



Department
for Education

School and College Panel – October 2021 wave

Research Report

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**Government
Social Research**

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Executive Summary

This report presents findings from the first (October 2021) wave of the School and College Panel, a panel run by IFF Research on behalf of the Department for Education.

A note on the reporting

The report covers questions asked about the individual experiences of teachers and leaders, and others asked of leaders at the school level.

Two types of weighting were applied to the data, depending on whether the questions were asking for school-level or individual-level answers from leaders and teachers.

Where responses from 'leaders', 'teachers' or 'leaders and teachers' are referred to in the report, individual-level weighting has been applied. Where responses from 'schools' are referred to, leaders have answered the survey question and a school-level weighting has been applied. Further detail on the weighting approach can be found in the methodology section.

Findings from each wave should be interpreted in the context of guidelines in place at that time. In October 2021 schools were fully reopened to all children, and the survey explored the experiences of school leaders and teachers since the reopening.

Caution should be taken when comparing results from previous surveys as any changes and patterns may be impacted by the guidelines in place at each timepoint.

Education Recovery

Perceptions of academic progress

All teachers were asked whether, as a result of school closures, pupils were behind in their learning compared to where they would expect them to be at this stage of their education (the question wording used the term 'school closures', though it is important to note that during the disruption to learning caused by periods of limited in-person attendance few schools were fully closed). Overall, 98% of teachers felt that *at least* some of their pupils were behind in their learning. Just over half of all teachers (55%) said that 'some' pupils were behind, and over a quarter (28%) felt that almost all pupils were behind.

Leaders and teachers who personally teach pupils with SEND were asked whether they felt that the gap between SEND pupils and pupils without SEND has become wider or narrower. Overall, three-quarters (74%) felt that the gap had become wider, with 31%

reporting the gap had become much wider and 43% reporting it had become slightly wider.

Readiness of year 7s

Secondary leaders and teachers that teach year 7 expressed mixed views regarding the extent to which the year 7s at their school were ready to begin this academic year.

Overall, just under two-thirds (65%) felt that year 7s were academically ready (7% very ready and 57% fairly ready), while just under a third (32%) did not feel the year 7s were academically ready (27% not very ready and 5% not at all ready).

Similarly, the majority (55%) of secondary leaders and teachers felt that year 7s were socially ready (10% very ready and 45% fairly ready), while 41% did not feel the year 7s were socially ready (30% not very ready and 11% not at all ready).

Summer schools

Three-quarters (75%) of schools had run a summer school this calendar year, while a quarter (25%) had not. Two-thirds (64%) of secondary leaders and teachers felt that their summer schools were effective at improving both literacy/English skills and numeracy/math skills; of those, half (54%) felt that the summer schools were fairly effective and a further 10% felt they were very effective.

The majority (90%) of secondary leaders and teachers reported that pupils with SEND had attended their schools' summer schools this year. Almost all agreed that the summer schools had helped support pupils with SEND to establish relationships with other students (96%), helped with building social confidence (95%) and helped with transition (93%). Secondary leaders and teachers also agreed that the summer schools had supported school readiness (79%) and, to a lesser extent (55%), built academic confidence.

Curriculum guidance

Overall, 60% of leaders and teachers reported that they were aware of DfE's curriculum guidance to teach a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery, while 30% were not. Almost two-thirds (63%) of schools aware of the guidance had already used it to help with curriculum planning, while a further 13% had not yet but were planning to use it. A fifth (20%) of schools who were aware of the guidance had not used it and did not plan to. Amongst individual teachers, less than half (45%) had already used the guidance to help with curriculum planning, while a further fifth (20%) had not yet but were planning to use it. Over a quarter (29%) of teachers had not used the guidance.

Leaders and teachers commonly reported using the guidance (which was aimed at curriculum leaders) to help address gaps in learning to support education recovery. Many also reported using the guidance as it was intended - to ensure that they were prioritising the most important areas of learning. Some used the guidance to help them review and/or adapt their existing curriculum.

Staff absence

All leaders and teachers were asked whether anything had prevented them personally from physically attending the school site since schools reopened this academic year. Around two-thirds (59%) stated that they hadn't had any reason not to attend the school site. The most frequent reasons selected by those who had been prevented from attending the school were non-COVID-19 related sickness (17% of all leaders and teachers), a COVID-19 related sickness (15%) and caring responsibilities (9%). To manage staff absence, the majority of schools (86%) had been redeploying existing staff within the school and two-thirds (60%) had been recruiting supply staff.

COVID-19 Testing

Secondary leaders and teachers were asked how important they felt regular COVID-19 testing of *pupils* was to effective on-site schooling at present. Overall, 85% of leaders and teachers thought it was *at least* fairly important, with more than half (57%) saying that testing was very important. All leaders and teachers were asked how important they felt regular COVID-19 testing of *staff* was to effective on-site schooling at present. Overall, 84% of leaders and teachers thought it was *at least* fairly important, with more than half (52%) saying that testing was very important.

Those who indicated that testing of pupils and/or staff was not important were asked to say why they felt this was the case in a free text response. Some felt that regular testing does not necessarily effectively protect pupils or staff from contracting COVID-19. Others emphasised that staff and/or pupils are likely to already be vaccinated and felt that it was time to return to a more 'normal' school environment. Some expressed doubts about the accuracy of the tests while others highlighted the burden that testing is seen to place on schools.

On the 8th June, the Department for Education made aggregated, school level, COVID-19 testing data available to schools. Just over half (55%) of schools had not used the data, a third (32%) didn't know whether or not their school had used it and 13% of schools had used the data. Of those who had used the data, a third (35%) of schools had not made or did not intend to make any changes as a result of this data. Others provided open-text examples of how they had made changes; schools had most commonly used the data to

instigate further social distancing and hygiene practices in their school, or as a spur to regularly remind parents, pupils and staff about the importance of testing.

Leader and Teacher Wellbeing

ONS measures of the extent to which leaders and teachers felt life satisfaction, that the things they do in their life are worthwhile, and their happiness all significantly decreased since they were last measured in June 2021. In October 2021, on average leaders and teachers gave a rating of 6.2 for life satisfaction, 6.9 for feelings of worthwhileness and 6 for feelings of happiness. These figures were all lower than the general population in Great Britain, where life satisfaction was rated on average as 7.4, feelings of worthwhileness were 7.7 and feelings of happiness were 7.3 when measured in March 2021. However, given the change in people's circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the timing of the Annual Population Survey (year ending March 2021), comparisons between the October survey results and the general population are not explored further in this report.

The proportion of leaders and teachers reporting that they were anxious had significantly increased since June 2021 (4.4 in June to 4.7 in October 2021). This figure was higher than the general population in Great Britain, where mean anxiety was found to be 3.3 in March 2021.

Overall, leaders' and teachers' job satisfaction levels have remained in line with those seen in June 2021 but have significantly decreased since April (58% in October vs. 60% in June vs. 62% in April). There were no significant differences between leaders and teachers.

Teaching about safe relationships

Overall, primary school teachers felt confident in teaching about most safeguarding subjects they were asked about, with the majority (96%) saying they felt confident teaching about how to stay safe online, appropriate boundaries, the concept of privacy and (94%) what counts as inappropriate or unsafe contact.

Overall, secondary school teachers were fairly confident in teaching about relationships, sex or health subjects, but expressed more confidence in some areas than others. A majority felt confident in teaching about consent (88%), what constitutes sexual harassment and violence (84%), harassment (80%), abuse (79%) and recognising the characteristics of positive intimate one-to-one relationships (78%). Teachers were slightly less confident teaching about sexual exploitation (70%), coercion and domestic abuse (70%) and pornography and the impact of harmful content (68%).

Secondary teachers who indicated they were not confident in teaching about certain subjects were asked why. The most common reasons were that teachers do not know what the best way to teach the subject is (74%) or they don't know enough about the subject content (70%).

Defibrillators

All school leaders were asked how many Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) their school/college has on site. Over a third of schools (39%) had no AEDs on site, while just under a half (47%) had one.

School leaders who reported that they do not have any AEDs on site were asked to explain why. The most common reason (54% of schools) was that the school didn't have funding for an AED. A third (34%) of schools noted that they had access to a community defibrillator and a quarter (24%) were not aware it was possible to have one on site.

When asked whether they were aware of the defibs4schools programme that will allow them to buy Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) at a reduced cost, 72% of schools stated that they were not aware whilst 28% were aware.

Knife Crime

In October 2021, 10% of schools were currently dealing with knife crime related safeguarding issues, while 87% were not. This was statistically significantly lower than in May 2021, when 13% of schools were dealing with knife crime related safeguarding issues. Secondary schools were significantly more likely to be dealing with knife crime as a safeguarding issue (34% of all secondary schools, compared with 6% of primary schools).

Amongst the minority of schools that were currently dealing with a knife crime safeguarding issue, most (55%) reported they were actively dealing with a single incident. Amongst schools actively dealing with knife crime, the mean number of incidents was 1.2, compared with 1.3 in May 2021.

Taken as a proportion of all pupils in the school, no schools reported they were dealing with more than 10 incidents per 1,000 pupils, although 2% of all schools reported they were dealing with between 4 and 10 incidents per 1,000 pupils.

Pupil Behaviour

Leaders and teachers were asked how concerned they were about disengagement from learning and an increase in behaviour issues.

Teachers were more likely than leaders to be concerned about both issues, with 59% concerned about disengagement from learning (compared with 44% of leaders), and 60% concerned about an increase in behaviour issues (compared with 43% of leaders). However, this represents a significant decrease in the proportion of teachers concerned to at least some extent about disengagement from learning compared with July 2021 (64%). The proportion of teachers concerned about behaviour issues was in line with the July survey (61%).

Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)

Overall, 60% schools agreed that they were able to support pupils with SEND (10% agreed strongly). This represents a significant decrease in the proportion of schools agreeing with the statement since June 2021 (79%), March 2021 (87%), and late February 2021 (73%). Primary schools were more likely to disagree that they could effectively support pupils with SEND (22%, compared with 14% of secondary schools).

Overall, over half (55%) of teachers agreed that they felt equipped to support pupils with SEND (7% agreed strongly). Primary teachers were more likely to strongly agree with this statement (9% vs. 5% of secondary teachers).

Schools were asked, at present, what they felt the barriers were to effectively providing support for pupils with SEND. Around 70% of schools reported the following barriers:

- Lack of access to “other” specialist services or professionals (71%);
- An increase in the number of pupils with differing needs compared with the 20/21 academic year (68%); and
- Staff supporting a large number of pupils with differing needs (68%).

Just 3% of schools felt that there were no current barriers to providing effective support for pupils with SEND.

Teachers were also asked about the barriers they currently experience to effectively providing support for pupils with SEND. Teachers most commonly felt that they do not have enough time to provide additional support to these pupils (67%), and that they have an increased number of pupils with differing needs compared with the 20/21 academic year (62%). Just 7% of teachers experienced no barriers.

Extra-Curricular activity

Over half (55%) of schools reported offering more extra-curricular activities than last academic year, with significantly more secondary schools reporting this than primary schools (75% for secondary vs. 52% for primary).

Challenges for schools

Leaders and teachers were asked an open-text question on what challenges, if any, were facing the school in the coming months. The most commonly reported upcoming challenge was staff absence or shortages – this appeared to be a particular issue in primary schools. Funding challenges were also frequently raised, and in some cases, these related to staff shortages. Lack of funding had made it difficult for schools to implement interventions to help pupils catch up and made it difficult to support pupils with additional needs.

Schools also commonly specifically mentioned the challenges associated with learning loss and education recovery, for example concern for pupils' academic achievement, balancing this with pupil mental health and wellbeing, and, for primary leaders and teachers, a particular concern about children's language, social and emotional development.

Another common challenge was the effect lockdown has had on pupil behaviour in classrooms, which has led to both an increase in low level disruption and more challenging behaviours or violence. Schools also reported high absence rates among pupils, much of this was driven by COVID-19 and other illnesses.

There were various other challenges reported by schools such as staff and pupil mental health and wellbeing, supporting pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, and external pressures such as OFSTED and exams that were making the situation in schools more difficult to manage.

Support for schools

Leaders and teachers were also asked an open-text question on how DfE could currently best support schools. Funding was the most commonly mentioned area, with this response linked to themes such as implementing COVID-19 measures, education recovery and pupil development, resources and specialist support, SEND provision, and staffing and retention. The perceived lack of funding was felt to be creating a heavy workload, pressure for the profession and to be leading to poor health and low morale.

Workload was also commonly mentioned by schools as an area in need of support: the additional workload pressures due to COVID-19 were felt to be taking disproportionate amounts of time away from teaching and supporting pupils. High workload was seen as contributing to poor mental health and high numbers thinking of leaving the profession. Leaders and teachers commonly spoke of a need for more teachers, support staff and supply staff. The mental health and wellbeing of both staff and pupils were also frequently reported by respondents as an area in need of (additional) support.

Other areas where support was needed included: clear communication and guidance from DfE, and additional support for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils including funding for access to specialist support and resources

Introduction

This report details findings from the October 2021 wave of the School and College Panel, a panel of leaders and teachers sampled from the Schools Workforce Census to provide rapid feedback to the Department for Education.

The short survey (taking five to ten minutes to complete) covered a range of topical issues in education during recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. A total of 811 leaders and 1,077 classroom teachers participated in the October wave.

Methodology

The School and College Panel consists of a group of leaders and teachers that have agreed to participate in short regular research surveys on topical education issues. Some leaders and teachers were previously recruited to the School Snapshot Panel in late 2020 and early 2021 and remained on the new School and College Panel. Others were recruited directly on to the School and College Panel at the end of the 2020/21 academic year.

All leaders and teachers were recruited from School Workforce Census data provided by the Department for Education. One leader from each chosen school was invited to take part in the October wave. Teachers were selected from the full population of teachers, meaning at some schools, multiple teachers were invited to participate in the October wave.

At the time of fieldwork in October 2021, leaders and tutors from colleges had not yet been recruited onto the panel.

The survey was administered online, with fieldwork lasting from 8th to 15th October 2021. Leaders and teachers received an email invite and two reminder emails.

The table below shows the response rate for the October survey for leaders and teachers by school phase.

Table 1. Response rate by key group

	Primary Leaders	Secondary Leaders	Primary Teachers	Secondary Teachers
Starting sample	1,580	1,172	1,517	1,456
Complete surveys	520	291	550	527
Response rate	33%	25%	36%	36%

Weighting

Two types of weighting were applied to the data, depending on whether questions were asking for school-level or individual-level answers from leaders and teachers.

School-level weighting

At the analysis stage, the school-level/leaders' data was grossed up to the overall population of schools. This process corrects for the over-sampling of secondary schools (relative to the proportion of the population that they represent) so that the findings can be interpreted as being representative of all (in scope) state-funded schools.¹

The population data for weighting was drawn from Get Information about Schools (GIAS).

Teachers / individual weighting

For the analysis on a teacher rather than a school base, the responses from leaders and classroom teachers were combined and weighted together to the overall population of teachers. The population data for the teachers weighting was taken from the Schools Workforce Census based on November 2020 data (the most current available data).

¹ Note that no responses were received from secondary studio schools in the October wave, therefore responses are representative of all in scope state-funded schools *excluding* secondary studio schools (secondary studio schools comprise 0.1% of the total school population).

Interpreting the findings

Data presented in this report is from a sample of senior leaders and teachers rather than the total population of leaders and teachers. Although the leader sample and the teacher sample have been weighted to be nationally representative (by school type and by teacher demographics), the data is still subject to sampling error. The extent of sampling error depends on the sampling approach (the closer it is to a random sample the less the sampling error), the sample size (the larger the sample the lower the likely sampling error) and the survey result (the closer to 50% the less confident statistically we are in the finding).

Given the sample size in this survey (1,888), statistically we can be 95% confident that for a survey finding of 50% based on all respondents, the 'true' value (if all leaders and teachers had answered rather than a sample of 1,888) lies within a +/- 3.2% range of this figure (i.e. 46.8% - 53.2%). Results based on a sub-set of schools interviewed are subject to a wider margin of error. For example, for results among school leaders, we can be 95% confident that for a survey result of 50% the sampling error is +/- 4.9%.

Differences between sub-groups and previous waves are only commented on in the text if they are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, unless otherwise stated, i.e. statistically we can be 95% confident that the differences are 'real' differences and not a result of the fact that the findings are based on a sample of schools rather than a census of all schools.

Free School Meal (FSM) entitlement is used as a proxy for deprivation levels at the school. All schools in England were listed in ascending order of the proportion of their pupils that are entitled to FSM. This ordered list was then split into five equal groups (or quintiles). Quintile 1, which is referred to as the 'lowest proportion' throughout the report, represents the schools with the lowest proportion of pupils entitled to FSM. This group thus equates to the schools with the least disadvantaged/deprived pupil population. The proportion of pupils entitled to FSM increases progressively as the quintiles increase. In the report, significant differences tend to be tested between schools with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils and schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils.

Due to rounding to the nearest whole number, percentages may not total to exactly 100% or precisely reflect statistics provided in the data tables.

In this report there is occasional reference to findings from previous School Snapshot Surveys (including the COVID-19 School Snapshot Survey run in May 2020). It should be noted that due to differences in methodology between the School Snapshot Survey and the School and College Panel, direct comparisons should be treated with caution.

A note on reporting

Some survey questions allow for an 'other, please specify' free text response. At the end of fieldwork, these free-text responses are examined. They are either back-coded into existing codes or new answer codes are created to group together responses for the purpose of reporting. These newly created codes are referred to as 'spontaneous' responses in charts. New codes are only created if they account for 1% or more of answers. Responses that cannot be matched to any existing, or newly created 'spontaneous' code, are reported as 'other'.

Education Recovery

School leaders and teachers were asked their views on the impact of disruption to learning during the pandemic, the use of summer schools during summer 2021, and their use of DfE curriculum guidance.

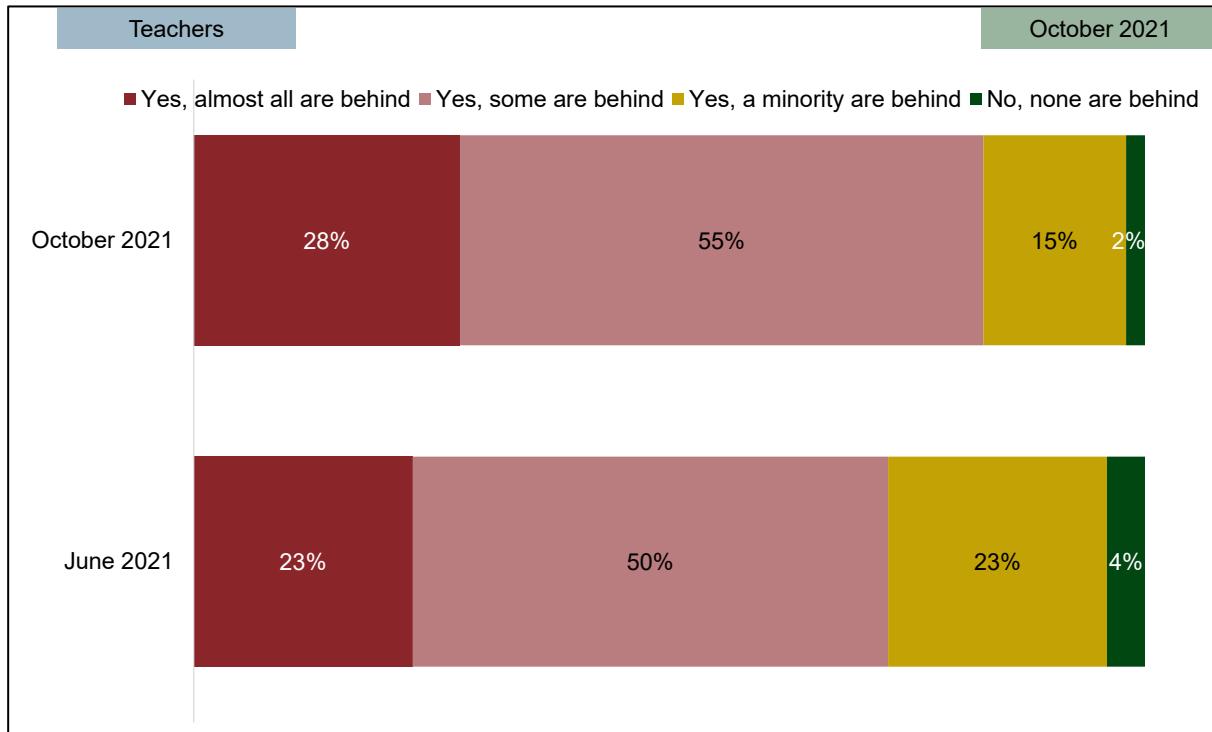
Pupils behind in their learning as a result of disruption to learning during the pandemic

Teachers were more likely to be worried about the extent to which pupils were behind in their learning than was the case in June 2021.

All teachers and leaders were asked 'As a result of school closures, do you think your pupils are behind in their learning compared to where you expect them to be at this stage of their education?' The question did not ask about specific subjects, however teachers were asked to consider the learning of pupils they teach personally, rather than for their views on the whole student body. It should be noted that the disruption to learning during periods of limited in-person attendance is described under a catch-all phrase of 'school closure' though few schools were fully closed.

Overall, 98% of teachers felt that *at least* some of their pupils were behind in their learning. Just over half of all teachers (55%) said that 'some' pupils are behind (up from 50% in the June 2021 survey), and over a quarter (28%) felt that almost all pupils were behind (up from 23% in June 2021).

Figure 1. Whether teachers felt pupils are behind in their learning



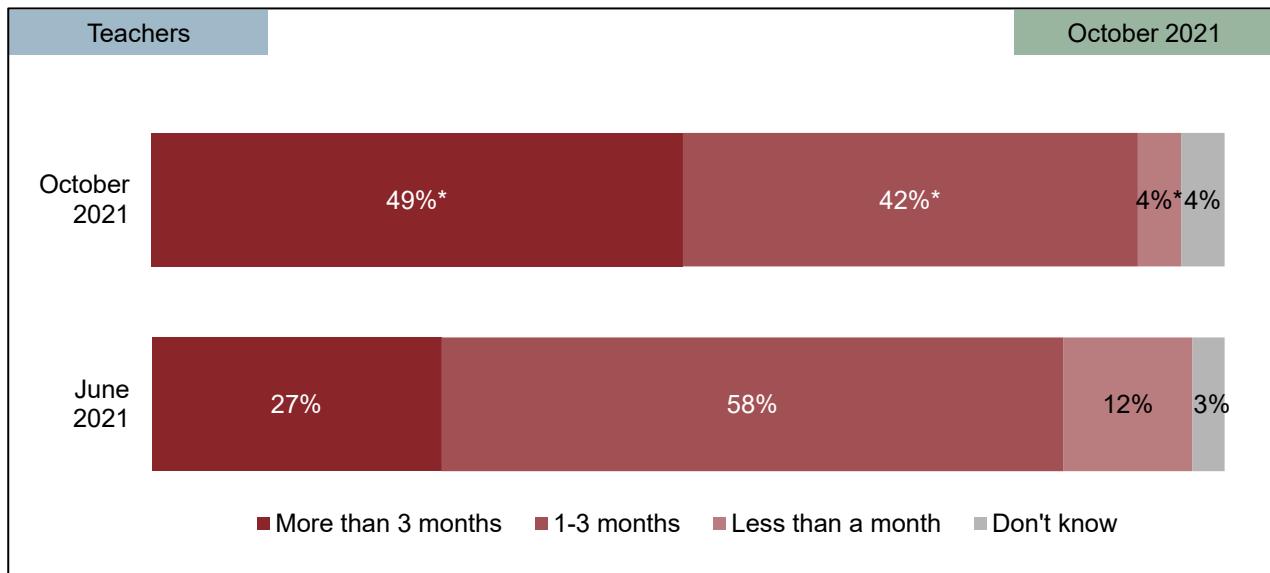
Source: School Snapshot Panel, June 2021 survey. H2: All teachers (n=979), October 2021 survey. B4: All teachers (n=1077).

Primary teachers were more likely than secondary to feel that almost all pupils are behind (33% vs. 23%), whereas secondary teachers were more likely than primary to feel that *some* pupils were behind (58% vs. 52%).

Significantly more teachers at schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils expressed concerns that almost all their pupils were behind in their learning, with over two-fifths (46%) reporting that this was the case, compared to 19% of teachers at schools with the lowest proportions of FSM eligible pupils.

Almost half (49%) of teachers felt that pupils were more than 3 months behind in their learning (up from 27% in June 2021), while two-fifths (42%) felt that pupils were 1-3 months behind (down from 58% in June 2021). Hence teachers felt both that more pupils were behind in their learning than in June and that, on average, the extent to which they were behind was greater.

Figure 2. How far teachers feel pupils are behind in their learning



Source: School Snapshot Panel, June 2021 survey. H3: Teachers that felt pupils were behind in their learning (n=938). October 2021. B5: Teachers that felt pupils were behind in their learning (n=1,052).

Primary school teachers were much more likely than secondary school teachers to feel that pupils were more than 3 months behind in their learning (60% vs. 37%), while secondary school teachers were more likely than primary school teachers to feel that pupils were 1-3 months behind (51% vs. 34%). Teachers in schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were also more likely to feel that pupils with more than 3 months behind (67% compared to 41% amongst teachers in schools with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils).

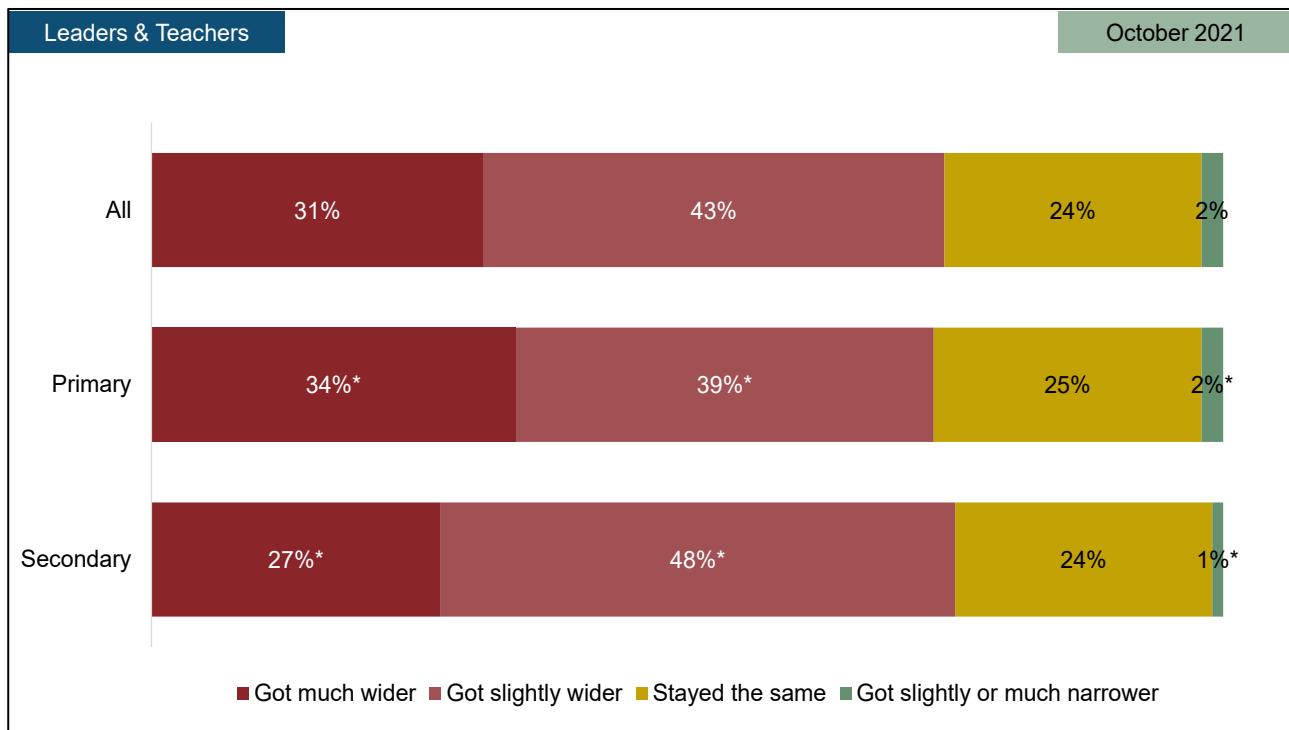
Leaders were also asked how far behind their pupils were, answering on the student body as a whole, rather than pupils they personally teach. Over a quarter (27%) of schools reported that almost all pupils were behind. However, unlike the pattern seen in teacher responses, there was no significant difference in the proportion of primary and secondary schools with almost all pupils behind in learning (28% vs. 26%). Over half (56%) of schools with pupils behind reported these pupils were, generally, more than 3 months behind where they should be. In line with findings from teachers, primary schools were more likely to report pupils more than 3 months behind compared to secondary schools (58% vs. 43%).

Gap between pupils with SEND and pupils without SEND

Leaders and teachers who personally teach pupils with SEND were asked whether they felt that the gap between pupils with SEND and pupils without SEND has got wider or narrower. Overall, three-quarters (74%) felt that the gap had become wider, with 31%

reporting the gap had become much wider and 43% reporting it had become slightly wider.

Figure 3. Views on whether the gap between pupils with SEND and pupils without SEND has become wider or narrower



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. B7: All leaders and teachers who personally teach pupils with SEND (n=1836). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between primary and secondary.

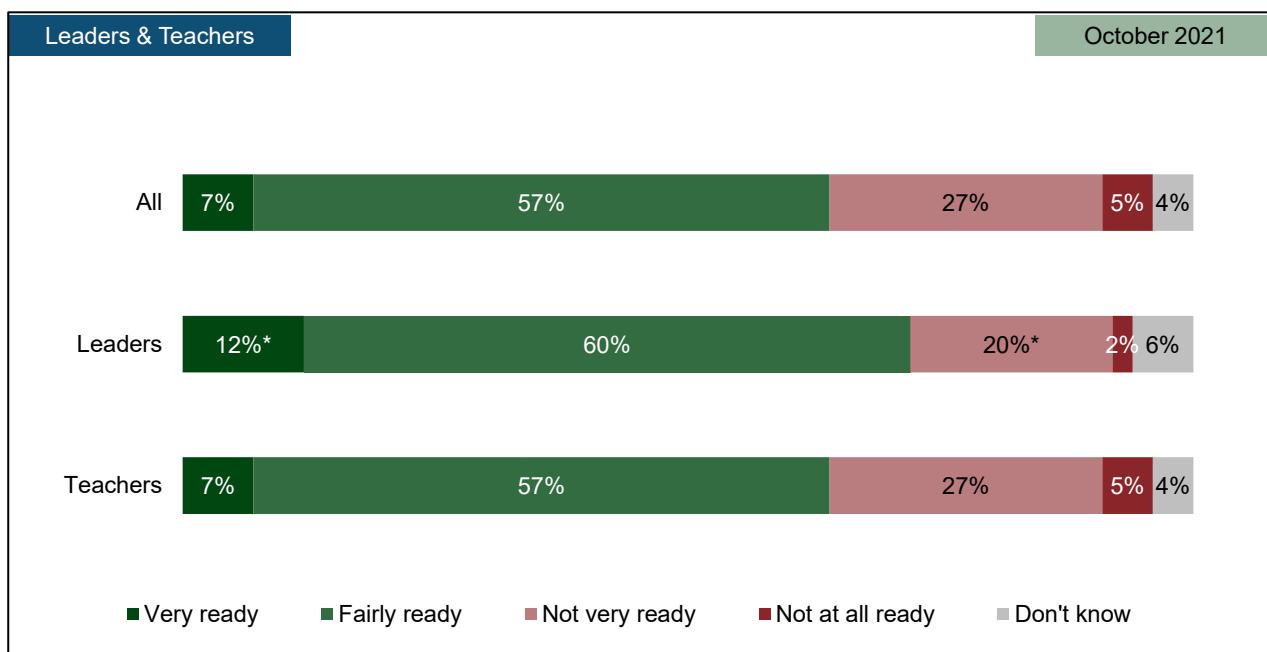
Although around three-quarters of leaders and teachers in both the primary (73%) and secondary (75%) sectors felt the gap had become wider, there were differences in the strength of these views. Those in the primary sector were more likely to state that the gap had become much wider compared to those in the secondary sector (34% vs. 27%). Leaders and teachers in schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were also more likely to state that the gap had become much wider compared to those with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils (36% vs. 26%), but less likely to say slightly wider (38% vs 44%).

Readiness of year 7s

Secondary leaders and teachers that teach year 7 expressed mixed views regarding the extent to which the year 7s at their school were ready to begin this academic year. Overall, just under two-thirds (65%) felt that year 7s were academically ready (7% very ready and 57% fairly ready), while just under a third (32%) did not feel the year 7s were

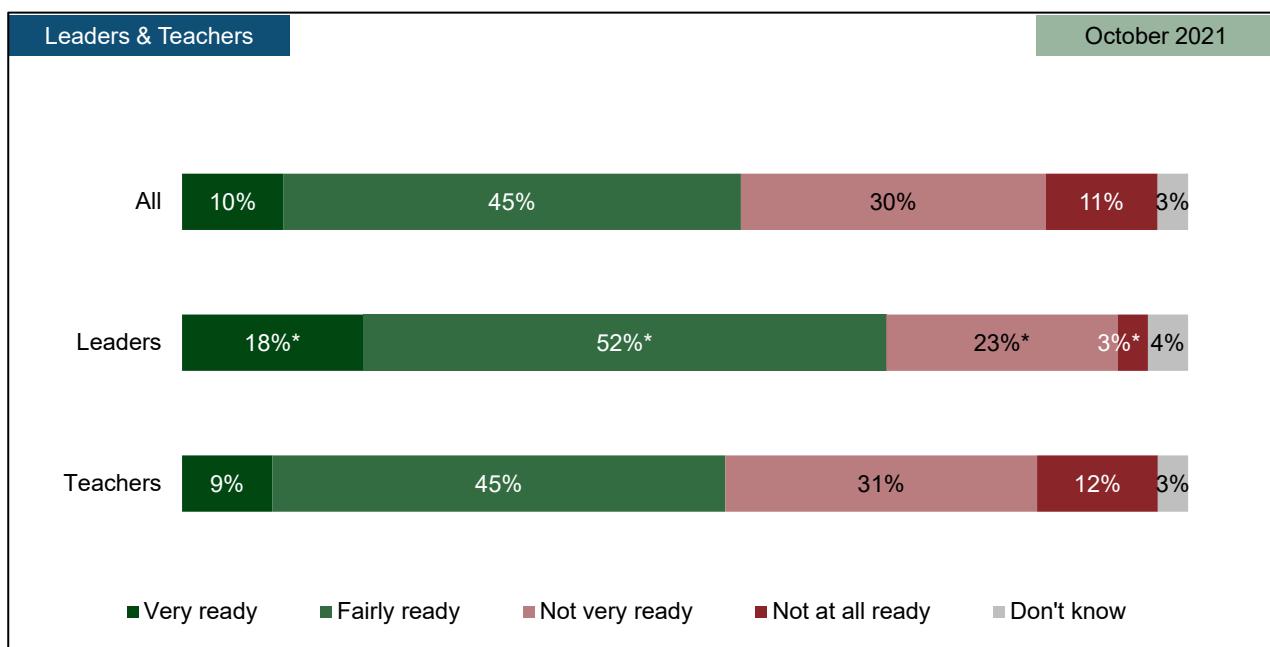
academically ready (27% not very ready and 5% not at all ready). Similarly, the majority (55%) of leaders and teachers felt that year 7s were socially ready (10% very ready and 45% fairly ready), while 41% did not feel the year 7s were socially ready (30% not very ready and 11% not at all ready).

Figure 4. Extent to which leaders and teachers felt that the year 7s at their school were academically ready to begin this academic year



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. A8_1: Secondary leaders and secondary teachers excluding those who do not teach year 7 (n=762). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between leaders and teachers.

Figure 5. Extent to which leaders and teachers felt that the year 7s at their school were socially ready to begin this academic year



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. A8_2: Secondary leaders and secondary teachers excluding those who do not teach year 7 (n=764).

A difference was seen in the views of leaders and teachers in relation to the readiness of year 7s this year. Leaders are more likely than teachers to feel that year 7s were very or fairly ready both academically and socially. Overall, 72% of leaders felt that year 7s were academically very or fairly ready, compared to 64% of teachers. Similarly, 70% of leaders felt year 7s were socially very or fairly ready, compared to 54% of teachers.

Leaders and teachers at schools that ran a summer school were not significantly more likely to say their year 7s were very or fairly ready *academically* (65% vs. 64% of leaders and teachers at schools that did not run a summer school), nor were they more likely to say year 7s were very or fairly ready *socially* (both 55%).

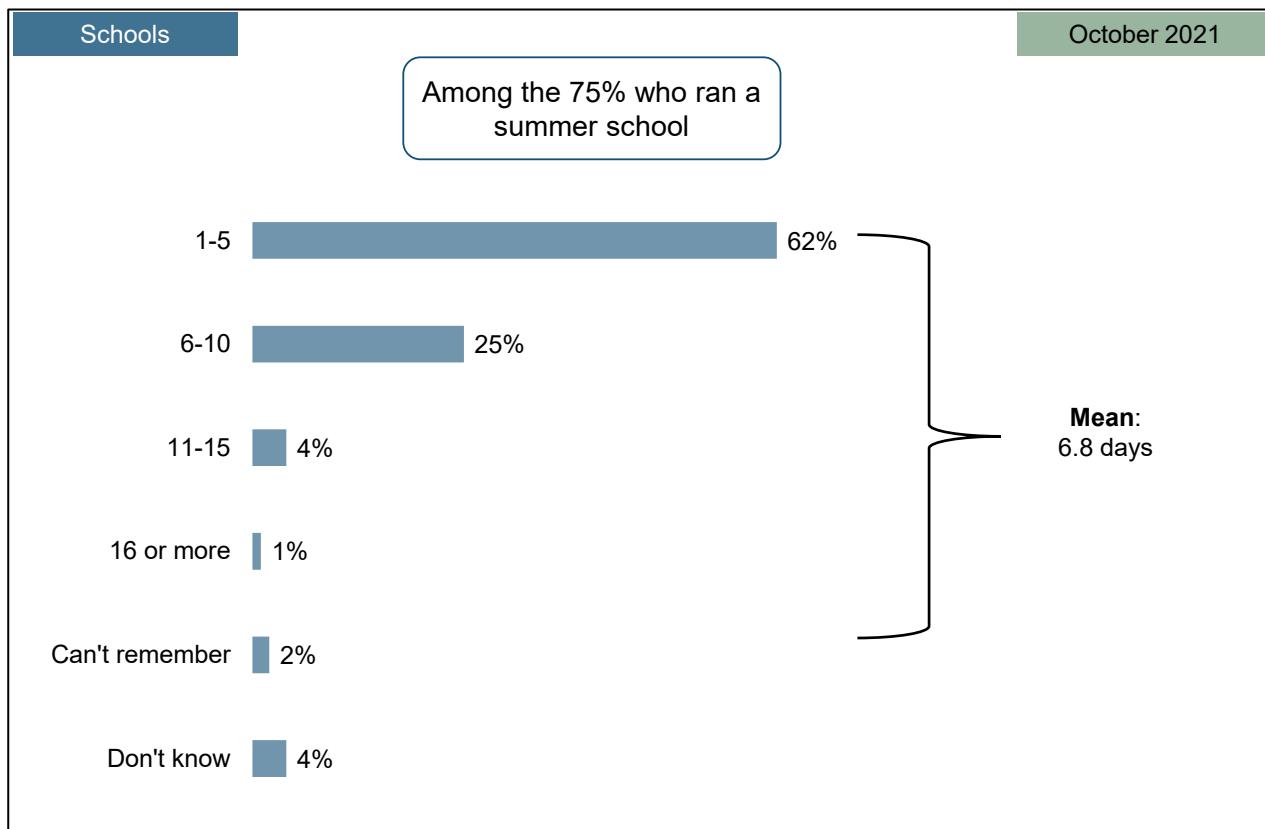
Background and structure of summer schools

All secondary leaders were asked whether their school had run a summer school this year (i.e. in summer 2021). Three-quarters (75%) of schools had run a summer school, while a quarter (25%) had not. Schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were more likely to have run a summer school than those with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils (80% vs. 60%).

The majority (91%) of summer schools which had been run by secondary schools this year were funded by DfE², though this proportion was lower (82%) among schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils.

Amongst secondary schools who provided summer schools most (62%) ran them for 1 to 5 days. A quarter (25%) ran them for 6 to 10 days. On average summer schools were offered for 6.8 days (mean).

Figure 6. The number of days summer schools ran for this year

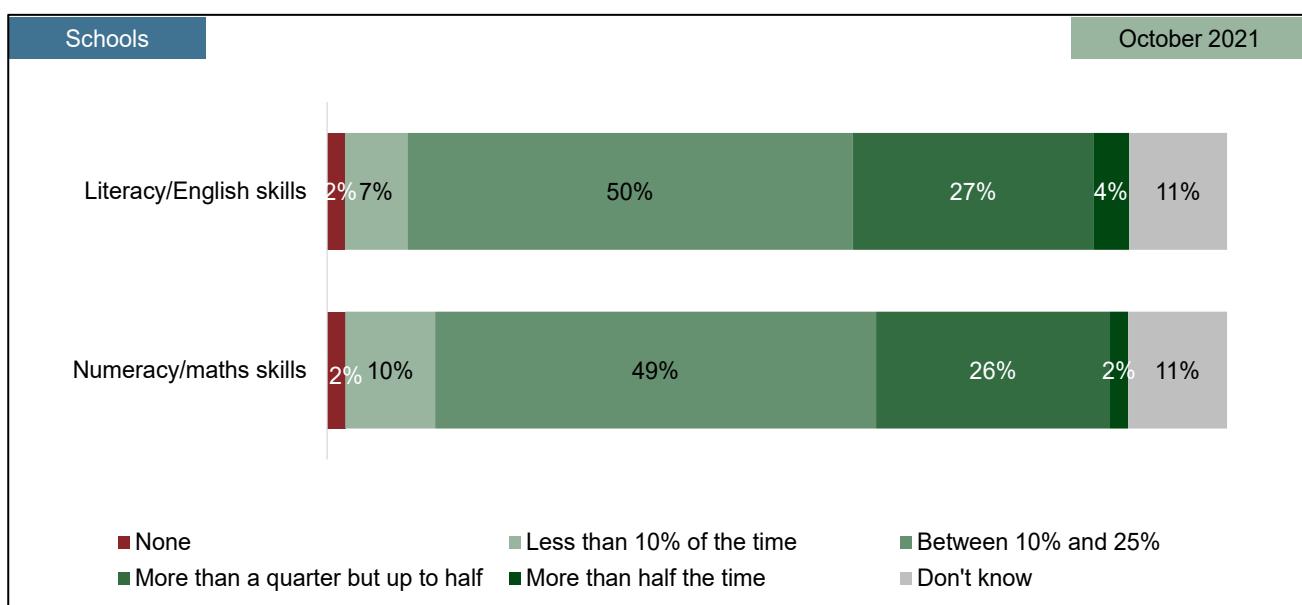


Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. A3: Secondary schools that ran a summer school this year (n=214).

² More information on the DfE summer schools programme is available here: [Summer schools programme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/summer-schools-programme)

Secondary school leaders were also asked what proportion of time was focused on literacy/English skills and numeracy/math skills in summer schools. Literacy/English skills accounted for 10% to 25% of the time for 50% of these schools, with a further 27% dedicating more than a quarter and up to half of the time to literacy/English skills. Results were almost identical for provision of numeracy/math skills (which accounted for 10% to 25% of the time for 49% of schools, and a further 26% dedicating more than a quarter up to half of the time on numeracy/math skills).

Figure 7. Proportion of time focused on literacy/English skills and numeracy/math skills in summer schools

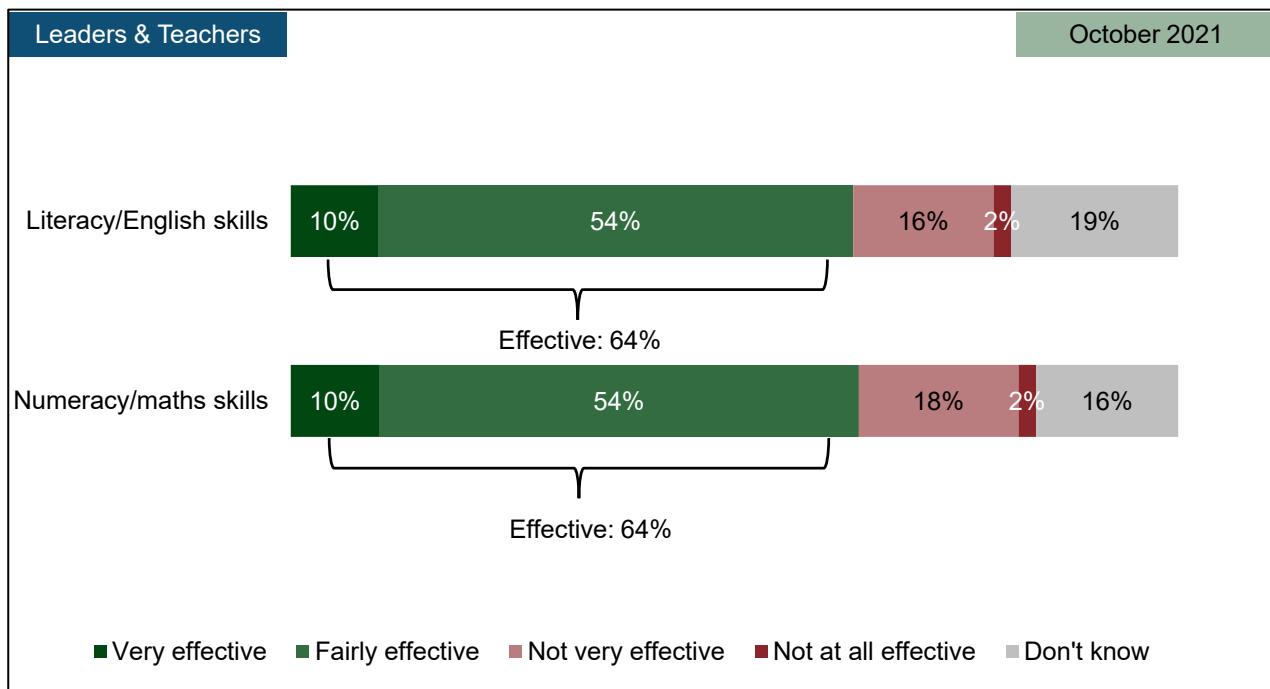


Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. A4: Secondary schools that ran a summer school this year (n=214).

Impact of summer schools

Both secondary leaders and teachers were broadly positive regarding the effectiveness of their summer schools at improving pupils' literacy/English skills and numeracy/math skills. Two-thirds (64%) of secondary leaders and teachers felt that their summer schools were effective to some extent at improving both literacy/English skills and numeracy/math skills; of those, half (54%) felt that the summer schools were fairly effective and a further 10% felt they were very effective. A smaller proportion (16% for literacy/English skills and 18% for numeracy/math skills) felt the summer schools were not very effective and a similar proportion (19% for literacy/English skills and 16% for numeracy/math skills) did not know whether their summer schools had been effective.

Figure 8. Views on the effectiveness of their school's summer school at improving pupils' literacy/English skills and numeracy/math skills

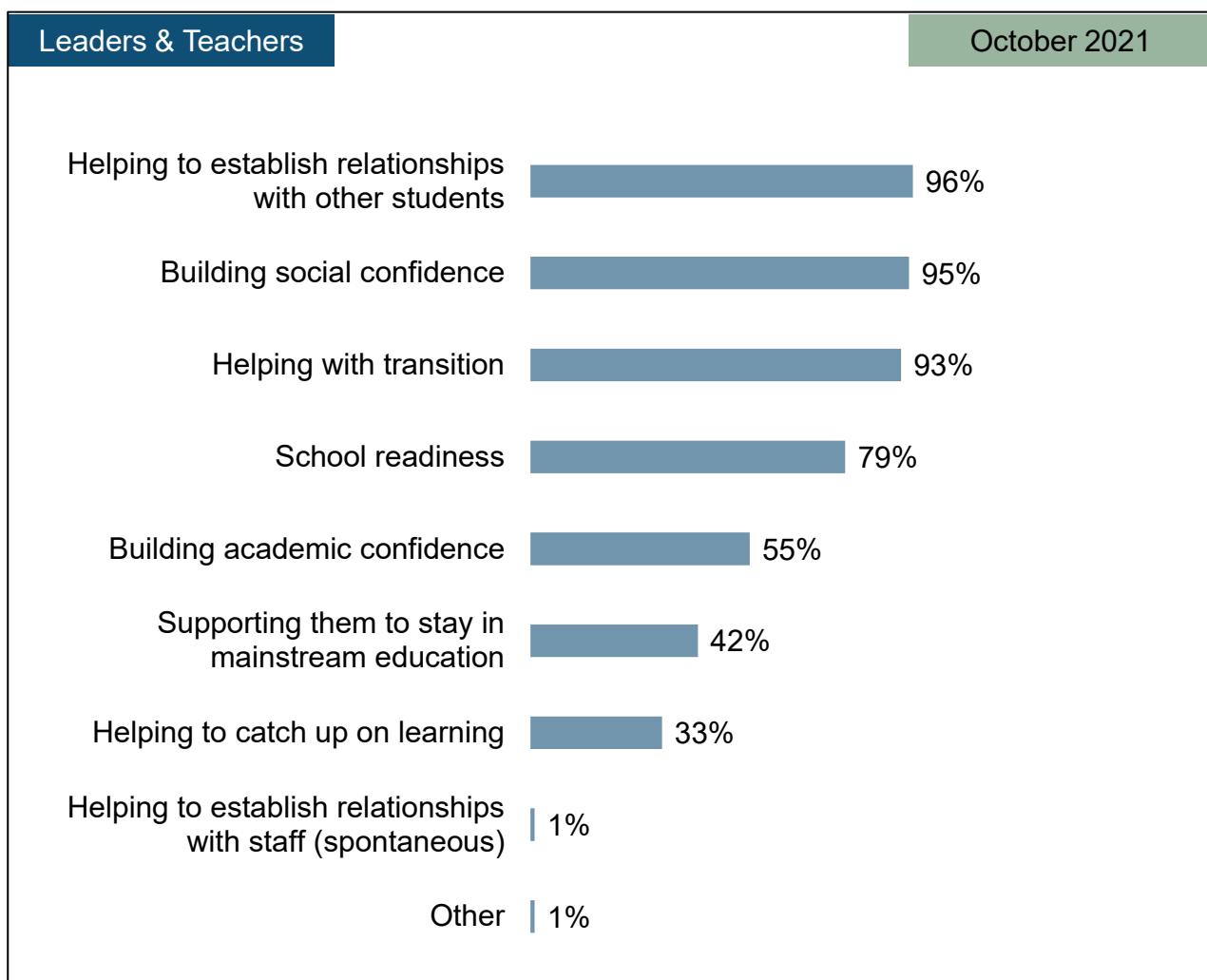


Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. A5: Secondary schools that ran a summer school this year and secondary teachers who were personally involved (literacy/English skills n=222, numeracy/math skills n=212).

Impact of summer schools on pupils with SEND

The majority (90%) of secondary leaders and teachers reported that pupils with SEND had attended their schools' summer schools this year. Almost all agreed that the summer schools had helped support pupils with SEND to establish relationships with other students (96%), helped with building social confidence (95%) and helped with transition (93%). Secondary leaders and teachers also agreed that the summer schools had supported school readiness (79%) and to a lesser extent built academic confidence (55%). They reported that the summer schools had slightly less impact on supporting pupils with SEND to stay in mainstream education (42%) or helping them to catch up on learning (33%).

Figure 9. Views on whether their school's summer school helped support pupils with SEND



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. A7: Secondary leaders running summer school or secondary teachers personally involved, and pupils with SEND attended (n=259).

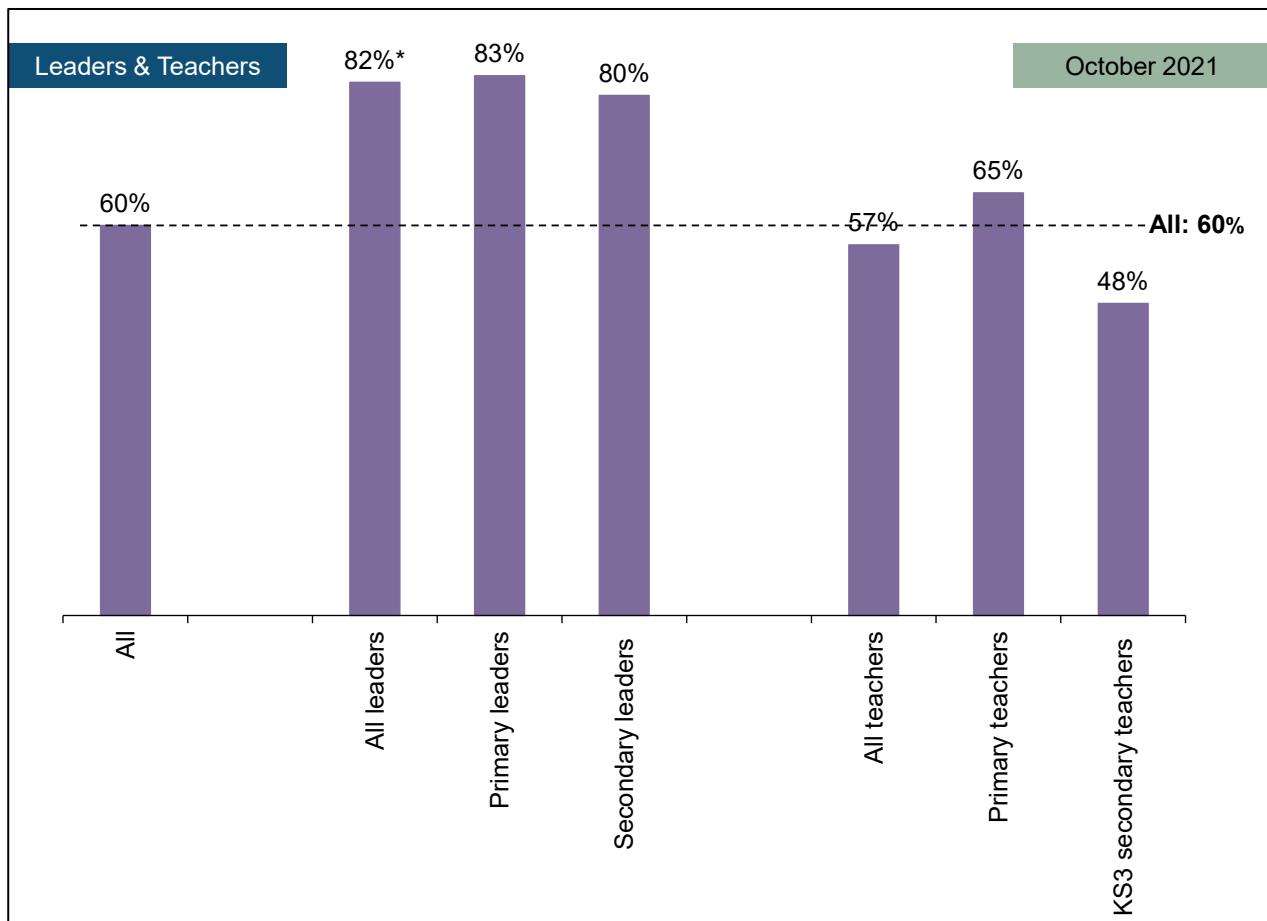
Secondary leaders and teachers from schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were more likely than average to report that the summer schools had supported pupils with SEND to catch up on learning (59% amongst those with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils compared the average of 33%).

Awareness of DfE curriculum guidance

In July 2021 the DfE published curriculum guidance titled “Teaching a broad and balanced curriculum for education recovery” which offers suggestions on how schools can decide to prioritise elements within their curriculum for education recovery. Under

two-thirds of leaders and teachers (60%) reported that they were aware of the guidance, while 30% were not and a further 10% were unsure.

Figure 10. Percentage of leaders and teachers aware of the DfE published curriculum guidance



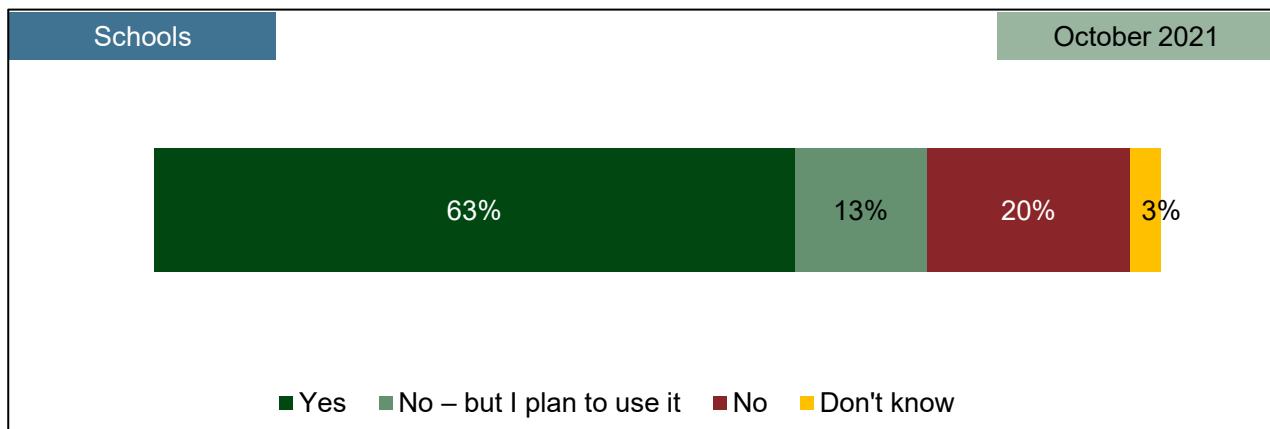
Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. B1: Leaders, primary teachers, and secondary teachers who teach KS3 (n=1843). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between leaders and teachers.

The guidance was aimed at leaders with responsibility for the curriculum: this was reflected in the finding that leaders were more likely than teachers to be aware of the guidance (82% vs. 57%). Primary leaders and teachers were also more aware of the guidance than secondary leaders and teachers (68% vs. 51% respectively). In addition, leaders and teachers from schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were particularly likely to be aware of the guidance (69% compared to 60% across all leaders and teachers).

Use of DfE curriculum guidance

Of those schools who were aware of the guidance, almost two-thirds (63%) had used it to help with curriculum planning, and a further 13% had not yet, but were planning to use it. A fifth of schools (20%) had not used the guidance. Schools with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were less likely than others to have used the guidance (51% compared to 63% across all schools).

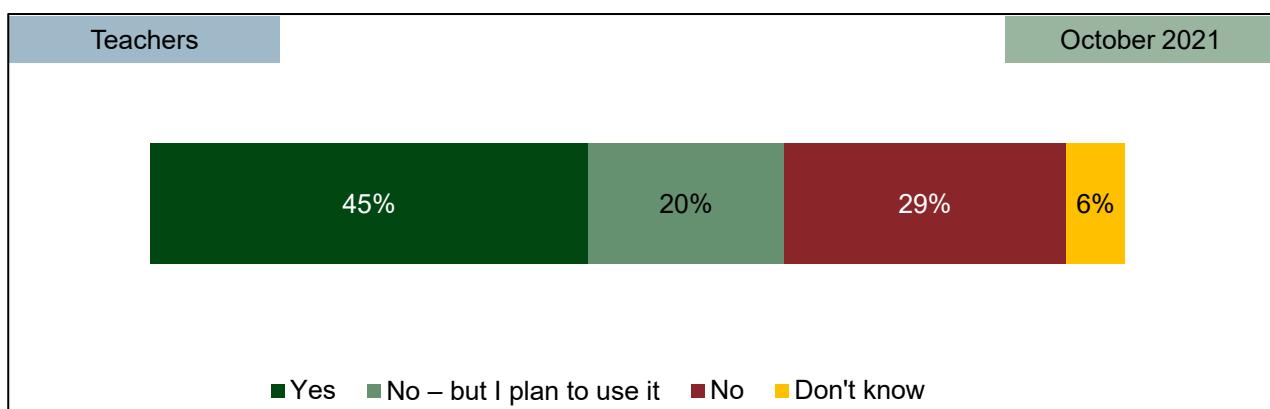
Figure 11. Whether schools had used the guidance to help with curriculum planning



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. B2: Leaders who are aware of the guidance (n=663).

Just under half of teachers (45%) had used the guidance to help with curriculum planning, while a further fifth (20%) planned to use it. Over a quarter (29%) had not used the guidance.

Figure 12. Whether teachers had used the guidance to help with curriculum planning



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. B2_teachers: Primary teachers and secondary teachers who teach KS3 who are aware of the guidance (n=588).

Leaders and teachers were asked an open-text question about how they had used the guidance.

They commonly reported using the guidance to help address gaps in learning to support education recovery. They noted that they had used the guidance to help them identify areas where their pupils might need more support and develop teaching and learning plans to ensure pupils 'catch up' where necessary. The guidance had helped some schools put a recovery plan or curriculum in place.

It has helped identify gaps in what children haven't been taught from the wider curriculum and to ensure these are plugged before moving the learning on. It has also ensured that phonics and early reading is a priority for KS1. – *Primary leader*

To support Catch-Up Programme by adjusting the curriculum to catch up lost learning through mini refresh teaching sessions/ projects. The key lost learning for subjects was developed using this document and addressed. – *Primary leader*

Many also reported using the guidance to ensure that they were prioritising the most important areas of learning. They had used the guidance to review their current areas of learning and ensure that they were prioritising areas which would meet the needs of pupils.

Used it to reflect on how we approach our curriculum, identifying areas we need to focus on above others, such as reading and class discussions. – *Secondary teacher*

To help decide what to cover during the first term. To help prioritize content and adjust our 'usual' units of work. – *Primary leader*

Some used the guidance to help them review and/or adapt their existing curriculum. This included reviewing curriculum content, lesson plans and assessment approaches. Examples included re-structuring lessons and units and ensuring their curriculum covers all national priorities.

It has enabled Subject Leaders to revise their curriculum area so that it not only provides clear and identifiable continuity and progression, but also interweaves and supports other curriculum areas. – *Primary leader*

Others used the guidance to ensure their curriculum content was broad enough, or used it as a reference point during their planning and teaching. Some noted that members of the SLT and/or curriculum leaders had distributed the guidance and used it within their teams.

Staff absence

Leaders and teachers prevented from physically attending the school site

All leaders and teachers were asked whether anything had prevented them personally from physically attending the school site since schools reopened this academic year (from August 2021). Around two-thirds (59%) of leaders and teachers reported that there had been no reasons stopping them from physically attending, with a slightly higher proportion of leaders (64%) than teachers (59%) giving this response.

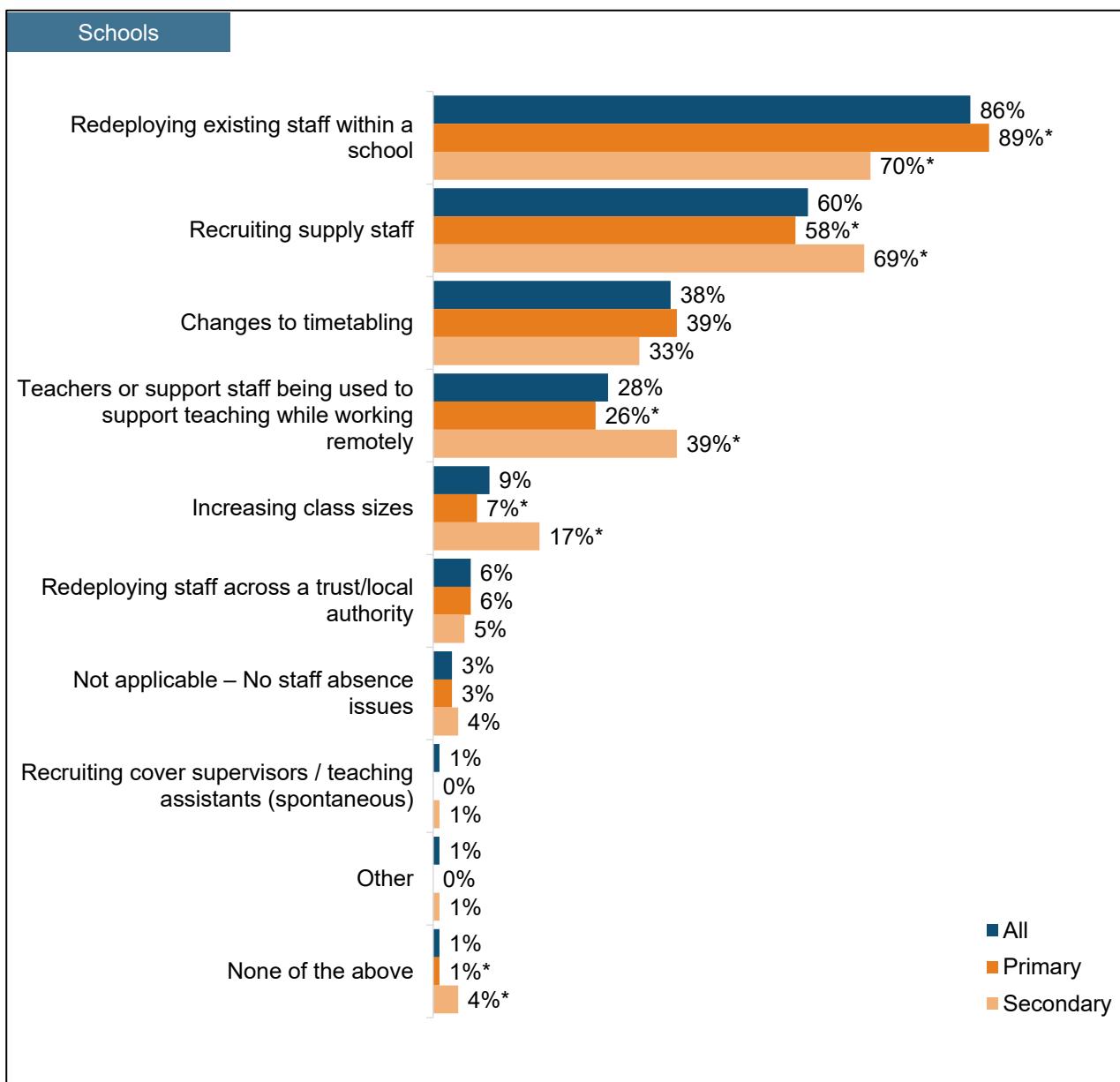
The most frequent reasons selected by those who had not been able to physically attend their school site were non-COVID-19 related sickness (17% of leaders and teachers), a COVID-19 related sickness (15%) and caring responsibilities (9%). A range of other reasons were selected less frequently (5% or less in all cases) by leaders and teachers, including attending a COVID-19 vaccination appointment or following side-effects of vaccination and other personal reasons.

Leaders and teachers from schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were more likely than others to report a barrier to physically attending school (47% compared to 41% across all leaders and teachers). They were also more likely to state that caring responsibilities had prevented them from attending the school site than leaders and teachers from schools with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils (15% from schools with the highest proportion FSM eligible compared to 7% from schools with the lowest proportion).

Managing staff absences

All leaders were asked to note which approaches, if any, had been used by their schools to manage staff absence since schools re-opened this academic year. The majority of schools (86%) had been redeploying existing staff within the school and two-thirds (60%) had been recruiting supply staff. Around a third (38%) had instigated timetable changes and in a quarter of schools (28%), teachers or support staff were being used to support teaching while working remotely.

Figure 13. Approaches used by schools to manage staff absence since schools reopened this academic year



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. D2: All leaders (n=811). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between primary and secondary.

Primary schools were more likely than secondary schools to redeploy existing staff (89% vs. 70%) and secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to recruit supply staff (69% vs. 58%). Secondary schools were also more likely than primary schools to have teachers or support staff being used to support teaching while working remotely (39% vs. 26%).

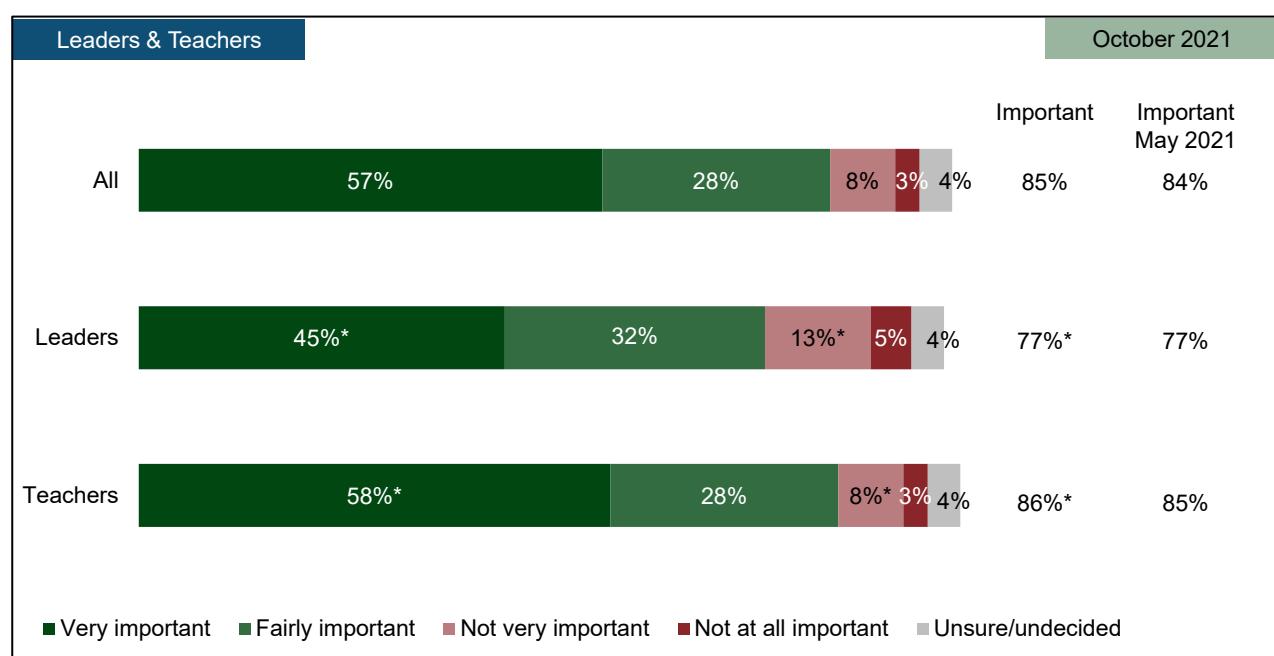
COVID-19 Testing

Rapid asymptomatic testing

The objective of the asymptomatic education testing programme in secondary schools is to break chains of transmission, maintain face to face education and reduce covid related absences from school. The Department is interested to understand how teachers and leaders view testing and whether they consider this to be a helpful tool in maintaining face to face education for their students. As case rates have varied since testing was introduced in January 2021 the Department is interested to understand how attitudes to testing have changed.

Secondary leaders and teachers were asked 'In your view, how important is regular COVID-19 testing of pupils to effective on-site schooling at present?' Overall, more than half (57%) of secondary leaders and teachers said testing was very important, a similar proportion to when the same question was asked in the May 2021 survey (54%). Overall, 85% said it was *at least* fairly important, which is also in line with the findings of the May survey (84%). Also in line with the May survey, there was a difference of opinion by role, with significantly more teachers reporting that testing was at least fairly important than leaders (86% vs. 77%, compared with 85% of teachers and 77% of leaders in May).

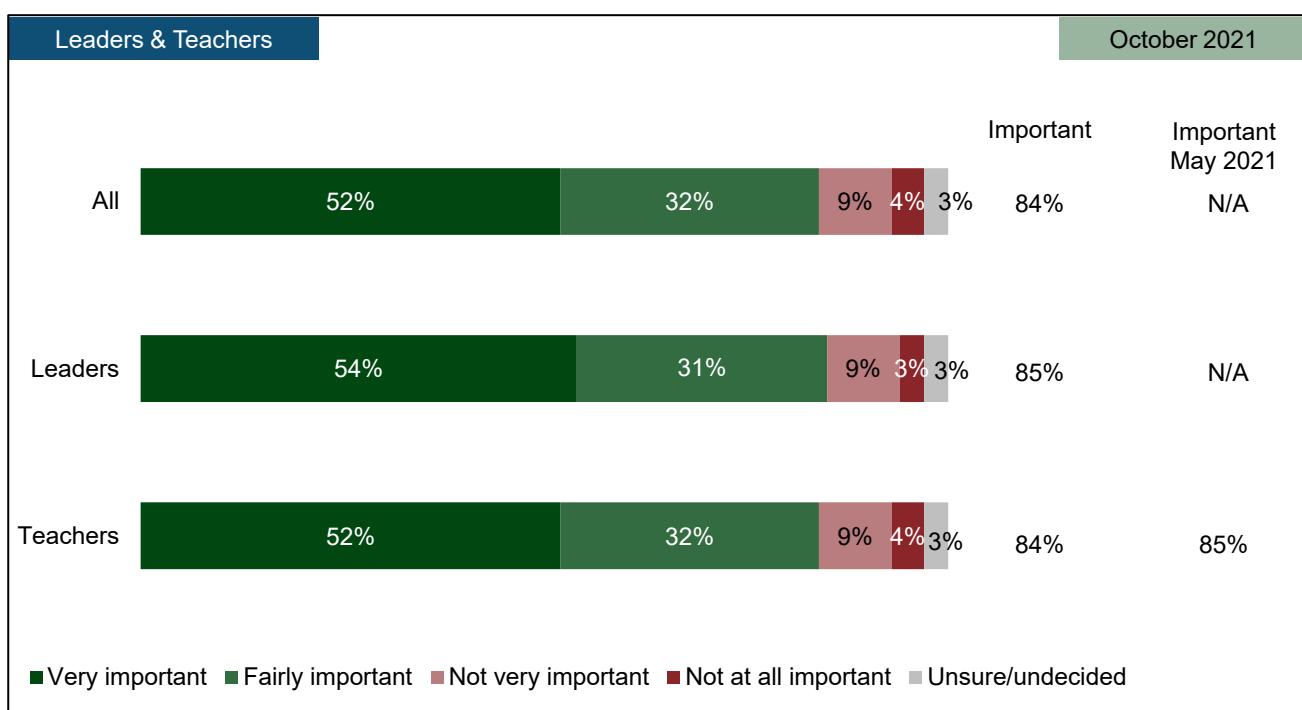
Figure 14. How important is regular COVID-19 testing of pupils to effective on-site schooling at present



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. D3: Secondary leaders and teachers (n=817). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between leaders and teachers.

All leaders and teachers were asked how important they felt regular COVID-19 testing of staff was to effective on-site schooling at present. Overall, 84% of leaders and teachers thought it was *at least* fairly important, with more than half (52%) saying that testing was very important. Again, these findings are similar to the May 2020 survey, in which 85% said testing of staff was at least fairly important, and 54% said very important. There was limited difference of opinion by role, unlike the difference seen in relation to testing of pupils (discussed above). However, leaders and teachers in secondary schools were more likely than those in primary schools to say staff testing was very important (55% vs. 50%).

Figure 15. How important is regular COVID-19 testing of staff to effective on-site schooling at present



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. D4: All leaders and teachers (n=1888).
Please note that in May 2021, this question was only asked of teachers.

One in ten (11%) secondary leaders and teachers felt that the regular COVID-19 testing of *pupils* is not important to effective on-site schooling at present (compared with 13% in May 2021), while 13% of all leaders and teachers felt that the regular COVID-19 testing of *staff* is not important. In an open-text question, leaders and teachers who indicated that testing of pupils and/or staff was not very or not at all important were asked to say why they felt this was the case.

Some felt that regular testing does not necessarily effectively protect pupils or staff from contracting COVID-19. They felt that there is a significant amount of social interaction

that could lead to transmission and that, even with testing, COVID-19 is highly likely to continue to spread.

Regular testing is not preventing the spread of covid as pupils have still been in contact with each other while contagious. – *Secondary teacher*

Others emphasised that staff and/or pupils were likely to already be vaccinated. As such, they felt that the likelihood of transmission was low. Similarly, some noted that, if close contacts of someone who receives a positive COVID-19 test do not necessarily have to self-isolate, they were not sure what the purpose of testing regularly would be. As such, some felt that it was time to return to a more ‘normal’ school environment.

We are now immunized and need to move on. We could have many healthy teachers isolating at one time if we all test. – *Primary teacher*

In my opinion, this is something we have to live with like flu and other infectious diseases. We don’t test for them on a regular basis, at some point we need to fully get back to normal. – *Primary leader*

Some expressed doubts about the accuracy of the tests, either because they did not trust the accuracy of the tests themselves or because they were being taken irregularly by staff and/or pupils. As such, they emphasised that it was difficult to ensure those who needed to take tests were doing so.

The LFT [lateral flow tests] are not effective enough for the testing to be relied upon. Staff are diligently testing but we have not had any positive staff LFTs although there have been positive PCRs. – *Primary leader*

The burden that testing was seen to place on schools and teachers was also highlighted. Leaders and teachers noted that the tests were logistically difficult to administer and reduced the amount of time teachers could dedicate to teaching.

It creates a disproportionate disruption to school operations as staff time is having to be used for this. – *Secondary leader*

Use of COVID-19 testing data

On 8 June the Department for Education made aggregated, school level, COVID-19 testing data available to schools. All leaders were asked whether their school had used this data. Only a small proportion of schools (13%) had used the data. Just over half

(55%) of schools had not used the data and a third (32%) did not know whether or not their school had used it. Secondary schools were more likely than primary schools to have used the data (23% vs. 11%) but were also more likely to say that they didn't know whether they'd used the data (53% vs. 27%).

Of those who had used the data, a third (35%) of schools had not made or did not intend to make any changes as a result of this data. A higher proportion of primary schools than secondary schools provided this response (41% vs. 21%). A further quarter (27%) of schools reported that it was too early to say yet.

Others provided examples (in an open text question) of how they had made changes as a result of this data.

Schools had most commonly used the data to instigate further social distancing and hygiene practices in their school. Examples included use of face masks, pupil bubbles, regular handwashing and increased cleaning.

Extra cleaning, handwashing, restriction of parental and visitor access to school. Asking visitors to wear masks. – *Primary leader*

Some had used the data as a spur to regularly remind parents, pupils and staff about the importance of testing and to maintain a method of communication with parents. This included increased communication about the benefits of testing. Examples included regular e-mail and social media communications, as well as communicating with staff internally via INSET days and other school-wide mechanisms.

We sent out communications to remind all staff to test and submit results and this was also mentioned in the INSET at the start of term.
– *Primary leader*

Constantly communicating with parents. Regular posts on social media too. Training videos used for pupils. Pupils constantly reminded to test. – *Primary leader*

Among the 13% who had used the data, a small number of schools reported using the data to inform their risk assessments, helping them to assess the suitability of their current plans and make risk assessment changes in response to changes in the data trends.

Leader and Teacher Wellbeing

In October 2021 leaders and teachers were asked a series of ONS-validated questions³ about personal wellbeing, including: their life satisfaction, the extent to which they feel the things they do in life are worthwhile, how happy they felt yesterday, their anxiety levels, and job satisfaction. Where averages are reported these are mean scores.

Supporting the wellbeing and mental health of staff is a crucial element of the Department's commitment to help create a supportive culture in schools and colleges. On 10th May 2021, the Department made a public commitment in the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter to measure staff wellbeing at regular intervals, track trends over time and build this evidence into policy making.

Results are discussed in the following sections. The final section discusses some sub-group differences common across all or nearly all measures covered in this chapter.

Life satisfaction

Leaders and teachers were asked to rate 'overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?' using a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all and 10 is 'completely'.

Two-thirds of leaders and teachers were satisfied with their life, with 54% giving a positive score of 7-10. There were no significant differences between the scores given by leaders and teachers. The mean average score of leaders and teachers on life satisfaction was 6.2 in October, a figure which is significantly lower than that reported for the general population in Great Britain in March 2021 (7.4).

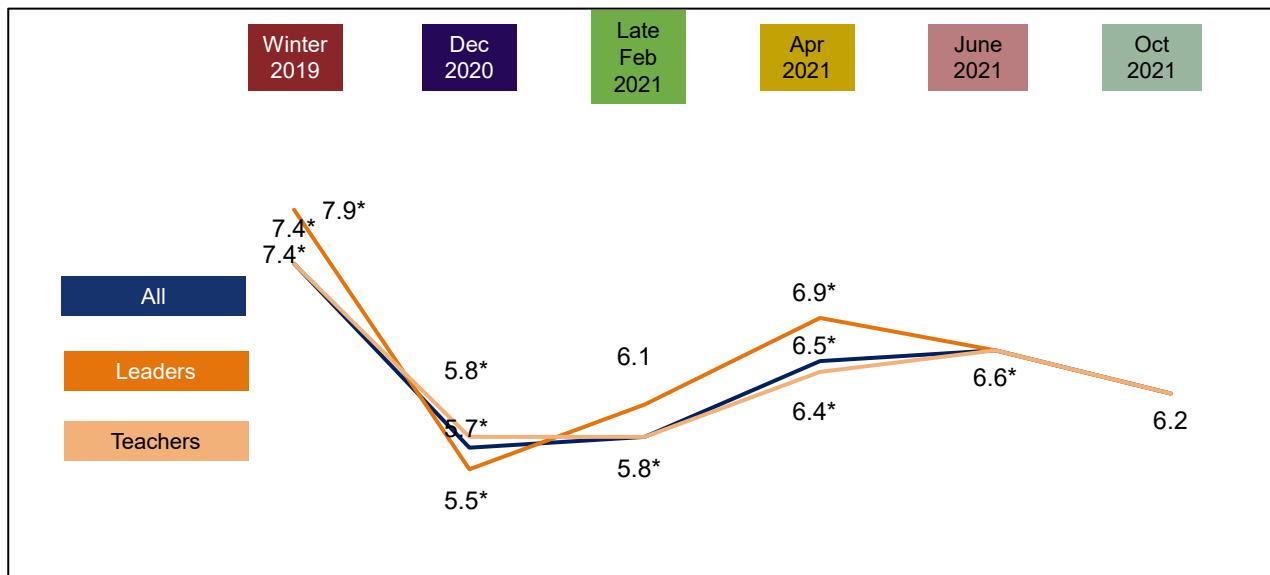
As shown in Figure 16, satisfaction levels appeared to be on the increase from December 2020 to the Late Feb 2021 survey and April 2021 survey. However, since the April and June 2021 surveys satisfaction levels in October have significantly decreased. Satisfaction levels in October are also significantly lower than in winter 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, on a more positive note, satisfaction levels in October 2021 are still significantly higher than they were in December 2020 and Late Feb 2021.

There was also a slight variation in mean satisfaction levels reported by leaders and teachers, with leaders reporting higher levels of satisfaction than teachers in the Late Feb and April 2021 surveys. Since then, satisfaction levels between leaders and teachers

³ Given the change in people's circumstances during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the timing of the October survey (October 2021) and the ONS Annual Population Survey (year ending March 2021), comparisons between the October survey results and the general population are not explored further.

have remained consistent, with both groups reporting a mean of 6.6 in June 2021 and 6.2 in October 2021.

Figure 16. Satisfaction with their life nowadays (mean score 0-10)



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey C1_1: All Leaders and Teachers. (n=1,888). June 2021 survey A1_1 (n=1,876). April 2021 survey C1_1 (n=2,159). Late Feb 2021 survey F6_1 (n=2,580). December 2020 survey H1_1 (n=1,012). Winter 2019 survey T5_1 (n=1,815). * Indicates a significant difference between highlighted wave and October 2021.

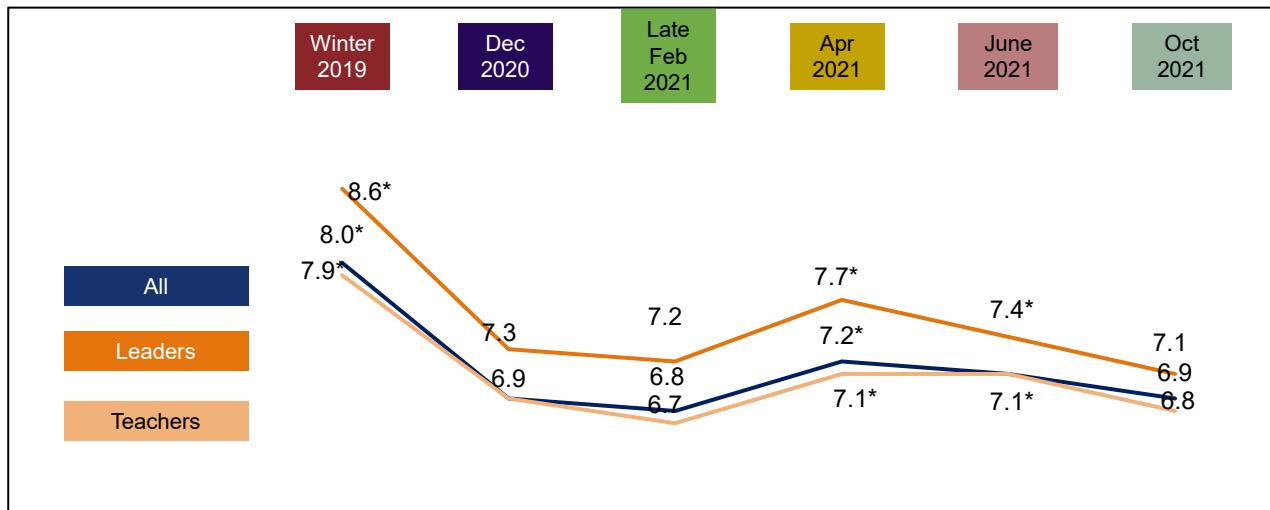
Worthwhileness of daily tasks

Using the same 0 to 10 scale as life satisfaction, leaders and teachers were asked 'overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?'.

Two thirds (66%) of leaders and teachers felt that the things they did in their life were worthwhile (giving a positive score of 7-10). Leaders gave a higher mean score on average than teachers (7.1 vs. 6.8). The average leaders' and teachers' score of 6.9 on worthwhileness of daily tasks in October is significantly lower than figure reported for the general population in Great Britain in March 2021 (7.7).

As shown in Figure 17, feelings of worthwhileness have significantly decreased since the April 2021 peak, and have returned to February 2021 levels, a pattern exactly mirroring that found for life satisfaction.

Figure 17. Extent to which feel the things they do in their life are worthwhile (mean score 0-10)



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey C1_2: All Leaders and Teachers (n=1,888). June 2021 survey A1_2 (n=1,876). April 2021 survey C1_2(n=2,159). Late Feb 2021 survey F6_2 (n=2,580). December 2020 survey H1_2 (n=1,012). Winter 2019 survey T5_2 (n=1,815). * Indicates a significant difference between highlighted wave and October 2021.

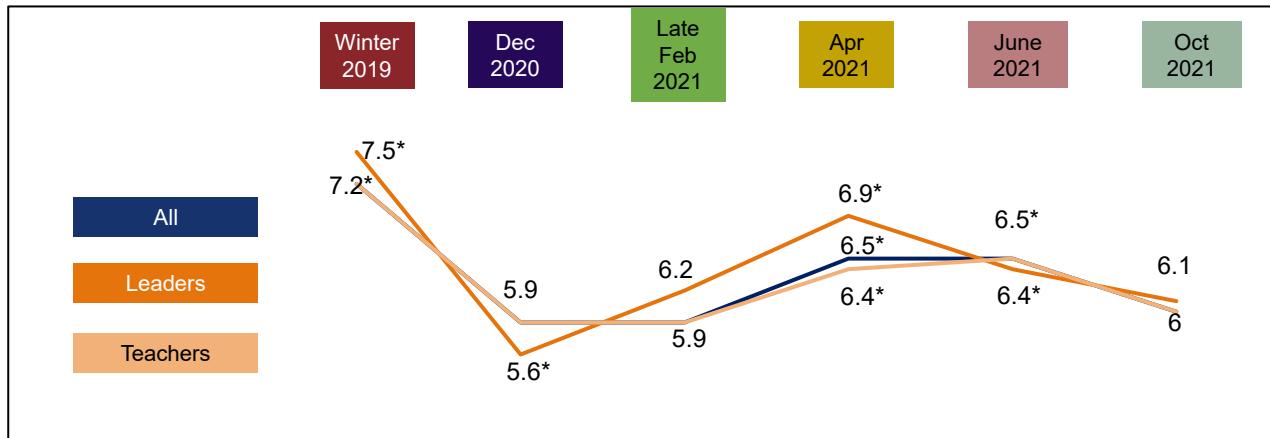
Happiness

Using the same scale, leaders and teachers were asked 'overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?'.

Just over half (52%) of leaders and teachers reported that they were happy yesterday (a rating of 7-10). A quarter rated their level of happiness as low (25%, a score of 0-4). There were no significant differences between the scores given by leaders and teachers. On average leaders and teachers scored 6.0 on levels of happiness in October, significantly lower than the figure reported for general population in Great Britain in March 2021 (7.3).

As shown in Figure 18, feelings of happiness have significantly decreased since April and June 2021 (and since the peak of 7.2 in Winter 2019). However, feelings of happiness are higher than in December 2020 (6.0 vs. 5.6 at the end of 2020).

Figure 18. How happy felt yesterday (mean score 0-10)



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey C1_3: All Leaders and Teachers (n=1,888). June 2021 survey A1_3 (n=1,876). April 2021 survey C1_3 (n=2,159). Late Feb 2021 survey F6_3 (n=2,580). December 2020 H1_3 survey(n=1,012). Winter 2019 survey T5_3 (n=1,815). * Indicates a significant difference between highlighted wave and October 2021.

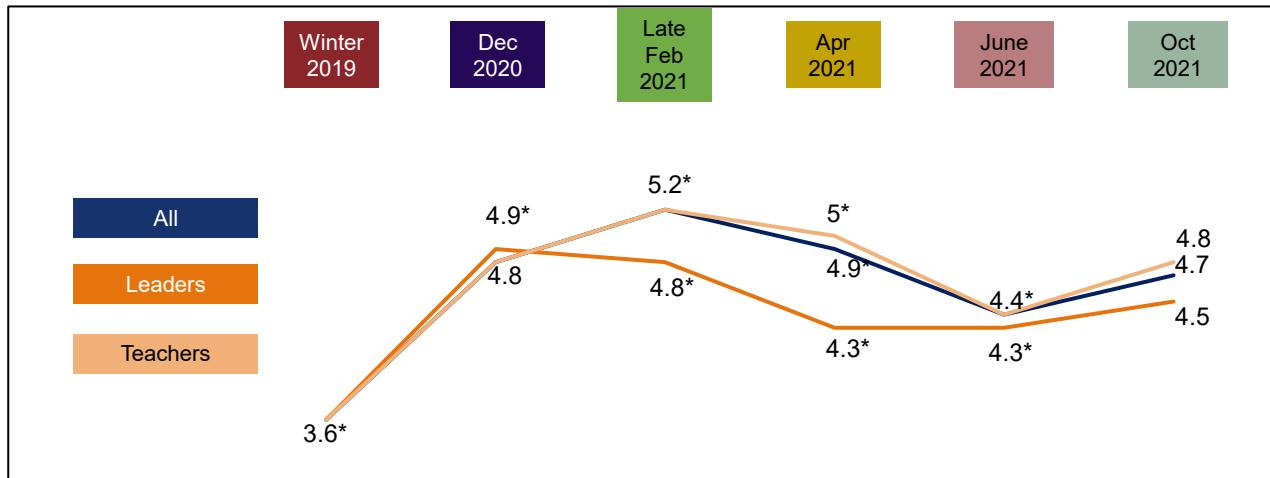
Anxiety

Using the same scale, leaders and teachers were asked 'overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?'. A low score (between 0-3) is a positive score as it represents not feeling anxious.

More than a third of leaders and teachers reported that they were not anxious (36%) (a score of 0-3). Leaders were significantly more likely than teachers to report that their anxiety was very low (giving a score of 0-1) (19% vs. 14%). The mean score among leaders and teachers was 4.7 in October, a figure which is significantly higher (i.e. representing higher anxiety levels) than that reported for the general population in Great Britain in March 2021 (3.3).

As shown in Figure 19, feelings of anxiety have significantly increased from a mean of 4.4 in June 2021 to 4.7 in the current survey. Feelings of anxiety were also significantly higher than in Winter 2019, when the mean score was 3.6. They are however significantly lower than the Late February 2021 survey (5.2).

Figure 19. Level of anxiety yesterday



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey C2: All Leaders and Teachers (n=1,888). June 2021 survey A2 (n=1,876). April 2021 survey C2 (n=2,159). Late Feb 2021 survey F4 (n=2,580). December 2020 survey H2 (n=1,012). Winter 2019 survey T6 (n=1,815). * Indicates a significant difference between highlighted wave and October 2021.

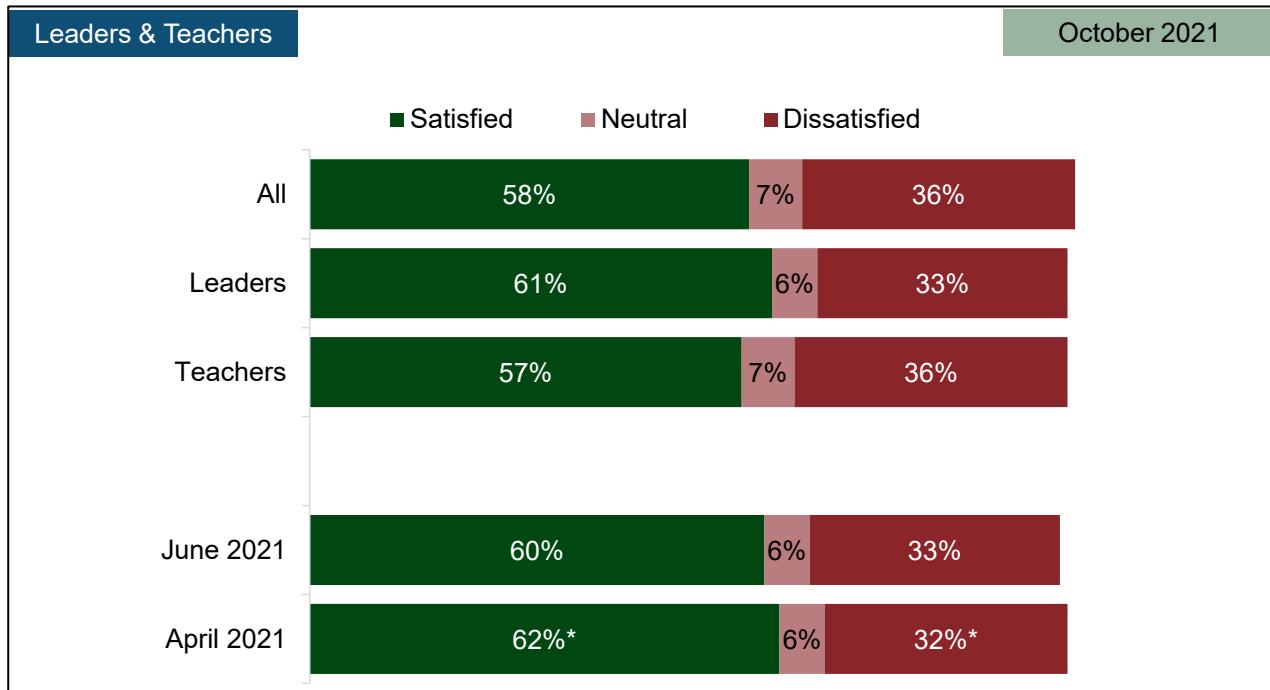
Job Satisfaction

Teachers and leaders were asked how satisfied they were with their present job, using a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means 'completely dissatisfied' and 7 means 'completely satisfied'.

Overall, just under three-fifths (58%) of leaders and teachers were satisfied with their job. There were no significant differences between leaders and teachers in the current survey.

As shown in Figure 20, leaders' and teachers' satisfaction levels have significantly decreased since April 2021 (58% in October vs. 62% in April).

Figure 20. Satisfaction with present job



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey C3: All Leaders and Teachers (n=1,888). June 2021 survey A3 (n=1,876). April 2021 survey C3 (n=2,159). * Indicates a significant difference from October 2021.

Subgroup differences

In the chapter, differences between leaders and teachers have been discussed. It was noticeable that there were no significant differences in mean scores or the proportion satisfied or not by phase (primary vs. secondary) or by gender. However:

- Leaders and teachers aged 55-64 were more satisfied with their life nowadays, that the things they do in their life are worthwhile, and how happy they felt yesterday, and were less anxious than younger leaders and teachers, though they were not more satisfied with their job.
- Leaders and teachers in schools rated outstanding by Ofsted were more satisfied with their life, felt that the things they do in their life are worthwhile, felt happier than they were yesterday, and were more satisfied with their job than teachers and leaders in other schools. However, they were not significantly less anxious. For job satisfaction, for example, almost two-thirds (65%) of leaders and teachers in schools rated outstanding by Ofsted were satisfied compared to less than three-fifths of those in schools rated good (58%) or in need of improvement (56%).

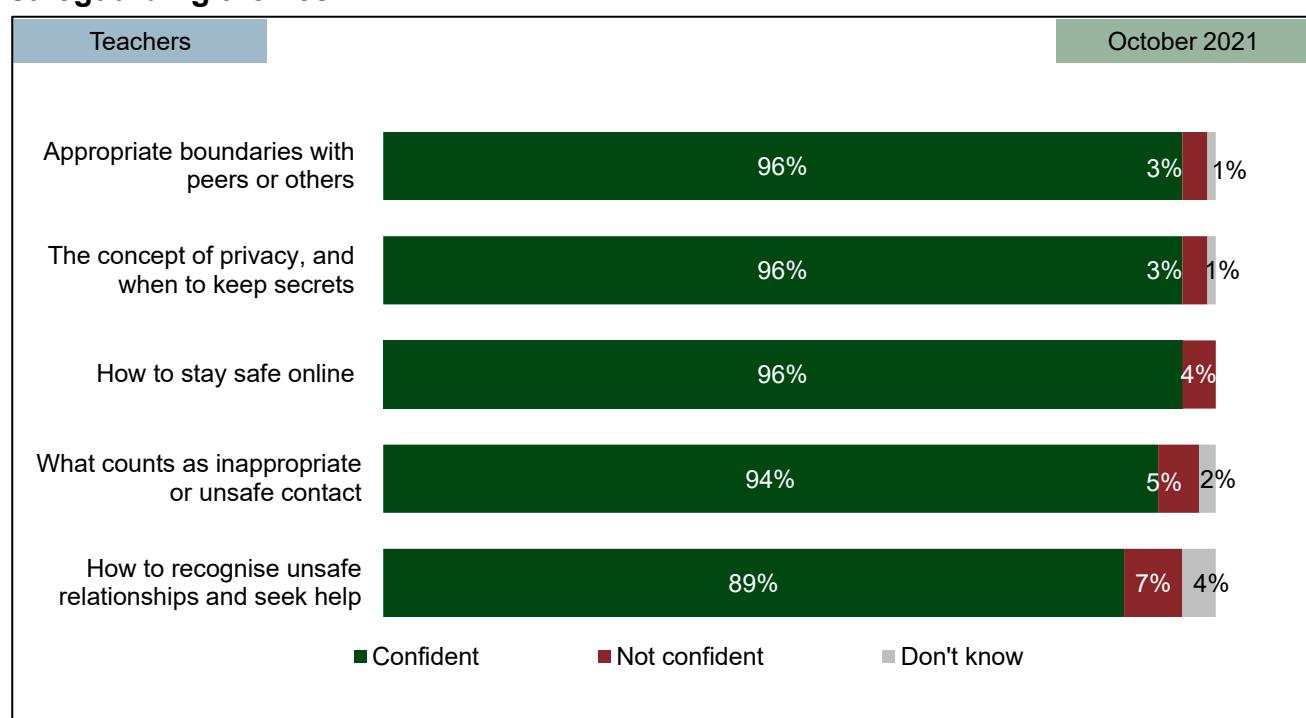
Teaching about safe relationships

In September 2020, Relationships Education became compulsory for all primary school-aged pupils, Relationships and Sex Education became compulsory for all secondary school-aged pupils, and Health Education became compulsory for all pupils in primary and secondary state-funded schools. Further to this, in response to Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges, the Department for Education is developing plans to support stronger relationships education, based on what support Ofsted found teachers need the most, including the need for increased confidence to teach sensitive or challenging topics, and better subject knowledge.

Teaching about safe relationships in primary schools

Almost three-quarters of primary school teachers said that they personally teach pupils about different types of abuse and how to stay safe (72%). These teachers were then asked how confident they felt about teaching certain safeguarding subjects. Overall, nearly all primary teachers felt confident in teaching about most safeguarding issues, particularly how to stay safe online, appropriate boundaries, the concept of privacy and when to keep secrets, and what counts as inappropriate or unsafe contact (each 94% - 96%). They were slightly less confident about teaching how to recognise unsafe relationships and seek help (89% vs. 7% not confident).

Figure 21. How confident primary school teachers felt about teaching certain safeguarding themes



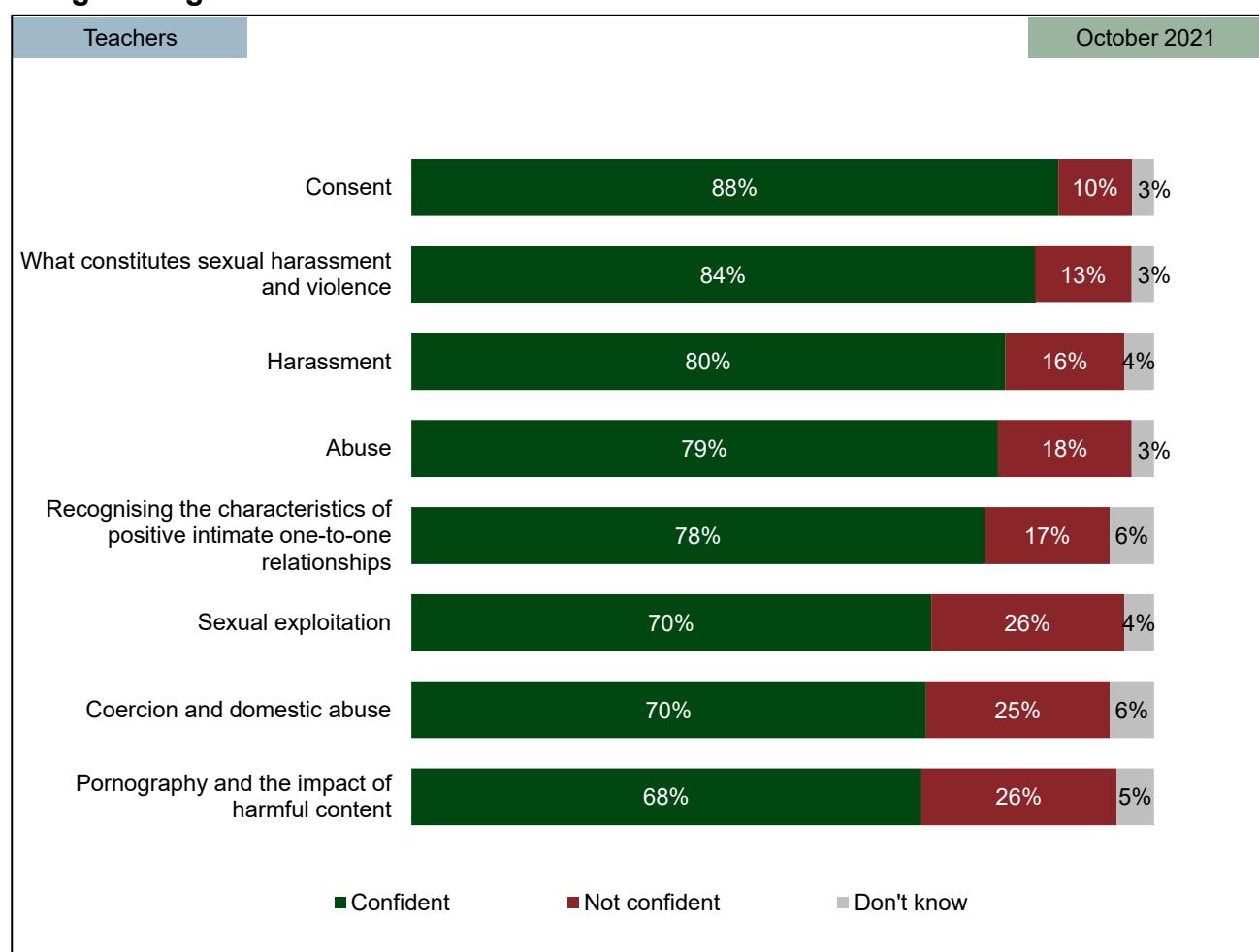
Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. E2: Primary teachers who personally teach pupils about different types of abuse and how to stay safe (n=394).

Teaching about safe relationships in secondary schools

Half (51%) of secondary school teachers said that they personally teach pupils about relationships, sex or health. This proportion rose to 67% amongst teachers in schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils. These teachers were asked how confident they feel about teaching certain relationships, sex or health subjects. At least two-thirds were confident about each subject, but overall teachers expressed much more confidence in some areas than others.

The vast majority (at least 75%) felt confident in teaching about consent (88%), what constitutes sexual harassment and violence (84%), harassment (80%), abuse (79%) and recognising the characteristics of positive intimate one-to-one relationships (78%). Relative to these, teachers were less confident teaching about sexual exploitation (70%), coercion and domestic abuse (70%) and pornography and the impact of harmful content (68%) – in each case around a quarter were not confident in these three areas.

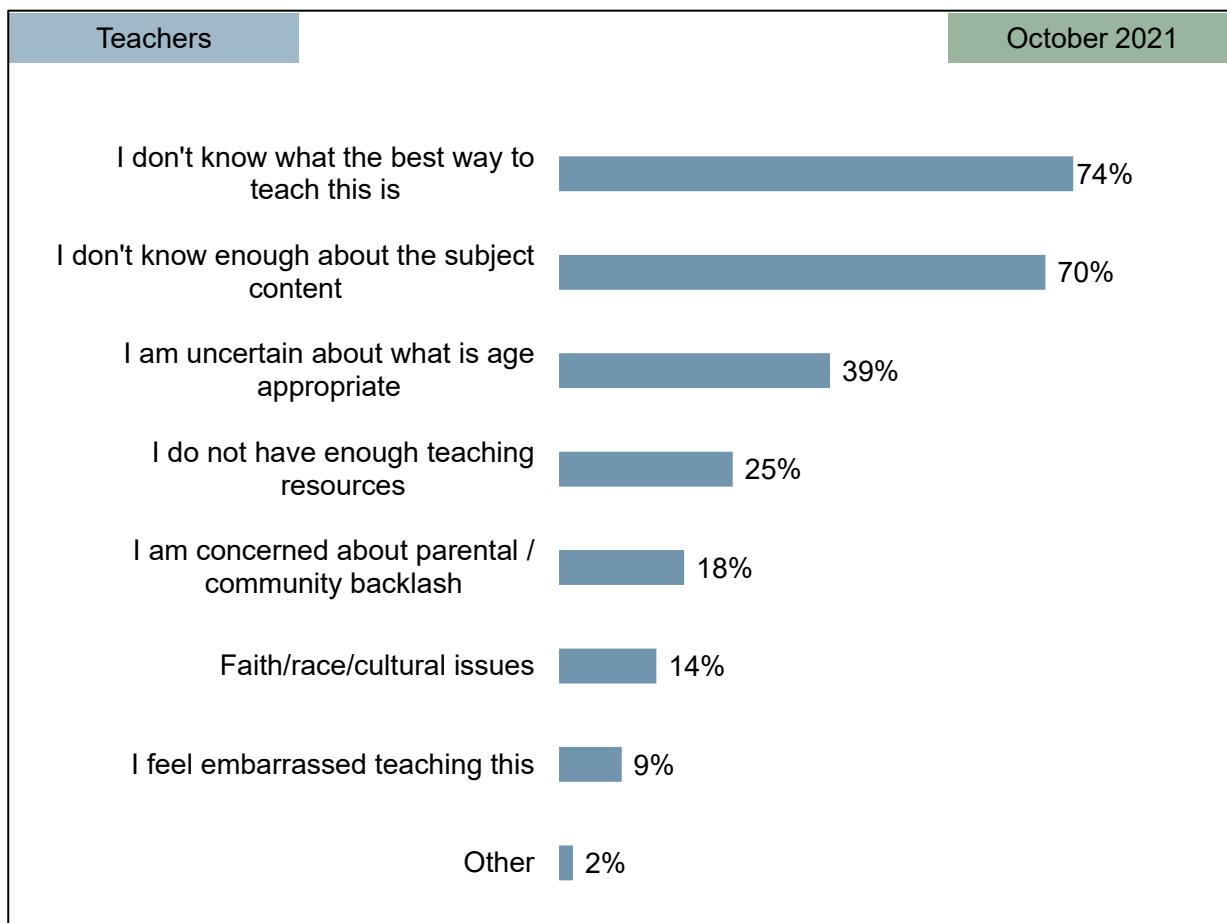
Figure 22. How confident secondary school teachers felt about teaching certain safeguarding themes



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. E4: Secondary teachers who personally teach pupils about relationships, sex or health (n=269).

Secondary teachers who indicated they were not confident in teaching about certain safeguarding themes were asked why. The most common reasons were that teachers do not know what the best way to teach the subject is (74%) or they don't know enough about the subject content (70%). Around a two-fifths of those not confident (39%) were also uncertain about what is age-appropriate and a quarter (25%) felt they did not have enough teaching resources.

Figure 23. Reasons why secondary teachers were not confident in teaching about certain subjects (prompted)



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. E5: Secondary teachers who do not feel confident teaching pupils about an aspect of relationships, sex or health (n=100).

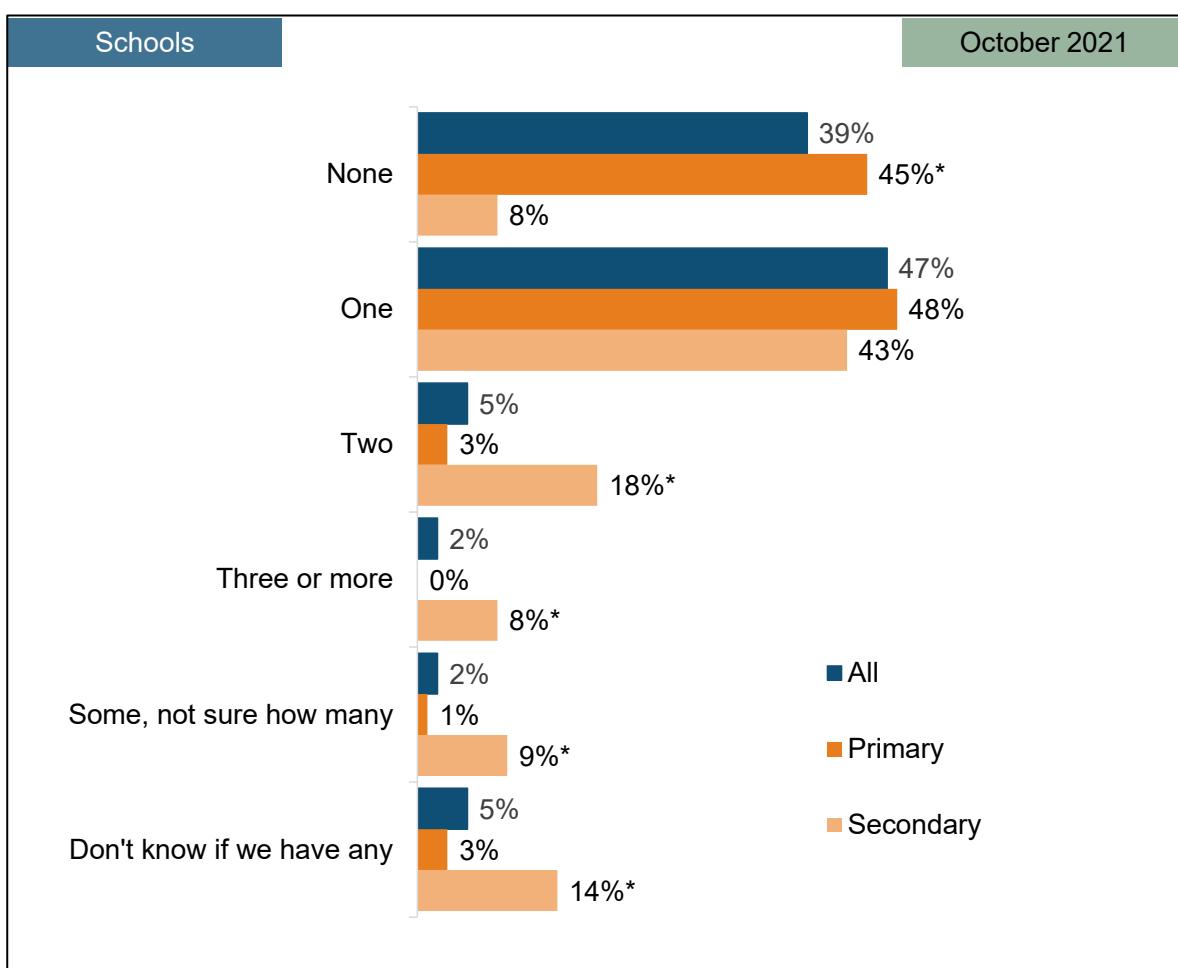
Defibrillators

From September 2020 all state-funded schools in England are required to teach first aid as part of the new subject of Health. For secondary school pupils this includes how to administer CPR and the purpose of defibrillators.

Although school-age children are at relatively low risk, the rare cases in which children die because of cardiac arrest are distressing for all involved. Placing Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in schools ensures that any child or adult on the premises should be within reach of a life saving device should a cardiac incident occur.

The DfE are therefore seeking to understand whether schools have this equipment and their awareness of programmes to support installation. All school leaders were asked how many AEDs their school/college has on site. Almost two-fifths (39%) had none on site, while just under a half (47%) had one. There were very wide differences by phase: 45% of primary schools reported having none, compared to 8% of secondary schools.

Figure 24. Whether or not schools have Automated External Defibrillators



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey. J1: All leaders (n=811). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between primary schools and secondary schools.

Leaders with no AEDs on site were asked why they had none. The most common reason (54% of schools) was that the school did not have funding for an AED. A third (34%) of schools noted that they had access to a community defibrillator and a quarter (24%) were not aware it was possible to have one on site. A small proportion were waiting for one to be installed (5%). Schools with the lowest proportion of FSM eligible pupils were more likely than others to state that they had access to a community defibrillator (54% vs. 16% in schools with the highest proportion of FSM eligible pupils). Rural schools were also more likely to report that they had access to a community defibrillator than urban schools (53% vs. 22%).

A majority of leaders (72%) were not aware of the defibs4schools programme that will allow them to buy AEDs at a reduced cost (28% were aware). Awareness was lower among young leaders aged under 35 (18%, compared with 40% of leaders aged 55 and over) and leaders of rural schools (21%). Awareness was also lower than average among leaders at schools that had no AEDs on site, with 19% of these leaders aware of the programme.

Knife Crime

There has been concern that knife crime incidents would rise following the easing of COVID-19 related restrictions. As schools are uniquely placed to understand the prevalence of these issues for their pupils, this question has been asked in order to track any trends in knife incidences involving school pupils.

Leaders were asked if their school was currently actively dealing with knife crime as a safeguarding issue, meaning they have taken action, however small, as a result of recognising a safeguarding risk to one of their pupils.

In October 2021, 10% of schools were currently dealing with knife crime related safeguarding issues. This was statistically significantly lower than in May 2021, when 13% of schools were dealing with knife crime related safeguarding issues. As seen in May 2021, in October 2021 schools with the following characteristics were significantly more likely to be dealing with knife crime as a safeguarding issue:

- Secondary schools (34%, compared with 6% of primary schools);
- Schools with the highest proportion of pupils eligible for FSM (13%, compared with 4% of schools with the lowest proportion of pupils eligible for FSM);
- Urban schools⁴ (13%, compared with 2% of rural schools)

In October 2021, schools with the Ofsted rating 'requires improvement' were more likely to be dealing with knife crime as a safeguarding issues (23%, compared with 7% of schools with the Ofsted rating 'outstanding'), as were schools in the East of England (16% vs. 10% overall).⁵ These patterns by Ofsted rating and region were not seen in May 2021.

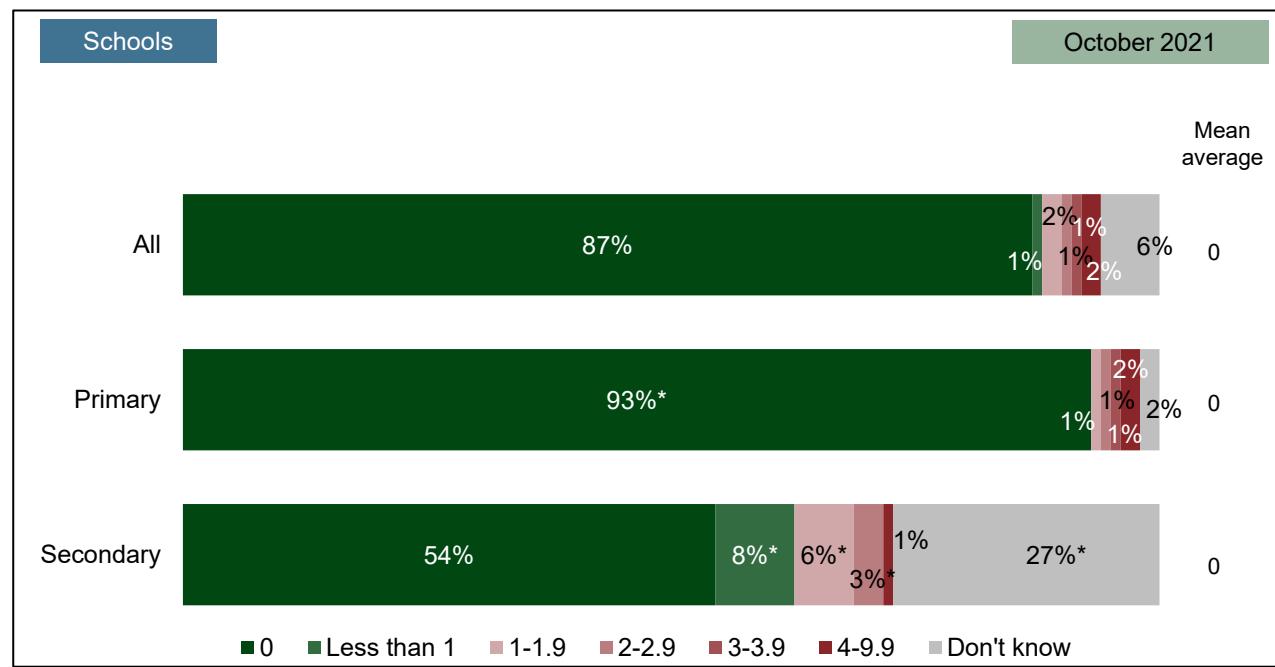
Amongst the minority of schools that were dealing with a knife crime safeguarding issue at the time of research in October 2021, most (55%) reported that they were actively dealing with a single incident. One per cent of schools actively dealing with knife crime were dealing with three incidents and 12% were dealing with two, though a third of school leaders were unsure how many incidents they were currently dealing with (32%, rising to almost half (46%) of secondary school leaders dealing with any incidents). Amongst schools actively dealing with knife crime, the mean number of incidents was 1.2, compared with 1.3 in May 2021.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/rural-urban-classification>

⁵ It was at a similar level in London (17%), but due to a low base size this is not statistically significantly different from the overall figure so should be treated with caution, as indicative. It is worth noting though that the proportion of schools in London dealing with knife crime as a safeguarding issue was far lower in October (17%) than it was in May 2021 (29%).

Taken as a proportion of all pupils in the school, no schools reported that they were dealing with more than 10 incidents per 1,000 pupils, although 2% of all schools reported they were dealing with between 4 and 10 incidents per 1,000 pupils. Results are shown on the following figure (based on all schools, including those not actively dealing with knife crime related safeguarding issues).

Figure 25. Number of safeguarding incidents involving knife crime that schools are actively dealing with per 1,000 pupils



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. F2: All leaders (n=811)

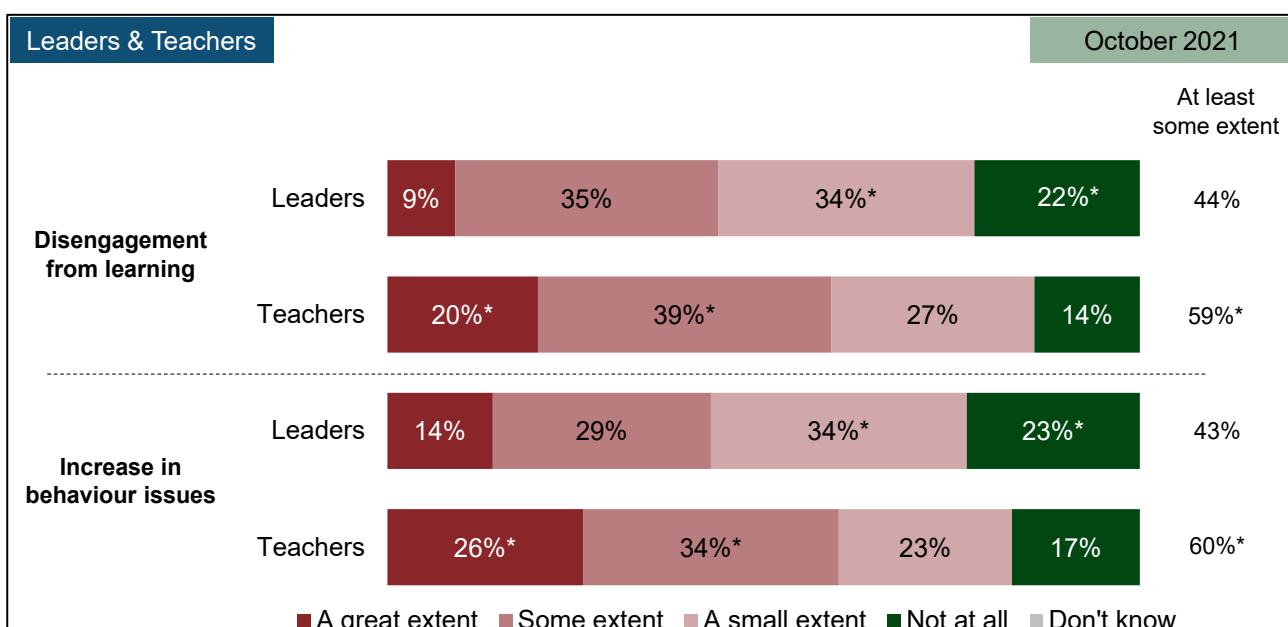
Pupil Behaviour

Understanding concerns related to pupil behaviour and engagement is a priority for DfE to inform guidance and best practice products for schools. Tracking concerns around behaviour and disengagement from learning through the COVID-19 period and beyond will enable DfE to comprehend the impact of pandemic related limited in-person attendance and disruption on behaviour and engagement, and adjust policy responses accordingly. In October 2021, leaders and teachers were asked how concerned they were about disengagement from learning and an increase in behaviour issues, as they had been in the July 2021, May 2021, March 2021, and December 2020 surveys.

Concern with these areas was fairly high, with 57% of leaders and teachers concerned to at least some extent about disengagement from learning and 58% about behaviour issues.

Teachers were more likely than leaders to be concerned about both issues to at least some extent, with 59% concerned about disengagement from learning (compared with 44% of leaders), and 60% concerned about an increase in behaviour issues (compared with 43% of leaders). As shown in Figure 26, teachers were around twice as likely as leaders to be greatly concerned about these issues (26% vs 14% respectively for an increase in behaviour issues and 20% vs 9% for disengagement from learning).

Figure 26. Extent to which leaders and teachers were concerned about disengagement from learning and an increase in behaviour issues

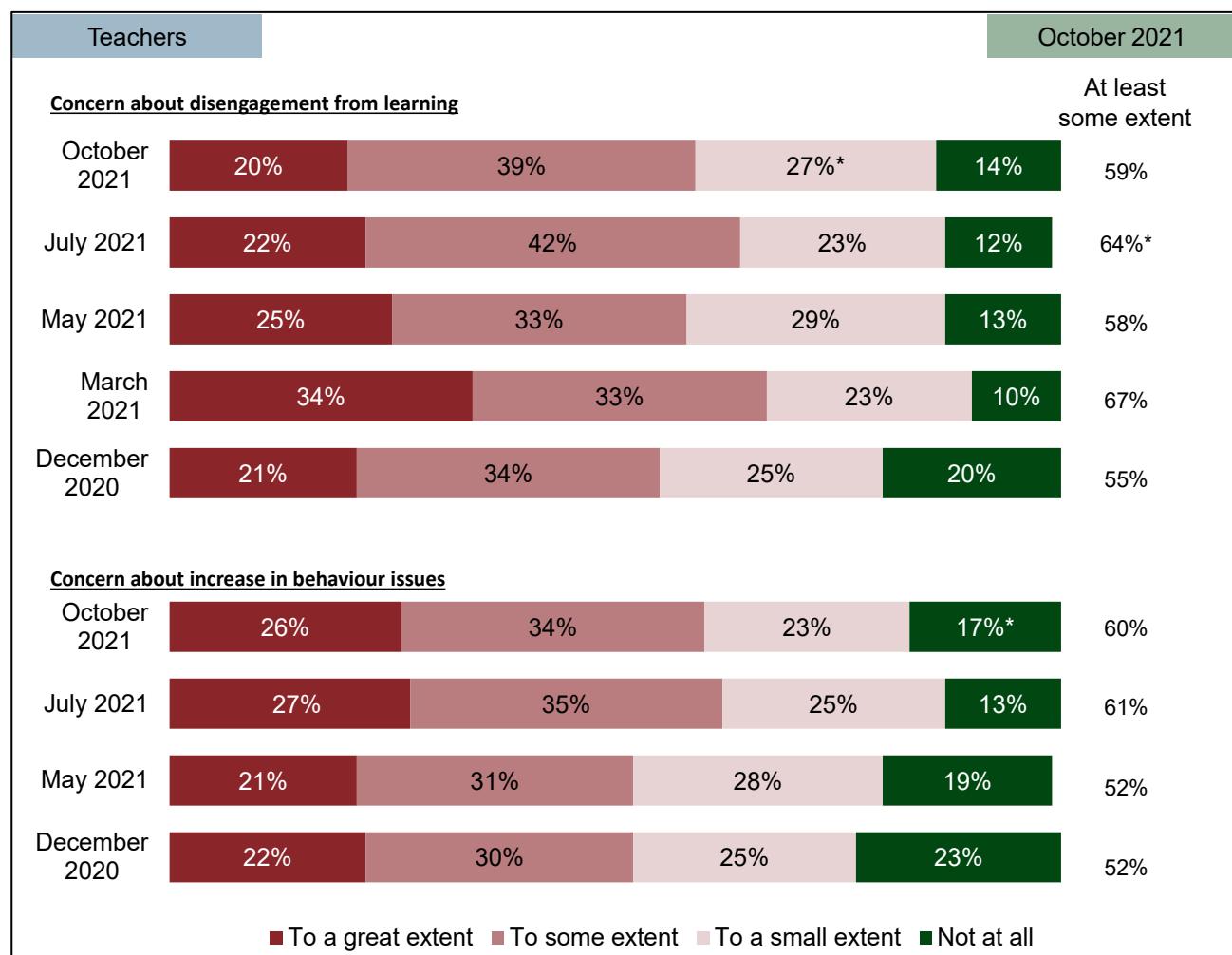


Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. I1_X: All leaders (n=811) and teachers (n=1,077). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between leaders and teachers.

October 2021 results for the proportion of teachers concerned to at least some extent about disengagement from learning (59%) represent a significant decrease compared with July 2021 (64%), although it is in line with the findings of the May survey (58%). The proportion greatly concerned (20%) is at its lowest level in the five surveys since December 2020 (it was highest at 34% in March 2021).

The proportion of teachers concerned about behaviour issues (60%) was in line with the July 2021 survey (61%), but higher than in May 2021 (52%).

Figure 27. Extent to which teachers were concerned about disengagement from learning and an increase in behaviour issues



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. I1_X: All teachers (n=1,077). July 2021 survey: All teachers (n=934). May 2021 survey: All teachers (n=1,054). March 2021 survey: All teachers (n=1,217). December 2020 survey: All teachers (n=619). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between October and July surveys.

In terms of subgroup differences, secondary leaders and teachers were significantly more likely to be greatly concerned than primary leaders and teachers about disengagement from learning (25% vs. 13%).

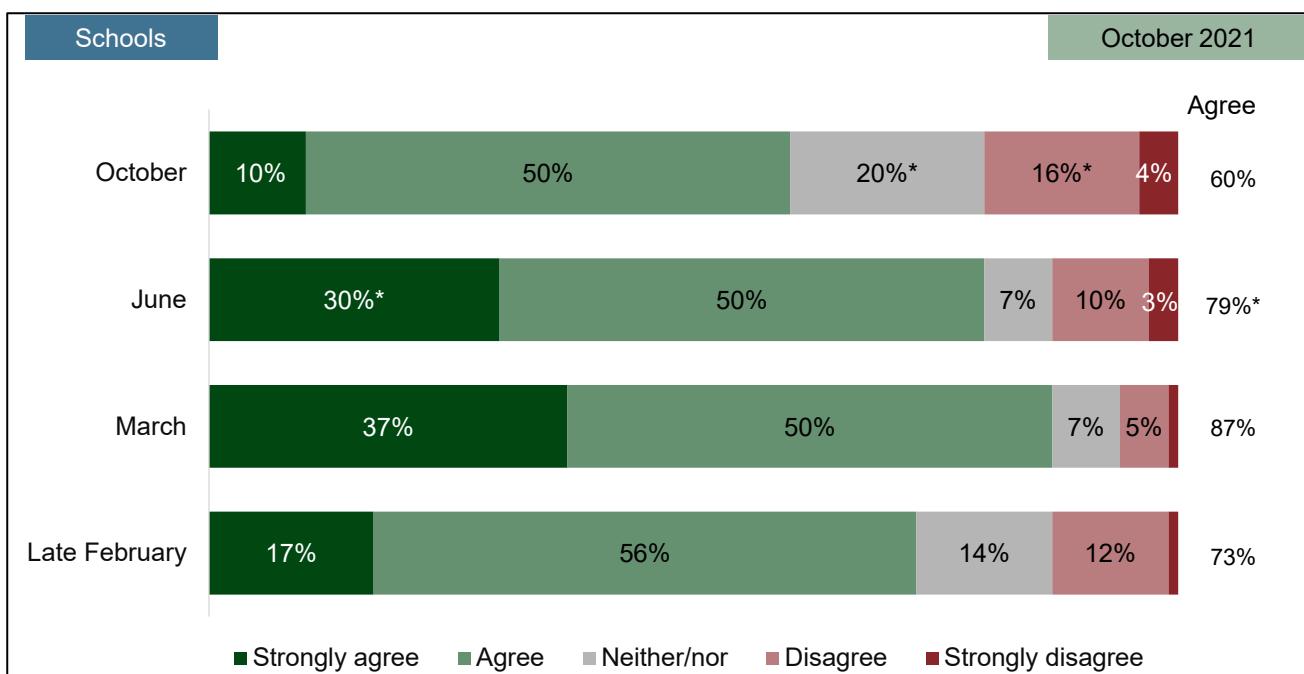
The following leaders and teachers were more likely to be greatly concerned about both issues:

- Those at schools with the highest proportions of pupils eligible for FSM - 32% greatly concerned about an increase in behaviour issues and 24% about disengagement from learning (compared with 17% and 12% respectively among those with the lowest proportions of pupils eligible for FSM).
- Those at schools with an Ofsted rating 'requires improvement' - 29% greatly concerned about an increase in behaviour issues and 21% about disengagement (compared with 20% and 12% respectively among those rated as 'outstanding').

SEND

Schools were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that they could currently effectively support pupils with SEND. There has been a steady decline in the proportion of schools agreeing that they can effectively support these pupils. Overall, three-in-five (60%) schools agreed that they were able to effectively support pupils with SEND (10% agreed strongly), whereas a fifth (20%) disagreed (of which 4% disagreed strongly). This represents a significant decrease in the proportion of schools agreeing with the statement since June 2021 (79%), March 2021 (87%), and late February 2021 (73%).

Figure 28. Schools' levels of agreement that they are able to effectively support pupils with SEND



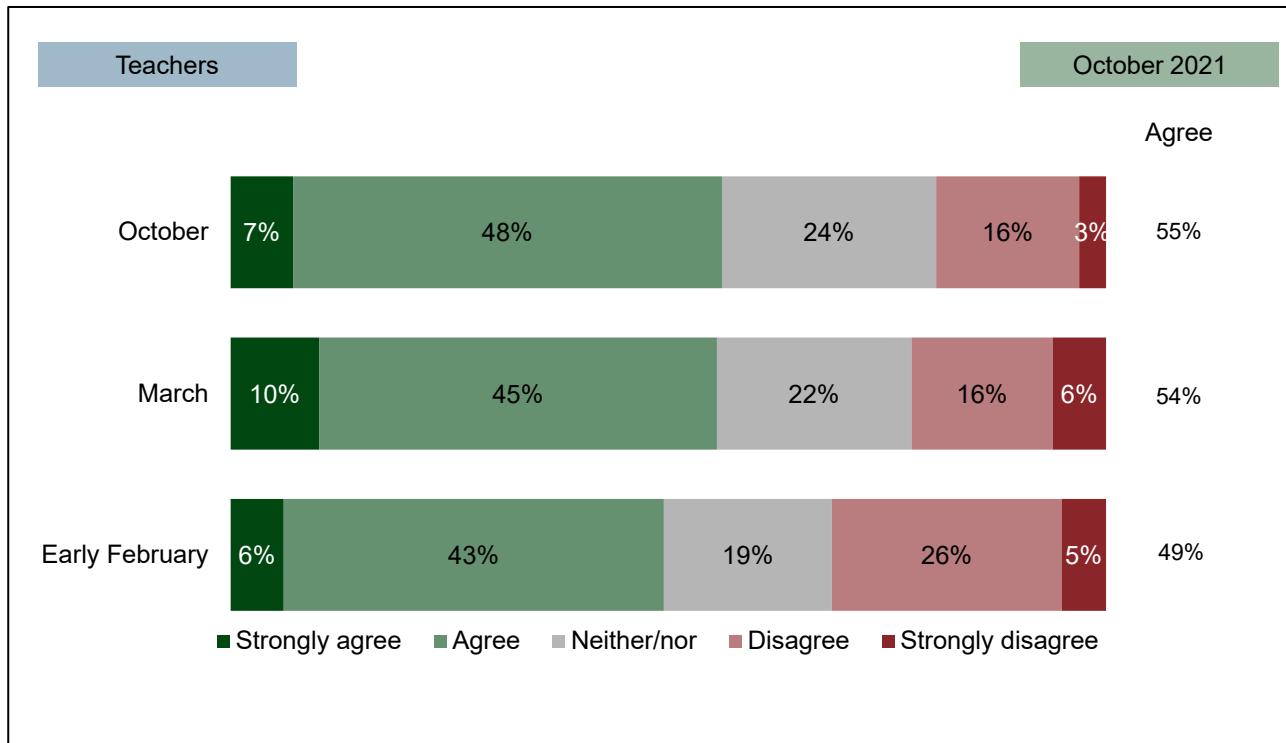
Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. G3: All schools (n=811). June 2021 survey: All schools (n=897). March 2021 survey: All schools (n=1,046). Late February 2021 survey: All schools (n=1,178). * Indicates a statistically significant difference between October 2021 and June 2021.

Primary school leaders were more likely to disagree that their school could effectively support pupils with SEND (22%, compared with 14% of secondary school leaders).

Teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that they personally felt equipped to support pupils with SEND. Overall, over half (55%) of teachers felt equipped to support pupils with SEND (7% agreed strongly) while almost a fifth (19%) disagreed (of which 3% disagreed strongly). This was in line with the findings

of the March 2021 survey, when 54% of teachers felt equipped to support pupils with SEND, but higher than in early February when 49% of teachers felt this.

Figure 29. Teachers' levels of agreement that they feel equipped to effectively support pupils with SEND



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. G4: All teachers (n=1,077). School Snapshot Panel, March 2021 survey. E4: All teachers (n=1,217). School Snapshot Panel, Early February 2021 survey. D1: All teachers (n=1,266).

Primary teachers were more likely to strongly agree that they felt equipped to support pupils with SEND (9% vs. 5% of secondary teachers), despite the fact that primary leaders were more likely to disagree that their school could effectively support pupils with SEND. Teachers working in schools in the South East were also more likely to agree (63%, compared with 55% on average across regions), as were teachers who had been teaching for over 20 years (61%).

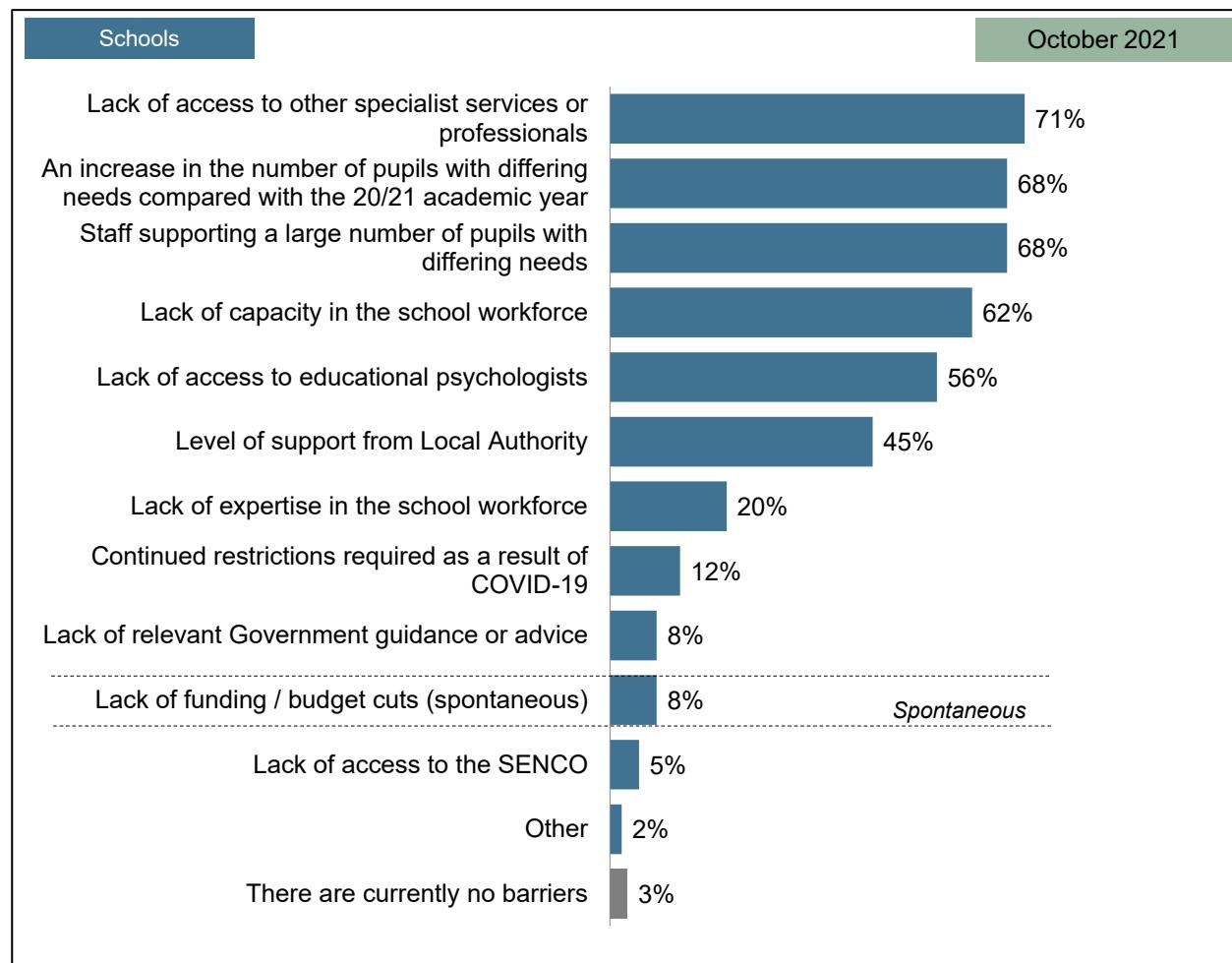
Barriers for schools to supporting pupils with SEND

In October 2021, schools were asked what barriers there are currently to effectively providing support for pupils with SEND. Around 70% of schools reported the following barriers:

- Lack of access to other specialist services or professionals (other than educational psychologists or the SENCO) (71%);
- An increase in the number of pupils with differing needs compared with the 20/21 academic year (68%); and
- Staff supporting a large number of pupils with differing needs (68%).

Just 3% of schools felt that there were no current barriers to providing effective support for pupils with SEND. There were no significant differences between the barriers reported by primary and secondary schools. The full list of barriers reported by schools is shown in Figure 30.

Figure 30. Barriers to supporting pupils with SEND for schools



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. G1: All schools (n=811).

In June 2021, schools were asked what they anticipated the barriers to supporting pupils with SEND to be in the next academic year (2021/22). The anticipated barriers were in line with the actual barriers reported by most schools in October, with around two-thirds of all schools having anticipated that the barriers would relate to:

- An increase in the number of pupils with differing needs compared with the 2020/21 academic year (67%);
- A lack of access to “other” specialist services or professionals (65%); and
- Staff having to support a large number of pupils with differing needs (65%).

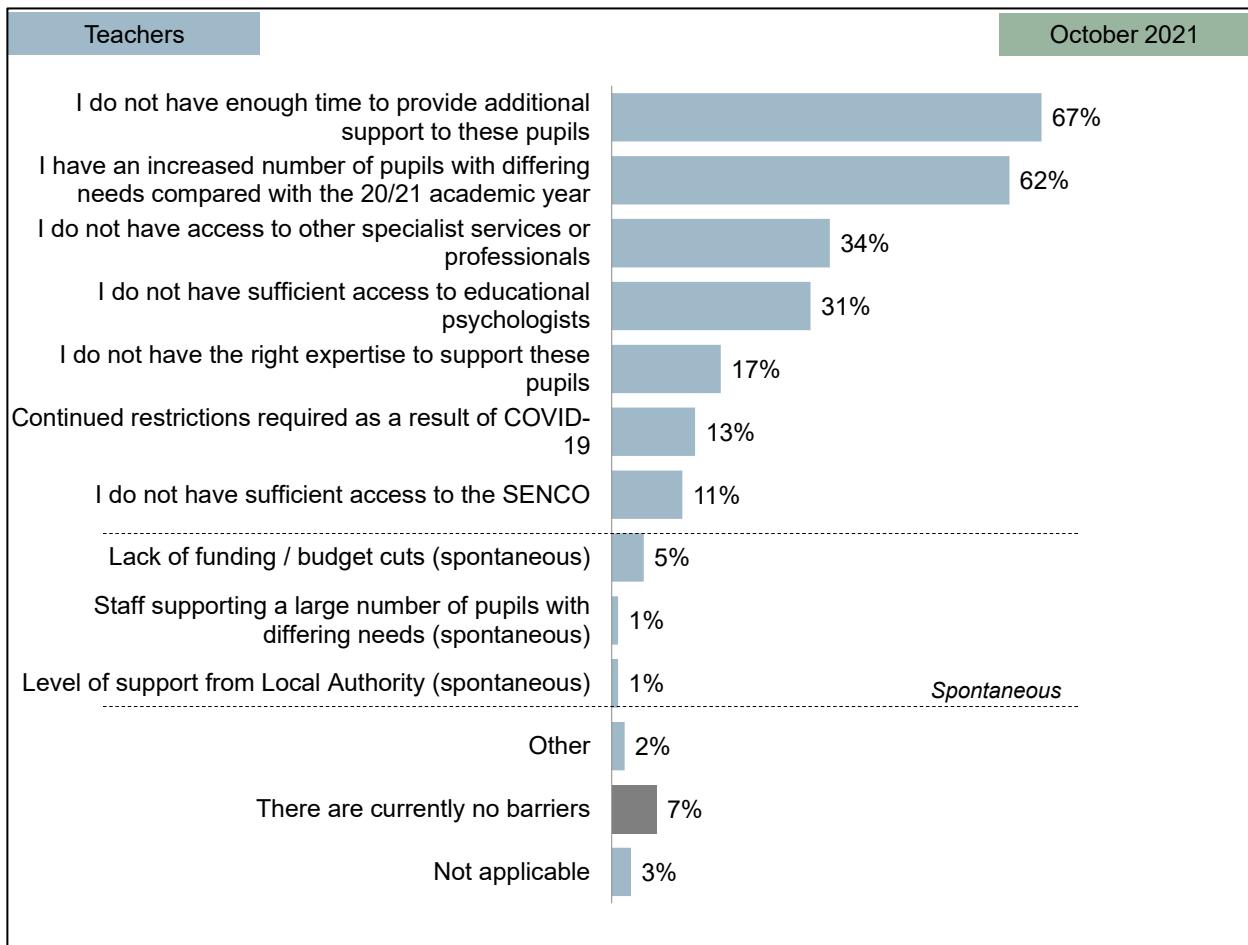
In June 2021 54% of schools anticipated continued restrictions required as a result of COVID-19 would be a barrier to supporting pupils with SEND in the next academic year, but actually just 12% of schools reported this as a barrier in October 2021, reflecting the reduction in restrictions by this time.

Barriers for teachers to supporting pupils with SEND

Teachers were also asked about the barriers they currently experience to effectively providing support for pupils with SEND. Teachers most commonly felt that they do not have enough time to provide additional support to these pupils (67%), and that they have an increased number of pupils with differing needs compared with the 20/21 academic year as a barrier (62%). Seven per cent of teachers experienced no barriers.

The full list of barriers is shown in Figure 31.

Figure 31. Barriers to supporting pupils with SEND for teachers



Source: School and College Panel, October 2021 survey. G2: All teachers (n=1,077).

Secondary teachers were more likely to report experiencing no current barriers (9%, compared with 5% of primary teachers).

A significantly higher proportion of primary than secondary teachers reported not having access to “other” specialist services or professionals (42% vs. 26%), not having sufficient access to educational psychologists (37% vs. 25%), and lack of funding or budget cuts (7% vs. 2%; it should be noted that lack of funding was mentioned by teachers spontaneously rather than being presented to respondents to select).

Teachers were asked in June 2021 about the barriers they anticipated to supporting pupils with SEND in the next academic year. As with schools, the actual barriers teachers experienced in the October survey mirror those expected in June, confirming their concerns were realistic in June 2021 teachers most commonly reported potential issues arising from an increased number of pupils with differing needs compared to the 2020/21 academic year (50%), and a lack of time in order to provide additional support to these pupils (50%).

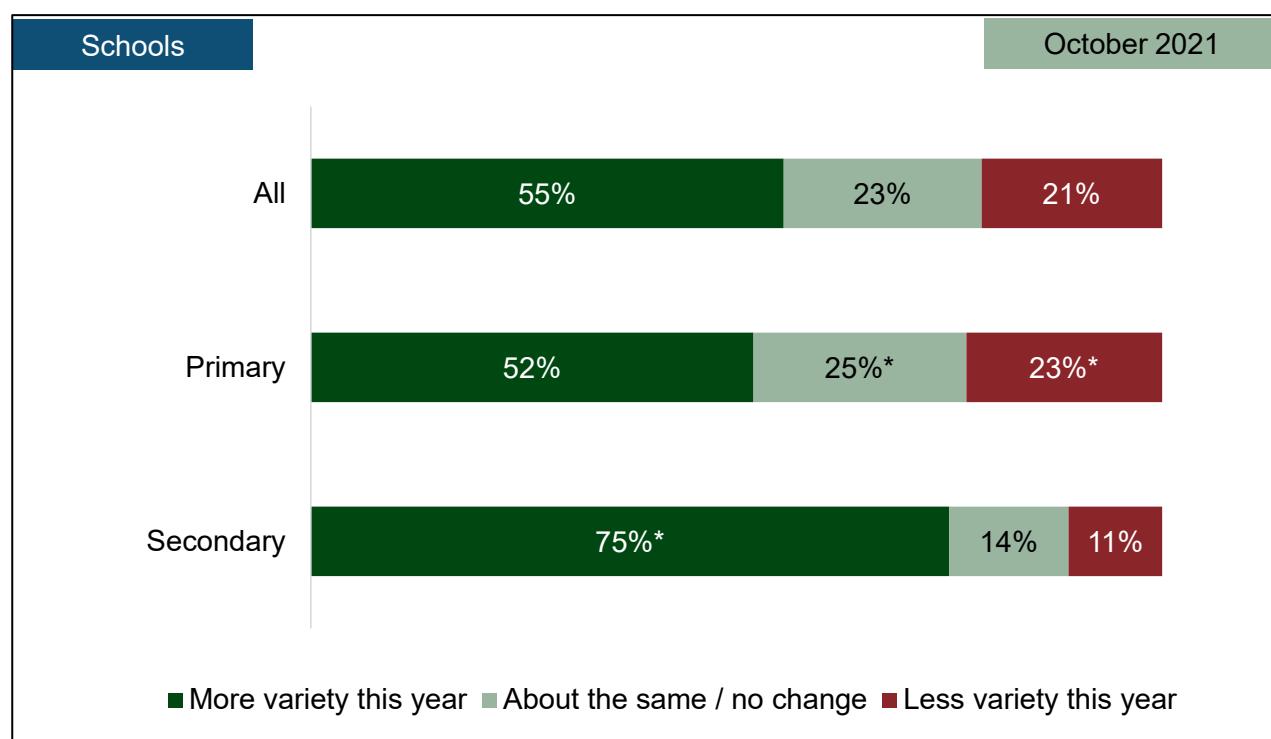
Extra-curricular Activities

Research suggests that extra-curricular activities are important in developing social and emotional skills, as well as providing a range of other positive outcomes (e.g., improved mental health and wellbeing, 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. There is evidence that during the pandemic schools have been less able to offer their usual range of activities.

Schools were asked whether their offer of extra-curricular activities had changed since the last academic year. As shown in Figure 32, over half of schools reported there was more variety this year than last (55%) with just over a fifth reporting there was less variety (21%), or that it had not changed (23%).

Secondary schools were more likely to report that there was greater variety than primary schools (75% in secondary schools vs. 52% in primary schools), and less likely to report reduced variety (11% vs 23%).

Figure 32. Whether extra-curricular activity provision has changed



Source: School Snapshot Panel, October 2021 survey H1: All Leaders (n=811). *Indicates a statistically significant difference between primary and secondary schools.

Challenges for schools

Leaders and teachers were asked an open-text question on what challenges, if any, were facing the school in the coming months. The question was asked to a random half of panel respondents. Overall responses showed that COVID-19 is still having a large impact on schools including staff absence, education recovery, funding, pupil attendance and engagement.

Staff absence

The most commonly reported upcoming challenge was staff absence or shortages. Although the most common challenge for all schools, it appeared to be more of an issue in primary schools than secondary. Some schools mentioned it is currently the most challenging it has been during the pandemic. Absence was intrinsically linked to COVID and funding (to cover absence), but absence due to non-COVID related illness was common too.

Sickness and 50+ covid cases are hindering the start of term. Staff absence is at the highest since the pandemic started! - *Leader, secondary school*

Staff absence is high - everyone is catching all the germs going around school - not necessarily Covid but other illnesses - we don't have our usual immunity and staff are tired - *Leader, primary school*

Catch-up and learning loss

Schools also commonly mentioned the challenges associated with learning loss and education recovery, which was quite a complex challenge with differing perspectives. Concern for pupils' academic achievement was mostly reported and balancing this with pupil mental health and wellbeing, whilst primary teachers and leaders highlighted a particular concern about children's language, social and emotional development.

Ensuring that all pupils recover lost learning and achieve age related expectations and higher whilst balancing the need to care for children's mental and physical health. - *Leader, primary school*

There are massive gaps in the children's learning this year compared to previous years - *Teacher, primary school*

I have also noticed an increase of children with speech and language needs which I suggest is due to lack of interaction during lockdowns.

- *Teacher, primary school*

Funding

Funding overlapped the other themes that emerged, in particular high levels of staff absence had put additional financial pressure on a perceived lack of funding. Lack of funding had also made it difficult for schools to implement interventions to help pupils catch up and made it difficult to support pupils with additional needs.

Lack of funding has decreased the support the school is able to provide for students with SEND and SEMH thus increasing the workload for teachers and increasing behaviour issues in the classroom. - *Teacher, secondary school*

I have no flexibility in staffing due to smaller real term budgets and this means I am unable to provide the education and support the children need. - *Leader, primary school*

Cumulative budget cuts continue to take their toll, and impact in so many ways - from lack of cover when staff are off sick to the fact that teachers end up spending their own money on resources for their class! - *Teacher, primary school*

Increase in numbers of children with significant additional needs, especially in early years - they do not come with additional funding and they need high levels of adult support which we are providing but this is impacting on finances - *Leader, primary school*

Pupil attendance, engagement and behaviour

Another common challenge was the effect lockdown has had on pupil behaviour in classrooms, which has led to both an increase in low level disruption and more challenging behaviours or violence. Schools also reported high absence rates among pupils, much of this was driven by COVID-19 and other illnesses. There was concern this would widen the gap between those attending and those absent.

I've noticed a rise in extreme behaviour, particularly in the new Year 7 and Year 8 cohort. This behaviour is often presenting most in pupils with SEND or SEMH issues and is the most unmanageable

behaviour I've seen in the 7 years I've spent in education - *Teacher, secondary school*

Pupils have become used to having an adult next to them at all times. Due to this a large majority of the class have poor independence, focus, listening skills and concentration. - *Teacher, primary school*

With approximately 25% of students absent at any one time from some classes, causing delays in tests, diversions in the curriculum (e.g., leaving difficult topics 'til everyone is back). - *Teacher, secondary school*

Other challenges

There were various other challenges reported by schools such as staff and pupil mental health and wellbeing, and supporting pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Schools also frequently mentioned external pressures such as OFSTED and exams that were making the situation in schools more difficult to manage and exacerbating other challenges such as pupil and staff mental health and wellbeing, along with workload.

Support for schools

Leaders and teachers were also asked an open-text question on how DfE could currently best support schools. The question was asked to a random half of panel respondents. Overall responses showed that COVID-19 is still having a large impact on schools with funding being the most common theme emerging and worsened by the pandemic for example by expenditure to cover for staff absences.

Funding

Funding was the most commonly mentioned area schools needed support in but was also linked to nearly all other themes such as COVID-19 measures, education recovery and pupil development, resources and specialist support, SEND provision and staffing and retention. The perceived lack of funding is felt to be creating a heavy workload, overwhelming pressure for the profession and is leading to poor health, low morale and many staff considering their value to the profession.

Due to Covid 19 we have experienced staffing absences which the remaining staff have to cover as our budget is very tight. This in turn has exhausted staff who are now off with recurring chest infections, back issues and other illnesses. We need support in our budgets to pay for supply costs. The staff are on their knees and are at new stages of exhaustion. - *Leader, primary school*

Schools need more money. We need resources, we need more staff, we need specialists, and we need more space. Money should be provided for counselling and play therapy. Some of the children in the school have been traumatised by what they have seen and experienced during the pandemic. Academically they will recover, but emotionally and socially they are really struggling. Money is so tight in schools that some schools cannot afford supply teachers and TAs when members of staff are sick, as a result SLT covers or there is no cover. - *Teacher, primary school*

Invest in training more SEND teachers, SENCOs and specialist. Invest in training for teaching assistants. I have worked for over twenty years in London schools and the expertise in this area and the funding is dire. - *Leader, secondary school*

Ensuring that schools have access to funding and equipment to create safe environments for pupils and staff. - *Teacher, secondary school*

More funding for schools, pay increase for staff, instead of the freeze to boost retention and moral. - *Teacher, primary school*

Staff workload

Workload was also commonly mentioned by schools as an area in need of support: the additional workload pressures due to COVID-19 such as data collections and external pressures such as OFSTED were taking disproportionate amounts of time away from teaching and supporting pupils. This was also connected with staff mental health as high workload is leading to poor mental health and thoughts of leaving the profession.

Teachers are under immense pressure at the moment. Extra workload created by getting ready for OFSTED (imminent) as well as providing additional support to groups of students that need it and coping with behaviour issues resulting from COVID disruption and time out of school/the classroom. Anything that can reduce workload and protect teachers' mental health will help to prevent more burnout and teachers leaving the profession. I am sure I am not the only one who has been considering it. - *Teacher, secondary school*

Reduce workload. There are too many additional expectations, responsibilities on full time teachers and it's significantly taking away time and energy from teaching and supporting pupils. - *Teacher, primary school*

Staffing and retention

Leaders and teachers commonly spoke of a need for more teachers, support staff and supply staff. Respondents said that the number of teachers considering leaving the profession or retiring, coupled with a shortage of new teachers, has resulted in retention and staffing issues in many schools, especially because of the increased absences due to staff testing positive for COVID-19. Staffing was also linked to funding, with schools needing financial support for cover and support staff.

We had 13 staff absent last week and really struggled to stay open. - *Leader, secondary school*

Support schools to retain staff and stop them from leaving education.
- *Leader, secondary school*

More funding, as we do not have enough support staff (three TAs between seven classes) and not enough 1:1 support staff for the increasing number of children with significant needs who do not have or cannot get an EHCP. This leads to overloaded staff, increased staff absences. - *Leader, primary school*

Mental health and wellbeing

The mental health and wellbeing of **both** staff and pupils were frequently reported by respondents as an area in need of desperate support. For pupils it was commented there was a “crisis” and the main way in which DfE could support them was additional funding and access to specialist services, in addition to the removal of mandatory assessments and exams. For staff most commonly affecting mental health was COVID-19, workload pressure and external pressures such as OFSTED.

We have 11-year-olds with suicidal thoughts. In 25 years of teaching and leadership, I have never seen the number of cases of self-harm, depression, crippling anxiety and suicidal thoughts. This is the result of underfunding support services... - *Leader, secondary school*

Statutory assessment for Y6 pupils should not go ahead in 2022 due to their last uninterrupted school year being in Year 3 - catch up and mental health should be a priority for all children - they should not have the added pressure of tests. - *Leader, primary school*

Morale is incredibly low in the teaching profession at the moment, and we are more stressed than ever... I'm staying late and my mental health is suffering so badly. - *Teacher, secondary school*

Stop OFSTED inspections. Entirely. They cause immense stress and worry. Change the format of the inspection to an audit and make it a collaborative process with a support focus ... As the school leader, I rarely sleep on Sunday, Monday or Tuesday nights, due to anxiety related to OFSTED. I am not alone in this. - *Leader, secondary school*

Other areas where support needed

As with challenges, there were various other areas some schools reported needing support in. This included clear communication and guidance from DfE, support for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils including funding for access to specialist support and resources, and further support and funding for education recovery. Some schools also mentioned support and recognition from DfE in regards to the efforts of teaching staff during the pandemic and the additional workload of delivering education recovery.



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Reference: RR1193

ISBN: 978-1-83870-343-1

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