

**School Omnibus Survey  
2018**

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## **Introduction.**

The School Omnibus Survey is a biannual multi-purpose survey issued to all grant-aided schools covering a variety of topics.

The purpose of the survey is to collect specific information from schools which is not readily available from another source. The information being collected is essential to allow the Department of Education to improve the support and guidance provided to schools, monitor the effectiveness of a range of policies / strategies, and to provide required information to its many stakeholders such as the Education Committee.

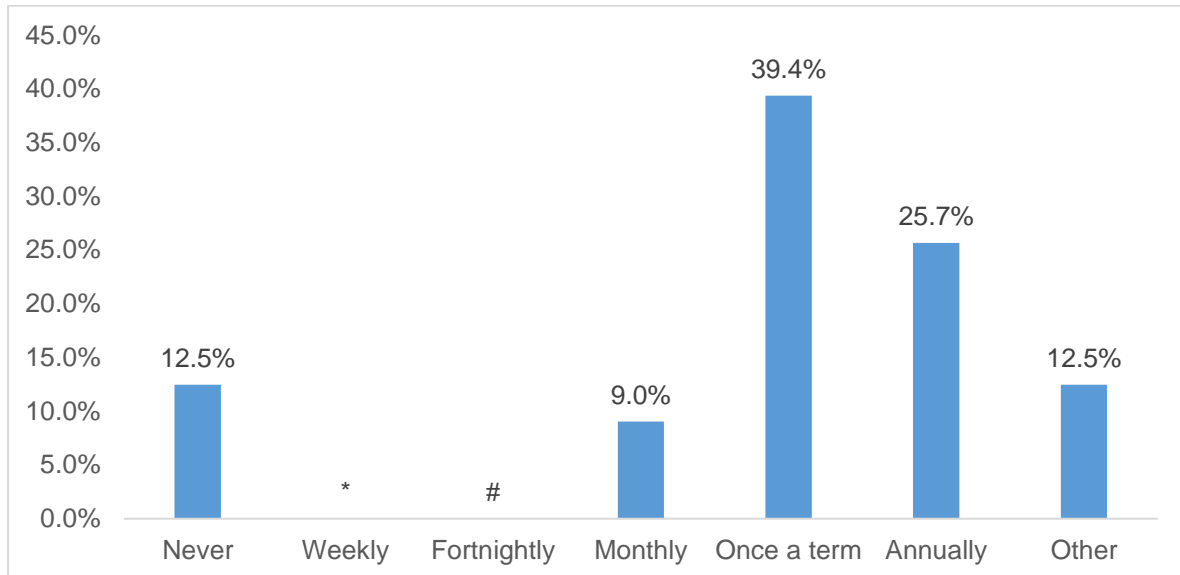
The 2018 Omnibus Survey is the fifth in the series of Omnibus Surveys with previous Omnibus Surveys undertaken in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Results from previous School Omnibus Surveys can be accessed at Department of Education, Analytical Services Unit website: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/survey-reports>

## Section A: Sustainable Schools.

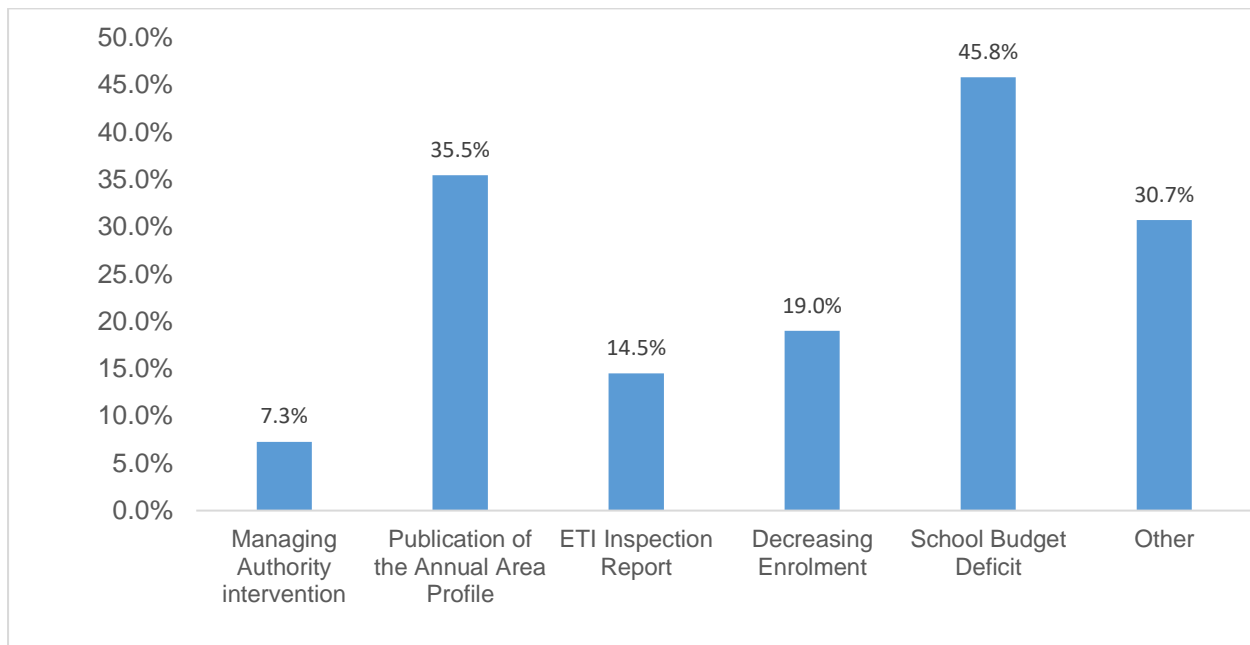
**Figure A1: How often does the Board of Governors discuss your school's sustainability?**



Base 409 respondents. \* indicates a percentage based on too small a number to be released. # indicates a number that is suppressed in order that another small number cannot be calculated.

- Thirty-nine per cent of schools stated that their Board of Governors discussed sustainability issues “Once a term” a further 26 per cent of schools discussed such issues less frequently; “Annually”.
- Of the schools that stated “Other” (one in eight responding schools) the only discernible pattern of response was “As required”.

**Figure A2: What triggers or events prompt the Board of Governors to discuss your school’s sustainability?**

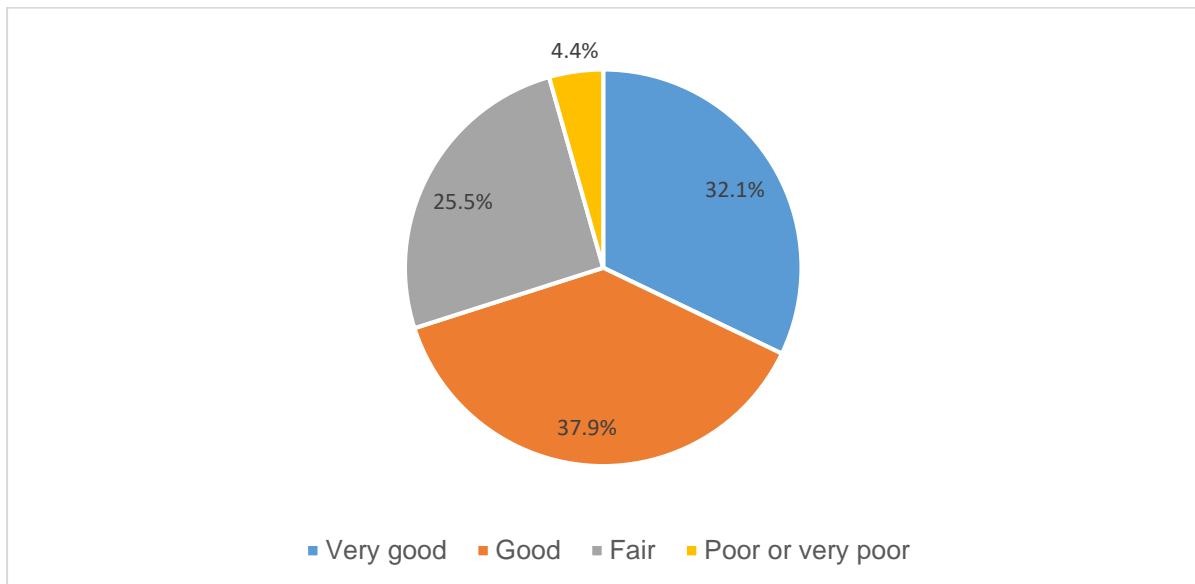


Base 358 schools. Multiple responses allowed.

Schools, other than those that stated that their Board of Governors never discuss sustainability, were asked what triggers or events prompted them to do so.

- Forty-six per cent of schools stated that their “School Budget Deficit” prompts their Board of Governors to discuss sustainability and 36 per cent stated that the publication of the “Annual Area Profile” prompts their Board of Governors to discuss sustainability.

**Figure A3: What is your level of understanding of the purpose of Area Planning?**

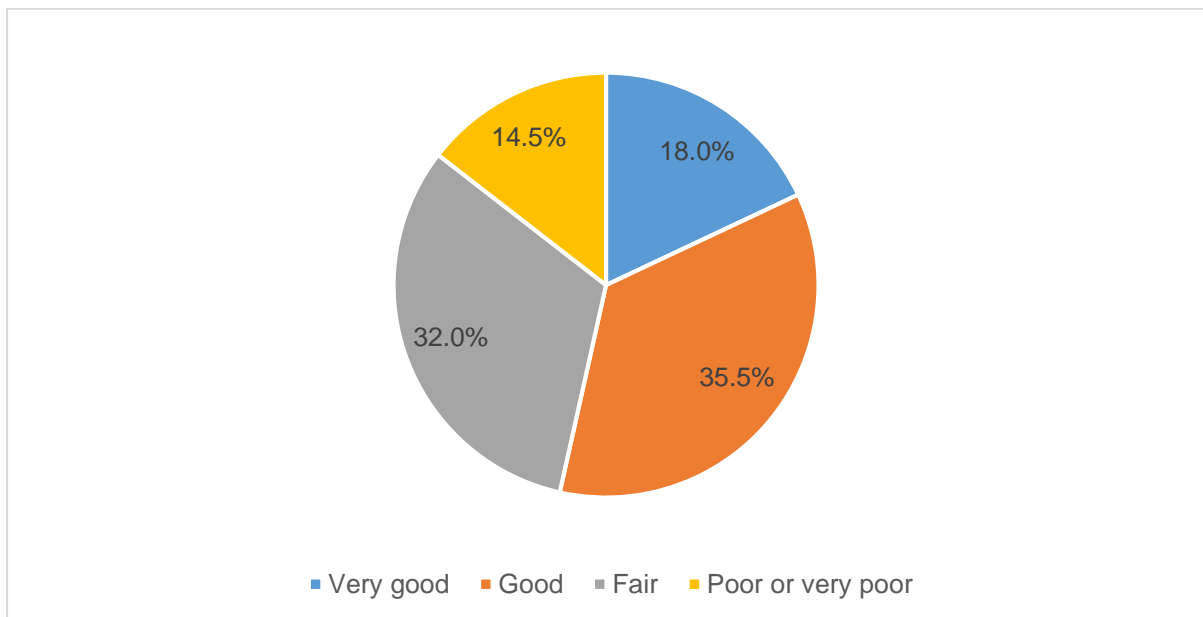


Base 364 schools.

Schools were asked about their level of understanding of the purpose of Area Planning.

- The majority of schools (70 per cent) stated that their understanding of the issue was at least good and 4 per cent stated that their level of understanding was poor or very poor.

**Figure A4: What is your level of understanding of how the Area Planning process operates?**

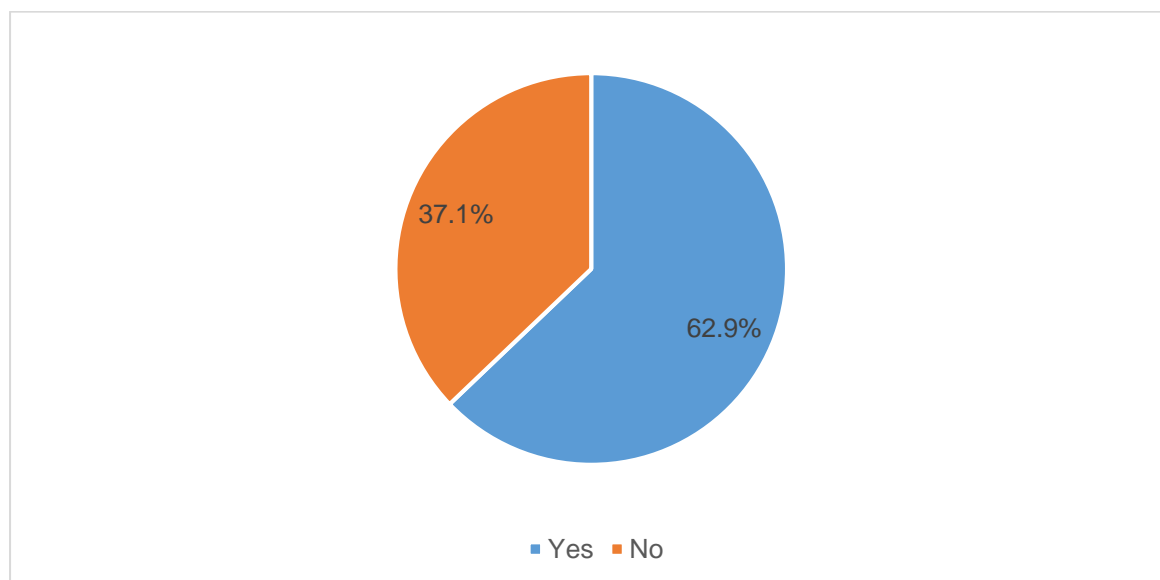


Base 366 schools

- Over half of schools (54 per cent) stated that their level of understanding of how the Area Planning process operates was good or very good.
- Fifteen per cent of schools stated that their level of understanding of how the Area Planning process operates was poor or very poor.

## Section B: Shared Education.

**Figure B1: In the last academic year, has your school partnered in shared education with other school(s)?**



Base 404 schools.

- Sixty-three per cent of schools stated that in the last academic year their school partnered in shared education with another school.

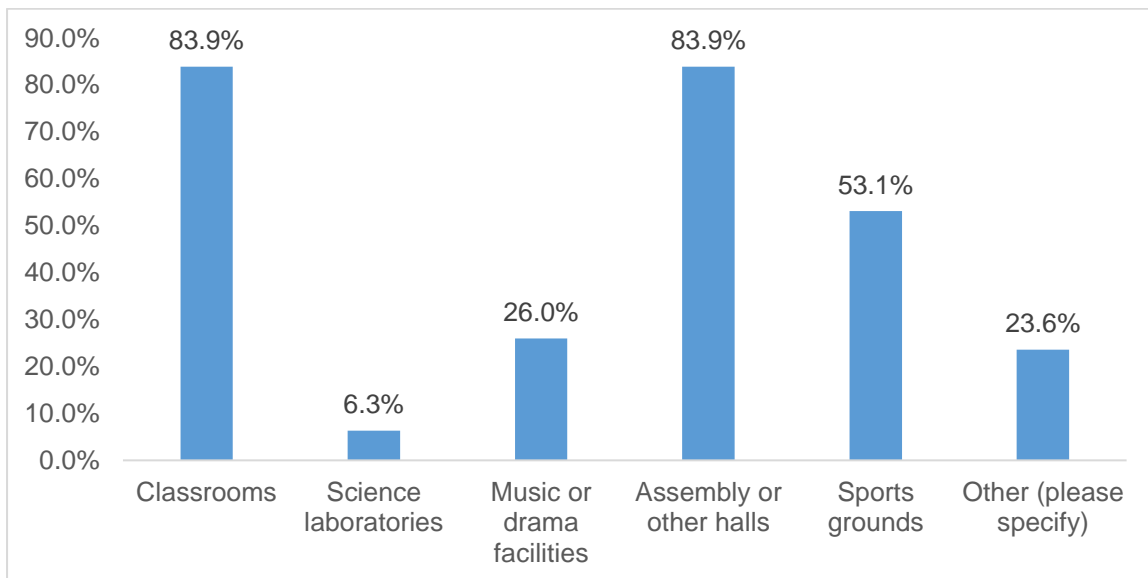
**Table B1: Please specify the type of activities you have partnered on in the last academic year.**

Shared classes with pupils from other schools (under the Entitlement Framework)	33.1%
Shared classes with pupils from other schools (other than under the Entitlement Framework)	53.5%
Project(s) with pupils from other school(s)	79.5%
Shared teachers	24.8%
Shared equipment (e.g. school minibus, computers)	24.8%
Shared resources (e.g. teaching plans, materials)	63.4%
Development of Shared Policies	30.7%
Extra-curricular activities	37.0%
Other (Please specify below)	19.7%
Base (254) respondents undertaking shared education. Multiple responses allowed.	



- The most common type of activity undertaken by those schools that stated their school partnered in shared education with another school was “Project(s) with pupils from other school(s)”; 80 per cent of schools that had participated in shared education.
- Sixty-three per cent of schools that had partnered in shared education “Shared resources” and 54 per cent “Shared classes with pupils from other schools (other than under the Entitlement Framework)”

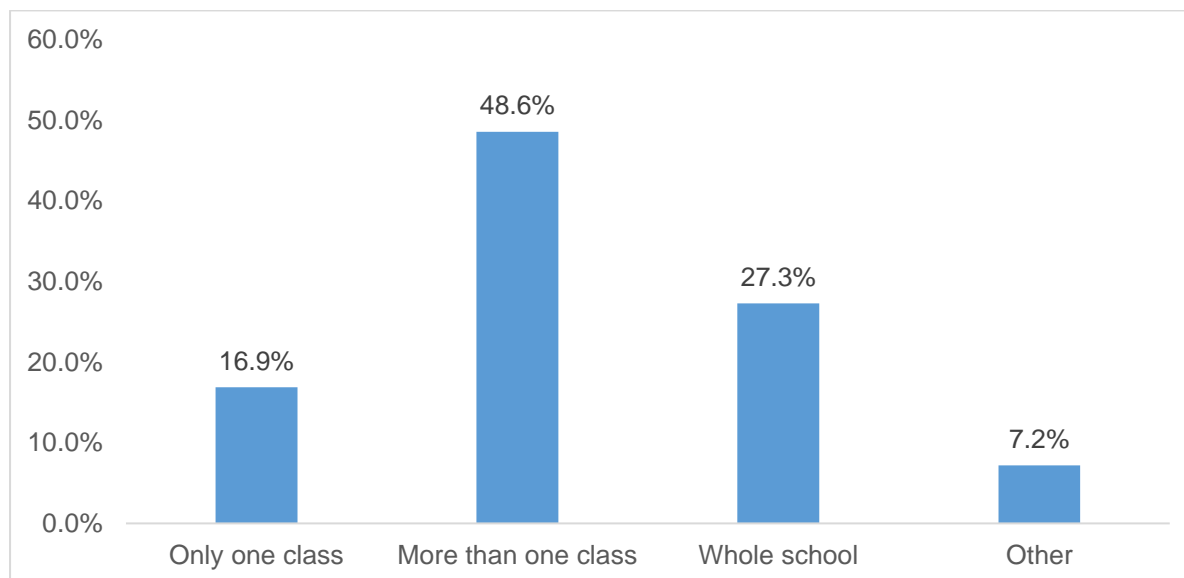
**Figure B2: Please specify which facilities you have used in the shared education partnership(s) in the last academic year?**



Base 254 schools. Multiple responses allowed.

- Eighty-four per cent of schools that stated their school partnered in shared education with another school used “Classrooms” and the same percentage stated that they used “Assembly or other halls”.

**Figure B3: Has your partnership in the last academic year involved...**



Base 254 schools.

- In approximately half of schools (49 per cent) participation in shared education involved “More than one class”.

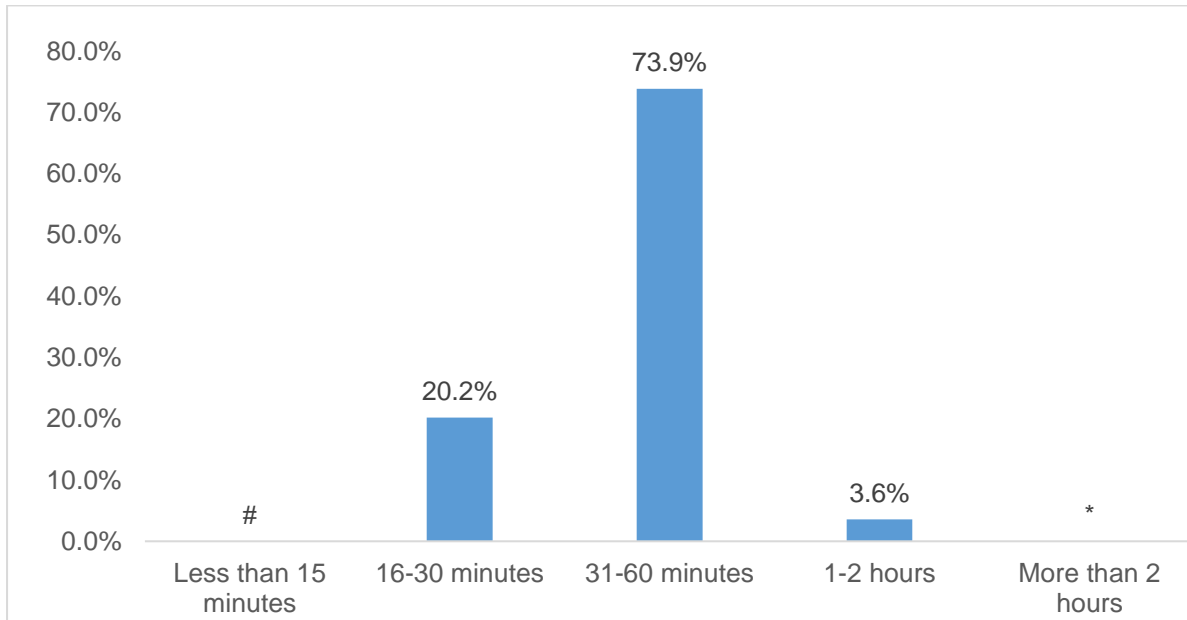
**Table B2: You indicated that your school has not partnered in shared education with other school(s). Please select the reason(s) for this?**

Lack of awareness of Shared Education	6.0%
Other priorities preventing engagement in Shared Education	26.7%
Parental reluctance to engage in Shared Education	*
Lack of support from the local community to engage in Shared Education	*
Board of Governors not supportive of Shared Education	*
Industrial Action preventing engagement in Shared Education	9.3%
Unable to identify partner school(s)	40.7%
Unsuccessful application to Shared Education funding programmes	6.7%
Other	28.7%
Base (150) respondents not undertaking shared education. Multiple responses allowed. * indicates percentage based on small number and suppressed.	

- The most common reason given for schools not to have participated in shared education was “Unable to identify partner school(s)”; 41 per cent of schools that had not participated in shared education.

## Section C: Play In Schools.

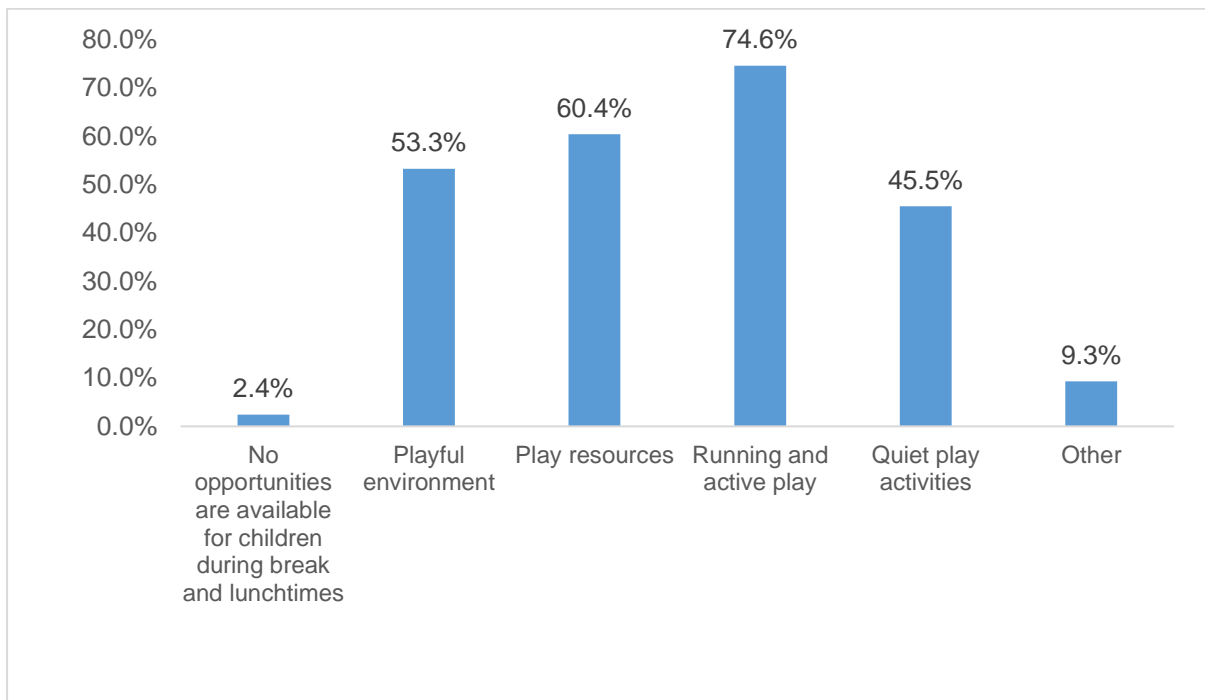
**Figure C1: How much time do children have for free play opportunities (unstructured play time) during the school day?**



Base 357 schools. \* indicates a percentage based on too small a number to be released. # indicates a number that is suppressed in order that another small number cannot be calculated.

- Approximately three quarters of schools (74 per cent) stated that children in their school had between 31 and 60 minutes of opportunities for free play during the school day.

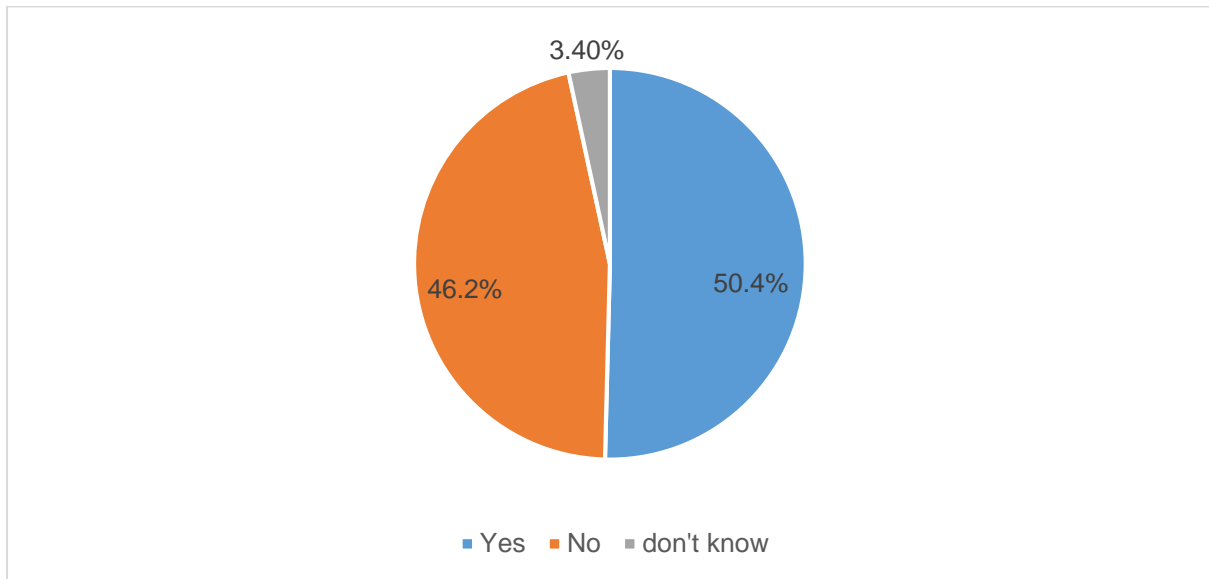
**Figure C2: What play opportunities are available for children during break and lunchtimes (i.e. playful environment, play resources, etc.)**



Base 409 schools. Multiple responses allowed.

- Three quarters of schools (75 per cent) have “Running and active play opportunities” available during break and lunchtimes.
- Sixty per cent of schools have “Play opportunities” and 53 per cent a “Playful environment”.

**Figure C3: Does your school have a Play Policy?**

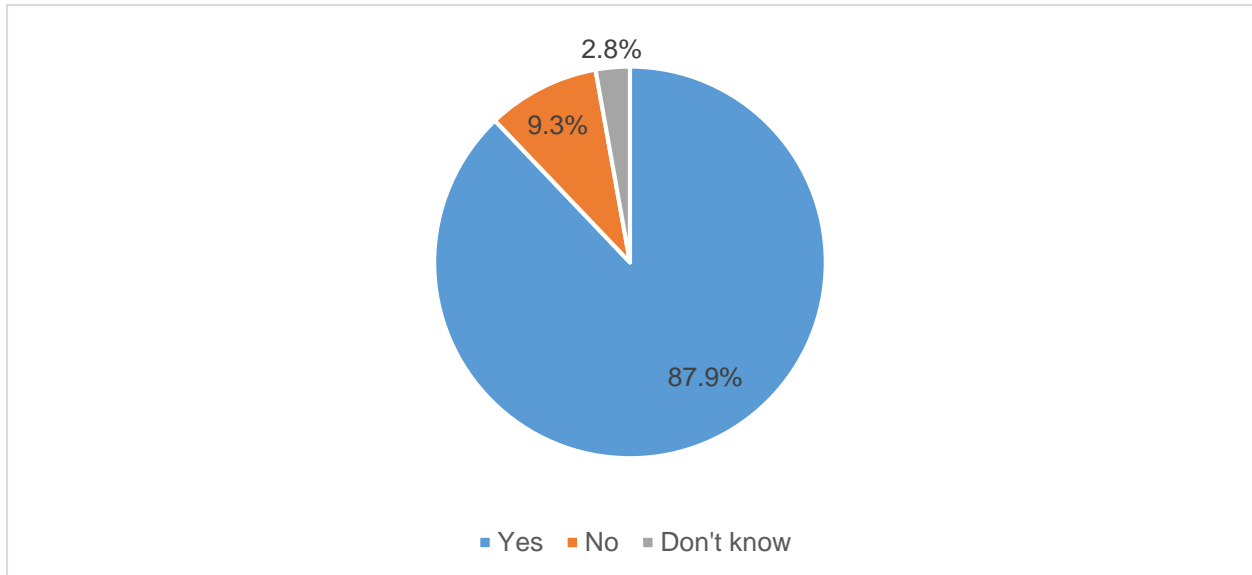


Base 357 schools.

- Half of schools (50 per cent) reported that their school has a play policy.

## Section D: Children's Services Co-Operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

**Figure D1: In the last academic year, has your school worked directly in co-operation with any of the Children's Authorities listed [above]<sup>2</sup> to improve the well-being of children and young people?**



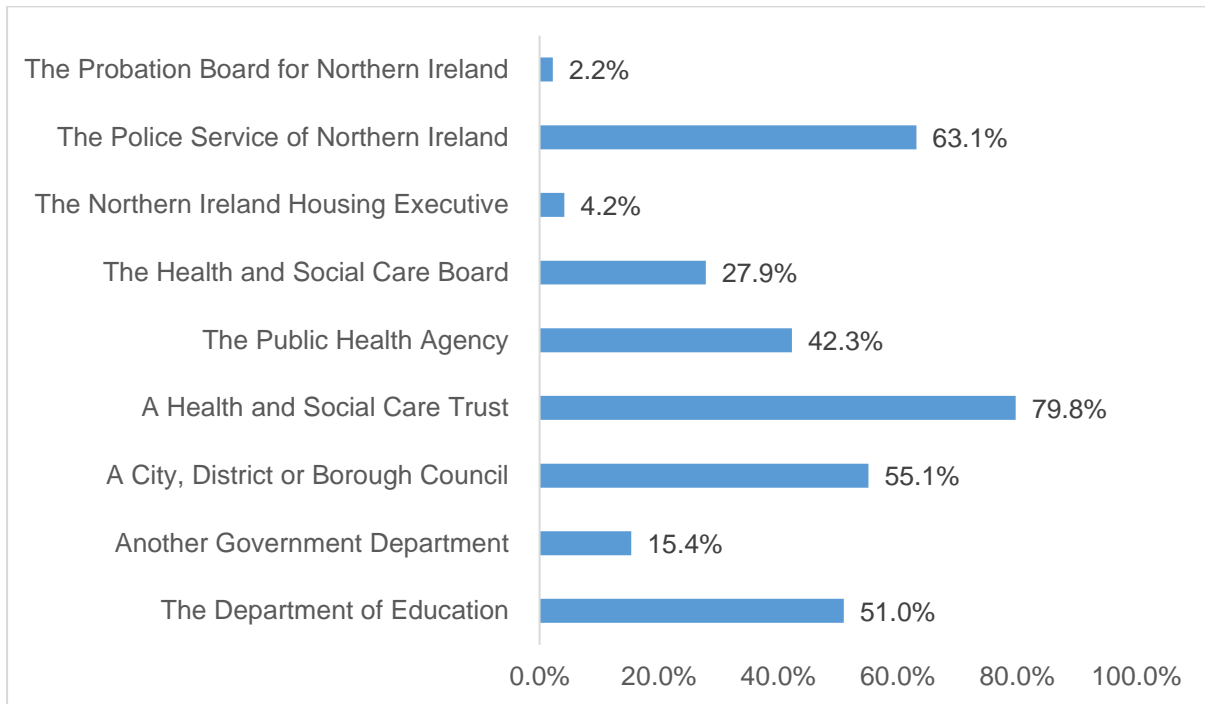
Base 355 schools

- The majority of schools (88 per cent) stated that they had worked directly in co-operation with one or more Children's Authorities to improve the well-being of children and young people.

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to Figure D2 for the list of Children's Authorities specified in the Children's Services Co-Operation Act (Northern Ireland) 2015.

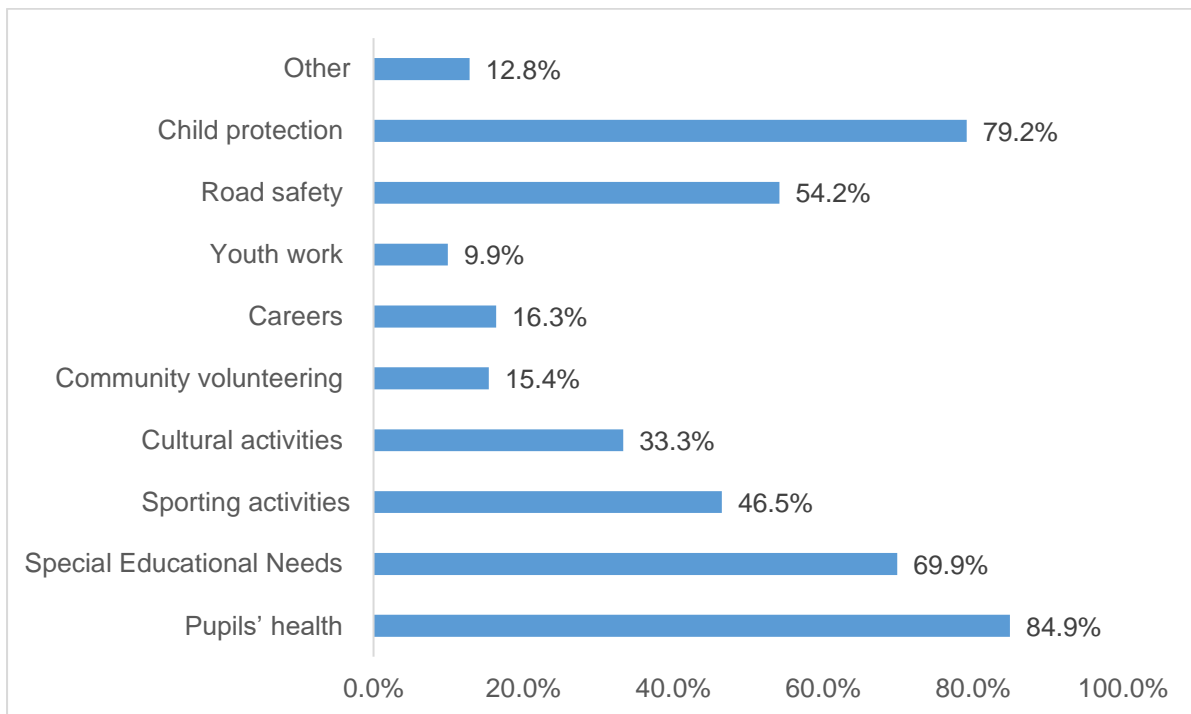
**Figure D2: You indicated that in the last academic year your school worked directly in co-operation with at least one Children’s Authority to improve the well-being of children and young people. Please specify which Children’s Authority(ies) you worked with.**



Base 312 schools; multiple responses allowed.

- Of those schools that had worked directly with at least one Children’s Authority the most common authority was “A Health and Social Care Trust”; 80 per cent of such schools.
- Sixty-three per cent of those schools that had worked directly with at least one Children’s Authority had worked with the “Police Service of Northern Ireland”.

**Figure D3: Please specify the type of activities that you have co-operated with the Children’s Authority(ies) on?**

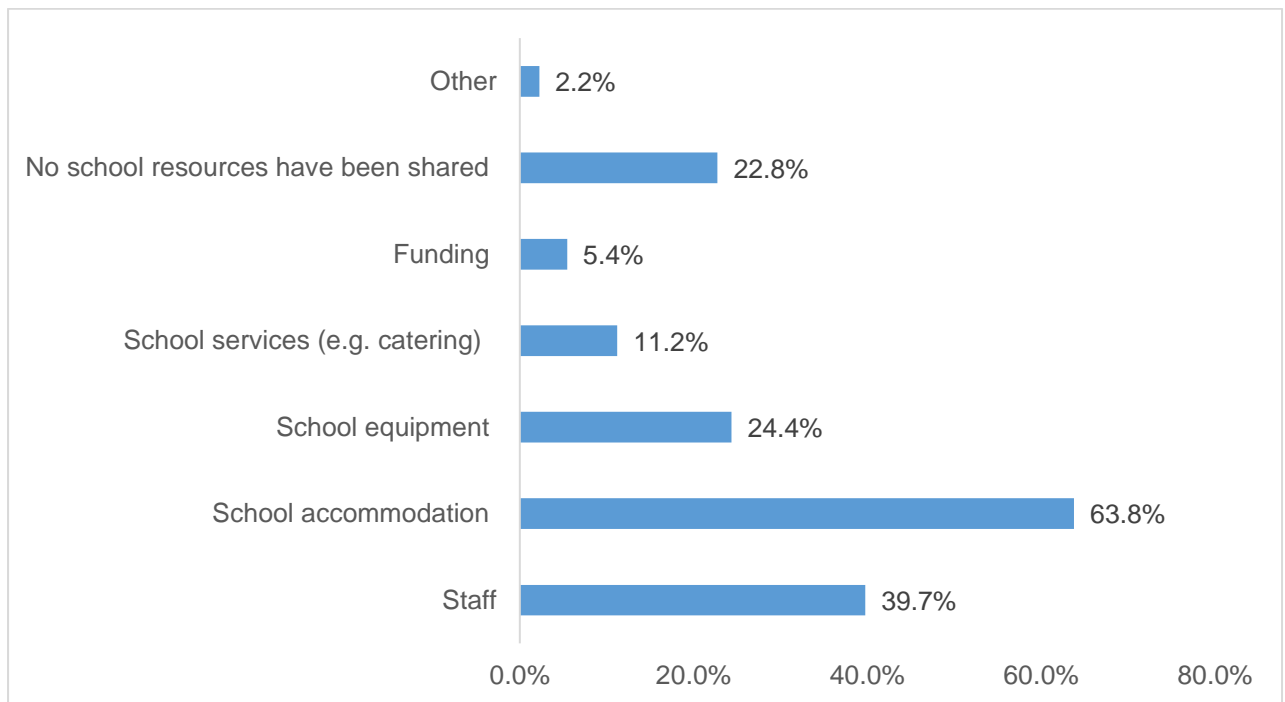


Base 312 schools; multiple responses allowed.

- The most common type of activity that a school had worked with a Children’s Authority(ies) on regarded “Pupils health”; 85 per cent of schools that had worked with a Children’s Authority(ies).
- Seventy-nine per cent of schools that had worked with a Children’s Authority(ies) did so in relation to “Child protection” and 70 per cent in relation to “Special Educational Needs”.



**Figure D4: Please specify any type of school resource(s) you have shared with the Children’s Authority (ies) as part of your co-operation with them?**

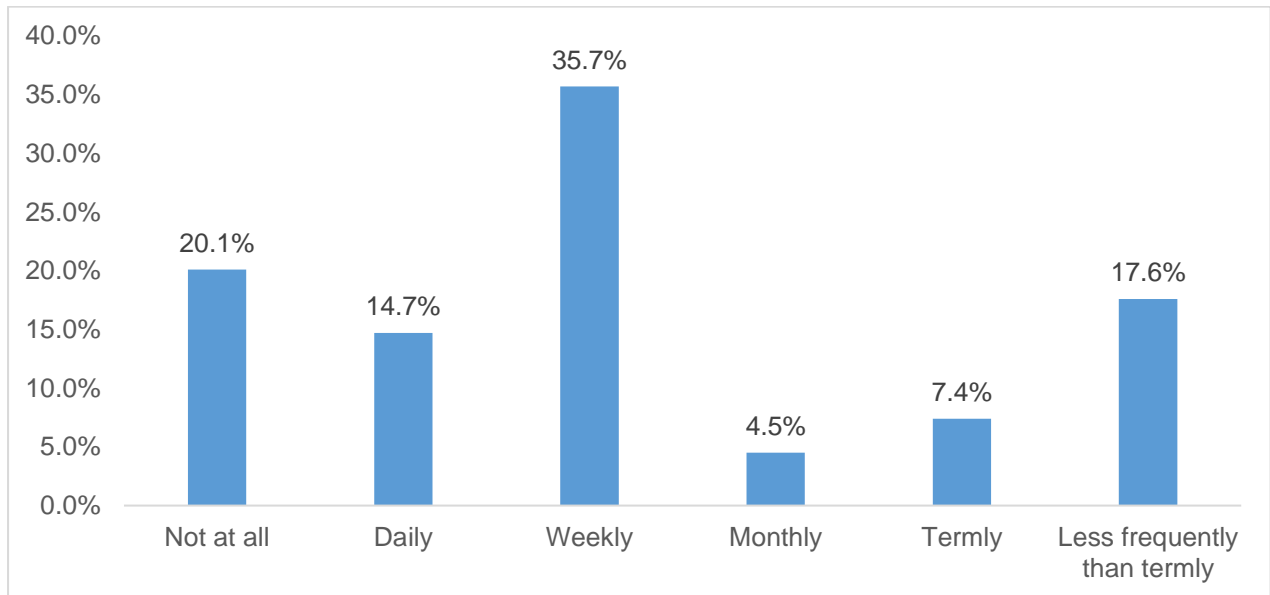


Base 312 schools; multiple responses allowed.

- Sixty-four per cent of schools that had worked directly with a Children’s Authority(ies) shared “School accommodation” and 40 per cent shared “Staff”.

## Section E: Community Use of School Premises.

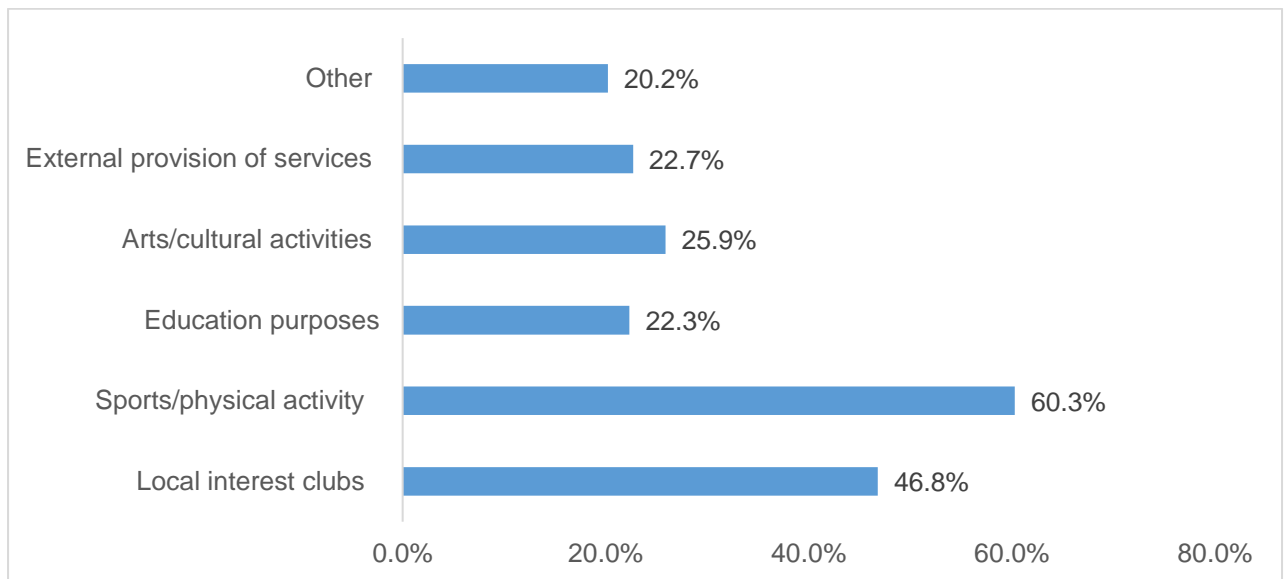
**Figure E1: To what extent do you allow the community to use your school premises outside normal school hours?**



Base 353 schools.

- Thirty-six per cent of schools allowed the community to use their school premises outside normal school hours on a weekly basis.
- One fifth of schools (20 per cent) did not let the community use their school premises outside normal school hours.

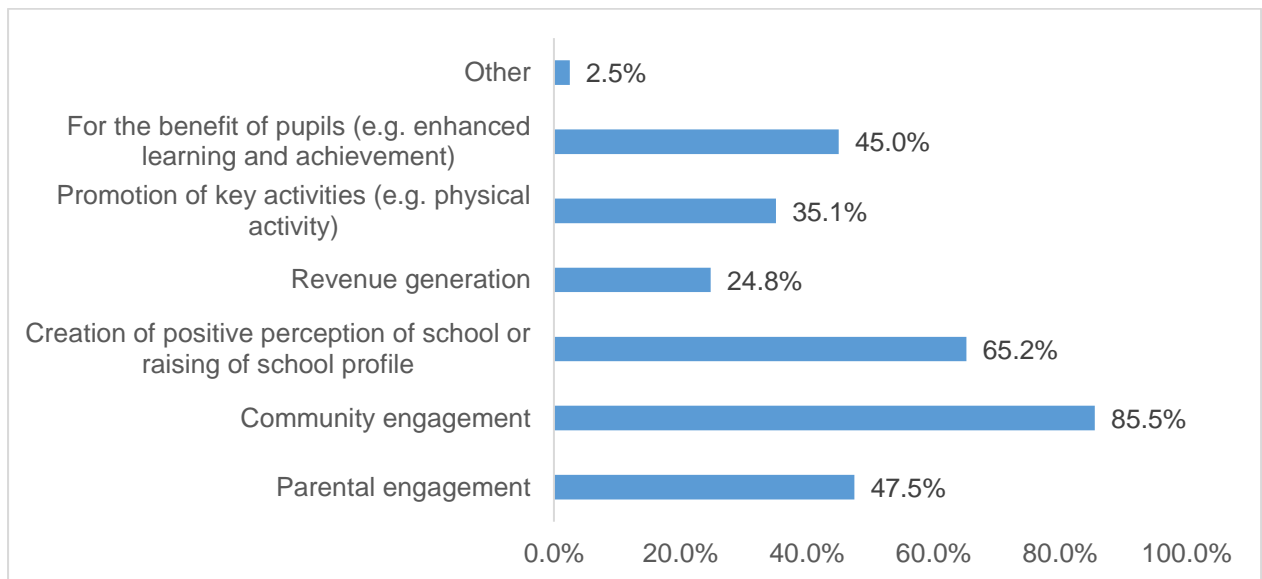
**Figure E2: What type of activity(ies) does the community use your premises for?**



Base 282 that allowed community use of their school premises; multiple response allowed

- Sixty per cent of schools that allowed community use of their school premises did so for “Sports / physical activities”.
- Approximately half (47 per cent) that allowed community use of their school premises did so for “Local interest clubs”.

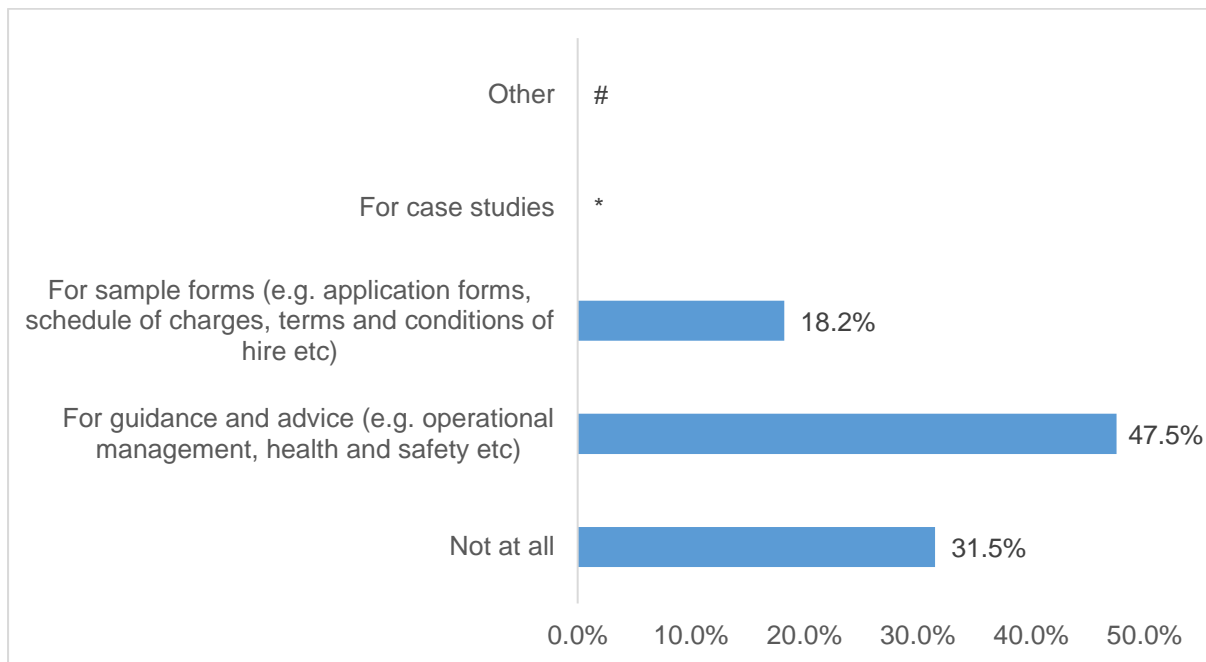
**Figure E3: What is (are) the main reason(s) for allowing the community to use your premises?**



Base 282 that allowed community use of their school premises; multiple response allowed.

- Approximately nine out of ten schools (86 per cent) that allowed community use of their school premises stated that the main reason was “Community engagement”.
- Sixty-five per cent of schools that allowed community use of their school premises stated that the main reason was the “Creation of a positive perception of their school or raising of their school’s profile”.

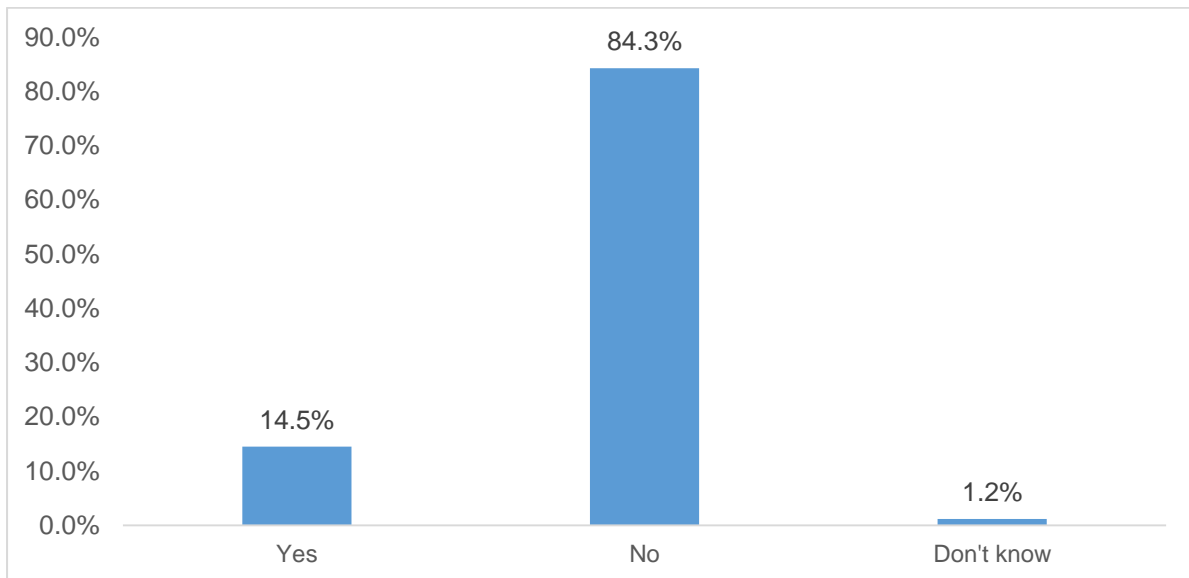
**Figure E4: To what extent do you use the Department of Education's "Community Use of School Premises: Guidance Toolkit for Schools"?**



Base 409 schools. \* indicates a percentage based on too small a number to be released. # indicates a number that is suppressed in order that another small number cannot be calculated.

- The most common use of the Department of Education's "Community Use of School Premises: Guidance Toolkit for Schools" was "For guidance and advice (e.g. operational management, health and safety etc)"; 48 per cent of schools.
- Thirty-two per cent of schools stated that they did not use the Department of Education's "Community Use of School Premises: Guidance Toolkit for Schools".

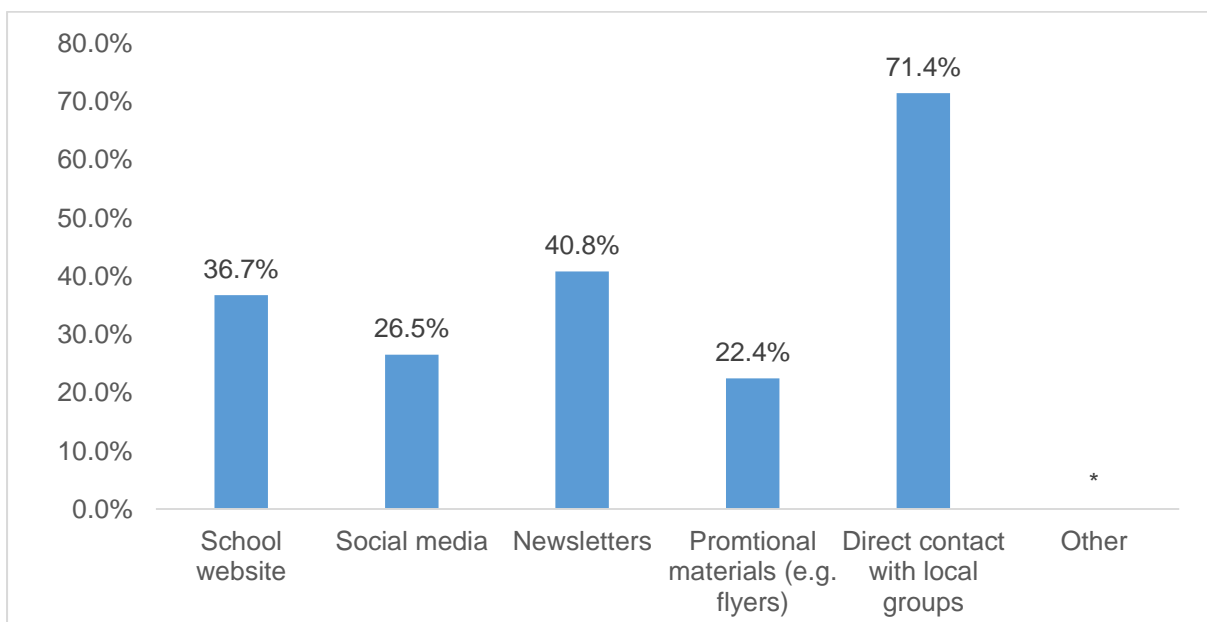
**Figure E4: Do you currently market or promote the availability of your school premises?**



Base 337 schools

- The majority of schools (84 per cent) stated that they did not market or promote the availability of their school premises.

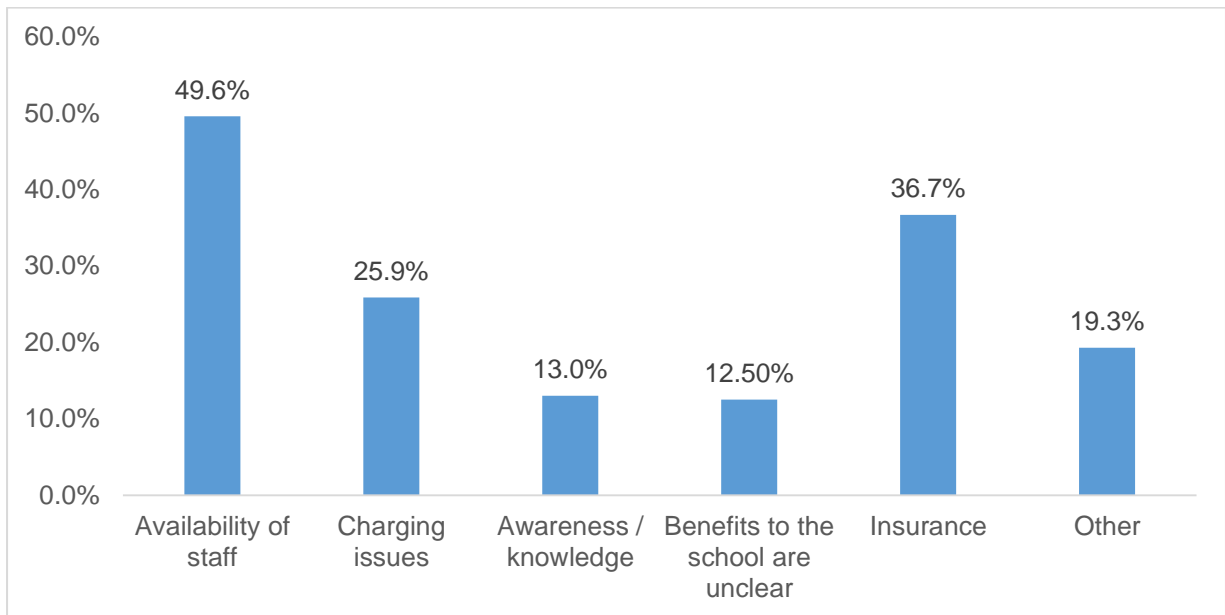
**Figure E5: You stated that your school markets or promotes the availability of school how do you do this?**



Base 49 schools that markets or promotes the availability of their school; multiple answers allowed. \* indicates a percentage based on too small a number to be released.

- The most common method that schools use to market or promote the availability of their school premises was “Direct contact with local groups”; 71 per cent of schools.

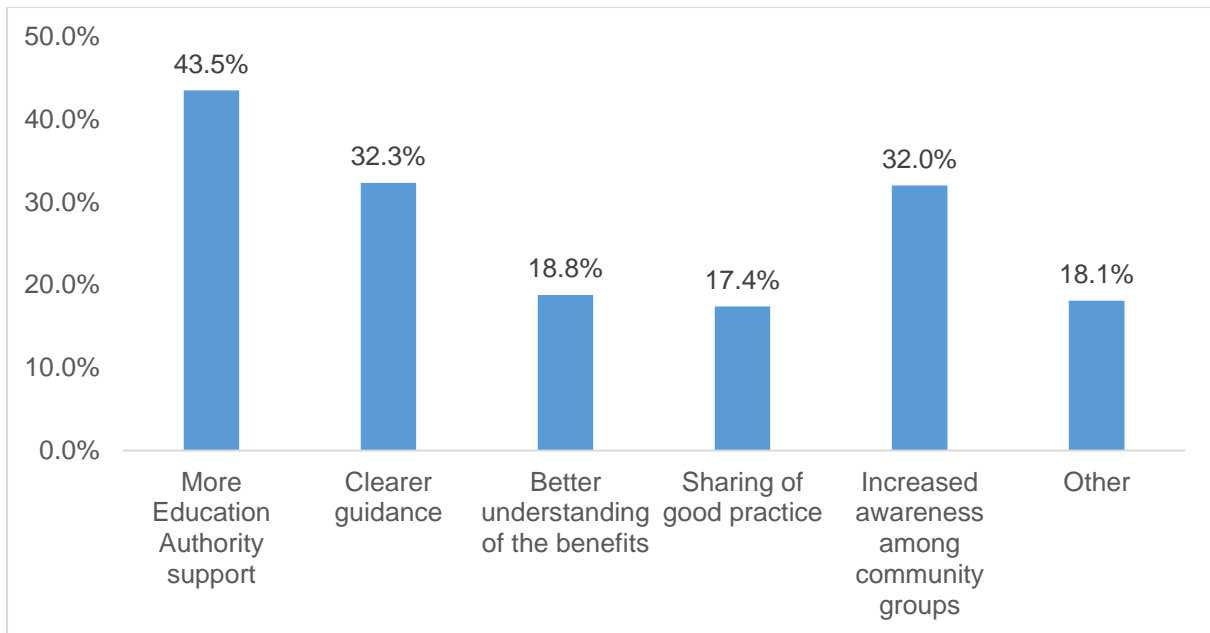
**Figure E6: Do you face any barriers in allowing the community to use your premises?**



Base 409 schools; multiple answers allowed.

- The most common barrier to allowing the community use of school premises was the “Availability of staff”; 50 per cent of schools.
- Approximately four out of ten schools (37 per cent) stated that “Insurance” was a barrier to allowing the community use of school premises.

**Figure E7: What would encourage you to begin, or to expand, community use of your premises?**



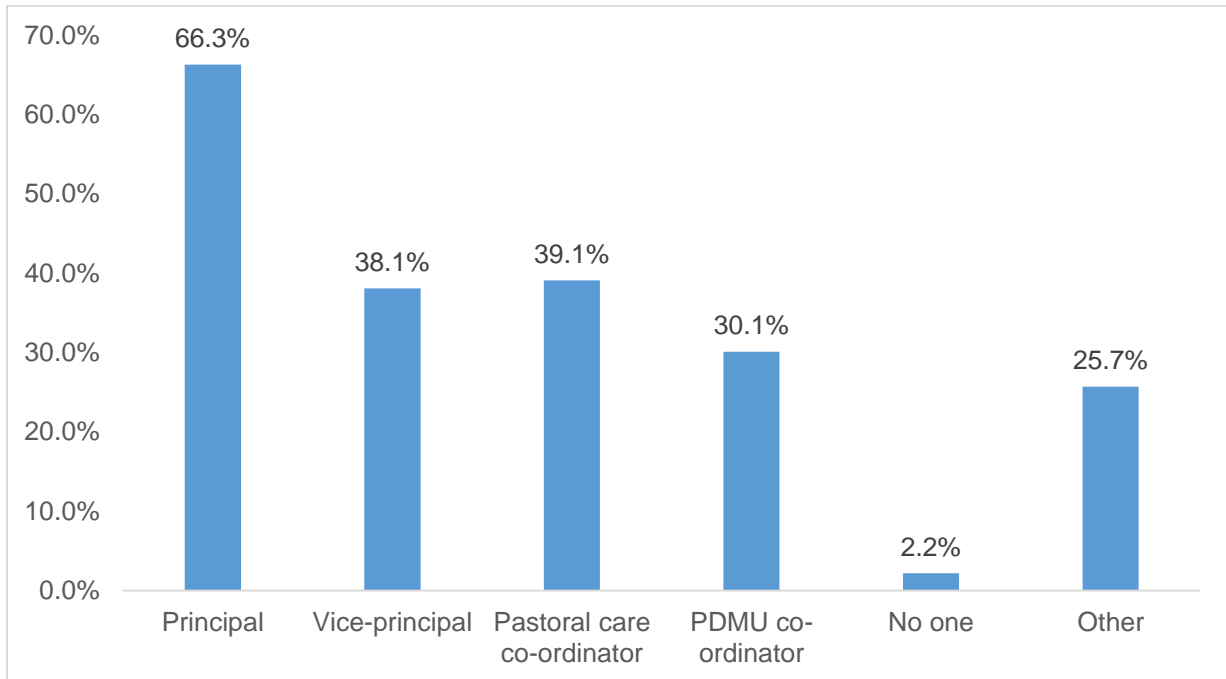
Base 409 schools; multiple answers allowed.

- “More Education Authority support” was the most common action (44 per cent of schools) that would encourage schools to begin or expand community use of their premises.
- Approximately one third of schools (32 per cent) stated that “Increased awareness among community groups” would encourage their school to begin or expand community use of their premises. Thirty-two per cent of schools stated that “Clearer guidance” would encourage them to begin or expand community use of their premises.



## Section F: Pupil Participation.

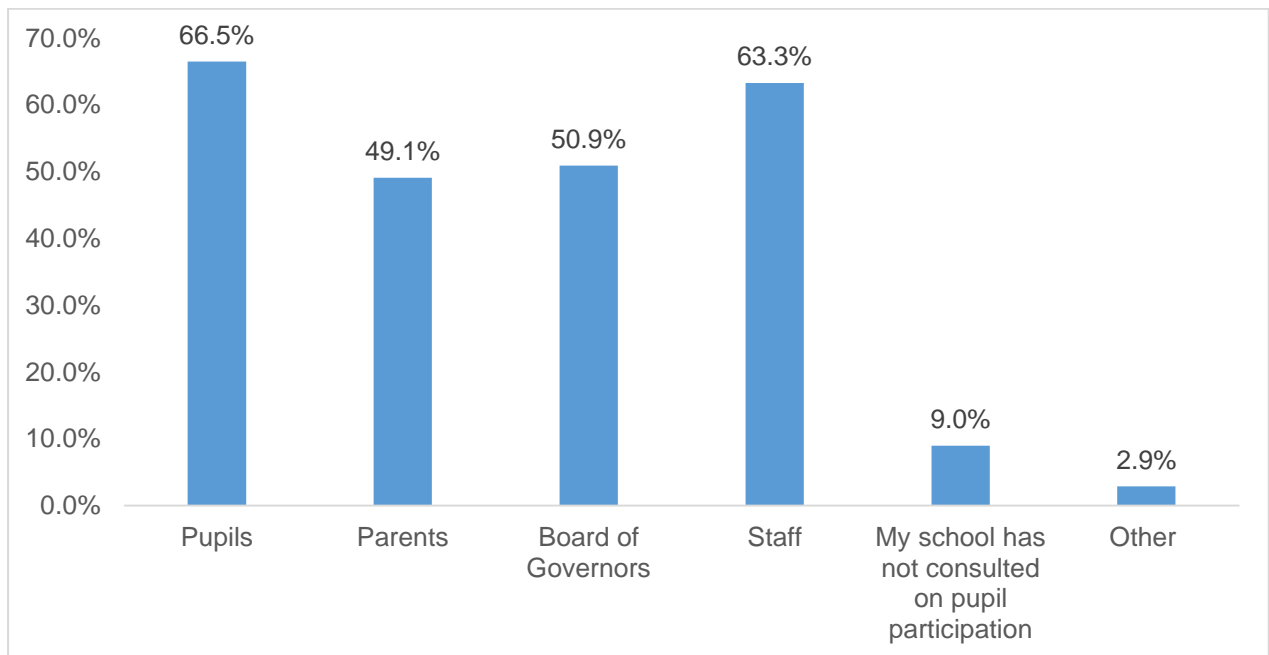
**Figure F1: Please specify who has responsibility for pupil participation in your school?**



Base 409 schools. Multiple answers allowed.

- Approximately two thirds of schools (66 per cent) stated that the school's principal has responsibility for pupil participation.

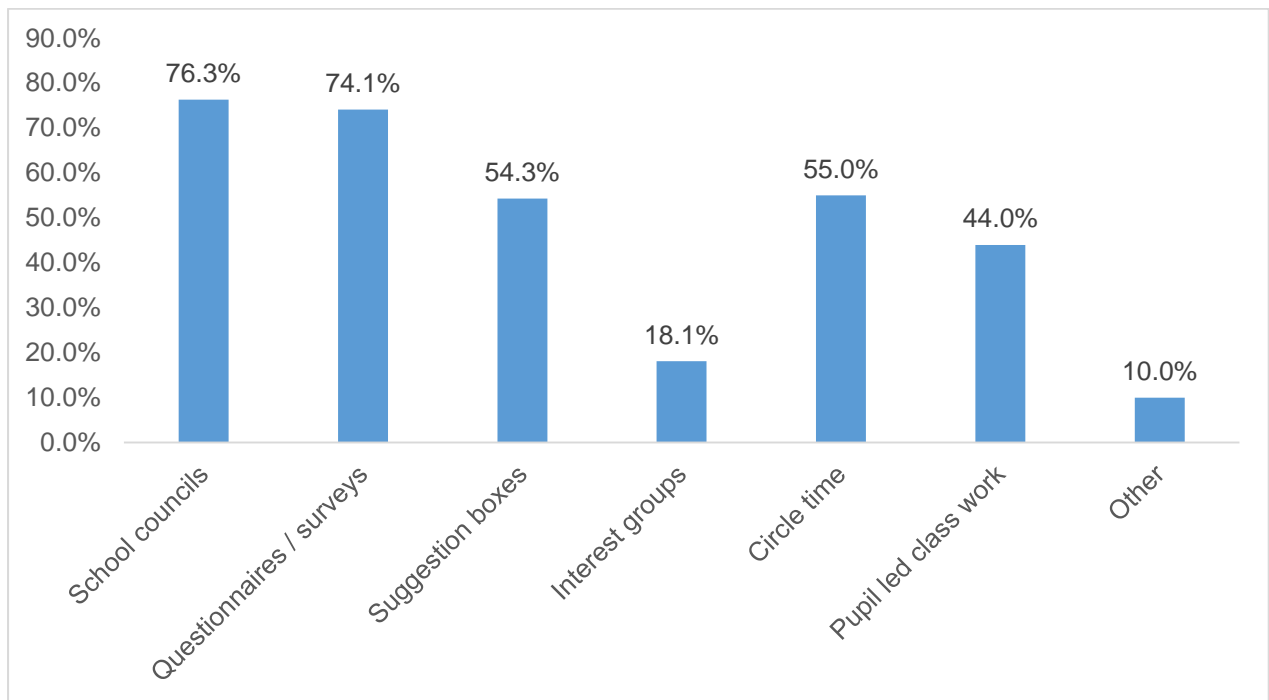
**Figure F2: Has your school consulted on pupil participation with pupils, parents, staff and the Board of Governors?**



Base 409 schools. Multiple answers allowed.

- Approximately two thirds of schools (67 per cent) consulted pupils regarding pupil participation at their school.
- Less than one in ten schools (9 per cent) stated that they had not consulted on pupil participation.

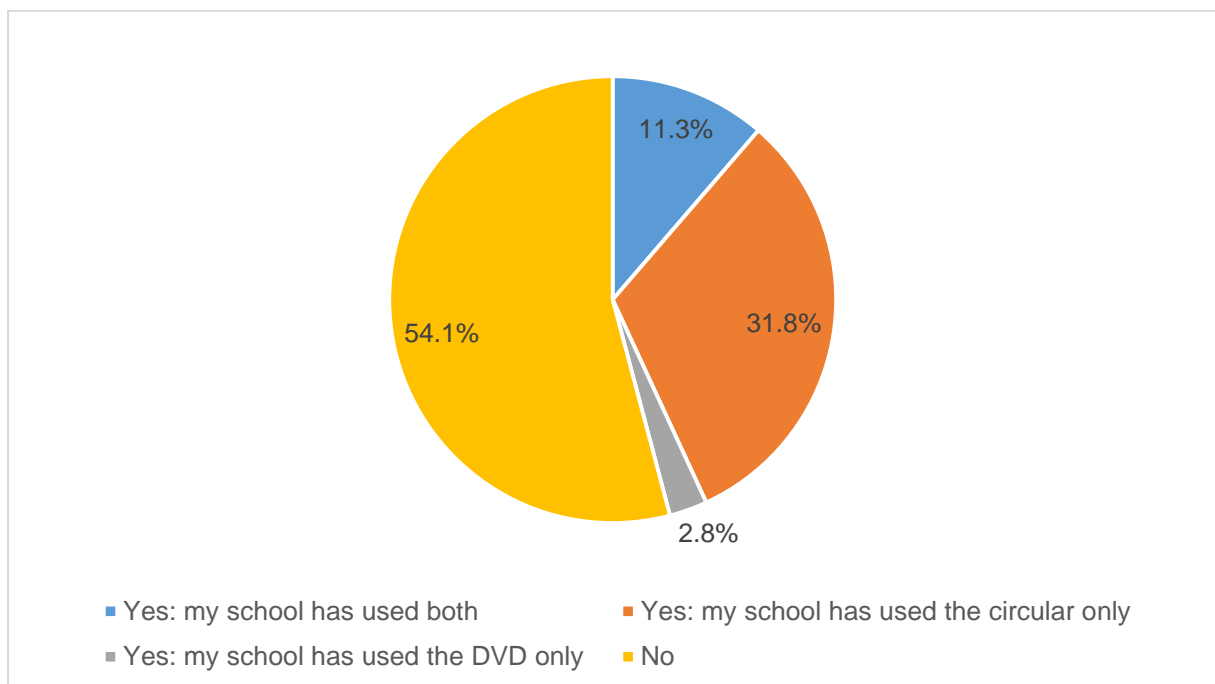
**Figure F3: What forms of pupil participation and engagement are facilitated in your school?**



Base 409 schools. Multiple answers allowed.

- Approximately three quarters of schools (76 per cent) have facilitated “School councils” as a form of pupil participation and engagement.
- Seventy-four per cent of schools have facilitated pupil participation and engagement using “Questionnaires / surveys”.

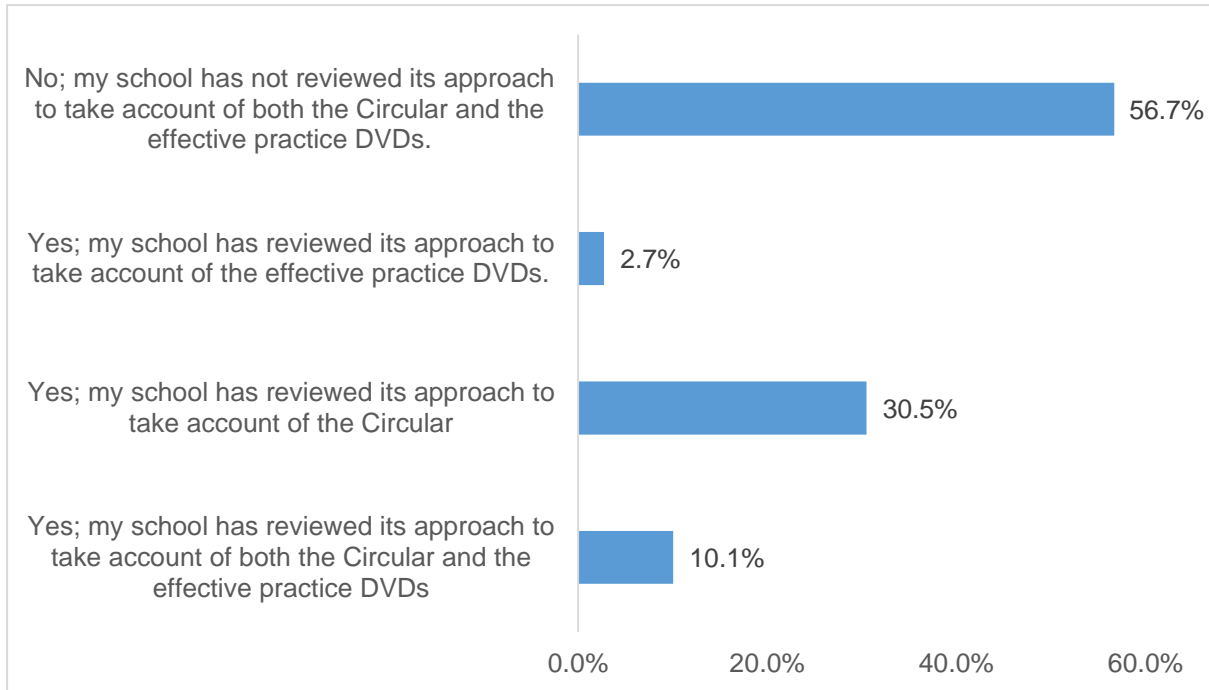
**Figure F4: Have you used the DE circular 2014/14 and / or the DVDs available on ESaGStv to review your schools policy on effective pupil participation?**



Base 327 schools.

- More than half of schools (54 per cent) stated that their school had not used the DE circular 2014/14 and / or the DVDs available on ESaGStv to review their school's policy on effective pupil participation.
- Thirty-two per cent of schools had used the DE circular only.

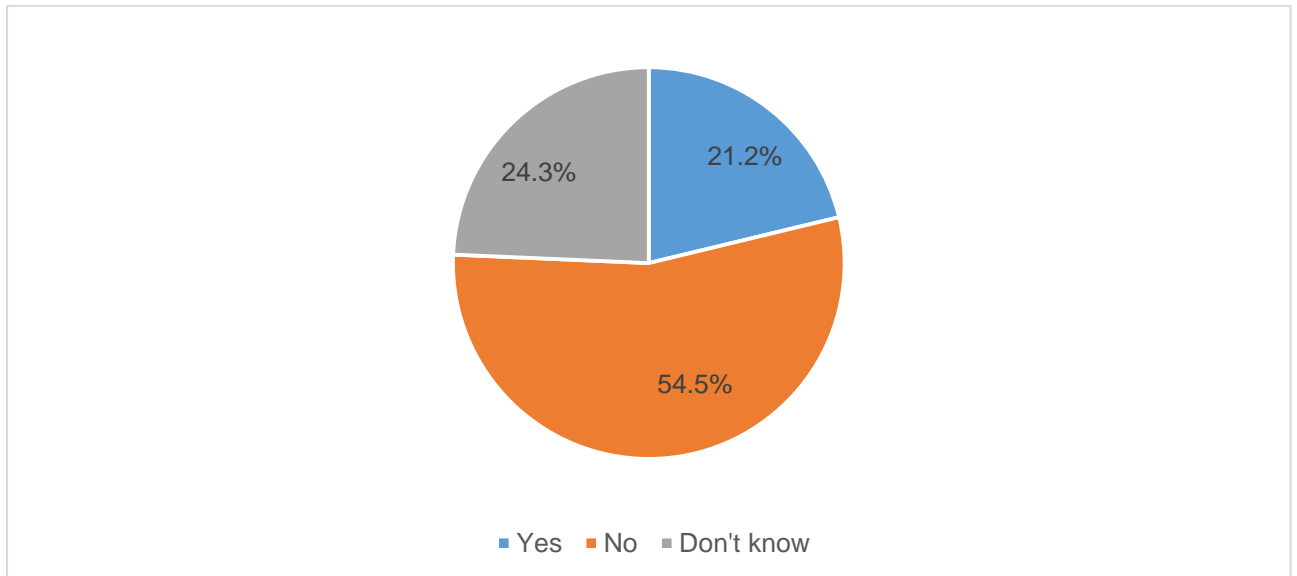
**Figure F5: Has your school reviewed your approach to pupil participation in decision making to take account of the Circular and / or effective practice DVDs?**



Base 328 schools.

- More than half of schools (57 per cent) stated that their school had not reviewed their approach to pupil participation in decision making to take account of the Circular and the effective practice DVDs.
- Thirty-one per cent of schools stated their school had reviewed their approach to pupil participation in decision making to take account of the DE Circular.

**Figure F6: Does your school have participation structures in place that facilitate gender identities?**



Base 325 schools.

- The majority of schools (55 per cent) stated that their school does not have participation structures in place that facilitate gender identities.

## Section G: Physical Education.

**Table G1: Primary Schools: On average how much time is spent per week on the delivery of curricular PE (i.e. dance, gymnastics, games, swimming and athletics) to pupils at each Key Stage? Please do not include any extra-curricular PE or sporting activities.**

	<b>0-59 minutes</b>	<b>60-119 minutes</b>	<b>120 minutes or more</b>
<b>Foundation stage</b>	48.3%	46.5%	5.2%
<b>Key stage 1</b>	40.3%	56.9%	2.8%
<b>Key stage 2</b>	24.7%	68.8%	6.5%

Base: foundation stage 230 schools; key stage 1, 248 schools and 247 key stage 2 schools.

- At foundation stage 48 per cent of schools reported that the average time spent per week on the delivery of curricular PE was less than one hour and 47 per cent reported the time spent was between one and two hours.
- For key stage 1 pupils, 40 per cent of schools reported that the average time spent per week on the delivery of curricular PE was less than one hour and 57 per cent reported the time spent was between one and two hours.
- For key stage 2 pupils, 25 per cent of schools reported that the average time spent per week on the delivery of curricular PE was less than one hour and 69 per cent reported the time spent was between one and two hours.

**Table G2: Post-primary Schools: On average how much time is spent per week on the delivery of curricular PE (i.e. dance, gymnastics, games, swimming and athletics) to pupils at each Key Stage? Please do not include any extra-curricular PE or sporting activities.**

	<b>0-59 minutes</b>	<b>60-119 minutes</b>	<b>120 minutes or more</b>
<b>Key stage 3</b>	11.9%	71.6%	16.4%
<b>Key stage 4</b>	23.4%	68.8%	7.8%
<b>Post 16</b>	45.0%	50.0%	*

Base key stage 3, 67 schools; key stage 4, 64 schools; post 16, 59 schools. \* indicates a percentage based on too small a number to be released.

- For all stages of post-primary education the most common time spent per week on the delivery of curricular PE was between one and two hours; key stage 3, 72 per cent; key stage 4, 69 per cent and for post 16 pupils, 50 per cent.

**Table G3: The table below requires that you select one option for each year group that best describes how curricular PE is delivered to pupils in your school.**

**[Primary Schools only]**

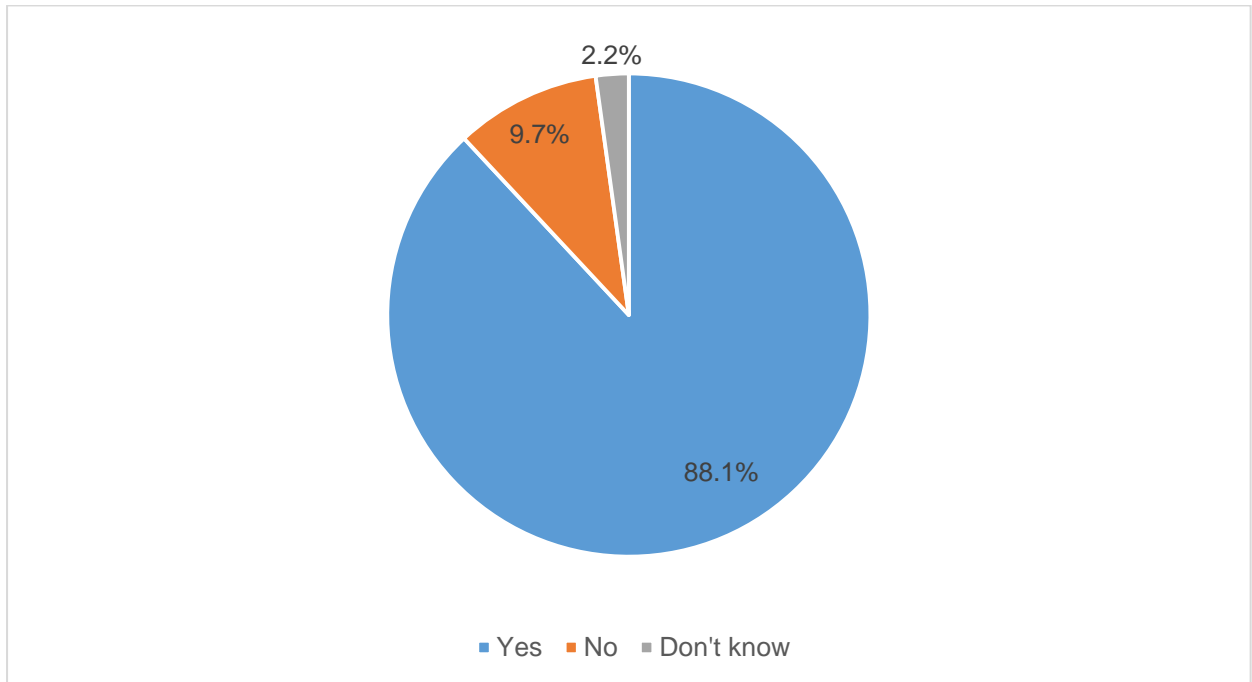
	<b>All curricular PE is delivered by school teaching staff.</b>	<b>Curricular PE is delivered by a combination of school teaching staff and an external provider.</b>	<b>All curricular PE is delivered by an external provider.</b>
<b>Foundation stage</b>	45.4%	52.2%	2.4%
<b>Key stage 1</b>	35.7%	63.1%	*
<b>Key stage 2</b>	25.9%	72.1%	2.0%

Base 249 schools. \* indicates a percentage based on too small a number to be released.

- Across all stages of primary education the most common delivery mechanism for curricular PE was by a combination of school teaching staff and external providers: 52 per cent in the foundation stage; 63 per cent at key stage 1 and 72 per cent at key stage 2.
- Of those primary schools that used an external provider(s) to deliver curricular PE, 82 per cent stated that this has impacted positively on the expertise of school teaching staff in relation to PE.



**Figure G1: Do you have a whole school approach to promoting physical activity?**



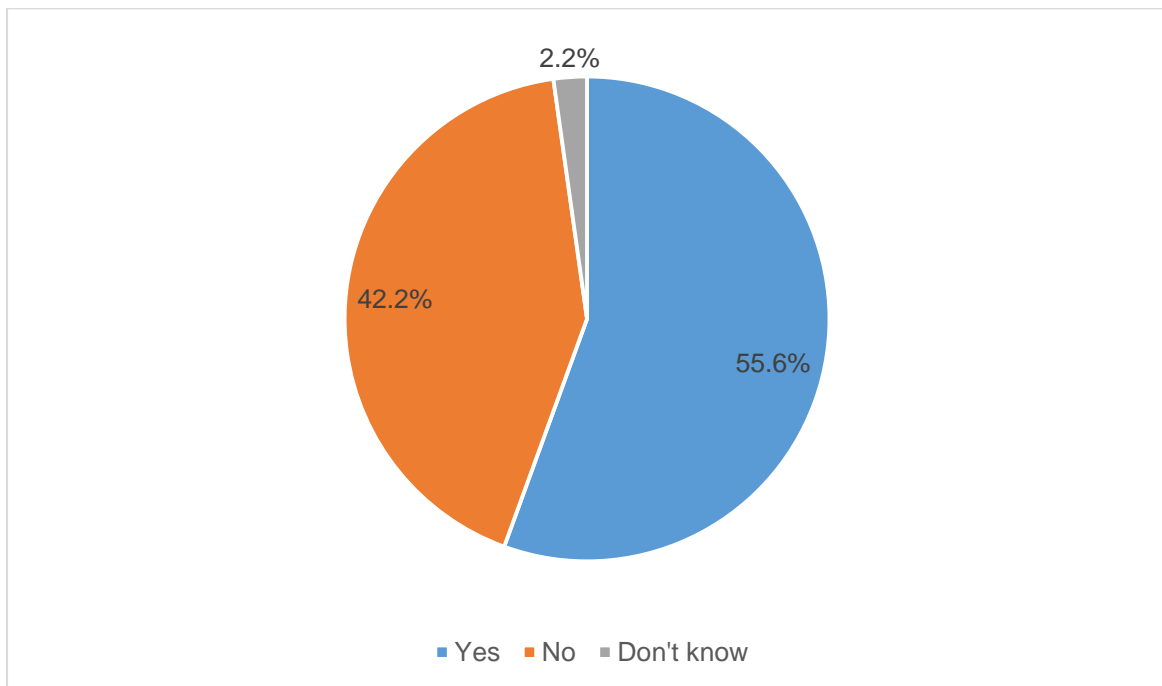
Base 318 schools.

- The majority of primary and post-primary schools (88 per cent) stated that their school has a whole school approach to promoting physical activity.

## Section H: Use of External Providers to Support the Delivery of the Statutory Curriculum.

(Primary and post-primary schools only)

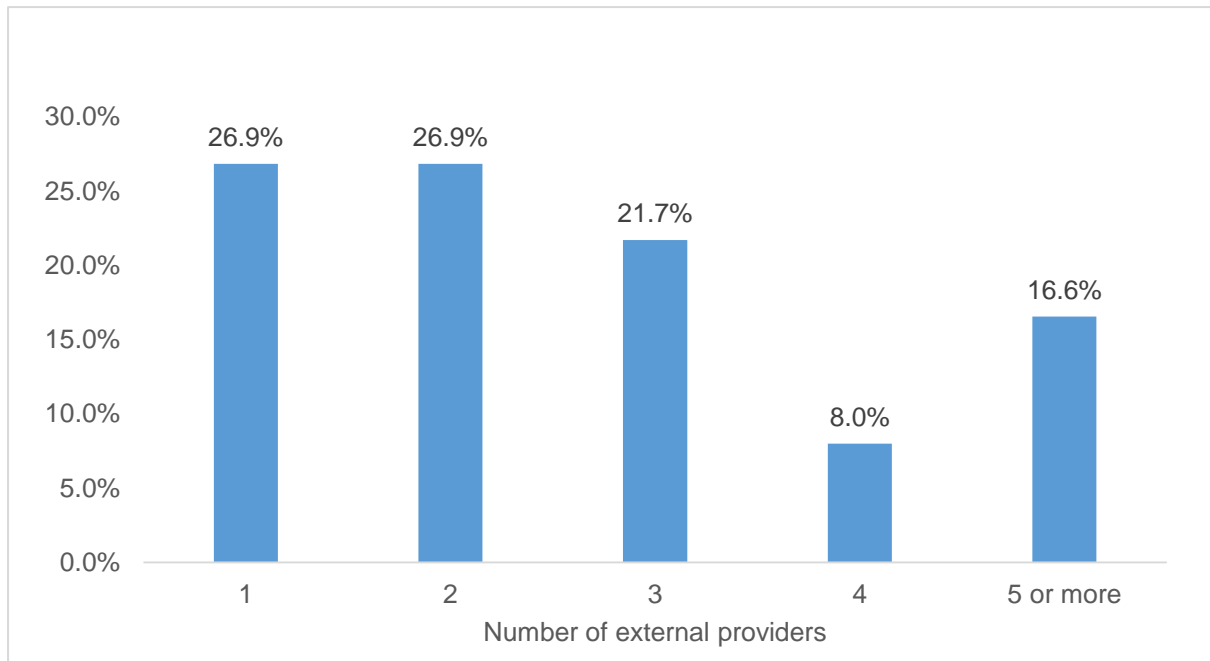
**Figure H1: Did your school use any external providers to support the delivery of the statutory curriculum to your pupils during the last academic year?**



Base 315 schools; primary and post-primary schools.

- Fifty-six per cent of schools stated that they had used external providers to support the delivery of the statutory curriculum to their pupils during the last academic year.

**Figure H2: You indicated that your school used external providers in the last academic year. Please enter in the box below the number of external providers your school used in the last academic year.**



Base 175 schools that stated they used external providers.

- Of the schools that used external providers 27 per cent of schools used one external provider in the last academic year and 27 per cent used two.

Table H1a and Table H1b show the areas of the statutory curriculum that external providers assisted schools to deliver. The table aggregates the responses provided by schools regarding at most three external providers that their school has used.

**Table H1a: Aspects of the statutory curriculum that were supported by external providers: Primary Schools**

Area of the primary curriculum.	Percentage of instances of support by external providers
Language and Literacy	8.4%
Mathematics and Numeracy	5.5%
The Arts	6.1%
Physical Education	39.0%
PDMU	14.2%
The World Around Us	9.3%
Religious Education	2.0%
ICT	3.2%
Modern Languages (including Irish)	2.9%
Other	9.3%
Total	100.0%

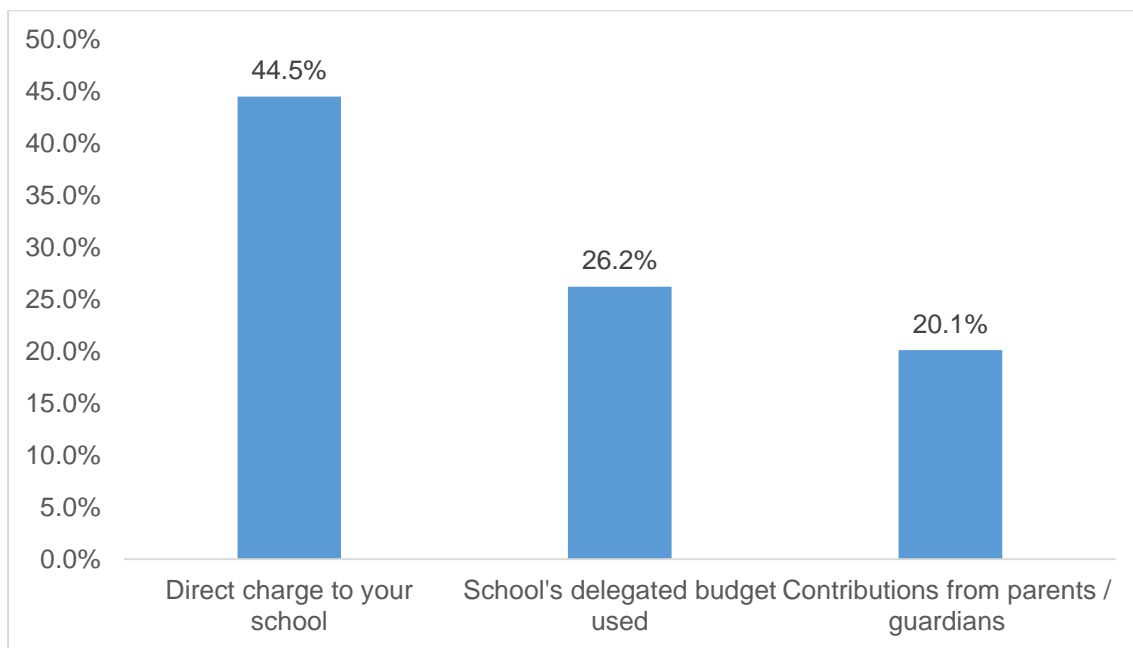
- The most commonly supported area of the statutory curriculum in primary schools by external providers was “Physical Education”; 39 per cent of all instances. Fourteen per cent of instances of support were for “PDMU”.

**Table H1b: Aspects of the statutory curriculum that were supported by external providers: Post-primary Schools.**

Area of the post-primary curriculum.	Percentage of instances of support by external providers
Language and Literacy	6.8%
English	4.9%
Modern Languages (including Irish)	3.9%
History	5.8%
Geography	4.9%
STEM	10.7%
ICT	4.9%
Business / Careers Education	15.5%
Religious Education	4.9%
Relationships and Sexual Identity	16.5%
Other	21.4%
Total	100.0%

- The most commonly supported area of the statutory curriculum in post-primary schools by external providers was “Relationships and Sexual Identity”; 17 per cent of all instances. Sixteen per cent of instances of support were for “Business / Careers Education”. Approximately one fifth (21 per cent) of instances were classed as “Other”.

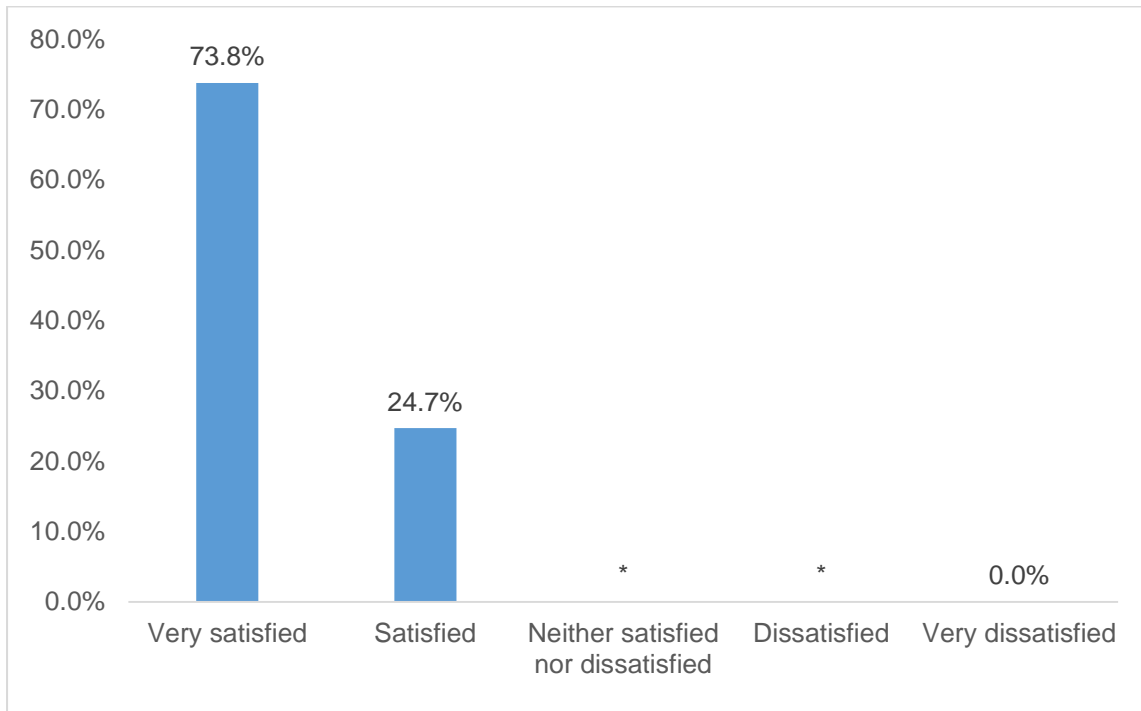
**Figure H3: Sources of financing for the service(s) of external provider(s).**



Base: Not all schools that indicated they had used external providers answered the questions regarding sources of financing. Percentages based on valid answers aggregated for one, two and three external providers. Direct charge to school; 328 instances of use of external providers. School's delegated budget; 324 instances of use of external providers. Contributions from parents / guardians; 330 instances of use of external providers.

- Forty-five per cent of the instances of use of external providers incurred a direct charge to the school; 26 per cent included financing from the schools delegated budget and 20 per cent sought contributions from parents / guardians.

**Figure H4: Satisfaction with the services provided by external providers.**



Base: Not all schools that indicated they had used external providers answered the questions regarding levels of satisfaction in the services received. Percentages based on valid answers aggregated for one, two and three external providers; 332 valid responses.

- Seventy-four per cent of schools that used external providers were very satisfied with the service(s) provided. Levels of dissatisfaction with the services provided by external providers were negligible and below release thresholds (dissatisfied) and no school reported that they were very dissatisfied with the service(s) provided.

## Annex A: Methodology and Respondent Profile.

The 2018 School Omnibus Survey was issued to all grant aided schools in Northern Ireland. Following the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency's policy of delivering surveys electronically where possible the Omnibus Survey made use of the online survey software SurveyMonkey.

The Department's Business Review Group reviewed the questions to be included in the Omnibus survey. Subsequently the survey was issued in September 2018 to avoid both the school examination period and the summer holiday period. A four week period was given for survey returns with a reminder issued one week prior to the closing date of the survey period.

As the schools responding to the survey are not selected by statistical methods there is no guarantee that the profile of these schools is representative of all grant aided schools in NI. However as the actual number of schools that respond to the survey is relatively large it is likely to be representative of all schools; the remainder of this section of the report will examine the validity of this assumption.

Not all questions were relevant to all schools, however to inform the reader of the representativeness of the 2018 Omnibus Survey the remainder of this section compares characteristics of all responding schools to information contained within the Analytical Services Unit (ASU) publication "School enrolments in Northern Ireland 2017/18"<sup>3</sup>

**Table A: School Type**

Type	2018 Omnibus		School enrolments in Northern Ireland 2017/18
	Number of responding schools	% of responding schools	
Primary	316	77.3	77.4
Post primary	76	18.6	18.9
Special	17	4.2	3.7
Total	409	100	100

Table A shows that the profile, (primary, post-primary and special) of schools responding to the 2018 Omnibus Survey is similar to the profile of all school types in Northern Ireland. It is unlikely that such a small differences would introduce any bias into the results of the Omnibus Survey.

<sup>3</sup> Source <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/school-enrolments-school-level-data-201718>

Table B below is derived from the responses to the Omnibus Survey, management type of the schools that responded and is compared with the relevant school management types in the ASU published information 2017/18 compared to the management type of respondents to the 2018 Omnibus survey.

**Table B: School Management Type.**

Management type	management type of schools 2017/18; % of schools	Omnibus Survey; % of schools
Controlled	44.4%	44.4%
Voluntary	5.8%	6.8%
Catholic maintained	39.3%	40.8%
Other maintained	2.9%	2.6%
Controlled integrated	2.6%	2.8%
Grant Maintained Integrated	3.6%	4.0%
Total	100%	100%

Note for 58 schools in the Omnibus survey the management type was not known

As with school type the management types of schools that responded to the Omnibus survey was not substantially different to the management type profile of all primary, post-primary and special schools in Northern Ireland.



## **Annex B Definition of Management Types.**

Definitions of school management types are as follows:

**Controlled:** Schools are managed and funded by the Education Authority through Boards of Governors (BoG). Primary and post-primary school BoGs consist of representatives of transferors - mainly the Protestant churches - along with representatives of parents, teachers and the EA.

**Voluntary:** Self-governing schools, generally of long standing, originally established to provide an academic education at post primary level on a fee paying basis. Now funded by the Department and managed by Boards of Governors. The BoGs are constituted in accordance with each school's scheme of management - usually representatives of foundation governors, parents, teachers and in most cases, DE or EA representatives. The BoGs is the employing authority and is responsible for the employment of all staff in its school.

**Maintained** schools are managed by Boards of Governors which consist of members nominated by trustees, along with representatives of parents, teachers and the Education Authority. These schools are funded through the EA for their running costs and directly by the Department in relation to capital building works. For **Catholic Maintained** schools, the Employing Authority is the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS). **Other maintained** schools are any schools that are not Catholic maintained. They are typically, but not exclusively, **Irish medium schools**.

**Controlled integrated:** Controlled schools which have acquired integrated status.

**Grant Maintained integrated:** Self-governing schools with integrated education status, funded directly by the Department of Education and managed by Boards of Governors. The BoG is the employing authority and responsible for employing staff.