

Officer responsible City Streets Manager	Author Brian Neill, Traffic Engineer
Corporate Plan Output: Traffic Signs and Markings	

The purpose of this report is to reconsider the request from the Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board that *'the City Services Committee be requested to consider the suitability of installing appropriate warning signage near kindergartens and other junior learning institutions when requested by parents'*. This report was originally considered by the Committee at its meeting on 6 July 1999. The Council has referred the report back to the Committee to allow further consideration to be given to the possible sign options of a 40kph speed limit outside schools.

BACKGROUND

From time to time, City Streets staff receive requests for the placement of 'Black on Yellow' diamond shaped warning signs to warn motorists of the presence of children on roads in the city. These requests are given due consideration by officers using the Transit NZ Signs Manual (the national guideline) to determine whether or not a sign should be erected. Other measures aimed at changing the road environment may also be considered, which could result in the elimination of the hazard.

It is understood that the Community Board has considered installing a traffic restraint near the Fairleigh Kindergarten in Garden Road. For the time being this proposal has been set aside and the Board has asked that a suitable hazard warning sign be erected instead.

NATIONAL SIGNS POLICY

Hazard warning signs are prescribed in the Fourth Schedule of the Traffic Regulations 1976. Guidelines for the erection of these signs are set out in the 'TNZ Manual of Traffic Signs and Road Markings'. The policy for the erection of pedestrian signs is contained in the two pages attached to this report.

The 'Children' sign on page 1 is not normally used outside kindergartens or playcentres in the city. The criteria for the erection of these signs suggests that they *'should be erected where in the opinion of the controlling authority, roadway conditions and the likely presence of considerable numbers of pedestrians under 16 years of age create a hazard.*

In particular where children often congregate on sections of road without footpaths or where recreation reserves provided with special facilities for children abut the road in areas not subject to a 50km/h speed restriction'.

The reason for the erection of road signs is that motorists are to be warned of potential hazards. When road signs are used in circumstances where the hazard is not obvious then the effectiveness of the message could be lost leading to a general disregard of such signs throughout the city.

USE OF PW-31 'CHILDREN' SIGNS IN THE CITY

As well as outside schools where PW-32 'Children/School' sign combinations are used (see page 2 attached), 'Children' signs are often erected near parks and reserves where play equipment encourages children to cross high volume roadways. Signs would not normally be erected on the approaches to kindergartens or playcentres where children are supervised.

CONCLUSION

PW-31 'Children' signs are often used on roads in the city to warn drivers of the presence of unsupervised children crossing a roadway. They are not normally erected in other areas where there is a concentration of supervised children such as outside kindergartens or playcentres.

The Council considered that recommendation 2 should be reconsidered as it referred to "high volume" rather than all roads in the city. The words "high volume" have been omitted from the new recommendation. The Fendalton/Waimairi Community Board also supports this view.

Recommendation: That the Council adopt the current practice of installing PW-31 'Children' signs which is:

1. Signs be erected in accordance with the 'Transit NZ Manual of Traffic Signs and Road Markings - Policy for the Erection of Pedestrian Signs'.
2. 'Children' hazard warning signs be considered for roads in the city where there are considerable numbers of unsupervised children crossing such as outside schools or playgrounds contained within parks or reserves.