Junior Roadwatch

Tying in with Road Safety Week's theme of speeding, a marathon week of Junior Roadwatch was delivered with 132 Year 5 and Year 6 children taking part in 7 sessions at the following schools:

- All Saints' NW2
- St Pauls NW7
- St Vincents
- Sunnyfields
- Whitings Hill

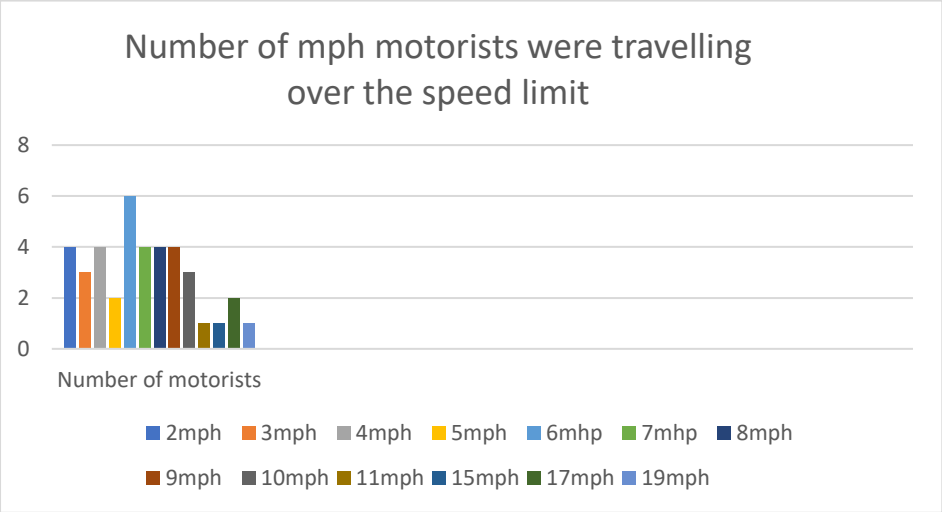
Each session began in the classroom, discussing with the children the importance of motorists keeping to the speed limit and why it matters to pedestrians like themselves. Smaller groups of children then wait outside whilst police officers detect speeding motorists with a speed gun. Once the speeding motorist has been flagged down, they are given the option of facing a penalty or answering the children's questions.

Will Norman, London's Walking and Cycling Commissioner attended one of the sessions:

"Speeding is a factor in nearly half of the fatalities on London's roads. I was delighted to join colleagues from the Met Police and Barnet Council for the Junior Roadwatch operation at Whiting Hills Primary – helping to reduce speeding near the school and raising awareness during National Road Safety Week."
Dr. Will Norman

Barnet Road Safety Education Officer (far left) with staff and pupils from Whitings Hill, Safer Transport Police officer (middle) and Will Norman (far right).

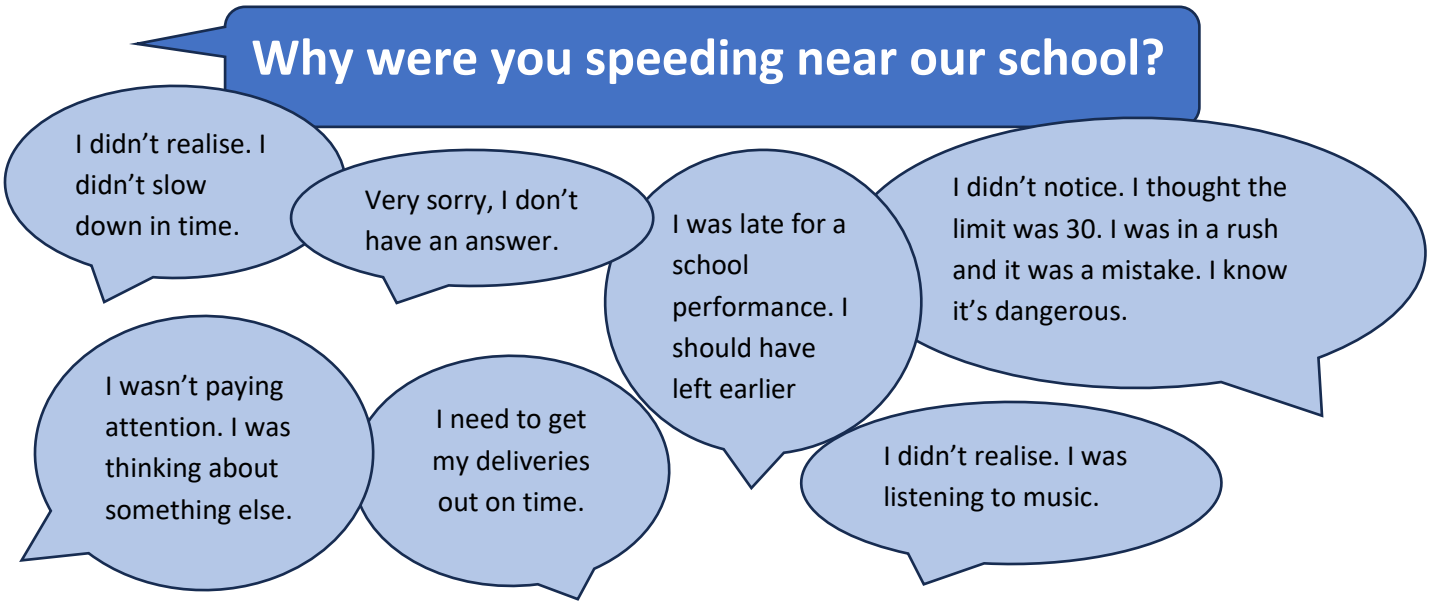
Speeding motorist (man in orange high viz) being questioned by pupils at Whitings Hill and Barnet Road Safety Education Officer

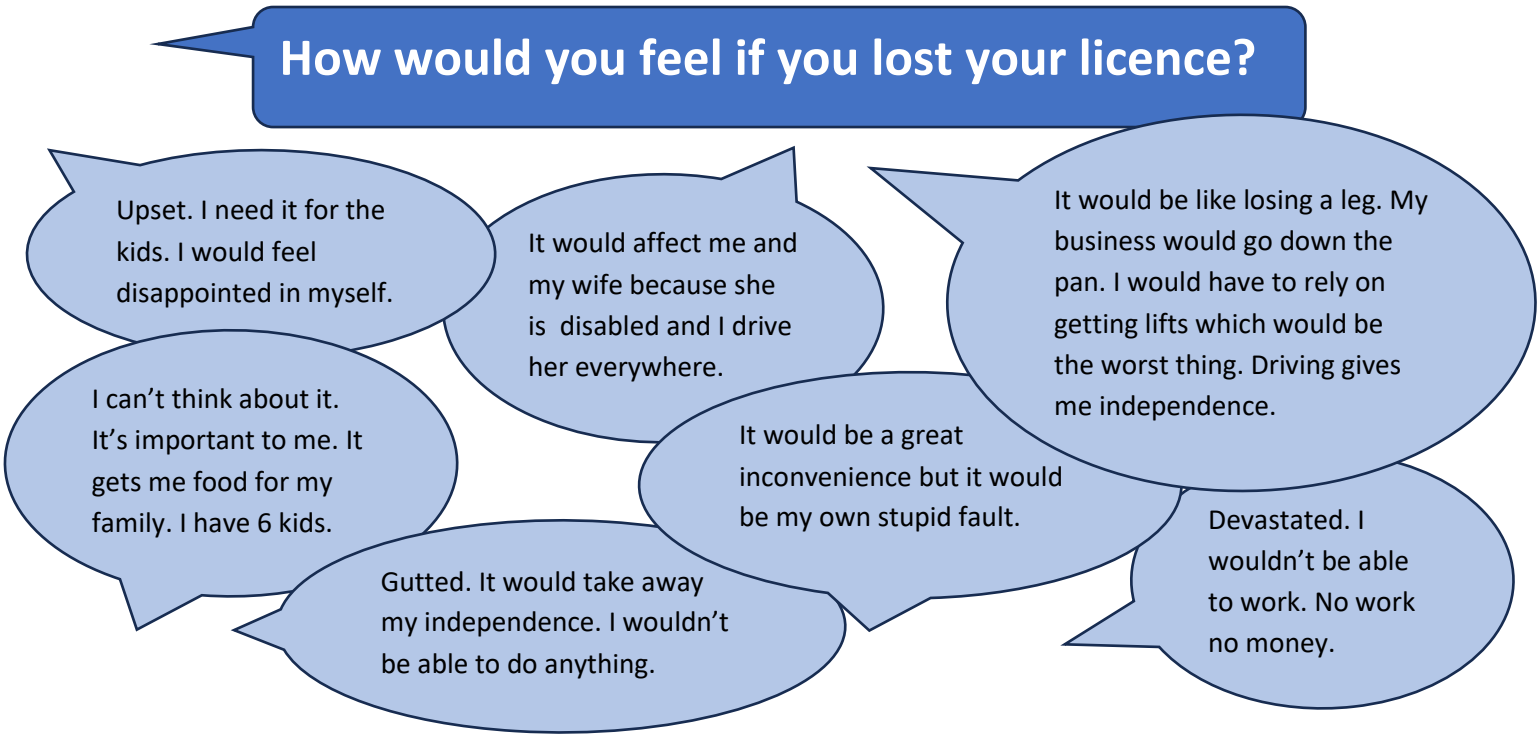


A total of 40 motorists were stopped for going over the speed limit with the worst offender travelling at 39mph in a 20mph zone.

We discussed with the children that the speed limit is not a target and should never be exceeded. Motorists were informed that an average speed reduction of 1mph reduces crash frequency by 5%.

Some examples of the questions the children asked and the answers they received:





When asked how often they use the road they were stopped on, most motorists answered daily or weekly (26 motorists).

Motorists were asked:

What do you think has had the biggest impact today?

- Being Stopped by police:1
- Answering the children's questions: 22
- Both: 15

Speaking to these children has a big impact.

I'll always remember this.

How effective do you think this scheme is?

- Not effective: 0
- Somewhat effective: 3
- Very effective: 36

This has given me perspective.

This has really made me think.

This is very powerful.

All 40 motorists pledged to stick to the speed limit in the future.

All children said they enjoyed the Junior Roadwatch session.

We asked what they enjoyed the most:

"100% . It was a great once in a life time experience. Thank you! I thought it was really effective that children were teaching adults life lessons. I loved it". *St Vincents*

"Because we got to stop someone and change them for the better." *Sunnyfields*

"I liked that they usually answered honestly." *Whitings Hill*

"Making it safe for the community." *St Pauls NW7*

"Talking to people and acting like police." *St Pauls NW7*

"Yes because we got to teach people to not go over the speed limit." *Whitings Hill*

"Seeing what their responses would be to our questions." *St Pauls NW7*

"I liked how we changed people's mind about speeding." *Whitings Hill*

"That the people we stopped said they would never speed again." *St Pauls NW7*

Will it make them think about their own safety when crossing roads?

"Yes, as if I'm not crossing sensibly, I could be putting myself in danger, as people don't always go the speed limit." *St Vincents*

"Yes because when I cross the road with my parents I wil know to be even more careful because some people go nearly twice the speed limit." *St Pauls NW7*

"Yes, after realising the dangers of speeding and how it is not very rare, I will probably take extra caution." *St Vincents*

"Yes because when I grow up and drive a car I will think about these questions." *Sunnyfields*

"Yes because the cars do their job so I have to have mine. If the cars aren't going at the speed limit it's still my responsibility to look after myself." *St Pauls NW7*

"I now know that a lot of people speed on this road so I can cross more carfefully." *St Pauls NW7*

"Yes because unfortunately people go too fast and are not aware." *St Vincents*

What else did they learn from Junior Roadwatch?

"That I didn't realise how important road safety is." *Whitings Hill*

"I learnt that people make mistakes and they can learn from it." *St Pauls NW7*

"If you wear something bright or colourful while crossing the road if the car comes by then they can see you 3 more seconds before [sooner]." *St Pauls NW7*

"I didn't know it was possible that we were going to find someone that went 37, she was supposed to go under 30!" *Whitings Hill*

"If you drive a 1 mile an hour slower, you reduce the risk of crashing by 5%." *St Pauls NW7*

"Speeding is the top thing in driving that leads to fatal thing." *Sunnyfields*

"That some people do not notice how fast they are going." *St Pauls NW7*

"I learned that the minimum fine for speeding is £100. I also learned that police have a machine for people who speed." *Sunnyfields*

"I never knew that e.g. if the speed limit was 20mph and you driving at 21mph it would still make a difference!" *St Pauls NW7*

All children participating in Junior Roadwatch received a high viz vest chain accessory.

"I didn't get the chance to say thank-you for all the work you put in to the two days at Whitings Hill. Massive appreciation from all here. I have spoken with the children and they really enjoyed the sessions" *Whitings Hill School Staff member*