

National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP)

2024/25 Data Profile

April 2026



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NCMP Data 2024/25

Source: [National Child Measurement Programme, England, 2024/25 School Year](#)

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Type of report

This profile is part of the Suffolk Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). A profile is a one-off analysis of specific data on a given subject, usually in response to a specific request for information.

It should be used as an overview of the subject, rather than a comprehensive examination of the health needs of a population. Profiles do not include recommendations or user feedback.

Key Things You Need to Know

1. In Suffolk, around 3 in 4 (75.7%) of 4/5-year-olds have a BMI in the healthy weight category; this decreases to around 2 in 3 (65.0%) of 10/11-year-olds. This matches the national trend, where 75.4% of reception-aged children and 62.2% of year 6 children are in the healthy weight category.
2. In Suffolk, around 1 in 10 (10.1%) reception-aged children are living with obesity (including severe obesity), increasing to just over 1 in 5 (20.2%) by year 6. Severe obesity also almost doubles between reception and year 6 for Suffolk children, increasing from 2.6% to 4.7%.
3. Around 1 in 4 Suffolk reception-year children are overweight or living with obesity (23.5%). This is statistically similar to England (23.5%). 1 in 3 Suffolk year 6 children are overweight or living with obesity (33.6%). This is statistically significantly lower than England (36.2%).
4. In Suffolk, at reception, the percentage of children overweight or living with obesity increased significantly in 2024/25 compared with the previous year, from 21.5% to 23.5%. In contrast, at reception there was no significant change in 2024/25 compared with the previous year in the percentage of children living with obesity. At year 6, there was also no significant change in 2024/25 compared with the previous year in the percentage of children living with obesity, or overweight or living with obesity.
5. In England, at reception, the percentage of children living with obesity and severe obesity increased significantly compared with the previous year. The percentage of children overweight or living with obesity also increased in 2024/25. In contrast, at year 6, there was no significant change in 2024/25 compared with the previous year in the percentage of children living with obesity, living with severe obesity, or overweight or living with obesity.

Executive summary

The National Childhood Measurement Programme (NCMP) report presents findings on child weight in state schools in England for Reception (aged 4-5 years) and Year 6 (aged 10-11 years). Measures include the percentage of children who are underweight, in the healthy weight category, overweight, living with obesity, and living with severe obesity, with published breakdowns by geography and selected demographic characteristics.

In Suffolk, the overall pattern mirrors the national picture: a higher proportion of children are in the healthy weight category in Reception than in Year 6, while the proportions overweight or living with obesity are higher in Year 6 than in Reception. Suffolk is statistically similar to England for Reception-aged children classified as overweight or living with obesity, but statistically significantly lower than England for Year 6 children on this combined measure.

At national level, boys have a higher prevalence of obesity than girls at both Reception and Year 6, with the largest gap seen in Year 6. Deprivation remains strongly associated with child weight outcomes nationally, and this pattern is also reflected in Suffolk's local authority profile. Within Suffolk, Ipswich records the lowest proportion of Year 6 children in the healthy weight category and the highest proportion living with obesity.

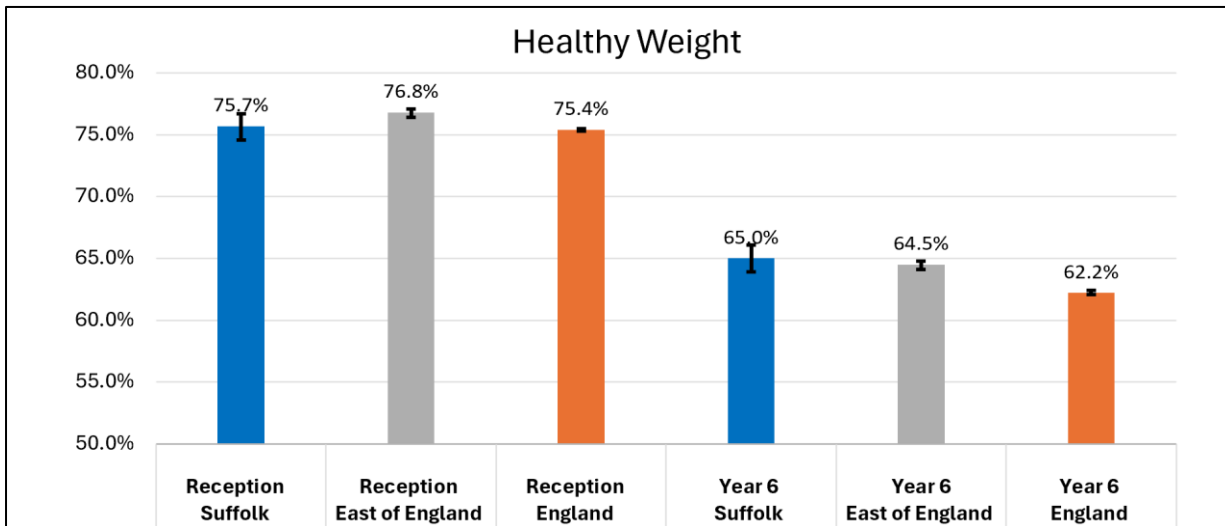
Throughout this report, the phrase "living with obesity" is used consistently in line with the wording used in the national publication when referring to the published BMI category.

What the data tells us

In 2024/25:

- 75.7% of Suffolk children in reception year are healthy weight, this falls to 65.0% for year 6 children. The percentage of healthy weight reception year children is statistically similar to England (75.4%), and statistically significantly higher than England for year 6 children (62.2%).
- Around 1 in 4 Suffolk reception-year children were overweight or living with obesity (23.5%). This was statistically similar to England (also 23.5%).
- 1 in 3 Suffolk year 6 children were overweight or living with obesity (33.6%). This was statistically significantly lower than England (36.2%)
- Compared with 2023/24, reception-year children overweight or living with obesity increased significantly from 21.5% to 23.5% in 2024/25. There was no statistically significant change in year 6 children overweight or living with obesity, which was 34.1% in 2023/24 and 33.6% in 2024/25.
- Based on the child's postcode of residence, Ipswich had 24.9% of reception-year children classified as overweight or living with obesity in 2024/25, compared with 21.3% in 2023/24, although this difference was not statistically significant. Across the Suffolk lower-tier local authority areas, Ipswich was statistically similar to the other areas for this BMI outcome.
- Ipswich also had the highest proportion of overweight and obese year 6 children, at 37.0%; however, this was unchanged compared with 2023/24. The proportion of overweight and obese children in reception and year 6 in Ipswich was statistically significantly higher than Suffolk, but statistically similar to England.

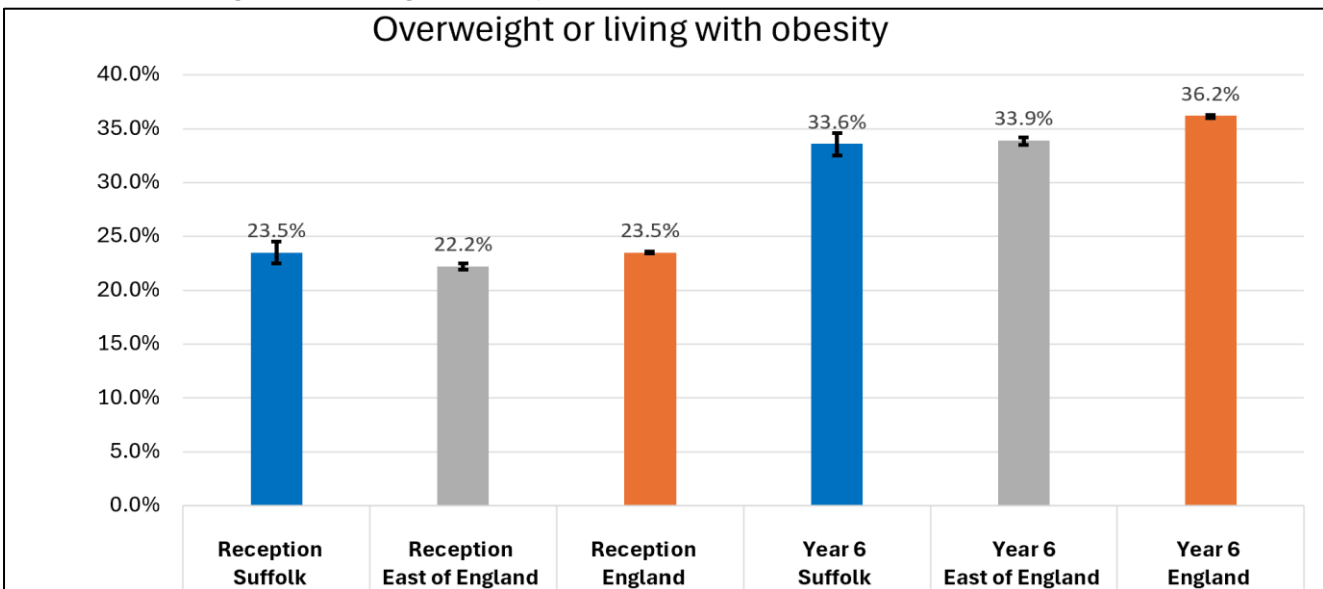
Figure 1: Percentage of children with a healthy weight from reception to year 6 by Suffolk, East of England, and England comparison.



For healthy weight pupils at reception, Suffolk (75.7%) is statistically similar to the 75.4% national average. Within the local authorities, Mid Suffolk recorded the highest percentage of healthy weight pupils at 78.1% - statistically similar to the national average.

Comparing Suffolk's data with England, the East of England and by local authority exposes several trends. Firstly, at reception less than 1% (0.8%) of Suffolk reception-aged pupils are underweight, which is statistically significantly similar to England (1.1%). By year 6, this number for Suffolk (1.5%) is statistically similar to the national average- 1.6%. All local authorities within Suffolk have a statistically similar percentage of underweight pupils compared to both the England and East of England averages.

Figure 2: Percentage of children classified as overweight or living with obesity, from reception to year 6 by Suffolk, East of England, and England comparison.



Suffolk's percentage (2.6%) of reception aged pupils living with severe obesity is statistically similar to the national average (2.9%). At year 6, the percentage of Suffolk pupils with severe obesity increases to 4.7%, however this figure is statistically significantly lower than the national average of 5.6%. Babergh has a statistically significantly lower percentage of year 6 pupils living with severe obesity at 3.4%.

Suffolk and England are statistically similar for reception-aged children, with 23.5% of pupils in both areas classified as overweight or living with obesity. At lower tier local authority level, about 1 in 4 (24.9%) reception-aged pupils in Ipswich are classified as either overweight or living with obesity. By year 6, Suffolk has a statistically significantly lower proportion of pupils classified as overweight or living with obesity (33.6%) than the England average (36.2%). However, in Ipswich, the proportion rises to 37.0%, which is statistically significantly higher than the East of England and Suffolk averages. In contrast, Mid Suffolk has a statistically significantly lower proportion than the East of England and a proportion similar to Suffolk, with 30.2% of year 6 pupils classified as either overweight or living with obesity.

Figure 3: Reception year prevalence of overweight or living with obesity in Suffolk, by child's postcode

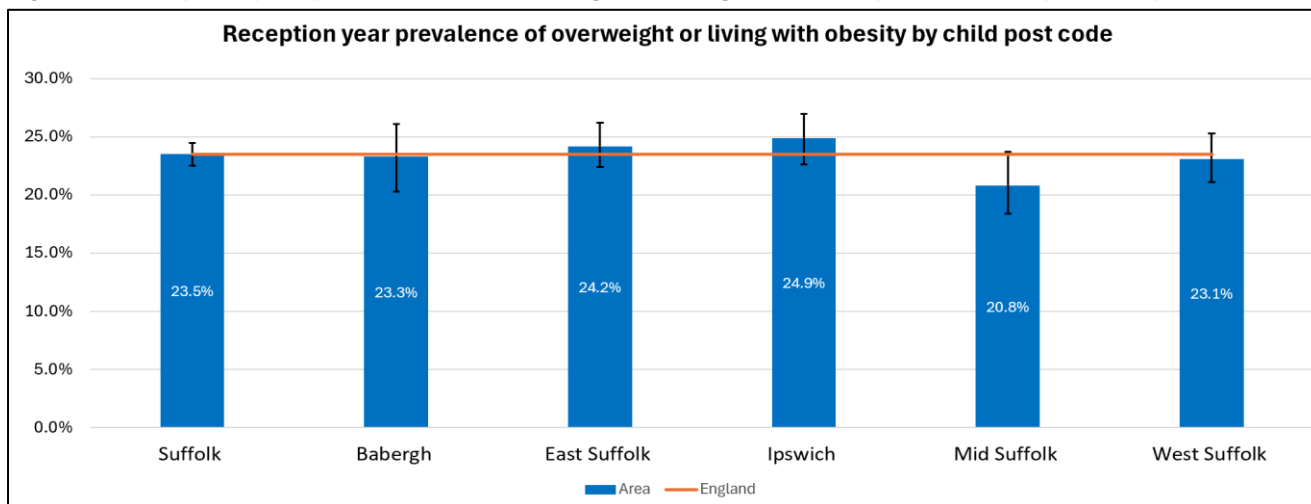
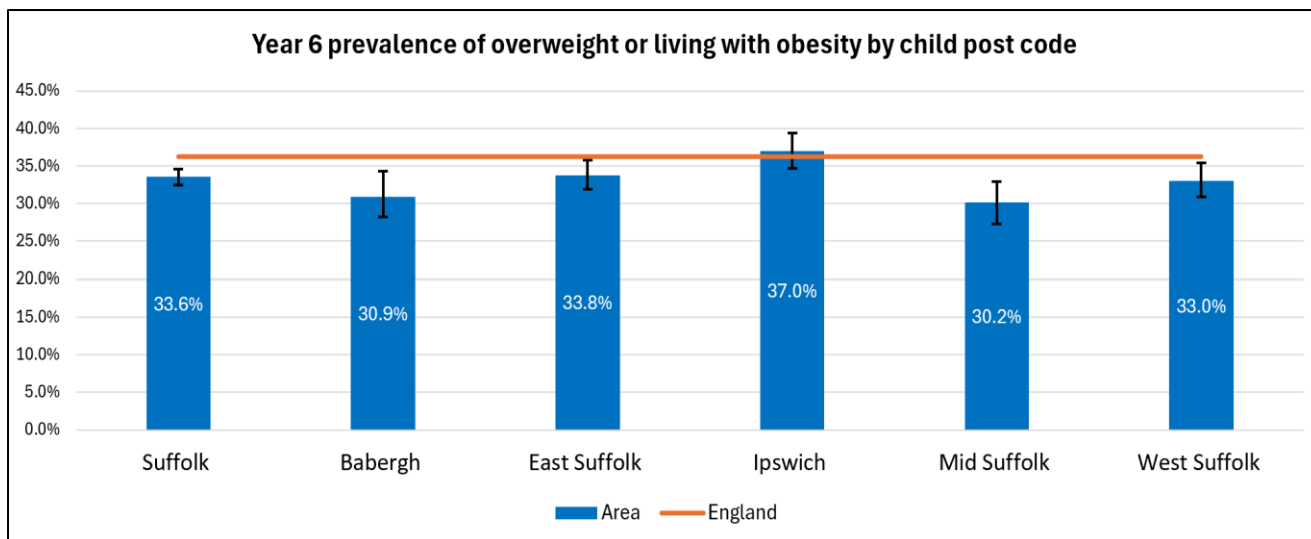


Figure 4: Year 6 prevalence of overweight or living with obesity in Suffolk, by child's postcode

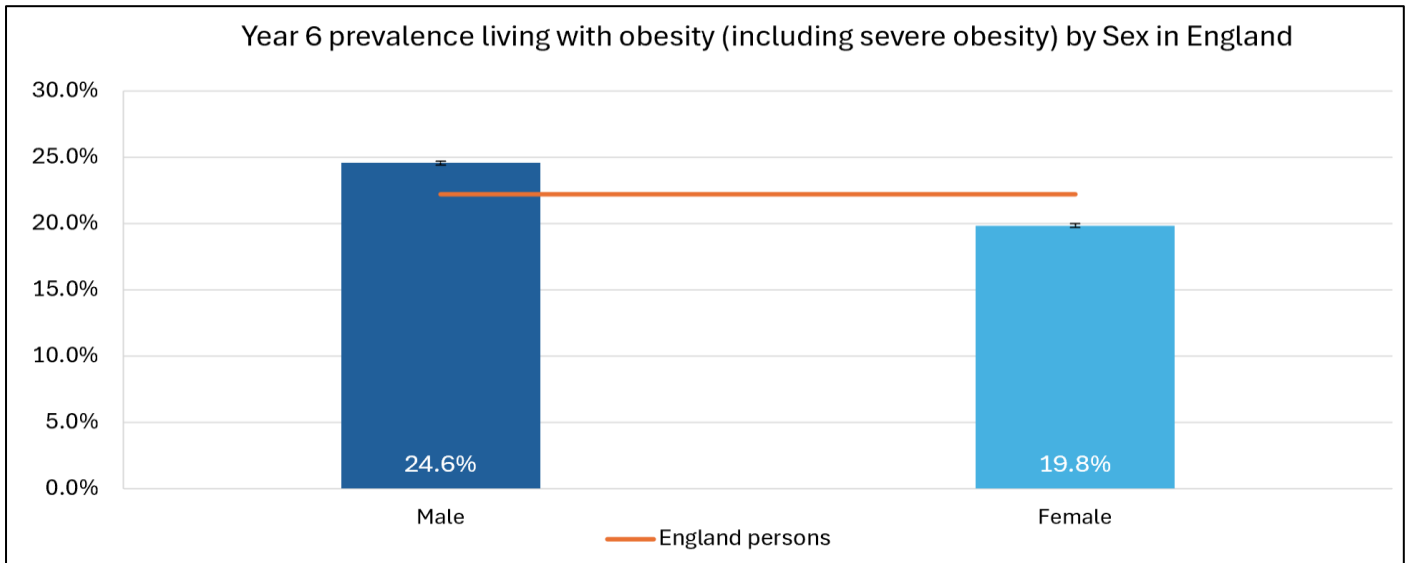


Demographic differences

While the published data is reported at local authority level, demographic breakdowns are only published at England level. This means that differences by sex, ethnicity, and deprivation cannot be explored in the published data at Suffolk local authority level.

When exploring differences by sex, specifically on obesity - the largest statistically significant gap exists between boys in year 6, with over 1 in 4 (24.6%) living with obesity in comparison to 1 in 5 (19.8%) of girls in year 6. Furthermore, the percentage of children classified as underweight increases from 1.1% in reception to 1.6% in year 6, however there is statistically significant difference by sex- more boys in reception (1.5%) are underweight than girls (0.7%), but this trend changes in year 6, where 1.5% of boys are underweight, compared to 1.7% of girls.

Figure 5: Year 6 prevalence living with obesity (including severe obesity) by Sex in England



Within the NCMP dataset, ethnicity data is only available at England level. Nationally, obesity prevalence was highest among Black African in reception year (15.0%) and among children from any other Black background in year 6 (31.4%), with both rates being statistically significantly higher than other ethnic groups. Chinese children had the statistically significantly lowest obesity levels (4.2% in reception, 13.6% in year 6).

Deprivation and obesity have a strong relationship; in England, twice as many children (14.0%) in the most deprived decile are living with obesity in reception year compared to the least deprived decile (6.9%). The deprivation gap (% of children living with obesity in reception in the most deprived areas compared with % of children living with obesity in reception in the least deprived areas) has increased nationally between 2014/15 to 2024/25 from 6.1% to 7.1%. For Year 6 pupils, the deprivation gap increased from 13.6% in 2014/15 to 15.8% in 2024/25. This shows that deprivation-related inequalities in child weight remain substantial and have widened over time.

Suffolk local authority data also show a pattern consistent with deprivation-related inequality. Ipswich, the most deprived local authority in Suffolk, records the lowest proportion of Year 6 children in the healthy weight category (61.2%) and the highest proportion living with obesity (24.8%) compared with the other Suffolk local authorities

Caveats/ limitations

The Office for National Statistics reports deprivation data based on both where the child lives (postcode) and the location of the school. Deprivation based on the child's postcode is viewed as more accurate due to children sometimes attending schools in areas where relative deprivation differs to where they live. Both sets of data can be used- for instance the data based on school location may be better suited for interventions targeted through schools, whereas facility provision may be better suited to resident-based data.

Measurements were taken at any time during the 2024/25 academic year, meaning some children were almost two years older than others during the same period of measurement. The 2024/25 NCMP data were published on 4 November 2025, so there is an expected gap between the reporting period and publication. However, this has no implication for the published data as BMI centiles are adjusted for age. NCMP data has relatively narrow confidence limits due to the large size of the sample and high participation rates at a national level; however, confidence intervals increase when analysing the data at local authority level.

Demographic breakdowns in the published NCMP data are only available at England level. This includes breakdowns by sex, ethnicity, and deprivation, so these demographic patterns cannot be explored at Suffolk level.

In terms of data quality and coverage, participation rate was not collected or published in 2019/20 and 2020/21 due to the pandemic impact on the data collection during those years.

In 2024/25, 94.1% of eligible children took part in the NCMP data collection. This is slightly higher than the 2023/24 participation rate of 93.6%. Additionally, if participation rates are low in a local authority, then estimates must be treated with caution as the sample may not be entirely representative.

Appendix

Table 1: Prevalence and number of children underweight, healthy weight, overweight, living with obesity and living with severe obesity in Reception, by nation, region, upper tier local authority and lower tier local authority (based on the postcode of the child).

Area	Underweight		Healthy weight		Overweight		Living with obesity		Living with severe obesity		Overweight or living with obesity	
	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)
England	5,989	1.1% [1.1, 1.1]	411,345	75.4% [75.3, 75.5]	71,013	13.0% [12.9, 13.1]	57,242	10.5% [10.4, 10.6]	15,995	2.9% [2.9, 3.0]	128,255	23.5% [23.4, 23.6]
East of England	680	1.1% [1.0, 1.2]	48,890	76.8% [76.4, 77.1]	8,165	12.8% [12.6, 13.1]	5,965	9.4% [9.1, 9.6]	1,605	2.5% [2.4, 2.6]	14,130	22.2% [21.9, 22.5]
Suffolk	55	0.8% [0.6, 1.1]	5,040	75.7% [74.6, 76.7]	895	13.4% [12.6, 14.3]	670	10.1% [9.4, 10.8]	175	2.6% [2.3, 3.1]	1,565	23.5% [22.5, 24.5]
Babergh	*	*	610	76.7% [73.2, 79.1]	105	13.2% [11.0, 15.7]	80	10.1% [8.0, 12.2]	20	2.5% [1.4, 3.5]	185	23.3% [20.3, 26.1]
East Suffolk	15	0.8 [0.4, 1.2]	1,440	75.0% [73.0, 76.9]	260	13.5% [12.2, 15.2]	205	10.7% [9.3, 12.1]	50	2.6% [1.9, 3.4]	465	24.2% [22.4, 26.2]
Ipswich	15	1.0% [0.6, 1.6]	1,090	74.4% [72.0, 76.5]	205	14.0% [12.2, 15.7]	160	10.9% [9.4, 12.6]	50	3.4% [2.6, 4.5]	365	24.9% [22.6, 27.0]
Mid Suffolk	10	1.1% [0.4, 1.7]	715	78.1% [75.4, 80.7]	115	12.6% [10.8, 15.4]	75	8.2% [6.6, 10.1]	15	1.6% [1.1, 2.8]	190	20.8% [18.4, 23.7]
West Suffolk	15	1.0% [0.5, 1.4]	1,185	76.0% [73.9, 78.1]	205	13.1% [11.6, 15.0]	155	9.9% [8.5, 11.5]	45	2.9% [2.1, 3.8]	360	23.1% [21.1, 25.3]

Note:

- Severe obesity is a subset of obesity, not an additional category.
- Asterisks (*) indicate suppressed data.
- CIs are 95% confidence intervals and show the range within which the true value is likely to lie.

Table 2: Prevalence and number of children underweight, healthy weight, overweight, living with obesity and living with severe obesity in Year 6, by nation, region, upper tier local authority and lower tier local authority (based on the postcode of the child).

Area	Underweight		Healthy weight		Overweight		Living with obesity		Living with severe obesity		Overweight or living with obesity	
	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)	Number	% (And CIs)
England	9,637	1.6% [1.6, 1.6]	373,570	62.2% [62.1, 62.4]	83,544	13.9% [13.8, 14.0]	133,553	22.2% [22.1, 22.4]	33,484	5.6% [5.5, 5.6]	217,097	36.2% [36.0, 36.3]
East of England	1,120	1.6% [1.5, 1.7]	44,350	64.5% [64.1, 64.8]	9,335	13.6% [13.3, 13.8]	13,975	20.3% [20.0, 20.6]	3,315	4.8% [4.7, 5.0]	23,310	33.9% [33.5, 34.2]
Suffolk	110	1.5% [1.2, 1.8]	4,800	65.0% [63.9, 66.1]	990	13.4% [12.6, 14.2]	1,490	20.2% [19.3, 21.1]	345	4.7% [4.2, 5.2]	2,480	33.6% [32.5, 34.6]
Babergh	10	1.1% [0.7, 2.2]	600	67.4% [64.5, 70.6]	120	13.5% [11.2, 15.7]	160	18.0% [15.5, 20.5]	30	3.4% [2.6, 5.0]	275	30.9% [28.2, 34.3]
East Suffolk	30	1.3% [0.9, 1.8]	1,450	64.9% [62.9, 66.8]	300	13.4% [12.2, 15.0]	455	20.4% [18.7, 22.1]	115	5.1% [4.3, 6.1]	755	33.8% [31.9, 35.8]
Ipswich	30	1.8% [1.4, 2.7]	1,000	61.2% [58.6, 63.3]	200	12.2% [10.7, 13.9]	405	24.8% [22.8, 27.0]	95	5.8% [4.7, 7.0]	605	37.0% [34.7, 39.4]
Mid Suffolk	15	1.5% [1.0, 2.6]	690	68.3% [65.4, 71.2]	135	13.4% [11.6, 15.8]	165	16.3% [14.3, 18.9]	35	3.5% [2.6, 4.9]	305	30.2% [27.3, 32.9]
West Suffolk	20	1.2% [0.9, 2.0]	1,060	65.4% [63.2, 67.8]	230	14.2% [12.6, 16.1]	305	18.8% [17.0, 20.4]	70	4.3% [3.4, 5.4]	535	33.0% [30.9, 35.4]

Note:

- Severe obesity is a subset of obesity, not an additional category.
- CIs are 95% confidence intervals and show the range within which the true value is likely to lie.