



Teachers' awareness and perceptions of Ofsted

Teacher Attitude Survey 2019 report



Please note this report is easier to interpret when printed in colour

Background

The main objectives of this study were to provide Ofsted with robust and timely evidence from classroom teachers to:

1. Explore their perceptions of Ofsted.
2. Help improve the way Ofsted communicates with teachers.
3. Measure understanding of Ofsted's myth busting campaign.

Sample profile

- An online survey was developed with Ofsted and was carried out among teachers between 20 March-10 April 2019.
- The total number of respondents was 1,007 teachers; 397 teachers working in a primary school and 610 teachers from a secondary school.
- The figures have been weighted and are representative of all teachers in England by their age, gender, school type and phase.

— Key findings

Ten key findings

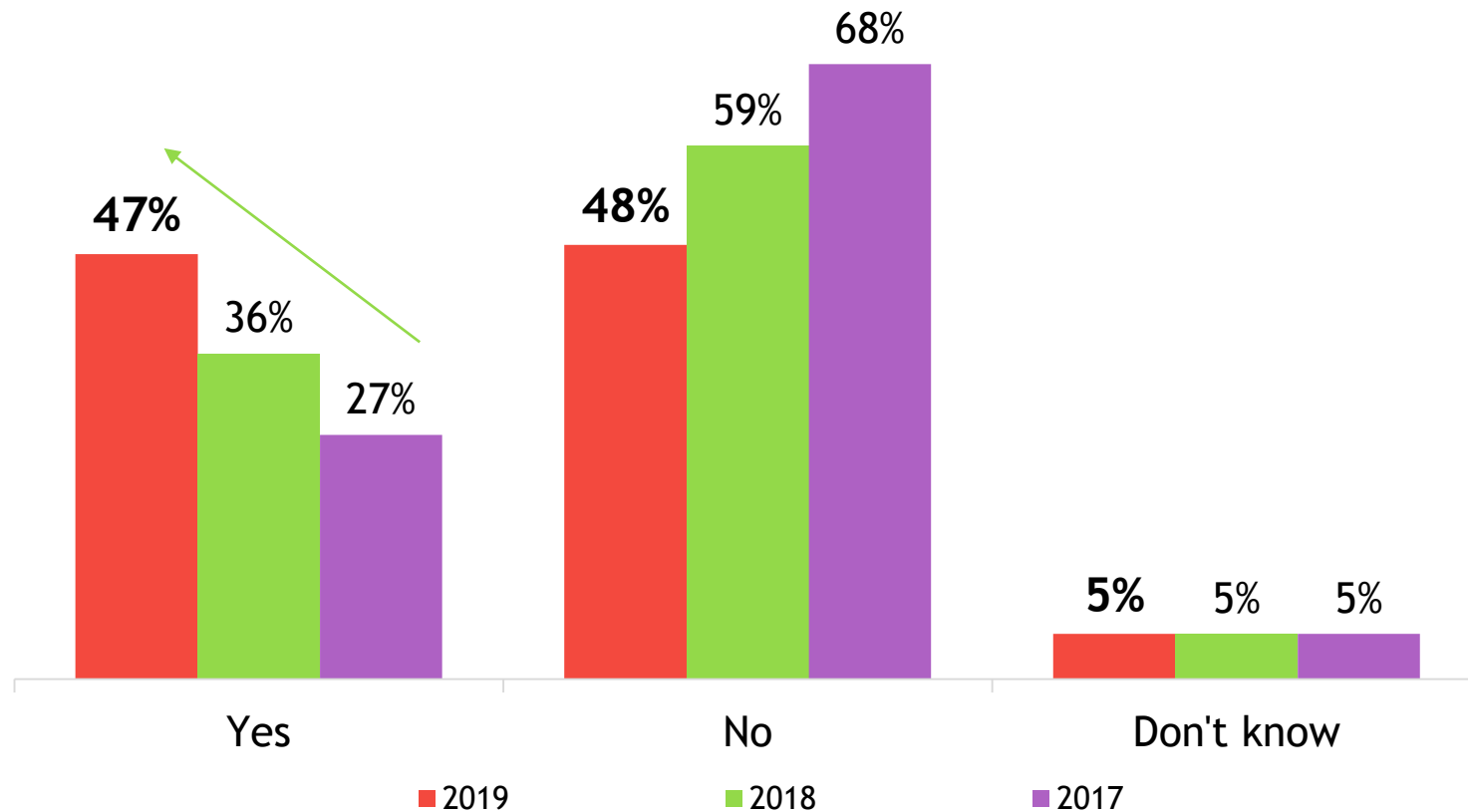
1. Awareness of Ofsted's myth busting campaign has consistently increased, with 47% of all teachers now having heard something about Ofsted's myth busting campaign compared to only 27% in 2017.
2. Subsequently, there has also been an increase in awareness of specific myths either being true or false. In particular, a greater proportion of teachers are aware that Ofsted is not looking for a particular teaching style, that many inspection teams do include a senior leader from another school and that Ofsted doesn't expect to see data about pupil performance and progress set out in a particular way.
3. Overall opinion of Ofsted has fallen since last year. Agreement that Ofsted acts as a reliable and trusted arbiter has fallen from 35% in 2018 to 18% this year. But, for the most part, teachers are not more likely to disagree but to choose neither agree nor disagree. Those who were most recently inspected were less likely to disagree than those who were inspected one to two years ago.
4. Seven in 10 (71%) continue to feel that their last inspection was pretty much in line with what they expected. Half (52%) still feel that the inspection team were 'professional but detached'.
5. Six out of 10 (61%) teachers whose school has been inspected by Ofsted feel that the final judgement reached by the inspection team was a fair and accurate assessment, this has remained the same since last year.
6. There has been a decrease in agreement that inspections are important and necessary to monitor performance and hold schools to account (38% agree compared with 50% in 2018). While agreement has fallen, disagreement remains the same with teachers having less of an opinion on this issue.
7. Only 27% of teachers feel inspections help individual schools improve (27% compared with 31% in 2018) but there has been an increase in perception that Ofsted inspectors have relevant frontline experience.
8. 41% of teachers currently feel that their school places a greater emphasis on getting good results than the content of the learning. This is significantly higher than parents' perception, which shows 24% feel this. Of those who work in a school that places a greater emphasis on getting good results than the content of the learning, seven in 10 (70%) teachers disagree with this focus being taken in their school.
9. 70% of primary school teachers state that their school has a strategy for improving and teaching reading. 91% use at least one of the outlined approaches to develop children's literacy.
10. While reading strategies are fairly widespread across primary schools, only a quarter of teachers feel most/all teachers at their schools are equipped to teach phonics to all children.

Ofsted's myth busting campaign

— Current understanding of myths

There has been a steady increase in awareness of Ofsted's myth busting campaign over the last two years, with awareness now standing at 47%

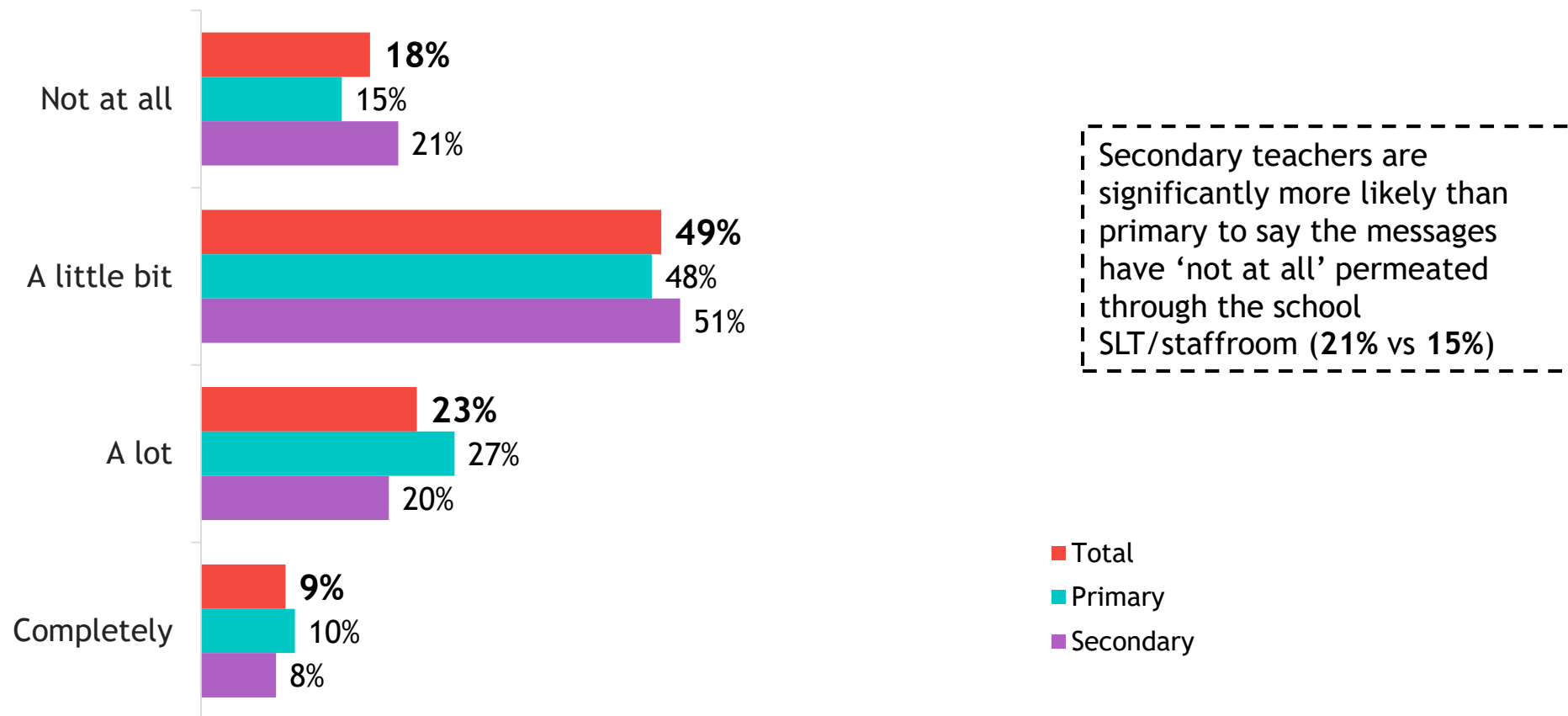
- Have you heard anything about Ofsted's myth busting campaign?



Awareness of the myth busting campaign is higher for:
Teachers aged 18 to 44 (50%), compared with those aged 45+ (41%)
Teachers/lecturers (49%), compared to supply teachers/lecturers (30%)

Half of all teachers feel that the myth busting messages from Ofsted have permeated a little bit through their school Senior Leadership Team/staffroom

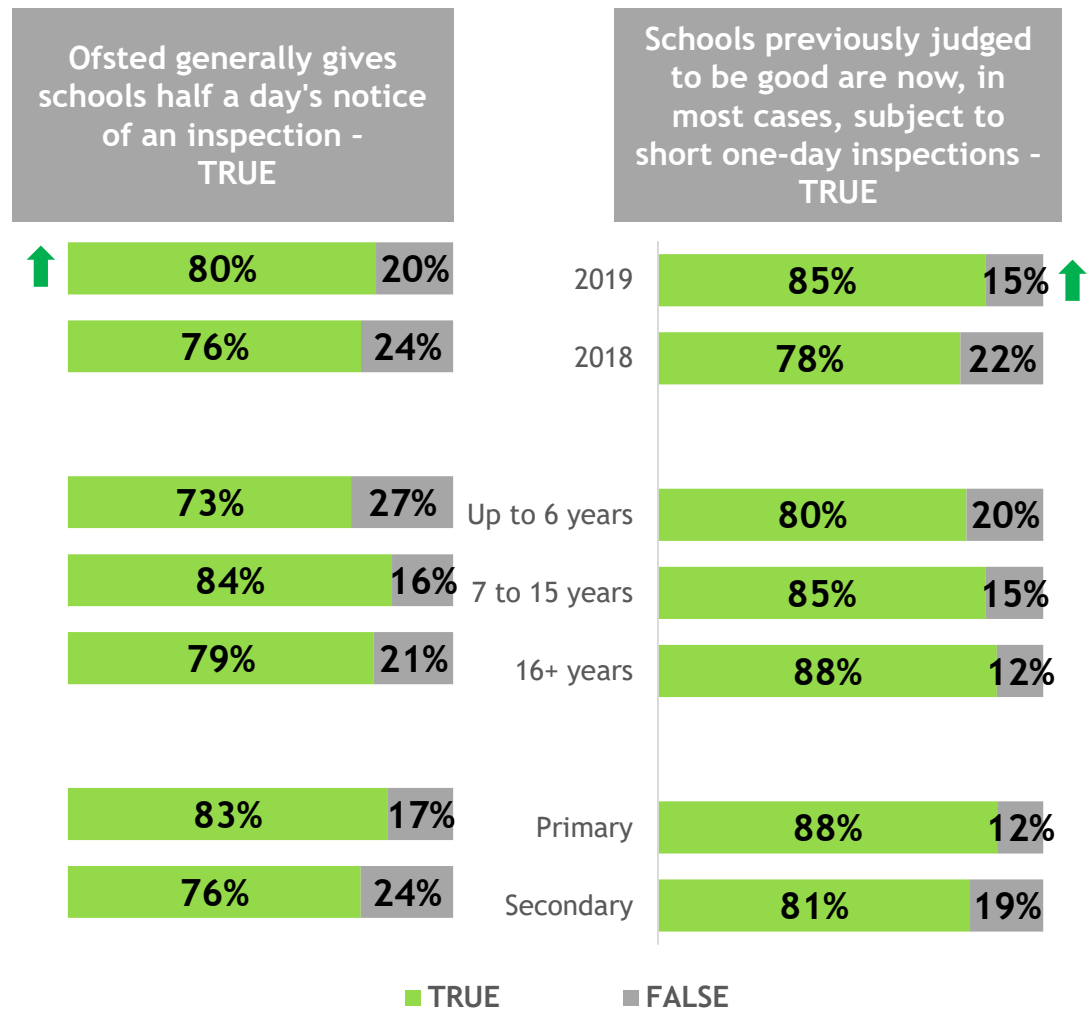
- How far, if at all, have the messages from Ofsted about myths permeated through your school Senior Leadership Team/staffroom?



There has been a strong increase in awareness that schools previously judged to be good are now, in most cases, subject to short one-day inspections

Knowing that Ofsted generally gives half a day's notice of an inspection was significantly higher for:

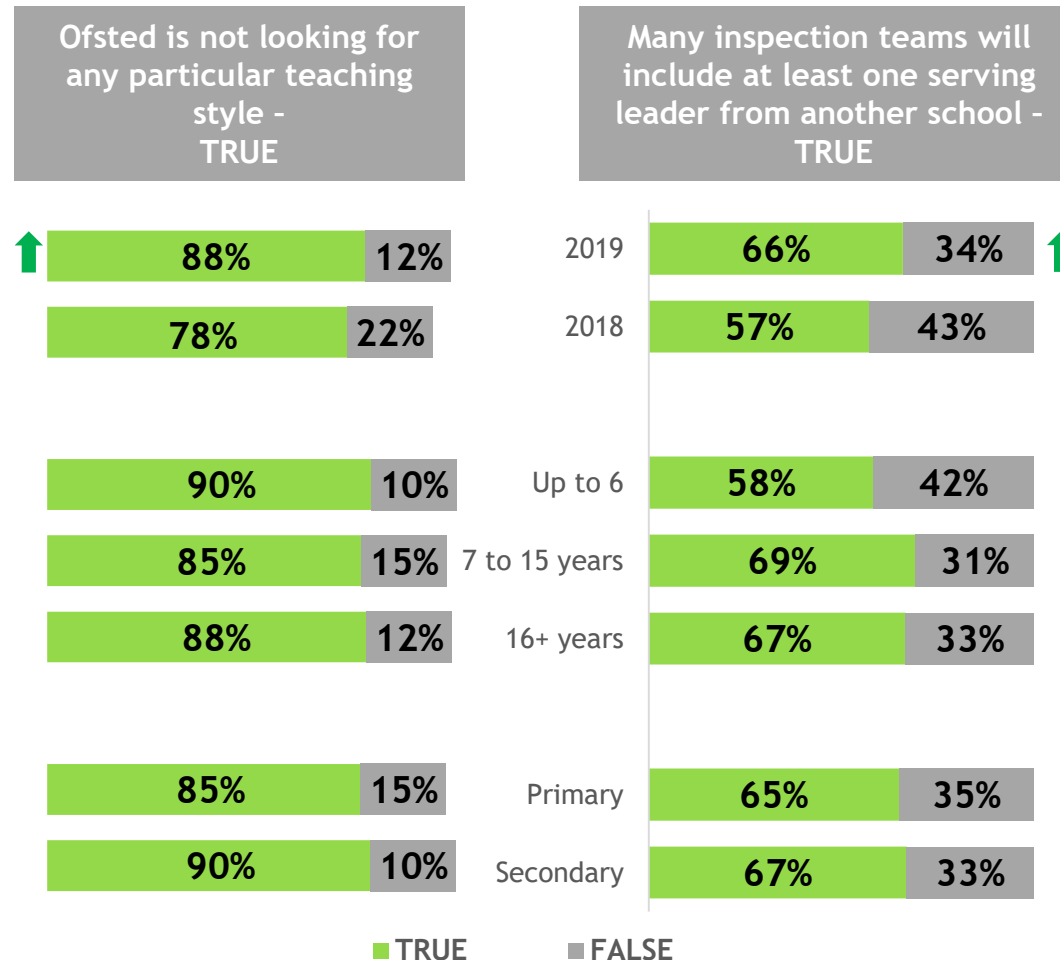
- Teachers aged 18 to 44 (82%), compared to those 45+ (76%)
- Primary school teachers (83%), compared to secondary (76%)



Primary teachers (88%) are also more likely than secondary (81%) to know that schools previously judged to be 'good' are subject to one day inspections



There has been a significant increase in awareness that Ofsted does not prefer a particular teaching style and that inspection teams include serving leaders from other schools

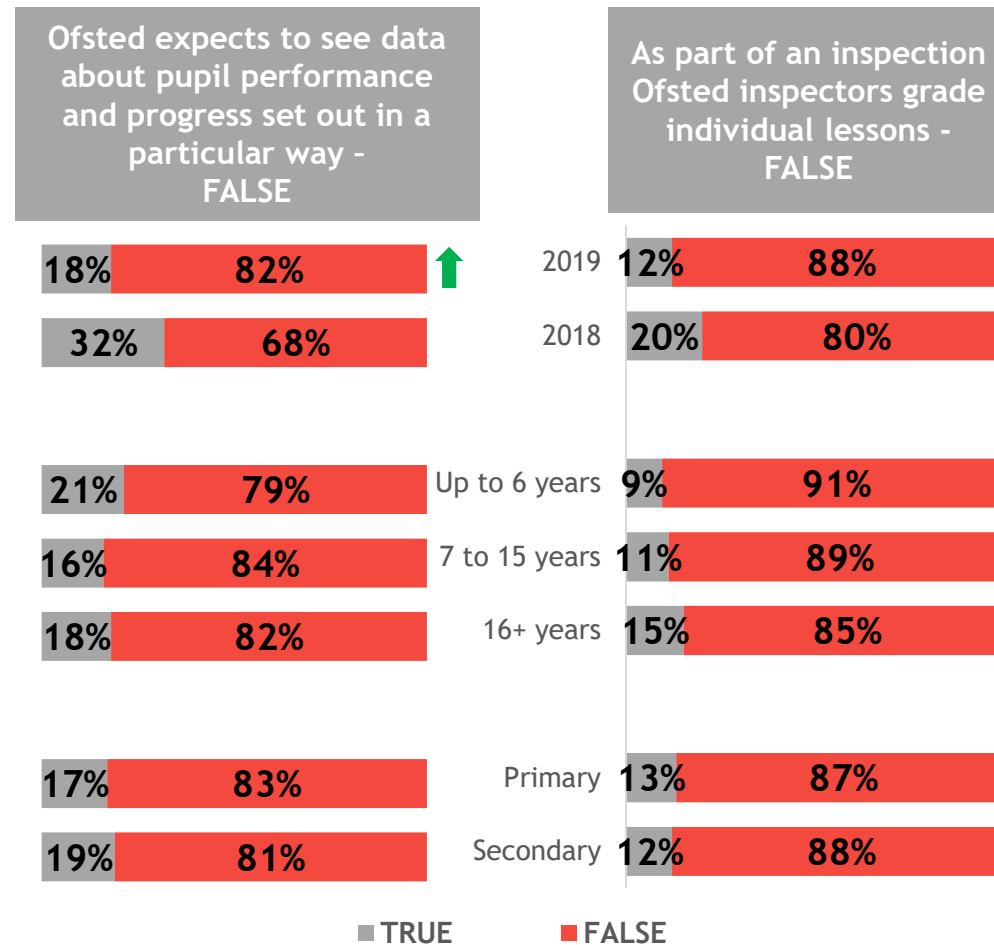


Knowing that inspection teams include serving leaders from other schools is higher for:

- Teachers in London (73%), compared to teachers in the North of England (59%)



Over eight in 10 know that Ofsted does not expect to see performance and progress set out in a specific way, and almost nine in 10 know that Ofsted does not grade individual lessons - with increases in awareness for both of these since 2018



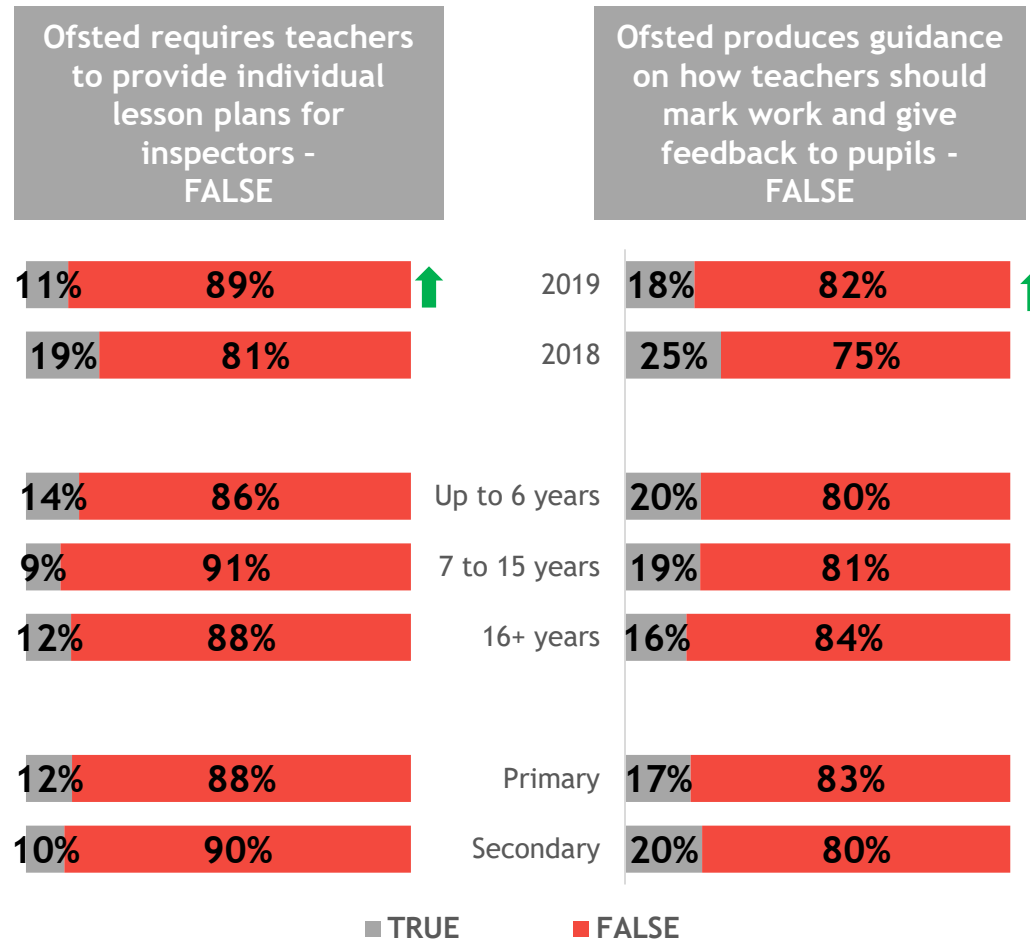
The proportion reporting that it is false that 'as part of an inspection Ofsted inspectors grade individual lessons' has increased to 88%, from 80% in 2018 and 74% in 2017

Thinking that Ofsted expects to see data about performance/progress set out in a particular way is higher for:

- Teachers who only have direct class contact a few times a week (29%), compared to those who have daily contact (16%)

Nine in 10 teachers know that Ofsted does not require individual lesson plans, and eight out of 10 know that Ofsted does not produce guidance on marking students' work

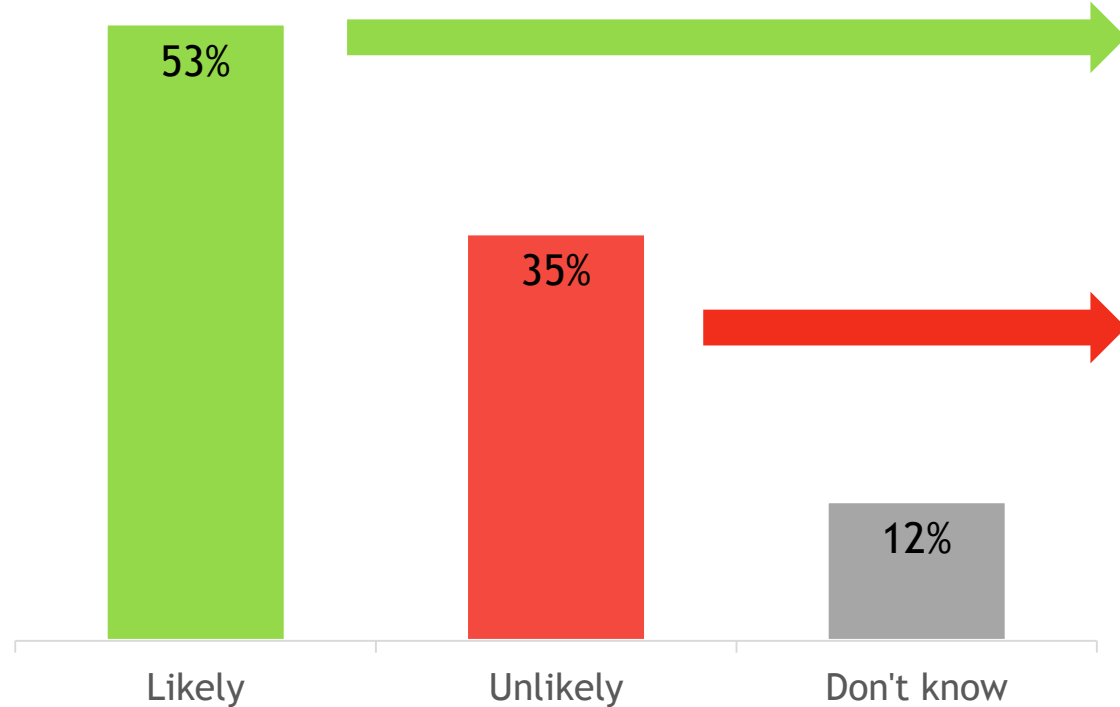
Teachers at outstanding schools, were most likely to think that Ofsted requires individual lesson plans for inspections (16%)



— Confidence in promoting and challenging information

After being shown the statements related to myth busting, half of teachers would be likely to promote these statements to colleagues and senior leaders at their school

How likely or unlikely are you to promote these statements to colleagues and senior leaders at your school?

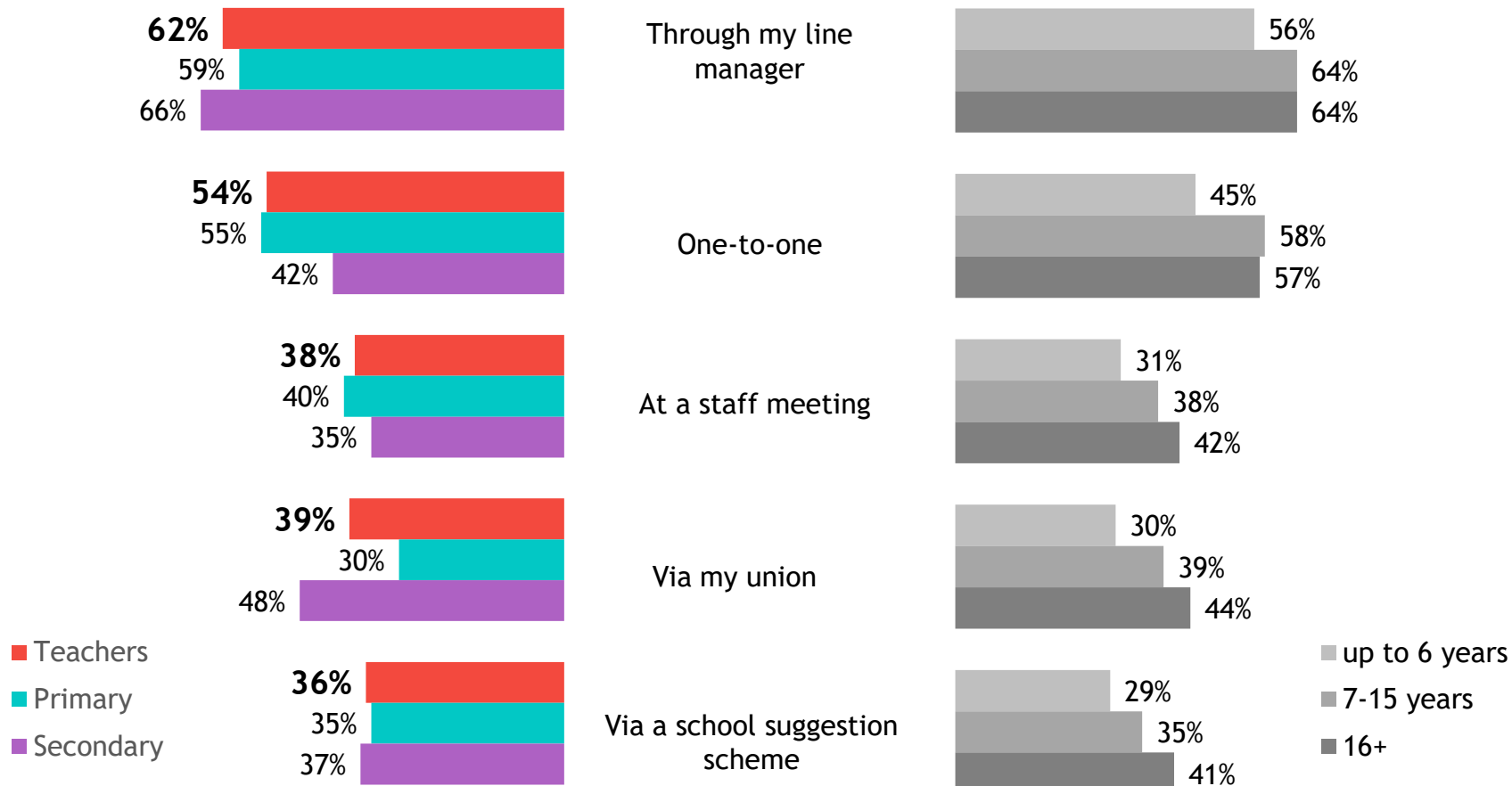


Teachers who were aware of the myth busting work that Ofsted has carried out are more likely to promote these messages than those unaware of Ofsted's work in this area (58% vs 48%)

Teachers in academy schools are more unlikely to promote myths compared with teachers in the maintained sector (41% vs 33%)

Six in 10 teachers would feel confident challenging a senior leader through their line manager. Staff who have been teaching for 16+ years are more confident than those in the early stages of their career

- Proportion stating that they feel confident to challenge senior leaders on facts in each of these situations

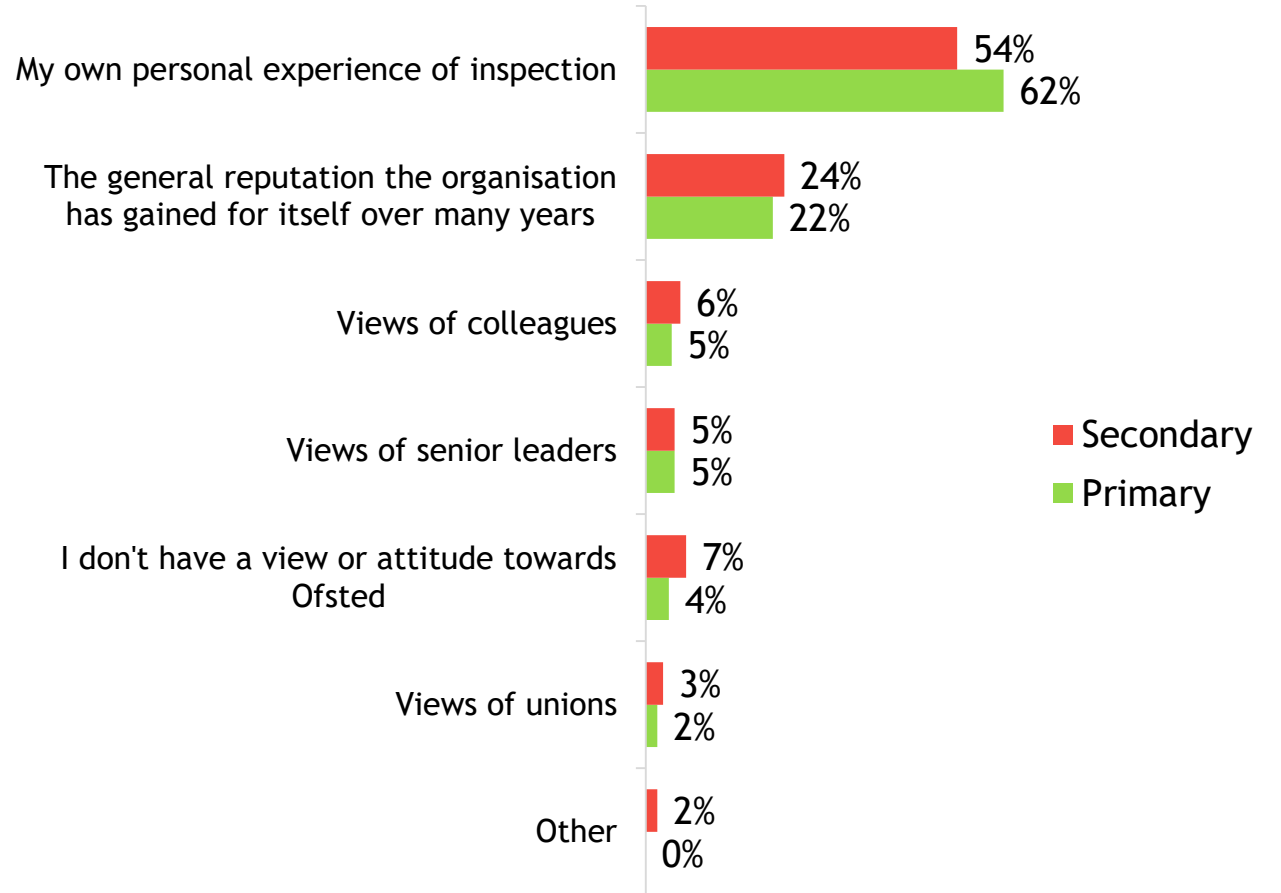
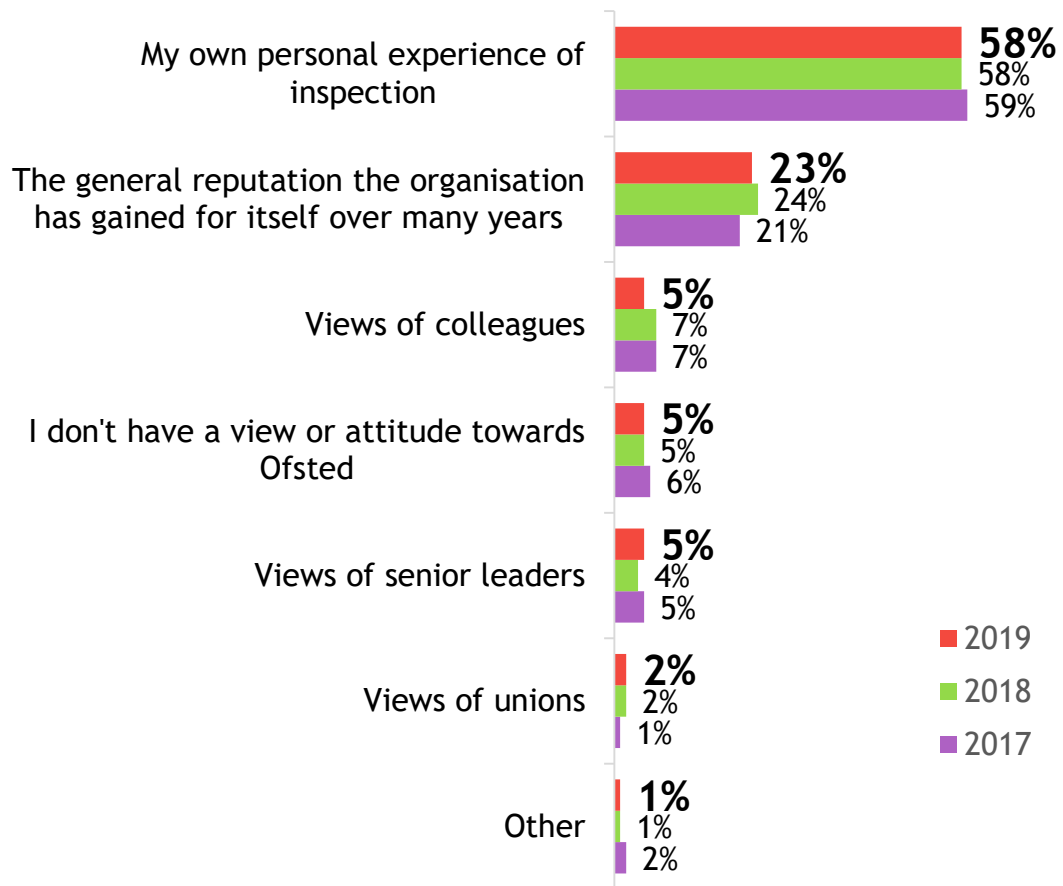


Teachers' perceptions of Ofsted

— Attitudes towards Ofsted as an organisation

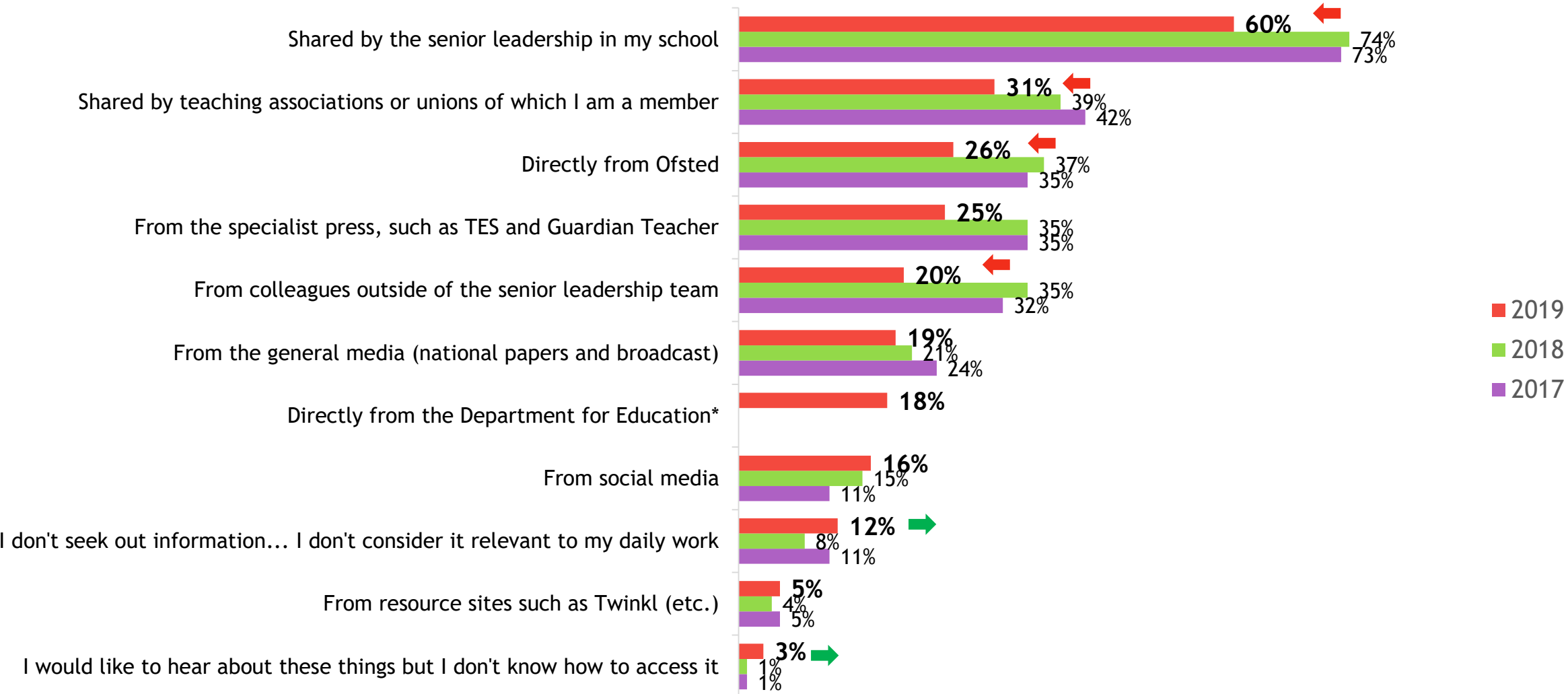
Personal experience of Ofsted remains the main factor shaping perceptions of Ofsted, but primary teachers are more likely to cite it than secondary teachers

- What most shapes your views of Ofsted?



There has been a significant decline in teachers finding information about Ofsted from a number sources, but social media continues to rise

- How do you find information about inspection and Ofsted?



*Added in 2019
 A1 - How do you find necessary information about inspection and how Ofsted works?
 Base: All teachers (n=1,007)

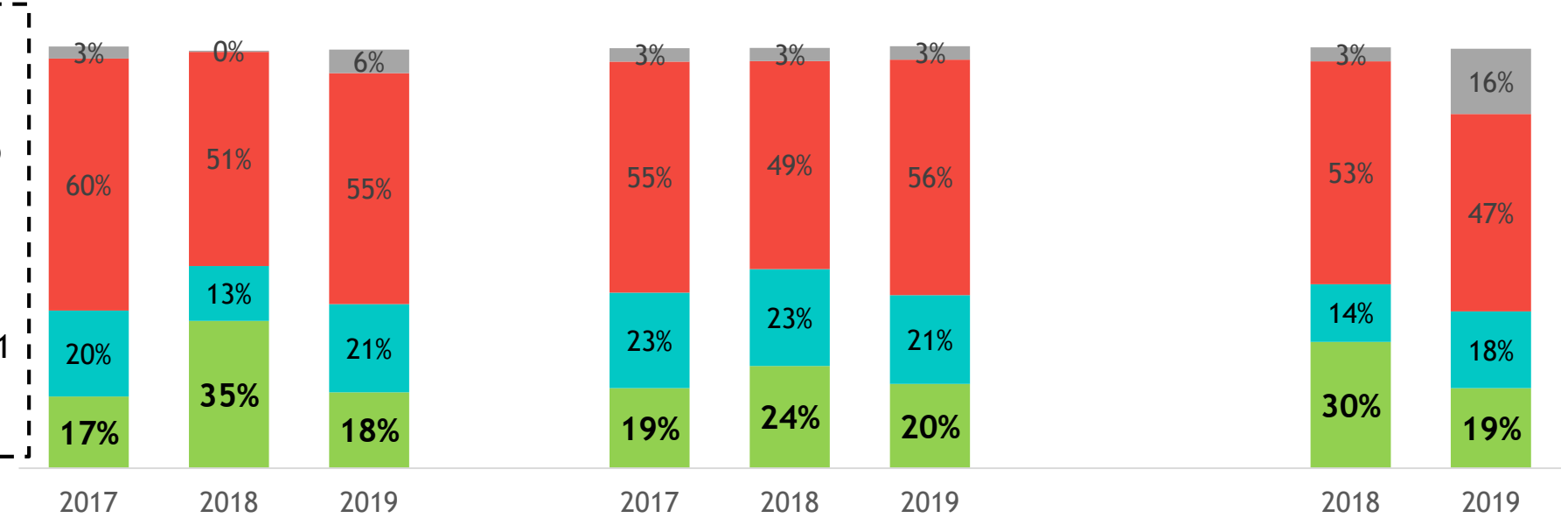
There have been drops in agreement since 2018 - but, for the most part, the shift has been towards 'neither agree nor disagree' rather than 'disagree'

With regards to perceptions around Ofsted being a reliable and trusted arbiter of standards we have seen reductions in the proportion who slightly agree with this statement and a move towards the middle ground of neither agree nor disagree, a softening of opinion.

- Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

■ Don't know ■ Disagree ■ Neither nor ■ Agree

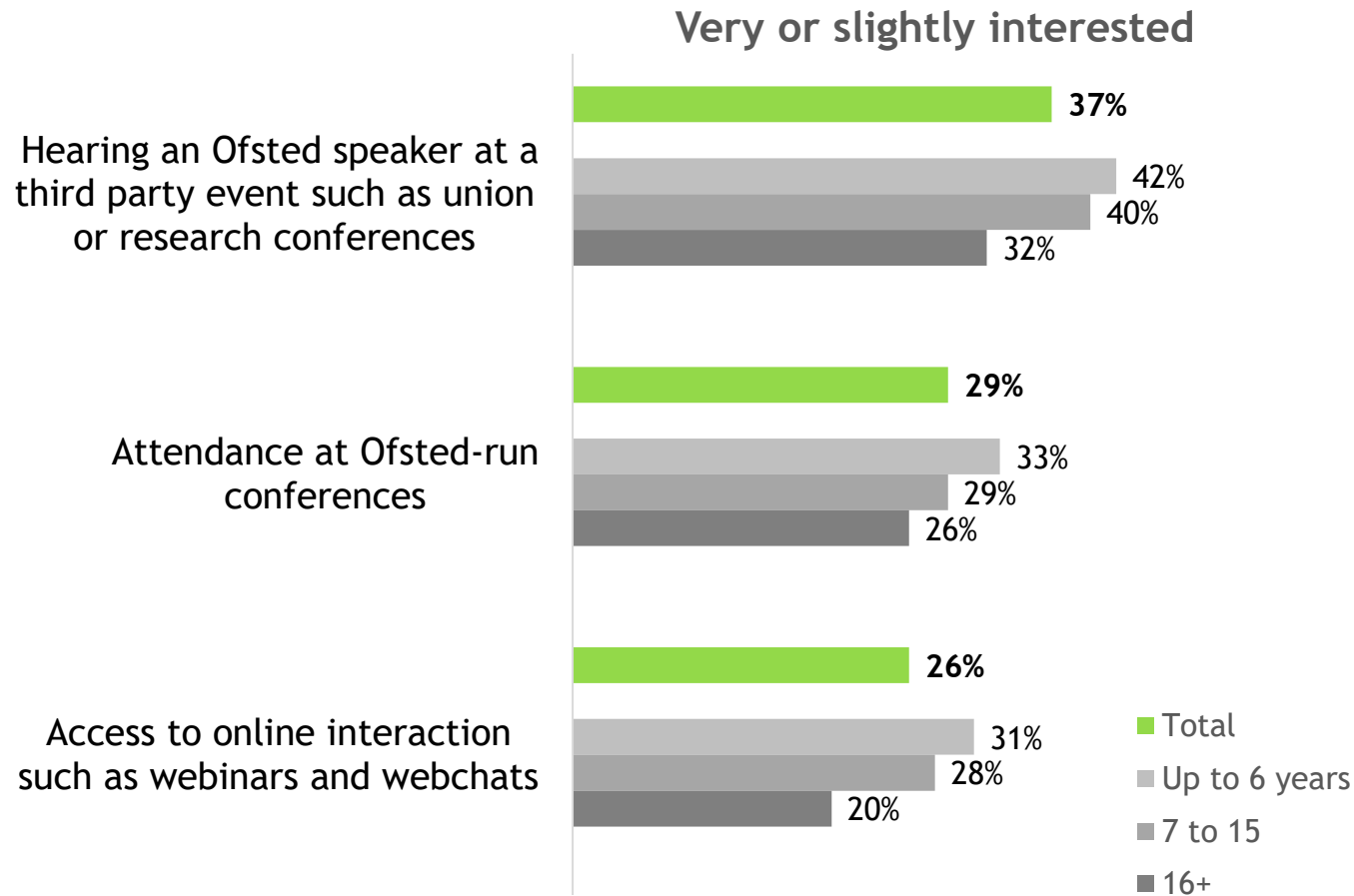
Those who were last inspected within the year are less likely to disagree that Ofsted acts as a reliable arbiter than those who were inspected 1 to 2 years ago (51% vs 62%)



Maintained schools are more likely than those in the Academy sector to think Ofsted is independent (18% vs 20%)

Overall, teachers are more interested in engaging with Ofsted through third party events than through webinars or Ofsted-run conferences

- How interested or uninterested would you be about engaging with Ofsted in the following ways?

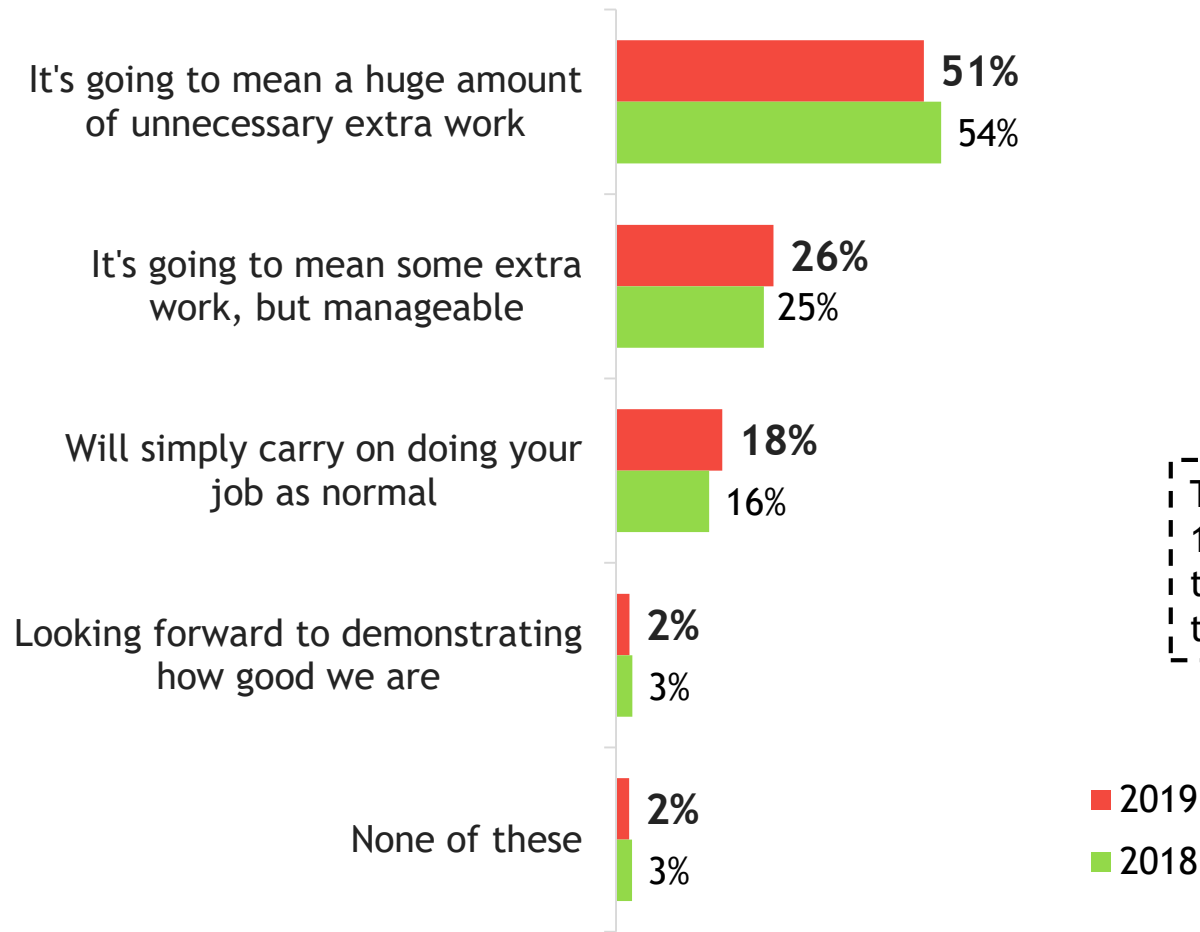


Teachers in the early stages of their career are more likely than experienced teachers to be interested in engaging with Ofsted

— Attitudes towards Ofsted inspections

Half (51%) of teachers still think that an Ofsted inspection means doing extra and unnecessary work

- Which of the following would best describe your reaction/thought process when you think about Ofsted inspecting your school?

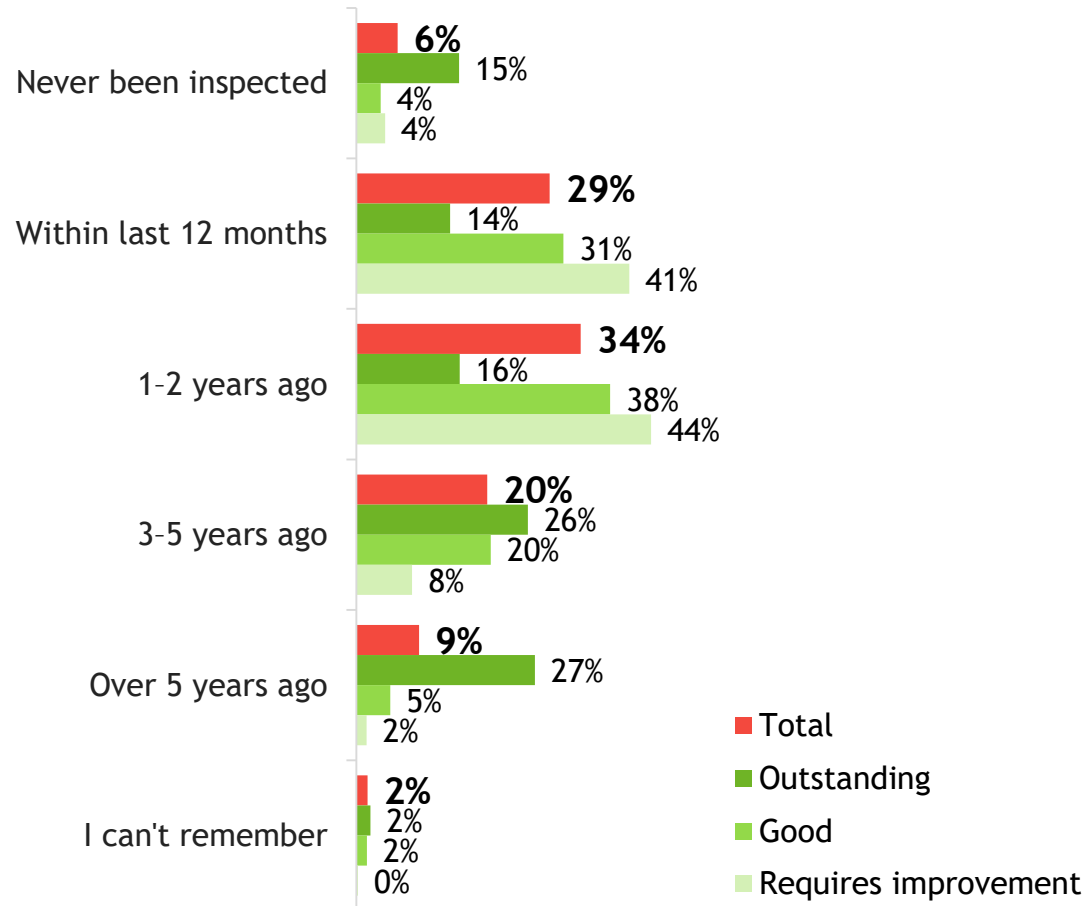


Those who have a personal experience of being inspected in the last 12 months are less likely than others to say it's going to mean a huge amount of unnecessary extra work (43% compared with 57% of those who were last inspected 1 to 2 years ago)

Those who have been teaching for over 16 years are significantly more likely than those teaching for up to six years to 'carry on as normal' (23% vs 12%)

63% of teachers have been inspected in the last two years, this increases to 85% for schools currently rated 'requires improvement' and falls to 30% of those who teach at an 'outstanding' school

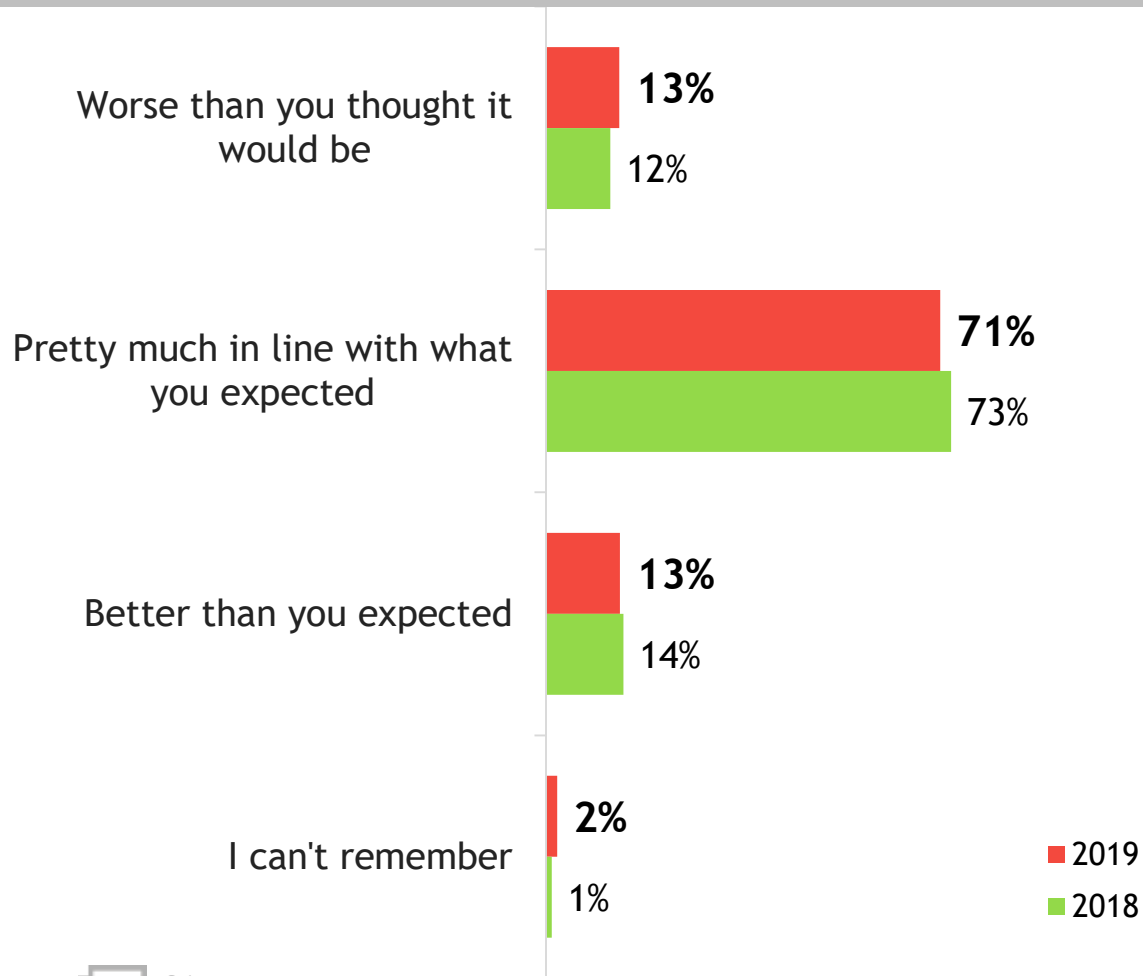
- How recent was your last personal experience of being inspected in a school setting?



19% of teachers with less than six years' teaching experience have never been inspected

Teachers' opinion on their experience of being inspected remains broadly the same since last year

- Thinking of the most recent experience of being inspected in a school setting, did you find the experience...

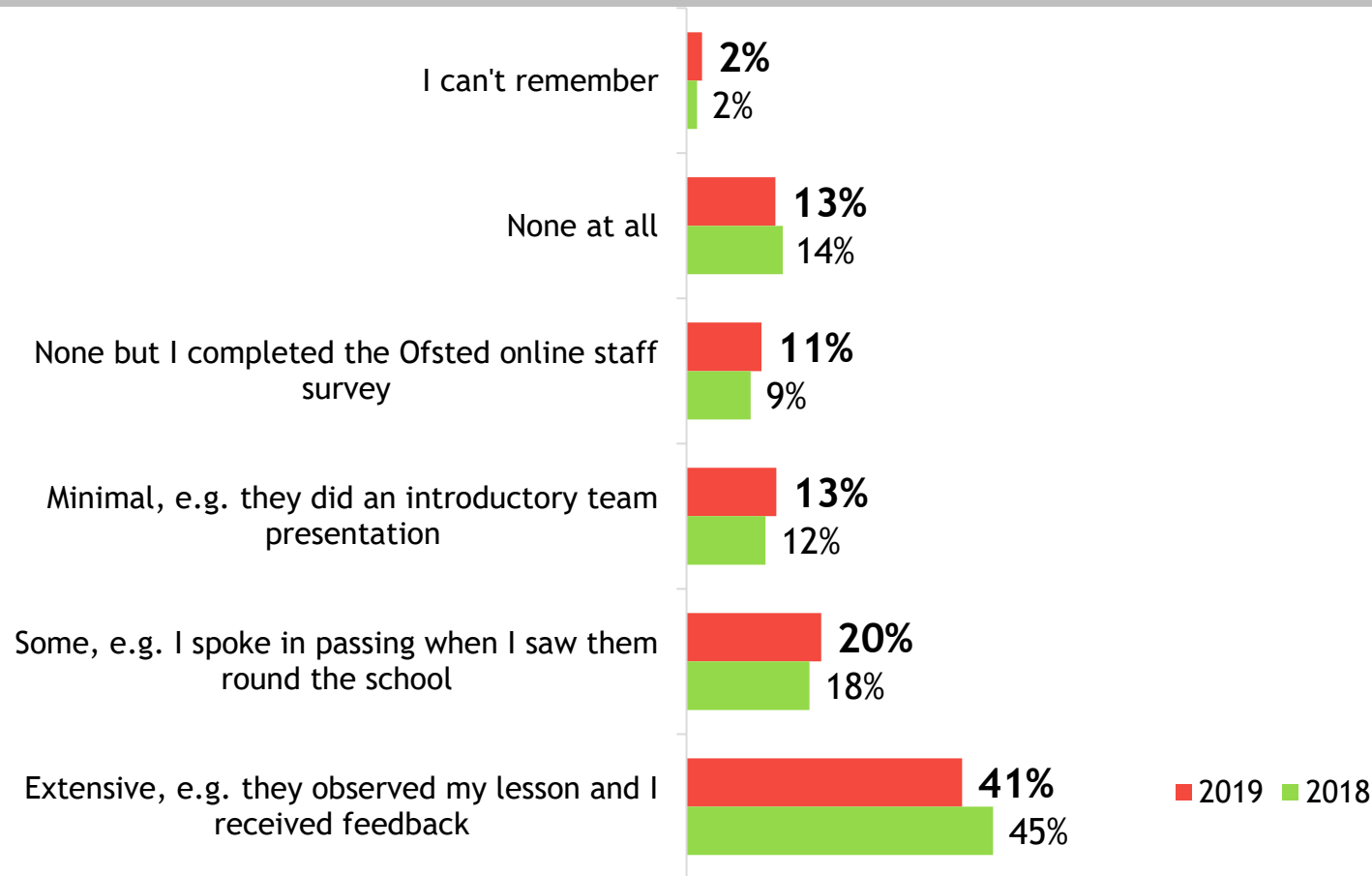


Those who have been teaching for less than six years were not significantly more likely to say that it was worse than they thought it would be. 17% said it was better than they expected

Unsurprisingly, significantly more (31%) teachers from a 'requires improvement' school thought it was worse than they expected it to be

41% of teachers had extensive involvement when they were last inspected by Ofsted. This has fallen slightly since 2018

- Still thinking about your last inspection: How much direct involvement did you have with the inspection team?

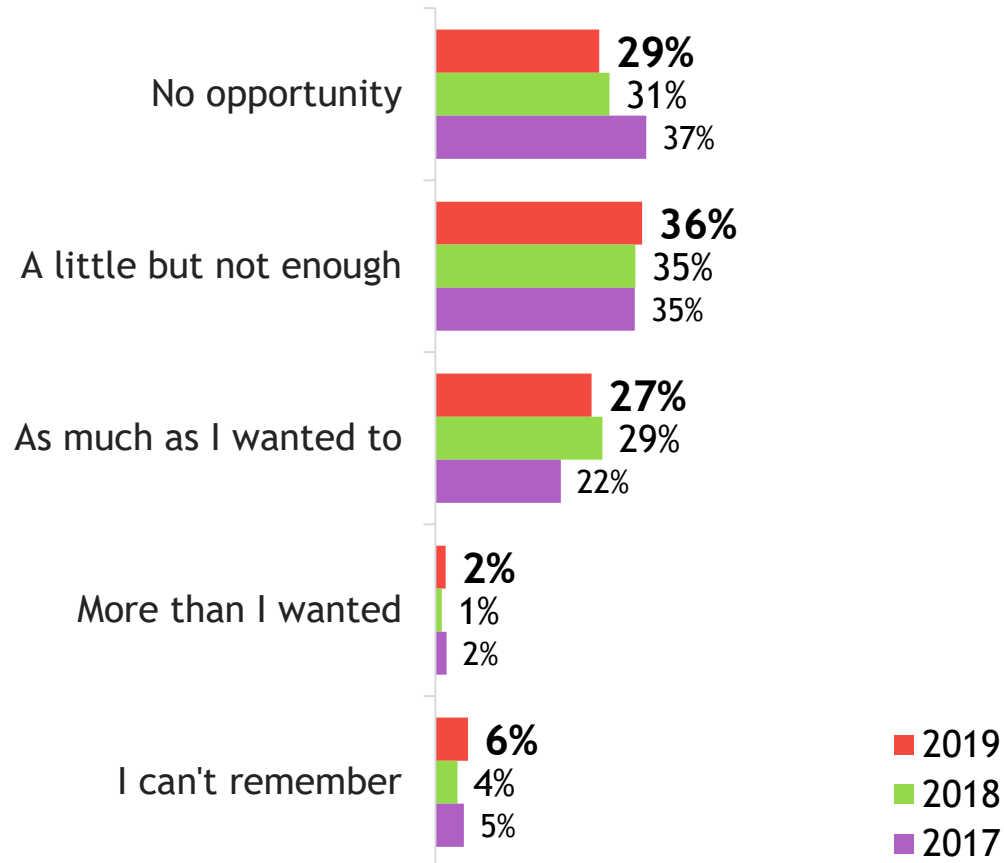


- Those at schools rated 'requires improvement' were significantly more likely than those from 'good' schools to have had extensive involvement (54% compared with 38%)

- 49% of teachers inspected over three years ago had extensive direct involvement, compared to 37% of teachers inspected within the last two years
- Those with more teaching experience are significantly more likely to be extensively involved than those with less than six years experience (47% compared with 33%)

Teachers with more experience are more likely to feel they could contribute to the inspection experience as much as they wanted to

- To what extent did you feel you had an opportunity to feed in your views and contribute to the whole experience of your school being inspected?



Plenty of opportunity:

- 33% of teachers who have seven to 15 years experience said they could contribute as much as they wanted to, compared with only 19% of those who have been teaching for up to six years.

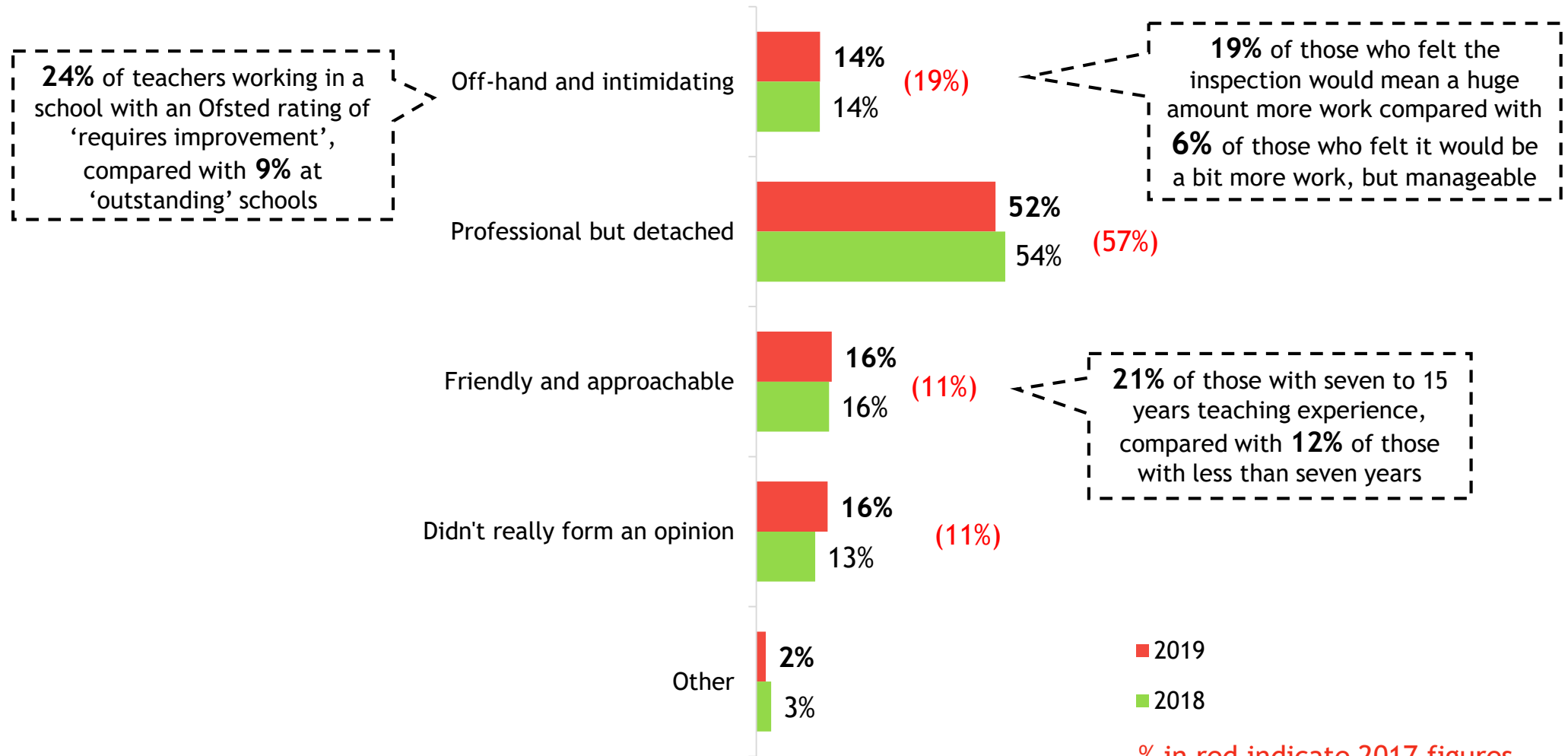
No opportunity:

- 33% of teachers working in a school with an Ofsted rating of 'requires improvement'
- 35% with teaching experience of seven years or less
- 34% of those who felt it would mean huge amount of extra work



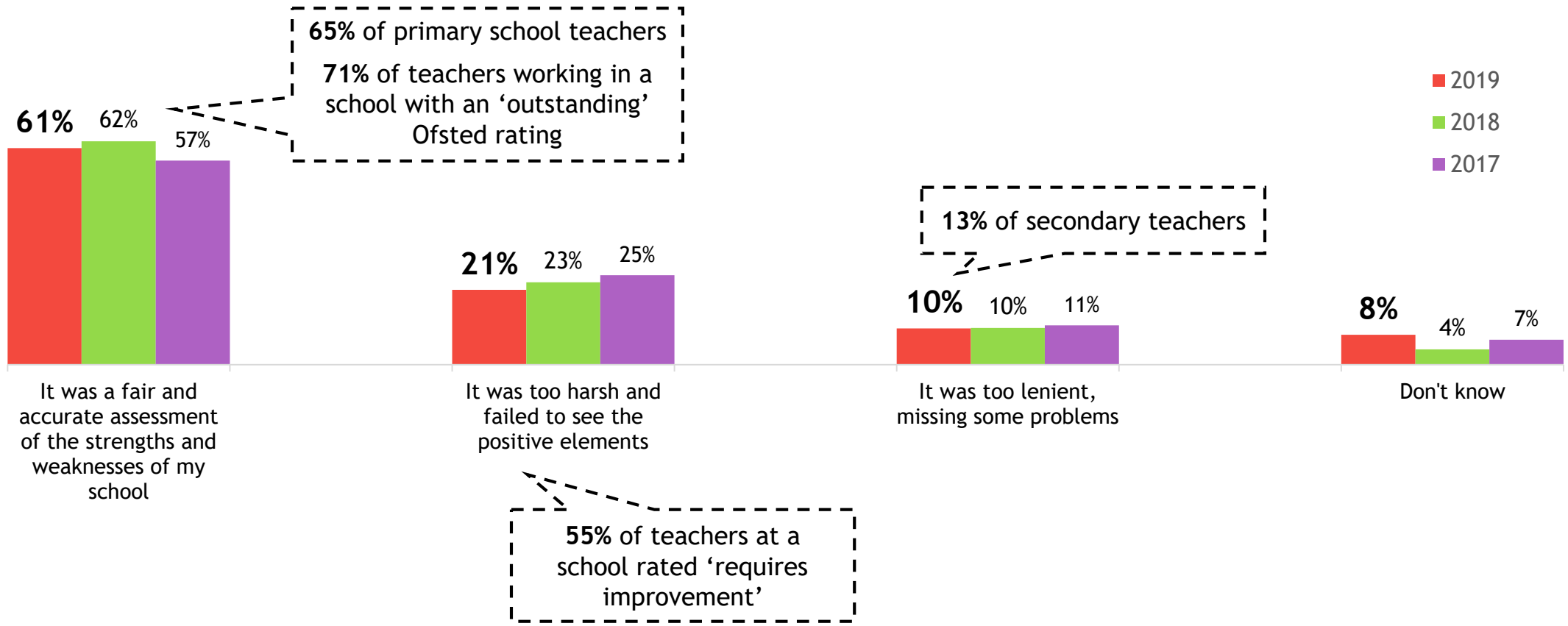
Over half still find the inspection team to be professional, but detached

The inspection team are...



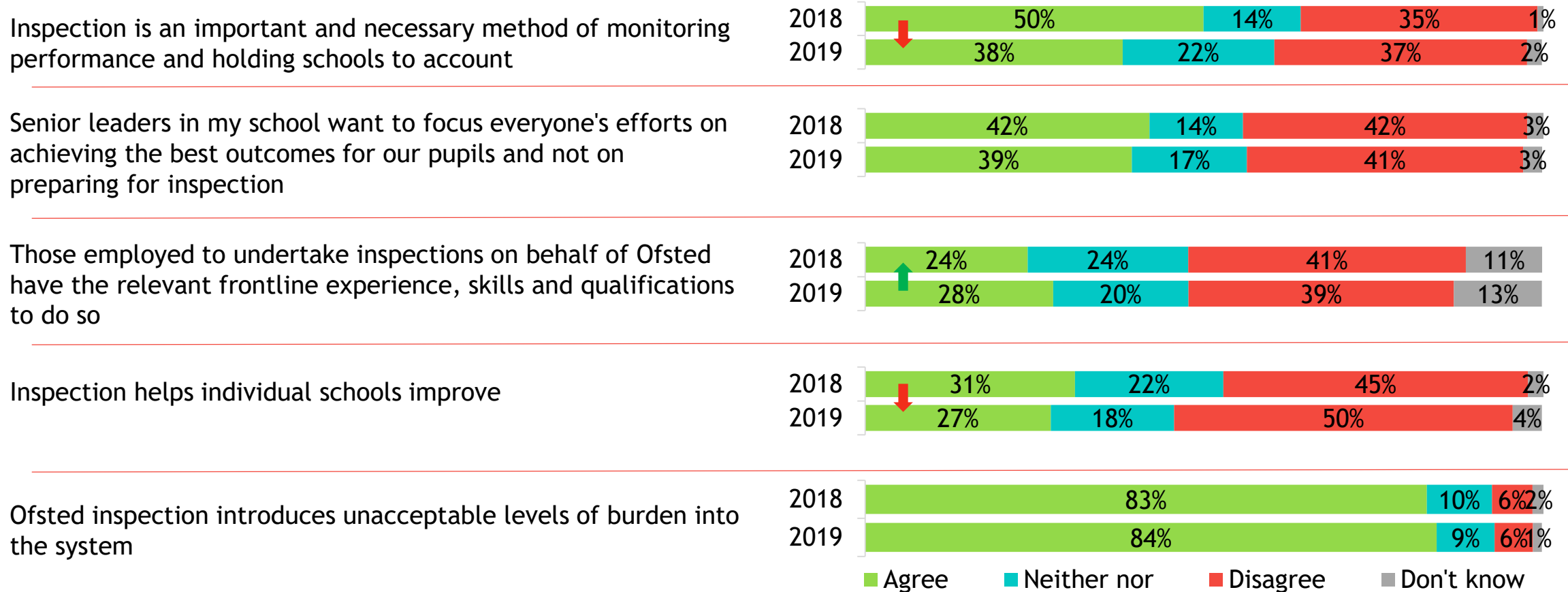
Six out of 10 (61%) teachers whose school has been inspected by Ofsted feel the final judgement reached by the inspection team was a fair and accurate assessment, which remains the same since 2018

- Which of the following best describes how you felt about the final judgement (and sub-judgements) that the inspection team reached?



Teachers who agree that inspections are important and necessary has fallen from 50% to 38% over the last year. This is largely due to an increase in teachers stating ‘neither agree nor disagree’

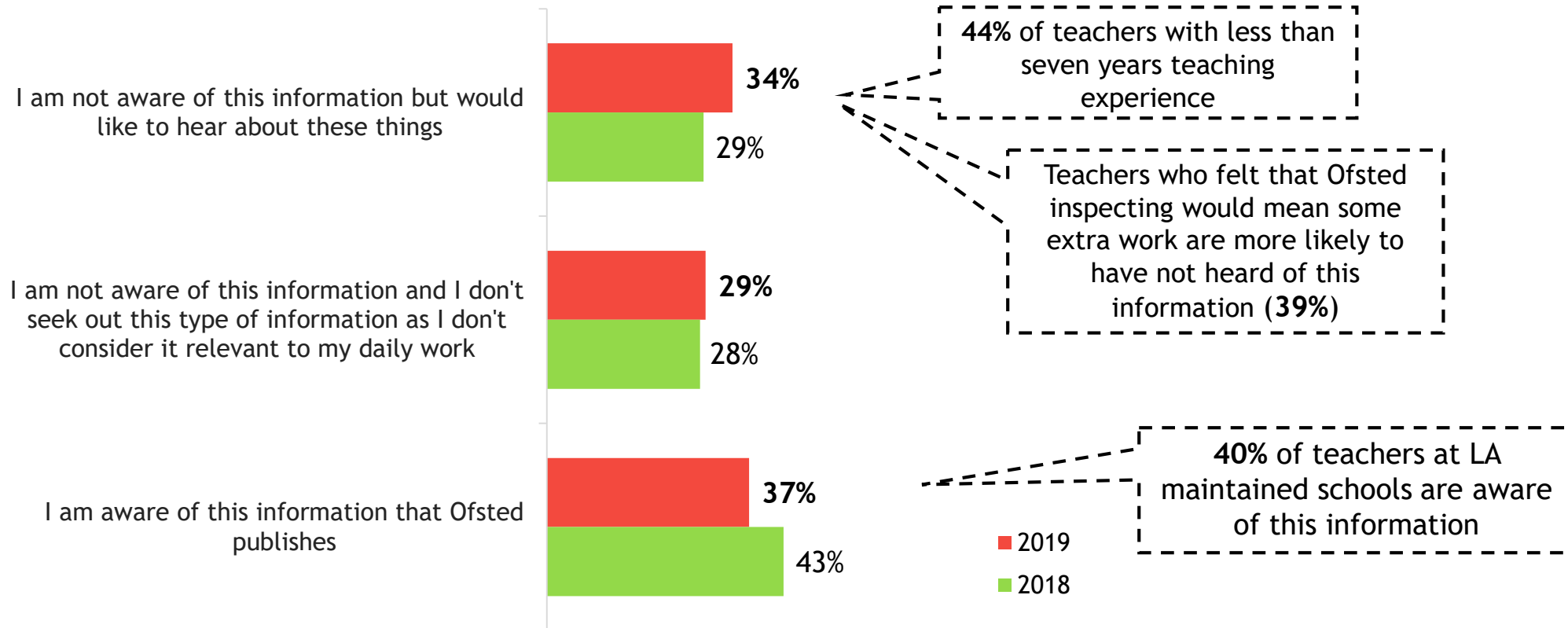
Teachers’ agreement on the importance of inspection and that inspection helps school improve has fallen over the last year. While there has been a fall in teachers who agree here, this has not translated to a significant rise in those who disagree with more teachers moving to the middle ground of having no strong opinion



— Awareness of Ofsted publications

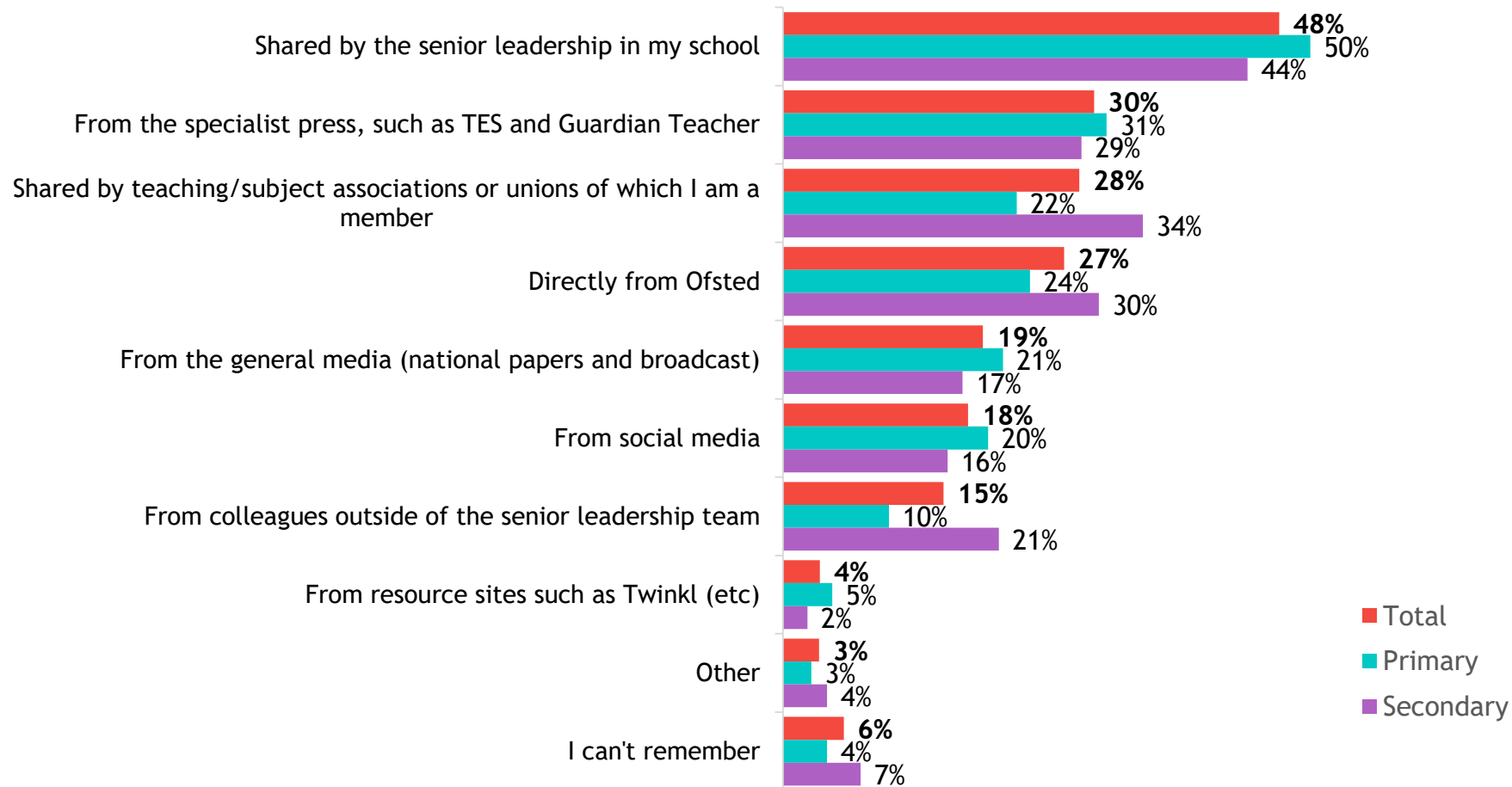
There has been a fall in awareness of this information, with just over a third (37%) aware that Ofsted publishes reports about the wider education sector

- Which of the following best describes your awareness of information that Ofsted publishes?



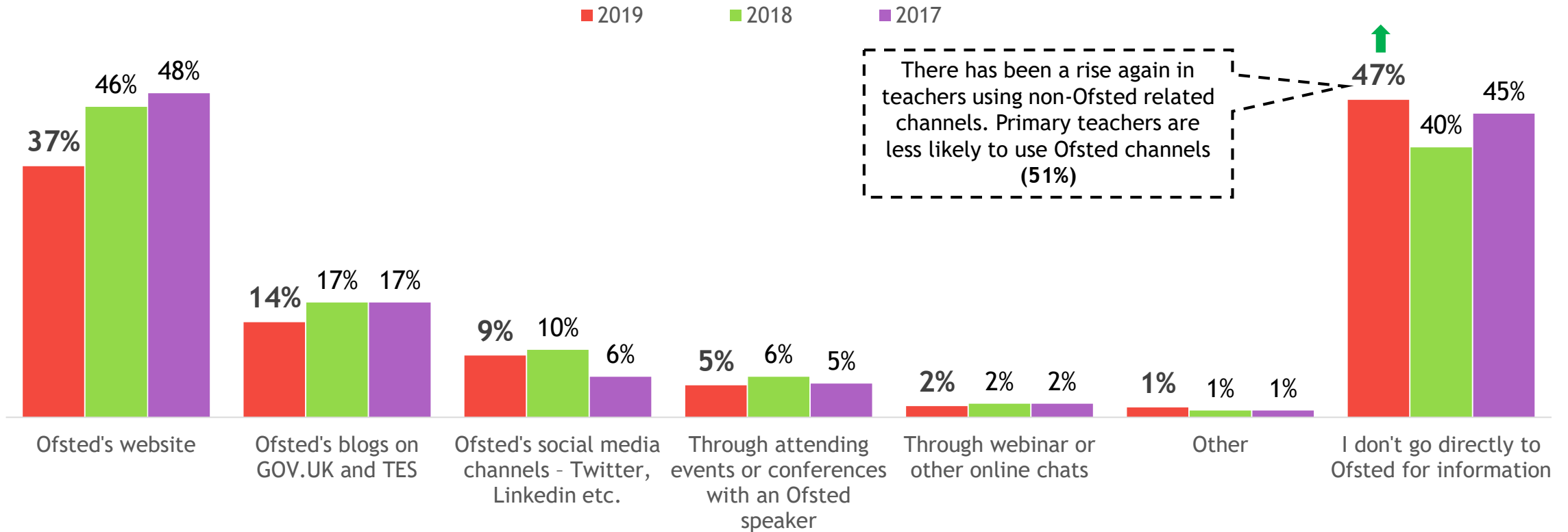
Information is mainly communicated to teachers through senior leaders, and trusted bodies such as TES and the teaching unions

- How do you hear about the information that Ofsted publishes?



Significantly fewer teachers are using the Ofsted website for information this year than in 2018

- Thinking about information that you might get directly from Ofsted, which channels do you use?

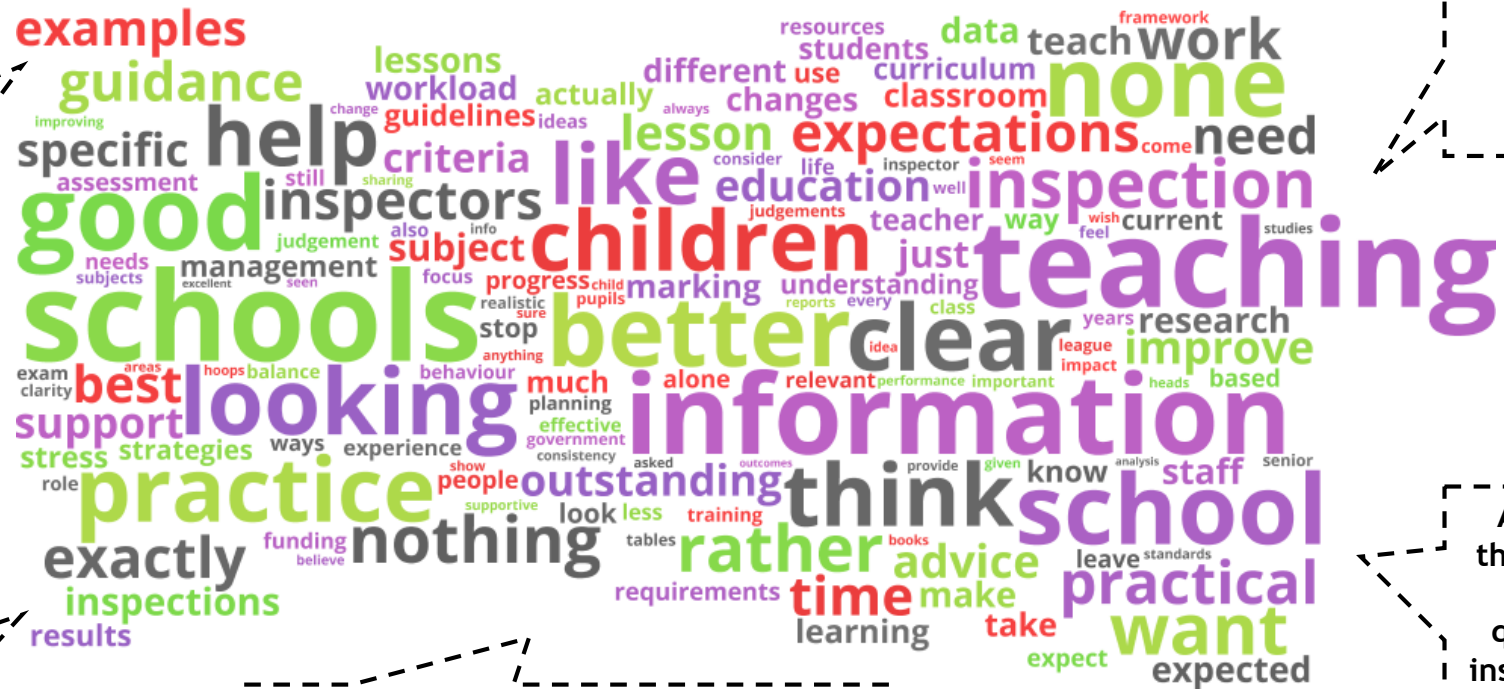


Teachers would like information on lesson plans and templates, with feedback on their lessons

- What practical information to help you do your job better would you like to get from Ofsted?

A clear idea of what information is necessary and to ensure that children's learning is most important rather than purely ticking boxes

If Ofsted genuinely think their role is to help me to do my job better, they should be inspecting the school's professional development.



What can I do to help students make better progress, rather than just jumping through stereotypical hoops

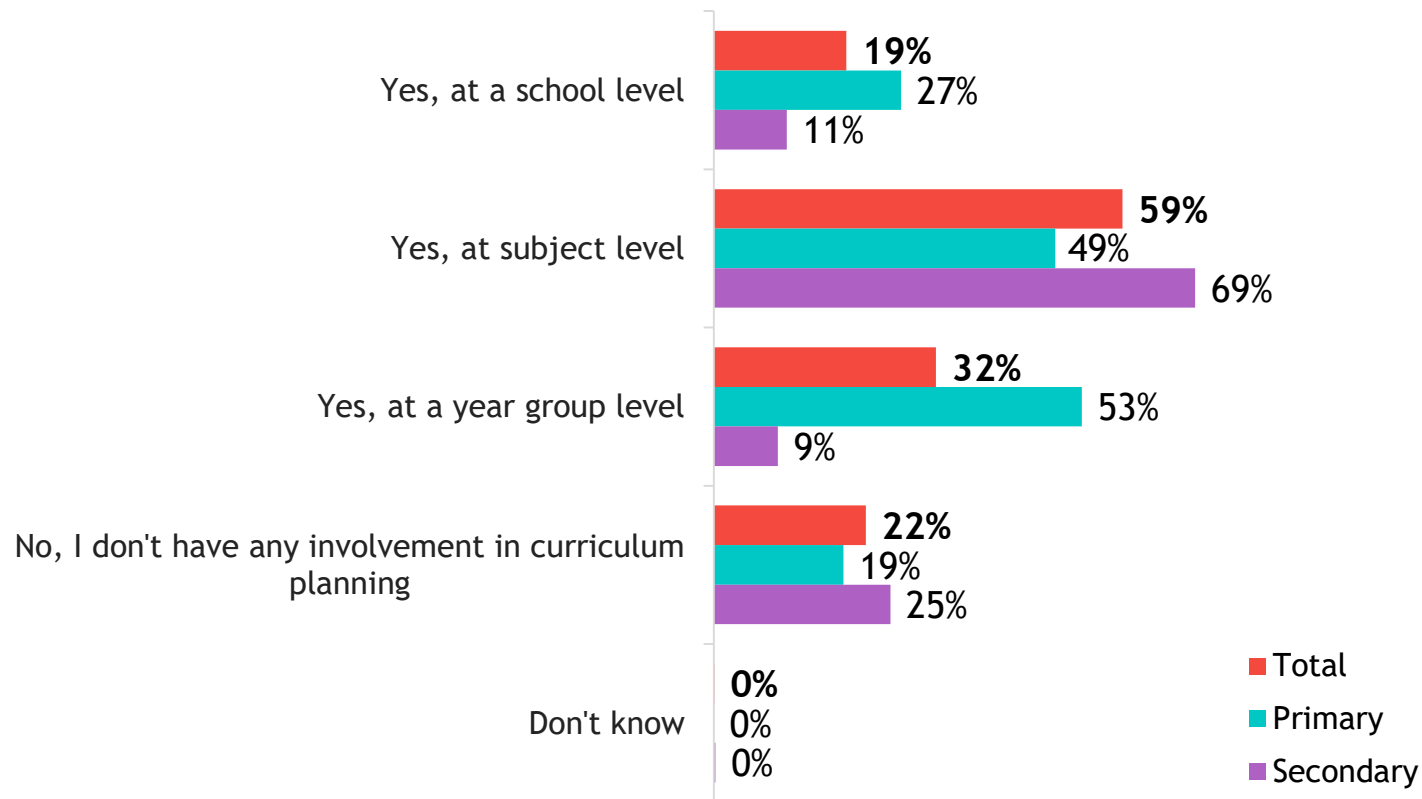
Comparisons of MFL performance which indicated proportion of A level entries in independent sector to assist exam analysis. Info about bilingual pupils as proportion of GCSE and A level cohort.

Advice and strategies rather than criticism, which is what it boils down to. Also, the qualifications of some Ofsted inspectors are questionable and I can't take them seriously based on my knowledge of their management of schools in the past.

— Focus of learning and the curriculum

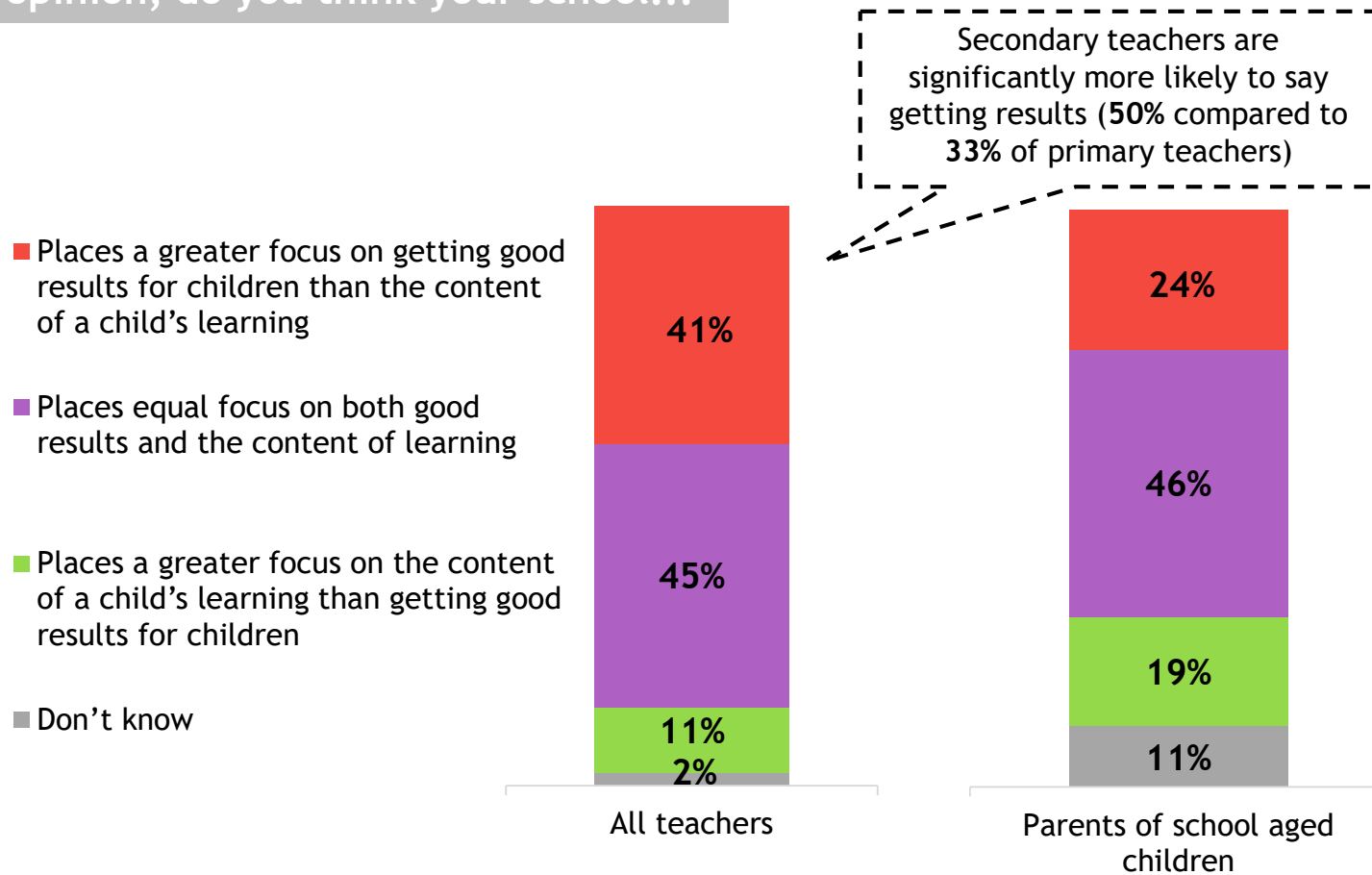
Over three quarters (78%) of teachers are involved in curriculum planning at their school, this increases to 81% for primary teachers

- Are you involved in the curriculum planning in your school?



Teachers are significantly more likely than parents this year to feel that their school places a greater emphasis on getting results

- In your opinion, do you think your school...

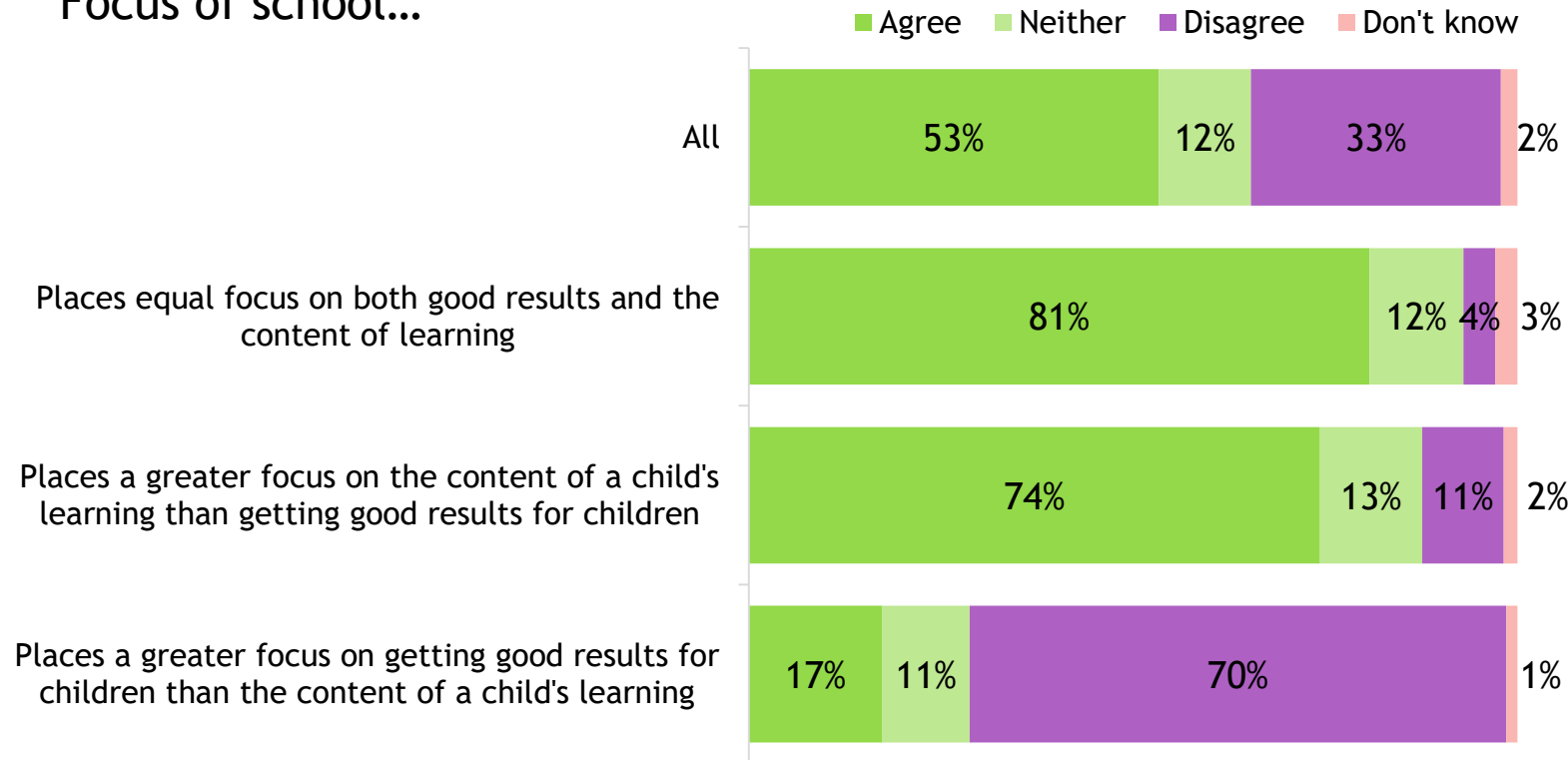


- 50% of teachers that teach at an academy say there is more emphasis on good results compared to 38% at maintained schools
- 50% of teachers at a school rated requires improvement say there is more emphasis on good results, compared to 34% at an outstanding school.
- 60% of teachers at an 'outstanding' school say that they place an equal focus

Seven in 10 (70%) of teachers who feel their school places a greater focus on getting results disagree with this approach in their school

- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the focus taken in your school?

Focus of school...

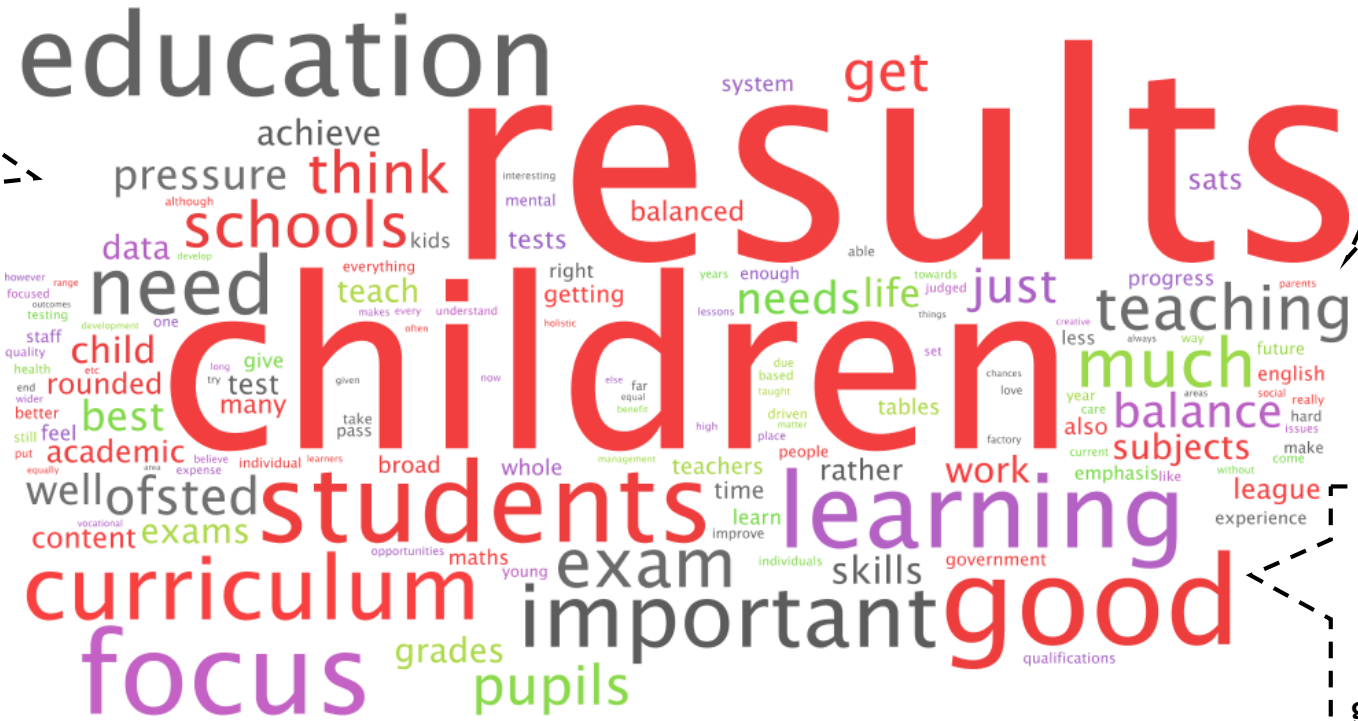


- 57% of teachers who teach primary agree and are significantly more likely than secondary teachers (49%) to agree with their schools focus
- 57% of teachers at a maintained school agree compared to 45% who teach at academies
- 38% of those that teach at a school that 'requires improvement' disagree with their schools focus

Many teachers believe that a core understanding of the basics is paramount, but this should not be detrimental to other creative subjects that develop other skills

I accept that in the present climate, schools are often rated by the qualifications that the pupils achieve, but the overall beneficial experience of the joy of learning can be lost for many pupils

There are so many more skills to life than memories. We should be developing children's emotional and mental health and well-being as well as main subjects, creative subjects should not be cut out of the timetable. Education is more than just league tables



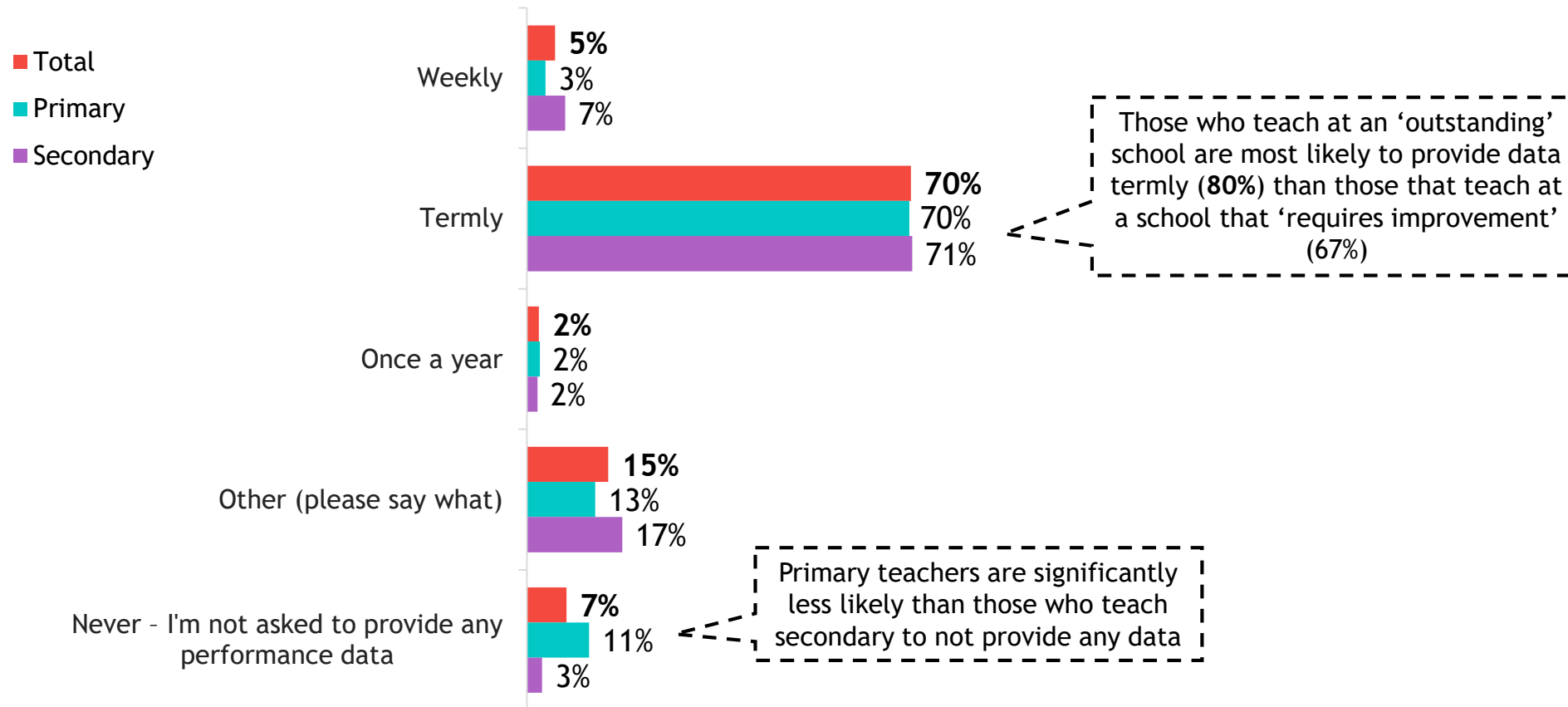
I believe we should teach children a thorough understanding of basic English and maths. It is lovely to broaden the curriculum but realistically children need daily practice in basic skills

Education is not about grades, although the education system would have you think that. Additionally, with the current system it does not matter how good the lowest level students are, because the bottom third are guaranteed to fail

— Providing data

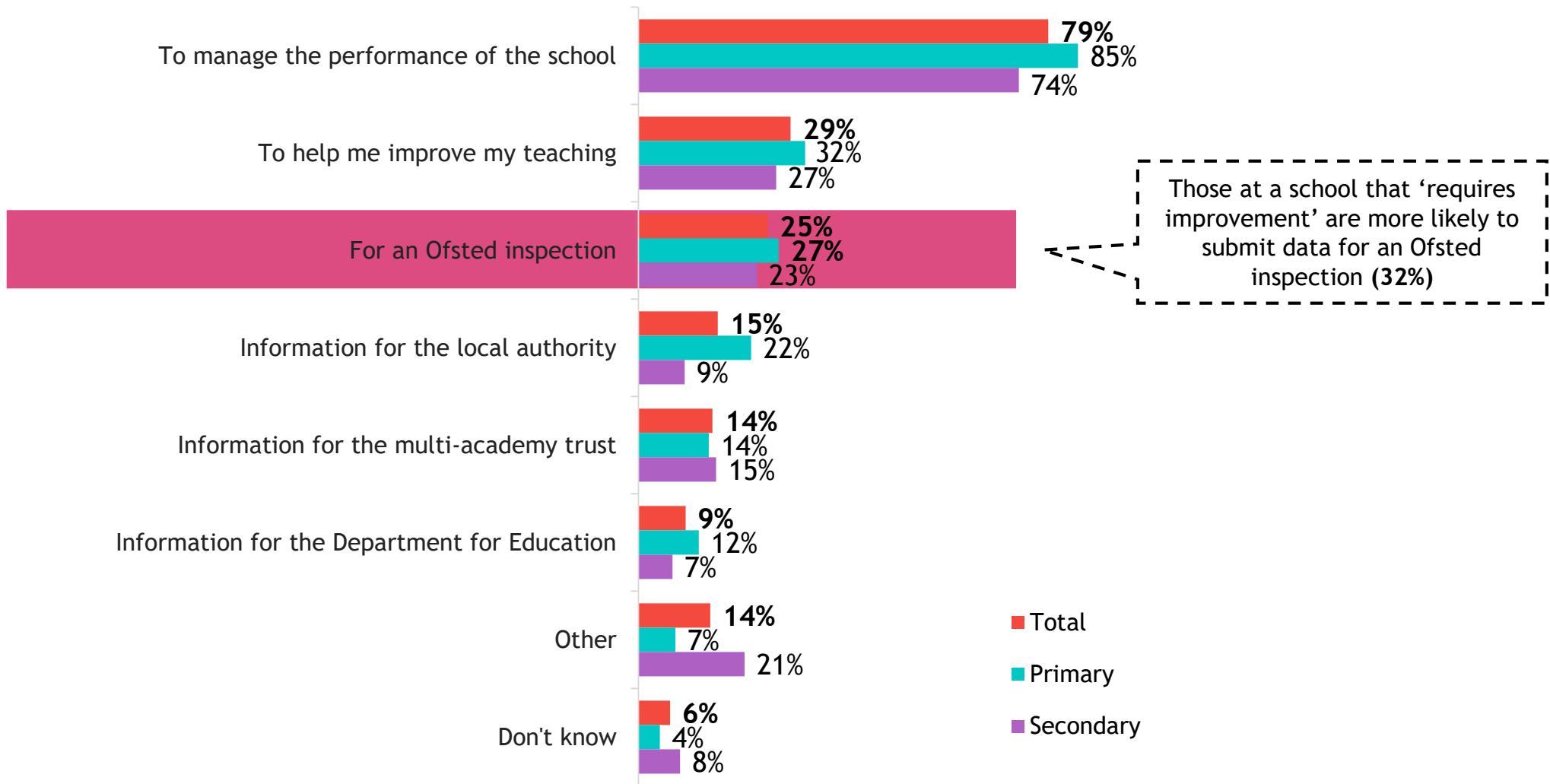
Most teachers in both primary and secondary have to provide data termly

- How often, if at all, are you requested to provide performance data about your pupils?

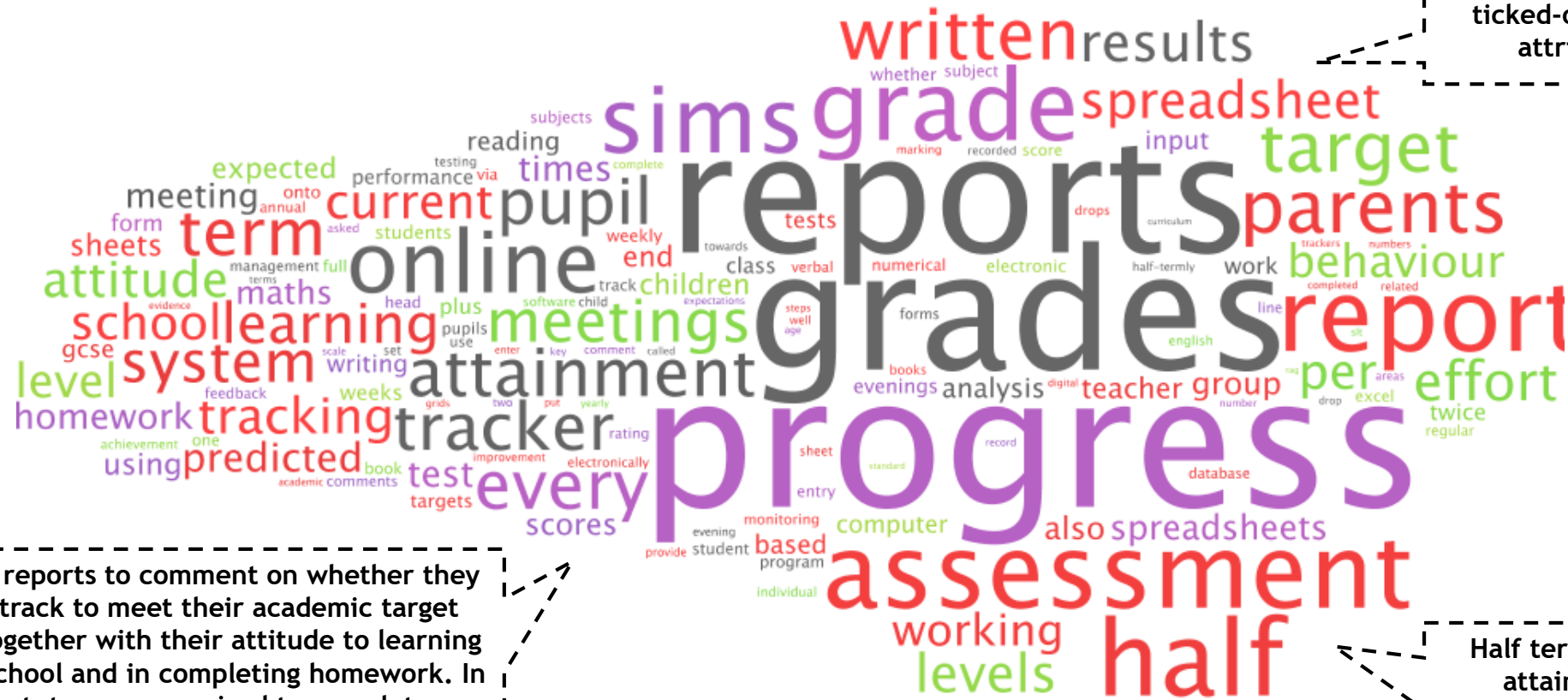


A quarter of teachers were asked to provide data for Ofsted, but mainly this is to help manage performance at their school

- Which, if any, of the following describe why you are asked to provide this data?



Many teachers provide students' grades, and the grades they are working towards. There is also a measure for effort



'Working-at' grades and also a ticked-or-unticked series of attribute statements

Tracking reports to comment on whether they are on track to meet their academic target grades together with their attitude to learning both in school and in completing homework. In addition, tutors are required to complete an annual report to comment on student overall progress and behaviour. We also have an annual parents' evening for each year group

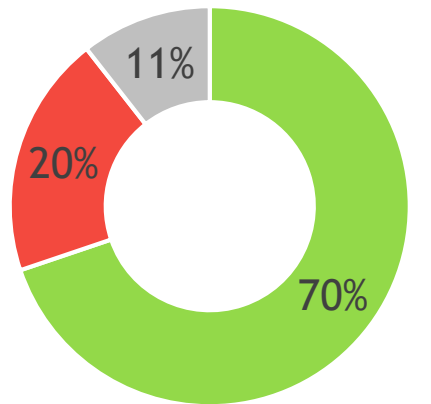
Half termly figures on current attainment, attitude and professional predictions. Extra termly progress reports for children with IPMs [Individual Provision Maps for SEN]



— Early years reading strategies

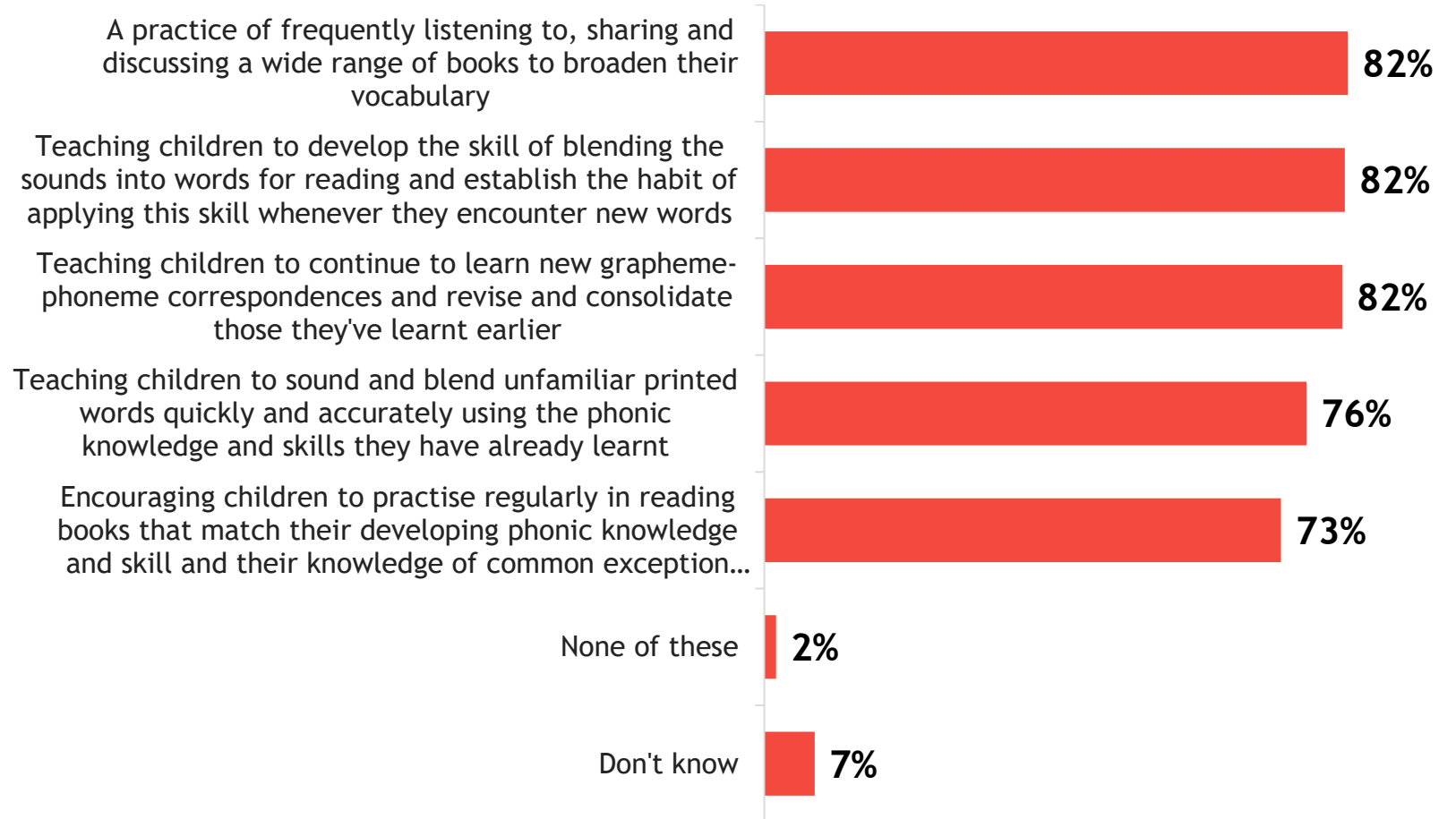
70% of primary teachers have a reading strategy at their school and three quarters of primary teachers have at least one of these strategies at their school

Does your school have a strategy for teaching reading from early years?



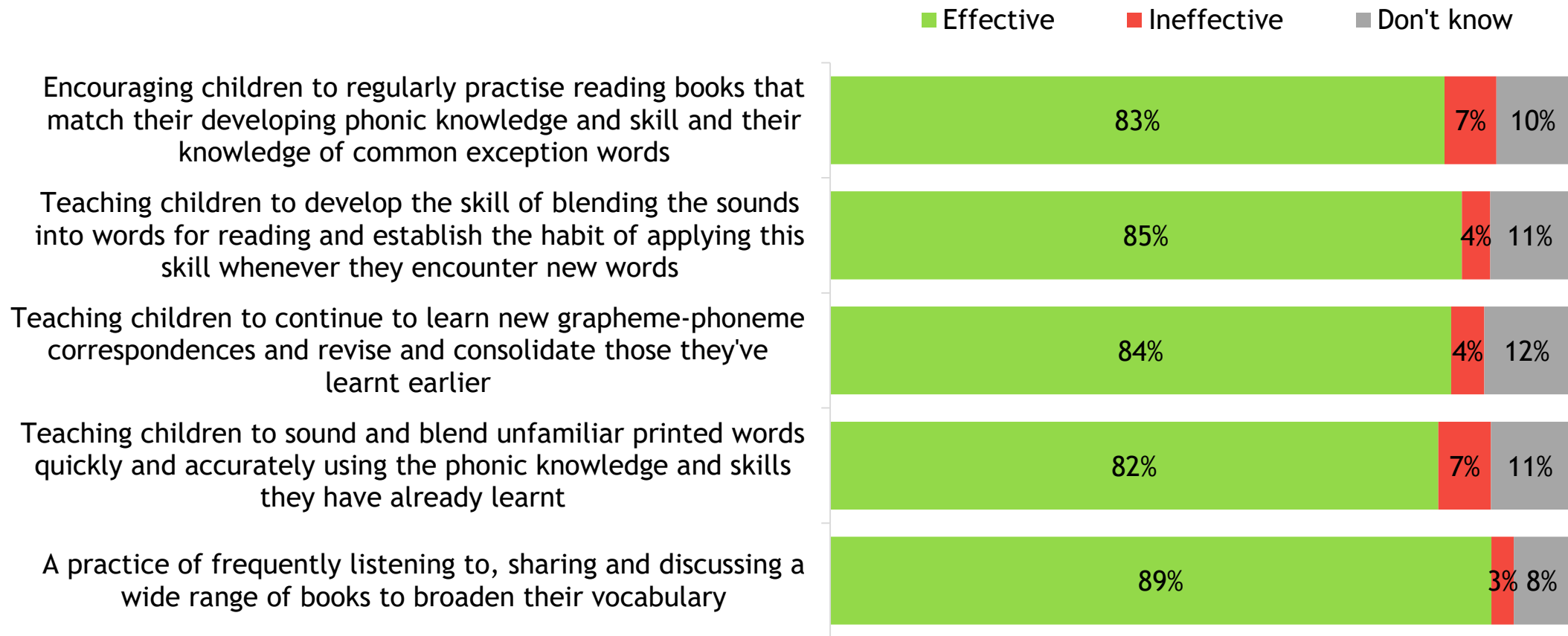
■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

- Which, if any, of the following take place in your school?

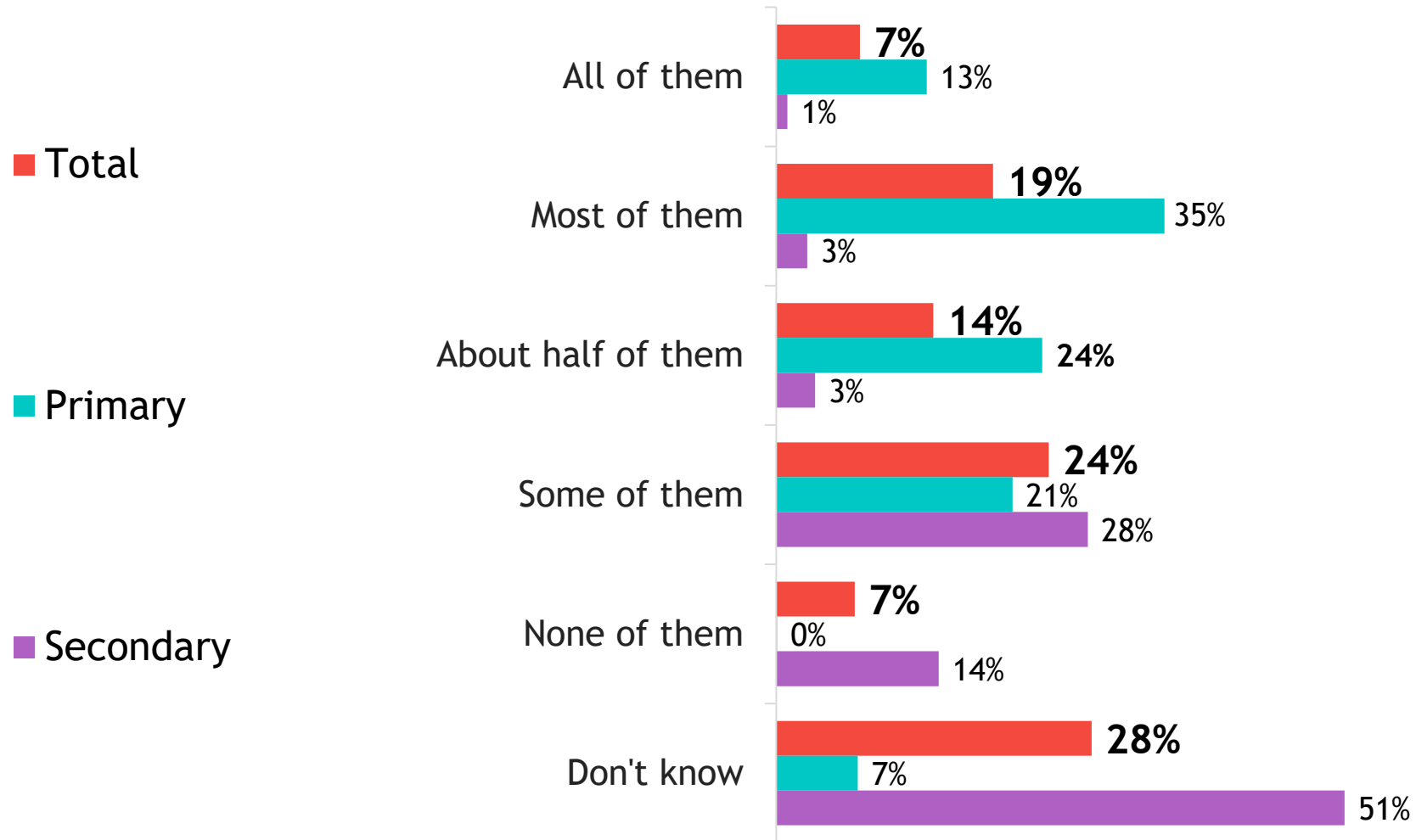


Primary teachers find that the practice of listening to, discussing and sharing books has been the most effective

- And how effective or ineffective have each of the following been in helping the children at your school reach the expected reading level?



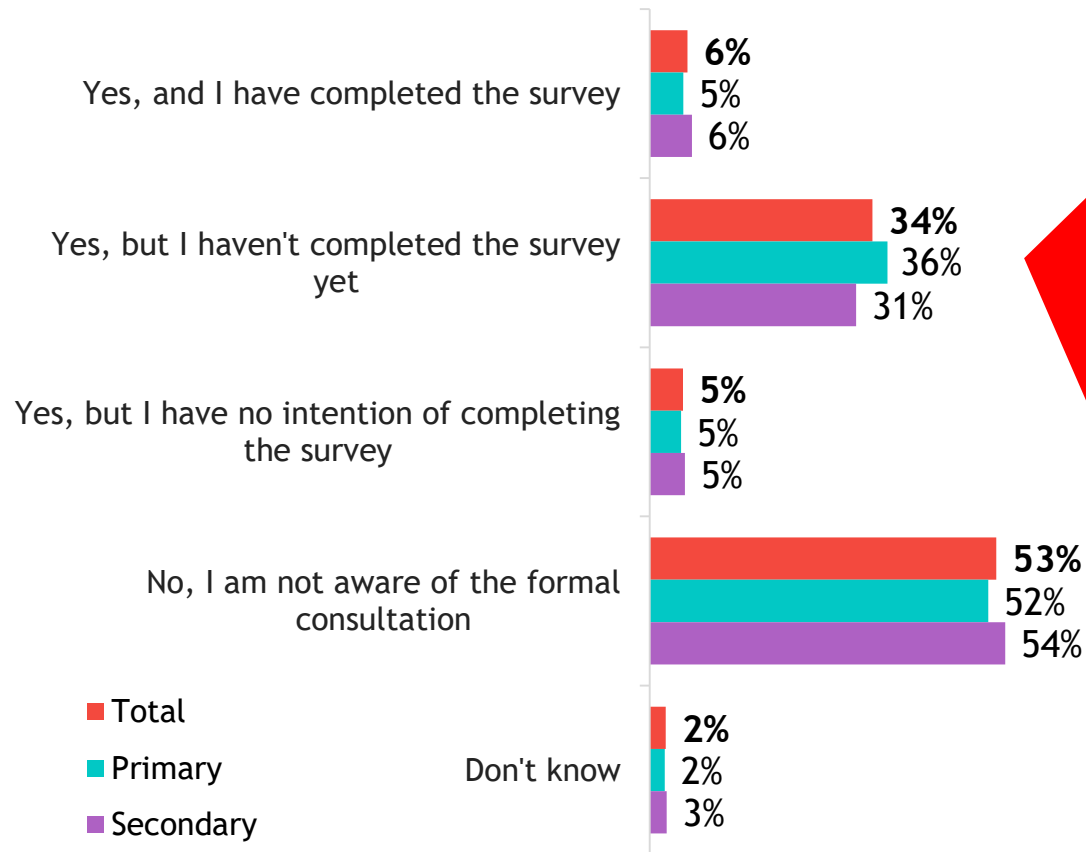
Only 13% of teachers at primary schools feel that all the teaching staff are experienced in teaching phonics



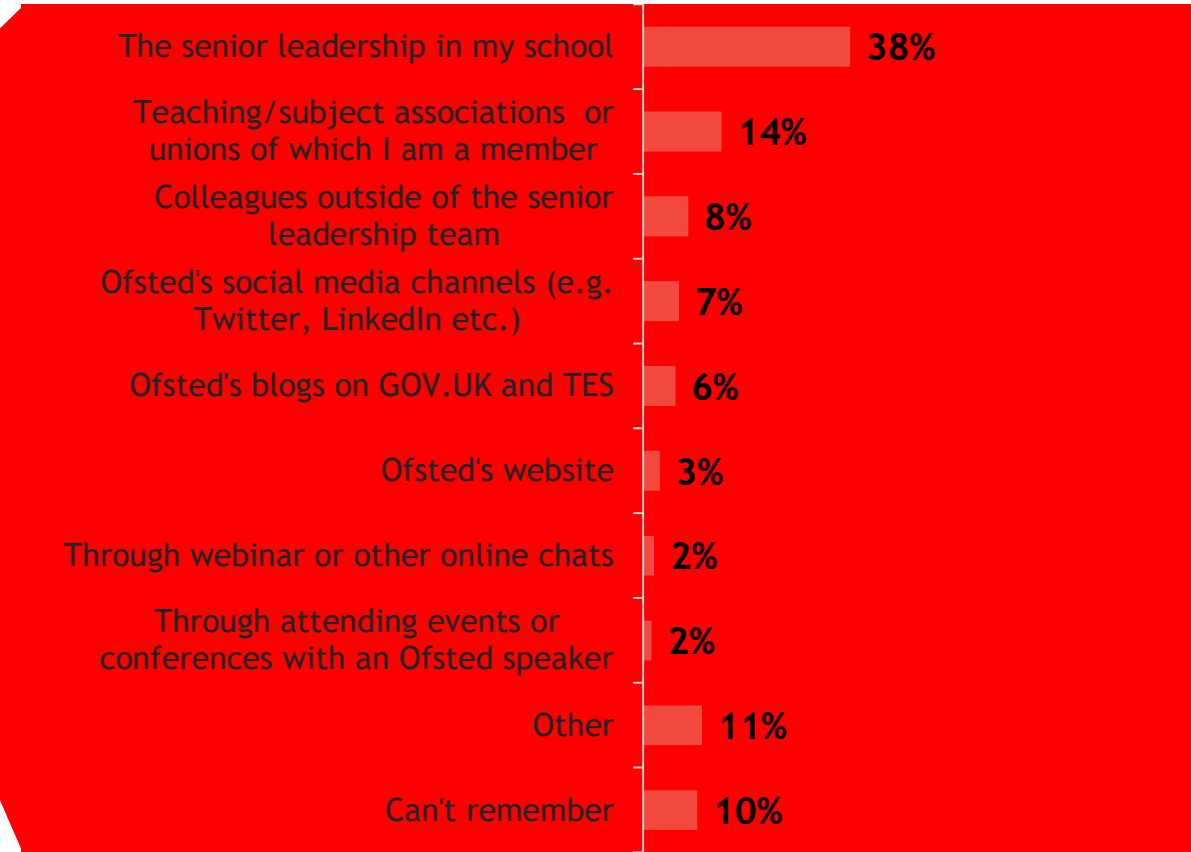
— Formal consultations

45% have heard of the formal consultation and, as before, teachers were most likely to find out about the formal consultation through the senior leaders at their school

- Before taking this survey, were you aware of the formal consultation?



- How did you find out about the formal consultation?





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