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# Children's Commissioner for Wales

## Beth Nesa? What Next? 7-11 survey

Detailed findings



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**beth nesa'**  
**what next**

dweud eich dweud  
have your say

## **Introduction**

**This is a report on the survey of children of primary school children conducted in Autumn 2015 as part of the ‘What Next? | Beth Nesa?’ project. The survey was one of a set of four which were conducted with different age groups of children and children, and with adults, gathering views and experiences in order to inform the future priorities of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales.**

## About the survey

### Questionnaire content

The survey consisted of a self-completion questionnaire which was mostly completed by children online via a computer, tablet or mobile. Paper versions of the questionnaire were also available on request. The questionnaire was available in Welsh, English and British Sign Language.

### Means of distributing

Information about the survey, including the links to the online questionnaires, were circulated as widely as possible within Wales. This included sending information to schools, reaching parents through social media, a radio campaign, and web advertisements.

### The sample

A total of 2,909 completed questionnaires were received and are included in this report<sup>1</sup>. Around 9% of responses were completed in Welsh and around 91% in English. The characteristics of these children are shown in Table 1:

- Around 51% of children defined themselves as female, 47% defined themselves as male and around 2% chose the 'prefer not to say' option in response to this question.
- Over a third (35%) of the sample were 10 years of age. The small proportion of children aged 11 is as would be expected given that the survey was undertaken in the first part of the Autumn term.
- Just over half of the children defined themselves as 'White – Welsh' and a further 38% as 'White – English', 'White – British' or 'White – Other'. Around 9% defined themselves as of Black and other minority ethnic backgrounds as summarised in Table 1. This is higher than an ONS estimate of 6% of children aged 0 to 15 of BME origin in Wales in 2009.
- Around 4% of the sample answered 'yes' to the question 'Would you say that you are disabled?'. However 29% were not sure or did not provide a response to this question
- Around 20% of the sample answered 'yes' to the question 'Have you ever been in care?'. This is much higher than the proportion in the general population and it seems very likely that some children misunderstood the meaning of this question.

<sup>1</sup> In total, the online survey was also started an additional 611 times but either these entries were blank or the cases contained

very little data due to the respondent exiting the survey within the first few questions.

**Table 1: Characteristics of the sample (unweighted)**

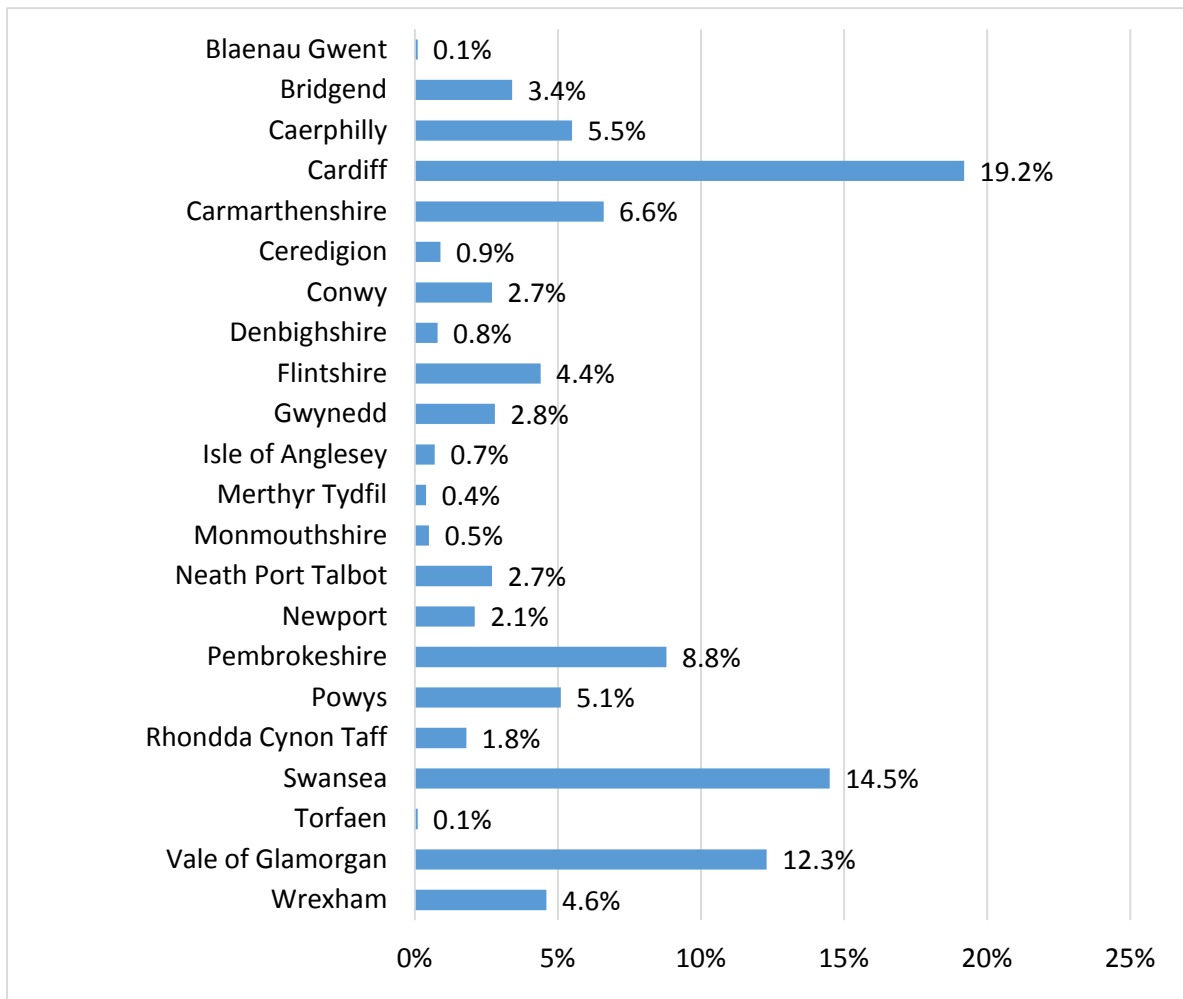
<b>Gender</b>		
	Female	51%
	Male	47%
	Prefer not to say	2%
<b>Age</b>		
	7 years old	15%
	8 years old	20%
	9 years old	22%
	10 years old	35%
	11 years old	8%
<b>Ethnic group</b>		
	White - Welsh	55%
	White - British	11%
	White - English	23%
	White - Other <sup>2</sup>	1%
	Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	2%
	Black/African/Caribbean	1%
	Mixed	3%
	Other <sup>3</sup>	3%
<b>Disabled</b>		
	Yes	4%
	Not sure	8%
	No	69%
	Missing (no response)	19%
<b>Ever been in care</b>		
	Yes	18%
	No	62%
	Missing (no response)	20%

<sup>2</sup> 'White - Other' includes the following categories: White – Irish (0.8%), White – Scottish (0.5%), White – Gypsy or Irish Traveller (0.7%) and Any Other White Background (2.0%)

<sup>3</sup> 'Other' includes the following categories: Arab (1.2%), Chinese (0.8%), Any Other Asian Background (1.7%) and Any Other Ethnic Group (0.9%)

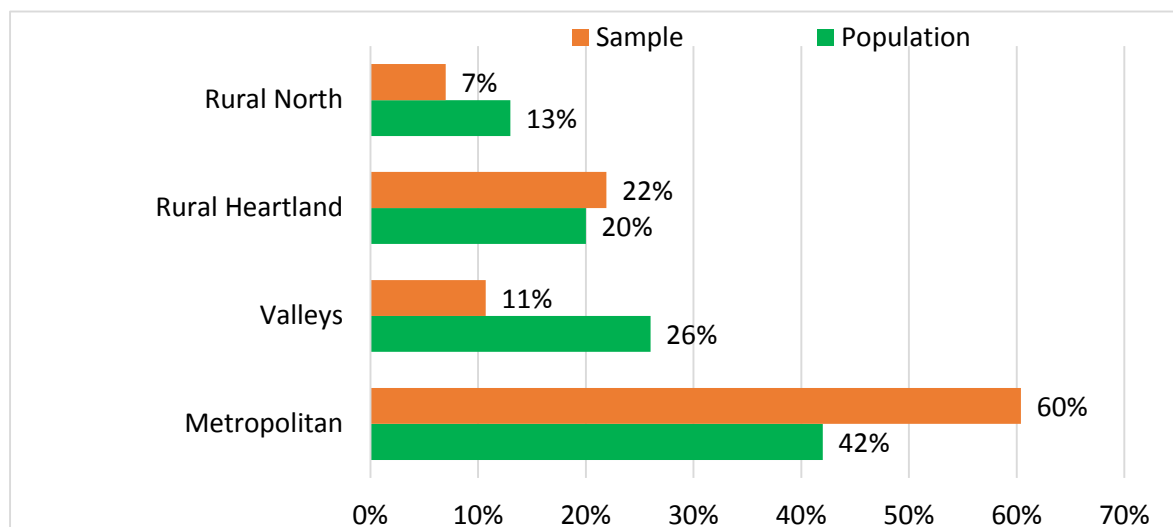
The percentage of children per local authority area in Wales are shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Percentage of children in the sample by local authority area**



These areas were grouped into four 'macro' regions, representing the different areas of Wales and the percentages in the sample in each region were compared with the percentages of children in the population as a whole by region (Figure 2). There was some under-representation of the Valleys and Rural North regions and a corresponding over-representation of the Metropolitan region. This was taken into account in weighting the sample for analysis (see next section).

**Figure 2: Percentage of children in the sample and in the population by macro region**



A set of four questions which makes up a measure of family economic background of the children (the Family Affluence Scale) was also included in the questionnaire. It asked about the number of vehicles the family owned; whether the child had a bedroom to themselves; how many times their family had been on holiday in the last year; and how many computers the family owned. However, in this age group, a substantial proportion (between 15% and 20%) of children did not provide answers to each of these questions so it was not possible to use this measure in the analysis.

### The questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 37 question items in the following sections:

- About you
- School and college
- The local area
- Knowledge of children's rights
- Use of languages
- Young people's priorities

Most questions were in closed tick-box format. There were a few open-ended response format questions. Wordings of questions and response options are provided in the relevant sections on findings.



## Presentation of findings

### Weighting

As noted above there was an uneven distribution of children compared to the overall population of Wales in this age group. In order to take account of this and to make the survey as representative as possible, weightings were calculated. These weightings balanced the sample (a) equally by gender<sup>4</sup>, (b) equally by age and (c) in line with the population proportions of children in this age group living in the four macro regions<sup>5</sup>.

All findings presented in the remainder of the report are weighted as described above.

### Missing data

There were relatively low levels (less than 10%) of missing data for all questions, and these responses are excluded from the percentages discussed unless otherwise specified.

### Rounding

For simplicity of presentation all percentages have been rounded to the nearest one percentage point, so totals for questions may not add up to exactly 100%.

### Significant differences

Wherever possible, statistical comparisons were made in responses to each question

by gender, age group and (where it seemed relevant) by region. Due to the small number (less than 50) of children who chose 'prefer not to say' to the question about gender it was not possible to make comparisons including this group. So gender comparisons are between those children selecting the 'Female' and 'Male' options only.

All comparisons were made using chi-square tests and where differences are reported as statistically significant this refers to a p-value of less than 0.01 (99% confidence). However, as discussed above, it should be noted that this was not a random sample of children in Wales and also that there was some clustering of responses (for example due to children in the same schools participating in the survey). So all comparisons should be regarded as tentative.

### Structure of the report

The structure of the report broadly follows the structure of the questionnaire, with findings presented in topic-based sections.

Each section begins with an overview of the questions asked and a summary of responses to each question for the weighted sample as a whole. Then comparisons are made for different sub-groups and charts illustrate key points of difference.

<sup>4</sup> While also taking into account the percentage of children who chose the 'prefer not to say' option for this question.

<sup>5</sup> Based on population estimates by the Office for National Statistics.

## School and College

In relation to children's experiences of school, the survey asked:

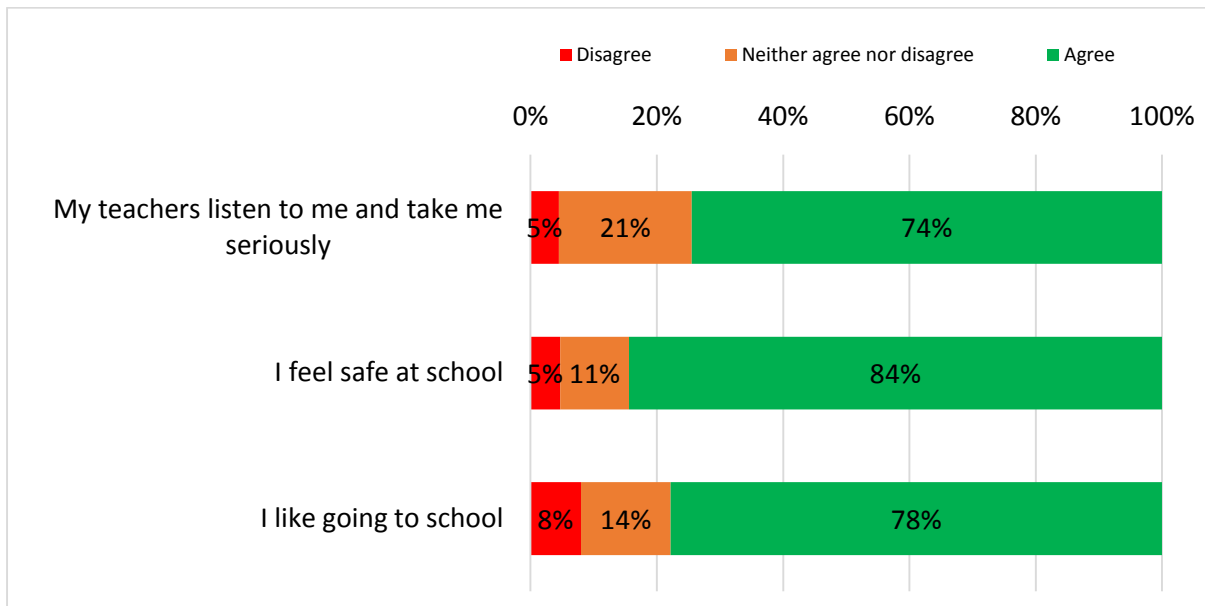
- Three general questions about school – liking going to school; feeling safe; and whether teachers listened and took children's view seriously
- Three questions about participation in decision-making at school
- Three questions about experiences of being bullied at school

## General questions about school

A summary of responses to the general questions about school and about PSE lessons are shown in Figure 3.

- Over three-quarters of children agreed that they liked going to school.
- Most children felt safe, and only around one in 20 did not.
- Around three-quarters of children felt that their teachers listened to them and took them seriously

**Figure 3: Overview of general questions about school**



### Gender

Girls were significantly more positive than boys in response to these questions. For example, 81% of girls agreed that they liked going to school compared to 75% of boys.

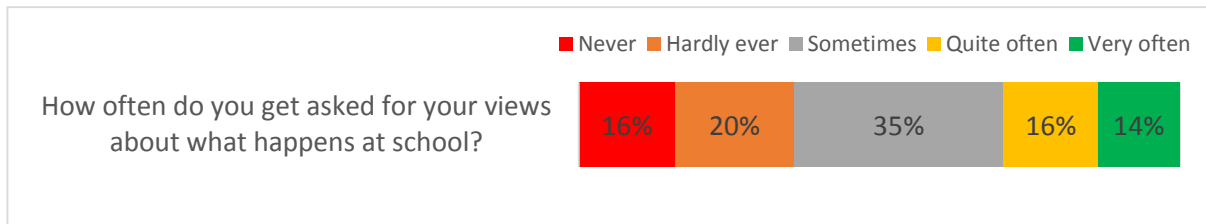
### Age group

There were no significant age patterns for these three questions.

## Participation at school/college

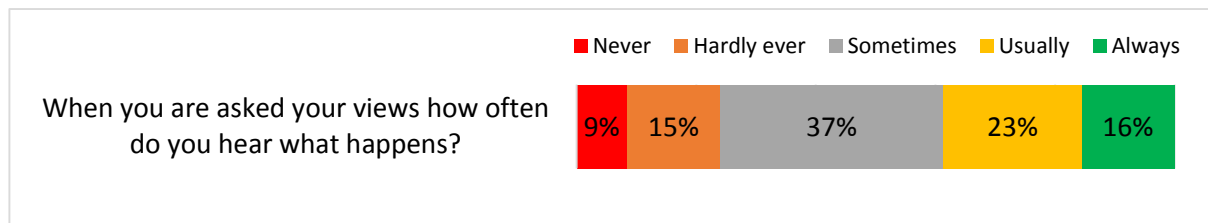
Young people were asked how often they were asked for their views about what happens at school. Around 30% of children said that this happened quite often or very often. Around one in six (16%) of children said they were never asked their views. Around 30% were quite or very often asked their views

**Figure 4: Frequency of being asked views about what happens at school**



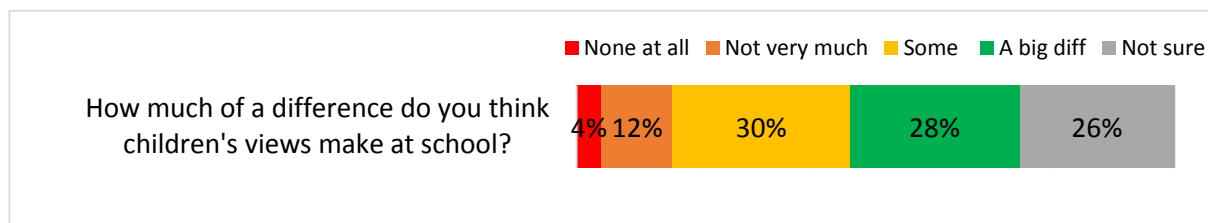
Young people (except those who answered 'never' to the above question) were asked how often they heard the outcome of what happened after they were asked their views. As shown in Figure 5, almost two-fifths of children said that they always or usually heard the outcome.

**Figure 5: Frequency of hearing outcomes of being consulted at school**



Finally, all children were also asked how much of a difference they thought that children's views made at school. More than a quarter felt that children's views made a big difference and a similar proportion thought that they made some difference. Few (4%) felt that children's views made no difference at all.

**Figure 6: Responses about how much difference children's views make at school**



### Gender and age differences

There were no significant gender differences in responses to these questions and no clear age patterns.

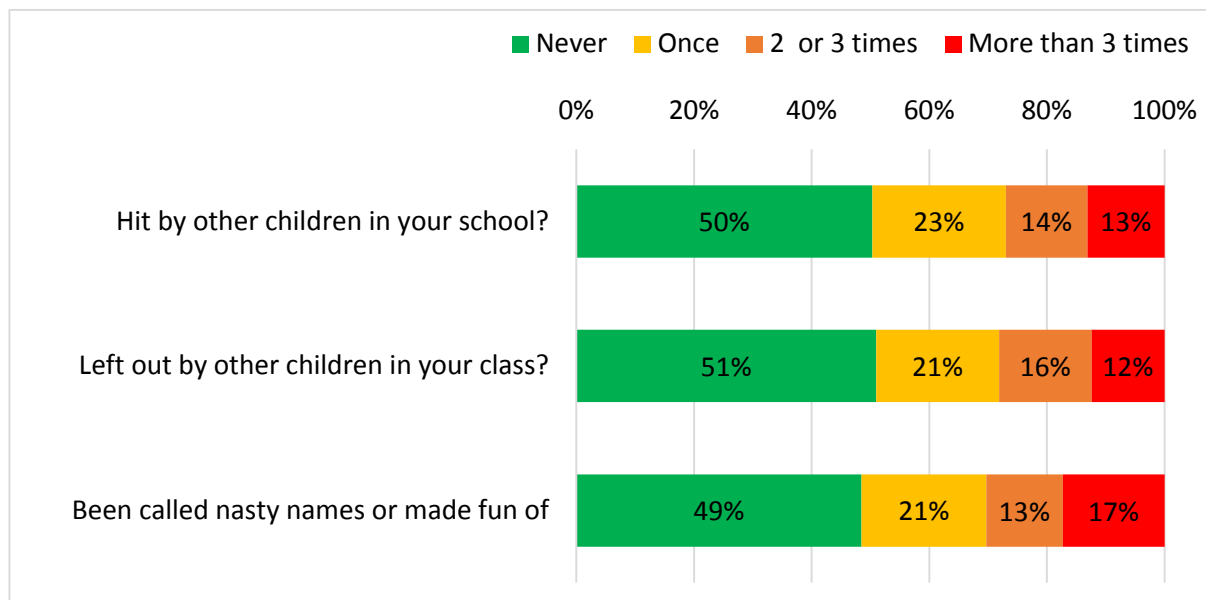
## Experiences of being bullied

Young people were asked how often they had experienced three forms of bullying in the last month:

- Being hit by other children at school
- Being left out by other children in class
- Being called nasty names or made fun of

Overall responses to these three questions are shown in Figure 7. Around half of children said that they had experienced each form of bullying at least once in the last month.

**Figure 7: Overview – experiences of being bullied**



### Gender differences

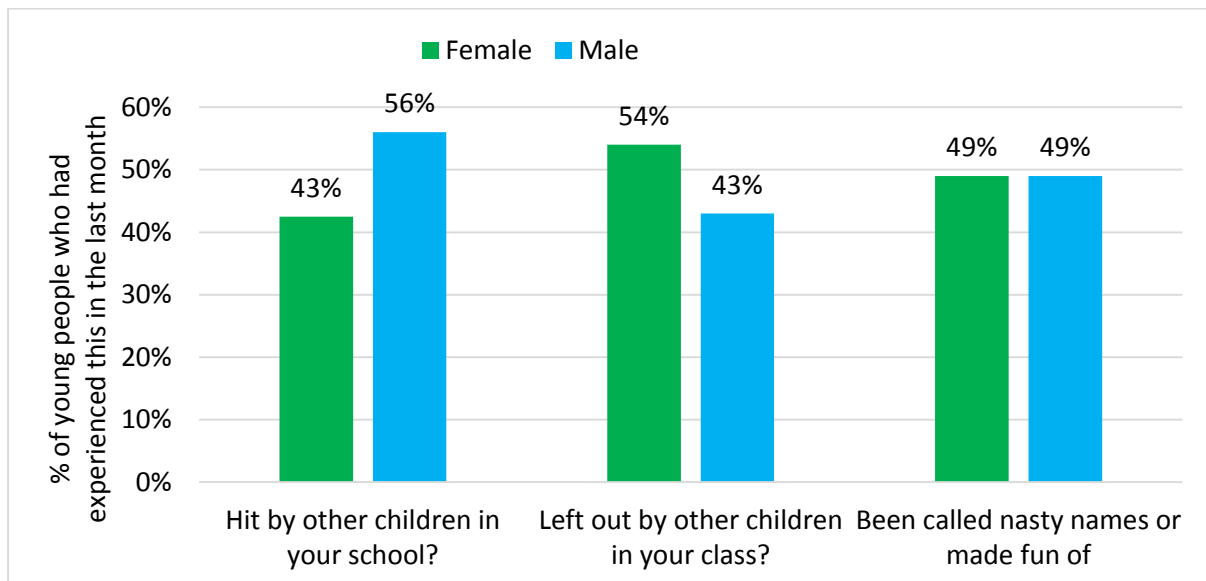
There were significant differences in the responses of girls and boys to two of these three questions (see Figure 8).

- Boys were more likely than girls to be hit by other children.
- Girls were more likely than boys to be left out by other children in class.
- There was no significant difference in whether girls and boys were called names.

### Age group

- There was a tendency for older children (in the 7 to 11 age group) to be less likely to have experienced each of these forms of bullying than younger children

**Figure 8: Experiences of being bullied by gender**





## The local area

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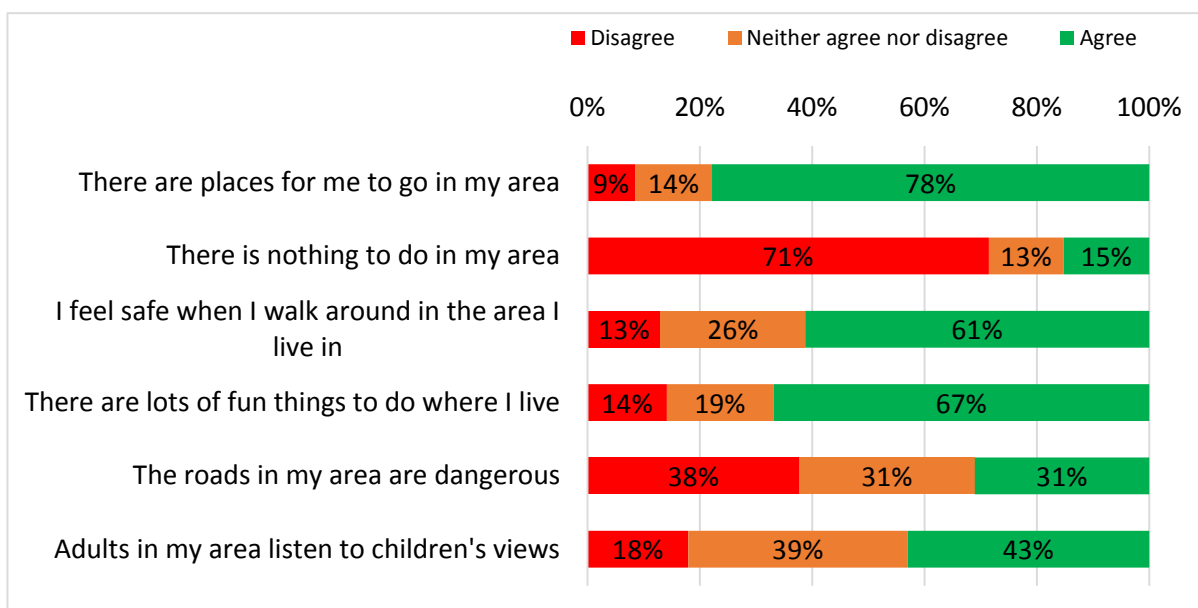
### The survey asked:

- Six general questions about children's views of the local area covering facilities, safety and whether they felt adults listened to them
- Three questions about participation in decision-making in the local area
- One question about experiences of victimisation in the local area
- Most children agreed that there were places for them to go in their local area and that there were lots of fun things to do where they lived. Only 15% agreed that there was nothing to do in their area.
- Most children agreed that they felt safe walking around in their local area but around one in seven (13%) disagreed with this statement
- Almost a third (31%) agreed that the local roads were dangerous
- More than two in five children (43%) agreed that adults in their area listened to children's a further two in five neither agreed nor disagreed. Just under a fifth disagreed.

### General views of the local area

An overview of children's responses to the six general questions is shown in Figure 9:

Figure 9: Overview – views of local area



### Gender

There was only one significant gender difference in answers to these questions – girls were a little less likely (65%) than boys (70%) to agree that there were lots of fun things to do where they lived.

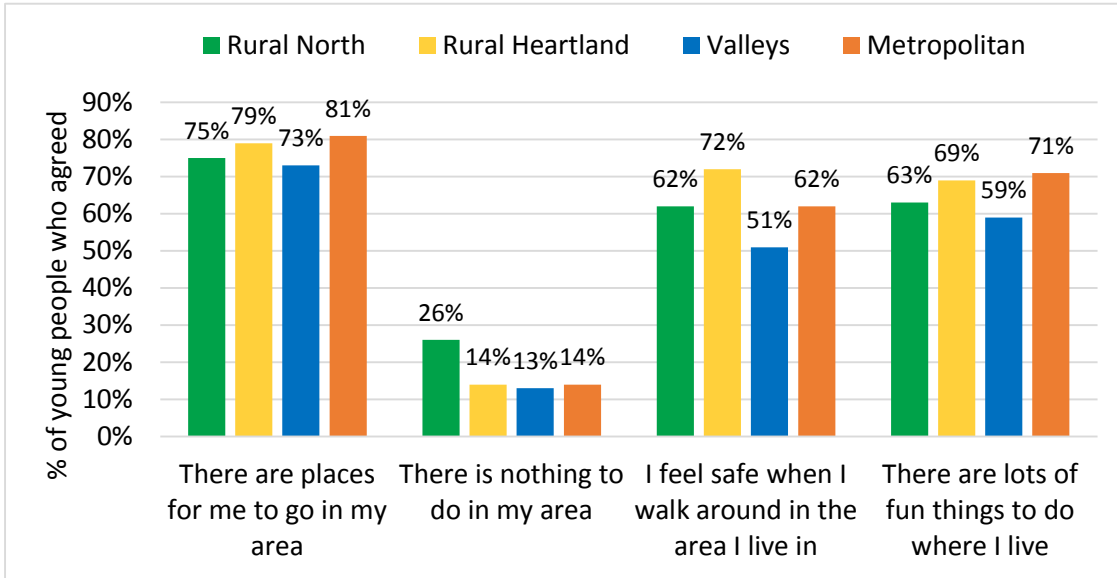
### Age group

The most notable age pattern in the responses was that older children were significantly less likely than younger children to agree that the roads in their area were dangerous.

### Region

There were significant differences between macro regions in terms of children’s views of their local area. As shown in Figure 10, children in the Valleys and Rural North regions tended to have less positive views about facilities and safety than those in the Rural Heartland and Metropolitan regions.

Figure 10: Views of local area by region

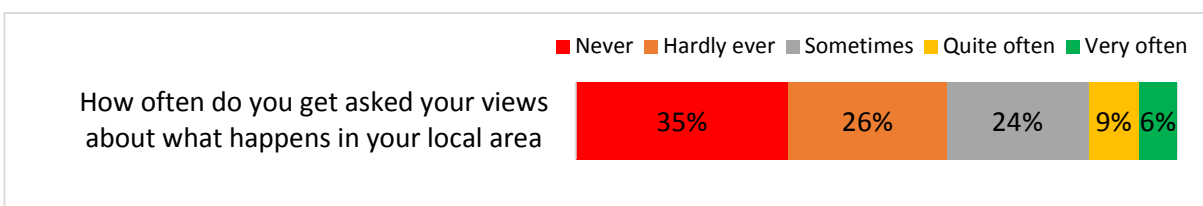


### Participation in local decision-making

Young people were asked three questions about participation in local decision-making that were similar to those discussed for school earlier.

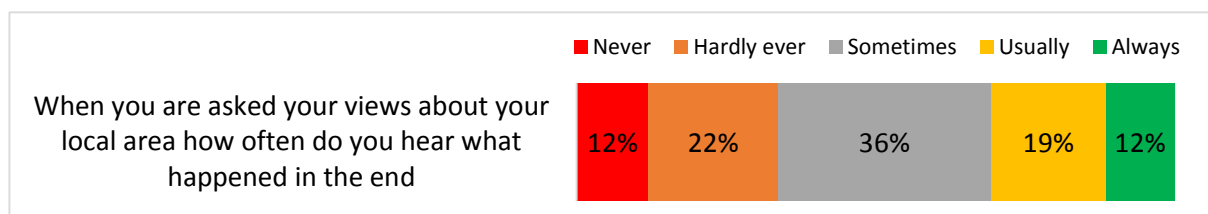
First, there was a question about frequency of being asked their views about what happens in the local area. A summary of responses is shown in Figure 11. Relatively few children (15%) said that they (quite or very) often were asked their views and around a third (35%) said that they were never asked their views.

Figure 11: Frequency of being asked views about what happens in local area



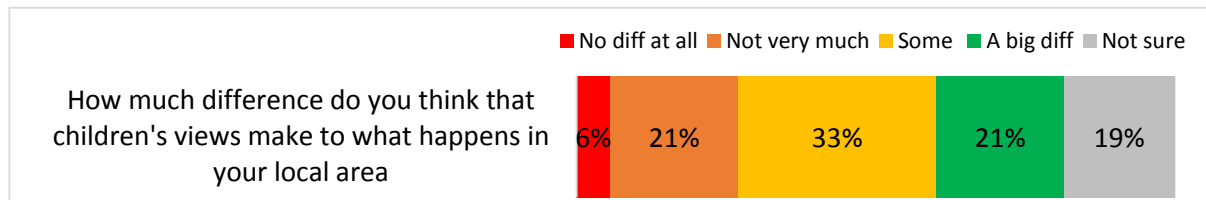
Young people who said that they had been asked their views were then asked how often they heard the outcome of this. The responses are shown in Figure 12. Around 30% of these children said that they usually or always heard the outcome

**Figure 12: Frequency of hearing outcome when consulted about views in local area**



Finally, children were asked how much difference they felt that children's views made to what happened in their local area. Around one in five (21%) of children said that they felt children's views made big difference and a further 33% felt they made some difference.

**Figure 13: Responses about the difference that children's views on the local area make**

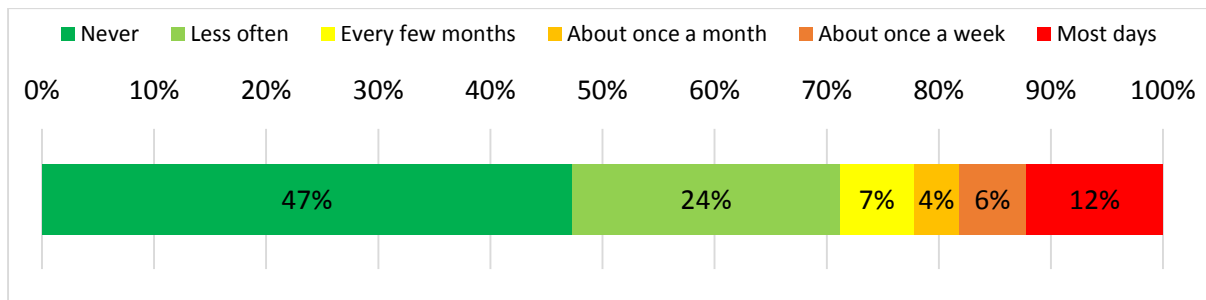


There were some statistically significant sub-group differences in responses to the question about frequency of being asked views about what happens in the local area, but these did not provide clear interpretable patterns of difference between sub-groups.

### Experiences of victimisation in the local area

Young people were asked a question about how often they were hurt or picked on by other children when they were out and about in the local area (Figure 14). More than half of children said this had happened to them at least once.

**Figure 14: When you are out and about in your local area, how often do other children hurt you or pick on you on purpose?**



There were no significant age or gender differences in the likelihood of having had this experience. Children in the Rural Heartland region were less likely than in other regions to say that they had ever experienced victimisation in their local area.

## Knowledge of children's rights

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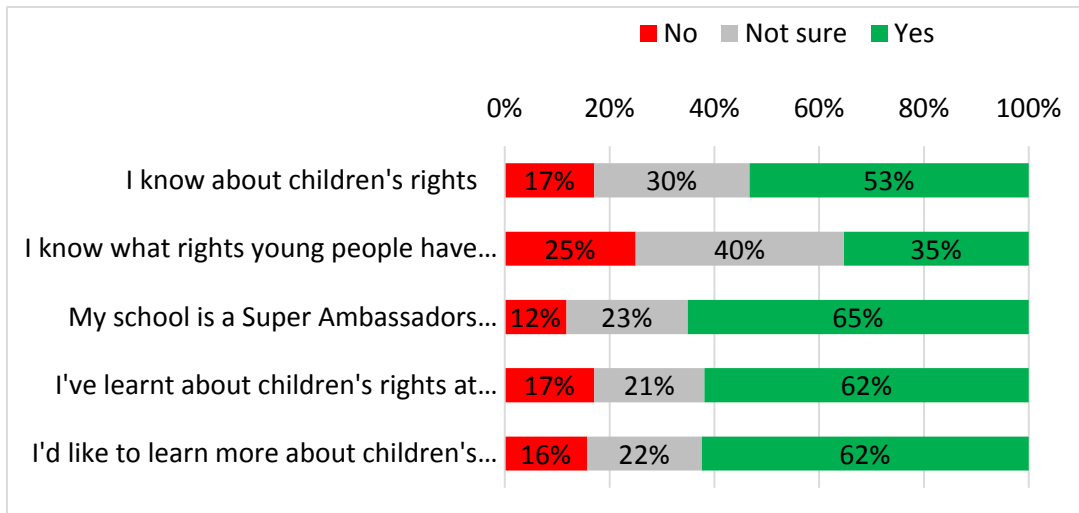
Young people were asked five statement-based questions about children's rights. The wordings of the statements and a summary of children's responses are shown in Figure 15.

- More than half of children (53%) in this age group said that they knew about children's rights although fewer (35%) said that they knew what rights children have under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Most had learned about children's rights at school and said that they would like to learn more about their rights
- Most children taking part in the survey (65%) were in schools participating in the Children's Commissioner's Super Ambassadors scheme. Children in these schools may be more likely than children in other schools to have received information about their rights.

### Gender and age differences

Boys (21%) were a little more likely than girls (14%) to say that they did not know about children's rights, as were younger children in this age group.

Figure 15: Overview – knowledge of children’s rights



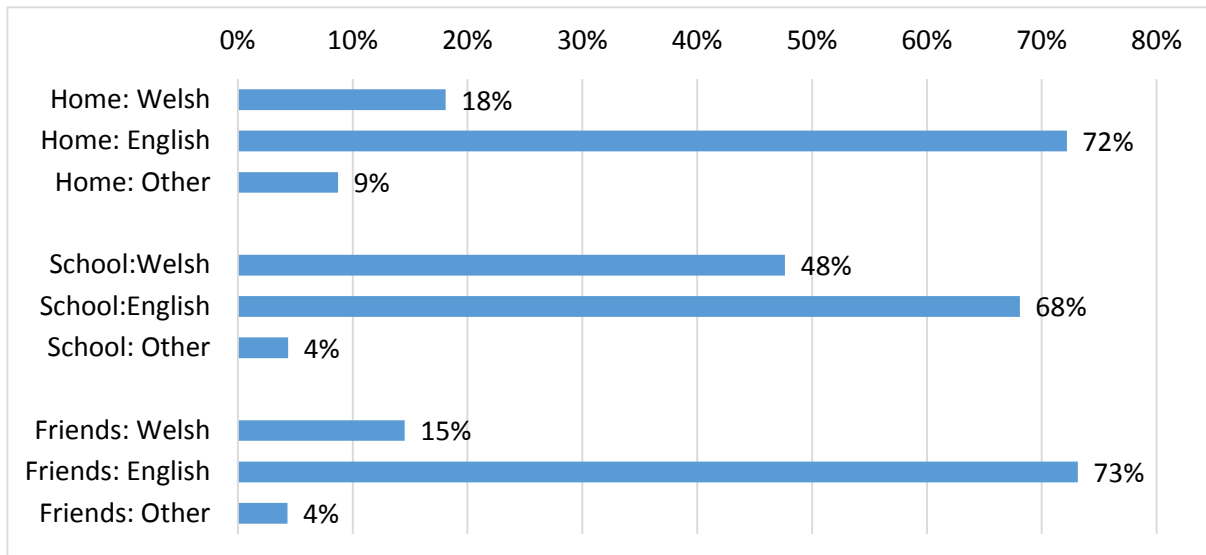


## Use of languages

Young people were asked three questions about which languages they used at home, at school and with friends. In each case three options were offered – Welsh, English and Other. It was possible to select more than one response for each question. An overview of responses is shown in Figure 16.

- Young people were much more likely to use Welsh at school (48%) than at home (18%) or with friends (15%).
- Levels of use of English were very similar in all three settings.
- Around one in 11 children said that they spoke other languages at home.

**Figure 16: Overview – use of languages at home, at school and with friends**



The comparisons that follow relate to the use of Welsh.

### Gender

There were no significant gender differences in the use of Welsh at home, school or with friends.

### Age

Children aged nine and over were a little more likely to use Welsh at school than younger children.

### Region

Children living in the Rural North region were the most likely to use Welsh at home and with friends. Children living in the Rural Heartland region were the most likely to use Welsh at school. Children in the Metropolitan region were the least likely to use Welsh in each context. This pattern would be particularly affected by the nature of the schools from which children in each region participated in the survey as the bulk of responses were through this route.

## Priorities

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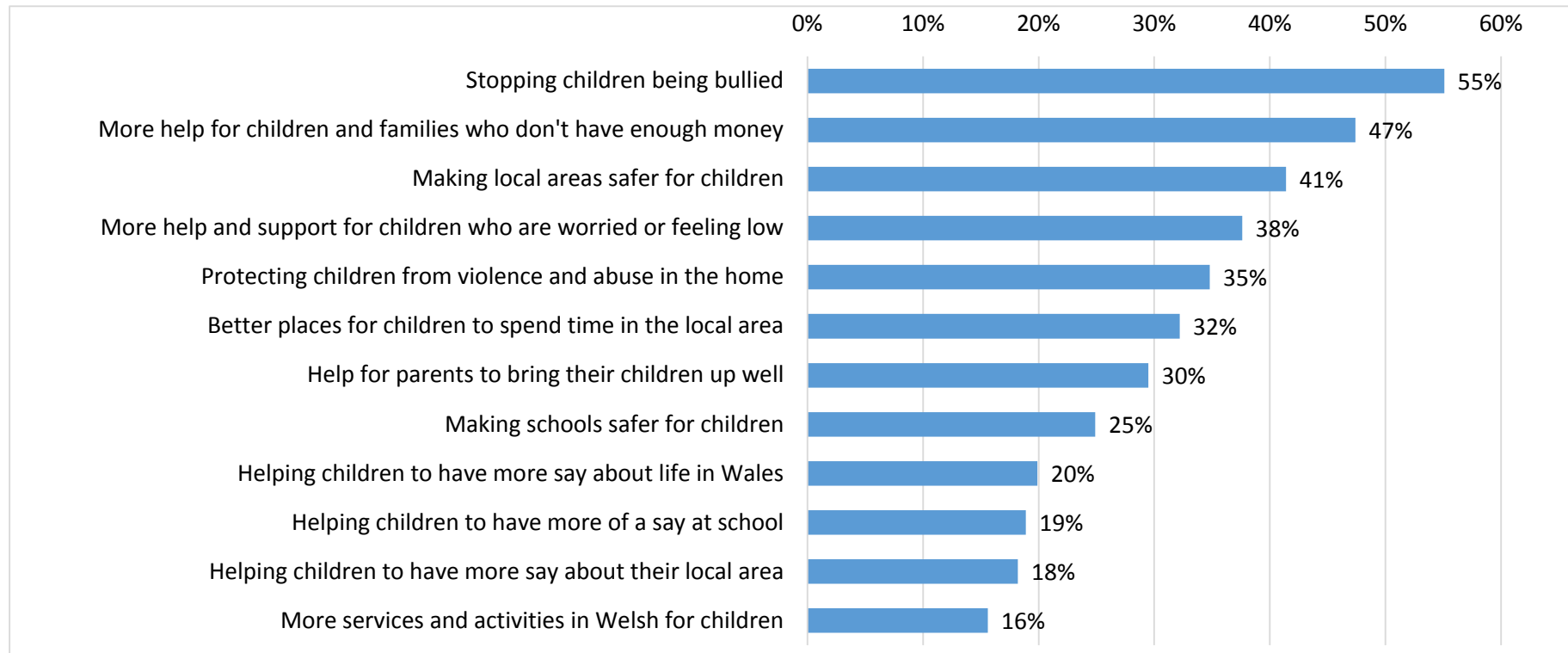
Young people were asked to select from a list of 12 priorities which were derived from the outcomes of the consultation which formed the first phase of this project.

The question wording was as follows:

*Please read the list carefully and then tick the things that you think are the most important to make things better for children in Wales. You can choose up to five things.*

The results of this question are summarised in Figure 17 in descending order of prioritisation. Bullying was the highest priority, being chosen by more than half of children.

Figure 17: Children’s priorities to make things better for children in Wales.



It is not possible to do statistical testing to compare responses from different sub-groups, in the way that has been done in other sections of this report, because of the particular format of this question<sup>6</sup>. However it is possible to compare visually the responses for different sub-groups. These are shown in Table 2 in terms of rankings rather than percentages for ease of interpretation.

Overall, it can be seen that there is relatively little difference in children's priorities on the basis of age, gender or region; and this suggests a broadly shared set of priorities among this age group in Wales.

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<sup>6</sup> As children could only choose up to five priorities the choices are not all completely independent of one another.

Table 2: Ranking of priorities by gender, age group and region

	All	Female	Male	7 to 9	10 to 11	Rural North	Rural Heartlands	Valleys	Metro-politan
Stopping children being bullied	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
More help for children and families who don't have enough money	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Making local areas safer for children	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3
More help and support for children who are worried or feeling low	4	4	5	4	5	3	4	4	4
Protecting children from violence and abuse in the home	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	6	5
Better places for children to spend time in the local area	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	6
Help for parents to bring their children up well	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Making schools safer for children	8	8	8	8	8	9	8	8	8
Helping children to have more say about life in Wales	9	9	9	9	11	8	10	10	9
Helping children to have more of a say at school	10	10	11	10	10	11	12	9	10

**Beth Nesa Project, Phase 2, Report of survey of children aged 7 to 11**

Helping children to have more say about their local area	11	11	10	11	9	12	9	11	11
More services and activities in Welsh for children	12	12	12	12	12	10	11	12	12

