Residential Street

Safe, Friendly, and Sustainable Neighbourhood

Keywords:

residential area, neighbourhood, street design, traffic safety, green space, accessibility, social interaction

Target group:

primary school pupils (ages 6-11)

Objectives:

This activity challenges pupils to reimagine a residential street as more than just a line of houses. They will design a lively and eco-friendly street where people can live, walk, play, meet, and feel safe.

Through this activity, pupils will explore how urban spaces shape daily life, how to reduce car dominance, and how to create inclusive, green, and people-centred neighbourhoods.

General Guideline on Time Allocation:

The duration needed to carry out this activity may vary depending on the specific group of children. Teachers are encouraged to adapt the implementation according to the needs, interests, and dynamics of the group.

In the preparatory phase, teachers may use a variety of activities to introduce and contextualize the chosen topic. These can include discussions, videos, drawings, storytelling, or even a field trip, depending on the age and background knowledge of the children.

The main construction phase, during which children plan and build their urban element using LEGO bricks, should typically not exceed 45 to 60 minutes. However, this phase often stimulates further curiosity and questions among the children, potentially leading to extended engagement or follow-up activities. For more detailed instructions and pedagogical support on how to implement activities of INNO–kids project, please download the Teacher's Methodological Guide.

Materials and Resources Needed:
- LEGO bricks of various types
- Recycled materials: cardboard, bottle caps, fabric, paper rolls
- Natural materials: twigs, moss, pebbles, dry leaves
- Coloured paper, scissors, glue, markers
- Printed symbols: road signs, bicycle paths, pedestrian crossings
- Large cardboard base for street layout

Note: Encourage pupils to repurpose available materials creatively. If LEGO bricks are not available, pupils may use basic craft supplies to bring their ideas to life through drawings and handmade models.

Introduction:
Ask pupils:
- What makes a street nice to live on?
- What problems can we find in some streets (too many cars, noise, no trees)?
- What would make a street safer for children and better for the planet?

Explain that their task is to design a residential street where:
- People of all ages feel safe and welcome
- Nature and people are prioritised over cars
- There are places to meet, rest, and play
- Green elements and eco-mobility are included

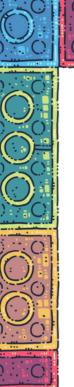## Procedure:
Preparation
In groups, pupils:
- Decide what kind of homes are on their street (flats, family houses, mix)
- Plan the layout (sidewalks, crossings, trees, public benches, bike lanes, safe driving zones, gardens, courtyards, green roofs)
- Choose what public elements to include: post box, compost bin, playground corner, info board
- Think about how people move and meet on the street

Construction
Pupils build a street model on a large cardboard base. Their model may include:
- Pavements, crossings, cycle lanes
- Parking spaces or car-free zones
- Houses and shared front gardens
- Community features (bench, noticeboard, compost corner, birdhouse)
- Eco-friendly solutions (rain garden, permeable pavement, tree shade)

Details

Pupils now add features that support safety, community, and nature:

- Traffic-calming elements: narrow lanes, speed bumps, signage
- Areas with shade, plants, play structures
- Accessibility features (wide paths, ramps)
- Shared mini-spaces: book box, herb planter, bike repair post
- Waste sorting station or community compost

Ask:

- "Can children play safely here?"
- "Would someone with a stroller or wheelchair move easily?"
- "How does this street reduce pollution?"

Stories

Each group creates a story involving the street:

- A child bikes to a friend's house safely
- Neighbours gather under a tree for an evening chat
- A cat rests on a sun-warmed doorstep while kids draw with chalk
- A passer-by leaves a message on the community board

Presentation

Each group presents their model:

- How they structured the street and why
- What makes it safe, friendly, and green
- What people do there and how they feel

Tips:

Support pupils in:

- Reducing car space in favour of people space
- Thinking of diverse users: children, elders, cyclists, pets
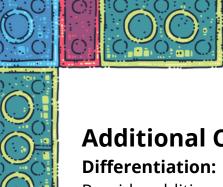- Balancing structure with life — don't forget benches, laughter, greenery

Ask:

"Would you like to live here?"

"What would happen here on a sunny afternoon?"

Additional Considerations:

Differentiation:
Provide additional support or simplified instructions for pupils who may require extra assistance. For advanced pupils, offer extension tasks such as researching further sustainable practices or designing more complex models.

Assessment:
Assess pupils based on their participation and engagement during discussions and hands-on activities. Evaluate the creativity, effort, collaboration, depth of understanding demonstrated in their models, critical thinking, ability to provide constructive feedback and presentation skills.

Extension Activities:
- Conduct a "street audit" near the school
- Write a letter to the mayor with suggestions from their design
- Create traffic signs or posters promoting safe walking and cycling

Curriculum Connections:
This activity integrates:
Civic Education (neighbourhood life, public space, cooperation)
Geography (maps, human settlements, spatial orientation)
Mathematics (proportions, spatial reasoning, area use)
Art (design, creativity, construction)
Language (storytelling, discussion, presentation skills)

SDG Connections:
- **SDG 3:** Good Health and Well-being – Pupils create a healthy, safe outdoor environment
- **SDG 11:** Sustainable Cities and Communities – Pupils design inclusive and green public infrastructure
- **SDG 12:** Responsible Consumption and Production – Pupils include local composting and reuse strategies
- **SDG 13:** Climate Action – Pupils limit car use and promote eco-friendly travel and greenery
- **SDG 15:** Life on Land – Pupils support biodiversity through habitat features and tree planting