

# Wiltshire Children and Young People's (8-18+ years) Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021

## Emotional health



Part of Wiltshire Intelligence



**Wiltshire Council**





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## Introduction

The Wiltshire Children and Young People's (8 to 18+ years) Health and Wellbeing Survey aims to develop a better understanding of Wiltshire's children and young people's experiences of life, both inside and outside the school environment. The survey helps schools to identify areas for improvement and address issues raised by their own pupils. It also provides evidence to influence the development of services provided by Wiltshire Council and their partners that improve the health and wellbeing of young people in the county. The survey was commissioned by Wiltshire Council and carried out by Foster and Brown Research Limited.

All schools in Wiltshire were invited to take part in the voluntary survey, which was carried out in 2020 (January to March) and 2021 (May to July). In 2020, 57 schools took part and there were nearly 6,000 responses, but the survey was cut short due to the pandemic. In 2021, two months after the end of the third national lockdown and a gradual lifting of Covid regulations<sup>1</sup>, all schools were again invited to participate in the survey and 7,499 pupils were involved from 77 schools – 65 primary and 13 secondary. Of these schools, 4 were independent.

Although no sampling method was used, the large number of children and young people and different schools involved means that we can have some confidence that the responses are representative of Wiltshire's children and young people. To get an idea of representation in the 2021 survey, see the demographic section below for an overview of the survey population characteristics and school representation in terms of type and deprivation. A similar survey was also carried out in 2017 and 2015. This allows us to begin to track how behaviours have changed over time.

The survey was completed online by pupils in year groups 4, 5, 6, 8, 10 and 12 and took advantage of the additional capabilities that online surveys bring, including accurate sliding response questions and presenting questions to a respondent based on their previous answers. There were three versions of the questionnaire designed separately for primary, secondary and Year 12/Further Education (FE) college pupils, plus adaptations for children and young people with special educational needs. The questions covered a wide range of aspects of young people's lives, including healthy lifestyles, learning experiences, relationships, wellbeing, safety, risky behaviours, aspirations, and support requirements.

Schools have been given access to their own data, which they can compare to an overall Wiltshire proportion for the appropriate school phase, created using the 2021 survey data. This means that they can make informed decisions about how to support the health and wellbeing needs of their pupils and use the data to monitor the impact of interventions.

## Focus of this report

This report provides detailed findings surrounding emotional wellbeing, predominantly drawn from the 2021 survey data. This includes themes of emotional wellbeing (Such as life satisfaction, happiness and confidence), sleep behaviour, relationships and bullying, being at school, self-harm and mental health support.

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<sup>1</sup> [Timeline of UK government coronavirus lockdowns and restrictions | The Institute for Government](#)

Other topic reports based on the survey findings will also be published related to risky behaviours, healthy lifestyles, school experience and feelings of safety. For a summary of the key findings across all themes, click here: <https://www.wiltshireintelligence.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Wiltshire-CYP-HWB-survey-Overview-report-.pdf> to find the Overview report for the 2021 survey.

## Presentation of results

This report starts by providing a summary of the results, including how the 2021 survey compares to the results in 2020 and 2017. This is followed by information on the demographics of the respondents, including school participation and a variety of different pupil characteristics. It then details participant responses to questions relating to emotional health and wellbeing, broken down into the topic sections mentioned above. Also included is a short section on support and knowledge, related to the issues discussed in this report. Most questions are presented graphically with a short narrative. Questions about self-harm and sexual relationships were not asked to primary respondents.

All results are broken into school phase; primary, secondary or year 12/FE, and are broken down by gender and vulnerable groups where appropriate. The term 'vulnerable group' refers to those who the evidence indicates to be at greater risk of poor outcomes compared to the general population. Through the survey, participants were invited to identify themselves as one or more of the following (these groups are non-exclusive):

- Having a family member in prison – now or in the past
- Being lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans (LGBT)
- Being adopted, fostered or looked after by the local authority (AFL)
- Having a parent/carer in the armed forces
- Being part of a family with a social worker
- Have free school meals or knew they were eligible
- Being a young carer
- Having a special educational need
- Having a disability
- From a minority ethnic group.

Children reporting that they have a Special Educational Need (SEN) and pupils reporting that they have a disability were grouped together (SEND) due to significant crossovers between the two and wide recognition of the term 'SEND'. Details relating to numbers and proportions of individual groups can be found in the demographic section below.

Where possible, comparisons to the 2020 and 2017 Wiltshire survey results have been made, as well as with recent national reports that consider similar themes, providing a useful benchmark. Local comparisons should be used with caution, however, due to the variations in sample size, amendments to question wording and changes to the schools involved, as well as the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Key findings

The key findings relating to emotional health and wellbeing from the 2021 survey are outlined below. The survey has shown that, generally, Wiltshire's children and young people are healthy and happy in primary school phases, though wellbeing seems to decline as children get older and there are some areas of concern, including: self-harm, worry affecting sleep and worry about going to school. The survey suggests that females often experience poorer outcomes than males, as well as those identifying with the vulnerable groups. To see a visual summary of the key findings from this report, navigate to the Wiltshire Intelligence website: [School Health Survey - Wiltshire Intelligence](#).

### Emotional Wellbeing

- Most children and young people across Wiltshire have good or excellent mental health. The scores on the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing scale (WEMWS) were: primary (**50.9**), secondary (**43.5**) and year 12/FE (**44.4**) (a score of 42-60 is believed to represent good mental health). **Females** had lower scores on WEMWS than males. Secondary females scored just outside the healthy range.
- **74%** primary and **53%** of secondary pupils were satisfied with their life quite often or most of the time. For secondary pupils, **males** were much more likely to be satisfied than females. Satisfaction with life was particularly low for adopted fostered or looked after children or young people (**AFL**) and **LGBT secondary pupils**.
- **71%** of primary, **49%** of secondary and **49%** of year 12/FE pupils reported being happy most of the time/quite often. For primary and secondary pupils, these proportions are slightly lower for happiness at school. **68%** of primary, **39%** of secondary and **50%** of year 12/FE pupils felt happy most of the time at school.
- **66%** of primary pupils felt confident about the future. This falls to **42%** for secondary pupils and **44%** for year 12/FE pupils. Those identifying as a member of a vulnerable group were less confident about the future, in particular, **LGBT pupils**.
- **73%** of primary, **45%** of secondary and **47%** of year 12/FE pupils stated that they felt proud of the things they had achieved in life most of the time/quite often.

### Sleep Behaviour

- **28%** of primary, **31%** of secondary and **34%** of year 12/FE were worried about something and unable to sleep weekly/most nights. **Females** were more likely to report that they were unable to sleep due to worry weekly/most nights compared to males.

### Relationships and Bullying

- **74%** of primary, **64%** of secondary and **63%** of year 12/FE reported that they were good/very good at making friends.
- **72%** of primary pupils, **64%** of secondary pupils and **79%** of year 12/FE pupils believed there was at least one adult in the school who cares about them.



- **58%** of primary, **62%** of secondary and **78%** of year 12/FE pupils reported that they had never been bullied in the past year. Primary pupils were most likely to be bullied frequently (**15%**), followed by secondary (**11%**) and were lowest for year 12/FE pupils (**5%**). The most common type of bullying was **verbal**, though cyber bullying has increased among primary school pupils. **Males** were more likely to report being physically bullied than females. Those identifying as a member of a vulnerable group were more likely to be bullied, particularly primary and secondary **AFL children**.
- **72%** of primary, **30%** of secondary and **46%** of year 12/FE pupils felt that their school deals well with bullying.

### At school

- **26%** of primary, **35%** secondary and **33%** year 12/FE pupils were worried about going to school. **Females** were more likely to worry about going to school than males.
- **65%** of primary, **33%** of secondary and **55%** of year 12/FE pupils felt that they got most of the help and support they needed at school.
- **Over 3 in 5** secondary and year 12/FE pupils felt stressed about school work. Proportions were much higher among **females**.

### Self-harm






- **14%** of secondary pupils and **15%** of year 12/FE pupils reported self-harming monthly, weekly or daily. **Females** were much more likely than males to report self-harming often compared to males.
- Amongst the vulnerable groups, proportions of frequent self-harming were particularly high for **LGBT children (34%)**. **1 in 5** year 12/FE pupils and **2 in 5** secondary pupils didn't tell anyone about their self-harm or overdose.

### Mental health support









- **67%** of primary, **25%** of secondary and **38%** of year 12/FE pupils reported that they got enough emotional support from school.
- **12%** of secondary pupils and **21%** of year 12/FE pupils have used a child or adolescent mental health service.
- **68%** primary, **43%** secondary and **51%** year 12/FE pupils found it easy to access mental health support at school.

## Comparison to the 2020 and 2017 surveys















The 2021 survey results show some differences from the previous surveys conducted in 2020 and 2017. For some questions, clear positive or negative changes or fluctuations can be identified, these are indicated using the key below by school phase. Questions that have stayed relatively constant have not been included. Due to changes to samples, sample sizes and question wording over the years, these changes should be interpreted with caution. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic may have influenced the 2020 and 2021 results and therefore had unusual effects on the proportions. Hence, no significance testing has been carried out on the changes to avoid making inaccurate claims of significant change or trend. As the tables show, in all three school phases, there have been some key fluctuations. In all three school phases, changes were mainly negative, indicating a reduction in emotional health and wellbeing across several different indicators.

Key:					
	Positive increase		Positive decrease		Fluctuation
	Negative increase		Negative decrease		












### Primary School

<i>Trend</i>	2021	2020	2017	Question
	71%	74%	79%	How happy have you felt over the past week? (most of the time/quite happy)
	68%	69%	74%	How happy have you felt over the past week AT SCHOOL? (most of the time/quite happy)
	73%	75%	81%	How proud do you feel of the things you have achieved in your life? (Quite/extremely)
	63%	69%	71%	How long did you sleep last night? (10 hours or more)
	28%	32%	24%	How often have you been so worried about something that you cannot sleep at night? (Quite often/most nights)
	20%	12%	11%	If you have been bullied in the last year in what way did it happen? (Cyber)
	12%	2%	3%	How many days of school did you miss last term? (20 or more)
	65%	61%	59%	How much help and support do you feel that you get at school? (most of the help/all of the help)

## Secondary School

<i>Trend</i>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Question</b>
	43.5	46.0	47.7	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale mean score
	53%	62%	66%	Overall, are you basically satisfied with your life? (most of the time/quite satisfied)
	49%	55%	61%	How happy have you felt over the past week? (most of the time/quite happy)
	39%	47%	52%	How happy have you felt at school over the past week? (most of the time/quite happy)
	42%	48%	50%	How confident about your future do you feel? (extremely confident/confident)
	45%	53%	58%	How proud do you feel of the things you have achieved in your life? (quite/extremely)
	63%	83%	77%	How long did you sleep last night? (8 hours or more)
	30%	30%	39%	How well do you think your school deals with bullying? (quite well/extremely well)
	11%	3%	3%	How many days of school did you miss last term? 20 or more
	65%	50%	57%	How would you describe being at school? Feeling stressed quite often/most of the time
	35%	25%	24%	How would you describe being at school? Feeling worried about going to school quite often/most of the time
	14%	9%	10%	How often have you self-harmed? (monthly, weekly, daily)
	32%	43%	N/A	How helpful was the mental health service? (quite helpful/very helpful)
	43%	65%	N/A	Is it easy to access mental health support at school? (quite easy/very easy)

## Year 12/FE

<b>Trend</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Question</b>
	44.4	45.3	47.0	Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale mean score
	49%	49%	58%	How happy have you felt over the past week? (most of the time/quite happy)
	44%	47%	49%	How confident about your future do you feel? (extremely confident/confident)
	47%	50%	53%	How proud do you feel of the things you have achieved in your life? (quite/extremely)
	34%	28%	26%	How often have you been so worried about something that you cannot sleep at night? (Quite often/most nights)
	8%	13%	13%	Have you been bullied in the last year? (Sometimes or more often)
	77%	86%	88%	If you have been bullied in the last year in what way did it happen? (Verbal)
	55%	48%	49%	How much help and support do you feel that you get at school? (most of the help/all of the help)
	60%	63%	56%	How would you describe being at your school? I feel stressed (Agree/strongly agree)
	33%	27%	25%	How would you describe being at school? Feeling worried about going to school quite often/most of the time
	15%	13%	12%	How often have you self-harmed? (monthly, weekly, daily)

## Response demographics

There are several ways that the results can be grouped using the following response demographics. The database contains 7,499 respondents in 2021, which is around 11% percent of the Wiltshire population of 8- to 18-year-olds. Table 1 provides a breakdown of these respondents by year group. In 2020, there were nearly 6,000 responses and in 2017 nearly 10,000 (4,375 primary, 4,083 secondary and 1,492 year 12/FE).

**Table 1: Overall response**

Phase	Primary				Secondary			FE	Total
	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total	Year 8	Year 10	Total	Year 12	
No.	1,330	1,251	1,600	4,181	1,485	773	2,258	1,060	7,499
%	18%	17%	21%		20%	10%		14%	100%

## Types of school

The secondary and year 12/FE respondents were taken from 13 of the 77 schools. 31% (4) of these were independent schools. This is a slightly higher proportion to the proportion of independent schools in Wiltshire that have secondary aged pupils (25%).<sup>2</sup> The primary school respondents were taken from 65 different schools, 6% (4) of which were independent schools. This is a similar proportion to the proportion of independent schools in Wiltshire that have aged primary pupils (6.8%).<sup>3</sup> This suggests that the representation from independent schools in the 2021 survey roughly matches the overall representation of independent schools in Wiltshire. The remaining schools were academy or LA schools. No special schools took part in the survey.

## Schools and deprivation

To gauge the level of representation in the survey from different schools in relation to deprivation, the proportion of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) has been used as a measure. This is a widely used measure as an indicator of deprivation, found to be a reliable indicator of low socioeconomic status.<sup>4</sup> The term 'eligible' used here refers to those who meet the eligibility criteria AND make a claim.<sup>5</sup> Data was taken from the summer term

<sup>2</sup> [All schools and colleges in Wiltshire - GOV.UK - Find and compare schools in England \(compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/all-schools-and-colleges-in-wiltshire)

<sup>3</sup> [All schools and colleges in Wiltshire - GOV.UK - Find and compare schools in England \(compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/all-schools-and-colleges-in-wiltshire)

<sup>4</sup> Chris Taylor (2018) The Reliability of Free School Meal Eligibility as a Measure of Socio-Economic Disadvantage: Evidence from the Millennium Cohort Study in Wales, British Journal of Educational Studies, 66:1, 29-51, DOI: [10.1080/00071005.2017.1330464](https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2017.1330464)

<sup>5</sup> [Complete the school census - Data items 2022 to 2023 - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/complete-the-school-census-data-items-2022-to-2023-guidance)

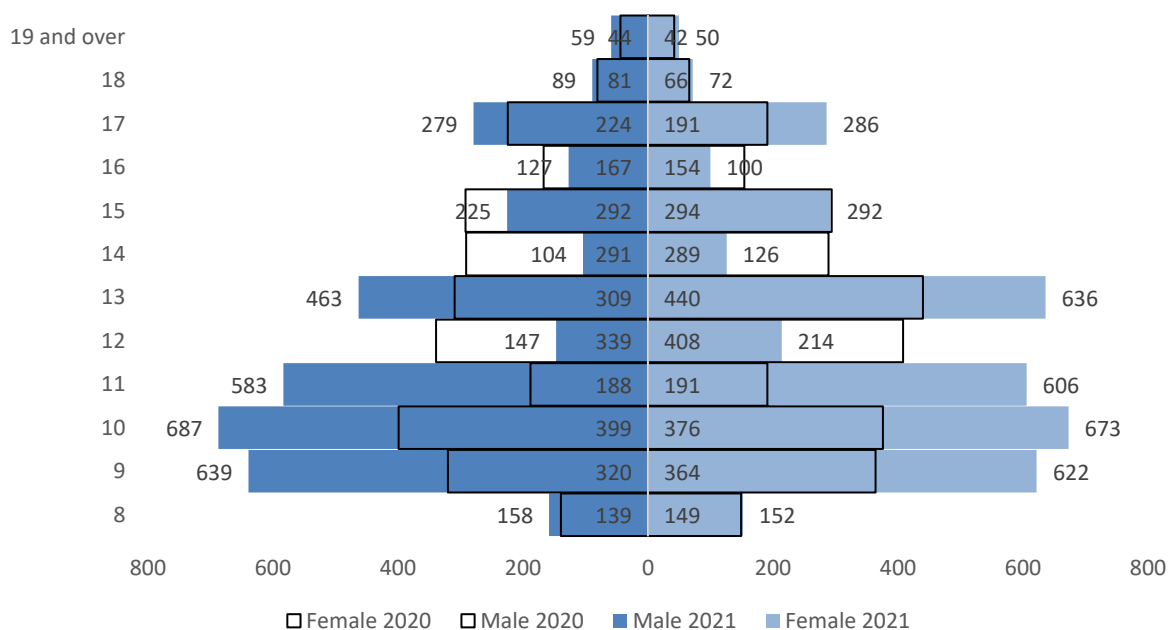
2021 school census to coincide with the dates that the survey was completed. Proportions of pupils eligible for FSM for all Wiltshire non-independent schools were ranked, with 1 being the highest proportion of FSM pupils, indicating higher deprivation. These rankings are displayed in tables in the appendix, only for those schools which took part in the 2021 survey, alongside the proportions. Year 12/FE pupils are not eligible for free school meals so tables only detail primary and secondary schools.

The primary schools involved in the survey cover a wide range of different levels of deprivation, as shown by the variation in the FSM rankings. On the other hand, for secondary schools, the top 9 most deprived schools in terms of proportion of FSM pupils did not take part in the 2021 survey.

### Age and gender

Age and gender information was collected from the respondents. Figure 1 below shows this information alongside the population information from the 2020 survey. The numbers sitting closest to the centre point (0) reflect the age and gender split of the 2020 survey responses and the numbers furthest from the centre point show the age and gender split of the 2021 survey response. There were similar or more responses from almost all ages in 2021 than in 2020. However, there were fewer responses from those aged 12, 14 and 16.

**Figure 1: Survey response population pyramid (2021 and 2020)\***



\*Data labels on the inside (closest to the axis) relate to the 2020 bars and on the outside relate to the 2021 bars.

## Ethnicity

Pupils were given the same options as the census when asked about their ethnicity.<sup>6</sup> Overall, 79.6% (5,972) of the pupils described themselves as “White British”, 14.6% (1,096) described themselves as from another ethnic background (see broad breakdown in Table 2) and 5.7% (431) did not want to say or did not respond. The 2020/21 Wiltshire school census found that 84.4% of pupils were white British, slightly higher than the proportion in the survey data.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 2. Ethnicity breakdown by broad categories**

Ethnicity	Pupils	Proportion of survey respondents
White British	5,972	79.6%
White other (White Irish, White other, White European, Traveller and Gypsy/Roma)	433	5.8%
Asian or Asian British (Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Any other Asian background)	169	2.3%
Black, Black British, British Caribbean or African	155	2.1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	339	4.5%
Did not respond/did not want to say	431	5.7%

\*Percentages do not sum exactly due to independent rounding

## Other characteristics

This section of demographic information relates to the groups termed ‘vulnerable groups’ and displays counts and proportions of each group by school phase (percentages may not sum due to independent rounding). It is difficult to determine whether the proportion of each group is representative of the Wiltshire proportion due to lack of available data for all groups. However, where possible, recent Wiltshire school census statistics have been included to provide some comparison to the survey proportions.

53% of the pupils surveyed in 2021 were a member of at least one of the above groups. Multiple group membership was also apparent. 1,493 pupils across the three school phases were a member of more than one of the above groups, which is 22% of the total sample. In primary school phases, 50% of pupils were a member of at least one vulnerable group, 19% were a member of two or more. In secondary school phases, 58% of pupils were a member of at least one vulnerable group, 24% were a member of two or more. In year 12/FE phases, 55% of pupils were a member of at least one vulnerable group, 18% were a member of two or more.

<sup>6</sup> [List of ethnic groups - GOV.UK \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/)

<sup>7</sup> [Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/)

In 2021 most respondents in all school phases were white British (Table 3). Of the ethnic minority individual groups, no single category was large enough to be representative. The proportion of ethnic minority pupils was largest in secondary school phases.

**Table 3: Ethnic minority**

	Primary		Secondary		Year 12/FE	
White British	3,277	78%	1,773	79%	922	87%
Ethnic minority	554	13%	421	19%	121	11%
No Response	350	8%	64	3%	17	2%

The percentage of children with military parents/carer(s) decreases by school phase, as seen in Table 4. 11% of primary school children, 11% in secondary school and 6% in year 12/FE had military parents/carer(s). This could be a sign that the parent/carers have exited the armed forces as their child progresses through the school phases. At the time of the survey, the termly school census (summer 2021) reported that 8.66% of primary and 11.42% of secondary pupils in Wiltshire were military children.

**Table 4: Children of military parent/carer(s)**

	Primary		Secondary		Year 12/FE	
With military parent/carer(s)	460	11%	253	11%	67	6%
No military parent/carer(s)	3,702	89%	1999	89%	992	94%

119 children (69 primary, 31 secondary and 19 year 12/FE) reported being either adopted, fostered, in care, or a looked after child (LAC). Between the school phases, 29-37% of these children are adopted (40 children overall). This group will be referred to as AFL throughout the report and it is important to note that this is a relatively small sample size.

Some respondents reported having a social worker (Table 5). The highest proportion of children with a social worker was in primary school (11%).

**Table 5: Social worker involved**

	Primary		Secondary		Year 12/FE	
Social worker involved	466	11%	186	8%	62	6%
No social worker	3,659	89%	2,054	92%	994	94%



In 2021, 16% of primary school pupils, 14% of secondary school pupils and 24% of year 12/FE pupils from the survey reported having a special educational need and/or a disability (SEND) (Table 6). At the time of the survey, the Wiltshire school census 2020/21 found that 12.6% of primary children had SEN support and 11.5% of secondary children had SEN support.<sup>8</sup>

**Table 6: Special Educational Need and/or Disability**

	Primary		Secondary		Year 12/FE	
<b>SEND</b>	661	16%	326	14%	255	24%
<b>Non-SEND</b>	3,520	84%	1,932	86%	805	76%

11% of primary school pupils and 10% of secondary school pupils reported that they have free school lunches or knew they were eligible for free school meals (FSM) in the 2021 survey sample (Table 7). In 2020/21, 14.1% of primary and 10.9% of secondary pupils in Wiltshire were known to be eligible for free school meals according to the school census.<sup>9</sup> The term 'eligible' used here refers to those who meet the eligibility criteria and make a claim.

**Table 7: Free School Meals**

	Primary		Secondary	
<b>Has free school meals</b>	465	11%	223	10%
<b>Does not have free school meals</b>	2,326	57%	1,584	71%
<b>Did not know</b>	1,325	32%	437	19%

To help to understand and meet young carers' needs, respondents were asked whether they were young carers. The question was worded as 'do you take on a caring role or support a family member who is disabled, long term sick, experiences mental ill health or misuses drugs or alcohol?'. In the 2021 survey 6% of primary school pupils, 7% of secondary school pupils and 6% of year 12/FE students in the survey reported being a young carer (Table 8).

**Table 8: Young carers**

	Primary School		Secondary School		Year 12/FE	
<b>Yes</b>	255	6%	163	7%	67	6%
<b>No</b>	3,860	94%	2,049	93%	982	94%

<sup>8</sup> [Special educational needs in England, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics/service.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-in-england)

<sup>9</sup> [Schools, pupils and their characteristics, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/explore-education-statistics/service.gov.uk/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics)

In this survey, the secondary school and year 12/FE respondents were asked about their sexual orientation and gender identification. Two categories were used to create a combined group of pupils who reported being lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or trans (LGBT). There were 400 LGBT respondents in the secondary school sample and 211 in the year 12/FE sample. This represents 20% of the year 12/FE respondents and 18% of the secondary school respondents (Table 9).

**Table 9: Children identifying as LGBT**

	Secondary School		Year 12/FE	
LGBT	400	18%	211	20%
Not LGBT	1,858	82%	849	80%

Children were asked whether anyone in their family (who lives in their house) had ever been in prison. In all school phases, less than 8% of children reported that someone in their family had ever been in prison (Table 10). This was not asked in 2017.

**Table 10: Children who have/had a family member (who lives with them) in prison**

	Primary School		Secondary School		Year 12/FE	
Yes	287	7%	159	7%	52	5%
No	3,856	93%	2,084	93%	1,005	95%

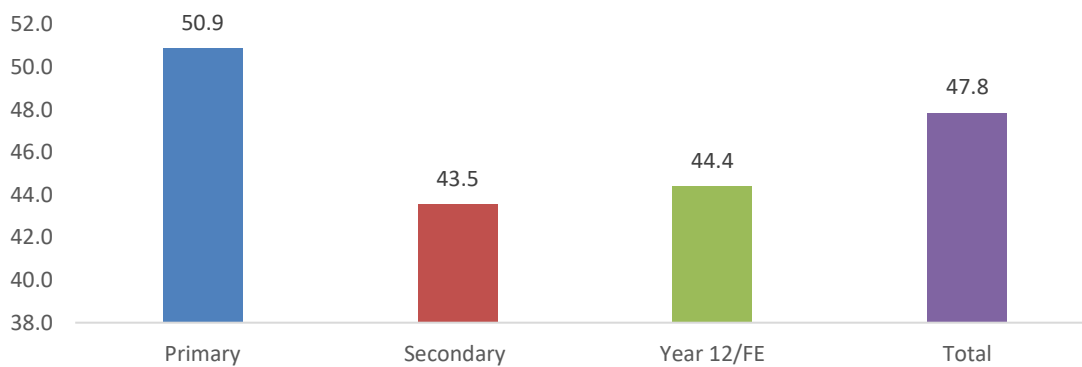
## Results

### Emotional wellbeing

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale was added in the 2017 survey. This is a population measure of mental wellbeing based on 14 positively worded statements. Respondents indicate how much they agree with each statement and the results are summed to create a mental wellbeing score (from 14 to 70). A score between 42 and 60 is believed to represent a relatively healthy mental wellbeing score. This scale has been validated for use with adolescents and is used nationally as a measure of mental wellbeing. Figure 2 provides the wellbeing score of the 2021 from each school phase as well as the total and indicates that children in all school phases have good mental health.

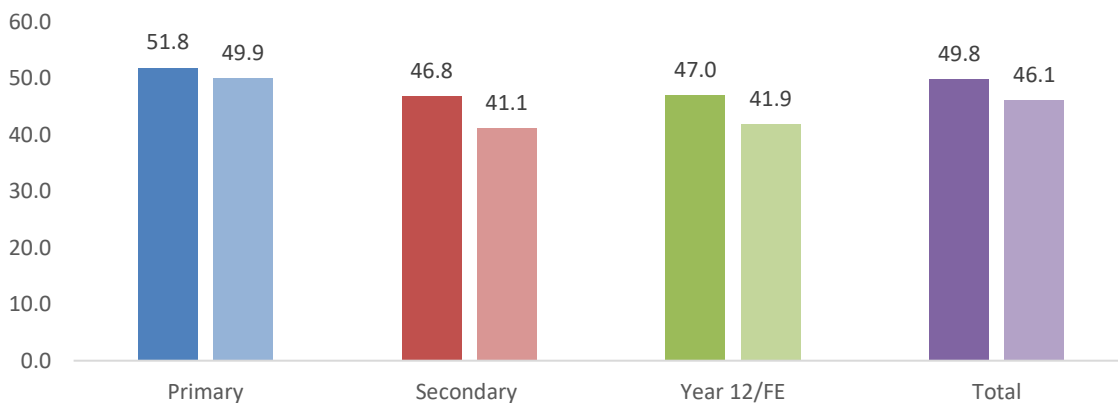
**Previous years:** The 2020 and 2017 survey presented very similar results, though average scores for secondary and year 12/FE pupils have dropped by approximately 4 points since 2017.

**Figure 2: Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale**



In the graph below, females are represented by the lighter colour, males by the darker. In primary schools, gender differences in emotional wellbeing are marginal. However, in secondary school and year 12/FE phases, there is a gender difference with females scoring lower than males (Figure 3). Secondary females score just outside the healthy range of 42-60.

**Figure 3: Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale. Gender**



Questions about life satisfaction are a common way to gauge an idea of someone's emotional wellbeing. Figure 4 indicates that the 74% of primary school pupils are quite satisfied or satisfied with life and 53% secondary pupils are quite satisfied or satisfied with life. This question was removed from the year 12/FE survey in 2021.

**Previous years:** In primary school phases there have not been any changes from the previous surveys. In secondary school phases, 2021 shows a decrease in life satisfaction since 2017 (66%) and 2020 (62%).

**Figure 4; Question 6.13: Overall, are you basically satisfied with your life?**

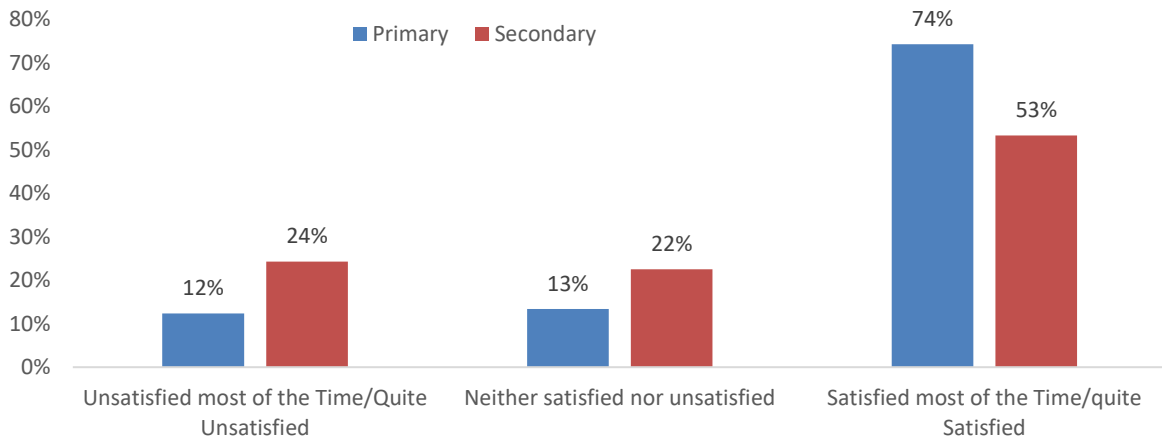
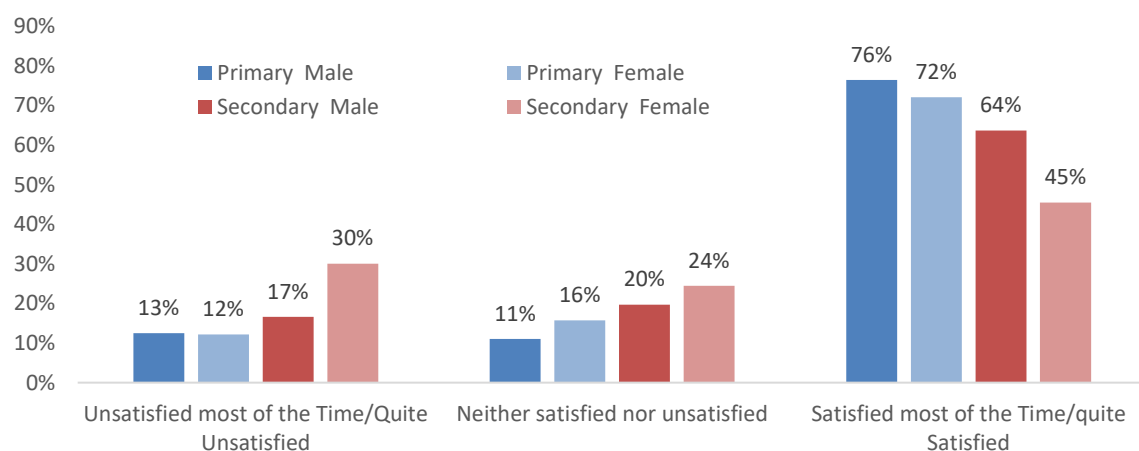


Figure 4a shows that a larger proportion of males in both school phases reported being more satisfied with life compared to females. This has also been found nationally.<sup>10</sup>

**Previous years:** The same gender pattern was observed in 2020 and 2017. Life satisfaction for female secondary pupils has decreased over the years (61% in 2017, 56% in 2020, 45% in 2021). The proportion of pupils feeling highly satisfied has also decreased for secondary males (73% in 2017, 70% in 2020, 64% in 2021).

**Figure 4a; Question 6.13: Overall, are you basically satisfied with your life?**

**Gender**

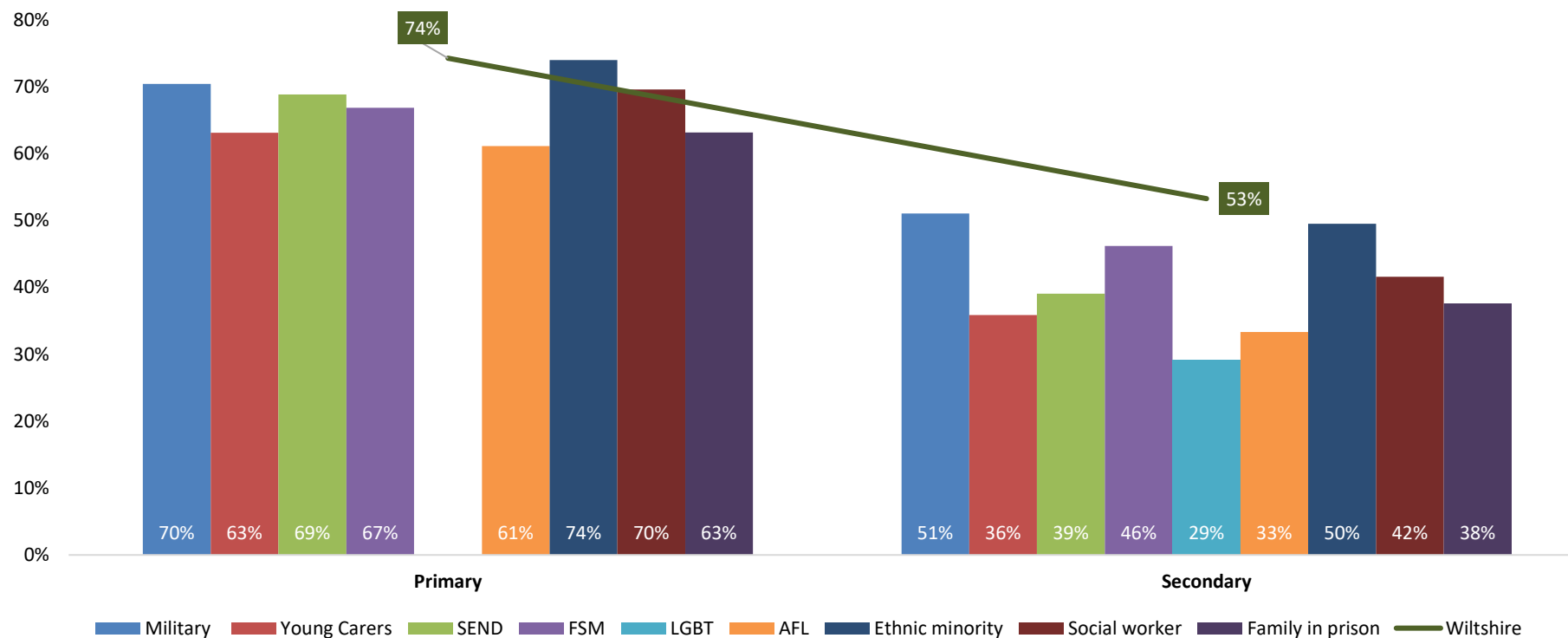


<sup>10</sup> [State of the nation 2021: children and young people's wellbeing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/state-of-nation-2021/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing)

Amongst those who identified as a member of a vulnerable group, a similar age pattern to the overall sample can be seen for the life satisfaction question. However, many of the children identifying with these vulnerable groups have statistically significantly lower levels of life satisfaction than the overall Wiltshire sample, apart from ethnic minority primary children and secondary military children (Figure 4b). Proportions were lowest for primary AFL children (61%) and secondary LGBT children (29%).

**Figure 4b; Question 6.13: Overall, are you basically satisfied with your life? Vulnerable groups.\***

**Response: Quite satisfied/satisfied**

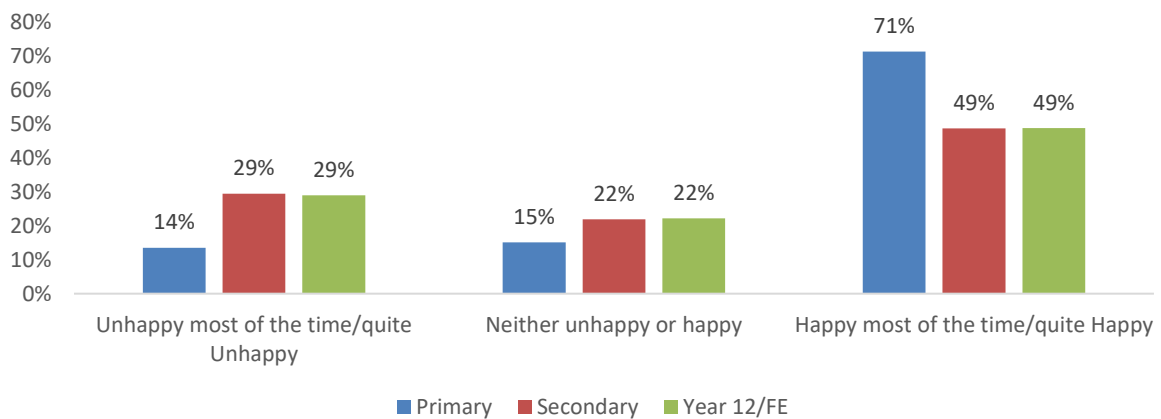


\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation. The AFL group in all school phases represents a relatively small sample size and caution should be taken when interpreting their results. Year 12/FE students were not this question in the 2021 school survey.

71% of primary school pupils reported being quite happy or happy over the past week (Figure 5). This was much lower in the other school phases, hence 29% of pupils in secondary school and year 12/FE students reported being unhappy or quite unhappy.

**Previous years:** Proportions of pupils reporting high levels of happiness have decreased since 2017 and 2020 in all school phases. Primary (79% in 2017, 74% in 2020, 71% in 2021), secondary (61% in 2017, 55% in 2020, 49% in 2021), year 12/FE (58% in 2017, 49% in 2020 and 2021).

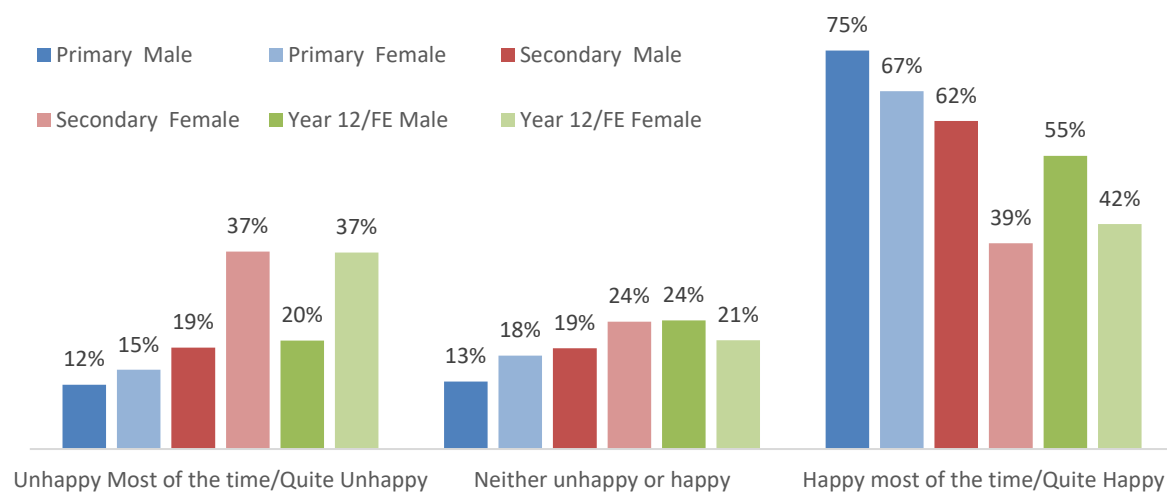
**Figure 5; Question 6.10: Thinking about how you have felt over the past week, would you say you felt generally?**



For all school phases, a higher percentage of males reported being quite happy or happy most of the time compared to females (Figure 5a). Furthermore, 37% females in secondary school and year 12/FE reported being unhappy most of the time or quite unhappy. This gender pattern has also been found nationally.<sup>11</sup>

**Previous years:** The 2020 and 2017 surveys presented similar gender patterns.

**Figure 5a; Question 6.10: Thinking about how you have felt over the past week, would you say you felt generally? Gender**

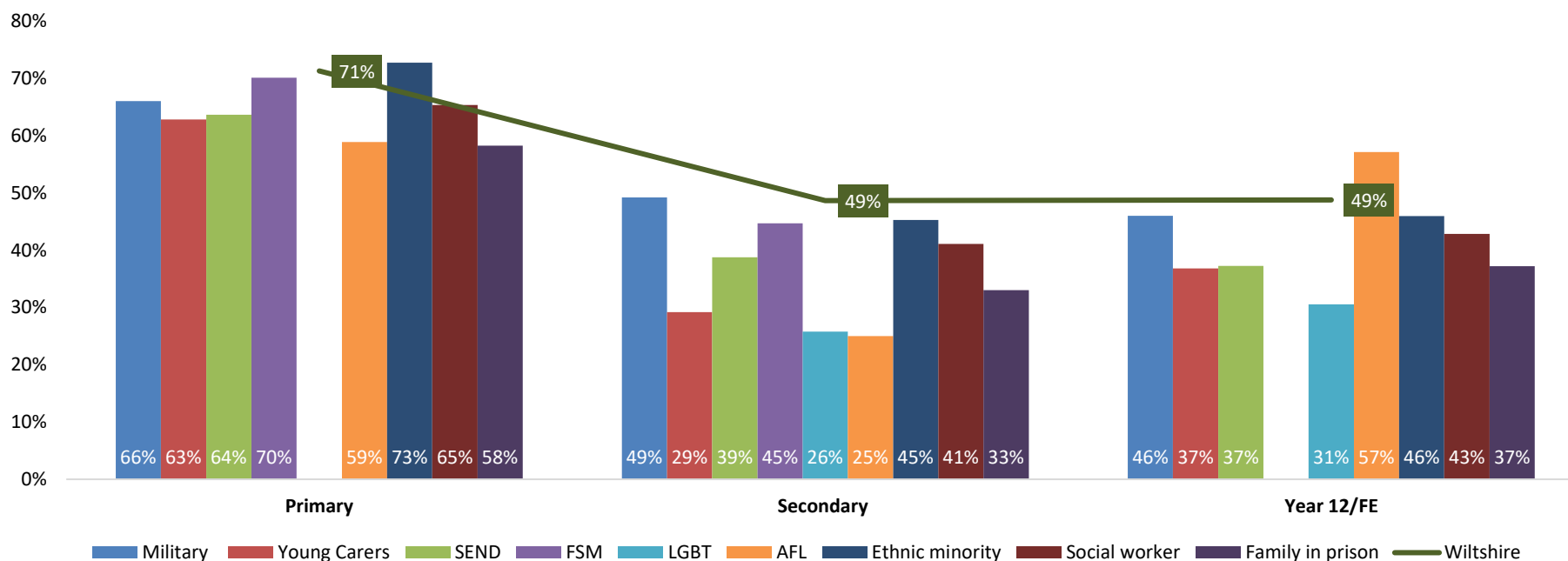


<sup>11</sup> [State of the nation 2021: children and young people's wellbeing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/state-of-the-nation-2021)

When looking at the vulnerable groups, statistically significantly lower proportions of most groups reported that they were quite happy or happy most of the time when compared to the overall Wiltshire sample (Figure 5b). The exceptions to this were children of military carers, ethnic minority children and year 12/FE AFL pupils. In the case of general happiness, proportions were lowest amongst children who have ever had a parent in prison in primary school phases (**58%**), AFL children in secondary school phases (**25%**) and LGBT pupils in year 12/FE school phases (**31%**).

**Figure 5b; Question 6.10: Thinking about how you have felt over the past week, would you say you felt generally? Vulnerable groups.\***

**Response: Quite happy or happy**

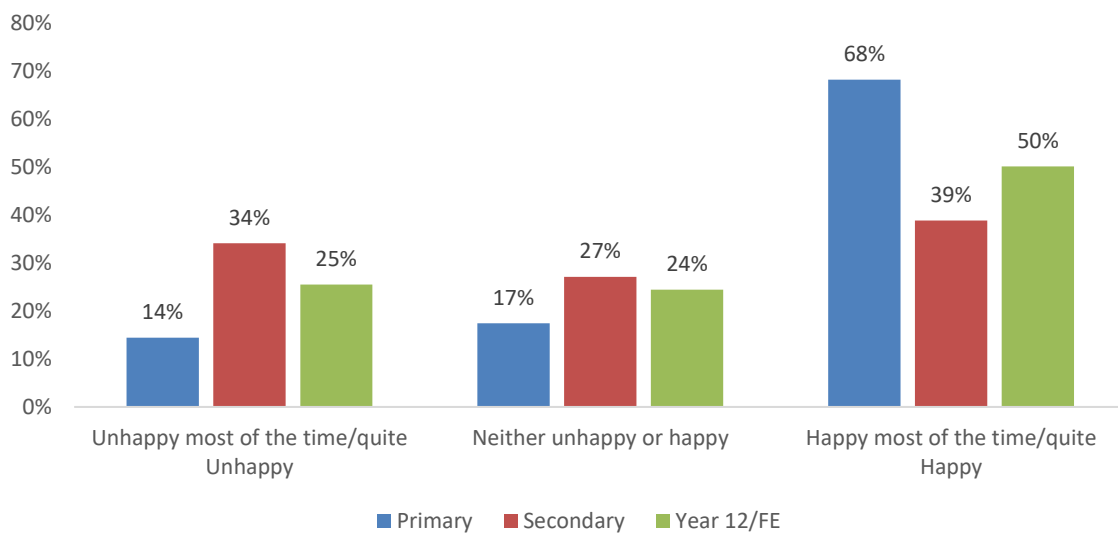


\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

When asked specifically about how they felt the past week **at school** (Figure 6), a similar pattern could be observed as to the previous more general question about how they felt over the past week (Figure 5). The primary school sample more frequently reported being quite happy or happy most of the time than the other school phases (68%). Whereas the secondary school pupils reported the lowest (39%). Happiness at school was lower than general happiness among all school phases.

**Previous years:** Proportions for year 12/FE pupils have not changed noticeably over the past few surveys. For primary and secondary pupils, proportions of children feeling happy at school have decreased: primary (74% in 2017, 69% in 2020 and 68% in 2021), secondary (52% in 2017, 47% in 2020 and 39% in 2021).

**Figure 6; Question 6.22: Thinking about how you have felt over the past week AT SCHOOL, would you say you felt generally?**

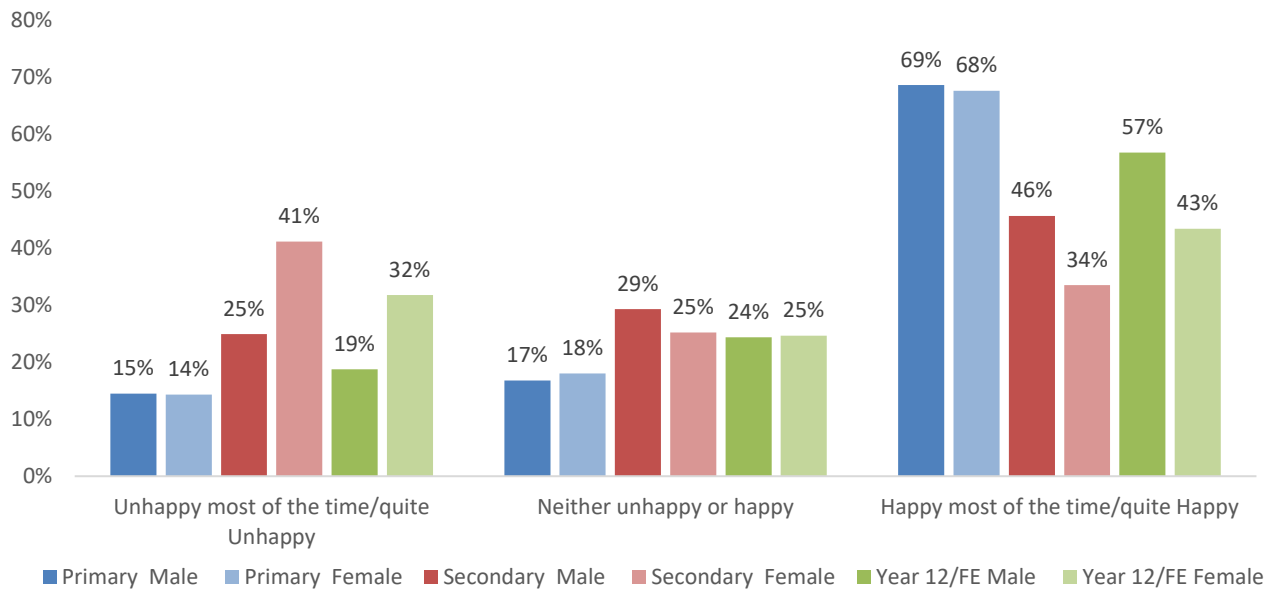




A larger proportion of males reported being quite happy or happy at school most of the time compared to females in the secondary and year 12/FE samples (Figure 6a). No difference was found in primary schools. 41% of females in secondary school and 32% in year 12/FE reported being unhappy or quite unhappy.

**Previous years:** The same gender patterns were apparent in 2020 and 2017. Proportions for secondary male and females have decreased noticeably over the years: male (58% in 2017, 55% in 2020, 46% in 2021), females (48% in 2017, 39% in 2020, 34% in 2021).

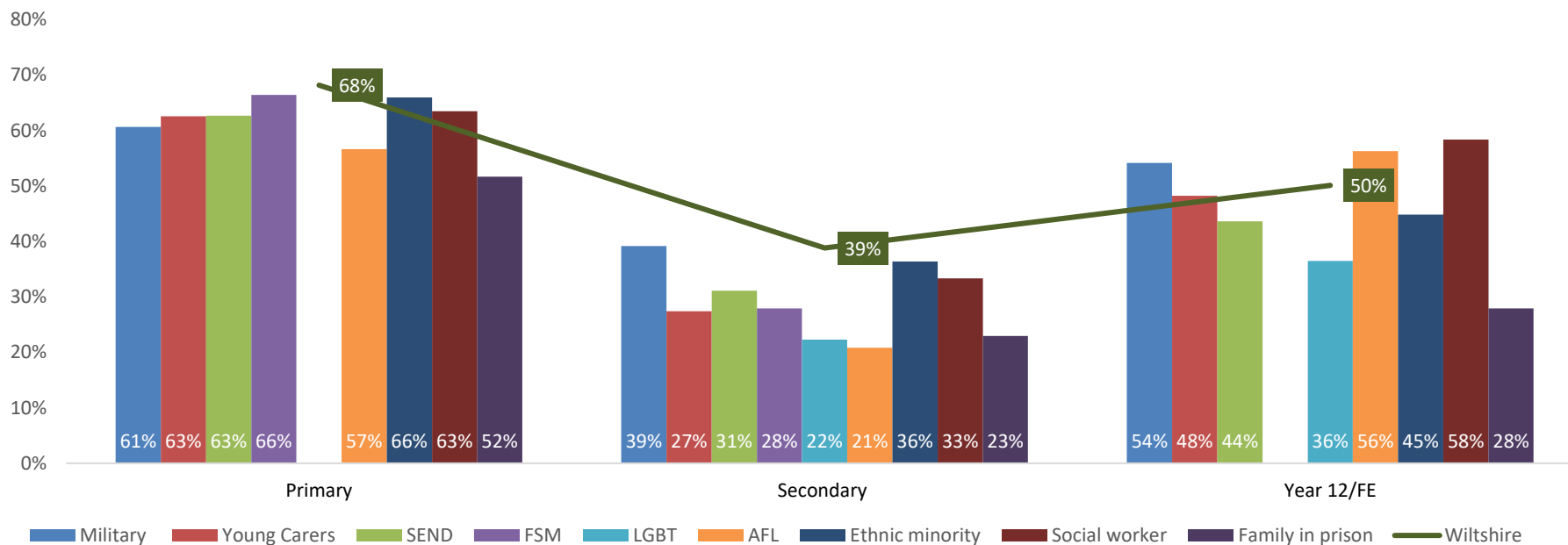
**Figure 6a; Question 6.22: Thinking about how you have felt over the past week AT SCHOOL, would you say you felt generally? Gender**



For many of the children identifying with the vulnerable groups, a smaller proportion reported feeling quite happy or happy most of the time when compared to the Wiltshire proportion (Figure 12). In primary school phases, smaller proportions of all vulnerable groups felt happy at school compared to the overall Wiltshire sample. In secondary school phases, all groups excluding military children had lower proportions. In year 12/FE phases, young carers, SEND children, LGBT children, ethnic minority children and children who had/have a parent in prison had lower proportions than the overall Wiltshire sample.

**Figure 6b; Question 6.22: Thinking about how you have felt over the past week AT SCHOOL, would you say you felt generally? Vulnerable groups. \***

**Response: Quite happy or happy**

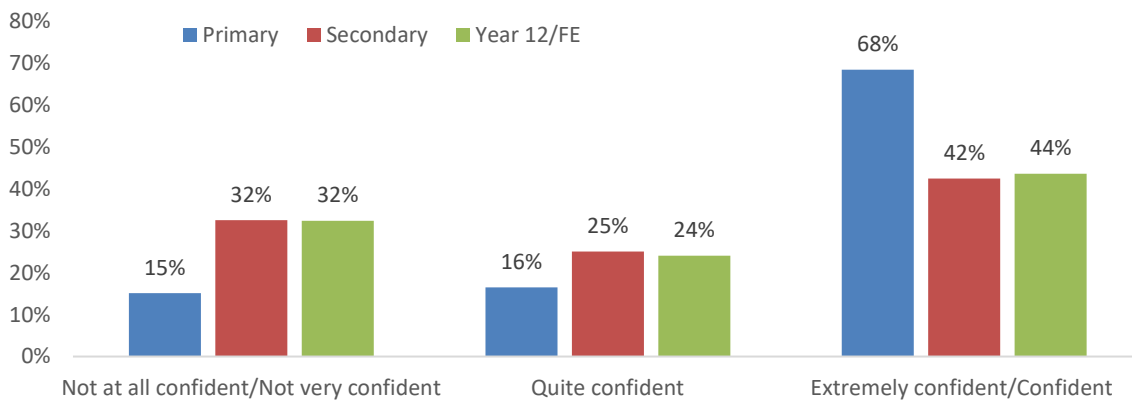


\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

When asked how confident pupils felt about their future, a larger proportion of the primary school sample (68%) reported being confident or extremely confident than the other school phases (Figure 7). Only 2 in 5 secondary and year 12/FE pupils felt confident about their future.

**Previous years:** Proportions for primary school pupils have stayed relatively constant. However, the proportion of the secondary school sample that were confident or very confident in their future has fallen from 50% (2017), to 48% (2020) to 42% (2021) and the proportion that feel not very or not at all confident has risen from 25% (2017) to 24% (2020) to 32% (2021). Similarly, the proportion of the year 12/FE who felt confident or very confident has fallen from 49% (2017) to 47% (2020) to 44% (2021).

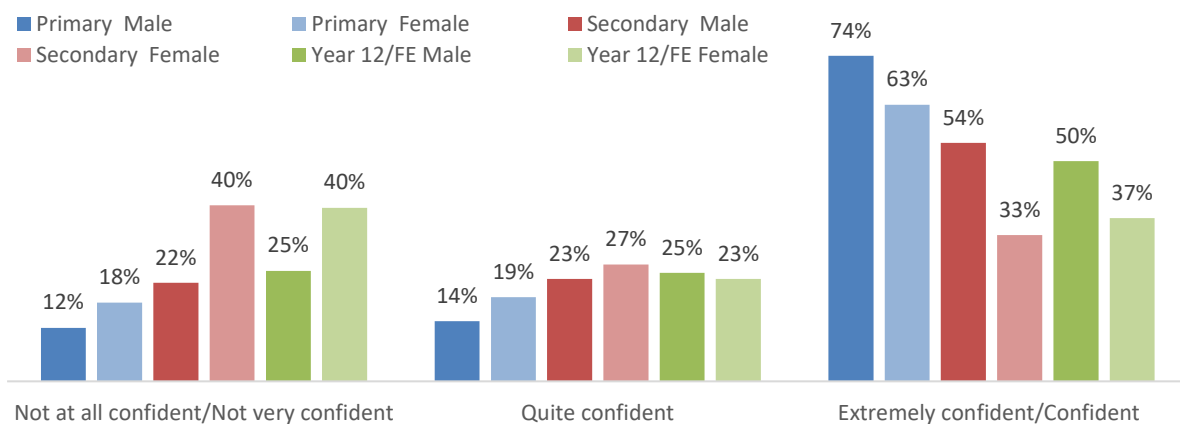
**Figure 7; Question 6.16: Overall, how confident about your future do you generally feel?**



A larger proportion of males reported being 'confident or extremely confident' than females in all school phases (Figure 7a). 40% females in secondary school and 40% in year 12/FE reported being not at all confident or not very confident.

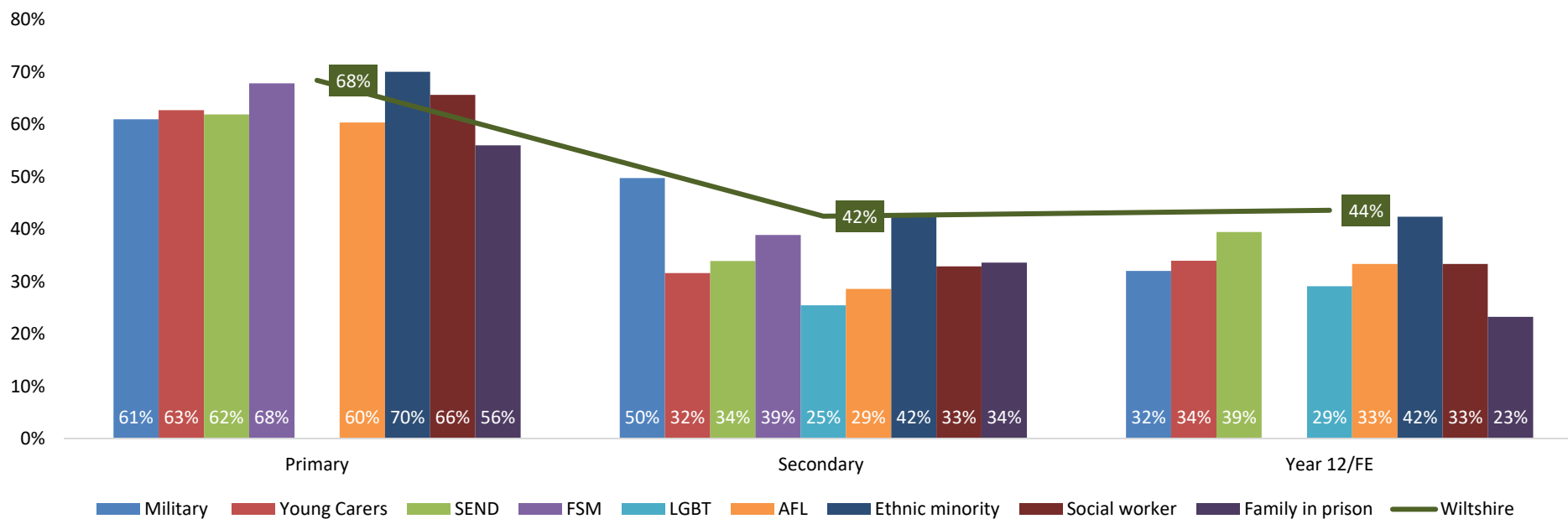
**Previous years:** These same gender patterns were observed in previous years. While all proportions of those feeling confident about the future have decreased since 2017, the most noticeable decreases were amongst primary female pupils (73% in 2017, 64% in 2020 and 63% in 2021) and secondary female pupils (43% in 2017, 41% in 2020 and 33% in 2021).

**Figure 7a; Question 6.16: Overall, how confident about your future do you generally feel? Gender**



In the primary school sample, almost all of the different vulnerable groups that children had identified with had similar percentages to the Wiltshire proportion (Figure 7b). However, 7 of the vulnerable groups in the secondary school sample had statistically significantly lower proportions of confident or extremely confident respondents (young carers, SEND, LGBT, children with a social worker and children who have/had a family member in prison). In the year 12/FE sample, all groups apart from ethnic minority children had statistically significantly lower levels of confidence, particularly LGBT children and children who have/had a family member in prison.

**Figure 7b; Question 6.16: Overall, how confident about your future do you generally feel? Vulnerable groups. \***  
**Response: Confident or extremely confident**

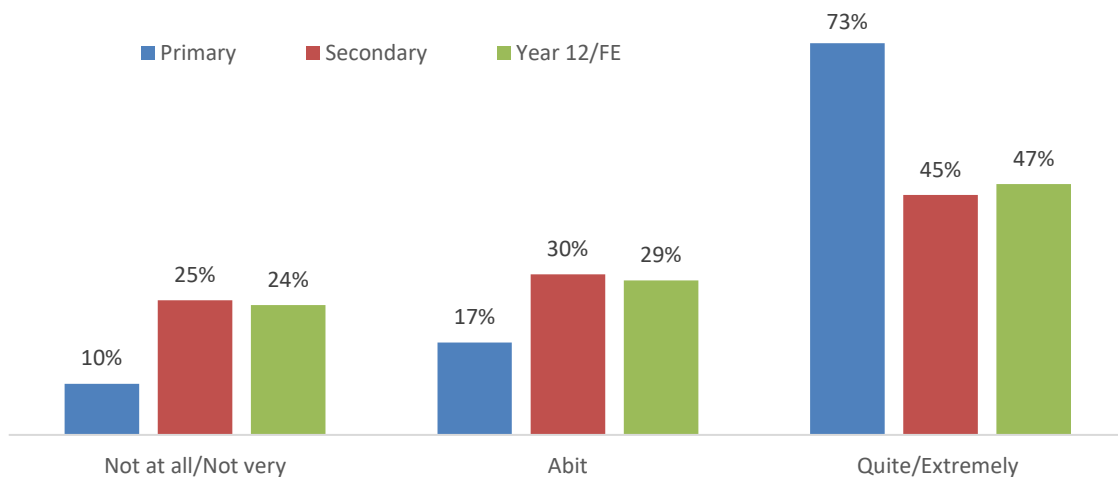


\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

When asked how proud they felt of things they have achieved, most primary school children felt quite or extremely proud (73%). In secondary and year 12/FE phases, this proportion was significantly smaller (45% secondary and 47% year 12/FE: figure 8). In 2018, a national report by Office of National Statistics stated that 74.5% of 10- to 15-year-olds felt the things they did in their lives were worthwhile.<sup>12</sup> For the equivalent age group, the survey proportion was 51%, which is much lower than the national findings.

**Previous years:** The proportion of primary school pupils who felt quite or extremely proud has fallen since 2017 (81%) and 2020 (75%). Similarly, the proportion of secondary school pupils who felt quite or extremely proud has fallen from 58% (2017) to 53% (2020) to 45% (2021) and year 12/FE from 53% (2017) to 50% (2020) to 47% (2021).

**Figure 8; Question 6.43: How proud do you feel of things you have achieved in your life?**

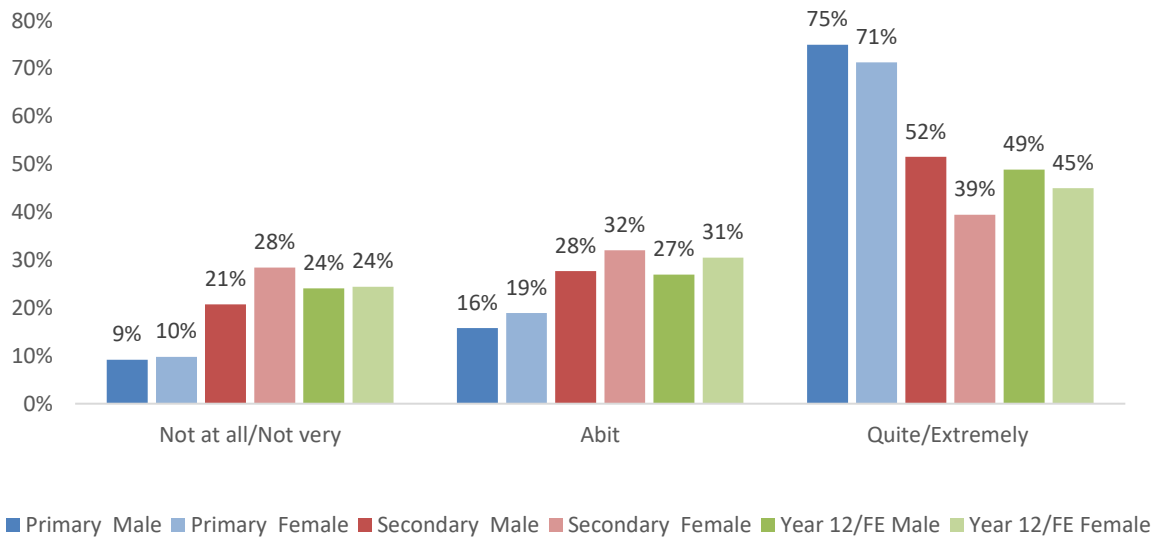


<sup>12</sup> Children's Society Household Panel Survey, taken from Children's Well-being Measures, 2018 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/childrenswellbeingmeasures>

In the primary school sample, there was little difference between the genders. However, in the secondary and year 12/FE samples the percentage of males who feel proud of the things they have achieved is higher than females (Figure 8a).

**Previous years:** The same gender patterns were observed in 2020 and 2017. The most noticeable change over the years was a decrease in secondary females feeling proud of the things they have achieved in their life (55% in 2017, 50% in 2020 and 39% in 2021).

**Figure 8a; Question 6.43: How proud do you feel of things you have achieved in your life? Gender.**



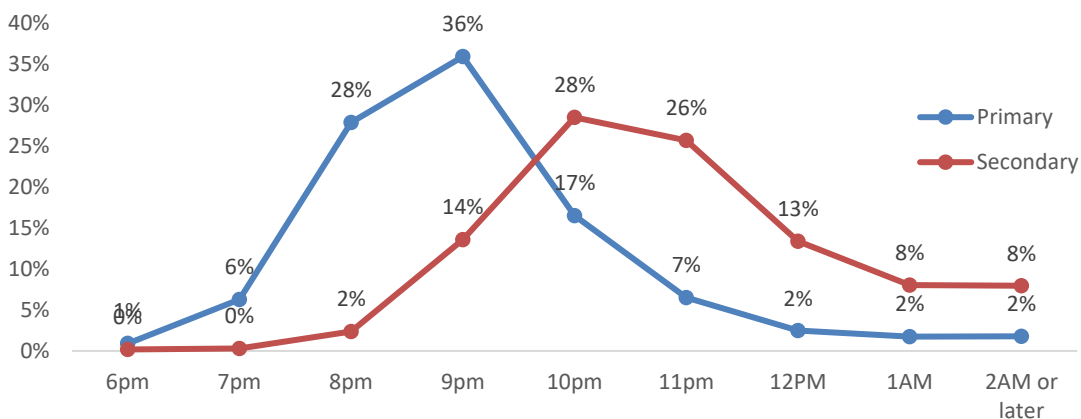
## Sleep behaviour

Sleep is an important health protecting behaviour as lack of sleep can impact negatively on mental health or can be an indication of poor mental health. Sleep experts recommend that children under 10 need at least 10 hours of sleep a night and from the ages of 10 to 18, they need at least 8 and a half hours.

The primary school respondents mainly fell into two-time brackets, 8pm and 9pm (28% and 36%; figure 9), for when they reported going to bed. For secondary school respondents, this was 10pm (28%) and 11pm (26%). There were minimal differences between genders.

**Previous years:** A similar pattern was seen in the 2020 and 2017 surveys.

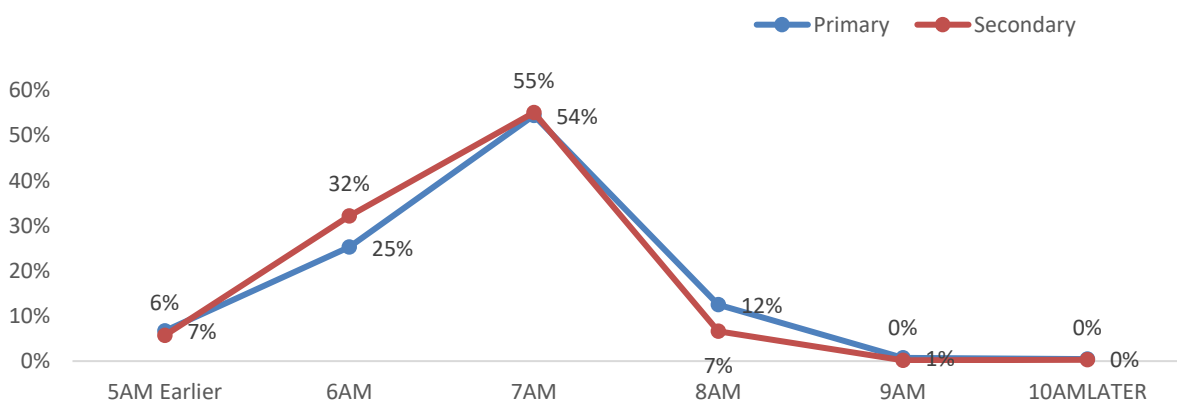
**Figure 9; Question 1.20: What time (to the nearest hour) did you go to bed last night?**



Respondents were also asked what time they woke up. 87% of primary school respondents and 92% of secondary school respondents were awake before or around 7 am (Figure 10). There was very little difference between the genders as to when children reported waking up.

**Previous years:** These findings are very similar to the 2020 and 2017 survey results.

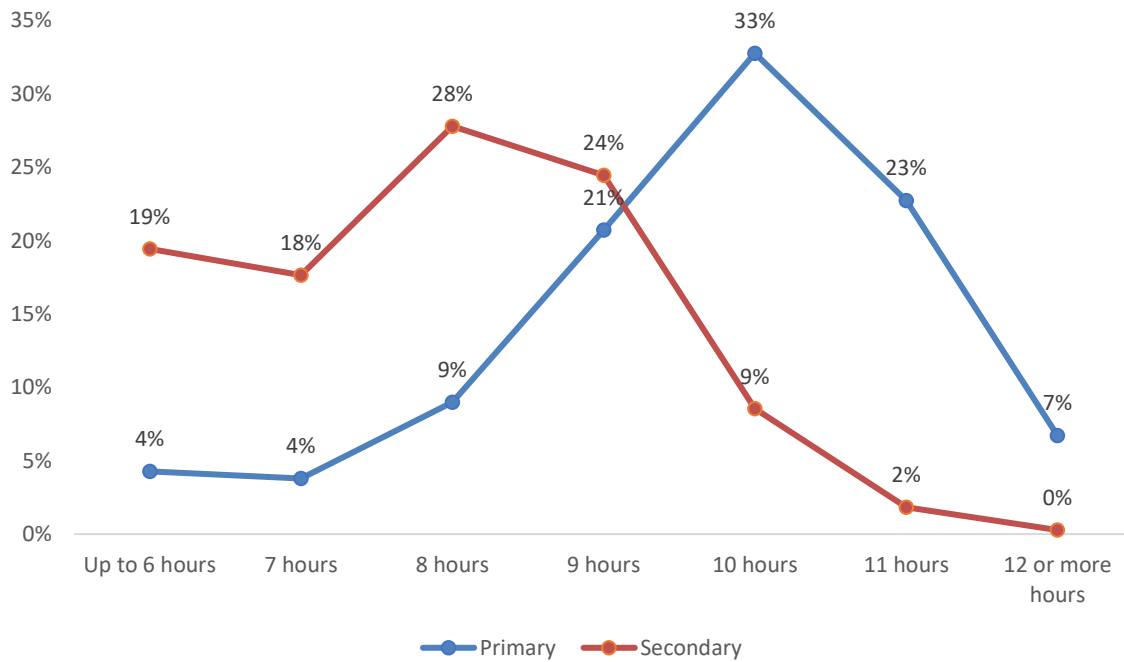
**Figure 10; Q1.38: What time (to the nearest hour) did you wake up this morning?**



The results from Q1.20 and Q1.38 were used in conjunction with the time that a respondent went to bed to create an estimate of how long respondents had been asleep. 63% of the primary school respondents are getting 10 or more hours sleep and 63% of secondary school respondents are getting 8 or more hours sleep (Figure 11). There were no noticeable gender differences in either school phases, apart from a slightly higher proportion of primary males reporting sleeping for 8 hours compared to females.

**Previous years:** Proportions of children getting enough sleep have decreased over the past few years in both school phases: primary (71% in 2017, 69% in 2020, 63% in 2021), secondary (77% in 2017, 83% in 2020 and 63% in 2021).

**Figure 11; Question 1.20 and Question 1.38, how long did you sleep last night?**

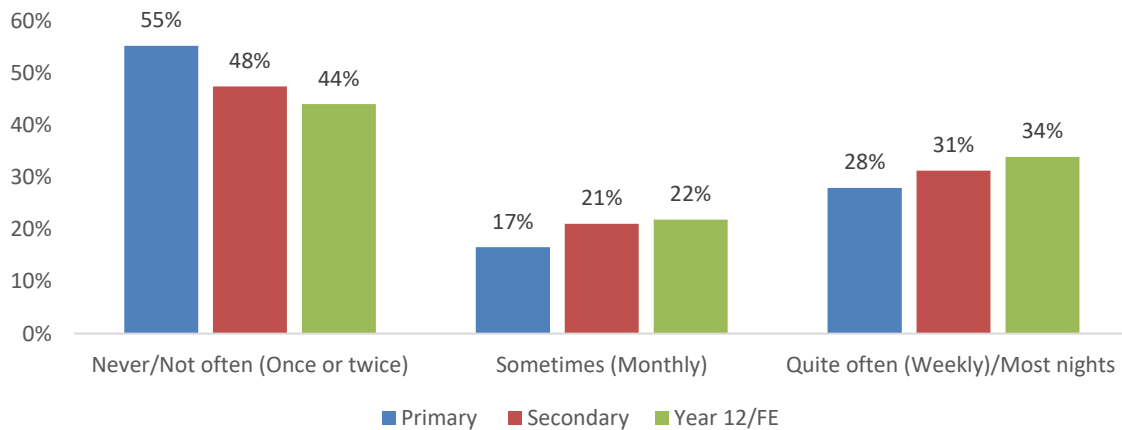




28% of primary school pupils, 31% secondary school pupils and 34% year 12/FE students reported feeling worried about something so much that they cannot sleep at night usually/most nights (Figure 12).

**Previous years:** The proportion of children feeling worried often in primary school phases has fluctuated over the past few surveys (24% in 2017, 32% in 2020 and 28% in 2021). The secondary school proportion has increased (21% in 2017, 25% in 2020 and 31% in 2021). This was also true for year 12/FE pupils (26% in 2017, 28% in 2020, 34% in 2021).

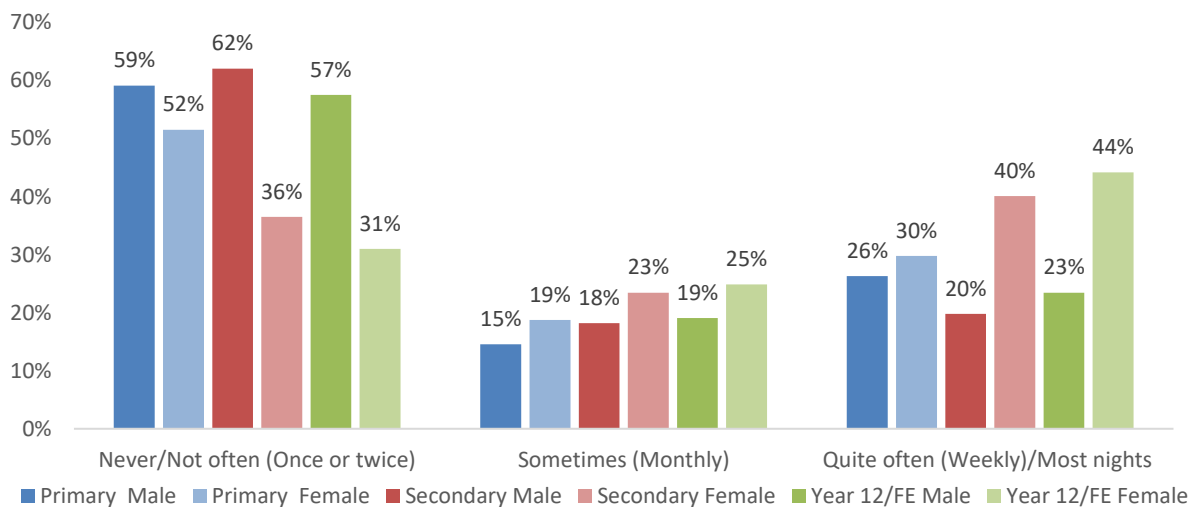
**Figure 12; Question 6.52: How often have you been so worried about something you cannot sleep at night?**



A larger proportion of females reported that they could not sleep at night quite often or most nights than males in secondary and year 12/FE but not in primary school (Figure 12a).

**Previous years:** This same gender pattern was observed in previous years. Secondary females had the most noticeable increase in worry over the past few years (26% in 2017, 34% in 2020 and 40% in 2021).

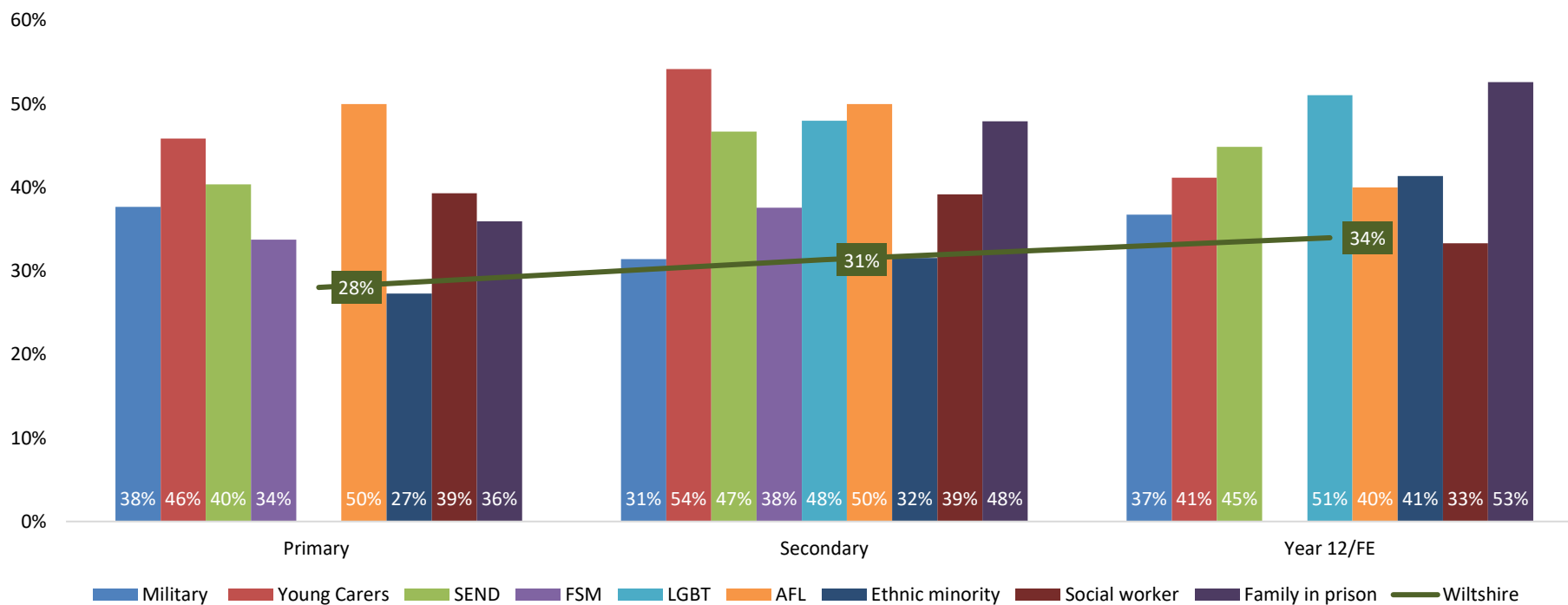
**Figure 12a; Question 6.52: How often have you been so worried about something you cannot sleep at night? Gender.**



In all the school phases, a higher percentage or similar percentage of those identifying with the vulnerable groups reported that they cannot sleep at night due to worries compared to the overall Wiltshire sample. Proportions were particularly high for primary AFL children, secondary young carers and year 12/FE children who have/had a family member in prison (Figure 12b).

**Figure 12b; Question 6.52: How often have you been so worried about something you cannot sleep at night? Vulnerable groups. \***

**Response: Quite often/most nights**



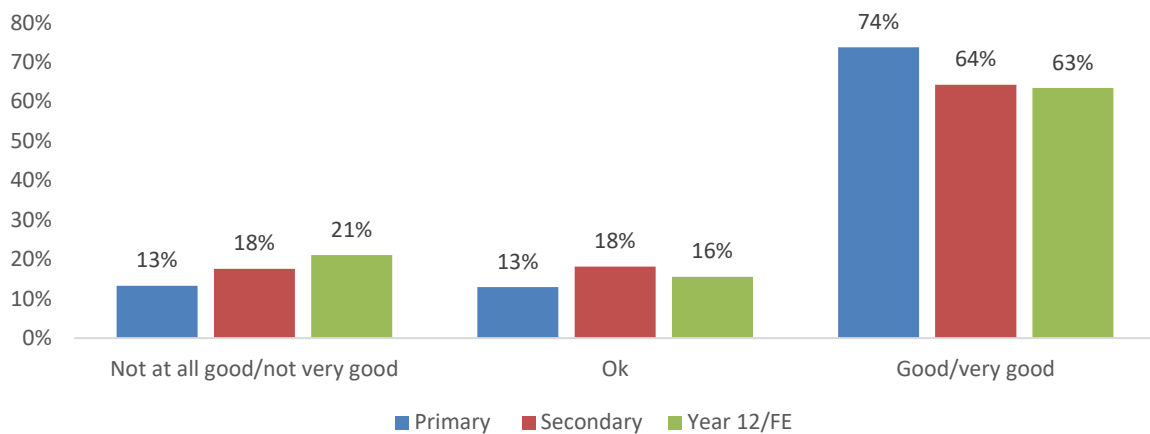
\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

## Relationships and Bullying

When asked how good they are at making and keeping friends, the proportion of the primary school sample that reported being good or very good (74%) was 9%-10% higher than the other school phases (Figure 13).

**Previous years:** Proportions of children reporting that they are good or very good at making friends have decreased in all school phases compared to previous years: primary (80% in 2017, 76% in 2020, 74% in 2021), secondary (72% in 2017, 68% in 2020, 64% in 2021), year 12/FE (67% in 2017, 65% in 2020, 63% in 2021).

**Figure 13; Question 6.32: How good are you at making and keeping friends?**



A slightly higher proportion of males reported that they were good or very good at making or keeping friends than females in all school phases (Figure 13a).

**Previous years:** This pattern was also apparent in previous years, apart from year 12/FE pupils in 2020 where females reported being better at making friends than males.

**Figure 13a; Question 6.32: How good are you at making and keeping friends? Gender.**

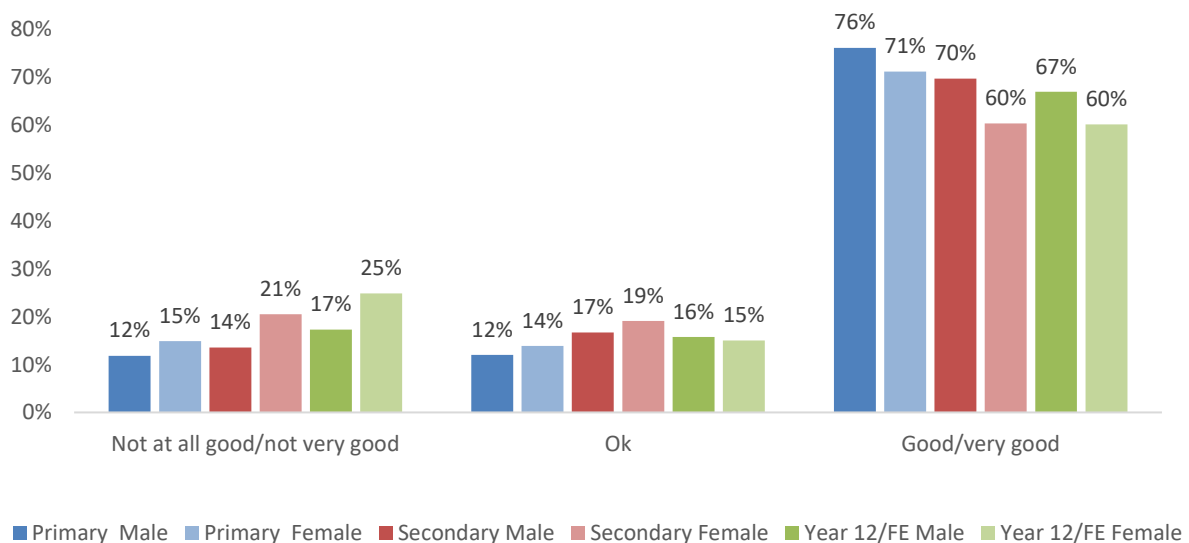
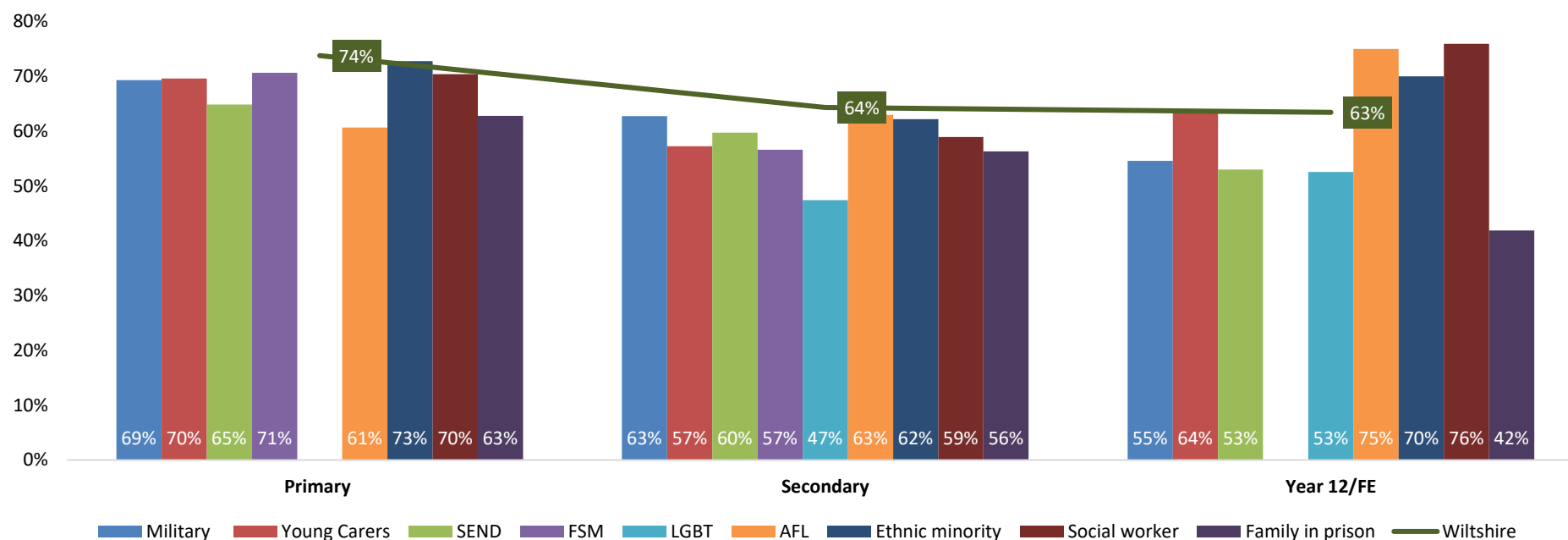


Figure 13b shows that statistically significantly lower proportions of those identifying with the vulnerable groups in the primary school sample reported being good or very good at making/keeping friends compared to the overall Wiltshire sample (apart from ethnic minority children). In the secondary school sample, proportions were closer to the Wiltshire proportion, though still lower, particularly for LGBT children (47%). In the year 12/FE sample, statistically significantly lower proportions of 4 vulnerable groups felt they were good at making/keeping friends than the overall Wiltshire sample (Parents in the military, LGBT, SEND and family member in prison).

**Figure 13b; Question 6.32: How good are you at making and keeping friends? Vulnerable groups. \***

**Response: Good/very good**

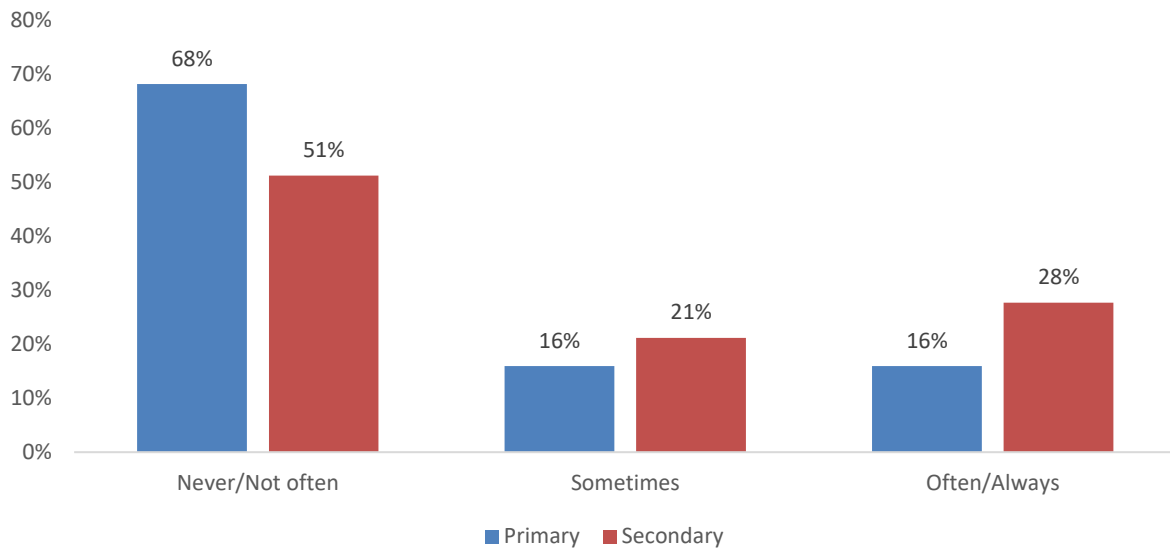


\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

A higher proportion of secondary school pupils reported feeling criticised quite often or always than the primary school respondents (Figure 14; 28% compared to 16%). A slightly higher proportion of males reported that they argue or feel criticised than females in the primary school sample. In secondary phases, the opposite was observed.

**Previous years:** The 2017 and 2020 survey presented very similar results.

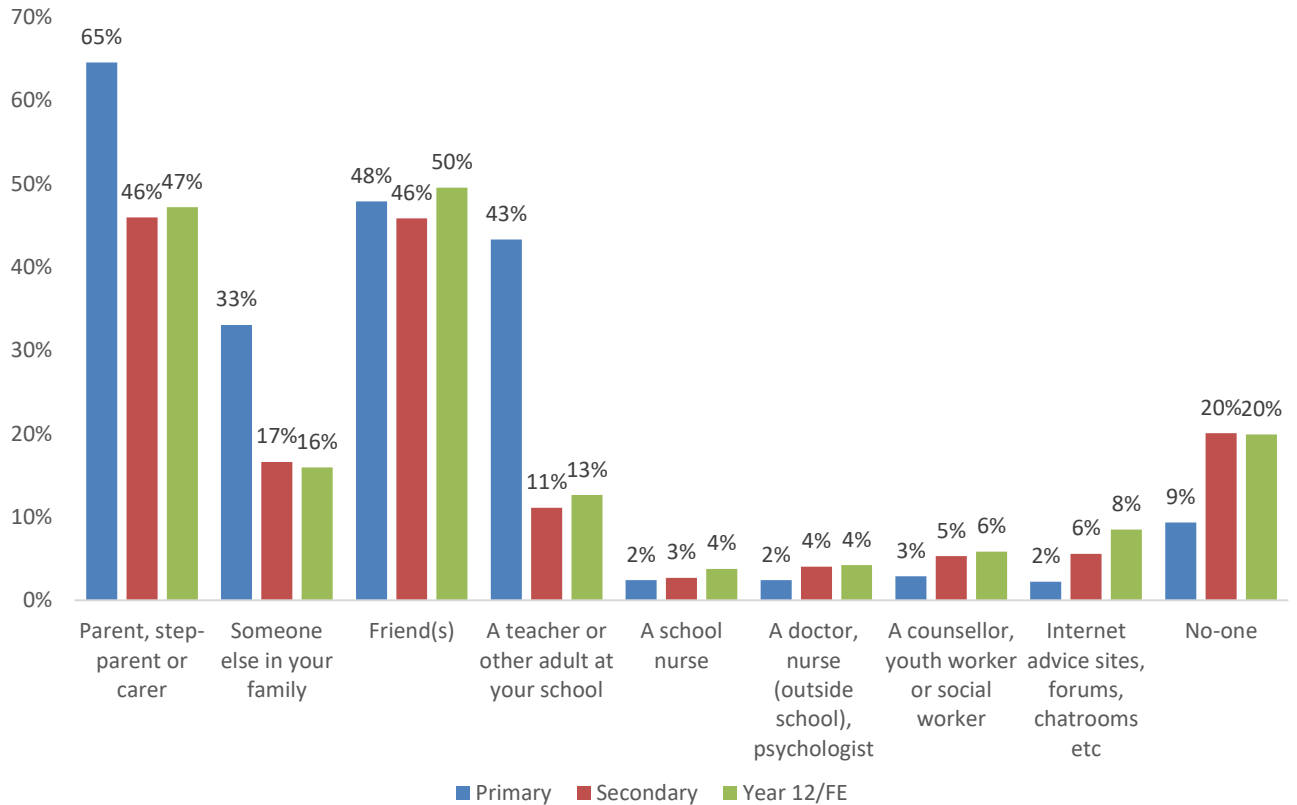
**Figure 14; Question 5.41: Do you argue with or feel criticised by friends, parents or carers about the amount of time you spend online?**



When asked who they would go to when unhappy or worried, most respondents in primary and secondary school phases reported that they would go to their parent or carer (Figure 15), though secondary respondents were also just as likely to go to friends for help. In year 12/FE phases, friends were the most common response (50%).

**Previous years:** The 2020 survey presented a very similar pattern. The 2017 survey had a smaller number of response categories so could not be compared to subsequent years.

**Figure 15; Question 6.11: When you are unhappy or worried about a personal issue, who would you go to for help? \***

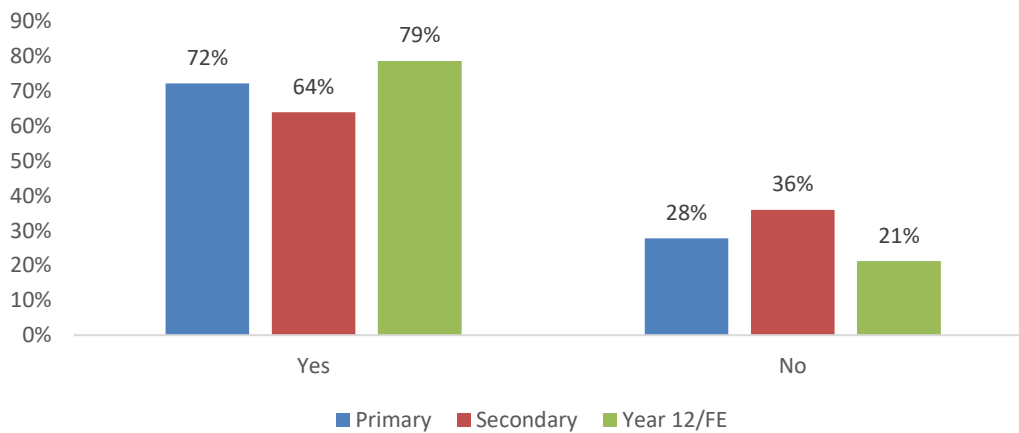


\*Respondents could select multiple options.

Pupils were asked if they have at least one adult at school who cares about them as an individual. Year 12/FE pupils were most likely to report that yes, they did (Figure 16). 36% of secondary pupils said no. There was some variation within the secondary school pupils with 41% of year 8 pupils saying no compared to only 6% of year 10 pupils. There were no gender differences.

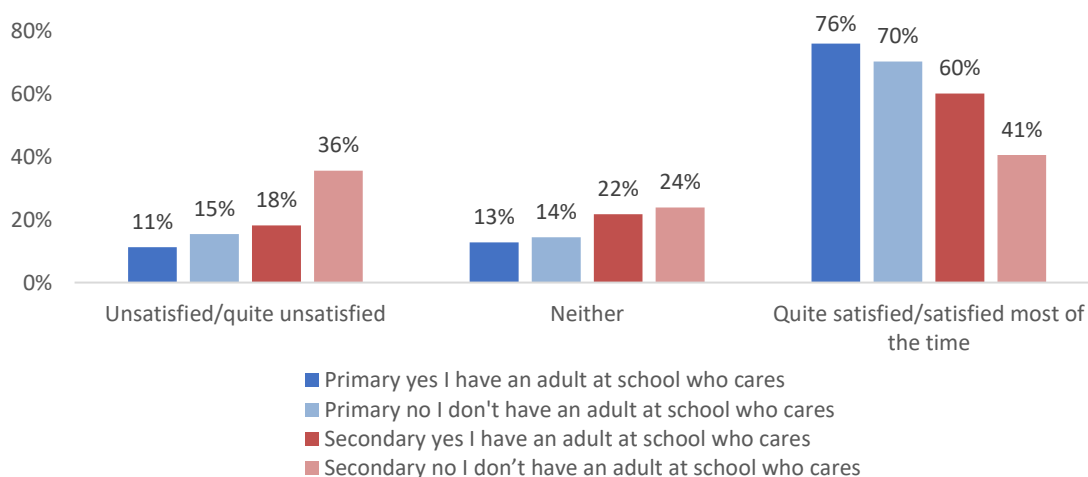
**Previous years:** Proportions for all school phases were the same in 2020.

**Figure 16; Question 4.47. Is there at least one adult at school who cares about you as an individual?**



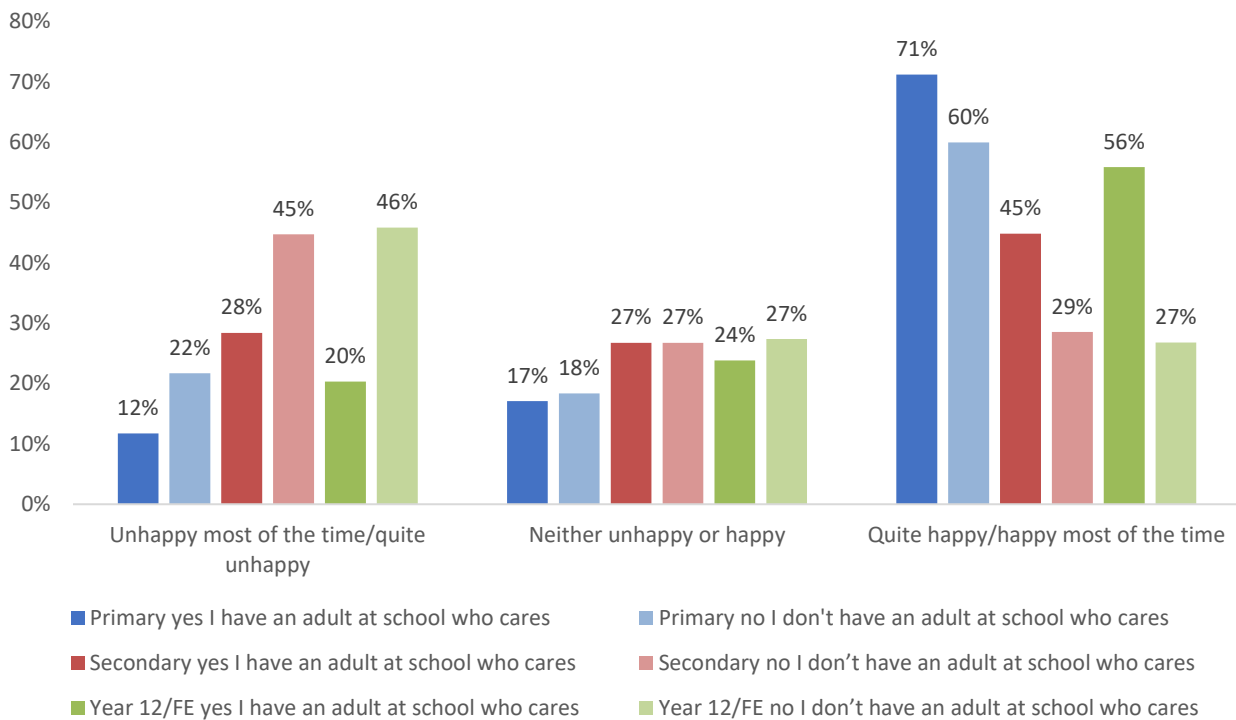
As this was a new question for the 2020 school survey, it was combined with measures of wellbeing to see how well it links to related concepts. When looking at life satisfaction, pupils who reported having an adult at school who cares about them were more satisfied with their life in both primary and secondary school phases, though the difference was much more pronounced in secondary phases (Figure 17).

**Figure 17. Question 4.47. Is there at least one adult at school who cares about you as an individual? And Question 6.13. Overall, are you basically satisfied with your life?**



The same patterns above were also observed when looking at happiness at school and whether pupils felt they have an adult at school who cares about them as an individual. Those who felt they did not were more likely to report being quite unhappy or unhappy most of time at school compared to those that did have an adult who cared about them (Figure 18). The difference was most apparent in year 12/FE school phases. These patterns were also apparent for other wellbeing measures, confidence in the future and pride in things achieved in life. All this suggests that children having an adult at school who cares about them does relate closely to a child's general wellbeing.

**Figure 18. Question 4.47. Is there at least one adult at school who cares about you as an individual? And Question 6.22. Thinking about how you have felt over the past week AT SCHOOL, would you say you felt generally?**

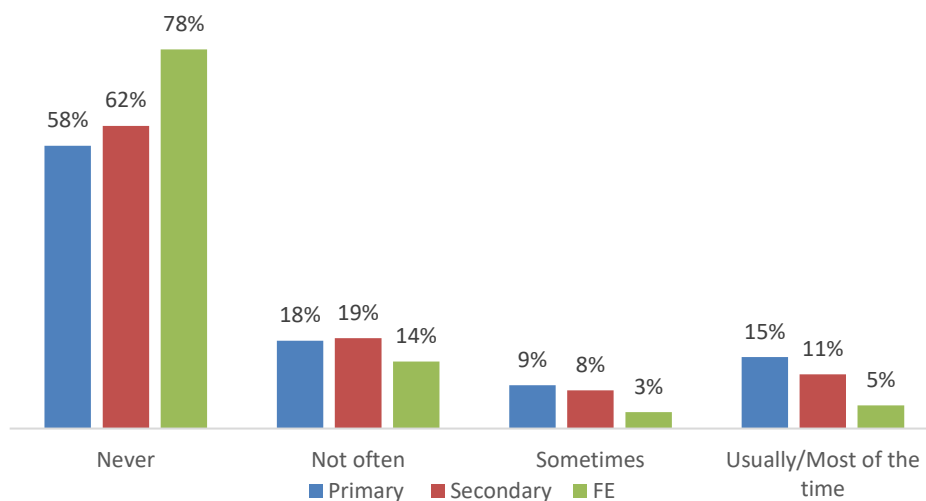




When respondents were asked if they had been bullied in the last year, most respondents from all school phases said no, though this was lowest in primary school phases (58% primary, 62% secondary and 78% year 12/FE). The proportion who reported being bullied sometimes or more often fell as school phase progressed (Figure 19). 24% of primary school pupils, 19% of secondary school pupils and 8% of year 12/FE pupils reported being bullied sometimes or more often. The state of nation report found that in July 2021, 15% of secondary pupils reported that they had been bullied in the previous year.<sup>13</sup> There were not any significant gender differences in the secondary and year 12/FE school phases. In primary school phases, males were slightly more likely than females to report being bullied quite often/most days in the last year.

**Previous years:** Proportions have not changed greatly since 2017 and 2020 for secondary school pupils. There has been a slight decrease in year 12/FE children reporting that they have been bullied sometimes or more often (13% in 2017 and 2020) and an increase in those reporting never (73% in 2017, 71% in 2020 to 78% in 2021).

**Figure 19; Question 6.07: Have you been bullied in the last year?**



<sup>13</sup> [State of the nation 2021: children and young people's wellbeing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/state-of-the-nation-2021-children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing)

In the primary school sample, all vulnerable groups bar ethnic minority children had higher percentages of those who were bullied quite often or most days than the overall Wiltshire sample. This was also the case in the secondary school phases (Figure 19a). In the year 12/FE phases, children identifying with the vulnerable groups were more likely to report being bullied often than the overall Wiltshire sample, apart from children with military carers, AFL children and ethnic minority children. National evidence has found that bullying is more likely to be reported among SEND children and FSM children, which is largely supported by the Wiltshire survey results. <sup>14</sup>

**Figure 19a; Question 6.07: Have you been bullied in the last year? Vulnerable groups. \***

**Response: quite often/most days**



\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

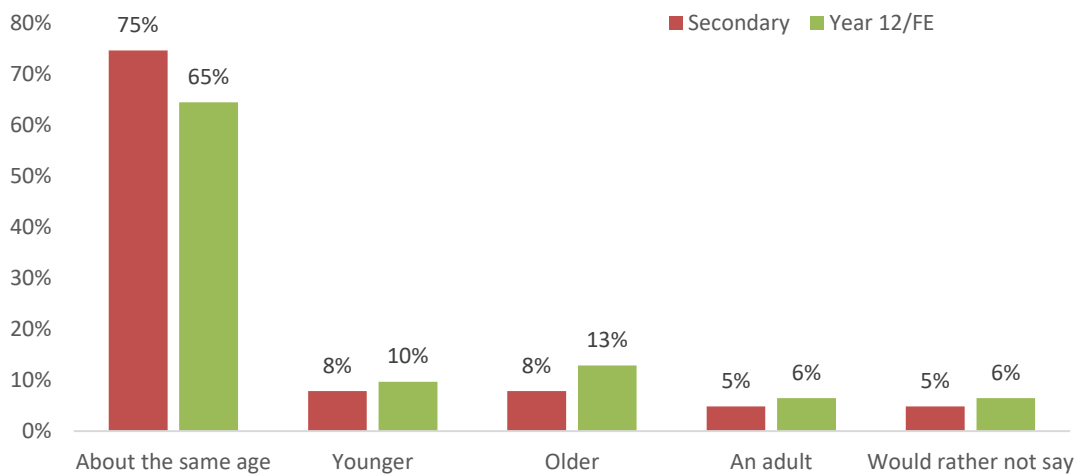
<sup>14</sup> [State of the nation 2021: children and young people's wellbeing - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/state-of-the-nation-2021-children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing)

Most respondents reported that the bully was the same age for both the secondary school respondents and the year 12/FE students (Figure 20). The primary school pupils were not asked this question.

**Previous years:** The 2017 and 2020 survey presented very similar results, though a higher proportion of secondary children reported that the bully was older (17% in 2017 and 11% in 2020).

Caution should be taken in interpreting these results as the definition of older or younger is not clear so the perception of the age brackets may change between respondents.

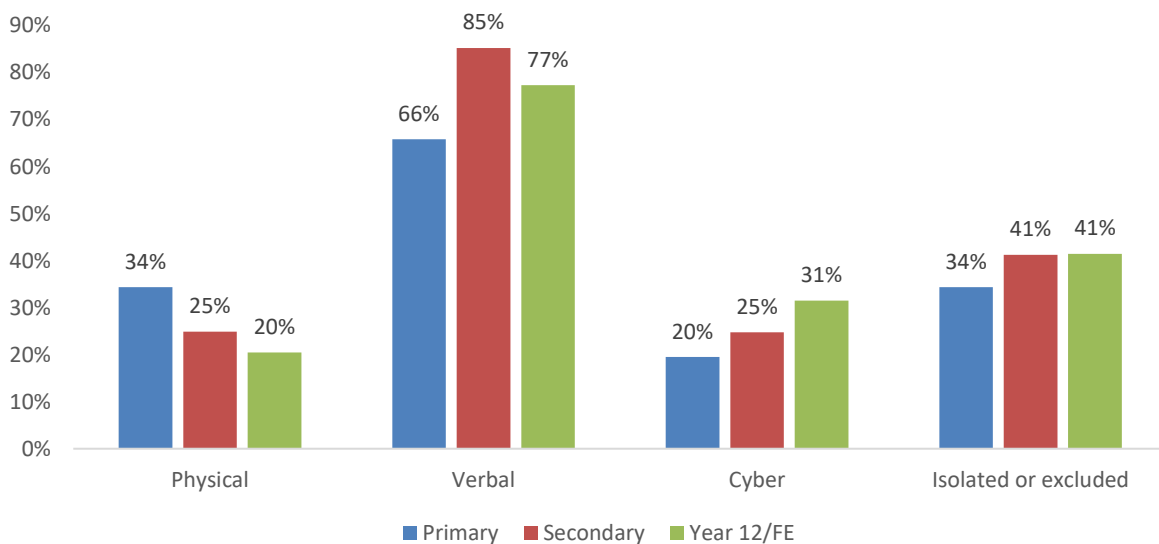
**Figure 20; Question 6.39: What age is the bully?**



When asked about the type of bullying experienced, most respondents said that it was verbal, though this was highest in secondary phases (85%, Figure 21). Overall, those reporting physical bullying decreased through school phase, while cyber bullying increased. In 2020, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) found that around 1 in 5 children aged 10-15 years in England and Wales experienced at least one type of online bullying, which falls in line with the survey percentages.<sup>15</sup> When broken down by gender, a slightly larger proportion of females reported cyber bullying, verbal bullying and being isolated or excluded compared to males. A larger proportion of males reported being physically bullied than females.

**Previous years:** Though patterns of bullying were largely the same in previous years, there have been some changes. There has been an increase in primary children reporting being cyber bullied (11% in 2017, 12% in 2020 and 20% in 2021). There has also been a decrease in year 12/FE pupils reporting being verbally bullied (88% in 2017, 86% in 2020 and 77% in 2021).

**Figure 21; Question 6.31: If you have been bullied in the last year in what way did it happen? \***



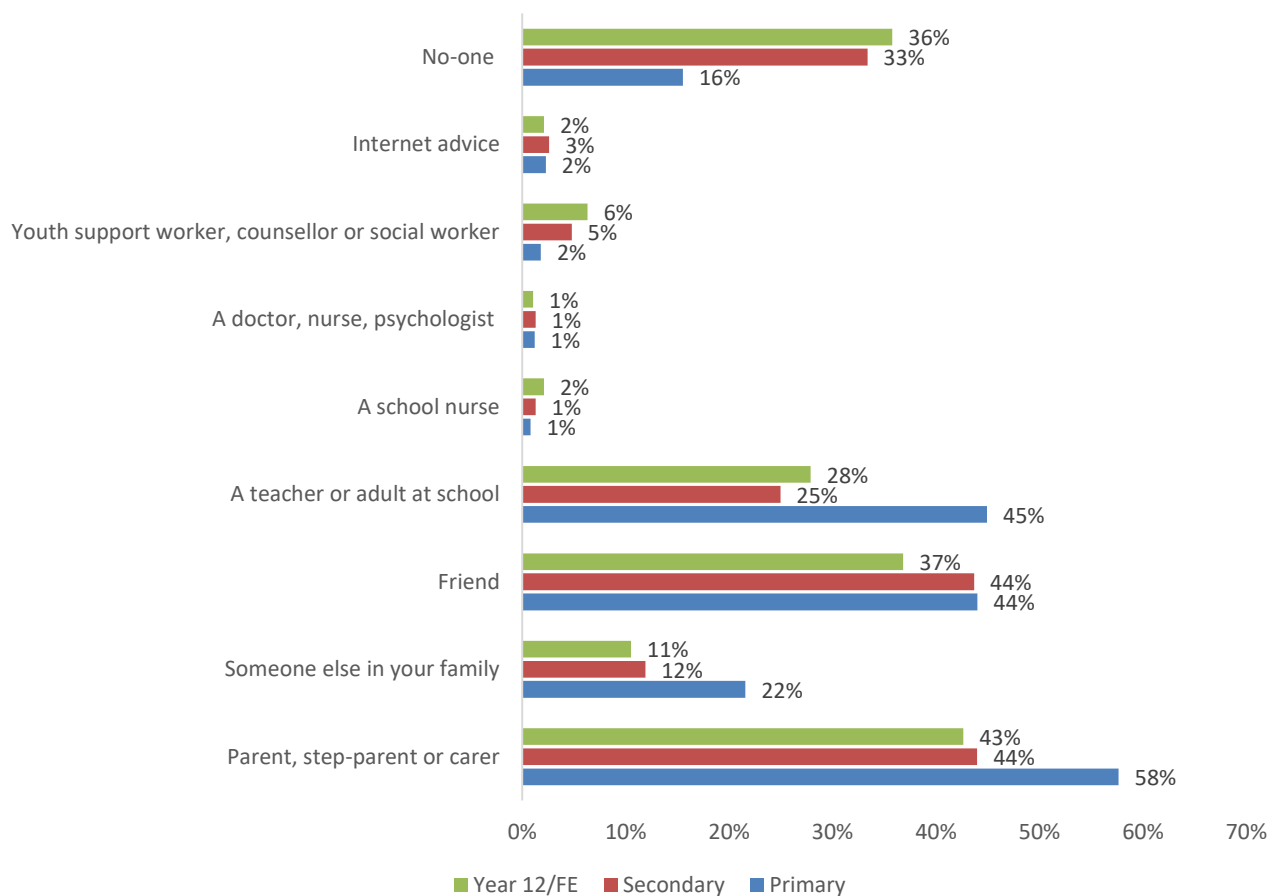
\*Respondents could select multiple options.

<sup>15</sup> [Online bullying in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

When asked if someone helped them deal with the bullying, a larger proportion of primary school respondents reported that their parent or carer helped (58%) than secondary school or year 12/FE respondents (44% and 43% respectively). Friends were the second highest group that those bullied reportedly received help from, though for primary school children this was also a teacher or adult at school (Figure 22). Secondary and year 12/FE respondents were more likely to speak to no-one than primary school respondents.

**Previous years:** Patterns were very similar in 2017 and 2020 but more secondary children were likely to report that no-one helped them in 2021 compared with 2020 (22%).

**Figure 22; Question 6.51: If you have ever been bullied, did someone help you deal with it? \***

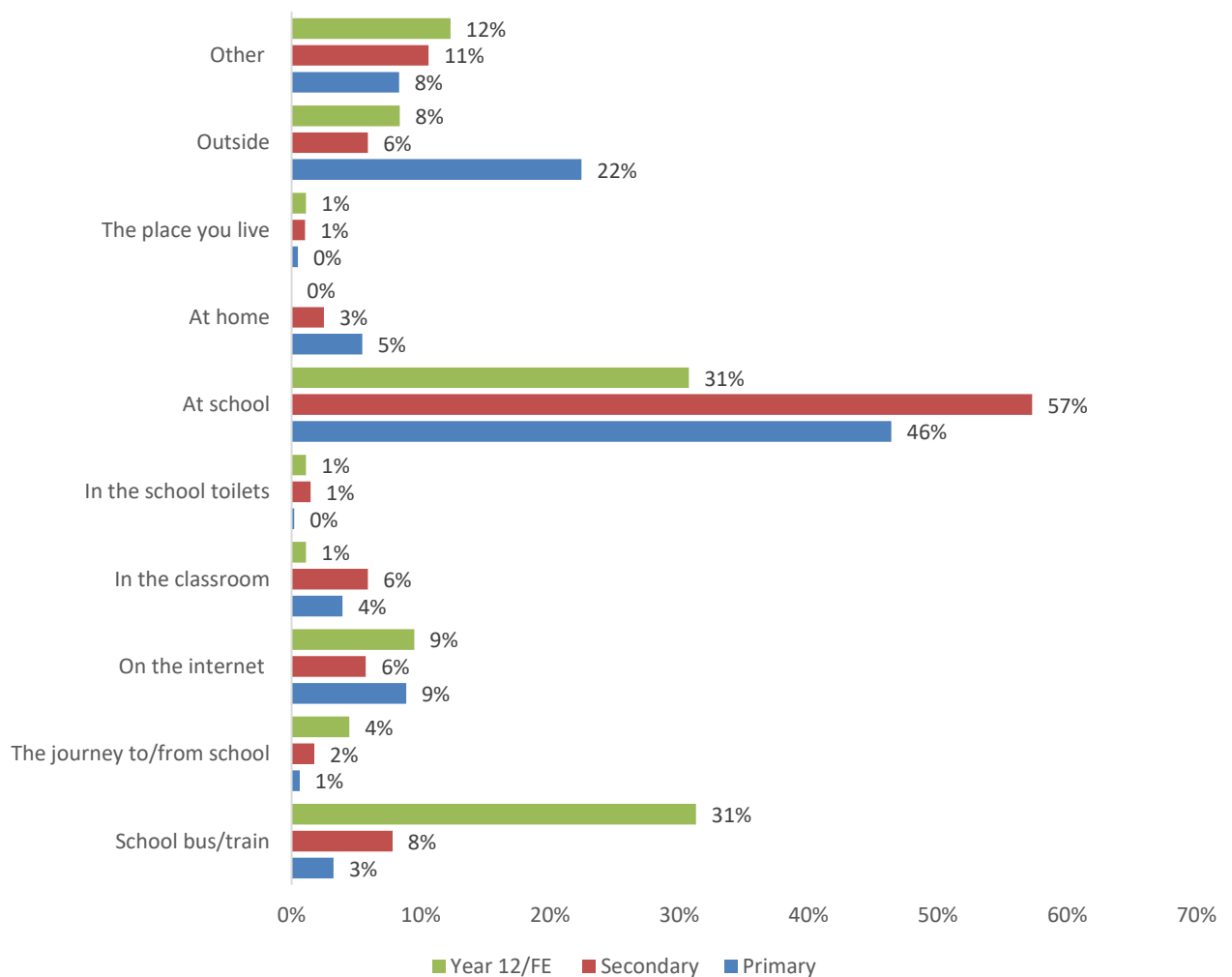


\*Respondents could select multiple options.

For each school phase, most respondents reported that the bullying usually happens at school or college (Figure 23). However, the size of this majority changed with each school phase. In primary school phases, 46% of the respondents reported the bullying occurred at school. This increased to 57% in secondary school and then decreased to 31% in year 12/FE phases. A large majority of year 12/FE respondents also reported that bullying occurred on the school bus or train (31%). The second highest location reported by primary school children was outside (22%).

**Previous years:** Results were very similar in 2017 and in 2020. Proportions of children reporting that bullying had taken place at school have decreased in all school phases (51% primary, 62% secondary, 42% year 12/FE) as compared to 2020.

**Figure 23; Question 6.42: Where does the bullying usually happen? \***

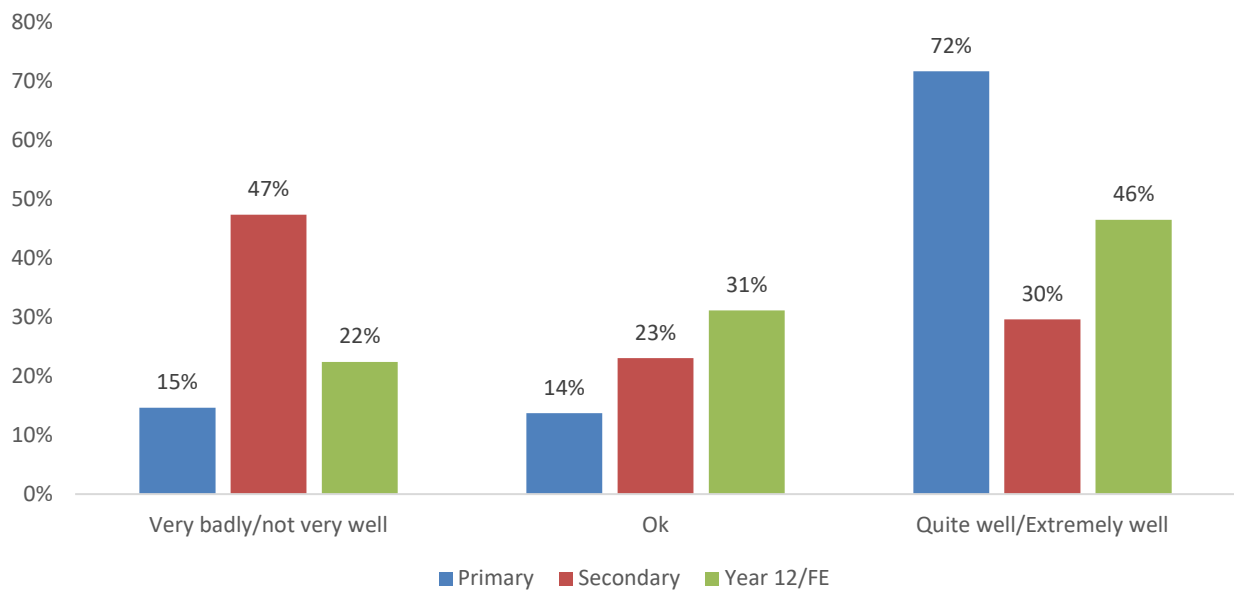


\*Respondents could select multiple options.

When asked how well respondents felt their school deals with bullying, there was significant variation between the school phases (Figure 24). Most of the primary school respondents felt that their school deals with bullying quite well or extremely well (72%), while only 30% of the secondary and 46% year 12/FE respondents felt the school did quite well or extremely well.

**Previous years:** There has been a slight increase in primary and year 12/FE respondents reporting that their school deals with bullying well since 2020 (67% primary, 40% year 12/FE). On the other hand, the proportion of secondary pupils reporting the same has decreased over the years (39% in 2017, 30% in 2020 and 2021).

**Figure 24; Question 6.09: How well do you think your school deals with bullying?**

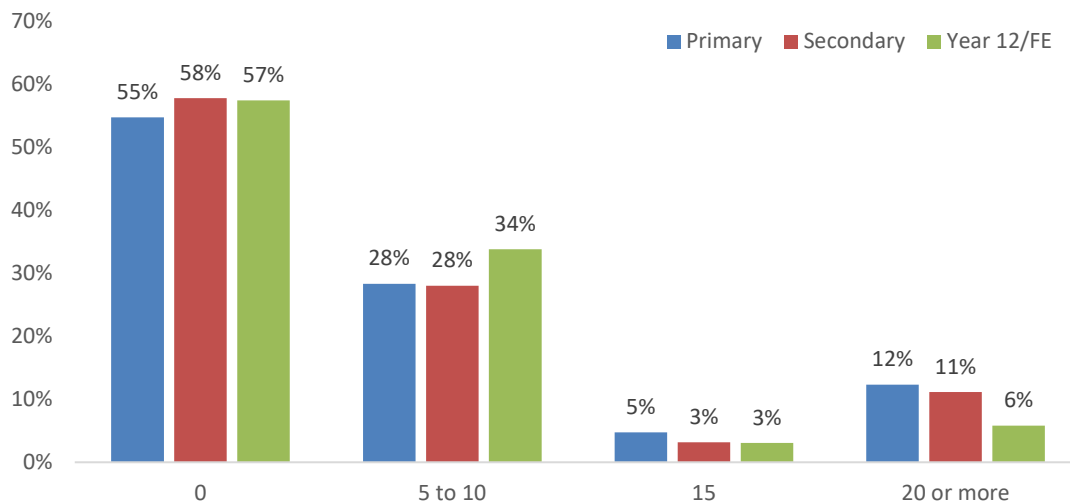


## At school

Around 50% of pupils reported not missing a day at school during the first term of 2020/21. For primary and secondary schools, around 12% of respondents had missed 20 or more days of school. In year 12/FE, this decreased to 6% (Figure 25). Most vulnerable groups were more likely to have missed 20 or more days of school compared to the overall Wiltshire sample. Proportions were particularly high for secondary young carers (24%), secondary AFL children (24%) and year 12/FE children who have/had a family member in prison (12%).

**Previous years:** In 2020 and 2017, proportions of children who had missed 20 or more days were lower (3% primary, 3% secondary and 2% year 12/FE in 2020 and 2% primary, 3% secondary and 3% year 12/FE in 2017). It may be that the increase in 2021 is a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and self-isolation guidelines. Though, 2021 has the highest proportions of those reporting 0 days missed compared to the previous two surveys.

**Figure 25; Question 4.26: How many days of school did you miss last term?**

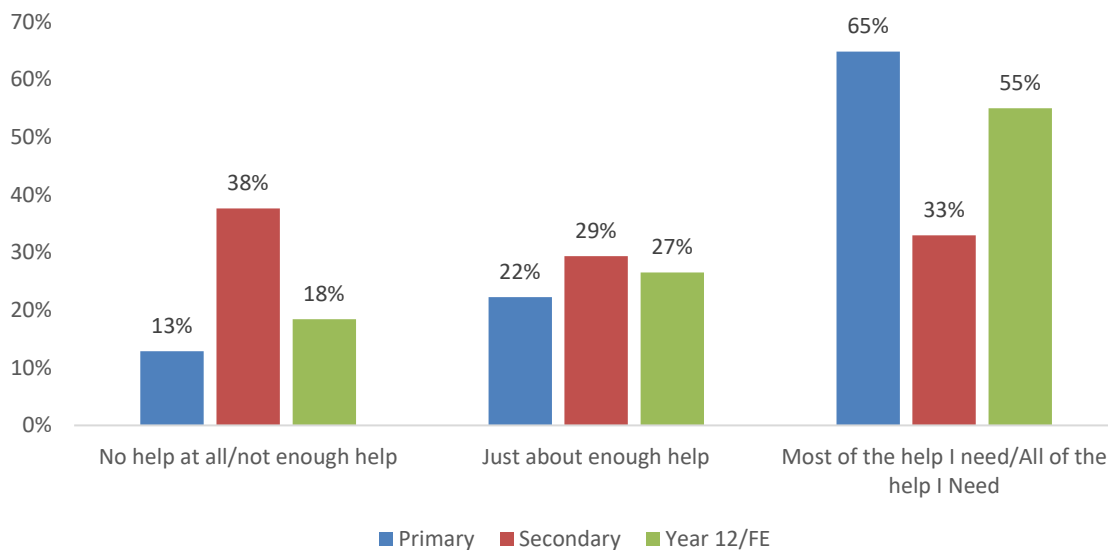




When asked how much help and support respondents felt they got at school, results varied significantly between the school phases. A larger proportion of primary school pupils felt they got support (65%) than the secondary school and year 12/FE students (Figure 26). The majority of secondary school students felt that they didn't receive any help or not enough help at school (38%).

**Previous years:** In previous years, secondary students were also the least likely to report that they got most of the help they needed at school. Proportions have increased for primary and year 12/FE pupils over the years: primary (59% in 2017, 61% in 2020 and 65% in 2021), year 12/FE (49% in 2017, 48% in 2020 and 55% in 2021). On the other hand, they have fluctuated for secondary pupils (37% in 2017, 31% in 2020 and 33% in 2021).

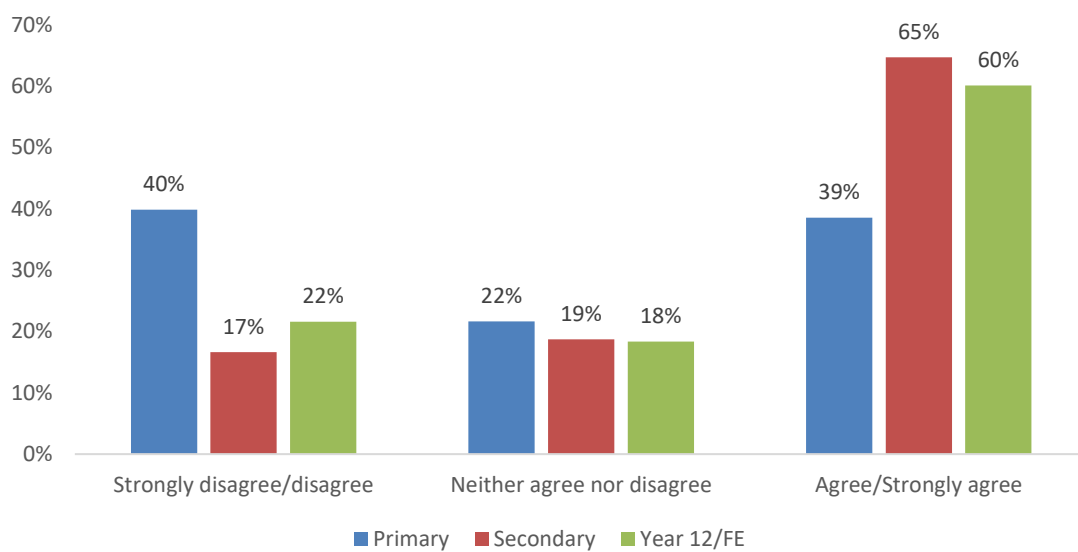
**Figure 26; Question 4.18: How much help and support do you feel that you get at school?**



Respondents were asked whether they agreed with several descriptions about school. One of the descriptions was 'I feel stressed by school work'. Most primary school respondents (40%) strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement (Figure 27). On the other hand, most of the secondary school (65%) and year 12/FE (60%) respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement.

**Previous years:** Feelings of stress about school work have increased over the years for all school phases, though only by approximately 4% for primary and year 12/FE pupils since 2017. For secondary pupils there has been a more notable increase (57% in 2017, 50% in 2020, 65% in 2021).

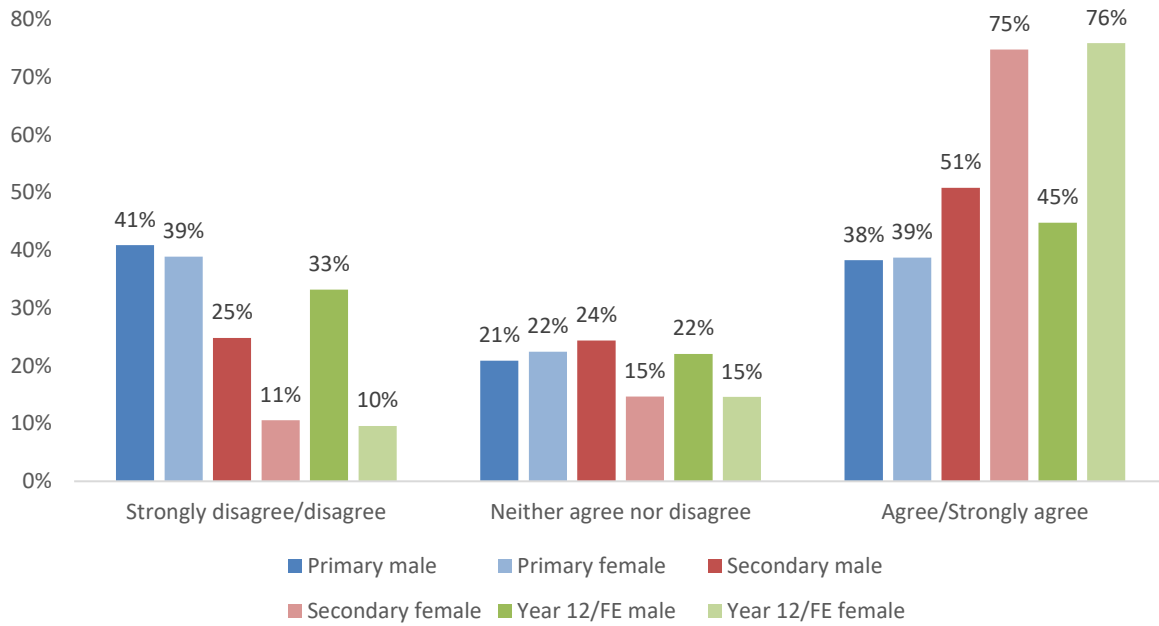
**Figure 27; Question 4.19: How would you describe being at your school? I feel stressed by school work.**



When comparing the feelings of stress by gender, a larger proportion of females in secondary school and year 12/FE phase agreed or strongly agreed that they feel stressed (Figure 27a). There were not any gender differences in primary school phases.

**Previous years:** These same gender patterns were observed in 2017 and 2020. Secondary females feeling stressed by school work has increased over the years (64% in 2017, 68% in 2020 and 75% in 2021).

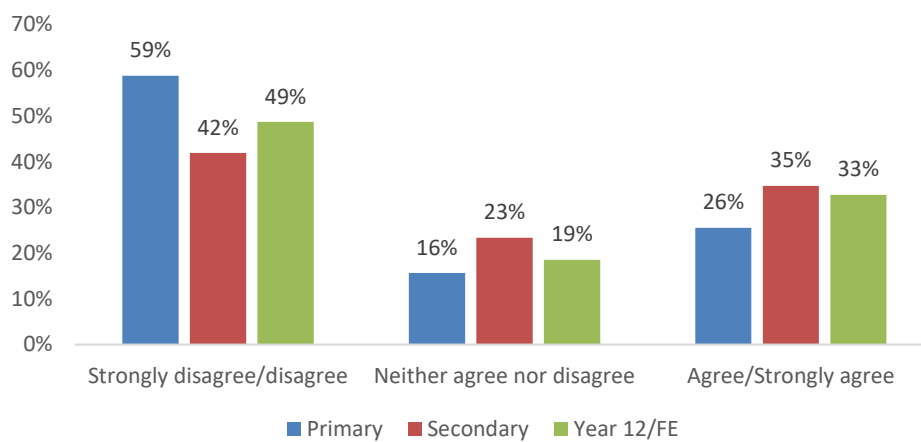
**Figure 27a; Question 4.19: How would you describe being at school? I feel stressed by school work. Gender**



Most students from all school phases were not worried about going to school (Figure 28). This was particularly true in primary school phases. However, 26-35% of pupils/students were worried. It may be the case that increase in worry about going to school is partially due to the impacts of Covid-19 pandemic.

**Previous years:** Proportions of worry about going to school have increased across all school phases since 2020 and 2017, though increases in the primary school phases are minimal. Proportions for secondary and year 12/FE pupils have increased by approximately 8%: Secondary (24% in 2017, 25% in 2020, 35% in 2021), year 12/FE (25% in 2017, 27% in 2020, 33% in 2021).

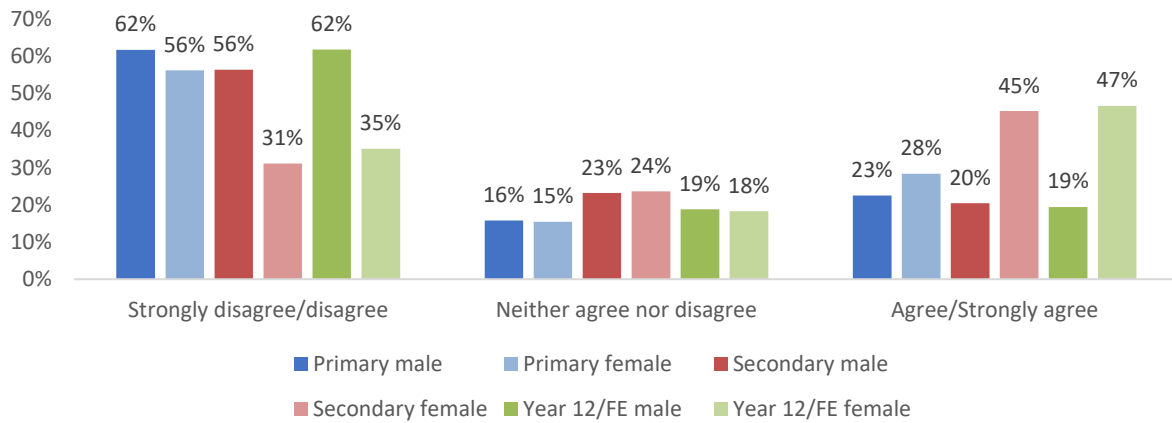
**Figure 28; Question 4.19: How would you describe being at school? I worry about going to school.**



There were gender differences in all school phases regarding worry about going to school. In all phases, females were more likely to report feeling worried about going to school than males (Figure 28a).

**Previous years:** These gender differences were also observed in previous years. Proportions for male secondary and year 12/FE pupils have stayed relatively constant, while proportions of females feeling worried about going to school have increased for both school phases: secondary (30% in 2017, 39% in 2020, 45% in 2021), year 12/FE (33% in 2017, 37% in 2020, 47% in 2021).

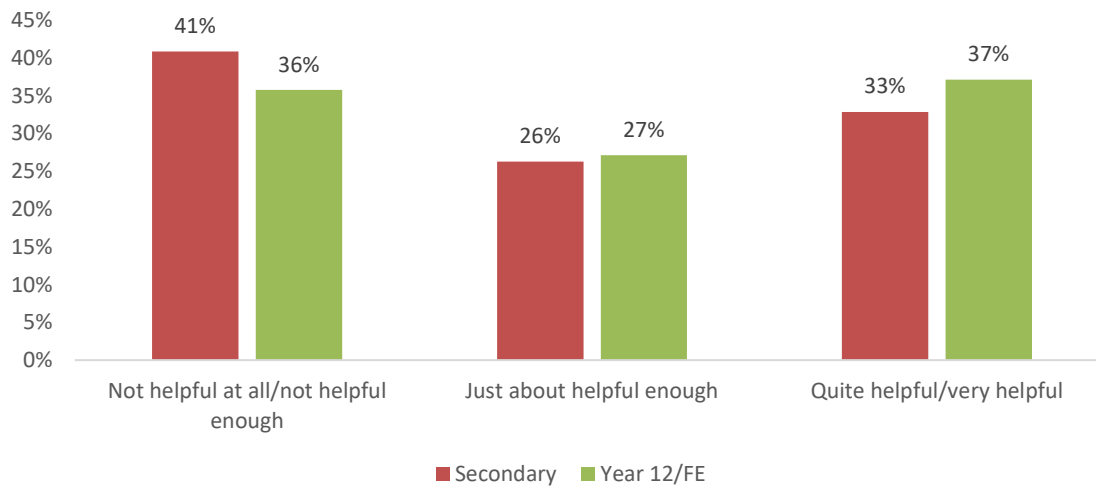
**Figure 28a; Question 4.19: How would you describe being at school? I worry about going to school. Gender.**



Respondents were asked how helpful it was to learn about several items. One of these items was 'handling your feelings' (Figure 29). This question was not asked of the primary school pupils. 41% of secondary children and 36% of year 12/FE children felt that the education they received on handling their feelings was not helpful or of no help. It is unclear from the survey whether this is due to the content or quality of education or whether respondents felt they did not need help regarding ways to handle feelings. A larger proportion of females reported that they did not receive enough help compared to males in both school phases.

**Previous years:** The 2017 survey presented very similar results. In 2020, proportions were slightly different for those reporting that they had not found it very helpful to learn about handling their feelings (34% secondary, 40% year 12/FE).

**Figure 29; Question 4.20: How helpful have you found it to learn about the things listed below: Handling your feelings?**



## Self-harm

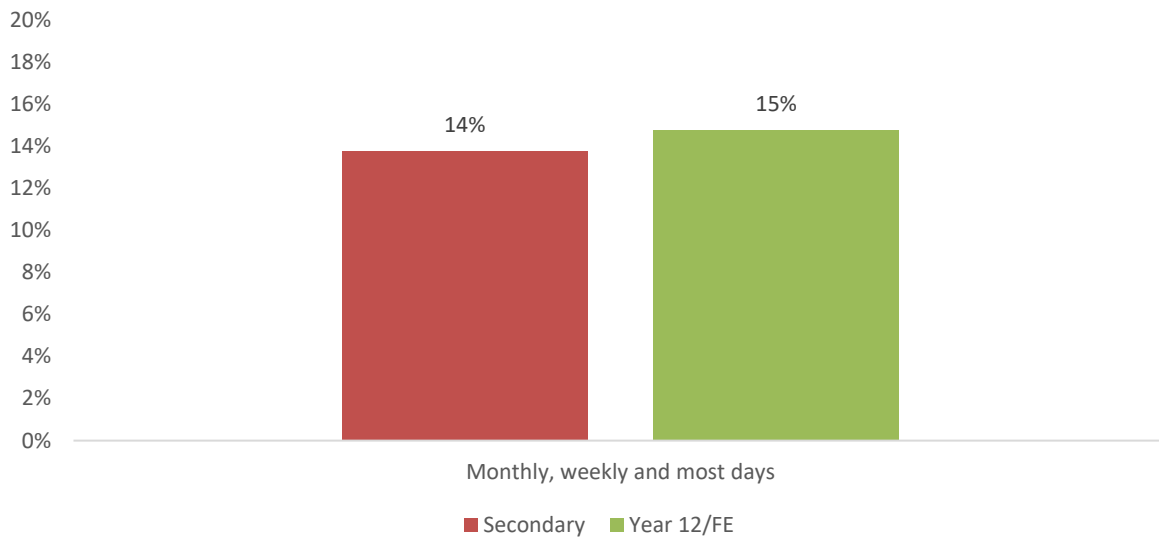
In 2021, 29% of year 12/FE respondents and 24% of secondary respondents reported that they had ever self-harmed or deliberately taken an overdose. Females were much more likely to report ever self-harming compared to males. Proportions in both school phases were slightly lower in 2017 (18% secondary, 26% year 12/FE).

14% of secondary school respondents and 15% of year 12/FE respondents reported self-harming monthly, weekly or daily in 2021 (Figure 30).

**Previous years:** These proportions were slightly lower in 2020 (9% secondary, 13% year 12/FE) and 2017 (10% secondary, 12% year 12/FE). Increases were predominantly noticeable for year 8 pupils when splitting the secondary phase into year groups (9% in 2017, 7% in 2020 up to 14% in 2021).

### Figure 30; Question 5.48. Have you ever self-harmed? (Frequency)

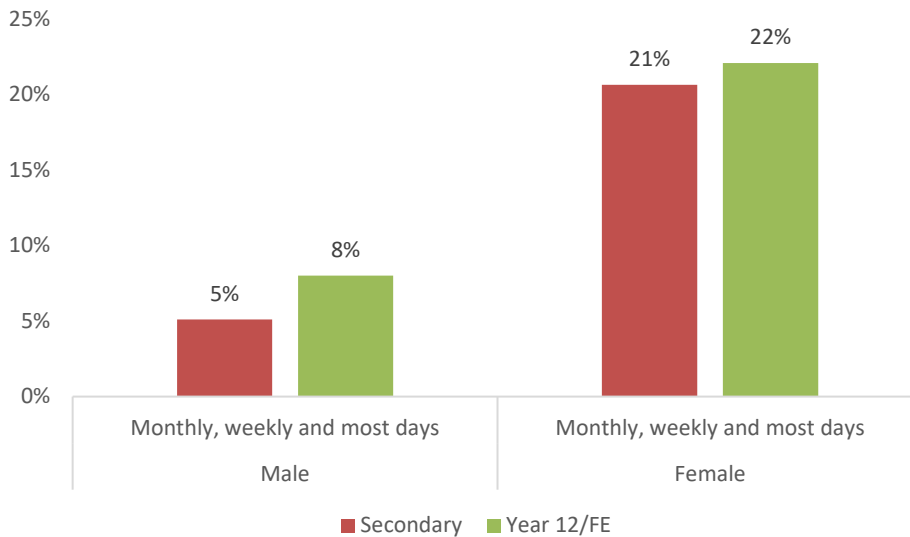
**Response: Monthly, weekly, daily.**



A larger proportion of female respondents reported self-harming monthly, weekly, or daily in both school phases (Figure 30a).

**Previous years:** These gender differences were apparent in 2020 and 2017. The proportion of female secondary pupils reporting self-harming often has increased since 2020 and 2017 (14% in 2017 and 12% in 2020).

**Figure 30a; Question 5.48. Have you ever self-harmed? (Frequency) Gender.**  
**Response: Monthly, weekly, daily.**

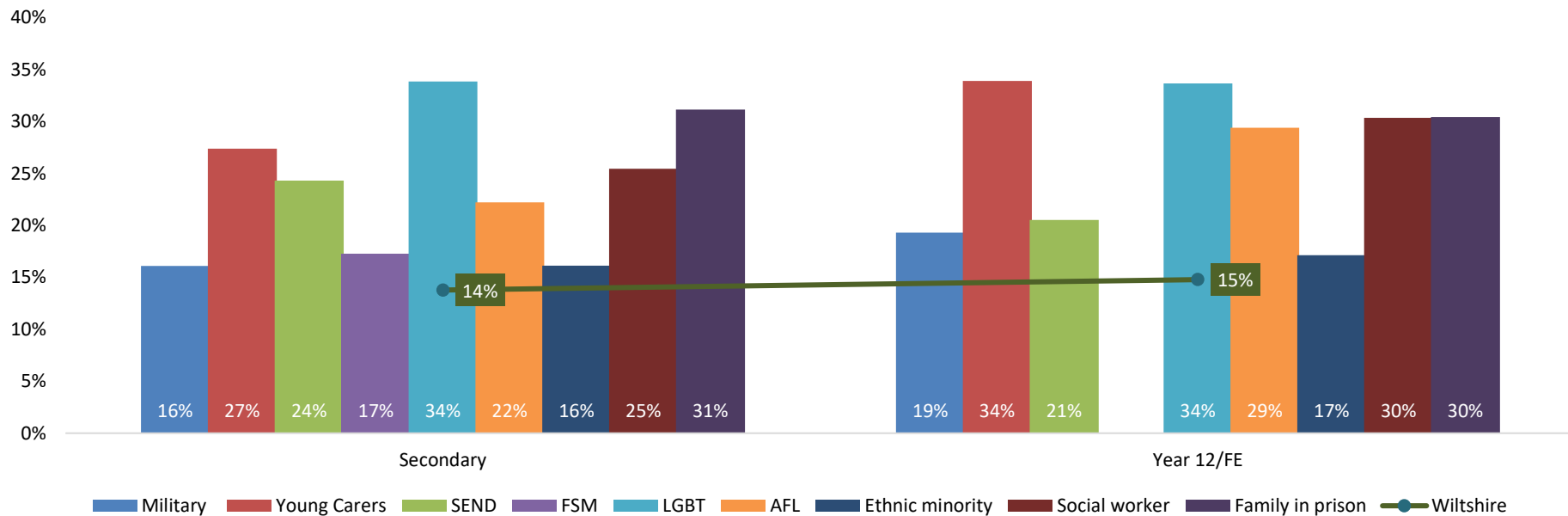




Proportions of those identifying with the vulnerable groups reporting self-harming monthly, weekly, or daily were much higher in all groups in both school phases when compared to the Wiltshire proportion (Figure 30b). Proportions were particularly high in secondary LGBT children and year 12/FE LGBT children and young carers.

**Figure 30b; Question 5.48. Have you ever self-harmed? (Frequency) \***

**Response: Monthly, weekly, daily.**

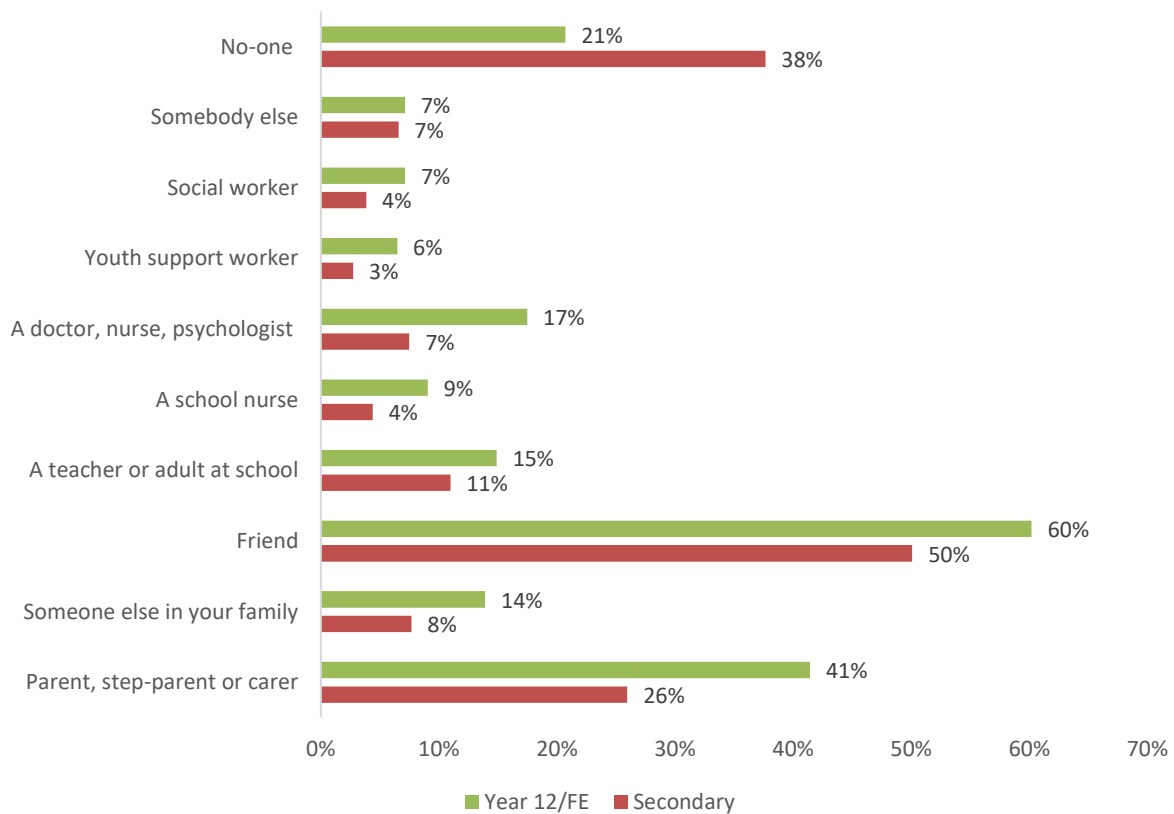


\*Year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.

Of those who reported having self-harmed or overdosed, approximately 62% of the secondary school sample and 79% of the year 12/FE school sample told some-one about it. Figure 31 shows that in both school phases, students were most likely to tell a friend about their self-harm or overdose. There is very little difference between genders in the secondary school phases, apart from the fact that more females told a friend than males (52% female, 44% male) and males were slightly more likely to tell no one. In the year 12/FE phase, there were some gender differences with more males reporting telling no one (30%) compared to females (17%).

**Previous years:** Proportions of those who have told someone about their self-harm or overdose have decreased for both school phases: secondary (2017 78% in 2020, 62% in 2021), year 12/FE (89% in 2020 and 79% in 2021). The same gender pattern was observed in previous years.

**Figure 31; Question 9.07: Have you ever told anyone about your self-harm/overdose? \***



\*Respondents could select multiple options.

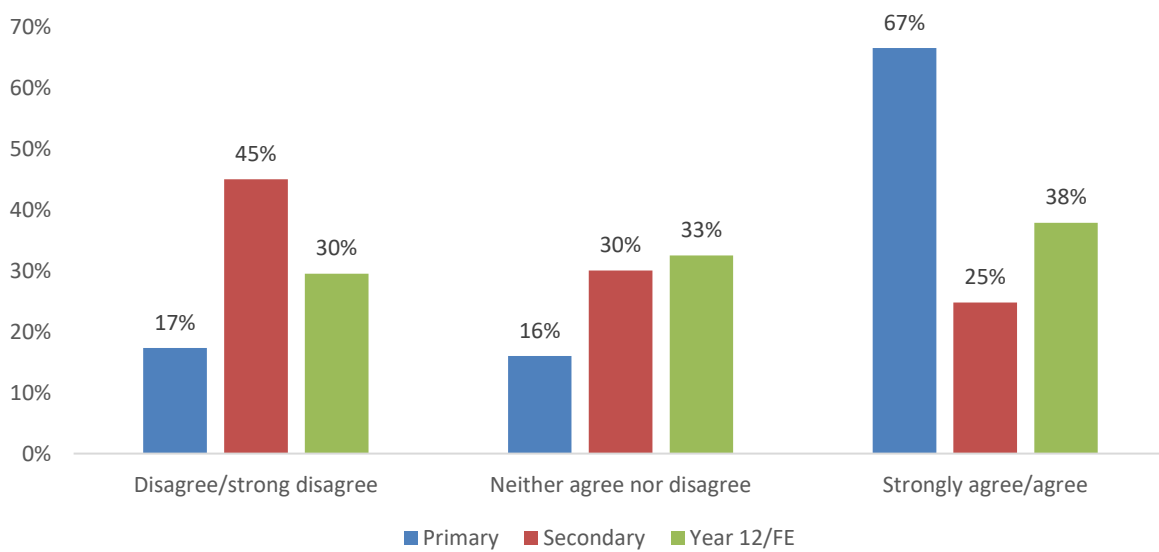


## Mental Health Support

Pupils were asked how much help with emotional support they get at school. 67% of primary children agreed that they get enough help (Figure 32). This proportion dropped significantly to 25% for secondary school pupils and 38% for year 12/FE pupils. In all school phases, males were slightly more likely to agree that they got enough emotional support at school.

**Previous years:** This question was not asked in 2017. Proportions for primary and year 12/E pupils were the same in 2020. For secondary school pupils, a higher proportion agreed that they got enough help at school with emotional support in 2020 (31%).

**Figure 32. Q4.19.23. How would you describe being at your school? I get enough help at school with emotional support.**

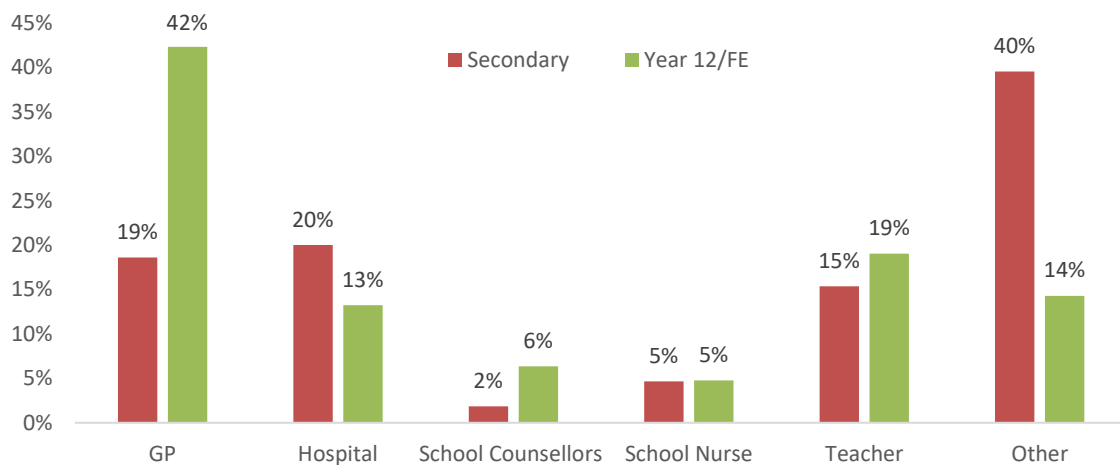


A series of questions were asked around mental health support access and availability for pupils. These questions were only introduced in the 2020 survey and were not asked to primary school children. In 2021, 12% of secondary school pupils and 21% of year 12/FE pupils reported using a child or adolescent mental health service. There was a gender difference in the responses with a slightly larger proportion of females in secondary phase and a much larger proportion of females in year 12/FE school phase reported using child or adolescent mental health service as compared to males (88% male vs 70% female).

Pupils were also asked how they first accessed the services. In 2021, most secondary school pupils reported accessing service through 'other' (40%) means (Figure 33). For year 12/FE pupils, most reported accessing mental health services through the GP (42%) and this was more likely among females compared to males.

**Previous years:** Similar patterns were found in the 2020 survey results.

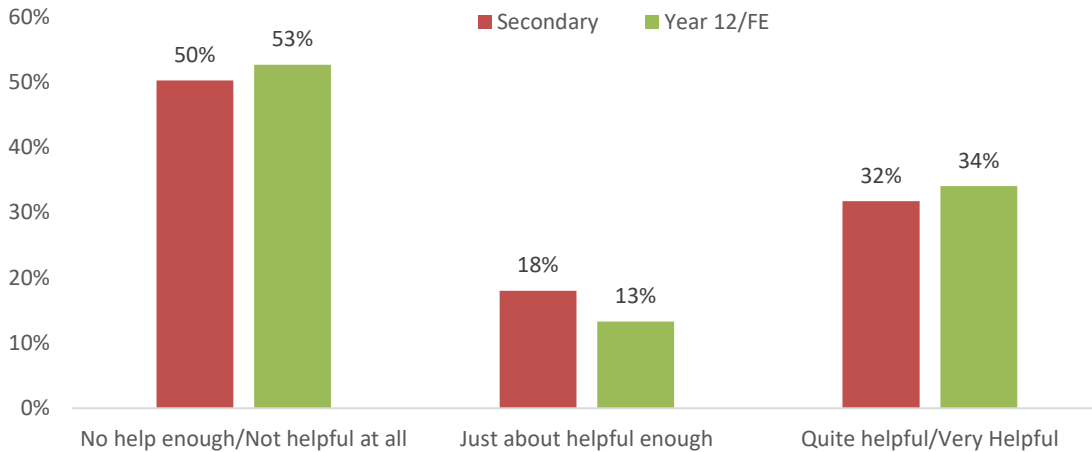
**Figure 33; Question 9.30: How did you first access the service?**



Pupils were asked how helpful they found the services. In 2021, 32% of secondary school pupils reported they found it very helpful, and 34% of year 12/FE pupils reported they found the services quite helpful or very helpful (Figure 34).

**Previous years:** In the 2020 survey, the results are similar, however, secondary pupils finding the service helpful has decreased since 2020 (43% to 32%).

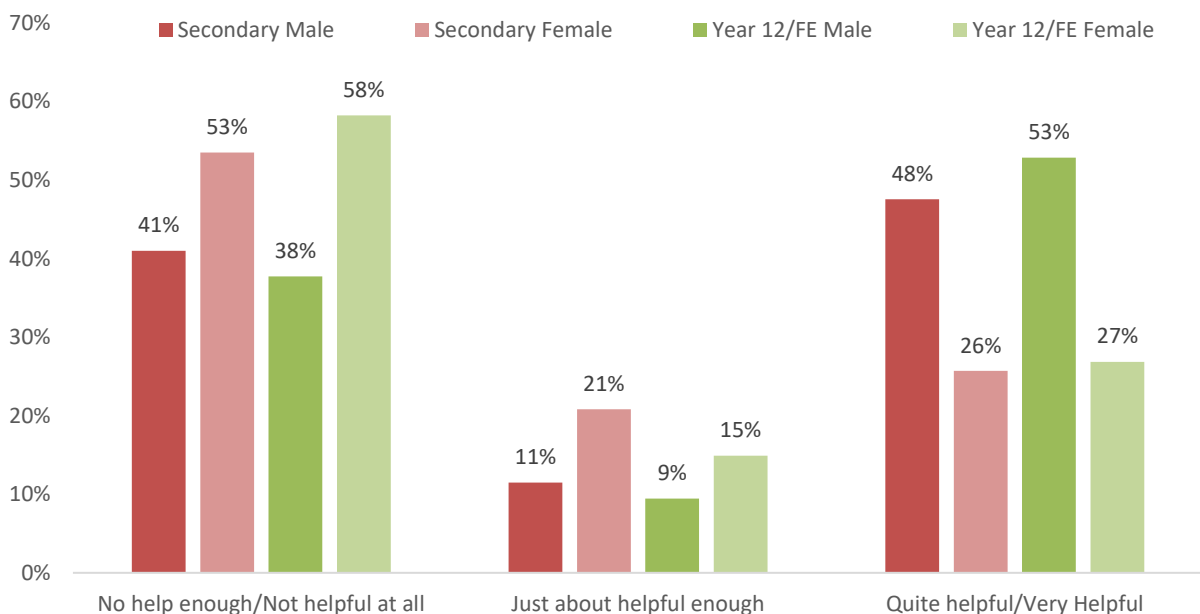
**Figure 34; Question 9.31: How helpful was the service?**



When comparing genders, in 2021, males in both secondary and year 12/FE phases reported finding the service more helpful as compared to females (Figure 34a).

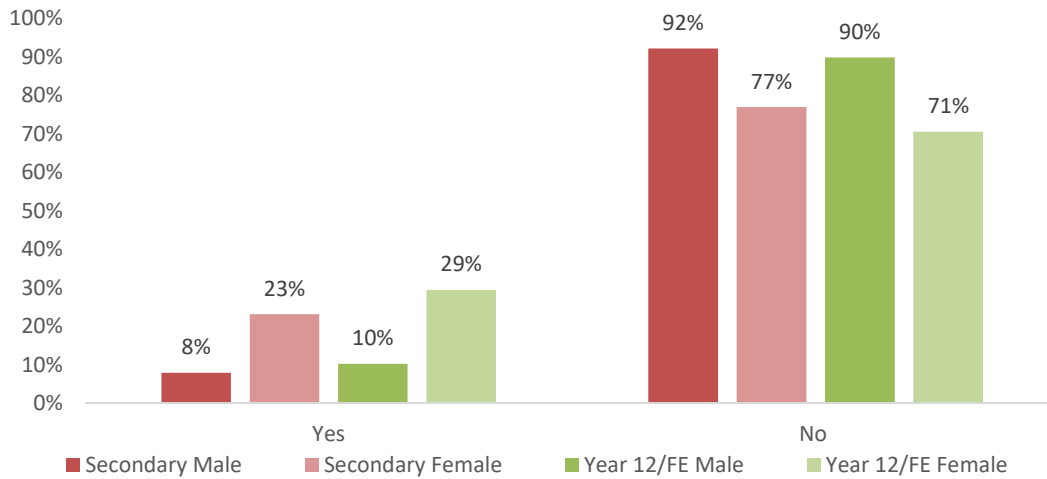
**Previous years:** The patterns were similar in the 2020 survey. There was an increase in the proportion of secondary males finding the service helpful from 33% in the 2020 survey to 48% in the 2021 survey.

**Figure 34a; Question 9.31: How helpful was the service?**



Pupils were asked whether they felt they could benefit from using mental health services. 16% from the secondary school and 19% from the year 12/FE pupils reported benefiting from using mental health services. This was similar to 2020 survey results. A higher proportion of females reported that they would benefit from mental health services as compared to males (Figure 35).

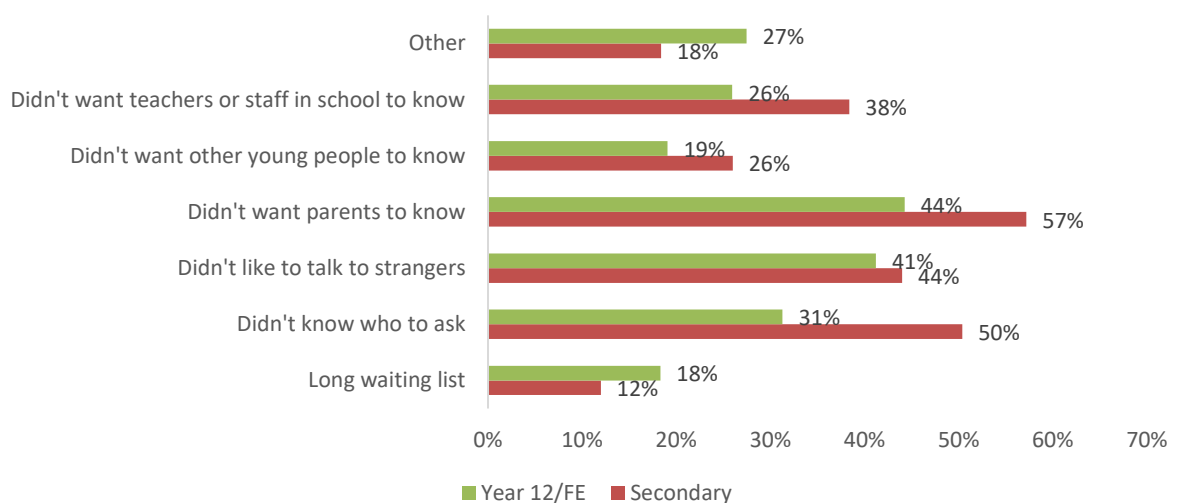
**Figure 35; Question 9.32: Have you ever felt that you could have benefited from using mental health services? Gender.**



Pupils who answered yes to the previous question were asked what prevented them accessing mental health services (Figure 36). In 2021, in both secondary and year 12/FE phases, most pupils reported that they didn't want their parents to know (57% and 44% respectively) and they didn't know who to ask (50% and 31%).

**Previous years:** Similar patterns were found in the 2020 school survey.

**Figure 36; Question 9.33: What prevented you from accessing a mental health service? \***

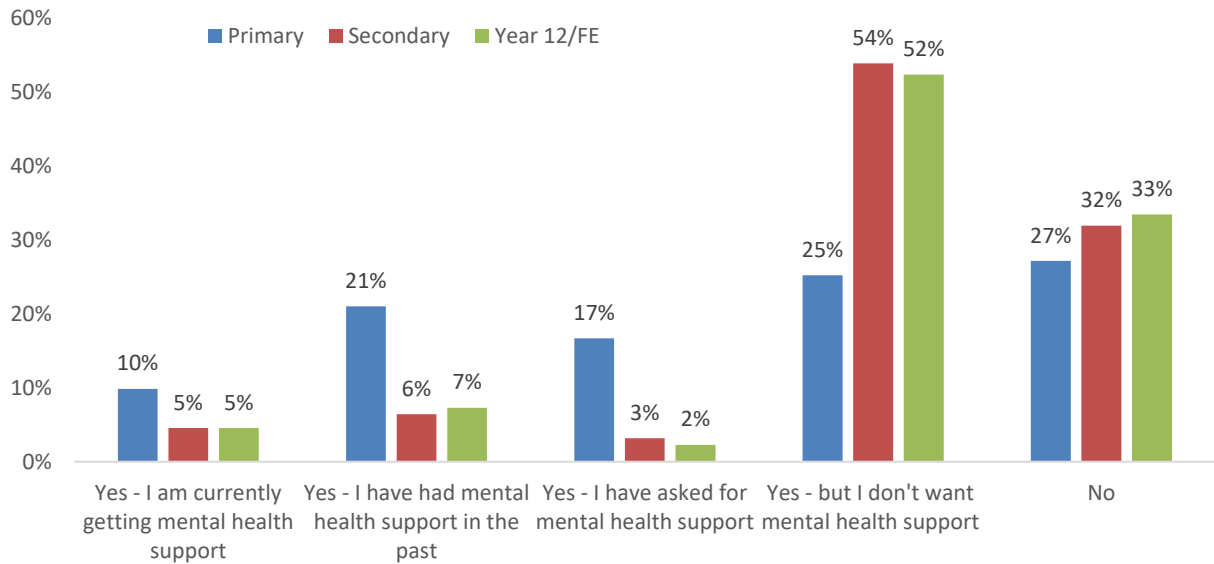


\*Respondents could select multiple options

In 2021, pupils were asked whether they know who provides mental health support in school (Figure 37). 27%-33% reported they do not know where to seek mental health support from.

**Previous years:** Similar patterns were found in the 2020 school survey.

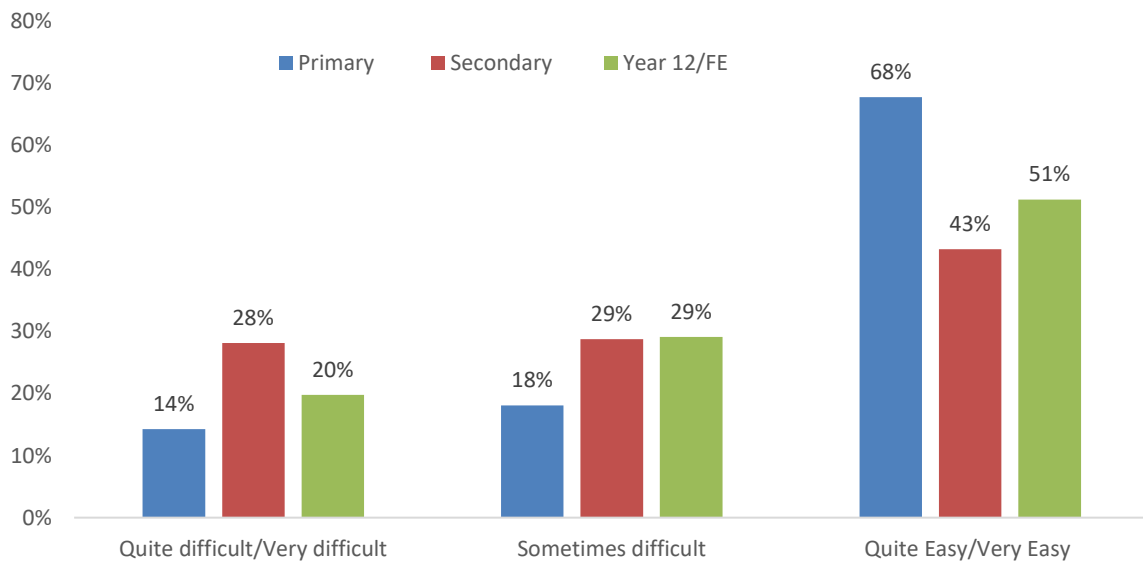
**Figure 37; Question 9.34: Do you know who provides mental health support in your school?**



Pupils were also asked if they can easily access mental health support at school (Figure 38). 68% of primary school pupils, 43% from secondary school and 51% reported they found it quite easy or very easy reported that its easy to access mental health support. When comparing genders, males found it easier to access mental health support at school as compared to females.

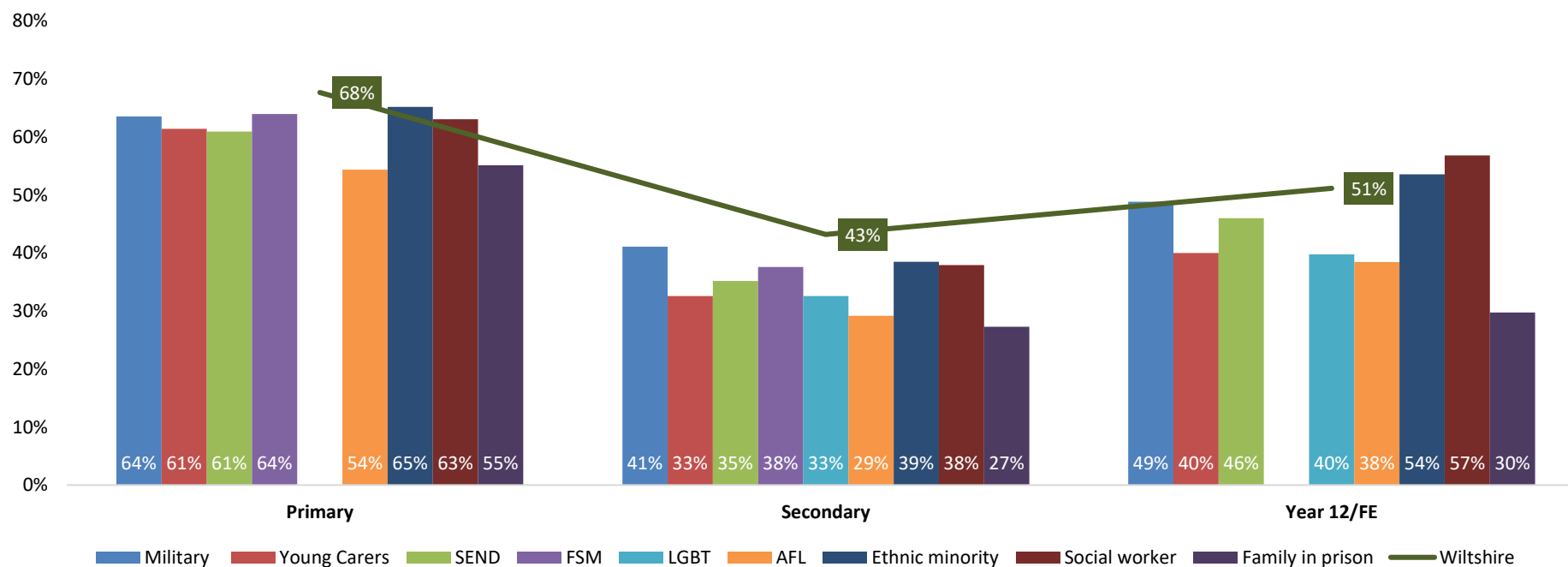
**Previous years:** These figures are relatively similar to 2020, though have dropped by 4% for secondary pupils (47% in 2020). This question was not asked in 2017.

**Figure 38; Question 9.35: Is it easy to access mental health support at school?**



Statistically significantly lower proportions of children identifying with the vulnerable groups reported that they could access mental health support easily at school when compared to the Wiltshire proportion (Figure 38a). This was the case for most of the groups, though there were some exceptions to this: secondary and year 12/FE military children, year 12/FE ethnic minority children and children with a social worker in the year 12/FE school phase.

**Figure 38a; Question 9.35: Is it easy to access mental health support at school? Vulnerable Groups. \***  
**Response: Quite easy or very easy.**



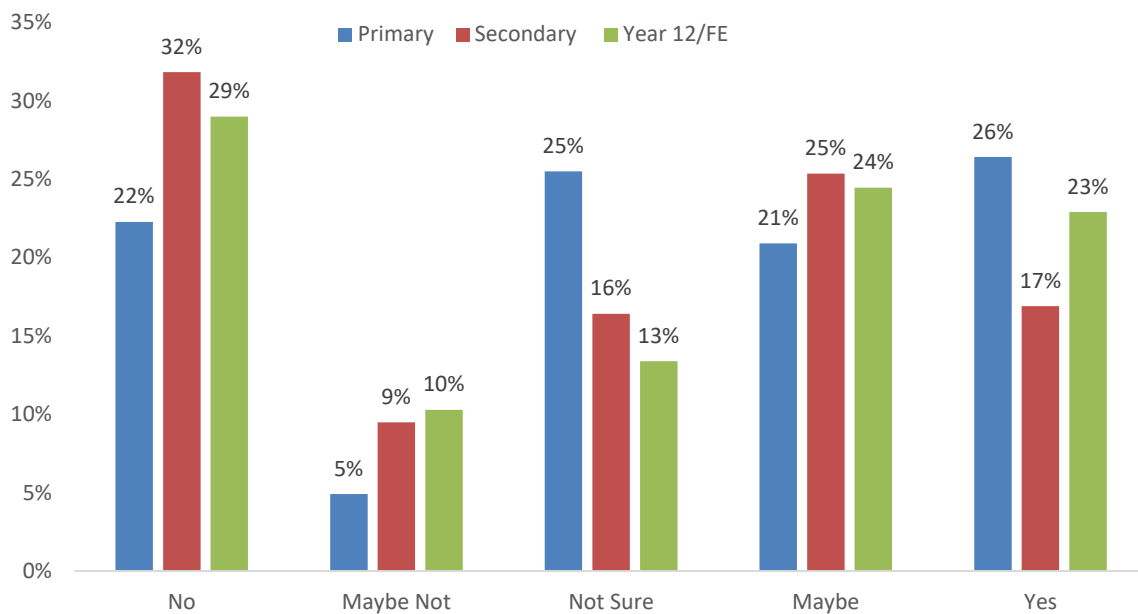
\*Primary school children were not asked for their sexual orientation and year 12/FE students were not asked if they were in receipt of free school meals. The AFL group in all school phases represents a small sample and caution should be used in interpreting the results.



Pupils were asked if they would go to the mental health worker at school if they needed mental health support (Figure 39). In 2021, 26% of primary school pupils, 17% of secondary school pupils and 23% of year 12/FE school pupils reported they would go to the mental health worker at school. In the secondary school phase, more males reported that they would go to the mental health worker at school as compared to females. Whereas for year 12/FE pupils the opposite was true, with more females reporting that they would get support from mental health worker at school. In the primary school phase, there were no gender differences.

**Previous years:** The results were like the 2020 school survey.

**Figure 39; Question 9.36: If you felt you needed mental health support, would you go to the Mental Health worker at school?**



## Support and knowledge

When asked whether there was anything the respondents felt they needed to know more about, 20% of secondary and 16% of year 12/FE pupils wanted more support about relationships and friendships. 11% of year 12/FE students and 19% of secondary school students wanted more support or knowledge with regards to self-harm. 23% of year 12/FE and 29% of secondary school respondents reported they wished to know more about stress management. Less respondents wanted to know more about anger management (12% year 12/FE, 19% secondary). Respondents could pick multiple options.

## Next steps

The data from this report will help schools to identify areas for improvement and address issues that were raised by their own pupils and will provide evidence to influence future services provided by Wiltshire Council and partners to improve the health and wellbeing of our children and young people. If you wish to discuss the data in this report or the other Wiltshire Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey reports please contact the Public Health Team at Wiltshire Council: [publichealth@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:publichealth@wiltshire.gov.uk)

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank schools who took part in the 2021 survey (May to July) and the 2020 survey (January to March), particularly the staff that organised its administration and all the pupils who gave up their time to provide information. A list of schools who participated can be found at the end of the Overview report on the Wiltshire Intelligence website: [School Health Survey - Wiltshire Intelligence](#)

### Report prepared by

Wiltshire Council Public Health Intelligence Team in partnership with Local Authority colleagues.

## Appendix

**Table A. Primary schools involved in the 2021 survey: FSM eligibility and school ranking based on summer 2021 school census data**

School	Proportion of pupils eligible and claiming FSM	Rank out of all Wiltshire primary schools (203)
River Mead School	58.62%	1
Studley Green Primary School	47.87%	4
Longford CofE (VC) Primary School	44.73%	5
Corsham Regis Primary Academy	37.58%	10
St Martin's CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School	36.49%	12
Holbrook Primary School	26.58%	27
Old Sarum Primary School	24.69%	29
Five Lanes Primary	24.66%	30
Ludgershall Castle Primary School	23.10%	34
Saint Edmund's Roman Catholic Academy Calne	22.73%	35
St Peter's Church of England Academy, Chippenham	22.58%	36
Bellefield Primary and Nursery School	21.92%	37
Fynamore Primary School	20.54%	42
Amesbury Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	20.27%	44
Redland Primary School	18.39%	50
Fitzmaurice Primary School	18.15%	51
Staverton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School	18.15%	52
St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School Wootton Bassett	17.80%	56
Westbury Leigh CofE Primary School	17.24%	59
Grove Primary School (The)	17.11%	60
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School Malmesbury	16.66%	62
Nursteed Primary School	15.46%	73
Greentrees Primary School	14.39%	80
Wansdyke Community School	14.10%	82
Sutton Benger Church of England Aided Primary School	12.35%	95
Forest & Sandridge Church of England Primary School	12.32%	98
Queen's Crescent School	11.74%	100
St George's Catholic Primary School, Warminster	11.11%	103
Dinton CofE Primary School	10.98%	106
Bowerhill Primary School	10.97%	107
St John's Catholic Primary School Trowbridge	10.35%	112
St Andrew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School Laverstock	10.14%	114
Malmesbury Church of England Primary School	9.43%	118

<b>Cherhill C of E Primary School</b>	9.36%	120
<b>Clarendon Junior School</b>	9.29%	121
<b>Pitton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School</b>	9.09%	124
<b>Coombe Bissett Church of England Primary School</b>	8.85%	125
<b>Brinkworth Earl Danby's Church of England Primary School</b>	8.07%	138
<b>Neston Primary School</b>	7.46%	140
<b>Langley Fitzurse Church of England Primary School</b>	7.44%	141
<b>Kington St Michael Church of England Primary School</b>	7.35%	145
<b>Aldbury &amp; West Grimstead Church of England Primary School</b>	7.22%	146
<b>Hilmarton Primary School</b>	7.14%	147
<b>St Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Porton</b>	7.04%	148
<b>St Nicholas Church of England VC Primary School Bromham</b>	6.81%	151
<b>Winterslow Church of England Aided Primary School</b>	6.70%	153
<b>Holt Voluntary Controlled Primary School</b>	6.33%	156
<b>Great Bedwyn Church of England School</b>	6.00%	161
<b>North Bradley CofE Primary School</b>	5.55%	168
<b>Woodford Valley CE Primary Academy</b>	5.26%	171
<b>Bulford St Leonard's CE (VA) Primary School</b>	5.00%	176
<b>Dauntsey's Academy Primary School</b>	4.62%	178
<b>Crudwell CofE Primary School</b>	4.03%	186
<b>Christ Church Church of England Controlled Primary School</b>	3.37%	190
<b>Winterbourne Earls Church of England Primary School</b>	3.19%	191
<b>Colerne CofE Primary School</b>	3.08%	194
<b>Stanton St Quintin Primary School</b>	2.94%	195
<b>Baydon St Nicholas Church of England Primary School</b>	2.83%	197
<b>Box Church of England Primary School</b>	2.38%	199
<b>Newton Tony Church of England Voluntary Controlled School</b>	1.20%	203

Source: Summer term school census 2021.

**Table B. Secondary schools involved in the 2021 survey: FSM eligibility and school ranking based on summer 2021 school census data**

School	Proportion of pupils eligible and claiming FSM	Rank out of all Wiltshire secondary schools (30)
Abbeyfield School	15.22%	10
Wyvern College	14.75%	11
Wellington Academy (The)	12.38%	15
Bradon Forest School	11.17%	18
Royal Wootton Bassett Academy	9.46%	22
Hardenhuish School	7.87%	24
St Laurence School	7.63%	25
South Wilts Grammar School	2.16%	30

Source: Summer term school census 2021.