





# Parents Annual Survey 2020

Parents' awareness and perceptions of Ofsted



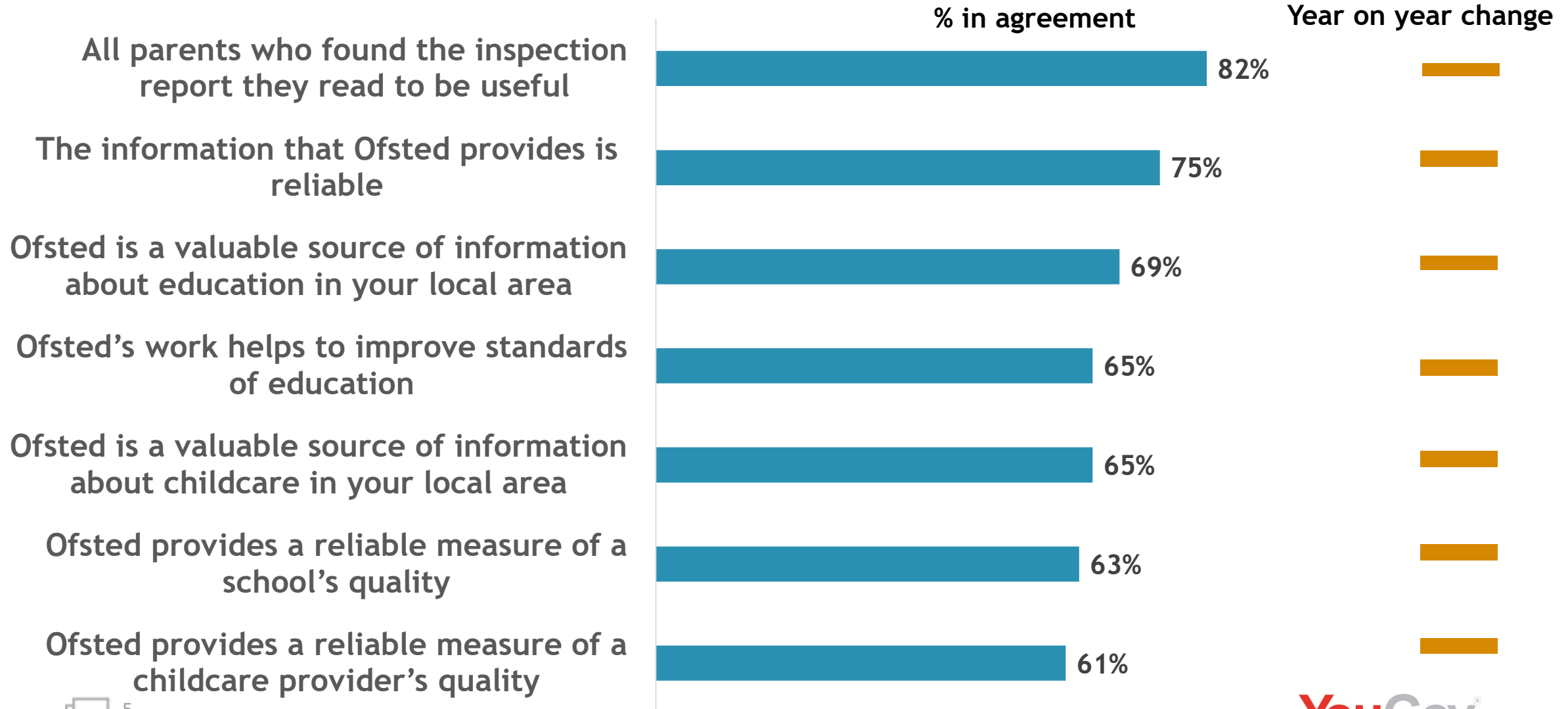
# — Background and method

# Method

- The objective of this study was to provide Ofsted with robust and timely evidence from parents to inform the development of the organisation's strategy and priorities
- An online survey was developed in conjunction with Ofsted and was carried out among parents between 12<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020
- The total number of respondents was 1,101 parents; 1,002 with a school aged child and 99 with a pre-school aged child attending childcare
- The figures have been weighted and are representative of all parents in England by family type, age of family reference person, social grade and region
- Throughout the report, net figures are shown and they may be slightly different to the raw data shown in charts due to rounding
- This is the fifth year that this research with parents has been conducted by Ofsted. Any statistically significant changes between waves will be identified with  and 

# — Key findings

# Summary of key measures



# Awareness and perceptions of Ofsted

1. Awareness of Ofsted remains high among parents at 62%. In 2020, parents were more likely to state they know a ‘fair amount’ than in previous years
2. Ofsted is most well known for its inspections of schools and colleges, however half (51%) are aware that Ofsted also inspects services for vulnerable children
3. Three quarters of parents feel Ofsted is a reliable source of information. This remains unchanged from 2018
4. Agreement that Ofsted provides a reliable measure of childcare and schools remains unchanged from 2018 with a majority of parents agreeing
5. It remains that two thirds of parents agree that Ofsted’s work helps to improve the standard of education

# Ofsted ratings and inspection reports

1. Overall most parents remain aware of the Ofsted rating of their child's school or childcare provider. Parents are most likely to have been told of the rating by the school or provider itself
2. Overall seven in ten parents have read an Ofsted report at some point. For parents of pre-school aged children this was most likely to help them choose a provider of childcare or school, and for parents with school aged children this was to check in and see how the school was doing
3. 81% of parents found the report they read useful, this increases to 88% among parents who read a report from a recent inspection
4. Eight in ten (80%) felt the report they read portrayed an accurate picture of the school or provider and parents who had read a report from a recent inspection were more likely to have found the report to be accurate (83%)

# Obtaining and sharing parents' views

1. Of the parents who had a child in a school that was inspected in the last 6 months, 65% of this number said they read the report
2. Under half (43%) had the opportunity to feed back and did, while a further quarter (26%) had the opportunity but chose not to feed back
3. Close to three quarters (72%) of all parents feel they are likely to provide feedback at the next inspection, and they would most like to be contacted via email
4. Parents are keen to retain their anonymity when providing feedback on their child's school, whether this is during an inspection or throughout the school year
5. Most parents would be happy to provide feedback outside of inspections, and would like this to be shared with the school to help it improve

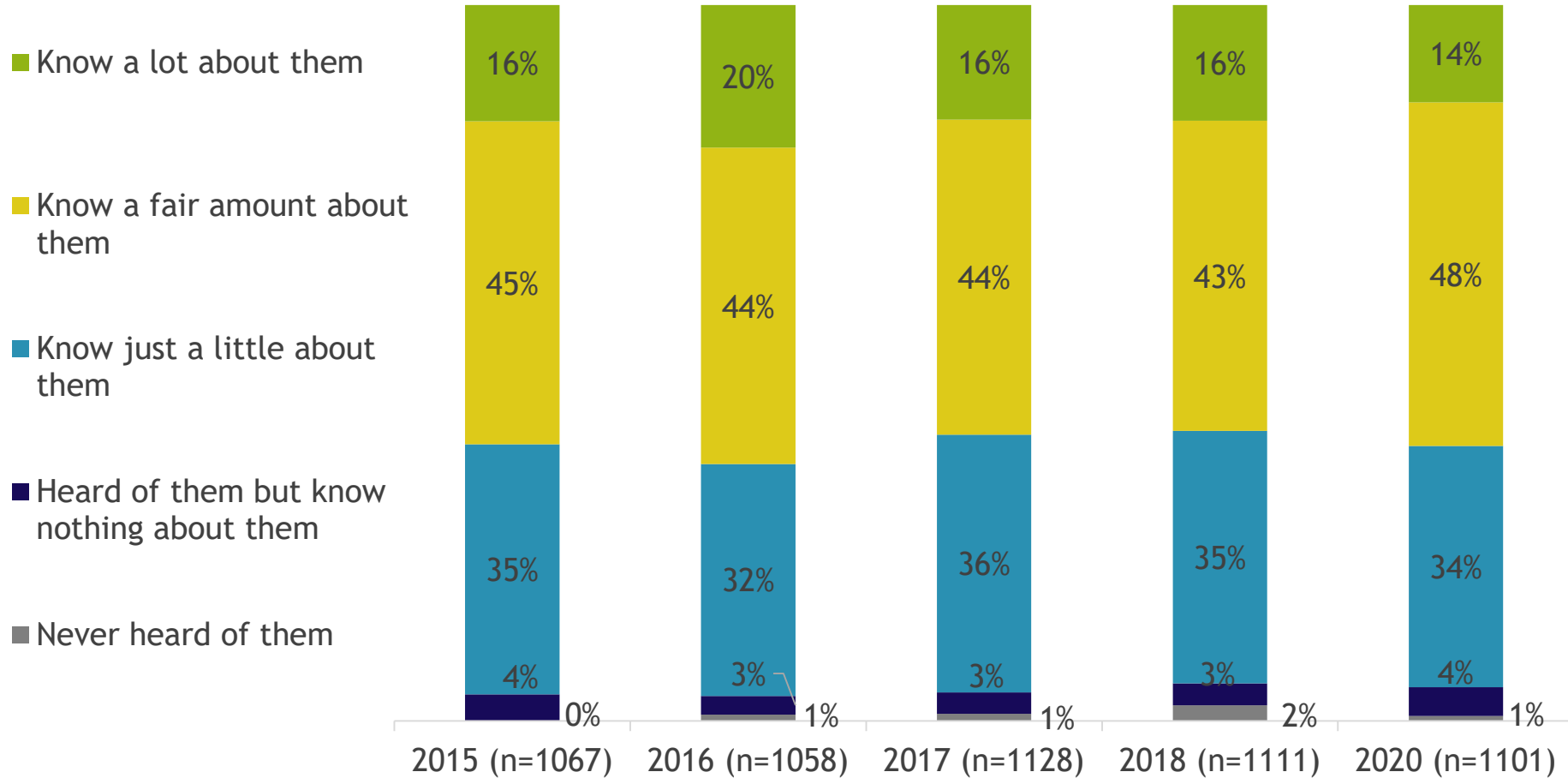


# Curriculum

1. In 2020, it remains that 79% of parents feel they have a good or at least reasonable understanding of the curriculum their child is being taught
2. Half (49%) of parents now feel that the school places an equal focus on both good results and the content of learning
3. A majority of parents feel that the school their child attends covers the core subjects, such as English, Maths and Science sufficiently. With 78% agreeing that English is well covered
4. Parents with primary aged children are less likely to feel Science is sufficiently covered than those with secondary aged children. This is the only 'core' subject that has this differentiation
5. 33% of parents with secondary children think 'Citizenship' is covered well, and 37% feel sex and relationship education is well covered
6. Interestingly, around three in ten parents of both primary and secondary aged children feel languages are sufficiently covered (28 and 33% respectively)

# — Awareness and perceptions of Ofsted

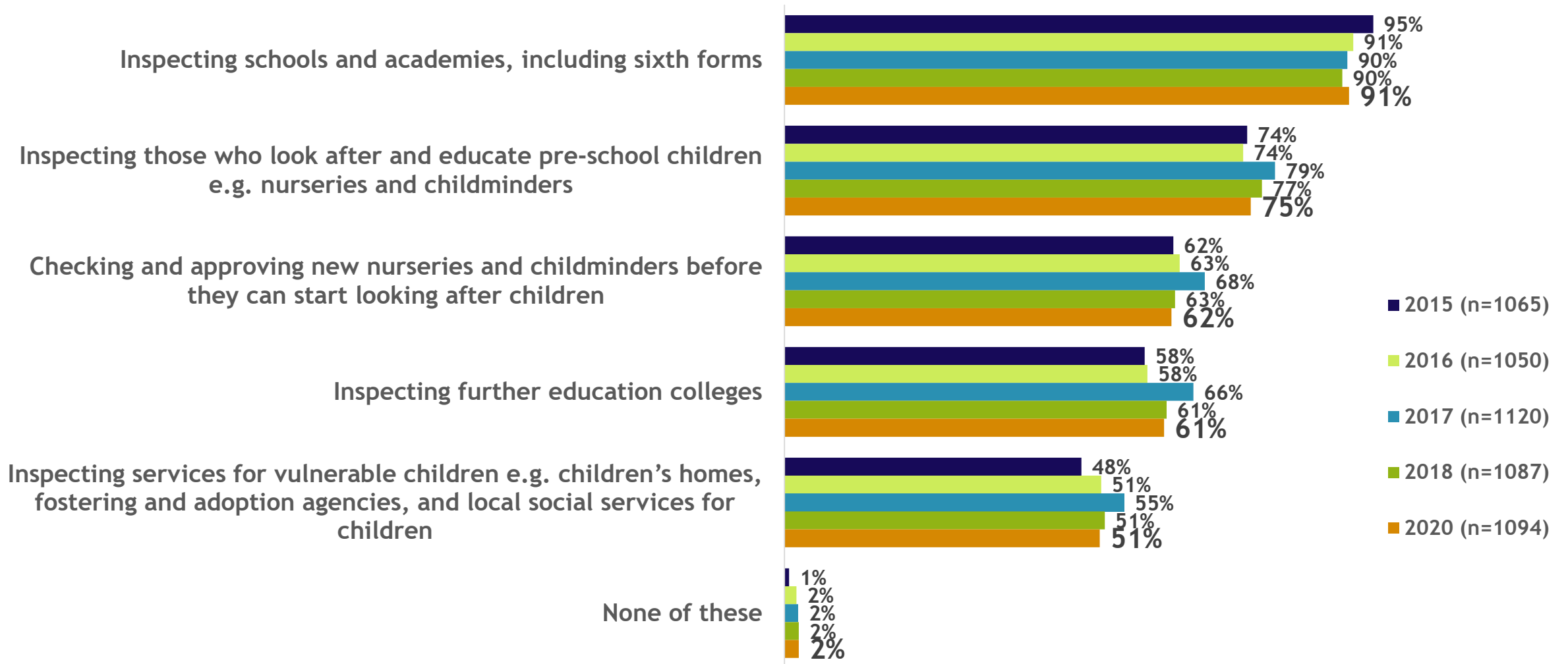
# Awareness of Ofsted remains very high, with six in ten (62%) parents knowing a lot or a fair amount. Parents are more likely to say they know a fair amount about Ofsted than previous waves



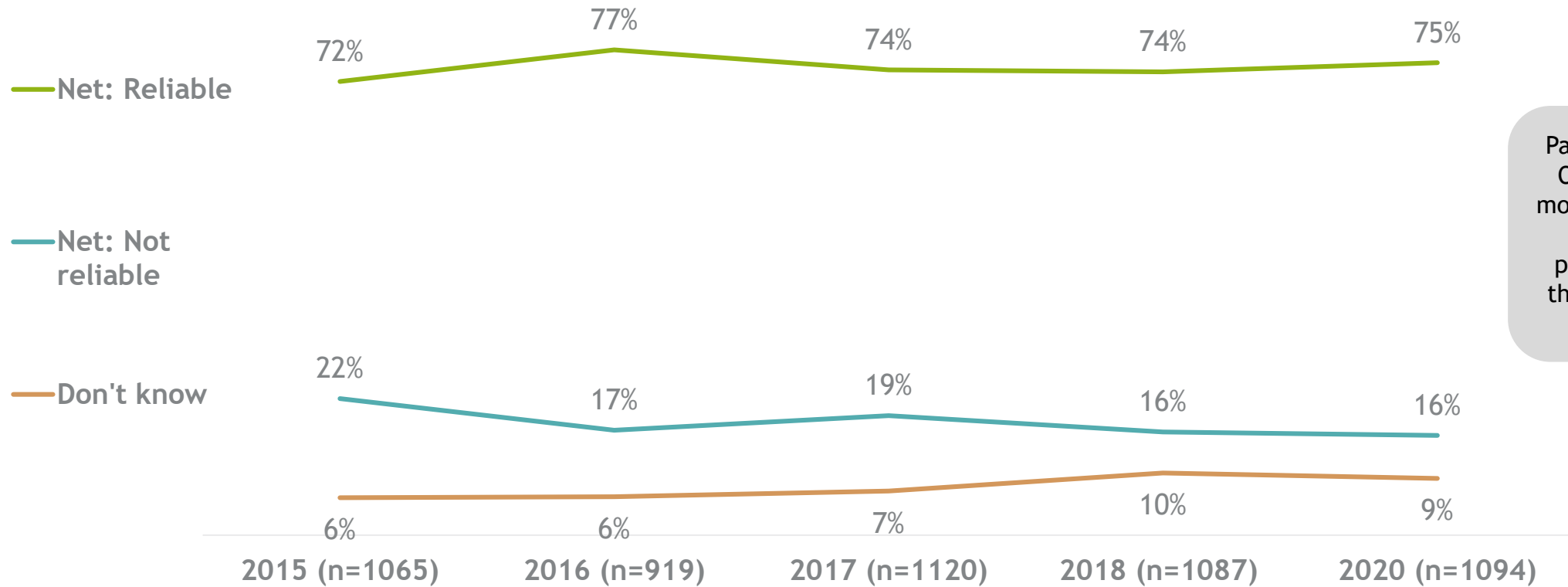
Those with children in year 6 are most likely to know a lot about Ofsted (23%)

Parents with a personally higher education level are more likely to know more about Ofsted (19% state a lot compared with 8% of those with a below degree level education)

# Nine in ten parents are aware that Ofsted inspects schools compared with six in ten who know that Ofsted inspects FE colleges

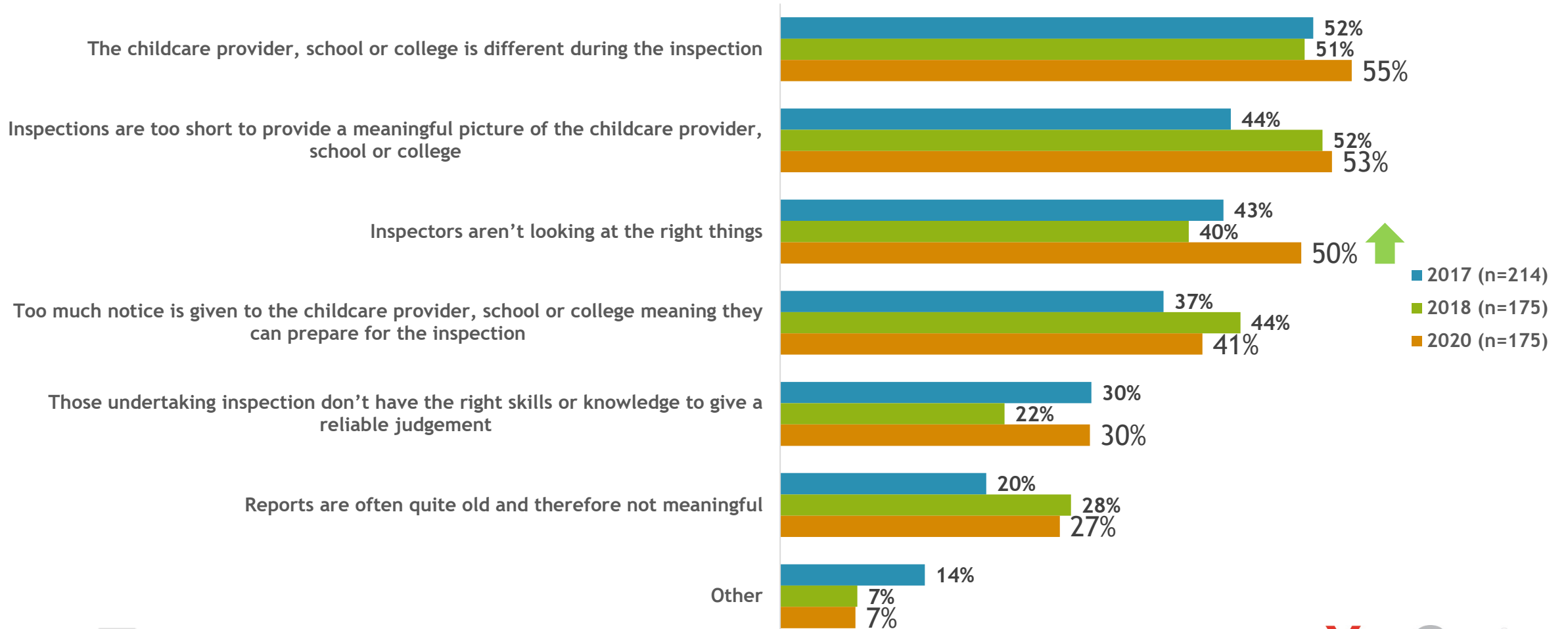


# Three quarters of parents in England believe the information Ofsted provides is reliable. This remains unchanged since 2018



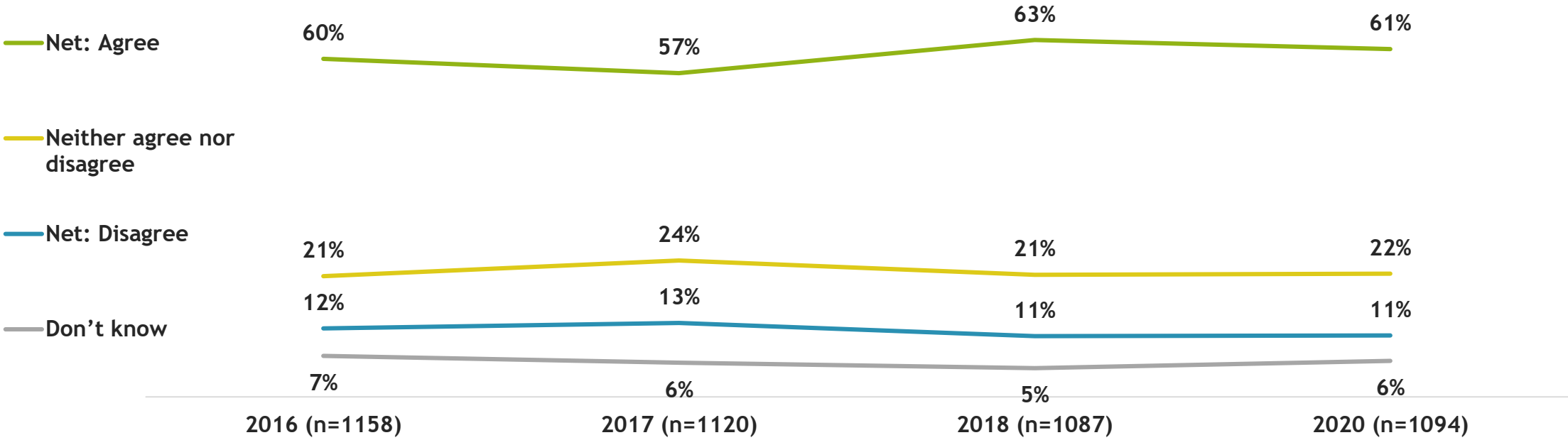
Parents who have read an Ofsted report are much more likely to feel that the information Ofsted provides is reliable than those who haven't read a report (81% v 62%)

Of those who do feel that the information is unreliable, the most cited reasons for this are that the provider is different during Ofsted inspections and that inspections are too short to be meaningful. Since 2018, there has been a rise in parents feeling that inspectors aren't looking at the right things



# After a significant rise in 2018, agreement among parents that Ofsted provides a reliable measure of a childcare provider's quality has remained near six in ten

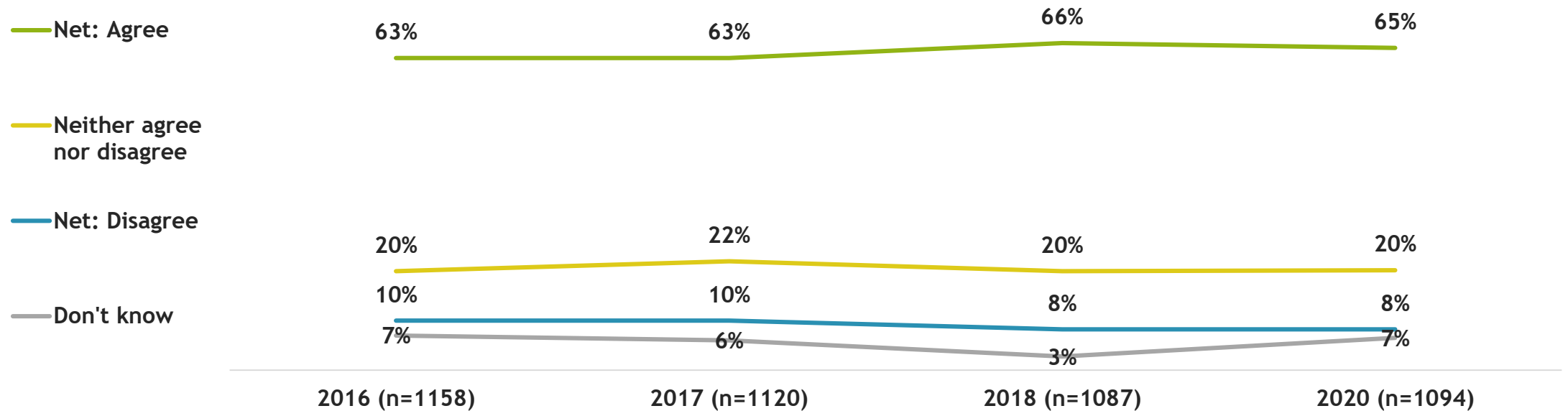
Ofsted provides a reliable measure of a childcare provider's quality



Parents in the West Midlands are most likely to agree (70%) compared with 56% in the North East and Yorkshire. Those who have read an Ofsted report are more likely to agree than those who haven't (64% compared with 55%).

# Two-thirds of parents continue to agree that Ofsted is a valuable source of information about childcare locally

Ofsted is a valuable source of information about childcare in your local area



68% of parents with children at primary school agree and this increases to 74% of parents with children in nursery or childcare.

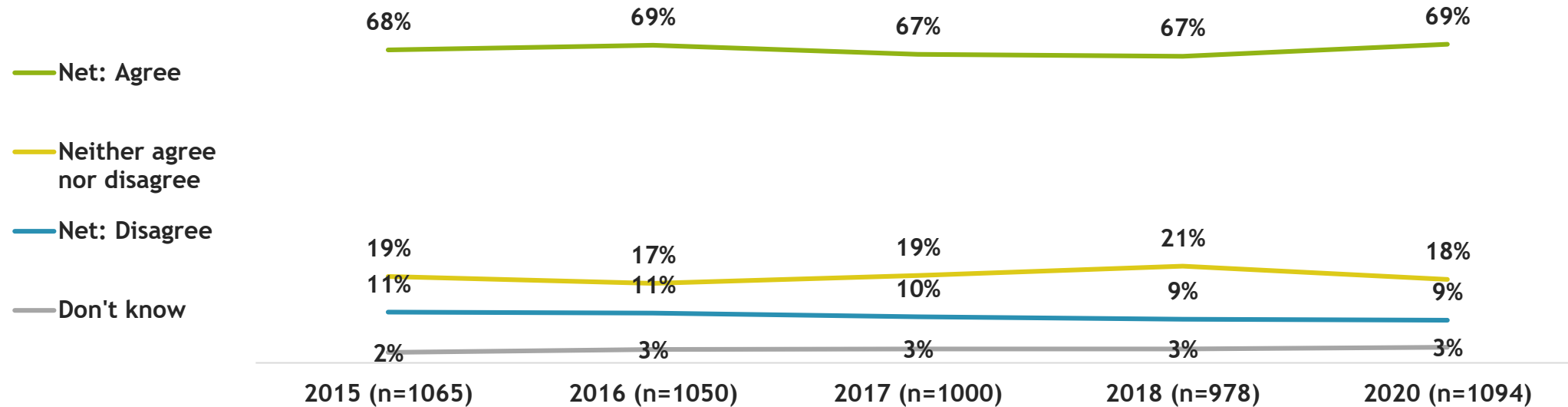
Again, parents in the West Midlands are most likely to agree (74%).





# Agreement that Ofsted is a valuable source on education remains unchanged since 2015, at seven out of ten parents

## Ofsted is a valuable source of information about education in your local area

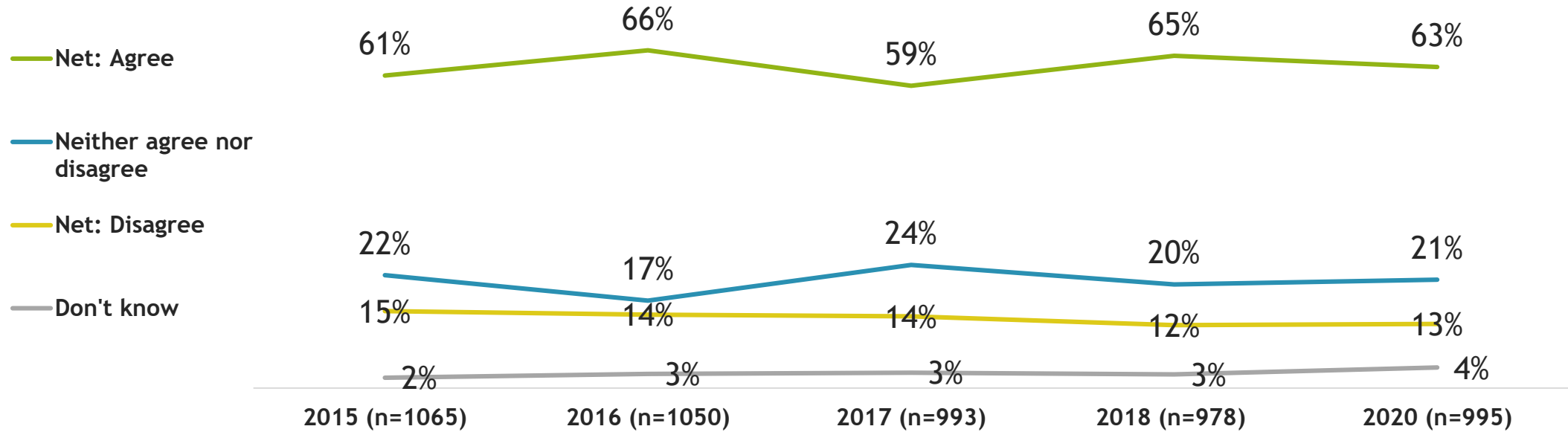


It remains that parents with pre-school children are most likely to agree (77%) compared with 61% of parents with children in year 9.

Those who have read an Ofsted report are more likely to agree (75%) compared with 57% who have not.

# It remains that six in ten parents agree that Ofsted provides a reliable measure of a school's quality. Only 13% of parents disagree with this statement

## Ofsted provides a reliable measure of a school's quality



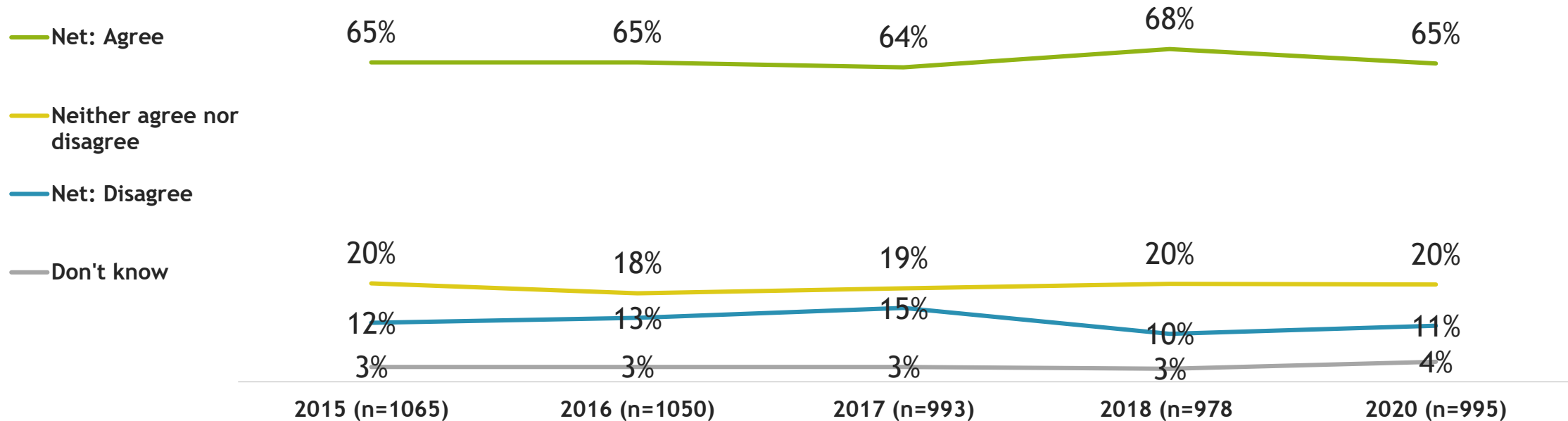
Agreement is consistent across parent of pre-school, primary and secondary aged children.

Those with children in year 5 are the most likely to agree (73%) compared with 56% of those with children in year 9.



# Agreement that Ofsted's work helps to improve standards of education remains unchanged since 2015

## Ofsted's work helps to improve standards of education

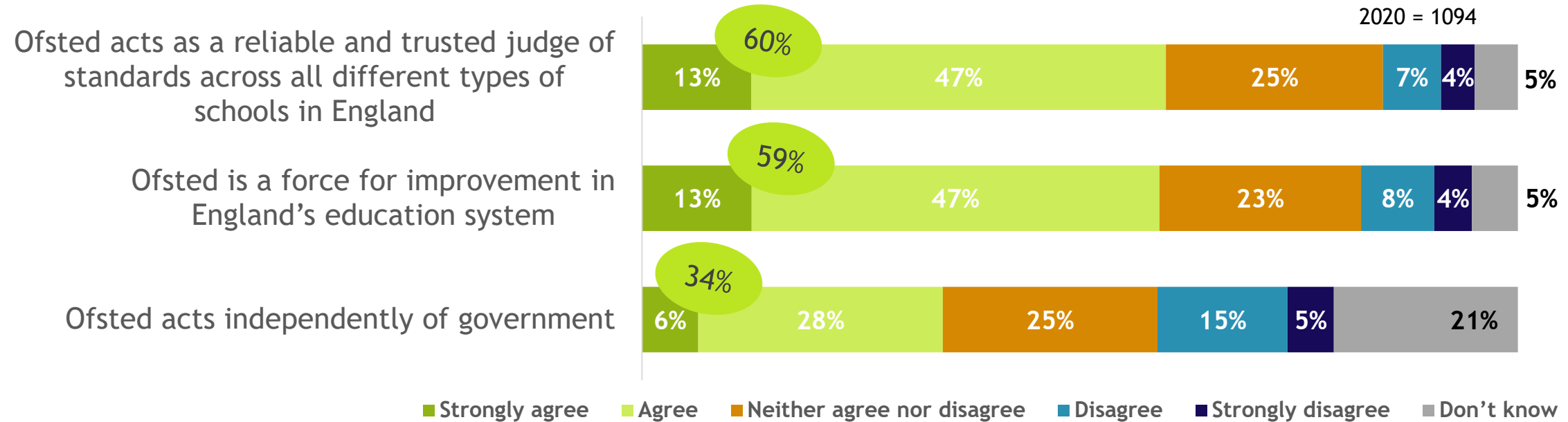


Across parents agreement is fairly level with two thirds in most cases agreeing that Ofsted's work helps to improve standards of education.

Agreement is slightly higher in the West Midlands (74%) and lowest in the North West (62%).



# Views about Ofsted remain unchanged since 2018. Six in ten parents believe Ofsted acts a reliable and trusted judge of standards across all different types of schools in England. A third of parents agree that Ofsted acts independently of government



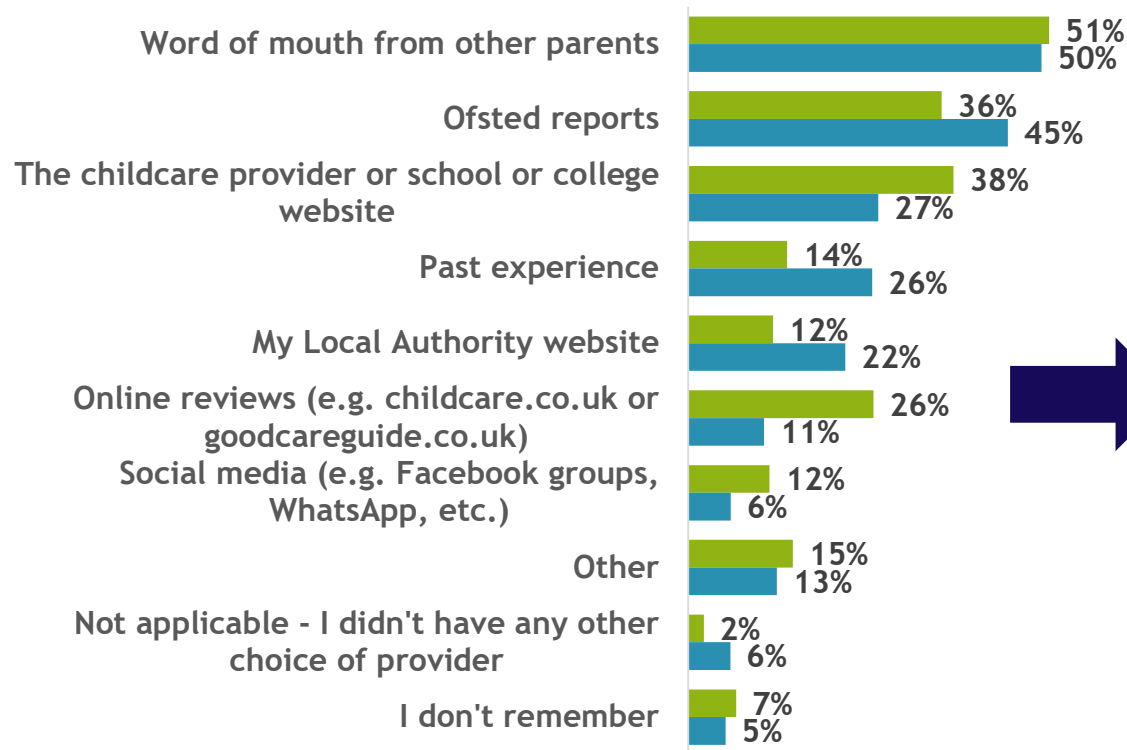
Parents with pre-school aged children are most likely to agree that Ofsted acts as a reliable judge of standards (69%) but this falls to 54% of parents with children in year 1.

Those who have read an Ofsted report (64%) are more likely to agree that Ofsted is a force for improvement in England's education system compared with 50% who have not read a report.

# — Choosing a provider

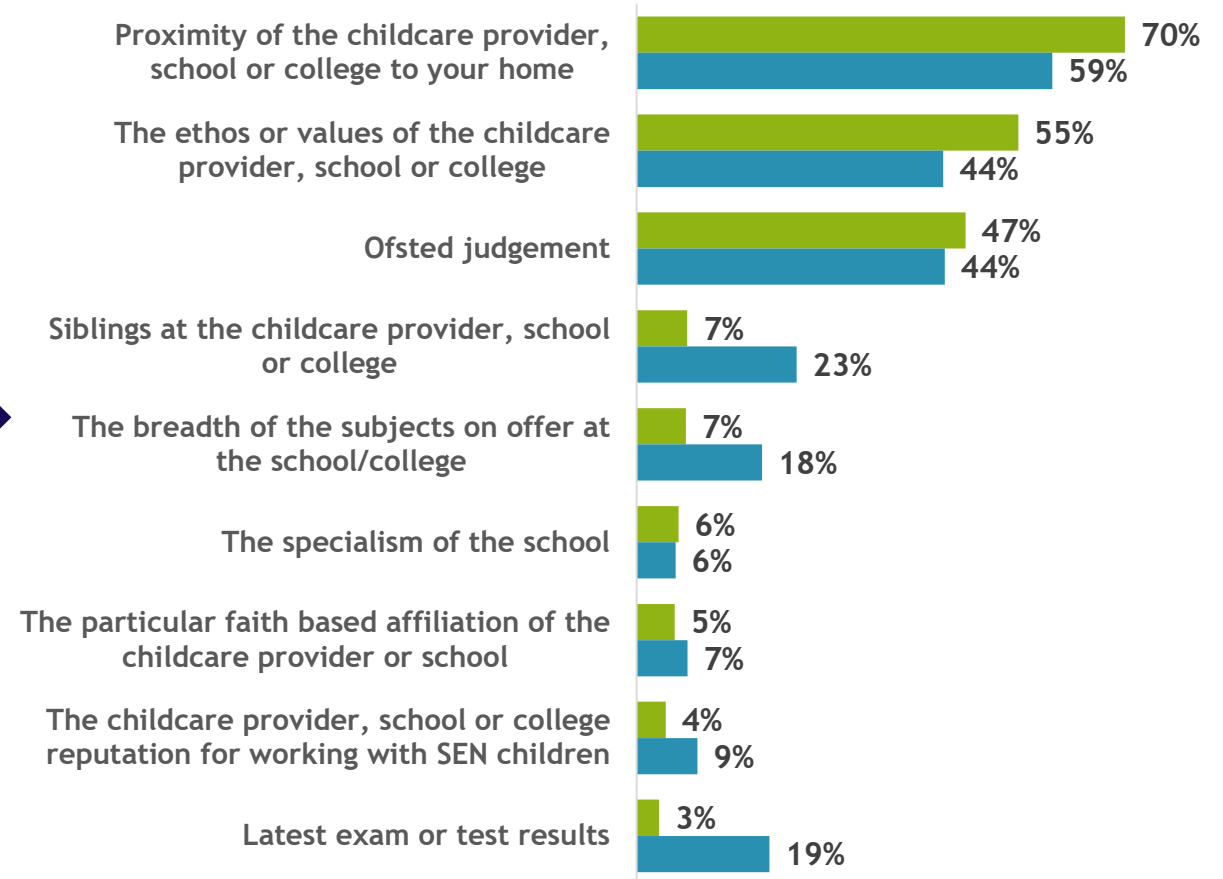
For parents of both nursery and school aged children, word of mouth was their main source of information about whether a provider would be right for their child. Proximity of the provider is the decisive factor in the final choice, followed by ethos and the Ofsted judgement

### Go to for information on the provider



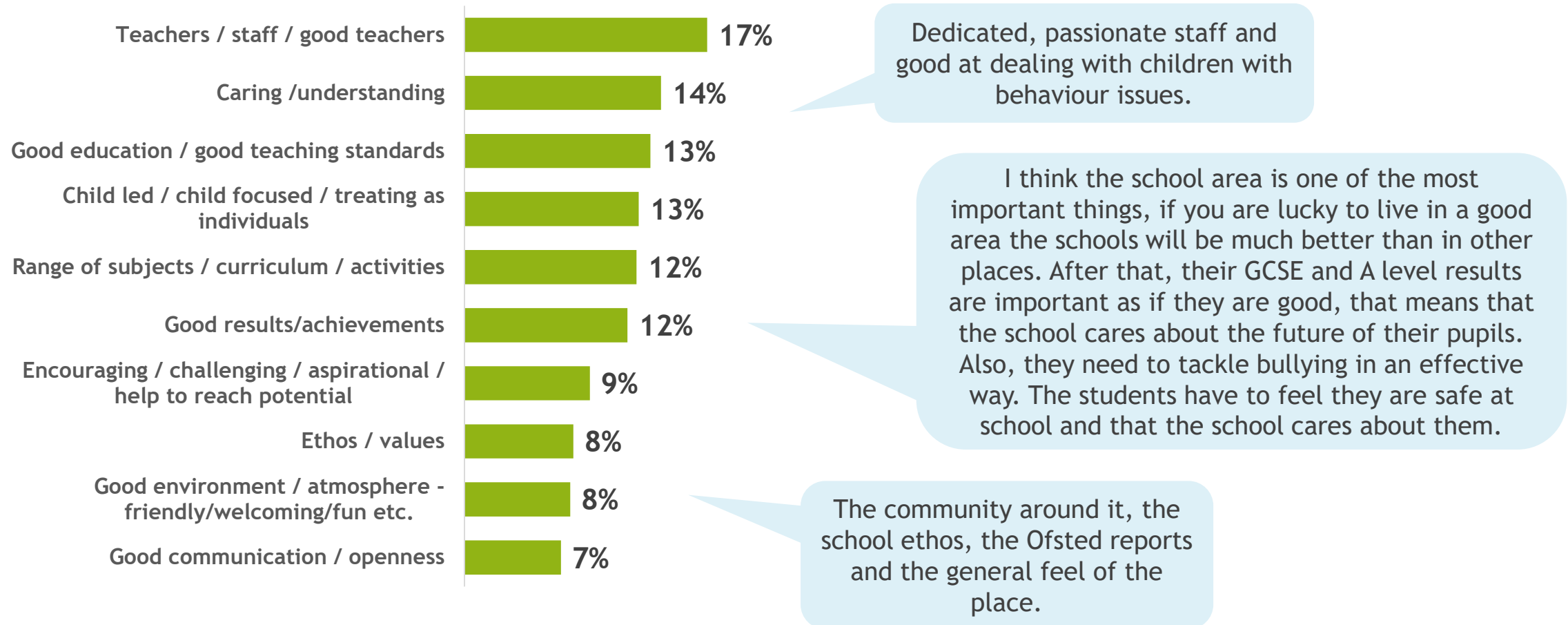
■ Parents of children of pre-school age (n=99)  
 ■ Parents of children of school age (n=1002)

### Decisive factor for parents choice of provider



# Good teachers, teaching and a sense of care and understanding emerge as the most important qualities in a school or childcare provider for parents

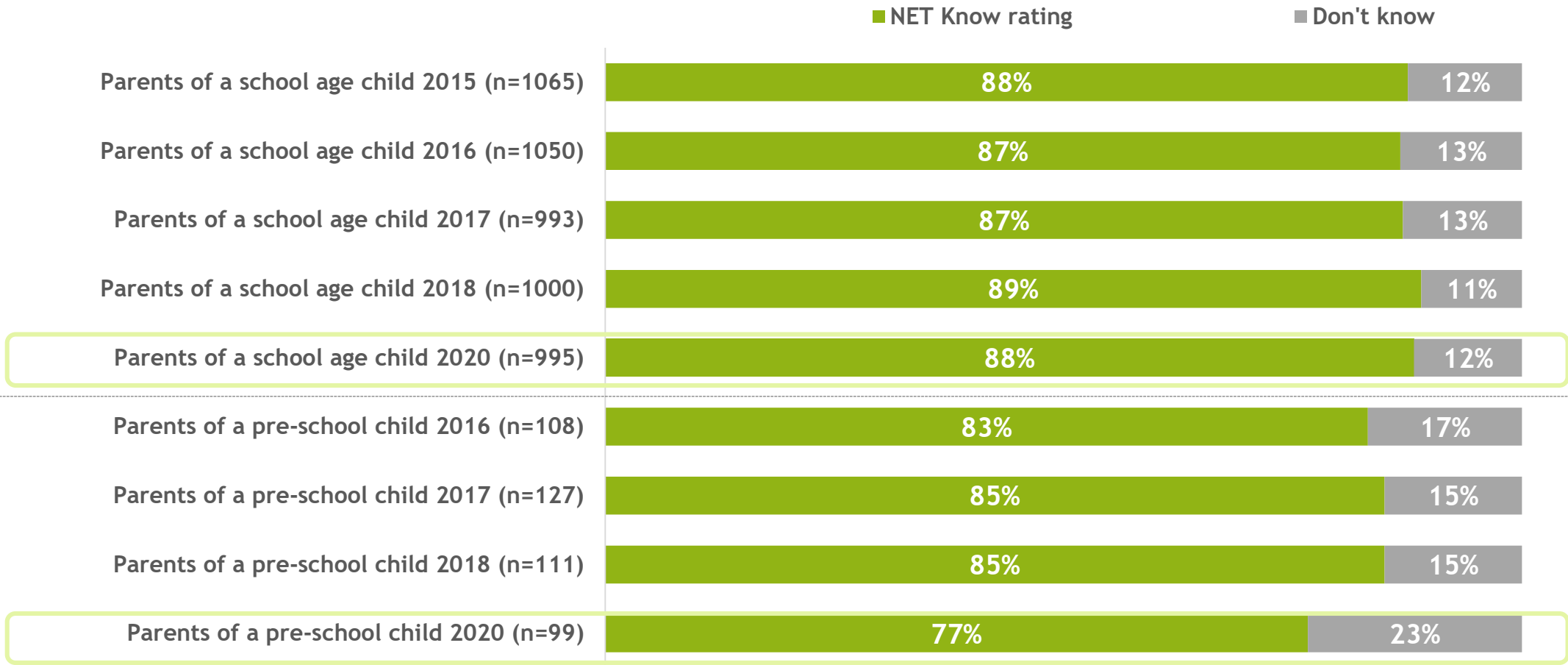
Emerging themes regarding what makes a good provider (top 10)



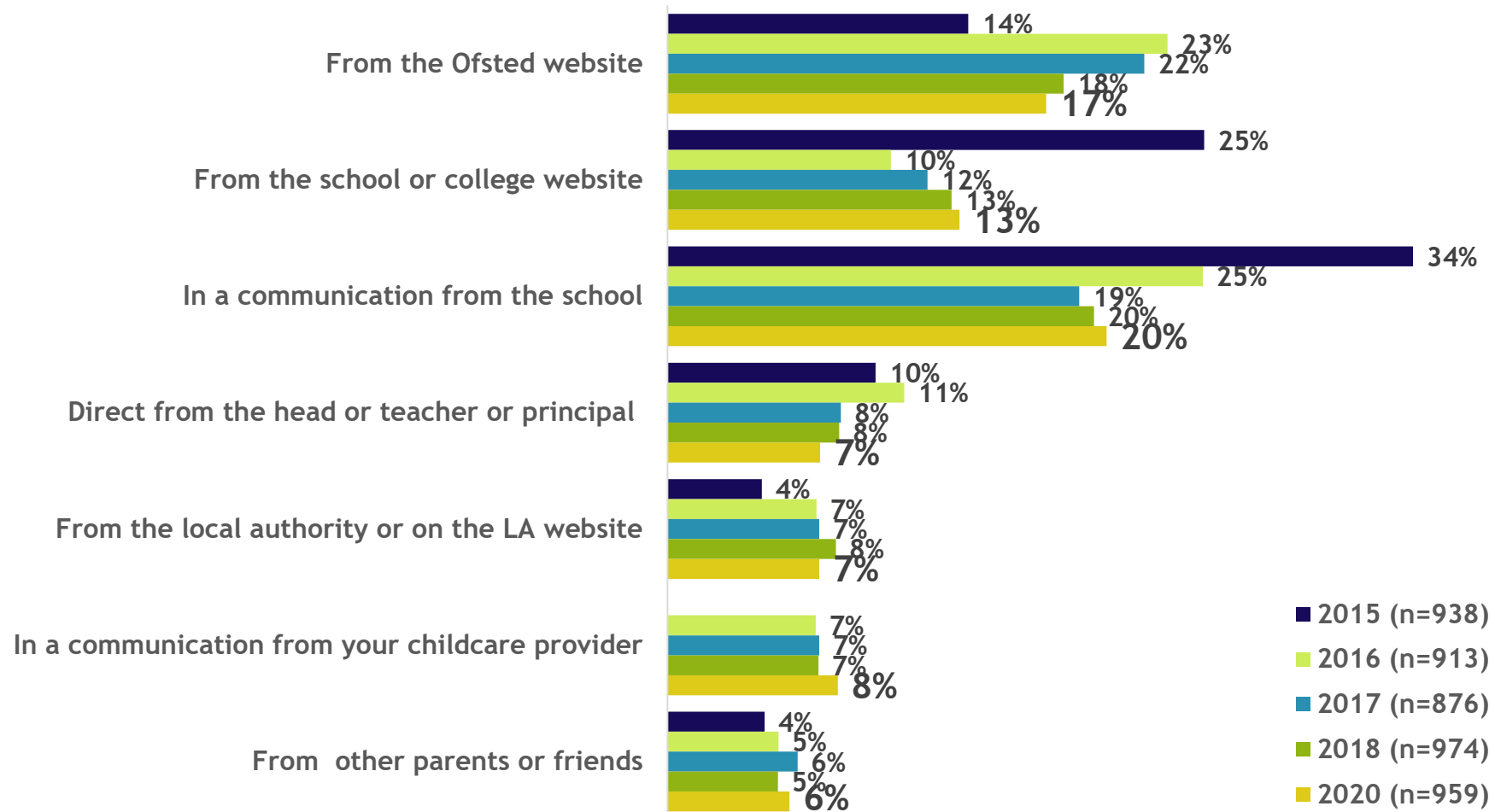
# — Ofsted ratings and inspection reports



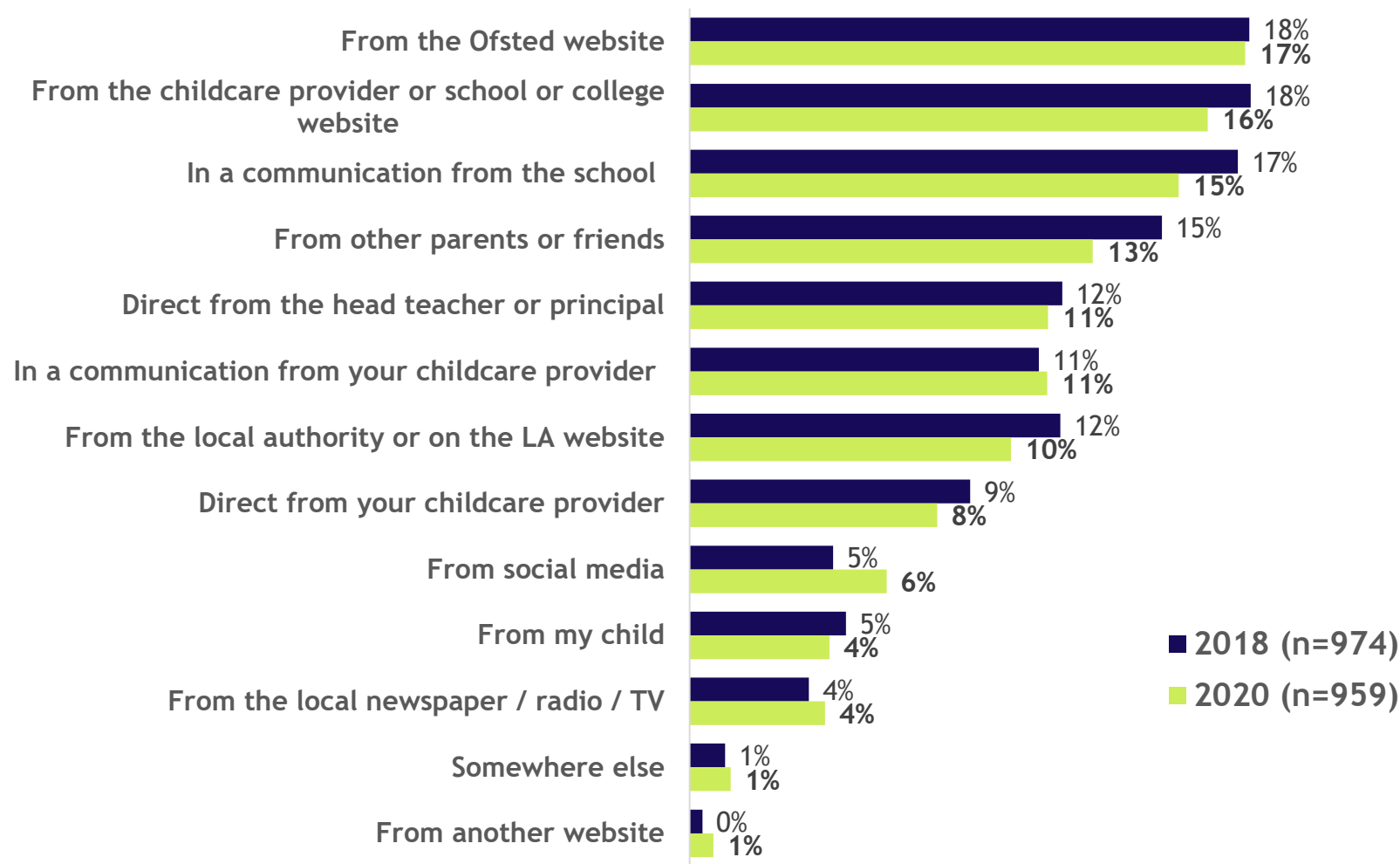
# Overall 87% of all parents are aware of Ofsted's rating at their last inspection



# Nearly equal proportions of parents first found the rating of the child's school, college or provider through the Ofsted website or through a communication from the school

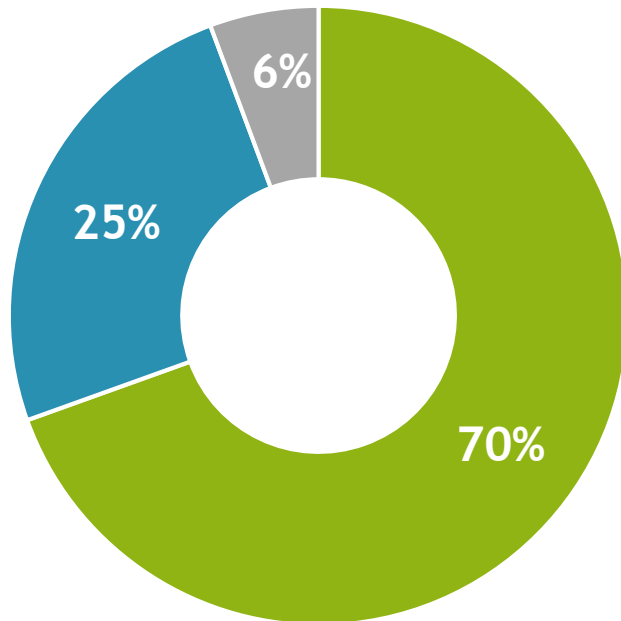


# Parents continue to look on either the school or Ofsted website to discover the Ofsted ratings



# 70% of parents state they have read an Ofsted report at some point

Have you ever read an Ofsted report?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't know

## Those most likely to have read a report:

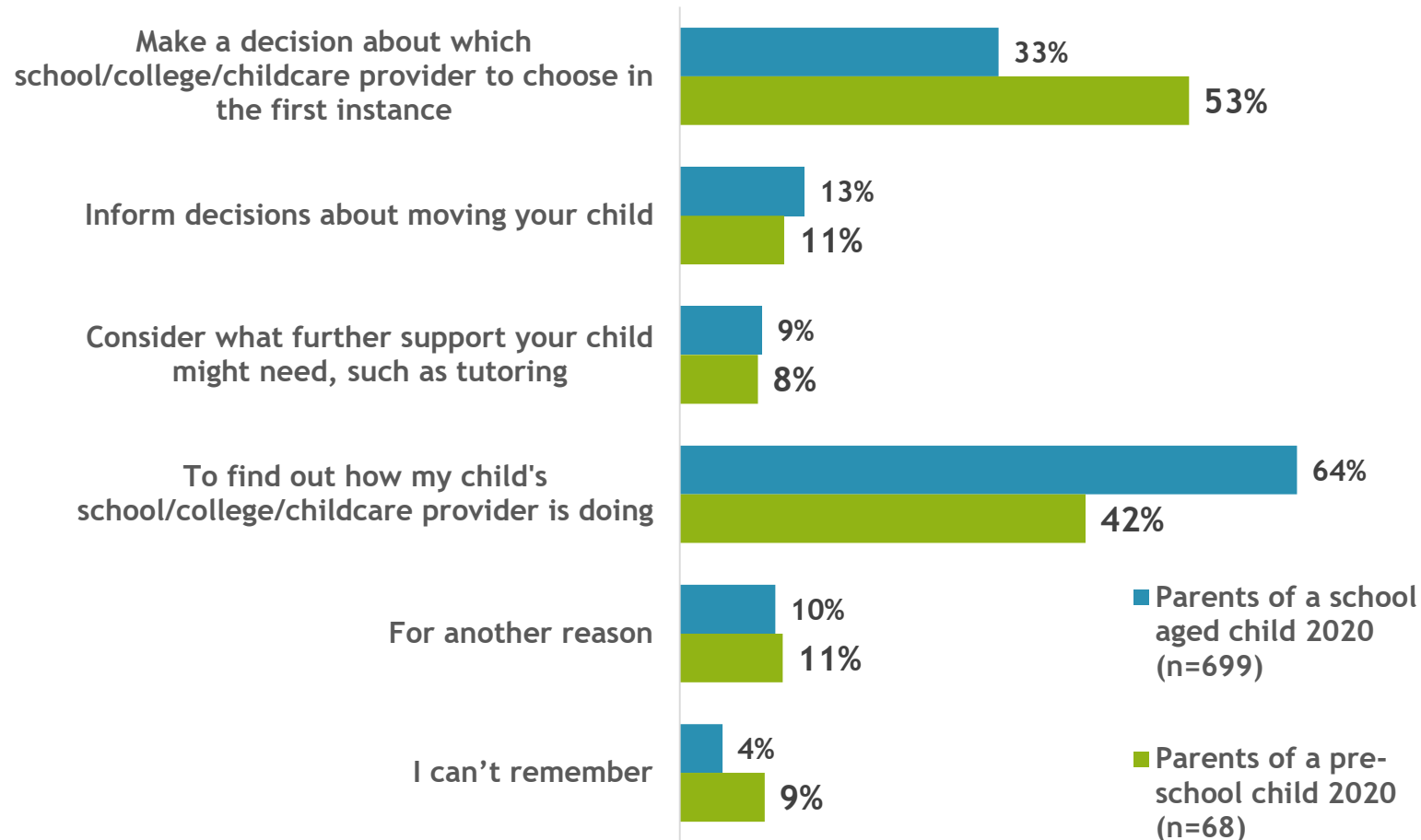
- Those with primary aged children: 73% (compared with 66% in secondary school)
- Parents with children in year 6 (76%)
- Those with a degree or above level of education (77%)



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Q9. When did you last read an Ofsted inspection report about a school, college, childcare provision etc?  
(Base: parents who have heard of Ofsted)

# Parents of school aged children were most likely to have read an Ofsted report to see how the school is doing while parents of younger children are more likely to have read a report to decide on the provider initially

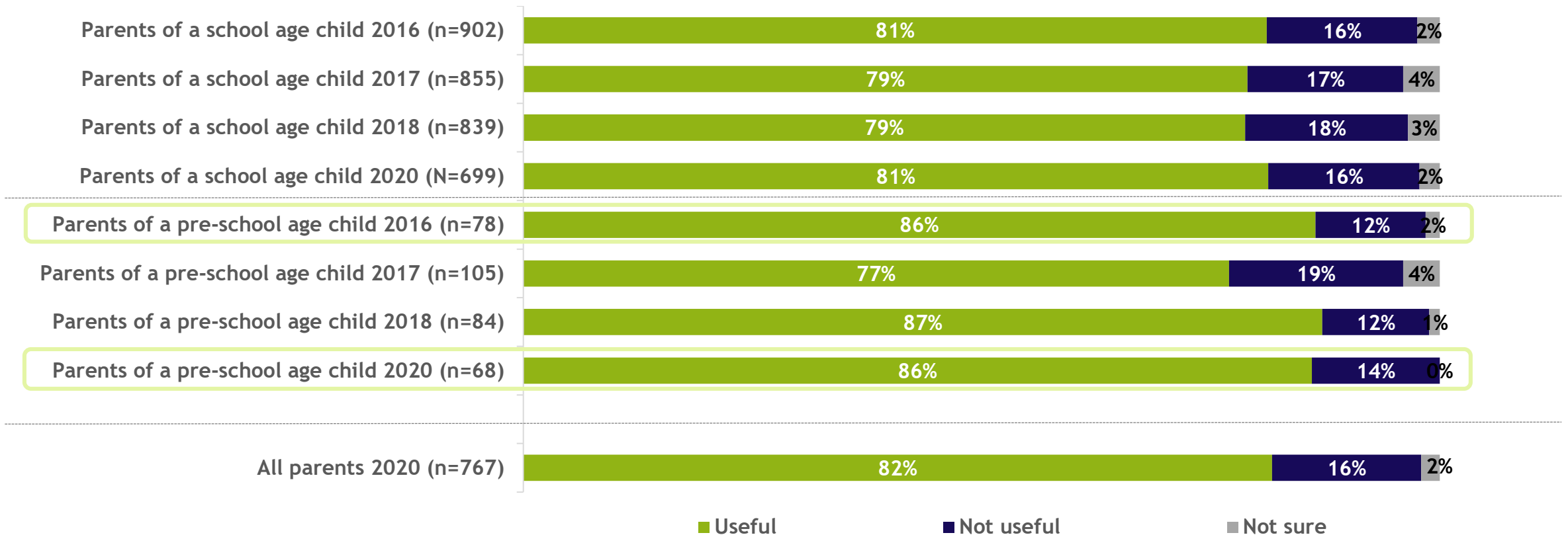


Of parents who read a recent report from a school or provider inspected in the last 6 months:

- 76% did so to see how the school was doing
- 20% did so to consider what further support their child might need
- 27% to make a decision about which school to choose

Parents who read this recent report were more likely than average to be seeing how the school was doing and whether their child needed more support

# 81% of parents with school age children and 86% of parents with pre-school children found the Ofsted report they read useful



88% of parents who have read a report from a school inspected in the last 6 months found this report useful, with 29% stating it was very useful. Only 12% found it to be not useful.

# Why was the Ofsted inspection report useful?

It shows which areas they think are lacking, then I am able to get resources to help my child from home and work with the school to improve that area

To give me the general feel for the setting. It is not the only source of information I base my decision on, though

Highlights areas of improvement required and so we can check progress in those areas when talking to children and the teachers

Provided more detail as to what was assessed and how standards were measured

It gave me a good understanding where the school was exceeding and where further improvements were required

Broad view of quality of teaching and pastoral care, areas for us to look at where extra help may be needed

Informed me of what the school was doing well and meeting the needs of the pupils

It shows the overall impression and how effective teaching is in particular school

It helped me to see where the school needed to improve and see if they had applied any changes



# Why was the Ofsted inspection report not useful?

Because I have regular contact with school and constantly check on my daughters progress so have a more regular understanding than Ofsted may have. Also knowing how some schools operate in a way that can cheat the system to make itself look better on paper than it actually is. I know an Ofsted report might actually not be a true reflection

Vague and did not highlight areas of strength that the school did well in sufficiently

Focuses so much on curriculum and not on the child

My child is halfway through there education at the school. Had no effect on my school decision

I believe they missed out so much that I know the pre-school does for children

It was very selective and focused on small snapshots

Because it doesn't really reflect my experience

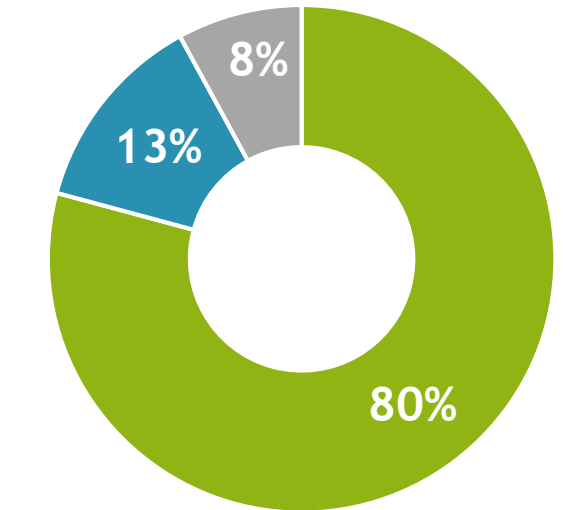




# Four in five parents who read a report felt it portrayed an accurate picture of the school or childcare provider, 13% felt it was not accurate

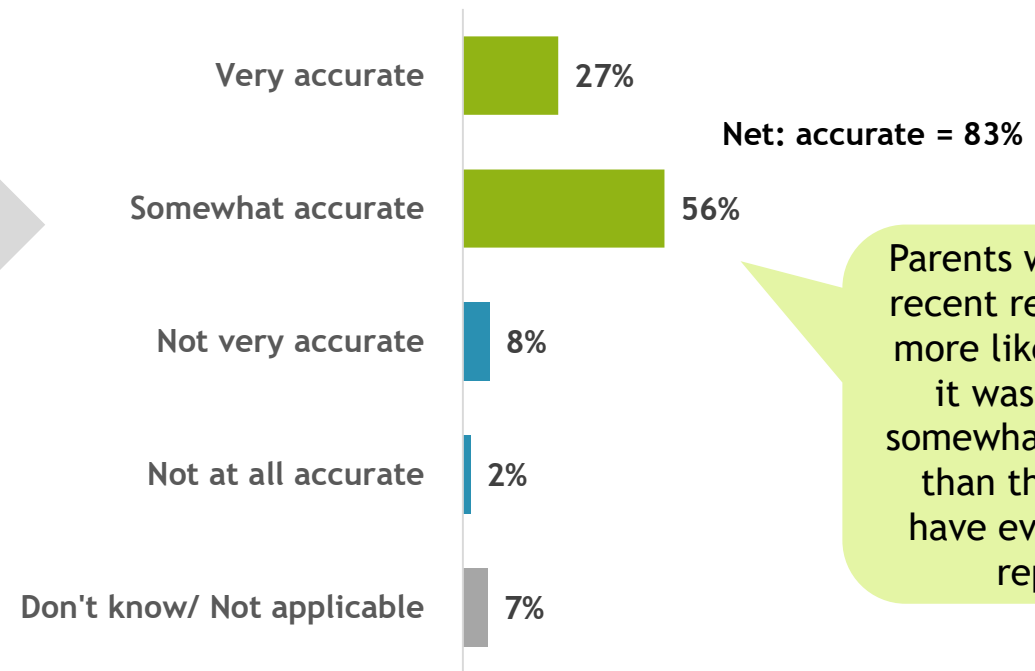
How accurate a picture did the Ofsted report you read paint of the school or childcare provider?

All who have ever read a report:



- Accurate
- Not accurate
- Don't know/ Not applicable

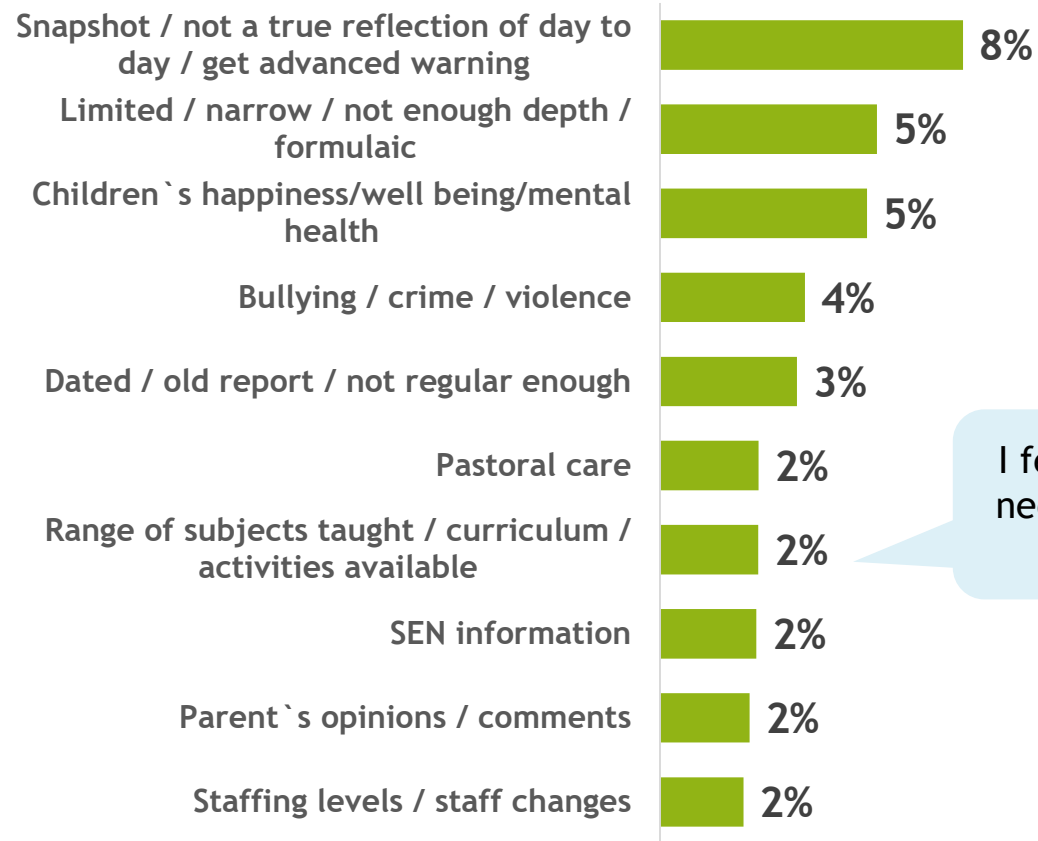
All who read a report after the school was inspected in the last 6 months (n=81):



Parents who read a recent report were more likely to feel it was very or somewhat accurate than those who have ever read a report

# Those who felt Ofsted reports could cover more most often mentioned that reports were merely a snapshot or that the reports and inspections are a bit formulaic

## Emerging themes about what was not covered (top 10)



Support for children with ongoing medical needs that fall outside the long term sick system

Lots of aspects of children's development and learning that didn't fit into certain categories and tick boxes

I felt the report was a little harsh and although there was need for improvements it wasn't a true account for day to day life within the school

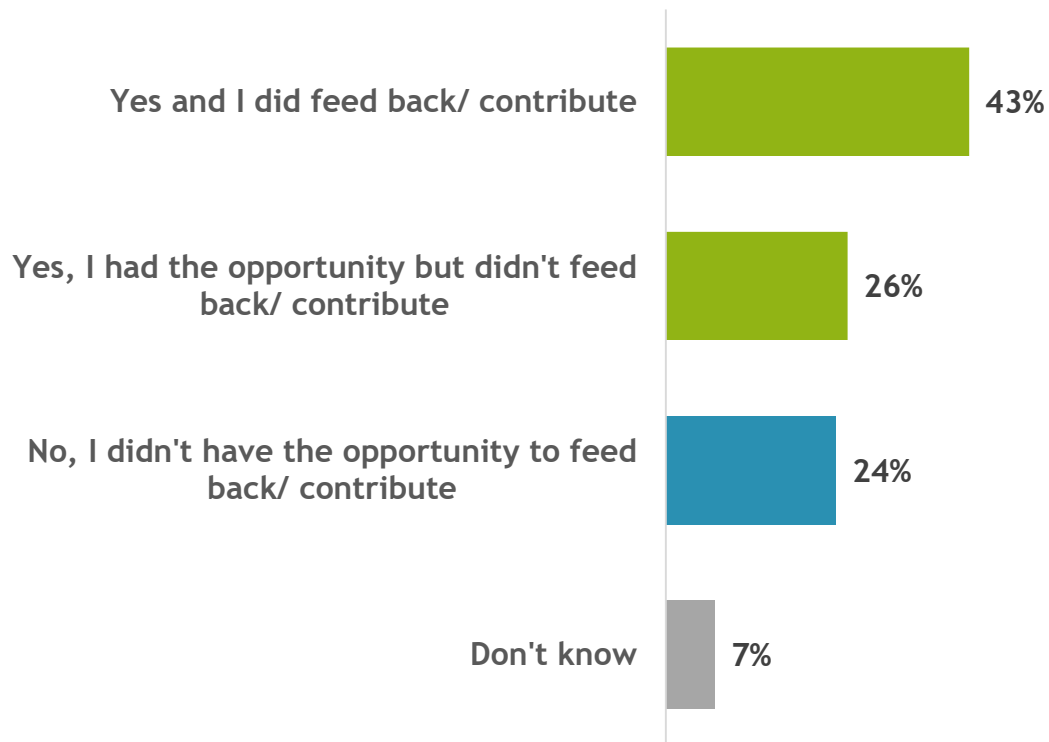
I feel (and have witnessed) schools/ colleges prepare for inspections, and know that they only give a snapshot rather than a consistent representation



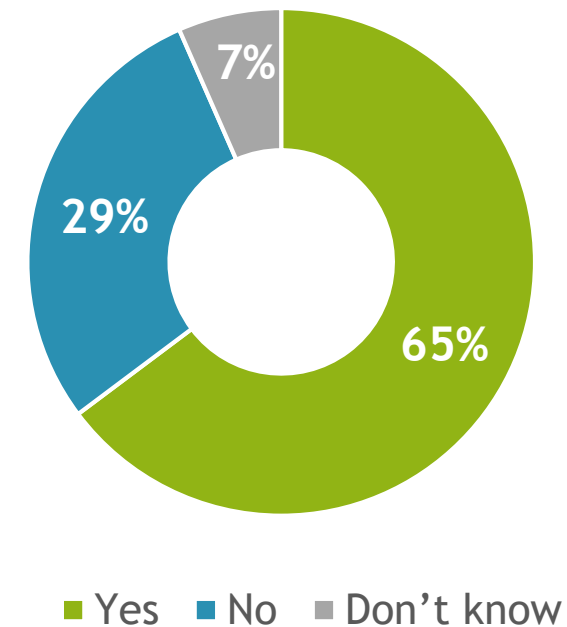
# — Obtaining and sharing parents' views

# A quarter of parents who had a child in the school at the most recent inspection felt they did not get a chance to contribute feedback

Did you get a chance to contribute during the last inspection?



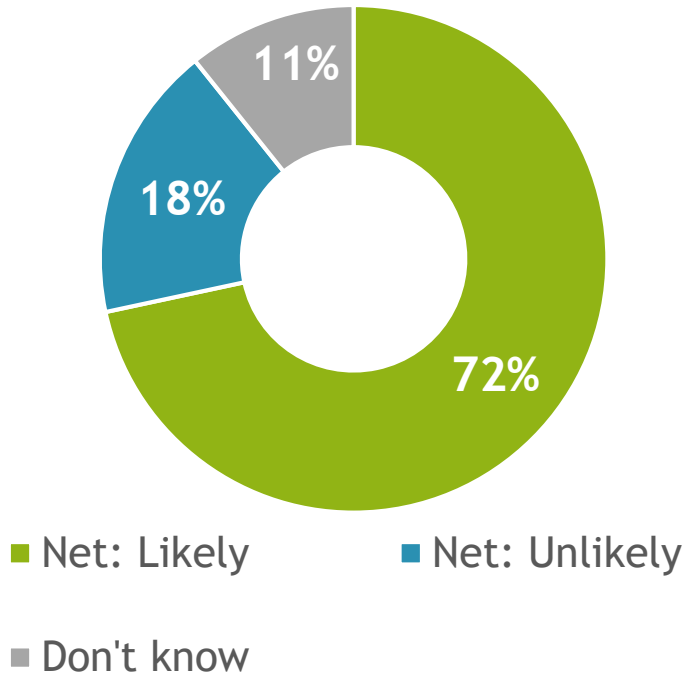
Did you read the report from the inspection within the last 6 months?



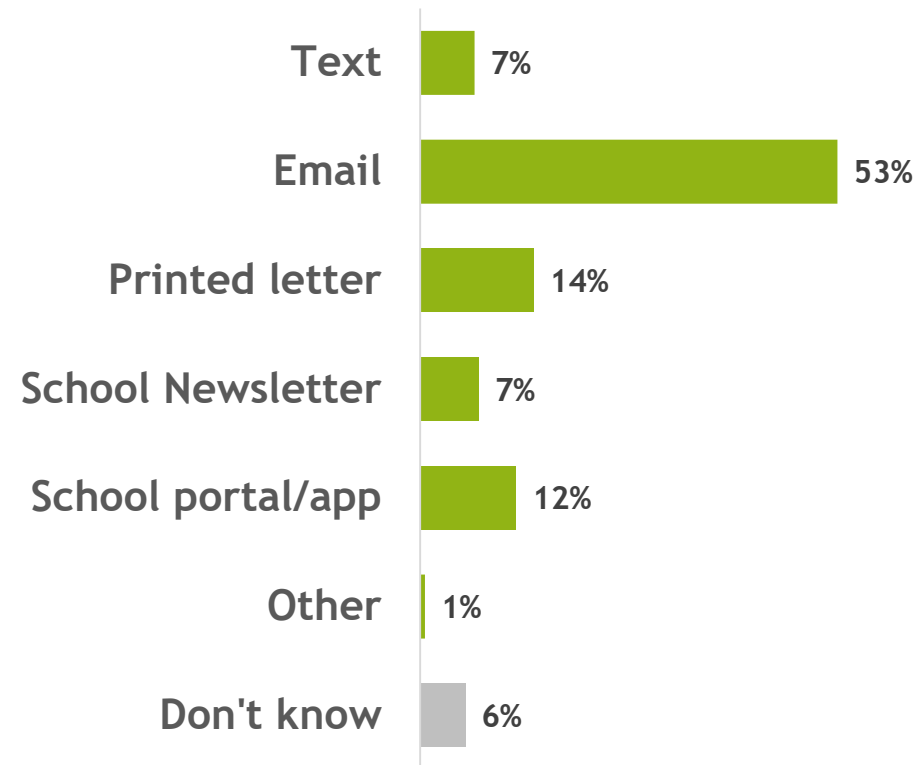
A2a\_2020. You said that your child's childcare provider, school or college was inspected in the past six months. Did you read part or all of the inspection report? Base: All who have a child whose school has been inspected in the last 6 months (n=133) / A3\_2020. When your child's school was last inspected, did you, as a parent, get a chance to feed back or contribute? Base: those who had a child at the school when it was last inspected. Base: All Parents whose child was at the school when it was last inspected (n=449)

# Three quarters of parents say they are likely to give feedback at the next inspection and most would prefer to be contacted by email

How likely are you to give feedback at the next inspection?

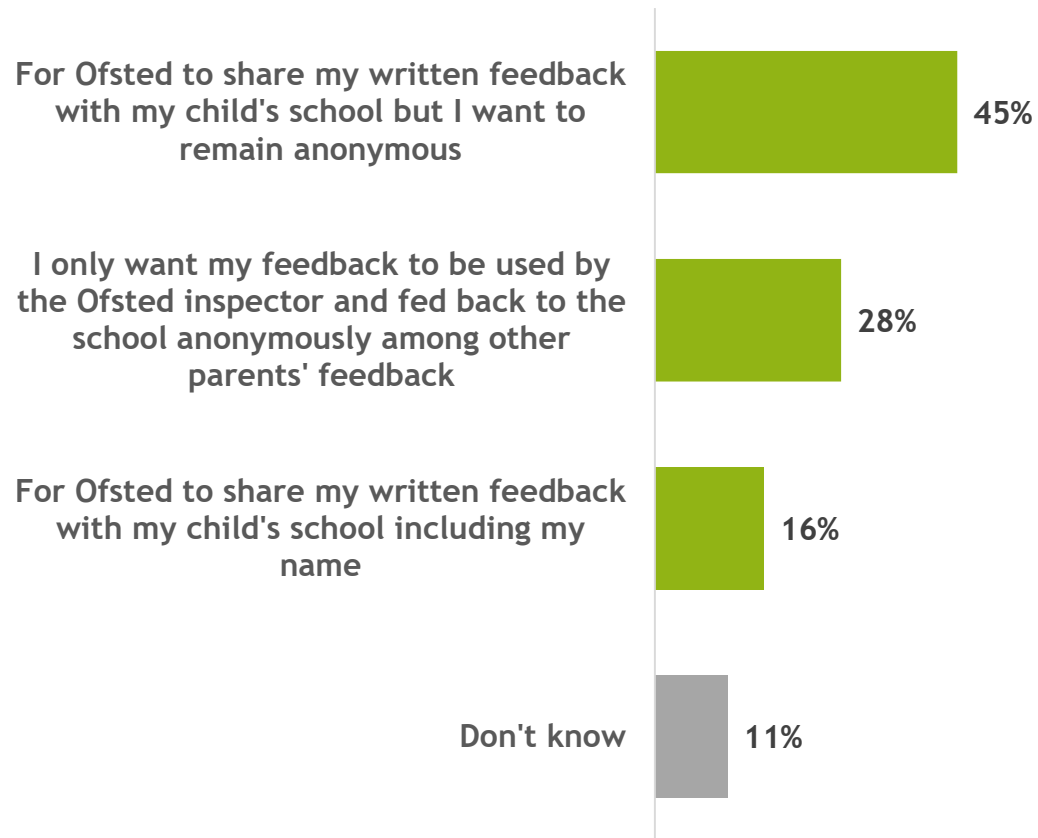


How would you want the school to contact you to provide feedback?



# Parents would rather keep their anonymity when providing feedback, but happy for the school to receive it once anonymised

How would you want your feedback to be used?

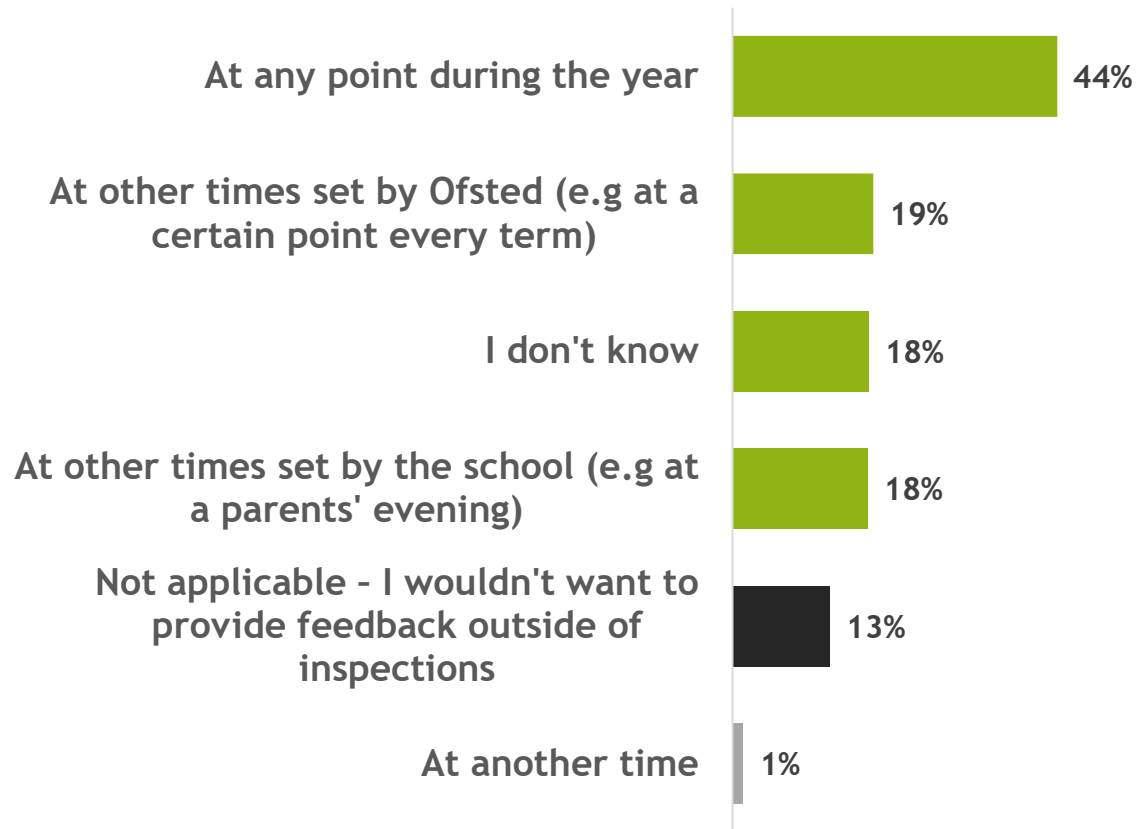


Older parents (over 55) are the most likely to be happy to share the feedback with the school including their name (28% compared with 15% of parents aged 35 to 54)

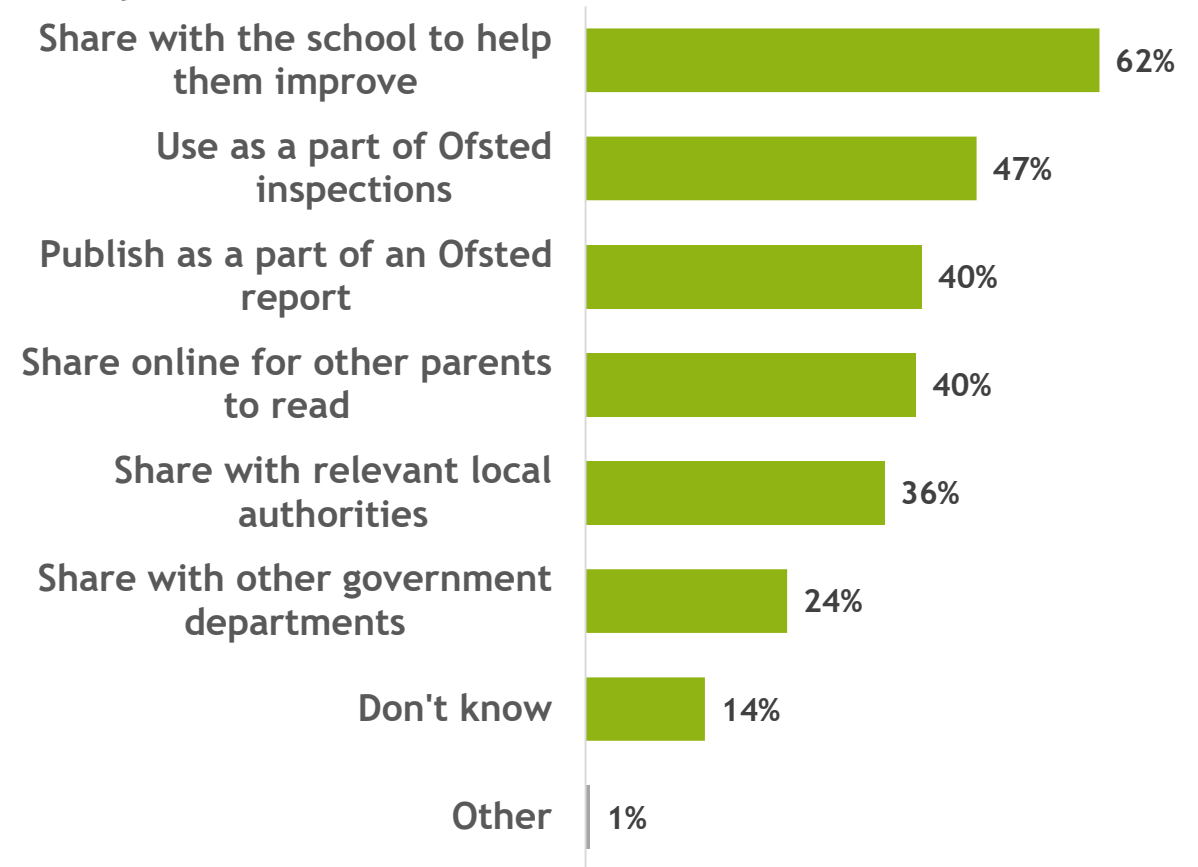
Parents in the South East are the least likely to be happy to include their name with their feedback (10% compared with 16% overall)

# 44% of parents would like to provide feedback throughout the year, in line with the current Ofsted survey. Parents are most likely to want to provide this feedback to help the school improve

What other times of year would you like to provide feedback?

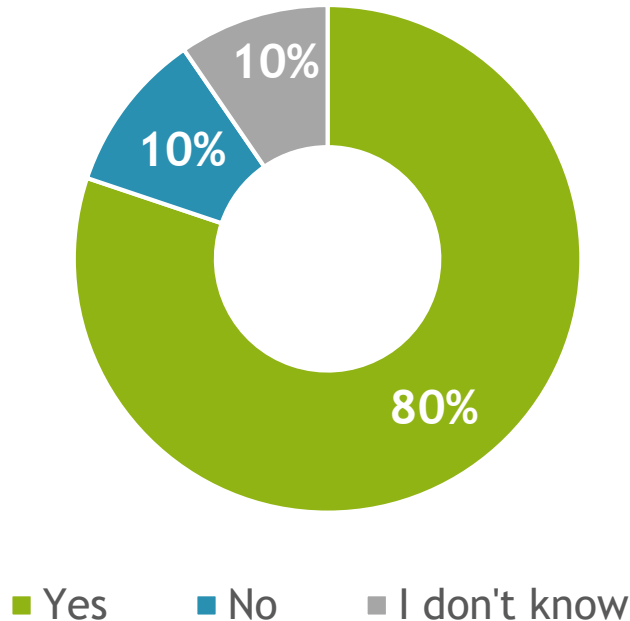


How would you want the yearly Ofsted survey feedback to be used?

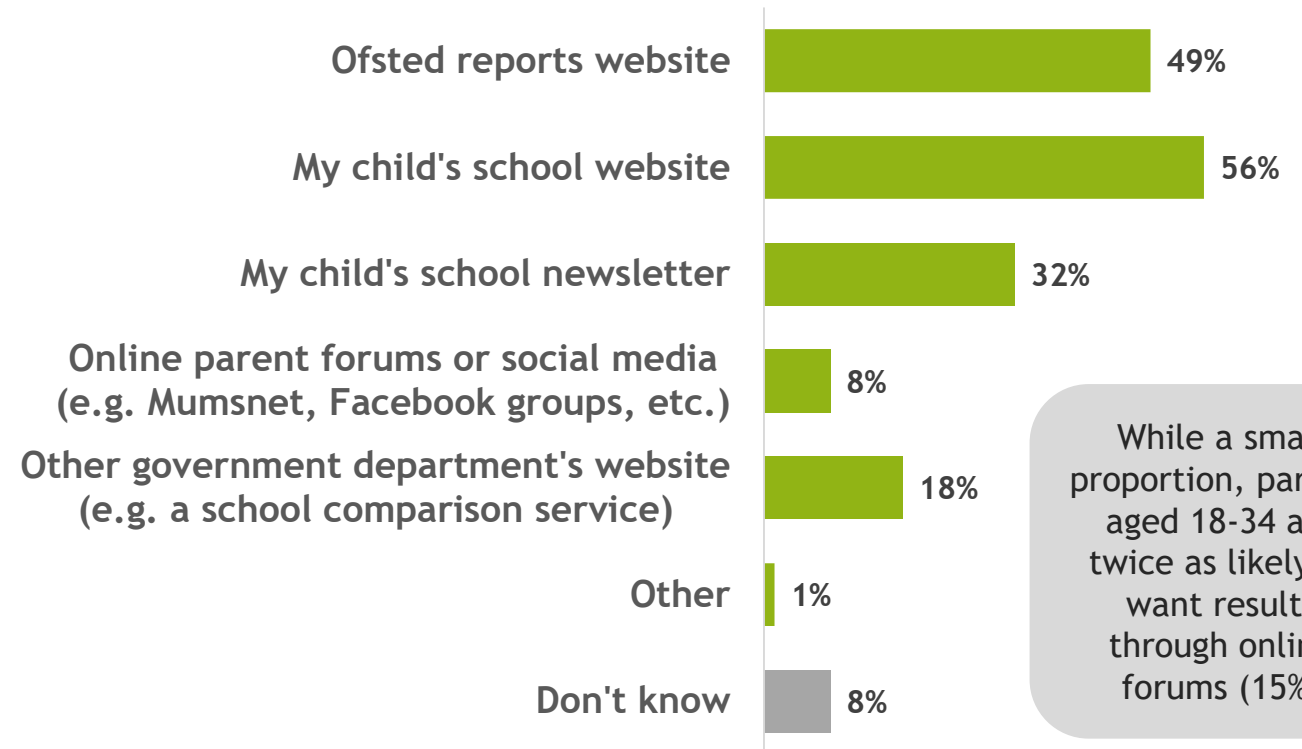


# Parents are keen to see the results from their feedback and would like to do so online, especially from their child's school website

Would you want to see the results of the feedback?



Where would you want to see these results?



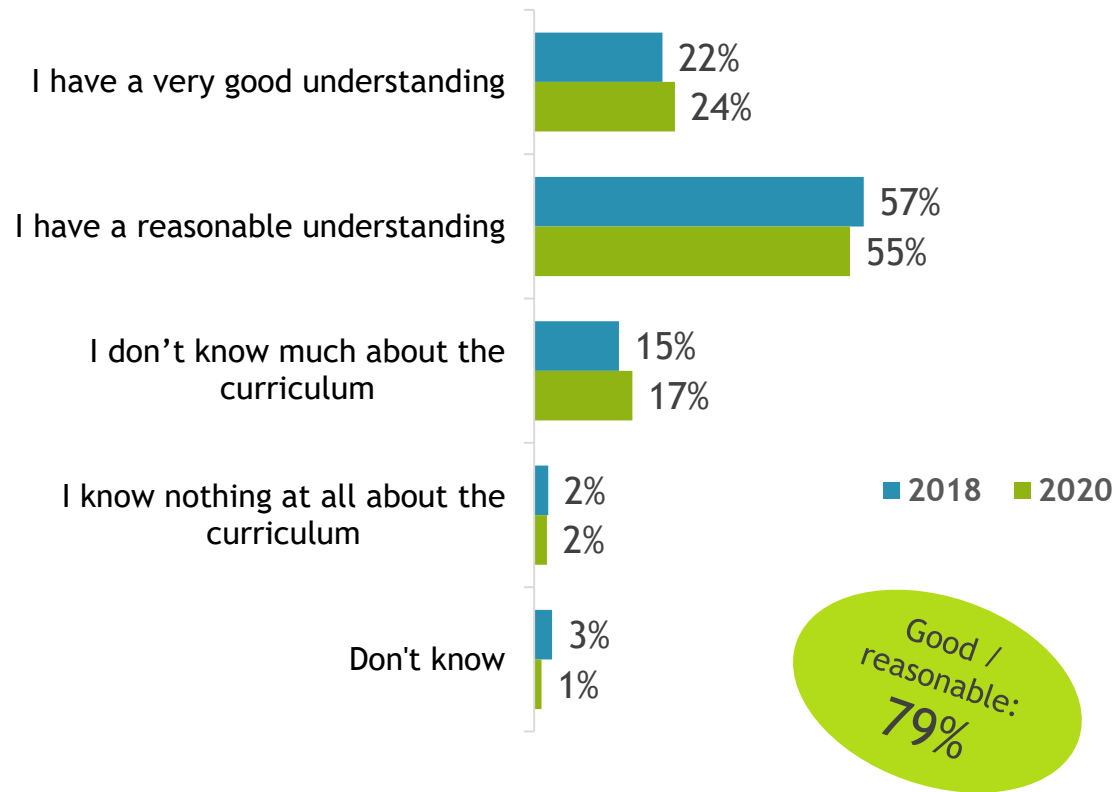
While a small proportion, parents aged 18-34 are twice as likely to want results through online forums (15%)



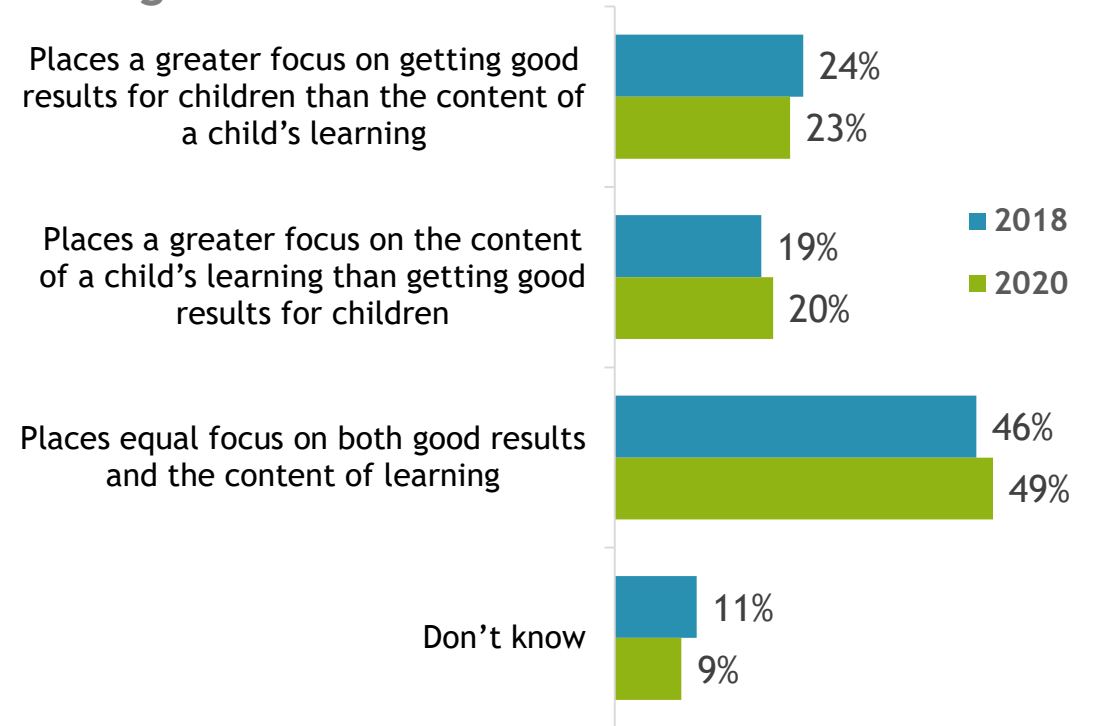
# — Perceptions towards the curriculum

# It remains that eight in ten parents feel they have a good understanding of their child's curriculum and are still most likely to feel the school places an equal focus on results and learning

## Parents' level of understanding of their child's curriculum

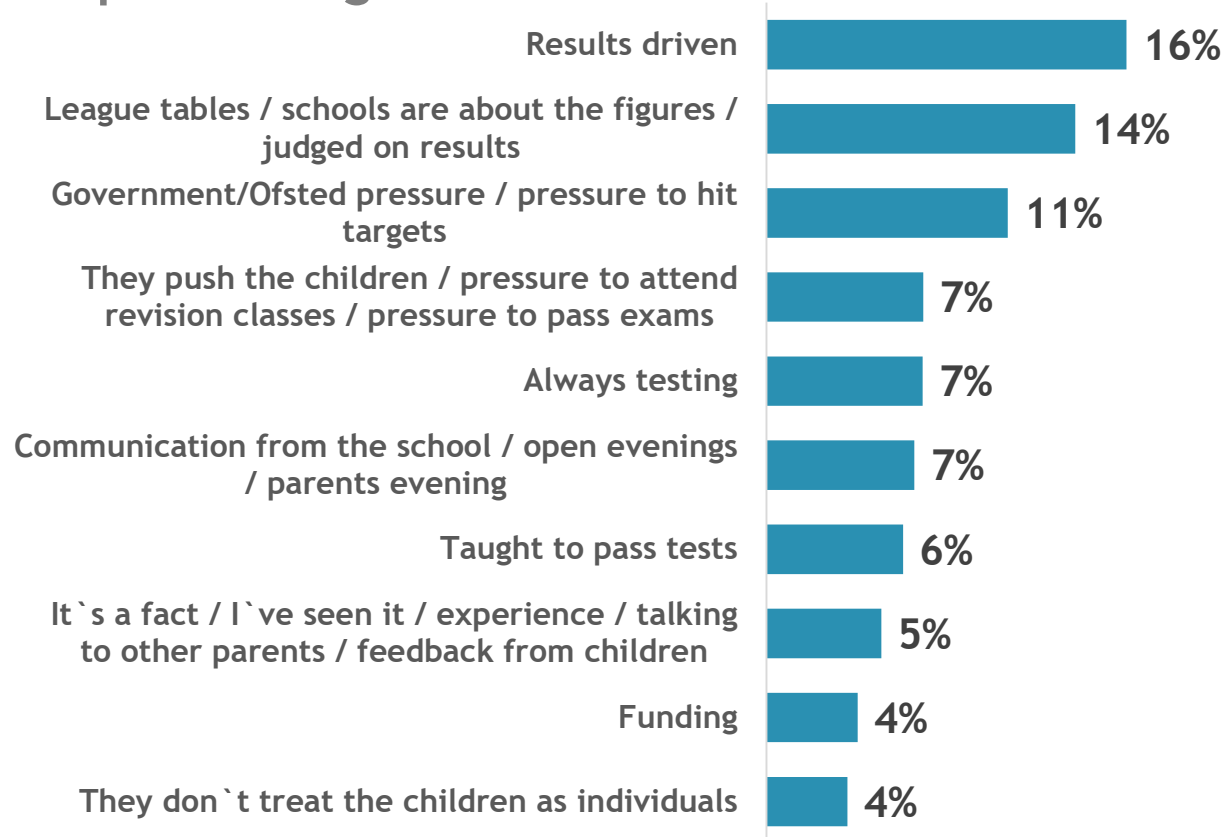


## Parental opinion on the content of their child's learning

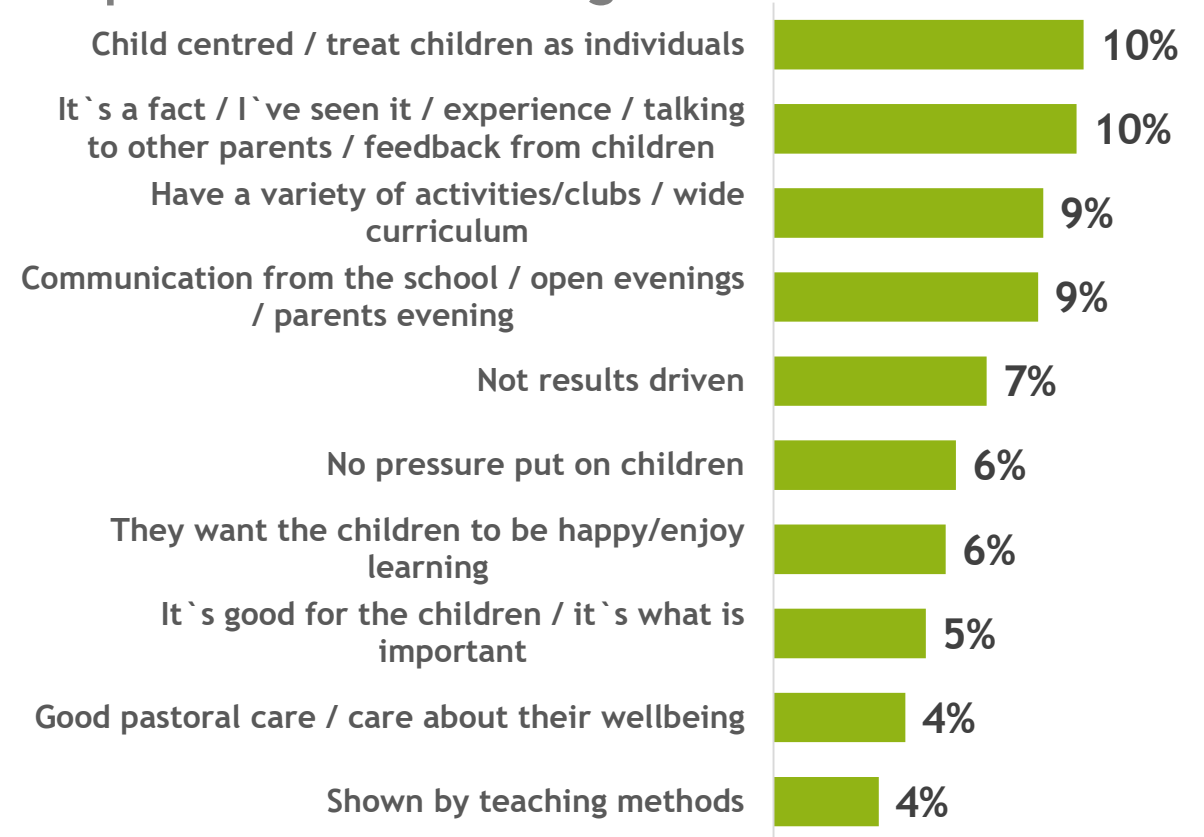


# Parents who feel the school places a greater emphasis on results feel it's because they are results driven and focused on league tables, as this is how the school is judged

## Why do you think they place a greater emphasis on good results?

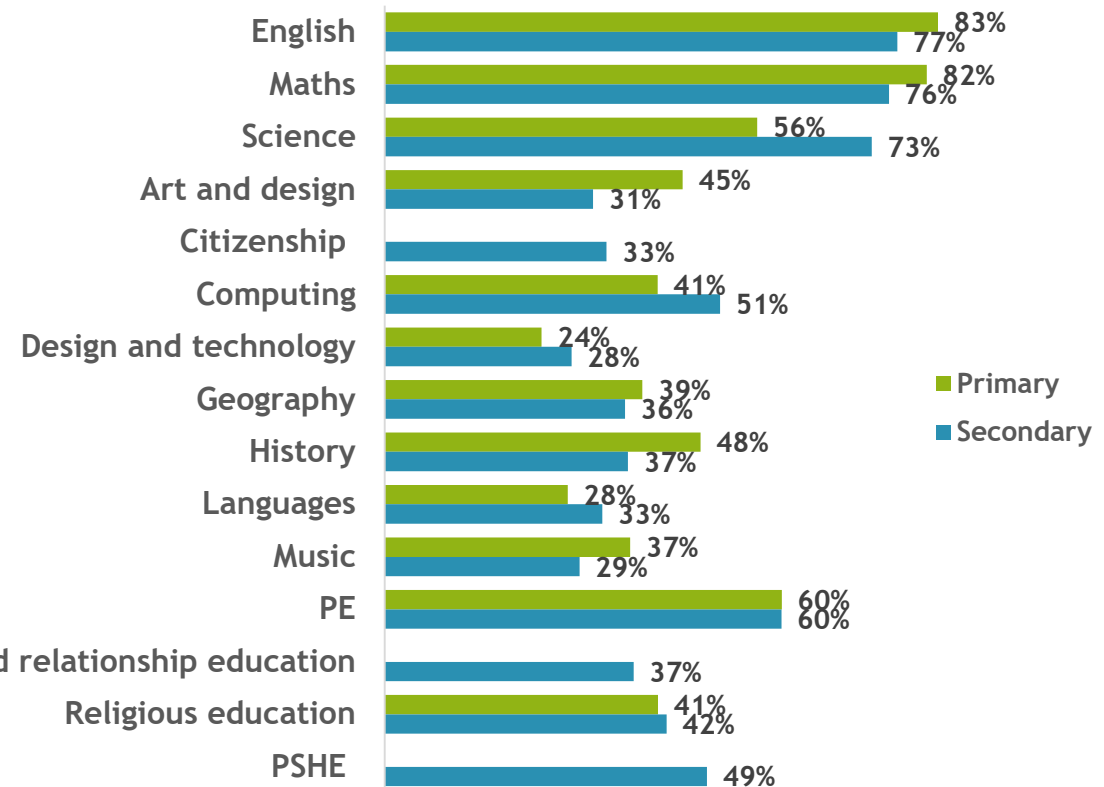
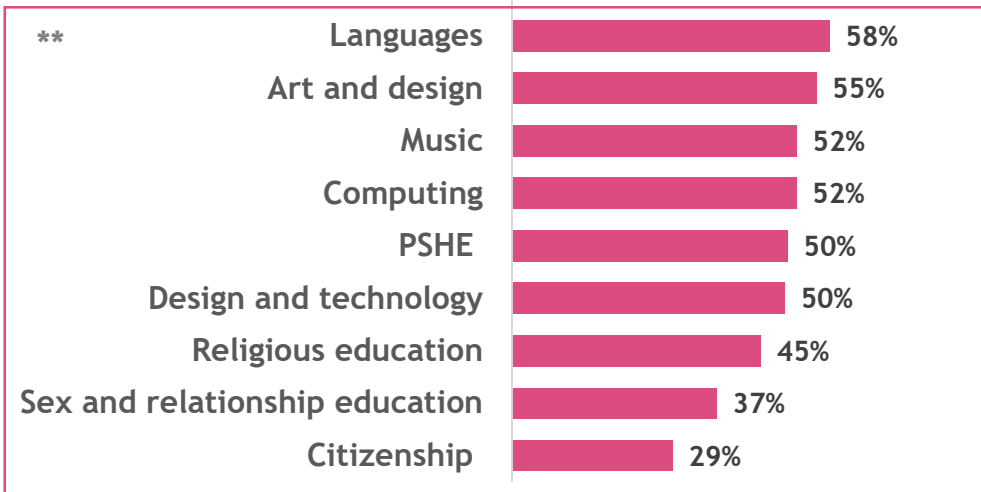


## Why do you think they place a greater emphasis child learning?



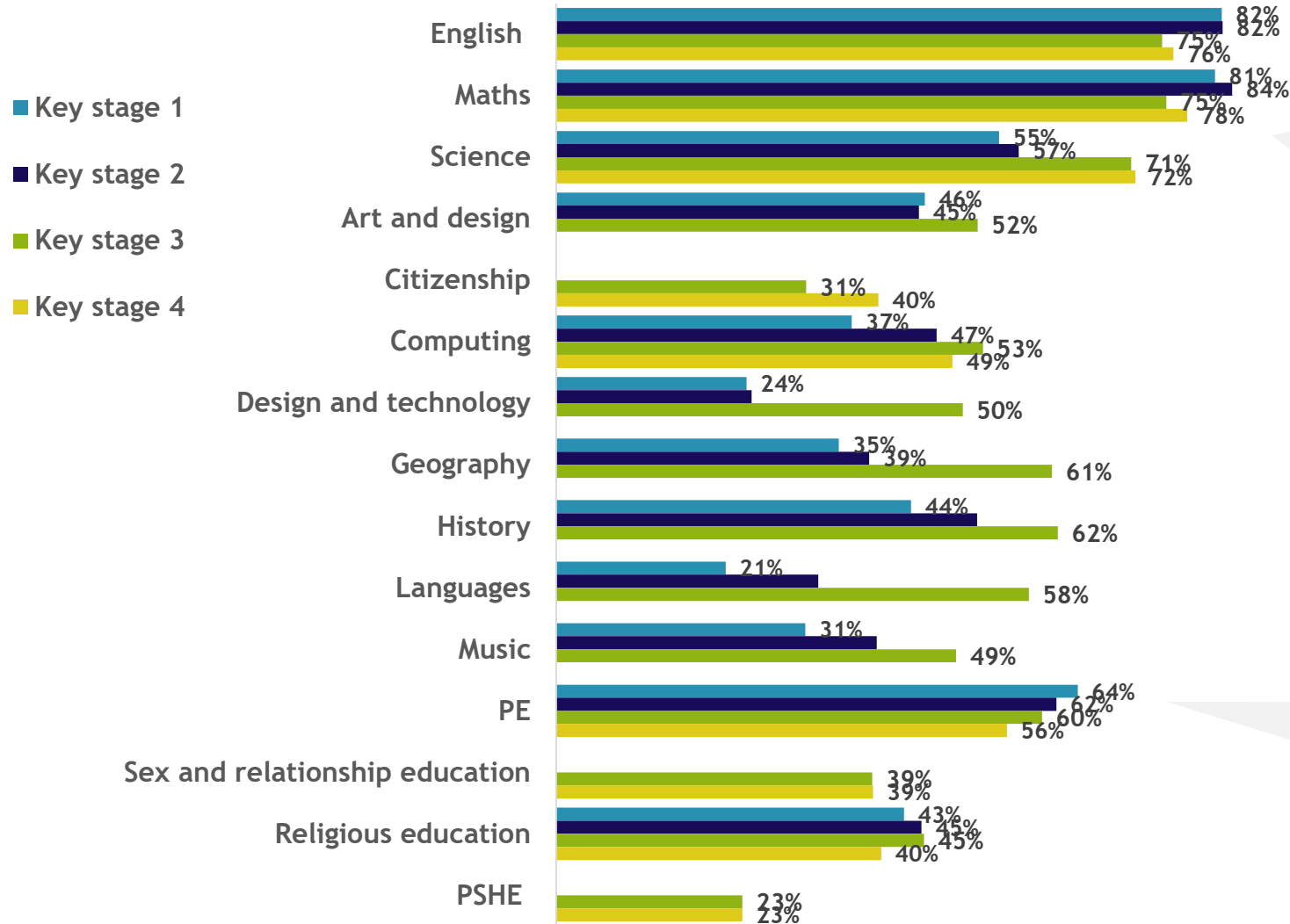
# For many subjects, only a minority of parents feel they are sufficiently covered in their child's education

Parents are most likely to feel 'core' subjects of Maths, English and Science are sufficiently covered in their child's education. However, four in ten parents or less feel that subjects such as Art, Music, Languages and D&T are sufficiently covered



Note: \*\*only asked to parents of secondary school students

# Across all key stages, parents are most likely to feel that English, Maths and Science are the most sufficiently covered



Those with children in key stage 2 are the most likely to feel Maths is well covered (84%) compared with 75% with children in key stage 3

Those with the youngest and the oldest children are the least likely to feel PE is covered sufficiently, 56% of parents with key stage 4 children, 51% with reception age children

# It remains that close to half of parents feel their child seems to have about the same amount of teaching time on a wide range of subjects as last year

