

CHILDREN, EDUCATION & SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 November 2023

HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIOUR SURVEY FINDINGS – ACADEMIC YEAR 2022/23

Report of the Executive Director of Health, Housing and Communities

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1** The purpose of the report is to share an overview of the findings of the recent Health Related Behaviour Survey conducted in the summer term of 2023.
- 1.2** The published summary report along with a supporting presentation is appended to this report.

2.0 Background

- 2.1** The Health Related Behaviour Survey (HRBS) provides an excellent baseline about the health-related behaviour of children and young people.
- 2.2** The information at school level is useful in demonstrating the effectiveness and impact of health and wellbeing programmes. Additionally, this data supports in providing a needs analysis.
- 2.3** For Sunderland City Council and wider partners - like the School Nursing Service - the Sunderland and ward level data will be used to inform service planning and delivery.
- 2.4** In 2022/23 we had the highest number of schools and pupils participate in the survey since it commenced in Sunderland in 2006, with 5970 young people participating. 33 primary schools and 15 secondary schools took part in the survey.
- 2.5** The survey methodology is a school-based questionnaire developed by the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) at Exeter University, which has over 30 years' experience in this field of work. The quality of the data collected is considered very robust and the history of its use by individual schools, local authorities and health bodies is extensive.
- 2.6** The survey is targeted at specific year groups, providing a rich source of data at key points of development for children and young people across a range of themes. Trend data analysis from the local sample and comparison with the wider SHEU sample is also provided for core questions.

2.7 In 2021/22, public health included Covid related questions to understand the impact Covid-19 had on children and young people, as well as inform any planning and delivery around Covid recovery. In 2022/23, public health adapted Covid-19 questions to understand how children and young people's views have shifted following the pandemic.

2.8 All pupils in Year 4 and Year 6 are surveyed across the following themes:

- personal background
- healthy eating
- physical activity
- drugs (Y6)
- alcohol (Y6)
- smoking and vaping (Y6)
- worries
- staying safe
- emotional health and wellbeing
- feelings
- bullying
- healthy eating
- growing up
- hygiene
- school experience
- covid-19

2.9 Approximately 100 pupils (4 classes/forms) from each of Year 8 and Year 10 are asked to complete the questionnaire. Themes covered in the survey are:

- personal background
- healthy eating and nutrition
- physical activity
- drugs
- alcohol
- smoking
- vaping
- school experience
- staying safe, including bullying
- relationships
- sexual health
- school experience
- health
- worries
- emotional health and wellbeing
- life since Covid-19

2.10 The survey results are processed by SHEU and each school participating in the survey will receive a individual report (free of charge):

- their own school results in tabular form
- a report containing a summary of key aspects of the data; and
- guidance on using the data

2.11 Sunderland City Council receive the combined results of all schools, with national comparisons for core questions which are shared with other teams and services as appropriate to support a greater understanding of local health needs, influence commissioning intentions and inform service planning.

2.12 Where school and pupil participation is at a sufficient level, additional ward level analysis is available on some of the themes covered in the survey, to provide further insight in relation to health inequalities. This academic year ward level was available for both primary and secondary schools.

3.0 Summary of Primary School Key Findings

Key
 Green Arrow – Good news
 Red Arrow – Not so good news
 Blue Arrow – Neutral change not good or bad

Statistically significant differences for Primary pupils comparing 2023 results with those in 2021	2023	2021	% point difference
Year 6 pupils who feel that they know enough about how their body changes as they grow up.	78%	69%	+9% ↑
Pupils who washed their hands before lunch on the day before the survey.	52%	81%	-29% ↓
Year 6 pupils who said teachers in school lessons, a School Nurse, or visitors in school lessons have talked with them about how their body changes as they grow up.	95%	72%	+23% ↑
Year 6 pupils who said either, teachers in school lessons, a School Nurse, or visitors in school lessons have talked with them about illegal drugs.	84%	67%	+17% ↑
Pupils who go swimming at least 'once a week'.	43%	24%	+19% ↑
Pupils who are able to get water in school.	96%	90%	+6% ↑
Pupils who did homework after school on the day before the survey.	29%	40%	-11% ↓
Pupils who wash their hands after visiting the toilet 'whenever possible'.	79%	87%	-8% ↓
Pupils who do something to avoid sunburn 'usually' or 'whenever possible'.	59%	49%	+10% ↑
Pupils who have had an accident in the 12 months before the survey that was treated by a doctor or at a hospital.	35%	27%	+8% ↑
Pupils who played sport after school on the day before the survey.	57%	49%	+8% ↑
Pupils who were pushed/hit for no reason in the last month.	50%	42%	+8% ↑
Pupils who think they are 'fit' or 'very fit'.	65%	59%	+6% ↑
Pupils who have a bicycle.	79%	84%	-5% ↓
Pupils who drank at least a litre of water on the day before the survey.	31%	27%	+4% ↑
Year 6 pupils said they are 'fairly sure' or 'certain' that they know someone who uses drugs (not as medicines).	16%	12%	+4% ↑
Pupils who spent time going to a club after school on the day before the survey.	28%	20%	+8% ↑
Pupils who at least 'sometimes' spend time playing ball games like football or netball during school playtimes/dinner times.	72%	64%	+8% ↑
Pupils who spent time playing sport or other physical activity after school on the day before the survey.	57%	49%	+8% ↑
Pupils who said people with different backgrounds are valued in their school.	67%	64%	+3% ↑
Pupils who eat vegetables 'on most days'.	30%	33%	-3% ↓
Year 6 pupils who are 'fairly sure' or 'certain' that they know someone who uses drugs (not as medicines)	6%	12%	+4% ↑
Pupils who worry 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about family problems.	33%	29%	+4% ↑
Pupils who have had their belongings taken or broken in the last month.	28%	20%	+8% ↑
Pupils said that if they were being bullied in school they would tell parents/carers about it.	86%	82%	+4% ↑
Pupils who said their work is marked so they can see how to improve it.	88%	91%	-3% ↓
Pupils who said their school cares whether they are happy or not.	71%	75%	-4% ↓
Pupils who said their teachers listen to them at school.	76%	80%	-4% ↓

4.0 Summary of Secondary School Key Findings

Statistically significant differences for Secondary pupils comparing 2023 results with those in 2021	2023	2021	% point difference
Pupils have visited the doctor in the last 6 months.	64%	47%	+17% ↑
Have been away from school in the last 12 months due to illness or injury.	72%	56%	+16% ↑
Have at least tried vapes.	35%	21%	+14% ↑
Know where they can get condoms free of charge.	40%	30%	+10% ↑
Don't want anyone to talk with them about puberty and growing up.	21%	39%	-18% ↓
Worry 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about exams and tests/school-work.	42%	51%	-9% ↓
Are 'quite' or 'very' happy with their life at the moment.	56%	50%	+6% ↑
Have found lessons about sex and relationships education 'quite' or 'very' useful.	37%	31%	+6% ↑
Had school food for lunch on the day before the survey.	59%	50%	+9% ↑
Rated their safety when going out after dark as 'poor' or 'very poor'.	25%	31%	-6% ↓
Have heard of the C-card scheme.	51%	44%	+6% ↑
Would like to lose weight.	49%	54%	-5% ↓

Statistically significant differences for Secondary pupils comparing 2023 results with those in 2021	2023	2021	% point difference
Drink alcohol at least 'occasionally'.	19%	23%	-4% ↓
Have found school lessons about drugs (including alcohol and tobacco) 'quite' or 'very' useful.	40%	36%	+4% ↑
Have found school lessons about puberty 'quite' or 'very' useful	38%	32%	+6% ↑
Chat to other people who they don't know in real life.	35%	39%	-4% ↓
Want to find a job as soon as possible when they leave school.	42%	39%	+3% ↑
Exercised enough to breathe harder and faster at least three times last week.	61%	58%	+3% ↑
Have been told how to stay safe while online.	76%	81%	-5% ↓
Rated their safety at school as 'good' or 'very good'	71%	75%	-4% ↓
Have a bicycle and they use it.	38%	42%	-4% ↓
'Never' or only 'sometimes' consider their health when choosing what to eat.	61%	64%	-3% ↓
Said school lessons are their main source of information about relationships and sexual health	24%	20%	+4% ↑
Have experienced at least one of the negative behaviours listed in a relationship with a past or current boyfriend/girlfriend.	31%	28%	+3% ↑
Travelled to school by car/van on the day of the survey.	41%	38%	+3% ↑
Worry 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about the way they look.	43%	47%	-4% ↓
Have been offered at least one of the drugs listed.	20%	18%	+2% ↑
Have been teased/made fun of in the last month.	46%	43%	+3% ↑
Had a high self-esteem score (15 or more).	31%	28%	+3% ↑
Have received a hurtful, nasty or scary message or picture online.	26%	28%	-2% ↓
Think they have been picked on or bullied because of the way they look.	39%	37%	+2% ↑

5.0 Actions to date

5.1 Participating schools have received their individual reports.

5.2 The report has been shared with relevant stakeholders and the roadshow communicating the results to key groups has commenced.

6.0 Priorities

6.1 Develop a communication toolkit that will support the professional audience, children and young people and parents/carers. Following dissemination of the toolkit feedback will be sought to understand usefulness and inform plans for the next survey.

6.2 Communicate the results and intelligence gathered with relevant groups and through discussion identify and agree key actions to improve outcomes for children and young people.

6.3 Through discussion of the results identify and agree key actions to improve outcomes for children and young people, including how the actions will be taken forward.

6.4 Gather learning and insights to improve future HRB surveys. Consolidate and synthesise the feedback acquired from various channels, including previous

sources and the input collected during the roadshow to inform the development of the 2025 survey.

- 6.5** Revisit special educational needs survey for 2025. Previously we have not had any schools participate in the HRBS. In 2023 one school expressed an interest and collaborated with us to adopt the survey design but was then not able to undertake the survey during the time period allocated. Will seek to engage further to understand how participation could be supported in the future.
- 6.6** To update relevant Joint Strategic Needs Assessments to include the appropriate data.
- 6.7** Ensure the school health profiles are updated and the full health offer is available.

7.0 Recommendation(s)

7.1 The Board is recommended to:

- Endorse the key priorities identified.
- Endorse the ongoing work of sharing information with key stakeholders to inform and influence our approaches and plans to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people in Sunderland.
- Agree actions and priorities.