

Road Safety Group Journeys road safety guide survey

Research study for

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Road Safety Group

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Prepared by

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1 Executive Summary

The Journeys road safety survey was commissioned by the Road Safety Group (RSG) for the purpose of finding out how successful the Journeys guide had been for improving road safety in schools.

An email was sent to the head teacher of all primary schools on the Schools Portal (487) with a link to an online questionnaire. A reminder email and £100 prize draw incentive were used to encourage responses. A paper questionnaire was also sent to all primary schools who hadn't responded to the online survey. 95 questionnaires were completed giving an overall response rate of 20%.

The main results from the survey are shown below.

- Current usage of the guide is mainly for planning road safety education activities in schools. Fewer use it for providing evidence in formal reporting procedures, creating written road safety advice for parents, and developing a road safety policy. The most common planned uses follow the same pattern as the current year, although usage is higher.
- When rating how easy the guide is to understand and use, respondents were most positive. And most schools agreed that the guide had helped them to plan road safety education activities in school.
- Schools found the guide less useful for providing evidence in formal reporting procedures, giving road safety advice to parents and developing a road safety policy.
- Most respondents thought the Journeys timeline was easy to understand.
- Most respondents thought the road safety evaluation and assessment forms were easy to complete (though more people thought they were fairly easy than very easy). The reasons given were because they are easy to understand and quick to fill in.
- An online form was the preference for returning assessments, and most schools would prefer to send them back in the summer term (and get the report back in the autumn term).
- In general all aspects of the road safety report are viewed positively by the schools that have used them. In order of agreement the results are that the report: can be used to keep children safe from accidental injury and death; reflects the information schools sent to the RSG, fully demonstrates the road safety work done by schools; and can be used to support SEF or OFSTED.
- The most popular suggestions of how the RSG should get feedback from pupils on their road safety training were child friendly questionnaires and face-to-face methods (eg class discussions, school council, feedback after the event).

When developing Journeys for the future the following recommendations should be considered.

Decide what the main purpose of the guide is and promote these within schools to ensure schools can work it into the curriculum and school development plan. If these purposes include helping schools to provide evidence in formal reporting procedures, giving road safety advice to parents and developing a road safety policy then the reasons why schools didn't use these should be looked into further.

In terms of improving the guide's content the following are things respondents suggested.

- Include more information in it (eg cycling information and advice for parents on equipment purchases, more teaching ideas and activities, model policy documents, more IT material on the CD).
- Look at opportunities of publishing the guide online to give more people access to it and allowing school to share activity ideas through it.

As most schools don't know if they will use the reporting process next year the following things should be considered to increase usage.

- Talk with schools to find out how the report could be constructed so it's more useful in SEF and OFSTED assessments.
- Promote the benefits of the reporting system to schools.
- Look at ways of making the evaluation and assessment forms easier and quicker to complete (eg more explanation of how to complete them, training sessions, layout).
- Make sure the process can be completed electronically with an online form for schools to fill in and electronic forms being sent to schools.
- Make sure the reporting cycle fits school's preferences (school submits assessment forms in the summer term and receive their road safety report in the autumn term).

Re-evaluate the guide next year as most schools will have had opportunity to use the guide fully. Ways of improving response rates should also be considered (eg communicating in advance of the survey so people know to expect it, reviewing the methodology, and promoting the actions taken as a result of the survey).

In order to gather pupils opinions on the road safety training they have had, a simple questionnaire mixed with some face-to-face methods should be used.

2 Introduction

The Road Safety Group (RSG) created a guide for road safety services for primary schools in 2006 called Journeys. The purpose of Journeys is to assess pupil's learning needs, and give schools the road safety resources they need to educate the children and produce information for parents. The whole process comes together through an annual evaluation and assessment process that allows RSG to produce a road safety report specific to individual schools. The project has now been running for a year and the RSG wanted to evaluate its success to make sure Journeys is as useful as possible to schools.

3 Research Objectives

The research objectives were to find out:

- how schools had used the guide;
- how useful schools had found the guide;
- if they were planning to use it in the future;
- perceptions of the evaluation and reporting process; and
- how the guide could be improved.

4 Methodology

All 487 primary schools on the Schools Portal were invited to take part in the survey. An e-mail was sent via the Schools Portal to the head teacher of each school with a link to the questionnaire. A reminder email was also sent to encourage responses. The questionnaire was hosted on the county council's website and used the Forms software. The questionnaire was available to complete from 16 October to 2 November 2007.

In order to increase responses a paper questionnaire was sent to all schools who hadn't responded to the online form on the 24 November and closed on the 14 December.

The incentive of a prize draw to win £100 for their school was given to encourage questionnaires to be completed. 95 questionnaires were completed, giving an overall response rate of 20%.

All data are unweighted and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.

5 Limitations

The questionnaire was sent to 487 primary schools in Lancashire. 95 schools responded, which equates to a response rate of 20%. Whilst in absolute terms the number of responses is low, it should be taken as statistically representative of the overall school population.

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of Respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
95	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 500 respond with a particular answer, the chance are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 46% and 54% (ie +/- 4%), versus a complete coverage of the entire customer base using the same procedure.

The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a given statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of Sample A	Size of Sample B	50/50	70/30	90/10
100	100	14%	13%	8%
200	200	10%	9%	6%
1000	1000	4%	4%	3%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, for two samples of 100 responses in each at around 50% of responses in each category to be compared, the difference needs to be over 14% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference is not due to chance alone.

6 Main Research Findings

A marked up questionnaire can be found in the appendices.

All responses are shown in counts rather than as percentages because the number of responses is below 100.

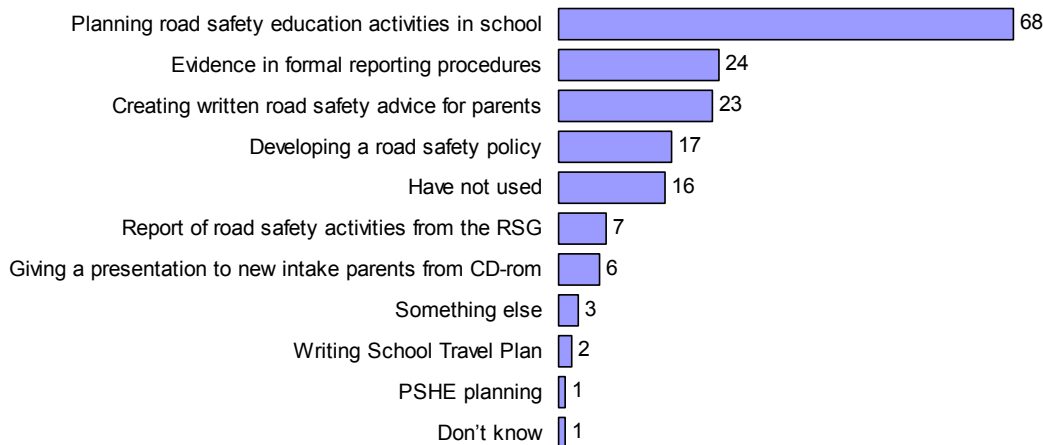
6.1 Usage of the Journeys guide

6.1.1 Current usage of the guide

Respondents were first asked how they had used Journeys for planning road safety activities in the last year.

By far the most common use of the Journeys guide in the last year has been for planning road safety education activities in schools (68). This is followed by providing evidence in formal reporting procedures such as SEF and OFSTED (24), creating written road safety advice for parents (23) and to help them develop a road safety policy (17). Only seven respondents said they had got a road safety report from the RSG (this is in the context of 39 schools actually getting a report for 2006/7). There were 16 respondents who hadn't used it.

Chart 1 - How has your school used Journeys for planning road safety activities in the last year?



Base: all respondents (94)

6.1.2 Future usage of the guide

Looking forward to the next school year, respondents were asked about their planned usage of Journeys.

Road safety report

Firstly they were asked if they planned to get a report of road safety activities from the RSG next year. Three times as many respondents thought their school would get a report from the RSG (33) than thought they wouldn't (10). But, most people were unsure if their school would (48).

Is your school planning to get a report of road safety activities from the Road Safety Group in the coming school year?	
Yes	33
No	10
Don't know	48

Base: all respondents (91)

Where respondents said they weren't going to take part the most common reason was a lack of time (5). One respondent said "the only thing limiting our use of this excellent and comprehensive resource is time!?".

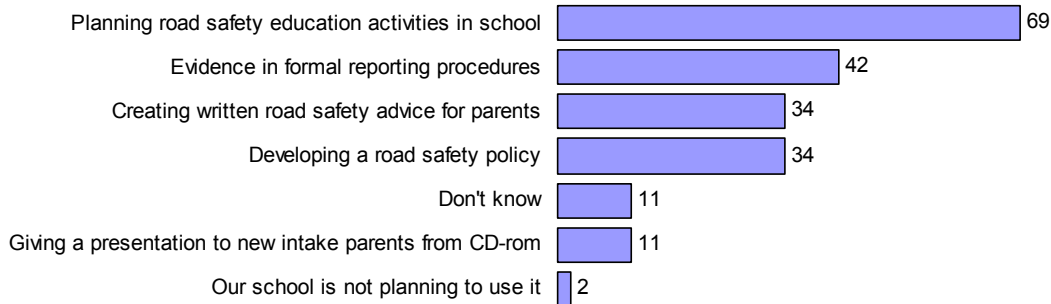
Others suggested things that would encourage them to take part including providing brief notes so there isn't too much to read through (1), that there should be regular reminders (1) and more information about it (1). Another suggested that the report should suggest ways forward (1).

General usage of Journeys

Respondents were then asked how their school was planning to use Journeys in the coming school year.

Only two schools aren't planning to use Journeys next year. This compares favourably to the 16 who haven't used it this year. The most common planned uses follow the same pattern as the current year: planning road safety education activities in schools (69), providing evidence in formal reporting procedures such as SEF and OFSTED (42), creating written road safety advice for parents (34), and to help them develop a road safety policy (34). And, the good news is that the numbers have risen for all of these uses (except for planning road safety activities). The use of the CD-rom for giving a presentation to new intake parents remains fairly low (11).

Chart 2 - How is your school planning to use Journeys in the coming school year?



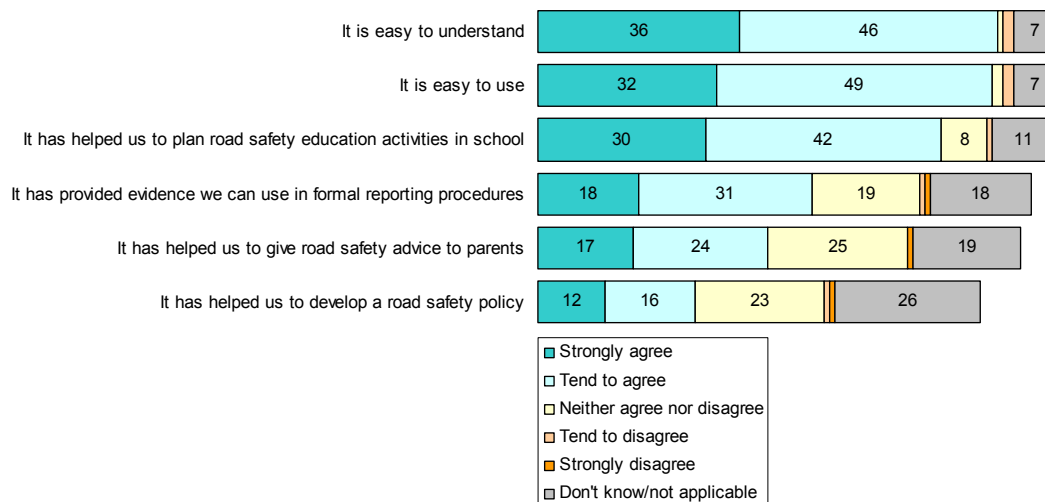
Base: all respondents (91)

Comments relating to why schools weren't planning to use Journeys mainly related to using other mechanisms such as the School Travel Plan, Right Start and Passport to Safer Cycling and as a result they "don't feel we need it" (3). Another comment was they were just planning to use it for training (1).

6.2 Perceptions of the usefulness of the Journeys guide

Respondents were then asked a series of questions asking them to rate the usefulness of different aspects of the guide. When rating how easy the guide is to understand and use respondents were most positive (82 and 81 strongly or tend to agree). Most schools agreed that the guide had helped them to plan road safety education activities in school (72 strongly or tend to agree). Schools found the guide less useful for providing evidence in formal reporting procedures, giving road safety advice to parents and developing a road safety policy (49, 41 and 28 respectively strongly or tend to agree). Positively few people disagreed with any of the statements though a number of respondents said they didn't know on each of the questions. This could be as a result of the newness of the guide in schools.

Chart 3 - Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements about the Journeys guide.



Base: all respondents (between 79 and 92)

Respondents comments about what could be done to improve the usefulness of the guide and what else needed including were to:

- having information on cycling and offering advice on what equipment to buy for parents (2);
- giving more examples of activities and teaching ideas (2);
- providing more IT material on the CD (2);
- making it available online and keep the website updated (2);
- giving less emphasis on assessing children (1);
- showing how it supports SEF (1);
- link to cross curricular focuses (1);
- having more pictures and less writing (1); and
- giving model policy documents (1).

6.3 The timeline provided in the guide

Most respondents thought that the timeline was easy to understand (82), although again quite a few people didn't know how to respond (11).

Is the timeline easy to understand?	
Yes	82
No	0
Don't know	11

Base: all respondents (93)

When asked how the timeline could be improved to make it easier to understand only one respondent had a suggestion which was to "list months and what needs doing".

A few more comments were made about how the timeline could complement the school planning cycle better. A number of these comments revolve around the timing of the reporting process that tended to conflict with each other. It seems that schools are generally busy and finding a particular time that suits everyone isn't possible. A couple of respondents suggested having the assessments every other year. Others stressed the importance of linking it with the school curriculum and school development plan and making sure they are aware of it in advance.

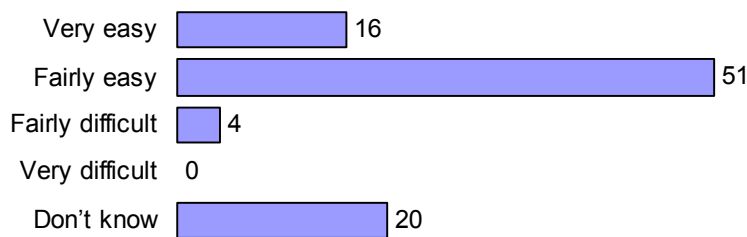
The breakdown of comments included:

- work themes into school curriculum (2);
- link it with the school development plan (2);
- have the evaluation every other year (2);
- school is very busy so difficult to find the time (1);
- start in April to fit with budget planning (1);
- do an initial assessment at the end of the school year (1);
- start in October, September is busy (1);
- report at end of academic year (1); and
- knowing what is available in advance (1).

6.4 The reporting process

Respondents then looked at the process of returning the evaluation and assessment forms to the RSG on which road safety resources and training programmes their school had used in the last year. On the whole people find them easy. Although there is room for improvement as the majority of people found them fairly easy (51) and four people think they are fairly difficult.

Chart 4 - How easy are the road safety evaluation and assessment forms to complete?



Base: all respondents (91)

When asked to explain why they gave these opinions the most popular reasons were positive: they are easy to understand and clear explanations were given (12), and that they are quick to fill in and short (7). Others pointed out that any evaluation is difficult and time consuming to complete. This is particularly important as each school “has so many other events it has to be accountable for. Having to account for this adds another pressure to Headteachers/staff” and they don’t want “another lengthy paper chase”. Therefore it is important to maintain the simplicity of the process so it “(doesn’t) take up to much time and get you to answer the question with a simple answer”.

Chart 5 - Why do you say this?

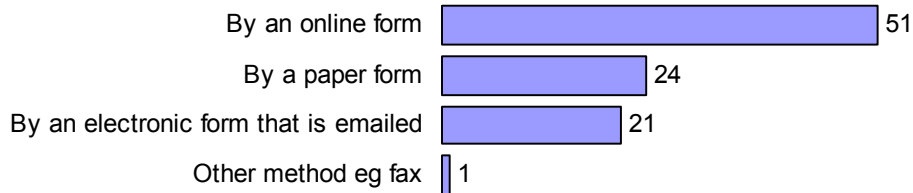


Base: all respondents (24)

Respondents were also asked how and when they would prefer to return their evaluation and assessment forms to the RSG.

Computer based methods were the most popular – particularly an online form (51) and fewer wanted an electronic forms that is emailed (21). Just over a quarter of people wanted a paper form (24).

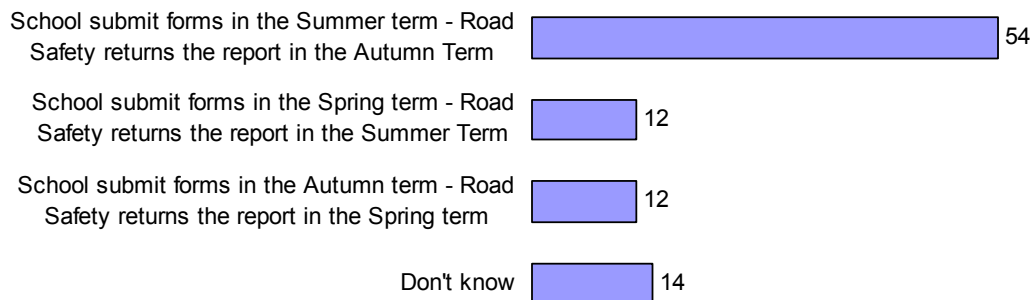
Chart 6 - How would you prefer to return your evaluation and assessment forms to the Road Safety Group?



Base: all respondents (88)

When dealing with so many schools there will never be a time for returning evaluations that suits everyone. However, the most popular time was for the school to submit their forms in the summer term and for the RSG to produce their report in the autumn term (54).

Chart 7 - When would be the best time for you to submit your evaluation and assessment forms to the Road Safety Group, and for them to return your individual report?



Base: all respondents (77)

There were only a few things that some people felt needed including in the report from the RSG. One person made each of the following suggestions to:

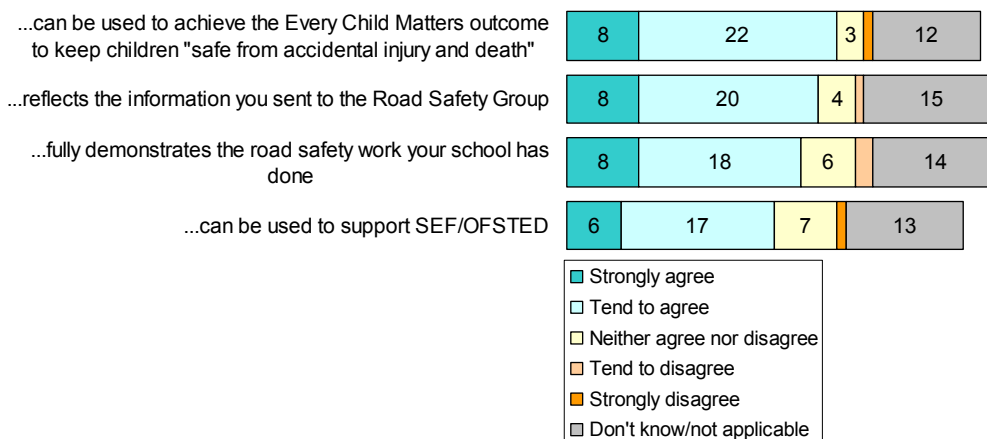
- include more data;
- give reasons for not completing sections;
- share activities with other schools via internet;
- provide electronic forms on the CD; and
- make it less time consuming.

6.5 Schools Journeys report

Respondents were asked for feedback on the report from the RSG. Again there were a number of people which this question was not applicable to probably because not all schools went through the whole Journeys process in the first year. Also bear in mind that only seven respondents actually said they had got a report from the RSG. Given that more people answered the questions in chart 7 about the report, the usage of the reporting process could be higher than the earlier figure suggests.

In general all aspects of the report are viewed positively by the schools that have used them. In order of agreement the results are that the report: can be used to keep children safe from accidental injury and death (30); reflects the information schools sent to the RSG (28), fully demonstrates the road safety work done by schools (26); and can be used to support SEF or OFSTED (23).

Chart 8 - Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. The report...



Base: all respondents (44 to 48)

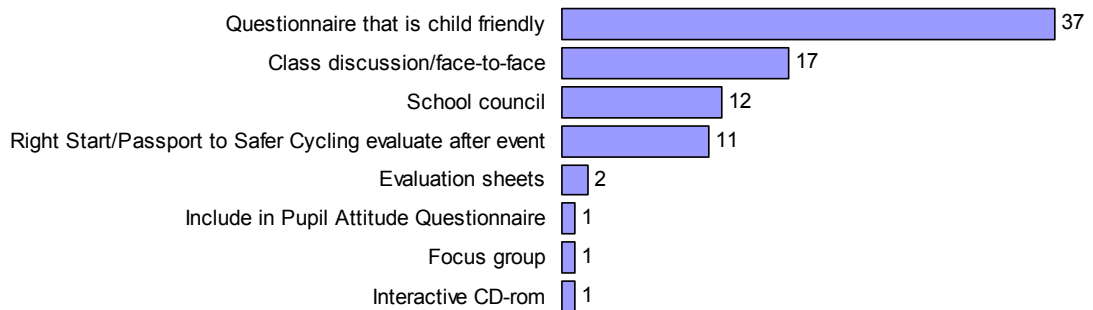
Only a couple of comments were made about what else could be included in the report to make it more useful to schools. Schools suggested including background information on future road improvements and crossing patrols (1), and including evaluations from children and parents in the report (1).

When asked how they would prefer to receive their schools' Journeys report the preference was for an electronic version (57) rather than a paper version (37).

6.6 Suggested ways to gather feedback from pupils

Many respondents gave suggestions for how the RSG should gather pupils opinions on the road safety training they have had. The most popular suggestion was to get them to complete a simple, child-friendly questionnaire (37). Followed by other face-to-face methods such as class discussions (17), the school council (12) and to evaluate the events straight after they have done them (11).

Chart 9 - What would be the best way to get your pupils opinions on road safety training they have had (eg Right Start Child Pedestrian Training Programme, Passport to Safer Cycling)?



Base: all respondents (71)

6.7 General comments from schools

Other feedback from the questionnaire about Journeys and the service provided by the road safety group was very positive. Most people commented that Journeys is user friendly and a useful tool (7) and that the service provided by the RSG is excellent (6) and they should keep up the good work (2).

If you have any other comments, compliments or complaints about the Journeys guide or about the service provided by the Road Safety Group please write them in below.	
User friendly, useful guide	7
Excellent support from Road Safety Group	6
Keep up the good work	2
Heavy handed for a small school	1
Time pressures make it difficult to use	1
Works well and saves lives	1
Road safety is a high priority	1
Manageable process	1

Base: all respondents (18)

7 Appendices: marked up questionnaire

All values are given in counts unless otherwise stated

Base: all respondents (94)

Q1	How has your school used Journeys for planning road safety activities in the last year?	
	Planning road safety education activities in school	68
	Evidence in formal reporting procedures	24
	Creating written road safety advice for parents	23
	Developing a road safety policy	17
	Have not used	16
	Report of road safety activities from the RSG	7
	Giving a presentation to new intake parents from CD-rom	6
	Something else	3
	Writing School Travel Plan	2
	PSHE planning	1
	Don't know	1

Base: all respondents (79 to 92)

Q2	Please tell us how much you agree with the following statements about the Journeys guide.						
		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
	It is easy to understand	36	46	1	2	0	7
	It is easy to use	32	49	2	2	0	7
	It has helped us to plan road safety education activities in school	30	42	8	1	0	11
	It has provided evidence we can use in formal reporting procedures	18	31	19	1	1	18
	It has helped us to give road safety advice to parents	17	24	25	0	1	19

Base: all respondents (13)

Q3	How could Journeys be improved to make it more useful, and what else should be included in the guide?	
	Nothing needs changing	3
	Cycling info/advice on buying equipment	2
	More examples of activities/teaching ideas	2
	More IT material on CD	2
	Available online/keep website updated	2
	Less emphasis on assessing children	1
	Show how it supports SEF	1
	Links to cross curricular focuses	1
	More pictures and less writing	1
	Model policy documents	1

Base: all respondents (93)

Q4	Is the timeline easy to understand?	
	Yes	82
	No	0
	Don't know	11

Base: all respondents (1)

Q5	How could the timeline be improved to make it easier to understand?	
	List months and what needs doing	1

Base: all respondents (12)

Q6	How could the timeline complement the school planning cycle better?	
	Work themes into school curriculum	2
	Link it with the school development plan	2
	Have the evaluation every other year	2
	School is very busy so difficult to find the time	1
	Start in April to fit with budget planning	1
	Knowing what is available in advance	1
	Do an initial assessment at the end of the school year	1
	Start in October, September is busy	1
	Report at end of academic year	1

Base: all respondents (91)

Q7	How easy are the road safety evaluation and assessment forms to complete?	
	Very easy	16
	Fairly easy	51
	Fairly difficult	4
	Very difficult	0
	Don't know	20

Base: all respondents (23)

Q8	Why do you say this?	
	Easy to understand/clear explanations	12
	Easy and quick/short	7
	Any evaluation is difficult/time consuming	5
	Not clear what was wanted	1
	Better to fill in group activities collectively	1
	Examples are a good guide	1

Base: all respondents (88)

Q9	How would you prefer to return your evaluation and assessment forms to the Road Safety Group?	
	By an online form	51
	By a paper form	24
	By an electronic form that is emailed	21
	Other method eg fax	1

Base: all respondents (5)

Q10	Please tell us if there are other things that you think need including in the reporting process.	
	Reasons for not completing sections	1
	Share activities with other schools via internet	1
	Electronic forms on the CD	1
	Less time consuming	1
	More data	1

Base: all respondents (92)

Q11	When would be the best time for you to submit your evaluation and assessment forms to the Road Safety Group, and for them to return your individual report?	
	School submit forms in the Summer term - Road Safety returns the report in the Autumn Term	54
	School submit forms in the Spring term - Road Safety returns the report in the Summer Term	12
	School submit forms in the Autumn term - Road Safety returns the report in the Spring term	12
	Don't know	14

Base: all respondents (44 to 48)

Q12	Please tell us how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. The report...						
		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/not applicable
	...can be used to achieve the Every Child Matters outcome to keep children "safe from accidental injury and death"	8	22	3	0	1	12
	...reflects the information you sent to the Road Safety Group	8	20	4	1	0	15
	...fully demonstrates the road safety work your school has done	8	18	6	2	0	14
	...can be used to support SEF/OFSTED	6	17	7	0	1	13

Base: all respondents (2)

Q13	What other information could be included in the report to make it more useful for your school?	
	Future road improvements/crossing patrols	1
	Evaluation from children and parents	1

Base: all respondents (89)

Q14	How would you prefer to receive your individual Journeys report from the Road Safety Group?	
	As an electronic report	57
	As a printed report	37
	Other method	0

Base: all respondents (91)

Q15	Is your school planning to get a report of road safety activities from the Road Safety Group in the coming school year?	
	Yes	33
	No	10
	Don't know	48

Base: all respondents (9)

Q16	What would encourage you to use the evaluation and assessment process?	
	Lack of time	5
	More information about it	1
	Ways forward	1
	Brief notes, not too much detail	1
	Regular reminders	1

Base: all respondents (91)

Q17	How is your school planning to use Journeys in the coming school year?	
	Planning road safety education activities in school	69
	Evidence in formal reporting procedures	42
	Creating written road safety advice for parents	34
	Developing a road safety policy	34
	Don't know	11
	Giving a presentation to new intake parents from CD-rom	11
	Our school is not planning to use it	2

Base: all respondents (4)

Q18	If your school isn't planning to use Journeys, please tell us why.	
	Already use Right Start and Passport to Safer Cycling in KS2	2
	Using it for training instead	1
	Use school travel plan instead	1

Base: all respondents (71)

Q19	What would be the best way to get your pupils opinions on road safety training they have had (eg Right Start Child Pedestrian Training Programme, Passport to Safer Cycling)?	
	Questionnaire that is child friendly	37
	Class discussion/face-to-face	17
	School council	12
	Right Start/Passport to Safer Cycling evaluate after event	11
	Evaluation sheets	2
	Include in Pupil Attitude Questionnaire	1
	Focus group	1
	Interactive CD-rom	1

Base: all respondents (18)

Q20	If you have any other comments, compliments or complaints about the Journeys guide or about the service provided by the Road Safety Group please write them in below.	
	User friendly, useful guide	7
	Excellent support from Road Safety Group	6
	Keep up the good work	2
	Heavy handed for a small school	1
	Time pressures make it difficult to use	1
	Works well and saves lives	1
	Road safety is a high priority	1
	Manageable process	1