

No1 child-safe county stays ahead of the pack

Issue Date: 17/03/2010

Staffordshire County Council's cabinet has announced a cast iron commitment to introducing part time 20mph zones at many schools across the county.

Part time 20mph zones operate during school run times to protect children, but ensure that traffic flows are unaffected when children are in class, and during school holidays.

The flexible approach is already in operation in parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland and has proved popular with both parents and other road users

The drive will start by tackling those schools on high risk main roads with high speeds and heavy traffic. The programme will roll out over the next few years.

Staffordshire is already No1 in the UK for child road safety. It's a position achieved through innovative road safety action, including the Walking Bus and Safer Routes to School programmes and a host of education and training projects. The 20mph zone initiative is a continuation of a winning formula.

Cabinet Member for Highways Mike Maryon said it was a clear manifesto priority for the new administration when it came to power in June last year.

"Out on the campaign trail we found that highways and school gate road safety were at the top of the list for the vast majority of voters.

"As soon as we took up office we pumped an extra £30m into highways and introduced a trial of 20mph zones at eight schools, one in each district.

"It proved to be massively popular with parents and now we will be going out and delivering a progressive programme of part time 20mph zones across the county.

"One child's death on our roads is one too many. That's the message we received loud and clear.

"We have approved the principle – but it's not going to happen overnight. Make no mistake this is a big undertaking, but its top of the list for Staffordshire people. We are committed to delivering," he said.

The Road Safety Team will assess schools working closely with local county councillors to identify what is appropriate, taking into account local concerns and issues.

Details of the first set of schools to benefit will be announced in the spring.