



## CAMPAIGN TO LICK LOLLIPOP RAGE TOWARDS LOLLIPOP MEN AND WOMEN AS STUDENTS RETURN TO SCHOOL



A WARNING has been sounded today that lives of children, parents and school wardens continue to be at risk from rogue drivers who fail to stop at school crossings. Road safety officers and school principals are been horrified at the number of motorists who ignore the so-called lollipop person, some even driving by pretending not to see the warden in the middle of the road.

As students return to school after the summer break the unsung heroes the lollipop women and men and the schoolchildren they protect have become the victims of a dangerous road rage and disrespect from road users.

For generations, lollipop men and women have shepherded schoolchildren safely across roads armed only with their trusty signs.

Local authorities are promoting The **“Stop Means Stop”** campaign, it reminds drivers that they are required by law to stop for school crossing patrols, information leaflets have been produced and will be distributed in schools.

Road safety officials receive concerns expressed on a regular basis from their staff that motorists are taking out their frustration at congested school drop off areas on the school lollipop wardens, with potentially fatal consequences.

Motorists' offences include driving around a school warden when they are on the road; revving engines or sounding horns while the warden and children were crossing; driving very close to the warden; and swearing and using threatening language.

Ms. Jemma Jacob Road Safety Officer in Waterford City & County Council said that many drivers were ignoring the lollipop 'Stop' sign even though they are legally obliged to do so. The wardens, like gardai, have the legal power to stop traffic.

**DRIVERS who fail to stop for lollipop men and women could face a €120 fine, 4 penalty points and disqualification.**

**Cyclists are also reminded that they must stop also when requested by a warden and under new laws introduced recently, cyclists failing to stop for a school warden are subject to a €40 fine.**

School wardens play a vital role in ensuring school children are provided with a safe route to and from school.

“They should be able to do this without fear of intimidation and threatening behaviour from inconsiderate motorists.

“Many drivers are blatantly ignoring the ‘Stop’ sign because they are frustrated over traffic hold-ups. They are now taking it out on the school wardens. This is very dangerous and a big problem,” said Ms Jacob who described the situation as a type of “lollipop bashing.”

Ms Jacob said lollipop wardens provided an essential service, especially in urban areas where people wanted to send their children to school by foot. It was very worrying if drivers adopted an aggressive approach to the wardens. There are over 400 lollipop wardens nationwide.

“Drivers must remember that if their car journey takes them through a patrolled area, allow extra time, slow down and be prepared and willing to stop when requested to do so by the school warden.”