

However you take your child to school it can sometimes be a stressful and chaotic journey. This leaflet provides advice on how you can reduce this stress and in turn make the area around schools a safer place at pick-up and drop-off times.

Parking dangerously or inconsiderately around schools at drop-off and pick-up times not only endangers other road users (particularly pedestrians and cyclists), it can also create stress for all concerned. Using the provided pedestrian and cycling infrastructure with your child contributes to their road safety education and sets a good example.

Don't create the problem...
Be part of the solution!



Check out www.rsa.ie for further safety tips

PORTLAOISE SCHOOLS CLUSTER PROJECT

The Portlaoise Schools Cluster Project is part of the Portlaoise Low Carbon Town Initiative. While the project was initiated by Laois County Council, it is run in the 10 primary and secondary schools of Portlaoise by Green-Schools.

The aim of the project is to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and safety on the way to school. This will be achieved by encouraging students, parents and teachers to walk, wheel, cycle, scoot, park & stride, use public transport or carpool instead of using the private car on the school run. Beside the environmental benefits, the added bonus of active travel will be improved physical and mental health for all.



SAFER SCHOOL GATES

**Let's Make Our Gates
Safer for Everyone by
Travelling Sustainably**



TRAVELLING SUSTAINABLY

As part of the Green-Schools Programme, the primary and secondary schools of Portlaoise are actively encouraging students to travel sustainably. Schools run WOW (Walk On Wednesdays) and COW (Cycle On Wednesdays) days every week, where students are encouraged to walk, park & stride, or cycle to and from school. For those unable to join in active travel, they are encouraged to carpool or use public transport on the school run.

Walking and cycling all the way or some of the way to school has numerous health and environmental benefits while being an opportunity for students to develop personal safety skills.

For further information visit www.greenschoolsireland.org

WALKING OR CYCLING TO SCHOOL TIPS

- Safety first!
- Wear a High-vis vest
- Wear a helmet and use bike lights if cycling
- Stop, look and listen before crossing
- Always stay on the footpath if walking or cycling lane if cycling.

PARK & STRIDE LOCATIONS

If you live too far away to walk, enquire about public transport options. If unavailable, you could try Park & Stride. This is where you drive some of the way and walk the rest of the way.

Talk to your school for Park & Stride locations if you're unsure.



AT THE SCHOOL GATES

Pedestrians / Cyclists

- Please use the pedestrian crossing and guide railings. These are designed to protect you from school traffic.
- Never use the driveway to enter the school. Cars leave the school at different times and using this for pedestrian or cycling access is dangerous
- If walking, use the footpaths and never walk on the cycle lane
- If cycling, be mindful of pedestrians and stay on the cycling lane.
- Walk your bike if the area near school is crowded.

Drivers

- Park & Stride or Carpool as much as you can. This will help reduce traffic outside the school.
- Keep your speed low
- Always let your child out of your vehicle onto the footpath side – never onto the road
- Check for pedestrians and cyclists before you or your child open the car door.

Drivers make our school less safe by:

- Blocking the road – emergency vehicles and other traffic may need access
- Parking on double yellow lines – This makes it difficult for other drivers and pedestrians to be safe.
- Parking on a roundabout or in such a way that you block a path
- Dropping off children while stuck in traffic
- Leaving their engine running while parked
- Not walking on the footpath after collecting or dropping off your child i.e. across roundabout, exiting/entering through school driveway.

