
Press Release

Date: 15 October 2007

Ref: pr0142



Licence to Roam

AN initiative to provide the pupils of Ford End Primary School a safer route to school has been launched by Chelmer Housing Partnership (CHP) and is to be officially opened by the Mayor of Chelmsford, Cllr David Lee.

Until recently the schoolchildren, aged 4 – 11 years old, have had to walk along the busy A130 to get to their school lessons. A grant of over £10,000 from Essex County Council's Safer Journeys to School initiative has helped to ensure that the school's 41 pupils no longer have to walk along the narrow pathway alongside the A130, which has hundreds of commuters driving through Ford End into Chelmsford on a daily basis. But in order to set up the new pathway, the children needed to be allowed access to a piece of land owned by CHP.

Following consultations with Essex Police, Essex County Council and Ford End Parish Council, CHP was delighted to grant the primary school pupils a 'licence to roam' across its property as part of their Safer Journey to School walkway.

Hazel Arnill, Headteacher of Ford End Primary School, said: "The new footpath has made the children's journey into school much safer and more pleasant. They can now walk through the school field and past an allotment rather than alongside the A130, which is an extremely busy road. It has also reduced the number of children needing to cross the A 130, by removing the necessity for parents to use the car park on the opposite side of this road.

"Older children are now allowed to be more independent as their parents no longer have to walk them all the way to school and drop them at the front door. The new walkway gives parents peace of mind and they've all been very enthusiastic and supportive of what we have been trying to achieve."

Nigel Perks, Head of Residential Services at CHP, said: "We were very happy to be able to grant the licence to roam to the pupils of Ford End Primary School. It provides them with a much safer route to their school and is a prime example of how organisations working together can achieve an excellent result by working towards a single, specific goal."

Cllr Norman Hume, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, said: "I am very pleased that the children of Ford End Primary School can now look forward to a safer journey to school. We are investing three-quarters of a million pounds on improving pedestrian access to schools across the county.

"We must all do everything we can to avoid accidents involving children and these schemes help in that as well as encouraging our children to become fitter by walking, helping them make friends and improving the environment."

-Ends-

Editors Notes:

- For more information contact Victoria Norton: 01245 613111, 07872 398015,
victoria.norton@chelmerhp.org.uk