



Designed to Smile Programme

Annual report for the academic year 2023-2024

September 2024

Introduction

[Designed to Smile](#) is the national child oral health improvement programme in Wales. It is underpinned by the scientific evidence of effective interventions to prevent childhood tooth decay, and the knowledge of where and to whom these interventions are most needed, provided by the [Dental Epidemiology Programme for Wales](#).

The programme continues to recover well following suspension of the programme during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, system-wide challenges and budgetary constraints exist which hamper efforts to fully deliver the programme as described in the [Welsh Health Circular \(2017\)](#).

Oral Health within the Healthy Child Wales Programme

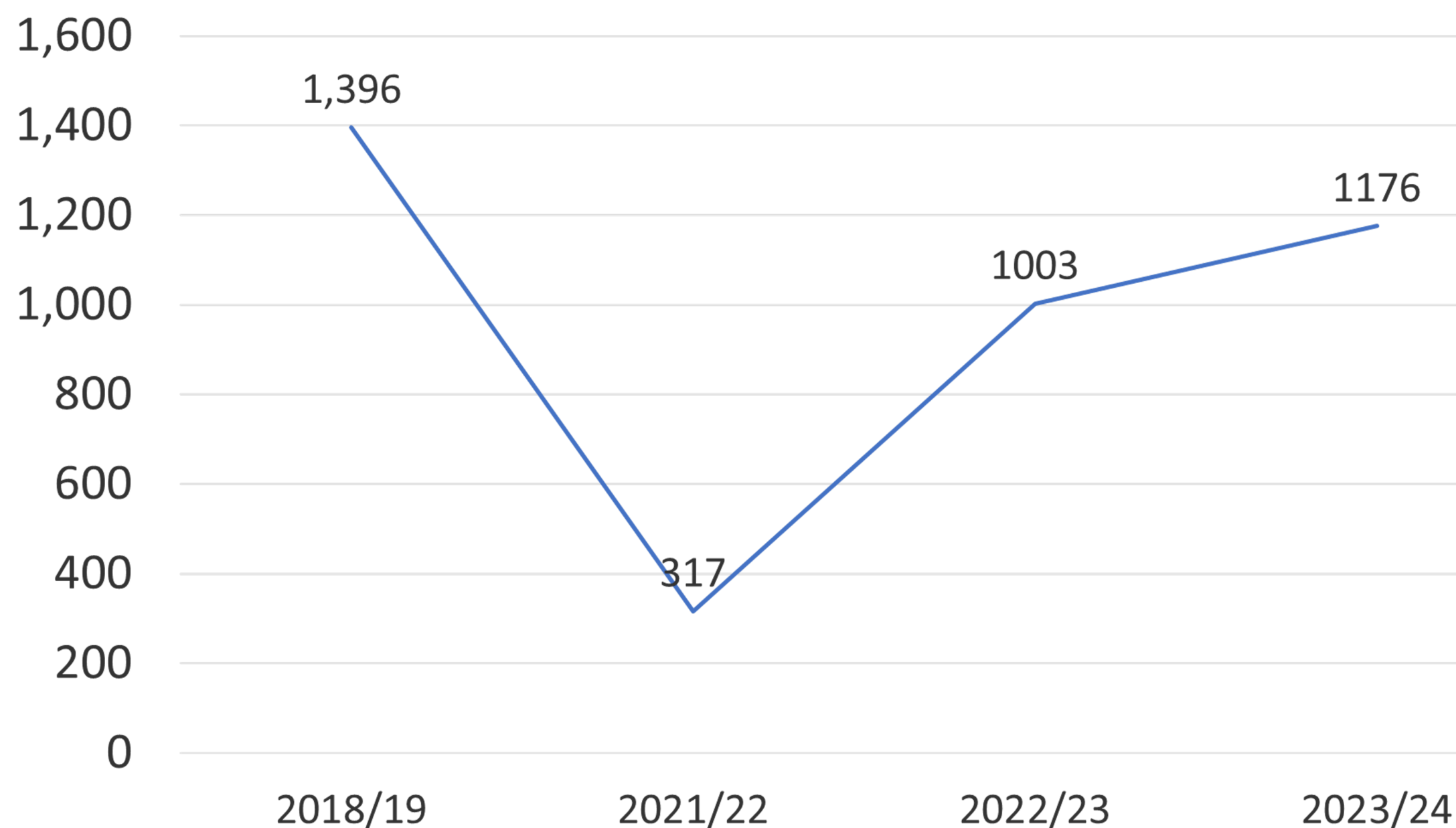
640 health visitors and students were provided with oral health education training (19 sessions). A further **832** professionals from childcare, health and social care received similar training from the Designed to Smile team (27 sessions).

35,544 toothbrushing home packs were distributed by health visitors to families at the Healthy Child Wales scheduled visits. **16,562** feeding trainer cups were also distributed by health visitors to families.



Supervised toothbrushing at nursery and school (1)

Number of nurseries and schools participating



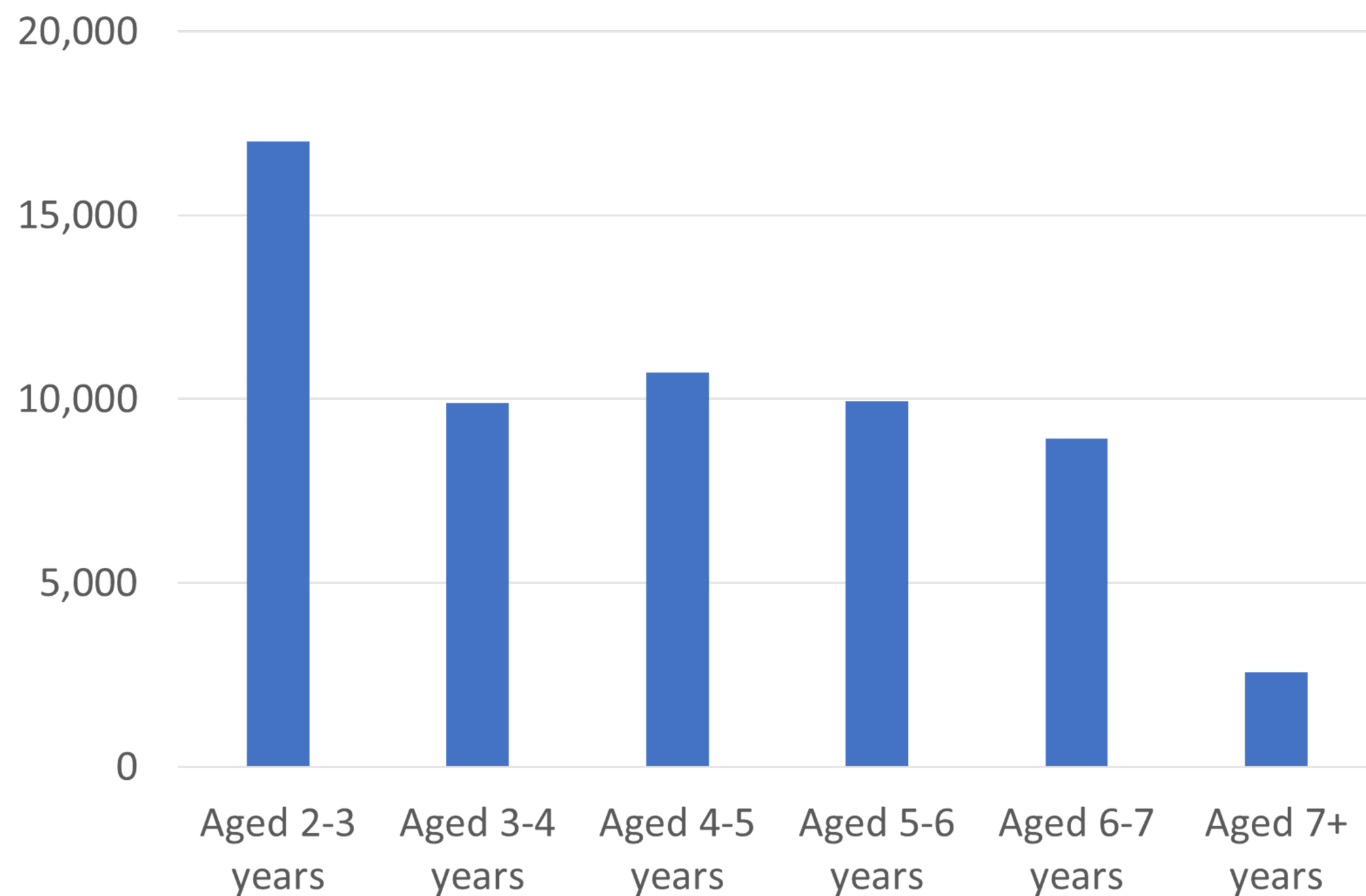
642 (79% of eligible) nurseries and **531** (63% of eligible) schools provided a supervised toothbrushing programme in 2023/24.

4,668 nursery and school staff received training from the Designed to Smile team, to deliver their toothbrushing programme.

86% of settings reported brushing every school day.

3582 quality assurance visits were conducted by the Designed to Smile team during the year.

Supervised toothbrushing at nursery and school (2)



59,079 children participated in a toothbrushing programme at their nursery or primary school in 2023/24.

Average parent/carer consent rate to participate was **89%**.

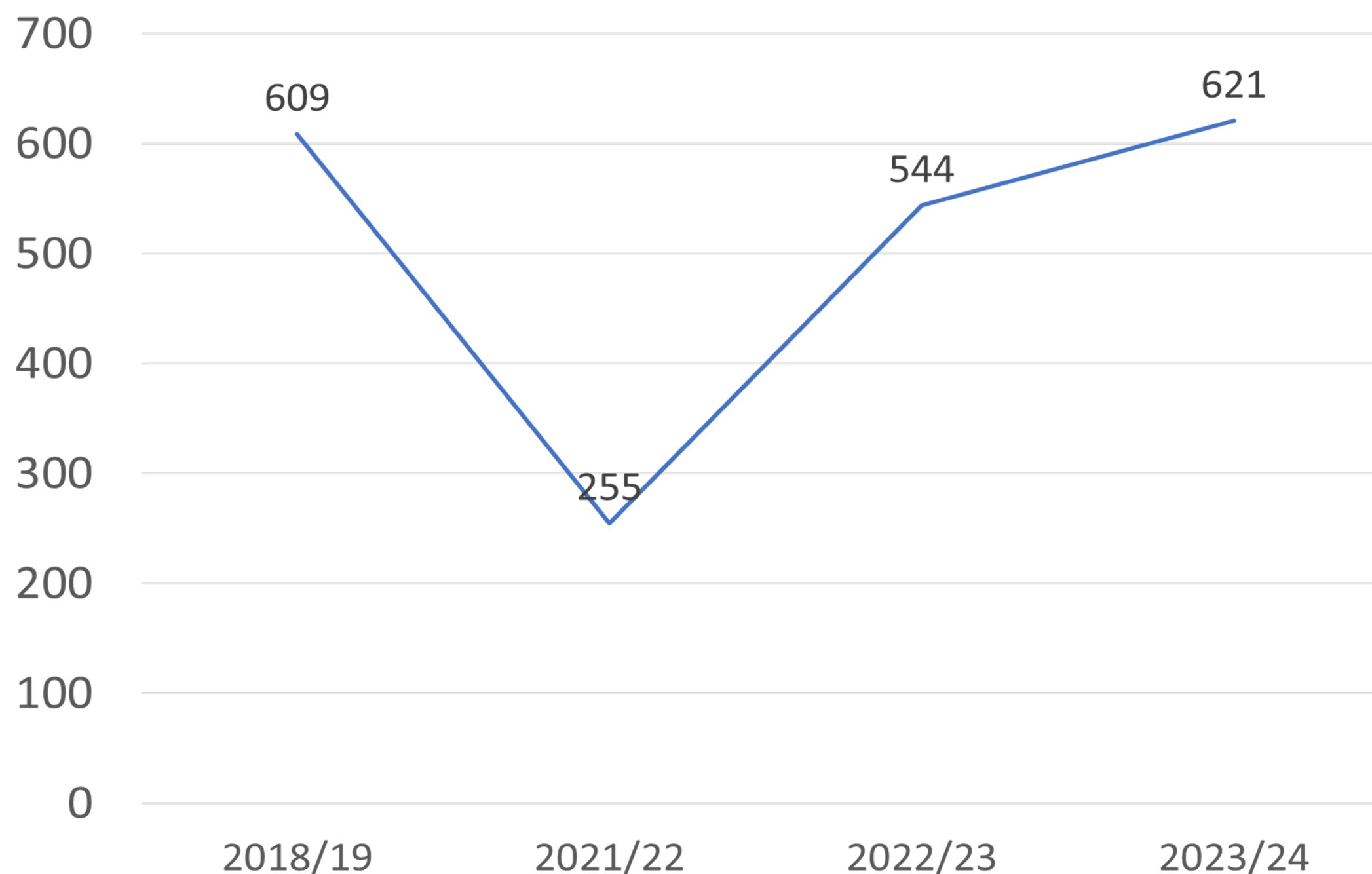


Distribution of toothbrushing home packs

167,695 toothbrushing home packs were distributed at nurseries and schools to children participating in Designed to Smile programme, to encourage toothbrushing twice a day at home.



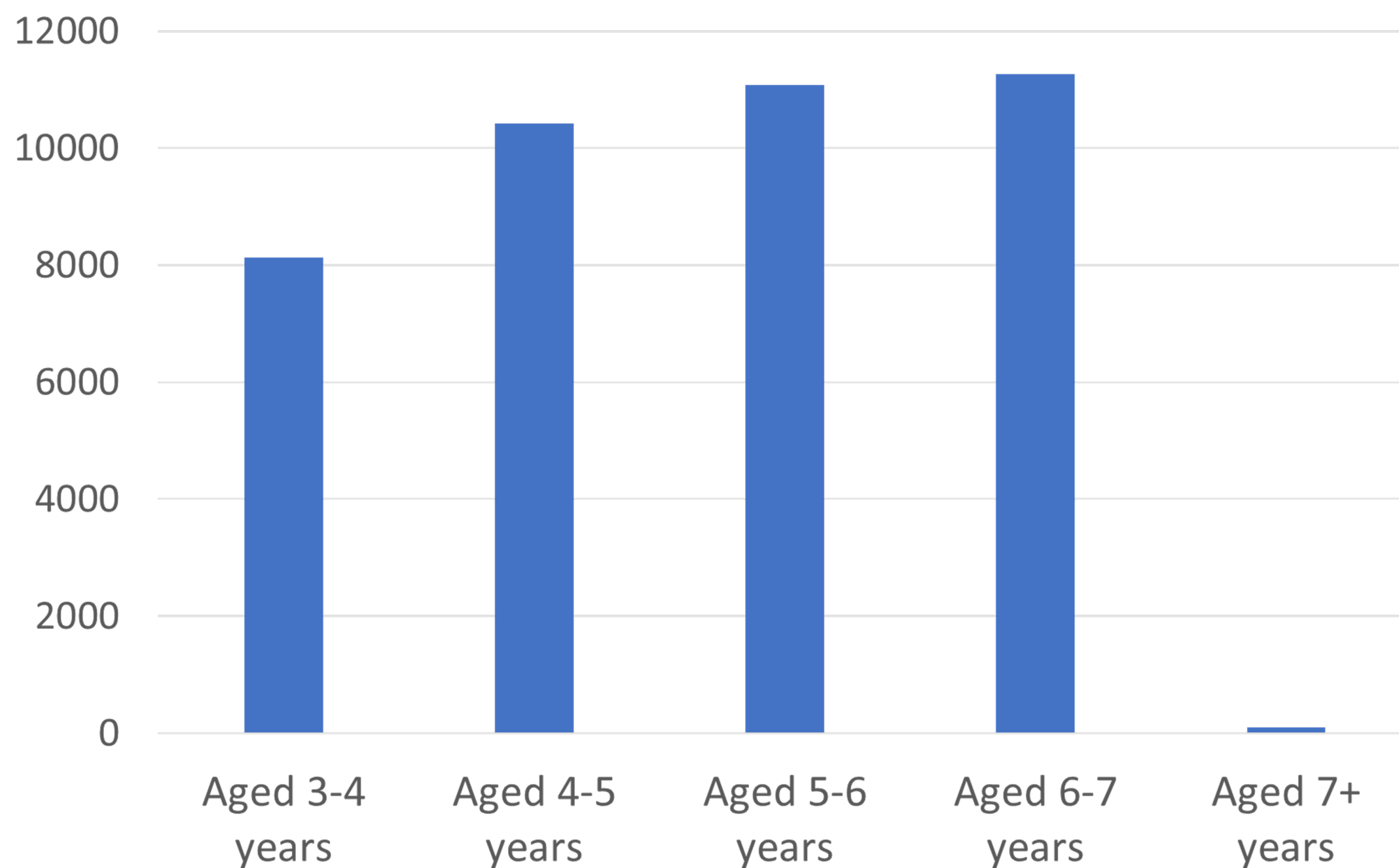
Fluoride varnish application at school (1)



621 settings (75% of eligible schools) facilitate the fluoride varnish programme. **549** settings received two application visits within the academic year, and **72** received only one visit.



Fluoride varnish application at school (2)

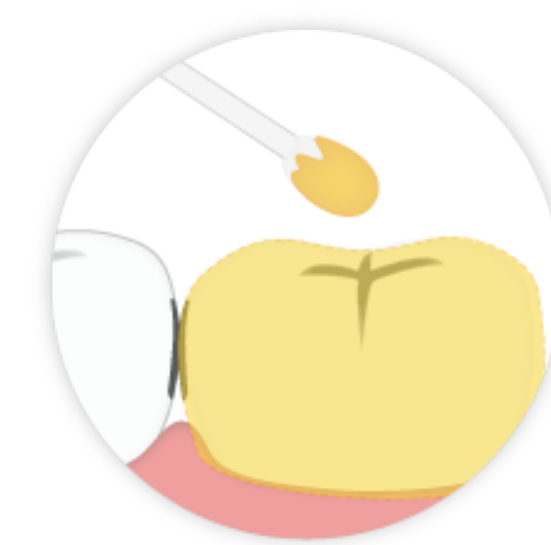


40,997 children received a fluoride varnish application at their school in 2023/24.

Average parent/carer consent rate to participate was **77%**.

14,580 children (36%) received one fluoride varnish application within the academic year, and **26,417** children (64%) received two applications.

8,214 children (20%) had signs of concern relating to dental caries.



Workforce and Expenditure

In April 2024, Designed to Smile had a whole time equivalent of **91.25** team members working in NHS Wales.

A total of **£3,883.793** was spent by NHS Wales to deliver Designed to Smile in 2023-2024.

Many thanks to the Designed to Smile staff in the seven local health boards for collecting and collating this monitoring data; and to all the staff and partners involved in the delivery of the programme.





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