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Forum of Scotland

Parent Survey July 2020

Parents' experiences of learning at home and looking ahead to
the new school year

Initial findings



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We heard from 2472 parents across Scotland

Our respondents had children of all ages, from Early Learning and Childcare through to the Senior Phase

Thank you to everyone who took part in our survey, and took the time to share your views and experiences with us

These are just some of our initial findings - a full report will be available on our website www.npfs.org.uk soon



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Firstly, we wanted to hear a little about your families' circumstances, so that we could understand how this might have affected your experiences of the lockdown



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Of our respondents...

26% felt that their child, or another person within their household, had an underlying health condition that put them at greater risk of Covid- 19



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9% of our respondents' report that their children are eligible for free school meals

Of those eligible for free school meals, these had been received in a variety of ways during the school closures:

Most (35%) received cash payments - other methods included vouchers (14%), Pre-Loaded Cards (14%), Meals Delivered Home (16%) and Meals Collected from the School (6%)



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We also asked you some questions about Additional Support Needs (ASN):

20.9% of our respondents reported that their child has ASN
Of those respondents, just under half (46%) of their children have a support plan in place. For those with a plan, Individualised Education Programmes (IEP) were most common at 31%.

17% of these parents had been contacted about reviewing their child's plan before the return to school in August



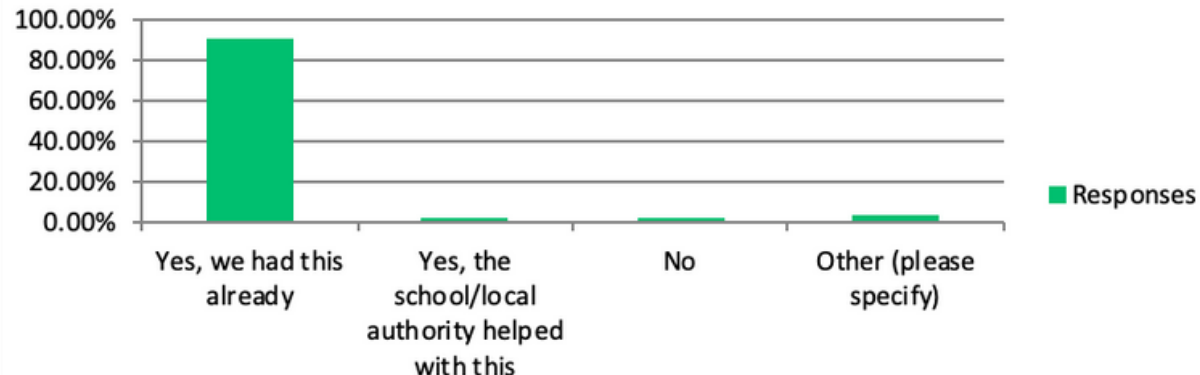
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We also wanted to know about your families' access to devices and internet connectivity:

The majority (91%) of our respondents reported already having a device in their home (not including a mobile phone) to access the internet. 66 of the parents we surveyed (3%) reported that they now have a device as their Local Authority had helped them with this.

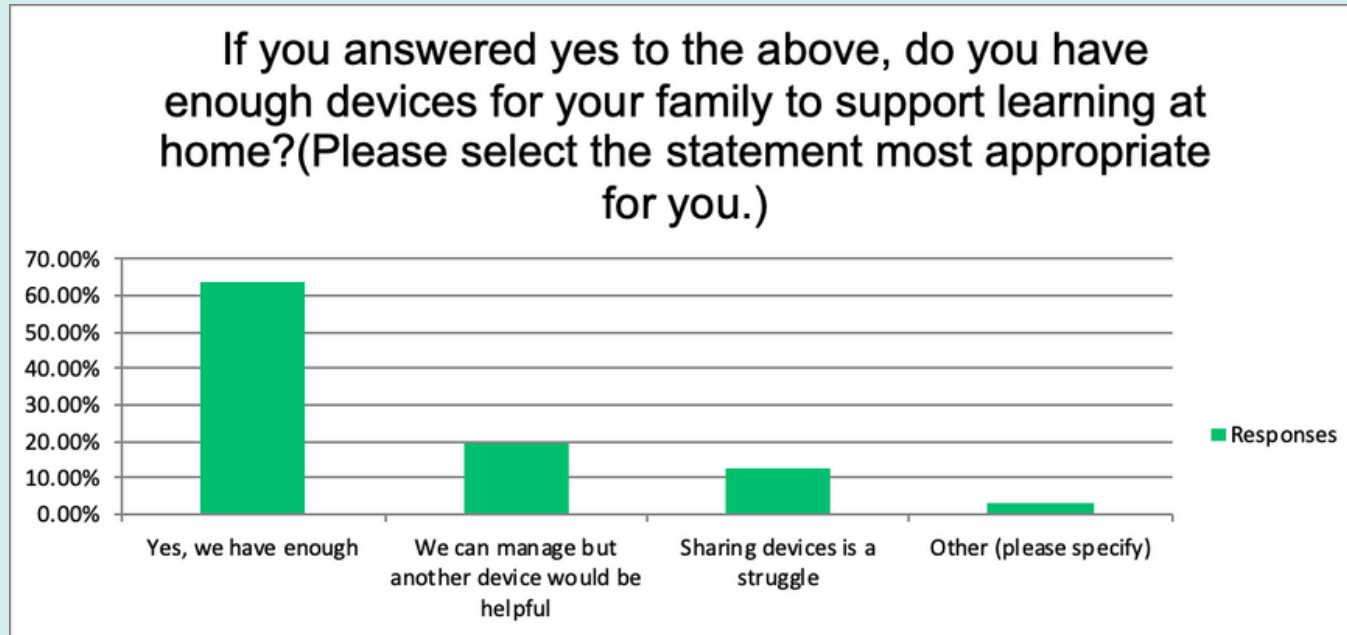


Do you have a device in your home for accessing the internet excluding a smart phone? (e.g. a tablet or computer, not a phone.)(Please select the statement most appropriate for you.)





The majority of our respondents also reported having enough devices in their household to support learning at home





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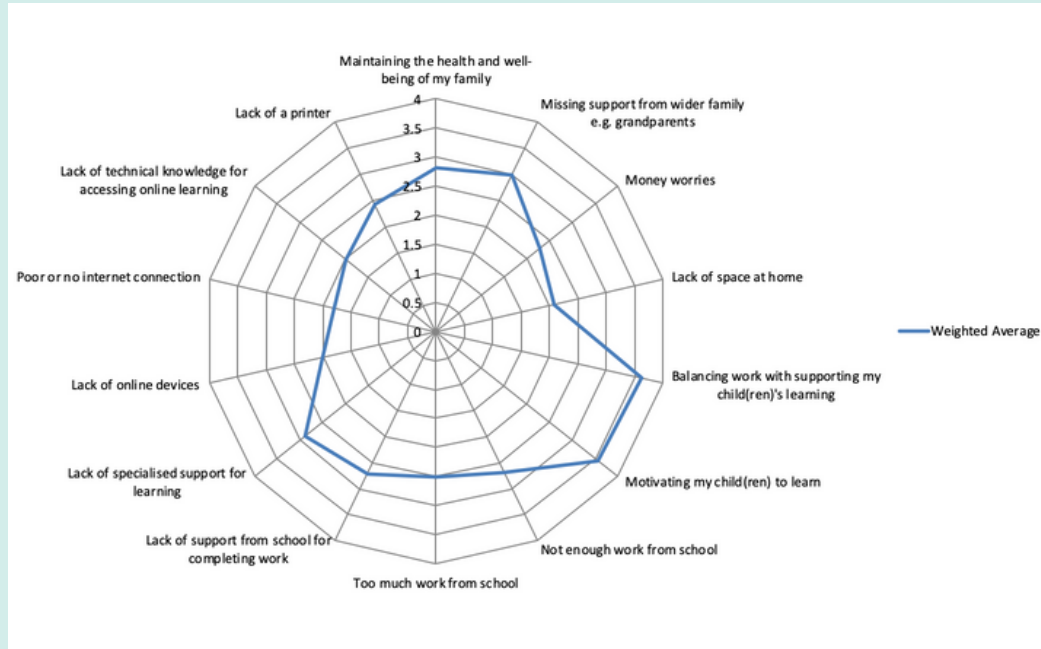
We know that all families experiences of the lockdown differ, so asked a range of statements to try and understand if any of the issues had been a challenge for you (On a scale from not at all challenging [0] to very Challenging [4])

Overall, the issue that the most of our respondents had found 'Very Challenging' was 'Balancing work with supporting my child(ren)'s learning' (39%). Second to this was 'Motivating my child(ren) to learn' - 35% identified this as 'Very Challenging'.



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All families are different and experiences of lockdown differ in many ways. When schools closed, were any of the following issues a challenge for you?(On a scale from not at all challenging [0] to very Challenging [4])

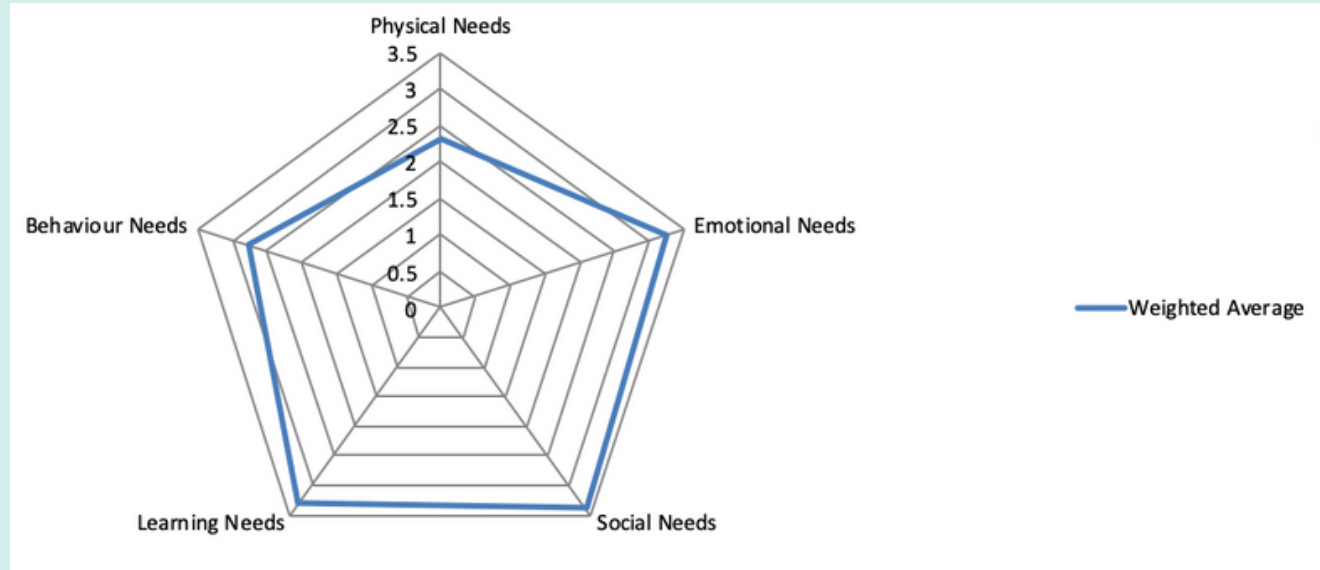




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We asked parents of children with ASN what they had found challenging during the school closures

Their child(ren)'s social needs were most commonly reported to be very challenging, closely followed by emotional needs and learning needs respectively.





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We asked parents of children with additional support needs and/or complex needs, what was (or would have been, if offered) the biggest help for you in supporting your child(ren)?

Some examples included:



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"An up to date plan to meet my child's needs and acknowledgment that the online teaching doesn't meet the needs of all children."

"Individualised learning to suit his needs."

"A Mental health counsellor was assigned to talk with my child weekly."

"1-2-1 online support from the school. My child is dyslexic and easily distracted. Group sessions can be boring for him and I'm not always sure they work well in terms of learning."



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"Support and regular contact with class teachers. They were amazing."

"To have access to some form of respite."

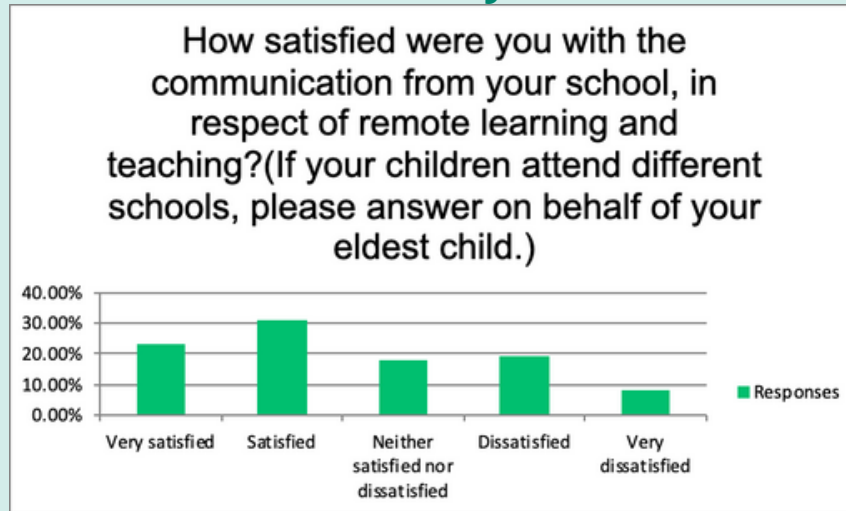
"More online learning support, the teacher was responsive to the best of her ability but more support would have helped. To be fair when I asked for it I got it. Everyone was feeling their way through an unprecedented situation."

"The biggest difficulty for my dyslexic child was the reliance on written activities to report back to teachers. However, some teachers offered a range of ways to do work, eg. video, which was much easier for her."



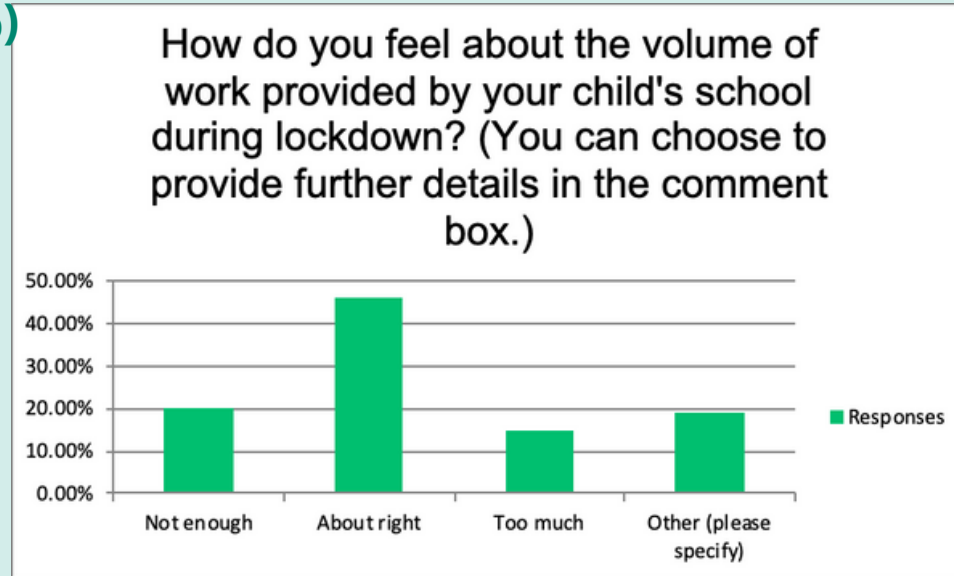
We asked about communication from your child(ren)'s school...

Overall, most parents who responded were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the communication they had received from their child's school (54%). However, 27% reported being either 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied'.





Overall, most parents who responded also felt that the amount of work that had been sent home was about right (46%). However more respondents (20%) reported that the volume of work was 'not enough' compared to those who felt it was too much (15%)





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We asked parents about the use of online learning tools and platforms last term...

91% reported that their child(ren)'s school did use online learning platforms, portals, or apps. In contrast only 28% reported that their child(ren) received access to live or recorded video lessons provided by their school.

We asked parents to tell us all of the online learning platforms their child had accessed during the school closures. The most common online platforms were Glow (65%), followed by Microsoft Teams (55%), and Google Classroom (32%)

38% of respondents reported that their school did provide information or support about how to use the online learning platforms. 31% did not receive support but felt they did not need it. 21% did not receive support but would have liked some.



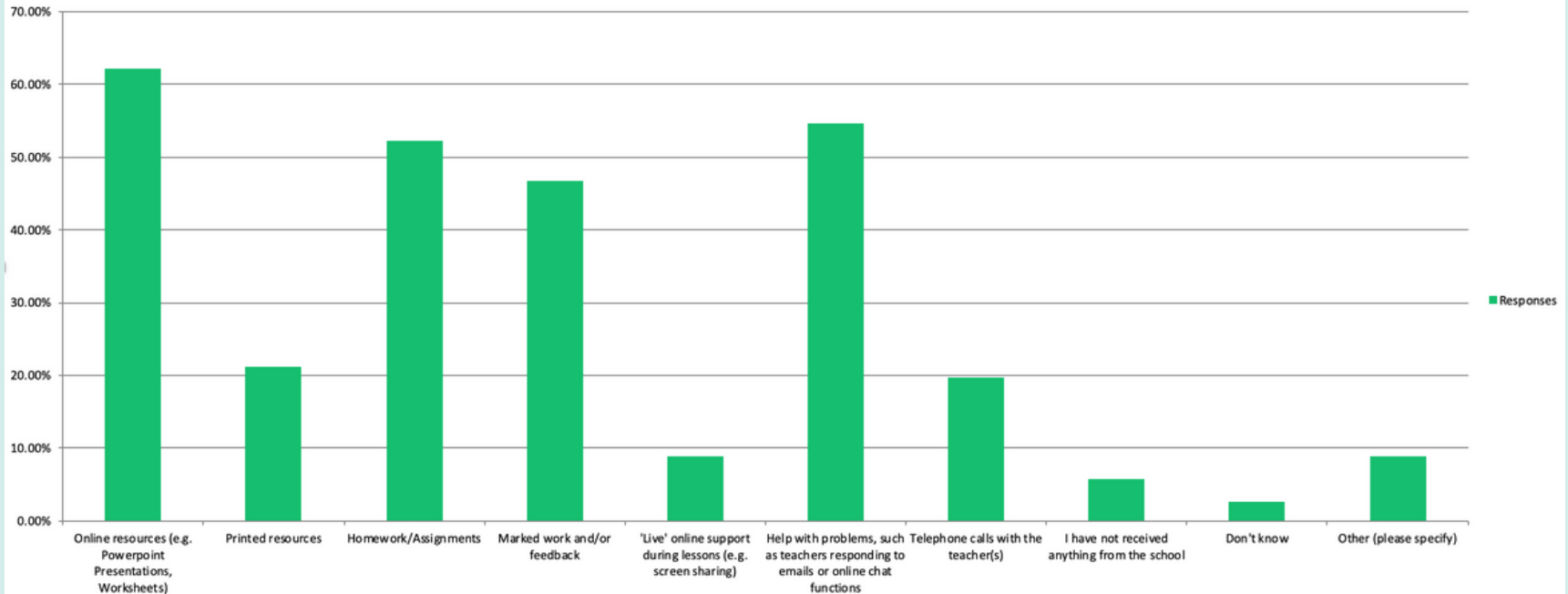
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From the responses gathered in our survey, the most common forms of support received were 'Online Resources e.g. Powerpoint Presentations, Worksheets' at 62%, 'Help with problems, such as teachers responding to emails or online chat' at 54%, and 'Homework/Assignments' at 52%.

135 Parents who took part in our survey (6%) reported 'I have not received anything from my school'



What other support did your school offer? (Please tick all that apply. If your children attend different schools, please answer on behalf of your eldest child.)





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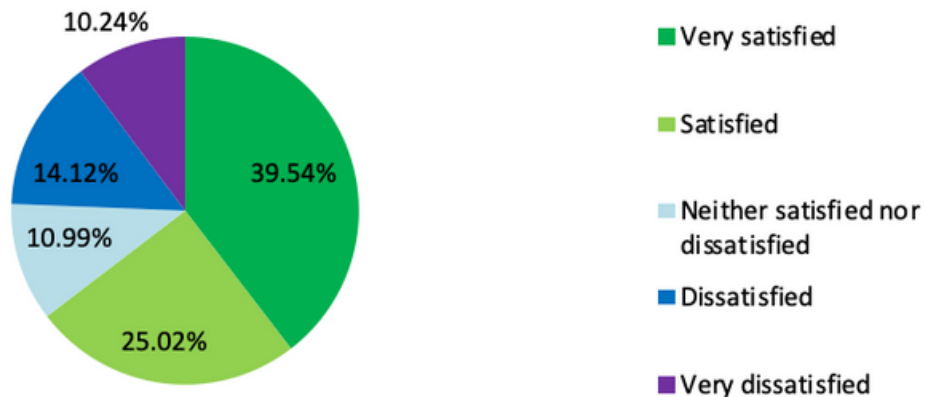
Finally, we asked parents about their views on the return to school in August...

65% of our respondents reported that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the Scottish Government's announcement that they would be aiming to return to school full-time in August

However almost a quarter of our respondents (24%) felt either 'disatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with the announcement



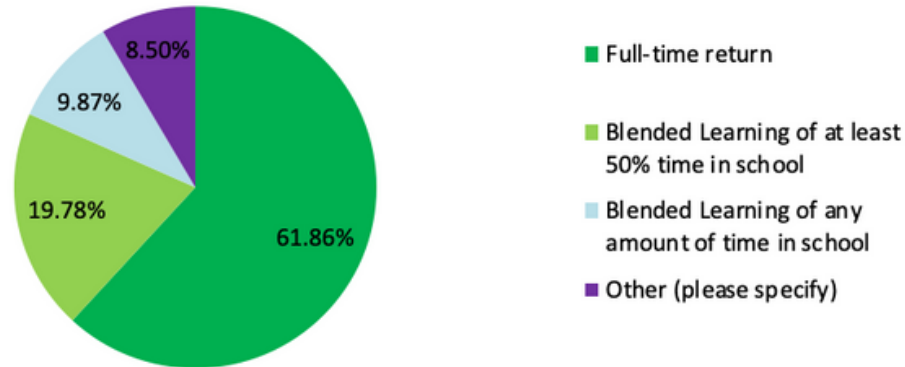
Thinking about the Scottish Government's announcement on aiming to return to school full-time in August, how satisfied are you with this decision?





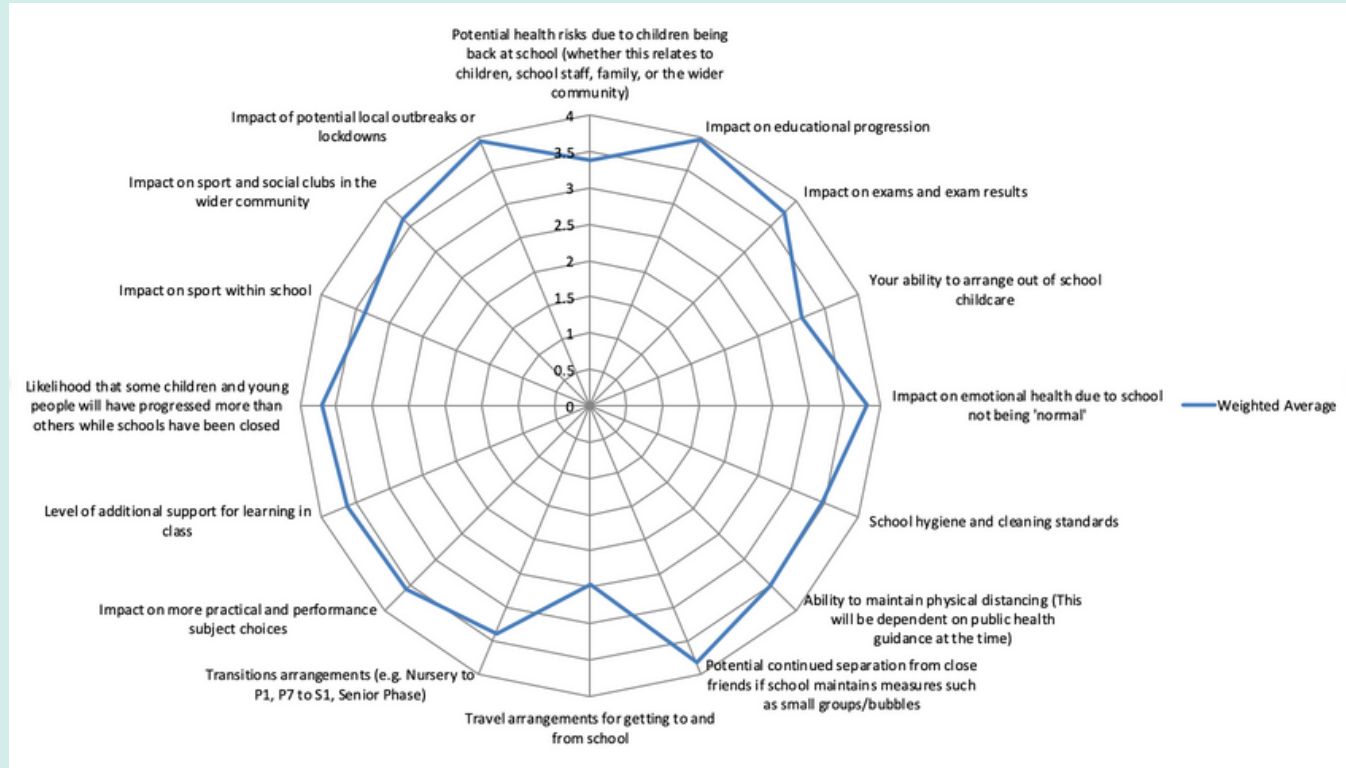
The majority of parents who took part in the survey's preferred option would be a full-time return to school (62%)

Thinking about the return to school in August, what would be your preferred option? (Please choose one.)





We wanted to gain an understanding of what concerns parents across Scotland have. We asked respondents to rank how they felt about the statements from a level of 'Not at all Concerned' (0) to 'Very Concerned' (4)





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We asked parents for their views on potential responses that could take place in the event of a future widespread outbreak of Covid-19

Overall most of our respondents (43%) reported that they would be either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with Blended Learning of at least 50% of the time in school, if this were advised by the Scottish Government. However only 28% reported that they would be 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with Blended Learning of less than 50% time in school.

26% of respondents reported that they would be 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' if no measures were taken and schools remained open full-time in the event of a future widespread outbreak



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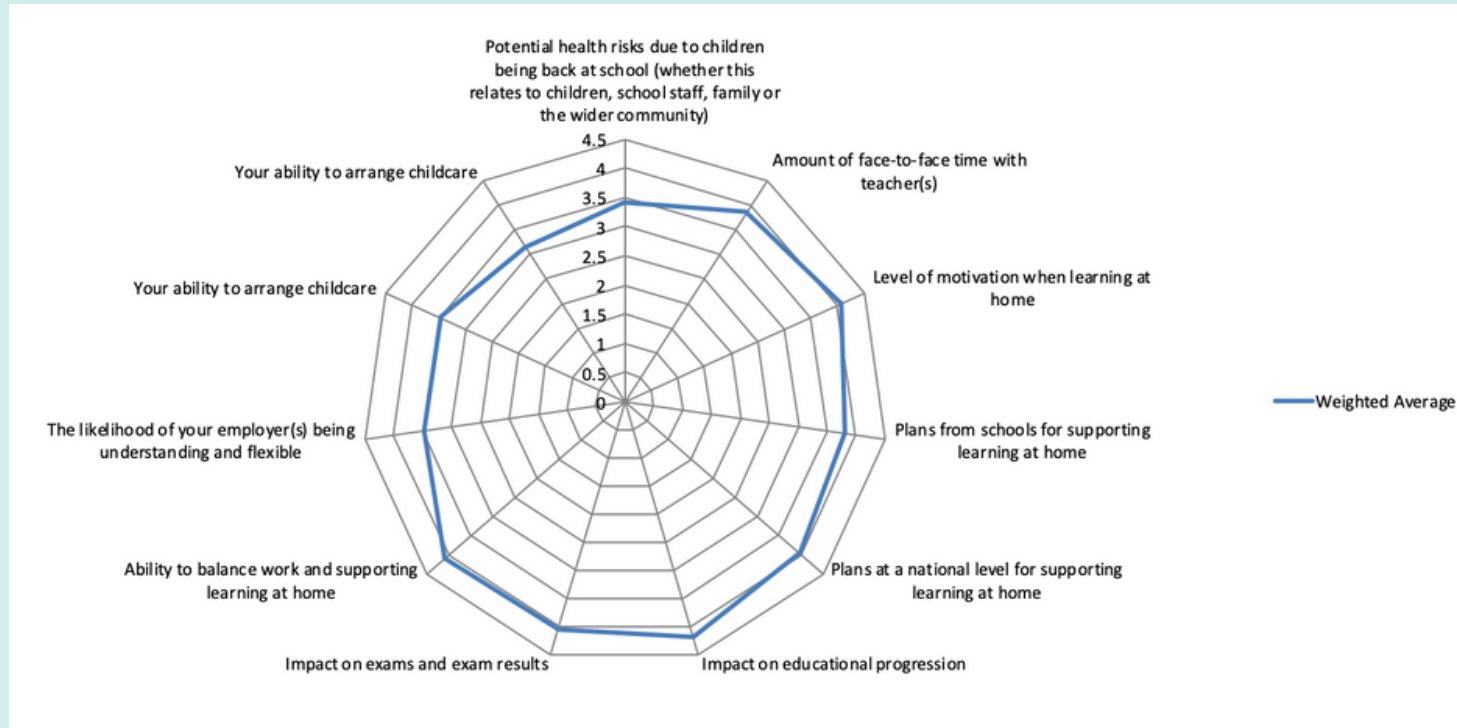
We asked parents to rank statements about how concerned they would feel on a scale of 'Not at all concerned' (0) to 'Very concerned' (4) if blended learning had to be implemented

The statements which the most respondents identified as something that would make them 'very concerned' were 'Impact on Educational Progression' (50% Very Concerned), 'Ability to balance work and supporting learning at home' (47% Very Concerned), and 'Level of motivation when learning at home' (46% Very Concerned).



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If circumstances made blended learning necessary, how concerned would you be about...

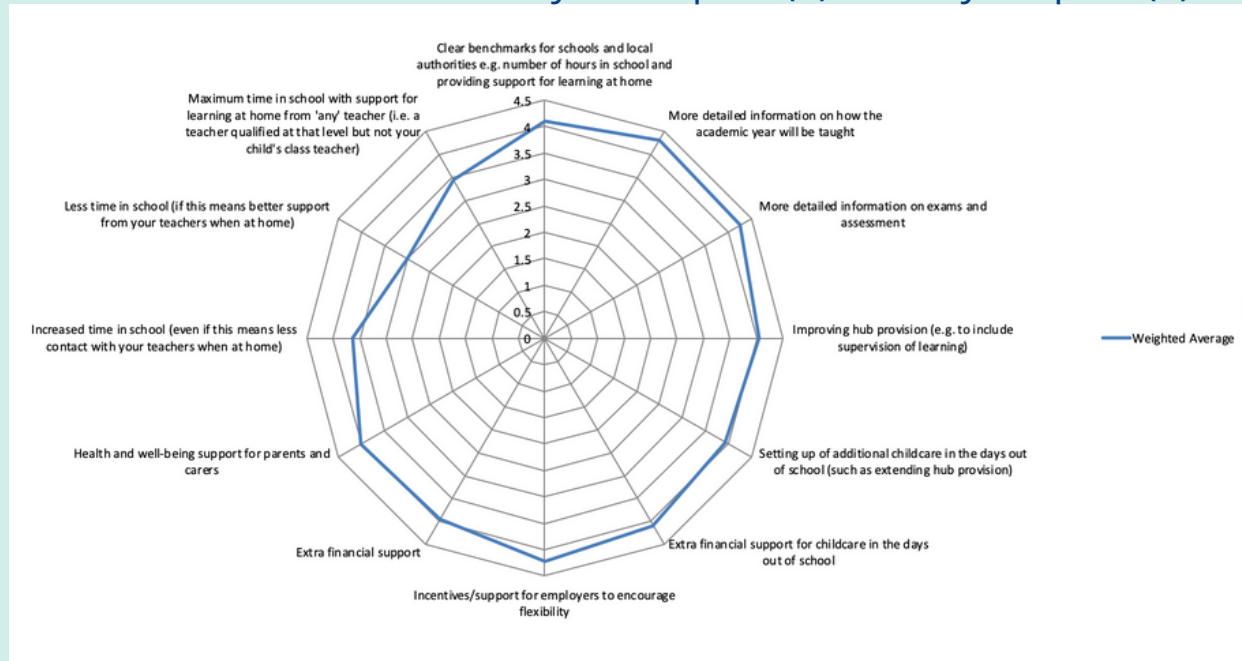




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We asked parents how they thought the blended learning proposal could be improved. We provided some suggestions and asked respondents to rank these from 'Very Unhelpful' (0) to 'Very Helpful' (4)

Around half of the respondents (51%) felt that 'More detailed information on how the academic year will be taught' would be 'very helpful'.

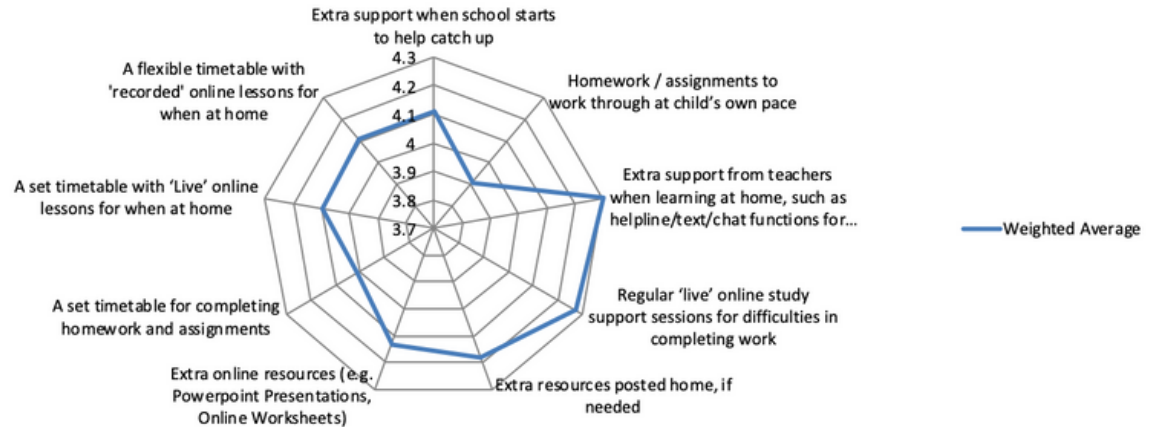




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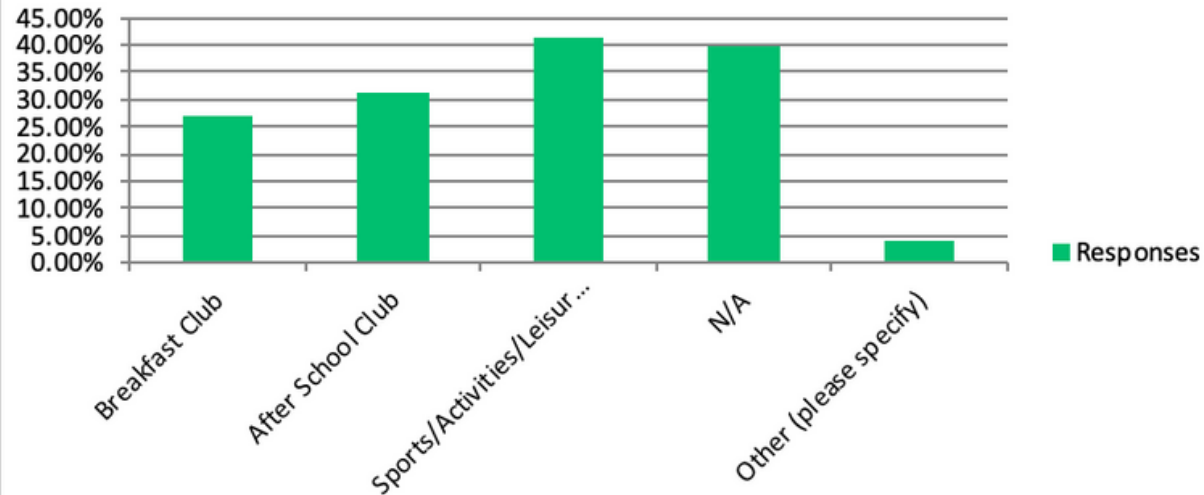
We asked parents what support would be helpful if blended learning is put in place, on a scale from 'Very Unhelpful' (0) to 'Very Helpful' (4)

Thinking of blended learning and the time that your child(ren) would be learning at home, what would you find helpful?





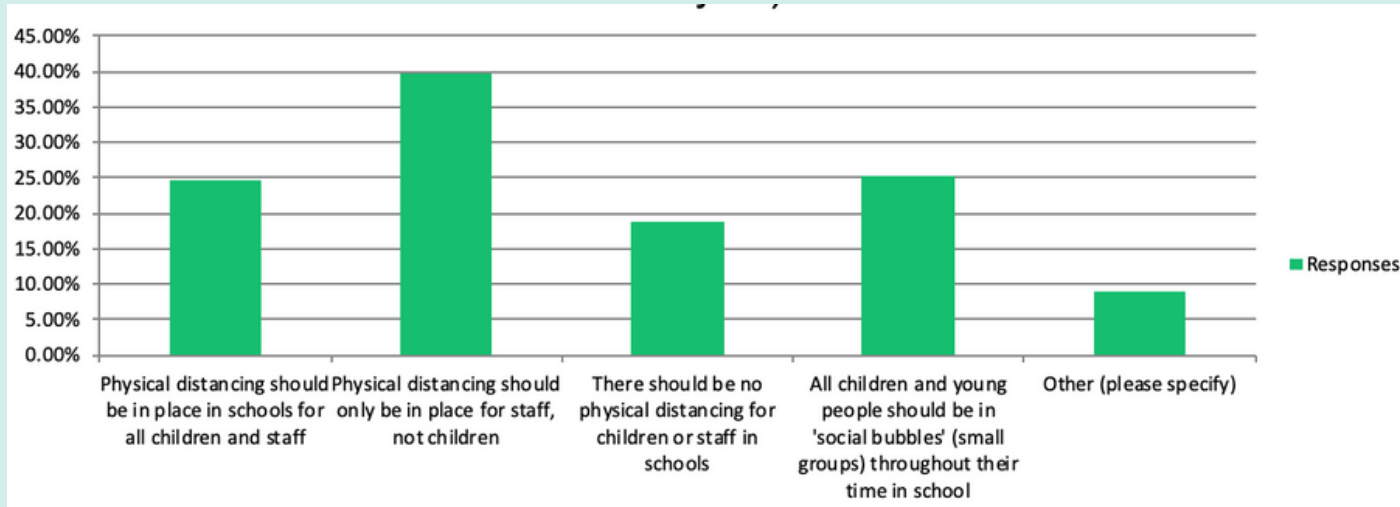
Which of the following would support you
with the return to school? (Please tick all
that apply)





There has been a lot of debate about physical distancing so we wanted to give parents an opportunity to voice their preferences

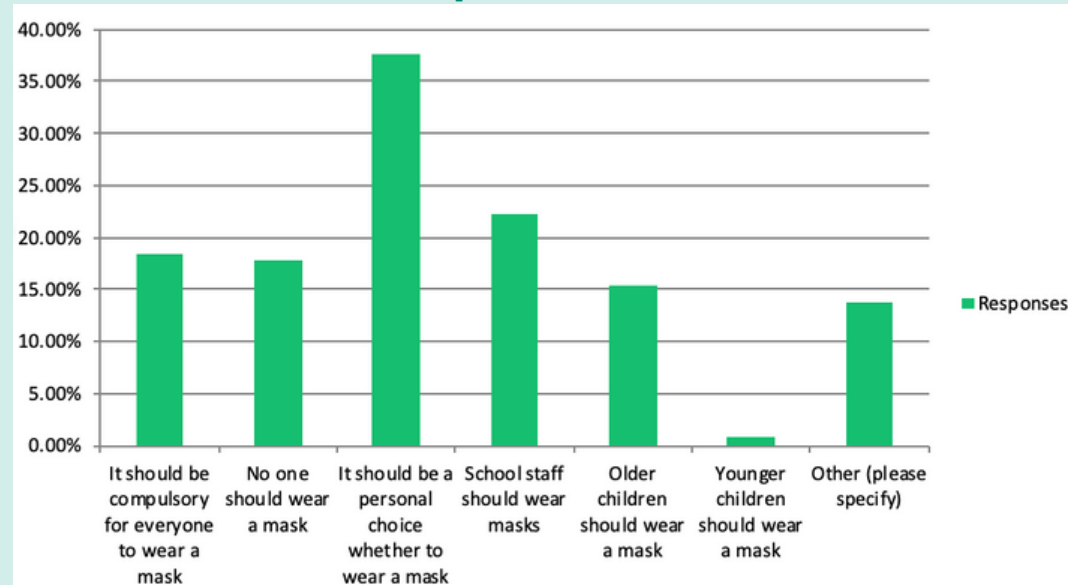
Most respondents (40%) felt that 'Physical Distancing should only be in place for staff, not children.'





We asked parents their preferences on the wearing of masks in school:

Most respondents (38%) felt that 'It should be a personal choice whether to wear a mask'





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**Thank you to everyone who
took part in our survey**



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