

Road Safety Campaign: Education Resource Review Findings

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Department
for Transport

Introduction

This note seeks thoughts from teachers, road safety officers and wider stakeholders on the THINK! road safety campaign's plans to update the education resources offered to aid the teaching of road safety in schools.

The current suite of THINK! materials developed in partnership with teachers and road safety experts launched in 2009 and were reviewed in 2011. At the time, they were singled out for their high quality and described as flexible, simple and easy to use. However, seven years on both the education and communication worlds have changed significantly:

- ✓ **a growing trend towards hands-on and interactive learning, means current THINK! education resources are not as effective as they once were at engaging young people**
- ✓ **rapid advances in education technology means the current programme feels dated**
- ✓ **refocus on core curriculum subjects has led to a lesser role for PSHE topics, resulting in a negative impact on the amount of time and resources schools are able to dedicate to road safety education**
- ✓ **recent changes to public and charity sectors and pressures on local authority budgets have led to a decrease in the number of professionals delivering road safety education with schools**

The THINK! Review

Given the changes since 2009, THINK! recruited education consultants Hopscotch Consulting and their research partner Chrysalis to:

- review current resources
- identify if there is a need for a national RSE programme and whether anyone is delivering this
- develop an overarching strategy for progressing THINK! education resources, in the absence of a national alternative
- create a resource development plan and devise recommendations for discussion and evaluation.

The review has considered:

- the key messages from the 2011 evaluation of THINK!
- changes to road safety education (RSE) context and how they affect the use of THINK! resources
- principles and features of best safety and road safety education practice
- models and techniques used in psychology that can be employed to enhance the effectiveness of THINK! and the ability of the programme to drive attitudinal and behavioural change
- whether and how digital technology can be used in road safety educational resources and communications.

Taken forward in three stages, the review comprised:

Stage 1: Evidence review summary

Analysis of 50 studies and documents from fields of education, policy and psychology; and discussions with eight organisations including RoSPA, TFL, Road Safety Scotland and PHE.

Stage 2: Stakeholder consultation

A panel of road safety education experts and THINK! education resource users (teachers and parents) who discussed outcomes of the evidence review; reviewed current resources; and drew on their own experiences of working with and interacting with children and young people to identify core areas for resource development.

Stage 3: Qualitative research

Six participatory discussion groups with 63 delegates – teachers, RSOs, parents, school nurses, out of school group leaders and emergency services to:

- gather information about existing practice and partnership working;
- explore participants' views about best practice
- establish if there is a need for a national road safety resource like THINK!
- establish where current gaps in delivery exist
- further develop the strategic pointers that came out of the first evidence review stage of the project

What the Review told us

THE OVERALL PICTURE IS NOT ENCOURAGING:

- ✓ **Insufficient volume and frequency of learning experiences:** the current provision of RSE across schools is patchy, fragmented and opportunistic, with virtually none taking place in secondary schools. Assemblies tended to be the most frequently mentioned method of delivery but acknowledged as insufficient. Very few opportunities, (Bikeability excepted) for practical training or in-depth learning occur.
- ✓ **Parents and schools** often feel the other is responsible for delivering road safety
- ✓ **Outdated resources:** THINK! resources are dated and don't incorporate enough interactive technology or active learning opportunities to engage young people; while local funding cuts have reduced the frequency of RSO schools' engagement.
- ✓ Resources aren't **differentiated** enough by age
- ✓ **Need for direction:** schools need to be shown how focus on road safety can help them deliver against OFSTED criteria and core attainment outcomes within PSHE and SMSC (social, moral, spiritual cultural development).

In addition:

- there is a lack of awareness around who should be driving RSE
- competing priorities have pushed RSE down schools' agendas
- support for active learning (one of the best ways to make RSE relevant to young people) is required – a recognised framework of skills by age
- as is support for greater student ownership and recognition of peer to peer learning where THINK! could look at buddy and peer mentoring schemes, such as the National Literacy Trust Paired Reading Scheme or the PHE's Health Ambassadors
- technology and interactive resources need to be embraced, focussed on developing a comprehensive set of age appropriate quality videos and clear instructions for using freely available interactive content such as Google maps, local KSI data
- flexibility is key: resources need to be delivered as bite size 10 minute chunks in PSHE slots or tutorial time, to form longer lessons or to provide content for drop down and enhancement days as well as work for out of school settings
- there is a need for a national programme that provides consistency of content and messaging, clearly demonstrating road safety skills at each key stage of development

Future Activity – the THINK! Approach

ANY FUTURE THINK! PROGRAMME NEEDS TO PROVIDE CLEAR DIRECTION TO SCHOOLS BY:

- ✓ Driving awareness of RSE being a fundamental part of a young person's personal development;
- ✓ Giving a clear framework for age appropriate RSE skills that recognise a young person's changing environment; and
- ✓ Enabling education practitioners to deliver RSE easily in an engaging manner without the need for too much preparation and research.

The audiences the THINK! programme needs to deliver against are:

- **Young people:** delivering resources that resonate with them and add value, providing active learning experiences
- **School Community:** any programme needs to be able to embed itself into schools in a more relevant way and deliver well against their priorities
- **Local Practitioners:** support local activity with resources that are both progressive and versatile
- **Parents:** Adapting some of the materials for schools into easily accessible information for parents so that children can take home what they have learnt and draw in parents/friends to practise it
- **Industry partnerships:** signposting to the schools' material provided by RoSPA and others

We propose creating a central content hub for THINK! which features:

- a skills framework – demonstrating what students need to know at each stage – a simple checklist
- DfT generated content including repurposing of some existing THINK! RSE material
- new DfT content, in particular short films (also accessible via YouTube) and 'quick-fire' activities
- curated content from stakeholders – links to approved stakeholder sites, ensuring a breadth of content is offered
- teacher/student/parent area
- how to access local authority data

Our suggested skills framework would be structured as follows:

To bring learning to life with relevant education methods to each group:

Learning stage	Ages	Learning approach
Early years to lower primary Nursery – Y2	3-7	Simple memorable rules reinforced through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions, signs and poems • Clear single message ‘call to action’ posters • Character led stories • Role play to bring to life real world scenarios • Use of photographs to illustrate real world scenarios • Teachers and parents reinforcing messages by acting as positive role models
Upper primary – lower secondary Y3 – Y7	7-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of photographs and videos to illustrate real world scenarios • Focus in PSHE on increasing responsibility that comes with independence – transition phase • Active learning opportunities e.g. creating own road safety videos • Introduction of peer to peer and student led learning
Upper secondary Y8 – Y13	13-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer to peer learning and mentoring opportunities • RSE skills linked to wider personal and social skills acquisition • Active learning opportunities e.g. creating own road safety videos, coming up with safety solutions • Development of ‘harder hitting’ messaging on distractions • A focus in later stages on preparing students for being young drivers

To help ensure that all age groups gain valuable skills:¹

Step	1	2	3
Age group	Early years – lower primary Nursery to Y2 (3 - 6)	Upper primary – lower secondary Y3 – Y7 (7 – 12)	Upper secondary Y8 to Y 13 (13 – 17)
Context for travel for each step	I'm learning to travel with an adult	I'm learning to travel on my own	I'm learning to manage new travel risks independently
Overall learning objective for each step	I can travel safely with an adult	I can travel safely on my own	I can travel safely on my own when new risks are introduced
Specific learning outcomes for each step	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know that pedestrians walk on the pavement and vehicles travel on the road 2. I know how to walk safely with a grown up and hold hands when walking near the road 3. I know safer crossing places and how to use them 4. I know the Stop, Look, Listen and Think sequence 5. I know how to ride a bike/scooter and cycle/scoot safely 6. I know why I need a child car seat when I travel in a car 7. I know how to behave when I travel in a car or a bus 8. I know how to be seen in the dark 9. I know how to keep safe in the holidays 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know the Green Cross Code, and safe crossing places on the road 2. I know The Highway Code, rules of the road and road signs 3. I know how to ride a bike and have had some cycle training 4. I know how to plan a safe journey to school 5. I know my responsibilities as a pedestrian, cyclist or passenger in a car or on public transport 6. I know how to travel independently to and from school as a pedestrian, cyclist or on public or school transport 7. I know risk and the effect of risky behaviour and can develop strategies to cope with dangerous situations caused by others 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I know my responsibilities as a pedestrian, passenger and driver 2. I know the training requirements for drivers 3. I know issues affecting young drivers such as peer pressure, speed, seatbelts, inexperience and overconfidence 4. I know the legislation relating to drugs and alcohol use and driving 5. I know how to travel independently safely and understand the benefits of sustainable travel

¹ Adapted from: PHE and RoSPA (2016) Road injury prevention: Resources to support schools to promote safe active travel – Public Health England

The proposed framework has been further developed to outline skill development outcomes and learning style for each group

Step	1	2	3
Age group	Early years – lower primary Nursery to Y2 (3 - 6)	Upper primary – lower secondary Y3 – Y7 (7 – 12)	Upper secondary Y8 to Y 13 (13 – 17)
Child development (learning context)	Every new experience is an exciting adventure!	The road to independence: I love being trusted	I'm my own person with my own views
Life skill development	<p>A framework that creates opportunities for young people to learn and practice the 4 most important life skills needed to master road safety through an age appropriate approach and with broader educational benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self awareness: emotional awareness, assessment & self confidence 2. Problem solving: problem identification, analysis and solution finding 3. Decision making: responsibility, information gathering, risk assessment, deciding on values 4. Active citizenship: keeping oneself and others safe, contributing to one's community 		
Life skills applied to road safety	<p>Situation-based resources that allow young people to apply the 4 life skills to age appropriate road safety challenges:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self awareness: feeling safe whilst travelling, assessing strengths & weaknesses, developing confidence 2. Problem solving: planning a journey, managing multiple road users, overcoming risks 3. Decision making: choosing safe places to cross, choosing who to travel with 4. Active citizenship: practising sustainable travel, understanding interpersonal communication on the road 		
Approach to learning (styles and formats)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Active learning 2. Learning through play 3. Storytelling 4. Sensory learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scenario-based and immersive learning 2. Gamified learning: fact finding, challenges 3. Peer to peer learning 4. Student led projects 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peer to peer learning 2. Student led projects 3. Learning through real life experience 4. Cause-related learning

THINK's aim in developing this framework would be to help children and teens to become more '**road aware**.' Our aim would be to:

- provide a strategic learning resource with longevity, providing a clear pathway of age appropriate skills that enable a young person to confidently grow from non-road user to proficient and safe user
- goal orientated delivering resources that are focussed on measurable outcomes, rather than processes
- become a nationally recognised and valued framework of road safety schools' education embraced by schools and wider community groups

Given resources available, the framework will be rolled out in stages with first resources focussing on the ‘transition’ years given child KSIs are highest for 11 and 12 year olds.

To ensure THINK! can become a valued framework for schools, we need to convince schools on the merits of enhanced RSE. We would aim to do that by demonstrating the relevance to schools on how RSE can provide clear outcomes linked to their priorities:

New focus	What that looks like
1. Supports the delivery of Ofsted’s SMSC framework	Clear links made in communications to the requirement for schools to develop pupils’ understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy emotionally and physically
2. Support the renewed focus on life skills development in schools (PSHE)	A nationally recognised framework that provides schools and out of school organisations with a progressive pathway over the course of which specific skills are developed, revisited and consolidated
3. Enable schools’ ability to deliver against Ofsted’s community outreach criteria	Help schools communicate and work more effectively with families around the delivery of RSE with road safety resources that are motivating, engaging and easy to use by non-specialists (so they get used)
4. In primary, build links to the Core Curriculum	Make simple, yet explicit links in resources, communications and supporting materials to literacy (report writing), maths (distances), science (forces) etc. as well as outline how the materials can be used as PSHE content
5. In secondary support wider skills delivery	Curriculum linking has next to no relevance Link content to wider skills delivery including peer pressure, how to have difficult conversations, bullying, utilising road safety related scenarios

KEY QUESTIONS

Do stakeholders:

- ✓ Agree with the suggested approach THINK! is advocating, including our initial resource focus on the ‘transition’ years, given child KSIs are highest for 11 and 12 year olds?
- ✓ Have additional ideas on how school delivery of RSE could be enhanced and how school use of the new THINK! hub could be encouraged?
- ✓ See any advantage in schools having their RSE delivery commended by DfT as part of a ‘road safety education standard’ award to schools – the equivalent of the ‘Eco’ or ‘Healthy’ schools schemes?