December 2021

Active Lives Children and Young People Survey 2020/2021

Year 4 Technical Note

September 20 – July 21

Ipsos MORI

Contents

The Active Lives Children and Young People Survey was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Sport England who commissioned the survey to inform both their own strategy and the strategies of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

The published data which this note accompanies are presented for Year 1 - baseline (academic year 2017/18), Year 3 - previous year (academic year 2019/20) and Year 4 (academic year 2020/21). This document provides details about Year 4 (20/21) of the survey, with differences from Year 1 (17/18) and Year 3 (19/20) pointed out. For trends tables all survey years are shown. Full details about previous survey years (17/18, 18/19, 20/21) are provided in the respective technical notes for those years.

1 Fieldwork and Survey Design

The new data presented here were collected during Year 4 of the survey, between September 2020 and July 2021 (2020/21 academic year) in England. The data were collected using CAWI online questionnaires. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the survey was completed either in schools or at home. Where pupils completed depended on the current government guidance, whether individual pupils were self-isolating (even if schools were fully open), and whether schools chose to administer the survey as homework rather than a school-based activity (this was only an option for secondary schools). There were three types of questionnaires:

- Short simple questionnaire for pupils in school year 1-2 (age 5-7),
- Questionnaires for pupils in school year 3-11 (age 7-15/16) and parents of pupils in school year 1-2,
- Questionnaire for one teacher in each school (most often the PE lead but also heads, deputies, and other teachers).

The table in the questionnaire content section shows which year groups and participant types were asked each type of question. The questionnaire content varied by age so as not to over-burden younger pupils.

Valid responses from sampled schools which could be used for analysis are shown below:

Table 1.1: Number of valid responses from sampled schools used in analysis

	Survey year			
School type	**Year 1 (2017/18)**	**Year 2 (2018/19)**	**Year 3 (2019/20)**	**Year 4 (2020/21)**
School year 1-2 pupils	25,927	23,587	14,576	13,886
School year 3-11 pupils and parents of pupils in school year 1-2	109,503	113,728	89,303	86,828
Teachers	1,623	1,524	1,186	1,166

Pupils took part during school time using computers, smartphones, or tablets either at school or at home. Teachers and parents took part at school or on their own computers, smartphones, or tablets at home. Information about the survey was provided to schools, class teachers, pupils, and parents in advance of taking part in the survey.

Academic year 2020/21 (Year 4) was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the autumn term 2020, school sites were open to all pupils, but with pupils occasionally having to isolate for periods of time. For the majority of the spring term 2021, school sites were closed to most pupils due to the national lockdown from January to March. School sites reopened for pupils in March 2021, following government

guidelines with adaptations such as staggered drop off and pick up times, bubbles of pupils and limited used of shared IT equipment. School sites remained open in the summer term 2021 with these adaptations continuing throughout.

In the summer term 2020 (during Year 3), when school sites were first closed to most pupils, the Active Lives Children and Young People survey was adapted to be completed from home. The adaptations made were continued during academic year 2020/21 (Year 4) to allow flexible completion of the survey at school or at home. The survey continued because it was important for Sport England to understand children and young people's participation in sport and physical activity and their attitudes and wellbeing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Information was provided to pupils, parents and teachers about completing the survey at home and amendments were made to the questionnaire to make it appropriate for completing at home – details of these amendments can be found at the end of this note. Amendments had already been made in the summer term of 2020, but further amendments were made for Year 4 (20/21) to make further improvements for smartphone completion and because of the implications of the ongoing pandemic on activities schools could offer.

2 Sample design

2.1 Sampling schools

The survey design is schools based. The sample design was generally the same as the first, second and third years of the survey to ensure comparability; any differences have been noted below[1].

A sample of schools was drawn from the January 2019 school census data. The database contained 23,939 schools, from which certain types of establishment were removed[2] before selection of the sample resulting in a sample frame of 21,527 schools. Of these, 5,876 were selected as main sample and 1,953 as a reserve sample across the whole year. The main sample was designed to include up to ten primary and ten secondary schools in each local authority and 370 independent schools across the country. The reserve sample comprised up to five primary and five secondary schools in each local authority but not every local authority had sufficient schools. State schools with a probability of selection of one or greater were automatically included in the sample. The remaining state schools were selected with a probability proportional to size. The sample of independent schools was stratified by local authority and pupil count. Reserve schools were only issued in local authorities where insufficient responses had been obtained from the main sample.

The main sample schools were allocated to a term using systematic random sampling. As in Year 2 (18/19) and 3 (19/20), the sample was designed to include 35% of the schools in the autumn term, 35% in the spring term and 30% in the summer term (in Year 1 (17/18) this was 30%/ 40%/ 30%; the adjustment was made in order to achieve equal numbers in the Autumn and Spring terms). The main issued sample of schools was 2,052 in the autumn term, 2,067 in the spring term and 1,757 in the summer term. The sample was designed to ensure that, where possible, year groups affected by summer exams were oversampled in earlier terms. In the spring term 409 reserve schools in 160 local authorities were issued, of which 13 then deferred to the summer term. In addition, one school intended for the Spring reserve sample had already asked to take part during the Autumn term. In the summer term, 368 reserve schools in 159 local authorities were issued.

To allow some flexibility during the pandemic, if schools requested to take part in a different term to the one they were sampled for, or if reserve schools requested to take part earlier in the academic year, this was permitted, providing it did not imbalance the sample in the local authority or Active Partnership area.

2.2 General sample procedures

For each school, up to three year groups were selected (only two in schools which only had two eligible year groups, for example infant schools).

Schools could opt-in to take part in the survey if they had not been sampled. The data for these opt-in schools are not included as part of the national dataset and so are not included in this report.

The information about the selected schools and the selected year groups in each school was communicated to Active Partnerships (APs) who were responsible for asking schools to participate. They did this directly with schools or through third parties such as School Games Organisers. Once a

---

[1] During summer term Year 3, amendments were made to the sample in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In Year 4, the sample reverted to the usual design, despite the ongoing pandemic.
[2] Nurseries, Pupil Referral Units, Special schools, Technology and Technical colleges, Studio schools, Sixth form colleges, schools with fewer than 30 pupils or containing only one year group.

school had agreed to take part, they used a Kish Grid provided by Ipsos MORI to select one mixed ability class within each of their selected year groups. URLs for the online surveys were then provided to each school. There were unique URLs for each school but not each pupil or parent.

2.3   Achieved sample numbers

The table below shows the number of schools with any pupil responses included in the analysis dataset in each term by type of school. This includes schools with partial pupil responses in cases where the questionnaire was completed sufficiently to be included in the analysis. Cases were included in the analysis if pupils in school year 3-11 and parents completed all the activity questions in the survey and if school year 1-2 pupils responded to the question which asked whether they like playing sport. This table excludes schools which were not in main or reserve samples and opted into the survey, but which are not used for national level analysis (of which there were 72, of which 5 only had a teacher response). This also excludes sampled schools where a teacher responded but there were no pupil responses (of which there were 51[3]). There were 33 sampled schools for which responses were received in more than one term. In the tables below the schools appear in the term that they have the most responses to avoid double counting.

Table 2.1: Number of sampled schools with partial or complete pupil responses in the 2020/21 academic year

School type	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total
State Primary	241	237	262	740
State Secondary	193	206	200	599
Independent	10	10	9	29
Total	444	453	471	1,368

Table 2.2: Number of sampled schools with partial or complete pupil responses in the 2019/20 academic year

School type	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total
State Primary	384	290	108	782
State Secondary	279	190	124	593
Independent	7	8	5	20
Total	670	488	237	1,395

---

[3] Of the 51 schools where a teacher responded but no pupils 26 were primary, 23 were secondary and 2 were independent. Among the 1,368 responding schools 253 had no teacher response.

Table 2.3: Number of sampled schools with partial or complete pupil responses in the 2018/19 academic year

School type	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total
State Primary	362	405	335	1,102
State Secondary	252	278	249	779
Independent	10	6	10	26
Total	624	689	594	1,907

Table 2.4: Number of sampled schools with partial or complete pupil responses in the 2017/18 academic year

School type	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total
State Primary	326	503	365	1,194
State Secondary	249	281	251	781
Independent	16	13	7	36
Total	591	797	623	2,011

3 Weighting

Weighting is required to reduce the risk of bias in survey estimates. Weights are produced to make the weighted achieved sample match the population as closely as possible. For the Active Lives Children and Young People Survey the weights correct for non-response by schools.

For state schools the weighting involved calibration to counts of school year by gender, counts of pupils in schools with more than 20% of pupils getting free school meals and counts of pupils in schools in a rural area. This was done separately for each region. It was not possible to adjust for local authority counts as there were some local authorities in which no schools participated. However, instead counts of pupils in NUTS2 (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) geographical areas were used as there was at least one responding school in each area. Independent schools were calibrated by counts of school year and gender. We explored the possibility of calibrating by region for independent schools but there were several regions with no independent school pupils responding to the survey. It should be noted that results by region include pupils in independent schools but the data for independent school pupils has not been weighted by region.

The weighting for Year 4 followed the same approach as for Year 3 but with some modifications as the academic year was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Reserve sample schools which asked to opt-in to the survey were treated as sampled for the selected year groups in the school and are included in the national data for Year 4 (20/21). Pupils in reserve schools which opted in who were not in the selected year groups were not included in the national data or weighted. Furthermore, some schools accidentally had their pupils completing on non-sampled opt-in URLs rather than the correct sampled URLs. In these cases, pupils in the selected year groups were weighted, with trimming if necessary[4], and included in the national data.

The weighting scheme does not take account of term because there are combinations of NUTS2, school type, gender, phase, rurality and free school meals where there are no cases in a term. The only way to weight by term would be to stop weighting by another factor. Since the other factors are important for the weighting and consistency should be maintained where possible, it was not possible to include term in the weighting. This should be considered when comparing results between terms and between years. The weighted sample within each term is not representative, whereas the weighted sample across the year is. Furthermore, the pandemic has had differential impacts on the unweighted sample size by term, with the summer term sample in Year 3 (19/20) being smaller than in other years and the autumn term sample in Year 4 (20/21) smaller than other years. This should be considered when analysing the results, for instance, because children tend to be more active in the summer, and the proportion of the sample in the summer term in Year 4 (20/21) is higher than in Year 3 (19/20), the overall figure for % active has declined only very slightly in Year 4 (20/21) compared with Year 3 (19/20), despite some children being less active in the autumn and spring of Year 4 (20/21) compared with Year 3 (19/20). For a full understanding of how activity has changed between Year 4 (20/21) and Years 2 (18/19) and 3 (19/20), analysis by term should be used, as well as the overall figures. Where possible, we advise also considering school phases (and key demographics) as part of this given weighting by term is not possible as detailed above.

The population estimates for weighting are produced from DfE pupil population estimates from Get Information About Schools (GIAS)[5] (2019/20). The sample for Year 4 (2020/21) was drawn from

---

[4] See penultimate paragraph of this section for an explanation of trimming weights.
[5] GIAS was previously referred to as 'Edubase'.

2019/20 school data because the sample was selected during the previous academic year so that APs could contact schools in advance of the fieldwork term. For consistency, the weighting was carried out using the same data which had been used for sampling. The population counts include pupil counts from schools which have permanently closed. This is because schools that have just closed will have pupils for the previous academic year that will not have been assigned to the new school yet.

As for Year 3, in Year 4, we noted that a number of schools had substantially more responding pupils than the selected 30 per up to three selected classes. In some cases, this appeared to be because schools which had opted in additional pupils (which is an option offered to schools) had asked these opted-in pupils to complete using the URLs for sampled pupils only. Therefore, the weighting for Year 4 was designed to trim the number of weighted pupils to 40 per class in the school, to avoid these additional pupils affecting the national results.

Weights have been calculated for pupils and parents. There are no weights for teachers and any teacher analysis is carried out unweighted (though the Year 4 report contains no teacher results). Some of the data reported in the wellbeing tables involves analysis of matched school year 1-2 pupil data with parent data for those year groups. This is only done when an individual match can be made based on gender, date of birth, year group and school. For this analysis the parent weight was used.

4 Data and statistics

4.1 Minimum base sizes

Data suppression

The data has been suppressed for certain cells in the data tables:

- Where the unweighted number of respondents responding to the question overall or to an individual category is less than 30, results are not presented. The symbol * is used to indicate this.
- Where the number of schools contributing to the results for an Active Partnership or local authority is 2 or fewer. The symbol ^ is used to indicate this.
- Where the unweighted base for an Active Partnership or local authority is less than 150. The symbol ^ is used to indicate this.

Flagged data

In the data tables, the absolute change in the significance table for Active Partnerships or local authorities may be highlighted in yellow. This indicates that the result is not based on all school year phases (a phase is defined as years 1-2, years 3-6 and years 7-11). The highlight indicates at least one of these school phases is missing from the Active Partnership or local authority's result. Alternatively, the result may also be highlighted when there is missing data from a particular term for the Active Partnership or local authority (e.g., if there are no responses during the Autumn term). The Absolute change is highlighted in yellow to indicate that this change needs to be interpreted with caution. Please refer to the lookup table which provides more detail on why that figure has been flagged, e.g. just school years 3-6 responses in Year 4 (20/21) (i.e. missing school phases 1-2 and 7-11) or missing Summer term data in Year 3 (19/20).

4.2 Confidence intervals

Confidence intervals for the measures presented in the report can be found in the linked report tables. Confidence intervals indicate that if repeated samples were taken and confidence intervals computed for each sample, 95% of the intervals would contain the true value. Confidence intervals vary for each measure and each demographic breakdown.

Confidence intervals have been calculated using the complex survey package in SPSS, which takes account of design effects. They are presented for rates (%) in the report tables. Confidence intervals would also apply to the population estimates presented in the report and report tables.

Sometimes confidence intervals cannot be provided, for example when the rate is 100%. In this case the symbol ^ is used. See the next section for more detail on the other circumstance in which confidence intervals cannot be calculated.

4.3   Design effects

For analysis by demography and large geography (region and Active Partnership) the calculation of confidence intervals takes account of strata (local authority) and clustering (school). Where there is only one school in a strata overall or for the demographic sub-groups being presented, confidence intervals cannot be calculated. The symbol ^ is used where confidence intervals cannot be calculated because only one school took part in each Active Partnership or local authority covered by the particular demographic or geographic category being shown. For analysis by local authority, clustering effects (respondents concentrated in a handful of schools) is not accounted for in the confidence intervals due to the small number of schools in each local authority. However, where the number of schools contributing to the results for a local authority is 2 or fewer, the data is suppressed which mitigates for this.

4.4   Significance Testing

The report and accompanying tables show data for the first survey year, the previous survey year and the current survey year (academic year 2017/18, academic year 2019/20 and academic year 2020/21). This has allowed for analysis of the change in participation and activity levels over time.

Note that disability variables are different in Years 3 and 4 from Years 1 and 2 because of an improvement to the questions after cognitive testing with young people, therefore, figures are not shown in the data tables for Year 1. The disability variables in Years 3 and 4 are all for long-term limiting disability and impairments. In Year 1 and 2 reports, data were shown for all disability whether or not long-term limiting.

To compare data across the three survey years, significance testing has been applied to the report tables. This indicates whether changes observed across survey years are likely to be 'true' changes in the population, rather than just observed by chance. Year 4 (2020/21) is compared to Year 1 (2017/18) and Year 3 (2019/20).

Standard errors were generated using the complex samples module in SPSS: these were then applied to t-tests to assess statistical significance.

Only differences which are statistically significant are reported on as differences in the commentary. Where results are reported as being the same for two groups, this means there is no statistically significant difference.

The accompanying tables also include data for the full time series. These tables are intended as summary statistics only, and so significance testing has not been applied to them.

4.5   Population estimates

These are estimates of the number of pupils in a particular group (for example, the number of pupils in the less active group, or the number of boys who have attended a live sports event at least twice in the last year).

These estimates have been calculated using the rate (%) and the 2020/21 DfE pupil population estimates, and therefore the true value would lie within a range around the estimates. The 2020/21 DfE pupil data was used so that the estimates would be based on the data for the academic year the survey took place. For sub-groups the population estimate is calculated from the share of the weighted responses for that category. The confidence intervals for the population estimates can be calculated by dividing the population estimate by the rate (%) and multiplying by the lower and upper confidence

interval rates in the report tables. In some cases, a population estimate has not been provided. ** is used where a decision has been made not to publish population estimates. For example, for number of impairments (LT, Limiting) because the categorisation in the data does not match those provided in population data.

On the tables presented by term, where the demographic split involves year group, the population estimates have been calculated using the rate multiplied by the population in the relevant school phase (year 1-2, 3-6, 7-11) rather than using rates for 1-11 or 3-11 and shares for the sub-groups. This is because the distribution of responding pupils by phase and term is not consistent across the years because of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on sample size. It was not possible to weight to correct for this, as explained in the weighting section, and so the share approach to calculation population estimates was not suitable. Within these phases (e.g., years 7-8, 9-11 or by gender) the share approach was used. For annual analysis the weighting does take account of the varying distribution of phase by year and so the standard share measure was used to calculate population estimates.

5 Questionnaire content

5.1 Overview of questionnaire

Owing to the wide age range covered by the survey, different questions were asked to different year groups. This reflected:

- whether questions are relevant (e.g., volunteering is not relevant for most school year 1-4 pupils),
- whether children could be expected to understand and answer questions on that topic (e.g., younger pupils were not expected to answer questions about life satisfaction),
- the time it took younger pupils to answer the questionnaire (questions were omitted for year 3-4 pupils to reduce questionnaire length and burden),
- whether questions can be answered by parents on behalf of their child (e.g., parents were not asked about their child's wellbeing).

For comparability, the Year 4 (20/21) questionnaire was kept broadly the same as the Year 3 version although there were some changes – these are detailed at the end of this note. Some amendments to the questionnaire that were made for the summer term 2020 were retained to make it appropriate for home completion during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other changes, such as the instruction to teachers in summer term Year 3 to consider the usual situation (when not in a pandemic) when answering questions about facilities and activities were further amended so that data on the situation as it was during the pandemic could be collected during Year 4.

The table on the following page shows which year groups were asked each question for the questions included in the annual report and tables. This is also clearly indicated on each table.

Some other questions were introduced in Year 4 but are not included in the report. These are described, together with other minor changes to the questionnaire in the section called 'Summary of pupil questionnaire changes from Year 3 to Year 4'.

For details about the initial development of the survey please refer to the Year 1 (17/18) Technical Report. Further developments are described in the technical reports for each year.

Table 5.1: Details of the questions asked of respondents and presented in the 2020/21 report

Questions content by year group	Year 1-2 pupils	Year 1-2 parents	Year 3-4 pupils	Year 5-6 pupils	Year 7-11 pupils
Activities					
Participation in sport and physical activity in last week (activities in and out of school and time spent out of school) (time spent in school assumed)	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Intensity of activity (whether made them breathe faster, whether made them hot or tired)	No	No – moderate intensity assumed	Yes but for some activities intensity assumed	Yes but for some activities intensity assumed	Yes but for some activities intensity assumed
Attitudes Extent to which enjoy sport and physical activity, feel confident taking part, find it easy (competence), understand why it is good for them, and know how to get involved or improve their skills	Yes but amended - only whether like playing/ being active/ find it easy	No	Yes apart from how to get involved / improve skills	Yes apart from how to get involved / improve skills	Yes
Swimming					
Whether can swim at all, 25m, tread water	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Whether can swim 200m	No	No	No	No	Yes
Whether can self-rescue, would like to swim more often	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you like swimming	Yes	No	No	No	No
Volunteering frequency and type (types vary between school year 5-6 and 7-11 pupils so are presented separately)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Wellbeing and development					
Happiness	Smiley face	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Life satisfaction and how worthwhile life is	No	No	No	No	Yes
Individual development (resilience) and Community development (trusting peers)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Loneliness	No	No	No	No	Yes
Live sporting events	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Demographic and social questions					
Gender, year group	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ethnicity	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Disability	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Family affluence scale	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

5.2   Definitions used in the report

Activity data in the report

Activity questions

The data were collected by asking:

- which activities from a list pupils had done in the last 7 days,
- on which days they had done each activity in the last 7 days (separately for in and out of school),
- how long they spent doing the activity the last time they did it (outside school), and
- whether it made them breathe faster or made them hot or tired.

Respondents could also mention other activities which were not listed on the questionnaire, and these were coded to the relevant activity.

Moderate activity: This is defined as activity where you raise your heart rate and feel a little out of breath (pupils were asked whether it made them breathe faster than sitting down reading in Years 3 and 4 and whether it made them breathe faster in Year 1).

Vigorous activity: This is defined as when you are out of breath or are sweating - you may not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for breath (pupils were asked whether it made them hot or tired).

For school year 1-2 pupils all activity has been assumed to be moderate intensity since parents were not asked about intensity for their children.

Deriving and cleaning activity data

Information on activities, time spent, intensity and location were combined and fed into the measures presented in the analysis (levels of activity and specific activities participated in). The following rules and edits were used in preparing the derived activity variables:

- The questionnaire was set up such that people selected the activities they did. Any activity which was not selected was assumed not to have been done.
- Where respondents provided duration information for an activity outside school, this was done as response groups (e.g., about half an hour, about three-quarters of an hour) and we allocated a set time for each for creating the derived activity variables (based on evidence from an objective measurement study[6], a standard duration falling within the band was applied). The data have been cleaned such that missing durations for outside school have been imputed using standard durations for that activity. Pupils were not asked about time spent on activities in school and so for all activities in school durations have been imputed using a standard set of times related to the year group and type of activity based on data for outside school, information from teachers on PE and break time durations and the results of the objective measurement study.
- Where information on duration, location or intensity was missing, standard rules were used to impute the data so that activity variables could be calculated for every case in the dataset.

---

[6] In the objective measurement study pupils used a wrist worn accelerometer and completed the questionnaire so that their objective data could be compared with the data collected in the questionnaire.

- Where pupils mentioned an excessive number of activities over the previous week the case was dropped from the data. Data were dropped for cases with more than 25 activities per day on average, resulting in 204 cases being dropped from the data from sampled schools.

In Years 3 (19/20) and 4 (20/21), for a small number of activities the level of intensity was assumed rather than asked. This does not affect the comparison with Year 1 (17/18) because though intensity was asked for these activities in Year 1 (17/18), intensity was assumed in the creation of derived variables.

Levels of Activity

Data are presented for three categories for **_overall activity in the last week_**. Only activity of at least moderate intensity is included. The first category includes pupils who meet the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) guidelines for young people of doing at least 60 minutes of activity on average per day across a week. The second category includes children who do an average of 30-59 minutes on average a day and the third category the children do less than 30 minutes a day. The categories are named:

- Active (an average of 60 minutes or more a day)
- Fairly active (an average of 30-59 minutes a day)
- Less active (less than an average of 30 minutes a day)

Activities

Information is presented on whether or not the pupil has done each activity for any duration with at least moderate intensity in the last week for groups of activities and specific activities. The table on the next page shows the specific activities which are included under each of the composite activity groupings used in the report. Where relevant, the wording or description given in the questionnaire is also included for reference.

The wording for some of these activities was changed in the summer term of Year 3 (19/20) and continued in Year 4 (20/21) to include references to online activities. These are shown in the table below. Also, the category of gym and fitness was extended to all year groups, not just school year 7-11 as it was in Year 1 (17/18), Year 2 (18/19) and the autumn and spring terms of Year 3 (19/20).

The order of activities in the initial question about whether they had been done in the last week was changed so that activities which pupils were more likely to be able to do during COVID-19 restrictions were nearer the top of the list. Wording was also adjusted according to whether or not the pupil reported that they were attending school at the school site.

Table 5.2: Activities which are included under each of the composite activity groupings used in the report

Broad activity group	Activity group	Activities
Sporting activities	Team sports	Football, Netball, Hockey, Cricket, Rugby, Baseball, Softball, Rounders, Basketball, Dodgeball, Benchball, Volleyball*, Lacrosse*, Handball*, King ball*, Korfball*, Roller hockey*, Other team sport*
	Running, athletics or multi-sports	Running, jogging, cross-country, the Daily Mile, Track and Field athletics, Sports day events, Multi-sports*
	Gymnastics, trampolining or cheerleading	Gymnastics, Trampolining (including in a garden, at a trampoline centre, or as part of a club), Cheerleading, Acrobatics including aerial, aerial hoop
	Swimming, diving and water polo	Swimming (and diving), Water polo*
	Racket sports	Table tennis/ping pong, Badminton, Tennis, Squash or racketball*, Other racket sports*
	Combat sports, martial arts or target sports	Boxing, Judo, karate, taekwondo and other martial arts, Archery*, Fencing*, Tai Chi*, Other combat sport or martial art*
	Adventure or outdoor sports	Climbing (including indoors), Snow sports*, Angling*, Sledging*, Orienteering*, Other adventure or outdoor sports*
	Ice skating	Ice skating
	Water sports	Water sports (canoeing, kayaking, sailing, rowing, surfing)
	Horse riding	Horse riding
	Golf	Golf*
	Karting and motorsports	Motorsports*, Karting*
	Other sport or fitness activity	Leisure games: Snooker, pool, billiards, ten pin bowling, skittles, darts*, Other sport or fitness activity*
Active play and informal activities	Active play and informal activities	Kicking a ball about, Skateboarding, roller skating/blading, Frisbee, throwing and catching or skipping, Playing it, tag, chase, sardines or other running games, Climbing or swinging in the playground, garden or park, Other active play*, Hula hooping*
Walking	Walking for travel	Walking to get to school or other places such as friends' houses or a park
	Walking for leisure	Going on a walk (includes walking a dog)
		Walking - type not specified (could be for travel or going on a walk)*
Dance	Dance	Dancing (include online or TV led e.g., TikTok dances)
Cycling	Cycling for travel	Cycling to get to school or other places such as friends' houses or the park
	Cycling for fun/fitness	Cycling/riding a bike for fun or fitness
		Cycling - type not specified (could be for travel or fun)*
Scooter	Riding a scooter	Riding a scooter for fun or to get to places like school, friends' houses or the park
Fitness activities	Gym or fitness	Gym or fitness (fitness/online class e.g. yoga or Joe Wicks, or using exercise machines e.g. rowing machine, exercise bike, running machine), Other fitness or gym*
Active Travel	Walking for travel	Walking to get to school or other places
	Cycling for travel	Cycling to get to school or other places
	Riding a scooter	Riding a scooter

* These activities were not included in the questionnaire but were back coded from other answers.

Activities continued

In addition, information on *swimming* has been included. This covers swimming confidence and capability as reported by pupils in school year 3-11 and school year 1-2 parents, and attitudes to swimming reported by school year 1-2 pupils (see previous table for age ranges covered by each question).

Volunteering

This is defined as volunteering at least twice in the last 12 months to support sport and physical activity. Examples of volunteering activities include being a sports leader or ambassador, coaching, refereeing, umpiring and stewarding, helping with set up and clearing away, helping with refreshments and any other activities which support sport and physical activity. Activities which only help family members are not included. Activities which involve sport and activity to raise money for sport are not included in the measure, although pupils were asked about them.

These questions were asked to pupils in school year 5-11. Pupils in school year 5-6 and school year 7-11 were asked about a different range of activities (appropriate to their age) and so information on roles is presented in separate tables for these two year groups.

Pupils were asked whether they had 'volunteered or given your time to do any of the following activities'. The question for pupils in school years 5-6 included the clarification: 'Think only about when you do them to help with sports, exercise or dance'. Pupils could report on other activities not on the list. These were subsequently back coded and ineligible activities such as helping at Brownies or running cake sales were excluded. All pupils who had reported that they helped with at least one type of activity were asked whether they had given their time for these activities more than once in the last year. Only those who had done so more than once were included in the measure. Note that while 'coached or instructed' is a separate category for school year 7-11, for school year 5-6 any back coded answers for coaching are included in 'other' and 'setting up or clearing away' is a separate category for school year 5-6 but for school year 7-11 any back coded answers of this type are included in 'other'. The results for school year 5-6 and 7-11 are presented separately because of the differences in codes.

Wellbeing and individual and community development

Three dimensions of mental wellbeing are presented: *happiness*, *life satisfaction* and the extent to which they feel the things they do in their life are *worthwhile*. For school year 1-2 a smiley face question was used which is expressed as three categories in the tables: happy, neither happy nor sad, sad. For school year 3-6 the standard ONS happiness yesterday question was used. For school year 7-11 the standard ONS happiness yesterday, life satisfaction and worthwhile questions were used.

Happiness: "How happy did you feel yesterday?" (school year 3-11)

Life Satisfaction: "How satisfied are you with life nowadays?" (school year 7-11)

Feeling your life is Worthwhile: "To what extent are the things you do in your life worthwhile" (school year 7-11)

These three questions are answered on an 11-point scale from 0 to 10 where 0 is not at all and 10 is completely. The results are presented as mean scores. The standard ONS wellbeing question about anxiety was not included as it is not recommended for use with children under 14 years old.

Individual and community development was captured from school year 3-11 pupils through a question about trying difficult things and a question about trusting peers. Each question is asked on a 5-point scale from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1) and agree and strongly agree. The questions asked were:

Individual Development: Using the resilience question "If I find something difficult, I keep trying until I can do it" (school year 3-11)

Community development: Using the trust question "How much do you feel you can trust people who are a similar age to you?" (school year 3-11)

As in Years 2 and 3, in Year 4 the results for strongly agree are shown, which differs from the Year 1 report when combined agree and strongly agree results were shown. The tables show the wellbeing and development indicators by demographic characteristics as well as split by level of activity and volunteering behaviour. See previous sections for activity and volunteering definitions. The findings for these variables can be found in other table sets. Here they are just used to look at levels of wellbeing and development split by level of activity and volunteering. The means for wellbeing tables are the mean calculated across the groups to which the answer relates from the scores of 0-10 which were used as answers to the questions.

Loneliness: In Year 3 the harmonised ONS loneliness question was included for the first time and continued to be asked in Year 4 (20/21). This asked "How often do you feel lonely?" with answers of often/always, some of the time, occasionally, hardly ever, never. The data tables report on the full question as well as the percentage saying they often or always feel lonely. This question was only asked to pupils in school year 7-11.

Attitudes questions

There were five questions about attitudes included in the year 3 to 11 questionnaire and covered in the Year 4 report. These were based on the concept of physical literacy[7]. School year 3-6 pupils were asked the first four and school year 7-11 pupils were asked all of them. Pupils were asked to respond on a scale with the following categories: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, can't say. The data tables report on the percentage strongly agreeing to each statement.

- I enjoy taking part in exercise and sports (***enjoyment***)
- I feel confident when I exercise and play sports (***confidence***)
- I find exercise and sports easy (***competence***)
- I understand why exercise and sports are good for me (***understanding***)
- I know how to get involved and improve my skills in lots of different types of exercise and sport (***knowledge***)

School year 1-2 pupils were asked about their attitudes in a short questionnaire. They were asked:

- Do like playing sport? (I love, I like, I don't like, I hate… data tables report on the percentage saying I love) (***enjoyment***)
- Do you find sport easy? (yes, no, don't know… data tables report on the percentage saying yes) (***competence***)

---

[7] Whitehead, M. (2016) Physical Literacy', *International Physical Literacy Association*

- Do you like being active? This includes things like running games, riding a bike or scooter, walking, and dancing. (I love, I like, I don't like, I hate… data tables report on the percentage saying I love) (***enjoyment***)
- Do you like swimming? (I love, I like, I don't like, I hate, I don't know… data tables report on the percentage saying I love) (***enjoyment***) but included under swimming in reporting

Following cognitive testing, further attitudes questions were added to the school year 3-11 questionnaire in Year 4 (20/21). These were introduced to provide further details on motivations. More information about these questions can be found in the section below covering questionnaire changes made in Year 4 (20/21). These attitudinal measures are not reported on in the data tables.

Sports spectating

This is measured as having watched two or more live sports events, whether professional or amateur, over the previous 12 months.

Pupils were asked:

- Have you done this activity (attended a live sports event) in the past 12 months?
- How many live sporting events have you been to see since last year?

Additional information provided was: Include all matches and competitions, including professional sport as well as watching family and friends compete. Please do not include any events that you took part in yourself, or events you watched on TV.

Answers of 'twice' or 'three or more' were included in this measure.

Key demographic variables

Year group and gender

The report contains breakdowns by ***year group and gender***. Gender includes the category 'other'. School year 7-11 pupils were asked to give more details. Where answers did not appear to indicate male, female or other, they were coded as prefer not to say or gender uncodeable. Year group is the answer reported by the pupil or their parent. In some cases, this was inconsistent with the age given but we took the year group as given and did not recode as only school year is used in published analysis.

A derived variable of gender and school year combined has been included. The year group breakdown for the gender category 'other' has not been shown because of small base sizes.

Ethnicity

Parents of school year 1-2 pupils were asked about their child's ethnicity using the full ONS standard question with a breakdown of ethnic groups (an additional code of 'prefer not to say' was added for the 2018/19 survey). These have been grouped into broader categories for analysis. Ethnicity for school year 3-11 pupils was self-reported and used a simplified question which offered these categories: White (British or English), White (nor British or English), Mixed race, Asian or British Asian, Black or Black British, Other, Prefer not to say (in year 2017/18 of the survey 'none of these' was presented rather than other and prefer not to say). For school year 1-2 data reported by the parents, Chinese has been coded into other.

A derived variable of gender and ethnicity combined has been included. The ethnic breakdown for the gender category 'other' has not been shown because of small base sizes.

Family Affluence Scale

This is a standard scale developed for the Health Behaviour in School Aged Children Survey (an international study of 11-15 year olds). The updated version of the scale was used which asks the following questions. Minor modifications were made to the questions to make them suitable for parents and for younger children for whom the scale was not originally designed.

- We would now like to ask you some questions about your home and your family. Does your family own a car, van or truck?
- Do you have your own bedroom for yourself?
- How many computers does your family own (including laptops and tablets/iPads, but NOT including game consoles and smartphones)?
- How many times did you and your family travel out of England for a holiday last year?
- How many bathrooms (room with a shower/ bath or both) are in your home?

Answers to these questions were scored according to the answers given, resulting in an overall score between 0 and 13. Scores of 0-6=low, 7-10=medium, 11-13=high. Note that in the autumn term of Year 1, the car question only had yes/ no categories when it should have had none, one, two or more. This means that scores in the autumn term have a maximum of 12. Adjustments have been made to the groupings to allow for this in the Year 1 data. In Years 2, 3 and 4, the correct question was asked throughout the survey year.

In Year 4 (20/21), an adjusted Family Affluence Scale (FAS) derived variable has been created and included in the data tables. In previous years, the FAS variable has been created from answers to all of the above questions. Owing to COVID-19 restrictions, it was not possible or was difficult, regardless of social background, to travel out of England at some points over the previous 12 months for most of academic year 2020/21. Therefore, a second FAS variable has been created, excluding answers to this question. This means that an overall score would be between 0 and 10, so the groupings for the bands have been adjusted – scores of 0-5=low, 6-8=medium, 9-10=high. It is important to note that the bands for the adjusted FAS variable are not comparable with the bands on the standard FAS variable. The adjusted FAS variable has been created retrospectively for previous survey years for comparability and only this adjusted FAS variable has been included in the Year 4 (academic year 2020-21) reporting.

Disabilities or long-term health conditions and number of impairments

The questions asked about disability or long-term health conditions were updated in Year 3 (19/20) and remained the same in Year 4 (20/21). In Years 1 (17/18) and 2 (18/19), the questions about disability or health conditions varied by age, but in Years 3 (19/20) and 4 (20/21), all school year 3-11 pupils and parents of school year 1-2 pupils were asked the same questions. Respondents were asked: "Do you[8] have a disability, special need or illness (e.g. autism, dyslexia, or asthma) which makes it difficult for you to do any of these things" and shown a list of tasks which included things like 'moving around including walking and running' and 'concentrating and paying attention'. If the answer was 'yes' they were asked which of those things they have difficulty with. If they selected any of the things in the list, they were then asked: "Do any of these disabilities, special needs or illnesses have a big effect on your life?" (to identify

---

[8] Or your son or your daughter in parent questionnaire

whether the disability or health condition is limiting) and: "Do you think any of these disabilities, special needs or illnesses will last for a year or more?" (to identify whether the disability or health condition is long-term).

Those who said yes at the initial question and both the question about the disability or health condition having a big effect on their life and whether they think it will last for a year or more were defined as having a long-term limiting disability or health condition (reported in the data tables).

The number and type of impairment was derived from the information given about specific things they found difficult to do and whether that impairment is long-term limiting. It should be noted that this is the number of impairments from a set list.

Those in the no long-term limiting disability or health condition category are those who reported no to the initial disability or health condition question or no to the disability or health condition having a big effect on their life or whether they think it will last for a year or more.

5.3   Summary of pupil questionnaire changes from Year 3 (2019-20) to Year 4 (2020-21)

As mentioned earlier in this note, changes needed to be made to the questionnaire for the summer term 2020 owing to the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic had on schools. Many of these changes were retained for Year 4 (20/21) of the survey – please refer to the Year 3 (19/20) technical note for the summary of changes made to questions for the summer term 2020.

Below is a list of changes made to questions for Year 4 (20/21) – some changes were to be appropriate for the COVID-19 pandemic situation and some were enhancements or new topics added to the questionnaire:

School year 1-2 questionnaire

Changed the question from 'Have you done any of these sports?' back to 'Have you done any of these sports in the last week?' (The same wording as the autumn and spring terms of Year 3 (19/20)).

Reinstated the question about how they got to school.

Added a response option to the question about how they got to school – 'I didn't go to school today'.

School year 3-11 pupils and parents of school year 1-2 questionnaire

Added additional wording to the question which asks whether the pupil has been to school in the last week to make it clear that attending school means in person, not online.

In the spring term, added a new question about where the survey is being completed – 'Where are you doing this survey?'. Answer options are 'At school', 'At home', 'Somewhere else' and 'Prefer not to say'.

Added tick and cross symbols to question explanations to provide clarity and make questions easier to view on a smartphone.

Added clarification to the 'Walking to get to school or other places' code to include 'such as friends' houses or a park'. This also applied to the 'riding a scooter' and 'cycling to get to school or other places' codes.

Added further emphasis to activity codes to include online activities. For example, 'Dancing (include online or TV led e.g., TikTok dances)'.

Reinstated the question asking whether pupils who had done no activities in the last week had done anything in the last four weeks.

Reinstated the question 'Would you like to swim more often?'. We also amended the explanation to the swimming questions: "*Swimming pools near you may or may not be open at the moment. It is still important to ask some questions about swimming.*"

The follow up question of 'Is this how you usually feel?' after asking 'Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?' continued to be asked to school year 7-11 pupils as well as school year 3-6 pupils.

Reinstated the question about how they got to school, for pupils who were attending school on some or all days of the week. Also added new answer options to this question 'I did not go into school as I was learning from home'.

Added more attitudinal questions. Pupils were asked to respond on a scale with the following categories: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, can't say. School year 7-11 pupils were asked all six and school year 3-6 pupils were asked the final question:

- ▪ I feel that I have the opportunity to be physically active
- ▪ I exercise to stay fit and healthy
- ▪ I exercise to help me relax and worry less about things
- ▪ I feel guilty when I don't exercise
- ▪ I exercise socially for fun with friends
- ▪ I exercise because someone tells me I have to

Added a question about whether children would like to do more or less activity – 'In the future would you like to do more, the same amount, or less exercise and sport than you do at the moment?'. This question was asked to pupils in school year 3-6 and school year 7-11. Answer options were 'More', 'The same amount' and 'Less'. Respondents that answered 'More' were then asked a follow up question – 'Thinking about doing more exercise or sport in the future, which statements apply to you?'. The statements were 'I want to do more of the exercise and sports I do now', 'I want to do different or new exercise or sports' and 'I don't mind whether I do more of the same or do different exercise or sports' with 'Don't know' and 'Prefer not to say' options as well.

Added a question about riding a bike – 'Can you ride a bike?'. This was only asked to pupils in school year 5 and 6. Answer options were 'Yes, without stabilisers', 'Yes, with stabilisers', 'Yes, an adaptive bike or adaptive trike for children with disabilities or special needs', 'No' and 'Don't know'.

The wording for the question about whether parents have to pay for school meals was changed – 'Thinking about school meals (food served by the school). Do your parents have to pay if you have school meals? If you don't normally have school meals, please tell us whether you think your parents would have to pay if you had a school meal.'

Amended the question about outdoor spaces that they can access. This was only asked to pupils in school year 7-11 and included more answer options - 'A balcony', 'A garden or backyard', 'A park or field', 'Outdoor sports places such as pitches or tennis courts', 'A wood or countryside', 'Beach or seaside', 'In a lake, river, canal', 'A road or pavement where you can safely go for a run or walk or ride your bike or scooter', 'Other place outside your house or flat (e.g. cycle way, path along river)' or 'None of these'.

Teacher questionnaire

In Year 3 summer term, some amendments were made to the teacher questionnaire, asking the teachers to report on the usual situation in relation to activities, facilities, swimming lessons and walking to school, rather than the situation as it was during the pandemic. By Year 4 it was clear that the impacts of the pandemic would be long term and so the questions were amended to ask the situation during the 2020/21 academic year. Where appropriate, new categories were added to enable teachers to explain the usual situation, as well as the current situation. For example, for swimming lessons a category was added for not usually offered, not offered because of the COVID-19 pandemic or not knowing whether they would be offered because of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, a new question was added about the impacts of the pandemic on PE and other activities offered at the school.

6 Note on Terminology

In the report tables, the term "respondents" is used as the heading for the unweighted base for each column. The term 'respondents' has been used because the term participant which is usually used to refer to people who take part in a survey is confusing in the context of a survey about sports participation where participation has a different meaning.

The term rate (%) means the weighted percentage of respondents who gave that answer.

The term share (%) means the weighted percentage of respondents who gave a given answer who are in that demographic category.

6 Note on Terminology

Our standards and accreditations

Ipsos MORI's standards and accreditations provide our clients with the peace of mind that they can always depend on us to deliver reliable, sustainable findings. Our focus on quality and continuous improvement means we have embedded a "right first time" approach throughout our organisation.

ISO 20252

This is the international market research specific standard that supersedes BS 7911/MRQSA and incorporates IQCS (Interviewer Quality Control Scheme). It covers the five stages of a Market Research project. Ipsos MORI was the first company in the world to gain this accreditation.

Market Research Society (MRS) Company Partnership

By being an MRS Company Partner, Ipsos MORI endorses and supports the core MRS brand values of professionalism, research excellence and business effectiveness, and commits to comply with the MRS Code of Conduct throughout the organisation. We were the first company to sign up to the requirements and self-regulation of the MRS Code. More than 350 companies have followed our lead.

ISO 9001

This is the international general company standard with a focus on continual improvement through quality management systems. In 1994, we became one of the early adopters of the ISO 9001 business standard.

ISO 27001

This is the international standard for information security, designed to ensure the selection of adequate and proportionate security controls. Ipsos MORI was the first research company in the UK to be awarded this in August 2008.

The UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the UK Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018

Ipsos MORI is required to comply with the UK GDPR and the UK DPA. It covers the processing of personal data and the protection of privacy.

HMG Cyber Essentials

This is a government-backed scheme and a key deliverable of the UK's National Cyber Security Programme. Ipsos MORI was assessment-validated for Cyber Essentials certification in 2016. Cyber Essentials defines a set of controls which, when properly implemented, provide organisations with basic protection from the most prevalent forms of threat coming from the internet.

Fair Data

Ipsos MORI is signed up as a "Fair Data" company, agreeing to adhere to 10 core principles. The principles support and complement other standards such as ISOs, and the requirements of Data Protection legislation.

For more information

About Ipsos MORI Public Affairs
Ipsos MORI Public Affairs works closely with national governments, local public services and the not-for-profit sector. Its c.200 research staff focus on public service and policy issues. Each has expertise in a particular part of the public sector, ensuring we have a detailed understanding of specific sectors and policy challenges. Combined with our methods and communications expertise, this helps ensure that our research makes a difference for decision makers and communities.

Ipsos MORI Ipsos