

# Supporting the Well-Being of Children and Young People in Essex 2009

## A summary report of the Essex Children and Young People's Questionnaire

These results are the compilation of data collected from a sample of primary pupils aged 7 to 11 and secondary pupils aged 12 to 18 in Essex during the Spring term 2009. This work was commissioned by Essex County Council and its partners as a way of collecting robust information about children and young people's lifestyles. This information is being used to set baselines and targets and help with action planning for the Children and Young People's Plan ([www.essexcc.gov.uk/cypplan](http://www.essexcc.gov.uk/cypplan)).

Teachers were briefed on how to collect the most reliable data. Then pupils in Years 3-6 in the primary schools and Years 7-13 in the secondary schools anonymously completed the questionnaire. A total of 9101 pupils took part in 78 primary and special schools and 37 secondary schools and sixth forms.

Schools were invited to complete the questionnaire as an online exercise. Schools were also provided with a paper version of the questionnaire if this was easier for them to administer.

Completed paper questionnaires were then returned to the Schools Health Education Unit in Exeter for processing.

### Age-related data

On pages 6 to 8 of this booklet some questions are presented by age range so that the differences in behaviour can be seen as children grow up.

The results of this survey build on the results of the first survey undertaken in 2007. Comparative data for 2008 is shown in ( ) in this report.

### 9101 young people were involved in the survey:

School phase	Primary	Secondary	Total
Age	7-11	12-18	
Boys	2324	2249	4573
Girls	2153	2375	4528
Total	4477	4624	9101

### Area data

Essex data have been broken down into datasets for each PCT. A set of tables for each of these areas is also available with comparisons made to the overall Essex data.

### Topics include

Background

Healthy eating

Physical activity

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

Safety

Emotional health and well-being

Recreation

Volunteering

School

*"We need to know there is always someone there to listen to our problems"*



# Essex Primary school pupils

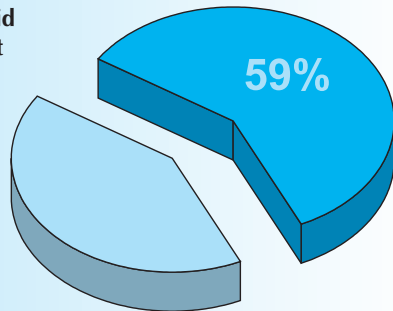
## BACKGROUND

- 89% (89%) describe themselves as 'White British'.
- 71% (69%) of primary aged pupils in Essex live with mum and dad together. 12% (12%) live with mainly or only mum.
- 7% (8%) of pupils said they have a special need or disability. When asked for detail about their circumstances, these range from learning difficulties to physical difficulties such as mobility problems and hearing problems.

## HEALTHY EATING

### Meal last night

- 59% (62%) of pupils said that their meal last night was cooked from fresh/frozen ingredients.
- 14% (16%) said it was a 'ready meal', 9% (9%) had a takeaway.



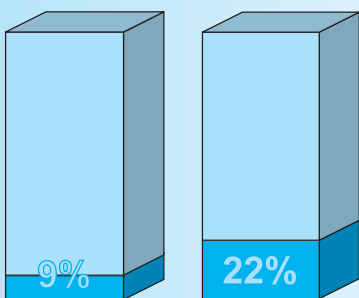
### Breakfast

- 58% (54%) of pupils had cereal for breakfast on the day of the survey. 29% (28%) said they had toast or bread. 15% (11%) of pupils had fruit for breakfast.
- 4% (3%) of pupils had nothing to eat or drink.

### Lunch at school

- 58% (61%) of pupils had a packed lunch at school, 40% (37%) had a dinner for their last school lunch.

### Five a day



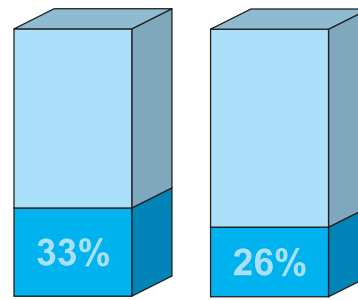
- 9% (9%) of pupils said that they had no portions of fruit or vegetables the day before. 22% (24%) said that they had 5 or more portions.

### Healthy drinking

- 9% (7%) of pupils said that they drank no water the day before.
- 24% (25%) of pupils had 5 or more small bottles or glasses of water to drink the day before.

*"All children should have good homes, food, schooling and a loving family!"*

## Attitude to weight

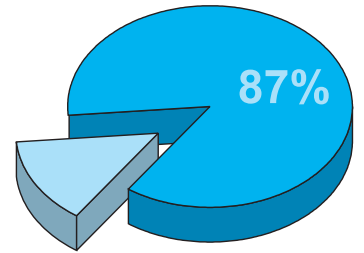


- 33% (36%) of girls and 26% (27%) of boys in the primary sample said that they would like to lose weight.

- 64% (63%) of pupils said they were happy with their weight.
- 20% (21%) of boys and 31% (34%) of girls worry 'often' or 'very often' about the way they look.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- 87% (90%) of pupils reported that they enjoy physical activities 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'.



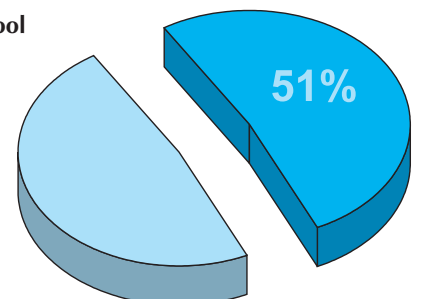
- 58% (62%) of boys and 52% (57%) of girls reported that they had exercised four times or more, in the last week, which made them breathe harder.
- When asked what would encourage them to exercise more the top answers included:

	Boys	Girls
Fun activities	56%	60%
Someone to exercise with	33%	43%
Better playparks and leisure centres	32%	41%

- 50% (51%) of pupils walked to school on the day of the survey, 47% (49%) came by car.

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

- 66% (67%) of pupils said that they get on well with their teacher. 63% (63%) said this about classroom assistants.
- Only 44% (45%) of pupils said that they get on well with mealtime assistants.
- When they play at school 51% (49%) said that they play with lots of friends.



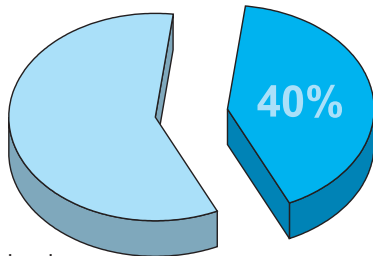
- 41% of boys and 58% of girls worry about what other people think of them.
- 55% of pupils worry about tests/SATs
- 31% of pupils worry about the environment, 35% about family problems and 29% worry about their safety.
- 67% of pupils said that there was someone they missed really badly. 28% said this was because they had gone away, 48% said it was because they had died, 5% said because they were ill.

- When asked if it would help to talk to anyone about this, 42% said family, 29% said a friend, 9% said their teacher and 4% said a counsellor.
- 64% of pupils said that if they have a problem that worried them they would talk to someone they know.
- 10% said they would try to work the problem out themselves

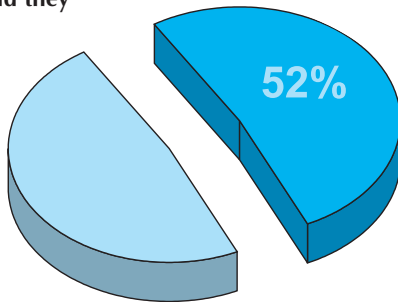
*“Every child should have a loving and caring family”*

## BULLYING

- 40% of pupils reported that they felt afraid to be in school because of bullying, at least sometimes.



- 7% said that they think others felt afraid to be in school because of them, 27% didn't know.
- When asked where bullying happened, 31% of pupils reported outside at breaktime, 9% said during lesson time, 13% said at or near home, and 4% reported on the way to or from school.
- When asked if they had told anyone about it, 35% had told mum, 24% had told dad. 18% had told their teacher about it.
- 54% of pupils said that the problem had got better; 20% said it hadn't and another 26% said they weren't sure.
- 52% (56%) of pupils said they think the school council could help prevent bullying at school.

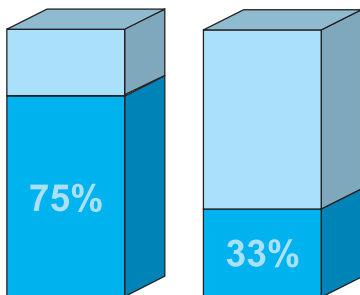


- 57% (61%) of pupils said they think older children looking after younger children could help prevent bullying at school.

*“We need more safer places to play”*

## SAFETY

- 87% (88%) of pupils said they 'usually' or 'always' felt safe at home. 81% (83%) felt safe on the way to and from school and at school.



- 75% (76%) said that they felt safe going out during the day, this fell to 33% (34%) going out at night.

- 62% (69%) of pupils said that seeing the police around made them feel safe. 66% (74%) said having a mobile phone made them feel safe.

## RECREATION

- 15% of pupils belong to a swimming club. 6% of girls belong to a gymnastics club and 28% of girls go to a dance class.
- 61% (53%) of pupils said that generally there was enough to do in their area. 23% (31%) said that there wasn't enough to do.
- 52% (49%) of pupils said they use their local playpark 'quite a lot' or 'every week'. 29% (33%) said this about their local library.
- 86% of pupils said that there was somewhere near where they lived that they could go and play outside.
- 89% of these pupils said that they felt safe playing there.

## VOLUNTEERING

- 28% (20%) of pupils said they look after family members who were ill or have a disability every day.
- 19% of pupils described themselves as a 'young carer'. 14% of these pupils said that it took up more than 2 hours of their time a day.
- 19% (15%) said they help other people near their home and 31% (17%) help other pupils at school 'every day'. 20% (17%) said they help to improve the environment 'every day'.

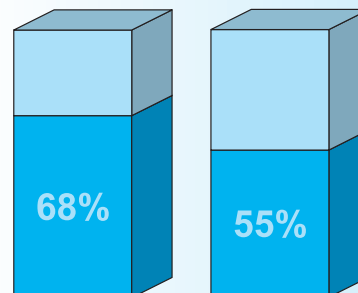
*“Adults should listen to children more so that we feel okay talking to them”*

*“We should have more younger people to talk to, like a young council where kids get to have their say”*

## SCHOOL

- 48% (51%) of pupils said they had voted in a class council in the last year. 26% (26%) said they had voted in a school council.
- 63% of pupils think adults listen to their views at school and take them seriously.
- Comparison of boys and girls enjoyment of school:

	Boys	Girls
Always	19% (22%)	25% (28%)
Mostly	40% (34%)	46% (43%)
Sometimes	30% (32%)	25% (24%)
Never	11% (12%)	4% (6%)



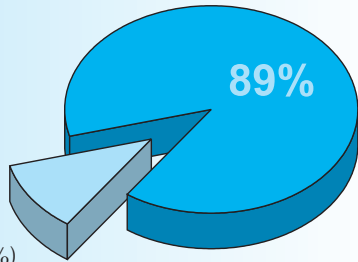
- 68% (67%) of girls and 55% (55%) of boys said they always try their best in school.

- 26% (29%) of pupils said it is 'very' or 'quite difficult' to get help from their teacher.

# Essex Secondary school pupils

## BACKGROUND

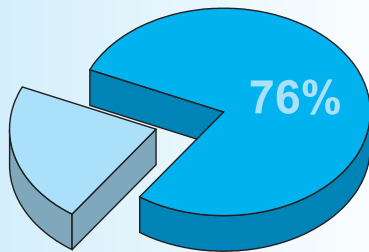
- 89% (91%) describe themselves as 'White British'.
- 65% (63%) of secondary aged pupils in Essex live with mum and dad together. 15% (16%) live with mainly or only mum.
- 6% (6%) of pupils said that they have a special need or disability. When asked for detail about their circumstances, these are listed mainly as Dyslexia, other learning difficulties and behavioural problems.



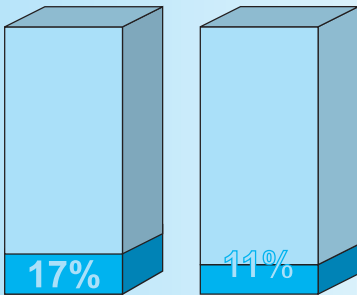
## HEALTHY EATING

### Meal last night

- 76% (76%) of pupils said that their meal last night was cooked from fresh/frozen ingredients.
- 7% (7%) described their meal last night as a 'ready meal' and 8% (7%) said a takeaway.



### Breakfast

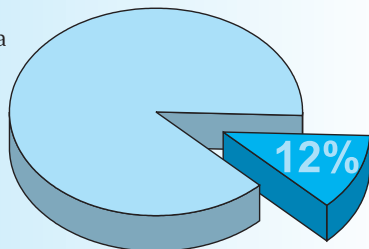


- 17% (16%) of girls and 11% (13%) of boys in the secondary sample said that they had nothing to eat or drink the morning of the survey.

- 42% (43%) of pupils had cereal for breakfast on the day of the survey. 22% (24%) said they had toast or bread. 9% (9%) of pupils had fruit for breakfast.

### Lunch at school

- 48% (45%) of pupils had a packed lunch, 22% (22%) had a hot lunch from the cafeteria and 11% (13%) said they had a cold lunch from the cafeteria for their last school lunch. 12% (10%) said they did not have any lunch.

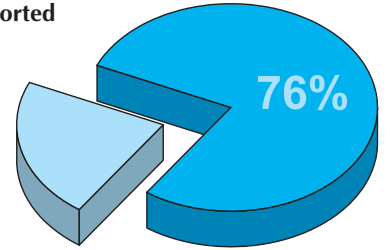


### Five a day

- 11% (11%) of pupils said that they had no portions of fruit or vegetables the day before. 15% (15%) said that they had 5 or more portions.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- 76% (80%) of pupils reported that they enjoy physical activities 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'.
- 53% (56%) of boys and 33% (39%) of girls reported that they had exercised four times or more in the last week, which made them breathe harder.
- 13% (9%) of pupils said they did not drink any water the day before.
- 54% (53%) of girls and 28% (28%) of boys would like to lose weight.
- When asked what would encourage them to exercise more the top answers included:



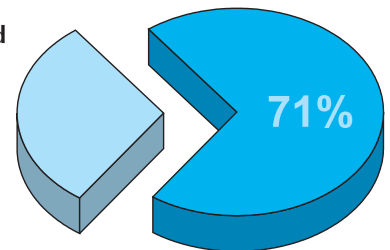
	Boys	Girls
Fun activities	54% (52%)	61% (58%)
Someone to exercise with	48% (42%)	60% (57%)
Better local facilities	35% (31%)	54% (48%)
Cheaper or free activities	34% (29%)	42% (37%)

- 48% (52%) of pupils usually walk to school, 30% (29%) travel by car or van and 25% (21%) by bus.

## TOBACCO, ALCOHOL & OTHER DRUGS

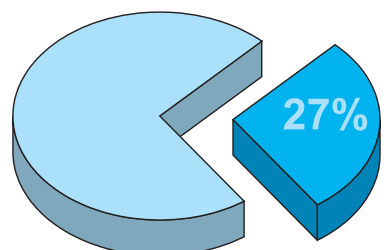
### Tobacco

- 71% (69%) of pupils said they have never smoked a cigarette.
- 15% (17%) of 15 year olds smoked in the last week.
- 9% (10%) of pupils reported that they smoke occasionally or regularly. 5% (5%) say that they used to smoke but don't now.
- 6% (8%) of boys and 8% (12%) of girls smoked in the last week.
- 24% (23%) of pupils who smoke bought their last cigarettes from a shop.
- When asked if anything would encourage them to give up, the top answers included having poor health, smelling of smoke and friends giving up.

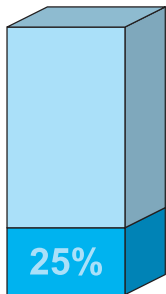
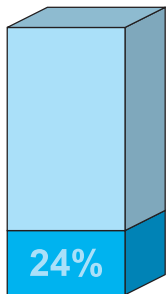


### Alcohol

- 27% of pupils said that they drink alcohol occasionally or regularly.
- 21% said that they have never drunk alcohol.
- 47% of 15 year olds drank alcohol in the last week.

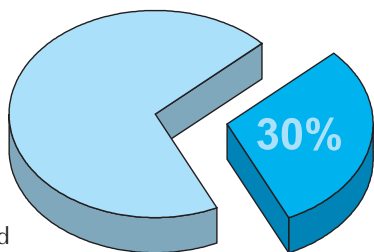


- 5% of pupils said they usually buy alcohol from an off-licence that should sell only to over-eighteens. 14% of pupils said they usually get alcohol from friends or relatives; 16% said from their parents.
- 19% of pupils said they had drunk alcohol at home in the seven days before the survey. 12% drank it at a friend's home and 7% said outside in a public place.
- 10% of pupils consumed 7 or more units of alcohol in the last week.



- 24% of the girls and 25% of the boys who drink said that they had been very drunk at least once in the last month.

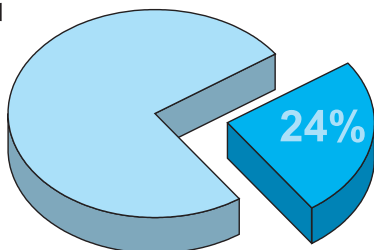
- 30% of pupils said that they had been drunk once or twice but not recently.



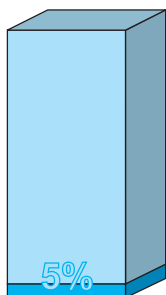
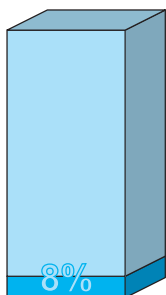
- Of those who have had alcohol, 45% said they had never been very drunk.
- When asked what would encourage them not to get drunk, the top answers included health reasons, if they or a friend got hurt or into trouble, unable to buy it or more things to do in the area.

### Other Drugs

- 24% (25%) of pupils said that they had been offered illegal drugs.



- 10% (9%) of 15 year olds said that they took drugs in the last month.
- 16% (18%) of pupils said that they had taken drugs not prescribed by a doctor.
- 4% (6%) of pupils reported that they had taken an illegal drug in the last month. 9% said at some point.

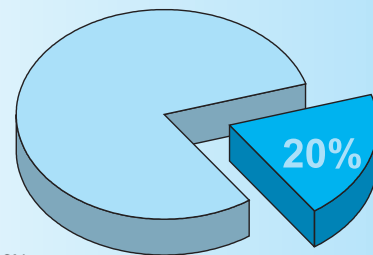


- The most popular drug was cannabis the second most common were poppers. When asked where they got hold of these substances, 8% (9%) said from friends, 5% (5%) said from a dealer.

*"We need more encouragement and support to help us achieve what we want"*

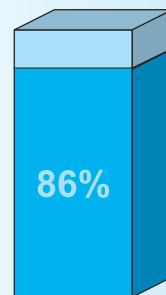
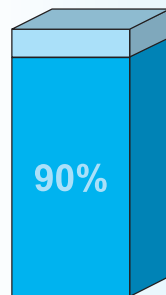
### BULLYING

- 20% of pupils reported that they felt afraid to be in school because of bullying, at least sometimes.



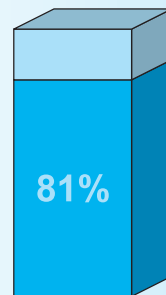
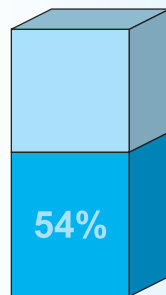
- 18% of pupils said that they 'didn't know' if others felt afraid to be in school because of them.
- When asked where bullying happened, 27% of pupils reported outside at breaktime, 20% said during lesson time, 14% said in the corridors, and 10% reported on the way to or from school.
- When asked if they had told anyone about it, 16% had told mum/carer, 9% had told dad/carer. 17% had told a friend, and 8% had told their teacher about it.
- 54% of pupils said the situation was improving; 15% said 'no' and another 31% said that they weren't sure.
- 37% (38%) of pupils said that they think anti-bullying schemes could help prevent bullying at school, 35% (36%) said friendship activities might help.

### SAFETY



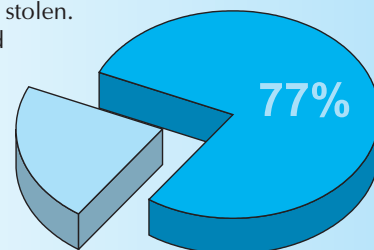
- 90% (89%) of pupils said that they 'usually' or 'always' felt safe at home. 86% (84%) felt safe on the way to and from school and at school.

- 89% (87%) said that they felt safe going out during the day, this fell to 51% (48%) going out at night.



- 54% (54%) of pupils said that seeing the police around made them feel safe. 81% (80%) said having a mobile phone made them feel safe.

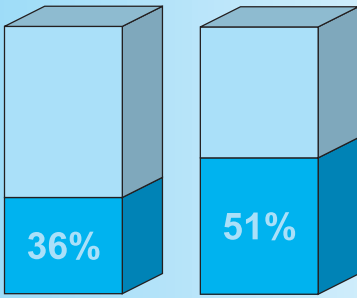
- 11% (14%) of pupils said they had been the victim of crime in the past 12 months. 5% (5%) had been attacked, 2% (3%) had their mobile phone stolen. Half of these pupils said that it happened at school. When asked who did this, 77% (78%) said by someone under 18.



*"We should have the opportunity to talk to young adults who have been through the same things as us and know how we feel"*

## EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

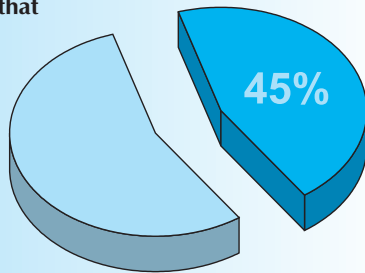
- 55% (57%) of pupils said that they get on well with their form teacher. 47% (43%) said this about other teachers. Only 23% (21%) of pupils said that they get on well with mealtime assistants



- 36% (36%) of boys and 51% (53%) of girls said that they worry 'quite a lot' or 'a lot' about SATs/exams.

- 37% (36%) of pupils worry about what other people think of them. 34% (35%) worry about relationships, 34% (35%) about being fashionable and 28% (30%) worry about their diet.

- 45% (47%) of pupils said that there was someone they missed really badly. 10% (10%) said this was due to a separation or divorce, 22% (21%) said it was because they had died and 3% (3%) said because they were ill.



- When asked if it would help to talk to anyone about this, 18% (17%) said family, 20% (20%) said friend and 3% (3%) said a counsellor.

*"There should be an 'email agony aunt' in schools so that you have someone to talk to about your problems"*

## RECREATION

- 26% (25%) of pupils said there is generally enough to do in their area. 55% (59%) said that there is not enough to do.
- 17% (19%) of pupils said that they use their local playpark at least once a week. 16% (17%) said this about their local leisure centre.

## Cross phase data – a closer look at some of the questions by age

The following is a selection of data relating to the set of questions found in both the primary and secondary versions of the questionnaire. It is always interesting to see how young people change as they grow up but this analysis is also useful because it can raise some important questions for local discussion.

## VOLUNTEERING

- 63% (55%) of boys and 71% (66%) of girls said that they give to charity 'at least a few days a year'. 41% (33%) of boys and 32% (21%) of girls said that they coach, support or referee other people in sport.
- 6% of pupils describe themselves as 'a young carer'. 16% of these pupils said that it took up more than 2 hours of their time a day.
- 55% (52%) of boys and 55% (57%) of girls said that they help care for relatives or friends at least sometimes. 13% (9%) of boys and 16% (12%) of girls said that they do this more than once a week or every day.
- 9% of pupils said that they helped other pupils at school once a week or more and 15% of boys and 18% of girls said they help to improve the environment at least once a week.

## School

- 58% of pupils think that adults listen to their views at school and take them seriously.
- 51% (47%) of pupils hope to go to university when they leave school.

### Comparison of boys and girls enjoyment of school:

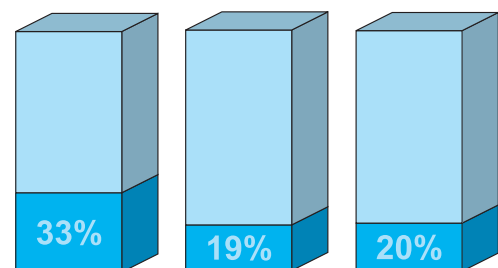
	Boys	Girls
Always	10% (7%)	10% (8%)
Mostly	45% (44%)	50% (49%)
Sometimes	36% (39%)	34% (37%)
Never	9% (10%)	6% (6%)

- 34% (33%) of girls and 27% (25%) of boys said they always try their best in school.
- 29% (31%) of pupils said it was 'very' or 'quite difficult' to get help from teachers.
- 39% (33%) of pupils said they had voted in a school or class election in the last year. 12% (11%) had been on a school council.

*"We want better and earlier advice on planning for our future"*

## BULLYING

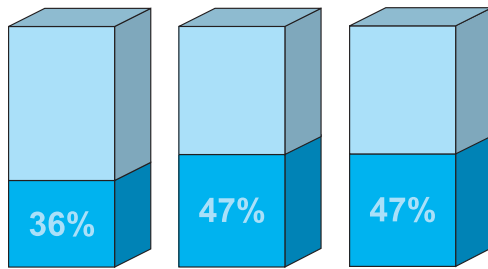
- 33% of Year 6 pupils, 19% of Years 9/10 and 20% of Year 11-13 pupils say that they feel afraid to be in school because of bullying at least sometimes in the last month.



The question does not say what bullying is, it asks for *fear of being in school* because of bullying. What effect is this fear likely to have on the school performance of the pupil?

## CONCERNS

- 36% (34%) of Year 6 girls, 47% (48%) of Years 9/10 and 47% (49%) of Year 11-13 girls said they worried about being fashionable 'quite often' or 'very often'.



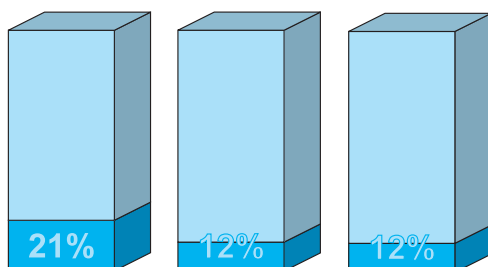
- An increase in the proportions of boys worrying about money was observed as age increased. 15% (15%) of Years 7/8 boys increased to 26% (26%) in Year 11-13. This was even higher for girls 15% (14%) in Year 7/8 rising to 37% (38%) in Year 11-13.

Are these levels of worrying a cause for concern?

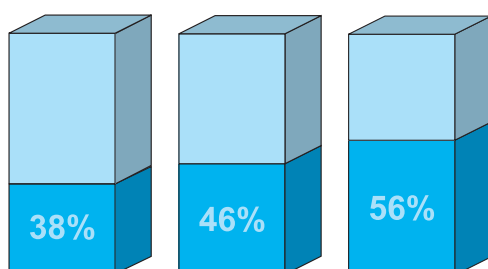
## HEALTHY EATING

### What did you do for your last school lunch?

- There is a downward trend in the number of pupils who report having a packed lunch at school. 57% (66%) of Year 6 pupils, 50% (45%) of Years 9/10 and 42% (40%) of Year 11-13 pupils had a packed lunch for their last school lunch.
- There is a downward trend in the number of pupils who report eating five portions of fruit or vegetables the day before. 21% (22%) of Year 6 falls to 12% (13%) of Years 9/10 and 12% (13%) of Year 11-13 pupils.



- There is an increase in the proportions of girls who report having nothing to eat or drink for breakfast. 4% (4%) of Year 6 rises to 20% (22%) of Years 9/10 and drops again to 19% (14%) of Year 11-13 girls.
- 38% (41%) of Year 6 girls said that they would like to lose weight, this rises to 46% (47%) of Year 7/8 and 56% (55%) of Year 9/10 girls.

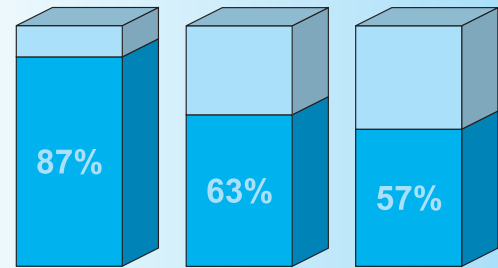


Are girls skipping breakfast in an attempt to lose weight? Could they be encouraged to increase activity levels instead?

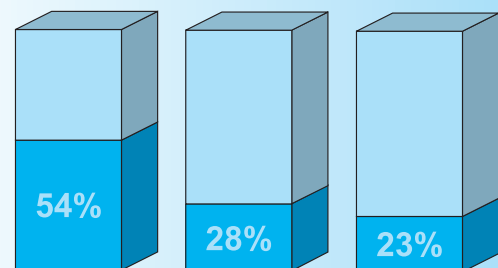
## PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

### How much do you enjoy physical activities?

- 87% (88%) of Year 6 girls said that they enjoy physical activities 'quite a lot' or 'a lot'. This figure has dropped to 63% (70%) in Years 9/10 and 57% (61%) in Year 11-13.



- These figures compare with 89% (92%) of Year 6 boys, 88% (88) in Years 9/10 and 81% (81%) in Year 11-13.
- 54% (57%) of Year 6 girls, 28% (35%) of Years 9/10 girls and 23% (24%) of Year 11-13 girls said that they exercised hard at least 4 times last week.

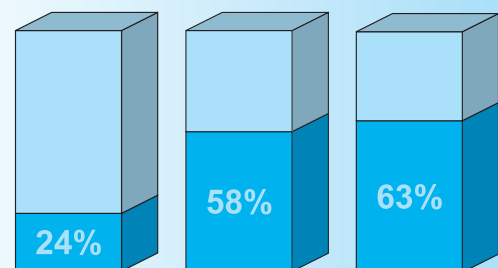


What local facilities are available for youngsters to be active? Are boys encouraged to do sport more than girls?

## RECREATION

### Is there enough for you to do in your local area?

- 24% (30%) of Year 6 boys, 58% (62%) of Years 9/10 and 63% (61%) of Year 11-13 boys say there is not enough for them to do in their local area.



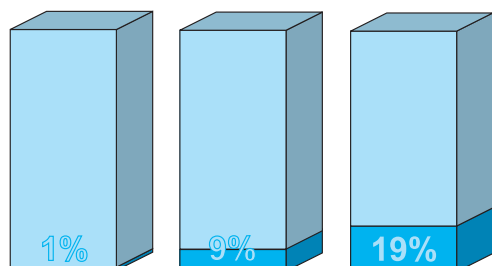
"There should be better facilities in our local area and more things for teenagers to do without having to travel too far"

## SECONDARY ONLY QUESTIONS

### TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

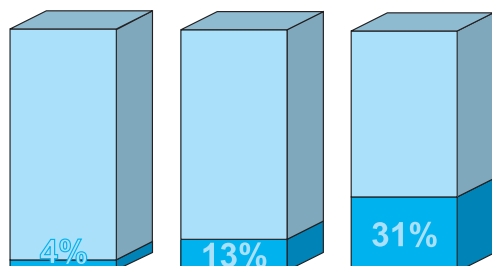
#### Have you smoked in the past?

- 90% (88%) of Years 7/8 girls, 61% (57%) of Years 9/10 girls and 42% (45%) of Year 11-13 girls said that they have never smoked.
- 1% (3%) of Years 7/8 girls, 9% (16%) of Years 9/10 girls and 19% (22%) of Year 11-13 girls smoked in the week before the survey.



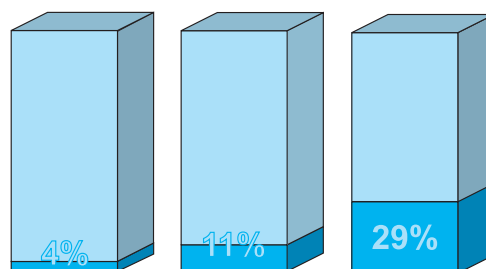
#### Do you drink alcohol?

- 9% (12%) of Years 7/8 boys drink alcohol 'occasionally' or 'regularly'. This rises to 27% (32%) of Years 9/10 boys and 53% (57%) of Year 11-13 boys.
- 4% (4%) of Years 7/8 boys drank beer the week before the survey, this rose to 13% (19%) of Years 9/10 boys and 31% (38%) of Year 11-13 boys.



*"We need places to go where young people can stay out of crime and drugs"*

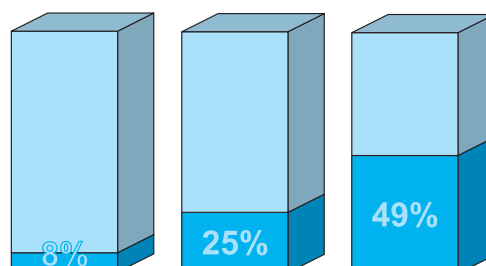
- For the girls, wine was most popular. 4% (7%) of Years 7/8 girls, 11% (14%) of Years 9/10 girls and 29% (16%) of Year 11-13 girls said that they drank wine in the previous week.



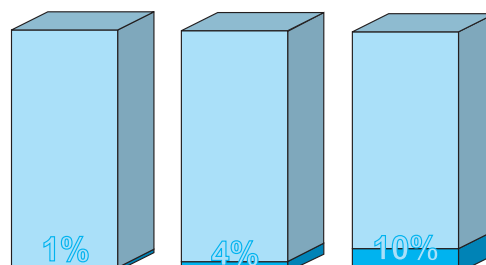
- The older the pupil, the more likely they are to report being very drunk in the past month.

#### Have you been offered illegal drugs?

- 8% (7%) of Years 7/8 pupils, 25% (28%) of Years 9/10 and 49% (47%) of Year 11-13 pupils reported that they have been offered illegal drugs.



- Within the last month 1% (1%) of Years 7/8 pupils had taken cannabis, 4% (4%) of Years 9/10 pupils said the same, this rose to 10% (9%) of Year 11-13 pupils.



At what age is it appropriate to drink alcohol? Can anything further be done to reduce smoking and drug use?

## The Way Forward – over to you

Thank you to all the headteachers, staff, children and young people for their time and contributions to this survey. This survey of children and young people's views on their attitudes and actions has been an integral piece of work in providing information that will assist schools, the local authority and its partners in concentrating on the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and the Every Child Matters agenda. It will also act as a resource to help schools establish appropriate curriculum development particularly in PSHEE and provide data to support aspects of the Ofsted self evaluation form.

Thank you also to the members of the Children's Trust Approach in Essex for their work and support in undertaking this survey.

*"There should be more surveys for young people to tell adults how they feel"*

#### Further information

If you have any queries or would like further information on the data contained in this booklet, please email [cypplan@essex.gov.uk](mailto:cypplan@essex.gov.uk) Telephone **01245 431348** or write to the **Schools, Children and Families Directorate** Essex County Council, County Hall, PO Box 11, Chelmsford Essex CM1 1LX.

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