

Publication Summary



Primary 1 Body Mass Index (BMI) Statistics

School Year 2011/12

Publication date – 30 April 2013



About this Release

This publication provides annual statistics on high, low and healthy body mass index (BMI) for Primary 1 school children, and includes data to school year 2011/12.

Key Points

- In school year 2011/12 a total of 52,139 valid height and weight measurements were recorded for children in Primary 1 in Scotland. This is approximately 92% of children in Primary 1. This is the first year that data are available for all council areas in Scotland.

Based on epidemiological thresholds used for population monitoring purposes:

- In 2011/12, 76.9% of children in Primary 1 were classified as healthy weight, a marginal increase on the 2010/11 figure of 76.7%.
- The BMI distribution of children in Primary 1 has remained broadly similar over the period 2000/01 to 2011/12 with around 21% to 23% of children (one in five) at risk of overweight and obesity combined and around 1.5% at risk of underweight. In 2011/12, 21.9% of children in Primary 1 were at risk of overweight and obesity combined and 1.2% at risk of underweight.

Based on clinical thresholds for assessing children:

- In 2011/12, 84.6% of children in Primary 1 in Scotland were classified as healthy weight, a marginal decrease on the 2010/11 figure of 84.7%.
- The BMI distribution of children in Primary 1 has remained broadly similar over the period 2000/01 to 2011/12 with around 14% to 16% of children overweight, obese and severely obese combined and around 0.5% underweight. In 2011/12, 14.9% of children were classified as overweight, obese and severely obese combined and 0.4% underweight.

Background

There is continued concern over the levels of overweight and obesity among children in Scotland. Obesity during childhood is a health concern in itself, but can also lead to physical and mental health problems in later life, such as heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis, back pain, increased risk of certain cancers, low self-esteem and depression. Underweight in childhood can also be a cause for concern, indicating poor nutritional intake and/or underlying medical problems. Both over- and underweight develop as a result of an imbalance between energy consumption and energy expenditure.

In previous years, this publication only presented information based on the epidemiological thresholds for classifying children into over- and underweight categories (see section on measuring obesity in children in the Publication Report). This year the tables based on epidemiological thresholds have been enhanced to include figures on the proportion of children classified as healthy weight. In addition new tables presenting figures based on the clinical thresholds for classifying children into categories of over- and underweight are included in the publication for the first time. The inclusion of this information is to support planning and delivery of clinical services, such as child healthy weight programmes in NHS Boards. There has also been a minor change to the methodology for allocating children into over- and underweight categories in this publication (this relates to the rounding of figures used in calculations). This change has been applied to data for all years presented resulting in minor revisions to some of the previously published figures (mainly in the range -0.1 to +0.1 percentage points). The revision does not affect the overall interpretation or conclusions to be drawn from previously published data.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#)

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