

Good Afternoon Mrs Monaghan

As you know, myself and other colleagues from the Newry City NPT have been present at the school pick up time on two separate occasions over the past two weeks. This has been in response to a report received regarding concerns for pupil and parent safety whilst walking within the immediate vicinity during this time.

The issues regarding parking during school drop off and pick up times, raises its head quite often and affects a number of schools within Newry and whilst there is no quick solution to fix the issue, there certainly are measures that can be taken to try and make the environment safer for all.

I would greatly appreciate if you could reach out to your parents and pupils alike in relation to observations of the situation at hand.

**Firstly:**

Whilst there were a few vehicles parked not in ideal positions, the most pressing concern was for those vehicles who park along the footpath to the right of the school gates as it runs up the hill past the shop and on into Windmill Road. For a large stretch of that footpath, it narrows considerably and cannot accommodate any vehicle at all parking half on and half off the kerb. One vehicle had parked the full way across the footpath, obviously in an effort not to obstruct the traffic on the road, but this in turn was putting all pedestrians, adult and child in danger with having to step out onto a main arterial road out of Newry which only has the national 60MPH speed sign a stone's throw away from that location.

Legally there needs to be 1.5m's of a space left on the footpath to allow safe passage of all including wheelchairs and double prams.

Last week, all pupils were able to be collected by parents without any vehicles having to park on that stretch of footpath. It may have been frustrating for some parents who were doing the pick-up but it did

show that it is possible with everyone having a bit of consideration for others when choosing where to park. Furthermore, we also noticed that two lanes of traffic were still able to flow without having to stop and give way to each other due to vehicles parked on each side at this point of the road.

There was a large footfall that day walking up the footpath and I took the opportunity to speak to some of the pupils to get their views on having a clear footpath to walk on and they told me they were happy and felt safer.

**We would therefore please ask for parents to avoid parking along this stretch of footpath as it is shown that it is possible to achieve.**

**Secondly:**

In relation to the pupils themselves, we noticed a number of pupils not using the school crossing facility and choosing to cross at other stretches of the road, which is not a safer choice. If it could please be emphasised to the pupils at St Clare's Abbey about the fact that it is a wonderful resource which the school has and if a pupil is walking home on their own, or even just walking on their own to the car which is picking them up across the road, whilst it might be walking a short distance in the opposite direction, **please walk down to the school patrol officer who will help keep you get safely across the road.**

Kind Regards

Constable 54140 | Newry City NPT | Ardmore PSNI | Newry, Mourne & Down.