

ActiveStreets 'Street Play' Policy

01 January 2023

Updated October 2023



City of Westminster



Fairer Westminster

Through our [Fairer Westminster Strategy](#) we believe in creating a world class Fairer Westminster, where everything the council does should enable every individual in our city to have the opportunity to improve their lives.

A city where people live in a healthy, sustainable and safe environment, can grow and learn throughout their lives, build fantastic careers in world-leading industries, have access to high quality, affordable homes and retire into the community with dignity and pride.

Tackling the climate emergency is the biggest challenge of a generation and we will play a leading role in delivering on our ambitious targets that will benefit the city for many years to come.

Our mission is to improve the lives of those that live in, work in or visit our city. We always put residents at the heart of all we do and also recognise that we are one of many organisations that can make positive changes. That's why we are committed to working collaboratively with residents, businesses and partners to deliver our ambitious vision.

ActiveWestminster

Through our [ActiveWestminster strategy](#) we will create an ActiveCity that encourages people to be physically active, where, when and how they choose, and to ensure the whole of Westminster can benefit from an attractive, supportive and healthier environment.

Reaching that goal will require persistence, patience and resolution, therefore it is not just about doing the same thing more efficiently - at times a more innovative, radical and bold change will be required and we want to ensure that there is an openness to explore new options. We want to work collaboratively to encourage innovation and share best practice, particularly through applying the principles and practical learning of behaviour change.

High quality streets, parks and spaces can and should encourage, facilitate and enable physical activity by default and well design spaces and places should be flexible and support play, physical activity, leisure and sport.

Through our various strategy commitments, we really want to focus our attention towards less traditional spaces, which are often more attractive and accessible for those currently not participating in any form of physical activity.

Therefore, we have developed and are meaningfully implementing our overall ActiveStreets programme across Westminster to enable and facilitate play, physical activity, leisure and sport opportunities 'on the doorstep' in our vibrant communities.



Strategic Context: Our ActiveStreets Programme

Our overall ActiveStreets programme is a key strategy commitment of our [ActiveWestminster strategy](#) - *Activate Your City, Lives and Neighbourhoods*, in addition to our [Open Spaces and Biodiversity strategy](#).

Our ActiveStreets programme consists of three types of ActiveStreet;

- **‘Play Street’** a permanent designation which will provide priority over traffic to children and families to play in streets at specified times. This is underpinned by Department for Transport legislation (Section 29, Road Traffic Act 1984).
- **‘Street Play’** facilitated by temporary road closures for children and families to play in streets at specified days, times and locations. We will shape a policy that makes applying for Street Play as simple and as affordable (ideally, free) as possible.
- **‘School Street’** provided either via permanent or temporary road closures for school children to play in the streets outside the school at specified days and times.

Each ActiveStreet should be supported by;

- **Activation**; An initial up to one-year programme of sports/play activities for children, young people, families and older people led by ActiveWestminster, the School and/or our partners.
- **Sustainability**; ‘StreetMakers’ a programme to identify, recruit, train and deploy parents, volunteers, community groups to continue to the programme of activation after the initial period and to ensure community ownership of the ActiveStreet.

The ActiveStreets programme aims to develop and implement ActiveStreets across Westminster to;

- Facilitate and enable play, physical activity, leisure and sport opportunities ‘on the doorstep’ in our vibrant communities by children, young people and families.
- Increase in the number of people who report they know their neighbours and can ask them for help.
- Improve air quality and increase active travel.

We are meaningfully implementing our overall ActiveStreets programme to encourage, facilitate and enable our schools, residents and communities to apply to open up our/their streets for activities in a variety of different ways; whether that be a ‘Play Street, a ‘School Street’ and/or ‘Street Play’ sessions.

Our Policy Approach: ‘Street Play’

ActiveWestminster’s underpinning principles of **P**romote, **A**ctivate, **C**ollaborate and **E**nable do not just represent doing more of the same. They present the step-change needed to create opportunities that maximise the impact of existing work, develop new approaches and ensure we take an evidenced and needs driven approach.

We will work collaboratively, both internally and externally with partners and stakeholders to encourage innovation and share best practice particularly through applying the principles and practical learning of behaviour change.

Through our ActiveStreets programme we have developed our ‘Street Play’ policy in the context of our various strategy commitments. We have ensured that this policy aligns with the Department for Transport (DfT) [guidance](#) and with [Playing Out](#)’s [best practice guidelines](#).

Playing Out is a not-for-profit organisation set up by parents in Bristol and now providing free resources, advice and inspiration for residents around the UK who want to open their streets for play. As well as instructional videos and step-by-step ‘manual for organisers’, you can download template posters and other materials and contact them directly for advice. Playing Out is a growing resident led movement with thousands of people taking action in their communities. You can connect with this through Playing Out’s Facebook group, website www.playingout.net or via email hello@playingout.net or telephone 0117 953 7167.

Therefore, we wish to actively support, enable and facilitate our residents to follow the ‘Playing Out’ model using the guidance and resources freely available via the Playing Out website.

We have established an ActiveStreets programme board which includes various council officers and departments, external experts (inc. Playing Out & the University of Westminster), Metropolitan Police and ‘StreetMakers’ (*stewards/parents/volunteers*) to monitor this policy and practice to address any issues that may arise.



Our Policy: 'Street Play'

1. Our on-line application form is simple and easy for a school or resident(s) to use, without jargon.
2. We can only consider applications from a school or resident(s) of the street where the 'Street Play' sessions are proposed to take place.
3. **We will fund the costs** of submitting and processing applications for 'Street Play' sessions. The public health benefits for children, young people and families alone far outweigh the administrative costs to the council.
4. We will accept applications all-year-round. We ask that applications are submitted 25 working days prior to proposed 'Street Play' session date(s) and we aim to process applications within 20 working days.
5. 'Street Play' sessions are facilitated via a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) under Section 16a of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
6. **All** TTRO's will re-direct any through traffic. Residents living in the street, as well as visitors and deliveries, can still drive in and out of the street at 5mph, providing they are guided by a 'StreetMaker' (*stewards/parents/volunteers*) once the street is clear of any children, young people and/or families.
7. DfT guidance, allows for multiple TTRO road closures to close several roads for 'Street Play' sessions via a single annual application covering up to any 12-month period. This is granted on a case-by-case basis.
8. Within reason, we enable schools/residents (*in consultation with children, young people and/or families*) to choose the days/times for their proposed 'Street Play' sessions to meet local need. 'Street Play' sessions can only be held in daylight hours and are typically for 3 hours, but can be longer.
9. Schools/residents can make between one and three application during the year (*e.g. for different days/times*), so that they can trial 'Street Play' locally to ensure it meets local need, as well as a possible precursor to a 'Play Street' or a 'School Street'.
10. Most residential streets are suitable for 'Street Play' sessions, however some might not be. We can **only approve** applications providing the following applies:
 - there is no planned highway or footway maintenance at specified location(s) on the proposed session dates/times
 - there is no other planned event on the on the proposed session dates/times
 - there is no significant effect on vehicular access and/or movement on surrounding roads
 - and/or any other activities that require traffic management
11. There is **no obligation** to close the street every time schools/residents have permission to do so for 'Street Play' sessions. Schools/residents should **only go ahead** if there are enough 'StreetMakers' (*stewards/parents/volunteers*) and **it is safe to do so**.

12. We will provide schools/residents with clear advice and procedures on street closure layout, any signage ([Playing Out provide advice on how to get road closure signs](#)) and/or barrier requirements for any 'Street Play' sessions.
13. We ask schools/residents to follow the safety guidelines in Playing Out's [ONLINE-VSN Playing-Out-manual-20.05.21.pdf \(playingout.net\)](#) (particularly pages 11-14 and 15-16) and also the [Steward Briefing](#) for 'StreetMakers' (stewards/parents/volunteers).
14. We ask schools/residents to utilise Playing Out's [leaflet](#) and [consultation letter template](#) (a simple leaflet and letter explaining what 'Street Play' sessions are), which should be delivered to all households/buildings in the street, where the proposed 'Street Play' sessions are to take place.
15. We **don't** require any proof of majority support (e.g. petitions or surveys). Where possible, any objections should be resolved between residents/neighbours, however we can lend support and where necessary offer possible practical solutions.
16. We will **only** consider 'material' objections that may be raised regarding any proposed 'Street Play' sessions. Applications will only be refused where there is a legitimate concern. We will **not** consider any objections based on disagreement with the general principle of 'Street Play', as the council believes that participation in play, physical activity, leisure and sport can be truly transformative, inclusive and inherently positive. Although some types of behaviour can be annoying, children, young people and/or families playing in the street and/or communal areas is **not in itself** [antisocial behaviour](#).
17. We ask schools/residents to utilise Playing Out's [Car Notice Template](#), which is a simple notice letting car owners know that 'Street Play' sessions will be taking place (*this is only applicable for streets that would like to ask car owners to move their cars for the duration of the sessions*).
18. We recommend schools/residents complete a [Risk-Benefit Assessment](#) for the 'Street Play' activities, which should cover the duration of the sessions.
19. Schools or parents/guardians remain responsible for their children, young people and families at all times during 'Street Play' sessions.
20. We ask schools/residents to sign a reasonable indemnity form (see pg 10) **and** recommend that Public Liability Insurance is taken out to cover the duration of the 'Street Play' sessions.
21. Schools/residents can purchase Playing Out's [helpful 'Street Play' kit](#), which has lots of useful information. However, if you are stuck for a way to cover the cost, please let us know and we'll see what we can do to help!

There is lots of further free advice and resources on the Playing Out [website](#), including ['Playing Out' in four simple steps](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#). There is also an active, supportive community of 'Street Play' organisers from around the UK in the Playing Out [Facebook group](#).

Additionally, the Council's Sport, Leisure and Active Communities team (SL&AC), as well as other colleagues/departments are happy to provide further information, advice and guidance.

INDEMNITY FORM

WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL
CITY HALL
64 VICTORIA STREET
LONDON
SW1E 6QP



Date: ____/____/____

In consideration of Westminster City Council ("Council") authorising and facilitating the;

1. organisation, management and running of 'Street Play' sessions, in accordance with the Council's ActiveStreets 'Street Play' Policy (*found at Appendix 1*), facilitated via a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) under section 16a of the Road Traffic Act, which will take place on;

Date(s) of sessions _____

between the hours of _____ and _____

at [address]: _____

2. I, the lead organiser of the 'Street Play' sessions, hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Council against all liabilities, costs, expenses, damages and losses (including but not limited to any direct, indirect or consequential losses, loss of profit, loss of reputation and all interest, penalties and legal costs (calculated on a full indemnity basis) and all other reasonable professional costs and expenses) suffered or incurred by or arising out of or in connection with the 'Street Play' sessions.

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Address: _____


Telephone: _____

This indemnity form is to be signed and must be returned to Sport, Leisure and Active Communities (SL&AC), The Pavilion, Paddington Recreation Ground, Randolph Avenue, Maida Vale, W9 1PD or via email to active@westminster.gov.uk **prior** to any 'Street Play' sessions taking place.





 Westminster City Council
Environment and City Management
Physical Activity, Leisure and Sport
The Pavilion,
Paddington Recreation Ground,
Randolph Avenue,
Maida Vale, W9 1PD

 020 7641 2012

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 @ActiveWCC

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