

Briefing note – Croydon Health and Wellbeing Schools' Survey (2022/23)

Introduction

This briefing gives a high-level summary of the first Health and Wellbeing Survey for pupils in Croydon (2022/23).

The survey was funded by the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) from the Department of Health and Social Care, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

This survey is the first of five to run over the next decade. This is the first time that Croydon has committed to collecting data over ten years to monitor trends in children and young people's health and wellbeing.

Methodology

An anonymous online survey was conducted by Insight Now and Croydon Council's public health team aimed at Croydon pupils across school years 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. Data was collected between November 2022 and January 2023.

The survey questions covered a range of topics that affect the lives of children and adolescents in the borough. These included diet, exercise, mental health, relationships, family life and overall wellbeing. For pupils in years 8, 10 and 12, there were also questions about their sexual health, and their use of drugs and alcohol.

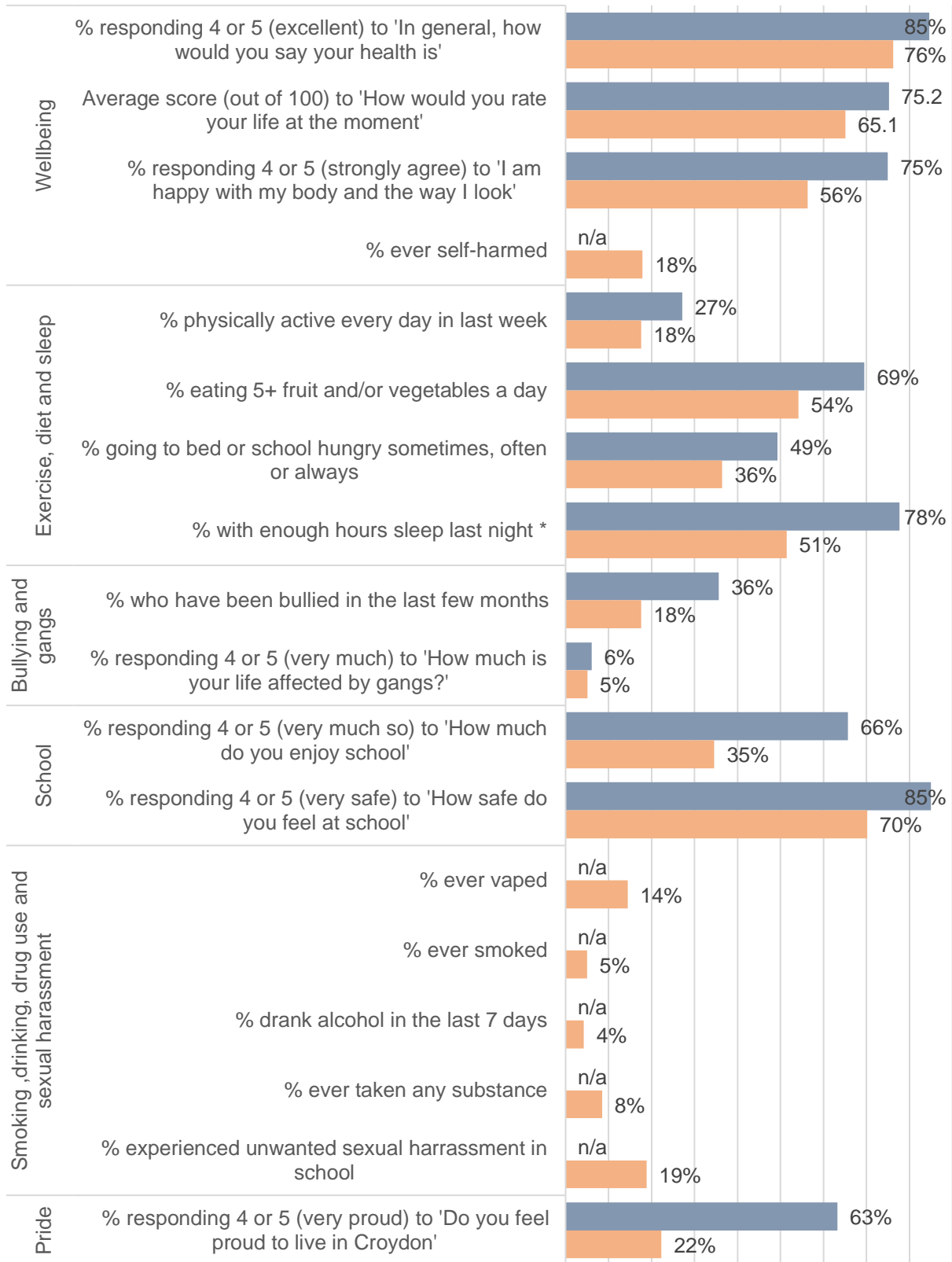
Results

A total of **4,116 pupils** in the appropriate school years completed the survey (18% of the eligible pupil population). 58 schools with pupils in the eligible years had one or more pupils submit a survey response, with varying degrees of uptake within each school (43% of all eligible schools in Croydon).

Almost three quarters of responses came from year 4 and 6 pupils (compared to around 47% of all pupils across Croydon coming from these year groups) - this represents a significant skew in the results. However, in both state-funded primary schools and secondary schools, responses were received across all eligible ages, sexes, and ethnic groups, meaning the sample is broadly representative of the pupil population in Croydon as a whole.

A summary figure of key findings is shown below, with results shown separately for primary school-aged and secondary school-aged pupils. Where primary school-aged pupils results show 'n/a' (not applicable), this is because those questions were not age-appropriate for primary school-aged pupils, and so were only asked to those in Years 8, 10 and 12:

■ Primary school-aged pupils ■ Secondary school-aged pupils



* (8+ hours for primary school aged pupils, 8-11 hours for secondary school aged pupils)

Some results cannot easily be represented in the summary table above, including the top self-reported worries of pupils. **The top worry of pupils across all year groups was knife crime, followed by terrorism.** Primary school-aged pupils then reported worrying most frequently about wars, bullying and gangs, whilst secondary school-aged pupils reported worrying most frequently about gangs, wars, and schoolwork/exams.

Additional key findings are presented within a comprehensive results report that will shortly be published on the Croydon Observatory.

Cautionary Notes

It is important to note that this survey contains self-reported information and views from pupils in Croydon. Further work is required to fully understand some of the results and how questions have been interpreted and answered.

Response rates to each question varied, from under 50% to over 90%. There may be several reasons why pupils chose not to answer certain questions – including being unclear about what the question was asking, fear of reporting, lack of interest, survey fatigue – and it is hoped that discussions with pupils about why they did or did not answer specific questions can be explored in the next phase of this work.

Next Steps

A programme of work is being delivered on in 2023/24 following the publication of the results of the survey.

- A programme of engagement with pupils and school staff colleagues will begin, to help understand the answers given to several of the questions (including, but not limited to, the series of questions on gangs (with a focus on understanding how pupils define a “gang”); and to co-design the next survey (reviewing the number of questions; identifying priority issues)
- Schools have received individual information packs containing results for their own pupils compared to the rest of Croydon. Schools are being supported by the Education Advisors for Health & Wellbeing, and the council’s public health team, to interpret their data packs and plan activities to address priority improvement areas.
- A series of further analyses will be conducted over the next year by the public health team. There will be a rolling programme of “in focus” reports published during the 2023/24 academic year that will each consider a health and wellbeing theme within the survey and analyse the findings in each area in detail, looking at any significant inequalities.
- The next survey is scheduled to take place in the autumn school term in 2024 (October-December 2024). The public health team will be working with schools to increase uptake of the survey, particularly among secondary school-aged pupils, and in special, independent, and home school settings.

The long-term ambition is to track the results of the survey over the next 10-year period, to understand how pupils’ health and wellbeing in Croydon changes, and where they may need additional support.