

Parent School Travel Survey

Key Findings



The purpose of the survey was to ask parents to share their experiences of the school run.

Parents from the West Midlands, East Midlands, Peterborough, Bedfordshire and Essex completed the survey.

Schools were asked to share the survey with their parents using social media, text alerts and newsletters.

22,969 parents from 974 schools responded during May to July 2020.

Distance to school

73% of parents responding to the survey live within two miles of their child's school. This distance can be walked safely where adequate crossings and footways are made available. Distances of up to five miles can be cycled by older pupils if safe cycling routes are available.

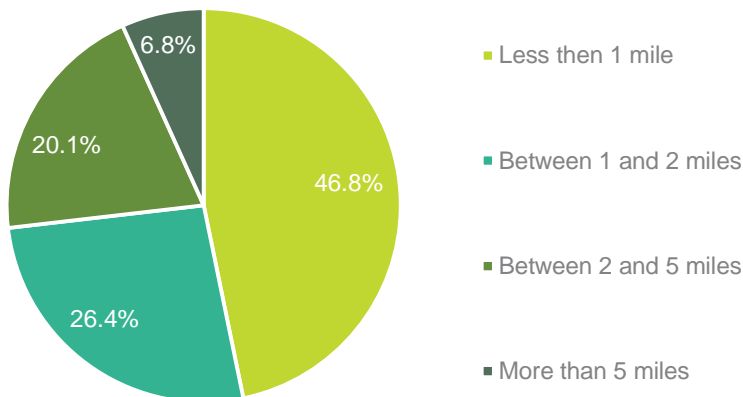


Figure 1: How far from the school do you live?



84% of parents do not want to drive their children to school



73% want their children travelling actively, though currently only 54% do.



4.8% of parents say their children usually cycle to school, though 22.3% would be cycling if they travelled as their parents wanted.

“Travelling actively to school is an excellent form of exercise. It encourages my son to enjoy cycling, this helps him to feel refreshed and energised for a positive mood for learning, what better way to start a day!” Melissa Briggs, parent at Wooton Lower School, Bedford

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Travel mode and preference

84% of parent respondents do not want to take their children to school by car. 73% wanted their children to be walking, scooting or cycling to school.

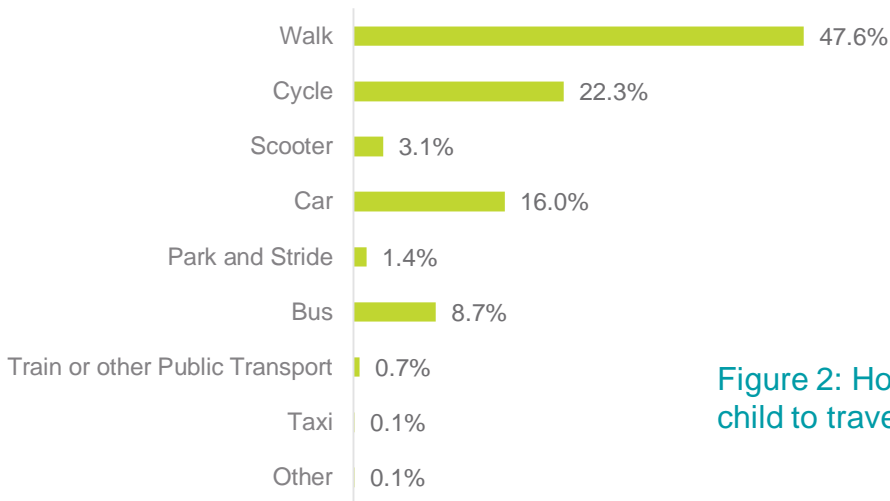


Figure 2: How would you like your child to travel to school?

4.8% of parents say their children already cycle to school; if pupils travelled the way parents would like, over four times as many would be cycling. Currently, 54.2% of parents say their children do walk, scoot or cycle and 34.1% are driven to school.

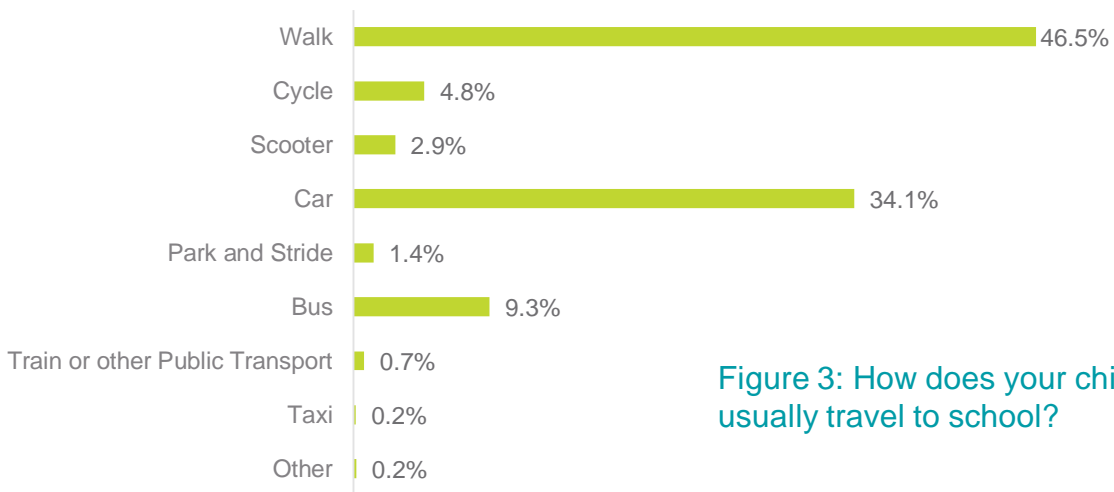


Figure 3: How does your child usually travel to school?

“Traffic free cycle lanes will definitely encourage children and adults to cycle to school/work by helping them feel safe and this will also help with a greener environment. During lockdown the roads have been so quiet and a lot less traffic so more people have cycled however with things slowly getting back to normal and more traffic on the roads, they are resorting to using cars to feel safer.”

Sharon Randhawa, parent at Priory School, Birmingham

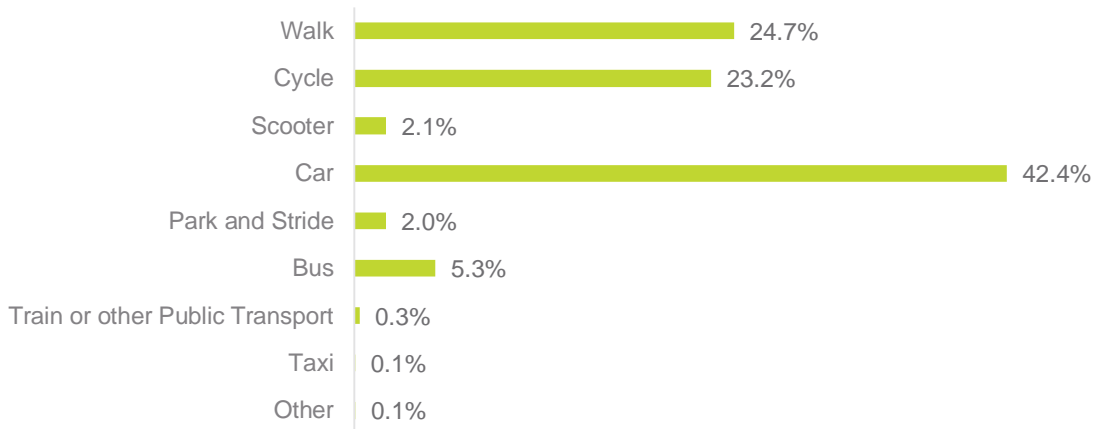
“The traffic and parking around schools is a growing problem causing safety issues for our children. Walking or cycling to school used to be an enjoyable part of the day but now is fraught with anxiety.”

Sam Woolley, parent at Fernwood Primary School, Nottingham

What do parents who drive their children to school want?

A majority of parents who drive their child to school would prefer it to be a different mode of transport. 28% of driving parents stated they would like their child to walk and 17% would like their child to cycle to school.

Figure 4: Of those that usually drive: How would you like your child to travel to school?



Families report having enjoyed walking and cycling together more during the lockdown period, but for these changes to become long term there have to be changes to our streets, less traffic close to schools, and improved facilities.

“We live too close to consider any other option but walk and it fits in with my ongoing cycle commute.”

Parent from Leicester

“It will help if there were safer pedestrian and cyclists routes.”

Neelam, a parent at Woodthorpe Infant & Junior School, Birmingham

“I’m optimistic for September. My work arrangements are changing and my children have gained weight during lockdown. They already agree that we should walk to school as they have seen the impact of less exercise during lock down.”

Anna, parent at Oldswinford Primary School, Dudley

“More children cycling would help parking issues outside the school but there is no safe place to keep the bike at school.”

Minal, a parent at Whitecrest Primary School, Sandwell

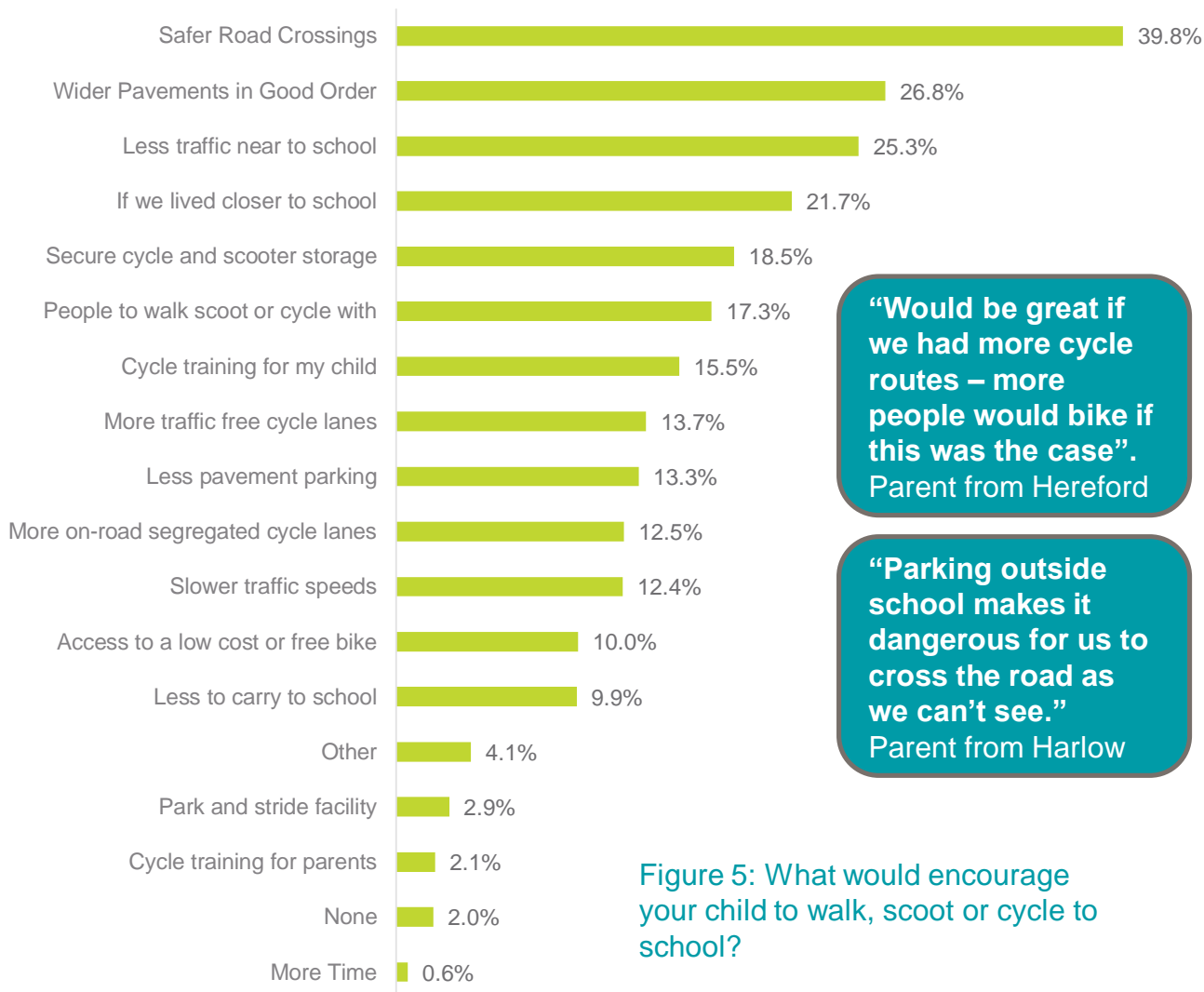


“Love walking to school, but less parking on the pavements will be such a good thing. I have a pram which I have to take in the street to walk around the cars on the pavements.”

A parent from Hillborough Infants School, Luton

What would enable pupils to travel to school actively?

Parents said safer crossings, improved pavements and less traffic close to school are the top three changes that would help their children to walk, scoot or cycle to school. Cycle and scooter storage, cycle training, less pavement parking and more on road segregated cycle lanes were also requested by many parents.



“Would be great if we had more cycle routes – more people would bike if this was the case”.
Parent from Hereford

“Parking outside school makes it dangerous for us to cross the road as we can’t see.”
Parent from Harlow

Figure 5: What would encourage your child to walk, scoot or cycle to school?

Families across a large area of England want to incorporate active travel into their daily lives. Parents report having enjoyed walking and cycling with their families more during lockdown, but for this to become normal, there will have to be changes to our streets, to levels of traffic, and improved facilities to enable active travel.



For queries or further data analysis requests please contact:

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