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Government Office for London

**Evaluation of the
'Safer Routes to School'
Pilot Scheme**

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KPMG

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1 Executive summary

The Safer Routes to School initiative aims to encourage and sustain the safe passage of children to and from school. This report is an evaluation of two pilot projects operating in London at the Park View Academy in Haringey and the Cardinal Pole School in Hackney. The London pilot involves the schools, the Metropolitan Police Force (most notably, the Safer Schools police officers), local bus operators within the region and was sponsored by the Government Office for London.

The pilot schemes were evaluated at two levels. Firstly, the organisation of the scheme in terms of its design and administration and secondly, the performance of the scheme in terms of meeting its core objectives and the impact it has had on the behaviour of children and bus drivers.

In summary, the scheme has been successful where there has been sustained commitment from all parties involved and where it has been integrated with other existing initiatives, at both a strategic and operational level, for example bus operator's anti vandalism campaigns. In such circumstances, there has been positive feedback from both school children and the local community that the scheme has had a positive impact.

If the pilot is to be successfully replicated throughout London, there are a number of key issues which require further consideration. These include:

- 1 The branding of the initiative. At the present time there is some confusion as to whether the scheme is aimed at addressing the anti-social behaviour of school children in and around bus stops or a citizenship programme which addresses the needs of a range of stakeholders including the pupils, schools, bus drivers, other passengers and the local community in making the passage of children to and from school a more enjoyable experience;
- 2 A scheme sponsor (lead organisation) that will provide strategic co-ordination, performance monitoring and knowledge management and who will disseminate best practice and lessons learnt amongst the schemes;
- 3 A pre-qualification process which assesses the commitment of local stakeholders to the scheme, as well as whether Safer Routes is actually required in a potential school prior to scheme commencement; and,
- 4 The establishment of a robust performance and financial management framework which will provide clear objectives, defined outputs and outcomes and can be monitored and measured over time to ensure the scheme is continuing to be effective and is delivering value for money.

KPMG have undertaken this evaluation as part of our community investment programme.

2 Introduction

This report evaluates the progress and performance of the Safer Routes pilot at Cardinal Pole School in Hackney and Park View Academy in Haringey. The report sets out our findings and conclusions and makes a series of recommendations to Government Office for London on how the programme should be taken forward.

2.1 Limitations

Our research for this report was completed on 18th June 2004. No account has been taken of matters arising after the completion of our fieldwork.

We have carried out this assessment on the basis that we are responsible solely to yourselves for the research work and any recommendations contained in this report. We shall under no circumstance whatsoever be under any liability to any other party other than yourselves for whatever you may, or may not do, in reliance on the report or any other information, and advice given, in relation to this assessment on the same basis.

KPMG has not verified any information that has been provided by yourselves or any third party during our consultations in relation to this assessment.

This piece of work complies with your brief and our report is not designed for any purpose other than that set out in your terms of reference.

2.2 Background

The London programme is based on a similar initiative operating in South Yorkshire. The scheme in South Yorkshire is managed by the South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE) and is being delivered to schools in and around the Sheffield area.

The overarching aim of the scheme is ‘to encourage the safe passage of children to and from school’. Whilst there are currently no formal ‘terms of reference’ available for the scheme, there appears to be some consensus of the following key objectives:

- To increase the general bus and road awareness of schoolchildren
- To educate schoolchildren in terms of acceptable behaviour (whilst travelling to and from school)
- To educate schoolchildren regarding best practice behaviour with regard to a number of personal safety situations encountered on buses
- To ensure that bus drivers play their role in creating a positive bus environment

- To ensure that schools fully participate and co-operate in their attempts to receive the SAFE mark Award

The two pilot schemes operating in London have been delivered in partnership with SYPTE who agreed to administer the project during the pilot period. As such, SYPTE has delivered teaching plans to both schools and distributed the relevant literature to all stakeholders. SYPTE have also worked with Crime Concern to perform monitoring on bus journeys.

2.3 **Our Terms of Reference**

Our terms of reference were to assess the extent to which the pilot schemes have been effective. In doing so we focussed on two key questions:

- Firstly, to what extent has the design and administration of the pilot schemes been effective (in other words, have the schemes been well conceived, organised and executed)? and,
- Secondly, what impact have the pilot schemes had on the behaviour of the school children and the perceptions of the schoolteachers, bus drivers and local communities?

3 **Methodology**

To answer these two key questions the methodology employed was divided into two separate work-streams:

- Work-stream 1 focussed on the design and administration of the pilot schemes. To investigate this we completed a desk-based review of the scheme documentation, attended the ‘kick-off signing’ meetings and undertook a series of face-to-face and telephone interviews with key participants – such as head-teachers, Safer Schools police officers, bus operators and members of SYTPE (who were involved in administering the London pilot).
- Work-stream 2 sought to assess the impact of the scheme on the perceptions and behaviours of school children, teachers, parents, bus drivers and the local community. As such we looked to establish a baseline position at the start of the scheme and gathered both qualitative and quantitative data after a period of 4-6 months to determine the extent to which the scheme had ‘made a difference’.
- In summary, work-stream 2 involved:
 - Surveys with relevant participants (e.g. children, parents, teachers, drivers and the local community). The survey findings were analysed to identify key issues
 - These key issues were then explored in greater depth through a series of focus groups and face-to-face interviews
 - In addition to the direct forms of data collection, we also undertook overt and covert situational observations of children and bus drivers, including informal interviews with school children waiting at the bus stop or travelling on the buses
 - This was supplemented by quantitative data collected from the schools detailing their bullying, truancy and school incident figures (where available), in addition to data collected by Crime Concern and SYTPE

The primary data collection was supported by secondary research material such as Ofsted and Census reports for the two schools and their wider geographical locations.

Further details of consultations and interviews can be found in Appendix A.

3.1 **Value for Money Analysis**

An important consideration for any government funded scheme is to determine not only how effective it is but also the extent to which it offers ‘value for money’.

We have not been able to conduct any detailed value for money analysis as part of this evaluation as the scheme does not currently maintain data of expenditure by inputs, outputs and outcomes.

However we have provided some high-level costing information based on the inputs to the scheme. In other words, we have calculated the inputs in terms of FTEs¹ for both the initial start up costs and the on-going costs of delivering the scheme. This will provide an indication of the likely costs of administering the scheme. This information can be built on, in the future, to provide a value for money analysis.

¹ Full Time Equivalent.

4 Understanding the Local Context

Two schools that were selected to pilot the Safer Routes scheme are located in two different London boroughs, namely Hackney and Haringey. This section provides some background information to draw out the similarities and differences that exist between the two geographical areas and the respective schools.

4.1 Hackney

Hackney has a population of 202,824 and the third lowest level of owner-occupied accommodation in the country (with 31% of people living in council homes and 20% renting from Housing Associations)².

Hackney has the tenth highest national level of lone parent households (92% of which are headed by females) and it is also the third most densely populated region in the country.

Over 10% of residents have migrated to Hackney and 5% of these are from outside the UK. 44% of Hackney's residents are white, with the largest ethnic minority groups being Black Africans (12%) and Black Caribbeans (10%).

The three most common religions within Hackney are Christianity, Muslim and the Jewish faiths.

Hackney has the highest level of unemployment in the country and the highest number of permanently sick/disabled people in Greater London.

In Hackney, levels of violence are nearly three times higher than the national average, levels of sexual offences twice the national average, reported robbery five times higher than the national average and burglary twice as high as the national average.

Hackney has European Objective Status 2.

4.2 Haringey

Haringey has a similar sized population of 216,507. In addition, like Hackney, 30% of people rent their homes from the council, housing association or registered social landlords. There are a small number of owner-occupied buildings, with high levels of overcrowding.

Few of Haringey's residents are born in the UK and there are strong representations of diverse religions.

In contrast to Hackney, Haringey fares better in terms of employment figures with only 5.8% of people unemployed (compared to a national average of 3.4%).

² Office for National Statistics 2001

With regards to crime, Haringey presents a similar picture with levels of violence and sexual offences twice the national average and robbery five times the national average.

Haringey also has European Objective Status 2.

5 The Schools

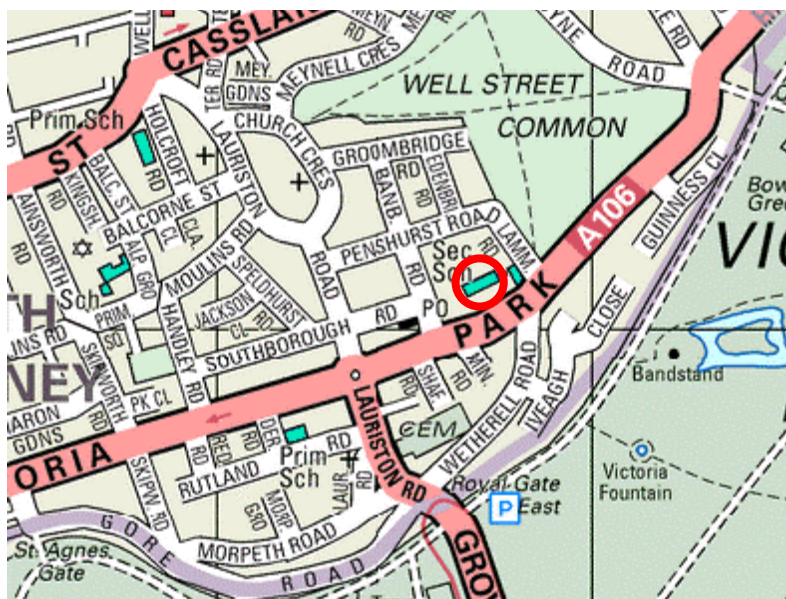
Cardinal Pole School (Hackney), and Park View Academy (Haringey) were selected to pilot the scheme because they both have a resident police officer that has been assigned to them (under the Safer Schools initiative). Moreover, the presence of an officer in the school has been well received by teachers, parents and children alike. Both are secondary schools.

5.1 Cardinal Pole School, Hackney

Cardinal Pole RC School is a mixed, 'voluntary aided' comprehensive school with 1,005 pupils from 11-18yrs. It is over subscribed, with many of the pupils coming from areas of high deprivation³.

66% of pupils are from ethnic minorities (mainly Black African and Caribbean). For 38% of pupils, English is a second language and 35% of pupils qualify for free school lunches. 21% of students have Special Education Needs. The school is based on two sites almost a mile apart. However the pilot was targeted at the main school site in Victoria Park Road.

In terms of educational performance, the school is rated as average, but in addition, has a good ethos and teacher relationships. Overall behaviour is deemed to be good (with no permanent exclusions during the last 12 months). It also has a low incidence of reported bullying. The school is seen as being racially harmonious, but concern has been expressed about the danger to pupils presented by gangs from other schools.



³ For further information see the Ofsted Inspection Report 100285. 24-28th September 2001

5.2 Park View Academy, Haringey

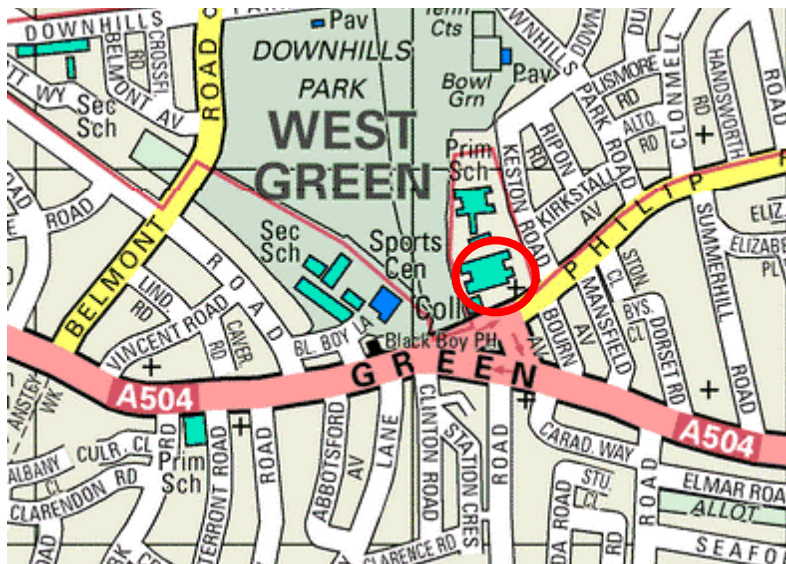
Park View Academy is a mixed comprehensive school with 1,107 students aged 11-19yrs. It was re-opened in 1999 following a period of closure when it was classified as a 'failing' school.

It has a very diverse ethnic mix, with pupils who would identify themselves as Turkish, Kurdish, Somali, Bengali, Albanian, Black Caribbean and Black African. English is a second language for 75% of students.

32% of students are registered as having Special Education Needs, and 60% qualify for free school meals (indicating high levels of socio-economic deprivation in the local community).

Educationally, the school is seen as having made "remarkable progress" in recent years, although standards continue to be well below average⁴. The school is also the focus of a local regeneration programme which has attracted substantial government funding. Behaviour is deemed to be satisfactory and bullying is dealt with effectively.

Like Cardinal Pole School, Park View Academy is seen as being 'racially harmonious', although attendance levels are poor and remain below the national average.



⁴ For further information see the Ofsted Inspection Report 131757 25-28th November 2002

6 Design and Administration of the Scheme

6.1 Introduction

In this section we seek to answer the first part of this review – namely ‘to what extent have the design and administration of the pilot schemes been effective (in other words, have the schemes been well conceived, organised and executed)?’

6.2 What is the scheme?

The Safer Routes scheme aims to:

‘encourage and sustain the safe passage of children to and from school by educating children about safer travel and citizenship’.

This is achieved through a combination of classroom based teaching which focuses on key areas of travel, in addition to related subjects such as bullying, smoking, personal safety, citizenship and vandalism.

In addition to the ‘educational aspects’ of the programme the behaviour of children at ‘bus stops’ is monitored to ensure that the children behave in a civilised manner when travelling to and from school by public transport.

The scheme also aims to encourage bus drivers to provide an environment where children are encouraged to behave well by responding to children in a friendly and respectful manner.

6.3 Programme co-ordination

In relation to the pilot scheme, the projects have been administered by SYTPE. In general, the administration of the programme appears to be working reasonably well. For example, the scheme is launched at each school with a ‘signing’ event whereby the various stakeholders meet and publicly agree to actively participate in the scheme. This is seen as an effective way of ensuring a common understanding of the aims and objectives of the scheme and generating an energy and enthusiasm at the outset from all stakeholders.

Further co-ordination is administered by SYTPE who liaise with each of the stakeholders to ensure that relevant Safer Routes documentation is being received and administered, and that the educational process is being fulfilled.

However, there are a number of areas which do require improvement if the scheme is to be taken forward. These ‘critical success factors’ are outlined below.

6.4 Critical Success Factors

6.4.1 Lead organisation

For the Safer Route scheme to be rolled out across London the roles currently undertaken by SYPTE, and the critical success factors outlined below, will need to be delivered by another lead organisation.

The lead organisation will be required to promote the strategic vision of the Safer Routes scheme. It must therefore have appropriate levels of influence to affect the behaviours of partner organisations.

The lead organisation will also need to be skilled at programme management and partnership working and have the capacity and motivation to successfully fulfil these requirements. An obvious candidate to undertake this role in London is Transport for London.

6.4.2 Terms of Reference

At the present time the scheme lacks a formal and agreed 'terms of reference' which clearly sets out the key objectives of the scheme. At a strategic level this will be vital in terms of branding and publicising the scheme. It will also form the bedrock of a performance management framework. At an operational level, establishing clear 'terms of reference' will help to develop a shared understanding between the various stakeholders from the outset.

6.4.3 Initial assessment

The Safer Routes scheme will not be appropriate for all schools across the London area.

As such, it will be vital to introduce an 'initial assessment' tool to identify which schools would benefit most from the scheme as oppose to those to those schools who will derive little or no benefit from participation (due perhaps to a perceived lack of problem, or a level of irrelevance due to different transport arrangements).

Having identified a list of appropriate schools it will be important to 'test' whether the school recognises that they have a 'need' for the scheme and also the 'level of motivation and commitment' required to run the scheme.

As such, the assessment process should clearly identify the objectives of the scheme and ask the applicant school to match these against their identified needs. In addition, it will be important for the school to understand what the scheme entails, in terms of resources and commitment and be able to demonstrate that it has the capacity to provide this on an 'on-going' basis.

Leadership has also been demonstrated as being a key ingredient for the implementation of a successful scheme in term of mobilising the participation of the school. This needs to come direct from the head or deputy head teacher who will need to act as a 'scheme champion' and 'role model' for the wider school community.

The initial assessment tool will therefore be vital to ensure that schools selected to participate in the programme have every chance of success and that valuable resources are not being misdirected.

6.4.4 Stakeholder participation

One of the most important elements of the programme concerns the participation and commitment of the various stakeholders. Sustainability of the programme fundamentally requires the long-term commitment of all involved parties to ensure that the programme is administered, organised and managed effectively and that the scheme continues to get the support required.

Dealing with poor stakeholder participation, once the initial enthusiasm for the project has waned has been difficult during the pilot period as there is no 'lead organisation' with responsibility for ensuring the successful delivery of the programme. As such, accountability for agreed actions is continually re-negotiated amongst the various stakeholders.

If the scheme were to be rolled out in London it will be vital for the lead organisation to establish, from the outset, clear processes to deal with unacceptable levels of commitment and participation from any one, or all stakeholders who have signed on to the scheme. At the present time, the only 'sanction' would be not granting the school the SAFE mark award.

6.4.5 Performance Management

The scheme lacks a performance management framework whereby inputs, outputs and outcomes can be monitored and measured on an on-going basis. The extent to which each individual scheme or the programme as a whole can prove that it is effective in terms of delivering the stated objectives is therefore largely subjective and based purely on anecdotal evidence.

The absence of a performance management framework also precludes effective communication and knowledge management, in other words, there are currently no systems in place to capture best practice and lessons learnt and share this knowledge across the schemes.

Sharing information across schemes will also encourage participants to feel part of a 'bigger picture' thereby combating issues associated with isolation, such as scheme mutation. In addition, it will also provide a supportive environment whereby early adopters of the scheme can 'coach' and 'support' new entrants.

6.4.6 **Branding**

There is evidence that the branding of the Safer Routes scheme is un-clear and that there are sensitivities around what ‘type’ of programme it ‘really is’.

Reservations have been expressed regarding the idea of Safer Routes as part of an ‘anti-social behaviour’ initiative – and the connotations that this holds for participative schools. Namely, that to be involved within the scheme, schools are admitting that the pupils engage in anti-social behaviour.

Whilst Safer Routes holds elements targeted at reducing anti-social behaviour, both community engagement and citizenship education are also central. It is imperative for the overall attractiveness of the scheme, and the willingness of schools to participate, that clarity and agreement is achieved on the issue of branding.

A popular option would be to promote Safer Routes within the remit of citizenship and personal safety. By doing so, this would alleviate some of the concerns expressed by the participating schools. This would also concur with the fact that the Safer Routes education modules are currently delivered within the Personal Social Education classes which incorporate issues of citizenship and personal safety into the mainstream curriculum.

6.4.7 **Value for money**

The lack of ‘costing’ information relating to the inputs, outputs and outcomes of the Safer Routes scheme means that it is currently impossible to demonstrate whether the scheme offers value for money. Indeed one of the recommendations for the scheme is to incorporate sound financial management within the programme administration.

As a publicly funded scheme, the scheme must be able to justify the use of resources (e.g. teachers, police officers time etc) and the opportunity cost of investing their time in delivering Safer Routes as opposed to other activities.

A value for money analysis should assess the wider ‘financial’ impact or outcomes of the scheme – for example - a reduction in vandalism (and therefore the ‘saved’ costs of repairing the school buses/ bus stops); the impact on the local economy (for example an improvement in the behaviour of school children will help to increase consumer spending at times when school children are present); the reduction in delays on buses (and the costs associated with improved ‘punctuality targets’); etc.

This analysis will also be important in terms of the programmes longer-term sustainability - when comparing the outcomes of the Safer Routes scheme to other ‘competing’ projects to determine which should be supported going forward.

6.4.7.1 *Unit Costing*

Although we have been unable to conduct a value for money analysis we have been able to provide some high-level costing information based on the inputs to the scheme. In other words, we have calculated the inputs in terms of FTEs⁵ for both the initial start up costs and the on-going costs of delivering the scheme.

Start up costs represented in Period 1 typically involve initial meetings between stakeholders, training on the aims of Safer Routes as well as the public ‘signing-up’ event.

Period 2 costs refer to the ‘on-going’ time commitments once the project is ‘established’ and running normally. As such, any costs incurred during this second time period can be attributed to normal day-to-day maintenance costs.

Period 1

Resource	Hackney			Haringey		
	Time spent	Cost p/h	Total	Time spent	Cost p/h	Total
John Waterman (GoL)	2.5 hrs	£21	£52.5	2.5 hrs	£21	£52.5
Andy Briers (MPS)	10.5 hrs	£35	£367.5	10.5 hrs	£35	£367.5
Safer Schools PC	10 hrs	£14	£140	10 hrs	£12	£120
School Teachers	7.5 hrs	£33*	£247.5	8 hrs	£50	£300
Franc Cockerill (SYTPE)	7 hrs	£9	£63	7 hrs	£9	£63
Bus Operator	4 hrs	£11.5	£46	4 hrs	£11.5	£46
Bus Driver	2 hrs	£9	£18	2 hrs	£9	£18
Total	43.5 hrs		£934.5	44 hrs		£967

*Involves meetings and activities performed with different staff. Cost p/h is therefore combined

⁵ Full Time Equivalent.

Period 2

Resource	Hackney			Haringey		
	Time spent	Cost p/h	Total	Time spent	Cost p/h	Total
John Waterman (GoL)	1.5 hrs	£21	£31.5	1.5 hrs	£21	£31.5
Andy Briers (MPS)	3.5 hrs	£35	£122.5	3.5 hrs	£35	£122.5
Safer Schools PC	5 hrs	£14	£70	5 hrs	£12	£60
School Teachers	5 hrs	£35	£175	6 hrs	£50	£300
Franc Cockerill (SYTPE)	1 hrs	£9	£9	3 hrs	£9	£27
Bus Operator	1 hrs	£11.5	£11.5	1 hrs	£11.5	£11.5
Bus Driver	.25 hrs	£9	£2.25	.25 hrs	£9	£2.25
Total	17.25 hrs		£421.75	20.25 hrs		£554.75

This analysis suggests that initial establishment costs (per week) for such a project would be approximately £950 per project. Weekly maintenance costs would then be on average £488 per school.

6.4.8 Conclusion

Whilst the design and administration of the pilot schemes been effective, should the scheme be introduced to other schools across London it will be necessary to address the success factors outlined above. The most urgent requirement is for a lead organisation that has the skills and capacity to undertake this role to be identified.

7 Impact of the Safer Routes Scheme

7.1 Introduction

In this section we seek to answer the second part of this review – namely ‘what impact have the pilot schemes had on the behaviour of the school children and the perceptions of the schoolteachers, bus drivers and local communities?’.

To answer this question the two pilot schemes were assessed in relation to four categories: education, impact on behaviour, community engagement and linkages/integration. Each of these is discussed in detail and illustrated by a case study below.

However, prior to presenting the detailed analysis it is important to summarise the different approaches each school has taken in relation to implementing the Safer Routes scheme.

7.1.1 Implementing the Safer Routes Scheme

In summary, Cardinal Pole School in Hackney had the on-going commitment of all stakeholders involved in the pilot. The scheme was actively ‘championed’ by the Deputy Head-Mistress. As such, not only were all the Safer Routes lessons accommodated in to the curriculum, but the Deputy Head teacher, alongside the Safer School officer, were personally responsible for monitoring the behaviour of the children at the bus stops.

By comparison, Park View Academy failed to demonstrate strong commitment to the scheme. As such, both the ‘lessons’ and the monitoring component of the scheme was not implemented effectively, thus leading to a situation where the school failed to meet their objectives in terms of either delivering the necessary educational parts of Safer Routes to the children, or monitoring the impact it had on their behaviour.

7.2 Education

The education and monitoring component of the Safer Routes programme is targeted at a variety of different stakeholders - namely pupils, teachers, bus drivers and operators.

In relation to the two pilots, the education element of the scheme was performed primarily by SYPTE, with the delivery part (e.g. providing a presence at bus stops etc.) by school teachers and Safer Schools Police Officers.

Education is seen as core to the programme’s focus and ‘lessons’ involve assessing feelings and beliefs about personal safety and what constitutes

appropriate behaviour during the 'school trip' with pupils. For bus drivers, bus operators and teachers, there is a supporting educational documentation.

7.2.1 Pupil education

The educational element of the programme aimed at the pupils is well defined and structured. At the beginning of the school year, children receive a 45 minute lesson on the subject of Personal Social Education. This is delivered to Year 7 and Year 8 age groups (in mixed classes) and organised through their tutor groups. Within this lesson they discuss a number of topics including: anti-social behaviour, bullying and crime. This is tailored towards the objectives of the Safer Routes scheme.

During the pilot project a member from SYTPE taught the lessons. The lessons are structured to be inclusive and involve discussions, group work, educational games and an educational video, in addition to team work and presentations. This ensures that the children's attention is maintained throughout the lesson, and that the key messages are clearly and repeatedly delivered via a number of different mediums.

The participative nature of the lessons also means that pupils are able to feed in their own experiences into the project to encourage relevance. In addition, the subject matter will often connect with other subjects within the Personal Social Education curriculum to ensure that the 'key messages' are not experienced in isolation. For example, wider teachings on citizenship can be related back to Safer Routes in terms of queuing for a bus and letting the elderly and infirmed on first.

Initial lessons are can be enhanced through the option of a second lesson delivered later in the school year. The follow-up lesson is designed to refresh previously taught content. SYTPE also currently offer the option of attending 'new-joiners' days at schools. These days are specifically for the forthcoming intake of pupils, and SYTPE can deliver a lesson-based session to the pupils on the same content as normal Safer Routes lessons.

7.2.2 Bus driver & company/teacher/parent education

Bus drivers at the relevant bus companies are given user-friendly leaflets informing them of the Safer Routes project and their role within it. In the handouts, there is information regarding the importance of their attitude and behaviour towards school children, and how they can help the initiative be successful. The bus companies currently control the distribution of the leaflets to the bus drivers. However due to high staff turnover and the change in route rotas, feedback from the bus operators suggests that it is likely that not all school-run drivers receive the relevant documentation.

Teachers and Parents are also given similar leaflets which summarise the scheme and emphasise how they can play the part in making sure that it is successfully run. These documents are user friendly and cover the main points of the programme.

7.2.3 **Conclusion**

The educational aspect of the Safer Routes scheme is well structured. Lessons to pupils are clear and well thought out, ensuring that children leave with a good recollection and understanding of what they have been taught. Supporting documentation is well written and delivered in a user-friendly format. Consideration will need to be given as to the most appropriate number of lessons. Evidence from the pilot scheme indicated that the second lesson (which is currently optional) is effective in reinforcing the key messages and allowing the pupils to revisit their previous attitudes having experienced the scheme (e.g. monitoring at bus stops).

There are reservations regarding the current process used to educate bus drivers as anecdotal evidence suggests that a number of the drivers are not receiving the relevant training materials. Moreover, a number of drivers felt that face-to-face briefings on the scheme would be more beneficial and provide an opportunity for discussion and debate. However, the practicalities of undertaking this, given the current lack of dedicated school-route drivers, will undoubtedly affect the feasibility of delivering this.

Finally, at the present time the scheme does not use feedback received to adapt and improve the content and delivery style of the lessons, thus making the educational process more relevant and meaningful. Whilst it will be important to retain the core aims and overall structure of the scheme (to ensure consistency across schemes), bespoke tailoring should be considered if it will increase the effectiveness of the scheme.

7.3 **Impact on Behaviour**

As aforementioned, the Safer Routes scheme is delivered through a series of classroom based teaching, in addition to the 'supervision' of children at bus stops at the end of the school day. In short, this involves the teachers and the school's police officer controlling and monitoring the behaviour of the pupils at the bus stop until they board the bus.

Additionally, bus companies and drivers are expected to perform their role as described in the educational literature, namely being prompt, helpful and well mannered to the children.

This section describes to what extent the scheme made an impact on the behaviour of all stakeholders. It is important to note that in the absence of a baseline assessment it is difficult to measure the change in behaviour other than relying on anecdotal evidence from the pupils, school, police officers and wider community.

7.3.1 **Cardinal Pole School, Hackney**

The teachers and pupils at Cardinal Pole School embraced the scheme wholeheartedly. As part of this evaluation, KPMG made a series of un-announced visits to the school and the various bus stops used by the children. On each occasion two members of staff and the school's police officer were present.

Positive feedback, in relation to the commitment of the school and teachers was also provided by SYPTE, who described the school as being prompt, supportive and helpful.

School children at the various bus-stops congregated quietly and safely until the bus arrived. Under the supervision of the teachers, they waited until other members of the general public had boarded the buses, before doing so themselves.

7.3.1.1 ***Opting-in and Opting out***

One of the interesting findings from our observations at Cardinal Pole School was that while some pupils were opting in to the scheme, others were opting out. Those opting in were actively going to the bus stops monitored by the teachers, whilst those opting out were either remaining out of sight of the bus stop until the bus arrived or were walking to different bus stops which were not being supervised.

Focus group analysis suggested that those pupils remaining at the bus stops were those who either were indifferent to the presence of teachers, or those who actively welcomed them - as a result of the fact that they felt safer with them being there.

For those opting out of the scheme, it is clear that they preferred not to be monitored. Whilst this means that their behaviour is unsupervised, this should not be viewed as a 'failure' of the scheme - unless of course they choose to misbehave at an alternative stop, thereby displacing the problem. Whilst displacement of this nature has not happened, it should be noted that some children have been involved in disturbances when travelling to alternative stops.

7.3.1.2 ***Recommendations***

The pilot scheme at Cardinal Pole School could further benefit from the monitoring resources being allotted to two bus routes near the school – rather than just the main stop.

7.3.2 **Park View Academy, Haringey**

In contrast to the school in Hackney, Park View Academy's participation towards the delivery of the pilot was uncommitted. Un-announced site visits revealed no supervision by the school's teachers, and interviews suggested that there was a problem in organising suitable staff to be involved in the project.

Feedback from SYPTTE suggested that they found the school much more difficult to engage with and deliver the lessons. This was mainly due to communication problems with the primary contact and a suggested lack of leadership and motivation by Park View Academy to pursue the scheme. This meant that key lessons to the pupils were not delivered and data regarding pupil's thoughts and feelings on their current travel arrangements was not collected.

7.3.3 **Supervised bus travel and dedicated buses**

Although not currently part of the existing Safer Routes initiative, our observation of children travelling on the buses indicated that whilst pupils congregate safely at bus stops (when monitored), upon boarding buses they can become rowdy, rude and intimidating to other passengers.

It is interesting to note that bus operators, school teachers and also the school children themselves have all proactively called for supervision on-board the buses in addition to that provided at the bus stops. In the focus groups with the children, they said that they would feel safer if there was a presence on bus journeys – and specifically a Police Officer. This was due to the powers police officers held, rather than a teacher who would perhaps be powerless to intervene in a situation involving other passengers. Moreover, the bus drivers also felt that it would be beneficial to have teachers providing on board supervision.

Both school teachers and children also called for dedicated school buses as a method of eliminating many of the problems that they experience. By this they meant that dedicated buses would collect children from outside school premises and deposit them at a main travel interchange for them to then disperse and use other public transport to reach their final destination.

It was felt that this would encourage the children to develop a sense of responsibility towards the bus (as it would be seen as theirs), thus preventing acts of vandalism. The children would also be easier to control as a collective group, thus meaning that any incidents could more easily be controlled and resolved. Finally members of the community that currently 'share' the existing bus with the children would be able to travel without the interference of the children as a large group.

Whilst the idea of providing a dedicated bus has many obvious advantages, it is important to consider the cost implications incurred in the delivery. This, and the support of both bus drivers and operators, needs to be fully explored before this idea is taken further.

7.3.4 **Bus drivers**

Our analysis indicated that the behaviour of bus drivers in relation to the children was varied. The focus groups at Cardinal Pole School in Hackney, that were undertaken six months into the scheme, revealed that driver attitudes had not

changed - that they were still 'un-friendly', although buses did tend to turn up on time.

The feedback also revealed instances of drivers failing to stop at designated bus stops when the buses were busy, albeit not full. These factors, whilst appearing inconsequential in isolation are contradictory to the role that the bus companies (and therefore bus drivers) sign up to when agreeing to take part in the Safer Routes scheme. Indeed, having signed up to the scheme, failure to comply is often experienced as more of an irritation to pupils as their expectations have been raised.

Feedback from Hackney suggested that drivers welcomed the presence of teachers at the bus-stops and were more co-operative with pupils as a result.

Within Haringey, where lessons to the children have not been completed, bus-stop behaviour was unsupervised and unruly, creating an intimidating atmosphere for members of the public and bus drivers. Observations showed that the bus-drivers who serviced the local routes acted in a negative manner towards the children, and in response the children misbehaving. This took the form of loitering around the bus-stops, not being considerate to other members of the public and opening the emergency doors to irritate the drivers.

7.3.4.1 *Bus driver attitudes*

Further analysis of general driver perceptions and attitudes uncovered various differences in thoughts and beliefs.

Some drivers made comments, uncovering feelings of contempt towards children, and a strong dislike of their behaviour. For example, "The school run has been the bus driver's nightmare ever since I became a driver some eleven years ago...." and "If as is said, 'the youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow', then God help us all".

In comparison, other bus drivers appeared to have a more understanding attitude toward the children's behaviour. Quotes included: "These kids are young and boys will be boys" and "In my opinion we was all children once (sic), these children are generally good natured, a little loud and excitable at time, the odd few can be rude, but so are some paying adults and drivers themselves, ... personally I find a smile and a "thank you" works most of the time".

The variance in these comments provides clear evidence to suggest that whilst some drivers are perhaps unsuitable for the role of the bus-route, other drivers have the personality, patience and understanding to not only work that particular route, but to also fully embrace the wider role envisaged by a Safer Routes bus driver.

7.3.4.2 *Dedicated drivers*

At the present time, all drivers are likely to cover the ‘bus-routes’. In other words, there are not dedicated drivers who have been selected or have expressed a preference to undertake this role. Our interviews revealed that a small number of drivers would be suitable to become ‘dedicated drivers’ e.g. consistently performing the school run. This model would have benefits for both driver and pupils. Through familiarity and association, both parties would have the opportunity to develop a mutually beneficial relationship, founded on respect and understanding. Further benefits could include the opportunity for drivers to undertake further training designed to assist them in their role, as well as developing stronger relationships with the schools - meaning that any incidents occurring on the buses would be reported to the school and dealt with more effectively.

For children, the development of respectful and trusting relationship would mean that their negative view of the majority of bus drivers would be challenged. Similarly, children would feel more comfortable in alerting bus drivers in times of trouble when travelling, as drivers would be seen as responsible and trustworthy adults, rather than anonymous and ‘un-friendly’ individuals.

7.3.5 **Case Study 1: Design and Delivery**

Design and Delivery case study (key findings from Cardinal Pole School, Hackney)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson planning by Fran Cockerill of SYPTE is thorough and well thought out • Length of delivery is adapted to fit in with the school’s existing time-table and lesson plan • Lessons administered by Fran Cockerill through the channel of the school’s own Personal Social Education class, incorporating many well known themes currently relevant to pupils i.e. smoking, bullying and behaviour • Lesson delivery to children is participative and varied • Teaching methods include a video, general presentation to children and also an educational game • Children are responsive and interact well within the lesson • Children develop a good understanding of Safer Routes and are also educated with regards to acceptable and best practice ways of behaviour within the local community and wider environment • Four months later, children are questioned about the Safer Routes teachings – and are able to recall the key messages • The children are able to apply these message to real-life situations including travelling by public transport

7.3.6 Conclusion

The delivery of Safer Routes has been carried out with differing levels of success at the two pilot schools. Cardinal Pole School has demonstrated an on-going and strong commitment to the project, with teachers consistently playing their role in monitoring children at the bus stops. In contrast, Park View Academy has struggled to perform this role, with more general after-school support coming only from the police. The result of these different approaches has had a significant impact on the behaviour of children. It is clear that the commitment and ability of the school to engage in the scheme is a critical success factor.

With regards to the effects on crime levels, the Safer Routes projects appear to have had a positive impact during the pilot period. In Haringey, whilst robberies on other bus routes increased, this did not happen on those connected to the school. Similarly, robberies occurring after school hours decreased as did reports of disturbances and anti-social behaviour to the police. It should also be recognised that the fear of crime appears to have also reduced. Members of the public in Hackney appear more reassured though the presence of teachers and the police at bus stops – shown through their increased usage during typical pupil transit hours.

There is evidence to suggest that the scheme could benefit from extending the monitoring of the children's behaviour to include travelling on the buses. The demand for this has come independently from schools, children and also bus operators.

Opting in and opting out of the programme has also been a key finding from the evaluation. This should not be seen as a weakness in the design of the programme providing that 'inappropriate behaviour' is not displaced elsewhere.

Other possible initiatives to strengthen the current Safer Routes scheme include dedicated bus drivers as well as dedicated buses. Both ideas hold strong benefits for all stakeholders and remedy a number of issues including the suitability of bus drivers to perform the school run and establishing a good rapport between children and drivers. Identifying dedicated drivers is also likely to lessen the pressure for teachers and police officers to continue to monitor the children whilst aboard the buses.

7.4 Community engagement

The success of the Safer Routes scheme could undoubtedly benefit from greater engagement with the local community. This could consist of informing residents and businesses of the scheme and seeking their support in terms of reporting incidents to the schools and encouraging children to behave appropriately through active praise, incentives etc.

There is, however, currently little opportunity for community involvement and the scheme is not publicised in the local community. Other factors inhibiting effective community engagement are:

- The disparate nature of the local communities
- Project concerns about raising unrealistic expectations
- Existing levels of friction and tension within the local communities
- The capacity, skills and confidence of projects to engage with the community

Although the Safer Routes pilot schemes have made a commitment to consult with stakeholders and the community this has not always been effectively managed. In particular, the process of consultation has been perceived by some police officers as raising the expectations of the community without the appropriate opportunity to educate them about the purpose of the programme.

Qualitative research in the local community undertaken as part of this evaluation suggests that community members did not understand the role of the scheme, although some were aware and very supportive of the activity surrounding the bus stops. There is clearly an unmet need to market the role of the partnership throughout the immediate area and educate the community as to how they can become more actively involved. Whilst this is a wider strategic issue for the Safer Routes programme, obtaining the understanding and participation of the local community will benefit individual schemes.

7.4.1 Case study 2: Community Engagement

Community Engagement case study (Newsagents, Hackney)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial questionnaires are completed by local communities businesses people/residents in Hackney at the beginning of the evaluation • Data analysis shows incidents of irritation and abuse by school children (for example racial name calling and acts of vandalism at a local shop) • Local community are keen for some sort of solution to problem incidents with school children • Local community members are unaware of Safer Routes, but once the scheme was explained to them, saw it as a positive move to improve the situation • Secondary questionnaires were attempted to be administered, but some previous respondents refuse to complete them due to gross dissatisfaction with any improvement in their own personal situation (ie school children in their shop) • They mistakenly associate this as a direct failing of the Safer Routes initiative and are now reluctant to participate in any evaluation of the programme

7.4.2 **Conclusion**

There is currently little evidence of effective community engagement within Safer Routes. Reasons for this include the disparate nature of the local community, project concerns about raising unrealistic expectations and existing levels of friction and tension within local communities.

The case study highlights a clear need for developing greater understanding and engagement with the community. Achieving a closer relationship between the project and community could be encouraged through, for example, presentations to community centres, inviting local business in to the school to explain the impact of the children's behaviour etc.

This would help to assure the community that unacceptable behaviour by the children is being addressed and also encourage the community to play a more active role in monitoring and supporting 'good' behaviour of children out of school. This would also fit with the Government's agenda on active citizenship.

7.5 Linkages and integration

There are two levels at which linkages and integration can be achieved and identified within the Safer Routes scheme: at a strategic and at an operational level.

- At a strategic level it will be important for the 'lead' organisation, (that will take on the role of 'programme managing' the scheme) to ensure that other initiatives taking place across London are assessed to see if there are any mutually beneficial ways of working together to achieve common goals and maximising impact. This is achieved in terms of realising synergies in objectives and strategically organising activities to compliment mutual objectives
- At an operational level it will be important for individual local schemes to map out other initiatives taking place within their locality and assessing whether any synergies and additionality can be obtained from working together. Linkages and integration are achieved here through the performance of some of the Safer Routes tasks satisfying objectives of other distinct or complimentary projects and vice versa

One of the greatest opportunities for the Safer Routes scheme is that there are many complimentary initiatives occurring nationally and across London in particular. There is a potential opportunity for collaborative working with a number of the anti-vandalism campaigns run by the participating bus operators as well as the Mayor of London's own agenda of 'citizenship' and appropriate behaviour on buses. For example, central to both campaigns is an idea of civil responsibility, respect to other people and respect to public facilities. Safer Routes, as part of the wider Safer Schools Programme, also links within several Police objectives including the Metropolitan Police Service's Youth Strategy and the MPS' Youth Policy Team.

Embedding the Safer Routes scheme within this wider context will help all organisations to deliver their key objectives through joint working. Joint working also encourages the development of effective relationships and partnerships, which may not have previously existed.

At an operational level, due to complimentary and common subject matter within each school's Personal Social Education classes and Safer Routes teachings as a whole, synergies have been formed within the delivery of lessons. Lesson content therefore includes a range of key points that reinforce and remind pupils of the main messages of the other campaigns, in conjunction with the original key points of Safer Routes. By doing this, the educational process of each initiative becomes more joined-up creating a more robust educational process for the pupils.

Additionally, by integrating the Safer Routes teachings within the Personal Social Education classes, the educational aspect of the programme is delivered in an

already familiar environment. This removes any possible fear from the pupils with regards to a new subject matter or an unfamiliar delivery vehicle which could work to hinder the absorption of the lessons.

The scheme also provides opportunities to develop more effective links between the police, local communities and school children. Through monitoring the children at a public meeting point (bus stop), the police gain good exposure to members of the immediate community and are a visible presence⁶. This means a number of objectives outside of Safer Routes are realised, for example: anti-vandalism, public re-assurance and the Police's wider community policing plans. Similarly, through greater levels of interaction between the police officers and the school children, the image of the police is changed from being that of a distant authoritative figure, to that of a more familiar role – which inevitably aids Police/Community relations.

Indeed, the early experience of this pilot suggest that there are many opportunities for the scheme to develop successful linkages with other initiatives. However, achieving this will be dependent on addressing a number of barriers which are outlined in more detail below.

7.5.1 Barriers

These include:

- Low levels of understanding of programme objectives and how individual projects may fit within wider initiatives – this will hopefully be addressed by establishing clear 'terms of reference'
- Lack of the schemes capacity and skills to take advantage of all possible synergy and integration opportunities
- Lack of participation by bodies who could provide good opportunities for links and integration (either through low awareness or reluctance to participate)

7.5.2 Case study 3: Links and Integration

Links and Integration case study (First Group – Bus Operator)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons are delivered by SYTPE on behalf of Safer Routes • Amongst a range of topics, lessons include teaching on bullying, responsibility and bus damage • First Group launch an anti-vandalism campaign designed at catching and removing those responsible for causing vandalism on their buses (usually children) • Safer Routes teachings and First Group's campaigns both over-lap due to

⁶ This may be a more appropriate task for a 'Community Police Officer' than a 'Safer Schools Officer'.

similar content

- Core elements of both campaigns (common message to school children about bus vandalism) are jointly promoted and therefore as a combined sum hold a greater reach than individual projects
- School children become more aware of do's and don'ts regarding vandalism and bus safety
- This Safer Routes process encourages better links between First Group and Cardinal Pole School
- As a result of this, First Group are able to visit Cardinal Pole School, and make a bus safety presentation to the children
- Children are further educated regarding bus safety
- First Group are able to make good links in with the local community and have the opportunity to speak to local schools

7.5.3 **Conclusion**

The Safer Routes scheme is well placed to develop and capitalise on forming effective linkages and integration with other initiatives at both a strategic and operational level.

At a strategic level, this should be a key task for the 'lead' organisation (once appointed). Where linkages exist, these should be built on to ensure that 'joint' messages are promoted thereby reiterating and reinforcing common messages and enabling 'greater penetration' of target audiences. For example, linkages with the Metropolitan Police's Youth Strategy, bus operator anti-vandalism campaigns and also the Mayor of London's own drives for citizenship should be capitalised on.

7.5.4 **National Promotion**

The evidence collected as part of this evaluation suggests that Safer Routes scheme has the potential to make a real impact on school travel for children both by making them feel safer and by improving the behaviour of children when travelling to and from school.

As such, should Government Office for London, and its key partners, choose to extend the scheme across London it will be important to publicise the scheme 'as an exemplar of innovative and effective partnership working' to other education authorities, Passenger Transport Executives and urban police forces. Providing the resources to promote the scheme nationally, and planning how this can best occur, (possibly in conjunction with SYPTE), should be a key activity for all stakeholders with the appointed lead organisation undertaking delivery of this role.

8 Recommendations

This final section of the report summarises the recommendations contained within the main body of the report.

To recap, our terms of reference were to assess the extent to which the two pilot schemes have been effective. In doing so we focussed on two key questions:

- Firstly, to what extent has the *design and administration* of the pilot schemes been effective (in other words, have the schemes been well conceived, organised and executed)? and,
- Secondly, what *impact* have the pilot schemes had on the behaviour of the school children and the perceptions of the schoolteachers, bus drivers and local communities?

This section has been structured to reflect the recommendations for each area.

8.1 Design and Administration of the Safer Routes Scheme

- To allow for the scheme to be implemented and developed, a lead organisation needs to be identified that has the capacity and resources to meet the programme management role identified (including undertaking the VFM analysis)
- The programme requires a Safer Routes ‘terms of reference ‘ that satisfies the agendas of all stakeholders.
- The Safer Routes project needs a strong brand to provide clarity on whether the programme is a Crime Reduction or Citizenship programme etc.
- To ensure that the programme is targeted at ‘identified need’ an initial assessment process needs to be established to decide which schools are appropriate for the Safer Routes Scheme
- It is important that there is the establishment of a performance management framework and monitoring regime, so that Safer Routes can ensure that it delivers the stated objectives
- To ensure full and committed co-operation between those involved, all stakeholders should be kept aware of individual and combined project aims/outputs and outcomes
- So that the project can work effectively, it is key that all stakeholders are made aware of the consequences of a lack of participation
- Through the establishment of a knowledge management system to capture and share relevant information, Safer Routes will have the mechanisms to learn and evolve through best practise and experience

- So that the initiative can continue to justify public funding, the programme needs to develop measures allowing it to assess effectiveness and value for money
- To gain wider and continued buy-in from all parties, the programme management should promote a wider understanding amongst relevant parties of:
 - 1 overall strategic and individual objectives of the schemes
 - 2 rules and the limits to flexibility
- National promotion of the scheme to be considered and agreed amongst stakeholders

8.2 Impact of the Safer Routes Scheme

- So that the content of the Safer Routes teachings can remain contemporary and relevant, Safer Routes questionnaires should link in with educational content
- To ensure the continued effective delivery of Safer Routes child education, it is important that this remains within Personal Social Education lessons
- A additional (second) lesson should be built in to the educational structure of the programme to review the experiences of the pupils and to also refresh their memory with regards to some of the original material
- To ensure that all bus drivers are aware of the Safer Routes initiative, driver education should be made an integral part of every new driver induction process with investigations made regarding the possibility of offering this 'face to face'
- where possible, only selected drivers to perform the school run (selection based on drivers' attitudes and perceptions)
- The use of dedicated vehicles to be explored further
- The extension of the scope of pupil monitoring to cover bus travel to be explored further
- Monitoring resources to be split to cover various bus stops to ensure that the programme is delivered effectively across each location

8.3 Community engagement

- To embed the programme within each area, further engagement needs to take place with the local community - an awareness building programme needs to be developed that can be tailored to local circumstances
- To ensure that the project manages the expectations of the community, there should be effective communications to ensure that they clearly understand the objectives of Safer Routes and are regularly informed of progress

- Explore the use of Police Community Officer as a resource to aid with monitoring

8.4 **Linkages and integrations**

- To ensure that the project is relevant and sustainable in the long term, it is important that it established links and integrations with complementary initiatives
- So that Safer Routes can be delivered to school children effectively, it is important that integration remains with Personal Social Education classes
- Further integration with local communities needs to be explored in each pilot location

9 **Appendix A**

The following activities were conducted as part of our research:

Hackney

- Interview and questionnaire with convenience shop owner (Feb 2004)
- Interview and questionnaire with local newsagent owner (Feb 2004)
- Interview and questionnaire with local newsagent worker (Feb 2004)
- Interview and questionnaire with convenience shop owner (June 2004)
- Interview with local newsagent owner (June 2004)
- Interview with Bill Weeks, First Group CCTV Analyst (Mar 2004)
- Informal interview with PC Phil Jacobs – Safer Schools police officer (Feb 2004)
- Informal interview with Sue Kerrigan - Cardinal Pole, Deputy Head (Feb 2004)
- Informal interview with Sue Kerrigan - Cardinal Pole, Deputy Head (June 2004)
- Informal interview with PC Ralph Lawton – PC Jacobs supervisor (June 2004)
- Informal interview with Bill Weeks, First Group CCTV Analyst (June 2004)
- Informal interview with Paul Owens, Stagecoach London Marketing and Commercial Manager (June 2004)
- Class focus group with Year 7s at Cardinal Pole, Hackney

Haringey

- Interview and questionnaire with local convenience shop owner (Feb 2004)
- Interview and questionnaire with local take-away worker (Feb 2004)
- Interview with Viv Swaida - Park View Academy Deputy Head (Mar 2004)
- Interview with Bill Weeks, First Group CCTV Analyst (Mar 2004)
- Informal interview with PC Chris West (Feb 2004)
- Informal interview with PC Ralph Lawton (June 2004)
- Informal interview with Bill Weeks, First Group CCTV Analyst (June 2004)

- Informal interview with Paul Owens, Stagecoach London Marketing and Commercial Manager (June 2004)