

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

6 MARCH 2025

QUESTION NO. 1

David Dymond to ask the Chair:

Parking Provision for Redlands Primary School Staff

As you are no doubt aware Redlands Primary school has been a major education feature in the Redlands Ward a working-class housing area for more than 120 years.

As time has moved forward residential parking has become a fact of life and a very limited resource.

Two facts impact upon the effective and efficient running of the school during the weekday.

- 1 when the school was built in Victorian times onsite parking was not considered as necessary when everyone walked to school.
- 2 within the Redlands estate public transport would not fit into the narrow, often dead-end streets. The nearest buses being the 19b, 20 and 21 which services the UoR.

I know some parking provision has been given to some school teachers. But in order to operate the school has to have admin staff and learning assistants who are typically low paid female workers There are some public parking places in Upper Redlands, Addington and Alexandra but due to large number HMO;s and student accommodation any spaces are greatly oversubscribed.

So can the members of the Sub-Committee give further consideration to any parking allocation, required only during office hours?

I personally use the 'Shanks's pony' for all my school support.

REPLY by the Chair of the Traffic Management Sub-Committee.

I invite Councillor Ennis, the Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport to make the response on my behalf.

REPLY by Councillor Ennis, Lead Councillor for Climate Strategy and Transport:

Given that as a Council we are actively working to discourage motorists using private vehicles through various means, the most obvious one being emissions-based charging. By granting a permit to non-teaching staff would give the impression of favouring one group of workers over the rest of the boroughs work force and residents. As parking controls expand into other areas, as they inevitably will, the precedent is then set for others to cite the decision and follow the same route. The agreement to issue permits to non-teaching staff would serve to undermine the validity of the permit scheme overall and is contrary to current policy.

The rules of the scheme as agreed by the Traffic Management Sub-Committee:
<https://www.reading.gov.uk/vehicles-roads-and-transport/parking-permits/permit-management-rules/>

Teacher

"49. "Teacher" means a person qualified to teach, and is employed by the school located in a permit parking zone.

a) Teaching Assistants are included

b) Trainee Teachers are included

c) Applications for other members of staff of the educational establishments (i.e. non-teaching staff) to be dealt with as discretionary business applications.

50. "Teacher permit" means but not limited to a permit issued by Reading Borough Council and will display the Vehicle Registration Mark (VRM), Make, Colour, Zone, unique reference number, date of expiry;

a) They may be colour coded for ease of identification and for classification of type of Permit without including such text on the Permit itself.

b) All permits will be valid for a maximum of one year from issue. The parking permits are restricted to term time only parking, between 7am and 8pm.

c) The school must have no or little off-street parking.

d) Proofs of vehicle ownership and confirmation of employment (Job description required to prove applicant is a teacher/teaching assistant and not just a coach/mentor) at the school must be provided to confirm employed as Teacher/Teaching Assistant/Trainee Teacher.

e) Visitor permits may be issued to the head teacher to cover supply teachers only.

i) Further books will only be issued upon proof that the permits have used in accordance with above.

f) There will be no entitlement to renew and new applications will be required annually.

g) The parking permits are limited in numbers to each school and it is dependant on the number of off-street parking spaces located at each school and zone availability. The primary purpose of the permit parking scheme is for residents to find parking near their home; it is not intended for schools per se. The number of permits for each school would be a discretionary decision of TMSC in extenuating circumstances.

h) The permits would include any business applications that may be granted. It would be for the school to allocate the permit applications.

i) A fee will be payable."

The fee is currently £48 - charged in line with the residents first permit.

Discretionary Business Permits

These are for businesses operating within a permit zone and the applicants have to provide a statement of reasons, Proof of Business and Business Use (i.e. insurance showing the vehicle is insured for business use, not for personal use). They are currently charged at £398.

As Councillors agreed that non-teaching staff should be dealt with as discretionary business, that is what the team have been processing them under.

We are all conscious of work and budget pressures, however, there are other wider considerations to be made. The overall policy of the Council is to reduce the reliance on the private car, which will in turn, reduces emissions. Again, pricing for parking permits is part of the strategy to achieve the council's overall objectives of being carbon neutral by 2030.