

# Enhancing Dean Park Primary School Users' Experience

## Theme Area

Active and Safe Travel; Young People

## Summary of Proposal

This proposal focuses on improving the experience and safety of pupils, parents, and staff at Dean Park Primary School. It addresses significant concerns around unsafe and congested parking during drop-off and pick-up times, as well as longer-term pressures from a growing population and outdated school infrastructure. The proposal combines traffic management solutions with longer-term considerations such as additional school provision and expanded play spaces.

## Local Context

Community feedback highlights Dean Park Primary School as a key area of concern. In a questionnaire with 210 responses, 110 respondents specifically mentioned the school, with 64 raising concerns about parking. Parking conditions during drop-off and pick-up times were described as “diabolical,” with issues including congestion, unsafe road use, and limited pedestrian safety.

Balerno is experiencing population growth, resulting in increased pressure on school capacity and surrounding infrastructure. The current school building has been described as outdated and “not fit for purpose,” although the quality of teaching is highly regarded. Narrow streets around the school further exacerbate traffic and safety challenges.

## Objectives

- Improve safety for children and families travelling to and from school
- Reduce traffic congestion and unsafe parking behaviours
- Encourage active travel such as walking and cycling
- Address long-term capacity and infrastructure needs for primary education in Balerno
- Enhance outdoor play opportunities for children

## **Description of the Proposal**

Short-term measures:

- Introduce designated drop-off and pick-up zones away from the school gates
- Explore implementation of a temporary car-free zone during peak school times
- Establish a “walking bus” initiative to encourage group walking to school
- Increase signage and road markings to improve awareness and compliance
- Consider a one-way traffic system around the school
- Provide an assisted pedestrian crossing or school crossing patrol
- Investigate the role of a safety officer or traffic warden during peak times

Medium to long-term measures:

- Assess the feasibility of a second primary school in the lower Balerno area to accommodate population growth
- Explore options for a new or upgraded school building to replace outdated facilities
- Improve and expand play areas in and around the school to support children’s wellbeing

## **Community Benefit**

This proposal will benefit pupils, parents, school staff, and the wider Balerno community. It will:

- Improve child safety and reduce accident risk
- Promote healthier lifestyles through active travel
- Reduce traffic congestion and environmental impact
- Support growing families with improved educational infrastructure
- Enhance children’s wellbeing through better play facilities