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We are writing to warmly welcome RBKC's recent announcement that the council is revisiting its decision to remove the Kensington High Street cycle lane. During the brief period in which it was in place, the KHS protected lane was a game changer for our school's staff, giving many the confidence to begin cycling to work for the first time while massively improving the safety and wellbeing of those who were already commuting by bicycle. School staff and other key workers have been called upon to continue to travel to work throughout every stage of the covid crisis, whilst being advised not to take public transport. The cycle lane gave us a safe and accessible option to do so.

Our wider school community was also strongly in support of the new safe cycling infrastructure, with some parents reporting that the lane had already enabled them to leave the car at home for the school run. We had hoped this was the beginning of a much larger, long term shift. School run traffic can account for one in four cars on London's roads at peak times, so any reduction in car trips to and from school reduces congestion for other road users, and reduces exposure to road danger and toxic air pollution for our pupils and others who live and work in RBKC.

Shifting routine journeys like the school run in densely populated areas like RBKC is also an essential way we can empower the next generation to drastically reduce our collective impact on the climate crisis. We discuss these topics extensively in school and the children are highly attuned to the need to make big changes to the way we live our lives today in order to safeguard their futures. But individual decisions like how to travel to school are ultimately determined by the choices available, and if cycling to school is not seen as a safe option for children then parents will not choose to do it. Without the protected lane, nobody could claim that KHS is safe for children to cycle on.

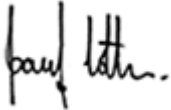
Fox Federation is 100% behind RBKC's commitment to become a carbon neutral borough by 2030. We believe it is clear that this target cannot be met unless changes are made to our streets to support and empower people to make more environmentally friendly travel choices, and to encourage a rapid move away from unnecessary car use.

Cycling as a means of transport is accessible to all. From a social justice point of view, schools are becoming increasingly aware that a car based COVID recovery is not an option for everyone. Safe and reliable cycle links provide a freedom of movement within and between boroughs for all that is easy to take for granted. Active travel also forms a big part of the discussions we have with children about a healthy lifestyle. We are facing an obesity crisis and developing children's understanding of how to approach each day with a health-conscious mind-set is paramount.

All of these benefits of active, sustainable travel are key reasons why the government has strongly supported road space reallocation away from cars during the pandemic, providing new guidance and funding for local authorities which we were hugely encouraged to see taken up by RBKC.

After the announcement was made that the lane was under threat, Fox was contacted by a number of other schools in the borough who were similarly dismayed that this decision had been taken without any apparent consultation with RBKC's educators. We would like to ask you now to focus your minds on your duty of care to your most vulnerable constituents, and to urge you in the strongest possible terms, on behalf of all school pupils in RBKC, to reinstate the KHS cycle lane at the earliest opportunity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Little". The signature is written in a cursive style with a vertical line through the first letter of the first name.

Executive Headteacher
Fox Federation