

School Sport Survey 2011 – ‘The State of the Nation’: KEY MESSAGES

CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

- Physical Education is part of the National Curriculum from Key Stages 1 to 4. 98% of primary school pupils and 97% of secondary school pupils said they took part in curricular Physical Education (PE).

EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

- Extracurricular participation levels for primary school pupils are identical to levels recorded in the 2009 survey - 78% overall took part in extracurricular sport in the previous year.
- In secondary schools, the overall level of extracurricular participation has dropped compared with previous survey findings, although over two thirds (65%) of pupils took part in the previous year. Older pupils in Years 9 and 10 are less likely to take part.

CLUB PARTICIPATION

- Club participation levels for primary school pupils are at the highest recorded level since 2000, with 85% of pupils taking part in sport with a club during the previous year.
- For secondary school pupils, levels of club participation have dropped, although club participation is slightly higher than extracurricular participation – 68% of pupils took part in sport with a club during the previous year. Participation levels are lower among older pupils.

FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION

- For the first time, the 2011 survey has captured a detailed picture of frequency of participation, allowing us to explore the number of occasions per week pupils take part in organised sport and recreation, outside of the curriculum. Just over a quarter of pupils (26% of secondary pupils and 28% of primary pupils) take part in organised activity (other than in curriculum time) on three or more occasions per week.

GENDER DIFFERENCES

- There is virtually no gender gap in extracurricular or club sport participation levels among primary school pupils.
- At secondary school, gender differences become more noticeable, and increase as pupils get older. Whilst there isn't a large difference in terms of overall participation levels, the main difference is in the *frequency* of female participation in organised sport. Relatively equal numbers of boys and girls take part in organised activity at least once a week outside of curricular time, but girls are less likely to take part three or more times a week. This pattern is the same for every year group.

REGIONAL PICTURE

- There are minimal differences in the levels of extracurricular and club participation, or the frequency of participation among primary pupils across Sport Wales' regions (North, Mid and West, Central South and South East). The greatest variation between lowest and highest levels is only four percentage points.
- The picture is similar at secondary school, although secondary pupils are slightly less likely to take part in extracurricular sport in the Central South. However, the greatest difference between all regions in either extracurricular or club settings, or using various frequency measures is only six percentage points.

SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND PARTICIPATION

- 'Receipt of a free school meal' is used as a proxy measure to look at levels of deprivation of children and young people in Wales. Each school in the survey is placed into a Free School Meal (FSM) quartile – based on the percentage of pupils at that school in receipt of a free school meal. Pupils in schools with a higher percentage of FSM take up are less likely to be frequent participants, they are less likely to participate in regular sport at a club, and they are less likely to visit a leisure centre.

INTRODUCTION

Our Vision sets out clear priorities for sport in Wales. We want a Wales where ***every child is hooked on sport for life*** and we have ***a nation of champions***. A key element of helping to achieve this and ensuring high performance, both as organisations and individuals, is to develop and use evidence.

The School Sport Survey took place in the summer term of 2011. The data from this survey enables us and our partners to strategically monitor and track trends in sports participation and the provision of Physical Education (PE) and school sport. This provides a base of evidence from which to shape sports policy and practice.

In the 2011 survey, nearly 40,000 pupils from Years 3-11 completed the questionnaire, making this the largest national survey with children and young people in Wales to date.

This paper presents an overview of what the data is telling us about sports **participation** in Wales. It covers long term trends of extracurricular and club participation and then focuses on the more detailed picture that the current survey gives us in terms of frequency of participation.

Long term trends

General levels of participation in extracurricular and club sport have remained the same or increased slightly for primary school pupils, and have dropped for secondary school pupils. As found in previous surveys, participation declines from Key Stage 3 onwards and declines slightly more for female pupils.

CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

Physical Education is part of the National Curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 to 4. The common requirements for each subject in the National Curriculum states that “The programme of study for each key stage should be taught to the great majority of pupils in the key stage, in ways appropriate to their developing maturities and abilities”.

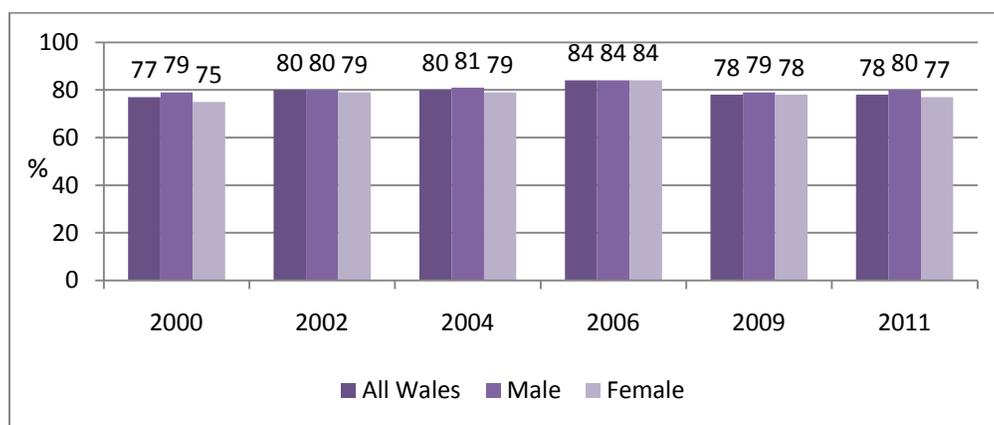
98% of primary school pupils and 97% of secondary school pupils said they took part in curricular Physical Education. There are no clear gender differences or regional differences, except that secondary school pupils in the Central South region were less likely to say they took part (94% compared with 97% overall). Pupils of all ages take part but pupils in Year 10 are slightly less likely to say they take part with 95% saying they do curricular PE.

EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

Primary school pupils

Overall, 78% of primary pupils took part in extracurricular sport in the previous year, an identical figure to the previous survey that took place in 2009. Figure 1 shows the trend since 2000.

Figure 1: Any participation in extracurricular sport in the last year: pupils in Years 3-6

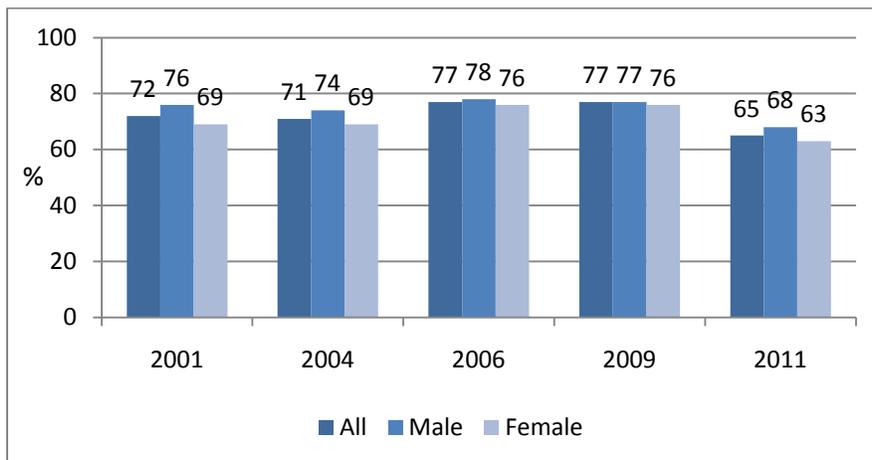


At primary school age, there is virtually no gender difference in overall participation levels in extracurricular activity. There are no clear regional differences. Age does make a difference – older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are more likely to take part than pupils in Years 3 and 4, with 70% taking part in Year 3 compared with 86% in Year 6.

Secondary School Pupils

Overall, 68% of secondary pupils took part in extracurricular activity in the previous year. Figure 2 shows the long term trend, which indicates a drop compared with previous surveys, although over two thirds of pupils participate.

Figure 2: Any participation in extracurricular sport in the last year: pupils in Years 7-11



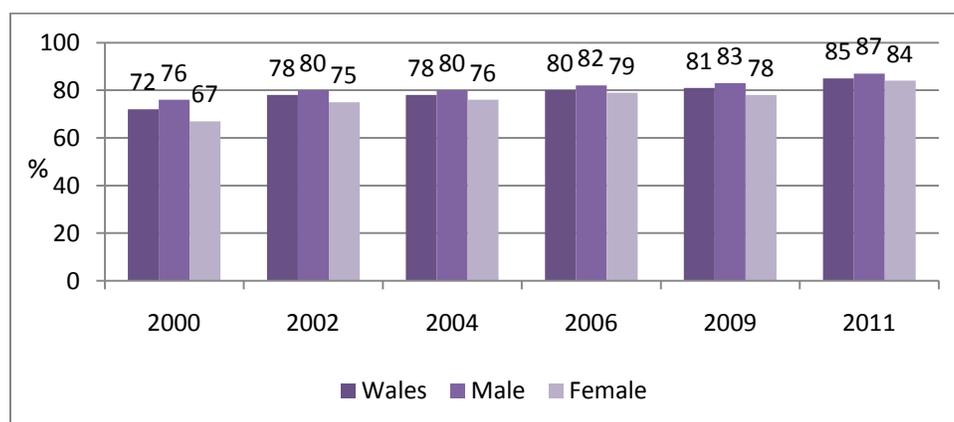
Overall levels of extracurricular participation show a slight gender gap of five percentage points. Older pupils are less likely to participate in extracurricular activity, with 75% taking part in Year 7 compared with 58% in Year 10.

As with primary schools, there are no great regional differences although pupils in the Central South are slightly less likely to say they take part in extracurricular activity (62%) compared with pupils in the South East region (66%) and pupils in the Mid and West and North regions (both 68%).

CLUB PARTICIPATION

Club participation among primary school pupils is at the highest recorded level since 2000, with 85% of primary school pupils taking part in club sport in the last year. Figure 3 shows the trend.

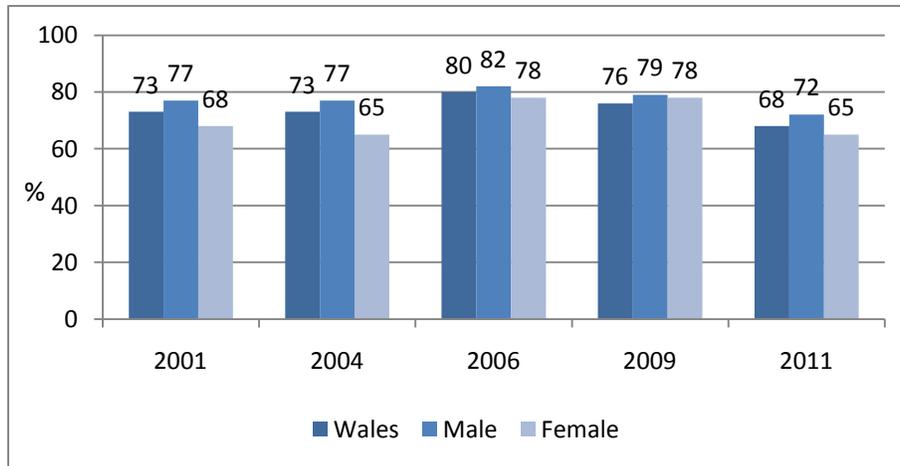
Figure 3: Any participation with a club in the last year – primary school pupils in Years 3-6



The data shows a gradual rise in overall club participation levels since 2000, and there is currently little difference between male and female participation levels. There are no clear variations at a regional level – all Sport Wales regions range between 84% and 87% participation.

At secondary school, participation has fallen slightly in comparison with previous years, with 68% taking part in sport with a club. Figure 4 shows the trend.

Figure 4: Any participation with a club in the last year – secondary school pupils in Years 7-11



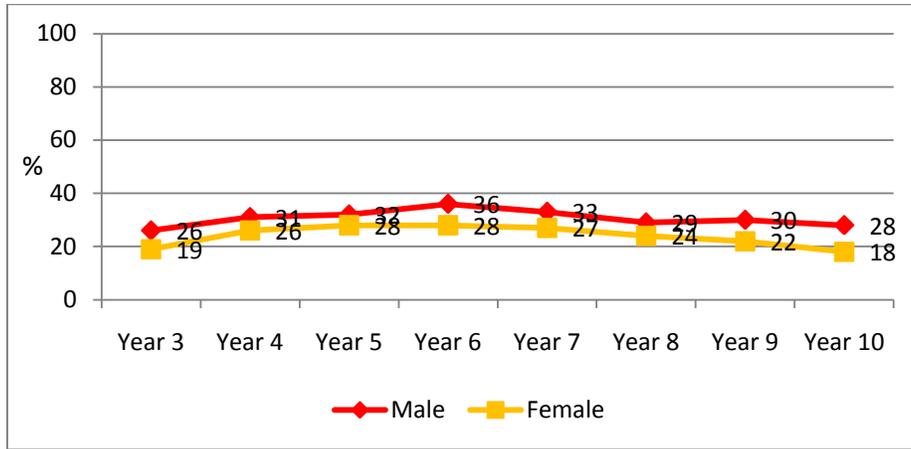
At secondary school, gender has more of an effect on participation. Again, there are no clear regional variations, with Sport Wales regions ranging between 66% and 70%. Age does play a part – 76% take part in Year 7 compared with 63% in Year 10.

FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION

We want to ensure that *every child is hooked on sport for life*. One way of measuring whether we are successful in meeting this aspiration is to explore the frequency of participation in sport. The 2011 School Sport Survey gives us a far more coherent picture and understanding about the frequency of pupils' sports participation. For the purposes of measuring whether someone is 'hooked' or not, we are using a measure of participating at least three times a week in organised activity (i.e. extracurricular or club participation) outside of the school curriculum.

Using this measure, in 2011 **28%** of pupils in Years 3-6 took part on at least three occasions a week (31% male and 25% female) and **26%** of pupils in Years 7-11 (30% male and 22% female). Figure 5 below shows this measure broken down by gender and school year from Year 3 to Year 10.

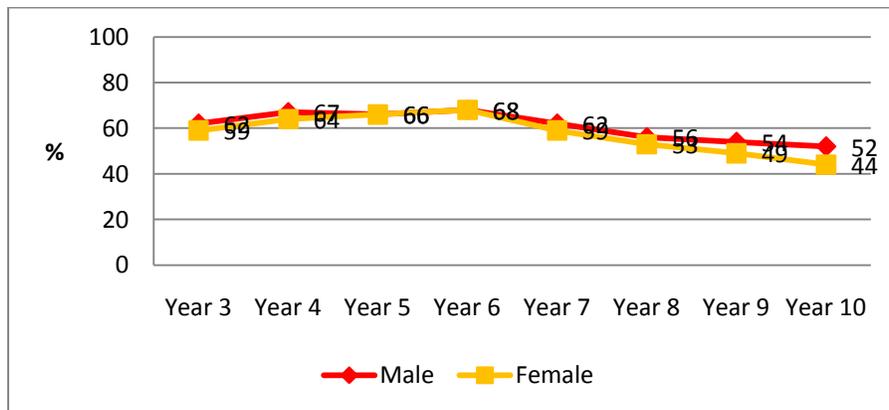
Figure 5: Percentage of pupils participating in extracurricular and/or club sport on at least three occasions a week



Source: School Sport Survey 2011
 Base: all respondents in school years 3-10. (n=39,727)

Participation in organised activity **at least once a week** is much higher (Figure 6 below), with 65% of primary school pupils on average taking part at least once week and 53% of secondary school pupils taking part at least once a week. For this level of frequency, the gender gap is minimal - until pupils reach Year 9 or 10, when girls start to participate less frequently than boys.

Figure 6: At least once a week - extracurricular and/or club participation



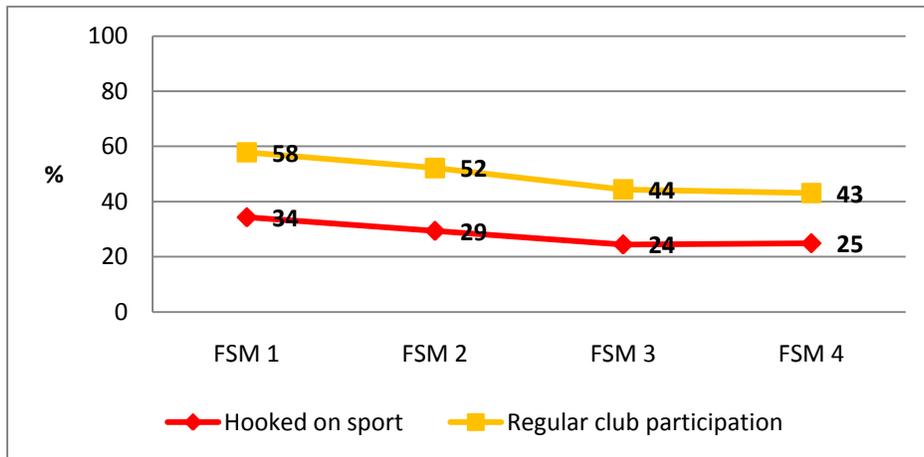
Source: School Sport Survey 2011
 Base: all respondents in school years 3-10. (n=39,727)

SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND PARTICIPATION

'Receipt of a free school meal' is used as a proxy measure of the socio-economic status of school children in Wales. Schools in the survey are placed into a Free School Meal (FSM) quartile – free FSM quartile 1 has a low percentage of FSM take up and FSM 4 has a high percentage of take up.

Figure 7 shows two measures of participation against each FSM quartile for primary school pupils. 'Regular' club participation in this instance is classified as being at least once a week. Pupils in schools with a low percentage of FSM are more likely to take part in club sport than pupils in schools with a high percentage of FSM. The same pattern is true when looking at the 'hooked on sport' measure (participation in extracurricular and/or club activity on three or more occasions per week) although this pattern is not as clear cut. Extracurricular participation also drops from FSM quartiles 1 to 4 but by nine percentage points compared with club sport which falls thirteen percentage points.

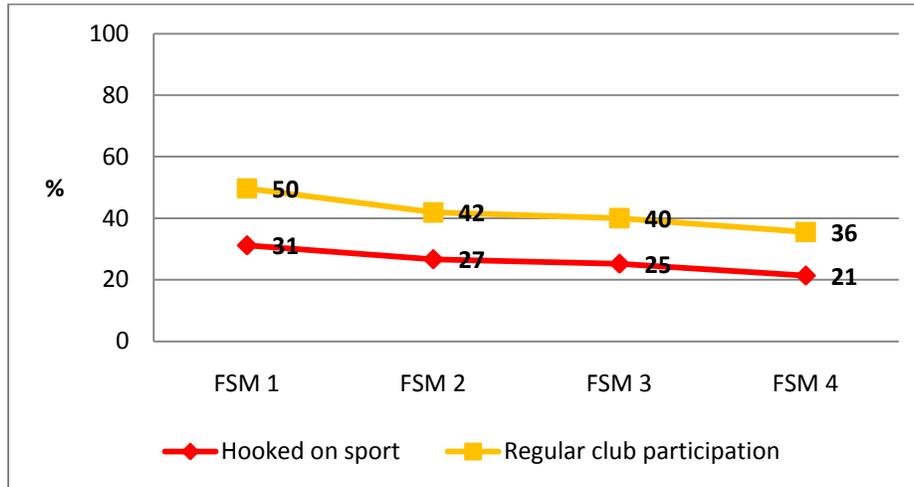
Figure 7: FSM quartile and participation – primary pupils



Source: School Sport Survey 2011
Base: all respondents in school years 3-6. (n=16,323)

Figure 8 shows the same pattern for secondary school pupils – there is a sixteen percentage point difference in club participation of pupils in schools in FSM 1 compared with FSM 4 and a ten percentage point difference in terms of frequency of participation on three or more occasions per week. As above, this may be influenced by extracurricular participation, which falls from FSM 1 to 4 but only by five percentage points.

Figure 8: FSM quartile and participation – secondary pupils



Source: School Sport Survey 2011
Base: all respondents in school years 7-10. (n=23,404)

NEXT STEPS

The initial overview of the current picture of sports participation in Wales for children and young people is generally very positive, but there are still inequalities to a greater or lesser extent in terms of age, gender and socio-economic status.

In order to address these issues it is important to get a clearer understanding about what is going on behind these headline patterns of participation. The level of data collected through the School Sport Survey in 2011 will allow us to make considerable headway in understanding what is happening 'on the ground' and understanding pupils' attitudes towards sport and physical recreation. Using data on well-being outcomes from the survey along with qualitative evidence that has recently been collected from young people will provide us with the evidence to explore these issues in far more detail and identify areas that can be addressed by the sports sector.