Results of the 2016 Kid’s Life and Times Survey

Who left this comic here? What do kids think about what?

It's about a big survey that researchers from the universities did. They said they wanted to know what P7 children thought about a lot of things now that we are finishing primary school. They sent out their survey to all schools and we answered loads of questions on the computers!

Oh yes I remember, it was great because we got time out of class to do the survey. They asked millions of questions about school. I hate school. It made me feel really good to be able to say that on the survey!
KLT Survey 2016

I love my school and my teachers are brilliant.

Yes well you’re a girl and I’m a boy and girls just like school better.

That’s sexist. Loads of the boys in my class love school.

Well what did the other P7 people say? The ones who did the survey?

Um... it turns out that girls actually are a bit happier than boys in their time at primary school; 83% of girls said they were mostly happy compared with 77% of boys.

Told you so!
Yes, but almost 8 out of 10 boys still said that they were happy so it’s not that many who were unhappy!

Do the researchers know why some people were unhappy?

Well girls were more likely than boys to say that their teachers always treated them with respect; 77% of girls said this compared with 69% of boys. Here are some of the other things that children said about how they felt when they were in school.

I don’t think they know for sure. It’s not that boys are bullied more. About the same number of boys as girls said that they were physically bullied in the last two months. Just over a fifth of boys and girls said they had been physically bullied. In fact, girls were a little bit more likely than boys to be bullied in other ways like cyber bullying or being called names or left out of stuff.

Are boys more unhappy because they get treated differently in the classroom?

Well girls were more likely than boys to say that their teachers always treated them with respect; 77% of girls said this compared with 69% of boys. Here are some of the other things that children said about how they felt when they were in school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How children feel about school by gender</th>
<th>Boys %</th>
<th>Girls %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I find it very hard to talk in front of the class</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am proud of my school work</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am doing the best work that I can</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like to be called on in class</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not doing as well in school as I would like to</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often feel upset in school</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My teacher makes me feel I am not good enough</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often get discouraged in school</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

So girls are more likely to find it hard to talk in front of the class and aren’t as keen as boys to be called on in class? Boys are also a bit more likely to say that they aren’t doing their best work and not doing as well in class as they would like to and that the teacher makes them feel that they are not good enough?

Yes, that’s what it looks like.
Yes they are. 62% of boys compared to 54% of girls said that they were happy that they were going to a new school, although more girls (39%) than boys (32%) said they were unsure. Girls had more worries with 38% of them worried about the new school compared with 26% of boys. They were anxious about maybe losing friends who might go to a different school and having to make new friends at the next school.

**Why children are worried about going to a new school by gender**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I might not be able to do the work</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might get bullied</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My friends might be going to a different school than me</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might not like the teachers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might not make new friends</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I might have to travel a long way to get to school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2**

So are boys more likely than girls to say they are glad to be going to a new school after P7?

No my teachers were brilliant and I did OK with the work. It was just that I didn’t like having to sit at a desk for so long every day. I NEED to be playing football! It’s my thing. If I can’t play football my head sort of explodes!

Don’t be so dramatic! Well the survey also asked about sports and exercise. Boys are definitely keener on exercise than girls. 42% of boys spent an hour on sport or exercise 7 times a week or more compared with 31% of girls.

Girls 31%  Boys 42%
How often children spend an hour during a day on sport or exercise in a normal week by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Frequency</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 4 times a week</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 times a week</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 times a week</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More often</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Types of sports or physical activities boys do in a normal week

Football
Running
Basketball
Swimming
Cycling
Rugby
Hurling
Boxing
Tennis
Hockey
Walking
Cycling
Gaelic

That's me. I play football WAY more than 7 times a week.

Are you counting playing FIFA on the Xbox?

Very funny.
The thing is we are all out playing serious footie while you girls are at home doing your nails.
You really are sexist aren’t you? You think girls don’t play football? Look at the word picture for the exercise that girls do.

Types of sports or physical activities girls do in a normal week

Netball  Running  Football  Swimming

Basketball  Playing  Gymnastics  Dancing

Hockey  Skipping  Tennis  Irish

Camogie  Horse  Walking  Gaelic

Cycling  Riding  Irish  Swimming

Figure 3

Seriously? Anyway I was just joking and I’m not really sexist. I know that loads of girls play football and video games just as much as boys.

Yeah that’s me. I love playing video games. I’m a serious gamer!

What do you play? Extreme Knitting?

You’re tragic! I am Grand Master in Overwatch.

Nice. But aren’t you breaking the law by playing a 12+ game when you’re only eleven?

Um… Actually that reminds me… one of the really interesting questions was what we thought the age of criminal responsibility should be in Northern Ireland.

Yeah I remember. They asked us if we thought that anyone who is ten years of age is old enough to understand if they are committing a crime and old enough to be arrested and go to court.
Well only 54% of boys and 44% of girls thought that someone who was 10 years old understood if they had broken the law and most people thought that the age of criminal responsibility should be at least 14.

I think 10 is way too young. There were loads of other questions about how children who break the law should be treated and we had an interesting discussion about it when we got back to class. People had very very different opinions.

An interesting discussion? Massive fight then?

Yeah. CARNAGE!
Kids’ Life and Times is an annual online survey of P7 children in Northern Ireland carried out in school. In 2016, 5,094 children participated.

The Kids’ Life and Times survey is a joint initiative between Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University and aims to provide an independent source of information on what children think about the social issues of the day.

Check the web site for more information on the survey findings (www.ark.ac.uk/klt) or call the Kids’ Life and Times team on 028 9097 5962 with any queries.

In collaboration with Queen’s University Belfast and Ulster University

School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work
Queen’s University Belfast
Belfast
BT7 1NN

Tel: 028 9097 5970/028 9097 5962
E-mail: info@ark.ac.uk

Magee Campus
Ulster University
Northland Road
Londonderry
BT48 7JL

Tel: 028 7167 5500
E-mail: info@ark.ac.uk

Kids’ Life and Times is part of ARK, a resource providing access to social and political material on Northern Ireland. Established in 2000 within Ulster University and Queen’s University Belfast, ARK has developed a range of resource materials that inform social and political debate in the region and raise the profile of social science research on Northern Ireland. ARK’s mission is to make social science knowledge on Northern Ireland easily accessible to the widest possible audience.

www.ark.ac.uk