

## Transport Research

# Review of the S1/S2 PSD Road Safety Education Resource

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In August 2007 the Scottish Government and Road Safety Scotland commissioned a review of the S1/S2 Personal and Social Development (PSD) Road Safety Education resource. The resource pack includes teachers' notes, suggested lesson plans and pupil activities, which aim to consolidate, reinforce and expand road safety education. It also includes support materials and a script for an S1 road safety play 'The Nine Lives of Roddy Hogg'. The resource is now five years old and it was considered appropriate to carry out a Scotland-wide review of the uptake and use of the materials, and to find out users' opinions on it, to help inform the development of new resource.

## Main Findings

- Child road accident casualties increase at age 12, especially as pedestrians on journeys to and from schools.
- Road safety formed part of the Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum in about two thirds of schools surveyed.
- With the exception of the Roddy Hogg play, the existing resource materials do not appear to be widely used in Scottish schools.
- The teaching ideas provided in the Roddy Hogg support materials are best used if pupils have seen the play, which limits their use.
- The majority of use of the resource materials is in S1 classes rather than S2. The general feeling from teachers, pupils and Road Safety Officers is that the resource is not sufficiently challenging for older pupils.
- The general feeling from teachers is that the resource is not appropriate for pupils with special education needs.
- The road safety topics in the resource are varied, but the activities tend to follow a similar format. The resource makes limited use of technology or multi-media approaches.
- Both teachers and pupils preferred PSE resources that offered a variety of teaching and learning approaches. They valued audio-visual materials and felt that the development of a road safety DVD for this age group would be relevant.
- Teachers and Road Safety Officers felt that any road safety education resource for S1/S2 should be clearly different from road safety education in primary school and in the upper secondary school. Pupils agreed that they wanted something different to that offered in primary school.
- There were differences in what pupils in S1 and S2 felt to be relevant road safety education topics. Teachers and Road Safety Officers also identified the need for the development of different materials to meet the needs of both S1 and S2.

## Introduction

In 2006, 369 children were killed or seriously injured on Scottish roads<sup>1</sup>. Improving the safety of children on Britain's roads is a central part of the UK Government's road safety strategy<sup>2</sup>. Road safety education has an important role to play in helping children and young people become safer road users.

In April 2002, the Scottish Road Safety Campaign (now Road Safety Scotland) launched the S1/S2 Personal and Social Development (PSD) Road Safety Education resource. The resource pack includes teachers' notes, suggested lesson plans and pupil activities, which aim to consolidate, reinforce and expand road safety education. It includes support materials and a script for an S1 road safety play 'The Nine Lives of Roddy Hogg', which is provided to S1 classes in secondary schools on a rotational basis. Each secondary school in Scotland has been provided with at least one hard copy of the resource and further copies are available for download.

As the resource is now over five years old, Road Safety Scotland commissioned a nationwide review to ascertain how many schools have been using the resource and to seek the opinions of three groups who use the resource: teachers, pupils and Road Safety Officers, about the content, style, imagery and tone of the materials. The information from this review will help establish how the resource was received and will help inform the development of new resource. The key reasons for updating the resource are threefold:

- To change any aspects that are out-of-date
- To incorporate additional road safety topics which were not included in the original resource (for example pre-driver information and road safety issues around using mobile phones and MP3 players)
- To take into account changes in the teaching profession in recent years (notably the Curriculum for Excellence)

## Methods

A number of different research methods were used to inform the review and to establish the attitudes and perceptions of different groups using the resource:

- A desktop review of existing road safety education resources used in Scotland for the S1/S2 age group and for pupils in primary and upper secondary classes (e.g.

*Streetsense* and *Crash Magnets*) and other resources used the UK

- A comprehensive review of road accident statistics for children of school age
- A postal survey was sent to all Scottish secondary schools and special schools that educate pupils of S1/S2 age (with 164 out of 550 schools returning a questionnaire). The survey included five questions around the level of uptake, use and effectiveness of the resource.
- Structured telephone interviews with 36 teachers, to gather more detailed information about the use and effectiveness of the resource
- 16 focus groups with S1/S2 pupils from 8 schools, to investigate young peoples' perspectives on the resource
- Three consultation workshops involving 20 Road Safety Officers, to examine their views and how the resource fits in with other activities

## Main findings

### Desktop review

It was evident that the more recent resources produced by Road Safety Scotland for primary and upper secondary school – *Streetsense* and *Crash Magnets* – present a more up-to-date approach than the current S1/S2 resource. Other resources identified from elsewhere in the UK for this age group also used more up-to-date approaches to road safety education, which may be transferable to Scotland. It was apparent that many of the more recently launched resources made extensive use of web-based material.

### Road Accident Statistics

A key finding of the review of road accident statistics for school age children was the large increase in pedestrian casualties on journeys to and from school as pupils move from primary to secondary school. Notable findings include:

- 30% more children are killed or injured in road accidents in the S1/S2 years than in the P6/P7 years
- The number of child casualties occurring on journeys to/from school peaks around the age of 12, increasing almost threefold from the age of 10 to the age of 12
- In police road accident reports, 'failing to look properly when hit' is a key factor contributing to road accidents involving pedestrians of S1/S2 age.

<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government (June 2007) *Statistical Bulletin: Transport Series* TRN/2007/3

<sup>2</sup> Department for Transport (2000) *Tomorrow's Roads – Safer for Everyone*

## Schools Survey

Analysis of the school survey provides an indication of use and opinions about the resource. However, as it represents a relatively low sample of schools, the findings cannot be generalised with confidence to the wider school population.

Two thirds of schools indicated that road safety formed part of the PSE curriculum. With the exception of the Roddy Hogg play, the existing resource materials do not appear to be widely used in Scottish schools. 38% of schools in the survey indicated using the S1/S2 RSE resource and 53% had used the Roddy Hogg play. The majority of use is in S1 classes rather than S2.

The most commonly used part of the resource was the Roddy Hogg play and the least used was the activity on Laws. In line with this, teachers reported most satisfaction with the Roddy Hogg play and most dissatisfaction with the activities on Laws and Moving from Primary to Secondary. 70% reported using other road safety materials, either alone or in conjunction with the S1/S2 RSE resource. *Crash Magnets* (a road safety resource developed for S3/S4 pupils) was the most commonly used other resource.

## Teacher Interviews

All teachers interviewed thought that RSE was relevant and important to the S1/S2 age group. The principal reasons given for not teaching it were time commitments and a lack of appropriate resources. On the whole, the resource was well received, but areas for improvement and updating were identified.

Teachers considered PSE resources to be good if they offered a variety of learning and teaching approaches. In particular they valued materials that were not too paper based and involved a variety of activities, often using audio-visual or interactive media, or the internet. All teachers thought the development of a DVD was relevant.

## Pupil Focus Groups

Most of the groups thought that some form of RSE was still relevant for their age group, but they wanted something different to that offered in primary school. There were some differences between what pupils in S1 and S2 felt to be relevant topics. For example, S2 pupils were more likely to consider becoming a driver to be relevant topics than S1; while S1 pupils considered 'judging speed and distance', and 'seeing and being seen' to be more relevant than those in S2.

The groups considered the worksheet activities in the resource to be satisfactory, but not inspiring. They preferred learning and teaching approaches that involved multi-media and websites, or discussions. All thought development of a

DVD would be relevant, particularly if it was believable and involved actors (rather than animation).

## Road Safety Officers' Workshops

The Road Safety Officers (RSOs) expressed concern that the schools do not get to see the play every year, particularly as the play is often the catalyst for using the resource. The majority spoke favourably of the play, but there was a strong view that the resource pack should be independent of the play.

The general feeling was that teaching notes are a necessary part of the resource, as not all teachers are proficient in teaching RSE and not all have time to prepare a lesson. There was a general feeling that S2 are more mature than S1 and require different materials. The RSOs also felt there should be continuity between *Streetsense* (a road safety resource developed for primary school), the resource for S1/S2, and *Crash Magnets*.

## Conclusions

There was a general view that road safety is a part of primary school education, but this perception belies its importance for an age group whose exposure to risk increases with greater independence and changes in lifestyle.

There was a clear consensus that a new resource was required, rather than the existing resource simply being amended. In terms of content, everyone recognised that there should be progression from primary road safety, but that the basic road safety messages need to be reiterated. It was also recognised that there is a wide range of maturity and development across the S1/S2 year groups. The need for the Theatre in Education production (Roddy Hogg) to be distinct and separate from the S1/S2 RSE activities was identified.

All those involved in the research agreed that the methods of delivery in the existing resource need to be updated. Everyone was keen to see a new resource that made use of up-to-date technology.

Future road safety resources should be:

- Relevant, and age and ability appropriate
- Current and accurate
- Practicable and relevant to teachers
- Supportive of the curriculum in schools
- Encourage interactive rather than passive education

## Recommendations

Based on the research findings, there are a number of recommendations for the development of a new resource for the S1/S2 age group:

- Develop a new resource with the focus on personal and social education (PSE), with reference to the role that health and well-being plays across the curriculum.
- Any new resource should be clearly different from road safety education in primary school and in the upper secondary school. It should complement and not compete with existing road safety education (RSE) resources.
- Distinct activities should be developed to meet the needs of both S1 and S2 and there should be progression in content from S1 to S2.
- A new resource should include a choice of active learning classroom activities and the format should use modern technologies. There should also be back-up ideas for when the technology is not available.
- Any new resource should have a separate identity to the play.
- Consideration is needed of how to raise awareness of the resource in schools.

This document, along with “Review of the S1/S2 PSD Road Safety Education Resource” the full research report of the project and further information about social and policy research commissioned and published on behalf of the Scottish Government, can be viewed on the Social Research website at: [www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/socialresearch). If you have any further queries about social research, or would like further copies of this Research Findings summary document, please contact us at [socialresearch@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:socialresearch@scotland.gsi.gov.uk) or telephone 0131 244 0285



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