

Engines Off when you Drop Off campaign

SCHOOLS toolkit



All about the Engines Off when you Drop Off campaign

According to Essex Air, the main source of air pollution in Braintree is road traffic. Idling – where a car's engine is left running while it is stationary – contributes to this problem and reduces air quality, particularly near schools. Young lungs are more vulnerable to its effects and children, being small, are closer to the source of the problem.

Research shows that when people pledge to change their behaviour, they are much more likely to follow through. That's why we are asking parents and carers to pledge to turn off their engines and drive down air pollution, to contribute to better air quality around schools, benefitting children, parents, carers and your neighbours. We are asking schools to help get this message out to their communities.

Each parent making a pledge will receive a digital certificate to print out. Once your school receives 25 pledges, we will send you a certificate to display. Once you hit 50, we will send you a gold digital badge to use in your communications, showing you're an idling aware school.

In this pack you will find a range of materials to help you get started. We would love it if you could share these in your classrooms, newsletters and other communications with parents, and please encourage them to make their pledges online.

This campaign is being run by Braintree District Council.

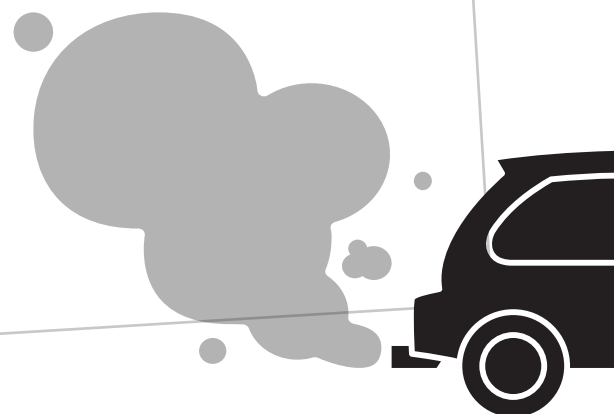
What's inside your toolkit:

Materials for you:

- KS1 and KS2 lesson plans from Clean Air for Schools
- Solutions for schools including an introduction to support with School Travel Plans
- Presentation for use in the classroom or assembly
- Posters to print and use around the school

Materials for you to share with parents:

- Letter explaining our campaign
- Myth buster
- Pledge card

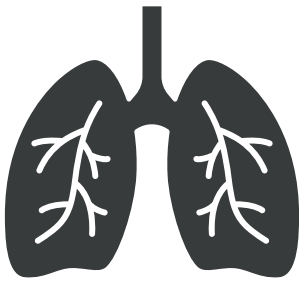


Facts and figures

RAC research found that

26%

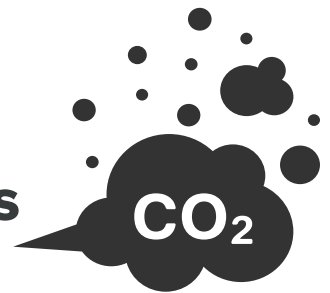
of those caught idling are spotted doing so outside schools.



Air pollution causes and worsens **children's asthma**, may cause **lung cancer** when they're older and increases the risk of respiratory illnesses like pneumonia.



An idling engine can produce up to **twice as many exhaust emissions** as an engine in motion.



Vehicle idling is an offence

against the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002.



Every minute an idling car can produce exhaust emissions to fill

150 balloons

...consider turning your engine off



Public Health England estimates long-term exposure to particulate air pollution has 'an effect equivalent to' around

25,000

deaths a year in England.



Solutions for Schools

**The best way
to protect
children from
the effects of
air pollution
is to leave the
car at home.**



**Get the whole
school community
involved in
AWARENESS
DAYS**

Dates in 2024:

20 JUNE
**National Clean
Air Day**

22 SEPTEMBER
Car Free Day



Promote cleaner, safer travel

Download KS1 and KS2 lesson plans from the Clean Air for Schools vision:

www.transform-our-world.org/campaigns/clean-air-for-schools-resources/clean-air-campaign-resources/clean-air-vision-resources



Take part in the School Travel Plan accreditation scheme

If you would like some help getting your children and families to try alternatives to the car, Essex County Council provides free support to schools. At the end of this pack we have included information on School Travel Plans and the accreditation scheme, which gives schools the option to earn stars according to their action on sustainable travel.



Learn together about air quality by installing a free SAMHE monitor



Schools are invited to join the SAMHE (Schools' Air quality Monitoring for Health and Education) research project. You will receive a FREE indoor air quality monitor linked to an interactive Web App where teachers and pupils can view their data and use it in curriculum-linked activities and exper-

iments. Teachers testify that it's "powerful to see the live feed" and has "provided our science group with a wealth of data to interrogate and analyse".

Go to www.samhe.org.uk/?utm_source=EssexJan24&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_campaign=home&utm_id=AJ1 to find out more.



Dear Parents/Carers,

We all know that toxic fumes caused by vehicle emissions are harmful to our health and that children are particularly vulnerable.

You might see some parents idling their engines outside of schools, unaware of the health impacts on those around them. As part of our commitment to create a safer, healthier environment in our school, we will be promoting Braintree District Council's pledge to end engine idling campaign to raise awareness of the impacts of excessive idling.

As part of this, we will be:

(Enter what your school will be doing. See below for ideas on what you can commit to as a school. Delete or add as appropriate)

- Putting up anti-idling signage
- Holding a poster competition for our pupils
- Running special assemblies, classes, presentations and quizzes on air pollution and engine idling.

We would love to see you get involved with the campaign. To help, you can:

- Pledge to turn your engine off while your car is stationary, by going online at **www.braintree.gov.uk/dropoffpledge** or using the QR code on the enclosed pledge card
- Turn off your engine outside school during pick up and drop off times
- Encourage others to turn off their engine while waiting, to protect everyone's health.

Sincerely,



[School or Headteacher]

Myth busters

MYTH: Switching a vehicle's engine on and off wastes fuel and causes more pollution than idling.

FACT: Idling for an hour can waste half a gallon of fuel or more. With modern engines, the cost of turning off the engine and restarting it after a minute or longer pollutes less and costs less than leaving the engine idling.



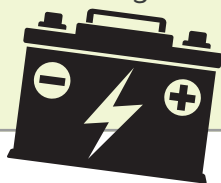
MYTH: It is better to idle a vehicle's engine because turning the engine off and on wears it out.

FACT: An idling engine will leave fuel residues that can damage engine components, causing costly wear and tear to your vehicle. Idling can cause spark plugs to become dirtier, more quickly. This can cause an increase in fuel consumption.



MYTH: A car's engine needs to stay on to keep the battery fully charged.

FACT: Modern batteries are more efficient and don't need to be running constantly to remain charged or use the radio.



MYTH: Engine idling is not against the law.

FACT: Idling unnecessarily while stationary is an offence under the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002, and may be subject to a fine.



MYTH: Idling my engine won't harm me or my children.

FACT: Inside the car the pollution levels will be higher than outside because they get trapped, without the benefit of wind to disperse them. Findings from Southampton University suggest that pollution levels can be 9-12 times higher inside the car than outside.

Idling an engine for just one minute produces as much carbon monoxide (a toxic gas associated with severe health risks) as smoking three packs of cigarettes.



Pledge cards



Children and their carers are exposed to higher levels of air pollution inside a car than outside in the open air.

If your child breathes in high levels of air pollution over a long period of time, they might be at risk of:

- their lungs not working as well as they grow older
- developing asthma during childhood or as an adult - and if they have asthma already, air pollution can make it worse
- wheezing
- coughs
- lung cancer when
- infections like pneumonia.

The school with the monthly highest number of pledges will be published on our online leader board!

It's not always possible to switch off when you're stationary; the RAC advises that if you have an older car (8+ years) or an older battery (5+ years), it is not advisable to switch off and on several times in a short period, eg in heavy traffic.

However, if you are parked or waiting for someone, especially outside of areas where there will be vulnerable people such as schools, GP surgeries or hospitals, you should turn the engine off.

SIGN OUR PLEDGE FORM

at www.braintree.gov.uk/dropoffpledge
or use the QR code to pledge that you will drive down air pollution.



School Travel Plan Accreditation Scheme

Essex County Council's Sustainable Travel Planning Team is working with Head teachers from schools of all ages to assist with the development of a School Travel Plan. These have multiple aims, including decreasing traffic levels around schools, improving pupils' road safety, interlinking with Healthy Schools status and Bikeability, and helping everyone get to and from school actively, more alert and ready to learn.

To help develop a School Travel Plan, a new and free national accreditation scheme has recently been launched. Modeshift STARS has been established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting cycling, walking and other forms of sustainable travel. Schools can register on the scheme for free and will be granted access to an online system, guiding them through each element of a Travel Plan with user-friendly instructions.

Once registered on the system, there are five levels of accreditation that a school can achieve, with certificate awarded for each on as frequently as every term to display within the school:



Approved (Green) accreditation is for schools right at the start of their travel plan. All that's required is to profile the school and your neighbourhood, set targets for what you want to achieve, and simply plan some initiatives for the future. This can be done in one term.



Good (Bronze) is for schools that demonstrate a commitment to promoting sustainable transport by conducting an annual survey, identifying travel issues and solutions and delivering a range of travel initiatives.



Very Good (Silver) schools have achieved a reduction in car use on the journey to school, identifying the sustainable modes which most suit their needs and working towards improving or implementing facilities to support these.



Excellent (Gold) is for schools that have excelled with promoting sustainable travel and achieved a reduction of at least 5% in car use on the journey to school by fully embracing sustainable travel as the norm throughout the entire school community



Finally **Outstanding** (Platinum) accreditation is for schools who've done everything for Gold, plus pupil travel surveys for four years and seen the levels of active travel – walking, scooting, cycling – rise by at least 5% in that time.



Essex County Council

Essex County Council can provide support to schools throughout their Travel Plan process. One of our Sustainable Travel Planning Advisors will offer their expertise and assistance, completely free of charge. Schools move through the levels of accreditation, with the ability to apply for the next level the following term. Each school, when successful, will receive a certificate for display to show their level of achievement.

All accredited schools can be put forward for the National STARS School Travel Awards. A national awards panel made up of experts in the field will decide upon the Regional and National Schools of the Year with the best schools in each region going forward to a national event with money-can't-buy prizes up for grabs.

A School Travel Plan is a relatively simple project which consists of three core sections;

1. A profile of the school, encompassing its size, location, pupil and staff population, and its existing facilities. This will include simple surveys (which ECC can assist with) on the travel habits and preferences of the pupils, and targets set for making these more sustainable
2. An analysis of the travel and transport issues affecting the school. A lot of this will become apparent from the surveys, but further investigation through consulting staff, parents, governors, other visitors to the school and the school council will add to the body of evidence.
3. Finally, based on the first two stages, an action plan of initiatives is devised, aimed at solving any problems that have been outlined and meeting the demands and needs of all those travelling to the school.

Once established, a School Travel Plan is a living document, aiming to move onto the next level of accreditation, which can be adjusted and tweaked as and when circumstances at your school change. Repeating the surveys at the same time each year and collecting any new evidence enables you to measure progress and reassess how even more opportunities can be provided.

Some of the opportunities provided by a working School Travel Plan includes;

- Healthier and more active, alert pupils
- Decrease in congestion around the school
- Greater awareness of safety issues
- Opportunities for Bikeability cycle training
- Complementing Healthy Schools applications and reviews
- Participation in national schemes, such as the WOW reward challenge
- Cleaner air in and around the school
- Pupils' greater connection with their local environment.

Our Sustainable Travel Planning Advisors can help you every step of the way, and are happy to share ideas that have worked well in other similar schools. We know that, like children, every school is different and so will encourage the school to own the Travel Plan, personalised to their needs.

To get started, you can either register your school on the Modeshift STARS website (<http://www.modeshiftstars.org/education>) or contact us at travelplanteam@essex.gov.uk or 0333 013 9390.