

Dear parents/carers,

Re: Use of school car park

A meeting was held at Poplar Farm School on Monday June 27th to further discuss the safe use of the car park at the beginning and end of the day. Many schools face similar problems to Poplar Farm and there is no ideal solution. No school can be responsible for the parking behaviour of parents on the roads around the school and we can only ask that parents are considerate and mindful of the needs of residents and the safety of other road users and pedestrians. Our priority is to ensure the safety of all children, their families and visitors when on the school premises.

Thank you to the parents and family members who attended the meetings and gave their suggestions and feedback.

Parking outside the school

Last November 2021, LCC received some concerns re parking on Helmsley Road, from residents. These included parking on both sides of the road, speeding and some verbal abuse. Lincolnshire council conducted their own investigations and visited the area on several occasions. They consequently have decided to introduce waiting restrictions on parts of Helmsley Road, Arundel Drive and Penrhyn Way. The proposed marking plans are with the contractors and the minor works and traffic department reported it hoped that the work would be completed in the summer holidays.

Longer drop off times

The school start time is 8.45am and finish time is 3.15pm and this is within the legal White Paper guidance. In staff/local school board discussions it was considered that these timings were appropriate.

American style drop off

Some parents favoured this type of scheme for Poplar Farm. After discussion with staff and local school board members, it has been decided that this will not be possible for several reasons.

- staff members have various meetings and duties before school starts and cannot supervise drop off in the car park.
- it would need several members of staff to operate such a scheme and there is no budget for employing extra staff to do this.
- the school has to ensure budgets are used to provide high quality education opportunities for our children
- Helmsley Road is not very wide and also has a bend towards the brow of the hill. Any queuing cars from a "drop off" system may compromise safety for other local drivers and pedestrians.
- Poplar Farm has been accredited as a Green Flag Eco-School and so, as a community, we should be encouraging our children to walk, scoot or bike to and from school where possible.

Entrance and exits

In our March meeting, it was briefly discussed whether changing the entrance and exit would give clearer visibility and better traffic flow. However, after consultations and discussions with the site manager, it was pointed out that the present entrance actually slows traffic down because of the angle of the turning. It therefore seems sensible to leave the entrance/exit as they are.

School Travel Plan

A School Travel Plan was written before Poplar Farm School was officially opened in 2018 and it suggests a package of measures aimed at reducing the number of "school runs" each day.

As the school and surrounding estate has grown, it is obvious that the travel plan no longer matches the needs of the school and the surrounding environment. It will be revised during the next academic year and included on the school website.

Expectations

We expect courtesy and good manners when using the car park. Verbal abuse to anyone on the premises will not be accepted.

Please drive appropriately. If there are no available spaces, please do not use the car park, double park, or block the waste disposal area. You need to exit the car park and find other appropriate parking. Recently a member of staff was unable to enter the car park to start work because of blocking by a van dropping off children.

Parents are asked to respect Disabled Parking spaces.

It was suggested to remove the 'drop off' wording from the car park.

There was a request that all gates are opened promptly each day and we will monitor this.

As the school grows even bigger, parking will continue to provoke more discussions but, in the meantime, let's all be vigilant at the busy times of day and look after one another to keep our community safe.

Poplar Farm School Local School Board