

Getting to and from school safely

School Council Initiative: 6th March 2009

SKIPPS Community effort needed

The problem

Safety is a prime concern for all parents.

The fatal accident a couple of years ago at a neighbouring school reminds us just how fine is the line that separates us from tragedy.

Ongoing 'incidents' involving local traffic and SKiPPS students on their way to and from school demand changes to our behaviour.

Those of us who use the front gates of the school, whether as drivers or as pedestrians are well aware of the potential for disaster. We are very lucky to have avoided any serious incidents so far.

The safety issue is obvious and critical. On top of that, the inevitable frustration

and sometimes even confrontation, has been exceedingly unpleasant.

We have a safe way for pedestrians (including those children who come to school by tram and walk the last 200 metres) to get safely from Fitzroy Street to the School.

Now:

- Cars line the laneway on both sides with wheels on the narrow footpaths. This narrows the lane so that moving vehicles are not able to pass each other.
- Cars stop in the 'Loop'.
- Cars are reversing, mounting the footpath and not surprisingly getting stropky with each other.

It is all totally unsatisfactory.

The solution

SKiPPS staff, the School Council and interested parents have been working on this issue for many years. Thanks to support from City of Port Phillip and Parks Victoria, we have a way forward.

But everyone has to help. In particular, we all need to change the way we use the lane and the car park.

Arriving at school and leaving it can be a safe and comfortable experience as long as everyone does their bit. This leaflet explains how we can each play our part.



We have alternatives

1. A healthy and sensible way for many people to travel between home and school is on foot. Let's walk. Or cycle. Or scoot, or roller blade. Ice-skating is not recommended for most of the year. But think about rejuvenating the Walking School Bus. Talk to Jen McCrabb for more details about routes and the key organisers.
2. If you must drive, you can park in
 - Canterbury Rd (no cost for an hour)
 - Hockey Drive (free for 20 minutes*)
 - or Lakeside Drive^and walk the last 150 metres through the Park. Plenty of hassle-free parking and a pleasant stroll. A great way to start and finish the day.
3. Another alternative parking spot, particularly sensible in the afternoons, is Lakeside Drive^ – just across the oval from the school's park gate.
4. Tram or bus can be a convenient option for some people.

And remember that we have to start only five minutes earlier in the morning, to turn the process into a relaxed and pleasurable experience.

In the afternoon, another option is to let your children know you will be ten minutes later to pick them up. Jen McCrabb and Anne Grigg are on duty until 3.45pm.

So you can miss the peak of the rush.

The School has prepared a map showing many of these alternatives - Walking School Bus routes, public transport, the range of parking options, and so on.

But if you must use the car park accessed from Fitzroy St, please support the system.

* Parks Victoria has agreed that Hockey Drive will now be 'Free for 20 minutes' at school start and finish times. New signs coming soon.

^ Lakeside Drive is paid meter parking. So is Fitzroy Street.

Car parking and vehicle access

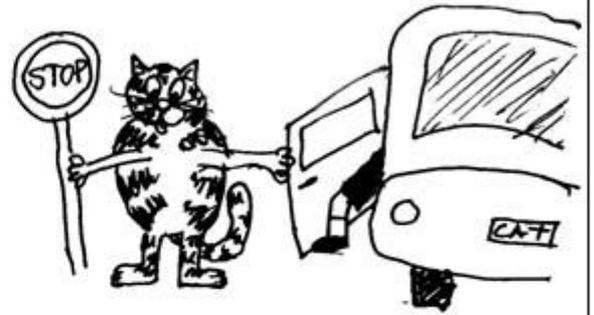
These are the arrangements we have negotiated with Parks Victoria (owns the car park) and City of Port Phillip (polices parking infringements in the lane).

1. Children on foot will be safe on the Bowling Club footpath because there will be **no parking, stopping or dropping off in the laneway**. We are looking at ways we can physically prevent cars mounting the pavement. We are also exploring redesign of the car park to improve traffic flow. But in the meantime: **NO STOPPING IN THE LANE** (or Bowls Club).
2. Between 8.30 and 9.30 am, and between 3.00 and 4.00 pm, **all 37 parking spaces are ten minute spaces**. This gives enough time for parents to deliver and pick up children. Let's keep it moving so that others can enjoy this same marvellous concession from Parks Victoria who will be strict in penalising people overstaying that ten minutes.

If you need to stay for longer, use the parking alternatives.

3. **All children dropped off in the car park should enter the school through the side gate from the Park**. This will make it easier for cars in the car park itself, and of course it will be safer for the children.
4. Traffic will flow smoothly out of the car park because there will be **no parking or stopping on the eastern footpath** (the car park side). Cars will be able to pass each other in the lane in opposite directions! Imagine that!
5. Drop-off will occur only in the car park. Drive in as far as you can before letting children out of the car.
6. If there is no parking spaces available, **don't stop**. Keep driving around the loop until your children come to the 'pick up' point. Jen McCrabb will be directing them.
7. If you need to stay longer, you can use one of the School's visitor permits. Ask at the School Office for one that will give you free parking for up to three hours.

The new parking arrangements



School side gate to and from the oval in Albert Park

All entry to school **from the Car Park** through this gate only

School Playground

Pick up Point



6 BAYS

7 BAYS

8 BAYS

8 BAYS

10 BAYS

Bowls Club

Absolutely No Stopping anywhere in the lane!

All pedestrian access **from Fitzroy Street** on this western footpath



Fitzroy Street

Your part in the plan

1. Become a SKiPPS **CAT**

- Be **C**onsiderate of others – adhere to the system: get back to your vehicle as quickly as you can so others can use the space; don't stop in the lane way causing delay and danger to others... And please park your car only in the legal car spaces.

And

- Be **T**olerant of others – everyone else has their own pressures too: a drop-off at ballet five minutes ago, a work meeting that starts in ten, no chance for a cup of coffee yet...

Take the pledge and display the yellow "I'm a SKiPPS CAT" sticker on your windscreen like a permit. It will tell the parking authorities that you are one of us.

When things go wrong, wave to the sticker and smile.

- ### 2. Give the arrangements a fair go.
- We are still discussing modifications to these arrangements with Parks Victoria and Port Phillip City Council. We are looking at changes to the car park to improve traffic flow. And we're hoping to persuade Parks Victoria to give us extended free periods in Hockey Drive and Lakeside Drive, particularly for the times that matter to us. If you think we can improve the set-up, convey your suggestions to the committee through Jen McCrabb.

In summary

1. **Consider and take up the healthy alternatives to driving**
2. **Consider and use the parking alternatives**
3. **Give the new arrangements in our car park a fair go**
 - **No parking or stopping in the lane**
 - **If just dropping off, go as far round the car park loop as you can before letting children out.**
 - **Ten minute parking 8.30 am - 9.30 am and 3.00 pm - 4.00 pm.**
 - **Do not leave your car unattended except in designated spaces**
 - **Pedestrians use the Bowling Club footpath to and from Fitzroy Street**
 - **Use the School's side gate for pedestrian access to and from the car park**
4. **Become a SKiPPS CAT – put the sticker on your windscreen. And smile**

This sticker allows parking officers@Hockey Drive know you're picking up children

