

**Student Health and Wellbeing in
Wales: Key findings from the
2022/23 School Health Research
Network Primary School Student
Health and Wellbeing Survey**



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Analysis for Policy



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Background (1)

- The School Health Research Network (SHRN)¹ has developed an engaged model of research across all mainstream secondary schools in Wales, with schools as partners.
- This includes learner and school-level surveys every two years, capturing a regular snapshot of 11 to 16 year olds' health behaviours and wellbeing.
- However, a focus solely on adolescence is too late for many young people, with our previous work for example showing that a substantial number of young people have clinically significant emotional difficulties by the time they finish primary school.²
- Expanding SHRN into primary schools offers an opportunity for joined up working across childhood and adolescence, and an avenue to better understand and support events such as transition to secondary school.

Background (2)

- In August 2020, the Welsh Government provided funding for a feasibility study to develop a model for the expansion of SHRN to primary schools and to evaluate key feasibility-related issues.
- This feasibility study included a national survey of Year 6 learners, with local authority booster samples, to enable reporting of learner wellbeing data at school, local authority and national levels. These data have previously been reported.³
- The next stage in the feasibility testing was to expand the survey so that learners in Years 3 to 6 could participate. This took place from September 2022 – March 2023. All state maintained primary schools in Wales were given the opportunity to participate.
- A report describing the research to establish the feasibility of expanding SHRN to primary schools will be published on the SHRN website after the study ends in 2024.

Research design (1)

Survey design

- This survey builds on the 2021 survey developed for Year 6 learners. Development of the 2021 survey involved a review of existing measures within SHRN's secondary school survey (and their suitability for primary school-aged learners), stakeholder feedback, a consultation with the young people's public involvement group ALPHA, and a review of other wellbeing measures used in UK primary school surveys.
- Where possible, to aid comparability with our secondary school survey, items were the same, or simplified versions of questions asked in the SHRN Student Health and Wellbeing Survey.⁴
- In order to extend the survey to younger learners, qualitative research was undertaken with school staff, parents and carers, and learners in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. Interviews explored views on consent processes and the suitability of individual survey items for these younger age groups.
- More information is available in the 2021 National Report,³ in Moore et al, 2022⁵ and in a recorded webinar⁶ detailing the expansion to primary schools.

Research design (2)

Methods

- A bilingual online survey was developed and learners in Years 3-6 (aged 7-11) were invited to participate.
- A research protocol was provided to each school to ensure consistent survey administration. The survey was overseen by teachers in a classroom setting.
- Data collection took place from September 2022-March 2023. While the initial aim was to test the feasibility of discrete representative surveys in two time periods (autumn term of 2022 and spring term of 2023), data were ultimately combined and analyses include data collected across both time periods.
- The survey was slightly modified in January 2023 based on school feedback and preliminary analysis on survey completion time. This involved removing questions for Years 3-4 to shorten the survey. The final version of the survey included 19 questions for Years 3 and 4, 28 questions for Year 5 and 33 questions for Year 6.

Consent

- Schools signed an agreement.
- Parent opt-out consent was used.
- Learners provided assent if they wished to participate.

Research design (3)

Sampling

- In the first term (Sept-Dec 2022), all primary schools in five case-study local authorities plus a nationally representative sample from the remaining 17 local authorities were invited to participate. This enabled us to assess demand for the survey and resource capacity to support demand.
- We reviewed uptake midway through the first term, and subsequently all state maintained primary schools in Wales (n=1219)* were invited to take part in the survey.
- These schools could either participate in the autumn or spring term.

Response rates

- Overall, 354 schools took part in the study from 21 out of 22 local authorities in Wales (29% school completion rate).
- All schools completed their survey online.
- 628 learners opened the survey but declined to participate.
- Partial responses (i.e. learners who did not complete the full survey) were not retained.
- 32,606 learners completed the questionnaires across the year groups:

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
Participants (N)	7,457	7,780	8,251	9,118	32,606

*One independent school participated in the survey in addition to the 1219 invited.

Local authority participation

- Initially, there was a focus on recruiting schools from five case study local authorities who had been involved in previous work on the study. The range of responses from different local authorities reflects this initial focus.
- Some schools also chose not to include all year groups, resulting in a lower % of learners participating.
- National data have been weighted to account for different response rates across local authorities.

Local authority	Sample (% of Year 3-6 learners in census 2021-22)	N of schools (% of total primary schools)
Blaenau Gwent	390 (12.7%)	5 (23.8%)
Bridgend	2,197 (32.2%)	22 (47.8%)
Caerphilly	1,757 (21.0%)	24 (35.3%)
Cardiff	3,077 (18.0%)	30 (30.3%)
Carmarthenshire	1,208 (14.7%)	17 (18.1%)
Ceredigion	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Conwy	733 (15.5%)	10 (21.3%)
Denbighshire	1,056 (23.1%)	10 (22.7%)
Flintshire	1,915 (27.3%)	18 (28.1%)
Gwynedd	473 (9.4%)	10 (12.7%)
Isle of Anglesey	846 (27.4%)	12 (30.0%)
Merthyr Tydfil	616 (21.1%)	7 (30.4%)
Monmouthshire	1,712 (47.5%)	18 (60.0%)
Neath Port Talbot	1,413 (22.7%)	15 (27.8%)
Newport	2,322 (28.8%)	17 (39.5%)
Pembrokeshire	1,656 (30.8%)	16 (29.6%)
Powys	899 (17.1%)	17 (22.1%)
Rhondda Cynon Taf	2,859 (25.5%)	34 (35.8%)
Swansea	3,047 (28.4%)	32 (41.6%)
Torfaen	1,556 (35.1%)	12 (46.2%)
Vale of Glamorgan	2,208 (33.2%)	18 (40.0%)
Wrexham	666 (10.3%)	10 (17.5%)
National	32,606 (23.0%)	354 (29.0%)

Notes on reporting

- Missingness varied for individual survey items.
- We are more confident in estimates with a lower level of missingness.
- Base numbers are provided across items reported. A colour code denotes the level of missingness:
 - **Green** - less than 5% missing data;
 - **Amber** - 5-10% missingness;
 - **Red** - >10% missingness.
- No formal statistical testing has been carried out. Precision of the estimates will be greater when the sample size is large. Young people who stated that they identified as neither a boy nor a girl represented a very small number of learners (n=559), less than 2% of the total sample. The estimates for this group will therefore be less precise than for other subgroups.
- The family affluence scale (FAS) was only asked of learners in Years 5 and 6, therefore all graphs including low, medium and high family affluence groupings only include data from these two year groups.
- More details on the measures used, including FAS, are provided in Appendix 1.

Sample demographics

Free School Meal (FSM) tertiles:

- **Low:** fewer than 12% of learners entitled to FSM;
- **Medium:** between 12%-22.9% of learners entitled to FSM;
- **High:** 23% or more learners entitled to FSM.

	% of learners eligible for FSM within school*		
	Low	Med	High
Participating schools (N)	98 (28%)	117 (33%)	139 (39%)
Non-participating schools (N)	304 (35%)	273 (32%)	287 (33%)
All schools (N)	402 (33%)	390 (32%)	426 (35%)

Weighting - weights were applied to correct for disproportionately sampled local authorities and variable response by local authority.

*Two non-participating schools did not have a %FSM value available. One independent school participated and has been included within the low %FSM category.

**FAS questions were only asked to learners in Years 5 and 6.

Participating learners		
		% (% excluding missing)
Family Affluence Score**	Low	30.7% (34.4%)
	Med	36.2% (40.6%)
	High	22.3% (25.0%)
	Missing	10.8%
Gender	Boy	48.1% (49.1%)
	Girl	48.2% (49.2%)
	Other gender identity	1.7% (1.8%)
	Missing	1.9%
Live with	Both parents	72.5% (76.9%)
	Stepfamily	4.8% (5.1%)
	Single mum	13.5% (14.3%)
	Single dad	1.3% (1.4%)
	Grandparents	0.8% (0.9%)
	Foster parents	0.7% (0.8%)
	Other	0.5% (0.6%)
Missing	5.8%	

Main findings from 2022-23

Data are reported for key items in the following sections:

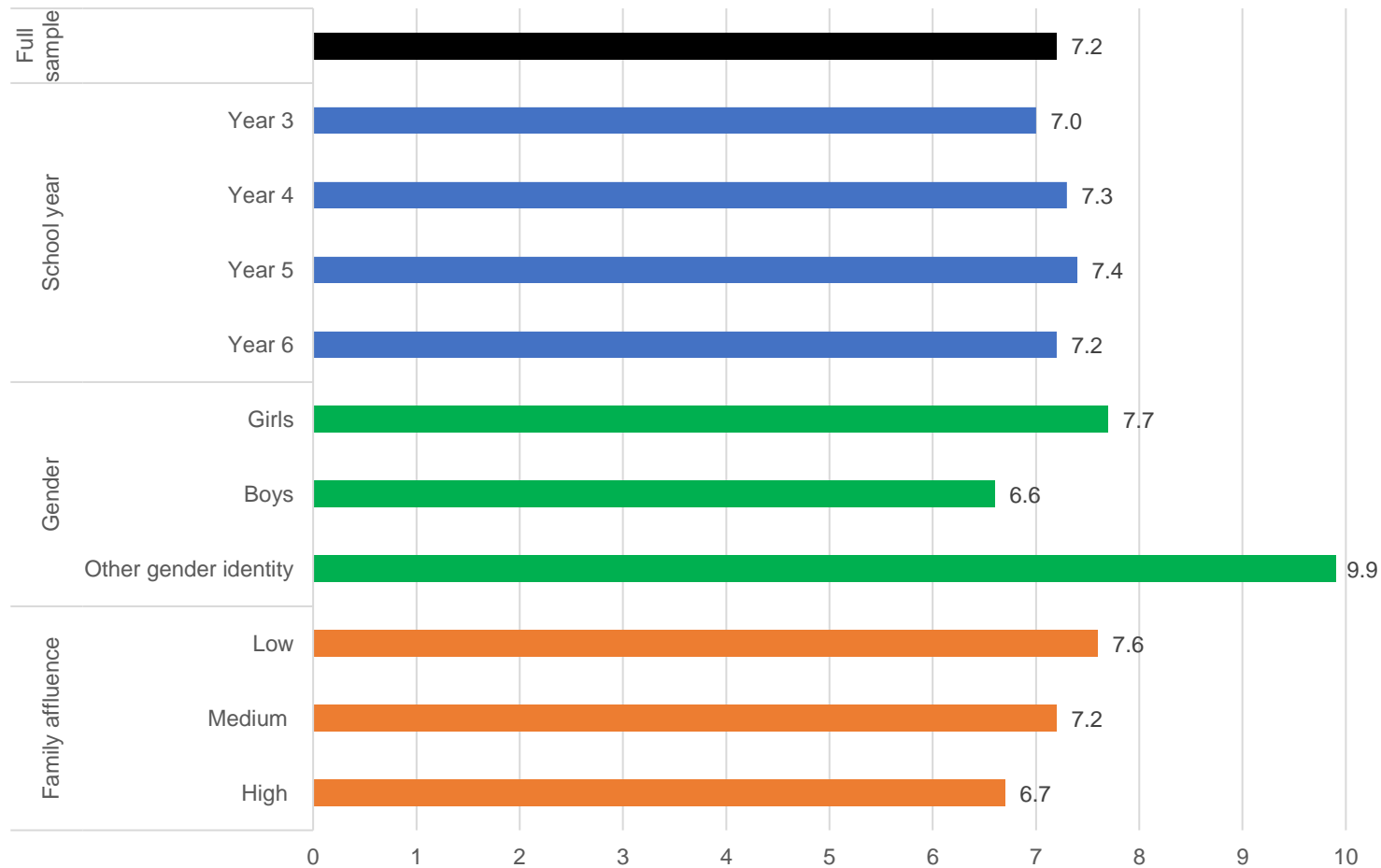
- 1) Mental health and wellbeing;
- 2) Bullying;
- 3) Healthy eating and physical activity;
- 4) School connectedness;
- 5) School transition;
- 6) Electronic devices (screen use); and
- 7) Sleep.

Use of questions across SHRN surveys

Primary survey	Secondary survey ³
School year	✓
Gender	✓ (modified version)
Birth month	✓ (modified version)
Birth year	✓
Family structure	✓ (modified version)
Main language spoken in home	
Family Affluence Scale ⁷	✓
Life satisfaction (Cantril Scale) ⁸	✓ (modified version)
My and My Feelings Questionnaire (modified version; Deighton et al, 2013) ⁹	
SHRN internalising symptoms	✓
Bullying	✓
Cyberbullying	✓
Liking school	✓
Relationships with other learners	✓
School belonging	✓
School involvement	✓
Relationships with school staff	✓
School transition (Rice et al., 2017, 2021) ^{10,11}	
Use of technology and social media	✓ (modified version)
Bedtime	✓
Fruit and vegetable consumption	✓
Physical activity	✓

1) MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Figure 1.1 Mean emotional difficulties score on the Me and My Feelings Questionnaire*, overall and by age, gender and family affluence

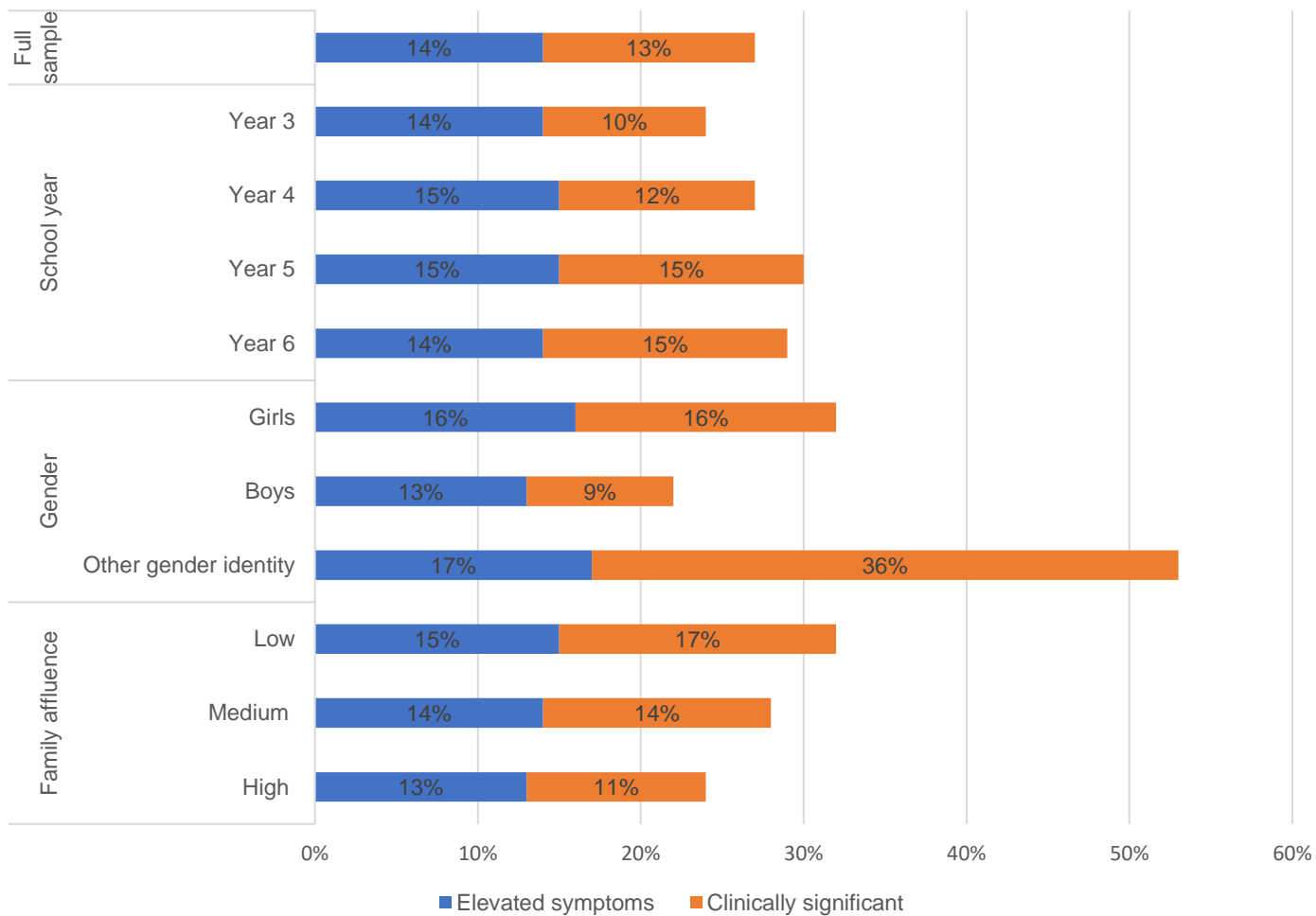


- A higher score on this scale (range 0-20) reflects higher emotional difficulties.
- There was little evidence of a gradient by age as indicated by year group.
- Girls had a higher average emotional difficulties score in comparison to boys (i.e. greater emotional difficulties). Learners who identified as neither a boy nor girl had the highest emotional difficulties scores.
- There was a clear socioeconomic gradient, with a higher mean score among learners from less affluent families.

**Scale scores are 'pro-rated' (i.e. based on the average of completed items) so long as >50% of individual items are completed. Only marginally different estimates were obtained where limited to 'complete cases' (full sample mean = 6.9).*

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N = 31,887)

Figure 1.2 Percentage who met the threshold for elevated or clinically significant emotional difficulties, overall and by age, gender and family affluence

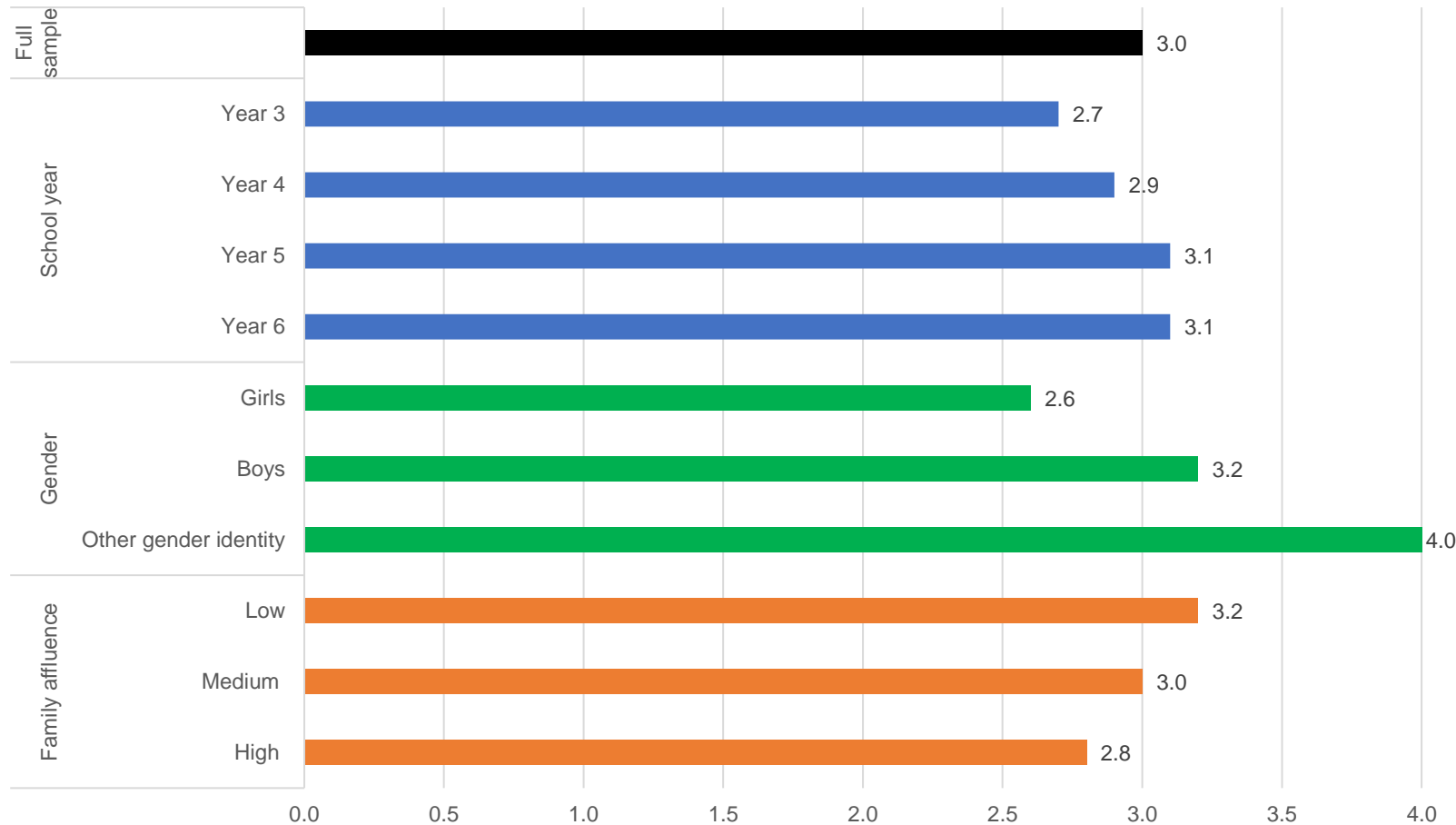


- In the full sample, over a quarter of learners reported elevated ($\geq 10/20$) emotional difficulties. Of these, 13% reported potentially clinically significant difficulties ($\geq 12/20$)*.
- There was no clear age trend, although elevated or clinically significant difficulties were marginally lowest in Year 3.
- More girls than boys reported elevated or clinically significant emotional difficulties. Learners who identified as neither a boy nor a girl had the highest rates of elevated or clinically significant emotional difficulties.
- There was a clear socioeconomic gradient, with learners from the least affluent families most likely to report elevated or clinically significant emotional difficulties.

**Scale scores are 'pro-rated' so long as >50% of individual items are completed. Where limited to complete cases, 25% report elevated or clinically significant emotional difficulties*

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N = 31,887)

Figure 1.3 Mean behavioural difficulties score on the Me and My Feelings Questionnaire*, overall and by age, gender and family affluence

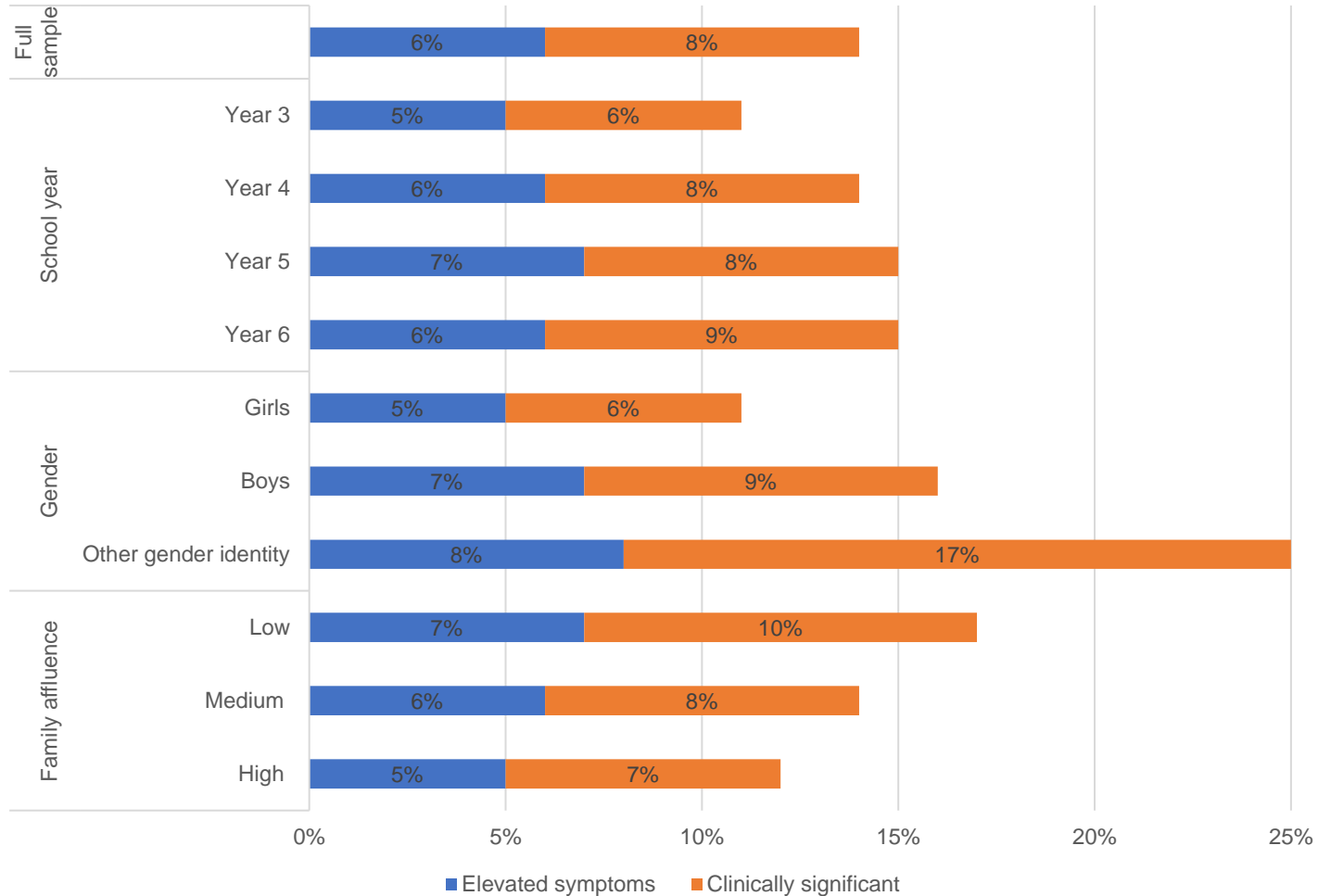


- A higher score on this scale (0-12) reflects higher behavioural difficulties.
- There was a clearer age gradient for behavioural than emotional difficulties.
- Boys had a higher average behavioural difficulties score than girls. Learners who identified as neither a boy nor a girl had the highest average behavioural difficulties score.
- Learners from the least affluent families had a higher behavioural difficulties score than those from more affluent families.

**Scale scores are 'pro-rated' so long as >50% of individual items are completed. Similar estimates obtained where limited to 'complete cases' (full sample mean = 2.9).*

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N = 31,715)

Figure 1.4 Percentage who met the threshold for elevated or clinically significant behavioural difficulties, overall and by age, gender and family affluence

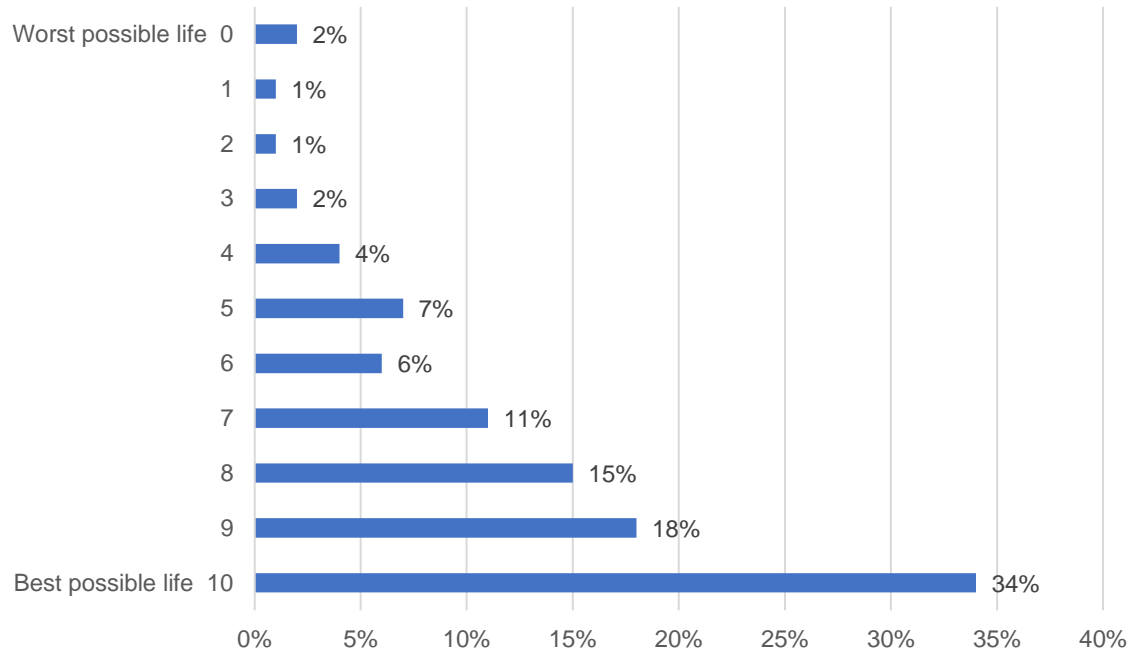


- In the full sample, 14% of learners met the threshold for elevated ($\geq 6/12$) or clinically significant ($\geq 7/12$) behavioural difficulties.
- Elevated or significant difficulties were lowest in Year 3, rising to Year 5 but not thereafter to Year 6.
- More boys reported elevated or clinically significant difficulties compared to girls. Learners who identified as neither a boy nor a girl had highest rates of elevated or clinically significant behavioural difficulties.
- Learners from the least affluent families were most likely to report elevated or clinically significant behavioural difficulties.

**Scale scores are 'pro-rated' so long as >50% of individual items are completed. Where limited to complete cases, 13% report elevated or clinically significant behavioural difficulties*

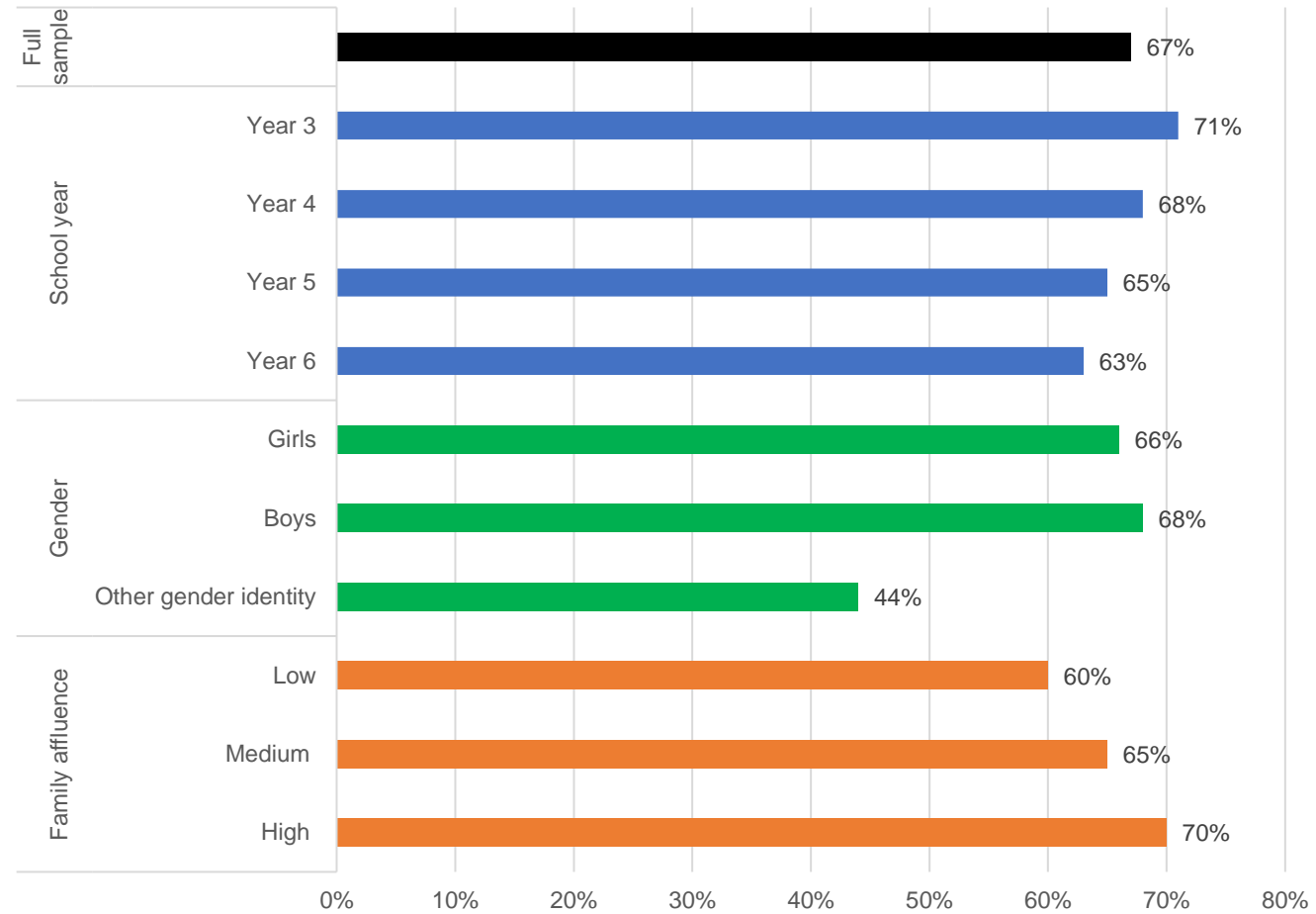
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N = 31,715)

Figure 1.5 Life satisfaction scale (%)



- 67% of learners reported a high degree of life satisfaction (i.e. $\geq 8/10$).
- Life satisfaction declined with increased age.
- A slightly higher proportion of boys reporting high life satisfaction than girls.
- There was a clear social gradient, with learners from less affluent families least likely to report high life satisfaction.

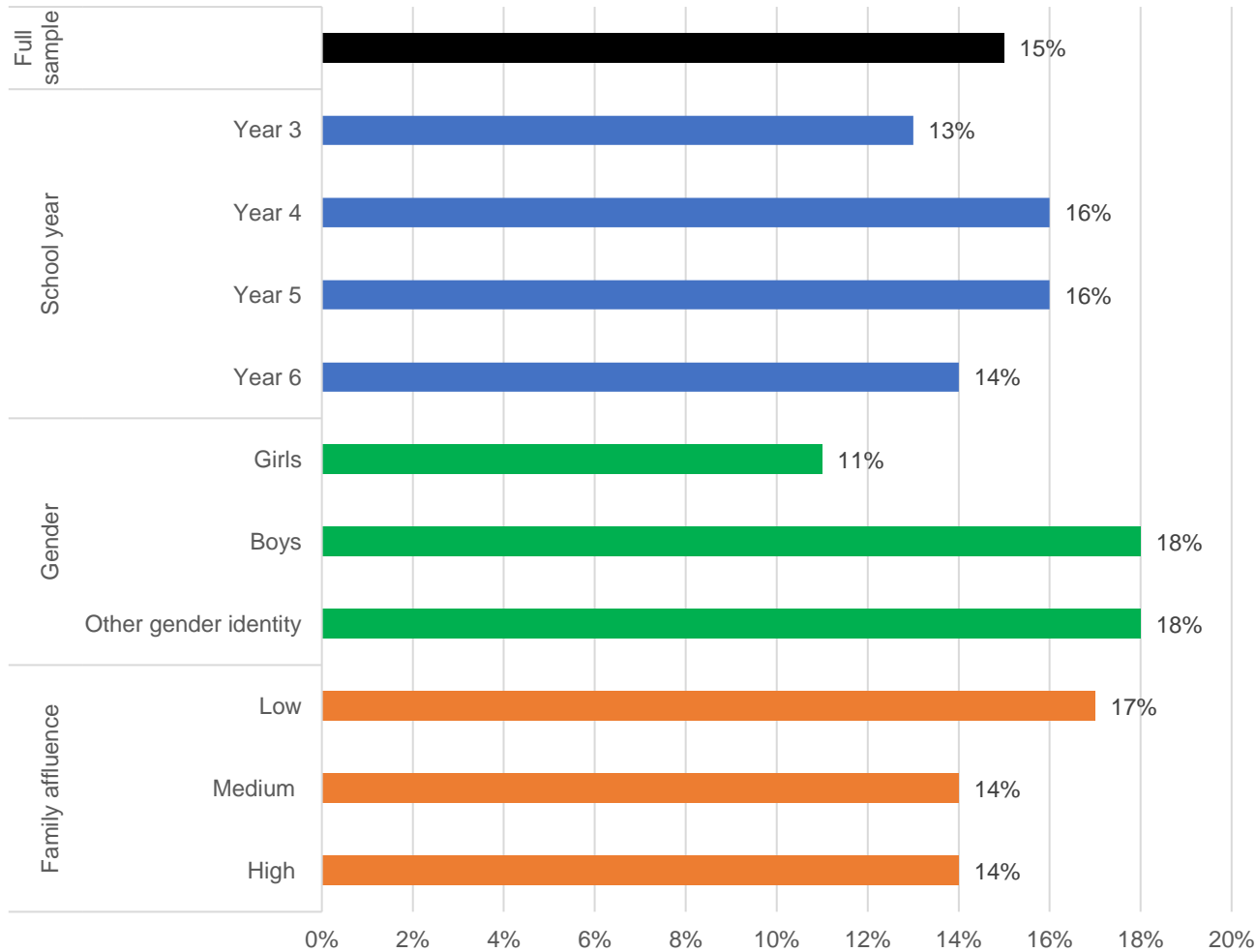
Figure 1.6 Percentage who rated their life satisfaction as eight or more, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,510)

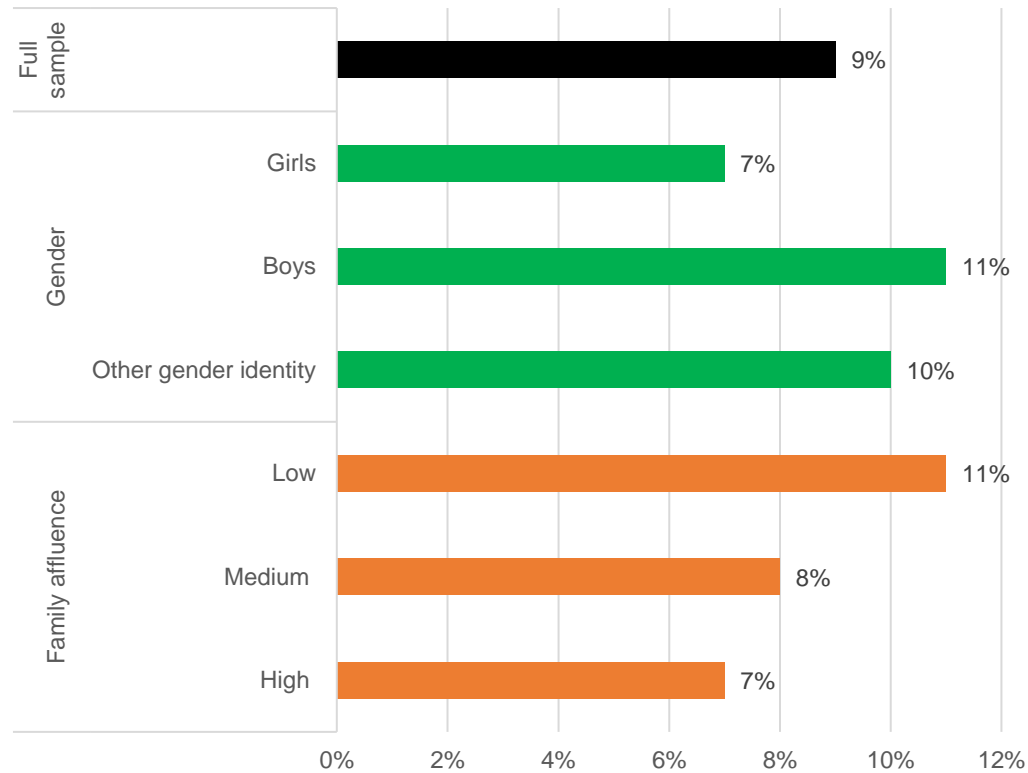
2) BULLYING

Figure 2.1 Percentage of learners who said they had taken part in bullying in the past couple of months, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



- 15% of learners reported having bullied another learner in the past couple of months.
- There was no clear age gradient, with bullying perpetration highest in Years 4 and 5.
- A higher proportion of boys than girls reporting having bullied others.
- Bullying perpetration showed some evidence of a social gradient, with learners from less affluent families reporting higher rates of bullying than those from medium or high affluence families.

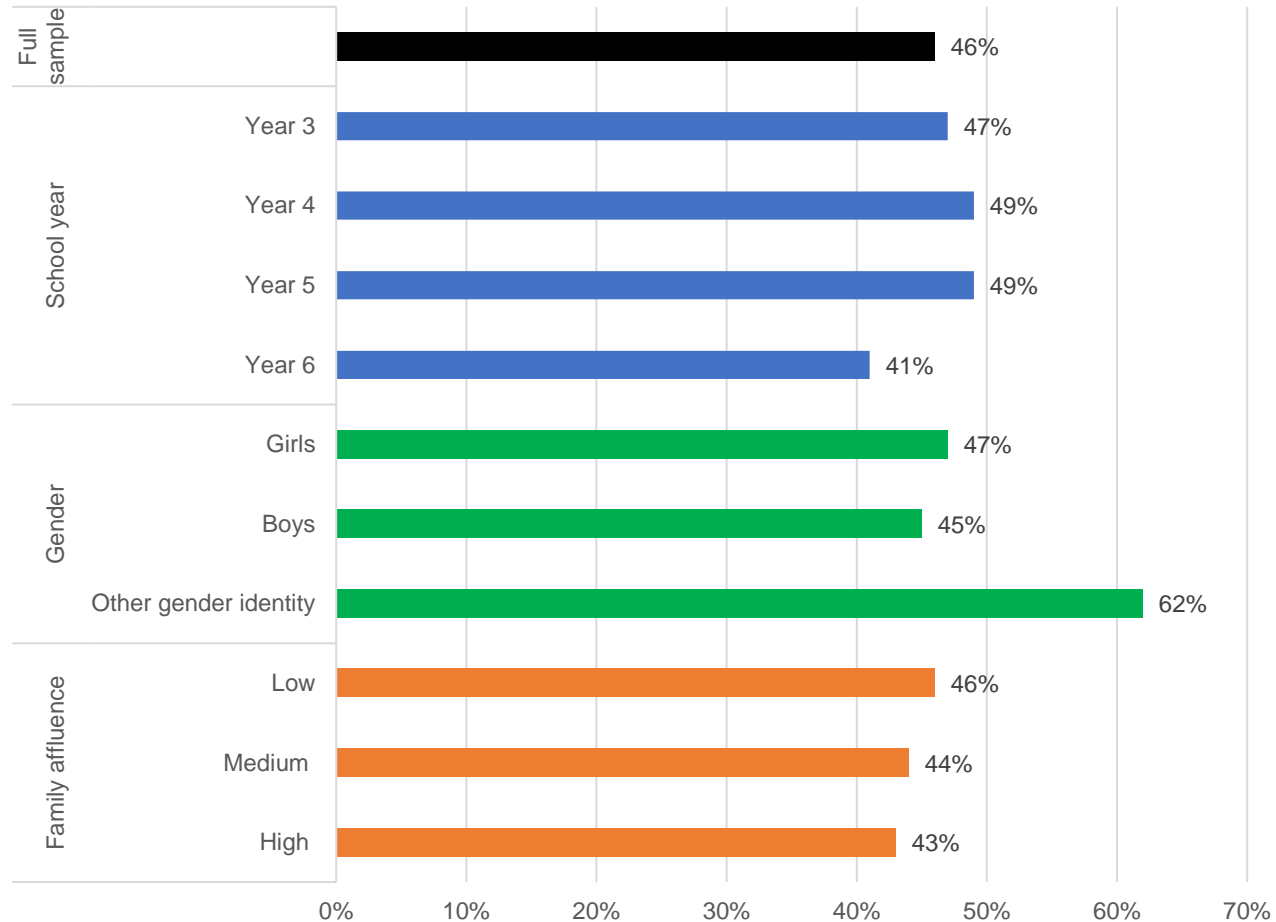
Figure 2.2 Percentage of learners in Year 6 who said they had taken part in cyberbullying in the past couple of months, overall and by gender and family affluence



- Cyberbullying questions were only asked of Year 6 learners.
- 9% of Year 6 learners reported having cyberbullied another learner in the past couple of months.
- A greater proportion of boys than girls said that they had cyberbullied others.
- Cyberbullying perpetration showed evidence of a social gradient, with learners from less affluent families reporting higher rates than those from more affluent families.

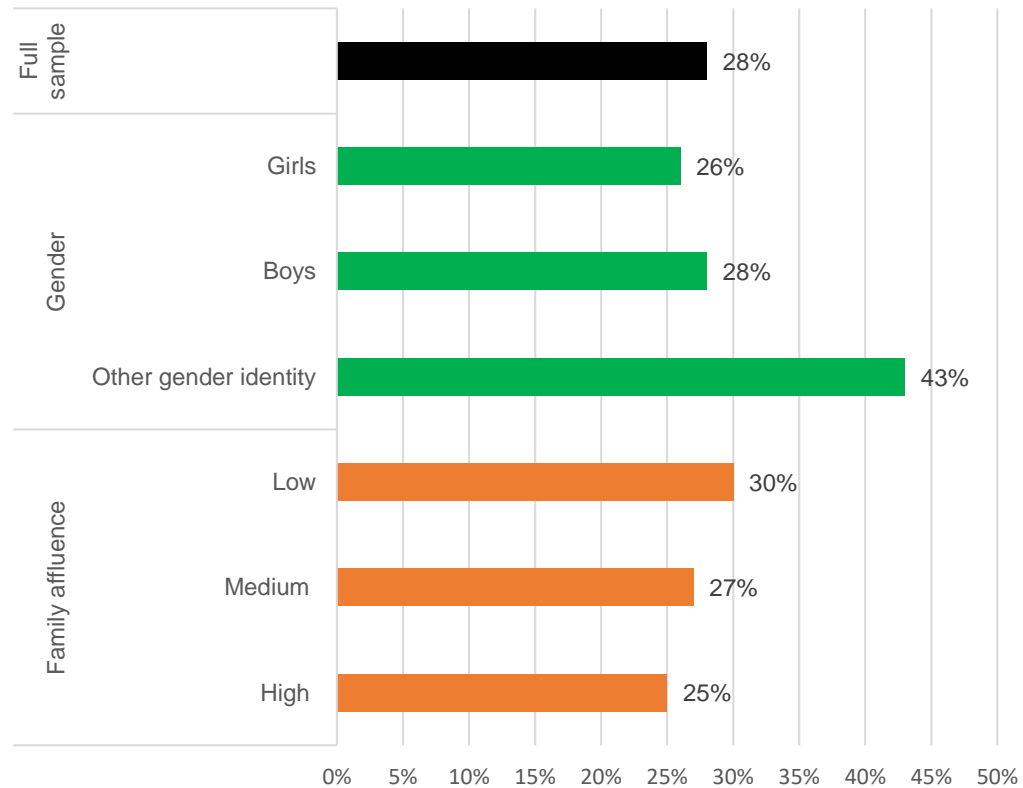
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=8,558)

Figure 2.3 Percentage of learners who said they had been bullied at school in the past couple of months, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



- Nearly half (46%) of learners reported having been bullied at school in the past couple of months.
- There was an unclear age gradient, although Year 6 learners were least likely to report having been bullied.
- A slightly higher proportion of girls than boys reporting having been bullied. Learners who identified as neither a boy nor a girl were most likely to report having been bullied.
- Bullying victimisation showed some evidence of a social gradient, with learners from less affluent families reporting slightly higher rates of being bullied than those from medium or high affluence families.

Figure 2.4 Percentage of learners in Year 6 who said they had been cyberbullied in the past couple of months, overall and by gender and family affluence

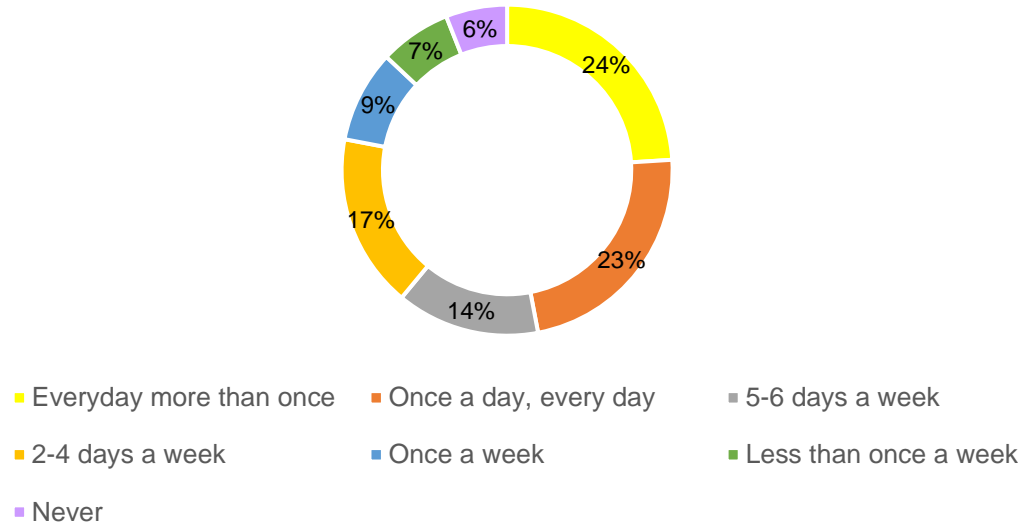


- 28% of Year 6 learners reported having been cyberbullied in the past couple of months.
- A slightly higher proportion of boys than girls reported having been cyberbullied.
- There was a social gradient in cyberbullying victimisation, with learners from less affluent families experiencing higher rates of bullying than those from more affluent families.

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=8,482)

3) HEALTHY EATING AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

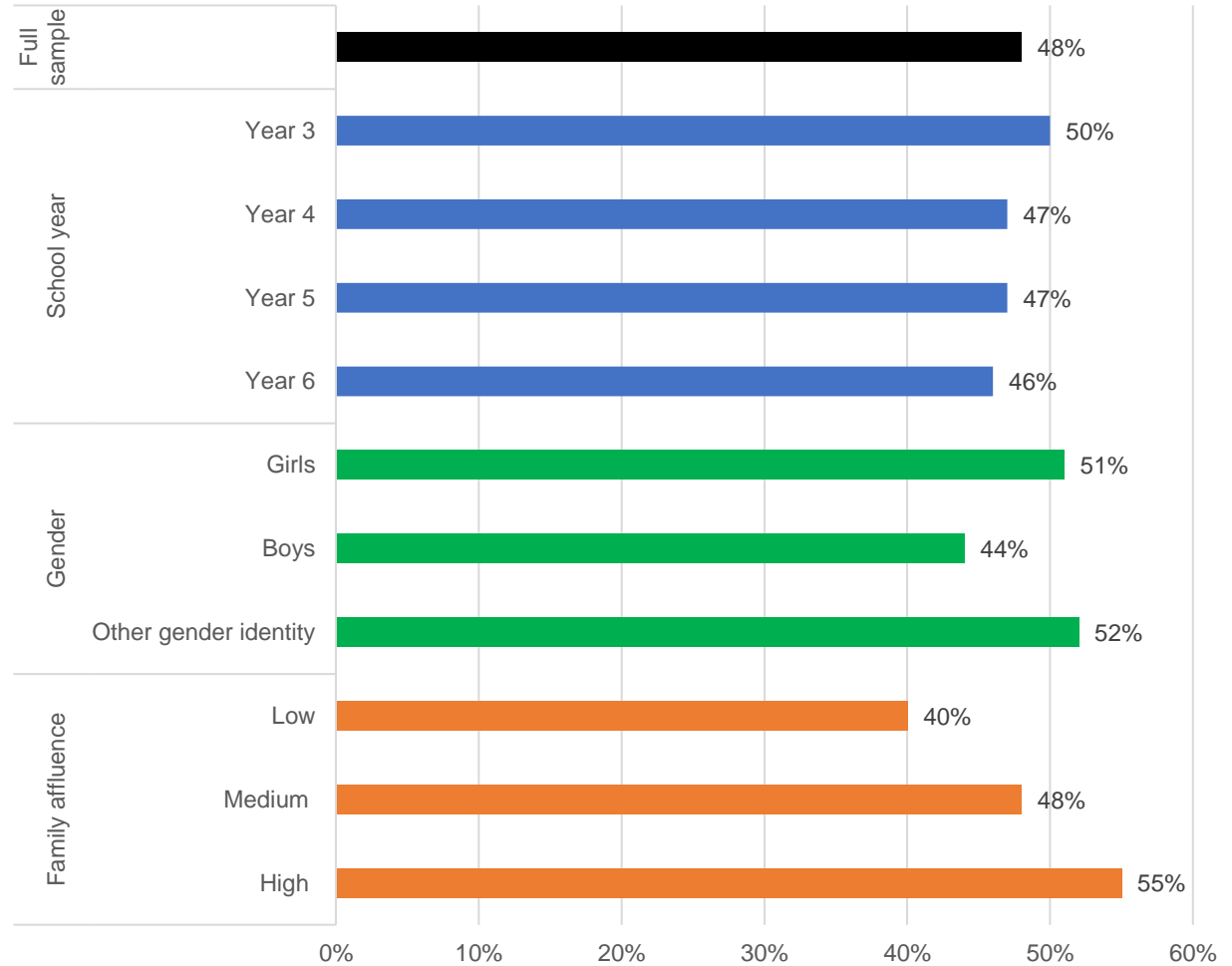
Figure 3.1 Frequency of fruit consumption (%)



- 48%* of learners reported eating fruit at least once a day.
- Year 3 learners were most likely to report eating fruit at least daily across the age groups.
- Girls were more likely to report eating fruit daily than boys.
- Learners from more affluent families were more likely to report eating fruit daily than those from less affluent families.

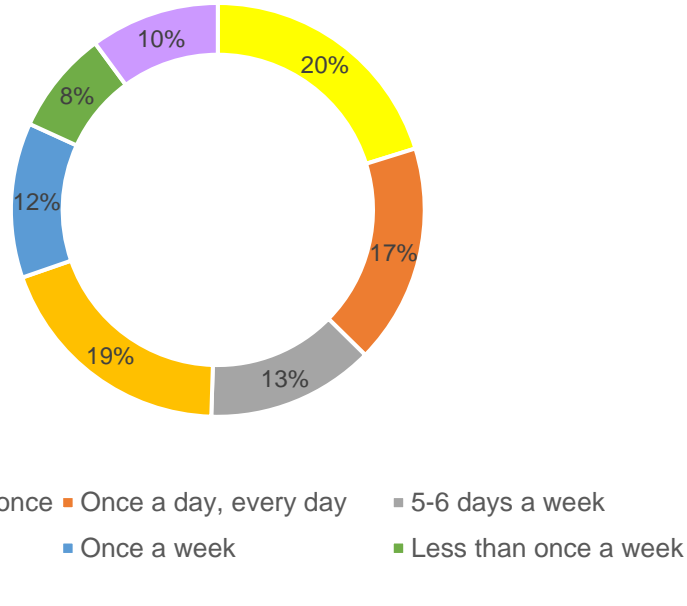
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,929)

Figure 3.2 Percentage who eat fruit at least daily, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



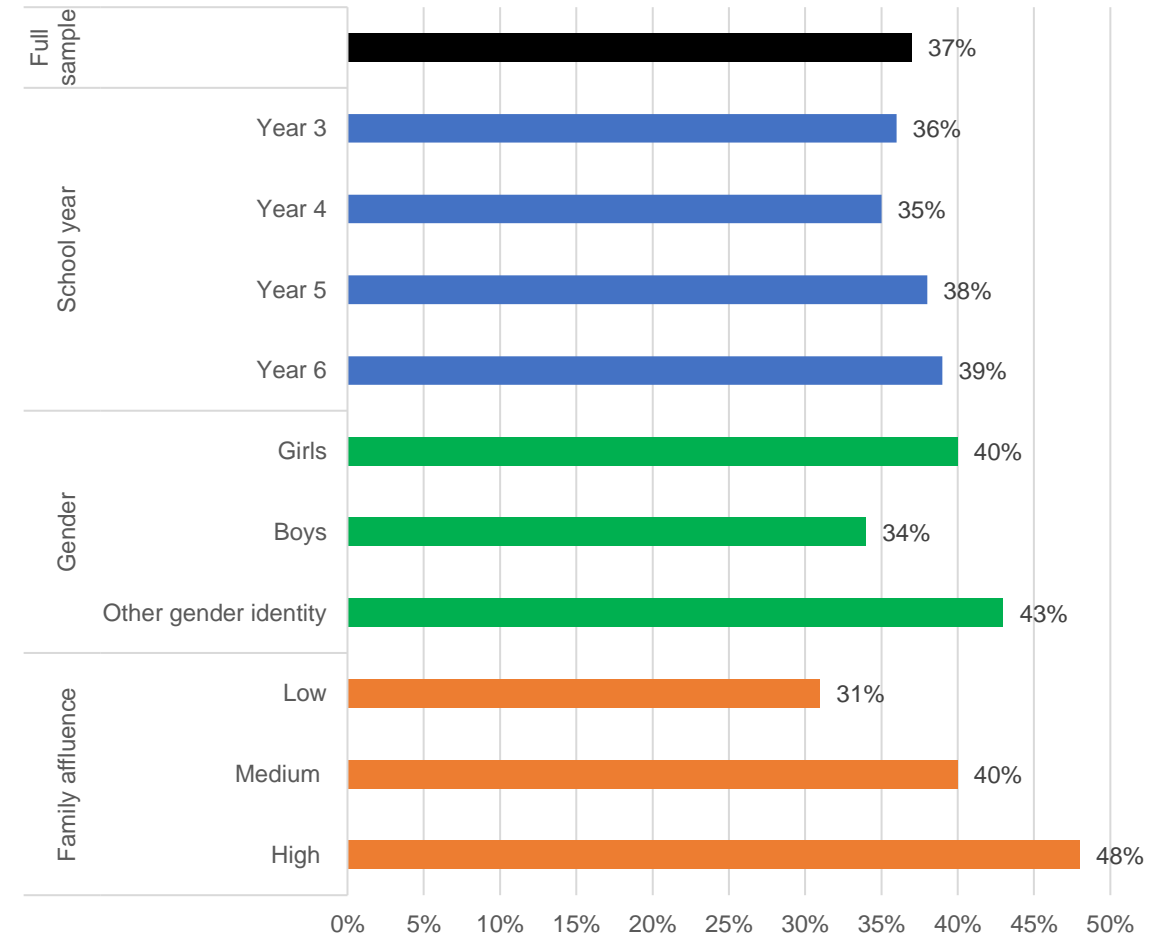
*The two graphs have different values due to rounding

Figure 3.3 Frequency of vegetable consumption (%)



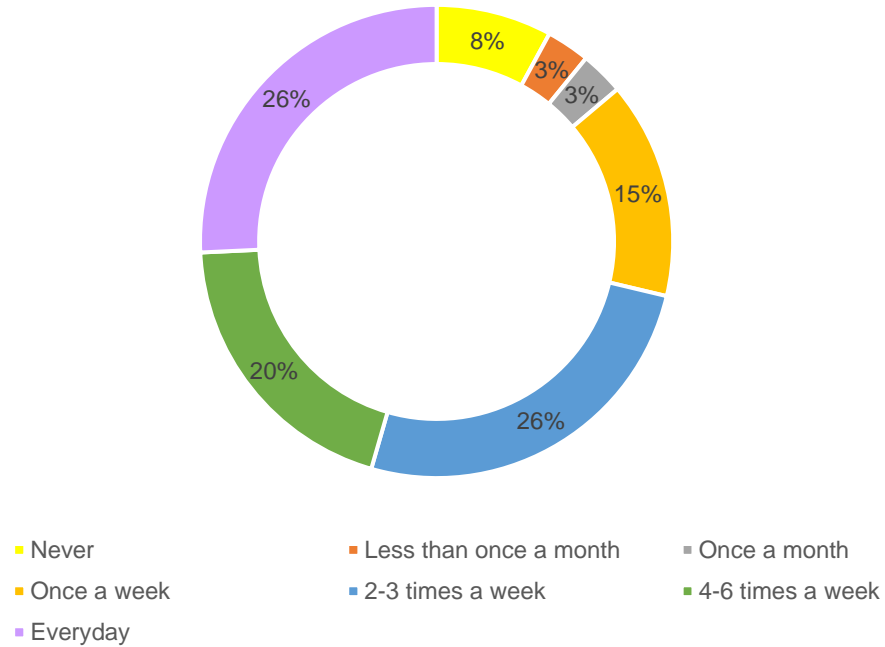
- 37% of learners reported eating vegetables at least once a day.
- Year 5 and 6 learners were more likely to report eating vegetables daily than younger learners.
- Girls were more likely to report eating vegetables daily than boys.
- Learners from more affluent families were more likely to report eating vegetables daily than those from less affluent families.

Figure 3.4 Percentage who eat vegetables at least daily, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



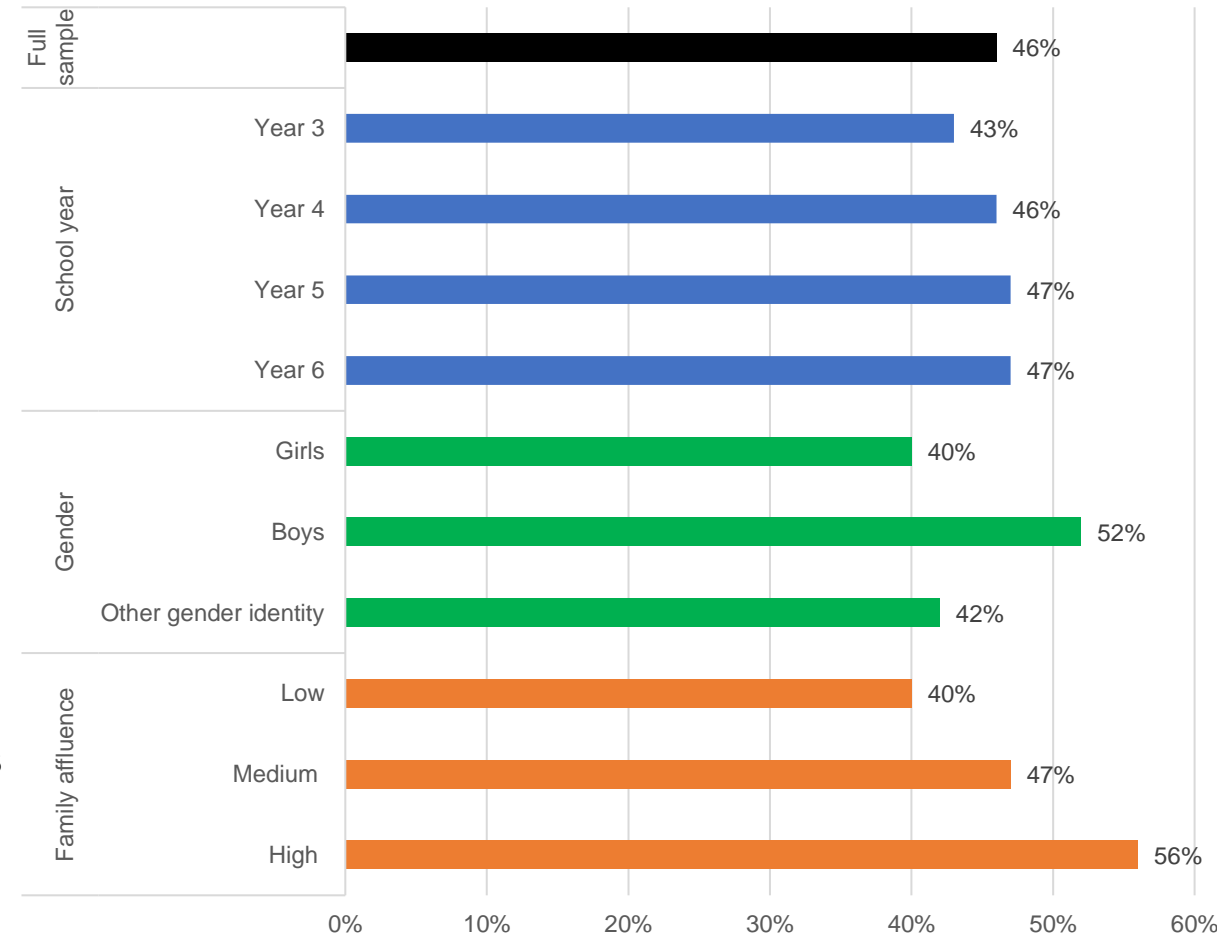
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,758)

Figure 3.5 Frequency of exercising (so much that they get of breath and sweat) (%)



- 46% of learners reported exercising in their free time (so much that they get out of breath and sweat) four times or more a week.
- Learners in Year 3 were least likely to report exercising four times or more a week.
- The proportion was highest in boys than in other gender groups.
- There was a clear social gradient, with learners from more affluent families more likely to exercise four or more times a week.

Figure 3.6 Percentage who reported exercising (so much that they get out of breath and sweat) at least four times a week, overall and by age, gender and family affluence

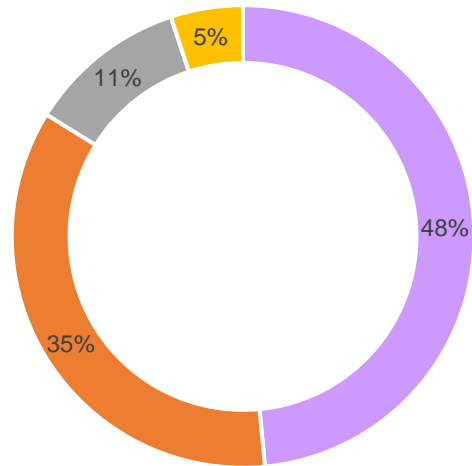


Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=29,722)

4) SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS*

*Some items within this section were only asked of Years 5 and 6 to limit length of survey for younger learners

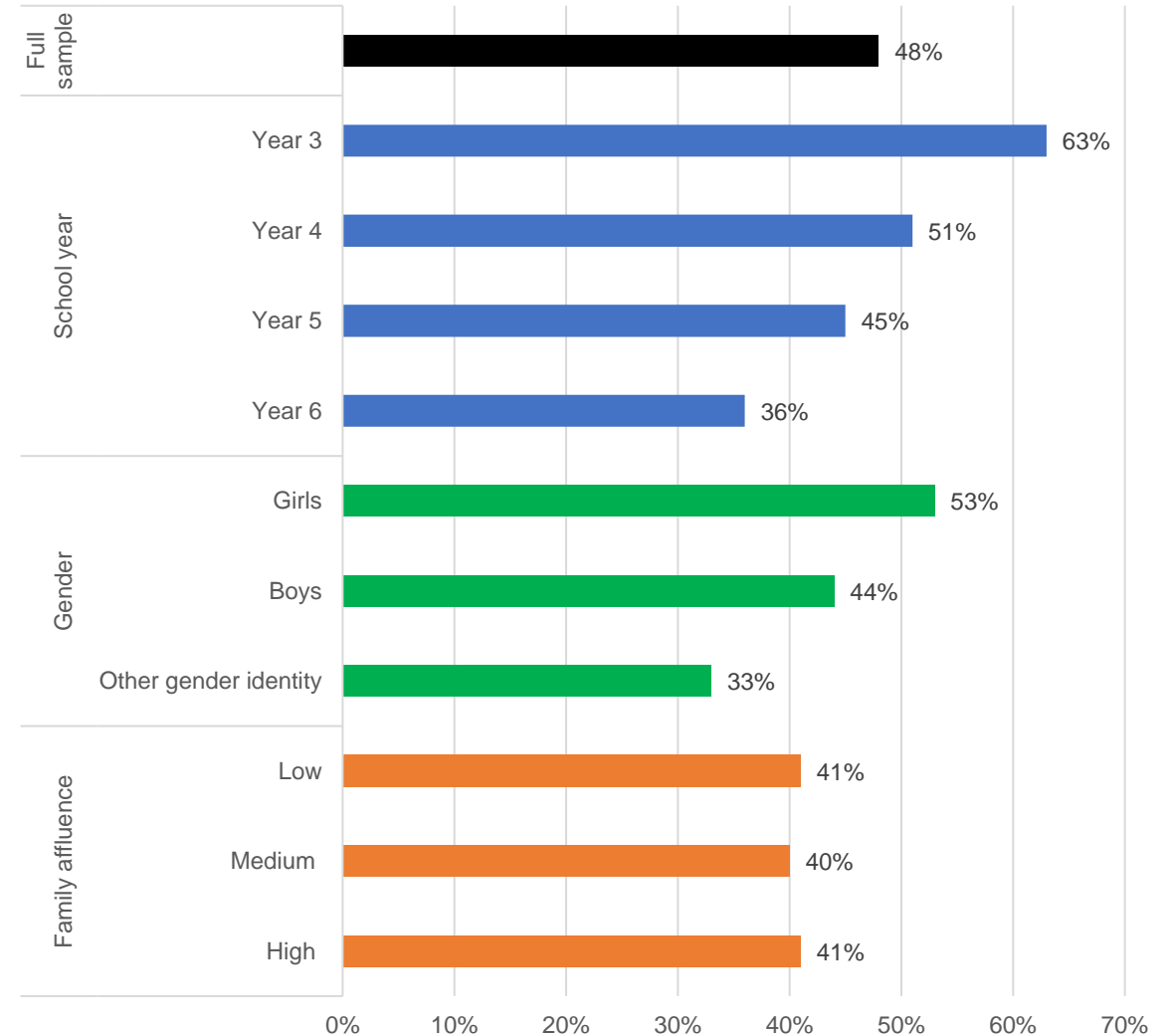
Figure 4.1 Feelings about school (%)



■ I like it a lot
 ■ I like it a bit
 ■ I don't like it very much
 ■ I don't like it at all

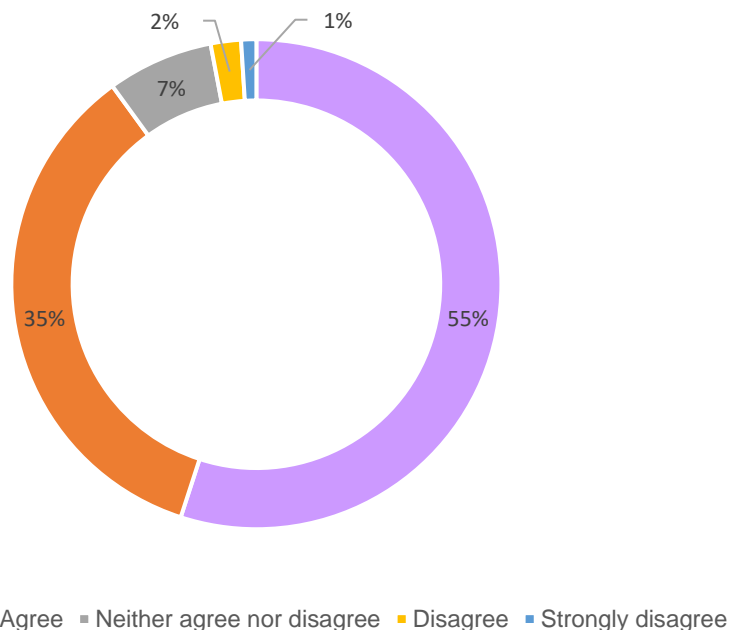
- 83% of learners reported liking school at least a bit, and 48% reported liking school a lot.
- While two in three Year 3 learners like school a lot, this declines to one in three by Year 6.
- Girls were more likely than the other gender groups to report liking school a lot.
- There was little evidence of a social gradient.

Figure 4.2 Percentage who like school a lot, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



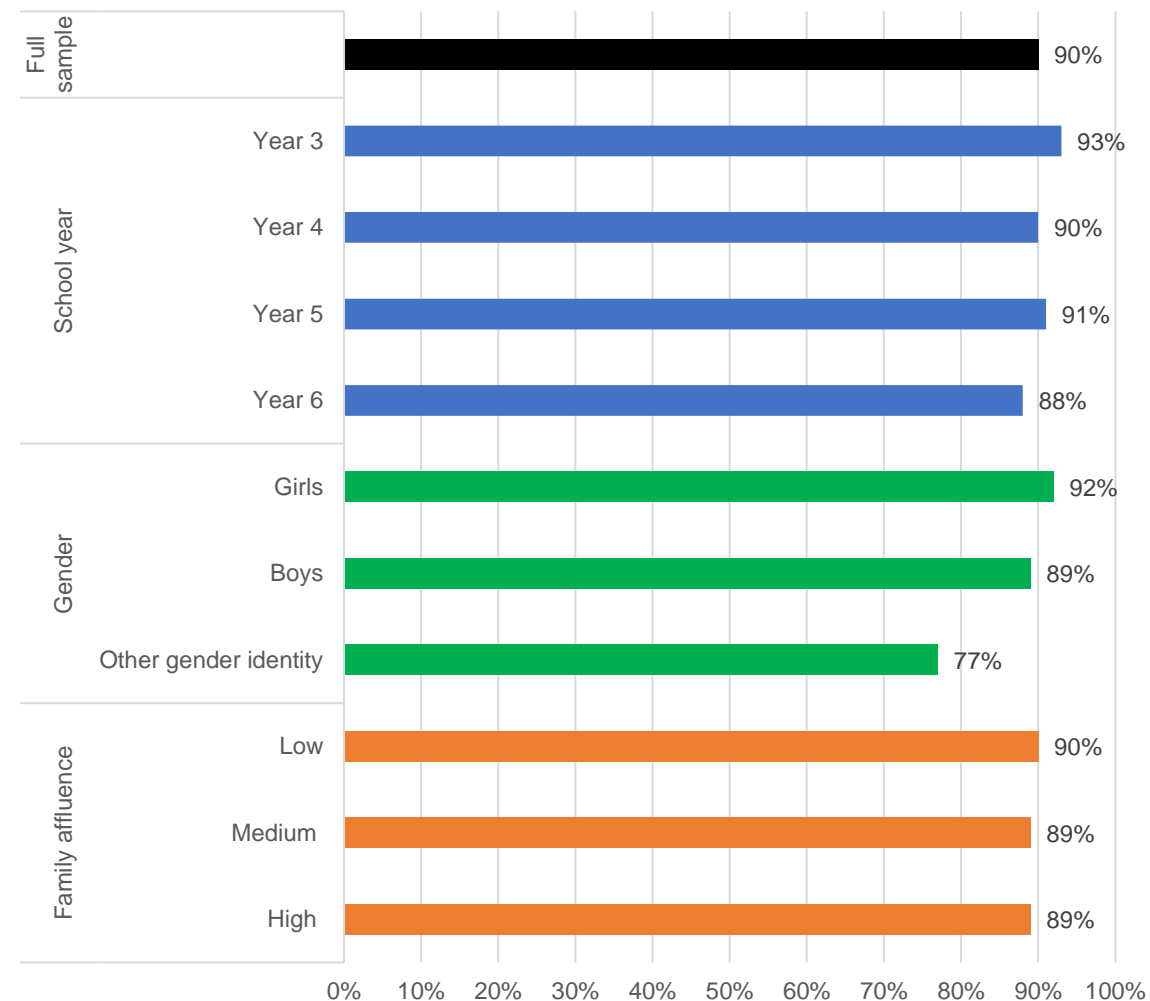
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,746)

Figure 4.3 Feel that teachers care about them as a person (%)



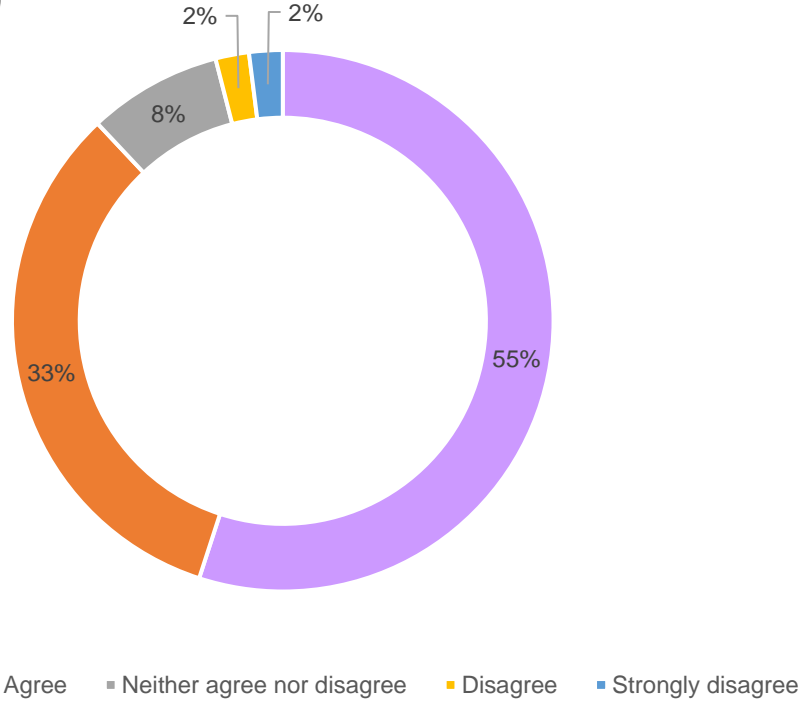
- 90% of learners agreed that their teachers care about them.
- Learners in Year 3 were most likely to report that their teachers care about them compared to the other year groups.
- Girls were slightly more likely than boys to report that their teachers care about them.
- There was no evidence of a social gradient.

Figure 4.4 Percentage who agree that their teachers care about them as a person, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,678)

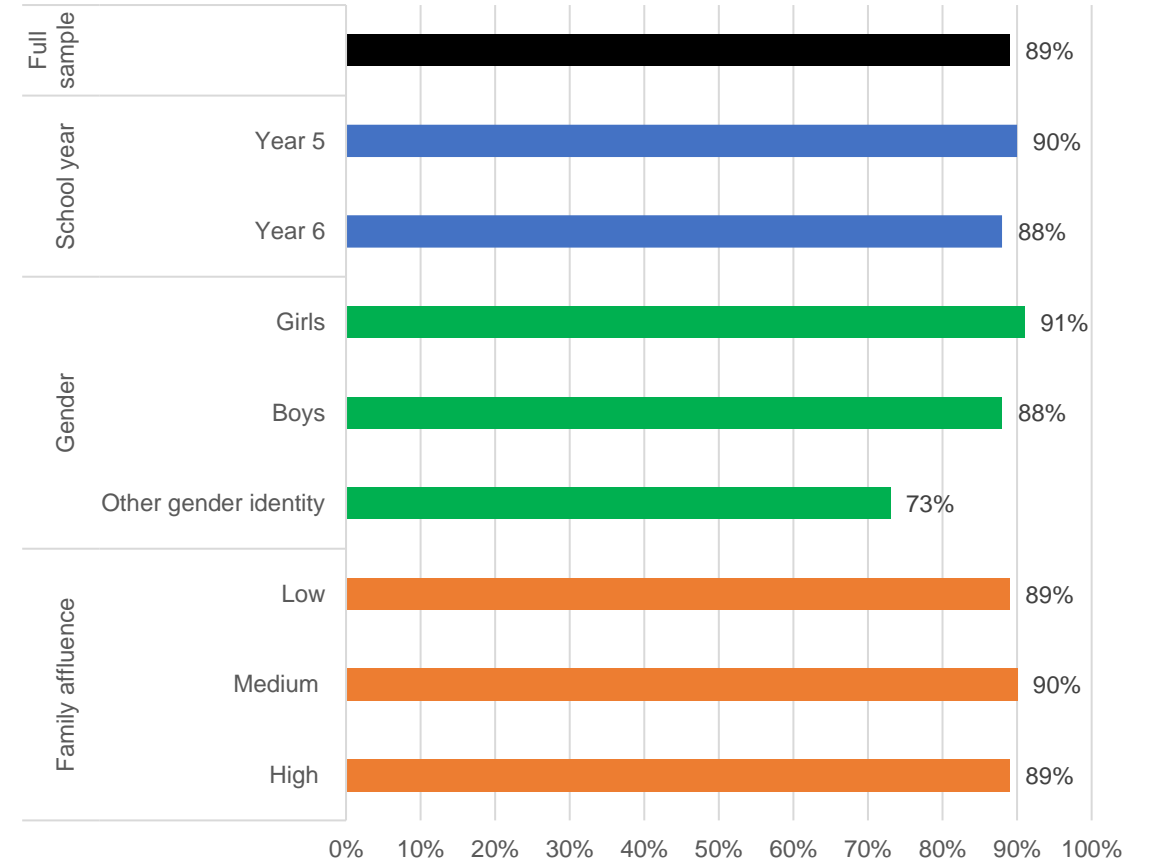
Figure 4.5 Feel that teachers accept them as they are (%)*



- 89%** of learners agreed that their teachers accept them as they are.
- Girls were slightly more likely than boys to report feeling accepted by teachers.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups.

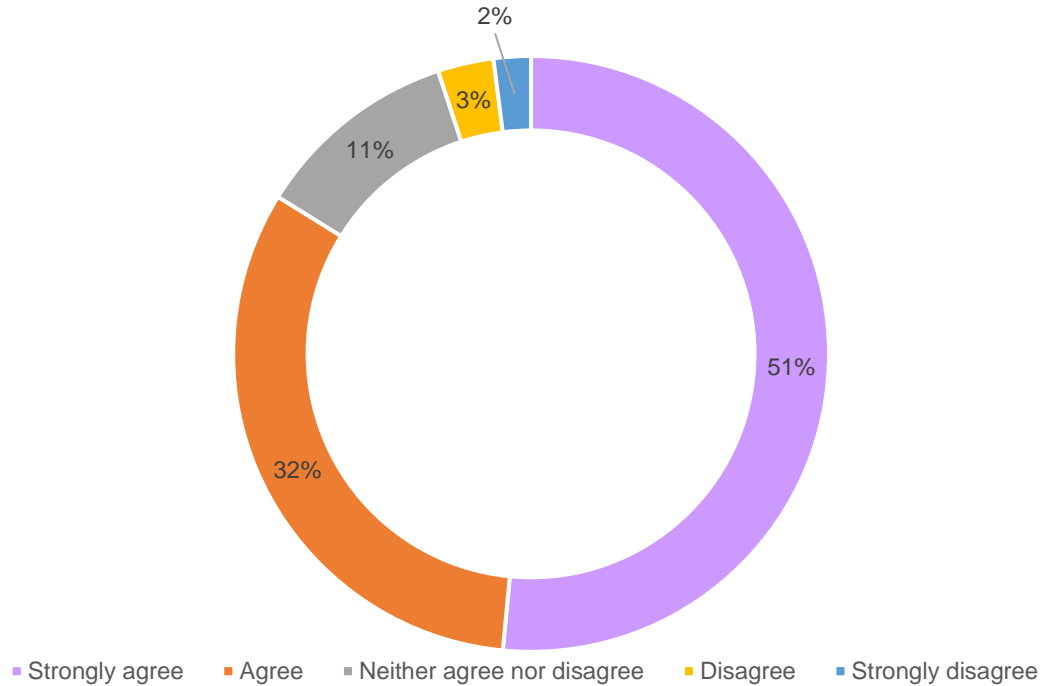
*Years 5 and 6 only; **The two graphs have different values due to rounding.

Figure 4.6 Percentage who agree that teachers accept them as they are, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,566)

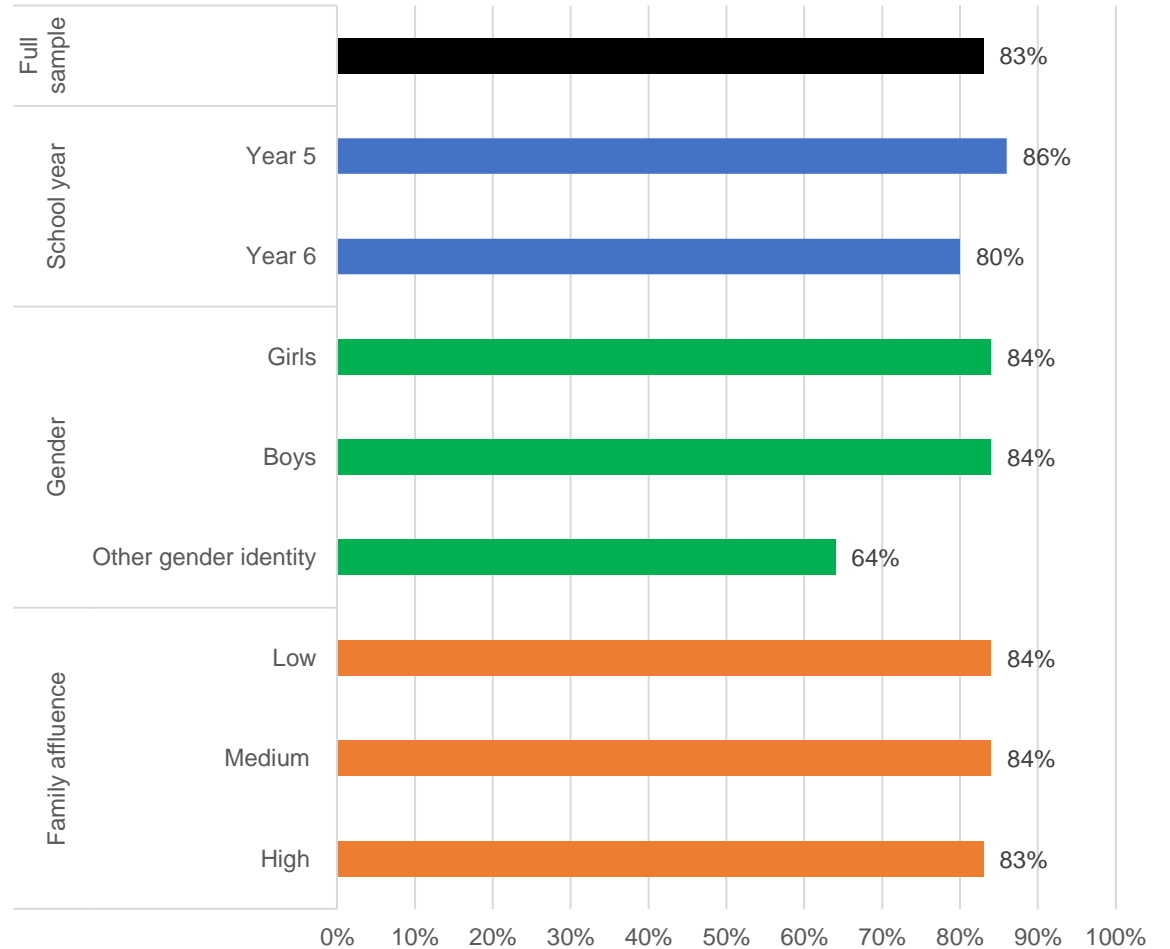
Figure 4.7 Trust teachers (%)*



- 83% of learners agreed that they trust their teachers.
- Learners in Year 6 were less likely than those in Year 5 to agree that they trust their teachers.
- There were no differences between boys and girls, or between family affluence groups.

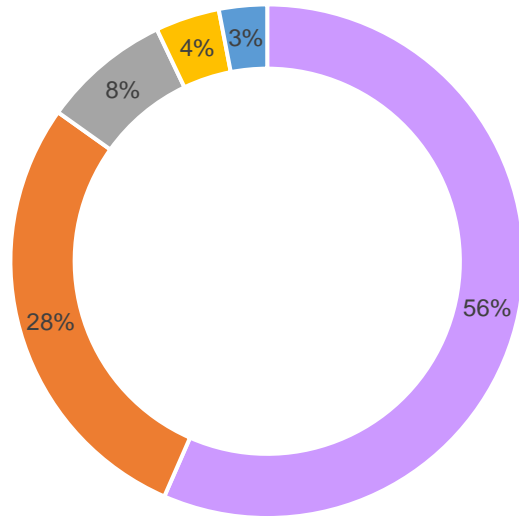
*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.8 Percentage who agree that they trust their teachers, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,560)

Figure 4.9 Adult at school to confide in (%)*

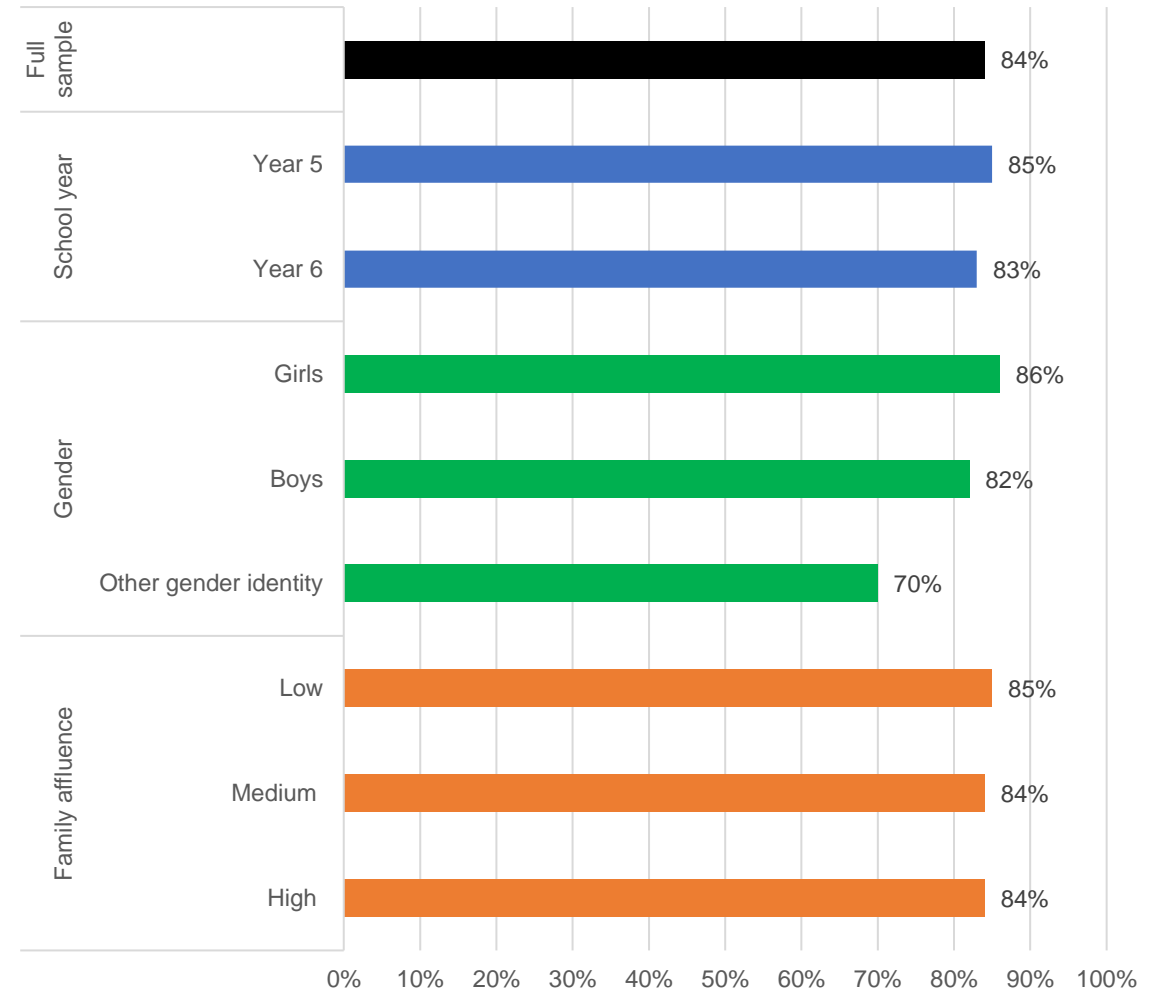


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

- 84% of learners agreed that there is at least one adult in school they can talk to about things that worry them.
- Girls were more likely than boys to report this.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups.

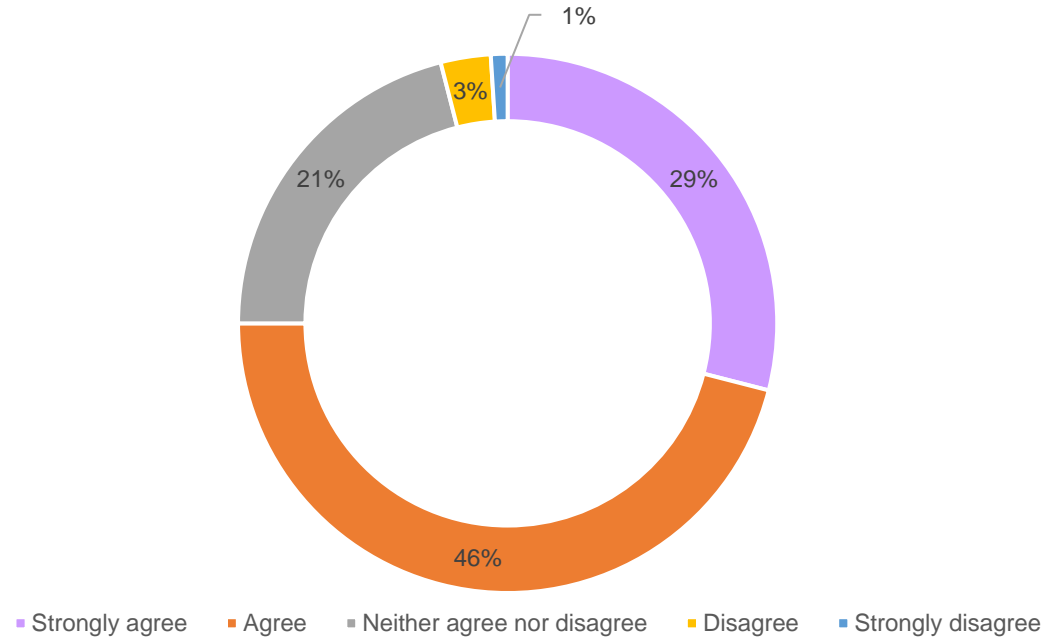
*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.10 Percentage who agree that there is at least one adult at school they can confide in, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,266)

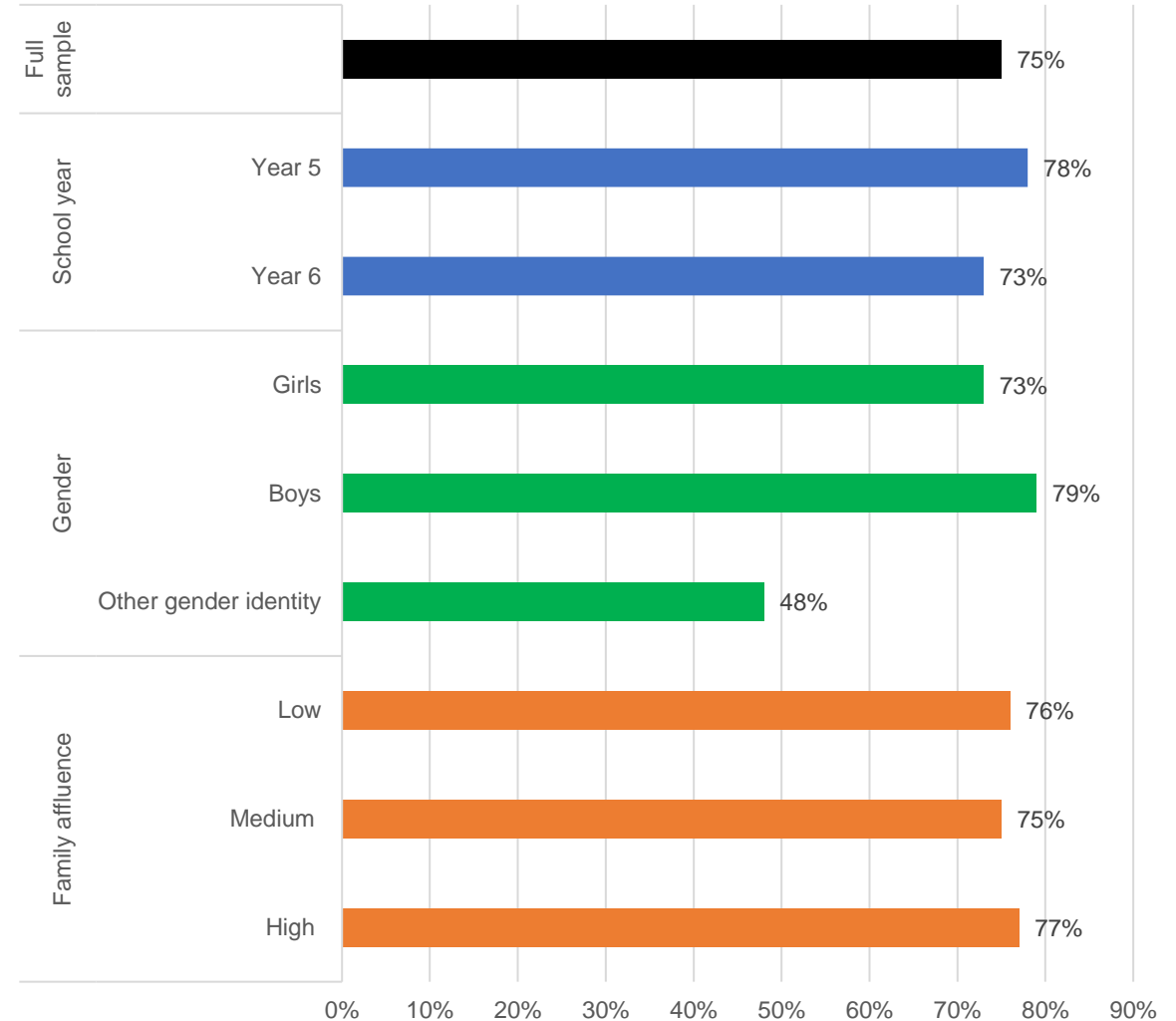
Figure 4.11 Children enjoy being together (%)*



- 75% of learners reported that children in their school enjoy being together.
- Learners in Year 6 were less likely than those in Year 5 to report that children enjoy being together.
- Boys were more likely to report that children at their school enjoy being together than the other gender groups. There was little difference of a social gradient.

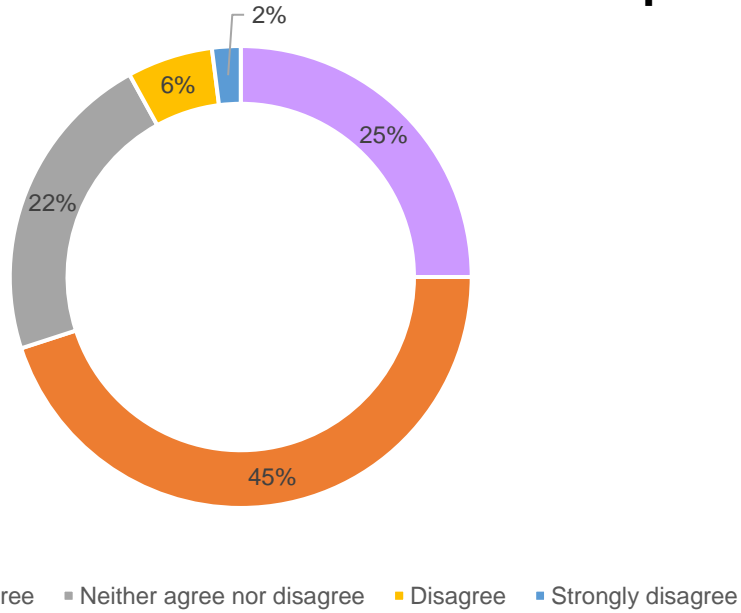
*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.12 Percentage who agree or strongly agree that children enjoy being together, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,510)

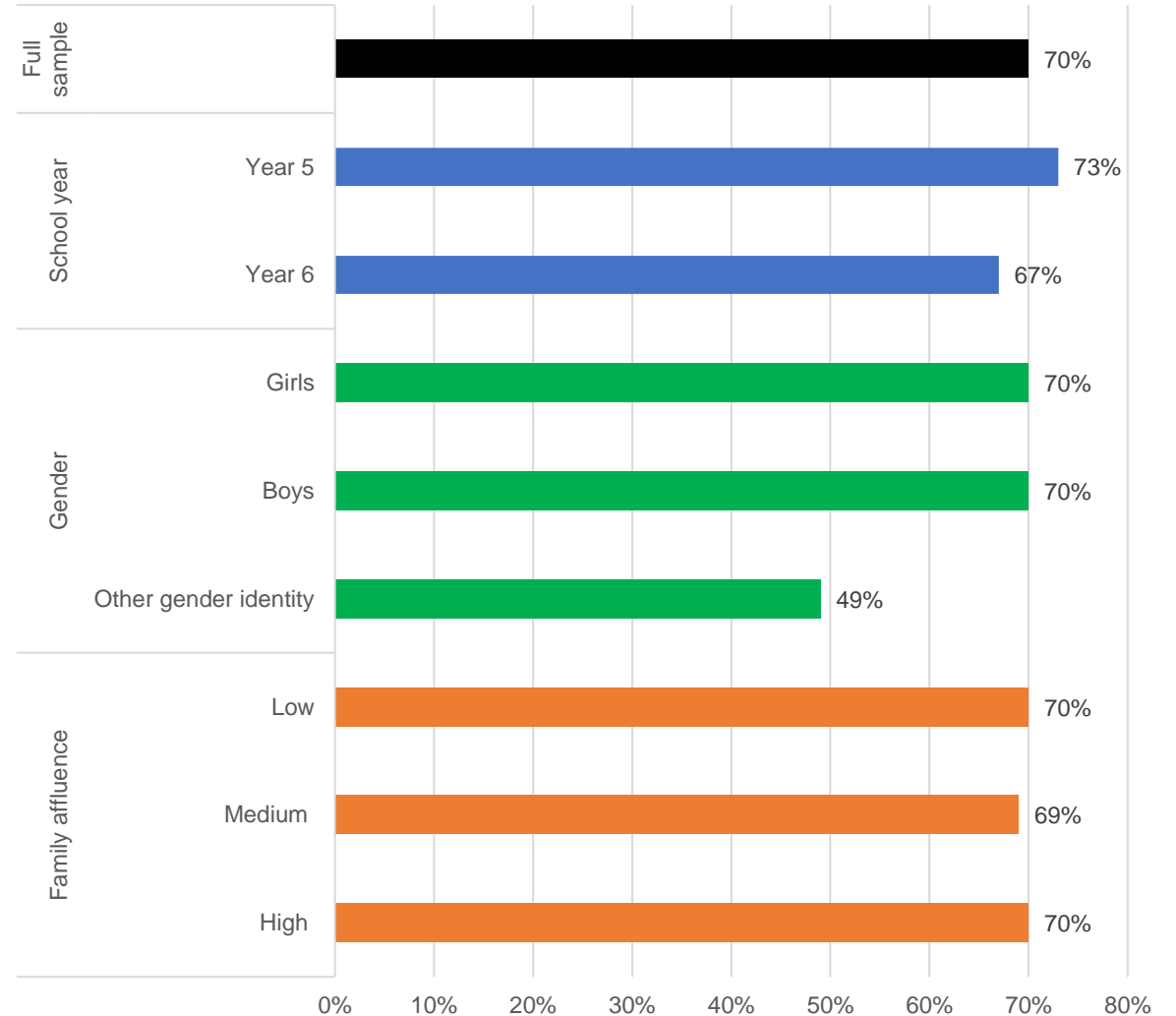
Figure 4.13 Most children are kind and helpful (%)*



- 70% of learners reported that most children in their school are kind and helpful.
- Learners in Year 6 were less likely than those in Year 5 to report that most children in their school are kind and helpful.
- There was little difference between boys and girls.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups.

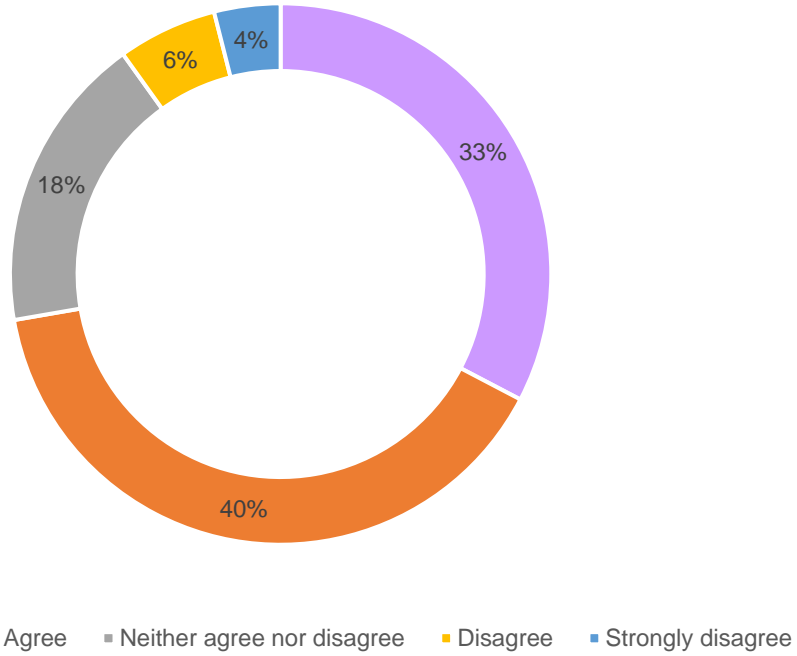
*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.14 Percentage who agree or strongly agree that most children are kind and helpful, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,625)

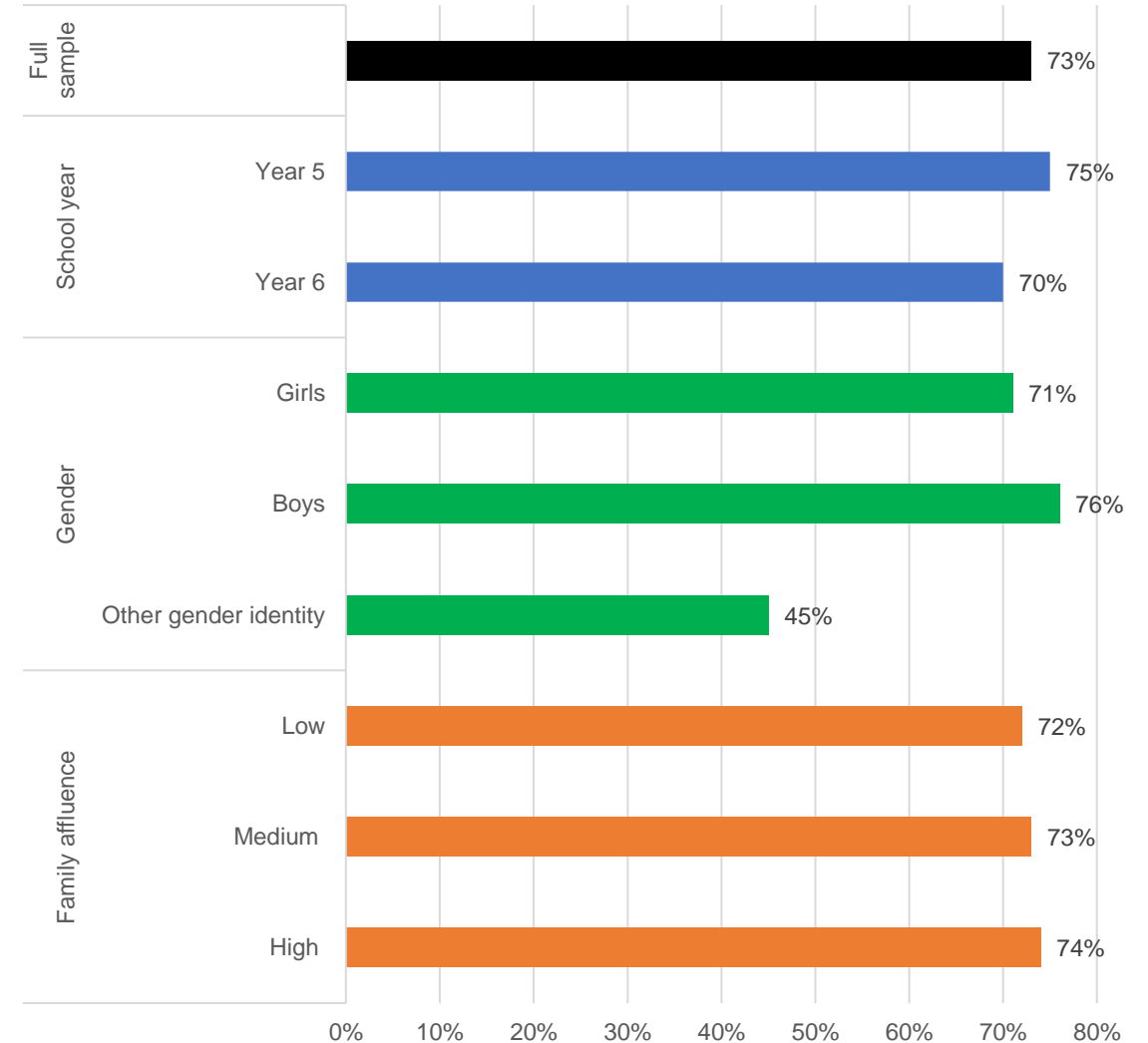
Figure 4.15 Other children accept me as I am (%)*



- 73% of learners agreed that other children accept them as they are. Learners in Year 6 were less likely than those in Year 5 to report this.
- Boys were more likely to agree that learners accept them as they are than the other gender groups.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups.

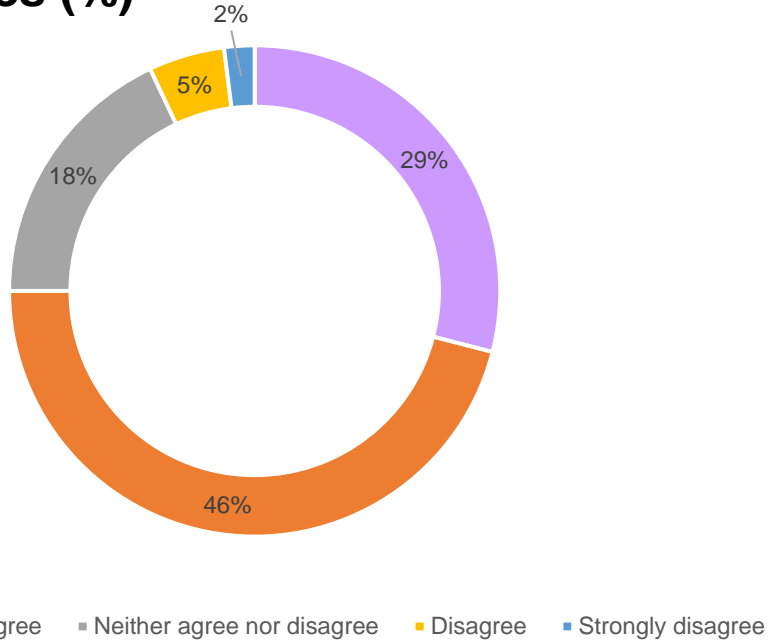
*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.16 Percentage who agree or strongly agree that other children accept them as they are, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=15,944)

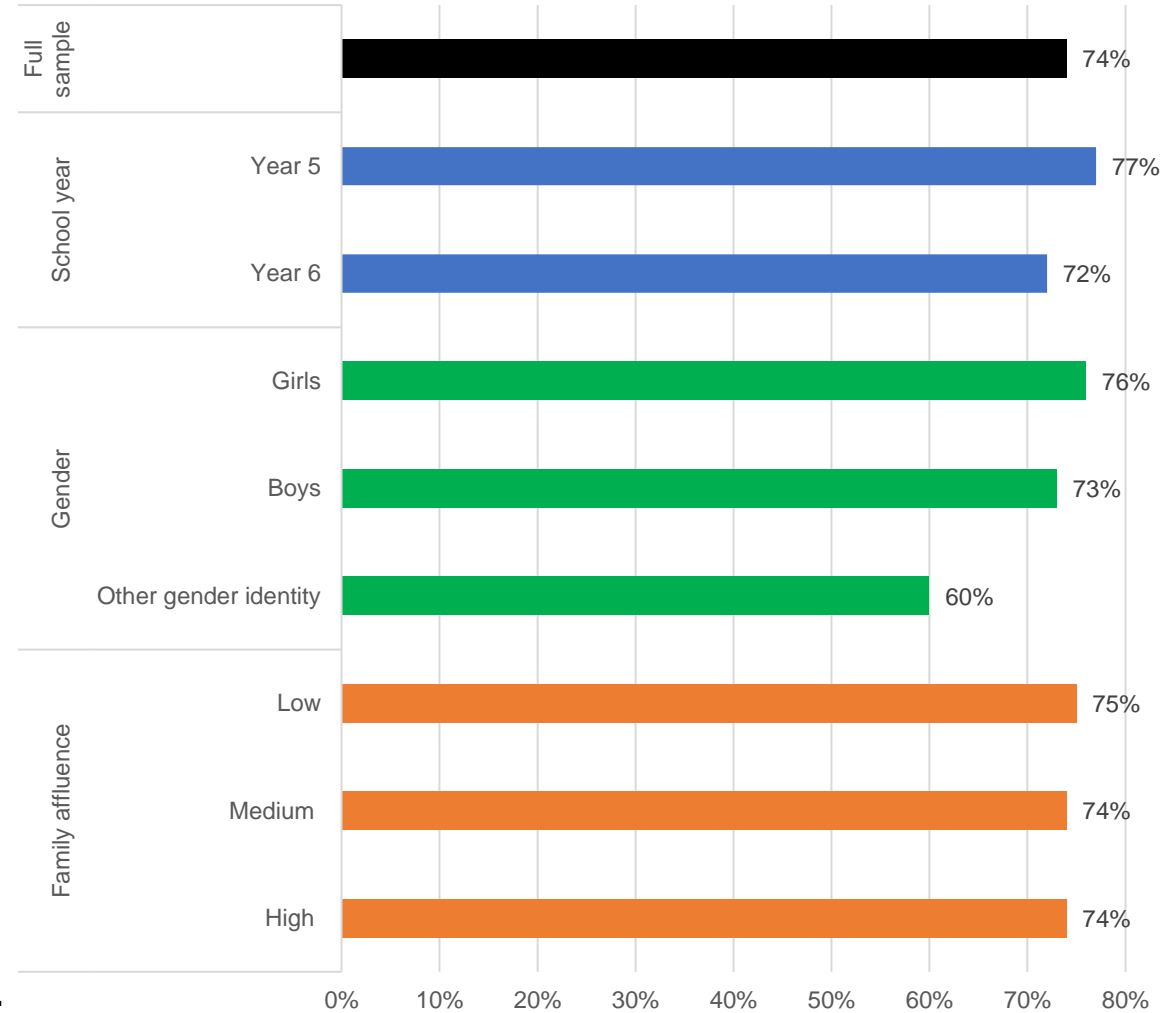
Figure 4.17 Children have a say in planning school activities (%)*



- 74%** of learners agreed that children have a say in planning school activities. Learners in Year 6 were less likely than those in Year 5 to report this.
- Girls were more likely to agree that learners have a say in planning school activities than the other gender groups.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups.

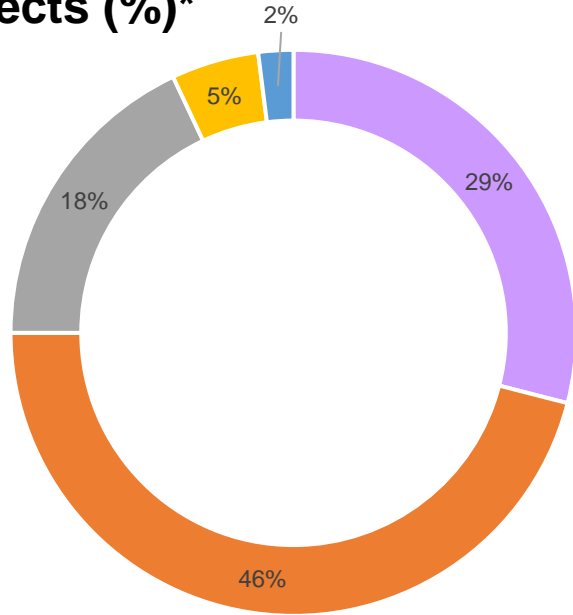
*Years 5 and 6 only; **The two graphs have different values due to rounding

Figure 4.18 Percentage who agree that children have a say in planning school activities, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=15,947)

Figure 4.19 Children have a chance to help plan school projects (%)*

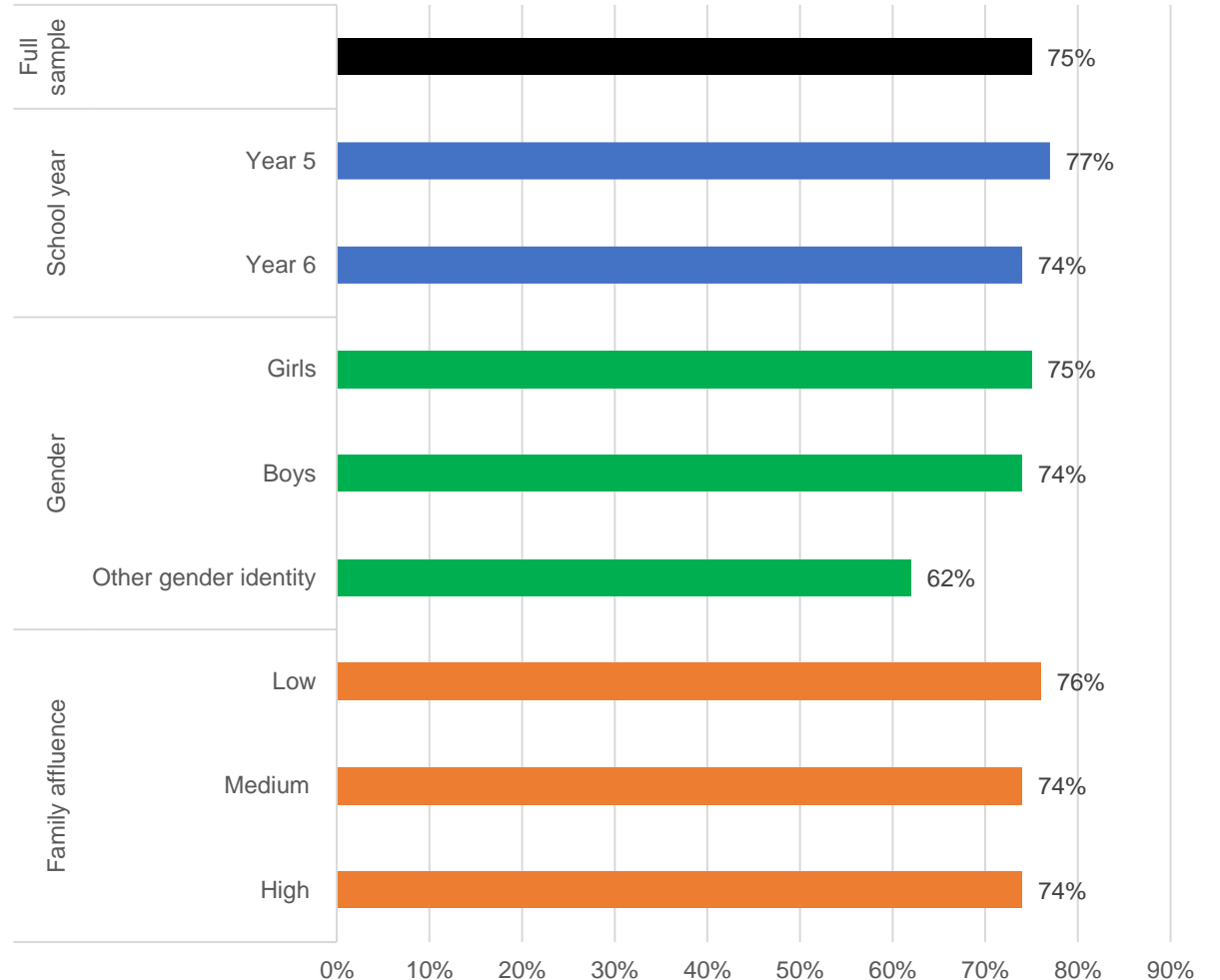


■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

- 75% of learners agreed that children have a chance to help plan school projects.
- Learners in Year 6 were less likely to report this than those in Year 5.
- There was little difference between boys and girls, or between family affluence groups.

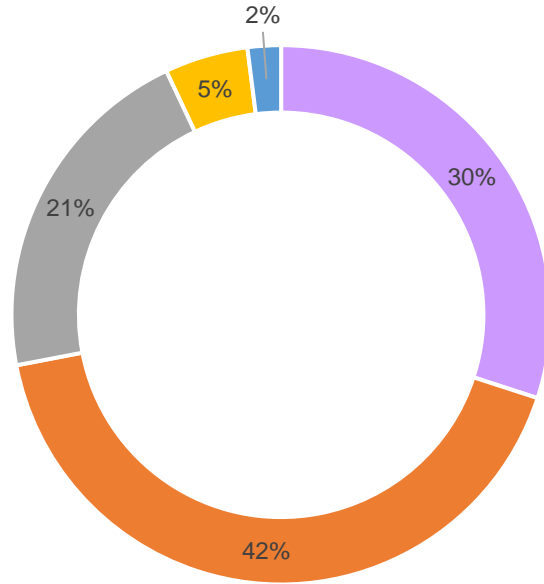
*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.20 Percentage who agree that children have a chance to help plan school projects, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,418)

Figure 4.21 Children’s ideas are treated seriously at school (%)*

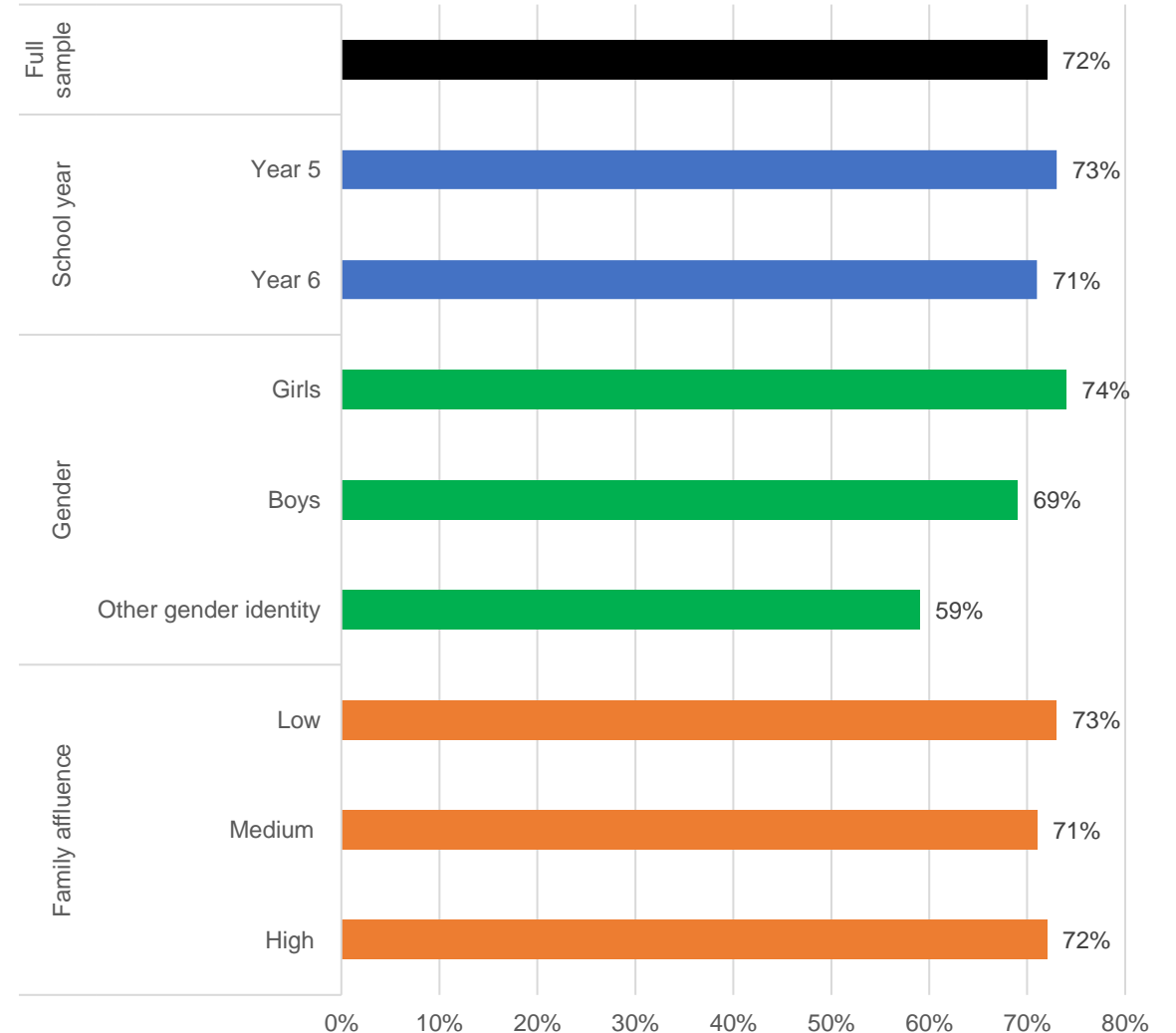


■ Strongly agree ■ Agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

- 72% of learners agreed that children’s ideas are treated seriously in school.
- Girls were most likely to say that learners’ ideas are taken seriously than the other gender groups.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups.

*Years 5 and 6 only

Figure 4.22 Percentage who agree that children’s ideas are treated seriously at school, overall and by age, gender and family affluence*



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=16,281) 39

5) SCHOOL TRANSITION

Figure 5.1 Worried about the transition to secondary school (%)

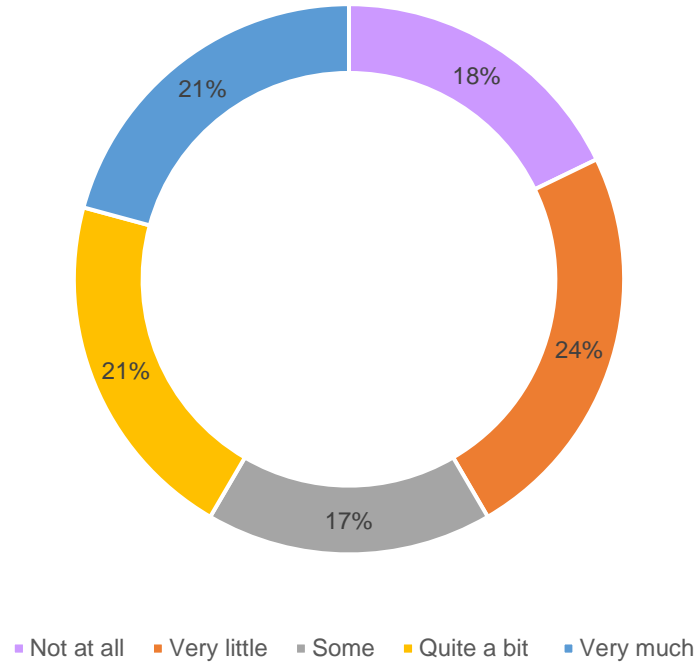
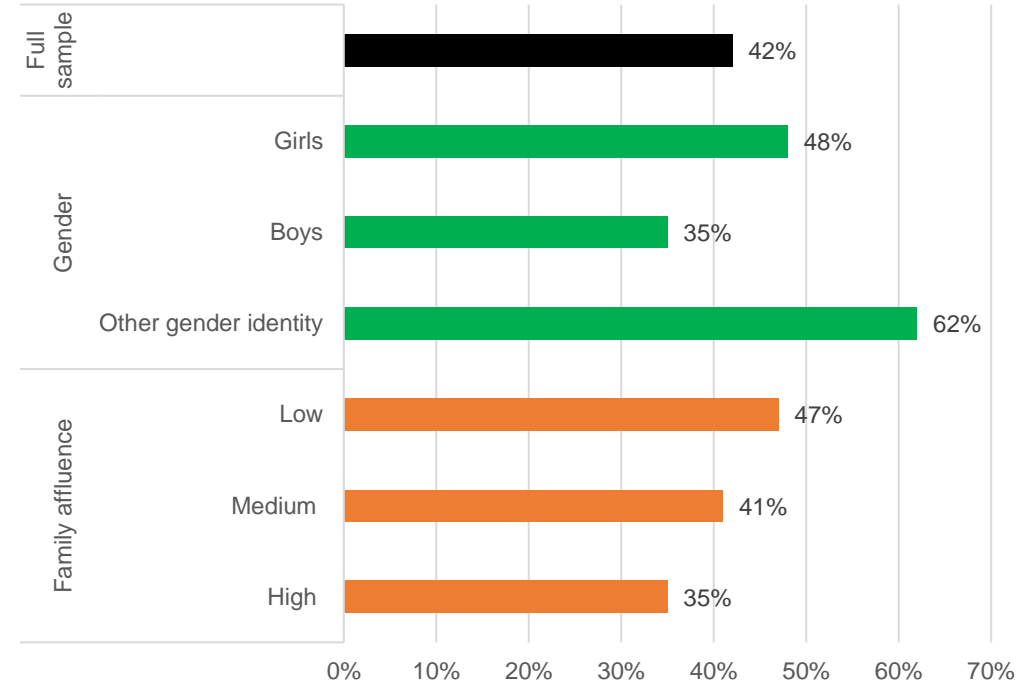


Figure 5.2 Percentage worried quite a bit or very much about the transition to secondary school, overall and by gender and family affluence



- Only learners in Year 6 were asked questions about transition.
- Over half of learners (59%) reported feeling worried about school transition at least to some extent, with 42% reporting being worried quite a bit or very much.
- Girls were more likely than boys to report feeling worried about transition, and learners who did not identify as either a boy or a girl were the most worried. There was a clear social gradient, with reports of worry highest among learners from the least affluent families.

Figure 5.3 Looking forward to the transition to secondary school (%)

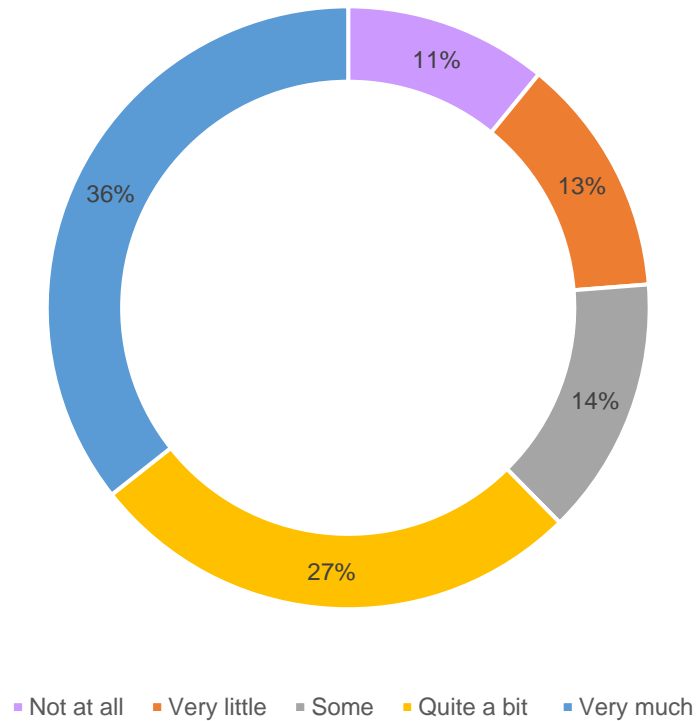
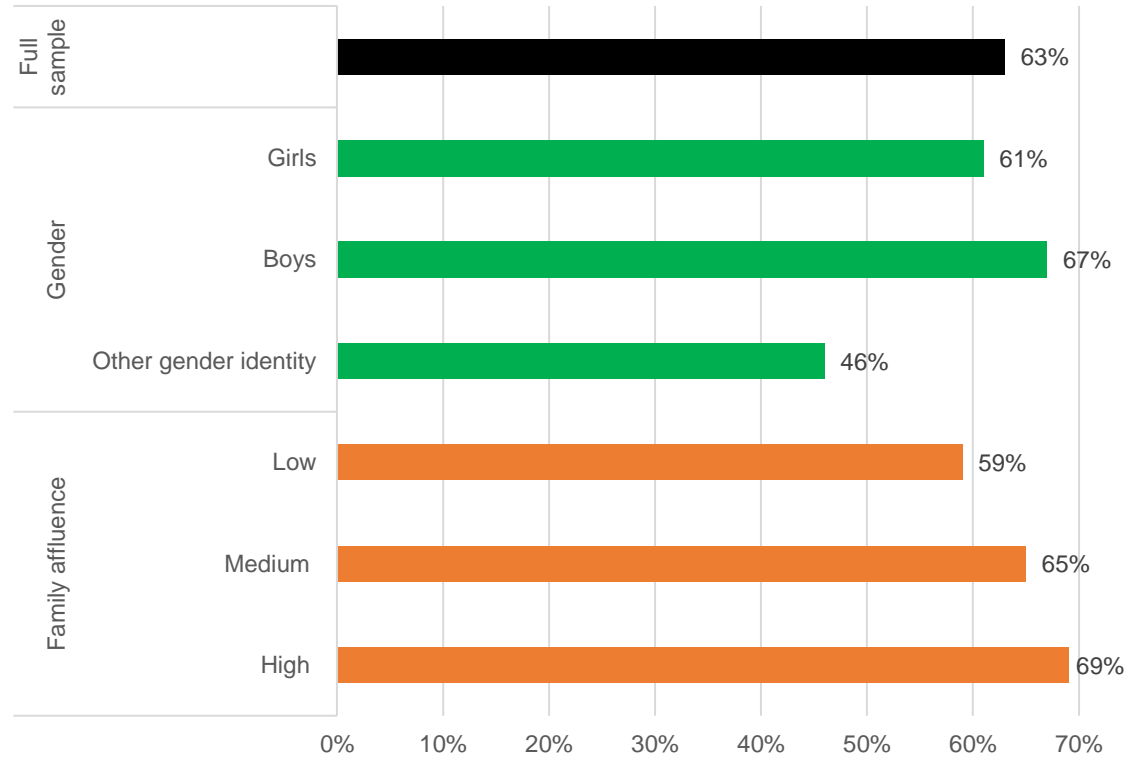


Figure 5.4 Percentage looking forward to the transition to secondary school quite a bit or very much, overall and by gender and family affluence

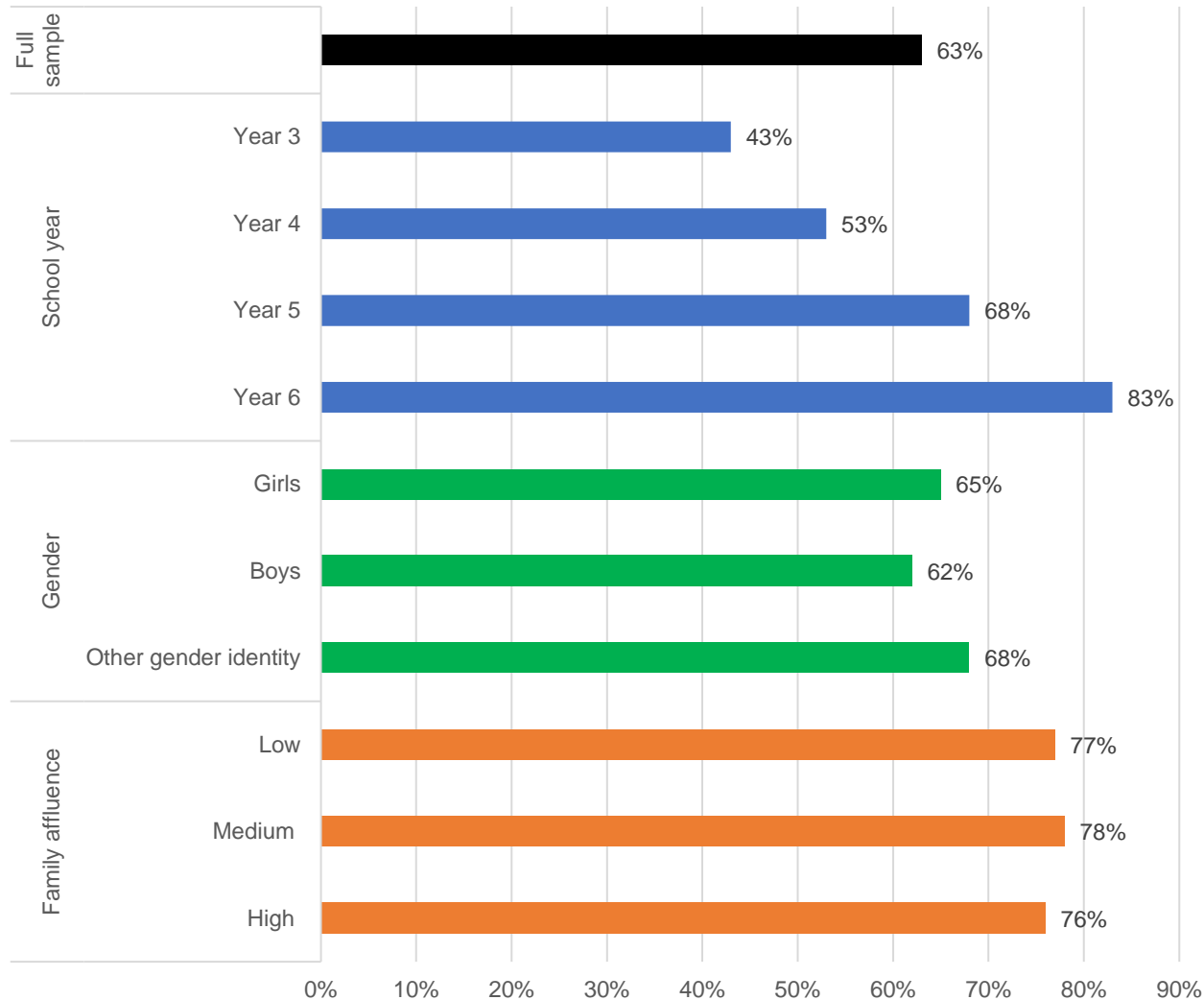


- Nearly two thirds (63%) of Year 6 learners reported looking forward to transition quite a bit or very much.
- Boys were more likely to report looking forward to transition compared to the other gender groups.
- There was a social gradient, with learners from high affluence families more likely to look forward to transition than those from medium or low affluence families.

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=8,857)

6) ELECTRONIC DEVICES (SCREEN USE)

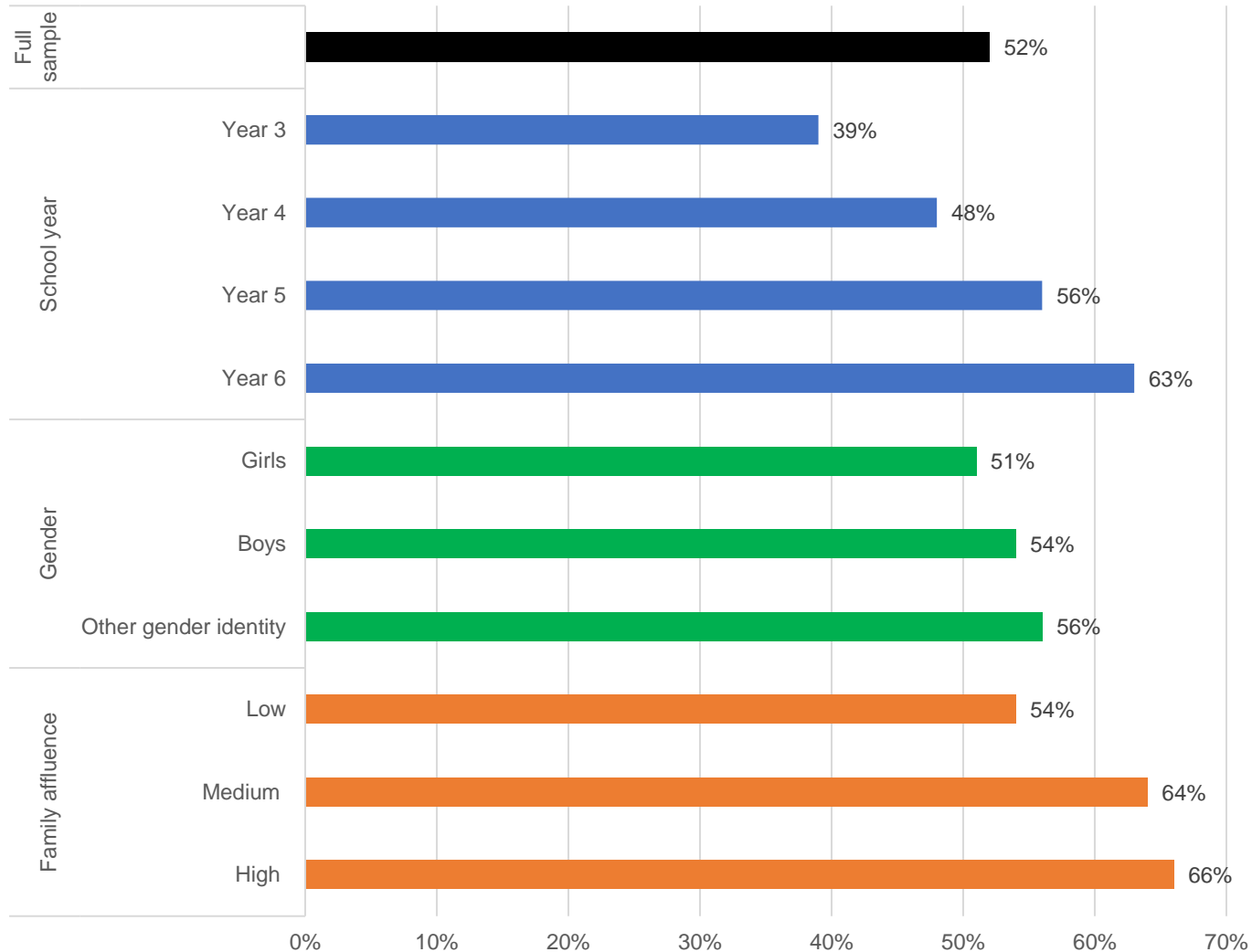
Figure 6.1 Percentage who reported owning a smartphone, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



- Most learners reported owning a smartphone.
- Girls were more likely to report owning a smartphone than boys.
- While a minority of Year 3 learners had their own smartphone, there is a steep increase in ownership by age, with five in six Year 6 learners owning a smartphone.
- There was little difference between family affluence groups in smartphone ownership.

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,976)

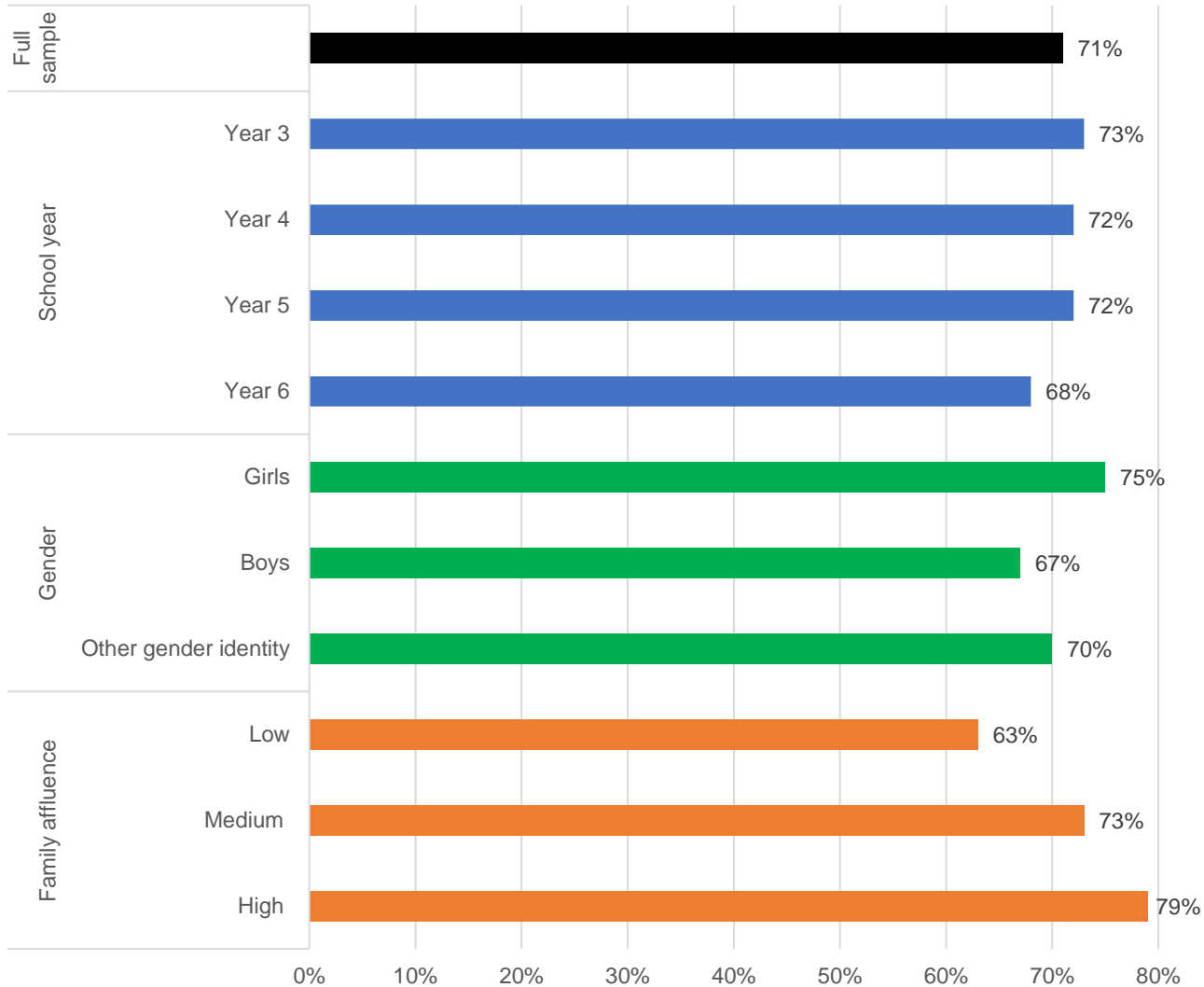
Figure 6.2 Percentage who reported owning their own computer or laptop, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



- Half (52%) of learners reported owning their own computer or laptop.
- Ownership increased as learners moved from Year 3 to Year 6.
- Girls were less likely to own a computer or laptop compared to the other gender groups.
- Ownership was highest among learners from more affluent families.

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,976)

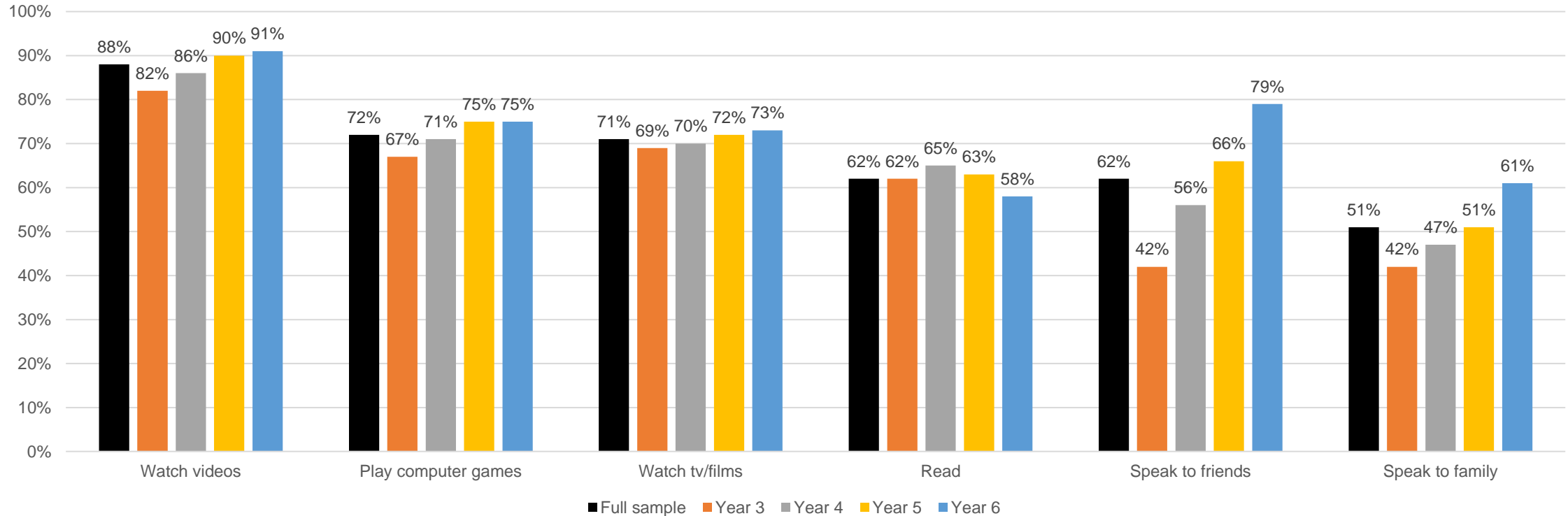
Figure 6.3 Percentage who reported owning a tablet, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



- Over two thirds (71%) of learners reported owning a tablet.
- There was a less clear age gradient than for other screen-based devices.
- Girls were more likely than boys to report owning a tablet.
- There was evidence of a social gradient, with learners from more affluent families more likely to report owning a tablet.

Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,976)

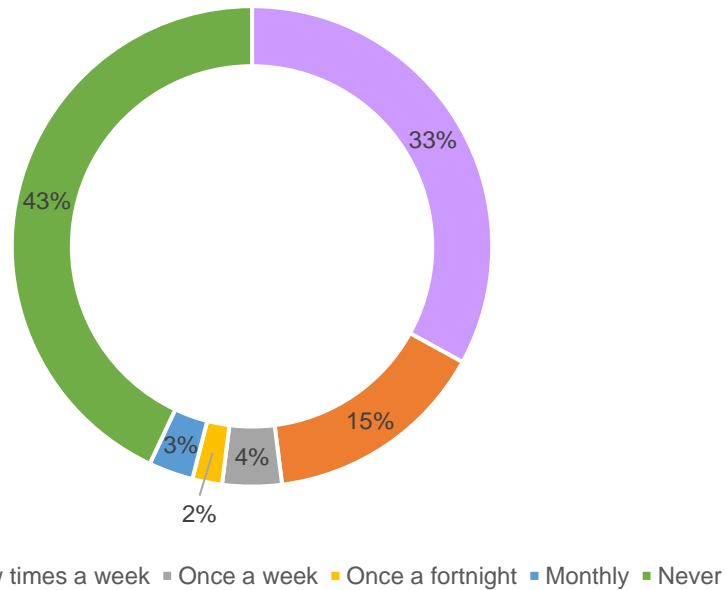
Figure 6.4 Use of electronic devices a few times a week or every day (%)



- A large proportion of learners reported using devices for entertainment and social connection a few times a week or every day, with watching videos the most common practice.
- Electronic devices are increasingly used for social connection purposes as learners get older.

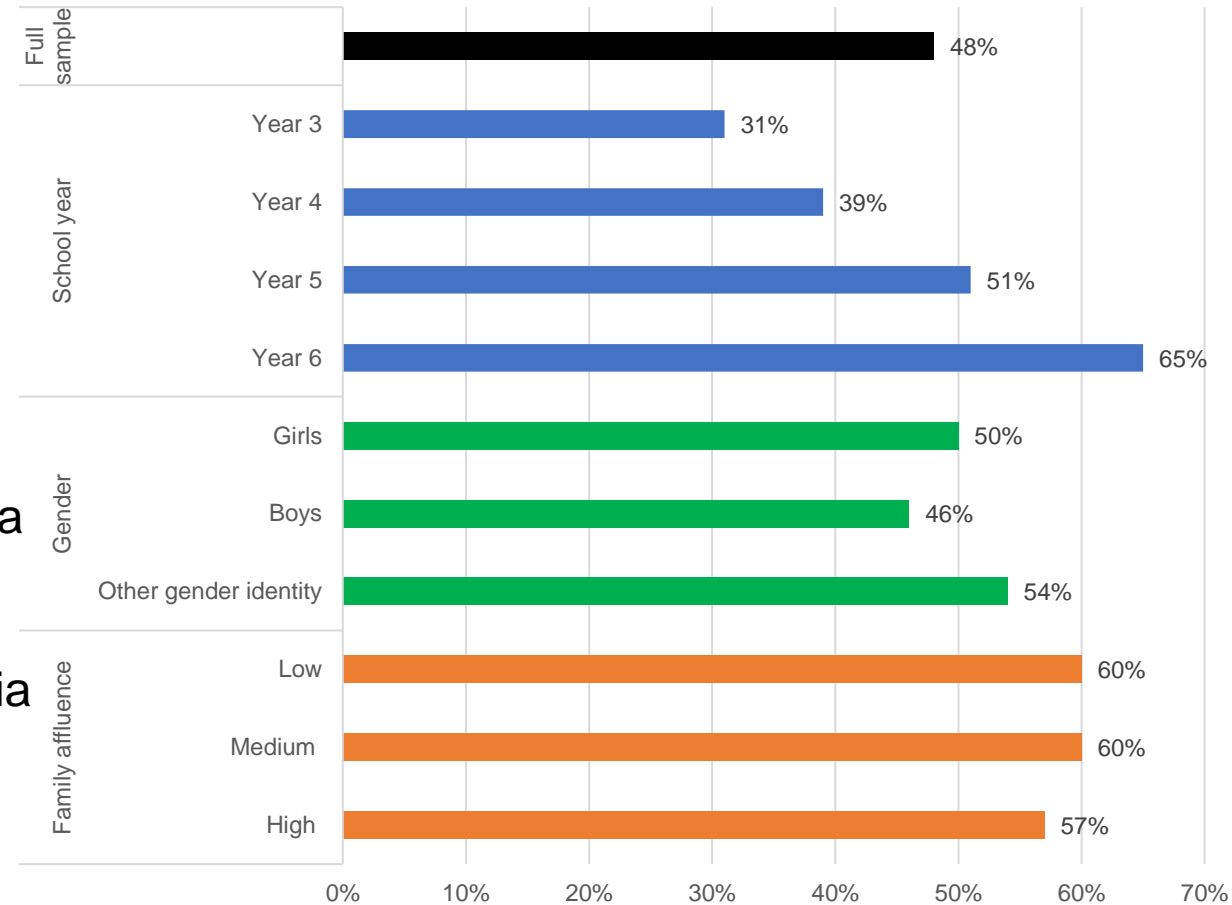
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer to 'watch videos' (N=31,439); 'play computer games' (N=31,391); 'watch tv/films' (N=31,465); 'read' (N=31,167); 'speak to friends' (N=31,067); 'speak to family' (N=30,698).

Figure 6.5 Use of social media sites or apps (%)



- Nearly half (48%) of learners reported using social media sites or apps a few times a week or every day.
- There was a large age gradient, with regular social media use more than doubling between Year 3 and Year 6.
- Girls were more likely to report using social media regularly than boys.
- Learners with high family affluence were least likely to report regular social media use.

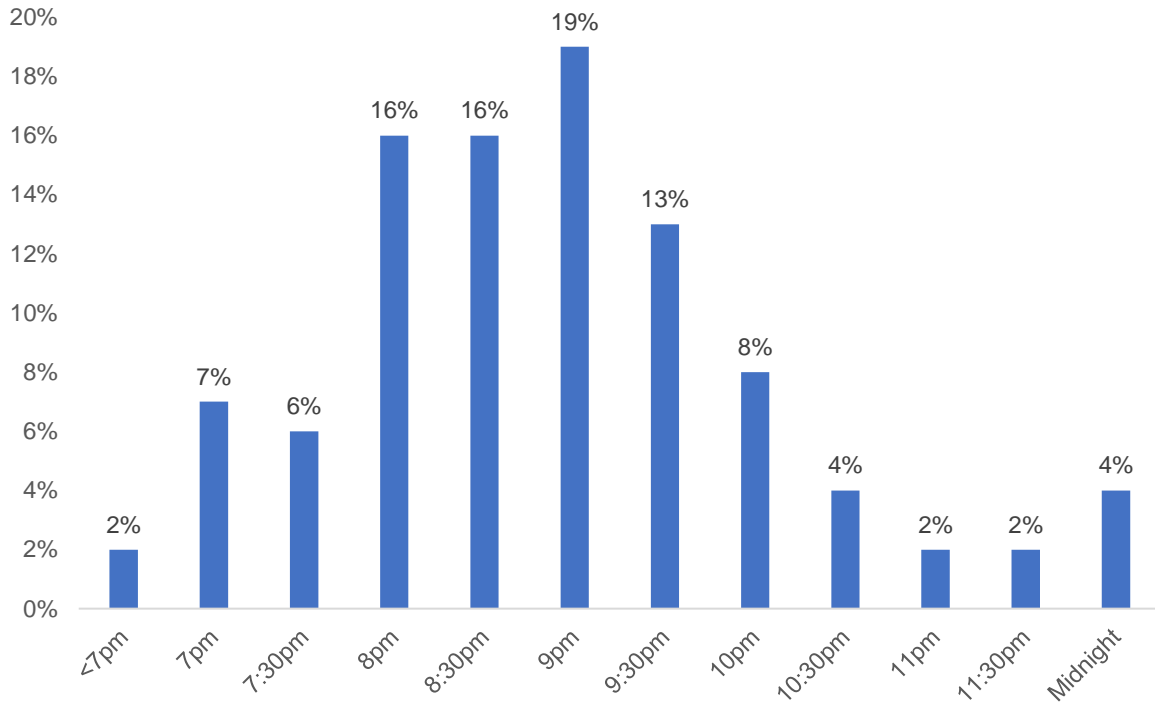
Figure 6.6 Percentage who use social media site or apps a few times a week or every day, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=29,883)

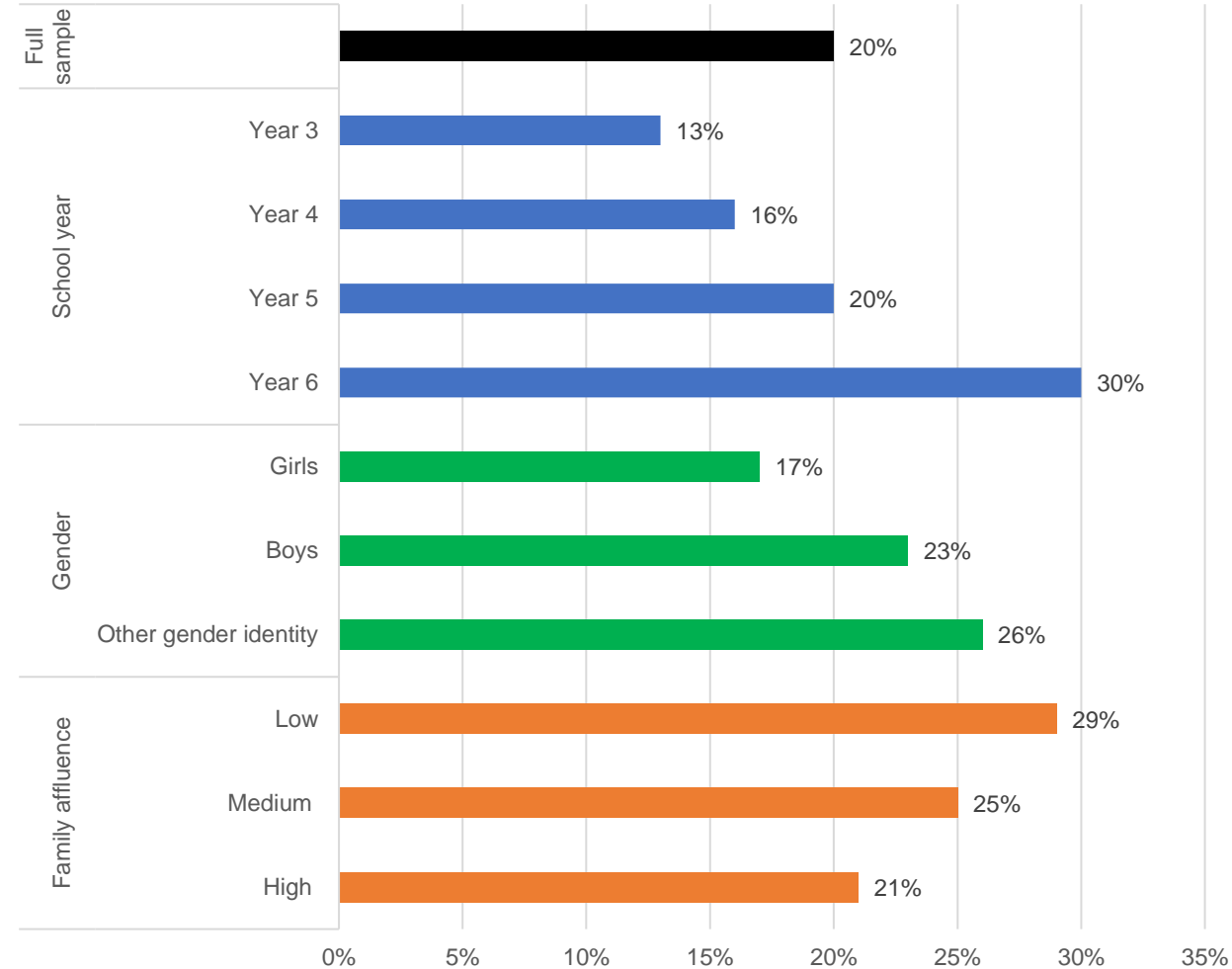
7) SLEEP

Figure 7.1 Bedtime (%)



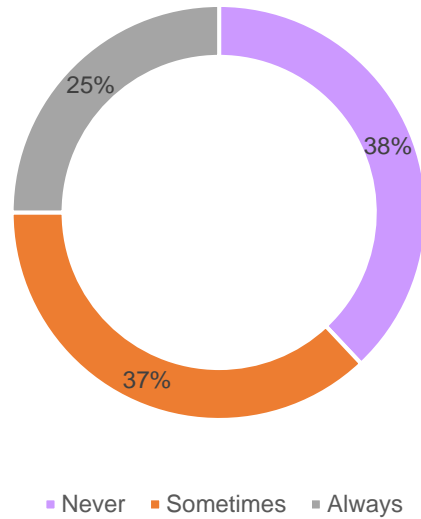
- 66% of learners reported a bedtime of 9pm or earlier, and 20% reported a bedtime of 10pm or later.
- The proportion of young people reporting a bedtime of 10pm or later increased from Year 3 to Year 6.
- More boys than girls, and more learners from less affluent families, reported a bedtime of 10pm or later.

Figure 7.2 Percentage that report a bedtime of 10pm or later, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



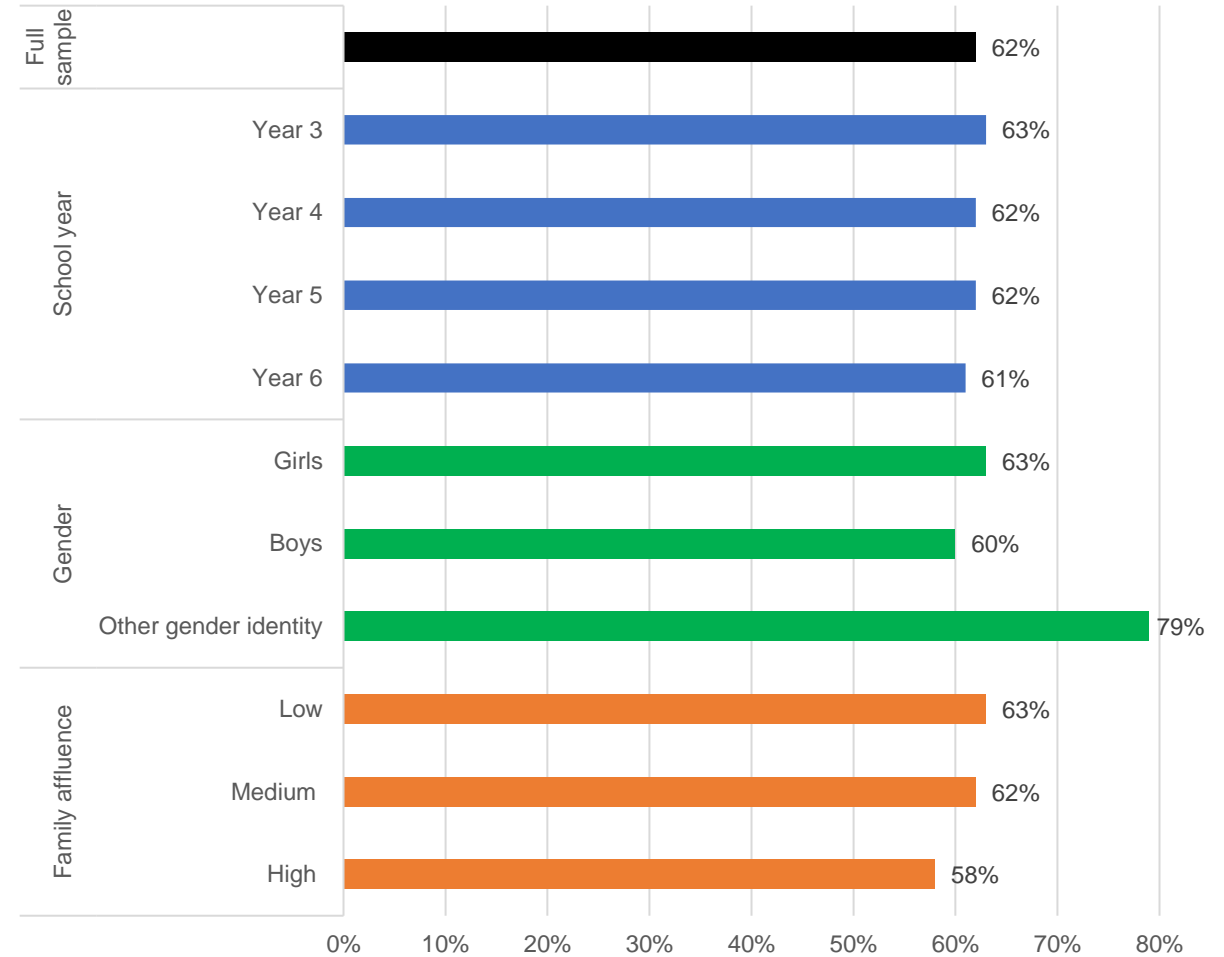
Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=30,383)

Figure 7.3 Problems sleeping (%)



- Nearly two thirds (62%) of learners reported having problems sleeping sometimes or always.
- There was little evidence of an age gradient.
- Boys were least likely to report experiencing problems sleeping of the three gender groups.
- There was some evidence of a social gradient, with learners from low affluence families more likely to experience problems sleeping than those from more affluent families.

Figure 7.4 Percentage of learners who reported having problems sleeping sometimes or always, overall and by age, gender and family affluence



Full sample base: All respondents who gave an answer (N=31,263)

Summary of findings 1 – learner health and wellbeing in 2022-23

- Almost one in seven learners reported clinically significant emotional difficulties, while nearly 1 in 12 reported clinically significant behavioural difficulties. Many more reported elevated but sub-clinical difficulties. Two-thirds gave a score of 8 out of 10 or higher for how satisfied they were with their life. Mental health symptoms tended to be more common, and life satisfaction lower, among learners from less affluent families. Life satisfaction decreased substantially with increased age, while there was less clear evidence of an age gradient for emotional difficulties.
- 1 in 7 learners said they had taken part in bullying in the past couple of months, while 1 in 11 Year 6 learners said they had taken part in cyberbullying. Nearly half of learners said they had been bullied at school in the past couple of months, and more than a quarter of Year 6 learners said they had been cyberbullied in the past couple of months. All bullying outcomes were more common in boys than girls, and in learners from less affluent homes.
- Fewer than half of learners reported eating fruit or vegetables daily, or exercising at least four times a week. Girls and learners from more affluent homes were more likely to report daily fruit and vegetable consumption, while boys and learners from more affluent families reported more exercise.

Summary of findings 2 – learner health and wellbeing in 2022-23

- Most Year 6 learners were looking forward to transition to secondary school. Feeling worried about transition to secondary school was strongly patterned by socioeconomic status, with more learners from less affluent families reporting they felt worried.
- Most learners reported owning electronic devices, which were used for entertainment and social connection. Ownership of devices tended to be more common in more affluent families with the exception of smartphones. While use of devices for entertainment purposes was common across age groups, use of devices for social connection (e.g. talking to family and friends) increased substantially with age. Social media usage increased from a third of learners in Year 3 to two thirds in Year 6.
- Most learners rated their relationships with school staff and other learners positively, and gave positive ratings of learner involvement in school life. The proportion of learners who reporting liking school a lot decreased from Year 3 to Year 6, from just under two thirds to just over one third of learners.
- Two thirds of learners reported a bedtime of 9pm or earlier, with boys and learners from less affluent families more likely to report a bedtime of 10pm or later.

Summary of findings 3 – learner health and wellbeing in 2022-23

- For nearly all questions, learners who stated that they identified as neither a boy nor a girl had poorer outcomes. They had higher emotional and behavioural difficulties, and lower life satisfaction. They were also more likely to report that they had been bullied or cyberbullied, were less likely to like school a lot and were more likely to be quite or very worried about transitioning to secondary school. For boys and girls, there was a mix of patterning, with some outcomes less favourable for boys (behavioural difficulties, bullying perpetration, bedtime) and others less favourable for girls (emotional difficulties, worrying about school transition and exercise). Girls tended to have more favourable perceptions of school connectedness than boys.
- Age gradients were particularly clear for life satisfaction, liking school, use of social media, bedtime and smartphone/computer/laptop ownership. Across the school connectedness questions, learners in Year 6 were consistently less likely than those in Year 5 to report positive feelings about school, peers and teachers.
- Mental health, bullying, healthy eating and physical activity, transition and sleep measures all showed socioeconomic gradients, with young people from less affluent families having less positive outcomes. Notably, all school connectedness outcomes were relatively flat, with little difference between socioeconomic groups.

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Appendix 1: Survey measures

- Gender
 - Learners were asked: 'Are you a...?' with the answer options of 'Boy'; 'Girl', 'Neither word describes me'; 'I do not want to answer'. Less than 2% of learners responded that 'Neither word describes me'.
- Family affluence scale (FAS)⁷
 - The scale consists of five items: 'Do you own your own bedroom?'; 'Does your family own a car, van or truck?'; 'How many bathrooms (with a bath or shower in them) are in your home?'; 'Does your family own a dishwasher?'; 'How many computers does your family own?'. Scores are summed to form a score from 0-10, where higher scores indicated higher affluence.
 - FAS categories: low affluence = scores of 0-6; medium affluence = scores of 7-8; high affluence = scores of 9-10.
- Me and My Feelings Questionnaire (MMFQ)⁹
 - Emotional and behavioural difficulties were assessed using the Me and My Feelings Questionnaire.⁶ Learners are asked how often they feel or behave certain ways. The scale consists of 16 questions, of which 10 relate to emotional difficulties and six to behavioural difficulties.
 - Emotional difficulties questions include: 'I feel lonely'; 'I feel scared'; 'I worry when I am at school' and 'I cry a lot'. The scale is scored out of 20. Scores of 10 and higher indicate elevated emotional difficulties; scores of 12 and higher indicate clinically significant difficulties.
 - Behavioural difficulties questions include: 'I get very angry'; 'I do things to hurt people'; 'I break things on purpose' and 'I hit out when I am angry'. The scale is scored out of 12. Scores of six and higher indicate elevated behavioural difficulties; scores of seven or higher indicate clinically significant difficulties.
 - Scores were 'pro-rated' (i.e. based on the average of completed items) so long as >50% of individual items were completed for each scale.

Appendix 1 (Continued)

- Cantril life satisfaction scale⁸
 - Learners were asked: 'On a scale of 0-10, how would you rate your life at the moment?' with 10 indicated as 'I have the best possible life' and 0 as 'I have the worst possible life'.
- School transition^{10,11}
 - Learners were asked: 'Are you looking forward to going to secondary school?' and 'Are you worried about going to secondary school?'. Responses were 'Not at all', 'Very little', 'Some', 'Quite a bit', 'Very much', 'I do not want to answer'.