



Department
for Education

COVID-19 Parent and Pupil Panel

May findings Report

May 2021

IFF Research Ltd



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Executive Summary

The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned the COVID-19 Parent and Pupil Panel (PPP) to collect robust and quick turnaround research in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The PPP aims to help DfE make evidence-based policy decisions, monitor the impact of the COVID-19 / post-COVID-19 situation, and see how views and experiences of parents and pupils change over time. To date the research has included:

- The recruitment wave (August 2020) invited pupils in years 6-13 and parents of pupils in reception to year 10 in the 2019/20 academic year to take part in a 15-minute online survey and join the PPP. Panel members were sampled from the National Pupil Database (NPD) and contacted by letter, inviting them to take part in an online survey (push-to-web approach).
- Subsequent waves have involved inviting panel members to take part in regular 5-minute online surveys. There have so far been nine subsequent survey waves between September 2020 and May 2021.

This report discusses the findings from the wave conducted in May 2021 (the ninth that has taken place).

School attendance

Attendance in the past two weeks (May 2021)

Pupils and parents were asked about their / their child's attendance in the last two weeks (covering the period 28 April to 17 May 2021). Over four-in-five secondary pupils (84%) and around nine-in-ten secondary parents (90%) and primary parents (93%) indicated that they / their child had attended school every day in the last two weeks, virtually unchanged from results in March 2021 (83%, 90% and 93% respectively).

Pupils in year 7-10 were more likely than those in year 11-13 to have attended every day in the last two weeks (90% vs. 74%), as was the pattern in March 2021.

Reasons for non-attendance

Where pupils had not physically attended school/college every day in the last two weeks they / their parents were asked why this was. The most common reason given by parents was non-COVID related illness, with this more likely to be mentioned than in March 2021 (50% of secondary parents vs. 34% in March; 67% of primary parents vs. 34% in March). The proportion selecting reasons directly related to COVID-19 had decreased since March 2021 among secondary pupils (35% vs. 49% in March 2021), primary parents (22% vs. 48% in March 2021) and secondary parents (25% vs. 47% in March 2021).

COVID-19 rules at school

Pupils who had attended school at all in the last two weeks were asked if they had been asked to follow four COVID-19 specific rules. The majority of pupils had been asked to do each, ranging from 96% for wearing a face covering and 86% for staying in smaller groups, to 71% for washing hands frequently and 69% for being asked to physically distance from other pupils where possible.¹

There was a decrease in the proportion of pupils reporting that they were asked to follow each of the four measures in May 2021 compared to December 2020. The proportion asked to wear a mask fell from 98% to 96%, those asked to stay in small groups fell from 90% to 86%, those asked to wash hands regularly fell from 80% to 71%, and those asked to stay physically distant fell from 73% to 69%.

Perceived importance of COVID-19 safety measures

Parents were asked about how important they thought different COVID-19 safety measures in schools were, up to the end of this academic year (July 2021).

Almost all primary parents (97%) thought that encouraging pupils to wash their hands frequently was important (81% thought this very important). Roughly the same proportion (96%) felt schools should implement enhanced cleaning measures, and over nine-in-ten (92%) said extra ventilation was important. Slightly fewer, though a majority, thought it was important for pupils to stay in small groups (77%), and for physically distancing where possible (68%).

Virtually all secondary parents felt that washing hands frequently and enhanced cleaning measures were important (97% and 96% respectively). Secondary parents were more likely than primary parents to say that staying in small groups (82% vs. 77%), keeping pupils physically distant (79% vs. 68%) and providing extra ventilation in classrooms (94% vs. 92%) was important.

Perceived strictness of COVID-19 safety measures

Parents and pupils were asked what they thought about the strictness of their school's COVID-19 safety measures. Over four-fifths of primary parents (85%), secondary parents (85%) and secondary pupils (82%) felt that the COVID-19 safety measures in schools were about right in terms of strictness. Among each audience, the proportion feeling the measures were too strict or not strict enough were relatively balanced. Secondary parents were slightly more likely than primary parents to say that measures in their child's school were not strict enough (6% vs. 4%).

¹ Face covering refers to face masks or coverings.

Behaviour on the most recent day pupils attended school or college

In line with findings from the start of the academic year (September 2020), in May 2021 68% of pupils reported experiencing disruptive behaviour in lessons on the most recent day they had attended, with 10% reporting *lots of* disruptive behaviour. Pupils in year 12 and 13 were much less likely to report any disruptive behaviour (32% and 28% respectively) than pupils in years 7 to 11 (78%). The most commonly reported disruptive behaviour was pupils chatting when they are not supposed to (reported by 91% of pupils saying disruptive behaviour took place) followed by pupils shouting out (reported by 73%).

Extra-curricular activities

In May 2021, more than half (53%) of pupils reported participating in at least one extra-curricular activity this term and one-in-five (20%) reported participating in more than one. Secondary parents were more likely than primary parents to report that their child participated in no extra-curricular activities (50% vs. 45%). The extra-curricular activities pupils most commonly reported participating in this term were sports and physical activities (36%).

Where pupils did not take part in an activity, they typically indicated that the primary reason for this was because they were not interested in that type of activity, followed by it not being offered. The most common reason parents of primary pupils reported for not participating in an activity was that their child's school did not offer the activities in question. A majority of primary parents reported this as the reason their child had not participated in seven out of the eight activities surveyed. Parents of secondary pupils were less consistent in the most common reason reported for not participating in an activity. Parents of secondary pupils most commonly reported that the main reason their child did not participate in sports and physical activities, creative arts, performing arts, uniform groups and community or diversity groups was because they were not interested in these activities. While for clubs relating to an academic subject, hobby and interest groups and volunteering, parents of secondary pupils reported that the main reason for not participating was that their child's school did not offer any activities like this.

Extra time in the school day

Parents most commonly felt that if time was added to the school day, it should be used for targeted academic support (58%), while pupils most commonly felt it should be used for sports clubs or extra-curricular activities (44%). Parents of primary pupils were more likely than those of secondary pupils to feel extra time should be used for sports clubs or

extra-curricular activities (56% vs. 44%) - the most popular desired use of additional time for pupils in year 7-10 (47%). Pupils in years 11-13 most commonly favoured targeted academic support (43%).

Tutoring engagement

Four-in-five (79%) parents reported that they would be likely to take up the offer of small group tuition were it available for their children at no cost, with primary parents more likely to do so than those of secondary pupils (82% vs 75%). A small majority of pupils (55%) said that they would be likely to take up small group tuition were it available at no cost, at some point in the day.

Parents (of both primary and secondary pupils) and pupils were most likely to report that they would take up small group tuition were it available *after* the school day.

Parents of primary pupils were more likely to be interested in small group tuition *before* the school day (54% vs. 43% of parents of secondary pupils) and *after* the school day (71% vs. 63% of parents of secondary pupils). Pupils in year 11-13 were more likely than younger pupils in year 7-10 to report that they would take up small group tuition *after* the school day (47% vs. 40%) or during school lunchtimes (31% vs. 23%).

Female pupils were more likely than male pupils to report that they would take up tuition *after* the school day (49% vs. 37%) or *at weekends* (20% vs. 15%). Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pupils, and parents of BAME pupils, were more likely than White pupils and their parents to say they would take up tuition whatever the time of day or day of the week it was available.²

Access to technology for home learning

Around one-in-seven (15%) parents reported that their child had been given either a laptop, tablet or help to access to the internet, with these more common among parents of secondary pupils (17%) than of primary pupils (13%).

Just under half (48%) of parents whose child had been given a laptop or tablet had since returned it. Of the 46% who had not returned it, around seven-in-ten (69%) expected to do so.

Almost three-quarters (73%) of parents whose child had been given a laptop or tablet said their child used it every day during the most recent period of school closures, and nine-in-ten that they used it at least once a week (89%).

² See [Glossary](#) for full definition.

Remote education

In May 2021, two-in-five (39%) of parents of pupils that had not attended school every weekday in the last two weeks reported that their child was offered some form of remote learning by their school, and a further 12% did not know. Half (50%) reported that their child had not received any remote learning. Amongst the parents surveyed whose child had been unable to attend school for COVID-19 related reasons, 70% had been offered some form of remote learning and a further 4% did not know whether remote learning had been offered³. Remote learning was most commonly offered through online worksheets / activities, lessons over video call and recommended reading of online resources, which was consistent with the February 2021, December 2020, late November 2020 and late October 2020 waves.

Future plans

Current year 13 pupils were asked a number of questions about their intentions for the following academic year. Overall, 90% intended to stay in some form of education or training, with 72% intending to go to university in September 2021. Amongst those who intended to go to university, the majority applied through UCAS (97%) and intended to study full-time (97%) and live away from home (74%).

Safeguarding

Pupils were asked, if something had happened between them and someone else that made them feel unsafe, how likely or unlikely they would be to talk to a member of staff at their school about it. Four scenarios were covered relating to an incident at home, at school or college, outside of these locations, or online.

Over half of pupils said they were likely to talk to a member of staff if an incident had made them feel unsafe at home (57%). Fewer pupils reported being likely to talk to a member of staff if it had taken place online (31%), the incident was outside of home or school (46%), or the incident was at school or college (50%). Reporting being likely to tell a member of staff at school they were made to feel unsafe was more common amongst younger pupils (years 7-10) compared to older pupils (11-13). Pupils with higher scores for worthwhileness (7-10), life satisfaction (7-10) and happiness (7-10) were more likely to report that they would speak to a member of staff if it happened in each of the four locations. Pupils with lower anxiety scores (0-3) were also more likely to say this.

³ Please note small base size (67 parents), results should be interpreted with caution.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Parents' views on pupil happiness

In February 2021, there was a sharp decrease in parents' views of their child's happiness compared to previous waves. This was during the time of the third UK lockdown, when schools were again not open to the majority of pupils. Since then, mean happiness scores have improved, from 7.4 out of 10 in February 2021 to 8.1 in March and 8.2 in May. As found previously, secondary parents in May reported lower happiness scores for their children than primary parents (7.7. vs. 8.5).

Pupils' views on their own wellbeing

Pupils' own reported wellbeing (mean) scores have remained stable between March and May 2021, following increases between February and March (happiness: 6.7 in May vs. 6.8 in March; life satisfaction remained at 6.6 as in March; worthwhileness: 6.7 vs. 6.6. in March).

Pupils' reasons for feeling anxious

Pupils' reported anxiousness score in May 2021 was 3.6 (with 0 being not at all anxious and 10 being completely anxious). Anxiousness scores have remained stable between March and May 2021, although continue to be higher than pre-Christmas levels, Amongst the 29% of secondary pupils who gave a high anxiousness score (6-10), uncertainty over grades was the most common reason for feeling anxious (68%). This was higher than in March (61%) and is now higher than keeping up with schoolwork (60%) and uncertainty over the future (59%) as reasons for feeling anxious.

Not being able to see family or friends continued to drop as a reason for high anxiety. Only a quarter (26%) selected not being able to socialise compared to 41% in March. A fifth of pupils (21%) cited concern about catching or spreading COVID-19 as a reason for having high anxiety, down compared to around three-in-ten pupils in March (32%). Similarly, only 5% of pupils said they were anxious because of taking part in COVID-19 testing compared to a fifth in March 2021 (21%).

Support available at school

Pupils and parents were asked to what extent they felt pupils had an adult at school who: really cares about me / my child; tells me / my child when I / they do a good job; listens to me / my child when I / they have something to say; believes I / that my child will succeed / be a success. The scores from these questions were combined to produce a mean 'school connectedness score'. Primary parents had a higher mean score than secondary parents – 16.5 compared to 14.6). Secondary pupils had a lower mean score of 13.6.

Pupils varied considerably in their views on the availability of adults in school who could provide these types of support. A fifth (21%) reported having an adult at school who really cares about them all of the time, compared to 12% who felt this support was never the case. Pupils were most likely to report having an adult at school who listens to them when they have things to say, with 27% saying this was always the case.

Rapid asymptomatic testing

The vast majority (85%) of pupils said they had taken a COVID-19 test (in any location) in the last seven days. This is a decrease compared to the March 2021 figure of 91%. Between March 2021 and May 2021, taking COVID-19 tests at school have become far less common for pupils, whereas taking tests at home have become more common. In May 2021, one-in-eleven secondary pupils reported that they had taken a test at school/college in the last seven days (9%), down from 69% of pupils reporting this in March 2021. Instead, secondary pupils were more likely to report taking a test at home (81% in May vs. 67% in March), in line with the Department's policy to transition to testing at home.

Similarly, less than one-in-ten (7%) secondary parents reported that their child had taken a test at school/college, down from over two-thirds (68%) reporting this in March 2021. In May 2021, 85% of secondary parents reported their child had taken a COVID-19 test at home in the last seven days, up from 68% in March 2021.

Secondary pupils and parents who reported they/their child had taken a COVID-19 test at home in the previous seven days, were asked how many rapid lateral flow tests they had taken at home in that time. It was most common for both secondary pupils (68%) and parents (76%) to report they/their child took two such tests. Four-in-five secondary pupils (81%) and secondary parents (82%) reported they/their child had reported the result in some way. The most common way of reporting at home rapid lateral flow tests was on GOV.UK (61% secondary pupils, 63% secondary parents), followed by informing the school/college/other education institution (39% secondary pupils, 43% secondary parents). Around a sixth of secondary pupils and parents said they did not report the result of their/their child's test to anyone (16% respectively).

Childcare

Almost a sixth (15%) of parents said their child currently attends a breakfast or after-school club (including revision clubs), with primary parents much more likely than secondary parents to report this (21% vs. 6%). Four-in-five (81%) secondary parents reported they had been informed of when their child should be wearing a face covering in these clubs, a similar proportion to secondary pupils (82%). Only two-in-five (40%) primary parents felt informed about when their child should wear a face covering at these

clubs, 44% reported no guidance had been given. This may reflect the fact that primary pupils are not required to wear face coverings in school and for before/after school activities, and that no specific additional guidance was felt to be needed.

Parents of pupils at breakfast and after-school clubs were asked whether their pupil had been asked to follow four protective COVID-19 measures: washing their hands frequently, wearing a face covering, staying in smaller groups (e.g. groups of up to 15), and keeping physically distant from other pupils where possible. Almost four-in-five (78%) parents reported their child has been asked to wash their hands frequently and stay in smaller groups at their breakfast and/or after school clubs. Three-in-five (61%) parents reported their child had been asked to keep physically distant from other pupils where possible, and around a fifth (18%) said their child had been asked to wear a face covering.

Parents of primary pupils were more likely to report that their child had been asked to wash their hands at these clubs, compared to secondary parents (81% vs. 67%).

Most parents felt their child had found the measures easy to follow: around four-in-five reported their child found washing their hands (78%), wearing a face covering (81%) and staying in a smaller group (83%) easy. Keeping physically distant from other pupils at the clubs was the measure that parents felt their child had found least likely to be easy (61% reported this had been easy, while 30% of parents felt their child had found this difficult). Secondary parents were far more likely to say their child was finding doing this easy, compared to primary parents (86% vs. 54%).

Parents were also asked how important they thought it was that their child's breakfast/after school club implements or encourages children attending to follow the four COVID-19 measures listed above. Across the four measures, parents were most likely to report that encouragement of their child to wash their hands at breakfast club and/or after school clubs was important, with nearly all (97%) parents reporting this to be important.

Around two-thirds (63%) of parents thought encouragement to wear a face covering in these clubs was not important. This appears to reflect the age at which pupils are required to wear a one, as 92% of secondary parents reported this to be important, compared to only 10% of primary parents.

Introduction

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting school closures, the Department for Education (DfE) wanted to conduct robust, quick turnaround research to assess the on-going views and experiences of parents and pupils from the start of the 2020/21 academic year. The research aimed to help DfE make evidence-based policy decisions, monitor the impact of the COVID-19 situation, and see how views and experiences of parents and pupils change over time. The research has been structured into two broad phases:

1. Recruitment Wave

In August 2020, pupils who were in year 6 - 13 and parents of pupils who were in reception to year 10 in the 2019/20 academic year were invited to take part in a 15-minute online survey via invitation letters sent to their home address. Both parents and pupils were sampled (by year group) from the National Pupil Database (NPD), and by completing the survey became part of the COVID-19 Parent and Pupil Panel (PPP). The PPP comprised of 7,191 parents (of primary and secondary pupils) and 5,327 secondary pupils who took part in the first 'COVID-19 Parent and Pupil Panel' survey.⁴

2. Subsequent Waves

Between the recruitment wave and the first subsequent wave all pupils moved up a year group. Pupils that had moved into years 7-13 and parents of pupils who had moved into year 1 to year 11 in the 2020/21 academic year were invited to take part in up to six subsequent short online surveys (each lasting around five minutes) during the 2020/21 academic year, between September 2020 and February 2021. Parents and pupils were asked to re-consent to take part in further waves of the panel, until Summer 2021.

This report presents the findings from the May 2021 wave, the ninth and penultimate wave that has taken place following the initial recruitment wave. Comparisons to previous waves are made where relevant.

⁴ For more demographic information on panellists see the August – October findings report or Technical Report.

Table 1. Parent and Pupil Panel (PPP) waves to date⁵

Wave	Audience	Fieldwork period	Fieldwork reference
Recruitment Wave	7,191 parents and 5,327 secondary pupils	13 August – 1 September 2020	August 2020
Wave 1	4,005 parents	16-20 September 2020	September 2020
Wave 2	3,491 parents and 1,780 secondary pupils	30 September – 4 October 2020	September/October 2020
Wave 3	731 school leavers	4-9 November 2020	School leavers - November 2020
Wave 4	3,542 parents and 1,661 secondary pupils	30 October – 1 November 2020	Late October 2020
Wave 5	3,388 parents and 1,612 secondary pupils	25-30 November 2020	Late November 2020
Wave 6	3,237 parents and 1,555 secondary pupils	16-21 December 2020	December 2020
Wave 7	3,082 parents and 1,537 secondary pupils	3-5 February 2021	February 2021
Wave 8	3,084 parents and 1,531 secondary pupils	22-26 March 2021	March 2021
Wave 9	3,084 parents and 1,537 secondary pupils	12-17 May 2021	May 2021

This report discusses the findings of the wave 9 results. It presents the key findings from each question (or series of questions on a related topic) before focussing on any significant subgroup differences.

⁵ Wave 9 is the wave included in this report⁶ Eligibility for FSMs is used a proxy for socioeconomic status, with those pupils eligible for FSMs considered to be living in greater socioeconomic deprivation than those pupils who were not eligible for FSMs.

For each question, subgroup differences by pupil year group, sex, ethnic group, eligibility for free school meals (FSMs), and Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) status were explored and statistically significant differences (at the 95% level of confidence) have been highlighted in the text, whereas differences that are not statistically significant are not discussed.^{6 7} Occasionally, other relevant subgroup differences are explored for specific questions (such as region).

Where tracker questions have been asked across two or more waves of the survey, additional analysis has been carried out to test for statistically significant changes in responses between the survey waves, and significant changes over time have been highlighted in the text.

⁶ Eligibility for FSMs is used a proxy for socioeconomic status, with those pupils eligible for FSMs considered to be living in greater socioeconomic deprivation than those pupils who were not eligible for FSMs.

⁷ See [Glossary](#) for full definitions.

Methodology

This report covers PPP wave 9 which was conducted in May 2021 (12th to 17th May).

Parents and pupils who had originally signed up for the PPP in August 2020 had only consented to take part in up to seven waves until February 2021. Consequently, all panellists were contacted ahead of wave 8 in March to ask them whether or not they would be happy to remain on the panel, and therefore continue to be invited to future surveys. Table 2 shows the number of parents and pupils who consented to remain on the panel.

Table 2. Number of parents and pupils on the original and new PPP panel

Year Group in academic year 2020/21	All parents		Secondary pupils	
	Original panel	New panel for wave 8 onwards	Original panel	New panel for wave 8 onwards
Year 1	573	408	-	-
Year 2	595	436	-	-
Year 3	616	444	-	-
Year 4	573	423	-	-
Year 5	594	452	-	-
Year 6	584	425	-	-
Year 7	668	484	325	208
Year 8	785	587	376	231
Year 9	740	520	367	236
Year 10	714	515	656	418
Year 11	749	531	697	440
Year 12	-	-	667	375
Year 13	-	-	669	427
School leavers	-	-	1,570	756
Total	7,191	5,225	3,757	2,335

As with all waves, results from wave 9 have been weighted to be representative of the pupil population.

For wave 9, an exercise was undertaken to encourage panellists who have been less likely to participate in previous waves to take part. This was done by inviting parents and pupils who completed wave 8 24 hours later than all other parents and pupils on the panel. This exercise had no impact on the overall number of parents who took part but may have impacted this somewhat for pupils, as the time taken to reach the required number of completed surveys was longer than in previous waves. However, this may have been due to the lower number of pupils presently on the panel (post re-consent), and decreasing engagement over time.

Key demographics for respondents at wave 9 are shown in Table 3.

More information about the methodology of the panel, including participant characteristics can be found in the Technical Report.

Table 3. Unweighted demographic profile of wave 9 respondents⁸

	Number of parents	% of all parents	Number of pupils	% of all pupils
All	3,084	100%	1,537	100%
Primary	1,544	50%	0	0%
Secondary	1,540	50%	1,537	100%
PUPIL: FSM	487	16%	293	19%
PUPIL: SEND	478	15%	197	13%
PUPIL: Child in need (CIN) ⁹	30	1%	12	1%
Ethnicity: White	2,607	85%	1,154	75%
Ethnicity: Asian	170	6%	176	11%
Ethnicity: Black	52	2%	62	4%
Ethnicity: Mixed	59	2%	72	5%
Ethnicity: Other	59	2%	25	2%
Gender (of pupil): Male	1,562	51%	599	39%
Gender (of pupil): Female	1,522	49%	938	61%
Region: East Midlands	281	9%	168	11%
Region: East of England	397	13%	180	12%
Region: London	303	10%	205	13%
Region: North East	153	5%	70	5%

⁸ Note percentages do not always sum to 100% due to some respondents not providing demographic data, or demographic data not being held on the NPD.

⁹ See [Glossary](#) for full definition.

	Number of parents	% of all parents	Number of pupils	% of all pupils
Region: North West	379	12%	179	12%
Region: South East	570	18%	253	16%
Region: South West	354	11%	157	10%
Region: West Midlands	338	11%	167	11%
Region: Yorkshire and Humber	309	10%	158	10%

Source: Pupil information (year group, FSM, SEND, CIN, Ethnicity, Gender, Region) sourced from information held on the National Pupil Database. Parental ethnicity and gender sourced from survey responses on the recruitment wave survey.

It is worth noting that the secondary parents and secondary pupil groups refer to pupils in slightly different year groups. The secondary parents group reflects the views of parents with pupils in years 7-11 in the 2020/21 academic year, while the secondary pupils group includes the views of pupils in years 7-13 in the 2020/21 academic year. The inclusion of more senior pupils (years 12-13) in the pupil group may help to explain some of the disparities between secondary pupils and secondary parents in this report.

At the recruitment wave pupils were sampled from those in years 6 – 13 in the 2019/20 academic year. Pupils moved up a year level between the recruitment wave in August 2020, during the 2019/20 academic year, and the first follow up pupil survey conducted in September/October 2020, in the first term of the 2020/21 academic year. Throughout the report we refer to pupils by the year group that they were in during the academic year of the wave in discussion. For example, a year 6 pupil that was recruited in the August 2020 wave is referred to as a year 6 pupil in the August 2020 wave, but a year 7 pupil from the September/October 2020 wave onwards. Similarly, a year 13 pupil in August 2020 is referred to as a 'school leaver' in the 2020/21 academic year. A breakdown of pupils by school year at wave 9 is shown in Table 4 below.

Year 11 pupils in August 2020 moved into year 12 in the 2020/21 academic year; it is estimated that around half of those who moved from year 11 to year 12 left school, with many of them moving to FE and sixth form colleges. As such, findings for year 12 likely represent all year 12 students, not just those in school sixth forms. Year 12 pupils in August 2020 who moved into year 13 in the 2020/21 academic year are only representative of those in school sixth forms.

Table 4. Breakdown of wave 9 pupil respondents by year group

Year Group 2019/20	Year Group 2020/21	Number invited to take part in wave 9	Response rate¹⁰	Number who took part in wave 9
Year 6	Year 7	208	62%	129
Year 7	Year 8	231	67%	154
Year 8	Year 9	236	65%	154
Year 9	Year 10	418	66%	275
Year 10	Year 11	440	63%	275
Year 11	Year 12	375	71%	268
Year 12	Year 13	427	66%	282
Year 13	'School Leavers'	-	-	-

¹⁰ Response rates were capped using quotas per year group and so the response rate under-estimate the number of parents and pupils who would have completed the survey.

School attendance

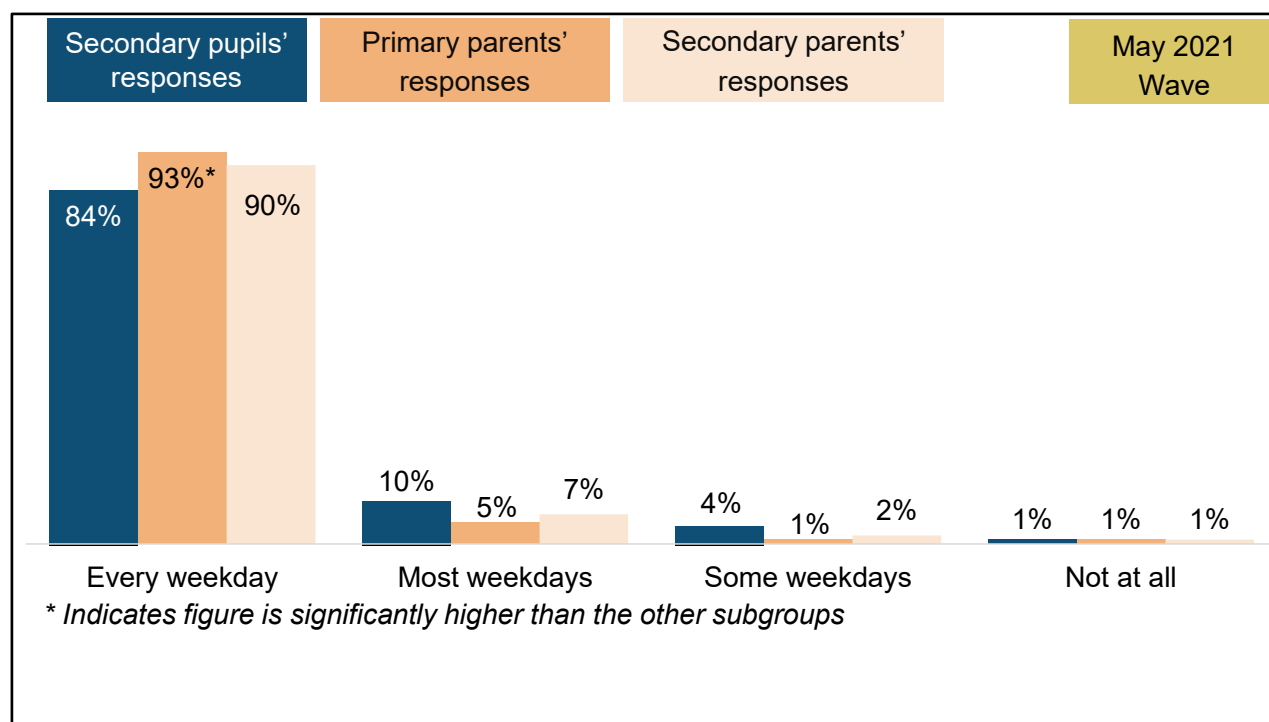
In May 2021, parents and pupils were asked about school attendance in the last two weeks (covering the period 28th April to 17th May). Schools were able to open to all pupils as of 8th March 2021 and physical attendance was mandatory once again. Guidance that advised clinically extremely vulnerable pupils not to physically attend school (covering the period of the third lockdown) had been in place from 6th January 2021 and ended on 31st March 2021.

Attendance in the past two weeks (May 2021)

Overall, reported attendance in May 2021 had remained stable since schools re-opened to pupils in March 2021. Over four-in-five secondary pupils (84%) had attended school every day in the last two weeks, no significant change compared to March 2021 (83%).

As shown in Figure 1, over nine-in-ten parents of primary pupils (93%) and of secondary pupils (90%) reported their child had attended every day, both similar / unchanged from the proportion who said this in March (92% and 90% respectively). Only 1% of (primary and secondary) parents and 1% of secondary pupils said they had not attended at all in the last two weeks (again unchanged from March 2021).

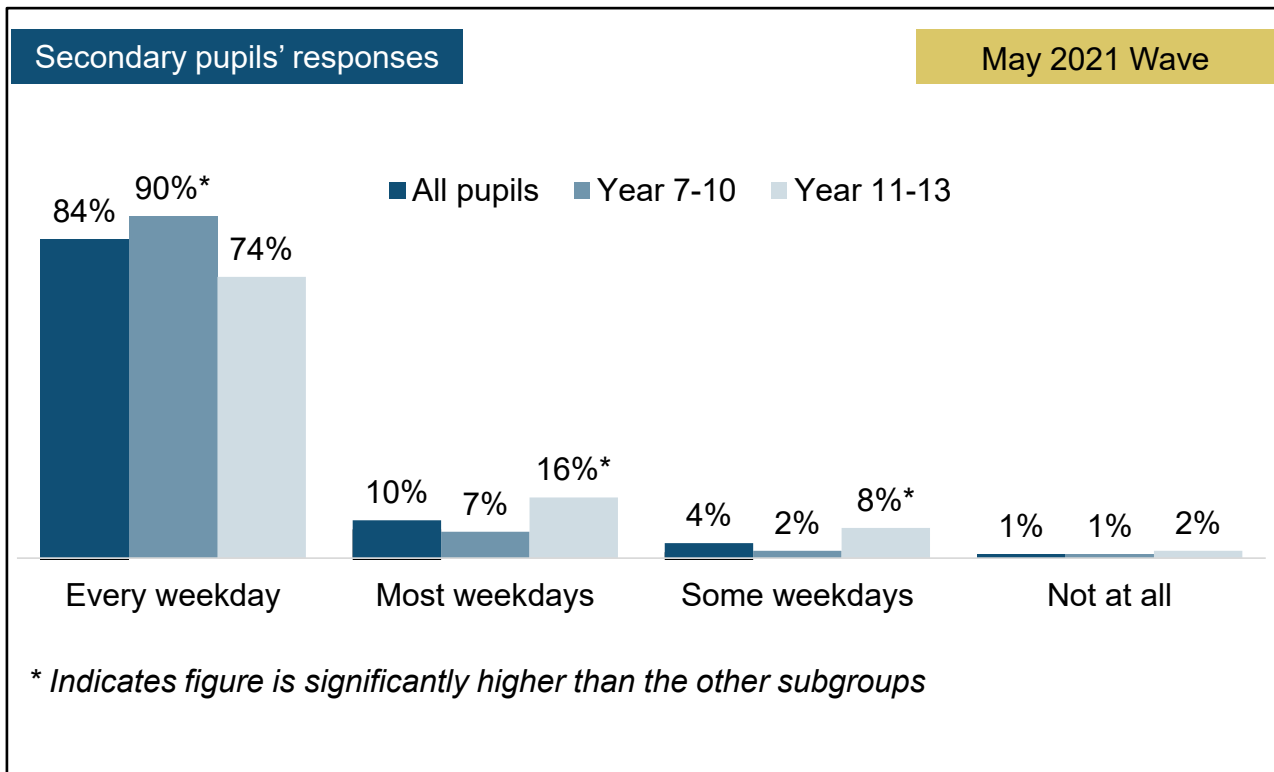
Figure 1: School attendance in the last two weeks (May 2021)



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave L16A/L16B_P2W9. "How often, if at all, have you physically attended school or college in the past two weeks of term time?" All pupils (n=1,537), Primary parents (n=1,544), Secondary parents (n=1,540)

As shown in Figure 2, pupils in year 7-10 were more likely than those in years 11-13 to have attended school every day in the last two weeks (90% vs. 74%), as was the pattern in March 2021.

Figure 2: Attendance in the last two weeks by pupil year group (May 2021)



Source: PPP May 2021 L16B_P2W9. "How often, if at all, have you physically attended school or college in the past two weeks of term time?" All pupils (n=1,537), year 7-10 (n=712), year 11-13 (n=825)

The following groups of pupils were also less likely to have attended school every day in the last two weeks:

- Female pupils compared to male pupils (81% vs. 88%).
- Pupils eligible for FSM compared to those not eligible (77% vs. 86%). This was also the case in March 2021.

The following groups of parents were less likely to say their child had attended school every day in the last two weeks:

- Parents of pupils eligible for FSM compared to those not (86% vs. 93%). This was

also the case in March 2021.

- Parents of pupils considered to have SEND compared to those without (85% compared to 93%).
- Parents of pupils who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan compared to those who do not (82% vs. 92%).¹¹

Reasons for non-attendance (May 2021)

Pupils and parents who had not attended every day in the last two weeks were asked why. As shown in Figure 3, the most common reason given by parents was non-COVID related illness (50% of secondary parents whose child had not attended school every day and 67% of primary parents). This represented a significant increase compared to the figure of 34% for secondary and primary parents in March 2021 and compared to 20% of secondary parents and 27% of primary parents in December 2020, the previous time schools were open to all pupils.¹²

Among secondary pupils, the most common reasons for absence were directly related to COVID-19 (35% of those who had not attended school every day).¹³ However, the proportion selecting reasons directly related to COVID-19 had decreased compared with March 2021 and December 2020 among secondary pupils (35% vs. 49% March 2021 vs. 71% December 2020), primary parents (22% vs. 48% March 2021 vs. 73% December 2020) and secondary parents (25% vs. 47% March 2021 vs. 74% December 2020). Among parents this shift was partly due to the reduction in those saying the school was closed to certain groups or bubbles (6% of secondary parents said this compared to 19% in March 2021 and 29% in December 2020, and 8% of primary parents gave this as a reason for absence compared to 24% in March 2021 and 27% in December 2020).

The proportion of secondary pupils who said they had not attended school every day due to anxiety or mental health problems was stable compared to March and December (17% for secondary pupils in March and May, 13% in December). The proportion was also stable for parents of primary pupils (10% compared to 8% in March) and parents of secondary pupils (20% compared to 19% in March), though higher than in December 2020 (4% primary parents, 10% secondary parents). However, as the proportion of those saying they had not attended school every day was lower in May than in December (7%

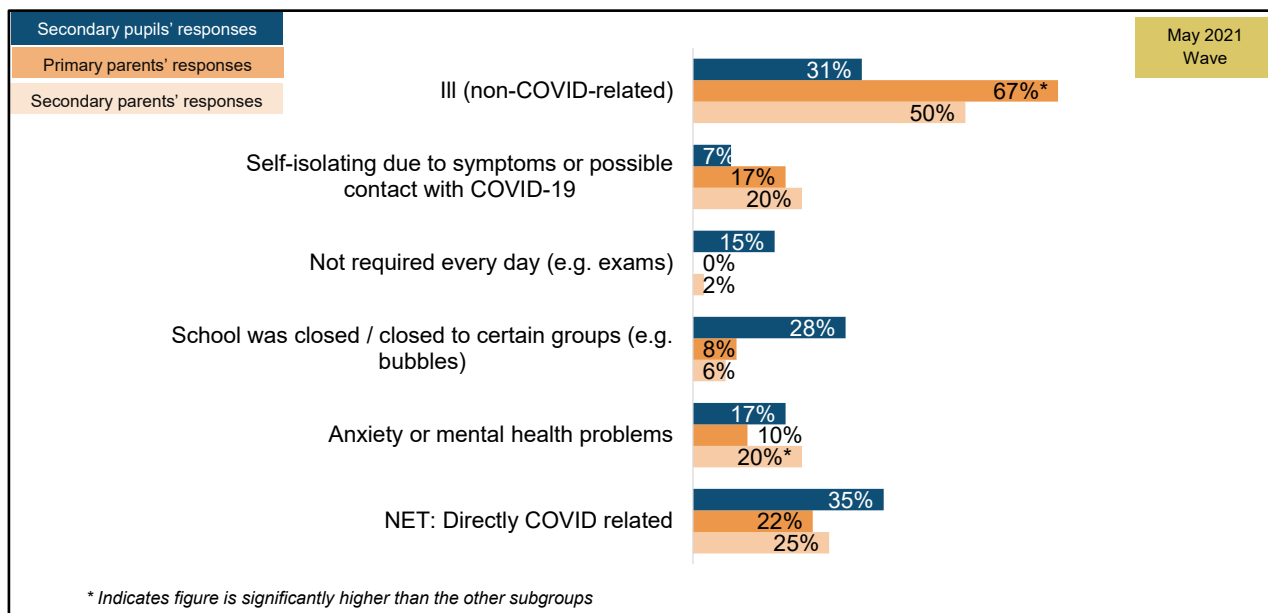
¹¹ See [Glossary](#) for full definition.

¹² Parents and pupils were also asked the reasons why they or their child did not attend school 'at all'. However, due to the small number of parents (n=33) and pupils (n=27) asked this, it has not been included in this report.

¹³ COVID-19 related reasons include reasons like 'I am self-isolating due to symptoms or possible contact with COVID-19' and 'My school is not open every day to all year groups / school was closed for me / closed to certain groups (e.g. bubbles).'

of parents compared to 21% in December), the number of those who said this was due to anxiety or mental health was actually lower overall in May than December.

Figure 3: Top reasons for not attending school every day since school was open to pupils



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave: L29/L28-P2W8 “Why has [PUPILNAME] not physically attended school every day?” Parents of pupils who attended school 'some' or 'most' days in the last two weeks (primary parents (n=109), secondary parents (n=131)). Pupils who have attended school some or most days in the last two weeks (n=287). Answer options selected by 5% or less of parents not shown in chart. 'NET: Directly COVID related' includes anyone who selected: self-isolating due to symptoms or possible contact with COVID-19, school was closed to certain groups, quarantining from travel and a positive COVID-19 test.

The proportion of secondary pupils not attending school every day over the past two weeks because they were self-isolating due to COVID-19 symptoms had also decreased since March and December 2020 (7% vs. 15% in March 2021 vs. 36% in December 2020) it was also less likely to be cited as a reason by secondary parents (17% vs. 30% in March 2021 vs. 48% in December 2020).

As mentioned, pupils in years 11-13 were less likely than those in years 7-10 to have attended every day in the past two weeks. Pupils in year 11-13 were more likely than those in year 7-10 to say this was due to their school not being open to them every day (43% vs. 6%), or that they were not required in school every day due to exams (25% vs. 0%). Pupils in years 7-10 were more likely than those in years 11-13 to have not attended every day in the last two weeks because of non-COVID-related illness (54% vs. 15%) or to be self-isolating due to symptoms of COVID-19 (12% vs. 4%) or having difficulty travelling to school (9% vs. 1%).

Pupils eligible for FSM and who had not attended school every day in the past two weeks, were more likely to say this was due to difficulties travelling to school (12% vs. 2% of those who had not attend every day and were not eligible for FSM).

COVID-19 rules at school

To keep schools open and maximise the opportunity for young people to attend during the COVID-19 pandemic, education leaders, staff, pupils, students and parents have worked tirelessly to implement measures which have helped to minimise the transmission of COVID-19 and to support the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and staff. Such measures have clear benefits in reducing transmission within schools but their costs to pupil's education and wellbeing are less well understood. Pupils who had attended school at all in the last two weeks were asked if they had been asked to follow four COVID-19 specific rules: washing hands frequently, wear face covering, keeping physically distanced from other pupils, and staying in smaller groups.

As shown in Figure 4, the majority of pupils reported that they had been asked to do each of the four behaviours. They were mostly likely to report having been asked to wear a face covering (96%), and least likely to report being asked to keep physically distant from other pupils where possible (69%).

There was a decrease in the proportion of pupils reporting that they were asked to follow each of the four measures in May 2021 compared to December 2020.

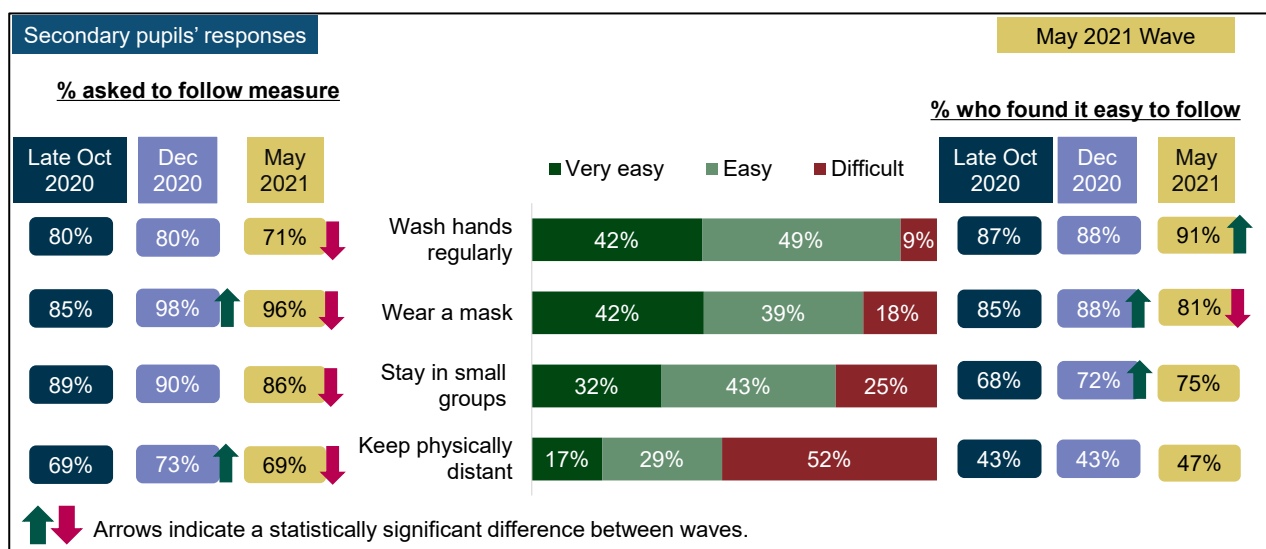
There was only a slight decrease in the proportion who reported being asked to wear a face covering compared to December 2020 (96% vs. 98%), but the proportion was still far higher than in October 2020 (85%). However, the proportion who said it was easy to follow this rule had also decreased compared to December 2020 (81% vs. 88%).

The proportion of pupils who reported they had been asked to wash their hands frequently had decreased significantly compared to both December and October 2020 (71% vs. 80% and 80%), which had previously seen a decrease compared to September 2020 (85%). The proportion of pupils who felt this rule was easy to follow however, had increased slightly compared to December 2020 (91% vs. 88%).

Pupils were less likely to say they had been asked to stay in small groups in May 2021 compared to December 2020 (86% vs. 90%). Three-quarters (75%) of those felt that the rule was easy to follow.

As was the case in December 2020, the rule that pupils were least likely to find easy to follow was keeping physically distant (47% of those who had been asked compared to 43% in December).

Figure 4. Knowledge of and ease of following measures among secondary pupils



Source: PPP Late October, December and May wave L43 “In your school or college have you been asked to:” All pupils attending school this term, (n=1,652 / n=1,540 / n=1,535) L45 “How easy or difficult are you finding it to follow these measures:” All pupils who has been asked to follow measure. Wash hands regularly (n=1,044), Wear a face covering (n=1,477), Stay in small groups (n=1,300), Keep physically distant n=1,036).

There were some differences in these findings by sub-group, as follows:

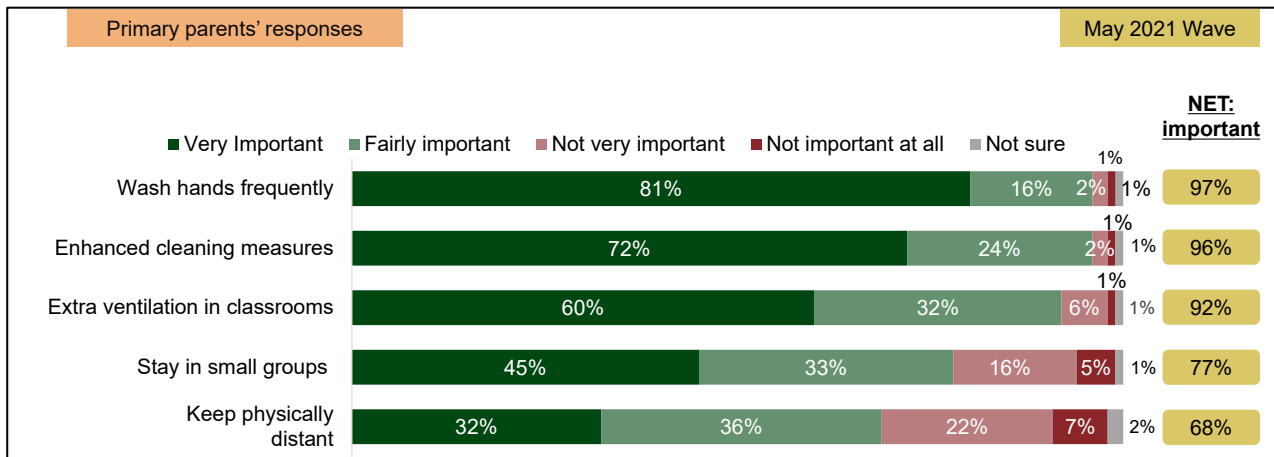
- Pupils in years 7-10 were more likely than those in 11-13 to say it was difficult to wash their hands regularly (10% vs. 6%) or wear a face covering (19% vs. 15%).
- Female pupils were more likely than male pupils to say it was hard to keep physically distant (56% vs. 48%).
- FSM eligible pupils were more likely to say it was easy to stay in smaller groups (84% vs. 73%) and stay physically apart (63% vs. 43% of non-eligible FSM pupils), but more likely to say it was difficult to wear a face covering (25% vs. 17% non-FSM).
- BAME pupils were more likely than White pupils to say it was difficult to stay physically apart (53% vs. 45%).

Perceived importance of COVID-19 safety measures

Parents were asked about how important they thought different COVID-19 safety measures in schools were, up to the end of this academic year July 2021. They were asked to rate the importance of schools encouraging pupils to stay in small groups, wash their hands frequently, keep groups of pupils physically distant where possible, implementing enhanced cleaning measures and provide extra ventilation in classrooms.

As shown in Figure 5, almost all primary parents (97%) thought that encouraging pupils to wash their hands frequently was important (81% felt this was very important). Roughly the same proportion (96%) felt schools should implement enhanced cleaning measures, and over nine-in-ten (92%) said this of extra ventilation. Over three-quarters (77%) thought it was important for pupils to stay in small groups, and around two-thirds (68%) thought keeping physically distant where possible was important.

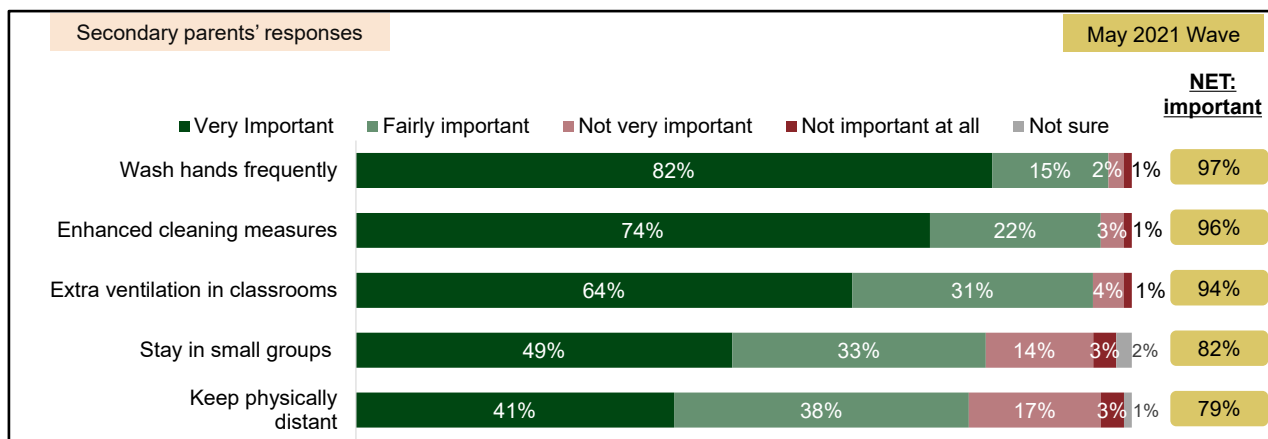
Figure 5: Primary parents' perceived importance of COVID-19 safety measures



Source: PPP May Wave. L44A-1-P2W9 how important, if at all, do you think it is for [PUPILNAME]'s school to continue to implement or encourage... All parents except those that home school Primary (n=1,540)

As shown in Figure 6, nearly all secondary parents felt that it was important for their pupil's school to encourage frequent hand washing (97%), implement enhanced cleaning measures (96%) and have extra ventilation (94%). Secondary parents were more likely than primary parents to say that the following were important: staying in small groups (82% vs. 77%) and keeping pupils physically distant (79% vs. 68%).

Figure 6: Secondary parents' perceived importance of COVID-19 safety measures



Source: PPP May Wave. L44A-1-P2W9 how important, if at all, do you think it is for [PUPILNAME]'s school to continue to implement or encourage... All parents except those that home school Secondary (n=1,533)

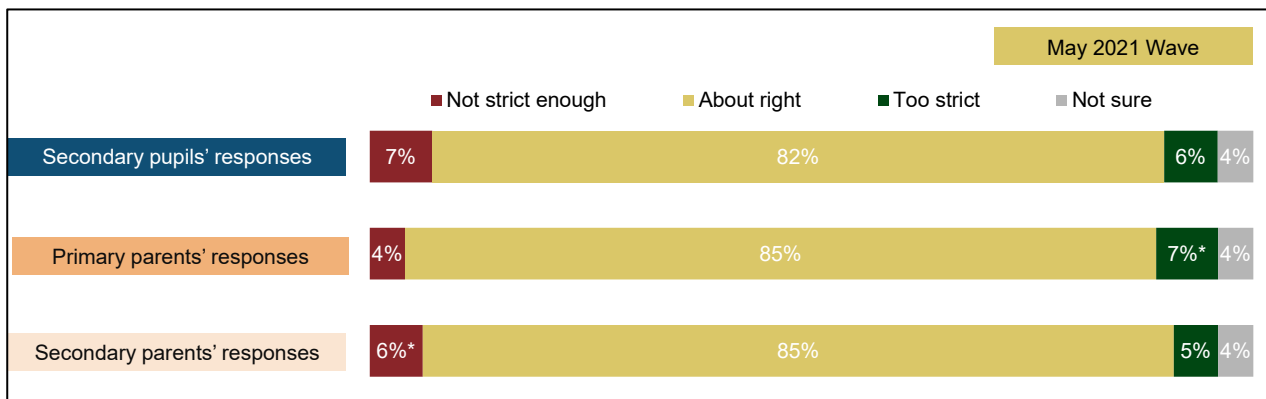
There were differences in perceived importance for different sub-groups of parents:

- Parents of pupils eligible for FSM were more likely than those not eligible for FSM to say it was important that pupils stay in small groups (84% vs. 78%) and keep physically distant (80% vs. 71%).
- Parents of BAME pupils were more likely than parents of White pupils to say it was important that pupils stay in small groups (89% vs. 76%), keep physically distant (83% vs. 70%) and that schools should provide extra ventilation in classrooms (96% vs. 92%).
- Parents of pupils with SEND were more likely than those without SEND to say it was important for pupils to keep physically distant (78% vs. 72%).
- Parents in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to say that it was important that pupils stay in smaller groups (81% vs. 73%) and physically distant where possible (74% vs. 68%).

Perceived strictness of COVID-19 safety measures

Parents and pupils were also asked what they thought about the strictness of their school's COVID-19 safety measures. As shown in Figure 7, over four-fifths of primary parents (85%), secondary parents (85%) and secondary pupils (82%) felt that the COVID-19 safety measures in schools were about right in terms of strictness. In each group, the proportion feeling the measures were too strict and not strict enough were relatively balanced. Secondary parents were slightly more likely than primary parents to say that measures in their child's school were not strict enough (6% vs. 4%).

Figure 7. Perceived strictness of their school’s COVID-19 safety measures



Source: PPP May Wave: L44B-P2W9 Do you think the current COVID-19 safety measures in [PUPILNAME]'s school are... Base: All parents except those that home school (n=3,073) All pupils except home schooled (n=1535)

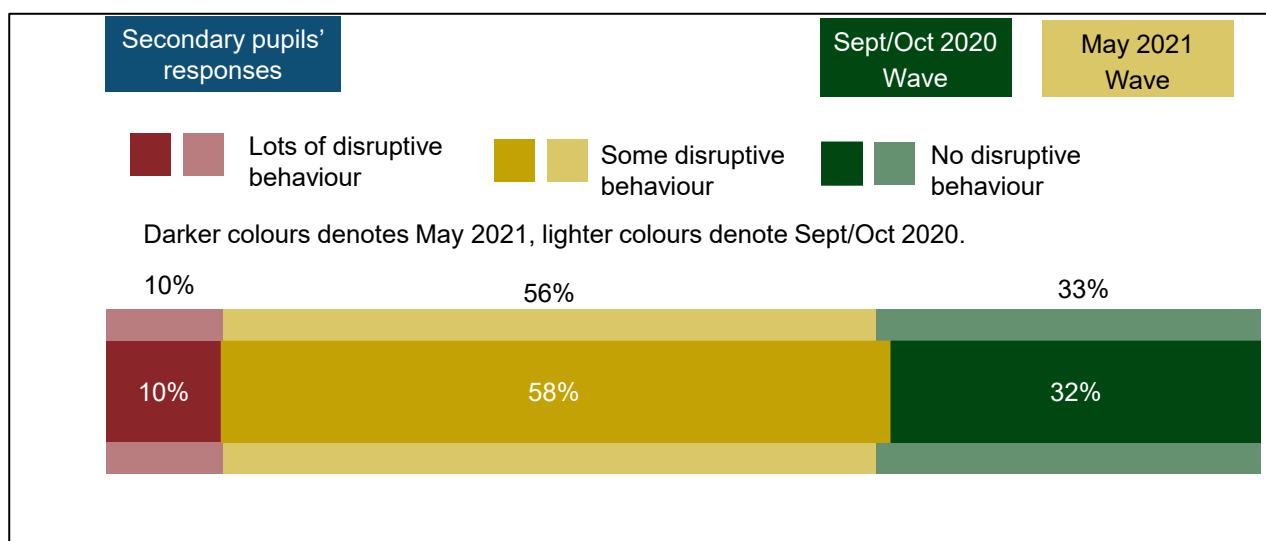
There were some groups of pupils and parents who were more likely to say that COVID-19 safety measures in school were not strict enough:

- Year 13 pupils compared to all other year groups (14% vs. 7% average).
- Parents of female pupils compared to parents of male pupils (6% vs. 4%).
- Pupils eligible for FSM compared to those who were not eligible (11% vs. 7%).
- Parents of BAME pupils compared to parents of White pupils (7% vs. 4%).

Behaviour on the most recent day pupils attended school or college

Pupils were asked about the level of disruptive behaviour from other students in class on the most recent day they were physically in school or college.¹⁴ As shown in Figure 8, results in May 2021 remained very similar to when the question was first asked in the September / October 2020 wave, with 68% of pupils reporting disruptive behaviour, including 10% who reported *lots of* disruptive behaviour.

Figure 8. Level of disruptive behaviour amongst other students in class



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave L47_P2W9. "Thinking about other students' behaviour in class, would you say there was..." All pupils excluding those who are permanently home-schooled (n=1,535)

Pupils in year 12 and 13 were much less likely to report any disruptive behaviour on the most recent day they attended (32% and 28% respectively) than those in years 7 to 11 (78%). Only 1% of year 12 and 2% of year 13 pupils reported 'lots of disruptive behaviour'. Variation could also be seen by region, with pupils in London the least likely to report any disruptive behaviour (61% vs. 68% overall).

Pupils were also asked how often the following behaviours occurred in classes attended on the most recent day they were in school or college:

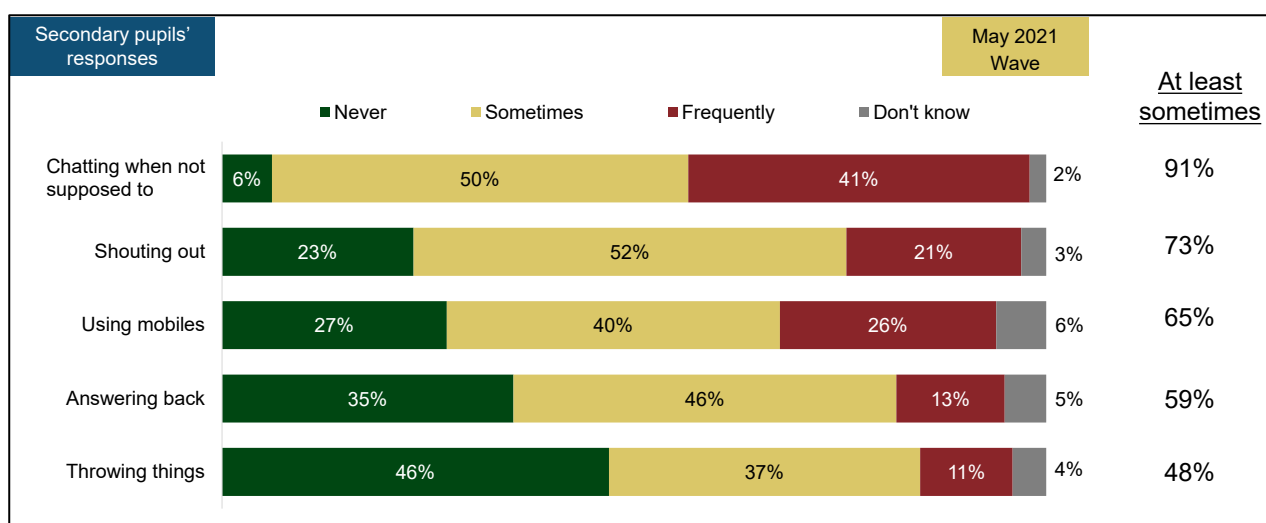
- Pupil(s) chatting when not supposed to.
- Pupil(s) shouting out.

¹⁴ Disruptive behaviour was defined as any behaviour that distracts teachers and other pupils from learning including low level disruption.

- Pupil(s) throwing things (non-aggressive).
- Pupil(s) answering back or challenging instructions.
- Pupil(s) using mobile devices when they are not supposed to.

As shown in Figure 9, out of these five behaviours, the most commonly experienced was pupils chatting when they are not supposed to, reported by 91% of pupils, with 41% reporting this happened frequently. Pupils throwing things was the least commonly experienced behaviour, but 48% still reported this happening at least sometimes.

Figure 9. How often disruptive behaviours occurred on the most recent day pupils attended school or college



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave L47A_P2W9. "How often, if at all, did the following occur?" All pupils excluding those who are permanently home-schooled (n=1,535)

Year 12 and 13 were much less likely than other year groups to report four of the five behaviours occurring *at least sometimes*:

- Pupils chatting when they are not supposed to (76% vs. 95% year 7 - 11).
- Pupils shouting out (40% vs. 82% year 7 – 11).
- Pupils throwing things (14% vs. 56% year 7 – 11).
- Pupils answering back or challenging instructions (28% vs. 67% year 7 – 11).

Extra-curricular activities

Research suggests that extra-curricular activities are important in developing social skills as well as providing a range of other positive outcomes (e.g., academic achievement, behaviour, and attendance at school). As such, schools are expected to offer a broad and balanced curriculum that extends beyond the academic, technical, or vocational qualifications.

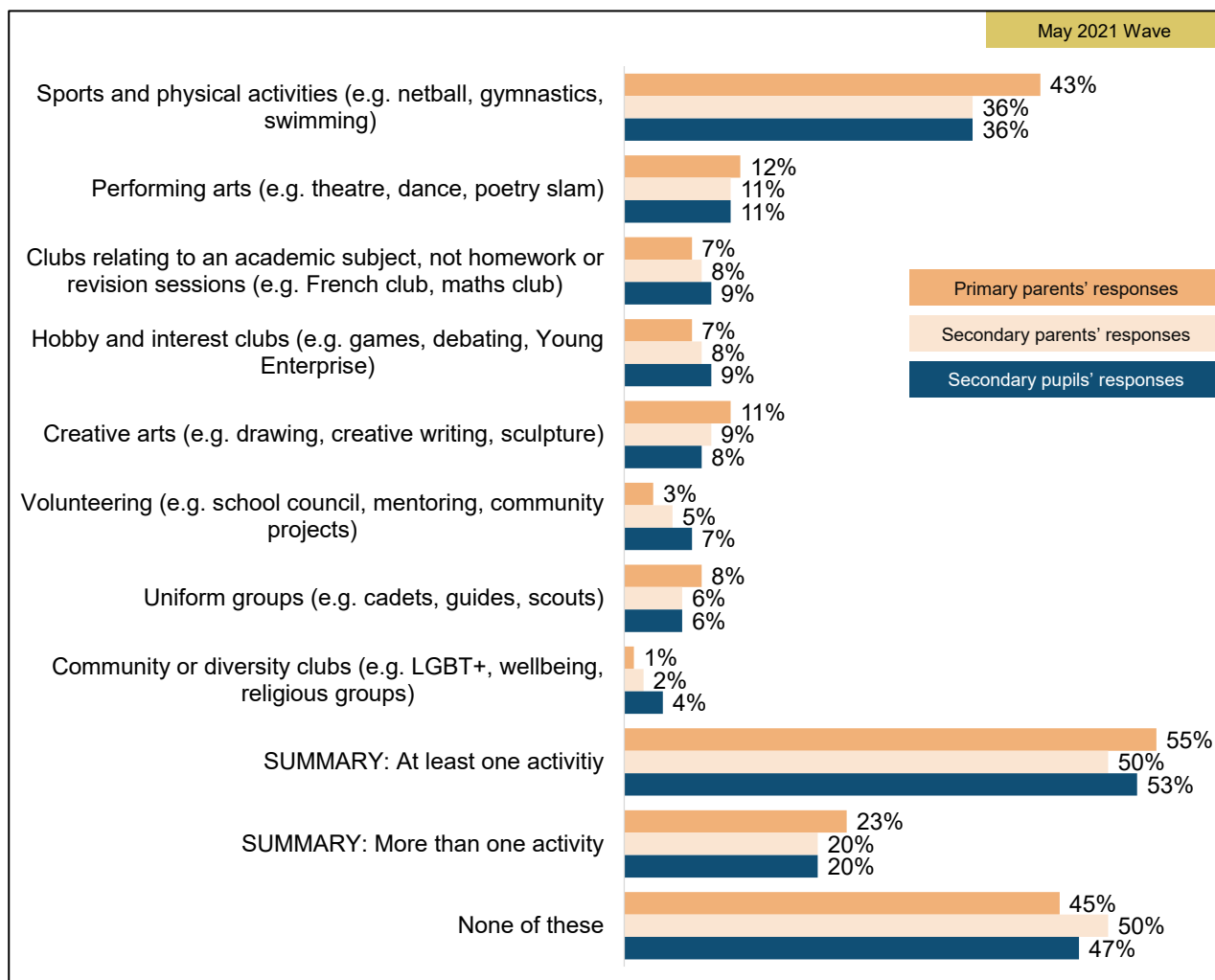
In May 2021 parents and pupils were asked about the extra-curricular activities they had participated in that term at school or college; the reasons why they had not participated in activities; and what they thought extra time in the school day should be used for.

Extra-curricular activities participated in this term

More than half (53%) of pupils reported participating in at least one extra-curricular activity this term and one-in-five (20%) reported participating in more than one. Primary parents were more likely than secondary parents to report that their child participated in at least one activity (55% vs. 50%) and more than one activity (23% vs 20%).

The most common extra-curricular activity secondary pupils reported taking part in this term were sports and physical activities (36%), followed by performing arts (11%) and clubs relating to an academic subject (9%). As shown in Figure 11, secondary parents' responses were broadly in line with pupils for the most common extra-curricular activities. Primary parents were more likely than secondary parents to report that their child had participated in sports or physical activities (43% vs. 36%), creative arts (11% vs. 9%) and uniform groups (8% vs. 6%).

Figure 10. Extra-curricular activities participated in this term at school or college



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, E1A: “Which of the following extra-curricular activities, if any, have you taken part in this term at school/college?” All pupils (excluding those permanently home schooled) / All parents (excluding those that home school) (n=1,535 / 3,073)

The following were all more likely than average to report not having participated in any extra-curricular activities this term:

- Older pupils (56% of year 11-13 vs. 42% of year 7-10).
- FSM-eligible pupils (53% vs. 46% of non-eligible FSM pupils).
- White pupils (49% vs. 41% of BAME pupils).
- Parents of pupils considered to have SEND (59% compared with 45% of parents of pupils not considered to have SEND). However, there was no significant difference among pupils considered to have SEND or not on this measure.
- Pupils that reported low life satisfaction (51% vs. 42% that reported high life satisfaction).

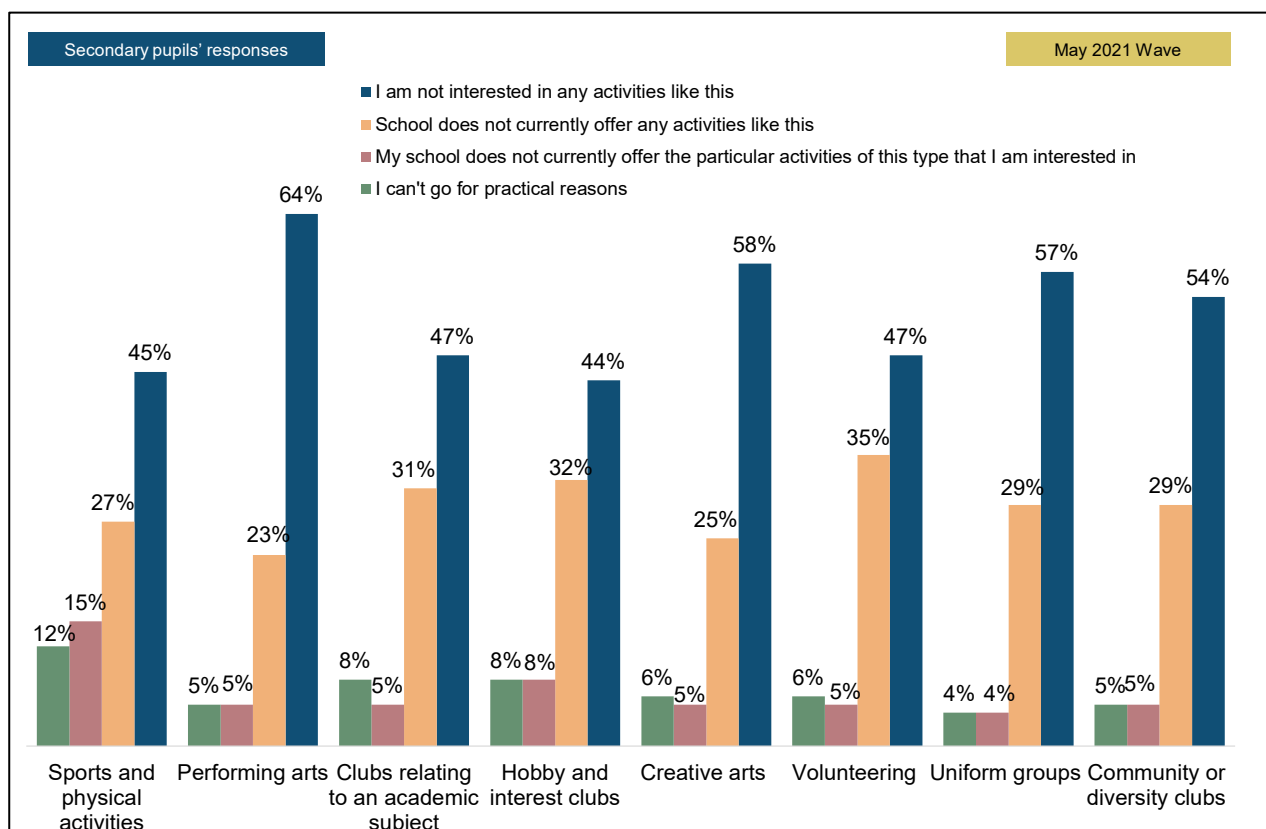
Other differences included:

- Younger pupils, in year 7-10, were more likely than older pupils in year 11-13 to have participated in: sports and physical activities (44% vs. 22%), performing arts (13% vs. 7%) and uniform groups (7% vs. 4%), reflecting the fact that they were more likely to have participated in any activity.
- Male pupils were more likely to have participated in sports and physical activities (41% vs. 30% of female pupils) but less likely to have participated in performing arts (7% vs. 15% of female pupils) or community or diversity groups (2% vs. 6% of female pupils). These differences were also reported among parents.
- BAME pupils were more likely to report having participated in sports and physical activities (44% vs. 33% of White pupils) and clubs relating to an academic subject (14% vs. 8% of White pupils). These differences were also reported among parents.
- Pupils considered to have SEND were more likely to have participated in creative arts (14% vs. 7% of those not considered to have SEND).

Why pupils did not participate in extra-curricular activities

For each activity type pupils did not participate in, respondents were asked why they had not participated. As shown in Figure 11, the most common reason given by pupils was not being interested in that activity, followed by it not being offered.

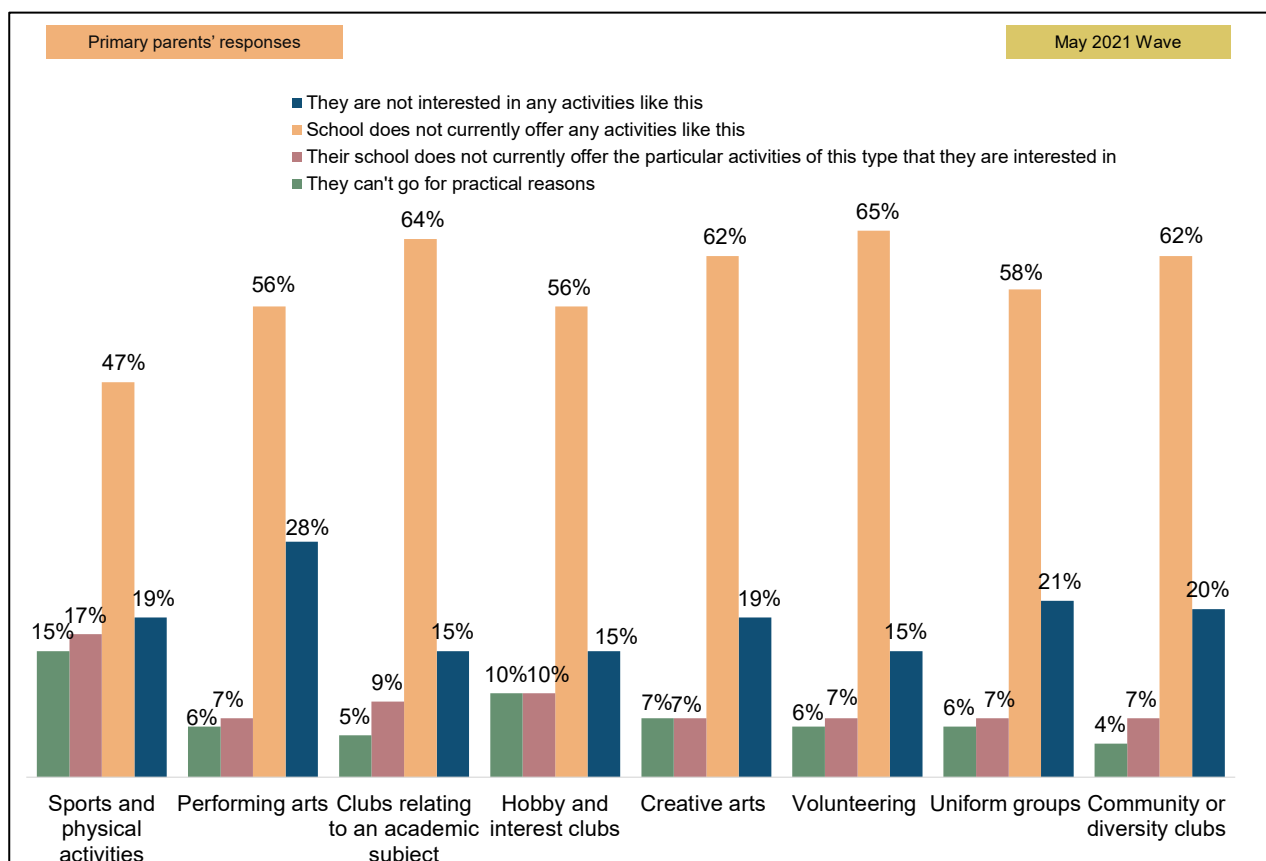
Figure 11. Pupil reasons for not taking part in extra-curricular activities at school or college this term



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, E7a What are the reason(s) that you haven't taken part in this type of extracurricular activity this term? All pupils who did not attend each extra-curricular activity this term (n=1,080-1,481) Note: responses ≤2% are not shown in this chart

Parents were most likely to report that their child did not take part in an activity because their school did not currently offer any activities of that kind. However, there was some divergence between parents of primary pupils and those of secondary pupils. As shown in Figure 12, below, the most common reason parents of primary pupils reported for not participating in an activity was that their child's school did not offer any activities like this. A majority of primary parents reported this as the main reason their child had not participated in seven out of the eight activities surveyed.

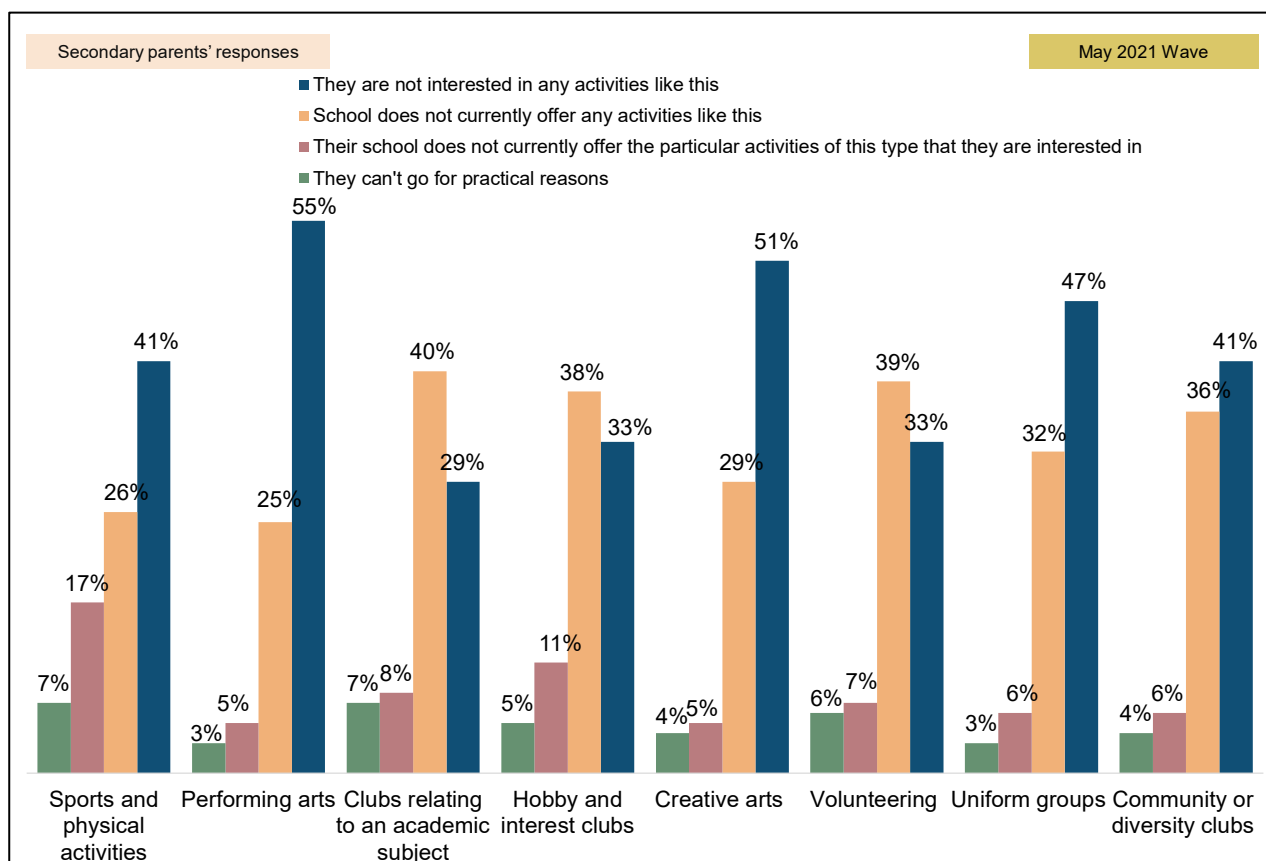
Figure 12. Parents of primary pupils' reasons for their child not taking part in extra-curricular activities this term



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, E7a What are the reason(s) that you haven't taken part in this type of extracurricular activity this term? Parents of primary pupils who did not attend each extracurricular activity this term (n= 902- 1,524) Note: responses ≤2% are not shown in this chart

As shown in Figure 13, below, parents of secondary pupils were less consistent in the most common reason reported for not participating in an activity. Parents of secondary pupils typically reported that the main reason their child did not participate in: sports and physical activities; creative arts; performing arts; uniform groups; and community or diversity groups, was because they were not interested. In contrast, for clubs relating to an academic subject, hobby and interest groups and volunteering parents of secondary pupils reported that the main reason their child didn't take part was because their child's school did not offer any activities like this.

Figure 13. Parents of secondary pupils' reasons for their child not taking part in extra-curricular activities this term



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, E7a What are the reason(s) that you haven't taken part in this type of extracurricular activity this term? Parents of secondary pupils who did not attend each extra-curricular activity this term (n= 1,030- 1,540) Note: responses ≤2% are not shown in this chart

The following subgroup differences of note were present:

- Older pupils, in year 11-13, were more likely than younger pupils in year 7-10 to:
 - Not participate in sport and physical activities because their school does not currently offer any activities like this (31% vs. 25%).
 - Not participate in creative arts because they are not interested (64% vs. 55%).
- Older pupils were less likely than younger pupils to:
 - Not participate in sport and physical activities because their school does not offer the particular activity they are interested in (12% vs. 18%).¹⁵

¹⁵ This refers to the specific activity rather than the broad activity type. For example, the school offers sports but not the particular sport (e.g. rugby) that the pupil is interested in.

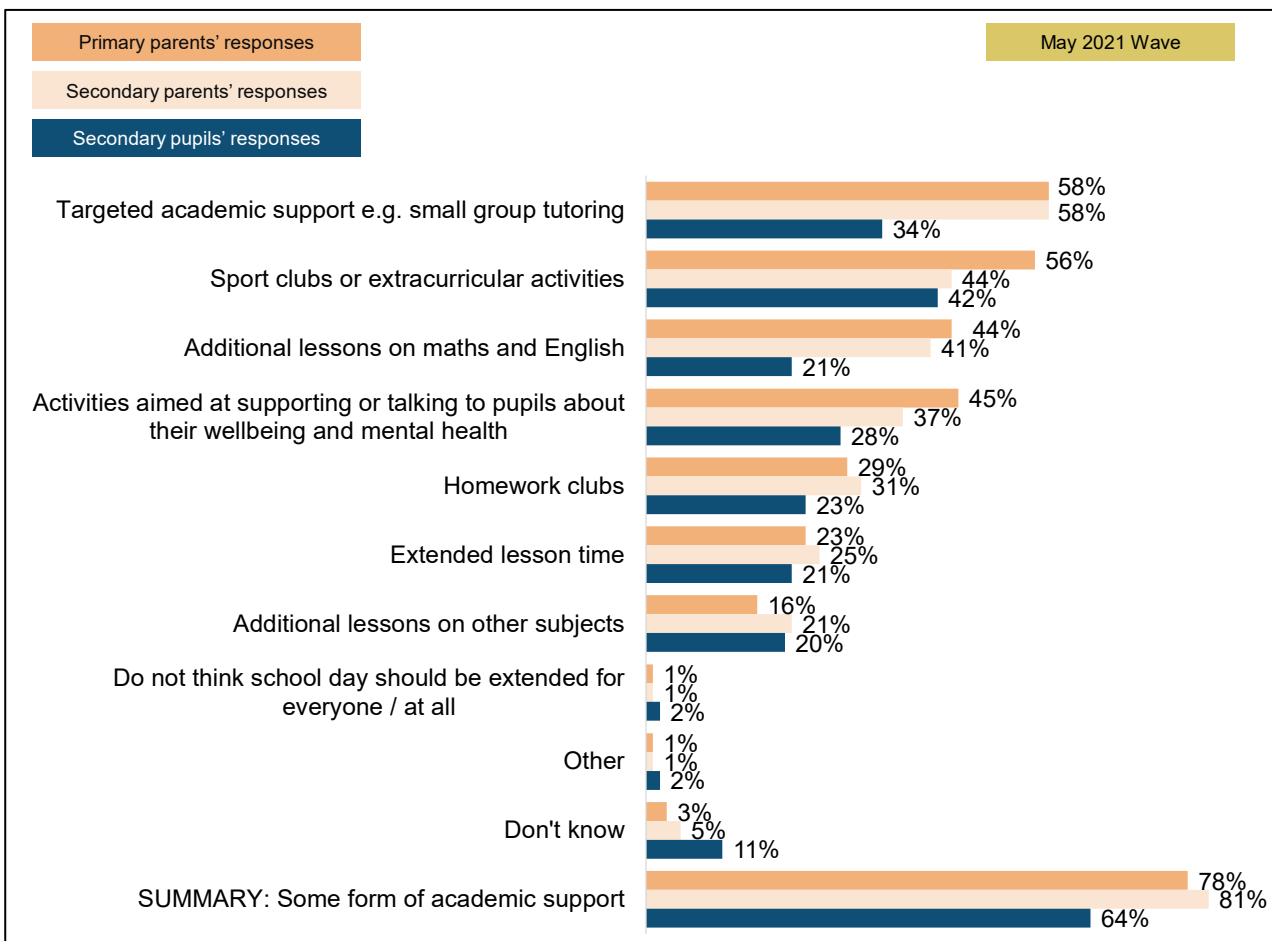
- Not participate in creative arts because their school does not offer any activities like this (20% vs. 27%).
- With the exception of sports and physical activities, male pupils were more likely than female pupils to have not participated in activities because they were not interested in activities of that kind.
- With the exception of sports and physical activities, FSM-eligible pupils were less likely than non-eligible FSM pupils to have not participated in activities because they were not interested in any activities of that kind.
- Parents of FSM-eligible pupils were less likely than non-FSM eligible pupils to report that their child had not participated in an activity because their school does not currently offer any activities of that kind.
- White pupils were more likely than BAME pupils to have not participated in each activity because they were not interested in any activities of that kind.
- BAME pupils were more likely than White pupils to report that they did not participate in sport and physical activities because their school does not currently offer any activities of this kind (34% vs. 25%).
- With the exception of performing arts, parents of pupils considered to have SEND were more likely than those not considered to have SEND to report that their child did not take part in activities because they were not interested in any activities of that kind.

Extra time in the school day

Parents and pupils were asked what they felt extra time in the school day should be used for.

As shown in Figure 14 below, parents most commonly felt that if time was added into the school day, it should be used for targeted academic support (58%). Pupils typically felt that the additional time would be best used for sports clubs or extra-curricular activities (42%).

Figure 14. What parents and pupils think extra time in the school day should be used for



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, X1: "Imagine extra time was added onto your school day. Which of the following do you think this time should be used for?" All parents of primary pupils except those that home school / all parents of secondary pupils except those that home school / all pupils except those that are home schooled (n=1,540 / 1,533 / 1,535)

Among both parents and pupils there was some difference by pupil age. Parents of primary pupils were more likely than those of secondary pupils to feel extra time should be used for sports clubs or extra-curricular activities (56% vs. 44%). Sports clubs or

extra-curricular activities were the most popular proposed use of time for pupils in year 7-10 (47% vs. 31% of pupils in year 11-13), while targeted academic support was most popular among pupils in year 11-13 (43% vs. 30% of pupils in year 7-10).

Male pupils were more likely to indicate a preference for the extra time being used for sports or extra-curricular activities (45% vs. 39% of female pupils) and were less likely to believe it should be used for some form of academic support (60% vs. 68% of female pupils).

FSM-eligible pupils were more likely than non-FSM eligible pupils to have selected additional lessons on maths and English (28% vs. 19%) but less likely to have selected targeted academic support e.g. small group tutoring (29% vs. 36%) or sports clubs or extra-curricular activities (31% vs. 44%).

Parents of FSM-eligible pupils were more likely than non-eligible FSM pupils to have selected activities aimed at supporting or talking to pupils about their wellbeing and mental health (47% vs. 40%). The same was true for parents of pupils considered to have SEND (49% vs. 40% of parents of pupils not considered to have SEND).

Parents of pupils considered to have SEND were also more likely than parents of pupils not considered to have SEND to have selected some form of academic support (83% vs. 73%), including: targeted academic support e.g. small group tutoring (64% vs. 57%); additional lessons on maths and English (49% vs. 42%); and homework clubs (35% vs. 29%).

BAME pupils were more likely than White pupils to have selected some form of academic support (71% vs. 62%), as were parents of BAME pupils (84% vs. 79% of parents of White pupils). Parents of White pupils were more likely to have selected sport clubs or extra-curricular activities (52% vs. 47% of parents of BAME pupils) and activities aimed at supporting or talking to pupils about their wellbeing and mental health (43% vs. 36% of BAME pupils).

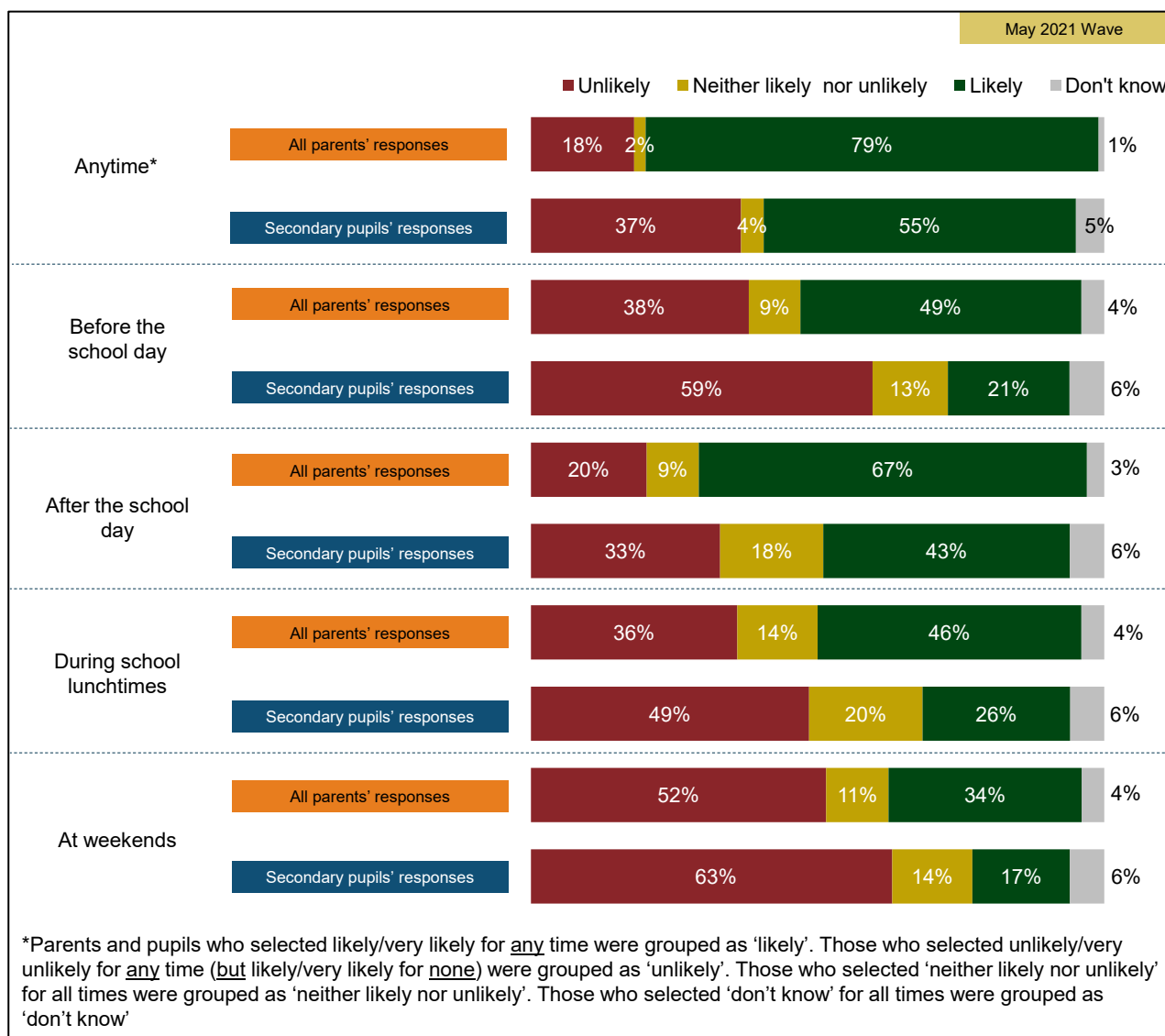
Tutoring engagement

Parents and pupils were asked about whether they would take up small group tuition at different points in the day were it available at no cost. Small group tuition is tutoring delivered at a maximum ratio of 1 tutor to 3 pupils and can be used to help pupils catch up on learning. It can be delivered both inside and outside of school hours.

Four-in-five (79%) parents reported that they would be likely to take up small group tuition were it available at no cost, at some point in the day, with parents of primary pupils more likely than those of secondary pupils (82% vs 75%). A majority of pupils (55%) said that they would be likely to take up small group tuition were it available at no cost, at some point in the day.

As shown in Figure 15, parents and pupils reported that they would be most likely to take up small group tuition *after* the school day (67% and 43% respectively), this was true of both primary and secondary parents (71% and 63% respectively). Among both parents and pupils likely uptake was lowest if they were at weekends (34% and 11% respectively), again, this was true of both primary and secondary parents (35% and 32%).

Figure 15. How likely parents and pupils would be to take up small group tuition if it was available at no cost



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, T7_1-4: "If small group tuition was available at no cost, how likely would you be to take this up if it was offered..." All parents except those that home school / all pupils except those that are home schooled (n=3,073 / 1,535)

The following subgroup differences emerged:

- Parents of primary pupils were more likely to take up small group tuition *before* the school day (54% vs. 43% of parents of secondary pupils) and *after* the school day (71% vs. 63% of parents of secondary pupils).
- Older pupils, in year 11-13, were more likely than younger pupils, in year 7-10, to report that they would take up small group tuition *after* the school day (47% vs. 40%) and *during* school lunchtimes (31% vs. 23%).
- Female pupils were more likely than male pupils to report that they would take up

tuition *after* the school day (49% vs. 37%) and at weekends (20% vs. 15%).

- FSM-eligible pupils were more likely than non-FSM eligible pupils to report that they would take up tuition *before* the school day (28% vs. 20%).
- BAME pupils were more likely than White pupils to have said they would take up tuition at each point in the week (before the school day, 27% vs. 19%; *after* the school day, 49% vs. 40%; *during* school lunchtimes, 32% vs. 24%; and at weekends, 29% vs. 13%). This difference was also present for parents.
- Parents of pupils considered to have SEND were more likely than those of pupils not considered to have SEND to report that they would take up tuition *after* the school day (71% vs. 67%).

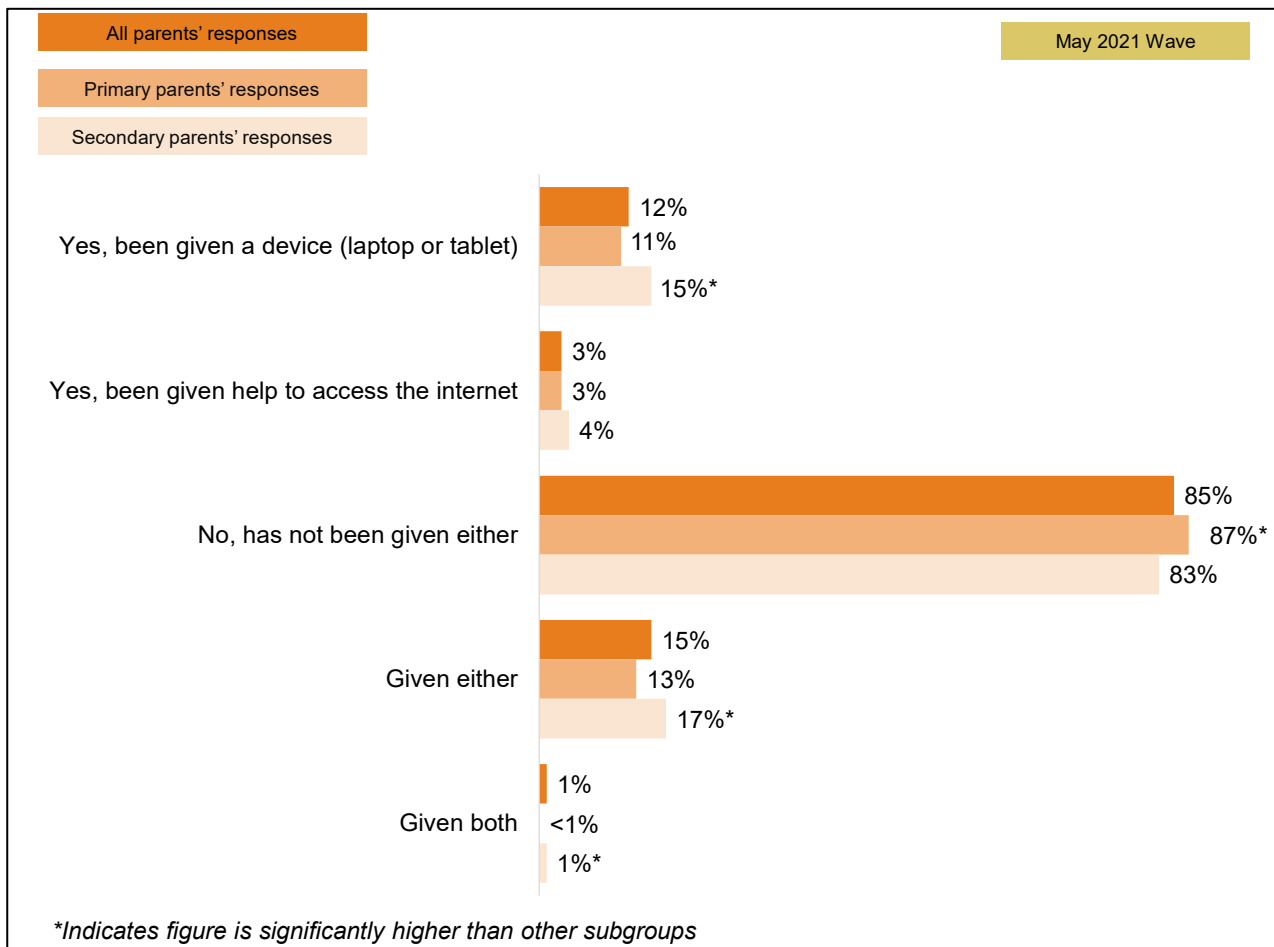
Access to technology for home learning

Since March 2020 schools, local authorities and academy trusts have been trying to help pupils learn from home or access social care remotely by providing them with computers (such as laptops or tablets) or tools to access the internet (such as 4G wireless routers, mobile network data uplifts or Wi-Fi codes). These efforts have been supported by the Department's Get Help with Technology programme, which has distributed over 1.3 million laptops and tablets to schools, trusts, local authorities and further education providers for disadvantaged children and young people as part of a £400 million investment to support access to remote education and online social care services. The Department has also provided support for over 100,000 families to get online through uplifts in mobile data and 4G wireless routers.

Across the PPP, parents have been asked about whether or not their child has been given a computer, laptop or tool to access the internet at home. In earlier PPP waves, this question was asked to parents who had not indicated that they had been given a laptop, tablet, 4G wireless router or an increase in mobile data in previous waves. However, in May 2021 this question was asked to all parents completing this wave, along with follow up questions on whether laptop/tablets had been returned and how frequently pupils had used them in the most recent period of school closures.

As shown in Figure 16, below, around one-in-seven (15%) parents reported that their child had been given either a laptop/tablet (12%) or help to access to the internet (3%) since March 2020. Parents of secondary pupils were more likely than those of primary pupils to have been given either (17% vs. 13%).

Figure 16. Whether pupils have been given a laptop/tablet or tool to access the internet at home



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, C15 “Has your child been given a device or tool to access the internet at home?” All parents / parents of primary pupils / parents of secondary pupils (n=3,084 / 1,544 / 1,540)

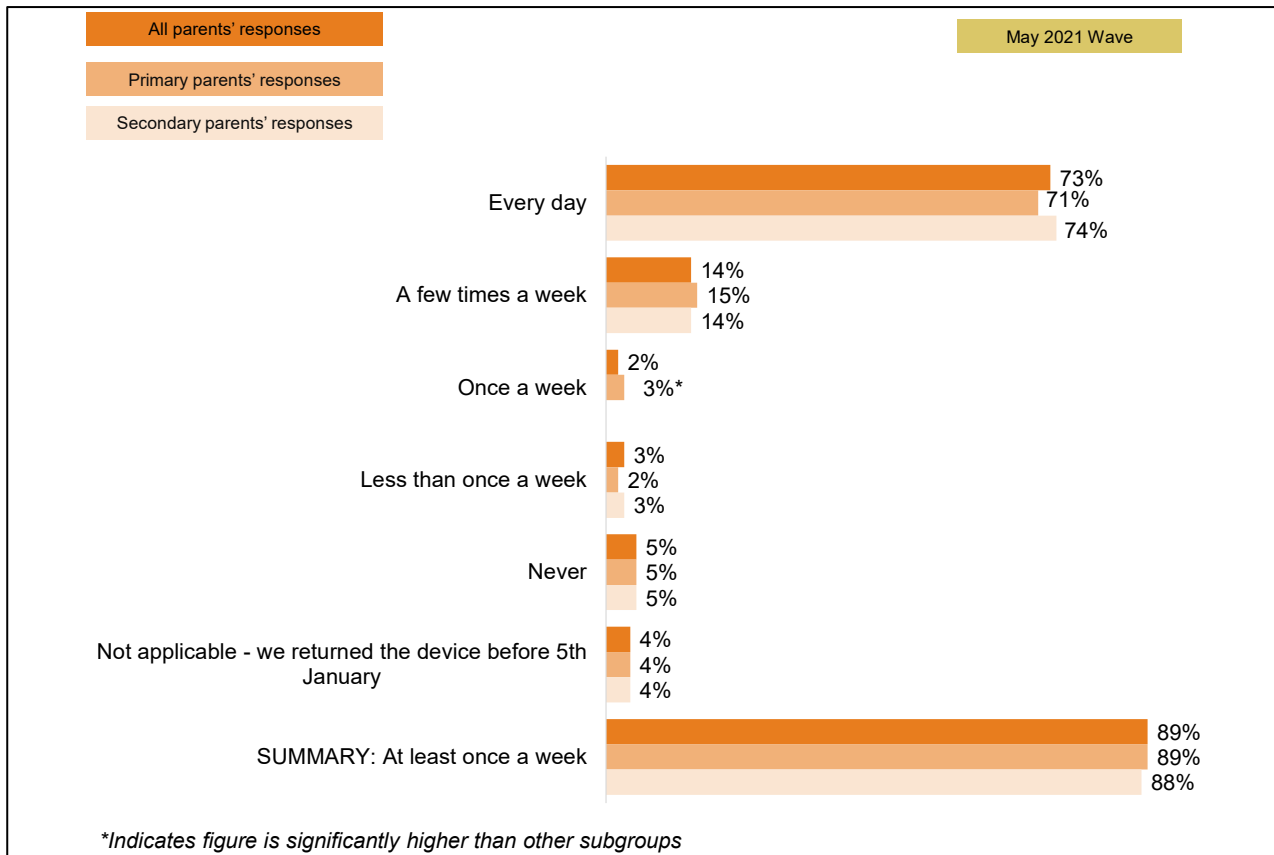
The following groups of parents were more likely to report their child had been given a laptop/tablet:

- Parents of FSM-eligible pupils (28% vs. 9% of parents of non-FSM eligible pupils).
- Parents of pupils considered to have SEND (16% vs. 12% of parents of pupils considered not to have SEND).
- Parents of BAME pupils (17% vs. 11% of parents of White pupils).

Just under half (48%) of parents who had been given a laptop/tablet had returned it. Of the 46% who had not returned it, around seven-in-ten (69%) expected to do so.

As shown in Figure 17, below, parents who had been given a laptop/tablet most commonly said their child used it every day during the most recent period of school closures and nine-in-ten that they used it at least once a week (89%).

Figure 17. How often pupils used the device they had been given during the most recent period of school closures, as reported by parents



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, C24 “During the most recent period of school closures how often on average did [PUPILNAME] use the device they had been given?” All parents who have been given a device (n=327)

Parents of FSM-eligible pupils were less likely than those of non-FSM eligible pupils to report that their child had used their laptop/tablet everyday (65% vs. 78%).

Remote education

Since 8th March, school attendance has been mandatory for all pupils of compulsory school age. However, schools affected by the remote education temporary continuity direction are still required to provide remote education for pupils where their attendance would be contrary to government guidance or legislation around coronavirus (COVID-19). This includes, for example, where such guidance means that a class, group, or small number of pupils need to self-isolate. Where it is needed, schools are expected to offer pupils 3-5 hours of remote education. This includes either recorded or live direct teaching alongside time for pupils to work independently to complete assignments that have been set.

To support schools in delivering remote education a comprehensive package of support continues to be available via the Get Help with Remote Education on gov.uk. DfE have also published information for parents and carers on remote education and how they can best support their child while learning from home where this is needed.

Throughout PPP, parents and pupils have been frequently asked about their experiences of remote education.

Amongst the parents surveyed whose child had been unable to attend school for COVID-19 related reasons, 70% had been offered some form of remote learning.¹⁶ A further 4% did not know whether remote learning had been offered¹⁷. Parents of pupils not attending every weekday in May 2021 due to COVID-19 related reasons were less likely than those in February to report that their child had undergone any kind of personal study¹⁸ (65% vs. 89%) or remote lessons¹⁹ (30% vs. 51%).

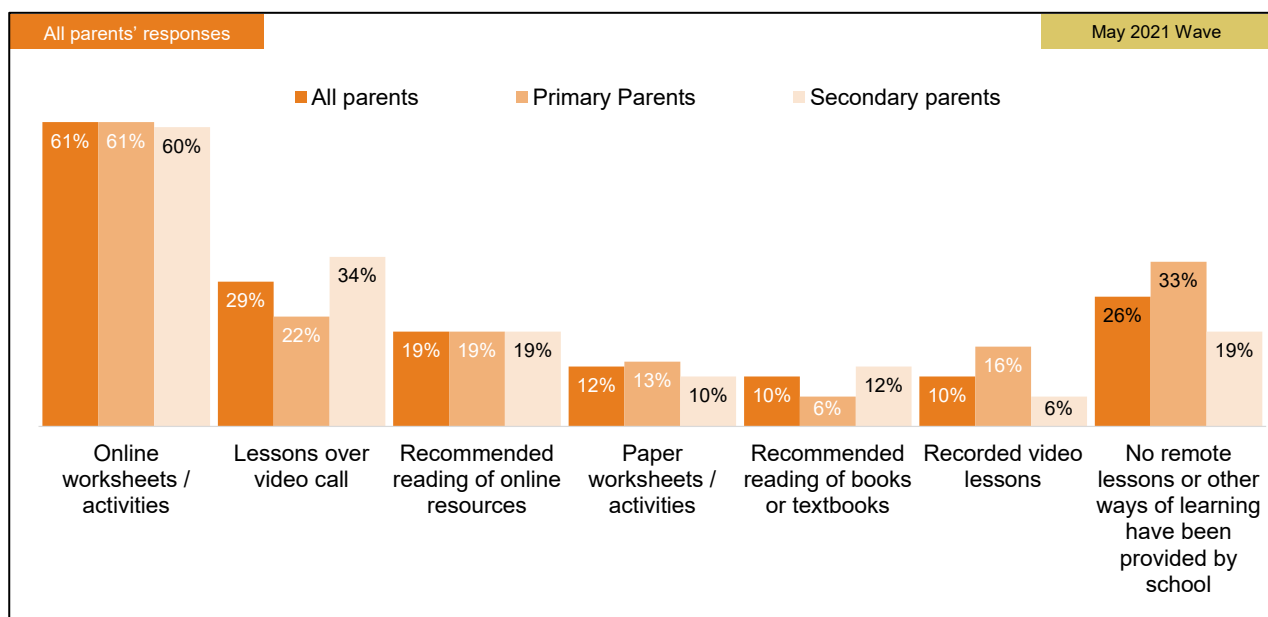
¹⁶ COVID-19 related reasons include those not attending because '[PUPILNAME] was self-isolating due to symptoms or possible contact with COVID-19', '[PUPILNAME]'s school was closed for [pupil name] / closed to certain groups (e.g. bubbles)' or '[PUPILNAME] has had a positive COVID-19 test'.

¹⁷ Please note small base size (67 parents), results should be interpreted with caution.

¹⁸ Personal study includes: online worksheets / activities; paper worksheets / activities; recommended reading of books or textbooks; and recommended reading of online resources

¹⁹ Remote lessons include: lessons over video call and recorded video lessons

Figure 18. Remote learning offered to pupils when not physically attending school in the last two weeks



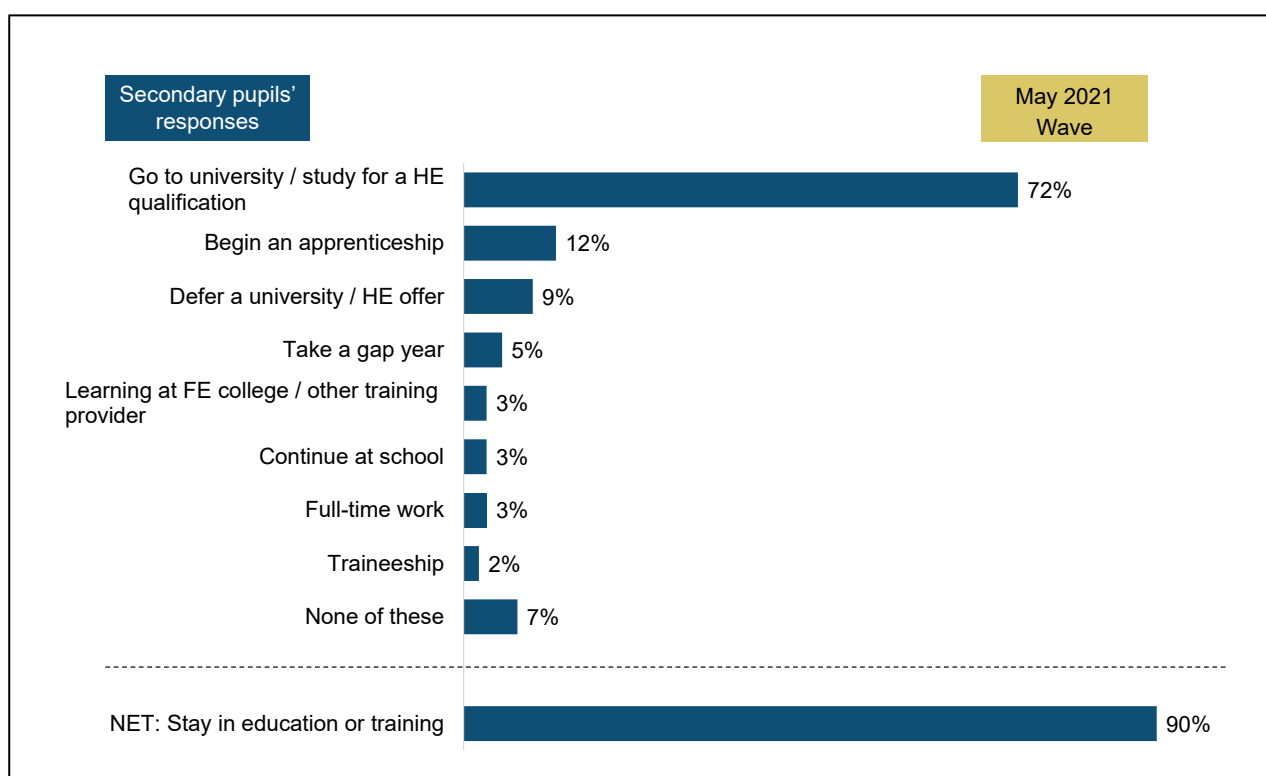
Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9, L34B: “Thinking about the last two weeks, what type of remote lessons or other ways of learning has [PUPILNAME]’s school offered when [PUPILNAME] is not physically attending school?” All parents who child did not attend school every weekday in the last two weeks for a reason directly related to COVID-19 (n=67)

As show in Figure 18, above, the most common remote learning offered was online worksheets, lessons over video call and recommended reading of online resources, which was consistent with the February 2021, December 2020, late November 2020 and late October 2020 waves..

Future plans

Current year 13 pupils were asked a number of questions about their plans for the next academic year, starting with what they planned to do in September 2021. As shown in Figure 19, the majority of year 13 pupils (72%) intended to start university and overall, 90% intended to stay in some form of education or training.

Figure 19. Plans for September 2021



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave G1_P2W9/G8_P2W9. "Are you planning on doing any of the following next year?"/ "What are your plans for next year?" All year 13 pupils (n=282)

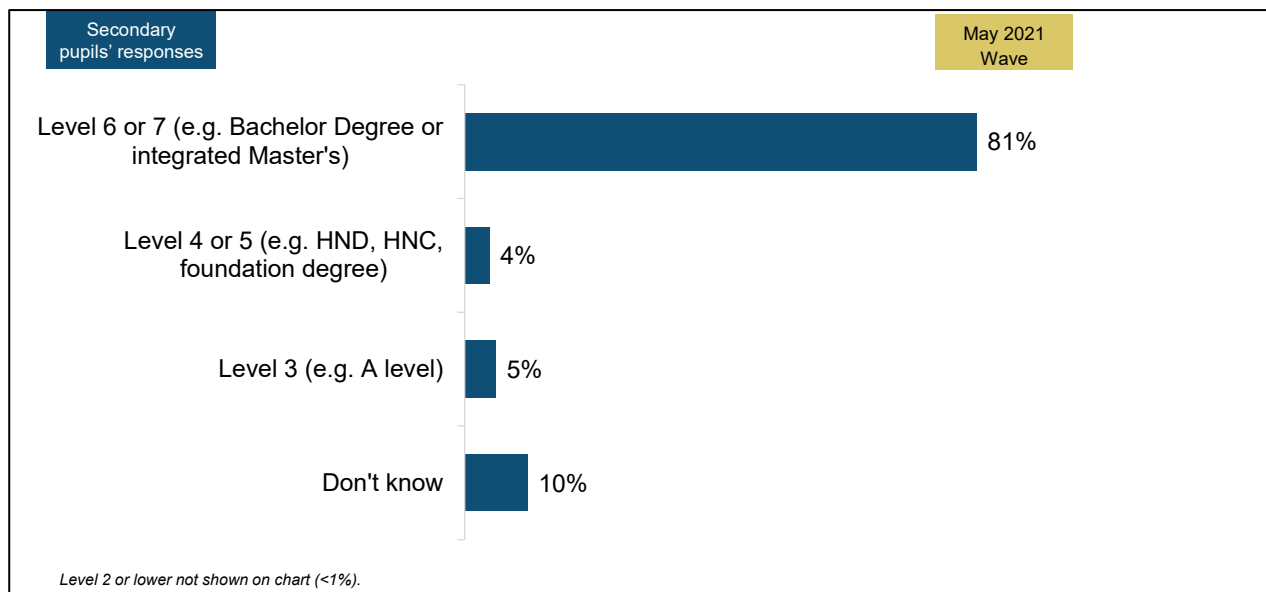
Results are very similar to when the question was previously asked in August 2020 (to year 13 pupils in the academic year 2019/20): around three-quarters intending to go to university in September (72% compared to 73% in August 2020). There was a slight increase in the proportion intending to begin an apprenticeship (12% in May 2021 compared with 8% in August 2020).

In line with findings from August 2020, results from the May survey showed female pupils were more likely than male pupils to be planning to go to university or study for a higher education qualification in September (77% vs. 64%). Also in line with August 2020 findings, BAME pupils remained more likely than White pupils to be planning to go to university or study for a Higher Education qualification (85% vs. 66%).

Plans for further education

The 90% of year 13 pupils who planned to stay in any form of education in September 2021 were asked the highest qualification level they planned to study towards. As shown in Figure 20, the majority (81%) planned to study towards a level 6 or 7 qualification.

Figure 20. The highest level of education pupils plan to study towards



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave G14b_P2W9. "What is the highest qualification level you plan to study towards?" All year 13 pupils staying in education next year (n=253)

BAME pupils were more likely than White pupils to plan to study at level 7 (48% vs. 29%) as were pupils from urban areas compared with rural (39% vs. 21%).

University applications

Pupils who planned to go to university (either in September 2021 or deferred to 2022) were asked a number of additional questions about their application and intentions for university study. Almost all (97%) pupils who planned to go to university applied through UCAS. Most intended to study for a bachelor degree, such as a BA or BSc (90%).²⁰ A further 3% had applied to study a Foundation Degree.

The majority (97%) planned to study full-time, with 1% indicating they would study part time and 2% currently unsure.

Those who planned to go to university in September 2021 were asked if they planned to live at or away from home during university term time. Almost three-quarters (74%)

²⁰ Level 7 qualifications such as Msc, MA, MEng or PGCE were not listed as an option in this question.

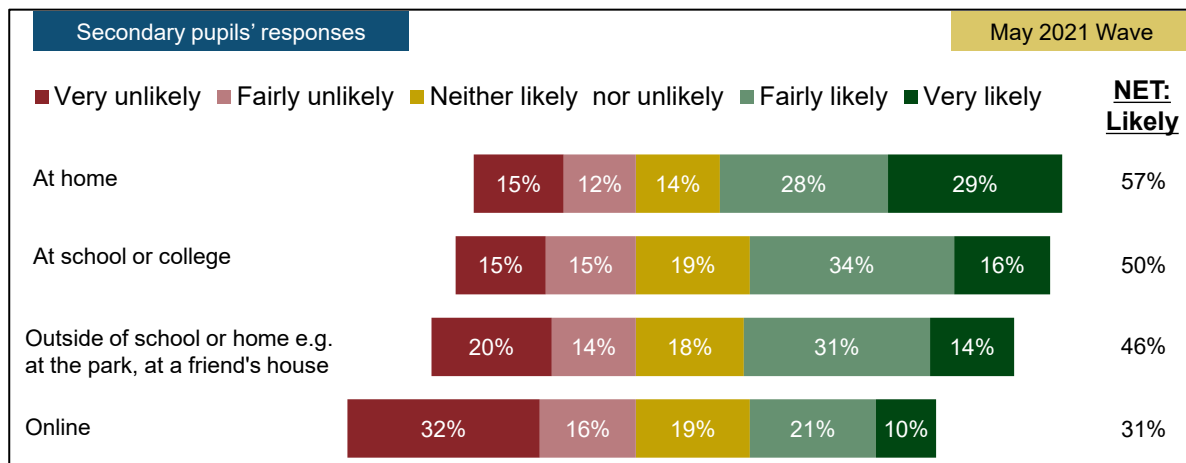
intended to live away from home, with this more common amongst pupils from rural areas compared with those in urban areas (89% vs. 71%). Overall, 21% intended to stay at home, and 4% were currently unsure.

Safeguarding

There has been concern throughout the pandemic that the disruption of usual school networks and national restrictions may have resulted in greater risk of harms for some children and young people. These harms include domestic violence, abuse and neglect, harms perpetrated online and risk of criminal exploitation. It is important to understand how likely it is that a pupil would disclose feeling unsafe to a member of staff at their school or college, in order to understand how schools can be made aware of risk and harm to children and young people. In May 2021, pupils were asked to imagine something had happened between them and someone else that made them feel unsafe. They were then asked how likely or unlikely it would be that they would talk to a member of staff at their school about it, if it happened at home, at school or college, outside of school or home, or online.

As shown in Figure 21, more pupils said they were likely to talk to a member of staff if an incident had made them feel unsafe had occurred at home (57%), and fewest if it had taken place online (31%). A fifth of pupils (20%) said they would be very unlikely to talk to a member of staff if an incident had happened outside (e.g. at the park, a friend's house), and a third (32%) if it had happened online.

Figure 21. Likelihood of pupils talking to a member of staff about an incident which made them feel unsafe, depending on where it had occurred



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave AG1_P2W9. "Imagine something happened between you and someone else which made you feel unsafe. How likely or unlikely is it that you would talk to a member of staff at your school about it, if it happened" All (excluding permanently home-schooled pupils) (n=1535). Prefer not to say (At school or college 1%, At home 2%, Outside of school 2%, Online 2%).

Younger pupils (years 7-10) more frequently reported that they were likely to talk to a member of staff at school if they had been made to feel unsafe, compared to older pupils (11-13), in the following contexts:

- At home (62% vs. 47%).
- At school or college (53% vs. 44%).
- Online (33% vs. 27%).

Pupils with higher scores for worthwhileness (7-10), life satisfaction (7-10) and happiness (7-10) were more likely to report that they would have speak to a member of staff if it happened in each of the four locations. Pupils with lower anxiety scores (0-3) were also more likely to say this.

Other differences across different groups of pupils included:

- Male pupils were more likely than female pupils to report that they would talk to a member of staff if an incident had made them feel unsafe online (34% vs. 28%) or at home (62% vs. 51%).
- A third of White pupils (33%) were likely to talk to a member of staff if they had been made to feel unsafe online, compared to a quarter of BAME pupils (25%).
- Pupils with SEND were more likely than non-SEND pupils to be likely to report an incident to a member of staff if it had occurred at school/college (57% vs. 49%) or at home (69% vs. 55%).
- Pupils living in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to report an incident to a member of staff if it had occurred at home (59% vs. 47%), as well as outside the school or home (47% vs. 38%).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Pupil mental health and wellbeing is an ongoing priority for the DfE. The pandemic and associated lockdown measures are affecting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing in a variety of ways. Being in school is thought to be beneficial for children and young people, while being away from school will likely have had some negative impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

At each wave of the PPP, parents and pupils were asked a series of ONS-validated questions about personal wellbeing, including how happy they felt yesterday, their life satisfaction, the extent to which they feel the things they do in life were worthwhile, and their anxiousness levels. DfE is tracking these questions over time to understand how young people and their families are coping with the pandemic.

The questions in this series are asked in a similar way, using a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'. The questions ask pupils 'overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?', 'overall, how satisfied are you with your life?', 'overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?' and 'overall how anxious did you feel yesterday?'. Parents are asked the same questions in relation to their child for both happiness and anxiousness.

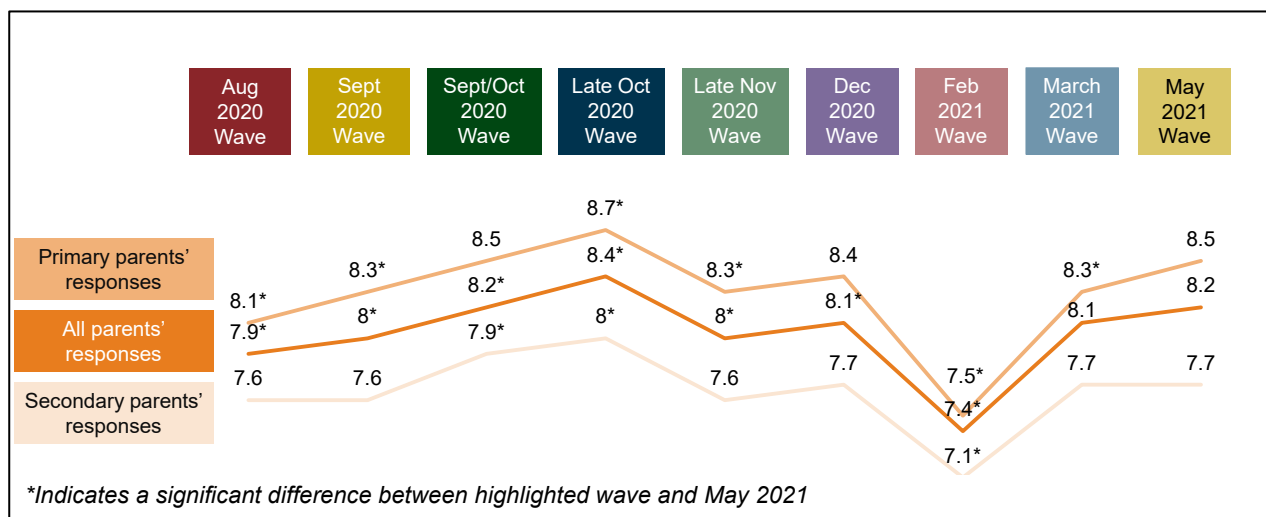
It is important to note that for the first three measures, a high score of 7-10 is a positive score as it suggests high levels of happiness, life satisfaction and worthwhileness, whereas for the anxiousness measure a low score of 0-3 is a positive score as it represents low levels of anxiousness and a high score (6-10) is a negative score for those who were considered anxious.

Pupil wellbeing

Parents' views on pupil happiness

In February 2021, there was a sharp decrease in the happiness levels of pupils, as reported by their parents, compared to previous waves. This was during the time of the third UK lockdown, and when schools were not open to the majority of pupils. As shown in Figure 22, parents reported improved happiness scores in March 2021 and these have improved further still in May 2021. Although mean scores are slightly different between primary and secondary parents, this trend has been the same throughout the period shown.

Figure 22. Parents' views on pupil's happiness (mean scores)



Source: PPP waves between August 2020 and May 2021, O1: “Overall, how happy did Pupil appear yesterday, where 0 is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'?” All parents (n=7,191 / n=4,005 / n=3,491 / n=3,542 / n=3,388 / n=3,237 / n=3,082 / n=3,084 n=3,084), primary parents (n=4,203 / n=1,987 / n=1,712 / n=1,771 / n=1,697 / n=1,618 / n=1,541 / n=1,537 / n=1,544), secondary parents (n=2,988 / n=2,018 / n=1,779 / n=1,771 / n=1,691 / n=1,619 / n=1,541 / n=1,541 n=1,540).

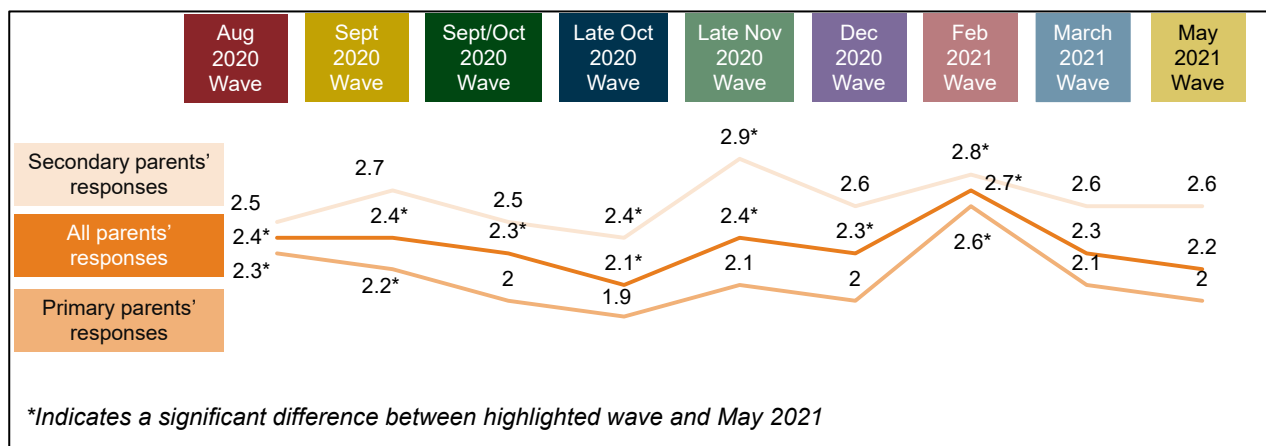
Consistent with earlier waves, lower happiness scores for their children were reported by the following parents:

- Secondary parents than primary parents (7.7 vs. 8.5).
- Parents whose child is eligible for FSM versus those whose child is not eligible (7.7 vs. 8.3).
- Parents whose child has SEND versus those whose child had no SEND (7.2 vs. 8.3).
- Parents of pupils who physically attended school most or some days in the past two weeks compared to those who attended every day (7.1 and 6.7 vs. 8.3).

Parents' views on pupil anxiousness

As with happiness scores, parents gave more positive scores for anxiousness in March and May 2021 compared to February, as shown in Figure 23.

Figure 23. Parents' views on pupil's anxiousness (mean scores)



Source: PPP waves between August 2020 and May 2021, O2: "On a scale where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did Pupil appear yesterday?" All parents (n=7,191 / n=4,005 / n=3,491 / n=3,542 / n=3,388 / n=3,237 / n=3,082 / n=3,084 / n=3,084), primary parents (n=4,203 / n=1,987 / n=1,712 / n=1,771 / n=1,697 / n=1,618 / n=1,541 / n=1,537 / n=1,544), secondary parents (n=2,988 / n=2,018 / n=1,779 / n=1,771 / n=1,691 / n=1,619 / n=1,541 / n=1,541 / n=1,540).

Broadly consistent with the findings in previous survey waves, higher mean scores of anxiousness for their children were more likely amongst the following parent groups:

- Parents of secondary pupils compared to primary pupils (2.6 vs. 2.0).
- Parents whose child is eligible for FSM (2.6 vs. 2.0 where the child is not eligible)
- Parents whose child has got SEND compared to those who do not (3.6 vs. 2.0).
- Parents of pupils who have physically attended school most or some days in the past two weeks compared to those who have attended every day (3.2 and 3.1 vs. 2.1).

Pupils' views on their own wellbeing

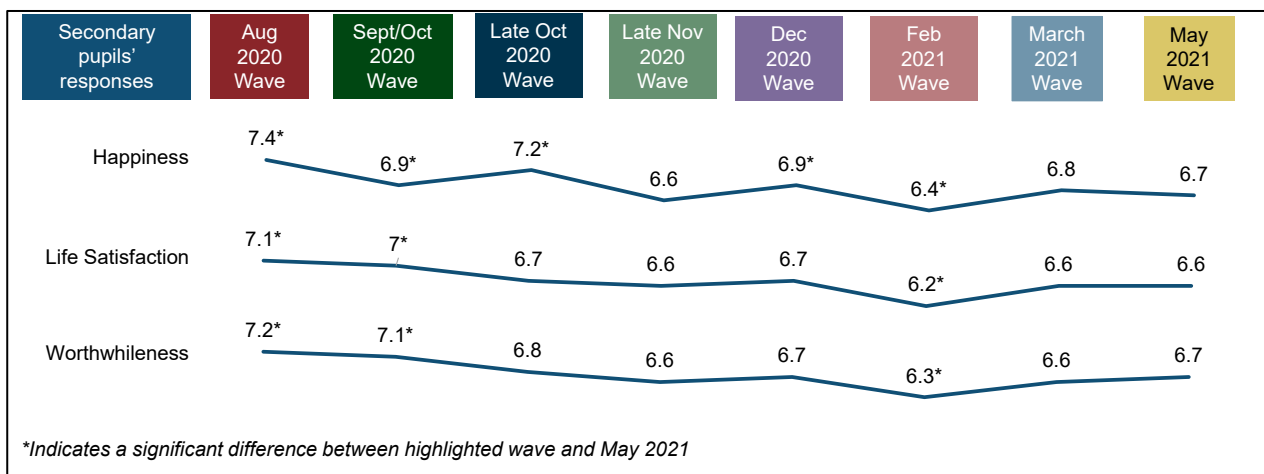
Secondary pupils were asked about their own levels of happiness, life satisfaction, the extent to which they feel the things they do in life were worthwhile, and their feelings of anxiousness.

Pupils' views on their own happiness, life satisfaction and worthwhileness

As shown in Figure 24, wellbeing mean scores have remained stable between March and May 2021, following an increase across all three measures between February and

March. Mean scores for happiness, life satisfaction and worthwhileness continue to be lower compared to summer 2020 and the start of the academic year 2020/21.

Figure 24. Pupils’ views of their own happiness, life satisfaction and worthwhileness (mean scores)



Source: PPP waves between August 2020 and May 2021, B5: “Rating of each measure on scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is “not at all” and 10 is “completely”” Secondary pupils (n=5,327 / n=1,780 / n=1,661 / n=1,612 / n=1,555 / n=1,537 / n=1,531 / n=1,537).

Consistent with previous waves, older pupils (years 11-13) were significantly less likely to be doing well compared to younger pupils (years 7-10) across all three measures:

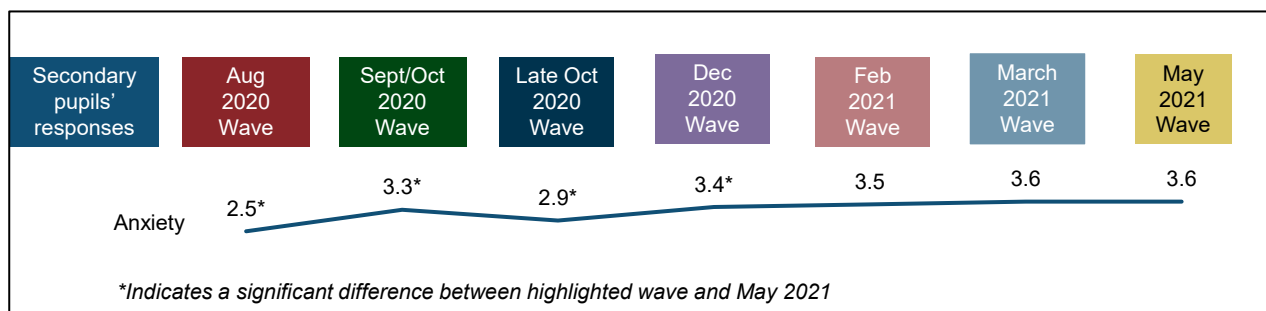
- Happiness: 7.1 for years 7-10 pupils vs. 6.1 for years 11-13 pupils
- Life satisfaction: 7.1 for years 7-10 pupils vs. 5.8 for years 11-13 pupils
- Worthwhileness: 7.1 for years 7-10 pupils vs. 5.9 for years 11-13 pupils

Since August 2020, female pupils have continued to report poorer wellbeing scores than their male counterparts for all three of these measures. In March 2021, female pupils had significantly lower mean scores for happiness (6.1 vs. 7.3), life satisfaction (6.0 vs. 7.2), and worthwhileness (6.1 vs. 7.2) compared to their male counterparts.

Pupils’ views on their own anxiousness

As with pupils’ reported happiness, life satisfaction and worthwhileness scores, anxiousness scores have also remained stable between March and May 2021, although continue to be higher than pre-Christmas levels, as shown in Figure 25.

Figure 25. Pupils' views of their own anxiousness (mean scores)



Source: PPP waves between August 2020 and May 2021, B6: "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday, where 0 is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely'" Secondary pupils (n=5,327 / n=1,780 / n=1,661 / n=1,555 / n=1,537 / n=1,531 / n=1,537).

Anxiousness scores were higher amongst the following pupils (patterns also seen across previous waves):

- Older pupils (years 11-13) compared to younger pupils (years 7-10) (4.6 vs. 3.1).
- Female pupils compared to male pupils (4.4. vs. 2.8).
- Pupils with SEND compared to pupils without SEND (4.0 vs. 3.5).

Pupils' reasons for feeling anxious

The 29% of secondary pupils who gave a high anxiousness score (6-10) were asked a follow up question asking what in the last two weeks has made them feel anxious.²¹

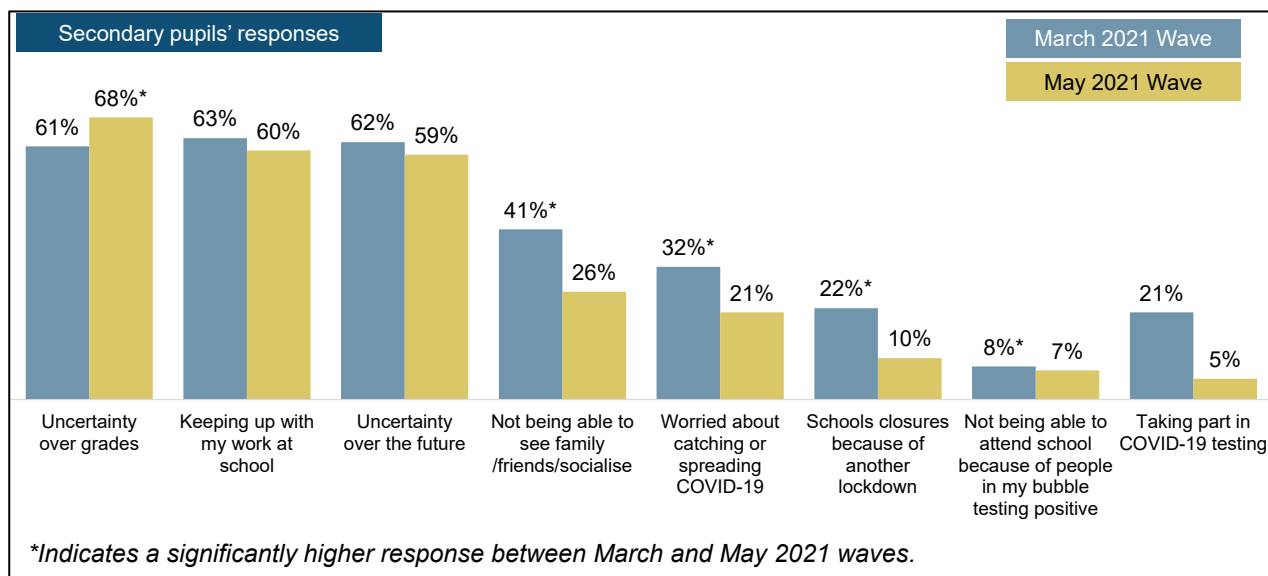
As shown in Figure 26, uncertainty over grades was the most common reason for pupils feeling anxious (68%). This was higher than in March (61%) and is now higher than keeping up with schoolwork (60%) and uncertainty over the future (59%).

Not being able to see family or friends continued to be less common as a reason for pupil anxiety than in previous waves. Only a quarter (26%) selected not being able to socialise compared to 41% in March. This is most likely a reflection of social distancing measures continuing to ease over this period and schools continuing to be open to the majority of pupils. Similarly, fewer pupils reported being anxious as a result of potential school closures due another lockdown (10% compared to 22% in March).

A fifth of pupils (21%) were worried about catching or spreading COVID-19, down from three-in-ten pupils in March (32%). In addition, only 5% of pupils said they were anxious because of taking part in COVID-19 testing compared to a fifth in March 2021 (21%).

²¹ The reported two weeks that pupils will have been thinking about would fall between 28th April - 17th May.

Figure 26. Reasons why pupils with high anxiousness were feeling anxious



Source: PPP March 2021 and May 2021 waves, B24C: “Thinking about the last two weeks, what do you think has made you anxious?” Secondary pupils who said they had high feelings of anxiousness (n=517 / n=550). Answer options <5% not shown.²²

In May those in years 11-13 were much more likely than younger secondary pupils to report being anxious because of uncertainty over grades (76% vs. 60% respectively) and uncertainty about the future (69% vs. 49%). This was similar to the pattern seen in March 2021. Unlike in March, older and younger pupils were just as likely to report keeping up with their school work as a cause for their anxiousness (having been more common amongst older pupils) (59% for year 7-10 pupils vs. 61% for year 11-13 pupils).

Loneliness

Loneliness is a key risk factor for poor mental health in children and young people, as well as adults. Social distancing measures and school closures for most pupils throughout the past year will likely have affected parents’ and pupils alike.

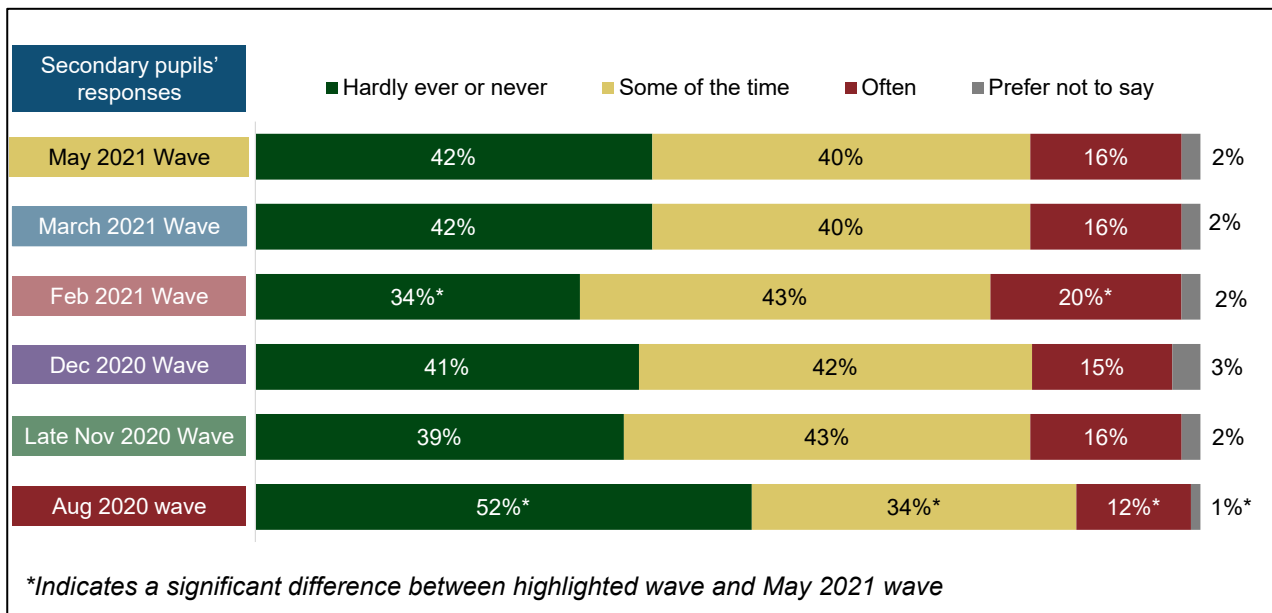
Pupils’ loneliness

In May 2021, 42% of secondary pupils reported hardly ever or never feeling lonely, the exact same proportion as in March 2021. As shown in Figure 27, pupils’ reported levels of loneliness were lower compared to February 2021 (during the time of the third UK

²² Personal issues e.g. death/illness in the family, Exams / assessments, Anxiety / depression / mental health issues, Worried about socialising in large groups again, Nothing, Other, Don't know, Prefer not to say

lockdown, and when schools were not open to the majority of pupils), but still higher than those seen in August 2020.

Figure 27. Percentage of secondary pupils who felt lonely



Source: PPP waves between August 2020 and May 2021, B12: “How often do you feel lonely?”
Secondary pupils (n=5,327 / n=1,612 / n=1,555 / n=1,537 / n=1,531, n=1,537).

Similarly, to previous waves:

- Year 11-13 pupils were more likely to have felt lonely at least some of the time (69%, particularly year 12 (73%) and 13 pupils (77%), than year 7-10s (49%).
- Female pupils were more likely than male pupils to often feel lonely (23% vs. 10%).

Support available at school

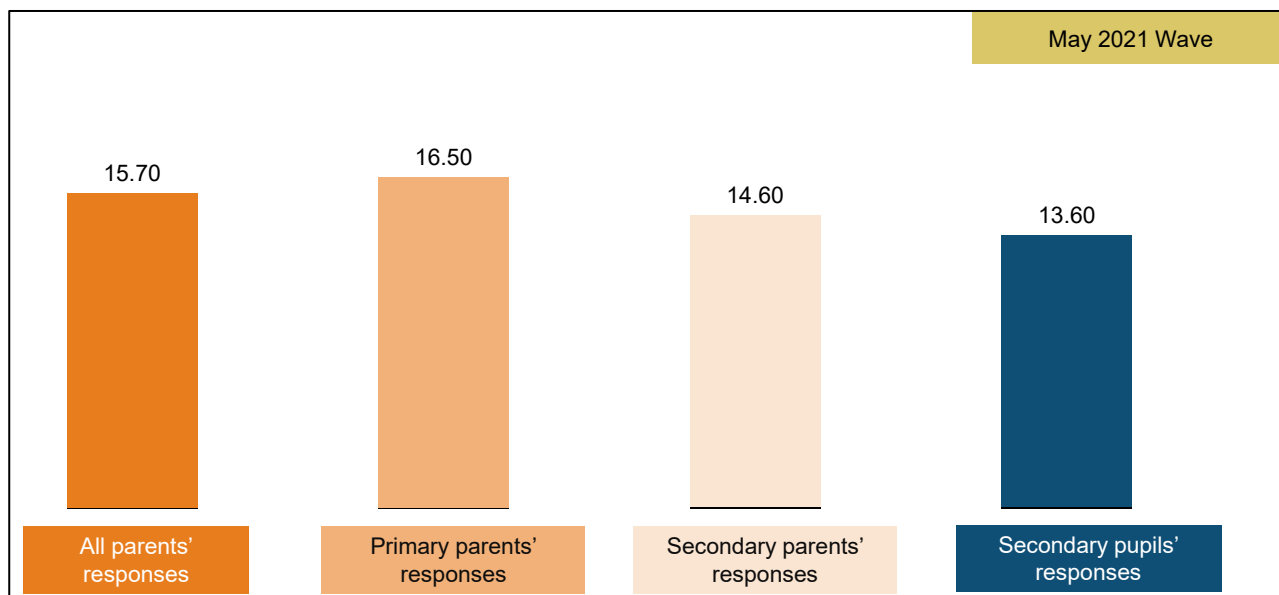
Pupils and parents were asked to what extent (on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always)) they felt they / their child had an adult at school who...

- ... really cares about me / my child
- ... tells me / my child when I / they do a good job
- ... listens to me / my child when I / they have something to say
- ... believes I / that my child will succeed / be a success.

The responses from these four questions were combined to produce a 4-20 measure of school connectedness. Overall, as shown in Figure 28, parents had a higher mean score

for school connectedness compared to pupils. Parents had a mean score of 15.7, with primary parents having a higher mean score than secondary parents (16.5 vs. 14.6). Secondary pupils had a mean score of 13.6.

Figure 28. Mean school connectedness scores



Source: PPP Wave 9, May 2021. AG_X/SRS_X “At school, there is an adult who...” All secondary pupils (except those who were permanently home schooled) / All parents (except those whose child was permanently home schooled) (n=1535 / 3073).

The following subgroups had a higher mean scores than their counterparts, suggesting a greater feeling of school connectedness amongst these groups:

- Primary parents compared to secondary parents (16.5 vs 14.6)
- Parents of pupils without SEN, compared to parents of pupils with SEN (15.8 vs. 15.2)
- Male pupils compared to female pupils (13.9 vs 13.3)

Year 7 pupils had the highest mean score of 14.6, significantly higher than all years (excluding year 8). The year with the lowest sense of school connectedness was year 10, with a mean score of 13.1.

Pupils varied considerably in their views of the extent to which they felt they had an adult in school who could provide these types of support. A fifth of pupils (21%) reported having an adult at school who really cares about them all of the time, compared to 12% who felt this was never the case. Pupils were more likely to report having an adult at school who listens to them when they have things to say, with 27% saying this is always the case.

Rapid asymptomatic testing

As part of the strategy for the re-opening of schools, the government requested that schools helped to implement a programme of rapid testing for secondary school pupils.

As part of the return to face-to-face education on 8th March 2021, schools were asked to facilitate testing three times for each secondary pupil at an on-site (school) Asymptomatic Testing Site before transitioning to twice-weekly testing at home. In March 2021 and May 2021, pupils and parents were asked about their experiences and views of COVID-19 testing.

Participation in rapid asymptomatic testing amongst secondary pupils

Secondary pupils' participation in rapid asymptomatic testing

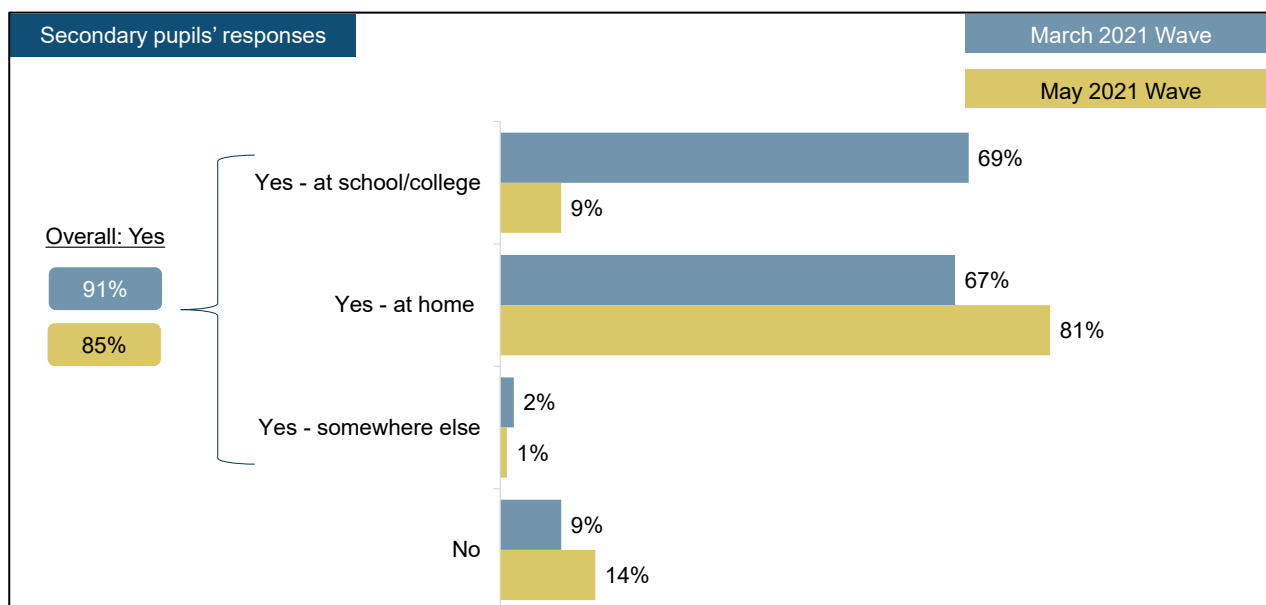
Secondary pupils were asked if they had taken any COVID-19 tests in the last seven days, either in school/college, at home, or elsewhere (e.g. a testing centre).²³ As shown in Figure 29, the vast majority (85%) of pupils said they had taken a COVID-19 test in the last seven days. This is a decrease compared to the March 2021 figure of 91%.²⁴

Between March 2021 and May 2021, taking COVID-19 tests at school have become far less common for pupils, whereas taking tests at home have become more common. In May 2021, 9% of secondary pupils reported that they had taken a test at school/college, vastly lower than the 69% of pupils reporting this in March 2021. Instead, secondary pupils were more likely in May 2021 to report taking a test at home (81%) than in March 2021 (67%).

²³ Secondary pupils were surveyed between 12th May and 17th May 2021.

²⁴ Secondary pupils were surveyed between 22nd March and 26th March 2021.

Figure 29. Whether secondary pupils had taken a COVID-19 test in the last 7 days, by location



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: AD12 “During the last 7 days, have you taken any test(s) to see if you have COVID-19 / coronavirus? (Please tick all that apply)” All pupils in March 2021/May 2021 (n=1,531/n=1,537). March 2021 prefer not to say less than 1%, May 2021 prefer not to say 1%.

Differences between groups of pupils remained the same in May 2021 as reported in March 2021, including:

- Older pupils (year 11-13) were more likely than younger pupils (year 7-10) to report not taking a test in the last seven days (19% vs. 12%).
- BAME pupils were more likely to report not having taken a test in the last seven days, compared to White pupils (21% vs. 12%). Among BAME pupils, 71% had taken a test at home compared to 84% of White pupils. BAME pupils continued to be more likely than White pupils to have taken a test in school (12% vs. 8%).
- Pupils with SEND and pupils eligible for FSM were around twice as likely as their non-SEND/non-FSM eligible counterparts to have not taken a COVID-19 test in the last seven days (pupil with SEND 20% vs. non-SEND pupils 13%, FSM pupils 25% vs. non-FSM pupils 12%).

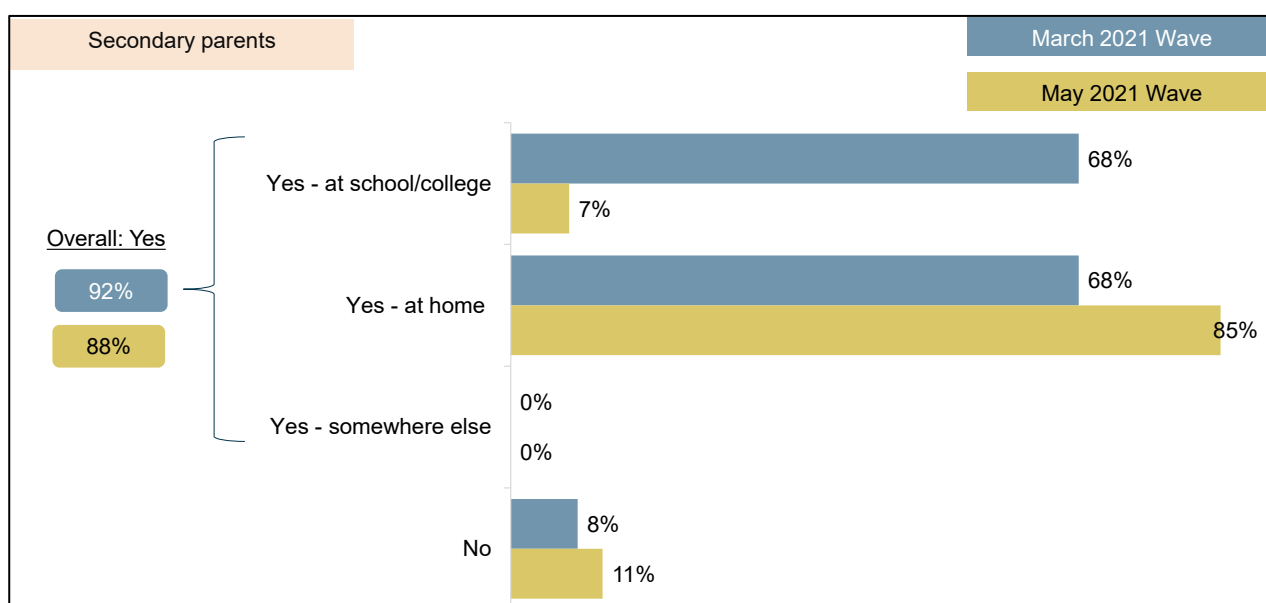
Whilst taking a COVID-19 test in school/college for all pupils dropped between March 2021 and May 2021 (from 69% to 9%), in May 2021 15% of pupils eligible for FSM took a test in school/college, twice as many as non-FSM pupils (8%). However, FSM pupils were less likely to have taken a test at home compared to non-FSM pupils (67% vs. 84%).

Secondary parents report of their child’s participation in rapid asymptomatic testing

Parents of secondary pupils were also asked if their child had taken any COVID-19 tests in the last seven days, either at school/college, at home or somewhere else (e.g. a testing centre).²⁵ The vast majority (88%) of parents said their child had taken a COVID-19 test in the last seven days, though this was lower than in March 2021 (92%).²⁶

As found for secondary pupils, less than one-in-ten (7%) secondary parents reported that their child had taken a test at school/college, vastly lower than the two-thirds (68%) of parents reporting this in March 2021. In May 2021, 85% of secondary parents reported their child had taken a COVID-19 test at home, up from 68% in March 2021.

Figure 30. Whether secondary pupils had taken a COVID-19 test in the last 7 days, by location, as reported by secondary parents



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: AD12 “During the last 7 days, has [PUPILNAME] taken any test(s) to see if they have COVID-19 / coronavirus?” All secondary parents in March 2021/May 2021 (n=1,547/n=1,540). March 2021 prefer not to say 1%, May 2021 prefer not to say 1%.

The sub-groups differences amongst parents were similar to those of pupils. For example, parents of White pupils (90%), and parents of non-FSM pupils (90%) were more likely to report their child taking a COVID-19 test in the previous seven days compared to parents of BAME pupils (83%), and parents of FSM-pupils (82%).

Secondary school parents in the East of England and the South East were the most likely to report their child having taken a COVID-19 test in the last seven days (93% and 92%

²⁵ Secondary parents were surveyed between 12th May and 17th May 2021.

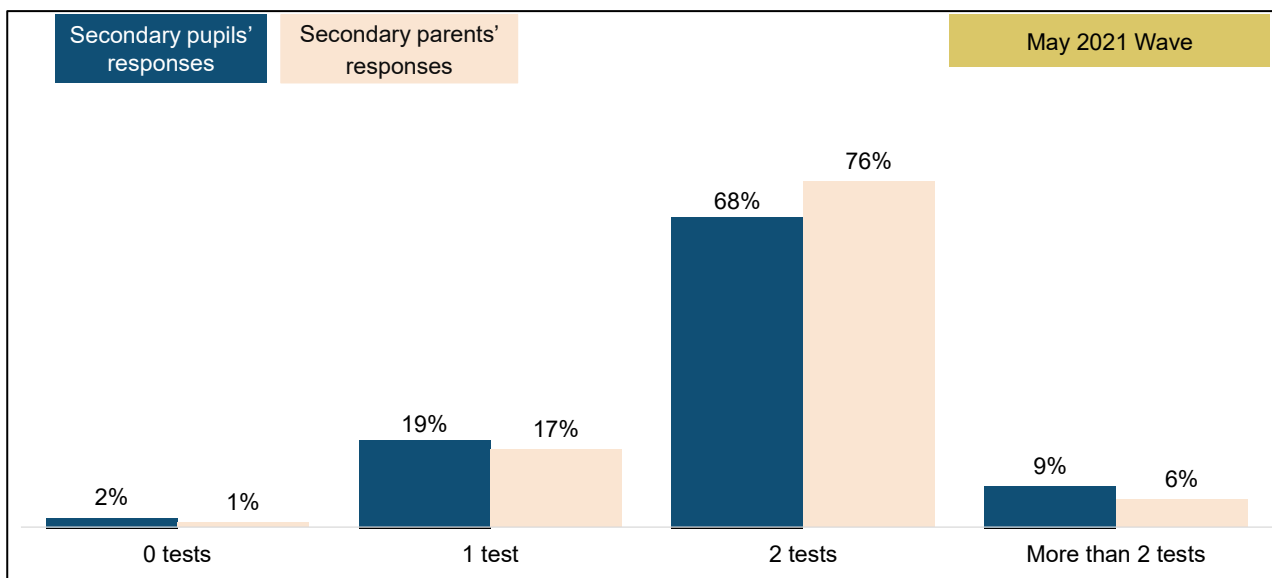
²⁶ Parents were surveyed on 22nd March and 23rd March 2021.

respectively), those in London the least likely (82%). Secondary school parents in the North-West were twice as likely to report their child had taken a COVID-19 test in school compared to average (14% vs. 7%), and parents in the South East were far less likely than average to report this (3%).

Quantity of rapid asymptomatic testing carried out at home amongst secondary pupils

Secondary school pupils and parents who reported they/their child had taken a COVID-19 test at home in the previous seven days were asked how many rapid lateral flow tests they had taken at home in that time period. As shown in Figure 31, it was most common for both secondary school pupils (68%) and parents (76%) to report they/their child had taken two tests at home in that time period.

Figure 31. Number of rapid lateral flow tests taken at home by secondary pupils in the last 7 days



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: AD21_P2W9. “During the last 7 days, how many rapid lateral flow tests have you taken at home to see if you have COVID-19/ coronavirus?” All pupils who took a Covid-19 test in the last 7 days at home / All parents who said yes to home testing (n=1,239 / n=1,120)

A small proportion reported having no rapid flow tests at home in the previous seven days, despite having said they/their child had taken a COVID-19 test at home in that time. This suggests they may have taken another (non-rapid flow) form of COVID-19 test at home, that they had been given a test kit by someone or that they were not consistent in reporting resource availability and use.

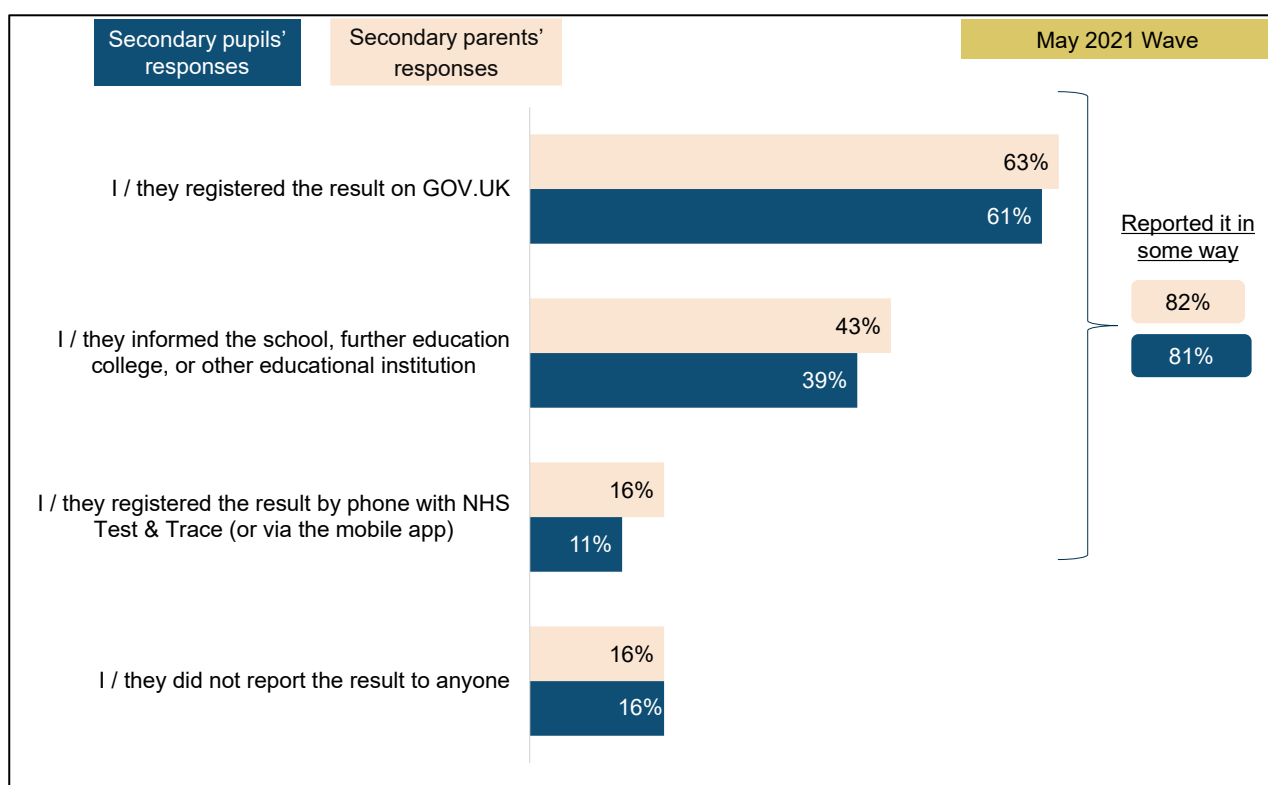
BAME pupils were twice as likely as White pupils to report taking more than two rapid lateral flow tests at home in the previous seven days (16% vs. 7%).

Reporting of asymptomatic testing results carried out at home amongst secondary pupils

Secondary pupils and parents who reported they/their child had taken at least one rapid lateral flow COVID-19 test at home in the previous seven days were asked whether they reported the result of the COVID-19 test(s).

As shown in Figure 32, four-in-five secondary pupils (81%) and secondary parents (82%) reported they/their child had reported the result in some way. This was most commonly on GOV.UK (61% secondary pupils, 63% secondary parents), followed by informing the school/college/other education institution (39% secondary pupils, 43% secondary parents). Around a sixth of secondary pupils and parents said they did not report the result of their/their child’s test to anyone (16% respectively).

Figure 32. Methods of reporting rapid lateral flow test results



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: AD22_P2W9. “How, if at all, did you report the result of your rapid lateral flow test(s) taken at home?” All pupils who took a lateral flow test in the last 7 days at home / All parents whose child has taken 1 or more rapid lateral flow test (n=1,189 / n=1,333)

The following subgroups of pupils were less likely to report their COVID-19 at home rapid lateral flow test result to anyone:

- Older pupils in year 11-13 (20%, and rising to 24% of year 13 pupils, compared to 15% among year 7-10s).
- Pupils eligible for FSM (27% compared to 14% of non-eligible FSM pupils).

Childcare

Breakfast/ after-school club providers are currently advised to follow the COVID-19: Actions for out-of-school settings guidance, which sets out the actions providers should take to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) in their settings.

This section reports the levels of attendance at school-led breakfast and after-school clubs (including after-school revision clubs) in May 2021. It also covers the protective COVID-19 measures that providers of breakfast and after-school clubs were advised to implement in May 2021, and how easy parents felt these measures were for their child to follow, alongside how important they thought these measures were. The responses from an open-text question about how parents thought their child had been affected by protective COVID-19 measures, at their breakfast and/or after school clubs, are also included.

Breakfast and after-school club attendance

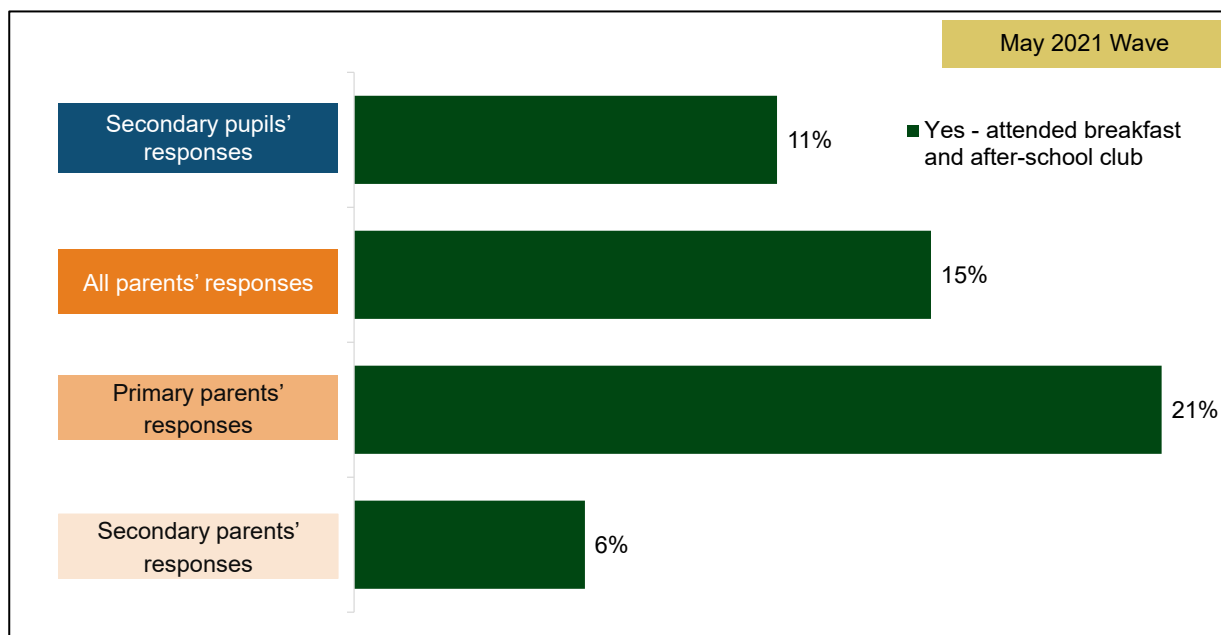
One-in-nine (11%) secondary pupils reported currently attending a breakfast or after-school club (including after-school revision clubs),²⁷ rising to almost a fifth (18%) of year 11 pupils, at the time of this survey. Whilst a slightly different question, in March 2021, parents were asked if they had used *before or after school wraparound care since 8th March 2021* (the date schools reopened to the majority of pupils).²⁸ One-in-ten (10%) parents reported that they had used wraparound childcare since 8th March, 90% had not. This is therefore a similar proportion to those who said their child had attended a breakfast or after-school club in May 2021. Comparisons between May 2021 and June 2021 waves should be carried out with caution, based on differences in question wording.

Almost a sixth (15%) of parents said their child currently attended a breakfast or after-school club (including revision club), with this much higher among parents of primary aged pupils (21%) than parents of secondary school pupils (6%).

²⁷ Excluding those who are permanently home schooled

²⁸ The fieldwork period for this wave was 22nd – 26th March 2021.

Figure 33. Breakfast and after-school club attendance



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: M35_P2W9. Do you go to a breakfast or after school club? All pupils (excluding permanently home-schooled pupils) / All Parents (n=1,537 / n=3,084)

Among secondary pupils, the key differences in attendance at breakfast and after-school clubs were:

- BAME pupils were almost twice as likely to attend compared to White pupils (17% vs. 9%).
- FSM eligible pupils were almost twice as likely to attend compared to non-eligible FSM pupils (18% vs. 10%).
- Pupils in the North East were twice as likely than average to attend, compared to an average across all regions (20% vs. 11%). This difference was also found among parents, where those in the North East were almost twice as likely to report their child attending one of these clubs, compared to an average among all parents (28% vs. 15%).

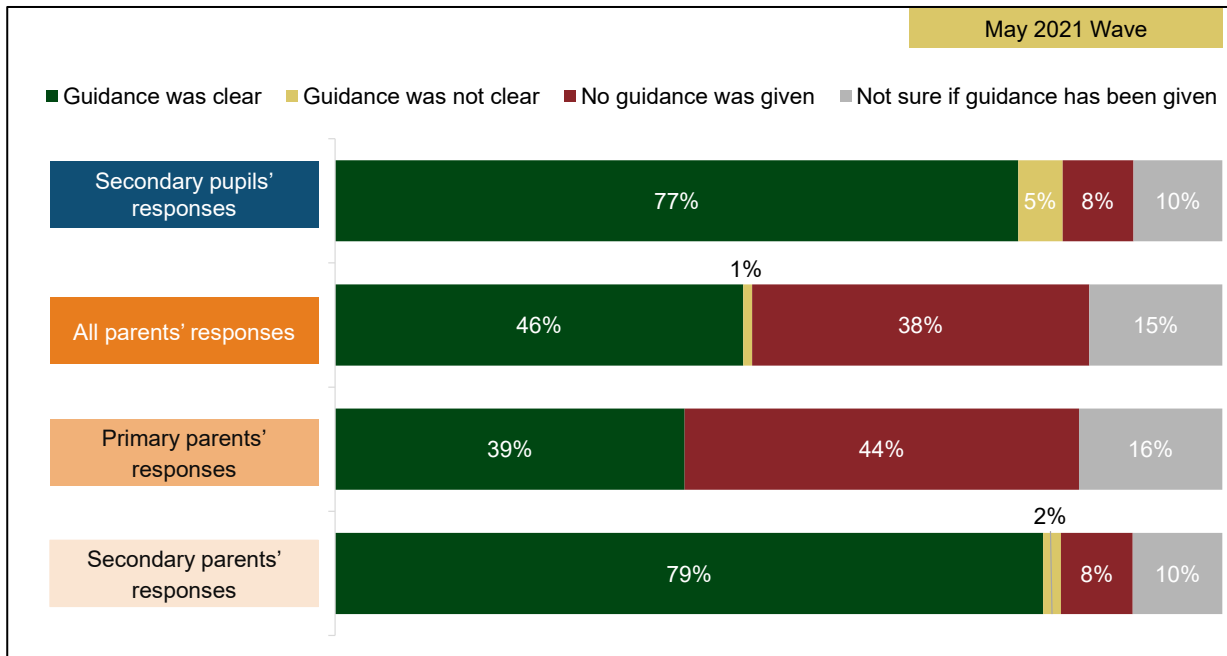
Face covering guidance at breakfast and after-school clubs

Secondary pupils and parents of pupils who attended breakfast and/or after-school club were asked whether they/their child had been informed about wearing a face covering at these clubs.

Four-in-five (82%) secondary pupils had been given guidance about wearing a face covering at breakfast or after-school clubs, one-in-ten (10%) were not sure, leaving 8% of secondary pupils attending these clubs saying they had not been given guidance about

wearing a face covering. Where given, the guidance was usually felt to be clear (77% of all pupils at these clubs felt they got clear guidance compared with 5% receiving guidance they felt was not clear).

Figure 34. Clarity of face covering guidance at breakfast and after-school clubs



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: M39_P2W9. "Has your breakfast or after school club informed you about wearing a mask or face covering?" Base: All pupils who go to breakfast or after school / Parents whose child has been to breakfast / after school club (n=167 / n=416)

Around half (47%) of parents of pupils that were currently attending breakfast and/or after-school clubs felt that they had been informed about when their child should be wearing a face covering at their club. This was much higher among secondary parents (81%, similar to the proportion reported by secondary pupils themselves) than primary parents (40%). This may reflect the fact that primary pupils were not required to wear face coverings in school and for before/after school activities, and that no specific additional guidance was felt to be needed.

COVID-19 measures at breakfast and after-school clubs

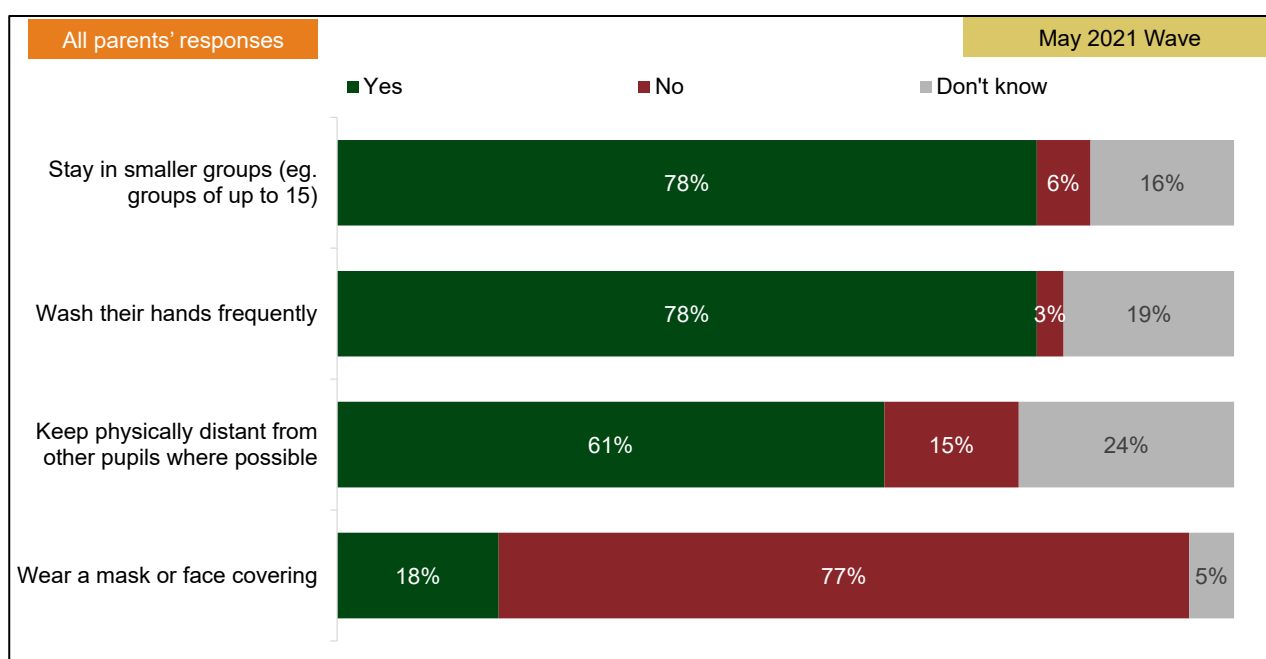
Parents of pupils at breakfast and after-school clubs were asked whether their pupil had been asked to follow four protective COVID-19 measures. This included:

- Washing their hands frequently.
- Wear a mask or face covering.
- Stay in smaller groups (e.g. groups of up to 15).

- Keep physically distant from other pupils where possible.

As shown in Figure 35, almost four-in-five parents reported their child has been asked to wash their hands frequently (78%) and stay in smaller groups (78%) at their breakfast and/or after school clubs. Three-in-five (61%) parents reported their child had been asked to keep physically distant from other pupils where possible. Around a fifth (18%) said their child had been asked to wear a face covering at their breakfast and/or after school club, though this varied widely between secondary parents (89%) and primary parents (3%).²⁹ It should be noted that relatively high proportions of parents were unsure if their child had been asked to take / abide by particular measures (e.g. almost a quarter in relation to keeping physically distant from other pupils).

Figure 35. COVID-19 measures at breakfast and after-school clubs



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: M36-P2W9 “When [PUPILNAME] is attending breakfast/after school club, have they been asked to... ?” (n=416)

Parents of primary pupils were more likely to report that their child had been asked to wash their hands at these clubs, compared to secondary parents (81% vs. 67%). There was no difference between primary and secondary parents reporting whether their child had been asked to stay in smaller groups or keep physically distant from other pupils.

Results differed by subgroup as follows:

- Parents of White pupils were more likely than parents of BAME pupils to report their child had been asked to wash their hands frequently (81% v 68%). There were also regional differences, with parents in the South West more likely than the

²⁹ Pupils of primary age are not required to wear masks in school and before/after school activities

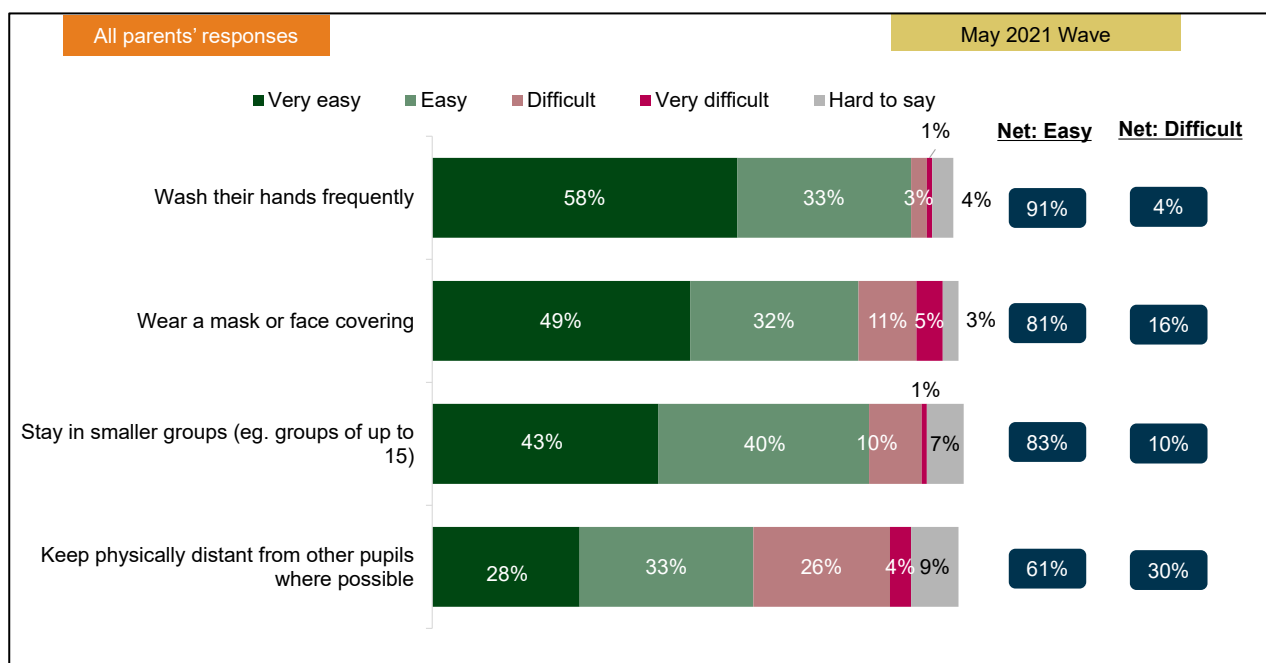
78% average to report their child being asked to wash their hands frequently at these clubs (91%), and those in the North West (66%) and London (64%) less likely than average to report this.

- Parents of BAME pupils were more likely than parents of White pupils to report their child had been asked to wear a mask or face covering (26% v 15%), as were parents in the West Midlands (29% vs. 18% average across all regions).

Ease of following COVID-19 measures at breakfast and after-school clubs

Parents of pupils who had been asked to follow each of the COVID-19 measures at breakfast and/or after-school clubs were asked how easy their child found it to follow these measures whilst as the club. As shown in Figure 36, around nine in ten (91%) parents reported their child found washing their hands easy (vs. 4% finding it difficult), and around four-in-five felt the same for their child wearing a face covering (81% vs. 16% finding this hard) and staying in a smaller group (83% vs. 10% finding this hard). Keeping physically distant from other pupils at the clubs was the measure that parents felt their child had found least likely to be easy (61% reported this had been easy, while 30% of parents felt their child had found this difficult).

Figure 36. Ease of following COVID-19 measures at breakfast and after-school clubs



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: M37-P2W9 “How easy or difficult is [PUPILNAME] finding it to follow these measures whilst at breakfast/after school club?” Base: All parents who said yes to this breakfast / after school club measure (Wash their hands frequently n=330 / wear a mask of

face covering n=87 / Stay in smaller groups n=330 / Keep physically distant from other pupils where possible n=262)

Parents of pupils with SEND were more likely to report their child found following each measure difficult. For example, 12% of parents of pupils with SEND reported their child found the guidance around washing their hands difficult to follow compared with 3% among parents of pupils without SEND. Similarly, parents of pupils with SEND were also more likely than parents of non-SEND pupils to report their child finding it hard to follow keeping physically distant (48% vs. 28%).

Parents of primary school pupils (35%) were more than three times as likely as secondary parents (10%) to report their child found it difficult keeping physically distanced from other pupils at their breakfast or after-school club.

Parents' view on the importance of COVID-19 measures at breakfast and after-school clubs

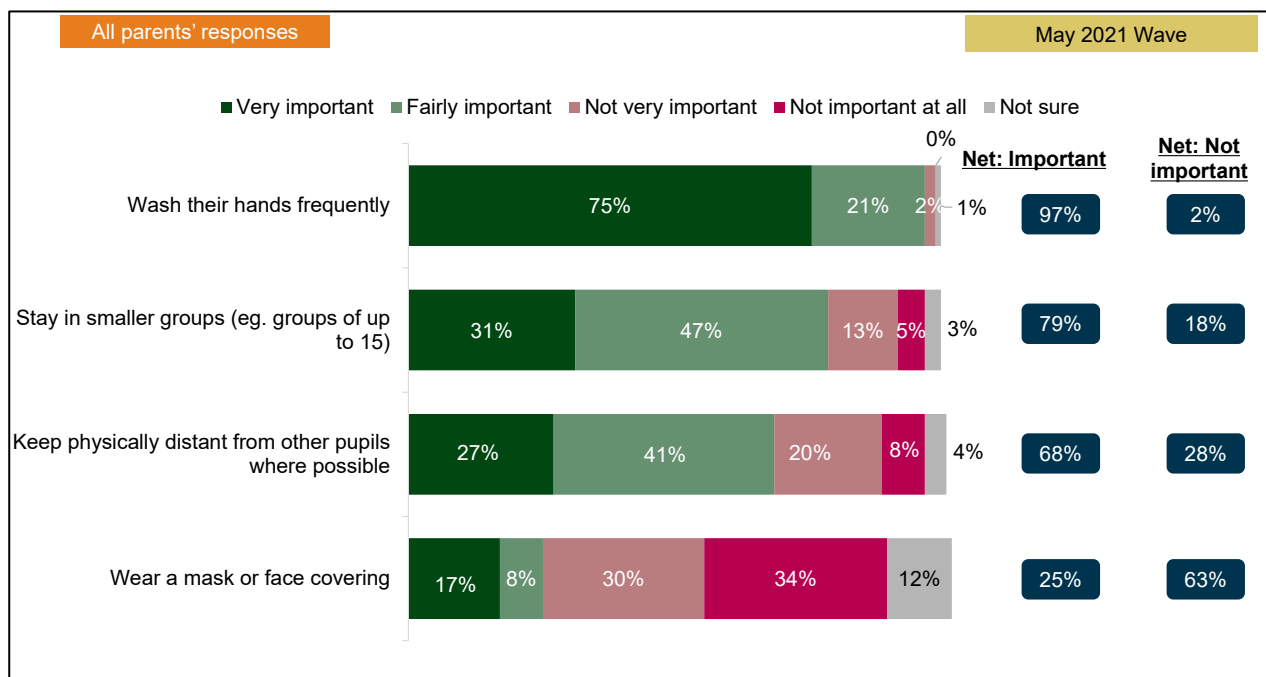
Parents of pupils who had been to a breakfast club and/or after-school club (including after school revision sessions) were asked how important they thought it was that their child's breakfast/after school club implemented or encouraged children attending to follow these four COVID-19 measures:

- Washing their hands frequently.
- Wear a mask or face covering.
- Stay in smaller groups (e.g. groups of up to 15).
- Keep physically distant from other pupils where possible.

Across the four measures, parents were most likely to report that encouragement of their child to wash their hands at breakfast club and/or after-school clubs was important, with nearly all (97%) parents regarding this to be important (75% felt this to be very important).

As shown in Figure 37, around four-in-five (79%) parents thought it was important to encourage their child to stay in smaller groups in these clubs, and more than two-thirds (68%) of parents thought it was important for their child's clubs to encourage keeping physically distanced from other pupils where possible. Far fewer (25%) felt it was important to encourage their child to wear a face covering in these clubs (63% felt this was not important) – opinion differed hugely between secondary parents (among whom 92% felt this important) and primary parents, among whom only 10% felt this important.

Figure 37. Importance of COVID-19 measures at breakfast and after-school clubs



Source: PPP May 2021 Wave 9: M38-P2w9 “How important, if at all, do you think it is that your child’s breakfast / after school club implements or encourages children attending to...?” (n=416)

Four-in-five (79%) parents felt it was important for their child to be encouraged to stay in smaller groups whilst at their breakfast and/or after school club. Results on this measure differed as follows:

- Parents of primary aged pupils were more than three times as likely to regard this as unimportant compared to secondary parents (20% vs. 6%).
- Parents of White pupils were more likely to say it was unimportant to encourage this behaviour at breakfast and/or after-school clubs, compared to BAME parents (21% vs. 8%).
- Around three-in-ten (31%) parents of pupils with SEND thought it was not important for their child to be encouraged in stay in smaller groups when at breakfast and/or after-school clubs, twice the proportion found among parents of non-SEND pupils (16%).

More than two-thirds (68%) of parents reported it was important for their child to be encouraged to keep physically distant from other pupils where possible whilst at their breakfast and/or after school club, with this higher among secondary parents (88%) than primary parents (64%). White parents were more likely to feel this was not important compared to BAME parents (32% vs.15%).

Glossary

BAME – Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic. Includes all ethnicities other than White and Unclassified.

CIN – Children in Need. This is a broad definition spanning a wide range of children and adolescents, in need of varying types of support and intervention, for a variety of reasons. A child is defined as ‘in need’ under section 17 of the Children Act 1989, where:

- They are unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for them of services by a local authority.
- Their health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for them of such services; or
- They are disabled.

EHC Plan – Education Health and Care plan. This is a legal document that describes a child or young person’s special educational, health and social care needs and explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs and how that help will support the child or young person,

FSM – Free School Meal. Eligibility for FSMs is used a proxy for socioeconomic status. Pupils eligible for FSMs were considered to be living in greater socioeconomic deprivation than those pupils who were not eligible for FSMs.

SEND – Special Educational Needs and Disability. A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.

Many children and young people who have SEND may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 – that is ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEN definition.

For more detail, please see the [SEND Code of Practice](#).



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For any enquiries regarding this publication, contact us at:

omnibus.surveys@education.gov.uk or www.education.gov.uk/contactus

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