

Synthesizing Perspectives: Crafting an Interdisciplinary View of Social Media's Impact on Young People's Mental Health (Maltby, et al. 2024)

Primary School Headteachers responses ($n=171$)

(Numbers do not respond to Demographic data ID).

1. negatively as it puts a lot of pressure on them
2. It affects their perception of reality in terms of what is normal or not. It affects the amount and quality of their sleep. It is a negative effect generally
3. More studies have shown that social media in general is not as a positive interaction as we first believed. With false information and clickbait stories being passed around, all people are being misled. We encourage our children to question what they see and read and to talk about things that they discover and do not understand. Children, like adults, are easily misled by those who groom them into believing what they are selling, and it is never for the better of the children. Social media should be banned for children younger than 15. They will have less stress about friends, their bodies, food, and trends.
4. Significantly! It reduces focus and conditions them for over stimulus. It is impacting on their ability to self-regulate or co-regulate, due to how much it is used by parents to 'quieten' their much younger children when they are dysregulated. It is impacting upon self-image and forcing an unhealthy comparison with too many different people and too many unrealistic presentations of the lives of others.
5. I think Social Media sites such as [named social media] have an enormous influence. Partly because of the unrealistic expectations of what a 'good life' looks like (always travelling, having expensive luxury goods etc.) and partly because of a perceived 'standard' of what people should look like - this is especially prevalent amongst young girls. I also think social sites where young people can chat to each other can have a big influence as it's much easier to say mean things behind a screen.
6. It puts a lot of pressure on children both to be available to respond immediately and to be on there in the first place to not miss out.
7. Depending on the individual child, their household, parent input and usage - it's hard to determine an exact answer. Though with current rates of self harm behaviours from young people, perhaps a big influence on their mental health.
8. Social media has a significant influence on children's mental health.
9. Social media can at times has a positive benefit to mental health but it more often has a negative effect.
10. The use of social media, without the appropriate support, monitoring, education can have a detrimental impact on children's mental health. We have seen examples of eating disorders perpetuated by overuse of [named social media] (as an example), as well as incidents of cyber bullying that children are subjected to 24/7.
11. It plays a significant part! Our children spend a good deal of their spare time using a variety of platforms and generally tend to trust / believe what they see / are told. We

do teach online safety at school, however it is increasingly hard to compete with the power of social media.

12. I think that social media can have a negative effect on the mental health of young people due to the amount of trolling that takes place on various platforms. Also, young people often find themselves comparing themselves to others because of posts on social media that make them question whether they have the right image or sense of taste in various things. Social media is a prevalent feature in the lives of young people in today's society, so they often cannot avoid seeing negative comments and posts on various channels.
13. I work with young children aged 5-7 and they are much more aware of things that aren't age appropriate, eg violence, swearing, sexualised images. This often comes out in their play and interactions with peers which causes difficulty in building healthy relationships and age appropriate play. Children have also expressed upset about things their parents have shared on social media that features them - e.g. pictures where they look a bit silly or are having a tantrum.
14. I think overall it has a detrimental effect on children, when content is not monitored and time limited by adults. I have been teaching since 1993 and in recent years seen an increase in bullying, negative thoughts, inappropriate behaviours and although I cannot say definitively it is due to social media it does have an impact. There are worrying perceptions about appearance and individuals worrying about things they should not be thinking about. Childhood seems to be reducing with many children 'addicted' to their phones. I think that for many children it is modelled at home, with parents and older sibling sharing content and using phones- games, social media as a "baby sitter" = keeps the children quiet. Children now have far more sexualised behaviours which I think can be linked to social media.
15. I think social media can have a determinantal influence on Young People's mental Health. An example we've been dealing with in school: use of [named social media] - children can't get away from their peers at any time. Issues that have happened in school or in the community then carry on at home and well into the night. Children in control of [named social media] groups will then do things like chuck their peers out of groups etc. This also happens within online gaming communities too. Children think that they must be on social media in order to be part of a social group which means more children are having phones at an early age. I also think platforms like [named social media] etc. are very unhelpful in terms of body image etc. But, for me, the biggest problem is never having any down time away from social media - I think that must be very difficult for young people.
16. We are seeing upper juniors using social media and it having a negative impact if there are disagreements. We give quite a lot of input repeating - never press send if you wouldn't be comfortable for your grandparents to read what you have written. We also see the impact of over use of technology to baby sit and that parents are on their phones so not engaging orally with their children. We send out a monthly online safety newsletter and encourage parents at any opportunity to delay giving smart phones (old style fine) - definitely setting boundaries, charging them overnight in living space not bedrooms. Like most things - in moderation is best.
17. A significant amount. We have children who have impacted sleep, because of their obsessional behaviours linked to social media use. We have children in school, who

have body image issues, including some who are controlling their food intake because of what they have seen on social media. We have children who have unrealistic expectations around possessions and wants vs needs.

18. Self-esteem and body image are adversely affected by the unrealistic expectations portrayed on social media. This phenomenon is observed equally in boys and girls. There's also a significant issue with FOMO (Fear of Missing Out), where young individuals are using social media late into the night because they worry about missing out on events or updates, despite our efforts to educate them on safe usage and our frequent communication with parents. Additionally, we've seen a substantial increase in bullying, especially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much of this bullying occurs on social media during the evening and late at night. Regrettably, we find ourselves addressing these issues during the day as parents often don't want to take responsibility for them during the nighttime hours.
19. It gives them a view that they have to look and act a certain way or they aren't accepted
20. Social media has a significant, negative impact on the mental health and self regulation of the children with whom I work.
21. I think it had a bad influence on their mental health. It causes them to view what is beautiful and pretty in a different way which can affect how they look at themselves
22. To a very large extent. Children are now seeing information about self-harm, suicide and other concerning information that they wouldn't have seen prior to social media. They are also more susceptible to grooming and cyberbullying due to the number of people accessing games with chat functions. As children aren't able to know for certain who they are talking to, they are at risk, despite considerable strategies in place in schools to support them with safeguarding.
23. Significantly. I work with children and currently we see children affected by their ability to access social media, be present on social media and being recognised. The ambitions of a significant number of children these days is to be a YouTuber when they are older instead of aspiring to a more well known career such as doctor, fireman, policeman etc.
24. It can be extremely time-consuming, all-encompassing, and addictive, as it is available 24/7. This constant access can overwhelm them with a constant stream of both positive and negative information.
25. Negatively! I think people look at others lives and feel jealous and question their own lives and feel bad about it.
26. A great deal. Social media sets up unrealistic expectations of happiness, social inclusion, and body shape/size.
27. It can have a very negative influence - people post exciting things and soe may feel theyhave to kp up or they may get access to the wrong sites which cause mental health issues. Easier to bully online as well.
28. i think it has a negative effect as too many people online are striving for perfection
29. I think it has a negative impact. Cyber bullying is an issue for primary aged children. And overuse of social media can replace healthier habits such as face to face interaction.
30. I work in a primary school and I would say from about p3 on, (age 7/8) our children have a social media presence and awareness. They'll freely discuss [named social

media] they've watched, as half of them at least have phones of their own, and they'll set up little [named social media] groups to chat back and forth with each other. It can be very clear how often they're using social media and how quickly they get into it and it becomes important in their lives. They become a bit manic about keeping up with their groups and those who don't have access to social media feel adrift and a little bit desperate that they're being left out.

31. The impact on mental health on these ages groups are very negative and detrimental.
32. Social media has a significantly detrimental effect on children's mental health. We see constant pressures from social media in terms of how children feel they need to look and act. In addition, bullying and peer pressure via social media is a constant battle and we are always having to deal with issues between children in school based on something that has happened on social media. The pressure on girls to look a certain way is profound and we see a significant drop in self esteem and confidence once the children reach certain ages; usually around 9 years old. Although it is normal for children to compare themselves to others and want to fit in, this is magnified by the use of social media with influencers presenting abnormal standards for children to feel they need to live up to.
33. Social Media has a lot of influence on children , young people and young adults alike. In children and young people especially, it can and has had an impact on their mental health in an extremely negative way and I have seen this first hand. Working in a Primary School, where children as young as seven have been able to access social media has been quite frightening. We have had incidents of self harming, school refusers, children talking online to unknown strangers and depression in children due to what they have seen and experienced online. I believe it is more prevalent than we think and the harm it can do can potentially stay with children for a long time.
34. I feel that it massively influences young peoples' mental health. Some children tend to portray themselves more confident, that would they would be face to face, during certain conversations. This can have a detrimental affect on others, who are essentially being bullied. On the other hand, it also provides children with knowledge of things they are interested in and would not learn about in school; information can be accessed so easily.
35. SM asserts peer pressure on young people and young adults, by implying that there is a standard of perfection which they should be aspiring to, in terms of body image and lifestyle.
36. It's has a positive and negative impact. The negatives is rust they see exposed to others things and don't learn how to deal with things
37. Hugely as children are being exposed to ideas that are not real life. People only post and show the good things and children are trying to live up to an unrealistic impression. Children want to be exactly like they see on social media and it is not always a healthy thing.
38. I think in adolescents body image is drastically effected negatively. In younger children they can form bonds over shared culture they get from social media, for example latest viral trends. However online bullying and sharing of upsetting material can have a detrimental impact on mental health.
39. Massively. I think it can be a positive in some ways but more often than not it influences it in a negative way

40. To a large extent. Children and young people are no longer able to step away from peer pressure. Previously bullying and peer pressure were situations which mainly occurred at school or when with friendship groups in social situations. Now, with high access to phones and social media, the pressure is more present than ever. Make up videos, fitness videos, videos from influencers who suggest certain types of behaviour are constant and children and young people's mental health is in crisis because home is no longer the safe space it was and dangerous people such as [named social media figure] and his ideas about women have a far greater reach than ever before.
41. I think it can greatly affect everyone's mental health particular with peer pressure and negative comments left or ridiculing others on chat groups. Encouraging dates and behaviour not normally associated with a particular person so they feel included.
42. Massively!
43. I think it can both be both beneficial and detrimental to their mental health. It can keep them in contact with friends so they don't become isolated but also become overwhelmed with everything they see, whether that is good or bad.
44. Massively! Social media affects every single aspect of our young people's lives - from using it as a research tool for homework to keeping up with trends, to being bullied. At the same time, it can also have a positive effect on mental health, when c/yp feel boosted by seeing people like them online.
45. Peer pressure is a huge and sometimes negative part of school life. Social media allows this to continue outside of school
46. I think, like most things, if used in moderation and with adequate supervision there are benefits to social media. However there are a lot of dangers for young people and we need to protect them and prevent them seeing harmful content.
47. It impacts them a lot - it reduces the amount of time they are out in the fresh air and doing physical activity. Reduces social interactions
48. It often leads them to make comparisons with others and exposes them to issues that are beyond their age and understanding.
49. I believe that social media has a wide, and growing, impact upon the mental health of our children. A great deal of this is positive. We live in a rural community, and our children are widely dispersed. This inhibits their ability to meet face to face, and so they use social media for social contact, even at a young age. We have seen that this brings numerous benefits. They are able to remain grounded by communicating with their peers. They collaborate over issues concerning them (including homework etc). They tell us that they value the ability to be in touch with someone else their age. However, there are also risks. We have seen safeguarding risks emanate into threats and real concerns that increase anxiety and impact negatively upon mental health. This is incredibly worrying for children and their families. We also note that some 'trends' in behaviour are influenced by social media. This also impacts negatively upon mental health as it changes attitudes and perceptions. Pupils feel that they must do something influenced by social media even if they know that this isn't right. This results in an internal moral conflict, increasing anxiety and impacting upon mental health.
50. It significantly impacts their mental health, subjecting them to immense pressure to conform to specific appearances or behaviors.

51. Social media affects the health of young people greatly in my profession. I work in education and I am aware of children using apps and social media websites which they are not old enough for. Children are also having too much screen time which affects their mood and ability to switch off and get the amount of sleep they need.
52. Whilst in some ways it is positive and helps them to connect and access friends and family and the wider world - it also has an incredibly negative impact. This includes: online bullying unrealistic expectations of what they should be doing, wearing, saying etc too much time on social media and being almost obsessed with it. Young people are so vulnerable and so many of them access social media which is meant for older individuals. No respite from the online world
53. A net overall negative effect. Young people are used to being connected to each other at all times, with no 'down time' for their own thoughts. They often feel compared and judged continually as they have no way of disconnecting from others' opinions. I am yet to uncover what positives there are which outweigh this constant connectedness. I strongly believe the epidemic of 'ADHD' is linked to an increasing amount of rapid-fire video content on social media platforms where images jump from one thing to another every second and children are used to taking in superficial visual and auditory content at this pace. Streaming TV simply compounds this same issue. Rapid fire content where one episode seamlessly blends into the next, stripped of the need to wait or endure the credits! In simple terms, could a modern day child watch '[name of film]'? I deliberately use no social media to promote or publicise my school, nor to make contact with parents. We rely on face to face contact or a phone call/email. Information is given through the website.
54. It can exert a substantial influence. Children are often attached to their phones and various social media platforms where unrealistic role models, such as fashion models, abound. The variety of communication methods available may lead to misinterpretations or hurtful messages being taken to heart.
55. From a very young age children are beginning to high expectations in regard to things they should be doing, wearing and look like. They cannot seem to distinguish between what's on social media and reality. They are also using social media to help regulate their emotions which causes the brain to be constantly stimulated and therefore they are not giving their brains a break, like playing outside. When children are asked to take a break from their devices more often than not they display distressing behaviour.
56. I work with primary age children. We are seeing year on year changes in children and their behaviours, including soaring numbers of children with anxiety as well as issues around boundaries, ability to communicate and entitlement. I believe that there is a major social change underway in terms of parenting style and that children are not only affected by their own use of social media (eg our 10-11 year olds who all have phones but are simply not mature enough to use [named social media] without being unkind to each other), but by the social media use of their parents. I think we should look at parental use of social media and how it impacts on children, as well as children's own use of social media. Every school has a toxic parent [named social media] group or two, and this negatively affects the children. When children are aware that parents don't value or respect a teacher, the child can disengage with learning - and that in turn affects confidence, self-esteem. I also wonder that parents spend so much time on their phones that they don't spend as much time with their

children. Many children with behavioural or MH issues these past two years have said 'Oh my mum is always on her phone'.

57. In my view, the relationship between social media use and mental health in children, young people, and young adults is intricate and has both positive and negative aspects. Positive Aspects: Connection and Support: Social media platforms can offer a sense of community and connection, allowing individuals to connect with peers, friends, and support groups. This can be particularly beneficial for those who may feel isolated in their offline lives. Information and Education: Social media serves as a vast source of information and educational content. It can facilitate learning, exposure to diverse perspectives, and opportunities for personal development. Expression and Creativity: Platforms like [named social media] enable young people to express themselves creatively, share their talents, and find like-minded communities, fostering a sense of identity and belonging. Negative Aspects: Cyberbullying: One of the most concerning aspects is the potential for cyberbullying, which can significantly impact mental health. The anonymity and distance provided by social media may embolden individuals to engage in harmful behavior. Social Comparison: The constant exposure to curated and often idealized versions of others' lives on social media can contribute to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem through social comparison. Fear of Missing Out (FOMO): Social media may amplify the fear of missing out on social events, experiences, or trends, leading to anxiety and a sense of inadequacy. Validation Seeking: The quest for likes, comments, and social validation on social media can create a dependency on external approval, impacting self-esteem and contributing to mental health challenges. Conclusion: In conclusion, the impact of social media on mental health is not universally negative, and it's crucial to recognise the diversity of experiences. Social media can offer support, connection, and educational opportunities. However, potential risks, such as cyberbullying and the impact of social comparison, should be addressed through informed and proactive strategies. Balancing the positive and negative aspects requires a combination of digital literacy, responsible platform use, and open communication between parents, educators, and young individuals.
58. I think it is mixed. I believe a study this week said that it was not universally negative. It can be hard to have a break from as it enters all areas of their lives.
59. I think it massively impacts their mental health negatively
60. It can help if they have good friends online and are able to find funny memes, but can be a problem if they are bullied. It can make people sad to see others posting about a lifestyle they can only hope for.
61. I have seen an increasing number of younger pupils (mine is a primary school) in possession of their own phones. It is not uncommon now for Yr2 pupils and above to have a phone. From Yr4/5 upwards we have regular episodes of unkind and unnecessary interactions via the platform of choice, currently Snapchat for us. This unduly influences the next day's interactions and weighs heavily on some pupils. They feel there is no escape from it. From a staff perspective, I recently had a long serving member of staff who had been a teacher for 26 years leave the profession. I believe a large part in that decision was due to exposure to very negative groups such as "exit teaching thrive" [social media site]. She was clearly struggling with her own

- issues but instead of finding a positive solution, she was consumed by the negativity of these groups, went off with a stress related illness and never returned.
62. It negatively impacts by focussing on images of perfection rather than realism.
 63. I believe that social media greatly influences people's mental health for a range of reasons - - people look to social media for 'validation' and if they don't get the 'likes' they are seeking it can harm self-esteem. - friendship issues can surface or be exacerbated - messages can be 'read' in the wrong way - bullying can take place 24 / 7 - children can see harmful content on social media - information about self-harm etc. - people can get a skewed sense of 'normal' on social media as many posting about their 'best life' rather than reality. - algorithms lead to people getting a very one sided view and people seeking help for negative thoughts may end up further down the rabbit hole!
 64. We are finding a big increase in behavioural issues caused by social media outside of school. This is impacting on children who feel that through social media they are picked on and 'bullied' by their peers. Children tend to say things in social media that they would not face to face. We have had children refuse to come into school and are worried about things that have been said through social media. We have had two children who have gone to home schooling due to mental health issues. I really feel that primary children are not mature enough to engage in social media but we have children as low as 5 years old participating. I am very concerned for the future...
 65. Significantly. Young people are impressionable and often have a strong desire to be involved and part of something popular. They rarely wish to be an outsider , unpopular or a target for bullies. This pressure is unhealthy and often expectations are unrealistic.
 66. Social media does impact upon children's mental health as they are constantly exposed to the 'ideals' and an untrue representation of life where they only see the positive parts of influencers lives. They also are exposed to dangerous habits which could impact upon their health such as vaping. They also develop an opinion of an 'ideal' body and then judge themselves against this when the reality is these pictures and clips have been edited.
 67. I feel children now spent alot of time on the internet and on Social Media and even having an age limit on social media does not appear to stop children creating accounts on social media e.g. [named social media]. It has a negative effect on their self esteem and seeing the 'perfect life and perfect image' online when in reality this is not the case negatively effecting their mental health.
 68. It can have both positive and negative aspects, as it has the potential to present people with an unrealistic world that they might use as a basis for comparison with their own lives.
 69. It's nit good. There is lots of peer pressure and unrealistic expectations
 70. I think social media puts pressure on children to look a certain way, have certain things and act in a certain way. It sets unrealistic expectations and can make people worry about their own lives.
 71. Children believe what they read and dont question the validity which can be detrimental to their health
 72. Overall, its impact tends to be negative, primarily because it often contains falsehoods that young individuals tend to believe.

73. I think it depends on the family background. Families who have strong communication with each other and provide a strong support system usually have a better experience and awareness, although there are some who have difficulties.
74. Children and young adults are influenced by what they see. They may want a particular product which makes things difficult for those that cannot afford it. They also believe that what they see is real and need to conform to the images they see online for example in appearance. They delve into feeds that they may not necessarily have looked at but have appeared somewhere along the line whilst looking for example self harm. All these things have a negative impact on mental health.
75. It gives them a false sense of reality that they feel they have to live up to. I feel it allows them to be mean online as it seems less visible to them. I also feel it dulls the want to give time to an enjoyable task as they get instant gratification from scrolling leading to mindless scrolling which has a negative impact.
76. Hugely - many have unrestricted and unlimited access. The algorithm is powerful and knows exactly how to manipulate them.
77. Without a strong support from a supporting adult, younger people can suffer harm from overuse of social media. They become caught up in the 'pretend' world that social media portrays and due to their lack of life experiences and immaturity can become significantly impacted leading to poor self esteem and poor social awareness.
78. It can influence their mental health to a relevant extent, as youth looks to their peers when it concerns things they may struggle with or feel confused about, or things like a sense of belonging. Social media can provide presumed answers for all of the above, and thus holds a relevant degree of risk if uncontrolled
79. Overall I think social media usage is damaging to young people and young adults mental health. It is overused, has insufficient controls (parental mainly!) It is difficult enough for children to navigate the social etiquette of friendship without the issues [named social media] bring. Reliance on social media develops a need for acceptance by peers and creates questions about am I likeable, do I fit in, am I big small fashionable unfashionable. It stops children enjoying childhood.
80. Social media is incredibly damaging to mental health in young people and adults. Through social media, they compare themselves to the unrealistic and often untrue lives of other people on social media which causes them to feel bad about their own lives. Additionally, being online for extended periods of time draws people away from the real world where they lack personal human connections, further damaging their emntal health.
81. Massive negative effect as they are exposed to content they shouldn't be seeing eg violence, self harm, bad language
82. It affects their mental health hugely. Body image comparing to the perfect image online, Friendships and being judged by their peers online around what they say, do, how they appear. Everything revolves around social media and children compare themselves with what they see online. This affects their self esteem, confidence and can they cause them, to become withdrawn and isolated.
83. Social media can most definitely have a detrimental effect on mental health. Children and young people rely heavily on social media for information, contact with friends, networking etc. A perfect world is often portrayed through social media and children and young people can be drawn into thinking their life should be like that, they should

look perfect etc etc. Sometimes reality is lost, and they are left feeling as though they don't conform, don't fit in, are inferior to others etc. Self-esteem can be damaged. Long hours spent staring at phones or tablets whilst interacting with social media also affects mental health and well-being as they spend less time socialising in person, more time indoors, less time communicating with others properly etc

84. Hugely and in a very negative way. Especially when it comes to the way they look and what they own compared to others.
85. I believe that social media is one of the biggest contributing factors in young people's mental health issues. Although we do not see much social media use within our school age group (infants), we are aware of, and have seen the impact of, comments on social media platforms amongst our local community that have caused emotional damage to families and individual reputations.
86. The online activity of children plays a huge part in children's mental health, their moods, concentration and impulse control.
87. The influence is vast on many levels. They have nowhere to be free of the pressures because children have access to this continually at home. Their perception and understanding of friendship and how to interact with people appropriately is skewed. The majority of parents do not take responsibility for their child's on-line activity and no filters or checks are in place. Children access many platforms all above the age restriction.
88. Like anything there is both good and bad. It can help forming relationships, connections with others with shared interests, and be a source of entertainment. Negatively there are a lot of people who use it to bully/target others, make judgments, or present unrealistic expectations, create shame and comparisons.
89. To a quite big extent. Obviously, on social media the young people and children are exposed to content that isn't always suitable to them, and can easily become victims of cyberbullying or cyber harassment. The FOMO develops especially quickly in a young brain. I perceive a decrease in ability to concentrate, to parse information, and self-motivation.
90. I believe that the mental health of children, young people and young adults can be both positively and negatively impacted by social media use. For me, it comes down to a filtering and awareness of the use of social media which can only be achieved through education and experience.
91. I think it can have a significant affect on their mental health. Before if you had a problem there was respite at home away from your peers but now children don't have that opportunity. Young children get caught up in the online culture and children who are respectful and kind in person write abusive and unkind messages online. The vulnerability of the attention you can get online which is positive draws children in and then the potential for using this as a lever for children. Sometimes it feels in schools we are dealing with fallout from social media outside of school. Parents who themselves are prey to social media do not seem to recognise the harm it does to their children unless properly supervised. I think the internet and social communication has been a game changer and has opened up so many opportunities to our children but we must also be very mindful of the destructive nature it can have. Responses on social media often show a lack of regulation by children quick to respond in

aggressive tones causing extreme hurt. This lack of regulation impacts themselves and others.

92. Social media use in young children can lead to low self esteem and feelings of not being good enough. It can also lead to a sense of failure due to being presented with unrealistic lifestyles and achievements. Watching content which is violent and filled with aggressive language can affect how a young child views the world. They might copy this behaviour particularly if it is presented by a popular influencer.
93. Depending on the content they are engaging with, social media can have both positive and negative effects. It can serve as a valuable resource for learning, allowing access to information on a wide range of topics, from caring for llamas to playing musical instruments and even the intricacies of trigonometry, which is fantastic. However, there is a downside. In cases of cyberbullying, a child may never get a break from harassment, as bullies can target them even late at night. There are also questionable websites that encourage children to engage in inappropriate or even illegal activities, potentially causing significant harm to a child's mental health. Unfortunately, these negative aspects of social media don't disappear, and the constant exposure can be detrimental.
94. I feel it influences their mental health to a great extent.
95. Negative effect. Lots of comparing and seeing the life heavily filtered. False sense of reality
96. In my opinion I believe social media plays a huge role in the influence of what the child thinks and feels about themselves. Body image and the social media sites which influence the negative thoughts and feelings.
97. To a large extent. There can be bullying and it stops young people doing healthier things such as sports and socialising
98. It's alarming how social media affects people. They often feel pressured to look or behave a certain way to fit in.
99. It shows them the wrong things to aspire to.
100. to a great extent. Young people seem to seek valuation from social media and very often not able to distinguish between reality and social media.
101. It affects their mental health a lot. It has an impact on their self image. It impacts their perception of themselves and allows them to compare themselves to others in an unhealthy way.
102. Negatively, everyone puts their best self or a false narrative online making it seems as if everything is perfect and children compare themselves to it
103. A great deal! there is so much pressure to look and behave a certain way. young people often believe untrue social media posts
104. A great deal! children have warped sense of what is normal, body shape, beauty and behaviour
105. There is a lot of negativity surrounding their social media interactions. It can lead to bullying, peer pressure, depression and anxiety.
106. I think it influences their mental health in a negative way if it's not monitored and limited by parents and carers.
107. It is a huge factor. Within school I think it has made parents aggressive, it allows them to hide behind a keyboard rather than speak to people - it creates cowardic. Parents can stir up the community over small things which has a huge metal

health implication on those at the receiving end. Parents are now not able to hold conversations. With children it enables a whole different range of bullying opportunities - children can't get away from life at all there is no rest for them or their brains.

108. Extremely - we are constantly being exposed to social media which has had a huge impact on children's mental health
109. Social media is out of control and influences the mental health of users, particularly young people i.e teenagers. There are far more incidents of bullying than there used to be that are being reported as online bullying. I don't know a single teenager that is not effected by it in some way.
110. Greatly, and with poor consequences
111. It gives young people and children expectations on how they should look or what they should be doing / posting on social media
112. Hugely, from messaging apps such as [named social media] where bullying happens to games such as call of duty where they are watching inappropriate content. But also in game messaging as settings as not right in games such as Roblox
113. A lot, not necessarily with the age group of children that I work with but as children get older & turn into adults I feel the influencing on social media can often paint an ideal world & an ideal picture that isn't realistic
114. To a great extent, a lot of content they see on social media is not a good representation of the real world and they think that they have to live up to the standards shown on social media, which is not possible. And this makes them feel bad or sad sometimes.
115. I believe it has a substantial impact. Professionally, I have witnessed instances where young people have become entangled in social media-related problems that have significantly distressed and created significant issues for them.
116. We have noticed a significant increase in children using social media and their mental health. In ways such as using it to bully each other - resulting in mental health issues for the victim, some children seeing inappropriate things which has an impact on them as well as body image issues among both boys and girls. I would say social media has a very heavy impact on children's mental health.
117. Slightly as they compare themselves to what they see in social media and they find activities that do not use technology less engaging. These factors could impact their learning and their mental health.
118. Terribly! I think people, children etc. look at how other people live and feel envious and feel that their lives should be a certain way.
119. Children are very keen to be connected with others. those that are not part of the online chat groups do get left out of conversations and each year, there are issues of cyberbullying, with parents often unaware. I am aware of children sending and receiving messages late into the night, when they should be sleeping, keen not to miss out and those who are less regulated by their parents seem to influence others. the content that children access is often a concern and brings language and attitudes into school that cause concern. Children enjoy the friendships extending outside of school but this tends to be game-based with children playing the same online games together. This has positives and negatives due to the competitive nature of the games. There is still concern that despite messages to the contrary, children link with strangers.

120. It's a pressure. There's the need to conform, stay relevant, maintain relationships and keep in the loop.
121. In certain aspects I feel like it can play a rather large part to play. Social media has a negative influence on the body image that girls have of themselves, this is vastly due to models sizing and celebrities etc using photoshopping to make the "perfect skin, waistline or lips. Several children have been on the receiving end of negative things said to them either by a stranger or someone they know, either via a social media platform or an online community linked to gaming. Children are now led to believe that everything you see in the media "must be true" this is portraying a bad image due to fake news and how fast something can be shared or created online. Sometimes children can be targeted by more than one person at a time, this is now something which has been vastly created due to social media and messaging platforms where groups and pages can easily be made with the intention of singling out someone and creating said hate against one individual.
122. Immensely so.
123. It affects their mental health every day
124. My professional opinion is related to children, having worked in primary schools I can see a negative influence over children in the older year groups. They are often allowed access to social media they are not old enough for and it means they don't get a break, if there's been a falling out at school this is continued later in [named social media]. They often aren't mature enough to read the emotion behind messages so something that would be a little tease in person they find upsetting over social media. It makes them more susceptible to peer pressure. They often bring issues into school the next day which shows they've been worrying all night and still concerned the next day which can't be beneficial to their mental health.
125. Social Media has a huge impact on young people's minds. Sometimes children can be exposed to content that is not appropriate that may change the way they think or feel about a particular subject which has a negative impact on their own mental health. Sometimes children can see or hear things that are shared socially which can also have a negative impact on social situations affecting their mental health.
126. Social media use can affect the mental health of children, young people and young adults. There is pressure to appear perfect on social media, there is content that is addictive, people are accessible constantly and all of this can have a negative impact on the mental health of the user. In fact, I'd say social media use is one of the major contributors to poor mental health.
127. It has a great deal of influence on people's mental health because it's not the same as the old days where people told you things to your face, people's thoughts and comments have become more personal and horrible these days hiding behind a keyboard
128. It creates an enormous amount of pressure, to both keep up with and be ahead of peers. They are under constant pressure to post and to create content, they can become the victims of shared images or videos that are not flattering or are bullying. It creates low self esteem and low self worth for many individuals.
129. I think it has a massive impact on their mental health. It can impact the way they feel about themselves and others. Social media can influence people to think a certain way

130. I think it does affect their mental health. It adds pressure to be "perfect" and the comparisons they make between themselves and others. It also exposes them to more adult themes quicker.
131. It damages their mental health and affects their sense of self worth dramatically. It makes them feel inadequate and makes them unhappy with what they have.
132. If overused it can have a negative effect on mental health, through mindless scrolling, and comparisons to other peoples "perfect lives". If used well though, it can be a great tool for building relationships, building a business and having good connections with people.
133. Social media can have both negative and positive influences on mental health. If used well, it can enhance communication, relationships and businesses can be formed. However, if someone is using it to make themselves feel better and mindlessly scrolling this can be detrimental to a person's mental health.
134. I think it has a very negative affect on them, putting pressure on them from such a young age to look an act a certain way to be acceptable. Also it exposes them to online bullying, which can be devastating
135. Young children see images that are far from the normal, they get a very skewed idea of what is normal is meant to be, and they constantly try to emulate the look and body language of things that are on social media that are too old for them. Children misinterpret information thats online, which can seriously damage their growing brains. Young children have not got the emotional intelligence to cope.
136. Social media can negatively influence young people's mental health. Having to be constantly available and exposed to the pressures of conformity. It is hard not to make comparisons with other people's lives and circumstances and the pressure of living up to high standards portrayed.
137. Considerably, both positively and negatively. Positively, as it can allow young people to stay in touch with one another more easily and give them access to a wider circle of friends beyond school. Negatively because of the many risks that social media can pose - bullying, grooming potential etc. At primary age we would be promoting sensible and careful use of social media. Most platforms have minimum age limits but we are under no illusion that children under these ages still access them in their fullness. We therefore try to mitigate the experiences they may be having by the teaching undertaken around online safety.
138. I believe that often it can have a detrimental effect on childrens mental health
139. Social media has a detrimental effect on the mental health of young people. It is often used in a negative way and even supposedly positive posts can cause anxiety in children and young adults.
140. Over the years I have see a change in children's general mood, behaviour increases for parents and parents going into crisis at home with behaviour management due to technology, I have also seen increased self harming at primary age, body image and self image issues with comparing themselves to online/social media influences. Boys particularly are struggling with heightened unregulated emotional behaviours, over stimulated by games but also mis led by inaccurate facts through social media influencers and you tube AI inaccurate facts.
141. It has a detrimental impact on their mental well-being.

142. To a great extent. I am a headteacher and we deal with online bullying, social media pressures.
143. I can observe that they are exposed to inappropriate content from a very young age. Many of them are aware of platforms like [named social media] and other apps designed for adults. I have also noticed instances where children exhibit behaviors that are not suitable for their age, which appear to be influenced by their exposure to social media.
144. I believe that social media severely influences children's mental health. It affects the way they see themselves and how it makes them perceive what a healthy image of a young person is.
145. Social media can influence their mental health if they can find some balance in using it and it will depend on their maturity or self-esteem.
146. A great deal. They spend too much time on social media and not enough talking. There is also a lot of online bullying.
147. It has a great impact on them - even in primary school where I work. The children appear to be in constant touch with each other which means that they get no down time from each other or school. I feel that it is making their world shrink a little!
148. It's alarming how social media affects people. They often feel pressured to look or behave a certain way to fit in.
149. Hugely. The effect is consistently underestimated. How can something that children spend literally hours (equating to over a day - 24 hours - a week) have no negative effect?
150. Social media has a large influence on children. They see all sorts of things which can influence them. It can be very addictive for them. The impact on their mental health can already be seen in their behaviours, even simple seemingly innocent things like knowing dances/trends on [named social media]. I feel that there will be more effects to be seen in the future as these children grow up.
151. Many fake connections not real life, perfect lifestyles and bodies/faces being presented, pressure to look like those people and have those lives. Being influenced by Influencers who only have their own interests at heart. Online bullying. Addiction to short videos and set up 'stories' and not being able to concentrate on anything long term. Feeling the need to be liked via posts and the feeling of not being good enough. Making perfect selfies and editing them to look perfect.
152. I have seen it cause a number of eating disorders across the ages, as well as hiding away and causing depression.
153. I think it has a 95% negative influence on children and youth mental health. The vast majority of social media makes children feel inferior/angry/misinformed/exhausted. The amount of real life conflict between children that is caused by things that have happened on social media is significant, and it can lead to some really nasty bullying that would not otherwise occur in such a virulent and aggressive way (without the "keyboard warrior" mentality). Also, predators use social media a lot to communicate with victims so that is another issue affecting mental (and sometimes physical) health in young people.

154. Social media provides a positive lifeline to some young people to enable them to stay in contact with their peers. It can also put excessive pressure on them to chase an ideal or image of perfection which can be damaging for mental health.
155. There is too much pressure on others to be like those on social media
156. It just doesn't matter how many lessons are given on how to be safe online, children want (and are given) devices at a younger and younger age and what they have access to in terms of social media is making many more young people have unrealistic goals in terms of how they look and what they own. This can lead to low self esteem which can lead to all sorts of problems.
157. In my opinion it can affect mental health negatively to a pretty large degree. First of all, there is the comparison of themselves to others online, especially when it comes to physical appearance. Unattainable or unrealistic standards of beauty is a problem that is exaggerated further by social media. But also if on social media from a young age, children can be exposed to things that are not age appropriate. And finally social media can cause children to not develop any other hobbies outside of their phone, and can cause them to spend less time with family, in turn affecting their mental health negatively.
158. For most young people it doesn't have an extreme impact. It influences their behaviour and their character more. There are also some positives to using social media but these are for very few. Regarding mental health they tend to develop some negative attitudes, illogical reasoning and some really difficult opinions. These cause them issues and it causes more conflict (internal and external) which over time degrades mental health and positivity. They are much more exposed and the conversations they hold over social media are at first much more mature (immature but adult themed) than they would have in real life. Many kids are left unchecked and this continues into adulthood. They carry some terrible things with them and over time I believe it's wholly negative.
159. They become addicted to using it and they are exposed to many unsuitable views, opinions and videos which impacts their view on growing up and their self-esteem. They are drawn in and fear missing out on subscribed accounts and it is continually available so they feel unable to switch off.
160. Social media portrays an element of people's lives. It affects children and young people because it can reduce their self-esteem. Forgetting that the pictures and videos have been carefully constructed and 'real' can be damaging. People can feel like they are less than they are. People compare themselves to what they see online. Children can see things they shouldn't see. The way that the algorithm wants users to keep using means that sometimes content that shouldn't be for children is seen by children. This is damaging. Children might not be mature enough to understand the content presented to them.
161. It affects them hugely. There is pressure on even primary school age children to look a certain way. Children are constantly experiencing conflict online via social media and there is no chance to 'escape'.
162. Society pressures to look a certain way, have certain things
163. I think social media use has a massively adverse impact on children's mental health. It exposes them to content that they should not see at that age, increases social

pressure on the way to behave and look. It adds an extra way they can be mean to each other and doesn't teach them about the real world.

164. They feel like their are standards to live up to - busy social lives, perfect rooms and decor, expensive phones and clothes etc. That life is happy and wonderful. There's a lot of pressure to 'fit in'.
165. I think it can have quite a significant influence and often to young people's detriment. These days social media I think can be seen as something of a virtual extension of the playground where image is hugely important and it can so easily be used as a way of bullying unfortunately.
166. It can have a negative effect, depicting unrealistic images as desirable for young people and children to aspire to. People leaving negative comments about posts can also be detrimental to mental health. Some young people put a lot of stock into how many friends/followers abd likes and comments they get. So low numbers or negative comments can damage self-esteem and views about their own self worth.
167. I think it has a detrimental effect on children, young people and young adults. It can cause self-doubt, low self esteem. It can be a platform for bullying, shaming etc. I also think young people are becoming addicted to social media and are not interacting face to face as much.
168. I believe it had a significant influence.
169. It gives them ideals to look up which are impossible to maintain all the time. It does not acknowledge the ups and downs of everyday life at times. Yet at other times it can provide too much personal information that may misrepresent or misinform creating further mental health problems.
170. I think it damages their mental health in many ways. Young people are exposed to many harmful things that they would otherwise not be seeing, and they believe images they see are the expected norm. This puts pressure on them to live up to what they think they should look like, do, behave like etc. when they can't live up to that expectation they believe they have a deficit and without support they can't overcome this. It is unrealistic and creates pressure on young people, which leads to low self esteem and confidence.
171. It can be both a positive and a negative. There is a lot of creativity on social media and it is generally easy to access as it is often multimedia. There are lots of new possibilities offered. But it can be addictive and hard to switch off. It can be used for bullying, including by people you don't know. Comparison is too easy and can harm self-esteem.