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Well-being of Wales 2017-18: what do we know about children's well-being?

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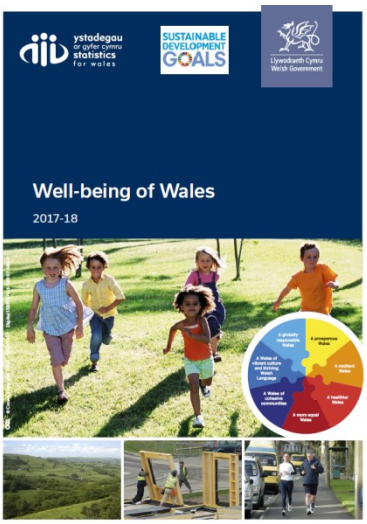
Well-being of Wales 2017-18: what do we know about children's well-being?

Introduction

The Well-being of Wales report provides an update on progress being made in Wales towards the achievement of the 7 well-being goals. It considers the current position and progress in recent years by reference to the 46 national indicators for Wales and some additional contextual information where appropriate. It was first published in 2017 and the second edition was published in September 2018.



This supplementary report is an extract of the analysis contained in the Well-being of Wales report concerning the well-being of children. It does not contain any additional narrative or analysis. It has been produced to draw out the specific analysis relating to children for those users who are interested in understand child well-being.

The report shows:

- There have been long-term improvements in terms of a healthy start in life, with a decline in low birth weight babies, improvements in dental health and breastfeeding take-up increasing over the decade. Vaccine uptake in young infants remains high and stable.
- New data from Foundation Phase on-entry assessments show how children have developed before entering school.
- During secondary school there are dramatic changes in children's well-being, self-reported health and lifestyles. Whilst at age 11 girls and boys report similar well-being and self-reported health, by aged 16 a gap is evident, with girls reporting lower well-being and worse health.
- Rates for smoking and drinking have fallen considerably over the years for those aged 11-16. However the number of healthy lifestyle behaviours declines rapidly as children progress through secondary school.
- Adverse Childhood Experience studies highlight the relationship between harmful experiences in childhood with negative long-term outcomes.
- Children are the population group most likely to be in relative income poverty, with the latest data showing that 28 per cent were living in income poverty. This has fallen over the past few years.
- Fewer children live in workless households, with falls in the latest year and over the medium-term.
- Attainment in primary and secondary school has risen in recent years, although there is variation between socio-economic groups.
- Participation in education, employment or training for young people post-compulsory education has been increasing in recent years.

- Attendance and participation in the arts have been increasing over the past decade.
- The highest rates of Welsh speaking ability and use is seen amongst children, although this is not maintained post-compulsory education. The percentage speaking Welsh at home has stabilised in recent years.
- A third of secondary school pupils feel lonely some of the time. Figures for Wales are similar to other parts of the UK, and girls are more likely to feel lonely than boys.
- One in ten secondary school pupils are bullied weekly, and these figures are relatively high within the UK.

Background

In response to our consultation on the national well-being indicators[1], several stakeholders noted that since the National Survey for Wales did not include data for people under the age of 16, there was a need to better capture the subjective well-being of children. In response, over the past year we have been working with colleagues in Cardiff University to use the Schools Health Research Network to develop our analysis of children's well-being on areas such as loneliness and perceptions of safety. This year's Well-being of Wales report therefore includes additional analysis on children's well-being based on this source, as well as the Millennium Cohort Study and other sources, such as data on children in workless households from the Annual Population Survey and the Foundation Phase on-entry assessment.

We will be considering future plans for Well-being of Wales reports over the next few months (see feedback). It is not expected that the focus on children will be repeated annually, and we will consider if a similar exercise should be undertaken for other groups. However we will continue to draw on the relevant data sources used in this year's report to supplement the national indicators drawn from the National Survey for Wales, where children are not covered.

Further analysis

The Well-being of Wales report includes some analysis of the national indicators according to socio-economic background, age or other equality groups. However, it is possible to analyse the indicators in even greater detail. Therefore the 46 on-line national indicator reports also provide links to more detailed reporting of those indicators through Statistical Releases or Bulletins produced either by Welsh Government or other departments.

StatsWales

The data that have been used to measure the national indicators are mostly available on the StatsWales site, with additional breakdowns by geographical area or population group where this has been possible.

Feedback

We want to ensure that our approach to reporting against well-being goals is as effective as possible and will be considering lessons learnt from this second year of reporting over the next few months. Over the past year we undertook a user survey on the first report, but

[1] Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: How do you measure a nation's progress?

welcome feedback at any time on the content or usability of the report. If you have thoughts, there is contact information at the beginning of the report.

We also welcome feedback on the approach for drawing out analysis of a particular topic for a supplementary report.

Acknowledgements

Some of the data on young people's well-being reported in this year's report came from the 2017/18 School Health Research Network (SHRN) / Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) survey. SHRN is a partnership between Cardiff University, Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Cancer Research UK and is led by the University's Centre for the Development and Evaluation of Complex Interventions for Public Health Improvement (DECIPHer). With the support of the partnership, SHRN has worked with secondary schools across Wales to establish a young people's health and well-being data infrastructure for Wales and the input of participating schools, staff and students into the SHRN/HBSC survey is gratefully acknowledged. We would also like to thank Gwyther Rees for his contribution in providing analysis and advice relating to the Millennium Cohort Study. Gwyther Rees has undertaken this work as a freelance researcher. He has substantial experience of research on children's well-being and is an Honorary Research Fellow at Cardiff University and an Associate Research Fellow at University of York.

What do we know about children's well-being?

There have been long-term improvements in terms of a healthy start in life, with a decline in low birth weight babies, improvements in dental health and breastfeeding take-up increasing over the decade.

The number of single babies (as opposed to twins or triplets etc.) born weighing less than 2.5 kg (5 pounds, 8 ounces) has been falling over the last decade or so. The most recent statistics for 2017 showed that 5.6 per cent of births (single babies) were low birth weight. This is the highest percentage since 2009.

Breastfeeding has health benefits for babies and their mothers. The percentage of babies breastfed[2] at birth has risen from 55 per cent in 2006 to 61 per cent in 2017. Babies of older mothers are more likely to be breastfed than those of younger mothers. Breastfeeding rates have increased, although only around 60 per cent of mothers who began breastfeeding at birth are still doing so at 6-8 weeks.

The most recent figures on children's dental health[3] (aged five and twelve) both show an improvement. There has been a reduction in the proportion of children aged five with decay over the last decade or so and although the proportion of children with dental decay is higher in the most deprived areas than the least, that gap is narrowing.

For those aged twelve there have been continued reductions in the prevalence of dental caries across all deprivation quintiles between 2004 and 2017. Despite this, the ratios of dental caries for the most deprived versus the middle deprived groups appear to be widening albeit slightly.

Teenage conceptions[4] reached a record low in 2016 and have fallen dramatically since 2008. The rate for those aged under 18 has more than halved over the same time period.

Vaccinations uptake in young children continues to be high

In 2017-18, vaccine uptake in young infants remained high and stable[5]. For the tenth consecutive year, uptake of both the '5 in 1' and pneumococcal conjugate vaccinations remained above 95 per cent in children at one year of age.

The proportion of children who were up to date with their routine immunisations by four years of age remains stable, following a decrease three years in a row.

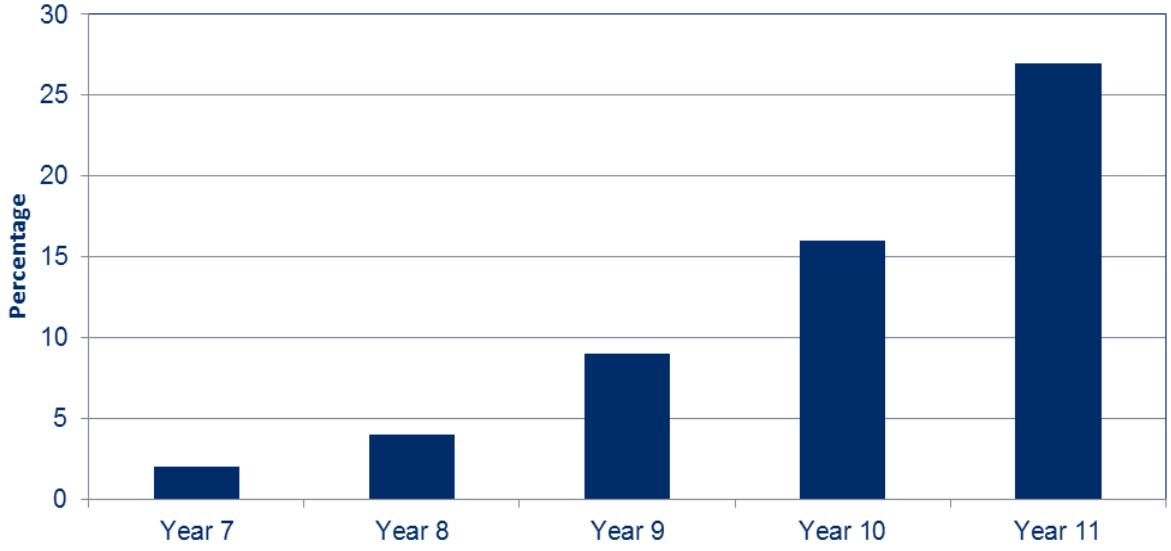
MMR uptake was just below 95 per cent for the first dose at two years.

[2] Births in Wales 2006 - 2016: Data from the National Community Child Health Database, Welsh Government
[3] Survey of twelve year olds oral health 2016-17, Cardiff University
[4] Conceptions in England and Wales 2016, Office for National Statistics
[5] Vaccine update in children in Wales, Public Health Wales

Most health behaviours deteriorate in secondary school

12 per cent of 11 to 16 year olds showed fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours (not smoking, not drinking above guidelines, consuming five fruit and veg a day, meeting physical activity guidelines). The number of healthy lifestyle behaviours deteriorates with age. 2 per cent of pupils in year 7 had fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours, increasing to 9 per cent in year 9 and 27 per cent in year 11.

Percentage of children following fewer than two healthy lifestyle behaviours by school year, 2013/14



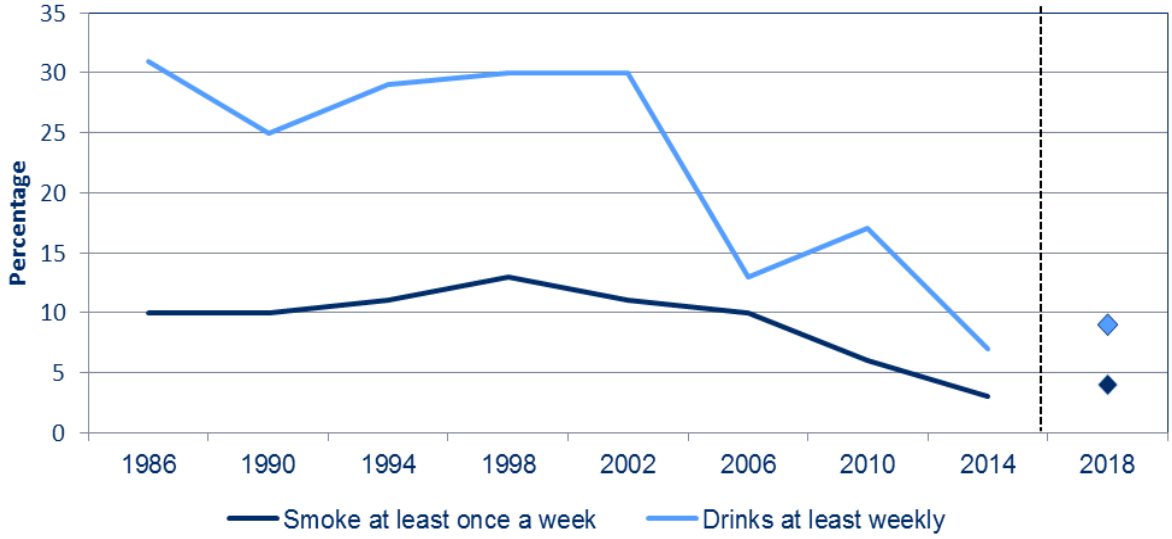
Source: Health Behaviour in School aged Children (HBSC)

The 2016-17 child measurement programme[6] shows that just over seven in every ten Welsh children have a healthy weight and that reception-age children are significantly more likely than the Welsh average to be obese if they live in areas of higher deprivation. Boys are more likely to be obese or overweight in school, with the gap widening during secondary school.

Rates of smoking[7] have declined since 1998 for 11 to 16 year olds from 13 per cent to around 4 per cent in 2017/18. Rates of drinking among young people on a weekly basis have fallen significantly between 2002 (23 per cent) and 2017/18 (9 per cent). Participation in physical activity is little changed from 2002 with boys being consistently more likely than girls to be physically active. Data for 2017/08 is provisional.

[6] Child Measurement Programme for Wales, Public Health Wales
[7] Welsh Government analysis of School Health Research Network data. Note that the figures are provisional and will be different to those which will be produced for HBSC.

Percentage of children aged 11-16 following selected health behaviours



Source: Health Behaviour in School-aged Children and School Health Research Network

Around a third of secondary school children walk to school[8], with a slightly higher proportion of boys than girls walking to school.

From year 9 onwards more girls report fair/ poor health than boys[9]. At age 11 (year 7) the proportion of boys and girls reporting poor health is the same (one in seven), but by age 16 (year 11) there is a gap – with one in three girls reporting poor health compared to one in four boys. However the overall proportion of children reporting poor health has fallen – down from 26 per cent in 2002 to 22 per cent in 2018. That fall is most evident in girls, but year 11 girls have seen little change over the last 12 years.

New data are available on children's stages of development on entry into primary school

Children in Wales are assessed through the Foundation Phase Profile, during their first 6 weeks following entry into primary school (Reception Class). This is used to determine the stage of development and interests of the child according to the Foundation Phase Profile and framework.

The data reflect the wide range of developmental maturity that we expect at this age, which is well within the normal range for children at entry to school, especially with the age variability at the point of school entry. Around 6 in 10 pupils aged 4 are at a stage of development in mathematics and language, literacy and communication in English that would be consistent with, or greater than, their age according to the framework, with around 9 in 10 pupils within one stage of the development consistent with their age.

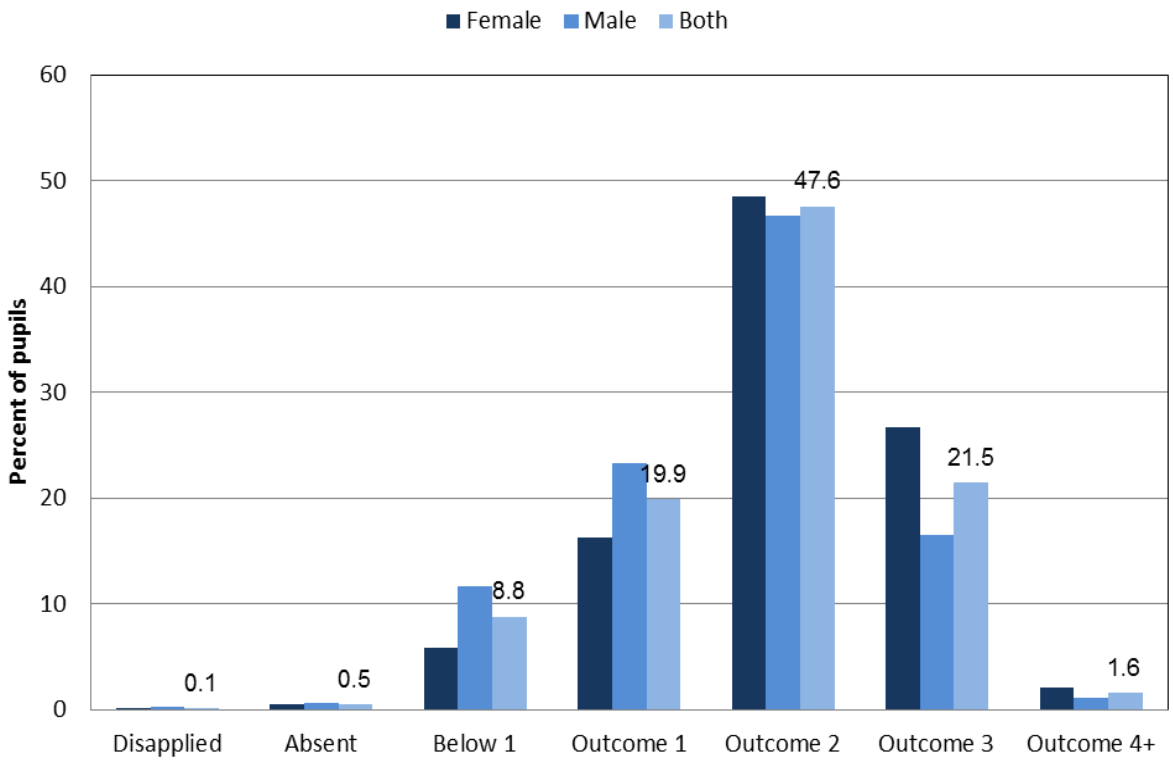
[8] Health behaviour in school-aged children, Welsh Government
[9] Health behaviour in school-aged children, Welsh Government; data for 2018 is provisional; data collection moved online for 2018 which may affect comparability

There is a different distribution for language, literacy and communication in Welsh, with around 1 in 3 pupils at a stage of development that is consistent with or greater than their age. This can be explained by the number of pupils from non-Welsh speaking households whose parents choose to enrol them at a Welsh medium school. To put this into context, by the end of the Foundation Phase around 9 in 10 pupils achieve the expected outcome in this area of learning.

For all areas of learning there is a different distribution pattern of developmental progress for boys compared with girls, as they mature at different rates, and on average girls are at a higher stage of development. This is consistent with other studies such as the Millennium Cohort Study and data from the Schedule of Growing Skills collected under the Flying Start programme.

One of the areas in which children are assessed is in personal and social development, well-being and cultural diversity. Around 7 in 10 pupils aged 4 are at a stage of development in this area of learning that would be consistent with or greater than their age according to the framework, with around 9 in 10 pupils within one stage of the development consistent with their age.

On-entry assessments of pupils in reception class: Personal and social development



Source: On-entry assessments of pupils, Welsh Government

Attainment in primary and secondary school has risen in recent years, although in international assessments Wales continues to lag behind the rest of the UK

International research indicates that addressing low and very low skills is even more important than increasing high skill levels. Research suggests that, in common with the rest of the UK, Wales continues to compare less well with other countries in this respect.

Results at the end of Key Stage 4 (the end of compulsory schooling) have been improving up to 2016, with the percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSE grades A*-C including mathematics and English / Welsh rising from just over 4 out of 10 pupils in 2007 to 6 out of 10 pupils in 2016. There have recently been a number of changes to the way performance is measured which means that consistent data is not available in 2017.

However the international comparisons made under the OECD's PISA assessments[10] suggests that in terms of reading, maths and science, Welsh 15 year olds continue to lag behind the rest of the UK. Internationally Wales performs below the average of OECD nations.

Results have also been improving at the other key stages of education in schools over the last decade. At Key Stage 2 (end of primary schooling), the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in each of the core subjects (mathematics, science and either English or Welsh) has increased over the last decade from 75 per cent to 90 per cent.

Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and children in care have poorer educational outcomes in schools on average with the gap widening as pupils get older

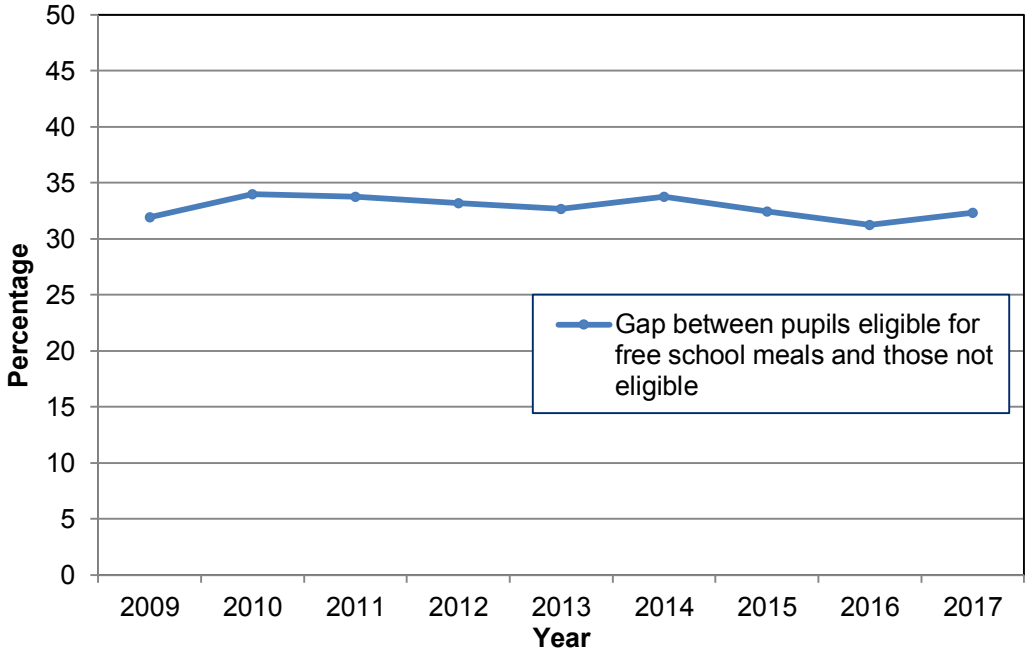
By using eligibility for free school meals as a measure of deprivation, there is a link between deprivation and attainment levels at school. While achievement is consistently improving across all pupils, those who are eligible for FSM have poorer performance at every key stage and on all performance measures. This gap increases as pupils get older. National Survey for Wales data also show that parents in multiple deprived households are less likely to be supporting their children with school work, and also have less confidence to do so.

At Key Stage 4 the gap between free school meal pupils and others has narrowed in recent years, although there was a slight increase in 2017 (to a gap of 32.3 percentage points) relative to 2016.

Inequalities also exist for children receiving care and support, again with the gap increasing as pupils get older. At March 2017 the percentage of children receiving care and support achieving the Level 2 inclusive measure at Key Stage 4 (12 per cent) is less than a quarter of the percentage for all pupils (55 per cent).

[10] Achievement of 15 year olds: Program for International Student Assessment national report, Welsh Government

Pupils achieving the L2 threshold (including English or Welsh first language and mathematics) at KS4, by year and free school meal eligibility, 2009 to 2017



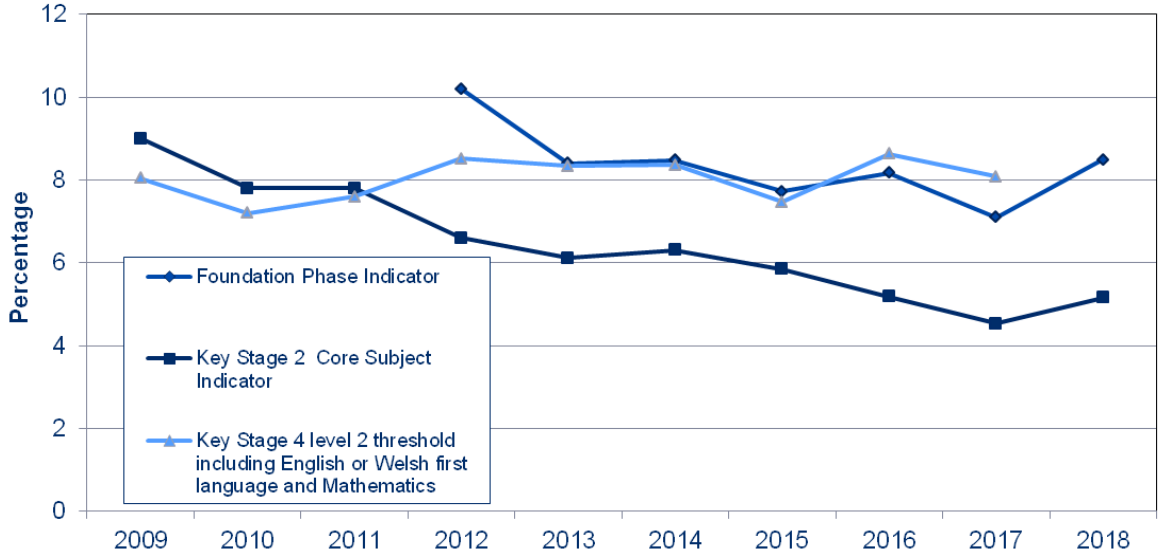
Source: Welsh Examination Database

Girls continue to achieve better educational outcomes than boys and are also more likely to continue their full-time education after the age or 16.

From Foundation Phase (up to 7 years old) to Key Stage 4 (15 year olds), a higher proportion of girls than boys achieve the expected outcomes. The gap initially narrows up to Key Stage 2 but then grows as pupils get older.

At the end of the Foundation Phase in 2018 the gap was 8.5 percentage points. Traditionally, the smallest gap between boys and girls has been at the end of Key Stage 2 (the end of primary schooling), and in 2018 the gap at that point was 5.2 percentage points. At the end of Key Stage 4, the gap was 8.1 percentage points in 2017.

Gap in pupil achievement between boys and girls, by key stage, 2009 to 2018



Source: National teacher assessment data collection, Welsh Government

Some differences in educational attainment are seen for different ethnicities; attainment remains low for gypsy traveller children, whilst a higher proportion of children from Asian, Chinese or mixed ethnicities reach expected levels of achievement than those from a white background.

Mixed patterns in educational attainment have been observed for people with different ethnicities. In general, the percentage of pupils from a Mixed, Asian or Asian British, and Chinese or Chinese British background achieving the expected levels at Key Stages 2 and 3 and the level 2 inclusive at Key Stage 4 is similar or higher than the percentage of pupils achieving this from a White background.

However, within these groups there is some variation. Pupils from Gypsy/Gypsy Roma and Other white backgrounds have lower levels of achievement than the White group overall, with 21.5 per cent and 53.0 per cent of pupils respectively achieving level 2 inclusive at Key stage 4, compared with 58.7 per cent for the White group overall, in the period 2015-17. Similarly, lower levels of achievement are recorded for pupils from White & Black Caribbean and White & Black African backgrounds than the mixed ethnicity group overall. Attainment is lower for pupils from Black or Black British group than for all pupils across each key stage.

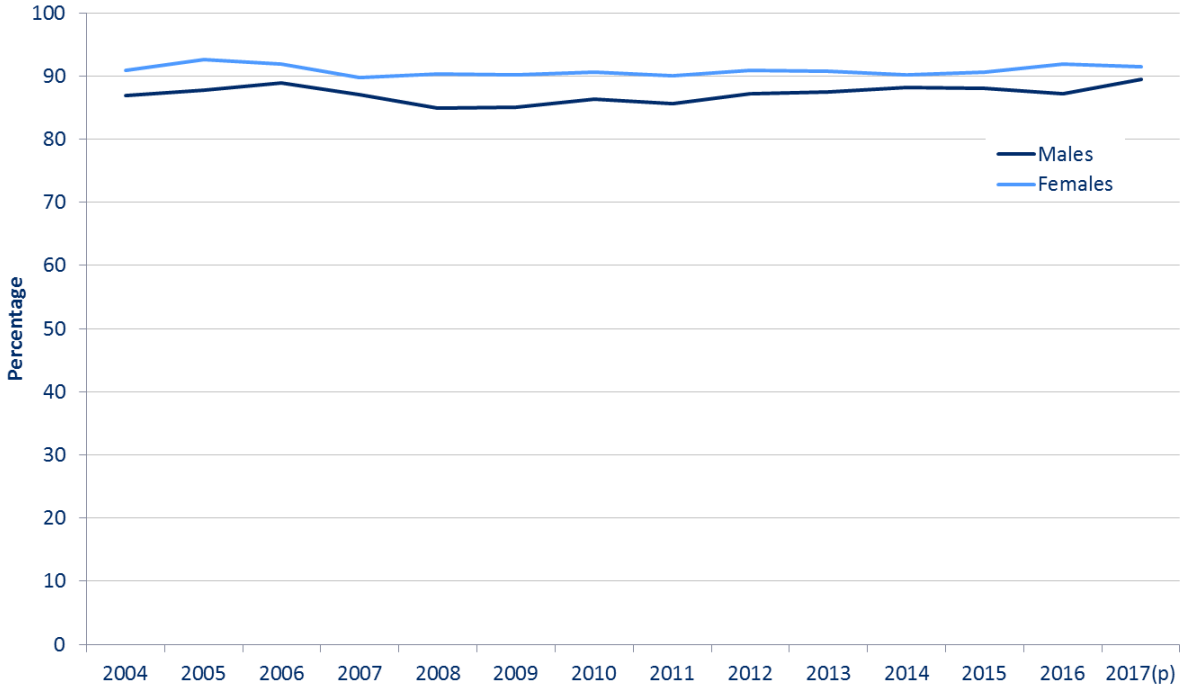
A 2014 research review on Ethnic Minority pupils[11], suggested a range of factors including socio-economic disadvantage and SEN status (for both of which differing rates are seen by ethnic group) that explain some, although not all, of the variance seen in attainment by different ethnic groups. Other factors affecting attainment that intersect with ethnicity include English language proficiency, gender, discrimination and culture.

[11] Ethnic minority pupils, Welsh Government

Participation in education, employment or training for young people post-compulsory education has been increasing in recent years

There have been recent increases in young people in education, employment or training both amongst 16-18 year olds and 19-24 year olds. For 16-18 year olds this percentage fluctuated at just under 90 per cent for many years but in general the figures have been increasing since the recession, and in 2017 90.5 per cent of 16-18 year olds were in education, employment or training. Similarly for 19-24 year olds this figure has increased since the recession and now stands at 84 per cent, around 6 percentage points higher than in 2012.

Percentage of 16-18 year-olds in education, employment or training, 2004 to 2017



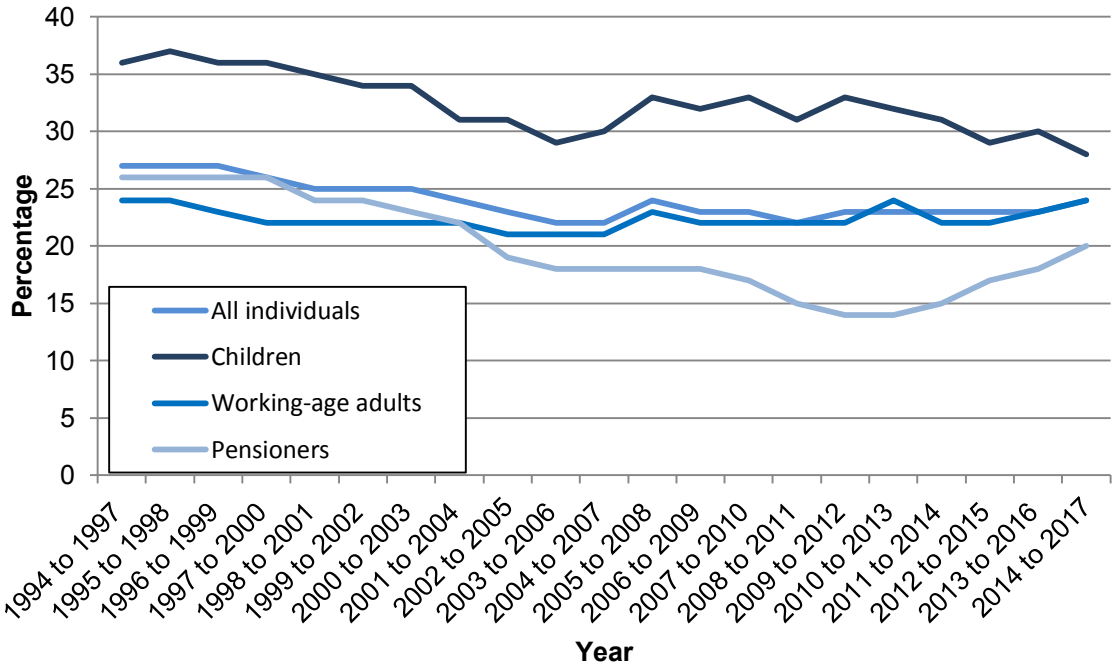
Source: Welsh Government

Children are the population group most likely to be in relative income poverty, with the latest data showing that 28 per cent were living in income poverty. This has fallen over the past few years

Children are more likely to be living in poverty than people as a whole. This is possibly because adults with children are more likely to be out of work or in low paid work due to childcare responsibilities.

The most recent figures (2014-15 to 2016-17) show that 28 per cent of children in Wales were living in relative income poverty after housing costs were paid, which equates to a two percentage point fall relative to the previous time period.

Percentage of all people, children, pensioners and working-age adults living in relative income poverty in Wales, 1994 to 2017



Source: Households Below Average Income, Office for National Statistics

Single parent households were more likely to be in material deprivation than other types of households; half of single parent households were in material deprivation in 2016-17 compared to one in five households with two adults and children, and less than one in ten of households comprising two adults with no children.

Of those who are parents, 7 per cent have children who would be classed as materially deprived. Children living in social housing were more likely to be in material deprivation than those in private rented accommodation or owner occupied homes.

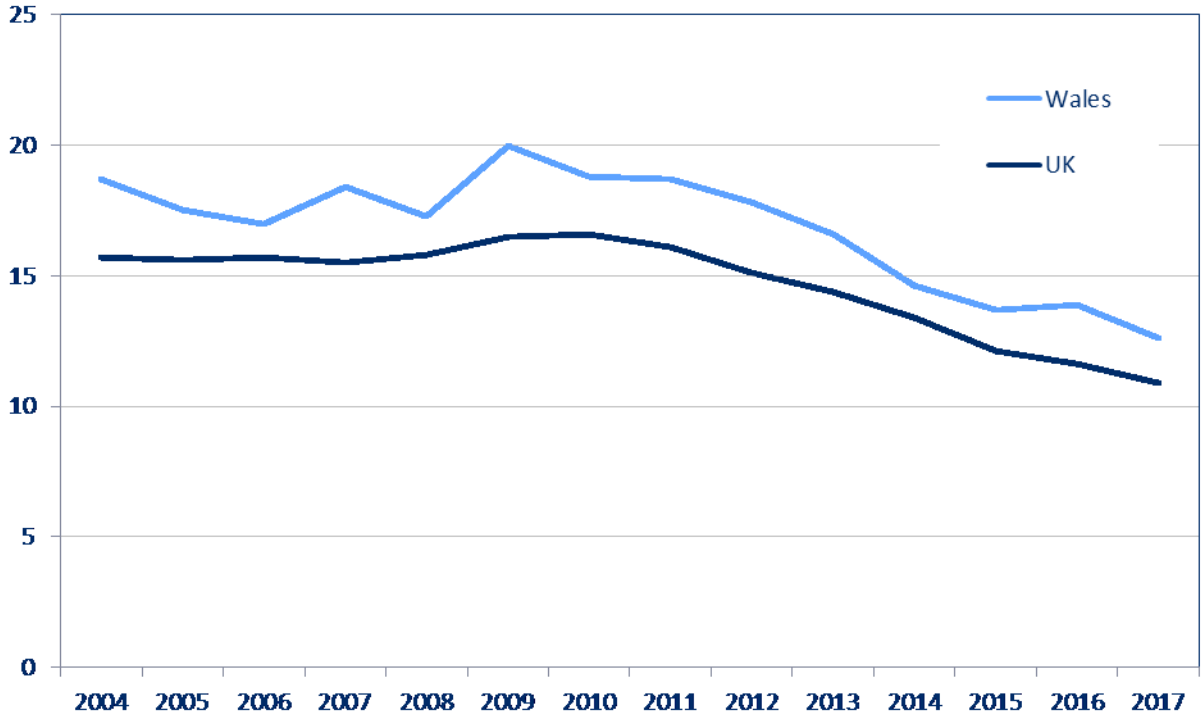
Previous evidence[12] from the 2014-15 National Survey suggested that even when parents are materially deprived, they appeared to try to protect their children from the experience of child-specific material deprivation.

Fewer children live in workless households

For children, the likelihood of being in relative income poverty is strongly linked to the employment status of adults in the household. In Wales 12.6 per cent of children lived in a workless household in 2017, compared with 10.9 per cent of children in the UK. In Wales there was a decrease since 2016 (13.9 per cent), and a significant fall from a peak of 20.0 per cent in 2009. 27.2 per cent of children in Wales live in a household where at least one (but not all) adult works, and 60.3 per cent live in a household with all adults in work.

[12] National Survey for Wales, 2014-15, Welsh Government

Percentage of children living in workless households, 2004 to 2017



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

Nearly half of households threatened with homelessness had dependent children

During 2017-18, around 46 per cent of all households threatened with homelessness were families with dependent children, up slightly from 45 per cent during 2016-17.

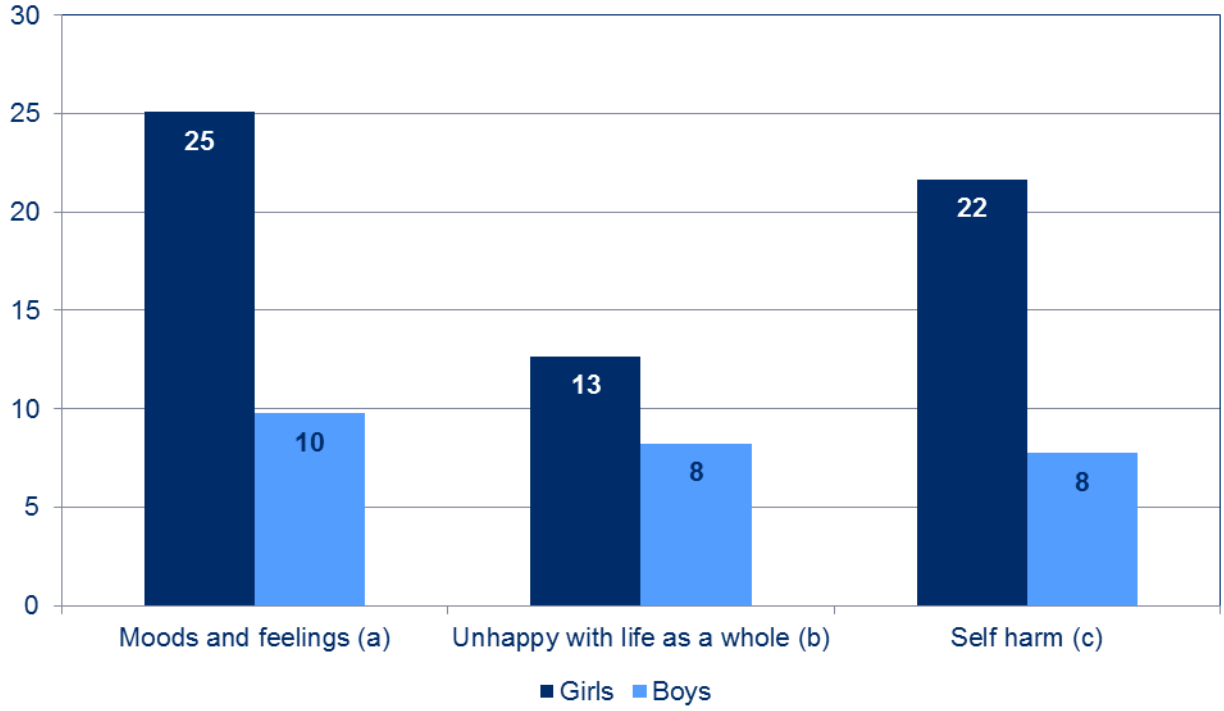
Lone parents (with dependent children) and single person households accounted for 83 per cent of all households assessed as eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need in 2017-18. These household types are considerably over-represented in comparison with their share of the household population (as indicated in the 2011 Census). One parent households (with dependent children) accounted for 33.1 per cent of homelessness cases compared with 7.5 per cent of the household population in 2011

Personal well-being declines from primary school to secondary schools, especially for girls

Self-rated life satisfaction[13] decreases for girls from year 7 (aged 11) through to year 11 (aged 16) and is notably lower than boys. Overall, self-rated life satisfaction has remained at a similar level during the last decade or so, from 2002 to 2018.

[13] Health behaviour in school-aged children, Welsh Government

Mental well-being results for boys and girls aged 14, 2015, Wales



(a) % with high score (12 or more out of 26) on Moods & Feelings scale
(b) % with low score (below mid-point) for happiness with life as a whole
(c) % who have hurt themselves on purpose in any way in the past year
Source: Millennium Cohort Study

Girls score significantly poorer than boys on the moods and feelings scale and a higher proportion of them have self-harmed in the previous year.

Analysis of data from the School Health Research Network[14] shows that mental well-being is broadly the same for boys and girls at year 7 but by year 10 girls' mental well-being has fallen more so than for boys.

One in ten secondary school pupils are bullied weekly, and these figures are relatively high within the UK

Latest data shows that for secondary school pupils 35 per cent had been bullied in the previous two months while 9 per cent had been bullied at least once a week. Cyber bullying was less prevalent with 19 per cent cyber bullied in the previous two months and 3 per cent at least once a week. 16 per cent admitted bullying others while the figure for cyber bullying was 9 per cent[15].

Previous data from the study have suggested that pupils in Wales are amongst the most likely in the UK to report being bullied more than a few times a month, and this is consistent with the OECD PISA study. However analysis of bullying is highly dependent on the context of the study and the assessment materials, and international comparisons will be influenced by different approaches and perceptions of bullying in different countries.

[14] Welsh Government analysis of School Health Research Network data
[15] Schools Health Research Network. See accompanying ad hoc publication

Within the UK, according to the Millennium Cohort Study, Welsh 14 year olds reported similar rates to those in Scotland and England of having been "hurt or picked on by other children on purpose" at least monthly.

There are differences when comparing prevalence of being bullied to pupils who report to studies they have bullied others (according to HBSC, Wales fares better internationally on the latter compared to the percentage reporting having been bullied).

A higher percentage of boys than girls (19 per cent vs 13 per cent) reported bullying[16] another child in 2018, but this has fallen during the last decade. However, a greater percentage of girls reported being bullied than boys (38 per cent vs 33 per cent), with evidence that this has increased in the most recent years to 2018.

One in ten young people reported that they had been a victim of crime in the last year

The Crime Survey for England and Wales estimated that for England and Wales, around 1 in 10 children aged 10 to 15 years were victims of at least one crime in the latest year ending March 2018.

Across England and Wales a higher percentage of boys aged 10 to 15 relative to girls of the same age experienced victimisation in the last year [17](ending March 2018), with this the case for the categories of all violence, all thefts and all crime.

The Millennium Cohort Study asked 14 year olds in 2015 how safe is it to walk, play or hang out in this area during the day, 6.4 per cent of those in Wales did not feel safe. This was similar to the figures for Scotland and England but lower than Northern Ireland (9.9).

New experimental statistics from ONS showed that in 2017-18 the police in Wales flagged 3,184 crimes as involving child sexual abuse and 466 as involving child sexual exploitation[18]. There were 4,085 arrests of children aged 10 to 17 for notifiable offences in Wales in 2016-17 but there was a fall of 13 per cent in the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System in Wales[19].

Secondary school pupils volunteer more frequently out of school than within school

Data shows that for secondary school pupils, 7 per cent volunteered for a club or organisation at school (outside of lessons) while 18 per cent volunteered for a club or organisation outside of school[20].

[16] Health behaviour in school-aged children, Welsh Government
[17] Crime in England and Wales: Annual Trend and Demographic Tables, Office for National Statistics
[18] Child module, Crime Survey for England and Wales, ONS
[19] Youth Justice annual statistics: 2016 to 2017, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales
[20] Schools Health Research Network, see ad hoc publication

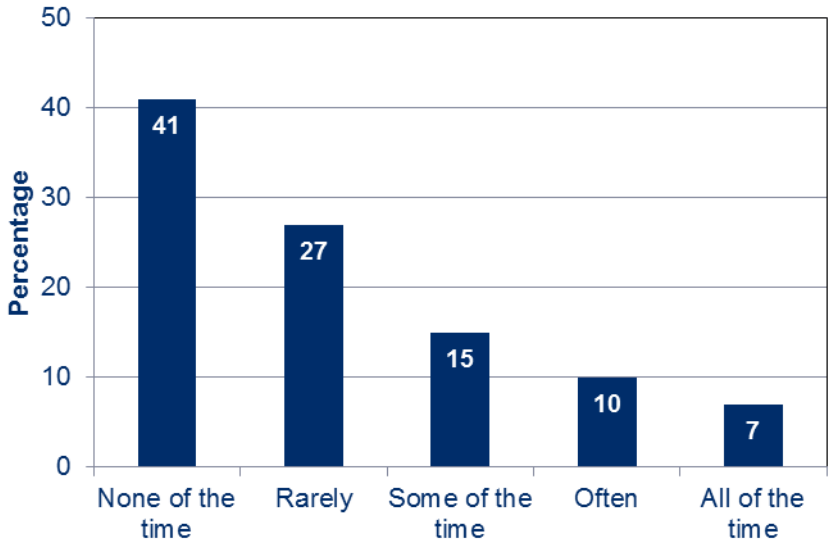
A third of secondary school pupils feel lonely some of the time, with figures similar to those in other countries of the UK

Data shows that for secondary school pupils, 32 per cent felt lonely at least some of the time[21].

The Millennium Cohort Study also asks about loneliness and, in 2015, 36.3 per cent of 14 year olds felt lonely at least sometimes. This is similar to the other UK nations but higher than Northern Ireland (30.3 per cent). There was a marked difference between boys (27 per cent) and girls (46 per cent). There is no clear link with deprivation although this did come through when considering those that said there was no one they felt close to (10.5 per cent) where this was higher for the less advantaged.

The 2015 PISA research showed that pupils in Wales, as with the rest of the UK, were more likely than the OECD average to feel lonely in school[22].

Percentage of secondary school children feeling lonely during the summer holiday, 2017



Source: SHRN / HBSC 2017

[21] Schools Health Research Network, see ad hoc publication
[22] PISA 2015 Results: Students' Well-being, OECD

Adverse Childhood Experience studies highlight the relationship between harmful experiences in childhood with negative long-term outcomes

Results from the first Welsh Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)[23] study show that when comparing people who suffered four or more harmful experiences in childhood with those who suffered none, those who suffered were 4 times more likely to experience high-risk drinking in adulthood, 6 times more likely to be a smoker and 14 times more likely to be involved in violence in the last year. The second survey[24] showed a similar pattern and that those people who have suffered four or more ACEs were 6.1 times more likely to have ever been treated for a mental illness. Having some resilience resources more than halved risks of current mental illness in those with four or more ACEs.

The ACEs report also showed that there are strong relationships between sports participation in childhood and lower lifetime mental illness. There are also associations between regular adult participation in sports and current mental illness.

Participation in sports amongst school children increased in the first half of the decade with boys more likely to participate

The School Sports survey for 2015 showed that 48 per cent of pupils in Years 3 to 11 (aged from 7 to 16) participated in sports 3 times a week. This is an increase from 40 per cent in 2013.

There is very little difference between overall participation rates across primary and secondary schools, with 49 per cent of primary pupils (aged 7 to 11) and 48 per cent of secondary pupils (aged 11 to 16) participating 3 times a week in sports. .

However, boys were more likely to regularly participate in sport than girls (52 per cent versus 44 per cent) and the participation rates for pupils from the least deprived schools tended to be higher than those for pupils from the most deprived schools.

Attendance and participation in the arts have been increasing over the past decade, but there are differences across genders and social-economic groups

The Arts Council of Wales carry out an annual survey25 of children's involvement in the arts. Following a decline in attendance in 2016, data for 2017 showed an increase with 87 per cent of those aged 7 to 18 years old having attended arts events once a year or more. Although the latest figure remains lower than the peak seen in 2015, in general a growing percentage of children have attended arts events. Trends have been similar for participation, with the figure for 2017 reversing a decline seen in 2016 and overall participation being higher than in the early part of the decade.

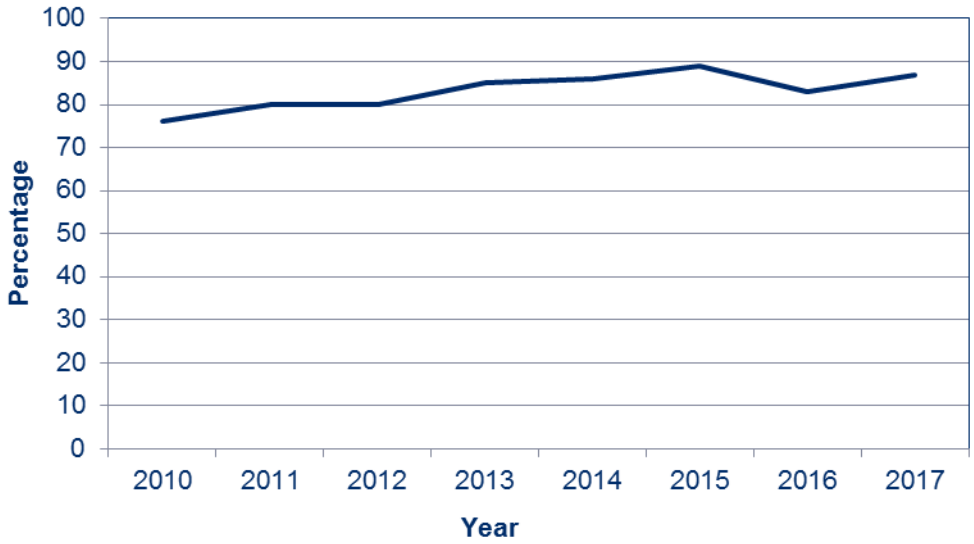
[23] Public Health Wales website
[24] Public Health Wales website
[25] Children's Omnibus Survey, Arts Council of Wales

The Arts Council of Wales' research on children's engagement with the arts asks children about their attendance at plays, musicals, opera, live music performances, dance performances, galleries or exhibitions, literature events, carnivals and street art events.

As with adults, girls and children from the higher socio-economic backgrounds were most likely to attend and participate in the arts.

As expected, children have a range of opportunities to attend or participate in events through their school or college as well as in their own time. Children are most likely to have attended arts events in their own time (76 per cent of children) compared with participation (55 per cent). But participation is more likely to have been led by school or college.

Attendance at arts events once a year or more by those aged 7 to 18, 2010 to 2017



Source: Children's Omnibus Survey, Arts Council of Wales

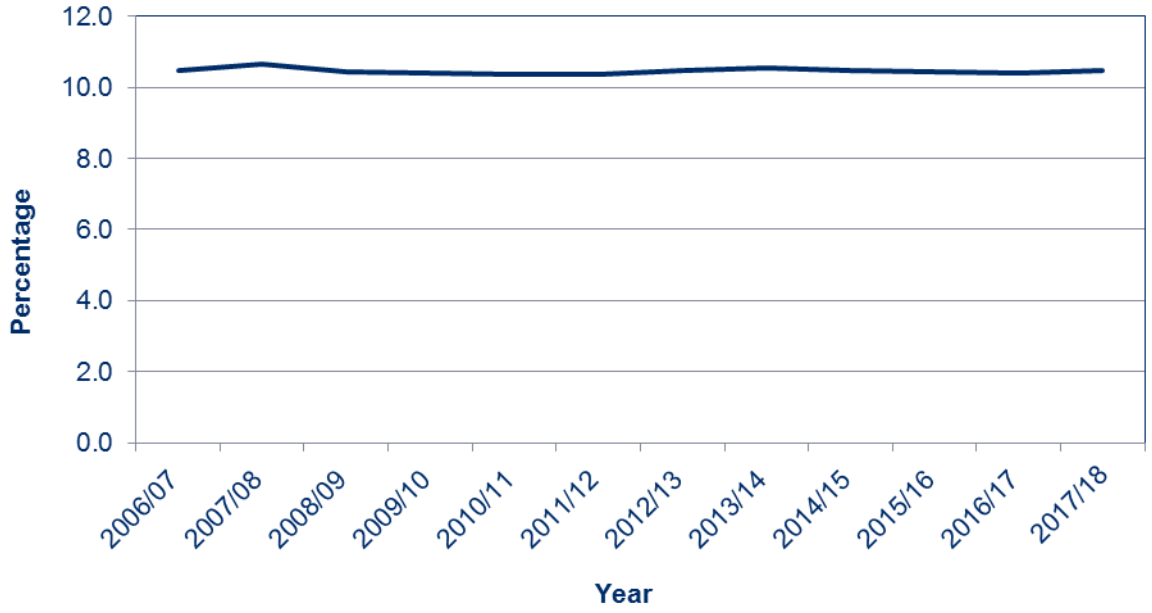
The highest rates of Welsh speaking ability and use is seen amongst children, although this is not maintained post-compulsory education. The percentage speaking Welsh at home has stabilised in recent years.

Both the 2011 Census and the more recent Welsh Language Use Survey (2013-15) show that children are the most likely to report that they are able to speak Welsh, with both sources suggesting that around 40 per cent of 3-15 year olds are able to do so. Younger people beyond the age of compulsory education are less likely to report that they speak Welsh.

The Welsh Language Use Survey report gave a full analysis of the usage of Welsh language amongst children and adults. To summarise, it showed that children are more likely than adults to be fluent or to speak a fair amount of Welsh. They are also most likely to use Welsh daily, likely due to regular usage in schools. The percentage of 3 to 15 year olds who spoke Welsh daily was considerably higher than any other age group, with almost a quarter of them speaking Welsh daily. The percentage of children and young people aged 3 to 15 who spoke Welsh daily is similar to the percentage of pupils who receive their education in Welsh-medium or bilingual primary, middle and secondary schools, although we do not know if they are necessarily the same children.

Another source of information on trends in Welsh language amongst children is the annual Schools Census, which showed an increased in the percentage of children whose parents said they spoke Welsh at home in the early 2010s, but in recent years has stabilised at around 10.4 per cent. The Welsh Language Use Survey showed children were far more likely to use Welsh in school than at home or with their friends.

Percentage aged 5 or over in maintained secondary schools who speak Welsh at home, 2006 to 2017



Source: Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC)

There is limited awareness amongst adults of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The 2017-18 National Survey for Wales shows that 34 per cent of adults have heard of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The figure is similar for adults with children in the household and those without[26].

[26] 2017/18 National Survey for Wales results viewer, Welsh Government

Schools in Wales are involved in programmes to prepare children for a changing world and to be leaders of change

Eco-schools is a global programme engaging millions of children across 67 countries. It is designed to empower and inspire young people to make positive environmental changes to their school and wider community, while building on their key skills, including numeracy and literacy, and encompassing Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC). There are currently 51,000 schools in 67 countries participating in the Eco-Schools programme. In Wales, 97 per cent of all the state schools in 2017/18 were registered on the voluntary Eco-Schools programme run by Keep Wales Tidy. Eco-schools can be awarded Bronze, Silver, Green Flag and Platinum status. There were 784 Green Flag schools, with 381 of these reaching Platinum status in 2017/1/8, for long term commitment to the programme[27].

The Global Learning Programme-Wales (GLP-W) is designed to develop and embed global learning (Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC)), in particular in developing children and young people as ethical and informed citizens of Wales and the world. Since 2014, GLP-W has recruited, trained and funded lead schools with expertise in global learning to coordinate networks where teachers from local schools share effective practice, expertise and resources. There are 49 GLP-W lead schools and 445 GLP-W network schools, 53 per cent of pupils on roll in Wales are involved in GLP-W[28].

[27] Unpublished data – statistics provided on request by Keep Wales Tidy
[28] Education Development Trust, Annual Report, 2016-17