

# Green School Travel Plan 2022-2023

## ST BENEDICT COLLEGE

SECONDARY SCHOOL KIRKOP





**EKOSKOLA COMMITTEE 2022-2023** 

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## 1. Geographic description of KSB Secondary Kirkop

The school is situated in Kirkop. The roads leading to school are Triq San Gwann and Triq il-Paleokristiani through road Triq Hal-Safi. The school is also found close to the periphery of various villages namely Safi, Zurrieq, Mqabba and Qrendi.

St Benedict College Secondary School is positioned 1.5 km away from Luqa International Airport, some 8km from Malta Freeport Terminal in Birzebbugia and 5km from Hal-Far Industrial Estate. The amenities close to the school include Lidl Supermarket which contributes highly to the traffic influx in Triq San Gwann and AFM quarters at Safi. In the proximity of the school there are also a number of industries such as Medavia, SR Technic, Aviation Cosmetics Malta and ST Microelectronics.



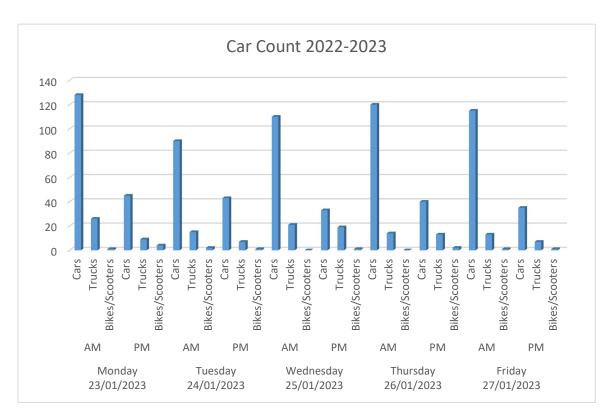
#### Geographical location of the school

Ekoskola Year 10 students carried a car count activity to monitor the flow of traffic around the school. One can notice that, traffic is always open through both roads that lead to the school entrance, and it is not closed during school opening and closing hours. Traffic was monitored through Triq San Gwann and it was noted that the influx of traffic is larger during the morning rather than in late morning. The traffic was monitored for an entire week, two times a day. At around 8:00am, traffic was monitored for 10 minutes and it was noted that a maximum of 128 private cars and a minimum of 90 cars passed during different days. It was also noted that a maximum of 26 large vehicles, including public buses, passed during this time. The number of scooters, bikes and motorcycles was very small compared to the number of cars.

The traffic was also monitored around 10:50am and it was noted that a maximum of 45 private cars and a minimum of 33 passed during different days. At this time, a smaller number of large vehicles passed where it was noted that a maximum of 19 of such vehicles passed. During this time, we observed a maximum of 4 scooters, motorbikes or bicycles passing.

|                    |              | EKOSKOIA                                      | Transport m                               | eans monite           | oring                 |   |
|--------------------|--------------|---|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Date               | Time         | No. of cars                                   | No. of trucks<br>/ large<br>vehicles      | No. of<br>motorcycles | No. of scooters/bikes | Students collecting data                      |
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Transport Survey in front of the school



#### Car count data for 2022-2023

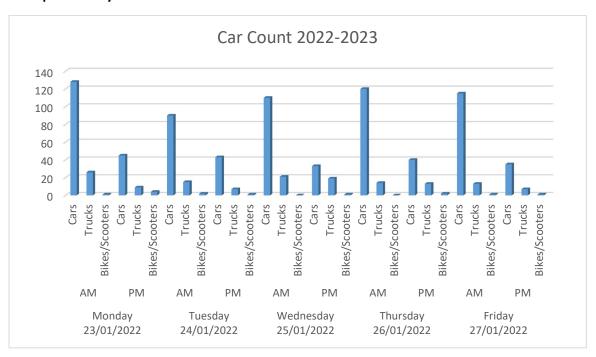
When comparing this information with the data gathered last year, during a typical week in January (reading were taken every 5min), one can notice that the frequency of vehicles per minute passing last year was 18.96 vehicles/minute (474 vehicles/25min). This year the frequency was rather comparable with 18.32 vehicles/minute (916 vehicles/50min). One needs to say that the slight dip in car flow might be attributed to the fact that this year (2022-23) part of Triq Hal-Safi was closed to traffic during the car count activity as road works were taking place.

| Date                   | Time  | No. of cars                                  | No. of<br>trucks/large<br>vehicles | No. of<br>scooters/bikes | Students collecting dat |
|------------------------|-------|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
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| 17 th January          | 10:55 | 苯苯二苯   | 11                                 | 1                        | 11                      |
| Tuesday                | 8:00  | HH HE HH HH                                  | IM I                               |                          | David<br>Anthea         |
| 18th January           | 10:55 | DUH UHN                                      | ¥ 6                                |                          | sarid<br>Anthea         |
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| Monday<br>24th January | 8:02  | HT HT HT                                     | HT 1111                            |                          | David<br>Anthea         |

Transport Survey around the school Part 1

| 24th January<br>25th January | 8:02 HT    | HT LITTER HT LITTER                       | THAT THAT | Translated in the second | David<br>Mathea<br>Mireya<br>Hariah |
|------------------------------|------------|---|-----------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Wednesday<br>26th January    | 8:02 1411  | ## ## 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 11 1  | HT IIII   |                          | David<br>Anthea<br>Oavid            |
| Thursday<br>07 th January    | 8: au HTI  | ## ###<br>## ############################ | -177 IIII |                          | Matthias Matthias                   |
| Wednesday<br>2nd February    | 8:01 111   | ult on on<br>an ontoer<br>art cart o      | int int   |                          |                                     |
| Thursday<br>3rd feb          | 8:02 141 1 |   | WTH       |                          | Matthias true bost                  |

#### Transport Survey around the school Part 2.



Data gathered during a typical week in 2021-22.

## 2. Existing school infrastructure used for transport

The school's infrastructure caters for different modes of transport. In fact, the school premises and surroundings accommodate the main modes of transport used by students and staff.

## A) Parking areas

Surrounding the school's premises there are 3 main parking areas indicated in the figure below as A, B and C.



Parking areas around the school.

**Parking area A (Figure 6):** Can be accessed from the main gate in Triq San Gwann near Lidl Supermarket. The area can accommodate around 20 cars and 5 motorcycles. This scholastic year, marks have been drawn on the ground to indicate specific parking spaces. Last year, those using these areas had no indication where to park. The main gate is opened only during the morning and for security reasons it is kept closed almost all day.





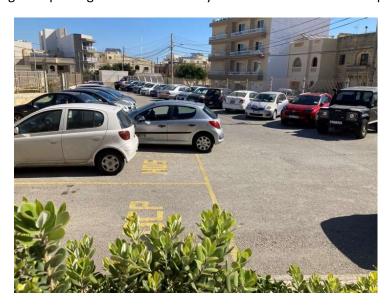
Parking areas A near main entrance.

**Parking area B:** This parking area can be accessed from behind the Sports Complex via Triq Giovanni Cassar. To access the school, one should eventually proceed through the bus dropping/dismissal area and it can cater for around 100 cars. Although this area is shared with the Sports complex administered by SportsMalta and the staff working at the College Principals' office, it is mainly used by school's staff.



#### Parking areas B behind Sports Complex.

**Parking area C:** The area can accommodate around 20 cars. Parents and other visitors use this gate to access the school as this is close to the school's reception. Head of School and College Principal use this area for parking. This parking area is also used by the staff who work at the Sports Complex.



Parking area C next to the Sports Complex.

Alternatively, to these parking areas, some members of staff and visitors choose to park their cars in the streets around the school premises near the main gate. One can in fact notice a lot of vacant parking spaces early before school time or after school hours.

One final consideration is that all parking areas are designed to accommodate gasoline/hybrid cars. There is no facility within the school premises or even in the vicinity of the school where those members of staff who make use of an electric car can charge their car.

#### B) Bike rack & Bike policy

During this scholastic year, the school thanks to the support provided by Kirkop local council installed a new bike rack that can cater for 15 bicycles. The bike rack was installed in the main parking area (marked as D).





#### The school's bike rack.

Once the new bike racks were installed, there was a surge in the number of students who used their bike to commute from home to school and back. In this regard, the school administration formalised the process of commuting by bike by issuing a School Bike policy (See Appendix 1). The policy expects students to get consent from their parents/guardians before they start using their bike to commute to school. The policy also provides guidelines so that students know what is required to commute safely to school.

#### C) Bus dropping/picking points

School bus routes enter the school premises from the area around the school football pitch and exit from the area near the Sports complex. The bus dropping/picking point is situated near just behind the Sports complex (point E) as marked in figure below.



## Bus drop/pick point and dismissal area.

## D) Public transport around the school

A number of bus stops are positioned just outside the school's main gate, not far away from the school. These are the following bus stops:

**Benedittu** (towards Valletta mainly) reached by the following Tal-Linja Routes: 71 Zurrieq, 73 Zurrieq, 117 Imqabba, 218 Imqabba.

**Benedittu 2** (from Valletta mainly) reached by the following Tal-Linja Routes: 71 Zurrieq, 73 Zurrieq, 117 Imqabba, 218 Imqabba.



Tal-Linja Bus stops close to school.



Walking distances from these bus stops, just in front of the Middle School, one can find other bus stops, namely Artillerija, that are serviced by the same bus routes as for the other two bus stops.

### E) Access on foot/wheelchair.

Students mainly coming from Safi and Zurrieq who reach the school on foot access the school mostly from the main gate. While those students who come from Kirkop access the school from the entrance near the Sports Complex.

Visitors who need to access the school premises need to access from the reception area found near the Sports complex and sign in and out.

The school is also accessible by wheelchair through both entrances and cases is facilitated through a number of ramps. Ramps are also provided close to fire exists to provide access if required.



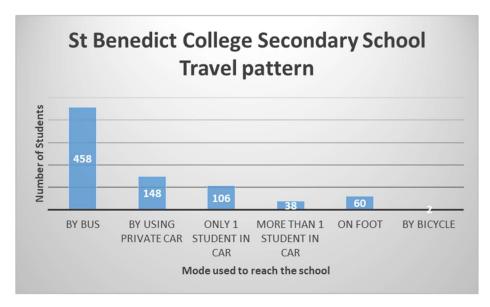


Ramps around the school.

## 3. Travel patterns at St Benedict College Secondary School

#### A) Travel patterns 2021-2022

Last scholastic year (2021-2022), the Ekoskola Year 10 Subcommittee students investigated the modes of transport used by all the students at school. The data showed that most students commute to school by bus (provided by the school). In fact, from the preliminary data collected at the beginning of the school year a total of 458 out of 668 students interviewed used this transport. Even though school provided free transport, some students preferred to get to school accompanied by their parents/guardians using the private car. A total number of 148 students out of 668 came to school by car however 38 of these students carpooled to school.



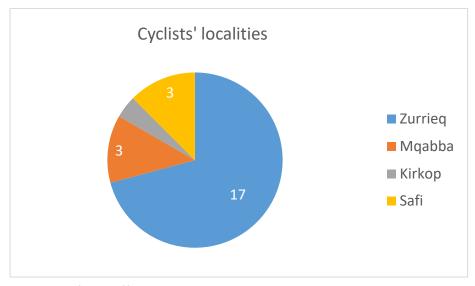
#### St Benedict College Secondary School Travel pattern- 2021-2023

A total number of 60 out of 658 students walked to school and 2 out of 658 students commuted to school by bike. To increase the number of students who use more sustainable modes of transport, the school community has invested a lot of effort to improve the school's infrastructure so to cater for these needs. Moreover, through this scholastic year, we focused on the students who walk and/or cycle to school so to investigate the trends in this area and improve these modes of commuting.

#### B) Students who currently walk or cycle to school.

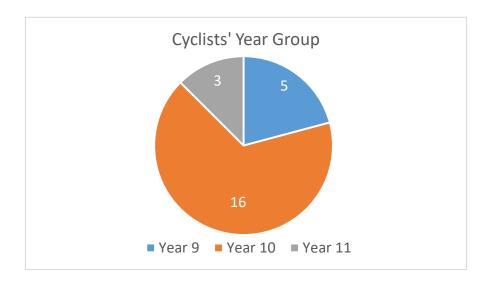
During this scholastic year (2022-23), our Ekoskola committe investigated the number of students who walk or cycle to school and tried to formalise the process of commuting to/from school when using these modes of transport. The committee also investigated various aspects related to these modes of commuting in order to improve the students' experience as they travel from home to school and back.

When considering the number of students who came to school using their bike, there are 24 registered students who can use their bike to commute to/from school. The students who travel using their bike come from Zurrieq, Safi, Mqabba and Kirkop. The great majority of these students (17) come from Zurrieq (see figure below). This might be expected as students coming from Zurrieq make a big chunk of the whole school's population.



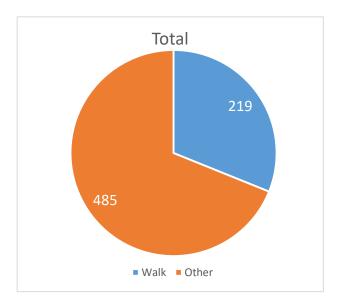
Students commuting from different localities by bike.

When considering how this group of cyclists is subdivided according to the different Year groups, one can notice that the largest number of students are from Year 10 students.



Students from different Year groups commuting by bike.

When considering the students who walk to school, a large chunk of the students' cohort walk or occasionally walk to school. This group amounts to almost 35% of the whole school population. In fact, 219 students from the whole school population indicated that they walk or occasionally walk to school while 485 reach the school premises using other means such as by bus.



Total number of students who walk or occasionally walk to school vs those that come to school using other means.

The figures below show the distribution of students who come to school on foot according to the different years.





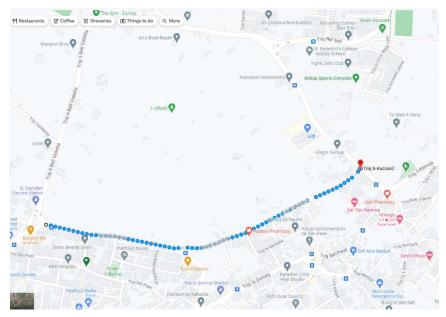


Total number of students who walk or occasionally walk to school according to their Year group.

C) Investigating the paths used by students as they walk or cycle to school.

To gain more information about possible safe paths for students who walk or cycle to school, Ms Rita Fenech, clerk at our school and member of the Ekoskola committee, together with the Year 10 Ekoskola group, contacted the local councils situated in the periphery of the school to gain more information regarding the bike lanes situated in the proximity of the school. The data gathered is illustrated below. Basically, this indicates that students can use one bike lane that start from Zurrieq and continues through Safi.

| Locality | Bike lanes               | Telephone          | Email             |
|----------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Mqabba   | NO Bike lanes            | 21680622           | mqabba.lc@gov.mt  |
| Kirkop   | NO Bike lanes            | 21680099, 21683777 | kirkop.lc@gov.mt  |
| Qrendi   | NO Bike lanes            | 21680404, 21640524 | grendi.lc@gov.mt  |
| Safi     | Triq il-Kuċċard, Safi    | 21689168, 21640290 | safi.lc@gov.mt    |
| Zurrieq  | Vjal ix-Xarolla, Zurrieq | 21689111           | zurrieq.lc@gov.mt |



Bike lanes in the proximity of the school.

Related to this, Year 9 European Studies students and Year 10 Ekoskola students managed to organise a meeting (see also Appendix 2) with Dr Rachel Scicluna and Dr Tiffany Attard from the Guardians of Future Generations, from the Ministry of Environment and are currently working on a project to enhance the paths used by students who commute daily from this school to home and back.



Meeting with representatives from the Guardians of Future Generations

## 4. Transport related initiatives

Last scholastic year, we noticed that the school had never organised a transport related event. In this regard, one of the targets for this year was to organise a sustainable mobility event that involved the whole school community.

Eventually, during the scholastic year 2022-23, to further promote the idea that micro mobility can be a feasible mode of commuting and to collect funds for charity, on Wednesday 14th December, our school organised a bike ride from school to Dar tal-Providenza and back. During 'Cycling4Charity' bike ride, a group of 20 students who registered with the school for a bike permit, accompanied by several parents and members of staff and by two LESA officers, cycled all the way from Kirkop to Siggiewi and back. Once at 'Id-Dar tal-Providenza' the students presented a donation of €1,050. The donation was raised through a collaboration of all the schools within the College.





#### Cycle4Charity in aid of Dar tal-Providenza.

Following this experience, the College administration is currently working to extend this event to all the schools in the College. Next year, St Benedict College will hold a whole College mobility event.

## 5. Active Mobility Grant by Transport Malta

Our school has collaborated with NatureTrust to apply for an Active Mobility grant (ACTive REACH OUT) with Transport Malta. Through this application, we have applied to upgrade various school facilities and fund the mobility event Cycle4charity. More specifically, through the grant, the school requested funding to:

- a) i) install two new bike racks (5 spaces for each rack) to extend the existing bike station that comprises 3 bike racks and
  - ii) install a canopy that shelters the existing bike rack;
- b) organise a bike ride from school to Dar tal-Providenza that involves students, parents, members of staff and people from the wider community to strengthen the culture that bikes can be a sustainable means of transport.

c) improve the signage in the area around the school so to alert drivers.

Later on during the second term, Tranport Malta confirmed that the grant was approved and the school will be awarded approximately €5,500 to implement the ideas mentioned above. Following approval, respective suppliers were contacted so that the various parts of the project could be implanted.

## 6. Monitoring air quality

Last scholastic year, CS-Technologies in collaboration with MFED installed an Air Quality kit (RS DesignSpark) over the Ekoskola noticeboard.



#### RS DesignSpark Air Quality kit

Although the sensor was installed last year, the supplier providing the kit took some time to provide the school access to the data. Eventually, during the second term the supplier provided us with the required information to access the online data base. To make this data more accessible, the supplier also offered to install a Breathe Better Bear device which will surely help to share the data collected by the sensor.

The data provided by this sensor can be used to investigate if the air quality at school is influenced by the fact that the school is situated in close proximity of Luqa International airport.



**Breathe Better Bear Device.** 

#### 7. Final Considerations

This is the second consecutive year that Ekoskola committee at St Benedict College Secondary School Kirkop is formulating its Green School Travel Plan. When comparing the targets set last year, one can notice that the school managed to accomplish a lot. The school has drastically upgraded its bike rack and introduced a new procedure how students can come to school using their bike. This implementation encouraged a great number of students to register as bikers and a larger number of students now commute to and from our school using their bikes. The data gathered also suggests that the number of students who regularly walk to school has also increased. The school also organised a whole school event related to sustainable mobility. This event will be now extended to other school within St Benedict College and additionally, the outcomes of this event will also serve to support a specific philanthropic institution.

When considering that the numbers of students who walk or use their bike to commute has increased, we decided to focus our effort to make sure that the students who use these modes of transport do so in the safest ways possible. In this regard, it is very important that next scholastic year, we focus on the idea of creating safe paths for those students who use sustainable modes of transport to commute. This will be the focus for next scholastic year.

Although the travel patterns of the members of staff were not investigated, one can still notice that most members of staff use their own private car to commute to school. This is evident from the amount of cars occupying all the available spaces in the parking areas and the areas surrounding the school. In the coming years, it is envisaged that the school explores various ideas to encourage its members of staff to use more sustainable modes of transport or possibly consider ways how to limit car usage such as carpooling. In addition to this, the school's administration should also work with the respective authorities to install a charging station for electric vehicles within the school's parking areas or at least within the school's neighbourhood.

## 8. Plan to improve the current Green School Travel Plan

Following the details obtained through this report, Ekoskola Committee has developed a number of actions that will be included in the Action Plan to achieve the Green flag. These actions include:

- 1) Ensure that the sustainable mobility event Cycle4Charity is carried out again during the scholastic year 2023-2024. Work with the other staff member at St Benedict College to extend this activity to all the schools within the College.
- 2) Enhance the schools' current infrastructure to cater for the increase in the number of students who use their bikes to commute from home to school and back. Ensure that the aims of the active mobility grant are fully achieved.
- 3) Collaborate with the Guardian of Future Generations board, Ministry of Environment to create safer paths for those who reach the school using sustainable means. Explore ideas such as installing a bike repair station at school.
- 4) Look into ways how to encourage members of staff to use modes of transport that are more sustainable. Explore the idea of installing a charging station for electric cars within the school's parking area or in the proximity of the school.

- 5) Refine the contents of the School Bike policy.
- 6) Promote a member of staff or student as our 'Sustainable mobility Champion'.
- 7) Participate in YRE focussing on issues related to Sustainable Transport.
- 8) Look into ways how to share the data provided by the air quality sensor installed at school and use this data to create more awareness on the existence of particulate matter in the air we breathe and how this may be also related to the conventional means of transport.

#### Appendix 1

## **School Bicycle Policy and School Bicycle Permit**

The school's administration acknowledges that there are many benefits if students use their bicycle to commute from home to school and back. Some of the benefits include:

- i) improving students' health through physical activity.
- ii) establishing a positive travel behaviour.
- iii) promoting independence while improving safety awareness.
- iv) contributing to the reduction of pollution in the community.

To encourage as many students as possible to come to school by bike, the school will:

- i) promote cycling as a positive way of travelling.
- ii) celebrate the achievements of those who choose to cycle to school.
- iii) provide a bicycle rack where bicycles can be stored. The rack is situated near the school's main entrance that may be occasionally open during school hours. Hence it is suggested that each bicycle is secured in place with a cycle lock.
- iv) provide an identification tag that should be attached to the bike.
- v) update the bicycle policy when required.

To make cycling to and from school a positive experience for all, we expect students to:

- i) ride their bikes in a sensible and safe way following the Highway Code.
- ii) take responsibility that their bike is roadworthy and regularly maintained.
- iii) behave in such a way which shows them and the school in the best possible light and to consider the need of others when cycling.
- iv) wear an appropriate helmet during the whole journey and possibly make use of high visibility clothing.
- v) plan the safest route to and from school.
- vi) dismount before entering the school grounds and walk their bicycles whilst on site.
- vii) keep the identification tag provided by the school always attached to the bike during the journey. The tag will be provided once the 'school bicycle permit' form is returned to the clerks' office.

For the wellbeing of the students, the administration expects parents/guardians to:

i) ensure that their children have developed their confidence and competence in cycling.

- ii) provide their children with the necessary safety equipment that ensures a safe journey.
- iii) ensure that the bicycle used by their children is roadworthy and well maintained.
- iv) plan with their children the best safe route to and from school.
- v) fill in the 'school bicycle permit' form and return it to the clerks' office.

As a school, we hope to support parents/ guardians who wish their children to cycle to school whilst making clear that the journey to school is the parents'/guardians' responsibility. In this regard, it is the parents/guardians and the parents/guardians alone who must decide whether a child should cycle to school and so the school cannot be held liable in case of an accident. Apart from that, the school cannot be held responsible of any theft/damages to the bike or safety equipment. Parking a bike at school is carried out at the rider's own risk.

**Note:** The term 'bike' or 'bicycle' in this policy refers to a pedal cycle that is human powered. Electric bikes, motorised bikes and electric scooters will not be allowed on school premises.

# School Bicycle Permit Cycling to School – Important Notice to Parents/Guardians

While St Benedict College Secondary School Kirkop wishes to encourage students to use their bike to commute to/from school, the responsibility as to whether your child is competent to negotiate hazards as may present themselves on the route from home to school and back must be yours and yours alone. St Benedict College Secondary School Kirkop does not accept liability for any consequences of that decision.

Parents/Guardians are also informed that the school cannot be held responsible to any theft/damages to the bike and/or to any safety equipment.

St Benedict College Secondary School Kirkop supports students who wish to walk or cycle to school since it improves their health and fitness, reduces traffic outside the school making conditions safer for everyone and benefits their general development. If you wish your son/daughter to cycle to/from school, please complete the form below.

#### Cycle Helmets

Students are expected to wear a correctly fitted cycle helmet and it is suggested that they use appropriate reflective clothing and bike lights when visibility is poor.

#### Conditions for Cycling to School

- 1. The bicycle must be in a roadworthy condition.
- 2. The cyclists must ride sensibly and follow the Highway Code at all times during the journey.

| 3. The bicycle must be locked securely in the approved cycle parking area.   |              |  |  |  |  |
|--|--------------|--|--|--|--|
| St Benedict College Secondary School Kirkop reserves the right to revoke this permit if these conditions are not adhered to. |              |  |  |  |  |
| Name of Student  | Class        |  |  |  |  |
| Cycle make   | Cycle colour |  |  |  |  |
| I accept the above conditions and give my consent so that  |              |  |  |  |  |
| Name of Parent/Guardian:   | . Signature: |  |  |  |  |
| Date:  |              |  |  |  |  |
| (This signed form should be returned to the clerks' office)  |              |  |  |  |  |

## Appendix 2

Suġġett: Nippromwovu Trasport Sostenibbli - Talba għall-appoġġ

Għażiża Dr Tiffany Attard,

Aħna l-istudenti tal-10 Sena tal-Iskola Sekondarja tal-Kulleġġ San Benedittu f'Ħal Kirkop, qed niktbulek bħala parti mill-grupp Ekoskola tagħna, li jiffoka fuq il-promozzjoni ta' prattiċi sostenibbli fl-iskola u l-kommunità tagħna.

Is-sena li għaddiet, uħud mill-istudenti sħabna tal-10 Sena bdew kampanja biex iħeġġu aktar studenti jiġu l-iskola bir-rota. Huma kkonvinċew b'suċċess 25 student biex jibdew jirkbu r-rota minflok ma jieħdu karozza jew xarabank. Biex jappoġġjaw din l-inizjattiva, poġġew ukoll żewġ bike racks fil-bini tal-iskola, li kienu utli ħafna.

Bħala l-membri attwali tal-grupp Ekoskola, qed nippjanaw li nkomplu din l-inizjattiva u nieħdu pass 'il quddiem. L-għan tagħna huwa li nħeġġu saħansitra aktar studenti biex imorru l-iskola bir-rota billi nagħmlu l-vjaġġ aktar sigur u aktar konvenjenti għalihom. Nippjanaw li nagħmlu dan billi ninstallaw bike rack ieħor fil-grawnd tal-iskola u nipprovdu tined biex nipproteġu r roti millelementi.

Nixtiequ wkoll nitolbu l-appoġġ tieghek biex nagħmlu l-vjaġġ lejn l-iskola aktar sigur u aktar faċli għall-istudenti li jiġu minn irħula ġirien bħaż-Żurrieq, l-Imqabba, il-Qrendi u Ħal Safi. Aħna nemmnu li l-promozzjoni taċ-ċikliżmu bħala mezz ta' trasport mhux biss tnaqqas il konġestjoni tattraffiku iżda tgħin ukoll biex intejbu l-ambjent u s-saħħa tagħna. L-unika żewġ bike lanes li hemm fiż-żona tagħna jinsabu fiż-Żurrieq, fi Vjal Ix-Xarolla u Triq Il-Kuċċard (ara l mappa mehmuża).

F'dan ir-rigward, nixtiequ nipproponu l-idea li noħolqu aktar bike lanes u li dawk eżistenti jsiru aktar aċċessibbli u aktar siguri għall-istudenti. Dan jinkoraġġixxi aktar studenti biex imorru l iskola bir-rota, inaqqas in-numru ta' karozzi fit-triq, u jikkontribwixxi għal ambjent aktar nadif u ekoloġiku. Nissugerrixxu wkoll li inżidu sinjali tat-traffiku li jigwardjaw iċ-ċiklisti, li javzaw lix xufiera li fit-tali ħin ser ikun hemm xi roti u joqogħdu iktar attenti (ara l-posters mehmuzin).

Għamilna sinjali għall-qtates li qed jaqsmu it-triq, ma nagħmlux sinjali għall-studenti li jiġu bil-mixi jew bir-rota? Naħsbu wkoll li trid tingħata aktar importanza lill-Valletta Declaration 2017

https://eumos.eu/wp-

content/uploads/2017/07/Valletta Declaration on Improving Road Safety.pdf

Aħna nemmnu li l-inizjattiva tiegħek ser tgħin tippromwovi trasport sostenibbli fil-komunità tagħna. Nistennew bil-ħerqa li nisimgħu mingħandek u niddiskutu kif nistgħu naħdmu flimkien biex nilħqu l-għanijiet tagħna.

Grazzi tal-ħin u l-konsiderazzjoni tiegħek.

Dejjem tiegħek,

Ryan Schembri

(Grupp Ekoskola tal-10 sena, Kullegg San Benedittu Skola Sekondarja, Hal Kirkop.)