

Evaluation of the
Accreditation Scheme
(STAR)

TfL job number 11070

April 2012



School Travel
Accredited & R

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Key findings

- 1 • School Travel Advisors' support is key to hooking schools into the scheme
- 2 • The main barrier to taking part/complaint is the time participation requires
- 3 • STAR works to increase walking and cycling levels by focussing objectives and maintaining motivation. However, some schools are limited in how far they can increase levels due to logistics (eg. school location)
- 4 • Success of the scheme is also reliant upon the enthusiasm of school travel champions
- 5 • Recognition and rewards are important for celebration but are not the initial motivators for taking part in STAR
- 6 • Satisfaction levels with the workshop are high, as is propensity to attend future workshops
- 7 • The workshops are sought as a forum for the exchange of ideas and the opportunity to network
- 8 • The movement of the application process online is welcomed

Action points for TfL on STAR itself

Reduce the time necessitated by the scheme



Get STAs to:

- Create more awareness of the scheme
- Secure 'easy-wins' with schools that are already at Bronze level
- Provide close support for schools as they enter the scheme

Provide advice and guidance that:

- Is specific to primary and secondary schools
- Is specific to each accreditation level
- Focuses on walking, scootering etc where increasing cycling levels is not feasible

Advise schools to:

- Work hard at securing parental buy-in (eg. through getting parents in to watch demonstrations and training)
- Organise pupil committees (and ensure each year new pupils are recruited) that focus on travel initiatives
- Purchase hardware (eg. bike shelters) to ensure legacy of the scheme

Provide:

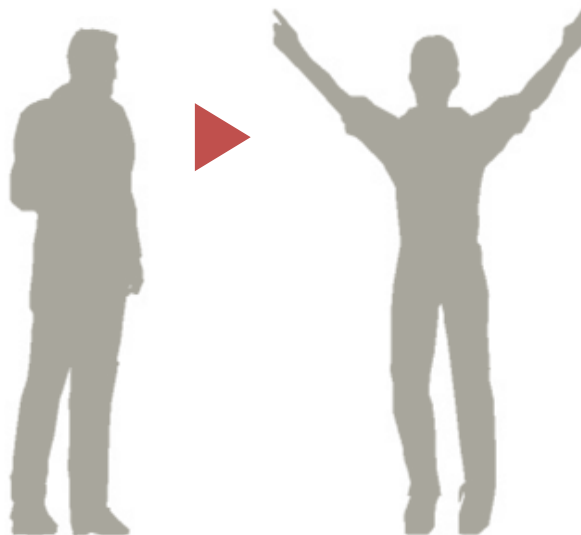
- More ideas and examples from other schools
- Links to and from health and environmental initiatives (eg. Healthy Schools)
- Ready-made slogans
- Ready-made materials (eg. for use in class and assemblies)
- Funding (or directions on where to get funding) to cover the cost of time and resources invested
- A separate scheme for Special Schools

Action points for TfL on STAR itself

STAR works best where:

- Travel champions care about the cause
- They are willing to give up time and invest effort
- These individuals acknowledge the time commitment but think it is worth it
- The schemes' success depends on their goodwill

How can TfL inspire enthusiasm and motivation amongst travel champions?



Could TfL...

- Get enthused ambassadors of STAR to provide evidence on the personal gratification they get from the scheme?
- Think about supporting schools to finance the extra workload these individuals take on?
- Reduce the time commitment needed and get STAs to reassure participants about workload?
- Get STAs to work more closely with schools (especially as they enter the scheme)?
- Ensure ideas are shared and signposts are provided to schemes/ resources/ hardware etc?

Action points for TfL on the workshop



Provide more time for networking, sharing ideas and examples



The workshops should be maintained as a celebration of hard work & achievements

Reduce investment of time through shorter and more local workshops

Ensure there is high awareness of the workshops



Ensure guidance and talks are specific to each accreditation level and primary/secondary



Research objectives and methodology



The research objectives



Value of the scheme

- Motivations and barriers to participation in the scheme
- How well the scheme supports the wider TfL goal of increasing cycling and walking to school (alongside other schemes such as Bike It and Cycle Grants)
- Suggested improvements to the scheme
- The importance of being rewarded

- Motivations and barriers to workshop attendance
- Suggested improvements to the workshop
- The workshops as an appropriate forum for sharing best practise



Sharing best practise at the workshop



The online application

- Response to the move online
- Effectiveness of the online application as part of the online School Travel Plan

The research methodology

Workshop attendees WA

- Online survey
- With those who attended Oct-11 workshops
- 183 invited to take part
- 27% response rate
- Fieldwork Jan-April-12

Workshop non-attendees WNA

- Online survey
- With those who were invited to, but did not attend, Oct-11 workshops
- 682 invited to take part
- 14% response rate
- Fieldwork April-12

Case studies CS

- Face-to-face depth interviews with accredited schools
- 5 schools involved (2 Bronze, 1 Silver, 2 Gold)
- Application form and School Travel Plans reviewed
- 45 mins each
- Fieldwork Feb-March-12

Semi-structured telephone depths SS

- 31 telephone depth interviews
- 11 Bronze, 4 Silver, 6 Gold, 10 schools not involved with STAR
- 10-20 mins each
- Fieldwork Feb-March-12

Taking part in STAR



Motivations for participation in STAR

School Travel Advisors



Becoming accredited can be an uphill battle at first. Once Bronze is secured, the scheme is easier to maintain. Involvement of School Travel Advisors (STAs) early on in the process is key

Some schools are already at Bronze level without realising it. These schools are 'easy wins' if STAs encourage a retrospective application

Enthusied champions



Participation in the scheme is highly dependent on there being an enthused individual happy to champion sustainable travel (and sacrifice the time to do so)

"I am a great believer in walking or public transport. I am totally anti-car" (Bronze)

Completion of School Travel Plan

The STAR application sits alongside renewal of the School Travel Plan (STP)

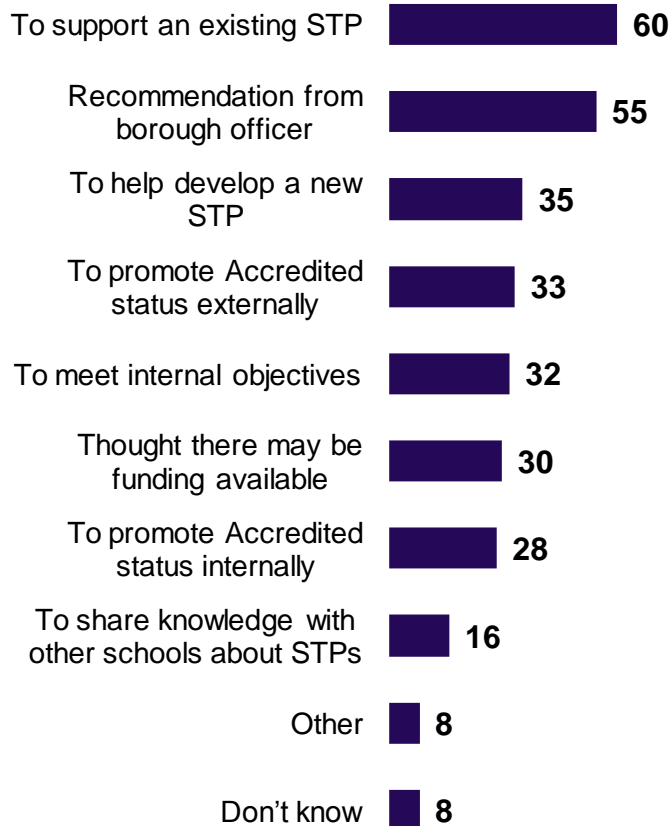
Participating in health or environmentally focused initiatives (eg. Healthy Schools) increases chances of STAR participation

Complimentary initiatives

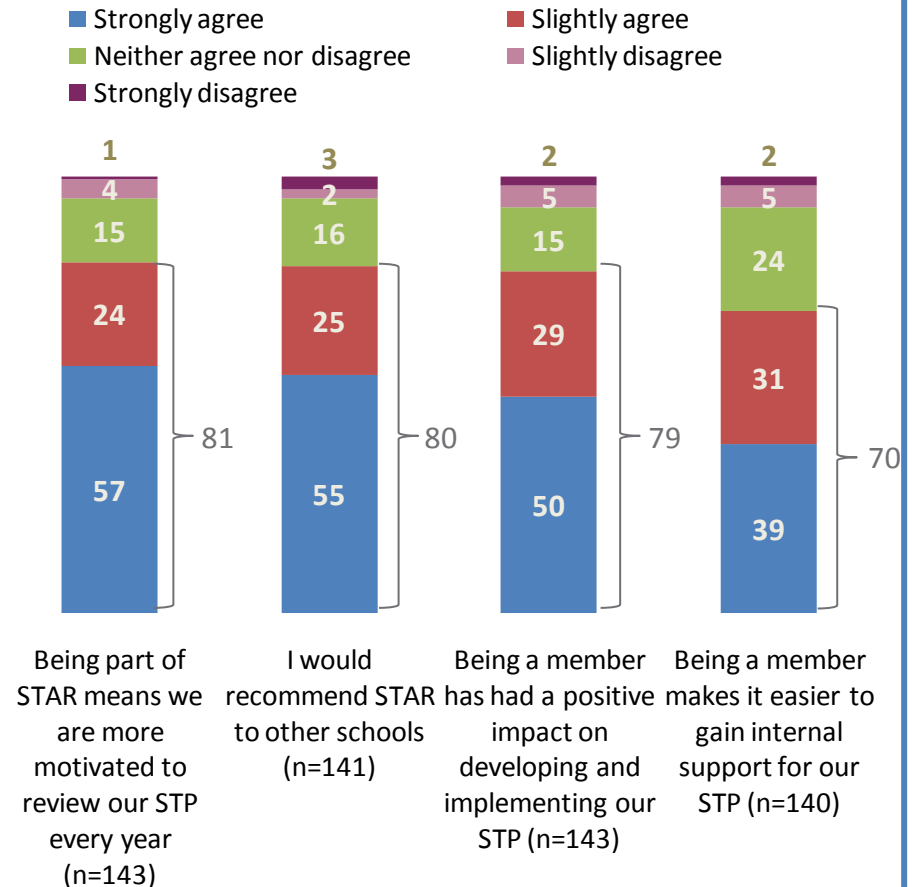
Motivations for participation in STAR

Greater emphasis is placed on STPs as a result of taking part in STAR

Reasons for participating in STAR (%) (prompted)



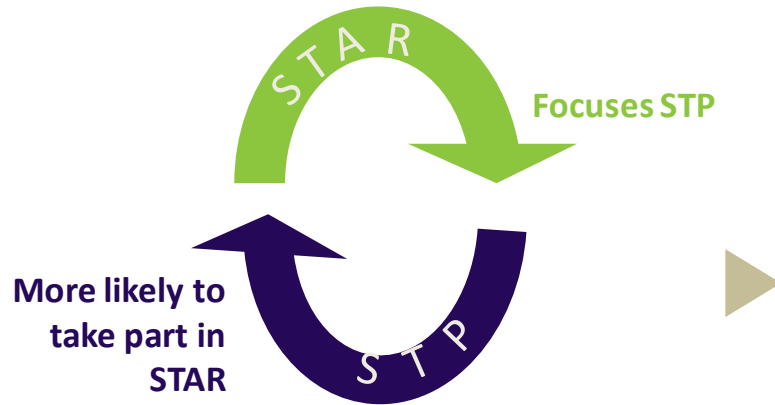
Agreement (%)



A1/D1 What prompted your school to participate in the Accreditation Scheme? Base: all workshop attendees and non-attendees (n=144)

A4/D4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about being a member of the Accreditation Scheme? Base: all workshop attendees and non-attendees excluding 'Don't know' (n=various)

How STAR ties in with other schemes



STAR and STPs tie together well

“One feeds off the other” (Gold)

“I just find that [STAR] runs along side the travel plan, it makes you look at what you have done and what you need to do” (Bronze)

“When you start to write a travel plan, you become more focused on what you do and what you don’t do. You are more aware of what is good for the school in terms of working through [STAR]” (Gold)

STAR and other schemes compliment not overlap and, once involved with STAR, schools are more likely to get involved with other schemes

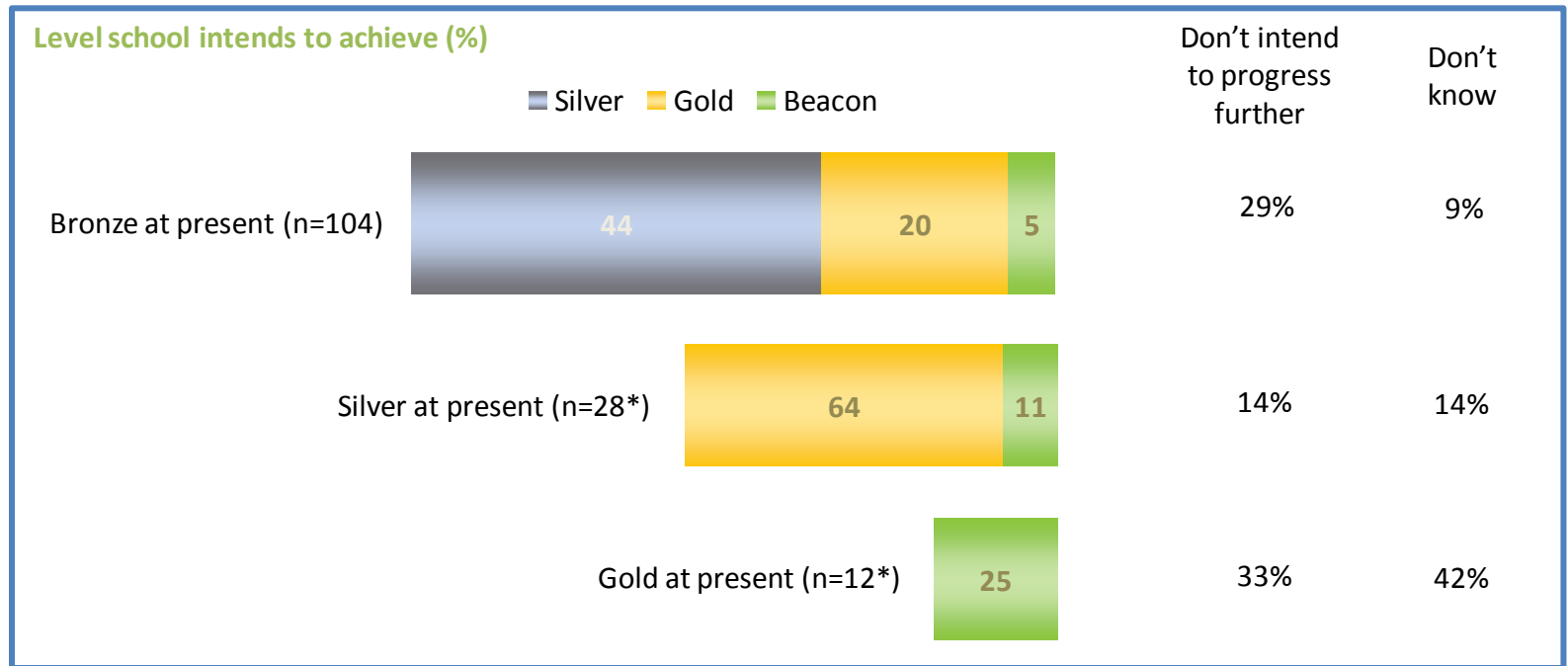
“They all kind of link into each other...Each of them have their own little bit to contribute, plus they do allow you a point for Healthy Schools and Bikeability, so all of those aspects are brought into the application” (Bronze)

“Once you are in the scheme, well I know the Wandsworth council are good at sending on information and encouraging you to do [other schemes]” (Bronze)



Progressing through STAR

Approximately two-thirds of Bronze schools intend to continue progressing through STAR. The main reason for not progressing is the workload and time the scheme necessitates



* Caution low base size

Reasons for not progressing with the scheme

"The work involved is unrealistic. Writing/ compiling long reports is very time consuming and is not an effective way of using my time" (Bronze)

"It involves a lot of work for very little gain" (Bronze)

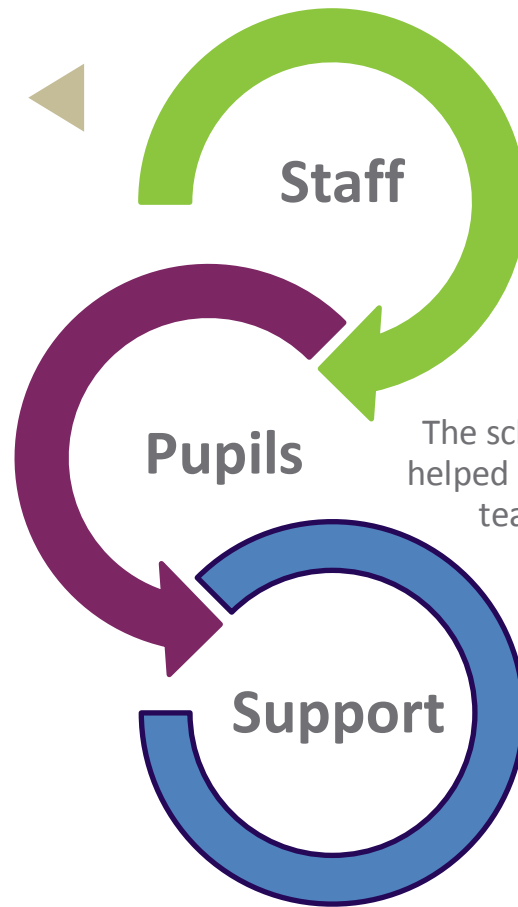
STAR's sustainability

Some travel champions admit that if they left the school, the STAR scheme would perish

"[If I left the school, STAR] might die a death. It has always been important to me, I would try to pass it on but they might not be as enthusiastic as me" (Gold)



Poster on road safety from a Gold school surveyed



But for others, they would simply hand-over the scheme to someone else

The scheme's sustainability would be helped considerably if the school had a team of pupils dedicated to it

Continuation of the scheme would benefit from close STA assistance, the presence of hardware (eg. cycle helmets and bike storage) and a reduction in time demanded by the scheme

Reasons for not engaging with STAR

Lack of awareness

"[We haven't applied for STAR] due to a lack of awareness and we've not reviewed ~~them~~ in a number of years"
(Not interested)



Time (and cost implications)

Time is the most critically off-putting factor. Teachers are very busy and there is limited resource to help fund/cover the time spent by teachers on the scheme



Poor contact with STA

If schools are not in touch with their STA, they are unlikely to hear about the scheme

Lack of funding available

The scheme would be more attractive to some if it provided funding (both for initiatives and teachers' time)

Not renewing STP

Since the application process is often completed alongside an update of the STP, schools that are not updating their plan are less likely to take part

Scheme targeted at primary

Some comment that STAR is better suited (and more advice/inspiration is given) to primary schools. *"[Our STA] does send us stuff but it's more aimed at primary schools"* (Not interested)

Application process off-putting

"[The application form] can look daunting and there is no guidance. People need to come in and be hands on, showing people how to do it" (Bronze)

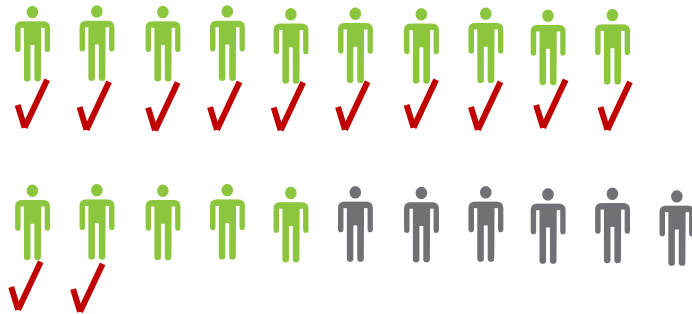
Scheme not tailored for Special Schools

Similarly, Special Schools have emphasised the desire for a version of STAR specific to the issues they face

Increasing walking and cycling through STAR

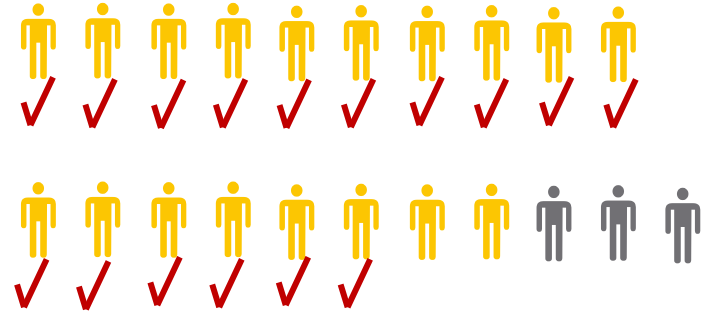


Increasing walking and cycling levels



15 out of the 21 participating schools surveyed (71%) say cycling levels have increased 'a lot/ a little' since taking part in STAR

Of these, 12 say STAR played a role in the increased levels

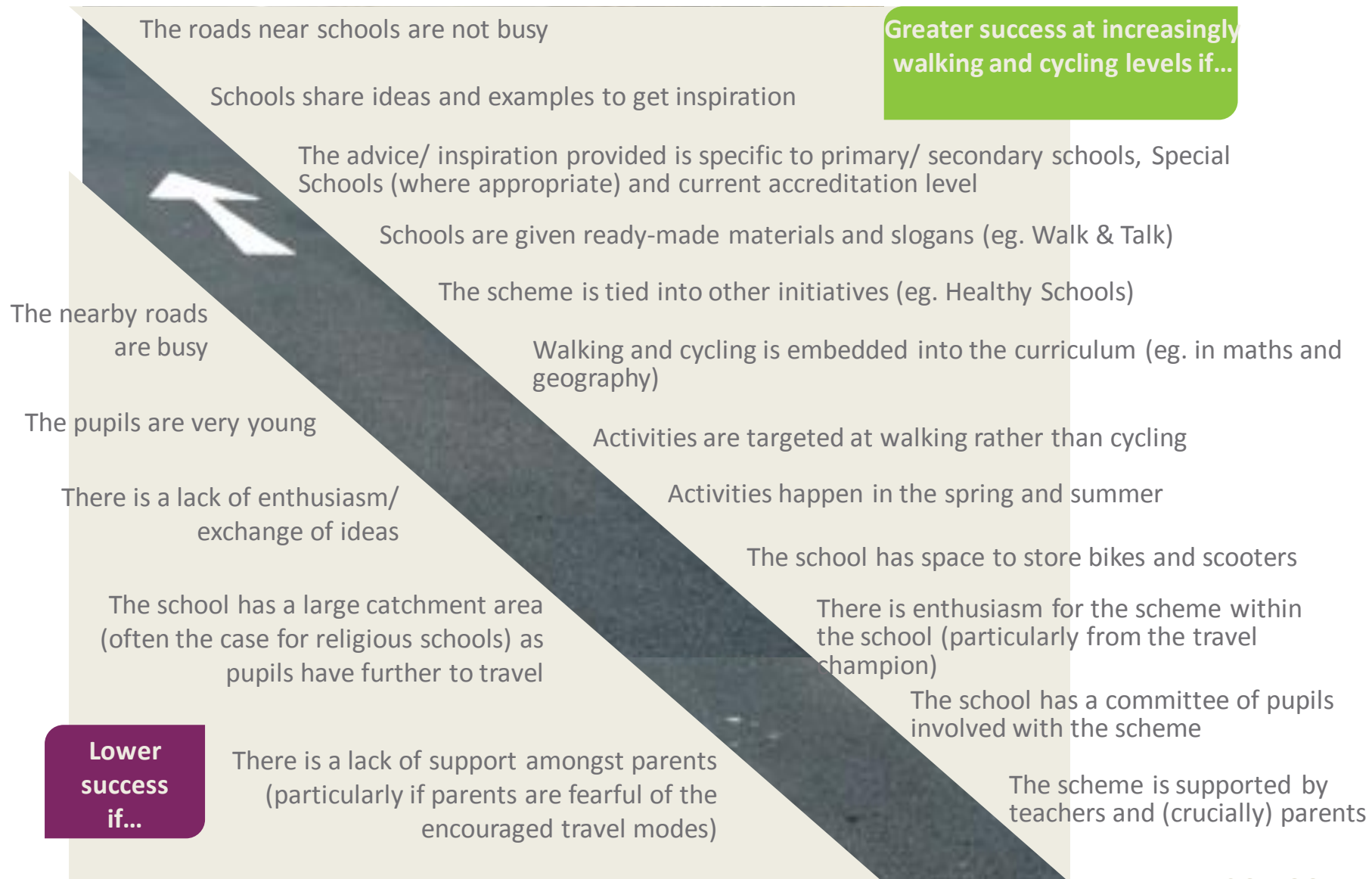


18 out of 21 (86%) say walking levels have increased 'a lot/ a little' since taking part in STAR

Of these, 16 say STAR played a role in the increased levels



Factors contributing to increased walking/ cycling



Example actions taken

Photographs from schools surveyed



Road markings in playground to practise

- Reduced car parking spaces
- Assemblies on travel and road safety
- “Florescent Friday”
- Junior Road Safety Officer committees
- Staff car sharing scheme

Most agree they would have taken some actions in the absence of STAR, but not as many or as sizeable



Bike shelter storage



Walk to School Week

“[Cycling levels] have increased since we installed the cycle pods as people now have safe places to put them” (Bronze)

“If we look back from last year, our statistics have almost doubled. The older the children are, the more they walk as their parents are more lenient” (Bronze)



Canopy for walking parents to wait under



Scooter storage pod

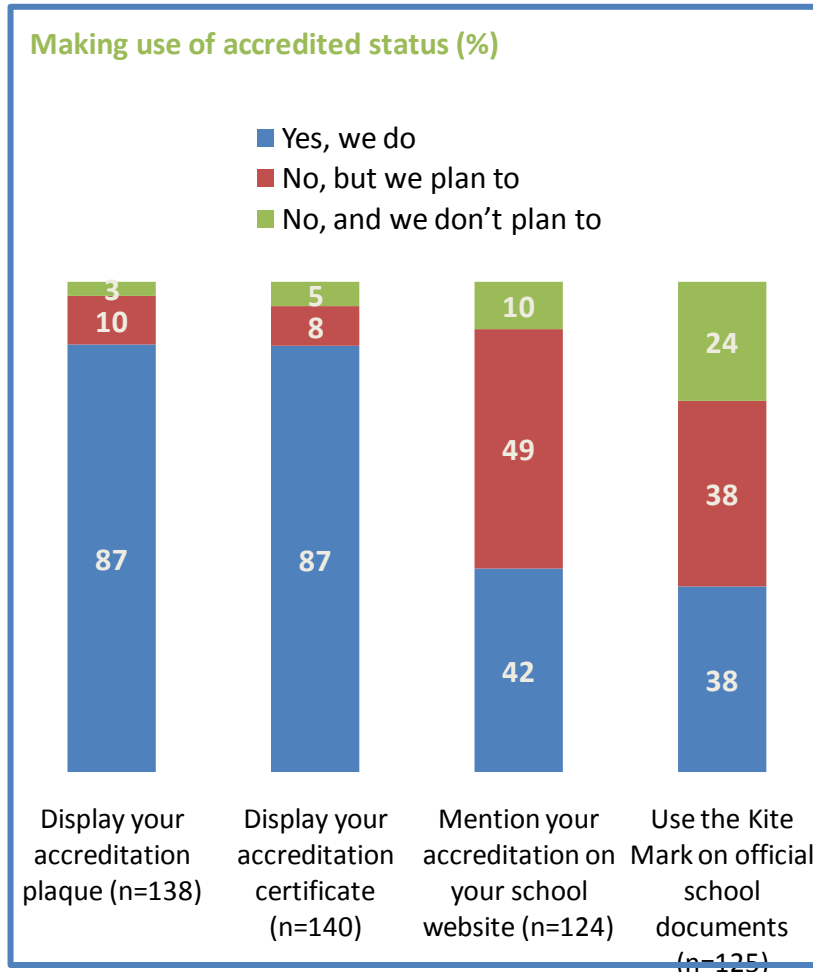
“Our area is described as having a lot of problems – it is economically deprived etc. so a lot of children do not have bikes. By having bikes in school and teaching them how to ride and become interested, by doing all of that, parents become confident about letting their children ride” (Gold)

Promoting STAR, being rewarded and being supported



Making use of accredited status

The accreditation plaque and certificate are more widely used to promote accredited status than website mentions and the Kite Mark, though there is an intention to promote the accreditation online



Award plaque in reception

66%

Agree it is appropriate for TfL to support schools through the Kite Mark (12% disagree)



Display of awards

63%

Agree it is valuable for their school to have the Kite Mark to help communicate their achievements (13% disagree)

Photographs from schools surveyed

B1/E1 Does your school do any of the following...?
 B4/E4 To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about the Kite Mark?
 Base: all workshop attendees and non-attendees excluding 'Don't know' (n-various)

Promotion and rewards as a motivator



Travel champions particularly enthused about STAR are far more likely to promote the scheme (both internally and externally)

The scheme helps set goals

The rewards alone do not motivate schools to get involved with STAR or achieve highly within it

"For me the accreditation was more about the celebration of what we had done" (ex-Silver)



But rewards provide a cause for celebration and excitement amongst pupils

Promotion of STAR depends on enthusiasm for it

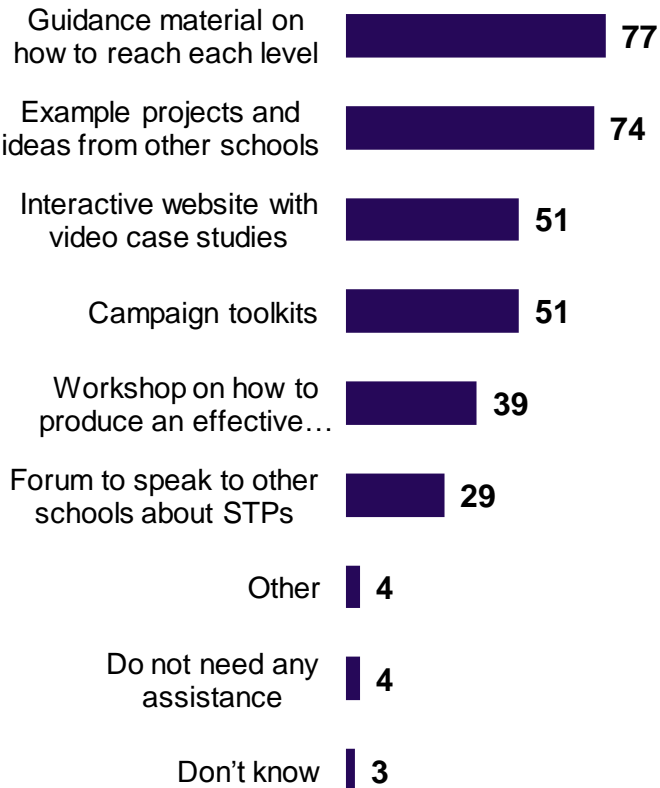
"It gives us a goal and something to work towards, it then encourages us to do it" (Gold)

Rewards don't necessarily motivate involvement or efforts

However, the rewards help generate interest amongst pupils and are a good cause for celebration

Desired resources from TfL

Resources that would assist schools (%) (prompted)



“PowerPoints to assist in assemblies because often when you do the assemblies it is getting the material that is the hardest” (Bronze)



This refers to advice specific to primary/ secondary and also to accreditation level

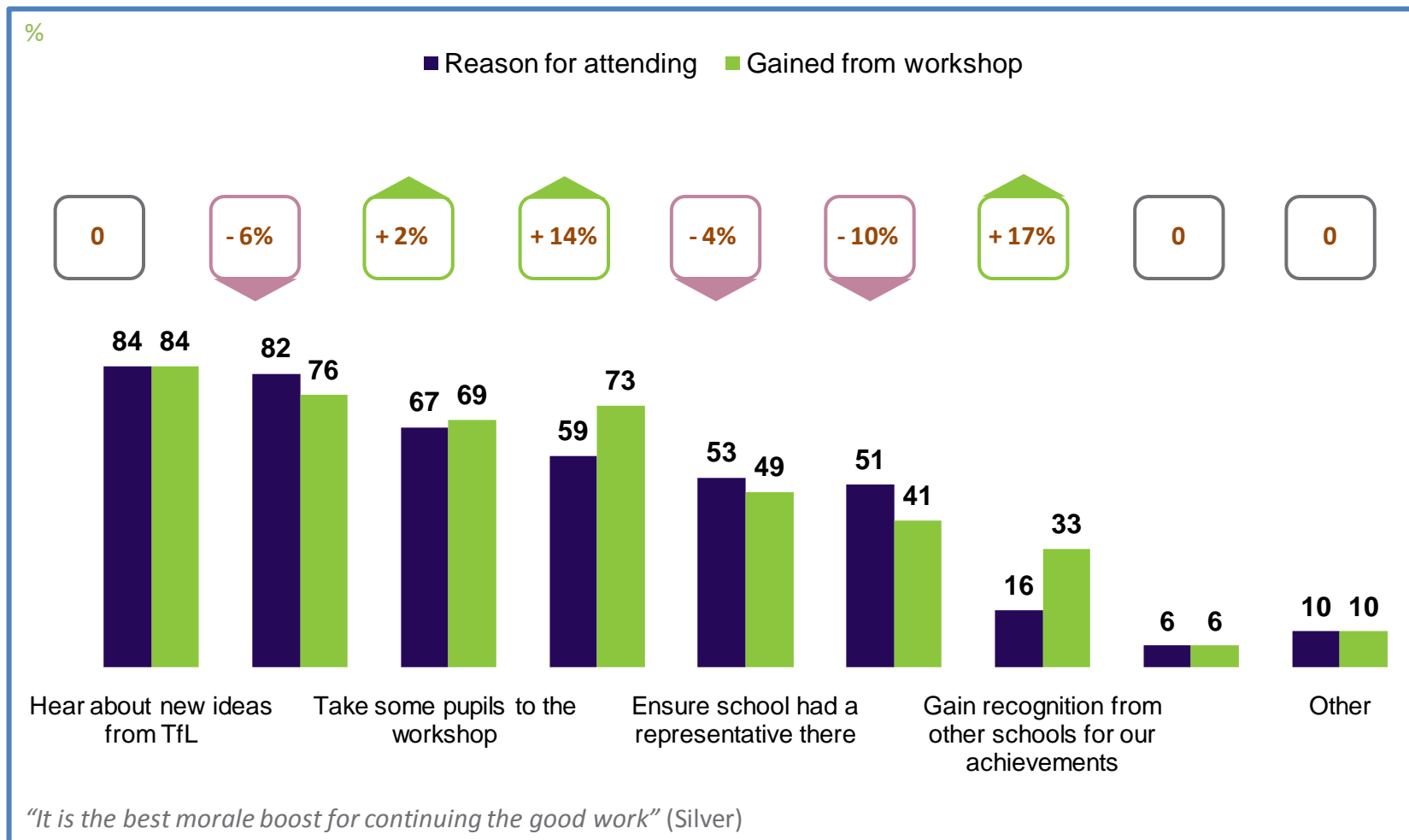
“[STAR] seems geared towards slightly older children who can bike to school....it would be good if more of the material were geared towards 3-7 year olds” (Silver Beacon)

Workshop attendance



Motivations for attending workshop & experiences gained

Networking and sharing ideas with TfL and other schools are key motivators to workshop attendance



A1 What were your reasons for attending the workshop? A2 And what did you actually gain from attending the workshop?
 Base: all workshop attendees excluding 'None of these' (n=49)

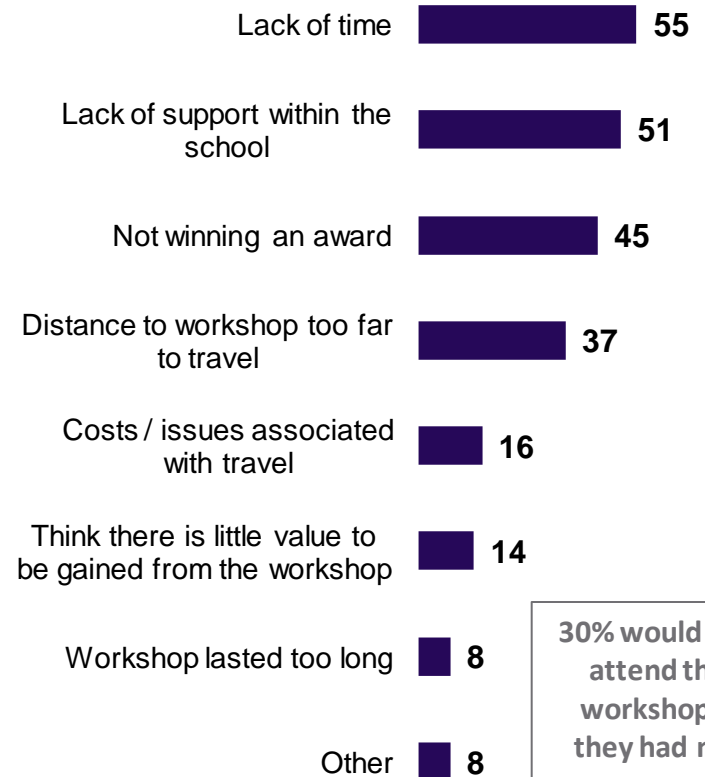
Discouraged workshop attendance

The greatest barrier to workshop attendance is a lack of time

Why they didn't attend the workshop (%) (prompted)



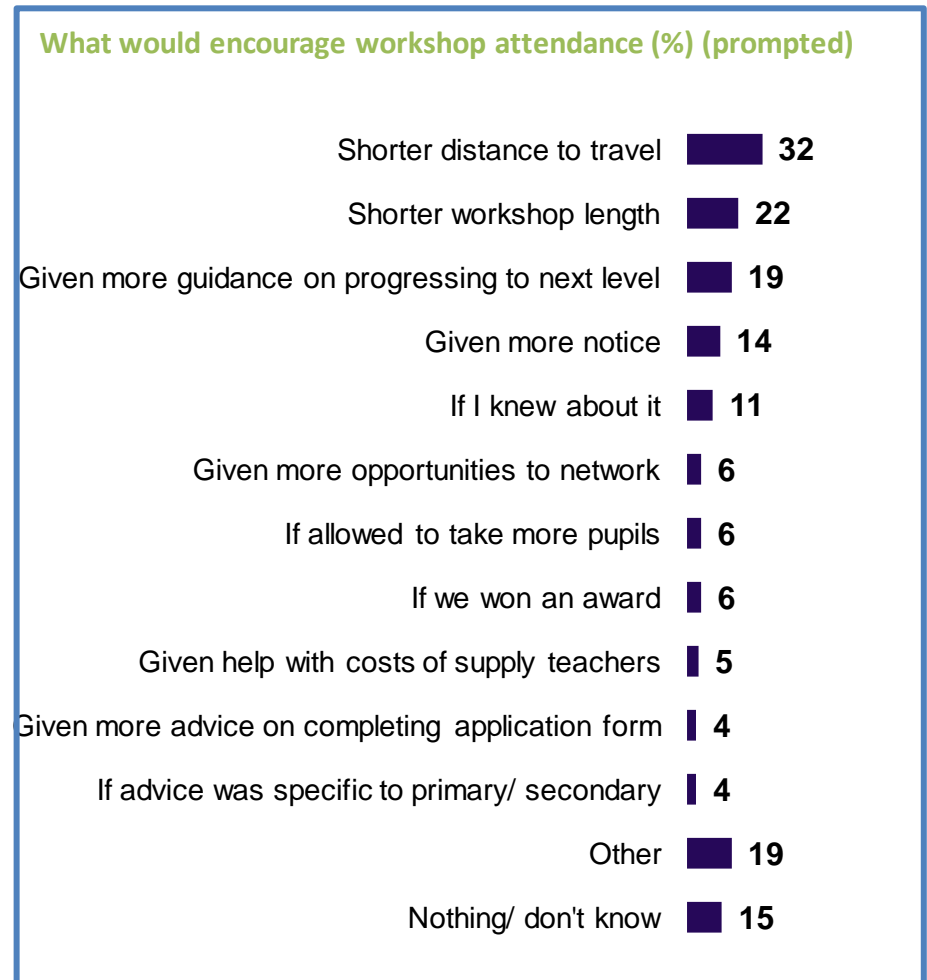
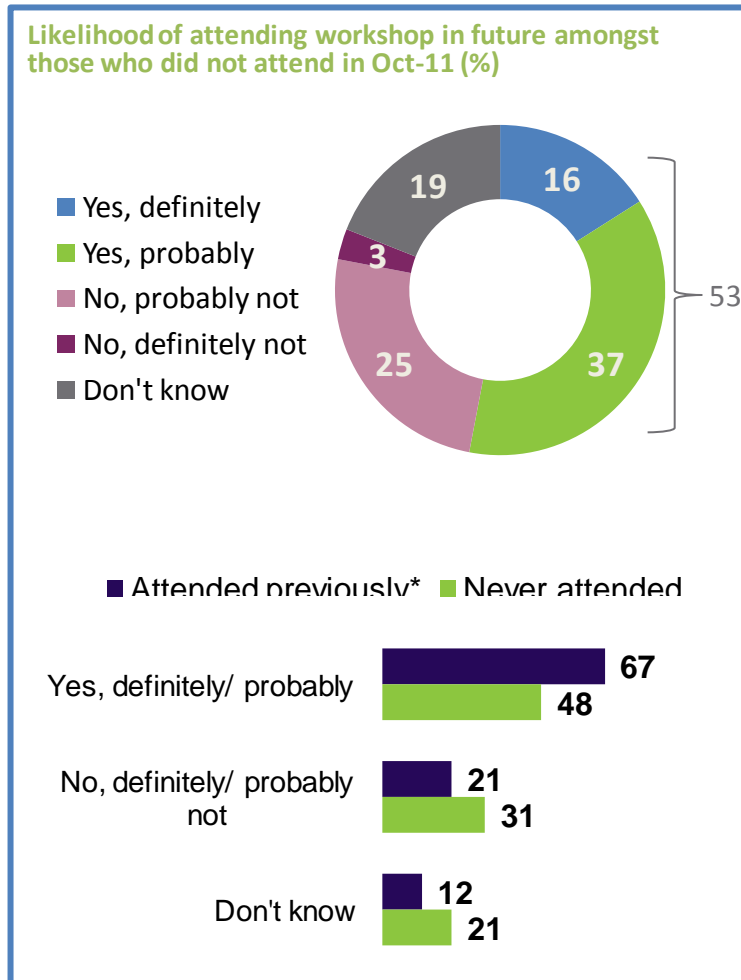
What factors might discourage workshop attendance (%) (prompted)



30% would not attend the workshop if they had not won an award

Attending the workshop amongst non-attendees

Half of those who have never attended a workshop say they are definitely/ probably likely to attend one in the future



* Caution low base size

D7 If given the opportunity, would you attend the workshop next year? Base: all workshop non-attendees (n=95) Base: all workshop non-attendees who have previously attended the workshop (n=24) Base: all workshop non-attendees who have never attended the workshop (n=71)
 D8 What would encourage you attend the workshop next year? Base: all workshop non-attendees not definitely likely to attend the workshop (n=80)

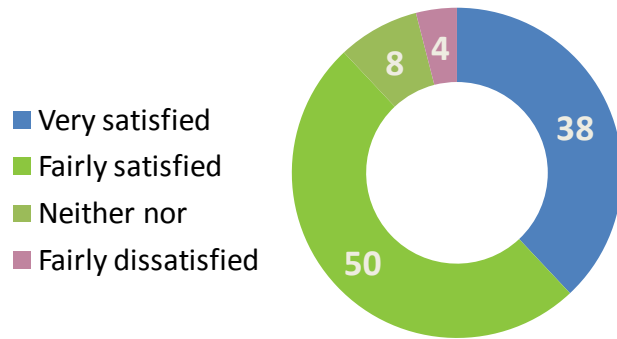
Evaluation of the workshop



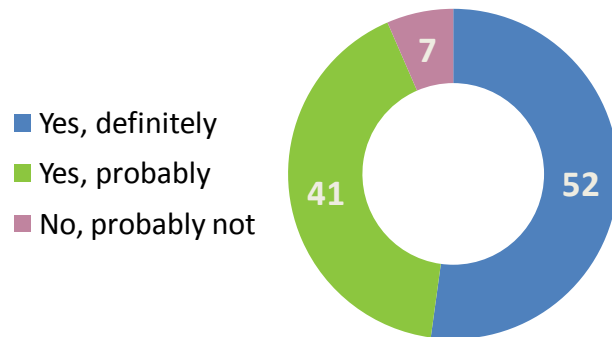
Satisfaction with the workshop

Very high levels of satisfaction with the workshop and high propensity to attend in future

Overall satisfaction with workshop (%)



Likelihood of attending workshop next year (%)



Opinions of the workshop (%)

- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither nor
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly disagree

It is valuable for our school to be recognised at the workshop (n=49)



The workshop is a good forum for exchanging knowledge with other schools and stakeholders (n=47)



It is appropriate for schools' achievements to be recognised at a forum such as the workshop (n=49)



Attending the workshop helps motivate my school to keep going and improve our STP (n=48)



The workshop helps to raise the profile of the STP within my school (n=49)

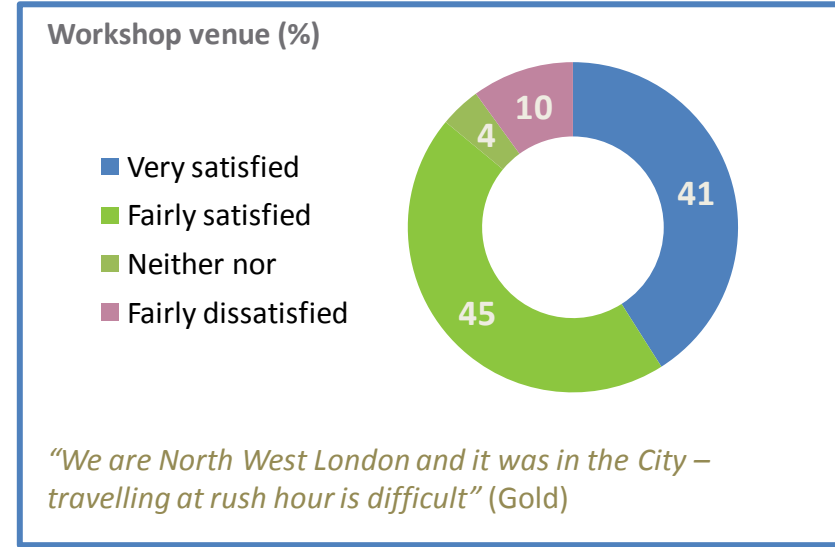
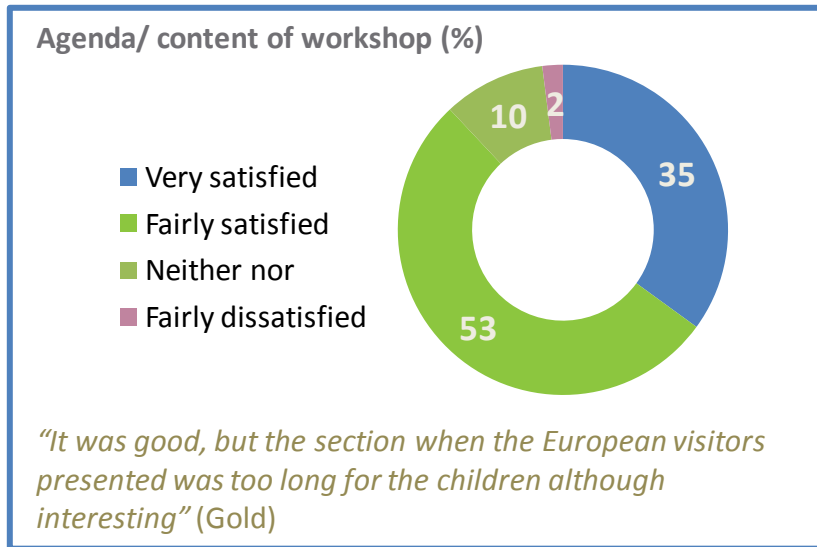
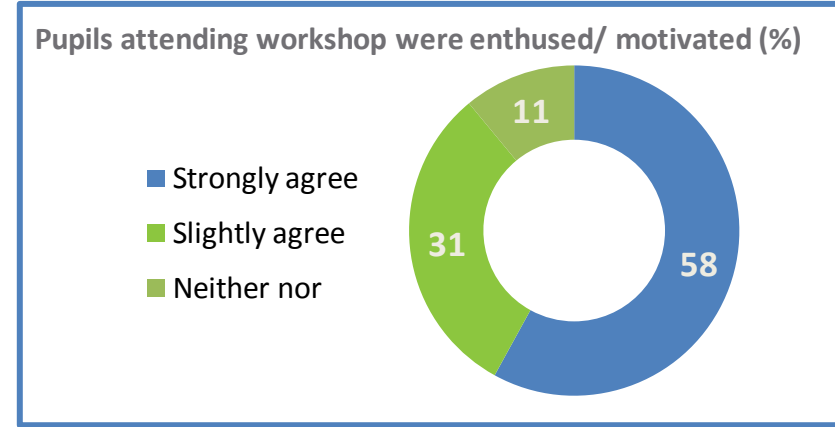
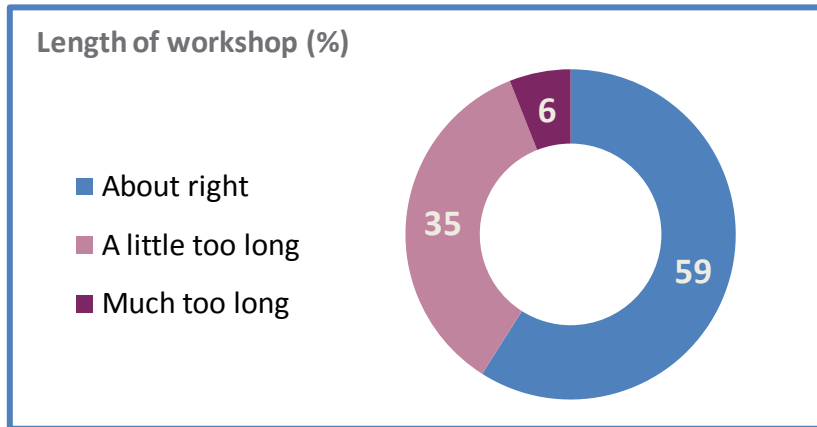


C7 Overall how satisfied were you with the workshop? Base: all workshop attendees excluding 'No opinion' (n=48)

A4 If given the opportunity, would you attend the workshop next year? Base: all workshop attendees excluding 'Don't know' (n=46) B1 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the workshop? Base: all workshop attendees excluding 'Don't know' (n=various)

Feedback on the workshop

There is room for the workshop to be shortened



C1 What is your view on the length of the workshop? C6 If any of your pupils attended the workshop, to what extent do you agree or disagree that they were enthused and motivated by attending the workshop? C2 How satisfied were you with the agenda / content of the workshop? C4 How satisfied were you with the workshop venue? Base: all workshop attendees excluding 'Don't know' and 'No opinion' (n=49/36/49/49)

Ways to improve the workshop

Suggested improvements to the workshop

5 mentions of sharing more learnings with other schools

4 mentions of the need for seats at lunch
mentions of grant money

3 mentions of shortening the workshop
mentions of being given more time to network

2 mentions for individual speakers to be given less time
mentions of working with schools at the same level
mentions of working with schools in the same borough (or with a borough representative)
mentions of more examples on motivating teenagers

"Include even more examples of work that has been completed in other schools" (Gold)

"We had travelled a long way and I didn't find it very relaxing or pleasant sitting on the floor to eat my lunch!" (Gold)

"More time is needed for staff to get together in small groups" (Bronze)

"It would be good to have the opportunity to speak to schools who are in a similar position to discuss ways forward - hearing about the outstanding schools sometimes makes me feel overwhelmed because the constraints on location, space etc." (Bronze)

"I would like to see some ideas for getting the message across to teenagers" (Bronze)

No consistent response as to what time of year the workshops should be held

- Sept/Oct is around open evenings for secondary schools which can be problematic
- Holding workshops locally will assist attendance irrespective of time of year

Moving online



Online movement



Travel champions are overwhelmingly in favour as long as it makes the application process...

Quicker

&

Easier

They see the move online as:

- Sensible
- Understandable given movement of most applications online
- Convenient (especially as it ties into the STP)
- More ecologically sustainable

"It's all in sync with the travel plan, it is all done for you and saves paperwork" (Bronze)

"I think it's the way most things are moving these days and people are used to doing it online. It is environmentally safe, it saves paper, it's sensible and it is convenient" (Bronze)

"It's a brilliant idea as long as you can log in and out and save your ideas. You need to be able to pull your evidence so that you know everything you need is saved there in that portal" (Silver)

Online movement



13 out of 21 (62%) travel champions aware the application process is moving online



6 (29%) have seen the new online application portal



8 out of 10 (80%) schools classified as 'not interested' in STAR say the application process moving online would encourage them to apply

The only concerns raised about the movement online were to do with possible IT issues and a preference for the ability to work with hard copies at times

"The new online [application] was easy to use but I would say that it was quite difficult to complete as I found in some cases that I had to enter the same information 3 or 4 times before it would save" (Bronze)

"It would be handy to have both options as the [hard copy] document is something that is completed by staff late at night" (Silver)

Case studies



Case Study: Primary School, Bronze

Enthusied travel
champion working
to progress through
STAR

Hooked into STAR by:

- Completing their STP in 2003-04
- Taking part in the Healthy Schools initiative

Focusing on:

- Walking rather than cycling as a more realistic and sustainable travel mode (there is little space for bike storage)

Actions taken include:

- Walk to School Week with trophy for best class
- Road safety assemblies given by pupils
- Canopy for parents to wait under whilst picking up pupils
- Map with home location of each pupil to encourage group travel

Stats:

- c.400 pupils
- Religious school
- Poor public transport
- Bronze trying for Silver
- Have Bike It and Cycle East (who do Bikeability and cycle awareness)



Map to show pupils' location

Their STAR experience

- They found the initial set-up very time-consuming but it has lessened since. The travel champion acknowledged that the time invested demonstrates the scheme's worth
- *"You want a high accolade because then it's not just every school getting it"*
- Ideally they would like regular local meeting to exchange ideas and generate inspiration
- *"If they had a local level borough meeting, say termly, so that people can get together and share experiences, rather than everybody having to reinvent the wheel. I think it would give moral support and impetus to individual coordinators"*
- There is a need for funding to reimburse time and efforts
- *"I think there should be a financial reward for the person who's leading on it because it's very time consuming and I [as Headteacher] can't afford to pay any additional salary. Even if it's just a retention payment for the year, like £1,000, a thank you"*
- They do not have a consistent and reliable team of support to turn to – involvement from parents and other staff depends on extent to which the specific projects inspire
- They are very glad for the workshops as an opportunity to celebrate their successes

Case Study: Secondary School, Gold Beacon

A 'can-do' school led by enthused champion and strongly supported by body of pupils

Stats:

- c.1,500 pupils
- Off a busy A-road
- Became Bronze in 2008 and progressed up to Gold
- Have Bikeability and Dr Bike



Bike rack

Hooked into STAR by:

- Completing their STP

Focusing on:

- Walking, cycling and public transport

Actions taken include:

- Cycling days
- Lessons (pupil-to-pupil) on how to use Journey Planner
- BMX demonstrations
- 'Travel Green Friday' every month
- Park & Stride campaign
- School travel champion is becoming an accredited cycling instructor

Their STAR experience

- There is a real collaboration between pupils and teachers
- There are two pupil committees which focus on transport initiatives (approx. 20 pupils in each group, one group is made up of 12-14 year olds and the other of 11 year olds)
- *"It's a great feeling to be with kids who enjoy what they're doing and it's kids from all walks of life. And they are getting life skills. We have coffee and consultation mornings and they run all that themselves, so they are good at networking and have lost a lot of their inhibitions, plus it will be great to put on their UCAS statement and on their CV"*
- *"The main thing is a real sense of achievement because here it's a real collaboration of teachers and students coming up with ideas, and it's really cool because it's your ideas being put forward and carried out"* (Pupil involved with STAR)
- Ex-pupils are asked to come back and talk about travel initiatives
- The pupil committees ensure the scheme's legacy with new pupils recruited each year to get involved
- *"We are getting in younger members. We set it up to keep the team going, so there's no real fear that it's going to stop. The day the team stops is the day the world ends!"*

Case Study: Primary School, Bronze

Less engaged school
as travel champion
is time poor and
under-resourced

Hooked into STAR by:

- Their STA advising them they fulfilled all the Bronze criteria and they should make a retrospective application

Focusing on:

- Walking and cycling rather than public transport use
- Decreasing the parking congestion currently experienced

Actions taken include:

- Cycle training
- Scooter pod
- Assemblies on sustainable travel
- Bling my bike

Stats:

- c.500 pupils
- Affluent area
- Positioned on quiet road with few traffic hazards
- Been Bronze for few years
- Have Bike It



'Come on let's walk!' banner

Their STAR experience

- Whilst acknowledging the scheme's benefit of looking good to parents and in Ofsted documentation, the travel champion ultimately feels under-resourced and time-poor
- *"This is just one of my roles, and is probably the least vital part of what I do and it's going to always be the thing that gets left till the end unless someone can take it over. It's all brilliant ideas but it's just more work for teachers."*
- They have no time to explore progression to Silver and are unlikely to pursue it
- *"They showed these folders of evidence of somebody that had gone for Silver and I thought 'yeah right'. It was a whole folder which was totally off-putting"*
- They feel that a key player in the scheme's success are the parents but that they cannot ultimately change parents' travel preferences
- *"The parents who come in the car will come in the car. On Walk to School Week, it's the same kids who walk to school because they live near...The kids like riding their bikes but they can only do what their parents let them do... you can't change parental views and habits because they are busy and have got to get to work"*

Conclusions



Conclusions

- 1 The scheme is working well to stimulate motivation and increase walking and cycling levels
- 2 The main hurdle to scheme uptake and success is the time-commitment it requires
- 3
 - There are a number of action points for TfL to consider to fine-tune the scheme's success
- 4
- 5 There is a high level of satisfaction with the workshops
- 6 The proposed plan to shorten and localise the workshops is in-line with research findings
 - The online application process is welcomed

Positive feedback on STAR

"I think the scheme is incredibly worthwhile and the children are motivated to help reduce car journeys" (Bronze)

"Thank you for giving our school the opportunity to get involved in this amazing project" (Bronze)

"I think that the accreditation system is positive for schools and it is not too difficult to get on the ladder and to achieve the bronze level which is helpful in terms of feeling success reasonably early on" (Gold)

"All the feedback we've had from parents has been really positive, that their children are now thinking about road safety" (Silver)

"It has been a worthy exercise and well worth pursuing" (Bronze)

"Travel to school was mainly heavy use of car journeys and now the majority walk" (Gold)

"The accreditation scheme has provided a framework for us to build our Travel Plan through different levels of 'effectiveness' and influence in our school community. We started small, and with the impetus of the accreditation scheme, have taken on new challenges to try to make our Travel Plan more effective year on year" (Gold)



Appendix

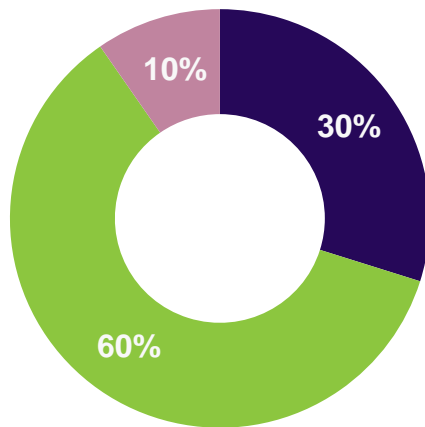


Joining STAR

The majority feel it is straightforward to join STAR and that the levels are sufficiently differentiated

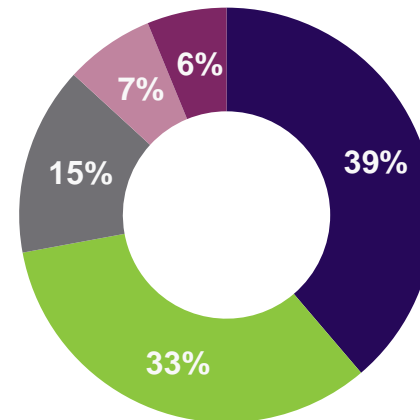
How straightforward it is to join STAR

- Very straightforward
- Quite straightforward
- Not very straightforward



Accreditation levels are sufficiently differentiated

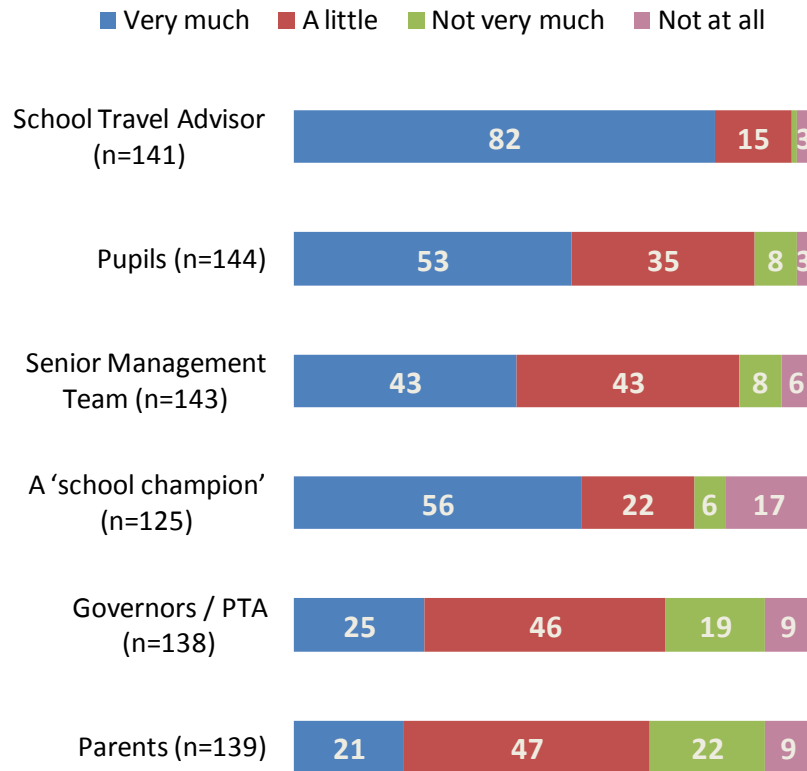
- Strongly agree
- Slightly agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Slightly disagree
- Strongly disagree



Internal support and use of Kite Mark

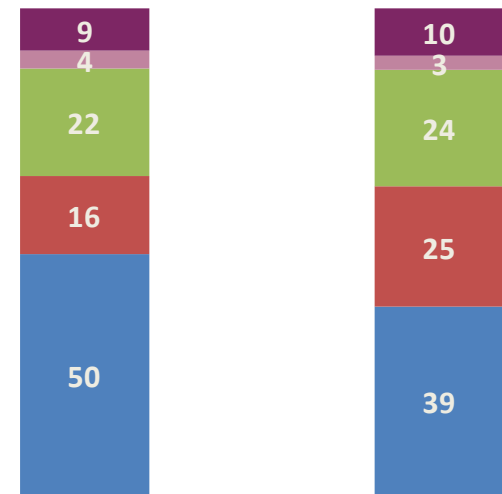
STAs play a pivotal role in motivating and helping schools to develop their STP

Extent of motivation and impetus to develop and progress STP (%)



Value of rewards (%)

Strongly agree, Slightly agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Slightly disagree, Strongly disagree



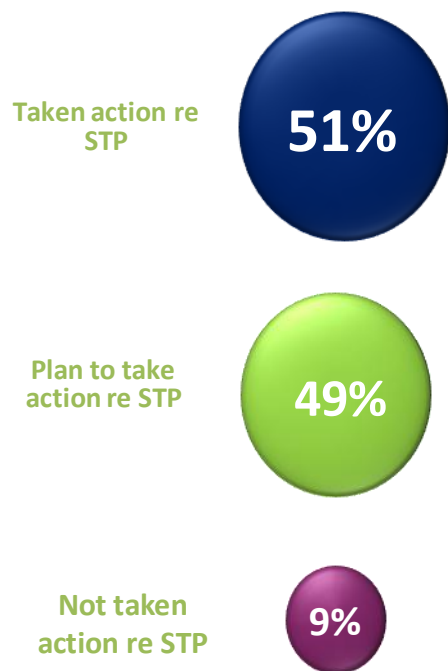
It is appropriate for TfL to support the work of schools through the Kite Mark (n=137)

It is valuable for my school to have the Kite Mark to help communicate our achievements (n=134)

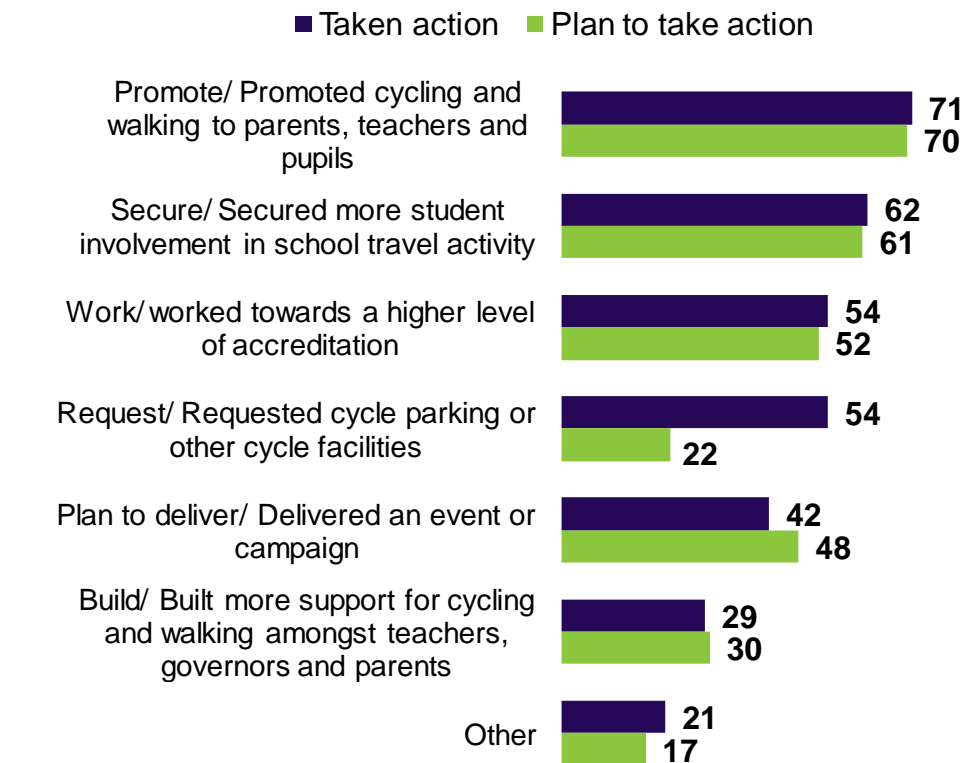
Actions taken as a result of attending the workshop

Many actions taken in relation to walking and cycling (though may not tie directly to workshop attendance)

As a result of attending the workshop...



Actions taken as a result of attending the workshop (%) (prompted)



* Caution low base size

B3 Have you taken, or are you planning to take, any actions regarding your School Travel Plan as a result of attending the workshop? Base: all workshop attendees excluding 'Don't know' (n=47) B4 What <have you already done/ what are you planning to do>? Base: all workshop attendees who have done anything/ plan to do anything (n=24*/23*)