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# Evaluation of Road Safety Scotland's Early Years Resource

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# **EVALUATION OF ROAD SAFETY SCOTLAND'S EARLY YEARS RESOURCE**

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## Executive Summary

### Key Findings

- Feedback on the content and design of the books was largely positive, and the resource is fit-for-purpose as an early years road safety education tool.
- There is a strong brand and a recognisable character that children, educators and parents seem to engage with well.
- The main limitations of the resource are the length of the books and the sophistication of some of the stories, especially for ante-pre-school children.
- Some minor adjustments to the ordering and distribution process, including a possible shift to electronic mechanisms, may maximise uptake and reach.
- Parental understanding of the purpose and rationale for the books could be improved, as well as awareness of the full range of resources available.
- The big and small books are being used to complement outside active learning and are being used in a range of innovative ways.
- There seems to be a genuine enthusiasm for the resources to continue to evolve and expand into new mediums.

### Background

Launched in 2010, Go Safe with Ziggy is Scotland's main road safety programme for children in their early years. Focussed around a series of six books, the approach targets three key age groups: 0-3, pre-school and the transition into Primary 1, in line with the Scottish Government's policy on early intervention and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)<sup>1</sup>.

Each of the books is available in large copy format ('big books') for use as a teaching resource by professionals in early years' establishments and primary schools, as well as small books for the home to be used by children and their parents/carers. The books are also available in Gaelic and Scots, and audio copies of the books are accessible via the 'Go Safe with Ziggy' dedicated website. The online resource also provides road safety information and interactive activities. The Ziggy books are made available for free to all early years establishments across Scotland, however, take-up remains far from universal.

With the programme having been in operation for just over five years, an independent evaluation was commissioned to explore experiences of the resource to date. This report details the learning from the research, and considers how the evidence may be used to contribute to the onward development, promotion and use of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>

## Research Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the work was to evaluate the content, distribution and use of the Go Safe with Ziggy series of books in order to understand whether they are designed, distributed and utilised in an effective way, offering value for money and to identify where potential improvements might be made.

## Research Methodology

The research methodology had four key strands including: a desk based familiarisation and technical review exercise, an online survey and telephone interviews with a sample of early years practitioners and teaching professionals, focus groups with parents and carers across Scotland, and workshops with road safety professionals and early years practitioners.

The online survey provided the main data to inform the evaluation, and shaped significantly the overall evaluation findings that are presented here. A total of 279 valid responses were received from a mix of schools, nurseries and community based playgroups. The majority of respondents indicated that they worked with either ante-pre-school (78%) or pre-school aged children (76%)<sup>2</sup>, with most working with both age groups (73%). Only one in four respondents said that they worked with Primary 1 aged children (25%).

Twenty semi-structured telephone interviews with early years practitioners were completed, which sought to explore in more detail the use and perceptions of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources and build on the survey findings. This was complemented by four focus group sessions with parents and carers of children in their early years in different geographic locations around Scotland, and two separate half-day workshops (one in Glasgow and one in Aberdeen) to bring together road safety professionals and early years practitioners. The purpose of the workshops was to share learning from the available research findings, and to seek views on how to take forward the emerging learning.

Across the research strands, there was considerable variation in the numbers of respondents who took part between local authorities and this should be borne in mind when interpreting the data presented in this report. It should also be noted that participation in the research cannot be taken as a proxy for engagement with the Go Safe with Ziggy resources and some of the views of those who use the resources most may not be represented in the research.

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<sup>2</sup> Ante-pre-school refers to the penultimate year before children are eligible to start school (typically ages 3-4) while pre-school refers to the year immediately prior to commencing primary education (typically ages 4-5)

## Evaluation Findings

### Distribution and Uptake of the Resources

The average uptake of the small books among early years establishments is around 47%. While there do not appear to be any clear links between geography or deprivation and uptake, there are clearly some local authorities where ordering activity is consistently higher or lower than the national average. Pro-active, targeted promotion by local Road Safety Officers (RSOs) may be the way forward in achieving more equitable distribution and use across the country, although it is recognised that access to RSOs and other resources to promote road safety education for the early years also varies considerably across the country.

Although the existing distribution process seems to operate well, there is some confusion regarding how and when the books should be ordered and there may be some preference to making the ordering system more flexible throughout the year, including the capacity to order full sets of books at a single ordering point.

The findings from the online survey indicated that there was a preference for online or email ordering compared to the paper based ordering that currently exists. The distribution of order forms could also potentially be accompanied by more direct communication and information about both the online resources, support resources and the main aims of the books to ensure that the full range of resources are being used to maximum effect. Awareness of the online resources was found to be particularly poor and there is scope for better signposting of these resources, perhaps via the distribution and ordering process.

Local practices for distributing books to parents varies and there is some evidence that a more personal approach to distribution, including guidance or supporting information directed at parents/carers may ensure that books are used as intended.

There might be further scope for Road Safety Scotland, in collaboration with Education Scotland and the Scottish Government, to refine and update the existing database of early years establishments that is held to ensure that it is up-to-date, and that ordering data is more accessible and can be monitored more regularly to identify variation in uptake.

### Use of the Resources

While most establishments still have and use their big book packs (which were distributed when the programme first launched), there seems to be some desire for the big books to be replenished since the original copies have been misplaced or become worn in several establishments.

The small books appear to be well received overall although some particular books appear to be ordered more by establishments than others and to be more recognisable to parents/carers and practitioners alike. It is not clear from the research why this is the case. Given that each of the books contains different road safety messages, there may be scope for ensuring the other books achieve equal distribution to ensure that the messages contained within them are not being missed.

The big and small books are being used to complement outside active learning and in a range of innovative ways. There is perhaps appetite from staff to reinforce the messages from the books with more interactive talks, and while there may be a preference for this to include visits from external partners, the proportionality and cost implications of this would need to be considered. Parents and carers report a child-led approach to using the books, where children act as the main instigators for use. The books are also being used as a reference resource in cases where children fail to act safely.

### Content and Design of the Resources

Feedback on the content and design of the books was largely positive, and it seems that the current resource is fit-for-purpose as an early years road safety education tool. Most respondents who took part in this research reported that children liked the Ziggy character and generally appear to engage well with the style of the books. The Ziggy brand is clear and recognisable and the use of repetition across the series of books is welcomed.

Over 75% of survey respondents rated the appearance, length, age appropriateness, format and usefulness of the books as either 'good' or 'excellent'. The limitations raised by some respondents were the length of the books and the sophistication of some of the stories for ante-pre-school children. This means that early years practitioners and parents are adapting the books to meet their own needs. This in itself is not necessarily a limitation, since the books were designed with Curriculum for Excellence in mind, which encourages non-prescriptive learning based on children's individual interests/preferences. It may, however, be acting as a barrier to more frequent use, in some cases.

The online resources, soft toys and interactive resources all received positive feedback from those who had used them and there is potential for greater use of these by raising awareness of the full range of Ziggy resources, especially among parents and carers. Although a recent addition to the Go Safe with Ziggy resource, the new journey pack was something that is already being well received and, based on comments from professionals and parents alike, it seems like it has potential to further improve the home links agenda.

There seems to be a genuine enthusiasm for the resource to continue to evolve and expand into new mediums. While this is a positive finding from the work, it must be recognised that the time and other financial resources that would be required to deliver against some of the wishes expressed by parents and practitioners alike would be considerable, and may be difficult to implement both nationally and locally.

### **Conclusions**

Overall, the Go Safe with Ziggy resource is well liked, has many strong and attractive features and addresses many of the weaknesses highlighted in the review of the road safety resource that preceded it. There is a strong brand and a recognisable character that children, educators and parents on the whole seem to be engaging with well. The design of the books is generally seen as good, although the length and



complexity of the books was highlighted by some as a potential barrier to use among the younger aged children. Parental understanding of the purpose and rationale for the books could also be improved, but neither of these issues seem to be creating significant barriers to use. The full range of resources is welcomed, but some support materials are being under-utilised due to a lack of awareness. Based on the feedback gathered, the resource itself requires little in terms of re-design or development except, perhaps, some simplification of story lines and main road safety messages for those at the younger age of intended user-group spectrum.

The biggest challenge, moving forward, is in ensuring that the right people are made aware of the full range of resources, and are encouraged to order them. Updating and refining the ordering and distribution process seems to be key to maximising the future success of the resource and helping it realise its full potential. This will ensure that children in their early years, and their parents and carers, continue to learn the importance of 'going safe'.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

In September 2015, KSO Research was commissioned to undertake an independent evaluation of Road Safety Scotland's Early Years Resource: 'Go Safe with Ziggy'.

Launched in 2010, Go Safe with Ziggy is Scotland's main road safety programme for children in their early years. Focussed around a series of six books, the approach targets three key age groups: 0-3, pre-school and the transition into Primary 1, in line with the Scottish Government's policy on early intervention and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)<sup>3</sup>. The Ziggy books are made available for free to all early years establishments across Scotland each year including all public, private and public-private nurseries. Each of the books is available in large copy format ('big books') for use as a teaching resource by professionals in early years' establishments and primary schools, as well as small books for the home to be used by children and their parents/carers. The hope is that the small books can be used at home to complement the work done in class and build strong links between home and school, promoting consistent road safety messages in both environments. The books are provided to all who submit an order, however, take-up remains far from universal across the country.

Given that the Ziggy books have now been in operation for just over five years, it was considered timely to evaluate whether they are delivering against their aims and to explore potential for further improvements based on users' experiences of the resource to date. This report details the learning from the research that was commissioned and considers how the evidence may be used to contribute to the onward development, promotion and use of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources.

## 1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the research was to evaluate the **content, distribution and use** of the Go Safe with Ziggy series of books in order to understand whether they are designed, distributed and utilised in an effective way, offering **value for money** and to identify where potential **improvements** might be made.

Specifically, the research sought to provide an understanding of:

- how the books and online resources are being used across the country;
- how the books are being distributed to parents/carers;
- how the resources are perceived by users, in terms of content and design; and
- suggestions for improvements to the content, distribution and/or use of the Go Safe with Ziggy series of books.

Although the main focus of the work was on the Go Safe with Ziggy books, consideration was also given to the wider offering (including the online and audio resources that accompany the books, and associated collateral), to provide a more holistic view of the resource overall.

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<sup>3</sup> See <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/>

### 1.3 Research Methodology

The research methodology had four key strands, as follows:

- **a familiarisation exercise:** including interviews with those involved in the resource distribution process, a literature and data review, and a technical review of the Go Safe with Ziggy books;
- **engagement with early years practitioners:** including an online survey of early years practitioners and telephone interviews with a sample of teaching professionals;
- **engagement with parents/carers:** through small focus group sessions held in four different sites across Scotland; and
- **workshops with road safety professionals and early years practitioners:** designed to bring together representatives from different backgrounds to share early learning from the research and discuss suggestions for any future refinement or improvements.

The approach was formative, with findings from the early stages of the work informing the subsequent development of surveys, interview schedules, focus group topic guides and the workshop content.

#### Desk Research and Technical Book Review

An early task for the research was to complete a technical review of the Go Safe with Ziggy books. This was designed to provide the researchers with a comprehensive overview of the content, style and overall nature of the books in order to inform the subsequent development of questionnaires and topic guides for engaging with the books' users. The technical review was undertaken at two stages: first, on inception and secondly, at the end of the research, following analysis of feedback from professionals, parents and carers with a view to better understanding and contextualising the feedback that was received. Each of the core books were reviewed separately against the same criteria to allow comparisons to be made between the different resources. Both the large and small copies of the books were included, along with the audio and online versions of the books. Although the Gaelic versions of the books and the accompanying multi-media resources/activities were not included in the initial review, views on these resources were sought in subsequent stages of the research.

#### Online Survey of Early Years Practitioners

The online survey provided the main data to inform the evaluation, and shaped significantly the overall evaluation findings that are presented here. The survey was designed to be completed online, with invitations to take part issued by email. Permission to approach schools and early years establishments in each local authority was sought from Directors of Education. Establishments from all local authorities were then invited to take part in the research, except for those in Moray where the council asked to be excluded from the research. To facilitate survey distribution, covering emails were designed for Head Teachers or other equivalent

heads of establishments. The link to the survey was included in the covering email alongside assurances of anonymity and contact details for the research team. Email addresses for primary schools were sourced from the Scottish Government's school contacts database (a total of 2196). Addresses for early years establishments (including public, private and public-private partnership nurseries) were sourced from the Care Inspectorate database. These were cross-referenced with the 3130<sup>4</sup> establishments listed on the Education Scotland early years database that is used for the distribution of the Go Safe with Ziggy order forms (which does not hold email addresses) to ensure that only those who had previously been invited to order the books were included in the survey.

A large proportion of establishments listed on the Education Scotland database could not be linked to email addresses on the Care Inspectorate database. Some of the establishments had specifically asked for their email address not to be included on the Care Inspectorate database and some groups did not fall under the remit of the Care Inspectorate (e.g. some playgroups and mother and toddler groups). Given that these groups are still eligible to receive the Go Safe with Ziggy books, independent efforts were made to trace their email addresses so that they were represented in the survey sample. In cases where email addresses were missing, online searches were carried out to try and find up-to-date email addresses. It was considered that the time and resources required to telephone establishments to ask for their email addresses was disproportionate to the likely returns.

The online search revealed that some of the establishments listed on the Education Scotland database had moved premises, changed name or had closed. Several of the early years establishments listed had the same email addresses as schools where the two were co-located (1186). There were also a number of duplicate entries (63 in total). Following removal of primary schools from the list (to avoid contacting them twice), a total of 1467 separate early years establishments were emailed.

Invitations to take part were issued by Transport Scotland's Analytical Services instead of being distributed directly by the research team. It was felt that issuing invitations from a central, recognisable government organisation would help to highlight the legitimacy of the work and hopefully maximise response rates. Respondents were initially given between 2-3 weeks to respond, and the survey deadline was extended by a further 1-2 weeks following a reminder email<sup>5</sup>.

The questionnaire was also made available in paper format on request, and participants were offered an opportunity to take part by telephone, if preferred. There was one request for a paper copy of the questionnaire, and this was issued but was not returned.

A total of 279 valid responses were received from the 3663 email addresses that were contacted. It is important to stress that some of the email addresses may have been incorrect, have changed or been updated, may have been addressed to staff

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<sup>4</sup> Number based on the October 2015 database, excluding establishments within the Moray Council area

<sup>5</sup> The dates of the initial emails and reminder emails varied due to the staggered nature of distribution over a period of 1-2 days

who were no longer at the establishment or may have been linked to establishments that were no longer open (e.g. community based playgroups). Given the mode of distribution, it is also likely that some of the emails were undelivered, may have been blocked or not opened by the intended recipients, and so it is not possible to know exactly how many of the invitations were actually received. Using the figure of 3663 as a guide, however, the indicative response rate was 8%.

The majority of respondents indicated that they worked with either ante-pre-school (78%) or pre-school aged children (76%)<sup>6</sup>, with most working with both age groups (73%). Only one in four respondents said that they worked with Primary 1 aged children (25%). A total of 21 respondents (8%) said that they worked with all age groups (i.e. ante-pre-school through to Primary 1). Where respondents indicated that they worked with 'other' children, this was typically those aged 0-5 or included children up to Primary 2. Some of the smaller rural or island based establishments worked with composite classes up to and including children in Primary 7.

Overall, the proportionate breakdown of email invitations issued was 60% to primary schools and 40% to early years establishments. With only 25% of the final sample indicating that they worked with Primary 1 aged children, the proportionate response from early years establishments seems to have been considerably greater than that of schools<sup>7</sup>.

There was considerable variation in the proportion of responses received from those invited to take part between local authorities and this should be borne in mind when interpreting the data presented in this report. It should also be noted that participation in the survey cannot be taken as a proxy for engagement with the Go Safe with Ziggy resources and some of those who use the resources most may simply not be represented in the survey.

### Telephone Interviews with Early Years Practitioners

Following the survey and analysis of early responses, a topic guide was developed for semi-structured telephone interviews with early years practitioners, which sought to explore in more detail the use and perceptions of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources.

Volunteers to participate in the telephone interviews were identified via the survey, with respondents being asked to indicate if they would be willing to take part in a telephone interview and, if so, to provide follow-up contact details. From 53 volunteers, a total of 39 were invited to take part. The selection was based on geography, SIMD rank, establishment type and broad differences in survey responses (favourable and less favourable feedback), to ensure that a good mix of views was canvassed. A total of 20 interviews were carried out.

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<sup>6</sup> Ante-pre-school refers to the penultimate year before children are eligible to start school (typically ages 3-4) while pre-school refers to the year immediately prior to commencing primary education (typically ages 4-5)

<sup>7</sup> The 2009 Road Safety Early Years Resource Consultation: Analysis of Responses showed a similar response pattern with 70% of consultation responses received from nurseries/playgroups compared to 30% from primary schools/pre-5 units

All interviews lasted around 10 minutes. Detailed notes were written up immediately following each interview, and qualitative feedback is provided alongside the survey results presented in this report. As the selection of respondents was not proportionate to the overall survey sentiments expressed, but was designed to seek a range of views, some of those with less favourable views may be over-represented in the qualitative feedback overall, and this should be remembered when interpreting the data presented.

### Focus Groups with Parents and Carers

A total of four focus group sessions were held with parents and carers of children in their early years. Meetings were held in four separate geographical sites, a mix of rural and urban, which were chosen on the basis either of their local authority being well represented or poorly represented in the annual distribution/uptake figures for the books. The groups were held at neutral venues, and in all but one case this was at the venues where parents/carers and their children already attended regular groups together (e.g. at playgroups in church/community halls). Across the groups, the range in age of children cared for was 0-12 years and there was a mix of parents/carers who had only one child, up to 4 children. This meant that, in many cases, parents were able to reflect on their experiences of receiving the books not only for their youngest children but also older siblings. A total of 37 people took part in the groups and this included mothers, fathers, grandparents and childminders. Unlike professional participants in the research, parents/carers were given a small cash incentive to thank them for their time and to cover cost of travel to the meetings. Sessions were audio recorded with permission and detailed notes were written up after the sessions, including illustrative verbatim quotes for inclusion in this report.

### Workshops with Professional Stakeholders

Towards the end of the research, two separate half-day workshops were convened to bring together road safety professionals and early years practitioners. The purpose of the workshops was to share learning from the research to that point, and seek views on how to take forward the emerging findings. Participants were recruited via existing networks (e.g. all Road Safety Officers across Scotland were invited to attend), via the online survey (respondents could indicate if they wished to attend) as well as via open invitations issued to early years establishments in the areas surrounding the workshop venues. Both events took place in neutral locations over a period of three hours in the afternoon. Across the two workshops, a total of 25 delegates took part (11 in Aberdeen and 14 in Glasgow). The sessions included a mix of presentations from the researchers and interactive group discussions and activities to share and document views and ideas. Participants were invited to give verbal feedback in response to group questions on the day and these were also documented on flip charts and sticky notes which were taken away for later analysis.

## **1.4 Research Caveats and Report Presentation**

It is worth noting that, given the relatively small response rate to the survey overall, and the small numbers of people involved in the qualitative elements of the work, the findings cannot be generalised too widely. In particular, the disproportionate and

varied level of response from around the country means that comparisons between areas should not be made.

While the overall response rate was lower than anticipated, it is worth emphasising that the online survey approach, with email invitations, represented the most cost effective means of ensuring that all primary schools and known early years establishments were contacted. Alternative postal or telephone survey approaches would have been considerably more resource intensive and would have required a sampling approach to have been taken instead of an all-inclusive approach. There is no way of knowing if the resultant sample would have been any larger than that achieved using the online approach, and so, although the response rate was low, it most likely represents the most effective and efficient means of generating the data that was required for the research.

It is also worth reiterating that the findings presented here represent only the views of those who opted to take part in the research and so there will also be a potential bias in the views expressed (i.e. we do not know the views of those who chose not to take part, and these may or may not differ significantly from the individuals who did respond).

Finally, the under-representation of schools should also be borne in mind. While the low level of response precludes any in-depth testing for statistically significant differences between groups of respondents (e.g. schools compared with pre-schools), the volume of data generated overall, and the level of detail provided by research participants still provides a relatively robust basis on which to evaluate the resources. The mix in different respondent groups reached across the research stages also means that the evaluation encompasses feedback from a wide range of users.

The remaining chapters detail the findings from across all of the research stages and are structured to provide learning in relation to the design, distribution and use of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources. Any differences in the views of different stakeholder groups are highlighted and, where qualitative evidence is cited, the strength or prominence of the sentiments expressed is detailed.

## 2 Development and Design of the Resource

### 2.1 Road Safety Education in Scotland

Immediately before the introduction of the Go Safe with Ziggy Early Years Resource in 2010, the main road safety education tool for 0-5 year olds in Scotland was the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland (CTCS). Established in 1995, the CTCS sought to develop skills and awareness of key road safety messages for pre-school children through provision of educational resources provided directly to parents and carers at home. The CTCS was a membership scheme, and every parent/carers was invited to register their child with the CTCS around their child's third birthday. The invitations were sent by post from Health Boards to all parents/carers of pre-school children in Scotland, although uptake was variable around the country.

The core resource for the CTCS was six workbooks, sent out directly to families who were registered with the club. The workbooks were interactive and factual worksheets were also provided to parents to help them in teaching their children about road safety and guide them in using the road safety tools.

Other partners were also involved in the distribution of CTCS materials and in encouraging use of the resources. This included:

- copies of the main road safety books being provided to nurseries and playgroups as well as song/story tapes;
- a dedicated childminder's pack which included road safety themed activities/stickers/story and song tapes; and
- sample copies of the CTCS books being sent to Health Visitors along with registration forms so that they might encourage parents and carers to engage with the scheme.

In 2005, data showed that the uptake of CTCS membership in Scotland was around 50% of all parents and carers of three year olds and the proportionate uptake had declined since the initiative started in 1995. There was also wide variation in uptake around the country. In particular, uptake was lower in areas of high socio-economic deprivation.

In 2006, research was commissioned by Road Safety Scotland to better understand why levels of engagement were not as high as was hoped, and to explore differences in uptake based on social deprivation<sup>8</sup>. This research identified that some of the main barriers to joining the scheme were:

- poor adult literacy and other language barriers, including English not being the first language in some households;
- the reliance on parents/carers needing to be proactive in joining the club;

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<sup>8</sup> ODS (2006) *Increasing Membership of the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland in Areas of High Deprivation*, Scottish Executive Social Research, <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2006/07/17113255/0>



- low levels of encouragement from nurseries/playgroups to get parents/carers to join, with better promotion of the initiative from Health Visitors;
- problems with the distribution of invitations to join the club, with high levels of home movement, particularly among families living in areas of deprivation meaning that invitations were being missed. Others simply did not recall receiving the membership forms;
- rigidity in the membership process, with only a short window to join the club, and all membership requests needing to be sent by post; and
- problems with awareness of the initiative and an unidentifiable theme/logo.

Encouragingly, this early research also indicated that road safety was considered to be an important issue among parents/carers and they were keen to ensure that their children received appropriate road safety education. Views on the resources that were part of the CTCS were also positive - particularly the gifted books and stickers that accompanied them. The main reservations regarding the resources were the perceived out-datedness of the characters in the books (i.e. balloon characters), the need for simpler texts and book layouts and the heavy reliance on parents to work directly with the children using resources - something that children could learn from more independently might be welcomed. Comments were also made that while the stories for children were engaging, the factual notes for parents were not and they were unlikely to read them.

Other comments included a need for memorable messages from each book, with a focus on just one or two key points being emphasised instead of multiple messages which might easily get confused. Support in using the resources was also welcomed, as well as online or interactive materials to support the printed books.

On the recommendation from this research, the Scottish Government approved the development of a new road safety resource for children in early years. In developing the new resource, Road Safety Scotland and the Scottish Government took forward a consultation with stakeholders to explore preferences in the ways that pre-school road safety education could be taken forward<sup>9</sup>. This engagement revealed some key points on the preferred content and format of any revised early years resources, including that:

- joint approaches were preferred, where lessons learned in pre-school establishments could be reinforced in the home environment;
- resources needed to be simple, accessible and age appropriate. Previous resources, such as the CTCS were seen as too lengthy, too complicated and with no clear or identifiable lead character;

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<sup>9</sup> ODS Consulting (2009) *Road Safety Early Years Resource Consultation: Analysis of Responses*, <http://www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk/publications-and-statistics/road-safety-early-years-resource-consultation-analysis-responses>

- books needed to be robust in their design and accompanied by supporting resources, such as online and interactive resources. Songs, stories and activities to engage children were key;
- resources needed to be available in accessible formats and additional languages, including Gaelic, and the messages conveyed needed to reflect the diversity in residential settings that children come from (i.e. urban and rural);
- provision needed to be universal and not based on 'opt in' approaches – access to resources needed to be automatically available to all; and
- links between the resource and the Curriculum for Excellence were needed to allow teaching professionals and parents/carers to understand how road safety education fits within the broader early years education objectives.

This earlier research ultimately led to the development of the Go Safe with Ziggy series of books and accompanying resources.

## 2.2 Exploring the Full Range of Resources

The core of the 'Go Safe with Ziggy' resource is a series of six books, these being:

### Ante-pre-school year (age 3-4)

- Ziggy and the Lollipop
- Ziggy Visits Granny
- Ziggy's Sunny Holiday

### Pre-school year (age 4-5)

- Ziggy's Halloween Wish
- Ziggy Goes Zab-a-ding-a-Wheeeee

### Primary 1 (age 5-6)

- Ziggy and Maggie Start School

Although the books are numbered 1 to 6 on their spines, they do not follow a particular sequence. Further, although different books can be ordered for each of the two different ages of children at different times (i.e. Ziggy and the Lollipop for ante-pre-school age children), this split is simply to ensure that distribution is staggered in a systematic way over two years. All books can be used by either the older or younger aged children over time.

The main character in each book is Ziggy, an alien from the planet Cosmos, who has come to learn how to 'Go Safe' on and around the road. The other main characters in the books are two children (Andrew and Maggie) and their mother. The family take Ziggy with them on outside journeys to learn about road safety together.

Each of the books is available in large copy format ('big books') for use as a teaching resource by professionals in early years' establishments and primary schools, as well as small books for the home to be used by children and their parents/carers. The books are also available in Gaelic and Scots, and audio copies of the books are accessible via the 'Go Safe with Ziggy' dedicated website<sup>10</sup>. The website itself contains dedicated areas with tailored resources for educators, parents and children (the 'Ziggy Zone'), which contain:

- **Educators** - image/sound/video galleries, activity idea cards, story audio files and links to CfE and to other road safety organisations;
- **Parents** - key road safety messages and guidance for parents/carers as educators, information about the little books for home and links to road safety organisations; and
- **Children's Ziggy Zone** - links to watch videos of other children engaged in road safety education or activities, online copies of the small books to read and several interactive games related to the Ziggy books.

The website also provides access to copies of three additional books that are designed for children in the younger years (the 'Out and About' buggy book for infants, 'Spot the Traffic' and 'Cross the Road with Ziggy'). While the first of these is available in hard copy, and is included in the Scottish Book Trust's (SBT's) Bookbug baby bag<sup>11</sup>, the two additional Ziggy titles are available as online resources only.

A final feature of the website is that it provides access to the 'Ziggy's Fun Day Out' story creator which allows children to write a road safety story with their peers and with the help of early years practitioners using an online template. For all stories submitted, classes receive a 'My Journey with Ziggy' pack complete with a Ziggy soft toy. The idea behind the resource is that the soft toy can then be taken home by children, in turns, to prompt them to share their road safety learning with parents/carers. Examples of stories that have already been submitted by other early years establishments can also be accessed online. The 'My Journey with Ziggy' pack was launched at the beginning of September 2015, and a promotional flyer was included with the Autumn 2015/16 order form issued to early years establishments by Education Scotland at the end of August the same year. Primary schools were also mailed separately by Education Scotland to promote the resource. It, therefore, represents the newest addition to the Go Safe with Ziggy package.

### 2.3 The Resources in Context

Curriculum for Excellence (CfE)<sup>12</sup> is Scotland's curriculum for children and young people aged 3 to 18. The early level spans pre-school and primary and is designed to meet the needs of most children from age 3 years until the end of Primary 1. The core messages of CfE for the early years are:

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<sup>10</sup> See [www.gosafewithziggy.com](http://www.gosafewithziggy.com)

<sup>11</sup> The Bookbug baby bag is gifted to parents via Health Visitors for children up to the age of 1. It contains books, CDs, puppets and other resources to support and encourage reading between parents/carers and their children from birth

<sup>12</sup> See [educationscotland.gov.uk](http://educationscotland.gov.uk)

- active, experiential learning;
- a holistic approach to learning;
- smooth transitions; and
- learning through play.

Curriculum for Excellence also stresses that learning experiences should be shaped by the interests of children and the Go Safe with Ziggy resources were developed with this in mind, recognising that effective learning will be different between children. Education Scotland further outline in their approach to early years education some of the core approaches to learning that are effective in the early years, including, among other things:

- **Active learning** - the use of real life and imaginary situations to engage children's thinking;
- **ICT in Education** - using information and communication technologies to share educational messages;
- **Creativity** - focusing on the identification and analysis of problems, learning from mistakes and using the imagination to explore new solutions;
- **Outdoor Learning** - use of different outside spaces to encourage new thinking; and
- **Co-operative and collaborative learning** - working with others, and without supervisor intervention, to analyse and solve problems together.

The design of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources reflects much of this existing knowledge on 'what works'. The main aim of the Go Safe with Ziggy books is to *"engage and inspire young children and the adults around them to go on their own road safety learning journey, through real experiences, alongside playing, talking and reading"*<sup>13</sup>. It therefore encompasses both the 'active learning' and 'outdoor learning' principles. The inclusion of online resources as part of the Ziggy brand ensures that children in their early years are offered the chance to learn road safety using ICT, and the range of art activities, puzzles and problem solving games included in the Ziggy Zone also encourage 'creativity'. The books aim to provide key road safety education messages to children, their parents/carers and early years practitioners, and to encourage interactive learning about how to 'Go Safe', again ensuring that 'co-operative and collaborative learning' is encompassed.

In 2008, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) published a briefing paper<sup>14</sup> for those involved in helping children and young people to stay safe, more generally, which included ten principles of effective safety education, to:

- encourage the adoption of, or reinforce, a whole school approach, within the wider community;
- use active approaches to teaching and learning (including interactive and experiential learning);
- involve young people in real decisions to help them stay safe;

<sup>13</sup> See [www.gosafewithziggy.com](http://www.gosafewithziggy.com)

<sup>14</sup> RoSPA (2008) Effective safety education: a briefing paper for all those involved in helping children and young people to stay safe, RoSPA: London

- assess children and young people's learning needs;
- teach safety as part of a comprehensive personal social and health curriculum;
- use realistic and relevant settings and resources;
- work in partnership (with supporting agencies such as the police);
- address known risks and protective factors (including gaps in knowledge, skills, parental rules, attitudes, and so on);
- address psychosocial aspects of safety (e.g. confidence, resilience, self-esteem and self-efficacy); and
- adopt positive approaches which model and reward safe behaviour, within a safe, supportive environment.

Again, the design of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources reflects much of this good practice. The approach that was developed for the new RSS early years resource focusses on introducing new books on a regular basis over the early years period, with books that can be used both at home and in educational settings to ensure cross-over of learning in both environments. This is designed to maintain strong links between home and nursery/school and ensure a consistency in the messages that children receive. The use of home links such as this is often cited as an example of best practice in early education, and research has shown that encouraging parental engagement through establishing links between home and school has a large and positive impact on children's learning<sup>15</sup>.

Although most of the book content is aimed at children and is designed for their learning, many messages in the books are also aimed at parents/carers. Supporting factual information and guidance is provided in the books for parents to improve and reinforce their own road safety awareness. The books are designed to be both an educational resource, and a fun, interactive resource for children to enjoy. Again, there is a considerable body of research evidence that shows that reading for pleasure impacts positively on educational, personal, emotional and social development<sup>16</sup>. Research has also shown that reading engagement is more important for children's educational success than familial socio-economic status and that parents play a critical role in fostering a love of reading<sup>17</sup>. The design of the Go Safe with Ziggy books to engage both parents/carers and children in a shared book, follows this ethos.

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<sup>15</sup> Goodall et. al. (2010) Review of Best Practice in Parental Engagement, Department for Education: London

<sup>16</sup> Department for Education (2012) Research evidence on Reading for Pleasure, Department for Education: London

<sup>17</sup> *ibid*

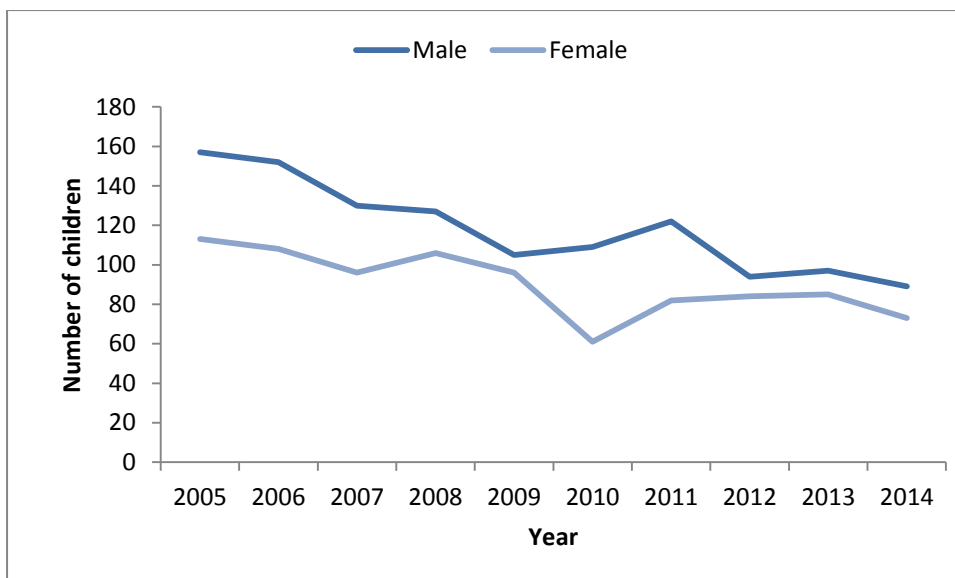
## 2.4 Why Develop an Early Years Road Safety Resource?

Before going on to explore the findings from the research, there is value in reiterating the rationale for the development of the Go Safe with Ziggy resource.

Data published by Transport Scotland<sup>18</sup> shows that there were 1,034 child casualties<sup>19</sup> on Scotland's roads in 2014 (the latest year for which data is available), representing just under 10% of all road casualties at the national level. Serious casualties represent around 16% of all child casualties and there has been a general downwards trajectory over the last decade or so for serious child casualties (from 372 in 2004 to 171 in 2014). The number of child fatalities remains small year on year, with an average of 6 children aged under 16 killed in the period 2012-14. Pedestrian casualties make up the greatest proportion of casualties for children (followed by car passengers and cyclists) and, in 2014, there were 501 child pedestrian casualties which represented around 29% of all pedestrian casualties of all ages.

Looking specifically at the early years, Figure 1 below shows that the overall number of reported casualties for children aged under 5 has declined over the last ten years, both among males and females, and that there has also been a narrowing of the gap between boys and girls involved in road casualties in recent years.

**Figure 1: Reported Road Casualties for Under 5s, 2005 to 2014<sup>20</sup>**



Overall, although the child road safety targets as set out in Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020<sup>21</sup> have not yet been met, positive progress is being made. The

<sup>18</sup> Transport Scotland (2015) Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2014 available at: [http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd\\_reports/uploaded\\_reports/j397988/j397988.pdf](http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j397988/j397988.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> Child casualties relate to those aged under 16 only

<sup>20</sup> Transport Scotland (2015) Key Reported Road Casualties Scotland 2014, available at [http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd\\_reports/uploaded\\_reports/j379866/j379866.pdf](http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j379866/j379866.pdf)

Road Safety Framework: 2015 Annual Report<sup>22</sup> highlights that there has been a 61% decrease in the number of children killed since 2004-08; exceeding the 2020 target of 50%, as well as a 47% decrease in the number of children seriously injured since 2004-08; slightly below the 2015 milestone (50%), with the 2020 target being a 65% reduction on the baseline. Importantly, the targets reflect that child road safety is a long-term challenge and that delivering and promoting road safety education is a long term commitment.

Early years road safety education forms part of a wider community and parental responsibility to ensure that children are safe on the roads<sup>23</sup>. It provides only the first step in a life-long road safety learning journey. It is against this backdrop that Road Safety Scotland seeks to ensure that the Go Safe with Ziggy resources continue to be designed, distributed and used to maximum effect so as to impact, wherever possible, on the safety of children on Scotland's roads both now, and in the future.

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<sup>21</sup> Scottish Government (2009) Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2020, available at: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/274654/0082190.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Transport Scotland (2016) Road Safety Framework: Annual Report 2015, available at: [http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd\\_reports/uploaded\\_reports/j419424/j419424.pdf](http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j419424/j419424.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, the Kids in the Car parental influence campaign at: <http://dontriskit.info/kids-in-the-car/>

### 3 Distribution and Ordering

#### 3.1 Understanding the National Distribution Process

Since the resource was launched, there have been a number of different distributions of the various elements, as follows:

- **Big book packs** - an initial distribution of the 'big books' to be used in educational establishments was undertaken in the 2010/11 academic year, to accompany the launch of the resource. All primary schools and nursery classes should have received the books. A second launch took place to registered childminders in May 2012, in collaboration with the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) who distributed them directly to their registered minders. More recently, big book packs have been made available on an ad hoc basis to any community setting where parents/carers attend with their young children and big book packs can be ordered directly from Road Safety Scotland.
- **Little books for home** - order forms are sent to all early years establishments across Scotland, which are included in the Education Scotland database, in August and February each year (with 3 books available to order in Autumn and 2 in Spring). Road Safety Scotland also add to that distribution list the contact details for playgroups and other community based groups where children in their early years may attend. This is important since it seeks to make the books available to children who may not have contact with any other formal pre-schooling (e.g. nurseries), and so would not be exposed to the books that way. The form allows copies to be ordered in English and Gaelic for both ante-pre-school and pre-school children. Establishments are also encouraged to order enough books to allow copies for new children who may join the establishment at a later date in any given year.

Whilst additional copies of both the big and small books can be sent on request at any other time in the year, this is relatively ad hoc and Education Scotland distribution staff reported that there is little demand outwith the main order timetable.

Distribution staff consulted as part of the evaluation confirmed that the current process runs smoothly with few problems. Only a small number of books are returned each year, and this is usually due to buildings that house nurseries/playgroups being temporarily closed for business at the time that delivery is attempted (for example, church halls that house toddler groups). Establishments that have been permanently closed are removed from the database as this becomes known.

The only book not to be distributed in this way is the sixth book in the series - 'Ziggy and Maggie Start School' - which has been distributed for the last two years, in most local authorities, via the Scottish Book Trust's Bookbug Family Pack. This has been gifted at the start of the school year, typically as part of Book Week Scotland, and usually directly by schools, and contains other books and resources appropriate for children in this age range. Moving forward, this mechanism will no longer be used and this final book will be distributed in the same way as the other titles.



### 3.2 Uptake of the Resources Over Time

Distribution data held by Education Scotland's distribution centre provides the main source of information on levels of uptake of the books both nationally and between local authority areas.

Data was provided for the evaluation on the numbers of order forms despatched and the numbers returned for both 2013/14 and 2014/15 (including both the Autumn and spring despatches). Partial data for 2012/13 was also provided, covering one distribution only. Table 1 below shows that the return rate has remained steady for all distributions, at around 47%. Further analysis of the data showed that this percentage remained reasonably steady for both the Autumn and Spring distributions in all years.

**Table 1: Number and Percentage of Order Forms Despatched and Returned, 2012/13 to 2014/15<sup>24</sup>**

| School Year | Despatched | Returned | %   |
|-------------|------------|----------|-----|
| 2012/13     | 3,420*     | 1,581    | 46% |
| 2013/14     | 6,557      | 3,085    | 47% |
| 2014/15     | 6,406      | 2,985    | 47% |

\*Covers one distribution only

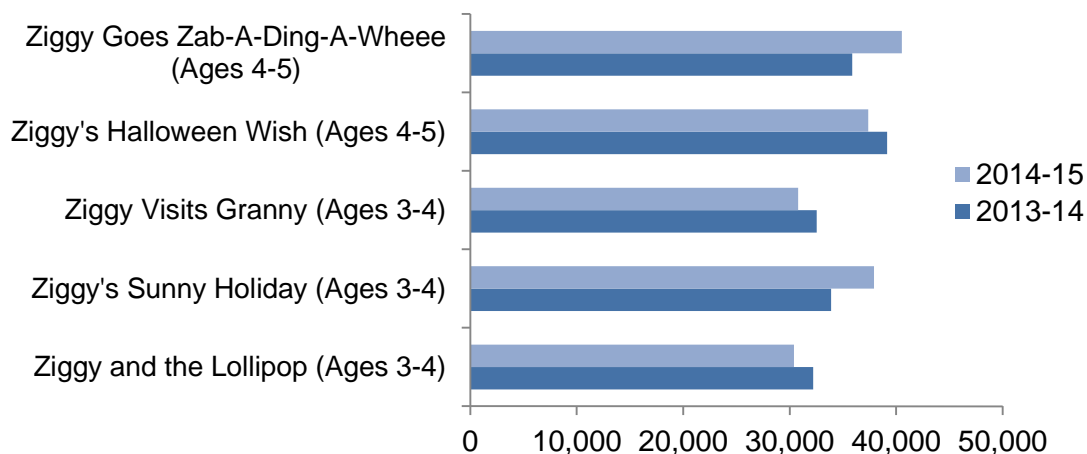
Across the two full years (2013/14 and 2014/15), a total of 355,684 books were ordered (175,838 in 2013/14 and 179,846 in 2014/15). The number of Gaelic texts ordered in both years was low (2,192 in 2013/14 and 2,825 in 2014/15). This represents just over 1% of all books ordered. Interestingly, the 2011 Scottish Census found that around 1.1% of the population spoke Gaelic<sup>25</sup> and so this level of ordering seems proportionate.

Figure 2 below shows the numbers of each of the resources that were issued to early years establishments for the previous two years, based on the orders placed. It shows that, across both years, there were greater numbers of the two pre-school books (i.e. Ziggy's Halloween Wish and Ziggy Goes Zab-a-Ding-a-Wheeeee) issued compared to the ante-pre-school books.

<sup>24</sup> Based on data supplied by the Education Scotland distribution centre for each period

<sup>25</sup> See: <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/news/census-2011-release-2a>

**Figure 2: Numbers of each book ordered, 2013/14 and 2014/15**



As part of the survey, early years practitioners were also asked which of the small books for home they had previously ordered. Twelve respondents did not indicate which of the small books, if any, they had previously ordered. Among the 267 who did provide a response, the book that had been ordered the most was Ziggy and the Lollipop followed by Ziggy's Halloween Wish and Ziggy Visits Granny (shown in Table 2 below). Each of these are made available via the August order form, and the reported uptake of these three books was higher overall than the two books made available in the spring session.

**Table 2: Which, if any, of the following small books have you ordered before? (n=267)**

| Response                        | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Ziggy and the Lollipop          | 184                   | 69%              |
| Ziggy's Halloween Wish          | 179                   | 67%              |
| Ziggy Visits Granny             | 159                   | 60%              |
| Ziggy's Sunny Holiday           | 134                   | 50%              |
| Ziggy Goes Zab-a-Ding-a-Wheeeee | 122                   | 46%              |
| Don't know/not sure             | 56                    | 21%              |
| None of the above               | 13                    | 5%               |

This provides a slight contrast to the Education Scotland order data which shows that, in the previous two years, there were greater numbers of the two pre-school books issued compared to the ante-pre-school books, although Ziggy's Halloween Wish features in both sets of figures. The discrepancy is likely to result from the nature of the sample who replied to the survey, compared to those who returned book order forms. It should be noted that the survey was carried out in the Autumn, and so findings may also be influenced by respondents recall of only the most recently ordered books. Together, however, the two data sources do perhaps indicate that Ziggy's Halloween Wish is one of the most popular books in the series, and this was also borne out in the telephone interviews with staff, discussions with parents and during the workshops (discussed below). Indeed, perhaps the main message that seems to be being retained from across the series of books is to dress brightly and be seen - one of the messages from Halloween book. Again, however, this may be because this was the most recent book that respondents are likely to

have used at the time of the fieldwork, and so may still have been fresh in their memories.

Almost half of those who said that they had previously ordered some of the small books indicated that they had ordered all five of the books available (n=95). Few respondents indicated that they ordered only one of the book titles (n=6).

Interestingly, one in five survey respondents indicated that they were 'unsure' which of the books they had ordered. This may be as a result of the person completing the survey not being directly responsible for ordering the books (64% of those who said that they were not sure also indicated that they had never personally completed an order form). For the remaining respondents, it may indicate misunderstanding about the different titles that are available.

Of the 13 respondents who indicated that they had not ordered any of the above titles, most said that this was because they were not aware of the resources (n=9).

At the time of writing, around 200 of the new 'My Journey with Ziggy' packs had been issued. Information about the uptake of this resource was not included in the survey since the survey was designed and distributed only weeks after the resource had been fully launched.

### 3.3 Uptake of the Resources by Area

Uptake data was also provided at the local authority level, to show which individual establishments had ordered books. This does not show the exact numbers of books ordered, but shows those areas where *any* books were ordered. While the average uptake is around 46/47%, analysis of uptake data for the 2013/14 and 2014/15<sup>26</sup> distributions by local authority shows that uptake ranges from as little as 30% in some places compared to nearly 70% in others.

Again, it is important to note that uptake alone cannot be assumed to be a measure of how well utilised the books are at the local level, and those areas where uptake is low may, indeed, have greater use of the books by individual establishments. What this data does show, however, is where there may be room for targeted promotion of the resources in the future to encourage uptake among establishments and improve access to the resources among children.

### 3.4 Links Between Uptake and Deprivation

Based on postcode data that is held as part of the Education Scotland distribution database, it was possible to explore uptake in terms of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) zone in which establishments are based for the two years 2013/14 and 2014/15. The individual SIMD rank was established for each establishment, which were then clustered based on the 2012 SIMD quintiles (1 to 5) where 1 represents those areas with the greatest levels of deprivation (the 20% most deprived communities), and 5 represents the least deprived areas (the 20% least deprived communities).

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<sup>26</sup> Averages exclude the Autumn 14/15 figures since an incomplete dataset was available for that distribution

Table 3 below shows that there is a reasonable spread in the SIMD ranks of establishments on the Education Scotland database. There are more establishments in SIMD quintile 3 compared to all others (25%) with the least in quintiles 5 then 1. Uptake across establishments in different deprivation clusters seems to largely mirror their representation in the database overall (i.e. it is proportionate to the number of establishments in each quintile). Within each quintile, ordering also varies little from the national average of 47% with no real deviations.

**Table 3: Uptake of Books by SIMD Cluster Group (2013/14 to 2014/15)**

| <b>SIMD 2012 Quintile</b> | <b>% Establishments on Database</b> | <b>Average % Uptake (across database)</b> | <b>Average % Uptake (within Quintile)</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 (20% most deprived)     | 18%                                 | 16%                                       | 47%                                       |
| 2                         | 18%                                 | 19%                                       | 50%                                       |
| 3                         | 25%                                 | 24%                                       | 47%                                       |
| 4                         | 22%                                 | 24%                                       | 52%                                       |
| 5 (20% least deprived)    | 17%                                 | 17%                                       | 46%                                       |

As part of the survey, accurate postcode information was also provided from 195 respondents (70%), which allowed their individual SIMD rank to be identified. Responses were again clustered based on the 2012 SIMD quintiles, and the proportionate breakdown of survey respondents in each group is shown in Table 4 below).

**Table 4: Responses by SIMD Cluster**

| <b>SIMD 2012 Quintile</b> | <b>Number of Responses</b> | <b>% of Responses</b> |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 (20% most deprived)     | 31                         | 16%                   |
| 2                         | 28                         | 14%                   |
| 3                         | 46                         | 24%                   |
| 4                         | 52                         | 27%                   |
| 5 (20% least deprived)    | 38                         | 19%                   |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>195</b>                 | <b>100%</b>           |

Again, there was a reasonable spread of responses from across the different SIMD zones with the largest proportion (27%) coming from those living in Zone 4 areas and the least from Zone 1 areas. Overall, the distribution of survey responses matched closely the distribution patterns for uptake recorded by Education Scotland.

This data suggests that there is not necessarily any notable difference in the uptake of books among establishments based on the deprivation zone in which they are based. What it does show is that uptake is perhaps marginally lower at both ends of the deprivation spectrum, rather than being isolated only at the most deprived end. This is encouraging insofar as previous research has indicated that uptake may be lower in areas of poverty. This data suggests that access is more widespread, based on ordering activity from establishments alone. Of course, while the SIMD of an establishment can be used to explore uptake at the establishment level by deprivation, it is recognised that not all children attending any given establishment will live in the same area nor have a home address of the same SIMD rank.

### 3.5 Uptake of the Resources by Urban/Rural Classification

Analysis of uptake data by urban/rural classification also shows that uptake across the 2013/14 and 2014/15 distributions was proportionate to the number of establishments in each type of geographical domain. Table 5 below shows that there are substantially more establishments on the Education Scotland database that are based in Large or Other Urban areas compared to other types of areas (making up 58% of all establishments overall). This is perhaps not surprising given that there will likely be larger numbers of children resident in these areas. There are very few 'small town' establishments on the database and just under a third are based in accessible rural or remote rural locations. When looking at ordering practices *within* clusters, the average uptake ranged from 44% in large urban areas to 52% in accessible small towns and accessible rural areas. While this range is quite large, in most cases, there was little variance from the national average uptake of 47%. Indeed, overall, there is nothing in the data to suggest that establishments in any particular type of geographical region are consistently more or less likely to order the books.

**Table 5: Uptake by Urban/Rural Classification (2013/14 to 2014/15)**

| <b>Classification</b> | <b>% on Database</b> | <b>Average % Uptake (across database)</b> | <b>Average % Uptake (within cluster)</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Large Urban Areas     | 32%                  | 29%                                       | 44%                                      |
| Other Urban Areas     | 27%                  | 29%                                       | 51%                                      |
| Accessible Small Town | 8%                   | 9%  | 52%                                      |
| Remote Small Town     | 5%                   | 5%  | 46%                                      |
| Accessible Rural      | 16%                  | 17%                                       | 52%                                      |
| Remote Rural          | 13%                  | 12%                                       | 46%                                      |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100%</b>          | <b>100%</b>                               | <b>-</b>                                 |

### 3.6 Perceptions and Possibilities for the Ordering Process

As part of the online survey, information was sought on who takes responsibility for completing the small book order forms in nurseries and schools. Table 6 below shows that, across the sample, almost half indicated that this was undertaken by the nursery/school Head Teacher or Manager (47%). One in five said that the forms were completed by administrative staff and one in ten said that it was completed by a class teacher. In most cases where someone else was mentioned as being responsible for filling in the book order forms, this was a Deputy Head or other member of the senior management team.

**Table 6: Who in your school or nursery is responsible for completing the book order forms? (n=249)**

| Response                   | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Head Teacher/Manager       | 118                   | 47%              |
| Administrator/Office Staff | 49                    | 20%              |
| Class Teacher              | 30                    | 12%              |
| Other                      | 31                    | 12%              |
| Not sure                   | 21                    | 8%               |

### Ease of Completing the Book Order Forms

Survey respondents provided feedback on how easy/difficult it was to complete the book order form (n=268). While 30% of those who responded had never completed a book order form directly, among those who had (n=188), the majority indicated that the form was very easy (77%) or quite easy (19%) to complete.

### Supported and Preferred Methods of Ordering

Of the 265 respondents who provided an answer, there was little difference in support for either ordering the small books by post compared to online (as shown in Table 7 below). Slightly more respondents indicated that they would support ordering by email compared to either of these two alternative methods.

**Table 7: Which of the following ways of ordering the small books for home would your school/nursery support? (n=265)**

| Response       | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Order by email | 197                   | 74%              |
| Order by post  | 170                   | 64%              |
| Order online   | 167                   | 63%              |

When asked which of the following ways of ordering would be their preferred option, there was a clear preference for ordering electronically, with 41% indicating that they would prefer to order by email, and 36% indicating they would prefer to order online. Only 12% of the total sample indicated that post was their preferred choice, while a further 12% indicated no preference. It is worth noting, however, that the survey was administered online and so those who completed the survey may be more disposed generally towards using electronic communications than those who did not. They may also be more likely to have access to the internet/email than those who did not take part and this may be a confounding factor in interpreting these responses.

### **3.7 Understanding Local Distribution Processes**

As part of the survey and interviews, information was also sought on what happens to the books once received by the schools/early years establishments (i.e. to explore onward distribution to parents carers). Parents and carers were also asked during

the focus groups about how (if at all) they had received the books, and their views on the local distribution practices.

### Small Book Distribution to Parents/Carers

Among those who provided a response to this question in the survey, the data shows that, in most cases, the small books are given directly to parents/carers to take home on behalf of their child. Just under half of respondents indicated that they send home the books in children's bags. Many establishments use a combination of handing out books and putting them in bags, as well as leaving 'spare' copies to be picked up at reception. Table 8 below shows the responses relating to how books are distributed. Totals here do not add to 100% as respondents were invited to select multiple different answers, if applicable.

**Table 8: How are the small books for home distributed to ensure they reach the children in your establishment and their parents/carers? (n=204)**

| Response   | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|
| Given directly to parents/carers                               | 126                   | 62%              |
| Sent home in children's bags                                   | 90                    | 44%              |
| Other (please specify)   | 22                    | 11%              |
| Left in the school/nursery for parents/carers to pick up       | 20                    | 10%              |
| We do not distribute them – we keep them in the school/nursery | 3                     | 1%               |

Other means of distributing the books included books being left in children's personal boxes or equivalent, being given as part of talking homework or as part of home visits.

While the distribution processes that are being used at the local level seem to be working well, most practitioners confirmed during interview that they had no direct feedback from parents/carers on what they thought of the books or if/how they were being used at home:

*"When we read the 'big books' to the children, quite often we hear "I used to have that book", which makes us wonder why they do not anymore. Are parents not reading them with the children at home....are they being binned?"*  
 [Nursery, Survey]

Some suggestions were made by practitioners and parents alike that posters aimed at parents dropping off/picking up children would help to raise awareness of Ziggy and road safety more generally. Some suggested that letters home to parents, from Road Safety Scotland or the Scottish Government (rather than the school or nursery), might prompt some parents/carers to take more interest in the resources:

*"It might be useful to draft a letter which could be used with parents for this purpose outlining the main aims of the particular book and directing them to how they can support their child through the book."* [Nursery, Survey]

Comments were also made in the survey and in interviews that online resources were more likely to be used by parents/carers than the small printed books:

*"Is the website mentioned in the small books? Perhaps some parents/carers would engage with this better." [School, Survey]*

Overall, it was felt that more could be done to promote the online resources with parents/carers either as part of the small books or via separate communications. Although some nurseries indicated that they had included information in their own newsletters, this practice was rare and ad hoc, and it was suggested that a more standardised way of communicating with parents may be needed.

Participants in the focus groups who had received copies of the books from nurseries reported mixed local gifting practices. In most cases, books had simply been sent home in children's bags with no covering note or explanation - the children were expected to convey the message behind the books being gifted. In other cases, books had been made available for parents/carers to pick up, and often it was a free choice as to which books they chose:

*"We [pre-school children] were given a choice....It was Granny or Lollipop." [Parent, Focus Group 4]*

As with early years practitioners, some suggestions were made that a more personal approach, including a letter to parents explaining the purpose of the books, might ensure better use. At the moment, the 'loose' distribution meant that some books were being neglected:

*"They should hand books directly to parents, because sometimes [it] can lay in his tray for a few days before I've even noticed it, or he [the child] can put it down somewhere. If they handed it to you, that would be easier for me, because I'm struggling with kids and bags and then things get left in the car." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

There was a relatively even split between those who had and had not previously seen the books. Those with older children at school were more likely to have previously seen the books, as well as those where the child attended a nursery placement (and had received the books there). The most recognisable books seemed to be Ziggy's Halloween Wish, Ziggy and the Lollipop and Ziggy Visits Granny, and this mirrors the distribution and survey data presented above. Again, it is worth noting that all of these books are gifted during Autumn and so parents were potentially more likely to have seen them in the weeks leading up to the research being carried out.

Overall, parents reported that they liked the idea of the books being provided for free, and would always take the books offered by school or nursery. They were especially likely to take the Ziggy books because they were recognisable as part of a series of books:

*"We know they like them, we know they are already familiar with them so it is adding to an existing collection." [Child Minder, Focus Group 3]*



Several parents also commented that receiving the books as a 'gift' from nursery made them seem more important and so the children took greater care and ownership of the books:

*"If it comes from nursery it is special, anything that comes from nursery is special... It makes it feel more valuable because her teacher has given her it to look after." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

On the whole, parents were enthusiastic about receiving the books through nurseries, but some proposed that it would be better to get all of the resources in one pack, to ensure that everyone got all of the books.

The one issue that did emerge from parents and carers was how long they keep the books. Given that the books were free, there were suggestions that the longevity of keeping the books at home was perhaps limited:

*"Everyone likes a free book...but, if I'm being honest, if I'm cleaning out my bookshelf, things like this are the first to go." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

Several parents also reported that they had received multiple copies for different children, and sometimes copies via different outlets for the same child (e.g. via a playgroup and nursery). In these cases, spare copies were usually binned meaning that each household usually had only a single copy, rather than one copy per child.

### P1 Family Pack Distribution

As discussed above, for the previous two years, the 'Ziggy and Maggie Start School' book has been distributed via the Scottish Book Trust's Bookbug P1 Family Pack (although, at the time of writing, this arrangement was about to end). Among the 116 establishments<sup>27</sup> that responded to the survey, the P1 packs were typically sent home in children's bags (see Table 9 below). This is presumably because of the lower levels of direct parental contact with primary children compared to nursery children, who are likely to be physically signed in and out of nursery.

**Table 9: How do you distribute the Primary 1 Family Pack in your school? (n=116)**

| Response   | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|
| Sent home in children's bags                                   | 92                    | 79%              |
| Other (please specify)   | 19                    | 16%              |
| Given directly to parents/carers                               | 16                    | 14%              |
| Left in the school/nursery for parents/carers to pick up       | 1                     | <1%              |
| We do not distribute them – we keep them in the school/nursery | 1                     | <1%              |

<sup>27</sup> It is not clear why some of the pre-school establishments provided responses on how they distributed this pack, but this may indicate that packs are being distributed earlier than intended or that establishments misunderstood what was being asked

Other means of distribution included books being handed out during a special assembly and being gifted by the local library Bookbug co-ordinator. Two respondents indicated that the books were gifted as part of wider Book Week Scotland celebrations.

A small number of respondents indicated as part of the survey that they did not receive the P1 family packs or P1 Ziggy book, and that they were unaware of this resource (despite teaching Primary 1 aged children). As one survey respondent noted:

*“You probably should do something to improve the publicity about the distribution. I have been aware of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources for several years and remember handing out the little books some years ago. However, I was not aware that they are still available for P1 children. The information in this survey was my first indication that Ziggy books were included in the Scottish Book Trust's Bookbug packs. I am quite familiar with these packs but have NOT been aware of the Ziggy books being included.”*  
[School, Survey]

This was also evidenced in some of the telephone interviews, where staff who had worked between nursery and school were unaware that there was a P1 stage book in the Ziggy series. Some comments were also made in the survey, and in the telephone interviews that the P1 book might be better to hand out before children leave nursery, to assist in the transition period to school:

*“The starting school book would be great as a transitional aid for pre-school children within the nursery rather than once they have started primary school.”*  
[Nursery, Interview]

A separate evaluation of the whole P1 family pack commissioned by Scottish Book Trust in 2014<sup>28</sup> also reported that, 97% of teachers surveyed said that they had read “all/some of the books” from the pack in class, and 31% said that they had specifically used the Ziggy and Maggie Start School book. Qualitative feedback from children involved in the evaluation also suggested that they were already familiar with the Ziggy character before the book had been gifted. This suggests that some pre-school exposure must have taken place, through use of the big books in pre-school establishments and/or small books for home.

### **3.8 Other Feedback on Distribution and Ordering**

While no further specific questions were asked regarding ordering and distribution in the online survey, the telephone interviews and workshops revealed some misunderstandings regarding the small book ordering process. Several front-line staff were unaware of how the books reached the establishment, or how they could order more. Some comments were also made that it would be helpful to have contact, even if by email, throughout the year to remind and prompt staff to order and use the books.

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<sup>28</sup> Blake Stevenson (2014) Evaluation of the 2013 Bookbug Primary 1 Family Pack, Scottish Book Trust, Edinburgh

Some highlighted that the timing of the current distribution was not ideal and suggested that it would be better to have a more flexible ordering process:

*“It would be easier if the books were sent to nursery as a pack and we could distribute them to the children at a seasonally appropriate time. For example, some of our ante-pre-school children don't start until January so it isn't valuable or relevant to give them the Hallowe'en book until the following October in their pre-school year. However, if the books were distributed by number [on the spine of each book] this wouldn't happen.” [Nursery, Survey]*

*“Make resources available at the start of the academic year and allow us to choose when to teach it. We use child-led responsive planning and have already covered road safety when then children were interested in it, long before the books came out.” [Nursery, Survey]*

As a result, some respondents said that they preferred to use the online resources, which could be used at any time, and they also preferred the immediacy of the online resources (i.e. not having to wait for books to arrive).

Finally, several respondents in the survey and who took part in a telephone interviews and workshops indicated that they would like to be able to order new 'big book' packs as part of the annual ordering process, since their old books had become worn.

### **3.9 Distribution and Ordering Going Forward**

The research seems to indicate that the ordering and distribution processes are, at present, relatively straightforward, but that there may be room for minor improvements to maximise uptake of the books.

#### Database improvements

The current database held by Education Scotland is in Excel format and requires to be manually updated and refreshed as new intelligence is received regarding the opening or closure of establishments. Given that the current distribution of order forms is by post, there is also no way of knowing if order forms that are not returned are due to lack of interest or closure of schools/nurseries.

This research exercise alone identified that there were numerous establishments listed on the Education Scotland database that were different from those listed on the Care Inspectorate database, suggesting gaps in some establishments who could potentially be eligible to receive the order forms (and books) who are not being reached.

The research also identified that some of the establishments listed on the Education Scotland database had moved, changed name or had closed. Several of the early years establishments listed had the same addresses as schools where the two were co-located (1186). There were also a number of duplicate entries (63 in total). This means that any analysis of uptake figures (such as that carried out above) is likely to be skewed or distorted since the true number of individual establishments who are invited to order the books each year cannot be accurately ascertained.

As a first step to improving distribution, and also better understanding which establishments in each area are ordering or failing to order books on a regular basis, an upgrade or remodelling of the distribution database could be considered that incorporates a means of regularly and consistently recording uptake by individual establishments over time. While there would be a resource implication for this practice, in terms of staff time required to manually upload and update information on a continuous basis, it is suggested that this would provide perhaps the most cost effective means of identifying priority areas for targeted promotion activity to improve ordering and uptake going forward. As the database is not overseen by Road Safety Scotland, however, the value of this commitment would need to be realised by Education Scotland too.

### Online or Electronic Ordering

Given the apparent preference for electronic modes of ordering revealed in the survey, it may also be worthwhile exploring a move from paper based ordering systems to electronic systems to allow quicker and more efficient distribution of forms and books. This could include order forms sent by email and/or online ordering, both of which may allow less scope for order forms to be lost. Moving to such an approach would require an initial one-off exercise to establish the email addresses of all those establishments currently listed, and ongoing updating and refreshing over time (e.g. annually) to ensure that the list remains current. Again, although this would be resource intensive up front, in the longer term, it seems that it would be a more cost effective way of ensuring that the database is current. School addresses (which make up a large proportion of those listed on the database) are unlikely to change often over time, and so following up nurseries and community based groups is likely to be the biggest challenge.

Other suggestions were made for a single stage ordering process at the start of each year, instead of twice each year, to reduce the administrative burden on schools/nurseries. While suggestions were also made for an 'open' and 'ongoing' ordering facility, this seems less attractive since the research revealed that receipt of the order forms sometimes acts as a reminder or prompt to staff to re-engage with the books and schedule some road safety education into their timetables. This could perhaps be overcome if an electronic system was adapted wherein email reminders could be sent at low cost around the themes/times for which books are appropriate (e.g. Halloween, Summer Holidays, and so on).

### Improving Communications

An emerging finding from the qualitative components of the research was that communications regarding the books are, at present, lacking a 'personal' approach. Order forms are issued without covering letters and are also not sent to a designated person within establishments. This means that there is scope for them to be opened by unintended recipients or otherwise misplaced.

Suggestions were made for order forms to be issued directly by Road Safety Scotland, or with a covering note reminding staff of the importance of road safety education and the full range and remit of the Go Safe with Ziggy resources. Similarly, reminders from known local authority staff (e.g. Directors of Education or Road

Safety Officers) who are familiar to schools/nurseries may improve uptake, it was felt. The clear challenge with this is that some local authorities no longer have dedicated RSOs and others have very limited resources/time to dedicate to early years road safety education.

Suggestions were also made for a 'guide for the gifter' which would include notes for schools/nurseries on the background and rationale of the free books, and the best ways to ensure onward distribution and use. A similar approach is used by Scottish Book Trust in the distribution of their Bookbug Family packs and may provide a model to explore going forward.

### Localised Distribution

Several participants at the workshops indicated that localised distribution of resources may be more effective than centralised distribution going forward, although the cost implications of this approach were also recognised. Overall, it was suggested that local authority staff, including local Road Safety Officers (RSOs) had a better awareness and understanding of local establishments, and could also monitor the opening of new establishments (or closing of old establishments) more easily. This would also allow them to monitor poor uptake in particular communities, and to carry out targeted promotional work in those areas.

An alternative may be to retain centralised control, but to introduce a mechanism whereby local authorities can be notified of poor uptake in their area where appropriate, as a prompt for localised promotion activity or reminders (e.g. by annual email). At present, it was suggested, local authority staff, including RSOs had only limited awareness of uptake of the resources in their own areas, due to the centralised nature of the ordering and distribution processes. This makes it difficult for them to challenge and address non-use. While RSOs are currently invited to contact Road Safety Scotland to enquire about uptake in local establishments, this is not a widespread practice and so the introduction of a regular, centrally initiated 'non-uptake' monitoring mechanism may be useful in improving uptake in the future.

### Alternative Distribution Routes

Common to all stakeholders involved in the research was the suggestion that alternative, complementary distribution methods should also be considered in the future. Most commonly, this included using libraries to make books available and to raise awareness of the resources, especially for parents and carers whose children did not attend pre-school care.

An alternative suggestion was for Health Visitors to be involved in distributing or raising awareness of the resources with several parents indicating that they had used their visits to Health Visitors in the early years as a source of information about health, wellbeing and education themed resources.

Finally, there was considerable support for the continued use of outlets such as the Bookbug bags to be used for the distribution of books. Bookbug had a strong and positive image as an early years resource provider among parents and practitioners and most felt that this was probably the best way of ensuring that parents whose children did not attend pre-school or nursery would access the books. Bookbug

resources were popular, it was suggested, and always used. The limitation of this approach is that control over such 'third party' distributions is not within the control of Road Safety Scotland and so there is a danger that consistency in approach over time might be lost. One example of this is the decision by Scottish Book Trust (SBT) to remove the P1 Ziggy book from their family pack from 2016 (having included it in the bag for the previous two years).

### Administrative Changes

The order forms, at present, are clearly branded, provide a link for further information about the resources and contact details which can be used by recipients to find out more about the resources. While the forms do not appear to require any substantial amendments, some suggestions for minor changes include:

- feedback from distribution staff suggests that there might be some confusion among those completing the form and that sometimes large numbers of Gaelic copies are ordered, when establishments intended to order English versions of the books. Adjusting the layout of the form might overcome this problem, although it should be stressed that is not something that happens with significant frequency;
- including on the order form some indication that copies of the big book pack can also be ordered. This would be particularly useful as a prompt for those establishments who have lost or misplaced their original copies to access the full resource and start using the class based books again. This may, of course, result in numerous additional requests for big book packs, and so the cost implications would need to be carefully considered; and
- redesigning the form to make it even more explicit which books are intended for which age of child since feedback suggests that confusion still occurs in this regard. Indeed, some practitioners queried whether there was a necessary divide between the two years and if it would be better to allow schools and nurseries to order all of the books and decide locally how to distribute them, especially given that the books are not designed to be incrementally challenging to read as children developed. This is discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

## 4 Exploring How the Resources are Used

The research also sought to develop an understanding of how the resources are currently used. Findings from across the different research strands are included below, highlighting the most common themes to emerge.

### 4.1 Use of the 'Big Book' Packs

As part of the online survey, just over 60% of respondents indicated that their establishment still had a copy of the 'big books' available for use with their children. Just over a quarter said that they did not and 13% said that they were not sure. There were no clear differences in responses between those that worked with Primary 1 aged children and those that did not.

The majority of respondents (69%) said that they had used the big books with their children in the last five years (see Table 10). This included some who said that they no longer had the books, and so suggests that the books had been in their possession at some point in the past, but were no longer at the establishment. Indeed, some practitioners reported in interviews that they only had some of the books remaining, and were unsure what had happened to the others from the set.

**Table 10: In the last five years, has your school/nursery used the big books with the children? (n=276)**

| Response | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|----------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Yes      | 191                   | 69%              |
| No       | 40                    | 14%              |
| Not Sure | 45                    | 16%              |

Among the 40 respondents who said that they had not used the big books in the last five years, the majority indicated that this was because they were not aware of the resource (n=27) or no longer had the books (n=4).

Among those who said that they had used the big books with their children in the last five years (n=191), most said that they used them to read to groups of children in the classroom/nursery (97%), as shown in Table 11.

**Table 11: How you have used the big books in your nursery or school? (n=191)**

| Response  | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|---|-----------------------|------------------|
| Read to groups of children in the classroom/nursery                             | 186                   | 97%              |
| Made available for children to 'read' or 'look at' alone                        | 116                   | 61%              |
| Used as part of a game/activity focused on road safety in the classroom/nursery | 93                    | 49%              |
| Used as part of an outing/journey outside of the classroom/nursery              | 58                    | 30%              |
| Shared reading between older and younger children                               | 28                    | 15%              |

A large proportion (61%) also reported that they leave the books in the classroom/nursery to be read independently by the children. This was confirmed during telephone interviews, where several respondents indicated that the books are included as part of their reading library in the classroom, are left on display or are kept in an accessible reading corner:

*"We also encourage the children to investigate and 'read' the big books to their friends on the floor." [Nursery, Interview]*

Other respondents reported that they used the big books as part of assemblies, for children to use as a prop to tell the story themselves and with parents as part of 'stay and play' parental involvement sessions.

As part of wider feedback in the research, some comments were made that the big books were unwieldy and the large soft-back format made reading them to groups of children a challenge:

*"Big books are very long and floppy, so when adult is reading the story it's difficult to hold and turn page at same time, so children are a little distracted by that." [Nursery, Survey]*

It was suggested that most books that are used for group reading are A4 in size, and that smaller hardback books, spiral bound flip books or board books would be better as a group resource.

One childminder who took part reported that storage of the big books was also problematic:

*"When I was a registered childminder I got a delivery of huge books, massive, in a clear bag... I have to admit, because I had the huge big ones, and a bookshelf doesn't accommodate big books, I prefer this size. So if I could have got the batch as a small set I would have looked at them more frequently. I gave my big books to the private nursery so they had an extra set." [Child Minder, Focus Group 3]*

This contrasted to another childminder who took part who commented that she had used the big books over a number of years and that they had been very popular with children because they were so big and this made them unusual and appealing:

*"They've never had a book that size before. They like to lie on the floor and spread them out." [Child Minder, Focus Group 3]*

While there were perhaps some mixed views on the format of the big books, it seems that they are being well used in most cases where establishments or individual carers have them.



## 4.2 Use of the Small Books for Home

Feedback on how the books were being used at home was sought from parents/carers who took part in the focus groups and had previously received them via their children's school/nursery.

Most of those who had received the books said that they had kept them, although not all said that they were well used. The approach to using the books seems to be very child-led and most parents said that they would only read the books if their child asked them to or selected them for their reading time together. There were mixed experiences on whether children did or did not choose the books:

*"He will choose them, I'm not expecting him to choose them after we have read them once or twice, but he does. He quite likes Ziggy." [Parent, Focus Group 1]*

*"I definitely used them when she was wee. I did make an effort to read them, and we went over it a few times, but now they are just kept with the other books." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

*"Mine are mixed in amongst other books, and they do sometimes pick them out, but not often." [Parent, Focus Group 4]*

Parents/carers typically said that they read the books together with their children when they first received them, and then left them readily available as children got older to use independently:

*"I've used them with all my kids, but after they go to school, they're old enough to look back at them themselves." [Parent, Focus Group 3]*

Other suggested that, over time, books were used most often as a reference tool or follow-up to unsafe behaviours, as a refresher to remind children of what they were doing wrong:

*"You know you've got something in the house that, if you need to remind them, "You're forgetting about holding hands again", then you've got a book to show them again." [Parent, Focus Group 3]*

Most of the parents/carers who took part also said that, although the books were a welcome reference tool, they considered that active learning was the best way to teach road safety messages, and that they needed to be accompanied by outside learning to be effective, wherever possible:

*"You need to read the book and show them as well, otherwise it doesn't really work. Some people just take the car everywhere, so they don't practice walking near busy roads." [Parent, Focus Group 4]*

Overall, parents and carers expressed that the small books acted well as a prompt to remind them to teach their children road safety behaviours. Most parents already engaged in road safety education with their children anyway, but a reported strength of the books was in making this fun rather than presenting it as a disciplinary activity.

### 4.3 Use of the Online Resources

#### Awareness of the Website and Online Resources

There was an even split between the number of respondents to the practitioner survey who said that they had previously visited the Go Safe with Ziggy website and those who had not (49% of respondents in each case). The remaining 2% were not sure.

#### Use of the Online Resources

Table 12 shows the most commonly used online resources were the online stories and games (each used by around two thirds of respondents).

**Table 12: Which, if any, of the following 'Go Safe with Ziggy' online resources have you used with the children in your establishment? (n=132)**

| Response                                 | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|
| Online stories                           | 86                    | 65%              |
| Online games                             | 84                    | 64%              |
| Ziggy Zone videos                        | 43                    | 33%              |
| Activity idea cards                      | 35                    | 27%              |
| Audio stories                            | 28                    | 21%              |
| None - just looked at what was available | 21                    | 16%              |
| Sound and image library                  | 18                    | 14%              |
| Other                                    | 8                     | 6%               |

As previously mentioned, wider feedback received during interviews and in the survey suggests that some teachers would like to see greater promotion of the online resources, since they perceived that the online activities and audio/visual resources might better capture children's attention:

*"I feel ICT software would be better utilised by the children than the books."*  
 [School, Survey]

*"The children would really enjoy animated versions and this would support the engagement of all pupils."* [Nursery, Survey]

*"The staff and children love the interactive books at the [website]."* [Nursery, Survey]

Several respondents praised the resources that could be used on the smartboard and there were also comments that the audio books were enjoyed by the children. In the survey and the workshops, there were several comments that a smartphone or tablet app would be well received.

Similar views were expressed by parents and carers who believed that apps were the way forward for educational resources for children, given the growing popularity and use of smart phones and tablets in the home:

*"I think most children now come from a house where there is either a smartphone or a tablet, and so an app would be a really great idea." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

*"A free full-on educational app would be great." [Parent, Focus Group 4]*

*"Playing with the iPad is a treat, so making it available as an app would make it [road safety education] something they wanted to do." [Parent, Focus Group 1]*

There was some discussion about the problems with using the internet with children in this age group and one group of parents/carers suggested that the option of apps was preferable because the children were less able, or less likely, to accidentally navigate away or access other (inappropriate) sites. Some indicated that they would feel safer leaving their children to play independently with an isolated app rather than allowing them to play freely on the internet.

Parents felt that having the resources available in a range of formats was ideal as children learn in different ways and this facilitates different learning opportunities. A number of the fathers/male carers in particular highlighted that they would be more likely to use audio books compared to written books. Some suggested that audio books or podcasts could be played in the car to reinforce safe travel messages.

One issue to emerge across the research was that the audio stories and online visual stories are not currently linked in a way that makes it easy to read and listen to the stories at the same time. This was perceived to be a weakness by practitioners and parents alike. There was some discussion among parents about being able to access the audiobook as a podcast to allow the children to read and listen independently, with the message "When you hear this ding please turn the page", or the child being able to open the book as an app and turn the page to hear what it says. This was considered especially valuable for those unable to read the words and so unable to follow the text at the same time as the audio file plays. The cost of developing a linked resource or an app that would provide this function does, however, need to be borne in mind and considered alongside the additionality it would bring.

### Reasons for Not Using the Online Resources

The main reasons given for not previously using the online resources across the survey and interviews was a lack of awareness. This was mentioned by 68% of non-users in the online survey, as shown in Table 13 below. One in five survey respondents said that they did not have time to use the online resources, and one in ten said that they did not have access to a computer in the classroom/nursery. This suggests that, although awareness is the biggest barrier, there may also be some practical and logistical barriers to greater use of the online resources too. This is interesting to note against the other finding that a Ziggy app might prove popular since use of any digital application requires access to digital resources, such as a computer, smartphone or tablet. It is reasonable to expect that the finding regarding limited access to computers might be replicated with an app, due to some schools and nurseries (as well as parents and carers) not having access to the required technology.

**Table 13: What are the main reasons why you have NOT previously used the online 'Go Safe with Ziggy' resources?**

| Response   | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|
| Was not aware of the online resources              | 107                   | 68%              |
| Too busy/not enough time                           | 31                    | 20%              |
| No access to computer/internet in class            | 19                    | 12%              |
| Other  | 13                    | 8%               |
| Did not consider them a useful resource            | 4                     | 3%               |
| Did not consider them appropriate for our children | 3                     | 2%               |

The lack of awareness was again reiterated during interviews and workshops, with practitioners highlighting that they had only found the online resources and information about how to use them accidentally, and some interviewees commenting that they had not known about the online resources until taking part in the evaluation survey. Some had since visited the site and several also mentioned that they would be visiting the site after having completed the survey.

Very few parents or carers were aware of the online resources, and none reported that they had used them. Despite this, there was considerable support for the idea of online resources, and most parents/carers said that they would have visited the site before if they had known about it. Although the website is signposted in the small books for home, it was suggested that this needed to be much more prominent, or that separate communication was required from schools/nurseries to alert parents.

#### **4.4 The Ziggy Soft Toy and Journey Pack**

Few of the practitioners and parents/carers who took part in the research had heard of the Ziggy soft toy and Journey Pack, probably because it is a relatively recent addition to the range of Go Safe with Ziggy resources and was introduced very shortly before the research began. Indeed, only one respondent indicated in the survey that they had taken part in the 'Ziggy's Fun Day Out' exercise to upload their photos and make their own book online. Several of those who took part in a telephone interview also mentioned that they had taken part in creating their own story online using the story creator and received a 'My Journey with Ziggy' pack (complete with the Ziggy soft toy), and provided very positive feedback on the experience:

*"We sent our story to the website and received our cuddly Ziggy. The children are currently taking him home on a rota basis, and sharing their knowledge with the parents and family members. Learning about road safety with Ziggy has been very worthwhile and the children are all using their knowledge in practical situations." [Nursery, Interview and Survey]*

All practitioners who took part in the workshops liked the idea of the Ziggy soft toy and take home bag/story pack, especially as this might help to engage parents/carers better with the road safety message. This was seen as a particularly useful resource in areas where literacy at home might be an issue, or in households where parents chose not to read with their children.

Parents and carers also suggested without prompting that a 'take home' soft toy would help with home links, and were surprised to find out that this already existed. Parents and practitioners alike suggested that soft toys for all of the main characters from the books would be well received by children, who could use them to engage in 'role play'.

#### 4.5 Individual Projects

Various examples were given in the online survey of how the Go Safe with Ziggy resources are being used in innovative ways to engage children. This included:

- art and craft sessions;
- visits from community police and crossing patrol staff to read the books and reinforce taught messages;
- inviting Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs) or primary school 'buddies' to read and share the books with younger children; and
- Ziggy appearing in Christmas nativity scenes.

Several establishments said that they had 'painted on' roads in the playground and roll out zebra crossings which they used to reinforce the messages in the books. Most establishments said that they used the resources alongside practical trips outside of the classroom, for example, on walks to the local shops. Some also used role play based on the Ziggy stories when out and about or took their Ziggy soft toy on journeys:

*"Ziggy goes out with the children on their weekly walks, we have a road safety champion who takes Ziggy and together they keep the group safe while out and about. The book and Ziggy then go home with that child to reinforce the learning." [Nursery, Survey]*

A number of establishments said that they had organised displays as part of open events or workshops for parents/carers at which Ziggy had been a key focus:

*"We recently ran a Stay & Play for Parents with all the books on display. We used the interactive whiteboard to discuss the road safety points within the book with the children and their parents." [Nursery, Survey]*

Interestingly, where respondents provided details of individual projects they had run, these mostly related to the title "Ziggy's Halloween Wish". Several also mentioned that this was the first book that they introduced to children and so tended to make this a bigger focus than later books. Having a book tied to a specific event was also seen as an appealing feature and some commented that it was easier to use this book as part of a wider event/activity than some of the later books in the series.

In one area, a dedicated early years project had been set up which was using road safety to increase numeracy skills. In this area, volunteer school crossing patrollers were working with children in their early years to carry out class-based and outdoor numeracy activities, using the Ziggy Visits Granny book (e.g. pattern matching, counting, measuring). Take home bags had also been developed featuring Ziggy toy activities and an activity book for parents/carers and children to complete when they

were travelling outdoors together. The project sought to increase parental and child discussions and understanding of road safety at the same time as encouraging numeracy skills, and involved collaboration from the local authority Road Safety Officer and the local Early Learning Development Co-ordinator. The volunteer staff who were involved in the project reported positively on the experience and the project had also attracted widespread community attention. Although only one project was running at the time of writing, it was hoped that the learning from this initiative would be shared with other groups within the locality and that they would embed the learning into local practice.

Overall, feedback from the research suggests that both the big and small books are being used as intended, although there is less engagement with the online resource. This is not as a result of lack of interest, however, rather a lack of awareness of the full range of resources that are available.

## 5 Overall Perceptions of the Resource

Across the research, participants were asked about the extent to which they perceived the books to be 'fit for purpose' for their intended audience, in terms of content, language and structure. This included questions to each of the different stakeholder groups (early years practitioners, parents/carers and road safety professionals), recognising that they each may have different perspectives on what would make the books user friendly and appropriate as both learning and recreational tools.

### 5.1 Ratings for Engagement

As part of the survey of practitioners, feedback on the Go Safe with Ziggy books was generally positive, with 75% of respondents overall indicating that they felt the children in their establishment engaged well or very well with the books. Less than 5% of the total sample indicated that the children did not engage well with the books (as shown in Table 14 below).

**Table 14: Thinking about both the big and small books, how well do you think the children in your school/nursery engage with the books? (n=263)**

| Response        | Number of Responses | % of Respondents |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Very Well       | 110                 | 42%              |
| Well            | 88                  | 33%              |
| Okay            | 55                  | 21%              |
| Not very well   | 8                   | 3%               |
| Not well at all | 2                   | 1%               |

When looking separately at the overall ratings provided by establishments that taught Primary 1 aged children and those that did not, the proportion of those who said that the children engaged very well was slightly higher for those with older children (78%) compared to those teaching only pre-school and/or ante-pre-school children (69%).

The parents and carers who took part in the focus groups were all very positive about the books and considered them to be engaging:

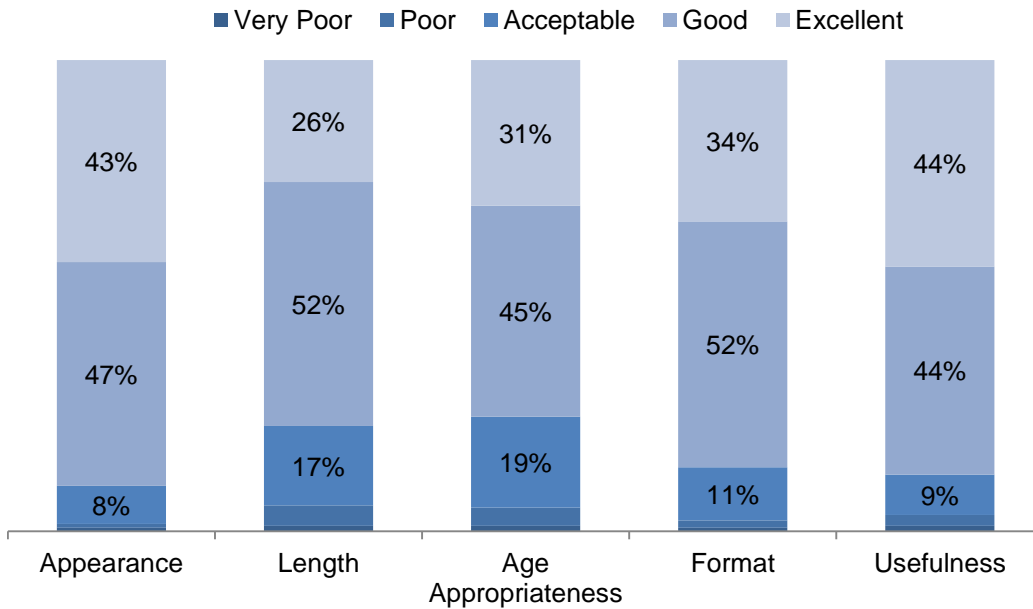
*“Every page makes you want you to turn to the next, it is not like you get halfway through and think, you know how with some books you think “I really want this book to end”, and you squeeze a few pages together to skip.”*  
 [Parent, Focus Group 4]

### 5.2 Individual Features of the Books

Survey respondents were asked about five different features of each the books: appearance, length, age appropriateness, format and usefulness. Ratings for all features were very positive overall, with over 75% of respondents rating each feature as either 'good' or 'excellent' (see Figure 3 below). While ratings were high for all features, the length and age appropriateness of the books were rated less favourably

overall while the format, usefulness and appearance of the books (e.g. images and illustrations) received higher ratings.

**Figure 3: Ratings for Individual Features of the Books**



Most Likable Features of the Books

Overwhelmingly, respondents said that the thing that children liked most about the books was the Ziggy character:

*“Ziggy - an alien is always a winner!” [Nursery, Survey]*

In particular, several practitioners mentioned that the children liked the idea of being able to ‘help’ Ziggy and also feeling that they knew more about road safety than he did:

*“Teaching Ziggy who doesn't know anything about road safety - they feel they know more than him and can help him.” [Nursery, Survey]*

*“They like to show that they have more knowledge of Road Safety than Ziggy.” [Nursery, Survey]*

*“Children identify with and like the character of Ziggy. They like to help Ziggy.” [Nursery, Survey]*

Similarly, several parents commented that the ‘silliness’ of the Ziggy character appealed to their children. The benefits of children observing Ziggy’s learning process was considered to be valuable as it was a way of reinforcing the message without the parents being the sole bearer of the message, which could be perceived as “nagging”:



*"I think it is nice that they are getting the message from a book rather than you just 'going on at them' about things all the time." [Parent, Focus Group 4]*

The children accepted that Ziggy needed to learn just like they did and also felt good at times that he was learning things that they already knew about. One of the parents suggested that children learn best through teaching someone else and that is what they are doing with Ziggy.

Several practitioners and parents alike also mentioned that the children liked the humour and the recognisable language/catch phrase that they associated with Ziggy. While humour was a positive feature for the children, respondents also commented that they perceived the books to achieve a good balance between accessibility to children and the seriousness of the messages being conveyed:

*"Stories can be quite funny but with a serious note." [School, Survey]*

*"The books are a fantastic way to broach the subject of safety with the children, allowing them to understand the dangers and manage the risks." [Nursery, Survey]*

Other likeable features included that the child characters in the story were the same age as those the books were designed for, and that this meant that the children could relate to their experiences. In addition, several respondents commented that having the story available in different formats (such as book and audio) was something that the children liked:

*"It's really good to have them in different formats as you can go back to them in a different format and they still seem a bit fresh. For example, I have used the big books in lessons and then revisited the material some time later using the online format." [Nursery, Survey]*

A number of comments were also made in the survey that the children loved being able to have a copy of the book to take home and the fact that their learning at home could be linked to their school/nursery experience of the book:

*"Having worked with the book in class pupils are often excited and motivated to share the book at home too." [Nursery, Interview]*

*"The children love to share the books at home and talk about what they have learnt at nursery." [Nursery, Interview]*

*"Children love getting a book to take home that they are familiar with and can talk to mum and dad about." [Nursery, Survey]*

Parents also liked the idea of links between nursery/school and home, but felt that the success of this approach was heavily dependent on parental interest, which was difficult to influence:

*"Half the parents wouldn't read the books. Some parents would be keen on doing it and see that's a really important message, but a lot of them wouldn't." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

Several comments were made about the value of the repetition in the books (for example, the characters, Ziggy's language and general format) and it was felt that this helped the children identify all of the books as being part of a road safety themed series:

*"I like the fact that they all revolve around Ziggy - this allows the children to become familiar with the character and link him with road safety." [Nursery, survey]*

*"They like the characters being the same in all stories." [Nursery, Survey]*

*"They really engage with the characters and the sayings that they come out with - they get to know repetitive words which help them to learn." [Nursery, survey]*

Another common response from both early years practitioners and parents/carers was that the use of real life photographs made the scenarios in the stories seem real for children, and that this was a strength of the resources:

*"The real life illustrations are excellent promoting the real life understanding of the road safety message." [Nursery, Interview]*

*"I really like the photographs, the real life pictures, that's a really good idea... Sometimes at this age, I think that illustrations and cartoons don't work, but they do understand photographs." [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

More general comments included that the children liked how colourful the books were and that the pictures/illustrations held their attention. The interactive nature of the books was also considered to be a positive aspect. Some mentioned that the Scottish settings and Scottish language used made the books relatable. In practical terms, the size of the small books was also described as a child-friendly feature: *"small enough to hold in their wee hands."*

### Least Likable Features of the Books

When asked specifically about the least likeable feature of the books, around a third of survey respondents cited that the books were too long/too wordy. This was suggested to be especially true for ante-pre-school children:

*"At times the stories can be too long, in particular for ante pre-school children". [Nursery, Survey]*

*"The children find it difficult to sit and listen to the whole book." [Nursery, Interview]*

*"They like that Ziggy is an alien but the stories are a bit long for the age group and they lose concentration." [Nursery, Survey]*

Similar views were expressed by several of the parents/carers who took part in focus group sessions:

*“Lovely [books], and lovely pictures, and very engaging, but some of them are too much and the children just lose interest half way through.” [Parent, Focus Group 2]*

*“For flicking through, it’s great, but as a story it’s a bit too long.” [Parent, Focus Group 3]*

Some school and nursery staff did note that the books may be more suitable for the pre-school children compared to ante-pre-school, but the mixed nature of many nursery based groups/classes made it difficult to separate the two for group reading activities. Whilst this is useful to note, it is a challenge that is not easy to resolve given that many pre-school establishments have children of different ages and different needs attending at the same time.

Several survey respondents commented that, because the books were so long, they tended to shorten or paraphrase the stories themselves. This was also mentioned during interviews with some teachers/nursery staff:

*“The length of some stories can prove too long for some of our children: we adapt them accordingly.” [Nursery, Interview]*

*“I tend to paraphrase the stories as they can be too wordy to use in a big group but this works fine. I think for some 3 year olds the books are a bit too complicated even one-to-one with parents.” [Nursery, Survey]*

*“As I read them with the children, I find that I miss out some of the pages. The messages are either repeated, or the content is meaningless, or too sophisticated for their age group.” [Nursery, Survey]*

More specifically, some comments were made that the story-lines were overly complicated and sometimes confused the children:

*“I feel the books are quite “busy” and long for the children to sit and remain fully engaged with. A simple message of safety has been slightly over complicated through plot and illustration (based on my experience reading them with the children in my setting over the years).” [Nursery, Survey]*

*“The length of the stories are too long for children aged 3-4 years old. Their attention levels fade after only a couple of pages into the books.” [Nursery, Interview]*

The side stories that run in parallel with the main road safety stories in the books were also seen as confusing to young children, and as being potentially distracting by a minority of the survey respondents:

*“The books are very long for ante pre-school children and the additional information about Scottish songs and sun awareness, for example, has impacted the lasting impression of the story for some children with them*

*“talking more about wearing sun cream than being safe crossing the road.”  
[Nursery, Survey]*

Some professional respondents also commented that some of the language, subtle jokes and use of humour was too sophisticated for young children, and that this may be a barrier to better engagement.

While most practitioners said that the alien character was a strength of the resource, several others commented that this sometimes confused the children, and some of the ideas were described as being quite abstract. The alien focus was also seen as distracting from the core road safety messages of the books in some cases, although it must be recognised that for a similar number, this was an attractive feature of the books. On balance, views regarding the alien character and the side stories were mostly favourable, but this nonetheless highlights one area where there was polarity in the views expressed:

*“They are not relating to the Ziggy character. One child asked if Aliens come to help him across the road. Would be better if the books were based on real life and not include Aliens as the focus turned more to space than the message we were trying to get across about road safety.” [Nursery, Survey]*

The language in some of the books was described as “strange” and “odd” by quite a few respondents. Several comments were also made that the books may be in need of updating, either because the stories were not contemporary or because they felt that children with older siblings would already be familiar with the stories and that something new would better grab their attention:

*“Needs to be a bit more current topic wise (the granny story is a bit outdated)”  
[Nursery, Interview]*

*“...they are the same stories every year - it would be good if there was some new story lines as the children do get bored of the same stories all the time.”  
[Nursery, Survey]*

*“We have lots of families who find that the older siblings already have the books so perhaps a cycle of different books would mean it less likely that children already have the same book in the house.” [Nursery, Survey]*

It is important to note that, despite this criticism, several telephone interviewees commented that they felt it was still important for children to have their ‘own’ copy of the book, rather than having to share and that the gift of giving a book to each child separately was very valuable. This contrasted with the views of parents (discussed above) who most often said that they were reluctant to keep multiple copies of the same books in the house, and so had discarded older copies of the books as younger siblings had brought home fresh copies.

Several of the practitioners who provided negative feedback did also comment that the books might be better suited to one-to-one contact and that as a resource to be used at home, they would probably work well:

*“One parent commented that her child really enjoyed them so perhaps they are better on a one to one basis at home.” [Nursery, Interview]*

*“The story can be a bit long for some of the children, but because they have the books at home they become familiar with the story.” [Nursery, Interview]*

Overall, those who provided negative feedback usually tied this to the length and complexity of the books. Again, it is worth reiterating that some of those who took part in the follow-up telephone interviews were selected specifically because they had provided less favourable views as part of the survey, and so some of the negative comments regarding the resources may be over-represented here. Feedback from both the survey and the telephone interviews was, on the whole, positive and the limitations of the resources presented above are included to highlight where minor tweaks or adjustments to the resources might potentially be made to improve on what was already considered to be a good resource overall.

### 5.3 Perceived Usefulness as a Teaching Resource

Feedback on the overall usefulness of the books as an educational resource for teaching road safety education was very positive. Overall, 89% of survey respondents said that it was quite useful or very useful. Only 5% of the total sample perceived that the books were not useful (shown in Table 15 below).

**Table 15: Overall, how useful would you rate the ‘Go Safe with Ziggy’ books as an educational resource for teaching road safety messages to children in early years settings? (n=270)**

| Response          | Number of Respondents | % of Respondents |
|-------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Very useful       | 179                   | 66%              |
| Quite useful      | 62                    | 23%              |
| Okay              | 17                    | 6%               |
| Not very useful   | 10                    | 4%               |
| Not useful at all | 2                     | 1%               |

Again, when looking separately at establishments that taught Primary 1 aged children and those that did not, 94% of those who did said that they found the resource quite or very useful, compared to 88% of those who taught only pre-school or ante-preschool children.

Interviews confirmed that teachers perceived the resources as helpful overall for teaching road safety education. That being said, several comments were also made that much of the teaching relied on “*common sense*” or learning from their own childhood, rather than being linked explicitly to the books. Overall, teachers and nursery staff commented that they liked the fact that the books were clearly linked to the Curriculum for Excellence, but were not dictated by it. The adaptability afforded by the resource was welcomed.

### 5.4 Retention of Key Messages

In assessing whether the books were fit for purpose, the evaluation sought to understand whether the key road safety messages contained in the books were

being retained by practitioners, parents/carers and children. The technical book review revealed that the books each contained different road safety messages, as well as repeating some core messages, (e.g. finding safe places to cross, use of pedestrian crossings/the 'green man', holding hands, and so on). Across all of the books, the point is also emphasised that children do not need to understand all of the content of the books, and that the main message is that children should learn to *hold hands and wait* before crossing the road. The contents of each book and the messages they contain is summarised in Appendix A.

There was mixed feedback on whether both the main message and individual messages in the books were always appropriate and clearly conveyed. Some practitioners felt that the main message should be to *stop, look and listen* and, indeed, some said that this was the main message that they taught to children in their establishments. Others said that the message should include a prompt for children to *think* before they cross roads and should also be more explicit about where children should wait (i.e. behind the kerb). Some participants questioned how easy the concept of 'waiting' was for children and felt that *stop* provided a clearer message to this age group. Parents, in contrast, seemed to stress that *holding hands* was the main message that they wanted to see conveyed:

*"At this age, its 'holding hands' that's the most important thing – 'You're either holding hands or you're not walking', that kind of thing." [Parent, Focus Group 4]*

In speaking with parents and carers, the other main road safety messages that are taught to children, and which they felt should feature in the books, appear to be:

- not to run near roads;
- to stop at the edge of the kerb;
- not to play with car seats/seatbelts;
- that the grown up should be on the side of the pavement nearest the road;
- to look left and right while crossing the road; and
- to wait for the 'green man' (at crossings).

The desired messages seem to be the same for both older and younger siblings and parents felt they were all covered by the existing books, albeit subtly, in some cases.

While parents/carers and practitioners agreed with most of the main messages conveyed in the books, and could see their importance, all agreed that the messages were quite complicated at times, and could be challenging for young readers to take on board. The independent book review also suggested that some of the books, in particular *Ziggy Visits Granny* and *Ziggy's Summer Holiday*, may contain too many messages for one book and may be too sophisticated for younger readers. The book review also revealed that it was not always clear what the main messages from each book were, and that, unless parents/carers read the guidance notes at the end of the books, some of the more subtle messages could potentially be missed. This was also noted by workshop participants.

Indeed, parents and carers in particular stressed that it would be useful if the main road safety theme of each book could be flagged on the front cover (e.g. in bullet point form), so that they could easily select the books that met their needs. The titles

of the books alone did not always provide a clear indicator of the main road safety messages that they contained. There were comments that the books were used in cases where children had demonstrated unsafe behaviours to act as a refresher, for instance, if children had failed to stop before crossing a road, and so knowing which book to refer back to 'at a glance' would be helpful.

Despite the complexity of some of the messages in the books, some parents commented that they felt that the books challenged them to think about what they needed to teach their children. For example, although they were aware of driveways crossing pavements and watching out for their children, they had not necessarily thought to teach their children about being aware of this. In this respect, the books were educational for parents too.

Overall, it was not clear which, if any, of the main road safety messages were being retained by the parents/carers who took part, nor was there anything to clarify whether the road safety messages were being retained by young children. Instead, it seems that the books are being used as a reference tool or a refresher for adults to remind themselves of the 'types' of messages that they should be sharing with their children. This is not necessarily a weakness of the resource, and instead highlights how, in line with the principles of Curriculum for Excellence, the resource is encouraging adaptive and flexible teaching and can be used responsively depending on children's interests and behaviours. There is, however, perhaps scope to make the key messages more explicit in some cases.

## 5.5 Raising Awareness

Across the research strands, one common theme to emerge was a lack of awareness either of the resource (overall) or of specific component parts of the Go Safe with Ziggy package (especially the online resources). Even among those who currently use the books and are familiar with the resource, there was patchy awareness of the wider offering. For parents and carers in particular, all familiarity was from the books alone and there was a commonly shared view that increasing awareness of the full range of resources was key to maximising use.

Parents most often said that they had only limited awareness of the books, and this was based purely on the copies received from nurseries. They did not know or understand the rationale behind the books in some cases and felt that some accompanying information issued by schools/nurseries, the Scottish Government or Road Safety Scotland could be beneficial.

While several parents/carers and professionals suggested that TV advertisements were probably the best way of achieving national awareness (and most could remember road safety TV advertisements from their own childhood), they recognised this was expensive. A potentially lower cost alternative that was suggested by parents/carers and practitioners was a Ziggy animation or You Tube video which children could access either at home or at school/nursery.

Practitioners suggested that there was scope for Ziggy to feature as a link resource on the websites of other early years providers/organisations (again, Bookbug was cited as an example of a resource that had a high profile and made good use of links

on other websites). Specifically, using the national GLOW<sup>29</sup> network was suggested as a means of reaching schools and using Mumsnet was suggested as a way of reaching parents/carers. Another group of parents who regularly met as part of a toddler group suggested that social media was a good way to make local parents/carers aware of the resources.

Finally, several workshop attendees suggested a national re-launch of the resource, but stressed that this would need to be accompanied by a new addition to the resource in order to make it more appealing to practitioners. They also recognised the cost implications of this, however, and so a targeted re-launch in areas where uptake is low may be an alternative option.

## 5.6 Other Suggestions for Maximising Utility and Engagement

### Simplified Books for Younger Readers

There was consensus among practitioners and parents/carers that road safety education could begin at an earlier age than 3, and many suggested that a simpler, abbreviated Go Safe with Ziggy book would be welcomed for children under 3. Although the 'Out and About' buggy book was seen as meeting this need to some extent, it was felt that there was room for a book to bridge the gap between the baby and pre-school years (i.e. for those aged 1 and 2). Indeed, parents in particular stressed that a book aimed at children aged 12-18 months would be helpful when children were leaning to walk and having their first outdoor independent walking experiences. Introducing the Ziggy character at this early age would also mean that children were familiar with the character before they received the first ante-pre-school book. While there are two online books that perhaps fill this gap ('Spot the Traffic' and 'Cross the Road with Ziggy'), hard copies of these books, available via Health Visitors or libraries was seen as a possibly valuable addition to the Ziggy package.

### Language Barriers

Although not explored specifically as part of this evaluation, comments were made by parents and early years practitioners that a textless version of the books would be welcomed for children and parents experiencing literacy or other learning barriers. Comments were made that, because the books are relatively text heavy compared to other pre-school story books, this may be particularly off-putting to parents/carers who cannot read. This book could also be used for children under 3 and adapted by parents/carers and educators to meet the learning stage of the child. This was something welcomed by nurseries working with children aged 0-5. A textless version of the books was also suggested as being useful to enable early years practitioners to work with children for whom English is not their first language.

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<sup>29</sup> GLOW is a digital environment for learning that is available across Scotland and funded by the Scottish Government. It presents schools with a purpose built digital learning solution which supports the delivery of Curriculum for Excellence



### Rewarding Good Practice

During the workshops, examples were given of other initiatives that reward schools for taking part, and also reward examples of good practice. In such cases, the rewards were often nominal (e.g. a paper certificate to signify that the school/nursery was actively participating). Feedback suggests that this acts as a good incentive to participation for establishments. Other forms of incentives or prizes were also discussed in workshops, including an annual national or local prize for those evidencing use and impact of the resources.

### External Visitors

The main other comment received through the research was that schools and nurseries would like to have visits from a Ziggy character to their school. Several respondents indicated that a visit from a life size Ziggy would really reinforce the messages being taught from the books:

*“Visit from characters to nurseries would be great! They could act out the stories for children and bring them to life.” [Nursery, Interview]*

As an alternative to having Ziggy characters visit establishments, some suggestions were put forward that it would be good if an independent visitor (for example, a Road Safety Officer) could visit the school and share the stories, since children were more likely to listen to a ‘new face’ conveying the stories. While external visitors seem to be a popular option, it is important to note that no consideration was given in responses to the resource implications of funding these activities. If the cost of such visits was to be paid for by establishments, for example, it is not clear if they would still be popular. An alternative may be for school/nursery staff to dress up as Ziggy (and this was reported by more than one authority) or for Junior Road Safety Officers to play a role in speaking to younger children as ‘special visitors’. These provide lower cost alternatives, but may still require significant time and financial resources. They are also options that would need to be initiated and co-ordinated locally, since Road Safety Scotland has no jurisdiction to dictate the use of local staff time or resources.

### Staff CPD

Although the interviews generally revealed that staff were comfortable with the resources and confident using them as a teaching resource, some suggestions were made for an accompanying CPD event/activity to keep Ziggy fresh in people’s minds, and ensure that staff (particularly new staff) were aware of the full range of resources available.

A CPD event would also potentially provide an opportunity to share some of the innovative practice that appears to be operating around the country, and to further advertise and raise awareness of the online resources. Suggestions were made that this would ideally be led by Road Safety Scotland or local Road Safety Officers, via in-service training. That being said, the cost of providing such events was also recognised as being potentially beyond existing budgets and would also need to be considered against the ‘added value’ it would contribute, since it seems that most staff who engaged with the research, are already comfortable with their knowledge

and use of the resources. Perhaps, the real value would be for newly trained staff and those not currently using the resources.

### Notes for Parents

The evaluation revealed that the factual notes for parents that are included in the books may not be being used. Indeed, parents/carers commented that they were unlikely to read the parental notes and concentrate only on the story. Some suggested that trying to incorporate factual guidance in the books may also be a distraction or off-putting feature for both children and adults.

That being said, it was recognised by parents/carers and practitioners that road safety education for parents was essential in reinforcing the messages to children. Early years' practitioners attending the workshops commented that they had witnessed many examples of poor parental practice with regards to road safety, with commonly reported issues including:

- children being allowed to alight vehicles directly onto busy roads, instead of exiting on the pavement side;
- inappropriate use of car seats;
- children being allowed to run in car parks;
- children being walked on the outside edge of pathways or on kerbs/roads, instead of on the inside of the pavement; and
- lack of helmets for children using scooters and bikes.

Stressing parental responsibility was something that all practitioners felt was key, and so there were suggestions that separate parental 'road safety guides' should perhaps be introduced to complement the Ziggy books or replace the guidance already published within them.

### Other Collateral

Finally, across the research, requests were made for additional collateral under the Go Safe with Ziggy brand. There were requests for florescent reflectors, stickers, keyrings, wristbands or other collateral to help engage children in the road safety themes. Posters for each of the different books, and for Ziggy's Road Safety Mission overall were suggested as being useful for nurseries/schools to catch parents attention. That being said, some respondents did indicate that if a project or resource became 'overcomplicated' it could put people off using it.

While these types of additional support resources do already exist, and Road Safety Officers have direct access to these for local use, there was limited awareness of what was currently available among those delivery road safety education in nurseries and schools. This suggests that more could be done by RSOs to promote them locally or, in areas where RSOs are no longer available, to let establishments know directly about the full range of resources that exist (e.g. as part of the book order forms).

## 6 Discussion

### 6.1 Key Findings

The research has provided considerable insight into how the books are being distributed and used, and also provides valuable feedback on the way that the books are designed and their appropriateness for the early years audience. The main findings in relation to the distribution, use and content of the resources are detailed below.

#### Distribution and Uptake

- Although the existing distribution process seems to operate well, there is some confusion regarding how and when the books should be ordered and there may be some preference for making the ordering system more flexible throughout the year, including the capacity to order full sets of books at a single ordering point. Given that uptake is usually higher for the existing Autumn distribution, the start of the academic year would seem to be the most appropriate time for a single order approach, if adopted.
- There appears to be a preference for online or email ordering. Although evidence from the survey may have been confounded by the research approach used (i.e. an online survey), qualitative interviews and workshop contributions confirmed that this might be a preferable option going forward.
- The average uptake of the small books among early years establishments is around 47%. While there do not appear to be any clear links between geography or deprivation and uptake, there are clearly some local authorities where ordering activity is consistently higher or lower than the national average.
- There might be scope for collaborative work between Road Safety Scotland, Education Scotland and the Scottish Government to refine and update the existing database of early years establishments that is held and managed by Education Scotland, to ensure that it is up-to-date, and that ordering data is more accessible and can be monitored more regularly to identify areas where uptake is poor. In addition, further exploration could be undertaken to identify contributing variables where uptake is identified as consistently high (i.e. to identify 'what works'). There may also be scope to cross-reference the existing database with those held by, for example, the Care Inspectorate, to ensure that the offer of books reaches the widest audience possible.
- There may be scope for more proactive involvement by RSOs in the regular monitoring of ordering activity at the local level. The intelligence that is already held by Education Scotland regarding who is ordering the books in each local authority is perhaps not being used to maximum effect (i.e. to inform targeted promotion and encourage wider use of the resource).
- The distribution of order forms could potentially be accompanied by more direct communication and information about the online resources, support

resources and the main aims of the books to ensure that the full range of resources are being used to their full potential.

- Awareness of the online resources was found to be particularly poor and there is scope for better signposting of these, perhaps via the distribution and ordering process. Signposting the website more clearly on the small and big books seems key to ensuring that parents are aware of the online resources.
- Local practice for distributing books to parents varies and there is some evidence that a more personal approach to distribution, including guidance or supporting information to parents may ensure that the books are used as intended.

### Use

- While most establishments still have and use their big book packs, there seems to be some desire for the big books to be replenished since the original copies have been misplaced or become worn in several establishments. A preference for hardback, spiral bound or board books seems to be evident among a reasonable number of staff, since the format at present can be unwieldy, and may be one of the main things that puts teachers off using the big books at present.
- The small books appear to be well received overall. The Halloween book appears to be one of the most popular and is well used for organising classroom based activities, possibly because it comes at the start of the year and has a clear theme.
- Some of the small books appear to be ordered more by establishments than others and to be more recognisable to parents/carers and practitioners alike. It is not clear from the research why this is the case. Given that each of the books contains different road safety messages, there may be scope for ensuring the other books achieve equal distribution to ensure that the messages contained within them are not being missed.
- The big and small books are being used to complement outside active learning and are being used in a range of innovative ways. There is perhaps appetite from staff to reinforce the messages from the books with more interactive talks, and while there may be a preference for this to include visits from external partners, the proportionality and cost implications of this would need to be considered.
- Parents and carers report a child-led approach to using the books, where children act as the main prompts for use. The books are also being used as a reference in cases where children fail to act safely.

### Content and Design

- Most respondents who took part in this research reported that children liked the Ziggy character and generally appear to engage well with the style of the

books. The Ziggy brand is clear and recognisable and the use of repetition across the series of books is welcomed.

- Over 75% of survey respondents rated the appearance, length, age appropriateness, format and usefulness of the books as either 'good' or 'excellent'.
- A number of respondents identified the length of the books and the sophistication of some of the stories as potential limitations. Feedback suggests that this is especially true for ante-pre-school children and means that early years practitioners and parents are adapting the books to meet their own needs. This in itself is not necessarily a limitation, since the books were designed with the Curriculum for Excellence in mind, which encourages non-prescriptive learning based on children's individual interests/preferences. It may, however, be acting as a barrier to more frequent use, in some cases.
- The online resources, soft toys and interactive resources all received positive feedback from those who had used them and there is potential for greater use of these by raising awareness of the full range of Ziggy resources, especially among parents and carers.
- There may be scope to expand the Ziggy series to include younger readers and bridge the gap between the existing 'buggy book' and the ante-pre-school year. Parents, in particular, stressed that a book aimed at children aged 12-18 months would be helpful when children were leaning to walk and having their first outdoor independent walking experiences. Introducing the Ziggy character at this early age would also mean that children were familiar with the character before they received the first ante-pre-school book. While there are two online books that perhaps fill this gap ('Spot the Traffic' and 'Cross the Road with Ziggy'), the value of making hard copies of these books available could be further explored.
- Although a new addition to the Go Safe with Ziggy resource, the journey pack is already being well received and, based on comments from professionals and parents alike, it appears to further improve the home links agenda.
- There was a strong desire from all stakeholders to see an accessible app that can be used in both the education and home environment. This may have value beyond the resources already provided online, since it may be perceived to be a safer, stand-alone resource that children could use independently. It could also be developed to not require internet access, although it would require a smartphone or tablet. Success, however, would be contingent on raising awareness of any such development, to prevent similar barriers that currently exist regarding awareness and use of the online resources being repeated.

Overall, the findings from the evaluation suggest that the Go Safe with Ziggy books are a strong and much appreciated resource, that are being used, for the most part, to encourage active approaches to teaching and learning (including interactive and experiential learning). There may be some scope for small adjustments or enhancements to both the distribution process and the content/format of some of the

resources to maximise their use but, on the whole, the resource is well received as a road safety tool for the early years.

## 6.2 The Findings in Context

The Go Safe with Ziggy resources were developed following a consultation with key stakeholders on what they wanted from an early years resource<sup>30</sup>. The evaluation suggests that the new resources have been successful in meeting many of the desired criteria that were set out. This includes achieving a core recognisable character in Ziggy who provides a strong link between the separate books and acts as a recognisable brand. The books cover both urban and rural settings and the key messages are clearly linked to Curriculum for Excellence to make clear how the books fit in the wider educational context. The availability of resources in different formats is welcomed and the use of home links is supported. All of these were requirements revealed by the earlier consultation.

The requirement for a resource that children could learn from more independently was also highlighted from previous research and this seems to be something that the Ziggy resource is achieving. The 'free' use of the big books in nurseries that was described here evidences that children are using the books independently as well as with adults. At home, children are being encouraged to lead the choice of books and copies are left available for children to use as and when they want for home-based reading activities. Independent use is encouraged after P1 for children as they grow older. The suggestion for an app indicates that there is a preference for encouraging additional independent learning, if possible.

Perhaps the one area where the new resources do not appear to reflect the preferences expressed in the previous consultation is the length and complexity of the texts, especially those where multiple messages are conveyed within a single story. Whilst some of the books do contain only 2-3 key messages, others are more diffuse and this might not meet the expectations of parents/carers, as expressed in earlier research. Limiting all of the texts to a smaller number of key themes may be more effective in ensuring that young readers take away the key messages. Whilst the books also offer 'side' stories to engage children, these also possibly detract from the main messages, and may be unnecessary if condensed versions of the books were sought.

The research into the CTCS<sup>31</sup> also showed that factual notes for parents were not being read, and this seems to remain true of the Ziggy resources. The design of a covering letter explaining the rationale and purpose of the books was suggested by participants to help to bridge this gap, but this would need to be tested to understand its likely efficacy. It may be that parents and carers prefer to use their own existing road safety knowledge when sharing the books with children, but this does mean that there is potential for some 'current' road safety education messages (such as appropriate use of car seats and so on) to be lost.

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<sup>30</sup> ODS Consulting (2009) *Road Safety Early Years Resource Consultation: Analysis of Responses*, <http://www.roadsafetyscotland.org.uk/publications-and-statistics/road-safety-early-years-resource-consultation-analysis-responses>

<sup>31</sup> ODS (2006) *Increasing Membership of the Children's Traffic Club in Scotland in Areas of High Deprivation*, Scottish Executive Social Research, <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2006/07/17113255/0>

Previous research<sup>32</sup> showed that uptake of CTCS membership in Scotland (the road safety programme for this age group that preceded Go Safe with Ziggy) was around 50%. This is similar to the percentage uptake in small books that was found in this study, based on Education Scotland distribution data, although it is recognised that there are some limitations to the reliability of this data (discussed above). Given that feedback is largely positive among those who do already order and use the books, the main challenge seems to be in encouraging more widespread uptake.

Encouragingly, unlike the previous research, there is little in the analysis that points towards differences in ordering by deprivation or rurality. Variance, instead, appears to be at the collective local authority level. This research was not able to identify with confidence the reasons behind the books not being ordered to all educational establishments despite universal entitlement. This is largely because the majority of practitioners who engaged with the survey had previously ordered the books due to the research design. Of the small number in the survey who had not ordered the books, the main reason for not doing so was a lack of awareness. This suggests that awareness raising in targeted areas may be the first step to increasing overall uptake, working with individual local authorities that currently appear to be engaging less well.

Previous research<sup>33</sup> has also shown that there is generally a need for more dissemination of good local practice in road safety education, training and publicity. This was echoed by those who attended the workshops, as well as among some survey and telephone interview participants and there seems a genuine appetite for CPD activity among early years teachers to learn more about what is available and how it is being used elsewhere. It is recognised that much of this good practice is already documented as an online resource for educators but, again, lack of awareness of the online resources means that this may not be being used to maximum effect.

Finally, one of the questions for the evaluation was to consider whether the Go Safe with Ziggy resources are perceived as offering 'value for money'. It is recognised that it is difficult to place an economic value on resources of this kind, and that much of the value can only be seen in the long term, with children remembering the messages and staying safe. Linking the success of the resources to any decrease in child road casualties is perhaps tenuous, since it is recognised that children's safety as pedestrians and road users is influenced by many factors beyond their own control (including other road users). It does seem, however, that there would be merit moving forward in trying to capture feedback on a regular, localised basis on what children and parents are taking from the books as a measure of the potential impact they may be having. This is missing at present and so makes an assessment of the impact and value of the resource difficult to achieve.

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<sup>32</sup> *ibid*

<sup>33</sup> MVA Consultancy (2009) *Building on Success: Improving the Delivery of Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity*, Department for Transport: London

### 6.3 Strengths and Weaknesses of the Resource

Table 16 summarises the main strengths and weaknesses of the resource identified from the research, reflecting the views of the full range of different stakeholders who took part. Most of the strengths relate to the style and design of the books, while the weaknesses relate mostly to communication/awareness barriers.

**Table 16: Summary of Strengths and Weaknesses of the Resource**

| Strengths   | Weaknesses  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ziggy character, catchphrases and branding</li> <li>• Book design (graphics and images)</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> <li>• Universal availability (to those who order)</li> <li>• Multiple formats (accessibility)</li> <li>• Interactive resources</li> <li>• Links to Curriculum for Excellence</li> <li>• Home links</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Length and complexity of some of the stories for some of the younger, ante-pre-school children</li> <li>• Confusion/inconsistency with some of the main road safety messages</li> <li>• Problems identifying the most appropriate person within establishments to direct communications</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of full range of resources</li> </ul> |

### 6.4 Opportunities and Challenges Moving Forward

Table 17 highlights the main opportunities and challenges moving forward, taking into account what parents/carers and professionals have reported. Several opportunities for further developing the resources were raised across the research strands, and there seems to be a genuine enthusiasm for the resources to continue to evolve and expand into new mediums. While this is a positive finding from the work, it must be recognised that the time and other financial resources that would be required to deliver against some of the wishes expressed by parents and practitioners alike are considerable. There is also a risk that resource is invested in developments or additions which are not used or under-used meaning that the costs outweigh any additional road safety returns. Inspiring changes to the ways in which the existing resources are used as well as raising their profile to strengthen their presence in the curriculum may be more realistic solutions.

**Table 17: Summary of Opportunities and Challenges Moving Forward**

| Opportunities   | Challenges   |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of social media or apps for awareness/promotion/access</li> <li>• Featuring the link to online resources/website more clearly on the hard copy books</li> <li>• Involvement of other professionals in the promotion of the initiative (e.g. Health Visitors)</li> <li>• CPD/Sharing Good Practice</li> <li>• Incentivising or rewarding use/participation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updating and monitoring distribution lists</li> <li>• Identifying new establishments to be included on the database</li> <li>• How to increase awareness of the full range of resources</li> <li>• Engaging parents and monitoring use of the resources at home</li> <li>• Measuring impacts</li> </ul> |



It is recognised that any resource will only ever be as good as the parent/practitioner who employs it, and so ensuring that books continue to reach the right people, and that their importance is communicated and understood remains the main challenge moving forward.

## 6.5 Conclusions

Overall, the Go Safe with Ziggy resource is well liked, and has many strong and attractive features compared to the resource that preceded it. There is a strong brand and a recognisable character that children, educators and parents on the whole seem to be engaging with well. The design of the books evaluated positively, with the length and complexity of the books being mentioned by some as providing the only barrier to use among the younger aged children. Parental understanding of the purpose and rationale for the books could be improved, but neither of these issues seem to be creating significant barriers to use. The full range of resources is also welcomed, but some materials are perhaps being under-utilised due to a lack of awareness.

Based on the feedback gathered, the resource itself requires little in terms of re-design or development. One suggestion would be the simplification of storylines and main road safety messages for the youngest children. It seems that the new additions to the Ziggy package, including the journey pack, are likely to help engage users even more, and the online stories for children between the baby and pre-school years seem to be a move in the right direction to fill a gap identified for this age group.

The biggest challenge, moving forward, is in ensuring that the right people are made aware of the full range of resources, and are encouraged to order them. Updating and refining the ordering and distribution process seems to be key to maximising the future success of the resource and helping it realise its full potential. This will ensure that children in their early years, and their parents and carers, continue to learn the importance of 'going safe'.

## Appendix A: Summary of Stories and Road Safety Messages

| <b>Title and Story Theme</b>   | <b>Main Road Safety Messages</b>   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>Ziggy and the Lollipop:</b><br/>           The main story covers the family's journey to school accompanied by Ziggy. This story covers safe walking on the pavement as well as safe road crossing behaviour/use of a lollipop person/crossing patrol officer.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it's safer to hold hands</li> <li>• as you walk along, look out for driveways</li> <li>• when you stop, keep your toes behind the kerb</li> <li>• always wait before you cross</li> <li>• look and listen for traffic</li> <li>• a lollipop person helps children to cross the road safely</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Ziggy's Halloween Wish:</b><br/>           The story focusses on the importance of visibility when walking/travelling at night. The story revolves around a night-time journey made at Halloween and the need for pedestrians and road users to make themselves seen to traffic.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• we have to look and listen for all sorts of traffic, not just cars</li> <li>• it's important to find a safe place to cross even if that means walking a bit further</li> <li>• stop and wait with your toes behind the kerb</li> <li>• look both ways and keep listening for traffic</li> <li>• always wait until it is safe before your cross</li> <li>• dressing brightly helps drivers to see you</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Ziggy Visits Granny:</b><br/>           The story specifically addresses use of size/age appropriate car seats and proper use of seatbelts. The book also focusses on walking in the countryside and the need to face oncoming traffic when walking and standing back when cars pass. There are also messages around holding hands where there is no pavement, finding a safe place to cross and ensuring that you are visible to traffic.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it's important to sit in a car seat that fits your size</li> <li>• being securely clicked in is the safest way to travel</li> <li>• on roads with no pavements, it's safer to hold hands</li> <li>• on roads with no pavements, always walk on the side the traffic is coming towards you and stand in when vehicles drive past</li> <li>• zebra crossings help us to cross the road safely</li> </ul>          |
| <p><b>Ziggy Goes Zab-a-ding-a-Whheeeee:</b><br/>           The book has three main sections: the first introduces the importance of wearing a protective helmet, the second focusses on use of the pedestrian crossings and the final section demonstrates that wearing a helmet allows children to safely enjoy using bikes/scooters.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it's safer to wear a helmet when you're on a bike</li> <li>• use a crossing to get across the road if you can - even if it means walking a bit further along</li> <li>• remember to wait and hold hands until you see the green man</li> <li>• check that all traffic has stopped before you go straight across</li> <li>• the park is a safe place to play in</li> </ul>                                       |
| <p><b>Ziggy's Sunny Holiday:</b><br/>           The story focusses on the dangers of getting out of the car/using the 'safe side' and safe behaviours in car parking areas. The initial part of the</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it's safer and smarter to sit nicely in your car seat</li> <li>• always wait until the grown-up with you tells you it's safe to go before you get out of your car</li> </ul>  |

| Title and Story Theme   | Main Road Safety Messages  |
|---|--|
| <p>book also builds logically on the main messages presented in the previous books. A further theme that is introduced is inappropriate driving, and teaching children that not all drivers follow the rules of the road/stop at traffic lights.</p>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• car parks can be dangerous</li> <li>• it's safer and smarter to stay close to the grown-up with you at all times</li> <li>• always find a safe place to cross, even if this means you need to walk a bit further</li> <li>• check that all the traffic has stopped before you go straight across, even if the green man is on</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Ziggy and Maggie Start School:</b><br/>                     The book does not have a single road safety message, nor does it introduce any 'new' road safety messages, but instead reiterates almost all of the learning from previous books in the series.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it's always safer to walk a bit further to use a proper crossing if there is one, like a Zebra, Pelican or Puffin crossing or to cross with a Lollipop person</li> <li>• hold hands and wait with your toes behind the kerb</li> <li>• look both ways and listen for traffic</li> <li>• if you're using a crossing, always wait until the traffic has stopped, even if the green man is on</li> <li>• when it's safe walk straight across and keep looking and listening as you go</li> </ul> |



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