

Teacher Guidance Notes

Reception

Children of this age cannot manage alone in the road environment safely. They do not understand the dangers of the road and their size limits their field of vision. Their road safety language is limited, they are unable to judge speed and distance accurately or to make calculated decisions. The 'Areas of Child Development' sheet shows how their physical, social, emotional and intellectual limitations link to their ability to stay safe in this complex and dangerous environment.

It is therefore essential that children of this age are protected from traffic dangers by their parents or carers and one of the most important things the school can do is to convince parents of this. Parents should be encouraged to join in the road safety work and to support and reinforce it at home.

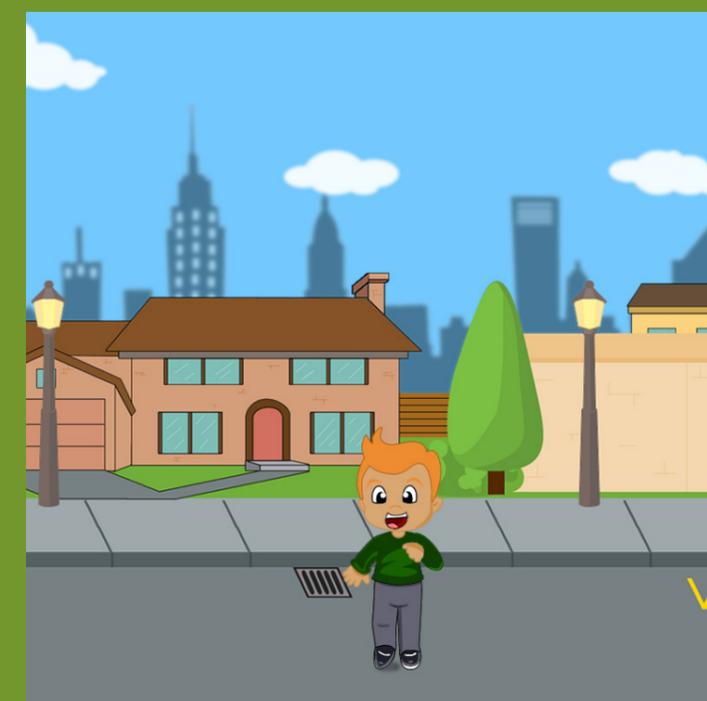
Because instruction is most effective when it is closely linked with 'doing' and to encourage parent involvement, this lesson is based on a 'road safety walk'. The walk can be themed to match any current topic and links can be made between the topic and road safety education. (For example, 'Colour' 'Shapes' 'Opposites' 'Ourselves')

The follow-up activities are designed to encourage **HOLDING HANDS**, to understand the word '**STOP**', to practice consciously using their eyes to **LOOK** carefully and their ears to **LISTEN** with concentration and discriminate between the jumbled sounds they can hear, and to **EXPAND THEIR VOCABULARY** and understand some important concepts such as the differences between the road and the pavement.

You may prefer to do some of the classroom activities before the walk

The activities are to help children to look and listen, to distinguish between different shapes, sizes and colours and to develop knowledge, skills and control of their physical movements which will all contribute to their road safety training.

The road safety walk is designed to put it into context in the 'real world' but also to establish a positive relationship between teachers and parents, develop an understanding of how a child's development impacts on their ability to keep safe, and a consistency amongst the adults in teaching the skills required.



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The key road safety messages that reception age children need to understand are:

1. **Always go out with a known/safe grown-up and always hold hands**
2. **STOP, look and listen**
3. **Roads are for traffic, pavements are for people**



The Road Safety Walk

- Risk assess a short walk near to the school. Try to include a quiet place to practice crossing the road, some road signs and street furniture to look at and learn about and reasonably wide pavements. If there are sections without pavement you will have to walk facing the traffic, and take extra care at bends
- Write a letter home to parents. Encourage families to send a volunteer adult (parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, carer, child-minder)
- Aim for a maximum adult: child ratio of 1:2
- Acquire sufficient hi-vis jackets for both adults and children
- On the day – brief all adult helpers
- Discuss the areas of child development that limit their ability to interact safely with the road environment
- Explain the 'rules' for the walk e.g. holding hands, adults walking kerbside of the children if with 1 child, things to talk about on the walk especially if relating to a topic, and linking this to road safety
- For sections without pavement, remember to walk facing the traffic, and you may need an adult to walk ahead to alert approaching traffic where there is a 'blind' bend
- It is best to split into small groups of say, 4 adults (8 children) and to be aware of being a possible distraction to drivers
- Remind the adults how important it is that they get down to the child's level when showing them things and especially when looking before crossing the road
- Ensure all adults know the Green Cross Code and apply it when practising crossing the road with the children in their care
- Brief the children on expected behaviour, especially holding hands and listening carefully to the instructions from 'their adult', why you are going out, why they will be wearing 'special' jackets, what you will be looking for
- REMEMBER too, that it is illegal for you to stop the traffic – the law allows only the police and school crossing patrols to stop traffic – if traffic voluntarily stops for you to cross the road beware of any overtaking vehicles
- De-brief in the classroom – 'what we saw and what we did'
- Above all – HAVE FUN!