road can easily identify that it is closed to through traffic. Ensure that road closure signs are positioned so that the writing on them is clearly visible to approaching drivers. Once in place, stewards must remain at their posts except to let vehicles of residents or visitors in and out. After the road is closed vehicles (except emergency vehicles) are breaking the law if they go through. However, if a driver lives on the road or is visiting a person living on the road and wants access in or out, they must be granted permission to do so.

4.3 At the end of the session

It is the responsibility of the street organisers to make sure that portable signs and barriers are removed, and all rubbish is cleared before the road is re-opened.

For an informal discussion about your application please contact Jogs Singh, Traffic Operations Team on 0116 454 3715



Useful resources:

Playing Out is a not-for-profit organisation set up by parents to activate street play across the UK. For downloadable free resources and lots of useful information around play streets visit Playing Out website www.playingout.net

Street Play Risk Assessment

Street Play Location:	Organis	er's Name:	Date of Assessment:	Event D	ate:	
Step 1 What are the hazards?	Step 2	Step 3		Step 4		
	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you doing already?	What further action is necessary	How will you put the assessment into action?		
 Walk around the site before the event Vehicles on the road parked or moving Ask people who live in the street what they think 	Identify the groups of people. Remember Some people have particular needs Babies and small children	List what is already in place to reduce the likelihood of harm or make any harm less serious.	You need to make sure that you have reduced risks 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. An easy way of doing this is to compare what you are already doing with good practice. If there is a difference, list what needs to be done.	and have set first.	ds that are h	igh risk