



Department for

**Infrastructure**

An Roinn

**Bonneagair**

Department for

**Infrastructure**

[www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk](http://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk)

# Investigating the impact of the Cycling Proficiency Scheme in schools in Northern Ireland, 2024



## Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch

December 2024

Department for Infrastructure  
James House  
Cromac Avenue  
Belfast

Contact: Jonathan Irwin  
Tel: 028 90 346 270  
Email: [asrb@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:asrb@nisra.gov.uk)



**NISRA**

Northern Ireland  
Statistics and Research Agency

Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann  
um Staitisticí agus Taighde

## Contents page

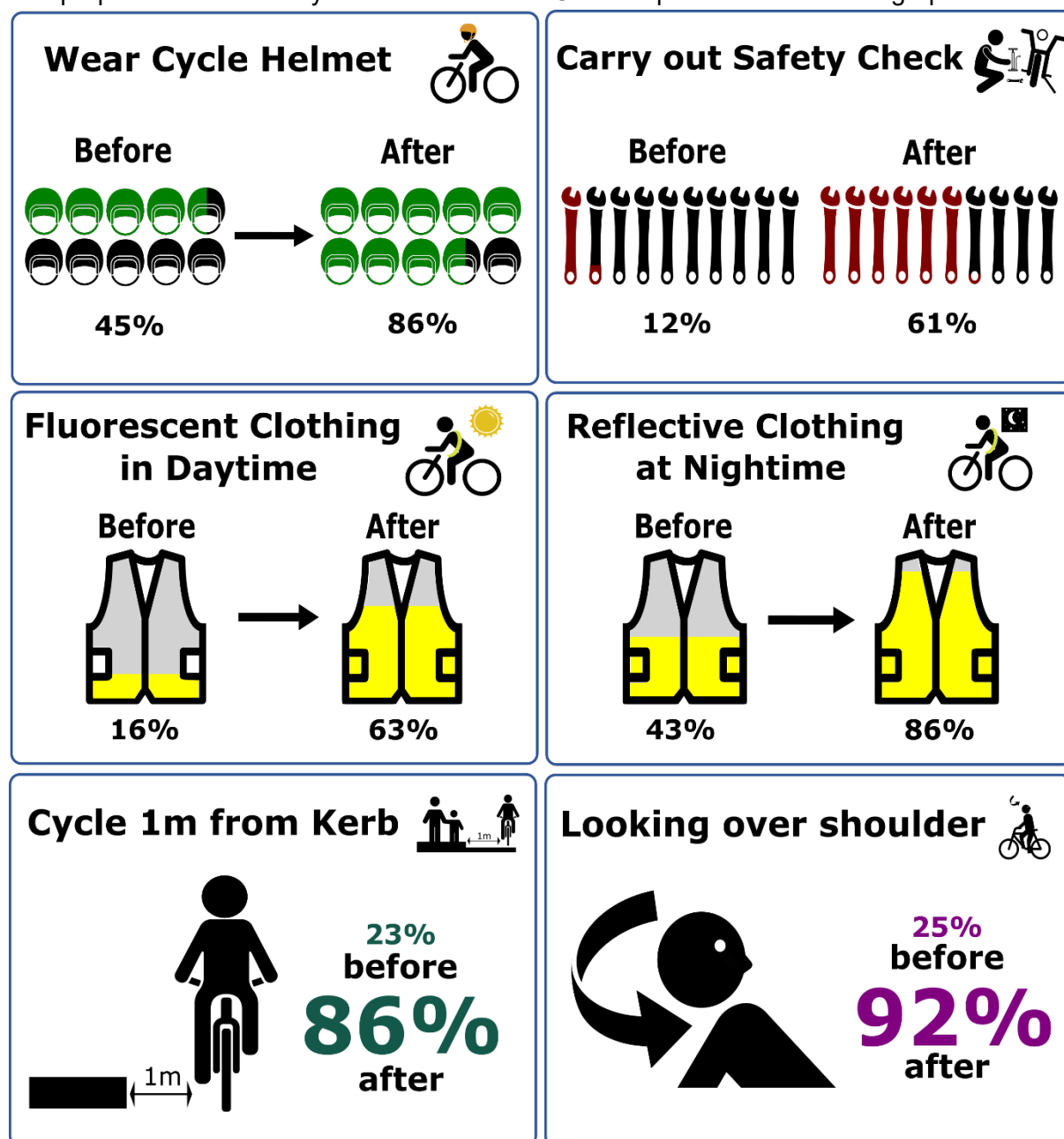
Infographics.....	<a href="#">Page 3</a>
Participating schools.....	<a href="#">Page 4</a>
Participating pupils.....	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
Findings.....	<a href="#">Page 6</a>
Q1 Cycle helmet.....	<a href="#">Page 7</a>
Q2 Safety check.....	<a href="#">Page 8</a>
Q3 Fluorescent clothing daytime.....	<a href="#">Page 9</a>
Q4 Reflective clothing night.....	<a href="#">Page 10</a>
Q5 Distance from kerb.....	<a href="#">Page 11</a>
Q6 Looking over shoulder.....	<a href="#">Page 12</a>
Post CPS training – comparison with previous years.....	<a href="#">Page 13</a>
Tables.....	<a href="#">Page 14</a>
Survey Methodology.....	<a href="#">Page 16</a>

## Infographics

Pupils were asked six questions about their cycling behaviours before and after they completed the Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS). The questions were:

- Do you wear your cycle helmet every time you ride your bicycle?
- Do you carry out a safety check on your bicycle each time before you ride it?
- Do you wear something fluorescent and bright when riding your bike in the daytime?
- Do you wear something reflective and bright when riding your bike at night?
- When cycling, do you keep about a metre away from the kerb / roadside verge?
- When cycling, do you look over your shoulder before signalling or moving?

The proportions who said 'yes' before and after CPS are presented in the Infographics below:







**Figure 2: Breakdown of Schools that completed the CPS survey in 2024**

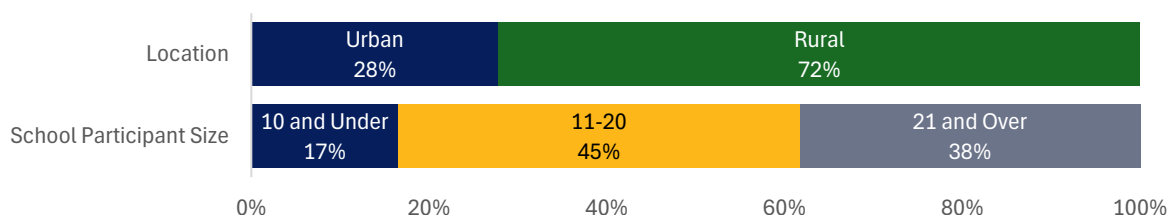
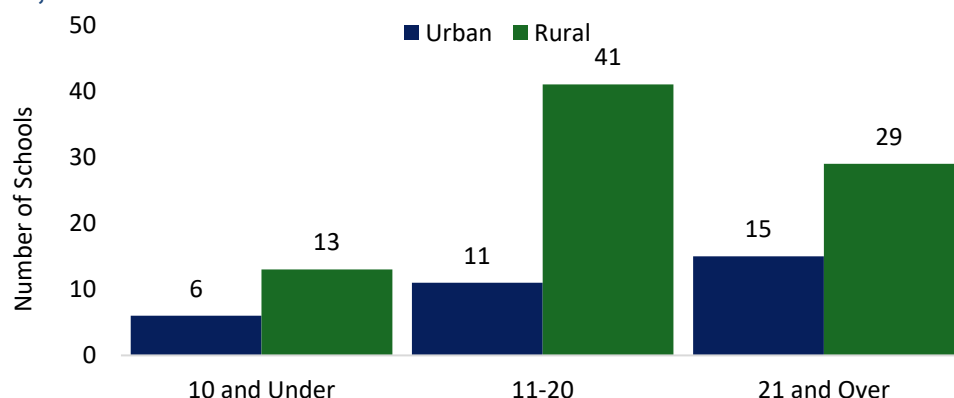


Figure 3 shows the breakdown by participant size in 2024 across urban and rural schools. The most frequent group size in a rural school area was those with 11-20 participants (49%). Within the under 11 group size, the majority (68%) were in rural areas. Of the thirty-two urban schools who completed the survey, six had a group size of fewer than 11 (19%), eleven had a participant size of 11-20 (34%), while the remaining fifteen had a group size of 21 or more (47%).

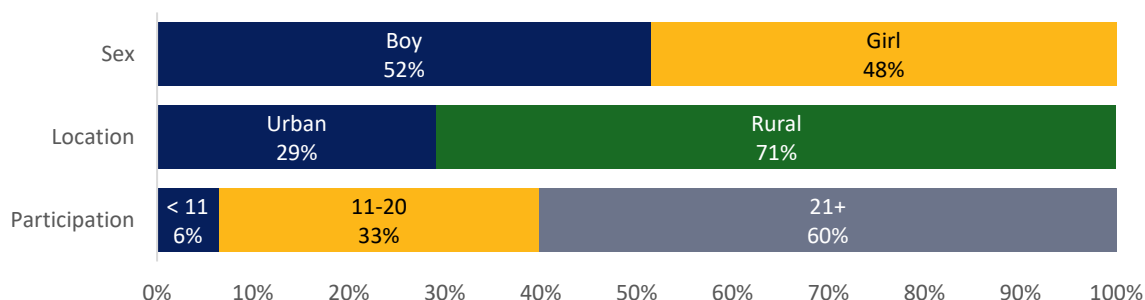
**Figure 3: Schools who completed the CPS survey by participant size and urban/rural location, 2024**



## Participating pupils

There were 1,015 boys (52%) and 955 girls (48%) who completed the survey, comprising 1,970 pupils from the 115 schools (a rise of 615 pupils from 2023; an increase of 45%). Nearly three quarters (71%) of these pupils were from a school in a rural area and 29% from an urban area school. In terms of group size, 1,179 were taught in groups of 21 or more (60%), 655 were in groups of 11 to 20 participants (33%) and schools with fewer than 11 participants made up the final 126 (6%). See breakdown below:

**Figure 4: Breakdown of pupils who completed the survey, 2024**

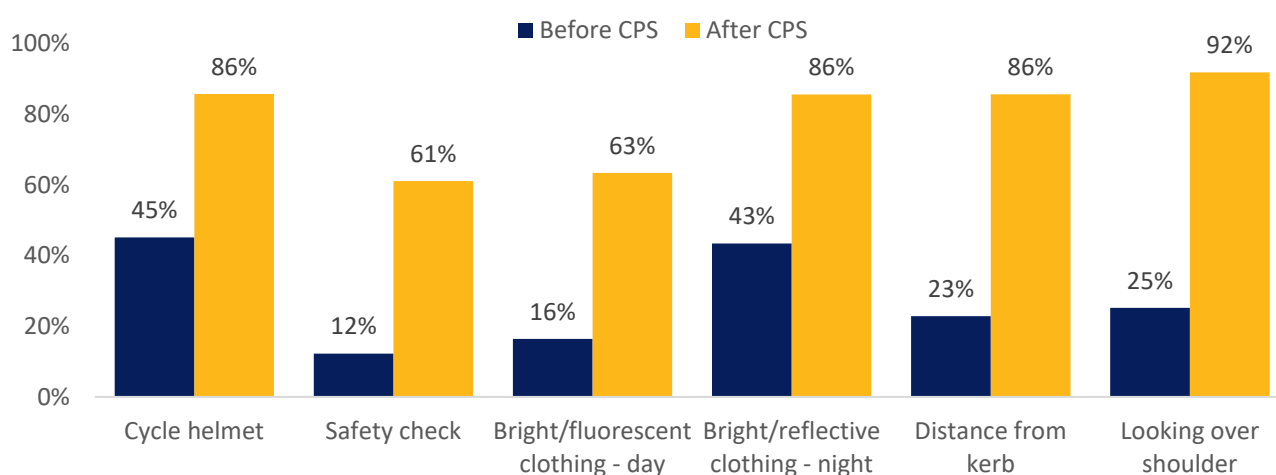


## Findings

The Cycling Proficiency Scheme aims to promote safe cycling behaviours among children. The training seems to have been highly effective – **97% of pupils said their knowledge of cycling safety had increased as a result of completing the CPS training**. This is lower than the 98% reported in 2023. The children reported a positive shift in all six safe cycling behaviours on completion of the course. Figure 5 below illustrates a clear increase in the proportions of pupils who answered ‘yes’ to each of the questions after completing the CPS.



**Figure 5: Proportion of pupils who answered ‘yes’ to each question before and after CPS, 2024**



## Key Points

- The behaviours in all six disciplines all increased greatly following the Cycling Proficiency Scheme with wearing a cycle helmet, wearing bright/reflective clothing at night, distance from kerb and looking over the shoulder all increasing to over 80%.
- The highest pre-course score was for those pupils who wore a cycle helmet every time they rode their bicycle with 45%; this increased on completion of the Scheme to 86%. The highest post-course score was looking over shoulder with 92% of pupils complying with this after CPS.
- The discipline of carrying out a safety check showed the greatest proportionate increase following CPS. Nearly five times more pupils than before training indicated that they now performed a safety check before cycling.
- Children from an urban school were more likely to wear a cycle helmet than rural school children. Pupils from urban schools were also more likely to carry out a safety check on their bicycle. In contrast, children in rural schools were more likely to look over their shoulder before signalling or moving.
- Girls were more likely to wear a helmet than boys. Girls were also more likely to wear something fluorescent / bright when riding their bike in the daytime, wear something reflective/bright when riding their bike at night, keep a metre away from the kerb / roadside verge and look over their shoulder before signalling or moving.



### Question 1: Cycle Helmet - Do you wear your cycle helmet every time you ride your bicycle?

**Before** completing the CPS, over **two fifths of all pupils** (45%) said they **wore their helmets** every time they ride their bike. **After** completing the CPS this proportion **nearly doubled, with 86%** now saying they wear their helmets.

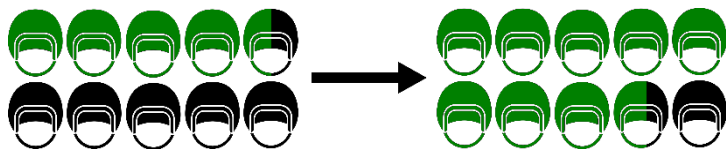
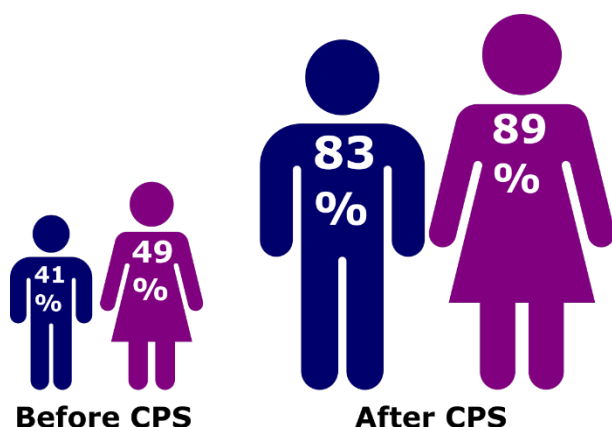


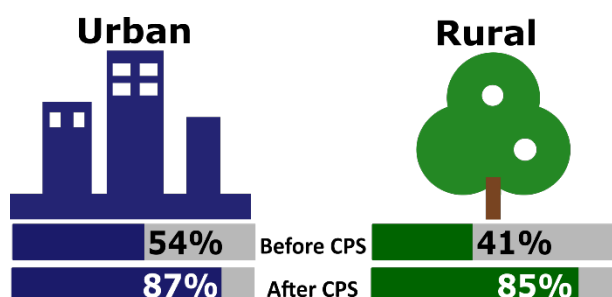
Figure 6 : Proportion of pupils who said they wore a cycle helmet, by sex, 2024



There was a **significant increase** in the number of boys and girls who responded 'yes' to wearing their helmet following the training.

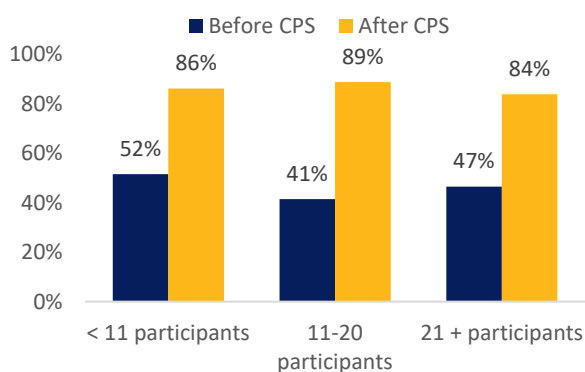
A significantly **greater percentage of girls** than boys said they wore a cycle helmet in both the pre and post CPS training responses.

Figure 7: Proportion of pupils who said they wore a cycle helmet, by location, 2024



The proportion who responded 'yes' to this question **before CPS training was significantly greater for urban schools** (54% urban; 41% rural). This trend continued **for urban schools following training** (87% urban; 85% rural), but with the gap narrowing to be no longer statistically significant.

Figure 8: Proportion of pupils who said they wore a cycle helmet, by the number of CPS participants in the school, 2024



On completion of the course, all participant groups reported a **significant increase** in proportions of helmet wearing, with those pupils taught in group sizes of **21 and over (84%) reporting lower compliance** than classes of 11-20 pupils (89%).



## Question 2: Safety Check- Do you carry out a safety check on your bicycle each time before you use it?

Prior to completing the CPS, only 241 (12%) pupils responded 'yes' to carrying out a safety check on their bicycle before using it. This **increased to over three fifths** of pupils (1,201 pupils; 61%) stating they now did this **upon completion of the scheme.**

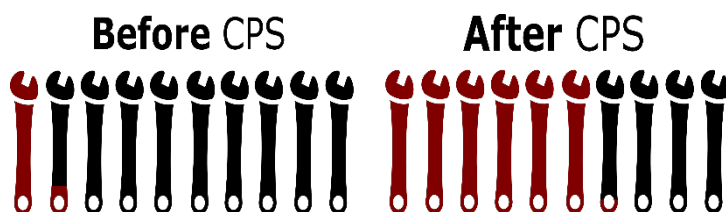
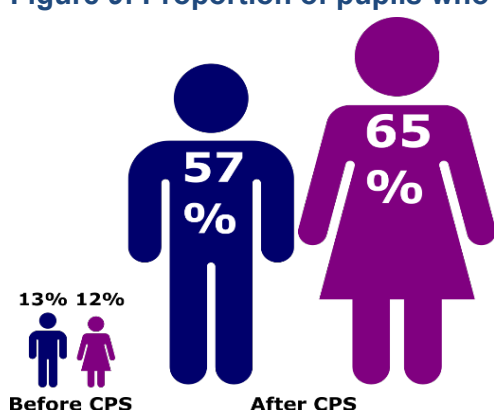


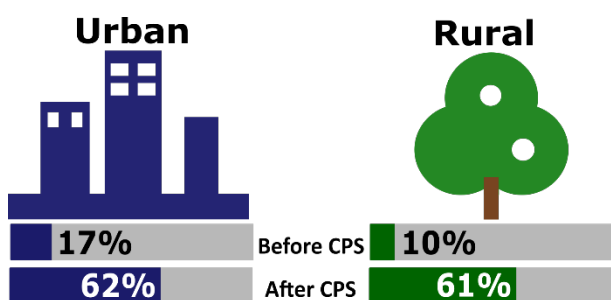
Figure 9: Proportion of pupils who said they carried out a safety check, by sex, 2024



The proportion who responded 'yes' was very low for both boys (13%) and girls (12%) before completing the CPS; this **increased considerably** to 57% and 65%, respectively, **following training.**

A significantly **greater percentage of girls** than boys said they carried out a safety check on their bicycle after they completed the CPS training.

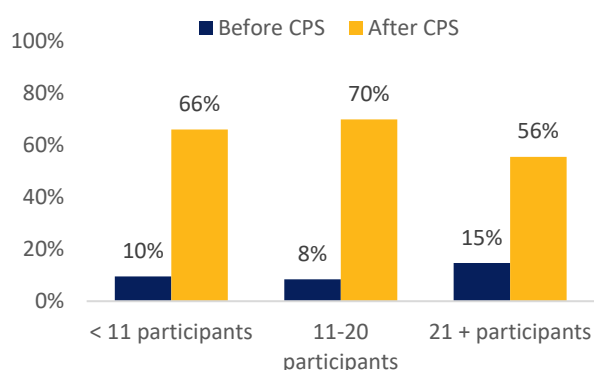
Figure 10: Proportion of pupils who said they carried out a safety check, by location, 2024



The proportion who responded 'yes' to this question **before CPS training was significantly greater for urban schools** (17% urban; 10% rural).

**Following CPS training**, pupils from both **urban and rural schools were more likely** to perform a safety check each time they rode their bike.

Figure 11: Proportion of pupils who said they carried out a safety check, by the number of CPS participants in the school, 2024



**Prior to CPS training**, pupils taught in groups of **21 and over participants (15%) were more likely** to carry out a safety check **than pupils taught in groups of 11-20.** Upon completion of the training all **participant groups** reported a **significant increase** in the proportion of those who performed a safety check. Those in groups of **21 or more (56%) were least likely** to carry out this check.





### Question 3: Fluorescent Clothing- Do you wear something fluorescent & bright when riding your bike in the daytime?

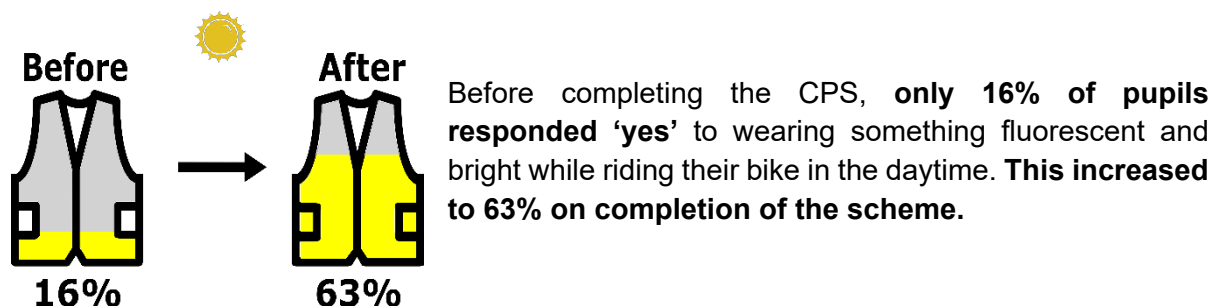


Figure 12: Proportion of pupils who said they wore fluorescent and bright clothing during the daytime, by sex, 2024

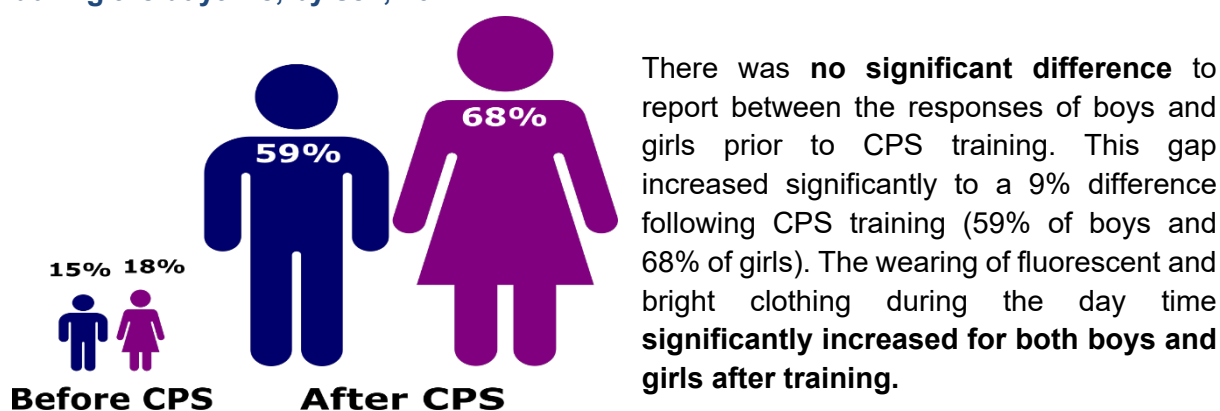


Figure 13: Proportion of pupils who said they wore fluorescent and bright clothing during the daytime, by location, 2024

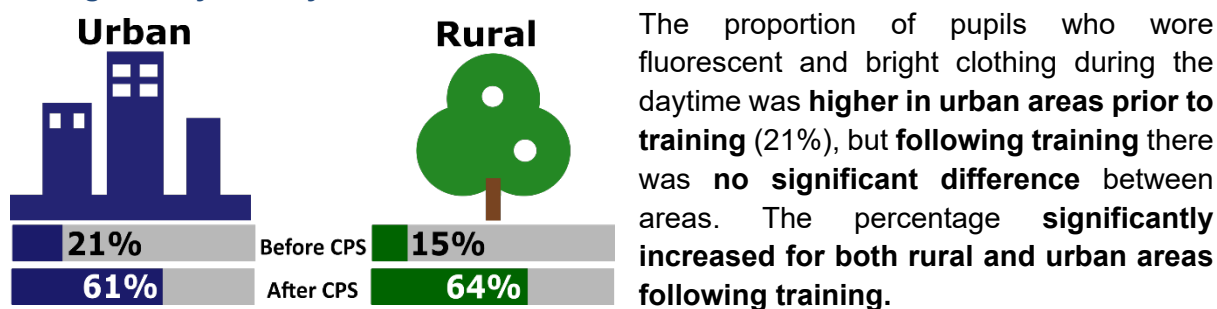
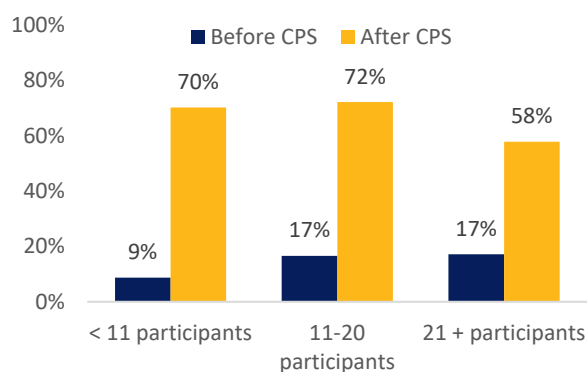


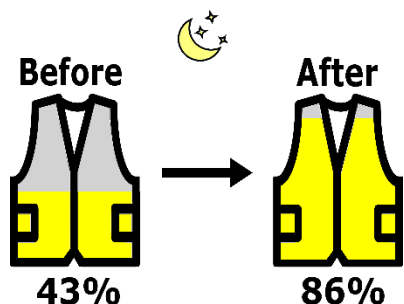
Figure 14: Proportion of pupils who said they wore fluorescent and bright clothing during the daytime, by the number of CPS participants in the school, 2024



Following training, schools with 21 or more participants (58%) reported a lower post-test score than the other participant groups. There was a significant increase for all size groups when comparing compliance for pre and post training.

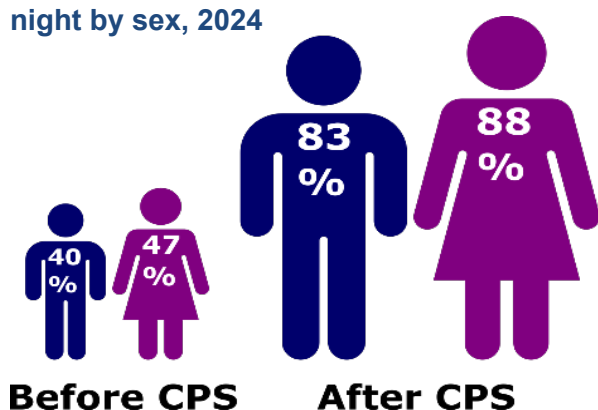


#### Question 4: Reflective Clothing- Do you wear something reflective & bright when riding your bike at night?



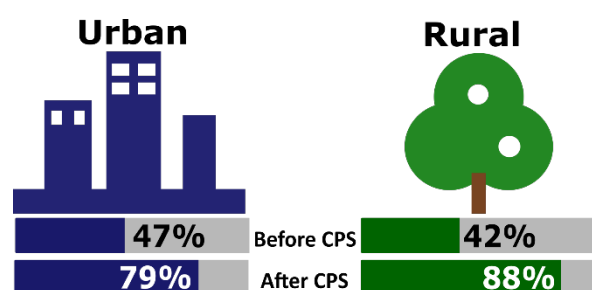
More pupils wore reflective and bright clothing at night time compared to during the day. **Before training, 43% of pupils** reported they always wore something reflective and bright when cycling at night. This proportion **doubled to 86% after CPS**.

Figure 15: Proportion of pupils who said they wore reflective and bright clothing at night by sex, 2024



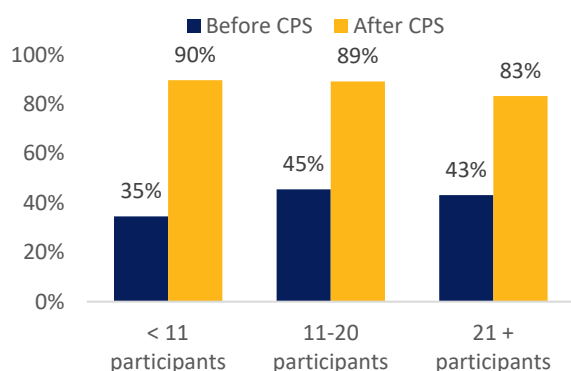
**Girls were significantly more likely than boys to comply** with the wearing of reflective and bright clothing during night-time hours, in both the pre and post CPS training responses. The percentage **increased significantly for both sexes post CPS Training**.

Figure 16: Proportion of pupils who said they wore reflective and bright clothing at night, by location, 2024



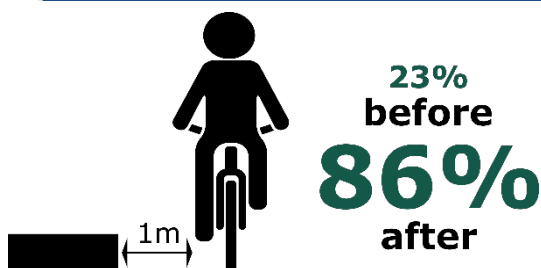
**Before training, there was no significant difference** between urban schools (47%) and rural schools (42%) in wearing fluorescent and bright clothing at night. However, **following training, pupils from a rural school (88%) were more likely** than those from an urban school (79%) to wear fluorescent and bright clothing at night.

Figure 17: Proportion of pupils who said they wore reflective and bright clothing at night, by the number of CPS participants in the school, 2024



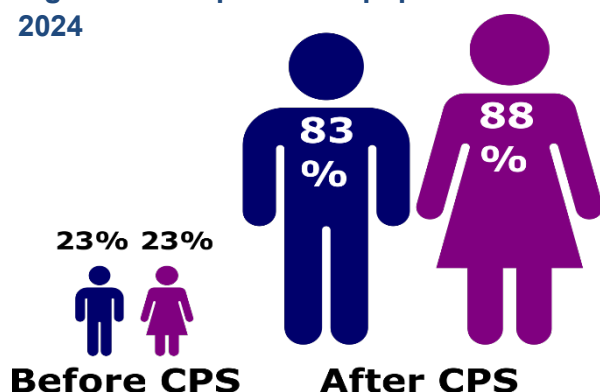
**Before CPS, those in groups with less than 11 participants were significantly less likely** to wear reflective and bright clothing during night-time hours compared to those in the 11-20 group. **Following training, those taught in groups of 21 or more were significantly less likely** to comply than those taught in groups of 11-20. There was a **significant increase in compliance for all size groups** when comparing pre and post training responses.

**Question 5: Distance from Kerb - when cycling do you keep about a metre away from the kerb/roadside verge?**



The CPS appears to have had a very positive impact on this particular procedure, with those pupils who cycled one metre from the kerb **increasing from 23% prior to CPS to 86% post training.**

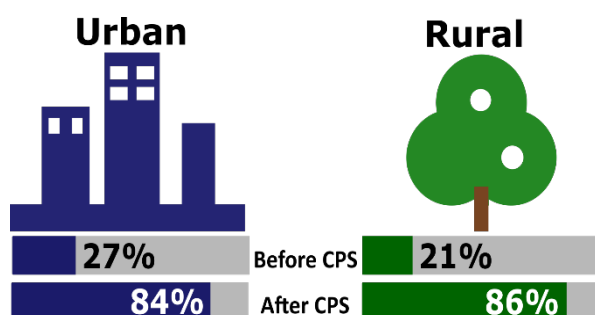
**Figure 18: Proportion of pupils who said they kept a metre away from the kerb by sex, 2024**



There was a **significant increase** in the proportion of boys and girls who responded 'yes' to this question after CPS.

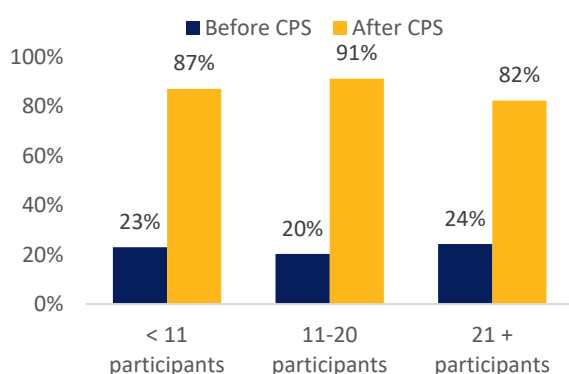
**Following training, girls were significantly more likely** than boys to comply with cycling one metre from the kerb.

**Figure 19: Proportion of pupils who said they kept a metre away from the kerb, by location, 2024**



Prior to CPS training, there was a **significant difference between participants from rural and urban schools.** Pupils from an urban school (27%) were more likely that those from a rural school (21%) to cycle a metre away from the kerb. **Following CPS, there was no significant difference between rural and urban.** Both rural and urban showed a **significant increase** after participation in CPS.

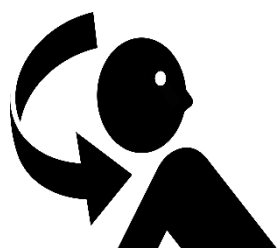
**Figure 20: Proportion of pupils who said they kept a metre away from the kerb, by the number of CPS participants in the school, 2024**



Pupils taught in group sizes of **11-20 pupils had a lower compliance** of cycling one metre away from the kerb before training than those in the **21 pupils or more** group. **Following the training, those taught in the group size of 11-20 pupils were more likely (91%)** to comply than those in the 21+ size (82%). There was a **significant increase for all class sizes when comparing compliance of pre and post training responses.**



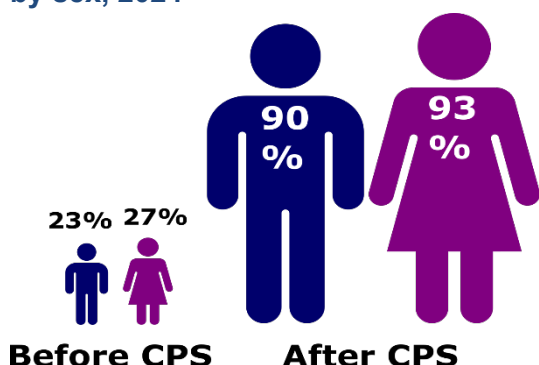
### Question 6: Looking over shoulder - When cycling do you look over your shoulder before signalling or moving?



25%  
before  
**92%**  
after

There was a **significant increase** in the proportion of children who responded 'yes' to this question after CPS training. **Before training, 25% of pupils** reported looking over their shoulder before moving or signalling which **increased to 92%** following the CPS.

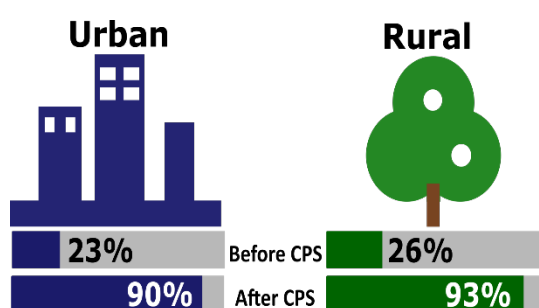
Figure 21: Proportion of pupils who said they looked over their shoulder before moving, by sex, 2024



**Girls were significantly more likely than boys** to look over their shoulder before signalling or moving after training.

Following the CPS training, **90% of boys** and **93% of girls** reported looking over their shoulder before moving. These figures represent a **significant difference** between the two sexes **after CPS training**.

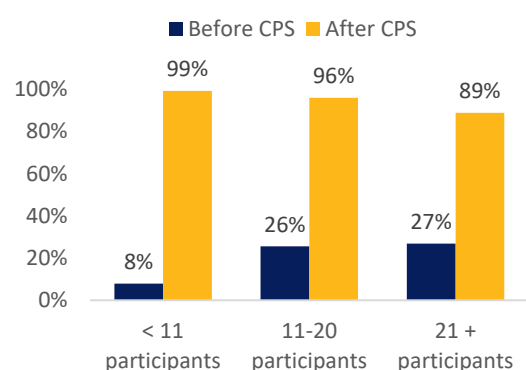
Figure 22: Proportion of pupils who said they looked over their shoulder before moving, by location, 2024



**Pupils from rural schools are significantly more likely than pupils from urban schools** to look over their shoulder after training.

**Prior to CPS training**, 26% of pupils in **rural** schools and 23% in **urban** schools said they looked over their shoulder before moving. **Following training**, these both **significantly increased** to 93% of pupils in rural schools and 90% of pupils in urban schools.

Figure 23: Proportion of pupils who said they looked over their shoulder before moving by the number of CPS participants in the school, 2024



School groups with **less than 11 participants reported a significantly lower percentage** of pupils looking over their shoulder **prior to CPS** than other group sizes. **Following training**, pupils taught in **groups of 21 or more** reported a **significantly lower percentage** compared to other group sizes. There was a **significant increase** for all size groups when **comparing compliance for pre and post training**.



## Post CPS Training – 2024 Comparison with previous years





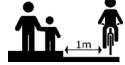



The above infographic illustrates comparisons between this year and previous years for each discipline, using significance tests.

As shown above, when compared with 2024, there has been a **significant increase** in pupils **wearing a helmet, carrying out a safety check, and wearing bright clothing**. However, it should be noted that comparisons between the years should be viewed with caution, as the study population varies each year, and there were a larger number of schools and pupils involved in the study this year than previous years.





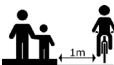

Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch, DfI  
Investigating the impact of the Cycling Proficiency Scheme in Northern Ireland 2024

**Tables: Pupil responses for each Cycling Proficiency Scheme question before and after training by school participant size, sex and urban/rural school area**

	Q1 Helmet Usage 				Q2 Safety Equipment 				Q3 Fluorescent & bright clothing – day time 				Q4 Reflective & bright clothing – night time 				Q5 Distance from kerb 				Q6 Looking over shoulder 			
	Total				Total				Total				Total				Total				Total			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	888	45	1685	86	241	12	1201	<b>61</b>	323	16	1246	63	842	43	1666	85	446	23	1675	85	496	25	1799	91
<b>No</b>	452	23	68	3	1451	74	243	<b>12</b>	1069	54	258	13	618	31	72	4	1000	51	91	5	865	44	27	1
<b>Sometimes</b>	626	32	212	11	272	14	521	<b>26</b>	574	29	461	23	479	24	208	11	503	26	189	10	605	31	132	7
<b>Missing</b>	4	0	5	0	6	0	5	<b>0</b>	4	0	5	0	31	2	24	1	21	1	15	1	4	0	12	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1970</b>	<b>100</b>
	< 11 participants				< 11 participants				< 11 participants				< 11 participants				< 11 participants				< 11 participants			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	65	52	107	85	12	10	82	65	11	9	87	69	38	30	104	83	29	23	108	86	10	8	123	98
<b>No</b>	25	20	9	7	112	89	9	7	72	57	10	8	43	34	2	2	82	65	0	0	73	58	0	0
<b>Sometimes</b>	36	29	8	6	2	2	33	26	43	34	27	21	29	23	10	8	15	12	16	13	43	34	1	1
<b>Missing</b>	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	16	13	10	8	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>100</b>
	11-20 participants				11-20 participants				11-20 participants				11-20 participants				11-20 participants				11-20 participants			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	275	41	589	89	56	8	464	70	110	17	478	72	297	45	583	88	132	20	605	91	170	26	636	96
<b>No</b>	148	22	19	3	528	79	29	4	341	51	80	12	172	26	27	4	355	53	18	3	289	43	1	0
<b>Sometimes</b>	240	36	55	8	79	12	170	26	213	32	105	16	184	28	44	7	164	25	40	6	205	31	26	4
<b>Missing</b>	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	2	0	12	2	11	2	14	2	2	0	1	0	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>665</b>	<b>100</b>
	21+ participants				21+ participants				21+ participants				21+ participants				21+ participants				21+ participants			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	548	46	989	84	173	15	655	56	202	17	681	58	507	43	979	83	285	24	962	82	316	27	1040	88
<b>No</b>	279	24	40	3	811	69	205	17	656	56	168	14	403	34	43	4	563	48	73	6	503	43	26	2
<b>Sometimes</b>	350	30	149	13	191	16	318	27	318	27	329	28	266	23	154	13	324	27	133	11	357	30	105	9
<b>Missing</b>	2	0	1	0	4	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	7	1	11	1	3	0	8	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1179</b>	<b>100</b>

Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch, DfI  
Investigating the impact of the Cycling Proficiency Scheme in Northern Ireland 2024

Tables cont'd: Pupil responses for each Cycling Proficiency Scheme question before and after training by school participant size, sex and urban/rural school area

	Q1 Helmet Usage 				Q2 Safety Equipment 				Q3 Fluorescent & bright clothing – day time 				Q4 Reflective & bright clothing – night time 				Q5 Distance from kerb 				Q6 Looking over shoulder 			
	Boys				Boys				Boys				Boys				Boys				Boys			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	419	41	840	83	130	13	579	57	151	15	597	59	398	39	834	82	228	22	846	83	237	23	917	90
<b>No</b>	260	26	46	5	736	73	154	15	584	58	159	16	338	33	52	5	504	50	61	6	472	47	20	2
<b>Sometimes</b>	334	33	128	13	145	14	281	28	278	27	258	25	266	26	119	12	273	27	107	11	305	30	77	8
<b>Missing</b>	2	0	1	0	4	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	13	1	10	1	10	1	1	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1015</b>	<b>100</b>
	Girls				Girls				Girls				Girls				Girls				Girls			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	469	49	845	88	111	12	622	65	172	18	649	68	444	46	832	87	218	23	829	87	259	27	882	92
<b>No</b>	192	20	22	2	715	75	89	9	485	51	99	10	280	29	20	2	496	52	30	3	393	41	7	1
<b>Sometimes</b>	292	31	84	9	127	13	240	25	296	31	203	21	213	22	89	9	230	24	82	9	300	31	55	6
<b>Missing</b>	2	0	4	0	2	0	4	0	2	0	4	0	18	2	14	1	11	1	14	1	3	0	11	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>955</b>	<b>100</b>
	Urban				Urban				Urban				Urban				Urban				Urban			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	310	54	494	87	97	17	356	62	118	21	347	61	263	46	443	78	153	27	480	84	129	23	508	89
<b>No</b>	139	24	15	3	396	69	88	15	312	55	99	17	192	34	26	5	293	51	38	7	279	49	11	2
<b>Sometimes</b>	121	21	62	11	75	13	127	22	140	25	125	22	107	19	94	16	124	22	53	9	163	29	47	8
<b>Missing</b>	1	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	9	2	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>100</b>
	Rural				Rural				Rural				Rural				Rural				Rural			
	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%	Before	%	After	%
<b>Yes</b>	578	41	1191	85	144	10	845	60	205	15	899	64	579	41	1223	87	293	21	1195	85	367	26	1291	92
<b>No</b>	313	22	53	4	1055	75	155	11	757	54	159	11	426	30	46	3	707	51	53	4	586	42	16	1
<b>Sometimes</b>	505	36	150	11	197	14	394	28	434	31	336	24	372	27	114	8	379	27	136	10	442	32	85	6
<b>Missing</b>	3	0	5	0	3	0	5	0	3	0	5	0	22	2	16	1	20	1	15	1	4	0	7	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1399</b>	<b>100</b>

## Survey Methodology

### Pupil Survey

The Cycling Proficiency Scheme (CPS) has operated in Northern Ireland schools for over 50 years, training approximately 450,000 pupils. Early road safety education is crucial in keeping children safe on the roads. The purpose of the scheme is to help children develop their skills, increase their confidence as cyclists and identify risks they may come across on the roads. The CPS is delivered by school staff and instructors who are trained and approved by, and registered with, DfI Active Travel. For the ninth year, a survey of school children who took part in CPS in Northern Ireland was carried out to consider the attitudes of the children towards various aspects of road safety before and after completion of the scheme. The questions were designed to assess how much the scheme had changed the attitudes and actions of participants in respect of various safety aspects of cycling such as wearing a helmet and reflective clothing, carrying out safety checks on bicycles and specifics of manoeuvring on the roads. This analysis monitors the effectiveness of the Scheme, allowing the Department to identify positive changes in participants' behaviour as well as areas requiring improved support and guidance. As with previous years, the cycling survey responses in 2024 were obtained through a show of hands in the classroom. When this new methodology was introduced in 2016, there were concerns that results could potentially suffer from bias as responses were not anonymous and participants may be hesitant responding in front of their classmates. However, the method was one that teachers could easily facilitate in order to get timely feedback and ensure a high response rate. Results in previous years were not significantly different, and Analysis, Statistics and Research Branch therefore concluded that the revised methodology could be continued.

A stratified sample was taken of 292 schools in Northern Ireland who had announced their intention to take part as of May 2024. A stratified random sampling methodology on these 292 schools (stratified based on sex, urban v rural and course participant size) was used to choose the sample of 147 schools (50%). Responses were received from 115 of these, giving a response rate of 78%. This is 38 more schools than took part in the survey in 2023, and as a result, the number of pupils responding increased from 1,355 to 1,970 (an increase of 45%) representing the most pupils participating since the CPS was first reported on in 2015.

The table below shows the percentage of respondent schools by sex, urban/rural classification and number taking part compared with the 292 CPS sampled schools.

	CPS School Profile (n=115)	Sample School Profile (n=292)
Urban	73%	71%
Rural	27%	29%
< 11 participants	21%	13%
11-20 participants	44%	48%
21+ participants	36%	38%

The figures show that the respondent profile is broadly representative of all 292 sampled schools, with no groups particularly over or under-represented in terms of their sex or



urban/rural classification<sup>1</sup>. Also, whilst a proportionate stratification by former Education and Library Board (ELB) area was not a key survey aim, nevertheless a good geographical spread of schools was achieved in the final sample. See the map of schools provided in Figure 1 of this report (Page 4). There was no need, therefore, to weight the results prior to undertaking the analysis.

Note that as the findings are derived from a sample survey and hence subject to sampling error, all differences reported in the commentary were tested to ensure that they were statistically significant (i.e., there was a less than one in twenty chance that they occurred through random factors alone). This means that, when comparing differences between subgroups with small numbers of respondents, some apparently large differences may not actually be statistically significant.

---

<sup>1</sup> Location defined using NISRA Central Postcode Directory urban/rural classification. Boundaries are available for Northern Ireland as defined by the Planning Service. These areas are defined from Settlement Development Limits (SDLs) which are a statistical classification and delineation of settlements. See [review-of-the-statistical-classification-and-delineation-of-settlements-march-2015.pdf \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/review-of-the-statistical-classification-and-delineation-of-settlements-march-2015.pdf) for more information.