

Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey Update

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Children's Select Committee on action taken in response to the findings of [Wiltshire's Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021](#), to outline plans for future health and wellbeing related surveys and to seek the support of the committee to encourage schools to take part.

Relevance to the Council's Business Plan

2. Capturing the experience of children and young people in relation to their health and wellbeing aligns with all four guiding themes of the Council Business Plan: prevention and early intervention, improving social mobility and tackling inequalities, understanding communities, and working together.
3. Understanding gained from the survey findings also supports us to achieve the Business Plan goals of Wiltshire being a place where people get the best start in life, stay active, and feel safe.

Background

4. Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Surveys have been conducted through schools and colleges across Wiltshire for over 40 years. The relatively large number of respondents from more recent surveys (9,951 from 95 settings in 2017, and 7,499 from 78 settings in 2021) provide confidence that the findings are broadly representative of young people in Wiltshire.
5. The purpose of the surveys is to gain a better understanding of the experience of school-aged children and young people across Wiltshire both inside and outside school in relation to, for example, healthy lifestyles, risky behaviours like smoking and drinking, and emotional wellbeing. It is expected that the findings will be considered alongside service outcome data and qualitative data to:
 - inform Local Authority and Integrated Care Board commissioning decisions;
 - affect service and project developments; and
 - influence system-wide thinking through programmes such as Wiltshire's Family and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme.
6. The survey findings are disseminated widely through key strategic groups and networks. Schools and colleges that participate receive setting-based reports comparing the responses from their pupils with the Wiltshire average to use in their Self-Evaluation Frameworks and to target school-based activities. In addition,

a Wiltshire-wide overview report and thematic reports are produced to inform strategic and operational decision making among key partners including local authority, education, health, police, and the voluntary sector. A series of infographics capturing key findings (Figure 1) were a new edition to the suite of resources following the last survey conducted in 2021.

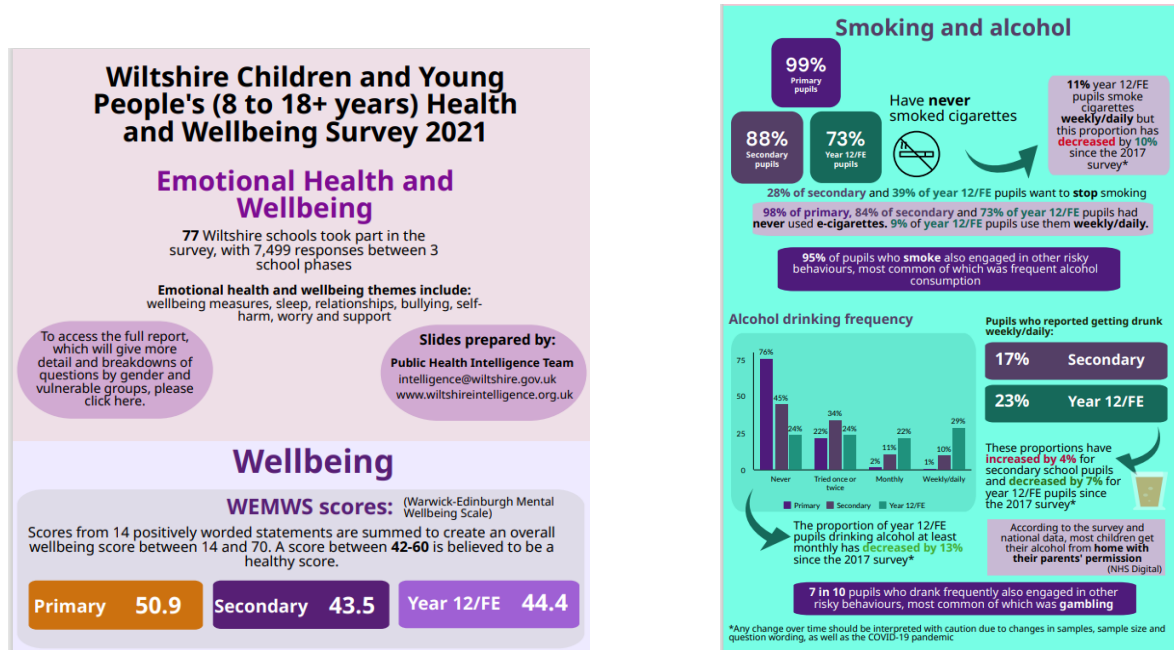


Figure 1: Examples of 2021 survey summary infographics

- An overview of the 2021 survey and key findings were presented at the Children's Select Committee on 6th July 2022, and a request was made for a future update on the action taken as a result of the survey findings.

Main Considerations

Feedback on awareness and use of survey

- In September 2023, schools, and partners from across the system working directly or indirectly with children, young people and families were asked to complete a short, anonymous questionnaire to feedback on their awareness of the Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing survey reports, and whether or how they used the findings. There were two questionnaires:
 - For school staff - to which there were 33 responses from 28 schools, and
 - For anyone else delivering or commissioning services for children and young people in Wiltshire – to which there were 147 responses available for analysis.
- The responses may not be representative of how the survey data has been used across all agencies and partners in Wiltshire, as the numbers were relatively small, however, they provide a useful insight into how we can continue to improve our provision of data from the survey. The highlights from the feedback are summarised below.

10. School staff all reported using one or more of the reports generated by the health and wellbeing survey and the vast majority indicated that the different styles of report were either very useful or somewhat useful.
11. Staff from schools involved in the previous health and wellbeing survey all responded that the school focussed reports were useful.
12. The responses showed that the survey reports were used in a variety of ways by school staff, shown below in Figure 2.

How have you used the results of the survey? (tick all that apply)

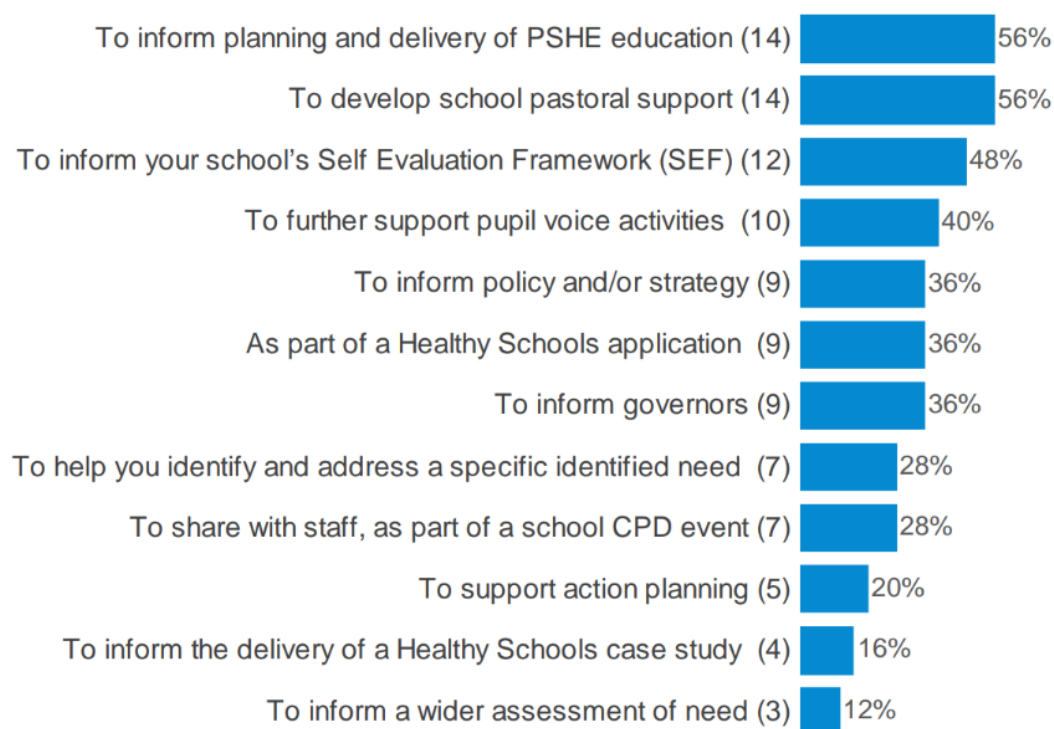


Figure 2: How school staff have used the survey results

13. Feedback from 147 colleagues working directly or indirectly with children and young people across the system widely (Local Authority, health, police, and voluntary sector) indicated that those who were aware of the reports on the survey findings found them useful to inform discussion and drive change both strategically and operationally.
14. However, nearly two thirds of respondents were not aware of the reports generated by the survey, thus highlighting the need to raise their profile and encourage greater usage.
15. Of those who were aware, almost all reported using the results of the survey in a variety of ways depicted below (Figure 3) and said action had been taken as a result.

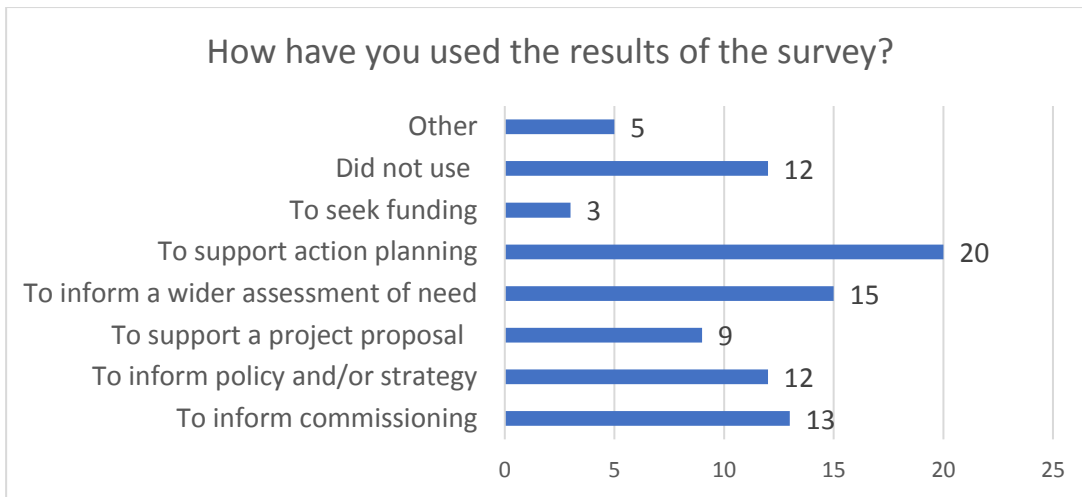


Figure 3: How have the results of the survey been used?

16. Specific examples of action taken were also reported and these have been grouped into the following themes:

- To inform local commissioning and strategy development (e.g. linking findings to the Disadvantaged Learner Strategy, and determining workstreams for the SEND Strategy Implementation Plan).
- To include in needs assessments (e.g. School Health Needs Assessments completed by the School Nursing Service)
- To inform service/ project delivery (e.g. the schools-based Phunky Foods Project)
- To influence the development of resources (e.g. for schools).
- To raise awareness of health and wellbeing issues identified through the survey (e.g. highlighting issues to councillors, using to guide themes in a staff newsletter).
- To inform workforce development (e.g. influencing continuous professional development priorities for practitioners).
- To improve understanding of the experience of children and young people from more vulnerable groups and adapt approaches on the frontline.

17. Case studies on how the survey data has been used were also shared by schools and colleagues, examples of which are summarised below.

School-based examples

18. There is evidence that schools are using the data to identify health priorities, to use a baseline against which to measure change following the implementation of an intervention and to support them to achieve the local Healthy Schools Award.

Box Primary School: evidencing health priorities (Oct 2022 – July 2023)

19. Box Primary School used data to select their health priorities (see quote below), addressed these using school-based interventions, demonstrated impact, and are keen for the next survey to inform their future work.
20. *“Evidence from Wiltshire Children and Young People's (8 to 18+ years) Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021 highlighted that only 67% of pupil at primary age feel they receive mental health support in school - which we still saw as a strikingly low number. We also feel physical health is hugely important for increasing children's mental health, so it was unnerving to find that only 49% of primary age children do 6 hours of exercise a week.”*
21. The school went on to implement interventions to increase activity and to introduce mindfulness strategies, and they gathered data to measure change. At the end of both projects, they were able to demonstrate a measurable increase in pupil's daily steps and activity, and a notable improvement in mindset.

Ludgershall Castle Primary School: Gold Healthy School Award (April 2021 – March 2022)

22. Ludgershall Castle Primary School showed how they used data from the survey to triangulate what staff were observing in relation to healthy eating and to identify a project to achieve their Gold Healthy Schools Award
23. *“School staff observed the unhealthy content of packed lunches over a period of time and were aware that work needed to be done to improve them. The school felt the Gold Healthy Schools Award was a good opportunity to do targeted work to improve the quality of packed lunches. We also referred back to our Wiltshire Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2018 and noted that a high number of children were eating crisps and chocolate at lunch times (packed lunches) and our recent data for 2021 confirmed that this was an area we need to improve on. Our last NCMP data showed that children in the Tidworth area had higher than average rates of obesity among children (both in reception and year 6).”*
24. Following the school's intervention, they provided data to show that children were consciously making healthier choices about the contents of their lunch box. Children eating fruit and vegetables had increased and there was a decrease in chocolate and crisps in lunchboxes.

St Nicholas Porton: identifying health priorities (Feb 2022 – Sept 2022)

25. *“From our Wiltshire Children & Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2020 & 2021 the children in our school felt that they needed more support in making healthy food choices. They also responded that they regularly ate less healthy food choices such as crisps and chocolate – a percentage that was much higher than the Wiltshire average.”*
26. Following the schools Healthy School intervention and surveys to measure impact, the school reported: “Children choosing a portion of fruit or vegetable at snack time

increased from 50% to 94% at our last data collection in September 2022. Children choosing a snack increased from 71% to 76%”

St Peter's Academy: triangulating staff observation (Sept 2021- July 2022)

27. *“Since returning to school in September 2021, we have found the children, particularly in FS, Y2 and Y6 classes finding school life challenging. The Wiltshire Children and Young Persons Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021 reiterated this by highlighting that the KS2 children were feeling more stressed by school and in turn, staff were struggling to find the support they needed to cope. We felt that a whole school approach was essential to support staff morale, family relationships and for pupil engagement.”*

28. Following a Healthy Schools intervention some of the outcomes produced included:

- 72% of pupils being able to describe two or more different techniques to help them self-regulate their emotional wellbeing, compared to just 20% before the project began.
- 96% of pupils being able to name one way to self-regulate their emotions compared to 58% at the beginning of the project.
- 90% of pupils knowing a trusted adult they can talk to if they needed help, compared to 79% at the start of the project.
- 80% of pupils reporting that the school helps them learn about different emotions.
- And 81% of pupils believing that the school cares for them and how they are feeling.

Studley Green: Healthy School action planning (Summer 2020 - 2022)

29. *“Wiltshire Children and Young People’s Well-being Survey 2021 results reveal Studley Green Primary School has well-being indicators poorer than average for the County.”*

30. The school focussed particularly on data related to bullying and feelings of safety at school. In response, they developed and delivered an action plan for their Wiltshire Healthy Schools Case study showing areas they set out to introduce or improve on and the intended impact and measurable outcomes. Following the plan there are documents that provide evidence of the measurable outcomes.

Strategic and commissioning examples

Emotional wellbeing

31. Data on emotional wellbeing informed the specification for the Children and Young People’s Early Mental Health Service procured by the Local Authority Children and Families’ Commissioning team early in 2023.

32. Data on self-harm informed discussion at a recent Wiltshire Self-Harm Summit. The opportunity to view the data by different sub-groups of young people provided particularly useful insights which are not available through other data sources. The event, organised by Public Health, was attended by approximately 80 professionals from a wide range of services including schools, hospitals, CAMHS, Local Authority

and the voluntary sector. Feedback was very positive and the outputs from the event are driving action around this agenda going forwards.

Substance use

33. The findings from the survey were used throughout the Substance Use Health Needs Assessment to demonstrate the prevalence of substance use amongst young people in Wiltshire. The data has then gone on to inform key parts of the Substance Use Strategy and delivery plan which will be a focus for the Combating Drugs Partnership over the next 5 years.

Sexual health

34. The findings related to sexual health highlighted the ongoing importance of sexual health services, such as No Worries (a sexual health service specifically for young people), supporting school age children. This helped influence engagement with related services, such as the school nursing service, during the 're-launch' of No Worries. As a result, there was good uptake of promotional resources for the service, and the idea to develop a 'No Worries Lite' model was identified. This model will enable a wider range of settings/ providers to receive training and resources to deliver some basic sexual health advice, support, and signposting for young people.

Future plans

35. This report demonstrates the value of undertaking Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Surveys in Wiltshire not only to schools but the wider system.
36. Discussions are underway between colleagues within Public Health and Education and Skills to inform the timing of future surveys. The draft proposal is to repeat this full-length survey every four years across Wiltshire, meaning the next would be in 2025. This will be dependent on funding being maintained within the relevant budgets from central government.
37. In addition, the benefit of gathering more regular data on the emotional wellbeing needs of children and young people has been recognised, and work is underway to prepare for the launch of a new Wiltshire Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Survey in 2024. This is a short survey, free to schools, and includes a subset of questions from the full-length Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey, which will enable trends to be monitored more frequently. It will be live for pupils to complete between 19th February and 20th March 2024.
38. To increase take-up of the survey among schools and colleges across Wiltshire, an opt-out approach trialled successfully in another local authority area, is being adopted for the new survey, setting an expectation that all schools and further education colleges will take part. The impact of this approach will be monitored and reviewed by colleagues in Public Health and Education and Skills.
39. Reporting arrangements will include setting-based reports for schools and colleges to use in self-evaluation reports, to identify need and plan school-based interventions related to emotional wellbeing. There will also be a Wiltshire wide

report showing the averages for Wiltshire with some analysis related to vulnerability factors.

40. Assuming the new Emotional Wellbeing Survey is a success, the plan is to repeat it every four years in between the full survey, thus providing biannual data on emotional wellbeing. The other development is to enable school-aged children and young people not in school to complete the survey by engaging with providers of Alternative Provision. We will also work with colleagues in Education Welfare to discuss how best to capture the voice of children and young people who are electively home educated. This is being trialled in 2024 when implementing the Wiltshire Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Survey.

41. Table 1 summarises the draft proposal described above for the frequency of children and young people's health and wellbeing related surveys.

Type of Survey	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Short Emotional Wellbeing survey	X			X		
Full Health and Wellbeing survey		X				X

Table 1: Draft timetable for future health and wellbeing related surveys

Conclusion

42. This report highlights how quantitative and qualitative feedback on action taken in response to the findings of Wiltshire's Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021 demonstrates the value of the survey and shows how it can drive improvements in health and wellbeing for children and young people locally.

43. The feedback also highlights the importance of raising greater awareness of the survey reports, and actively encouraging Council colleagues and partners across the system to utilise the data to inform service delivery, commissioning, and strategic planning.

44. It is proposed that the Health and Wellbeing Survey is undertaken every four years with an additional shorter survey on emotional wellbeing in between.

Lead Director: Kate Blackburn, Director of Public Health

Report Author: Sally Johnson, Public Health Strategist (0-25 years)
sally.johnson@wiltshire.gov.uk

Date of report: 19 December 2023