



<b>SUBJECT:</b>	The School Health Research Network (SHRN) Student Health and Wellbeing Survey
<b>MEETING:</b>	Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2026
<b>DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:</b> All	

## 1. PURPOSE

Following the meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2025 Performance and Overview Scrutiny Committee Members requested further information in relation to the School Health Research Network (SHRN) student health and wellbeing survey and insights into how the data is utilised in Monmouthshire.

## 2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The School Health Research Network (SHRN) is Wales' national, biennial school health surveillance and improvement system that engages all maintained secondary schools in Wales and is expanding across primary. Founded in 2013, it is a policy practice research partnership between Welsh Government, Public Health Wales and Cardiff University that provides robust pupil reported, school level data to participating schools across Wales.<sup>1</sup>

2.2 Pupil participation is voluntary and all data is anonymised. Parents / carers receive survey information that emphasizes confidentiality and the option to skip survey questions. At a national level data is used as part of research and data-linkage processes allow anonymous linkage for approved research, enabling longitudinal insights.

### 2.3 Secondary Schools

At Local Authority (LA) level, Public Health Wales (PHW) now provides an interactive dashboard <sup>2</sup> with national and LA secondary school data and a 2017–2023 time series across the following health topics:

- Physical Activity and Diet
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Substance Use and Gambling

<sup>1</sup> [School Health Research Network](#)

<sup>2</sup> [SHRN Data Dashboard - Public Health Wales](#)

- Sex and Relationships
- School Life
- Friendships and Bullying
- General Health

Since 2023, the dashboard has replaced the national reports for secondary school data at LA and National levels.

## 2.4 Primary Schools

Since 2021, the survey has extended into primary schools for pupils in years 3 – 6. National findings from The SHRN Student Health and Well-being Surveys in Primary Schools can be found on the SHRN website <sup>3</sup>. 50,000 pupils across Wales participated in 2024 survey. LA level data is available via a report and participating schools receive their own individual data report.

Primary School Reports include data on the following health topics:

- Health Protective Behaviours
- Vaping
- Emotional and Mental Well-being
- School Connectedness
- School Transition
- Bullying
- Screen Use and Social Media

## 3. HOW SHRN IS USED IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

### 3.1 Participation Rates

- All 4 secondary schools are fully engaged and participating. ≥80% pupils participation in 2023
- 27 out of 30 primary schools participated in the 2024 survey (1 school was not eligible)
- The survey is currently not available for students attending Pupil Referral Units

### 3.2 Schools

School wellbeing leads analysis their SHRN data to identify key areas for development. Secondary schools track their SHRN data over previous surveys from 2017 to present. Through analysis schools:

- develop action plans
- review curriculum planning
- develop whole school actions
- review relevant policies

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<sup>3</sup> [National Data and Reports - The School Health Research Network](#)

**Secondary School Example** – An overview of one secondary school's response to their 2023 SHRN survey.

#### **Curriculum Review to Include:**

- resilience, positive psychology, and emotional regulation, stress management strategies and mindfulness techniques.
- targeted lessons on sleep hygiene, the impact of screen time, and healthy digital habits.
- ensured learning around healthy friendships, digital citizenship, and the importance of offline social interaction is embedded.

#### **Whole School Action to Promote Wellbeing and Positive Relationships**

- Implemented weekly tutor time check-ins and wellbeing journals to help students reflect on their emotional wellbeing.
- Launched a staff training programme on active listening and trauma-informed approaches to enhance student-staff relationships.
- Refreshed our Anti-Bullying Policy, with a specific focus on digital behaviours; composed with our Student Equity group.

#### **Student Engagement**

- Established a Student Leadership Team that meets fortnightly to feed into policy and curriculum planning, ensuring learners feel heard and valued.
- Recruited designated Sixth Form Wellbeing Ambassadors to act as a peer liaison for support.
- Promoted peer-led initiatives, including "buddy schemes" and safe online interaction workshops.

#### **Working with Families**

- Collaborated with parents through newsletters and information evenings about setting boundaries around devices and sleep routines.

#### **Impact**

- Termly student surveys show increased positive self-reporting on happiness, feeling safe and confidence levels.

### **3.3 Cluster Level**

Cluster School Wellbeing Leads share their SHRN priorities to identify collaborative areas for development and share effective practice. Regular meetings and structured reflection help well-being leads interrogate reports, triangulate with other school level evidence to embed priorities within action plans / school development plans.

## Cluster Example - Promoting Physical Activity and Reducing Sedentary Behaviour

### Issue Identified

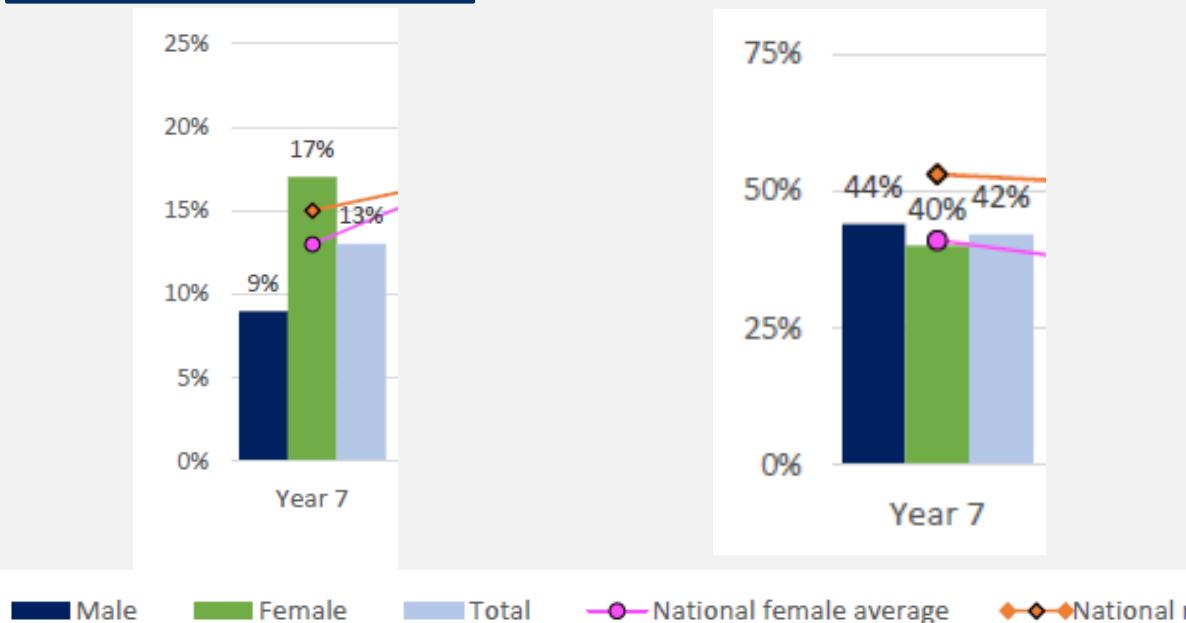
SHRN data revealed a decline in physical activity levels, particularly among girls, - alongside a rise in sedentary behaviours (any activity involving low energy expenditure in a sitting, reclining, or lying posture).

### The SHRN Student Health and Well-being Survey 2023: Local Authority Report for Monmouthshire County Council

#### Food and Fitness: Physical Activity Section

Sedentary Behaviour - Learners who usually spend 7 or more hours of their free time on a

Outside School Hours - Learners who exercise vigorously outside of school time at least four times a week.



### Actions Implemented:

- **Collaboration** with local sports development officers to compile and distribute lists of local clubs and activities.
- **Promotion of after-school physical activity** through cluster-wide sports events and friendly competitions.
- **Integrated physical activity planning** into the annual school calendar to ensure consistent delivery.

## Impact:

- **Increased learner participation** in physical activities across the cluster.
- **Strengthened partnerships with local sports providers**, enhancing community engagement and access to opportunities.

A case study of Monmouthshire's approach to using SHRN data is available from the SHRH website [here](#).

### 3.4 LA Level

The Wellbeing in Schools Partnership Group works with a range of stakeholders, including school representatives, to co-construct and implement a LA wellbeing action plan for schools. The partnership uses SHRN alongside other evidence to set priorities and coordinate delivery across schools and services.

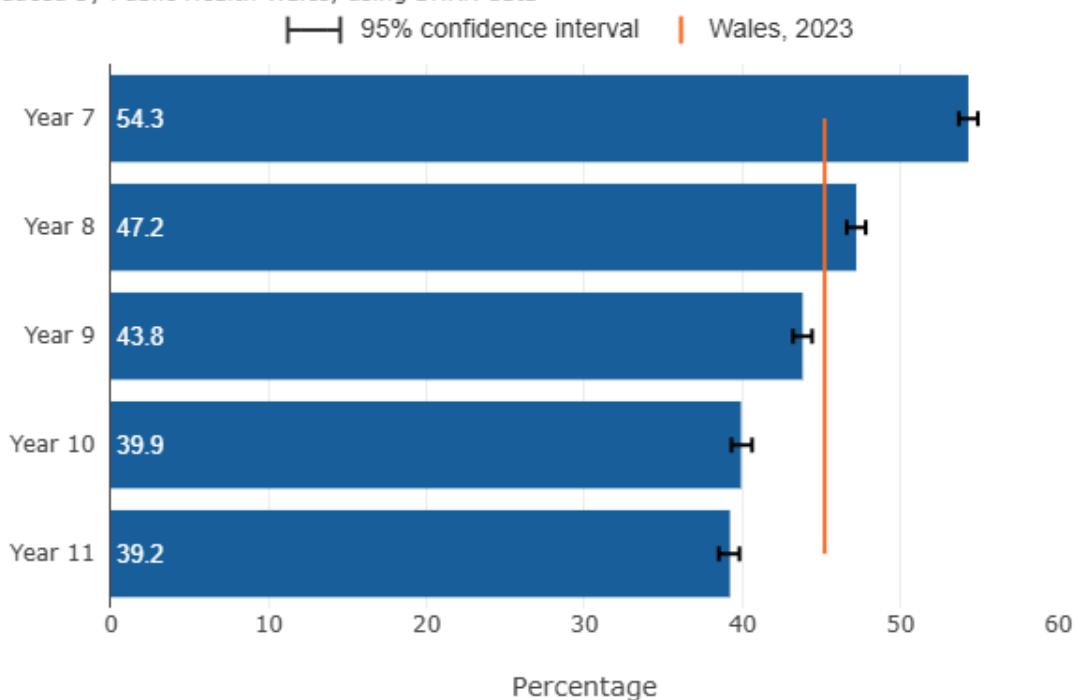
#### LA Example from the Wellbeing in Schools Partnership Group

##### Issue Identified

Analysis of the secondary SHRN 2023 data via the dashboard identified a falling trend in the percentage of Monmouthshire students reporting eating breakfast every week day by age. The data includes 11-16 year olds who answered that five days out of five they have more than a glass of milk or fruit juice for breakfast.

#### Reported eating breakfast every weekday, percentage, persons, aged 11-16, multiple year groups, Wales, 2023

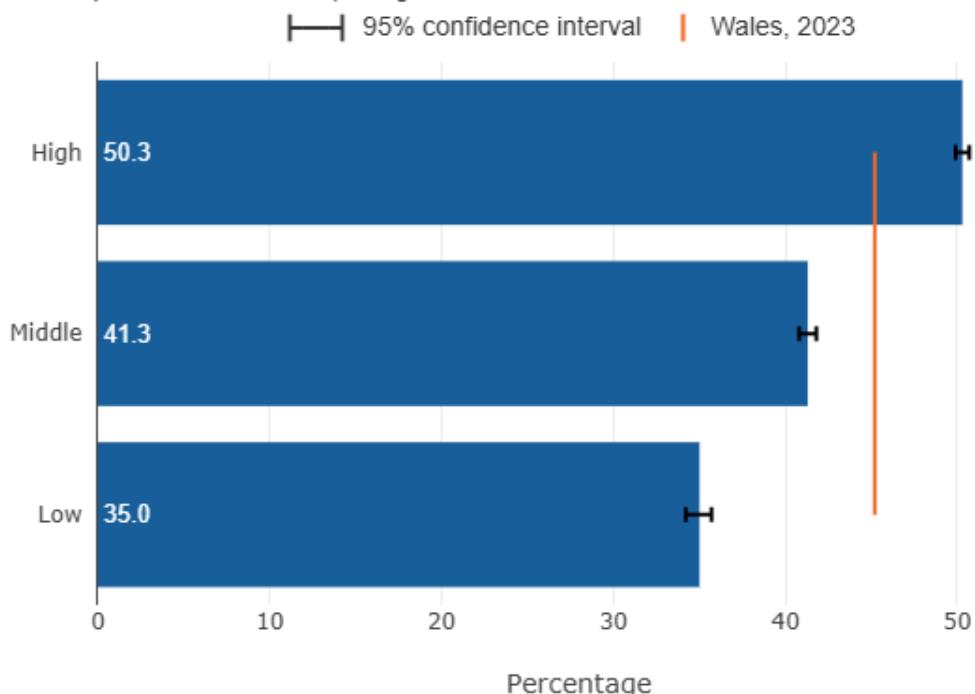
Produced by Public Health Wales, using SHRN data



The SHRN survey also uses the Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Family Affluence Scale (FAS) to estimate young people's socio-economic status. An affluence score result is calculated using five out of the possible six affluence results. Monmouthshire 2023 data also shows a falling trend in the percentage of students eating breakfast on weekday in low affluence families.

### **Reported eating breakfast every weekday, percentage, persons, aged 11-16, low, middle and high Family Affluence Scale (FAS) scores, Wales, 2023**

Produced by Public Health Wales, using SHRN data



#### **Action**

The Wellbeing in School Partnership Group identified a small grant to be utilised by the four secondary schools to provide breakfast provision for vulnerable learners during academic year 2025/6.

#### **Impact**

Initial feedback from schools is positive. An evaluation will be provided at the end of the academic year.

## **4. LINKS TO WELSH POLICY AND INSPECTION**

4.1 SHRN underpins high-priority Welsh policy, including the Whole-School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-being (2021)<sup>4</sup> that sets an expectation that schools and LAs use evidence (like SHRN) for planning and evaluation.

<sup>4</sup> [WG42005](#)

4.2 Estyn emphasises strong participation, share findings with pupils and staff and plan for improvement in priority areas as characteristics of effective schools, reflected in Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupils' health and wellbeing report (2019).<sup>5</sup>

4.3 SHRN provides schools with year and gender level data on a thematic basis and it is important that this is used alongside other qualitative and quantitative pupil level data in order to understand the needs of pupils in their school and to respond to Welsh Policy.

## **5. CHALLENGES**

5.1 Continuing to maintain high levels of engagement by schools when:

- Logistical challenges for secondary school pupils to participate in the survey
- The delay in schools receiving their individual reports after survey completion
- Capacity for school colleagues to interrogate the data, develop and implement actions

5.2 The delay in the primary LA report and capacity for LA colleagues to interrogate data and implement actions.

## **6. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This report is for scrutiny only and does not make any requests for additional resource.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 Endorse the continued use and resourcing of SHRN across schools and clusters; support time for staff engagement with the data; and note the plan to broaden primary participation and strengthen monitoring of impact.

## **8. CONSULTEES**

8.1 CLSE DMT – 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

9.1 See links in document.

## **10. AUTHOR**

Emma Taylor, Healthy Settings Lead

[emmataylor@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:emmataylor@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

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<sup>5</sup> [Healthy and happy – school impact on pupils' health and wellbeing](#)