

# **Medway Council School Streets Exemption Policy**

# **March 2024**

## **School Streets Exemption Policy**

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### **SUMMARY**

A new initiative to make streets outside schools safer for children was launched on Monday, 11 March 2024.

The School Streets programme, launched in partnership with Medway Council and local schools, to see vehicle restrictions introduced in designated streets, turning them into pedestrian and cycle-only zones during drop-off and pick-up times in the school term.

Its aim is to create a safer environment, improve air quality and reduce congestion, by reducing the number of vehicles outside schools.

The launch of the scheme follows the success of School Streets around the country, which has demonstrated the positive impact they can have on the school community, and we are excited to have introduced the initiative to Medway.

It also comes after we successfully secured £486k from the government’s [Active Travel Fund](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/millions-of-people-to-benefit-from-200-million-to-improve-walking-and-cycling-routes), and follows consultation - which involved schools, residents and parents - held in June and September last year.

Feedback from the consultations led to amendments and design changes and resulted in School Streets being designated outside seven schools.

These are:

* Burnt Oak Primary School, Cornwall Road, Gillingham
* Greenvale Primary School, Symons Avenue, Chatham
* Miers Court Primary School, Silverspot Close, Rainham
* Phoenix Primary School, Glencoe Road, Chatham
* St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Greenfield Road, Gillingham
* St Peters Infant School, Holcombe Road Rochester
* St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, Bleakwood Road, Walderslade.

A full list of the streets and operating times can be found on [our website](https://www.medway.gov.uk/schoolstreets)

### INTRODUCTION

Under the School Streets scheme vehicles must not enter the School Street unless they have an exemption. Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras areused to monitor vehicles on the street during operational hours.

School Streets restrictions are only effective at drop-off and pick-up times, and anyone already parked on the street before these periods can remain parked. They are also free to exit the street without contravening the restrictions.

Restrictions will not be in place during bank holidays, school holidays or weekends~~.~~ There will be a six-month warning period when School Streets start so road users have time to get use to the new system.

The first time a driver enters a School Street without an exemption, they will receive awarning notice. After getting this notice, or once the six-month warning period is over, drivers who do not follow the rules will receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

School Streets have signs to warn drivers and tell them the operating times.

Drivers can apply for an exemption if they live or work in a restricted street, if they are carer for a vulnerable resident who lives on the street, in the catchment area or if they, or their child, is a blue badge holder and needs access to the street.

Exemptions will also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

For more information visit: [Medway.gov.uk/SchoolStreets](https://www.medway.gov.uk/schoolstreets).

### How School Streets work

A School Street is a pedestrian and cycle only area at set times during the school term. Vehicles must not enter the area unless they have an exemption.

Emergency service vehicles, school buses, utility providers attending emergencies, postal services and waste vehicles are automatically exempt.

Vehicle restrictions apply at drop-off and pick-up times on school days and are not in place during school holidays or weekends.

School Streets have signs to warn drivers and tell them the operating times.

### School Street enforcement

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras are used to capture vehicles entering a School Street during operational hours.

There will be a 6-month warning period when School Streets start so road users have time to get used to the new system.

The first time a driver enters a School Street without an exemption, they will get a warning notice.

After getting this notice or once the 6-month warning period is over, drivers who do not follow the rules will receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN).

### Parking in a School Street during restricted times

If you are already legally parked within a School Street before the start of the operating time, you can stay parked or exit the street without being issued a PCN.

You will not be able to enter the street and access parking areas during operating times unless you have an exemption.

### Applying for an exemption

You can apply for an exemption that will allow you to drive and park within a School Street location during operating times.

[View the School Street locations and operating times](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200137/schools_and_learning/1791/school_streets_scheme).

Your vehicle registration will be added to our exemptions list if your application is approved. This will stop you from getting a PCN (Penalty Charge Notice) when entering the School Street during operating times.

An exemption is virtual. You will not receive a paper permit and will not have to display anything on your vehicle.

An exemption lasts for 2 years.

### Taxis

Taxis are not exempt unless they have a Blue Badge holder customer. Taxis will need to pick up and drop off as close to the destination as possible without entering the School Street locations.

If a customer needs to be collected from their home within a School Streets location, a PCN may be issued. This can be appealed with evidence.

Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and failure to provide proof or supporting evidence with the appeal will be rejected.

### Who can apply for an exemption

You can apply for an exemption if you:

* live in a restricted street in the catchment area
* work at a business in a restricted street
* work at a school in a restricted street
* or your child are a Blue Badge holder and need access to a restricted street
* are a carer of vulnerable residents who live in a restricted street.

We'll also consider other exemptions on a case-by-case basis.

If you are contracted by us to provide school transport, your vehicle is exempt for all School Street locations. Please provide the relevant information for us to add you to the exemption list. If you would like to check your vehicle is on our list, email permits@medway.gov.uk.

Emergency service vehicles, school buses, utility providers attending emergencies, postal services and waste vehicles are automatically exempt. Please ensure that your vehicle details have been added to the exemption list by providing the relevant information to permits@medway.gov.uk

### Application Process

What you need to apply:

You can [apply for an exemption using our online form](https://www.medway.gov.uk/xfp/form/668).

Eligibility proof

You will need to upload evidence to support your online application:

* Resident: proof of address such as a utility bill (dated within the last 3 months, and not vehicle related)
* Business employee: a letter from the business you work for to prove you are an employee
* School employee: proof you work at a school such as a letter from your manager on headed paper
* Blue Badge holder: a photo of the front and back of your Blue Badge. You will also need to describe why you need access to a School Street during operating times. Should your Blue Badge expire before the exemption date the exemption will be given to the expiry date of the Blue Badge.
* Child with disability: a letter from a health professional to confirm your child is unable to walk or finds it very difficult to walk
* Professional, a carer or medical practitioner: a company letter to prove you are an employee and need an exemption.

We require each application to submit their actual documents via the website or alternatively by emailing permits@medway.gov.uk

### Vehicle proof

You will also need to prove you own a vehicle or drive a company vehicle.

We will accept either:

* your vehicle registration document (logbook or V5C)
* insurance certificate
* Motability lease
* a letter from your employer with details of the company vehicle you drive.

### Eligibility proof

You will need to upload evidence to support your online application:

* Resident: proof of address such as a utility bill (dated within the last 3 months, and not vehicle related)
* Business employee: a letter from the business you work for to prove you are an employee and need to access a School Street
* School employee: proof you work at a school such as a letter from your manager on headed paper
* Blue Badge holder: a photo of the front and back of your Blue Badge. You’ll also need to describe why you need access to a School Street during operating times
* Child with disability: a letter from a health professional to confirm your child is unable to walk or finds it very difficult to walk
* Professional, a carer or medical practitioner: a company letter to prove you are an employee and need an exemption.

Due to General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) we do not have access to personal details even if the applicant has applied for a parking permit. Neither do we have access to Council Tax to check residency either. If the applicant fails to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with the application, the application will be rejected.

Holding a parking permit for resident holder only parking bays (Controlled Parking Zones – CPZ) inside a School Street is not criteria for awarding an exemption. Furthermore, a School Street Exemption does not entitle you to park inside a CPZ.

This exemption policy applies to

* Residents living inside a School Street
* School staff, where the only car park entrance is inside a School Street
* Carers – formal and informal - who need to access a property, inside a School Street
* Blue badge holders who need to access the school or a property inside a School Street
* School buses
* Businesses in School Streets It is not council policy to issue blanket exemptions across all School Streets.

### Vehicles automatically exempt:

* Emergency services
* Waste collection services
* Royal Mail deliveries

Drivers are encouraged, even if exempt, to avoid entering School Streets during restricted times, to maximise the benefits for all.

### Exemption Residents

Residents living inside a School Street catchment area can apply for an exemption for their vehicle.

If you have a permit for a controlled parking zone (CPZ) you must apply separately for your School Street exemption. A School Street exemption does not guarantee a parking space on your street.

The changing of a vehicle(s) must be emailed to permits@medway.gov.uk including details of your School Street exemption and the new vehicle documents to enable us to update the exemption list with your new vehicle registration mark. Please allow 48 hours for the exemption list to be updated.

Should you receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) in the interim whilst your details are being updated you will need to appeal the PCN. If you fail to update your vehicle registration mark and receive a PCN we will not be able to cancel the charge issued.

The approval of the School Streets exemption is renewed biannually, emails will be sent to individuals 60 days and again at 30 days before the exemption expires. It will be the drivers responsibility to ensure that their application is submitted and approved in time for the new exemption to start.

If this is not adhered to and a late application is made and a PCN is received, we will not be able to cancel the charge issued.

Your exemption does not start until you have received the email advising that your application has been approved.

### Exemption School Staff

School staff where the only car park entrance is inside the School Street can apply for an exemption.

It is the responsibility of the school to inform visitors of the restrictions Peripatetic teachers and others accessing a school to provide educational services can apply for an exemption.

Please apply at least 48 hours in advance.

Applications giving less than 48 hours’ notice may result in a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) being issued.

If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected. All other applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Contractors attending the school on a regular basis will either need to avoid the School Streets exemption times or have a letter from the school approving their application for a School Street exemption.

### Exemption Carers (formal and informal)

Registered carers of residents living inside the School Street can apply for an exemption. Informal carers of residents living inside a School Street may also be eligible for exemption. Informal carers must provide evidence of their caring role e.g., a note from a General Practitioner (G.P.), District Nurse or another NHS professional such as a consultant.

If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected.

All other applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Exemption Blue Badge Holders

Blue Badge holders that require access to a property inside a School Street (including those dropping off or collecting from the school) during the hours of operation can apply for an exemption.

Schools may be required to confirm the status of parents or students who are included in an exemption application.

If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected.

All other applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Exemption School Buses

Buses transporting school children to or from a school inside a School Street must apply for an exemption. This applies to private out of school clubs that operate a bus service to the school. The school will be required to confirm that the service collects and drops-off children to and from the school. This exemption includes buses attending the school to take the students on a school excursion or event. School and bus service providers are expected to comply with Council processes to administer these exemptions. Should a need arise for a Public Route Master Bus (under the auspices of Arriva/Stagecoach) to access a School Street, it will be exempt. No other buses (e.g., minibuses) are exempt.

If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected.

### Exemption Businesses inside School Streets

Vehicles belonging to businesses inside School Streets are eligible to apply for an exemption. All other applications (including business users) will be considered on a case-by-case basis • If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected.

### Miscellaneous

Vehicles Mobile businesses, tradespeople, and emergency callouts are where possible expected to park outside the exemption.

If your vehicle is already legally parked within a School Street before the start of the operating time, you can stay parked or exit the street without being issued a PCN.

You will not be able to enter the street or access parking areas during operating times unless you have an exemption.

If you need to enter a School Street as an emergency during restricted hours and it is not suitable for you to park outside of the exemption, the driver can appeal the Penalty Charge Notice with supporting evidence of why you needed to enter a School Street. Appeals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If they fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence, then their appeal will be disallowed.

By taking these positive and proactive steps, the Council continues to reduce traffic, improve safety for children and encourage more walking and cycling on the school run. School Streets supports the Council’s Local Implementation Plan, making it easier for everyone to travel more sustainably (walking, cycling, public transport) and provides a safer, cleaner environment for children travelling to and from school.

Applications for temporary exemptions can be made for scheduled appointments inside a School Street. Please apply at least 48 hours in advance Applications giving less than 48 hours’ notice could result in a PCN which will need to be challenged.

### Changing of a vehicle

The changing of a vehicle(s) must be emailed to permits@medway.gov.uk including details of your School Street exemption and the new vehicle documents to enable us to update the exemption list with your new vehicle registration mark. Please allow 48 hours for the exemption list to be updated.

Should you receive a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) in the interim whilst your details are being updated you will need to appeal the PCN. If you fail to update your vehicle registration mark and receive a PCN we will not be able to cancel the charge issued.

### Emergencies

In the event of an emergency call-out during the time of restriction, a PCN may be issued, and an appeal can be made. Appeals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your appeal, it will be rejected.

Where reasonable, it is expected that utility companies and tradespeople will schedule work outside of the restricted times or park outside the School Street

### Taxis

Private hire (taxis) vehicles are not eligible for exemptions to drive through the School Streets during the hours of operation.

Residents are encouraged to meet the vehicle outside the School Street during the restricted hours. Where a customer must be collected from their home, a PCN may be issued. This can be appealed with supporting evidence. Decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Appeals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected.

### Delivery vehicles

Delivery vehicles are not automatically exempt, and residents are encouraged to book deliveries outside the hours of restriction. If a delivery is made during restricted hours and is suitable for hand delivery, it is expected that delivery companies will make the last part of the journey on foot. Where a delivery is too large to carry into the School Street, the driver can appeal the PCN with supporting evidence of the address to which the item was delivered. Decisions are made on a case by-case basis. Appeals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. If you fail to provide the correct proof/supporting evidence with your application, it will be rejected.

### Misuse of Exemptions

Schools, the public and all stakeholders are expected to comply with the exemption processes in place to help ensure the safe and effective operation of School Streets. If it's proved that you have given false information, you may be prosecuted and could face a fine of up to £2,500.