

User Consultation of Statistical Publications – School Destinations of Secondary School Pupils Resident in London Boroughs

Introduction and Summary

The Department for Education (DfE) aims to keep its statistics relevant and useful. In Autumn 2010 the DfE sought feedback from users of the ‘School Destinations of Secondary School Pupils Resident in London Boroughs’ statistical bulletin to get their feedback on the publication.

The user questionnaire was publicised in the Information about Children, Education and Schools (ICES) Bulletin in October 2010. The ICES bulletin keeps Local Authorities and their schools, academies and other partners updated on data collections and data related developments and events. The questionnaire was also publicised on the RS gateway and advertised to users of the Departments Statistical publications who had registered an interest in participating in DfE consultations.

In total there were 30 respondents to the survey, of which 4 completed the whole survey. A large proportion (22) of the people who took part in the survey use the publication for work purposes. We also received responses from people using the publication for studies and people using it for personal interest. Of those using the publication for work purposes the majority (15) work in Local Government, whilst there were also responses from central government, academia and a government agency. We would like to thank all individuals who participated in the survey.

Recommendations

We are concerned that the low response rate is an indication that the publication is of interest to a niche audience and that meeting this requirement may not be the most effective use of our resources. With this in mind the recommended course of action is to consult with users to assess the impact of dropping the publication from the schedule on a permanent basis.

A summary of the feedback survey results can be found below.

Summary of key points

1. The publication has a specialist rather than a mainstream audience and they use the publication infrequently over the year.
2. The results from the feedback make it difficult to assess how widely used the publication is. 30 people took part in the survey but only a very small number 4 completed the full survey. Admittedly, this may be because the questionnaire contained too many questions.
3. The publication is used primarily for the information on the cross border movement of pupils and to school place planning by local authorities. The publication is also used by a wider audience.

4. Users find the publication easy to read with the level of detail pitched at the right level for the audience, and the majority do not think it too technical.
5. Users use the Excel tables, LA summary and commentary, with the most popular areas of the publication being the destination of pupils/cross border movement, and pupil inflows/outflows to and from Local Authorities.
6. As expected, users from Local Authorities are interested in the destination of pupils, inflows and outflows and pupil retention from year 6 to year 7, all of which support their school place planning activities.
7. The information about where pupils live and go to school is the most popular information in the publication. The new information added for the first time in the last edition of the publication was less popular. This information was brand new at the time of the consultation so it may be too early to form conclusions about the usefulness of tables only added this year.
8. Users did not identify any additional information, not already in the publication, that they would like to see included in the publication, nor did they identify anything in particular they would like to change. Users confirmed that the publications format and timing meets their needs.
9. The responses indicate that users prefer to consume the information in the publication in tables and text rather than in maps. However, the low response rate makes it hard to form definite conclusions about the effectiveness of any of the different ways of making the information available.
10. It was too early to form any conclusions about the usefulness of the underlying data. It had only been used by one of the respondents at the time of the consultation. It should be noted that the underlying data was published after the main publication, just before the user consultation began.

Background - The School Destinations of Secondary School Pupils Resident in London Boroughs Statistical Bulletin

The Department has published this Statistical Bulletin on an annual basis since 2005. Its main purpose is to bring together and make available to a wider audience, including London Local Authorities, a single comprehensive picture of the secondary school destinations of pupils across London using data collected in the School Census. It contains information about the pupils living and / or attending maintained secondary schools (including middle deemed), City Technology Colleges and Academies in London.

The scope and content of the bulletin has changed over time to reflect developments in the scope of the DfE data collection programme and user interests. Notable examples include;

2006 - The publication of a cross-border matrix showing movement within and across local authorities (Tables 2 and 2a in the latest bulletin).

2008 - The publication of information about

- i. pupil inflows and outflows by school characteristics (Tables 3 and 4 in the latest bulletin).
- ii. pupil movement at the transition between year 6 and year 7 (Table 6 in the latest bulletin),
- iii. distance travelled and mode of travel (Tables 7, 7a and 9 and 9a in the latest bulletin), and

2010 – The publication of Information about cross border movement, distance travelled and mode of travel by pupil and school characteristics (Tables 10 – 18 in the latest bulletin).

The most recent bulletin published in August 2010 is available at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000951/index.shtml>

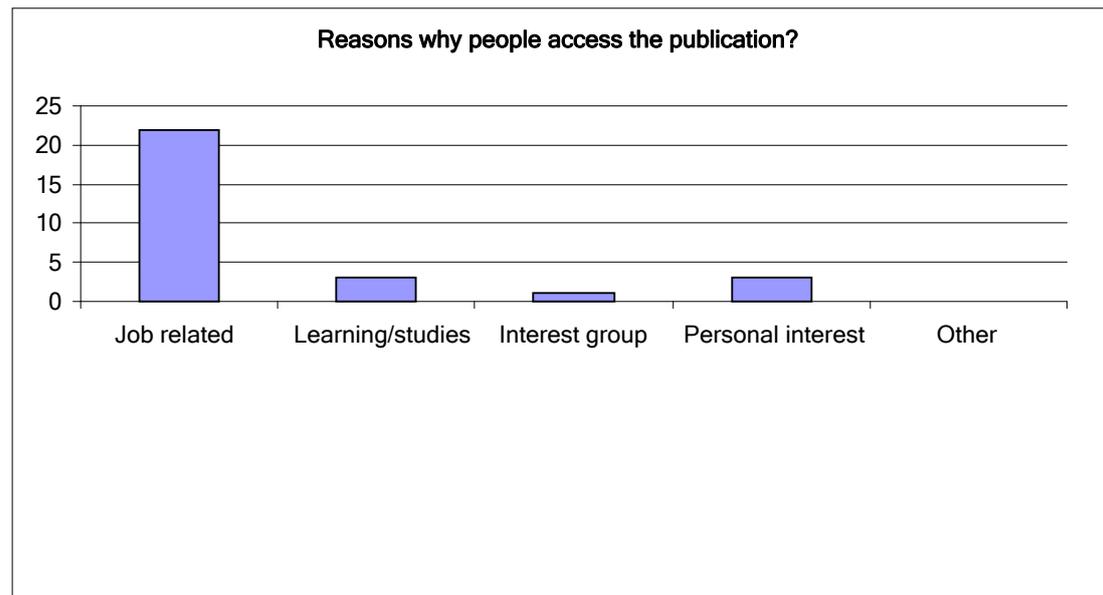
Detailed Results of user questionnaire

Respondent information

For what reason do you generally access the publication? Please tick all that apply.

Number of respondents: 28

Number of responses: 29



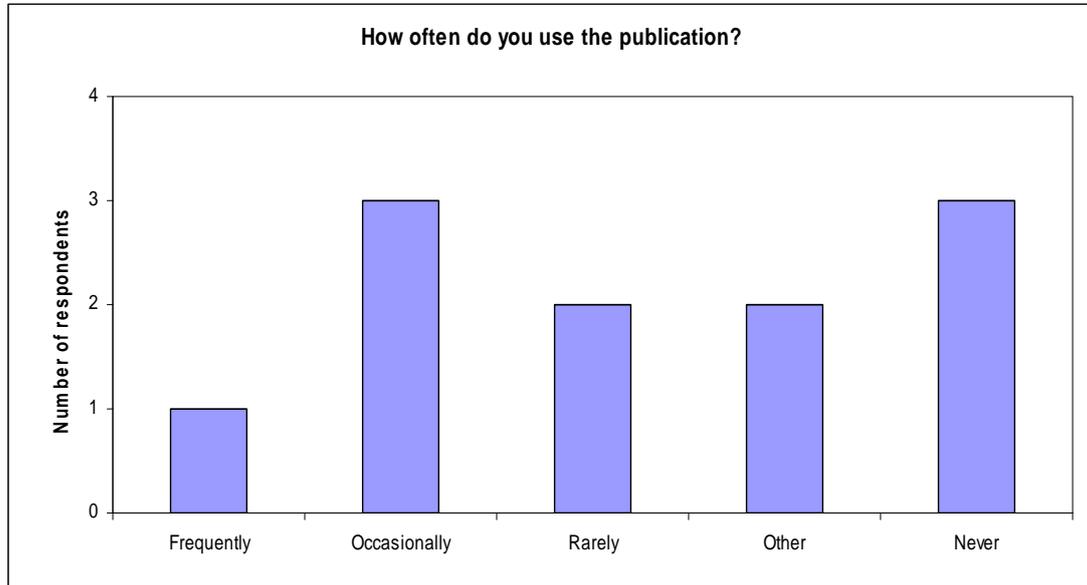
If answered 'job related' please select the sector you work in:

Sector	Number of responses
Local Government	15
Central Government	2
Academia	2
Government agency	1
Retails and services	1
Parliament	0
Media	0
Financial	0
Other	0

General information

1. How often do you use the publication?

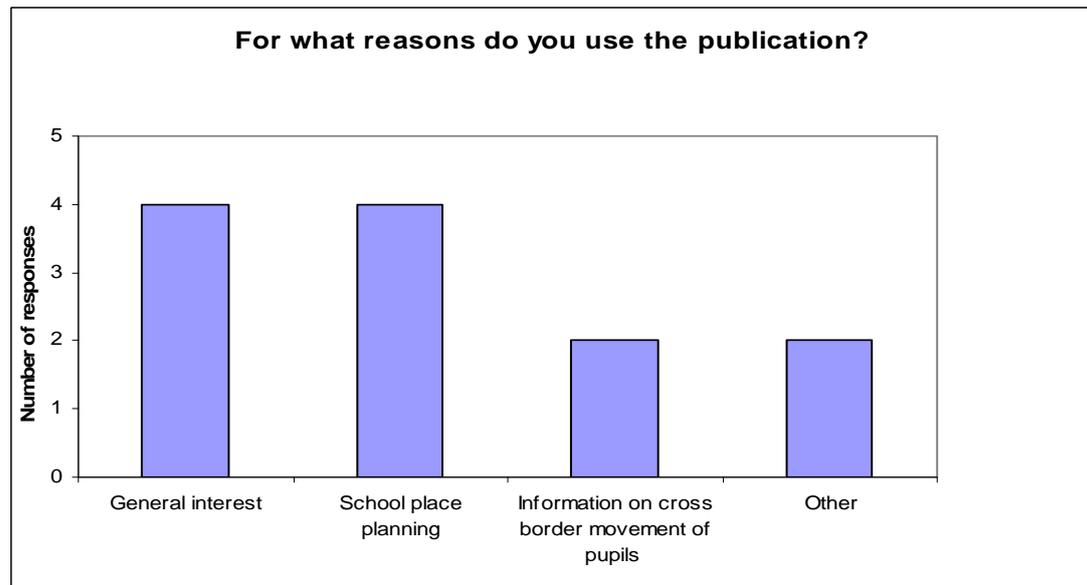
Number of respondents: 11



2. For what reasons(s) do you use the publication?

Number of respondents: 9

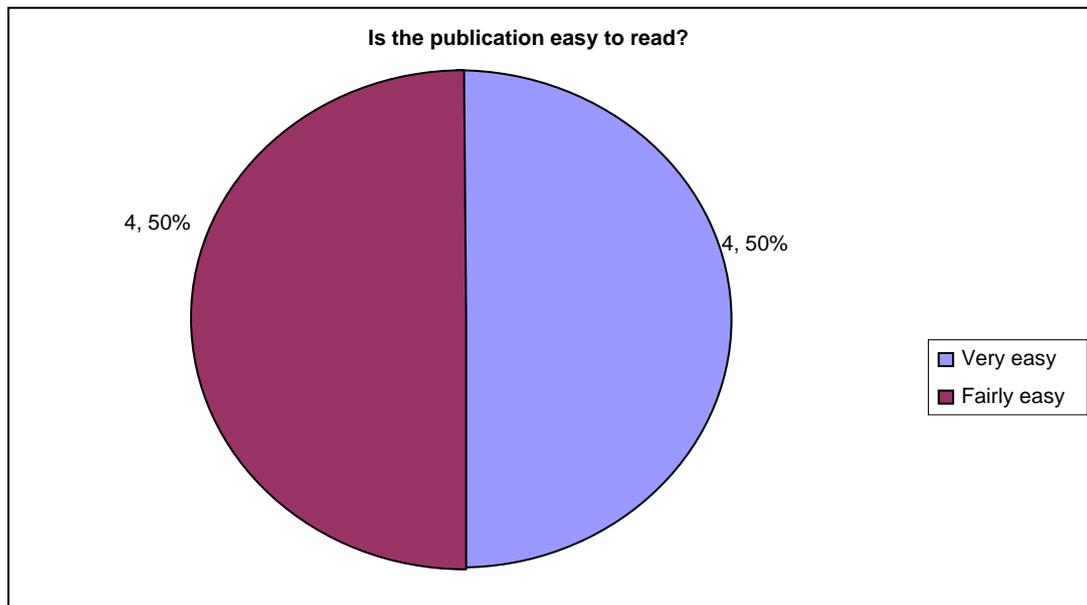
Number of responses: 12



Other responses: informing policy, and left blank.

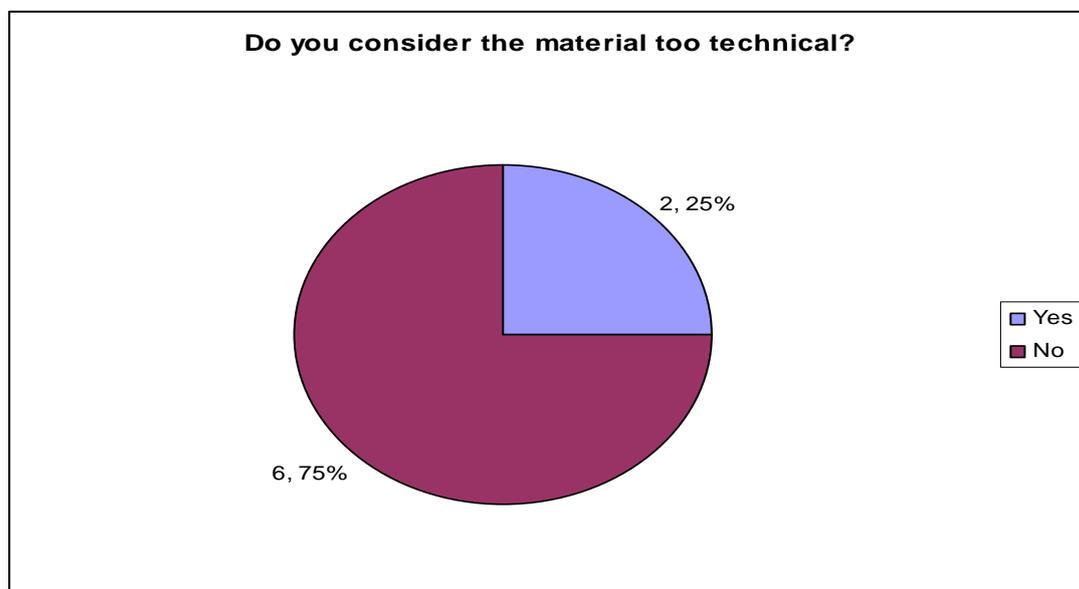
3. Do you find the publication easy to read?

Number of respondents: 8



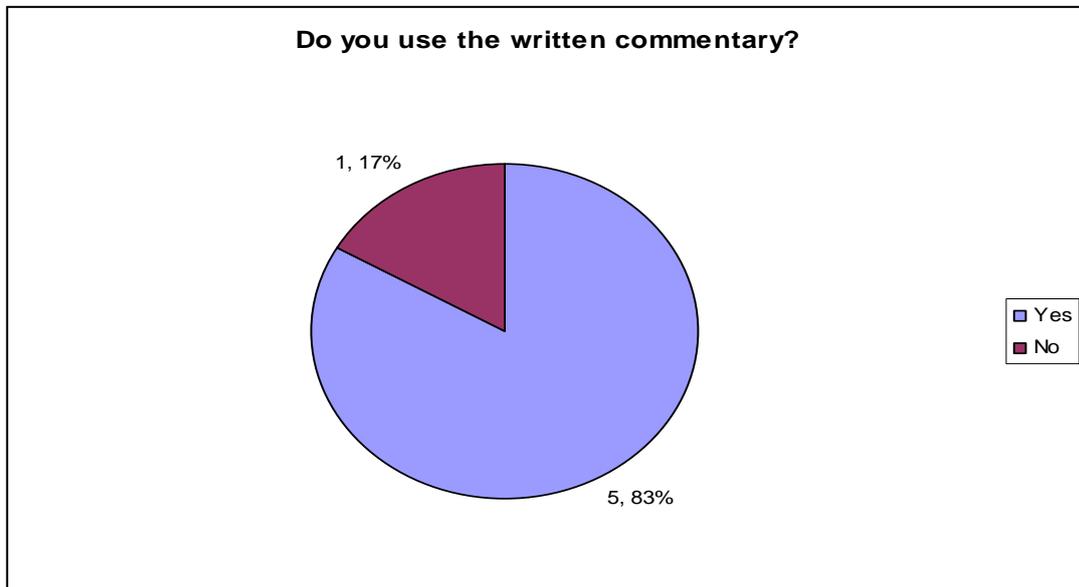
4. Do you consider the material too technical?

Number of respondents: 8



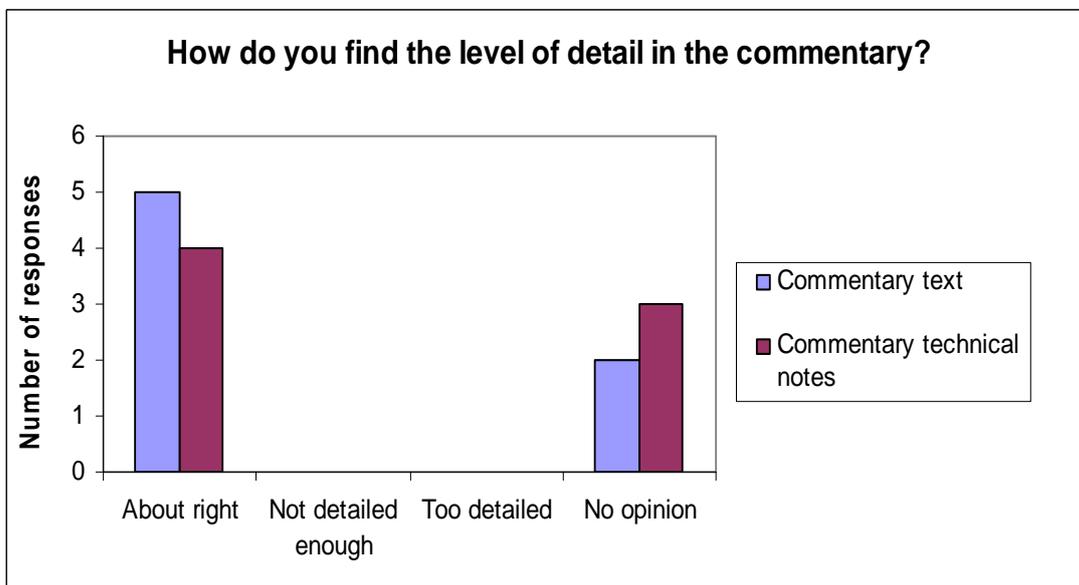
5. Do you use the written commentary?

Number of respondents: 6



6. Level of detail in the main text and (7) technical notes of the commentary.

Number of respondents: 7



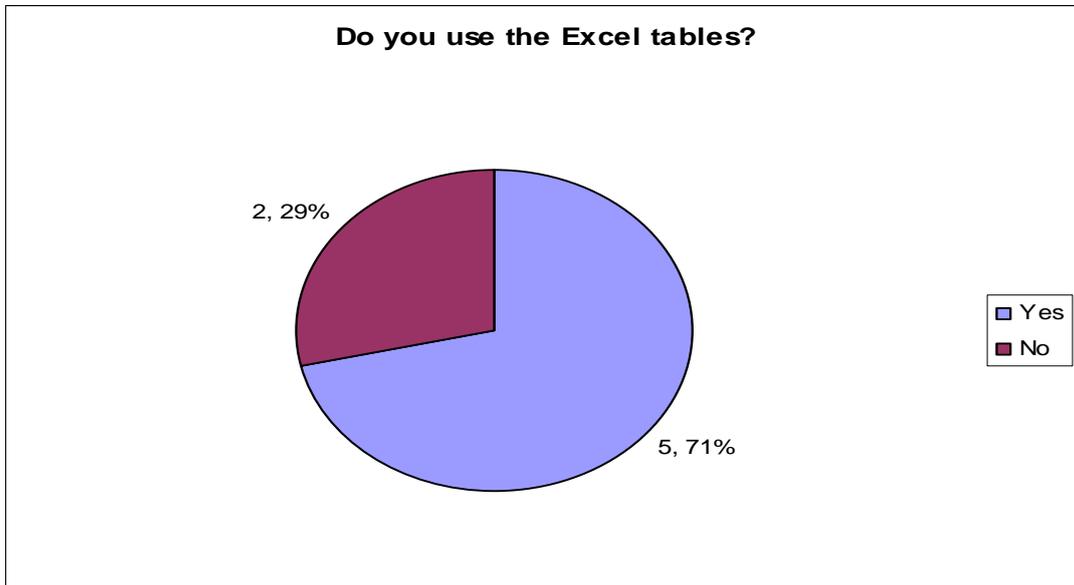
8. Are there any specific items that you would like to see added to the main text or technical notes?

Number of responses: 1

No.

9. Do you use the spreadsheet? (Excel tables)

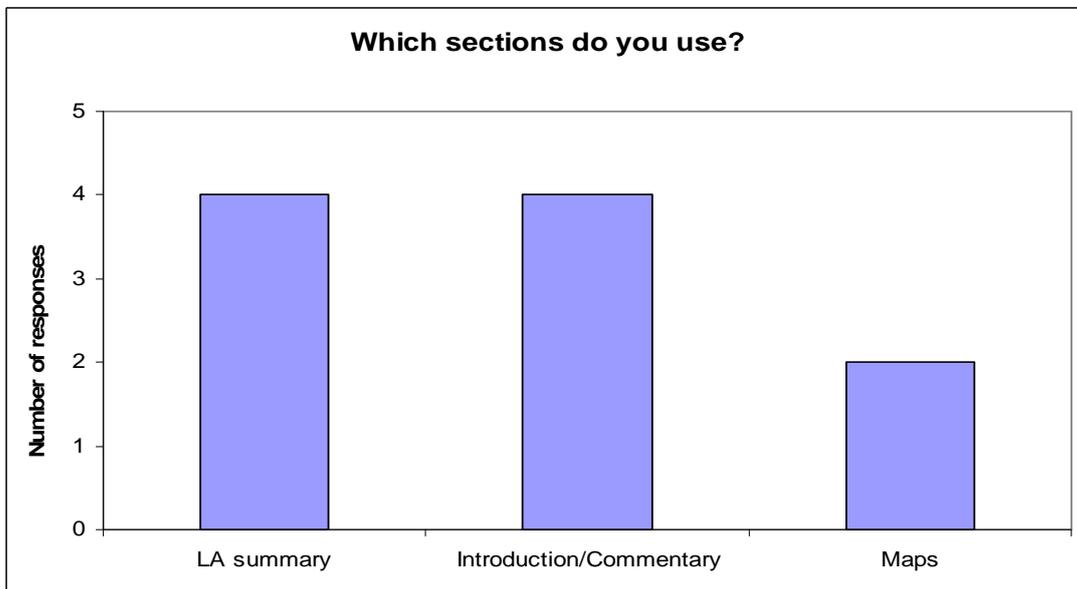
Number of respondents: 7



10. Which sections do you use?

Number of respondents: 6

Number of responses: 10



11. Which subject areas do you use?

Number of respondents: 5

Number of responses: 12

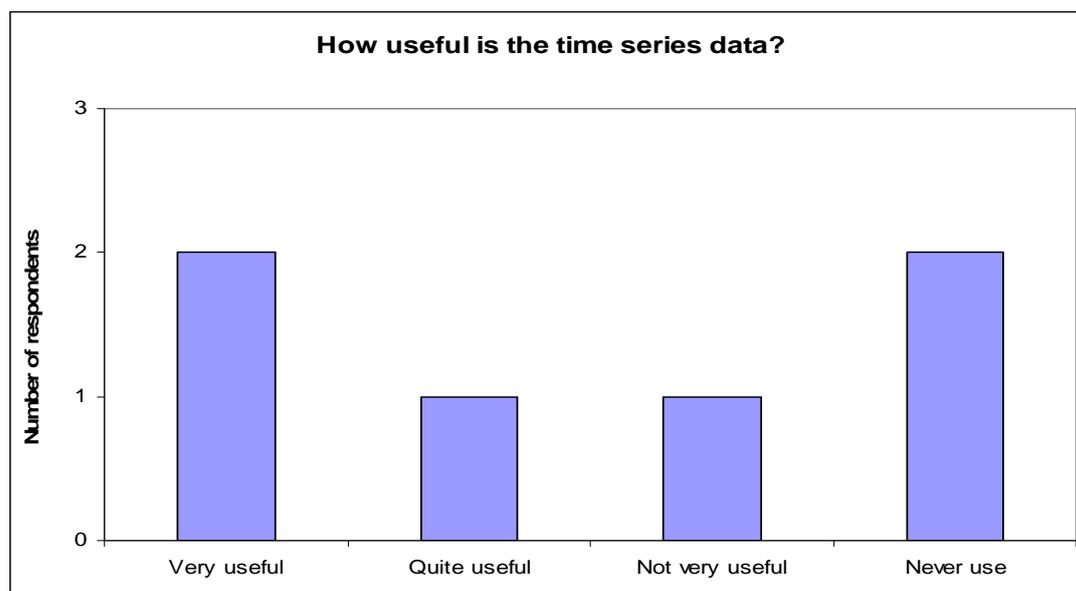
Subject area used	Number of responses
Pupil inflows and outflows	4
Destination of pupils (including cross border movement)	3
Inflows and outflows at transition between Year 6 and Year 7 (pupil retention)	2
Number/Percentage of pupils by deprivation indicators	2
Cross border movement time series	1
Schools and pupils by school characteristics	0
Distance travelled to school (LA level)	0
Mode of travel to school (LA level)	0
Pupil characteristics	0
School characteristics	0

12. Are there any other breakdowns you would like to see included?

There were no responses to this question.

13. How useful is the time series data?

Number of respondents: 6



14. Which of the following time series options would you find useful?

Time Series options	Number of responses
Base year and latest year (e.g. 2002 and 2010)	2
Base year, spot year and three most recent years (e.g. 2002, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010)	2
Other	1
Base year and three most recent years (e.g. 2002, 2008, 2009, 2010)	0
Base year and five most recent years (e.g. 2002, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)	0
Alternative base year and latest year (e.g. 2005 and 2010)	0
Alternative base year and three most recent years (e.g. 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010)	0
Alternative base year and five most recent years (e.g. 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)	0

The 'other' suggestion was for the 3 or 5 most recent years.

15. Are there any tables you think do not need to be included?

Number of responses: 2

- i. Table 1 (London LA destinations of secondary school pupils resident or attending school in London)
- ii. Table 12 (mode of travel of secondary school pupils residing or attending school in London by pupil characteristics).

16. Are there any other sources you could use to find the information you need from the publication?

There were no responses to this question.

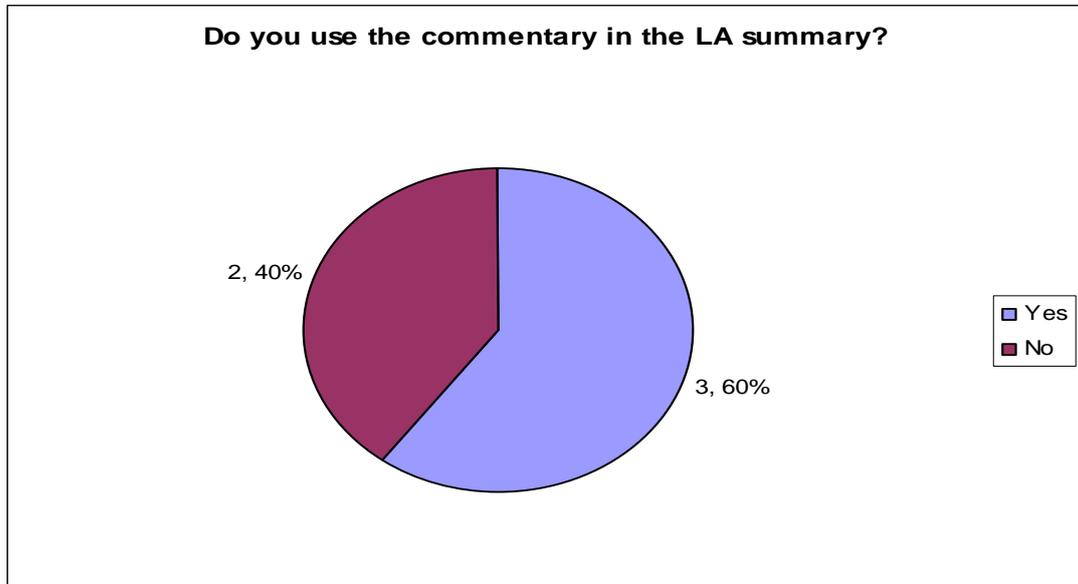
17. Do you use the publication in conjunction with other sources of information?

There were no responses to this question.

Local Authority Summary

1. Do you use the commentary in the Local Authority Summary

Number of respondents: 5



If yes, how useful do you find the following information:

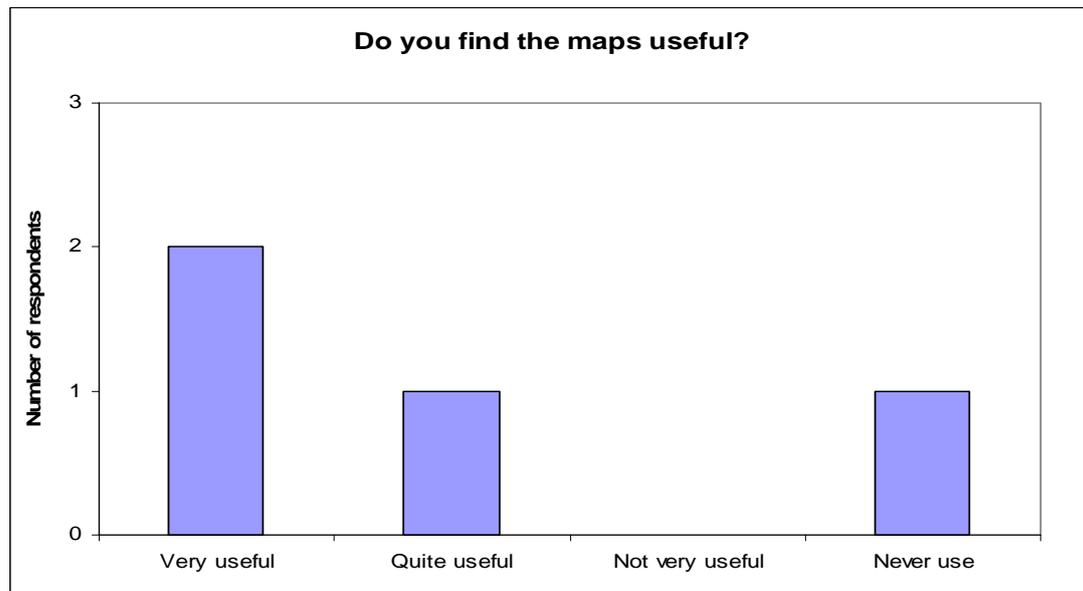
Number of responses: 12

Local Authority Summary information	Very useful	Quite useful	Not very useful
Percentage of resident pupils attending school	1	1	0
Exporter summary (which LAs the LA exports to)	1	1	0
Importer summary (which LAs the LA imports from)	1	2	0
Pupil retention from Year 6 to Year 7 summary	0	2	0
Distance travelled and mode of travel summary	0	2	1

Maps

1. Do you find the maps useful?

Number of respondents: 4



2. Are there any additional maps you would like to see included in the publication?

There were no responses to this question.

3. Are there any maps you think do not need to be included?

Number of responses: 2

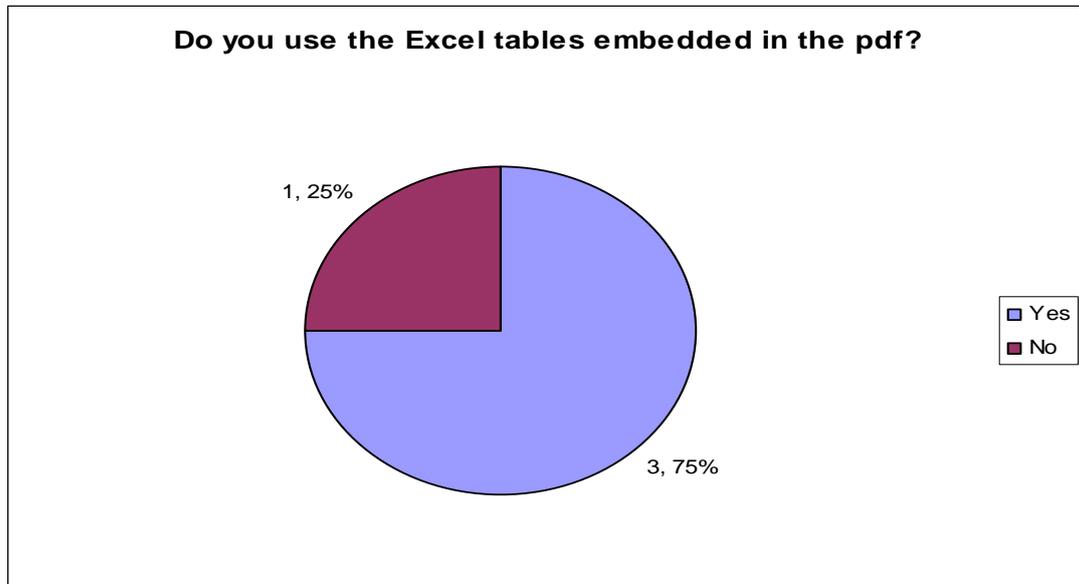
i. The 'proportion of pupils residing in and attending school in the LA as a percentage of the resident population'

ii. The 'percentage of secondary school population travelling 3 miles or less to school'.

Publication Format

1. Do you use the copies of the Excel tables which have been embedded in the pdf file?

Number of respondents: 4



2. Does the current PDF and Excel format of the publication meet your needs?

Number of respondents: 4

All responses were 'Yes'

3. Does the current timing of the publication meet your requirements?

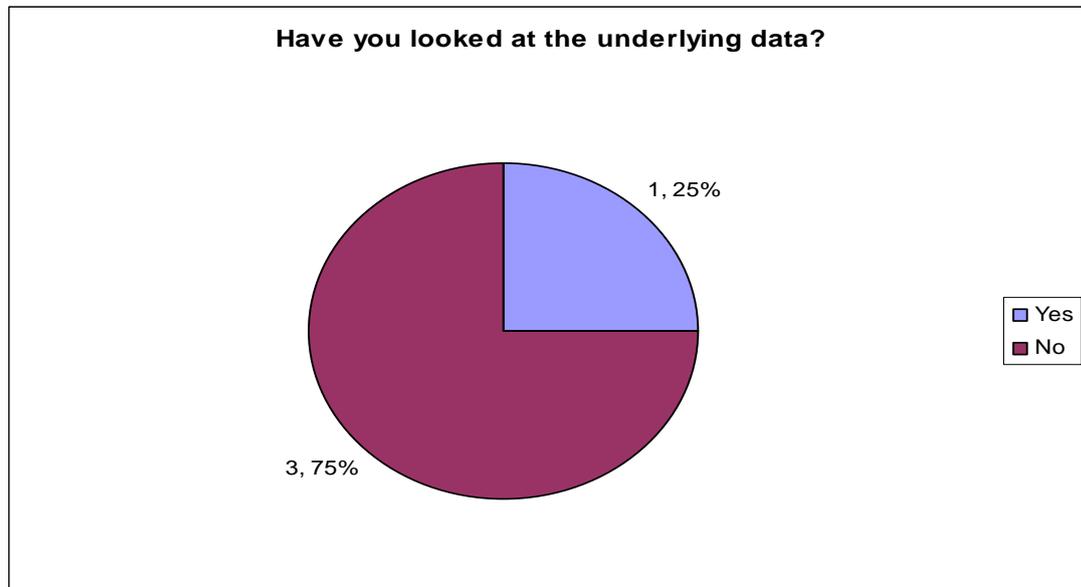
Number of respondents: 4

All responses were 'Yes'.

Underlying Data

1. Have you looked at the underlying data accompanying the publication?

Number of respondents: 4



2. How useful do you find the underlying data?

Number of respondents: 1

'very useful'.

Conclusion

1. Is there anything else you would like to change to make the publication more relevant to your needs?

There were no responses to this question.

2. Please rate the overall quality and usefulness of this publication

Number of respondents: 4

Overall quality and usefulness of publication	Number of responses
Excellent	1
Good	3
Adequate	0
Poor	0