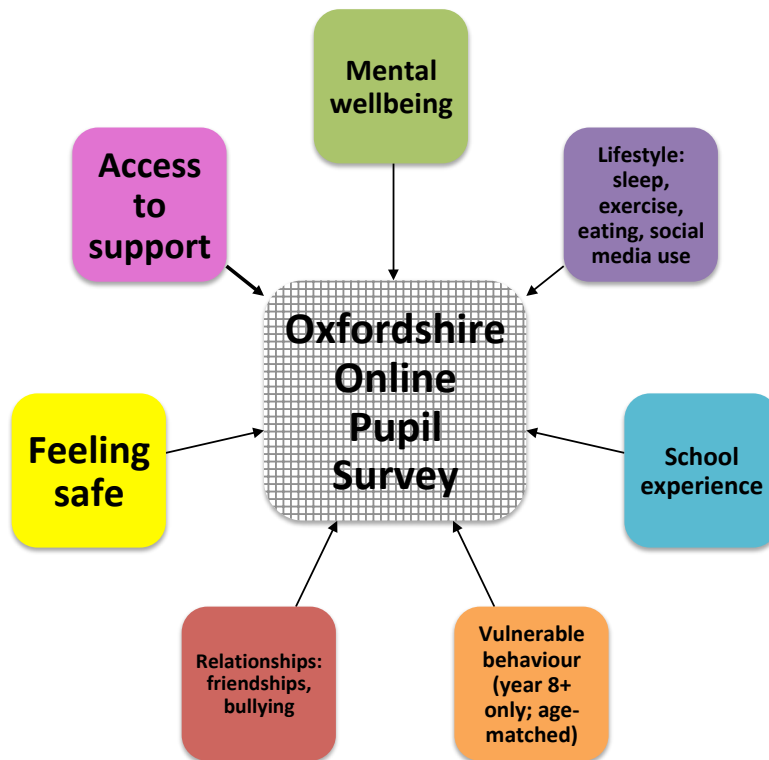


# Oxfordshire OxWell School Survey 2019

## SUMMARY REPORT



## Introduction

The aim of the OxWell School Survey (Oxfordshire's Online Pupil Survey) is to aggregate pupils' responses to questions on a range of health and wellbeing-related issues, to inform individual schools, Oxfordshire County Council, and research. The data can be used in research aimed at improving the wellbeing and mental health of children and adolescents, to track the success of interventions that aim to improve support for mental wellbeing (like Trailblazer), and to help local services to allocate resources effectively. Participating schools are able to access anonymous summaries of the results from their own pupils and to compare them to the county average via an online data tool, helping them to tailor support to the needs of their pupils. Three versions of the survey were developed to be age appropriate for primary (years 4-6), secondary (years 8-11) and Year 12-13/Further Education, and were approved by the University of Oxford Research Ethics Committee (Reference R62366/RE001).

An Online Pupil Survey (OPS) was initially developed by Gloucestershire County Council with an independent research company, Foster and Brown Research Ltd. It ran from 2006 to 2018 in Gloucestershire, and was later adapted to meet the priorities of other neighbouring counties. Early in 2019, the OPS was adapted further for the OxWell School Survey ([www.psych.ox.ac.uk/research/schoolmentalhealth](http://www.psych.ox.ac.uk/research/schoolmentalhealth)), which is coordinated by Dr Karen Mansfield and Professor Mina Fazel, at the University of Oxford, and administered by Foster and Brown Research Ltd ([www.fabresearchonline.co.uk](http://www.fabresearchonline.co.uk)).

The data summarised in this report were collected during designated school periods between 9<sup>th</sup> May 2019 and 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019 in year groups 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 12, in 36 schools, and 4,390 pupils took part. Data from 4,222 pupils are included in the summary presented in this report. These are preliminary findings based on summaries calculated using the online data tool (LodeSeeker) developed by Foster and Brown. More detailed results and statistical tests will be included in manuscripts intended for publication in scientific journals.

### Acknowledgements

We would first like to thank all of the staff at participating schools for planning the survey into lesson time. We would like to thank the pupils and their parents for taking part in this research, and we would like to thank both parents and schools for the valuable questions and feedback we received. Thank you to Pauline Foster and Elaine Purse for their responsiveness in helping us ensure that the Oxfordshire survey adhered to research ethics guidelines at the University of Oxford, and for their patience in making changes to the survey to address important questions relevant to mental health.

**Funding:** The Oxfordshire OPS 2019 and associated report was funded by an MRC Mental Health Data Pathfinder Award to the University of Oxford and by the NIHR Oxford Health Biomedical Research Centre. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the University of Oxford, the NIHR, the NHS, or the Department of Health and Social Care.

## Summary of respondents who took part in 2019

### Demographics

Key Demographics Oxfordshire OPS	Number of respondents 2019
Total respondents (cleaned database)	4222
Male	1917 (45%)
Female	2287 (55%)
Born outside UK	580 (14%)
One or both parents born outside UK	1870 (44%)
Eligible for Free School Meals	747 (18%)
Accessed CAMHS	252 (6%)
School phase - Primary	2391 (57%)
School phase - Secondary	1502 (36%)
School phase – Year 12/FE	329 (8%)

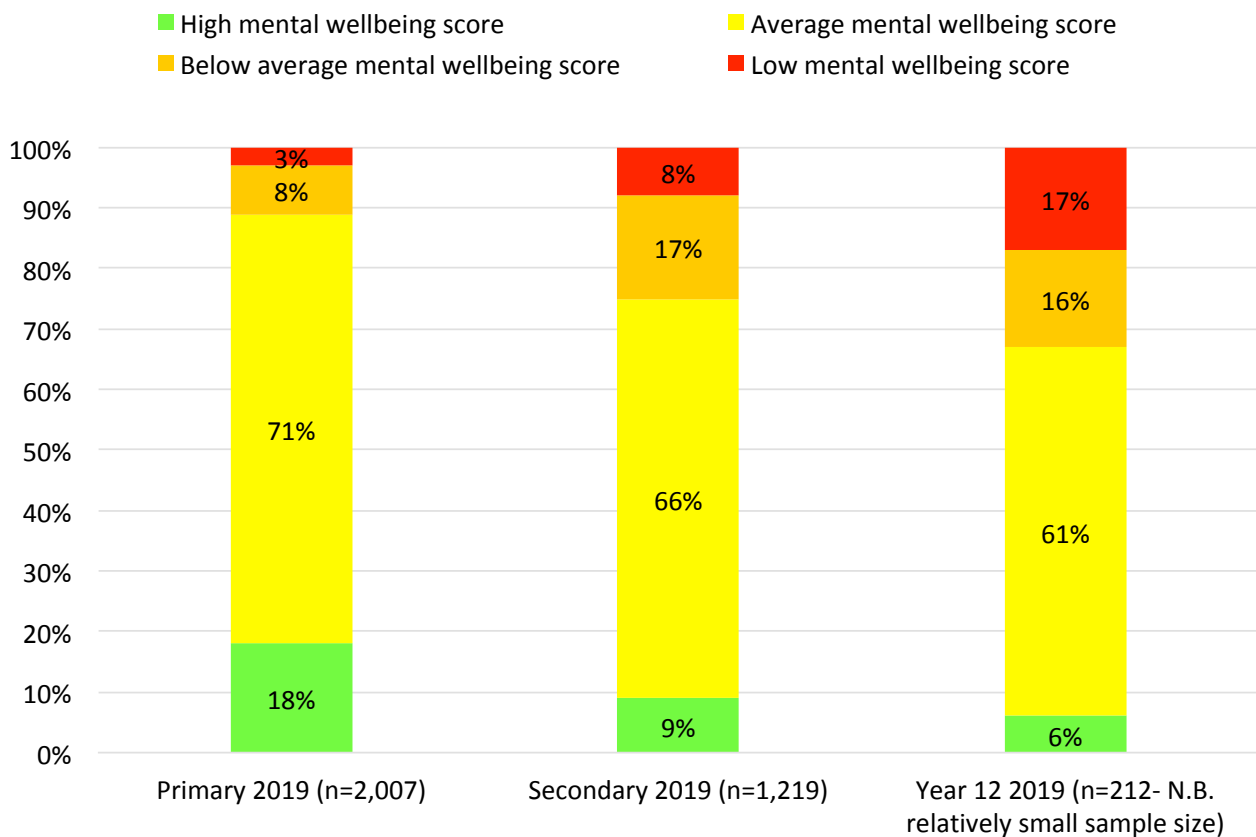
### Respondents per Council District

Council District	Number of respondents	%
Oxford City	848	47%
South Oxfordshire	369	20%
Cherwell	206	11%
Vale of the White Horse	128	7%
West Oxfordshire	55	3%
Outside the County	54	3%
Would rather not say	147	8%

## Mental Wellbeing

### The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale

In order to measure mental wellbeing we used the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)<sup>1</sup>. This is a population/group measure of mental wellbeing that is widely used and has been validated for adults and adolescents of 13 years and older. Fourteen positively worded questions are used to calculate an overall mental wellbeing score. The categories below (high, average, below average, and low wellbeing) are based on the distribution of responses in other populations (adults and adolescents).



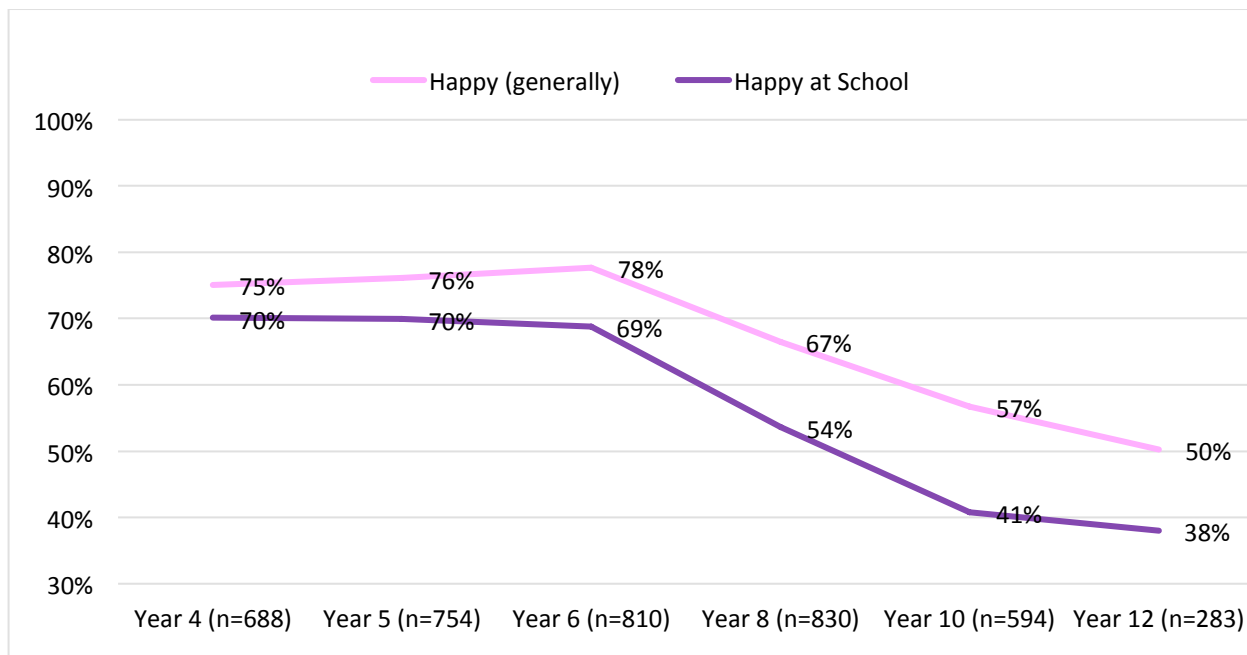
### Mental Wellbeing scores per school phase

Primary school pupils scored numerically higher in wellbeing compared to secondary and FE college students, and there were more students in year 12 than in years 8&10 with low mental wellbeing. Although care should be taken in interpreting WEMWBS scores for children under 13 years of age, and our year 12 group is relatively small in this comparison, the overall pattern fits with the finding that adolescence is a critical age for the onset of mental health problems (<https://blogs.rch.org.au/cah/files/2011/06/Gore-et-al-Lancet-June-2011.pdf>).

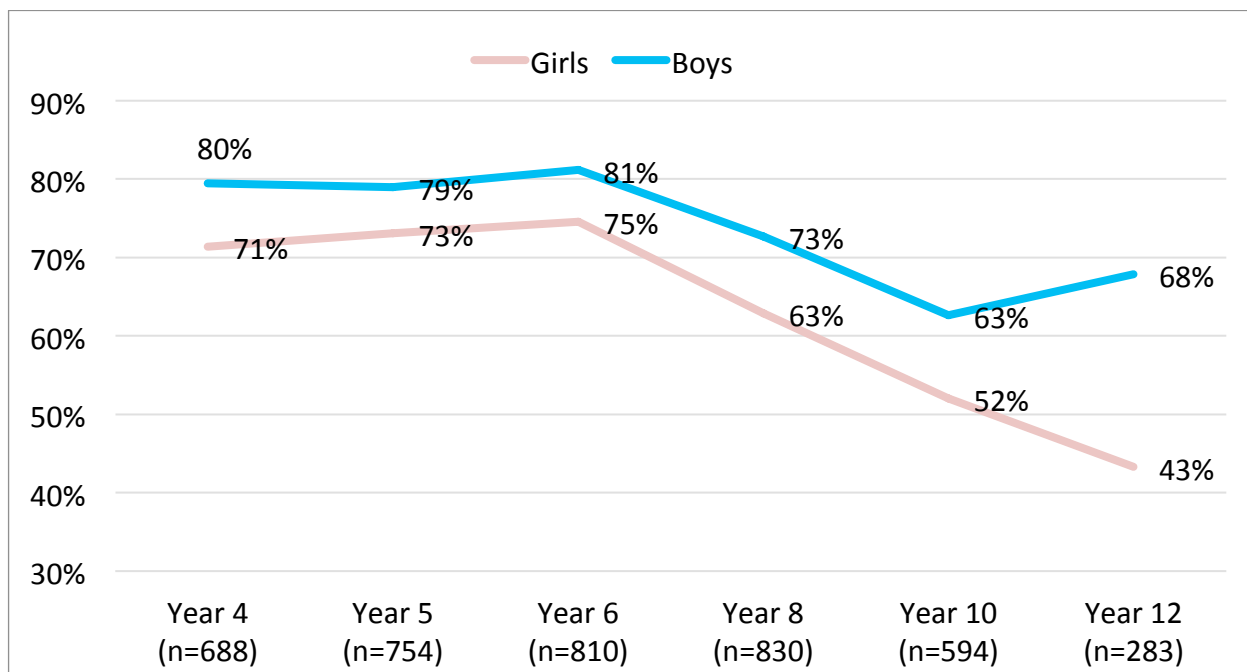
<sup>1</sup> <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs/>

<sup>2</sup> In this document where we mention Oxfordshire County Council, we also include Oxfordshire Public Health, Oxfordshire

**General Happiness**



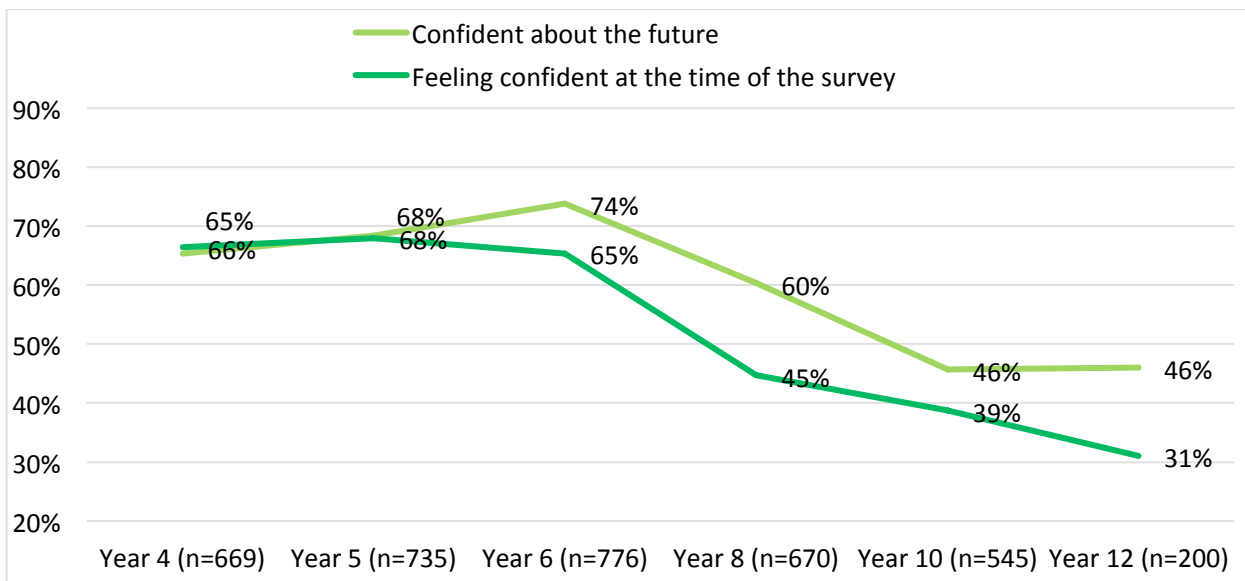
**Percentage of pupils who have been feeling happy over the past week (in general / at school)**



**Percentage of pupils who have been feeling happy over the past week (boys / girls)**

Pupils in all school years were also asked how happy they had been feeling over the past week, in general and at school. Comparable to the pattern in WEMWBS scores, pupils at secondary schools and FE colleges reported feeling less happy than younger pupils, both in general and at school. More boys than girls reported feeling generally happy, a pattern that was consistent across year groups, and most pronounced in year 12 students. The pattern of higher scores for boys compared to girls in secondary pupils and FE college students was also consistent across all measures of happiness/wellbeing.

### Confidence



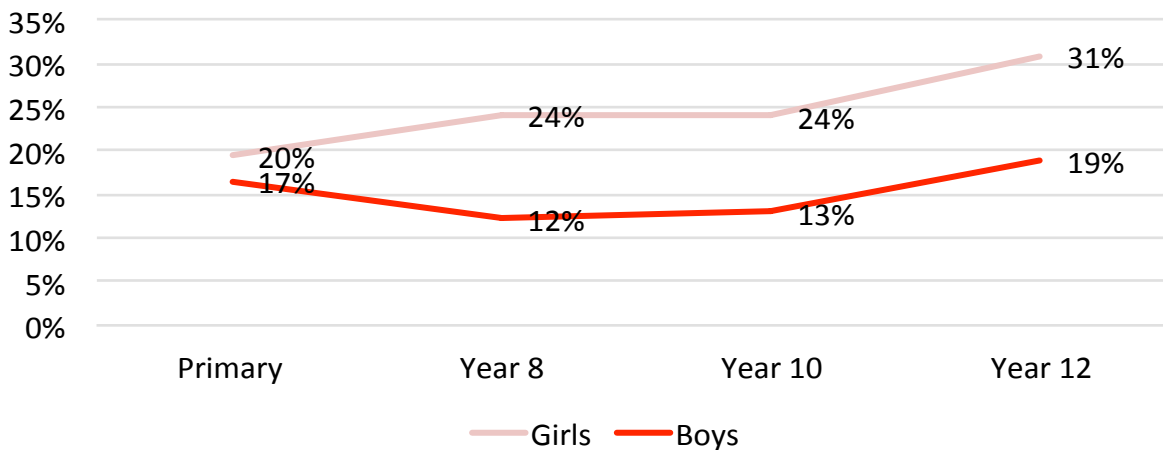
#### Percentage of pupils who feel confident (in general / about the future)

One of the questions in the WEMWBS asked pupils to rate how confident they had been feeling in the past week, and a separate survey question asked them how confident they felt about the future. Less pupils reported feeling confident in years 8, 10 and 12, compared to primary years, but more pupils said they felt confident about the future.

### Worry / Stress

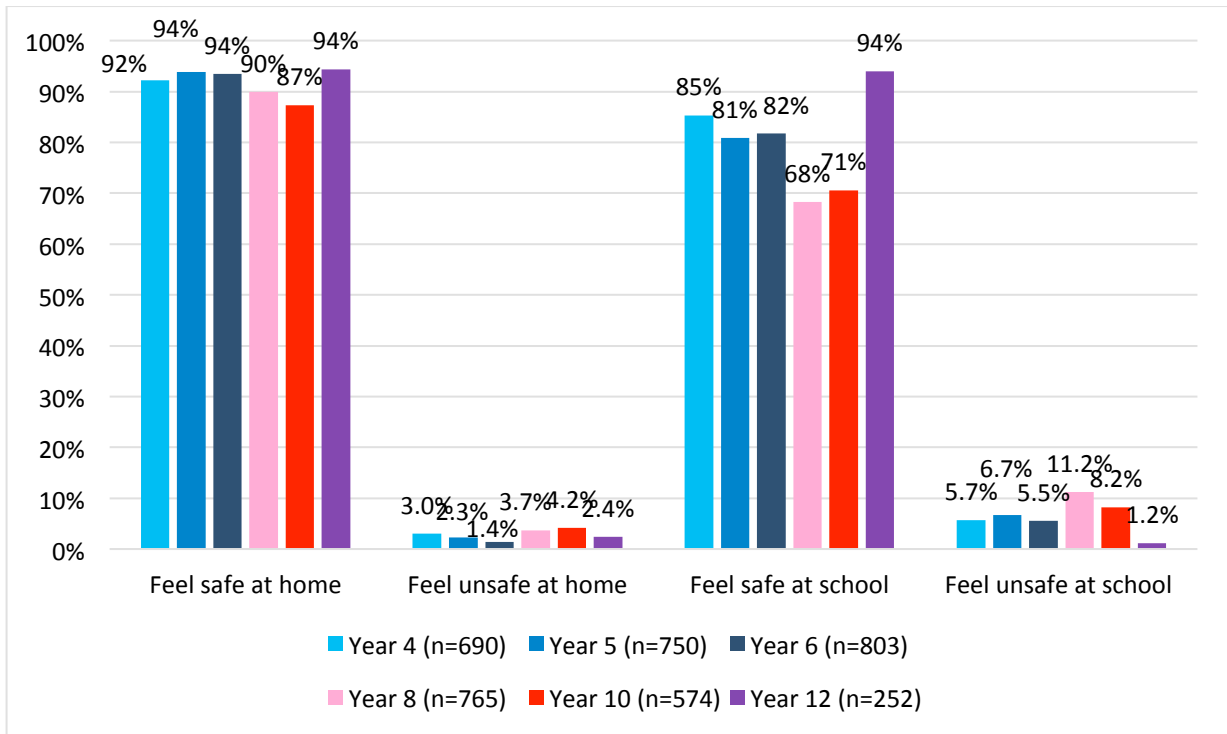
Our key stress indicator is the question “How often are you so worried about something, you cannot sleep at night?” 19% of all pupils said they wake up frequently – weekly or most nights, because they were worried about something. We found that 18% of primary, 20% of secondary and 27% of Year 12s are frequently so worried about something that they cannot sleep at night. Girls report having trouble sleeping due to worry more than boys, especially in year 12 (31% compared to 19%).

#### Often too worried to sleep



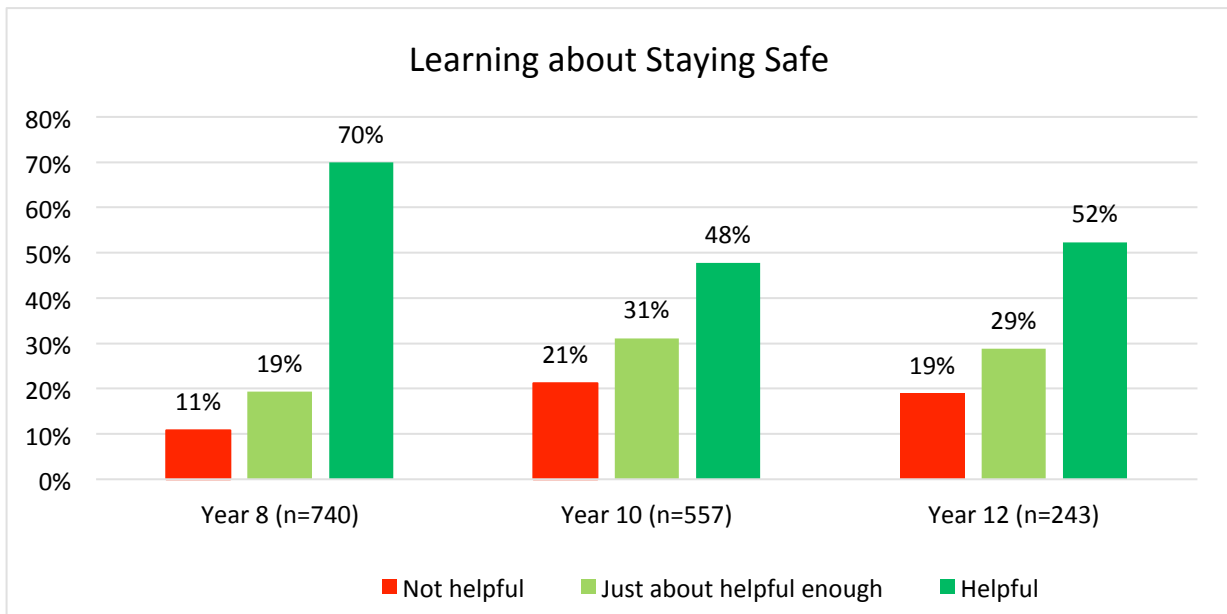
#### Percentage of pupils who are too worried to sleep at least once a week (boys/girls)

## Feeling Safe



**Percentage of pupils who feel safe vs. unsafe in each year (at home, at school)**

In all year groups, pupils were asked how safe they feel at home and at school. The majority of pupils reported that they felt safe or very safe both at home and at school.



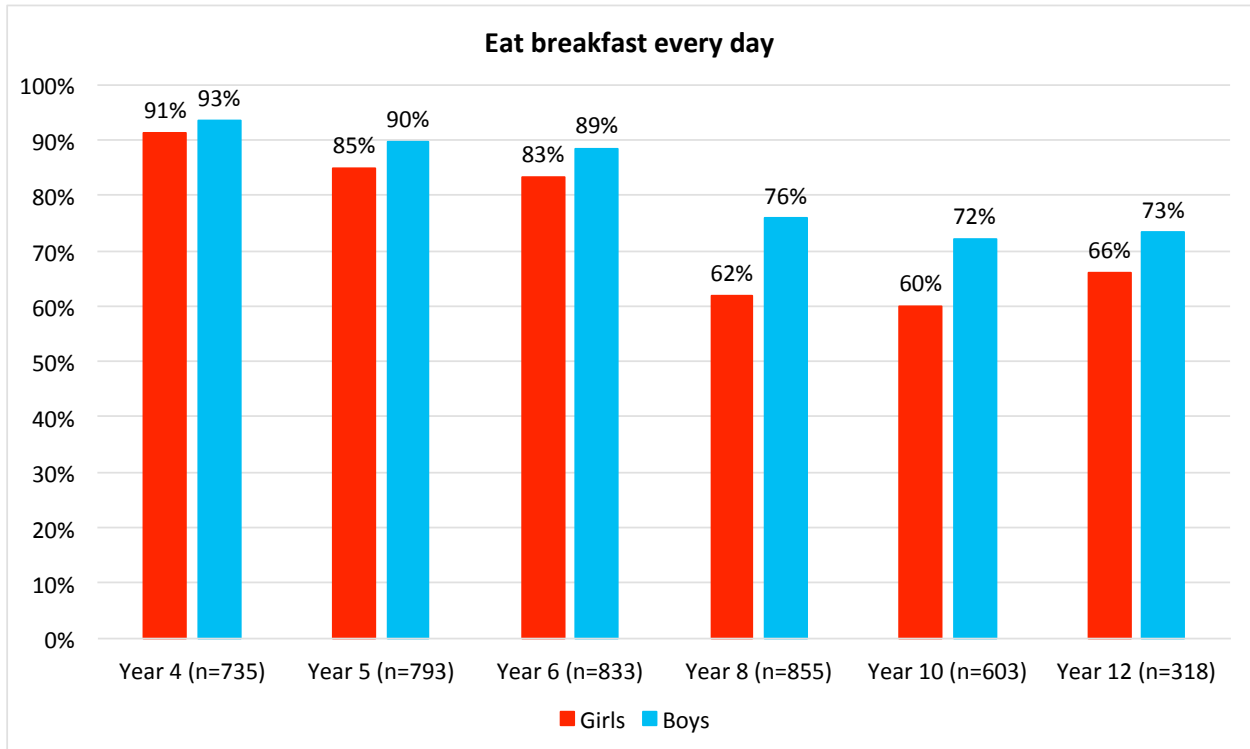
**Percentage of pupils who felt that information from school on staying safe was helpful**

Secondary school pupils were asked how helpful information from school had been on staying safe, and particularly younger pupils reported they had found this information helpful.

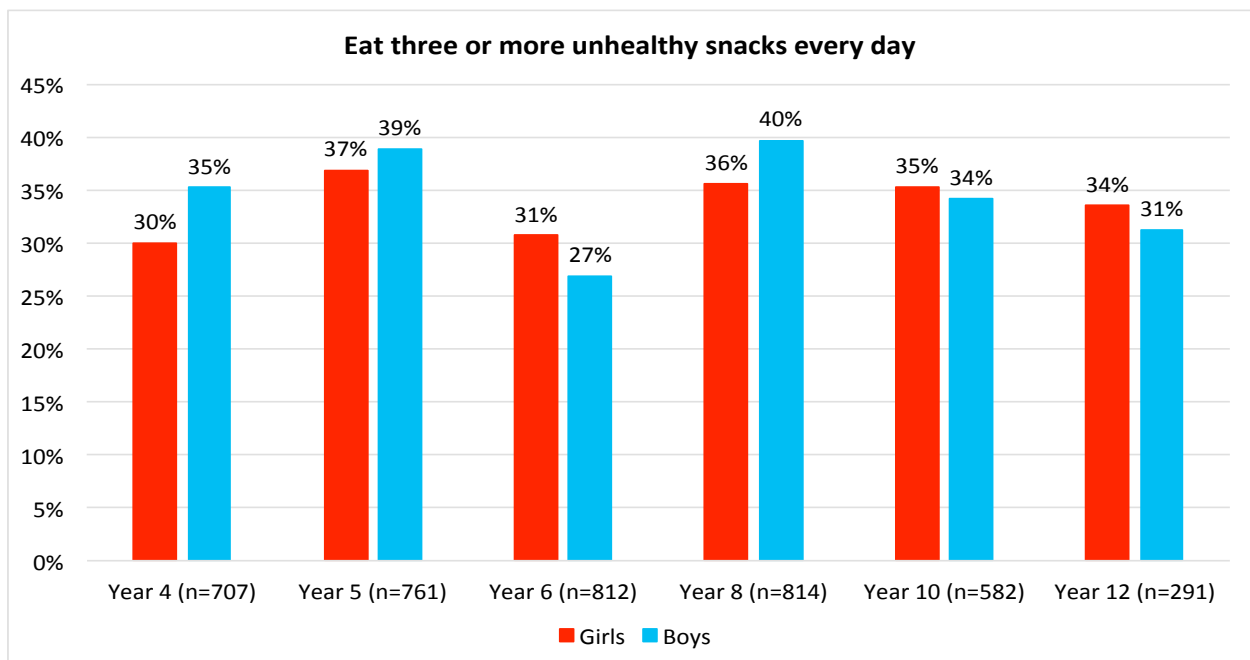
## Lifestyle

### Healthy eating

79% of pupils ate breakfast usually or every morning. The number of pupils who ate breakfast was lower in older pupils. Girls consistently ate breakfast less frequently than boys, particularly in years 8 and 10.



### Percentage of pupils who eat breakfast every day



### Percentage of pupils who eat three or more unhealthy snacks a day

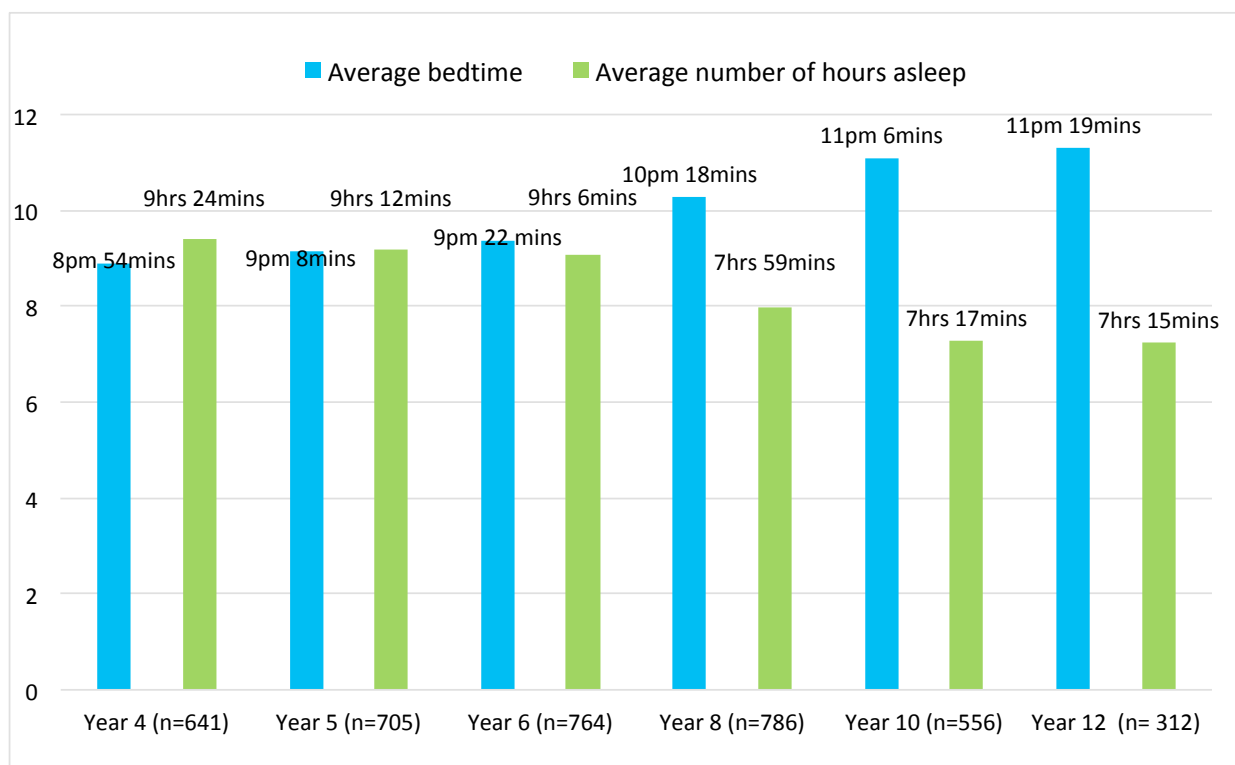


34% of pupils reported having 3 or more snacks every day (e.g. sweets, chocolate, biscuits and crisps). Boys tended to eat slightly more unhealthy snacks than girls overall (35% boys said they ate 3 or more snacks a day compared to 34% of girls), particularly in years 4 and 8.

### **Sleep behaviour**

The average amount of sleep the night before the survey was 8 hours and 31 minutes. We also asked what time pupils got up (average 6.50am). It is recommended that children under 10 need at least ten hours of sleep a night, and from the ages of 10 to 18 adolescents need at least eight and half hours. Children and young people in Oxfordshire report having an average of 9 hours 13 minutes sleep in primary, 7 hours 42 minutes sleep in secondary and 7 hours 15 minutes in Year 12.

The children and young people were also asked if they had woken up the night before the survey (29% said they had) and if so, why. The most common reasons given were to get a drink or use the bathroom, woken by a noise or woken by a nightmare. However, 13.5% said they woke up because they were worried about something and 7% because they were worried about school.

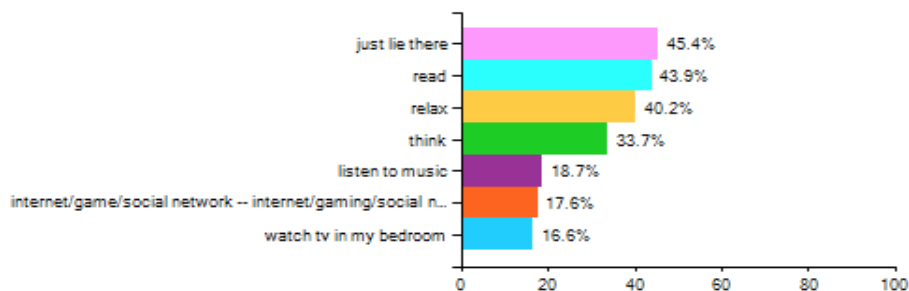


**Average bedtime and number of hours slept, the night before completing the survey**

Pupils who reported that it took them more than an hour to get to sleep were asked what they did before going to sleep. Most pupils reported that they were relaxing, just lying there, thinking or reading. However, 17% of primary, 19% of secondary and 25% Year 12'S were watching TV in their room. 18% of primary, 41% of secondary and 51% Year 12 were using the internet (e.g. internet sites, social media, gaming, texting) before they went to sleep.

**Primary**

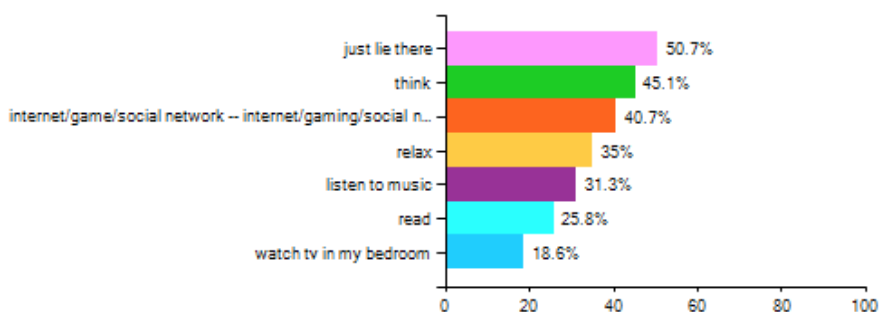
**Year Group = 4 AND Year Group = 5 AND Year Group = 6**



Year Group = 4 AND Year Group = 5 AND Year Group = 6 n:1407

**Secondary**

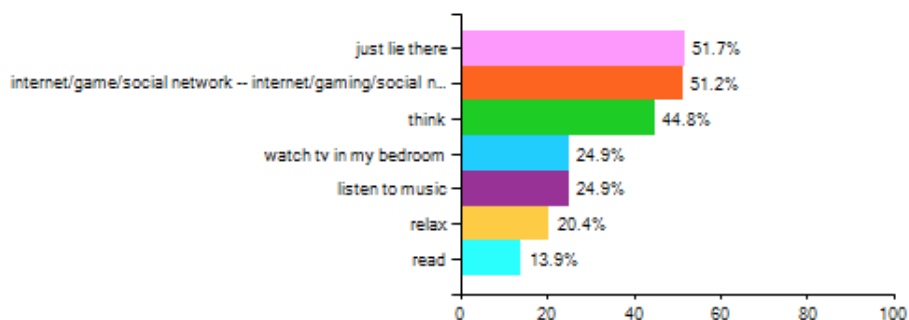
**Year Group = 8 AND Year Group = 10**



Year Group = 8 AND Year Group = 10 n:918

**Year 12**

**Year Group = 12**

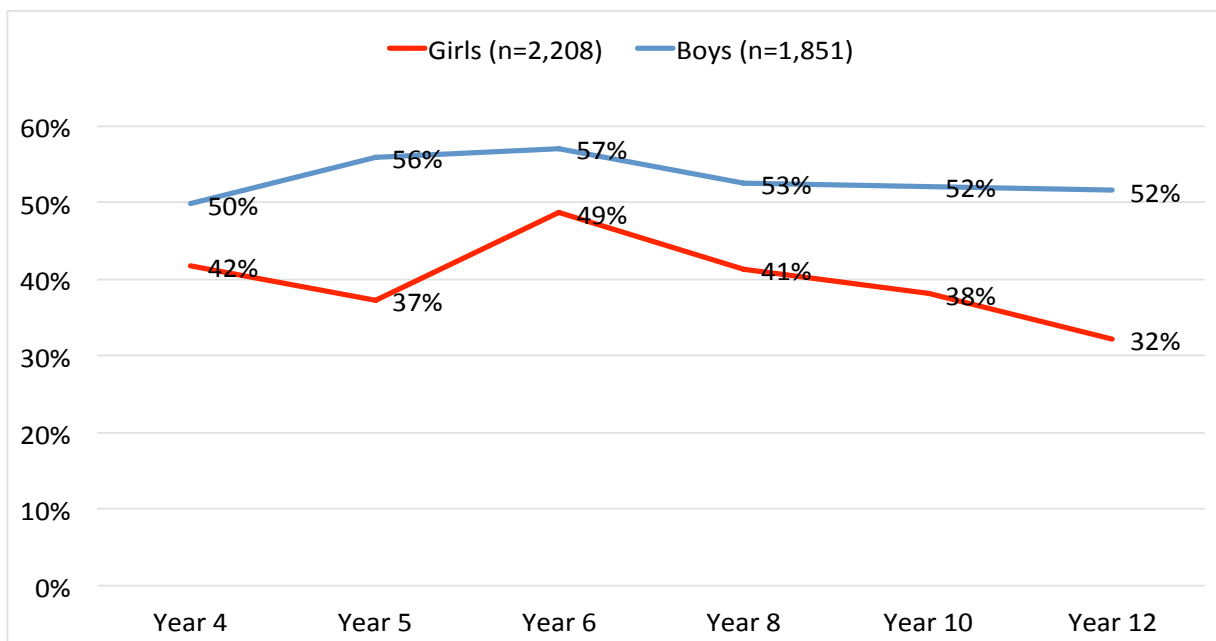


Year Group = 12 n:201

**What children and young people did before going to sleep the night before the survey (for those who took more than one hour to get to sleep)**

## Physical Activity

8% of girls and 7% of boys said they do not take part in any exercise. 47% of pupils (n = 1,902) across all age groups take part in at least 6 hours of physical activity (including play) each week. 49% of primary pupils, 45% of secondary pupils and 38% of Year 12s reported at least 6 hours a week. The recommendation from the Chief Medical Officer is 7 hours a week. 41% of girls compared to 54% of boys did 6 or more hours of physical activity a week.

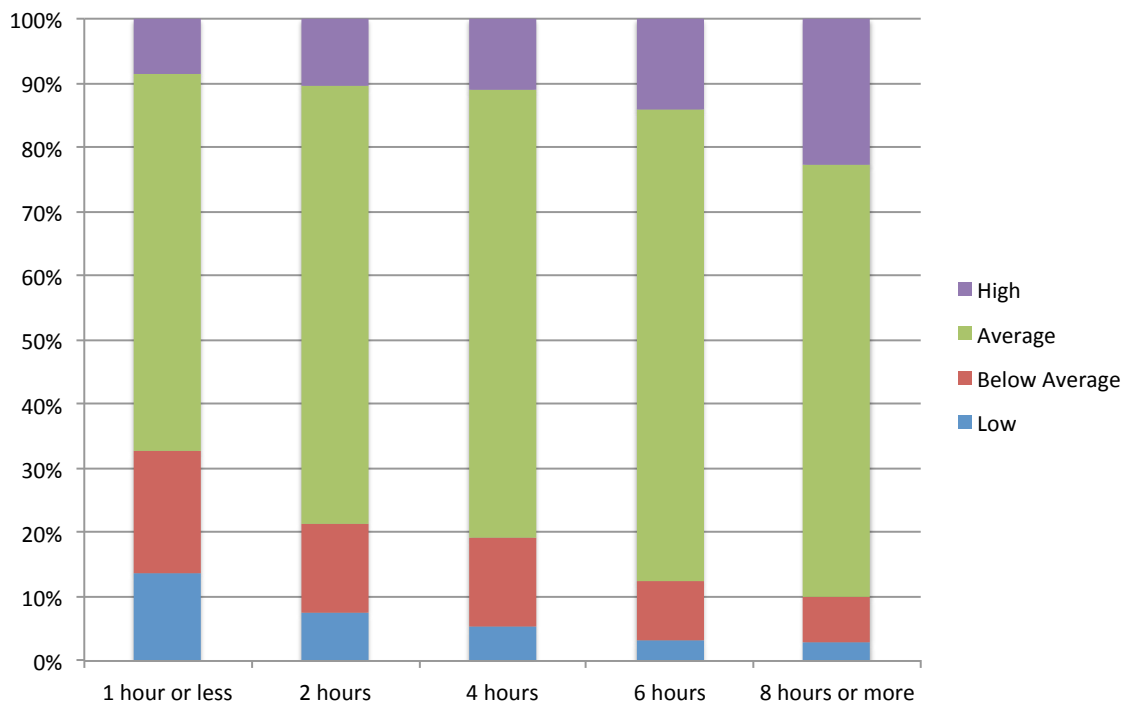


### Percentage of pupils who reported doing 6 or more hours of exercise per week (girls/boys)

57% of pupils overall felt they did enough exercise to keep healthy. 20% felt they sometimes did enough and 23% felt they did not do enough exercise to keep them healthy. For girls, 50% reported they felt they did enough exercise and 24% felt they did not do enough to keep them healthy, while for boys, 67% felt they did enough and 14% felt they did not do enough.

Overall 80% of girls and 79% of boys said they would like to do more physical activity. This was fairly consistent across age groups. 80% of both boys and girls in Primary phase felt this way, 79% girls and 71% boys in secondary and 86% girls and 72% boys in year 12.

As can be seen in the graph below, amount of exercise is related to mental wellbeing scores. Pupils who participated in 8 hours or more of exercise per week were more likely to have high wellbeing scores, and pupils who participated in less than 6 hours exercise per week were more likely to have below average or low wellbeing scores.

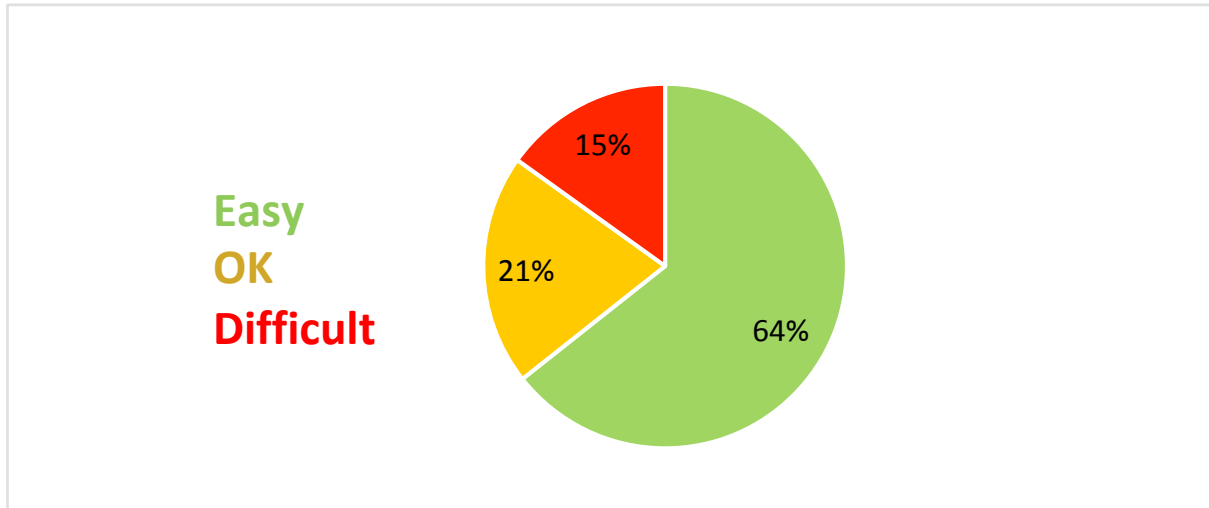


**The relationship between hours exercise per week and wellbeing scores (all phases)**

## Relationships

### Friendships

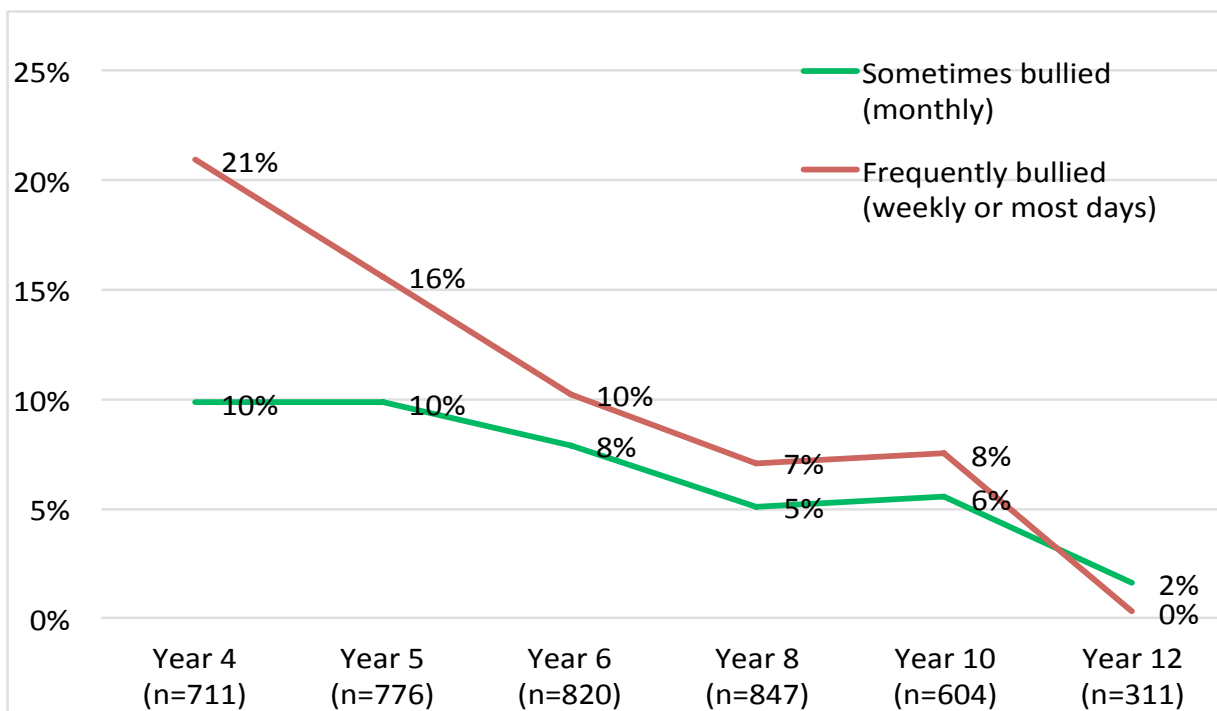
64% of primary, secondary and Year 12 pupils said they found it easy to make and keep friends.



Percentage of pupils who found it easy, sometimes difficult, or very difficult to make friends

### Bullying

The majority (64%) of pupils reported not being bullied in the last year. Over 200 children and young people reported being bullied most days, but less for older pupils.

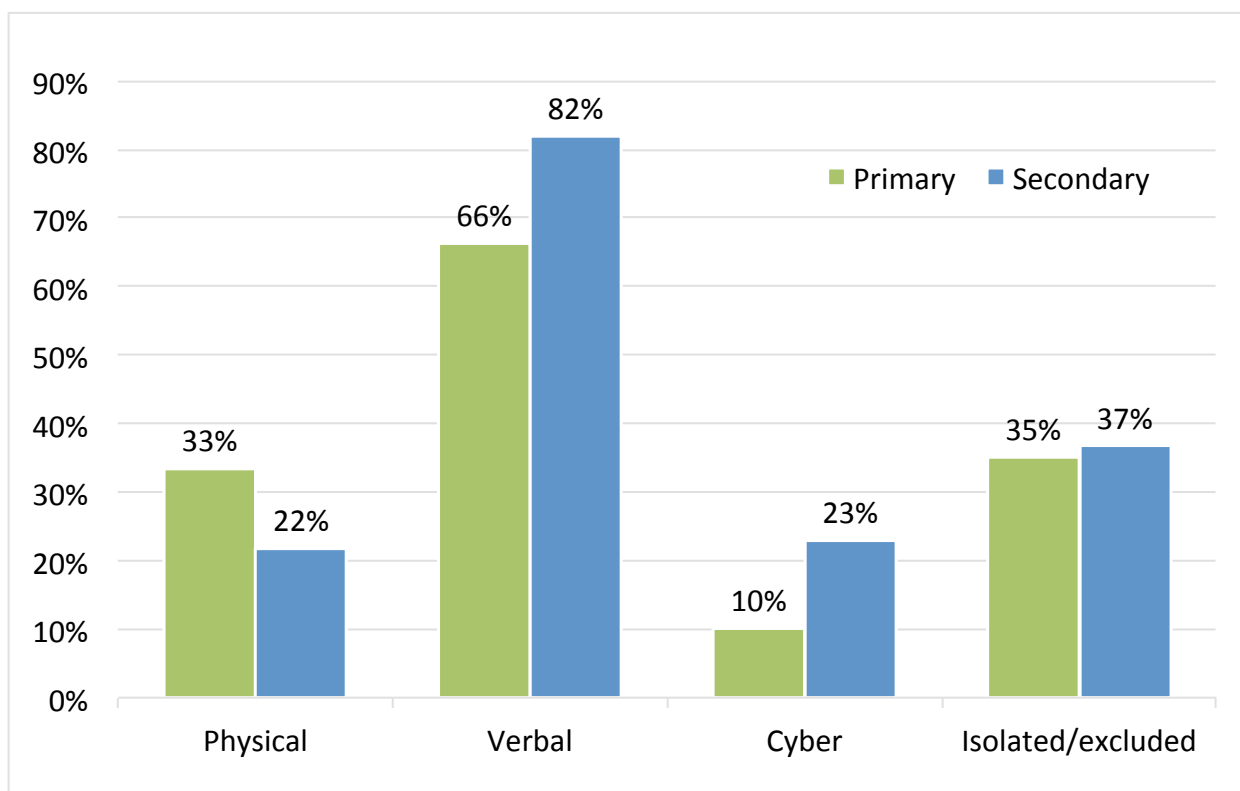


Percentage of pupils who are bullied on a monthly or weekly basis

In 22% of cases overall, (19% girls and 25% boys) the bullying was still happening at the time of the survey. Although less bullying was reported in secondary and year 12 students, perception of how well schools deal with bullying (by all pupils) is lowest in Year 10.

% Pupils bullied in the last year	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 8	Year 10	Year 12
Pupils bullied in the last year, quite often or most days	21%	16%	10%	7%	8%	0.3%
Pupils who think their school deals with bullying well or extremely well	70%	65%	60%	37%	28%	50%

**Both reported bullying and perception of school management of bullying is lower in older pupils**



**Types of bullying reported by primary and secondary pupils**

For those who reported being bullied, verbal bullying and cyber bullying were more common in secondary pupils than in primary pupils.

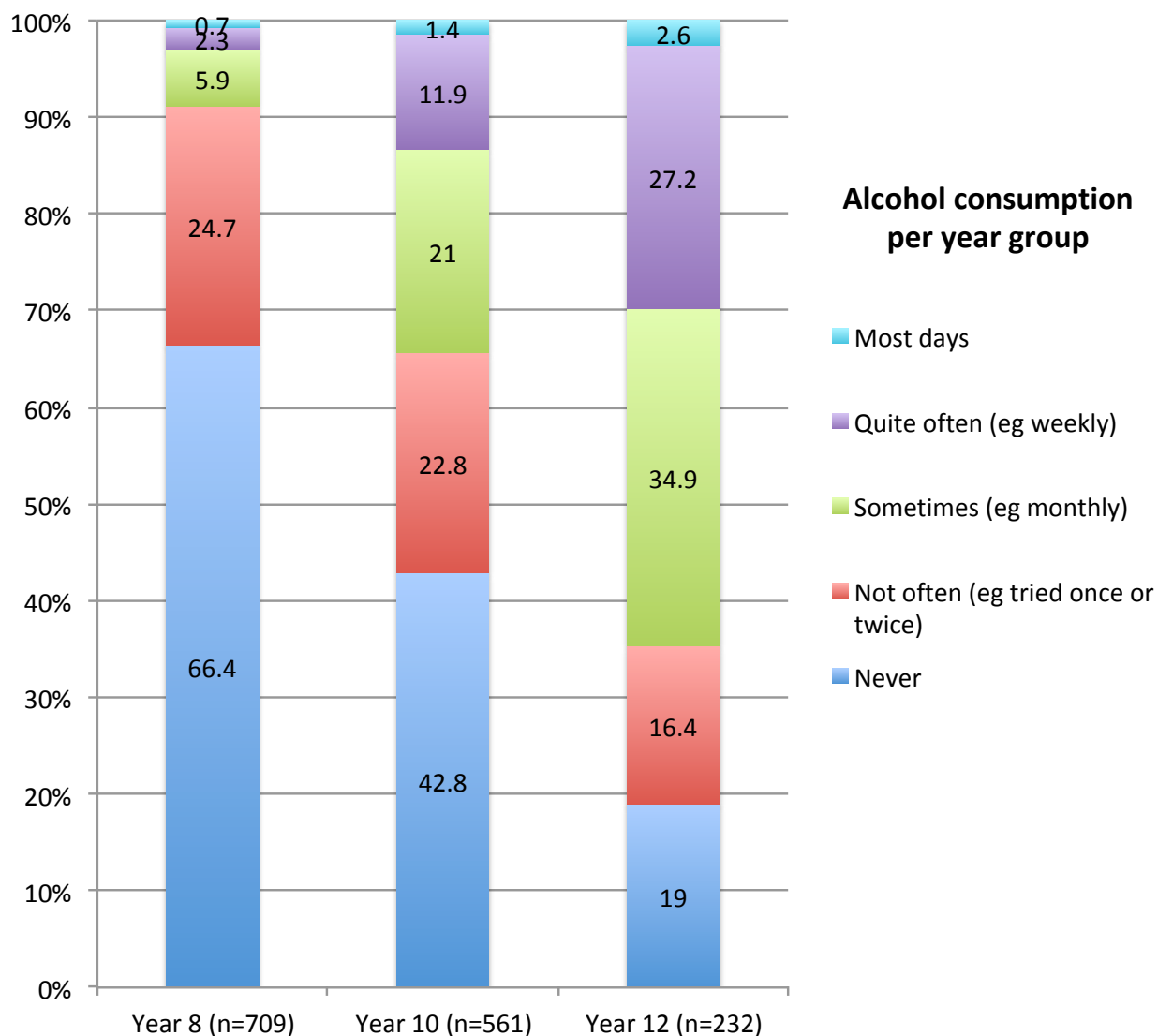
82% of the perpetrators of bullying were the same age as the victims. Only 6% were older and in 2 reported cases, an adult. Most of bullying took place in schools (62%) with a similar pattern between boys and girls. There were too few Year 12s (n=22) to include for this question.

## Substances and Vulnerable Behaviour

Questions on substances and vulnerable behaviour were only included in the versions of the survey for pupils in year 8 and above.

### Alcohol

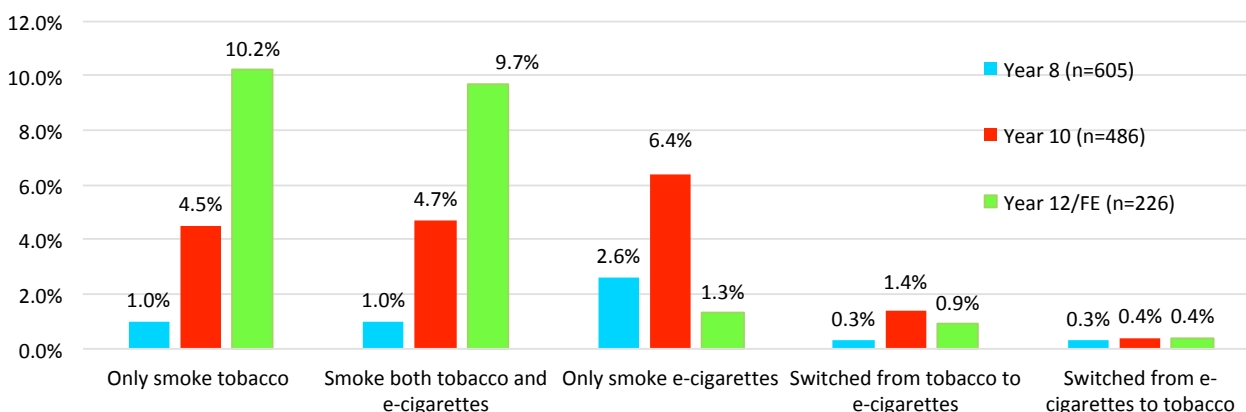
80% of secondary pupils and 35% of Year 12 reported that either they had never drunk alcohol or had only tried alcohol once or twice. By year 12, 30% of young people who do drink alcohol, reported getting drunk regularly (weekly or more).



Distribution of frequency of alcohol consumption per year group

### Smoking

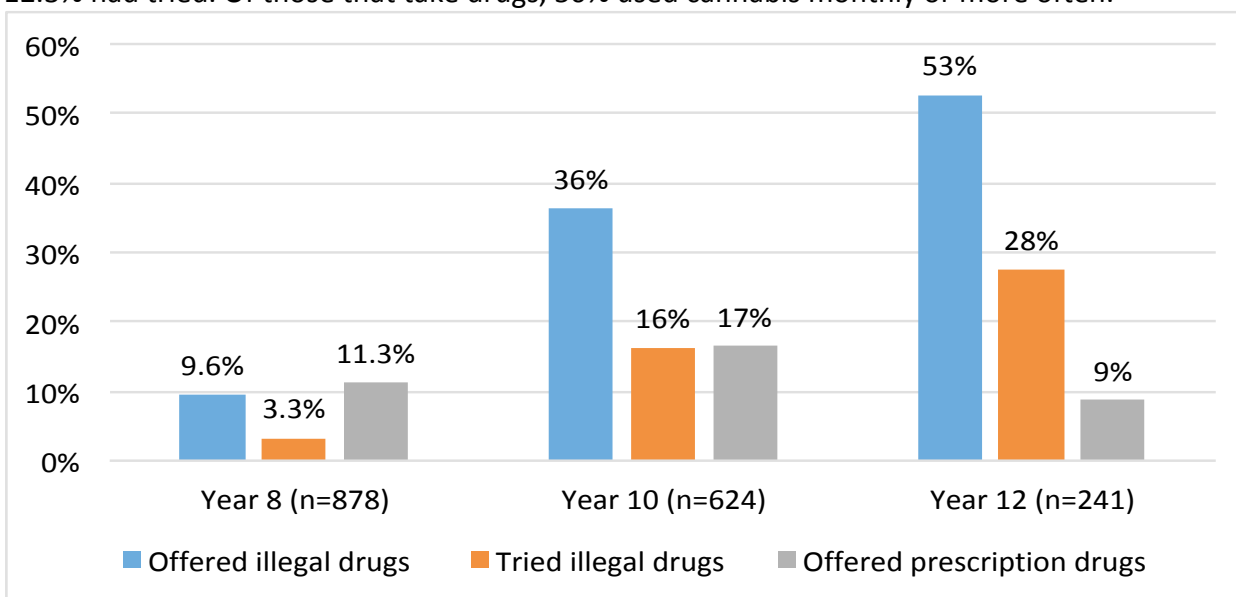
Over 85% of all pupils had never smoked and 8% had only tried it once or twice. 95% of secondary pupils and 85% year 12s reported they had never smoked or only tried once or twice. Of those who smoke regularly – the average was nearly five cigarettes a week (4.8). 35% of the pupils who smoked, said they would like to stop smoking, 65% did not and this was consistent across age groups. 83% of pupils had never used e-cigarettes (vaping) and 10% had tried it once or twice, 7% vaped monthly or more. 3.3% of secondary and 3.8% of year 12’s vaped regularly (weekly or more).



### Percentage of pupils who smoke tobacco, e-cigarettes, or both, in each year group

### Illegal drugs / pharming

26.5 % of all secondary and year 12 students said they had been offered illegal drugs and 12% had tried. 13% had been offered prescription drugs that were not their own (pharming), and 12.3% had tried. Of those that take drugs, 50% used cannabis monthly or more often.



### Percentage of pupils in each year who have been offered or tried drugs



## **Self-harm**

Only Secondary and year 12 phase pupils were asked about self-harm, and only pupils who answered 'yes' to the first question "Have you ever self-harmed" saw any of the remaining self-harm questions. In total 301 pupils answered 'yes'. However, utmost care needs to be taken in reporting the prevalence of self-harm, as many of the young people might not have fully understood what we mean by 'self-harm'. As such, these results will be reported separately after taking into account pupils' text responses where they are available, so that we can be certain not to over- or under-estimate the prevalence of self-harm in Oxfordshire school pupils. These analyses will include self-poisoning (over-dosing).

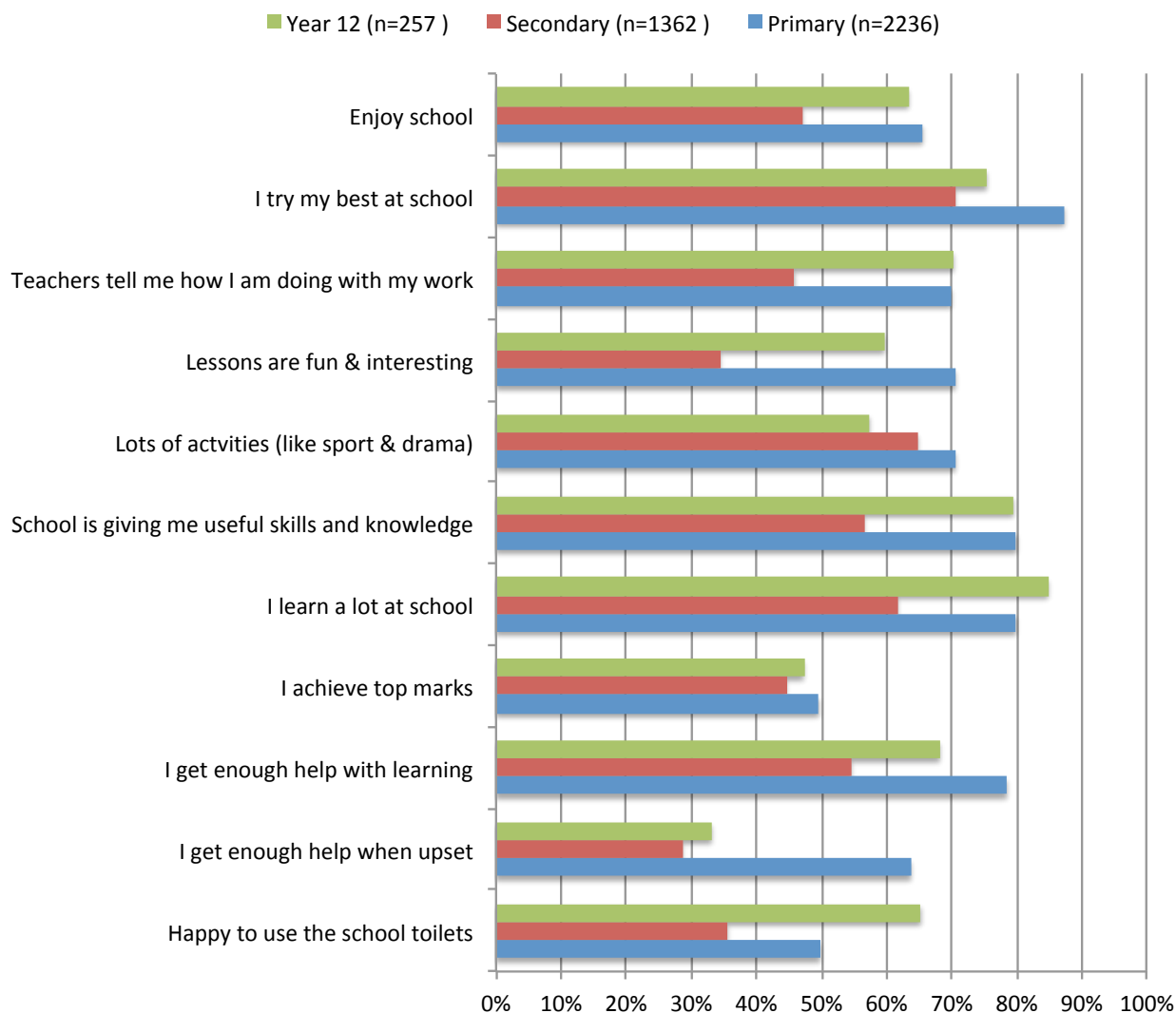
Young people who had self-harmed and/or overdosed were asked about the support they received.

- 52% of those who reported self-harm had told someone about it. 41% had told their parents/carers, 79% their friends and 48% told no-one.
- 27% of all those who self-harmed said they had professional medical treatment (nurse, GP, hospital, paramedics) for their injury
- 49% of young people who said they self-harmed said that they have received no help.
- 33% said they'd received help from their friends, 31% from their family, 10% from a psychiatrist or psychologist and 9% from CAMHS.
- 36% of those who self-harmed and had received help said it was helpful and 64% not at all helpful or not helpful enough.
- Of the young people who did not receive help for their self-harm, half did not want to burden anyone else or did not want help, 48% said they did not trust anyone, 41% were worried about what people would say, and 33% were worried about it being kept confidential.

## School Experience

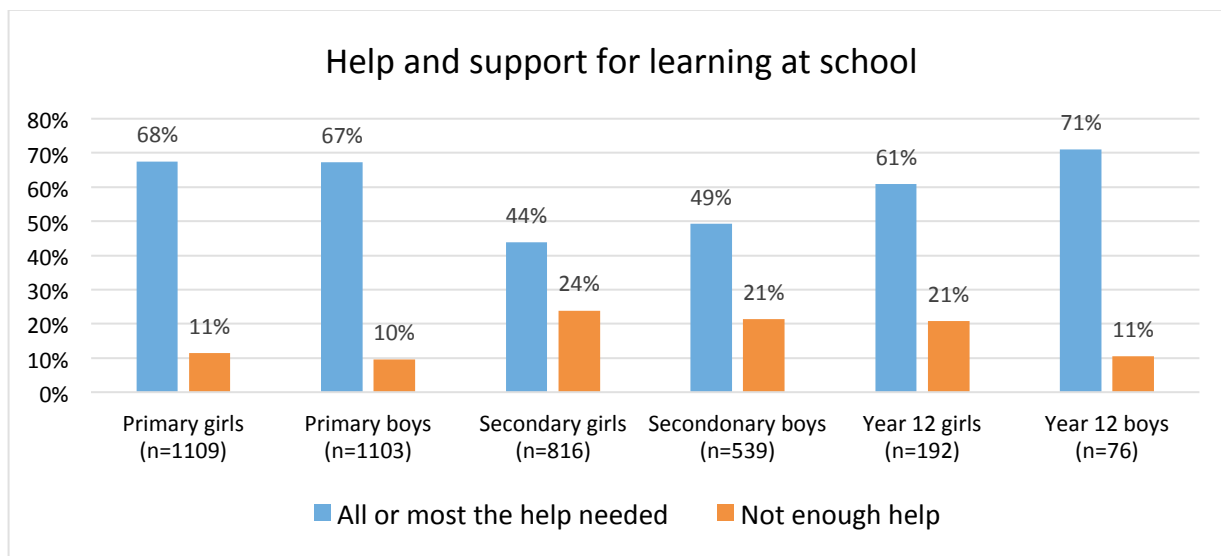
Pupils were asked about their day to day experience at school. There was a great deal of variation between phases and between individual schools. Most pupils felt they tried their best at school and weren't disruptive.

### Positive school experience



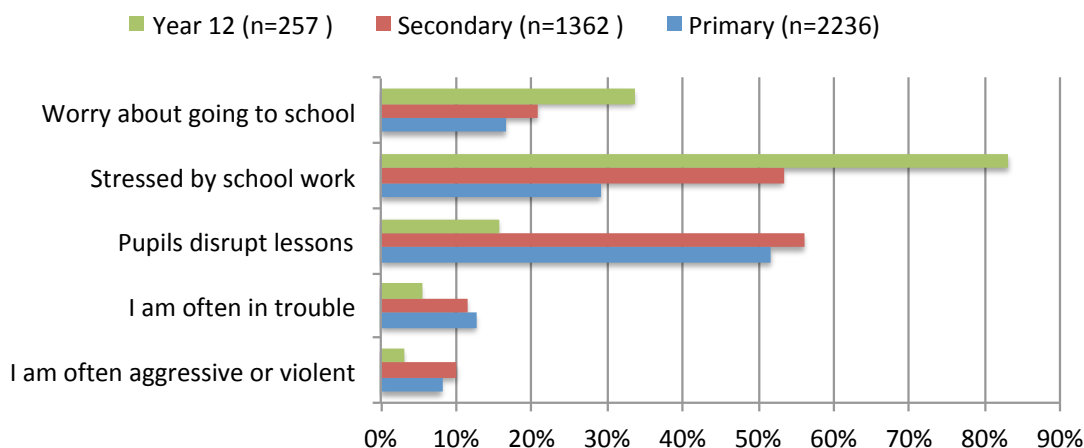
**Percentage of pupils who agreed with positive statements about school experience**

Secondary phase pupils felt they had less support for learning at school than primary or Year 12.



**Percentage of pupils who reported receiving enough or not enough support with learning**

**Negative school experience**



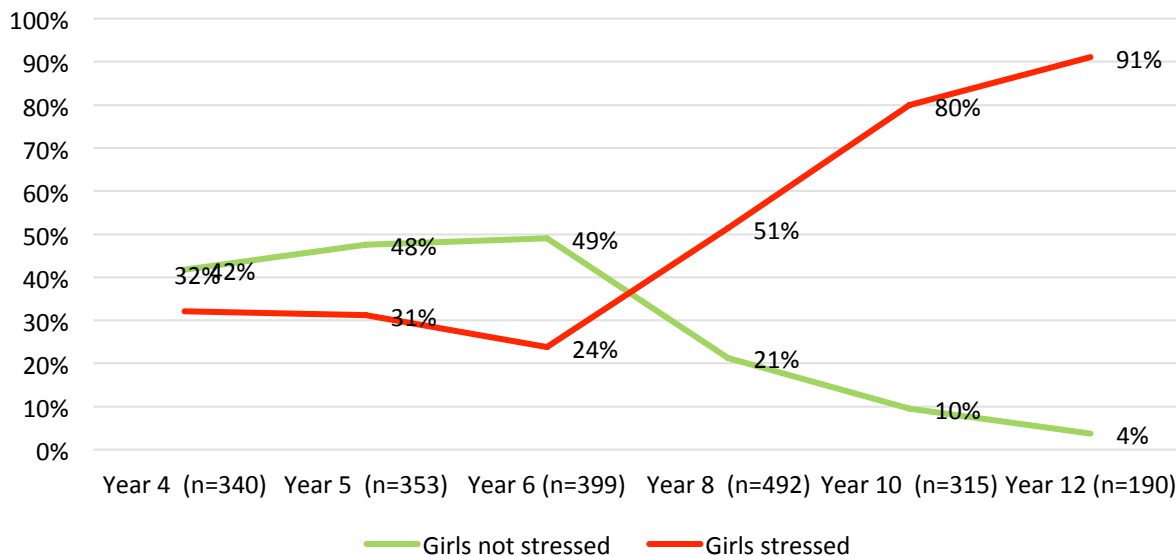
**Percentage of pupils who agreed with negative statements about school experience**

**Stressed by school work**

More pupils felt stressed by schoolwork in the secondary phase compared to the primary phase. This was more pronounced in girls and highest in Year 12 where 91% of girls and 62% of boys agreed or strongly agreed they feel stressed by schoolwork.

% pupils

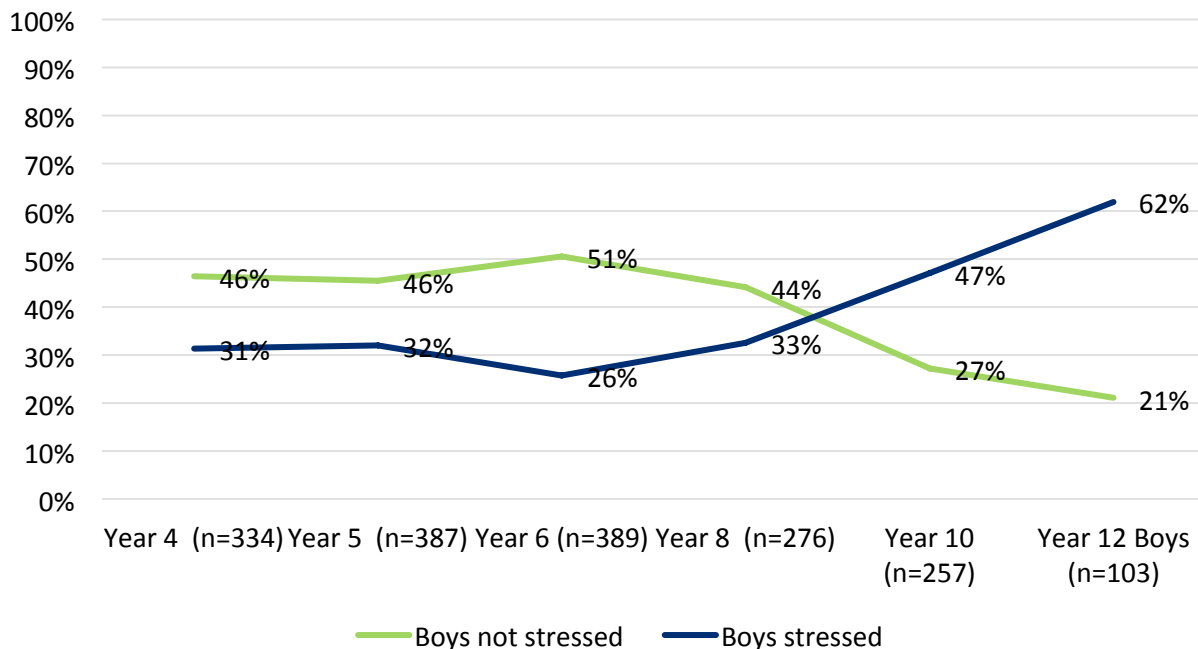
### Stressed by School Work - Girls



### Percentage of girls who report feeling stressed vs. not stressed by school work per year group

% pupils

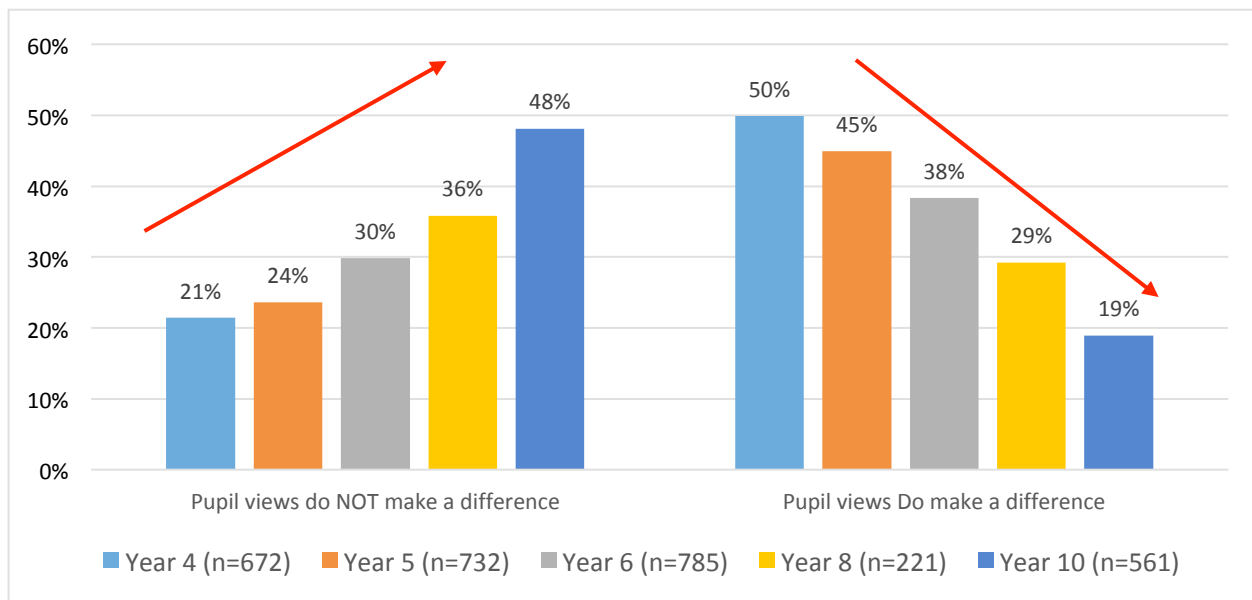
### Stressed by School Work - Boys



### Percentage of boys who report feeling stressed vs. not stressed by school work per year group

## Pupil Voice

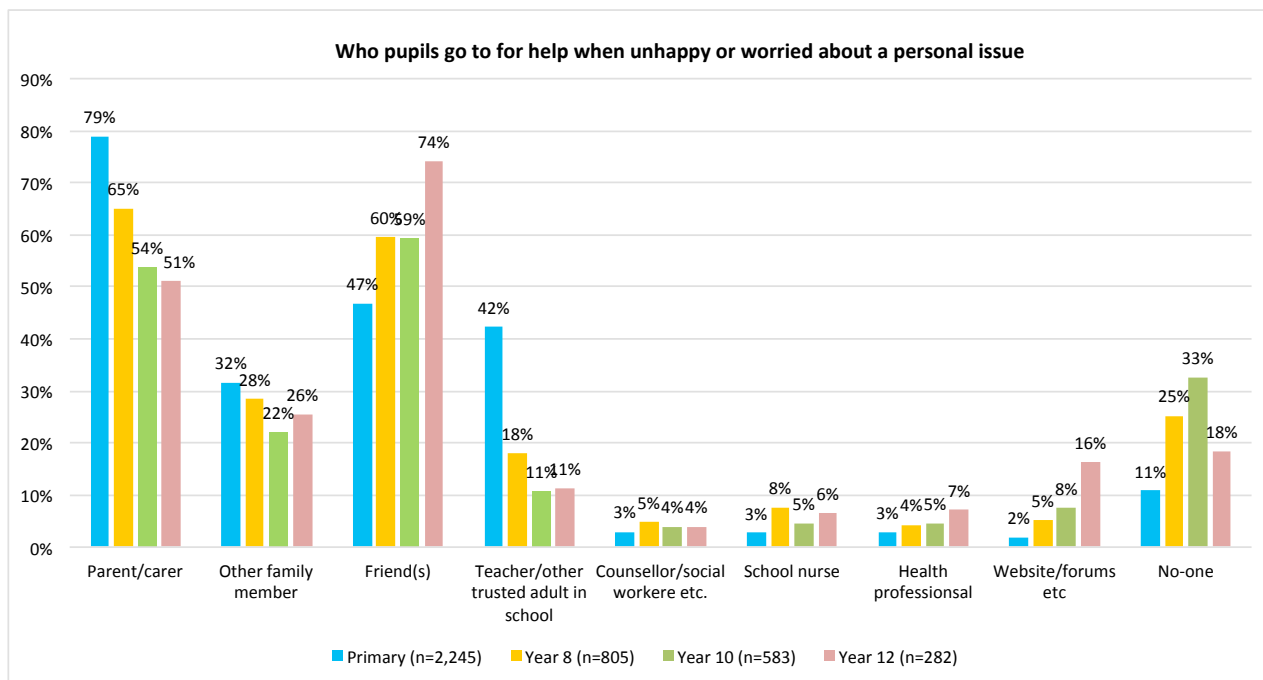
37% of children and young people surveyed felt that pupil voice through the school council makes a difference. 44% of primary and 25% of secondary felt this was the case. Confidence in pupil voice was lowest in year 10 where only 19% of pupils felt their school council and pupil views made a difference.



### School council & pupil views

## Access to Support

Pupils were asked who they were most likely to go to for further help and advice when they were **unhappy about a personal issue**. Family was the main source of support and guidance (79% in primary phase), but older students were more likely to go to friends (74% by year 12). Parents, siblings and other family members, however, still remained key for older pupils. 18% of year 12, 29% of secondary phase and 11% in primary reported they had no-one to go to for advice.



**Percentage of pupils who if worried would seek help from family, friends, or elsewhere**

## Next Steps

The findings presented in this report are only a summary of the data that have been collected so far. Analyses investigating the relationships between lifestyle factors, vulnerable indicators, access to support and other protective factors, will be reported in manuscripts that are currently being prepared for publication in scientific journals.

The Oxfordshire Online Pupil Survey (OxonOPS) is currently funded by a University of Oxford project, and at least two future surveys are being supported by Oxfordshire County Council. The OPS is free to all primary, secondary and further education schools and colleges (including independent schools) in the County. Its aim is to guide participating schools, Oxfordshire County Council and mental health services to support and protect adolescents' health and wellbeing. By maximising the number of schools and settings involved in the repeat surveys, we hope to track the effectiveness of interventions running in Oxfordshire for service providers, researchers and Oxfordshire County Council<sup>2</sup> and thus inform a more efficient, targeted use of resources. The research team are also working with other local authorities in order to align questions between comparable surveys.

In May-July 2020 we are running a modified version of the survey, adapted to the challenges of the COVID-19 lockdown, intended to inform schools of the impact of the pandemic on the mental wellbeing of their pupils and to prepare them to adapt support appropriately when schools are fully reopened. Summary results will be made available on the research team's webpage as quickly as possible.

This report has been prepared by Pauline Foster, Philippa Dent, Donna Husband and Karen Mansfield.

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<sup>2</sup> In this document where we mention Oxfordshire County Council, we also include Oxfordshire Public Health, Oxfordshire Education and other relevant Council organisations and partners.