

# The children teaching grown-ups how to park responsibly



**HARBORNE POLICE ROUND-UP**  
by  
**Sgt MARK HICKMAN**

**THE end of the year is always a time when we can reflect on our own behaviour and how it may effect others. I have spoken about the subject of general issues around parking and speeding before.**

This month, I wish to concentrate on an area where feelings are running very high amongst many who live, work or visit Harborne. This subject is the parking of vehicles in and around Harborne schools.

The issues have never gone away but are likely to get worse as some of the schools are expanding - St Chad's and St Mary's primary schools, for example.

Parents continue to drop their children on zig zags, park on double yellows, abuse their disability badges, turn around dangerously and also abuse and threaten those who try to educate them about their behaviour.

Following a near miss at St Mary's School on Vivien Road - a driver parked dangerously and waved a child across the road when a car was coming - there has been considerable anger amongst the school communities about the behaviour of quite a few parents/guardians who take and collect their children to and from school.

This led to a partnership meeting chaired by Harborne Councillor James Mckay. Problems were highlighted at each and every school in the Harborne area.

The following schools were all represented - St Peter's, St Mary's, Chad Vale, Harborne Junior and Infants, Lordswood Boys and Girls Schools, George Dixon Academy and George Dixon Primary School.

I think it is accepted that the police cannot be at each school each day. In fact when we are present, there are few issues around the schools - people park responsibly!

But we can't always be there, and it is when we are not there that there are problems as there is a perception that there will be no sanction against inconsiderate drivers.

St Mary's were represented amongst others by the Head Boy and Head Girl (names?).

They form part of a group that carry placards and wear high visibility jackets. They "police" their own school gates.

This is an innovative way to tackle the problem. There is also something very charming about children teaching grown up people how to behave.

The problems around schools in Harborne, and actually the whole city, are truly shocking. There is real concern that an accident with a child is not too far away.

Parents, teachers and children are all going to be working together to deal with this problem.

Do not abuse them. The police may then become



Children from St Mary's RC School "police" their own school gates to encourage drivers to park safely and well away from zig zag lines.

involved as you may commit a crime. From our point of view, we will continue to support the schools around a variety of issues including parking.

We will come and knock your door if your details are passed to us and we will arrest you and give you a criminal record if you act inappropriately towards teachers, parents or children who YOU abuse when it is YOU who has parked illegally and more important, dangerously.

**LAST** month I spoke about various issues leading up to Christmas, particularly burglary and violence around the pubs in Harborne.

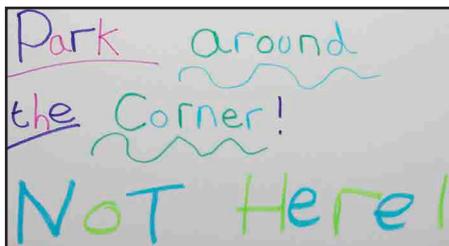
I would just ask you to enjoy the Christmas period but please be mindful of advertising your property to thieves and be careful with how much you drink over the festive season.

Please also consider neighbours and the vulnerable and perhaps lonely people who you know or who live near you.

Leading up to Christmas, please be aware that thieves will pray on our older generation who often still carry cash about with them. We have had a number of incidents where victims have been followed from a bank or building society and engaged in conversation, the cash being stolen whilst the offender and victim are talking, perhaps after the offender has asked for the time.

**I WISH** all readers well for Christmas and the New Year. As always, if you need some help or wish to discuss an issue, please contact us on 101 extension 7863 6667 or place Harborne Neighbourhood Team in your search engine and send us an e-mail via our website.

## 1/4 page botanical gardens



Signs hand drawn by the children at St Mary's. "There is something charming about children teaching grown up people how to behave" - Sgt Mark Hickman.