Coronavirus Parent Survey Results

Northern Ireland

March 2021

Key Findings

Coping during lockdown

- Parents say their children are coping slightly better with the current arrangements for schooling than they are themselves. 41% of children are coping well compared with 36% of parents.
- 44% of parents and 43% of children are finding it harder to cope in the most recent lockdown compared with how they coped during the first lockdown.

Supporting learning from home

- Just over half of parents (54%) are confident supporting their child's learning from home in the last half term.
- Post primary school children are spending more time learning at home than primary school children (73% post primary spend more than 3 hours a day compared with 35% of primary school children).
- 44% of parents feel the amount of time their child spends on school work is about right, 31% consider it to be too little and 18% say it is too much.
- 54% of parents are spending up to 2 hours overseeing their child's work each day. 27% of parents with a SEN child are spending over three hours a day overseeing their child's work compared with 18% of parents with a child without SEN.
- 45% of primary school parents and 29% of post primary school parents are spending more time overseeing their child's school work compared with the first lockdown.

Children's engagement in learning

- 58% of parents say their child is engaged in their learning currently. Children with SEN and primary age children are less engaged than their counterparts.
- 52% of primary school children and 43% of post primary school children are less engaged in their learning compared to before the pandemic.

Home learning support from school

- Overall, 66% of primary school parents and 60% of post primary school parents are satisfied with the home learning support given by their child's school during the last term. A third of all parents are not very satisfied (24%) or not at all satisfied (11%) with the learning support.
- Looking at specific learning support, over half of parents are satisfied with the frequency of teachers checking in with their child (63% very or quite satisfied), the feedback on work completed (63%), the volume of work set (62%), and instruction/teaching given (60%). Parents are less satisfied with the number of live lessons (32% very or quite satisfied), the availability of activities that support mental health and well-being (36%), availability of printed resources (47%) and the number of recorded lessons/video clips (48%).
- 61% of parents are satisfied with school communications to parents; 42% with feedback to parents on their child's performance and 31% with the learning resources so parents can help their child engage in a new topic.
- 47% of primary school parents and 36% of post primary school parents are more aware of what their child is learning compared to before the first lockdown.

Mental health and well-being

- 38% of parents rate their child's mental health and well-being currently as very good (10%) or good (28%).
- 27% of post primary school parents are concerned or very concerned about their child's mental health and well-being compared with 20% of primary school parents.
- Parents with a child with SEN were far more likely to rate that child's mental health and well-being as concerning or very concerning compared with parents with a child without SEN (39% vs. 20%).
- 15% of parents who rated their child's mental health and well-being concerning or very concerning have contacted a friend or family member for support, 15% the school, 12% a GP, 8% CAMHS, and 11% someone else. 38% of parents haven't contacted anyone for support.

- 86% of children's and 84% of parents' mental health and well-being have been negatively affected by the disruption to schooling since the start of the first lockdown.
- The biggest triggers impacting their child's mental health and well-being are social isolation/inability to physically play/socialise with friends (79% rating it in their top three triggers), missing extra-curricular clubs and activities (40%), keeping up with learning at home (37%), worry about themselves or a family member getting ill with Covid-19 (20%) and low self-esteem (19%).

Parents' challenges and concerns

- Parents' biggest challenges with schools closed to most pupils are juggling work and home schooling (56% of parents rated it in their top three challenges), motivating their child to do their school work (51%), the impact on their relationship with their child (38%) and looking after other family members and household chores in addition to home schooling (32%).
- 70% of all parents are more worried about the impact of the pandemic on their child's education now compared to last March. 9% of parents are less worried.

Returning to school

- 36% of parents said they'd be happy for their children to return to school as soon as the current lockdown ends. Another 27% said only when scientists, the government and schools leaders say it is safe to do so.
- If schools are unable to reopen fully, 39% of primary school parents and 49% of post primary school parents would like to see a blended learning approach across all year groups rather than certain year groups returning before others.
- Many parents would welcome additional mental health and well-being support in schools including regular discussion of mental health issues within classroom settings (46% of parents), an assessment of every child's psychological well-being when they return to school (42%) and greater focus on physical education when their child returns to school (41%).

Satisfaction with government and school responses

- 14% of parents think the government is managing children's education well during the pandemic, with 2% saying very well and 12% quite well.
- Just over half of parents (51%) agree that their child's school has listened to parents during the pandemic whilst only 7% say the same of the government.

About Parentkind

Parentkind is the largest network of PTA fundraisers in the UK. We bring specialist fundraising support and advice to parent volunteers so that every school can benefit from a successful PTA. Our 13,000 PTA members raise over £120+ million per year, placing us alongside some of the largest charities in the UK. As a national charity, Parentkind, give those with a parenting role a voice in education. We invest substantial resources in representing parent views on their child's learning to local, regional and national governments and agencies because evidence tells parental participation in education benefits all children in all schools and society as a whole.

The Parentkind journey started in 1956 by a group of pioneer parents who were passionate about parent involvement in their child's learning but felt that they needed a voice at national as well as local level. Therefore, from PTAs on the ground forming regional federations, the national association of PTAs was born.

Nicholas Gillet was the first chair of the National Council of Parent Teacher Associations (NCPTA), as it was then called, and his vision was that parents should not only have a local role and a voice in their child's school but also at a national level in education policy.

Today family life is very different to 65 years ago and so is the education system. We have many different types of family structures and circumstances (the nuclear family, single parents, or two working parents), much more disparate community support and a multitude of care arrangements for children around school. However, the vision remains the same; parents should not only have a local role and a voice in their child's school but also at a national level in education policy.

Methodology

A short online survey, promoted to parents of school age children in Northern Ireland via social media, was active between 9pm on 9th February and 8am on 17th February 2021. 840 parents took part in the survey. Parents with more than one child were invited to answer some of the questions for a second child. 184 parents did so, and explains why some of the questions have more responses than 840.

Please note that not every parent answered every question. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. 'Prefer not to say' responses are excluded from SEN/not SEN calculations.

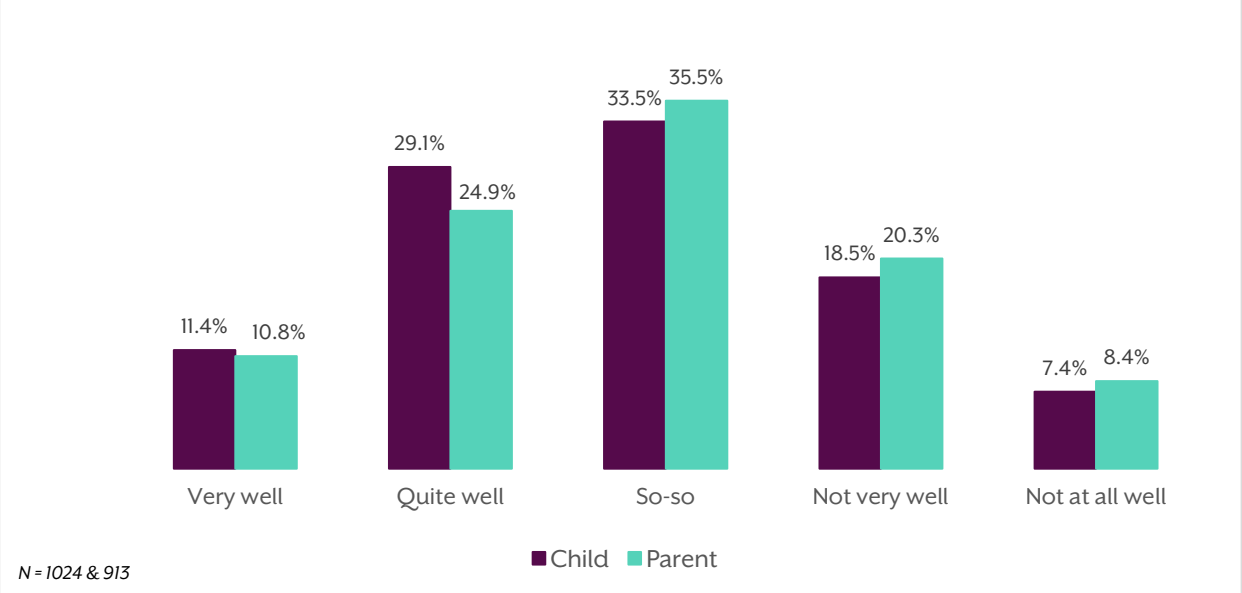
Notable differences in responses between parents with a child with SEN and parents without a SEN child and between primary school and post primary school parents are highlighted throughout the report.

Full Results

1. Coping during lockdown

Parents were asked how well their child was coping with the current arrangements for their schooling and subsequently how well they themselves were coping with the arrangements. As Figure 1 shows, parents say their child is coping better that they are.

Figure 1: How well are you and your child coping with the current arrangements for their schooling?



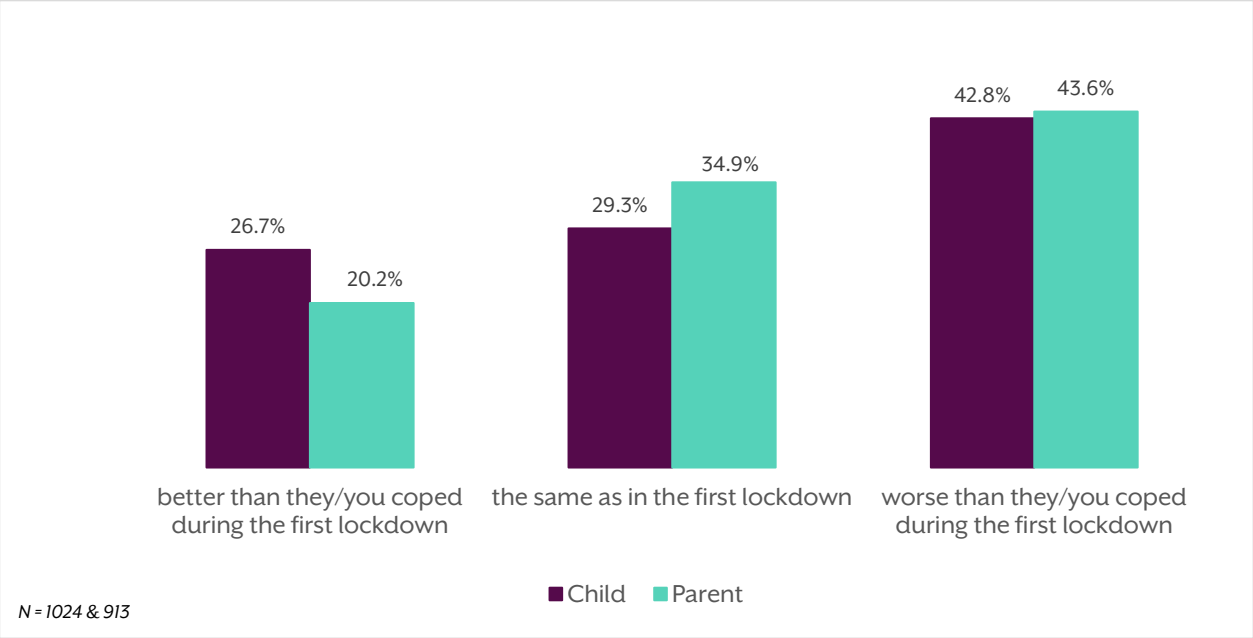
Parents of a child with SEN are less likely to be coping well than parents with a child without SEN (26% very well or quite well SEN vs. 38% not SEN). Similarly, primary school parents are coping less well than post primary school parents (31% very well or quite well primary parents vs. 40% post primary parents).

Parents were asked how this compared to how they and their child coped during the first lockdown. As Figure 2 shows, although 27% of children and 20% of parents are coping better, 43% of children and 44% of parents are finding it harder to cope in the most recent lockdown. This compares to only 17% of parents in England saying they are having a worse time compared to the first lockdown[1].

[1] Parentkind ran a shorter survey to parents in England at the same time as this survey. 565 parents responded to the England survey. See https://www.parentkind.org.uk/Research--policy/research/research-index

Interestingly, parents of a child with SEN are more likely to say both they and their child are coping better now than in the first lockdown than parents of a non SEN child (parent coping better 27% SEN vs. 19% not SEN; child coping better 32% SEN vs. 26% not SEN). This is despite the fact that children with SEN are coping less well with the current arrangements than children without SEN (39% of parents with a SEN child said their child was coping not very well or not at all well compared with 24% of parents of a child without SEN).

Figure 2: Is this better, the same or worse than during the first lockdown?



2. Supporting learning from home

Parents were asked how confident they were supporting their child's learning from home last half term (Figure 3).

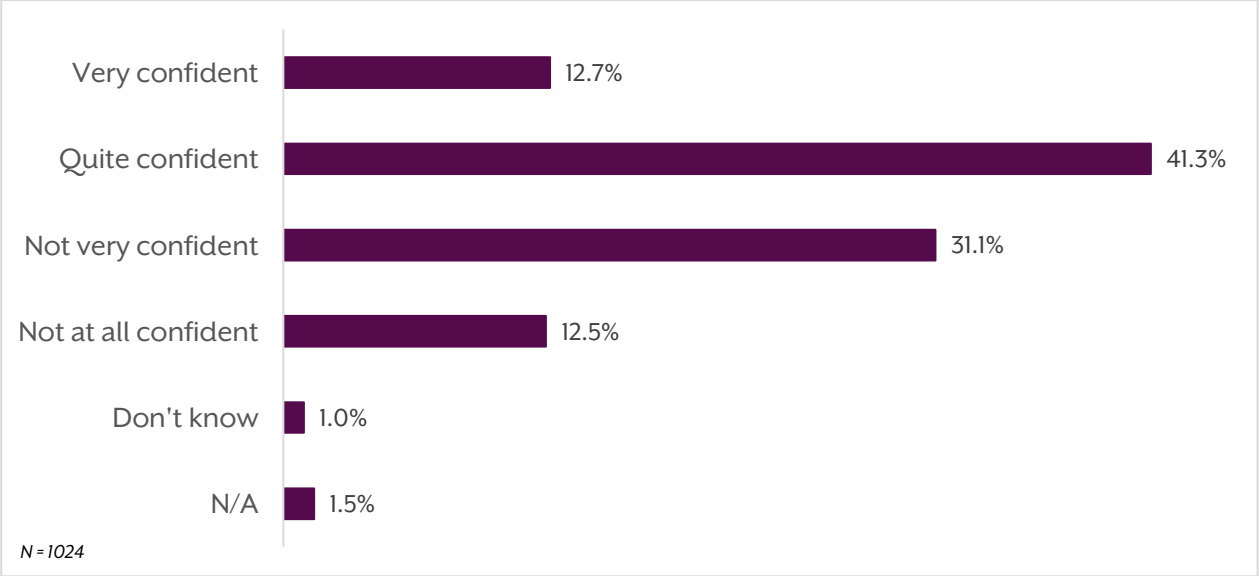
Overall, 54% of parents are either very confident or quite confident supporting their child's learning. This is much lower than the 79% of parents in England who feel confident supporting learning in the last half term[2]. Primary school parents are more confident supporting their child's learning than post primary parents (57% primary very or quite confident vs. 50% post primary). Parents of children without SEN are more confident than those with children with SEN (56% non SEN very or quite confident vs. 40% SEN).

Where parents said they were not very or not at all confident we also asked what support they would find helpful to improve their confidence. The most popular responses to this open question were:

- more online classes (26%)
- more support from school directly to parents to help them understand how and what to teach (18%)
- the challenge trying to support learning while working from home (18%)
- regular contact from schools to offer support and feedback (11%)
- SEN issues (4%).

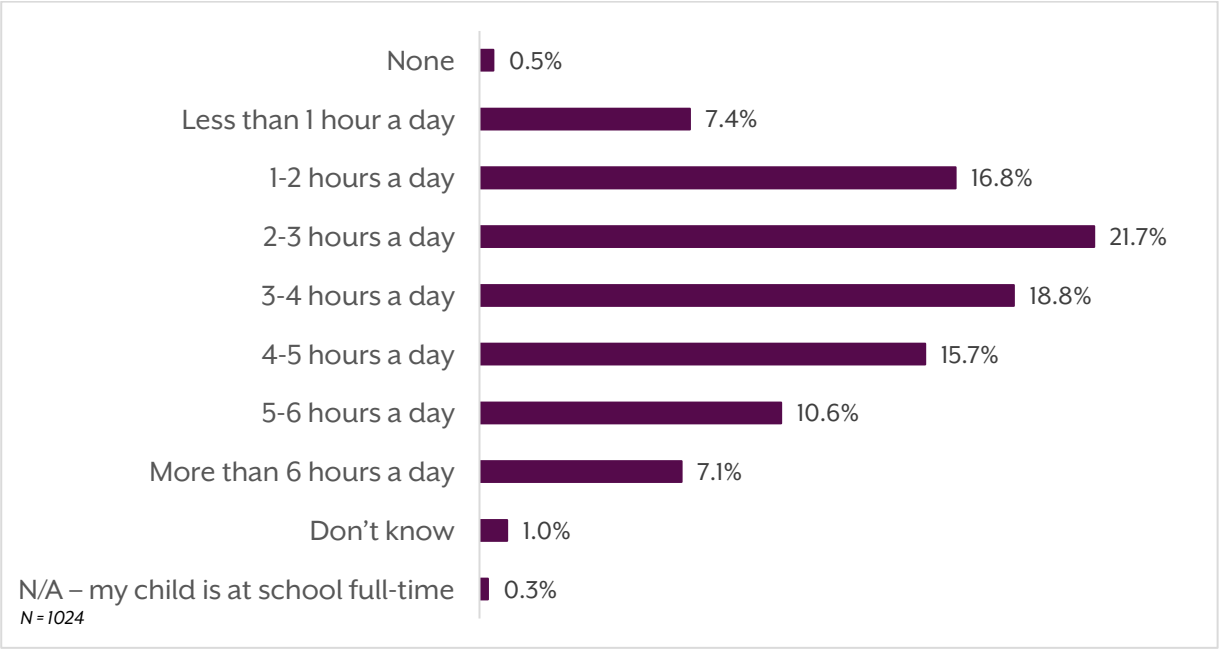
[2] Ibid.

Figure 3: How confident do you feel supporting your child's learning from home?



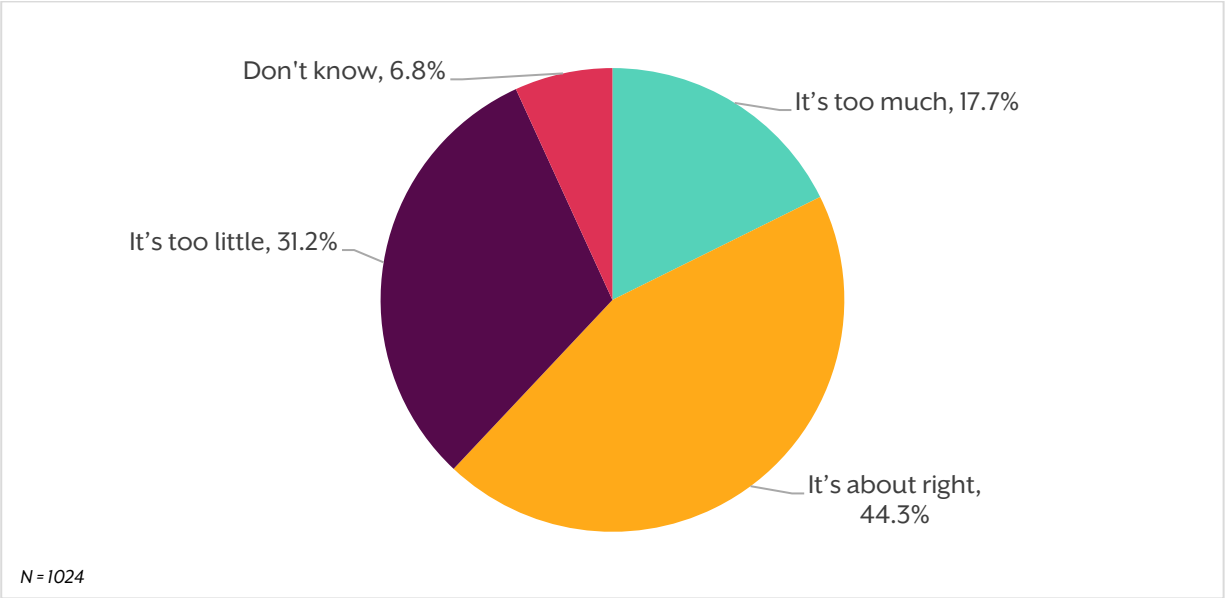
Parents were asked how many hours a day, on average, their child was spending on school work (Figure 4). Post primary school children are spending more time studying than primary school children (73% post primary spend more than 3 hours a day compared with 35% of primary school children). Children with SEN are spending less time on school work than children without SEN (32% of SEN children are spending up to 2 hours a day compared with 24% of children without SEN).

Figure 4: How many hours a day on average is your child spending on school work?



We then asked parents whether they felt the time spent was too much, too little or about right (Figure 5). Whilst 44% of parents feel the amount of time spent on school work is about right, 31% consider it to be too little (34% primary and 28% post primary). More than one fifth of post primary school parents (22%) feel their child is spending too much time on school work.

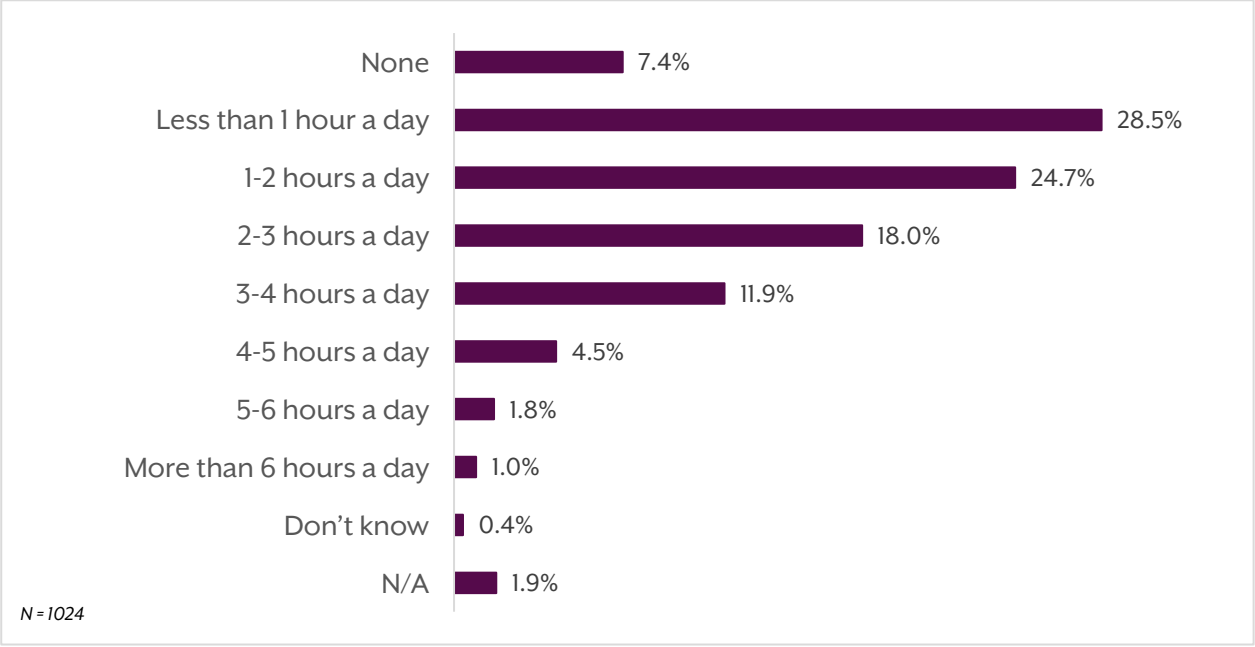
Figure 5: How do you feel about this average amount of time they are spending on school work?



We then asked parents how much time they were spending overseeing their child's work. The results are in Figure 6.

Parents of a child with SEN are spending more time supervising their child's work – 27% of parents with a SEN child are spending over three hours a day overseeing their child's work compared with 18% of parents with a child without SEN. 22% of primary school parents are spending more than 3 hours supervising school work compared with 16% of post primary school parents.

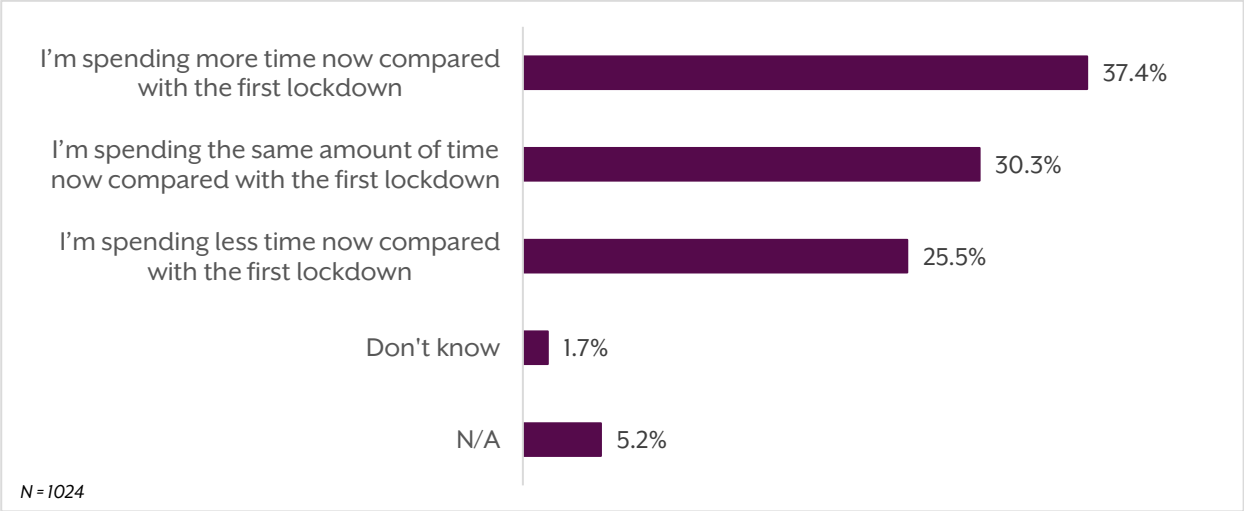
Figure 6: Approximately how much time are you spending overseeing your child's school work?



Parents were asked how this amount of time compared with how much time they spent overseeing their child's work during the first lockdown. The results are shown in Figure 7 and are very similar to responses from parents in our England survey[3].

45% of primary school parents and 29% of post primary school parents are spending more time overseeing their child's school work compared with the first lockdown. Fewer parents of children with SEN are spending less time overseeing their child's work now compared with the first lockdown (19% of SEN parents compared with 27% of non SEN parents.)

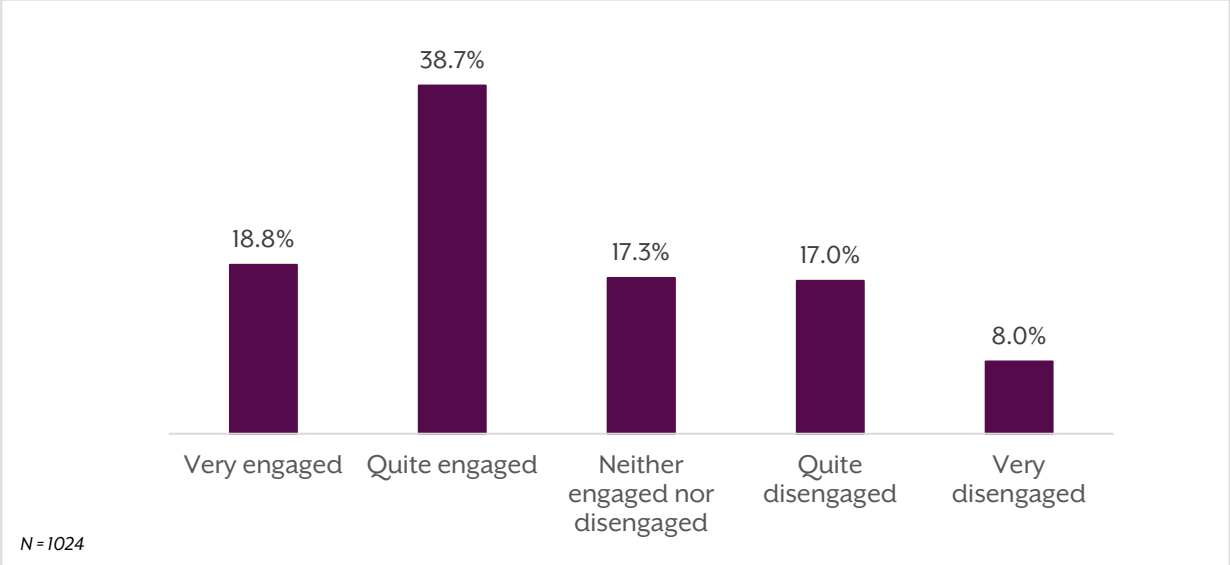
Figure 7: How does this compare to the first lockdown?



3. Children's engagement in learning

Parents were asked how engaged their child was in their learning currently (Figure 8) and how this level of engagement compares with how engaged they were in their learning before the disruption caused by the pandemic (Figure 9).

Figure 8: To what extent is your child engaged in their learning currently?

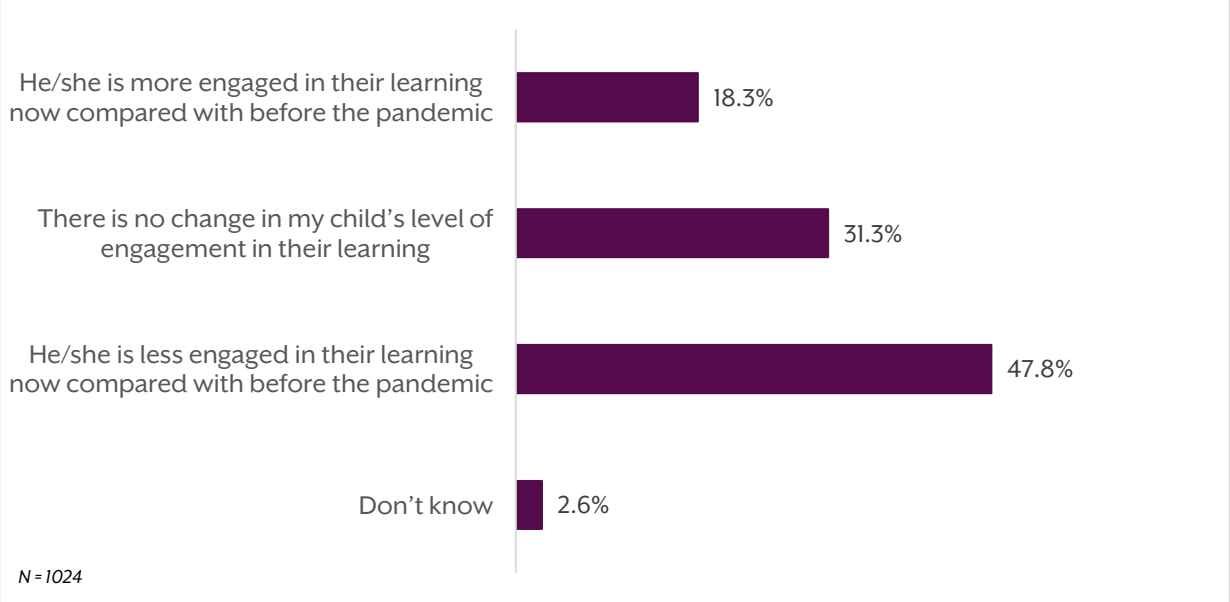


[3] Ibid.

According to parents, children with SEN are less engaged in their learning than children without SEN (41% of parents with a SEN child said they were very or quite engaged in their learning currently compared with 60% of parents of a child without SEN). Post primary aged children are more engaged in their learning than primary aged children (63% post primary vs. 52% primary).

52% of primary school children and 43% of post primary school children are less engaged in their learning compared to before the pandemic.

Figure 9: How does this compare with how engaged they were in their learning before the disruption caused by the pandemic?



4. Home learning support from school

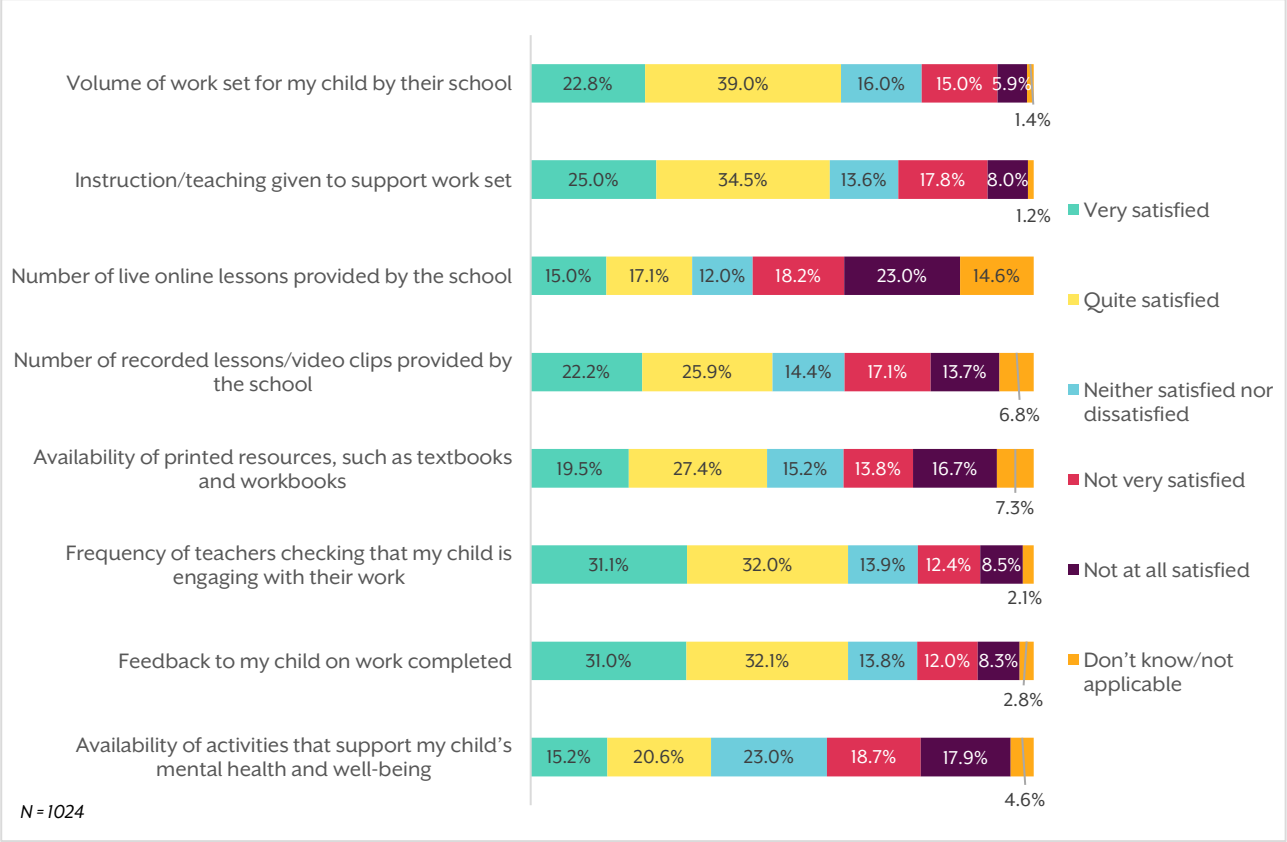
Parents were asked to rate various aspects of learning support given to their child by their school in the most recent half term (Figure 10).

Looking at responses from parents of a child with SEN and those without, parents with an SEN child are less satisfied with all the aspects of learning provision above compared with parents without an SEN child. For example, 62% of parents without a SEN child are satisfied with the teaching given to support work compared with only 44% of parents of non SEN children. With the exception of 'feedback to my child on work completed' with a difference of 3% between parents with and without a SEN child, all other aspects of learning support reported differences in SEN and non SEN parents' satisfaction levels of 9% to 18%.

There were also a number of differences in satisfaction levels between primary and post primary parents:

- Volume of work set – 67% of primary parents satisfied vs. 56% post primary
- Instruction/teaching given – 64% primary vs. 54% post primary
- Number of live online lessons provided – 21% primary vs. 44% post primary
- Availability of printed resources, such as textbooks and workbooks – 55% primary vs. 38% post primary
- Feedback to their child on work completed – 68% primary vs. 57% post primary
- Availability of activities that support their child's mental health and well-being – 48% primary vs. 28% post primary.

Figure 10: How satisfied are you with various aspects of learning support given to your child by their school in this most recent half term?



Having asked some of these questions in Parentkind's July survey we can report that with the exception of activities to support their child's mental health and well-being satisfaction levels amongst parents have increased since July as follows:

- Feedback to my child on work completed (63% very or quite satisfied now vs. 40% in July)
- Frequency of teachers checking that my child is engaging with their work[4] (63% vs. 36%)
- Volume of work set for my child by their school (62% vs. 52%)
- Instruction/teaching given to support work set (60% vs.39%)
- Number of recorded lessons/video clips provided by the school (48% vs. 27%)
- Number of live online lessons provided by the school (32% vs. 16%)
- Availability of activities that support my child's mental health and well-being (36% vs. 35%).

We then asked how satisfied parents were with aspects of learning support given to themselves this half term (Figure 11).

Responses of parents with and without a SEN child were more aligned here, though there was still a difference of 9% between those parents without a SEN child satisfied with general communication from their child's school (62%) and those with a SEN child (53%).

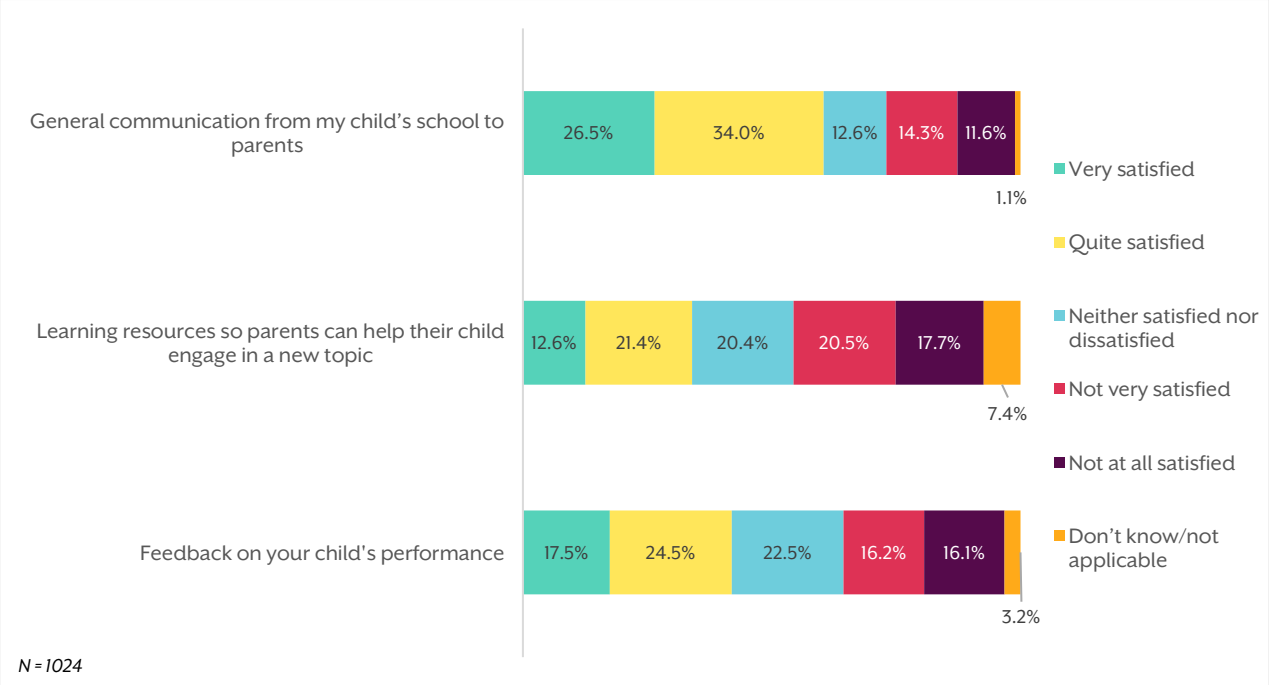
[4] The wording differed slightly between July (Availability/frequency of teachers to check-in in person with my child) and this survey

There were some differences in satisfaction levels between primary and post primary parents:

- Feedback on their child's performance – 47% of primary parents satisfied vs. 37% of post primary parents
- Learning resources so parents can help their child engage in a new topic – 46% primary vs. 21% post primary
- General communication from their child's school to parents – 65% primary vs. 55% post primary.

Comparing these results with those from our July survey[5] there has been an improvement in the percentage of parents satisfied with the communication from their child's school from 51% in July to 61% now. However, there has been no improvement in satisfaction with learning resources (we did not ask specifically about feedback on their child's performance in July).

Figure 11: How satisfied are you with various aspects of learning support your child's school has given parents in this most recent half term?

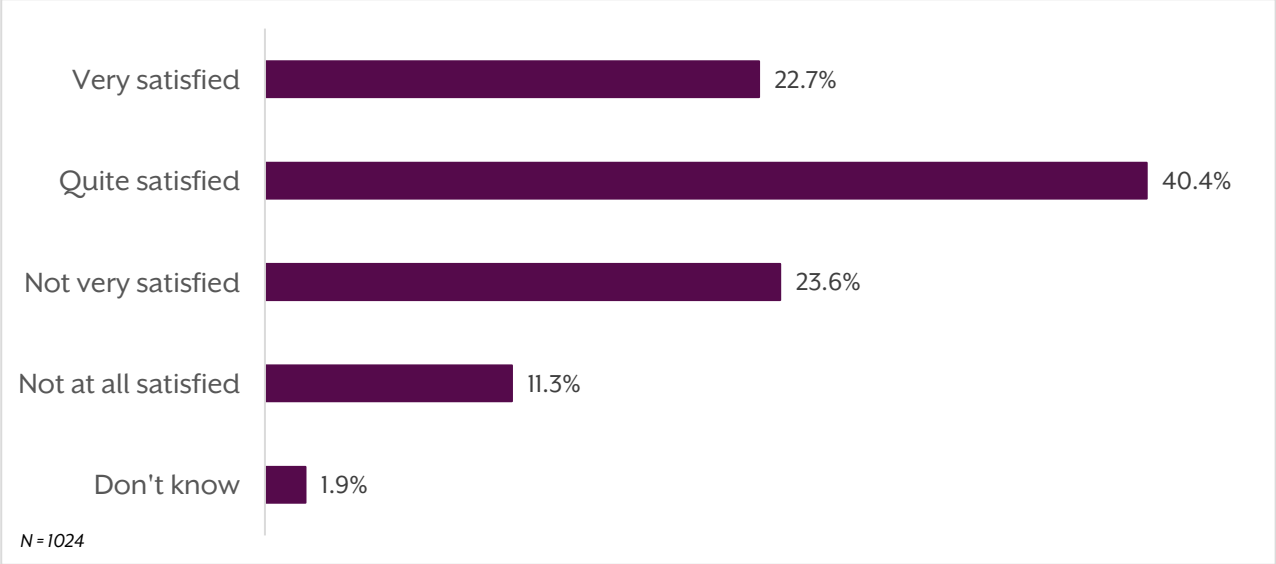


We asked parents how satisfied they were with the home learning support given by their child's school overall this last half term (Figure 12). Whilst almost two thirds of Northern Ireland parents are either very satisfied or quite satisfied this is lower than the 86% of parents in England who are satisfied with the home learning support given by their child's school during the last half term[6] and lower than the 82% of Northern Ireland parents satisfied with the learning support given during the first lockdown as reported in our May survey[7].

66% of primary school parents and 60% of post primary school parents are satisfied with the home learning support given by their child's school. Parents of children with SEN are less satisfied than those without SEN (53% SEN very or quite satisfied compared with 65% not SEN).

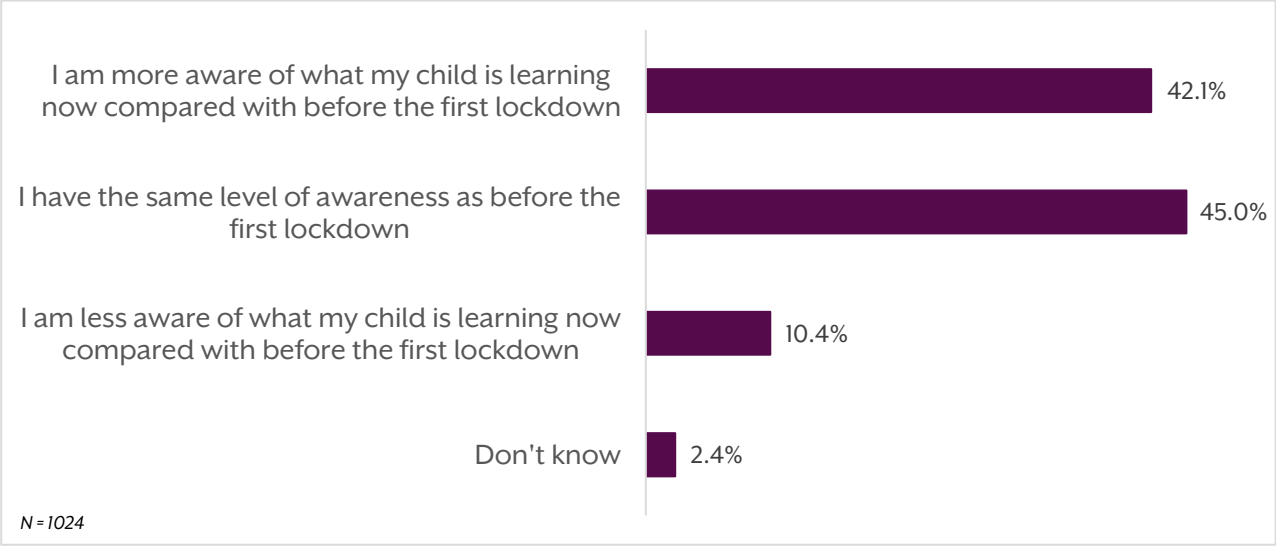
[5] See Parentkind, 2020 – Third Coronavirus Survey – Northern Ireland Results https://www.parentkind.org.uk/uploads/files/1/CV19%203rd%20survey%20infographic%20NI.pdf
[6] Ibid.
[7] See Parentkind 2020 – Second Coronavirus Survey – N.Ireland results – https://www.parentkind.org.uk/uploads/files/1/News/Coronavirus%202/CV19%20infographic%20Northern%20Ireland.pdf

Figure 12: Overall, how satisfied have you been with the home learning support given by your child's school this term?



Parents were asked whether or not they were more aware of what their child is learning at school as a result of the changes to their schooling (Figure 13). 47% of primary school parents and 36% of post primary school parents told us they are more aware of what their child is learning compared to before the first lockdown.

Figure 13: What impact, if any, have all the changes in your child's schooling had on your awareness of what they are learning at school?



5. Mental health and well-being

Parents were asked to rate their child's mental health currently (Figure 14). Parents who rated it concerning or very concerning were also asked if they'd contacted anyone for help (Figure 15).

27% of post primary school parents are concerned or very concerned about their child's mental health and well-being compared with 20% of primary school parents.

Parents with a child with SEN are far more likely to rate that child's mental health and well-being as concerning or very concerning compared with parents with a child without SEN (39% vs. 20%). They are also far more likely to

seek help from someone (only 8% of SEN parents had not been in contact with someone for help compared with 45% of parents with a child without SEN). 28% of parents with a SEN child whose mental health was concerning or very concerning had contacted school compared with 11% of non SEN parents. Conversely, 18% of parents of non SEN children had spoken to a friend or family member compared with 10% of SEN parents.

Figure 14: Please rate your child's mental health and well-being currently

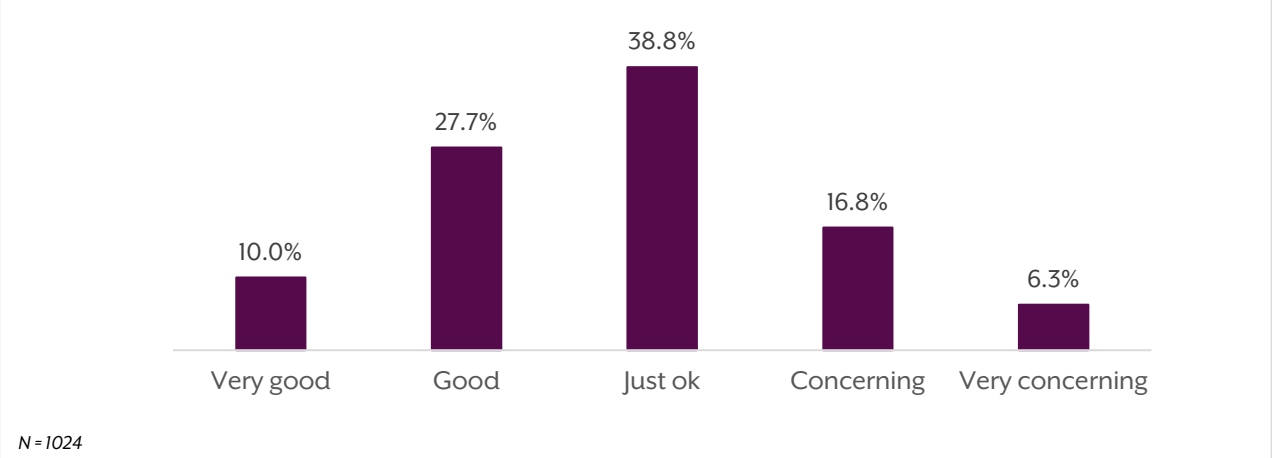
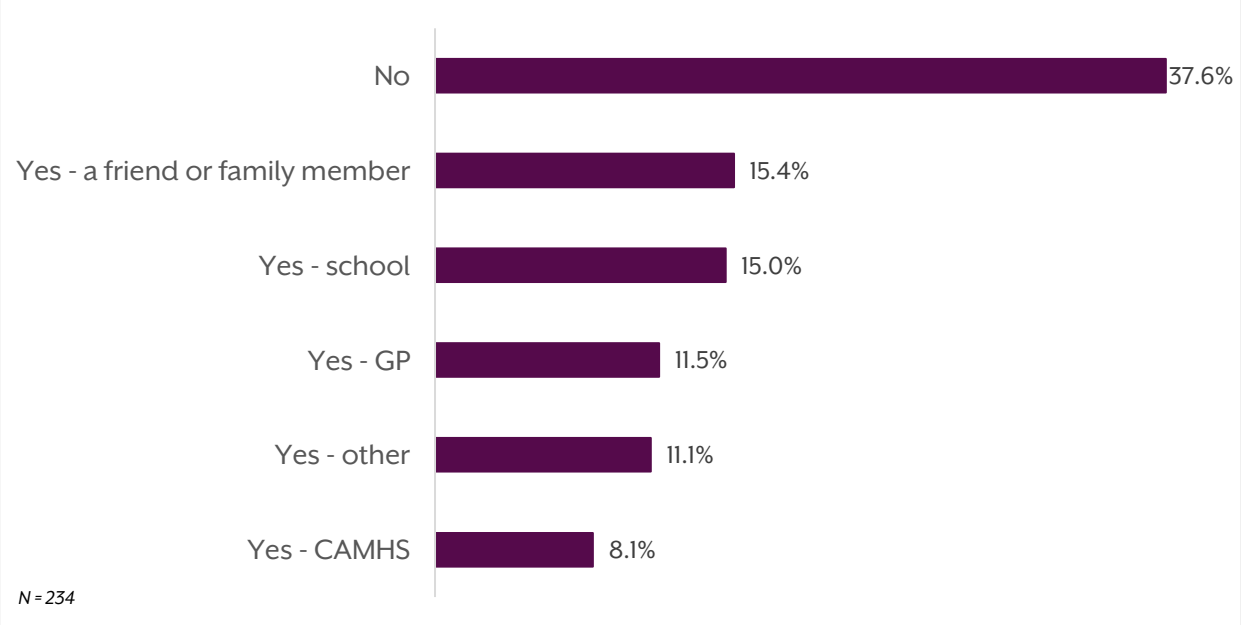


Figure 15: If concerning or very concerning, have you contacted someone for help?



We then asked parents to what extent their child's and their own mental health and well-being have been affected by the disruption to schooling since the start of the first lockdown (Figure 16).

Whilst the proportion of parents with an SEN child and those without being affected negatively by the disruption to schooling is almost identical (85% SEN vs. 84% not SEN) more parents with a SEN child said that effect was large (38% SEN vs. 26% not SEN).

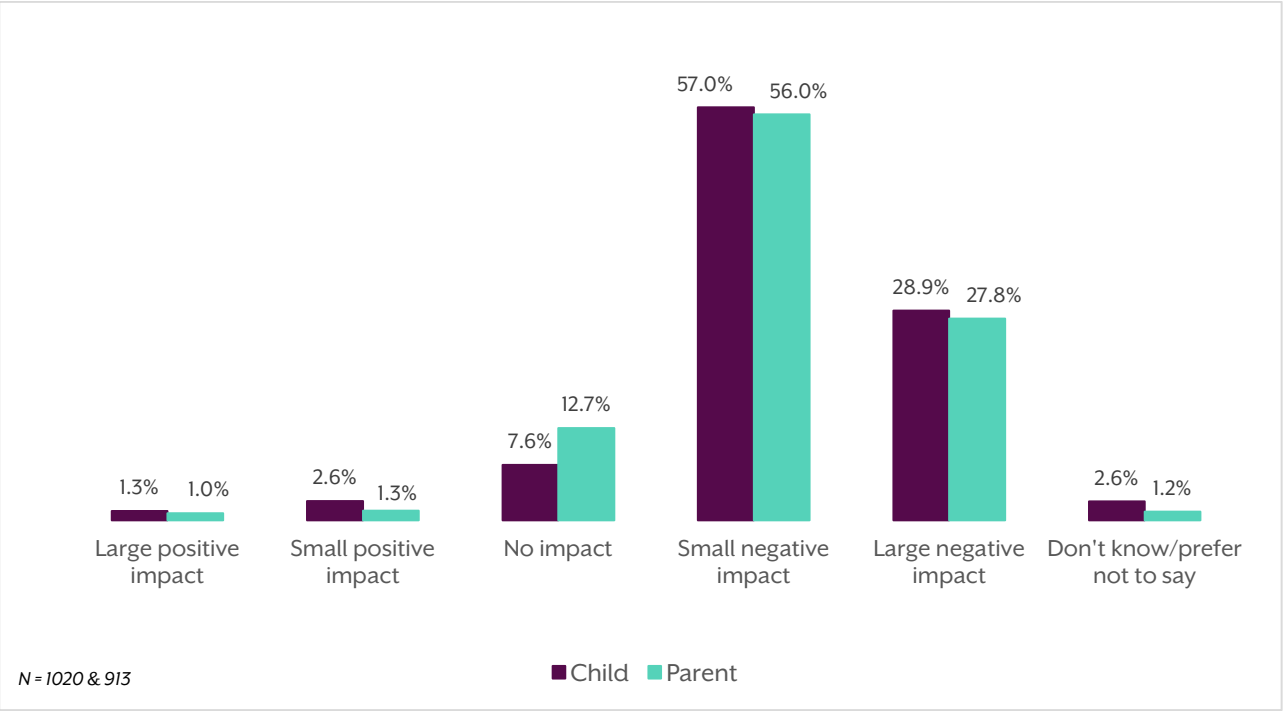
Parents of a SEN child are more likely to say the disruption to schooling has had a large negative impact on their child's mental health and well-being than parents of a child without SEN (42% vs. 27%) and less likely to say a small negative impact (44% vs. 59%). Interestingly, 8% of parents with a SEN child reported the disruption having a positive impact on their child's mental health and well-being compared with 3% of parents of children without SEN.

Parents of primary school children are more likely to report the disruption having a negative impact on their own mental health and well-being than parents of post primary school children (87% primary vs. 80% post primary) and rate it as a large negative impact on themselves (34% primary vs. 21% post primary).

Whilst there is little difference between the percentages of primary and post primary children's mental health and well-being being impacted negatively overall, post primary children are more likely to experience a large negative impact than primary school children (33% vs. 25%).

Parents in Northern Ireland are far more likely to have been impacted negatively by the current arrangements for their child's schooling than their English counterparts: whilst 84% of parents in Northern Ireland said their mental health and well-being has been negatively impacted 45% of parents in England say the same[8].

Figure 16: To what extent has your child's and your own mental health and well-being been affected by the disruption to schooling over the last 11 months?



Parents of children whose mental health and well-being has been affected by the disruption to schooling were asked to indicate their biggest triggers. The results are in Figure 17.

There are some notable differences in responses of parents with a SEN child and those without, including:

- Social isolation/inability to physically play/socialise with friends - 69% SEN, 81% not SEN
- Missing extra-curricular clubs and activities – 22% SEN, 42% not SEN
- Worry about themselves or a family member getting ill with Covid-19 – 25% SEN, 20% not SEN
- Low self-esteem - 33% SEN, 17% not SEN
- Lack of learning support - 27% SEN, 13% not SEN
- Not having a device or own space to concentrate on school work - 9% SEN, 3% not SEN.

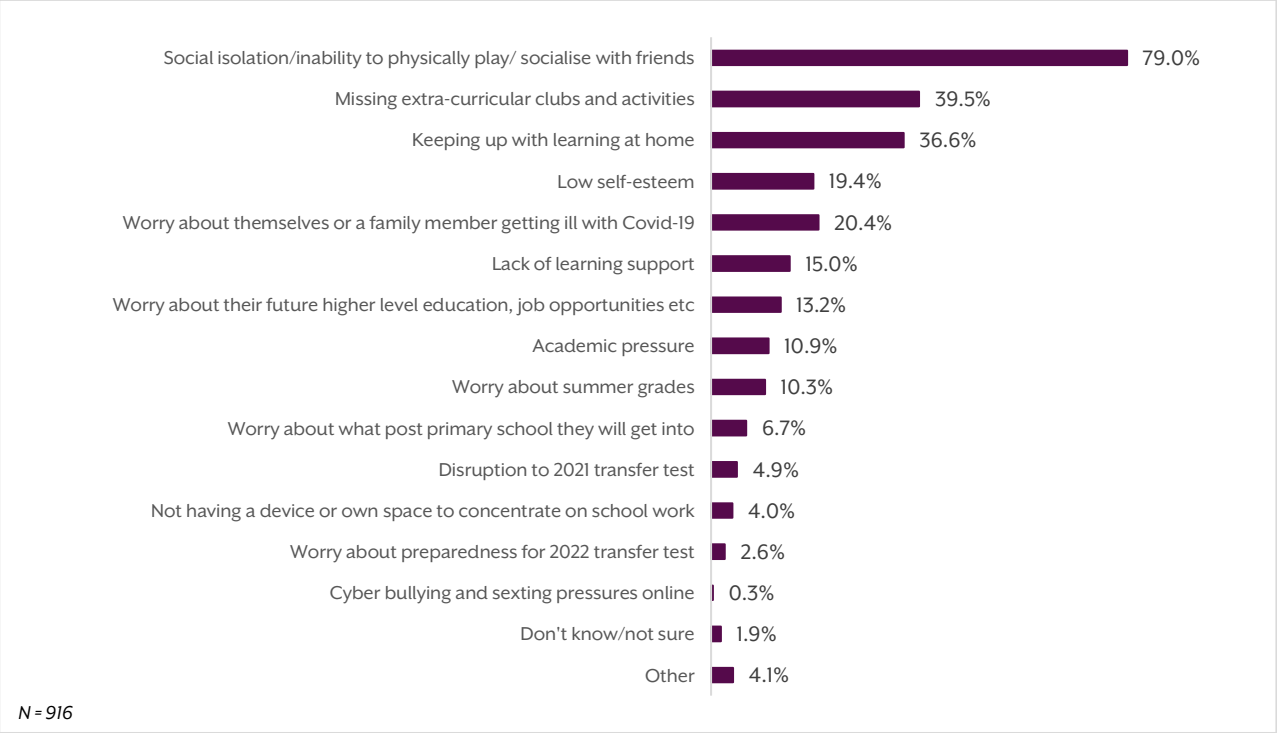
Notable differences in the biggest triggers reported by primary school parents compared with post primary school parents are:

- Social isolation/inability to physically play or socialise with friends - 84% primary, 73% post primary

[8] See England results https://www.parentkind.org.uk/Research--policy/research/research-index

- Missing extra-curricular clubs and activities - 46% primary, 32% post primary
- Worry about themselves or a family member getting ill with Covid-19 - 24% primary, 16% post primary
- Worry about their future higher level education, job opportunities etc. - 2% primary, 26% post primary
- Academic pressure - 4% primary, 19% post primary
- Worry about summer grades - 0% primary, 41% of Y12s, Y13s & Y14s
- Worry about what post primary school they will get into – 61% of P7s, 0% post primary
- Disruption to 2021 transfer test – 38% of P7s, 0% post primary
- Worry about preparedness for 2022 transfer test - 22% of P6s, 0% post primary.

Figure 17: What are the top three triggers to impact your child's mental health and well-being? *(All those affected by disruption)*



We asked parents who told us their child's mental health was anything other than 'very good' what support they'd like to see put in place to improve their child's mental health and well-being. As well as the collated results shown in Figure 18, other unprompted suggestions from parents included more focus on wellbeing recovery when back at school and less focus on academic work; extra-curricular activities, sport, music and art should be increased and clubs in place for every interest group; extra support and social skills development for current Y8 children who didn't get to transition properly from primary to post primary and then lockdown; an increase in the number of school counsellors; increased contact from schools to parents and waiting times for SEN assessments or reviews shortened.

Parents of children with SEN prioritise different responses to those parents of children without SEN including:

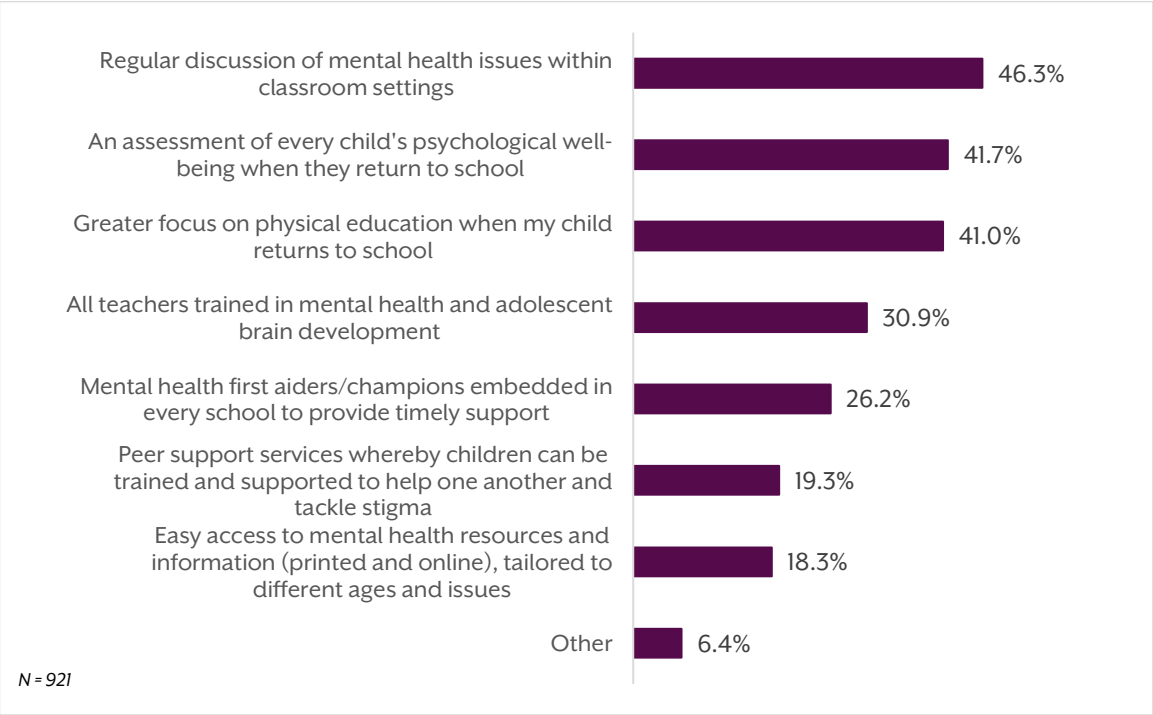
- An assessment of every child's psychological well-being when they return to school - 51% SEN, 40% not SEN
- All teachers trained in mental health and adolescent brain development – 38% SEN, 30% not SEN
- Regular discussion of mental health issues within classroom settings – 36% SEN, 48% not SEN
- Mental health first aiders/champions embedded in every school to provide timely support – 32% SEN, 26% not SEN.

- Greater focus on physical education when their child returns to school – 29% SEN, 43% not SEN.

There are some differences in responses of primary school and post primary school parents too:

- Peer support services whereby children can be trained and supported to help one another and tackle stigma - 15% of primary school parents, 24% of post primary school parents
- Regular discussion of mental health issues within classroom settings - 43% primary, 50% post primary
- All teachers trained in mental health and adolescent brain development - 28% primary, 34% post primary
- Greater focus on physical education when their child returns to school - 50% primary, 32% post primary.

Figure 18: What would you most like to see put in place to improve your child's mental health and well-being? *(Tick up to 3)*



6. Parents' challenges and concerns

Parents were asked to indicate their biggest challenges with schools being closed to the majority of pupils (Figure 19). 3% of parents said they didn't have any challenges.

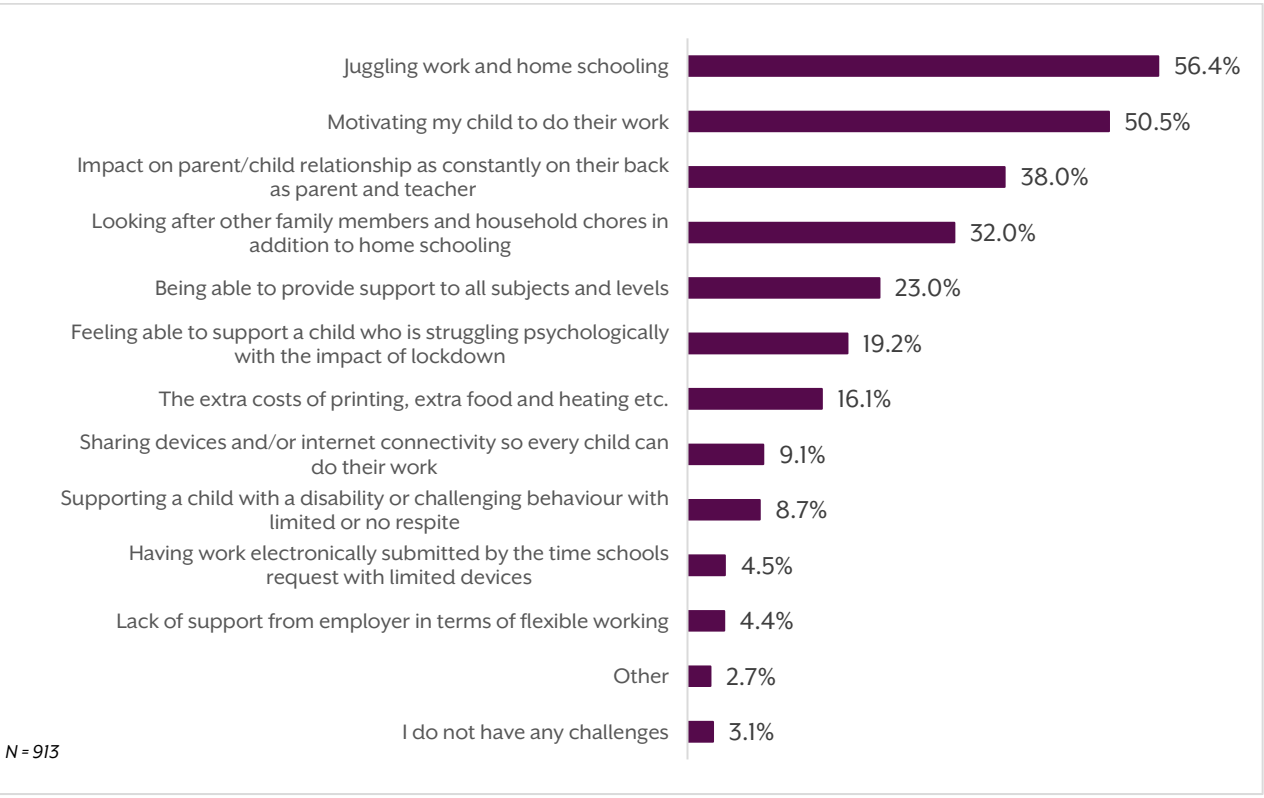
Juggling work and home schooling is a top three challenge for parents of children with SEN (45%) and an even higher percentage of parents of children without SEN (58%). The biggest differences between parents of children with or without SEN is in the challenge of supporting a child with a disability or challenging behaviour with limited or no respite (38% SEN vs. 4% not SEN) and feeling able to support a child who is struggling psychologically with the impact of lockdown (30% SEN vs. 17% not SEN).

Notable differences between primary school and post primary school parents' top challenges are:

- Juggling work and home schooling - 63% primary, 49% post primary
- Being able to provide support to all subjects and levels - 18% primary, 29% post primary
- Looking after other family members and household chores in addition to home schooling - 39% primary, 24% post primary

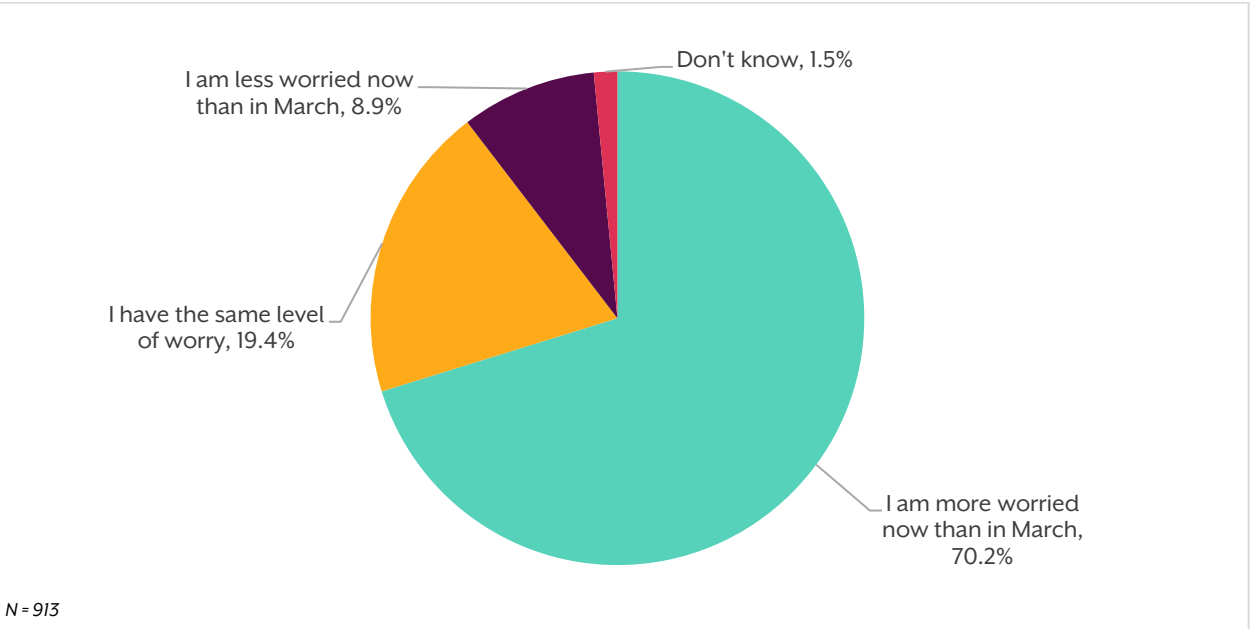
- Feeling able to support a child who is struggling psychologically with the impact of lockdown - 15% primary, 24% post primary.

Figure 19: What are the biggest challenges you are facing with schools being closed to the majority of pupils? *(Top 3 – if you are not facing any challenges please tick that option)*



Parents were asked how worried they were now about the impact of the pandemic on their child's education compared to last March when schools first closed to the majority of children. As Figure 20 shows, 70% of all parents are more worried now compared to last March. For parents of a child with SEN the figure is 78%. For parents with a child at primary school its 73% and a child at post primary school 67%.

Figure 20: How worried are you now about the impact of the pandemic on your child(ren)'s education compared to last March when schools first closed for the majority of children?



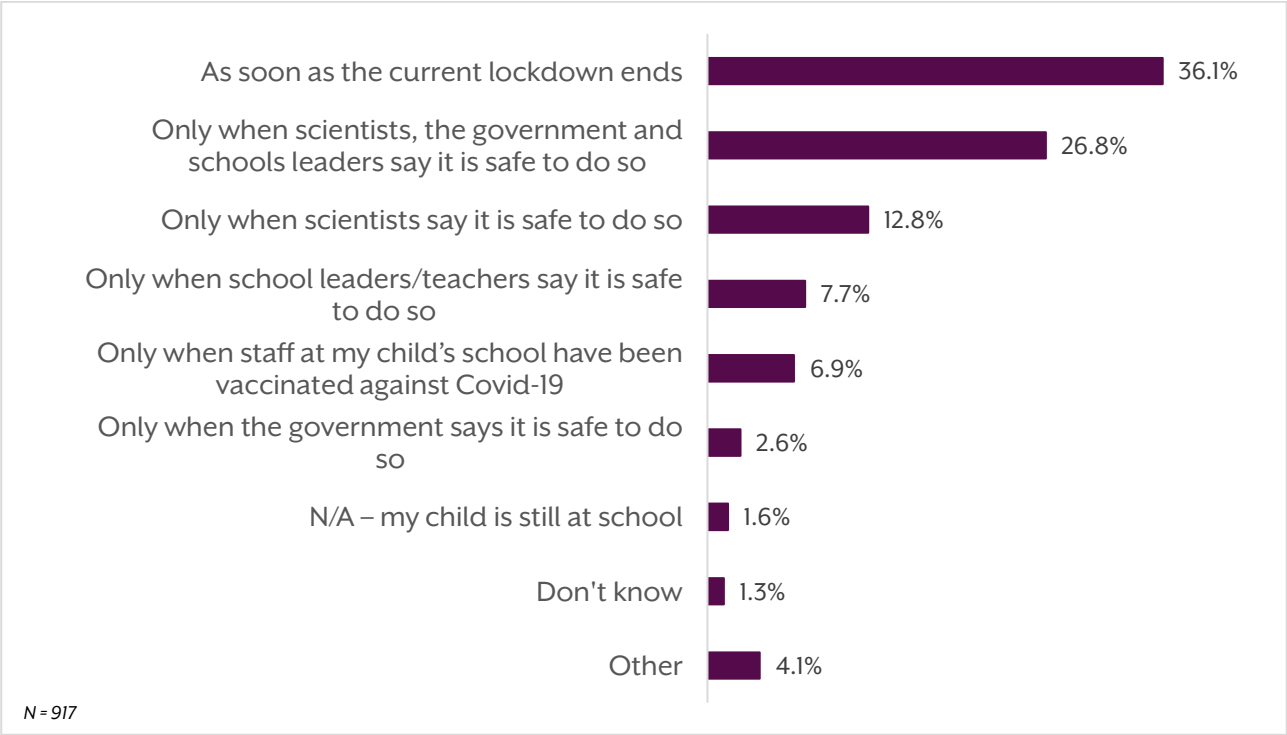
Northern Ireland parents are far more concerned now than parents in England where only 26% of parents are more worried about the impact of the pandemic on their child's education now[9]. There has also been a big increase in level of concern since May when 33% of Northern Ireland parents said they were more worried about the impact of the pandemic on their child's education now compared to when schools first closed in March 2020.

7. Returning to school

In the run up to this survey there were lots of discussions as to when schools might reopen to more pupils. Parents were asked when they'd be happy for their children to return to school (Figure 21).

The most common response, chosen by 36% of parents is 'As soon as the current lockdown ends'. 40% of primary school parents selected this option compared with 31% of post primary school parents. Parents of children with SEN are less favourable to this option, with 26% opting for it. A similar proportion (25%) said 'Only when scientists, the government and schools leaders say it is safe to do so' compared with 27% of non SEN parents. 22% of SEN parents selected 'Only when scientists say it is safe to do so' compared with 11% of parents without a SEN child.

Figure 21: There have been lots of discussions recently as to when schools might reopen to more pupils. When would you be happy for your child to return to school?



Parents were asked for their preferred option for pupils returning to the classroom if schools are unable to initially fully reopen. Primary parents' responses are shown in Figure 22 and post primary parents' responses in Figure 23.

Both parents of a SEN child and those with a child without SEN favour the blended learning approach for their child's return to school if they can't reopen fully (it was chosen by 39% SEN primary school parents vs. 40% not SEN primary school parents and 52% of SEN post primary school parents and 49% post primary parents with children without SEN).

[9] Ibid.

Figure 22: What option would you like to see if primary schools cannot reopen to all pupils initially?

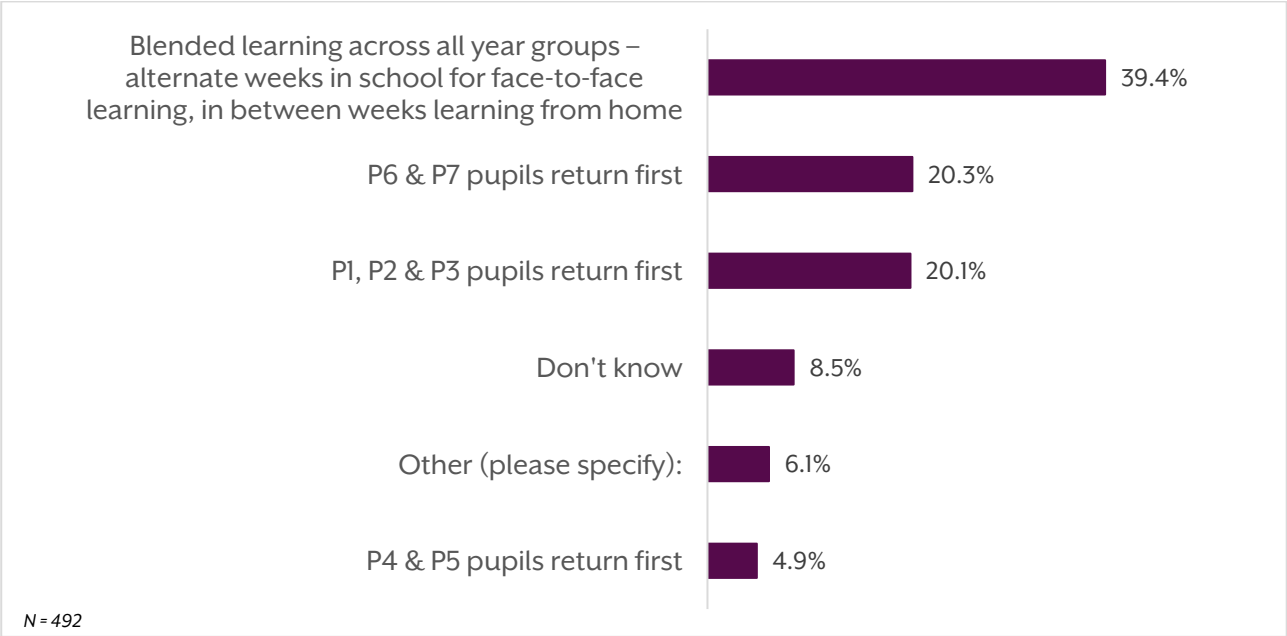
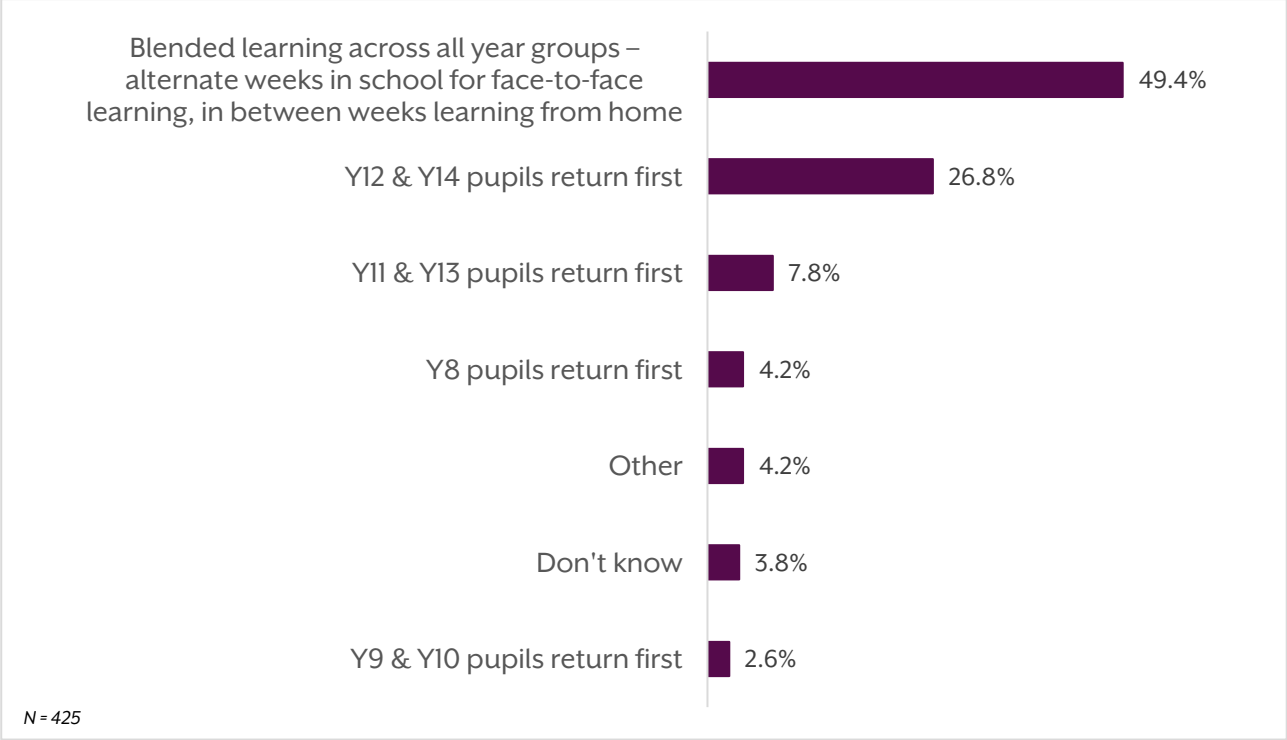


Figure 23: What option would you like to see if post primary schools cannot reopen to all pupils initially?



Parents were given the opportunity to add further comments on the survey's themes.

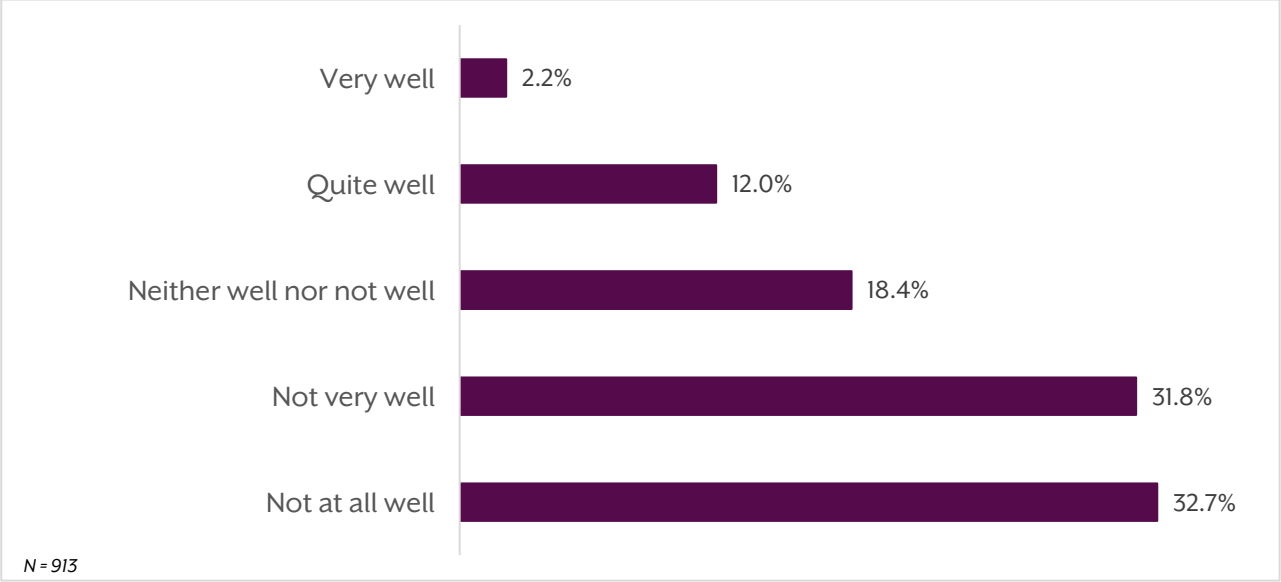
177 parents added further comments and many of these were detailed explanations for their earlier responses on topics including returning to school, parents' lack of confidence supporting learning at home and both theirs and their child's psychological wellbeing. In addition to these comments, other repeated points were raised as means of concern by a number of parents. These included:

- the disparity in the quality and quantity of remote teaching being provided by schools
- the challenge that many key worker parents faced trying to access a place in school for their child(ren) since Christmas and for those children that were accessing a place, they were coming home with the all school work to start in the evening
- parents working on the frontline particularly feeling the strain of working and supporting learning from home
- a lack of home-learning and/or well-being support for children with SEN and also those Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) who were not availing of the vulnerable child place, particularly mainstream schools
- that employers were more empathetic to their employees who were supporting learning from home during the first lockdown, but this time, work output is the priority and little or no empathy for parents, particularly mums who are trying to work from home, look after small children and support learning
- annoyance at the government for not supporting employers so they could be more understanding of employees who are juggling work and home-schooling
- whether any information was available for supporting children who are suffering long Covid when they return to school
- a small number of parents strongly expressed their desire for this school year to be repeated.

8. Satisfaction with government and school responses

We asked parents how well they think the government is managing children's education during the pandemic (Figure 24). The majority of parents do not think the government is handling it well, with 33% of all parents saying 'Not at all well', rising to 43% of parents with a child with SEN. Parents with children at post primary school are slightly more positive than those with a child in primary school (16% of post primary parents said very well or quite well vs. 12% of primary school parents).

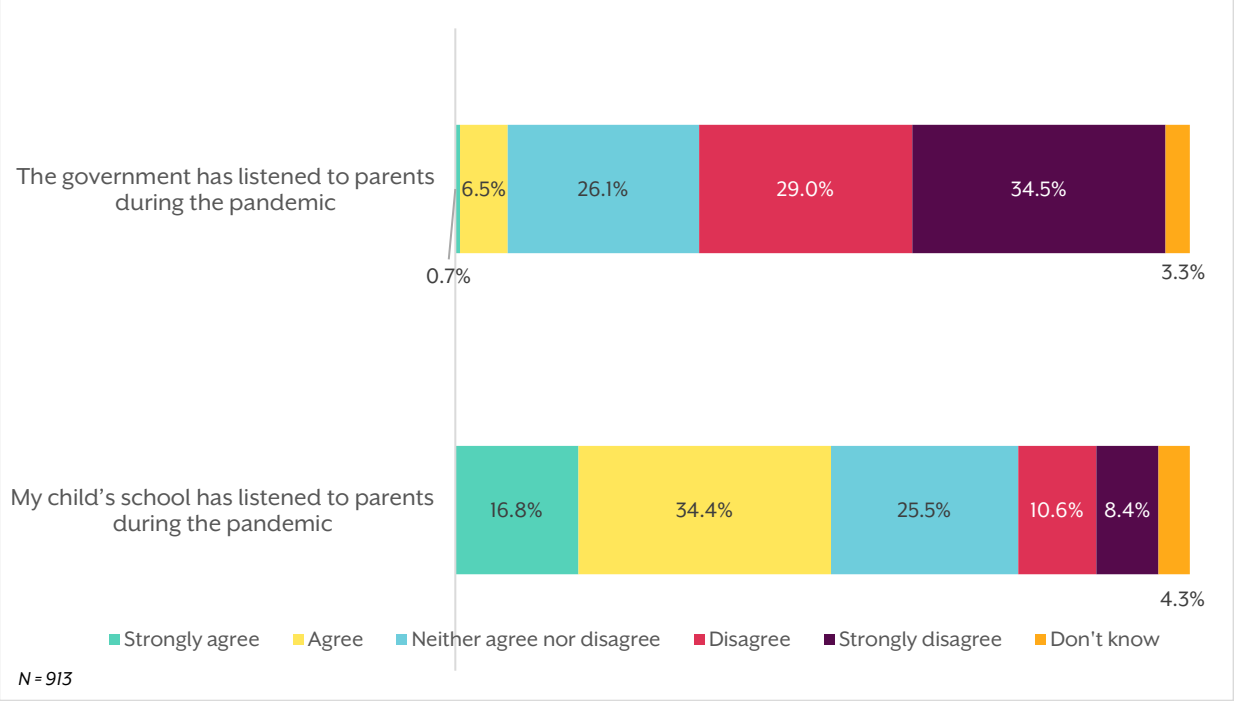
Figure 24: How well do you feel the government is managing children's education during this pandemic?



Finally we asked parents whether they think the government and their child's school has listened to parents during the pandemic. As Figure 25 shows, more than half of parents (51%) agree that their child's school has listened to parents whilst only 7% say the same of the government.

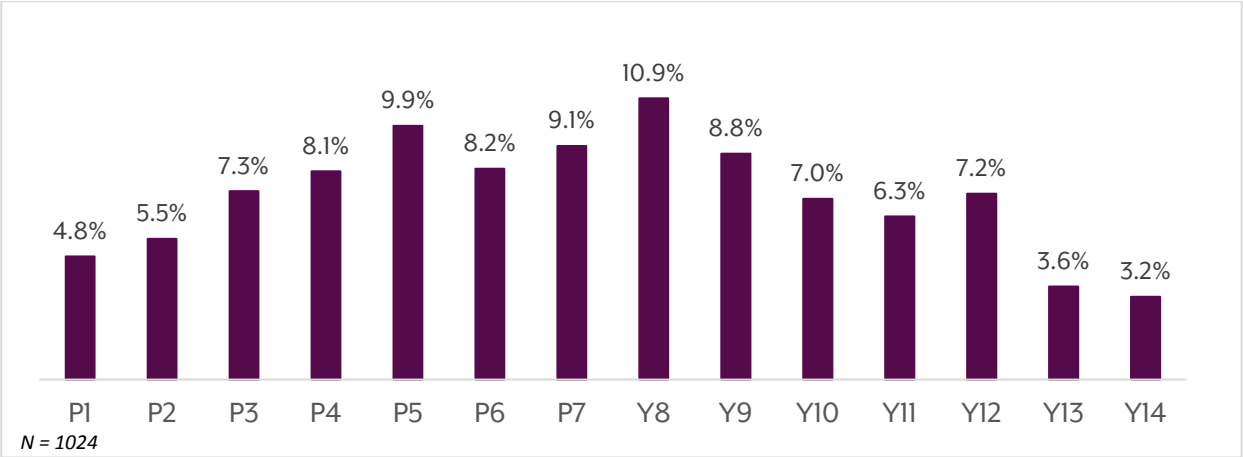
Parents of children with SEN were less positive in their assessment of the government listening to them compared with those with children without SEN (41% SEN strongly disagree vs. 34% of non SEN).

Figure 25: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



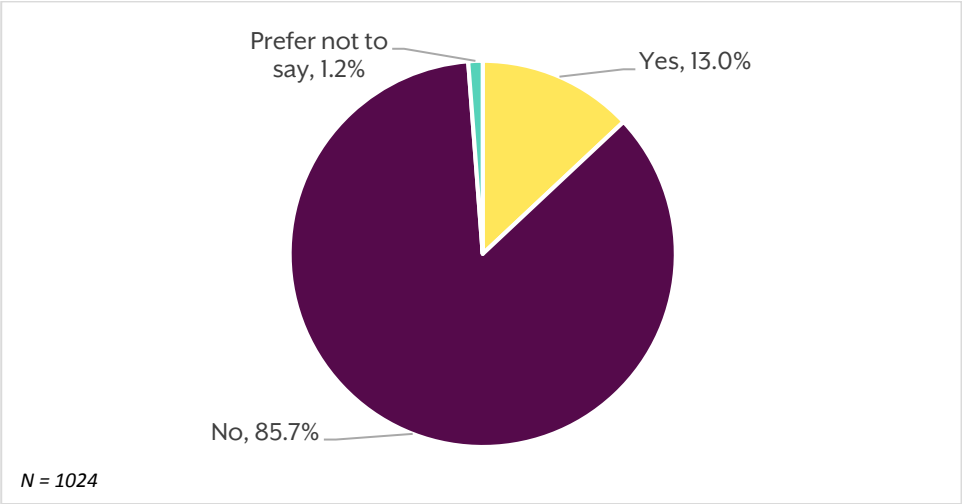
Appendix - Demographics

i. School year of child



ii. Special Education Needs

Does your child have Special Educational Needs (SEN)? Defined as those with, or striving to get, a statement of SEN or SEN support



iii. School attendance

Is your child going in to school currently due to the fact that they meet one of the eligibility criteria (e.g. you/your partner is a key worker, your child attends a special school etc.)?