

eis

The Educational  
Institute of Scotland

# Teaching During the Covid-19 Shutdown



**Member Survey Results**

**May 2020**

The Educational Institute of Scotland

## Background

On the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020, all schools in Scotland were closed in order to tackle the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. To continue to deliver some education to the children of key workers, and to vulnerable children, school hubs opened with staff volunteering in significant numbers to support this function. Other teachers took on the role of providing remote teaching and learning, whilst working from home as part of the national lockdown.

Seven weeks into this school shutdown the EIS surveyed its members to find out about the challenges of delivering education remotely as well as in school hubs. Within this survey, questions were designed, also, to understand teacher wellbeing, and what is required as we move into the next academic session in August 2020 on the basis of a “blended learning” approach.

## Methodology

The School Sector Survey was opened on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May and closed at midnight on 19<sup>th</sup> of May. The survey has a total of 41 questions, but owing to survey design, most members answered no more than 30.

In total 26,128 responses were gathered, with a return rate of almost 60%. This turnout shows more than half of all members eligible have completed the survey. The average response time to complete the survey was 14 minutes; however some members noted that it took them longer than this due to the extended answers that they gave.

Eligible members were emailed a link to the survey, which was also promoted on the EIS website and the EIS social media pages. Prior to the survey going live to members, it was issued to a small test sample of members for peer review. As changes were made following this testing phase, all test responses were deleted prior to the survey going live, with all eligible members re-submitting their responses.

The survey was broken down into 5 sections: About You, Hub Support, Remote Learning, Health and Wellbeing and The Next Academic Session. There was also an opportunity at the end for members to note any further comments.

Only a handful of questions were mandatory. This allowed respondents to skip questions as they progressed throughout the survey. This was done to ensure that there was no false recording within the survey, to improve confidence in the results. Some questions also had ‘logic’ applied, meaning that respondents would be redirected to different follow-on questions depending on the answers they gave. Details of how many respondents answered each question are included within this report.

All figures within this report have been rounded to the nearest one decimal place, meaning that some questions may not have a total exacting 100%, with other questions within the survey allowing for multiple responses.

There was considerable opportunity for members to record more detailed answers to the questions posed, either by using comment boxes, or by ticking an “other” option where appropriate. Throughout this report member comments have been included under the corresponding questions. As some questions within the survey elicited thousands of additional comments or responses, the quotes selected are only a snapshot of this wider data but have been chosen to reflect the majority of views captured.

## Margin of Error

Margin of error (also called confidence interval) indicates the level of certainty with which you can expect your survey results to reflect the views from the overall population. Surveying is always a balancing act where you use a smaller group (your survey respondents) to represent a much larger one (the target market or total population).

Margin of error is often used as a way of measuring how effective a survey is. The smaller the margin of error, the more confidence you may have in your results. The bigger the margin of error, the farther they can stray from the views of the total population. One way in which to reduce the margin of error is to increase the sample size.

Using the full eligible membership as our baseline figure, the margin of error with our sample of 26,128 is less than one percent<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Survey Monkey, Margin of Error Calculator [https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/margin-of-error-calculator/?ut\\_source=mp&ut\\_source2=sample-size-calculator&ut\\_source3=inline&ut\\_ctatext=margin%2520of%2520error%2520calculator](https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/margin-of-error-calculator/?ut_source=mp&ut_source2=sample-size-calculator&ut_source3=inline&ut_ctatext=margin%2520of%2520error%2520calculator)

## Section 1 – About You Findings

### About You

The first section of the survey asked respondents to fill in key details about themselves. The answers given in these opening sections give an indication of who our members are and what they teach. Whilst these answers provide insight into EIS teacher members when looked at on their own, they can also be analysed alongside other questions within this survey to provide information on how different sections of EIS membership responded to certain issues.

Within the survey, members were asked whether they taught in primary, secondary or special schools (with the ability to select more than one option as appropriate), with secondary school teachers then also being asked what subject(s) they taught. Members were asked, also, to state what their substantive post is from a range of options, and which local authority they worked in.

The questions on member characteristics were compulsory, to ensure that only eligible members filled in the survey, as well as ensuring that there was a large sample to allow for disaggregation. Where the sample size was lower than 1,000 these have not been disaggregated to ensure confidence in the results.

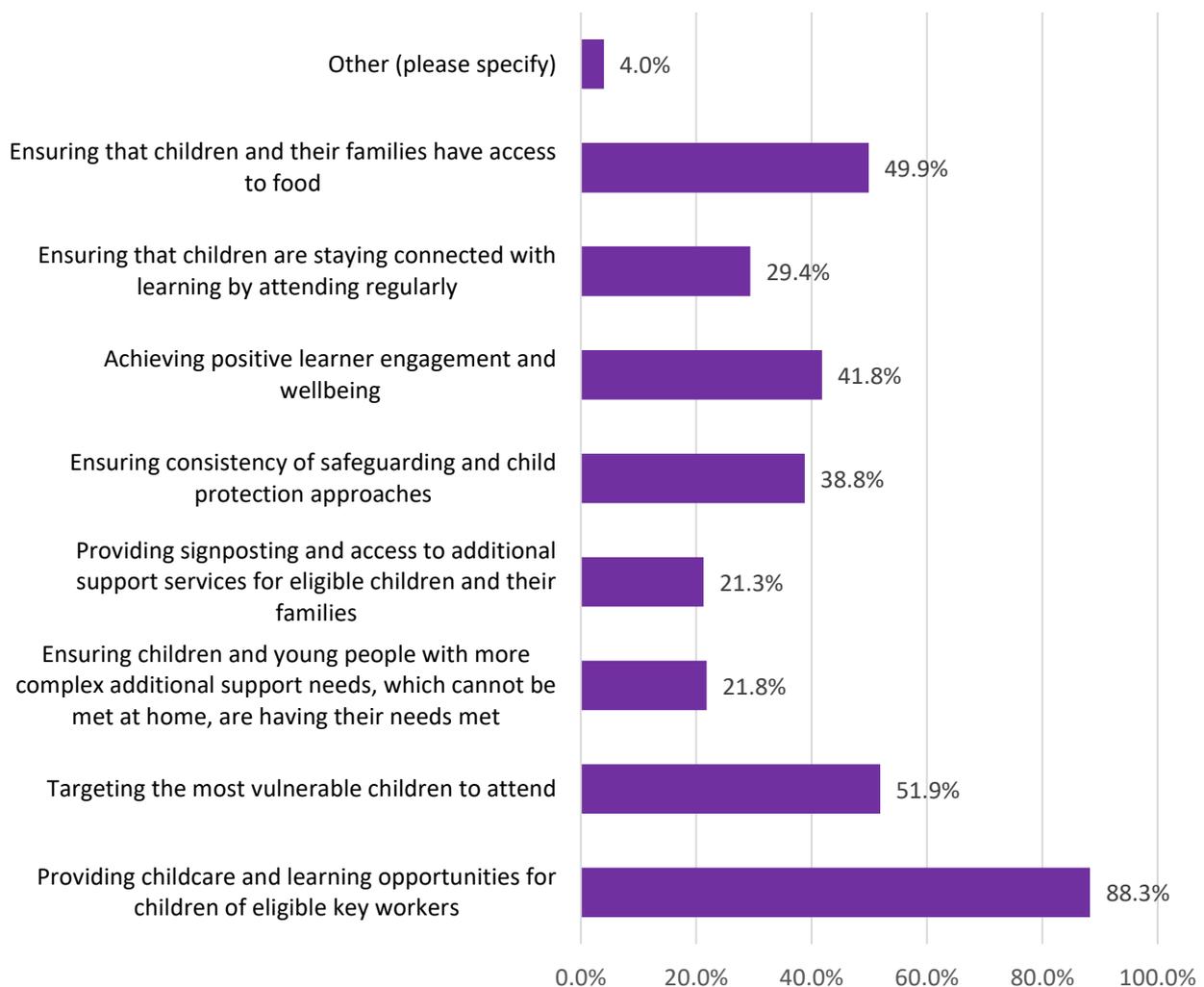
Where useful, results have been refined to illustrate nuances in response based on indicators such as sector worked in, post held or any other relevant characteristic.

## Section 2 – School Hubs

The first question within the school hubs section asked members about the extent of their involvement in local hubs. 7% of members said they had been involved in the planning of Hub learning and support, 28% said they had been involved in the teaching within a Hub, and 65% said they had not been involved in any aspect of Hub provision.

Those who had been involved in either planning or teaching, were then asked which aspects had been delivered successfully. Figure 1 below shows their views.

**Figure 1: “Which the following objectives of Hub provision have been delivered well in your Hub? (please tick all that apply)” responses<sup>2</sup>**



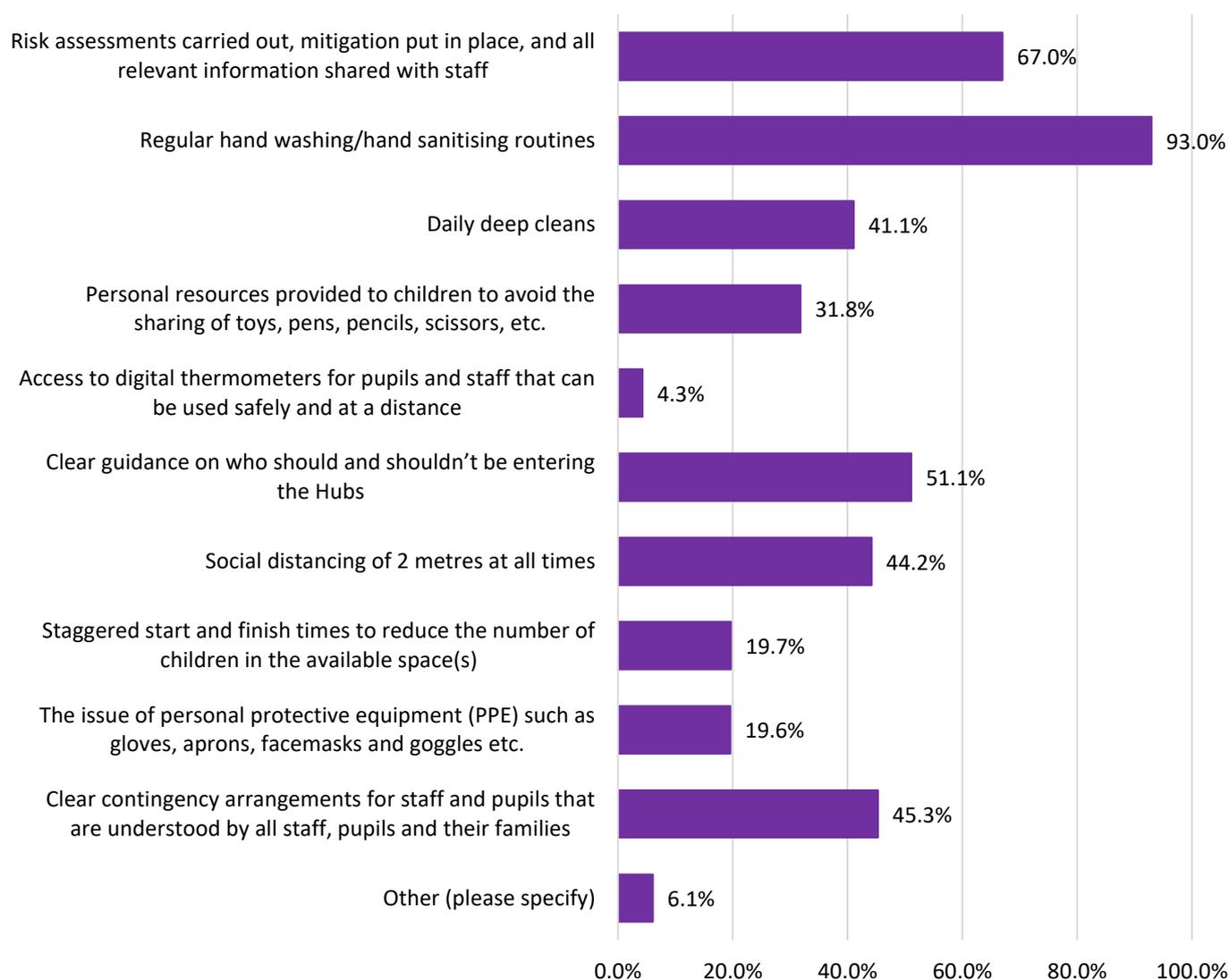
Total Responses: 8,525

<sup>2</sup> Respondents were asked to tick all that apply

Those who indicated “other” as an answer choice highlighted the importance of the Hubs as a childcare option and to provide free schools meals. Many reported that education had been a secondary function, but that the Hubs had been used, also, to prepare materials for wider home learning.

Respondents involved in local Hub provision were then asked which health and safety measures had been introduced to ensure the safety of all staff and pupils. Again, respondents were asked to tick all that applied, to enable better understanding of which measures had been more widely implemented. Figure 2 below shows their responses in more detail.

**Figure 2: “What health and safety measures were introduced to ensure the safety of staff and pupils within the Hub provision you’ve been working in?” responses**



Total Responses: 7,991

The findings from figure 2 highlight that there is inconsistency in the safety measures that have been implemented across local Hubs. Within the “other” comments, many highlighted that more PPE equipment

was becoming available, such as the availability of masks, after relying only on gloves and aprons. Many members mentioned their concerns around the poor amount of PPE they had been provided with. Others highlighted that social distancing measures had been introduced, frequently with clear markings in the room, but that children often struggled to adhere to this, as they naturally moved towards other children and staff, even in small classes.

At the end of this section, members were encouraged to provide further comments on their experiences. Almost 2,500 additional responses were logged with the following quotes included as a representative sample:

- “Social distancing measures were put in place in advance (tables spread out, timetable staggered) but especially with pupils of primary school age it was not possible to socially distance. Some needed to have their laces tied repeatedly. In the gym hall equipment was shared frequently. It’s a petri dish.”
- “Difficult to schedule learning due to the vast diversity in age ranges.”
- “Not an easy process with lack of clear strategic direction and guidance from the central staffing, particularly around clarity and guidance in PPE and policies and procedures.”
- “Very difficult to observe social distancing although pupils were clearly trying. Difficult for me as well as the job involves helping children closely with ICT problems or even helping a 6 year-old with putting on painting overalls.”
- “Schools do not have the appropriate PPE equipment required to keep pupils and staff safe.”

## Section 3 – Remote Learning

The next section of the survey asked respondents about their experiences of delivering remote learning. This section explores the barriers that EIS members have faced, as well as their perceptions of the challenges that their pupils have experienced in continuing their learning online.

The biggest barrier that members reported was low pupil participation, with over 60% recording this, followed by the challenges in delivering the practical elements of the coursework. This highlights the challenge of keeping students effectively engaged in their learning, when working remotely. Figure 3 below shows these results in full.

**Figure 3: “What have been the barriers, if any, to you delivering home learning?” responses**



Total responses: 23,714

Around 10% of respondents said that this question wasn't applicable to them, and 11% stated "other". Of the "other" responses, members highlighted numerous additional concerns such as teaching their own children at home, having to use their own equipment and a lack of support in setting up online platforms and dealing with behaviour issues.

Less than 1% of respondents highlighted that they did not have their reasonable adjustments in place, as per their normal working arrangements. Almost 10% of members stated that their poor mental or physical health stood as a barrier to delivering remote learning. Whilst these are a small figure overall, this highlights the many equality issues that must be fully addressed to support teachers working remotely.

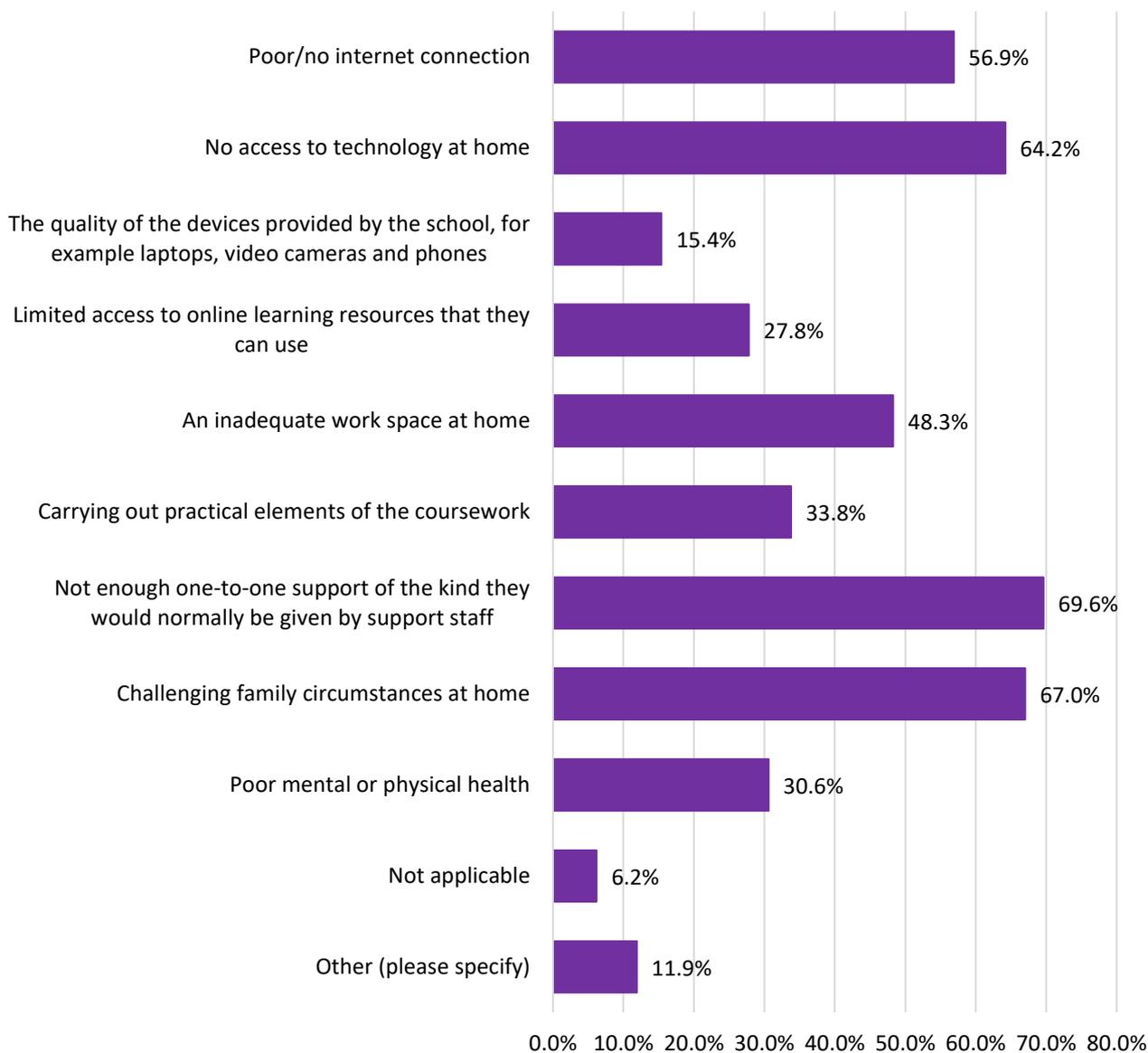
Almost 5,000 additional comments were left under this question. Here are some member comments, which represent the additional challenges members are facing.

- "I am trying to teach from home with limited space whilst also trying to help my young daughter with home schooling which she is finding very difficult. Emotions are very high; we are all getting under each other's feet. Video calls and conferences are challenging as I have no real space to do this privately."
- "I find myself working for long hours, trying to adapt materials to suit online learning and also learning how to use the functionality of Microsoft teams."
- "Very difficult delivering practical subjects online. Music - pupils don't always have access to instruments. Drama relies on group work."
- "It is important to recognise that everyone's personal circumstances are different, and having four children and two working parents, it has been a struggle to find a balance between work, home learning and home. In the event of teachers being asked to return to schools the impact for those who are parents and carers must be carefully considered."
- "Technical issues with Seemis constantly. My home laptop is so slow that it takes over an hour to do a task that would take 20 mins on a normal work computer. We are still expected to contact parents and pupils without being provided with mobile phones to do so (we have just been told to withhold our number if we do not want parents and pupils having this)."
- "It has taken time to adjust and learn new skills in using technology in order to start online teaching. Having time with children at home and elderly parents to support."
- "The lack of regular dialogue with colleagues and pupils makes minor issues into much larger ones. Things that would have been solved through a short conversation become "official" incidents through the necessity of email."

The next question asked members to think about the challenges facing their pupils in terms of participating in home learning. Whilst only 20% of members said that poor, or no access to the internet was a barrier for them, over half of respondents stated this was a barrier to their pupils. Over 60% said that having no access to technology was also a key challenge.

Whilst challenging home circumstances was highlighted as an issue for just under 10% of our members, almost 70% stated this was a key barrier for their pupils as shown in Figure 4.

**Figure 4: “What have been the barriers, if any, to you delivering home learning?” responses**



Total responses: 23,714

These findings were also broken down by sector, to determine if there are any differences in sector experiences. Figure 5 shows that the most common barrier noted by members across each of these 3 sectors was a lack of one-to-one support, that would normally be delivered by support staff. There were some notable differences across some of the other areas however, with around 28% of Primary school members highlighting the practical elements of the course being a challenge, compared to almost half of all secondary school respondents.

Poor mental or physical health was almost twice as likely to be reported as an obstacle to learning by those working in the Special education sector than those in the Primary sector. From those that ticked “other” as an option many highlighted the challenges of delivering education to children with Additional Support Needs, as well as the challenging family circumstances that may have been exacerbated through the lockdown measures. Some members highlighted that their pupils were not engaging, but couldn’t identify

why, whilst others noted that many children and young people were sharing devices with other household members and therefore not always contactable or able to complete tasks.

**Figure 5: “What have been the barriers, if any, to you delivering home learning?” responses by sector**

| Answer Choices   | Primary education | Secondary education | Special education |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Poor /no internet connection   | 55.7%             | 62.6%               | 43.9%             |
| No access to technology at home  | 65.2%             | 66.8%               | 52.3%             |
| The quality of the devices provided by the school, for example laptops, video cameras and phones   | 13.1%             | 20.1%               | 12.8%             |
| Limited access to online learning resources that they can use  | 29.1%             | 25.3%               | 36.4%             |
| An inadequate work-space at home (e.g. a lack of privacy due to overcrowding at home, lack of desk and chair to work comfortably, etc.)  | 47.2%             | 53.6%               | 40.5%             |
| Carrying out practical elements of the coursework  | 27.9%             | 45%                 | 32.9%             |
| Not enough one-to-one support of the kind that they would normally be given by learning support staff  | 72.6%             | 67.1%               | 75.6%             |
| Challenging family circumstances at home (e.g. illness, financial problems, limited access to food, limited space for learning, addiction, relationship tensions, domestic abuse etc.) | 70.3%             | 64.4%               | 67.2%             |
| Poor mental or physical health   | 25.7%             | 38.5%               | 44.5%             |
| Not applicable   | 5.9%              | 4.5%                | 6.6%              |
| Other (please specify)   | 11.4%             | 11.6%               | 17.1%             |

Below is a small sample of the thousands of additional comments that were left in response to this question.

- “These are challenging times for everyone. Some children are in large families and sharing of technology or lack of technology is difficult. Some parents are struggling every day to get their children to work. Some families are making no contact although we are trying our best to keep in contact with them.”
- “Pupils have struggled with understanding systems such as teams which they have not previously used in a subject such as Art and Design.”
- “Children whose parents in poverty and afflicted by poor health or substance misuse have little help in supporting home learning.”
- “Our pupils have done really well at accessing work at home. Obviously it has been challenging for some families, and there are a few who haven't been engaging much with learning, so we are trying to encourage and support these families.”
- “It was a very quick turn-around for pupil to gain access to online learning and resources. While the school did their best to set pupils up with team and online apps etc. I think a lot of our pupils are

struggling to access work from home especially when so many of them need that one to one support and engagement.”

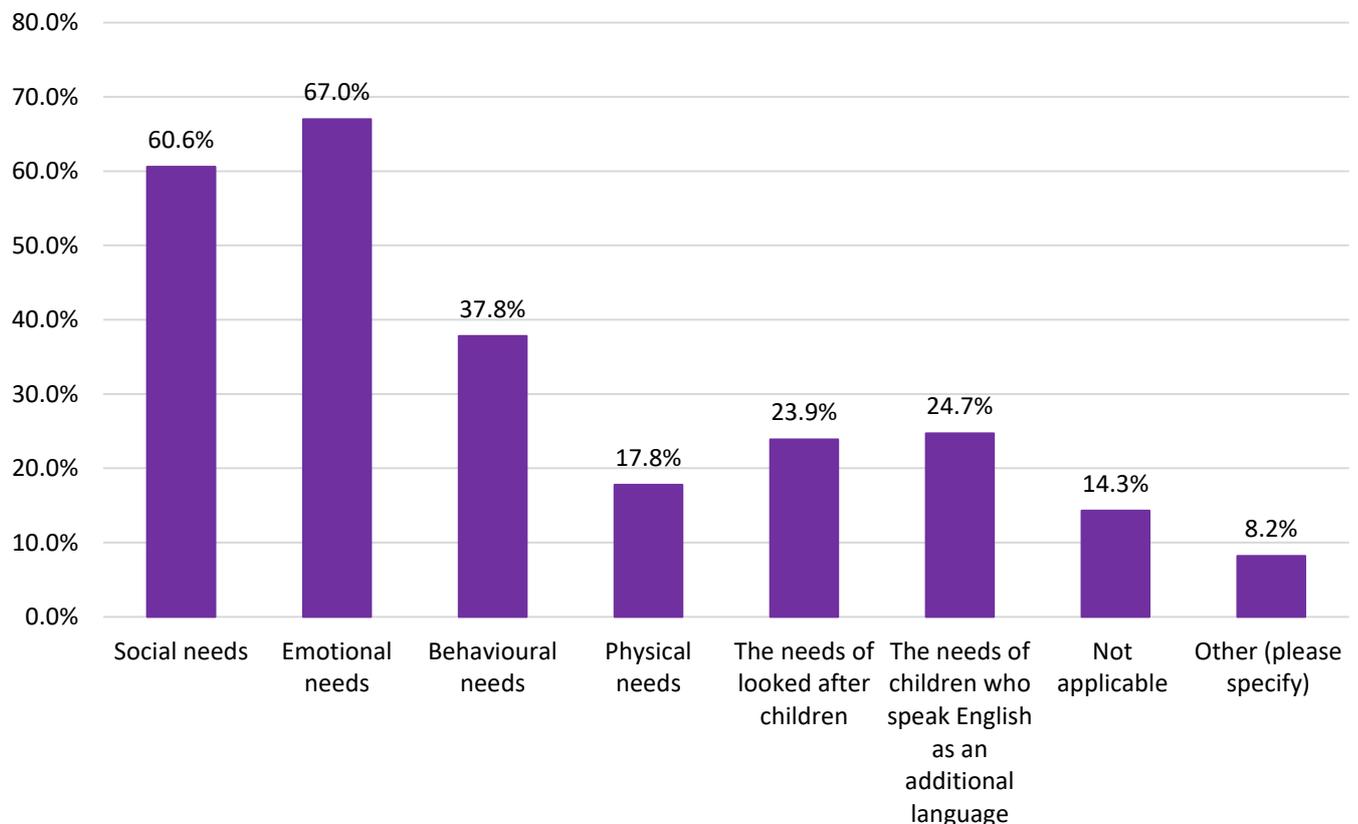
- “Lack of routine, ability of parents to read/guide learning, younger siblings and therefore busy household.”

### Meeting Additional Support Needs

When asked if the children with additional support needs in their class are having their needs met since moving to online learning, only 11% of members said yes. 50% of respondents said that they didn’t believe their needs had been met, with 31% saying they didn’t know and the rest stating it wasn’t applicable to their role.

When asked which needs were not being met, emotional and social needs came top, with over 60% of respondents noting this. Under the “other” comments, members stated that many children were not having their basic educational needs met, as well as not having the parental support that they need, for varying reasons. Figure 6 below details these results in full.

**Figure 6: “Where have been the greatest challenges in meeting the needs of children with Additional Support Needs since the school shutdown? The greatest challenges have been in addressing:” responses**



Total responses: 22,418

Meeting the needs of children with additional support needs was highlighted as a key issue by members. Many stated that in order to support their pupils they also had to offer support to their parents and carers in order to deliver their education at home. Members also fed back on the challenges of delivering one-to-one support to the children and young people who had identified additional support needs, and a collapse in routine which many children need. Below is a very small sample of the, almost 4,000, comments that members submitted.

- “I’ve been told I’m not allowed to deliver one to one lessons remotely because of the council’s health and safety policy.”
- “We are doing what we can. Contacting families as well as communicating with the children through home learning platform. The children with social and emotional needs have a very low level of engagement. Communication from parents has allowed us to send feedback and lets us suggest activities linked to children’s interests. The social and emotional support part is very challenging.”
- “Need clarity and support in the protection of support staff and what I can be asking them to be doing in order to support pupils individually remotely. As far as I am aware there is little directive coming from their own unions advising how to continue to do their job. I feel as line manager I have a duty to look out for this group of staff which if deployed effectively will assist workload of teachers.”
- “It is difficult to get them to engage. The success of working with these children is working closely with them. Not remotely from home.”
- “Some families are not getting breaks from each other, that they would normally benefit from. Anxiety levels are being raised when little things go wrong (difficulty uploading work, slow internet, different/several ways of communicating).”
- “Very dyslexic pupils who need a greater amount of support to access written instructions have struggled greatly to engage particularly where this is combined with social family issues. Children with ADHD have struggled with the amount of screen time as this can lead to heightened behaviours. In some cases online learning has been a very positive experience for some of our ASD children and we need to learn from this as we go back to more formal schooling.”
- “Parents have reported that it has taken a very long time for the children to adjust and settle to the point where they have felt comfortable introducing school home learning. Some only in the last week or so.”
- “Children with EAL, their parents, require an interpreter. Especially at Early level. Those parents are not able to access the activities. We use Emotionworks to try and meet the emotional needs of the children but it’s not as effective as one-2-one.”

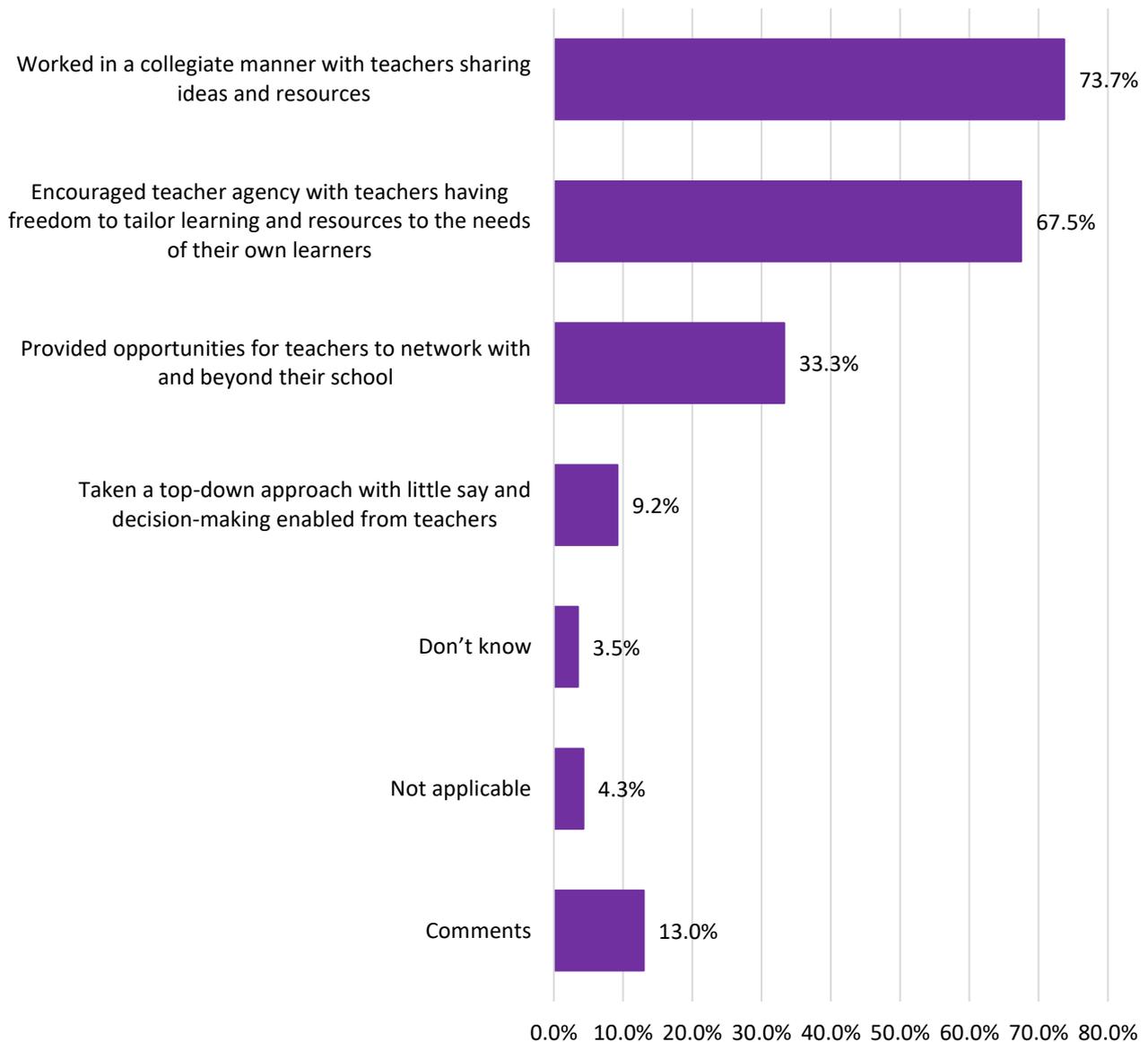
## **Managing Remote Learning**

In order to better understand how the move to online learning had been delivered across different schools and local authorities, the survey included several questions on teacher perceptions of how remote learning had been implemented. Overall, members fed back that they believed that the move towards online and remote learning had been done collegiately, with teacher agency encouraged.

Figure 7 outlines member views on how teaching materials were created, designed and shared following the school closures. Many of the additional comments that were left by members reflect on the peer-to-peer support that has been prevalent during their move to home working. Some members suggested that they

would welcome greater feedback from parents on how the online resources have been used. Others suggested that stronger guidance was needed from their local authority or from national government.

**Figure 7: “Whilst creating, designing and sharing online learning and teaching materials has your school:” responses**

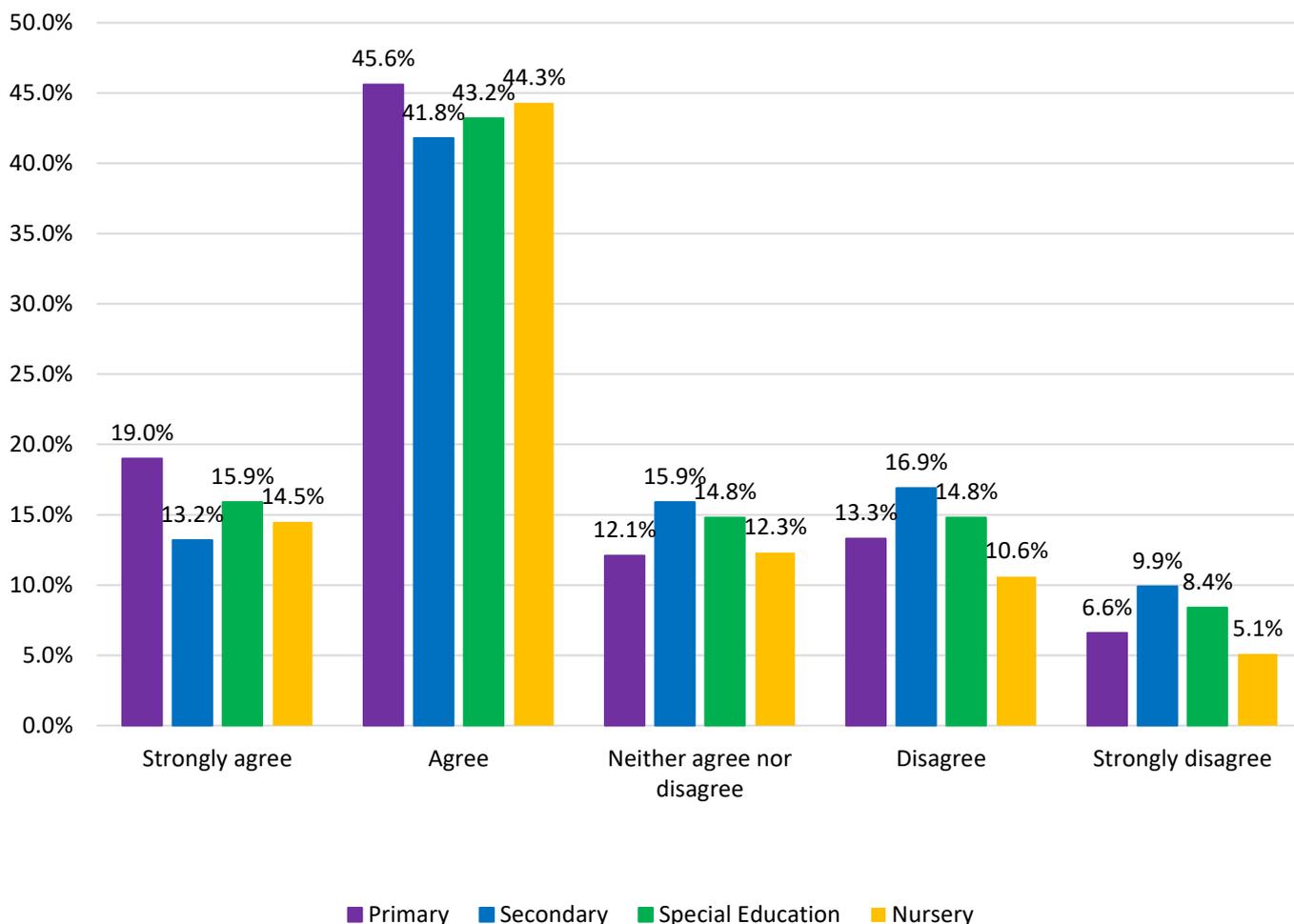


Total responses: 22,632

Just over 76% of respondents said they had engaged in professional learning, for example - professional reading and courses or webinars to help them deliver online learning and home working. Of those who had completed professional learning, 44% said this had been delivered by their school, and 37% said it was through their local authority. Other providers named were, the EIS, Education Scotland, GTCS, TES and various universities and online learning delivered through Eventbrite. Many members stated that they had completed professional learning through their own personal reading and online searches.

Members were then asked a series of questions which explored their perceptions of how successfully remote learning had been managed within their school. This included management of expectations from both parents and senior staff within their school. The following figures show member views on each of these areas, and with disaggregated data included where statistically significant.

**Figure 8: “How far do you agree with the following statements: ‘There have been collegiate discussions concerning realistic expectations about the contingency measures to be put in place to support pupils in my school.’” Responses by sector<sup>3</sup>**



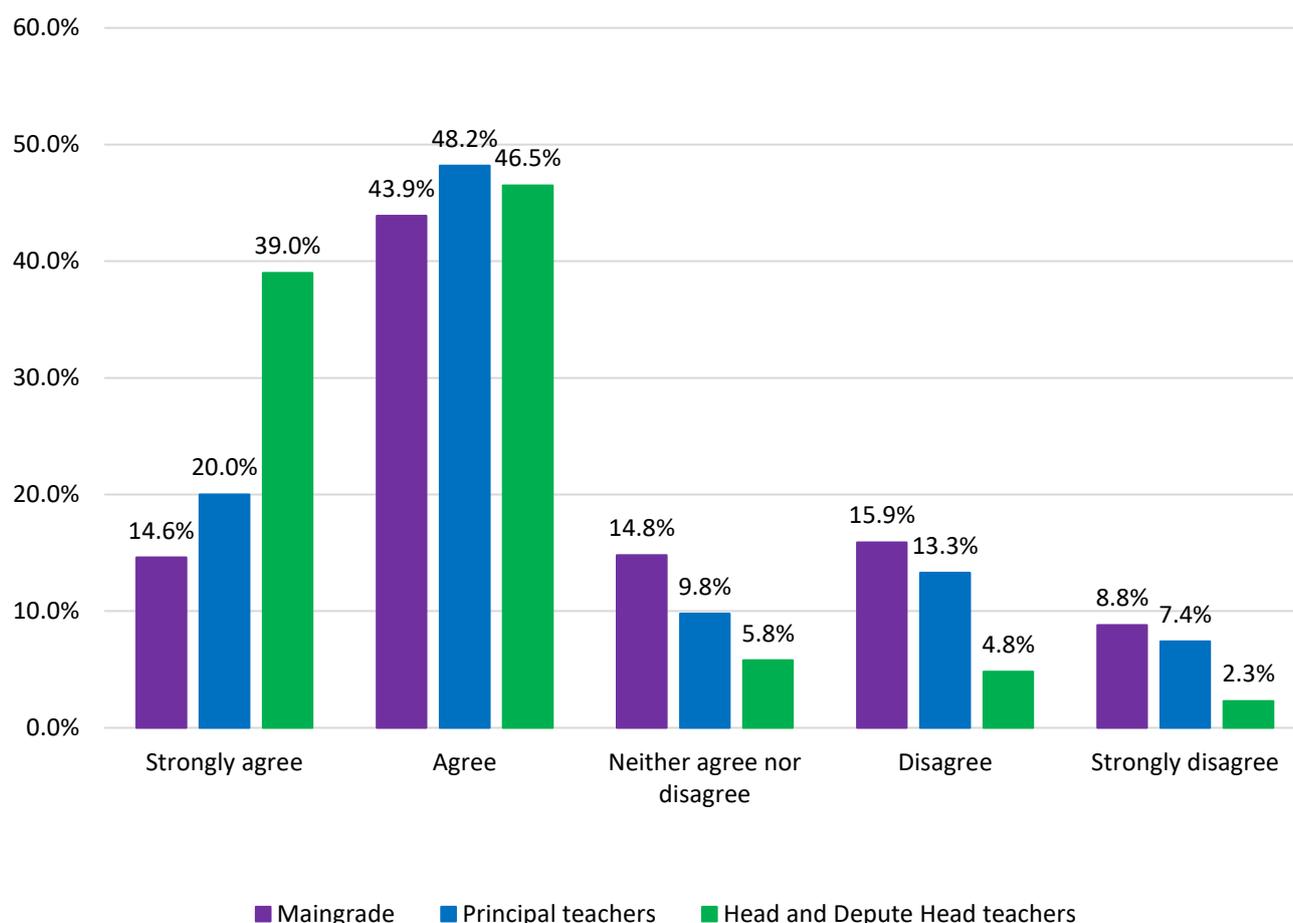
Total responses: 22,417

When asked if collegiate discussions concerning realistic expectations about the contingency measures, that were to be put in place to support pupils had taken place, more than half of all respondents agreed. When these responses were broken down by education sector, there was little variation between responses, as figure 8 above shows.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents who ticked “not applicable” in answer to this question have not been included in the graph above, therefore totals will not equal 100%

However, when these responses were analysed by substantive posts, there was considerable variation across roles. Although more Head and Depute Headteachers strongly agreed that collegiate discussion had taken place the majority view across all grades was to either agree or strongly agree that this was the case as demonstrated in figure 9.

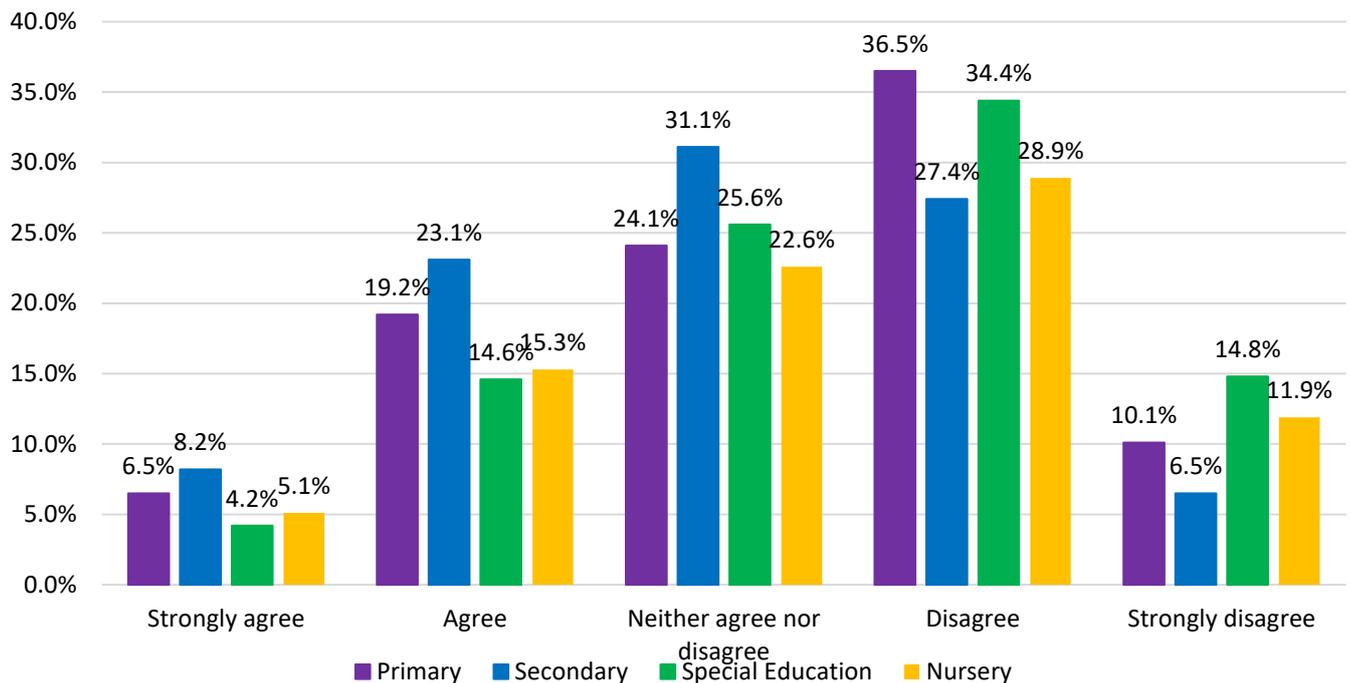
**Figure 9: “How far do you agree with the following statements: ‘There have been collegiate discussions concerning realistic expectations about the contingency measures to be put in place to support pupils in my school.’” Responses by substantive post<sup>4</sup>**



Around a third of members agreed that there has been an unrealistic expectation from parents regarding the quality and quantity of home learning materials that can be developed and delivered at this time. There was little variation across each of the four education sectors examined as demonstrated in figure 10, however in figure 11, the differences of perception across substantive post can be seen.

<sup>4</sup> Respondents who ticked “not applicable” in answer to this question have not been included in the graph above, therefore totals will not equal 100%

**Figure 10: “There is an unrealistic expectation from parents as to the quantity and quality of home learning materials that can be developed and delivered at this time?” responses by sector<sup>5</sup>**



Total responses: 22,342

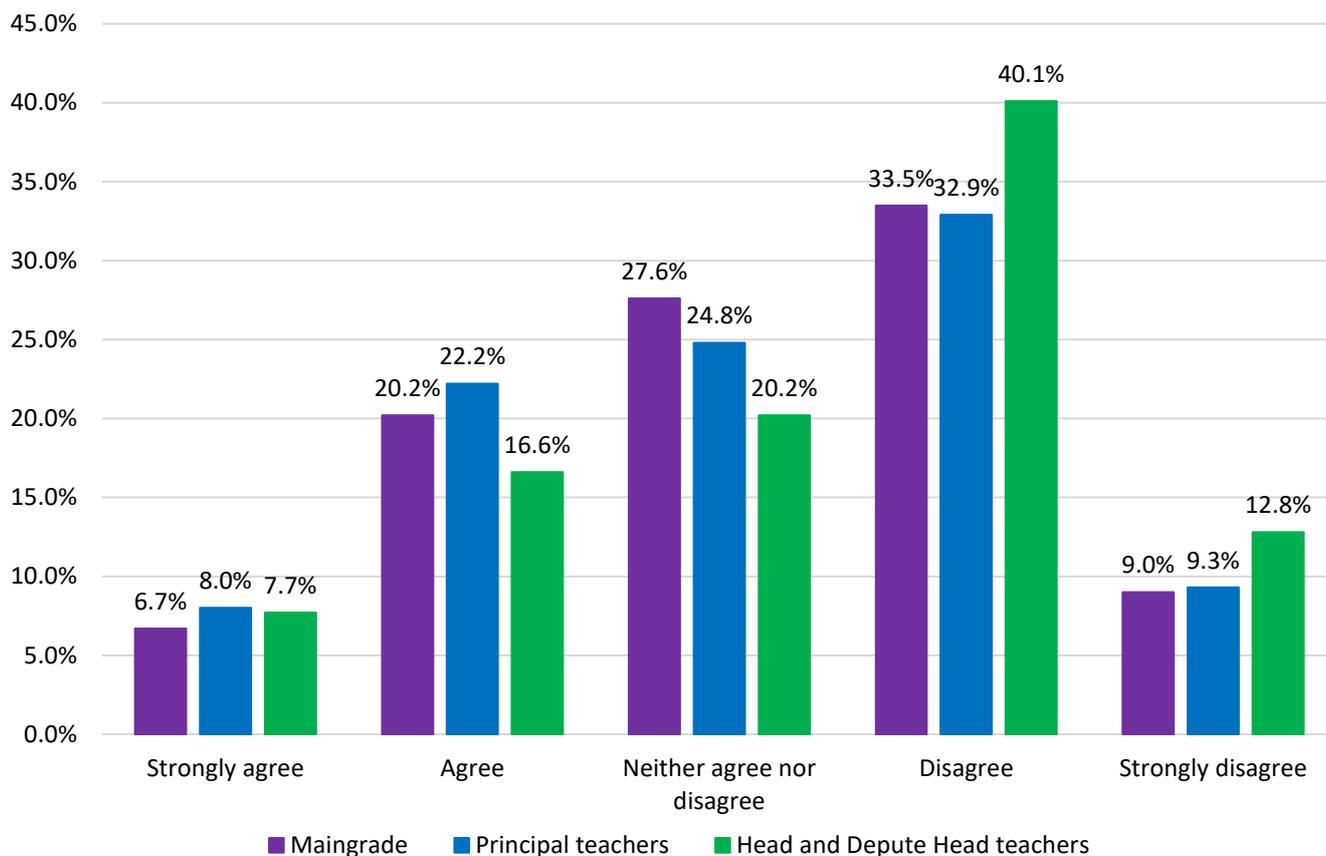
Principal teachers were the most likely to agree that there has been an unrealistic expectation from parents regarding the quantity and quality of home learning materials that could be delivered, whereas Head and Depute Headteachers were the most likely to disagree.

Over 3,000 comments were left alongside this question with many members highlighting the challenges of delivering home learning. Members highlighted that as the weeks have moved on, parents are becoming more comfortable with home learning and have a better understanding of what can be delivered by themselves as well as by the class teacher. Many of the comments clarified that where they thought that expectations from parents were unrealistic, this was a small minority. Below is a small sample of the feedback left from members:

- “Most parents seem to be realistic but there are some who are looking for 5 hours of set teaching every day - for S1. In the current scenario I feel this is unrealistic with teachers home schooling their own children and getting to grips with technology etc. Some pupils would also not be able to access online for that amount of time which would only increase the attainment gap.”
- “Especially early on, there was a lot of parental pressure, but partly claiming there was too much work set.”
- “A small number of parents do appear to think more can be done than is being done. However, I believe they are anxious and simply giving voice to this.”
- “The parents have been very supportive and appreciative of everything we have done to support them and their child in home learning.”

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 11: “There is an unrealistic expectation from parents as to the quantity and quality of home learning materials that can be developed and delivered at this time?” responses by substantive post<sup>6</sup>**



Total responses 22,342

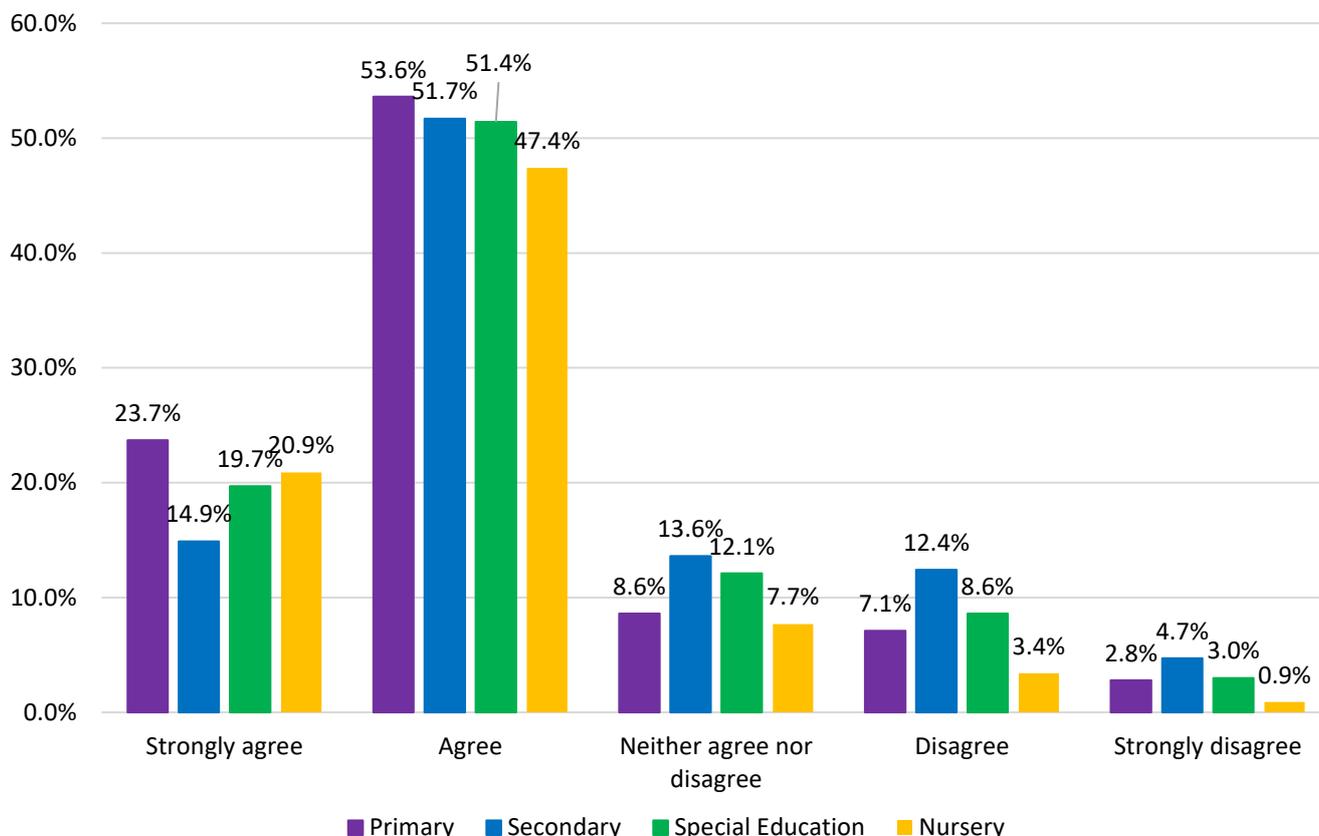
The final question within this section of the survey asked members if they believed the expectations from their school regarding the learning that they are expected to deliver to young people is achievable. The vast majority of respondents agreed, or strongly agreed that this was the case, as shown in figures 12 and 13.

When responses were broken down by sector, there were some notable differences, with those working in the primary school sector more likely to agree that the expectations of their school were achievable, and those working within the secondary school sector most likely to disagree.

Figure 13 shows member views disaggregated by substantive post. Whilst there is strong agreement across each of the 3 categories listed, that expectations from their school were achievable, this is most strongly reported from Head and Depute Headteachers, with 86% agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 12: “I feel that the expectations from my school, regarding the learning I am expected to deliver to young people are realistic and achievable.” Responses by sector<sup>7</sup>**



Total responses: 22,380

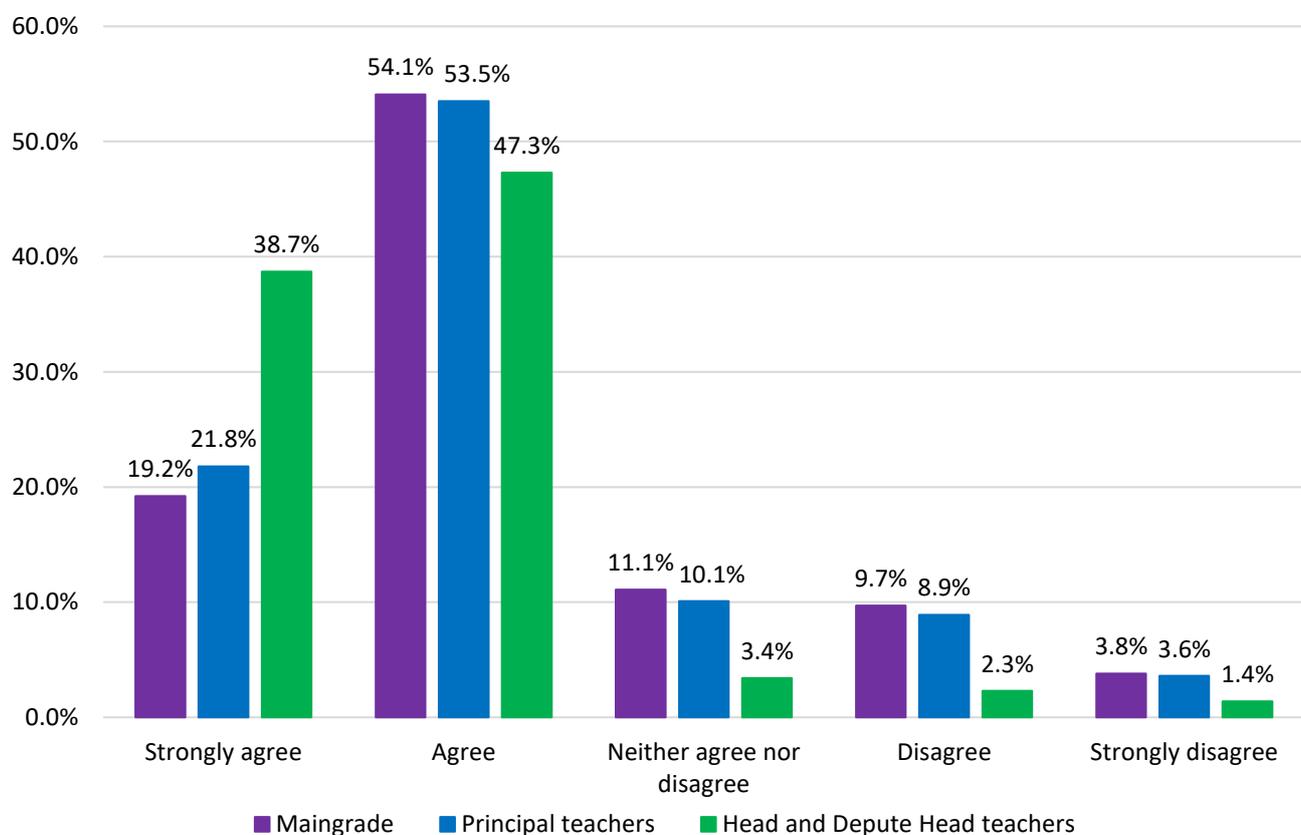
Almost 2,000 comments were left by members, giving further insight into the expectations of their school. The vast majority of comments left highlighted that whilst they had found the move to online learning demanding, and very time consuming, they did feel supported by their school. Some members did highlight that some of the expectations to carry out professional learning or complete paperwork had been unrealistic, and that greater guidance was needed in some instances. Below is a very small selection of the comments that were left in regard to this question:

- “They [the school] have been very good at ensuring we also look after our own health and well-being as well as family circumstances.”
- “I agree that for me, as a teacher with no other commitments to worry about and a high level of digital skills, the expectations have been manageable. It will have been a lot tougher for teachers who are also being expected to facilitate their own children’s learning. I have had to take on a wide range of extra responsibilities as a result of this.”
- “I feel that the expectations are manageable of the work set for pupils, however I feel there isn’t an understanding from my school management about how long marking and giving feedback to each child takes.”
- “The difficulty to me seems to be that no one knows what the expectations are.”

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

- “Headteacher has been very realistic with regards to expectation and has taken into account the teacher’s personal circumstances as well as the needs of the learners in her class.”
- “I know that teachers are being asked to phone and keep in touch with some parents and believe this is an additional task that would not normally be in a class teacher’s list of duties.”
- “Now that there is more collegiate conversation, I feel I can deliver what I am asked to do.”
- “Sometimes I feel it is the opposite - I want to do more! Management is supportive, and does not put pressure on staff. Council approach is health and wellbeing, and not the academic side - but I worry about this impact when schools do resume as there will be even bigger gaps in learning and poverty.”

**Figure 13: “I feel that the expectations from my school, regarding the learning I am expected to deliver to young people are realistic and achievable.” Responses by substantive post<sup>8</sup>**



Total responses: 22,380

The findings within this section highlight the resourcefulness and adaptability of our teaching work force. Many members have reported that they are working collegiately to provide the best resources for pupils and offer greater support to staff. However, it is also clear from these results that members cannot continue to work very long hours to meet the current needs, and greater support must be given to those with their own caring responsibilities at home.

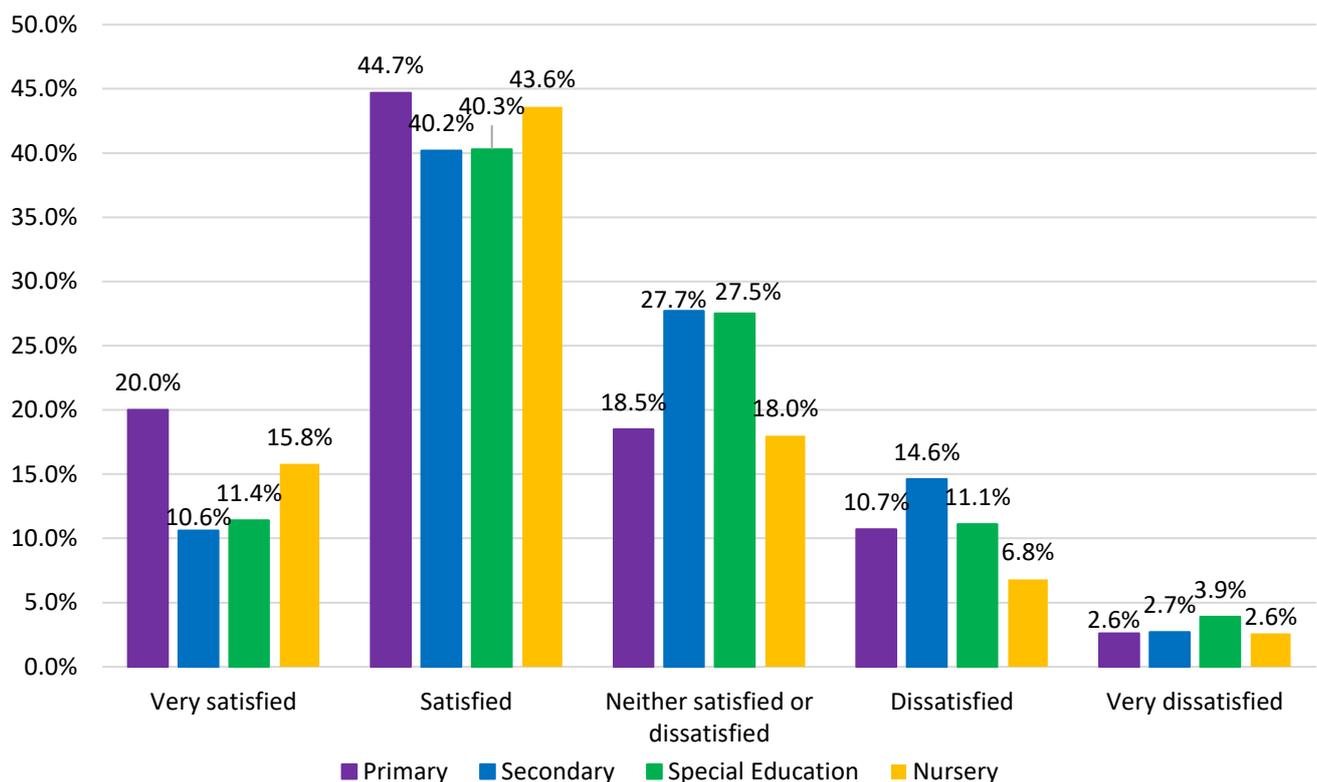
<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

## Section 4 – Health and Wellbeing

The lockdown measures that have been put in place to tackle the Covid-19 virus have restricted the activities that many of us would undertake in our leisure time, to relax and have fun. The inability to meet face to face with loved ones has also been difficult, as these support networks often help us to cope with challenging circumstances and times of high anxiety. Whilst it is perhaps expected that many of us living during lockdown will experience some reduction in our overall wellbeing, the EIS was keen to better understand if there have been additional factors which can be addressed to support the mental health of those working in schools.

The first question asked within this section looked at member perceptions of how the school shutdowns had been managed.

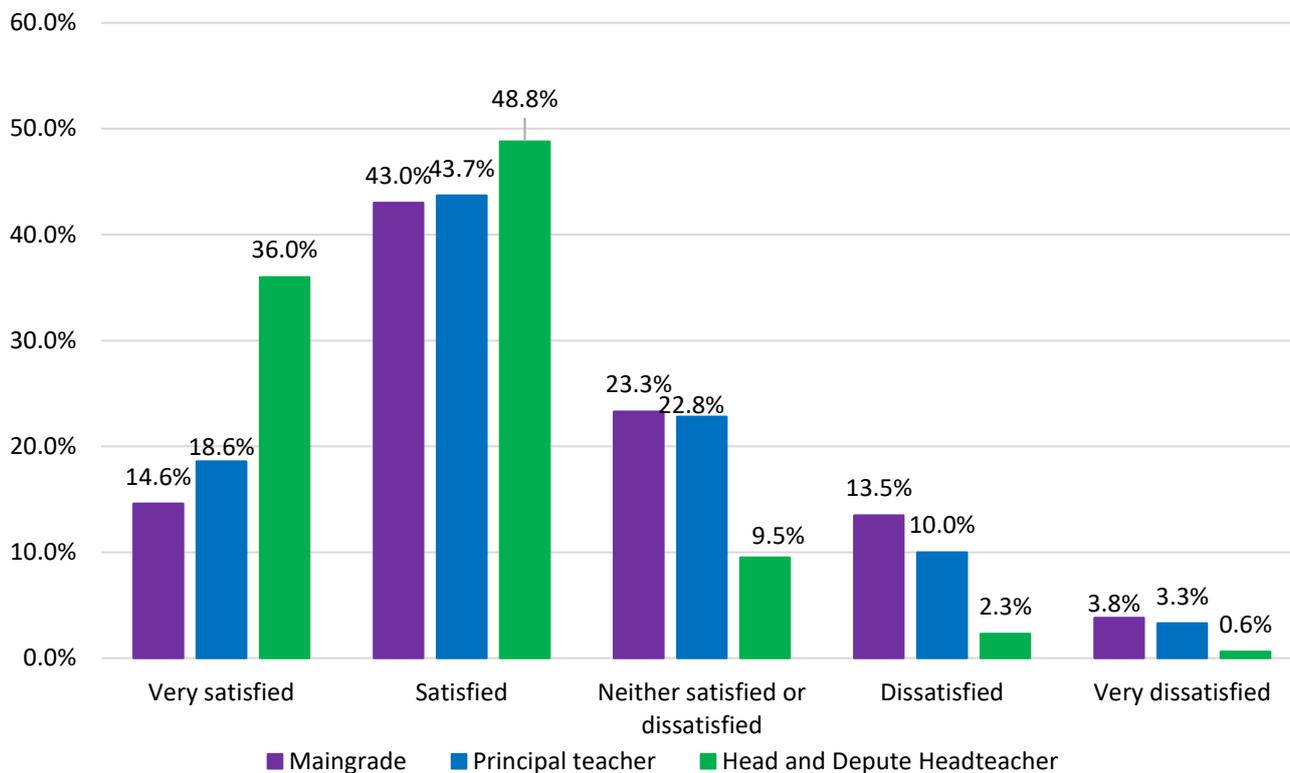
**Figure 14: “How satisfied are you with how the move to remote teaching and learning was managed within your school?” responses by sector<sup>9</sup>**



Total responses: 22,366

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 15: “How satisfied are you with how the move to remote teaching and learning was managed within your school?” by substantive post**



Total respondents: 22,366

Figures 14 and 15 show that overall members have said that they are satisfied with how the move to remote teaching was managed by their school. Those working within the secondary school sector, were slightly more likely to be dissatisfied than those in other sectors, and those in more senior positions were more likely to be satisfied than their maingrade colleagues.

The comments that were left under this question offered further examples of areas that members thought could have been handled better.

- “Even though we knew it was likely that schools would close, finding the time to check that all children were familiar with our chosen platform for delivering home learning was short. I had access issues, work part-time so wasn’t at school the last two days the children were and it was a regular supply teacher that worked with them. We have all learned together and reinforced that fact with the children. Although we knew all children had devices to access home learning, we didn’t take into account that some of them may be trickier to use.”
- “It all happened so quickly. I am part-time and finished work on the Wednesday the decision was made to close schools. I had very little time to prepare.”
- “We had 2 days to pull together a plan. Very stressful and trying to put on a calm facade for pupils and parents wasn’t easy.”
- “Two days before shutdown we were told we would be communicating with our pupils and delivering learning through Microsoft Teams. No training was offered, nor provision made to allow time for teachers to learn how to use this platform.”

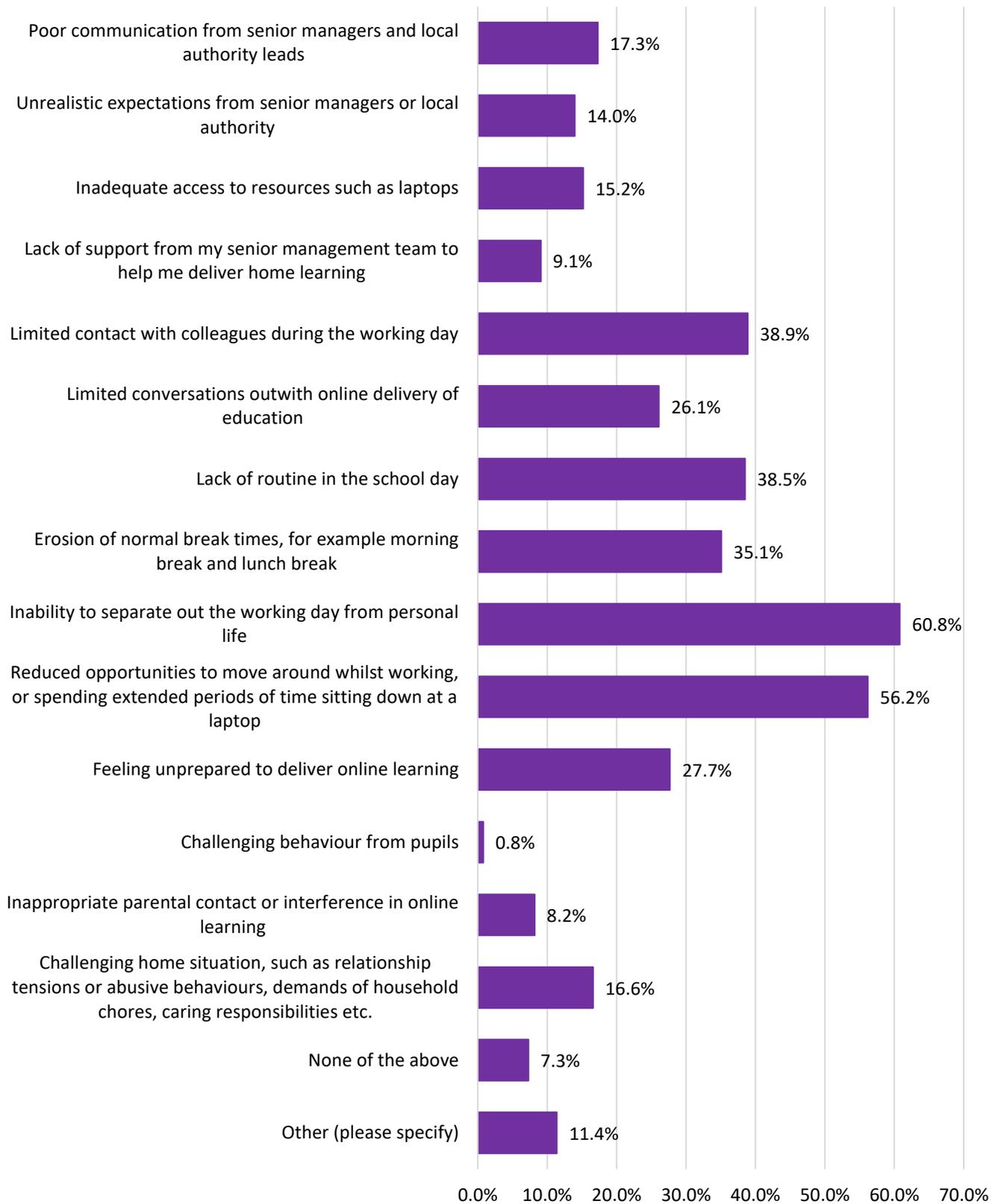
- “Could have started sooner. Lots of technology issues beforehand as laptop was not up to date.”
- “Hard and stressful at the start but has allowed us to be prepared for home learning.”
- “I was in quarantine during the last week before the schools shut down and very little of what the school was putting in place was communicated to me. I had to try and muddle through for the first few weeks.”

Members were then also asked specifically on what elements of their home working had negatively impacted on their wellbeing. The survey allowed for members to tick as many options as they thought were applicable, and they were given the opportunity to record any other factors that were not provided in the drop-down list. Figure 16 shows how members responded to this question.

Under the “other” option, members highlighted many of the challenges that have had a negative impact on their wellbeing including the pressure they feel from various parties, and the extending hours of the school day.

Members highlighted health problems that have been caused or exacerbated by their inadequate workspace at home. Members also highlighted the stress of delivering home learning to their own children as well as sharing resources with other household members.

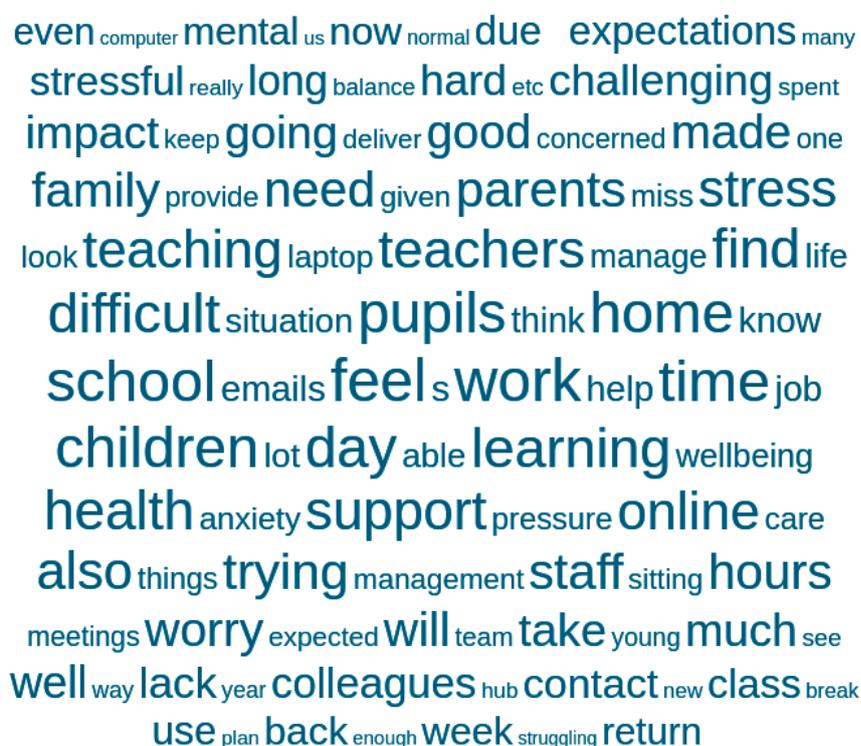
**Figure 16: “What are the critical elements that negatively impact on your wellbeing whilst working from home?” responses**



Total responses: 22,025

There were two separate boxes which allowed members to expand on how they were feeling, and what were the key elements that were contributing to any sense of poor wellbeing. Between these two comment boxes, over 8,000 comments were recorded. Figure 17 is a word cloud of the 100 most used words in these comments.

**Figure 17: “Further comments on the impact to your health and wellbeing” responses**



Below are some comments that reflect the additional feedback that members gave:

- “Being constantly messaged by some colleagues at all times of the day. Constant messaging implying lack of trust and professionalism.”
- “Being a parent as well as a teacher presents challenges in that I want to ensure my child has the best opportunities I can offer him within his school day, but obviously need to focus on my own work too.”
- “Although I can choose to ignore messages and emails after school hours there is still the feeling that I am contactable at any time of the day.”
- “I often feel that we are being bombarded with information as there have been so many Whatsapp groups set up which makes it hard to separate work from personal life as this is on our personal devices.”
- “As a teacher of a practical subject I have found this extremely difficult. The lack of interaction from pupils through teams has been minimal and little work has been produced.”
- “The workload is huge. The day never ends. You end up online all day long including weekends and late at night. This is not manageable or sustainable.”
- “The delivery of the curriculum via iPad has exacerbated carpal tunnel syndrome which in turn has affected the quality of my sleep.”

- “The perception the media puts out of lazy teachers wanting to avoid work! Stresses me out lots. We are working as hard as usual in an unfamiliar way in stressful circumstances while worried for our own family while being criticised publicly by politicians (though thankfully not our local ones).”
- “I’m getting a bad back because my workspace wasn’t originally designed to work in. I find it hard to sleep some nights because of the pain.”
- “I started my probation on 20 April. Whilst I have been involved with delivering online learning with my own class and year group responsibilities, I am worried that I am facing a term without the usual probationer support.”
- “As a supply teacher in the authority I was not contacted with a view to delivering home learning remotely. I feel disadvantaged- I would like to be able to contribute in some way.”
- “I feel that I have a routine now and I am following EIS guidance and local authority guidance on working from home. I did find it hard at the beginning as I was unsure how much I was expected to do.”
- “I am worried constantly at being hands on with young people with the only PPE being the change of uniform before moving to next child.”
- “I am completely overwhelmed and working 11 hour days in an attempt to stick to my 0.6 contract.”

When asked, 54% of respondents<sup>10</sup> said that they had a caring responsibility for their children, another family member or someone else. Of these 54, only 62% said that they felt they had been adequately supported by their employer to help them deliver these personal responsibilities.<sup>11</sup>

Supporting teachers to achieve greater teacher agency, and a better work-life balance has long been a priority for the EIS. To support teachers as they move towards a blended teaching model, support and clear guidance must be issued to schools, parents and pupils to alleviate some of the additional pressures that EIS members have reported.

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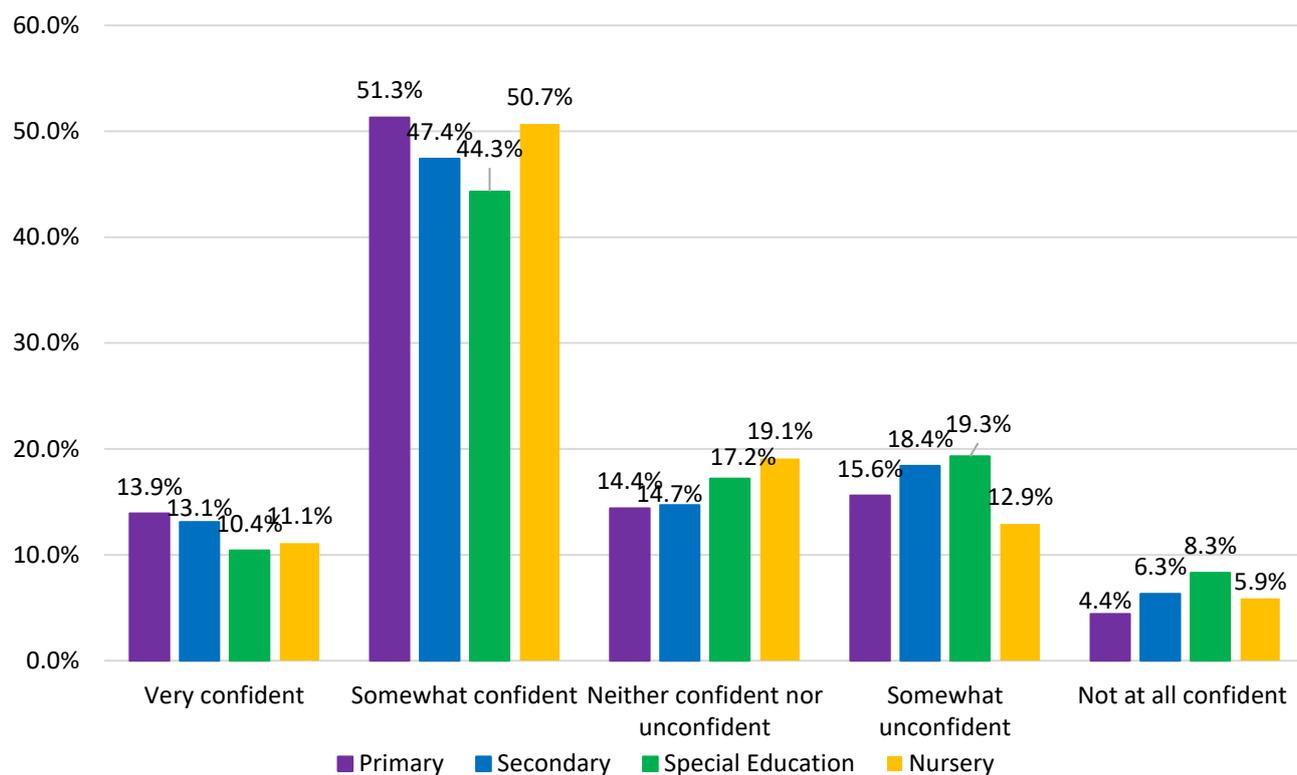
<sup>10</sup> 22,060 members answered the question: “Do you have caring responsibilities for children or another family member, or someone else?” 53.6% said yes, 43.6% said no and 2.8% indicated that they would prefer not to say.

<sup>11</sup> 13,346 members answered the follow-up question “If yes, do you think you have been given adequate support from your employer to help you?” 62.3% said yes, 31.1% said no. This total does not equal 100% suggesting that some respondents skipped this question.

## Section 5 – Next Academic Session

The final section of the survey asked members directly about how they are feeling about moving towards the next session of teaching with social distancing measures still in place. The first question posed to members asked what level of confidence they have in their ability to cope with an increased use of online learning in the next academic year? Figure 18 below shows member views broken down by school sector.

**Figure 18: “What level of confidence do you have in your ability to cope with an increased use of online learning in the next academic year?” responses by sector**



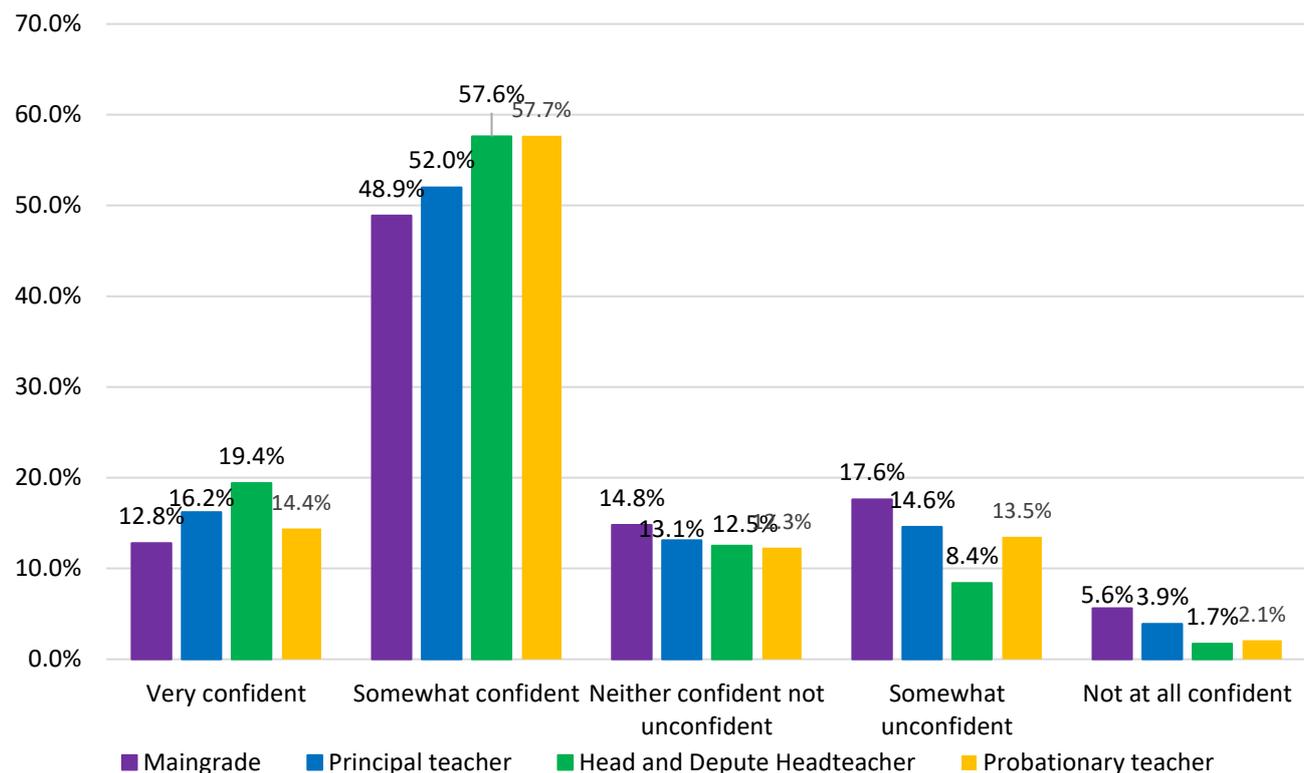
Total responses: 22,021

Figures 18 and 19 suggest that members across all sectors and substantive posts feel reasonably confident that they can cope with and increased use of online learning in the next academic year. The results for those who are currently in their probation year of teaching were broadly similar to those across the other substantive posts. However, in the comments section underneath this question, many probationary teachers highlighted that whilst they felt confident about delivering learning, they were uncertain about what year group, or indeed school they would be teaching in. Comments from probationary teachers:

- “I have been informed I will be teaching primary 1 next year and I am uncertain for how to best support their transition online and teach them effectively online at such a young age.”
- “As a current NQT [newly qualified teacher], I am changing schools in August, so setting up new classes online and taking new subjects is quite daunting.”

- “As a probationer I feel like I lack the experience in normal teaching due to missing my final term. It is much harder to teach online without pupils in front of you. It's a huge challenge.”
- “I am a probationer so not sure where I will be next year.”
- “As a supply teacher I am not experiencing putting home learning into practice for students. It worries me that I will not have those skills like my colleagues do. I fear I will be disadvantaged as a probationer supply teacher...now with no experience of providing home learning.”

**Figure 19: “What level of confidence do you have in your ability to cope with an increased use of online learning in the next academic year?” responses by sector**

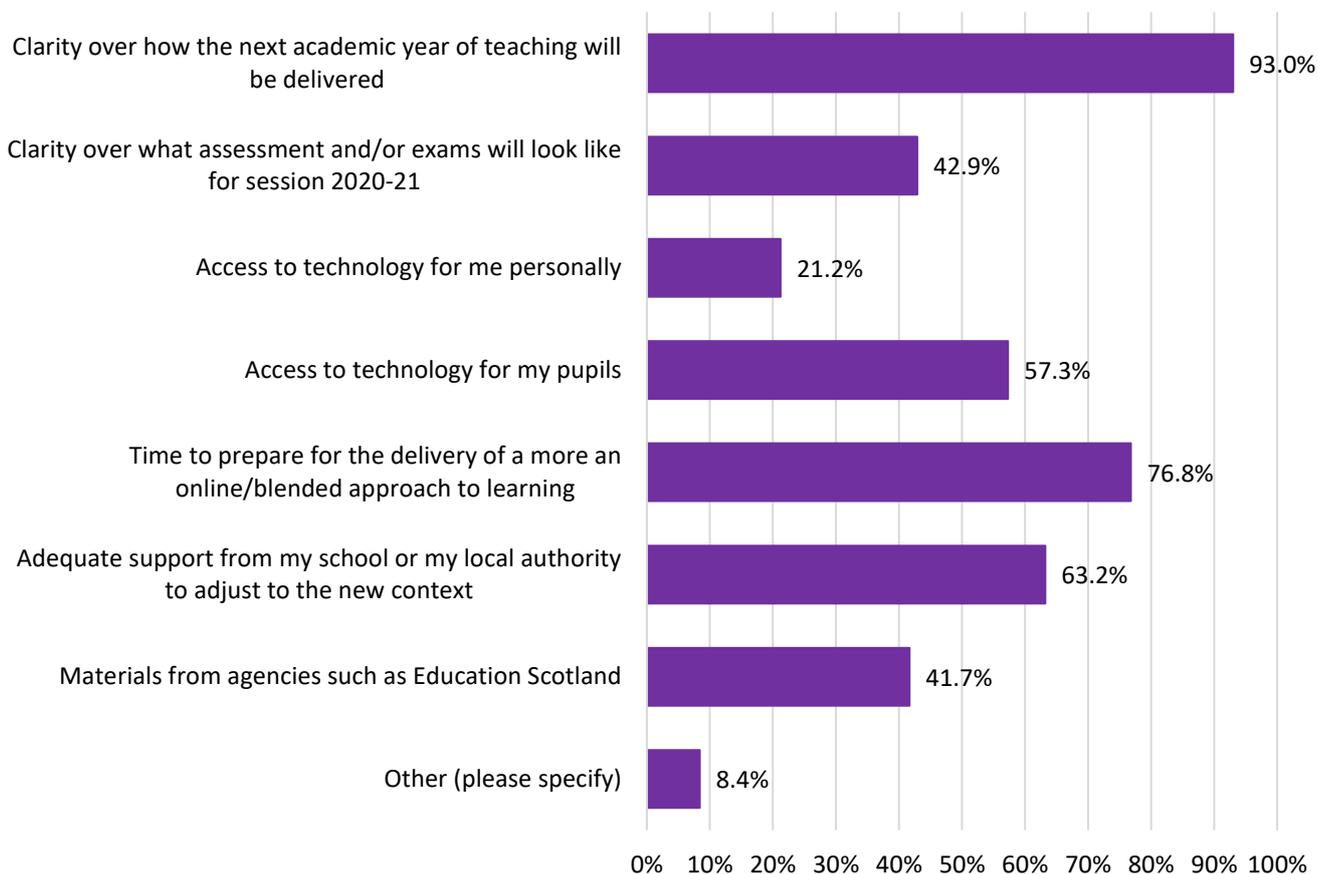


The next question asked members what they thought was needed to build their confidence around the next session of teaching. Over 90% of respondents said that greater clarity over how the next academic year of teaching will be delivered would be the most critical to building confidence around the next session. The next most critical element, was having time to prepare, followed by support from their school and local authority. Each of these elements must be incorporated into the planning for the 2020/2021 session to ensure teachers, and other relevant education staff can deliver a blended approach to learning, with confidence.

Of those who indicated “other” as an option to this question there were many other concerns listed. Some members had clear worries over how ASN pupils’ needs would be met in a different teaching model, others highlighted the challenges of social distancing, even with smaller class sizes, and the need to access PPE for all staff working in schools. Members also highlighted again, the demands they have at home with caring responsibilities and asked for greater clarity on how this would be managed and what expectations there would be on staff who fall into this category. It was also repeated throughout these comments that

consideration must be paid to the time-consuming nature of online delivery, especially if teachers are also then expected to be in school as well.

**Figure 20: Which of the following are most critical to be building confidence around next session? responses<sup>12</sup>**



Total responses: 21,927

Comments from members who indicated “other”:

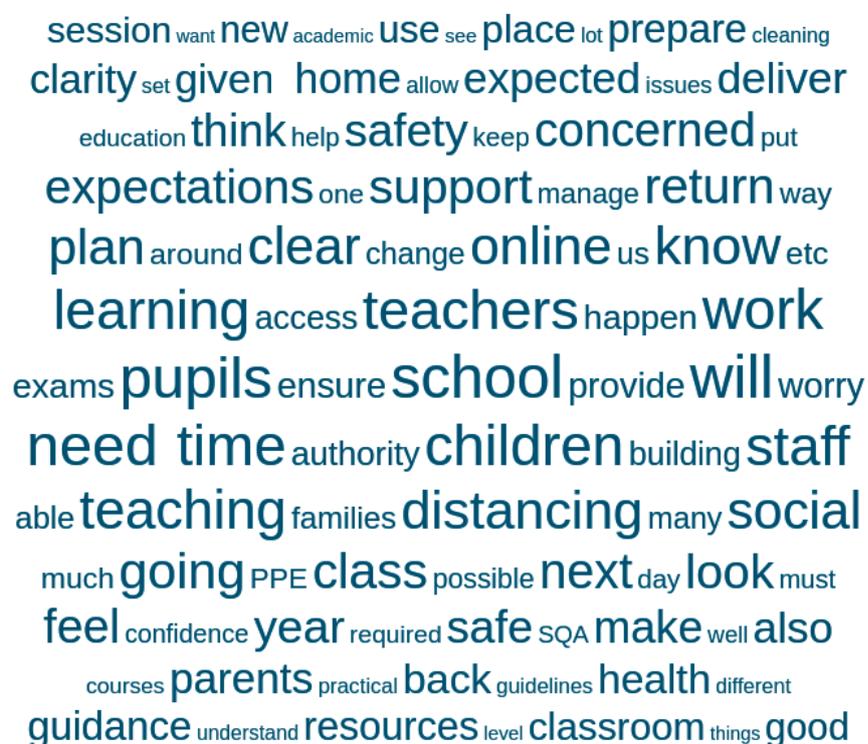
- “Access to training to support staff develop their skills & confidence in providing quality online learning for all children.”
- “I am concerned at the loss of time in school for teaching and preparing classes for next year’s exams. Especially the current S3 pupils who will be sitting their N5’s next year. I am concerned at how I am going to get through each course I teach as a result of loss of teaching time in school.”
- “Clarity over expectations on how we bridge gaps where pupils have not engaged with work.”
- “Guidance on how teachers are meant to be able to be in school teaching yet also provide online teaching when I am working more hours than my contract with just online teaching.”
- “How looking after my own children who may be at school part time will fit in with me having to go to work. Also workload around having to teach in school and plan and prepare online learning in addition to that.”

<sup>12</sup> Members were invited to tick all options that applied, meaning that totals do not equal 100%

- “Worried as teaching situation is changing totally due to staffing complement. Not sure if my health problems can be catered for.”

Following this question, there was an opportunity for members to highlight any further comments they had on how to build confidence in the next session. Almost 5,000 responses were gathered, with members highlighting again their concerns around ASN learning, the cleanliness of schools and access to PPE, as well as how the social distancing measures would be introduced. Many also raised their concerns for how teacher health and wellbeing could be supported if the move to online learning was to be embedded in the next session. Figure 21 below is a word cloud of the most used words within this comments section, with some key quotes provided below.

**Figure 21: “Further comments on building confidence around the next academic session” responses**



- “Health and wellbeing support in place for those seriously needing it, whether that be staff or pupils- this has been testing time for so many and lots of work will need to be done to get some children back on track in the next academic school year. Early discussions with SQA about not having the same expectations for assessment and examinations of pupils in the pupils who will be sitting or undertaking exams in the 2021 cohort as they've already lost time to learn parts of their courses.”
- “As a member of the Instrumental Music Staff I would hope not to be forgotten about. Exams in our subject can add equivalent Higher points to UCAS entries etc. Music making is important for a wide academic range of pupils and can be a focus of relieving stress etc. I would also hope that we would not be expected to continue teaching in rooms with no outside windows, are part of the school cleaning schedule ( book cupboards are not at the moment!!) and that we can deliver safely within Government guidelines.”
- “I am sure, like others, there are huge anxieties around returning to school and safety concerns. It seems a lot to fit in a senior course with all the time we could potentially be losing.”

- “How many ASN pupils will be in ASN class at any one time. How will my support for learning worker manage to come to school around her own children being at school part-time. How to manage ASN pupils who do not understand social distancing.”
- “Knowing that the health situation is safe and that adequate measures have been put in place to ensure this; knowing that new working set-up will fit in with set-up for own children and family circumstances.”
- “Recovery time will be needed for staff and pupils as well as exam targets/expectations for SQA exam pupils for 2021 exam diet as we are missing a lot of teaching time for new courses in these months of May and June.”

### **Prioritisation of face-to-face learning**

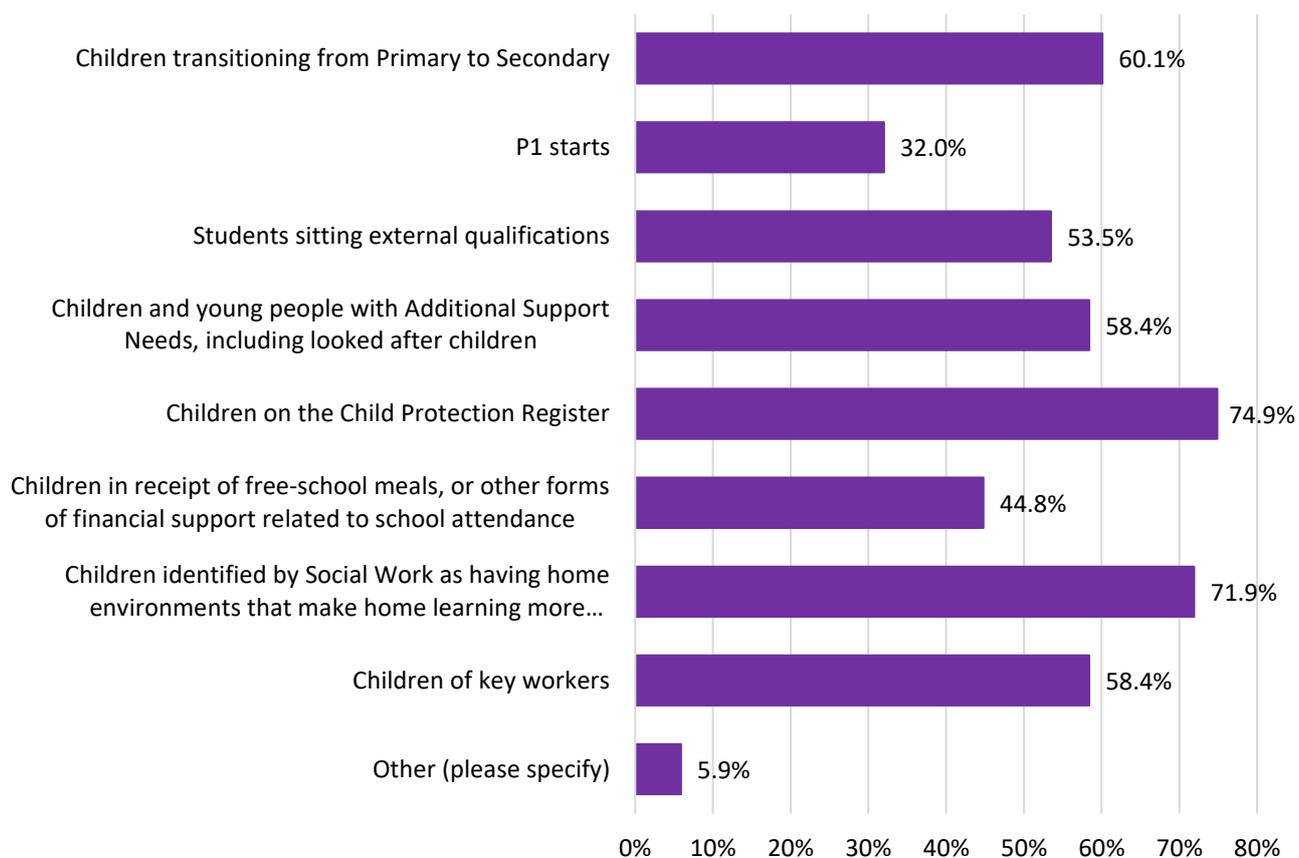
At the time of the survey being live, discussions were ongoing about how, when, and who will be prioritised when school buildings reopen. Members were reminded that the Scottish Government was considering that certain groups be prioritised as part of a phased approach to reopening schools, and asked if provision be prioritised or be universal, even at a reduced level? In response to this 58% of members said they agreed that provision should be prioritised, 23% that provision should be universal (even at a reduced level) and 19% indicated that they didn't know.

When prompted further about which groups should be prioritised (were that to be the model used) members indicated that children on the child protection register, children identified by social work as having challenging home environments and those transitioning from primary to secondary school should be considered first. Figure 22 details the full responses given.

Of those who indicated “other” as an option, many clarified that they struggled to identify which groups should be prioritised over others, as all children benefit greatly from being in a supported learning environment. Some members highlighted that it may be best to prioritise older children as they may be working towards exams, but also may be better able to adhere to the social distancing rules – which could be more challenging for younger pupils. Some responses also suggested the continuation of some of the Hub provision which could be used for more vulnerable children, or those who have parents that are key workers. Comments included:

- “Priority should be a focus on what is taught. Reducing curriculum areas and focusing fully on literacy, numeracy and Health and Wellbeing. Rather than splitting days of pupils returning I feel it would be better to split into morning and afternoon groups or to have pupils in for a full week at a time.”
- “I actually think it would be a good idea to delay P1 starts. This would give P1 teachers time to settle their current P1s to help them settle back into school and prioritise their social and emotional wellbeing. Once we start transitioning them into P2 we can then also start transitioning the new P1 intake. This shouldn't be rushed - our focus should be on wellbeing of children and not attainment.”
- “Any group going back could still struggling for being the only group back.”
- “Many concerns due to numbers, health and safety etc however clearer guidelines, quicker updates on progress to allow staff to prep and know focus so time being used efficiently to plan, also more transparency of plan. I felt we have had very little news or updates regarding thoughts or potential plan going forward.”

**Figure 22: “If prioritised, which groups do you think should be prioritised when schools begin to reopen?”**



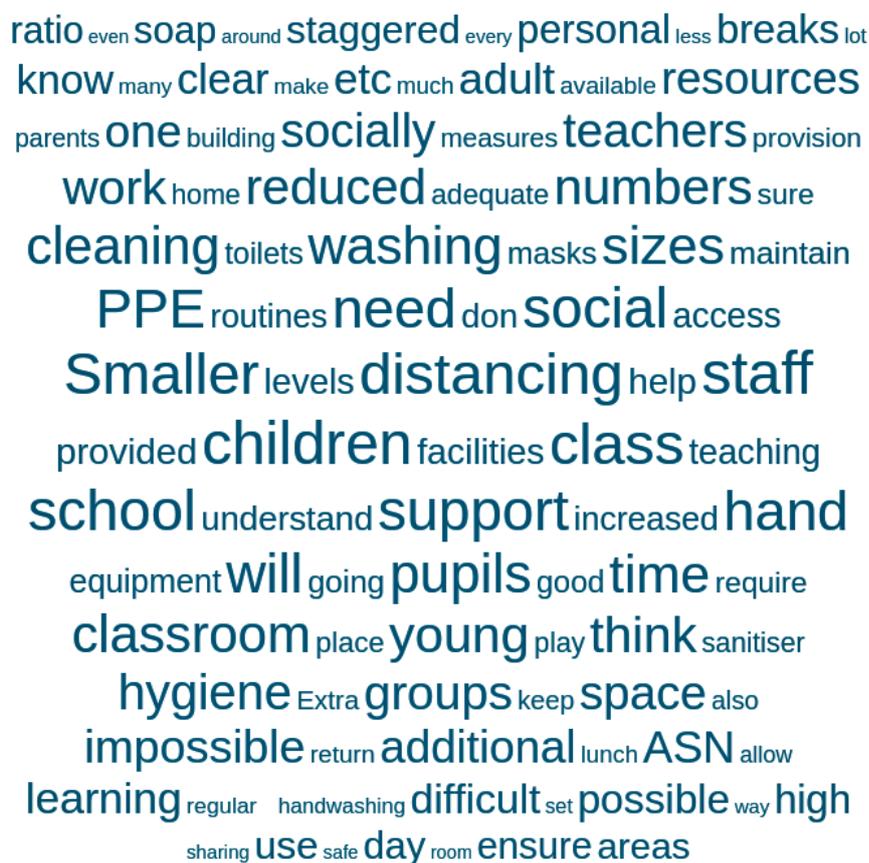
Total responses: 20,420

The next question was an open ended question which asked members: “What additional measures do you think need to be taken to support children with Additional Support Needs, or younger children to socially distance or maintain high levels of personal hygiene?” Over 14,000 comments were recorded in response to this question. Figure 23 is a word cloud of the most used words within these responses with some representative comments offered below.

- “I think specific guidance needs to be introduced so staff are aware of how to appropriately support.”
- “I have no idea how that is to be achieved without having a detrimental effect on the child and adults involved, on emotional terms.”
- “Target small groups and have stringent routine organised. Face masks and gloves should be mandatory and made readily available to all staff and pupils.”
- “Small class size. Develop areas in school for learning. More resources for individuals instead of sharing. PPE equipment.”
- “In my setting, continue with the measures in place; limit pupils to 1 per class with up to 2 adults to support and promote and support personal hygiene routines as appropriate for each child dependent on their needs.”
- “Extra adult support, extra space, extra hand washing facilities and more gentle soap. The class has had to leave their room to be kept safe as a result of behavioural issues. What do we do here? No

additional space! When an increase in hand washing was introduced a pupil refused to wash their hands and purposely went around touching items in the classroom.”

**Figure 23: “What additional measures do you think need to be taken to support children with Additional Support Needs, or younger children to socially distance or maintain high levels of personal hygiene?”**



Another opened ended question asked members: “What additional measures do you think need to be taken to support the delivery of practical subjects such as P.E. and Home Economics whilst socially distancing and maintaining high levels of personal hygiene?” Over 12,000 responses were given to this question with members highlighting the need for considerably smaller class sizes, clear guidance and guidelines for staff, pupils and parents as well as improved cleanliness of schools. Figure 24 shows the words most used in response to this question, with key comments highlighted below.

- “Will be very difficult as sharing of resources is required. Numbers would need to be significantly reduced. Clear and concise guidance.”
- “Very small numbers in class and strict PPE put in place.”
- “As a PE teacher I find it extremely difficult to see how we will be able to teach the practical element of our subject whilst maintain proper social distancing.”
- “Allowing remote teaching, and priming pupils to receive music instrumental lessons remotely.”
- “As a practical subject teacher, we are used to working in pairs and this is what we are geared up for. In terms of resources and physical space, I don’t know how this can be done safely other than class sizes of 10 with pupils working on their own in science.”
- “Full PPE and a consideration of the relevance of this at primary level when the focus should be on tackling the arising attainment gap in literacy and numeracy.”

- “Adequate space, outdoor provision and access, timetabling consideration to allow for adequate cleaning between uses of spaces and equipment.”

**Figure 24: “What additional measures do you think need to be taken to support the delivery of practical subjects such as P.E. and Home Economics whilst socially distancing and maintaining high levels of personal hygiene?”**

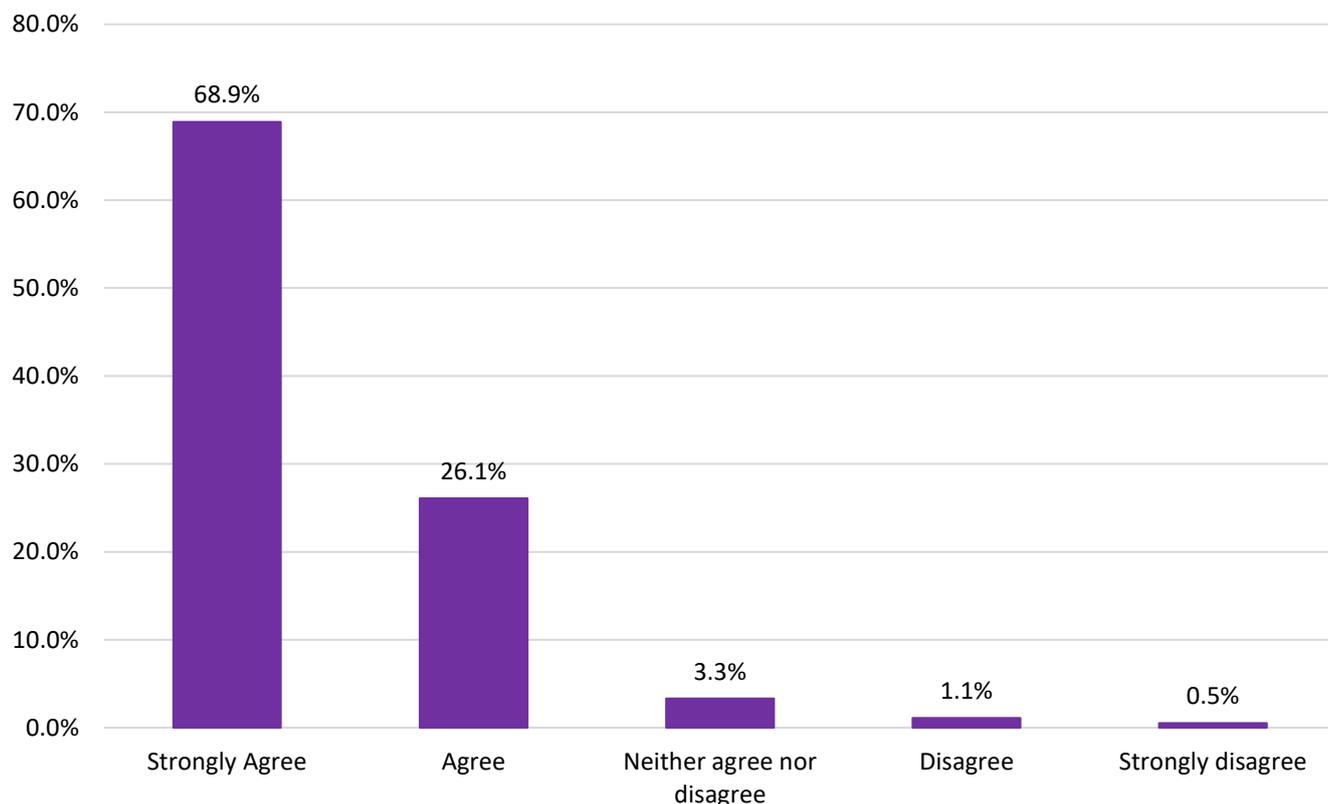
P.E. increased team guidance support maintain areas set etc may  
 outside personal outdoor also resources hall contact  
 focus practical deep sharing curriculum lessons access  
 home provided activities every school Unsure  
 possible less numbers ensure time one  
 social classroom children take use economics  
 need outdoors cleaning difficult  
 equipment sure Smaller allow class don  
 PE games sizes learning pupils limited  
 distancing much will required Reduced  
 impossible staff facilities space additional groups  
 masks hand see subjects place sports primary  
 changing materials PPE clear work idea washing extra  
 think going teaching socially good teachers high rooms day  
 know non delivered given individual hygiene

The EIS has articulated a strong set of conditions to be met before schools can reopen. Within the survey these 3 conditions were also presented to members for their views. These 3 conditions are:

1. Established capacity to “test trace and isolate”;
2. Significant operational changes in place to ensure implementation of all health guidelines (for example effective social distancing, enhanced hygiene routines, and ongoing risk assessments in place); and
3. Transparent and shared evidence that the spread of infection is under control and that schools and educational establishments are safe places to work.

When asked, 95% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with these 3 conditions. 3% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 2% disagreed or strongly disagreed. With over 20,000 teacher members agreeing with the EIS stance on the reopening of schools, this is a clear call to decision makers to ensure that these conditions are met before staff and pupils return as shown in figure 25.

**Figure 25: “The EIS has articulated a strong set of conditions to be met before schools can reopen: 1. Established capacity to “test trace and isolate” 2. Significant operational changes in place to ensure implementation of all health guidelines e.g. effective social distancing, enhanced hygiene routines, and ongoing risk assessments in place 3. Transparent and shared evidence that the spread of infection is under control and that schools and educational establishments are safe places to work In terms of this statement, do you?” responses**



### Shielding, caring responsibilities and underlying health conditions

When prompted, just over 20% of respondents said they have underlying physical or mental health conditions that would put them more at risk of Covid-19 impacts and would prevent them returning to classroom teaching. A further 33% said that they had childcare responsibilities, and 18% said they had shielding responsibilities which would make it difficult for them to return to classroom teaching.<sup>13</sup> Many members highlighted their concerns around returning too soon or returning without further professional or personal support. Below are some of the other issues members raised.

- “I think it is important that we return to the classroom only when we have a concrete plan in place. I also think that the return needs to provide pupils with as much normality as possible. Having my

<sup>13</sup> Full data outlined in Appendix A

own daughter at home learning I now believe the impact on children's mental health is much higher than we realise. When it is safe to do so pupils need to return to school as soon as they can.”

- “The issue with staggered returns will be for teaching parents and attempting to co-ordinate doing the job we want to do and juggling potentially challenging childcare.”
- “Gravely anxious about returning too soon. Really unsure of a return date so looking for clarification. Worried about childcare and whether my own children will have to go to a hub that has already had an infection confirmed within.”
- “Some people that don’t fall under those categories may have someone living at home with them who is ‘high risk’ and may be worried about being the virus home to them.”
- “I am concerned about physical space which would make social distancing difficult. We are a small school. We have only 2 classrooms and already utilise open area space. Our hall is tiny. I have no idea how we can social distance.”
- “It is going to be extremely difficult to function in schools after this. Even simple things like lining up, eating lunch, walking in corridors will be difficult. In class, children touch all the pencils, pens, rulers, runners, etc. They chew the tips of pencils, they share these resources. Is the answer that they bring in their own pencil case and pencils etc? Some parents would object to the cost, so do they continue to share? Very unhygienic. I have found working in the hub that children are not used to social distancing out of school. They play with their friends as usual.”
- “Instrumental Teachers routinely teach in rooms much smaller than classrooms and very often groups of 4-5, sometimes blowing instruments. The health implications are starkly obvious.”
- “Teacher health and wellbeing must be considered. We should not be expected to return until effective PPE is available and there are clear measures to ensure that teacher and pupil safety are controlled and are a priority.”

All of the comments above highlight the concerns that members have about returning to work, not only for themselves and their pupils, but also for their families and wider networks. These concerns must be taken seriously when planning for the return to face-to-face schooling. Finally, members were asked what internet they had at home, with 98%<sup>14</sup> saying that they had broadband, and 1% saying they only had access on their phone or that they did not have access to the internet. 1% reported “other” as an option, with many saying that whilst they had broadband it was very slow, or being shared across many people within the household which had affected performance.

When asked if they had a workspace that was separated from other areas of the home, only 34% said yes, with the remaining 66% saying no.

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<sup>14</sup> Of 21,431 respondents

## Final Comments and Conclusions

The findings and comments within each of these sections highlight that schools have worked hard to ensure that their pupils and staff are not disadvantaged during these challenging times. The majority of members highlighted the collegiate approaches that have been taken to ensure solutions are found, and that as far as practicable, teaching has continued as effectively as possible.

However, members have also been clear that this challenging time, has pushed them to work long hours, adapt their skills quickly and left them in need of clearer guidance. It is also clear that this has taken an emotional and sometimes physical toll on members who are trying to work during a global pandemic and national emergency.

The responses within this report get to the heart of teacher concerns and anxieties and set out the clear next steps for decision makers. For many the lack of clarity about what is to happen over the coming year is itself a source of stress, alongside childcare and shielding responsibilities. For lots of members their work space is not separate from the rest of the home, and therefore accounts of working well beyond the working day, and finding it difficult to switch off are common. This highlights the ever present need to support teacher health and wellbeing, as well as managing expectations from all parties about what is to be expected from their class teacher. These expectations must also reflect the wider personal commitments and capabilities of our school members.

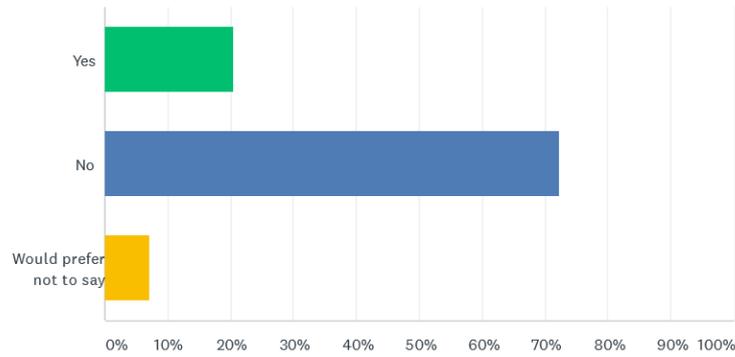
When prompted, over 5,000 members left concluding comments to their survey responses. Below are a very small sample.

- “Schooling is also about socialising and building social skills with others. The prospect of children, particularly young children, being put into an environment where there may only be a few of their class colleagues present, "rigid/extreme" social distancing I find a concern, almost cruel for children to be in such environment. Schools should go back, but not just for the sake of it or to satisfy politicians.”
- “I think we need to watch carefully what happens in other countries with similar statistics to ourselves to learn the best way to reopen schools safely.”
- “I’m feeling quite terrified at the prospect of schools reopening as normal to pupils in August and I don’t feel confident that the necessary measures will be implemented to ensure the safety of pupils and staff. I’m worried about the well-being of the children I will be teaching and feel a huge personal responsibility to ensure their safety regarding covid-19. This will be even more difficult if we don’t have access to PPE or are able to socially distance. It’s impossible to imagine how this will work in schools.”
- “I don't envy anyone trying to negotiate a path in these challenging circumstances. Thank you for all you are doing.”
- “I feel frazzled and for the first time in my teaching career of 24 years, I feel that my mental health has been greatly affected by this experience.”
- “Genuine two-way communication at every level will continue to be critical to this process. Any concerns raised by staff must continue to be dealt with fully & respectfully. Above all, political considerations must continue to take second place to ensuring the health & safety of staff/students.”
- “When drawing up timetables for possible phased return etc consideration should be given to teachers who teach in multiple schools and have to travel between establishments.”

## Appendix A – Questions 36, 37 and 38

Q36 Do you have underlying physical or mental health conditions that put you more at risk of Covid-19 impacts and would prevent you returning to classroom teaching?

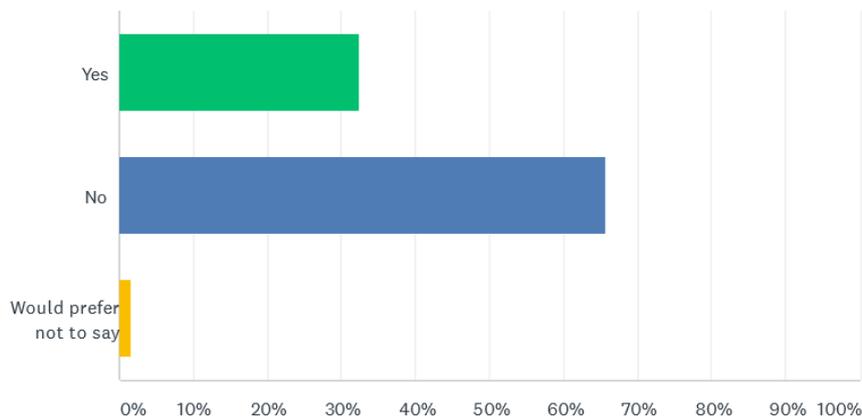
Answered: 21,396 Skipped: 4,732



| ANSWER CHOICES          | RESPONSES     |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Yes                     | 20.57% 4,402  |
| No                      | 72.40% 15,490 |
| Would prefer not to say | 7.03% 1,504   |
| TOTAL                   | 21,396        |

Q37 Do you have childcare responsibilities which would make it difficult for you to return to classroom teaching?

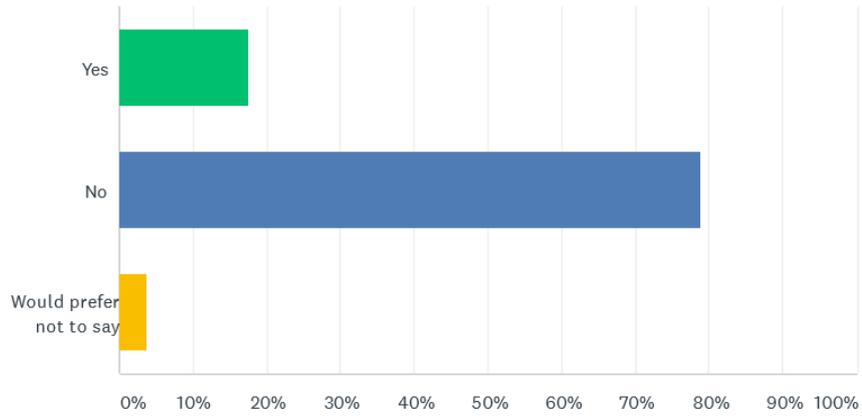
Answered: 21,389 Skipped: 4,739



| ANSWER CHOICES          | RESPONSES     |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| Yes                     | 32.53% 6,958  |
| No                      | 65.79% 14,071 |
| Would prefer not to say | 1.68% 360     |
| TOTAL                   | 21,389        |

### Q38 Do you have shielding responsibilities which would make it difficult for you to return to classroom teaching?

Answered: 21,378 Skipped: 4,750



| ANSWER CHOICES          | RESPONSES |               |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Yes                     | 17.50%    | 3,742         |
| No                      | 78.81%    | 16,849        |
| Would prefer not to say | 3.68%     | 787           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>            |           | <b>21,378</b> |

## Further Information

For more information on any of the themes within this report please contact:

Lesley Warren, Campaigns, Policy and Research Co-ordinator

Email: [lwarren@eis.org.uk](mailto:lwarren@eis.org.uk)

For more information on the Educational Institute of Scotland:

Website: [www.eis.org.uk](http://www.eis.org.uk)

Twitter: @EISUnion

Facebook: Educational Institute of Scotland

Email: [enquiries@eis.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@eis.org.uk)

Phone: +44 (0)131 225 6244

Postal address:

The Educational Institute of Scotland

46 Moray Place

Edinburgh

EH3 6BH