

Parents/Guardians of Dunbeg Primary School Pupils

Safety Issues at School Drop Off / Pick Up Time

The safety of all children is a primary concern to all parents, guardians and teachers at Dunbeg Primary school. Due to recent traffic incidents around the entrance to Dunbeg Primary School and the church car park at pick up times, we kindly ask that you take a few minutes to read this letter.

The incidents were as follows:

2 cars collided within the church car park – it was all at low speed, so hence no damage. They were both reversing at the same time, which is the key aspect here, as visibility is reduced during reversing.

A parent had pulled into the church car park, but due to it being full, then reversed all the way out to park on the path, but didn't see a child behind them, the parent of the child had to shout to get their child to stay away.

Another child ran across the road in front of a car, luckily the car was going very slow and no contact was made between child and car.

Unfortunately when Dunbeg Primary School was built, the designers did not foresee the heavy use of cars to drop or pick up children at school that we now have. Pupils are now bussed / driven in from many surrounding villages.

Our aim is to reduce (as is reasonably possible) the risk of any accidents involving cars and children. Previous measures have been taken to reduce this risk, for example:

Building of the Sustrans cycle / foot path

Asking parents of P3 children and above to use an alternative car park other than the church to drop off and pick up at, e.g. car parks by the recycling area or by the bus turning circle at the end of the cycle path.

Using a walking bus to transport pupils to pick up points.

You are asking how can we improve this further? In the short term, we encourage the use of the above methods at all times and in addition:

Please don't use the church car park or parking along Etive Road (the approach road to the school) unless really necessary. If using the church car park, please reverse park on arrival, so that when moving off at times when children are more likely to be near your car, you have full vision when driving out of the car park.

To wait for your children by the school gates on the land by the Sustrans cycle path. This is to reduce the risk of a collision at the entrance to the church car park.

We would encourage you not to let children play on the grassed areas within the church grounds, in order to reduce the mix of children in proximity to vehicles.

When driving along Etive Road, always drive at low speed when in the vicinity of pupils.

Where possible to walk / scoot / cycle to and from school rather than drive, this has the added benefit of being a healthy option too, as well as reducing traffic.

Maintaining a safety mindset at all times.

A Police presence will be in and around the school area to aid with these general road and traffic safety measures.

In the long term, the Parent Council is engaging with Argyll and Bute Council to find safer means for our children to travel to and from Dunbeg school. Any further improvements or suggestions are welcome.

We all want our children to grow up fit and healthy, without encountering any serious accidents. We also understand the time pressures that parents are under and your other concerns during drop off and pick up*, therefore we ask that all parents respect the need to keep all pupils safe. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please feel free to contact me either directly or via other Parent Council committee members or the Head Teacher, Ms MacVicar.

On behalf of the Parent Council and School Staff, I thank you for assisting us in amending our safety practices for the benefit of the pupils. Drop-off and pick up time is a very hectic time of the day and we appreciate your cooperation in helping us keep our children safe.

Adrian Beard

Chair

Dunbeg Primary School Parent Council

* Quote from 'The Problem of Traffic Congestion Around Schools' website - "When asked, parents who choose to take their children by car cite distance, traffic hazards, time constraints, and bad weather as the most common reasons for selecting this transportation mode. Other research has asserted that both road safety and "stranger danger" are the key explanations for why parents are increasingly taking their children to school by car. One can view such threats to child safety as both a cause and a symptom of school congestion. On the one hand, parental concerns about traffic hazards could lead more parents to drive their children to school, thereby increasing congestion. On the other hand, traffic congestion could lead to more child pedestrian accidents, with backed up cars' blocking the views of small children crossing the street to enter school." - <http://bit.ly/1nhYby8>