



Department  
for Education

# Omnibus survey of pupils and their parents or carers: wave 5

Research report

March 2019

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## Glossary of terms

Term	Description
<b>Free school meal (FSM) entitlement</b>	Free school meal (FSM) entitlement refers to school pupils who are eligible for free school meals. These pupils come from families that are entitled to one or more of a range of benefits which aim to support those on low incomes. As such, FSM entitlement is used as a proxy measure for disadvantage.
<b>IDACI</b>	IDACI is an abbreviation for the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index. This measure ranks areas according to the proportion of children under the age of 16 that live in low income households and, as such, serves as an alternative (more granular) measure of deprivation. Households are allocated to one of five quintiles where the first IDACI quintile represents the 20% least deprived areas and the fifth IDACI quintile represents the 20% most deprived areas.
<b>Key stages</b>	<p>Key stages are used to categorise different phases of pupils' educational journey. This report focuses on key stages 3, 4 and 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key stage 3 (KS3) spans the initial three years of secondary education (year 7, year 8 and year 9).</li> <li>• Key stage 4 (KS4) spans the last two years of secondary education (year 10 and year 11) when most school pupils are working towards GCSE or equivalent qualifications.</li> <li>• Key stage 5 (KS5), spans the 'sixth form' phase in which most pupils focus on AS and A-levels, technical or vocational qualifications, or apprenticeships (years 12 and 13). Please note that those studying apprenticeships were not invited to participate in this study because an apprentice's learning takes place primarily in the workplace, not in a school or college setting.</li> </ul>
<b>Regions</b>	<p>The regions used throughout this report are based on groupings of standard regions (formerly referred to as Government Office Regions). These are defined as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North - North East, North West, and Yorkshire &amp; Humber.</li> <li>• Midlands – East and West Midlands.</li> <li>• South – South East, South West, and East of England.</li> <li>• London – London (Greater).</li> </ul>

Term	Description
<p><b>Special educational needs (SEN)</b></p>	<p>A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as ‘...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities’. Within this definition, ‘long-term’ is defined as ‘a year or more’ and ‘substantial’ is defined as ‘more than minor or trivial’.</p> <p>SEND refers to both those with SEN and those with disabilities.</p> <p>Throughout this report, subgroup analysis compares responses from those with SEN provision, to those without SEN provision, according to the data held on the National Pupil Database (NPD).</p>

## Executive Summary

This fifth wave of the omnibus survey of pupils and their parents/carers surveyed a nationally representative sample of young people at secondary schools and colleges in England.

The key findings for each chapter of the report are highlighted below. All reported differences between waves or subgroups are **statistically significant**, unless otherwise stated.

### Chapter 1 – School measures

#### Sources of information used when choosing a secondary school

- 60% of parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 used at least one source of academic performance data when choosing their child's secondary school.
- Parents/carers were most likely to have used 'Ofsted reports' (48%).
- Parents/carers were least likely to use 'data on the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) results' (3%) and 'data on the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entries' (1%).
- 29% of parents/carers stated that they 'did not use academic performance when choosing a school', while 10% were unaware that this information was available to them.

#### Information received about progression and attainment

- Nearly all parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 reported that they had received information from their child's school about their progress and attainment. 84% of parents/carers found this information to be both clear and useful (either somewhat or very).
- Looking at the questions individually, 86% of parents/carers found this information either 'somewhat clear' (45%) or 'very clear' (41%) and 90% found this information either 'somewhat useful' (47%) or 'very useful' (44%).

#### Knowledge of destination measures

- 54% of parents/carers of school pupils knew about destination measures at wave 5, with 44% knowing 'a little' and 10% knowing 'a lot'. In addition, four in ten (41%) parents/carers said they had not heard of these measures before.
- Similar proportions of parents/carers of school pupils knew about destinations at waves 3 (51%) and 5 (54%).



- 58% of parents/carers of college students knew about destination measures, with 51% knowing ‘a little’ and 7% knowing ‘a lot’. In addition, over one-third of parents/carers (37%) said they had not heard of these measures before.
- Similar proportions of parents/carers of college students (58%) and parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (62%) knew about destination measures. However, parents/carers of college students were less likely to know ‘a lot’ about these measures (7%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (13%).

## Chapter 2 – GCSE reform

### Changes to GCSE grading

- Almost all school pupils in year 9 and above (97%) had heard that the A\*-G grades at GCSE were being replaced by new grades 9-1. This was consistent with the findings from wave 4.
- Awareness of the government’s reforms to GCSEs among parents/carers of pupils in year 9 and above was also high (88%), but has dipped slightly in wave 5. Year-on-year, awareness of grading changes to GCSEs was consistently higher among pupils in year 9 and above than their parents/carers.
- A similar pattern exists among college students and their parents/carers: almost all (98%) college students had heard about the grading changes, which indicates an increase in awareness since the last survey wave. However, awareness appears to have dropped among parents/carers of college students from 88% at wave 4 to 79% at wave 5.
- Pupils in year 9 and above had varying levels of understanding about the elements involved in changes to GCSE grading. While most (82%) understood ‘very well’ ‘what the new highest grade is’, just under half understood ‘very well’ what a ‘standard’ (45%) or ‘strong’ (47%) pass means. Very few pupils knew why the government introduced new GCSEs (10%) or why the grading scale changed (8%).
- Parents’/carers’ knowledge of the GCSE reforms reflected the pattern of pupils’ understanding. For example, parents/carers with children in years 9 and above were most likely to know what the new highest grade is (62% understood this ‘very well’) but few understood why the government introduced the new GCSEs and why the grading scale changed to numbers (10% and 12% say ‘very well’ respectively). Three in ten said they understood ‘very well’ what a ‘strong’ or ‘standard’ pass means (32% and 29% respectively).
- Little has changed in terms of both parents’/carers’ and pupils’ understanding of the changes to GCSE grading between wave 4 and wave 5. The exception being a slight drop in understanding amongst parents/carers as to why the grading

system changed from letter to numbers (50% at wave 4 said 'somewhat'/'very well', compared with 46% at wave 5).

- Most college students (63%) also understood 'very well' what the new highest grade is, and 32% and 31% respectively understood 'very well' what a 'standard' or 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale. However, only a minority understood why the government has introduced new GCSEs (9%) or why the grading scale has changed to numbers (6%).
- Reflecting the findings among college students, their parents/carers were also most likely to understand 'very well' what the new highest grade is (48%), what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale (27%) and what a 'standard' pass means (24%). Fewer parents/carers of college students understood 'very well' why the government has introduced new GCSEs and why the grading scale has changed to numbers (10% and 9% respectively). Overall, college students' and their parents'/carers' understanding of the changes made to GCSE grading has remained consistent since the questions were first asked at wave 4.

## Progress 8

- Awareness of Progress 8 has been explored in all five waves of the survey and is now at its highest point, but understanding of what the measure tells parents/carers about a school's performance has decreased.
- 36% of parents/carers of school pupils had heard of Progress 8; increasing from 14% at wave 1 (conducted in summer 2016 when the measure was first introduced).
- However, the proportion of parents/carers who said 'yes', they understood what Progress 8 tells them about a school's performance, has decreased over the last three waves: 46% at wave 3, 47% at wave 4 and 41% at wave 5.

## Chapter 3 – Subject and qualification choice

- 44% of pupils in years 9 and above had heard of the EBacc, which suggests that awareness has declined since the question was last asked 12 months ago (44% at wave 5, compared with 51% at wave 3). This pattern is reflected in the responses of parents/carers with children in years 9 and above: at wave 5 54% said they were aware of the EBacc, compared with 60% at wave 3. Current levels of awareness are similar to that found in the wave 2 survey.
- Awareness of the EBacc was lower among pupils and parents/carers of pupils in year 7 compared with all other year groups, and particularly those pupils in years 12 and 13. Pupils, and parents/carers of pupils, in KS5 were more likely to have heard of the EBacc than college students (57%, compared with 44%).

- Parents/carers of school pupils who had heard of the EBacc were more likely to advise their child to take the EBacc than not (39%, compared with 18%). However, 41% were unsure.
- Most parents/carers of pupils (79%) would advise their child to take a GCSE in computing; just 8% said 'no'. This was the most popular choice from a list of GCSE subjects, including:
  - A foreign language GCSE (71% of parents/carers would advise their child to take this) and
  - Geography or History GCSEs (63% in both cases).
- The proportion of parents/carers who would advise their child to take an 'arts' GCSE (e.g. art, music or drama) is lower; while 58% would say 'yes', 23% said that if they had the choice they would not advise their child to take a GCSE in the 'arts'.
- In terms of advising their child, the most important consideration for parents/carers in relation to taking a foreign language GCSE was whether their child will enjoy it (mentioned by 78%). However, two-thirds of parents/carers (65%) would consider whether it will help their child's future career.

## Chapter 4 – Provision and attendance at school/college

### Lunch provision

- Overall, 60% of school pupils reported having typically eaten school lunches at least 'once or twice per week' over the last 12 months, with 31% of these eating school lunches every day. On the other hand, around one-fifth of school pupils (18%) reported 'never' eating school lunches over the last 12 months.
- Overall, 40% of college students reported having typically eaten college lunches at least 'once or twice per week' over the last 12 months, with just 5% of these eating college lunches every day. On the other hand, around one-third of college students (31%) reported 'never' eating college lunches over the last 12 months.
- School pupils in KS5 were more likely to report having typically eaten school/college lunches 'every day' (17%) and less likely to report having typically eaten school/college lunches 'once or twice per week' (15%), compared with college students (17% and 21% respectively).

### Availability of sanitary products

- Overall, 46% of female school pupils and 40% of female college students reported that their school/college provides free access to sanitary products (e.g. tampons, towels) for those who need them.

- Around half of the female school pupils asked said their school makes sanitary products available 'from the school nurse' (49%) and 'from the school office' (46%). Less reported options were: 'from a teacher' (11%), 'from other staff members' (11%), and 'from a free vending machine' (3%).
- Overall, 6% of female school pupils indicated that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost, with 1% saying 'yes, every month', 3% saying 'yes, a few times a year', and 2% saying 'yes, less often than that'.
- Overall, 14% of female college students indicated that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost, with 4% saying 'yes, every month', 4% saying 'yes, a few times a year', and 7% saying 'yes, less often than that'.

## Attendance

- In total, 79% of school pupils and 79% of parents/carers reported that they/their child had missed school at least once over the last year.
- Looking at regular absence (defined as 'once or twice a term' or 'three times or more a term'), 29% of school pupils reported that they had missed school regularly, while 27% of parents/carers reported that their child had missed school regularly.
- In general, school pupils and parents/carers reported greater levels of school absence at wave 5, compared with wave 3.
- In total, 76% of college students and 77% of parents/carers reported that they/their child had missed college at least once over the last year. Looking at regular absence, 38% of college students reported that they had missed college regularly, while 34% of parents/carers reported that their child had missed college regularly.
- Overall, the most frequently given reason for regular absence by school pupils and parents/carers was they were/I was 'ill' (86% and 84% respectively), which is consistent with wave 3. This was also the most frequently given reason for regular absence by college students and parents/carers (74% respectively).

## Chapter 5 – Mental health support

### *'I know enough about how to look after my/my child's mental health'*

- Overall, parents/carers of school pupils were more likely to agree with this statement (80%), compared with school pupils (66%).

- Parents/carers at wave 5 were less likely to agree with this statement (80%), compared with both waves 1 and 3 (83% respectively).
- 65% of school pupils agreed with this statement at wave 1. This significantly increased to 71% at wave 3, and significantly decreased back down to 66% at wave 5.
- Overall, parents/carers of college students were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (78%), compared with college students (62%).

### ***'I know where to go if I need help/ for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health'***

- Overall, parents/carers of school pupils were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (74%), compared with school pupils (70%).
- Parents/carers at wave 5 were less likely to agree with this statement (74%), compared with parents/carers at wave 1 (78%). There were no significant differences between waves 1 (78%) and 3 (76%), or waves 3 (76%) and 5 (74%).
- Overall levels of agreement were higher at waves 3 and 5 (70%), compared with wave 1 (65%). The proportion of school pupils who agreed with this statement at waves 3 and 5 did not significantly differ (70% respectively).
- Overall, parents/carers of college students were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (75%), compared with college students (67%).

### **Who do school pupils and college students feel comfortable speaking to if they needed information or support for their mental health?**

- School pupils were most likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'parents or other family members' (77%) – though this was lower than wave 1 (81%).
- College students were most likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'parents or other family members' (63%) or their 'friends' (60%).

## **Chapter 6 – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

- 13% of parents/carers of school pupils considered their child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND). Of those, 46% said that their child (with a SEND) had a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment.

- Between waves 1 and 3, the proportion of parents/carers who said that their child (with a SEND) had a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment decreased from 52% to 33%.

### **Parents/carers who considered their child to have a SEND were asked about the support their child's school provides.**

- 45% felt that they 'know how to engage with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or learning support service' at their child's school.
- 39% felt that 'most teachers at the school know how to support' their child. Notably, the level of agreement with this statement was significantly higher at wave 3 (52%).
- 33% felt 'confident that the right level of support is being put in place' for their child.
- 33% felt 'fully involved in decisions about the support the school' gives their child. Notably, the level of agreement with this statement was significantly lower at wave 1 (24%).
- 26% felt their child's school 'accurately identifies those who may have a Special Educational Need or Disability'.
- 12% of parents/carers of college students considered their child to have a SEND.

## **Chapter 7 – Free activities during school/college holidays**

### **School pupils**

- School pupils were asked which activities provided for free during school holidays would be of most interest to them. The most popular activities were 'sports and fitness' (50%), 'outdoor pursuits' (27%), 'creative activities' (22%), 'cooking and healthy eating' (22%), 'computing' (21%) and 'performing arts' (19%).
- Older pupils in KS4 and KS5 were more interested in 'academic/school support' than KS3 pupils (17%, 21% and 10% respectively), and were also more likely to say that none of the activities interested them (14% of pupils in KS4 and KS5 compared with 8% in KS3).
- Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more interested in activities related to 'cooking and healthy eating' (30% compared with 21%) and 'creative activities' (29% compared with 21%) than those not eligible for FSM.
- Pupils with a special educational need (SEN) were more interested in 'computing' than those with no SEN (31% compared with 20%) and 'cooking and healthy eating' (29% compared with 22%).

## College students

- College students were asked the same question, and compared to school pupils in KS5 they were less likely to be interested in activities related to 'academic/school support' (13% compared with 21%), 'music' (11% compared with 17%) and 'faith-related activities' (3% compared with 6%).

## Parents/carers of school pupils

- 18% of parents/carers of school pupils were aware of regular, organised activities available for free during the school holidays in their area.
- Of those who were aware of these activities, 37% said that their child had attended them.
- Overall, 7% of parents/carers of school pupils had a child who had attended this sort of activity in the past 12 months.
- Most of the parents/carers who were aware of these activities, but whose child had not attended said this was because the activity did not interest their child (57%).
- Among parents/carers who were not aware of these activities, the most common reasons given as to what would encourage them to make use of these activities were 'activities that interest your child' (85%) and 'activities that are age-appropriate for your child' (61%).
- Parents/carers of pupils in both KS4 and KS5 were more likely to say that none of the listed factors would encourage them to make use of free activities (7% of KS5 parents/carers and 5% of KS4 parents/carers compared with 2% of KS3 parents/carers).

## Parents/carers of college students

- 14% of parents/carers of college students were aware of regular, organised activities provided for free during the school holidays in their area.
- The number of parents/carers of college students aware of these activities whose child had attended was too small to report the findings.
- Among parents/carers of college students who were not aware of these activities, the most common reasons given as to what would encourage them to make use of these activities were 'activities that interest your child' (77%) and 'activities that are age-appropriate for your child' (54%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 were more likely than parents/carers of college students to say that educational activities would encourage them (39% compared with 33%).



## Chapter 8 – Careers guidance

### Apprenticeships, and technical and vocational options

- School pupils in year 8 and above most commonly reported having had the opportunity to learn more about apprenticeships and technical and vocational options from the provider 'Further Education colleges' in the last 12 months (38%). This is followed by apprenticeship providers (32%), University Technical colleges (25%) and Studio Schools (5%).

### Considering a STEM job or career

- Over half of school pupils (54%) and 45% of college students said they had considered a job or career in STEM.
- School pupils in KS5 were more likely to report considering a job or career in STEM than college students (53% compared with 45%).
- When it comes to the helpfulness of opportunities in increasing understanding of a job or career in STEM:
  - School pupils were most likely to report finding 'meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' very or somewhat helpful (83%), followed by 'information offered in careers education' (82%), 'some other opportunity' (81%), 'discussions in science and maths lessons' (79%) and 'discussions in PSHE lessons' (68%). School pupils were least likely to report finding 'discussions in science clubs' (66%) helpful.
  - College students were most likely to report finding 'some other opportunity' very or somewhat helpful (88%). This is followed by 'meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' (85%), 'information offered in careers education' (85%), 'discussions in science and maths lessons' (81%), 'discussions in science clubs' (63%). College students were least likely to report finding 'discussions in PSHE lessons' (62%) helpful.

### Have parents/carers discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child?

- Close to two-thirds of parents/carers of school pupils reported having discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child (63%). A third had not discussed this with their child (34%).
- 58% of parents/carers of college students reported discussing the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child; 40% reported they had not.



- Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 were more likely to report discussing the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of college students (67% compared with 58%).
- Looking at parents/carers who had not discussed a STEM career with their child:
  - Among parents/carers of school pupils, the most frequent reason for this was 'my child has never shown any interest in these areas' (45%), followed by 'my child has not yet started to think about their future job or career options' (39%) and 'my child is better at other subjects at school' (32%) and 'I don't know enough about careers in these areas' (19%).
  - Among parents/carers of college students, the most common reason given was 'my child has never shown an interest in these areas' (77%), followed by 'my child is better at other subjects at college' (42%), 'I don't know enough about careers in these areas' (15%) and 'my child has not yet started to think about their future job or career options' (7%).

## Careers advice opportunities

### What had school pupils/college students done/attended?

- The highest proportion of school pupils had done/attended 'careers talks' (73%), followed by 'careers and skills fairs' (60%), 'careers websites' (54%), 'a mentor offering advice or guidance (in person)' (47%), 'enterprise activities/competitions' (41%), 'CV workshops' (37%), 'workshops with employers on key work-related skills' (37%) and 'mock interviews' (31%).
- The highest proportion of college students reported they had done/attended 'careers talks' (80%), followed by 'careers and skills fairs' (74%), 'a mentor offering advice and guidance (in person)', 'CV workshops' (64%), 'careers websites' (63%), 'workshops with employers on key work-related skills' (46%), 'mock interviews' (34%) and 'enterprise activities/competitions' (30%).

### Who led them?

- The highest proportion of school pupils said the careers opportunities were led by school staff for all options asked about apart from 'workshops with employers on key work related skills'. For this opportunity, a higher proportion said they were led by external employers (22%).
- As is the case for school pupils, the highest proportion of college students said the careers opportunities were led by college staff for all options asked about apart from 'workshops with employers on key work related skills'. For this opportunity, a higher proportion said they were led by external employers (26%).

## How often done/attended?

- Out of all the career opportunities asked about, the activity that school pupils were most likely to have done once was 'mock interviews' (64%). The career opportunity that school pupils were most likely to have attended three times or more was 'career talks' (24%).
- College students were most likely to have done or attended 'mock interviews' once (51%). The career opportunity that college students were most likely to have done or attended three times or more was 'a mentor offering advice and guidance (in person)' (46%).

## Work experience placements

- Close to two-thirds of school pupils in year 8 and above (64%) had not done a work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months. 21% had done one placement, 5% percent had done two and 2% had done three or more. Therefore, 27% had done at least one placement.
- Just under half of college students (48%) had not done a work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months. 29% had done one placement, 10% had done two and 7% had done three or more. Therefore, 46% had done at least one work placement with an employer in the last 12 months.
- There are no significant differences between school pupils in KS5 and college students in likelihood to have done work experience placements.

# Background and Methodology

## Background to the survey

This report draws together the findings from the fifth wave of the omnibus survey of pupils and their parents/carers in England, which was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).

This omnibus survey was established in 2016 to enable policy teams across DfE to collect data on a range of topics in a cost-effective and timely manner, while reducing respondent burden. To date five waves of the survey have been conducted, with the most recent wave (wave 5) taking place in July – August 2018.

## Fieldwork dates and response by wave

Details of the fieldwork dates and response for each wave of the research are set out below:

**Table 1: Fieldwork dates and response by wave**

	Fieldwork Dates	Number of completed paired questionnaires	Response rate
<b>Wave 1</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> July – 22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2016	1,723 paired parent/carer and pupil questionnaires	22%
<b>Wave 2</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2016 – 16 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	1,595 paired parent/carer and pupil questionnaires	23%
<b>Wave 3</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> July – 30 <sup>th</sup> August 2017	1,504 paired parent/carer and pupil questionnaires	21%
<b>Wave 4</b>	27 <sup>th</sup> November 2017 - 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2018	2,590 <sup>1</sup> paired parent/carer and school pupil questionnaires	22%
		206 paired parent/carer and college student questionnaires	10%
<b>Wave 5</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> July – 28 <sup>th</sup> August 2018	2,265 <sup>2</sup> paired parent/carer and school pupil questionnaires	23%
		317 paired parent/carer and college student questionnaires	16%

<sup>1</sup> Please note that at wave 4, an incentive experiment ran alongside the main fieldwork. This included a boost sample of SEN status and/or FSM eligible school pupils, drawn from the NPD. The completed paired questionnaires in the incentive experiment and main fieldwork were reported together.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that at wave 5, households where school pupils were eligible for FSM were incentivised.

## Methodology

### Sample design

This fifth wave surveyed a nationally representative sample of young people at secondary schools and colleges in England. A postal push-to-web approach was used, using the National Pupil Database (NPD) as a sampling frame for secondary school pupils<sup>3</sup>, and the Individualised Learner Records (ILR) as a sampling frame for college students. A postal push-to-web approach was consistent with waves 1, 2, 3 and 4. However, the inclusion of 16-18 year olds attending Further Education (FE) and Sixth Form colleges (from the ILR sampling frame), was a new addition at wave 4.

Those studying an apprenticeship were not invited to take part in the survey because an apprentice's learning takes place primarily in the workplace, not in a school or college setting. Apprenticeships are therefore excluded as they do not meet the design aim to ask 11 to 18 year olds what they think about their education in these settings.

### Fieldwork

Wave 5 was soft-launched to a subset of the sample on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. The main fieldwork began on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018, and closed for all respondents on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018. The initial mailing invited school pupils/college students and their parents/carers to complete the survey online using a web-link and unique log-in provided. Non-respondents were sent reminder mailings, including a paper questionnaire with the second reminder letter.

In each household, two separate questionnaires were administered; one to the school pupil or college student, and one to their parent/carer. All respondents self-completed the questionnaire. In total, the final report includes 2,265 households where both the school pupil and their parent/carer took part, and 317 households where both the college student and their parent/carer took part.

At wave 5, an incentive was offered to pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their parents/carers, where both completed the survey. They each received a £10 Love2Shop voucher shortly after the close of fieldwork.

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<sup>3</sup> Schools included middle deemed secondary schools and academies, City Technology Colleges, and special schools (maintained and non-maintained special schools, hospital special schools and academies, and pupil referral units). Pupils who are home educated, or attending independent schools were not included, as they are not covered by the NPD.

## Questionnaire

The questionnaire used in wave 5 was updated to reflect changes in the Department's aims, priorities and policies. However, some questions were consistent with previous waves, allowing for comparison over time. Table 2 below outlines the range of topics covered in wave 5 and indicates where the report offers the ability to track changes over time:

**Table 2: Topics and trend data covered in wave 5**

Chapter	Topic	Trend data
1. School measures	The sources of academic information parents/carers used when choosing their child's secondary school, the clarity and usefulness of the information they received about their child's progress and attainment, and their knowledge about destination measures published by the government.	✓
2. GCSE reform	Awareness and understanding of changes to GCSE grading and Progress 8.	✓
3. Subject and qualification choice	Awareness of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), whether parents/carers would advise their child to take the EBacc/listed GCSEs, and reasons why parents/carers would/would not advise their child to take a foreign language GCSE.	✓
4. Provision and attendance at school/college	How often school pupils/college students have typically eaten food served at lunch time, whether they have free access to sanitary products, and their attendance at school/college.	✓
5. Mental health support	Knowledge of mental health support, who school pupils/college students feel comfortable speaking to about their mental health.	✓
6. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	The support provided to school pupils/college students who are considered to have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND).	✓
7. Free activities during school/college holidays	Awareness of and attendance at regular, organised activities that are held for free in their local area.	
8. Careers guidance	Contact with technical, vocational and apprenticeship providers, considering a job or career in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and careers advice.	✓

Technical information for wave 5 can be found in the 'Technical Appendix' chapter on page 179 onwards.

## Introduction to the report

### Audience definitions

Throughout this report the following terminology is used to describe the audiences who took part in wave 5:

**Table 3: Audience definitions for wave 5**

Audience	Definition
<b>School pupils (and their parents/carers)</b>	Young people in years 7-13 attending a state-funded secondary school in England, sampled from the National Pupil Database.
<b>College students (and their parents/carers)</b>	Young people in their first or second year of learning, attending a FE or Sixth Form college in England, sampled from the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). This includes those studying AS/A-Levels, or technical or vocational courses only. Those studying apprenticeships were excluded.

### A guide to interpreting the survey data

Findings for wave 5 are presented, followed by the statistically significant differences by wave, subgroup and sample type. These differences have been tested at the 95 per cent confidence level, which means that, if the survey was carried out 100 times (each with its own sample), a finding of a similar nature would be found on at least 95 occasions.

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to rounding, or respondents being able to give multiple answers to the same question. Where multiple responses are allowed, this has been noted.

Reported combinations have been calculated using the data. This means the reported combinations **may not equal the sum of the responses presented on a chart/in a table** due to rounding.

Where an asterisk (\*) is displayed on a chart or in a table, this means the value for that response is greater than zero, but less than 0.5%. All other values are displayed.

### Paired responses

Throughout this report, the analysis is based on paired responses only. By paired response we mean that both the selected school pupil or college student, and one of their parents/carers, have taken part in the survey. Where only the school pupil/college student or their parent/carer have taken part, their responses have been excluded from this report.

For each survey question, it is stated whether the question was asked for school pupils, college students, and/or their parents/carers. Where the same question was asked in both the school pupil/college student and parent/carer questionnaires, we have carried out paired response analysis. This analysis examined whether the school pupil/college student gave the same or a different response to their parent/carer. Where one or both did not provide an answer, or answered 'don't know' or 'don't want to answer', the pair have been excluded from this analysis.

### **Differences by sample type**

Where both school pupils and college students were asked the same question, we have compared the responses for school pupils in the comparable year groups (i.e. year 12 and year 13, or key stage 5 (KS5)) with the responses for college students. Similarly, we have compared responses for parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 with the responses for parents/carers of college students.

### **Differences by wave**

Where the same question has been asked to the same audience in previous waves, we have reported the wave-on-wave trends. For consistency, the analysis for previous waves is also based on paired responses only. Where questions are no longer comparable due to changes in question wording, this has been noted.

### **Differences by subgroup**

For all survey questions, we have tested for statistically significant differences between the following subgroups (for detail on how subgroups were defined, please see 'Data Processing' in the 'Technical Appendix' chapter – pages 186-187):

**Table 4: School pupils and their parents/carers: Subgroup analysis for wave 5**

<b>Subgroup</b>
<p><b>Pupil's year group and key stage</b></p> <p>Please note that, to avoid repetition, the analysis for year group is only included where this adds to the understanding of the data. All significant key stage differences are reported throughout.</p>
<p><b>Pupil's gender:</b> Female or male</p> <p>Where data linking, consent was provided and pupils identified 'in some other way' in the survey, we have not used the data held by the NPD. As such, these pupils are not included in the male-female gender comparison.</p> <p>Please note that pupils who identified 'in some other way' in the survey are not included as a separate subgroup as the sample size is too small to detect meaningful statistically significant differences.</p>
<p><b>Disadvantage</b></p> <p>Please note that there are two measures for disadvantage: eligibility for free school meals (FSM), and Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) rank. To avoid repetition, the subgroup analysis for the measure with the clearest pattern is typically reported. Where it adds to understanding, both are reported.</p>
<p><b>SEN</b></p> <p>Whether the pupil is in receipt of special educational needs (SEN) provision.</p>
<p><b>Pupil's ethnicity</b></p> <p>Subgroups include: 'Asian or Asian British' pupils, 'Black/African/Caribbean/Black British' pupils, 'White' pupils, and pupils in other ethnic groups.</p> <p>For pupils in other ethnic groups, parents/carers selected that 'mixed/multiple ethnic groups' or an 'other ethnic group' best described their child's ethnicity in the survey.</p>
<p><b>Region</b></p> <p>Regional comparisons have been made between the North, the Midlands, the South (excluding London), and London.</p>

**Table 5: College students and their parents/carers: Subgroup analysis for wave 5**

<b>Subgroup</b>
<p><b>Student's year of learning:</b> first year or second year</p>
<p><b>Student's gender:</b> Female or male</p> <p>Please note that students who identified 'in some other way' in the survey are not included as a separate subgroup as the sample size is too small to detect meaningful statistically significant differences.</p>



Subgroup
<b>Student's qualification type:</b> whether the student reported spending the majority of their time at college studying AS/A-levels, or a technical/vocational course.

These groups are in line with the previous waves of the survey. Unless otherwise specified, all reported differences are statistically significant.

### Interpreting tables with significance testing

Throughout the report, significant differences in the data are sometimes presented in tables. These all follow the same structure. For example, the table below displays a statistically significant difference between girls and boys. Significance is denoted by the letter (or letters) in red next to the percentage – it means this figure is significantly higher than the corresponding percentage in the column headed by this letter. In this example, this means the “73%” of girls in column A is significantly higher than the “61%” of boys in column B. Significance is always denoted on the column that is significantly higher. As noted beneath the table, the significance has been tested at the 5% risk level for columns A and B (which is equivalent to the confidence being set at 95%). For more information on confidence, please see ‘How accurately does the survey reflect the views of school pupils/college students and parents/carers?’.

**Table 6: Example table displaying significance testing**

% of school pupils giving each answer	Girls (A)	Boys (B)
<i>Base:</i>	600	400
<i>% of school pupils</i>	73 <b>B</b>	61

**AB** = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B.

### How accurately does the survey reflect the views of school pupils/college students and parents/carers?

Overall, only a proportion of the total population of young people attending secondary schools or colleges in England and their parents/carers took part in the fifth wave of this survey. As such, we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are the same as those we would have obtained if the total population completed the survey (“the true values”). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the true values based on the sample size, and the number of times a particular answer was given (i.e. the survey percentage). The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually set at 95% - that is, if we repeated our sampling process 100 times, and asked each sample a question, 95 times out of 100, the answer would be a similar value to the ‘true value’.

The survey data reported has been weighted to ensure the findings are nationally representative of young people at secondary schools and colleges in England (please see pages 198-200 of the ‘Technical Appendix’ for more detail on weighting). Applying weights to the data, while tending to make the quoted figures more representative of the population of interest, also reduces the statistical reliability of the data. As such the ‘effective’ base size<sup>4</sup>, which is used in any statistical testing, is smaller than the unweighted base size. This effect has been taken into account in determining whether or not the differences described throughout the report are statistically significant. Therefore, while the base sizes noted throughout this report are the actual base size, the statistical analysis is based on the effective base.

Table 7 illustrates the effective base size and margins of error for each sample type. The effective base sizes for subgroups are lower and can be found in the data tables, which are supplied separately. For the effective base size and margins of error by wave, please see page 201 of the ‘Technical Appendix’.

**Table 7: Effective base size and margins of error by sample type**

<b>Sample type</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Effective base size</b>	<b>Margin of error at 95% confidence level<sup>5</sup></b>
Paired parent/carers and school pupils	2,265	1,998	+/-2.2%
Paired parent/carers and college students	317	298	+/-5.7%

Results from any survey are estimates, and there is a margin of error associated with each figure quoted. Essentially, the smaller the sample size, the greater the uncertainty.

Only findings with sufficient sample sizes have been reported. For the sample of school pupils and parents/carers, only subgroups comprising of 100 or more respondents are commented on in this report. Given the smaller sample size of college students and parents/carers, only subgroups comprising of **50 or more respondents** are commented on in this report.

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<sup>4</sup> The effective base size refers to the base (or sample) size once adjustments have been made to reduce the likelihood of the statistics producing significant results simply because the weighting has made adjustments to the data.

<sup>5</sup> This is the margin of error for a figure of 50%. Margins of error reduce as figures tend towards either 100% or 0%. As such, the quoted margin of error is the largest that would apply to any data based on the total samples of parents/carers or pupils/students.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, the difference may be “real” or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been surveyed). Confidence intervals will be wider when comparing groups, especially where there are small numbers. For this survey, only statistically significant results from subgroup analysis have been included (unless otherwise stated).

## Chapter 1 – School measures

*This chapter includes the findings for questions around school measures, including which sources of academic information parents/carers used when choosing their child's secondary school, whether parents/carers found the information their child's school gives them about their child's progress and attainment clear or useful, and whether parents/carers knew about destination measures published by the government.*

### Background

In 2015, the government began to release provisional GCSE results in advance of final GCSE results, to improve transparency and help parents/carers choose a secondary school for their child based on academic performance<sup>6</sup>. However, there is evidence to suggest that parents/carers make their choice of school based on a range of factors<sup>7</sup>. It is therefore important to understand how and why parents/carers choose secondary schools, and the factors affecting their choices.

### What sources of information do parents/carers use when choosing their child's secondary school?

#### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 were told that 'Multiple sources of information are available to parents/carers about a school's academic performance'. They were then asked, 'Which of the following, if any, did you use when choosing your child's secondary school?' and they could then select as many sources as applicable. In the online survey, a help button was available that clarified that 'you might have found this information in various different places, such as government webpages, Local Authority pages, school prospectus or open day, or elsewhere'. This question was new to wave 5.

Overall, 60% of parents/carers used at least one of the sources listed. Parents/carers were most likely to have used 'Ofsted reports', with 48% choosing this option. This was followed by 25% of parents/carers who used 'data on pupils' English and maths GCSE results'. 8% of parents/carers used 'attainment 8 scores', 7% used 'progress 8 scores', and 6% used 'destination data published by the government'. Parents/carers were least likely to use 'data on the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) results' (3%) and 'data on the

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<sup>6</sup> Department for Education (2015). 'Parents to receive more help choosing secondary schools', <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/parents-to-receive-more-help-choosing-secondary-schools>

<sup>7</sup> For example: Weldon, M. (2018) Secondary school choice and selection: Insights from new national preferences data.

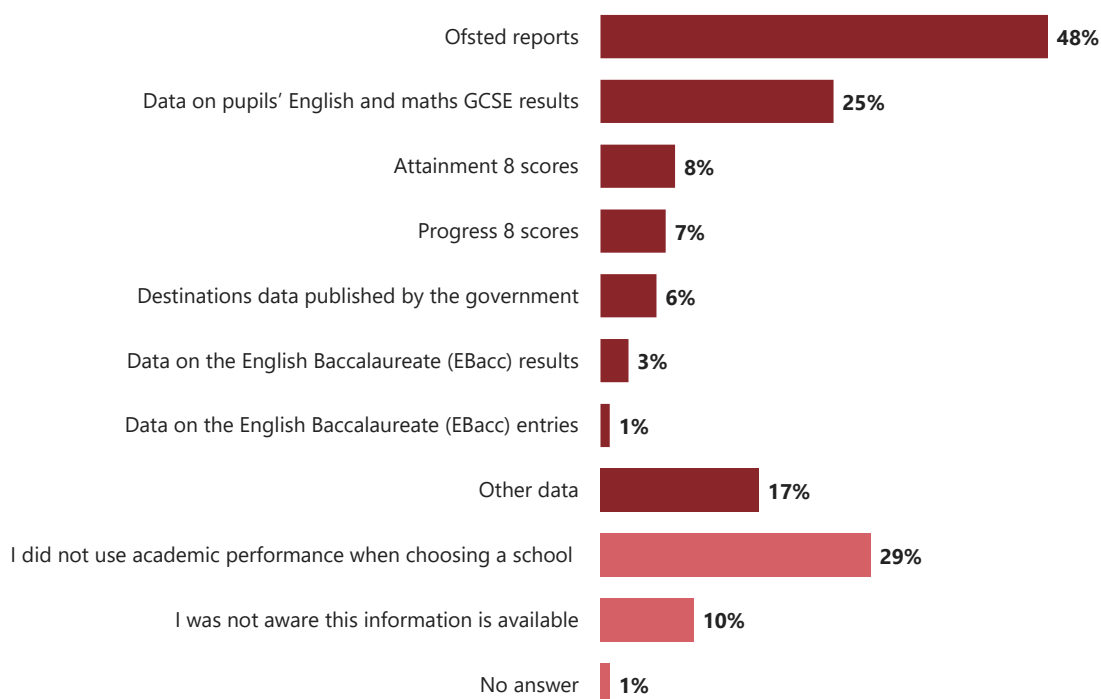
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/732881/Secondary\\_school\\_choice\\_and\\_selection.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732881/Secondary_school_choice_and_selection.pdf)

English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entries' (1%) as sources of information about a school's academic performance.

In addition to the sources listed, 17% of parents/carers used 'other data' when choosing their child's secondary school. This response code was not an open textbox, however, so we are unable to report what was included as 'other data'.

On the other hand, 29% of parents/carers stated that they 'did not use academic performance when choosing a school', while 10% were unaware that this information was available to them.

**Figure 1: 'Multiple sources of information are available to parents/carers about a school's academic performance. Which of the following, if any, did you use when choosing your child's secondary school?'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 (1,052)

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Disadvantage

Parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) were less likely to use information about a school's academic performance when choosing their child's secondary school, compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (39% used at least one of the sources listed, compared with 63%).

This trend was also evident for the following sources of information:

- Ofsted reports (29% of school pupils who were eligible for FSM, compared with 50% who were not).
- Data on pupils' English and maths results (5% of school pupils who were eligible for FSM, compared with 28% who were not).
- Attainment 8 scores (4% of school pupils who were eligible for FSM, compared with 9% who were not).

In line with this, parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to say they 'did not use academic performance when choosing a school' (38%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (28%). Additionally, parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for FSM were also more likely to say they were 'not aware this information is available' (24%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (8%).

## SEN

Parents/carers of school pupils who were receiving provision for a special educational need (SEN) were less likely to use information about a school's academic performance when choosing their child's secondary school. Only 49% used at least one of the sources listed, compared with 61% of parents/carers of school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision.

This trend was also apparent for the following sources of information:

- Ofsted reports (35% of school pupils who were receiving SEN provision, compared with 49% who were not).
- Data on pupils' English and maths GCSE results (15% of school pupils who were receiving SEN provision, compared with 28% who were not).
- Attainment 8 scores (4% of school pupils who were receiving SEN provision, compared with 10% who were not).

As such, this trend is consistent with the subgroup differences seen by eligibility for FSM.

## Ethnicity

Overall, parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils were more likely to have used at least one of the sources listed (81%), compared with parents/carers of White pupils (57%).

In line with this, parents/carers of White pupils were more likely to say 'I did not use academic performance when choosing a school' (33%), compared with parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (16%) and parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (12%).

On the other hand, parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to say they were 'not aware this information is available' (18%), compared with parents/carers of White pupils (9%) and parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (5%).

Looking at specific sources of academic information, parents/carers of White pupils were less likely to use several of the sources listed, compared with parents/carers of pupils in the other ethnic groups. These included:

- 'Data on pupils' English and maths GCSE results' (24%), compared with parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (39%).
- 'Progress 8 scores' (6%), compared with parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (19%).
- 'Data on the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) results' (2%), compared with parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (7%).
- 'Data on the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) entries' (1%), compared with parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (4%).

## Region

Overall, parents/carers of school pupils in London were more likely to have used at least one of the sources listed (71%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the South (60%), North (56%) and Midlands (54%).

In line with this, parents/carers in London were less likely to say 'I did not use academic performance when choosing a school' (17%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the South (34%), North (33%) and Midlands (29%). However, parents/carers of school pupils in the South were less likely to say they were 'not aware this information is available' (6%), compared with parents/carers of pupils in the Midlands (16%), London (11%) and the North (10%).

Looking at specific sources of academic information:

- Parents/carers of school pupils in London were more likely to use 'data on pupils' English and maths GCSE results' (36%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the North (24%) and Midlands (20%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils in London were more likely to use 'destinations data published by the government' (13%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the South (6%), Midlands (4%) and North (3%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils in London (11%) and the South (10%) were more likely to use 'attainment 8 scores', compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the Midlands (4%).

*There were no differences found by pupil's year group or gender.*

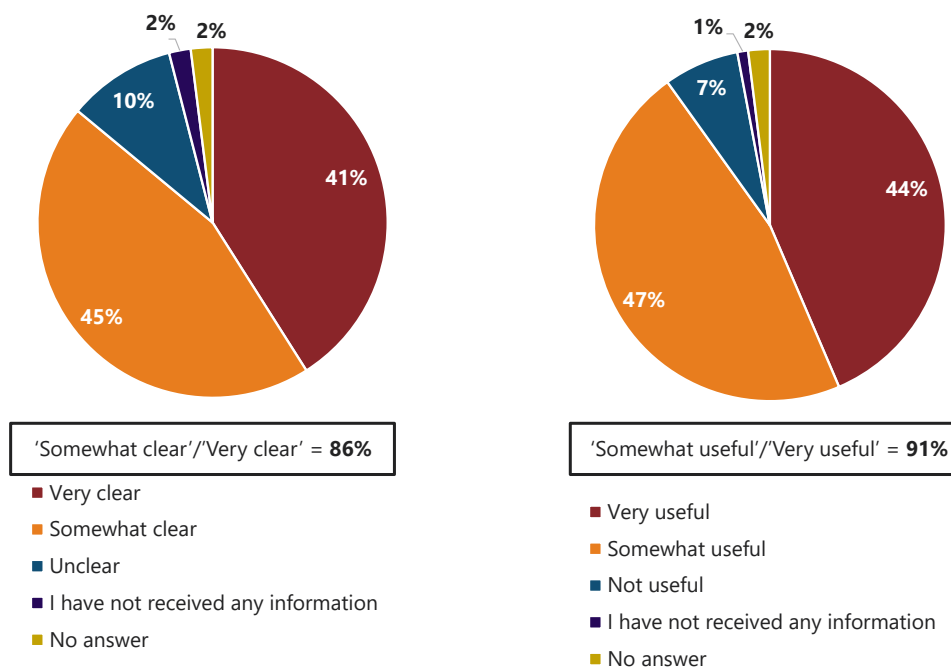
# How clear and useful is the information parents/carers receive from their child's school about their progress and attainment?

## Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 were asked two new questions regarding the information they received from their child's school about their progress and attainment:

- 'How **clear** is the information your child's school gives you about your child's progress and attainment?'
- 'How **useful** is the information your child's school gives you about your child's progress and attainment?'

Figure 2: 'How **clear/useful** is the information your child's school gives you about your child's progress and attainment?'



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 (1,052)

Overall, nearly all parents/carers reported that they had received information from their child's school about their progress and attainment.

- 84% of parents/carers found this information to be *both* clear and useful (either 'somewhat' or 'very').



- 33% of parents/carers found this information to be *both* ‘very clear’ and ‘very useful’.
- 31% of parents/carers found this information to be *both* ‘somewhat clear’ and ‘somewhat useful’.
- Just 4% of parents/carers found this information to be *both* ‘unclear’ and ‘not useful’.

Looking at the questions individually, 86% of parents/carers found this information either ‘somewhat clear’ (45%) or ‘very clear’ (41%). Similarly, 90% of parents/carers found this information either ‘somewhat useful’ (47%) or ‘very useful’ (44%)<sup>8</sup>.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 who reported that the information they received from their child’s school about their progress and attainment was ‘clear’ (combining ‘somewhat clear’ or ‘very clear’) or ‘useful’ (combining ‘somewhat useful’ or ‘very useful’).

### Pupil’s gender

Parents/carers of girls were more likely to have found this information ‘useful’ (93%), compared with parents/carers of boys (88%).

It is unclear what was driving this gender difference. Notably, a greater proportion of boys were receiving SEN provision (18%) compared with girls (10%), and parents/carers of school pupils receiving SEN provision were less likely to have found this information ‘useful’. As such, there may be an interaction between gender and SEN provision. However, other factors not captured in the survey may also be driving this gender difference, for example, the child’s level of attainment may play a role.

### Disadvantage

Parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for FSM were less likely to consider this information ‘clear’ (80%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (87%). There was no difference found by eligibility for FSM for the usefulness of this information.

Table 8 summarises the findings across the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintiles. Parents/carers of school pupils in the most deprived quintiles were less likely to consider this information ‘clear’ (81% and 82% for the fourth and fifth quintiles respectively), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the third quintile (91%).

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<sup>8</sup> Please note, reported combinations may not equal the sum of the responses presented due to rounding.

On the other hand, parents/carers of school pupils in the second quintile (94%) were more likely than parents/carers of school pupils in the fourth quintile (85%) to consider this information ‘useful’.

**Table 8: The proportion of parents/carers who found the information their child’s school gives them about their progress and attainment ‘clear’/ ‘useful’, by IDACI quintile**

	1 <sup>st</sup> Quintile (A)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quintile (B)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quintile (C)	4 <sup>th</sup> Quintile (D)	5 <sup>th</sup> Quintile (E)
<b>Base:</b>	200	171	187	148	167
‘Very clear/somewhat clear’	86	88	91 D,E	81	82
‘Very useful/somewhat useful’	91	94 D	92	85	88

ABCDE = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E

## SEN

Parents/carers of school pupils who were receiving SEN provision were less likely to find this information ‘clear’ (79%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (87%).

Overall, the findings highlight that parents/carers of school pupils were significantly more likely to say the information received from their child’s school was ‘clear’ if their child was not eligible for FSM or in receipt of any SEN provision, compared with those whose children were. Notably, just 2% of those who found this information clear were parents/carers of school pupils who were both eligible for FSM and in receipt of SEN provision.

However, there was no difference found by SEN provision for the usefulness of this information.

## Ethnicity

Parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to consider this information ‘useful’ (95%), compared with parents/carers of pupils in other ethnic groups<sup>9</sup> (83%).

Similarly, parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (92%) and White pupils (87%) were also more likely to consider this information ‘clear’, compared with parents/carers of pupils in other ethnic groups (73%).

<sup>9</sup> For pupils in other ethnic groups, parents/carers selected that ‘mixed/multiple ethnic groups’ or ‘other ethnic group’ best described their child’s ethnicity in the survey.

## Region

There were no differences found by region for parents/carers who found this information 'clear'.

In terms of usefulness, parents/carers of school pupils in the Midlands (94%) were more likely than parents/carers of school pupils in London (86%) to have found this information 'useful'.

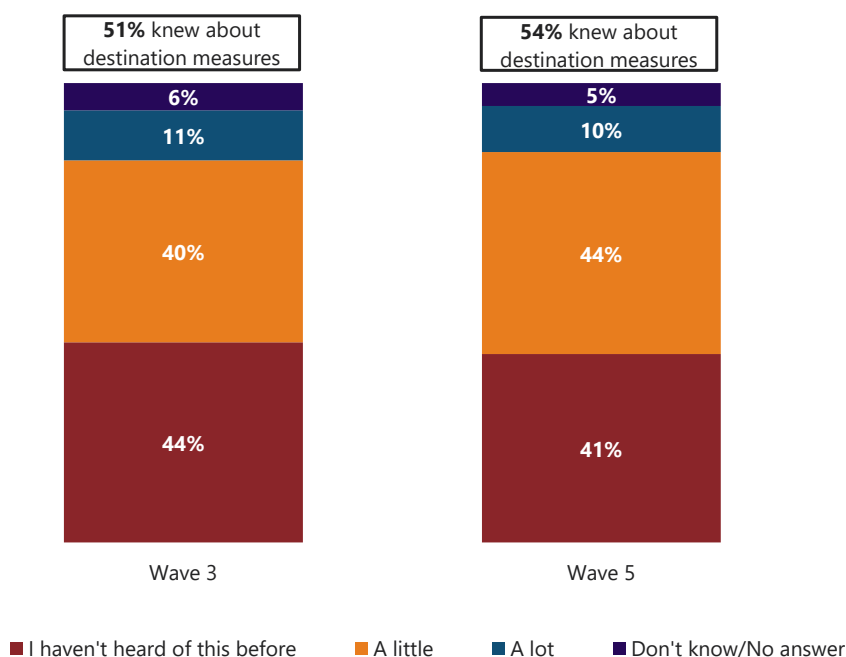
*There were no differences found by pupil's year group or key stage.*

## How much do parents/carers know about destination measures published by the government?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils in all year groups were told: 'The government publishes destination measures on school and college performance tables. This is information about how many pupils from the school stay in education, or go on to employment or training in the year after finishing study'. They were then asked, 'Before this survey, how much did you know about this?' and could select 'A lot', 'A little', 'I haven't heard of this before', or 'Don't know'.

**Figure 3: 'The government publishes destination measures on school and college performance tables. This is information about how many pupils from the school stay in education, or go on to employment or training in the year after finishing study. Before this survey, how much did you know about this?'**



Base: All parents/carers of school pupils at wave 3 (1,725) and wave 5 (2,265)

Overall, 54% of parents/carers knew about destination measures at wave 5, with 44% knowing ‘a little’ and 10% knowing ‘a lot’. In addition, 41% of parents/carers said they had not heard of these measures before.

As the same question was asked at wave 3, we can also make wave-on-wave comparisons. Similar proportions of parents/carers knew about destinations at wave 3 (51%) and wave 5 (54%).

Looking at parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 only, 50% reported knowing about destination measures at wave 5. Despite this, just 6% reported using ‘destinations data published by the government’ when choosing their child’s secondary school. Only 1% used destination measures as their sole source of academic information when choosing their child’s secondary school.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of parents/carers of school pupils who knew about destination measures (‘a little’ or ‘a lot’).

### Pupil’s key stage and year group

In general, parents/carers of older school pupils were more likely to know about destination measures. These differences are statistically significant. For example, parents/carers of school pupils in key stage 4 (KS4, 57%) and key stage 5 (KS5, 62%) were more likely to know about these destination measures, compared with parents/carers of school pupils in key stage 3 (KS3, 50%). As shown in Table 9, this increase in knowledge about destination measures appears to increase when the pupil is in year 11 or above.

**Table 9: The proportion of parents/carers who knew about destination measures, by year group and key stage**

	Year Group							Key Stage		
	Year 7 (A)	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)	KS3 (H)	KS4 (I)	KS5 (J)
<i>Base:</i>	366	357	333	311	283	316	292	1056	594	608
<i>% of parents/carers</i>	51	50	49	54	61 A,B,C	59 A,B,C	66 A,B,C,D	50	57 H	62 H

ABCDEFGHIJ = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I/J

### SEN

Parents/carers of school pupils who were receiving SEN provision were less likely to know about destination measures (49%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (56%).

## Region

In terms of differences by region, parents/carers of school pupils that reside in London were more likely to know about destination measures (61%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the South (51%). There were no other statistically significant differences found when comparing the remaining regions.

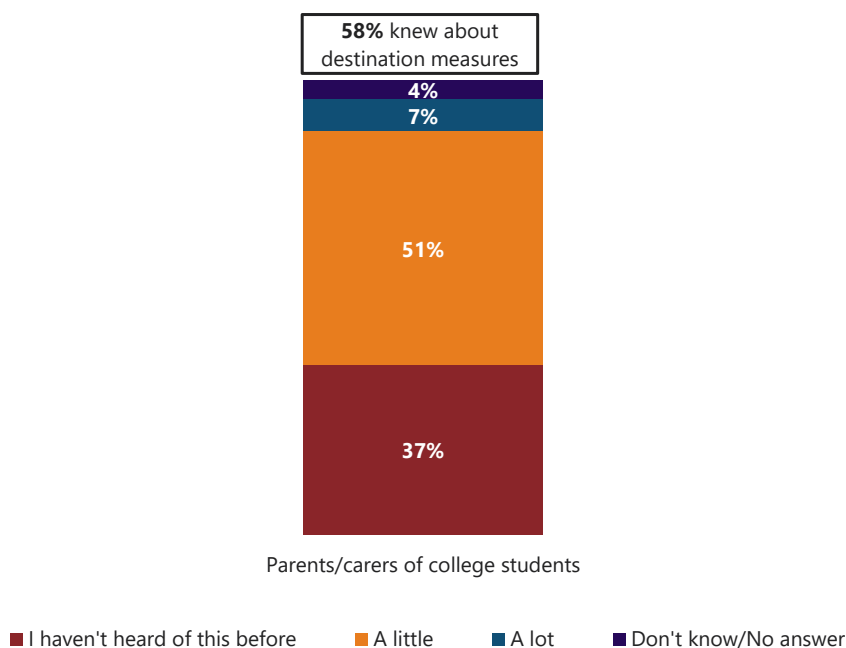
*There were no differences found by pupil's gender, eligibility for FSM, IDACI quintiles or ethnicity.*

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students were also asked how much they knew about the destination measures the government publishes on school and college performance tables. Like parents/carers of school pupils, they could select 'A lot', 'A little', 'I haven't heard of this before', or 'Don't know'. This question was new to wave 5 for parents/carers of college students.

Overall, 58% of parents/carers knew about destination measures, with 51% knowing 'a little' and 7% knowing 'a lot'. In addition, 37% of parents/carers said they had not heard of these measures before.

**Figure 4: 'The government publishes destination measures on school and college performance tables. This is information about how many pupils from the school stay in education, or go on to employment or training in the year after finishing study. Before this survey, how much did you know about this?'**



Base: Parents/carers of college students (317)

## Significant differences by subgroup

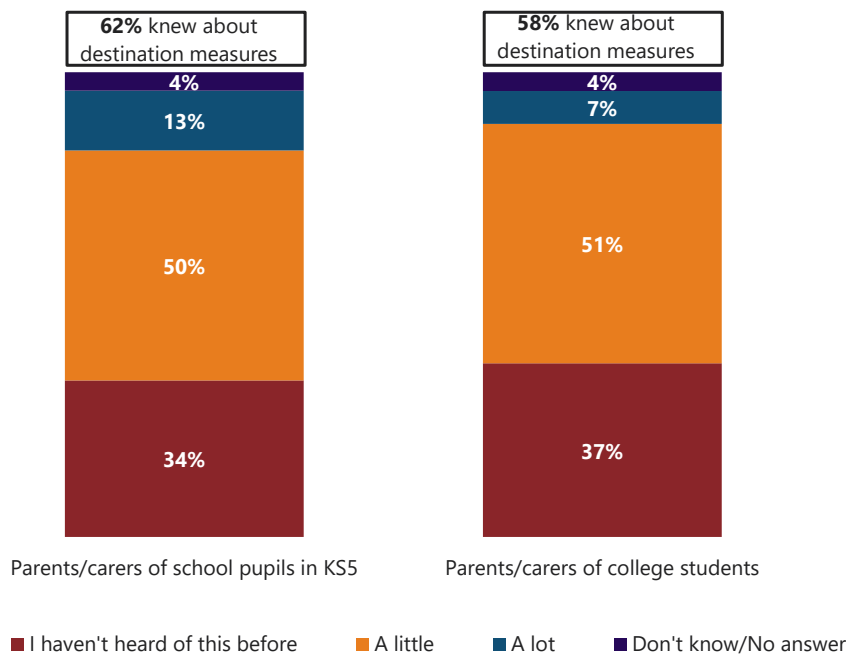
Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of parents/carers of college students who knew about destination measures ('a little' or 'a lot').

*There were no differences found by student's gender, year of learning or qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

When comparing the responses of parents/carers of college students with the responses of parents/carers of school pupils in KS5, similar proportions of parents/carers knew about destination measures. However, parents/carers of college students were less likely to know 'a lot' about these measures (7%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (13%).

**Figure 5: 'The government publishes destination measures on school and college performance tables. This is information about how many pupils from the school stay in education, or go on to employment or training in the year after finishing study. Before this survey, how much did you know about this?'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (608) and parents/carers of college students (317)

## Chapter 2 – GCSE Reform

*In this chapter awareness of changes to GCSE grading among school pupils, college students and their parents/carers is explored, comparing the findings with all previous waves of the survey. Parents/carers were also asked about their awareness and understanding of Progress 8 as a measure of school performance.*

### Background – Changes to GCSE grading

As part of the government's reforms to GCSEs, the way in which GCSEs are graded is changing from A\* to G to a numbered system (9 to 1), with 9 being the highest grade<sup>10</sup>. The new grading scale will recognise more clearly the achievements of high-attaining students, as the additional grades allow for greater differentiation. It will also make it easy to understand whether someone has taken a reformed GCSE or a previous version. Other features of the new GCSEs are:

- Assessment is mainly by exam, with non-examined assessment (such as coursework) used only where it is the only valid way to assess essential elements of a subject such as practical skills.
- The subject content has been redeveloped to be more challenging.
- The new GCSEs are linear, where the main assessment is done at the end of the two-year programme of study.

Tiering is only used when a single exam cannot assess pupils across the full ability range in a way that enables them all to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding; this means fewer subjects now use tiering. Foundation and higher tiers are permitted only in maths, statistics, science and modern foreign languages.

The survey explored pupils', students' and their parents'/carers' awareness of the changes to GCSEs and whether they felt that they understood how GCSEs are being reformed.

### Have school pupils, college students, and their parents/carers heard about the changes to GCSE grading?

To explore awareness of the changes to GCSE grading, school pupils, college students and their respective parents/carers were presented with the following explanation:

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<sup>10</sup> Ofqual, 2018. Get the facts: GCSE reform. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-the-facts-gcse-and-a-level-reform/get-the-facts-gcse-reform>

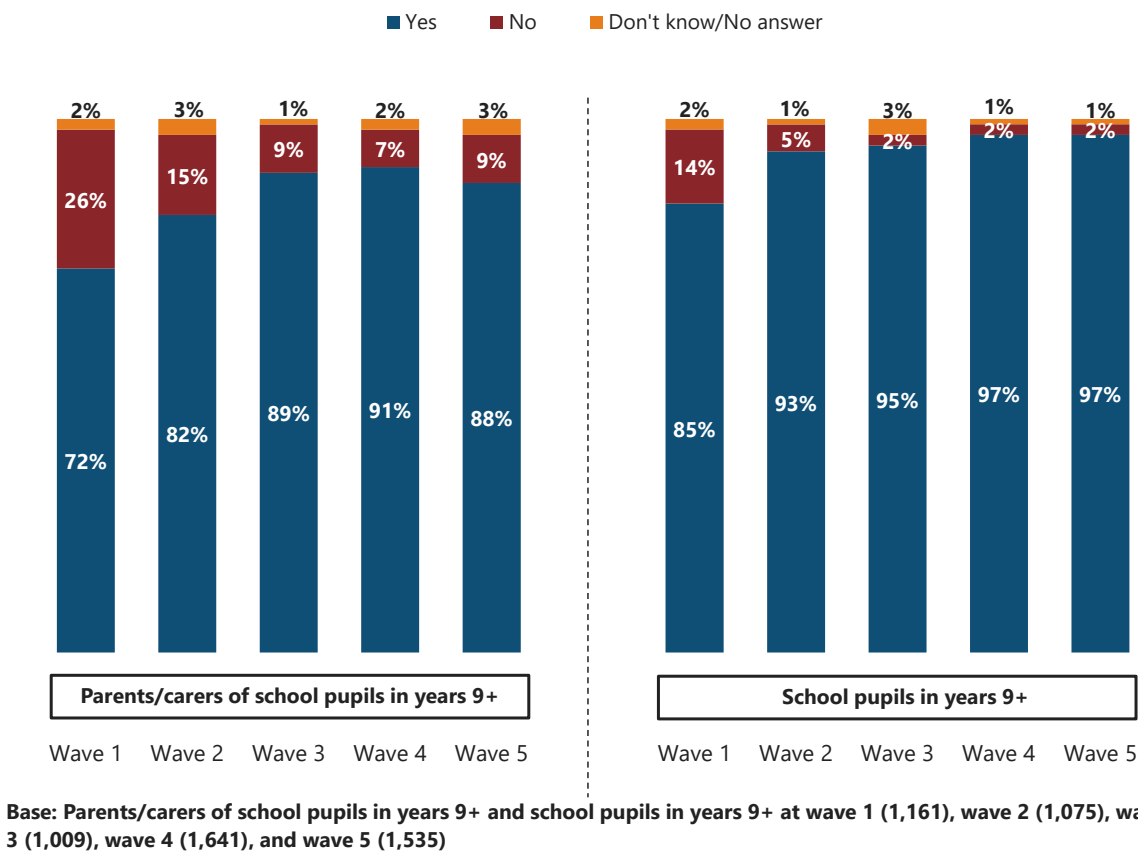
'From 2017, the old A\*-G grading at GCSE is being replaced by new grades 9 to 1'.

Pupils and students were then asked 'Have you heard about these changes?' and parents/carers were asked 'Before this survey, had you heard about the government's reforms to GCSEs?'

## School pupils and parents/carers

To compare awareness with all previous waves of the survey, the overall findings are shown for school pupils and their parents/carers in year 9 and above.

**Figure 6: 'From 2017, the old A\*-G grading at GCSE is being replaced by new grades 9 to 1. Had you heard about the government's reforms to GCSEs/ Have you heard about these changes?'**



Almost all school pupils in year 9 and above (97%) were aware of the grading changes at GCSE. As illustrated in Figure 6, awareness among pupils increased from 85% in wave 1 to 97% in wave 4, with this year's findings remaining consistent with the previous survey.

Awareness of the government's reforms to GCSEs among parents/carers of pupils in year 9 and above was 88%, with 9% reporting not being aware. This indicates a slight dip at wave 5, having previously increased year on year. As shown in Figure 6, the findings are in line with the wave 3 results.



Awareness of grading changes to GCSEs is, year-on-year, consistently higher among pupils in year 9 and above than their parents/carers.

## Paired response

The analysis of paired responses covers all year groups (not just those in year 9 and above). Notably, overall awareness of the reforms/changes to the grading system is lower than for those in only years 9 and above.

In the vast majority of cases (85%) both the parent/carer and pupil reported being aware of these changes (parent/carers were aware of the reforms to GCSEs and pupils were aware of the changes to the grading system). In just 2% of cases neither the pupils or parents/carers had heard of the changes and reforms respectively.

In 9% of cases the pupil had heard of the changes but the parent/carer had not heard of the reforms; in 3% of cases the parent/carer had heard of the reforms while their child had not heard of the changes.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Only statistically significant differences are reported here, based on all school pupils, including those in years 7 and 8.

### Pupil's key stage and year group

Almost all pupils in key stage 4 (KS4) and key stage 5 (KS5) were aware of the introduction of the new grades, 9 to 1, at GCSE (98% and 99%, respectively). However, the figure is lower among pupils in key stage 3 (KS3; 83%). Analysis of the results by curriculum year highlights lower levels of awareness in year 7, compared with all other year groups, as shown in Table 10 below.

The findings are similar for parents/carers of school pupils, but with a dip in awareness amongst those with children in year 13.

**Table 10: From 2017, the old A\*-C grading at GCSE is being replaced by new grades 9 to 1. Have you heard of these changes (*pupils*)/ Before this survey, had you heard about the government's reforms to GCSEs (*parents*)? (By year group)**

% giving each answer	Year 7 (A)	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)
Base:	366	357	333	311	283	316	292
School pupils - Yes	73	86 A	92 A,B	97 A,B,C	99 A,B,C	99 A,B,C	98 A,B,C
Parents/carers - Yes	79	77	85 A,B	86 A,B	91 A,B,C,G	92 A,B,C,D,G	85 A,B

ABCDEF G = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G.

## Disadvantage

Awareness of the GCSE grading changes was slightly higher among pupils who were not eligible for free school meals (FSM, 91%), compared to those who were eligible (87%). This is consistent with the finding that pupils in the first Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintile (least deprived) were more likely to have heard of the changes, compared with those in the most deprived quintile (94%, compared with 88%).

The differences in awareness measured by indicators for FSM and IDACI were wider among parents/carers. 87% of parents/carers whose child was not eligible for FSM had heard of the government's reforms, compared with 71% of those whose child was eligible. Furthermore, 94% of parents/carers in the first IDACI quintile had heard of the reforms to GCSE grades, compared with 76% of those in the fifth quintile.

## SEN

93% of pupils who did not have special educational needs (SEN) knew of the changes to GCSE grading, compared with 74% of pupils with SEN. A similar pattern was evident among parents/carers: 88% of parents/carers with a child who did not have SEN were aware of reforms to GCSE grading, compared with 75% of those who had a child with SEN.

## Ethnicity

Awareness of the reforms was higher among parents/carers of White pupils (86%), compared with parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (78%) and those from other ethnic groups<sup>11</sup> (78%). There was no statistical difference among pupils themselves.

*There were no differences found by pupil's gender or region.*

## College students and parents/carers

Both college students, and their parents/carers were also presented with the following explanation:

'From 2017, the old A\*-G grading at GCSE is being replaced by new grades 9 to 1.'

Students were then asked 'Have you heard about these changes?' and parents/carers were asked 'Before this survey, had you heard about the government's reforms to GCSEs?'

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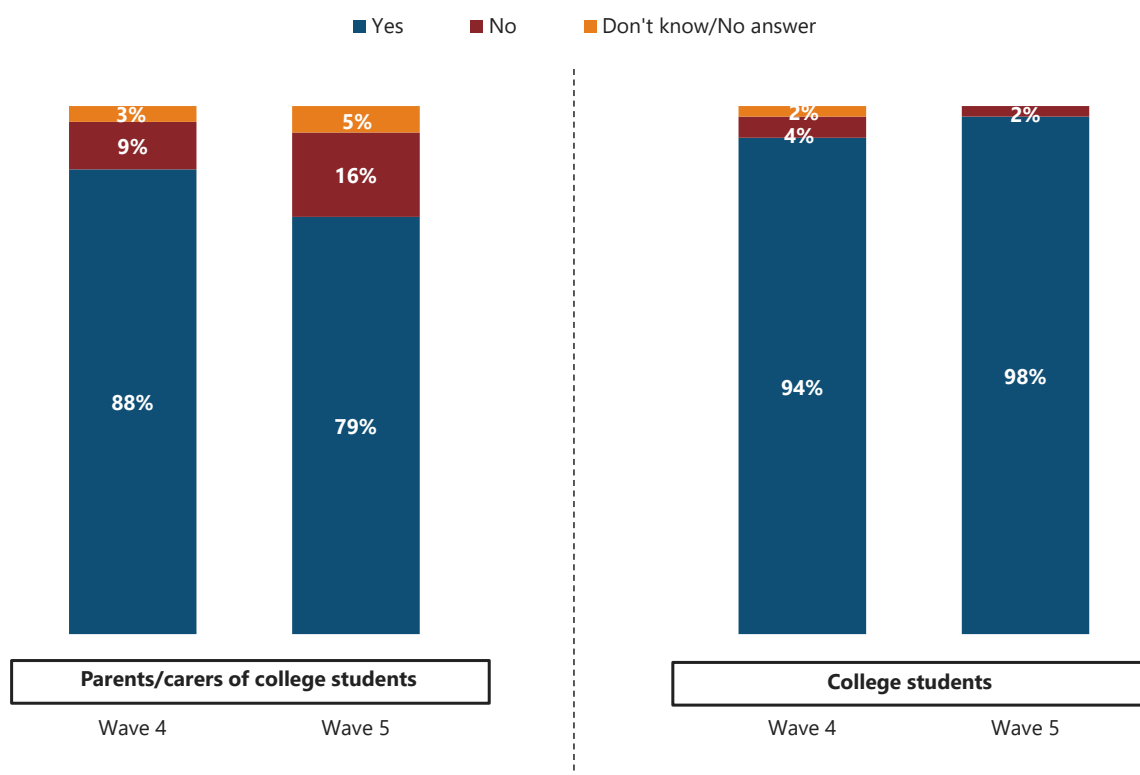
<sup>11</sup> For pupils in other ethnic groups, parents/carers selected that 'mixed/multiple ethnic groups' or an 'other ethnic group' best described their child's ethnicity in the survey.

Almost all college students (98%) were aware of the changes to GCSE grading, which represents an increase in awareness in comparison to the wave 4 findings (94%).

Conversely, awareness of the GCSE reforms among parents/carers of college students was lower at wave 5 than at wave 4, when the question was first asked. As illustrated in Figure 7 below, 79% of parents/carers had heard of the reforms, compared with 88% in the previous survey.

As with school pupils, awareness was consistently higher among students than their parents/carers.

**Figure 7: 'From 2017, the old A\*-G grading at GCSE is being replaced by new grades 9 to 1. Had you heard about the government's reforms to GCSEs/Have you heard about these changes?'**



Base: Parents/carers of college students and college students at wave 4 (206) and wave 5 (317)

## Paired response

In the vast majority of cases (85%) both the parent/carer and the student were aware of the reforms. In 14% of cases the student had heard of the reforms but their parent/carer had not, and in just 1% of cases only the parent/carer had heard of the reforms. In less than 1% of cases neither the student nor the parent/carer had heard of the reforms.

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Student's gender

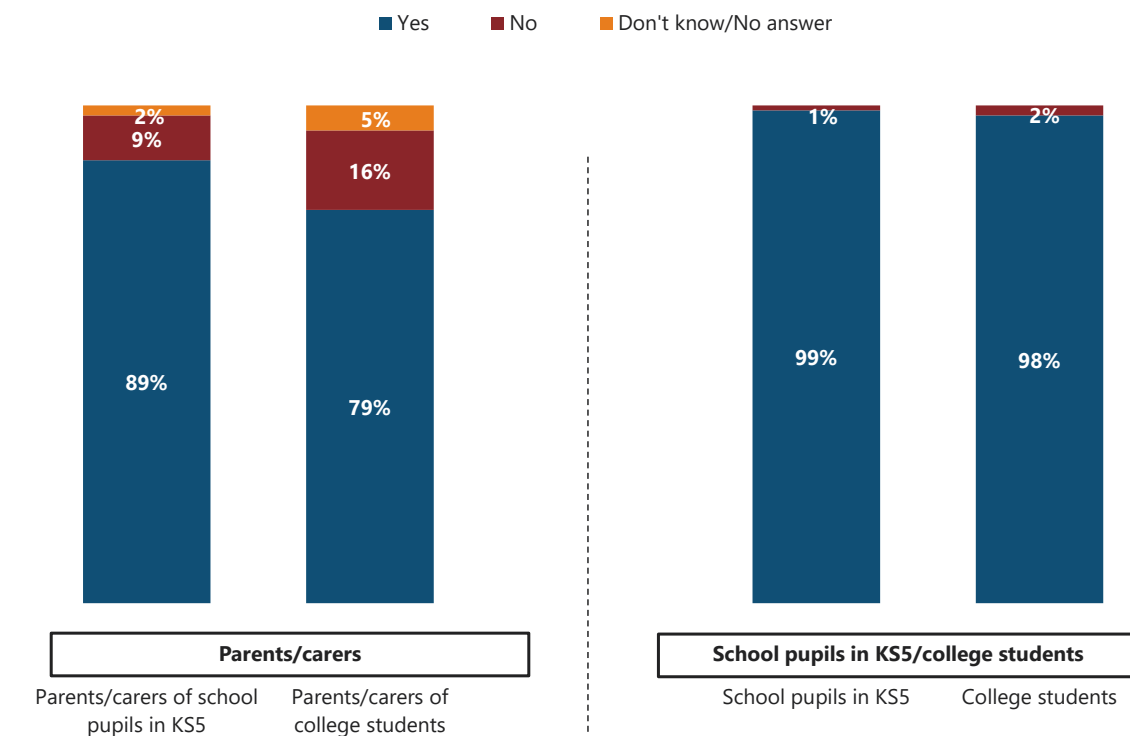
All female college students who took part in the survey had heard of the changes to the way GCSEs are graded, compared with 96% of male students. There were no statistical differences by student's gender, among parents/carers of students.

*There were no differences found by student's year of learning or qualification type for students or their parents/carers.*

### Significant differences by sample type

Almost all college students (98%) were aware of the changes to GCSE grading. This is in line with the findings among KS5 school pupils (99%), and represents an increase in awareness compared with wave 4. However, parents/carers of college students were less likely to have heard of the reforms to GCSEs than parents/carers of KS5 pupils (79% and 89%, respectively).

**Figure 8: 'From 2017, the old A\*-G grading at GCSE is being replaced by new grades 9 to 1. Had you heard about the government's reforms to GCSEs/Have you heard about these changes?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 and school pupils in KS5 (608). Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)**

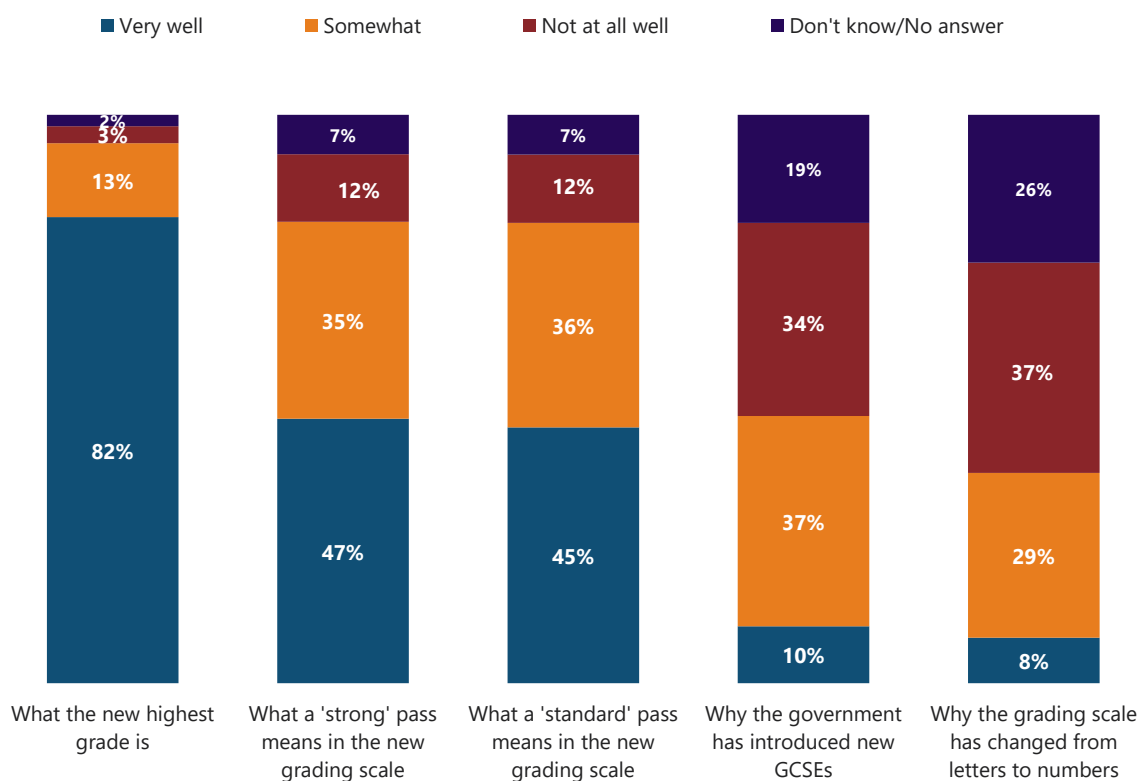
## How well do school pupils, college students, and their parents/carers understand the GCSE reforms?

School pupils and college students who had heard of the changes to the GCSE grading system, and parents/carers who had heard of the government's GCSE reforms were then asked a series of follow-up questions to explore their understanding further.

To allow for comparisons to be made with wave 4 the overall findings are shown for pupils (and parents/carers of pupils) in years 9 and above. However sub-group differences are based on all pupils and students and their parents/carers.

### School pupils and parents/carers

Figure 9: 'How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?'



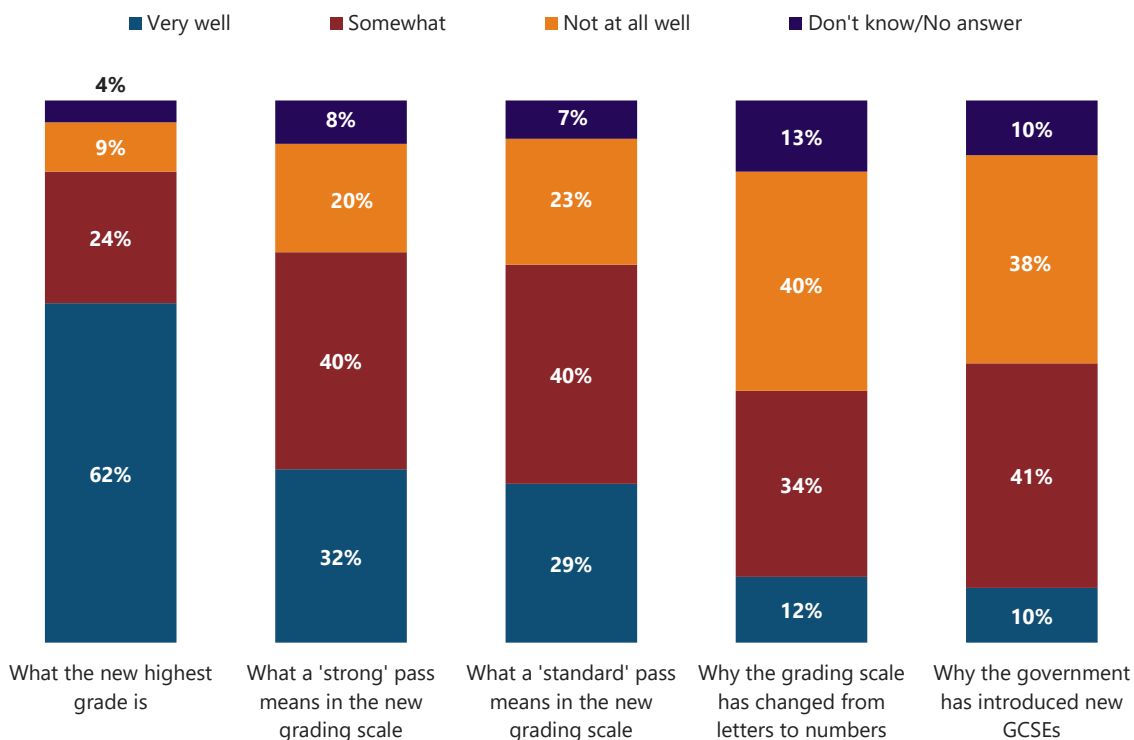
Base: School pupils in years 9+ who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading (1,491)

As shown in Figure 9, school pupils in years 9 and above were most likely to be aware of the new highest grade at GCSE. The vast majority of pupils (82%) said that they understood 'very well' what the new highest grade is.

47% of all pupils said they understood 'very well' what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale; 45% understood what a 'standard' pass means in the new grading scale. 81% understood what a 'strong' and 'standard' pass means 'very well' or 'somewhat'.

There was a far lower level of understanding around why the government introduced the new GCSEs (10% saying ‘very well’) and why the scale moved from letters to numbers (8% saying ‘very well’).

**Figure 10: ‘How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?’**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 9+ who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading (1,357)**

As shown in Figure 10, parents’/carers’ knowledge of the GCSE reforms closely reflected the pattern of pupils. For example, as with pupils, parents/carers with children in years 9 and above were most likely to indicate that they knew what the new highest grade is, but just 62% said they understood this ‘very well’.

32% said they knew ‘very well’ what a ‘strong’ pass means, 29% said they knew ‘very well’ what a ‘standard’ pass means.

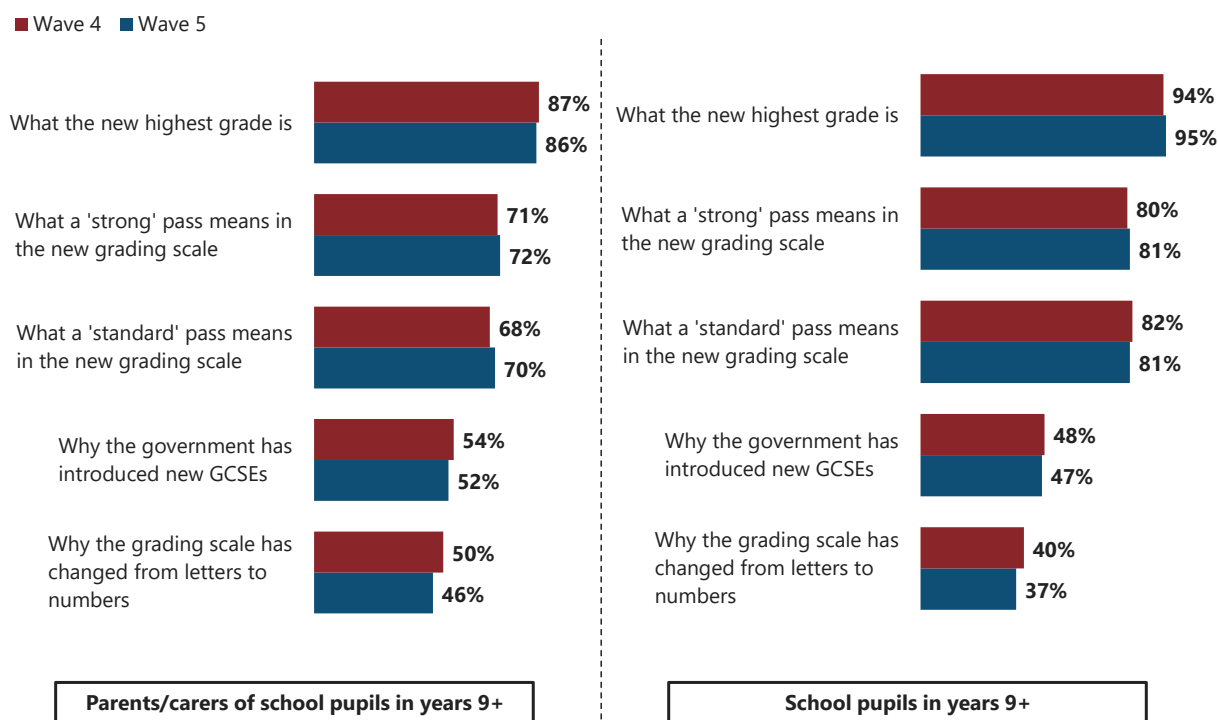
As with school pupils, parents/carers were less likely to understand why the government introduced the new GCSEs and why the grading scale changed to numbers (10% and 12% said ‘very well’, respectively).

### Wave-on-wave trends

Questions regarding understanding of the changes to GCSE grading were first asked of school pupils and parents/carers in wave 4 of the survey. As shown in Figure 11, overall, very little has changed in terms of both parents’/carers’ and pupils’ understanding between the two waves. The exception being a slight drop in understanding among

parents/carers as to why the grading system changed from letters to numbers (50% at wave 4 said 'somewhat'/'very well', compared with 46% at wave 5).

**Figure 11: 'How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?' ('very well'/'somewhat')**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 9+ who have heard about changes to GCSE grading at wave 4 (1,460) and wave 5 (1,357). School pupils in years 9+ who have heard about changes to GCSE grading at wave 4 (1,555) and wave 5 (1,491)

## Paired response

The analysis of paired responses covers all year groups (not just those in year 9 and above).

Table 11 shows that a high proportion of both school pupils and their parents/carers understood 'very well' or 'somewhat' what the new highest grade is (88%), what a 'strong' pass is (67%) and what a 'standard' pass is (64%).

Lower overall levels of understanding regarding why the government introduced new GCSEs and changed the grading scale is reflected here. Just 38% of both parents/carers and pupils understood why the reforms had been introduced; with 22% of parents/carers saying they understood 'very well' or 'somewhat' when their child does not, and 18% of cases where, conversely, the pupil understood but their parent/carer does not.

Similarly, 24% of parents/carers say they understood why the grading scale has changed from letters to numbers, when their child does not. 17% of pupils understood the changes but their parent/carer does not.

**Table 11: How well, if at all, do you understand each of the following...? (Paired analysis of school pupils and parents/carers)**

	Proportion of both <i>pupils</i> and <i>parents/carers</i> who understand 'very well' or 'somewhat'	Proportion of <i>pupils</i> who said they understood 'very well' or 'somewhat', while their parent/carer did not	Proportion of <i>parents/carers</i> who said they understood 'very well' or 'somewhat', while their child did not	Proportion of both <i>pupils</i> and <i>parents/carers</i> who <u>do not</u> understand
What the new highest grade is?	88%	9%	3%	*
What a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale?	67%	18%	10%	6%
What a 'standard' pass means in the new grading scale?	64%	20%	11%	6%
Why the government has introduced new GCSEs?	38%	18%	22%	23%
Why the grading scale has changed from letters to numbers?	32%	17%	24%	27%

## Significant differences by subgroup

Only statistically significant differences are reported here. These are based on all school pupils, including those in years 7 and 8, and their parents/carers, who have heard about the changes to GCSE grading.

### Pupil's key stage and year group

Understanding among pupils as to why the government introduced the new GCSEs increases with age. 48% of all KS5 pupils said they understood 'very well'/'somewhat' why the government introduced the new GCSEs, compared with 41% of KS3 students. Among parents/carers understanding of why the government decided to introduce new GCSEs was consistent by key stage.

By key stage, pupils' and parents'/carers' understanding of why the grading scale changed from letters to numbers is consistent. However, there are variations with regard to knowing what a 'standard' and 'strong' pass means:

- 88% of KS4 pupils knew what a 'standard' pass means in the new grading scale, compared with 71% of KS3 pupils and 67% of KS5 pupils. Similarly, 87% of KS4



pupils knew what a 'strong' pass means, compared with 74% of KS3 pupils and 68% of KS5 pupils.

- Amongst parents/carers who have heard about the changes to GCSE grading, 73% of those with children in KS4 understood what a 'standard' pass means, compared with 63% of those with children in KS3 and 66% of those with children in KS5. Likewise, 74% of parents/carers with a child in KS4 knew what a 'strong' pass means, compared with 68% of KS3 parents/carers and 68% of KS5 parents/carers.

Table 12, below, highlights lower levels of understanding among both year 7 and year 13 pupils in terms of changes to GCSE grading. For the latter, this could reflect the fact that most of the changes were introduced after they had completed their GCSEs; for the former their relative inexperience of the secondary school system.

**Table 12: How well, if at all, do you understand the following . . . ? (By year group)**

% saying 'very well/somewhat'	Year 7 (A)	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)
<i>Base:</i>	270	309	306	304	280	314	287
<b>Why the government has introduced new GCSEs?</b>	34	41	48 <b>G</b>	46 <b>G</b>	46 <b>G</b>	53 <b>A,B,G</b>	43
<b>Why the grading has changed from letters to numbers?</b>	31	36	38 <b>G</b>	35	39 <b>G</b>	44 <b>A,B,D,G</b>	29
<b>What the new highest grade is?</b>	86	92 <b>A</b>	96 <b>A,G</b>	95 <b>A,G</b>	96 <b>A,G</b>	98 <b>A,B,D,G</b>	88
<b>What a 'standard' pass means in the new grading scale?</b>	60	71 <b>A,G</b>	80 <b>A,B,G</b>	87 <b>A,B,C,G</b>	89 <b>A,B,C,F,G</b>	83 <b>A,B,G</b>	49
<b>What a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale?</b>	66 <b>G</b>	75 <b>A,G</b>	81 <b>A,G</b>	86 <b>A,B,G</b>	88 <b>A,B,C,G</b>	84 <b>A,B,G</b>	49

**ABCDEFGG** = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G.

## Pupil's gender

Awareness of why the new GCSEs were introduced was higher among male pupils than female pupils (47%, compared to 40%). Similarly, male pupils were more likely to understand why the grading scale has switched from letters to numbers (39%, compared with 33%).

With these exceptions, there were no other key differences in understanding by gender among school pupils and their parents/carers.

## Disadvantage

Eligibility for FSM highlights the following key differences in pupils' or parents'/carers' understanding of the changes that have been made to GCSEs:

- School pupils eligible for FSM were more likely to understand why the grading scale has changed from letters to numbers (48% say 'very well/somewhat', compared with 34% who were not eligible).
- Parents/carers with a child who was not eligible for FSM were more likely to say they understand what the new highest grade is (87%, compared with 77% of parents/carers whose child was eligible for FSM).
- Parents/carers with a child who was not eligible for FSM were more likely to say they understand what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale (71%, compared with 64% of parents/carers whose child was eligible for FSM).

## SEN

Understanding of the new 'standard' and 'strong' pass was lower among school pupils with SEN and parents/carers of a child with SEN, compared with those who did not have SEN:

- 59% pupils with SEN knew 'very well'/'somewhat' what a 'standard' pass is, compared with 79% of pupils without SEN. 59% of parents/carers with a child with SEN understood what a 'standard' pass is, compared with 68% of parents/carers whose child did not have SEN.
- Similarly, 62% of pupils with SEN knew 'very well/somewhat' what a 'strong' pass was, compared with 79% of pupils who did not have SEN. 61% of parents/carers of a child with SEN understood what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale, compared with 71% of parents/carers who did not have a child with SEN.

Additionally, among parents/carers of children with SEN there were lower levels of understanding as to why the government introduced new GCSEs (40%, compared with 53% of those who did not have a child with SEN, said they understood 'very well'/'somewhat'). Furthermore parents/carers of children with SEN were also less likely than those of children without SEN to understand what the new highest grade is (68%, compared with 88%).

## Ethnicity

53% of Asian/Asian British pupils say they know 'very well'/'somewhat' why the government introduced new GCSEs, compared with 43% of White pupils. Furthermore, Asian/Asian British pupils were also more likely to understand why the grading scale has changed to numbers than White pupils (47%, compared with 35%).

Asian/Asian British pupils were also more likely than White pupils to understand what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale (83% and 76%, respectively). The same pattern emerged among parents/carers: 79% of those with a child who was Asian/Asian British said they knew what a 'strong' pass means, compared with 69% of parents/carers of White pupils.

Among parents/carers with a child who was Asian/Asian British there was also a greater understanding of what the new highest grade is (91% said 'very well'/'somewhat'), compared with 86% of parents/carers of White pupils and 77% of parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils.

## **Region**

Understanding of why the new GCSEs were introduced appeared to be higher among pupils living in London, compared with those living outside of the capital (54% said 'very well'/'somewhat', compared with 43% living outside London). Consistent with this, the findings show that a higher proportion of pupils living in London understood why the GCSE grading scale had changed to numbers (46% said 'very well'/'somewhat', compared with 35% of pupils living outside London).

There were no regional differences in the responses from parents/carers.

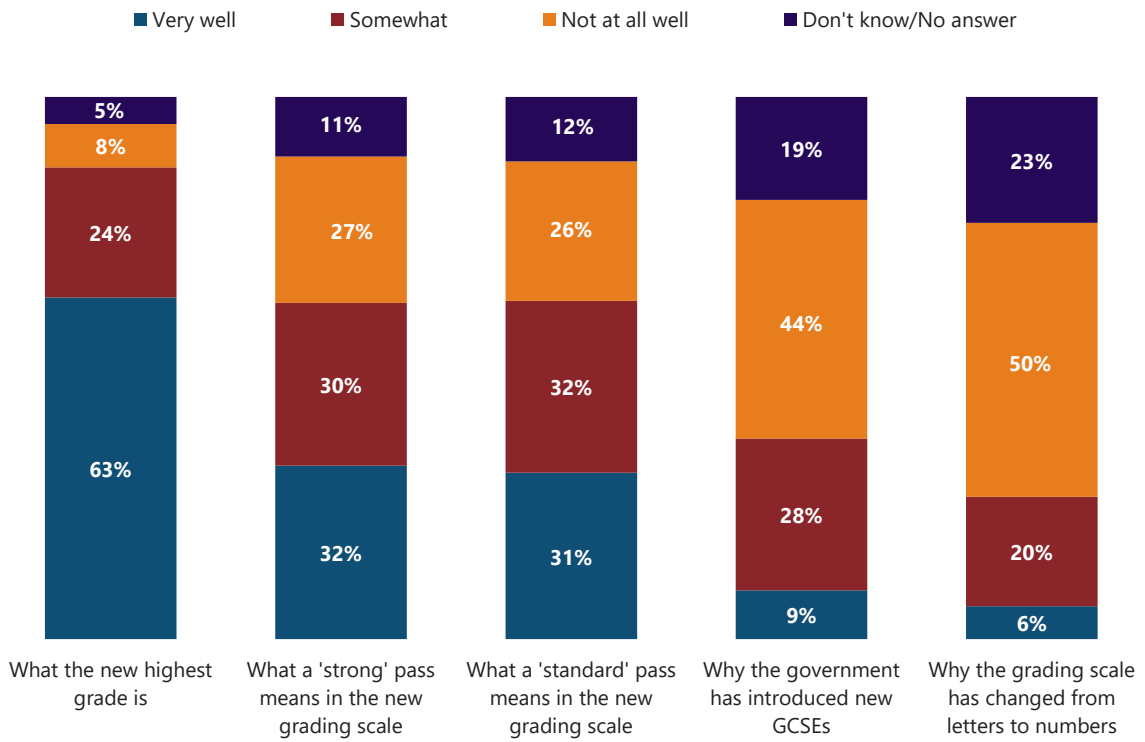
## **College students and parents/carers**

College students and their parents/carers who had heard of the changes to the GCSE grading system were then asked the same series of follow-up questions to explore their understanding further.

As shown in Figure 12 below, most college students knew what the new highest grade is (87% say 'very well'/'somewhat'), 63% understood what a 'standard' pass means, and 62% understood what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale. However, only a minority understood why the government has introduced the new GCSEs (37%) or why the grading scale has changed to numbers (26%).

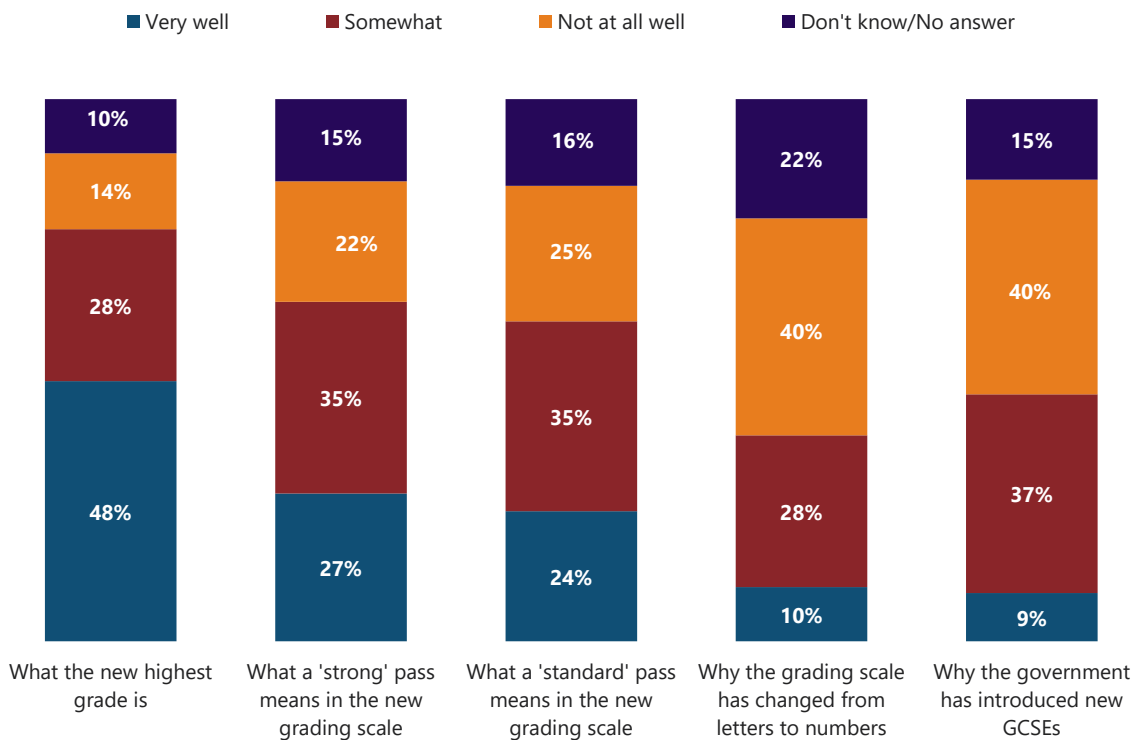
Reflecting the findings among college students, their parents/carers were also most likely to understand what the new highest grade is (76% say 'very well'/'somewhat'), what a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale (62%) and what a 'standard' pass means (59%). A higher proportion of parents/carers than college students themselves said they understood why the government introduced new GCSEs and why the grading scale changed to numbers (46% and 38% respectively).

**Figure 12: 'How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?'**



Base: College students who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading (311)

**Figure 13: 'How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?'**

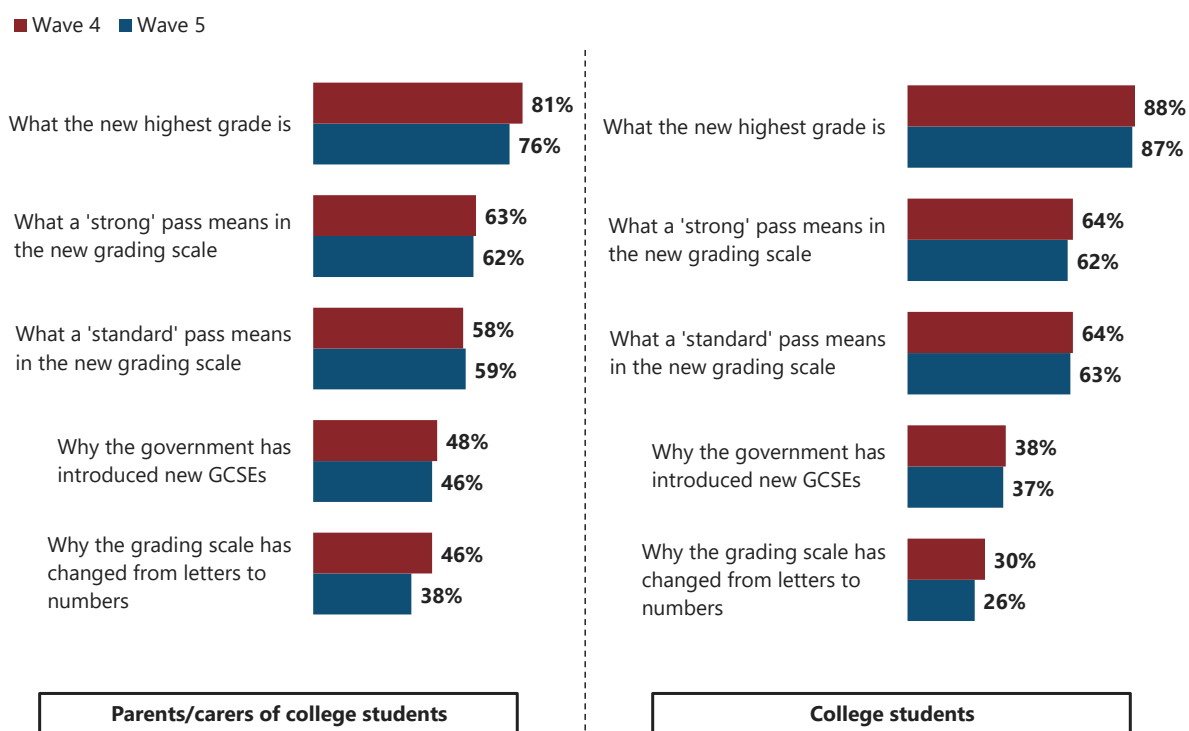


Base: Parents/carers of college students who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading (259)

This series of questions was first asked of college students and their parents/carers at wave 4, with findings from both the current and previous wave shown in Figure 14 below. Overall, both college students' and their parents'/carers' understanding of the changes to GCSE grading have remained consistent.

Although a slight drop is observed in the proportion of both students and parents/carers who understood why the grading scale had changed from letters to numbers the difference is not statistically significant.

**Figure 14: 'How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?' ('very well'/'somewhat')**



Base: Parents/carers of college students who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading at wave 4 (185) and wave 5 (259). College students who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading at wave 4 (197) and wave 5 (311)

## Paired response

As shown in Table 13 below, in most cases both students and their parent/carer understood what the new highest grade is (83%), what a 'standard' pass is (60%) and what a 'strong' pass is (59%).

However, only 29% of students and their parents/carers understood why the government has introduced the new GCSEs and in 23% of cases neither student nor parent/carer understood. In 20% of cases students understood 'very well' or 'somewhat' why new GCSEs had been introduced, but their parents/carers did not. Conversely, in 28% of cases a parent/carer understood but their child did not.

In 34% of cases neither student nor parent/carer understood why the grading scale has changed from letters to numbers; just 22% of both students and their parents/carers understood why. In 15% of cases students understood 'very well' or 'somewhat' why there had been a change from letters to numbers, but their parents/carers did not. Conversely, in 29% of cases a parent/carer understood the change to letters but their child did not.

**Table 13: How well, if at all, do you understand each of the following...? (Paired analysis of college students and parents/carers)**

	Proportion of both <i>students</i> and <i>parents/carers</i> who understand 'very well' or 'somewhat'	Proportion of <i>students</i> who said they understood 'very well' or 'somewhat', while their parent/carer did not	Proportion of <i>parents/carers</i> who said they understood 'very well' or 'somewhat', while their child did not	Proportion of both <i>students</i> and <i>parents/carers</i> who DO NOT understand
Why the government has introduced new GCSEs?	29%	20%	28%	23%
Why the grading scale has changed from letters to numbers?	22%	15%	29%	34%
What the new highest grade is?	83%	12%	3%	3%
What a 'standard' pass means in the new grading scale?	60%	18%	12%	11%
What a 'strong' pass means in the new grading scale?	59%	15%	18%	8%

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Student's gender

Female college students were more likely than male college students to understand why the grading scale has changed to numbers (33% say 'somewhat' or 'very well', compared with 19%).

They were also more likely to understand 'somewhat' or 'very well' what a 'standard' pass means in the new grading scale (69%, compared with 55% of male college students) and what a 'strong' pass means (68%, compared with 56% of male students).

### Year of learning

First year students were more likely to understand a number of changes to GCSE grading, in comparison to students in their second year of learning.

- First year students were more likely than second year students to say they understood 'somewhat'/'very well' what the new highest grade is (96% and 83%, respectively). This is consistent with parents/carers of college students; 85% of parents/carers with a student in their first year of learning said they understood what the new highest grade is, compared with 72% of those with a student in their second year of learning.
- First year students were also more likely to understand the meaning of both a 'standard' pass (84%, compared with 56% of second year college students) and a 'strong' pass in the new grading scale (79%, compared with 56% of second year college students).

### Qualification type

Understanding of changes to GCSEs was more common among AS/A level students, in comparison to those studying for a technical/vocational qualification:

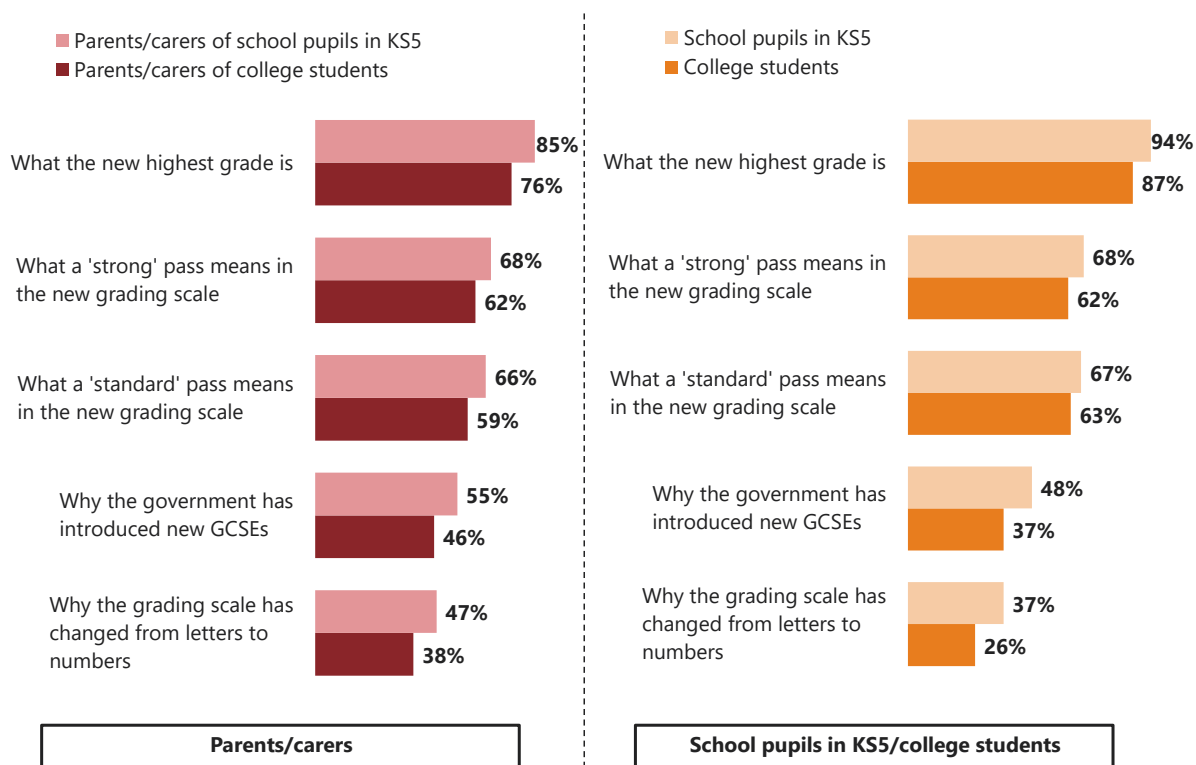
- College students undertaking AS/A levels were more likely to say they understood 'somewhat' or 'very well' why the government has introduced the new GCSEs (44%), compared with those undertaking technical/vocational options (32%).
- Those studying for AS/A levels were more likely to understand what the new highest grade is (94%), compared with those studying for a technical/vocational qualification (86%).

### Significant differences by sample type

Taking the analysis one step further, the findings from college students and their parents/carers were compared with their equivalents in KS5 in terms of their understanding of the reforms to GCSEs.

As shown in Figure 15, there are consistently higher levels of perceived understanding of the changes to GCSE grading amongst parents/carers of KS5 school pupils than parents/carers of college students, and amongst KS5 pupils in comparison to college students. There were three areas where KS5 school pupils and their parents/carers reported higher levels of awareness than those of college students; these were: 1) why the government has introduced new GCSEs, 2) why the government has changed the grading scale, and 3) understanding what the new highest grade is.

**Figure 15: 'How well, if at all, do you understand the following ...?'**



**Base:** Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (543) and school pupils in KS5 (601) who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading. Parents/carers of college students (259) and college students (311) who have heard about changes to the GCSE grading

## Background – Progress 8

From 2016, Progress 8 replaced 5 A\*-C (including English and maths) as a new headline measure of secondary school performance. Progress 8 measures the progress that pupils in a school make from the end of key stage 2 (KS2) to the end of key stage 4 (KS4).

A Progress 8 score is calculated for each pupil by comparing their achievement across eight qualifications (their Attainment 8 score) with the average Attainment 8 score of all pupils nationally who had a similar starting point (or 'prior attainment') using assessment results from the end of primary school. The greater the Progress 8 score, the greater the progress made by the pupil compared with the average for pupils with similar prior attainment. Performance is measured across eight qualifications including English, maths, three further EBacc subjects, and three other qualifications, which can be from the range of GCSE subjects or any other approved, high-value qualifications.

Progress 8 is calculated for individual pupils solely in order to calculate a school's Progress 8 score, and there is no need for schools to share individual Progress 8 scores with their pupils. A school's Progress 8 score is calculated as the average of its pupils' Progress 8 scores. It gives an indication of whether, as a group, pupils in the school made above or below average progress compared with similar pupils in other schools.



Provisional progress 8 scores for the 2017-2018 academic year were published in October 2018<sup>12,13</sup>.

One of the aims of Progress 8 is to inform parents' choice of school. It is, therefore, important to establish parents'/carers' awareness of Progress 8, and their level of understanding of what the measure will tell them about a school's performance.

## Have parents/carers of school pupils heard of Progress 8?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

In all five waves of the survey to date, parents/carers of school pupils were given the following definition of Progress 8:

*'From 2016, Progress 8 replaced 5A\*-C GCSEs as the main measure of a secondary school's performance. Progress 8 shows how well pupils at that school progress from the end of primary school to the end of year 11 (age 16), compared with pupils with similar starting points.'*

They were then asked 'Before this survey, had you heard of Progress 8?'

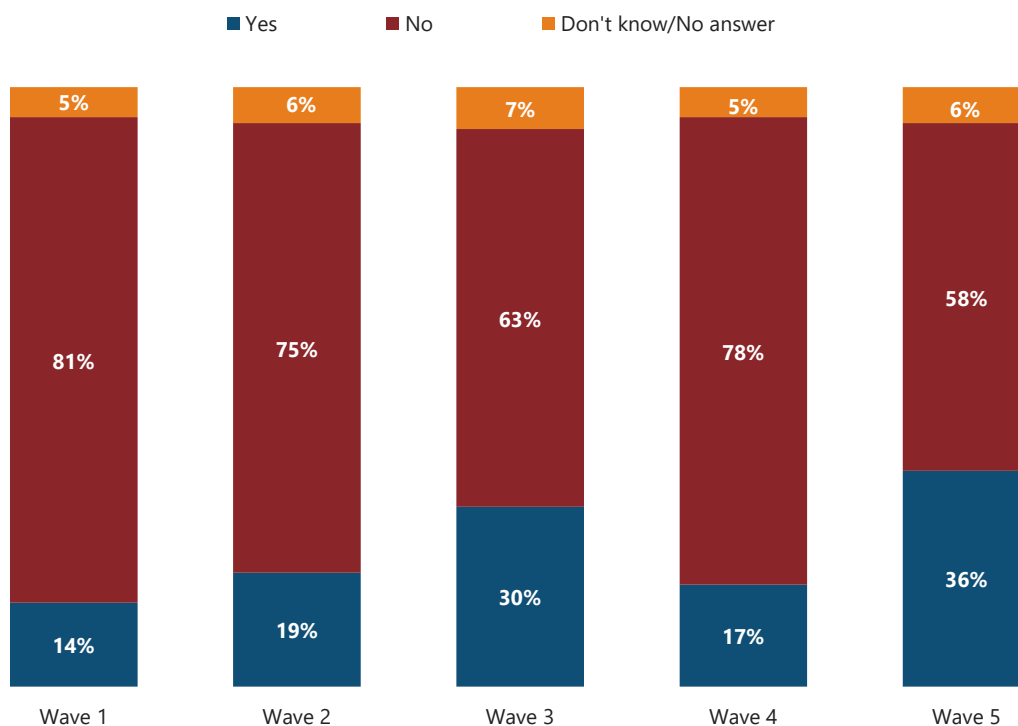
Awareness of Progress 8 is now at its highest point with 36% of parents/carers indicating that they had heard of the measure before taking part in the survey. As shown in Figure 16, previous to the dip in awareness in wave 4 (to 17%), it had increased wave-on-wave from 14% in wave 1 (conducted in summer 2016 when the measure was first introduced), to 19% in wave 2 (conducted in winter 2016/17) and 30% in wave 3 (conducted in summer 2017).

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<sup>12</sup> The school performance tables can be found here: <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/>

<sup>13</sup> Further information on Progress 8 can be found in DfE, 2018. Secondary accountability measures guide for maintained secondary schools, academies and free schools. This can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/progress-8-school-performance-measure>

**Figure 16: 'Before this survey, had you heard of Progress 8?'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils at wave 1 (1,723), wave 2 (1,595), wave 3 (1,504), wave 4 (2,590), and wave 5 (2,265)

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Disadvantage

Consistent with findings from the wave 4 survey, parents/carers of pupils who were not eligible for FSM were more likely to have heard of Progress 8 (39%) than those whose children were eligible for FSM (23%).

### SEN

Parents/carers of pupils who had SEN were less likely to have heard of Progress 8 (30%) compared with those parents/carers of pupils who did not have SEN (39%).

### Ethnicity

Parents/carers of pupils who are White were more likely to say they have heard of Progress 8 (39%) compared with parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (27%).

### Region

Parents/carers who live outside of London (39%) were more likely to say that they had heard of Progress 8 compared with those who live in London (34%).

*There were no differences found by pupil's key stage or gender.*

## Do parents/carers of school pupils understand what Progress 8 tells them about a school's performance?

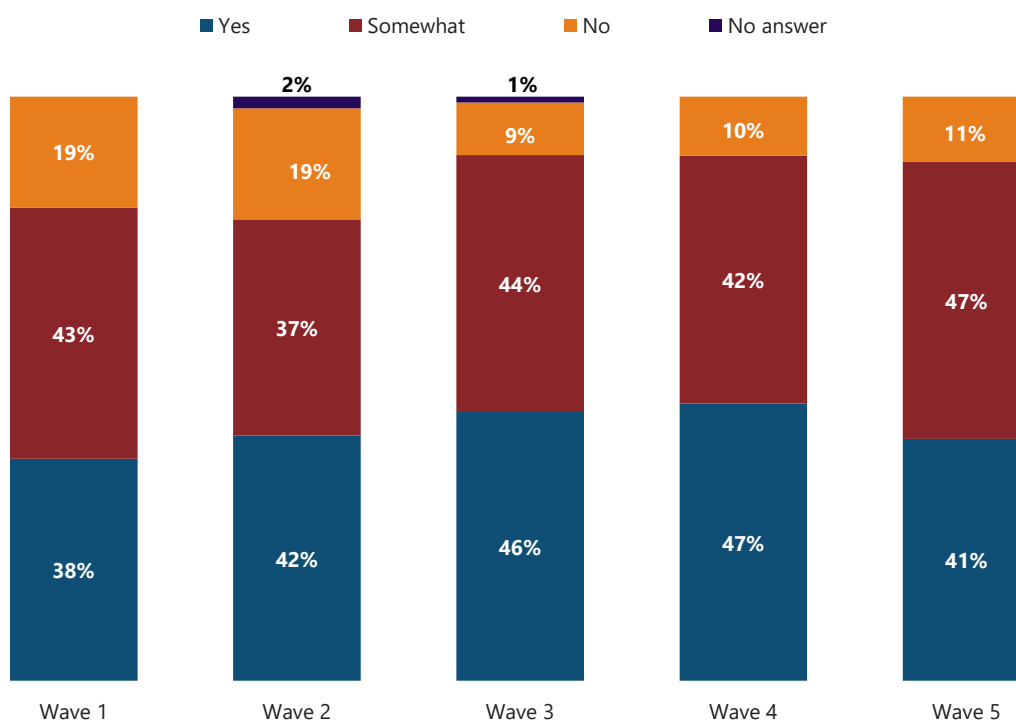
### Parents/carers of school pupils

All parents/carers of school pupils who had heard of Progress 8 were then asked whether they understood what the measure tells them about a school's performance. Parents/carers have been asked this question across all five waves of the survey.

While overall awareness of Progress 8 may have increased between wave 4 and 5, there was no similar shift in perceived understanding of the measure among parents/carers of pupils who had heard of it.

As shown in Figure 17, the proportion of parents/carers who said they understood what Progress 8 tells them about a school's performance, at least 'somewhat' has remained consistent over the last three waves; 90% at wave 3, 89% at wave 4 and 88% at wave 5. Looking at this in more detail, the proportion who said 'yes', they understand what Progress 8 tells them about a school, has decreased from 46% at wave 3 and 47% at wave 4 to 41% at wave 5.

Figure 17: 'Do you understand what Progress 8 tells you about a school's performance?'



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who have heard of Progress 8 at wave 1 (250), wave 2 (310), wave 3 (444), wave 4 (414), and wave 5 (826)

## Significant differences by subgroup

### SEN

Parents/carers of pupils who had SEN were less likely to have understood, at least 'somewhat', what Progress 8 tells them about a school's performance (76%) compared with those parents/carers of pupils who did not have SEN (90%).

*There were no differences found by pupil's key stage, gender, disadvantage, ethnicity or region.*

## Chapter 3 – Subject and qualifications choice

*This chapter explores awareness and attitudes towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) among pupils and students, alongside their parents/carers. Comparisons are made with previous waves of the study, where available, to track changes in awareness over time.*

*This chapter also reports on parents'/carers' views regarding the choice of GCSE subject and the reasons why parents/carers would advise their child to take a foreign language GCSE.*

### Background – English Baccalaureate (EBacc)

In addition to the compulsory core subjects (English, maths and science) and foundation subjects (computing, physical education, and citizenship) which pupils in maintained schools must study at key stage 4 (KS4), all state funded schools must teach religious education, and maintained schools must also offer at least one subject from each of these areas:

- Arts (e.g. art, music, drama)
- Design and technology
- Humanities (e.g. history, geography)
- Modern foreign languages (e.g. French, Spanish, Russian)

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) is a school performance measure, which reports on the proportion of pupils that have taken GCSEs in the following combination of subjects:

- English language and English literature;
- mathematics;
- science (combined science or three out of four of: biology, chemistry, physics or computer science);
- history or geography; and
- a modern or ancient language.

EBacc data was first published in the 2010 school performance tables.

Questions have been included in this survey to better understand pupils' and parents'/carers' awareness of this performance measure, as well as the motivations behind choosing to study them at GCSE.

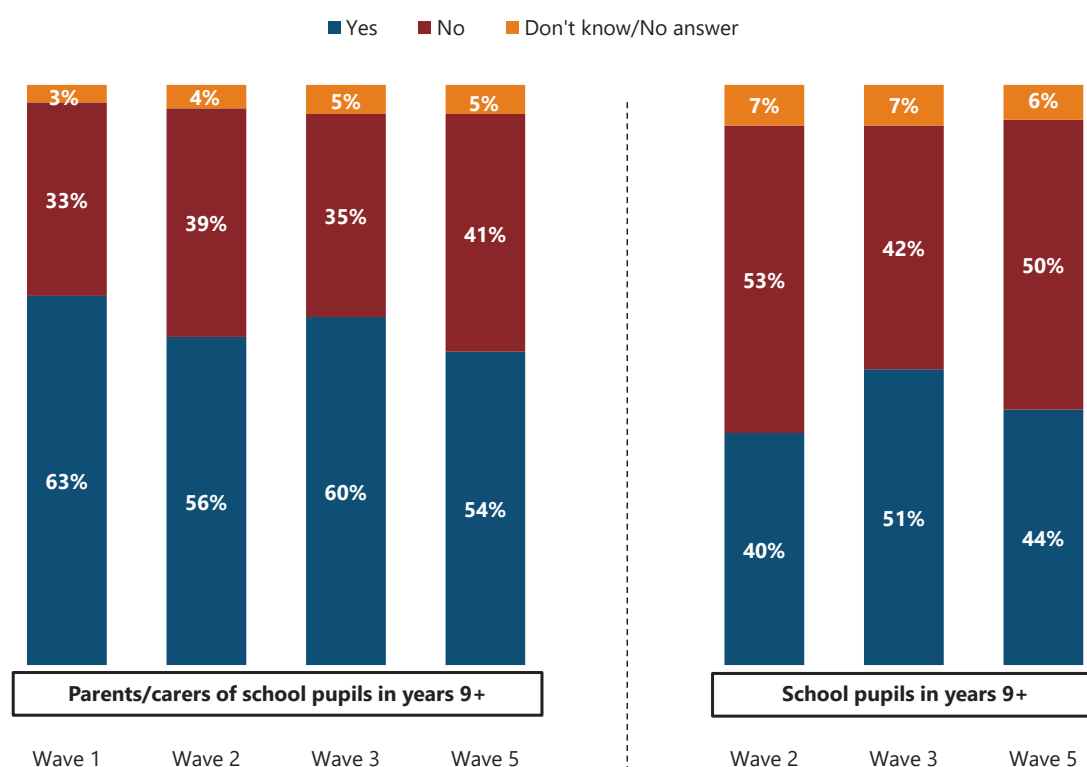
# Have school pupils, college students, and their parents/carers heard of the EBacc?

## School pupils and parents/carers

All school pupils and their parents/carers were asked ‘Have you heard of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?’. The wording of the question was retained from waves 2 and 3 of the survey for both parents/carers and school pupils. In wave 1 of the survey the same question was only asked of parents/carers.

To allow for comparisons to be made across waves the overall findings are shown for pupils (and parents/carers of pupils) in years 9 and above, with subgroup differences based on all pupils and their parents/carers.

**Figure 18: ‘Have you heard of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?’**



**Base:** Parents/carers of school pupils in years 9+ and school pupils in years 9+ at wave 1 (1,161), wave 2 (1,075), wave 3 (1,009), wave 4 (1,641), and wave 5 (1,535)

The findings suggest that awareness of the EBacc has declined since the wave 3 survey. This is from 51% of pupils in years 9 and above at wave 3, to 44% of pupils at wave 5. Awareness is now comparable with the findings from the wave 2 survey (40% of pupils), as shown in Figure 18.

This pattern is reflected in the survey of parents/carers with children in years 9 and above: At wave 5 54% said they were aware of the EBacc, compared with the higher figure of 60% in wave 3, but in line with the wave 2 findings (56%).

Across all waves where this question has been asked, awareness of the EBacc was higher among parents/carers, in comparison with pupils.

## Paired response

The analysis of paired responses in terms of awareness of the EBacc covers all year groups (not just those in year 9 and above):

- In 30% of paired responses, both the parent/carer and the pupil were aware of the EBacc.
- In 34% of cases neither the parent/carer nor the pupil were aware of the EBacc.
- In 27% of cases, only the parent/carer had heard of it.
- In 9% of cases, only the pupil had heard of it.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Statistically significant differences are reported here, based on all school pupils, including those in years 7 and 8.

### Pupil's key stage and year group

Awareness of the EBacc among pupils and parents/carers increases as pupils progress through school. Just 22% of key stage 3 (KS3) pupils had heard of the EBacc, compared with 42% of key stage 4 (KS4) pupils and 57% of key stage 5 (KS5) pupils.

This is highlighted in the analysis of response by year group. As shown below in Table 14, 7% of year 7 pupils and 22% of year 8 pupils had heard of the EBacc. In comparison, 51% of year 12 pupils and 64% of year 13 pupils were aware of the EBacc.

**Table 14: The proportion of school pupils who have heard of the English Baccalaureate, by year group and key stage**

	Year Group							Key Stage		
	Year 7 (A)	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)	KS3 (H)	KS4 (I)	KS5 (J)
<i>Base:</i>	366	357	333	311	283	316	292	1056	594	608
<i>% of pupils</i>	7	22 <b>A</b>	39 <b>A,B</b>	38 <b>A,B</b>	47 <b>A,B,C,D</b>	51 <b>A,B,C,D</b>	64 <b>A,B,C,D E,F</b>	22	42 <b>H</b>	57 <b>H,I</b>

**ABCDEFGHIJ** = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I/J

Awareness was also lowest among parents/carers of KS3 pupils. 46% of KS3 parents/carers were aware of the EBacc, compared with 63% of parents/carers of KS5 pupils.

## Disadvantage

Parents/carers whose child is not eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more likely to have heard of EBacc than those whose child is eligible (55%, compared with 27%). This mirrors the findings from wave 3.

Analysis of the findings by Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) emphasises the difference even further. 73% of parents/carers in the first quintile (least deprived) indicated that they had heard of EBacc, compared with just 28% of those in the fifth (most deprived) quintile. This is seen in Table 15.

There was no difference among pupils themselves in terms of these two measures of disadvantage.

**Table 15: The proportion of parents/carers who had heard of the English Baccalaureate, by Deprivation - IDACI**

% of parents/carers giving each answer	1 <sup>st</sup> Quintile (A)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quintile (B)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quintile (C)	4 <sup>th</sup> Quintile (D)	5 <sup>th</sup> Quintile (E)
<i>Base:</i>	472	379	397	313	322
<i>% of parents/carers</i>	73 B,C,D,E	61 C,D,E	52 D,E	37 E	28

ABCDE = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E.

## SEN

Pupils without special educational needs (SEN) were more likely than those with SEN to have heard of the EBacc (36%, compared with 16%). A similar pattern was also evident among parents/carers; with 54% of parents/carers whose child did not have SEN aware of the EBacc, compared with 36% of parents/carers of children with SEN.

## Ethnicity

Reflecting the findings from the wave 3 survey, parents/carers of White pupils were more likely to be aware of the EBacc than parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils and parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (55%, compared with 37% and 39%, respectively).

This difference was not reflected in the findings from the survey of pupils themselves.

## Region

There was some variation by region in parents'/carers' awareness of the EBacc, once again reflecting the findings from the wave 3 study. A higher proportion of parents/carers living in the South (58%) were aware of the EBacc than those in the Midlands (47%), North (48%) and London (48%).

There were no differences among pupils themselves by region.



*For school pupils and parents/carers, there were no differences found by pupil's gender.*

## **College students and parents/carers**

College students and parents/carers were also asked 'Have you heard of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?' Overall, 44% of college students and 53% of their parents/carers had heard of the EBacc.

### **Paired response**

The analysis of paired response shows that in 36% of cases both the parent/carer and the college student had heard of the EBacc. However, in 31% of cases neither the parent/carer nor the student were aware of the EBacc. In 21% of cases just the parent/carer had heard of the EBacc and in 12% just the student had heard of the EBacc.

### **Significant differences by subgroup**

#### **Student's gender**

Awareness of the EBacc was higher among parents/carers of male college students, than parents/carers of female students (61%, compared with 46%). Amongst students themselves, there was no significant difference by gender.

#### **Qualification type**

For both parents/carers and students there were variations in awareness by qualification type:

- 62% of college students studying AS/A levels had heard of the EBacc, compared with 30% of students studying for a technical or vocational qualification.
- Similarly, 62% of parents/carers of a student studying AS/A levels had heard of the EBacc, compared with 47% of parents/carers with a child studying for a technical or vocational qualification.

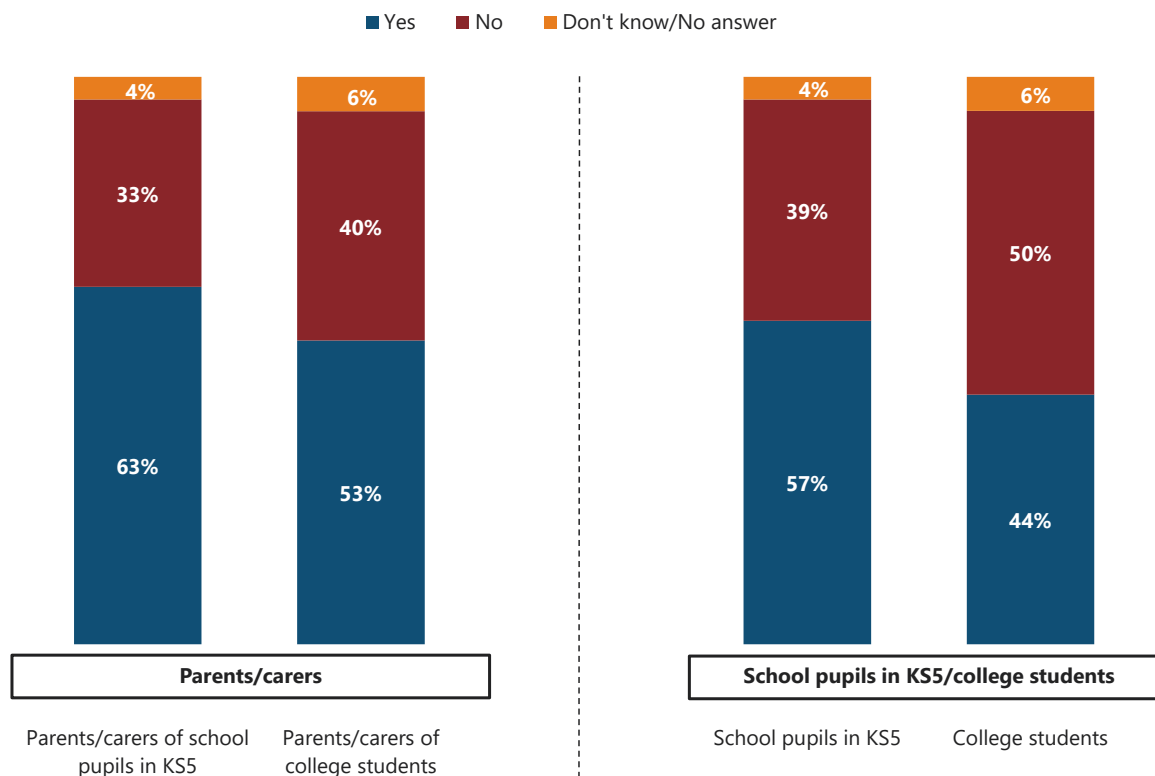
*There were no differences found by year of learning.*

### **Significant differences by sample type**

Awareness of the EBacc was lower amongst college students than school pupils in KS5 (44%, compared with 57%). College students' awareness was also lower than among parents/carers of college students (44%, compared with 53%).

However, as shown in Figure 19 below, parents/carers of college students were less likely to have heard of the EBacc than parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (53%, compared with 63%).

**Figure 19: 'Have you heard of the English Baccalaureate (EBacc)?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 and school pupils in KS5 (608). Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)**

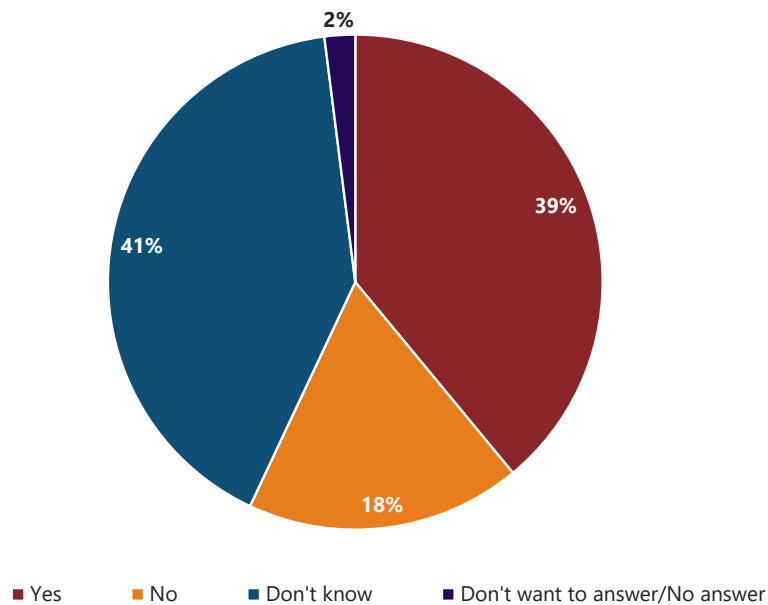
## If their child had a choice, would parents/carers advise them to take the EBacc?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 who had heard of the EBacc were asked a new question in wave 5 to further explore attitudes towards the EBacc.

Overall, 39% of parents/carers of year 7-9 pupils said 'yes', if they had the choice they would advise their child to take the EBacc, just 18% would not do so. However, 41% were unsure.

Figure 20: 'If your child had the choice, would you advise them to take the EBacc?'



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 (494)

### Significant differences by subgroup

Statistically significant differences are reported here, based on parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 who had heard of the EBacc.

#### SEN

42% of parents/carers with a child who does not have SEN said they would advise them to take the EBacc, compared with just 15% of parents/carers with a child who has SEN.<sup>14</sup>

*For parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9, there were no differences found by pupil's key stage or year group, gender, disadvantage, ethnicity and region.*

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<sup>14</sup> Small base size (n=49 parents/carers with a child in years 7-9 who has SEN). Results should be seen as indicative.

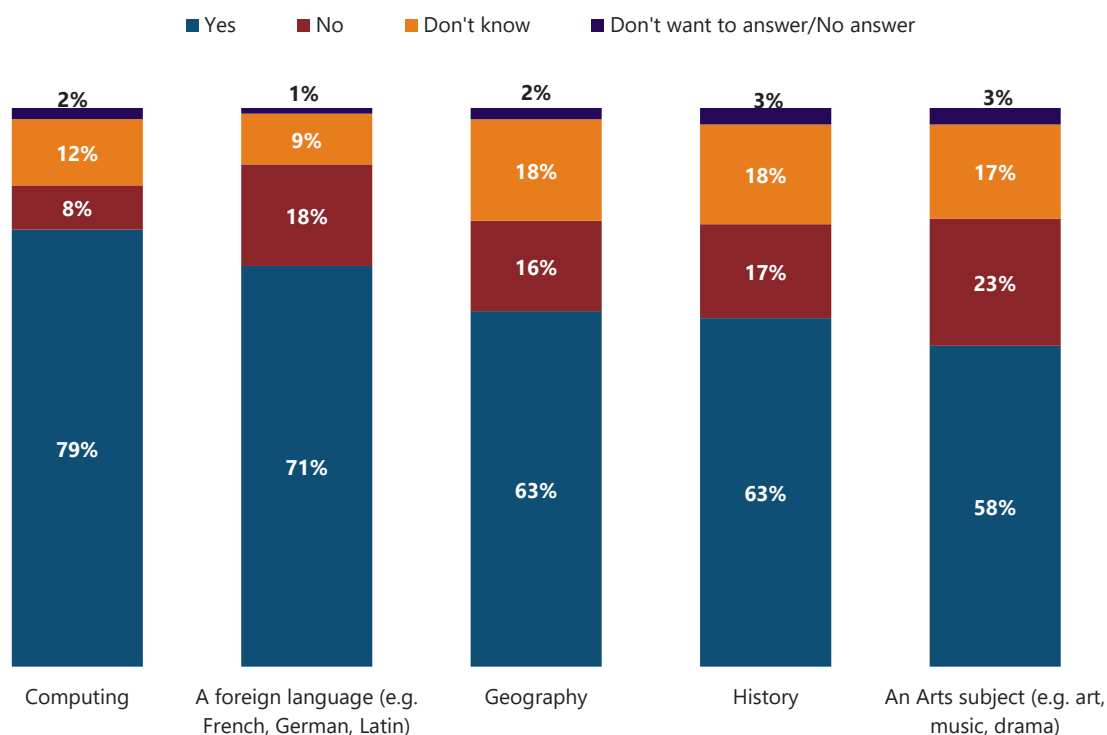
## If their child had a choice, which GCSEs would parents/carers advise them to take?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 were presented with a list of GCSEs and asked to consider whether they would advise their child to take the subject, if they had the choice.

Looking across all the options, parents/carers were most likely to advise their child to take a GCSE in Computing (79%), followed by a foreign language (71%). 63% would advise their child to take Geography and the same proportion would advise them to take History. 58% would advise their child to take a GCSE in an arts subject.

**Figure 21: 'If your child had the choice, would you advise them to take the following GCSEs?'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 (1,052)

### Significant differences by subgroup

Statistically significant differences are reported here, based on parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 only.

#### Pupil's key stage and year group

Parent/carers attitudes towards their child taking a GCSE in Geography or History are consistent across all subgroups, except for year group. 26% of parents/carers of year 7

pupils were unsure whether to advise their child to take a GCSE in Geography. In comparison, just 14% of year 8 parents/carers and 13% of year 9 parents/carers were unsure.

Similarly, 23% of year 7 parents/carers were unsure (answered 'don't know') when asked to consider whether they would advise their child to take a GCSE in History, compared with 16% of year 8 parents/carers and 15% of year 9 parents/carers.

There were no differences by key stage or year group for all other subject choice at GCSE.

### **Pupil's gender**

Parents/carers of boys in years 7-9 were more likely to advise their child to take a GCSE in Computing than parents/carers of girls (83%, compared with 74%). In contrast, parents/carers of girls were more likely to advise their child to take a GCSE in an arts subject (64%, compared with 52% of parents/carers of boys).

Pupil gender was not a factor in GCSE choice for languages, Geography or History.

### **Disadvantage**

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 were more likely to advise their child to take a foreign language if they are not eligible for FSM (74%, compared with 54% of parents/carers with a child eligible for FSM).

When asked to consider arts subjects (e.g. art, music, drama) parents/carers of pupils eligible for FSM were more likely to advise their child to take a GCSE in these subjects than parents/carers with children who are not eligible (75%, compared with 55%).

### **SEN**

The option to take a foreign language GCSE was more popular among parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 without SEN, than among those who have a child with SEN (75%, compared with 54%).

Conversely the option to take a GCSE in Computing was more popular among parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 who have SEN, compared with those who do not (87%, compared with 76%).

### **Region**

There were few variations in GCSE choice by region, except for Computing. Parents/carers living in London would be more likely to advise their child to take a GCSE in this subject, than those living outside of London (86%, compared with 76%).

*There were no differences found by ethnicity.*

# What are the reasons parents/carers will or will not advise their child to take a foreign language GCSE?

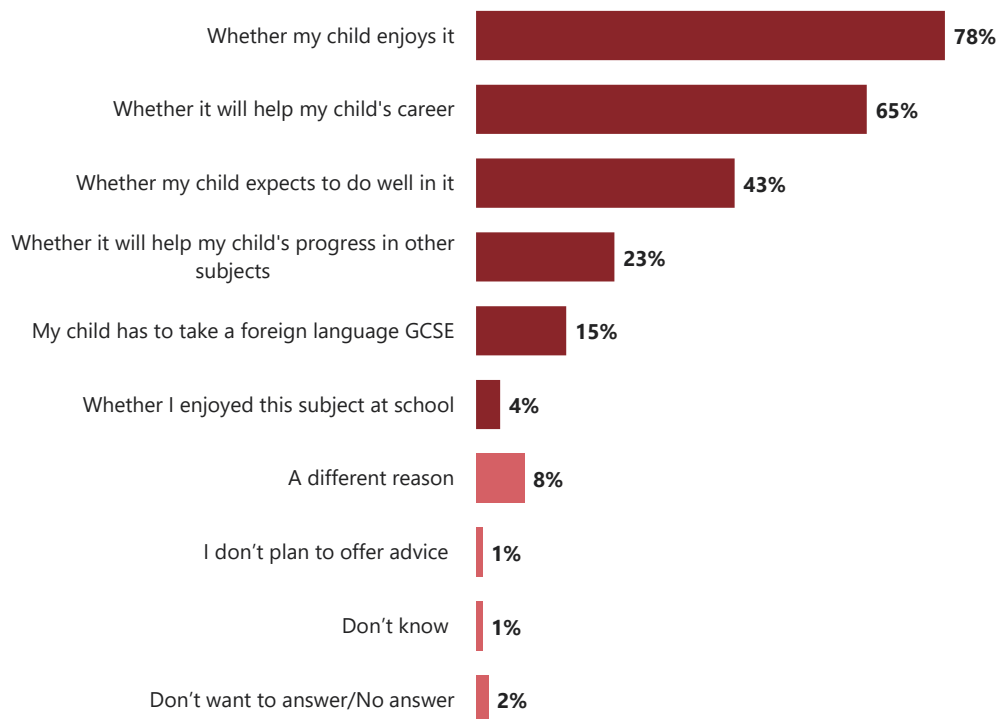
## Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 were also asked to consider what their main priorities would be in terms of advising their child to take a foreign language GCSE in years 10 and 11. Parents/carers were presented with six possible priorities to select from, but also given the option of 'a different reason' (to the ones listed) or to say that they would not be planning to offer advice.

The most important consideration for parents/carers was whether their child will enjoy it, mentioned by 78%. 65% of parents/carers said that a priority was whether it will help their child's career and 43% said they would factor in whether their child is likely to do well in the subject.

At the other end of the scale, just 4 per cent of parents/carers said that their own experience of the subject would affect how they advise their child in terms of taking a foreign language GCSE.

**Figure 22: 'Thinking about whether you will or will not advise your child to take a foreign language GCSE in years 10 and 11, what do you think your main priorities will be?'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 (1,052)

Parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9 who would advise their child to take a foreign language were more likely to cite 'Whether it will help my child's career' (68%) and 'Whether my child expects to do well in it' (45%) as their main priorities in comparison to parents/carers of school pupils who would not advise their child to take a foreign language (55%, and 37%, respectively).

## Significant differences by subgroup

Statistically significant differences are reported here, based on parents/carers of school pupils in years 7-9.

### Disadvantage

No significant differences were found when comparing the priorities for taking a foreign language GCSE by eligibility for free school meals (FSM). However, by analysing attitudes using the IDACI measure, the findings indicate that parents/carers of children in the fifth quintile (most deprived) are more likely to prioritise whether it will be helpful in terms of their child's future career, over and above other factors.

In contrast, parents/carers of children in the first IDACI quintile (least deprived) said that their main priority would be whether their child enjoys it. This group were more likely to highlight the consideration of whether their child expects to do well in a foreign language GCSE, as shown in Table 16 below.

**Table 16: Thinking about whether you will or will not advise your child to take a foreign language GCSE in years 10 and 11, what do you think your main priorities will be? (By Deprivation - IDACI)**

% of parents/carers giving each answer	1 <sup>st</sup> Quintile (A)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quintile (B)	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quintile (C)	4 <sup>th</sup> Quintile (D)	5 <sup>th</sup> Quintile (E)
<i>Base:</i>	200	171	187	148	167
Whether it will help my child's career	58	61	64	65	79 A,B,C,D
Whether it will help my child's progress in other subjects	13	22 A	21	28 A	32 A,B,C
Whether my child enjoys it	84 D,E	82 D,E	85 D,E	72	70
Whether I enjoyed this subject at school	2	2	4	4	6 A,B
Whether my child expects to do well in it	58 C,D,E	49 D,E	44	35	35
My child has to take a foreign language GCSE	23 D,E	17 E	18 E	14 E	7
A different reason	8	8	10	7	5

<b>I don't plan to offer advice</b>	1	1	1	-	1
<b>Don't know</b>	-	-	1	*	3 <b>A,B</b>
<b>Don't want to answer</b>	-	1	1	1	-

**ABCDE** = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E.

## Ethnicity

Parents/carers of White pupils said that their main priority would be whether their child enjoys learning a foreign language (82%). In contrast parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils most commonly highlighted the importance of whether taking a foreign language GCSE will help their child's future career (mentioned by 77%).

*There were no differences found by pupil's key stage, gender, SEN or region.*



## Chapter 4 – Provision and attendance at school/college

*This chapter includes findings on lunch provision, the availability of sanitary products and attendance at school/college.*

**Lunch provision:** *School pupils and college students were asked how often they have typically eaten school/college lunches over the last 12 months. School/college lunches were defined as food served by the school/college at lunch time. This question was new to wave 5.*

**Availability of sanitary products:** *Female school pupils and college students were asked whether their school/college provides free access to sanitary products (e.g. tampons, towels) for those that need them, and if so, how their school/college makes these products available. Female school pupils and college students were also asked whether they have ever been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost. These questions were new to wave 5.*

**Attendance:** *School pupils, college students and their parents/carers were asked how often the pupil/student had missed school over the last year. Where the pupil/student reported missing school at least 'once or twice a term', they were then asked what stopped them going to school/college regularly. School pupils and their parents/carers were asked these questions at waves 3 and 5, so wave-on-wave comparisons are reported for this sample group.*

### Background – Lunch provision

The Department for Education (DfE) supports the provision of nutritious food in schools to enable pupils to be well nourished, develop healthy eating habits and to concentrate and learn in school. The government encourages all schools to promote healthy eating and to provide healthy, tasty and nutritious food and drink.

Nearly a quarter of children in England are obese or overweight by the time they start primary school aged five, and this rises to one third by the time they leave aged 11<sup>15</sup>. The government has already taken several measures to improve school food. The School Food Standards came into force from January 2015. They have been widely welcomed but since then new advice on sugar and nutrition has been published. Therefore, the DfE, supported by Public Health England, will update the School Food Standards in light of refreshed government dietary recommendations. The update will be comprehensive on

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<sup>15</sup> NHS Digital. (2017). National Child Measurement Programme England 2016-2017. Available from: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/national-child-measurement-programme/2016-17-school-year>

reducing sugar consumption and will be coupled with detailed guidance to caterers and schools so they are well prepared to adapt to the changes.

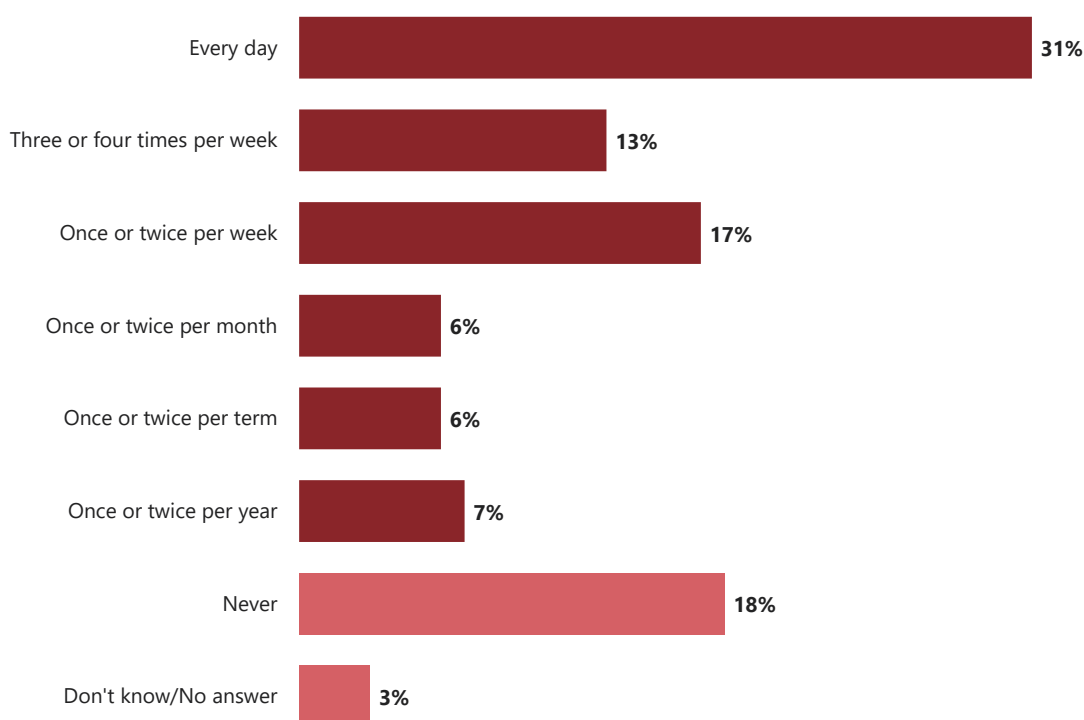
In addition to the School Food Standards, many DfE policies aim to make a direct contribution to reducing the incidence of childhood obesity, such as universal infant free school meals, the School Food Plan, the National Breakfast Club Programme, the addition of food education in the national curriculum, and the primary PE and sport premium. Ofsted inspectors also look at how schools supports pupils' knowledge on how to keep themselves healthy, including through exercising and healthy eating.

## How often do school pupils and college students typically eat food served by their school/college at lunch time?

### School pupils

School pupils were asked 'Over the last 12 months, how often have you typically eaten school lunches? By school lunches, we mean food served by the school at lunch time'.

**Figure 23: 'Over the last 12 months, how often have you typically eaten school lunches? By school lunches, we mean food served by the school at lunch time.'**



**Base: All school pupils (2,265)**

Overall, 60% of school pupils reported having typically eaten school lunches at least 'once or twice per week' over the last 12 months, with 31% of these eating school

lunches every day<sup>16</sup>. On the other hand, 18% of school pupils reported ‘never’ eating school lunches over the last 12 months.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of school pupils who reported having typically eaten school lunches at least ‘once or twice per week’ over the last 12 months.

### Pupil’s key stage and year group

As shown in Table 17, there was a general trend where pupils in the younger year groups were more likely to report having typically eaten school lunches at least weekly. These differences were statistically significant. For example, pupils in key stage 3 (KS3, 66%) were more likely than pupils in key stage 4 (KS4, 57%) and key stage 5 (KS5, 45%) to report having typically eaten school lunches at least weekly. Similarly, pupils in KS4 (57%) were more likely than pupils in KS5 (45%) to report the same.

**Table 17: The proportion of school pupils who reported having typically eaten school lunches at least ‘once or twice per week’ over the last 12 months, by year group and key stage**

	Year Group							Key Stage		
	Year 7 (A)	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)	KS3 (H)	KS4 (I)	KS5 (J)
<i>Base:</i>	366	357	333	311	283	316	292	1056	594	608
<i>% of pupils</i>	71 C,D,E,F,G	66 E,F,G	60 F,G	61 F,G	54 G	47	43	66 I,J	57 J	45

ABCDEFGHIJ = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I/J.

### Disadvantage

Pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more likely to report having typically eaten school lunches at least weekly (76%), compared with pupils who were not FSM eligible (58%).

### Ethnicity

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (73%) and Asian/Asian British pupils (65%) were more likely to report having typically eaten school lunches at least weekly, compared with White pupils (58%).

Notably, eligibility for FSM was highest among Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils and lowest among Asian/Asian British pupils, so eligibility for FSM was not the driving factor for this difference.

<sup>16</sup> Please note, reported combinations may not equal the sum of the responses presented due to rounding.

## Region

Pupils living in the North (68%) or London (67%) were more likely to report having typically eaten school lunches at least weekly, compared with pupils living in the Midlands (55%) and the South (57%). There was no clear interaction with FSM eligibility or ethnicity that could account for this regional difference.

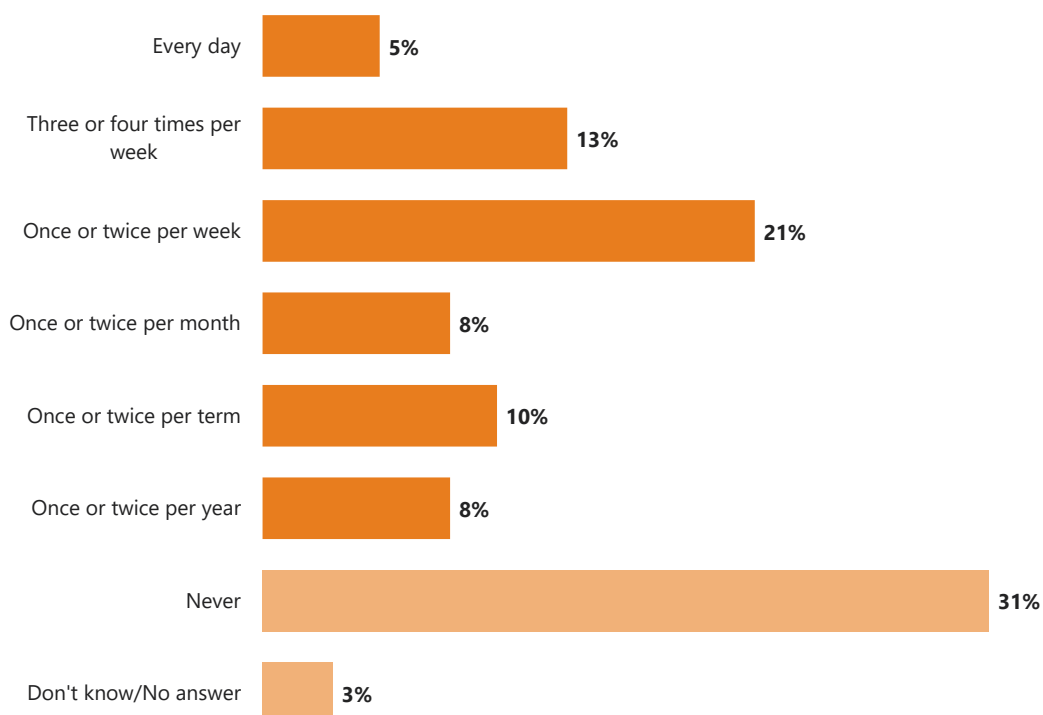
*There were no differences found by pupil's gender or special educational needs (SEN).*

## College students

College students were asked the same question as school pupils about their college lunch provision: 'Over the last 12 months, how often have you typically eaten college lunches? By college lunches, we mean food served by the college at lunch time'.

Overall, 40% of college students reported having typically eaten college lunches at least 'once or twice per week' over the last 12 months, with just 5% of these eating college lunches every day. On the other hand, 31% of college students reported 'never' eating college lunches over the last 12 months.

**Figure 24: 'Over the last 12 months, how often have you typically eaten college lunches? By college lunches, we mean food served by the college at lunch time.'**



**Base: All college students (317)**

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of college students who reported having typically eaten college lunches at least 'once or twice per week' over the last 12 months.

### Student's gender

Female students were more likely to report having typically eaten college lunches at least weekly (46%), compared with male students (33%).

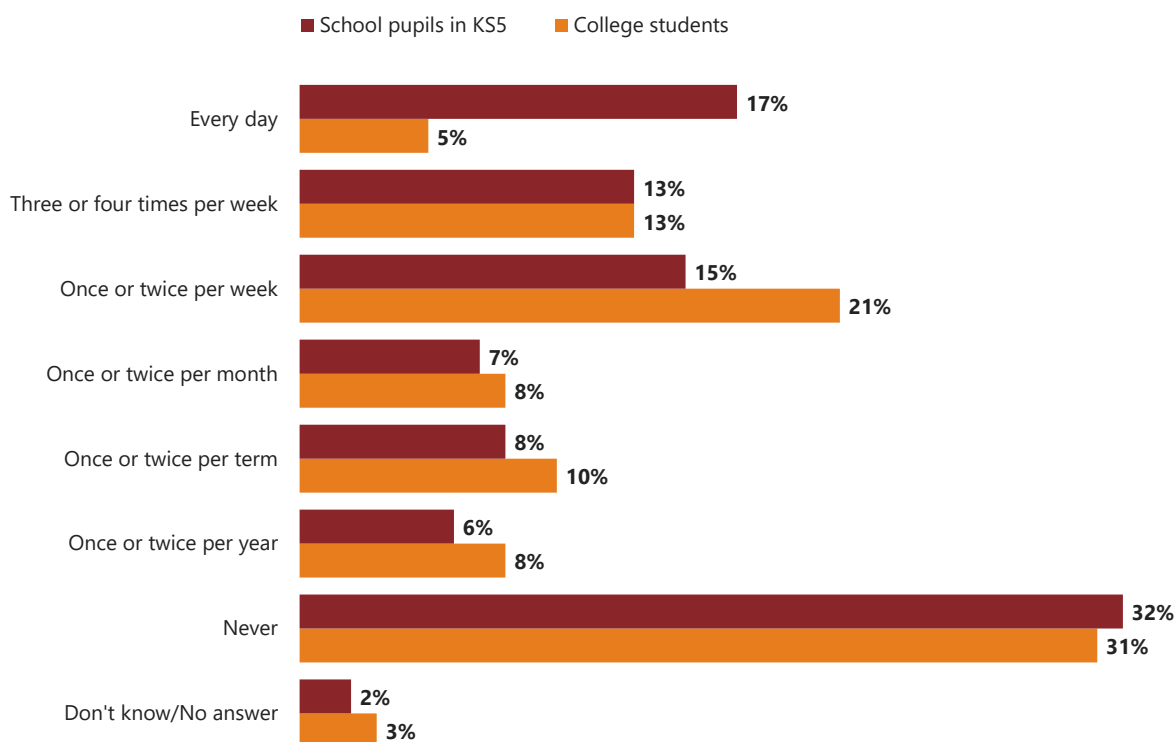
### Year of learning

Students in their first year of learning were less likely to report having typically eaten college lunches at least weekly (33%), compared with students in their second year of learning (47%).

*There were no differences found by qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

**Figure 25: 'Over the last 12 months, how often have you typically eaten school/college lunches? By school/college lunches, we mean food served by the school/college at lunch time.'**



Base: School pupils in KS5 (608) and college students (317)

There were two significant differences between the responses of college students and school pupils in KS5:

- College students were less likely to report having typically eaten school/college lunches ‘every day’ (5%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (17%); and
- College students were more likely to report having typically eaten school/college lunches ‘once or twice per week’ (21%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (15%).

## Background – Sanitary products

In its single departmental plan, the DfE has made clear its commitment to ensuring that they prioritise the needs of the most disadvantaged. The department’s current guidance on Relationship and Sex Education encourages schools to make sensitive arrangements to help girls cope with menstruation. Schools have discretion over how they use their funding and can make sanitary products available if they identify this as a barrier to attendance. The department supports schools in addressing the needs of disadvantaged pupils through pupil premium funding, worth more than £2.4 billion of additional funding in 2018 alone.

The government is also awarding £15 million a year to women’s charities through the Tampon Tax Fund – equivalent to the amount of VAT raised from the sale of women’s sanitary products. In the last round of the Tampon Tax Fund the government provided over £1.6 million for the ‘Let’s Talk. Period.’ Project, delivered by ‘Brook Young People’ across England. The project will identify vulnerable and disadvantaged girls and young women who struggle to afford sanitary products. The project will develop resources to educate girls about menstruation and hand out pre-paid cards allowing girls and young women in need to access free sanitary products at local distribution points.

## Do school pupils and college students have free access to sanitary products at their school or college?

### School pupils

Female school pupils were asked ‘Does your school provide free access to sanitary products (e.g. tampons, towels) for those who need them?’

Overall, 46% of school pupils said ‘yes’, 21% said ‘no’, and 33% did not know whether their school provides free access to sanitary products.

### Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of female school pupils who said ‘yes’, their school does provide free access to sanitary products for those that need them.

## **Pupil's key stage and year group**

Pupils in KS4 were more likely to say their school provides free access to sanitary products (51%), compared with pupils in KS3 (43%) and KS5 (40%). This was driven by the high percentage of year 11 pupils who reported that their school provides free access to sanitary products (58%) – this figure is significantly higher than all other year groups (which range between 38% and 46%).

## **Disadvantage**

When looking across the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintiles, pupils in the third (48%), fourth (48%) and fifth (51%) quintiles (the most deprived) were more likely to say their school provides free access to sanitary products, compared with pupils in the first quintile (35%).

However, there was no significant difference between pupils who were eligible for FSM (48%) and pupils who were not (45%).

*There were no differences found by SEN or region.*

*Due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by ethnicity.*

## **College students**

Female college students were asked 'Does your college provide free access to sanitary products (e.g. tampons, towels) for those who need them?'

Overall, 22% of college students said 'yes', 32% said 'no', and 45% did not know whether their college provides free access to sanitary products.

## **Significant differences by subgroup**

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of female college students who said 'yes', their college does provide free access to sanitary products for those that need them.

*There were no differences found by year of learning or qualification type.*

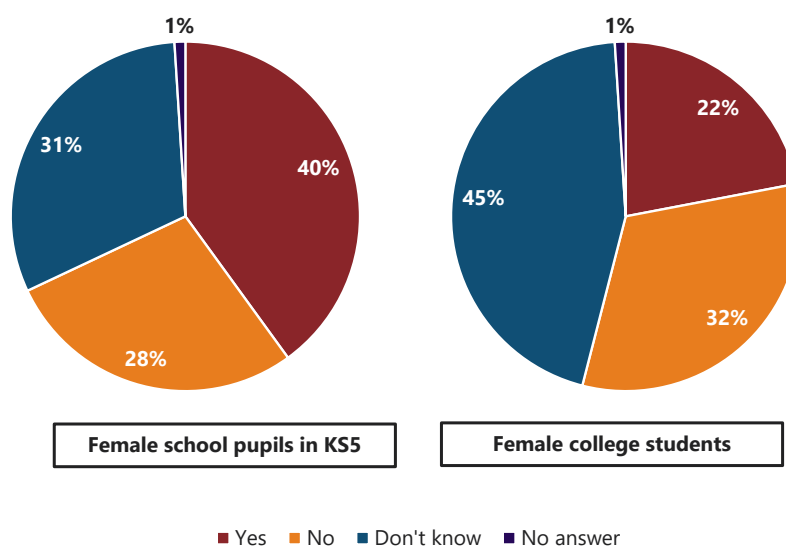
## **Significant differences by sample type**

There were two significant differences between the responses of school pupils in KS5 and college students:

- Female college students were less likely to say their school/college provides free access to sanitary products for those that need them (22%), compared with female school pupils in KS5 (40%).

- Female college students were more likely to say they did not know whether their school/college provides free access to sanitary products (45%), compared with female school pupils in KS5 (31%).

**Figure 26: 'Does your school/college provide free access to sanitary products (e.g. tampons, towels) for those who need them?'**



Base: Female school pupils in KS5 (341) and female college students (185)

## How do schools and colleges make free sanitary products available?

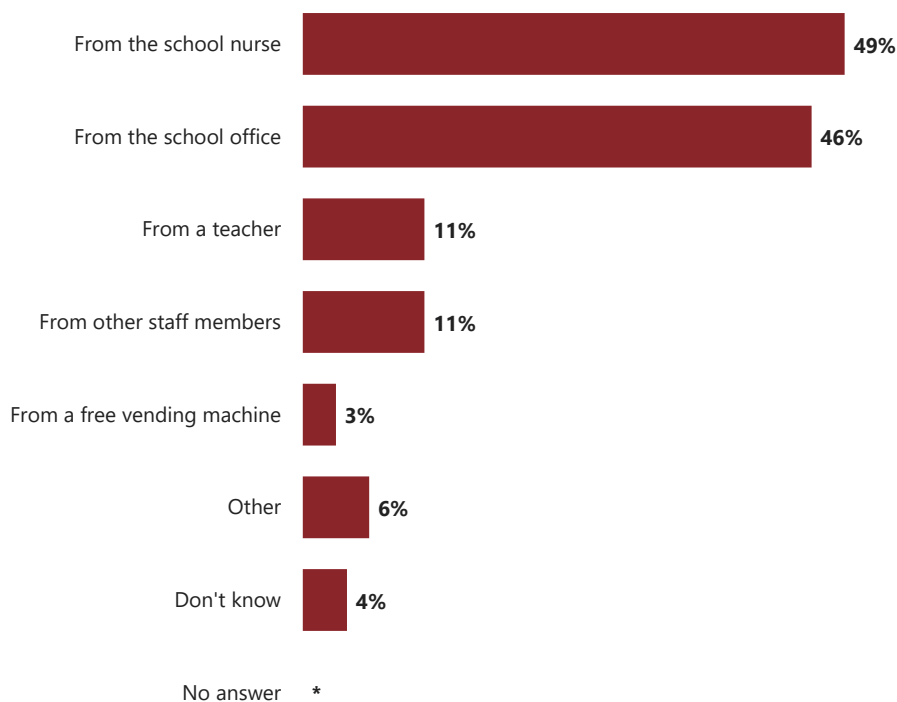
### School pupils

Female school pupils who said 'yes', their school does provide free access to sanitary products, were then asked 'How does your school make these products available?'. Pupils could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list.

As shown on Figure 27, 49% of the female school pupils asked said their school makes sanitary products available 'from the school nurse', and 46% said 'from the school office'. 11% of female school pupils said these products were available 'from a teacher' or 'from other staff members', and just 3% said these products were available 'from a free vending machine'.



**Figure 27: 'How does your school make these products available?'**



**Base: All female school pupils (529) where their school provide free access to sanitary products**

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Pupil's key stage

Female school pupils in KS3 were more likely to report that their school makes sanitary products available 'from a teacher' (15%), compared with female school pupils in KS4 (7%) and KS5 (6%).

### Disadvantage

Female school pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to report that their school makes sanitary products available 'from a teacher' (19%), compared with female school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (10%). However, please note that due to small base size for FSM eligibility<sup>17</sup>, this result should be treated as indicative only.

*Due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by pupil's year group, IDACI quintile, SEN, ethnicity or region.*

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<sup>17</sup> Small base size (n=70 female school pupils who were eligible for FSM).

## College students

Female college students who said 'yes', their college does provide free access to sanitary products, were then asked 'How does your college make these products available?'. Students could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list.

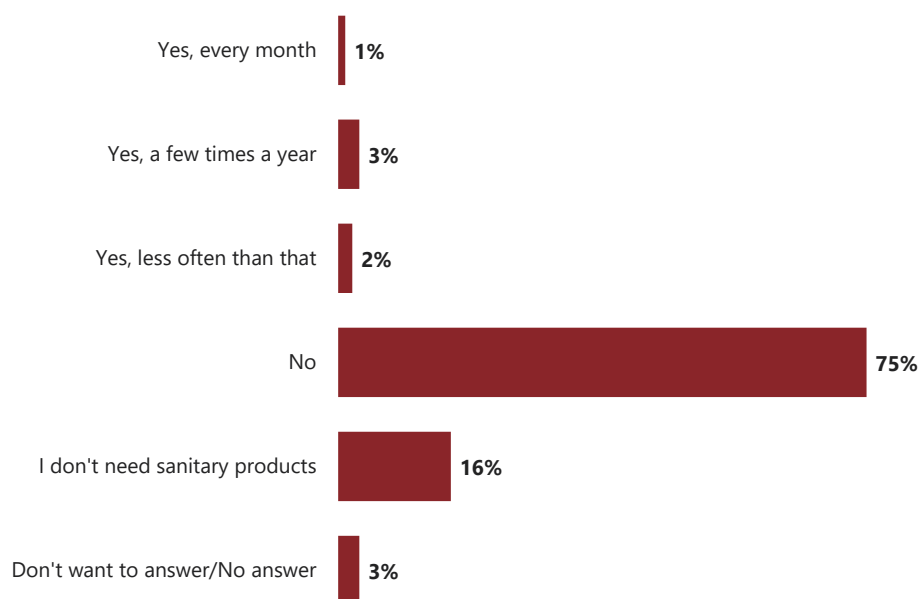
*With a sample size of 40 female college students, we are unable to report the findings for this question.*

## Have school pupils or college students ever been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost?

### School pupils

All female school pupils were asked 'Have you ever been unable to access sanitary products (e.g. tampon, towels) over the past 12 months because of their cost?'

**Figure 28: 'Have you ever been unable to access sanitary products (e.g. tampon, towels) over the past 12 months because of their cost?'**



**Base: All female school pupils (1,195)**

Overall, 6% of female school pupils indicated that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost, with 1% saying 'yes, every month', 3% saying 'yes, a few times a year', and 2% saying 'yes, less often than

that'. When excluding the female school pupils who reported that they 'don't need sanitary products' from the base sample size, the overall figure increases from 6% to 7%.

Of those who reported that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost, 35% indicated that they had free access to sanitary products at their school, 48% indicated that they did not have free access to these products at their school, and 17% indicated that they did not know whether their school provides these products for free. However, please note that due to small base<sup>18</sup>, these findings should be treated as indicative only.

Female school pupils that answered 'yes' (either 'yes, every month', 'yes, a few times a year', or 'yes, less often than that') were then asked the follow-up question 'And how, if at all, has this affected you over the past 12 months?' However, due to the small sample size, we are unable to report the findings for this question.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of female school pupils who said 'yes', they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months (either 'every month', 'a few times a year', or 'less often than that') because of their cost.

### Pupil's key stage

The proportion of female school pupils who indicated that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost appeared to increase with age: female school pupils in KS4 (9%) and KS5 (11%) were more likely to indicate that they had experienced this, compared with female school pupils in KS3 (4%). When female school pupils who reported that they 'don't need sanitary products' are excluded from the base sample size, the same trend is still apparent: female school pupils in KS4 (13%) and KS5 (15%) were more likely to indicate that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost, compared with female school pupils in KS3 (5%).

### Disadvantage

Female school pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to report that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost (14%), compared with female school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (5%).

*There were no differences found by SEN, ethnicity or region.*

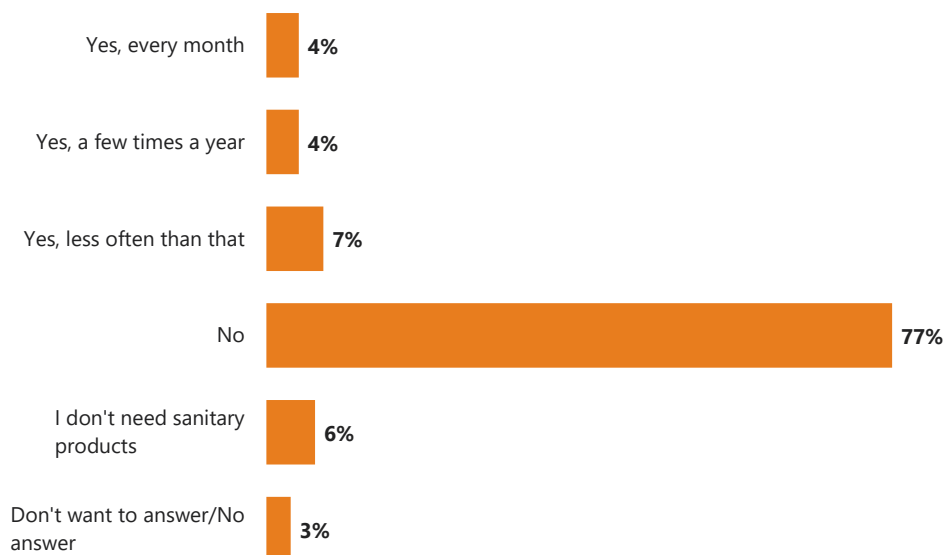
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<sup>18</sup> Small base size (n=70 female school pupils who were unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost).

## College students

All female college students were asked the same question: ‘Have you ever been unable to access sanitary products (e.g. tampon, towels) over the past 12 months because of their cost?’

**Figure 29: ‘Have you ever been unable to access sanitary products (e.g. tampon, towels) over the past 12 months because of their cost?’**



**Base: Female college students (185)**

Overall, 14% of female college students indicated that they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost, with 4% saying ‘yes, every month’, 4% saying ‘yes, a few times a year’, and 7% saying ‘yes, less often than that’. When you exclude the female college students who reported that they ‘don’t need sanitary products’ from the base sample size, the overall figure increases from 14% to 15%.

Female college students that answered ‘yes’ (either ‘yes, every month’, ‘yes, a few times a year’, or ‘yes, less often than that’) were then asked the follow-up question ‘And how, if at all, has this affected you over the past 12 months?’ However, due to the small base size, we are unable to report the findings for this question.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of female college students who said ‘yes’, they had been unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months (either ‘every month’, ‘a few times a year’, or ‘less often than that’) because of their cost.

*There were no differences found by year of learning or qualification type.*

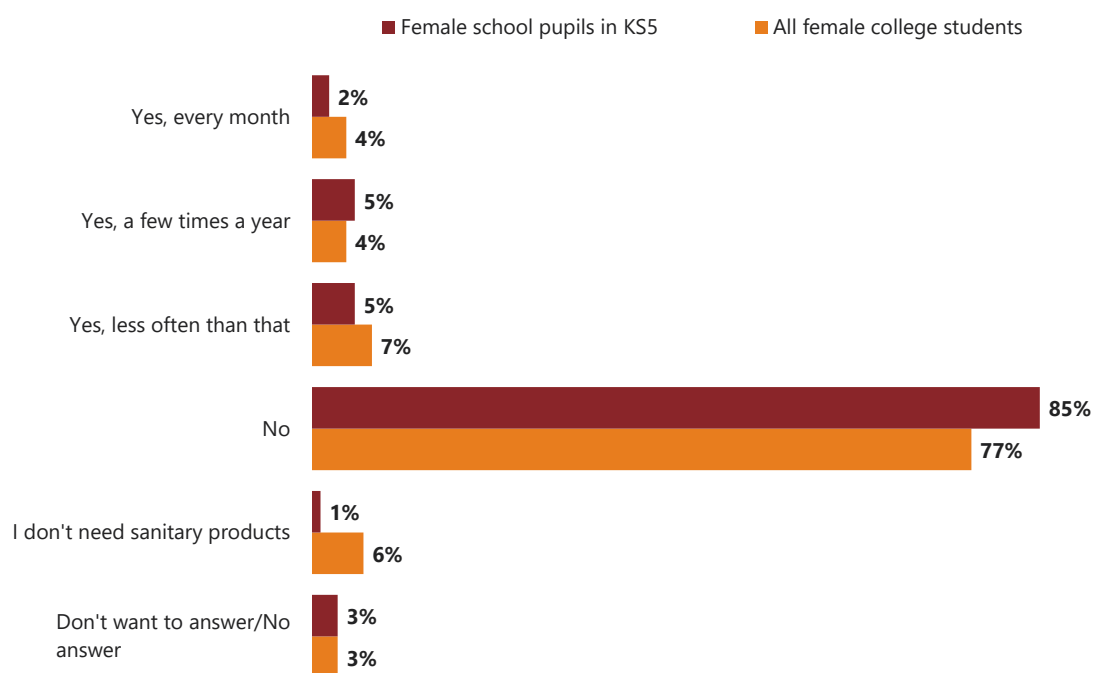
## Significant differences by sample type

There were two significant differences between the responses of school pupils in KS5 and college students:

- Female college students were less likely to say 'no', they had not experienced being unable to access sanitary products over the past 12 months because of their cost (77%), compared with female school pupils in KS5 (85%).
- Female college students were more likely to say they 'don't need sanitary products' (6%), compared with female school pupils in KS5 (1%).

Notably, there were no significant differences between the proportion of school pupils in KS5 and proportion of college students who reported that they had experienced this. This is still true when female school pupils who reported that they 'don't need sanitary products' are excluded from the base sample size.

**Figure 30: 'Have you ever been unable to access sanitary products (e.g. tampon, towels) over the past 12 months because of their cost?'**



Base: Female school pupils in KS5 (341) and female college students (185)

## Background – Attendance

Attending school regularly is essential to ensure that pupils benefit from their education and fulfil their potential. Pupils that miss lessons are more likely to fall behind, and have

lower achievement levels at both primary and secondary schools<sup>19</sup>. Absence rates decreased from 2006/07 until 2013/14 but have remained fairly steady since then. Between 2015/16 and 2016/17, absence levels increased in secondary and special schools, although they remained steady in primary schools. In addition, around one in ten pupils were persistently absent from school during the 2016/17 academic year, according to official statistics released by the DfE<sup>20</sup>. This survey included questions to those who report that they miss school regularly, to understand the reasons behind persistent absence. At KS5, colleges and other FE providers are responsible for tracking and improving their learners' attendance, by setting their own learner attendance policy.

## How often do school pupils and college students miss school/college?

### School pupils and parents/carers

School pupils were asked 'Over the last year, how often did you miss school?' Their parent/carer was also asked the same question: 'Over the last year, how often did your child miss school?' The same response list was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of school pupils and parents/carers.

Overall, there were no significant differences between the responses of school pupils and parents/carers (Figure 31 below). In total, 79% of school pupils and 79% of parents/carers reported that they/their child had missed school at least once over the last year. Notably, this 79% does not reflect the same group of households (i.e. the 79% of school pupils and 79% of parents/carers were not from the same households).

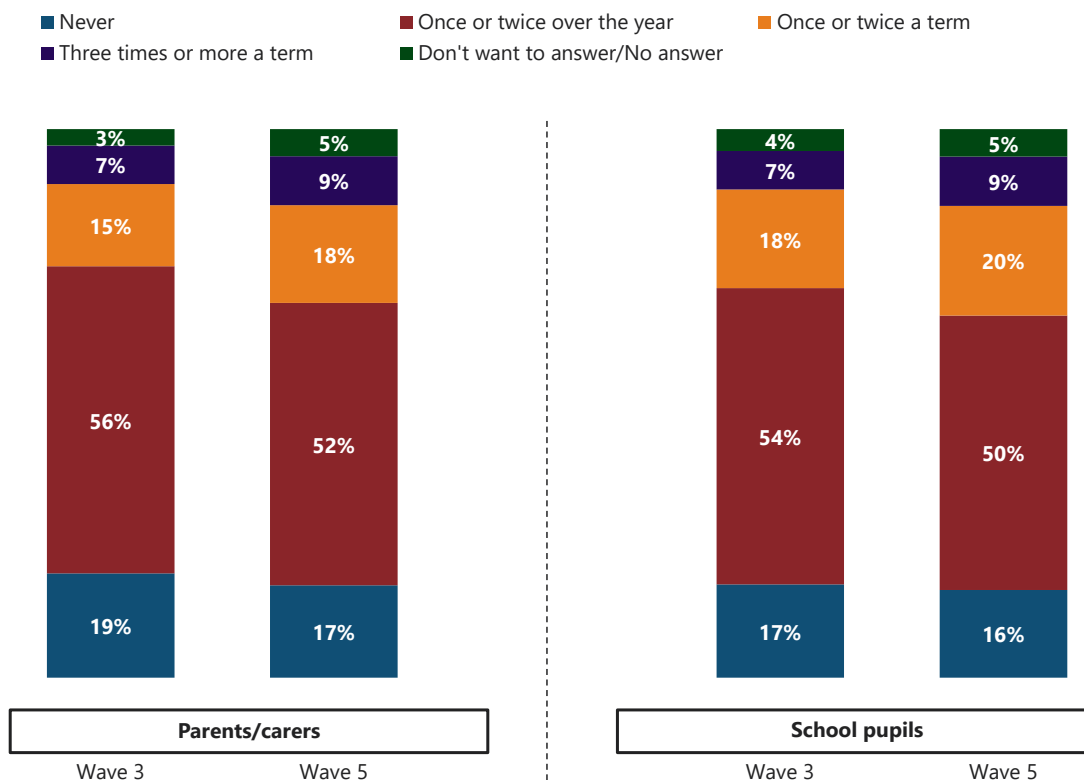
Looking at regular school absence over the last year (defined as 'once or twice a term' or 'three times or more a term') 29% of school pupils reported that they had missed school regularly, while 27% of parents/carers reported that their child had missed school regularly.

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<sup>19</sup> Department for Education. (2016). School attendance: Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, pg 4.:  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/564599/school\\_attendance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/564599/school_attendance.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Department for Education. (2018). Pupil absence in schools in England: 2016 to 2017:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/pupil-absence-in-schools-in-england-2016-to-2017>

**Figure 31: ‘Over the last year, how often did you/your child miss school?’**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils and school pupils at wave 3 (1,504) and wave 5 (2,265)

Furthermore, as the same questions about attendance were asked at wave 3, we can also make wave-on-wave comparisons. In general, school pupils and parents/carers reported greater levels of school absence at wave 5 compared with wave 3.

Comparing the responses of parents/carers at wave 3 and wave 5:

- Parents/carers at wave 5 were less likely to report that their child missed school ‘once or twice’ over the last 12 months (52%), compared with parents/carers at wave 3 (56%).
- Parents/carers at wave 5 were more likely to report that their child missed school ‘once or twice a term’ over the last 12 months (18%), compared with parents/carers at wave 3 (15%).
- Parents/carers at wave 5 were more likely to report that their child missed school ‘three times or more a term’ over the last 12 months (9%), compared with parents/carers at wave 3 (7%).

Comparing the responses of school pupils at wave 3 and wave 5:

- School pupils at wave 5 were less likely to report that they missed school ‘once or twice’ over the last 12 months (50%), compared with school pupils at wave 3 (54%).

- School pupils at wave 5 were more likely to report that they missed school ‘three times or more a term’ over the last 12 months (9%), compared with school pupils at wave 3 (7%).

## Paired response

As both the school pupil and their parent/carer indicated how often the pupil had missed school over the last year, we have compared their responses:

- 76% of school pupils and their parents/carers gave the same answer as each other about how often the pupil had missed school. Of those households, 13% agreed that the pupil had ‘never’ missed school.
- In 15% of households, the school pupil said they missed school more frequently than their parent/carer indicated.
- In 9% of households, the parent/carer said their child missed school more frequently than the child themselves indicated.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of school pupils and parents/carers who reported that they/their child missed school regularly<sup>21</sup>.

### Pupil’s key stage and year group

As shown in Table 18, older school pupils were more likely to report that they had missed school regularly. These differences are statistically significant. For example, pupils in KS3 (26%) were less likely than pupils in KS4 (32%) and KS5 (35%) to say that they had missed school at least ‘once or twice a term’ over the last year.

**Table 18: The proportion of school pupils who reported missing school at least ‘once or twice a term’ over the last year, by year group and key stage**

	Year Group							Key Stage		
	Year 7 (A)	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)	KS3 (H)	KS4 (I)	KS5 (J)
<i>Base:</i>	366	357	333	311	283	316	292	1056	594	608
<i>% of pupils</i>	23	28	28	33 A	31 A	32 A	39 A,B,C,E	26	32 H	35 H

ABCDEFGHIJ = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I/J.

For parents/carers of school pupils, however, no significant differences were found by pupil’s key stage or year group.

<sup>21</sup> Defined as ‘once or twice a term’ or ‘three times or more a term’.



## Pupil's gender

Girls (32%) were more likely than boys (27%) to report that they had missed school regularly over the last year. For parents/carers of school pupils, no gender differences were reported: parents/carers of girls were just as likely as parents/carers of boys to report that their child had missed school regularly over the past year.

## Disadvantage

There was a clear difference between those eligible for FSM, and those who were not. School pupils who were FSM eligible were more likely to say that they had missed school regularly over the last year (45%), compared with school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (27%). The same trend was evident among parents/carers, with parents/carers of school pupils who were FSM eligible being more likely to say that their child missed school regularly over the last year (42%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (25%).

## SEN

There was also a clear difference between those in receipt of SEN provision, and those who were not. School pupils who were receiving SEN provision were more likely to say that they had missed school regularly over the last year (38%), compared with school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (27%). The same trend was evident among parents/carers, with parents/carers of school pupils receiving SEN provision being more likely to say that their child missed school regularly over the last year (37%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (24%).

## Region

Parents/carers of school pupils in the South were more likely to report that their child missed school regularly (30%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the North (22%). For school pupils, no regional differences were reported.

*There were no differences found by ethnicity.*

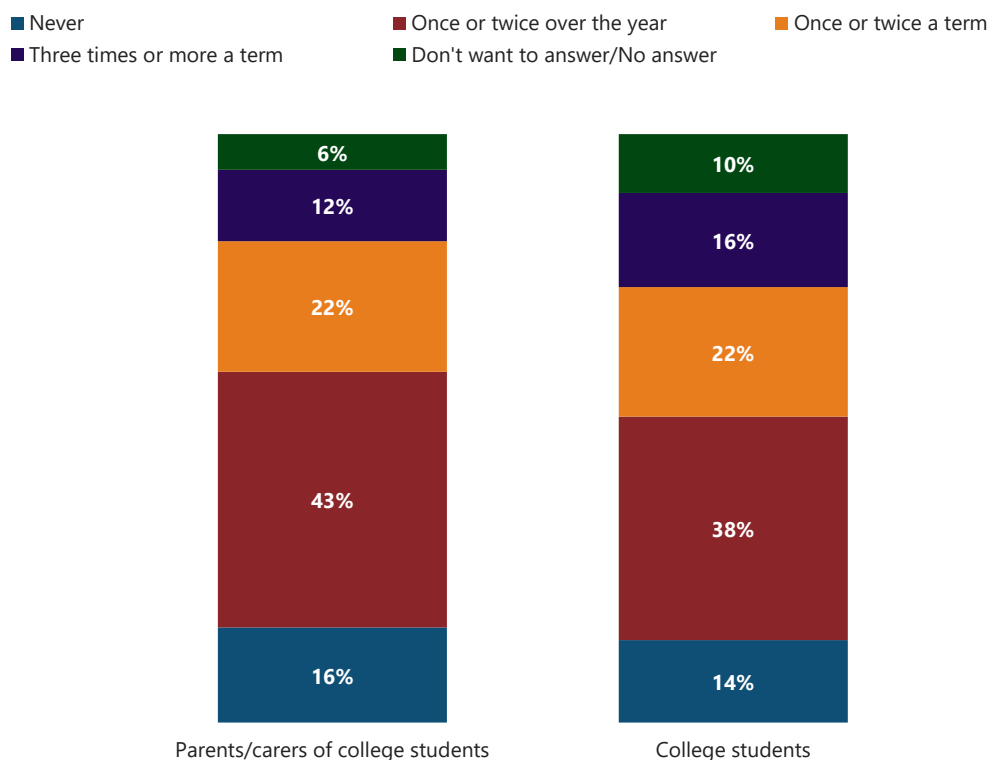
## College students and parents/carers

College students were asked 'Over the last year, how often did you miss college?'. Their parent/carer was also asked the same question: 'Over the last year, how often did your child miss college?'. The same response list was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of college students and parents/carers.

Overall, there were no significant differences between the responses of college students and parents/carers (Figure 32 below). In total, 76% of college students and 77% of parents/carers reported that they/their child had missed college at least once over the last year. Looking at regular college absence over the last year (defined as 'once or twice a term' or 'three times or more a term'), 38% of college students reported that they had

missed college regularly, while 34% of parents/carers reported that their child had missed college regularly.

**Figure 32: ‘Over the last year, how often did you/your child miss college?’**



Base: Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)

## Paired response

As both the college student and their parent/carer indicated how often the student had missed college over the last year, we have compared their responses:

- 69% of college students and their parents/carers gave the same answer as each other about how often the student had missed college. Of those households, 12% of agreed that the student had ‘never’ missed college.
- In 21% of households, the college student said they missed college more frequently than their parent/carer indicated.
- In 10% of households, the parent/carer said their child missed college more frequently than the child themselves indicated.

## Significant differences by subgroup

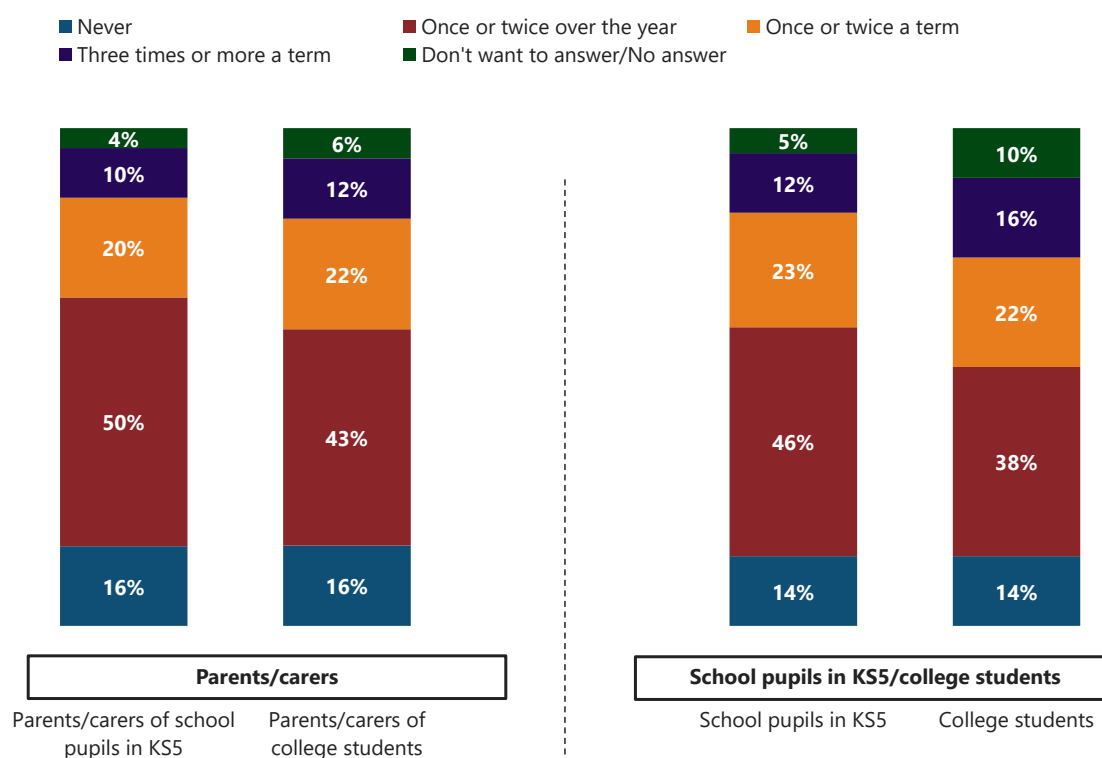
Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of college students and parents/carers who reported that they/their child missed college regularly<sup>22</sup>.

*There were no differences found by student's gender, year of learning or qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

There was one key significant difference by sample type. Parents/carers of college students were less likely to report that their child missed college/school 'once or twice over the year' (43%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (50%). The same trend was reported by their children, with college students being less likely to say that they had missed college/school 'once or twice over the year' (38%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (46%).

**Figure 33: 'Over the last year, how often did you/your child miss school/college?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 and school pupils in KS5 (608). Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)**

<sup>22</sup> Defined as 'once or twice a term' or 'three times or more a term'.

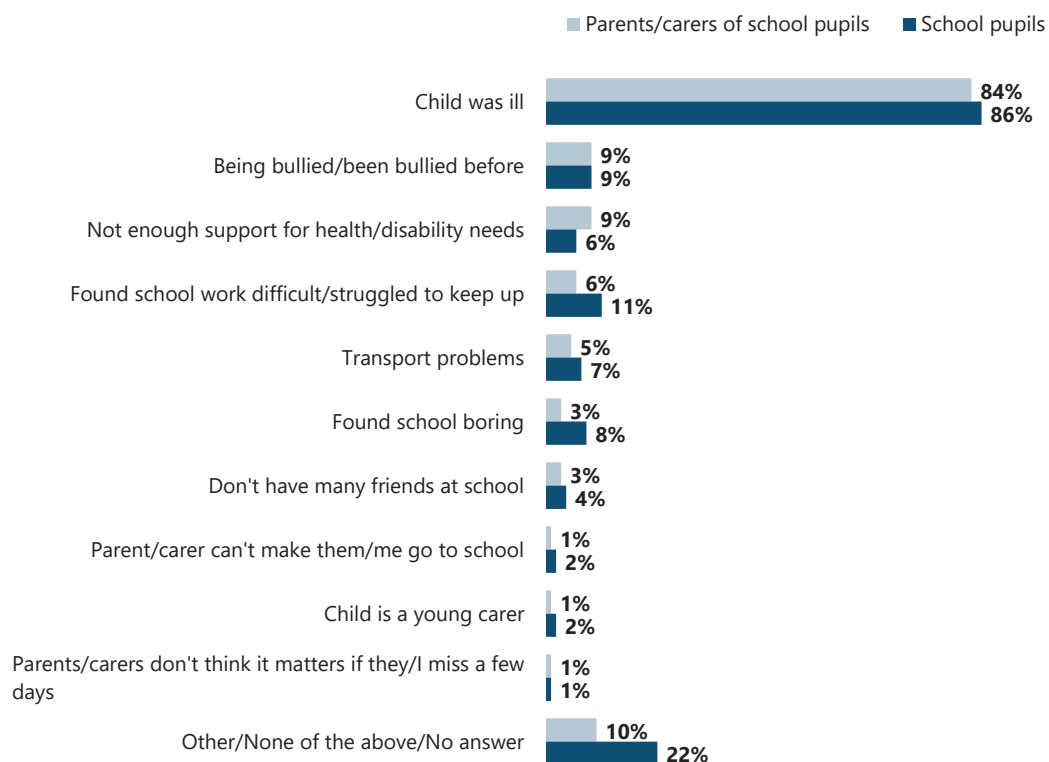
# What has stopped school pupils and college students going to school/college regularly?

## School pupils and parents/carers

School pupils who reported that they had missed school regularly over the last year (defined as 'once or twice a term' or 'three times or more a term') were asked 'Which, if any, have stopped you going to school regularly?' Parents/carers who reported that their child had missed school regularly over the last year were also asked the same question: 'Which, if any, have stopped your child going to school regularly?' The same response list was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of school pupils and parents/carers. School pupils and parents/carers could select as many responses as applicable.

Overall, the most frequently given reason for regular school absence by both school pupils and parents/carers was they were/I was 'ill' (86% and 84% respectively).

**Figure 34: 'Which, if any, have stopped you/your child going to school regularly?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who have missed school at least once or twice a term (609). School pupils who have missed school at least once or twice a term (577)**

When analysing the results, there were some key differences between school pupils and their parents'/carers' responses. School pupils were more likely to say they 'found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work' (11%) or 'found school boring' (8%), compared with parents/carers (6% and 3% respectively). On the other hand,

parents/carers were more likely to say their child's school 'didn't give enough support for their health/disability needs' (9%), compared with school pupils (6%).

Furthermore, as the same questions about reasons for missing school were asked at wave 3, we can also make wave-on-wave comparisons. Overall, the responses at wave 3 and wave 5 were very similar. However, there were two significant differences:

- School pupils at wave 5 were more likely to say that they had missed school regularly because they 'found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work' (11%), compared with school pupils at wave 3 (7%).
- Parents/carers at wave 5 were less likely to say that their child had missed school regularly because 'they were being bullied or have been bullied before' (9%), compared with parents/carers at wave 3 (15%).

## Paired response

The findings above focus on all school pupils who indicated that they had missed school regularly, and all parents/carers who indicated that their child had missed school regularly. The paired response analysis, however, includes households only where both the school pupil and parent/carer indicated that the pupil had missed school regularly. The most prominent differences in paired response were seen for the following reasons:

- School pupils were more likely to say they had missed school regularly because they 'found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work' (13%), compared with parents/carers (6%).
- School pupils were also more likely to say they had missed school regularly because they 'found school boring' (9%), compared with parents/carers (3%).

## Significant differences by subgroup

Like wave 3, illness was by far the most frequently given reason for regular school absence across all subgroups of school pupils and parents/carers. However, there were some variations in responses, which are discussed below.

### Pupil's key stage

The reasons reported for regular school absence varied across key stages. As there was no clear overall trend, we have analysed these key differences by each key stage.

#### ***Reasons more prevalent in KS3***

School pupils in KS3 were more likely to say that they were 'ill' (90%) or were 'being bullied or have been bullied before' (8%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (77% and 4% respectively).

For parents/carers of school pupils, there were significant differences for the same two reasons: parents/carers of school pupils in KS3 were more likely to say that their child

had been 'ill' (87%) or were 'being bullied or have been bullied before' (12%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (78% and 3% respectively).

### ***Reasons more prevalent in KS4***

School pupils in KS4 were more likely to say that they 'found school boring' (10%) or 'my school didn't give enough support for my health/disability needs' (9%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (4% for both reasons).

On the other hand, school pupils in KS4 were also more likely to say that they were 'being bullied or have been bullied before' (11%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (4%).

For parents/carers, similar trends were reported. Parents/carers of school pupils in KS4 were more likely to say that their child 'found school boring' (5%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS3 (1%). In addition, parents/carers of school pupils in KS4 were more likely to say their child's school 'didn't give enough support for their health/disability needs' (13%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in both KS3 (7%) and KS5 (5%).

### ***Reasons more prevalent in KS5***

- School pupils in KS5 were more likely to say that they 'found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work' (24%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (6%) and KS4 (11%).
- School pupils in KS5 were more likely to say that they 'found school boring' (16%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (4%).
- School pupils in KS5 were more likely to say that they 'had transport problems' (11%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (6%).
- School pupils in KS5 were more likely to say that they 'had to care for someone at home' (4%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (1%).

For the reason 'they found school boring', a similar trend was evident among parents/carers. Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 were more likely to report that their child missed school regularly for this reason (6%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS3 (1%).

*For school pupils and parents/carers, due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by pupil's year group.*

### **Pupil's gender**

There was one gender difference reported in the school pupil questionnaire: boys were more likely to say that they had stopped going to school regularly because they 'found school boring' (10%), compared with girls (5%).

For parents/carers of school pupils, no gender differences were reported.

## **Disadvantage**

For school pupils, those who were eligible for FSM were more likely to say that they had stopped going to school regularly because they were 'being bullied or have been bullied before' (14%), compared with those who were not eligible for FSM (7%).

For parents/carers of school pupils, there were significant differences for the following reasons for missing school regularly:

- Parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to say 'there were issues with transport' (11%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (3%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to say their child 'found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work' (10%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (5%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to say their child does not have many friends at school (6%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (2%).

*We were unable to analyse subgroup differences by IDACI quintile due to the small sample sizes within each category for both school pupils and parents/carers.*

## **SEN**

For school pupils, there were significant differences for the following reasons for missing school regularly:

- School pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that they 'found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work' (21%), compared with school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (8%).
- School pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that they were 'being bullied or have been bullied before' (21%), compared with school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (8%).
- School pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that 'my school didn't give enough support for my health/disability needs' (16%), compared with school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (4%).
- School pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that they 'don't have many friends at school' (10%), compared with school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (3%).

For parents/carers of school pupils, there were significant differences for the same four reasons:

- Parents/carers of school pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that they ‘found school work difficult/struggled to keep up with school work’ (18%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (3%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that they were ‘being bullied or have been bullied before’ (24%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (7%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that ‘my school didn’t give enough support for my health/disability needs’ (20%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (7%).
- Parents/carers of school pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were more likely to say that they ‘don’t have many friends at school’ (8%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (2%).

On the other hand, school pupils who were in receipt of SEN provision were less likely to say that they had missed school regularly because they were ‘ill’ (79%), compared with school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision (88%).

## Ethnicity

*For school pupils and parents/carers, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by ethnicity for school pupils and parents/carers, due to the small sample sizes within each category.*

## Region

School pupils based in London (13%) or the North (12%) were more likely to say that they had stopped going to school regularly because they ‘had transport problems’, compared with school pupils based in the South (4%).

*We were unable to analyse subgroup differences by region for parents/carers of school pupils due to the small sample sizes within each category.*

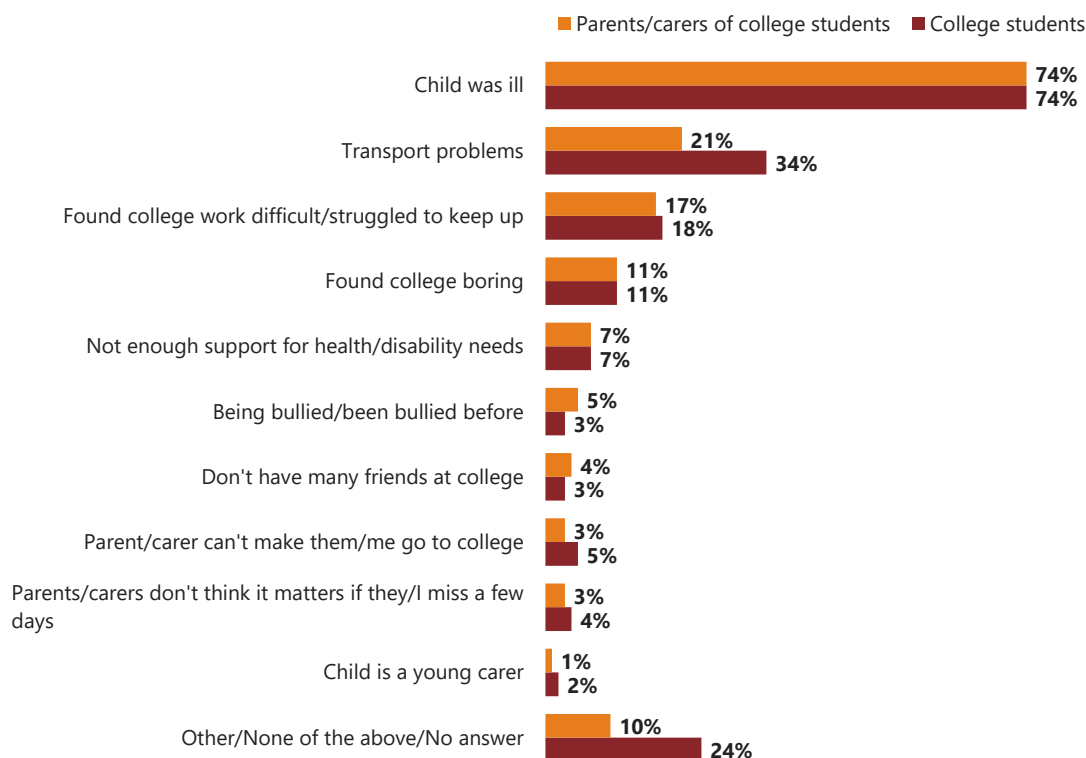
## College students and parents/carers

College students who reported that they had missed college regularly over the last year (defined as ‘once or twice a term’ or ‘three times or more a term’) were asked ‘Which, if any, have stopped you going to college regularly?’. Parents/carers who reported that their child had missed college regularly over the last year were also asked the same question: ‘Which, if any, have stopped your child going to college regularly?’. The same response list was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of college students and parents/carers. College students and parents/carers could select as many responses as applicable.



Overall, the most frequently given reason for regular college absence by both college students and parents/carers was that ‘they were/I was ill’ (74% respectively). Notably, this 74% does not reflect the same group of households (i.e. the 74% of college students and 74% of parents/carers were not from the same households).

**Figure 35: ‘Which, if any, have stopped you/your child going to college regularly?’**



**Base: Parents/carers of college students who have missed college at least once or twice a term (107). College students who have missed college at least once or twice a term (122)**

Looking at the differences in response between college students and parents/carers, there was only one significant difference: college students were more likely to say that they had missed college regularly because they had ‘transport problems’ (34%), compared with parents/carers (21%).

## Paired response

The findings above focus on all college students who indicated that they had missed college regularly, and all parents/carers who indicated that their child had missed college regularly. The paired response analysis, however, includes households only where both the college student and parent/carer indicated that the student had missed college regularly.

The most prominent differences in paired response were seen for the following reasons:

- College students were more likely to say they had missed college regularly because they ‘found college work difficult/struggled to keep up with college work’ (24%), compared with parents/carers (18%).

- College students were also more likely to say they had missed college regularly because they ‘found college boring’ (16%), compared with parents/carers (13%).
- On the other hand, parents/carers were more likely to say their child had missed college regularly because ‘they were ill’ (80%), compared with college students themselves (73%).

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Qualification type

College students who studied AS/A levels were more likely to say ‘my college didn’t give enough support for my health/disability needs’ (11%), compared with college students who studied a technical/vocational course (1%).

*For college students, due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by student’s gender or year or learning.*

*For parents/carers of college students, due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse any subgroup differences.*

### Significant differences by sample type

Comparing the responses of college students with school pupils in KS5, there was one significant difference: college students were more likely to say they ‘had transport problems’ (34%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (11%).

This trend was also evident among parents/carers: parents/carers of college students were more likely to say that there had been ‘issues with transport’ (21%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (6%).

In addition, parents/carers of college students were also more likely to say that their child ‘found school/college work difficult/struggled with school/college work’ (17%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (9%).

## Chapter 5 – Mental health support

*This chapter includes findings on mental health support. School pupils, college students and parents/carers were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements that they know how to look after their/their child's mental health and that they know where to go for advice/information if they/their child needed help with their mental health. Furthermore, school pupils and college students were asked who they would feel comfortable speaking to if they needed information or support for their mental health.*

### Background

Approximately 11% of children and young people aged 5-15 in England have a diagnosable mental health problem, children who suffer with a mental health problem face unequal chances in their lives, particularly where childhood mental health issues continue into adulthood.<sup>23</sup>

Where more serious mental health problems occur, schools and colleges should expect the pupil and their family to be supported by Children's and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS), run by NHS. These organisations should support and work alongside the existing role that schools and colleges already have. This role can include: activities that raise awareness of good mental health, recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible, providing early support for emerging problems or those with less severe issues, and working effectively with health services to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment. The Department for Education (DfE) has committed to supporting schools 'to promote good mental wellbeing in children, to provide a supportive environment for those experiencing problems, and to secure access to more specialist help for those who need it'.<sup>24</sup>

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) and the DfE published the government response to 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health: a Green Paper' on 25<sup>th</sup> July, 2018.<sup>25</sup> The government response sets out how they will incentivise every school and college to identify a Designated Senior Lead (DSL) for Mental Health to oversee the approach to mental health and wellbeing, introduce Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs), and pilot four-week waiting times.

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<sup>23</sup> NHS, 2018. Mental health of Children and Young People in Great Britain. <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-great-britain>

<sup>24</sup> Department for Education, 2016. DfE Strategy 2015-2020: World-class education and care. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/508421/DfE-strategy-narrative.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508421/DfE-strategy-narrative.pdf)

<sup>25</sup> Department of Health & Social Care & Department for Education, 2018. Government Response to the Consultation on Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper and Next Steps. <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

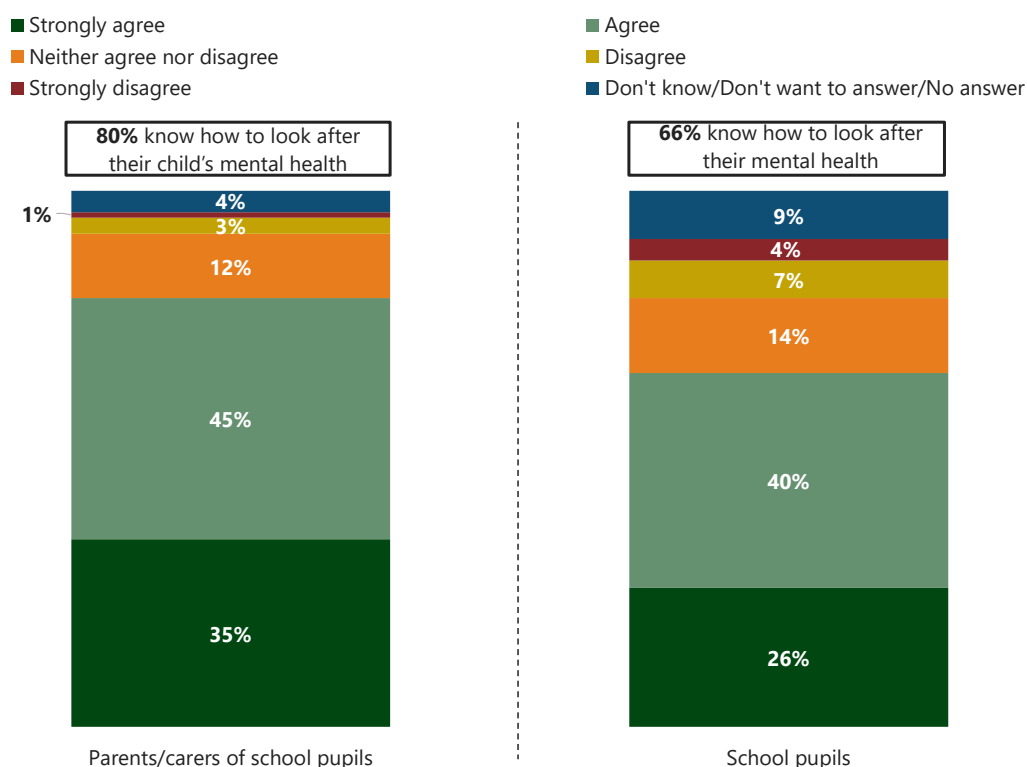
The DfE want to enable schools and colleges to develop effective support for mental health for pupils, students and parents/carers. This means it is important to understand whether pupils, students and parents/carers know how to look after their/their child's mental health or where to go if they do need help. In addition, the DfE needs to know who pupils and students feel comfortable speaking to if they needed information or support for their mental health

## Do school pupils, college students, and their parents/carers know enough about looking after mental health?

### School pupils and parents/carers

School pupils were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'I know enough about how to look after my mental health'. Parents/carers were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with a similar statement: 'I know how to look after my child's mental health'.

**Figure 36: 'How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my/my child's mental health'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils and school pupils (2,265)

Overall, parents/carers of school pupils were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (80%), compared with school pupils (66%). On the other hand, school pupils

were more likely to disagree with this mental health statement (11%), compared with parents/carers (4%).

### **Wave-on-wave trends for parents/carers of school pupils**

#### ***‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my child’s mental health’***

Overall levels of agreement with this mental health statement remained consistent between waves 1 and 3, with 83% of parents/carers at both waves agreeing that they know how to look after their child’s mental health. However, parents/carers at wave 5 were significantly less likely to agree with this statement (80%), compared with both waves 1 and 3 (83% at both waves).

On the other hand, overall levels of disagreement with this mental health statement have remained consistent across waves. There were no significant differences between wave 1 (3%), wave 3 (4%) or wave 5 (4%).

The full breakdown of responses is below in Table 19.

**Table 19: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my child’s mental health’, by wave**

<b>% parents/carers giving this answer</b>	<b>Wave 1 (A)</b>	<b>Wave 3 (B)</b>	<b>Wave 5 (C)</b>
Base:	1,723	1,504	2,265
‘Strongly agree’	31	36	35 <b>A</b>
‘Agree’	52 <b>C</b>	47	45
‘Neither nor disagree’	11 <b>B</b>	8	12 <b>B</b>
‘Disagree’	2	2	3 <b>A, B</b>
‘Strongly disagree’	1	2 <b>C</b>	1

**ABC** = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C

### **Wave-on-wave trends for school pupils**

#### ***‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my mental health’***

65% of school pupils agreed with the statement ‘I know enough about how to look after my mental health’ at wave 1. This significantly increased to 71% at wave 3, and significantly decreased back down to 66% at wave 5. There was no significant difference between the proportions of school pupils who agreed at waves 1 (65%) and 5 (66%).

Conversely, the proportion of school pupils who disagreed with the above statement did not significantly change wave-on-wave (14% at wave 1, 12% at wave 3, and then 11% at wave 5). However, school pupils at wave 5 were less likely to disagree (11%), compared with school pupils at wave 1 (14%).

The full breakdown of responses is below in Table 20.

**Table 20: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my mental health’, by wave**

% school pupils giving this answer	Wave 1 (A)	Wave 3 (B)	Wave 5 (C)
Base:	1,723	1,504	2,265
‘Strongly agree’	19	23 A	26 A,B
‘Agree’	46 C	48 C	40
‘Neither nor disagree’	15 B	12	14
‘Disagree’	11 B,C	8	7
‘Strongly disagree’	3	4	4

ABC = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C

## Paired response

### *‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my/my child’s mental health’*

As both the school pupil and their parent/carer indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with this mental health statement, we have compared their responses.

Where both the school pupil and their parent/carer gave the same answer:

- 61% agreed that they know enough about how to look after their/their child’s mental health, and
- 1% disagreed with this statement – that is, neither the school pupil or their parent/carer felt they know enough about this topic.

Where the school pupil and their parent/carer gave different answers:

- 2% of pupils agreed that they know enough about how to look after their mental health while their parent/carer disagreed, and
- 11% of parents/carers agreed with this statement while their child disagreed.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of school pupils and parents/carers who agreed (by selecting either 'agree' or 'strongly agree') that they know how to look after their/their child's mental health.

### Pupil's key stage

School pupils in key stage 3 (KS3, 68%) and key stage 4 (KS4, 66%) were more likely to agree that they know enough about how to look after their mental health, compared with school pupils in key stage 5 (KS5, 59%). For parents/carers, there were no differences found by pupil's key stage.

### Pupil's gender

Boys were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (71%), compared with girls (61%). For parents/carers, there was no difference found by pupil's gender.

### SEN

School pupils who were receiving provision for special educational needs (SEN) were less likely to agree that they know enough about how to look after their mental health (52%), compared with school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (68%). For parents/carers, there was no difference found by pupil's SEN.

### Ethnicity

Parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (83%) and parents/carers of White pupils (81%) were more likely to agree with this mental health statement, compared with parents/carers of pupils in other ethnic groups<sup>26</sup> (73%). For school pupils, there were no differences found by ethnicity.

### Region

Parents/carers of school pupils in the North were more likely to agree with this statement (86%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the South (80%) or London (75%).

*For both school pupils and parents/carers, there were no differences found by disadvantage (eligibility for free school meals (FSM) or Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintiles).*

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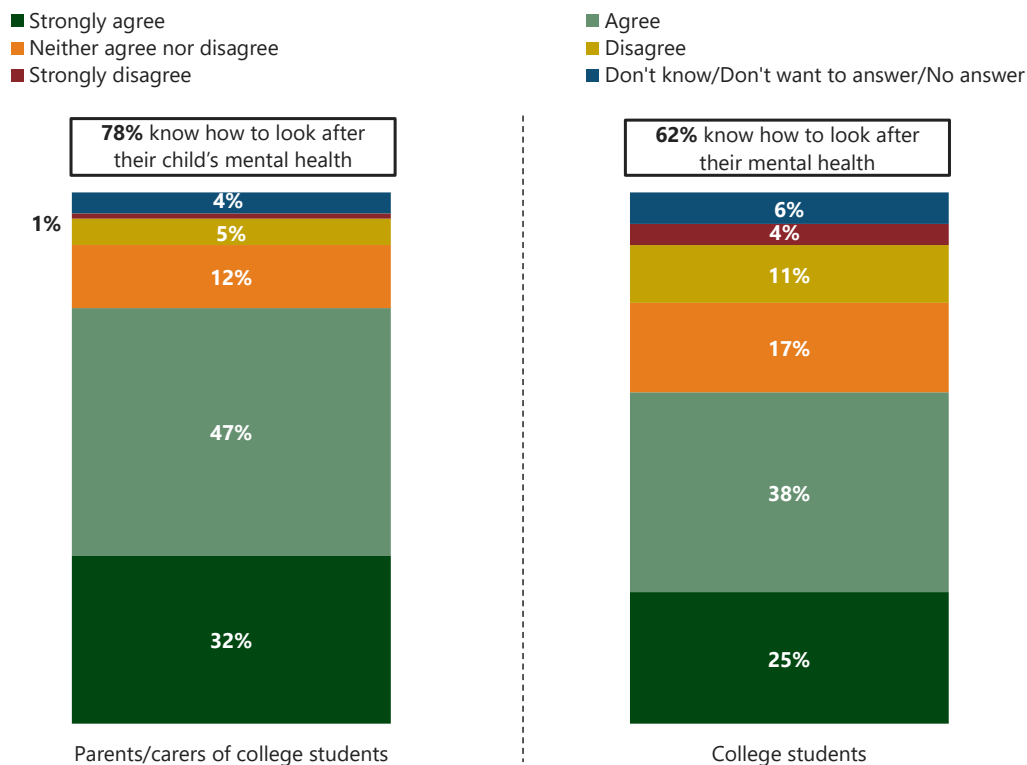
<sup>26</sup> For pupils in other ethnic groups, parents/carers selected that 'mixed/multiple ethnic groups' or 'other ethnic group' best described their child's ethnicity in the survey.

## College students and parents/carers

College students were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘I know enough about how to look after my mental health’. Parents/carers were also asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the similar statement: ‘I know how to look after my child’s mental health’. The same response scale was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of college students and parents/carers. This wave was the first time this question was asked for college students and parents/carers.

As shown in Figure 37, below, parents/carers of college students were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (78%), compared with college students (62%). In line with this, college students were however more likely to disagree with this mental health statement (15%), compared with parents/carers (6%).

**Figure 37: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my/my child’s mental health’**



Base: Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)

## Paired response

***‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my/my child’s mental health’***

As both the college student and their parent/carer indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with this mental health statement, a comparison of the responses has been made.



Where both the college student and their parent/carer gave the same answer:

- 59% agreed that they know enough about how to look after their/their child’s mental health, and
- 3% disagreed with this statement – that is, neither the college student or their parent/carer felt they know enough about this topic.

Where the college student and their parent/carer gave different answers:

- 2% of students agreed that they know enough about how to look after their mental health while their parent/carer disagreed, and
- 11% of parents/carers agreed with this statement while their child disagreed.

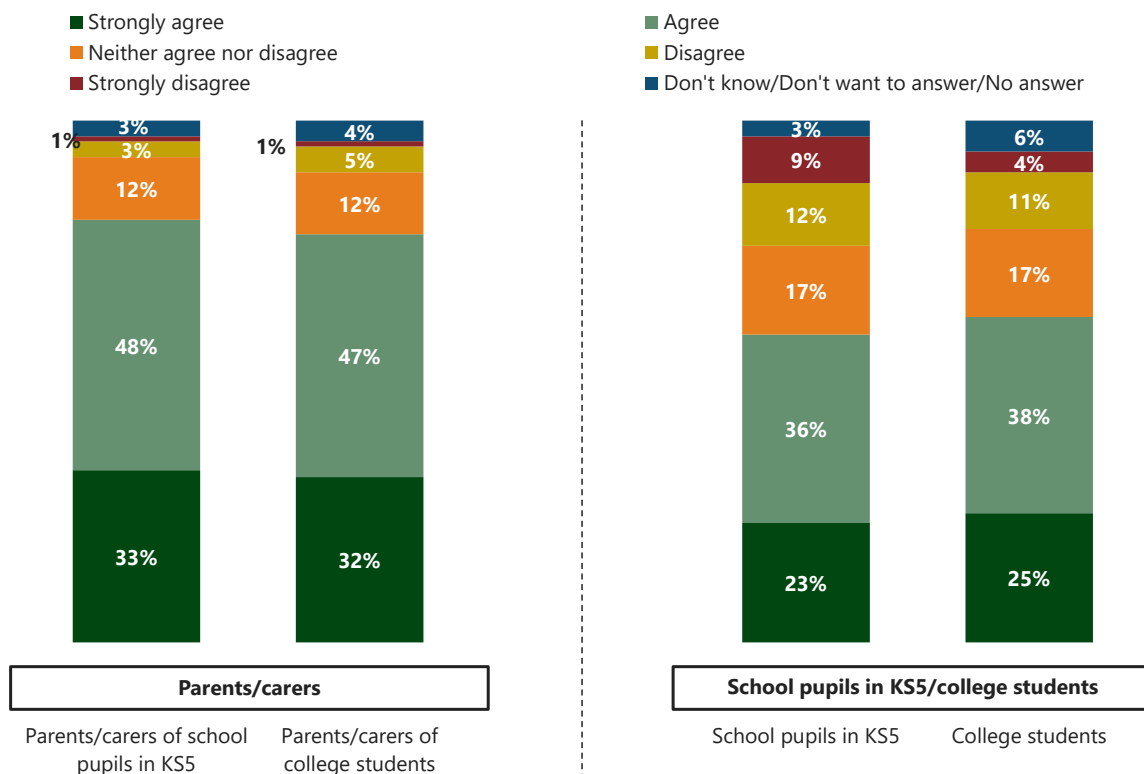
### Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of college students and parents/carers who agreed (by selecting either ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’) that they know how to look after their/their child’s mental health.

*For both college students and parents/carers, there were no differences found by student’s gender, year of learning or qualification type.*

### Significant differences by sample type

**Figure 38: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know enough about how to look after my/my child’s mental health’**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 and school pupils in KS5 (608). Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)**

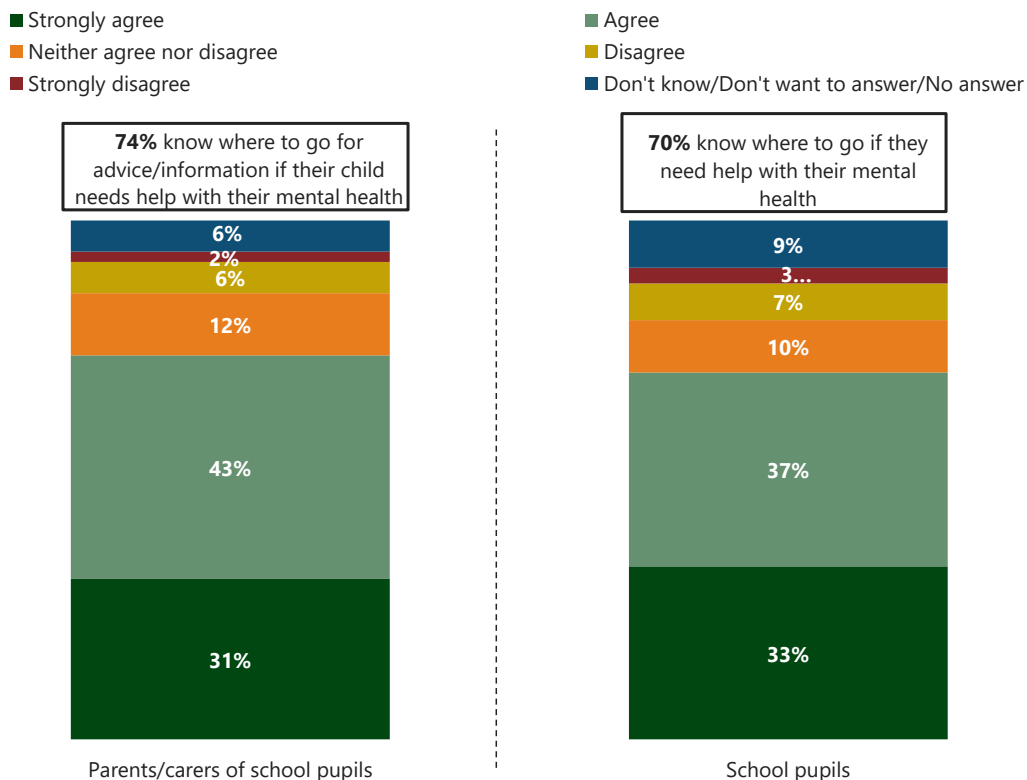
For parents/carers, there were no significant differences by sample type – that is, parents/carers of college students and parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 provided similar levels of agreement to this mental health statement. By contrast, college students (15%) were significantly less likely than school pupils in KS5 (21%) to disagree with this statement.

## Do school pupils, college students, and their parents/carers know where to go if they need help with mental health?

### School pupils and parents/carers

School pupils were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘I know where to go if I need help with my mental health’. Parents/carers were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the similar statement: ‘I know where to go for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health’. The same response scale was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of school pupils and parents/carers.

**Figure 39: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know where to go if I need help/for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health’**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils and school pupils (2,265)

Overall, parents/carers of school pupils were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (74%), compared with school pupils (70%). On the other hand, school pupils

were more likely to disagree with this mental health statement (11%), compared with parents/carers (9%).

### **Wave-on-wave trends for parents/carers of school pupils**

#### ***‘How much do you agree or disagree that... I know where to go for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health’***

Parents/carers at wave 5 were less likely to agree that they know where to go for advice/information if their child needs help with their mental health (74%), compared with parents/carers at wave 1 (78%). There were no significant differences between waves 1 (78%) and 3 (76%), or waves 3 (76%) and 5 (74%).

On the other hand, the proportion of parents/carers who disagreed with the above mental health statement have remained consistent across waves. There were no significant differences between wave 1 (8%), wave 3 (9%) or wave 5 (8%).

**Table 21: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know where to go for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health’, by wave**

<b>% parents/carers giving this answer</b>	<b>Wave 1 (A)</b>	<b>Wave 3 (B)</b>	<b>Wave 5 (C)</b>
Base:	1,723	1,504	2,265
‘Strongly agree’	28	29	31 <b>A</b>
‘Agree’	50 <b>C</b>	47 <b>C</b>	43
‘Neither nor disagree’	10	11	12 <b>A</b>
‘Disagree’	7	6	6
‘Strongly disagree’	1	3 <b>A</b>	2 <b>A</b>

**ABC** = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C

### **Wave-on-wave trends for school pupils**

#### ***‘How much do you agree or disagree that... I know where to go for help with my mental health’***

Overall levels of agreement were significantly higher at waves 3 and 5 (70%), compared with wave 1 (65%). The proportion of school pupils who agreed with this mental health statement at waves 3 and 5 did not significantly differ (70% at both waves).

Additionally, overall levels of disagreement were significantly lower at waves 3 (12%) and 5 (10%), compared with wave 1 (16%). The proportion of school pupils who disagreed with this mental health statement at waves 3 (12%) and 5 (10%) did not significantly differ.

**Table 22: ‘How much do you agree or disagree that...I know where to go if I need help with my mental health’, by wave**

% school pupils giving this answer	Wave 1 (A)	Wave 3 (B)	Wave 5 (C)
Base:	1,723	1,504	2,265
‘Strongly agree’	20	23	33 A,B
‘Agree’	45 C	48 C	37
‘Neither nor disagree’	13 C	12	10
‘Disagree’	12 B,C	8	7
‘Strongly disagree’	4	4	3

ABC = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C

## Paired response

*‘How much do you agree or disagree that... I know where to go if I need help/for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health’*

As both the school pupil and their parent/carer indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with this mental health statement, we have compared their responses.

Where both the school pupil and their parent/carer gave the same answer:

- 60% agreed that they know where to go if they/their child needs help with their mental health, and
- 2% disagreed with this statement – that is, neither the school pupil or their parent/carer felt they know where to go for this type of help.

Where the school pupil and their parent/carer gave different answers:

- 5% of pupils agreed that they know where to go if they/their child needs help with their mental health while their parent/carer disagreed, and
- 9% of parents/carers agreed with this statement while their child disagreed.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of school pupils and parents/carers who agreed (by selecting either ‘agree’ or ‘strongly agree’) that they know where to go for advice/information if they/their child needed help with their mental health.

### Pupil’s key stage and year group

School pupils in KS3 were more likely to agree that they know where to go if they need help with their mental health (72%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (64%).

For parents/carers, there were no differences found by pupil’s key stage. However, parents/carers of pupils in year 13 were more likely to agree that they know where to go

for advice/information if their child needs help with their mental health (79%), compared with parents/carers of pupils in year 10 (71%).

### **Pupil's gender**

Boys were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (72%), compared with girls (68%). As such, boys were more likely than girls to agree with both mental health statements: 'I know enough about how to look after my mental health' and 'I know where to go if I need help with my mental health'.

For parents/carers, there was no difference found by pupil's gender.

### **SEN**

School pupils who were receiving SEN provision were less likely to agree that they know where to go if they need help with their mental health (63%), compared with school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (71%). As such, school pupils in receipt of SEN provision were less likely than school pupils who were not in receipt of SEN provision to agree with both mental health statements.

For parents/carers, there was no difference found by SEN.

### **Region**

Parents/carers of school pupils in the North were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (80%), compared with parents/carers of school pupils in the South (73%). For school pupils, there were no differences found by region.

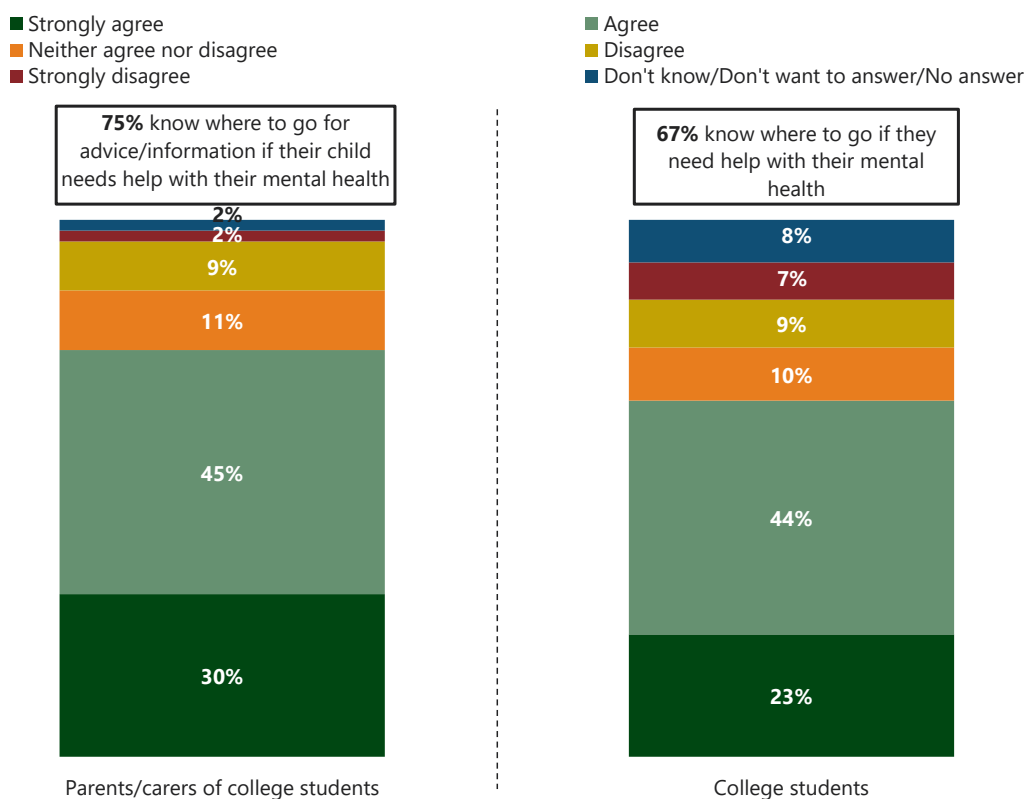
*For both school pupils and parents/carers, there were no differences found by disadvantage or ethnicity.*

### **College students and parents/carers**

Similar to school pupils, college students were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement 'I know where to go if I need help with my mental health'. Parents/carers were also asked how much they agreed or disagreed with the similar statement: 'I know where to go for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health'. The same response scale was used for both questions, meaning we can compare the responses of college students and parents/carers. This wave was the first time this question was asked for college students and parents/carers.

Overall, parents/carers of college students were more likely to agree with this mental health statement (75%), compared with college students (67%). On the other hand, college students were more likely to disagree with this mental health statement (16%), compared with parents/carers (10%).

**Figure 40: 'How much do you agree or disagree that...I know where to go if I need help/for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health'**



Base: Parents/carers of college students and college students (317)

## Paired response

***'How much do you agree or disagree that... I know where to go if I need help/for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health'***

As both the college student and their parent/carer indicated whether they agreed or disagreed with this mental health statement, we have compared their responses.

Where both the college student and their parent/carer gave the same answer:

- 60% agreed that they know where to go if they/their child needs help with their mental health, and
- 4% disagreed with this statement – that is, neither the college student or their parent/carer felt they know where to go for this type of help.

Where the college student and their parent/carer gave different answers:

- 4% of students agreed that they know where to go if they/their child needs help with their mental health while their parent/carer disagreed, and
- 11% of parents/carers agreed with this statement while their child disagreed.

## Significant differences by subgroup

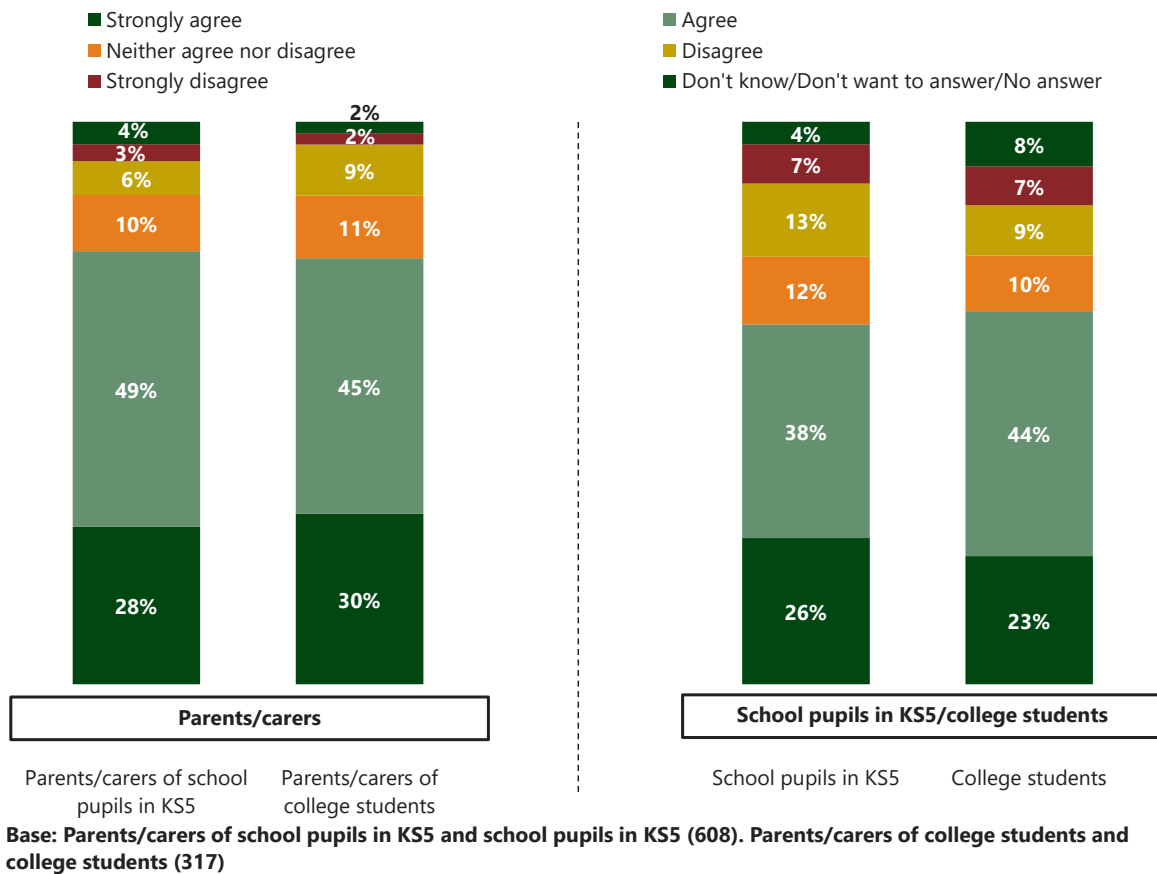
Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of college students and parents/carers who agreed (by selecting either 'agree' or 'strongly agree') that they know where to go for advice/information if they/their child needed help with their mental health.

*For both college students and parents/carers, there were no differences found by student's gender, year of learning or qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

There were no significant differences by sample type. As shown in Figure 41, college students and school pupils in KS5 provided similar levels of agreement to this mental health statement. The same trend was found among their parents/carers.

**Figure 41: 'How much do you agree or disagree that...I know where to go if I need help/for advice/information if my child needs help with their mental health'**



# Who do school pupils and college students feel comfortable speaking to if they needed information or support for their mental health?

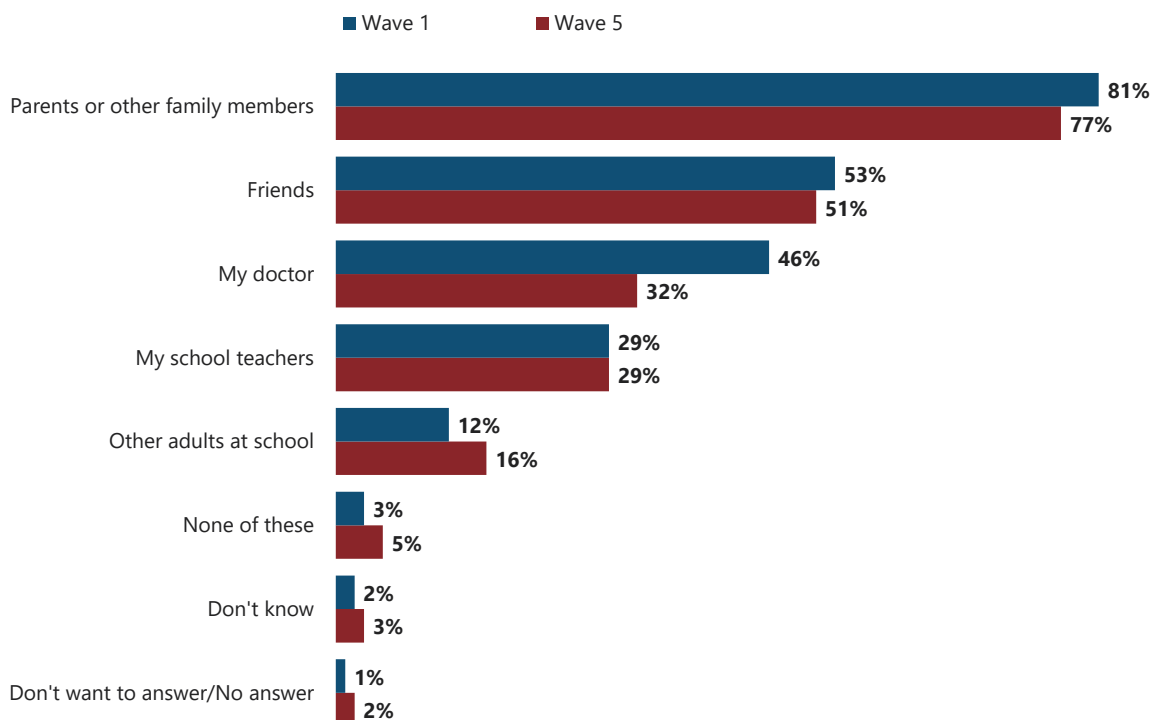
## School pupils

School pupils were asked ‘Who, if any, of these people would you feel comfortable speaking to if you needed information or support for your mental health?’ School pupils could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list. The proportion of pupils choosing each option is shown below, Figure 42.

School pupils were most likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their ‘parents or other family members’ (77%). 51% of school pupils said they would feel comfortable speaking to their ‘friends’ about their mental health. 32% of school pupils would feel comfortable speaking to their ‘doctor’, 29% would feel comfortable speaking to their ‘school teachers’, while just 16% felt comfortable speaking to ‘other adults at school’.

On the other hand, 5% of school pupils indicated that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed if they needed information or support for their mental health.

**Figure 42: ‘Who, if any, of these people would you feel comfortable speaking to if you needed information or support for your mental health?’**



Base: All school pupils at wave 1 (1,723) and wave 5 (2,265)



Furthermore, as the same question was asked at wave 1, we can also make wave-on-wave comparisons. Here, we see some significant differences.

School pupils at wave 5 were less likely to say they would feel comfortable speaking to 'parents or other family members' (77%) or their 'doctor' (32%) about their mental health, compared with school pupils at wave 1 (81% and 46% respectively).

However, school pupils at wave 5 were more likely to say they would feel comfortable speaking to 'other adults at school' if they needed information or support for their mental health (16%), compared with school pupils at wave 1 (12%).

On the other hand, school pupils at wave 5 were also more likely to indicate that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed about their mental health (5%), compared with school pupils at wave 1 (3%).

## **Significant differences by subgroup**

### **Pupil's key stage**

Response varied across key stages. As there was no clear overall trend, we have analysed these key differences by each key stage.

#### ***Key stage 3 (KS3)***

School pupils in KS3 were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to 'parents or other family members' if they need information or support for their mental health (83%), compared with school pupils in KS4 (73%) and KS5 (66%).

#### ***Key stage 4 (KS4)***

School pupils in KS4 were also more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to 'parents or other family members' if they need information or support for their mental health (73%), compared with school pupils in KS5 (66%).

In addition, school pupils in KS4 were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' (57%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (46%).

On the other hand, school pupils in KS4 were also more likely to indicate that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed about their mental health (7%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (3%).

#### ***Key stage 5 (KS5)***

Like KS4, school pupils in KS5 were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' about their mental health (61%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (46%).

Furthermore, school pupils in KS5 were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'doctor' (41%), compared with school pupils in KS3 and KS4 (31% respectively).

Similar to KS4, school pupils in KS5 were also more likely to indicate that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed if they need information or support for their mental health (8%), compared with school pupils in KS3 (3%).

### **Pupil's gender**

Boys were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking about their mental health with:

- 'Parents and other family members' (81%), compared with girls (74%).
- Their 'school teachers' (32%), compared with girls (27%).
- Their 'doctor' (37%), compared with girls (28%).

By contrast, girls were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' about their mental health (59%), compared with boys (44%).

### **Disadvantage**

School pupils who were eligible for FSM were less likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' about their mental health (44%), compared with school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (52%).

When looking across the IDACI quintiles, school pupils in the most deprived quintile (the fifth) were also less likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' about their mental health (43%), compared with school pupils in all other quintiles (the first 56%, second 57%, third 53% and fourth 52%).

### **SEN**

School pupils who were receiving SEN provision were less likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to 'friends' about their mental health (42%), compared with school pupils who were not receiving SEN provision (54%).

### **Ethnicity**

Response varied by ethnicity. As there was no clear overall trend, we have analysed these key differences by each.

#### ***White pupils***

White pupils were more likely to say they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' if they needed information or support for their mental health (52%), compared with Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (38%).

In addition, White pupils were also more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to 'other adults at school' (18%), compared with pupils in other ethnic groups (5%).

### ***Asian/Asian British pupils***

Similar to White pupils, Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to say they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'friends' if they needed information or support for their mental health (53%), compared with Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (38%).

On the other hand, Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to say they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'doctor' about their mental health (39%), compared with White pupils (31%).

In addition, Asian/Asian British pupils were also more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their 'school teachers' (36%) or 'other adults at school' (15%), compared with pupils in other ethnic groups (22% and 5% respectively).

### ***Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils***

Similar to White pupils and Asian/Asian British pupils, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils were also more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to 'other adults at school' about their mental health (16%), compared with pupils in other ethnic groups (5%).

On the other hand, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils were also more likely to indicate that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed if they needed information or support for their mental health (9%), compared with White pupils (4%).

## **Region**

School pupils based in the Midlands were more likely to say they would feel comfortable speaking to 'other adults at school' about their mental health (20%), compared with school pupils based in London (12%).

Furthermore, school pupils based in London (6%), the North (6%) or South (5%) were more likely to indicate that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed if they needed information or support for their mental health, compared with pupils based in the Midlands (2%).

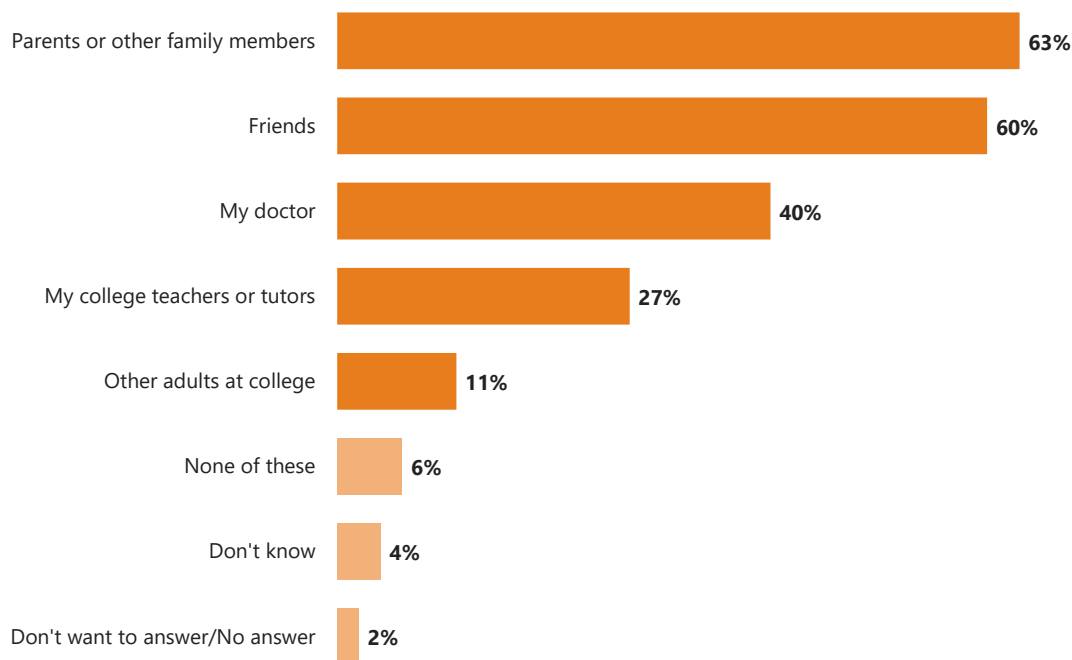
## **College students**

College students were also asked 'Who, if any, of these people would you feel comfortable speaking to if you needed information or support for your mental health?' College students could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list. This wave was the first time this question was asked for college students.

As seen in Figure 43, college students were most likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to their ‘parents or other family members’ (63%) or their ‘friends’ (60%). This was followed by their ‘doctor’ (40%). 27% of college students felt comfortable speaking to their ‘college teachers or tutors’, while 11% felt comfortable speaking to ‘other adults at college’.

On the other hand, 6% of college students indicated that they would not feel comfortable speaking to any of the people listed if they needed information or support for their mental health.

**Figure 43: ‘Who, if any, of these people would you feel comfortable speaking to if you needed information or support for your mental health?’**



Base: College students (317)

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Qualification type

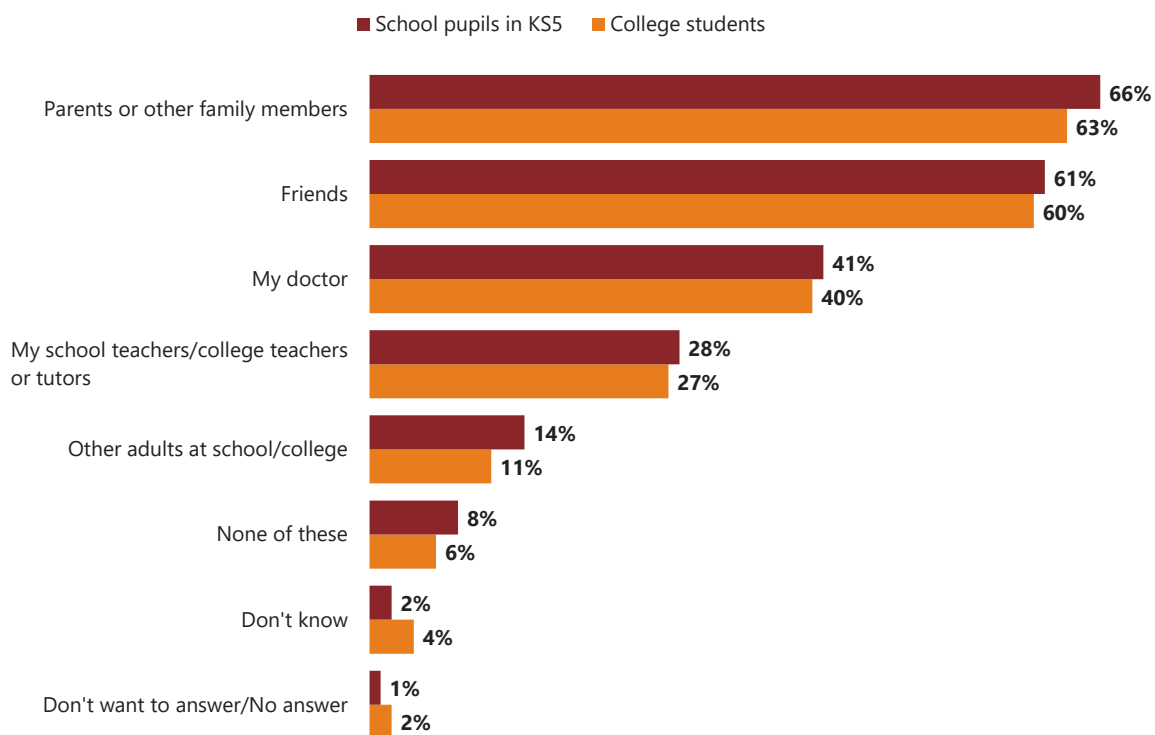
College students who studied a technical/vocational course were more likely to say that they would feel comfortable speaking to ‘parents and other family members’ if they needed information or support for their mental health (70%), compared with college students who studied AS/A levels (57%).

*There were no differences found by student’s gender or year of learning.*

## Significant differences by sample type

There were no significant differences by sample type. As seen in Figure 44, college students and school pupils in KS5 provided similar levels of response across all people listed.

**Figure 44: 'Who, if any, of these people would you feel comfortable speaking to if you needed information or support for your mental health?'**



**Base: School pupils in KS5 (608) and college students (317)**

## Chapter 6 – Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

*This chapter includes findings on the support provided to school pupils/college students who are considered to have a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND).*

*Parents/carers of school pupils and college students were asked whether they considered their child to have a SEND, and if so, whether their child has a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment.*

*Parents/carers of school pupils and college students who considered their child to have a SEND were also asked about the support their child's school/college provides.*

*Parents/carers of school pupils were asked these questions at waves 1 and 3, so wave-on-wave comparisons are reported for this sample group.*

### Background

A child or young person has special educational needs (SEN) if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made available for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Within this definition, 'long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. SEND refers to both those with SEN and those with disabilities.

In this chapter, parents/carers of school pupils and college students were asked whether they consider their child to have SEND. Schools and colleges have freedom in how they support children with SEND, guided by the Department for Education and Department of Health SEND Code of Practice (2015).<sup>27</sup> They can choose to 'buy in' particular professional/specialist support or programmes, or to provide their staff with training in particular areas. It is therefore important to understand how children and young people with SEND are currently supported at their school or college.

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<sup>27</sup> Department for Education and Department of Health, 2015. Special educational needs and disabilities code of practice: 0 to 25 years.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/398815/SEND\\_Code\\_of\\_Practice\\_January\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf)

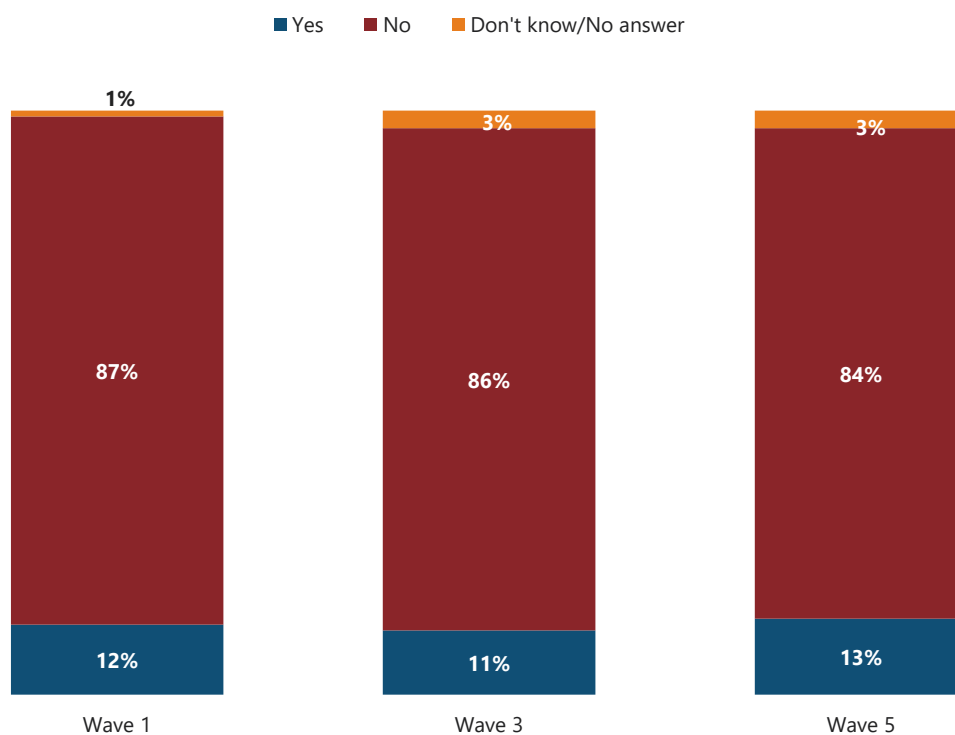
# How many parents/carers consider their child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?

## Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils were asked ‘Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?’

Overall, 13% of parents/carers said ‘yes’, 84% said ‘no’, and 3% did not provide an answer. As shown in Figure 45, below, the proportion of parents/carers who considered their child to have a SEND has been consistent, with no significant differences found by wave.

Figure 45: ‘Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?’



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils at wave 1 (1,723), wave 3 (1,504), and wave 5 (2,265)

## Significant differences by subgroup<sup>28</sup>

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of parents/carers of school pupils who said ‘yes’, they considered their child to have a SEND. This question has not been analysed

<sup>28</sup> For population level data on SEN see Department for Education (2018). ‘Special Educational Needs in England January 2018: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2018>

by SEN (i.e. comparing those who were receiving SEN provision, compared with those who were not receiving SEN provision).<sup>29</sup>

### **Pupil's key stage**

Parents/carers of school pupils in key stage 3 (KS3; 13%) and key stage 4 (KS4; 16%) were more likely to consider their child to have a SEND than parents/carers of school pupils in key stage 5 (KS5; 8%).

### **Pupil's gender**

Parents/carers of boys were more likely to consider their child to have a SEND (16%) than with parents/carers of girls (10%).

### **Disadvantage**

Parents/carers of school pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more likely to consider their child to have a SEND (23%) than parents/carers of school pupils who were not eligible for FSM (12%).

### **Ethnicity**

Parents/carers of White pupils were more likely to consider their child to have a SEND (15%) than parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (6%).

*There were no differences found by region.*

## **Comparison with the National Pupil Database**

In the survey, parents/carers of school pupils were asked for permission to link their survey responses to information held by the National Pupil Database (NPD). Where permission was given, it was possible to compare the survey responses (for the question 'Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?') with the SEN administrative data held in the NPD. In the NPD, cases were recorded as having a SEN where the school pupil had an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, were receiving SEN support, and/or had a SEN statement. As such, it should be noted that SEN status in NPD refers only to SEN provision and does not include all types of disabilities.

In the NPD sample of parents/carers who gave permission to link their survey responses, 242 school pupils were recorded as having a SEN. Of those, 68% said 'yes' to the

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<sup>29</sup> Please note – the previous question asked parents/carers whether their child had a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), while the subgroup analysis throughout the report focusses specifically on school pupils in receipt of SEN provision (as per NPD records).



question 'Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?', 28% said 'no', and 3% said that they 'don't wish to answer' or provided no answer.

**Table 23: 'Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?' (For school pupils with SEN status in the National Pupil Database only)**

<b>Parent/carer considers child to have a SEND</b>	<b>Recorded as SEN in NPD<sup>30</sup></b>
<b>Base:</b>	242
<b>Yes</b>	68%
<b>No</b>	28%
<b>Don't wish to answer/no answer</b>	3%

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students were also asked 'Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?'

Overall, 12% of parents/carers said 'yes', 85% said 'no', and 3% did not provide an answer.

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of parents/carers of college students who said 'yes', they considered their child to have a SEND.

### Qualification type

Parents/carers of college students who studied a technical/vocational course were more likely to consider their child to have a SEND (17%) than parents/carers of college students who studied AS/A levels (7%).

*There were no differences found by student's gender and year of learning.*

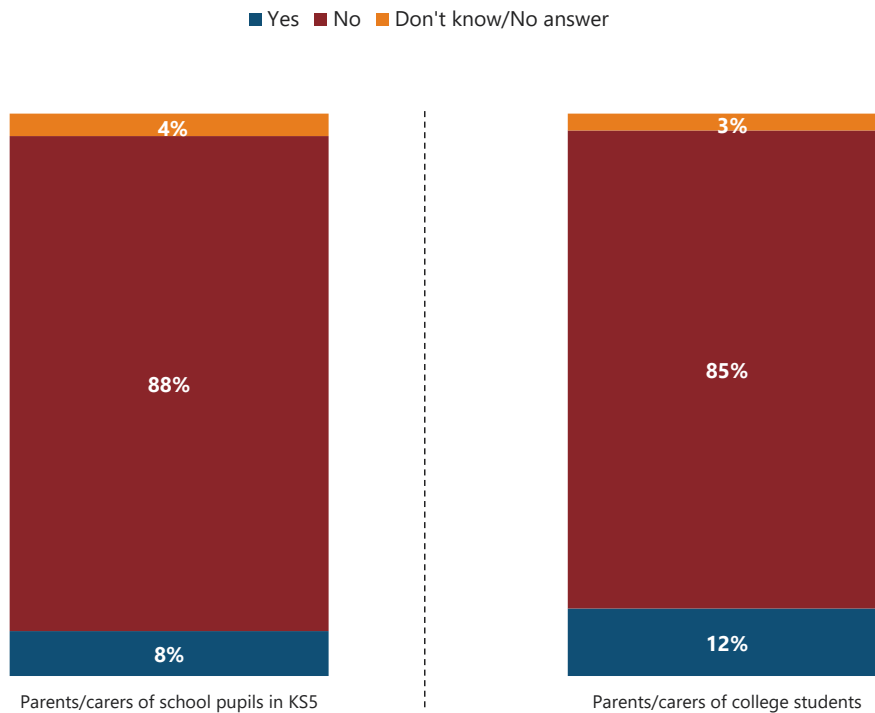
## Significant differences by sample type

There were no significant differences between the proportion of parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 and the proportion of parents/carers of college students who considered their child to have a SEND. This is shown in Figure 46, below.

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<sup>30</sup> Cases recorded in the NPD as either 'E – Education, Health and Care plan', 'K – SEN support' or 'S – Statement' in the variable 'SENprovision\_AUT18'.

**Figure 46: 'Do you consider your child to have a Special Educational Need or Disability?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (608) and parents/carers of college students (317)**

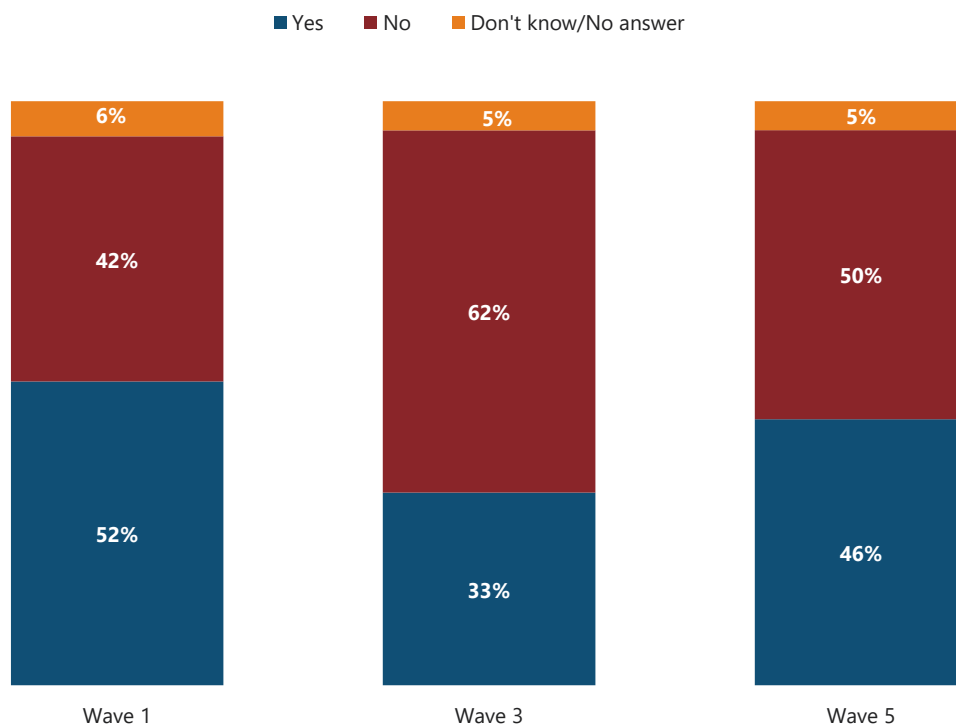
## Does your child have a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils who considered their child to have a SEND were then asked 'Does your child have a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment?'

Overall, 46% of parents/carers said 'yes', 50% said 'no', and 5% did not provide an answer. This is shown in Figure 47, below.

**Figure 47: ‘Does your child have a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment?’**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who consider their child to have a SEND at wave 1 (193), wave 3 (158), and wave 5 (275)

As the same question was asked at waves 1 and 3, we can make wave-on-wave comparisons. Here, we see some significant differences. The proportion of parents/carers who said that their child had a statement/EHC plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment decreased from 52% to 33% between waves 1 and 3, and then increased again to 46% at wave 5.

### Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of parents/carers of school pupils who said ‘yes’, their child has a statement/EHC plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment. This question has not been analysed by SEN (i.e. comparing those who were receiving SEN provision, compared with those who were not receiving SEN provision).

#### Pupil’s gender

Parents/carers of boys were more likely report that their child has a statement/EHC plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment (51%) than parents/carers of girls (37%).

*Due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by pupil’s key stage/year group, disadvantage (IDACI quintile, eligibility for free school meals (FSM)), ethnicity or region.*

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students who considered their child to have a SEND were also asked 'Does your child have a statement/Education Health and Care (EHC) plan/Learning Difficulty Assessment?'

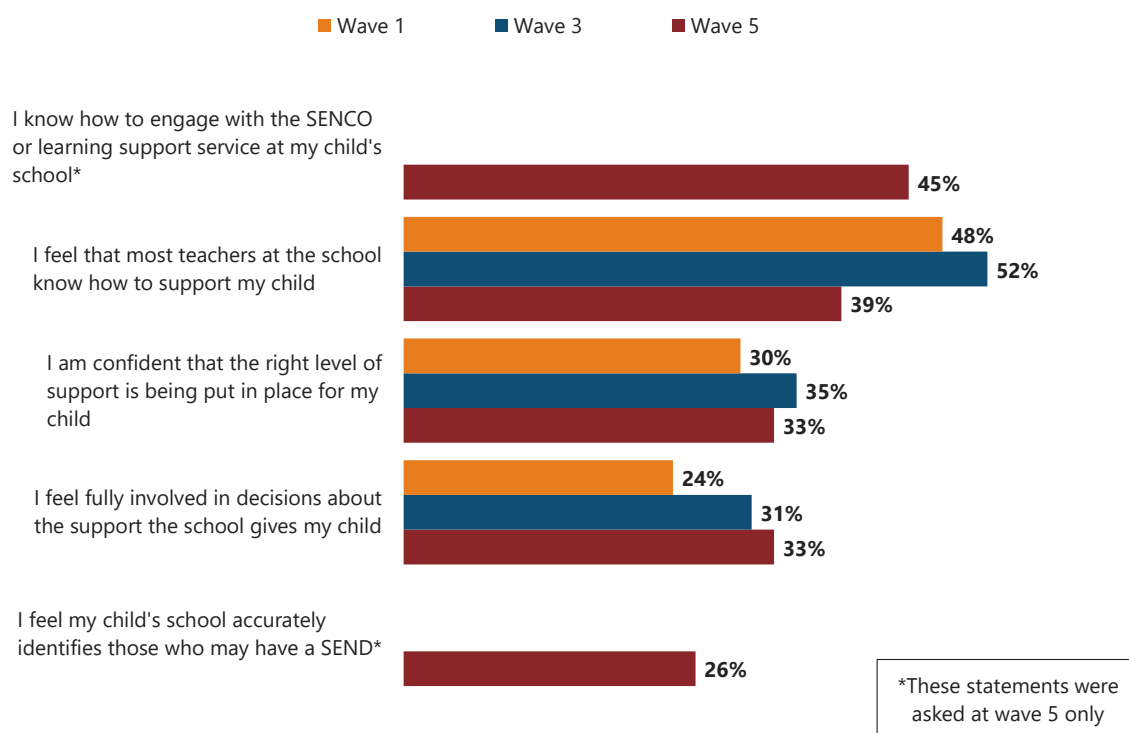
*With a sample size of 39 parents/carers of college students, we are unable to report the findings for this question.*

## Do parents/carers feel there is adequate Special Educational Needs support for their child at their school/college?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils who considered their child to have a SEND were then told 'The following statements are about Special Educational Needs support for your child. Which of the following, if any, do you feel applies to you?' Parents/carers could then select as many statements as applicable from the provided list (as shown on Figure 48 below).

**Figure 48: 'The following statements are about Special Educational Needs support for your child. Which of the following, if any, do you feel applies to you?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who consider their child to have a SEND at wave 1 (193), wave 3 (158), and wave 5 (275). 'None of the above' and 'No answer' not displayed**

As shown on Figure 48:

- 45% of parents/carers felt that they ‘know how to engage with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or learning support service’ at their child’s school.
- This was followed by 39% of parents/carers who felt that ‘most teachers at the school know how to support’ their child.
- 33% of parents/carers felt ‘confident that the right level of support is being put in place’ for their child.
- 33% of parents/carers felt ‘fully involved in decisions about the support the school gives their child’.
- 26% of parents/carers felt their child’s school ‘accurately identifies those who may have a Special Educational Need or Disability’.
- 30% of parents/carers indicated that none of the statements applied to them by selecting ‘none of the above’ instead.

Please note that parents/carers could select as many statements as applicable to them (other than ‘none of the above’) and therefore they may not be the same parents in each group. For example, the 33% of parents/carers who felt ‘fully involved decisions about the support the school gives their child’ is not the 33% of parents/carers who felt ‘confident that the right level of support is being put in place’ for their child.

As the same question was asked at waves 1 and 3, we can make wave-on-wave comparisons for the statements that were included across these waves. Looking at consecutive waves, there was only one significant difference: parents/carers at wave 5 were less likely to feel that ‘most teachers at the school know how to support’ their child (39%) than parents/carers at wave 3 (52%).

In addition, parents/carers at wave 5 were more likely to say that they felt ‘fully involved in decisions about the support the school’ gives their child (33%), compared with parents/carers at wave 1 (24%).

### **Significant differences by subgroup**

This question has not been analysed by SEN (i.e. comparing those who were receiving SEN provision, compared with those who were not receiving SEN provision).

*There were no differences found by pupil’s gender.*

*Due to the small sample sizes within each category, we were unable to analyse subgroup differences by pupil’s key stage/year group, IDACI quintiles, FSM eligibility, ethnicity or region.*

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students who considered their child to have a SEND were shown the same question: 'The following statements are about Special Educational Needs support for your child. Which of the following, if any, do you feel applies to you?' Like parents/carers of school pupils, they could then select as many statements as applicable from the provided list.

*With a sample size of 39 parents/carers of college students, we are unable to report the findings for this question.*

## Chapter 7 – Free activities during school/college holidays

*This chapter explores parents'/carers' awareness and use of clubs and activities that are provided for free during the school holidays, and what activities they think their child would be most interested in. School pupils and college students were asked which types of activities would make them most interested in attending these free holiday clubs.*

### Background

Enrichment activities and healthy food over the school holidays can help ensure pupils return to school engaged, invigorated and ready to learn. However, evidence suggests that children from disadvantaged families are less likely to access organised out-of-school activities; more likely to experience social isolation; and more likely to experience 'unhealthy' holidays<sup>31,32,33,34,35</sup>.

Early in 2018 we announced a programme of work to investigate how best to ensure more children from disadvantaged families benefit from enriching activities and healthy meals over the school holidays. This included a £2m fund where organisations were invited to bid for funding to deliver free enrichment activities and healthy food during the 2018 summer holidays. The seven organisations that received funding for 2018 were able to support just over 280 clubs and 18,000 children<sup>36</sup>. The data and information collected during the summer will be used to shape department plans for 2019, which will be set out later in the autumn.

### Which free activities would school pupils and college students be most interested in going to during the holidays?

#### School pupils

School pupils were presented with a list of activities and asked 'If there was a free club or activity set up in your area during the school holiday, which of the following activities

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<sup>31</sup> Cullinane and Montacute, 2017. *Life Lessons: Improving essential life skills for young people* The Sutton Trust

<sup>32</sup> The Sutton Trust Extra-curricular Inequality Research Brief (2014)

<sup>33</sup> Kellogg's Foundation, 2015. *Isolation and Hunger: the reality of the school holidays for struggling families*

<sup>34</sup> Gill and Sharma, 2004. *Food poverty in the school holidays*. Barnardo's

<sup>35</sup> Mann, S., Wade, M., Sandercock, G., and Beedie, C., 2017. *The impact of summer holidays and school deprivation index upon cardiorespiratory levels in primary school children*. Presented at European College of Sports Science, Essen, Germany

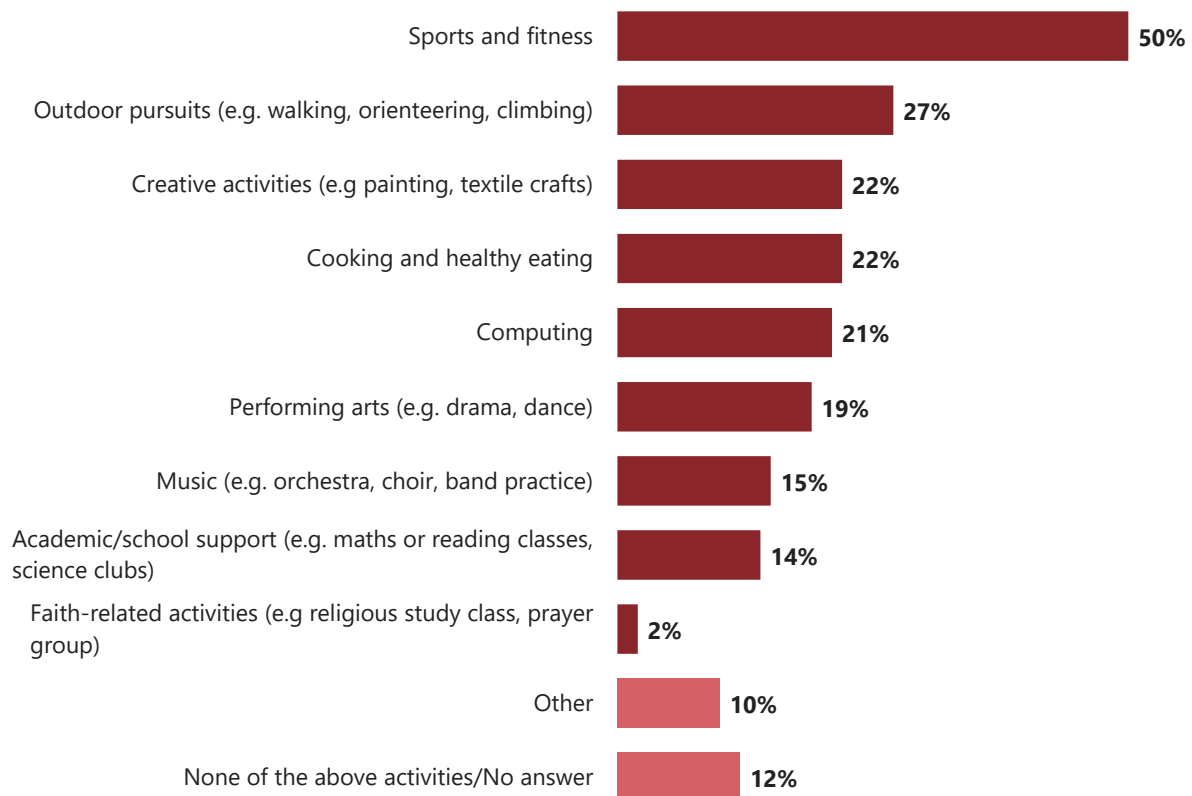
<sup>36</sup> Department for Education, 2018. *Ad hoc notice: Holiday activities and food: 2018 programme*

would make you most interested in going? This could be at school, or outside of school'. School pupils could select up to three answers. This question was new to wave 5.

The most popular activity, selected by 50% of the school pupils, was 'sports and fitness', followed by 'outdoor pursuits' (27%). 22% of the pupils selected 'creative activities', 22% selected 'cooking and healthy eating', 21% selected 'computing', and 19% selected 'performing arts'. 15% chose 'music' and 14% wanted 'academic/school support'. A small proportion (2%) selected 'faith-related activities'. 10% of pupils said that they would be interested in some 'other' activity that was not listed. This response code was not an open textbox, so we are unable to say what these other activities were.

12% of school pupils said that none of the activities were of interest to them or gave no answer.

**Figure 49: 'If there was a free club or activity set up in your area during the school holiday, which of the following activities would make you most interested in going? This could be at school, or outside of school'**



**Base: All school pupils (2,265)**



## Significant differences by subgroup

### Pupil's key stage

School pupils in key stage 3 (KS3) were more interested in many of the activities than older pupils in key stage 4 (KS4) and key stage 5 (KS5). Those in KS3 were more likely to select:

- 'Sports and fitness' activities (53% compared with 47% for pupils in both KS4 and KS5);
- 'Creative activities' (25% compared with 18% for pupils in KS4 and 19% for pupils in KS5);
- 'Cooking and healthy eating' (26% compared with 18% for pupils in KS4 and 19% for pupils in KS5);
- 'Computing' (25% compared with 19% for pupils in KS4 and 12% for pupils in KS5); and
- 'Performing arts' (21% compared with 16% for pupils in KS4 and 14% for pupils in KS5).

Pupils in KS4 were more likely to be interested in 'computing' than pupils in KS5 (19% compared with 12%).

Pupils in KS4 and KS5 were more likely than those in KS3 to be interested in activities related to 'academic/school support' (21% of pupils in KS5 and 17% of pupils in KS4 chose this activity compared with 10% in KS3).

Pupils in KS5 were more interested in 'faith-related activities' than pupils in KS4 and KS3 (6% compared with 1% of pupils in KS4 and 2% of pupils in KS3). Pupils in KS5 were also more interested in 'outdoor pursuits' than pupils in KS3 (31% compared with 26%).

Pupils in KS4 and KS5 were more likely than those in KS3 to say that they were not interested in any of the activities (14% of pupils in KS4 and KS5 compared with 8% of pupils in KS3).

### Pupil's gender

There were a number of differences between what interested boys and girls. Boys were more likely to express an interest in 'sports and fitness' (57% compared with 44% of girls), 'computing' (32% compared with 9%), 'outdoor pursuits' (29% compared with 24%) and 'other' activities (11% compared with 9%).

Girls were more likely to express interest in 'creative activities' (33% compared with 11% of boys), 'performing arts' (29% compared with 8%), 'cooking and healthy eating' (29% compared with 16%), 'music' (17% compared with 13%), 'academic/school support' (15% compared with 12%) and 'faith-related activities' (3% compared with 2%).

## Disadvantage

Pupils who were eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more likely to be interested in activities related to 'cooking and healthy eating' than pupils not eligible for FSM (30% compared with 21%) and 'creative activities' (29% compared with 21%).

## SEN

Pupils receiving provision for special educational needs (SEN) were less interested in 'sports and fitness' activities (38% compared with 52% of pupils who did not have SEN).

Pupils with SEN were more interested in 'computing' than pupils with no SEN (32% compared with 19%) and 'cooking and healthy eating' (29% compared with 22%).

## Ethnicity

Pupils of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnicity were more interested than pupils of all other ethnicities in 'sports and fitness' activities (71% compared with 48% of White pupils, 50% of Asian/Asian British pupils and 53% of pupils from other<sup>37</sup> ethnic groups). They were also more interested in 'performing arts' (31% compared with 19% of White pupils, 10% of Asian/Asian British pupils and 16% of pupils from other ethnic groups). Pupils of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnicity were more interested in 'cooking and healthy eating' than White pupils and Asian/Asian British pupils (32% compared with 22% and 21% respectively).

Asian/Asian British pupils were more interested in 'creative activities' than White pupils and pupils from other ethnic groups (33% compared with 20% and 15% respectively). They were also more interested in 'computing' than White pupils and pupils of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnicity (29% compared with 20% and 12% respectively).

Pupils from other ethnic groups were more interested in 'computing' than those of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British ethnicity (26% compared with 12%) and were more interested in 'music' than White pupils and Asian/Asian British pupils (22% compared with 14% and 12% respectively).

White pupils were less interested in activities related to 'academic/school support' than pupils of any other ethnicity (11% compared with 21% of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils, 21% of Asian/Asian British pupils and 18% of pupils from other ethnic groups).

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<sup>37</sup> For pupils in other ethnic groups, parents/carers selected that 'mixed/multiple ethnic groups' or an 'other ethnic group' best described their child's ethnicity in the survey.

White pupils were also less interested in 'faith-related activities' than pupils of any other ethnicity, while Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils were more interested in this than both White and Asian/Asian British pupils (1% of White pupils expressed interest in 'faith-related activities' compared with 14% of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils, 6% of Asian/Asian British pupils and 8% of pupils from other ethnic groups).

Both White pupils and those from other ethnic groups were more likely to say that none of the activities were of interest than Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (12% of White pupils said 'none of the activities' as did 10% of pupils from other ethnic groups compared with 3% of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils).

The survey did not collect data on the religious beliefs of the pupils or their parents.

## **Region**

Pupils in London were more likely to be interested in 'faith-related activities' than those in other regions (5% compared with 2% of pupils outside London). They were also more likely to be interested in 'sport and fitness' activities than those in the North and South (57% of pupils in London compared with 48% of pupils living in both the North and South).

Pupils in the Midlands were more interested in 'creative activities' than those living in the South (25% compared with 20%).

Pupils in the South were more likely to choose 'other' than those living in the North and the Midlands (12% compared with 8% and 8% respectively).

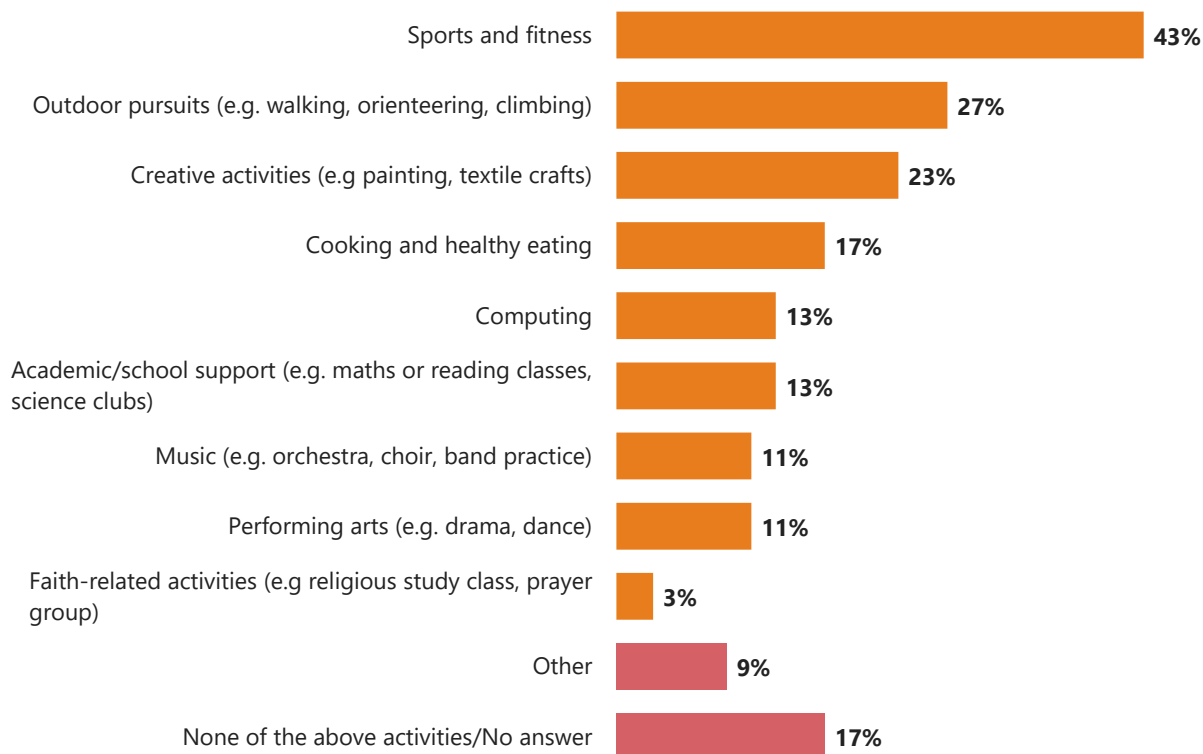
## **College students**

College students were also presented with a list of activities and asked 'If there was a free club or activity set up in your area during the college holiday, which of the following activities would make you most interested in going? This could be at college, or outside of college'. College students could select up to three answers. This question was new to wave 5.

The most popular activity was 'sports and fitness', selected by 43% of the students, followed by 'outdoor pursuits' (27%). 23% of the students selected 'creative activities'. 'Cooking and healthy eating' was the next most popular, selected by 17%. 'Computing' and 'academic/college support' were selected by 13% of students and 'performing arts' and 'music' by 11%. 3% were interested in 'faith-related activities' and 9% said that they would be interested in some other activity that was not listed.

17% of college students said that none of the activities were of interest to them or gave no answer.

**Figure 50: 'If there was a free club or activity set up in your area during the school holiday, which of the following activities would make you most interested in going? This could be at school, or outside of school'**



**Base: All college students (317)**

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Student's gender

Male college students were more interested in 'sports and fitness' activities than female students (51% compared with 37%) and 'computing' activities (20% compared with 7%).

Female students were more interested in 'creative activities' (28% compared with 16%), 'cooking and healthy eating' (23% compared with 11%) and 'performing arts' (18% compared with 3%).

### Qualification type

Students studying for AS/A levels were more interested in 'academic/college support' (21% compared with 7%) and 'outdoor pursuits' than students studying for a technical qualification (32% compared with 21%).

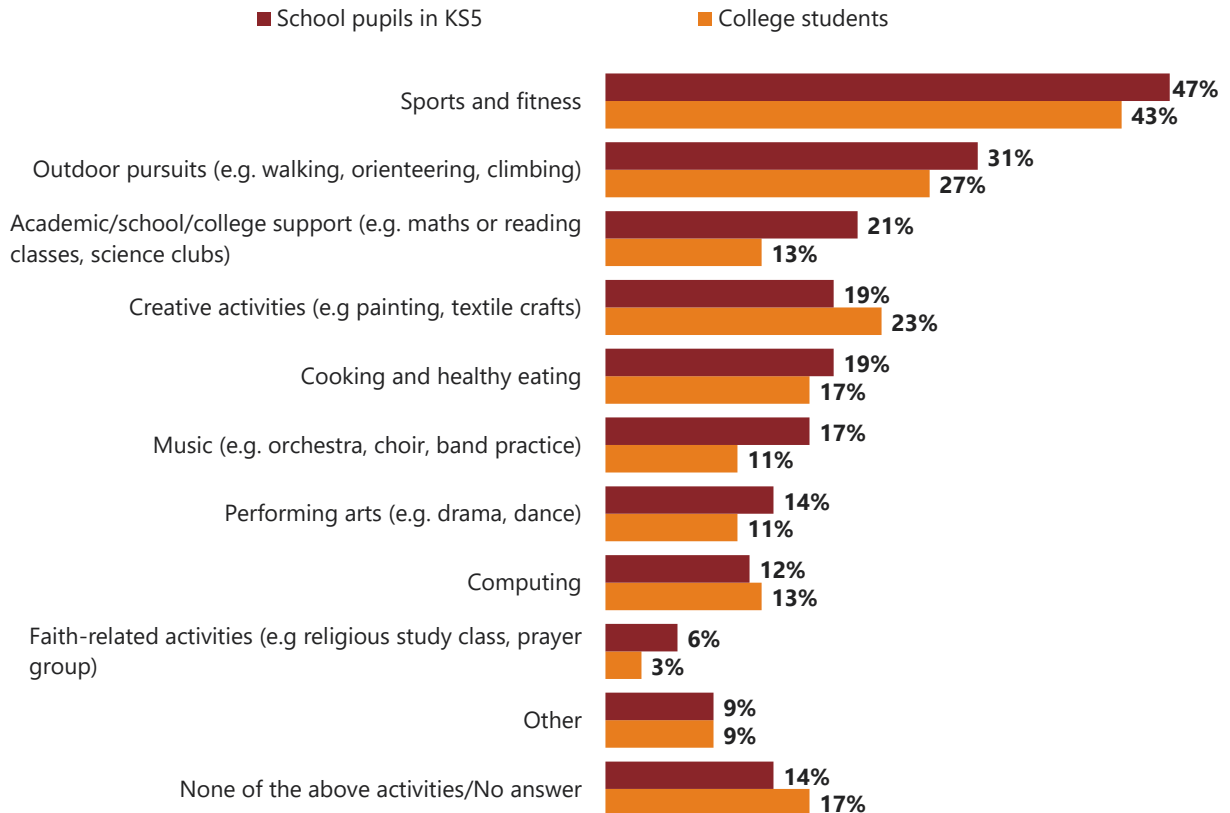
Those studying for a technical qualification were more likely to say that none of the activities were of interest than those studying for A levels (19% compared with 10%).

There were no differences found by year of learning.

## Significant differences by sample type

Figure 51, below, shows the proportion of college students selecting each activity compared with school pupils in KS5.

**Figure 51: 'If there was a free club or activity set up in your area during the school holiday, which of the following activities would make you most interested in going? This could be at school, or outside of school'**



**Base: School pupils in KS5 (608) and college students (317)**

Compared to college students, school pupils in KS5 were more likely to be interested in activities related to 'academic/school support' (21% compared with 13%), 'music' (17% compared with 11%) and 'faith-related activities' (6% compared with 3%).

## Are parents/carers aware of any regular, organised activities in their area, which their child could attend for free during the holidays?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils were asked: 'Are you aware of any regular, organised activities in your area, which your child could attend **for free** during the school holidays?' This question was new to wave 5.

18% of parents/carers said that they were aware of such activities. 75% said that they were not aware of these sorts of activities and 5% did not know. 2% did not answer the question.

### Significant differences by subgroup

#### Disadvantage

Parents/carers of pupils who were eligible for FSM were less likely to say that they were not aware of these sorts of activities than those not eligible for FSM (70% compared with 77%), and more likely to say they didn't know (8% compared with 4%).

However, there was no significant difference in the proportion of parents/carers eligible and not eligible for FSM who were aware of these clubs/activities.

#### Ethnicity

Parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to say that they were aware of these clubs/activities than parents/carers of White pupils (27% and 24% compared with 17% respectively).

Parents/carers of White pupils were more likely to say that they were not aware of these clubs/activities than parents/carers of pupils of all other ethnicities (79% compared with 64% of parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils, 69% of parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils and 71% of parents/carers of pupils of other ethnic groups).

#### Region

Parents/carers of pupils in London were more likely to be aware of these sorts of clubs/activities than those in the Midlands and the South (24% compared with 14% and 16% respectively).

Parents/carers of pupils living in rural areas were more likely to say that they were not aware of these clubs/activities (81% compared with 76% of those in urban areas).

*There were no differences found by pupil's key stage, gender or SEN.*

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students were also asked: 'Are you aware of any regular, organised activities in your area, which your child could attend **for free** during the college holidays?' This question was new to wave 5.

14% said that they were aware of such activities. 79% said that they were not aware of these sorts of activities and 5% did not know. (2% did not answer the question).

## Significant differences by subgroup

*There were no differences by student's gender, year of learning or qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

There were no differences between parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 and parents/carers of college students in their awareness of these types of club/activities.

## Has your child attended any of these activities in the past 12 months?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers who were aware of regular, organised activities provided for free during the school holidays were asked: 'Has your child attended these activities in the past 12 months?' This question was also new to wave 5.

37% of parents/carers **who were aware** of the activities said that their child had attended, 58% said that their child had not attended, 2% did not know and 2% did not answer. 7% **of all** parents/carers said that their child had attended these types of free holiday activities.

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Pupil's gender

Parents/carers of boys were more likely to say that their child had attended these free clubs/activities (44% compared with 31% of parents/carers of girls).

There were no differences found by pupil's key stage.

*The base sizes for parents/carers of pupils eligible for FSM; non-White pupils; SEN pupils and for region are too small to allow for differences to be tested for significance.*

## Parents/carers of college students

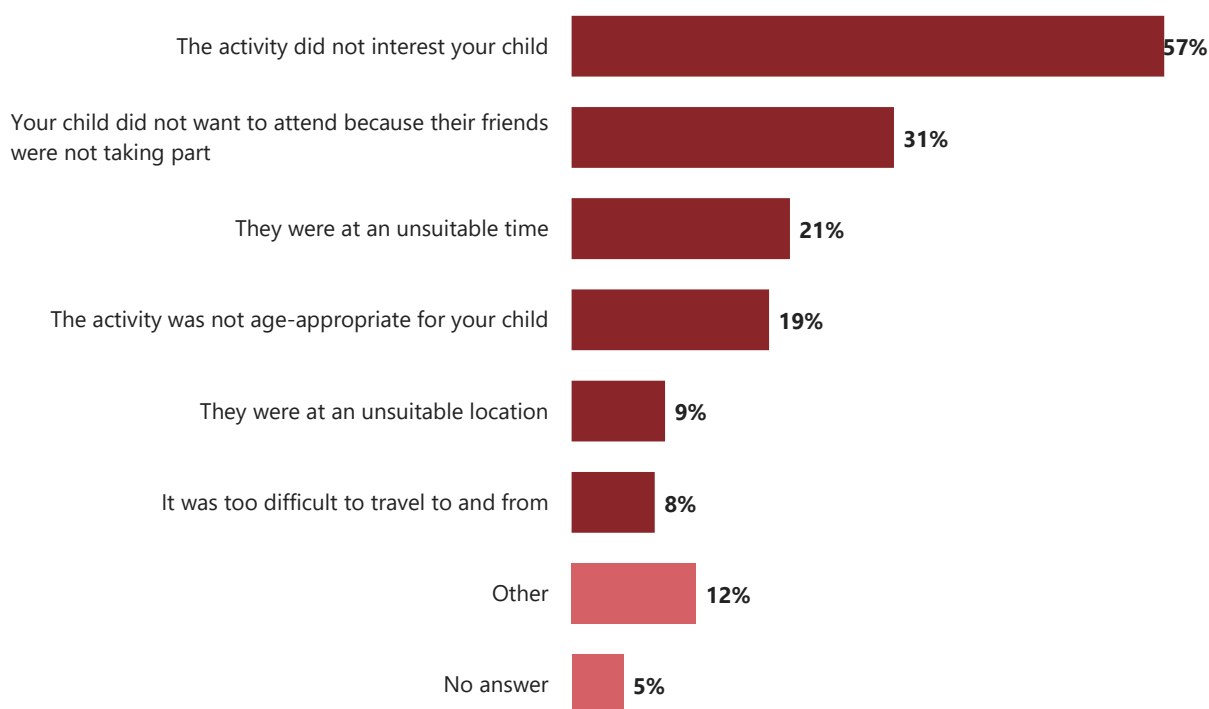
The number of parents/carers of college students who were aware of regular, organised activities provided for free during the school holidays was too small to report the findings on attendance (unweighted base of 43).

## Why has your child not attended any of these activities in the past 12 months?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils who were aware of regular, organised activities provided for free during the school holidays, but whose child had not attended any in the past 12 months, were asked why their child had not attended. They could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list. This question was also new to wave 5.

**Figure 52: ‘You have said that your child has not attended any of these activities in the past 12 months. Why was this?’**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who are aware of regular, organised activities in their area, but their child has not attended any in the past 12 months (247)**

As Figure 52 shows, the most common reason reported was that the activity on offer did not interest their child (57%), with the second most common reason being that their child did not want to attend because their friends were not taking part (31%). 21% parents/carers said the activity was at an unsuitable time and 19% said that the activity was not age-appropriate for their child. 9% said that the activity was at an unsuitable



location and 8% said it was too difficult to travel to and from the activity. 12% said that there was some other reason why their child had not attended.

## **Significant differences by subgroup**

### **Pupil's gender**

There were very few differences by pupil's gender. Parents/carers of girls were more likely to say that there was some other reason why their child had not attended than parents/carers of boys (17% compared with 6%).

*Base sizes for disadvantage, SEN, ethnicity and regional subgroups were too small to allow for differences to be tested for significance.*

### **Parents/carers of college students**

The number of parents/carers of college students who were aware of regular, organised activities whose child had not attended was too small to report the findings (unweighted base of 30).

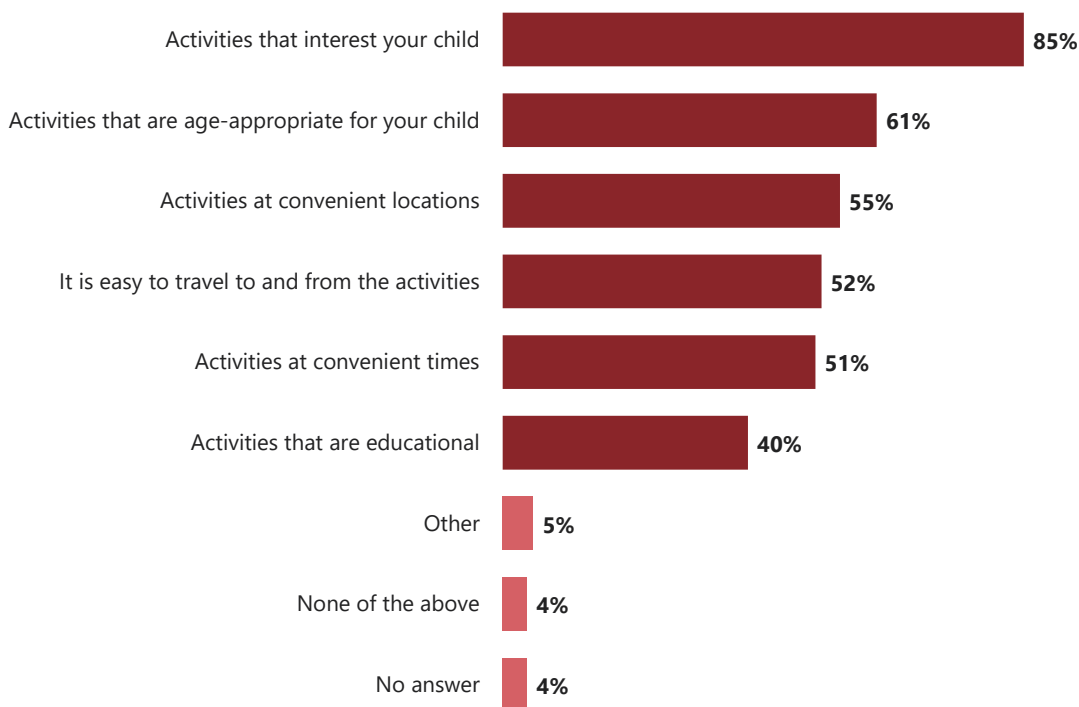
## **If they were aware of free activities in their area for their child, what would encourage parents/carers to make use of them?**

### **Parents/carers of school pupils**

Parents/carers of school pupils who were not aware of regular, organised activities in their area, that their child could attend for free in the school holidays, were asked: 'If you were aware of free activities in your area for your child, which of the following would encourage you to make use of them?' They could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list. This question was also new to wave 5.

As Figure 53 shows, the most common answer was 'activities that interest my child' (85%), followed by 'activities that are age-appropriate for my child' (61%). 55% wanted activities at convenient locations, 52% wanted activities that were easy to travel to and from, and 51% wanted activities that were at convenient times. 40% wanted activities that were educational. A small proportion (4%) said that none of the responses would encourage them to make use of these sorts of activities.

**Figure 53: 'If you were aware of free activities in your area for your child, which of the following would encourage you to make use of them?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who are unaware of regular, organised activities in their area which their child could attend for free during the school holidays (1,823)**

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Pupil's key stage

Parents/carers of pupils in KS3 were more likely than parents/carers of pupils in KS4 and KS5 to say that they wanted activities at convenient times (54% compared with 47%). KS3 parents/carers were also more likely than parents/carers of pupils in KS5 to say that they wanted activities in convenient locations (57% compared with 51%) and activities that interested their child (87% compared with 80%).

Parents/carers of pupils in both KS4 and KS5 were more likely than parents/carers of pupils in KS3 to say that none of the listed factors would encourage them to make use of free activities (7% of KS5 parents/carers and 5% of KS4 parents/carers selected this response compared with 2% of KS3 parents/carers).

### Disadvantage

Parents/carers of pupils who were not eligible for FSM were more likely to want activities at convenient times than parents/carers of pupils who were eligible for FSM (52% compared with 43%).

Parents/carers of pupils who were eligible for FSM were more likely to say none of the factors would encourage them to make use of the activities (7% compared with 4% of parents/carers not eligible for FSM).

Parents/carers in the fifth Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) quintile (most deprived) were more likely than those in the top three quintiles (least deprived) to say that educational activities would encourage them to make use of the activities (51% compared with 33% in the first IDACI quintile, 35% in the second IDACI quintile and 37% in the third IDACI quintile). A similar pattern was seen for those in the fourth IDACI quintile who were more likely than those in the top two quintiles to choose educational activities (45% compared with 33% and 35%).

## **SEN**

Parents/carers of pupils with no SEN were more likely to want activities that interested their child (87% compared with 79% of parents/carers of pupils with SEN).

Parents/carers of pupils with SEN were more likely to say that some other activity would encourage them to make use of these activities (9% compared with 4% of parents/carers of children without SEN).

## **Ethnicity**

Parents/carers of White pupils were least likely to say that educational activities would encourage them to make use of these activities (33% compared with 57% of parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils, 73% of parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils and 62% of parents/carers of pupils from other ethnic groups).

Parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils were more likely to say that educational activities would be encouraging than parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (73% compared with 57%).

## **Region**

Parents/carers of pupils in London were more likely to choose educational activities than those in other regions (52% compared with 40% in the North, 39% in the Midlands and 35% in the South).

Parents/carers of pupils in the South were more likely to want activities that interested their child than parents/carers of pupils in London (88% compared with 81%).

Parents/carers in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to want educational activities (42% compared with 29%) and activities that it was easy to travel to and from (54% compared with 47%).

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students who were not aware of regular, organised activities in their area that their child could attend for free in the school holidays were asked also asked: 'If you were aware of free activities in your area for your child, which of the following would encourage you to make use of them?' They could select as many responses as applicable from the provided list. This question was new to wave 5.

The most common answer was 'activities that interest my child' (77%), followed by 'activities that are age-appropriate for my child' (54%). 49% wanted activities that were easy to travel to and from, 48% wanted activities at convenient locations and 44% wanted activities at convenient times. 33% wanted activities that were educational. 9% said that none of the factors would encourage them to make use of these activities.

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Student's gender

Parents/carers of female students were more likely to want activities at convenient locations than parents/carers of male students (54% compared with 41%).

### Year of learning

Parents/carers of students in their first year of learning were more likely to be interested in activities that were educational (44% compared with 27% for parents/carers of students in their second year). They were also more likely to want activities at convenient times (56% compared with 40%).

### Qualification type

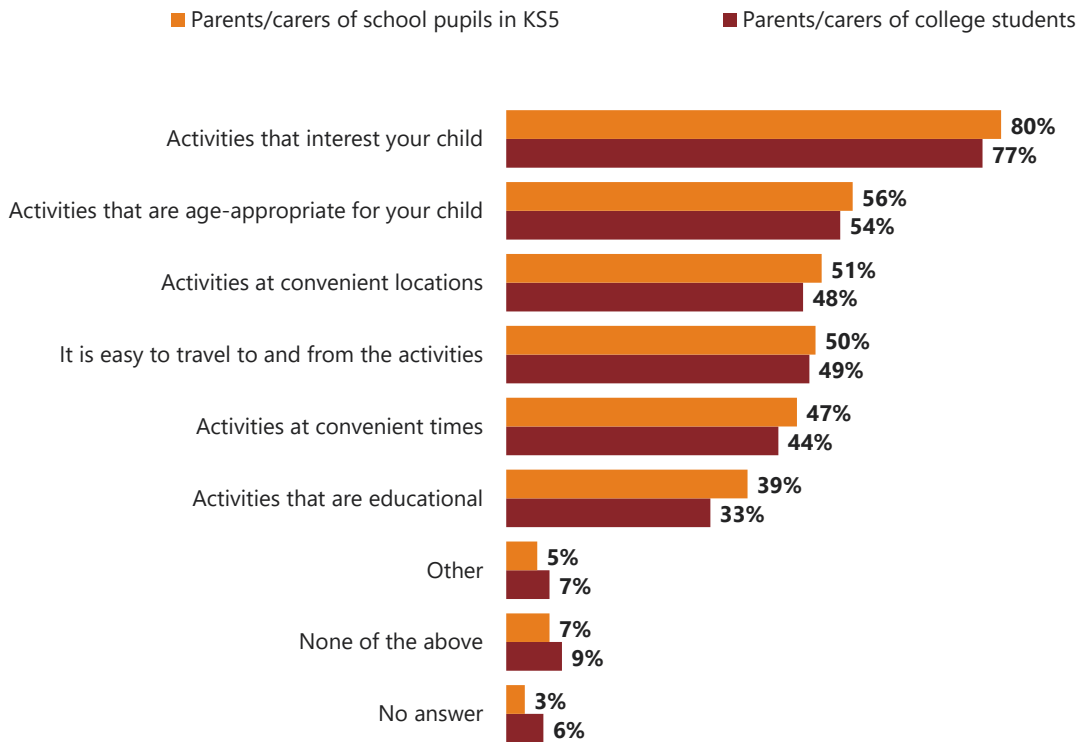
Parents/carers of students taking AS/A levels were more likely to want activities at convenient times than parents/carers of students doing technical/vocational qualifications (51% compared with 38%).

## Significant differences by sample type

Figure 54 shows the proportion of parents/carers of college students selecting each reason compared with parents/carers of school pupils in KS5.

The only significant difference is that parents/carers of school pupils were more likely to say that educational activities would encourage them than parents/carers of college students (39% compared with 33%).

**Figure 54: 'If you were aware of free activities in your area for your child, which of the following would encourage you to make use of them?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (497) and parents/carers of college students (267) who are unaware of regular, organised activities in their area which their child could attend for free during the school/college holidays**

## Chapter 8 – Careers guidance

*This chapter explores whether school pupils and college students have heard directly from apprenticeship and/or technical and vocational providers at school/college. Also, if they have considered a career in STEM, whether the opportunities they have had at school/college have helped them understand more about a STEM career and whether their parent/carer has discussed a possible career in STEM with them and if not, why not.*

*This chapter also examines what careers guidance opportunities school pupils and college students have had in the last year, the number of times they have attended and who led them. Finally, this chapter looks at the number of work placements that school pupils/college students have attended in the last year.*

### Background – Apprenticeships, and technical and vocational options

The core options for post-16 education are an academic or a technical option. The academic option includes A levels and AS levels and is designed to prepare individuals for academic higher education. The technical option includes apprenticeships, which are work-based, and technical education routes. An apprenticeship is a job which includes a significant training component to allow an individual to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed for their chosen occupation. This option also includes technical and vocational qualifications such as BTECs, NVQs or Tech Levels which develop occupational and technical skills.

The importance of access to high quality information on post-16 options in helping young people make the best decisions is well-established.<sup>38</sup> Questions were included in the survey to measure the amount of information received by pupils/students and their parents/carers on apprenticeships and technical and vocational options.

### Through their school, have pupils had the chance to hear directly from technical and vocational, and apprenticeship providers in the last 12 months?

#### School pupils

School pupils in year 8 and above were asked 'Through your school have you had the chance to hear directly from University Technical Colleges/Studio Schools/Further

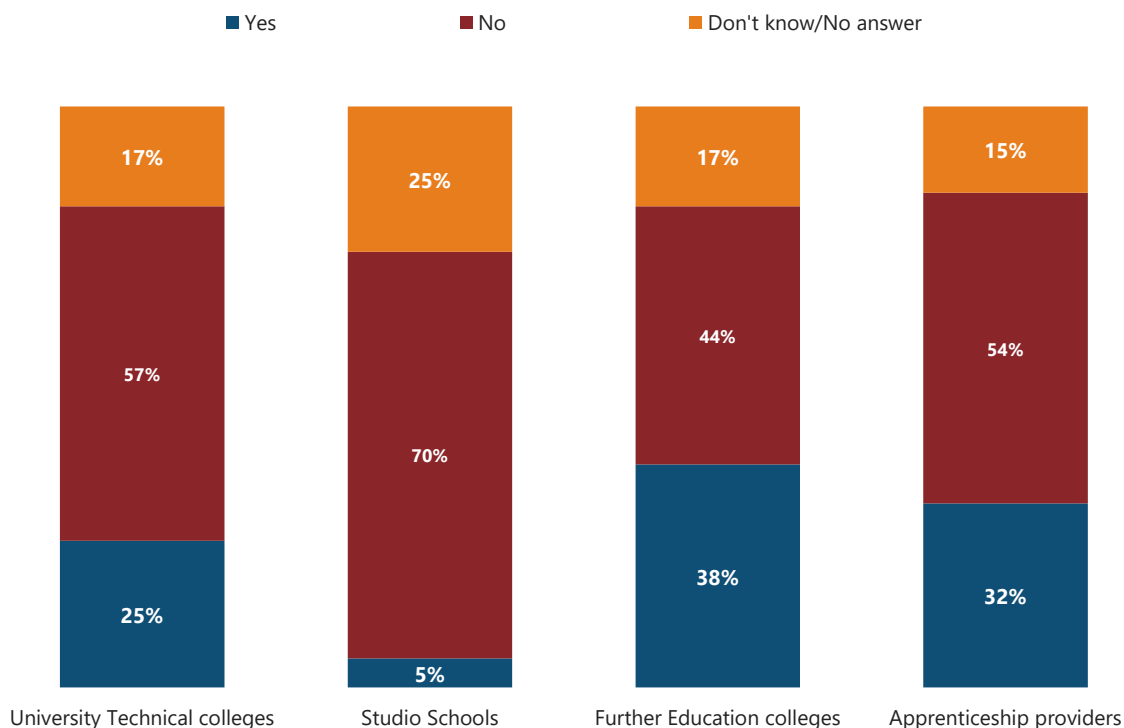
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<sup>38</sup>Department for Education. (2017). 'User insight research into post-16 choices' <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/user-insight-research-into-post-16-choices>

Education colleges/apprenticeship providers in the last 12 months?’<sup>39</sup> This was a new question in wave 5. This follows the introduction of new legislation in January 2018 which requires schools to ensure that there is an opportunity for a range of education and training providers to access pupils in year 8 to year 13 for the purpose of informing them about approved technical education qualifications or apprenticeships.

The provider that the highest proportion of school pupils reported having had the opportunity to learn more about apprenticeships, and technical and vocational options from were Further Education colleges (38%). This is followed by apprenticeship providers (32%), University Technical Colleges (25%) and Studio Schools (5%).

**Figure 55: ‘Now please think about any opportunities you have had through your school to learn more about apprenticeships, and technical and vocational options. Through your school have you had the chance to hear directly from ... in the last 12 months?’**



**Base: School pupils in years 8+ (1,842)**

<sup>39</sup> The full question wording was: ‘Now please think about any opportunities you have had through your school to learn more about apprenticeships, and technical and vocational options. Through your school have you had the chance to hear directly from University Technical Colleges/Studio Schools/Further Education colleges/apprenticeship providers in the last 12 months?’

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on differences between the proportions who said 'yes' to each statement.

### Pupil's key stage and year group

As shown in Table 24, there is a general trend where school pupils in the older year groups were more likely than those in the younger year groups to report having had the opportunity to hear directly from University Technical Colleges, Studio Schools Further Education colleges and apprenticeship providers.

**Table 24: The proportion of school pupils in year 8 and above who reported having had the chance to hear directly from ... in the last 12 months**

	Year Group						Key Stage		
	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)	KS3 (H)	KS4 (I)	KS5 (J)
<i>Base:</i>	318	330	309	278	315	292	648	587	607
<i>University Technical Colleges</i>	11	21 A	31 A,B	29 A,B	37 A,B,D	33 A,B	16	30 G	35 G
<i>Studio Schools</i>	2	5	7 A	7 A	6 A	5 A	3	7 G	6
<i>Further Education colleges</i>	13	26 A	40 A,B	63 A,B,C ,F	56 A,B,C	50 A,B,C	19	51 G	53 G
<i>Apprenticeship providers</i>	8	19 A	27 A,B	51 A,B,C	58 A,B,C	67 A,B,C ,D,E	14	38 G	62 G,H

ABCDEFGHI = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C/D/E/F/G/H/I

### 'University Technical Colleges'<sup>40</sup>

Pupils in key stages (KS) 4 and 5 were more likely than those in KS3 to report hearing directly from University Technical Colleges in the last 12 months (30% and 35% compared with 16%).

<sup>40</sup> When considering the response to this question it is important to consider there are only 50 University Technical Colleges in England at the time of publishing.



### ***‘Studio Schools’<sup>41</sup>***

Overall the proportion of school pupils in year 8 and above who had heard directly from Studio Schools is low (5%). However, those in older year groups were more likely to report hearing directly from Studio Schools than those in younger year groups (5% in year 13 compared with 2% in year 8).

### ***‘Further Education colleges’***

School pupils in KS4 and KS5 were more likely to report hearing directly from Further Education colleges than those in KS3 (51% and 53% respectively, compared with 19%).

However, school pupils in year 11 were more likely than those in year 13 to report hearing directly from Further Education colleges (63% compared with 50%).

### ***‘Apprenticeship providers’***

The proportion of school pupils who reported hearing directly from apprenticeship providers increases for each key stage from 14% at KS3 to 38% at KS4 and 62% at KS5.

School pupils in year 13 were more likely to report hearing directly from apprenticeship providers than those in all other year groups (67% in year 13, compared with 8% in year 8, 19% in year 9, 27% in year 10, 51% in year 11, 58% in year 12).

### **Pupil’s gender**

Boys were more likely than girls to report having had the chance to hear directly from University Technical colleges in the last 12 months through their school (27% compared with 23%).

### **Disadvantage**

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) were more likely than those not eligible for FSM to report having had the chance to hear directly from University Technical Colleges in the last 12 months, through their school (32% compared with 24%).

### **SEN**

School pupils with special educational needs (SEN) were more likely than those without SEN to report having had the chance to hear directly from apprenticeship providers at their school in the last 12 months (35% compared with 24%).

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<sup>41</sup> When considering the response to this question it is important to consider there were only 27 Studio Schools in England at the time of publishing.

## Region

There were some differences found by region:

- School pupils in the North and Midlands were more likely than those in the South to say they had the chance to hear directly from University Technical Colleges through their school in the last 12 months (31% and 30% compared with 21%).
- School pupils in the North were more likely than those in London to report hearing directly from Further Education colleges through their school in the last 12 months (45% compared with 30%). School pupils in the South were also more likely than their London counterparts to say they had heard directly from Further Education colleges (39% compared with 30%).
- A higher proportion of school pupils in the North reported hearing directly from Studio Schools than those in the Midlands or South (9% compared with 4% for both).
- Similarly, a higher proportion of school pupils in the North reported hearing directly from apprenticeship providers than those in the Midlands or South (38% compared with 29% and 31%).

*There were no significant differences found by ethnicity.*

## Background – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

The Department published a [new careers strategy](#) in December 2017,<sup>42</sup> with a clear focus on social mobility. It includes proposals to improve the quality and coverage of careers advice in schools and colleges as well as some proposals for promoting gender equality by increasing young people's contact with employers, especially in relation to STEM subjects.

This survey asks about the breadth and effectiveness of current careers provision in schools and colleges on STEM and explores the different ways to encourage young people, especially girls, to consider jobs in science, technology, engineering and maths.

The DfE have identified the need to ensure that young people are equipped with the skills they need in science and mathematics as a priority within education policy in England.

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<sup>42</sup> Department for Education. (2017). Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents. Available from: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664319/Careers\\_strategy.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf)

# Have school pupils and college students considered a job or career in STEM when they leave education?

## School pupils

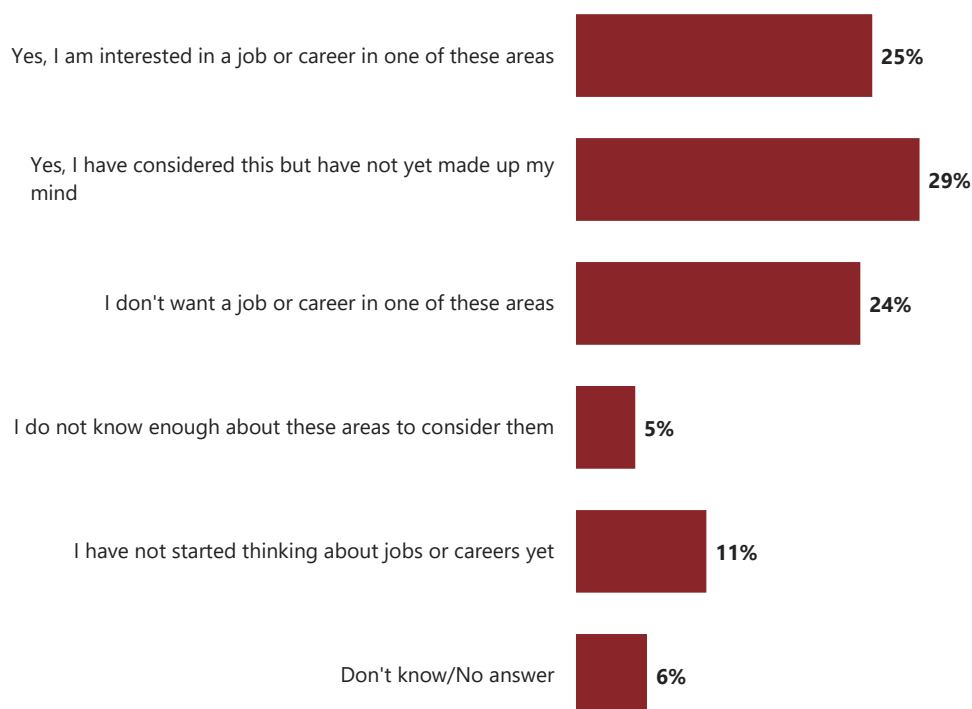
School pupils were asked 'Have you considered a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering (STEM) when you leave education?' This was a new question in wave 5.

54% of school pupils said they have considered a job or career in STEM. This comprises those who said 'yes, I am interested in a job or career in one of these areas' (25%) or 'yes, I have considered this but have not yet made up my mind' (29%).

24% of school pupils said 'I don't want a job or career in one of these areas'.

A small proportion (5%) said 'I do not know enough about these areas to consider them' or 'I have not started thinking about jobs or careers yet' (11%).

**Figure 56: 'Have you considered a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering (STEM) when you leave education?'**



Base: All school pupils (2,265)

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is for the most part based on the proportion of school pupils who reported having considered a job or career in STEM; that is those who answered 'yes, I

am interested in a job or career in one of these areas’ or ‘yes, I have considered this but have not yet made up my mind’. Subgroup differences are highlighted for other options where they are considered relevant to the analysis.

### Pupil’s key stage

As shown in Table 25 below, overall there are no differences by key stage in the proportion of school pupils who have considered a job or career in STEM. However, a higher proportion of school pupils in KS5 than in KS3 or KS4 reported ‘Yes, I am interested in a job or career in one of these areas’ (32% compared with 24% for both). In contrast, a higher proportion of those in KS3 and KS4 than in KS5 reported ‘yes, I have considered this but have not yet made up my mind’ (31% for both compared with 21%).

The proportion of school pupils who said ‘I don’t want a job or career in one of these areas’ increases from 16% at KS3 to 30% at KS4 and 40% at KS5.

Similarly, the proportion of school pupils who reported ‘I have not started thinking about jobs or careers yet’ decreases from 17% at KS3 to 6% at KS4 and 3% at KS5.

There were no differences by key stage in the proportion of school pupils reporting ‘I do not know enough about these areas to consider them’.

**Table 25: The proportion of school pupils by key stage who reported whether they have considered a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering (STEM) when they leave education**

	Key Stage		
	KS3 (A)	KS4 (B)	KS5 (C)
<b>Base:</b>	1,056	594	608
Yes, I am interested in a job or career in one of these areas	24	24	32 AB
Yes, I have considered this but have not yet made up my mind	31 C	31 C	21
I don’t want a job or career in one of these areas	16	30 A	40 A,B
I do not know enough about these areas to consider them	5	5	3
I have not started thinking about jobs or careers yet	17 B,C	6 C	3
Don’t know	7 BC	4 C	1
Not stated	*	*	*
<b>Yes</b>	55	55	52

ABC = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C.

### Pupil’s gender

A higher proportion of boys than girls reported they have considered a job or career in STEM (61% compared with 48%). This links with the finding reported below that parents/carers of boys were more likely to discuss a job or career in STEM with them than parents/carers of girls (70% compared with 56%).

## Disadvantage

School pupils eligible for FSM were less likely than those not eligible for FSM to say they have considered a job or career in STEM (45% compared with 56%).

## SEN

School pupils with SEN were less likely than those without SEN to report considering a job or career in STEM (41% compared with 58%). This is despite a higher proportion of parents/carers with a child with SEN reporting they had discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with them, than parents/carers of a child without SEN (67% compared with 51%).

## Ethnicity

Asian/Asian British, Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and Other ethnic groups<sup>43</sup> are more likely than White school pupils to have considered a job or career in STEM (72%, 63% and 62% compared with 50%).

*There were no differences found by region.*

## College students

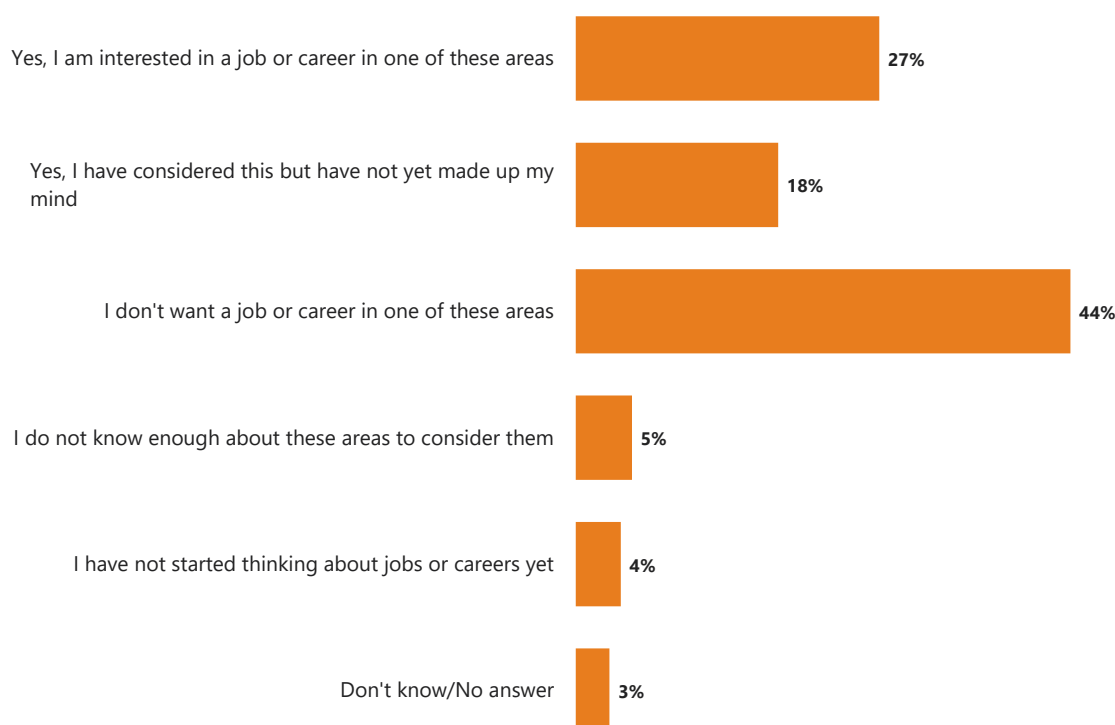
College students were also asked 'Have you considered a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering (STEM) when you leave education?' This question was asked for the first time at wave 5.

Overall, 45% of college students reported considering a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering when they leave education. This comprises those who reported 'yes, I am interested in a job or career in one of these areas' (27%) or 'yes, I have considered this, but have not yet made up my mind' (18%). 44% of college students said 'I don't want a job or career in one of these areas'. A small proportion reported 'I do not know enough about these areas to consider them' (5%) or 'I have not started thinking about jobs or careers yet' (4%).

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<sup>43</sup> For pupils in other ethnic groups, parents/carers selected that 'mixed/multiple ethnic groups' or an 'other ethnic group' best described their child's ethnicity in the survey.

**Figure 57: 'Have you considered a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering (STEM) when you leave education?'**



Base: All college students (317)

## Significant differences by subgroup

As is the case for school pupils, subgroup analysis is for the most part based on the proportion of college students who reported having considered a job or career in STEM, that is those who answered 'yes, I am interested in a job or career in one of these areas' or 'yes, I have considered this but have not yet made up my mind'. Subgroup differences are highlighted for other options where they are considered relevant to the analysis.

### Student's gender

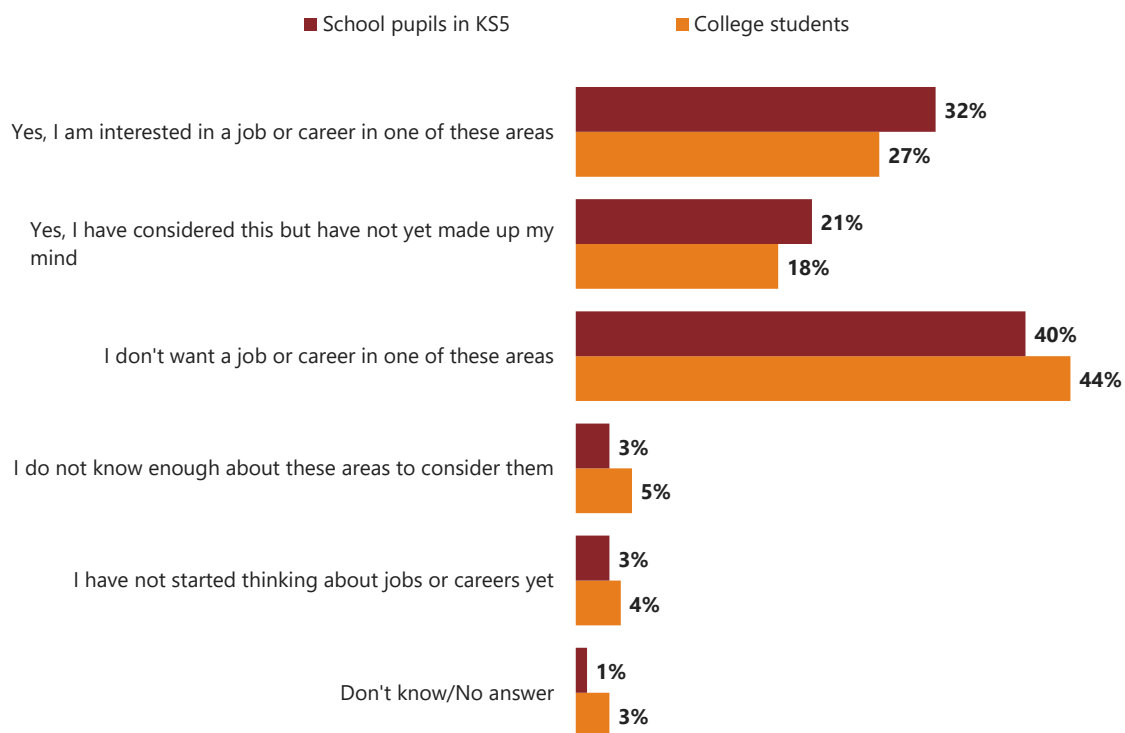
As with school pupils, there is a difference by gender. Male students were more likely to report having considered a job or career in STEM than female students (57% compared with 34%).

*There were no differences found by student's year of learning or qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

School pupils in KS5 were more likely to report considering a job or career in STEM than college students (52% compared with 45%). There were no other significant differences between these groups.

**Figure 58: 'Have you considered a job or career in science, maths, technology or engineering (STEM) when you leave education?'**



Base: All school pupils in KS5 (608) and college students (317)

## Have the opportunities provided by the school/college helped school pupils and college students understand more about a future job or career in STEM?

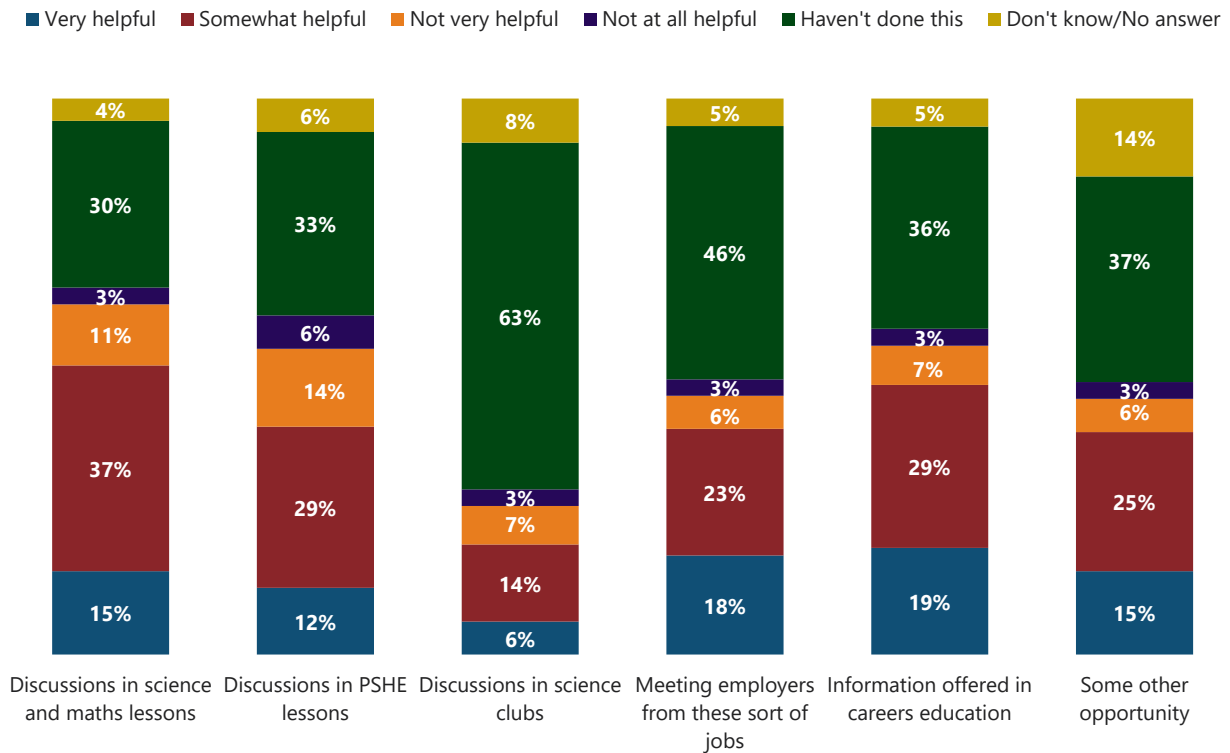
### School pupils

School pupils were asked 'If your school has provided any of the following opportunities to understand more about a future job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM), how helpful did you find it?' This question was asked for the first time at wave 5.

School pupils were most likely to report finding 'meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' very or somewhat helpful (83%). This is followed by 'information offered in careers education' (82%), 'some other opportunity' (81%), 'discussions in science and maths

lessons' (79%) and 'discussions in PSHE lessons' (68%). School pupils were least likely to report finding 'discussions in science clubs' (66%) helpful<sup>44</sup>.

**Figure 59: 'If your school has provided any of the following opportunities to understand more about a future job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM), how helpful did you find it?'**



Base: All school pupils (2,265)

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of pupils who say each activity is 'very' or 'somewhat' helpful. Subgroup differences are highlighted for other options where they are considered relevant to the analysis.

### Pupil's key stage

School pupils in KS3 were more likely to say the following were helpful than those in KS4 or KS5:

- 'Discussions in science and maths lessons' (82% compared with 73% and 77%).

<sup>44</sup> The proportion of school pupils who answered 'not done this', 'don't know' or 'not stated' was as follows: 'Discussions in science and maths lessons' (66%), 'discussions in PSHE lessons' (60%), 'information offered in careers education' (58%), 'meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' (49%), 'some other opportunity' (49%), 'discussions in science clubs' (30%).



- 'Discussions in PSHE lessons' (74% compared with 62% and 60%).
- 'Information offered in careers education' (85% compared with 79% and 80%).

## Disadvantage

There was one difference found by disadvantage. School pupils eligible for FSM were more likely to say 'Discussions in science clubs' were helpful than those not eligible for FSM (68% compared with 57%).

## SEN

In comparison to those with SEN, school pupils without SEN were more likely to rate the following opportunities as helpful:

- 'Discussions in science clubs' (69% compared with 48%).
- 'Meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' (85% compared with 73%).

## Ethnicity

There were some differences between ethnic groups:

- Asian/Asian British and Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils were more likely to rate 'discussions in PSHE lessons' as helpful than White pupils (76% and 82% compared with 67%).
- Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to rate 'discussions in science clubs' as helpful than White pupils (77% compared with 60%).
- Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to rate 'meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' as helpful than White or Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils (92% compared with 82% and 80%).
- Asian/Asian British pupils were more likely to rate 'information offered in careers education' as helpful than White pupils (92% compared with 80%).

## Region

There are a number of regional differences:

- A higher proportion of school pupils in London found 'discussions in PSHE lessons' helpful compared with those in the South (76% compared with 65%).
- A higher proportion of school pupils in London found 'discussions in science clubs' helpful compared with those in the South (77% compared with 62%).
- A higher proportion of school pupils in the North found 'meeting employers from these sorts of jobs' helpful compared with those in the Midlands (87% compared with 78%).

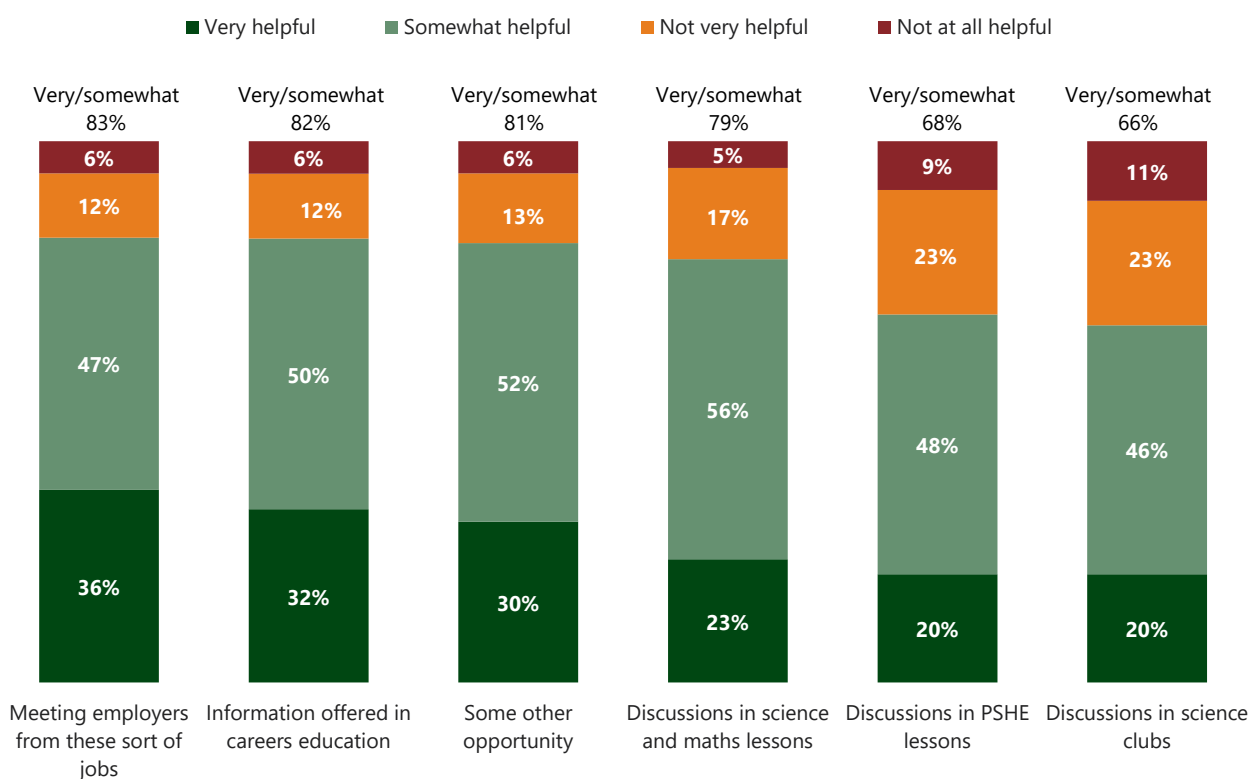
*There were no differences found by pupil gender.*

## College students

College students were asked the same question as school pupils: ‘If your college has provided any of the following opportunities to understand more about a future job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM), how helpful did you find it?’ This question was asked for the first time at wave 5.

As shown in Figure 60 below, college students were most likely to report finding ‘some other opportunity’ very or somewhat helpful (88%). This is followed by ‘meeting employers from these sorts of jobs’ (85%), ‘information offered in careers education’ (85%), ‘discussions in science and maths lessons’ (81%), ‘discussions in science clubs’ (63%). College students were least likely to report finding ‘discussions in PSHE lessons’ (62%) helpful.<sup>45</sup>

**Figure 60: ‘If your college has provided any of the following opportunities to understand more about a future job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM), how helpful did you find it?’**



**Base:** All school pupils who had done each opportunity i.e. excluding those who answered ‘Haven’t done this’, ‘Don’t know’ or ‘No answer’: ‘Discussions in science and maths lessons’ (1,506), ‘Discussions in PSHE lessons’ (1,360), ‘Discussions in science clubs’ (684), ‘Meeting employers from these sorts of jobs’ (1,159), ‘Information offered in careers education’ (1,375), ‘Some other opportunity’ (1,126). Chart is ranked by ‘very helpful’.

<sup>45</sup> The proportion of students who answered ‘not done this’, ‘don’t know’ or ‘not stated’ was as follows: ‘Discussions in science and maths lessons’ (48%), ‘discussions in PSHE lessons’ (34%), ‘information offered in careers education’ (67%), ‘meeting employers from these sorts of jobs’ (54%), ‘some other opportunity’ (54%), ‘discussions in science clubs’ (25%).

## Significant differences by subgroup

The base sizes are too small to allow reliable subgroup analysis among college students.

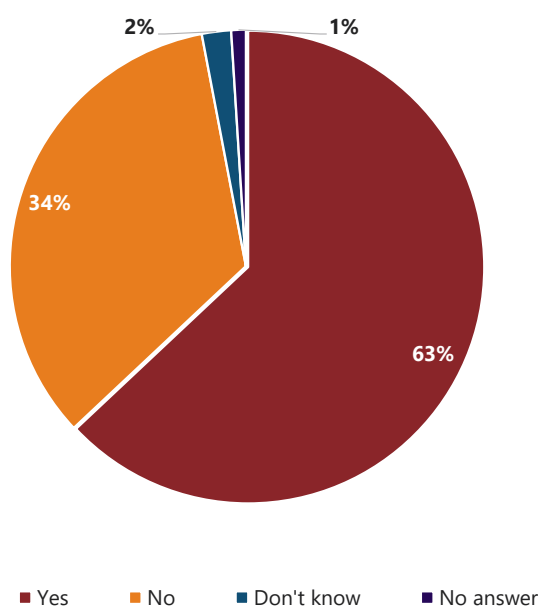
## Have parents/carers discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils were asked 'Have you ever discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child?'. This was asked for the first time at wave 5.

As shown in Figure 61 below, 63% of parents/carers of school pupils reported having discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child. 34% had not discussed this with their child.

**Figure 61: 'Have you ever discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child?'**



Base: Parents/carers of all school pupils (2,265)

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Pupil's key stage

Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 were more likely to have discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM than those in KS3 or KS4 (67% compared with 63% and 62%).

### Pupil's gender

Parents/carers of school pupils who are boys were more likely to have discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of school pupils who are girls (70% compared with 56%).

### Disadvantage

Parents/carers of school pupils who are not eligible for FSM were more likely to have discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of school pupils not eligible for FSM (65% compared with 53%).

### SEN

A higher proportion of parents/carers of school pupils with SEN had discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of school pupils without SEN (67% compared with 51%).

### Ethnicity

A higher proportion of parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils had discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of Black/African/Caribbean/Black British pupils or White pupils (79% compared with 60% and 61%).

### Region

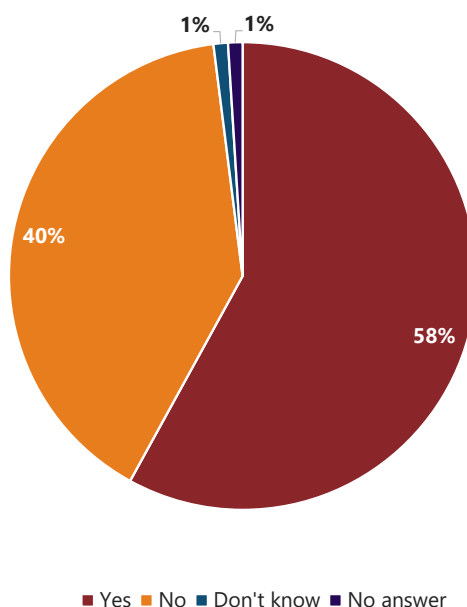
A higher proportion of parents/carers of pupils in the South had discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of pupils in the Midlands (67% compared with 59%).

## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students were asked the same question on discussing STEM as parents/carers of school pupils. This was 'Have you ever discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child'? This was asked for the first time at wave 5.

As shown in Figure 62 below, 58% of parents/carers of college students reported discussing the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child. 40% reported they had not.

**Figure 62: 'Have you ever discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child?'**



Base: Parents/carers of all college students (317)

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Student's gender

Parents/carers of male college students were more likely to have discussed a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of female college students (68% compared with 50%).

### Qualification type

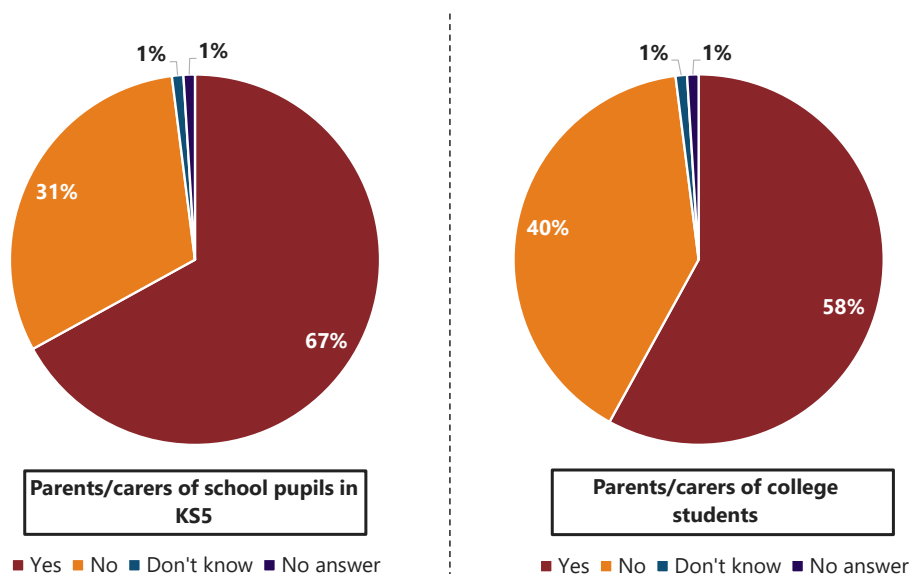
Parents/carers of college students studying for an AS/A Level were more likely to have discussed a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of college students studying for a technical/vocational qualification (68% compared with 49%).

*There were no differences found by year of learning.*

## Significant differences by sample type

Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 were more likely to report discussing the possibility of a job or career in STEM than parents/carers of college students (67% compared with 58%).

**Figure 63: 'Have you ever discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child?'**



Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (608), and parents/carers of college students (317)

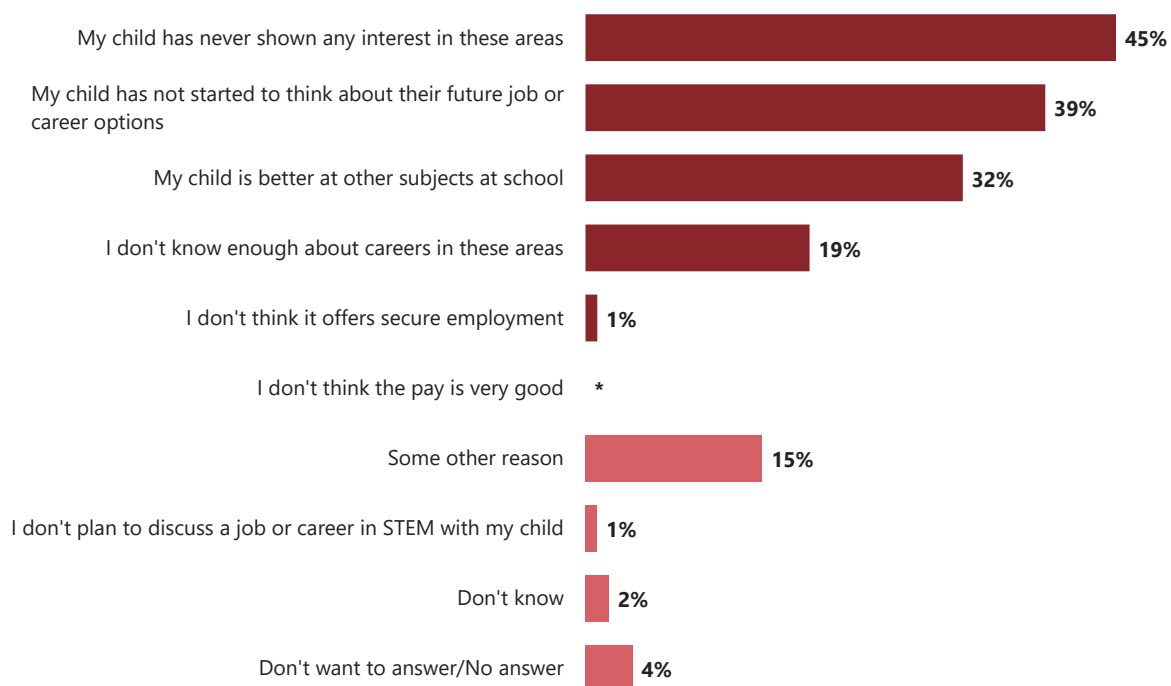
## What are the main reasons parents/carers have not discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child?

### Parents/carers of school pupils

Parents/carers of school pupils who had not discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM were asked the following question: 'You said that you had not discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child. What are the main reasons for this?' Up to three answers could be selected.

The most frequently provided answer to this question was 'my child has never shown any interest in these areas' (45%), followed by 'my child has not yet started to think about their future job or career options' (39%) and 'my child is better at other subjects at school' (32%), 'I don't know enough about careers in these areas' (19%). Just 1% of parents of school pupils said 'I don't plan to discuss a job or career in STEM with my child'.

**Figure 64: ‘You said that you had not discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child. What are the main reasons for this?’**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils who have not discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child (776)**

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Pupil's key stage

As shown in Table 26, there are a number of differences among parents/carers of school pupils in different key stages.

- The proportion of parents/carers who said they had not discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM because ‘my child has not yet started to think about their future job options’ was lower among those in KS5 (7%) than those in KS4 (21%) and KS3 (57%). A higher proportion of parents/carers of pupils in KS4 and KS5 said ‘my child has never shown an interest in these areas’ than KS3 (57% for both compared with 35%).
- A higher proportion of parents/carers of pupils in KS4 and KS5 said ‘my child is better at other subjects at school’ than KS3 (41% and 49% compared with 23%).
- Parents/carers of pupils in KS3 were more likely to say ‘I don't know enough about careers in these areas’ than those in KS4 or KS5 (23% compared with 15% and 13%).

**Table 26: Reasons given by parents/carers of school pupils for not discussing the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child by key stage**

	Key Stage		
	KS3 (A)	KS4 (B)	KS5 (C)
<b>Base:</b>	363	212	198
My child has not started to think about their future job or career options	57 B,C	21	7
My child has never shown any interest in these areas	35	57 A	57 A
My child is better at other subjects at school	23	41 A	49 A
I don't think it offers secure employment	2	1	1
I don't think the pay is very good	*	*	0
I don't know enough about careers in these areas	23 B,C	15	13
I don't plan to discuss a job or career in STEM with my child	*	2	3
Don't know	2	1	2
Don't want to answer	2	*	1
Not stated	2	2	5

ABC = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C.

### Pupil gender

Parents/carers of pupils who are girls were more likely to give the following answers than parents/carers of pupils who are boys:

- 'My child has never shown any interest in these areas' (53% of parents/carers of girls compared with 33% of parents/carers of boys).
- 'My child is better at other subjects at school' (35% of parents/carers of girls compared with 28% of parents/carers of boys).

On the other hand, parents/carers of pupils who are boys were more likely to say 'my child has not yet started to think about their future job or career options' (43% compared with 36%).

### Ethnicity

Parents/carers of pupils who were Asian/Asian British were more likely to say 'my child has not yet started to think about their future job or career options' than parents/carers of White pupils (55% compared with 37%).

Conversely, parents/carers of White pupils were more likely to say 'my child is better at other subjects at school' than parents/carers of Asian/Asian British pupils (33% compared with 15%).

*There were no differences found by disadvantage, SEN or region.*

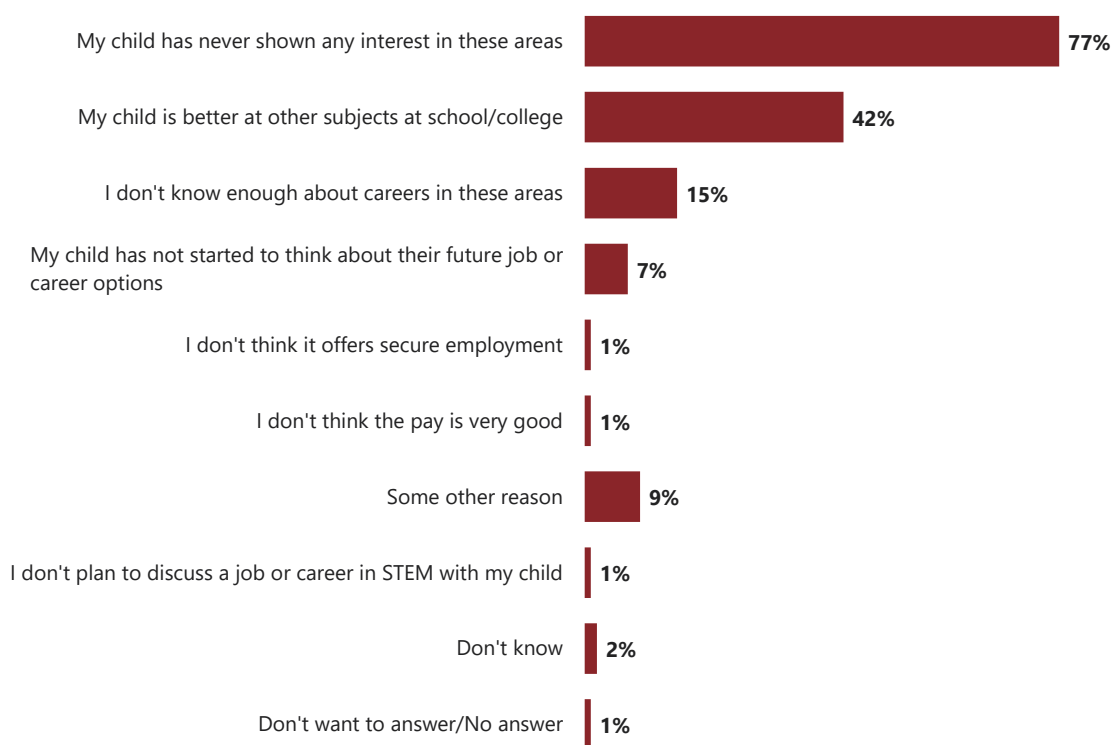


## Parents/carers of college students

Parents/carers of college students were asked the same question as the parents/carers of school pupils: 'You said that you have not discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child. What are the main reasons for this?' This question was asked for the first time at wave 5.

The most common reason given by parents/carers of college students for not discussing the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child was 'my child has never shown an interest in these areas' (77%). This is followed by 'my child is better at other subjects at college' (42%), 'I don't know enough about careers in these areas' (15%) and 'my child has not yet started to think about their future job or career options' (7%). Just 1% of parents/carers of college students said 'I don't plan to discuss a job or career in STEM with my child'.

**Figure 65: 'You said that you had not discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child. What are the main reasons for this?'**



**Base: Parents/carers of college students (131) who have not discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child**

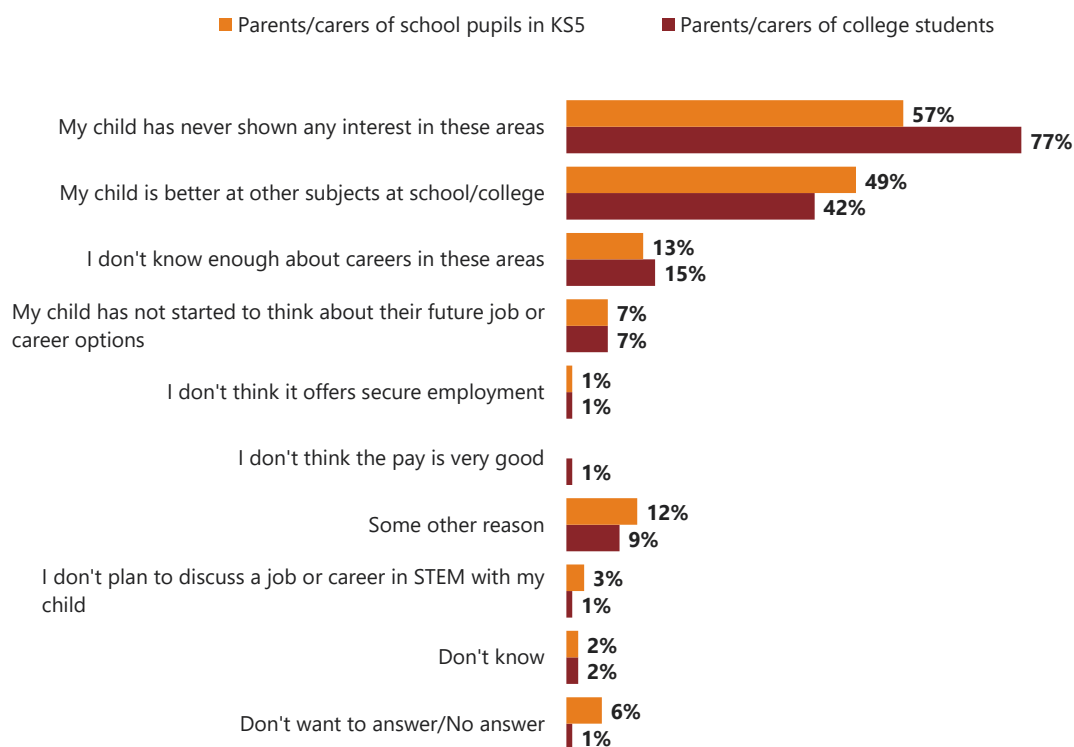
## Significant differences by subgroup

*There were no differences found by student's gender, year of learning or qualification type.*

## Significant differences by sample type

Parents/carers of college students were more likely to say ‘my child has never shown any interest in these areas’ than parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (77% compared with 57%). No other differences were found.

**Figure 66: ‘You said that you had not discussed the possibility of a job or career in science, technology, maths or engineering (STEM) with your child. What are the main reasons for this?’**



**Base: Parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 (198) and parents/carers of college students (131) who have not discussed the possibility of a job or career in STEM with their child**

## Background – Careers advice

In December 2017, DfE published the government’s career strategy which set out its long-term plan to improve the quality and quantity of careers provision across the country<sup>46</sup>. The strategy sets out a series of measures to be implemented during 2018-20 to help young people and adults choose the career that is right for them. It follows the launch of the government’s Industrial Strategy, which will invest in the development of

<sup>46</sup> Department for Education (2017). ‘Careers strategy: making the most of everyone’s skills and talents’. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664319/Careers\\_strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664319/Careers_strategy.pdf)

skills and increase productivity across the country<sup>47</sup>. The survey also asks about work experience; statutory guidance states that schools should ensure that by the age of 16, every pupil has at least one experience of a workplace, and one further such experience by the age of 18.

## Which careers advice opportunities have school pupils and college students undertaken or attended in the past year?

### School pupils

School pupils in year 8 and above were asked 'Which of the following have you done or attended at school in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven't done this'. This question was asked at wave 3 as well as wave 5, although some modifications were made to the wording of three of the answer options. This means wave 5 findings are not comparable to wave 3.<sup>48</sup>

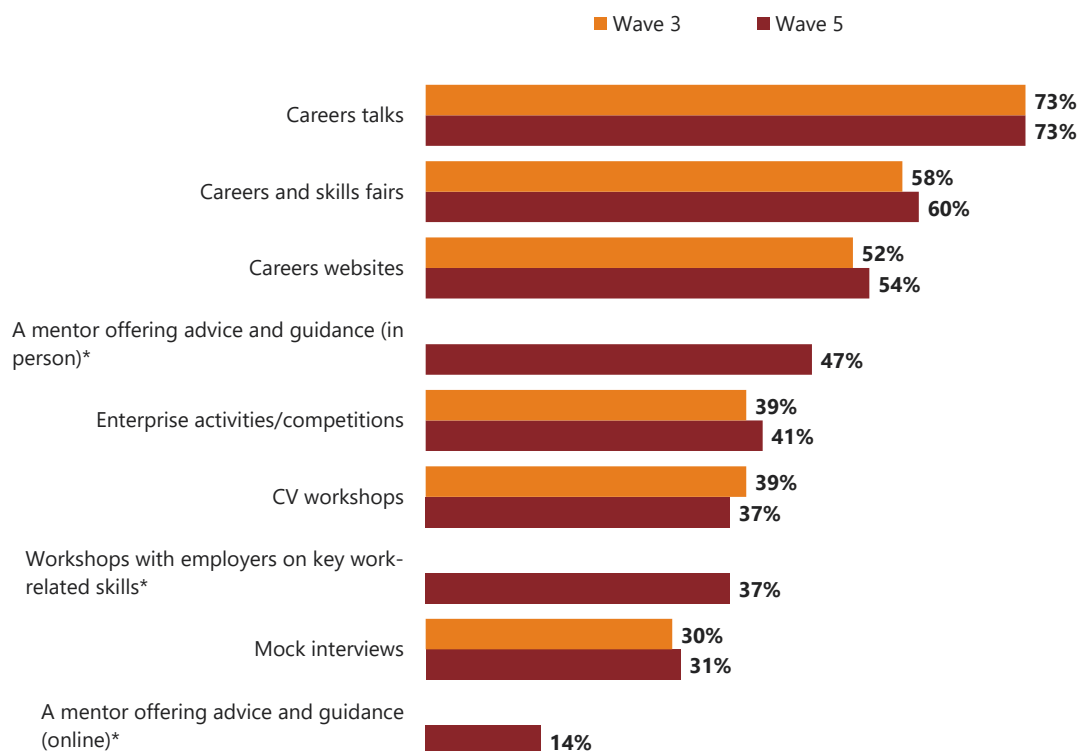
There has been no change in the types of careers opportunities that school pupils have participated in between wave 3 and wave 5. School pupils commonly reported doing or attending 'careers talks' (73%), followed by 'careers and skills fairs' (60%), 'careers websites' (54%), 'a mentor offering advice or guidance (in person)' (47%), 'enterprise activities/competitions' (41%), 'CV workshops' (37%), 'workshops with employers on key work-related skills' (37%) and 'mock interviews' (31%). The smallest proportion of school pupils said they had had 'a mentor offering advice and guidance (online)' (14%).

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<sup>47</sup> Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2017). 'Industrial Strategy: building a Britain fit for the future.' Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/industrial-strategy-building-a-britain-fit-for-the-future>

<sup>48</sup> The following answer options were available at wave 3: 'E-mentoring', 'Mentoring' and 'Employability workshops', but changed to the following at wave 5 'A mentor offering advice or guidance (online)', 'A mentor offering advice or guidance (in person)' and 'Workshops with employers on work-related skills'. Findings are not comparable for these options.

**Figure 67: 'Which of the following have you done or attended at school in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven't done this.'**



**Base: School pupils in years 8+ at wave 3 (1,250) and wave 5 (1,842)**

\*Revised wording - response option at wave 5 is not comparable to wave 3

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of pupils in year 8 and above who said they have undertaken or attended at school the career opportunities asked about (i.e. excluding those who had not done them or did not provide an answer).

### Pupil's key stage

As shown in Table 27 below, school pupils at KS5 were more likely to have undertaken or attended all career opportunities than those in KS3 or KS4, apart from 'enterprise activities/competitions'. For this, school pupils in KS3 were more likely than those in KS4 to have undertaken it (44% compared with 38%).

**Table 27: Proportion of school pupils in year 8 and above who have undertaken or attended the following at school in the past year by key stage.**

	Key Stage		
	KS3 (A)	KS4 (B)	KS5 (C)
<b>Base:</b>	648	587	607
Careers or skills fairs	45	66 A	81 A,B
Careers talks	61	80 A	89 A,B
Careers websites	42	59 A	71 A,B
CV workshops	20	44 A	64 A,B
Mock interviews	11	44 A	51 A,B
A mentor offering advice and guidance (in person)	33	54 A	66 A,B
A mentor offering advice and guidance (online)	11	15 A	21 A,B
Workshops with employers on key work-related skills	33	36	47 A,B
Enterprise activities/competitions	44 B	38	40

ABC = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C.

## Pupil gender

Girls were more likely than boys to have undertaken or attended the following:

- Careers and skills fairs (64% compared with 56%).
- Careers talks (78% compared with 69%)
- A mentor offering advice and guidance (in person) (50% compared with 45%).

## SEN

- School pupils who do not have SEN were more likely than those who have SEN to have undertaken or attended the following: Careers and skills fairs (61% compared with 48%).
- Careers talks (76% compared with 64%).

## Ethnicity

Asian/Asian British school pupils were more likely than those who are White to have undertaken or attended the following:

- Careers and skills fairs (72% compared with 58%).
- Careers talks (85% compared with 71%).
- Careers websites (66% compared with 53%).
- A mentor offering advice and guidance (in person) (55% compared with 46%).

- A mentor offering advice and guidance (online) (19% compared with 13%).
- Workshops with employers on key work-related skills (46% compared with 34%).

## Region

School pupils in London were more likely to have attended ‘CV workshops’ than their counterparts in the North (46% compared with 32%).

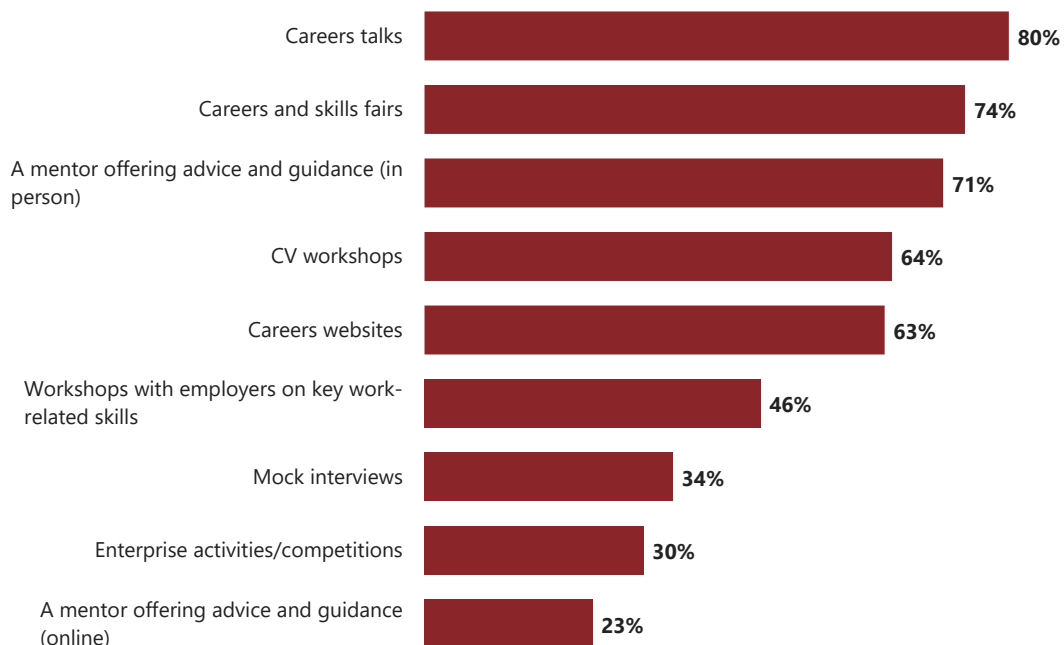
Additionally, pupils in London were more likely to have undertaken ‘enterprise activities/competitions’ than pupils in the South (48% compared with 38%).

*There were no differences found by disadvantage.*

## College students

College students were asked the same question as school pupils, ‘Which of the following have you done or attended at college in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven’t done this’. This question was asked to college students for the first time at wave 5.

**Figure 68: ‘Which of the following have you done or attended at college in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven’t done this.’**



**Base: College students (317)**

As shown in Figure 68, the highest proportion of college students reported they have undertaken or attended ‘careers talks’ (80%), followed by ‘careers and skills fairs’ (74%),

'a mentor offering advice and guidance (in person) (71%), 'CV workshops' (64%), 'careers websites' (63%), 'workshops with employers on key work-related skills' (46%), 'mock interviews' (34%) and 'enterprise activities/competitions' (30%). The smallest proportion of college students said they had done or attended 'a mentor offering advice and guidance (online)' (23%).

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based only on the proportion of college students who said they have undertaken or attended the career opportunities listed above (i.e. the proportion who did not select 'Haven't done this' or did not provide an answer 'Not stated').

### Student's gender

There were no differences found by gender for all activities apart from 'careers and skills fairs': female students were more likely than male students to have attended this activity (80% compared with 69%).

### Qualification type

Students studying for an AS/A Level were more likely to have attended 'careers and skills fairs' than those studying for a technical/vocational qualification (85% compared with 67%).

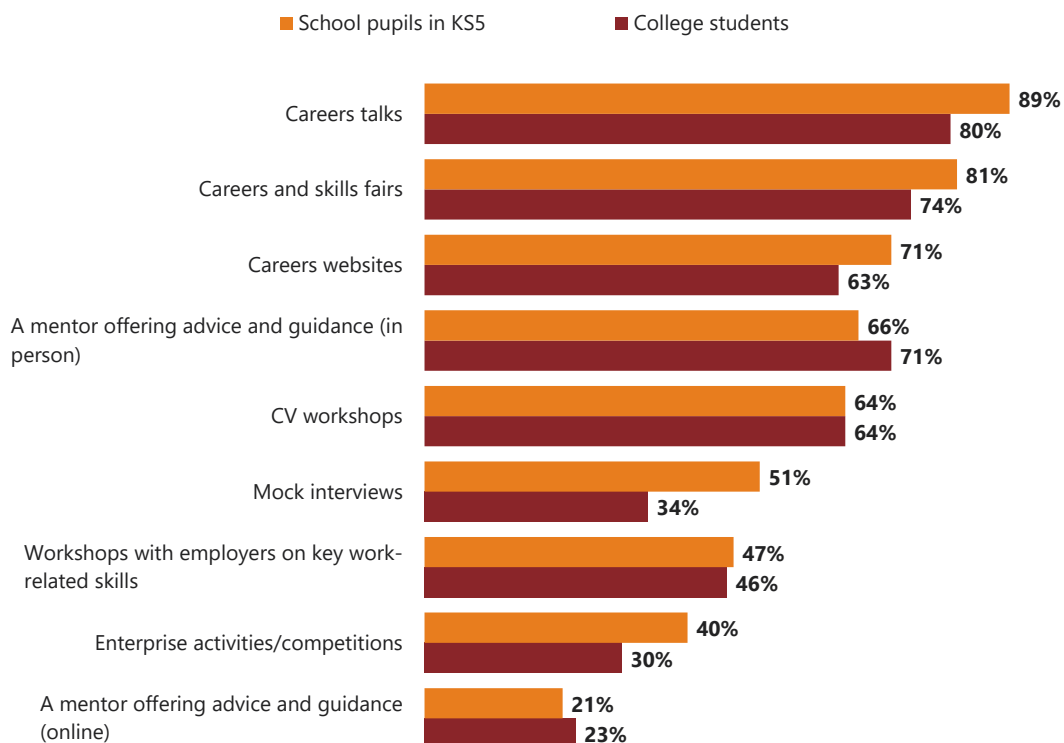
*There were no differences found by year of learning.*

## Significant differences by sample type

As shown in Figure 69, a higher proportion of school pupils in KS5 than college students said they had done or attended the following:

- 'Careers talks' (89% of pupils in KS5 compared with 80% of college students).
- 'Careers and skills fairs' (81% of pupils in KS5 compared with 74% of college students).
- 'Careers websites' (71% of pupils in KS5 compared with 63% of college students).
- 'Mock interviews' (51% of pupils in KS5 compared with 34% of college students).
- 'Enterprise activities/competitions' (40% of pupils in KS5 compared with 30% of college students).

**Figure 69: 'Which of the following have you done or attended at school/college in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven't done this.'**



**Base: School pupils in KS5 (607) and college students (317)**

## Who led each careers advice opportunity?

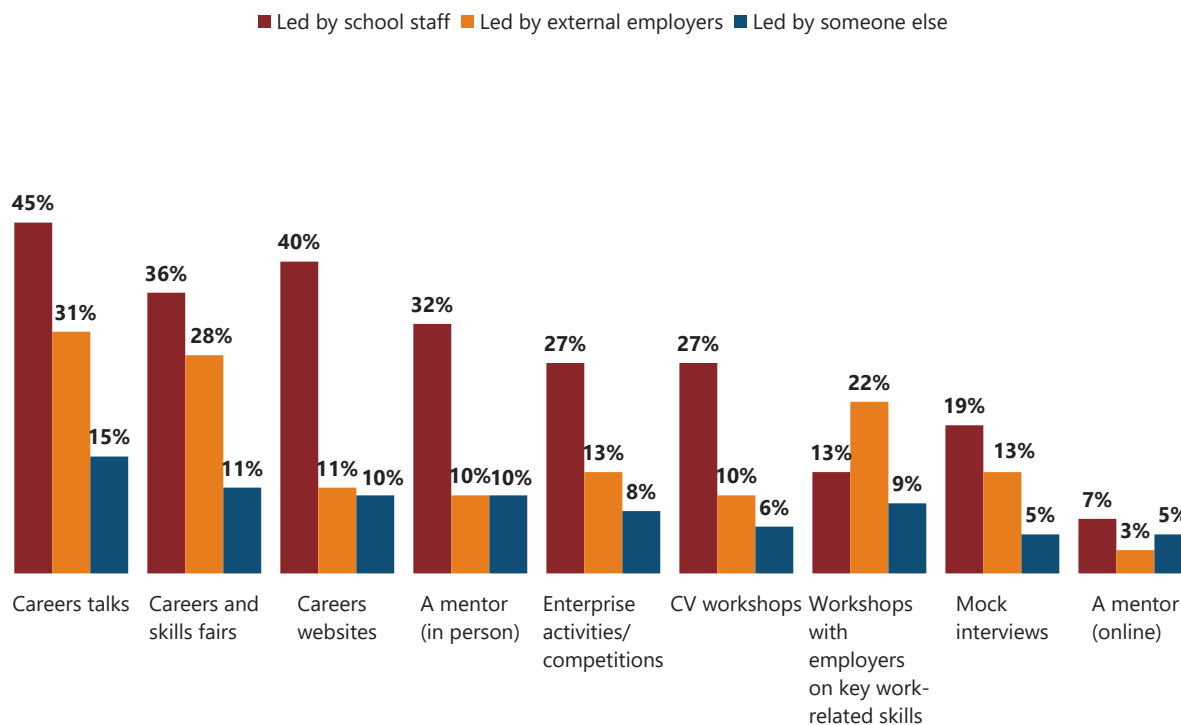
### School pupils

As shown in Figure 70, the careers opportunities asked about were most likely to be led by school staff. This is the case for all opportunities asked about apart from 'workshops with employers on key work related skills'. For this opportunity, a higher proportion said they were led by external employers than school staff (22% compared with 13%).<sup>49</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Subgroup analysis is based on those who have done each opportunity, rather than between those who said the opportunities were led by school staff etc. The patterns are largely the same.



**Figure 70: 'Which of the following have you done or attended at school/college in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven't done this.'**

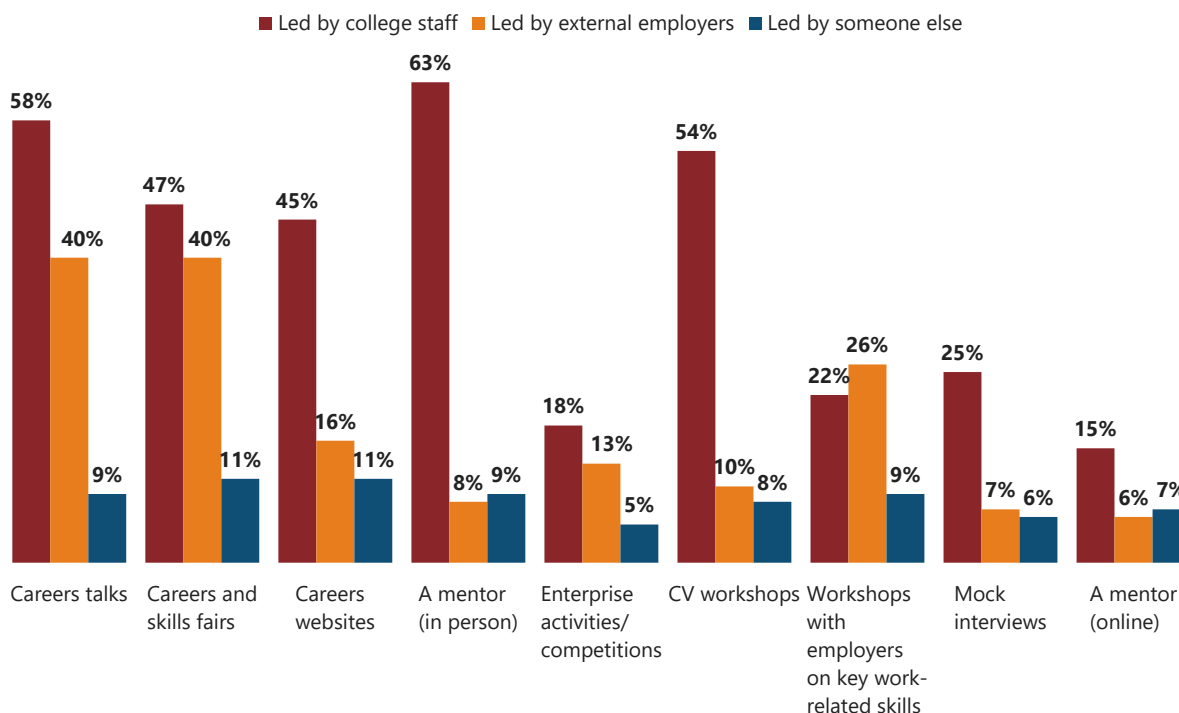


Base: School pupils in years 8+ (1,842). 'Haven't done this' and 'Not stated' not displayed

## College students

Similarly, for college students, the careers opportunities asked about were most likely to be led by school staff. This is the case for all opportunities apart from 'workshops with employers on key work related skills'. For this opportunity, a higher proportion said they were led by external employers than college staff (26% compared with 22%).

**Figure 71: 'Which of the following have you done or attended at school/college in the past year? For each, please say if it was led by school staff, led by external employers, led by someone else, or you haven't done this.'**



Base: College students (317). 'Haven't done this' and 'Not stated' not displayed

## How many times have school pupils and college students done or attended each careers advice opportunity in the past year?

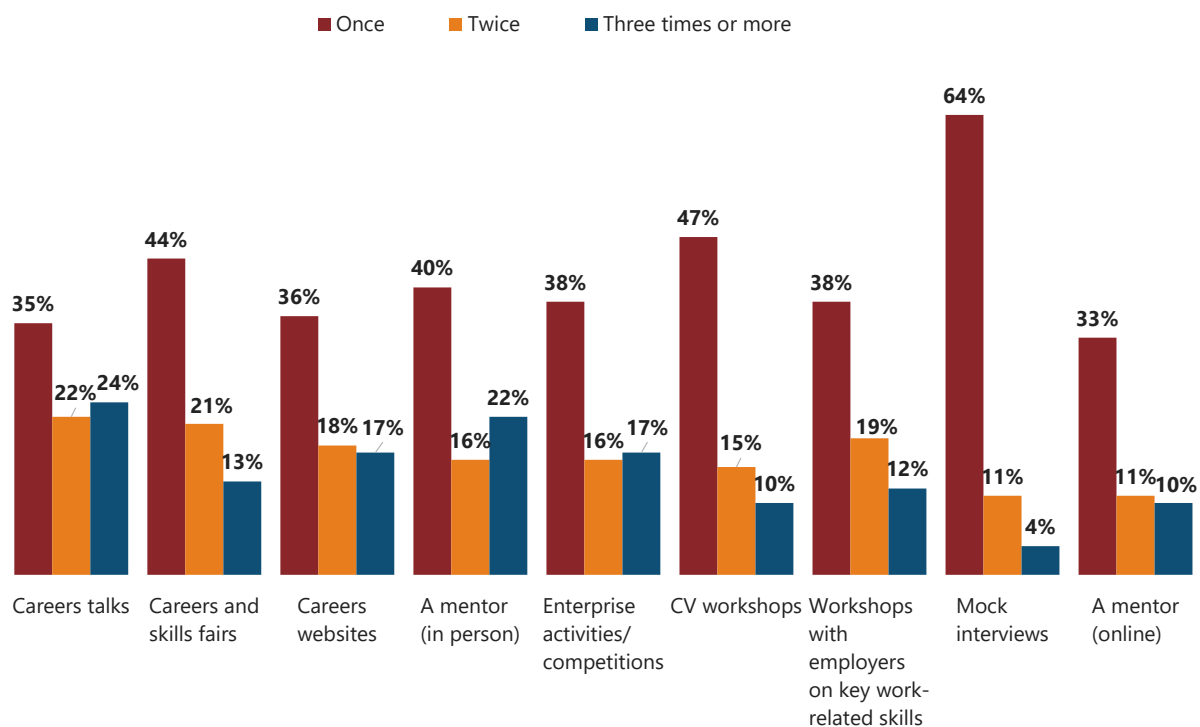
### School pupils

School pupils in year 8 and above who had undertaken or attended a career opportunity were asked a follow-up question: 'And how many times have you done or attended each of the following at school in the last year?'. This question was asked for the first time at wave 5.

The career opportunities that school pupils were most likely to have undertaken once were 'mock interviews' (64%), 'CV workshops' (47%), 'careers and skills fairs' (44%) and 'a mentor (in person)' (40%). The opportunity that school pupils were least likely to have undertaken once is 'a mentor (online)' (33%).

The career opportunity that school pupils were most likely to have undertaken three times or more was 'career talks' (24%). This is followed by 'a mentor (in person)' (22%), 'careers websites' and 'enterprise activities/competitions' (both 17%). The career opportunity that school pupils were least likely to have undertaken or attended three times or more was 'mock interviews' (4%).

**Figure 72: ‘And how many times have you done or attended each of the following at school in the last year?’**



**Base: School pupils in year 8+ who have done or attended each career opportunity: careers talks (1,406), careers and skills fairs (1,174), careers websites (1,055), a mentor (in person) (932), enterprise activities/competitions (743), CV workshops (780), workshops with employers on key work-related skills (705), mock interviews (630), a mentor (online) (278). ‘Don’t know’/‘Can’t remember’/‘No answer’ not displayed**

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based only the proportion of school pupils who reported undertaking or attending each career opportunity three times or more.

### Pupil’s key stage

Pupils in KS5 were more likely than those in KS3 or KS4 to have done or attended the following career opportunities three times or more:

- ‘Careers and skills fairs’ (17% compared with 9% in KS3).
- ‘Careers talks’ (38% compared with 21% in KS3 and KS4).
- ‘Careers websites’ (30% compared with 10% in KS3 and 16% in KS4).
- ‘Mock interviews’ (8% compared with 2% in KS4).
- ‘A mentor offering advice or guidance (in person)’ (32% compared with 23% in KS3 and 17% in KS4).

## **Pupil's gender**

School pupils who are girls were more likely to have attended 'careers talks' three times or more than school pupils who are boys (28% compared with 20%).

## **Disadvantage**

School pupils who are eligible for FSM were more likely to have attended 'careers and skills fairs' three times or more than those not eligible for FSM (20% compared with 11%).

## **Ethnicity**

Asian/Asian British school pupils were more likely to have attended 'careers talks' three times or more than White school pupils (36% compared 22%).

Asian/Asian British and Black/African/Caribbean/Black British school pupils were more likely to have looked at 'careers websites' three times or more than White school pupils (25% and 30% compared with 15%).

## **Region**

School pupils in London were more likely to have attended 'mock interviews' three times or more than those in the North or South (10% compared with 2% and 1%).

*There were no differences found by SEN.*

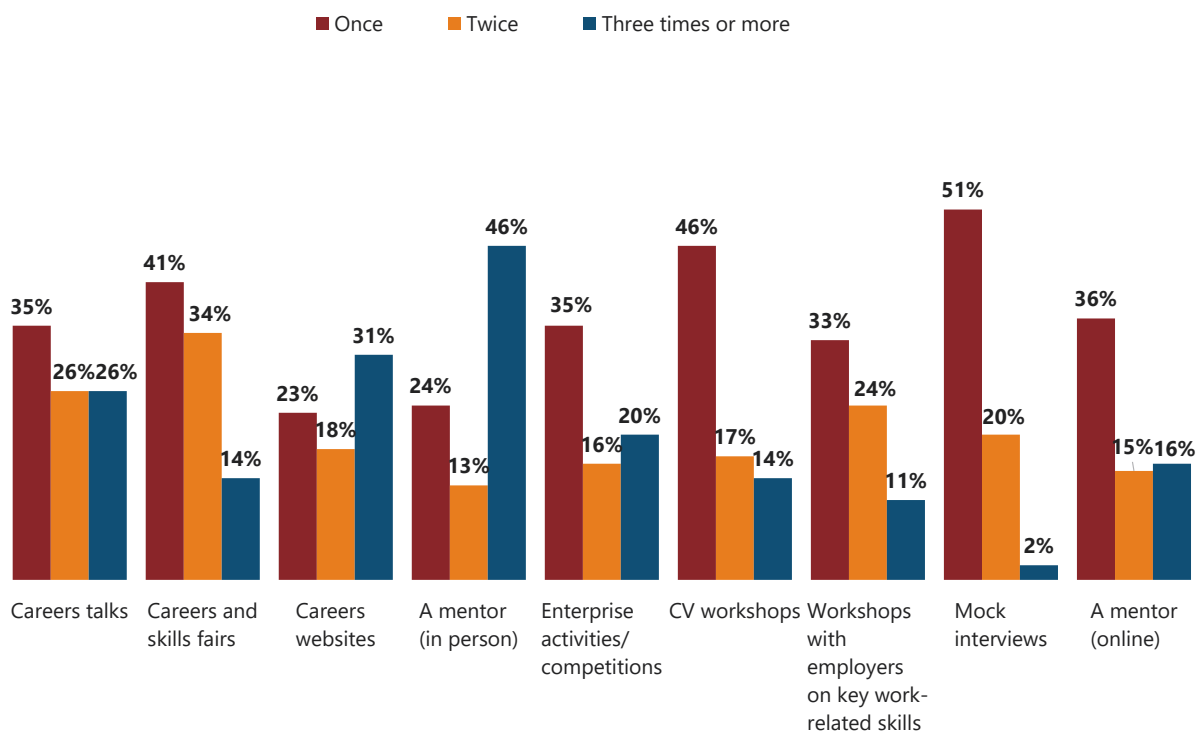
## **College students**

College students who had undertaken or attended a career opportunity were asked the same question as school pupils: 'And how many times have you done or attended each of the following at school in the last year?' This question was asked for the first time at wave 5.

The career opportunity that college students were most likely to have undertaken once was 'mock interviews' (51%). This is followed by 'CV workshops' (46%), 'careers and skills fairs' (41%), 'a mentor offering advice and guidance (online)' (36%), 'careers talks' (35%) and 'enterprise activities/competitions' (35%). The opportunity that college students were least likely to have undertaken or attended only once was 'careers websites' (23%).

The career opportunities that college students were most likely to have undertaken or attended three times or more were: 'a mentor offering advice and guidance (in person)' (46%), 'careers websites' (31%) and 'careers talks' (26%). The career opportunity that college students were least likely to have attended three times or more was 'mock interviews' (2%).

**Figure 73: ‘And how many time have you done or attended each of the following at college in the last year?’**



**Base: College students who have done or attended each career opportunity: careers talks (251), careers and skills fairs (237), careers websites (197), a mentor (in person) (224), enterprise activities/competitions (93), CV workshops (196), workshops with employers on key work-related skills (142), mock interviews (104), a mentor (online) (69). ‘Don’t know’/‘Can’t remember’/‘No answer’ not displayed**

## Significant differences by subgroup

### Year of learning

College students in their first year of learning were more likely to have attended ‘careers or skills fairs’ three times or more than those in their second year (21% compared with 8%). This is also the case for ‘careers websites’ (43% compared with 24%).

College students in their second year of learning were more likely to have attended or undertaken ‘CV workshops’ three times or more than those in their first year (21% compared with 7%).

*There were no differences found by student’s gender or qualification type.*

### Significant differences by sample type

Differences between college students and school pupils in KS5 have not been reported because of the low base size.

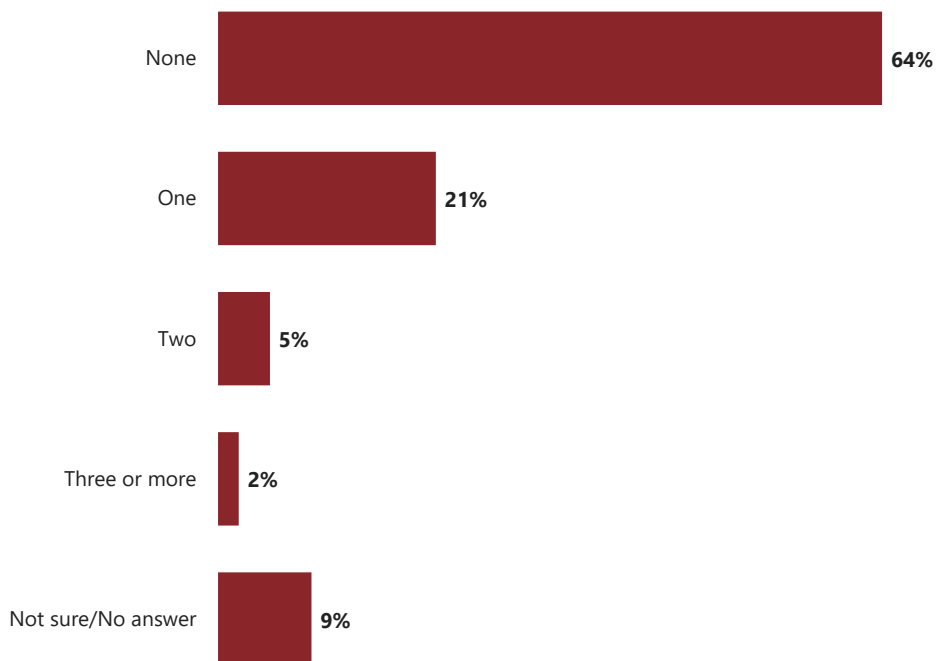
# How many work experience placements of a week or longer have school pupils and college students spent with an employer in the past 12 months?

## School pupils

School pupils in year 8 and above were asked ‘How many work experience placements of a week or longer have you spent with an employer in the past 12 months?’ This question was asked for the first time in wave 5.

As shown in Figure 74 below, 64% of school pupils in year 8 and above had not undertaken a work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months. 21% had undertaken one placement, 5% percent had undertaken two and 2% had undertaken three or more. Therefore, 27% had undertaken at least one placement.

**Figure 74: ‘How many work experience placements of a week or longer have you spent with an employer in the past 12 months?’**



**Base: School pupils in years 8+ (1,842)**

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of school pupils who have undertaken at least one work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months.

### Pupil's year group and key stage

As shown in Table 28, the proportion of pupils who have undertaken at least one work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months increases for each year group and therefore key stage. While 5% of school pupils in year 8 had undertaken a work placement this increases to 48% of school pupils in year 13.

**Table 28: Proportion of school pupils in year 8 and above who have undertaken at least one work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months.**

	Year Group						Key Stage		
	Year 8 (B)	Year 9 (C)	Year 10 (D)	Year 11 (E)	Year 12 (F)	Year 13 (G)	KS3 (H)	KS4 (I)	KS5 (J)
<i>Base:</i>	318	330	309	278	315	292	648	587	607
<i>At least one</i>	5	4	38 A,B	42 A,B	57 A,B,C,D,F	48 A,B,C	5	40 G	53 G,H

ABC = significant difference at 5% risk level. Columns tested: A/B/C.

### Region

A higher proportion of school pupils in London had undertaken at least one work experience placement than those in the North (33% compared with 21%).

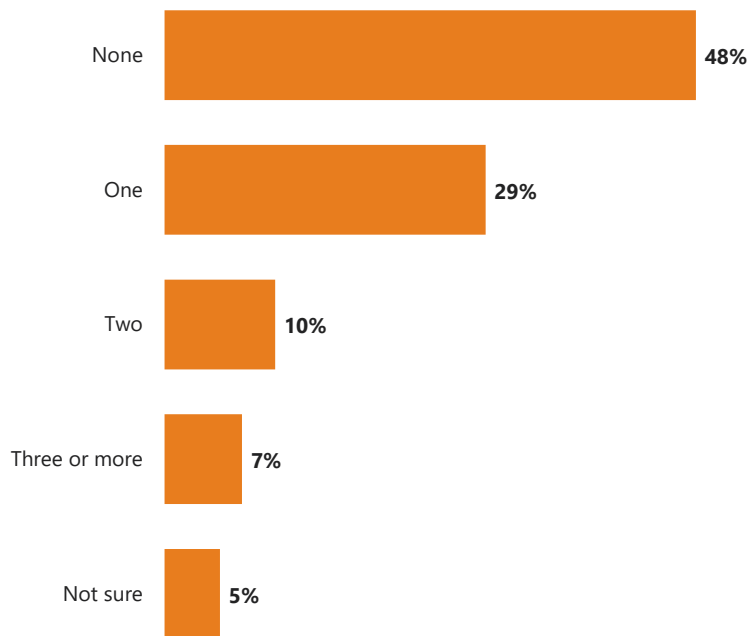
*There were no differences found by pupil's gender, disadvantage, SEN or ethnicity.*

### College students

College students were asked 'How many work experience placements of a week or longer have you spent with an employer in the past 12 months?' This question was asked for the first time in wave 5.

As shown in Figure 75 below, 48% of college students had not undertaken a work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months. 29% had undertaken one placement, 10% had undertaken two and 7% had undertaken three or more. Therefore, 46% had undertaken at least one work placement with an employer in the last 12 months.

**Figure 75: 'How many work experience placements of a week or longer have you spent with an employer in the past 12 months?'**



Base: College students (317)

## Significant differences by subgroup

Subgroup analysis is based on the proportion of college students who had undertaken at least one work experience placement of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months.

### Qualification type

College students studying for a technical/vocational qualification were more likely to have undertaken a work experience placement than those studying for an AS/A Level (58% compared with 33%).

*There were no differences found by student's gender or year of learning.*

## Significant differences by sample type

There are no significant differences between school pupils in KS5 and college students in their likelihood to have undertaken work experience placements of a week or longer with an employer in the past 12 months



## Technical Appendix

This appendix outlines the methods used in this study, including data collection methodology, sampling, data processing and weighting.

This work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of ISO 9001, ISO 20252, and ISO 27001.

### Methodology overview

This fifth wave of the omnibus survey of pupils and their parents/carers surveyed a nationally representative sample of young people at secondary schools and colleges in England. A postal push-to-web approach was used, using the National Pupil Database (NPD) as a sampling frame for secondary school pupils (at state-funded schools), and the Individualised Learner Records (ILR) as a sampling frame for college students. A postal push-to-web approach was consistent with waves 1, 2,3 and 4. However, the inclusion of 16-18 year olds attending Further Education (FE) and Sixth Form colleges (from the ILR sampling frame), excluding those studying apprenticeships, was a new addition at wave 4.

Wave 5 was soft-launched to a subset of the sample on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018<sup>50</sup>. The main fieldwork began on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018, and closed for all respondents on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018. The initial mailing invited school pupils/college students and their parents/carers to complete the survey online using a web-link and unique log-in. Non-respondents were sent reminder mailings, including a paper questionnaire with the second reminder letter.

In each household, two separate questionnaires were administered: one to the school pupil or college student, and one to their parent/carer. All respondents self-completed the questionnaire.

At wave 5, an incentive was offered to school pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their parents/carers: where both the school pupil and the parent/carer completed the survey. They each received a £10 Love2Shop voucher shortly after the close of fieldwork.

For each wave, the reported number of paired school pupils and parent/carers (from the NPD sample) were as follows:

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<sup>50</sup> 100 pairs (school pupils/college students and their parents/carers) were included in the soft launch. These respondents were randomly chosen from the selected sample.

- Wave 1: 1,723 interviews (from an initial mail-out of 8,000)
- Wave 2: 1,595 interviews (from an initial mail-out of 7,000)
- Wave 3: 1,504 interviews (from an initial mail-out of 7,252)
- Wave 4: 2,590<sup>51</sup> interviews (from an initial mail-out of 11,800)
- Wave 5: 2,265<sup>52</sup> interviews (from an initial mail-out of 10,059)

For waves 4-5, the reported number of paired college students and parent/carers (from the ILR sample) were as follows:

- Wave 4: 206 interviews (from an initial mail-out of 2,000)
- Wave 5: 317 interviews (from an initial mail-out of 2,000)

## Sampling

### School pupils and their parents/carers (NPD)

To ensure consistency with previous waves, the sample of families included in the survey was taken from the NPD. Pupils in state-funded secondary schools in England (including middle-deemed secondary schools, academies, grammar schools, City Technology Colleges and special schools<sup>53</sup>) were included in the survey. School pupils who are home educated or attending independent schools (not covered by NPD) were not included.

### Sample selection

The latest available version of the NPD was used to obtain the sample (the academic year 2017/2018 extract). DfE first provided an anonymised dataset with Pupil Matching References (PMR) and the measures required for the sampling. Ipsos MORI used this to select the sample, and returned the sampled PMRs to DfE to extract the contact information from the NPD, and deleted all other information held. Having received the contact information, Ipsos MORI checked for any families that appeared more than once (due to more than one child being selected) and replaced any duplicates with a family sampled at random from the reserve sample.

The sample was drawn to ensure the final profile of survey respondents would be representative, once weighted, of the population of school pupils in years 7 to 13 in England. Children that were not in secondary education (defined as school years 7 to 13) were first deleted.

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<sup>51</sup> Please note that at wave 4, an incentive experiment ran alongside the main fieldwork. This included a boost sample of SEN status and/or FSM eligible school pupils, drawn from the NPD. The completed paired questionnaires in the incentive experiment and main fieldwork were reported together.

<sup>52</sup> Please note that at wave 5, households where school pupils were eligible for FSM were incentivised.

<sup>53</sup> Including maintained and non-maintained special schools, hospital special schools and academies.

The sampling frame was stratified by the following NPD variables:

- School year by eligibility for FSM
- Gender
- Age
- Local Authority (LA)
- Major ethnic group
- Provision types under the SEN Code of Practice
- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) rank

The first level of stratification consisted of school year by FSM eligibility. As incentives were offered to pupils eligible for FSM, which would increase the response rate in that group, the sample was designed so that the predicted participating sample for the FSM group was in proportion. Within each school year, 1,437 pupils were sampled in total, of which 110 were eligible for FSM. A reserve sample with exactly the same design was also selected.

Appropriate weighting was applied to ensure that pupils eligible for FSM were in their correct proportion for analysis.

## **College students and their parents/carers (ILR)**

In line with wave 4, a sample was also drawn from the ILR to reach more 16-18 year olds outside of the school setting.

College students in their first and second year of learning (i.e. school years 12 and 13) for the academic year 2017/18 were identified in the ILR and an anonymised sampling frame was sent to Ipsos MORI. College students that had declined to be contacted by post were also removed at this stage.

Duplicates were identified using the Learner Reference Number and additional entries removed so that each college student only appeared once in the sampling frame. The sampling frame was stratified by the following ILR variables:

- Age
- Gender
- Learner aims (academic/ technical)
- Eligibility for FSM
- Major ethnic group
- Learning difficulties or disabilities/health problems

A systematic stratified sample of 2,000 college students was sampled, with 1,000 in each age group. An additional reserve sample of 2,000 was also sampled using the same design.

The sample of Learner Reference Numbers was sent to the ILR team to extract the contact details. Again, the sample was checked for duplicate families and any identified were replaced at random from the reserve sample.

## Questionnaire

DfE sent Ipsos MORI provisional questions and then worked with Ipsos MORI to develop the questionnaires.

The questionnaires covered a number of topics, including:

- School measures
- GCSE reform including changes to GCSE grading and Progress 8
- Subject and qualification choice, including the English Baccalaureate and GCSEs
- Provision at school/college, such as lunches and access to free sanitary products
- Attendance at school/college
- Mental health support
- SEND support
- Free activities during school/college holidays
- Careers guidance

A minority of questions were excluded from the college student questionnaires (and their parent/carer questionnaire) due to a lack of applicability outside of a school setting. In addition, some minor changes to phrasing were incorporated to ensure that these questionnaires were relevant to those attending colleges, and their parents/carers.

A number of questions were included in both the parent/carer and their child's (school pupil or college student) questionnaire. This allowed for analysis to look at whether the school pupil/college student and their parent/carer provided the same or a different response. These are described in the report as 'paired responses'.

Both questionnaires were cognitively tested by trained Ipsos MORI researchers. Materials testing was carried out prior to the cognitive testing to mirror the process of receiving the invitation/reminder letters followed by completing the questionnaire as closely as possible. Ipsos MORI conducted thirteen interviews with school pupils/college students and one of their parents/carers, each lasting around two hours in total, per pair. Quotas were set on parent's gender, child's school/college year, child's gender, child's ethnicity and parent's social grade to ensure a spread of demographic profiles were

included. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in the families' homes, and respondents were given an incentive to thank them for their time.

## Fieldwork

The survey opened on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 and closed on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2018. The stages of fieldwork largely followed the methodology established in waves 1-3 of the omnibus. However, from wave 4, targeted reminders were added to maximise the response rates among those eligible for FSM and those with special educational needs (SEN) provision.

### Stage 1

The survey was launched on a single web-link. The unique log-in generated for each respondent routed them to the correct version of the questionnaire.

Ipsos MORI sent an invitation letter to the 'parent/carer of [named child]' in the NPD sample, introducing the survey and inviting them and their named child to take part online, and to the '[named child]' in the ILR sample, introducing the survey and inviting them and one of their parents/carers to take part online. These letters included details of the study; instructions on how to take part; and contact details for the Department for Education (DfE) and Ipsos MORI for any further questions.

The study was branded as 'The Pupil and Parent/Carer Snapshot Survey'. The invitation explained that the survey was being conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of the DfE; that respondents had been selected at random from a database held by DfE; and that their responses would be kept strictly confidential.

The NPD sample invitation included a separate letter to pass to the named child if the parent/carer consented to the school pupil taking part. The reverse was true for the ILR sample, where the invitation was addressed directly to the college student, with a separate letter provided to be shared with their parent/carer. The letters stressed the importance of both the school pupil/college student and their parent/carer taking part.

For those who were in the incentive group (i.e. FSM eligible school pupils and their parents/carers), the invitation letters emphasised the opportunity to receive two £10 vouchers – one for the school pupil and one for the parent/carer – only if both submitted a response.

A soft launch was conducted for the study, approaching an initial random selection of 100 addresses on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. The full sample was invited to take part from 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018.

## Stage 2

Ipsos MORI sent a reminder mailing to all addresses where only one response from the household had been received, or where no response had been received from the school pupil/college student *and* their parent/carer.

For the NPD sample, the reminder mailings were tailored based on whether a response had already been received, and whether this was from the school pupil or their parent/carer:

- Where neither the school pupil or their parent/carer had responded, a reminder mailing was addressed to the parent/carer. This mailing included a reminder letter for the parent/carer, and a reminder letter for the parent/carer to share with their child.
- Where only the school pupil had responded, a reminder mailing was addressed to the parent/carer. This mailing included a reminder letter for the parent/carer only.
- Where only the parent/carer had responded, a reminder mailing was addressed to the parent/carer. This mailing included a thank you letter for the parent/carer, and a reminder letter for the parent/carer to share with their child.

Similarly, for the ILR sample the reminder mailings were tailored based on whether a response had already been received, and whether this was from the college student or their parent/carer:

- Where neither the college student or their parent/carer had responded, a reminder mailing was addressed to the college student. This mailing included a reminder letter for the student, and a reminder letter for the student to share with their parent/carer.
- Where only the college student had responded, a reminder mailing was addressed to the parent/carer. This mailing included a reminder letter for the parent/carer only.
- Where only the parent/carer had responded, a reminder mailing was addressed to the college student. This mailing included a reminder letter for the student only.

All reminder letters contained information about the survey, and how they could take part using the web-link and log-in details provided.

## Stage 3

Ipsos MORI sent an additional reminder mailing to all addresses where only one response from the household had been received, or where no response had been received from the school pupil/college student *and* their parent/carer.

These reminder mailings were tailored using the same approach as stage 2. However, the mailings at stage 3 also contained paper booklet versions of the questionnaires,

alongside freepost return envelopes. Each paper questionnaire was personalised with the name of the school pupil/college student, or 'parent/carer of [named school pupil/college student]'.

All reminder letters contained information about the survey, and how they could take part by either completing the paper questionnaire and returning this in the provided envelope, or online using the provided web-link and log-in details.

## Stage 4

In a bid to boost response rates among hard-to-reach groups within the NPD sample, a third reminder was administered in the form of a postcard. These postcards were sent to non-responding households where the school pupil was eligible for FSM and/or flagged as in receipt of SEN provision.

Like the previous reminder mailings, the postcard mailings were tailored based on whether a response had already been received, and whether this was from the school pupil or their parent/carer. A similar approach to stages 2 and 3 was used:

- Where neither the school pupil or their parent/carer had responded, a postcard was addressed to the parent/carer. This postcard encouraged the parent/carer to take part, and then asked them to pass the postcard on to their child.
- Where only the school pupil had responded, a postcard was addressed to the parent/carer.
- Where only the parent/carer had responded, a postcard was addressed to the parent/carer. This postcard thanked the parent/carer for taking part, and asked them to share the postcard with their child.

The postcard presented an opportunity to engage with respondents in a more visually appealing format. All postcards reminded respondents of their online log-in details, but also that they could still complete and return the paper version of the questionnaire if they preferred. For data privacy, the postcards were sent in envelopes.

## Stage 5

A fourth and final reminder mailing was sent to non-responding households in the two lowest responding sample groups: households where the school pupil was flagged as in receipt of SEN provision, and college students and their parents/carers. This mailing took the form of reminder letters, and used the same approach as stages 2 and 3. Similarly, all reminder letters contained information about the survey, and how they could take part by either filling in their paper questionnaire and returning this in the provided freepost return envelope, or by completing it online using the provided web-link and log-in details.

## Data processing

### Cleaning

The online survey was designed and scripted to ensure respondents were only routed to questions that were relevant to them. Where possible, this logic was applied to the paper responses, meaning that some responses were altered post-fieldwork, for example removing a response to a question that the respondent should have skipped.

Where a respondent did not respond to a question that they should have answered in the postal questionnaire, they have been coded into the response category 'no answer'. Due to the very small sample sizes in this response category, we have combined 'no answer' with 'don't want to answer'/'don't know' throughout the report.

### School pupils and their parents/carers

At the start of the survey school pupils were asked if their parent/carer was happy for them to take part in the survey. Parents/carers were also asked if they were happy for their child to take part. Interviews for school pupils under the age of 16 were only included if their parent/carer also took part in the survey. Respondents were asked for permission for their survey responses to be linked with information held in the NPD. This information was used to define the following subgroups for analysis:

- Pupil's year group and key stage
- Pupil's gender (male and female only)
- Whether the pupil was eligible for FSM
- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Indices (IDACI) rank quintiles (i.e. dividing the distribution of IDACI ranks into five equal groups, with the first quintile representing the least deprived, and the fifth quintile representing the most deprived)
- Provision types under the SEN code of practice
- Pupil's major ethnic group
- Region (derived from postcode)

For those who did not give permission for their survey responses to be linked, answers given in the survey itself were used instead. IDACI rank, SEN provision and region are exceptions to this, as comparable questions were not asked in the survey. In these cases, those who did not agree to data linking were excluded from the subgroup definition.

In the survey, pupils were asked to identify which of the following response codes best described their gender: 'male', 'female', or 'in some other way'. Where data linking, consent was provided and pupils identified 'in some other way' in the survey, we have not



used the data held by the NPD. As such, these pupils are not included in the gender subgroup analysis. Please note that due to the small sample size, pupils that identified 'in some other way' in the survey are not included as a separate subgroup.

### **College students and their parents/carers**

Answers given in the survey itself were used to define the following subgroups for analysis:

- Student's year of learning
- Student's gender (male and female only)
- Student's qualification type: AS/A Levels or Technical/Vocational

Like school pupils, due to the small sample size, we are unable to report students who selected 'in some other way' at the gender question in the survey as a separate subgroup.

### **Removing respondents**

In 16 cases, there was a large discrepancy between the answer given in the parent/carer survey and the information held in the NPD in terms of school year. These respondents were excluded from the results due to concerns that the parent/carer was not answering the survey in relation to the named child drawn in the sample.

In addition, a small number of respondents and their corresponding paired response (eight pairs from the NPD sample, and eight pairs from the ILR sample) were excluded from the results for completing the online survey too quickly<sup>54</sup>. Post-cleaning, the median online completion time was 9 minutes for the pupil/student questionnaire and 7 minutes for the parent/carer questionnaire.

The final data for analysis included paired responses only, i.e. where the school pupil or college student and one of their parents/carers had both completed the survey.

### **Data analysis**

Throughout the report, we have compared two proportions using independent samples t-tests. This means there is no overlap between the two samples being compared (for example, the proportion of females who provided a particular answer compared with the proportion of males who provided that answer). Weighting has been applied to all cases to make them representative of their sample population (i.e. NPD for school pupils and

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<sup>54</sup> Based on the survey completion times, the cut-off for school pupils/college students was set at 3 minutes, and the cut-off for parents/carers was set at 2.5 minutes.

ILR for college students). As such, the independent samples t-tests have been applied to weighted data throughout.

All reported differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, unless otherwise specified. This means, if we repeated our sampling process 100 times, and asked each sample a question, 95 times out of 100, the answer would be a similar value to the value we would have obtained if the total population completed the survey.

Only findings with sufficient sample sizes have been reported. For the sample of school pupils and parents/carers, only subgroups comprising of 100 or more respondents are commented on in this report. Given the smaller sample size of college students and parents/carers, only subgroups comprising of **50 or more respondents** are commented on in this report.

## Types of analysis reported

### Paired responses

Throughout this report, the analysis is based on paired responses only. By paired response we mean that both the selected school pupil or college student, and one of their parents/carers, have taken part in the survey. Where only the school pupil/college student *or* their parent/carer have taken part, their responses have been excluded from this report.

For each survey question, it is stated whether the question was asked for school pupils, college students, and/or their parents/carers. Where the same question was asked in both the school pupil/college student and parent/carer questionnaires, we have carried out paired response analysis. This analysis examined whether the school pupil/college student gave the same or a different response to their parent/carer. Where one or both did not provide an answer, or answered 'don't know' or 'don't want to answer', the pair have been excluded from this analysis.

### Differences by sample type

Where both school pupils and college students were asked the same question, we have compared the responses for school pupils in the comparable year groups (i.e. year 12 and year 13, or key stage 5 (KS5)) with the responses for college students. Similarly, we have compared responses for parents/carers of school pupils in KS5 with the responses for parents/carers of college students.

### Differences by wave

Where the same question has been asked to the same audience in previous waves, we have reported the wave-on-wave trends. For consistency, the analysis for previous waves is also based on paired responses only. Where questions are no longer comparable due to changes in question wording, this has been noted.

## Differences by subgroup

For all survey questions, we have tested for statistically significant differences between the subgroups defined above (under 'Data Processing').

## Sample profile

The number of completed questionnaires by analysis subgroup is shown in Table 29 for the NPD sample (school pupils and their parents/carers), and Table 30 for the ILR sample (college students and their parents/carers).

Please note that parent's gender and the household's total annual income<sup>55</sup> (before tax and other deductions) was self-reported in the parent/carer questionnaire for both the NPD and ILR samples. This report does not include any analysis by parent's gender or household income – this information is included in the sample profile tables for reference only.

These tables are based on unweighted data.

**Table 29: NPD sample by subgroup**

		Completed questionnaires – paired school pupil and parent/carer (n)	% of total
<b>Pupil's year group</b>	Year 7	366	16%
	Year 8	357	16%
	Year 9	333	15%
	Year 10	311	14%
	Year 11	283	13%
	Year 12	316	14%
	Year 13	292	13%
<b>Pupil's key stage</b>	KS3	1,056	47%
	KS4	594	26%
	KS5	608	27%
<b>Pupil's gender</b>	Male	1,034	46%
	Female	1,207	53%

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<sup>55</sup>Parents/carers were asked to think about all sources of income, including from work, benefits, pensions, child maintenance, rent or other sources.

		Completed questionnaires – paired school pupil and parent/carer (n)	% of total
<b>FSM eligible</b>	Yes	256	11%
	No	1,970	87%
<b>IDACI quintile</b>	1 <sup>st</sup>	472	21%
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	379	17%
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	397	18%
	4 <sup>th</sup>	313	14%
	5 <sup>th</sup>	322	14%
<b>SEN provision</b>	Yes	280	12%
	No	1,959	87%
<b>Pupil's ethnicity</b>	White	1,766	78%
	Asian/Asian British	237	11%
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	100	4%
	Other ethnic groups	130	6%
<b>Region</b>	North	494	22%
	Midlands	371	16%
	South (exc. London)	780	34%
	London	238	11%
<b>Parent's gender</b>	Male	388	17%
	Female	1,837	81%
<b>Total annual (gross) household income</b>	Below £10,000	146	6%
	£10,001 - £20,000	282	13%
	£20,001 - £35,000	336	15%
	£35,001 - £50,000	337	15%
	£50,0001 or more	651	29%

**Table 30: ILR sample by subgroup**

		<b>Completed questionnaires – paired college student and parent/carer (n)</b>	<b>% of total</b>
<b>Student's year of learning</b>	First	118	37%
	Second	141	45%
<b>Student's gender</b>	Male	128	40%
	Female	185	58%
<b>Student's qualification type</b>	AS/A Level	154	49%
	Technical/Vocational	141	45%
<b>Parent's gender</b>	Male	66	21%
	Female	246	78%
<b>Total annual (gross) household income</b>	Below £10,000	26	8%
	£10,001 - £20,000	46	15%
	£20,001 - £35,000	59	19%
	£35,001 - £50,000	51	16%
	£50,0001 or more	59	20%

## Response rates

All response rate tables are based on unweighted data.

### School pupils and their parents/carers

In total, 2,724 interviews with parents/carers of school pupils and 2,623 interviews with school pupils were achieved. The final reporting figure was 2,265 paired interviews, after data cleaning.

The achieved response rates are shown in Table 31 below, split out by those who were offered an incentive to participate in the survey, and those who were not.

**Table 31: Wave 5 response rates (NPD)**

	<b>Total combined</b> (Selected sample of 9,976*)		<b>Non-incentive</b> (Selected sample of 9,214*)		<b>Incentive</b> (Selected sample of 762*)	
	<b>Interviews achieved</b>	<b>Response rate</b>	<b>Interviews achieved</b>	<b>Response rate</b>	<b>Interviews achieved</b>	<b>Response rate</b>
All paired interviews in final reporting figures	2,265	23%	2,005	22%	260	34%
All paired interviews achieved before data cleaning	2,289	23%	2,021	22%	268	35%
All parent/carer of school pupils interviews achieved before pairing and data cleaning	2,623	26%	2,343	25%	280	37%
All school pupil interviews achieved before pairing and data cleaning	2,724	27%	2,425	26%	299	39%

\* Based on the selected samples after removal of ineligible addresses (defined as return to senders).

The cumulative response rates achieved at each mailout are shown in Table 32. These figures are based on the total number of interviews post-data cleaning.

**Table 32: Wave 5 response rates by mailout (NPD)**

		Total combined (selected sample of 10,059)			Non-incentive (selected sample of 9,289)			Incentive (selected sample of 770)*		
		Size of mail out	Interviews achieved	Cumulative response rate	Size of mail out	Interviews achieved	Cumulative response rate	Size of mail out	Interviews achieved	Cumulative response rate
<b>Paired parents/ carers</b>	Invite	10,059	664	7%	9289	556	6%	770	108	14%
	Reminder 1	9,395	556	12%	8733	499	11%	662	57	21%
	Reminder 2	8,839	893	21%	8234	882	21%	605	11	23%
	Reminder 3	7,946	106	22%	7352	22	21%	594	84	34%
	Reminder 4	7,840	46	23%	7330	46	22%	-	-	-
<b>Paired pupils</b>	Invite	10,059	742	7%	9,289	630	7%	770	112	15%
	Reminder 1	9,317	532	13%	8,659	473	12%	658	59	22%
	Reminder 2	8,785	788	20%	8,186	775	20%	599	13	24%
	Reminder 3	7,997	158	22%	7,411	82	21%	586	76	34%
	Reminder 4	7,839	45	23%	7,329	45	22%	-	-	-

\*Please note that reminder 2 included a copy of the paper questionnaire, and reminder 4 was not sent to the incentive sample

### Subgroup and mode breakdown

The response rates achieved across the different subgroups are shown in Table 33. These categories are based on school pupil characteristics. Please note these figures are based on the total number of interviews post-data cleaning, and exclude the response options 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say'. The unweighted profile of respondents who completed the survey is shown in Table 34, split by the mode they used.

Table 33: Wave 5 response rates for each subgroup – Paired (NPD)

		Total combined			Non-incentive group			Incentive group		
		Size of mail out	Interviews achieved – Paired	Response rate	Size of mail out	Interviews achieved – Paired	Response rate	Size of mail out	Interviews achieved – Paired	Response rate
<b>Pupil's gender</b>	Female	5,020	1,207	24%	4,636	1,056	23%	384	151	39%
	Male	5,039	1,034	21%	4,653	926	20%	386	108	28%
<b>School year</b>	Year 7	1,437	366	25%	1,327	327	25%	110	39	35%
	Year 8	1,437	357	25%	1,327	329	25%	110	28	25%
	Year 9	1,437	333	23%	1,327	291	22%	110	42	38%
	Year 10	1,437	311	22%	1,327	272	20%	110	39	35%
	Year 11	1,437	283	20%	1,327	248	19%	110	35	32%
	Year 12	1,437	316	22%	1,327	272	20%	110	44	40%
	Year 13	1,437	292	20%	1,327	259	20%	110	33	30%
<b>FSM eligible</b>	No	9,289	1,970	21%	9,289	1,965	21%	-	-	
	Yes	770	256	33%	-	-		770	250	32%
<b>Major ethnic group</b>	White	7,552	1,766	23%	7,027	1,583	23%	525	183	35%
	Non-white	2,507	467	19%	2,262	394	17%	245	73	30%
<b>SEN provision</b>	Yes	8,794	1,959	22%	8,247	1,762	21%	223	60	27%
	No	1,265	280	22%	1,042	220	21%	547	197	36%



**Table 34: Number of completed surveys for each subgroup, by mode (NPD)**

		Total combined		Non-incentive group		Incentive group	
		Online	Paper	Online	Paper	Online	Paper
<b>Pupil's gender</b>	Female	824	383	705	351	119	32
	Male	666	368	579	347	87	21
<b>School year</b>	Year 7	249	117	218	109	31	8
	Year 8	235	122	211	118	24	4
	Year 9	227	106	196	95	31	11
	Year 10	197	114	166	106	31	8
	Year 11	178	105	151	97	27	8
	Year 12	212	104	176	96	36	8
	Year 13	205	87	179	80	26	7
<b>FSM eligible</b>	No	1,292	678	1,289	676	3	2
	Yes	202	54	1	5	201	49
<b>Major ethnic group</b>	White	1,157	609	1,011	572	146	37
	Non-white	336	131	277	117	59	14
<b>SEN provision</b>	Yes	178	102	127	93	51	9
	No	1,319	640	1,114	597	205	43

## College students and their parents/carers

In total, 366 interviews with parents/carers of college students and 418 interviews with college students were achieved. The final reporting figure was 317 paired interviews, after data cleaning.

The achieved response rates are shown in Table 35 below.

**Table 35: Wave 5 response rates (ILR)**

	Total	
	Interviews achieved	Response rate
All paired interviews in final reporting figures	317	16%
All paired interviews achieved before data cleaning	325	16%
All parent/carer of students interviews achieved before pairing and data cleaning	366	18%
All student interviews achieved before pairing and data cleaning	418	21%

\*Please note that no ILR addresses were ineligible (defined as return to senders)

The cumulative response rates achieved at each mailout are shown in Table 36 below. These figures are based on the total number of interviews post-data cleaning.

**Table 36: Wave 5 response rates by mailout (ILR)**

		Size of mail out	Interviews achieved	Cumulative response rate
<b>Paired parents/carers</b>	Invitation	2,000	54	3%
	Reminder 1	1,946	69	6%
	Reminder 2	1,877	26	7%
	Reminder 3	-	-	-
	Reminder 4	1,851	168	16%
<b>Paired students</b>	Invitation	2,000	77	4%
	Reminder 1	1,923	65	7%
	Reminder 2	1,858	120	13%
	Reminder 3	-	-	-
	Reminder 4	1,738	55	16%

\*Please note that reminder 2 included a copy of the paper questionnaire, and the postcard reminder (reminder 3) was not sent to the ILR sample

## Subgroup and mode breakdown

The response rates achieved across the different subgroups are shown in Table 37. These categories are based on college student characteristics. Please note these figures are based on the total number of interviews post-data cleaning, and exclude the response options ‘don’t know’ or ‘prefer not to say’. The unweighted profile of respondents who completed the survey is shown in Table 38, split by the mode they used.

**Table 37: Wave 5 response rates for each subgroup – Paired (ILR)**

		Size of mail out	Interviews achieved – Paired	Response rate
<b>Student’s gender</b>	Male	933	128	14%
	Female	1,067	185	17%
<b>Student’s year of learning</b>	First	1,000	118	12%
	Second	1,000	141	14%

**Table 38: Number of completed surveys for each subgroup, by mode (ILR)**

		Online	Paper
<b>Student’s gender</b>	Male	68	60
	Female	117	68
<b>Student’s year of learning</b>	First	80	38
	Second	79	62
<b>Qualification type<sup>56</sup></b>	AS/A Levels	107	47
	Technical/vocational	71	70

## Online completion rates by device

The online survey was designed to be device-agnostic, allowing respondents to complete the questionnaire on a desktop computer/laptop, smartphone or tablet device with ease. Table 39 illustrates the online completion rates by device for each type of sample:

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<sup>56</sup> Based on data collected in the college student questionnaire, which asked what type of qualification they spent the majority of their time studying at college.

**Table 39: Online completion rates by device for each type of sample**

Sample type	Desktop computer/ laptop	Smartphone	Tablet	Unknown device <sup>57</sup>
School pupils (All)	47%	34%	15%	4%
School pupils (Incentive)	30%	50%	12%	8%
School pupils (Non-incentive)	50%	31%	15%	4%
Parents/carers of school pupils (All)	49%	29%	18%	5%
Parents/carers of school pupils (Incentive)	30%	47%	15%	8%
Parents/carers of school pupils (Non-incentive)	51%	26%	18%	4%
College students (All)	56%	30%	9%	4%
Parents/carers of college students (All)	55%	23%	16%	5%

## Weighting

### School pupils and their parents/carers (NPD)

The survey data was weighted to correct for the disproportionate sampling by eligibility for FSM in the design and for non-response bias.

This was done by producing calibration weights<sup>58</sup> in Stata that, when applied, would adjust the characteristics of the responding sample so that they matched the population estimates for the following:

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<sup>57</sup> Type of device not captured by online survey.

<sup>58</sup> J.C. Deville, C.E. Särndal (1992): Calibration Estimators in Survey Sampling. Journal of the American Statistical Association, 82, 376-381.

- Gender
- School year
- Region
- Major ethnic group
- Eligibility for FSM

These population estimates were estimated directly for all pupils that were eligible for the survey in the National Pupil Database, the database from which the sample was originally selected (see Table 40 for the population totals). Note that the weighting was based on characteristics of the pupils only, as the NPD does not hold information about parents.

**Table 40: Population totals (derived from the NPD)**

		Target	%
<b>Pupil's gender</b>	Female	1,584,665	49.3
	Male	1,630,911	50.7
<b>School year</b>	Year 7	582,641	18.1
	Year 8	577,650	18.0
	Year 9	565,230	17.6
	Year 10	549,590	17.1
	Year 11	530,172	16.5
	Year 12	216,122	6.7
	Year 13	194,171	6.0
<b>FSM eligible</b>	No	2,791,984	86.8
	Yes	423,592	13.2
<b>Major ethnic group</b>	White	2,409,170	74.9
	Non-White	806,406	25.1
<b>Region</b>	East Midlands	280,527	8.7
	East of England	365,031	11.4
	London	506,274	15.7

		Target	%
	North East	150,438	4.7
	North West	423,413	13.2
	South East	505,705	15.7
	South West	303,034	9.4
	West Midlands	359,763	11.2
	Yorkshire and the Humber	321,391	10.0

Weighting the sample to compensate for the design of the study and for non-response reduces the precision of survey estimates. This is measured by the design effect, which is a measure of the relative loss in precision. The design effect due to weighting for the NPD achieved sample was 1.13.

### College students and their parents/carers (ILR)

The ILR sample was also weighted using calibration weighting to population estimates for: gender, school year and major ethnic group. These population totals were estimated from the full ILR sampling frame, the database from which the sample was originally selected (see Table 41 for the population totals).

**Table 41: Population totals (derived from the ILR)**

		Target	%
<b>Student's gender</b>	Female	89,184	53.3
	Male	78,031	46.7
<b>Student's year of learning</b>	First	76,599	45.8
	Second	90,616	54.2
<b>Major ethnic group</b>	White	131,542	78.7
	Non-White	35,673	21.3

The design effect from the ILR sample weights was 1.06.

## Effective base size and margins of error by wave

Applying weights to the data, while tending to make the quoted figures more representative of the population of interest, but also reduces the statistical reliability of the data. As such the 'effective' base size<sup>59</sup>, which is used in any statistical testing, is smaller than the unweighted base size. This effect has been taken into account in determining whether or not differences described throughout the report are statistically significant. Therefore, while the base sizes noted throughout this report are the actual base size, the statistical analysis is based on the effective base.

Table 42 illustrates the effective base size and margins of error by wave.

**Table 42: Effective base size and margins of error by wave**

		Unweighted sample size	Effective base size	Margin of error at 95% confidence level <sup>60</sup>
<b>Wave 1</b>	Paired parent/carers and school pupils	1,723	1,501	+/-2.5%
<b>Wave 2</b>	Paired parent/carers and school pupils	1,595	1,352	+/-2.7%
<b>Wave 3</b>	Paired parent/carers and school pupils	1,504	1,316	+/-2.7%
<b>Wave 4</b>	Paired parent/carers and school pupils	2,590	2,146	+/-2.1%
	Paired parent/carers and college students	206	187	+/-7.2%
<b>Wave 5</b>	Paired parent/carers and school pupils	2,265	1,998	+/-2.2%
	Paired parent/carers and college students	317	298	+/-5.7%

<sup>59</sup> The effective base size refers to the base (or sample) size once adjustments have been made to reduce the likelihood of the statistics producing significant results simply because the weighting has made adjustments to the data.

<sup>60</sup> This is the margin of error for a figure of 50%. Margins of error reduce as figures tend towards either 100% or 0%. As such, the quoted margin of error is the largest that would apply to any data based on the total samples of parents/carers or pupils/students. Please note that in the wave 1 and 2 reports, the margins of error were rounded to 3%.



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for Education

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**Reference: DFE-RR906**

**ISBN: 978-1-78105-998-2**

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