
Heeley / Meersbrook Consultation Report

Children's Consultation Report 2009

**Children's Voices Project
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Introduction

Children are at the heart of many services throughout Sheffield. Their involvement in the planning, delivery and evaluation of services affecting them is critical for ensuring a service is efficient and based on actual need.

Article 12 of the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child states that,

“Children and young people have a right to express an opinion on any matter affecting them and to have that opinion taken into account”.

This statement is supported in Sheffield through the Sheffield Children and Young People's Plan and the Sheffield Children and Young People's Participation Strategy.

The Children's Voices Project is firmly committed to this principle and is leading on consultation and participation work with children in Sheffield.

For more information on matters relating to this report or for support and advice in involving children in your setting please contact:

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Executive Summary

In the spring of 2009 Children's Voices were approached by officers working in the Heeley / Meersbrook area of Sheffield to consult with children in three local primary schools. Children's Voices were commissioned to carry out a consultation project with children on the issues raised by the Every Child Matters consultation, conducted by Sheffield City Council in 2007.

Children's Voices consulted with approximately 240 children from year groups 2 and 5 in the following primary schools:

- Carfield Primary
- Anns Grove Primary
- Meersbrook Bank Primary.

The children were asked for their views and opinions on solutions to issues that were raised specifically by children living in the Heeley / Meersbrook area. The issues included:

- Lessons at school
- Recycling
- Attendance at after school clubs
- Bullying
- Safety in their area
- Travelling to and from school.

Summary of findings

Lessons at school

- Y2 pupils' favourite lessons are art and science; Y5's favourite lessons are art and P.E.
- Both Y2 and Y5 pupils' least favourite lesson is maths
- Both Y2 and Y5 pupils would like to improve lessons by making them more practical, for example incorporating more games, doing more experiments, taking lessons outside and using computers
- Both Y2 and Y5 pupils would like to improve maths lessons by making them more fun with games and by making it easier with clearer explanations
- Both Y2 and Y5 pupils would like to spend longer on their favourite lessons.

Recycling

- The majority of Y2 and Y5 pupils recycle paper, plastic, glass and tin cans
- 56% of Y2 and 36% of Y5 pupils do not recycle clothes
- The majority of Y5 pupils said they would be encouraged to recycle more if there were more recycling bins in the area they lived in

- Y5 pupils said that they would find recycling easier if bins and packaging had clearer labelling so that they knew what could be recycled and where.

Attendance at after school clubs

- 54% of Y2 and 42% of Y5 have never been to after school club
- Y5 pupils go to after school club significantly more often than Y2 pupils, as only 16% of Y2 go 'lots' compared to 34% of Y5
- The majority Y2 would be encouraged to go to after school club more often if there was nice food and their friends went
- The majority of Y5 would be encouraged to go to after school club more often if they got to do sports activities.

Bullying

- 68% of Y2 think that it would be a "great" idea to have a secret box in their class for them to write down any worries or concerns. At the end of the day or week the teacher would read out the 'worry' anonymously to the class and work out a solution together
- The majority of both Y2 and Y5 pupils think that punishments for bullies should be missing privileges and leisure time such as playtime.
- Both Y2 and Y5 pupils suggested that pupils who bullied should be given time to talk to a teacher about why they bullied. Other suggestions included writing a "sorry letter" to the victim and befriending the person they bullied
- Most Y2 pupils would talk to their friends and teachers if they were being bullied; most Y5 pupils would talk to their parents or carers
- Most Y2 pupils think ignoring bullies is a great and effective idea to combat bullying.
- Most Y2 and Y5 pupils think that being buddied up with a friend at playtime and dinner time is a great idea if you were being bullied
- Most Y5 pupils think that it is a good idea to have a special dedicated person within school to talk to about bullying and any other problems they may have.

Safety in their area

- 68% of Y2 and 60% of Y5 said they do not feel safe where they live. Most common reasons for this were crime, gangs and 'stranger danger'
- Most pupils who said they felt safe in their area said this was because they felt a sense of community, because people knew them and looked out for them
- A high proportion of Y5 pupils said that having more police around during the day and night would make their area better.

Travelling to and from school

- Both Y2 and Y5 pupils said that the worst things about walking to school are the dangerous roads and stranger danger

Recommendations

- Where possible, teachers should include more games and practical activities into lessons, particularly maths lessons
- There should be more recycling bins in accessible places in the area. Schools could contribute to this recommendation by looking into having recycling bins on site, available for the pupils and the wider community to use
- Recycling bins should have clear labels on them stating what can be put in them. The labels could be made accessible with images. Schools could contribute to this recommendation by making sure any bins they have in school are clearly labelled. Schools should remind children to recycle with posters and verbal conversations
- To encourage children to go to after school clubs, they could be involved in choosing snacks and drinks, activities. This could be done via suggestions boxes in the clubs for users and around school for non-users
- A 'buddy' system at playtimes and lunchtimes, a 'worry box' in class and a special delegated person to talk to are all ideas that could be discussed with pupils as part of a school's anti-bullying strategy
- Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) should be present in the area during the day and night to ensure safety and to create a community feel. School could contribute to this recommendation by having a PCSO visiting the school on a regular basis, so that the children can get to know them
- Traffic issues in the area could be addressed. Schools could contribute to this recommendation by having a school crossing patrol person on key busy roads

Consultation techniques

Consultation technique: Picture Voting

Purpose: To find out what are the children's most and least favourite lessons

Outline of the technique: Photographs of lots of different lessons were presented to the children. Each child was given two different coloured stickers, one to vote on their favourite lesson and one to vote on their least favourite lesson. Post-it notes were also provided for the children to add any additional lessons.

Consultation technique: Blackboard Thinking

Purpose: To find out what could make lessons more fun and interesting

Outline of the technique: Children were given black paper and chalk. They were asked to write or draw something that would make their lessons more fun and interesting.

Consultation technique: Feely Boxes

Purpose: To find out what materials children recycle

Outline of the technique: Items that can be recycled were placed inside boxes which had a hole cut out of the front. The children were asked to feel inside the boxes and identify the materials using touch alone. Once the child identified the material they had to mark down on a chart whether they recycle it or not.

Consultation technique: Message in a Bottle

Purpose: To find out what would encourage children to recycle

Outline of the technique: Children were given old and distressed pieces of paper to write ideas on about what would encourage them to recycle. Children then wrapped up their responses with string and placed it inside the bottle.

Consultation technique: Token in a Jar

Purpose: To find out how many children have been to after school clubs

Outline of the technique: Several jars were set up with options on about how often they attend after school club. Children were given a token to put in the jar that represented how often they attended.

Consultation technique: Building Blocks

Purpose: To find out what would encourage children to go to after school club or if they already attend after school what do they enjoy about it

Outline of the technique: Children were asked to build a tower of ideas that would encourage them to go to after school club. Lots of stickers already had pre-written ideas on them using widget symbols. Children searched through the stickers to find what would encourage them to go there more; they then stuck the stickers to the bricks making a tower of ideas. Blank stickers were also provided so that children could write additional ideas.

Consultation technique: Hook a Duck

Purpose: To find solutions to bullying

Outline of the technique: Questions relating to various solutions to bullying were stuck to the bottom of rubber ducks and placed in a paddling pool. The children were given a 'fishing rod' with a hook on the end which they used to 'hook' a duck. They then read the question from the bottom of the duck and gave their response.

Consultation technique: Dictaphones

Purpose: To find out if children like and feel safe where they live

Outline of the technique: Children were given 3 dictaphones; each dictaphone was assigned a different question about the area they live in. Children went along the 3 stations set up with the dictaphones and recorded their answers.

Consultation technique: Road Map

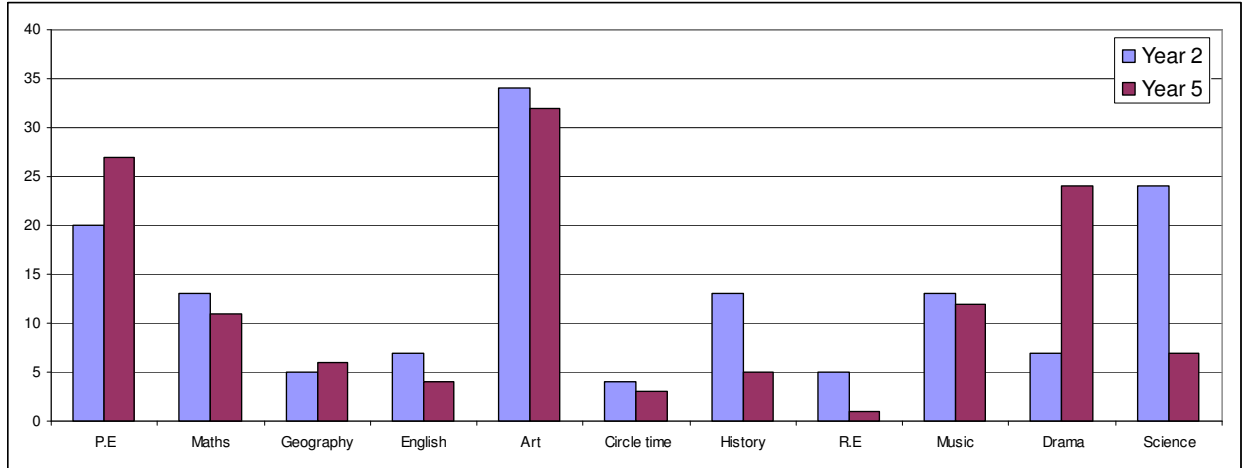
Purpose: To find out what is good and bad about walking to school

Outline of the technique: Children were given pictures of children walking to school. Children were asked to write the good and bad things about walking to school. They were also asked to think of anything that might stop them from walking to school and anything that would encourage them to walk more often. Once they had completed their ideas and coloured in the picture they stuck it on the road map.

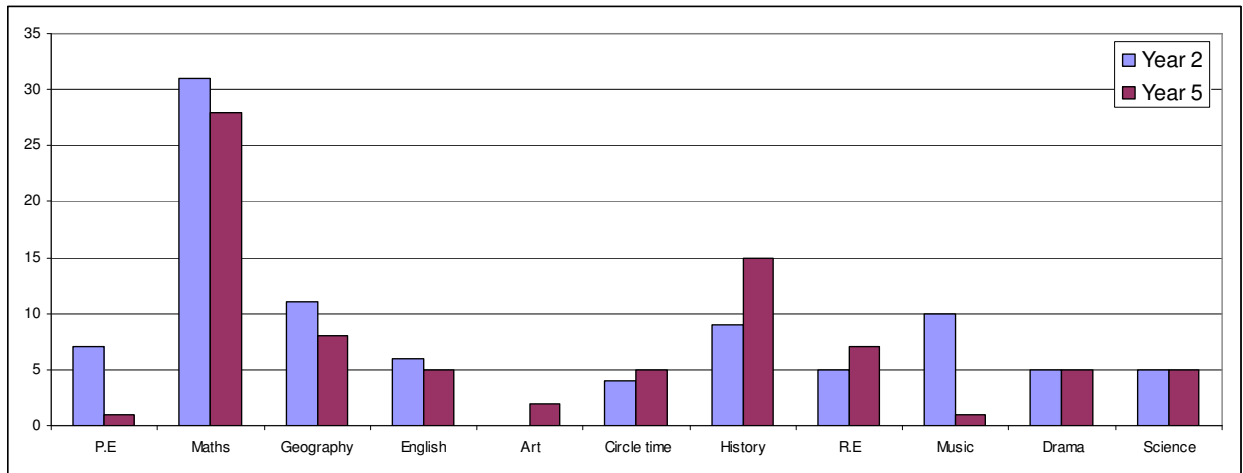
Findings

Technique- Picture Voting

What is your favourite lesson?



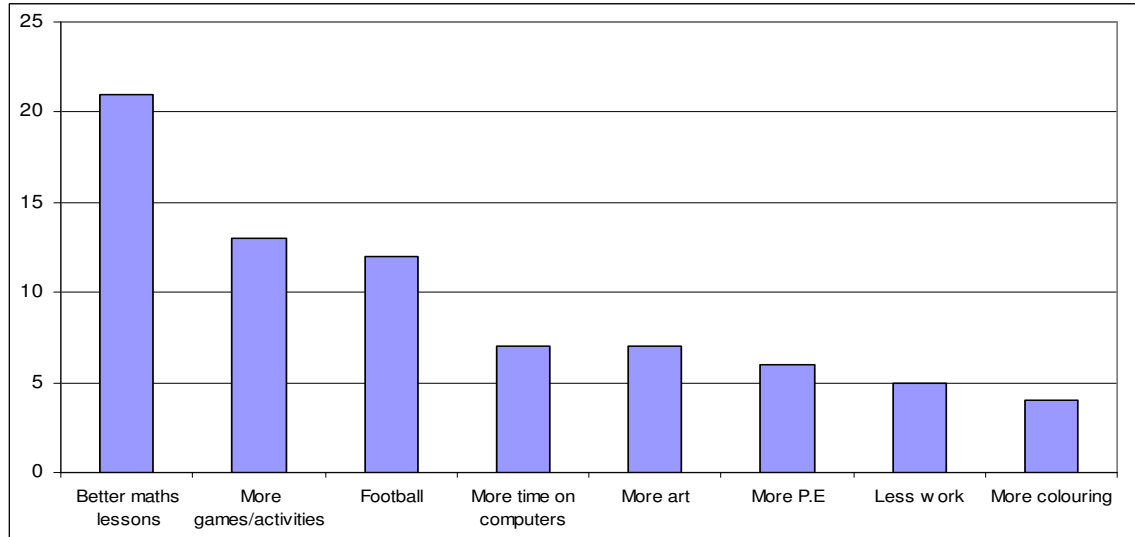
What is your least favourite lesson?



Technique- Blackboard thinking

What could make your lessons more fun and interesting?

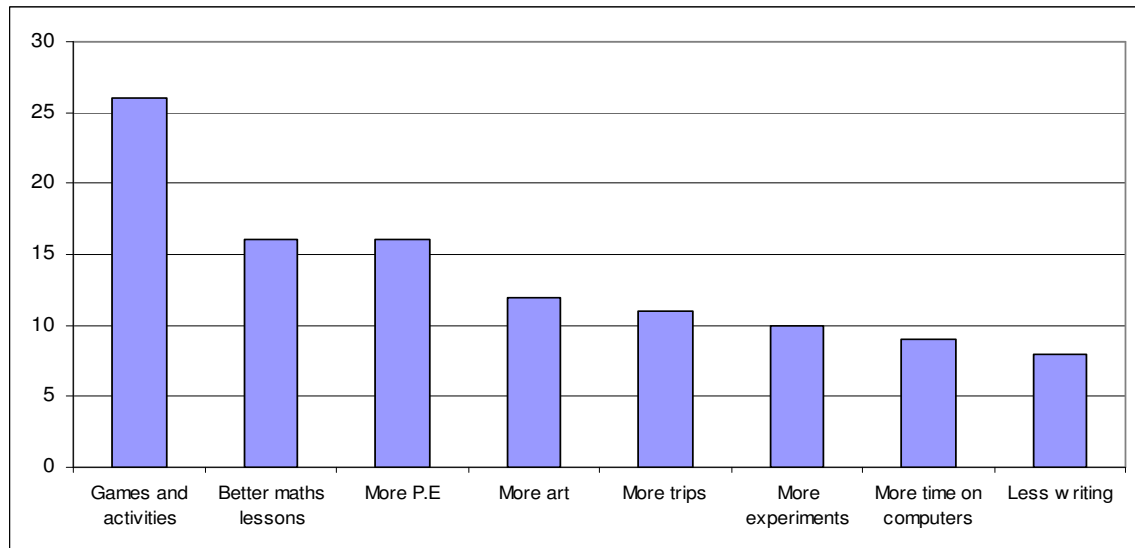
Year 2:



Other popular ideas included:

- Going on trips
- Having lessons outside
- Doing more science experiments

Year 5:



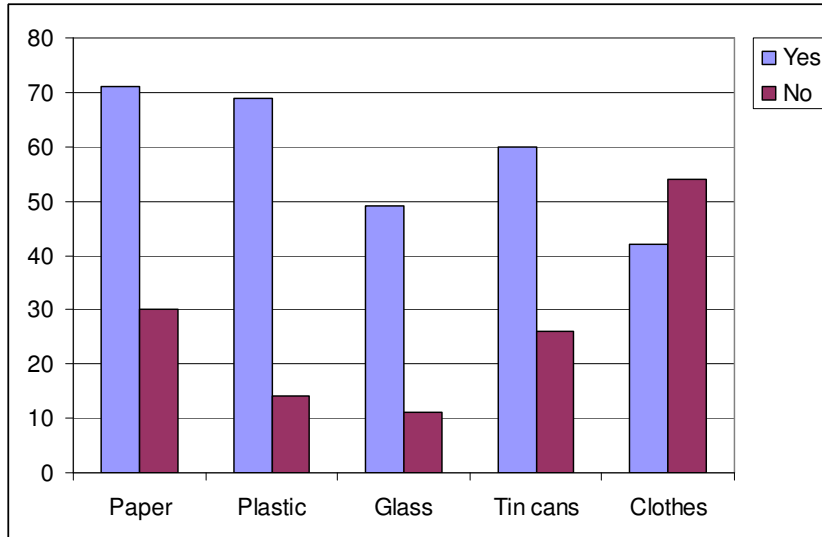
Other popular ideas included:

- No school uniform
- Having lessons outside
- If we get to choose what subjects/topics we do

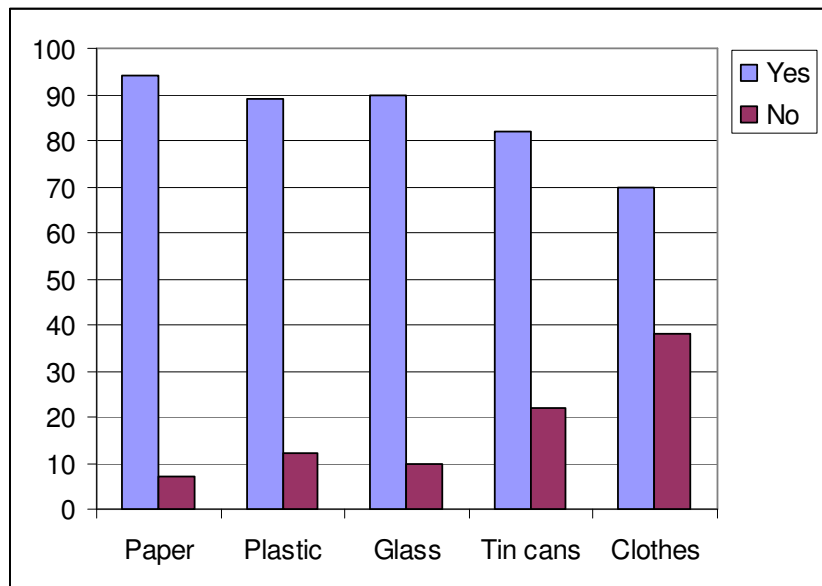
Technique- Feely Boxes

Do you recycle this...?

Year 2



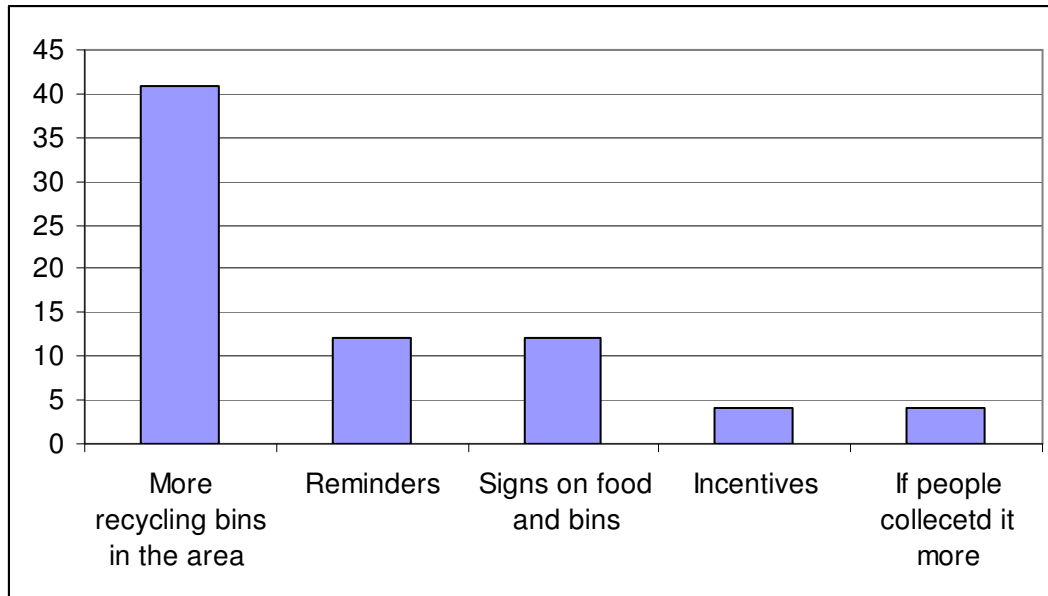
Year 5



Technique- Message in a bottle

What would encourage you to recycle more often?

Year 5

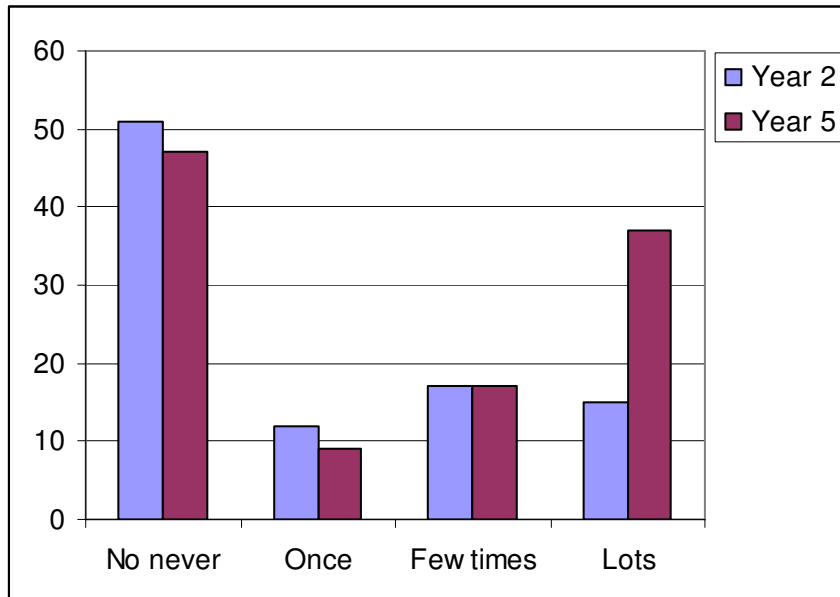


Other popular ideas included:

- Recycle clothes at charity shops
- If I saw what happens to it when it gets recycled
- If there was no other way of getting rid of rubbish
- Having someone to help you e.g. friends, neighbours and parents/careers

Technique- Beans in a jar

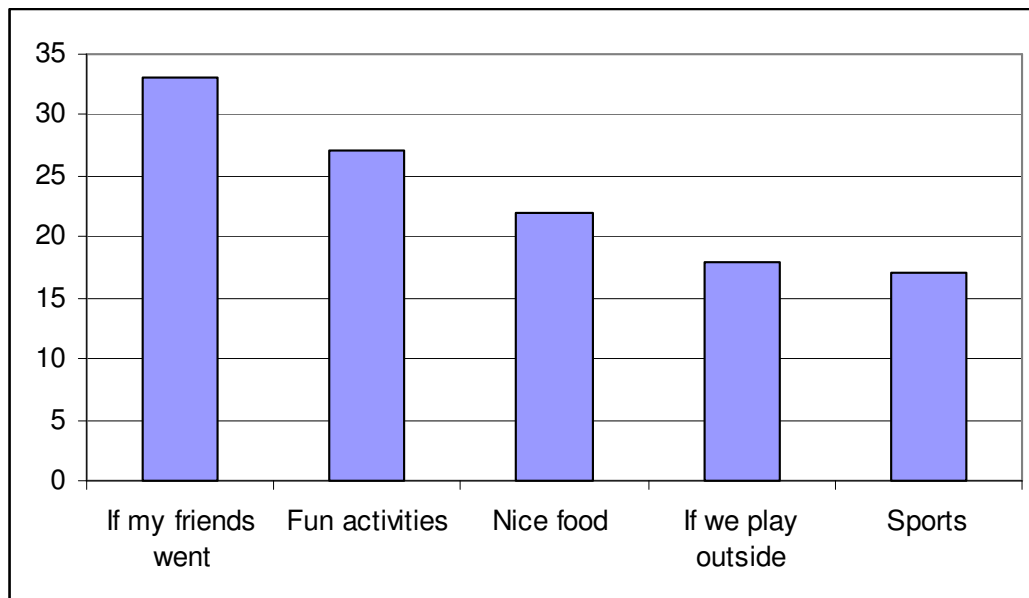
Have you ever been to after school club?



Technique- Building blocks

What would encourage you to go to after school club?
What do you already enjoy at after school club?

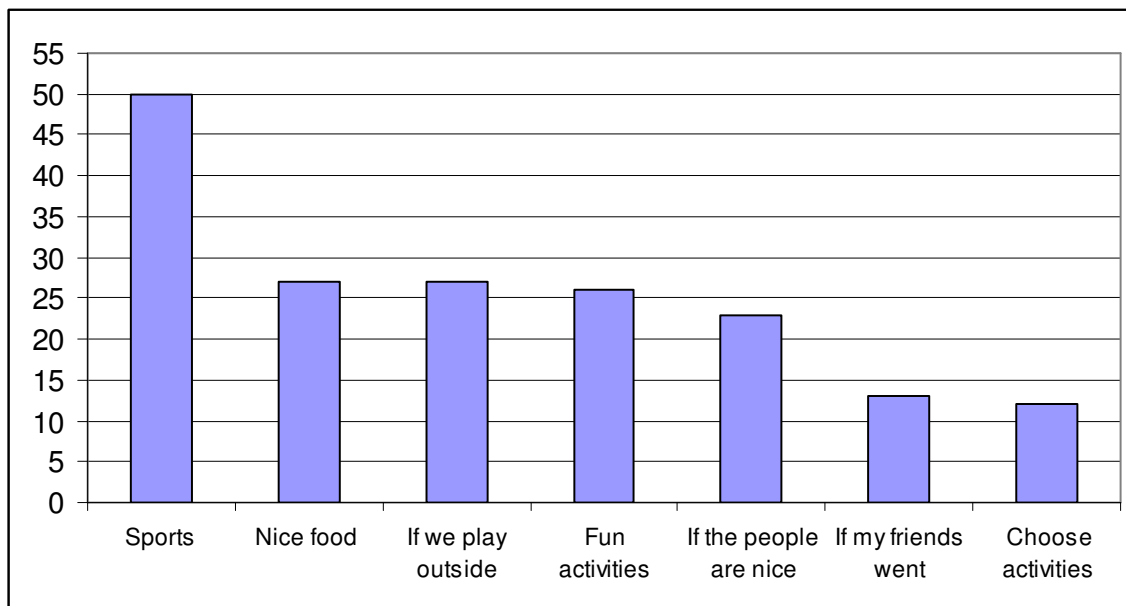
Year 2



Other popular ideas included:

- If the people are nice
- If we get to choose the activities we do

Year 5:



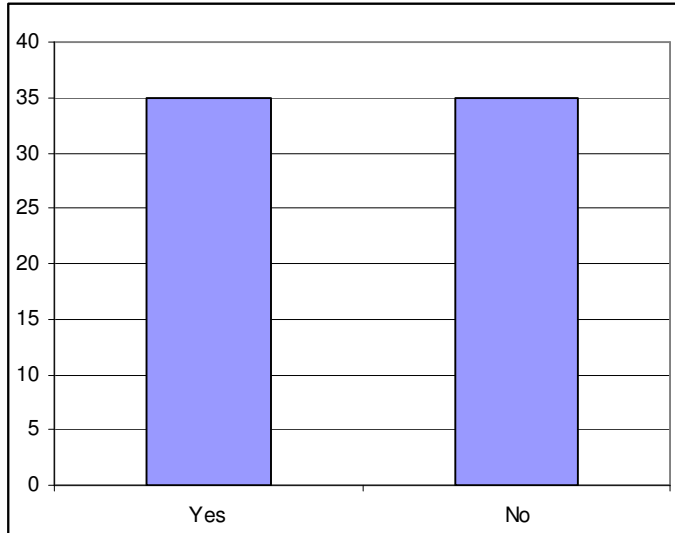
Other popular ideas included:

- Going on trips
- Arts and crafts

Technique- Hook a duck

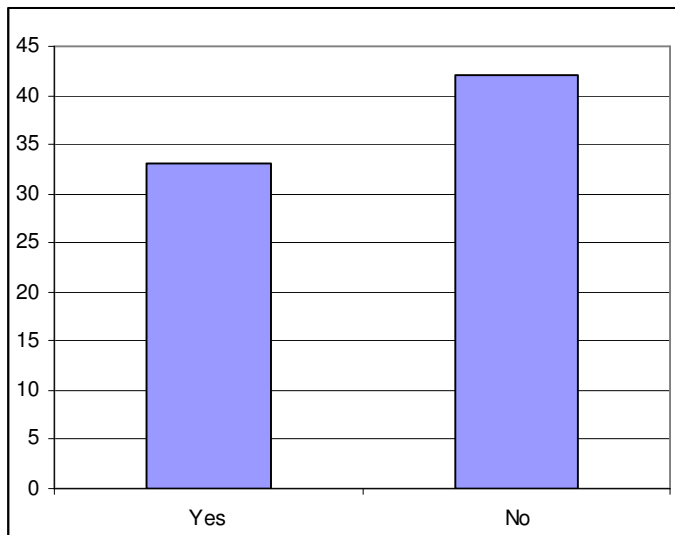
1. If you were being bullied would you consider ringing Childline?

Year 5

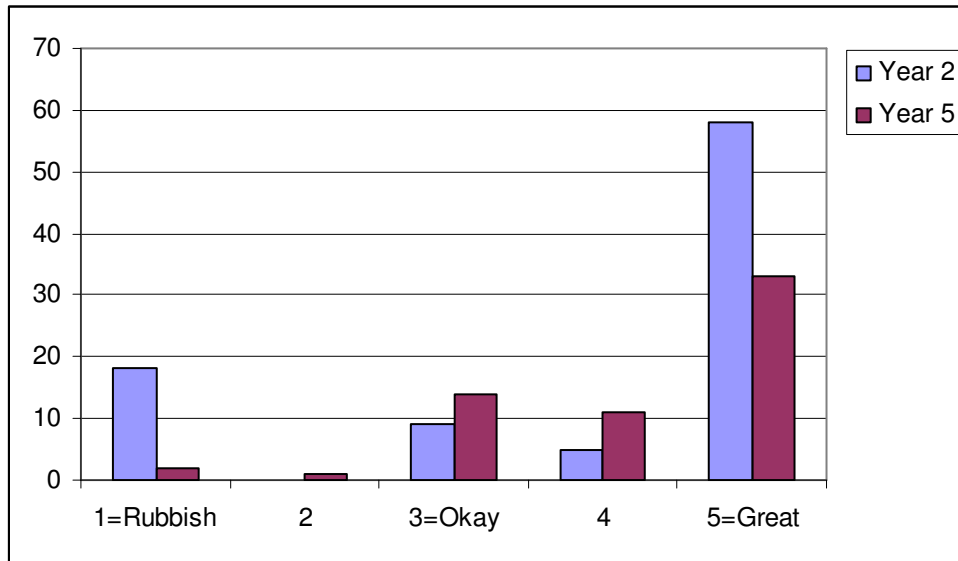


2. If you were being bullied do you think that a website with help and advice would be help?

Year 5

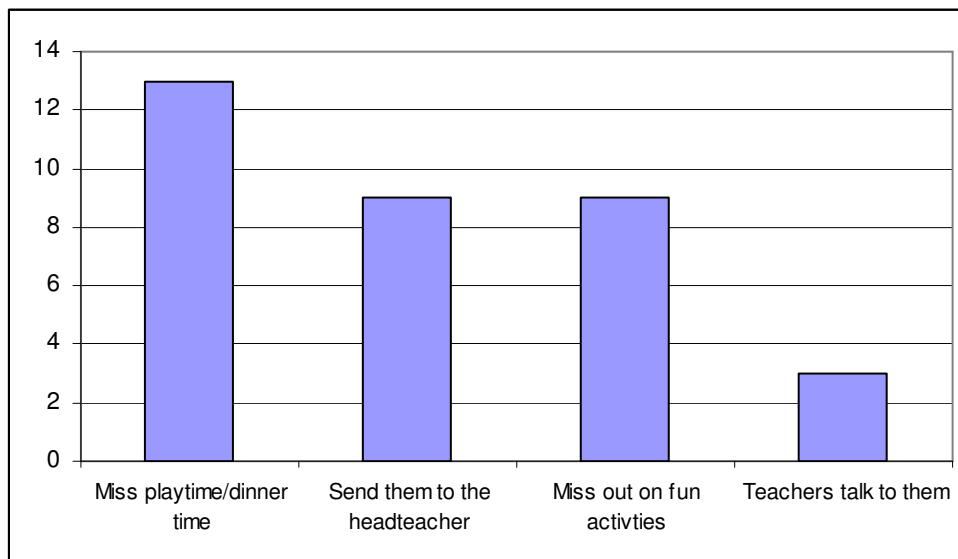


3. On a scale of 1-5 how would you rate the idea of a secret box in your class?



4. What do you think the punishment should be for bullies within schools?

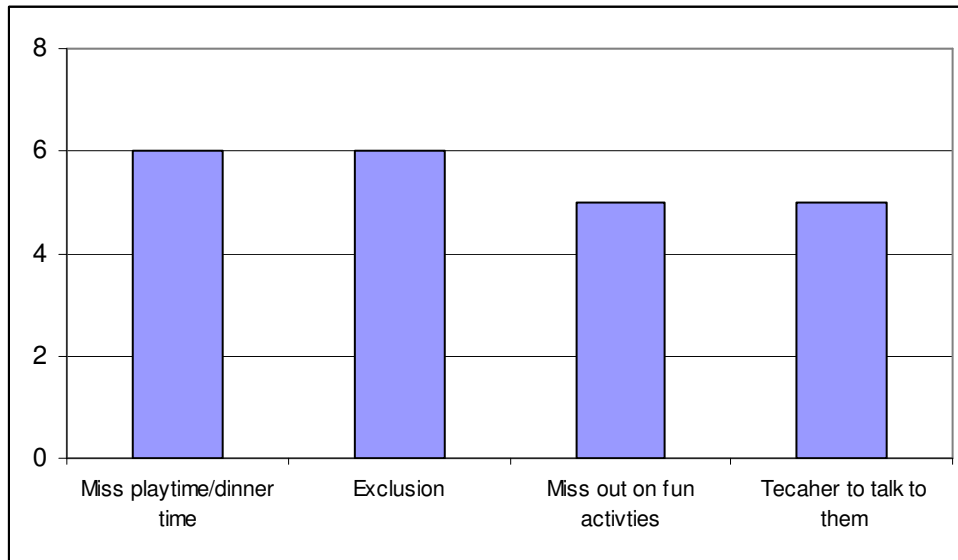
Year 2



Other popular ideas included:

- Going to prison
- They should do lots of work
- They should be made to eat cold food

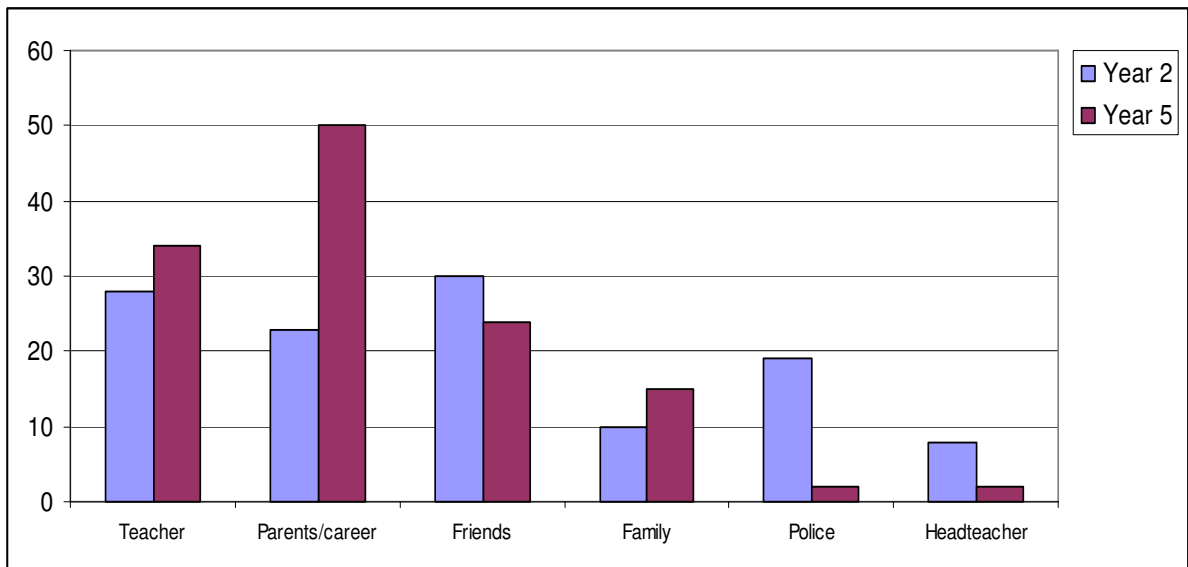
Year 5



Other popular ideas included:

- The bully should write a sorry letter
- The bully should befriend their victim
- They should do extra lessons
- Letters sent home to parents

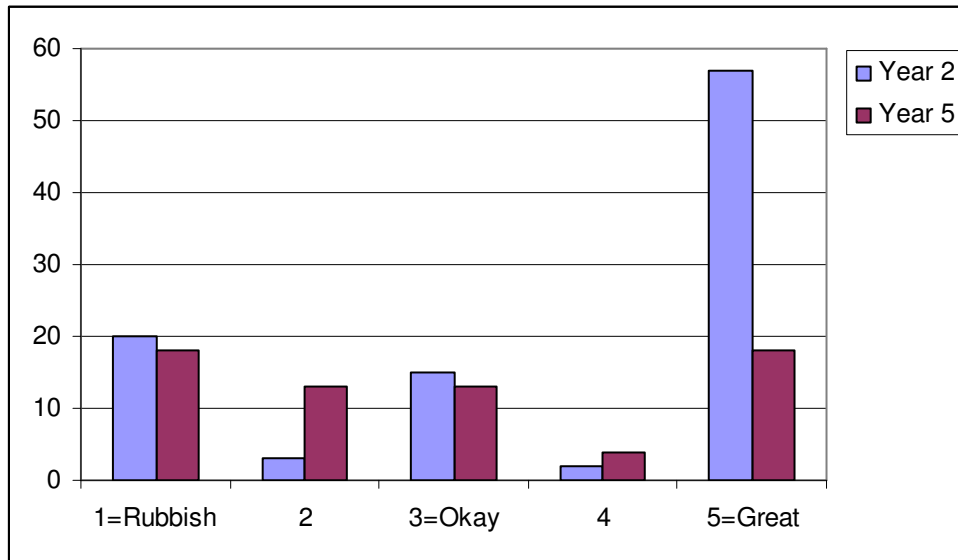
5. If you were being bullied who are you most likely to talk to about it?



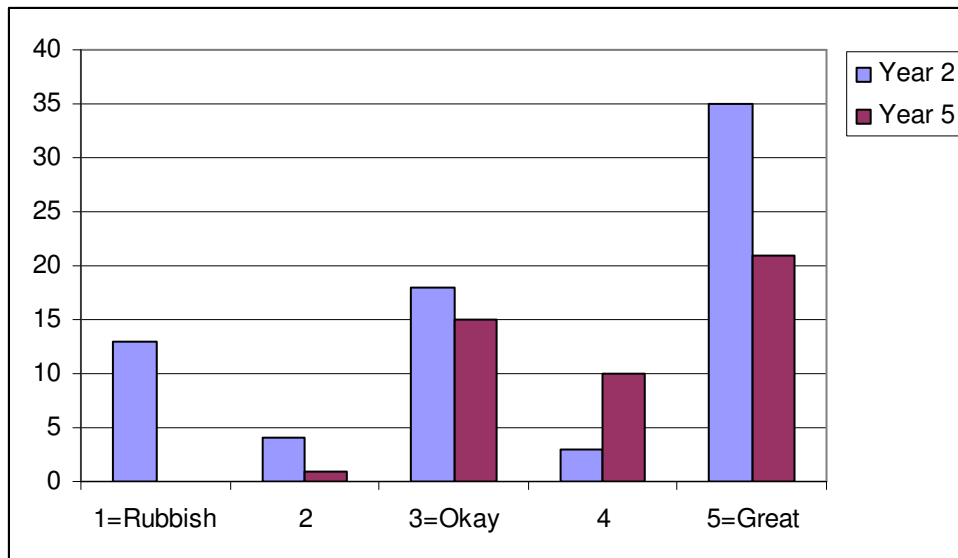
Other popular ideas included:

- Lunch time staff
- Nobody
- The bully

6. On a scale of 1-5 how effective do you think it is to ignore bullies?



7. If you were being bullied how helpful on a scale of 1-5 do you think being buddied up with a friend would be?



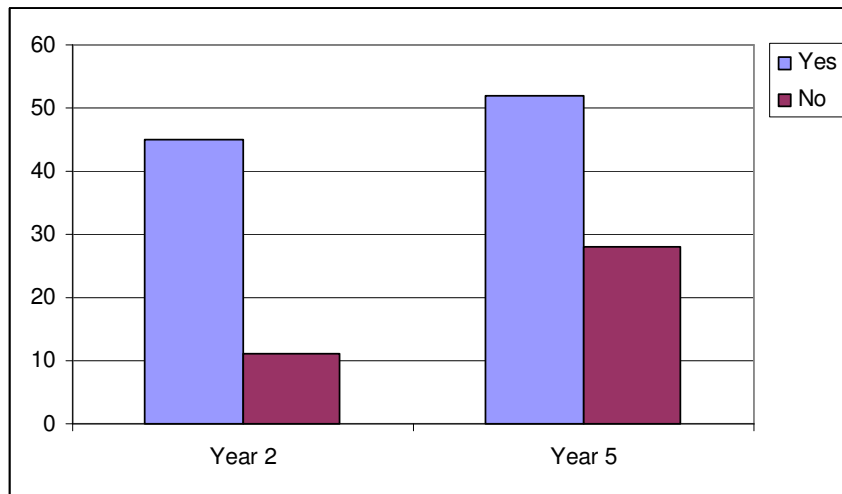
8. What do you think to a special person within school to talk to about bullying and other problems?

Year 5

- Good idea x19
- Bad idea x4
- It would be good if it was someone you know
- Good idea if done in private
- It would be good to have someone other than your teacher to talk to

Technique- Dictaphones

1. Do you like where you live? Why?



Popular reasons children gave to liking where they live included:

Year 2:

- I live near my friends
- People look out for me
- Live near the park

Year 5:

- I live near my friends
- There is a park nearby
- I can go out to play
- People look out for me

Popular reasons children gave to not liking where they lived included:

Year 2:

- Lots of bad people area
- Busy roads
- No where to play

Year 5:

- Gangs in the area
- Lots of vandalism
- Nasty people around

2. How could we make your area better? (The most popular ideas)

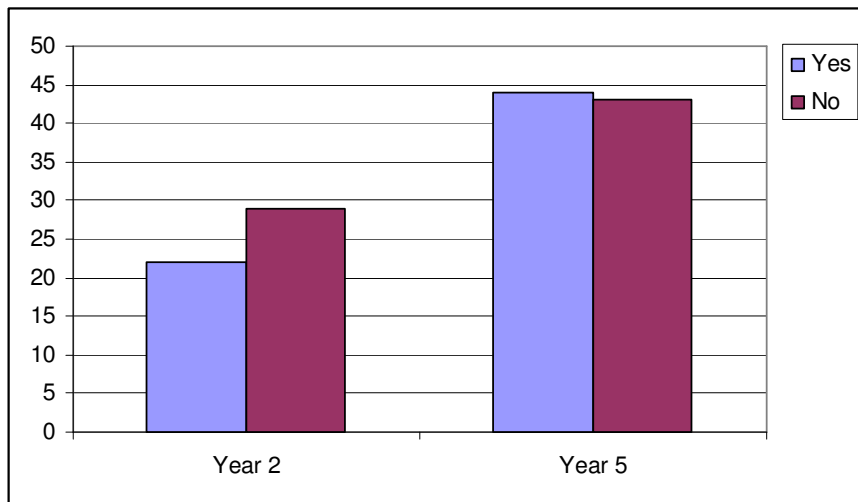
Year 2:

- More police
- If the area was cleaned up of rubbish and dog faeces
- Road safety
- More places to play

Year 5:

- More police during the day and night
- Putting CCTV cameras up
- More places to play
- Safer places to cross the road

3. Do you feel safe where you live? Why?



Popular reasons children gave to feeling safe where they live:

Year 2

- People look out for me
- My friends and family look after me

Year 5

- People look out for me
- My friends and family look after me
- There are lots of police around

Popular reasons children gave to not feeling safe where they live:

Year 2

- Busy roads
- Crime
- Stranger danger
- There are not many people around

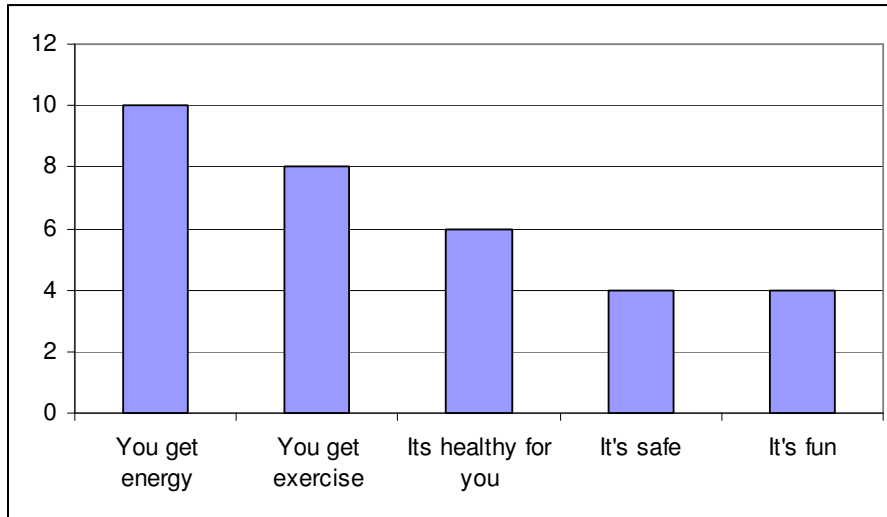
Year 5

- Gangs
- Murders
- Bullies
- Stranger danger
- Busy roads
- Crime

Technique- Road map

1. What is good about walking to school?

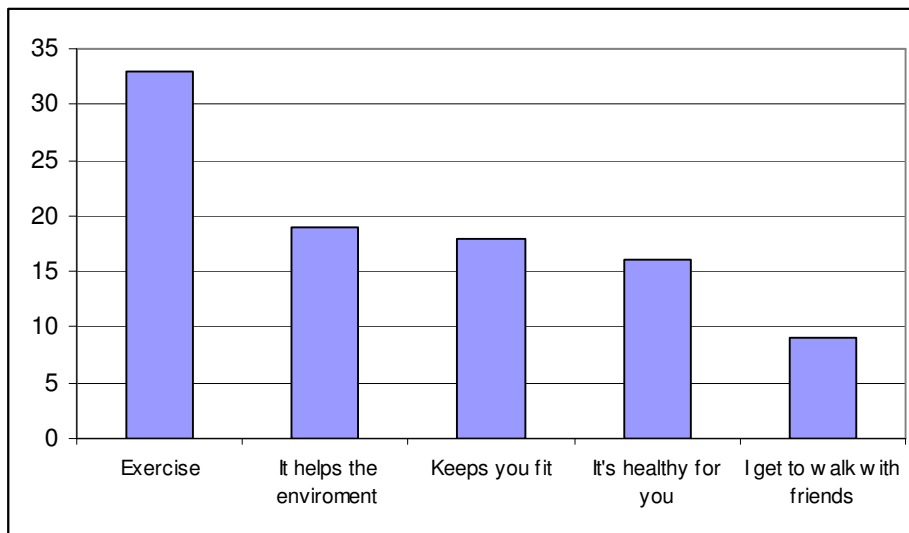
Year 2



Other popular ideas included:

- You get to see cars
- Fresh air
- Don't have to wait in traffic

Year 5

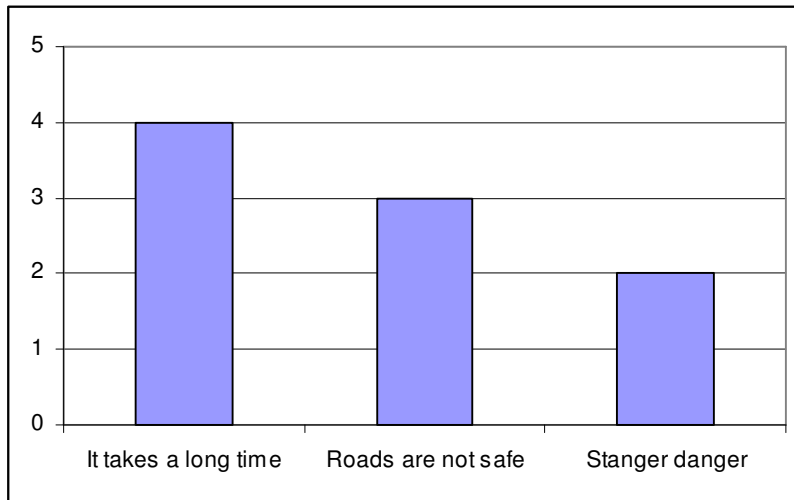


Other popular ideas included:

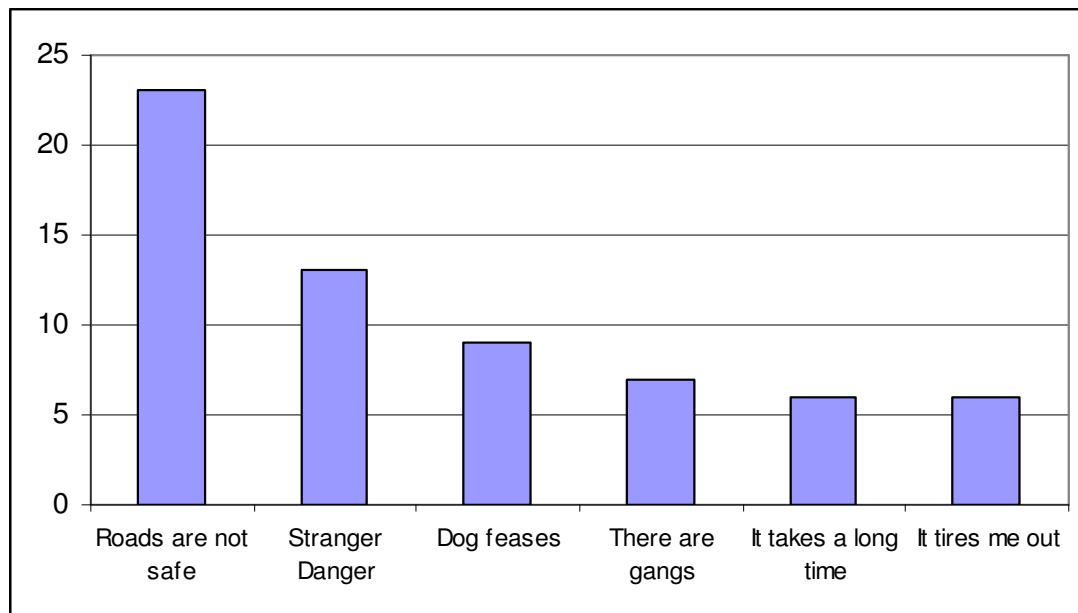
- You get fresh air x4
- You feel independent x2
- It's fun

2. What is bad about walking to school?

Year 2



Year 5



Other popular ideas included:

- You get bullied
- Bad weather