

Healthy Weight Data Overview - Children and Young People: Oct 2025

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Introduction:

This briefing has been developed to support decisions to prioritise areas of work for the Healthy Weight Partnership (HWP). The purpose of this briefing is to outline key nationally available data to help set the context for local needs and inequalities relating specifically to physical activity. It collates analysis at an East Sussex level for a range of publicly available data and, where possible, this information has been benchmarked nationally. Where local data on health inequalities is not available, national evidence is presented.

Data are drawn from many sources and vary by time period, population and presentation of values, so care should be taken with interpretation - the data is meant as guidance to complement local knowledge and expertise. Where possible the relationships to national or local benchmarks are marked using the following key: amber - similar to benchmark, green - significantly better than benchmark (95% confidence), red - significantly worse than benchmark (95% confidence).

Key Findings:

East Sussex:

- 24.4% children in East Sussex are eligible for free school meals, lower than England (25.7%). However, rates in East Sussex have been rising slightly faster than nationally.
- In East Sussex, the rate of hospital admissions for dental caries in those aged 0-5 years is 27.6/100,000, significantly less than England (207.2/100,000)
- Overweight/obesity in reception children (22.5%) is similar to England overall (22.1%) but is significantly higher in Eastbourne. Overweight/ obesity in year 6 (30.7%) is significantly lower than England (35.8%).
- There is a clear association with higher obesity rates in East Sussex and higher levels of deprivation.
- In East Sussex in 2023/24, 18.5% reception children of healthy weight were overweight/obese in Year 6, while 70.8% who were overweight/ obese remained so in year 6. This is significantly lower than England.
- The likelihood of pupils eating breakfast, lunch or five portions of fruit or vegetables each day decreases with age from primary, to secondary to college pupils.
- Approximately three quarters of primary, secondary and college students are having up to three snacks high in fat or sugar on a normal school day

England:

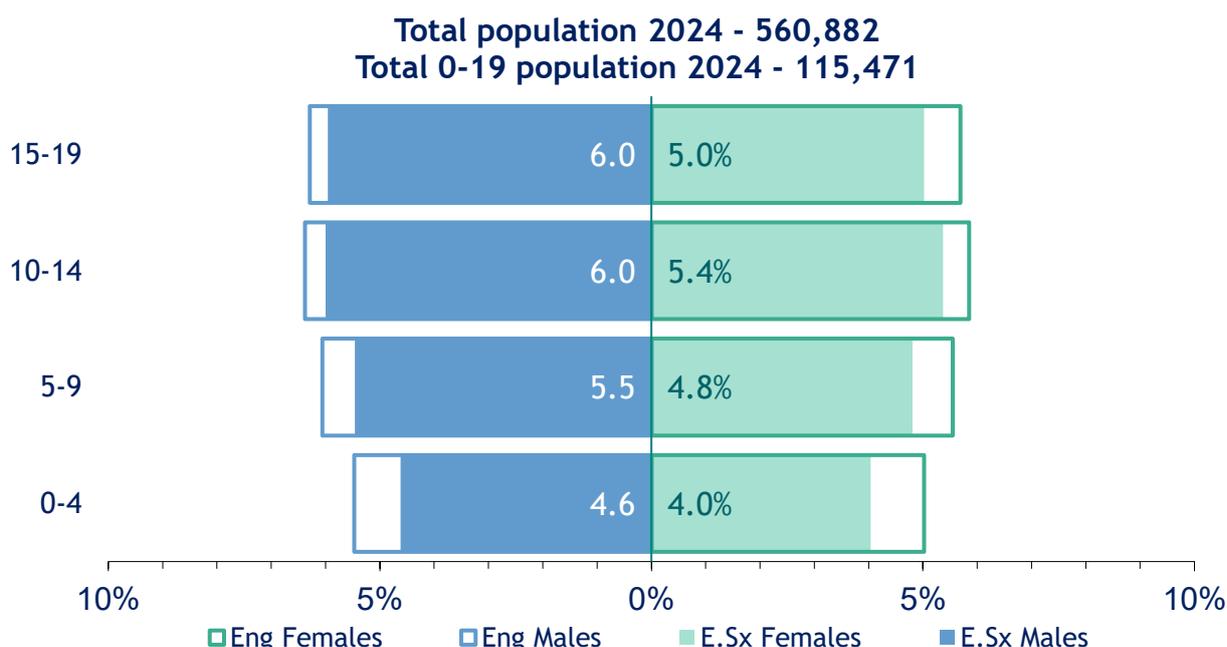
- Similarly to East Sussex, there is a clear association with higher obesity rates in England and higher levels of deprivation.
- Boys in both reception and year 6 are more likely than girls to be overweight/obese.
- Boys in reception are also more likely to be underweight, compared to those in Year 6 who are less likely than girls to be underweight.
- Overweight/obesity and underweight varies by ethnic group, and by age.
- Children and young people in England eat an average of 3.3 portions of fruit and vegetables a day, with just under 1 in 5 eating 5 or more portions.
- Fruit and vegetable consumption decreases as deprivation increases
- Girls are more likely than boys to eat 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day, with the greatest gender gap in 11-12 year olds, with boys 2.5 times more likely than girls to eat no portions of fruit or vegetables a day.

Contextual Factors

Our young population:

- Young people make up 18.6% of the total population in East Sussex in 2024. This is lower than the regional (21.0%) and national (20.8%) averages.
- 48.5% of the 0-19 population are female (n=56,049) and 51.5% male (n=59,422)

Figure 1: East Sussex population age and gender profile, 0-19 years, 2024

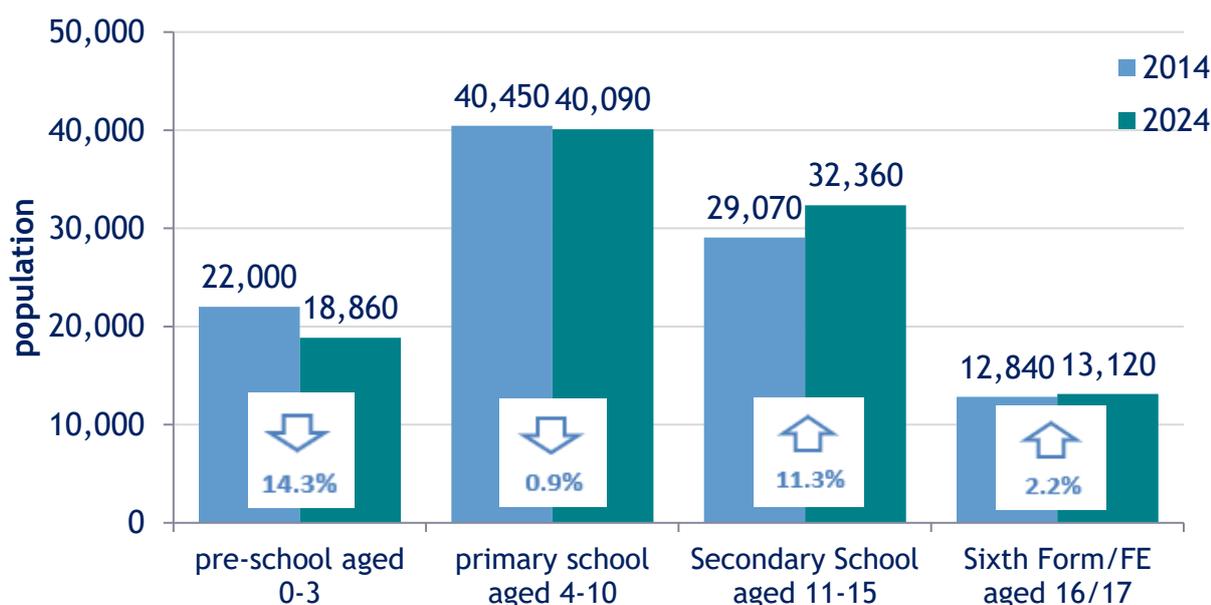


Source: ONS, Mid-year population estimates, 2024

School age population in East Sussex:

- The population of 0-17 year olds in East Sussex has increased by just 0.1% (64 children) since 2014, from 104,364 in 2014 to 104,428 in 2024. In England and the South East numbers rose by 5.6% and 6.9% respectively.
- Overall numbers of school-age children (aged 4-15) have risen in the county over the last decade (up 4.2%). However the number of primary aged children (4-10) fell by 0.9%, while the number of secondary age (11-15) increased by 11.3%.
- Wealden, Rother and Eastbourne saw increases in the number of children and young people between 2014 and 2024, with numbers up by 4.0% in Wealden (up 1,224), 2.3% in Rother (361 children) and 0.9% in Eastbourne (170). But numbers fell in Hastings by 6.2% (down 1,183) and in Lewes by 2.6% (down 508).

Figure 2: Population change among children and young people in East Sussex, 2014-2024



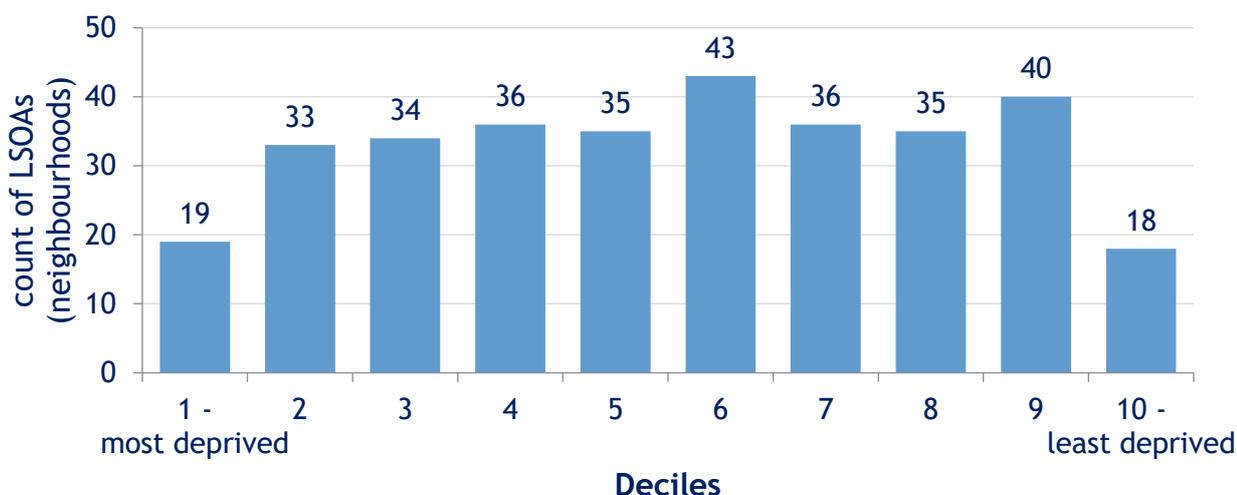
Source: ONS, Mid-year population estimates, 2024

Deprivation:

- The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019 is the official measure of relative deprivation for small areas (or neighbourhoods) in England. The IMD combines information from seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation: Income; Employment; Education; Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; Barriers to Housing Services; Living Environment.

- The IDACI is a subset of the Income Deprivation Domain, with the Index showing the proportion of children aged 0 - 15 in each of the 32,844 neighbourhoods in England that live in families that are income deprived.
- 19 East Sussex neighbourhoods (LSOAs) are classified as being within the 10% most deprived in England in terms of income deprivation affecting children, and 52 neighbourhoods are in the 20% most deprived in England.

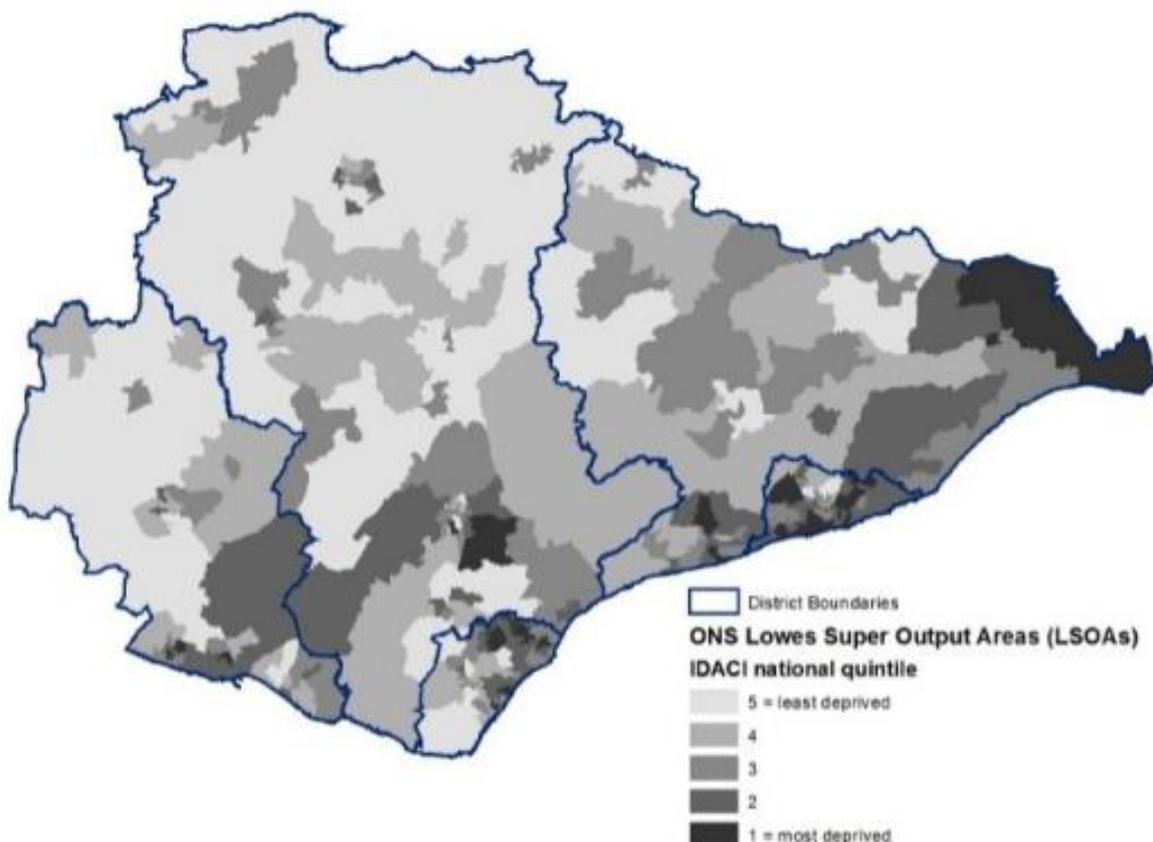
Figure 3: Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) Deciles | 2019



Source: MHCLG, 2019

- The neighbourhoods with children that live in families that are amongst the 10% most income deprived in the country are concentrated primarily around coastal areas of the county.

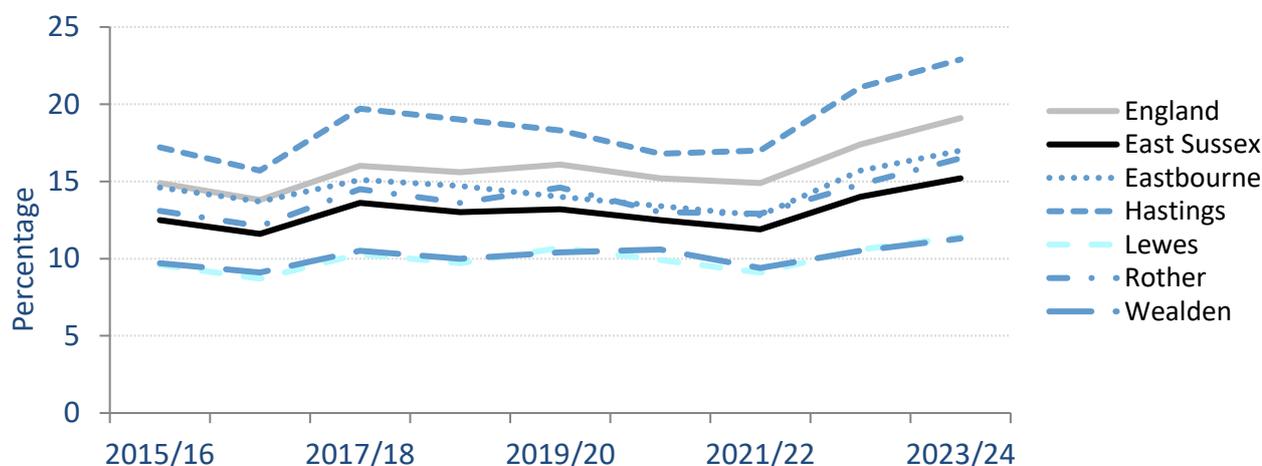
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI 2019)



Children living in poverty:

- In 2023/24, 15.2% of the under 16 population of East Sussex lived in absolute low income families. This refers to people living in households with income below 60% of median income in 2011, adjusted for inflation. This is significantly better than England (19.1%)
- Hastings is significantly worse than England (22.9%) while all other districts and boroughs are significantly better. This has been the pattern since 2017/18

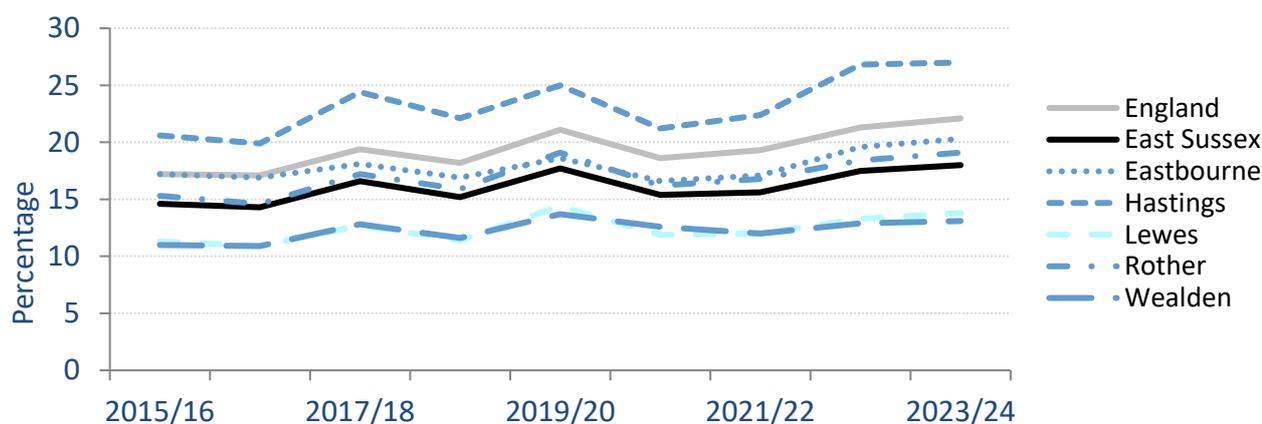
Figure 4: Children and Young people under 16 living in absolute poverty, 2023/24



Source: OHID, based on Department for Work and Pensions and Office for National Statistics data

- In 2023/24, 18% of the under 16 population of East Sussex lived in relative low income families. This refers to people living in households with income below 60% of the median in that year. This is significantly better than England (22.1%)
- Over a quarter of under 16s live in relative poverty in Hastings (27%), this is significantly worse than England. while all other districts and boroughs are significantly better. This has been the pattern since 2017/18

Figure 5: Children and Young people under 16 living in relative poverty, 2023/24

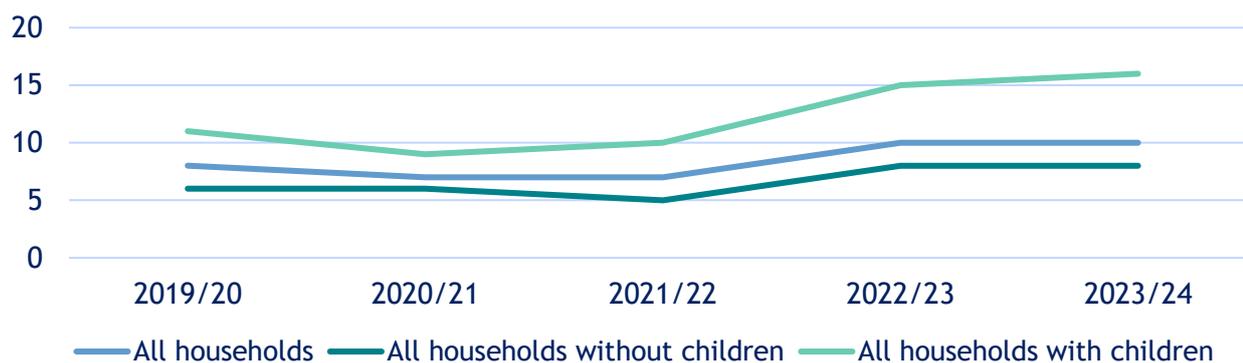


Source: OHID, based on Department for Work and Pensions and Office for National Statistics data

Food insecurity:

- The Department for Work and Pensions has been collecting data on food security since 2019/ 202, and on food bank usage since 2021/22. Food security data measures whether households have sufficient food to facilitate an active and healthy lifestyle.
- In England, 10% of families in 2023/24 were food insecure, compared to 8% in the South East.
- In 2023/24, 16% of households with children were food insecure in England, double the proportion of households without children (8%).
- Food insecurity has been steadily rising since 2020/21 for all households, but the rate of food insecurity in households with children has been increasing at a faster rate than those without, nearly doubling from 9% in 2020/21.

Figure 6: Food insecurity by household composition - England



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

- In England in 2023/24, 4% of households had used a food bank in the last 12 months: 3% of households without children, and 6% of households with children. Over the last two years food bank usage has increased for both households with and without children.
- In England in 2023/24, 1% of households without children, and 2% of households with children had used a foodbank in the last 30 days.

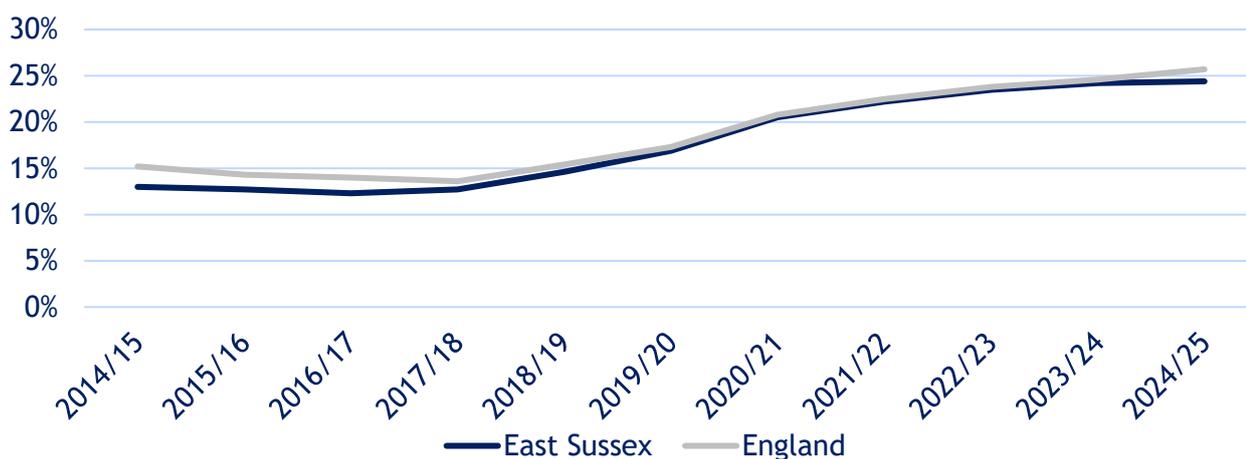
Free School Meals:

- 25.7% of pupils in England in 2024/25 were eligible for free school meals, up from 24.6% in 2023/24. This represents almost 2.2 million pupils.
- In East Sussex in the same time period eligibility for free school meals saw a slight

rise from 24.2% in 2023/24 to 24.4% in 2024/25, lower than England.

- Free school meal eligibility in East Sussex has remained consistently lower than England since 2014/15, although it has risen by 11.4% in this time period compared to a national rise of 10.5%.

Figure 7: Free school eligibility, 2014/15 to 2024/25

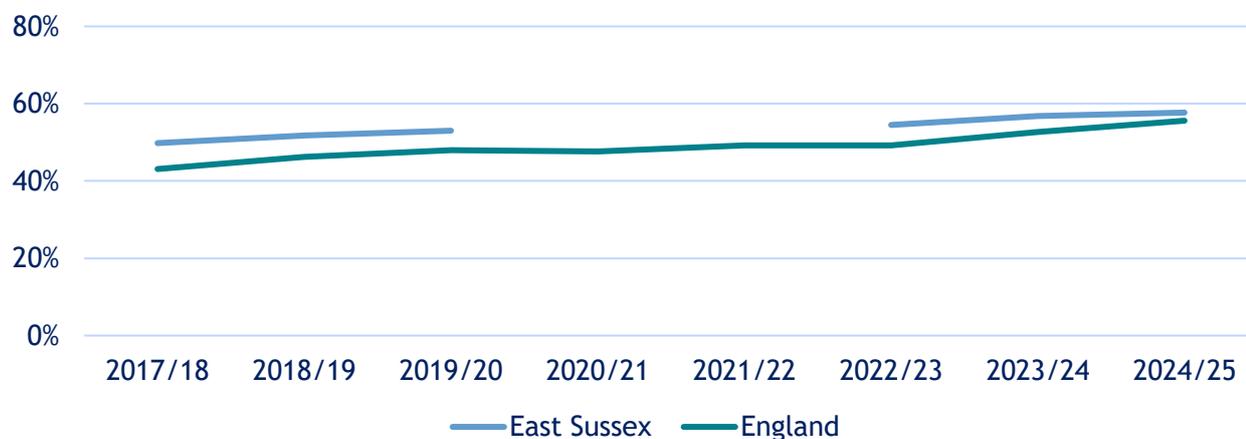


Source: Department for Education

Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks after birth

- In East Sussex, 57.7% children are breastfed at 6-8 weeks after birth, significantly higher than nationally (55.6%).
- East Sussex has had a significantly higher proportion of babies breastfed 6-8 weeks after birth compared to nationally since 2017/18

Figure 8: Breastfeeding prevalence at 6-8 weeks

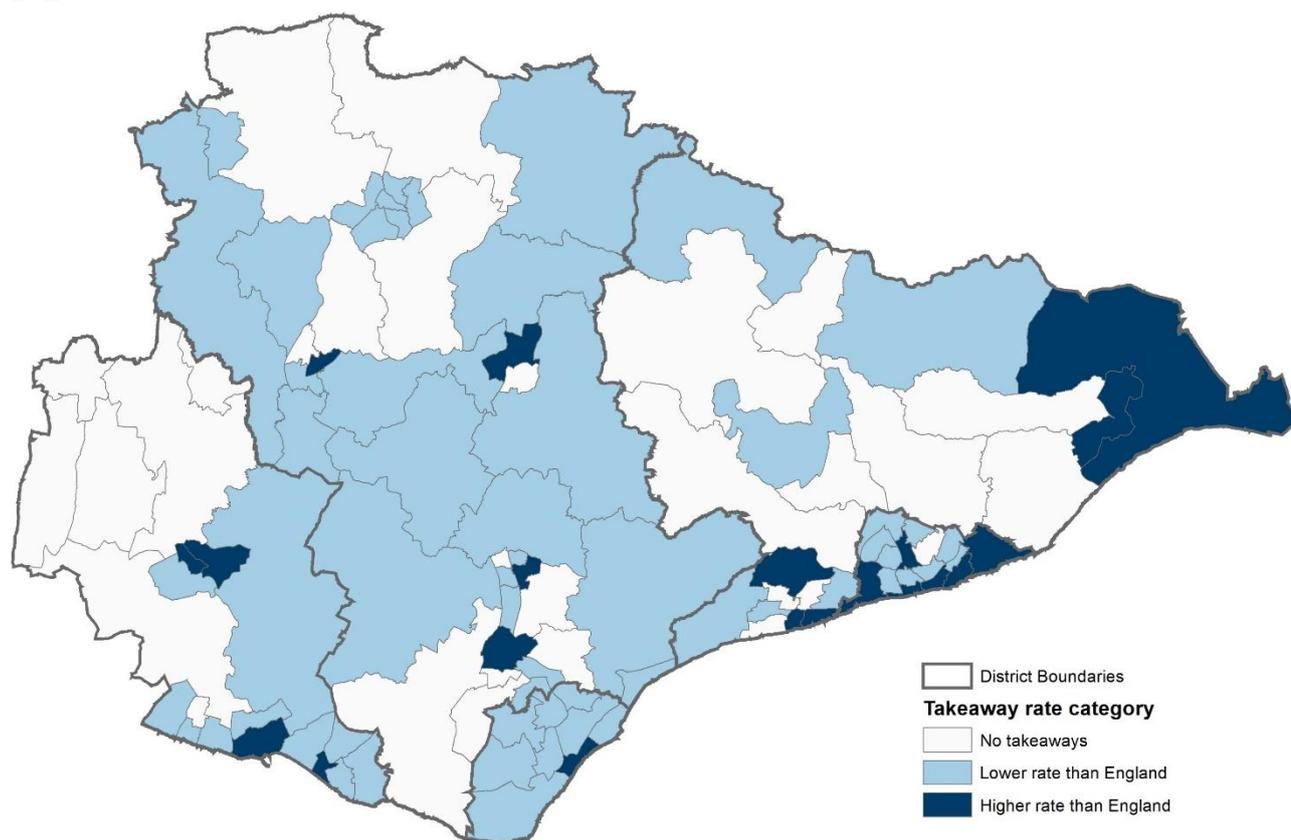


Source: OHID, based on interim reporting data for universal health visiting services

Takeaways in East Sussex

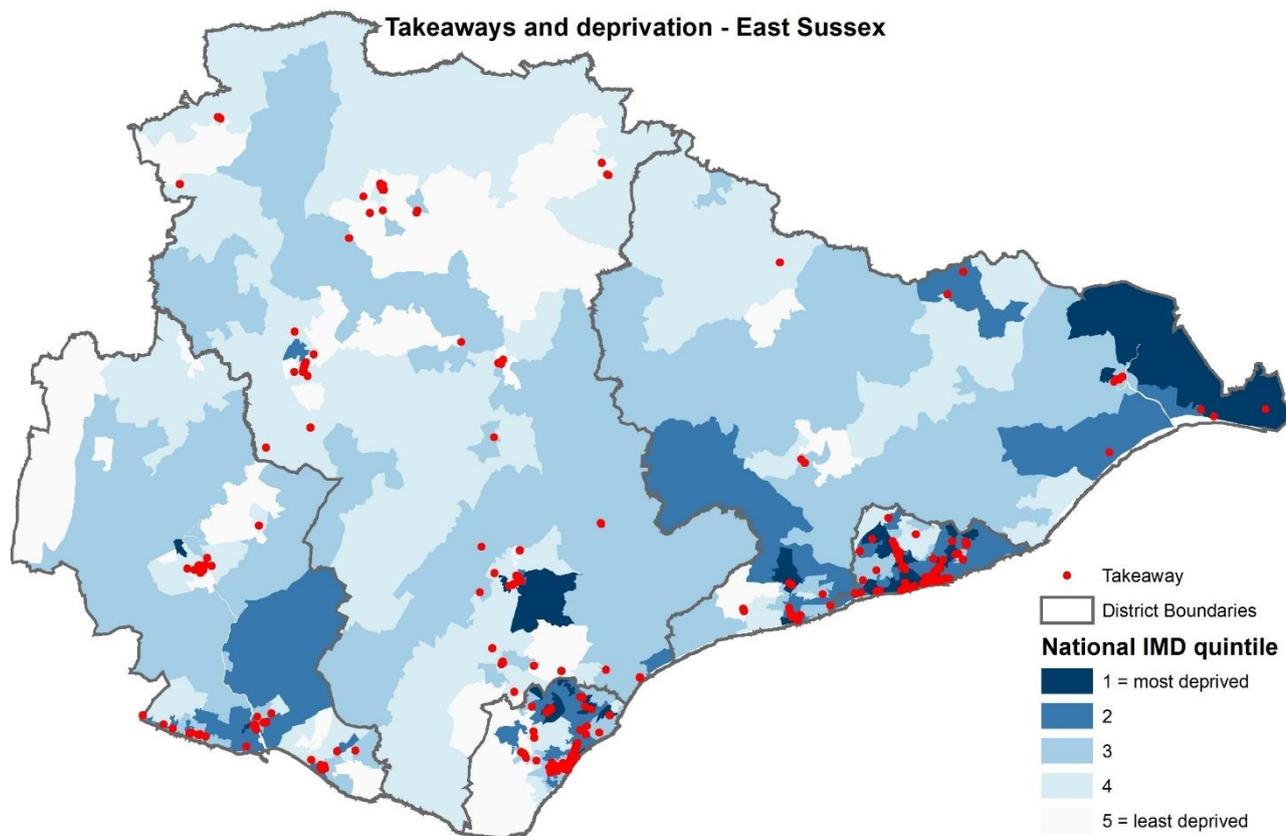
- As at September 2025, there were 422 takeaways in East Sussex: 129 in Hastings; 92 in Eastbourne; 90 in Wealden; 56 in Lewes and 55 in Rother. This equates to 0.75 per 1,000 population for the county. However, the rate per 1,000 population varies according to area, from between 0.54 and 0.57 in Lewes, Rother and Wealden, to 0.89 in Eastbourne and 1.39 per 1,000 in Hastings.
- Figure 6 shows the locations within the county where the rate of takeaways per 1,000 population is higher or lower compared to England, along with locations where there are no takeaways. It is notable that many areas with a higher rate of takeaways than England are concentrated along the more populated coastal areas.

Figure 9: Rate of takeaways (per 1,000 residents) by ward, compared to England, March 2024



- Figure 7 shows the county in terms of deprivation, overlaid with the data on the location of hot food takeaways in the county. Correlation can be seen between the locations of the areas of highest deprivation, in the dark blue, and the biggest concentrations of HFTs.

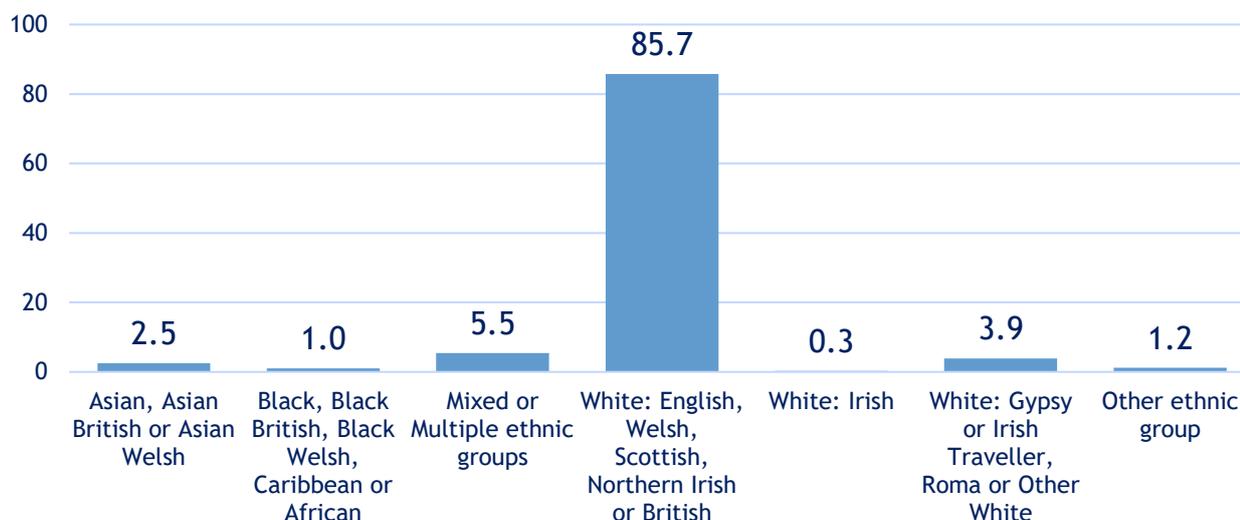
Figure 10: Takeaways and deprivation in East Sussex



Ethnicity:

- 86% of the East Sussex 0-19 population were identified as White British (White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British) in the 2021 Census, followed by 5.5% Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups. This compares to 88.3% people of all ages in East Sussex identifying as White British and 2.3% as Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups.

Figure 11: East Sussex 0-19 population by broad ethnic group, 2021

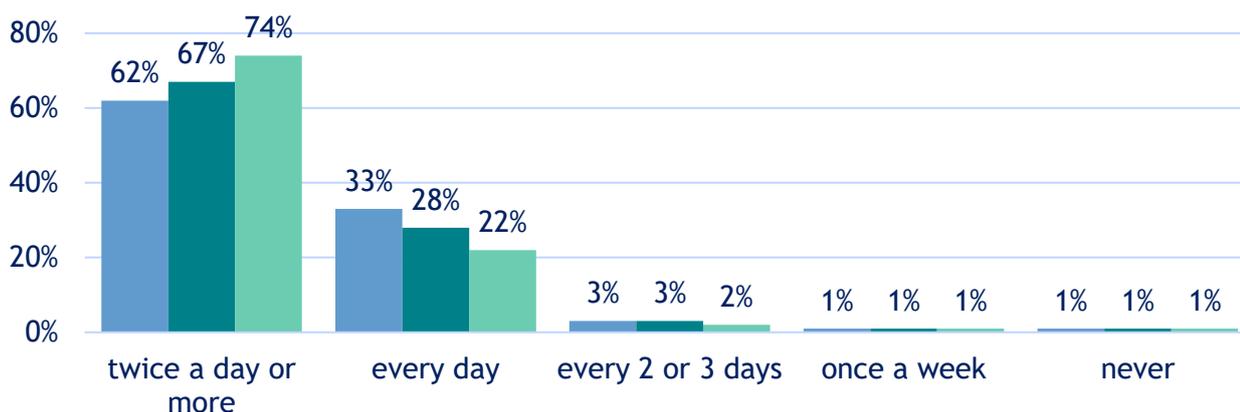


Source: ONS, Census 2021

Oral health:

- Most primary (95%), secondary (95%) and college pupils (96%) report brushing their teeth at least every day, with most brushing their teeth twice a day or more.
- Secondary students (67%) are slightly more likely to report brushing their teeth twice a day compared to primary students (62%).

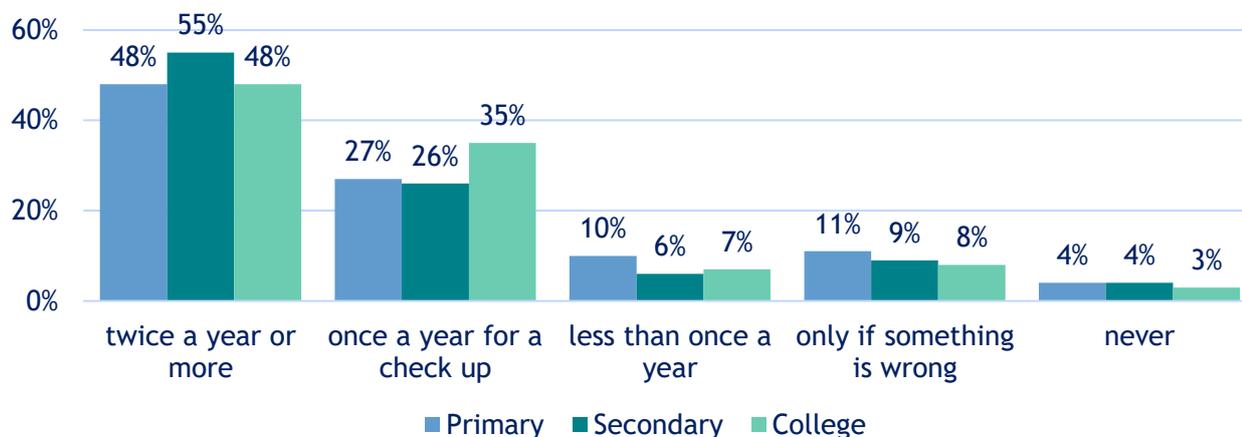
Figure 12: how often children and young people brush their teeth, 2023/24



Source: East Sussex My Health My School Survey, 2023/24

- 4% of primary and secondary students, and 3% of college students report never visiting the dentist. However, most students visit the dentist at least once a year for a check-up (primary- 75%, secondary- 81%, college- 83%).

Figure 13: how often children and young people visited the dentist, 2023/24



Source: East Sussex My Health My School Survey, 2023/24

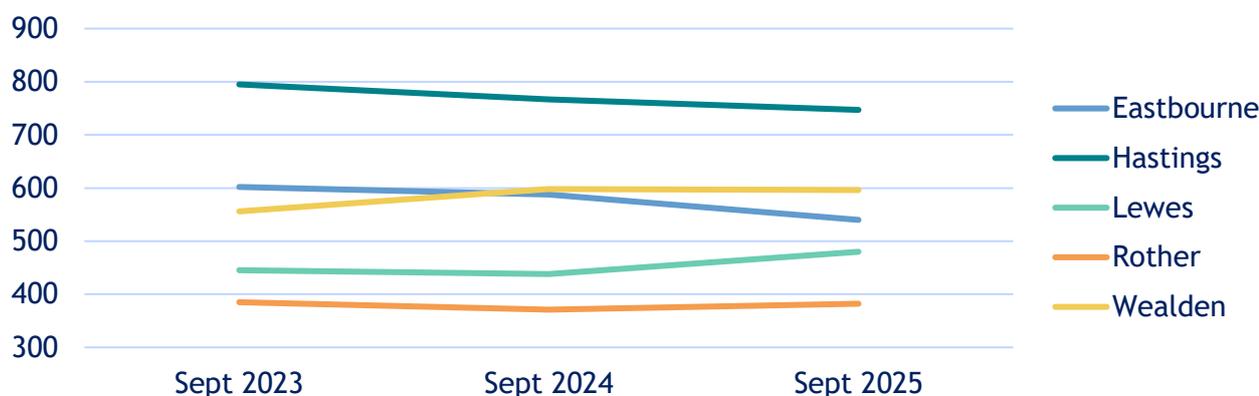
- In East Sussex, the rate of hospital admissions for dental caries in those aged 0-5 years is 27.6 per 100,000. This is significantly less than England (207.2 per 100,000)
- The rate of hospital admissions for dental caries in 0-5 year olds has risen in East Sussex from 21.7/100,000 in 2019/20, and nationally from 197.5/100,000.

Healthy Weight in East Sussex:

Healthy Start in East Sussex:

- Healthy Start is an NHS scheme that helps women who are pregnant or have young children and are receiving benefits to buy foods such as milk or fruit. Eligibility is derived from certain qualifying benefits, such as universal credit and child benefit.
- Due to a because of a historical problem with the data nationally, data is not available on the proportion of eligible people who are on the scheme in East Sussex. However, the numbers of people on the scheme are shown below.
- In September 2025 there were 326,108 people on the Healthy Start scheme nationally. In East Sussex this amounted to 2,745 people on the scheme, with numbers in the county falling slightly over the last 2 years.
- Between September 2023 and September 2025, there has been a decrease in those taking up the Healthy Start scheme in Eastbourne and Hastings, and little change in Rother. However there has been an increase in numbers on the Healthy Start scheme in Lewes and Wealden.

Figure 14: Number of beneficiaries of the Healthy Start scheme, September 2023 to September 2025

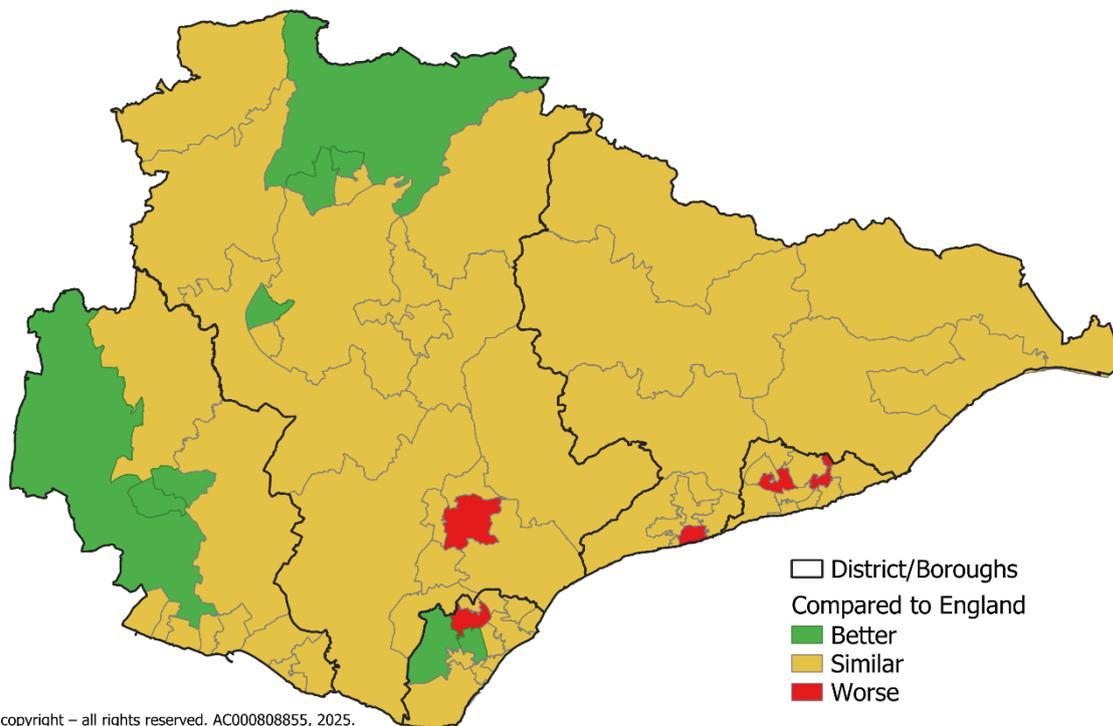


Source: NHSE, 2025

Overweight, obesity and underweight in East Sussex: Reception

- Five MSOAs (areas of between 5,000 and 15,000 people) in East Sussex have worse rates of overweight and obesity in children in reception year compared to England: two in Hastings, one in Eastbourne, one in Rother and one in Wealden
- Of the nine MSOAs with significantly better rates than England, three are in Lewes, 5 in Wealden and one in Eastbourne.
- The areas in East Sussex with worse rates than England all contain some of the most deprived areas in the county, which are also in the 20% most deprived in the country.

Figure 15: Overweight and obesity in reception, East Sussex MSOAs compared to England, 2021/22-2023/24



Source: East Sussex Public Health Intelligence team, using NCMP data

- The prevalence of overweight/obesity in East Sussex (22.5%) is similar to England (22.1%).
- Eastbourne is the only area in East Sussex which is significantly different to England, with significantly higher rates of overweight/obesity (26.2%)
- Since 2014, the prevalence of overweight/obesity amongst reception children has increased by 3.3% in Eastbourne, and 2.5% in Rother, with a slightly smaller increase in Wealden (0.5%). Conversely there has been a decline in Hastings (2.5%) and Lewes (0.5%)

Figure 16: Reception prevalence of overweight (including obesity)- 2023/24

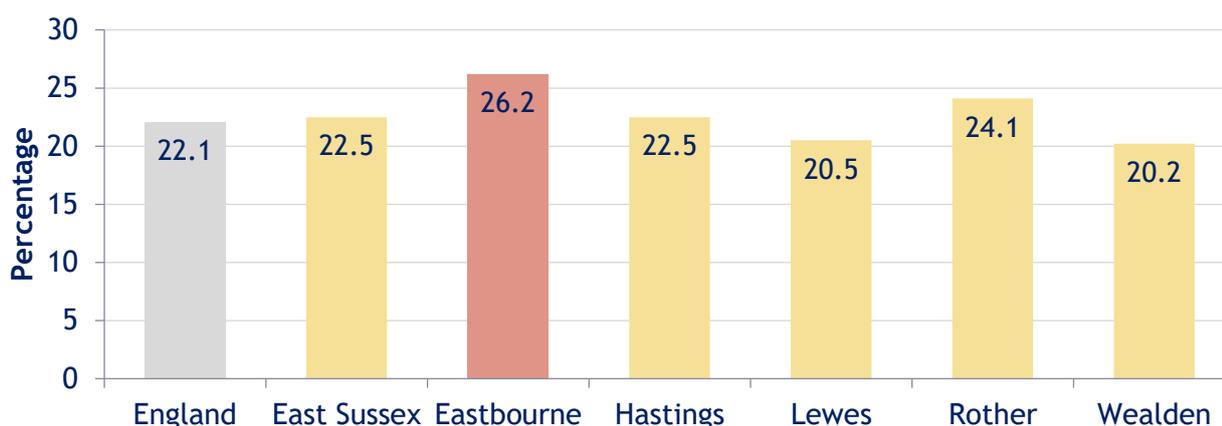


Table 1: Overweight and obesity in reception in East Sussex, 2014/15 to 2023/24

	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Difference 2014-2024
England	21.9	22.1	22.6	22.4	22.6	23	27.7	22.3	21.3	22.1	-0.4
East Sussex	19.9	22.6	23.3	23.4	23.3	23	25.9	19.8	22.1	22.5	0.7
Eastbourne	20.1	22	23.8	26.7	27.6	23.8		19.3	21.9	26.2	3.3
Hastings	24.3	24.5	24	25.8	25	22.9		20.6	24.6	22.5	-2.5
Lewes	16.6	21.4	23.4	21.8	20.1	22.9		17.8	21.8	20.5	-0.5
Rother	20.3	23.2	23.7	20.3	25	23.8		23.5	23.1	24.1	2.8
Wealden	18.7	22.3	22	21.7	20.2	22.3		18.8	20.2	20.2	0.5

Source: NCMP

- The prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) in East Sussex (17.7%) is significantly lower than England (22.1%).
- Eastbourne (12.8%) is the only area in East Sussex which is significantly worse than England, and Wealden (6.6%) is the only area significantly better.
- Since 2014, the prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) amongst reception children has increased by 1.3% in East Sussex, with the greatest increase in Eastbourne (4.6%), followed by Lewes (1.9%).

Figure 17: Reception prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) - 2023/24

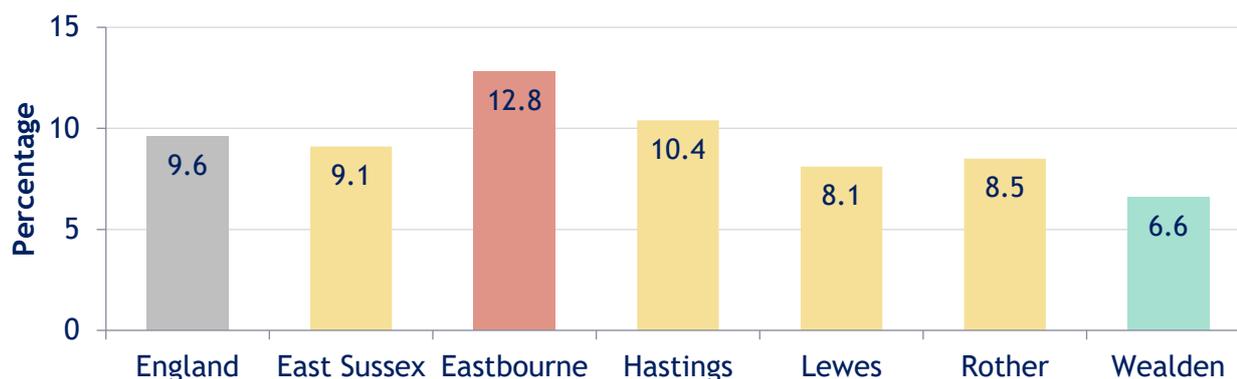


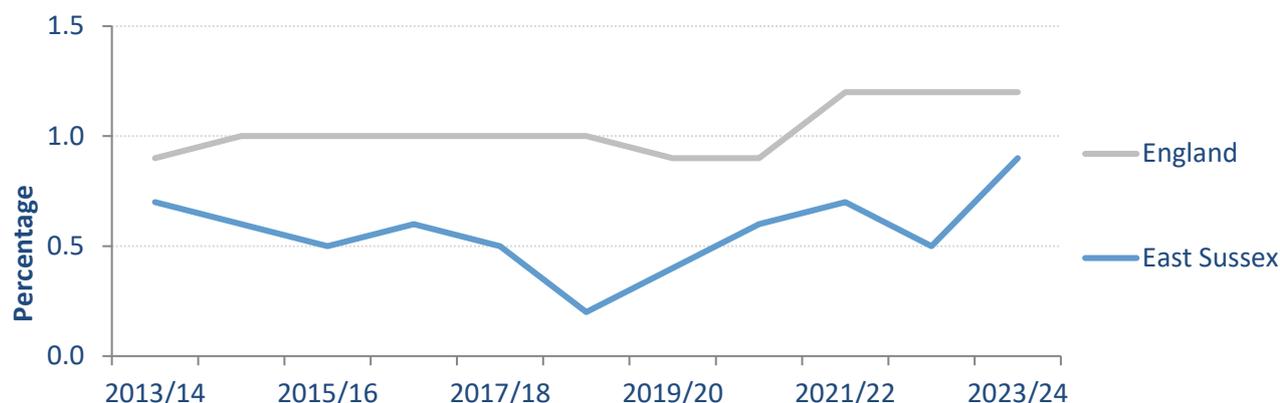
Table 2: Reception prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) - 2014/15 to 2023/24

	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Difference 2014-2024
England	9.1	9.3	9.6	9.5	9.7	9.9	14.4	10.1	9.2	9.6	0.5
East Sussex	7.8	8.9	9.6	9.6	9	8.7	11.9	7.8	8.6	9.1	1.3
Eastbourne	8.2	8.8	10.8	11.1	10	9.8		7.6	8	12.8	4.6
Hastings	11.1	9	11.1	11.3	10.8	9.6		7.6	8.7	10.4	-0.7
Lewes	6.2	8.7	9.1	7.1	8.2	9.2		7.1	8.9	8.1	1.9
Rother	7.8	10.3	9.9	9.8	8.6	8.6		9.6	9.8	8.5	0.7
Wealden	6.3	8.5	8.2	8.3	7.9	8.3		7.8	7.6	6.6	0.3

Source: NCMP

- 0.9% of reception children were underweight in 2023/24, compared to 1.2% in England.
- The prevalence of underweight children in Reception has remained consistently lower than England, but has been broadly increasing since a low of 0.2% in 2018/19.
- Small numbers mean data is not available at district and borough level.

Figure 18: Reception prevalence of underweight - 2013/14 to 2023/24

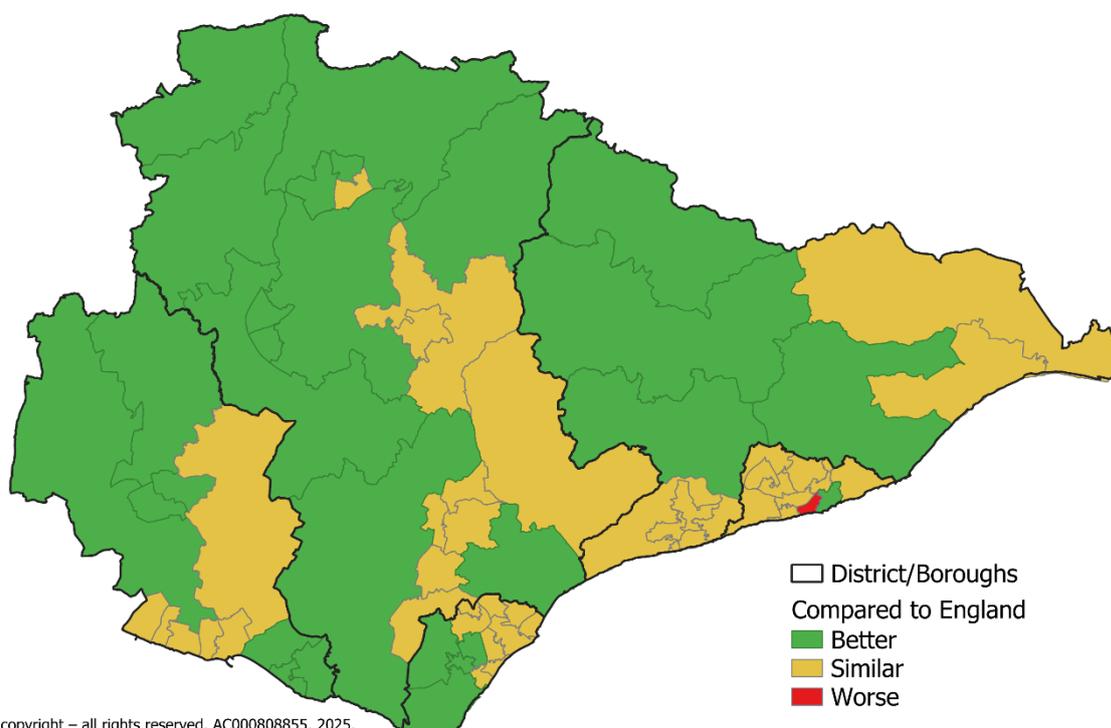


Source: NCMP

Year 6

- Only one MSOA (areas of between 5,000 and 15,000 people) in Hastings has worse rates of overweight and obesity in children in year 6 compared to England. This MSOA contains some of the most deprived areas in the county, which are also some of the most derived in England.
- The areas with similar rates of overweight and obesity than England are predominantly concentrated along the coastal areas of the county, and in areas of increased deprivation in Lewes and Wealden

Figure 19: Overweight and obesity in year 6, East Sussex MSOAs compared to England, 2021/22-2023/24



Source: East Sussex Public Health Intelligence team, using NCMP data

- The prevalence of overweight/obesity in year 6 in East Sussex (30.7%) is significantly lower than England (35.8%).
- Lewes (28%), Rother (29.7%) and Wealden (27.9%) all have significantly lower rates of overweight/obesity in Year 6 children than England.
- Since 2014, the prevalence of overweight/obesity amongst Year 6 children has increased nationally by 2.6%, and in East Sussex by 1.1%. Hastings has seen the largest increase in the county (3.1%), followed by Lewes (2.5%). However, the prevalence in Lewes has been significantly lower than England since 2016/17, whereas the prevalence in Hastings has been similar to England since 2009/10.
- Conversely there has been a decline in Eastbourne (0.5%) and Rother (1.9%) over the same period.

Figure 20: Year 6 prevalence of overweight (including obesity)- 2023/24

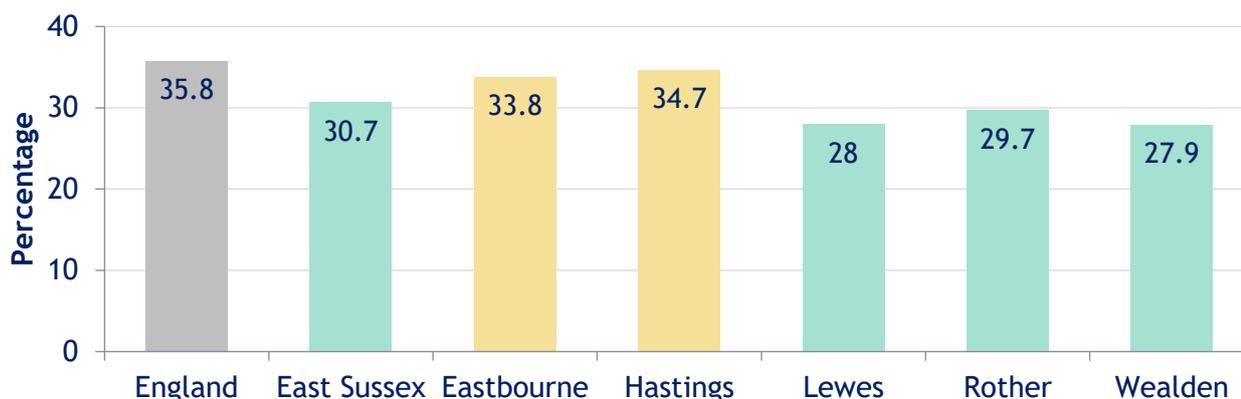


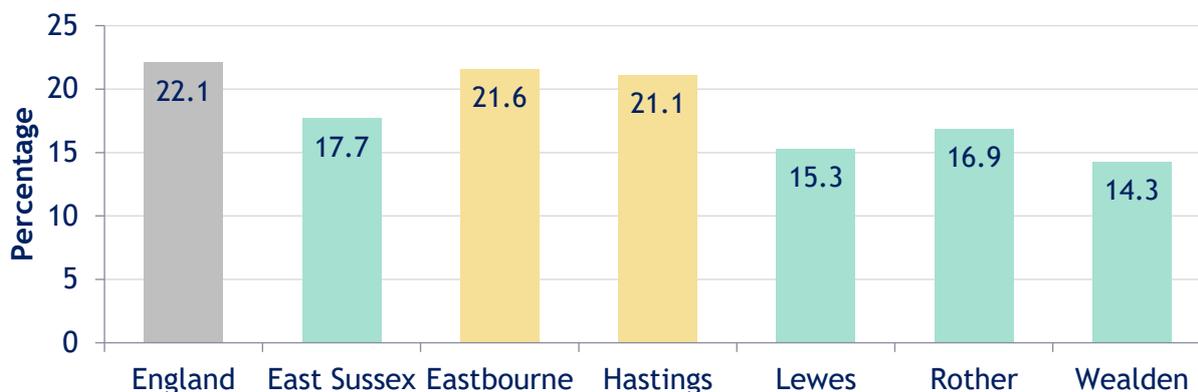
Table 3: Year 6 prevalence of overweight (including obesity)- 2014/15 to 2023/24

	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Difference 2014-2024
England	33.2	34.2	34.2	34.3	34.3	35.2	40.9	37.8	36.6	35.8	2.6
East Sussex	29.6	32	30.4	29.5	28.2	32		32.8	32.6	30.7	1.1
Eastbourne	34.3	37.3	31.3	30.6	30.8			32	34.4	33.8	-0.5
Hastings	31.6	34.3	35.3	32	32.7	35.2		38.4	36.9	34.7	3.1
Lewes	25.5	31.1	25.8	29.9	23.6	31		30.3	31.8	28	2.5
Rother	31.6	31.9	33.5	29.2	28.4	31.1		33.6	34.4	29.7	-1.9
Wealden	26.3	28.2	27.2	27.5	26.4	29.8		30.1	28	27.9	1.6

Source: NCMP

- The prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) in East Sussex (17.7%), significantly lower than England (22.1%).
- Lewes (15.3%), Rother (16.9%) and Wealden (14.3%) all have significantly lower rates of obesity in Year 6 children than England.
- Since 2014, the prevalence of obesity amongst Year 6 children has increased nationally by 3%, and in East Sussex by 2%.
- Eastbourne has seen the largest increase in the county (4.7%), followed by Lewes (3.2%).
- Rother is the only area in the county where Year 6 obesity has decreased since 2014/15.

Figure 21: Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) - 2023/24



Source: NCMP

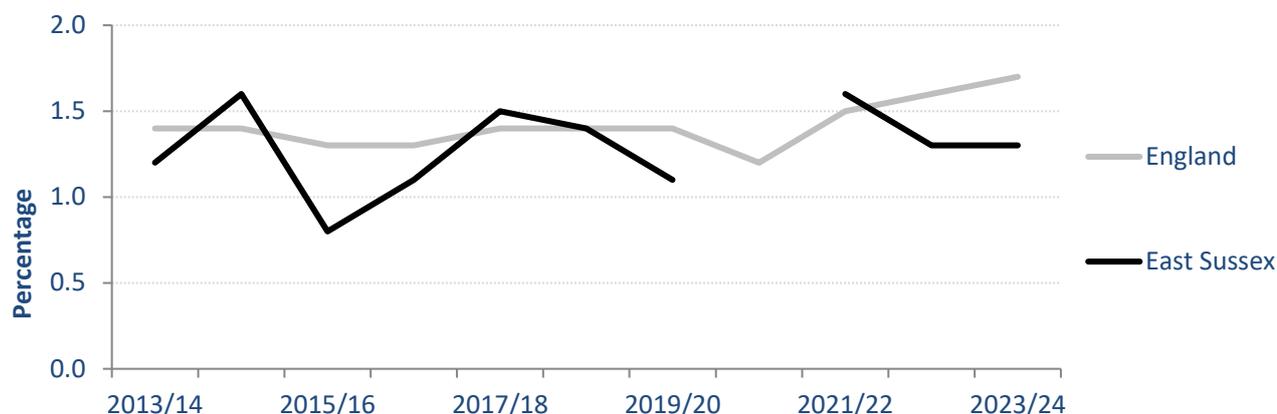
Table 4: Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) - 2014/15 to 2023/24

	2014 /15	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Difference 2014-2024
England	19.1	19.8	20	20.1	20.2	21	25.5	23.4	22.7	22.1	3
East Sussex	15.7	18.8	17.1	15.9	16.4	17.5		18.1	19.3	17.7	2
Eastbourne	16.9	23.5	17.2	16.6	17.4			18	21.1	21.6	4.7
Hastings	19.2	22.1	20.5	18	19.3	19.8		21.6	23.2	21.1	1.9
Lewes	12.1	17.2	12.4	16	14.6	16.8		18.5	17.7	15.3	3.2
Rother	18.4	19.1	20.6	15.5	16.7	16		19.3	20.4	16.9	-1.5
Wealden	12.9	14.3	15.8	13.9	14.9	15.5		14.5	15.7	14.3	1.4

Source: NCMP

- 1.3% of year 6 children were underweight in 2023/24, compared to 1.7% in England.
- The prevalence of underweight children in year 6 has fluctuated since 2013/14.
- Small numbers mean data is not available at district and borough level.

Figure 22: year 6 prevalence of underweight - 2013/14 to 2023/24

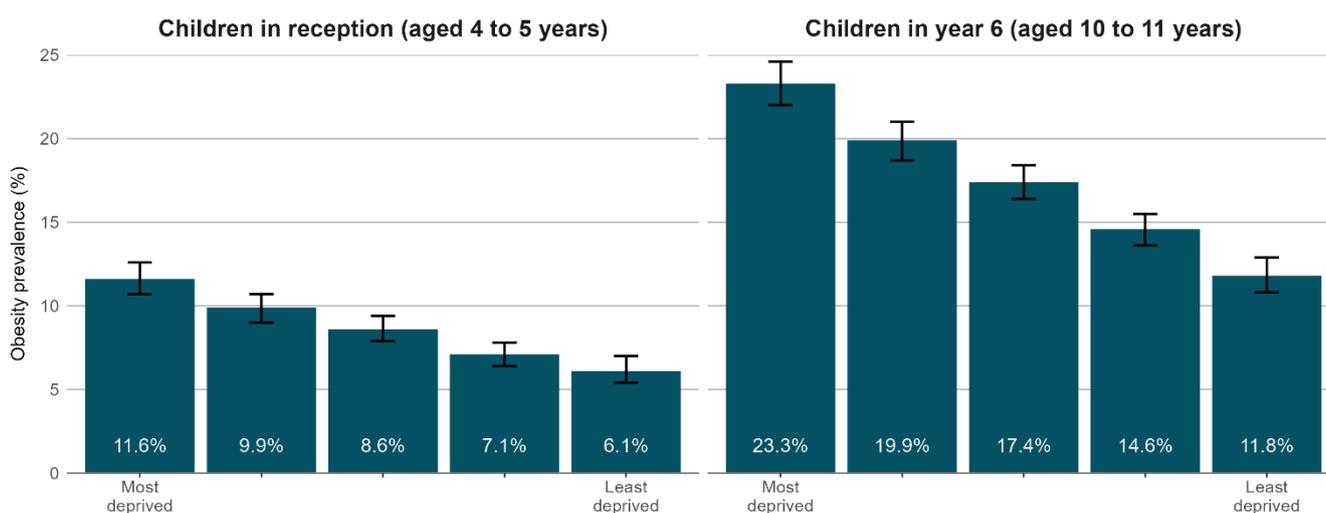


Source: NCMP

Obesity by deprivation and age

- Figure 6 shows obesity prevalence by deprivation across two age groups for children, in reception (YR) and for children in year 6 (the last year of primary school).
- There is a clear association with higher obesity rates and levels of deprivation, where, as children grow up, the prevalence of obesity increases.

Figure 23: Child Obesity rates in reception and year 6 in East Sussex, by deprivation quintile, combined 5-year data.



NB: Data combined 5-years, (2017- 2018, to 2022- 2023), 95% confidence intervals are displayed on the chart

Source: OHID, Obesity Profile, Patterns and trends in child obesity, East Sussex report

Change in weight between reception and year 6 in East Sussex:

- Three quarters of children who are overweight (including obese) in reception in England are still overweight in year 6.
- 70.8% of reception children remained overweight (including obesity) in year 6 in East Sussex in 2023/24, significantly lower than England (77.1%)
- Hastings (71.3%), Lewes (68.9%) and Wealden (64.6%) all have significantly lower prevalence of children remaining overweight than England.

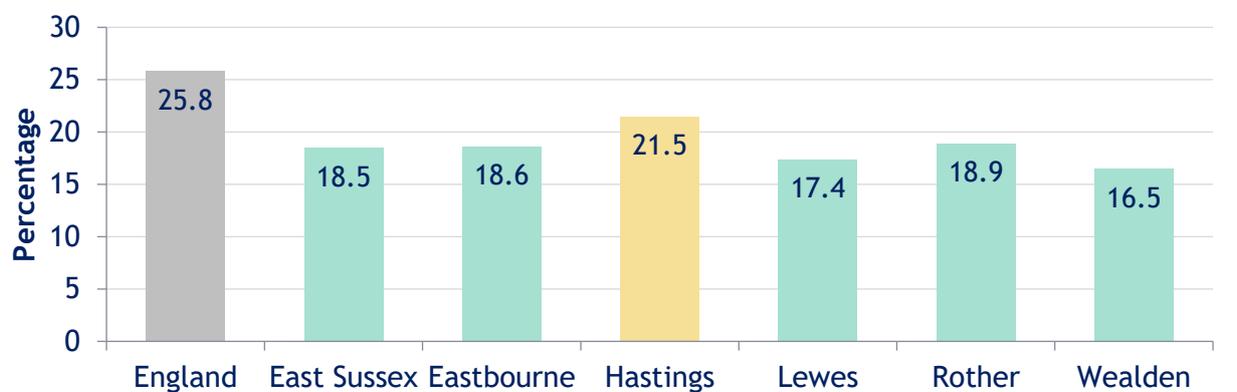
Figure 24: Percentage of reception children remaining overweight (including obesity) in year 6 - 2023/24



Source: NCMP

- One in four reception children of healthy weight in reception in England are overweight (including obese) by the time they are in year 6 (25.8%).
- The rise from healthy weight children in reception who are overweight by year 6 is significantly lower in East Sussex (18.5%) compared to England, and this is the case for all districts and boroughs except for Hastings which is similar to England.
- The percentage of children moving from healthy weight to overweight between reception and year 6 varies, from 16.5% in Wealden, to 21.5% in Hastings.

Figure 25: Percentage of children moving from healthy weight in reception to overweight (including obesity) in year 6 2021/22-23/24



Source: NCMP

Healthy eating in East Sussex

Eating meals during the school week

- The likelihood of children and young people eating breakfast every week day decreases with age, from 74% of primary pupils to 43% of college students.
- The same pattern is seen for pupils eating lunch, falling from 87% of primary pupils to 48% of college students.
- Secondary and college students are three times more likely than primary school pupils to have no breakfast during the week, and no lunch during the week.
- Children and young people of all ages are three times more likely to have no breakfast than they are to have no lunch.

Figure 26: In a normal school week, how many days do you have breakfast?

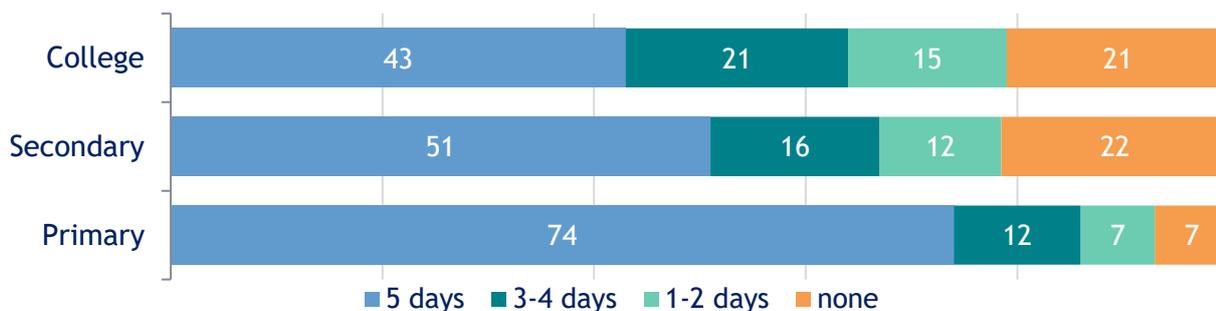
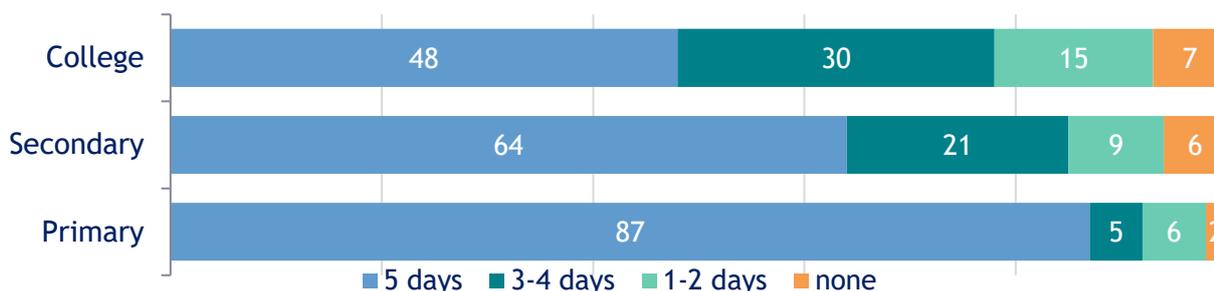


Figure 27: In a normal school week, how many days do you have lunch?



Source: East Sussex My Health My School Survey, 2023/24

Fruit, vegetable and snack consumption

- Primary students (33%) are more likely to have 5 or more portions of fruit or vegetables on a normal school day compared to secondary (21%) and college students (17%).
- The likelihood of eating fewer than 5 portions, or having no portions of fruit or vegetables increases with age
- Approximately three quarters of students are having 3 or less snacks high in fat or sugar on a normal school day (Primary: 73%, Secondary: 76%, College: 77%).
- Most students are having none or one sugar sweetened drink on a normal school day (Primary: 65%, Secondary: 60%, College: 64%).

Figure 28: On a normal school/college day, how many portions of the following do you have? - Fruit and Vegetables

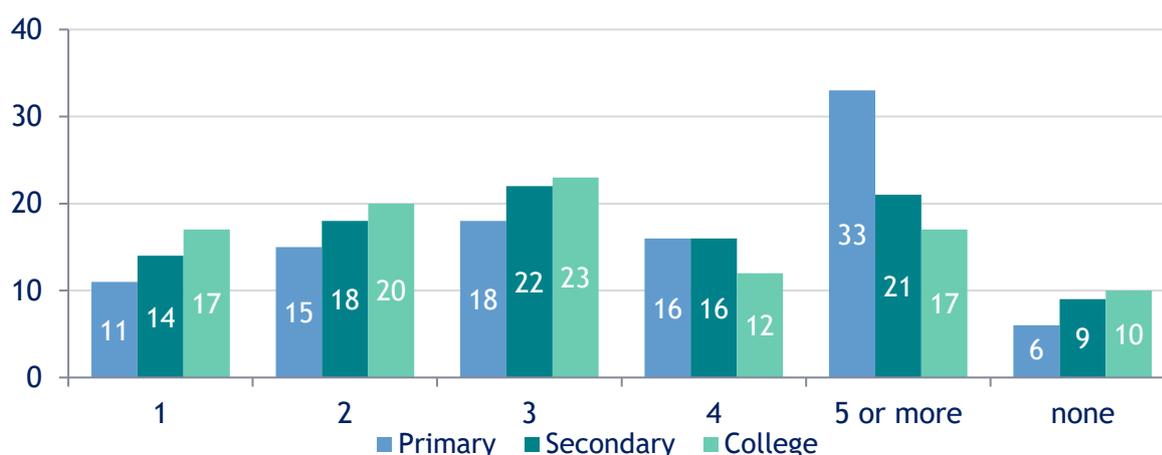


Figure 29: On a normal school/college day, how many portions of the following do you have? - Snacks - high in fat or high in sugar

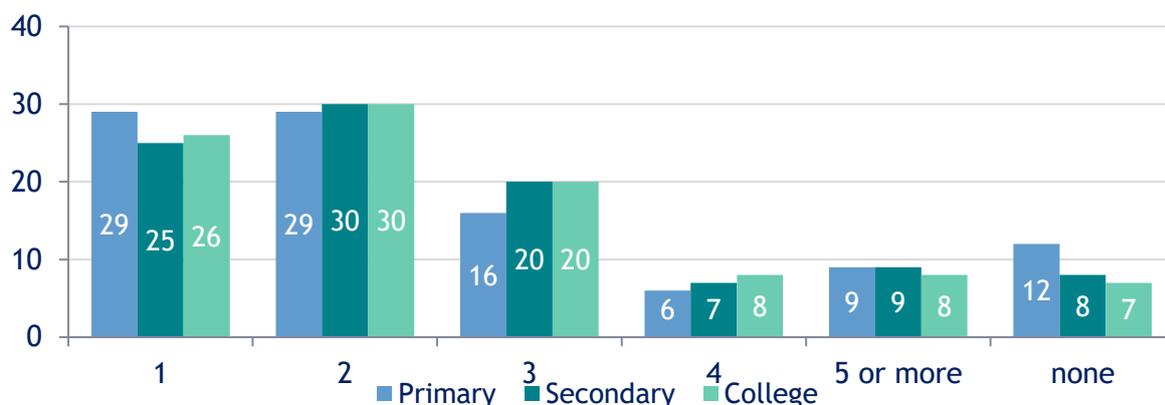
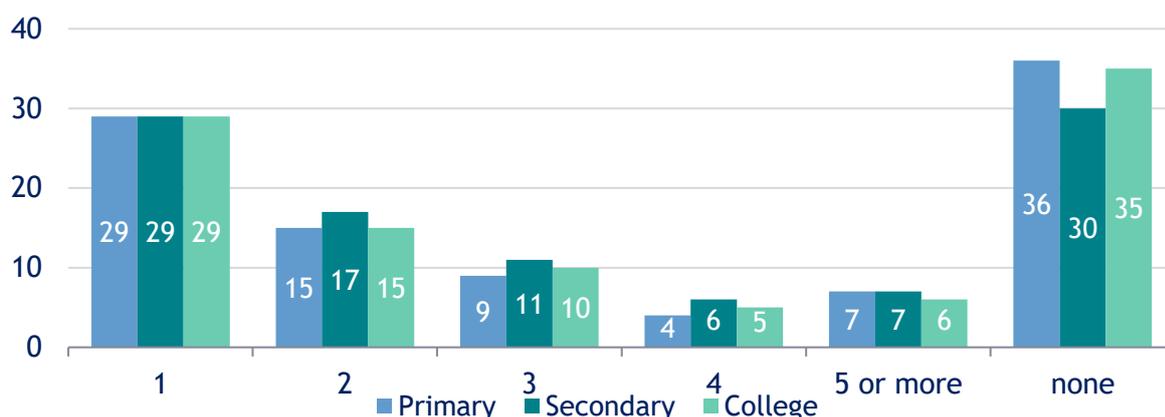


Figure 30: On a normal school/college day, how many portions of the following do you have? - Sugar sweetened drinks



Source: East Sussex My Health My School Survey, 2023/24

Health inequalities in child weight in England: Reception

- There is a clear association between child overweight and obesity in reception year in England and deprivation, with child overweight and obesity increasing as levels of deprivation increase.
- Boys in reception are more likely than girls to be overweight/obese
- Children who are of White British, White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, Black Caribbean, Black African and Any Other Black background have significantly higher overweight/obesity prevalence compared to the England Average.

- Children who are of Indian background have the lowest Overweight/obesity rates of any ethnic group.

Table 5: reception prevalence of overweight (including obesity) 2023/24 Proportion %
Reception overweight / obesity prevalence

England average	22.1%				
Deprivation quintile	Most deprived	26.1	Ethnicity	White and Black Caribbean	26.6
	2 nd most	25		White and Black African	25.7
	3 rd most	23.6		White and Asian	15.3
	4 th most	23.1		Any other Mixed background	20.8
	5 th most	22.1		Indian	11.8
	5 th least deprived	21.1		Pakistani	18.9
	4 th least	20.4		Bangladeshi	18.6
	3 rd least	19.9		Any other Asian Background	17.6
	2 nd least	18.9		Black Caribbean	25.1
	Least deprived	17		Black African	27.4
Sex	Male	22.2%		Any other Black background	26.2
	Female	21.9%		Chinese	10.3
Ethnicity	White British	23.3		Any other Ethnic group	22.5
	White Irish	26.7		Not stated/ Invalid	21.6
	Any other White background	20.5			

Source: NCMP

- There is a clear association between child underweight in reception year in England and deprivation, with child underweight increasing as levels of deprivation increase.
- Twice the proportion of boys in reception are underweight than girls.

- While children who are of White and Asian, Indian, Bangladeshi, or Any Other Asian backgrounds have some of the lowest overweight/obesity rates in England, they also have higher underweight prevalence than people of other ethnic backgrounds and in comparison to the England average.

Table 6: reception prevalence of underweight 2023/24 Proportion %

England average	1.2%			
Deprivation quintile			Ethnicity	
	Most deprived	1.3	White and Black Caribbean	0.9
	2 nd most	1.4	White and Black African	0.6
	3 rd most	1.4	White and Asian	1.6
	4 th most	1.3	Any other Mixed background	1.2
	5 th most	1.3	Indian	6.2
	5 th least deprived	1.1	Pakistani	3.6
	4 th least	1	Bangladeshi	3.4
	3 rd least	1	Any other Asian Background	3.1
	2 nd least	1	Black Caribbean	0.7
	Least deprived	1	Black African	1.3
Sex	Male	1.6	Any other Black background	1.4
	Female	0.8	Chinese	1.3
Ethnicity	White British	0.5	Any other Ethnic group	1.2
	White Irish	0.5	Not stated/ Invalid	1.3
	Any other White background	0.9		

Source: NCMP

Year 6

- There is a clear association between deprivation and child overweight and obesity in year 6 in England, with child overweight and obesity increasing as levels of deprivation increase.
- Boys in year 6 are more likely than girls to be overweight/obese
- Children of Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Any Other Asian background, Black African, Black Caribbean, Any Other Black background, White and Black African, White and Black Caribbean, Any Other White background or are of Any Other Ethnic group have significantly higher overweight/obesity prevalence than the England Average.
- Children who are of Chinese ethnic background have the lowest Overweight/obesity rates of any ethnic group (24.5%).

Table 7: year 6 prevalence of overweight (including obesity) 2023/24 Proportion %

England average	35.8%				
Deprivation quintile	Most deprived	43.3	Ethnicity	White and Black Caribbean	42.2
	2 nd most	41.8		White and Black African	42.2
	3 rd most	40.1		White and Asian	30.5
	4 th most	38.1		Any other Mixed background	36
	5 th most	36.2		Indian	34.8
	5 th least deprived	34.4		Pakistani	40.7
	4 th least	32.3		Bangladeshi	44.3
	3 rd least	30.9		Any other Asian Background	37.9
	2 nd least	28.9		Black Caribbean	45.6
	Least deprived	25.2		Black African	46
Sex	Male	38.1		Any other Black background	45.7
	Female	33.5		Chinese	24.5
Ethnicity	White British	34.1		Any other Ethnic group	40.3

	White Irish	33.2		Not stated/ Invalid	35.5
	Any other White background	36.3			

Source: NCMP

- The prevalence of underweight year 6 children in the least deprived decile is significantly higher than the England average.
- Year 6 boys are less likely to be underweight than year 6 girls.
- While children who are of White and Asian, Indian, and Chinese backgrounds have some of the lowest overweight/obesity rates in year 6 children in England, they also have higher underweight prevalence in comparison to the England average. Children of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Any Other Asian backgrounds also have significantly higher proportions of underweight than nationally.

Table 8: year 6 prevalence of underweight 2023/24 Proportion %

England average	1.7%				
Deprivation quintile	Most deprived	1.7	Ethnicity	White and Black Caribbean	
	2 nd most	1.7		White and Black African	1.1
	3 rd most	1.7		White and Asian	2.5
	4 th most	1.7		Any other Mixed background	1.7
	5 th most	1.6		Indian	5
	5 th least deprived	1.6		Pakistani	4.1
	4 th least	1.6		Bangladeshi	2.8
	3 rd least	1.6		Any other Asian Background	3.1
	2 nd least	1.7		Black Caribbean	0.9
	Least deprived	1.9		Black African	1.2
Sex	Male	1.5		Any other Black background	1.1

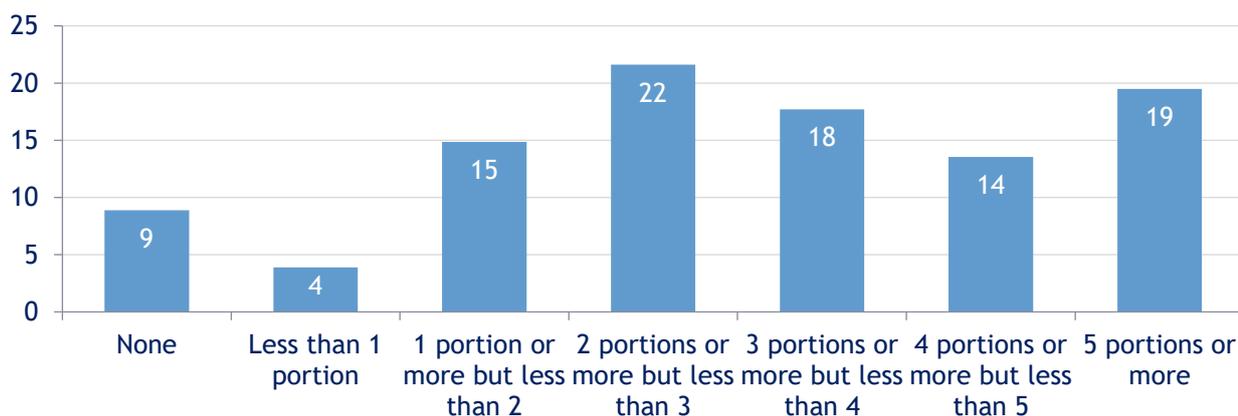
	Female	1.8	Chinese	3
Ethnicity	White British	1.3	Any other Ethnic group	1.7
	White Irish	1.6	Not stated/ Invalid	1.7
	Any other White background	1.3		

Source: NCMP

Healthy eating in England:

- Children and young people in England eat an average of 3.3 portions of fruit and vegetables a day, with just under 1 in 5 eating 5 or more portions.

Figure 31: Percentage of children aged 5 to 15 that meet the UK recommendations of 5+ portions of fruit and vegetables per day, 2022



Source: NHSE Digital, Health Survey for England, 2022

Health Inequalities in healthy eating

- The proportion of children and young people who have 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day decreases as deprivation increases, while the likelihood of having no portions a day increases as deprivation increases.
- Girls are more likely than boys to eat 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables a day, and young people aged 11-12 are more likely than any other age group to have 5 or more portions a day.

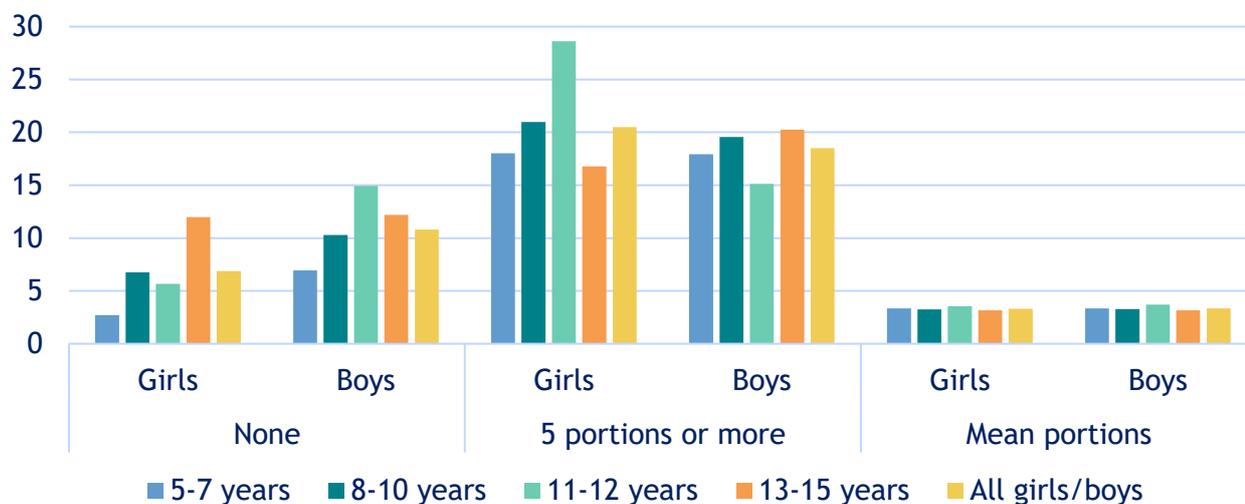
Table 9: Percentage of children aged 5 to 15 that meet the UK recommendations of 5+ portions of fruit and vegetables per day, 2022

		5+ a day	mean portions
England average		19%	3.3
Deprivation quintile	Most deprived	17%	3
	2 nd most deprived	17%	3.3
	3 rd most deprived	20%	3.4
	2 nd least deprived	16%	3.5
	Least deprived	25%	3.5
Age	5-7	18%	3.3
	8-10	20%	3.3
	11-12	22%	3.6
	13-15	19%	3.2
Sex	Male	18%	3.3
	Female	21%	3.3

Source: NHSE Digital, Health Survey for England, 2022

- Girls aged 11-12 are twice as likely as boys to eat 5+ portions a day, this is a much greater gender gap than any other age group. Conversely, boys aged 11-12 are 2.5 times more likely than girls to eat no portions of fruit or vegetables during a day.

Figure 32: Percentage of children aged 5 to 15 that meet the UK recommendations of 5+ portions of fruit and vegetables per day by sex, 2022



Source: NHSE Digital, Health Survey for England, 2022

KEY INFORMATION SOURCES

- [East Sussex in Figures - Data Observatory - Population estimates in 2024 \(August 2025\)](#)
- [My Health My School survey 2023-2024 |](#)
- [Obesity, physical activity and nutrition - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)
- [Child and Maternal Health - Data | Fingertips | Department of Health and Social Care](#)
- [Feat \(Food, environment Assessment Tool\)](#)
- [Family Resources Survey: financial year 2023 to 2024 - GOV.UK](#)
- [Health Survey for England](#)