Body Mass Index of Primary 1 Children in Scotland
School Year 2016/17
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About this release
This publication from Information Services Division (ISD) provides annual statistics on high, low and healthy body mass index (BMI) for Primary 1 school children, and includes data for school years 2007/08 to 2016/17. Statistics in this release are derived from height and weight measurements collected at health reviews in Primary 1.

Main points
- In school year 2016/17, 76.1% of children assessed in Primary 1 were classified as healthy weight, with 22.9% at risk of overweight or obesity and 1.0% at risk of underweight.

Source: CHSP-School, November 2017, ISD Scotland

- Over the last decade, the percentage of P1 children at risk of overweight or obesity has increased slightly and the percentage at risk of underweight has decreased slightly.
- Children from deprived areas are less likely to have a healthy weight. In 2016/17, 72.5% of children from the most deprived areas had a healthy weight compared to 80.9% of those from the least deprived areas.
- The percentage of girls and boys with a healthy weight is similar. In 2016/17, 76.7% of girls and 75.5% of boys had a healthy weight.
Background

In school year 2016/17 a total of 51,529 children had valid height and weight measurements recorded in Primary 1. This is approximately 83.5% of all children in Primary 1.

A child’s BMI is calculated by dividing their weight (in kilograms) by their height (in metres) squared. Children are then allocated to a healthy or unhealthy weight category by comparing their BMI to the range of BMIs seen among a reference group of children of the same age and sex.

This summary provides information on the proportion of children found to be at risk of having an unhealthy weight based on the thresholds used for monitoring the health of the child population (‘epidemiological thresholds’). The full report also provides information on the proportion of children found to have an unhealthy weight based on the stricter clinical thresholds used by health professionals caring for individual children.

There is continued concern over the levels of overweight and obesity among children in Scotland. Obesity during childhood is a health concern in itself, and it can also lead to physical and mental health problems throughout adulthood. Being underweight in childhood can also be a cause for concern, indicating poor nutritional intake and/or underlying medical problems.

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Further Information

Further information can be found in the [Primary 1 BMI Statistics Scotland Report](#), and the downloadable [data tables](#).

ISD Scotland publishes a wide range of information on Child Health including infant feeding, immunisations, and 27-30 month review. Further information can be found in the [Child Health](#) section on the ISD website.

The next release of this publication will be in December 2018.