

# Health & Wellbeing Survey Analysis

April 2023



## Approach

This report provides an overview of the insight gleaned from our analysis of health and wellbeing data gathered at the end of 2022 compared to that gathered in March 2022. Although the timeline for data comparison between March and November 2022 is relatively short, there are inferences that can be drawn from looking longitudinally across the two surveys. With consistency of sample size and surveying in November each year going forwards, the Education Service and wider Community Planning Partnership will be able to validate the key messages derived from this initial review through robust trend data. Officers have compared year group survey responses to those from March 2022 in order to start to determine if the actions taken to date have positively impacted pupil wellbeing. Comparisons with national data sets have been made where possible. Please note, current data is included in **bold**.

Given that an individual's mental health and wellbeing is influenced by a wide variety of factors, including environmental, social and the interaction between these, Officers have looked at how family affluence and gender impacts wellbeing for the first time. Given that the surveys undertaken are anonymous (which prohibits matching to SIMD profile), The Family Affluence Scale (FAS) has been used. The FAS asks young people questions about material assets with the answers given by young people summed to create an overall score to enable analysis. Young people who didn't want to respond to particular questions were able to disregard them and **691 (19.6%)** of primary school pupils and **1219 (19.4%)** of secondary school pupils are not included in the analysis by family affluence due to incomplete responses. Despite this, there is a sufficiently high response rate to have confidence in the insights gleaned.

Gender can be a heavy influence on mental health and wellbeing. Girls (from the onset of puberty) are more prone to report emotional difficulties than boys whilst boys are more likely to exhibit behavioural traits. Where a disparity is evident across boys and girls and thought directly attributable to anticipated norms, this has been noted. **137 (1.4%)** primary and **292 (2.8%)** secondary pupils chose not to record or disclose their gender when asked: "How would you describe yourself?" Boy/Girl/In another way/Prefer not to say. It is important that we don't make assumptions about the reasons for selecting In another way/Prefer not to say. Making such selections may indicate that some young people did not see the relevance of the question and chose to disregard it, it may indicate a young person identifies as being transgender (identify as a gender different to their sex at birth), may indicate young people identify as being non-binary (those that do not or do not fully identify as either male or female) or a range of other potential scenarios. Of the evidence that exists nationally, we know that those who are transgender or non-binary are more likely to report adverse health outcomes as a result of 'minority stress' and exposure to stigma and discrimination so it is thought important to explore these areas to ensure we can support appropriately.

## Background

During November / December 2022, **9803** children and young people from P6-S6 completed the Mental Health & Wellbeing Survey developed by the Scottish Schools Health and Wellbeing Improvement Research Network (SHINE), this was a higher return rate than the previous year (9428). In real terms this means that we have returns from **67%** of all pupils from P6 to S6 with a higher proportion of returns from younger year groups.

Year group	% of returns March	% of returns November
P6	81%	81%
P7	80%	85%
S1	67%	77%
S2	64%	68%
S3	72%	64%
S4	46%	49%
S5	44%	43%
S6	41%	42%

Note: this Table does not include those pupils who did not provide their year group (n=46 in primary and n=93 in secondary)

As a result of the high number of returns, there is 95% confidence level across each gender and phase. The influence of larger cohort sample sizes and response rates means that the confidence level exceeds 95% for younger respondents. As a result, we can have confidence in the data.

Children and young people from P5-S6 also had the opportunity to undertake a Physical Health & Wellbeing survey developed by the Local Authority. Questions within this were drawn from previous local surveys, national lines of enquiry and the clarification sought to support effective local planning based on the working knowledge of school leaders. **6993** pupils completed this survey in November/December 2022.

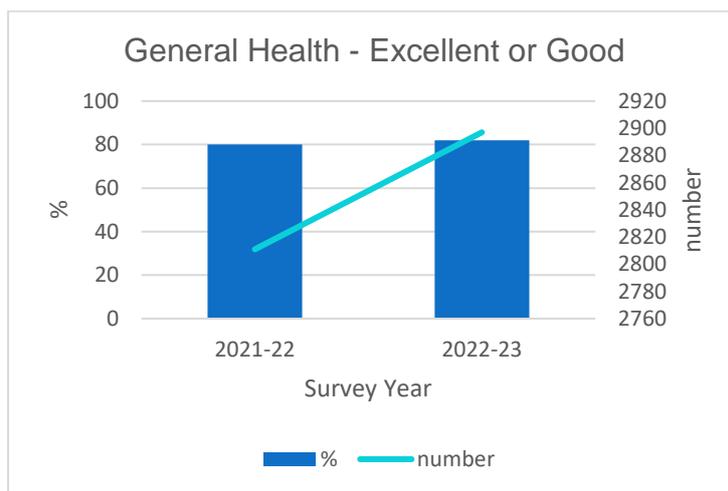
As with the first survey, no specific weightings have been applied to the effect of increased/reduced gender or phase roll sizes on outcome comparisons between survey points but, in general, any rise in sample size or response rates enhances data confidence levels.

The analysis of both surveys provides an opportunity to take stock of current approaches and identify appropriate next steps to address emerging health needs. This report will be passed to the Mental Health Collaboration so that it can be used to inform work in delivering against the Children's Services Plan 2023-26 and will be considered as the National Improvement Framework Plan for 2023-24 is being developed.

## SHINE Mental Health Survey results - Primary 6 & 7

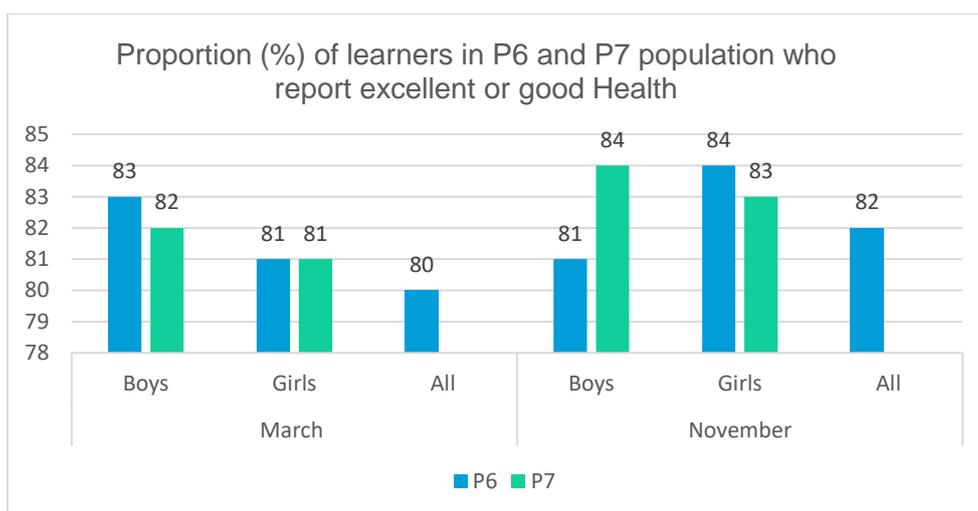
**3533** pupils from P6 and P7 completed this survey with **119 pupils** (178) not providing details of their gender and **46** (65) pupils not identifying their year group. This is a slightly higher return rate from last year and is thought to be due to the rising school roll (3514).

Young people were asked about their happiness with eleven aspects of life including family, friendships, school, appearance, future, and life overall.



**82%, 2897** (80%, 2811) of learners in primary 6 and 7 who responded reported that their health was excellent or good. This means that **17%, 601** (18%, 633) of learners reported that their general health was fair and **1%, 35** (2%, 70) stated their general health was poor. The proportion of pupils self-reporting Excellent or Good Health in November 2022, with the exception of P6 boys, has improved across combined gender and stage in comparison with March 2022.

There is a reduced differential in the outcomes between boys and girls. There is a marginally greater proportion of girls reporting excellent or good health, reversing the pattern from March 2022 where a larger proportion of boys than girls were reporting positive health outcomes. Scottish Government data reports a Scottish average for P6/7 of 78.4%. The Local P6 & 7 average of 83.5% exceeds the Scottish average which suggests that appropriate steps were taken to mitigate risk to pupil health and wellbeing.



Those in the low family affluence group were more likely to report a range of negative outcomes across nearly all the measures within the survey. This is also seen nationally in the Scottish Government Data and seen in the health outcomes of adults living in areas of deprivation. This should be considered more fully as we work to address the poverty related attainment and health gap.

Family affluence – General Health			
Primary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Excellent or good health	73	83	89
% Feeling always or often confident	49	58	66

Amongst both primary and secondary school pupils, those young people who did not disclose their gender were more likely to report a range of negative outcomes and feelings across nearly all measures. This will require careful consideration given the pattern emerging from this and further data sets regarding gender.

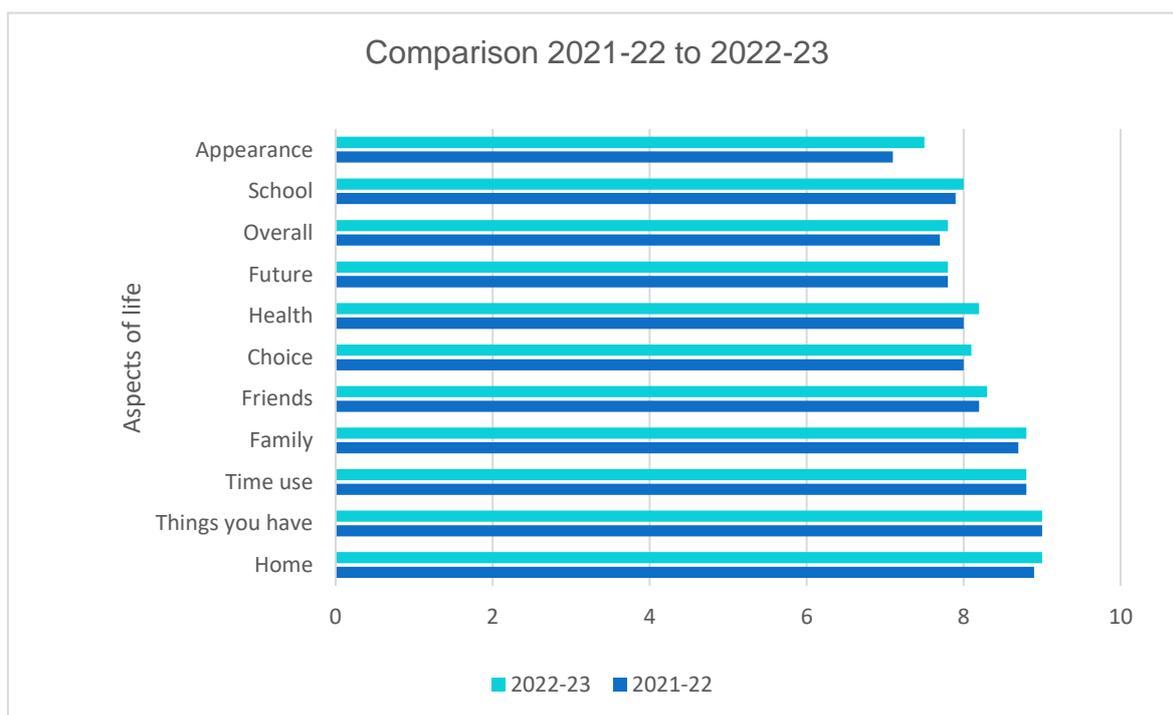
Gender – General Health			
Primary pupils	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
% Excellent or good health	82	84	61
% Feel always and often confident	65	50	27

## Happiness

Learners were asked to rate how happy they are with various aspects of their life. Response options ranged from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'very unhappy', 5 means 'neither happy nor unhappy' and 10 means 'very happy'. Similar to last year, on the whole boys were slightly more positive than girls, however, this was the opposite when asked specifically about school. This is broadly to be expected given what we know about how young people grow and develop and are impacted by puberty.

In comparison with March 2022, the overall % of pupils noting low levels of happiness across each life aspect is marginally improved with the majority of aspects (7 from 11) reflecting this pattern of relatively significant movement, taking cohort profile change into account

Across P6 and P7, learners were positive about many aspects of their lives. However, across both age groups and gender categories, 'Appearance' was still lower than other aspects of their lives with **24%, 405** (27 %, 444) of P6 learners and **30%, 504** (35%, 569) of P7 learners noting appearance as a concern.



November 2022 survey data indicates an overall reduction of 3 percentage points in those concerned about Appearance compared to March 2022. Although this is a welcomed improvement this remains an area of focus.

Young people in the lowest family affluence group were more likely to report low levels of happiness across a range of life domains than their more affluent peers at both primary and secondary school level. Those in the lowest group were more than twice as likely to report low levels of happiness with life as a whole, the home they live in, choices available

to them, friendships, appearance, their future and school than their peers in the least deprived cohort. This has implications for how we work to address the poverty related attainment gap. Data from Scottish Government shows this is a strong theme across Scotland, this remains a focus nationally as well as a local priority.

<b>Family affluence – Report of low happiness</b>			
<b>Primary pupils</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>High</b>
% Life as a whole	12	7	5
% Family relationships	5	3	3
% Home you live in	5	2	2
% Choice in life	9	6	4
% Friendships	9	5	4
% Things you have	3	2	1
% Health	9	6	2
% Appearance	19	14	9
% Future	12	7	5
% School	12	8	5
% Free time	3	2	2

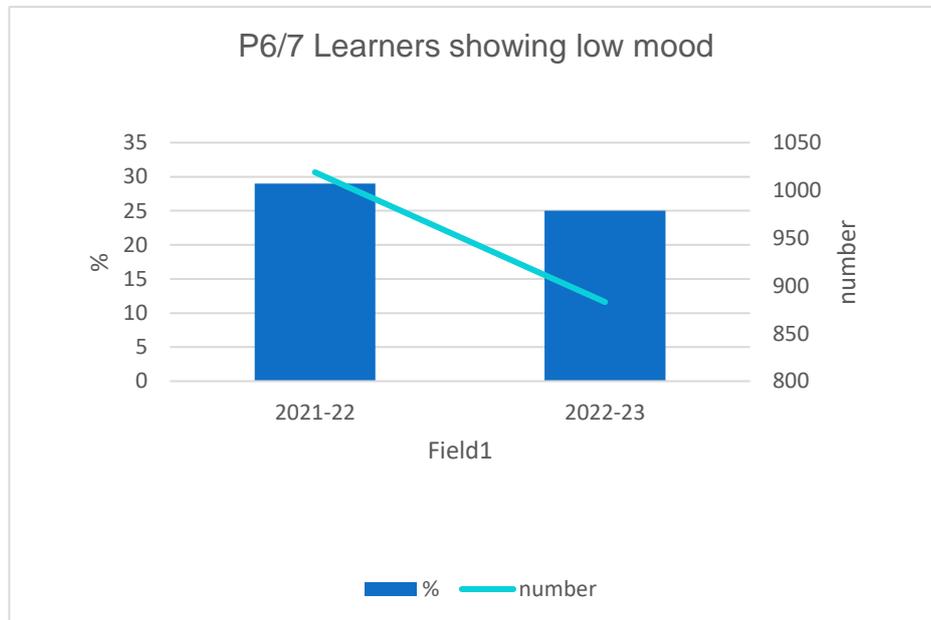
Reviewing the data by gender shows that those who did not disclose their gender were nearly 6 times more likely to be negative about life as a whole than their peers and 5 times more likely to report poor health. Only thoughts about free time were in line with peers. There is a need to really think about how best to address the disparity in outcomes for this group.

<b>Gender - Report of low happiness</b>			
<b>Primary pupils</b>	<b>Boy</b>	<b>Girl</b>	<b>Did not disclose</b>
% Life as a whole	6	7	29
% Family relationships	3	4	10
% Home you live in	2	2	8
% Choice in life	6	6	20
% Friendships	5	7	16
% Things you have	2	2	5
% Health	5	5	25
% Appearance	10	17	49
% Future	7	7	21
% School	10	7	20
% Free time	2	3	3

There is a need to look in more detail at the impact of social media on perceptions of appearance and to consider how best to support those who chose not to disclose gender.

The WHO-5 Wellbeing Index is a five item scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning. Items are summed to create a score ranging from 0 to 100. A score of 50 or less on the WHO-5 indicates low mood

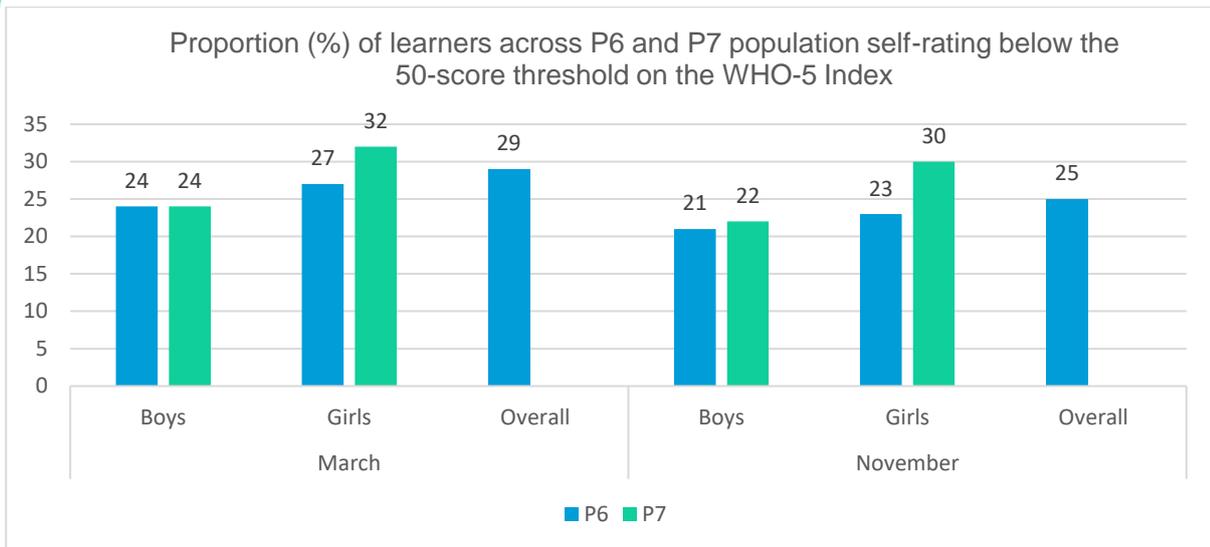
75% of those in Primary 6 and 7 didn't show evidence of low mood. As a result, 25%, 883 (29%, 1019) learners across Aberdeen P6 and P7 population self-rated below the 50-score threshold.



The proportion of learners in P6 and P7 self-rating with low mood is noting relative improvements when compared with March 2022 outcomes, in each gender cohort and across both primary and secondary phases. In combination, these have produced a significant reduction of 4 percentage points in the proportion of all pupils scoring below the 50-score threshold. We are confident that increased focus on supporting the mental wellbeing of learners through counselling, LIAM (Let's Introduce Anxiety Management), DBI (Distress Brief Intervention), ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistants) and targeted work with Active Schools Assistants has impacted positively in this.

Looking at direction of travel by gender, outcomes for boys are improved, as are those for girls (where the percentage P6 and P7 combined learners self-rating below the threshold has fallen slightly faster).

At the same time, the longitudinal outcome for girls (from P6 in March to P7 in November) shows an increase in the proportion of learners self-reporting low mood which is an outlier in terms of the outcomes for each of the other cohorts and worthy of further exploration at school and community level. This could indicate that girls are generally more concerned about upcoming transitions than boys.



Low mood was more prevalent amongst young people from the least affluent group, for example, amongst primary school children, **34%** of pupils from the low affluence group reported low mood compared with **23%** in the medium affluence group and **15%** of those in the most affluent group. The difference between outcomes for those deemed to be at risk of depression was more prevalent with those identified as being least affluent nearly 4 times more likely to be at risk compared to those deemed the most affluent.

Family affluence – Low Mood			
Primary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Low mood	34	23	15
% Risk of depression	11	7	3

Low mood also varied by gender amongst both primary and secondary school pupils with girls more likely to report low mood than boys, but with those who did not disclose their gender more than twice as likely to have low mood than their peers. Those who did not disclose were twice as likely to report being at risk of depression. There is a need to work with Community Planning Partners to consider this more fully.

Gender – Low Mood			
Primary pupils	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
% Low mood	22	26	51
% Risk of depression	7	7	15

## Emotional and Behavioural scale

There continues to be a higher percentage of girls than boys in P6, **41%, 345** (44%, 349) and in P7 **42%, 333** (44%, 325) showing elevated responses within the Emotional Scale, while the responses for Behavioural aspects, on average score, were similar for both boys and girls with **16% 565** (17%, 573) of responses being elevated, similar to last year. Data from Scottish Government also shows a gender bias, national data shows mental wellbeing for girls to be poorer than for boys overall in Scotland showing broad alignment between local and national data.

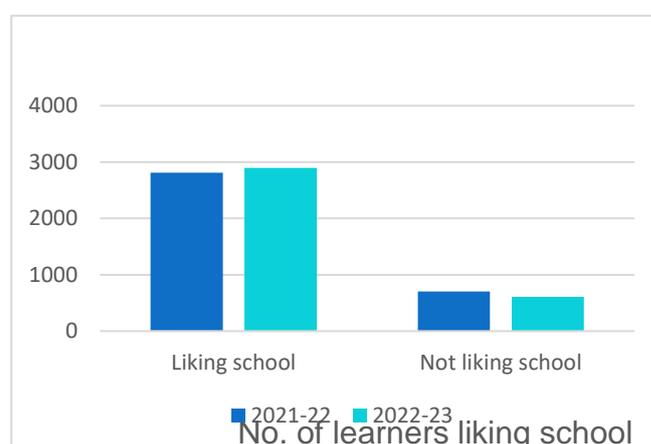
Family affluence - Emotional and Behavioural scale			
Primary pupils scoring as expected	Low	Medium	High
% Emotional	57	67	71
% Behavioural	80	84	90

Amongst primary school pupils, those who did not disclose gender were less likely to score “as expected” on the emotional and behavioural scales.

Gender - Emotional and Behavioural scale			
Primary pupils scoring as expected	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
% Emotional	73	59	33
% Behavioural	83	87	66

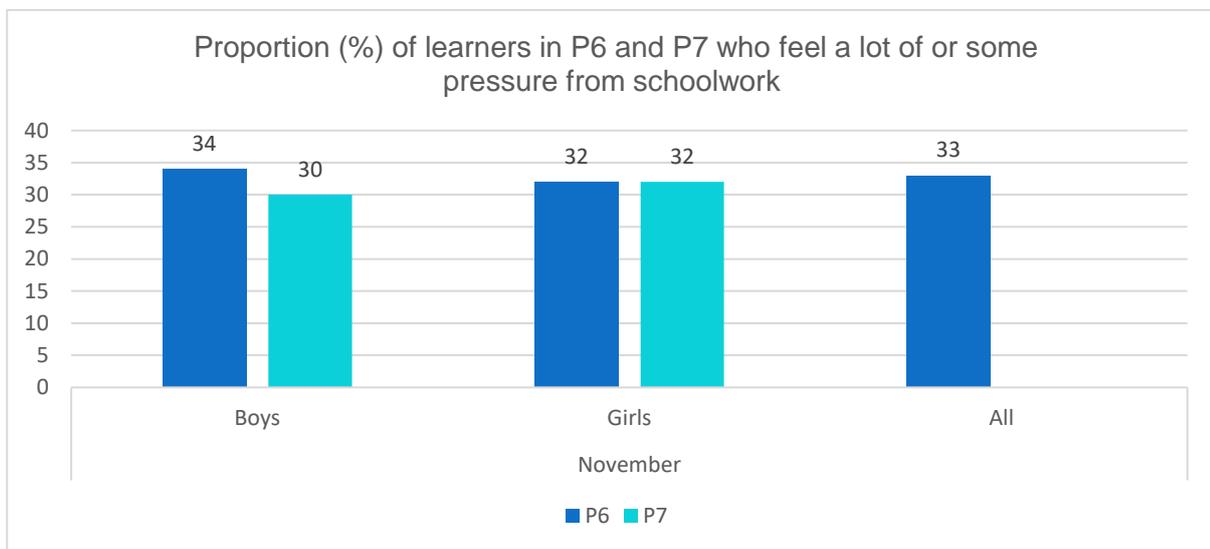
## Liking School

The number of learners reporting that they like school shows a slight overall increase, **82%, 2897** (80%, 2811) who like school a bit or a lot, which compares to **18%, 606** (20%, 703) who rated not liking school very much or at all. There is a notable difference regarding gender preference this year with 8% more of girls in P6 liking school to boys and 6% more girls in P7 than boys. This is an increased differential than was apparent in March 2022 and worthy of further exploration.



## Pressured by Schoolwork

**12%, 404** (12%, 422) of learners stated that they felt pressured by schoolwork a lot, with **26%, 876** (24%, 843) highlighting that they did not feel pressured by schoolwork at all.



Individual schools can review this information at a more localised level to understand if there are any particular groups most impacted.

There is limited statistical evidence across P6 and P7 that gender is a determinant of the extent to which learners reflect pressures from schoolwork, although at P6 boys noted experiencing a lot of pressure (14%) which has some significance in comparison with girls at this phase.

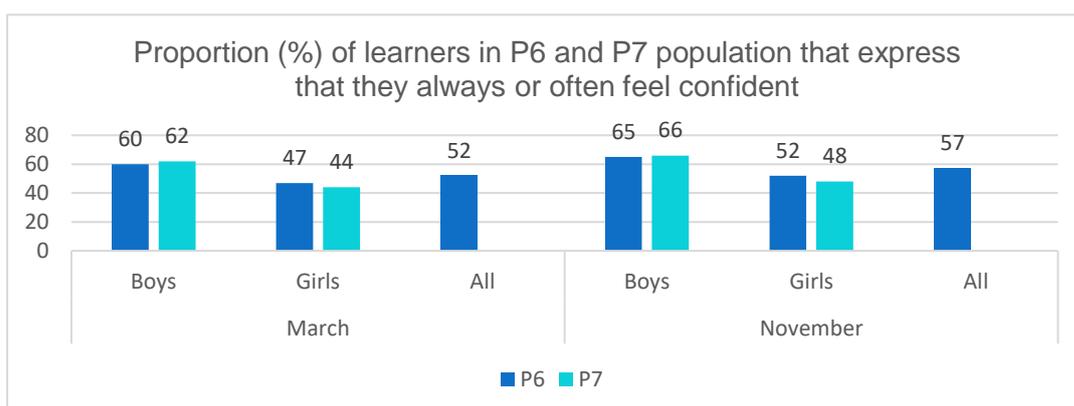
Some of the school experience data did not vary by family affluence. For example, feeling a lot or a bit of schoolwork pressure did not vary by family affluence amongst secondary pupils and liking school (a lot or a bit) did not vary by affluence amongst primary pupils.

Some of the positive mental health measures (particularly amongst primary school children) did not vary by affluence.

## Self Confidence

Learners were asked about how confident they felt in themselves.

**57%, 2013** (52%, 1827) of P6 and P7 pupils stated that they always or often felt confident. This has increased towards the pre-pandemic national averages based on the data in March 2022.



Overall, expressed confidence levels between the two 2022 sample points reflect statistically meaningful improvement by gender and phase, resulting in a material increase in self-reported confidence levels among all pupils.

For each gender, the average rate of increase between March and November 2022 for combined P6 and P7 outcomes are identical at 4.5 percentage points with this being duplicated across both phases.

Averaged expressed confidence levels amongst girls relative to boys continues to be lower at -15.5 percentage points, although the percentage improvement rate for girls is slightly higher than for boys. Scottish data for all school stages show a strong gender difference with girls reporting lower confidence levels than boys.

**The Social Emotional Health Survey (SEHS) measures different aspects of a child's social and emotional wellbeing: Gratitude, Zest, Persistence and Optimism. All these aspects are positive character traits and are linked to having more positive mental health and greater school engagement.**

**Gratitude** is associated with increased life satisfaction and social interaction including perception of support and providing support to others as well as academic achievement.

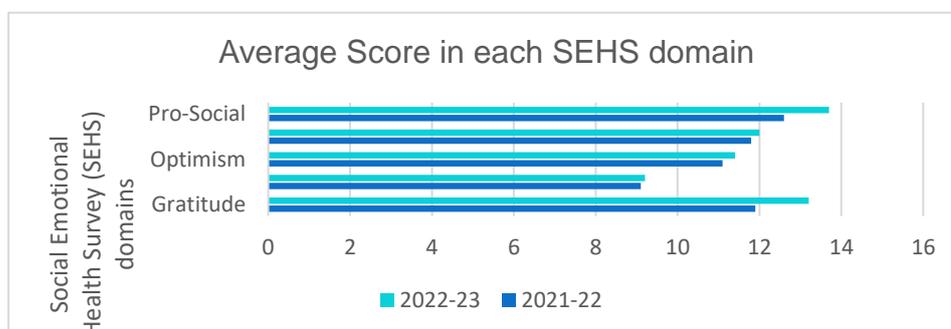
**Optimism** is associated with greater interest in school, persistence and coping as well as more positive social relationships.

**Zest** has a positive association with relationships with others, improved emotional wellbeing and autonomy.

**Persistence** has been shown to increase learning, mediating the relationship between motivation and performance.

The co-occurrence of multiple positive psychological traits from these 4 areas is called (covitality) they are associated with increased resilience, pro-social behaviour, school engagement and satisfaction.

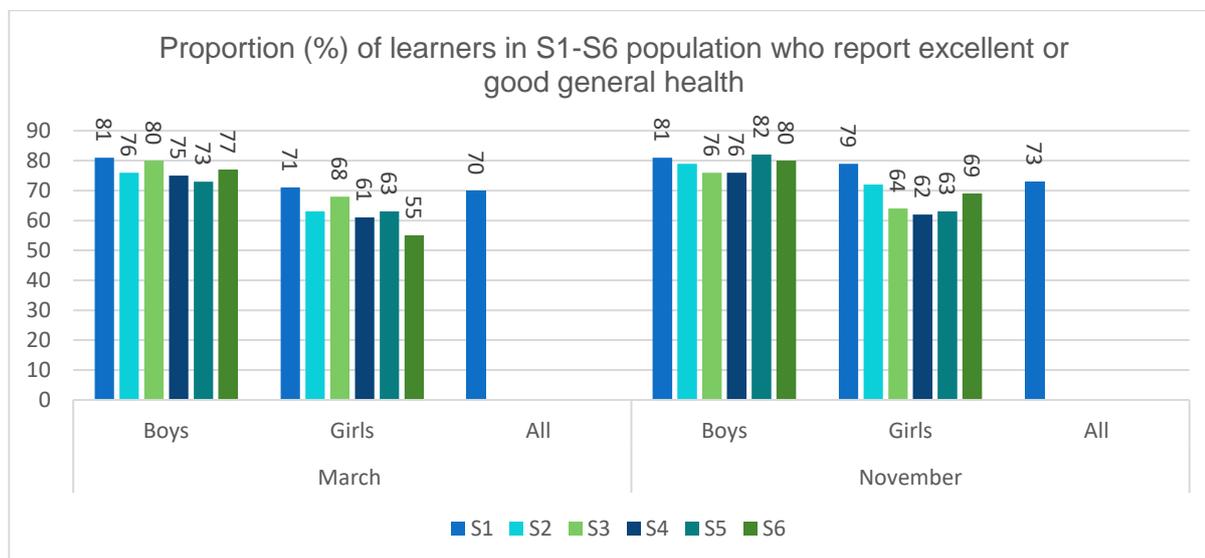
The responses to this section of the survey provide scores out of 16 within these four domains and then are collated to create an overall covitality score, out of 64.



Across gender groups and year groups responses from last year have increased across all aspects of this, showing a positive picture for all with a particular increase in the area of gratitude, increasing the overall pro-social scores of both boys and girls. For the overall positive mental health score for primary pupils ("covitality") those who did not disclose gender had the lowest score and there was no difference between boys and girls.

## SHINE Mental Health Survey (Secondary 1-6)

**59% 6270** (60%, 5914) learners from S1-S6 completed the secondary survey with **292** (237) learners choosing not to provide details of their gender and **98** (93) learners not identifying their year group.



The data suggests that boys continue to be more confident about their general health.

A higher percentage of both male and female learners in S1 now state that their general health is Excellent or Good. However, this is lower than the levels reported by children at the primary 7 stage.

For both boys and girls, there is an appreciable increase in self-reported general health between survey points with the whole cohort outcome rising from **70% to 73%**. The extent of improvement is more evident for girls with the S1-S6 average being raised by **5%** from **63% to 68%**, more than double the increase reported by boys when the relative size of the survey sample is taken into account.

Across the phases, the greatest gains have been made in S6 and S2 with each of the other phases, with the exception of S3, showing increases in reported health. From the data, the outcomes for both boys and girls in S3 show falling levels of self-reported general health of around 4 percentage points, and the differential between boys and girls, although closing from March to November 2022, continues to show a gap of more than ten percentage points. The impact of the periods of lockdown on the S3 year group could be a factor here.

There is evidence that the self-reported health of girls steadily reduces over the secondary phases. In S3/S4, there is a clear increase in the number of girls highlighting that they have poor general health and overall, **4%** of all secondary female students state this across all responses. This is a reduction however of **45** young people compared to March 2022. There is a similar underlying pattern of increasing self-reported poor health from S1 -S4 amongst boys but this is significantly less accentuated between phases and is tracking at lower levels than girls.

Outcomes for both boys and girls at S5 and S6, from November data appear to break this upwards phase trend, although with girls self-reporting poor health at levels above that of boys, but for both genders, these levels are improved on the March 2022 data.

Reporting good or excellent health was associated with family affluence at both primary and secondary school level, for example, **81%** of secondary pupils in the high family affluence group rated their health as good or excellent compared with **61%** of those in the low family affluence group. Although not a directly comparable measure, review of national data shows a **10%** difference between the lowest and highest affluence groups. The local difference is greater suggesting a need for considerable focus on this area.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Excellent or good health	61	74	81
% Feel always or often confident	34	41	48
% Feel lonely all or most of the time	29	19	17
% Has self-harmed at least once in lifetime	25	19	17

Young people in the low family affluence group were more likely to report lower levels of confidence at both primary and secondary school.

Young people in the low family affluence group were more likely to report feeling lonely (all or most of the time) compared with those in the high family affluence (**29%** versus **17%**).

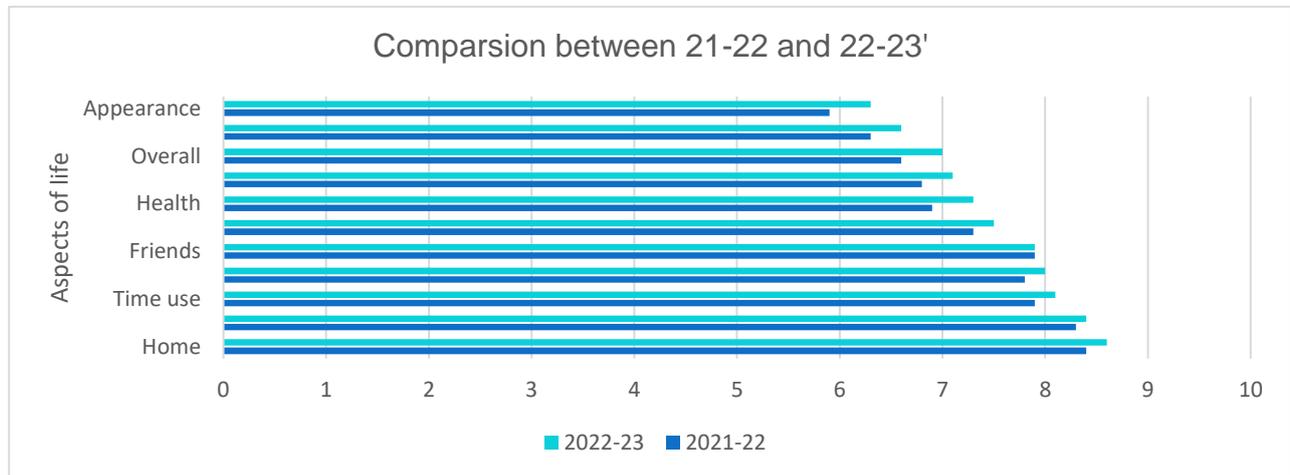
Girls were consistently more likely to report more negative outcomes than boys, with greater differences between boys and girls emerging amongst secondary pupils.

Prevalence of self-harming varied by gender, with nearly four in ten (**38%**) of those who did not disclose their gender reporting that they had self-harmed at least once in their lifetime, compared with **21%** of girls and **15%** of boys. This area will require careful consideration by the Mental Health Improvement Collaborative.

Gender			
Secondary pupils	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
% Excellent or good health	79	69	39
% Feel always and often confident	55	28	24
% Feel lonely all or most of the time	17	23	46
% Has self-harmed at least once in lifetime	15	21	38

Learners were asked to rate how happy they are with various aspects of their life. Response options ranged from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'very unhappy', 5 means 'neither happy nor unhappy' and 10 means 'very happy'.

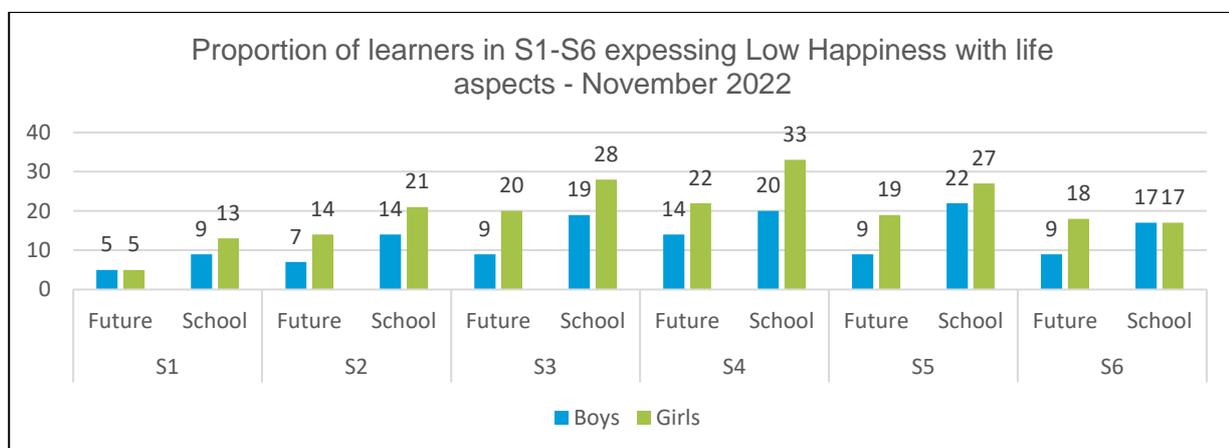
Within Secondary Schools, it was again clear that the aspects of their lives learners were most happy with are, home, things they had, time use, friends and family, with school and appearance consistently receiving lower scores.



Overall, **25%** (a reduction of **6%**) of learners since March 2022 report low happiness linked to 'Appearance' and **20%** (a reduction of **3%**), linked to 'School'. Although there is a notable reduction in both areas, showing a positive step forward, there continues to be, however from Primary to Secondary, an increase from **10%** of primary learners to **20%** of secondary learners who report low happiness regarding school.

In March 2022 the trend in reporting of low happiness rose with each phase transition from S1 – S6, however, from November data, the overall percentage now reduces again in S5 and S6 to **28%**, an improvement of 13 percentage points.

From S2-S4 there is an extending difference in girls views of School from that of boys, which closes in S5 and S6, whilst girls consistently express lower happiness than boys regarding the Future, that continues on a largely deteriorating trend up to S6.



Proportion of learners in S1-S6 expressing Low Happiness with life aspects				
Phase	Aspect	Boys	Girls	Gender Difference (% points)
S1	Future	5	5	0
	School	9	13	4
S2	Future	7	14	7
	School	14	21	7
S3	Future	9	20	11
	School	19	28	9
S4	Future	14	22	8
	School	20	33	13
S5	Future	9	19	10
	School	22	27	5
S6	Future	9	18	9
	School	17	17	0

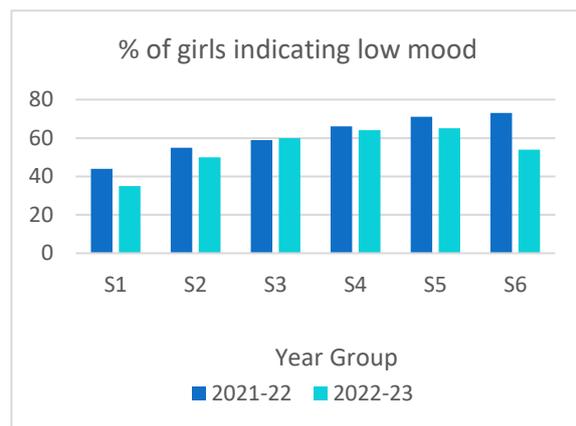
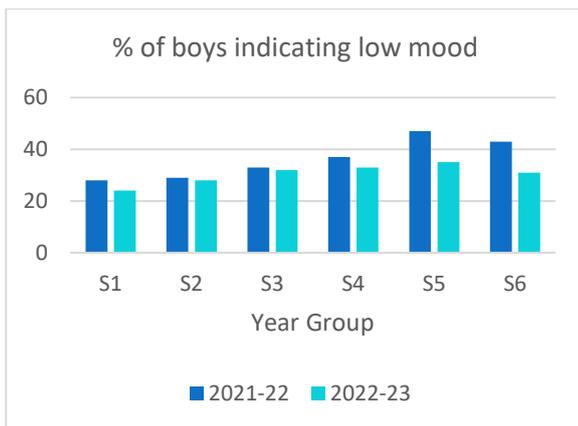
Family affluence heavily influences happiness at the secondary phase. Those in the low affluence group were twice as likely to be unhappy with life in general than those in the highest affluence group. Those in the lower affluence group were 5 times more likely to express unhappiness with the home they live in.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils	Low	Medium	High
% Life as a whole	20	15	10
% Family relationships	12	8	5
% Home you live in	10	4	2
% Choice in life	14	9	6
% Friendships	10	6	5
% Things you have	8	4	2
% Health	19	13	9
% Appearance	33	25	18
% Future	17	13	9
% School	27	18	15
% Free time	9	6	4

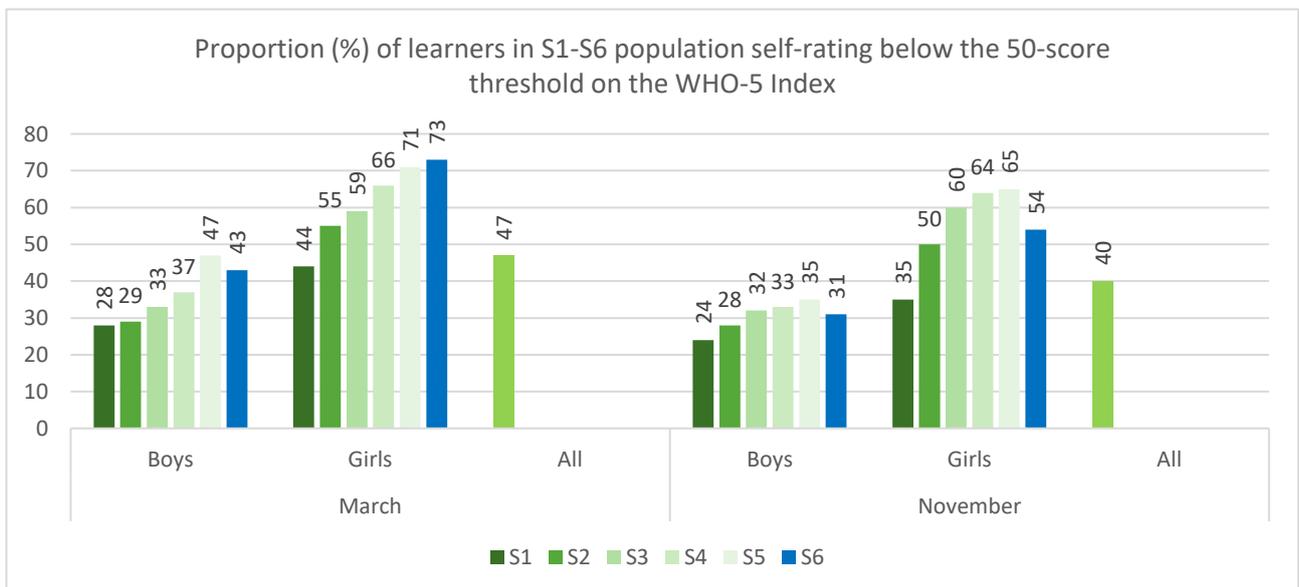
In terms of low happiness with life, across nearly all of the measures, pupils who didn't disclose their gender expressed the most unhappiness at both secondary and primary level.

Gender			
Secondary pupils	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
% Life as a whole	10	18	44
% Family relationships	4	11	27
% Home you live in	3	6	13
% Choice in life	7	10	26
% Friendships	5	8	18
% Things you have	3	5	12
% Health	9	15	36
% Appearance	15	33	56
% Future	8	15	36
% School	16	23	37
% Free time	2	8	12

**The WHO-5 Wellbeing Index is a five-item scale which provides a measure of emotional functioning.** Answers are collated to create a score ranging from 0 to 100. A score of 50 or less on the WHO-5 indicates low mood.



The proportion of learners across S1-S6 self-rating below the 50-score threshold on the WHO Wellbeing Index is showing early signs of improvement across each phase, and for all learners in this cohort but with some caveats around the outcomes for S3 boys and girls, where the extent of change between March and November 2022 is minimal.

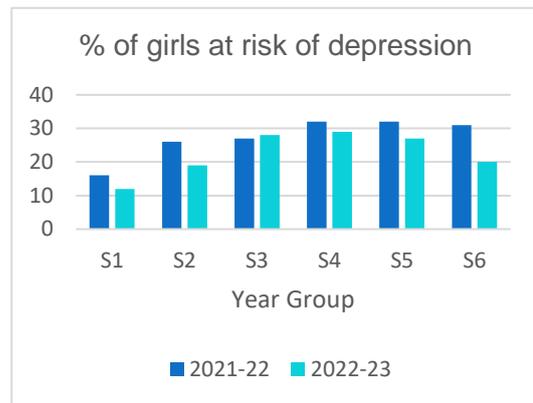
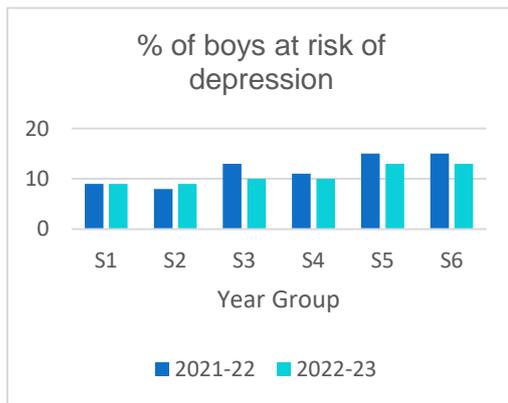


Overall, the average improvement rate for girls is slightly higher than that for boys although this has yet to fully manifest in a material closing of the whole cohort (S1-S6) gender-based gap. Despite outcomes at S1 and S2 being the most improved for girls, the year-on-year change for S3 and S4 is limited which has the effect of suppressing the overall gender gain for girls.

In absolute terms, the outcomes at S5 and S6 (and in combination) for both boys and girls are showing the greatest improvement across the phases which is viewed as a substantive change as these were amongst the poorest performing of all the phases in March 2022. The extent to which the March data was influenced by circumstantial pressures around the pending 2022 examination diet should be kept in mind so the November information may not be presenting a fully rounded comparative picture.

The graphs above indicate an overall positive picture towards the reduction of low mood in both boys and girls from March 2022. Overall, there has been a **5%** reduction of learners indicating low mood. This equates to 147 learners.

The graphs below highlight the proportion of those scoring 28 or less and are classified as at risk of depression. We see a reduction in the number of learners at risk of depression in both gender groups and most year groups. Concerns for the wellbeing of girls compared to that of boys remains, although there are two small increases across year groups of **1%** at S2 boys and S3 girls.



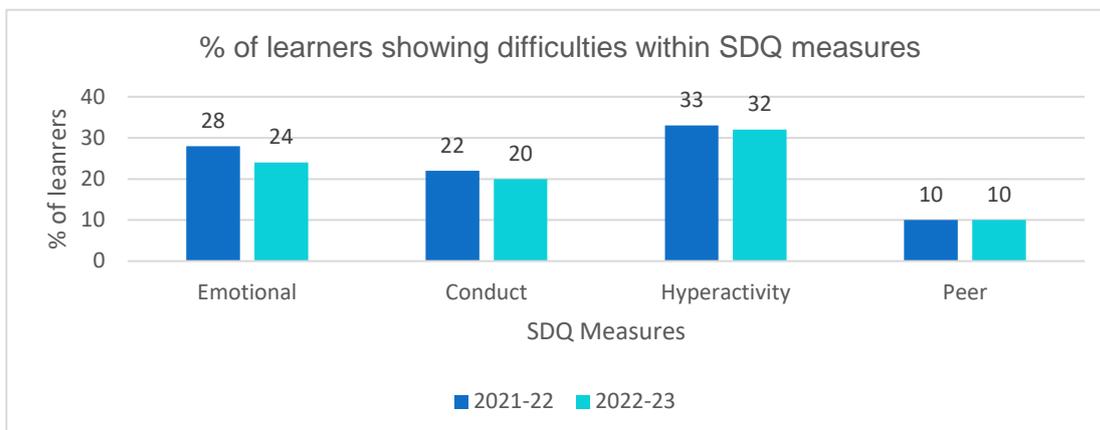
Family affluence strongly influences low mood and a risk of depression. As for primary schools, this will have to be considered carefully as interventions are being planned to address equity.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils	Low	Medium	High
Low mood	50	42	33
Risk of depression	24	15	10

Those who did not disclose their gender are far more likely to self-report low mood and be considered at risk of depression.

Gender			
Secondary pupils	Boys	Girls	Non-binary
Low mood	30	53	73
Risk of depression	10	21	37

**The Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) measures mental health difficulties in different areas: emotional symptoms, conduct, hyperactivity and peer relationships.**



Reviewing all year groups there is still a very clear, high percentage of girls showing difficulties with hyperactivity and emotions. There is an overall decrease across all measures.

Although at first glance this data is of concern, data for Aberdeen City mirrors Scottish Government data on differences between genders:

*“Girls were more likely to agree they wish they had a different kind of life; there are lots of things they worry about in their life; they often or always feel lonely; they sometimes, often or always feel left out of things; and their body and the way they look affects how they feel about themselves. Girls were also more likely to have problematic social media use than boys.” Scottish Government, Health & Wellbeing Census, February 2023*

Encouragingly, Aberdeen City wellbeing data for both genders is ahead of the national data reported by the Scottish Government. There is still a need to continue to put a local focus on effectively meeting the emotional wellbeing needs of girls across all year groups and further consider what opportunities there are to provide support as our local data highlights this area.

Secondary school pupils in the high family affluence group were less likely to report mental health difficulties, as scored by the SDQ. Overall, **62%** of those in the most affluent group scored within the expected normal range on this scale, compared with **45%** of those in the low family affluence group.

Family affluence			
Secondary pupils scoring as expected	Low	Medium	High
% Emotional	58	66	70
% Conduct disorder	66	71	73
% Hyperactivity	51	55	59
% Peer relations difficulties	59	71	78
% Pro-social	70	74	80
Overall SDQ score	45	56	62

A quarter (**24%**) of those who did not disclose gender scored within the “as expected” normal range in the overall Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) score compared with **46%** of girls and **65%** of boys.

Gender			
Secondary pupils scoring as expected	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
% Emotional	83	53	36
% Conduct disorder	71	70	52
% Hyperactivity	61	53	29
% Peer relations difficulties	71	70	41
% Pro-social	68	79	62
% Overall SDQ score	65	46	24

At secondary school, those who did not disclose gender were more likely to have lower scores in the domains of belief in self and belief in others but there were no differences between nonbinary and girls in emotional competence.

### Sleep

Secondary learners were asked to complete the adolescent sleep wake scale that measures sleep quality. Higher scores indicate better sleep quality.

Boys in all year groups continue to indicate that they have a better sleep quality than girls. The average sleep score from March 2022 and this survey, has not changed.

All pupils, however, would benefit from increased sleep quality to positively impact on their mental and physical health. We should consider the links between social media and the use of digital technology and the potential impact this has had on the measures noted. There is a range of data around the increased need for sleep in the teenage years, with teenagers having a different biological circadian rhythm to adults, or younger children.

Family affluence			
	Low	Medium	High
Mean sleep quality score	35	37	39

Young people in the high family affluence group reported higher sleep quality than those in the other affluence groups. Those who did not disclose their gender reported poorer sleep than all other groups.

Gender			
	Boy	Girl	Did not disclose
Mean sleep quality score	39	36	30

## Pressured by Schoolwork

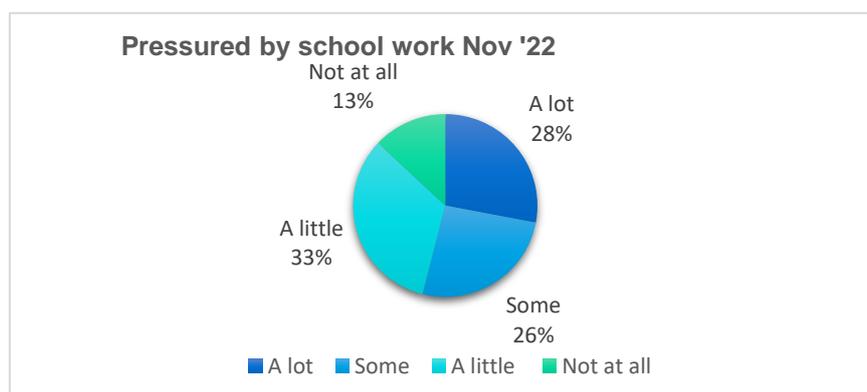
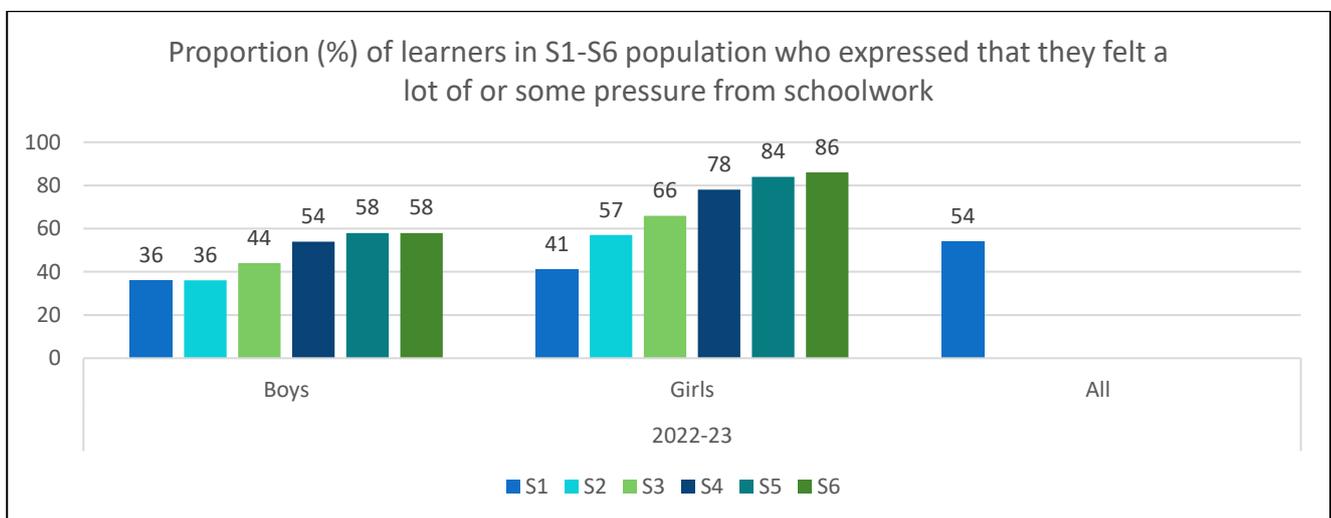
There has been a reduction in the number of pupils who feel pressured by school work from **31%** in March 2022 to **28%** currently. We must factor in that the first survey was undertaken nearer exam timetables and therefore this may have had an impact on responses to the first survey.

**28%** (31%) of all S1-S6 learners expressed that they felt pressured by schoolwork a lot with **15%** (12%) highlighting that they did not feel pressured by schoolwork at all.

Outwith the two measures at either end of the four-stage range noted above, there is, arguably, marginally less significant change in the proportion who noted that they felt 'Some' and 'A Little' pressure.

Overall, this represents a generally improved position on the March 2022 surveying, although with a continuing gender gap between boys and girls that, as in March, statistically develops as learners progress through the phases. Looking forward, the outcome of the on-going education reforms, most notably the Hayward Review, may impact positively here as less reliance is put on single high stake exams which are known to disproportionately affect those living in areas of deprivation.

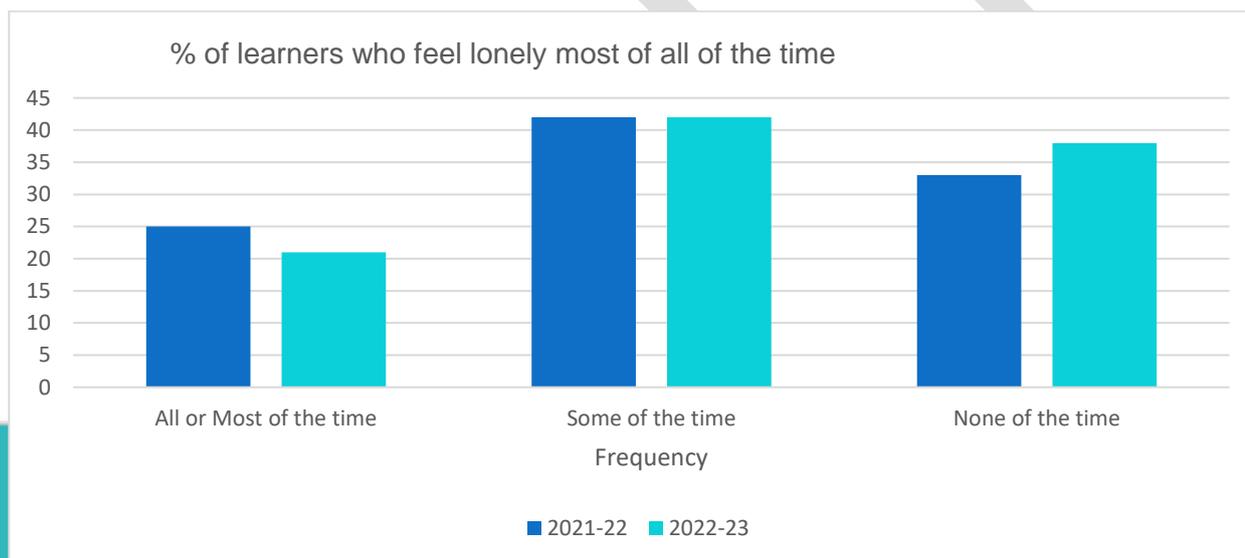
In the context of gender, there are some limited indications that the gap between boys and girls has closed between survey points but, as with the Wellbeing Index data above, some caution should be exercised around (a) interpreting this as a material direction of travel due to the circumstances of the respective pupil educational journeys in March and November and (b) that this pattern is replicated across each phase.



## Loneliness

There are links between high loneliness, other areas of wellbeing and decreasing positive life outcomes. Learners were asked how often they felt lonely in the past week. **38%** feeling more positive about this aspect of their life, showed an increase between March and November 2022 of **5%** more learners feeling lonely none of the time. **21% (1316)** of learners stated that they felt lonely most or all the time. Less restrictions on social interactions in November 2022 will likely have impacted on this positive change.

Research on loneliness in teenagers tells us that teenagers report higher levels of loneliness than any other age group in society. Additionally, their self-reports of feelings of loneliness are related to their need to feel socially connected, particularly to groups. Even a short time away from a strong positive group can make them feel lonely. Many secondary school's activities and clubs, outdoors sporting clubs to a lesser extent, were suspended in line with the range of restrictions from the Covid-19 pandemic. As these are re-established, we hope to see these figures around loneliness continue to decrease. There are ways we can incorporate more social learning across the secondary curriculum which can also support this area, supporting wellbeing more generally.

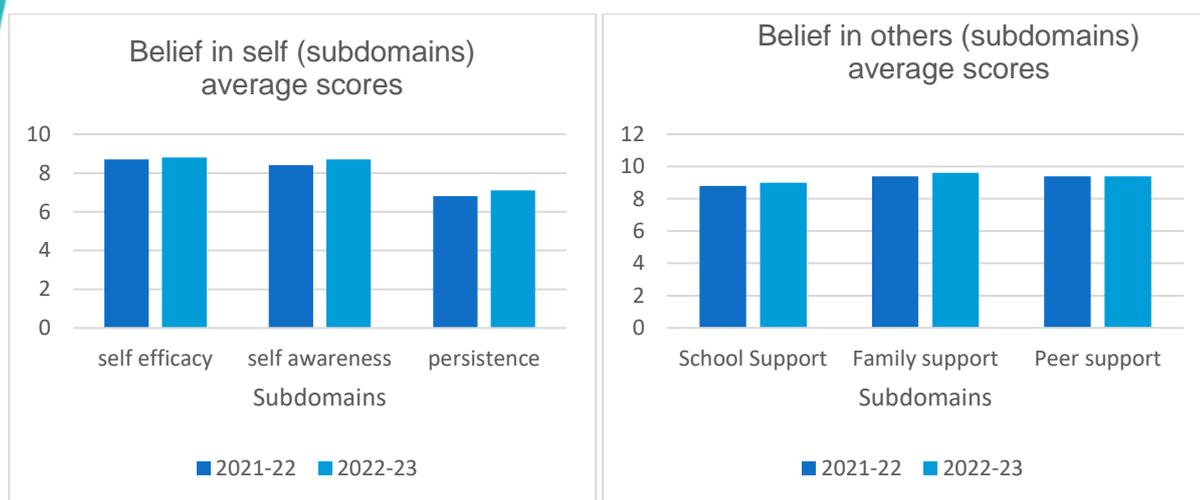


## Social Emotional Health

This measures different competencies of positive socio-emotional health, which are fundamental for young people to develop to live engaging and meaningful lives.

In all year groups, boys show higher levels of self-efficacy, self-awareness, and persistence, with self-efficacy rating higher in most year groups. Since March 2022, there has been a positive increase in all 3 areas.

Learners overall are showing a positive response to belief in others with an increase in the areas of school support and family support. Data for boys suggests that school support and family support are better than peer support and for girls, peer support is significantly higher at all year groups. This gender difference is again in-line with national data from Scottish Government, that boys and younger children self-report higher positive perceptions of those they live with. Teenagers, especially females seek more peer support and acceptance from peers than their family members, as a function of the teenage brain.



Emotional regulation, empathy and self-control are reviewed to understand Emotional competence. All learners show a higher level of empathy, an increased level of emotional regulation and self-control of 0.2 points from March 2022. Self-control continues to be lower than the other 2 subdomains within this section. This data is as expected due to the processes ongoing in the teenage brain. At this time, we see a reduction in a teenager's ability to correctly recognise emotions in others (if not related to themselves) and increased self-consciousness.

Overall, learners' levels of optimism are also rising with a notable dip at S3 and S4. This may be linked to a change in curriculum delivery and expectations with consideration of the exam schedule at this stage. Local data is at odds with the national data which shows a declining picture up to S5 and S6.

Gender			
Secondary pupils level of optimism	Boys	Girls	Did not disclose
Optimism	8.3	7.3	6.1

Once again, we can see poorer outcomes for those who did not disclose gender.

### Liking School

Learners were asked to select whether they liked school from a scale of, a lot to not at all. **42% (2484)** of learners indicating that they don't like school very much or at all, there is a need for us to consider carefully how this might be improved. Scottish Government data reports the low trend in attitudes across S1 – S4, improving in S5 and 6. This trend isn't reflected locally and remains low across secondary stages.

**31%** of learners stated that they felt pressured by schoolwork a lot with **12%** highlighting that they did not feel pressured by schoolwork at all. Nationally, **23.2%** of learners reported feeling pressured by school work and there is a clear national gender bias (30.3% of girls compared to 16% of boys).

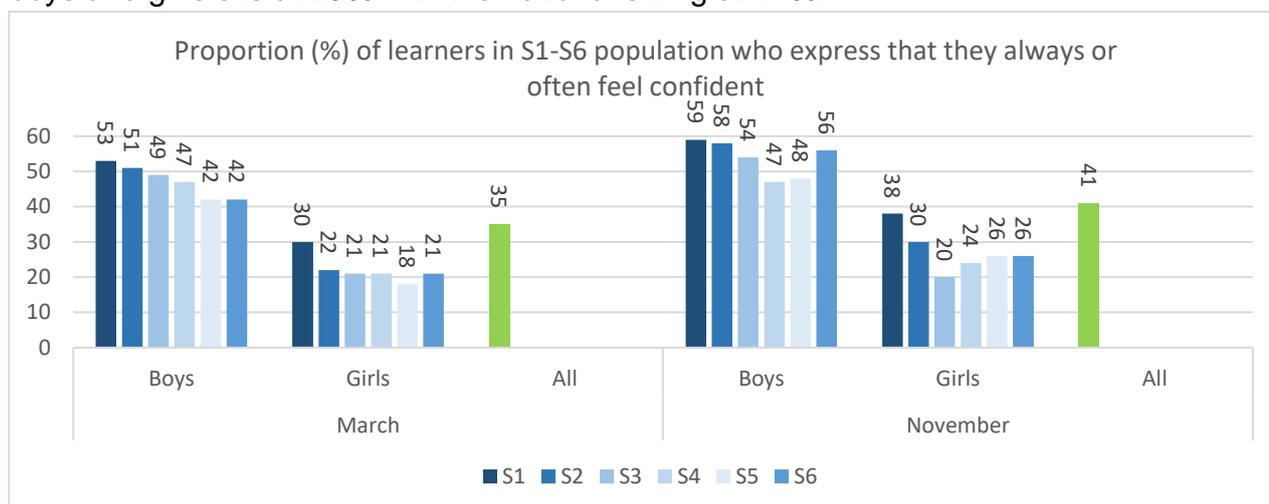
Given that these two measures show poorer local outcomes against the national average outcome, they are worthy of further consideration.

## Self Confidence

The proportion of all S1-S6 pupils who express that they always or often feel confident has risen by a substantive six percentage points from March 2022, with an average of **53.7%** for boys and **27.3%** for girls\*, these gender based averaged measures represent an increase of just over six percentage points for boys and five percentage points for girls.

Amongst boys, the greatest improvements were noted in S6 with the majority of phases showing improvement. Whilst, with the exception of S3 which was statistically unchanged, the outcomes for girls also rose across each phase, both the gender-based differential overall, and that at S3 and S6, has widened marginally. Longitudinally, the cohort transition of boys from S3 to S4 and girls from S2 to S3 both fell by two percentage points with the outcomes for those moving from S5 to S6 being the most improved year-on-year.

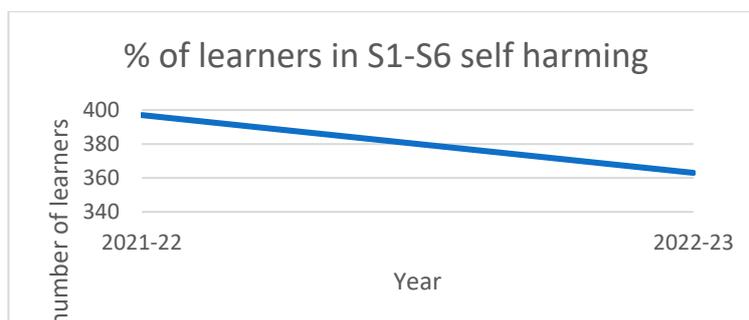
Although there isn't a directly comparable national measure, national data suggests that our gender difference is more marked than the national average. Locally, the gap between boys and girls sits at **29%** with the national sitting at **17%**.



## Self-Harm

Based on previous responses **4910** pupils were asked if they had ever hurt themselves on purpose, **19%** said yes, showing a reduction of **4%** from March 2022. There is a noticeable difference between the responses from girls and boys with **15%** of boys stating they had hurt themselves on purpose and **21%** of girls. This gender difference is seen nationally, and for all ages of the Scottish Population.

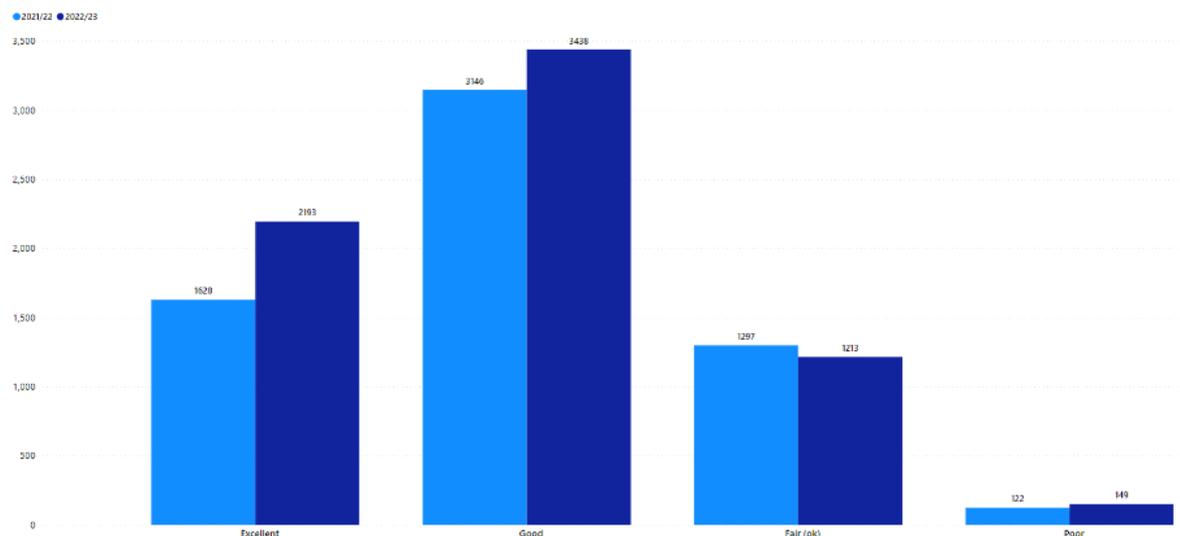
**19% (932)** of all learners from S1-S6 choose 'prefer not to say' with 12% of boys selecting this option and 24% of girls.



This was even across year groups, and out of those reporting yes, **39% (363)** suggesting they had done this between 1-10 times, and **22% (205)** suggesting that they had done this more than 10 times over the past year. This data, although showing a reduction of learners self-harming 10 times, shows an increase of 3% of learners self-harming 10 or more times in the past year. This area continues to need significant focus through partnership approaches to support young people. National and UK wide data pre-pandemic showed that self-harm was on the increase, with teenage girls and those identifying in the LGBTQA+ most at risk at using this coping strategy as a way of managing mental health.

## Physical Wellbeing (P5-S6)

**6993** learners from P5-S6 completed the Physical wellbeing survey in November and December 2022. This is an increase of **800 (11.4%)** pupils from March 2022. Similar to the Mental Wellbeing survey, learners were asked to identify how well they thought their general physical wellbeing was.

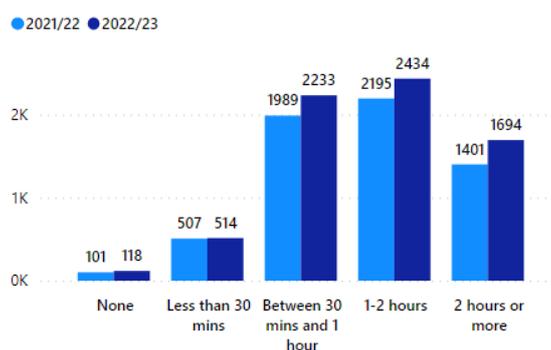


The majority of learners, **78%** continued to identify their general health as good or excellent, with a **3%** increase in this area since March 2022. **17%** felt their general health was fair with a further **2% (149)** of learners stating that their general health was poor. This shows an improvement across general physical wellbeing, however this is more positive for primary pupils than secondary.

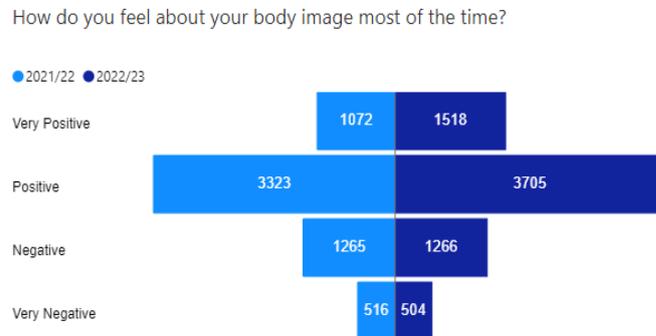
## Physical Health and Body Image

NHS physical activity guidelines suggest that on average children and young people between 5 – 18 should aim for at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity, physical activity a day across the week. **69%** of learners who completed this survey meet the national health standards set above. This was **11%** higher for primary pupils than secondary, evidencing the need for us to continue focusing on increased physical activity at the early stages of pupil development. Compared to the most recent 2021 national data for 11-15 year olds, this is **4.5%** higher, however we also recognise that this does not include young people aged 16-18.

How much time do you spend doing physical activity...



**75%** of learners feel positive or very positive about their body image, showing a **4%** increase from March 2022. As with the mental wellbeing survey, however **25%** of learners reported that most of the time they felt negative or very negative about their body image. Out of the **504** pupils who stated they felt very negative about their body image, **155** of those pupils were in Primary School.



The Mental Health Foundation recently reported that 35% of 13–19-year olds said their body image causes them to ‘often’ or ‘always’ worry. They also stated that 37% of young people said they felt upset, and 31% said they felt ashamed about their body image. This shows that nationally poor body image and worries about appearance are commonplace amongst young people and must remain a focus for improvement and support.

### Relationships with others

Throughout our lives, the number and strength of relationships can affect our mental and physical wellbeing. The benefits of social interactions and good mental health are significant. Proven links include lower rates of anxiety and depression, higher self-esteem, greater empathy, and more trusting and cooperative relationships.

Being available to listen to children and young people, is essential for supporting individual needs and understanding fully what is required. Learners were asked if they had an adult in their lives that listens to them about how they are feeling. **68%** positively shared that they always did, showing an increase of 4%. **5% (345)** also stated no, they did not have an adult in their life that listens to them about how they are feeling. This is a similar percentage of learners from March 2022.

**93%** of learners identified that overall, their relationships with other people were positive some, most, or all of the time. Although a 2% reduction from March 2022, learners were showing a slight improvement in how often they felt included by others. Continued focus on wellbeing, equality and inclusion will support us to continue to build a positive culture for our learners to thrive at home, school and in the local community.

Always or often felt included			
	March 22	November 22	Difference
At home	81%	83%	+2%
In the classroom	75%	76%	+1%
At break / lunch times in school	82%	82%	=
Online	72%	73%	+1%

## Feeling Safe

Learners were asked to consider how safe they felt within various environments and across all schools and year groups, the majority of learners reported that they felt safe always or most of the time in their communities, at home and in school, however there is a percentage of learners who feel that they rarely or never feel safe in these environments. Working with the Health & Wellbeing Youth Group, we will delve further to understand this better and address this both at local level and city wide. Where appropriate we will involve the Community Planning Partnership with this.

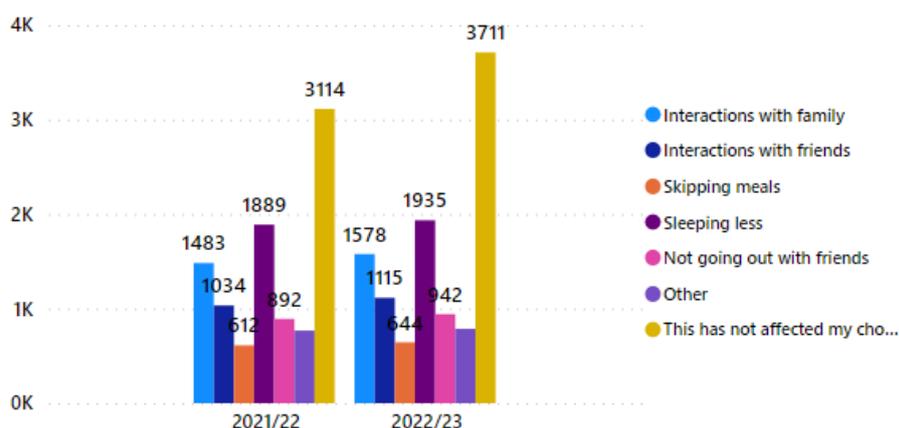
Feeling safe always or most of the time			
	March 22	November 22	Difference
In the community	86%	87%	+1%
At home	96%	96%	=
At School	79%	81%	+2%
Online	76%	76%	=

## Sleep

NHS advises that teenagers between the age of 13-18 should have a recommended 8 hours sleep. Learners were asked about their usual sleep patterns and the number of hours they slept the night before completion of the survey. **11%** of learners reported that they had 5 hours sleep or less with **2.5%** learners saying that they had less than 3 hours sleep. **187** (257) Primary aged pupils reported that they usually went to bed after midnight showing a reduction of 70 pupils from March 2022. The most popular time of going to sleep for P5-P7 pupils is between 9pm and 10pm with secondary pupils selecting between 10pm-11pm. We will continue to work with parents through our Stronger Families Series to support positive choices around sleep.

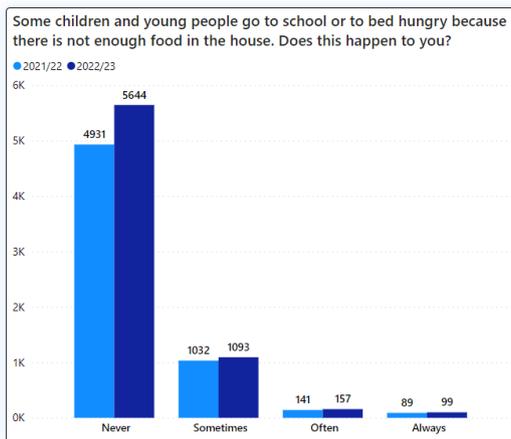
**27%** of learners feel that technology has affected the choices that they make, relating to and impacting their sleep, showing a reduction of 3.5% since March 2022. **43%** learners reported that on school days they can spend more than 3 hours on technology during free time and this increases to **63%** at the weekend with **27%** stating that they spend more than 6 hours on technology at the weekend.

Has technology affected any of the choices you make on a daily basis?



## Food and Drink

Establishing good eating habits is vitally important to support positive weight management. We have seen an increase of learners eating breakfast daily during the school week increasing from **59%** in March 2022 to **61%** in November 2022. Only **50%** of secondary pupils eat breakfast daily on a school day with **71%** of primary pupils having breakfast before going to school. The number of learners who reported starting the day with breakfast was varied when you compared school days and weekends with **75%** eating breakfast daily at the weekend. **15%** of children are regularly attending school, however with no breakfast.



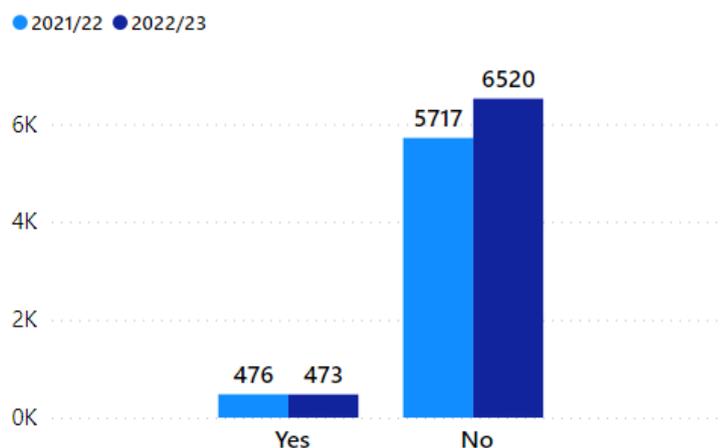
There are times where children and young people do not have the right access to food to meet their nutritional needs. With the impact on the cost of living currently this may also affect this. **3.7%, 256** learners who completed the survey, reported that they often or always went to bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. This mirrors the previous survey results. Continued review of this data at local level will help us identify where food parcels, foodbanks, breakfast clubs and other such resources would help us address this and target our support.

## Substance Use / Misuse

### Smoking

**6.7%, 473** of learners reported that they have tried smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes showing a reduction of **1.3%**, with 19 young people smoking between 1-20 cigarettes a week and 29 learners smoking more than 20. The number of young people reporting that they use e-cigarettes or vapes, is **2% (149)** reporting that they use e-cigarettes or vapes once a week or more. We have had reported, an increase of vaping however across school communities and continue to work with partners to ensure this is being addressed and schools are supported to manage this.

Have you ever tried smoking cigarettes or e-cigarettes?



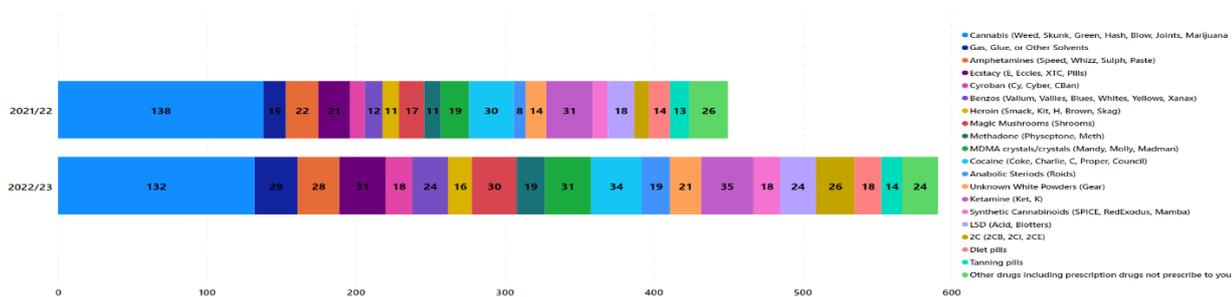
## Alcohol

Learners were asked about alcohol consumption, regularity and type of alcoholic drinks consumed. **88%, 6137** (84.64%, 5242) learners stated that they had never had a drink of alcohol. From March 2022 there has been a slight reduction from **80 to 62** learners who state that they get drunk weekly, with Cider, Spirits and Alcopops highlighted as those most often selected for regular consumption.

## Drugs

**6848** stated that they had never done this. **2%, 145** of our learners reported that they have taken illegal drugs, drugs formerly known as legal highs, solvents or prescription drugs that were not prescribed for them. **21** of our learners also stated that they use drugs daily with the largest number of responses linked to cannabis, followed by Ketamine and Cocaine.

Which (if any) of these drugs have you used in the last year?



Partnership work with Police Scotland is currently being piloted in 3 of our secondary schools with a focus on substance misuse. This will continue to be a focus through the Children's Services Plan.

### Summary of next steps

Through the LOIP and associated Children's Services Plan we will link with the Mental Health Collaborative to review any identified trends and consider how to address these.

There will be an increased focus on poverty and how this impacts health and educational outcomes. Continued work is also required around the area of physical appearance. We will need to consider carefully our support for girls in particular, and those who did not disclose their gender identity, who have shown greater challenges with regards to mental health.

We will continue to promote healthy choices and build confidence in our young people and parents and carers, to support good decisions in areas such as sleep, use of technology and substance misuse.

Targeted work at ASG level, through the Mental Health Youth Group and our partnership with school counsellors will allow us to better understand those identified with low mood and at risk of depression. We will need to ensure this work links closely to adult services to help build a continuum of support around mental health and the potential for suicide prevention.

We will continue to monitor trends carefully on a yearly basis to ensure that we are targeting the right supports in the right areas.