No Idling
SCHOOLS TOOLKIT

No Idling
SAVE MONEY • TURN OFF • SPARE THE AIR

Brent
INTRODUCTION

Air pollution is a growing threat worldwide and harms the health of millions of people per year. Unlike other risks to our health, many people don’t understand what causes air pollution, what effects it has on our health or how to reduce our exposure to it.

The impact of air pollution can be particularly harmful for the more vulnerable members of society, such as children, older people and those with existing heart and lung conditions.

This is why we are calling on schools in Brent to take action and join us in tackling air pollution caused by idling vehicles around the borough’s schools.

This toolkit will support you in developing your own No Idling campaign and includes a number of resources to help you get started.

What is Idling?

Idling is when a vehicle’s engine is left running while it is parked or stationary for a period longer than 30 seconds, contributing further to toxic emissions in the air we breathe. This commonly happens when drivers are stopped at traffic lights or waiting whilst parked outside a house, school or business.

Idling vehicles in school zones can be hard on young lungs. Vehicle exhaust fumes in our air contains many pollutants that are linked to asthma and other lung diseases, allergies, heart disease, cancer and other health problems.

Vehicle idling also increases your carbon footprint, using up natural resources and increasing emissions, which damages the environment.

LEADING A NO IDLING PROGRAMME AT YOUR SCHOOL

Every child should be able to breathe clean air and this guide gives school leaders information about the small actions they can take to significantly improve air quality around their schools.

They key to having a successful No Idling programme at your schools is educating parents and students about the benefits of not idling and the small actions that can make a big difference.

Follow this advice to start your own campaign:

📍 PICK YOUR TEAM

This could be an entire class, a cross-year group eco-team, or a group of dedicated students. Choose a team leader within the faculty to oversee the programme and organise the campaign activities.

📍 UNDERSTAND THE WHY

Make sure you understand why it’s so important to take action for better air quality. This includes the effects air pollution has on our health and what we can do about it. Don’t limit your knowledge to the effects of idling vehicles only; the more you know about air quality, the more you can educate others and change behaviour.

📍 START PLANNING

Introduce the campaign to parents and pupils at the school gates or do something bigger like running a themed assembly or organising an event to engage the whole school. Think about inviting parents along to your events and activities and make sure you let everyone know what you have planned.

📍 MEASURE YOUR IMPACT

You can measure the success of your campaign in a number of ways. You could count the number of idling vehicles at the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up for a week before the campaign, and then again a few months after you begin your campaign.

The number of people walking to school and taking public transport instead of driving could also be used as indicators of the impact.

It’s important to take a baseline measurement before your campaign and a second measurement afterwards to understand the impact it has had on behaviours.

📍 SPREAD THE WORD

This is the most important step in a successful No Idling campaign. In order to change behaviour, you have to educate people about the problem and provide them with a solution(s). Well-planned educational activities can help create understanding and support for the campaign. Use your communications channels to let parents and other schools know about your campaign activities. These could include newsletters, social media channels, your website and text alerts.

"It’s so important that we all work together to improve the quality of the air we breathe. And there are things each of us can do to help.

“We’re taking action to make it easier to walk and cycle in Brent and we’re very lucky to have such great public transport in most of the borough. I know that sometimes you might need to drive but even then you can still do your bit by switching off your engine when you are stationary, for example outside a school or shop, or whilst waiting in car parks, petrol stations or lay-bys. By turning off your engine you will improve the quality of air inside and outside the car, reduce pollution, help cut heart disease, reduce lung cancer and prevent asthma attacks.

“This campaign shows how one small everyday change can make a difference. Our schools are the right place to start because children are particularly at risk of harm. But whether you’re driving to school, hospital or to the shops, please turn off your engine and do your bit to make Brent a cleaner place."

Cllr Eleanor Southwood, Brent Council Cabinet Member for Environment
IDEAS FOR YOUR NO IDLING CAMPAIGN

Be imaginative, positive and clear in your messaging in order to encourage and help maintain engagement during the campaign. Here are a few suggestions for ways to spread the word:

1. Create posters to put up or hold during the morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up. You can use the ones provided in this toolkit or create your own with the students.

2. Create some excitement about your campaign by holding a school-wide event, inviting parents and members of the public. You could host an event specifically to let people know about the No Idling campaign, or you could use existing school events or festivals to help spread the word. Make sure to take lots of photos and videos, which will help to spread your key messages after the event.

3. Use the No Idling Pledge cards in this toolkit to have drivers commit to turning their engines off. Send pledge cards home with the students for their parents or guardians and students to sign. Find a public place within the classroom to hang up the pledge cards.

4. Create and display signage at the school drop off zones. You can use the banners available from Brent Council or you can create your own with the students.

5. Use your communications channels to spread the word. If you have social media accounts, like Facebook or Twitter, post about your campaign activities and call to action. If you have a newsletter, include an article about the campaign and what you are asking parents and students to do. This toolkit contains some ideas to help you get your messages out.

NO IDLING PLEDGE CARDS

No Idling At My School

PLEDGE FORM FOR PARENTS

By signing this pledge, you are joining others in our school community to improve air quality and health. Thank you for helping everyone breathe a little easier!

I __________________________ (Name of parent)
hereby pledge to my child

__________________________________________
(Name of child)

that I will turn off my engine when near the school grounds and anywhere else I might be waiting in my vehicle.

Signed __________________________ (signature of parent)

Witnessed __________________________ (signature of child)

One small, everyday change can make a big difference. To protect air quality and your children’s health, it is recommended that you idle your vehicle for no longer than 10 seconds.

Spare the air!

Click to download here
CAMPAIGN RESOURCES

An important part of your No Idling campaign is educating and engaging with parents, students and members’ of the public.

We have provided a number of campaign resources to help you spread the word and increase the impact of your campaign.

Logo
[downloadable no idling logo here]

Posters
[downloadable posters here]

Leaflets
[downloadable leaflets here – concertina fold A4]

NO IDLING CAMPAIGN

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

Join us and say NO to idling

This year, [INSERT SCHOOL NAME] is launching a No Idling campaign to improve the quality of air around our school and protect our health.

As part of this campaign, our school will establish a No Idling Zone to improve air quality and create a healthier environment for students, teachers and parents. This zone is an area where all vehicle owners are asked to turn their engines off whilst they wait.

So, if you are going to be sitting still for more than 30 seconds, please remember to turn your car’s engine off. You will not only improve our air, you will also save money in fuel and vehicle wear and tear costs!

Why should you support No Idling?

Idling harms our health: vehicle exhaust fumes are damaging to everyone’s health, but it especially affects children, who breathe more and at a faster rate than adults. By turning off your engine, you can improve the quality of air students, parents and teachers breathe while they are at school.

Idling pollutes the air we breathe: an idling engine produces unnecessary pollution and can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion. By not idling, you reduce the level of harmful emissions being released into the atmosphere.

Keep money in your wallet and save fuel: despite the popular story that idling your car uses less fuel than turning it off and restarting – idling actually costs you money. It is more fuel efficient to turn off your engine if you are going to be sitting more than 30 seconds and this will also reduce the wear and tear on your engine.

You can help reduce air pollution around school by doing the following:

• Turn off your engine when dropping off or picking up from school
• Take up cycling and walk where you can, or think about choosing public transport over using your car
• Share car journeys where possible

Please support [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]’s No Idling campaign and turn off your car while waiting to drop off or pick up your students. Together, we can make a real difference and improve the quality of air we all breathe.

Newsletter article template
To download this in word format, click here
**EMAIL TEMPLATES**

**TO: [PARENTS]**

**SUBJECT: No Idling Zone takes effect at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]**

Starting from [DATE], students and teachers at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME] will be launching a No Idling campaign to improve the quality of air around our school. As part of this campaign, we will be establishing a No Idling Zone to improve air quality and create a healthier environment for students, teachers and parents. This zone is an area where all vehicle owners are asked to turn their engines off whilst they wait.

The emissions that come from vehicle exhausts are harmful for everyone, especially children who breathe more and at a faster rate than adults. Vehicle exhaust in our air contains many pollutants that are linked to asthma and other lung diseases, allergies, heart disease, cancer and other health problems.

Please support [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]'s No Idling Campaign and turn off your car while waiting to drop off or pick up students. Together, we can make a real difference and improve the quality of air we all breathe.

*To download this in word format, click here.*

**GET IN TOUCH**

We want to make it easy for you to carry out your own successful No Idling campaign.

We are happy for you to amend our information and tools for your purposes and support with any campaign activities you undertake.

For more information or support with kick-starting your campaign, please contact transportation@brent.gov.uk

Let’s work together to make Brent a cleaner, greener and healthier place to live.