

Care Zone Road Safety project, Department for Infrastructure:

Active Travel Survey – results

Background

The Road Safety project funded by Department of Infrastructure (DfI), included the development and conducting on an active travel survey with parents/guardians of children attending primary schools in the CareZone area.

The initial draft of the survey, developed by Belfast Healthy Cities was commented on by the education department within DfI. Following this, the amended draft was forwarded to Mrs Joanne Smyth, Principal, Sacred Heart Boys PS, who was actively participating in other aspects of the Road Safety project. Mrs Smyth made comments on the language and length of the survey, appropriate to local parents. Final consultation on language and length of the survey took place with the Care Zone Community Champions, who in addition to comments on the draft survey also made suggestions on the inclusion of rewards for submission of the survey.

Response from parents; schools represented

The final survey, consisting of 18 questions, was forwarded to the four primary schools in the area, inviting them to include the link to the survey on the school Facebook page or other as appropriate. Completed surveys were received from 62 parents from two primary schools in the area, with a further 117 completed during Road Safety week, 19th – 23rd April from three of the four primary schools in the area. The Care Zone Community Champions; YEHA (Youth Education Health Advice) and Belfast Healthy Cities staff conducted the surveys during Road Safety week, outside the three schools, morning and afternoon, with support from the principals of the schools. Some parents who completed the survey also identified the secondary level schools, older children attended in the area.

Q1: Gender

76% of people who take children to school identified as female; 24% identified as males

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Male	24.02%	43
2	Female	75.98%	136
3	Other	0.00%	0
4	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0

Q2: Age

27% of people who responded to the survey were agree 35-39 years; 25% were aged 40-49 years; 23 % were aged 30-34 years; 12% were agreed 25-29 years; 11% were over 50 years and 2% were aged 19-24 years.

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	19-24	2.23%	4
2	25-29	11.73%	21
3	30-34	22.91%	41
4	35-39	27.37%	49
5	40-49	25.14%	45
6	50-59	5.03%	9
7	60 plus	5.59%	10

Q3: School your child attends
(no total %)

39 people who completed the survey had children attending Sacred Heart;

71 indicated they had children attending Our Lady's Deanby Gardens;

32 had children attending Bunscoil.

A further 35 people who completed the survey, represented parents whose children attended more than one school (primary/ secondary/nursery) in the area, including Cliftonville Integrated PS; Holy Cross PS; St Malachy's College; Mercy Primary; Blessed Trinity and Oldpark Nursery and one parent had children attending local schools with another child in Harberton Special school (check where it is?)

Q4: How does your child travel to and from school most often?

42% of the responses indicated children walked to school, while 53% indicated children were taken to school b car. 3% travel to school by bus and the remaining 2% is a combination of travelling to school by taxi; school bus and combination of driving so far and walking the rest.

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	walk	42.46%	76
2	cycle	0.00%	0
3	scooter	0.00%	0
4	bus	3.35%	6
5	car	52.51%	94
6	Other (please specify):	1.68%	3

Q5: Who takes your child to school?

85% of children are taken to school by parents; 6% by grandparents and the remaining children are taken to school by guardian (2%); older brother/sister (2%) travels alone (3%) and remaining 2% by an auntie and or the school bus.

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	older brother/sister	1.68%	3
2	child travels alone	2.79%	5
3	parent	85.47%	153
4	guardian	1.68%	3
5	grandparent	6.15%	11
6	neighbour	0.00%	0
7	Other (please specify):	2.23%	4

Q6: What is the reason for not walking to and from school?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	it's not safe to walk	10.66%	13
2	distance to school is too far to walk	40.98%	50
3	personal security concerns	6.56%	8
4	children have no one to walk with	9.02%	11
5	children are too young to walk	22.95%	28
6	hadn't thought of children walking to school	1.64%	2
7	disability/medical reasons	9.84%	12
8	Other (please specify):	31.15%	38

Other responses indicating why children do not walk to school include the following:

- easier to drop off/rush going to work (11 responses)
- weather (7)
- children attending other schools (9)
- have a young child with a disability (1)
- school street too busy to allow children walk/ too much traffic (3)

Q7: What would need to happen to allow your child walk to and from school?

This was an open ended question and from the 103 responses to this question, the following responses were made:

- 28 indicated it was not safe to walk to school as there was too much traffic & not enough of lollipop patrol people
- 21 indicated children were too young to walk to school
- 19 lived too far from the school

Those who marked 'other' responses included: a supervised group to walk children to school; less dog mess; would have to walk and would be late for work; if school bus didn't exist; if they had a friend to walk with; easier to continue to get the bus; 'stagger starting times of local schools as I have children attending several schools in the area'; better weather.

6 people responded 'Nothing', possibly implying that they would continue not to walk to school.

Q8: Would you consider allowing your child to walk to school with children attending the same school, if supervised by adults (Walking Bus)?

This represents a very positive response by 80% of respondents to the proposal regarding a Walking Bus

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	78.95%	135
2	No	21.05%	36

**Q9: What is the reason for not cycling to and from school?
Please choose all that are relevant.**

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	it's not safe to cycle	36.65%	59
2	distance to school is too far to cycle	22.98%	37
3	child doesn't own a bike	8.07%	13
4	children are too young to cycle	16.15%	26
5	can't afford a safety helmet	0.00%	0
6	bike is broken	0.62%	1
7	not confident about child cycling	23.60%	38

Of the 26 respondents that marked 'other' the response included:

- responses indicating not safe/too much traffic (8)
- live too close or too far (4)
- too young to cycle (3)
- sometimes do (2)

Other single responses included: a lot of pedestrians on the pavement; 3 children at 3 different schools and cycling not an option; bag too heavy for secondary school child; wouldn't want bike stolen; time; other child; children have never asked but would allow; too many reasons; one person did not response

Q10: what would need to change to allow your child cycle to school?

This was an open ended question and from the 114 respondents, the responses included:

- Safety issues, including additional crossings, too much traffic/no cycle lanes (57)
- Distance/too far/too close (12)

- Age/too young (11)
- Increased confidence on bike required (7)
- Time/too busy (5)
- Can't ride a bike (2)
- No bike (2)
- Safe space for child to leave bike at school (2)
- Nothing (2)

Other single responses included: not practical uphill for older child; direct bus that is supervised; does occasionally; 9 provided no response;

Q11: Does your child travel to school using the Translink Metro 12A bus?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	2.25%	4
2	No	94.94%	169
3	Translink 12a not on school route	2.81%	5

Q12: Please give the reason why your child does not travel to school by bus? Please choose all that apply

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	lives close to school/can walk	41.14%	65
2	no direct bus	25.32%	40
3	not convenient to get the bus	13.92%	22
4	don't know if there is a direct route to school by bus	3.80%	6
5	hadn't thought of child going to and from school by bus	1.90%	3
6	cost of bus fare	4.43%	7
7	disability/medical reasons	5.70%	9
8	Other (please specify):	14.56%	23

23 respondents marked 'other' and responses included:

- Drive to school/work (7)
- Do use bus (4)
- Brought to school by parents (2)
- Age/too young (3)
- personal safety (2)
- Too close to school for a bus (2)

Other single responses included: I like walking the children to school; too dangerous; can't travel alone.

Q13: What would need to change to allow your child travel to and from school by bus?

This was an open ended question and from the 62 people who responded, the responses included:

- Direct school bus service (13)
- N/A (8)
- Age – need to be older (5)
- Nothing (5)
- Current bus route unsuitable/frequency (5)
- Distance to school (lives close to school) (3)
- Morning bus is too late re school time & work commitment (3)
- Supervision on bus (3)
- Free bus (2)
- Bus service expensive (2)
- Already use school bus (2)

Other single responses included: Unable to travel alone due to ill health; Prefer them to walk and get some exercise; School bus doesn't travel to area; Children at different schools; Easier to drive; if he lived on bus route; not suitable to get bus; school bus route closer; less traffic disembarking from bus; increased bus stops

Q14: What are the Road Safety concerns for your children walking or cycling to school? Please choose all that are relevant.

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Not enough crossings for children on the route to school	45.83%	77

		Response Percent	Response Total
2	too much traffic	82.74%	139
3	traffic too fast	47.62%	80
4	Poor pavement conditions (damaged/uneven pavements, narrow pavements)	17.26%	29
5	Car parking on pavements	27.98%	47
6	Poor weather	18.45%	31
7	Other (please specify):	11.31%	19

From the 19 respondents who marked other, the responses included:

- Dog mess (8)
- Too far (2)

Other single responses included: Drivers using mobile phones; not enough lollipop crossings; Personal safety; Wouldn't be confident about cycling; too young; Different school runs; Child has disability; a lot of pedestrians on the route and secondary school on our route; school route on main road

**Q15: What is the reason for travelling to and from school by car?
Please choose all that are relevant?**

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	disability / health	10.40%	13
2	personal choice to take the car	40.00%	50
3	unable to carry work/personal items walking or cycling to take child to school	6.40%	8
4	haven't the time in the morning to walk or cycle	35.20%	44
5	it's on the route to my drive to work	21.60%	27
6	it's more convenient to drive to school	26.40%	33

		Response Percent	Response Total
7	feels safer	22.40%	28
8	too much air pollution	0.80%	1
9	Other (please specify):	18.40%	23

From the 23 respondents who marked 'other', responses included:

- Distance (6)
- NA/ Don't drive to school (4)
- Weather (4)
- Driving quickest option (1)
- Picking up by grandparent and its easier (2)

Other single responses included: don't drive; drive occasionally re starting school time suitable for work; no bus and too far to walk; it's necessary; child with a disability; children at different schools and don't have time to walk or cycle

Q16: do you walk for shopping and personal business in the local area?

		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes	81.01%	145
2	No	18.99%	34

Q17: What do you believe are the main benefits from walking in the local area?

This was an open ended question and all 179 respondents provided the following responses, some provide more than one reason:

- Exercise/better for physical health/love to be outside/good/like to walk (88)
- Meet/see other people/neighbours/mental health/therapeutic/sense of belonging (31)
- Fresh air/sun (19)
- Supporting local shops/businesses/convenient/ easy to get what you need/ economically better/shops need your support (17)
- Reduce traffic/ make safer environment (15)
- Waterworks as it's pretty/nice area/Going to local parks (10)
- Less pollution/better for environment (8)
- No worries about getting parked (6)
- Getting to know your area/plenty of local shops/post office (7)

- Get children used to roads/good for children (4)
- Cost/ cheap exercise (3)
- Avoid traffic (2)

Other single responses included: quicker to walk than wait on taxi; not much; reduces my driving; walking dogs

Q18: Do you have any suggestions for change?

This was an open-ended question and 68 respondents provided the following responses:

- Dog mess/more dog warden/do they exist? (19)
- Reduced speeding by drivers/20mph needed/traffic calming measures (8)
- Direct school bus (6)
- Reduced traffic/ impact on air pollution/climate change (6)
- Walking bus with adult supervision (5)
- Car parking areas/facilities (4)
- Increased crossing at the Oldpark Road & Torrens area; Lights at Westland Road (both reference Cliftonville circus end)/more safety at roundabout (3)
- Increased crossings (2)
- One way driving system/Oldpark & Rosapenna/streets to narrow (2)
- No pavement parking (2)
- Cycling proficiency in schools again (2)
- Schools to have different start times to accommodate families who have children at two schools, I would walk if this was the case (2)
- Close chapel gates at Deanby/no cars allowed (2)

Other single responses included: increased police presence; signs to inform drivers re children; cycle lanes/children supported to walk to school; car park in school needs to be operated; people's attitudes towards walkers & cyclists; close streets to traffic; safety area for school bus; better system when waiting on children at pick up time; cycle lanes for children/children able to cycle on pavement at weekend when there are few pedestrians.