

# Report on the shared Pedestrian/Cycle zone outside St Peter's School, Falcon Rd, Morningside.

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**FAO:** Members of Transport meeting, The Ivy, Bruntsfield

The following is my personal report and observations, as a parent of children at St Peter's School and also as a member of the general public and council tax payer, on the state of the part time Pedestrian/Cycle zone outside St Peter's School, Morningside. I do not represent the school in any official capacity, although other parents have expressed their frustrations at the ineffectiveness of the zone.

## Observations

1. More than six months after implementation, the pedestrian/cycle zone remains largely unutilised by pedestrians, who self-marginalise to the pavement areas of the zone.
2. Using the zone as a pedestrian can be an unpleasant and dangerous experience, with many motorists accessing the zone failing to modify their speed and behaviour to recognise the right of way of pedestrians using the zone.
3. Pedestrians using the zone have been subject to abuse, intimidation and confrontation. On one occasion my children and I were deliberately driven at whilst walking in the zone.
4. Attempts to record the levels and speed of traffic through the zone on camera are met with hostility.
5. In spite of the twenty flashing amber lights and the clear and explicit "pedestrian/cycle zone" signs demarcating the zone, many motorists appear to be completely unaware they are accessing a pedestrian/cycle zone and proceed into and through it at speeds of more than 20 MPH.
6. Without any serious enforcement or monitoring of the zone, many motorists clearly use the zone as a rapid shortcut from Newbattle Terrace to Morningside Rd.
7. The police's response has been inconsistent, incoherent and sporadic. Occasionally there is a token presence for a couple of days, and then the status quo ante resumes. Advice from police on using the zone as a pedestrian varies from suggesting that the pedestrian zone not be used by pedestrians (!), to advising that abuses are recorded and reported (but, without witnesses this is largely futile).

## Suggestions

I am not in any sense an expert on these matters, but, short of a scheme with physical barriers and operators managing access, I suggest one or more of the following changes.

1. Replacement of amber flashing lights with flashing Stop signs, with further signs explicitly stating that motorists must give way to pedestrians and cyclists in the zone, and to only proceed when safe to do so.
2. A clear change of the physical surface environment when the zone is accessed by motorists, such as a raised continuation of the pavement, and speed bumps on the road surface (there are currently none), to provide a psychological demarcation for pedestrians and cyclists using the zone and others accessing it.
3. CCTV cameras, such as are at the bus lane at Peffermill Rd and elsewhere.
4. It is unclear why all the streets in the zone have to be through-streets for motor cars. Perhaps a combination of turning some of the streets into no-through-streets and a one way system would ameliorate the situation.
5. Turning the whole area into a permanent cycle/pedestrian zone.

## Conclusion

It is my opinion that the status quo is not only deeply frustrating, unjust and unsatisfactory but it is positively **DANGEROUS**. An area clearly and explicitly labelled and signposted as a pedestrian/cycle zone, but in which vehicles continue to travel at high speeds and behave as if they have right of way is a recipe for a very serious accident, *particularly around a school*.

The police simply cannot be expected, nor should be expected, to provide constant protection of the zone, and infrastructure and other systems need to be put in place to make it usable and safe, and to make abuses of the zone recordable and prosecutable.

If the zone is not to be properly enforced and made safe to walk in, it **MUST BE RE-SIGNPOSTED** as something other than a pedestrian/cycle zone, for all avoidance of doubt.

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