

Childhood obesity is regarded as one of the most serious global public health challenges for the 21st century (World Health Organisation). Being overweight or very overweight harms children. Obese children are more likely to be ill, be absent from school due to illness, experience health-related limitations and require more medical care than healthy weight children. Overweight and obese children are also more likely to become obese adults, and have a higher risk of morbidity, disability and premature mortality in adulthood (Chief Medical Officer, 2012). Being underweight harms children through failure to thrive, stunted growth and weakened immune systems with an increased risk of osteoporosis in adulthood. Helping children to reach and stay a healthy weight will reduce their risk of poor health, such as those risks listed above.

The National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) measures the height and weight of around one million primary school children in England every year, providing a detailed picture of the prevalence of obesity. Children are measured when they start school at the age of 4 or 5 years (Reception) and in their last year of primary school (Year 6) at the age of 10 or 11 years.

**Why is this important?**



Obesity doubles the risk of dying prematurely, obese adults are 7 times more likely to become a type 2 diabetic than adults of a healthy weight.

**What is the local context?**



Child obesity and overweight rates in Torbay are broadly in line with regional and national rates.

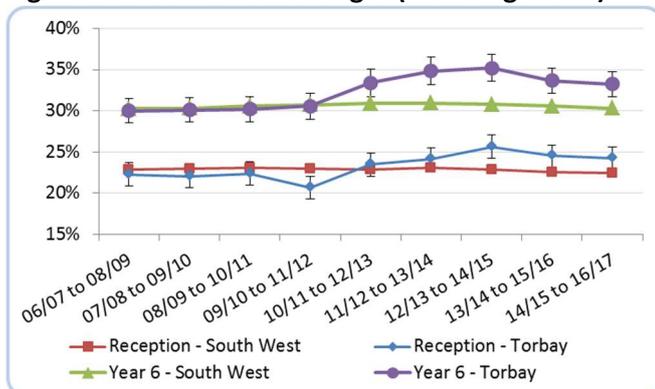
**What should we do?**



Encourage children and their parents to adopt healthy eating habits and be more physically active.

Obesity relates to those children whose BMI score is greater than or equal to the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile of the UK90 growth reference, overweight to greater than or equal to the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile but less than the 95<sup>th</sup>, underweight to less than the 2<sup>nd</sup> percentile.

**Fig 1: Prevalence of overweight (including obese)**



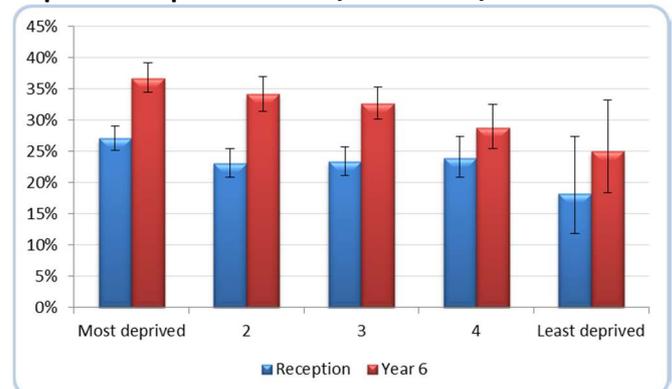
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**Overweight** - Torbay has seen a gradual increase in the prevalence of overweight reception age pupils during the last 10 years. In comparison to the South West region, Torbay largely had a similar rate (Fig 1).

For the first 4 time periods, Torbay was in line with the South West region. This rate has since increased

and Torbay now has significantly higher rates of overweight Year 6 pupils than the South West region (Fig 1).

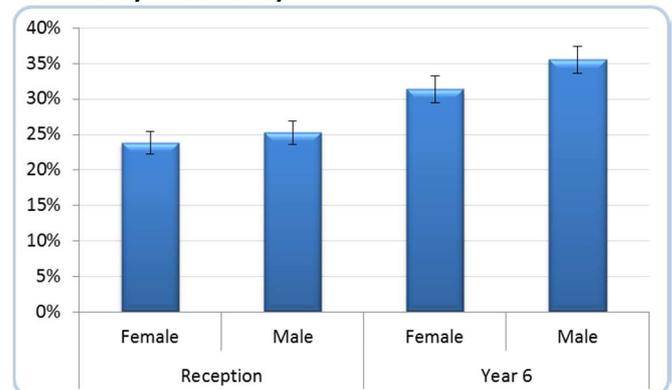
**Fig 2: Overweight (including obese) prevalence by deprivation quintile - 2013/14 to 2016/17**



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Within the Reception age cohort there is not a strong correlation between deprivation and overweight pupils (Fig 2). However, there is a stronger correlation within the Year 6 cohort with the most deprived quintile having significantly higher levels than the 2 least deprived quartiles (Fig 2).

**Fig 3: Overweight (including obese) prevalence by sex - 2013/14 to 2016/17**

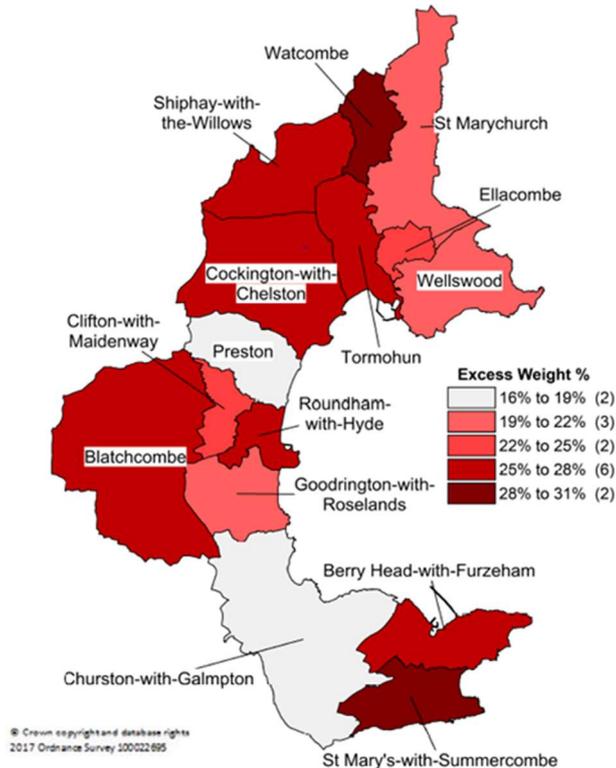


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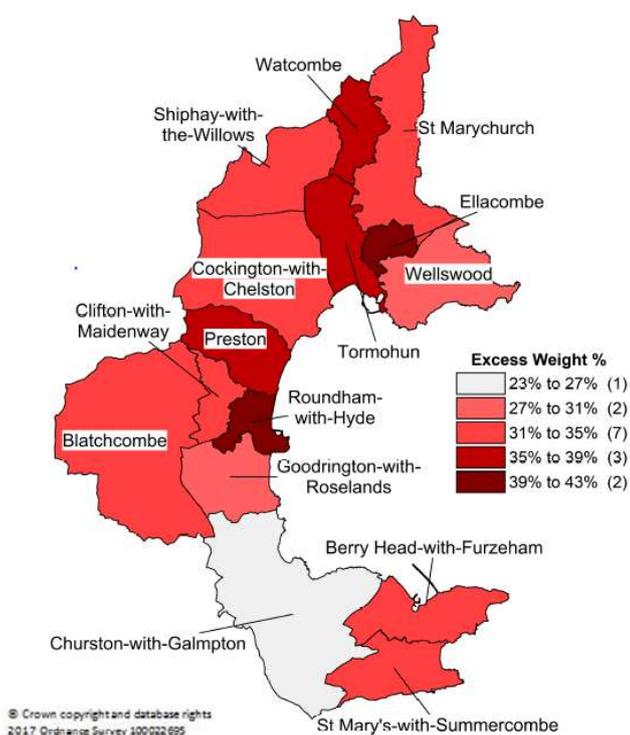
In a similar vein to the deprivation data, there is no link between sex and overweight pupils within the

Reception age cohort. However, within the Year 6 cohort, male pupils have a significantly higher likelihood of being overweight than their female contemporaries (Fig 3).

**Fig 4: Reception Pupils: Overweight (including obese) prevalence by ward - 2013/14 to 2016/17**

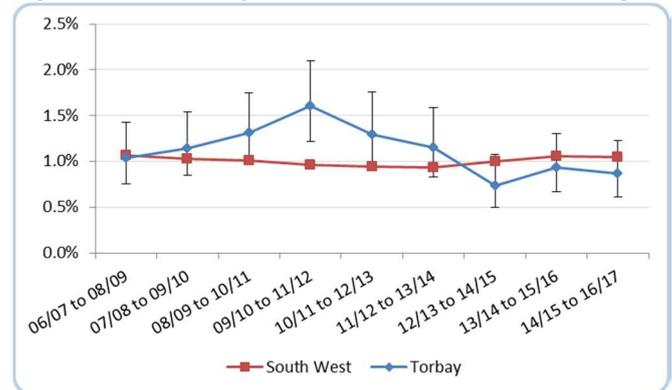


**Fig 5: Year 6: Overweight (including obese) prevalence by ward - 2013/14 to 2016/17**



Watcombe, Roundham with Hyde and Tormohun had high rates of overweight pupils across both age groups. Churston with Galampton, Goodrington with Roselands and Wellswood had low rates. Preston had the largest difference between age groups, its rate almost doubled between Reception and Year 6, this compares to a 37% increase in the average ward. However, it should be noted that the numbers at ward level are small and could be subject to significant variation.

**Fig 6: Year 6 Pupils: Prevalence of underweight**



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**Underweight** - When talking about healthy weights it can be easy to overlook those children who are underweight. Apart from a brief period, Torbay's prevalence of underweight Year 6 pupils is in line with the South West region (Fig 6). We were unable to complete the same comparison for Reception pupils as numbers were very small and in many instances were suppressed.

**References and further information:**

Torbay JSNA [www.southdevonandtorbay.info](http://www.southdevonandtorbay.info)  
 PHE NCMP Local Authority Profile <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/national-child-measurement-programme>  
 Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer: surveillance Volume 2012: On the State of the Public's Health. [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/298297/cmo-report2012.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/298297/cmo-report2012.pdf)  
 NCMP Child obesity and excess weight: small area level data <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-obesity-and-excess-weight-small-area-level-data>  
 Childhood Obesity: a plan for action <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action/childhood-obesity-a-plan-for-action>  
 UK90 Growth Charts <https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/growth-charts>