



#BeeWell Headline Findings 2025/26

Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and
Southampton (HIPS)

March 2026

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Glossary of terms used in this report

Cisgender = Girls and boys whose gender matches their assigned sex at birth. This term helps us to clarify when trans young people have a different experience.

TGD = Transgender and gender diverse, which includes non-binary and gender fluid young people. This is used as a label on graphs and figures.

Trans = Used to include anyone whose gender differs from their assigned sex at birth. We use this in the report to refer to young people who are transgender, non-binary, gender fluid or identify another way.

Cross-sectional = Data that shows how things are at one moment in time.

Longitudinal = Data that shows how things change for the same group of people over time.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan = A legally binding plan that sets out long-term education, health, and care needs and the specific support a child or young person must receive.

SEN support = Extra help in school, but without a formal plan. Support is organised by the school rather than through a statutory process.

Executive summary

#BeeWell is a multi-year programme implemented across Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton to systematically assess and strengthen the wellbeing of young people.

Led by The University of Manchester, The Gregson Family Foundation and Anna Freud alongside Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and Isle of Wight Council. It provides a robust dataset that captures the lived experiences, health behaviours and support needs of students in secondary schools, enabling partners to identify differences in health outcomes, monitor trends over time, inform strategic policy responses and collective action across the system.

We now have three years of data. Since 2023, #BeeWell has collected over 63,000 surveys from over **46,000 young people across 115 secondary schools**. In 2025, the survey engaged more than 20,900 students in Years 7 and 10, including a **diversity of young people** including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) (18%), those eligible for free school meals (FSM) (22%), and those who identify as LGBTQ+ (16%). This sample provides broad coverage across sociodemographic groups, enabling **detailed analysis of inequalities in wellbeing across the area**.

The 2025 #BeeWell survey responses indicate **improvements across several core wellbeing indicators** at population level, including **increases in life satisfaction and psychological wellbeing, and reductions in emotional difficulties among Year 10 students**. Longitudinal evidence suggests that **wellbeing among the same cohort of students has remained stable**. This is an encouraging finding given the decline typically observed during these years.

Despite these improvements, the data highlights **significant and persistent inequalities in health outcomes**. Gender is an important factor with regard to outcomes across wellbeing, stress, coping, bullying and health behaviours, with **transgender and gender-diverse (non-binary and gender fluid) young people experiencing consistently poorer outcomes** than their cisgender peers. **Cisgender girls also experience poorer outcomes** than cisgender boys across multiple outcomes, such as emotional difficulties and stress. **Socioeconomic disadvantages and SEND status also remain associated with poorer outcomes** across multiple domains.

These findings underscore the continued need for **place-based approaches** and **targeted early-intervention strategies**.

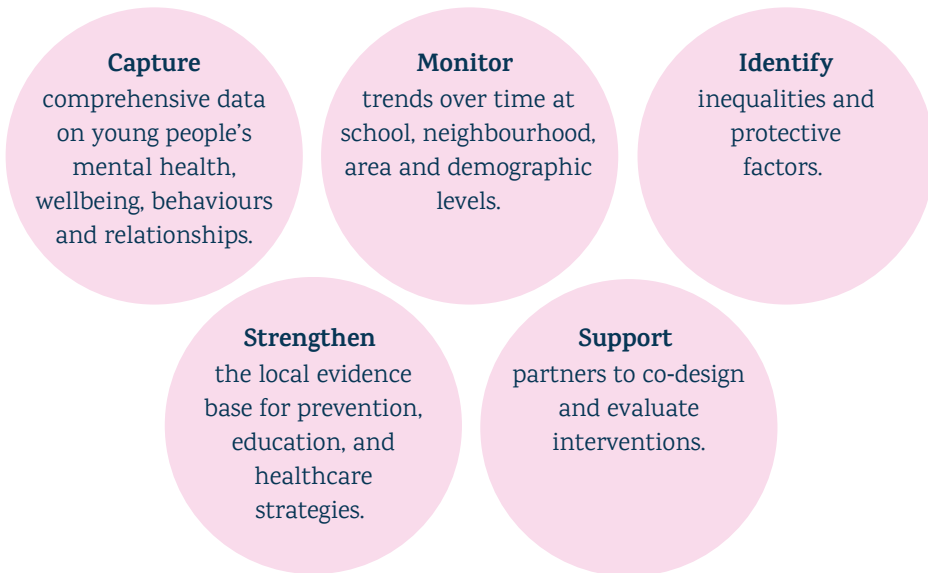


Introduction

The #BeeWell programme was rolled out to Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton in 2023 to measure young people's wellbeing and act together for change. As a partnership we work together with academic partners, Local Government, local schools and other partners to understand young people's wellbeing, putting their voices at the centre of our work and acting on the findings.



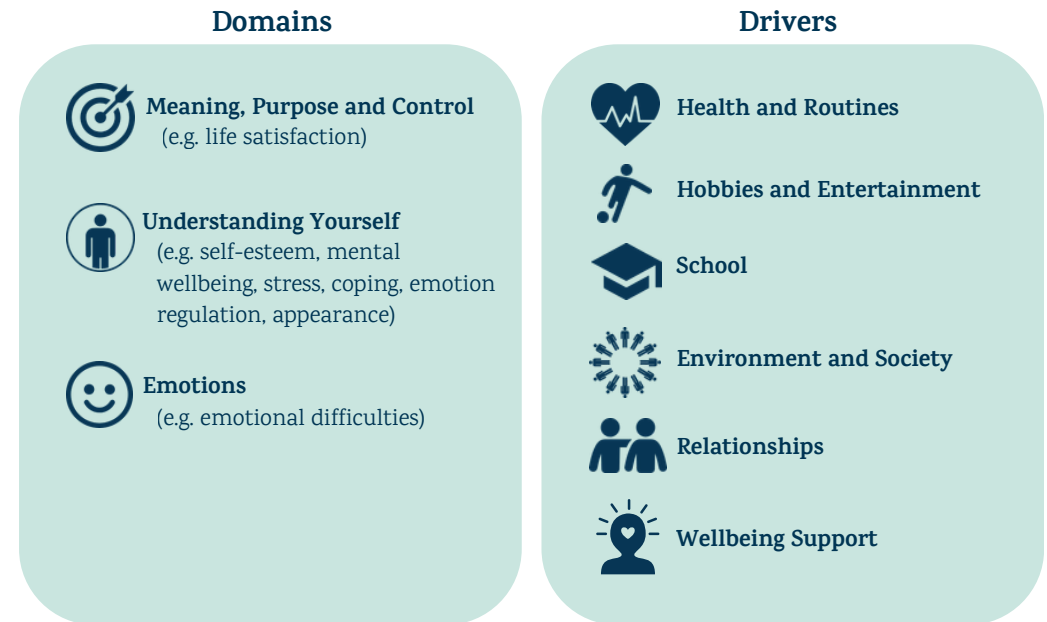
#BeeWell operates as a system resource, generating high-quality data that informs service design, policy development, resource allocation and preventative public health approaches. The programme aims to:



In 2025, the programme expanded to include Year 7 students for the first time, providing valuable insight into the experiences of young people transitioning into secondary education. This, combined with the repeat measurement of Year 10 students, enables both cross-sectional and longitudinal analysis.

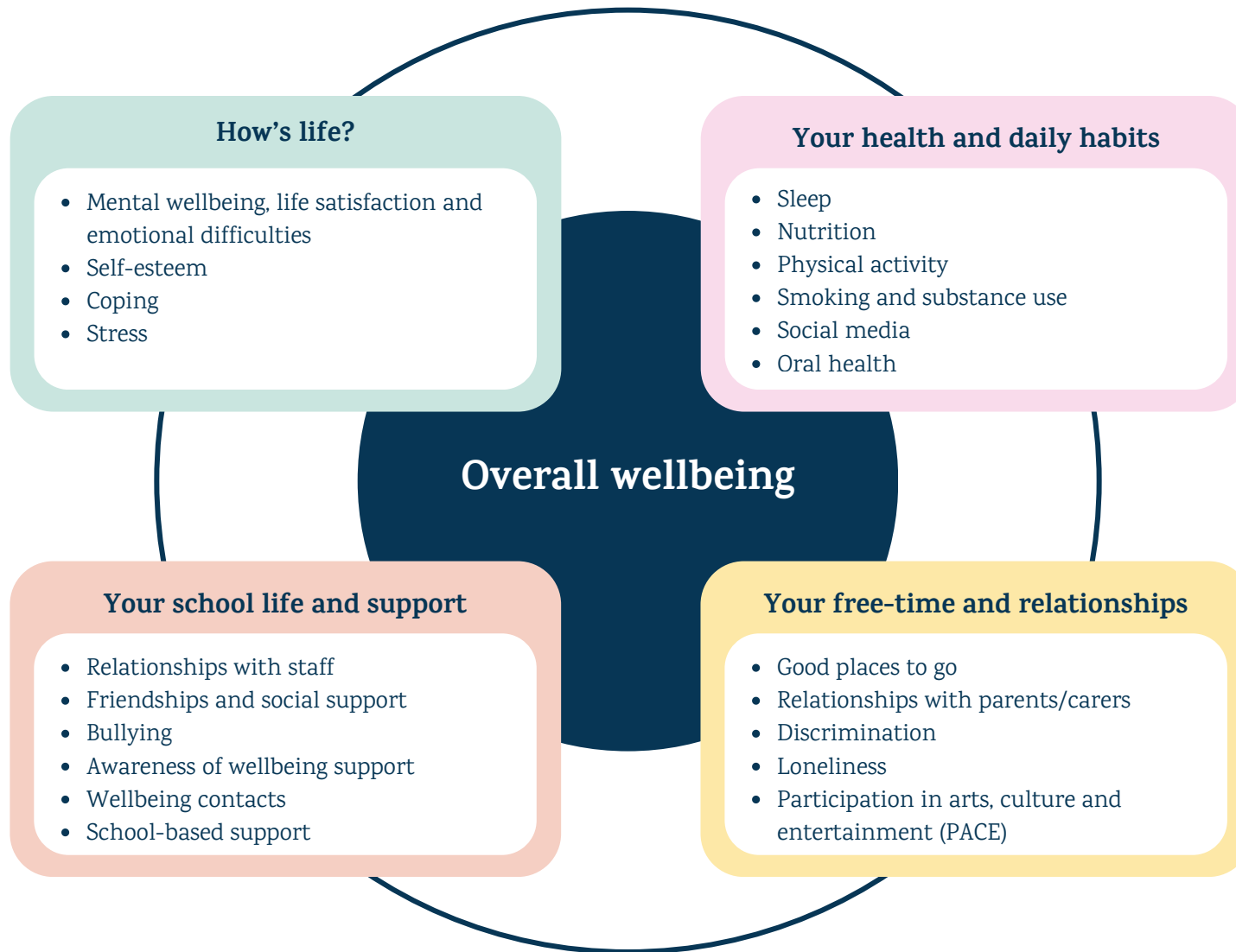
The #BeeWell Survey

The #BeeWell dataset remains one of the most **comprehensive sources of insight into young people's wellbeing** across the area. It is a foundational component of local public health intelligence and a key driver for partnership action across education, health, voluntary sector organisations and local authorities.



The full survey asks 120 questions covering the above domains and drivers. A short and symbol version are also available to non-mainstream schools and settings.

The domains and drivers of wellbeing focused on in this report:



Chapter 1. How's life?

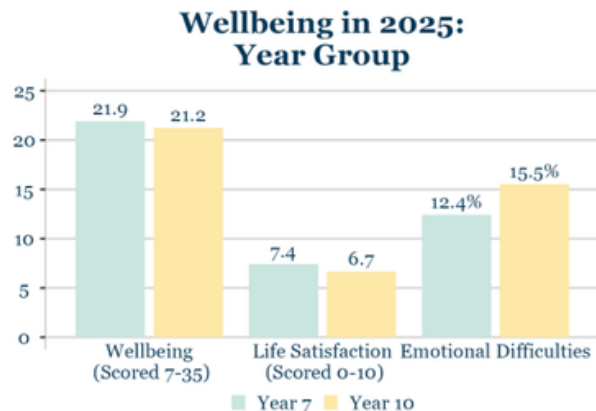
Mental wellbeing, life satisfaction and emotional difficulties

This section summarises patterns in young people's mental wellbeing across the HIPS area, drawing on three years of #BeeWell survey data. The indicators used (life satisfaction, mental wellbeing and emotional difficulties) provide a rounded picture of subjective wellbeing at population level.

Year 7 wellbeing (2025)

The inclusion of Year 7 students in 2025 allows comparison across age groups. Year 7 young people surveyed in 2025 showed higher wellbeing and life satisfaction compared to Year 10s, and lower rates of elevated emotional difficulties:

- **Higher psychological wellbeing** (21.9 vs. 21.2 in Year 10).
- **Higher life satisfaction** (7.4 vs. 6.7).
- **Lower emotional difficulties** (12.4% vs. 15.5%).

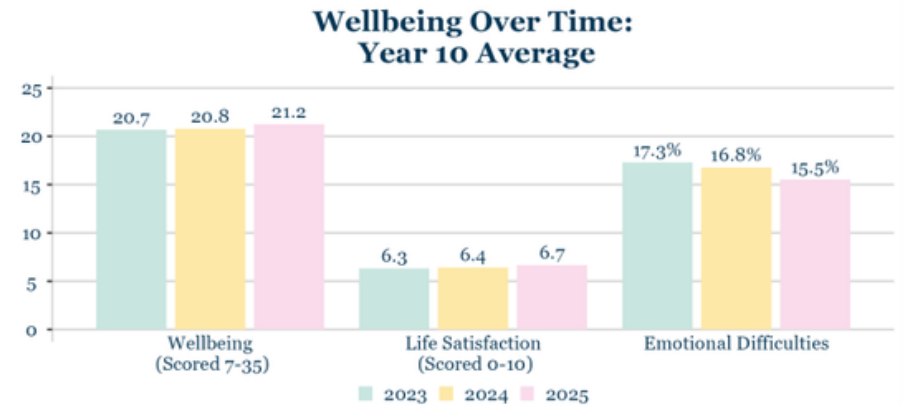


These age-related differences are consistent with developmental evidence that wellbeing typically declines during mid-adolescence.

Population-level trends (Year 10 cross-sectional cohorts)

Analysis of three consecutive Year 10 cohorts (2023–2025) shows consistent improvements across all major wellbeing indicators:

- **Life satisfaction increased** from 6.3/10 in 2023 to 6.7/10 in 2025.
- **Psychological wellbeing increased** from 20.7/35 to 21.2/35.
- **Emotional difficulties reduced** from 17.3% to 15.5%, representing a relative reduction of approximately 10%.



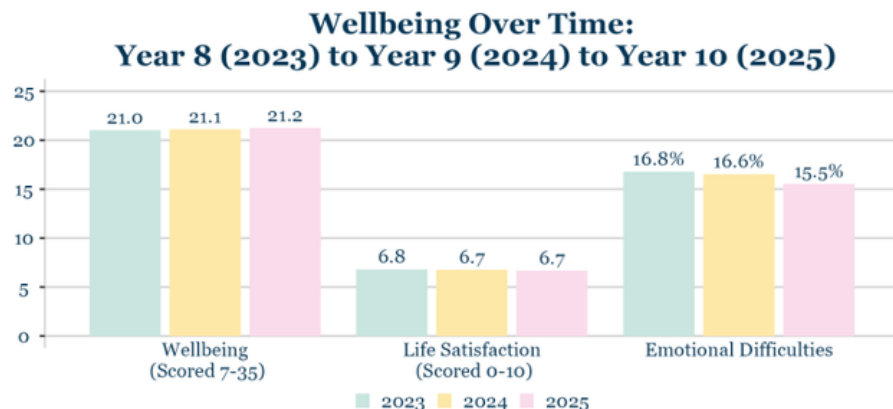
These positive changes suggest that service provision, such as strengthened mental wellbeing and school-based support, and possible improvements in broader social determinants, may be contributing to more positive outcomes for young people across the region.

Improvements in emotional difficulties between 2023 and 2025 has been mainly seen in neighbourhoods with the highest levels of difficulties, suggesting that local targeted interventions may be helping.

Longitudinal trends (following the same cohort)

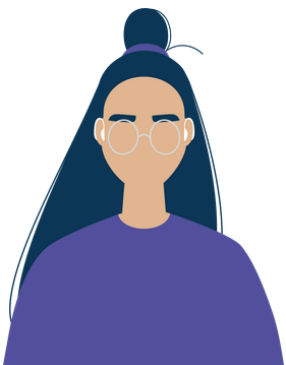
Tracking the cohort of students surveyed in Year 8 (2023), Year 9 (2024) and Year 10 (2025) provides further insight into how wellbeing changes across early adolescence:

- **Psychological wellbeing remained stable** (21.0 to 21.2).
- **Life satisfaction remained stable** (6.8 to 6.7).
- **Emotional difficulties declined** slightly from 16.8% to 15.5%.



Given that the young people's perception of wellbeing often declines with age, the stability and slight reduction in emotional difficulties could represent the beginnings of a positive trend.

However, as school attendance changes each year (students joining and leaving the school), this data should be interpreted carefully as there is no way to ensure the students are the same each year.



Inequalities in wellbeing

The inequalities in wellbeing presented below are based on combined data from young people in Year 7 and 10.

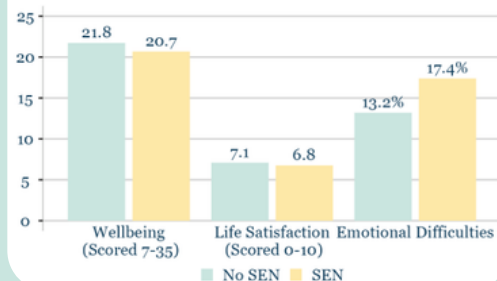
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Among young people with SEND reported:

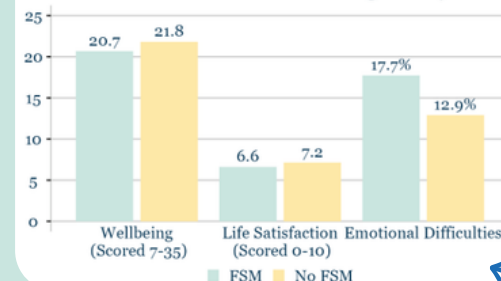
- **Similar wellbeing and life satisfaction** scores to those without SEND.
- **Higher emotional difficulties** (17.4% vs. 13.2%).

Although overall wellbeing levels appear comparable, the elevated rate of emotional difficulties suggests a need for sustained early help, tailored school support, and strengthened SEN-inclusive environments.

Wellbeing in 2025: SEN Status



Wellbeing in 2025: Free School Meal Eligibility



Socioeconomic disadvantage (Free School Meal (FSM) eligibility)

FSM-eligible young people consistently experience poorer outcomes:

- **Lower wellbeing** (20.7 vs 21.8).
- **Lower life satisfaction** (6.6 vs 7.2).
- **Higher emotional difficulties** (17.7% vs. 12.9%).

These findings align with national evidence on the link between socioeconomic disadvantage and mental health and highlight an ongoing need for proportionate universalism in policy and service delivery.

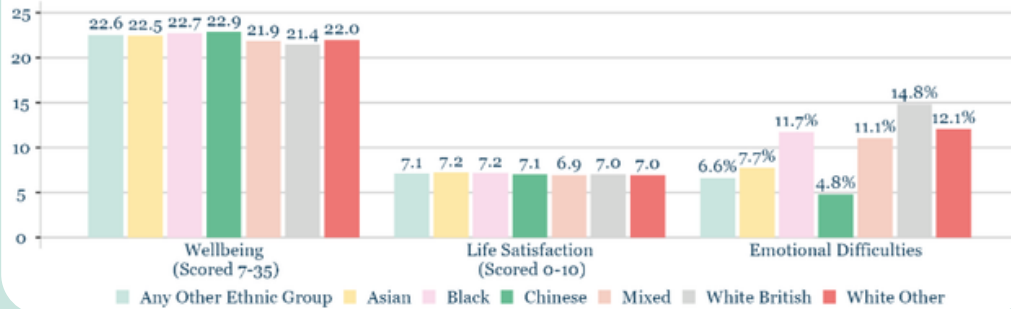
Ethnic group differences

Wellbeing and life satisfaction scores were broadly similar across ethnic groups; however, emotional difficulties varied more clearly:

- **Lowest prevalence:** Chinese young people (4.8%).
- **Highest prevalence:** White British young people (14.8%).

These variations may reflect a combination of structural factors, cultural norms, reporting styles, local school experiences and community-level protective factors.

Wellbeing in 2025:
Ethnicity



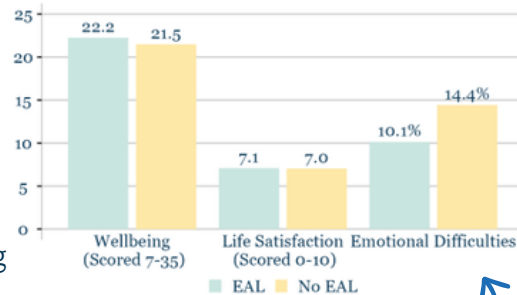
English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Young people with EAL reported:

- **Slightly higher wellbeing** (22.2 vs. 21.5).
- **Slightly lower emotional difficulties** (10.1% vs. 14.4%).

These findings are consistent with wider evidence suggesting that multilingualism, cultural protective factors, or strong family networks may contribute positively to emotional resilience

Wellbeing in 2025:
English as an Additional Language



Gender (largest inequalities)

Gender is the most significant and consistent predictor of mental health outcomes across all measures.

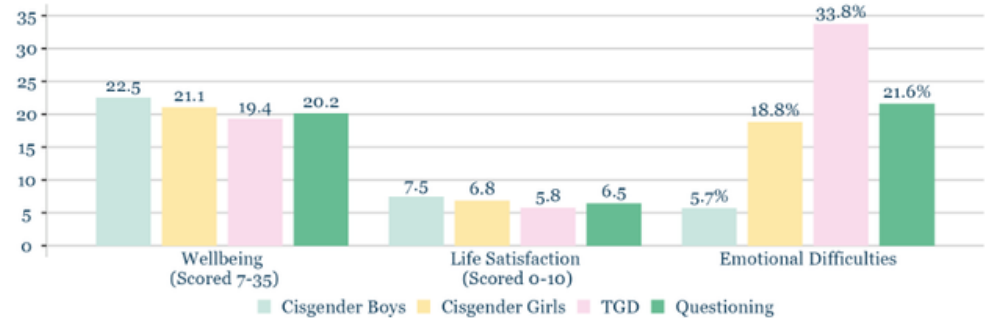
Trans young people reported:

- **Markedly lower wellbeing** (19.4).
- **Lower life satisfaction** (5.8).
- **Substantially higher emotional difficulties** (33.8%).

In comparison:

- Cisgender boys: 22.5 wellbeing; 7.5 life satisfaction; 5.7% emotional difficulties.
- Cisgender girls: 21.1 wellbeing; 6.8 life satisfaction; 18.8% emotional difficulties.

Wellbeing in 2025:
Gender



These disparities indicate **significant unmet need** and **wider structural, social and psychological pressures** experienced by trans young people. They require **focused, intersectional, and multi-agency responses**, building on the work of LGBTQ+ young people and [Breakout Youth](#) in 2024/25 to provide context to the findings from their lived experience and the recommendations developed.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is a core component of young people's subjective wellbeing and is closely linked to resilience, school engagement and mental health outcomes.

The #BeeWell data provides a consistent picture of self-esteem across three years, highlighting both **stability at population level** and **significant inequalities for specific groups**.

Self-esteem among Year 10 students in the HIPS area has shown a **modest improvement** since 2023 but **remains broadly stable overall**. As expected, **Year 7 students report higher self-esteem than Year 10s**, reflecting a typical developmental pattern in which confidence tends to decline during mid-adolescence before stabilising in later teenage years.



Inequalities in Self-Esteem

Although population-level trends are positive, there are **pronounced disparities between demographic groups**. These inequalities provide important direction for targeted public health and education interventions.

Gender

Gender is the **strongest predictor** of levels of self-esteem within the dataset. In 2025:

- **Trans young people** reported substantially **lower self-esteem** (13.14/20) than their peers.
- **Cisgender boys** reported the **highest levels** (15.40/20).
- **Cisgender girls** reported slightly **lower levels** (14.41/20).

The magnitude of this disparity suggests significant and persistent pressures experienced by trans young people, like bullying, discrimination and poorer family relationships, which are reflected across multiple wellbeing indicators. This has implications for inclusive school practice, anti-bullying approaches, safeguarding and mental health support pathways.

Ethnicity

Self-esteem levels varied across ethnic groups, with several **minority ethnic groups** reporting **higher scores** than White British young people:

- **Chinese, Black and Other ethnic groups** had the **highest self-esteem** scores.
- **White British** students had comparatively **lower** scores.

These findings may reflect a combination of cultural protective factors, strong family or community support networks, or differing norms in self-evaluation and reporting.

Socioeconomic disadvantage (FSM eligibility)

FSM-eligible young people reported slightly **lower self-esteem**, although the difference was **less pronounced** than in other wellbeing indicators.

While this inequality is modest, it aligns with broader evidence linking socioeconomic adversity to lower wellbeing, confidence and opportunities for positive identity development.

SEND

Differences in self-esteem between young people with SEND and those without were **small and not significant**.

However, when interpreted alongside higher rates of emotional difficulties and bullying among SEND students, these findings suggest that self-esteem alone may not capture the full extent of mental health pressures experienced by this group.

In conclusion, interventions aimed at improving self-esteem should therefore be **proportionate, evidence-based and tailored to groups facing the greatest disadvantage**. Schools, local authorities and partners should particularly consider:

- **Inclusive environments** that support trans young people, girls and young women as part of a whole school offer.
- Opportunities that **promote belonging, confidence and positive identity** for disadvantaged groups.
- **Prevention programmes** in early adolescence, when self-esteem begins to decline.



Coping

The ability to cope with stress is an important determinant of mental wellbeing, influencing resilience, problem-solving, and the capacity to manage everyday challenges.

#BeeWell data for Year 10 students indicates that perceived coping ability has remained **moderate and stable** across the three-year period (2023–2025), suggesting no significant population-level change during this time.

Across all three survey years, most Year 10 students report a **mid-range level of coping**, indicating that while many young people can manage stress to some extent, there remains considerable scope for strengthening coping skills through universal and targeted interventions.

Inequalities in coping

Gender

Gender shows the **most pronounced disparity** in coping ability:

- **Trans young people** report the **lowest coping** scores (3.52/6).
- **Cisgender boys** report the **highest** levels (4.36/6).
- **Cisgender girls** report **slightly lower coping than boys** (4.10/6).

These findings align with broader evidence from the wellbeing and stress indicators, which show that trans young people experience disproportionate emotional and psychological burden. Coping ability appears to be one of several related domains where these inequalities manifest, indicating a need for targeted and affirming support.

Ethnicity and Language

Ethnic differences in coping ability suggest the presence of potential protective factors:

- **Chinese young people** reported the **highest coping** scores (4.83/6).
- Most **other minority ethnic groups** also reported **higher coping than White British students**.
- Young people with **EAL** similarly reported **higher coping**.

These patterns may reflect cultural norms around persistence and problem-solving, strong family or community networks, other resilience-enhancing factors embedded within cultural identity or family structures, or differing norms in self-evaluation and reporting.

Socioeconomic disadvantage (FSM eligibility) and SEND

Socioeconomic disadvantage and SEND status were both associated with **slightly lower coping** scores, though these inequalities were **modest** compared with those observed for gender.

While these differences are smaller, they remain relevant in the context of wider evidence showing that young people experiencing socioeconomic adversity or living with SEND face greater cumulative stressors.

Strengthening coping skills among these groups remains an important preventative strategy.

Stress

Stress is a key determinant of mental health and can influence emotional development, school engagement, physical health and long-term wellbeing. The #BeeWell survey assesses stress using two indicators:

Feeling
overwhelmed
by difficulties

Feeling unable
to control
important
aspects of life.

Together, these measures provide an indication of young people's perceived emotional load and their sense of agency in managing daily challenges.

Across all indicators, stress levels among Year 10 students **remained stable** over the three-year period from 2023 to 2025. Typically, between **one in five and one in four young people** report **high stress**, indicating that significant proportions of adolescents experience ongoing difficulties with emotional regulation and the demands of school, relationships and daily life.



One in five young people report high stress

This stability suggests that, at a population level, there has been no meaningful improvement or deterioration in stress over time. However, this masks considerable variation between demographic groups.

Inequalities in stress

Gender

Consistent with findings for wellbeing and coping, gender is the **strongest and most persistent predictor** of higher stress:

- **Cisgender boys** report the **lowest stress** levels (15% & 18%).
- **Cisgender girls** report **significantly higher** levels (27% & 32%).
- **Trans young people** report the **highest stress** levels (30% & 35%).

Almost twice as many trans young people and cisgender girls experience high stress, compared to cisgender boys. These pronounced inequalities suggest that these groups face emotional and social pressures and we need to better understand what shapes this.

Socioeconomic disadvantage (FSM eligibility)

Socioeconomic disadvantage had a **modest impact** on stress levels:

- FSM-eligible students reported slightly higher levels of feeling overwhelmed.
- No meaningful differences were seen in relation to perceived control over important aspects of life.

While these differences are less pronounced than those observed for gender, they reflect the broader influence of disadvantage on young people's emotional environments.

SEND

SEND status showed **minimal differences** in stress levels. However, when interpreted alongside higher rates of bullying, lower sleep levels and higher emotional difficulties among SEND students, these findings suggest that stress may interact with multiple overlapping challenges within this group.

Ethnicity and Language

Patterns of stress varied significantly by ethnic group:

- Young people from **Chinese, Black, and Asian backgrounds** reported **lower stress levels** compared with White British students.
- Young people with **EAL** also reported **lower stress**.

These findings may indicate the presence of protective factors within some communities, such as strong family cohesion, cultural resilience, or norms around shared responsibility, though further exploration would be required to understand these protective mechanisms.

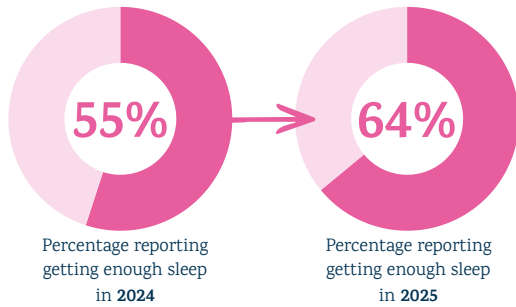
In conclusion, the stress data presents several key implications:

- Stress affects a substantial proportion of young people and has remained stable over time, highlighting an ongoing need for **universal emotional literacy, early help, and school-based mental health initiatives**.
- Gender differences in stress mirror inequalities across all major wellbeing domains, suggesting **significant structural and relational barriers** experienced by **trans young people**. Addressing these disparities will require **system-wide action, culturally competent provision, and strengthened safeguarding and inclusion practices**.
- Lower levels of stress among some minority ethnic groups may reflect protective cultural or social factors that could inform **strengths-based interventions**.
- Modest socioeconomic and SEND-related differences suggest that stress in these groups interacts with wider determinants and reinforcing vulnerabilities, underscoring the importance of **proportionate universalism** and **multi-agency early intervention**.

Chapter 2. Your health and daily habits

Sleep

In 2025, **most young people said they get enough sleep to concentrate at school**. About 64% reported getting enough sleep, which is better than in 2024, when 55% said the same.



Among Year 10 students in 2025, more young people reported getting enough sleep than in previous years. However, when we look at the same group of students over time, the **number getting enough sleep has gone down a little as they moved from Year 8 to Year 10**.

There were differences in which young people said they got enough sleep:

Almost **58% of young people who are eligible for FSM said they get enough sleep**, compared to roughly 66% of those who are not.

Boys were more likely to get enough sleep than girls.

Young people who were **questioning their gender** or who **were trans** were **less likely** to get enough sleep.

Young people **without SEND were also more likely to get enough sleep** compared to those who had SEN support or an EHC plan.

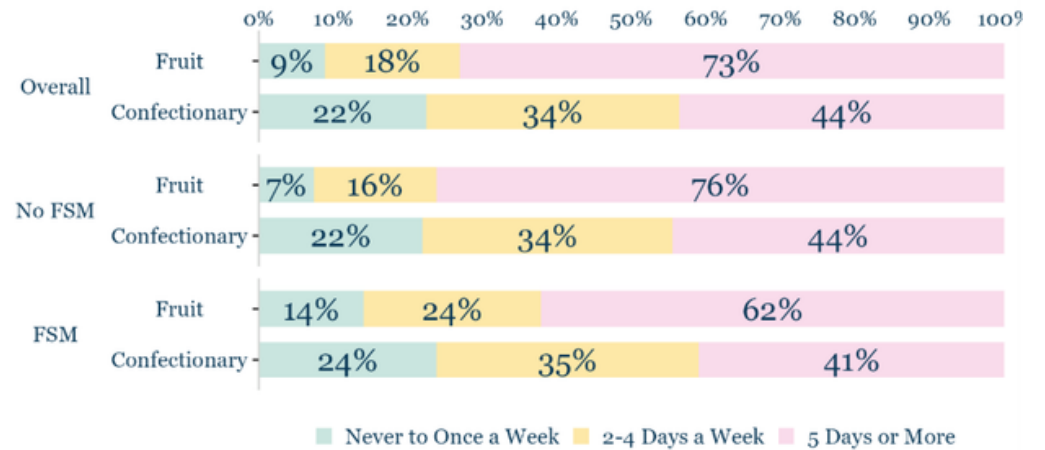
However, **Asian young people were the most likely to report getting enough sleep**, more than any other ethnic group.

Nutrition

Young people were asked how many times per week they usually eat fruit and vegetables.

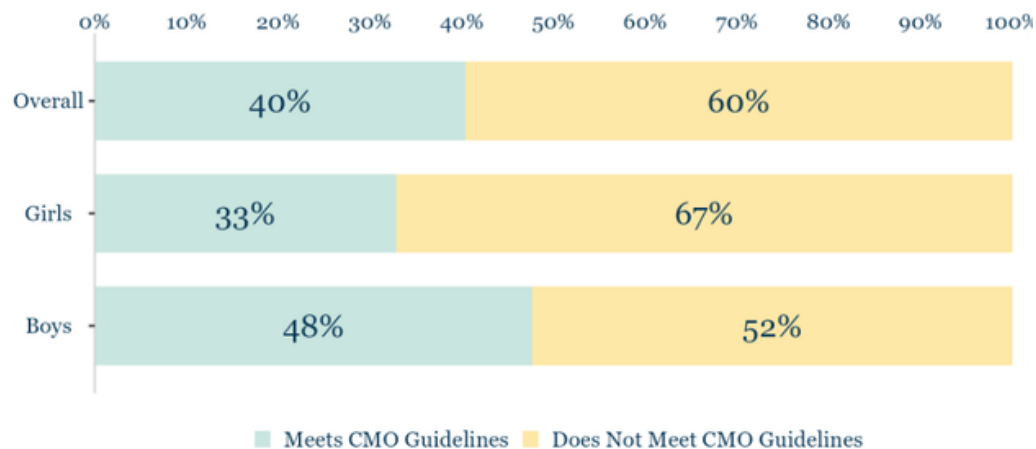
About **73%** said they **eat fruit and vegetable on five or more days each week**. Around **44%** said they **eat sweets or drink sugary drinks on five or more days each week**.

Young people who are **not eligible for FSM were more likely to eat fruit often** (76%) than those who are (62%). However, both groups ate sweets or sugary drinks at similar rates.



Physical activity

In 2025, **40%** of young people said they were **doing enough physical activity to meet Chief Medical Officer’s health guidelines**, which means being active for about 60 minutes every day.

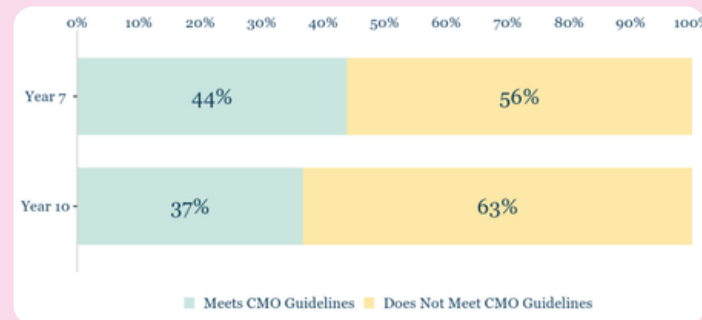


This is lower than the most recent data collected by the [Active Lives Survey](#), which estimated 51% of secondary students met these guidelines in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, 45% in Portsmouth and 52% in Southampton.

i The Active Lives Survey is a comprehensive physical activity specific survey that calculates time spent being active and includes a specific reference to time spent in active travel such as walking and cycling to school. This additional detail may result in higher reporting of activity levels in the Active Lives Survey.

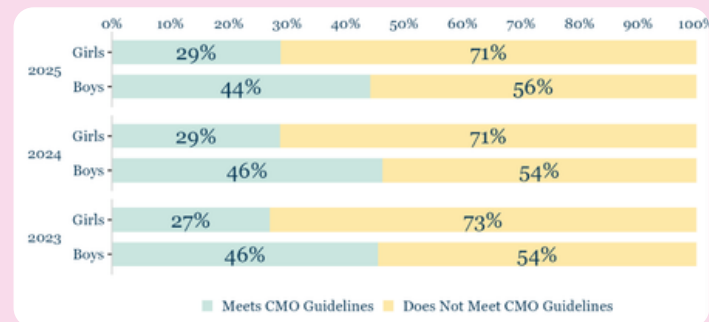


Year group averages in 2025:



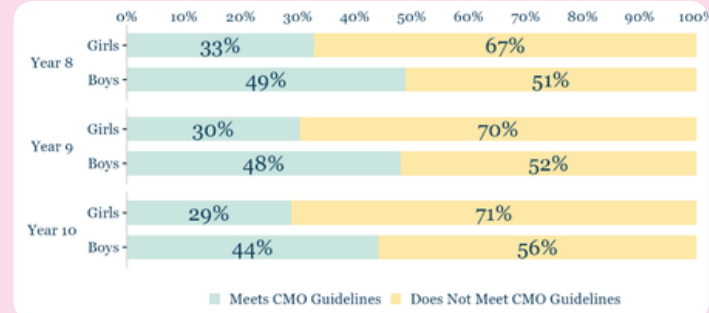
More boys than girls met these guidelines, and younger students were more active than older ones. For Year 10 students, the number meeting the guidelines has stayed fairly similar over the last three years.

Comparing sequential Year 10 cohorts:



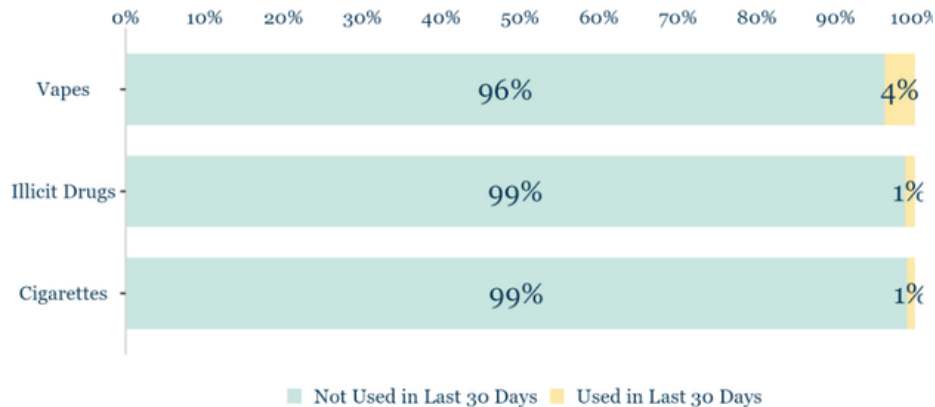
When looking at the same group of students over time, **girls stayed at about the same level of activity**, but **boys were slightly less active** by the time they **reached Year 10**.

Longitudinal trends from Year 8 (2023) to Year 10 (2025):



Smoking and substance use

Most young people said they had not used illicit drugs, vapes (also known as e-cigarettes), or smoked cigarettes in the past 30 days. Only about 1% said they had used cigarettes, and 1% said they had used illicit drugs. Vapes were the most common substance reported, with around **4% of young people saying they had vaped in the last month.**

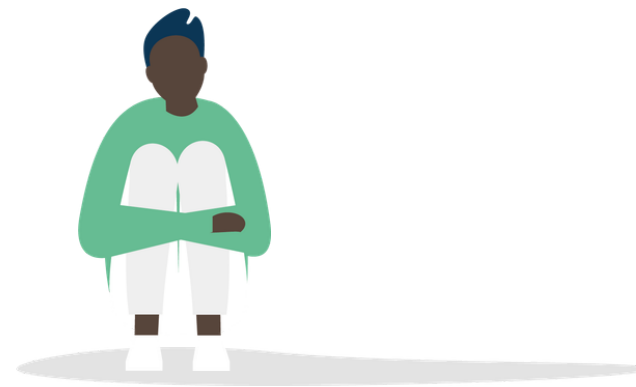


In 2024, 4% of Year 9 students reported to be vaping, and this went up to 7% in Year 10. In the 2025 survey, about **1% of Year 7 students and nearly 7% of Year 10 students said they had vaped in the last 30 days.** We have therefore **not seen an increase in vaping in Year 10** but need to **consider the increased prevalence from Year 7 to Year 10.**

Nationally, the proportion of pupils (11-15 years old) reported as vape users in 2021 and 2023 was 9%. Although both national data and local survey depend on self-reporting, the lower reported vaping prevalence seen in the local #BeeWell data could be linked to the survey taking place within schools where reporting could be linked to perspective of increased risk of sanctions (e.g. detention, exclusions etc).

More young people from groups who often face disadvantages were vaping, for example:

- About **6% of trans young people** said they had used vapes in the last 30 days. This was higher than cisgender girls (about 4%) and cisgender boys (about 3%).
- About **9% of gay or lesbian young people** vaped, and **6% of bi/pansexual young people**, compared to heterosexual young people (about 4%).
- Young people who are eligible for **FSM were also more likely to use vapes** (about 6%) than those who are not (about 3%).
- **White British young people (about 4%) were more likely to vape** than Asian young people (about 1%), young people from mixed backgrounds (about 4%), or those from other White backgrounds (about 3%). Fewer than 10 young people from Black or Other Ethnic Groups reported vaping.



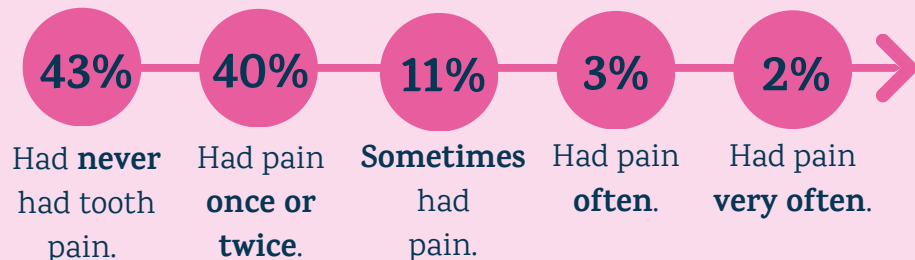
Oral health

In the 2025 survey, **most young people said they had been to the dentist** (about 91%) and almost **85% said they brushed their teeth twice a day or more**. Around 15% were brushing less than twice a day.



Around eight in ten (85%) of young people brush their teeth twice daily

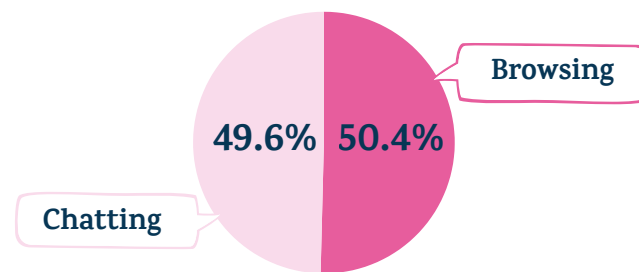
Only a small number had frequent tooth pain:



Social media

On a normal weekday, young people spent about **3.9 hours a day on social media**. Year 7 students spent around 3.5 hours, while **Year 10 students spent more time** - about 4.5 hours.

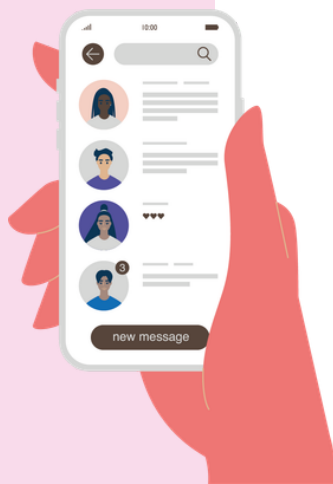
Young people split their time on social media almost evenly between browsing (scrolling through feeds, photos, and stories) and chatting with others. They spent slightly more time browsing (50.4%) than chatting (49.6%).



Different groups of young people spent different amounts of time online:

- Young people who are **eligible for FSM spent more time on social media** (4.6 hours) than those who are not (3.8 hours).
- Students who have **EAL spent slightly less time** (3.8 hours) than those who do not (4.0 hours).
- Young people with SEND spent about the same amount of time as those without SEND (4.0 vs 3.9 hours).

Across all these groups, the split between browsing and chatting was almost the same.



Chapter 3. Your free-time and relationships

Good places to go

Access to safe, high-quality recreational spaces is an important determinant of young people’s social development, physical activity, and overall wellbeing.

In 2025, **68% of young people in Years 7 and 10 agreed that there are good places in their local area to spend their free time**, such as parks, leisure centres, youth clubs and shops. However, the proportion varied substantially across the region, ranging from 57% to 78% across and within the four local authority areas.

64.6% in Isle of Wight
(range: 58.3 – 64.9%; 6.6%)

65.7% in Portsmouth
(range: 61.7% – 71.3%; 9.6%)

65.5% in Southampton
(range: 62.5 – 67.6%; 5.1%)

68% in Hampshire
(range: 56.8% – 77.7%; 20.9%)

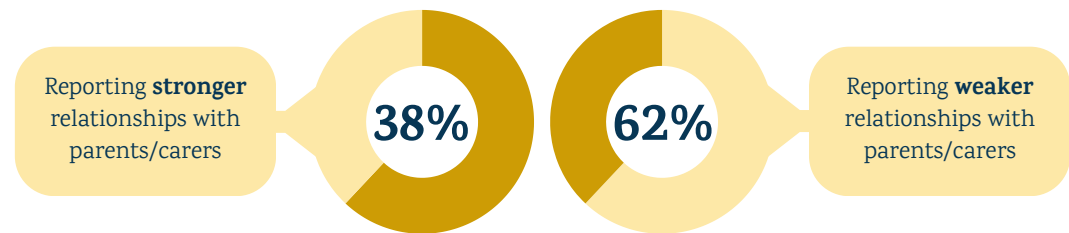
This breakdown shows that **Hampshire has the widest gap** between its lowest- and highest-scoring neighbourhoods, meaning experiences vary more within Hampshire than in the other areas. By contrast, **Southampton has the narrowest gap**.

When looking at the year groups separately, **79% of Year 7 students** said there are good places to spend their free time, compared with **56% of Year 10 students**. This shows that older students feel less positive about the places available to them.

Relationships with parents/carers

Positive parent–child relationships are a well-established protective factor for mental health and resilience.

In 2025, **38%** of young people reported having **stronger relationships** with their parents or carers, while **62%** reported **weaker relationships**. Although the majority continue to report weaker relationships, this marks a **meaningful improvement from 2023**, when only around 30% of Year 10 students reported stronger relationships.



This year (2025) **Year 7s reported slightly higher rates** of stronger parental relationships (39%) compared to Year 10s (36%), consistent with typical patterns of parent-child relationship quality during adolescence. Longitudinal evidence from students tracked from **Year 8 (2023) to Year 10 (2025)** also shows **improvements in relationships** with their parents, rising from 31% to 36%.



Demographic differences were less pronounced than in other wellbeing domains:

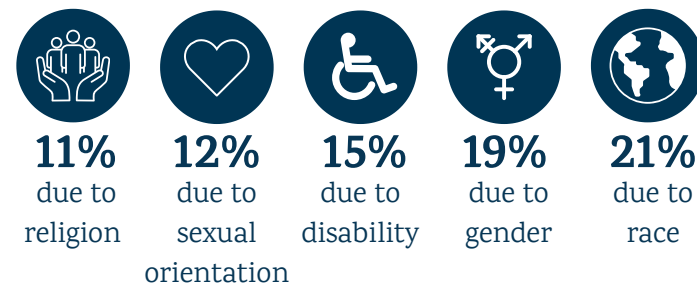
- **39% of cisgender boys and girls** reported **stronger relationships**.
- However, young people **questioning their gender and trans young people** reported notably **lower levels of positive relationships** (28% and 27%), indicating greater relational strain and possible challenges related to acceptance within families.
- Young people with **SEND were also less likely to report stronger relationships** (31%) than those without SEND (39%).
- **FSM-eligible** students showed similarly **lower rates** (32%).
- Differences between ethnic groups and EAL status were **relatively small**, though **Chinese young people reported lower rates** (26%), which may reflect cultural differences in how parent-child relationship quality is self-assessed rather than poorer actual relationship quality.



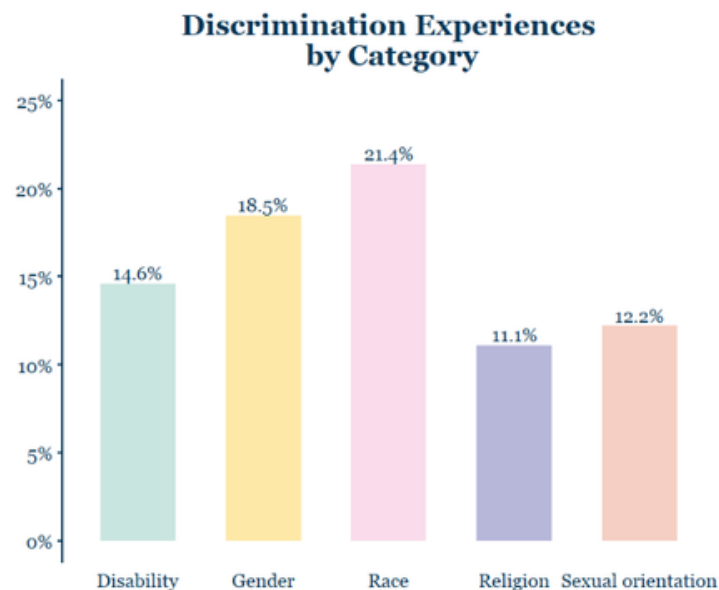
Discrimination

Experiences of discrimination remain a significant concern due to their association with poorer mental health, reduced school belonging and increased risk behaviours.

In 2025:

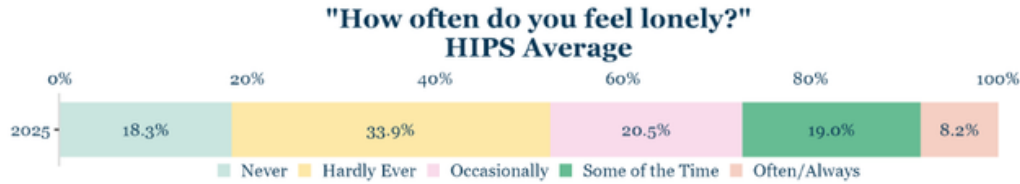


These findings demonstrate that a considerable minority of young people continue to experience identity-based discrimination, with race- and gender-related discrimination particularly prevalent.



Loneliness

In 2025, just under **one in 10 young people** (8.2%) said they **often or always feel lonely**. This is a **slight improvement** on last year's findings when 10.2% students reported the same. When comparing consecutive Year 10 cohorts, the percentage has dropped from 11.1% in 2024 to 10.2% in 2025, suggesting a slight improvement.



Large disparities exist:

22.3% of trans young people report often or always feeling lonely compared to **4.9% of cisgender boys**, **9.4% of cisgender girls** and **11.8% of young people who were questioning their gender**.

There were differences across ethnic groups too. The prevalence of often or always feeling lonely was **lowest in young people from "Any Other Ethnic Group" (4.1%)** and **most frequent for Black young people (9.0%)**.

10.9% of young people with SEND report often/always feeling lonely compared with **7.7% of those without SEND**.

When comparing sexual orientation, often or always feeling lonely was **least prevalent in heterosexual/straight young (6.4%)**, followed by those **describing themselves another way (10.4%)**, those **unsure of their sexual orientation (10.8%)**, **Bisexual or pansexual young people (22.4%)**, and **gay and lesbian young people (22.5%)**.

Other groups also showed differences in often/always feeling lonely:

- **More Year 10's** report loneliness (10.2%) than Year 7s (6.5%).
- **Fewer young people with EAL** report loneliness (7.5%) than those without (8.4%).
- **More young people eligible for FSM** report loneliness (11.7%) than those not eligible (7.3%).

Participation in arts, culture and entertainment (PACE)

In 2025, **64% of young people in Years 7 and 10 reported frequent engagement** (at least monthly) in a median of **four PACE activities**.

The **most** commonly reported activities were:



84%

Sport, exercise or physical activity outside school



82%

Gaming

Less common activities included:



13%

Attending religious services



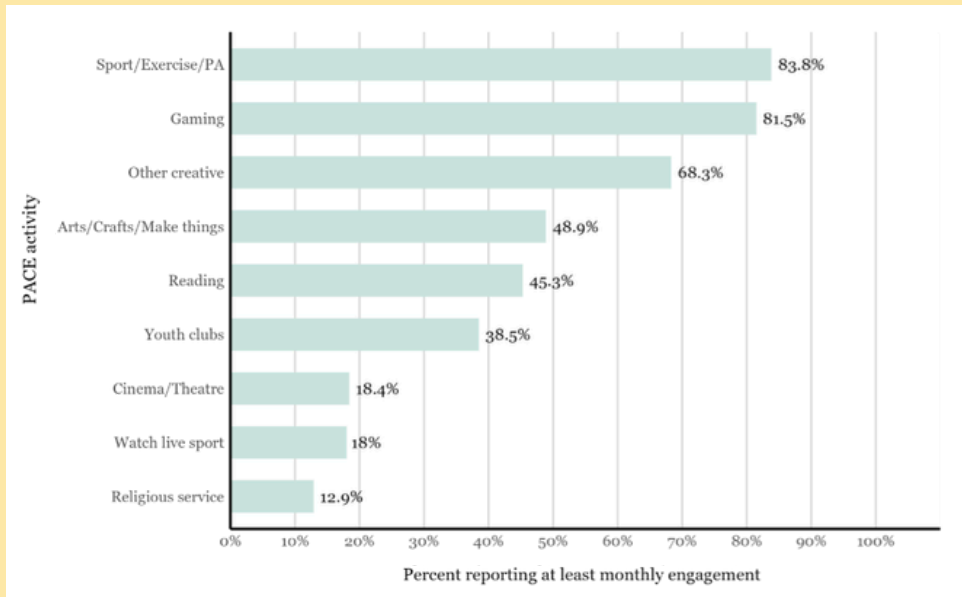
18%

Going to the cinema or theatre

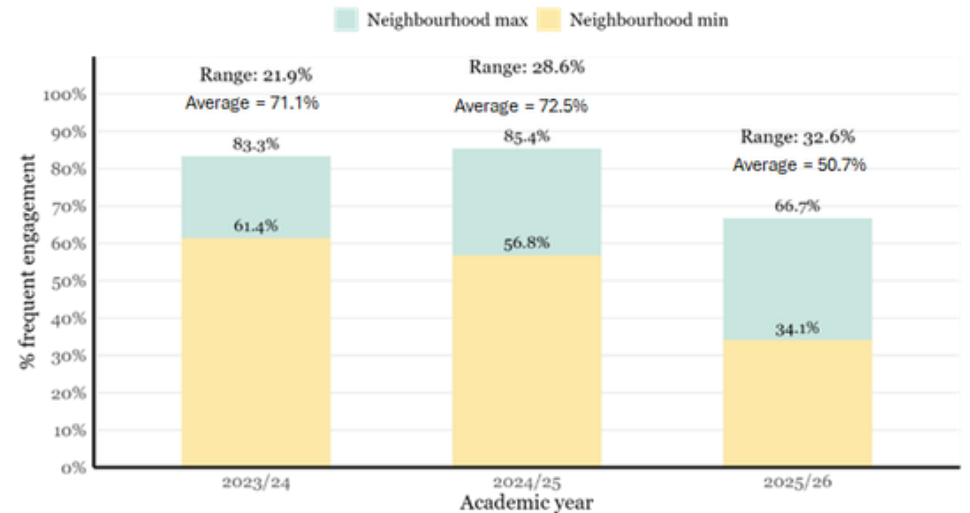


18%

Watching live sport



Across 46 neighbourhoods, engagement rates ranged from **49% to 78%** (a difference of 29%). Among Year 10 students, the neighbourhood range has widened between 2023 and 2025, suggesting that **the gap in engagement in PACE activities between the highest and lowest neighbourhoods is widening.**



The range in engagement with arts, culture and sports varied for all students across HIPS (Year 7 and Year 10 combined):



61% in Isle of Wight
(range: 58 – 71.1%; 13%)



67% in Portsmouth
(range: 60.1 – 72.4%; 12%)



63% in Southampton
(range: 54.9 – 72.9%; 18%)

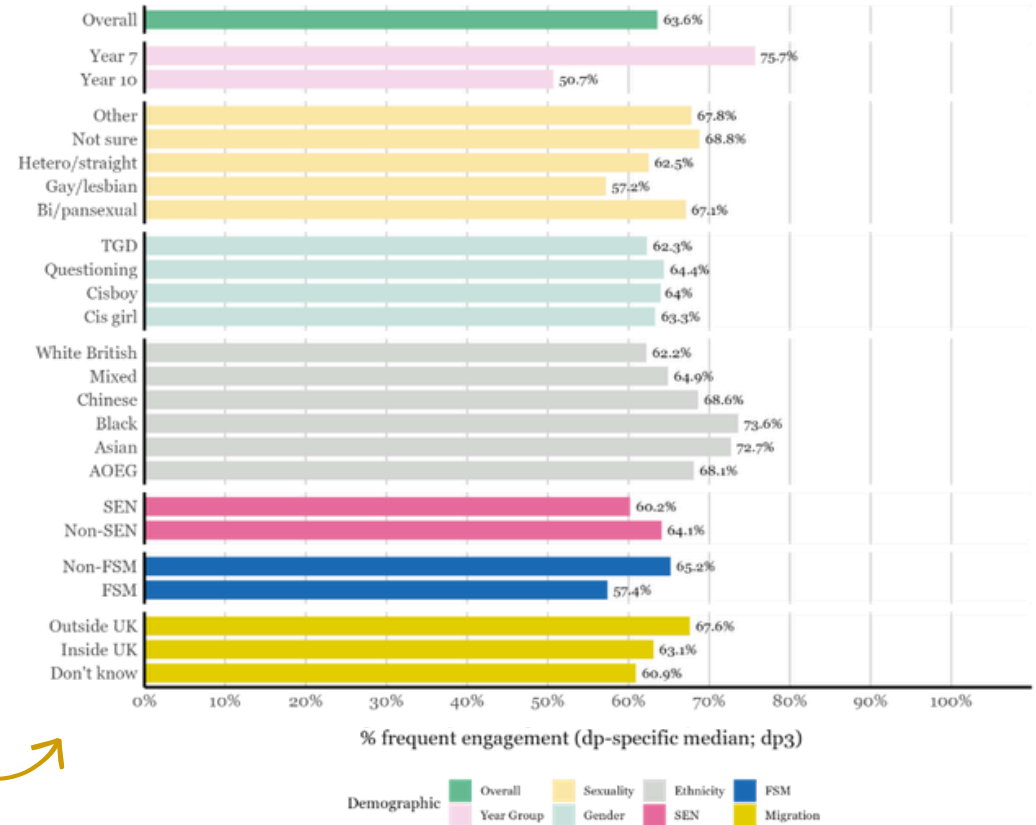


64% in Hampshire
(range: 49 – 78%; 29%)

Portsmouth had the highest engagement overall and the narrowest gap between the highest and lowest neighbourhoods.

The data shows differences between groups:

- **Year 7 students engaged more frequently** than Year 10 (76% vs 51%).
- **Gay and lesbian students had the lowest engagement** (57%) compared to all other sexual orientations.
- **Engagement was similar across genders.**
- **Black young people had the highest engagement** (74%) compared with White young people (62%).
- **SEND students reported slightly lower engagement** than non-SEND students (60% vs 64%).
- **FSM-eligible students had notably lower engagement** (56% vs 65%).
- **Young people born outside the UK reported higher engagement** (68%) than UK-born peers (63%).

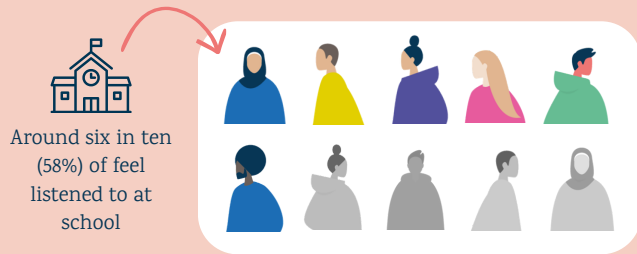


Cross-sectionally, **Year 10 engagement was similar in 2023 (71%) and 2024 (73%) but dropped substantially in 2025 (51%)**. When we follow the same group of young people over time, we see that their **engagement in activities steadily declined** as they moved through secondary school, from 65% in Year 8 (2023) to 59% in Year 9 (2024) and 51% in Year 10 (2025).

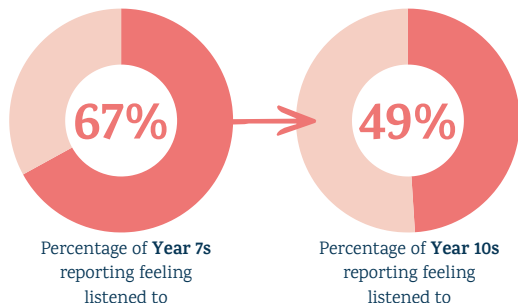
Chapter 4. Your school life and support

Relationships with staff

In 2025, just under **six in ten** secondary school students (58%) said that there is a **member of staff at their school who listens to them when they have something to say**. This means that many young people still don't always feel heard by staff.



These **feelings of being listened to change noticeably as students get older**. Around **two-thirds of Year 7 students (67%)** reported feeling listened to, but this fell to **fewer than half of students by Year 10 (49%)**.



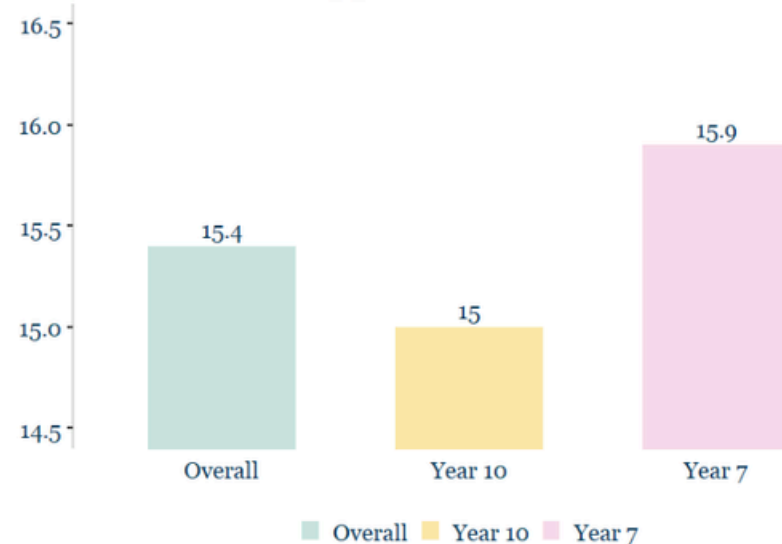
This marked decline indicates that as young people progress through secondary school, they may feel less supported or less able to share their thoughts, feelings or suggestions with staff.

Friendship and social support

To measure friendship and social support, the total score across four items was used (e.g. 'I get along with people around me' and 'I feel supported by my friends').

In 2025, the average score for social support across Years 7 and 10 was 15.4 out of 20, which shows that **most young people felt well supported**. **Year 10 students scored slightly lower (15.0)** than Year 7 students (15.9).

Mean Friendship & Social Support Score (HIPS 2025)

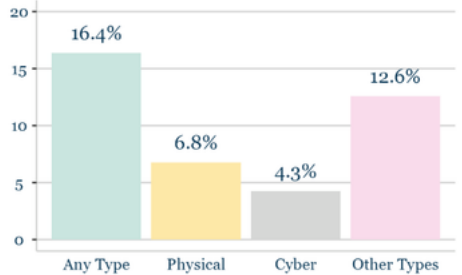


For Year 10 students, **scores have improved slightly over the years**, rising from 14.7 in 2023 to 15.0 in 2025. When tracking the same group of students over time, the scores stayed fairly steady, with only small changes: 15.1 in Year 8 (2023), 14.9 in Year 9 (2024), and 15.0 in Year 10 (2025).

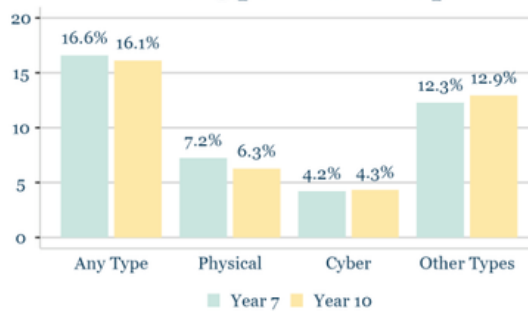
Bullying

In 2025, approximately **16% of young people across the region reported experiencing bullying**, with nearly identical rates among Year 7 (17%) and Year 10 (16%).

Young People Bullied "Quite a Lot" in 2025

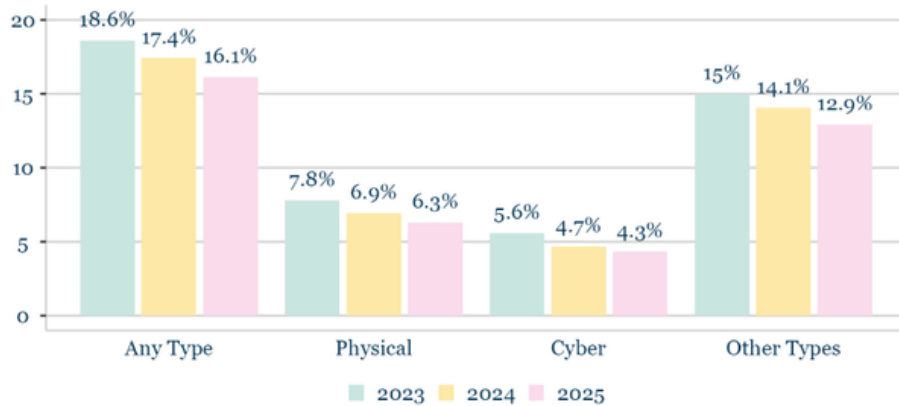


Young People Bullied "Quite a Lot" in 2025 per Year Group



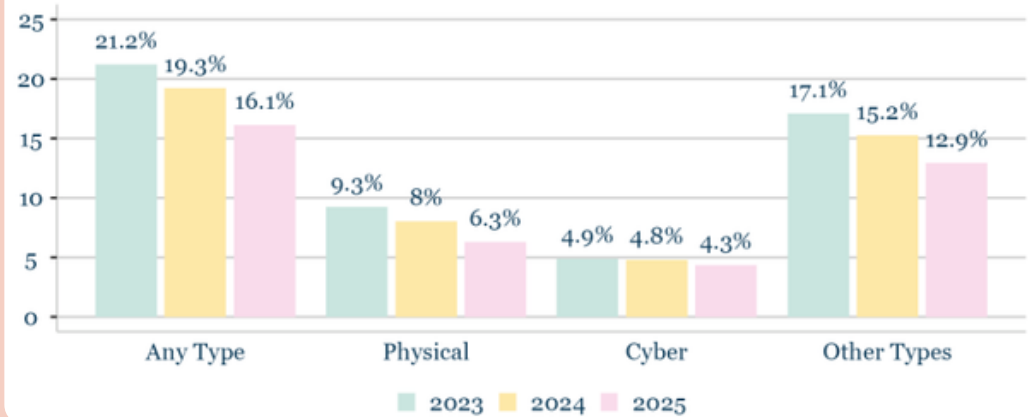
Encouragingly, **bullying among Year 10 cohorts has declined** from 19% (2023) to 16% (2025).

Year 10's Bullied "Quite a Lot" Each Survey Year



This positive trend is also evident in the longitudinal cohort tracked from Year 8 in 2023 to Year 10 in 2025, which showed **a decline from 21% reporting bullying in Year 8 to 16% by Year 10**, suggesting that bullying experiences may decrease as young people progress through secondary school or that interventions are having positive effects.

Young People Bullied "Quite a Lot" Year 8 (2023) to Year 9 (2024) to Year 10 (2025)



Inequalities in bullying

Gender

The most **striking differences** in bullying experiences emerged by gender. While cisgender boys (14%) and cisgender girls (15%) reported relatively low and similar rates of bullying, **young people questioning their gender** (25%) and particularly **trans young people** (36%) were **substantially more likely to experience bullying**.

This represents a concerning disparity, with transgender young people more than twice as likely to be bullied compared to their cisgender peers.

SEND and Socioeconomic disadvantage (FSM eligibility)

Young people with **special educational needs and disabilities** also reported **notably higher rates of bullying** (22%) compared to those without SEND (15%), while socioeconomic disadvantage showed a similar pattern, with **FSM-eligible young people reporting higher rates** (21%) than non-FSM eligible young people (15%).

These differences point to specific groups requiring targeted anti-bullying support focused on prevention and mediation.

Ethnic Group differences

Bullying also varied by ethnic background.

Asian young people (8%) and **Chinese young people** (9%) reported **substantially lower rates of bullying** than any other ethnic group, while **White British young people** (17%) and **Black young people** (18%) **reported higher rates**.

Young people with **EAL also reported lower bullying rates** (13%) compared to those without EAL (17%).

These patterns may reflect protective factors in some communities, different reporting patterns across cultural groups, or varying experiences of school climate and peer relationships. The particularly low rates among Asian and Chinese young people potentially suggest strong peer support networks or other protective factors worth understanding further.



Awareness of wellbeing support

Levels of awareness of local and national health and wellbeing services were low across all areas:

Hampshire

In Hampshire, **78%** of young people attending school reported they had **never heard of Kooth** (a mental health and wellbeing service offering live messaging, discussion boards, articles and online counselling). In addition, **74%** had **never heard of Chat Health**, a confidential text-messaging service for young people to access health and wellbeing advice. **Awareness was also low for Healthier Together**, with 79% reporting they had never heard of this service, and for **Health for Teens**, with 72% reporting they had never heard of this online health resource for young people aged 11–19. More positively, **only 25% had never heard of NHS 111**, which provides physical and mental health advice and support.

Isle of Wight

Among young people attending school on the Isle of Wight, **81%** reported they had **never heard of Kooth**. A large **majority** (83%) reported they had **never heard of No Limits**, a service providing mental health support, advice, advocacy and counselling. **Half** (50%) had **never heard of Young Minds**, a website providing information, advice and support for young people affected by mental health issues, and **43% had never heard of Mental Health Support Teams**, which offer school-based mental health support. More positively, **only a third** (32%) **had never heard of IOW Youth Trust**, which supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people and their families.

Portsmouth

In Portsmouth, **77% of young people reported they had never heard of Kooth**, awareness was **similarly low for No Limits**, with 78% reporting they had never heard of this service. The **lowest awareness was observed for the Little Blue Book of Sunshine**, with 82% reporting they had never heard of this resource, which provides tips on managing anxiety, stress, body image, relationships and anger. **50% reported not having heard of Young Minds**, more positively **only 43% had never heard of Mental Health Support Teams**.

Southampton

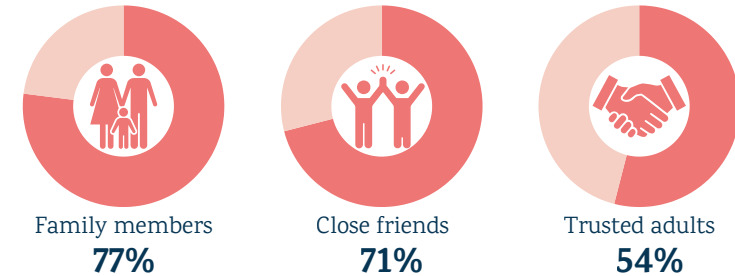
Finally, in Southampton, **88% of young people reported they had never heard of the Little Blue Book of Sunshine**. Over three quarters (76%) had never heard of Kooth, while 55% had never heard of No Limits and 54% had never heard of Mental Health Support Teams. In addition, **62% reported they had never heard of other services** not listed in the survey.

Most used and useful support services:

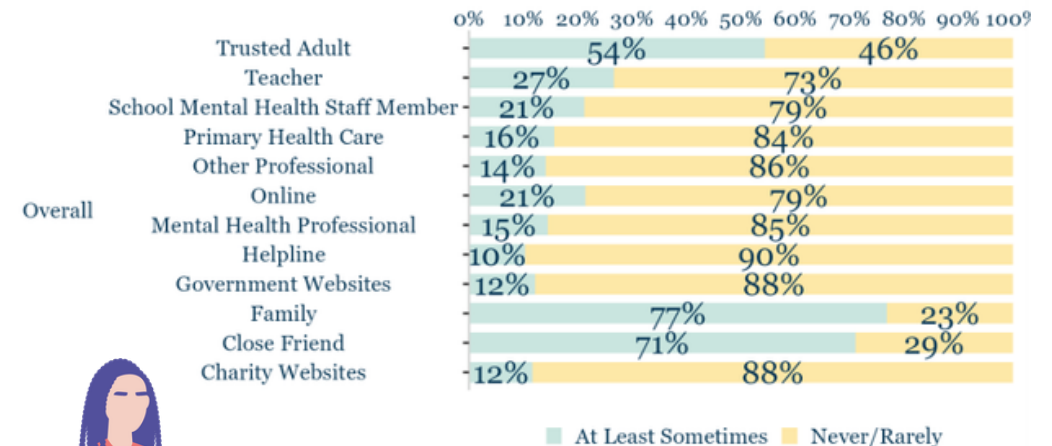
- **In Hampshire**, the service that was most used and found to be helpful was **NHS 111** (5%).
- **On the Isle of Wight**, **IOW Youth Trust** was most commonly identified as used and helpful (6%), followed by **Mental Health Support Teams** (5%).
- **In Portsmouth**, **Mental Health Support Teams** (5%) and **Young Minds** (2%) were identified as the most used and helpful services.
- **In Southampton**, **No Limits** was identified as the most used and helpful service (3%), followed by **Mental Health Support Teams** (3%).

Wellbeing contacts

Family members (77%), **close friends** (71%), and **trusted adults** (54%) were the **most commonly used sources of information or advice about mental health**.



In contrast, young people were far less likely to seek information through helplines or via government and charity websites.



Patterns of help-seeking were **broadly consistent across genders**, with trusted adults, family, and close friends remaining the primary sources of support. **Similar trends were observed across all ethnic groups**, where these three sources were also the most frequently accessed for mental health information and advice.

There were **notable differences by year group**. **Family support was more commonly reported by Year 7 students** (82%) than Year 10 students (71%), whereas **reliance on close friends increased with age**, rising from 66% in Year 7 to 77% in Year 10. Use of trusted adults decreased from 61% in Year 7 to 48% in Year 10.

Young people with an **Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan or SEND status were more likely than those with no identified SEND to seek information or support from online sources** (25–27% vs. 21%), **helplines** (15–16% vs. 9%), and **school-based or professional support** (33–39% vs. 25%).



School-based support

Young people were asked whether they had used any mental health or wellbeing support available within their school.

Across Years 7 and 10, **18% reported that they had used this support**.

Use of school-based support varied across demographic groups:

Cisgender boys reported the lowest levels of engagement (14%), whereas **trans young people were the most likely to have accessed support** (22%).

Young people eligible for FSM were slightly more likely to use school support (20%) than those not eligible (18%).

A similar pattern was observed for SEND: **young people with SEND reported higher use of support** (23%) compared with those without SEND (17%).

Differences were also evident by ethnic group and language:

Asian young people were least likely to have used school-based support (11%), while **White British young people were the most likely** to do so (19%).

Young people with EAL reported lower levels of access (12%) compared with those who do not have EAL (19%).

In terms of awareness and confidence in available provision, **44% of young people stated that they knew how to seek help for mental health concerns at school**. Around two-thirds (64%) reported feeling **comfortable talking to adults** about these issues, and **59% believed they could access support confidentially**. The same proportion (59%) found the support helpful, while **50% felt that they were able to access it when needed**.

Next steps and recommendations

The findings from the #BeeWell 2025/26 dataset **highlight areas of improvements** as well as **persistent inequalities in the wellbeing** of young people across the HIPS region.

Despite improvements in several headline indicators, **substantial disparities** remain **across gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, SEND status, and age**. These inequalities shape how young people experience school, health behaviours, access support, and, critically, whether they feel heard by the adults and systems around them.

The survey results clearly demonstrate that the **experiences of trans young people, SEND students, and those eligible for free school meals** are characterised by **consistently poorer outcomes** across multiple wellbeing domains. Addressing these disparities requires coordinated, multi-agency action and a stronger emphasis on listening, prevention, early help and targeted support.

Across HIPS, these results have highlighted our focus to:

- 1.**
Amplify the voice of young people
- 2.**
Access, awareness and equity to Mental Health support
- 3.**
Promoting healthy, positive behaviour choices

1. Amplify the voice of young people

A key theme emerging from the data is that **many young people**, particularly those in Year 10, **do not feel listened to** within school settings. This relational pattern has implications for mental health, school engagement and trust in support systems.

Actions that schools and wider community organisations can take include **prioritising routine, structured opportunities** for young people to **express their views** in ways that feel **safe and meaningful**, for example digital feedback tools, and designated 'listening points' where concerns can be raised.

Consider **evidencing** how young people's **feedback has influenced decisions** should be built into all programmes. Importantly, these mechanisms must include **specific pathways** for young people who **we do not regularly hear from**, including trans students, who report the lowest levels of being heard.

We will be **strengthening** the voice of our Youth Matters Steering Group over the coming months.

2. Access, awareness and equity to Mental Health support

The findings also show young people have **very low levels of awareness of mental health and wellbeing services** across all the area. This highlights an **avoidable barrier** to our young people seeking help early enough and reduced opportunities for key interventions.

An **evidenced-based co-produced, communications approach** using youth-friendly messaging, social media platforms, school assemblies, and translated materials for those with varying literacy abilities would address this. Within schools, staff being given protected time to explain confidentiality policies, referral routes, and how to seek help, would address a critical gap identified in the survey.

Targeted mental health support is also **essential** for groups with the **poorest outcomes**. Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) can use the data to consider how to focus support for SEND, LGBTQ+, and FSM-eligible students.

Through **strengthened anti-bullying strategies**, schools can monitor identity-based bullying robustly and respond consistently, given the significantly elevated bullying rates among transgender, SEND and FSM-eligible students.

3. Promoting healthy, positive behaviour choices

The survey findings also highlight the **need for stronger focus on positive health behaviours**.

A **whole-school approach to health literacy** would address sleep inequality, increasing social media use, low levels of physical activity, and rising vaping between Year 7 and Year 10. This includes delivering **consistent, evidence-based programmes** on sleep, digital habits, smoking and vaping, and physical activity, supported by **practical interventions** such as structured daily movement opportunities, active travel programmes and targeted programmes for girls and less active students.

The contribution **family-focused programmes can make** should also be considered, recognising the **strong role families play** as the primary source of support for mental health advice.

Finally, the data highlights **clear differences** in access to safe, enjoyable and age-appropriate leisure spaces, with **older students reporting fewer opportunities** than their younger peers. Building on work that is already happening, local partners could **further explore** how existing **community spaces** might be used more **flexibly and collaboratively** with young people, and how affordable evening and weekend activities could be strengthened. Cultural and leisure providers could consider **adapting and promoting their inclusive, low-cost programmes** that particularly reach groups with the lowest levels of participation, including those eligible for FSM.



Thank you

We would like to extend a sincere thanks to all schools for providing opportunities for their young people's voices to be heard by contributing to this report. As we look ahead, we encourage partners to utilise the insight and continue to shape, challenge and drive service delivery with our young people's health outcomes in mind.

If you require further support in relation to the headline findings, the dashboard, or require specific data to support your work, please get in touch with the HIPS #BeeWell Programme Team,

Follow our social media channels to keep up to date with #BeeWell.



Email

hiow.beewell@hants.gov.uk



BlueSky

[@beewelluk.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/beewelluk.bsky.social)



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