



Sandwell MBC

SHAPE Survey Results

Final Report

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1. Executive Summary

The SHAPE Survey has been conducted bi-annually since November 2014 when the SHAPE Programme was introduced as a child's voice initiative. It is a means to consult with young people on the five SHAPE themes of:

- Staying Safe
- Being Healthy
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Economic Wellbeing

In 2019, the online survey was developed for 4 client groups, Primary School children from years 5 and 6, Secondary School pupils from years 7 – 13, parents and professionals. The link to the survey was distributed to all Primary, Secondary, Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in Sandwell. The total number of survey participants was 876.

The questions were devised and developed by a number of stakeholders who deliver services to young people and broken down further into these specific areas: demographics, issues, social media and gaming, future, support services, exercise and play/ youth provision.

The main findings from the report portray that children and young people want to be loved, valued, respected and listened to. They need support to help them through secondary school, from first stage of transition, building resilience to tackle any potential bullying issues, through to dealing with stress of school work and exams, which can also have a negative effective on their mental health and wellbeing.

A greater understanding of children and young people with disabilities is required, to ensure their needs in and out of school are met adequately and parents are aware of what support is available to them.

Social media has become part of daily life for children and young people starting from primary school age and the influences of social media remain a concern for both parents and professionals. Gaming is also becoming a fast-growing entertainment avenue for young people and many appear to spend their time gaming rather than going out to places for entertainment.

The positive aspirations of children at a primary school level, need to continue to be supported by parents and professionals, even though they may find it a challenge to manage young people as they reach their teens. To build on this further development and training should be invested in young people through their education so they are able to build independent and secure futures.

The perception of Sandwell as a Borough remains negative, due to high levels of crime and deprivation. A greater emphasis needs to be made on the positives and ensuring regeneration and town plans are responsive to the needs of the future generation, ensuring Sandwell retains its developed young people.

Finally, further work needs to be done to improve communication for young people especially youth in secondary schools, so they have a wealth of information they need to support them and their families.

This report provides a detailed account of all the survey results along with a set of recommendations which internal and external stakeholders will adopt to address the needs and issues identified by children, young people, parents and professionals.

2. Objectives and Purpose

The purpose of the SHAPE Survey is to consult with children and young people ranging from the age of 8 – 18 years, for the council members, senior leaders, officers and partners to be able to understand the experiences, needs, issues and views of young people in Sandwell.

The 2019 survey was extended to parents and professionals working with young people. Similar questions were asked of these two groups as the Secondary School pupil survey. The reasoning behind the development of adult surveys was to understand if adults who are parents of children and young people or work with them, are aware of their needs and issues or whether the views of adults are different to those of the young people themselves.

The information from this study will enable stakeholders to reflect on the services they offer to young people and identify from the responses in the survey if any changes need to be made based on the consultation results.

National survey such as Ditch the Label, Make Your Mark and the Ofcom Survey collect data from young people on specific issues like bullying, views on what national changes should be made by Government and media consultation. However, on a local level the SHAPE Survey offers a cross-section of consultation on a number of topics affecting the lives of young people and is the only consistent survey that is sent to every school in Sandwell on a regular basis.

3. Methodology

There were 4 participant groups for the survey, these included the following:

- Primary School Pupils from years 5 and 6
- Secondary School Pupils from years 7 to 13
- Professionals working with children and young people in schools and other settings
- Parents of children and young people

An online survey was developed by the Public Health Intelligence Team with the questions formulated by the SHAPE Team and internal and external partners who had an interest in consulting with young people on their services. The following topics cover all the SHAPE themes of staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making

a positive contribution and economic wellbeing and were used to devise the questions asked:

- General – demographic information e.g. age, school year, town
- Issues – affecting young people today
- Social media and gaming – social media platforms and gaming usage
- Future – aspirations, skills, future learning opportunities
- Support services – awareness of local policing, school nursing and other support services offered to young people
- Being healthy – exercise and healthy eating
- Socialising with friends – where in Sandwell or out of the Borough do young people socialise
- Play and youth provision – where do children and young people engage in youth activities and what is looked for in a youth facility
- Conclusion – anything else the participant would like to say

The survey was developed with similar questions for all 4 groups, the questions were reviewed by the Communications Team in Public Health to ensure they were not leading, could be clearly understood and developed in plain English. Many open-ended questions were included to ensure the children and young people were able to express their views and opinions freely. The survey questions can be found on Sandwell Trends (<https://www.sandwelltrends.info/shape-surveys-2019/>).

Once the survey was developed and tested, the links were sent to all schools through the regular school's communication bulletin via Head Teachers. Head Teachers were asked to distribute the survey for pupils in their schools to complete, as well as staff. Additionally, they were requested to send the survey link for parents through newsletters and email communication.

There were no restrictions in the amount of young people from each school who could take part in the survey, however, schools were offered the incentive that if 25% of pupils on their school roll completed the survey, they would be provided with their school's individual results.

Each group was also offered the chance to enter into a prize draw to win vouchers, as an incentive for more participants to take part in the survey.

The survey was distributed on Friday 27th September 2019 with a 9-week period for participants to take part in the survey and a deadline of Friday 29th November 2019.

4. Results

The total number of participants that took part in the survey was 876, the total for each group were as follows:

- Primary school pupils – 438
- Secondary school pupils – 301
- Parents – 72

- Professionals - 65

The following pages provide a breakdown of the results of all the surveys based on the topic areas.

4.1 Demographics and Limitations

Of the 100 primary schools in Sandwell including special schools and pupil referral units, 13% of schools were represented through participants. The number of participants from a single institution varied from 1 to 144.

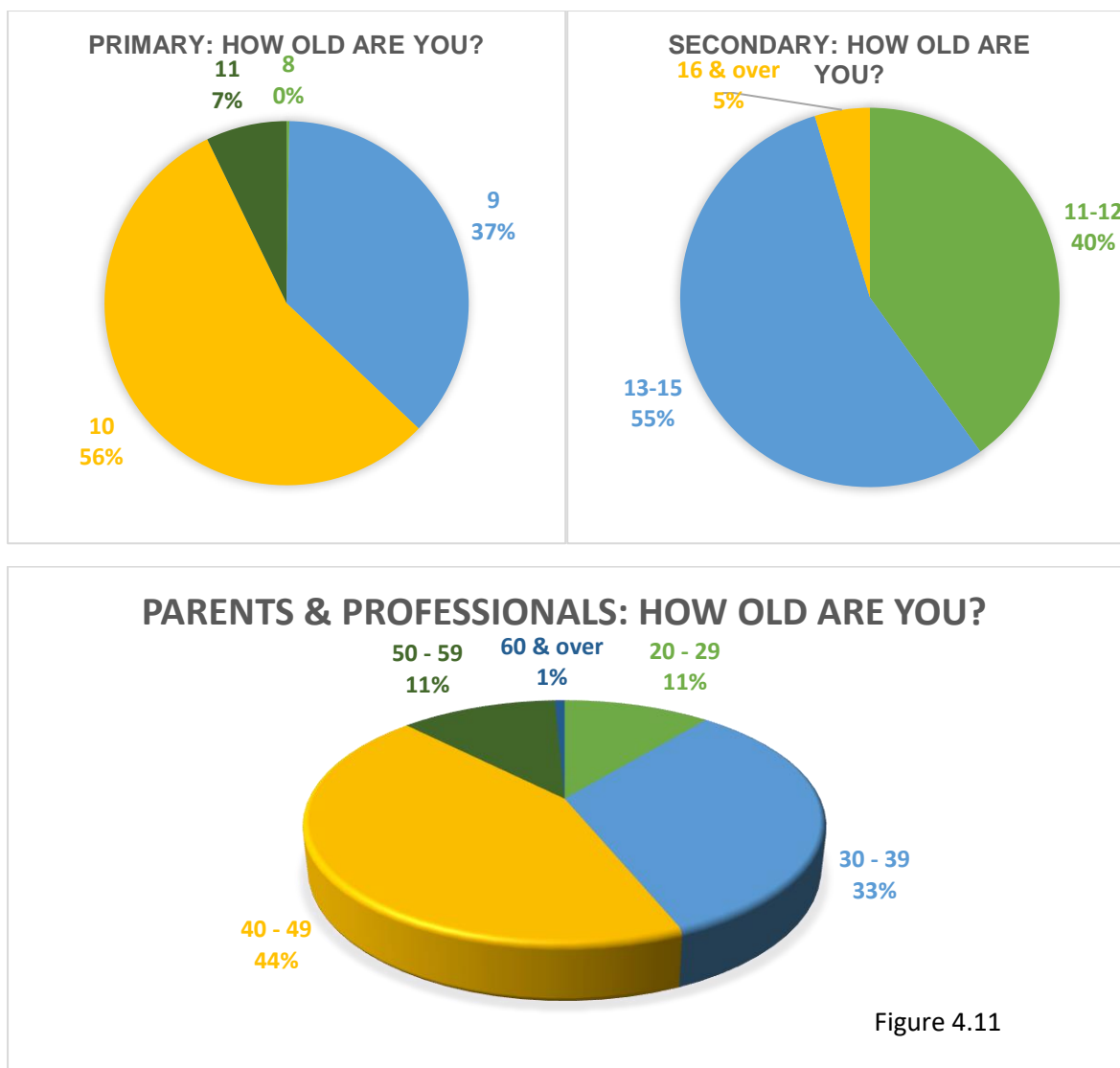
Of the 25 secondary schools in Sandwell including special schools and pupil referral units there was a representation of 40%. The number of participants from a single institution from this age range varied from 1 to 189.

The parents who took part in the survey represented a minimum of 170 children in Sandwell who attend 30% of the 125 schools in the Borough. However, the population of parents in Sandwell as a whole is much higher therefore it must be noted that the 72 parents who took part in the survey are merely a small sample of parents and not a true representation of the parent population of the Borough.

The professionals were from educational institutions working with young people such as Headteachers and Assistant Headteachers, pastoral support, SENCO and office staff. Other vocations such as Educational Psychologists and Careers Advisers also took part. Again, as with parents, there are a large number of professionals working with children and young people in Sandwell therefore the 65 professionals who took part in the survey are a very small percentage and not a true representation of the professionals in this area of work.

Figure 4.11 provides a breakdown of the age of the participants. For the primary age the largest category was age 10, secondary, age 13-15 and for parents and professionals, 40-49.

As the 16 and over category of secondary pupils only represented 5% of total participants it must be noted, is difficult to offer definitive conclusions when analysing the results of the survey for this age group



The male/ female and ethnicity breakdown are shown in Figure 4.12. The primary and secondary participants were almost evenly split however the adults' participants were predominantly female. For all groups the largest response was mostly from people of white ethnicity.

Please note primary pupils were not asked about their ethnicity.

Participants	Male	Female
Primary	47.9%	51.8%
Secondary	44.2%	49.8%
Parents	4.2%	95.8%
Professionals	18.5%	80%

Participants	White	Mixed, Black	Asian or Other
Secondary	63.8%	31.7%	4.5%
Parents	69.4%	29.2%	1.4%
Professionals	83.1%	15.4%	1.5%

Figure 4.12

The participant groups were asked which town they lived in or worked in (professionals). The breakdown is provided in Figure 4.13. Wednesbury town was not represented in the survey through pupils, however a small percentage of parents lived in Wednesbury or worked in the town. Oldbury had the most participants in 3 of the survey groups.

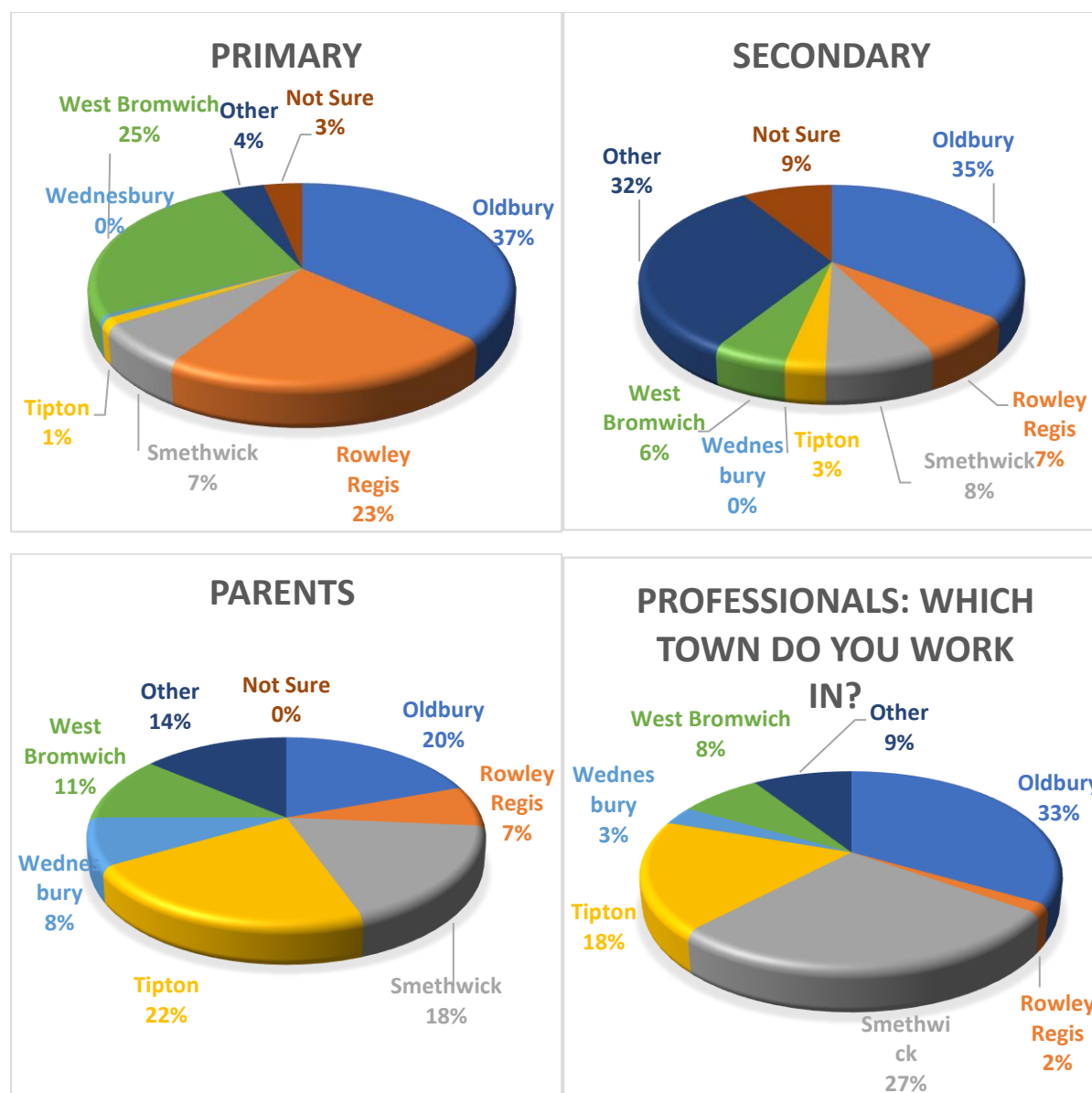


Figure 4.13

4.2 Issues

This section focussed on what issues affect young people today. Figure 4.21 shows the results when secondary school pupils were asked for their top 3 issues and how this differs to parents and professionals.

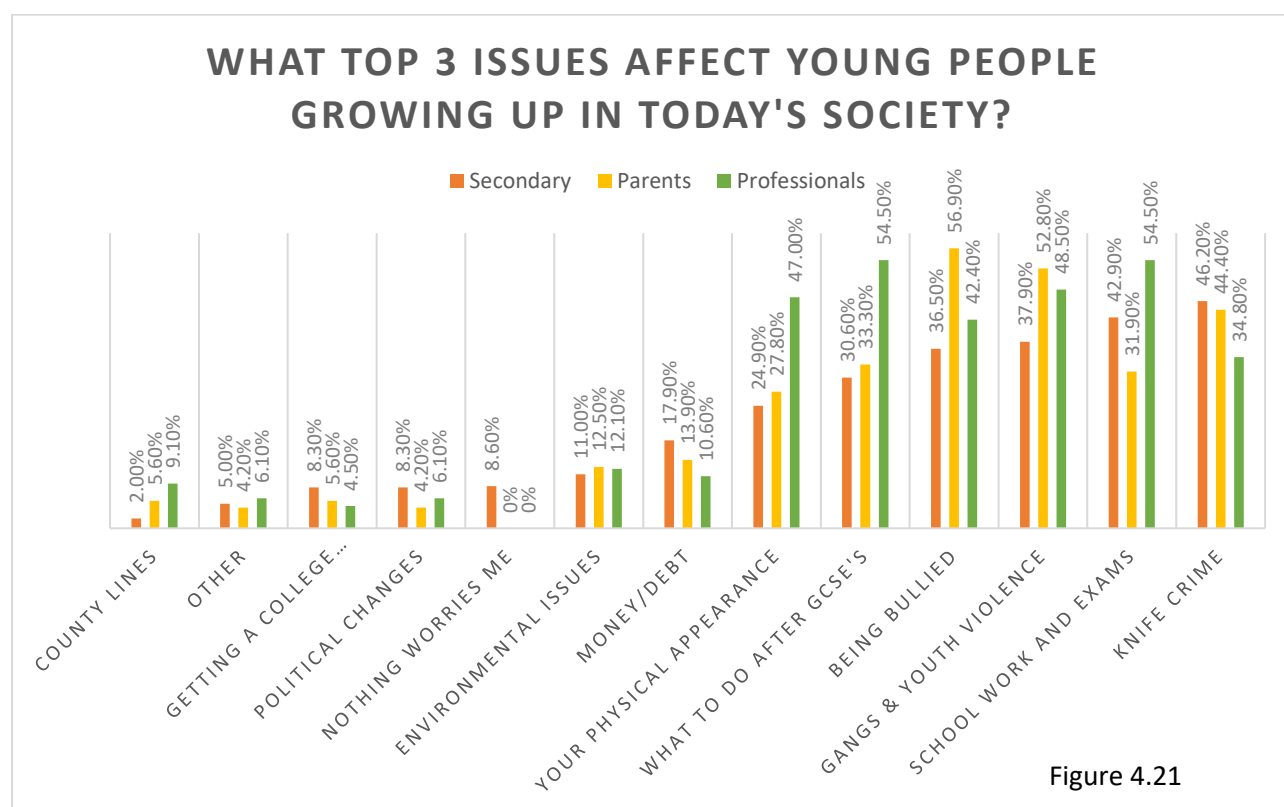
Secondary school pupils identified the top 3 issues as being knife crime (46.2%), school work and exams (42.9%) and gangs and youth violence (37.9%). Although

being bullied was not far behind in 4th place (36.5%). Breaking this down further by age groups the 14 responses from the 16s and overs matched the total response results as did the 13- 15 age group, however for both age groups school work and exams was the top issue out of the 3. For 11-12's school work and exams featured in 4th place after knife crime, being bullied and gangs and violence.

For the 'other' option, young people stated mental health, homework, problems at home and life in general as being an issue for them.

In comparison parents identified the top 3 issues as being bullied (56.9%), gangs and youth violence (52.8%) and knife crime (44.4%). School work and exams is in 4th place for parents. Three parents who stated 'other' identified the issues as social media, phone and nothing to do.

The professionals identified the top 3 issues as school work and exams (54.50%), gangs and youth violence (48.5%) and physical appearance (47.00%), which for the other 2 groups featured a lot lower. Being bullied featured in 4th position.



Primary school children were asked a set of questions on feelings, to gain an understanding of issues.

When asked if the children felt happy about life at the moment, 79.6% said this statement was true for them. The explanations they gave for this response were that they felt loved, happy at school, things were going well, good friends, nice teachers, football and having ipads/ps4s.

The children who stated neither true or untrue, not true or don't know stated reasons mainly to do with family issues, such as parents being ill or financially struggling and

coming from broken families, a few had suffered bereavement. A few had also made references to being lonely, having no one to play with or rude people at school. Some stated they preferred not to say. A couple suffered from dyslexia. There were a few concerning statements such as 'I don't like me', 'stress', 'worried', 'sometimes I don't like myself and hate myself' and 'I'm unlucky'.

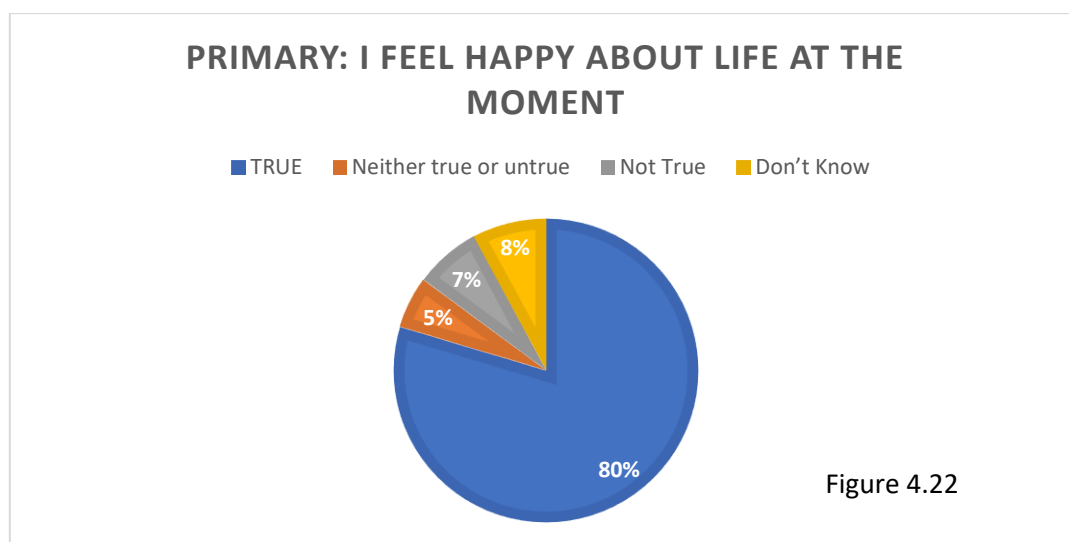
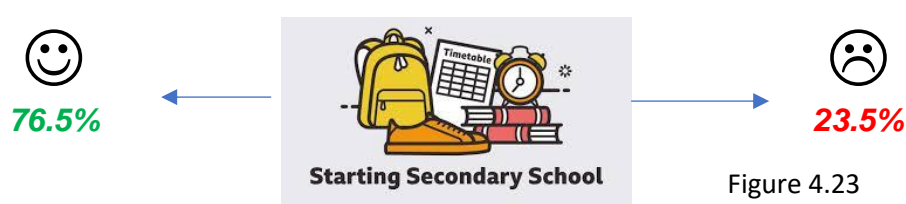


Figure 4.23 shows 76.5% were looking forward to going to secondary school because there were more sports, new friends, trips, opportunity to learn new things, being with their siblings and would be fun as well as making a new start. Those who were not looking forward to secondary school gave reasons such as feeling they would be bullied or being the youngest. They were nervous and anxious about making new friends and worried about hard work and exams. There were also references to 'detention'.



When asked how they feel they are coping with the levels of school work and the build up to Sats 63.1% felt they were coping well and 5.6% were not coping well but 31.3% said they were not sure.

4.3 Social Media and Gaming

The following series of questions focuses on internet, social media channels, usage and gaming.

Internet

97.7% of primary school children stated they used the internet at home. When asked what they used the internet for, figure 4.31 shows that 69.3% stated gaming followed by homework/research as their top answers. With third place at 39.8% for social media.

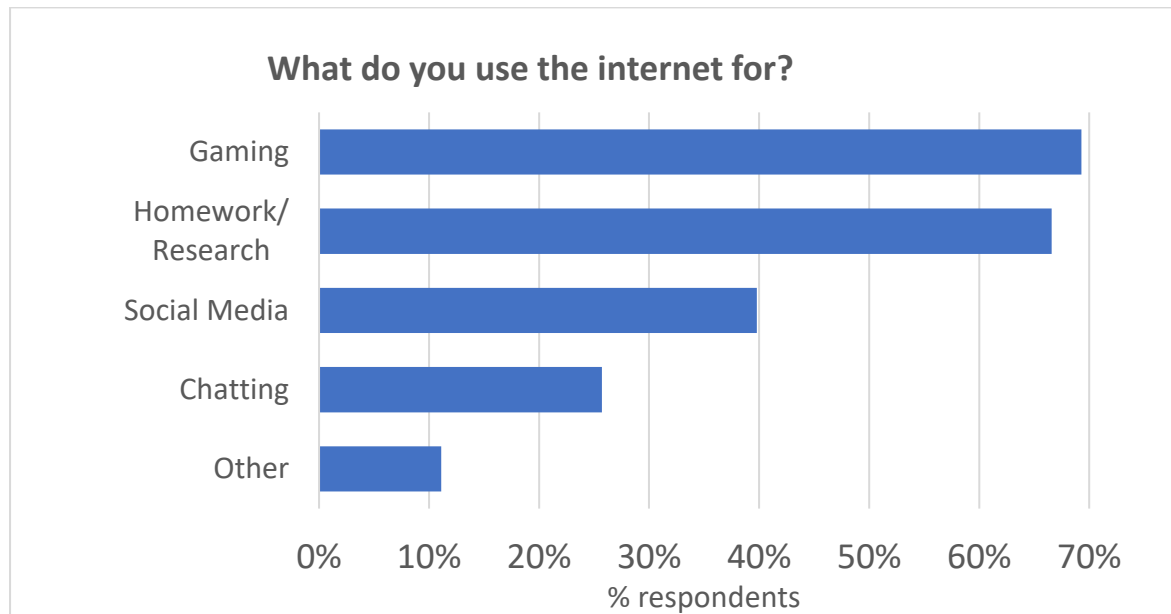


Figure 4.31

Figure 4.32 shows the usage of the different categories above. The children stated they used the internet mostly on a daily basis for all categories except their homework/research which was more used on a weekly basis.

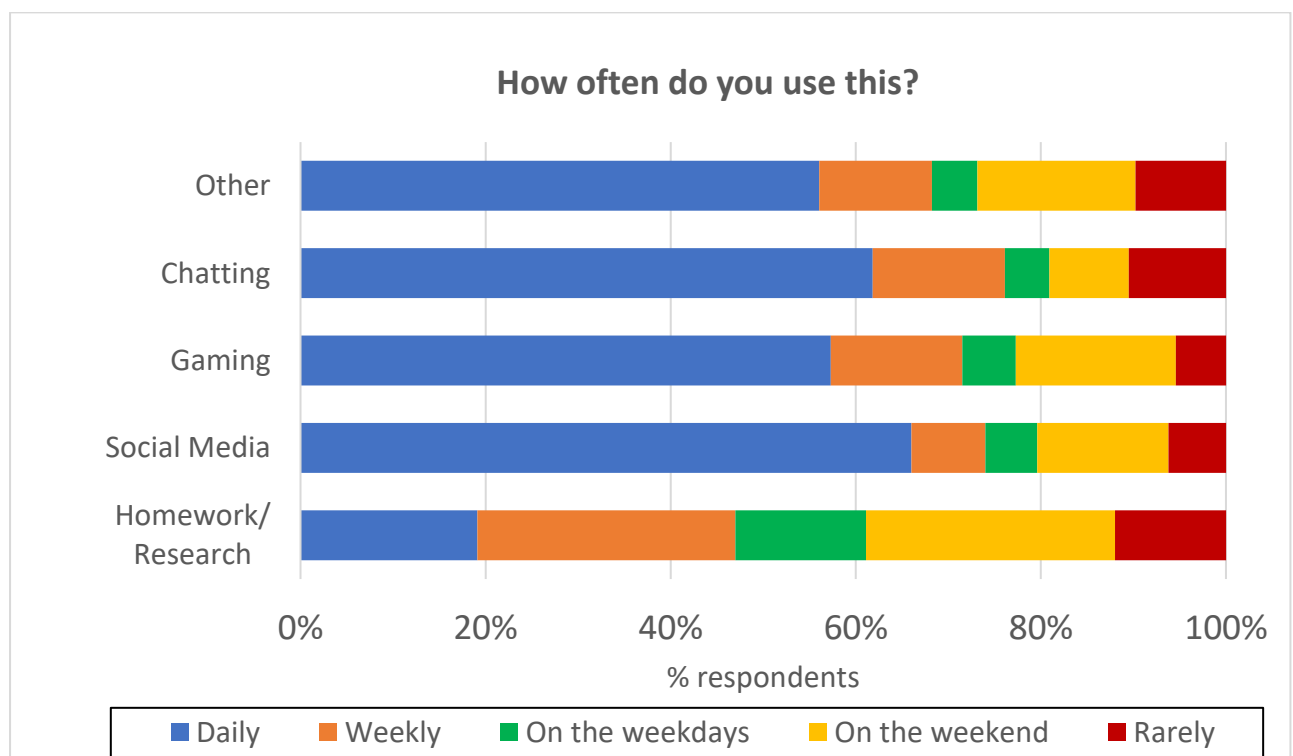


Figure 4.32

Social Media

Figure 4.33 highlights the top social media channels used by children and young people. For primary school age the most popular channels were YouTube (97.1%), WhatsApp (46.8%) and TikTok (45.6%). For secondary pupils the most popular channels were You Tube (87.7%), WhatsApp (79.1%) and Instagram (66.4%).

The parents and professionals asked both stated Snapchat as being the most popular channel which came in 4th position for young people. However, both did highlight You Tube and Instagram in 2nd and 3rd place.

Although social media is widely used by nearly all children in primary school. When they were asked if they chat online to people they have never met 553 (12.1%) stated they do. However, 97.2% did state they have been educated to stay safe online.

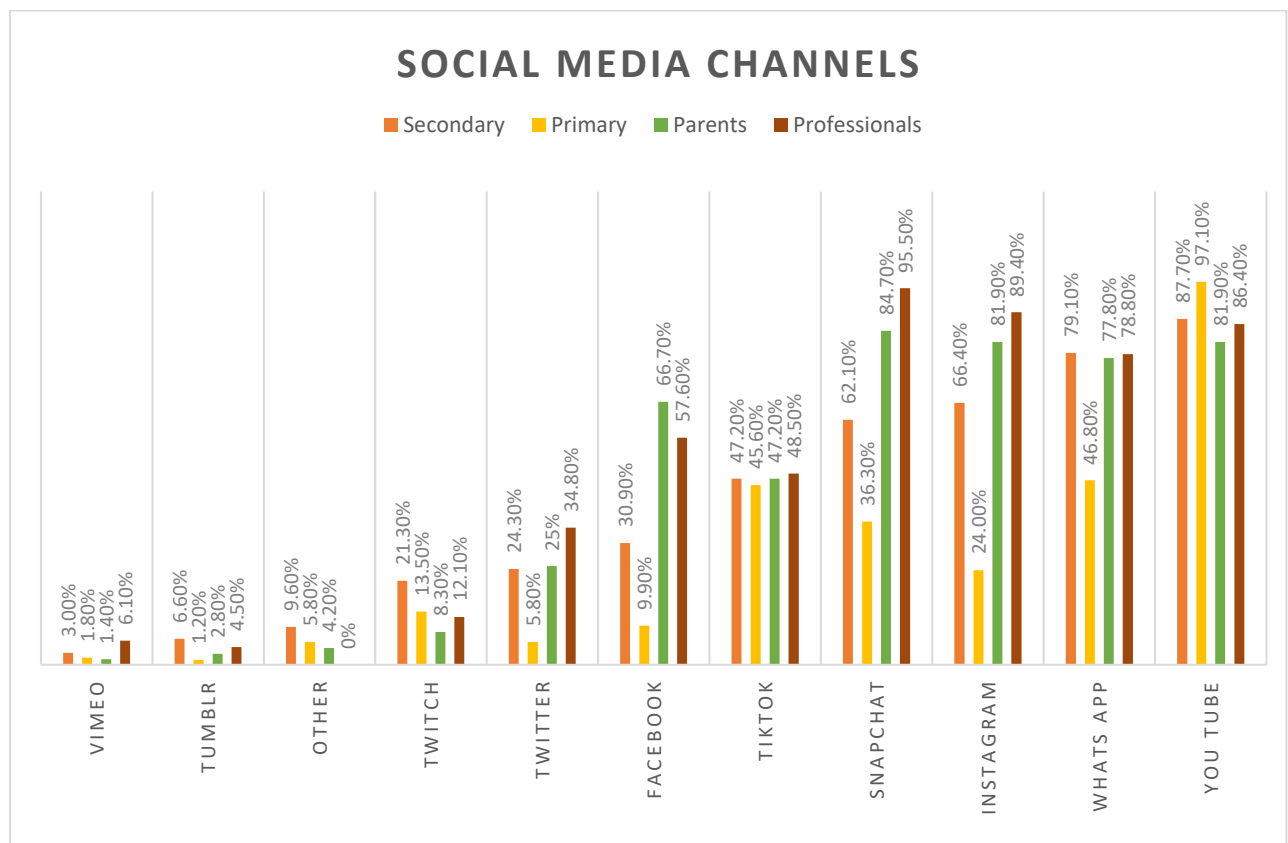


Figure 4.33

Figure 4.34 breaks the results down further for secondary pupils by age groups.

Considering the minimum age to use these applications is 13 for Snapchat and You Tube (13 with parents' permission otherwise 18) and 16 for WhatsApp, it is interesting to note that the top applications 11-12-year olds use are You Tube (87.9%), WhatsApp (82.8%), Snapchat (57.8%) closely followed by Tik Tok (54.3%).

For 13-15-year olds, the top applications are You Tube (90.2%), Instagram (81.1%) and WhatsApp (81.1%). WhatsApp has a minimum age of 16. The 'other' option

chosen by young people stated Pinterest, Reddit, Bitmoji, Tinder, Netflix, Houseparty, Discord, Omeagle and Discord.

The over 16s who did respond selected Instagram (84.6%), Tik Tok (69.2%), You Tube (69.2%) and Snapchat (61.5%).

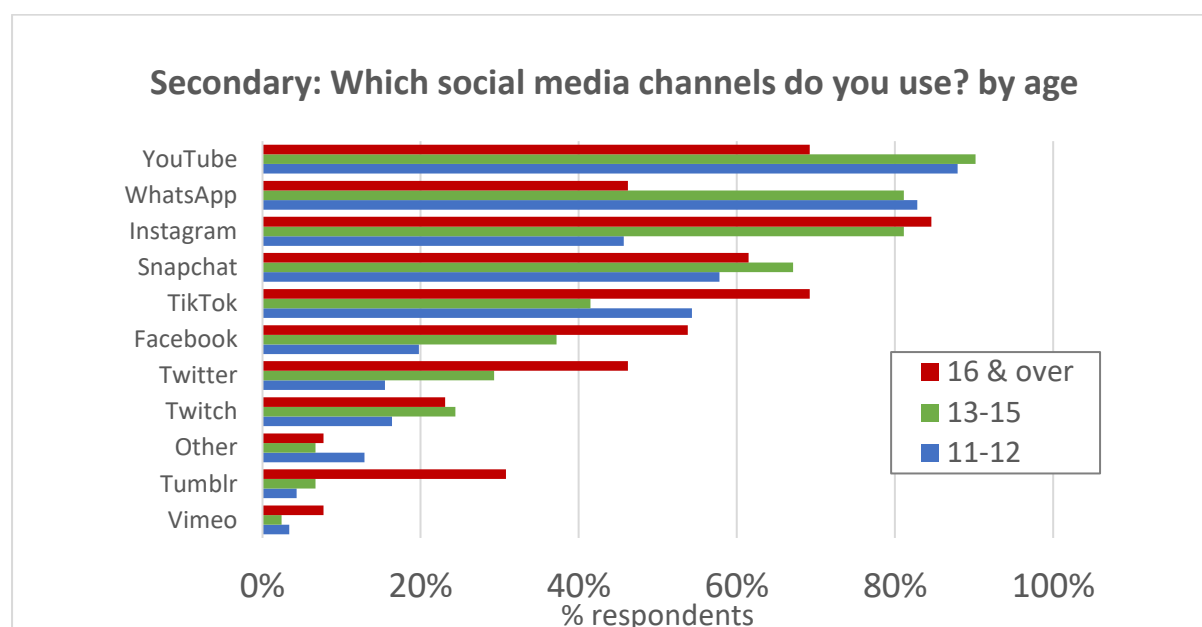


Figure 4.34

Figure 4.35 shows the results of secondary school pupils, when asked how frequently they use the different social media platforms. The most popular response was daily for the top 5 applications, You Tube, WhatsApp, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok. Parents and professionals also stated the same.

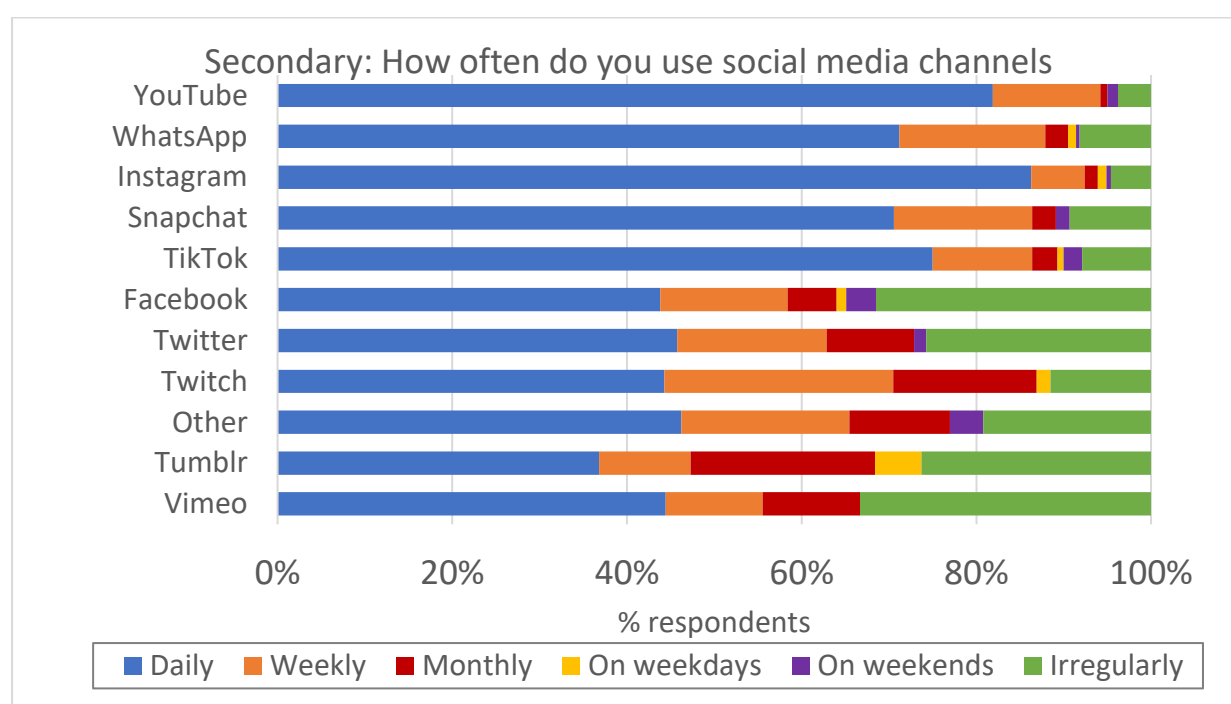


Figure 4.35

Figure 4.36 shows that the secondary pupils use the platforms predominantly for watching videos and messaging. Posting pictures was the third highest response.

The responses for the most popular applications were as follows:

- You Tube – watch videos and gaming
- Instagram – messaging, posting pictures and watching videos
- WhatsApp – messaging, video calling and posting pictures

Parents and professionals both felt the young people use the platforms for posting pictures the most and then messaging and watching videos.

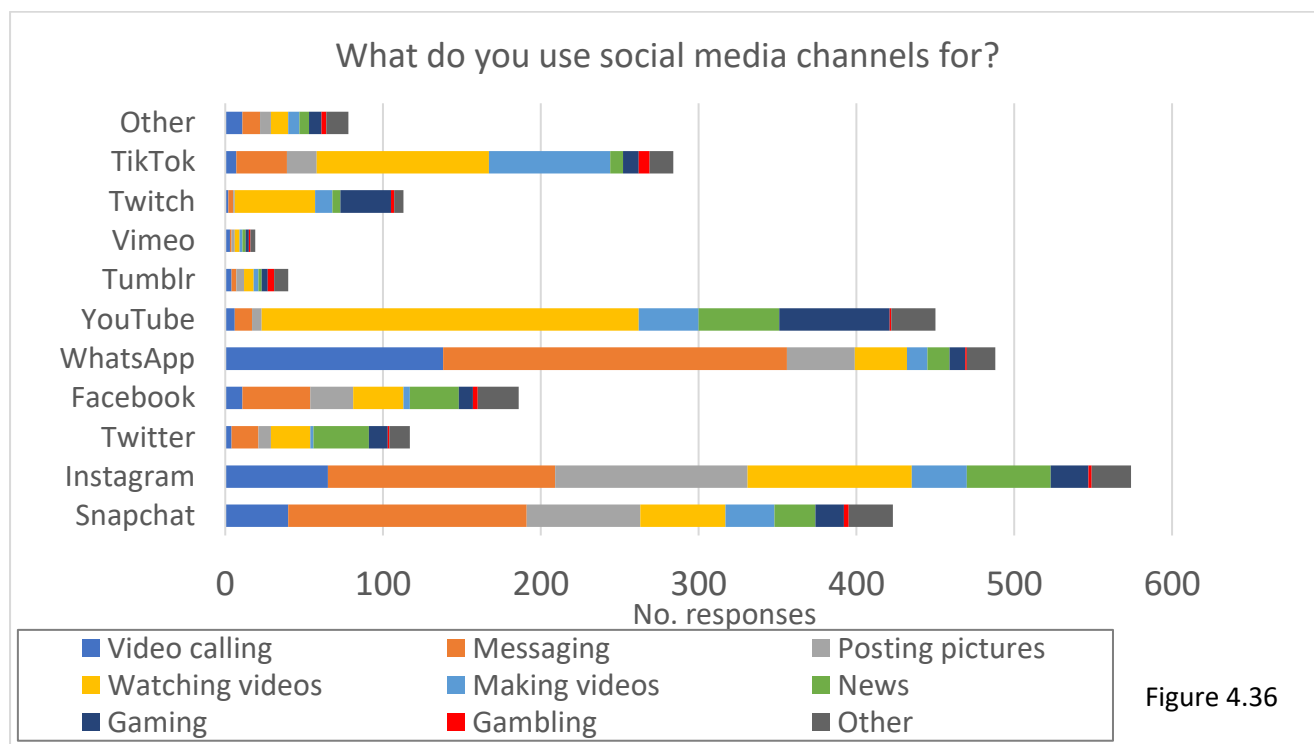


Figure 4.36

Secondary age pupils were asked what issues they had experienced on social media. The results are shown in Figure 4.37 with 27% stating cyberbullying. Parents and professionals also believed this was the issue young people faced the most. Other issues such as racist, sexist, homophobic comments were also encountered. 10% stated anything else as an option, which included 'nothing', 'funny comments', 'nice comments', 'nasty names' and 'weird messages'.

The graph below shows parents and professionals views with slightly different results, however racist comments featured within the top 3 issues faced by all 3 groups asked.

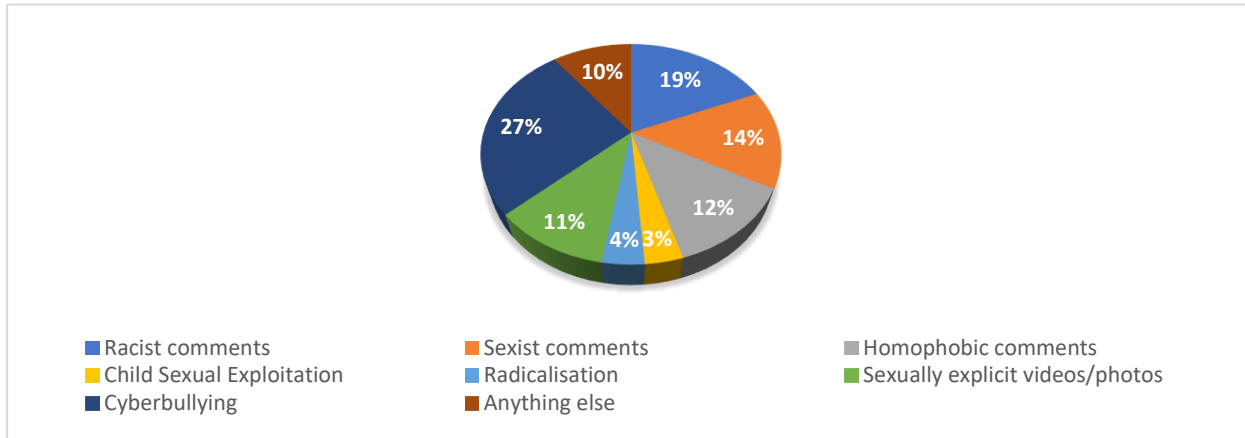


Figure 4.36

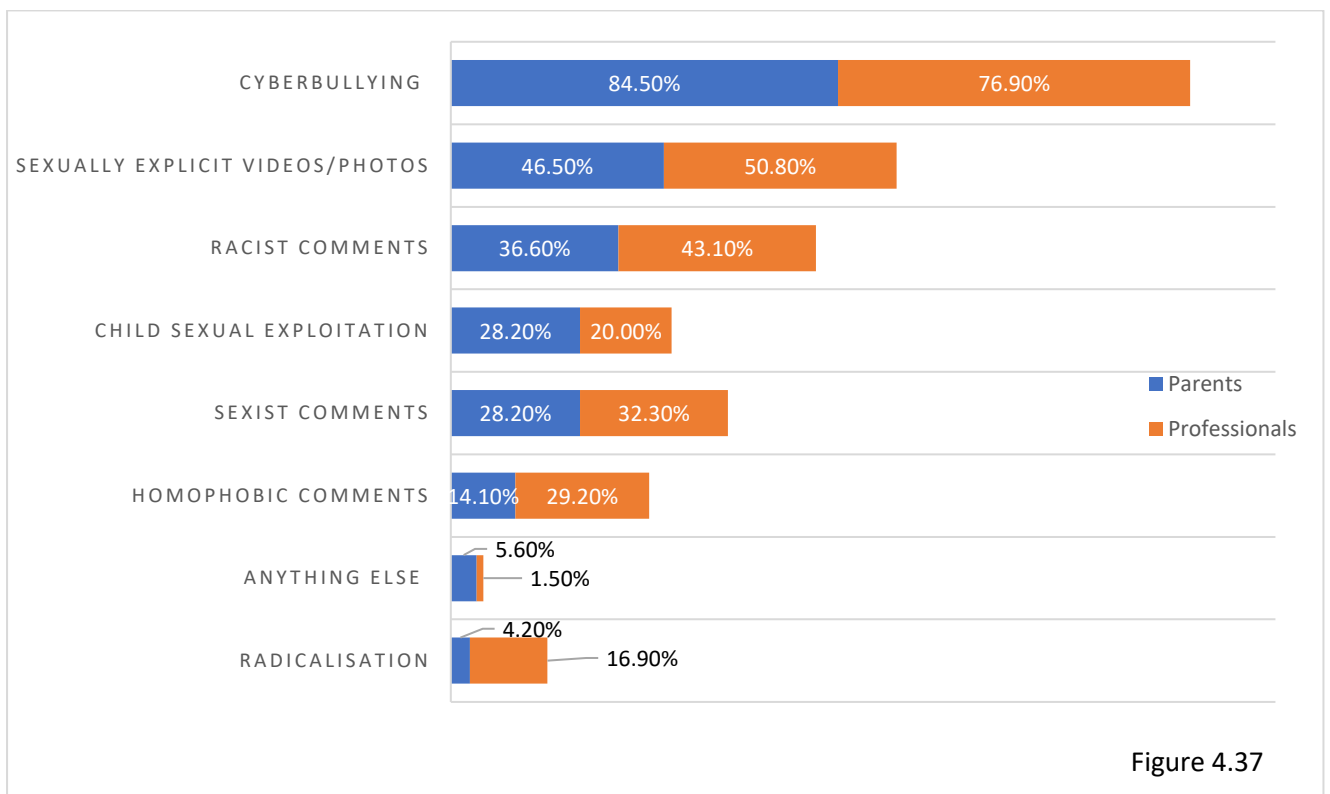


Figure 4.37

Gaming

68.8% of the young people said they game. Of those who game 47.1% claimed they were playing age-appropriate games, over a third, 37.4% stated they were not playing age-appropriate games and 15.5% said they were not sure. Figure 4.38 shows that 57% of the gamers, played daily of which 30% play 3-4 hours a day and 29% play for over 6 hours a day.

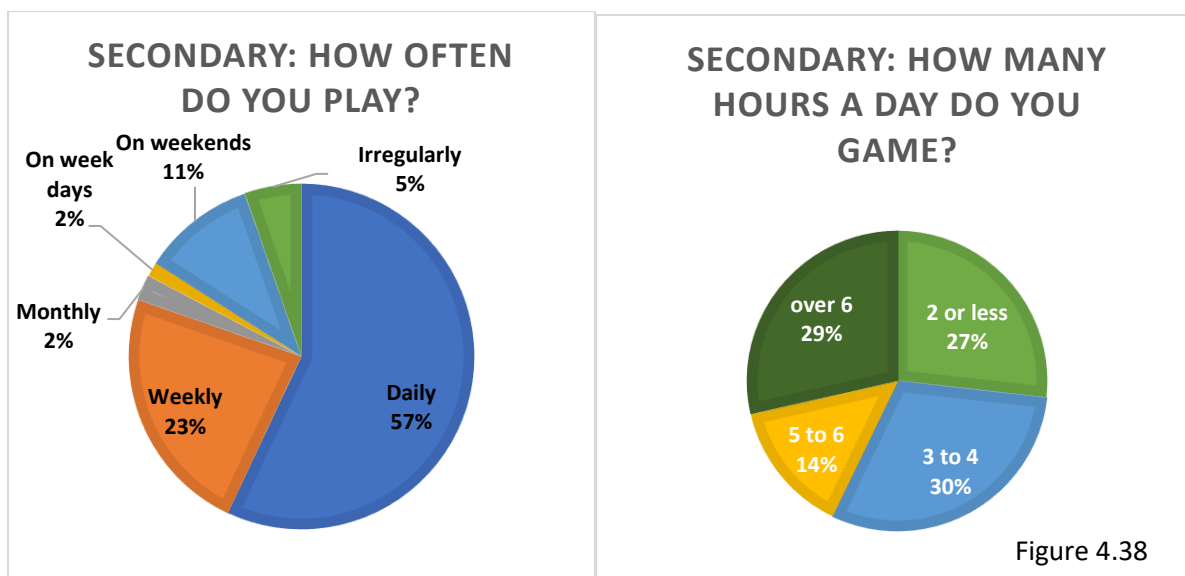
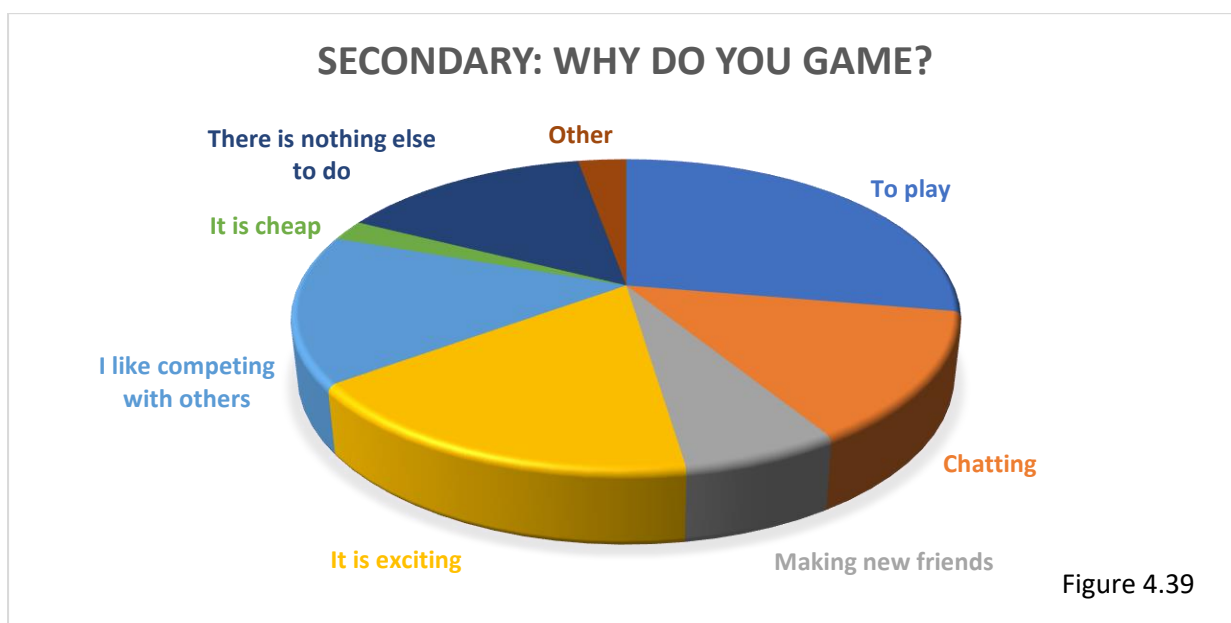


Figure 4.39 states that the top reason for gaming was to play, with 81.2% selecting this response, followed by 50.7% who said it was exciting, 45.4% said they like competing with others and 43% said there is nothing else to do. The young people who stated 'other' stated they game for entertainment, win prizes and money, play with friends or siblings. One young person has referred to gaming as 'A world and to forget what's going on around you'.



4.4 Future

Living in Sandwell

Primary school pupils were asked if they like living in their town and 87.2% said they did because they felt safe, it was a quiet area, they had good neighbours, they lived close to shops, their family lived in the same town, it was multi-cultural, and a couple of children stated they like it because they lived next to McDonalds!

6.6% stated no and 6.2% stated not sure. The reasons provided were because it was no fun, no friends who live on their street, nasty neighbours, too quiet, not much to see, would rather live in Birmingham, a lot of knife crime, speeding, pollution and getting bullied.

Both primary and secondary pupils were asked whether they would continue to live in Sandwell in the future. The results are shown in Figure 4.41 below. A larger percentage of primary pupils wanted to continue staying in Sandwell 41.7% compared to 18% of secondary pupils.

28% of primary did not want to stay in Sandwell and similarly 30% of secondary pupils did not want to either. 30.3% of primary school pupils were not sure compared to over half 52% of the secondary pupils being not sure.

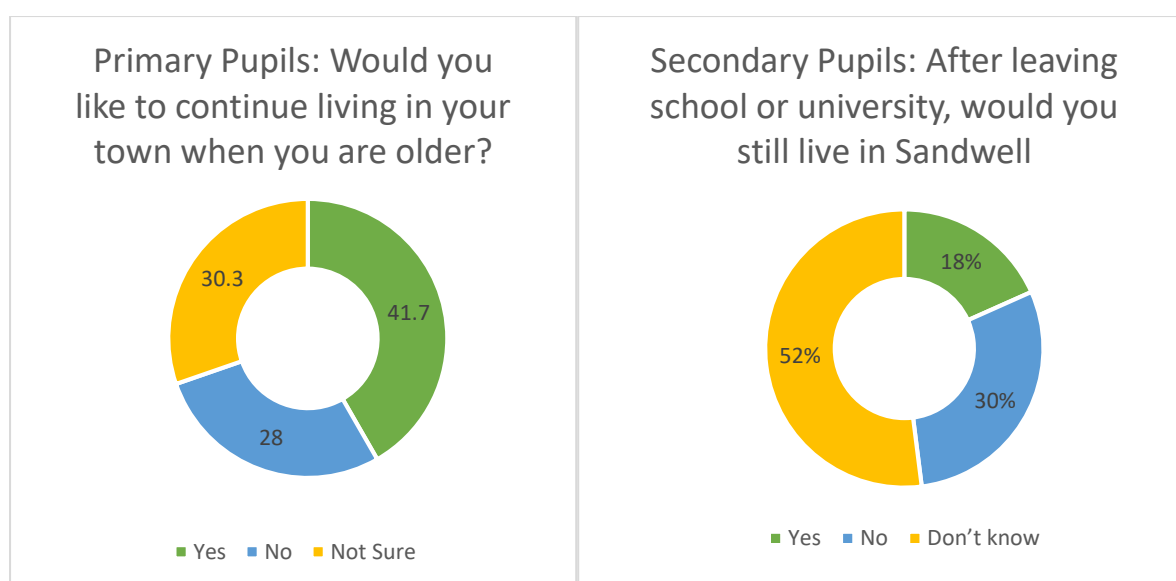


Figure 4.41

The groups of parents and professionals were asked the same question. Figure 4.42 shows only 27% of both groups thought young people would continue to live in Sandwell after University. Reasons provided were that the young people who stayed in Sandwell are likely to be those who have no aspirations, they had a routine and their families were based in Sandwell. Financial circumstances would also mean they would be unable to move elsewhere. A small number of parents and professionals recognised that Sandwell is a developing area and there was easy access to surrounding towns.

Some of the explanations for why both groups thought young people would not want to live in Sandwell were lack of aspirations amongst young people, they would enjoy the quality of life elsewhere and would have more opportunities including jobs, university placements and housing. They compared this to the lack of opportunities in Sandwell including

limited youth activities. The reputation of Sandwell being a 'council estate environment', dirty and deprived and being dangerous due to crime also emerged as reasons. One parent stated she felt Sandwell was a 'racist' area due to the abuse she and her children had faced.

Those who stated 'don't know' claimed the career choices and aspirations of young people would be the deciding factor of whether they continued to live in Sandwell or not. The professionals also claimed financial and family circumstances also make a difference and despite many young people wanting to move away, these factors may be barrier to them doing so.

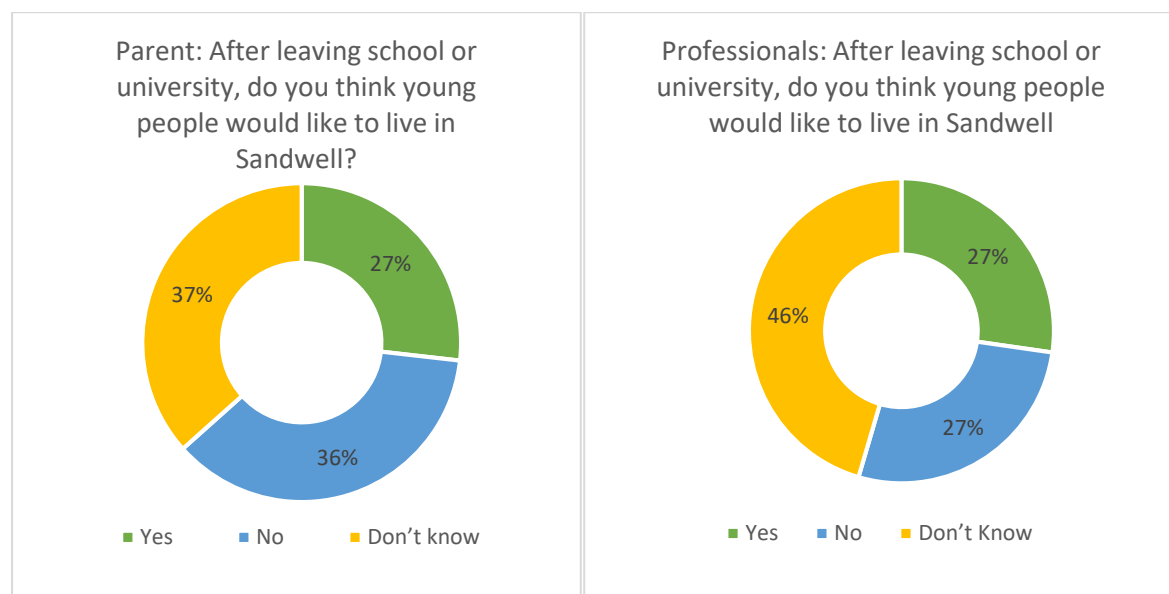
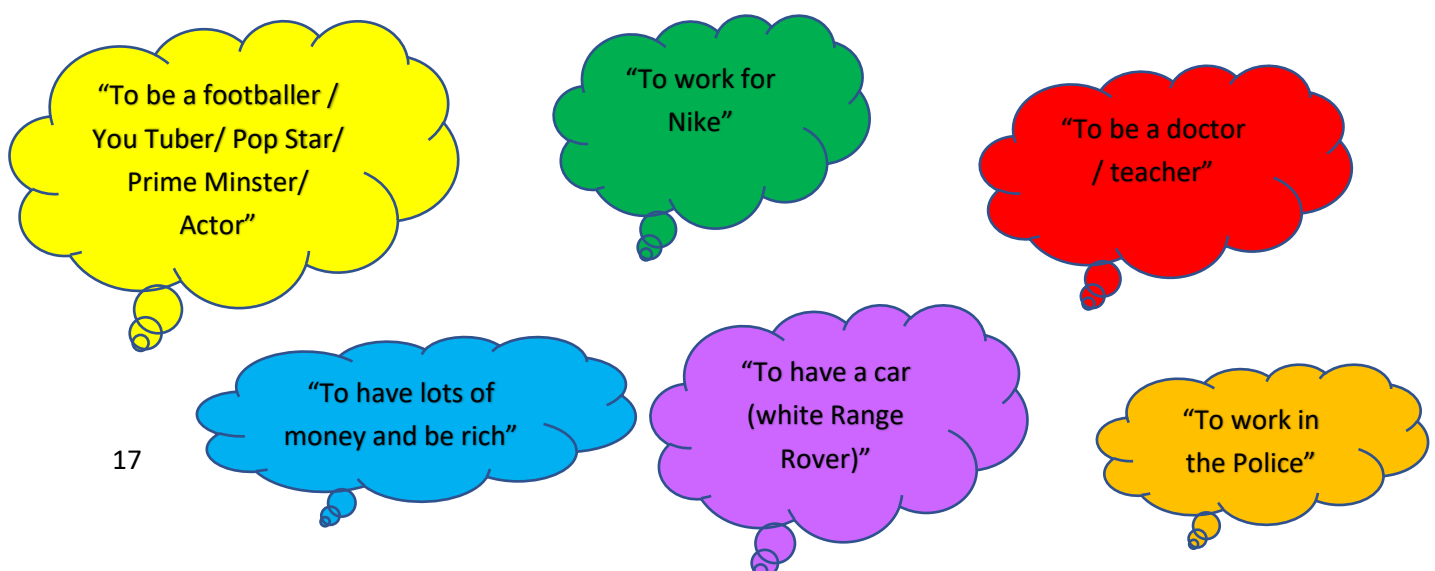


Figure 4.42

Aspirations

Primary school children were asked what two wishes they have for when they grow up. Figure 4.43 shows the range of answers were provided which can be categorised into two types, one for aspirational jobs and focussed on money and finances and the other answers showed their desire to make a positive contribution to society, be the best person they can be and to have positive relationships.



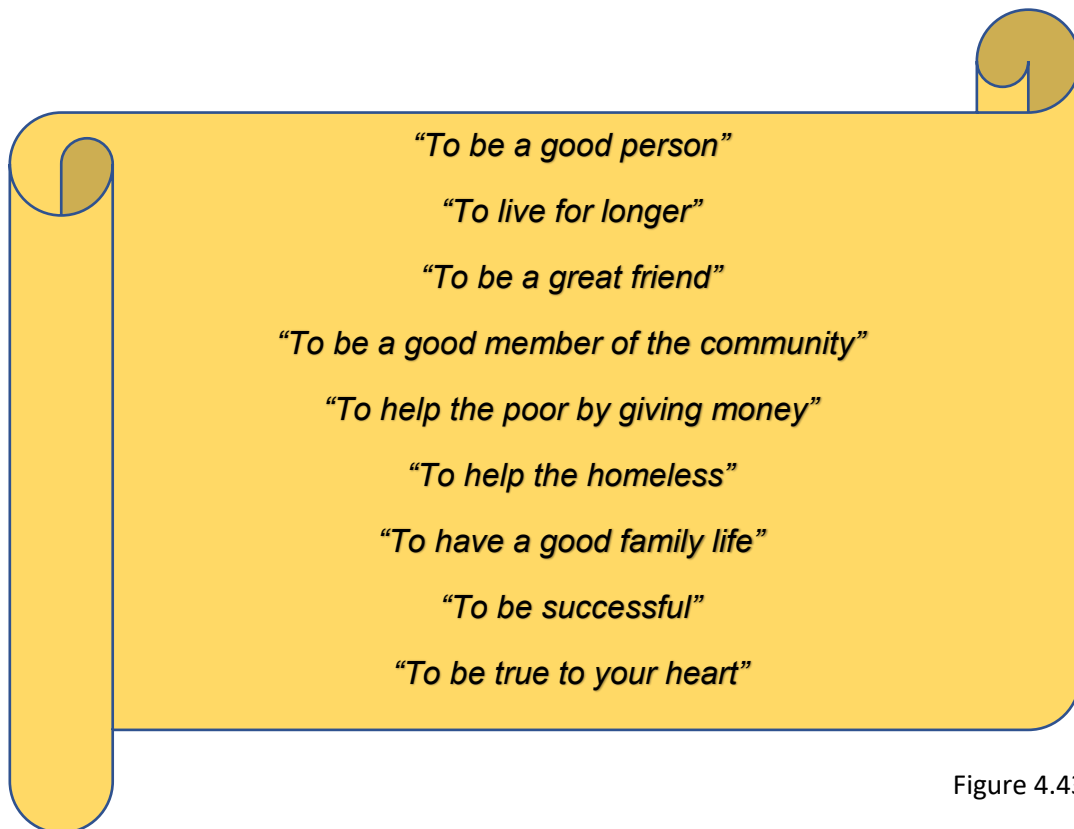


Figure 4.43

Parents and professionals were asked for three aspirations for their children or the young people they work with. Most of the answers were about the characteristics they would like young people to develop. The range of answers included:

- Honesty and be individuals of 'integrity'
- Loyalty
- Kindness
- Happiness
- Valuing themselves
- Building positive relationships
- Good mannered
- Confident
- Outgoing
- Resilient
- Flexible
- Motivated
- Have self-respect
- Be successful
- Contribute to community and society and be good citizens
- Pursue your dreams
- Be successful – go to university, have a good education, travel
- Be independent
- Be healthy
- Experience different cultures
- Be safe and don't live in fear

- Have the ability to make well-balanced choices and understand what's right and wrong
- Stay away from crime
- Good mental wellbeing
- Not to be pressurised by social media

Parents and professionals were asked a follow up question on barriers preventing young people from achieving their aspirations. 61% of parents felt there were barriers and 84.6% of professionals felt there were barriers. The similarities in barriers for both groups were:

- School pressures – exam pressures and school curriculum referred to as 'rigid' with no focus on life skills
- Lack of understanding of special educational needs (SEN)
- Lack of opportunities with careers and social activities
- Crime
- Deprivation e.g. payment of university fees
- Lack of aspiration in young people whether this is down to low confidence or self esteem
- Influences of social media
- Other external influences e.g. wrong crowds of friends etc
- Mental health issues and hence the lack of support to tackle them e.g. stress, anxiety

Professionals additionally stated other factors, predominantly regarding family circumstances, these included:

- Lack of family support
- Neglect
- No parental aspirations
- Lack of positive role models
- Language barriers
- Anger

Development & Skills

Secondary pupils were asked about their future in terms of what vocations they would be interested in finding out more about and skills which will help them to gain independence.

Figure 4.44 provides results for the vocations the young people would be interested in. The most popular responses were finding jobs/careers, followed by college and university education and apprenticeships.

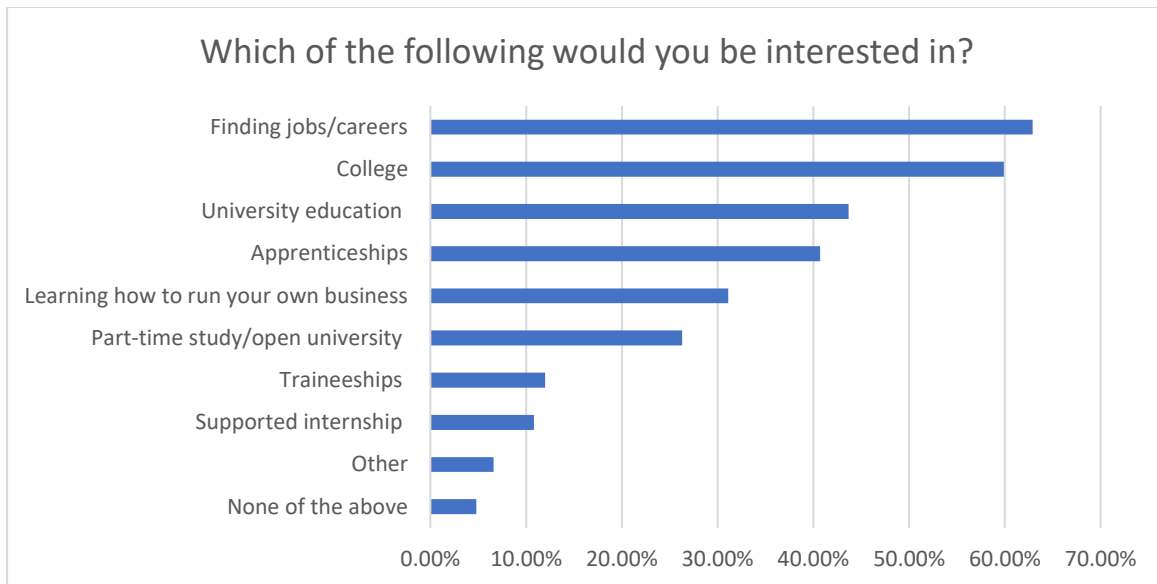


Figure 4.44

Parents and professionals were asked how well they feel young people are educated on the following future learning and career opportunities. The results in figure 4.45 show that both groups feel young people are educated in university education, finding jobs/careers and apprenticeships. However, they are not educated so well on learning how to run their own business which over 30% of secondary pupils stated they were interested to learn about.

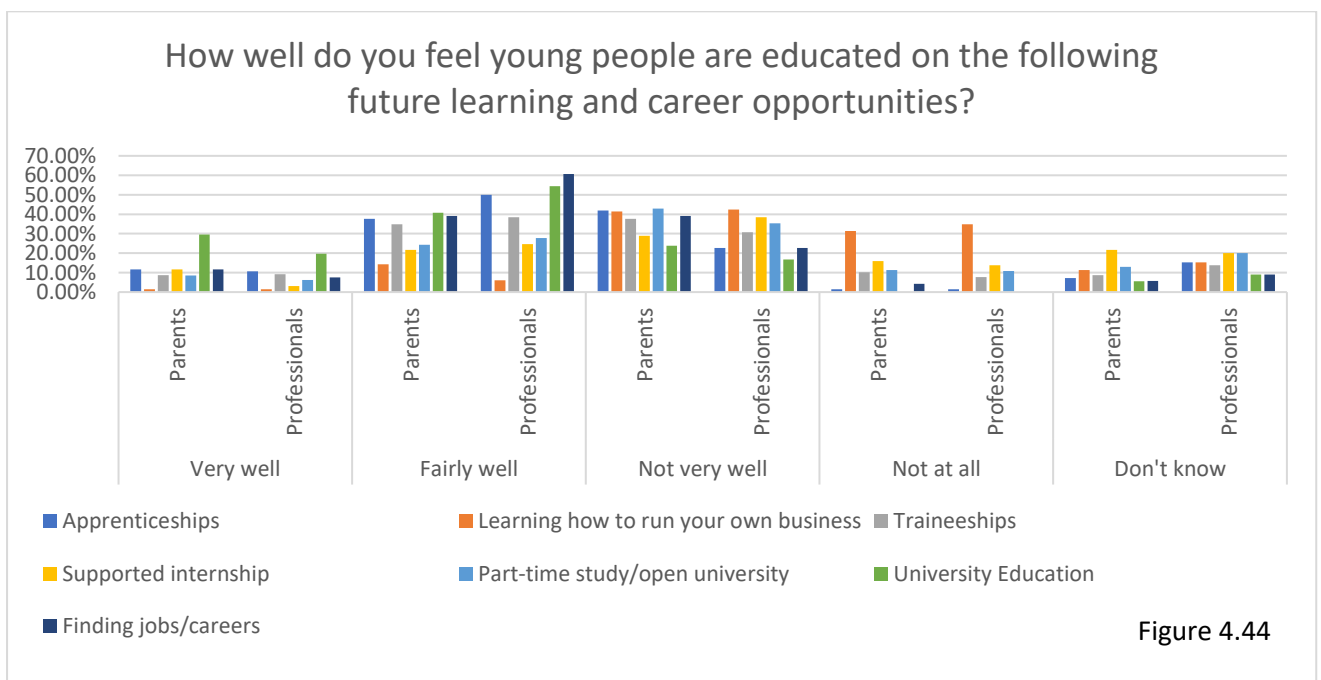


Figure 4.44

The young people in figure 4.45 outline what skills they feel competent in. The skills they feel most competent in are living a healthy lifestyle, caring for a family, doing laundry and managing relationships. The skills require more support in or can't do include setting up their own business, renting or buying a property, opening a bank account and training and development.

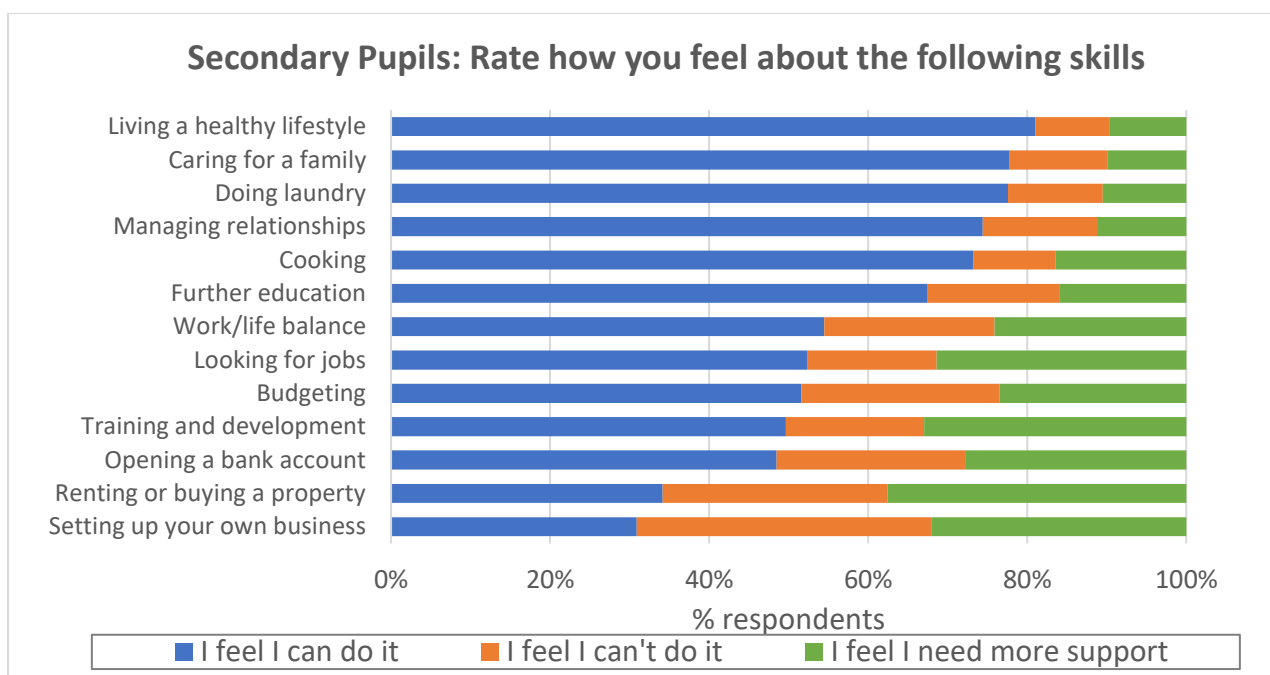
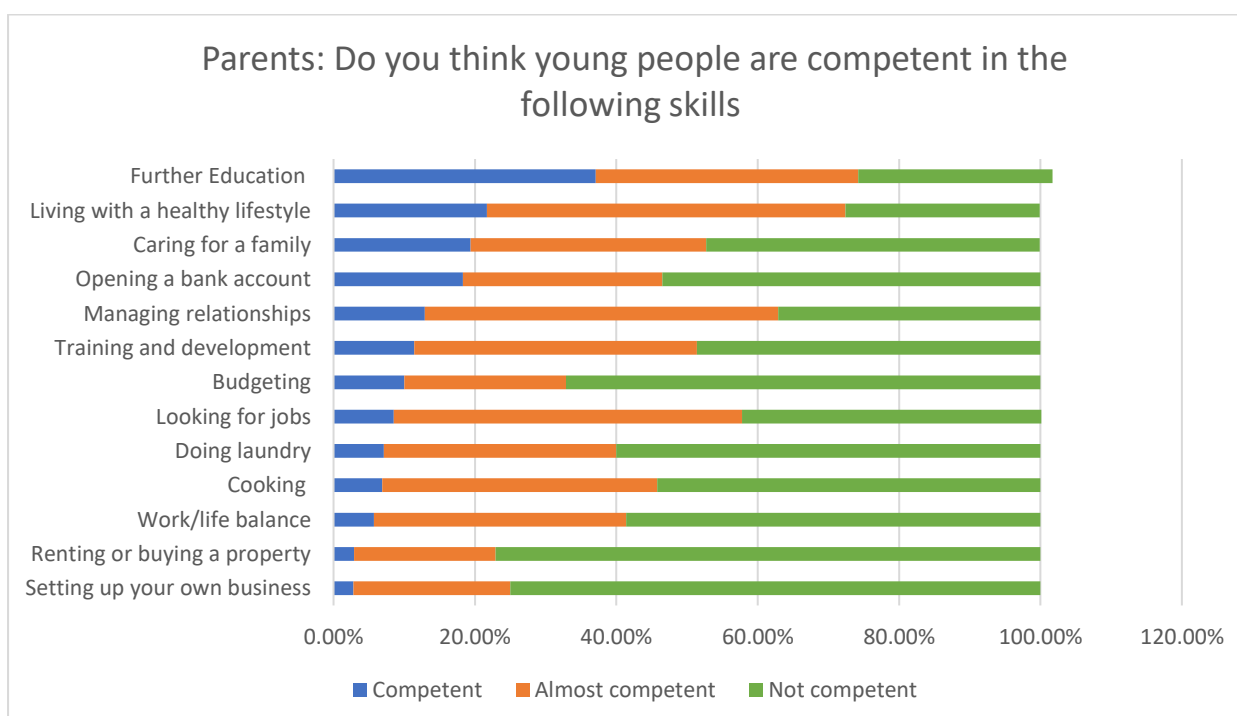


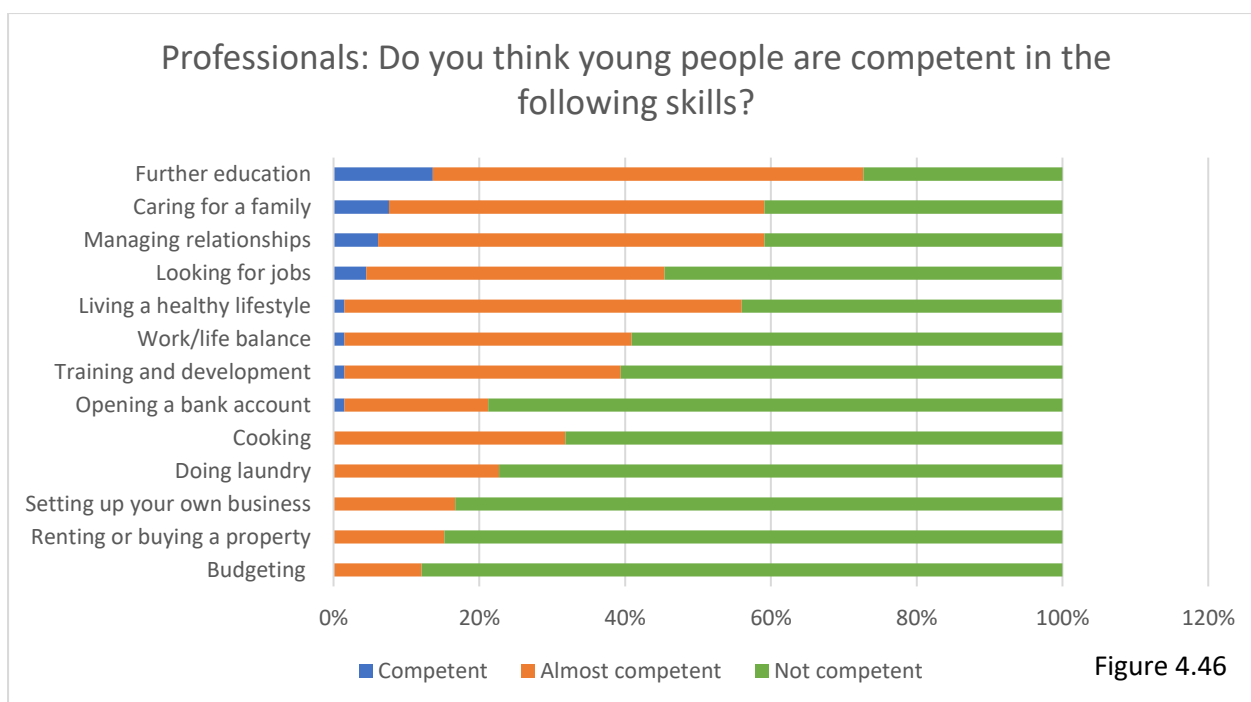
Figure 4.45

Parents and professionals felt the young people were less competent in the skills as shown in figure 4.46.

Parents and professionals both felt young people were almost or competent in further education, living a healthy lifestyle, caring for family and managing relationships. They felt that young people were least competent with setting up their own business or renting/buying a property which concurs with young people's responses.

However, parents felt they were not very competent in managing a work/life balance, whereas professionals felt they were not as competent on budgeting.





4.5 Support Services

The groups were asked a range of questions on various support services.

Policing

The first set of questions were regarding policing to primary and secondary school children. The two questions asked were whether the pupils knew who their local/link police officer was, and secondly would they know how to report something. The results are shown below in figure 4.51.

	Do you know who your local/link Police Officer is?		Would you know how to report something to the Police?	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Yes	31.4%	14.7%	62.3%	68.6%
No	68.6%	85.3%	13.6%	13.4%
Not Sure	N/A	N/A	24.1%	18.1%

Figure 4.51

The results show that although many pupils are unaware of their local police officer, over two thirds are aware of how to report something to the police.

School Nursing

A series of questions were asked of all four groups about school nursing. The pupils were asked whether they were aware if their school had a school nurse, if they knew who the school nurse was/ how to get into contact with them. Secondary pupils were additionally asked if they knew what services the school nurse offered. The adults were asked whether they thought children and young people would be aware of the school nurse service, how to get into contact with them and if they thought the young

people knew what services they offered. Figure 4.52 provides a breakdown of the results.

Awareness of school nursing				
	Primary	Secondary	Parents	Professionals
Yes	43.90%	66.10%	45.60%	28.80%
No	56.10%	33.90%	32.40%	43.90%
Not Sure	N/A	N/A	22.10%	27.30%

Do you know who your school nurse is? How to get into contact with the school nurse				
	Primary	Secondary	Parents	Professionals
Yes	17.70%	38.02%	29.40%	21.20%
No	67.40%	62.00%	39.70%	56.10%
Not Sure	14.90%	N/A	30.90%	22.70%

Awareness of services school nurse offers			
	Secondary	Parents	Professionals
Yes	19.50%	23.50%	6.10%
No	47.70%	54.40%	69.70%
Not Sure	32.90%	22.10%	24.20%

Figure 4.52

The results above show the secondary school pupils have a greater awareness of school nursing service and how to contact the school nurse compared to primary school pupils, however only 23.5% knew what services they offered. The majority of parents and professionals thought the young people didn't know about the service and how to contact the school nurse.

31.8% of secondary pupils (95 in total) had visited their school nurse and 90% of them had accessed them through their drop-in session at school.

The preferred way of accessing the school nurse was through the drop-in session at school, as figure 4.53 shows.

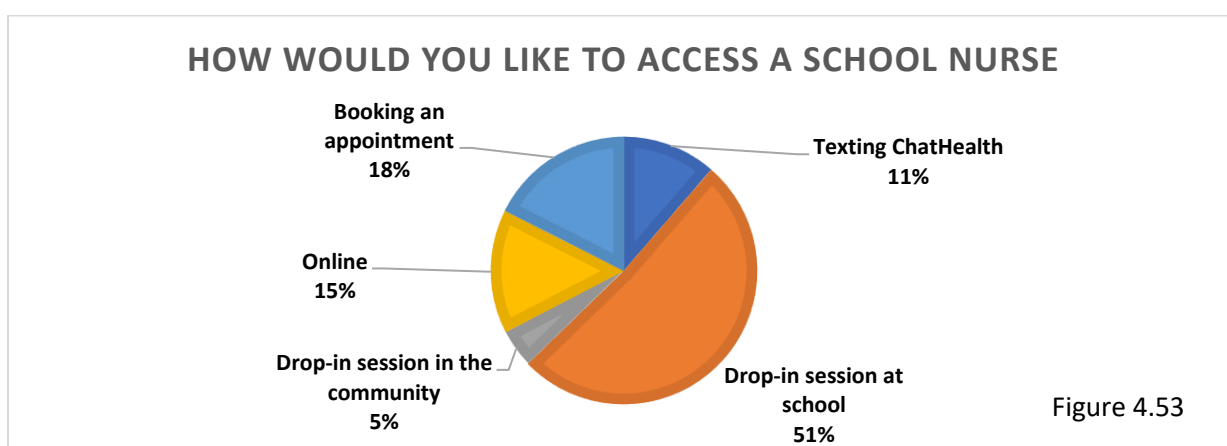


Figure 4.53

Other Services

Figure 4.54 shows what support services secondary pupils were aware of, the first graph showing all ages and the second by breakdown of age groups.

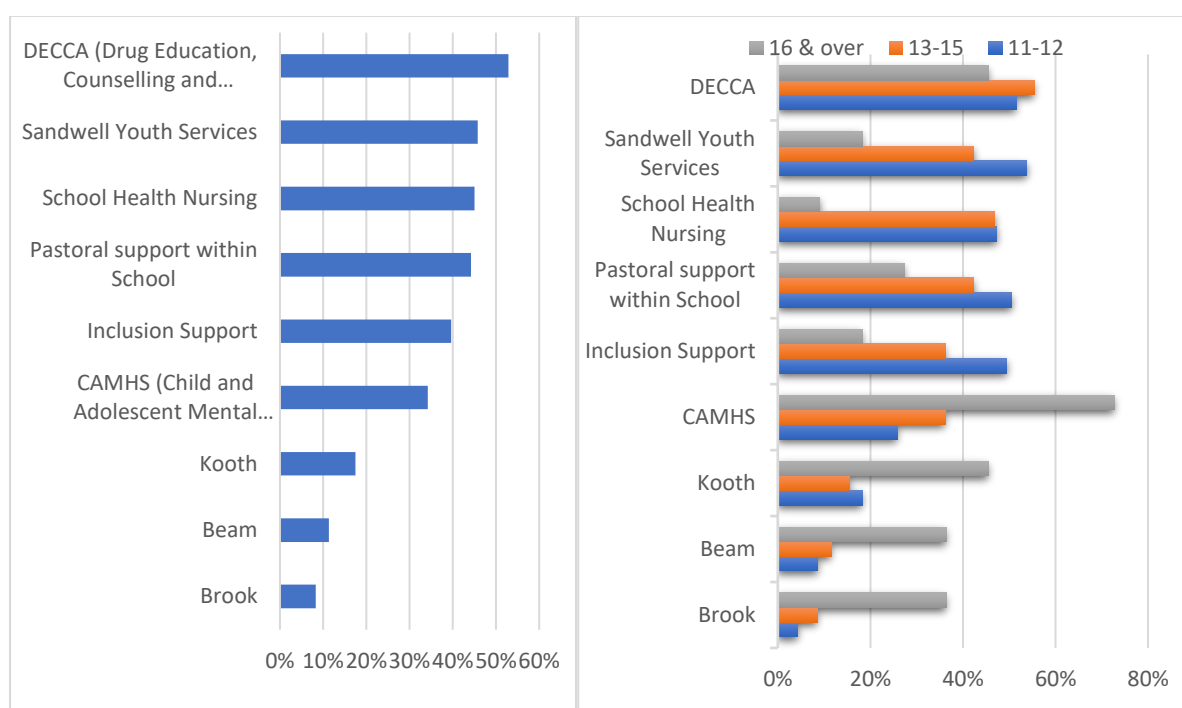


Figure 4.54

The support services young people were aware of the most were DECCA, Sandwell Youth Services, School Health Nursing and pastoral support in school. Breaking this down by age highlights that 11-12s and 13-15s were less aware of the support from mental health services such as Beam and Kooth and sexual health services such as Brook.

Both parents and professionals appear to be aware of support services available to young people as demonstrated in Figure 4.55 but do not think young people are aware of them. The only area they were confident in young people knowing about was pastoral support within school. Both groups agreed that Youth Services and Inclusion support were services they were least aware of. However, Figure 4.54 clearly shows that the 11-12s and 13-15-year olds appear to be aware of Youth Services.

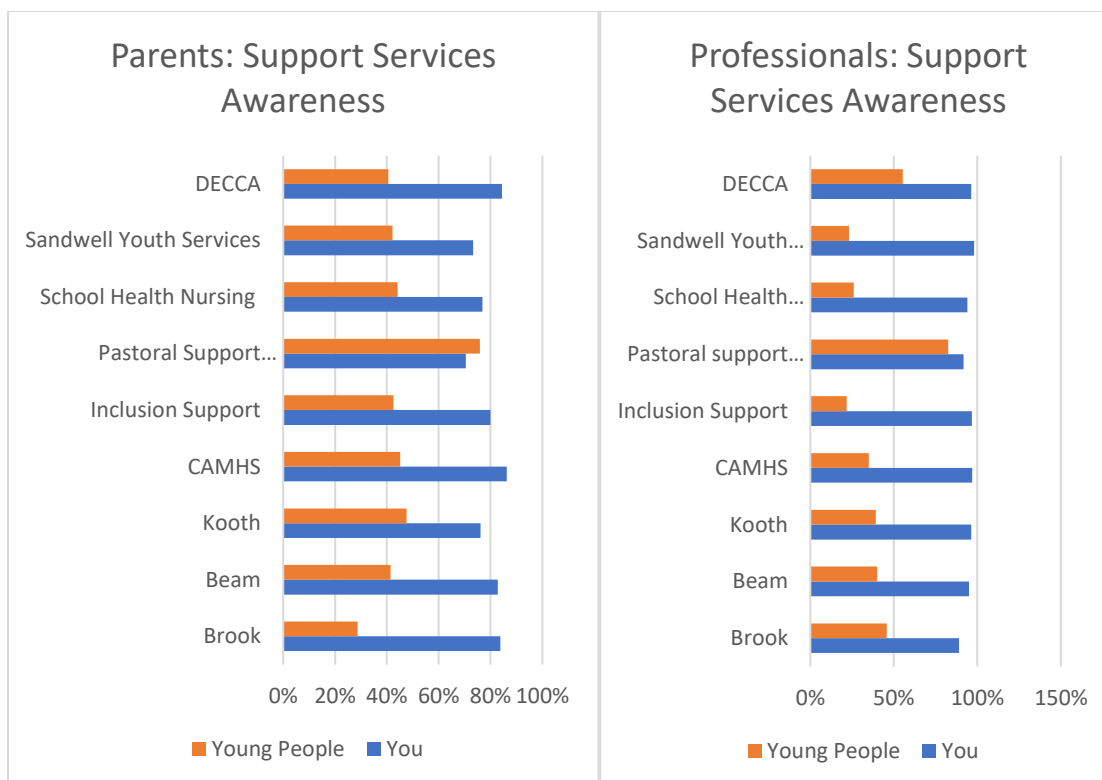


Figure 4.55

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Secondary school pupils were asked what they think would improve their mental health and wellbeing. Figure 4.56 shows that extra support during exam season had the highest response. It is important to note school work and exams were identified as one of the top 3 issues in section 4.2. Having family support for deprivation, having someone to talk to as well as the ability to voice views and opinions freely also ranked quite high. When breaking the graph down by age groups, 11-12s and 13-15s had similar responses

For over 16s although the numbers were low, 45.5% felt the ability to voice views and opinions freely was the most important factor to improving mental health and wellbeing. Extra support during exam season and offering more opportunities to make friends and access to confidence training and development also rated high.

The parents didn't think family support would be a major factor in improving their mental health and wellbeing, however 11-15year olds and professionals felt this was important.

Young people didn't seem to think making friends or having more activities were as important as both parents and professionals felt.

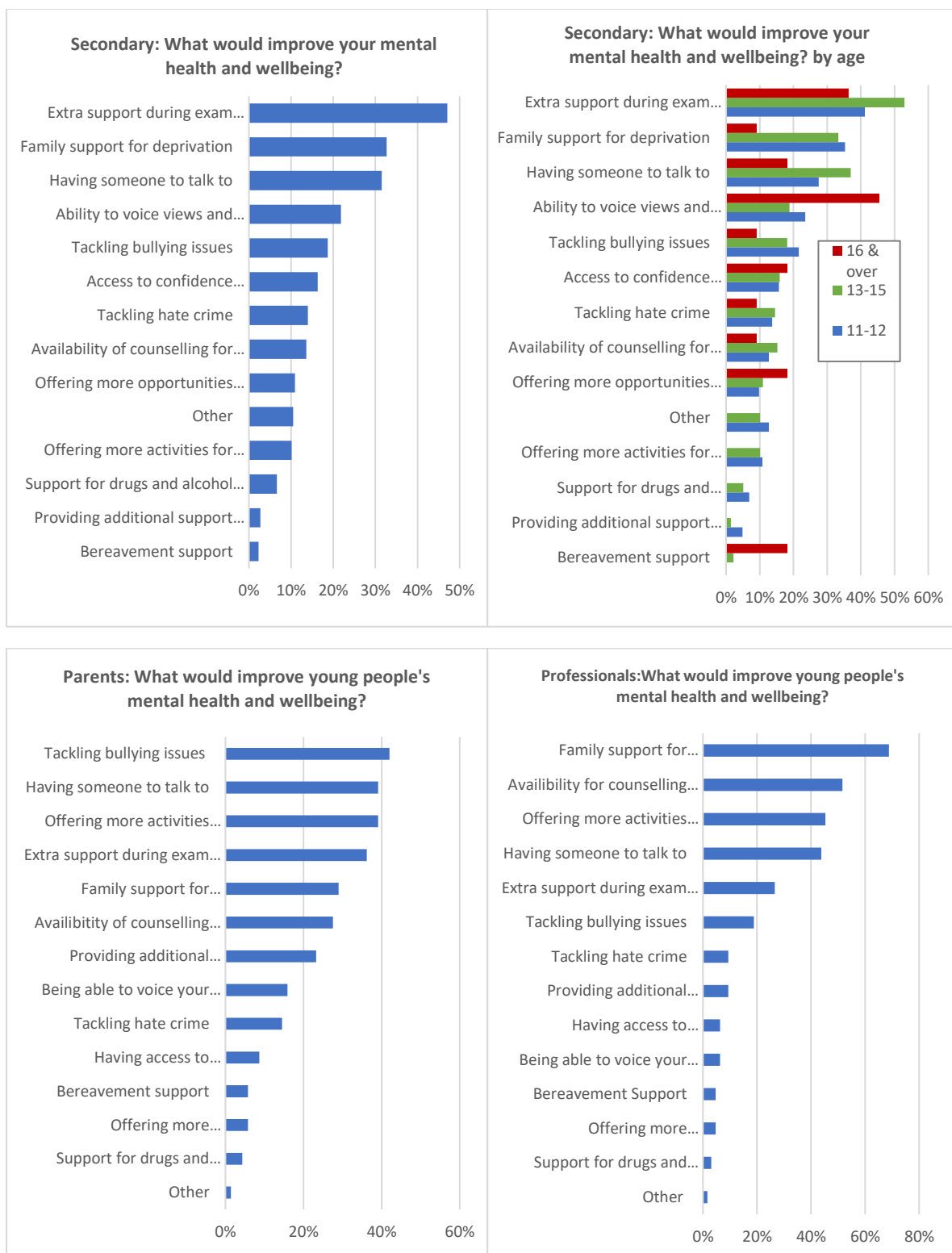


Figure 4.56

Being Safe

Primary school children were asked about safety and who they would speak to if they had any concerns. In total 95.7% of children felt safe in school with only 19 children who said 'no' and this was because of 'mean' people, a knife being brought into school and bullying. 84.6% of children felt safe outside of school, 67 children explained this was due to crime with many references on kidnapping and getting killed. Strangers were also mentioned, along with gangs, guns, knives. A few also stated they were worried about getting lost or hurt.

Figure 4.57 shows who they would tell if they had a problem in school and out of school. If there was a problem in school. The children stated they would tell their teacher or a parent/carer. Outside of school, they are likely to tell their parent/carer

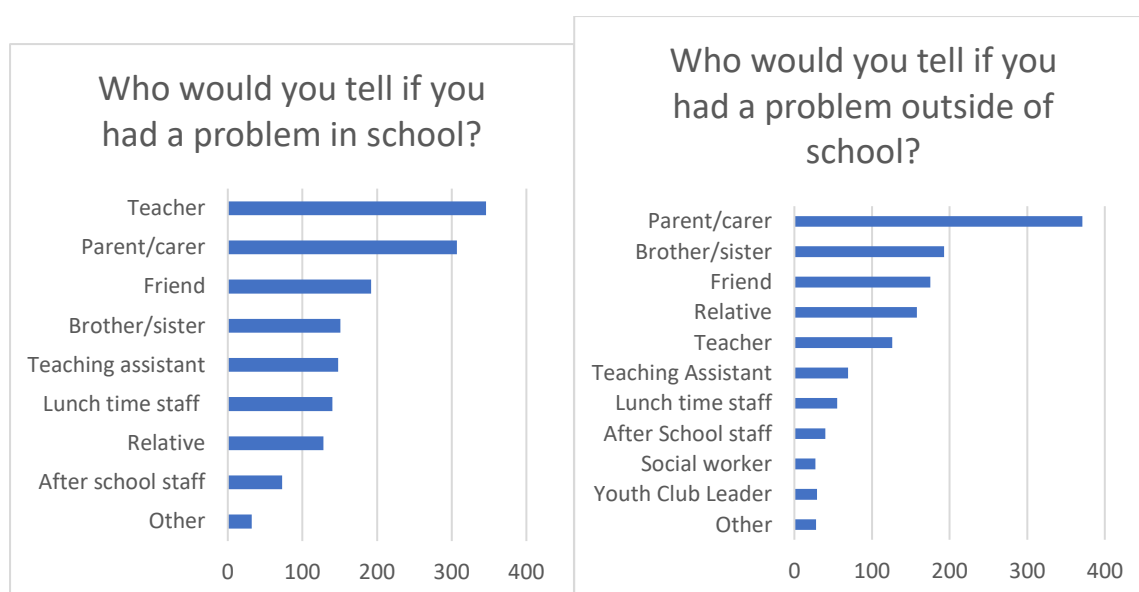


Figure 4.57

4.6 Being Healthy

Exercise

Primary and secondary pupils were asked where they exercise. Results below in Figure 4.61 show that for primary school children, they mainly exercise during PE in school and in the park outside of school. For secondary school pupils they exercise predominately at home. Parents and professionals thought young people exercise at school or with sporting clubs/groups.

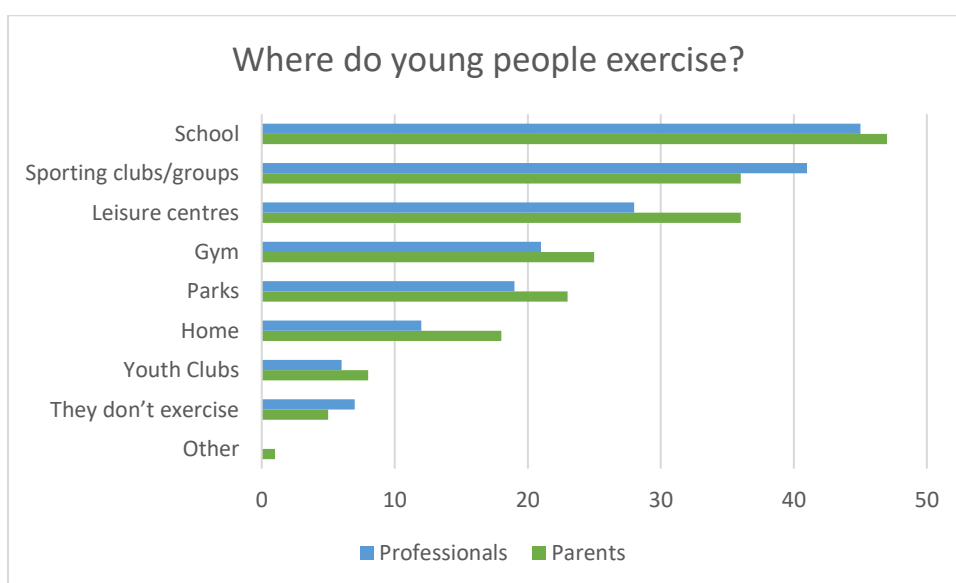
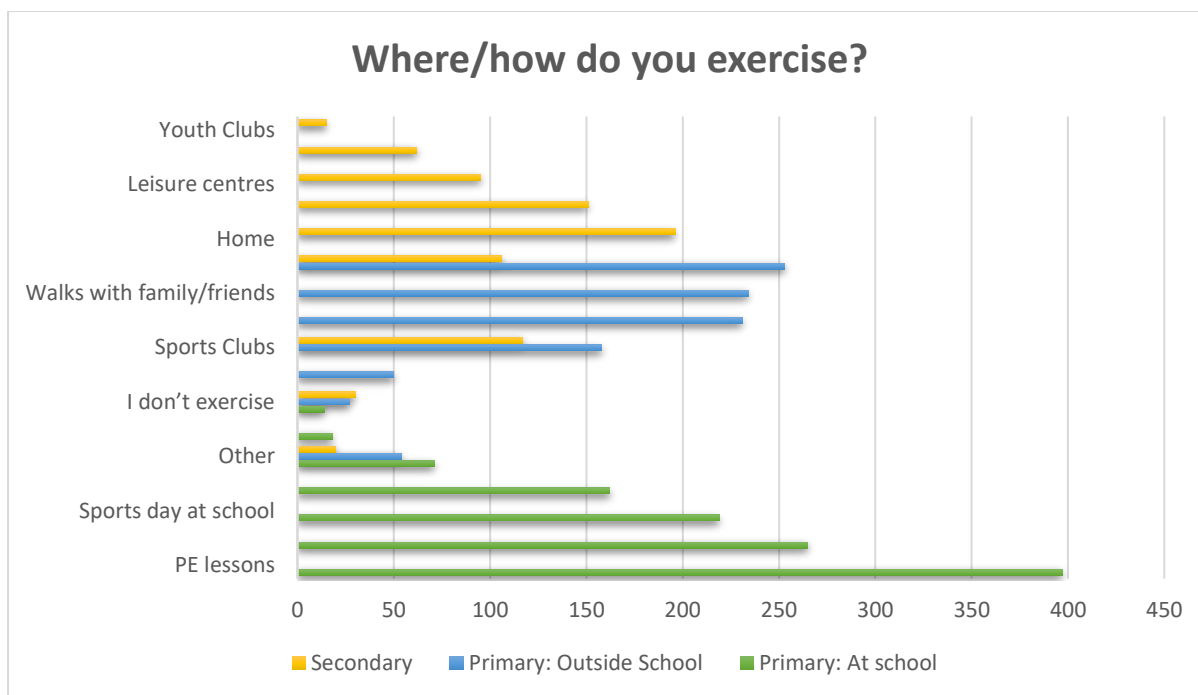


Figure 4.61

When secondary pupils, parents and professionals were asked to rank the reasons why they exercised, these matched on the whole, apart from young people ranking their second reason as losing weight, and third as getting stronger, whereas parents and professionals answered the other way around. Listed below are the reasons and rankings for secondary pupils:

1. To look good
2. To lose weight
3. To get stronger
4. To make friends
5. To improve my mood
6. To have better stamina

7. To get more energy
8. To help with long term health conditions
9. Other

All three groups were then asked if they felt the council could help more in directing young people to the available sporting/physical activity facilities. Figure 4.62 shows 41% of secondary school pupils felt the council could do more. The majority of both groups of adults felt the council could do more.

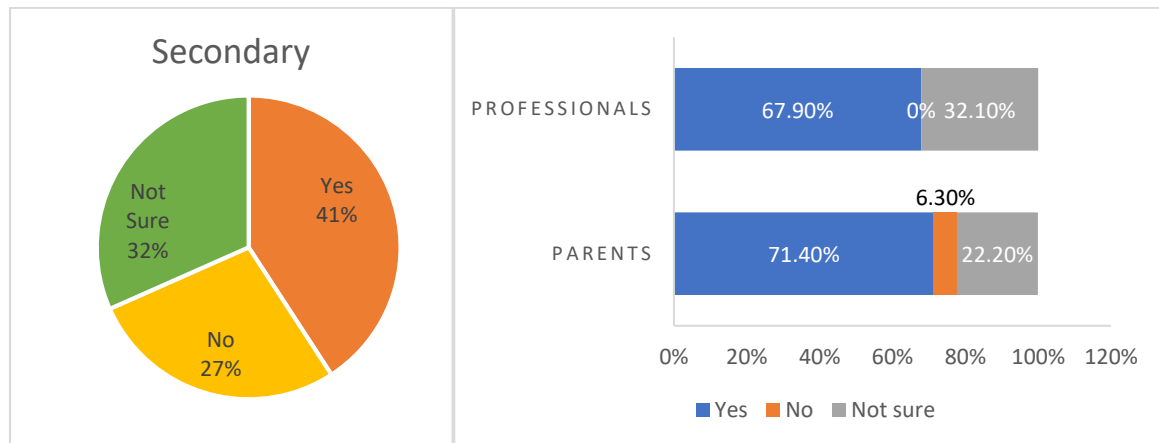


Figure 4.61

Healthy Eating

Primary school children were asked additional questions on healthy meals. Figure 4.62 outlines that the 88.50% of children on average think they have healthy meals in and out of school.

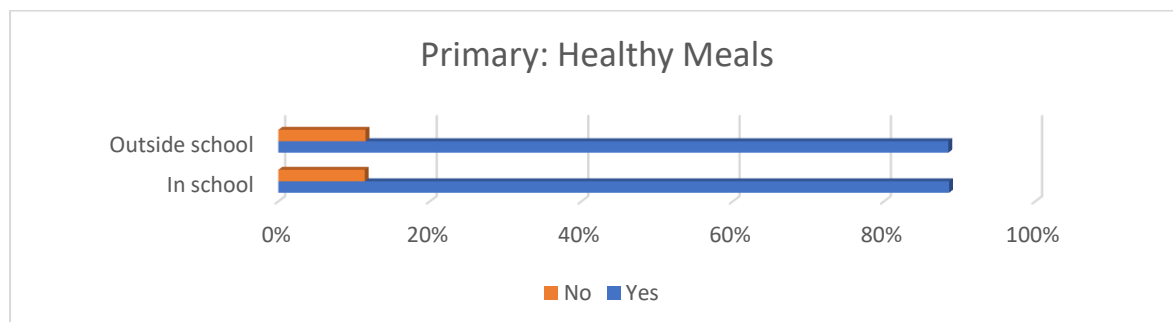


Figure 4.62

4.7 Socialising with Friends

Within this section each person was asked about play and youth provision specific to the town they lived in. *(Please note and refer to section 4.1 demographics and limitations as a reminder that there were no primary or secondary participants who lived in Wednesbury therefore most graphs presented in this section will omit the town (unless a young person has entered the town incorrectly), even though areas of the town may be referred to by the participants)*

Parks

Primary pupils identified the most popular parks they visit as Dartmouth Park, Britannia, Warley Woods and Sandwell Valley. The 'other' category had references made to parks located in the vicinity of their school, outside their houses or areas they live, these are not necessarily parks, but are green spaces. A number of other parks outside of the Borough were mentioned including:

- Kings Hill Park, Darlaston
- Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham
- Summer Hill Park, Birmingham

A few primary school children also stated they couldn't go to parks alone, because they weren't safe, with references to gangs and stabbings.

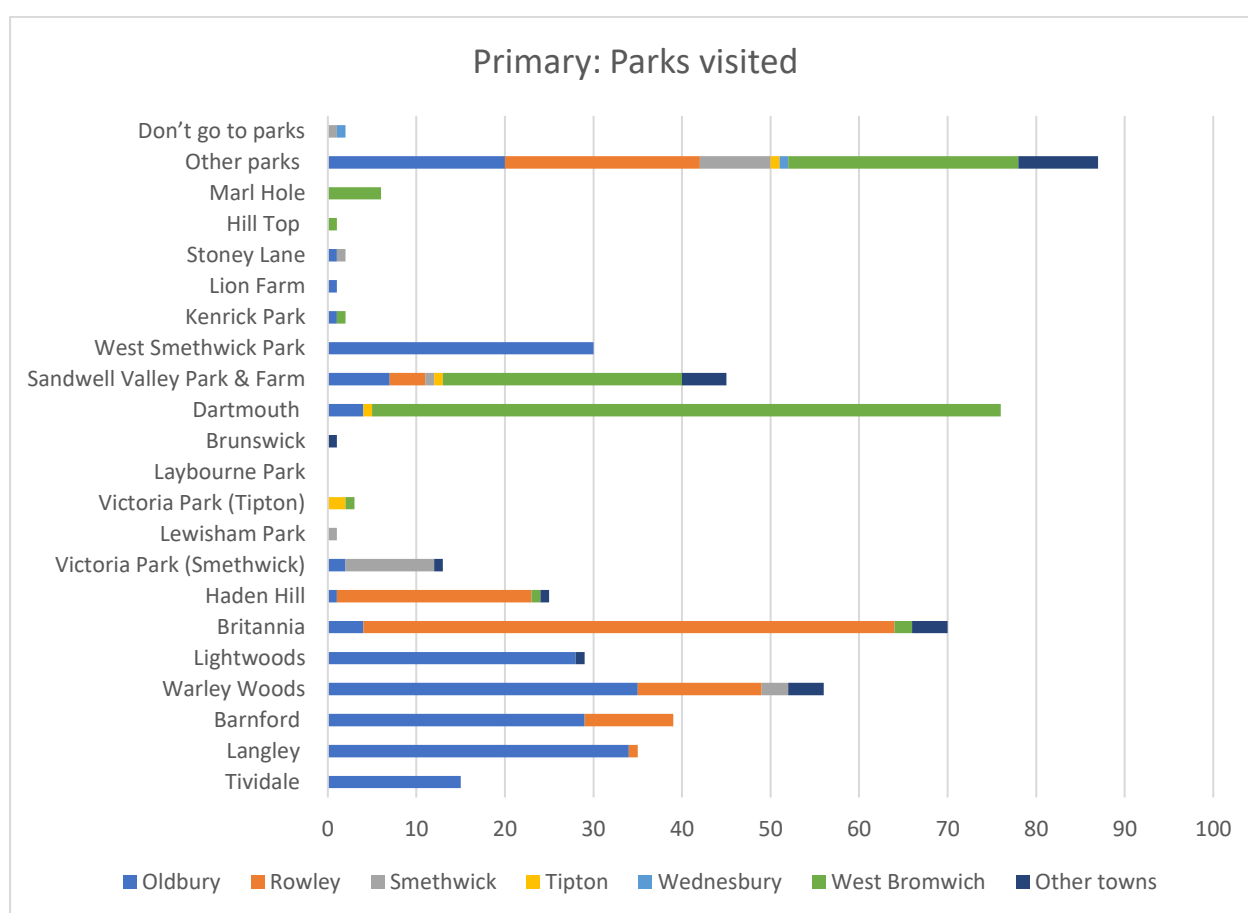
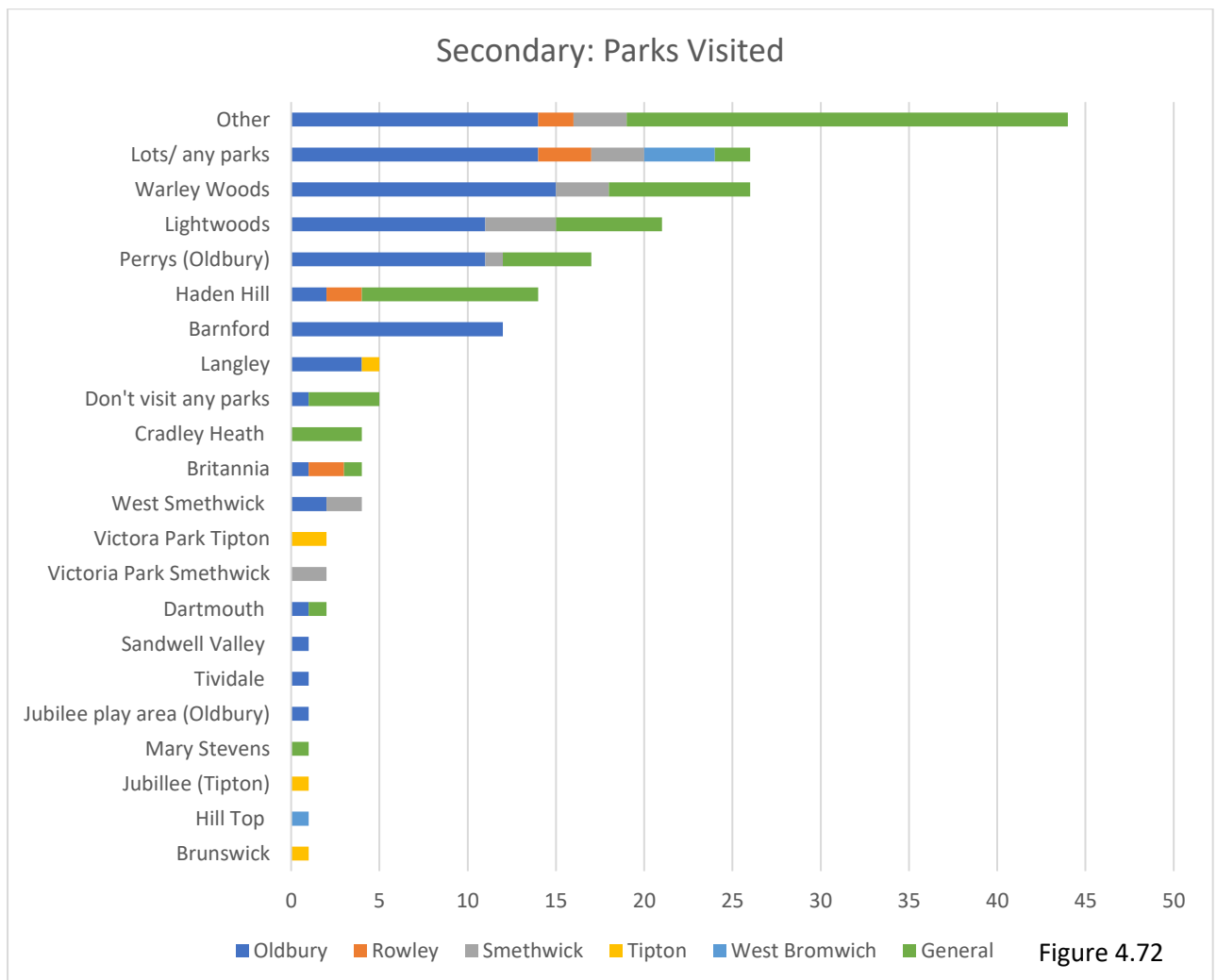


Figure 4.71

For secondary pupils the responses were more varied. In terms of Sandwell parks, the most popular were Warley Woods, Lightwoods Park and Haden Hill along with Perrys Park which students made reference to being by Perryfields High School. 5 stated they didn't visit parks, 26 visited a number of parks. 44 references were made about other parks not in Sandwell, these included:

- Howley Grange Park in Quinton
- Hurst Green Park in Halesowen
- Woodgate Valley in Quinton

- Clent Hills in Worcester
- Baremore Park in Cradley, Dudley
- Netheron Park in Dudley
- Hurst Green Park in Halesowen
- Hutingtree Park in Halesowen
- Cannock Chase in Cannock
- Queens Park
- Cannon Hill Park in Birmingham
- Olive Hill in Halesowen
- Grove Park, Harborne



Parents and professionals concurred with the responses of primary and secondary school children responding with the same parks mentioned, however professionals thought Sandwell Valley Park would be more popular.

Home Environment

The pupils were asked where they play/ hang out with their friends in their home environment. For primary school pupils the highest response was meeting friends in their own home. For secondary school pupils who chose to respond to this question,

both own home and friends' homes had a similar response rate. As did the parents and professionals survey results for this question.

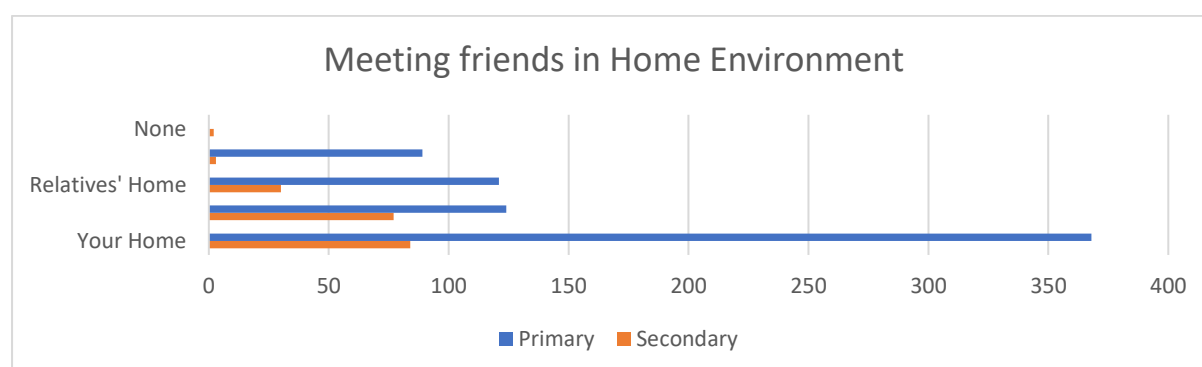
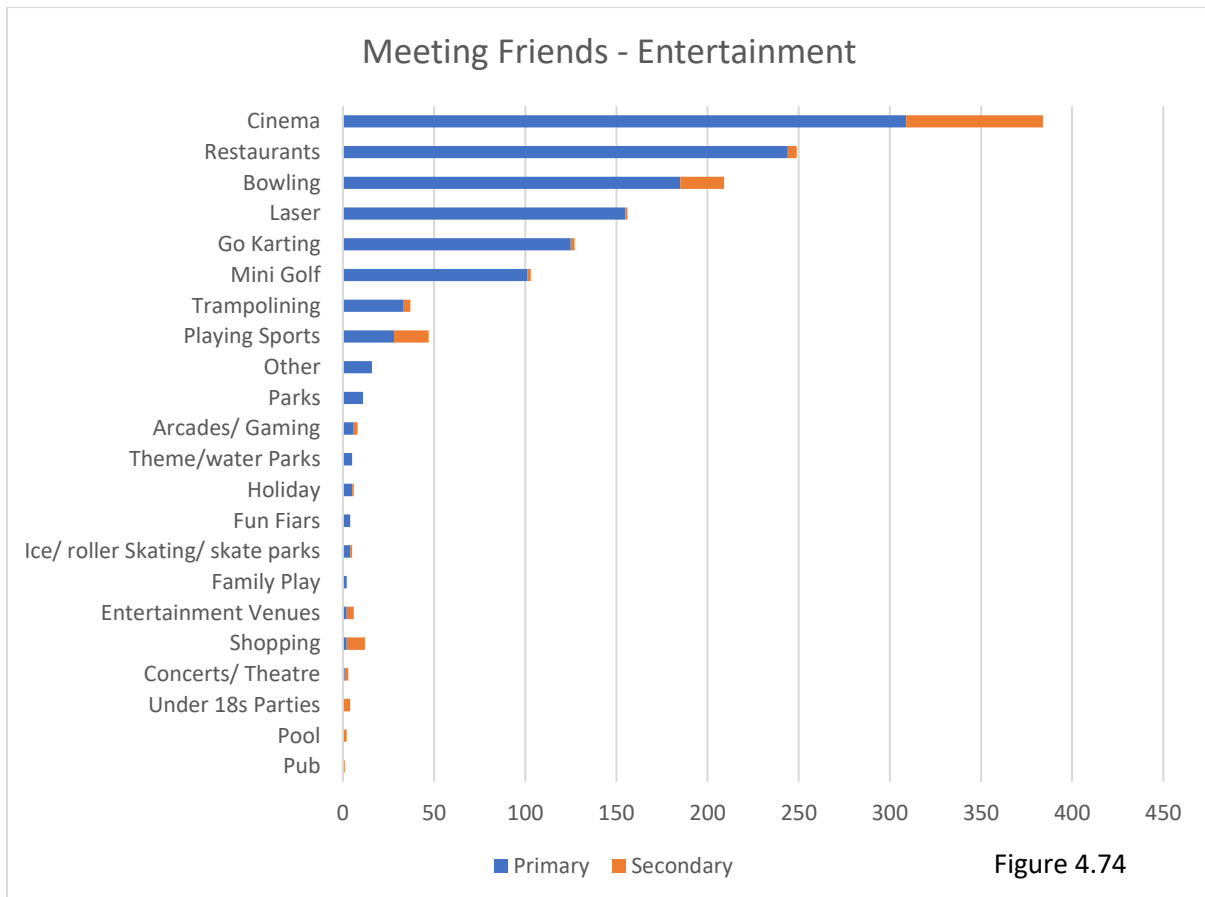


Figure 4.73

Entertainment

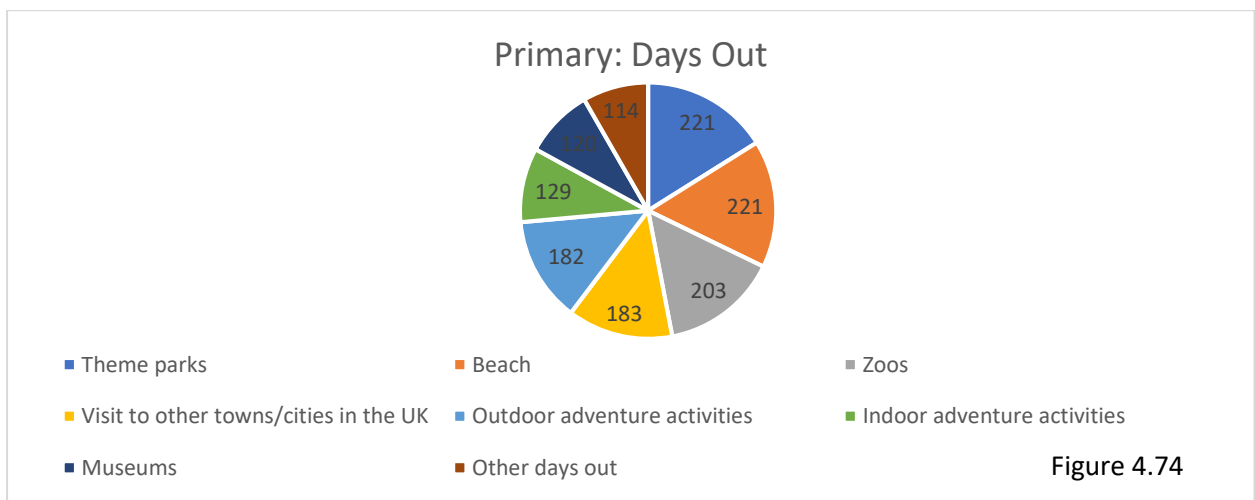
The pupils were asked in what entertainment place they meet friends or hang out with them. Primary school children were offered options of cinema, restaurants/food places, bowling, laser tag, go karting, mini golf and other. Other has been broken down into more categories on figure 4.74 below. Secondary school pupils were offered a free text box, which resulted in fewer responses. From the responses received figure 4.74 shows that the most popular responses for both groups were cinema, bowling and restaurants. In the 'other' category for primary pupils' references were made to play centres such as Space Hoppers.

Parents agreed with what the young people had highlighted as the most popular entertainment venues, but shisha lounge and nail bars were also mentioned, however this came from just one parent. The professionals had stated the same as the young people.



Days Out

Primary school children in figure 4.75 have identified the different types of days out they like. This resulted in a variety of responses to the options, the most popular being theme parks, beach and zoos.

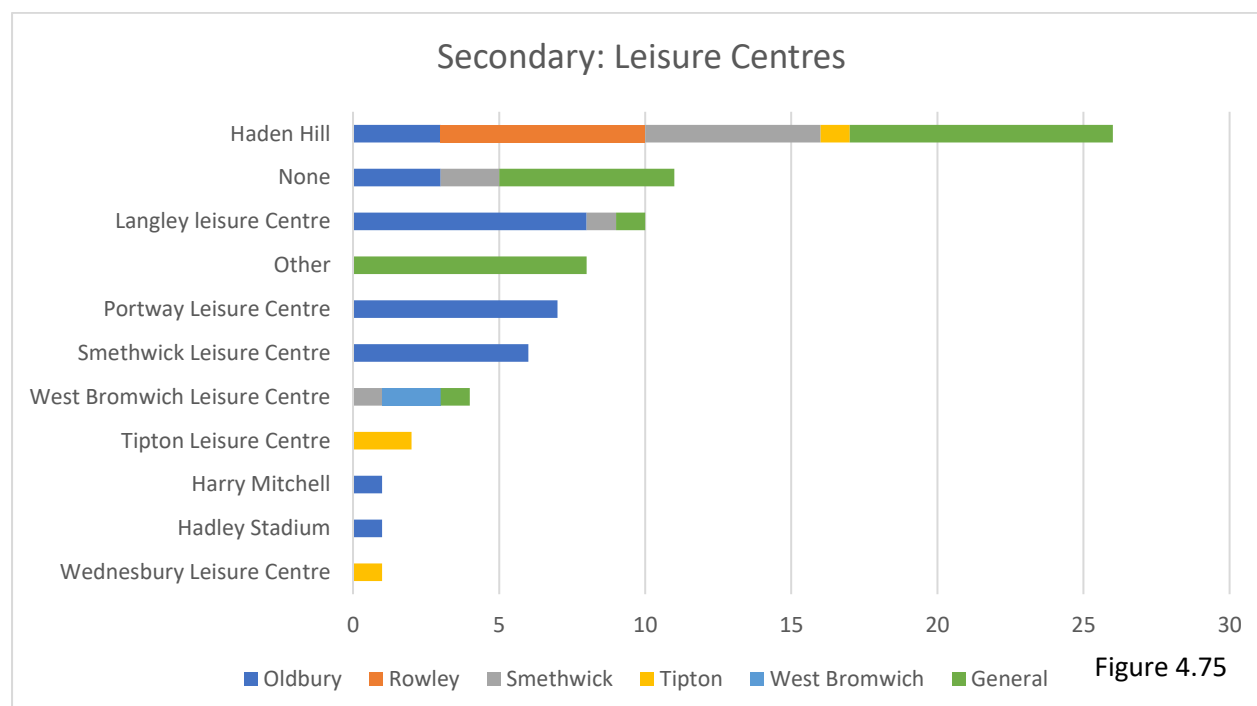


Leisure Centres

Secondary school pupils were asked about a few other places where they could hang out with their friends. Figure 4.75 shows which leisure centres are visited by young people and their friends. The responses were lower for this category. Those that did

respond stated Haden Hill and Langley were the most popular. The second most popular response was none, confirming that many young people do not use leisure centres with friends. Other popular leisure centres included Crystal Leisure Centre in Stourbridge and Harborne Leisure Centre. Most leisure centres visited were located in the town that the young people either live in or in the town closest to where they live.

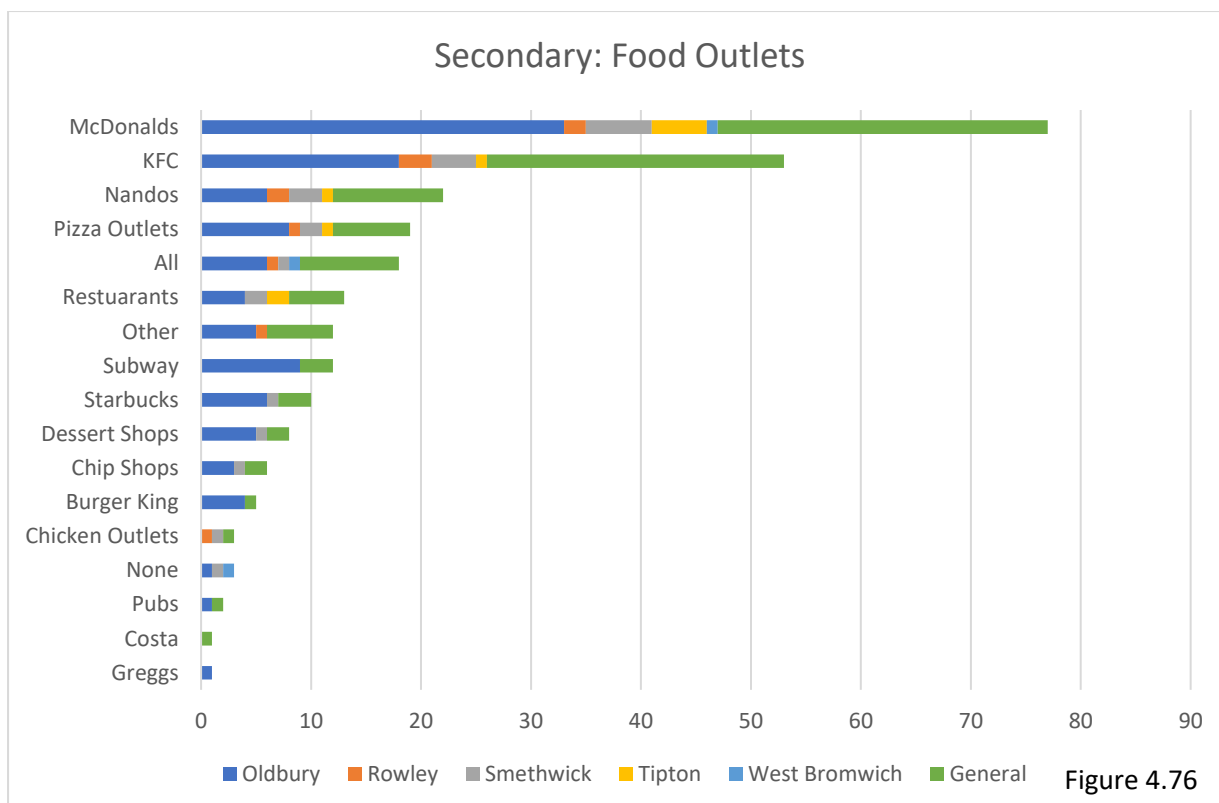
Parents and professionals chose the same leisure centres.



Food Outlets

The graph below, figure 4.76 shows the results for where young people socialise in food outlets, this had many responses. McDonalds and KFC were the most popular food outlets. All the food outlets were fast food venue, apart from a small number of restaurants. Many of the food outlets were not based in Sandwell such as Delightful Dessert, which is actually in Quinton, but was popular for all towns, as was Starbuck based in Quinton, Birmingham or Merry Hill.

Parents and professionals chose the same food outlets.

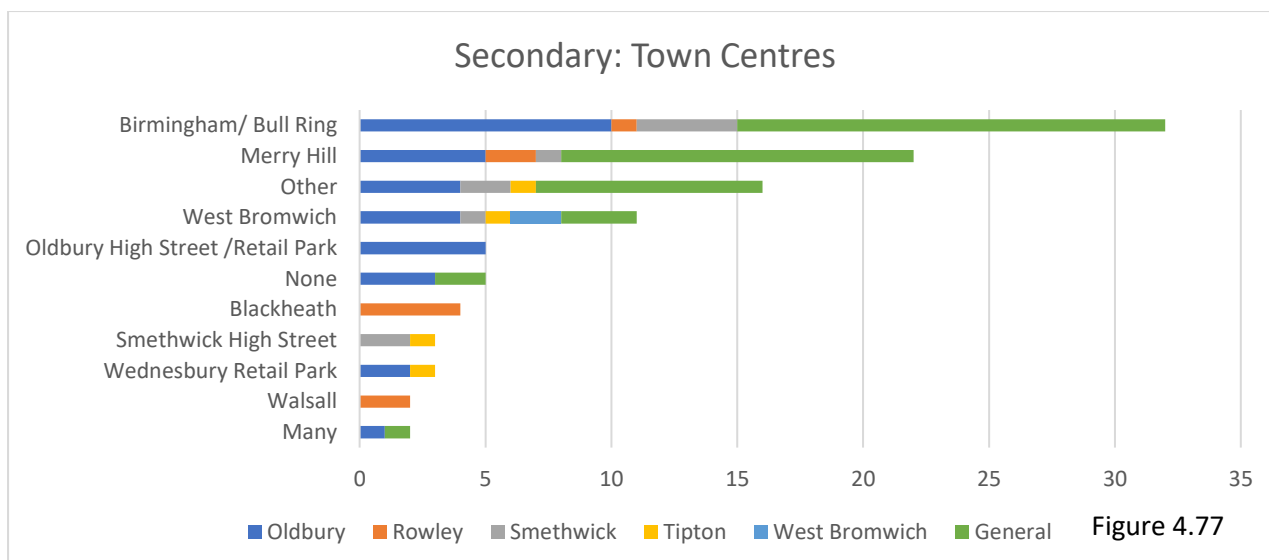


Town Centres

The young people who identified the town centres they visit with friends chose Birmingham/Bullring and Merry Hill, both being outside of Sandwell. In terms of town centres in Sandwell, West Bromwich/New Square was the most popular.

The 'other' option relates to a number of different places out of the Borough such as Fort in Birmingham, Halesowen, Harborne High Street, Dudley and Bearwood High Street.

Parents and professionals chose the same town centres but did highlight Great Bridge for Tipton town and Cape Hill for Smethwick and neither of these were mentioned by young people.



Out of Sandwell

Finally, young people were asked if there were any places out of Sandwell they visited with friends. The places mentioned most were towns in Sandwell, Rowley, Smethwick and West Bromwich.

Other towns were Birmingham, Halesowen, Merry Hill, Quinton and some other areas further away from the West Midlands, such as East Midlands and even further such as Devon.

A few young people said they would only visit other places with family, not friends, as it's not considered safe.

Parents and professionals both stated faith groups and places as worship as places young people might go with friends. One parent stated 'in cars' as young people are sometimes observed hanging out in cars together not necessarily going anywhere. One parent also mentioned specialist SEN provision as their child would not have much else to go to as there is not much offered for young people with disabilities. Professionals also mentioned libraries as a place to meet with friends and stated the young people might go camping outside of Sandwell.

4.8 Play and Youth Provision

Afterschool Activities

The primary pupils were asked if they took part in afterschool activities, figure 4.81 shows the most popular activities were sports, arts and crafts and painting and drawing. Others made reference to more sports such as gymnastics. 47.8% generally attended these clubs on a weekly basis.

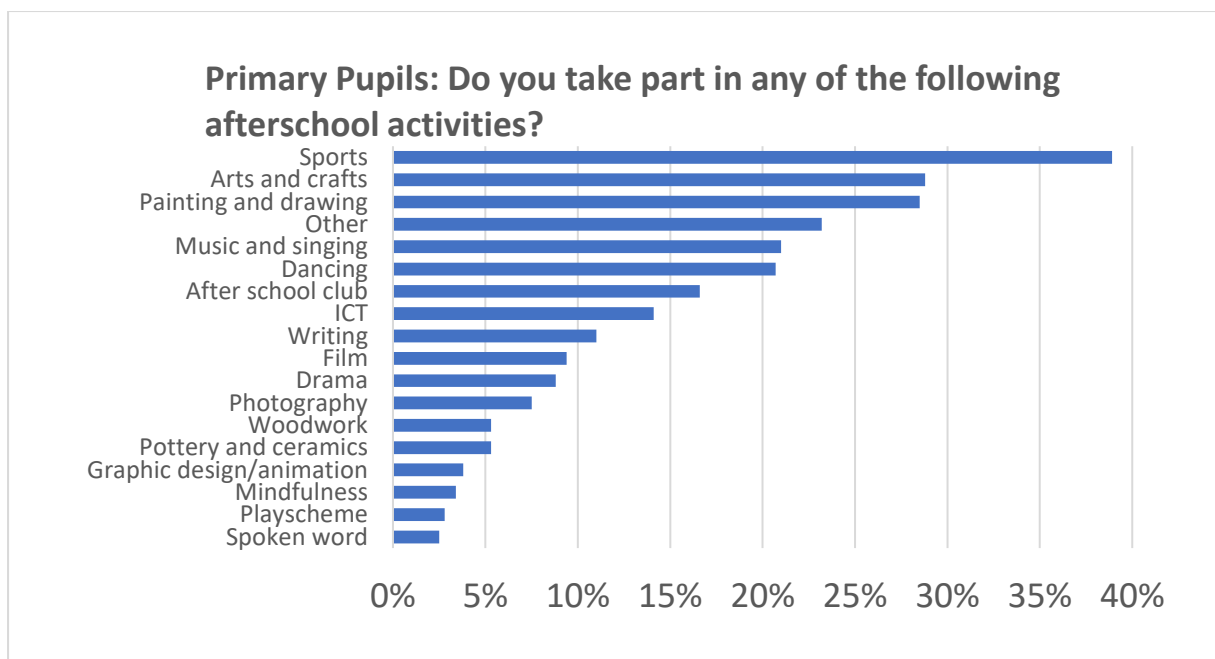


Figure 4.81

When secondary pupils were asked if they take part in afterschool activities, in figure 4.82, 46% said they took part in sports, 23% stated other, however when asked to specify, the young people listed sports such as rugby, gymnastics, badminton and trampolining. Other things mentioned here were cadets, gaming, stem club, and learning other languages with a few references to youth clubs. The third most popular answer was dancing.

72.7% of those who attended the clubs, attended them on a weekly basis and 82.7 attended them alone, without a parent/carers.

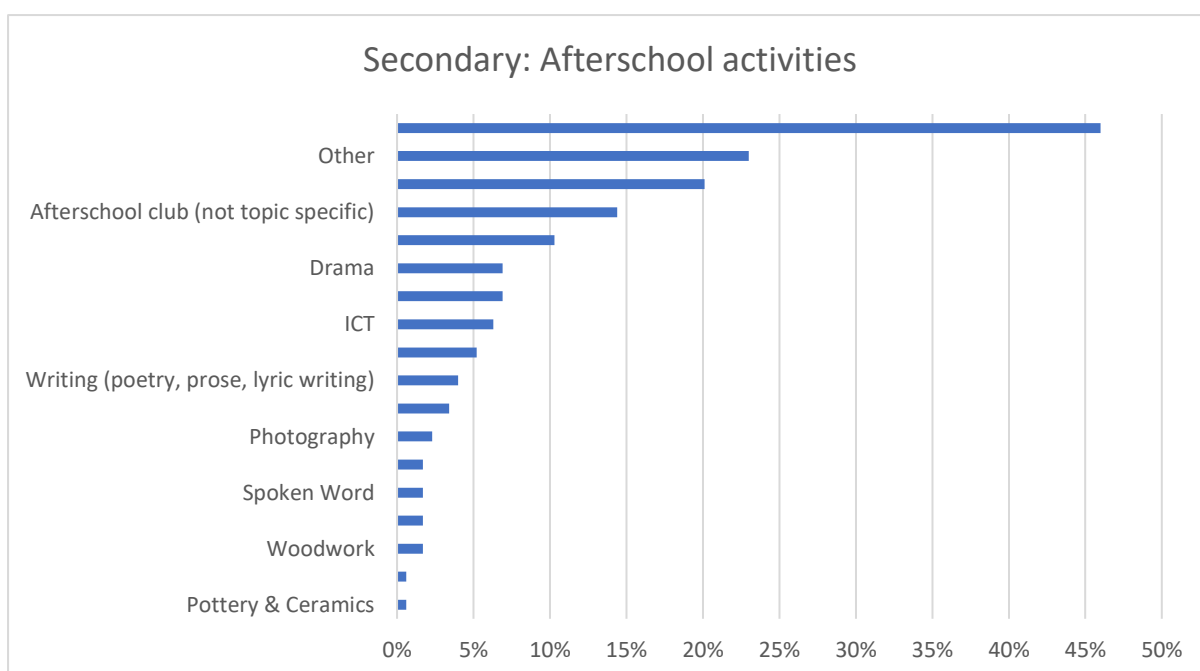


Figure 4.82

Secondary school pupils find out about activities from their school/college or friends the most as shown in figure 4.83

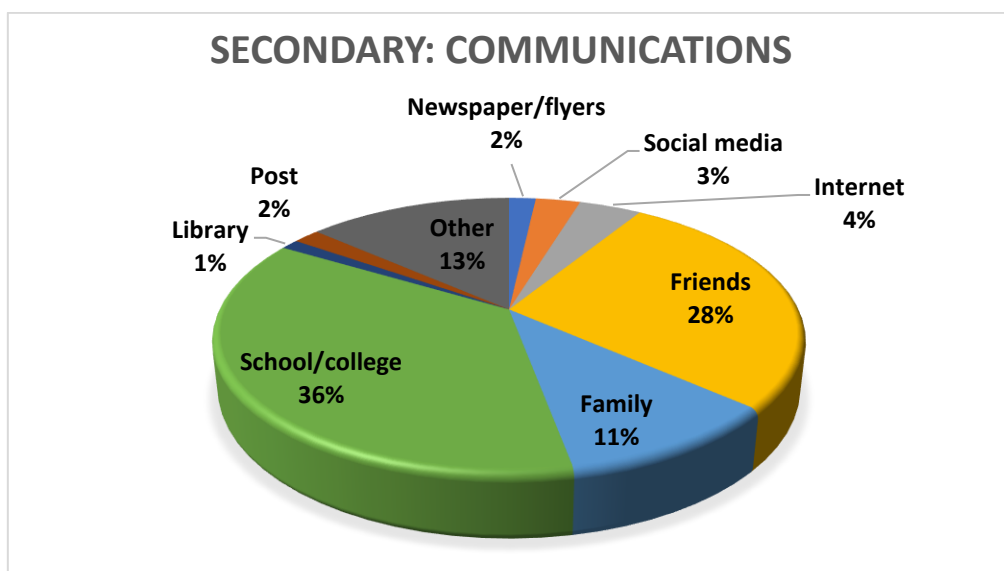


Figure 4.83

Youth Clubs/Provision

Both primary and secondary school pupils were asked about their engagement in playschemes and youth provision. For primary school pupils the most popular were afterschool clubs and sports clubs from the options provided. Secondary school pupils were provided a free text box to complete, which only a few young people did and the majority of them said they didn't attend any youth clubs/provision. Of the low numbers who did, they stated they attended church youth clubs and community youth clubs.

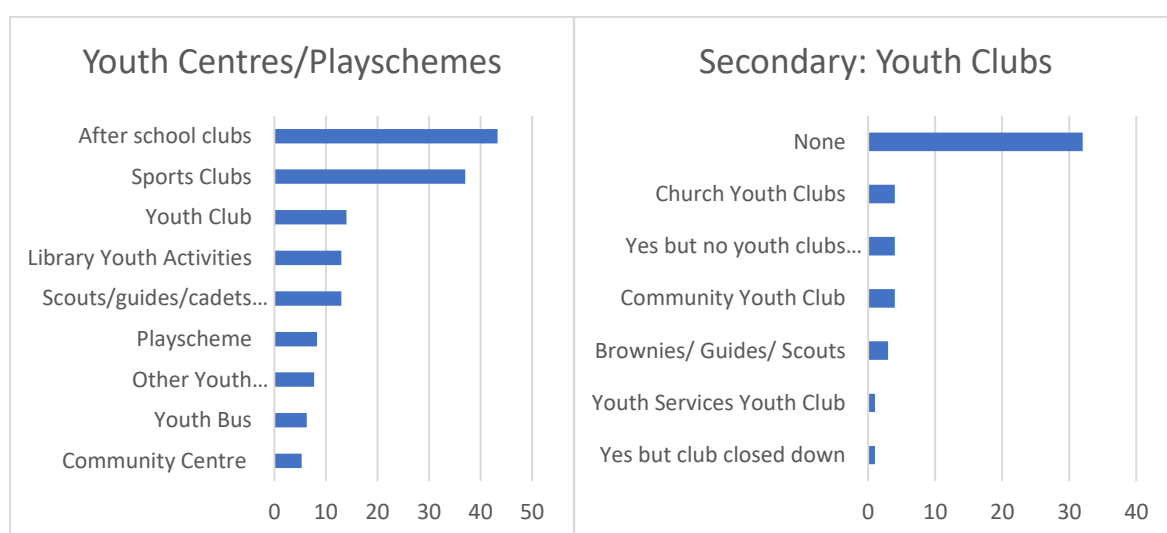


Figure 4.84

The lack of attendance at youth clubs/provision was confirmed when only 18.1% of young people stated they had attended a youth club/provision.

Figure 4.81 shows the results when young people were asked if they would use a youth club if it was in their school. 17% said yes, and when these 52 young people were asked what times they would like this to run from, the most popular answer was straight after school from 3pm – 5pm.

43% of young people said they were unsure as to whether they would use a youth club after school. Those who responded as 'no' gave reasons such as it would feel uncomfortable, it's not necessary, better to be outside of school, because they have friends, they find them boring, they have homework, don't have the time, would rather be at home and they are a waste of time. One person stated they didn't know what a youth club was.

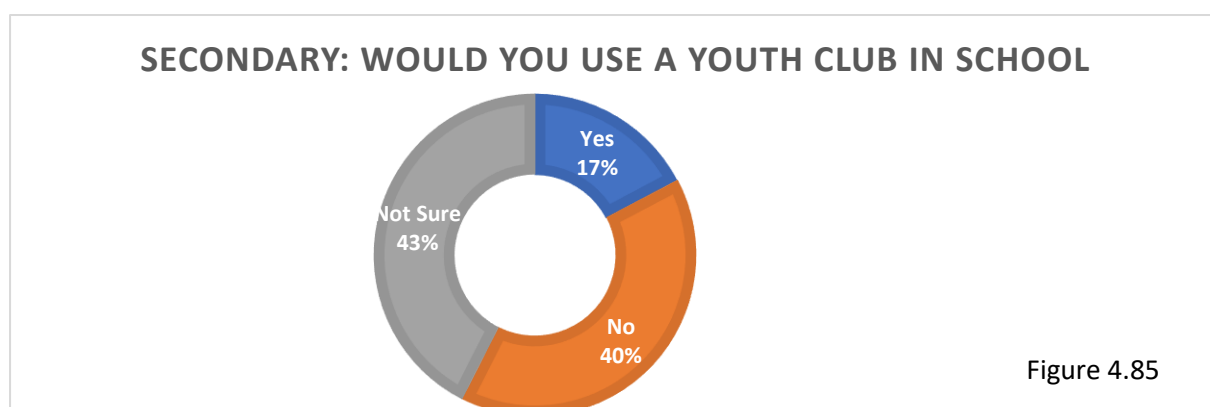
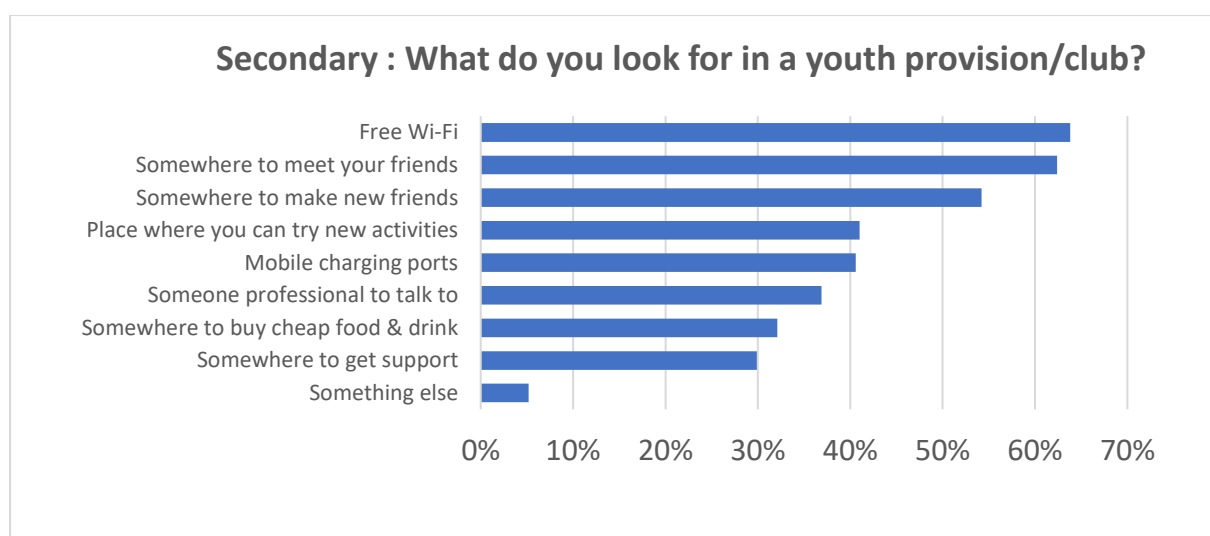
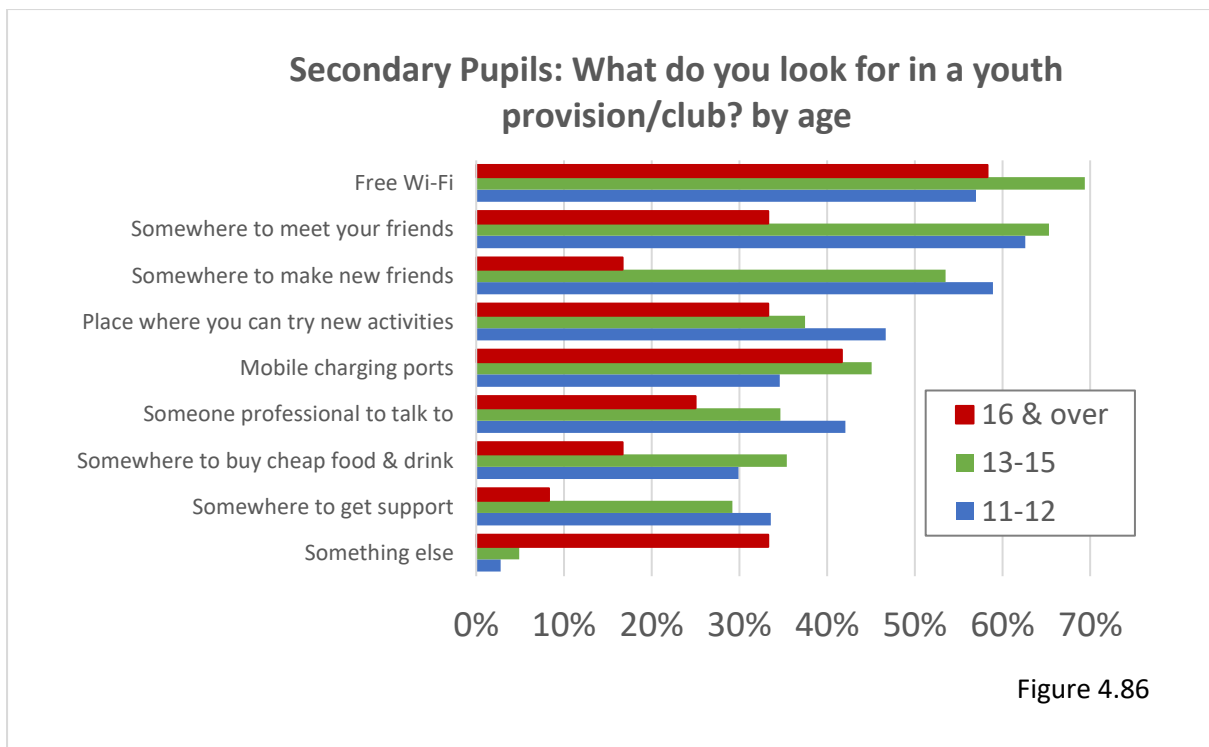


Figure 4.86 shows the results when young people were asked what they look for in a youth provision/club. 63.8% responded with free wi-fi, closely followed by 62.4% stating somewhere to meet their friends and 54.2% stating somewhere to make new friends.

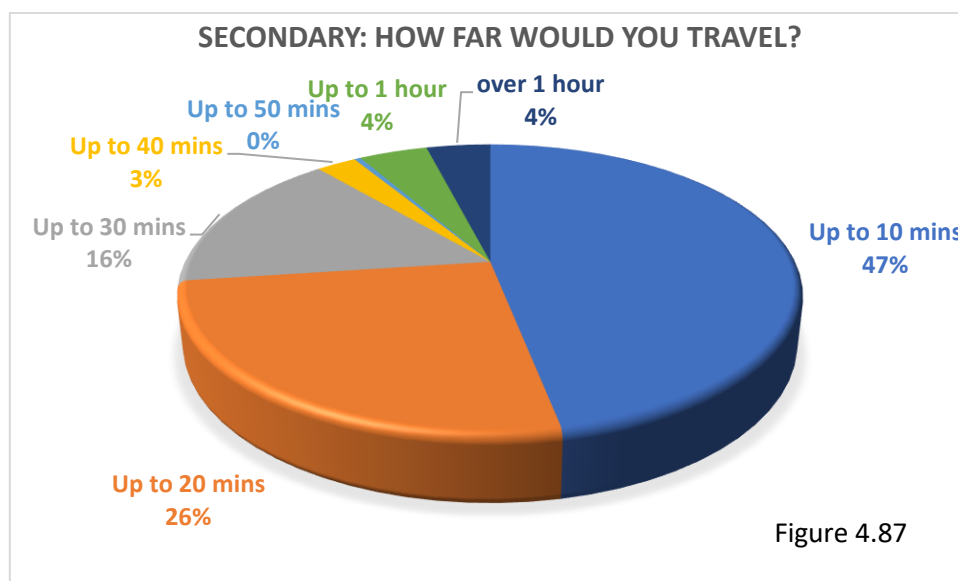
When breaking this down into age groups, 11-12 and 13-15 years olds concurred with the top three overall functions.

Of the over 16s who took part in the survey 58.3% stated free wi-fi and 41.7% wanted mobile charging ports.





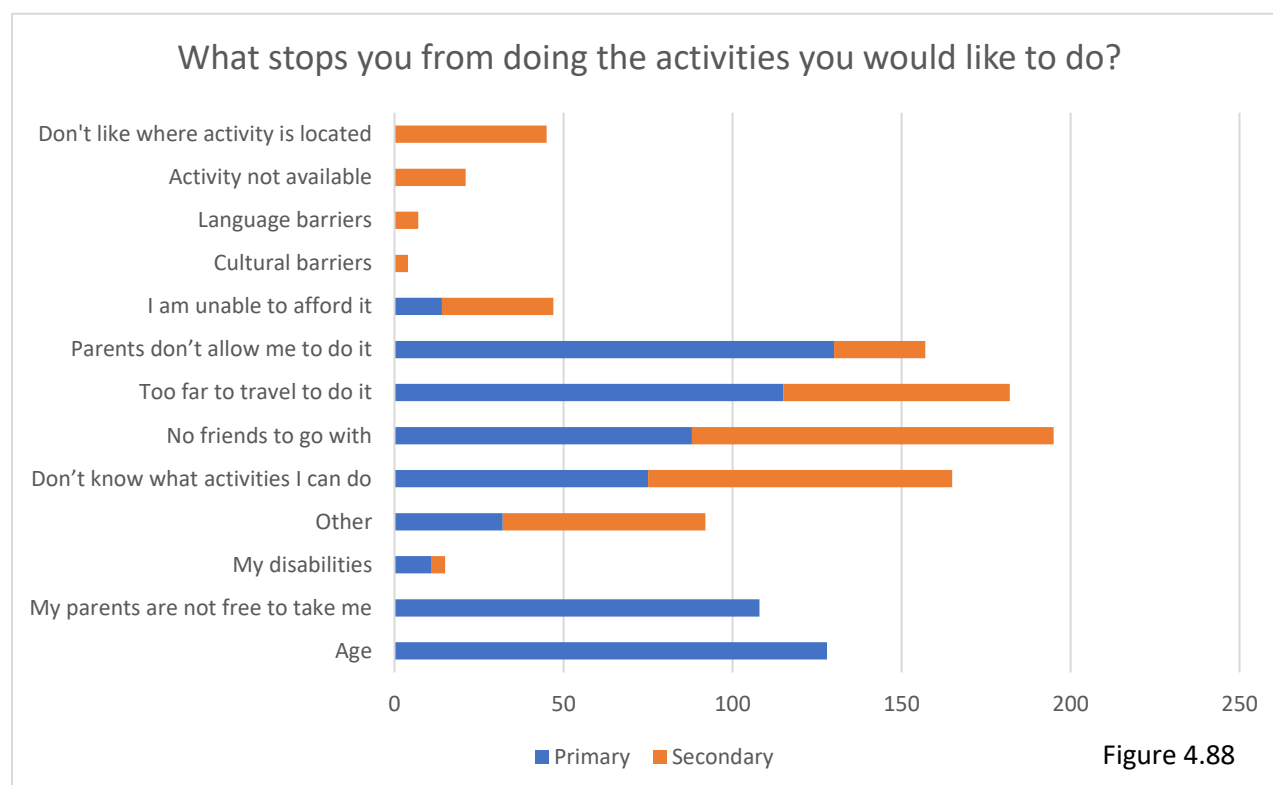
Of the 277 secondary pupils who responded to the question about how far they would travel to a youth club, figure 4.87 shows 47% stated up to 10 minutes and 26% up to 20 minutes.



Barriers to Activities

Both primary and secondary pupils were asked what stopped them doing the activities they would like to do. The responses are shown below in figure 4.88. For Primary school children the most popular answers were parents don't allow me to do it, age and it's too far to travel. Others referred to not wanting to go to any activities. The secondary school pupils were provided with a few additional options to choose from. They mostly selected there was no-one to go with (43%), they were unaware of what is available (36.1%) and 26.9% said it was too far to travel. The 24.1% who stated

'other' included they didn't want to go, laziness, uncomfortable in new environments, faith related clubs which other faiths would not be able to attend, club has ceased, no activities they like, violence and gangs, anxiety, caring responsibilities and too much homework to do.



Parents were asked what barriers exist for young people who would like to do recreational activities in Sandwell. The popular reasons were, activities were too far, and transport links were poor, "My children used to attend a youth club that got shut down because of funding and the nearest one now is quite far, and I don't drive so getting them there is near impossible". Money was another issue, "After the age of 11, the free activities decline, all we have on offer is the youth bus for 1 hour a week".

They don't know what's available and safety was also highlighted as an issue. There was a reference made by one parent that the children now have no confidence.

Professionals were asked the same question. The common reasons given were the cost of activities, accessibility such as travelling to where the activity takes place and the timing of these may not be suitable, they may be later in the evening and also lack of knowledge of the activities that exist.

Other barriers identified included family circumstances, such as parents being too tired to take the young people, and family commitments including religion or faith responsibilities. For the young people themselves they might have too much school work, they might not be part of a social circle and therefore don't feel they can attend recreational activities on their own and both parents and young people might not be able to identify what the benefits of these activities are.

4.9 Anything else about being a young person in Sandwell

Primary Pupils

Most pupils answered no, giving reasons such as they were happy playing with friends, siblings and pets. One person stated they “don’t pay bills” so everything was ok at the moment. A few stated it was hard being a young person because of tutoring and dyslexia.

One child acknowledged that people need to switch off from their games and go to the park instead.

The negative comments included were made by children who stated they didn’t feel loved or respected, were bored and not trusted to do anything, wanted to earn money but couldn’t.

One child stated, “we should be able to make our own decisions and we should be able to share our opinions with others”.

Secondary Pupils

Most young people answered that living in Sandwell was challenging and difficult for a number of reasons such as school, not being listened to, lots of homework and exams, bullying and lack of support for young people particularly around mental health.

Comments were made that Sandwell is boring and there were no opportunities or nothing to do for young people and it would be good to offer “cheaper or free facilities” and ensure young people’s voices are heard. Statements were made by young people saying they felt scared due to mean people. A lot of references were also made to knife crime. Although most of the comments made were negative, a few respondents however did make positive statements saying they were ‘happy’ and ‘it’s good’.

Parents

Parents were asked if there was anything they would like to say about being a parent of a young person in Sandwell. Parents appear to find parenting a young person challenging for a number of reasons. Parents require more support to bring up their children whether it is assisting them financially, so they can ensure young people can be involved in positive activities or disciplining them as they feel they have no control over them, particularly with social media influences. Parents are also unaware of what support networks are available to them, there are language barriers which affect the communication between parents and teachers and there is lack of training for school staff and parents on caring and educating children with disabilities including issues such as ADHD and autism.

Safety has become a huge concern for parents, they feel there are not many safe places for young people to play. Safe places that did exist like youth clubs with youth workers who could help young people build confidence and positive relationships don’t exist as much and it is felt more should be available, especially as there is limited life skills education in schools, so young people sometimes don’t know how to deal with conflict when it arises, and this could lead to serious consequences.

With Sandwell being a deprived area, parents felt this had a negative impact on young people's aspirations and they were likely to get a better education outside of Sandwell. Young people are also unlikely to be able to afford housing in the future and therefore will be living with parents for a lot longer.

One parent felt that the police and council were doing very little to make improvements.

Professionals

Professionals were asked if there was anything they would like to say about working with young people in Sandwell.

Although professionals like parents appear to find young people challenging for a number of reasons, they find it rewarding to work with young people, teachers referred to their students as 'amazing'.

Some however did say they found young people difficult to engage with and frustrating to deal with, as they get little respect back. Some professionals identified that although they would like to meet all the needs of children they work with, this is not always possible. They felt young people require more support for mental health and anxiety. One professional described young people as being 'terrified'. Young people therefore need to be aware of the services that are out there in the community for them to access with their families. Professionals felt social media had a negative effect on young people. Some professionals felt that young people would benefit from mentoring.

Some students face real barriers to learning and life in general and they feel their parents need to engage with them. Some young people have no aspirations and feel there is no way out of situations they are in. However, when they do achieve this is also rewarding to see by the professionals.

5. Conclusion

This detailed survey report can, even with its limitations, provide a good indication of the needs of young people from their perspective and also provide some recommendations about what the local authority and other agencies should be implementing to meet the needs.

As identified with previous SHAPE surveys, young people's needs vary with age. For 13 to 16 year olds school work and exams were identified as their top issue and as the area they felt they needed the most support in. However, parents didn't see this as being one of the top three issues for young people. They thought bullying was, as did 11- 12 year olds. They are the youngest in school and the transition from primary to secondary school is a worrying time with nearly a quarter of children in primary school stating they were not looking forward to going to secondary school because of the fear of being bullied and being worried about hard work and exams. Ditch the Labels Annual Bullying Survey 2019 highlighted 62% of young people bullied were bullied by a classmate and 37% were bullied by somebody at school.

Cyberbullying was also an issue identified when asked about issues encountered online and Ditch the Label's Annual Bullying Survey 2019 also confirms that

cyberbullying is the most frequently experienced type of bullying at 74% compared to other bullying methods.

Crime as a whole was a feature in many of the responses from all groups emerging from a primary level when asked about how safe they feel, to secondary school level where knife and gangs and violence appeared in the top three issues identified. Parents and professionals also viewed these as pertinent issues particularly gangs and violence. With social media being used on a daily basis by young people, it is not a surprise that this issue featured highly as media can be a prime contributor to raising the profile of crime in positive and negative ways.

Social media was extremely popular, with nearly all primary and secondary pupils who took part in the survey using the internet for social media and on a daily basis. Although this may be common, it can be associated with poor mental health and wellbeing. NHS Digital – Mental Health of children and young people in England 2017 reported that 87.3% 11-19 years old with mental disorder were more likely to use social media every day and use it for longer than 4 hours on a typical school day.

You Tube emerged as the most popular application with Whats App and Instagram also popular channels. This correlates with national findings, as Ofcom's 2019 Children and Parents: Media Use and Attitudes Report and Media Live Study shows, "YouTube remains a firm favourite among children. 5 to 15 year olds are more likely to pick YouTube as their platform of choice". TikTok appears to be emerging in popularity too, again echoed by the Ofcom reports, "Newer platforms like TikTok are gaining popularity. TikTok is used by 13% of 12-15 year olds up from 8% in 2018".

To find out that the age restrictions on social media channels were not being adhered to was not surprising, however the fact that parents and professionals thought Snapchat was the most popular channel clearly shows they may not be aware just how popular other applications are. Primary school pupils reported using the internet for social media and particularly YouTube on a regular basis, as well as for gaming. This would suggest that more online safety awareness needs to take place from KS2. Watching videos, messaging, posting pictures and video calling were the main ways social media was used both as entertainment and to keep in touch with friends.

Gaming was also becoming even more popular with young people, again starting from a primary school level. It was claimed that social media was also used for gaming, although this is possibly because many YouTube influencers are gamers who have millions of subscribers. The Ofcom report also highlighted "parental concerns about in-game spending and gaming-related bullying increase. This links to the concerning elements from the survey results where a small number of pupils, 28 in total, use social media channels for gambling.

Along with crime issues and deprivation, it was evident from comments made that Sandwell does not have the best reputation in the eyes of all four groups. Although some of the adults did acknowledge it was improving and developing, the majority felt it was not somewhere where young people could build their future. Those who did want to stay or were unsure, their responses were based on their families living in Sandwell and it being familiar territory rather than the Borough itself.

This was also apparent when young people stated where they socialised with friends, many places were located out of Sandwell. The places they socialised in predominantly were parks and food outlets. Adults highlighted Sandwell parks were used for socialising, however the children and young people stated many parks outside of the borough, as they did with entertainment venues, days out and town centres they visit. Places such in Birmingham such as the Bullring and Broadway Plaza, Merryhill and Castlegate, Dudley, were popular due to the number of entertainment facilities available such as cinema, restaurants and bowling, which featured high for both primary and secondary age groups. In terms of Sandwell, West Bromwich/New Square was the most popular. Theme parks, beaches and zoos were popular days out, again, these are places that do not feature in Sandwell.

Primary school children felt they eat healthily in and out of school. Although secondary school pupils were not asked this question, they were asked if they socialise with friends in food outlets and many students answered this with the most popular choices were fast food outlets such as McDonalds and KFC. Many food outlets mentioned were again out of the Borough such as Delightful Desserts in Quinton, and TGIs in Birmingham.

Looking at these responses it appears young people of secondary school age are happy to socialise with friends out of the Borough however when it comes to attending youth clubs or youth provision, something closer to home was favourable, within 10 - 20 minutes travelling time. Youth clubs/youth provision were only attended by 18.1% of secondary school pupils. Any clubs that were attended were either after school clubs, or church youth clubs. Young people stated that youth clubs for them would be somewhere to meet friends or make new ones and try new activities, but the biggest feature of a youth provision should be free wi-fi and for the over 16s mobile charging ports should be available too.

Travel appeared to be a barrier for why young people being able to do activities they like to do, but the biggest barrier was having no-one to go with, and also for the secondary pupils they didn't know what activities were available. A quarter of secondary school pupils stated they did not want to go to activities due to laziness, too much homework, felt uncomfortable, no activities they liked doing were being offered, and increased levels of crime; violence and gangs, were also an issue.

The lack of awareness of services offered and appropriate communication to children and young people was a thread through the survey results. Young people need more awareness of who they can call on for support in and out of schools, whether it is the link police officer, school nurse or other support services. Unlike the adults, young people did not feel making friends or having activities would improve their mental health and wellbeing, for them having someone to talk to, voicing their opinions and having support to learn and develop, outweighed these needs.

In terms of development for the future, despite parents feeling young people were educated well about careers, college, university education and apprenticeships, these are what the young people were most interested in learning about, therefore continuing to educate and provide them with information on these is important. Learning how to run your own business was something adults and young people felt they were not

educated about, and yet it was something that over 30% of young people were interested in finding out more about. This also was highlighted as an area which all young people felt they were not competent in along with renting or buying their own home.

Interestingly, young people felt competent in many of the other life skills such as living a healthy lifestyle, caring for their family, household chores and managing relationships, but parents and professionals disagreed with this, rating young people not very competent in a number of skills. This demonstrates the difference in perceptions of young people and adults.

Overall being a child and young person in Sandwell, from primary school to teenage years can be a challenge. In primary school children are happy playing and enjoying their friendships, some who have disabilities can find it's a struggle as parents stated more understanding of these young people is required by professionals. Transition to secondary school becomes an issue with the emergence of bullying. Social media and gaming have an influence at a young age and becomes a part of life at secondary school. With the stresses of school and exams, young people require a lot of support and by having this and feeling they are listened too, they would have better mental health and wellbeing. The Good Childhood Survey 2019 developed by the Children's Society highlighted that young people have anxiety about their future, money, getting good grades, crime and the environment. Most of these have been highlighted in this local survey too. The national survey also states it's important for young people to have a say and a choice.

For parents, it's a challenge bringing young people up and instilling discipline when external influences and social media become such an important part of their lives. Crime and a feeling of not being safe is a concern for parents, along with deprivation. Some feel their children have better prospects out of the Borough, despite a few parents feeling Sandwell has made some inroads into development.

Professionals also find working with young people a challenge, however they find it also rewarding. Discipline again being an issue, with some young people seen as being disrespectful. It is also difficult to meet all their needs; therefore, young people need to be more aware of what services are out in the community to support them. Someone to talk to like a mentor would also be beneficial. Professionals feel parental support is vital for young people growing up.

6. Recommendations

Based on the results of the survey and conclusions made, please find below a list of recommendations for internal and external partners.

Issue	Recommendation	Lead organisation
Limitations of SHAPE Survey	<p>Increase uptake of the annual SHAPE survey to ensure wide representation.</p> <p>Identify and agree a set of core survey questions to be repeated annually in order to analyse changes over time.</p>	SHAPE & SMBC Education

School Work and Exams	Find out more from young people about the type of support they feel they need in order to cope better with examinations. Increase exam support for young people taking GCSEs and A-levels to help relieve stress.	Schools & SMBC Education
Bullying	Improve strategic coordination of anti-bullying initiatives. Anti-Bullying Roadshow in November to target years 5, 6, 7 and 8 Schools to review anti-bullying policies and procedures – incorporate into wellbeing charter mark process.	SHAPE & WM Police Schools & Inclusion Support
Transition from Primary to Secondary	Further work to take place to ensure children in year 6 are prepared for transition with a focus on bullying and increase in school work.	SMBC Education (Transitions)
Increased usage of social media	Review evidence-base for harm-minimisation approaches to social media use and gaming. Ensure social media awareness is a core component within local PSHE curriculum. Evaluate and review existing internet safety training initiatives for parents and professionals in order to identify gaps in coverage and identify funding opportunities.	Public Health Education/Public Health SHAPE & Joint Commissioning Partnership
Perception of crime in Sandwell	Increase the visibility of PCSOs. Work with West Bromwich Business Improvement District (BID) to make further improvements within West Bromwich town centre.	WM Police and Neighbourhood Services
	Hold a second Youth Summit event to understand the issues regarding gangs and violence for young people – feedback on actions taken since first summit.	WM Police & SHAPE
	Implement the actions and recommendations from the world café review focussed on knife crime and feedback to the young people involved	WM Police
	Work with schools to ensure Link Officers are known to young people	WM Police

Lack of awareness of school nursing services	Continue to raise the profile of school nursing in school to young people including what services the school nurse can offer	SMBC Public Health & School Nurses
Lack of attendance at youth clubs/provisions in Sandwell and lack of awareness of what they offer	Implement recommendations of Youth Services review	SMBC Youth Services
Support for mental health and wellbeing, particularly during exam season	All schools to have undertaken the emotional health and wellbeing charter mark and developed an action plan for promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing.	SMBC Education (Educational Psychologists)
Social entertainment sought outside of Sandwell as more variety offered	Inclusive growth and tourism plan to identify the needs of young people and take them into account in development of future plans	SMBC Neighbourhood Services
Lack of knowledge for young people and parents of support services and facilities offered to children and young people	Develop a central portal (Just Youth) for all young people communications within the council and link to Discover Sandwell. Develop SHAPE's Instagram and promote for young people's use and SHAPE's You Tube channel	SHAPE & SMBC Youth Services & SMBC Corporate Communications
Young people want to be listened to	All schools to introduce a pupil voice project or school council. Guidance to be developed.	Schools & SHAPE
	Up to 3 representatives from each secondary school in Sandwell to be part of SHAPE Youth Forum	Schools & SHAPE
Parents find bringing up young people a challenge	Review parenting support offer for parents of teenagers, identify gaps and commissioning opportunities, building on existing good practice	CYP Joint Commissioning Partnership
Young people want someone to talk to	Continue to build the universal workforce of 'Trusted Adults' – extend training offer. Ensure targeted mentoring support is widely available to young people that need it	Education and Public Health CYP Joint Commissioning Partnership
Lack of education on certain life skills and development topics	Introduce topics such as budgeting, having a worklife/balance, setting up your own business and renting or buying a property to PHSE and citizenship lessons working with agencies such as Citizens Advice Bureau	SMBC Education

Lack of understanding and support for children with disabilities	More awareness is required for professionals understanding the needs of children with disabilities	SEND
	Communicate and publicise the SEND Local offer to parents and professionals	SEND

7.