Research Report DCSF-RR155

Customer Perception Tracking Research

Public Survey

Final Report (Waves 1-3)

BMG Research

department for
children, schools and families

Research Report No DCSF-RR155

Customer Perception Tracking Research Public Survey

Final Report (Waves 1-3)

BMG Research

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

© Bostock Marketing Group 2009

ISBN 978 1 84775 522 3

August 2009

Table of Contents

1 Introduction 1

1.1 Background 1

1.2 Methodology 1

1.3 Statistical Significance 1

1.4 Format of report 2

2 DSO 1 - Secure the wellbeing and health of children and young people 4

2.1 Value of early learning 4

2.2 Ease of using public transport 4

3 DSO 2 - Safeguard the young and vulnerable 6

3.1 Bullying 6

3.2 Safety of Young People 11

4 DSO 3 - Achieve world class standards in education 15

4.1 Quality of education 15

4.2 Choice 17

5 DSO 4 - Close the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged families 19

5.1 Behaviour at schools and colleges in the local area 19

5.2 Improvement in pupil behaviour 20

6 DSO 5 - Ensure young people are participating and achieving their potential to 16 and beyond 22

6.1 Schools and colleges as preparation for working life 22

7 DSO 6 - Keep children and young people on the path to success 23

7.1 Young people’s role in the community 23

7.2 Young people’s access to sports / clubs / community activities 27

8 England as a country to grow up in 30

9 Profile of Respondents 33

Table of Figures

Figure 1 - Q11: How important do you feel it is for children aged 3-4 to attend some form of pre-school, nursery or early learning before they go into full time education at the age of 5? 4

Figure 2 - Q14. Thinking about transport, how easy would you say it is for children in your local area to get to school or college without travelling by car - that is to catch public transport, walk or cycle? 5

Figure 3 - Q7: To what extent do you think bullying is a problem in schools in England today? Would you say it is…?..... 7

Figure 4 - Q8: Do you feel that the problem of bullying in schools over the last five years is?8

Figure 5 - Q9: In general how effective do you think school staff is at dealing with bullying?10

Figure 6 - Q10: How safe do you feel it is for children and young people…?..... 11

Figure 7 - Q1: How would you rate the current quality of publicly funded education in ... (SCHOOL TYPE)? 15

Figure 8 - Q2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the choice of education institution is good? 17

Figure 9 - Q5: Would you describe pupil behaviour at your local schools / colleges as? 19

Figure 10 - Q6: Thinking about your child's school/college, do you feel that standards of pupil behaviour generally are improving, staying the same or getting worse? 20

Figure 11 - Q3: Overall, how well do you feel schools and colleges in England today prepare young people for working life? 22

Figure 12 - Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements..? 24

Figure 13 - Q13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? . 27

Figure 14 - Q15: To what extent do you agree or disagree overall that England is a good country for children to grow up in?..... 30

Figure 15 - Q15: To what extent do you agree or disagree overall that England is a good country for children to grow up in?..... 32

Table of tables

Table 1 - Q10: How safe do you feel it is for children and young people…?..... 12

Table 2 - Q10: How safe do you feel it is for children and young people…? Wave 3..... 13

Table 3 - Q1: How would you rate the current quality of publicly funded education in ... (SCHOOL TYPE)? 16

Table 4 - Q2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the choice of education institution is good? 18

Table 5 - Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements..? .. 25

Table 6 - Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements..?.. 26

Table 7 - Q13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? 28

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2006, the DCSF commissioned BMG Research to undertake a 3 year Customer Perception Tracking study of three key audiences: the general public; parents of children and young people aged up to 19; and young people aged 11-19 themselves.

The aims and objectives of the tracking study are to:

- Monitor perceptions of the overall quality of state education provision at all stages from early years provision through to Higher Education.

- Measure attitudes towards various issues such as children's safety and wellbeing at school and in the community, and children and young people's role and role in the community.

- Understand perceptions towards participation in higher education.

- Understand the overall perception of England as a place to grow up.

This report covers the third wave of the survey of the general public, with the main analysis focussing on wave 3 findings. Comparisons are also made between wave 1, wave 2 and wave 3 data.

1.2 Methodology

Interviews for wave 3 were conducted by telephone in December 2008 and January 2009 among 1000 respondents in England.

Wave 1's interviews were conducted in December 2007 and January 2008, while wave 2's interviews were conducted in June and July 2008.

The sample interviewed was designed to be broadly representative of the general public. The demographic profile of the sample of interviewed respondents is a good reflection of the population of the general England population overall. This is included in Section 9 of the report.

1.3 Statistical Significance

Tests for statistical significance are based on the number of interviews achieved and the relevant percentage figure. The maximum standard error at the 95% level of confidence for the total sample, based on a 50%:50% response is +/-3.1%. The nearer the percentage reported moves to 100% or 0% (i.e. there is a majority responding one way or another), the smaller the standard error. A reported percentage of 90%/10% would be subject to a standard error of just +/-0.6% at the 95% confidence level.

When reporting findings from sub-samples; say, male respondents or those aged 18-29; each percentage figure based on the sub-sample it is reported for is subject to a level of standard error which will be larger than the standard error that the total sample is subject to because the number of interviews it is based on will be smaller. The smaller the sample base the larger the standard error.

When comparing two sub-samples, or two waves of data, the calculation of the standard error takes in account both sample sizes and the percentages reported for each. Based on this calculation, the difference between two sub-samples or waves of data may or may not be statistically significant.

When reporting on data, statistically significant differences or changes are described in the text as 'significant', other changes of note are mentioned but not described as 'significant'.

1.4 Format of report

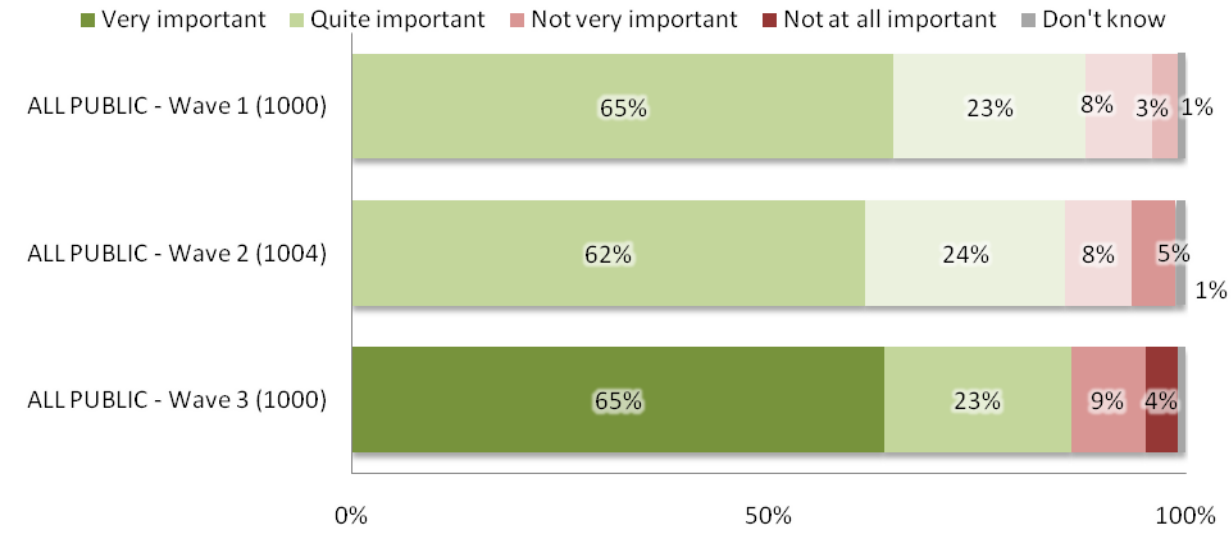
This research report details findings from the survey of the public. The findings are structured around DSO objectives, with data provided on key question areas for each DSO:

- DSO 1: Secure the wellbeing and health of children and young people
- DSO 2: Safeguard the young and vulnerable
- DSO 3: Achieve world class standards in education
- DSO 4: Close the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged families
- DSO 5: Ensure young people are participating and achieving their potential to 16 and beyond
- DSO 6: Keep children and young people on the path to success
- England as a place to grow up in (cross-cutting DSO objectives)

Tables and figures have been used throughout the report to illustrate the data. Where tables are used to collate total scaled responses, such as those who agree (strongly + slightly) versus those who disagree (strongly + slightly), the total positive responses (i.e. total agree, total very + quite etc) are illustrated in **bold**, while the total negative responses (i.e. total disagree, total not very + not at all etc) are illustrated in grey.

The tables and figures present wave 1, wave 2 and wave 3 data on the total sample, with wave 1 and 2 data shown in pale colours and wave 3 in full colour, followed by the detailed breakdown from wave 3, also illustrated in full colour.

Wave 1, Wave 2 vs. Wave 3 example



It should also be noted that occasionally when two or more figures are summed to provide an aggregate figure (such as the proportion giving a positive response overall for example) there may be an apparent discrepancy between the two figures and the aggregate figure. This is due to roundings. Data is presented as whole integers in this report, but has been presented in the data report to one decimal place. Anything up to n.4 is rounded down to the previous whole integer (24.4% becomes 24%) and anything from n.5 to n.9 is rounded up to the next whole integer (24.5 becomes 25%). Thus a percentage of, say 62.8% rounds up to 63% and a percentage of 15.5% rounds up to 16%, but the aggregate figure will not be 79% as one would expect but, calculated by summing 62.8% and 15.5%, will be 78.3%, which rounds down to 78%.

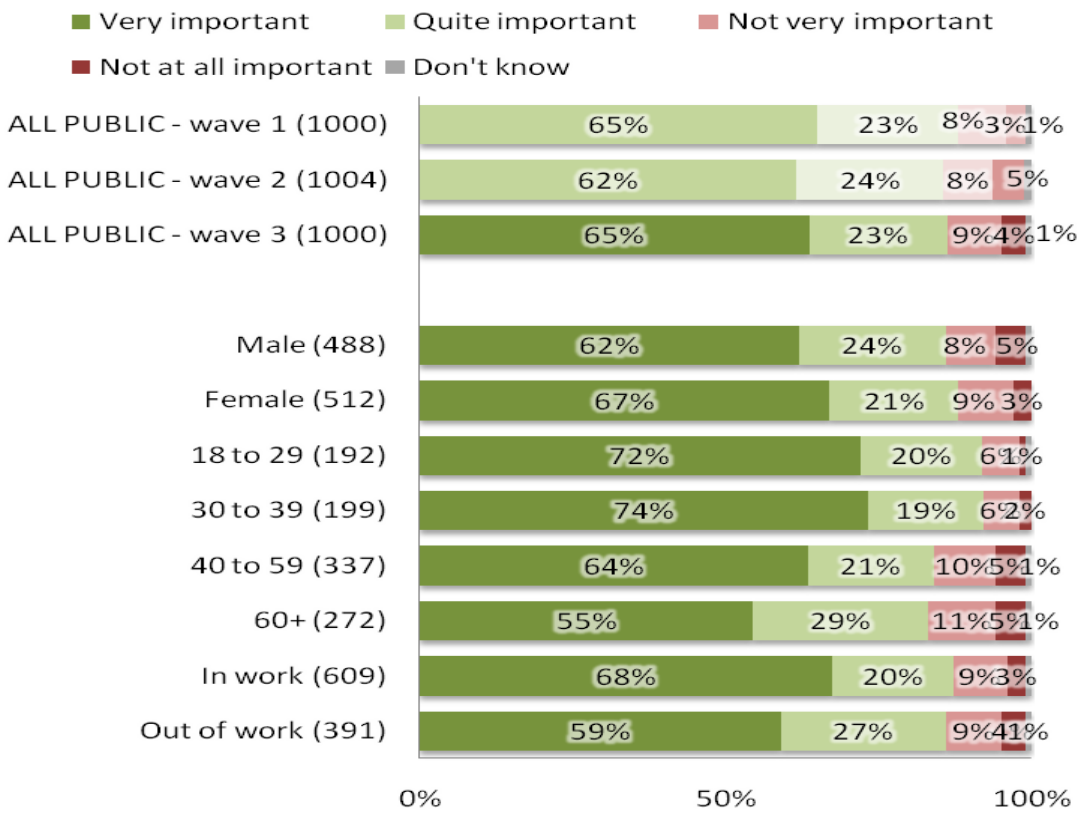
2 DSO 1 - Secure the wellbeing and health of children and young people

2.1 Value of early learning

Respondents were asked to rate how important they think it is for children aged 3-4 to attend some form of pre-school, nursery or early learning before they go into full time education at the age of 5. As in waves 1 and 2, most respondents feel that it is important, with more than four-fifths of all respondents rating it as important (87%, compared with 86% in wave 2 and 88% in wave 1).

Older respondents are significantly less likely than younger respondents to feel that it is very important for children aged 3-4 to attend some form of pre-school, nursery or early learning (73% of 18-39 year olds consider it very important, compared with 60% of 40+ year olds). There is also a significant difference between those in work and those out of work (68% of respondents in work consider it very important, compared with 59% of those currently out of work).

Figure 1 - Q11: How important do you feel it is for children aged 3-4 to attend some form of pre-school, nursery or early learning before they go into full time education at the age of 5?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

Compared with wave 1 of the study the proportion of people aged 60 and over that consider early learning very important has decreased significantly, from 65% in wave 1, to 55% in wave 3.

2.2 Ease of using public transport

Respondents were asked to think about transport in their local area and to rate how easy it is for children in their local area to get to school, college, university or work without travelling by car (i.e. to catch public transport, walk or cycle).

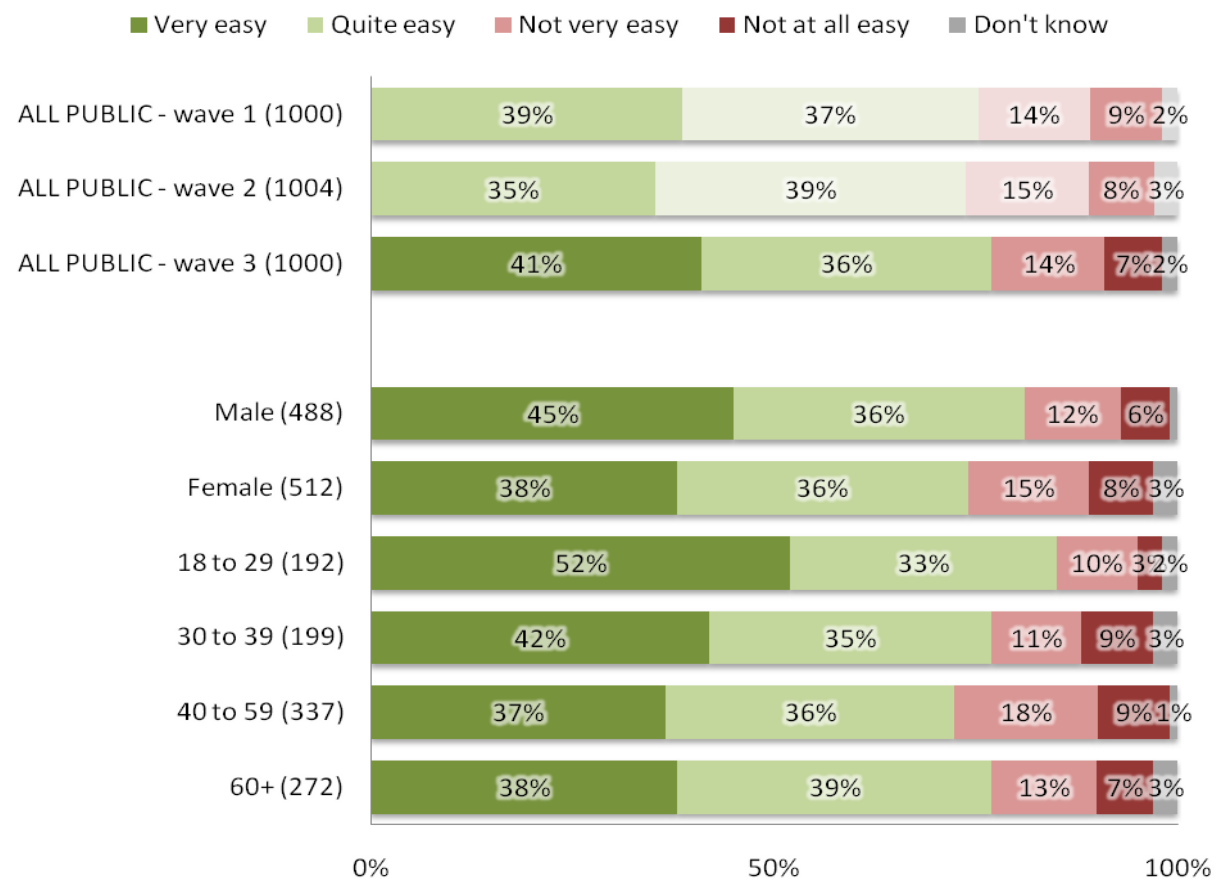
Just over three-quarters of respondents agree that it is easy to travel without using the car (77%), with 41% reporting that they find it very easy (a significantly higher proportion than in wave 2) and 36% reporting that they find it quite easy. One-in-five respondents (21%) find it not very or not at all easy. These proportions are similar to those reported in waves 1 and 2, when 76% and 74% respectively reported that it is easy for children in their local area to get to school, college, university or work without travelling by car.

As in previous waves, it is younger respondents that are more likely to think it is easy for children to get to school or college without travelling by car. More than four-fifths of 18-29 year olds (85%) feel that it is easy (with 52% feeling it is very easy) compared with 78% of respondents aged 60+ (and 38% feeling it is very easy).

Male respondents are significantly more likely than females to feel that it is easy for children to get to school or college without travelling by car (81%, compared with 74% of females).

There are no significant changes in response between waves 1 and 3 by age or gender.

Figure 2 - Q14. Thinking about transport, how easy would you say it is for children in your local area to get to school or college without travelling by car - that is to catch public transport, walk or cycle?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

3 DSO 2 - Safeguard the young and vulnerable

3.1 Bullying

Respondents were asked about the extent to which they feel bullying is a problem in schools in England today. Three-quarters (76%) feel that bullying is a problem to some degree. This is almost identical to the proportion in wave 2 (75%) but still significantly lower proportion than reported in wave 1 (80%).

As in both previous waves, males are significantly less likely than females to report bullying is a problem (72%, compared with 80%). The proportion of females reporting bullying as a *very big* problem is significantly lower now than in wave 1 (37% in wave 1 and now 30% in wave 3) while the proportion of males with this view has hardly changed (72% in wave 1 and 73% in wave 2 considered bullying a very big or quite big problem).

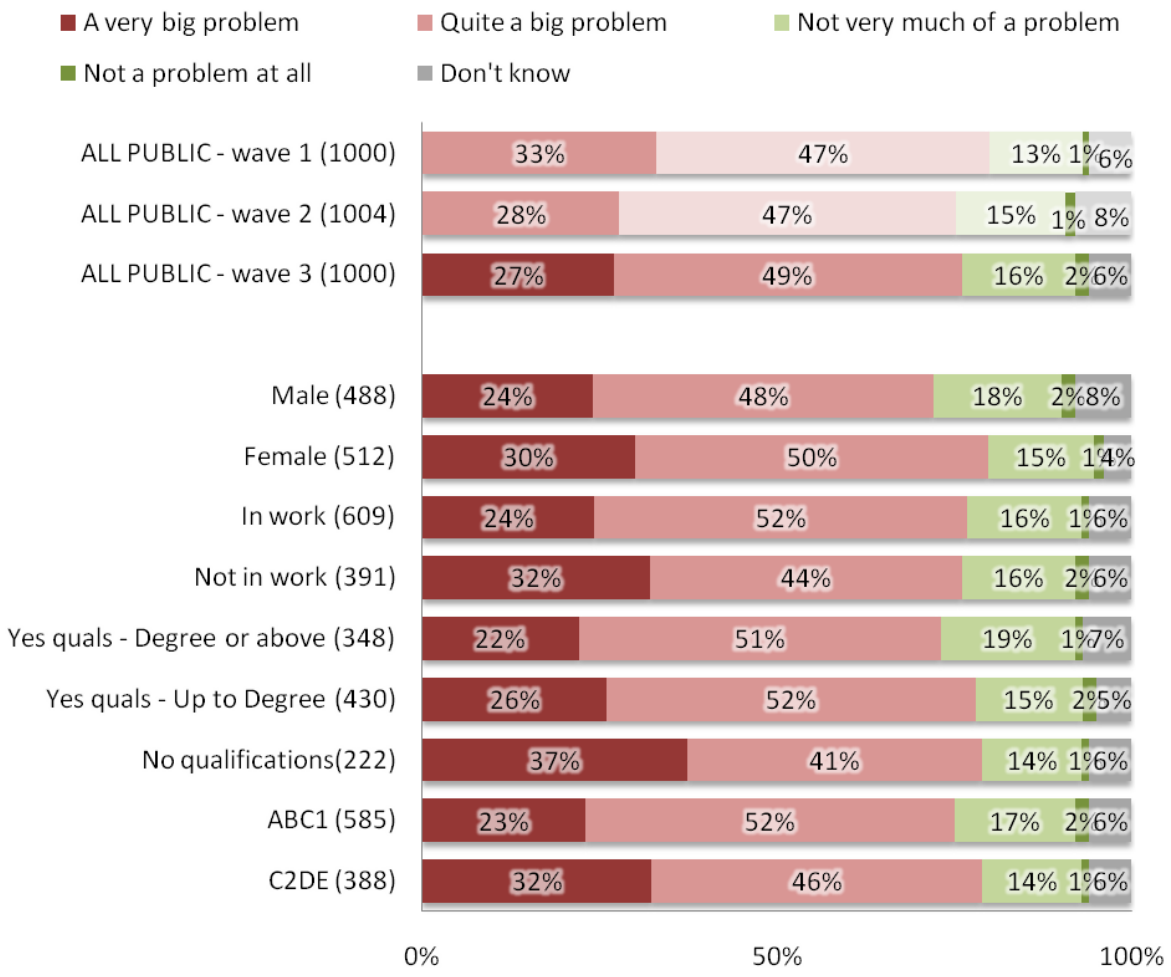
In wave 1 there were significant differences in views on bullying by age, this has not been the case in waves 2 or 3.

There are differences in the extent to which respondents consider bullying a problem according to whether respondents are in work or out of work, and according to whether they have qualifications. Respondents out of work are significantly more likely to feel it is a *very* big problem (32%) than those in work (24%), while, 37% of respondents with no qualifications feel bullying is a *very* big problem, compared with 24% of those with qualifications, again, a significant difference between the two groups.

Compared with wave 1 respondents in work and those qualified up to degree level are significantly less likely to consider bullying a very big problem (30% of respondents in work in wave 1, compared with 24% in wave 3, and 36% of those qualified up to degree level in wave 1 compared with 26% in wave 3).

As in previous waves, respondents within the C2DE socio-economic groups are significantly more likely to feel it is a *very* big problem (32%) than those in ABC1 (23%).

Figure 3 - Q7: To what extent do you think bullying is a problem in schools in England today? Would you say it is…?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

Respondents were then asked whether they feel the problem of bullying in schools over the last five years is improving, staying the same or getting worse. The proportion that feels the problem is getting better is slightly higher in wave 3 (15%) than in waves 1 and 2 (both 13%). Just over a third (36%) feel that the extent of the problem is staying the same and almost the same proportion (37%) feel that the problem of bullying in schools is getting worse. The proportion that says the problem is getting worse (37%) is significantly lower in wave 3 than in waves 1 and 2 (both 42%).

Similar to waves 1 and 2, females are more likely than males to feel that the problem is getting worse (40%, compared with 34% of males), although the proportion of females saying the problem is getting worse is significantly lower in wave 3 than in wave 2 (from 48% down to 40%).

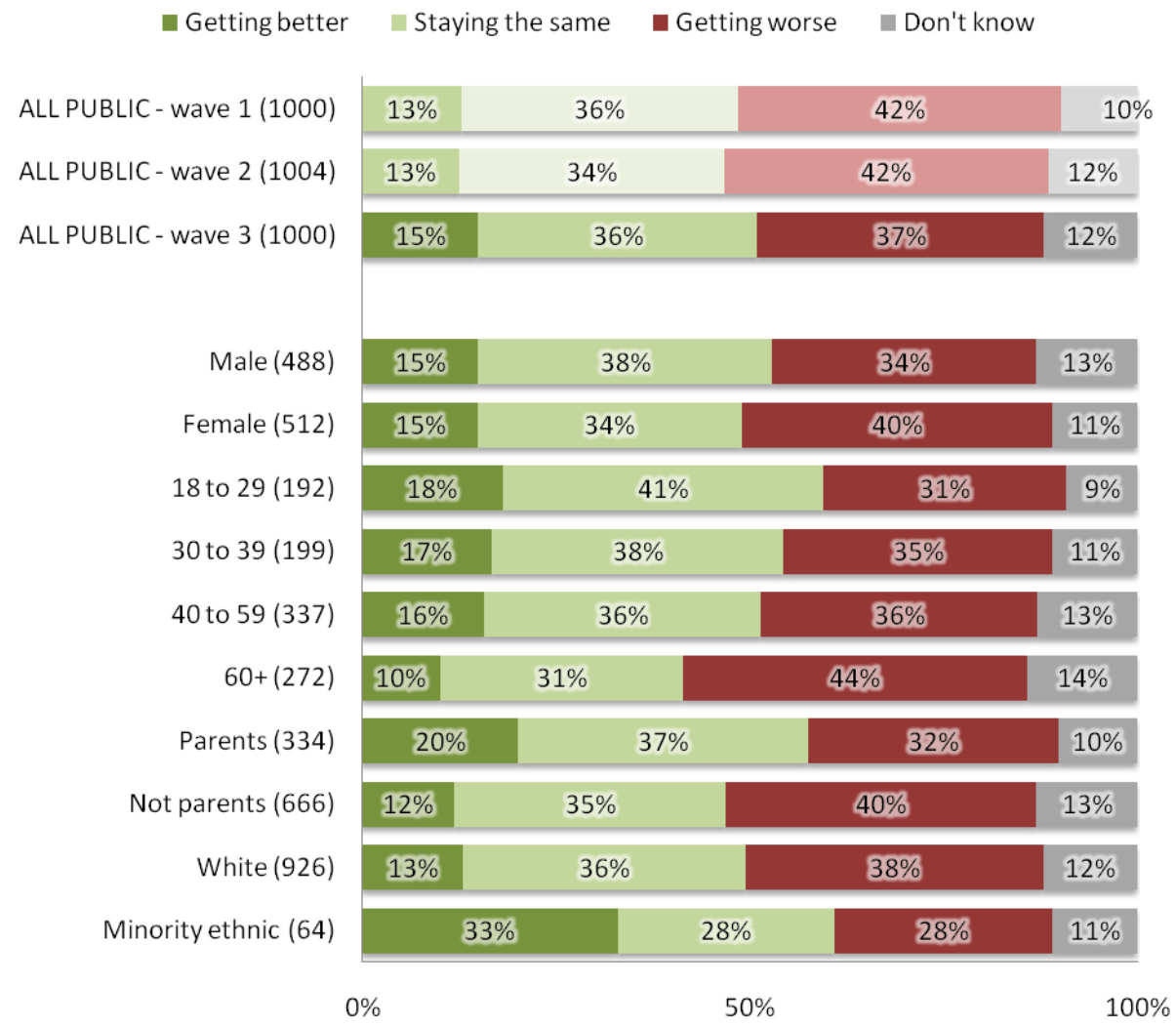
Respondents without dependent children (40%) and older respondents (45% of those 60+ years) are significantly more likely to feel the problem of bullying is getting worse, than compared with those who have got dependent children (32%) and respondents under 60 years of age (34%).

Compared with wave 1 there has been a significant decline in the proportion of parents with dependent children who think the problem of bullying is getting worse (from 43% in wave 1, to 32% in wave 3).

Respondents from ethnic minority groups are significantly more likely than White respondents to think the problem of bullying is getting better (33%, compared with 14% of White respondents).

Unlike in waves 1 and 2, there are no significant differences in responses to this question by socio-economic group.

Figure 4 - Q8: Do you feel that the problem of bullying in schools over the last five years is?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

Respondents were then asked to consider in general how effective they think school or college staff are at dealing with bullying. In waves 1 and 2 the general public were divided in their opinions, with the proportion of respondents feeling that staff are very or fairly effective, being almost identical to the proportion that felt staff are not effective. In wave 3 however, responses are more positive, with 49% of respondents feeling that staff are very or fairly effective at dealing with bullying, compared with 42% who think they are not effective. Since wave 1 there has been a significant increase in the proportion of respondents that feel that

school or college staff are at least fairly effective at dealing with bullying (from 42% in wave 1 to 49% in wave 3).

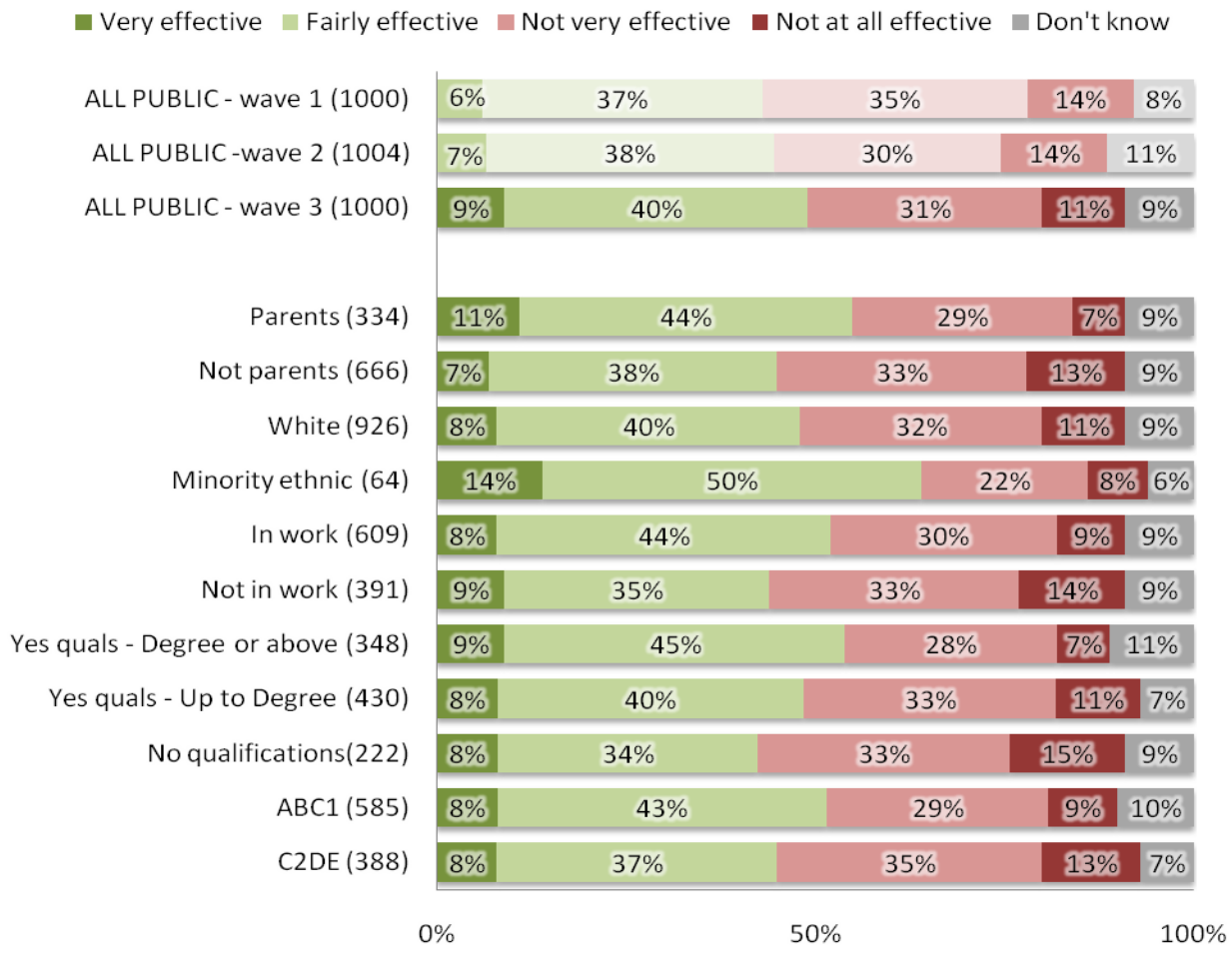
Differences are again evident according to whether respondents have dependent children and by ethnicity. Respondents with dependent children are significantly more likely than those who do not to think staff are effective at dealing with bullying (56%, compared with 45% among those with no dependent children). While respondents from ethnic minority groups are more likely than white respondents to think staff are effective (64%; 48% of White respondents).

There are also significant differences in opinion according to whether respondents are in work, and whether they have qualifications. Respondents in work (52%) are more likely than those out of work (44%) to think staff *are* effective at dealing with bullying. Respondents with no qualifications (49%) and those with lower level qualifications (44% among those with qualifications up to degree level), are more likely than those with higher level qualifications to think staff are *not* effective at dealing with bullying (35% among those with degrees or higher level qualifications).

Respondents in C2DE socio-economic groups are significantly more likely than those in ABC1 socio-economic groups to think that school staff are *not very or not at all* effective at dealing with bullying (48%, compared with 39% in ABC1 groups).

Compared with wave 1 of the study these differences noted between sub-groups of the total public sample are very similar.

Figure 5 - Q9: In general how effective do you think school staff is at dealing with bullying?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

3.2 Safety of Young People

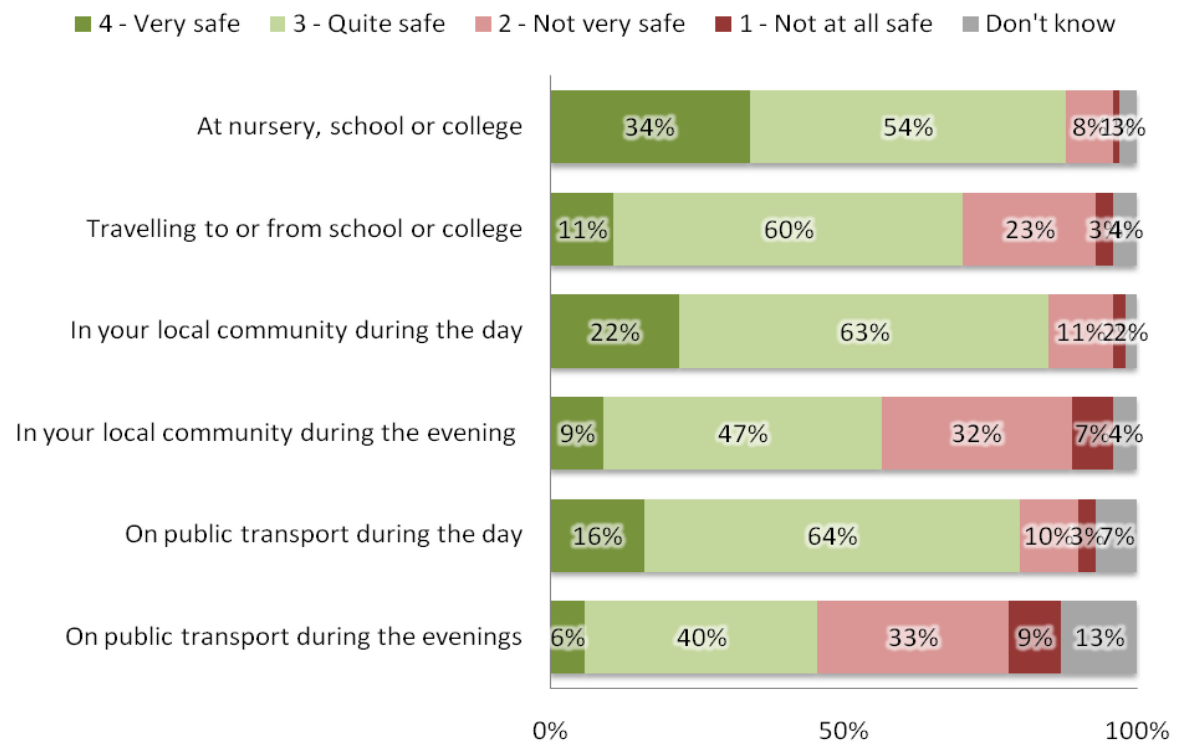
Respondents were then asked to think about the safety of young people in general in England today, in a range of situations.

As reported in waves 1 and 2, most respondents feel that all situations are safe for young people during the day, although opinion is more divided when considering situations for young people at night. This is highlighted in the figure below.

Respondents are most likely to rate nursery, school or college as safe (88%), followed by in the local community during the day (85%). Fewer respondents, although still the majority, rate public transport during the day as safe (79%), while fewer again (70%) feel it is safe travelling to or from school or college, and only around a quarter feel travelling to and from school or college is not (26%).

The proportion feeling any situation is safe is lower when it comes to considering it in the evening. Over half the respondents (56%) feel it is safe for children and young people in their local community during the evenings, while two-fifths (40%) feel it is not safe.
Opinions are much more divided when it comes to the perceived safety of children and young people on public transport during the evenings. The proportion considering it safe (45%) is only slightly higher than the proportion that considers it unsafe (42%).

Figure 6 - Q10: How safe do you feel it is for children and young people…?



Sample base: 1000: All public

Compared with wave 1 the public are now more likely to think that children and young people are safe during the evenings in their local community (56%, compared with 51% in wave 1 - significant) and on public transport (45%, compared with 42% in wave 1 - not significant), although the proportions considering each unsafe are still notable.

Table 1 - Q10: How safe do you feel it is for children and young people…?

	ALL PUBLIC					
	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3	
	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-
…at nursery, school or college	**87**	11	**84**	11	**88**	9
…travelling to or from school or college	**69**	28	**67**	27	**70**	26
…in your local community during the day	**83**	15	**83**	13	**85**	13
…in your local community during the evenings	**51**	45	**56**	38	**56**	40
…on public transport during the day	**79**	13	**78**	12	**79**	13
…on public transport during the evenings	**42**	44	**44**	40	**45**	42
Sample bases	1000		1004		1000	

Differences of opinion are evident by gender, ethnicity, economic status and according to whether respondents hold qualifications, as the following table summarises.

Table 2 - Q10: How safe do you feel it is for children and young people…? Wave 3

	GENDER				ETHNICITY				ECONOMIC STATUS				QUALIFICATIONS							
	Male		Female		White		Minority ethnic		In work		Out of work		Yes - degree or above		Yes - up to degree		No			
	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-		
…at nursery, school or college	90	8	87	10	90	8	75	20	91	6	84	13	90	7	90	7	83	15		
…travelling to or from school or college	74	22	66	30	72	25	56	38	72	26	68	27	72	24	70	27	68	27		
…in your local community during the day	86	12	85	14	86	12	77	20	86	13	85	13	87	12	84	14	84	13		
…in your local community during the evenings	61	35	51	44	56	39	52	47	59	39	52	40	61	37	56	40	48	44		
…on public transport during the day	81	12	78	15	80	13	77	20	83	12	74	16	84	10	79	15	72	16		
…on public transport during the evenings	52	36	39	48	46	41	39	53	49	44	40	39	48	41	49	41	35	45		
Sample bases	488		512		926		64		609		391		348		430		222			

Females are significantly more likely than males to think children and young people are unsafe when travelling to or from school or college, in their local community in the evenings and on public transport in the evenings.

Respondents from ethnic minority groups are more likely than white respondents to think children and young people are unsafe in all situations, but significantly more likely when at school or college, and when travelling to school or college.

Respondents who are currently in work are significantly more likely than those out of work to consider children and young people safe at school or college, and on public transport, both during the day or in the evenings.

Members of the public with the highest level qualifications (degree or above) are more likely than those with no qualifications to think children are safe while at school or college, in their local community in the evenings, and on public transport, both during the day or in the evenings.

By socio-economic group the only significant difference in opinion is on whether children and young people are safe either at school or college. Among ABC1 respondents 38% consider children very safe, while among C2DE respondents the proportion is significantly lower at 29%.

On the whole the differences by sub-groups are very similar to those reported in previous waves, however there has been a significant increase amongst males in the proportion that feels it is safe for children and young people at nursery, school or college (up from 85% in wave 1 to 90% in wave 3. There have also been significant improvements amongst people in work and people qualified up to degree level regarding the safety of young people in their local community during the day (52% of people in work considered this safe in wave 1, compared with 59% in wave 3, while among people qualified to degree level the respective figures are 46% and 56%).

People qualified up to degree level are also now significantly more likely to feel young people are safe on public transport during the evening (41% in wave 1, compared with 49% in wave 3).

4 DSO 3 - Achieve world class standards in education

4.1 Quality of education

Respondents were asked to rate the current quality of various stages of publicly funded education on a four-point scale from very good to very poor. The figure below shows the positive and negative ratings for each aspect among all respondents who provided a valid response (don't know responses are therefore excluded).

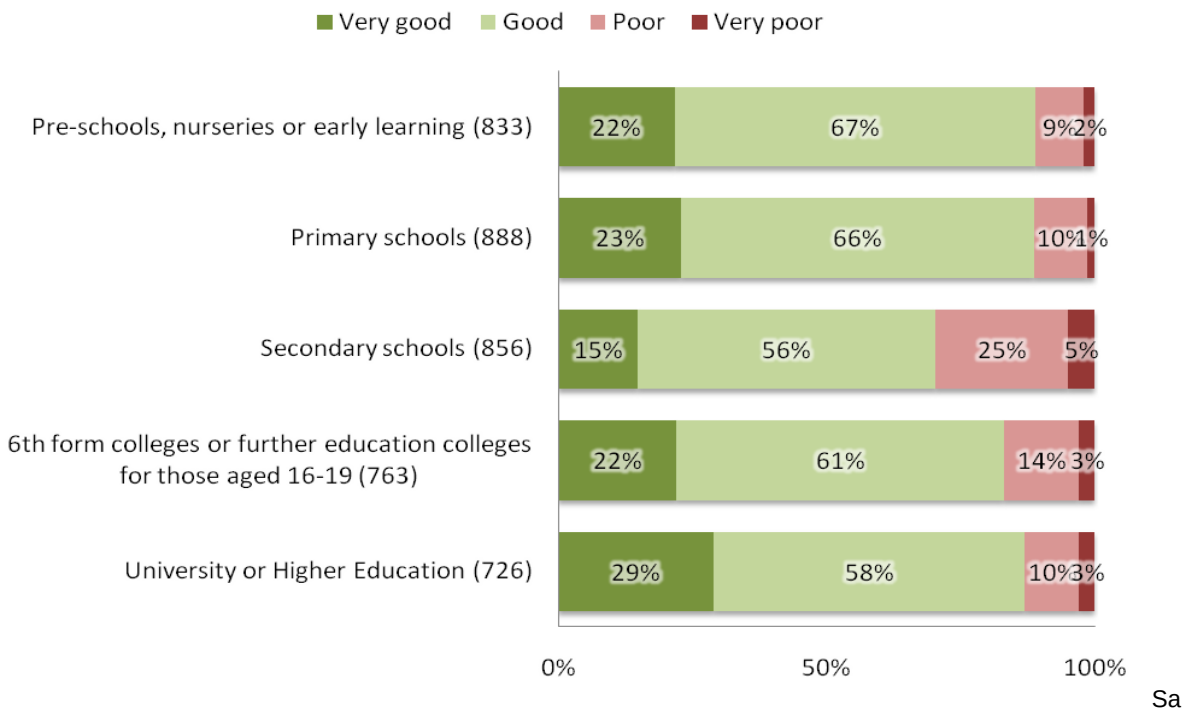
Most general public respondents feel that the current quality of publicly funded education in all these stages is good, with a minority rating any stage as poor to any degree.

Almost nine in ten give a positive rating (i.e. good or very good) for the current quality of pre-schools, nurseries or early learning (89%), for primary schools (89%) and for University or Higher Education (87%).

For sixth form college or further education just over four-fifths rate the current quality as good or very good (83%), and just less than one-fifth rate it poor or very poor (17%),

As in waves 1 and 2, secondary schools are most likely to be rated as very or quite poor, although by a slightly lower proportion (30%, compared with 34% in wave 1 and 35% in wave 2). Still the majority rate secondary schools as good (70%) and this represents a significant improvement compared with waves 1 and 2).

Figure 7 - Q1: How would you rate the current quality of publicly funded education in ... (SCHOOL TYPE)?



Sample bases in parentheses (where provided a valid response)

The table below focuses on differences in views across the three waves of the survey and by age.

Compared with wave 2 public opinion about the quality of publicly funded education has improved, and significantly so for primary schools, secondary schools and universities or higher education. The proportion rating each school type as either good or very good is now either equal to or higher than in wave 1.

In waves 1 and 2 it was observed that opinions of public education become more negative as respondents' age increases. In this third wave this is again true for pre-schools and nurseries, primary schools and also universities/higher education, however this is no longer the case for secondary schools or 6th form colleges / further education. Respondents aged 30-39 years are least likely to give a favourable rating for secondary schools or 6th form colleges / further education.

Table 3 - Q1: How would you rate the current quality of publicly funded education in ... (SCHOOL TYPE)?

	ALL PUBLIC						18-29		30-39		40-59		60+	
	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3									
	% +	%-	% +	% +	% +	% +	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-
Pre-schools, nurseries or early learning	**85**	15	**87**	13	**89**	11	**94**	6	**90**	10	**88**	12	**86**	14
Primary schools	**84**	16	**84**	16	**89**	11	**94**	6	**88**	12	**87**	13	**87**	13
Secondary schools	**65**	35	**65**	35	**70**	30	**75**	25	**63**	37	**69**	31	**74**	26
6th form colleges or further education colleges for those aged 16-19	**82**	18	**80**	20	**83**	17	**84**	16	**77**	23	**84**	17	**85**	15
University or Higher Education	**87**	13	**83**	17	**87**	13	**96**	4	**85**	15	**85**	15	**85**	15
Maximum sample bases	1000		1004		1000		192		199		337		272	

Respondents from ABC1 socio-economic groups are significantly less likely than respondents from C2DE groups to rate secondary schools as good or very good (65%, compared with 79% of C2DEs). This difference was not evident in wave 1.

Females are significantly more likely than male respondents to give a rating of very good to pre-schools/nurseries (26%, compared with 17% of males), primary schools (28%, compared with 17% of males) and secondary schools (17%, compared with 12% of males). Back in wave 1 there was only a significant difference by gender for pre-schools/nurseries.

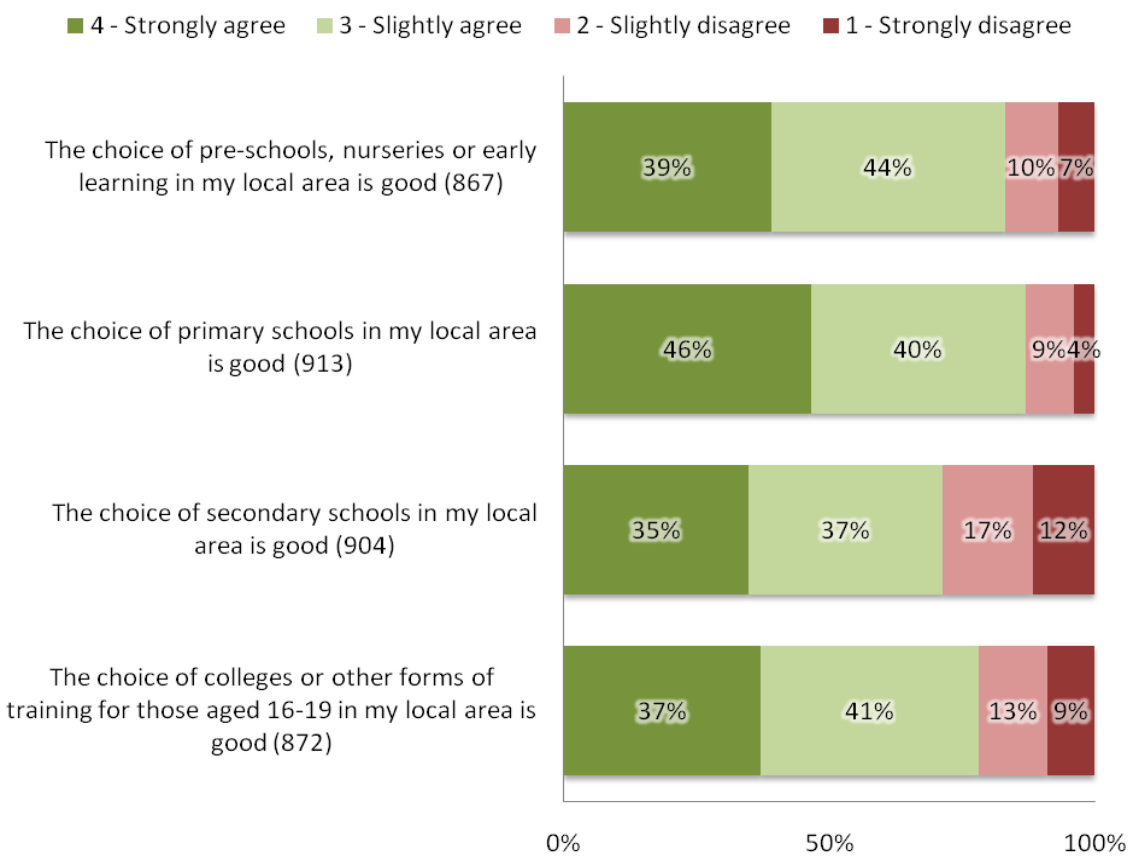
4.2 Choice

The general public were asked about the extent to which they agree or disagree with a range of statements concerning the choice of publicly funded education in their local area at each stage of education up to age 18.

As in waves 1 and 2, most respondents feel that there is a good choice of all types of educational institutions in their local areas, but are particularly likely to feel this in relation to the pre-school, nursery or early learning stage and the primary stage, with over eight in ten respondents agreeing in both cases (82% and 87% respectively).

Respondents are less likely to agree that the choice is good when it comes to secondary education and beyond, although still the majority feel the choice is good in this respect. There has been little change from wave to wave. Approaching three-quarters of respondents (72%) agree that the choice of secondary schools is good (compared with 71% in wave 1 and 69% in wave 2) and four-fifths (79%) agree that the choice of colleges and training for 16-18 year olds is good (compared with 80% in wave 1 and 75% in wave 2).

Figure 8 - Q2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the choice of education institution is good?



Sample bases in parentheses (where provided a valid response)

Compared with wave 1 the proportion of the public that agree the choice of primary school in their area is good has increased (from 84% to 87%) but not significantly, while for other school types ratings are more or less equal to wave 1 levels.

There is little variation by sub-group with regard to these views, although as illustrated in the table below, respondents in the ABC1 socio-economic group are significantly less likely than those in C2DE groups to agree that the choice of primary schools and especially secondary schools is good. This pattern was also evident for secondary schools in wave 1 of the survey, but also for pre-schools/nurseries, whereas there is now little difference in the rating of pre-schools/nurseries by social grouping in wave 3.

Table 4 - Q2: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the choice of education institution is good?

	ALL PUBLIC						ABC1		C2DE	
	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3					
	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-
Pre-schools, nurseries or early learning	**82**	18	**84**	16	**82**	18	**82**	18	**84**	16
Primary schools	**84**	16	**86**	14	**87**	13	**84**	16	**91**	9
Secondary schools	**71**	29	**69**	31	**72**	28	**65**	35	**81**	19
Colleges or other forms of training for 16-18s	**80**	20	**75**	25	**79**	21	**77**	23	**82**	18
Maximum sample bases	1000		1004		1000		585		388	

Male members of the public are significantly more likely than females to agree that the choice of secondary schools is good (77%, compared with 67% of females).

Members of the public who are currently out of work are significantly more likely than those in work to agree that the choice of secondary schools is good (79% among people out of work; 67% in work). This represents a significant change compared with wave 1 when the difference between those in work and out of work was minimal (71% amongst people out of work and72% amongst people in work).

5 DSO 4 - Close the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged families

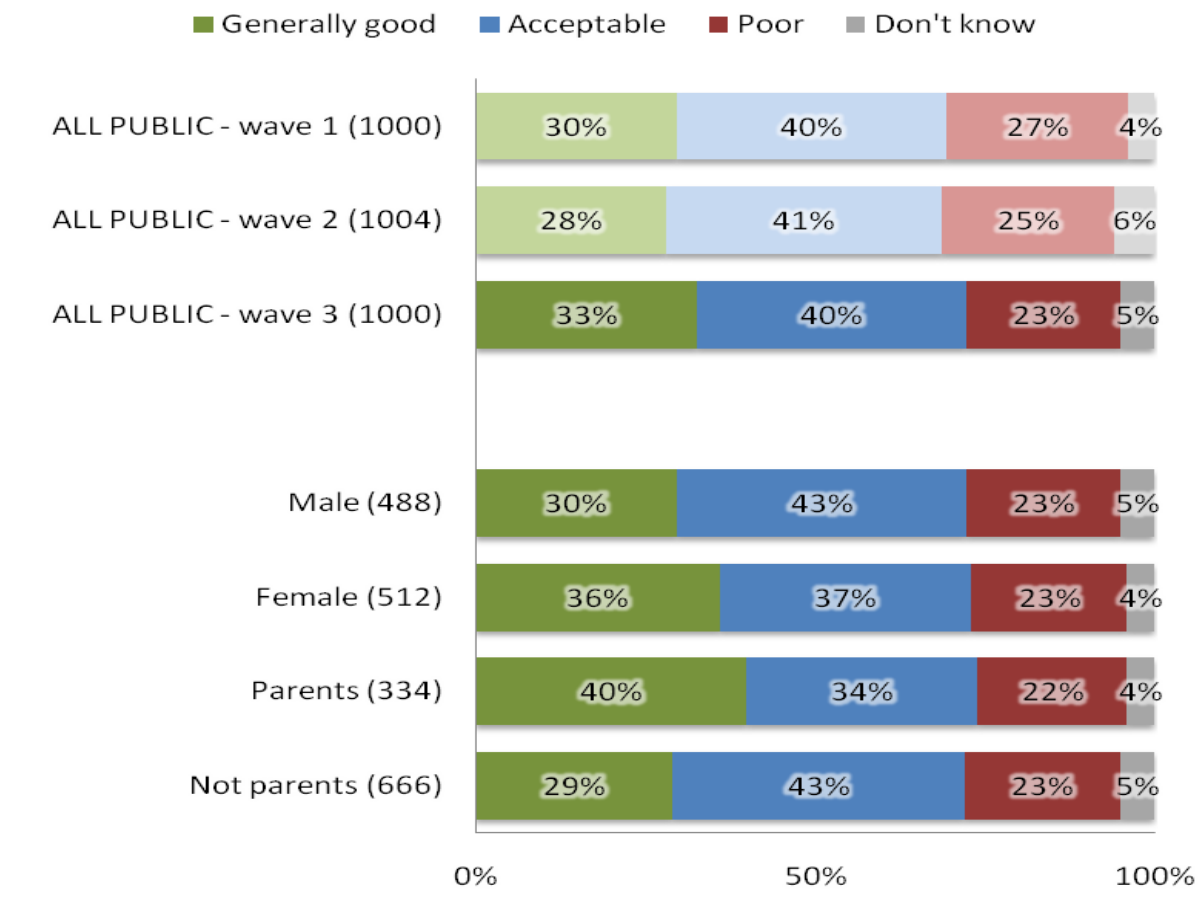
5.1 Behaviour at schools and colleges in the local area

Respondents were asked how they would describe pupil behaviour at schools or colleges in their local area. As in wave 1, most respondents are positive about pupil behaviour, with 33% feeling it is generally good and 40% that it is acceptable. Just less than a quarter (23%) feels that pupil behaviour is poor, which represents a significant improvement compared with wave 1, when just over a quarter described pupil behaviour as poor (27%).

As in waves 1 and 2, female respondents are significantly more likely than males to describe pupil behaviour as generally good (36%; 30% of males), although the difference between the two is not as great as in wave 1. There has been a significant improvement in this score among males since wave 1 (from 22% to 30%)

Parents are significantly more likely than respondents without dependent children to think pupil behaviour is generally good (40%, compared with 29%).

Figure 9 - Q5: Would you describe pupil behaviour at your local schools / colleges as?



Sample bases in parentheses: all public

Respondents who reported bullying to be a problem in schools in England are significantly more likely to feel that pupil behaviour in schools and colleges in their local area is poor (26%, compared with 13% of respondents who feel that bullying is not a problem). The

proportion feeling that pupil behaviour is poor increases to 34% among respondents that feel that bullying has worsened in the last five years.

5.2 Improvement in pupil behaviour

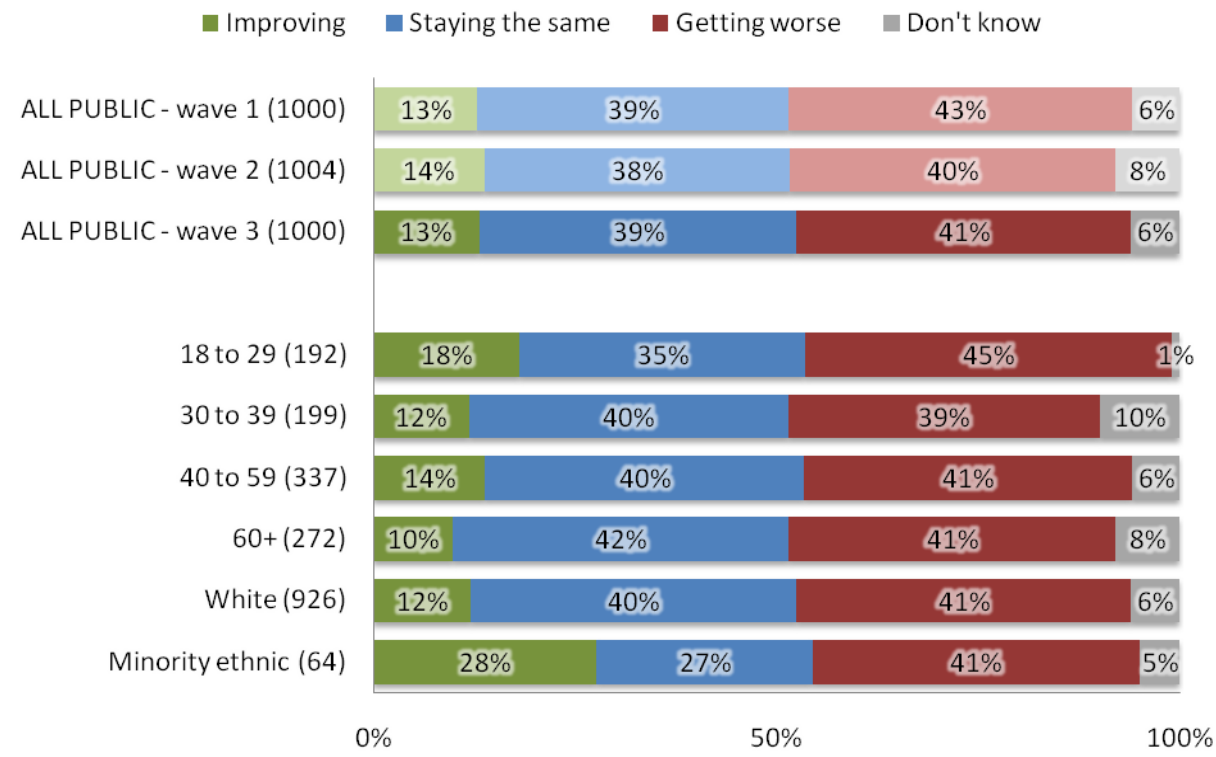
Next the public were asked whether they think standards of pupil behaviour in schools or colleges are generally improving, staying the same or getting worse. The figure below highlights the extent to which respondents are divided in their views, and how responses have remained consistent with waves 1 and 2 of the study. Two-fifths of respondents think standards of behaviour are getting worse (41%) or are staying the same (39%). A minority (13%) feel that standards of behaviour are improving.

Looking at differences in opinion by age there are no significant differences in terms of those considering there has been improvement or deterioration in pupil behaviour. Among 18-29 year olds views are most positive, but this age group are also more likely to report that pupil behaviour is getting worse. However, respondents from other age groups are significantly more likely than 18-29 year olds to say they do not know whether standards of pupil behaviour are getting better or worse.

There are no significant changes since wave 1 by age.

Respondents in minority ethnic groups are significantly more likely than white respondents to feel that standards of pupil behaviour are improving (28%, compared with 12% of white respondents), although just as likely to feel that standards are getting worse. This pattern was also evident in wave 1.

Figure 10 - Q6: Thinking about your child's school/college, do you feel that standards of pupil behaviour generally are improving, staying the same or getting worse?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

As in previous waves there is still a strong link between ratings of discipline/behaviour in schools and thoughts about whether the situation is improving. Members of the public who think pupil behaviour is generally good are significantly more likely than those who think it is either acceptable or poor to think that pupil behaviour is improving (21%, compared with 12% among those who rate behaviour as acceptable and 5% among those who rate it as poor). Among the public who rate discipline/behaviour as poor 75% think pupil behaviour is getting worse.

There is also a strong link with perceptions of bullying. Where bullying is thought to be a problem 45% think pupil behaviour is getting worse, compared with 29% among those who say bullying is not a problem. The difference between these two groups is statistically significant.

6 DSO 5 - Ensure young people are participating and achieving their potential to 16 and beyond

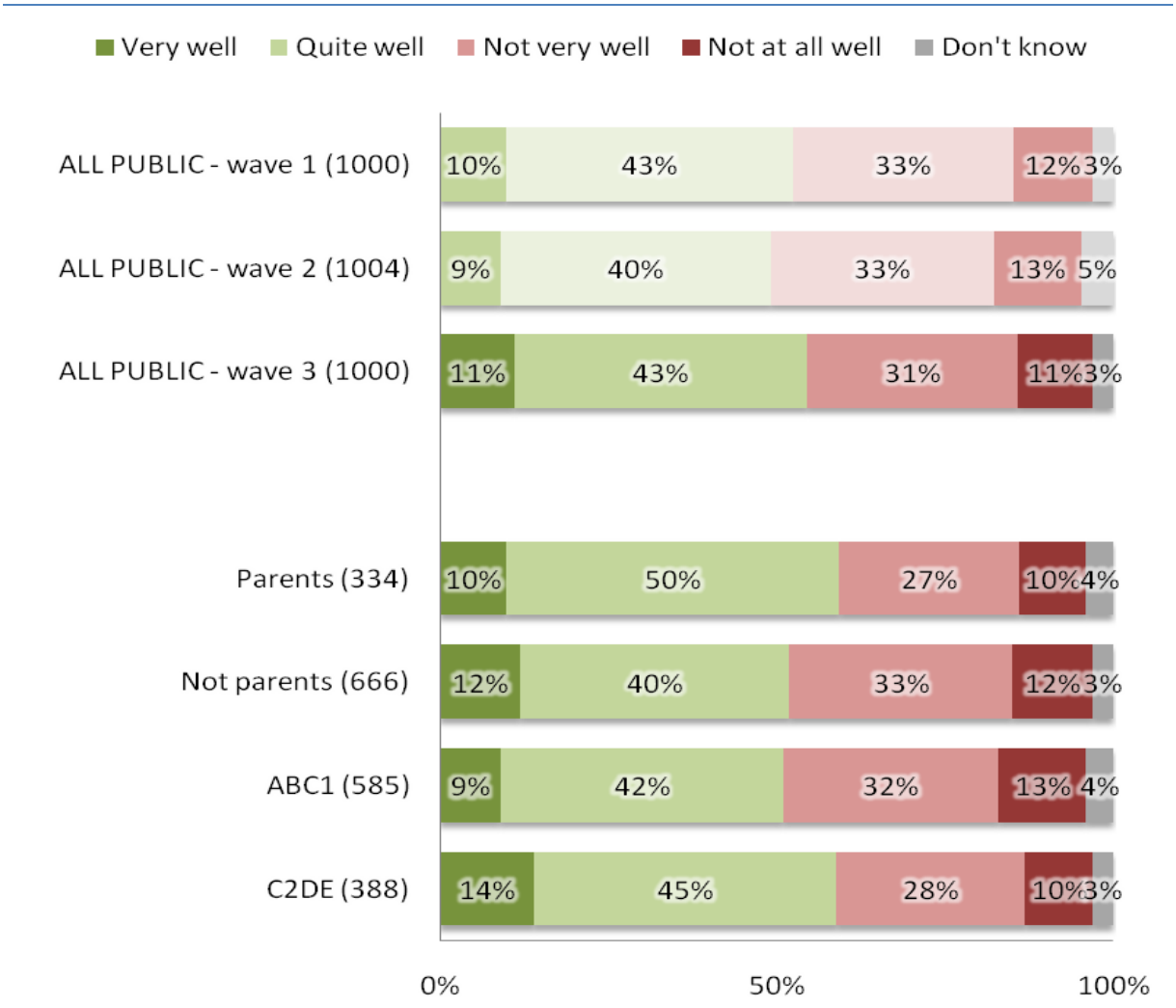
6.1 Schools and colleges as preparation for working life

Compared with wave 2 there has been a significant improvement in how the public feel schools and colleges in England prepare young people for working life, which means responses are now back to the level seen in wave 1. The general public are more likely to feel that schools and colleges prepare young people very or fairly well (54%), than not well (42%).

Parents are more likely than those without children to think schools and colleges do well at preparing young people for working life (60%; 52% of people without children).

Respondents in socio-economic group C2DE are significantly more likely to hold positive views than people in ABC1 groups (59% rate schools and colleges well, compared with 52% of those in group ABC1). This follows wave 1 and 2 findings.

Figure 11 - Q3: Overall, how well do you feel schools and colleges in England today prepare young people for working life?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

7 DSO 6 - Keep children and young people on the path to success

7.1 Young people's role in the community

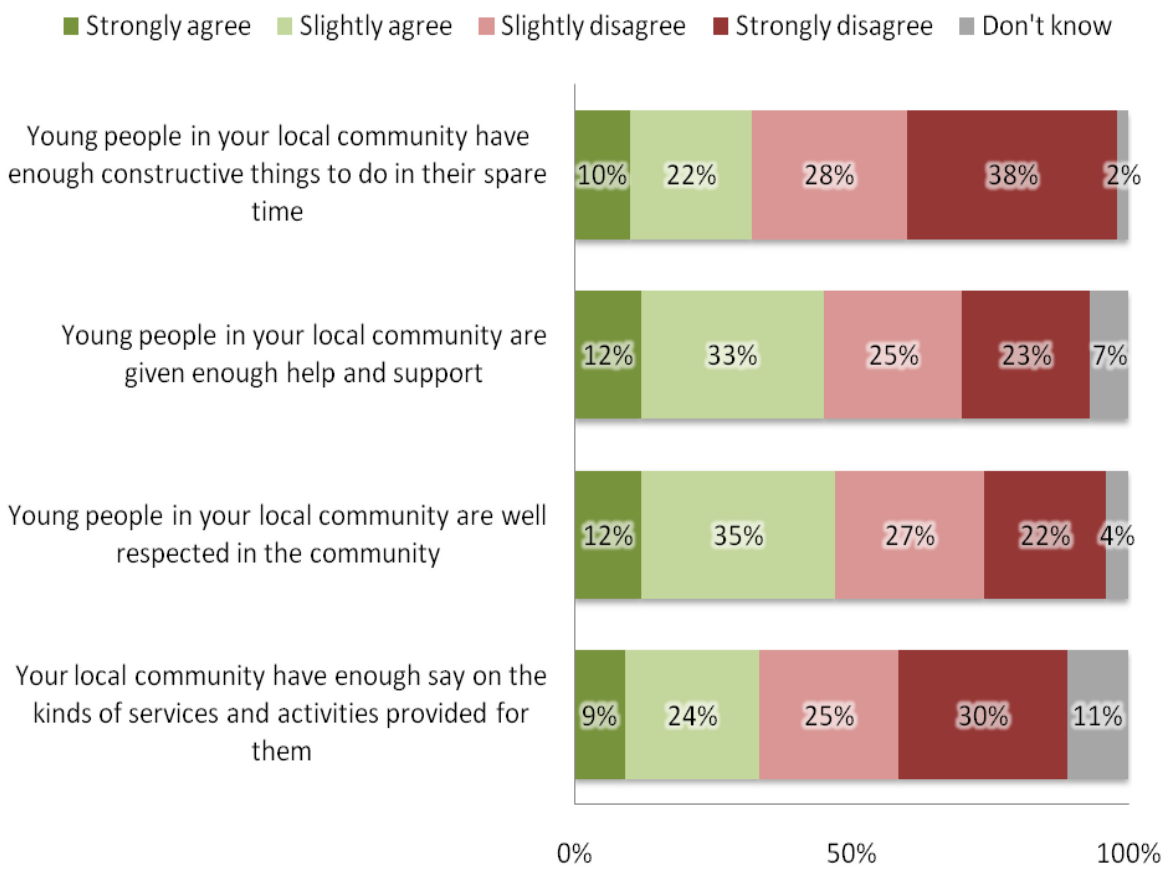
General public respondents were asked to think more generally about young people in their local community today and to rate their agreement with a number of statements on a scale where '1' indicates strong disagreement and '4' indicates strong agreement.

As in waves 1 and 2, the level of disagreement with each of the statements (in aggregate) exceeds the level of agreement. In general therefore, the public disagrees that young people in their local community have sufficient provision in terms of constructive things to do, help and support, respect from the community or enough say on services and activities provided for them.

However, for the two statements that people agree most with, the difference between those agreeing and agreeing is only marginal. Respondents are most likely to agree with the statement that young people in the local community are well respected (47%, while 49% disagree), followed by young people in the local community are given enough help and support (44% agree; 48% disagree).

Disagreement is higher for the statement 'your local community have enough say on the kinds of services and activities provided for them' (56% disagree) and highest of all for 'young people in your local community have enough constructive things to do in their spare time (66% disagree).

Figure 12 - Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements..? Young people in your local community…



Sample base: 1000: All public

Since wave 1 the trend has been upwards in terms of agreement with each of the statements, and for young people being given enough help and support the level of agreement is now significantly higher than in wave 1 (44%; 39% in wave 1).

Members of the public aged 60 years and over are more likely to agree with each of the statements about young people. This age group is significantly more likely to agree that young people are well respected in the community, as illustrated in the table below.

Table 5 - Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements..?

	ALL PUBLIC						AGE							
	wave 1		wave 2		wave 3		18-29		30-39		40-59		60+	
	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-
… have enough constructive things to do in their spare time	**30**	67	**32**	65	**32**	66	**31**	69	**31**	67	**29**	69	**37**	60
… are given enough help and support	**39**	54	**42**	49	**44**	48	**45**	52	**46**	47	**39**	54	**50**	39
… are well respected in the community	**43**	51	**46**	48	**47**	49	**37**	62	**48**	47	**42**	55	**60**	34
…have enough say on the kinds of services and activities provided for them	**31**	60	**33**	55	**33**	56	**30**	65	**31**	56	**31**	59	**39**	45
Sample bases	1000		1004		1000		192		199		337		272	

Compared with wave 1 there have been no significant changes by age group.

People who are currently in work are more likely than those out of work to disagree with each of the statements, and significantly so in terms of young people being well respected in the community and having enough say on the kinds of services and activities provided for them. Since wave 1 the proportion of people out of work that thinks young people are given enough help and support has increased significantly (from 39%, to 46% in wave 3).
People who hold no qualifications are significantly more likely than those who do, to agree that young people are well respected in the community and that they have enough say. Since wave 1 there have been significant increases in the proportion of people with no

qualifications that agree young people are given enough help and support (from 39% in wave 1, to 48% in wave 3) and that they are well respected in the community (from 45% in wave 1, to 56% in wave 3).

The table that follows summarises the wave 3 differences by economic status and qualification level.

Table 6 - Q12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements..?

	ECONOMIC STATUS				QUALIFICATIONS					
	In work		Out of work		Degree or above		Up to degree		No quals	
	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-
… have enough constructive things to do in their spare time	**31**	68	**33**	64	**35**	64	**30**	69	**32**	65
… are given enough help and support	**43**	50	**46**	45	**47**	44	**41**	53	**48**	46
… are well respected in the community	**43**	54	**54**	41	**46**	49	**43**	54	**56**	38
…have enough say on the kinds of services and activities provided for them	**31**	59	**36**	50	**33**	53	**29**	61	**41**	48
Sample bases	609		391		348		430		222	

7.2 Young people's access to sports/clubs/community activities

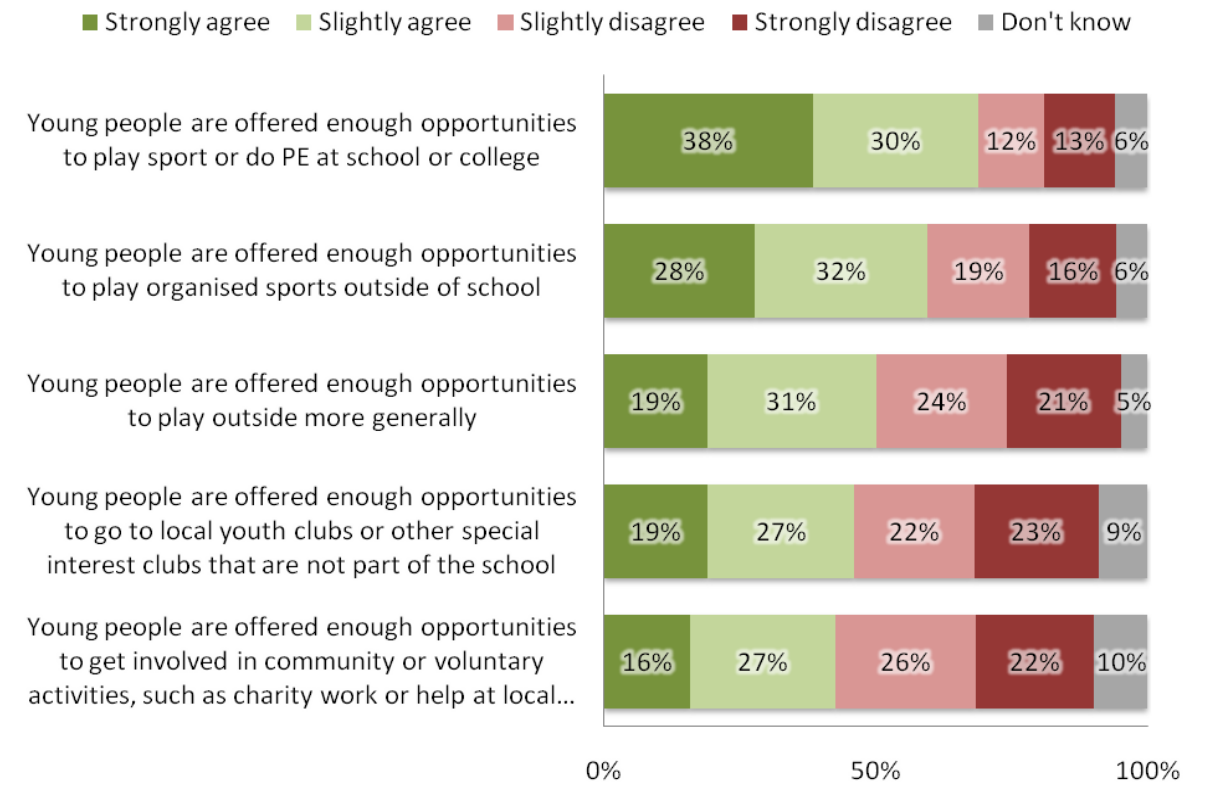
Respondents were then asked to consider in more detail the activities available to young people in their local community. They were asked about the extent to which they agree or disagree with a range of statements concerning whether young people are offered enough opportunities to take part in a range of activities.

Respondents are most likely to agree that young people are offered enough opportunities to play sport or do PE at school or college (69%), followed by agreement that there are enough opportunities for young people to play organised sports outside of school or college (60%).

However, in terms of playing outside more generally, going to youth clubs or other special interest clubs, or taking part in community or voluntary activities, fewer respondents still feel there is adequate provision in their local community. More than two-fifths of respondents disagree that there are enough opportunities in these areas (see figure below).

Figure 13 - Q13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Young people in your local community are offered enough opportunities to…



Sample base: 1000: All public

Generally, responses are consistent with previous waves of the study, although compared with wave 1 agreement that there are enough opportunities for sport or PE at school or college, and enough organised sports outside of school has increased slightly.

Looking at differences in opinion by age, younger respondents aged 18-29 are significantly more likely than people of other ages to feel there are enough opportunities for young people to play sports or do PE at school or college (80%) and to play outside more generally (64%). These significant differences were also evident back in wave 1, when 18-29 year olds were also significantly more likely to agree that young people are offered enough opportunities to go to local youth clubs or other special interest clubs.

Agreement that there are enough opportunities for young people to get involved in community or voluntary activities, such as charity work or help at local events, is significantly higher among respondents aged 60 and over (52%) than among other age groups, as the following table highlights.

Table 7 - Q13: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Young people are offered enough opportunities…

	ALL PUBLIC						18-29		30-39		40-59		60+	
	Wave 1		Wave 2		Wave 3									
	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-	% +	%-
…to play sport or do PE at school or college	**66**	29	**67**	24	**69**	25	**80**	17	**70**	24	**65**	29	**65**	27
…to play organised sports outside of school	**57**	38	**58**	33	**60**	35	**66**	32	**59**	34	**56**	38	**60**	34
…to play outside more generally	**49**	47	**53**	42	**50**	45	**64**	37	**54**	37	**42**	56	**49**	45
…to go to local youth clubs or other special interest clubs that are not part of the school (e.g. drama clubs, dance clubs)	**45**	47	**44**	41	**46**	45	**53**	42	**44**	44	**40**	52	**48**	41
…to get involved in community or voluntary activities, such as charity work or help at local events	**42**	49	**42**	43	**43**	48	**38**	56	**38**	49	**40**	51	**52**	37
Sample bases	1000		1004		1000		**192**		**199**		**337**		**272**	

The other significant differences in responses, between sub-groups of the population, are that parents are significantly more likely than people without children to agree that there are sufficient opportunities to play sport or do PE at school of college (73%; 67% among those without children), which is a change to wave 1 when parents and non-parents views were very similar (68% and 65% respectively). While, as in wave 1, men are more likely than women to believe young people are offered enough opportunities to play outside more generally (55% of males agree; 46% of females).

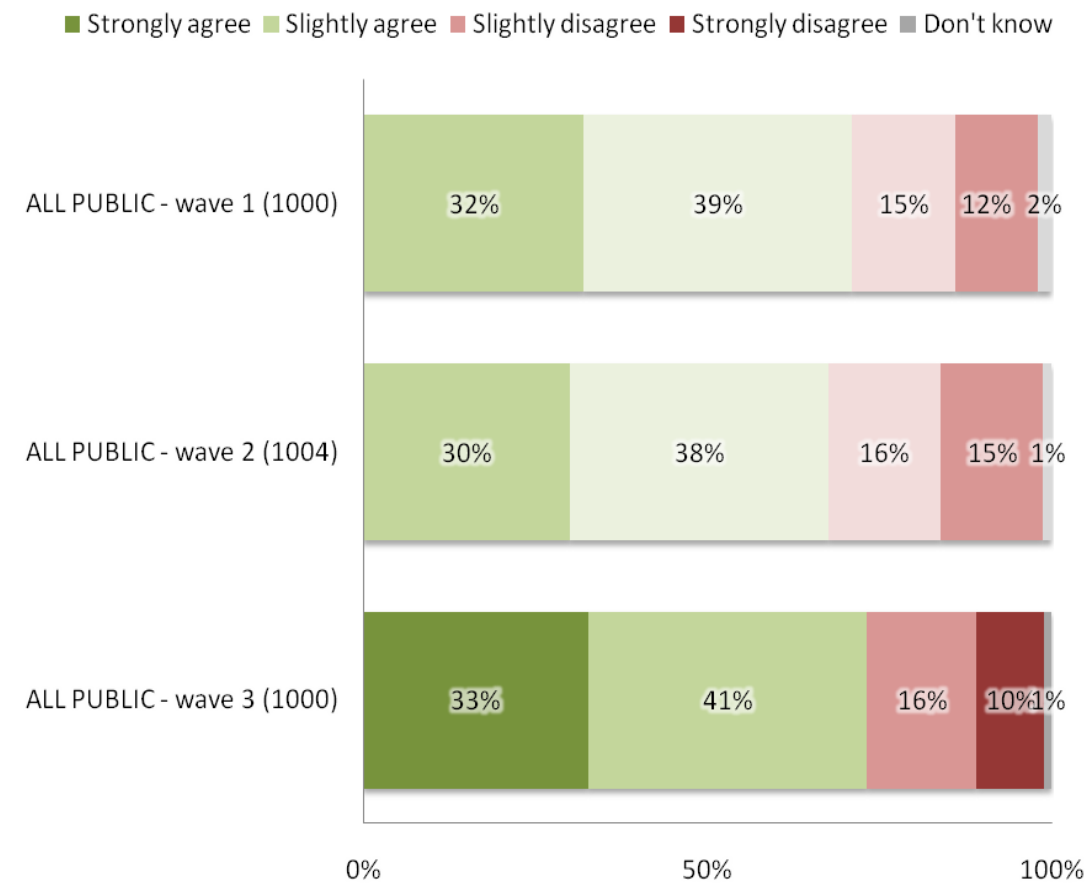
8 England as a country to grow up in

Compared with wave 2 there has been a significant increase in the proportion of people who agree that England is a good country for children to grow up in. Nearly three-quarters of the public agree that this is the case (74%), compared with nearer two-thirds in wave 2 (68%). The response is also more favourable (but not significantly so) than in wave 1 when 71% agreed.

The proportion that disagree that England is a good country for children to grow up in (26%) is lower than in wave 2 (31%) but similar to wave 1 (27%), as the following chart illustrates.

There is little variation in views among the different subgroups.

Figure 14 - Q15: To what extent do you agree or disagree overall that England is a good country for children to grow up in?



Sample bases shown in parentheses: all public

This section analyses the public's responses in more detail, to understand how respondents' opinions on other issues covered in the survey relate to their overall views on England as a country to grow up in. Respondents' views on whether schools and colleges prepare young people well for working life, on pupil behaviour or bullying are reflected in their views on whether or not England is a good country for children to grow up in. Those reporting more positive views on education issues also report more positive views on England as a country to grow up in, illustrating the significance of these issues in the process of growing up. Therefore, similar to waves 1 and 2, most respondents who feel that schools and colleges prepare young people well for working life also agree that England is a good country for

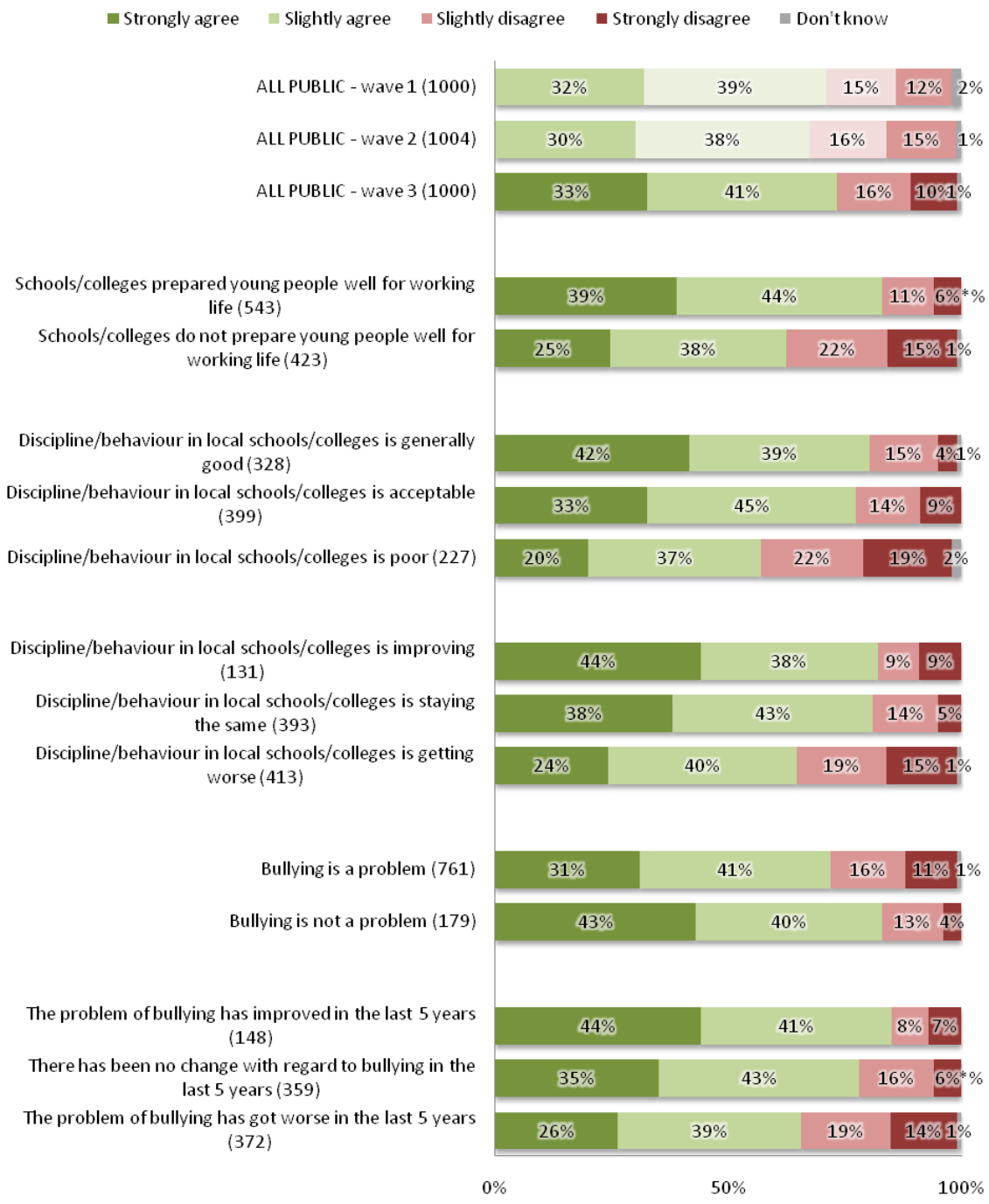
children to grow up in (83% agree, 17% disagree), while those who feel that schools and colleges do not prepare young people well for working life, are significantly less likely to agree (63% agree, and 37% disagree).

Similarly, 81% of those who feel that behaviour of pupils in local schools and colleges is good also agree that England is a good country for children to grow up in, while among those who feel that behaviour of pupils in local schools and colleges is poor, just 57% agree. This is a statistically significant difference.

Among people who feel the problem of bullying has got worse in the last 5 years a third disagree that England is a good country for children to grow up in (34%), compared with fewer than half that proportion (15%) people who think there have been improvements in bullying. Again, this difference is statistically significant.

The relationship between these views and the overall assessment of England as a good country for children to grow up in is summarised in the following figure.

Figure 15 - Q15: To what extent do you agree or disagree overall that England is a good country for children to grow up in?



Sample bases shown in parentheses

9 Profile of Respondents

Profile of Public Respondents		% Wave 1	% Wave 2	% Wave 3
Age	18-29	17	20	19
	30-39	21	21	20
	40-49	20	18	17
	50-59	19	16	16
	60-69	13	13	12
	70+	10	12	15
Gender	Male	40	47	49
	Female	61	53	51
Working status	Working - full time (more than 30 hours a week)	42	44	46
	Working - part time (30 hours or less)	17	16	15
	Unemployed and seeking work for less than 6 months	3	4	3
	Unemployed and seeking work for more than 6 months	3	1	2
	Not working - Retired	21	24	25
	Not working - Not able to work due to illness/ disability	5	3	3
	Not working - Looking after the home or family	9	9	6
Qualification Achievement	A postgraduate degree or doctorate, NVQ level 5 or equivalent	12	10	10
	A degree or higher degree, HND, HNC, NVQ level 4 or equivalent	21	23	25
	A levels, NVQ Level 3 or equivalent	15	17	19
	GCSEs, O Levels, NVQ Level 2 or equivalent	17	15	19
	Other	5	7	5
	No qualifications	30	29	22
Ethnicity	White European	86	87	87

Profile of Public Respondents		% Wave 1	% Wave 2	% Wave 3
	Other white background	4	2	5
	Black Caribbean	2	1	1
	Black African	1	1	<0.5%
	Other black background	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
	Chinese	<0.5%	<0.5%	<0.5%
	Indian	2	1	1
	Pakistani	2	2	2
	Bangladeshi	<0.5%	0	0
	Other Asian background	1	1	1
	Mixed background	1	2	1
	Other	1	1	1
	Refused	1	1	1
Sample bases:		1000	1004	1000

Ref: DCSF-RR155

ISBN: 978 1 84775 522 3

© Bostock Marketing Group 2009

www.dcsf.gov.uk/research

Published by the Department for
Children, Schools and Families

department for
children, schools and families