

INVERNESS ROYAL ACADEMY



SCHOOL TRAVEL PLAN

March 2014

Background

Inverness Royal Academy is a long established school in Inverness. It has been sited in Culduthel Road for thirty seven years during which time the environs of the school have changed dramatically. Within the last 12 years this has been due, in the main, to the opening of the Southern Distributor Road (SDR) in 2002 and the subsequent housing developments that have sprung up along its length.

Discussions over the impact of the SDR first commenced in 2000 with agreement being reached in 2001 for the B861 and Culduthel Avenue to be blocked off with the intention of creating a safe environment around the school. A lengthy delay ensued due, in part, to objections to the proposals. Culduthel Avenue was finally blocked off over the summer holidays in 2006. The B861 remained open but part-time speed limits were put in place along with a zebra crossing to enable pupils to cross to the school playing fields. This was completed in August 2006.

The new Inverness Royal Academy is due to be completed, on site, in 2016 and will be a school capable of accommodating 1450 pupils. This increase in role is to accommodate the increased numbers now in our ASG and projected to come through the Gaelic Medium Primary school situated next to the Inverness Royal Academy campus and the natural increase in role due to the large numbers of houses being built in the school's catchment area.

Road Safety has long been an issue of high importance within the school. The School Board was heavily involved in this for many years especially during the period described above. The Rector and the Board worked hard to fight for the safe conditions which the pupils of the school deserved. The newly formed Parent Council has worked to keep this important issue as a priority.

After completion of the long awaited plans and due to continuing concerns, it was decided to formalise the road safety issue by preparing a School Travel Plan (STP) under the guidance of the Highland Council Road Safety Team. This document is the updated plan for the new Inverness Royal Academy which is due to open in June 2016.

The main aims of the previous STP were highlighted as follows:

- To improve safety around the school
- To increase the number of pupils travelling to school on foot or by bicycle
- To raise awareness amongst pupils, parents and staff of the consequences of their travel choices.

School Profile

The school is a six year comprehensive serving an extensive area. It includes Foyers, Whitebridge, Inverarnie and Farr. The associated primary schools are Aldourie, Cauldeen, Farr, Foyers, Hilton, Holm, Lochardil and Stratherrick. Children living within the catchment area who attended St Joseph's and Bishop Eden primaries also transfer to the school after Primary 7. A recent development has been the addition of pupils who wish to have their curriculum taught through the medium of Gaelic. S1 pupils started at the school in August 2007.

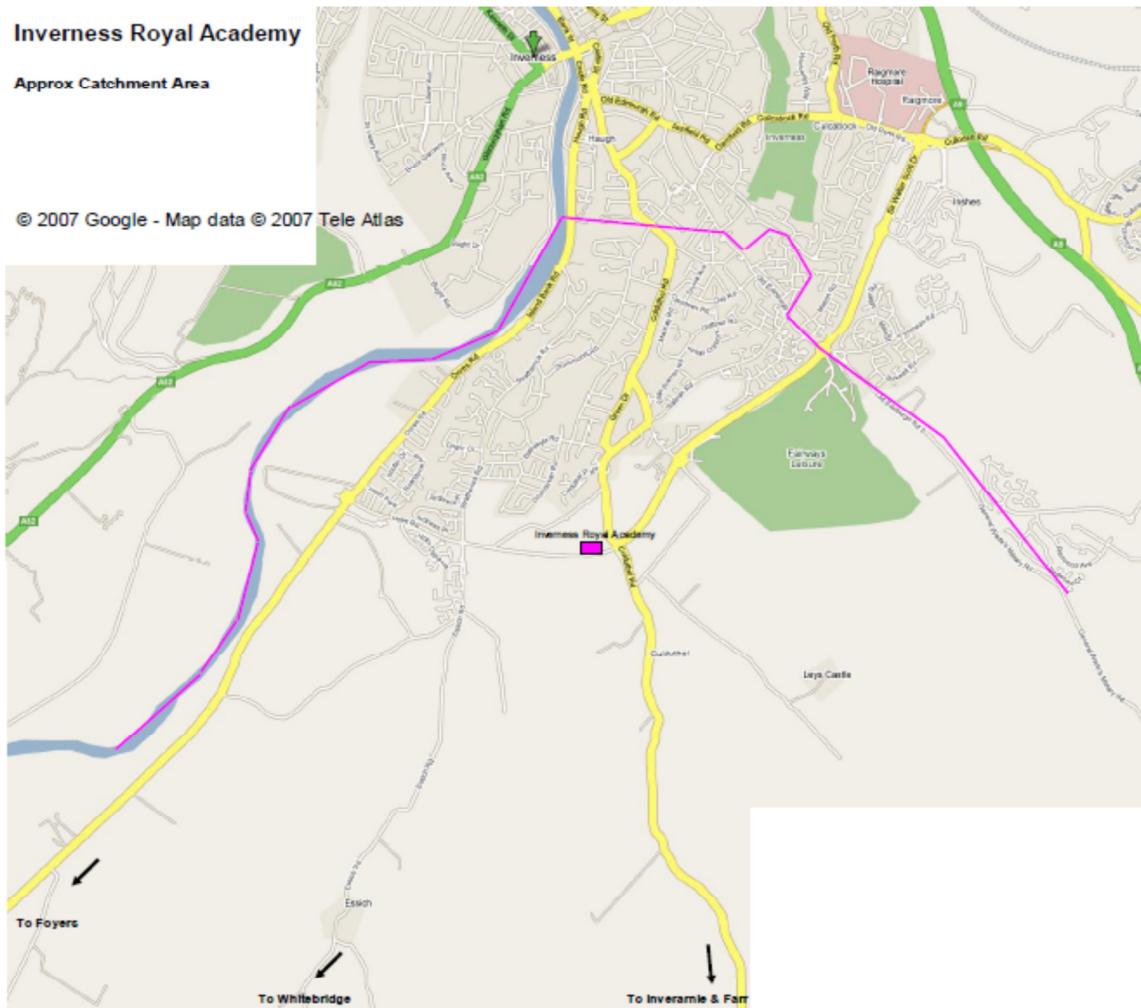
Parents living out with the catchment area can request that their children be placed at the school. The catchment area is shown at Appendix A. At present around one hundred pupils live out with the catchment area. The current school roll is 936 which is made up of 743 families.

As indicated earlier the school role is set to increase over the next 10 to 12 years as the number of houses being built in our surrounding catchment area rises and numbers using the Gaelic Medium Primary School also increase. The new school has been designed to comfortably accommodate 1450 pupils but could stretch to a maximum of 1520 if required.

Inverness Royal Academy

Approx Catchment Area

© 2007 Google - Map data © 2007 Tele Atlas

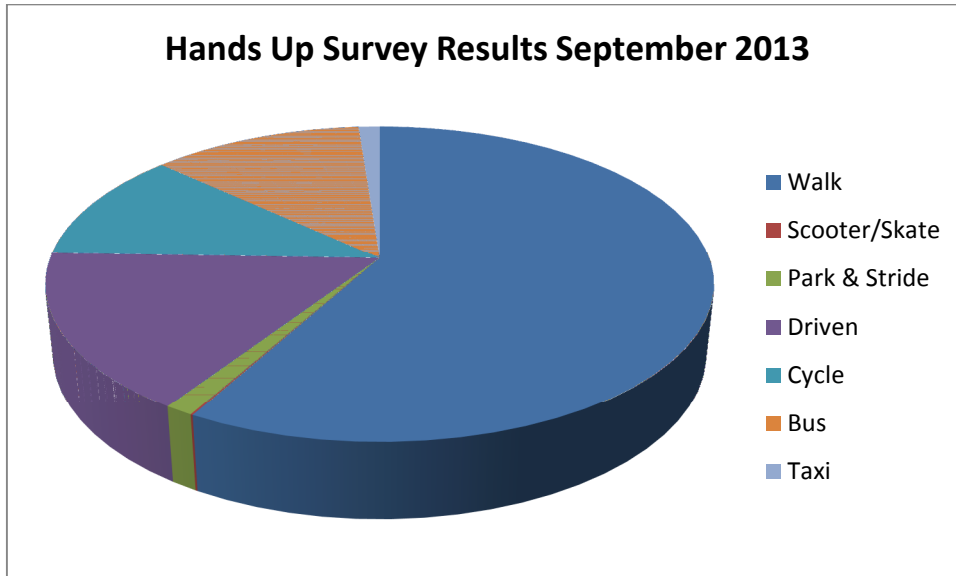


Current Travel Patterns

Hands Up Survey

On Monday 9th September 2013, registration teachers carried out a hands up survey to determine how pupils had travelled to school that day. The weather conditions were fair; it was dry with sunny spells. Seven hundred and eighty two pupils from S1 to S6 took part in the survey. The results are shown below;

Travel Mode	Number of Pupils	Percentage
Walk	454	58.1%
Scooter/Skate	1	0.1%
Park & Stride	9	1.2%
Driven	127	16.2%
Cycle	88	11.3%
Bus	94	12%
Taxi	9	1.2%



Our last hands up survey carried out in 2007 showed that 41% of pupils attending the school walked and 14% cycled, with 33% coming by car. While it would appear that we have seen numbers walking to school increase significantly, numbers cycling have decreased which is a little disappointing. Given the numbers of pupils who have access to a bike there is obviously work which needs to be done to improve the numbers cycling to school. It would help if there was sufficient secure and covered provision for cycle storage in the new school and clearly defined cycle paths to and from the school.

A pleasing statistic however is that the numbers coming to school by car have dropped significantly from 33% in 2007 to almost 17% in 2013. This is in line with parental preferences expressed as part of the survey in 2007 where 63% of parents indicated that they would prefer their child to walk to school.

Cycle Survey February 2014

The school currently has a large area for storing bikes which came into use 20 years ago. It was funded by the school itself through a coordinated fundraising exercise involving pupils, staff and parents. Following consultation an additional gate was built into the fence bordering Culduthel Avenue to allow direct access for pupils to the compound. This new access gate meant pupils no longer had to cycle through the car park to gain access to the compound. It is important that the new school has safe access and clearly defined cycle routes to the secure, covered cycle storage units on site. During the build programme the current bike compound will be replaced by a temporary bike compound situated at the end of the games hall. Access to this will be through the main car park entrance and this will have to be very carefully managed to mitigate risk to cyclists and pedestrians. This temporary compound will be secure.

Gates of the compounds (both temporary and in the new school) will be locked by a member of the janitorial staff once the bell for morning classes has rung. They will be opened at the start of lunchtime for those going home and locked again at the start of classes after lunch. The gates will remain locked until the end of the school day. Pupils who need to access the compound to get their

bikes during the school day for whatever reason will have to sign a key in and out from the school office.



The current bicycle compound which is to be relocated during construction.

On Friday 14th February 2014 a survey was carried out to determine the number of pupils cycling to school on that day. It was a fine but cold morning with a light breeze although the forecast for later in the day was not so good. The count was conducted in the morning. Fifty seven pupils only cycled to school that morning which was only 7% of the total number attending that day. This is down from the 11.8% figure recorded during the previous September. The fall in numbers can in all likelihood be attributed to the time of year and the colder weather. However, having said that it is still disappointingly low.

Vehicle Survey February 2014

One of the problems with the current car park/parent drop off/bus drop off facilities is that they are concentrated in the same area as shown below.



Additionally they share the same entrance and exit as shown below.



Entrance to the main car park.

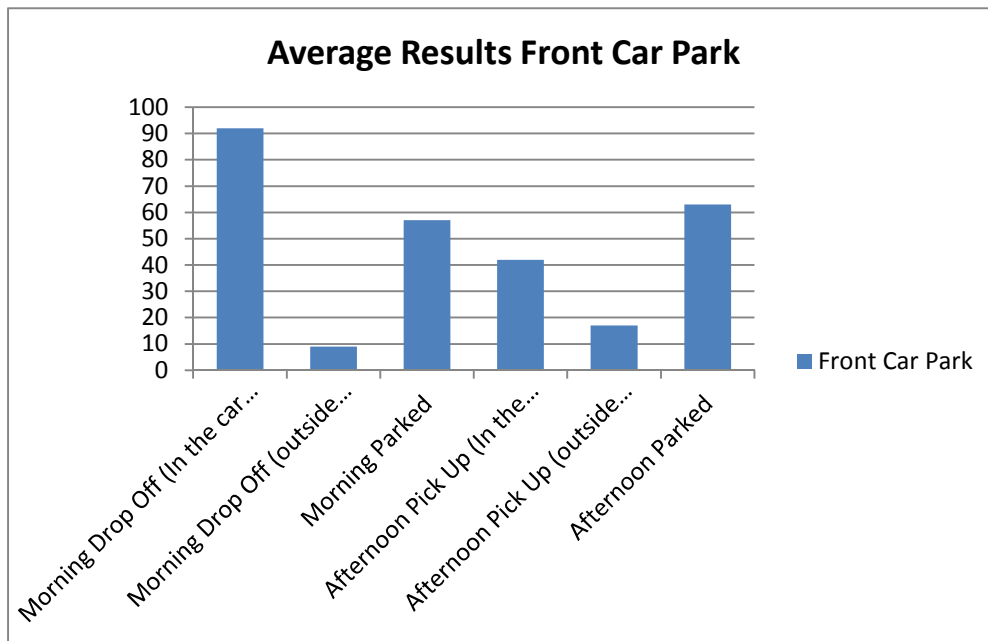
The current arrangement is unsatisfactory and the problems caused at peak times of having all the areas in the same location need to be addressed in the planning for the new school.

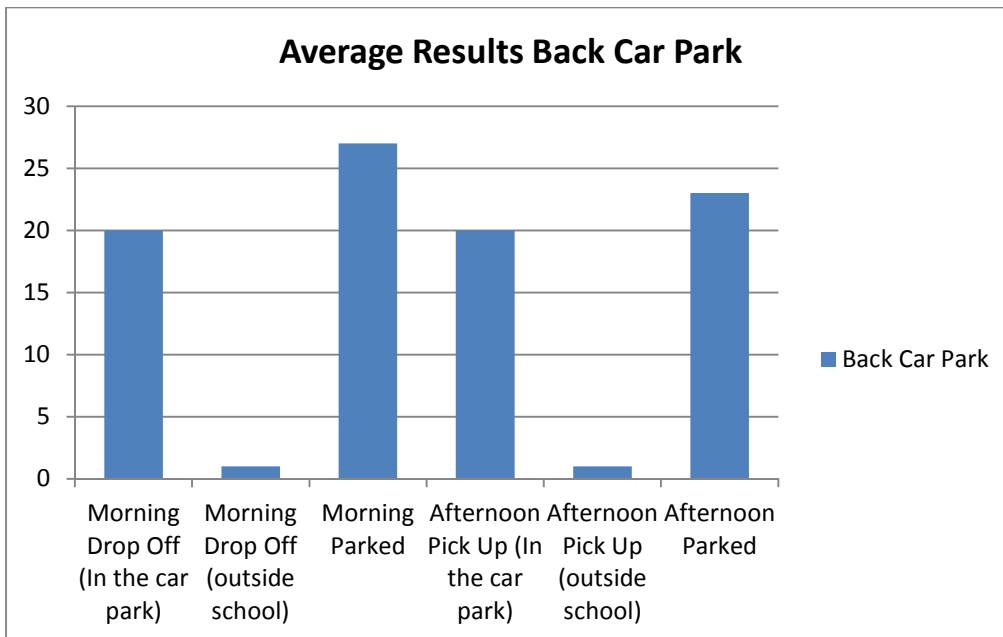
To demonstrate the problem a survey was carried out over the week commencing Monday 10th March 2014 to count the number of cars dropping pupils off in the morning between 08:30am and 08:50 am. During this time 3 buses drop rural pupils off and 18 pupils are dropped off by taxis. In addition at this time there is a steady influx of staff arriving and parking up for the day.

Detailed day by day results are included in the appendix but the week's findings can be summarised as follows;

	Front Car Park	Back Car Park
Morning Drop Off (In the car park)	92	20
Morning Drop Off (outside school)	9	1
Morning Parked	57	27
Afternoon Pick Up (In the car park)	42	20
Afternoon Pick Up (outside school)	17	1
Afternoon Parked	63	23

Average figures for the Car Park Survey carried out week beginning 10th March





Traffic in the back car park is much less than in the front. The average data for the front car park shows a significant through flow of traffic in a 20 minute period with over 100 cars entering the car park on one of the mornings. A large percentage of those are dropping pupils off for school. When you combine this number of cars with the buses and pedestrians you can see the potential for problems.

The new build must address this by having at the very least the bus drop off separated from the car park and parental drop off points. The area outside the school needs to be marked off in such a way as to discourage parents from stopping in Culduthel Road to drop their youngsters off, particularly near the entrances to the bus drop off and car park. Yellow 'School Keep Clear' markings (zig zags) and signage should be extended along Culduthel Road to stop parents dropping off and picking up pupils on this road during school hours. This should be enhanced by a Temporary Traffic Order, enforceable by the Police.

To cater for the large numbers who will access the site on foot and by bike from the South the current pelican crossing on Culduthel Road should be upgraded to a Toucan crossing.

Replace this Pelican crossing with a Toucan Crossing



A Toucan crossing would allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross safely by forcing drivers to stop to allow them to cross at this point.

Given the extensive building to the South and West of the southern Distributor Road (SDR) consideration should be given to putting in Toucan crossings to the West of the roundabout at the head of Culduthel Road and the SDR. This would provide safe crossing points for pupils coming from the developed areas to the West and South of the SDR. This is especially important given the expected increase in vehicular traffic using the SDR on completion of the Southern Link Road across the River Ness and the canal.



These would complement the crossing the currently exists just to the East of the junction for the school.

Given that a number of our pupils walk to school or cycle and the potential for these numbers to increase as the school role increases there is an opportunity to create a safer route to and from the school by utilising the west side of the B861 Culduthel Road. The existing pavement could be designated as dual Cycle/Pedestrian use. To improve the footpath for this the end of the existing barrier would need to be re-positioned towards the kerb. Clear signage would also be required.



This end of the barrier would require to be re-shaped towards the kerb.

Cyclists and pedestrians accessing the school site from the North and East will either come through the woods or up Culduthel Road. The main access point to the new school will be to the North for both groups. Cycle shelters will be provided on both sides of the school to cater for cyclists from all directions. The safety of cyclists and pedestrians from this side is a concern and the school would like to see work done to Culduthel Avenue to provide a safe and secure shared use footpath for bikes and pedestrians running East to West along Culduthel Avenue on the North side of the existing road. This road will be blocked off to traffic by bollards just before the main entrance from the North and just after the turn into the school ASN drop off area. This would create a secure crossing point for cyclists and pedestrians.



Create a shared footpath for bikes & pedestrians to the left of the yellow line shown in the photo above along Culduthel Avenue.

Summary

To a certain degree the school has been successful in achieving some of the aims of the original STP. More pupils now walk or cycle to school and fewer parents drive their youngsters to school. There is still room for improvement though and the school will continue to work towards educating our pupils on the benefits of cycling or walking to school where practicable. We will continue to work with pupils to make them aware of safety issues on their journey to and from school. Some of the works carried out in the past have certainly improved pupil safety.

There is an opportunity however with the building of the new Inverness Royal Academy to improve things even further and the main issues we would like to see addressed as part of the work towards the new school are as follows;

1. Covered, secure cycle shelters for staff and pupils around the school grounds.
2. Safe access and clearly defined cycle routes to the secure, covered cycle storage units on site.
3. Upgrade the Pelican crossing outside the school to a Toucan crossing.
4. Re-shape the end of the barrier on Culduthel Road as indicated earlier to allow for the existing pavement to be designated as a shared pedestrian/cycle route.
5. The addition of two more Toucan crossings on the SDR further to the west of the site approximately as indicated on the image on page 10.
6. Establish a school keep clear zone in the area near to the entrances to the school car park and bus drop off point to deter parents from stopping on the road outside the school, possibly by extending the use of yellow zig zag markings, signage and Temporary Traffic Order. The current double yellow lines have little impact.
7. Install a shared use footpath, with separation for bikes and pedestrians along the North side of Culduthel Avenue to take pupils to the secure crossing point for the North entrance to the site and the school.
8. In relation to condition 5 (i&ii) of the planning permission, this has been discussed with Transport Planning and the Road Safety Officer and there is no requirement for information on this aspect of the Travel Plan.

Appendix 1 – Traffic Survey Results

Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Monday 10th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	84
Cars Stopping outside School	6
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Dry and bright conditions Two hold ups caused by buses Several caused by cars parking too close to the entrance
No. of cars parked	60

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Monday 10th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	11
Cars Stopping outside School	
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Dry and warm

No. of cars parked	26
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Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Monday 10th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	34
Cars Stopping outside School	30
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Sunny 3 buses in the car park at half 3. This led to cars not being able to pass.
No. of cars parked	65

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Monday 10th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	21
Cars Stopping outside School	1
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	
No. of cars parked	25

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Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Tuesday 11th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	116
Cars Stopping outside School	20
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	5 buses stopped at the school in this time Warm and windy weather
No. of cars parked	59

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Tuesday 11th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	20
Cars Stopping outside School	3
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Sunny conditions No buses
No. of cars parked	26

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Traffic Survey

Area of school: Front Car Park



Date: Tuesday 11th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	49
Cars Stopping outside School	12
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Three buses
No. of cars parked	64

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Tuesday 11th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	23
Cars Stopping outside School	1
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Bus for the core arrived at 3.22pm. Sunny and calm winds

No. of cars parked	23
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Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Wednesday 12th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	95
Cars Stopping outside School	13
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Buses at 8.37, 8.39, 8.40 2 cyclists came through the car park. Most avoided it.
No. of cars parked	52 and both mini buses

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Wednesday 12th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	27
Cars Stopping outside School	0
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Dry and sunny

No. of cars parked	30

Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Wednesday 12th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	27
Cars Stopping outside School	9
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	4 buses. Buses totally blocked the way for cars at 15.35.
No. of cars parked	69

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Wednesday 12th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	23
Cars Stopping outside School	1
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Sunny and calm

No. of cars parked	18
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Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Thursday 13th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	76
Cars Stopping outside School	6
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Dry and cloudy Bin Lorry stopped for a long time outside the school causing cars to overtake.
No. of cars parked	52

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Thursday 13th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	29
Cars Stopping outside School	0
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	

No. of cars parked	26

Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Thursday 13th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	42
Cars Stopping outside School	23
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Sunny 3 buses but no hold ups caused by them
No. of cars parked	64

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Thursday 13th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	13
Cars Stopping outside School	0
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Warm and calm

No. of cars parked	28

Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Friday 14th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am

Cars Entering Car Park	91
Cars Stopping outside School	4
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Dry Very windy
No. of cars parked	64

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Friday 14th March 2013

Time 8:30am – 8:50am102

Cars Entering Car Park	14
Cars Stopping outside School	1
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	Very windy

times)	
No. of cars parked	27

Traffic Survey



Area of school: Front Car Park

Date: Friday 14th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	58
Cars Stopping outside School	9
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times, any buses and the times)	3 buses No hold ups
No. of cars parked	53

Area of school: Back Car Park

Date: Friday 14th March 2013

Time 3:20pm – 3:40pm

Cars Entering Car Park	22
Cars Stopping outside School	1
Observations (include weather, causes of any hold ups and the times,	Cloudy and windy

any buses and the times)	
No. of cars parked	23

Appendix 2 – School Transport Management Statement

INVERNESS ROYAL ACADEMY





SCHOOL TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

February 2014

Background

The new Inverness Royal Academy is due to be completed, on site, in 2016 and will be a school capable of taking 1450 pupils. This increase in role is to accommodate the increased numbers now in our ASG and projected to come through the Gaelic Medium Primary school situated next to the Inverness Royal Academy campus and the natural increase in role due to the large numbers of houses being built in the school's catchment area.

Road Safety has long been an issue of high importance in and around the school. The School Board was heavily involved in promoting this and both they and the Rector have worked hard to fight for the safe conditions which the pupils of the school deserved.

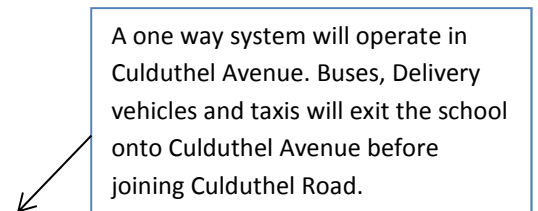
One of the main issues we as a school have faced is having our Bus Drop off point, our Parent Drop off point and our staff car parking all located in the same area with communal access and egress points. In addition these entrance and exits are used by both cyclists and pupils walking to school.

Plans for the new school show that pedestrian access, cycle access and vehicular access have been separated as much as is possible. The Bus Drop off point has been separated from the main car park and the Parent Drop off area (which is located in the main car park).

It is important that the school manages these arrangements effectively to ensure that safety continues to be at the forefront of what we do.

To that end we will have to ensure that all our parents, pupils, bus & taxi partners and members of the community in general are made fully aware of the arrangements for arriving at school either by foot, by bicycle, by car or by bus and that these arrangements are adhered to.

The diagram below indicates the main entrance points around the school.



A one way system will operate in Culduthel Avenue. Buses, Delivery vehicles and taxis will exit the school onto Culduthel Avenue before joining Culduthel Road.



The school will put the following in place to ensure that the transition to the new arrangements goes smoothly and safely and that these arrangements are then adhered to;

1. Parents will receive written notice of the new arrangements well in advance of them coming into effect. This will emphasise the need to act responsibly and to take into account the safety of the pupils and other road users when dropping off/picking up their youngsters from school, particularly when moving around the car park. Parents will be discouraged from either using the bus drop off or from stopping outside the school perimeter (as the road is quite narrow) to drop off their youngsters.
2. Pupils will be taken through the new arrangements at a series of special assemblies. The emphasis at these will be on pupils following the pathways and crossing points and behaving responsibly and safely. Pupils will be encouraged to use the specified entrance points to the school as indicated above.

3. Pupils cycling to school will be encouraged to use the cycle routes, crossing points and access points and to act in a responsible manner when doing so. The emphasis will again be on safety (including the need to wear helmets) and looking out for pedestrians and others road users.
4. Bus and Taxi companies will be informed of the new arrangements for dropping off pupils (NB only ASN pupils with specific requirements should be dropped off outside the ASN wing with access via the North West Gate) well in advance of them starting. Members of SMT will ensure that these are adhered to by being out and about in the morning and at close of school.
5. The parent drop off zone will be closely monitored by members of the SMT to ensure that parents are following the Travel Plan and are conducting themselves responsibly and safely.
6. A one way system for traffic flow will operate in the car park. This will be clearly marked using signs and painted on arrows and parents and staff will be encouraged to follow it. Both parents and staff will be given clear written notice of the one way system ahead of it coming into operation. The importance of following the one way system will be made clear to both staff and parents.