



Emmaline Martin, pictured with her children Layla and Jude, says a crossing would make a big difference at Birralelee Primary School. Picture: Josie Hayden

East

Birralelee Primary School principal and parents warn of serious safety risk to children

Andrew Rogers, Manningham Leader
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MANNINGHAM Council has refused to install a supervised crossing at a Doncaster primary school despite the principal and parents' fears for students' safety.

Birralee Primary School has a rapidly growing enrolment and a single-street Heyington Ave frontage.

Parents have been left jostling for position at drop-off and pick-up times, with principal Ashley Ryan warning the problem will only get worse as traffic volumes increase.

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“I’m just really worried that a child will get knocked over,” Mr Ryan said.

He said a request to make Heyington Ave a one-way street had been turned down by the council and two requests over two years for a school crossing in Wilsons Road had fallen on deaf ears.

Instead Manningham Council chief executive Warwick Winn told Leader the traffic issue was “not uncommon” in Manningham.



📷 Birralee Primary School in Doncaster has a growing enrolment, adding to traffic congestion and fears for students' safety. Picture: Josie Hayden

He said the school and the community needed to do more to educate drivers, and that council shared the problem of the crossings with VicRoads.

But VicRoads media adviser Jarryd Stokes says both the roads in question fall under the care of Manningham Council.

Meanwhile, Mr Ryan is desperate.

“We have 86 preps enrolled for next year and only 30 students finishing grade six,” he said.

“Traffic volumes have already more than doubled in recent years — it’s just chaotic.”

Mr Ryan is urging parents to consider alternative arrangements.

But many parents have told him they’re reluctant to let their kids walk to school because of a lack of manned crossings in the area, particularly across the busy Wilsons Rd to the north of the Doncaster campus.

Mr Ryan said he sympathised with parents who refused to let their children cross Wilsons Rd unsupervised.



📷 The school has warned that traffic at drop-off and pick-up times will get worse next year.
Picture: Josie Hayden

“I wouldn’t let them cross that road either,” he said.

“There are vehicles parked everywhere and a small child peeking out between two parked cars, with motorists coming down doing 40-50km an hour, is a recipe for tragedy.”

Mr Ryan said the school had encouraged parents to park further away and walk with their children the rest of the way.

But the initiative had failed to have a significant effect on the problem, which was likely to get even worse next year, he warned.

Emmaline Martin parks on the opposite side of Wilsons Rd and walks the rest of the way with her son Jude, who is in prep.

“A crossing would help massively — even as an adult you have to be careful, so you can’t expect a kid to cross on their own,” she said.

Mr Winn said installing a school crossing could cost council up to \$20,000 with about \$11,000 ongoing costs in salary, uniforms and other administration.

He said the council had tried to work with the school to solve the problem.