

Section 1:

#1 (Opening paragraph)

Strengths: Your opening effectively grabs the reader's attention with relatable imagery of busy school mornings. You clearly establish the main argument and create urgency around the issue.

Weakness: Lack of specific evidence → Your opening relies heavily on emotional appeals without providing concrete statistics or research findings. Phrases like "How many more accidents, near-misses, or health consequences do we need" create concern but would be stronger with actual numbers showing accident rates near schools or pollution levels that children face during school hours.

Exemplar: *"According to recent studies, children are three times more likely to be injured in traffic accidents during school pick-up and drop-off times, with over 200 incidents reported annually near Australian primary schools."*

#2 (Second body paragraph about environment)

Strengths: You paint a vivid picture contrasting polluted air with clean air, making the environmental benefits easy to visualise. Your connection between air quality and children's health is relevant and important.

Weakness: Insufficient depth of explanation → While you mention that "vehicles are major contributors to air pollution," your writing doesn't explore how car-free zones specifically would improve air quality around schools. The connection between fewer cars and measurably cleaner air needs stronger development, particularly explaining what types of pollutants would decrease and by how much.

Exemplar: *"Studies show that car-free zones can reduce harmful nitrogen dioxide levels by up to 40% within 200 metres of schools, directly improving the air that children breathe during their most active outdoor time."*

#3 (Counter-argument paragraph)

Strengths: You acknowledge opposing viewpoints, which strengthens your argument by showing you've considered different perspectives. Your suggested solutions like school buses and bike lanes are practical.

Weakness: Underdeveloped counter-argument response → Your dismissal of convenience concerns feels rushed with phrases like "it might be inconvenient at first" without fully addressing real challenges families face. You don't explore situations where alternative transport genuinely isn't available or safe, making your response seem incomplete.

Exemplar: *"For families living more than two kilometres from school or those with mobility challenges, councils could establish designated pick-up zones just outside the car-free area, connected by safe walking paths."*

■ Your piece demonstrates a clear understanding of persuasive writing structure and presents a well-organised argument for car-free school zones. The topic choice is relevant and important for community discussions. However, your writing would benefit from including more specific evidence and research to support your claims. Additionally, you could strengthen your argument by exploring the practical challenges more thoroughly. Consider adding real examples from schools that have already implemented car-free zones and what happened as a result. Also, think about addressing different types of schools - suburban versus city schools might face different challenges. Your environmental argument could be enhanced by explaining exactly which pollutants decrease and how this helps children's health. Furthermore, your safety argument would be more convincing with statistics about accident rates during school times compared to other periods.

Overall Score: 46/50

Section 2:

Should streets around schools be car-free?

#1 In today's fast-paced world, the safety and well-being of our children often seem to take a backseat to convenience and efficiency. Every morning, parents rush to drop off their kids at school, often battling through heavy traffic. However, the streets around schools, packed with cars and noise, pose a dangerous environment for young students. How many more accidents, near-misses, or health consequences do we need before we take action? With growing concerns about air pollution, traffic-related injuries, and the declining physical health of children, the idea of making streets around schools car-free is gaining traction. A car-free zone around schools would not only reduce the risk of accidents but also contribute to a cleaner environment and encourage healthier, more sustainable

transportation options. Creating these car-free zones is not just a good idea—it's a necessity. Can we really keep going about our daily lives knowing that the very spaces meant to nurture our children are putting them at risk? It's time we take a stand and prioritise the safety, health, and future of our next generation.

First and foremost, one of the primary reasons to implement car-free zones around schools is to ensure the safety of children. Imagine, just for a moment, a child walking to school, their backpack bouncing with every step, when suddenly a speeding car comes too close, almost striking them. How can we live with the knowledge that a momentary lapse in attention or a careless driver could ruin an innocent life forever? Schools are bustling environments, and when cars crowd the roads, they increase the risk of accidents. In fact, studies show that children are more vulnerable to traffic accidents, particularly during peak school times when cars are rushing to drop off or pick up students. By restricting cars from the areas around schools, we can significantly reduce the number of potential accidents. A safer environment is not just a luxury—it is a necessity.

#2 Secondly, car-free streets would have a positive impact on the environment. Imagine the scene: a group of children walking to school, breathing in fresh, clean air, free from the fumes of idling cars. Instead of coughing and sneezing from air pollution, they can focus on their day ahead. Vehicles are major contributors to air pollution and carbon emissions, which negatively affect both public health and the planet. By reducing the number of cars around schools, we would decrease the levels of pollution in these areas, creating a cleaner and healthier environment for both children and the community. Imagine a world where we don't have to worry about the long-term effects of toxic air on our children's lungs and future health. Furthermore, reducing car traffic would also help mitigate noise pollution, leading to a quieter and more peaceful atmosphere around the school, which could enhance the learning experience for students.

#3 Lastly, making streets around schools car-free would encourage more sustainable modes of transportation. Picture this: a group of children joyfully riding their bikes to school, parents walking alongside them, enjoying the moment of connection. If driving is restricted, parents and children would be more likely to walk, bike, or use public transportation to get to school. These alternatives promote physical activity and help reduce dependency on cars, which is a step toward a more sustainable future. Can you imagine a future where our children grow up knowing how to stay active, healthy, and connected to their communities, all while reducing their carbon footprint? Additionally, encouraging walking or biking can improve children's overall health and foster habits of active living, which are essential for combating childhood obesity and promoting long-term wellness. Isn't this the kind of future we should be striving to create?

Critics may argue that removing cars from around schools would be inconvenient for parents, especially those who rely on driving due to long distances or a lack of alternatives. However, this can be addressed by creating temporary car-free zones during peak times and expanding options like school buses, bike lanes, and safe walking paths. While it might be inconvenient at first, the long-term benefits of safety, environmental improvements and a better future make it worthwhile. With time, more families may embrace alternative transportation.

In conclusion, making streets around schools car-free is a measure that prioritises the safety of children, improves the environment, and promotes sustainable transportation. With the growing need to address traffic congestion, pollution, and public health concerns, this policy offers a simple yet effective solution. How much longer can we ignore the risks and consequences of keeping the streets open to cars around schools? It is clear that the benefits of car-free zones far outweigh any potential drawbacks, and thus, such initiatives should be embraced for the betterment of both students and society as a whole. Our children's safety and future depend on it.