

B&NES Children and Young Peoples' Health and Wellbeing Survey overviewⁱ

March 2018

In the Spring and Summer terms of 2017, Bath & North East Somerset Council surveyed their pupils about their health and wellbeing. The Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (HRBQ) was used to ask pupils questions about a range of health issues including healthy eating, physical activity, substance use, sexual health and mental health. 36 out of 54 primary and 14 out of 16 secondary schools (including 2 studio schools) took part. The survey was completed by over 6144 pupils in schools across years 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12, with (79%) of all Y8/Y10 pupils in B&NES completing a questionnaire.

The survey provides a window into the lives of children and young people in B&NES and is used by individual schools and the local authority to inform planning to improve children and young people's health and well-being. The data has been collected every other year since 2011 and provides four years of results on a range of lifestyle indicators. The survey is not a random sample and therefore may not be representative of all children and young people in B&NES but to have such a high proportion of schools taking part, particularly in the secondary phase, gives great weight to the information collected.

Bruce Laurence, Director of Public health, who commissions the survey, said: "The Council is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of children and young people in B&NES. This survey provides data that enable us to measure progress on issues that matter to us, as well as identifying the things that matter to young people, and that they might need support with. Most importantly, it gives us information on which to act and target our resources to improve their lives.

Individual schools can use their own results to improve the health of their pupils and can set themselves targets to work towards as part of their health improvement work.

The B&NES aggregated findings are used to inform council strategies, planning and commissioning of services and measure progress over time across a range of action plans."

"Overall the health of children and young people in B&NES is very good and our recent Child Health Profile for B&NESⁱⁱ shows that our main areas for improvement relate to the under 5s.

Our survey results confirm that most of our children and young people are making good decisions about their lifestyles and health behaviour and are delaying their risk taking. We know that, compared with 2015: more children are using technology and spending more time online, but also that they feel they know how to stay safe, and fewer year 6 children are reporting that they have seen images, videos or content online that were for adults only. We know that more primary children are taking part in vigorous physical activity and eating more fruit and veg and are actively avoiding sunburn most of the time.

*However, we also know that there is much work still to do before **all** B&NES children are following the recommendations for a healthy life by: eating 5 a day, being active for 60 minutes a day, consuming the recommended amounts of water, reducing sugar and fat, getting enough sleep and limiting their screen time.*

We know that sleep, diet and physical activity are essential for positive mental and physical health. We know that some pupils are still going to school without breakfast and

without enough sleep which has a significant impact on their ability to concentrate at school, as well as affecting their behaviour and weight.

The survey underlines the importance of focussing on vulnerable groups, such as those children eligible for free school meals and LGB (lesbian, gay and bisexual) young people who tend to have poorer health and wellbeing outcomes.

There has been much in the media about the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people and this survey gives us interesting insights into the issues which cause them to struggle at times, for example with exam stress or the way they look.

We know that the vast majority of young people talk to trusted adults about their problems and have good coping skills such as relaxing by listening to music. We are working with schools and other partners to encourage their pupils to move from undertaking less beneficial activities e.g. angry outbursts or hurting themselves in some way to more positive ways of coping.

We are encouraging schools to look at their own survey results, identifying their successes and areas for development and asking them to share their findings with pupils, staff, Governors and parents.”

The survey will be repeated again in 2019.

ⁱA Health Related Behaviour Questionnaire (HRBQ) was conducted in B&NES in 2017. It is generally known as the SHEU survey, as it is conducted by the School Health Education Unit. The SHEU have been surveying children since 1977. In B&NES the survey was conducted in 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017. The survey is completely confidential and is given in year 4 and 6 in primary schools and in year 8 and 10 in Secondary schools and in some year 12 classes, in participating schools. The aim to gain an insight into the health related behaviour of the children and young people in B&NES. The survey provides the most reliable and detailed local information on children's health beliefs, attitudes and behaviours, and this then helps B&NES to provide the most effective services and support to them, through the NHS, local authority, schools and other local organisations.

The survey sample of 6144 is broken down as follows:-

2148 in years 4 and 6 (primary)

3238 in years 8 and 10 (secondary)

5190 Total

Plus 448 in year 12 (6th form)

Gender analysis excludes anyone whose gender wasn't specified as well as anyone who completed the survey in year 5, year 9 or year 11.

Any children who are not in school on the day of the survey will not have taken part. This means that C&YP who are vulnerable, chronically ill, avoiding school, excluded from school, or who are home educated will not be included in the survey. Therefore the responses may not represent their views and experiences.

Year 8 participation rate is 83% [88% in 2015]

Year 10 participation rate is 75% [81% in 2015]

Year 8 & 10 combined participation rate this year is 79% [84% in 2015]

ⁱⁱ Child Health Profile <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/your-council-and-democracy/local-research-and-statistics/research-library/health-profile>