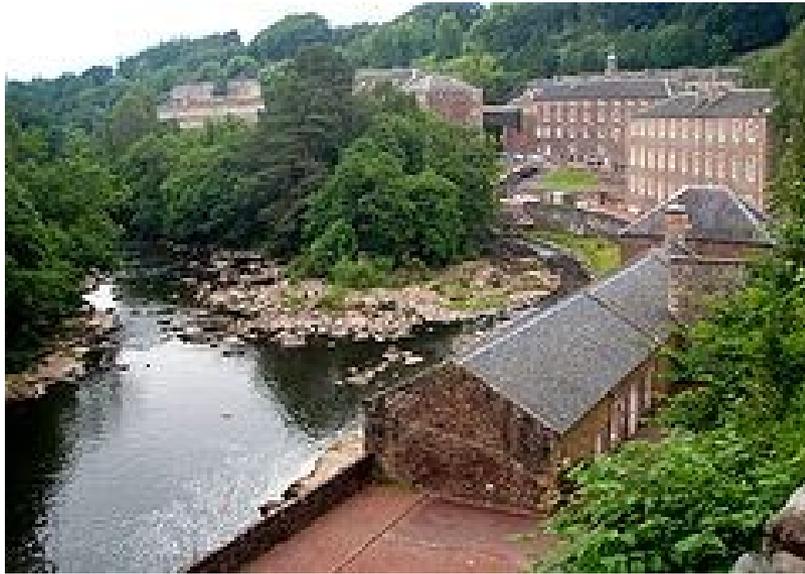


The impact of educational experience and
school exclusion on criminal careers:
Findings from the Edinburgh Study of Youth
Transitions and Crime

Professor Susan McVie
Growing Up in Ireland Conference
26 November 2014



“It must be evident to those who have been in the practice of observing children with attention, that much of good or evil is taught to or acquired by a child at a very early period of its life.”

(Robert Owen, 1816)



The long-term benefits of education for health and well-being

- Improved life-expectancy
- Greater civic engagement
- Better sense of well-being and happiness
- Why?
 - Increased income
 - cognitive and emotional skills development
 - enhanced social skills
 - improved social status
 - access to networks that can enhance social interaction

Links between education and offending

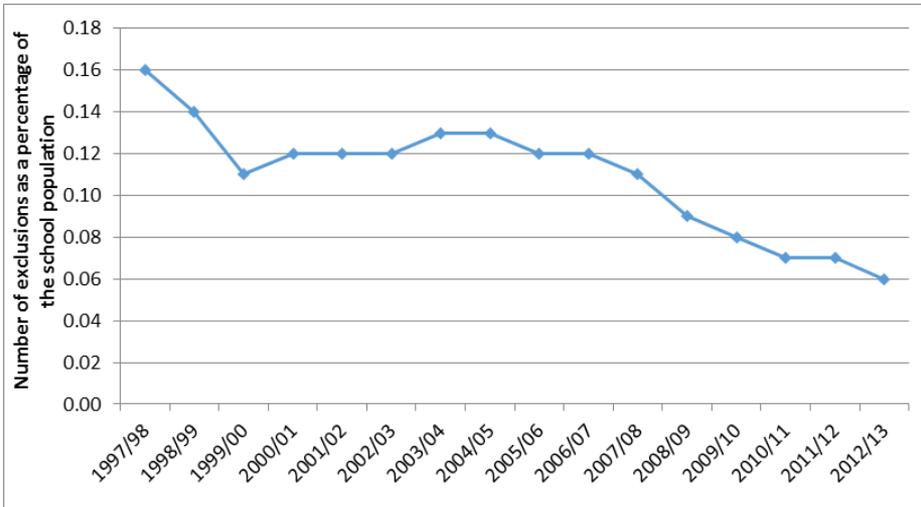
- Research indicates a strong negative correlation between educational attainment and crime
- Educational attainment **increases the chances of legitimate work**, improves income levels, thus reducing likelihood of offending (Lochner 2004)
- Greater time spent in education reduces **time available for participation** in criminal activity (Machin et al 2011)
- Commitment to education influences crime through its **effect on patience and risk aversion** (Oreopoulos 2007)
- Early development of **non-cognitive skills** (e.g. motivation and social adjustment) impacts more on later offending than cognitive skills (Reynolds et al 2010)
- Education in prison reduces recidivism and increases post-release earnings (Steurer and Smith, 2003)

The dangers of school exclusion

- School exclusion became a focus of public attention in the 1990s after rates of permanent exclusion increased four-fold in five years (Donovan, 1998)
- The number of school exclusions or expulsions has fallen significantly within the last 10 years across the different parts of the UK

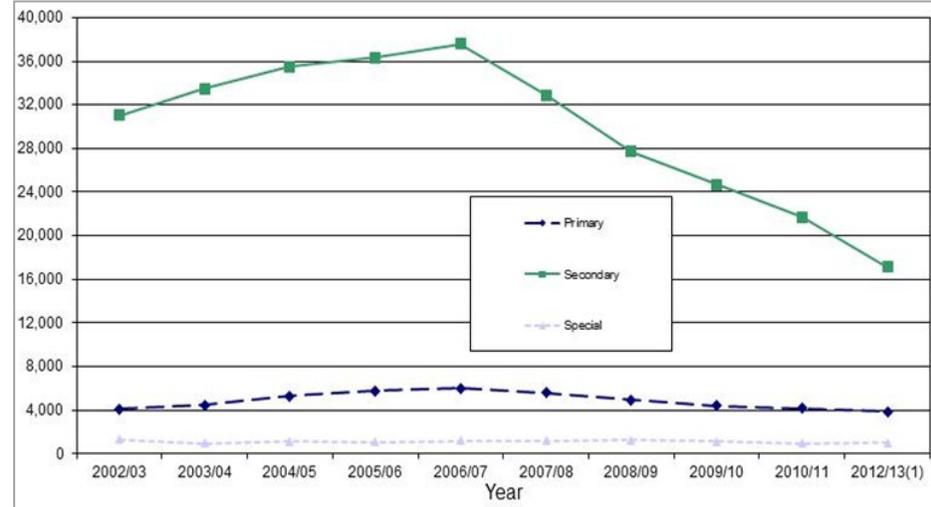
Rate of permanent exclusion in England

Source: Department for Education statistical bulletin 2014



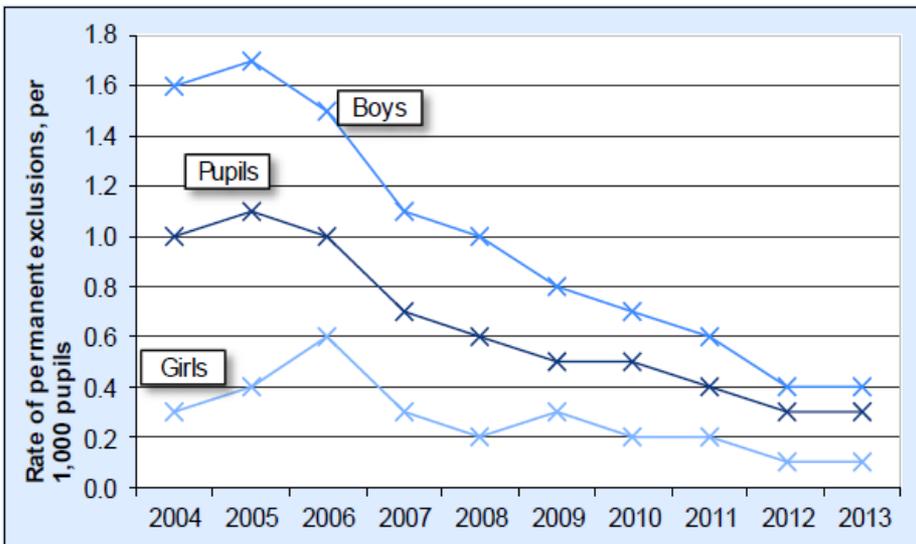
Number of School exclusions in Scotland

Source: Scottish Government statistical bulletin 2014



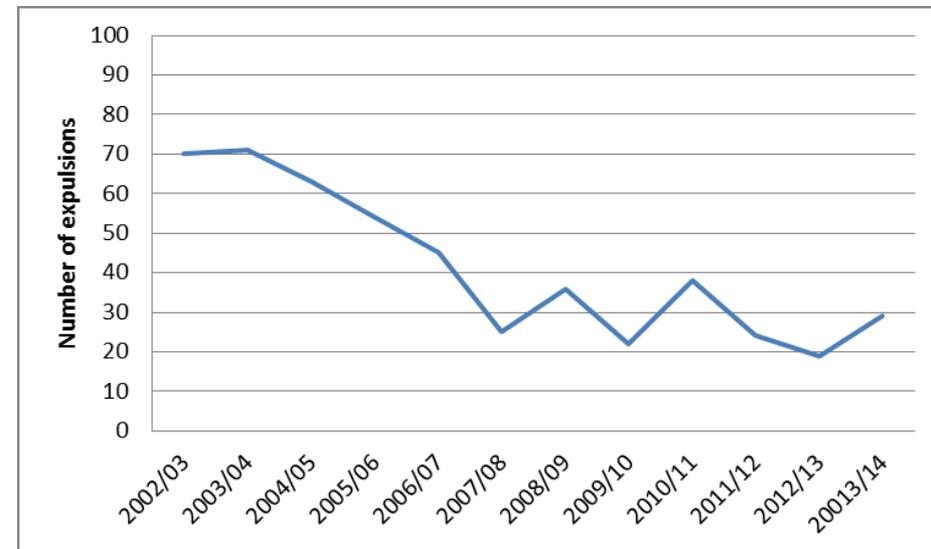
Rate of permanent exclusion in Wales

Source: Statistics for Wales bulletin 2014



Number of expulsions in Northern Ireland

Source: Department of Education Northern Ireland website 2014



The dangers of school exclusion

- School exclusion became a focus of public attention in the 1990s after rates of permanent exclusion increased four-fold in five years (Donovan, 1998)
- The number of school exclusions or expulsions has fallen significantly within the last 10 years across the different parts of the UK
- Rates of exclusion are highest amongst males, pupils with additional support needs, those from the most deprived backgrounds and certain ethnic groups
- School exclusion increases the probability of early school drop out and involvement in the criminal justice system in the US (Losen and Gillespie, 2012)
- UK research also shows very poor outcomes for those excluded from school and significant risk of offending (Powis et al 1998, Berridge et al 2001)
- The 'school-to-prison' pipeline (Krezmien et al 2014)

The Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime

Aims

1. Prospective longitudinal study of pathways into and out of offending, involving a cohort of 4,300 young people who started secondary school in Edinburgh in 1998
2. Funded by the ESRC, Scottish Government and the Nuffield Foundation to inform both academic and policy audiences
3. Aims to study offending within 3 main contexts:
 - a. Individual development through the life-course
 - b. Physical and social structure of neighbourhoods
 - c. Impact of interaction with agencies of social control & law enforcement

Methods

4. Census based survey involving all 23 mainstream schools, 8 out of 14 Independent schools and 9 out of 12 special schools (92.2% coverage)
5. Six annual sweeps of data collection involving self-completion questionnaires administered from 1998-2003
6. Complex survey design involving multiple additional methods of data collection (data linkage)
7. Sweep 7 of data collection (2009-11) to map *criminal justice* careers and explore the impact of intervention on desistance from offending amongst a sub-sample of the cohort.

Data collection

Birth to age 11	Age 12	Age 13	Age 14	Age 15	Age 16	Age 17	Age 18-25
	Self completion questionnaires						Face to face survey
		Face to face interviews				Face to face interviews	
		Teacher evaluation	Survey of parents	SQA Examination results			
	School records on attendance and exclusion						
	Police juvenile liaison officer records						
	Social work records						
	Children's hearings records						
	Scottish criminal records (convictions)						
	Geographical information system of Edinburgh neighbourhoods						

The questionnaire

Intended to give a continuous picture of young people's lives.

Sweep 1 = 'ever'; Sweep 2 = 'the last year'; Sweep 7 = 'last 5 years'

Wide range of questions including spare time activities, family, friends, health and substance use, **school experience & attitudes**, employment and training, neighbourhoods, style and image, attitudes and future aspirations, reasons for offending/desistance.

Asks about involvement in offending and experience of being a victim.

Core questions and occasional questions

Fieldwork methods

Primarily school classroom based administration of self-completion questionnaires (exam-type conditions).

Pre-warning of children with additional learning needs and extra resources provided as scribes or general helpers.

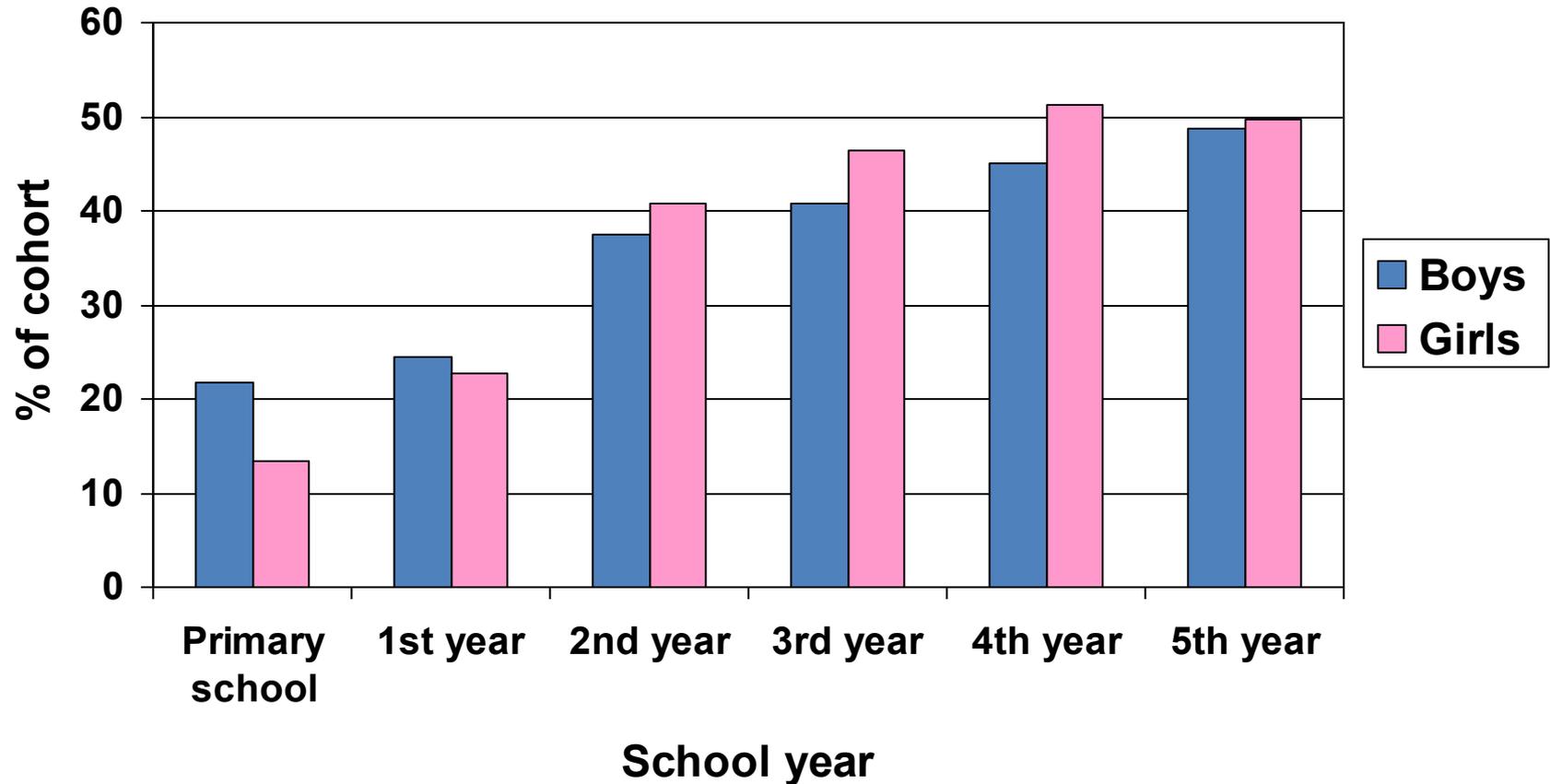
Return visits to achieve absentees, excluded pupils, truants and those absent with permission (e.g. work placements).

Visits to special educational resources to visit those permanently excluded, special referrals or on secure orders (e.g. Panmure House, Wellington School, Falkland School)

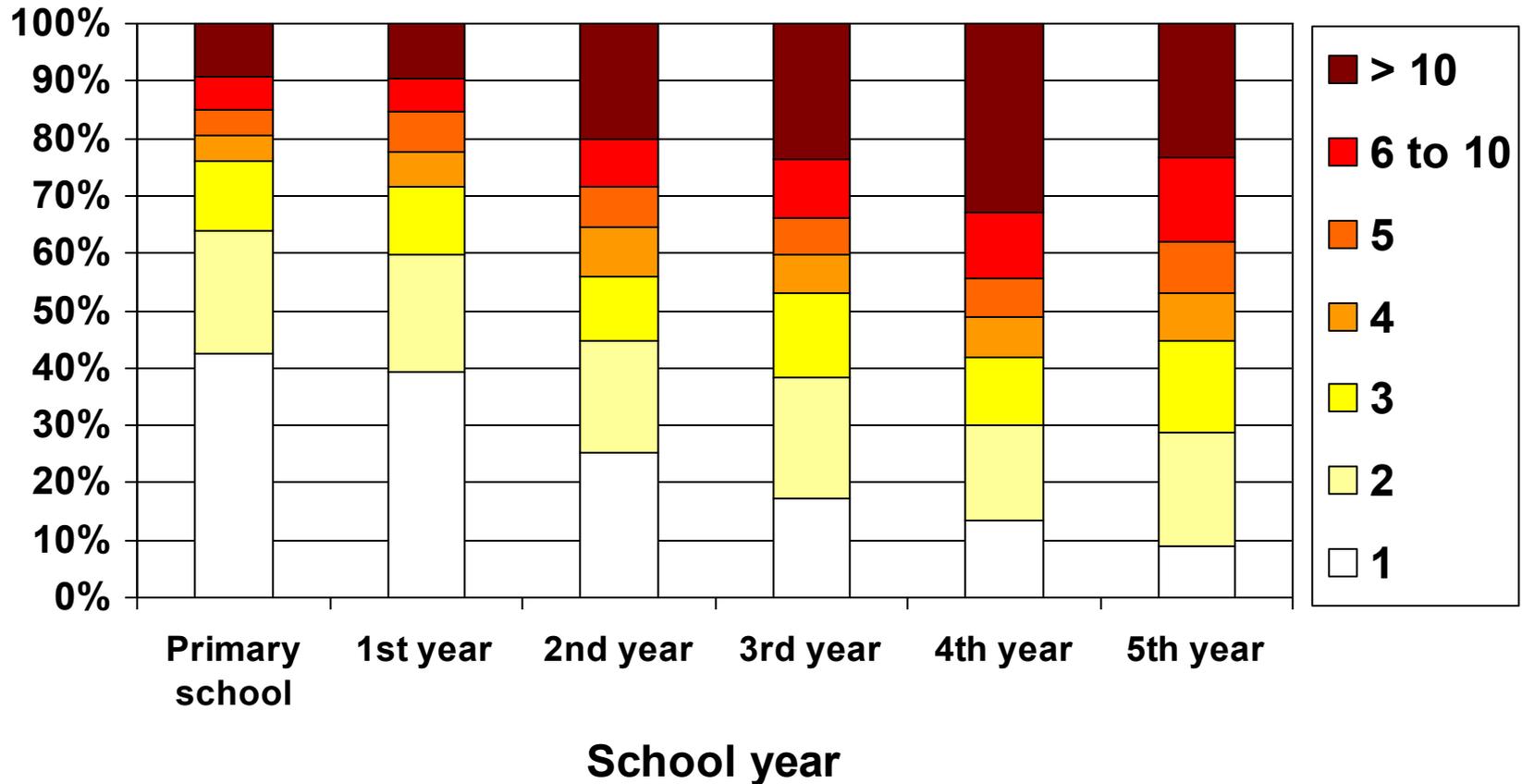
Non-school visits to achieve school leavers, chronic non-attenders and for later sweeps (e.g. home, University office, children's homes, secure units, social work offices, supermarkets, cafes, prison)

Truancy

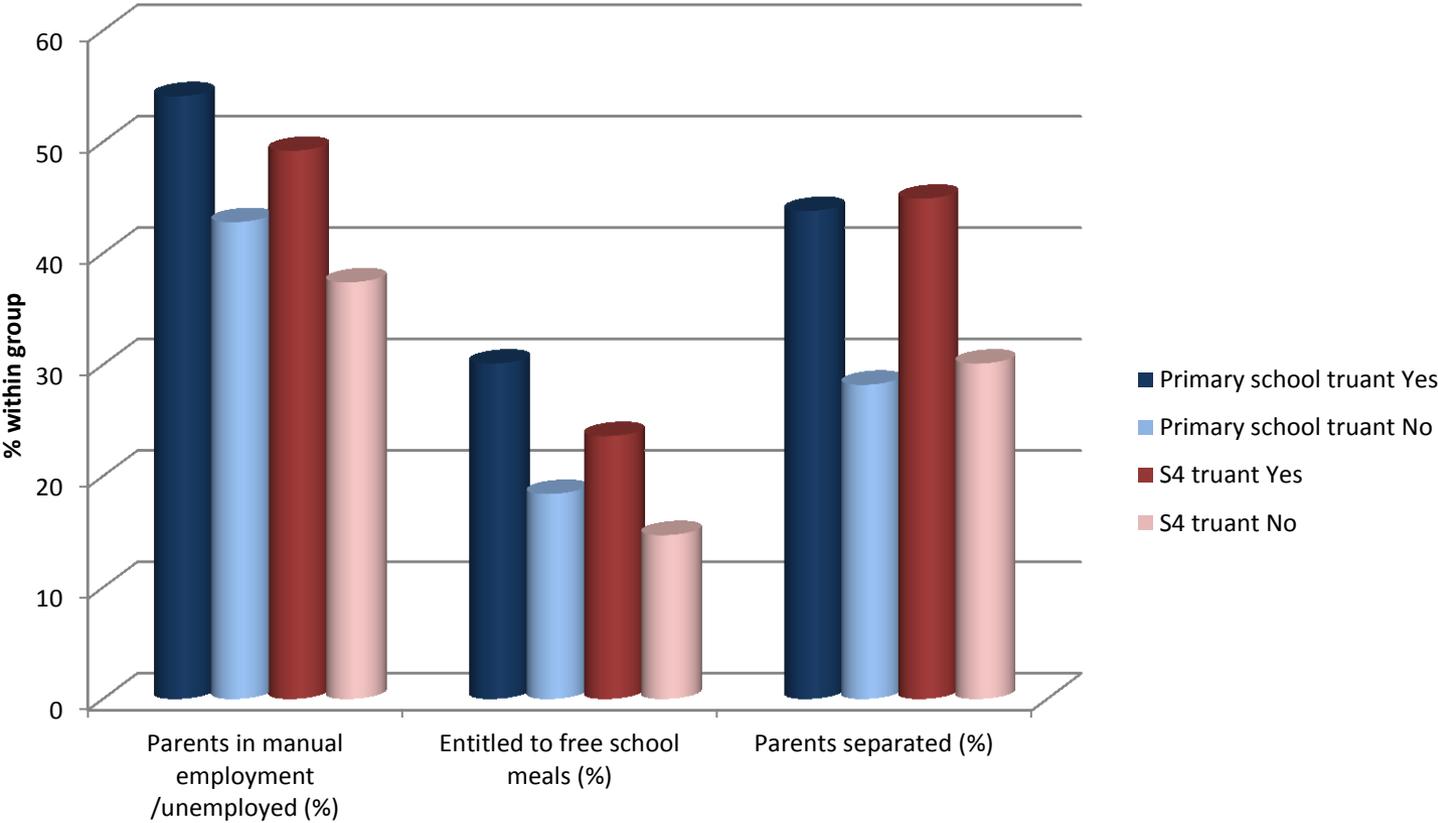
Prevalence of truancy by gender



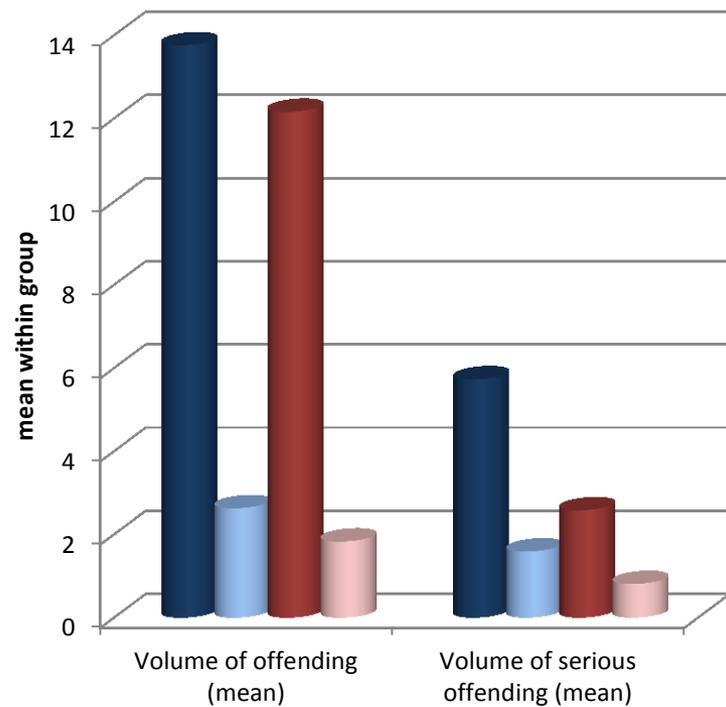
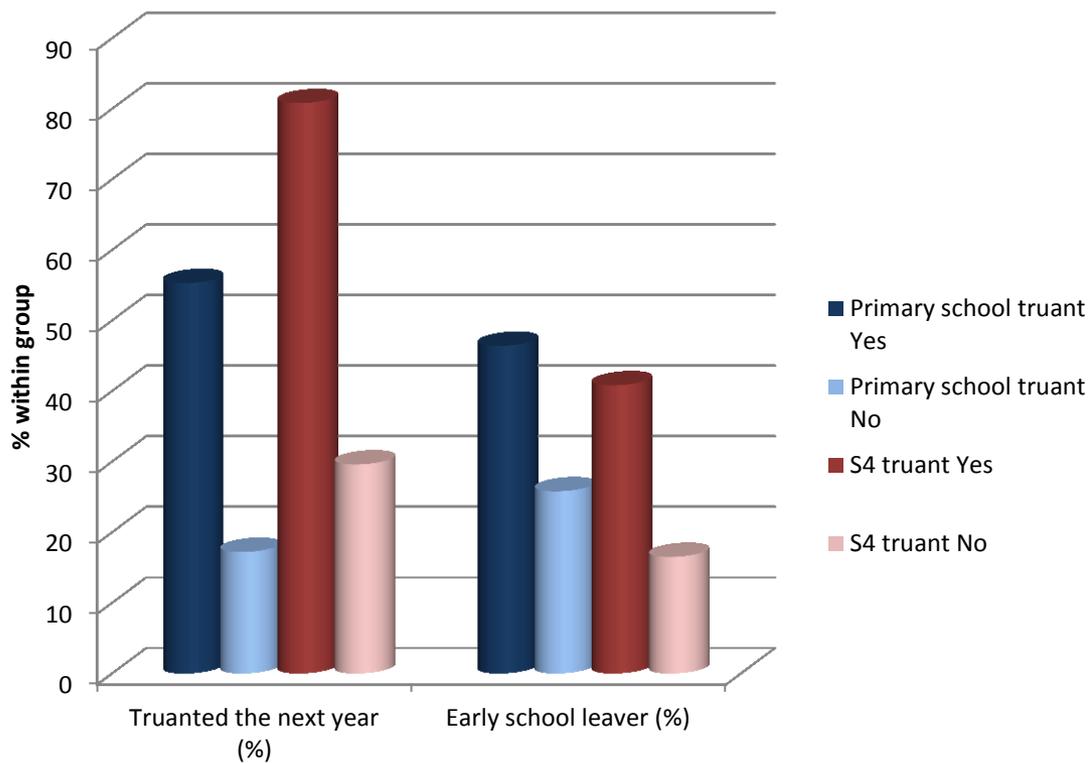
Number of times truanted

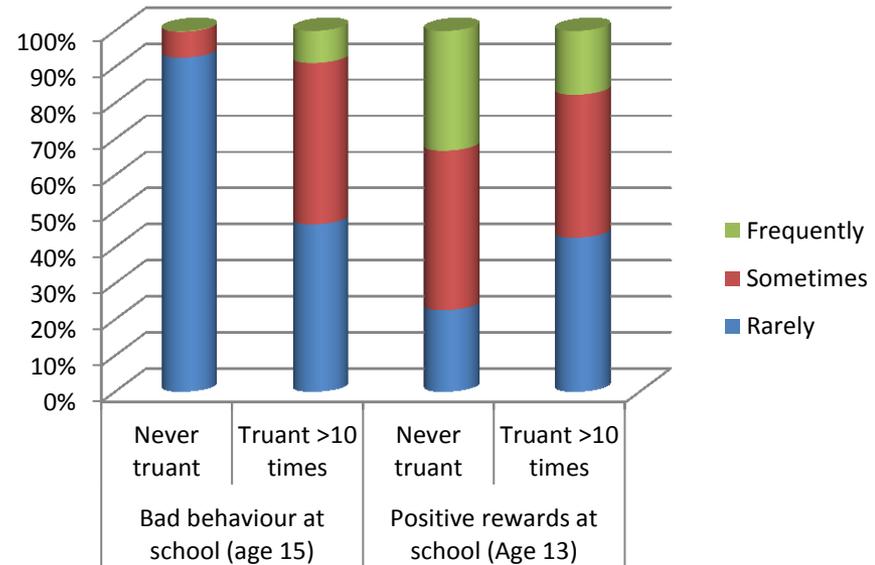
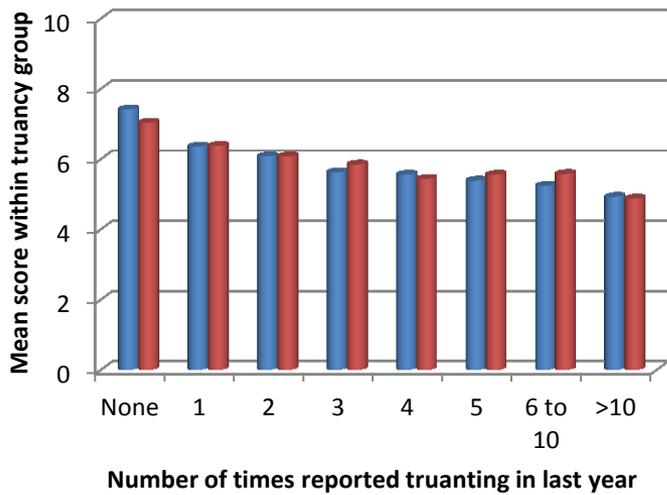
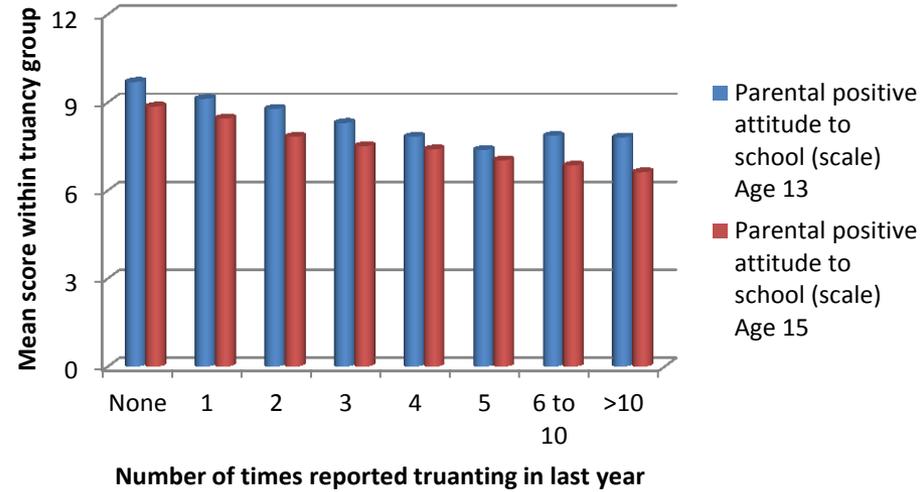
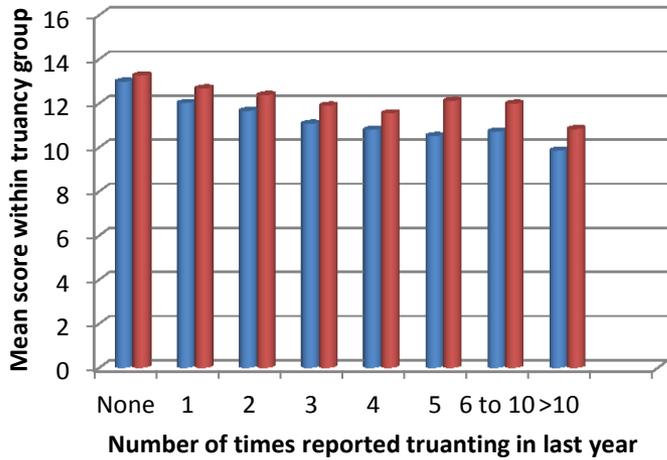


Demographic profile of truants



Behavioural profile of truants





What are the key predictors of frequent truancy?

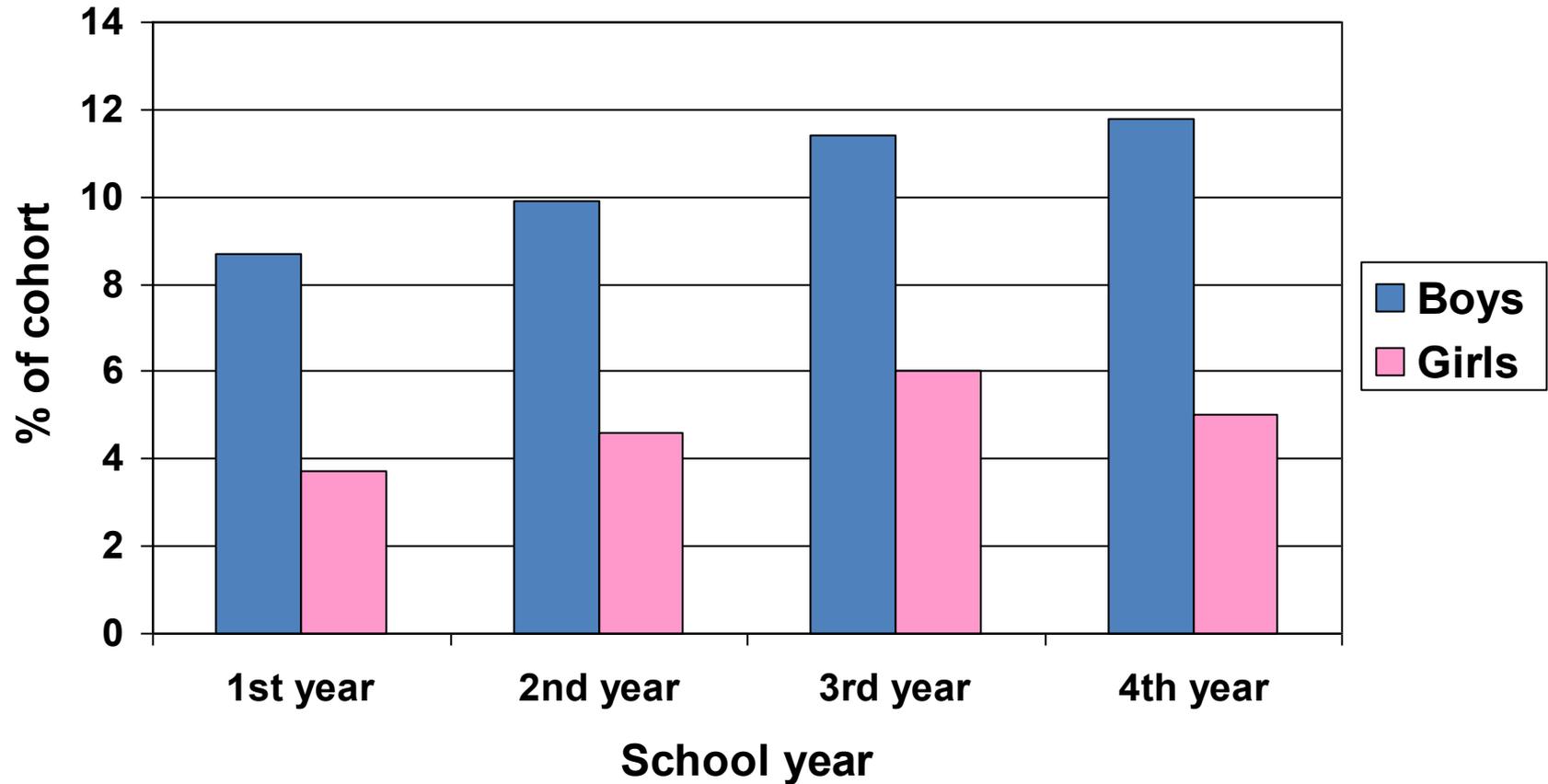
Domain	Actual variables	Odds ratio	Effect
Gender	Gender (1=female)	1.45	+
Family	Family Structure (1=not 2 birth parents)	1.21	+
Deprivation	Neighbourhood Deprivation	1.23	+
Substance use	Smoking daily	1.54	+
	Drug Use in last year	1.37	+
	Alcohol Use weekly	1.12	+
School related factors	School Punishments	1.77	+
	Parental Involvement in School	0.78	-
	Bad Behaviour at School	1.26	+
	Attachment to School	0.82	-
	Relationships with Teachers	0.91	-
Vulnerability	Bullying Others	0.84	-
	Victimisation	1.18	+
	Adult Harassment	1.12	+
	Risk Taking personality	1.12	+

Variables not significant in the final model: Socio-economic status, free school meals, self-reported offending, impulsivity, self-esteem, alienation, conflict with parents and parental supervision.

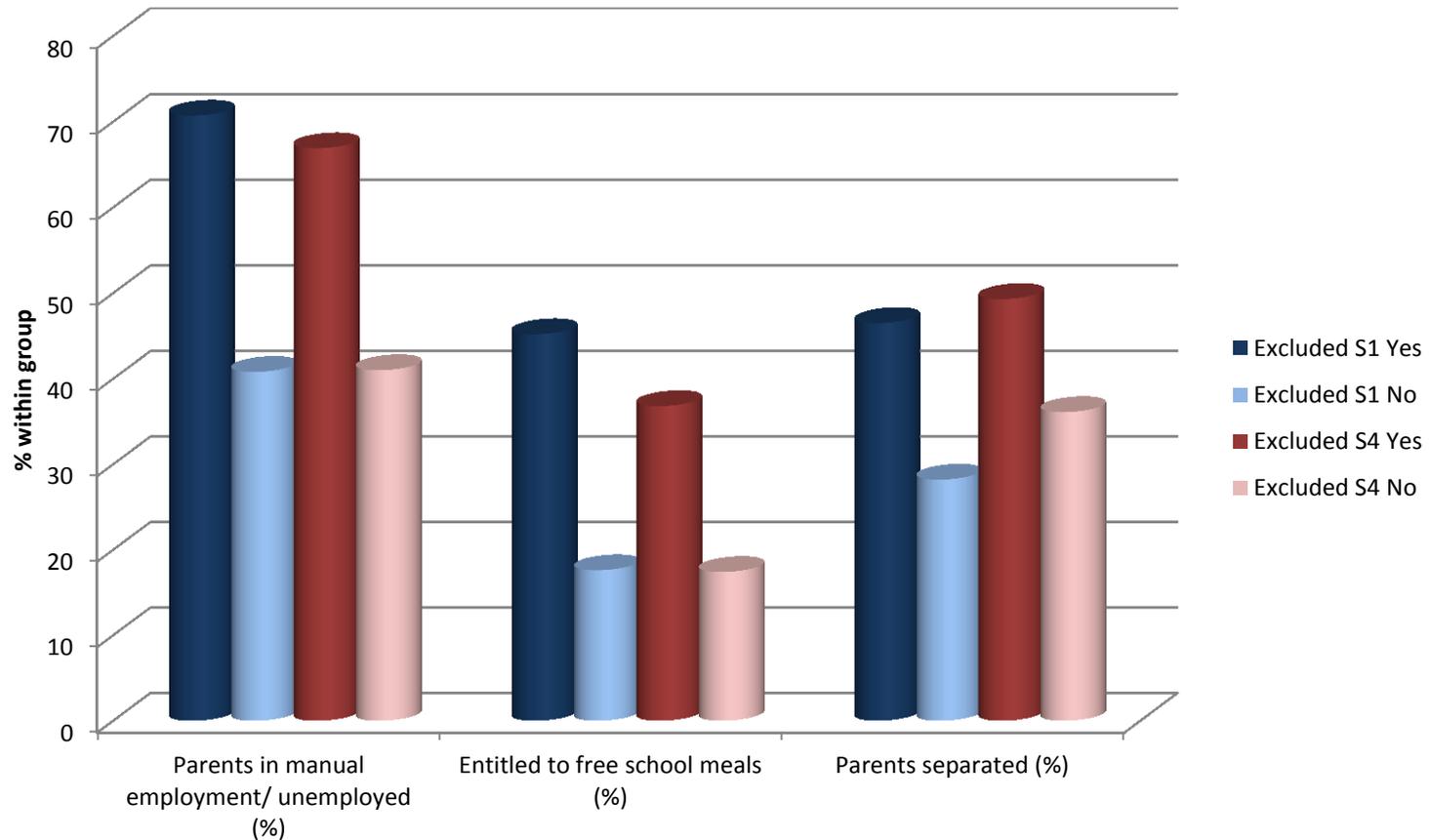
Source: McAra, L (2004) 'Truancy, School Exclusion and Substance Misuse' (p16).

Exclusion

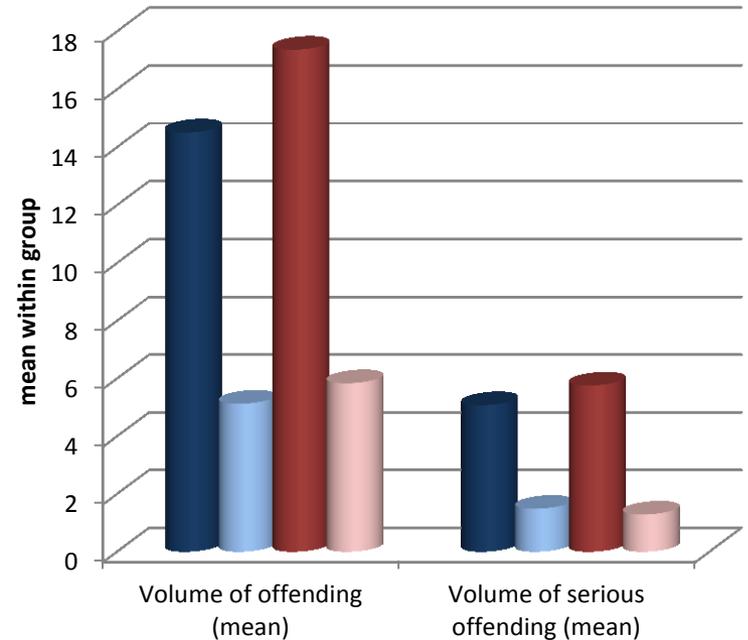
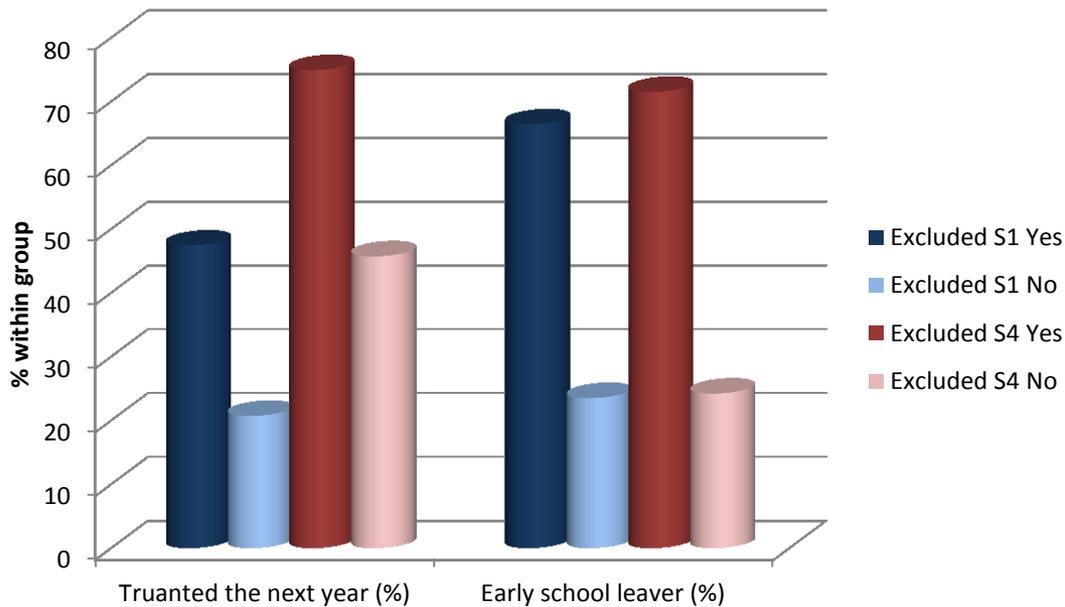
Prevalence of exclusion by gender

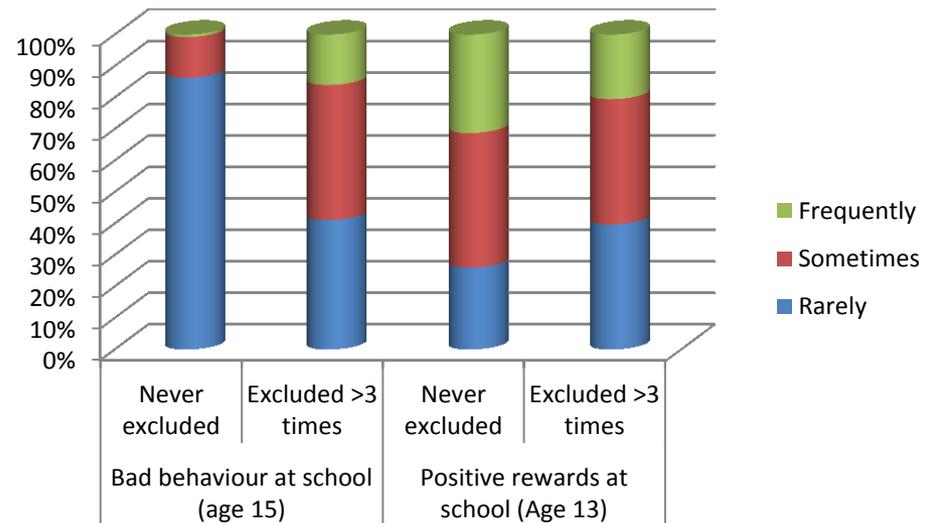
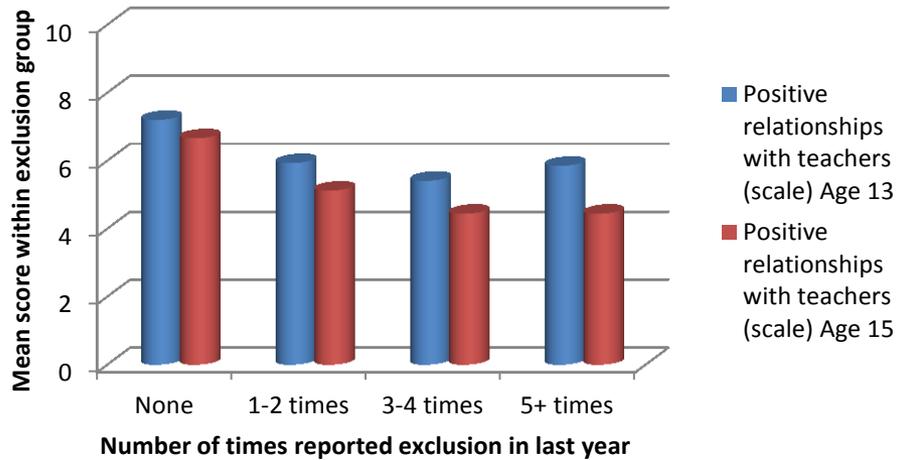
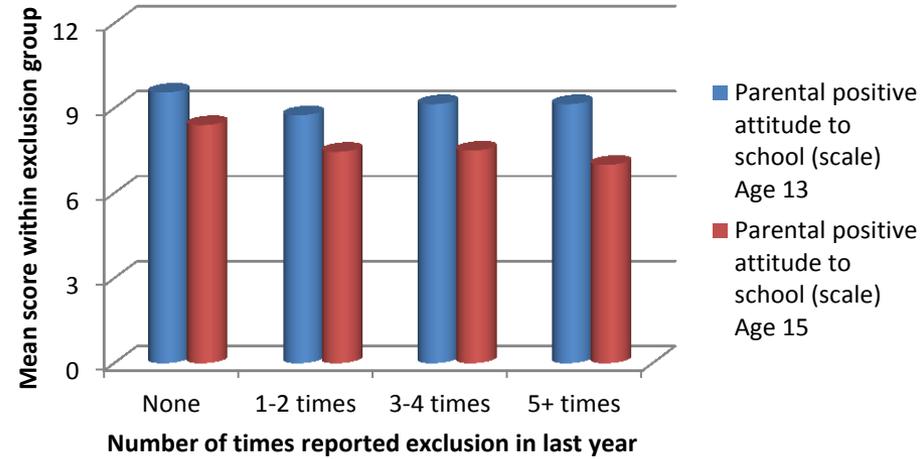
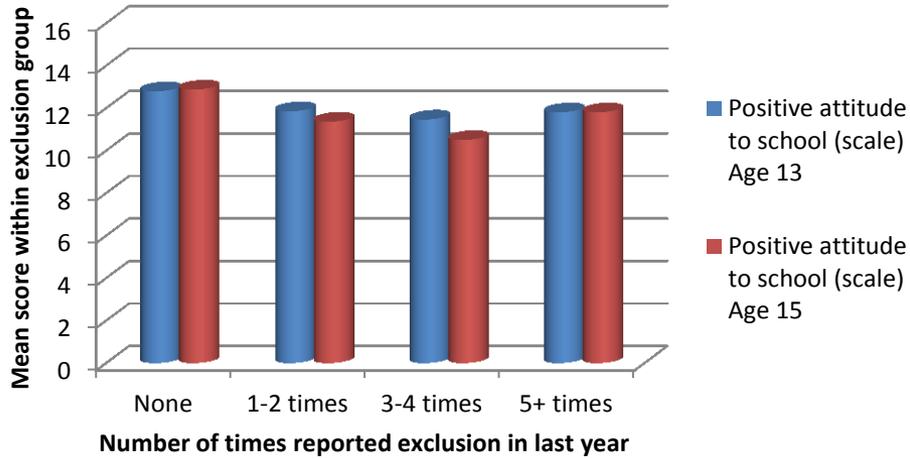


Demographic profile of excludees



Behavioural profile of excludees





What are the key predictors of school exclusion?

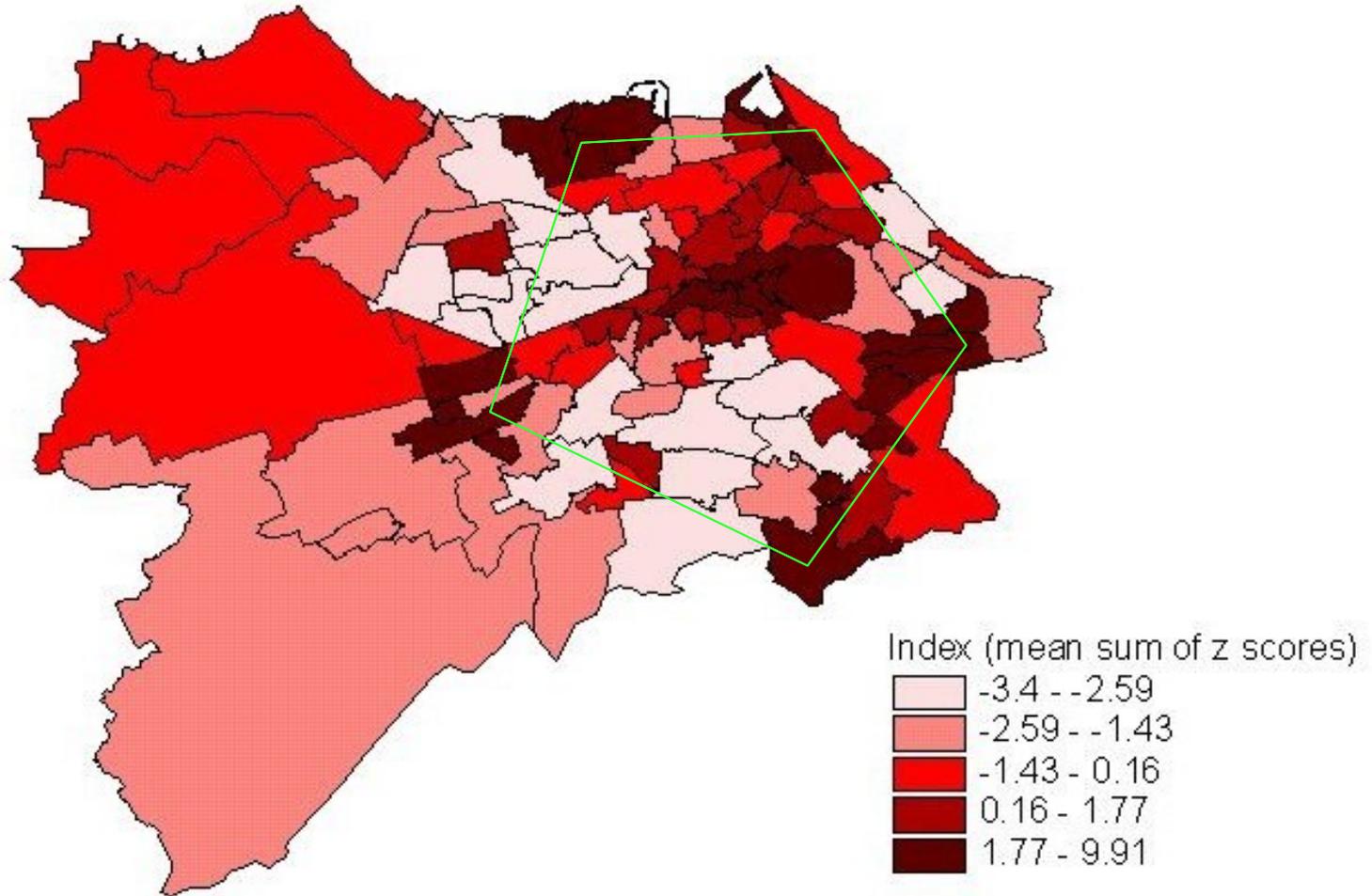
Domain	Actual variables	Odds ratio	Effect
Gender	Gender (male)	2.66	+
Family	Family Structure (not living with 2 birth parents)	1.62	+
	Poor parental supervision	1.14	+
Deprivation	Neighbourhood Deprivation	1.14	+
	Free school meal entitlement (yes)	1.97	+
Substance use	Volume of drug use in last year	1.09	+
School related factors	Volume of school punishments	1.19	+

Variables not significant in the final model: Smoking, alcohol use, self-reported offending, truancy, victimisation, being bullied, socio-economic status, bad behaviour at school, alienation, impulsivity, risk taking, parents involvement in school and attachment to school.

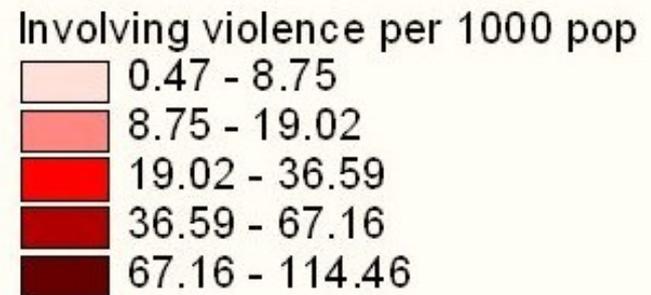
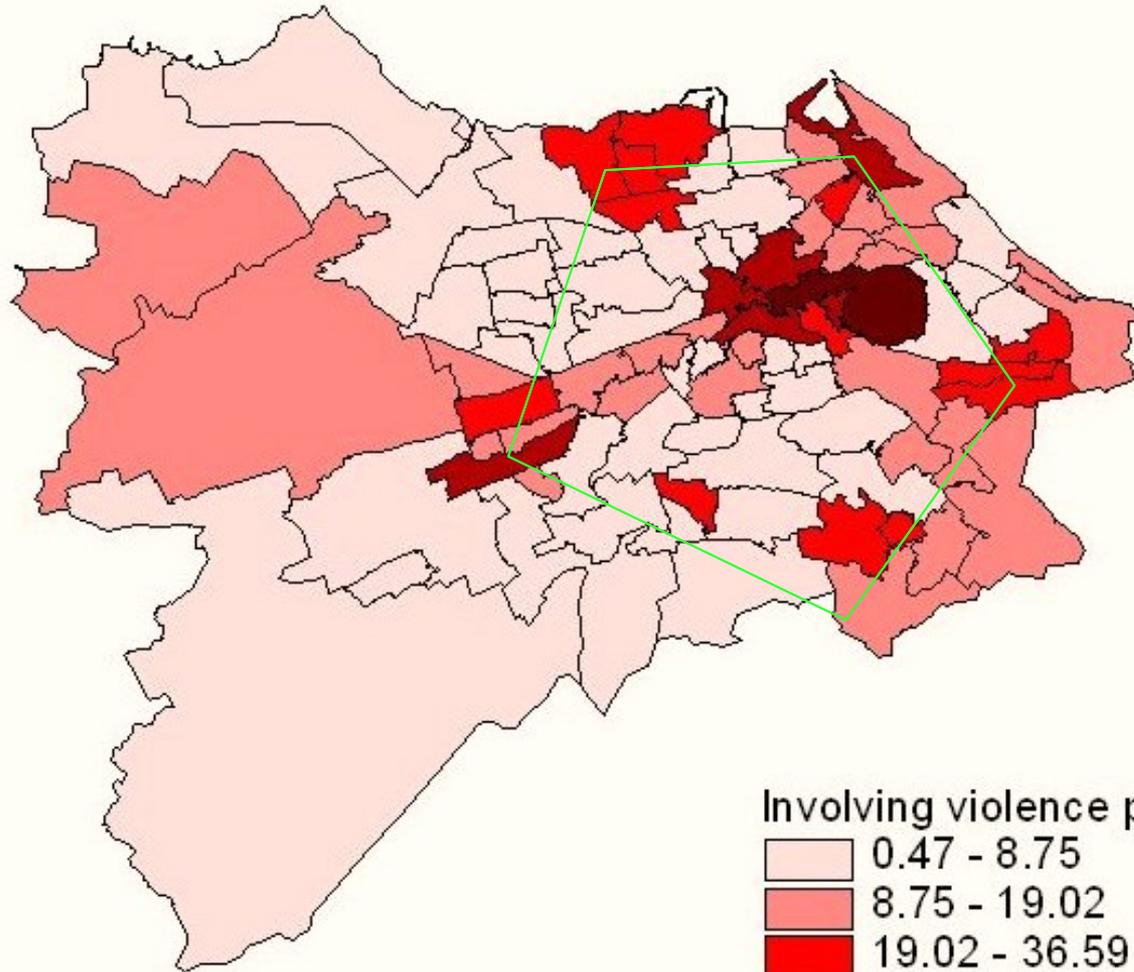
Source: McAra, L (2004) 'Truancy, School Exclusion and Substance Misuse' (p24).

Mapping school truancy, exclusion and deprivation

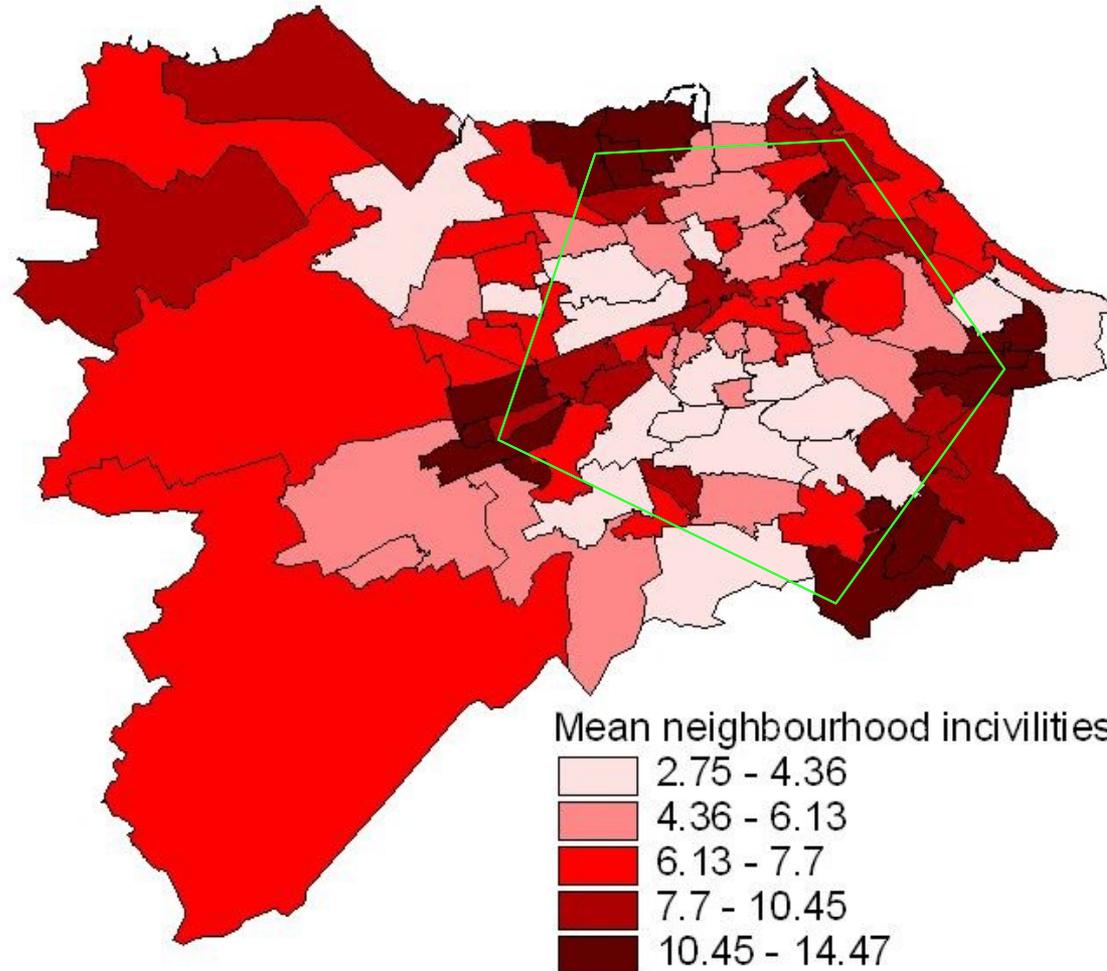
Mapping inequality: Deprivation across Edinburgh



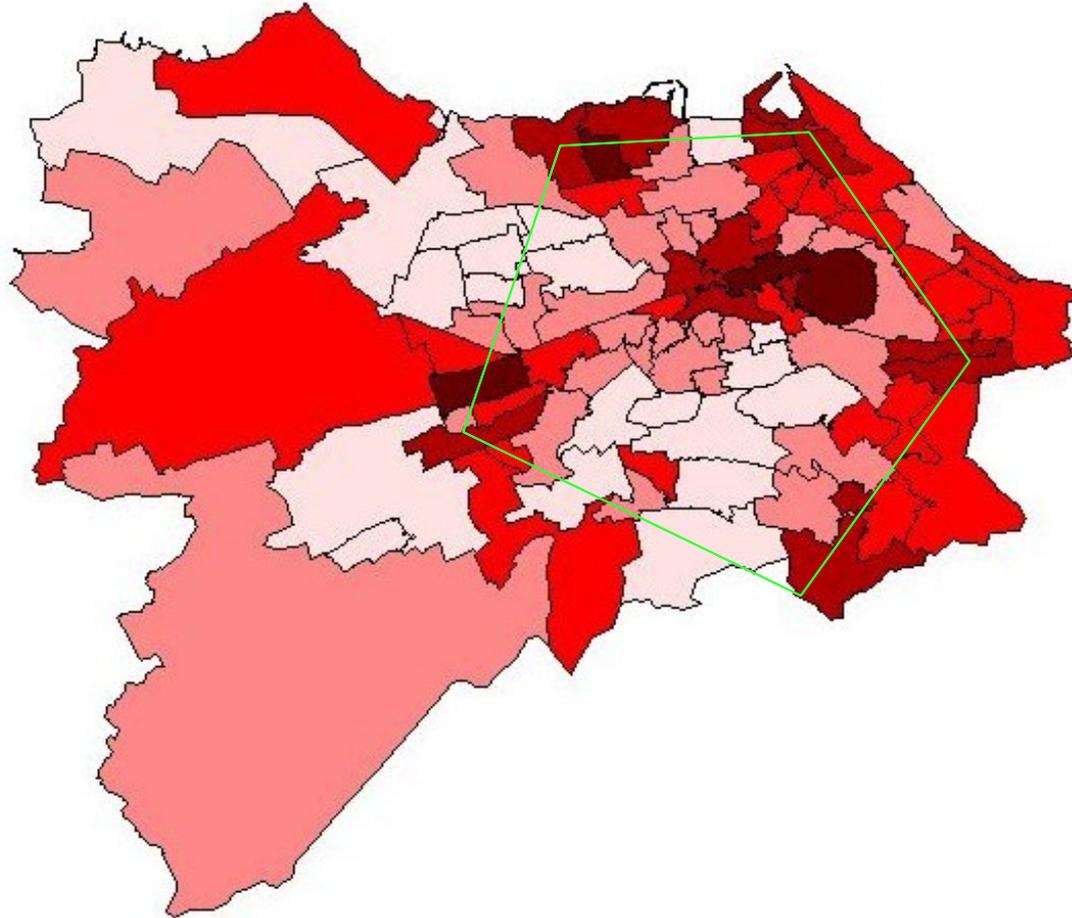
Mapping disorder: Police recorded crime within Edinburgh



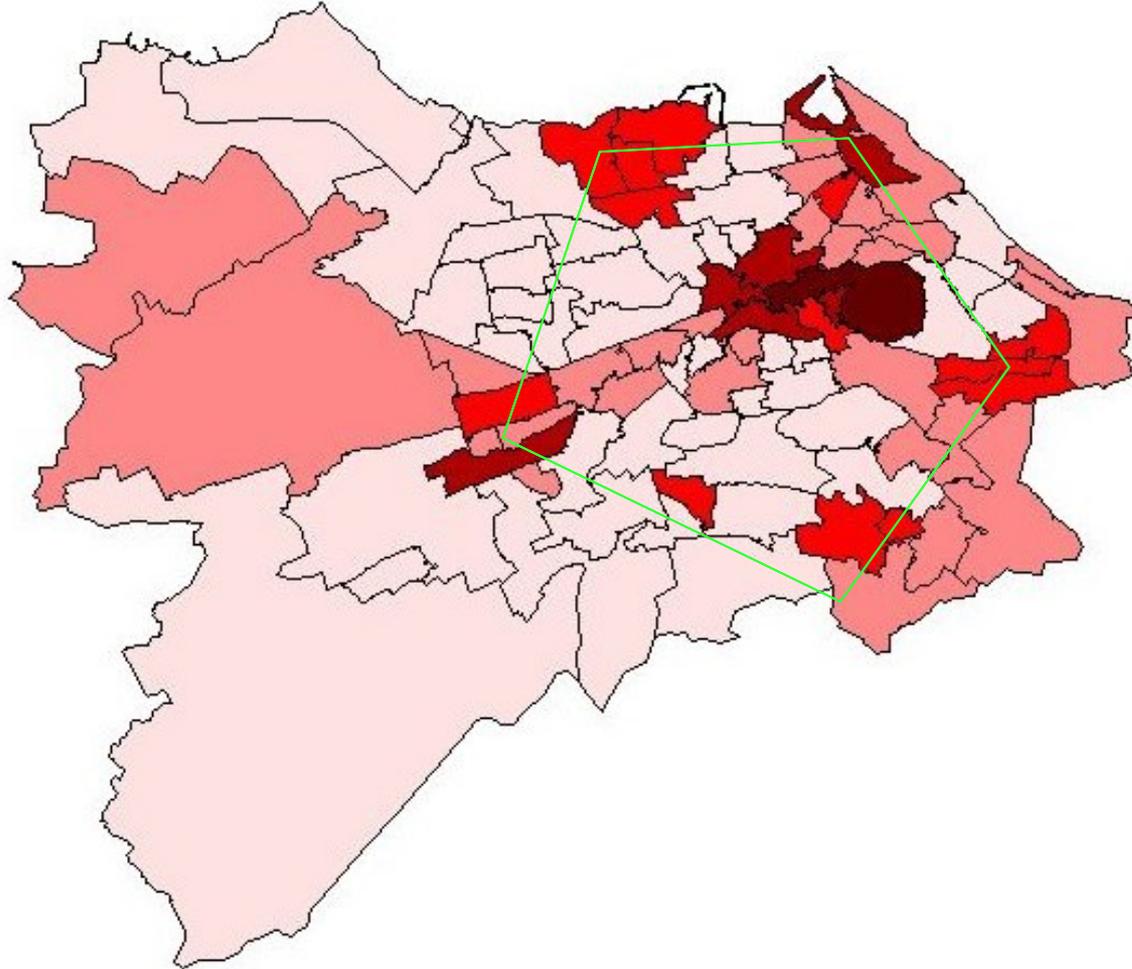
Mapping disorder: Neighbourhood incivilities observed by cohort (age 15)



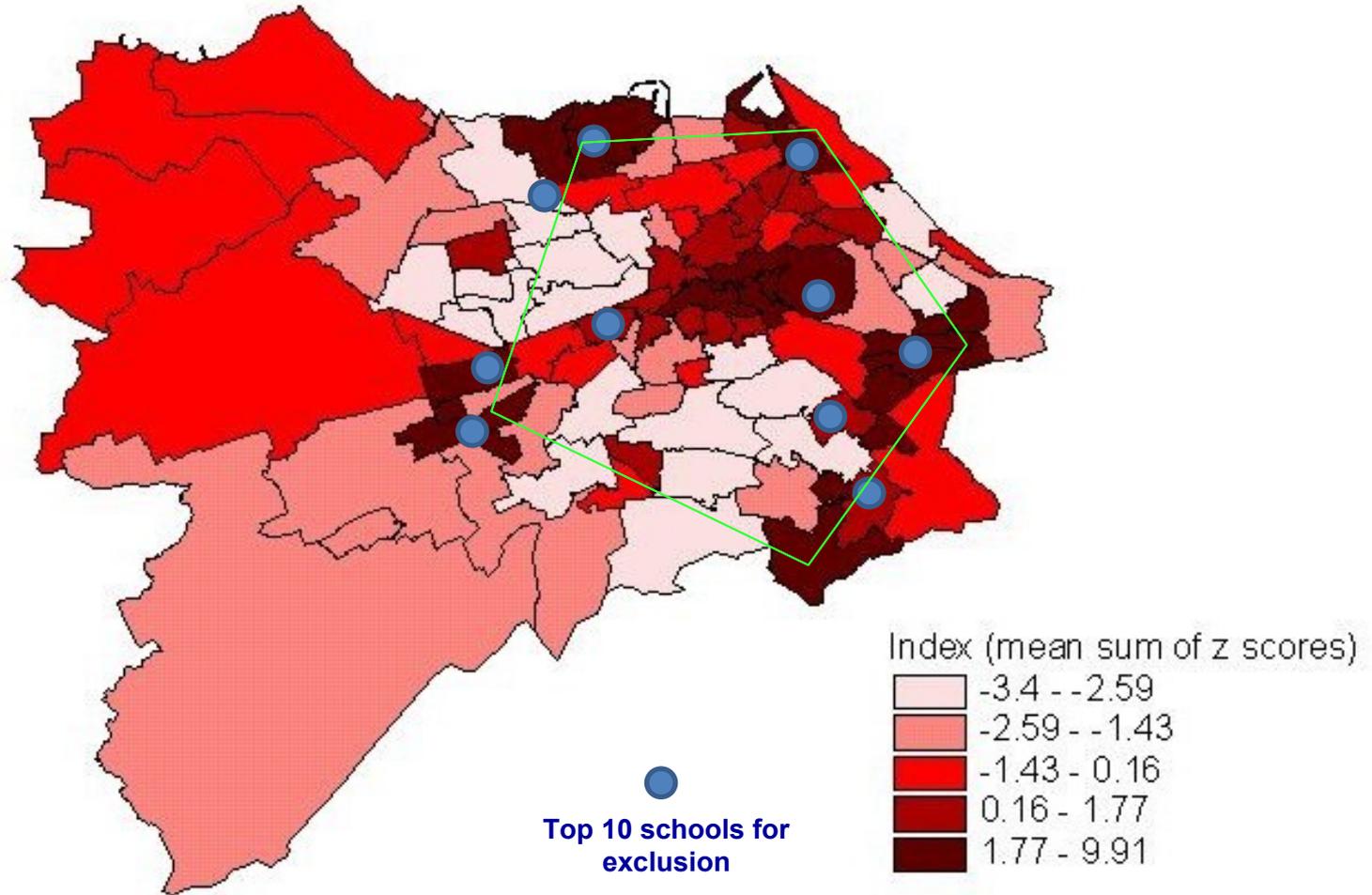
Truancy amongst cohort (age 15)



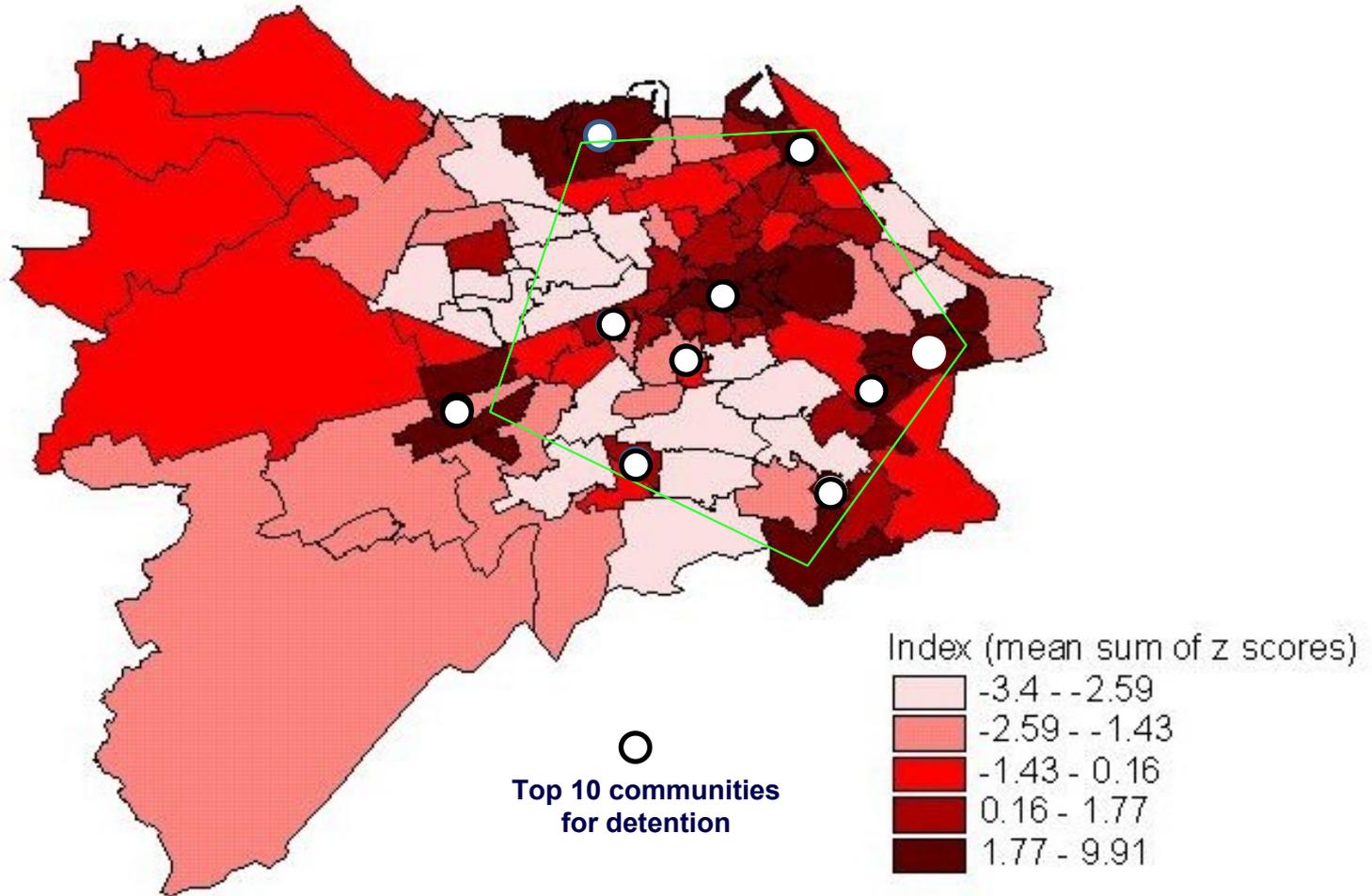
Exclusion amongst cohort (ever)



Mapping inequality: School exclusion across Edinburgh

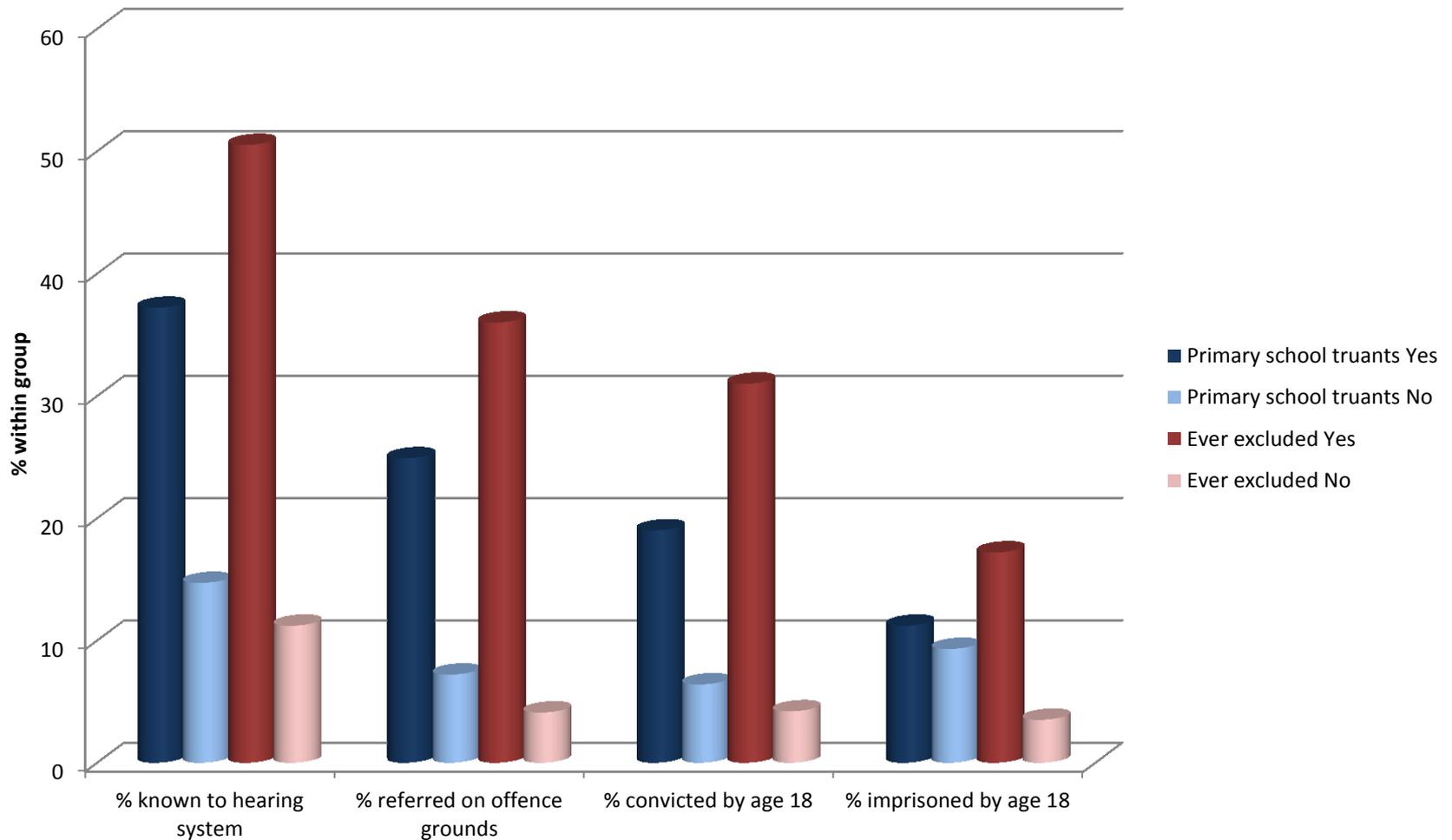


Mapping inequality: Detention across Edinburgh

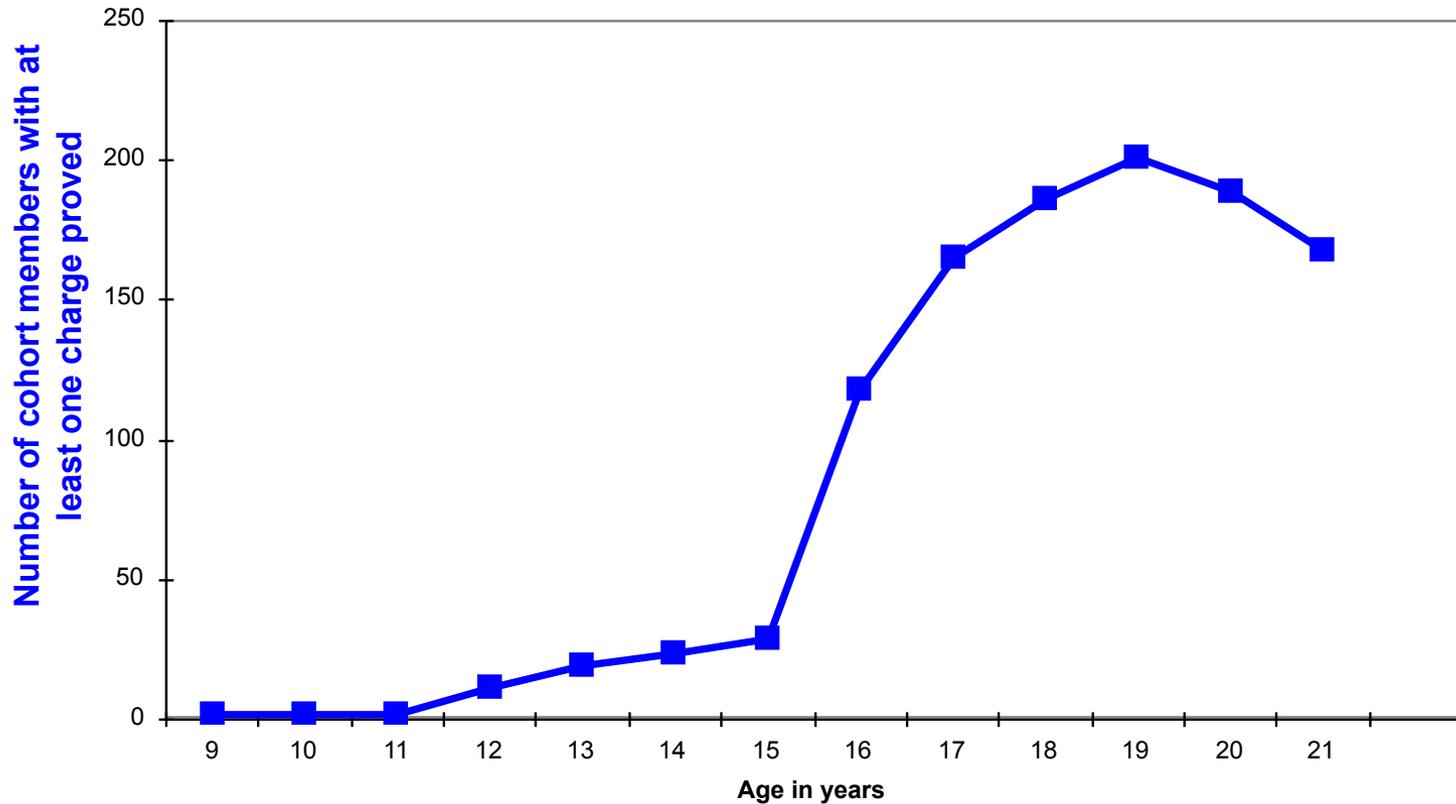


Linking school experience with longer term criminal careers

Early truants & excluded pupils have poor system outcomes



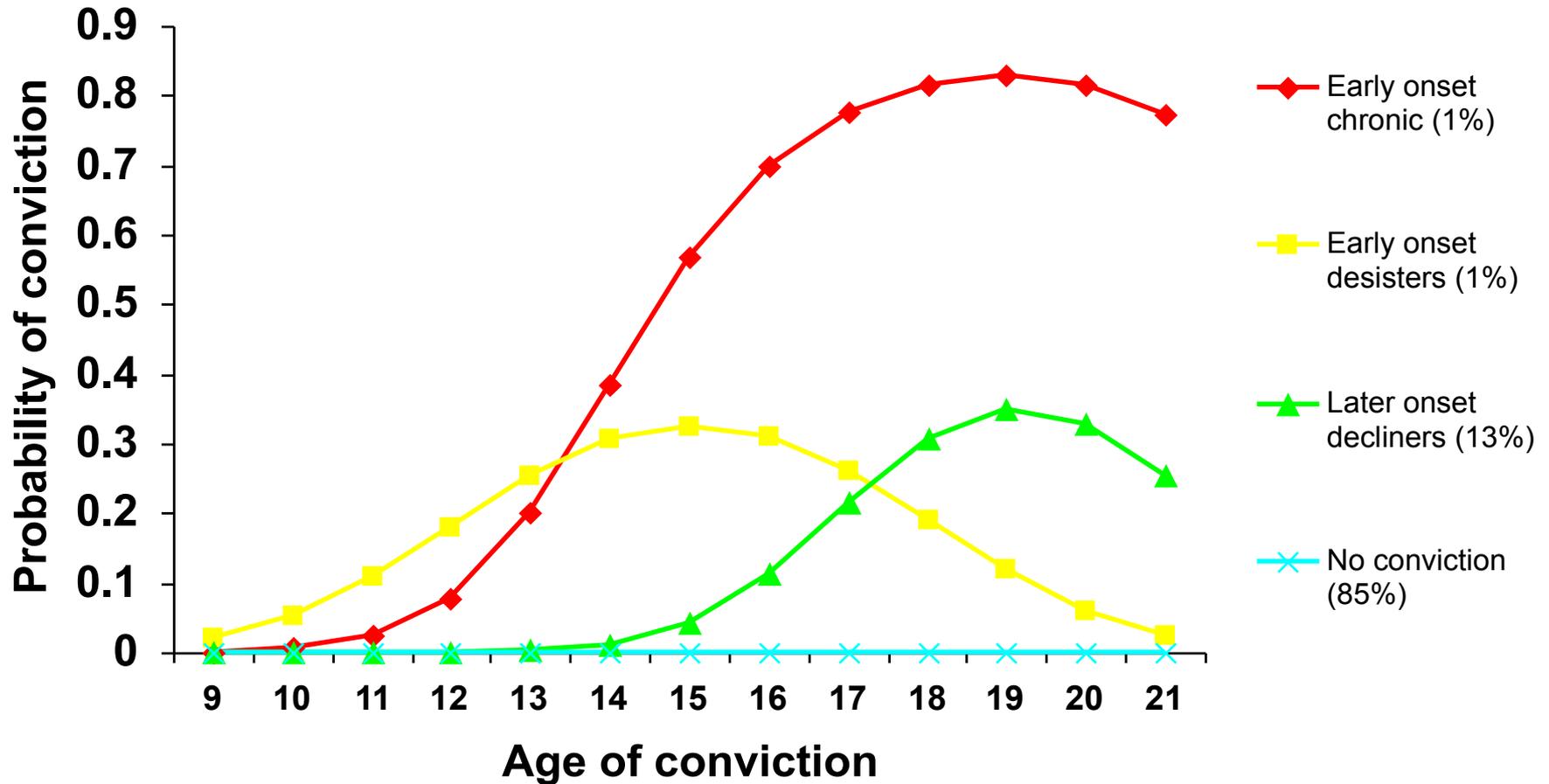
Prevalence of conviction amongst the cohort



Notes: Cohort=3855 whose names were checked against criminal conviction records; self-report data are unweighted.

Probability of conviction for different 'groups' using trajectory modelling

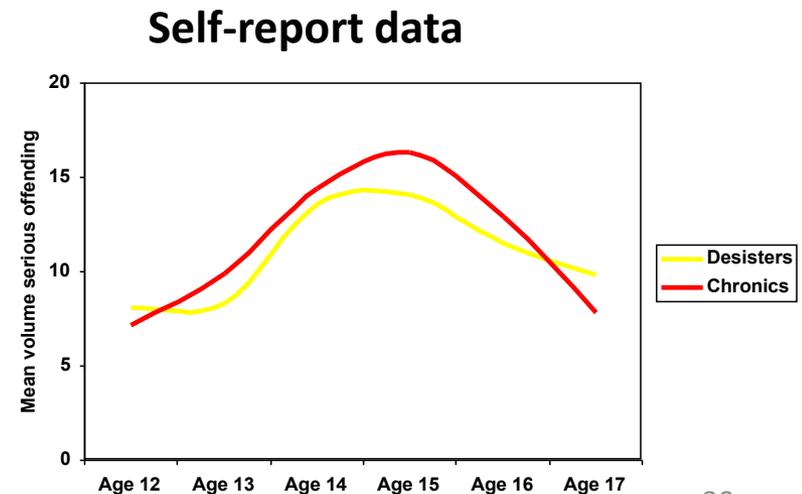
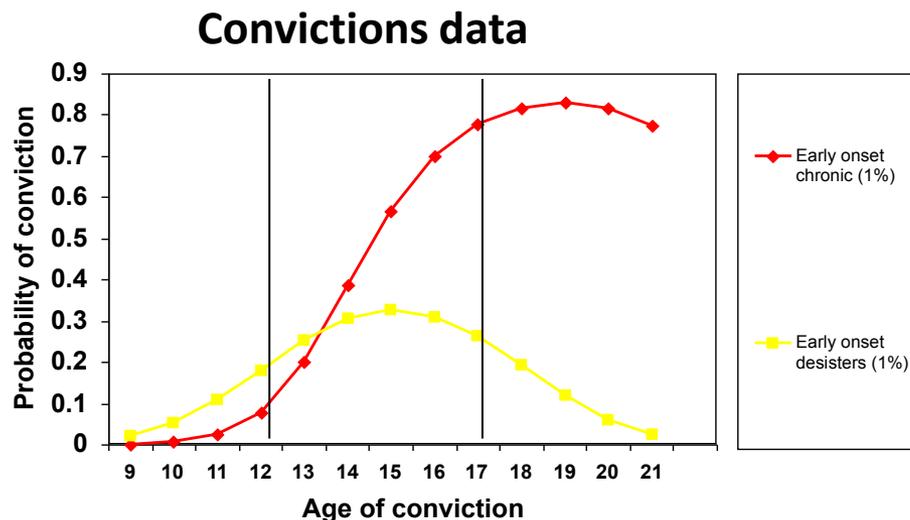
(McAra and McVie, 2010)



Note: Cohort=3855 whose names were checked against criminal conviction records.

How do those who experience early conviction differ at age 12?

- No significant differences on measures of deprivation, family problems, delinquent peers, risky leisure activities, **school problems (truancy, exclusion and bad behaviour)**, personality dimensions or moral attitudes to crime.
- **No significant difference in frequency of serious offending** according to self-reports.



School exclusion and truancy are critical factors in predicting a chronic conviction pathway

- The early onset group that went on to have a pattern of 'chronic' convictions were more likely than the desisters to:
 - truant from school
 - be excluded from school
 - get into trouble with the police
 - and receive statutory supervision from CHS during this period

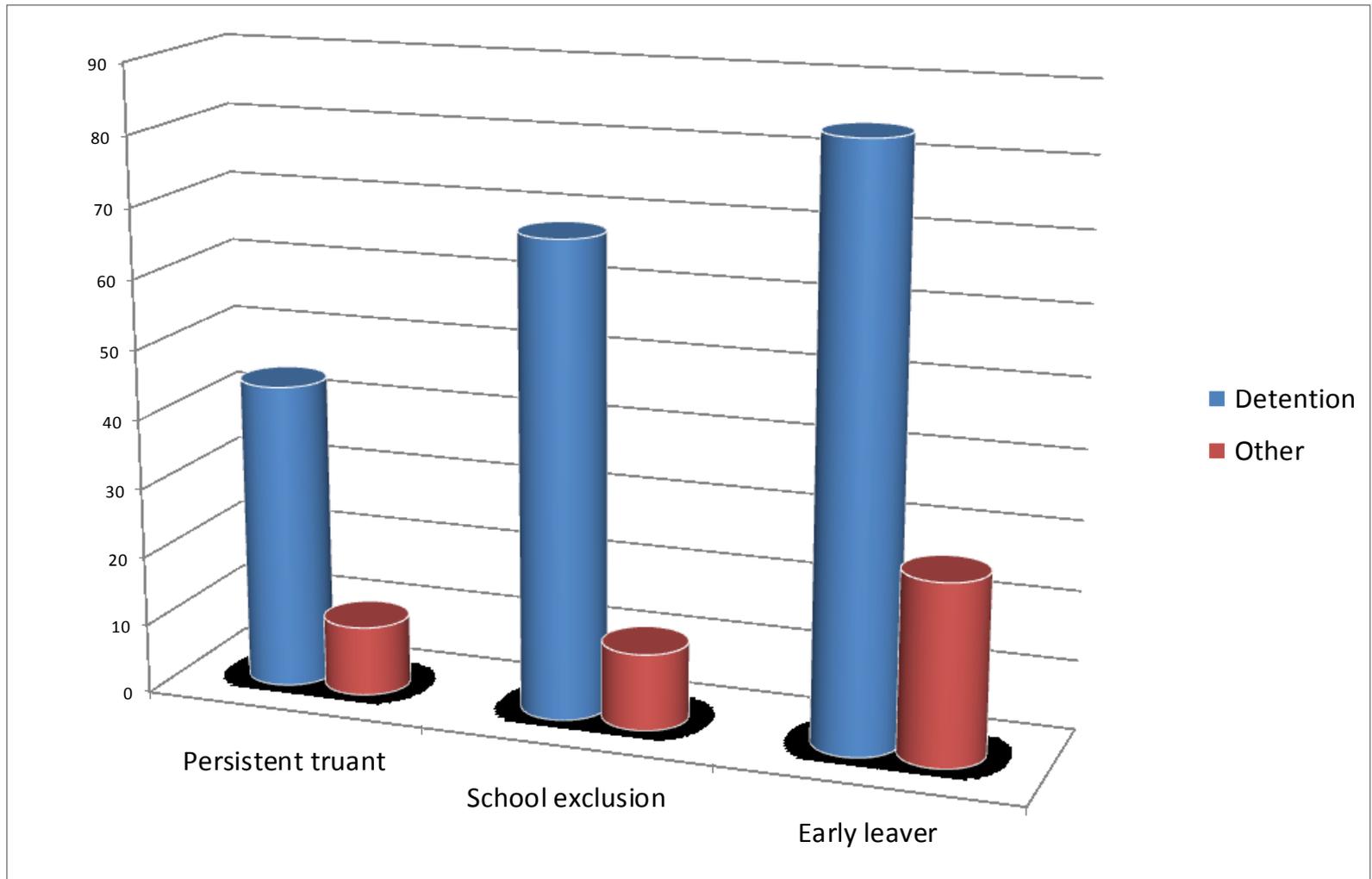
NOTE: the groups did not differ on any of these things at age 12.

School exclusion is a critical factor in predicting detention

Predicting custody by age 24	Odds ratio
Excluded from school by age 15	4.0
Residential care by age 12	4.0
Male	3.5
Offence history includes violence by age 12 (self report)	2.9

Predicting school exclusion at age 15	Odds ratio
Rated by teachers as disruptive at age 13	3.2
Excluded from school at age 12	2.8
Boy	2.4
Live in top 25% most deprived neighbourhoods	2.3
Single parent or non-parental carer	1.6
High volume of bad behaviour at age 15	1.6
Low socio-economic status	1.5

School profile of those detained by age 24



Implications for education systems

- Recent research showing sustained reductions in exclusions is very welcome but the disproportionate use of exclusion for already disadvantaged youths urgently needs to be addressed
- Tackling school-based problems at an early stage is key – early truants and excluded pupils have the worst long term outcomes
- The relationship between truancy, school exclusion and deprivation and disadvantage are significant and require targeted resource
- Change the language from one of ‘exclusion’ to one of ‘inclusion’ and target the resource where it is needed – in schools
- Let’s be more imaginative with education: A full entitlement approach? Sentenced to education?

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