

DISCOURAGE VEHICLE IDLING AROUND SCHOOLS

The Royal College of Physicians estimate 40,000 deaths a year in the UK are linked to air pollution, with engine idling contributing to this. An idling engine can produce up to twice as many emissions as an engine in motion. This unnecessary source of pollution causes damage to our environment and is a particular issue outside our schools. Action must be taken to prevent and discourage vehicle idling.

Rule 123 of The Highway Code states that drivers must not leave a parked vehicle unattended with the engine running or leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while the vehicle is stationary on a public road.

Idling increases the amount of exhaust fumes in the air and these fumes contain a number of harmful gases including carbon dioxide, which is bad for the environment and contributes towards climate change, as well as a range of other harmful gases including nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons which are linked to asthma and other lung diseases.

Southend-on-Sea City Council notes:

Local authorities have the power under The Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) (Fixed Penalty) (England) Regulations 2002 to issue a £20 fixed penalty notice (FPN) for emission offences and stationary idling if a motorist refuses to switch off their engine, regardless of the location

Idling is already prohibited by Rule 123 of The Highway Code, enforced by Section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1998 and the Road Traffic (Vehicle Emissions) Regulations 2002.

While air pollution affects everyone, children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable because their bodies, organs and immune systems are still developing. Southend is one of the top ten worst Cities for pollution, it is the equivalent of smoking 157 cigarettes per year, that is just simply by breathing, this needs to change.

Southend-on-Sea City Council resolves to:

- Increase parking enforcement presence around schools with the express additional aim of encouraging motorists to switch their engines off while dropping off and picking up their children;
- Issue FPNs to those motorists who refuse to turn off their engines without good reason when requested by a Civil Enforcement Officer;
- Install anti-idling signs around schools to hammer home the message;
- Investigate the greater use of CCTV equipment and CCTV vehicles to assist enforcement;
- Expedite the rollout of "School Streets" at suitable locations as part of its efforts to encourage safer and healthier travel to and from school, while also helping to boost air quality levels;
- Work with schools to develop School Travel Plans which reduce the number of cars used on the school run through initiatives like 'walking buses' and car-pools

Proposed by:

Cllr Richardson Seconded by: Cllr Cowan