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The Educational
Institute of Scotland

Teaching During the Covid-19 Shutdown: Headteacher and Depute Headteacher Survey Results



Member Survey Results

May 2020

The Educational Institute of Scotland

Background

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

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

Methodology

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Headteacher and Depute Headteacher Results

This briefing paper details the responses that were gathered from the 1,558 members who indicated that they worked in a Headteacher or Depute Headteacher role. This report highlights their views, and should be read alongside the full survey data report.

Margin of Error

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

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

Using the full eligible membership as our baseline figure, the margin of error with our sample of 26,128 is less than one percent¹.

¹ Survey Monkey, Margin of Error Calculator https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/margin-of-error-calculator/?ut_source=mp&ut_source2=sample-size-calculator&ut_source3=inline&ut_ctatext=margin%2520of%2520error%2520calculator

Section 1 – About You Findings

About You

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

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

The questions on member characteristics were compulsory, to ensure that only eligible members filled in the survey, as well as ensuring that there was a large sample to allow for disaggregation. All of the questions within this dedicated report demonstrate the data trends and views of EIS Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members.

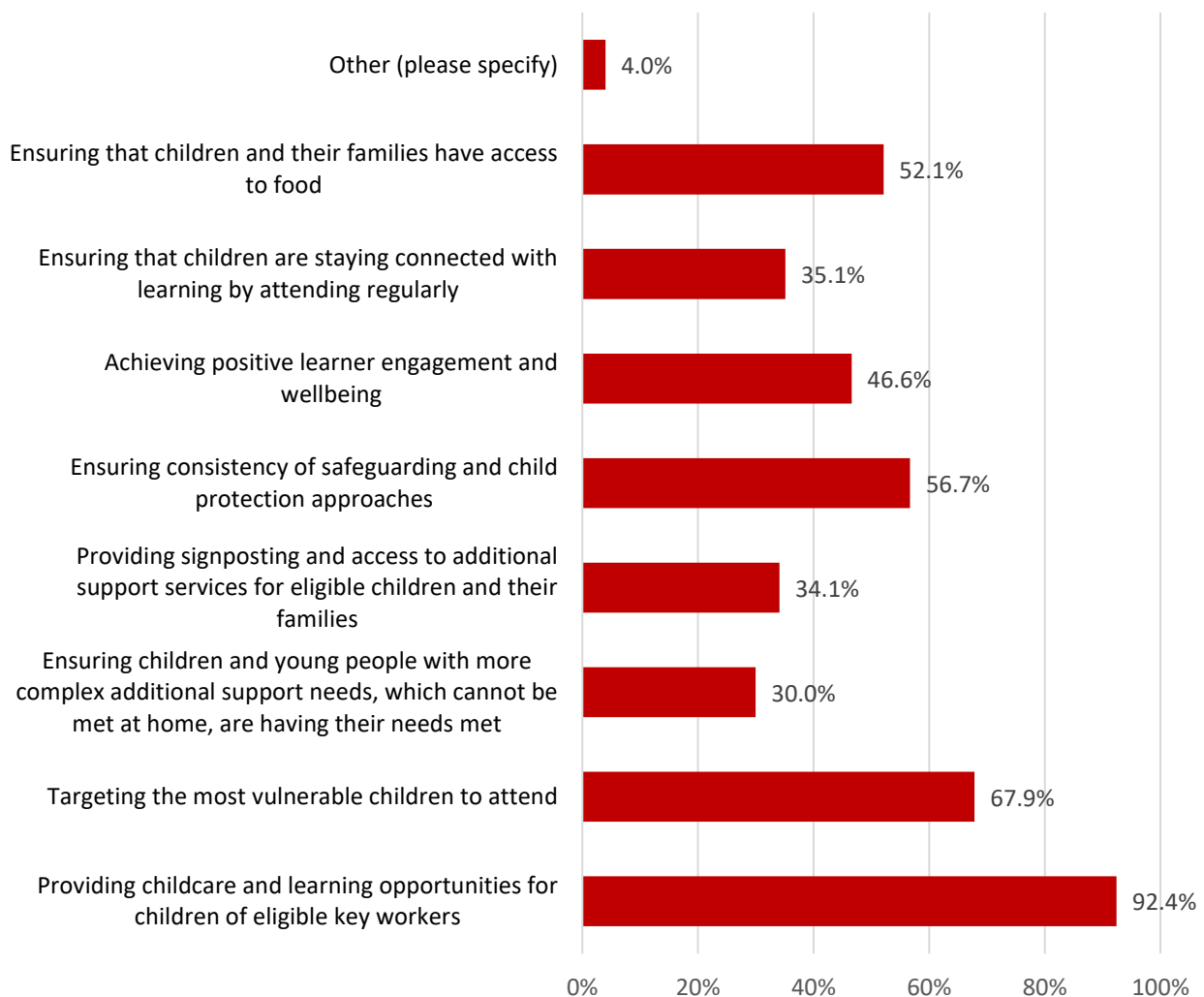
Responses within this briefing include findings from Primary, Secondary, Special and Nursery education. The responses included within this report also represent members from every local authority area.

Section 2 – School Hubs

The first question within the School Hubs section asked members about the extent of their involvement in local hubs. 52% Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members said they had been involved in the planning of Hub learning and support, 16% said they had been involved in the teaching within a Hub, and 32% said they had not been involved in any aspect of Hub provision.

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

Figure 1: “Which the following objectives of Hub provision have been delivered well in your Hub? (please tick all that apply)” responses²



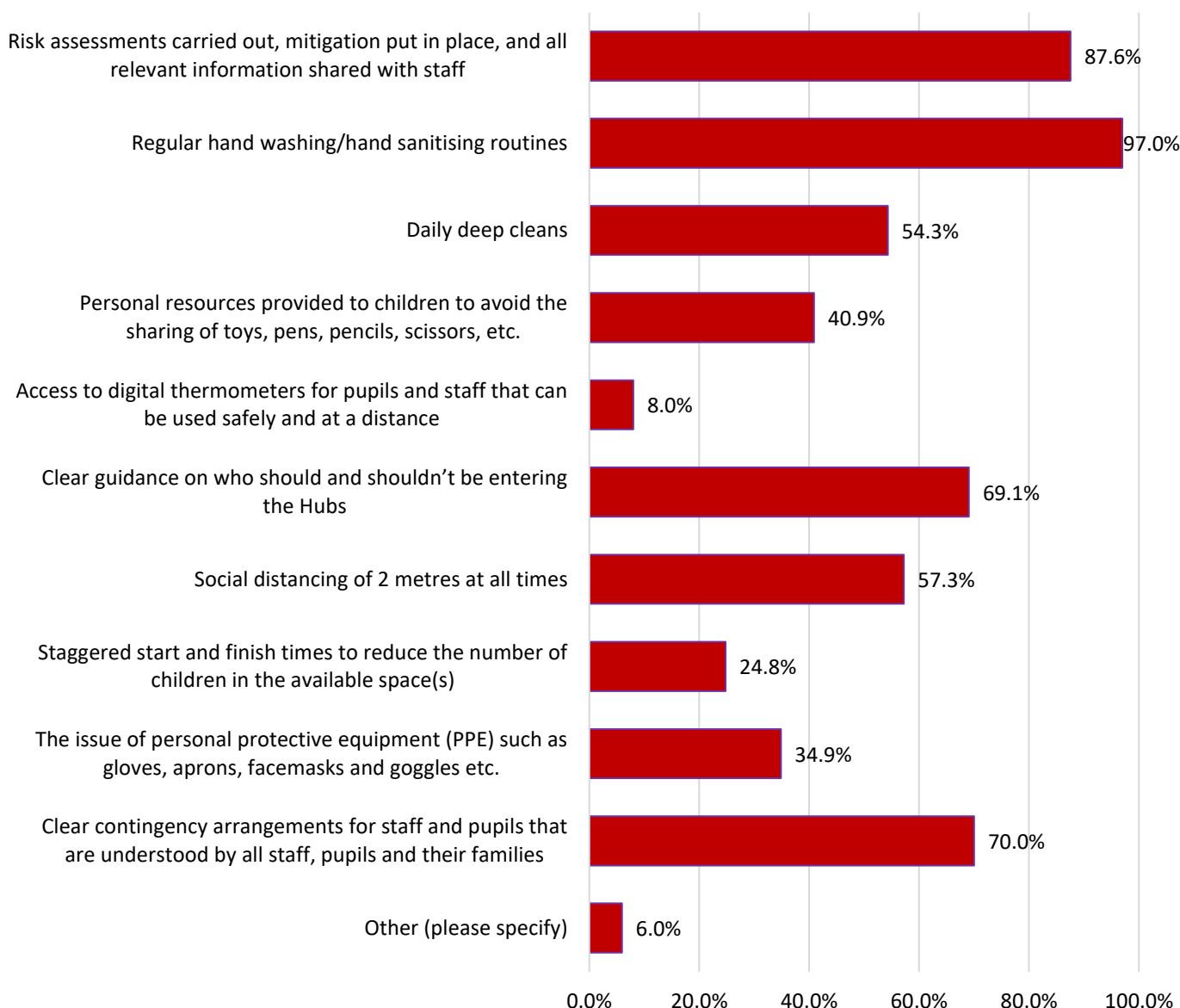
Total Responses: 977

² Respondents were asked to tick all that apply

Those who indicated “other” as an answer choice highlighted that whilst vulnerable and at-risk children had been prioritised for Hub provision many found it difficult to reach all children with an entitlement. Others stated that the Hubs allowed cross sector working and supporting the health and wellbeing of families.

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

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



Total Responses: 924

The findings from figure 2 highlight that there is inconsistency in the safety measures that have been implemented across local Hubs. Within the “other” comments, many highlighted that they had implemented regular handwashing and had access to hand sanitisers but found keeping to the social distancing rules challenging. Some HT & DHT members also commented that they did not feel they had enough time to plan out Hub provision and carry out full assessments. Some Headteacher and Depute Headteachers said that they did not receive enough support from their local authority.

At the end of this section, members were encouraged to provide further comments on their experiences. Over 250 additional responses were logged with the following quotes included as a representative sample:

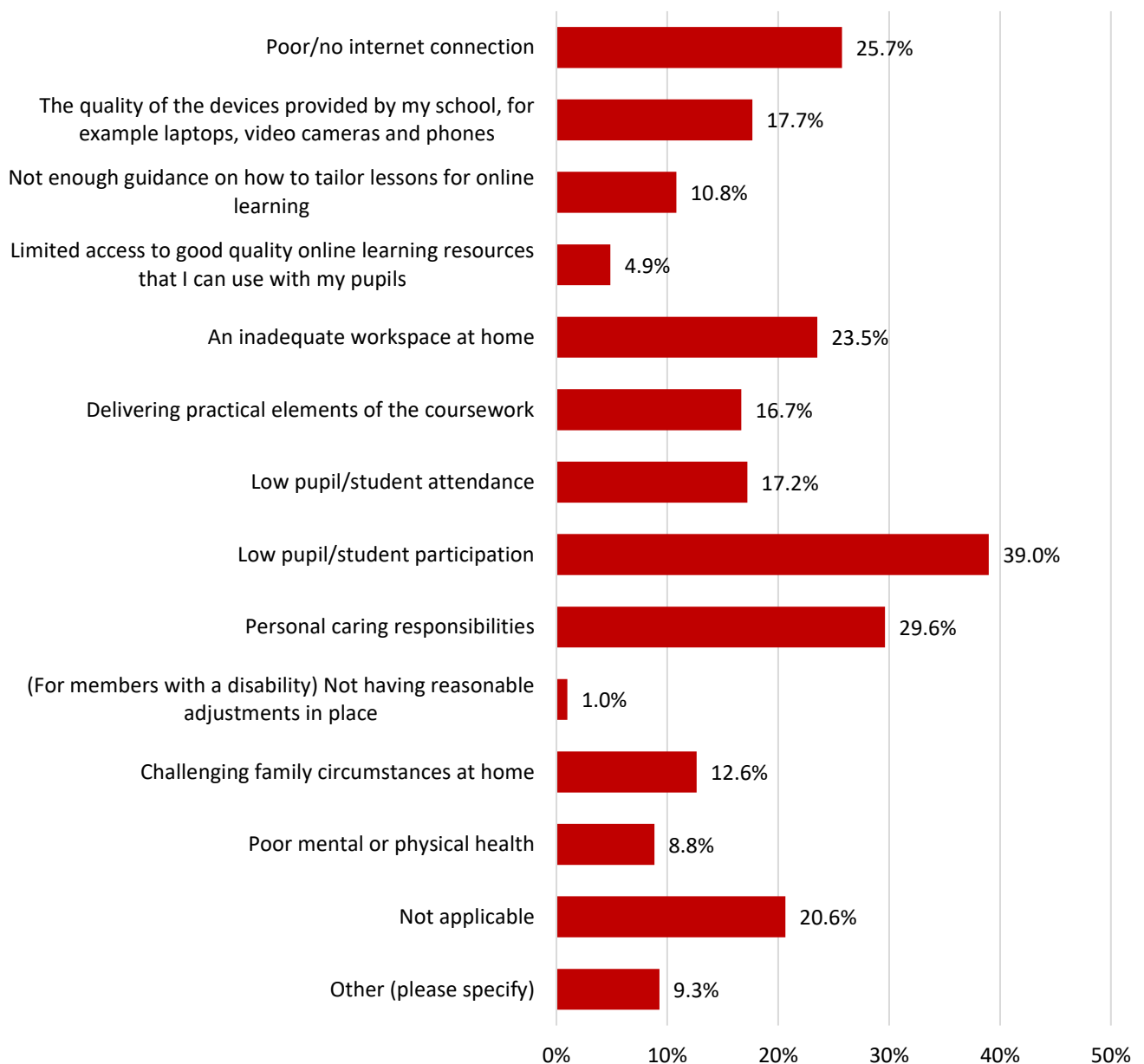
- “Impossible to maintain social distancing at all times with younger children. Additional cleaning only amounted to wiping down extra surfaces once a day. No increased frequency of cleaning except by teaching and support staff taking it on themselves.”
- “I have not been involved in the day to day running just initial set up. I think that some vulnerable children are falling through the cracks because they are just below social work threshold as local community supports usually enough to keep the family going.”
- “Initial inconsistencies and lack of leadership, clear line of communication created an incredible amount of stress and anxiety in the HTs asked to create a Hub at very short notice.”
- “The organisation for SLT [Senior Leadership Team] has been highly challenging. The children, particularly below age 10, find it exceptionally hard to social distance. Adults repeatedly feel they are ‘nagging’, particularly during any periods of outdoor play. Some children can have 10 different teachers in a week, due to the rota system. The teachers can only do a limited number of mornings/afternoons as they still need to deliver online learning for their own classes during that week.”
- “It would be better to be in our own building. Hub dinner hall is too small, not sure if all schools following the same rules. Hard to enforce rules when it is not your school.”

Section 3 – Remote Learning

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

The biggest barrier that Headteacher and Depute Headteachers reported was low pupil participation, with almost 40% recording this, followed by poor or no internet connection. This highlights the challenge of reaching out and keeping students effectively engaged in their learning, when working remotely. Figure 3 below shows these results in full.

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



Total responses: 1,313

Around 20% of respondents said that this question wasn't applicable to them, and 9% stated "other". Of the "other" responses, HT & DHT respondents highlighted the challenges of balancing so many priorities at the same time, and the additional workload that has been brought about from remote teaching.

Less than 1% of respondents highlighted that they did not have their reasonable adjustments in place, as per their normal working arrangements. Almost 9% of HT & DHT members stated that their poor mental or physical health stood as a barrier to delivering remote learning. Whilst these numbers are a small figure overall, this highlights the many equality issues that must be fully addressed to support senior managers working remotely.

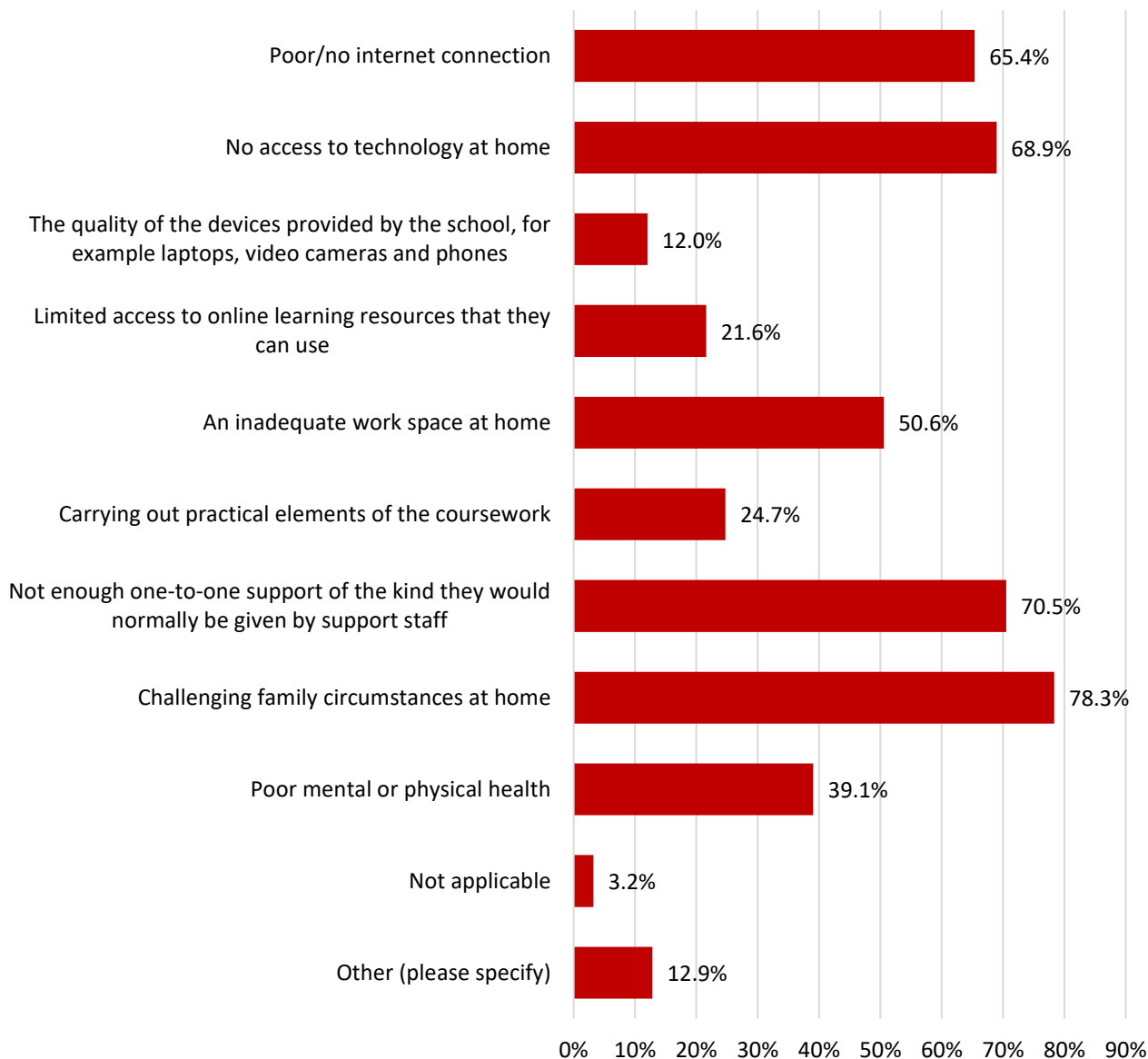
Over 200 additional comments were left under this question. Here are some Headteacher and Depute Headteacher comments, which reflect the additional challenges members are facing.

- "Specific difficulties as no admin support to do timetable etc - office staff not supplied with laptop or secure site access until week 8."
- "We have been able to provide digital learning - I teach as part of my remit. I find that tailoring resources for online learning is much more time consuming than preparing a lesson to deliver to a class."
- "Engagement has been high. As a school we set our own parameters two weeks before lockdown in consultation with staff and parents in the event we were to lockdown. Children and families were given devices and remote support has worked well. Class Teachers are engaging in online learning and also providing small group, individual and parental support."
- "It's so difficult having my own children at home too. I want to be able to teach and support them but it is difficult to juggle with the workload from school."
- "I have been humbled and so very, very proud of the way my staff rose to the challenge of delivering a curriculum from their home with some of them also volunteering at the hub and juggling their own family commitments. The dedication they have shown to their classes at this time has been phenomenal."
- "It has been very difficult being involved in video meetings all day. Given that staff are working all different hours, messages, emails. Etc. start at 7am and finish about midnight. People are very demanding and expect instant answers."

The next question asked members to think about the challenges facing their pupils in terms of participating in home learning. Whilst only 25% Headteacher and Depute Headteachers said that poor, or no access to the internet was a barrier for them, over 65% of respondents stated this was a barrier to their pupils.

The most common barrier that HTs & DHTs cited was challenging family circumstances at home, with almost 80% highlighting this as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: “When thinking of your students, what barriers have you seen to their participation in home learning?” responses



Total responses: 1,339

Almost 13% of respondents selected “other” as a response to this question. Within these responses, Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members highlighted the differences in access to technology as well as physical resources such as pens and paper. Many also stated that children who have additional support needs have not had access to the same level of support that their school would normally provide.

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

- “We’re working hard to get digital access for pupils. Number of Pupils working on mobile devices is huge. The authority is supporting delivery of devices/providing internet access.”
- “Some parents have commented that they are finding it difficult to motivate their child, struggling to manage all different age groups at home, parents finding it stressful, lack of ICT equipment, cost of accessing internet, or no internet.”
- “Some of the barriers have been us being able to get in contact with the children and concerns over our CP/VP [child protection/vulnerable people] children. We have almost all of our children engaging in packs or online learning but there are still a few outstanding.”
- “The level of additional support need requires the specialist provision that can only be delivered in a school setting with the appropriate levels of staffing and access to physical resources. I know that in conversation with parents and carers, our children use digital learning at home to meet their leisure needs, rather than a more specific learning related task. Parents express the difficulties they face trying to direct their children to the online learning that the school has provided, although access to Teams, Dojo, Google and GLOW is very variable and real frustration has been expressed around connectivity.”

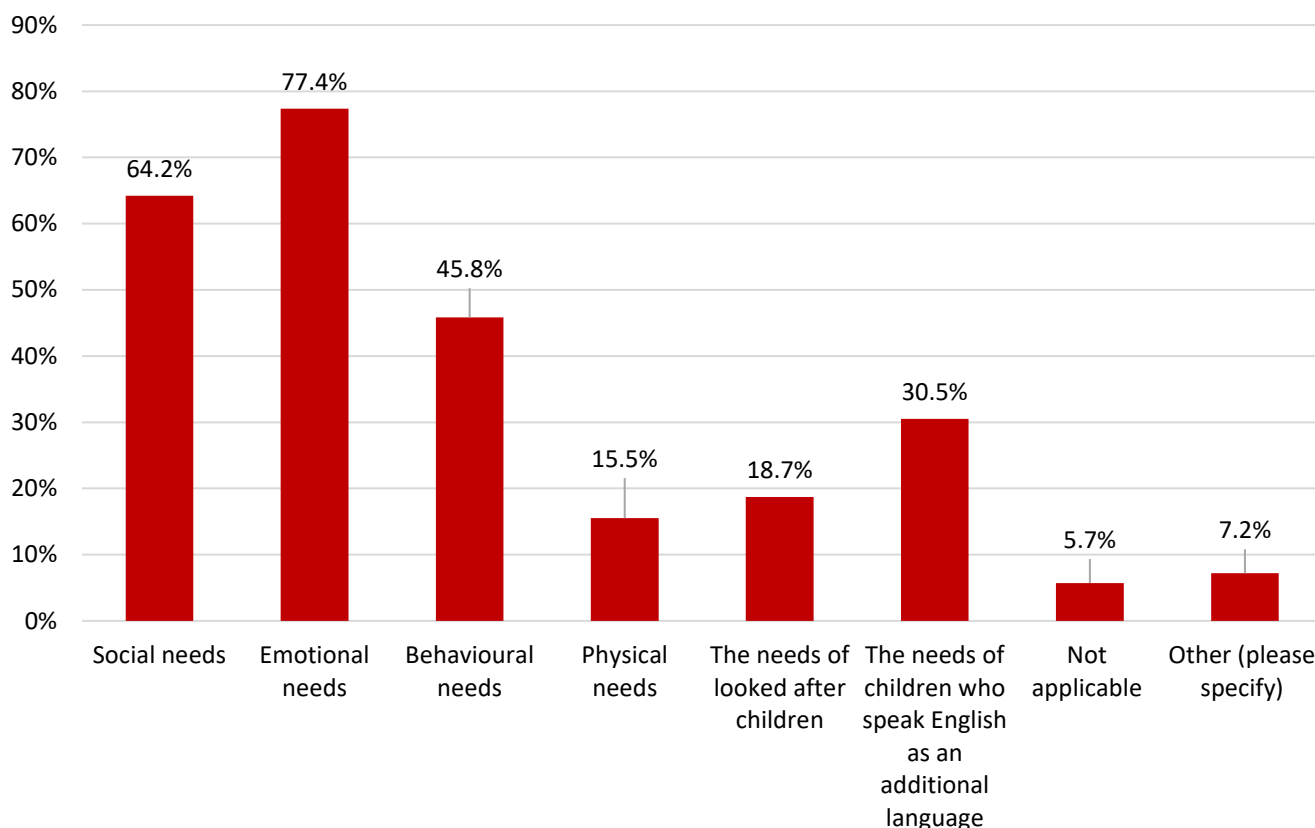
Meeting Additional Support Needs

When Headteacher and Depute Headteachers were asked if the children with additional support needs in their classes are having their needs met since moving to online learning, only 25% of members said yes. 45% of respondents said that they didn’t believe their needs had been met, with 18% saying they didn’t know and the rest stating it wasn’t applicable to their role.

When asked which needs were not being met, emotional and social needs came top, with over 75% of respondents noting this. Under the “other” comments, senior staff highlighted the additional support they have been offering to families in terms of respite care, as well as encouraging feedback from parents and carers.

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

Figure 5: “Where have been the greatest challenges in meeting the needs of children with Additional Support Needs since the school shutdown? The greatest challenges have been in addressing:” responses



Total responses: 1,294

Below is a very small sample of the comments that Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members submitted.

- “The situation is very difficult for those with complex needs to understand. They separate school and home quite distinctly and will not engage in school activities at home. Parents struggle to manage behavioural difficulties, as well as to give the 1:1 attention required if they have more than one child in the family. Some of our more able pupils are coping well and many parents are engaging well with activities provided by staff. The use of videos for the staff to tell children what is expected/ teach mini-activities has been useful.”
- “I have suggested social and emotional needs as some parents, understandably, are struggling and therefore aren’t able to support social and emotional needs. We have provided a lot of helpful tips/how to talk to your child/support/explain.”
- “Some children will need one to one, face to face input with a member of teaching staff to fully engage in education.”
- “I fear our nurture groups and support on return will need to change into a nurture school with more time for social emotional and behavioural support.”
- “Would be keen to see additional support staff allocation for these children on return as allocation was poor prior to lockdown due to presumption of mainstream for all. Some of our pupils with ASN needs also have families with literacy difficulties.”

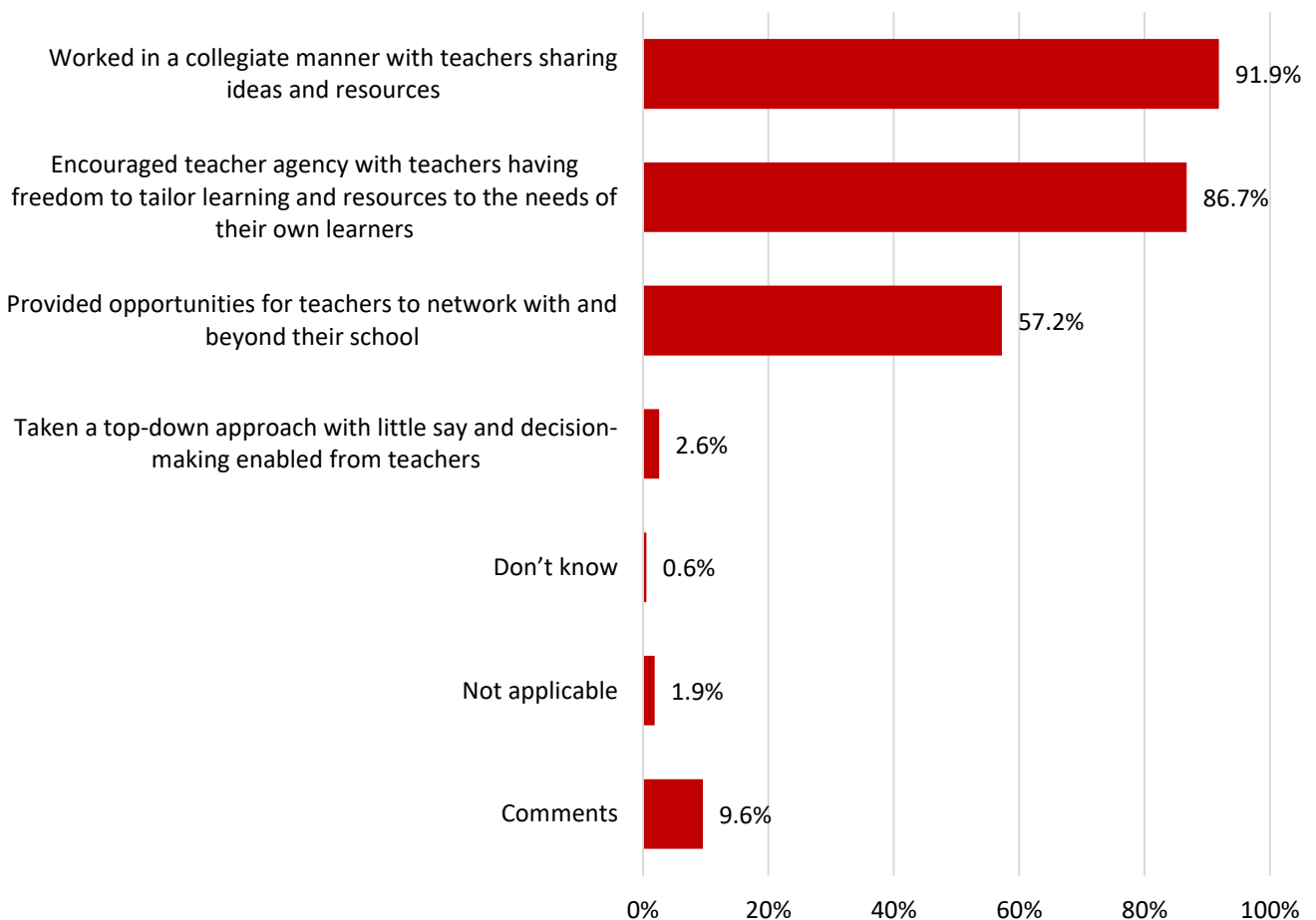
Managing Remote Learning

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

Figure 6 outlines member views on how teaching materials were created, designed and shared following the school closures. Senior managers highlighted that they allowed many of their teachers to adapt to the move to online teaching across different platforms to enable staff to use the software they felt most comfortable using. One senior manager member highlighted their concern over how the digital materials may be shared, as they were producing a lot of video content which they did not wish to see distributed more widely.

Many Head and Depute Headteacher members highlighted the creative and collaborative work that they have seen since the school shutdown. Many comments reflected the long hours that teachers across all levels have been working, which is not sustainable longer term.

Figure 6: “Whilst creating, designing and sharing online learning and teaching materials has your school:” responses



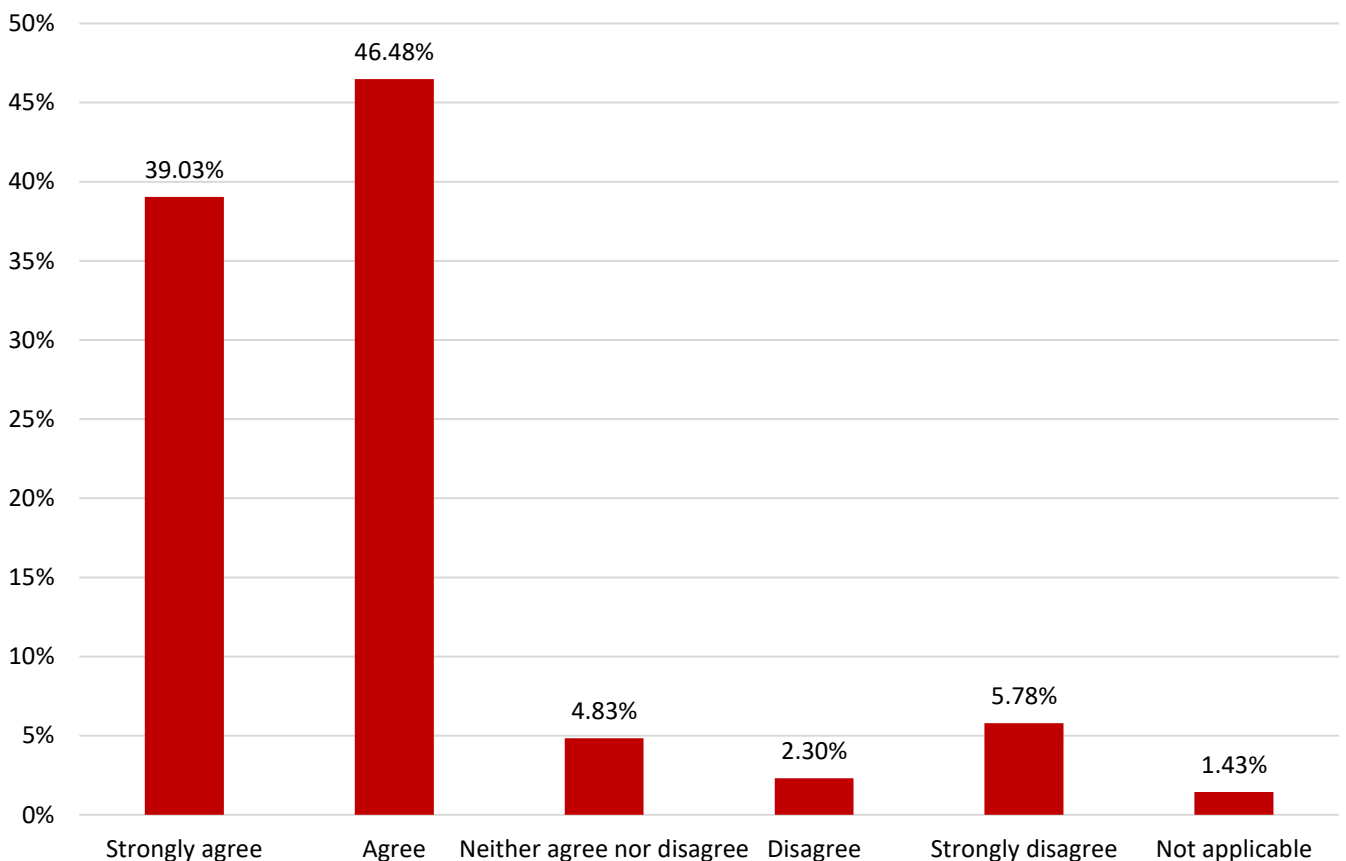
Total responses: 1,277

Managing Online Learning

Just over 80% of Head and Depute Headteacher respondents said they had engaged in professional learning, for example - professional reading and courses or webinars to help them deliver online learning and home working. Of those who had completed professional learning, 54% said this had been delivered by their school, and 57% said it was through their local authority. Other providers named were, the EIS, Education Scotland, GTCS, TES and various universities and online learning delivered through Eventbrite. Many HT & DHT members stated that they had completed professional learning through their own personal reading and online searches.

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

Figure 7: “How far do you agree with the following statements: ‘There have been collegiate discussions concerning realistic expectations about the contingency measures to be put in place to support pupils in my school.’” responses

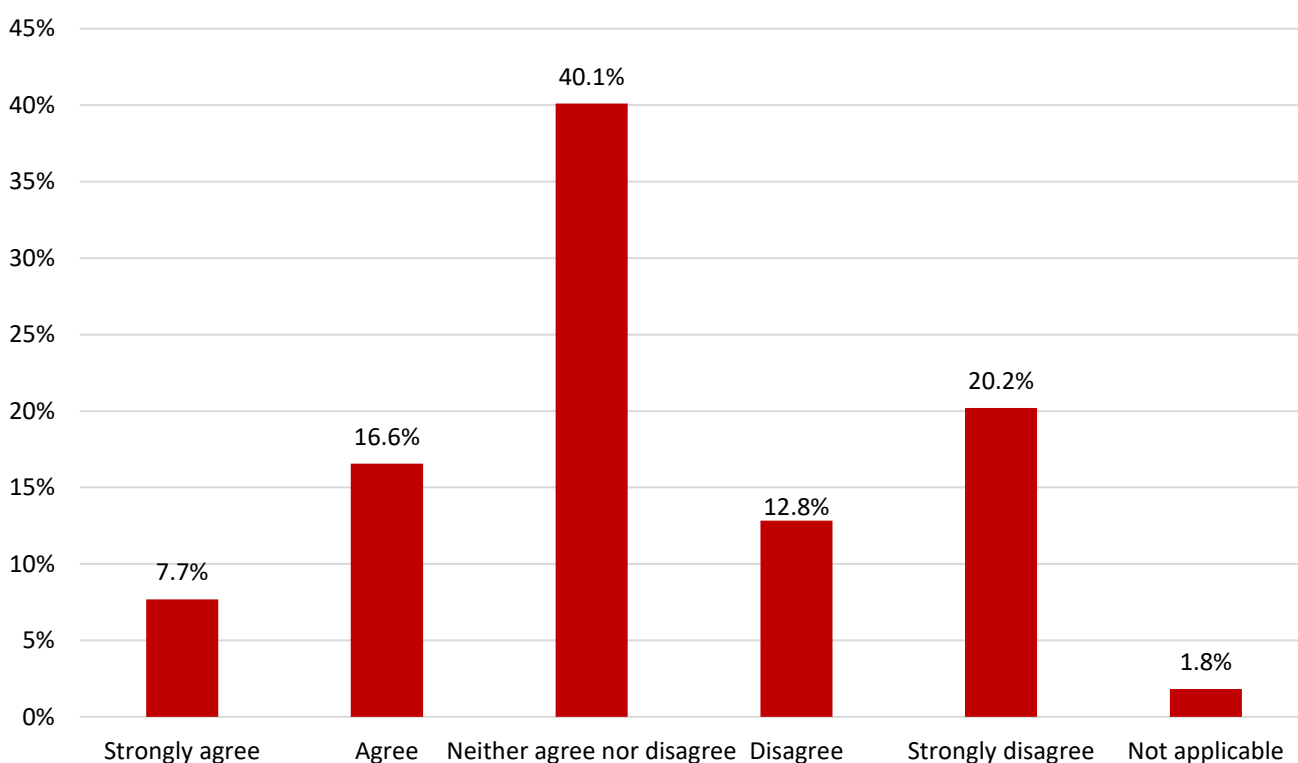


Total responses: 1,263

When asked if collegiate discussions concerning realistic expectations about the contingency measures that were to be put in place to support pupils had taken place, more than 85% of HTs and DHTs agreed. Around a fifth of members agreed that there had been an unrealistic expectation from parents regarding the quality and quantity of home learning materials that could be developed and delivered at this time (figure 8).

The comments left under this section highlighted the importance of having clear government and local authority guidelines in order to support staff. Once again Headteachers and Depute Headteachers highlighted the capacity issues that they have faced with regards to the access to and accessibility of technology in their school networks. Many highlighted that feedback from parents had been positive, but that they would welcome greater dialogue on how to improve engagement with pupils.

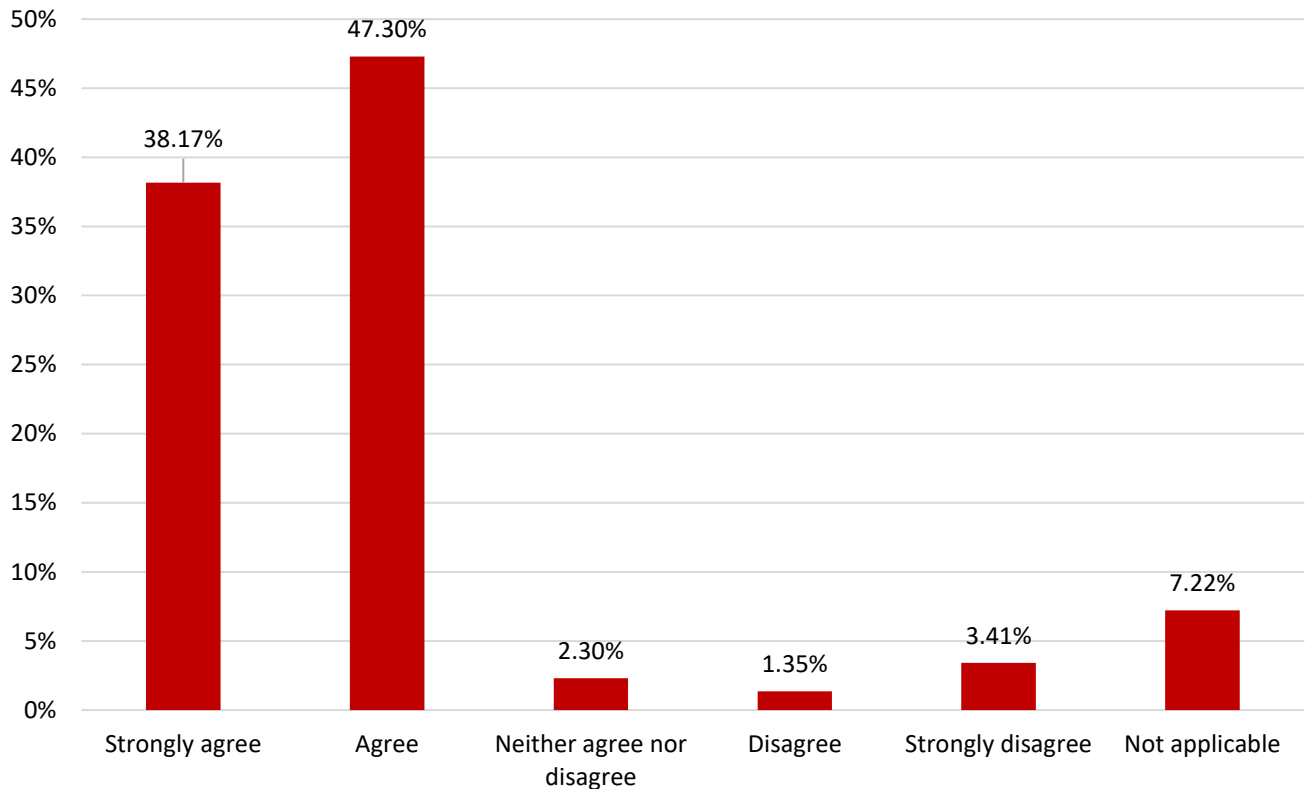
Figure 8: “There is an unrealistic expectation from parents as to the quantity and quality of home learning materials that can be developed and delivered at this time?” responses



Total responses: 1,262

The final question within this section of the survey asked members if they believed the expectations from their school regarding the learning that they were expected to deliver to young people was achievable. The vast majority of Head and Depute Headteacher respondents agreed, or strongly agreed that this was the case, as shown in figure 9.

Figure 9: “I feel that the expectations from my school, regarding the learning I am expected to deliver to young people are realistic and achievable.” responses



Total responses: 1,260

The vast majority of comments left highlighted that whilst they had found the move to online learning demanding, and very time consuming, Headteachers and Depute Headteachers iterated that health and wellbeing support was vital to in the transition to online teaching.

Below is a very small selection of the comments that were left in regard to this question:

- “I have told all staff that their HWB is the priority and they have to do what is best for them, in their context. I try to communicate regularly and help/guide/support without pressure. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' for delivery - just the best we can do and a range of options for parents. We will never please everyone.”
- “As a leader I need to carefully manage this. Not to overwhelm staff with demands on doing this or that, but be clear about the purpose of what they are doing. What learning is given to do has to have impact - focusing on reading, numeracy and life skills as research indicates these will have the biggest impact for learners. Over the weeks I have noticed an increase in requests from teachers from our Authority. Demands on gathering information from schools- who is engaging, who is not - what are they engaging with, have phone calls been made, etc. So an increase from the Authority of data gathering creeping in.”
- “It is foremost in my mind and I am doing all I can to make sure colleagues have a fair and realistic workload and that they have as much flexibility and autonomy as possible. The EIS advice on this has been very helpful.”

- “We surveyed the parents - and almost all were accepting of the quantity and quality of home learning materials.”
- “Weekly meetings to analyse engagement with teachers (not how much work has been submitted) just that child/ family are engaging and communicating, so we know they are ok. This means no one slips through that has gone silent. It had been the main way we have been able to support many families with paper packs or with school iPads lent out.”
- “I regularly remind staff that they should read the EIS guidance and approach their working pattern with a high degree of common sense and to think about their families, their dogs and time away from screens. However, I am aware that I seem to continually have conversations with one or two members of staff who are not so confident in applying their personal judgment, to slow down and step back from their 'always on' mentality. I give the message, I reinforce it, but I think there will always be those who have a difficulty around this. I do too and it's important for staff mental wellbeing, as well as my own.”

The findings within this section highlight the huge amount of work that has taken place to move the Scottish curriculum out of the classroom and into the home. Headteachers and Depute Teachers have concerns around some children not accessing the levels of support that they would normally enjoy in the classroom, with a fear that some may be “slipping through the net”.

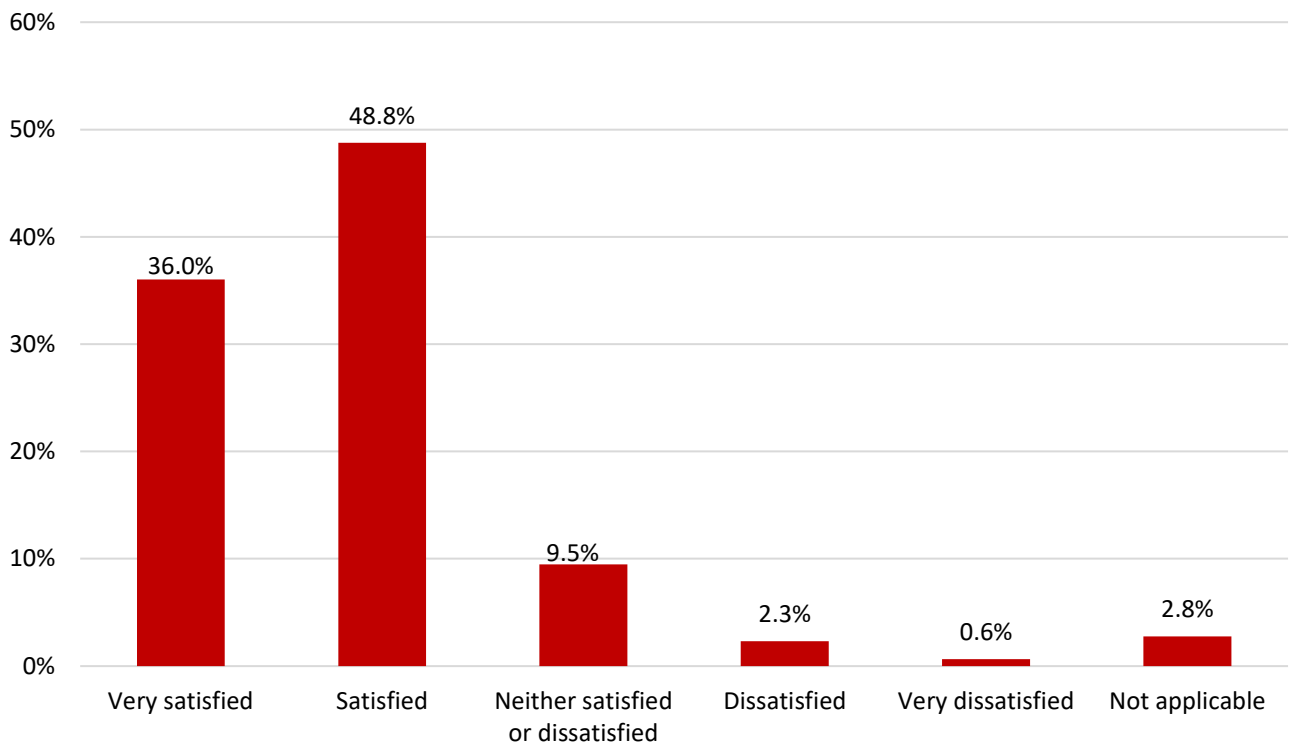
The need for clear guidance around what is expected of those working in the school sector is as urgent as ever, and this must be a priority as schools move towards a blended learning approach.

Section 4 – Health and Wellbeing

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

The first question asked within this section looked at member perceptions of how the school shutdowns had been managed. Figure 10 below shows the responses of Head and Depute Headteacher members.

Figure 10: “How satisfied are you with how the move to remote teaching and learning was managed within your school?”



Total responses: 1,257

Figure 10 shows that amongst Headteacher and Depute Headteacher colleagues there was high levels of satisfaction of how teaching was managed within their school. Many of the comments that were left underneath this question highlighted the hard work and planning that colleagues had put in to ensure the

school and their pupils were prepared for the transition. Many also stated that the speed at which they were expected to act provided some limitations in terms of setting up IT systems for staff and pupils.

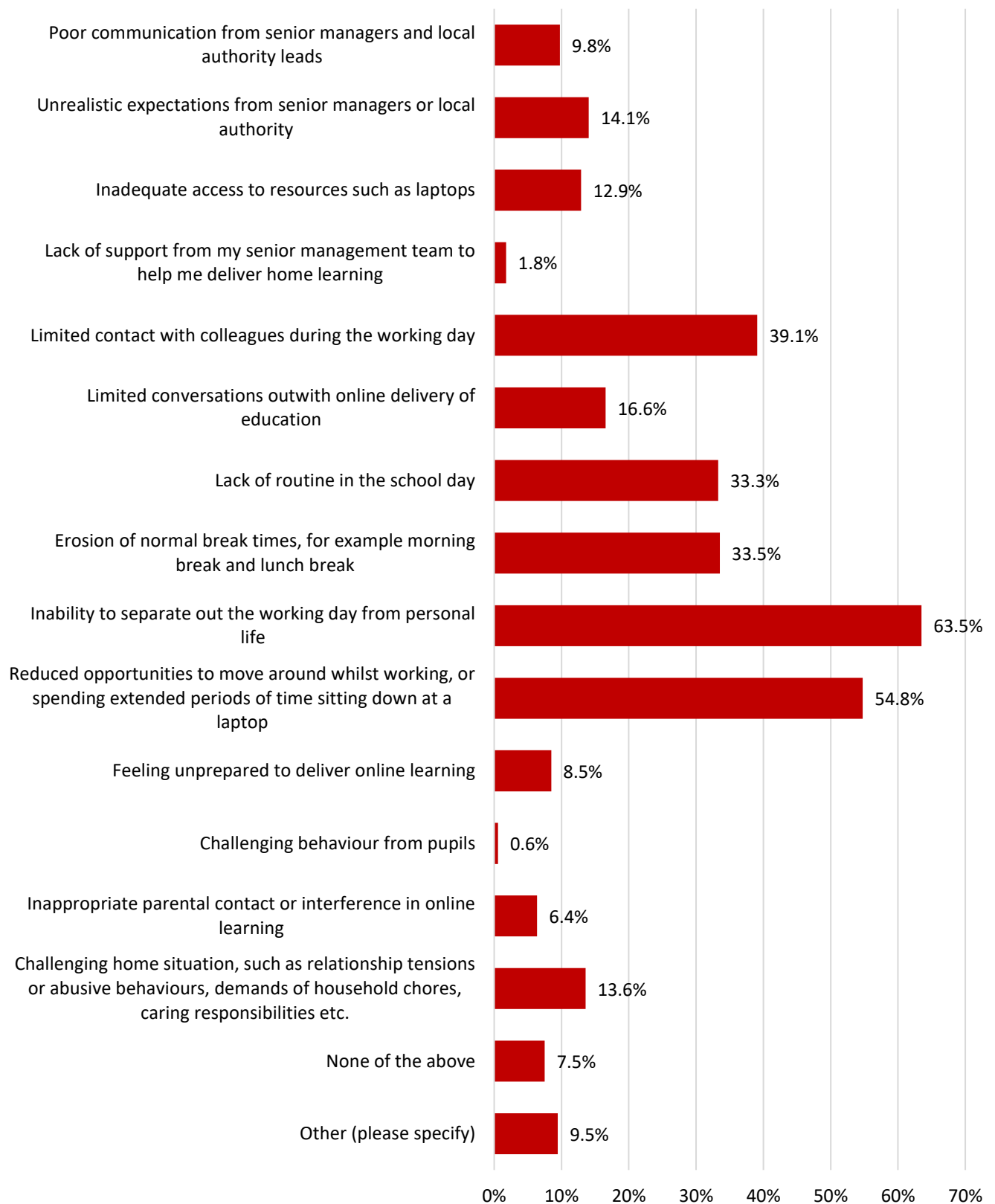
- “All school staff worked very hard to get online learning up and running in a very short space of time. As a member of the SLT I can only commend their efforts.”
- “Given the very short time we had to prepare for school closure I don't know what more we could have done with the time that we had to prep for online and prepare physical home learning packs for pupils.”
- “Given two weeks to prepare with lots of uncertainty we worked together as a Team and planned for the eventuality of this being long term. All teaching staff were involved in this preparation.”
- “Local Authority IT limitations on staff & pupil use of technology slowed us down at the start but things have been improving since lockdown. Other LAs seem to have supported a wider range of IT prior to lockdown.”
- “Everyone was professional and supported each other at the time and continue to do so. As time goes on I/we would expect to be supported and to support any collegiate request that came our way. If this is to be the new norm then I would expect that we will have to offer more support as a school/council and to be supported as a teacher.”

Members were then also asked specifically on what elements of their home working had negatively impacted on their wellbeing. The survey allowed for members to tick as many options as they thought were applicable, and they were given the opportunity to record any other factors that were not provided in the drop-down list. Figure 11 shows how HT & DHT members responded to this question.

By far, the biggest cause for concern was members’ inability to separate out the working day from their personal life. This was closely followed by reduced opportunities to move around whilst working. These are factors which must be considered when members may be expected to work from home for much longer periods of time.

Under the “other” option, Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members highlighted many of the challenges that have had a negative impact on their wellbeing including the pressure they feel to meet their own childcare responsibilities as well as the stress caused by communicating across many different platforms.

Figure 11: “What are the critical elements that negatively impact on your wellbeing whilst working from home?”



Total responses: 1,238

There were two separate boxes which allowed members to expand on how they were feeling, and what were the key elements that were contributing to any sense of poor wellbeing. Below are some comments that reflect the additional feedback that HT and DHT members gave:

- “I cannot switch off. This is hard anyway as an HT; however the normal routine is no longer there. Dealing with LEA returns with unrealistic deadlines whilst managing parent concerns, vulnerable children, staff, managing and organising a Hub along with your own school issues whilst also being worried about family members etc. is all taking its toll. I did not have any holiday days during Easter and it now looks like summer will be the same. That worries me greatly!”
- “Difficult conducting all correspondence over vscene and email. Time consuming and tiring being at a screen all day.”
- “Concerns due to the uncertainty of the future risk to our whole school community if Covid 19 cases rise as school returns.”
- “Stress and anxiety levels are hugely increased due to two teachers as parents and our children to try to home school whilst supporting/running our own school life.”
- “The pandemic is a uniquely stressful situation in itself. Working from home has added significantly to that stress as every day presents new challenges. Human interactions are at the core of teaching and this is a huge support which is unavailable at this time.”
- “Uncertainty impacts on HWB for all. Trying to ensure that all my staff and parents have access to support from me for their emotional and mental well-being impacts on my own. It is something I do happily but it does take its toll as some weeks are harder than others.”
- “The workload is immense, in different ways to 'normal' school time. There is a lot of support needed for staff too. Frustrations with equipment and connectivity, etc., yes, but also everything takes twice as long. Everyone is learning 'on the job' and with limited equipment at home. There is just no clear life/work balance for me just now; some staff contact first thing because that's when their own children are busy, some contact late at night when their kids are in bed. I know I should stick to regular hours but then it is overwhelming and mounts up so quickly. I am now trying to cover HUB people's toil plus do my own job. I am also trying to organise and oversee in-service training and hard copy packs for those who cannot access computers. There is just so much, plus loads of emails/updates/spreadsheets/attachments, etc. I feel I work or am in 'work mode' from the minute I wake until the minute I try to sleep.”

When asked, 62% of respondents³ said that they had a caring responsibility for their children, another family member or someone else. Of these 62%, 72% said that they felt they had been adequately supported by their employer to help them deliver these personal responsibilities.⁴

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

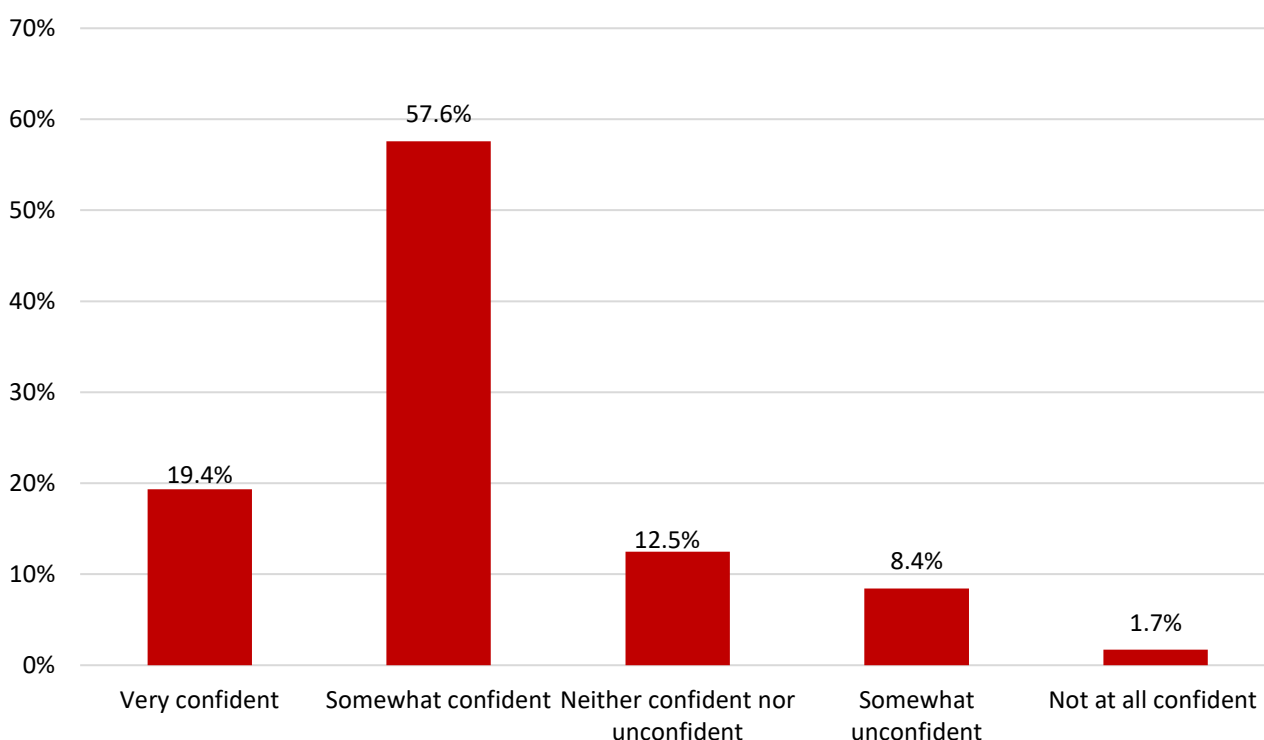
³ 1,241 Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members answered the question: “Do you have caring responsibilities for children or another family member, or someone else?” 62.1% said yes, 35.8% said no and 2.1% indicated that they would prefer not to say.

⁴ 840 Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members answered the follow-up question “If yes, do you think you have been given adequate support from your employer to help you?” 72.4% said yes, 21.9% said no. This total does not equal 100% suggesting that some respondents skipped this question.

Section 5 – Next Academic Session

The final section of the survey asked members directly about how they are feeling about moving towards the next session of teaching with social distancing measures still in place. The first question posed to members asked what level of confidence they have in their ability to cope with an increased use of online learning in the next academic year? Figure 12 below shows Headteacher and Depute Headteacher member views.

Figure 12: “What level of confidence do you have in your ability to cope with an increased use of online learning in the next academic year?”



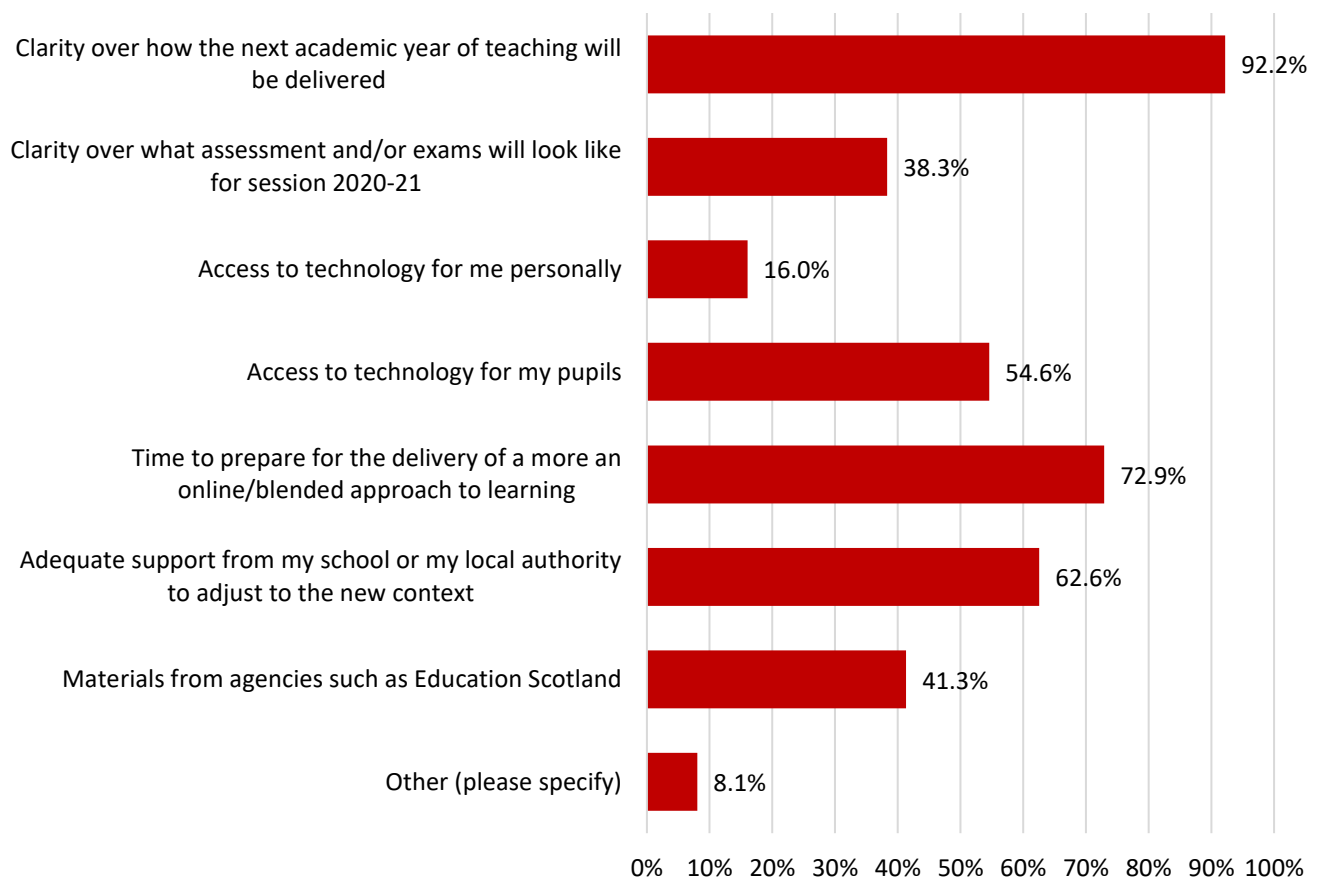
Total responses: 1,235

Figure 12 suggest that HT & DHT members feel reasonably confident that they can cope with an increased use of online learning in the next academic year. However members highlighted the concerns that they had going forward, for example in meeting their personal caring responsibilities as well as the limitations with their current Information Communications Technology (ICT) provisions.

- “If we were to go down a phased return, it would be helpful if schools could purchase some additional ICT equipment to enable children to work at school or at home.”
- “I am confident in using technology and have adapted to it well however this is not how I want to teach. I want to be in front of my class.”

- “If the expectation would be for me as a manager to be physically in school and also providing home learning for my class commitments then not at all. This would cause me great stress and make me consider whether I could continue in my role as this would not be reasonable.”
- “I feel fairly confident in online learning but it lacks the social element which is a huge part of teaching. Building relationships is a huge part of health and wellbeing.”
- “I went into this profession because of the human interactions. Something of the joy of the job will be lost if it becomes a 'computer job'. I know this isn't anyone's 'fault', and it will hopefully return to some form of 'normal', but I don't think it will be the same again. I will 'cope', but I want to love my job - and that comes from being with children.”

Figure 13: Which of the following are most critical to be building confidence around next session?



Total responses: 1,229

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

Of those who indicated “other” as an option to this question there were many other concerns listed. Many highlighted their concerns around the next exam diet and how the curriculum will be delivered; others also wanted reassurances that PPE would be available to all within their school that need or want them.

Comments from members who indicated “other”:

- “I worry about workload of staff. Teaching of (classes when) we return plus online learning.”
- “Clarity over how health implications have been considered to plan a return to schools. Also, clarity on a national approach to phasing in - senior pupils cannot be disadvantaged because they attend a larger school and travel by bus so therefore won't have access to schools as frequently as those pupils in smaller school settings who do not require school transport. Inequity here is going to be huge if there is no national blanket policy.”
- “Adequate time to prepare for reopening. Agreed focus across country for new normal and realistic expectations and supports.”
- “Safety of pupils and staff. Facilitating collegiate working practices. Enabling staff to work whilst they juggle personal demands and caring responsibilities. I want any expectation on them to be realistic.”
- “SQA must make an early decision on course content for this coming session. Given the likelihood of greatly reduced class contact time in school, covering courses as they stand will be almost impossible. Courses need to be reduced in length and this needs to be done as early as possible because schools teach courses in different orders and delaying the decision even till August will likely mean some are disadvantaged hugely by having taught something no longer assessed. Flexibility so that teachers can supervise SQA exams next sessions (rather than invigilators many of whom will be in at-risk groups) would allow the possibility of an exam diet rather than it being all on teacher estimates again.”

Following this question, there was an opportunity for members to highlight any further comments they had on how to build confidence in the next session. HT & DHT members highlighted the practical steps that they believed would improve confidence, for example greater access to and accessibility of ICT devices, and clear planning around what is to be expected of schools in the next term.

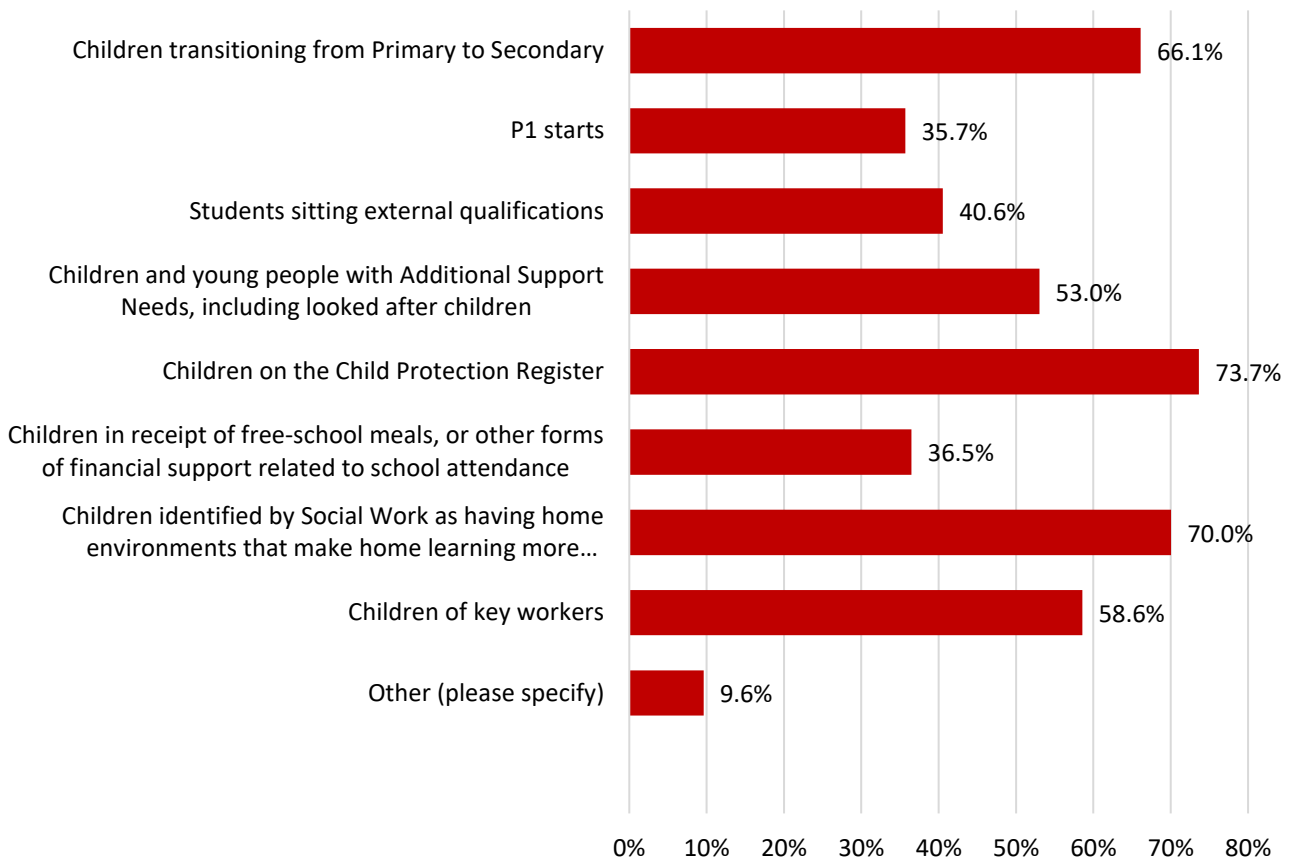
- “There needs to be a clear and robust action plan for the year rather than short term piecemeal arrangements. There needs to be allocation of IT devices for all pupils. Staff need to be given increased preparation and CPD time. Needs more recognition that these are unusual times and therefore needs a bespoke plan for the year.”
- “Really need good quality ICT and systems that work to create a decent experience for young people. Development time to create materials. Sensible approaches to social distancing. Decision on exams from outset so we can assess appropriately.”
- “We don't know how we can sustain online teaching whilst working with certain year groups in school at the same time.”
- “Stop all inspections to enable schools to focus on what needs done now, to remove unnecessary stress and to minimise adults in the school.”
- “If we are all in this together for the benefit of children and young people, then this should be the focus. Strip away needless policy updates and pause inspections. Perhaps teachers on secondment with external agencies should be asked to come back into school to assist with delivering learning in new operational contexts.”

Prioritisation of face-to-face learning

At the time of the survey being live, discussions were ongoing about how, when, and who will be prioritised when school buildings reopen. Members were reminded that the Scottish Government was considering that certain groups be prioritised as part of a phased approach to reopening schools, and asked if provision be prioritised or be universal, even at a reduced level? In response to this 61% of Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members said they agreed that provision should be prioritised, 29% that provision should be universal (even at a reduced level) and 10% indicated that they didn't know.

When prompted further about which groups should be prioritised (were that to be the model used) senior staff indicated that children on the child protection register, children identified by social work as having challenging home environments and those transitioning from Primary to Secondary school should be considered first. Figure 14 details the full responses given by Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members.

Figure 14: "If prioritised, which groups do you think should be prioritised when schools begin to reopen?"



Total responses: 1,154

"Other" responses highlighted the fact that many children with additional support needs are better served in school. Many also stated that consideration needs to be given to the definition of key worker to support working parents when schools reopen.

The next question was an open ended question which asked members: "What additional measures do you think need to be taken to support children with Additional Support Needs, or younger children to socially distance or maintain high levels of personal hygiene?" Below is a representative sample of the comments left by senior staff members.

- "Extra staffing, for some ASN children they may need 1-1. Very clear child friendly guidelines for staff to enforce with children. Lower ratios and numbers for our youngest children."
- "Small class sizes with appropriate Classroom Assistance support. Screens around desks. Hand washing stations in classrooms."
- "It will be necessary to offer PPE to members of staff working with these groups who do not understand the social distancing and also for children who may become overwhelmed causing them to spit and hit out. They can't help this but we need to protect the staff working with them as they are vulnerable in these situations."
- "Increased resources to support rigorous hygiene planning. Transition time to adapt to the new routines. Account taken of the particular ASN and strategies required to best support them and they're families."
- "Clear guidelines and enough staff to resource and support."
- "Safe working spaces for adults working with children. Clear expectations issued to parents around social distance. Managing expectations of parents as to what education will look like."

Another opened ended question asked members: "What additional measures do you think need to be taken to support the delivery of practical subjects such as P.E. and Home Economics whilst socially distancing and maintaining high levels of personal hygiene?" Key comments from Headteachers and Depute Headteachers are highlighted below.

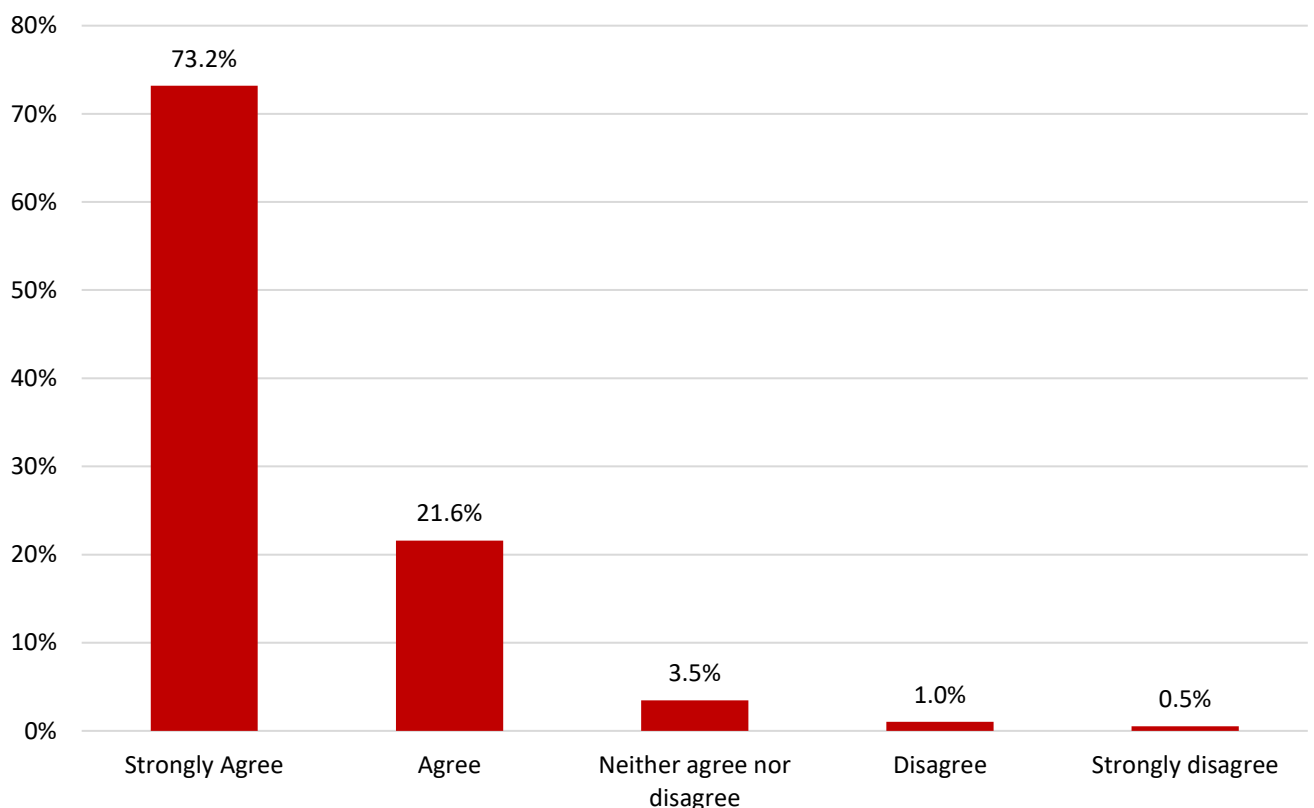
- "They cannot be delivered unless all pupils have their own equipment. Pupils cannot maintain high levels of personal hygiene without full support to do so and for some this is not possible."
- "Support from active schools, etc. in lessons/ activities that can be done keeping social distancing guidelines both indoor and outside. In Primary focus on food can be delivered in a different way as it is unlikely that we would have the resources and appropriate space to ensure proper food/ personal hygiene with no sharing. Some simple practical tasks could be undertaken if we had enough resources for individuals. Some schools could teach lessons and send activities home for cooking however not all families will have what is required for this and logistics of sending ingredients home may not be possible for large numbers of children."
- "Clear guidance based on the experiences of other countries. Greater use of outdoor spaces and imaginative and innovative planning to ensure reasonable amount of practical activities being provided."
- "The PE curriculum will have to be reduced, no games as these do not lend themselves to social distancing. There needs to be sanitiser in every classroom and in the corridors."
- "Health & Safety guidelines required. Risk assessments required. Consistency across authority in all aspects. Parents need to know their children are safe. Staff need to know they are safe. Cleaning of equipment- who and when?"
- "Remain at home until safe to return to school and deliver these areas of the curriculum safely."

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

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

When asked, 95% of Head and Depute Headteacher respondents agreed or strongly agreed with these 3 conditions. 3% neither agreed nor disagreed and only 2% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This is a clear call to decision makers to ensure that these conditions are met before staff and pupils return as shown in figure 15.

Figure 15: “The EIS has articulated a strong set of conditions to be met before schools can reopen: 1. Established capacity to “test trace and isolate” 2. Significant operational changes in place to ensure implementation of all health guidelines e.g. effective social distancing, enhanced hygiene routines, and ongoing risk assessments in place 3. Transparent and shared evidence that the spread of infection is under control and that schools and educational establishments are safe places to work in terms of this statement, do you?” responses



Total responses: 1,186

Shielding, caring responsibilities and underlying health conditions

When prompted, 18% of Head and Depute Headteacher respondents said they have underlying physical or mental health conditions that would put them more at risk of Covid-19 impacts and would prevent them returning to classroom teaching. A further 35% said that they had childcare responsibilities, and 14% said they had shielding responsibilities which would make it difficult for them to return to classroom teaching.⁵ Many members highlighted their concerns around returning too soon or returning without further professional or personal support. Below are some of the other issues senior staff members raised.

- “I am not in vulnerable but others in my household are therefore concerned about their welfare. Need clarity in vulnerable or shielding staff.”
- “I am very anxious that we are rushing the return to school. I feel very strongly that we need to wait until it is SAFE for ALL to return.”
- “Although no underlying health issues I don’t want to put myself or anyone else in danger unless safe working environment.”
- “Has become increasingly obvious that the main function of schools is to support young people to socialise, to provide safety (accommodation & adult guidance) & feed vulnerable pupils. Education of subject content/skills is much further down the list yet schools continue to be judged on that. That needs to change. All teachers believe in the importance of child protection & feel protective of their pupils. We work with children plus family on a daily basis.”
- “Account needs to be taken of teachers that have young children and how they may be able to support a phased return to school.”
- “A clear set of guidelines should be devised that identifies who should and should not be in the workplace. Hubs should also operate within their own schools, as much as possible. There is a serious gap in provision for vulnerable children as a result.”

All of the comments above highlight the concerns that members have about returning to work, not only for themselves and their pupils, but also for their families and wider networks. These concerns must be taken seriously when planning for the return to face-to-face schooling.

Finally, members were asked what internet they had at home, with 98%⁶ saying that they had broadband, and 2% saying they only had access on their phone or that they did not have access to the internet.

When asked if they had a workspace that was separated from other areas of the home, only 43% said yes, with the remaining 57% saying no.

⁵ Full data outlined in Appendix A

⁶ Of 1,187 respondents

Final Comments and Conclusions

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

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

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

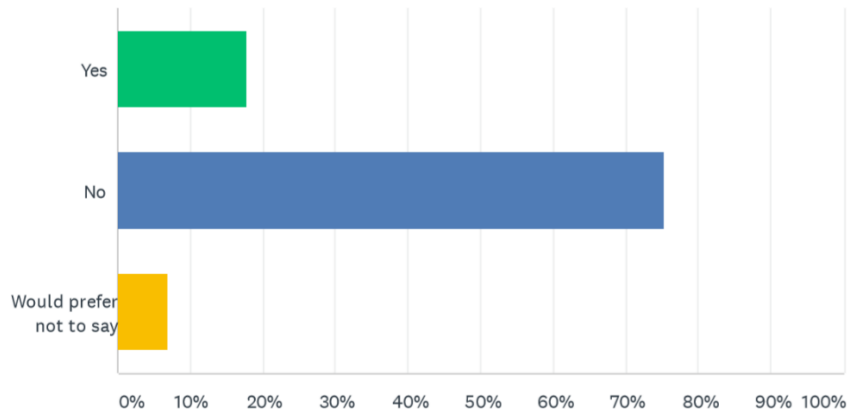
When prompted, Headteacher and Depute Headteacher members left concluding comments to their survey responses. Below is a very small sample.

- “I would like staff to feel confident in coming back. I would like clear and concise guidance around what is expected from me as a Leader in Primary school and Nursery. I think there has to be an emphasis on children’s and staff’s HWB as well as an emphasis on learning rather than being glorified babysitters. Parents’ expectations need managed at national and local level so as an HT I can focus on developing a baseline for learning across all stages that can be built on.”
- “Guidance staff under huge strain to support pupils and families while they face their own challenges working at home. Their remits need to be examined as a priority. Many have huge caseloads.”
- “Working in an old school with 1500 pupils, socially distancing will not work unless numbers are dramatically reduced. The current building is dirty with seriously inadequate toilet and hand washing facilities. There needs to be a root and branch change to allow staff or pupils to be safe.”
- “Schools with the support of local authorities and staff should be given time to create a workable solution to ensure everyone is safe when schools reopen. The EIS would be part of that process. People are concerned about their own and their families’ health. Everyone wants to get "back to normal" but a well-planned and gradual return will be paramount.”
- “Concerns regarding parental expectation for the future. Staff already being asked to volunteer part of their summer holidays. What will be the expectation for other holidays and moving forward for the years to come? Staff pay and conditions do not match the change in role and remit at this point in time.”
- “How can equity and equality be addressed for all our learners during a phased return?”

Appendix A – Questions 36, 37 and 38

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

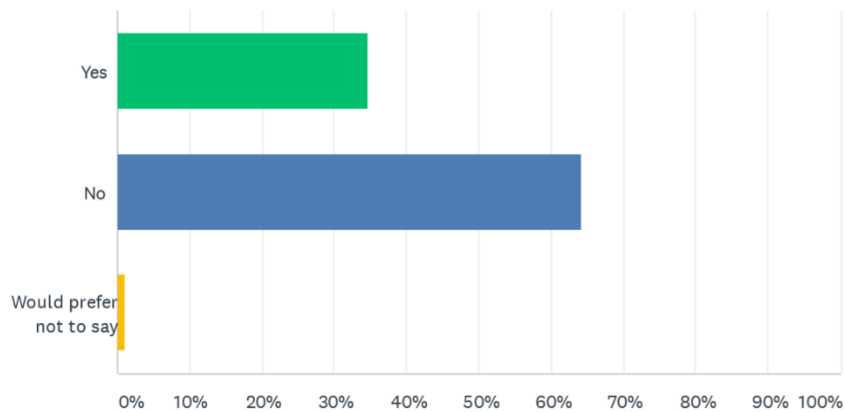
Answered: 1,185 Skipped: 373



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	17.72%	210
No	75.27%	892
Would prefer not to say	7.00%	83
TOTAL		1,185

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

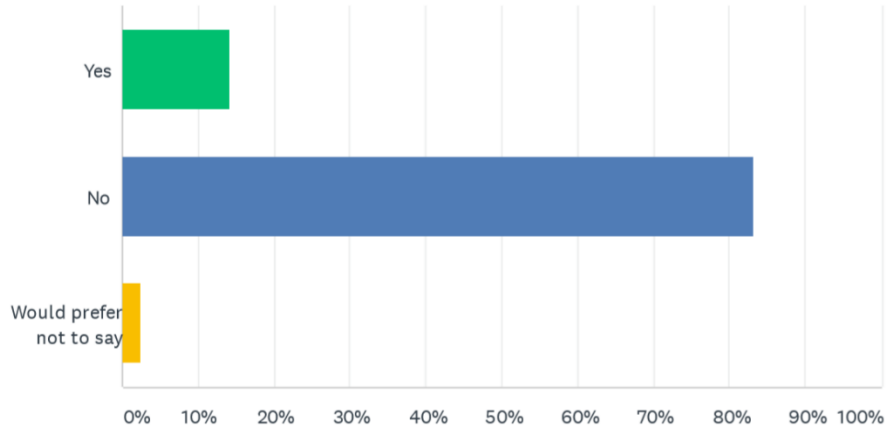
Answered: 1,183 Skipped: 375



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	34.74%	411
No	64.16%	759
Would prefer not to say	1.10%	13
TOTAL		1,183

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

Answered: 1,185 Skipped: 373



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	14.18%	168
No	83.29%	987
Would prefer not to say	2.53%	30
TOTAL		1,185

Further Information

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

Lesley Warren, Campaigns, Policy and Research Co-ordinator

Email: lwarren@eis.org.uk

For more information on the Educational Institute of Scotland:

Website: www.eis.org.uk

Twitter: @EISUnion

Facebook: Educational Institute of Scotland

Email: enquiries@eis.org.uk

Phone: +44 (0)131 225 6244

Postal address:

The Educational Institute of Scotland

46 Moray Place

Edinburgh

EH3 6BH