

# Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey Bulletin

October - November 2013

December 2014

## Contents

Behaviour and attitudes of post-primary school pupils in relation to:

- ➔ Demographics
- ➔ Family Financial Circumstances
- ➔ Organ Donation
- ➔ School and Shared Education
- ➔ Subject Choices and Next Steps
- ➔ Nutrition
- ➔ Breastfeeding
- ➔ Starting a Business
- ➔ Play and Leisure
- ➔ Firework Safety
- ➔ Travelling to School
- ➔ Road Safety
- ➔ Health and Wellbeing
- ➔ Alcohol
- ➔ Smoking
- ➔ Solvents and Drugs
- ➔ Medicines
- ➔ Long Term Conditions
- ➔ Sun Protection
- ➔ Police Ombudsman
- ➔ Personal Safety
- ➔ Flu Vaccine
- ➔ Sexual Experience and Knowledge
- ➔ Attitudes Towards Sexual and Domestic Violence
- ➔ Social Support

## A survey of the behaviour and attitudes of young people on areas and issues affecting their lives

This bulletin presents key findings from the fourth round of the Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitudes Survey, carried out between October and December 2013. These results are based on data which has been weighted by year group, gender and religion in order to reflect the composition of the Northern Ireland post-primary population.

Central Survey Unit was commissioned by a consortium of government departments to design and conduct a survey, covering a range of topics relevant to the lives of young people today (see 'Contents' section). Interest amongst policy makers on the views and behaviours of young people was such that in order to meet the demand for additional questions on the survey, the topics were split across two versions of the questionnaire, A and B.

From a representative sample of post-primary schools in Northern Ireland, 75 schools agreed to participate in the survey. Schools were selected at random to complete one version of the questionnaire. One class from each year group (Form 1/Year 8 – Form 5/Year 12) was then randomly selected. A total of 7076 pupils aged 11 - 16 years took part in the survey.

In addition to this bulletin, tables of top-line results and a technical report are available. Details on how to access these are provided at the end of this bulletin. The accompanying dataset will be released in December 2014 and will be available on the UK Data Archive.

For the purpose of this bulletin, all percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

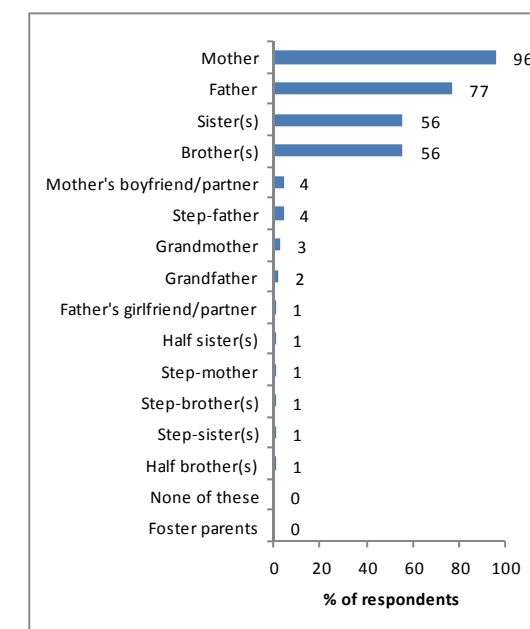
## Demographics

The majority of pupils' households are comprised of a mother (96%), a father (77%) and over half include brother(s) (56%) and sister(s) (56%).

Fourteen percent of pupils reported that their household included persons from more than one community background.

Eighty one percent of pupils' fathers and 69% of pupils' mothers currently are in employment. The majority (90%) of pupils were born in Northern Ireland while 83% of their fathers and 85% of their mothers were born in Northern Ireland.

**Figure 1: Who of the following, if any, do you live with?**



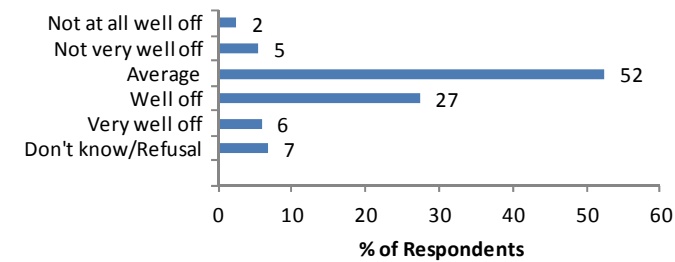
### Family Financial Circumstances

Almost one in ten (8%) pupils think their family is either not at all or not very well off. Half (52%) think they are average and 33% think they are well or very well off.

The majority of pupils (83%) have their own bedroom in the home where they normally live and nearly all pupils' families (93%) own at least one car, van or truck.

In the past 12 months over three quarters of pupils (78%) travelled away on holiday with their family at least once.

**Figure 2: How well off do you think your family is financially?**



### Organ Donation

The majority of pupils (82%) have heard of organ donation but less than half (49%) have ever heard of the NHS Organ Donor Register. When asked their views on the opt-out/opt-in options for organ donation a third of

respondents are in favour of keeping the current system of opting in, 23% are in favour of changing the system to opting out and 37% need more information to decide.

### School and Shared Education

Over four fifths (85%) of pupils like school at present. The majority are in agreement that it is important to have maths and English qualifications by the time they leave school (93%), that staying on at school is important if they want to get a good job (86%) and that they could do well at school (88%).

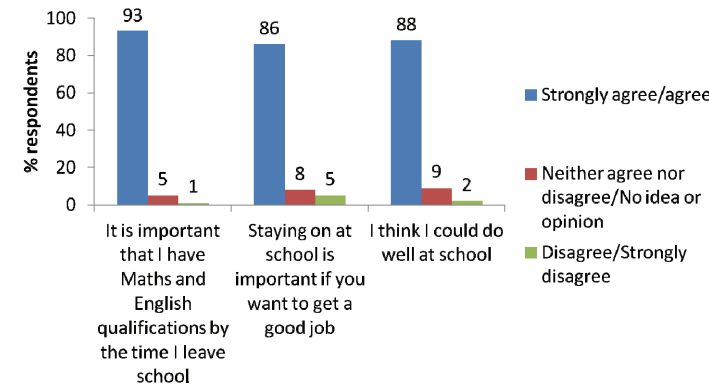
Eighty six percent of pupils feel a certain amount of stress due to the school work they have to do and 43% agree that they sometimes or often have difficulty falling asleep because they are thinking about school. Almost a third (31%) feel that their family expects too much of them at school.

Almost three quarters (73%) find school boring at least some days, 17% have skipped classes or school this term and 6% have been expelled or suspended from school.

Ninety two percent of pupils have a school council at their school and 69% of these pupils think that it is an effective way for them to get their views across.

Nearly half (49%) of pupils have been involved in projects or shared classes with pupils from another school in the past year. In over half (59%) of cases the shared classes or projects involved children of a different religion. The majority of pupils (86%) enjoyed the shared classes or projects they participated in.

**Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**



### Social Support

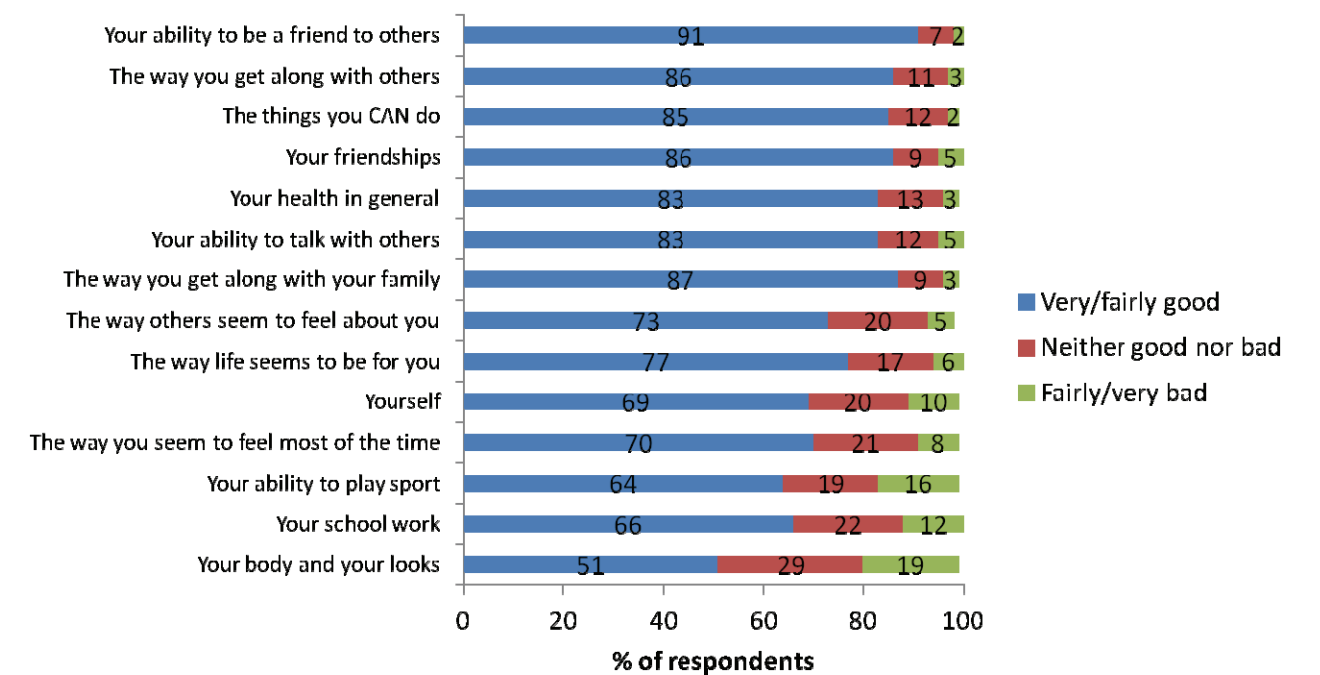
Almost all pupils feel that they have family/friends who do things to make them happy (97%), who make them feel loved (98%), who give them support and encouragement (97%), who would see that they are taken care of if they needed to be (96%), who accept them just as they are (95%), who make them feel an important part of their lives (96%) and, finally, who can be relied on no matter what happens (95%).

very bad about their body and looks, 16% of pupils felt fairly or very bad about their ability to play sport and 12% of pupils felt fairly or very bad about their school work.

The majority of pupils (91%) felt very or fairly good about their ability to be a friend to others, 85% felt very or fairly good about the things that they can do and 86% felt very or fairly good about their friendships in the 4 weeks prior to the survey.

During the 4 weeks prior to the survey, 19% felt fairly or

**Figure 18: During the last 4 weeks, how good or bad have you felt about the following?**



**For additional copies of this bulletin or the reports, please contact:**

Central Survey Unit  
 McAuley House  
 2-14 Castle Street  
 Belfast  
 BT1 1SY

Telephone:  
 (028) 9034 8197  
 (028) 9034 8267  
 Fax: (028) 9034 8276

Email:  
[norma.broomfield@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:norma.broomfield@dfpni.gov.uk)  
[maureen.stewart@dfpni.gov.uk](mailto:maureen.stewart@dfpni.gov.uk)

Visit the CSU website at  
[www.csu.nisra.gov.uk](http://www.csu.nisra.gov.uk)

## Sexual Experience and Knowledge

Over two thirds (68%) of pupils in Years 11 & 12 have had a boyfriend or girlfriend and ten percent have had sexual intercourse. Seventy percent of these pupils had sexual intercourse for the first time between the ages of 13 and 15. Just under three quarters (74%) of those who have had sexual intercourse used something to prevent pregnancy. The majority (66%) of these pupils used a condom and 19% used both a condom and the pill.

Over half (59%) of pupils said they would find it easy to get contraceptives, with 62% of pupils stating they would get them from shops/chemists.

The majority of Year 11 and 12 pupils knew HIV (79%) and AIDS (76%) are sexually transmitted diseases whilst 27% knew that syphilis, 62% knew that herpes and 55% knew that chlamydia are sexually transmitted diseases.

When seeking advice about sexual health issues nearly two thirds of pupils (61%) would use their doctor/GP, over a third (34%) would use their family, whilst almost a third (30%) would use their friends.

**Table 5: How much, if any, sexual experience have you had?**

	% Respondents
None	35
Small amount	37
Some experience but no sexual intercourse	17
Experienced, including sexual intercourse	10
Refusal/Don't know	2
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	<b>2937</b>

## Attitudes Towards Sexual and Domestic Violence

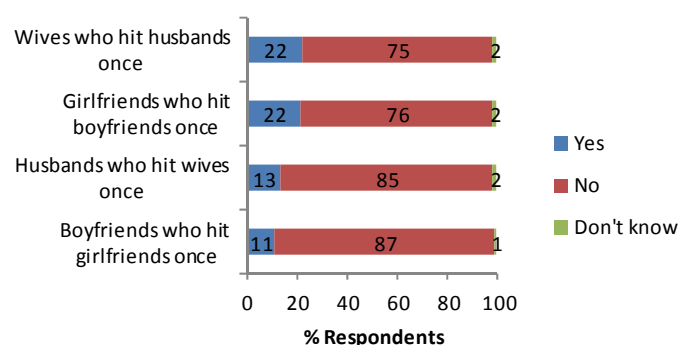
The majority of pupils (88%) in Years 11 & 12 think that unless somebody freely agrees to it, nobody has the right to carry out any act which is in any way sexual and almost three quarters (71%) think that many victims experience sexual violence when they have been drinking alcohol. Over two thirds (69%) of pupils in years 11 and 12 think that girls are more likely to be victims of child sexual abuse.

Approximately a tenth (11%) of pupils in years 11 and 12 think boyfriends who hit girlfriends once deserve a second chance in the relationship and slightly more think that husbands who hit wives once deserve a second chance in the relationship (13%). Ten percent of pupils in years 11 and 12 think it is okay for a man to hit his girlfriend/wife if she has slept with someone else.

Almost a quarter (22%) of pupils in years 11 and 12 think girlfriends who hit boyfriends once or wives who hit

husbands once deserve a second chance in the relationship. Almost a quarter (22%) of pupils in years 11 and 12 think it is okay for a woman to hit her boyfriend/husband if he has slept with someone else.

**Figure 17: Who deserves a second chance in the relationship?**



## Subject Choices and Next Steps

Two thirds (66%) of pupils in years 11 and 12 chose their subjects with a career area in mind and over half are content with the advice they got about their subject choices from their career teachers (60%) and their other teachers (66%). Fourteen percent of pupils in years 11 and 12 have attended lessons for their subjects at places other than their own school.

Immediately after they finish year 12, 72% of pupils in years 11 and 12 plan to do A Levels, 9% want to do Vocational Qualifications and 6% are not planning to stay on in education. Almost a third (31%) of pupils said that they would only stay on at school or Further Education college if they received an Education Maintenance Allowance.

**Table 1: Which of the following do you want to do immediately after you finish year 12?\***

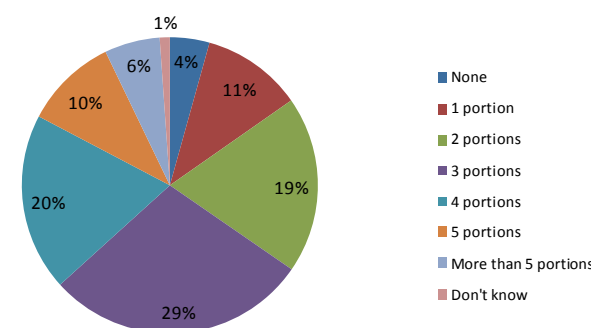
	% Respondents
Vocational Qualifications	9
AS Levels	38
A-Levels	72
Other	11
Not planning to stay on in education	6
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	<b>1311</b>

\*Multiple response question, percentages may not add to 100%

## Nutrition

Just under half (49%) of pupils eat fruit and 40% eat vegetables and salads, at least once a day. Only 16% of pupils usually eat 5 or more portions of fruit or vegetables each day. Almost a fifth (19%) eat meat products every day and over half (56%) eat fish less than once a week or never.

**Figure 4: How many portions of fruit/vegetables do you usually eat each day?**



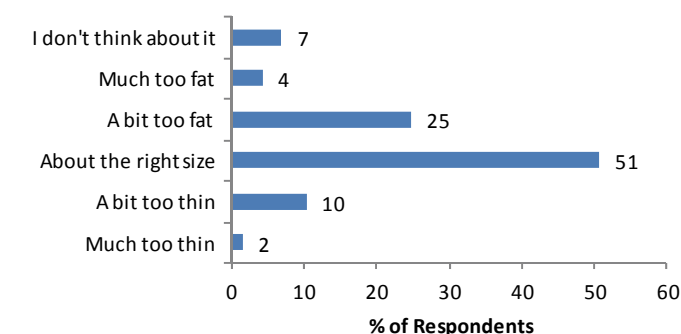
Almost a fifth (19%) of pupils never eat breakfast on school days and 20% don't usually eat it at weekends. When asked what they usually do for lunch, over two fifths (45%) of pupils eat a school dinner and 36% take a packed lunch. The majority (93%) of pupils think that there is usually a good choice of food available in school

and 81% reported that there is usually a food option available in school which they consider to be healthy. However, 49% of all pupils would like to see more healthy food available in school.

The majority (86%) of pupils have been taught about healthy eating at school (not including Primary School) and three fifths (60%) of these pupils said that this helped them to make sensible choices while almost a third (30%) said that they would have made sensible choices anyway.

Half of pupils (51%) think that their body size is about the right size, while 37% of girls compared to 21% of boys, think they are too fat.

**Figure 5: Do you think your body size is...**

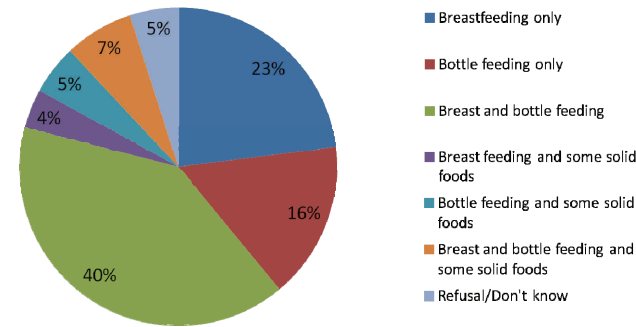


### Breastfeeding

Two fifths of pupils think that the normal way for a three month old baby to be fed is by both breast and bottle feeding. Over a fifth (23%) think it is by breastfeeding only, while 16% think it is by bottle feeding only.

Almost half of pupils (49%) think when they see a woman breastfeeding her baby that it is just a normal part of life. Almost a quarter (24%) have never seen anyone breastfeeding and 18% feel uncomfortable when they see a baby breastfeeding.

**Figure 6: What do you think is the normal way for a 3 month old baby to be fed?**



### Starting a Business

Almost two thirds of pupils (63%) in Years 11&12 would be interested in starting their own business at any time in the future and over a third (36%) have a business idea.

Over a third (34%) of pupils have had an opportunity in school to trial a business idea and almost half (44%) know someone personally who has started a business in the last two years.

Half of pupils (46%) are aware that there is support available to help start their own business. The organisation that the students are most aware of is Invest NI, which 68% of Year 11 and 12 pupils have heard of.

**Table 2: Which, if any, of these organisations have you heard of?\***

Organisation	% Respondents
Invest NI	68
Local Enterprise Agencies	24
Princes Trust	24
Advantage	4
None of these	21
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	<b>1311</b>

\*Multiple response question, percentages may not add to 100%

### Play and Leisure

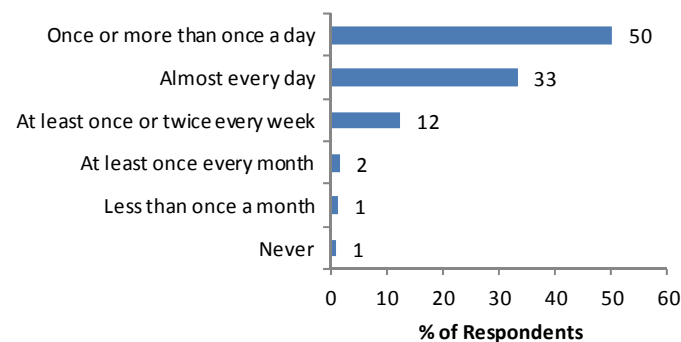
Almost two thirds (64%) of pupils think that the play and leisure facilities in their area are good while 65% would like more opportunities to take part in challenging and stimulating activities.

The main reasons stopping pupils from accessing play and leisure facilities in their local area are; not enough time (45%), not enough facilities close to where they live (20%) and the cost of activities (19%). Nearly two thirds of pupils (65%) agree that public spaces (e.g. shopping centres and sports centres) create a welcoming environment for young people.

Half of pupils use the internet once or more than once a day at home. The majority of pupils (89%) have been taught about staying safe online in the last year, 81% by a

teacher and 58% by a parent. Most pupils (94%) are confident that they know how to stay safe online.

**Figure 7: How often do you use the internet at home?**



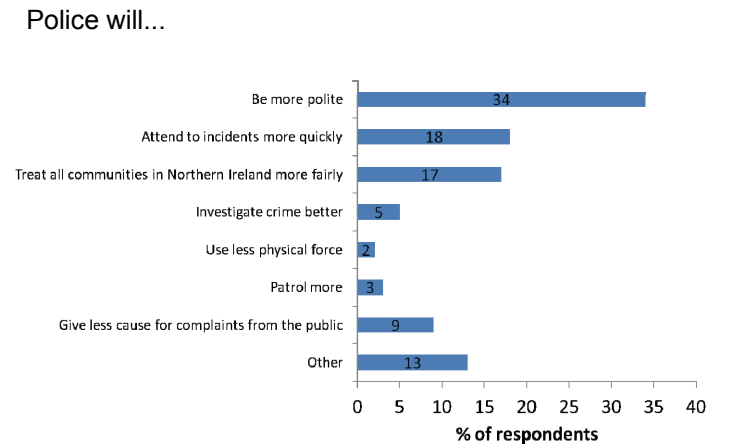
### Police Ombudsman

Almost a fifth (17%) of pupils said that on at least one occasion a police officer behaved towards them in a way that they thought was unacceptable. Over a quarter (27%) of these pupils, had, following the most recent incident, made a complaint about this. Of those who made a complaint half made it to the local police station and 7% made it to the Police Ombudsman.

A fifth of respondents have heard of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and over half (52%) think it is part of the police.

When asked if they think the Police Ombudsmans office deals with complaints fairly 71% of respondents think they do. The majority of pupils (83%) think that the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland will help ensure that the police do a good job.

**Figure 15: In what way do you think the police will do a good job because of the Police Ombudsman?**



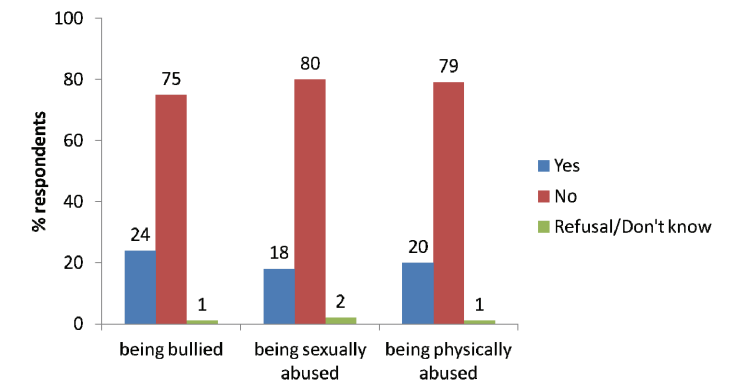
### Personal Safety

The majority of pupils (94%) feel safe in the area in which they live.

In relation to their own personal safety, almost a quarter of pupils (24%) are worried about being bullied, 20% are worried about being physically abused and 18% are worried about being sexually abused.

In the 12 months prior to the survey, 17% of pupils have been bullied, 7% of pupils have been called names or been harassed because of their religion, 8% of pupils have been harassed/bullied/abused via the internet and 6% have been bullied/harassed via texts/videos/images or calls to their mobile.

**Figure 16: In relation to your own personal safety, are you worried about..?**



### Flu Vaccine

The majority of pupils (83%) said if they were offered a nasal spray vaccine from a doctor/nurse to protect against flu they would take it. Of those who wouldn't take it, 36% said they wouldn't want to receive a squirt of

vaccine up the nose and over a quarter (28%) said they would rather receive the vaccine via an injection. A quarter said they did not think it would work.

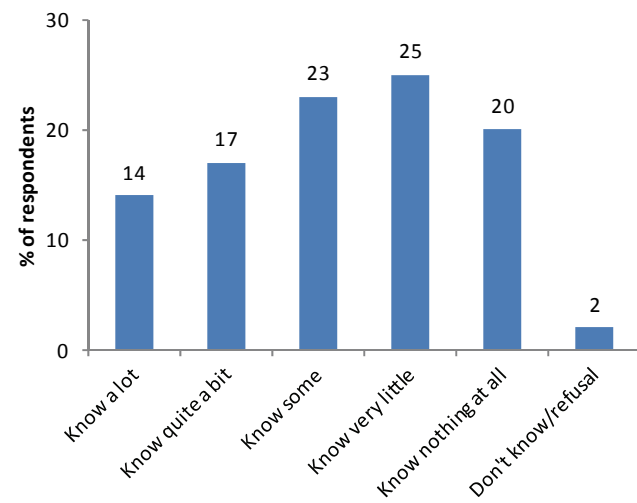
### Medicines

Almost a third of respondents (27%) have at least once been offered medicines other than by their doctor, pharmacist or parent. Seventeen per cent have at some point in the past used or tried medicines other than those supplied by their doctor, pharmacist or parent. Of these respondents nearly one in ten (9%) use the medicines daily, whilst almost two fifths (39%) use them rarely and 18% don't use them anymore.

Over half (54%) think it is fairly or very easy to get medicines using the internet and a small number (2%) have used the internet at some time to buy medicines. The same number (2%) have at some time used medicines bought on the internet.

Almost half of pupils (44%) know very little or nothing at all about the risks of taking medicines bought on the internet.

**Figure 13: How much do you know about the risks of taking medicines bought on the internet?**



### Long Term Conditions

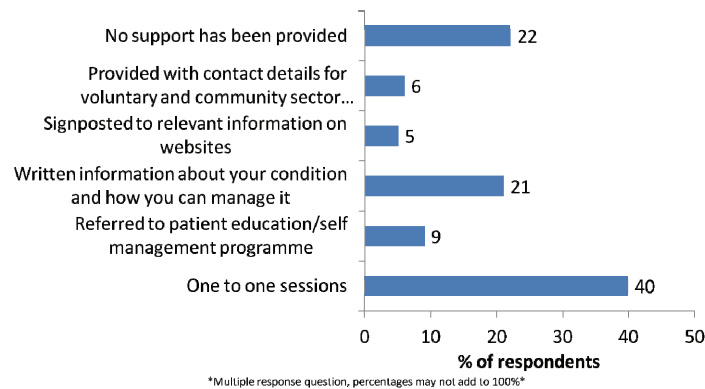
In the last twelve months one in ten pupils have been told they have, or have been receiving treatment for, one or more long term conditions. Over a fifth (22%) of these pupils reported that no support had been provided to help manage their condition from a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or other health professional.

Of those who did receive support, this came in the form of one to one sessions (40%), referral to a patient education/self management programme (9%), written information (21%), signposting to relevant information on websites (5%) and contact details for voluntary and community sector organisations which offer support (6%).

In terms of managing their conditions, 80% of pupils felt more knowledgeable and confident as a result of one to one session, 87% as a result of referral to a patient education/self management programme, 84% as a result of being provided with contact details of organisations

which offer support, 81% as a result of written information and 65% as a result of being signposted to relevant information on websites.

**Figure 14: Have you received any support to help you manage your condition from a doctor, nurse, pharmacist or other health professional?**



### Sun Protection

Ten percent of pupils have used a sunbed and of these over a fifth have used them in sunbed premises (22%) or at home (23%). Over a third (38%) have used them in some other place. Almost half of respondents (44%) did not use protective goggles when using a sunbed.

The majority of pupils (84%) associate a higher risk of skin cancer with using a sunbed, whilst almost a third (30%) associate eye damage and premature skin aging to the practice.

### Firework Safety

The majority of pupils (88%) have seen television/poster advertisements or heard radio advertisements on firework safety and the main message recognised by 92% of these pupils is "Fireworks are dangerous".

In the 12 months prior to the survey, two thirds of pupils had some type of education on firework safety in school, provided mainly by teachers (59%), Fire Service (40%) and the Police (48%). When asked if the firework safety advertisements or information received changed the way they behaved 65% said it has. Of these pupils, 34% said their behaviour has changed a lot and 46% said it has changed a little or some.

**Table 3: Who provided the firework safety education in school?\***

Provider	% Respondents
Teacher	59
Fire Service	40
Police	48
Other	4
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	<b>2554</b>

\*Multiple response question, percentages may not add to 100%

### Travelling to School

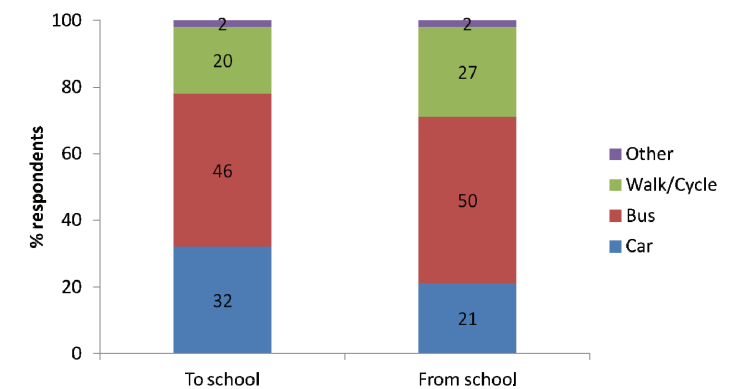
Half of pupils usually travel most of the way to (46%) and from (50%) school by bus, compared to 20% who walk or cycle to school and 27% who walk or cycle from school. Nearly one third (32%) usually travel to school by car and 21% travel home by car.

If they travel by car to or from school, 35% percent of pupils do so with their siblings and 13% do so with friends/other pupils.

When asked what would encourage them to walk to or from school more often, 58% of pupils said if they lived closer, over a third (34%) said if they did not have things to carry and 30% said better weather.

Just under half (47%) of pupils qualify for free school transport and of these 78% use this to or from school everyday.

**Figure 8: How do you usually travel most of the way to and from school?**



### Road Safety

On at least some occasions, 54% of pupils use a mobile phone, ipod or mp3 player while crossing the road, 28% run across the road without checking for traffic and 48% carry on with friends while crossing the road.

Over four fifths of pupils always wear a seatbelt in the front seat (85%) and over three quarters in the back seat (79%) of a car. More than a third (34%) of pupils never

wear bright coloured clothes while cycling or walking at night, and 36% never wear a cycle helmet.

In the 12 months prior to the survey, over half (57%) of pupils had some type of education on road safety in school. For 60% of these pupils the road safety education was provided by teachers and the majority of pupils (87%) found it useful.

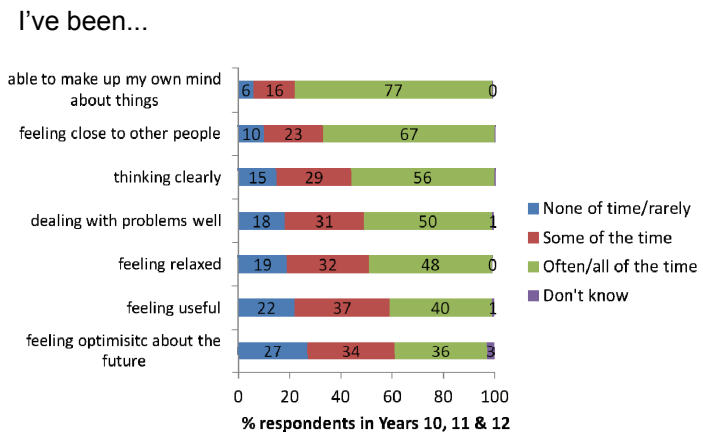
### Health and Wellbeing

In the week prior to the survey, one in ten pupils in Years 8 & 9 reported having never or seldom been happy with the way they were, the same number never or seldom felt full of energy, and 14% were never or seldom able to do the things that they wanted to in their free time. However, the majority of pupils (94%) in Years 8&9 would say that in general their health is excellent or very good.

The majority of pupils (77%) in Years 10, 11 & 12 feel that often or all of the time they have been able to make up their own mind about things, two thirds (67%) often or all the time have been feeling close to other people, over half (56%) often or all the time have been thinking clearly, 50% often or all the time have been dealing with problems well and under half often or all the time have

been feeling relaxed (48%), feeling useful (40%) and feeling optimistic about the future (36%).

Figure 9: Years 10, 11 & 12 Health and Wellbeing

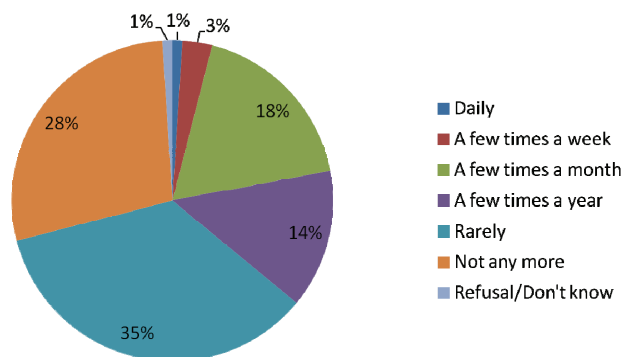


### Alcohol

Just over a third of pupils (38%) have taken an alcoholic drink (23% of Key stage 3 pupils and 59% of Key stage 4). Of those who have ever had an alcoholic drink, over half (56%) were aged 13 or under when they had their first drink.

Just over a fifth (22%) of pupils who have drunk alcohol got their last alcoholic drink from their mother/father whilst 16% got it from their friends. Over a quarter (29%) of these pupils were at home the last time they drank alcohol, 15% of pupils were at someone else's house, while 10% were somewhere outside such as the park, street, in an entry, under a bridge, etc. Under half of pupils (43%) were with a friend (12%) or group of friends (31%) the last time they had an alcoholic drink.

Figure 10: At present, how often do you drink anything alcoholic?



Over a quarter of pupils (28%) that have taken an alcoholic drink do not drink anything alcoholic anymore. Of the pupils who have ever had an alcoholic drink, over a fifth (21%) drink alcohol at least a few times a month.

Of those pupils who have had an alcoholic drink, the majority have never been in trouble with their parents or family members (79%), local people (92%), school (98%), police (92%) or friends (90%) due to alcohol. Over four fifths (82%) of pupils who have drunk alcohol have never bought alcohol for themselves.

Table 4: Where were you the last time you drank alcohol?

Location	% Respondents
At home	29
At someone else's house	15
Somewhere outside	10
At a pub	3
At a party	12
At a rave, disco, club or concert	6
On holiday	5
At a special occasion (e.g. wedding)	12
Somewhere else	6
Don't know/refusal	2
<b>Number of valid cases</b>	<b>1479</b>

### Smoking

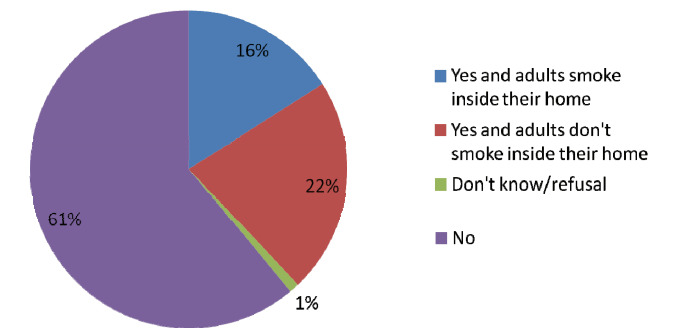
Over one in ten pupils (13%) have smoked tobacco, with just over three fifths (62%) of those having smoked at 13 or under. Only 6% of pupils in Key stage 3 (Years 8, 9 and 10) have ever smoked compared to 24% in Key stage 4 (Years 11 and 12). Sixty-two percent of those who have smoked no longer do, whilst a fifth smoke everyday.

Over three fifths (61%) of pupils that smoke at least once a week would like to give up smoking cigarettes altogether.

Just over one in ten pupils (11%) agree that smoking can help control your weight, 19% agree that smoking can put you in a better mood, 28% agree that smokers are more boring than people who don't smoke, 28% agree that smoking can help you calm down and 31% agree that smokers tend to be more 'hard' than people who don't

smoke. Thirty eight percent of pupils live in a household with adults who smoke and of these adults 42% smoke inside the home.

Figure 11: Do any adults in your household smoke?



### Solvents and Drugs

On at least one occasion, 9% of pupils have been offered solvents and 5% of pupils have inhaled solvents. Over half (53%) of those who have inhaled solvents no longer use them.

Almost a fifth (17%) of pupils have been offered drugs (not counting solvents) on at least one occasion and 8% of pupils have used or tried drugs (not counting solvents) at some time. The two most common drugs for pupils to have ever used or tried are Cannabis (5%) and Legal Highs (2%). One percent of pupils have used Poppers, Ecstasy, Tranquilisers, Heroin, Magic Mushrooms and Cocaine.

Of the pupils that have used or tried Cannabis over a quarter (27%) use Cannabis at least a few times a month, nearly one in five (17%) rarely use Cannabis (less than a few times a year) and almost half (44%) no longer use Cannabis.

Figure 12: How often do you use Cannabis?

