



Engagement with the inspection process

A survey of Ofsted's Parents' Panel

April 2010

Introduction



In early 2010 the Ofsted Parents' Panel was consulted on how inspectors can better engage with parents during an inspection of their child's school or childcare provider. Four hundred and seven members of the panel took part in this survey.

It is essential that Ofsted understands parental attitudes towards inspections, as well as finding out about the most practical ways to gather parents' views during the inspection process. The findings of this survey are helping to inform Ofsted's approach to inspections going forward.

Contents



- 4: Objectives

- 5: Method

Schools:

- 6: Attitude to inspection

- 14: Engaging parents in the inspection process

- 19: Experience of inspections

- 28: Engagement with the inspection process

- 37: Feedback in-between inspections

- 41: Involvement in children's education

Early Years Provision:

- 42: Attitudes to inspection

- 57: Engaging parents in inspections

- 59: Experience of inspections

- 65: The report

- 71: Summary

Objectives

- To explore parental attitudes and experiences around the inspection of schools and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) childminder and day care providers

To find out:

- How parents can better engage with inspectors to express their views before or during an inspection
- Whether the questionnaire, used to gain parental feedback during inspections of schools, is suitable
- What parents thought about the report on the school/childcare provider after the inspection had taken place
- Compare experiences of inspections pre and post September and April 2009
- How well parents feel schools involve them in their child's education

Method



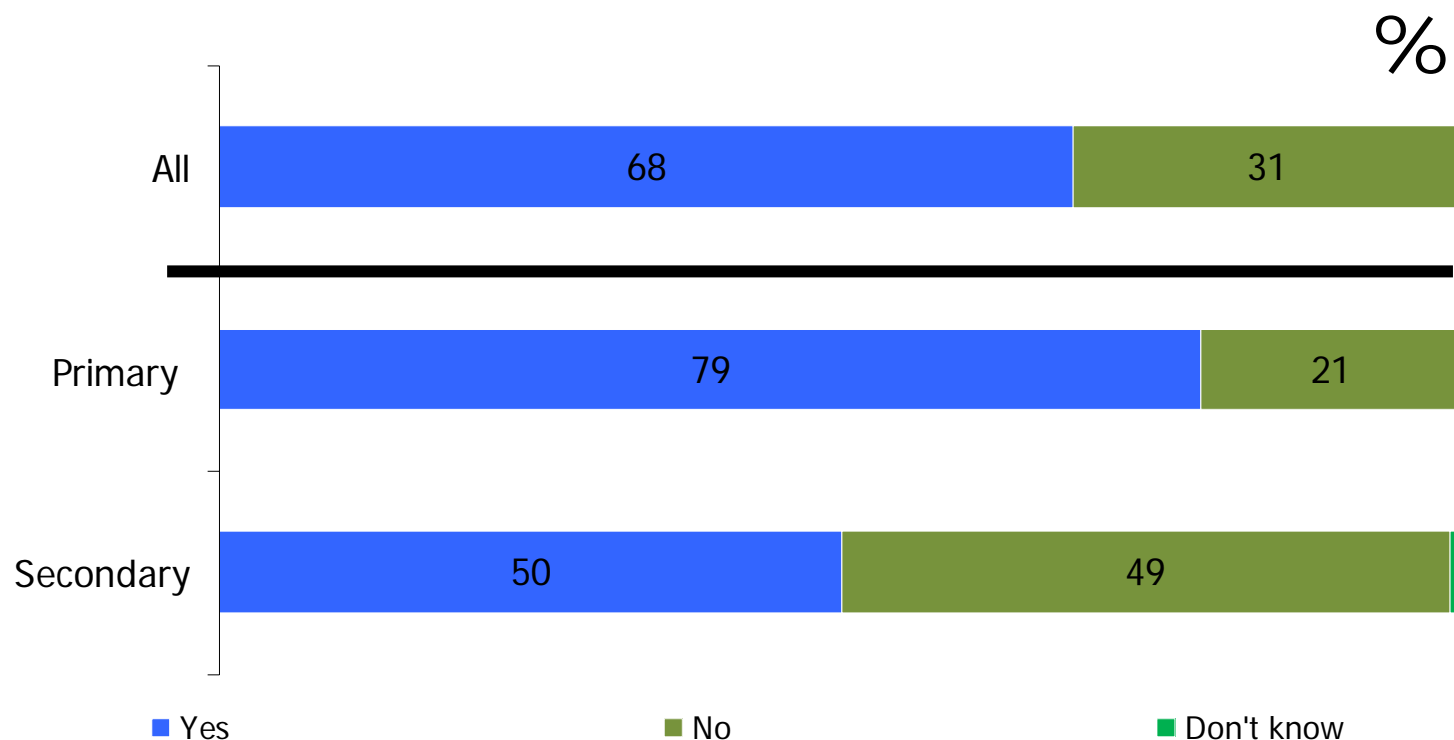
- Parents were consulted via an online questionnaire sent to 1681 members of the Ofsted parents' panel
- The Ofsted parents' panel is made up of parents who agreed to fill out a series of online surveys for Ofsted throughout the course of a year
- Every member of the panel has at least one child in a state school or in registered childcare
- 407 parents responded to this survey, a response rate of 24%
- The survey was carried out between 25 February and 14 March 2010

Attitudes to inspections

Inspection of schools

April 2010

Did you look at Ofsted inspection reports when choosing your child/children's school?



Bases: All parents with a child in maintained school (381), 18-24 (37) 35-44 (192), 45+ (149), ABC1 (296), C2DE (85), Primary (183), Secondary (137)

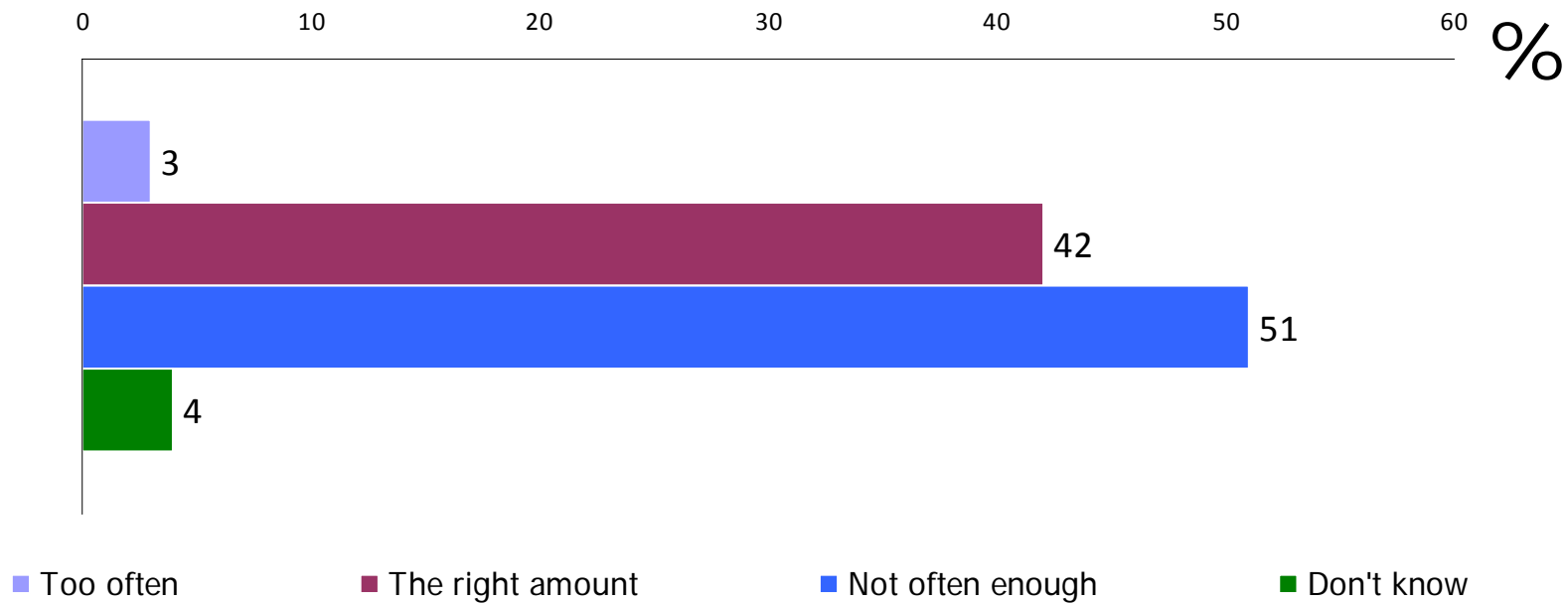
Did you look at Ofsted inspection reports when choosing your child/children's school?



Younger parents were more likely to look at Ofsted inspection reports when choosing their child's school than older parents. There was a large difference between parents aged 18–34 (80%) and those over 45 (59%).

Those parents who only had children in primary school were more likely to say that they had looked at Ofsted inspection reports when choosing their child's school (79%) compared with parents of children in secondary school or sixth form (50%).

Currently Ofsted inspects a school at least once every 3–5 years, or more frequently if concerns were raised at the previous inspection. Do you think that schools are inspected by Ofsted...



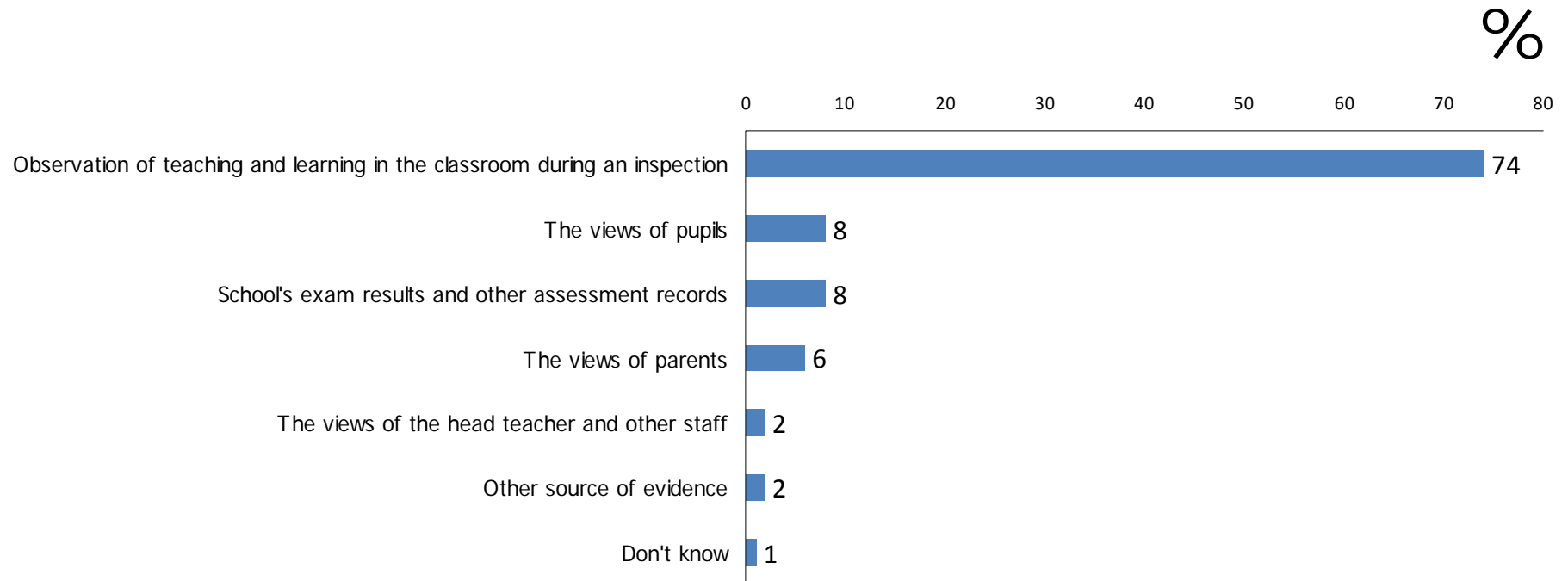
Base: All parents with a child in maintained school (381), ABC1 (296), C2DE (85)

Currently Ofsted inspects a school at least once every 3–5 years, or more frequently if concerns were raised at the previous inspection. Do you think that schools are inspected by Ofsted...



- Parents were much more likely to think that schools are not inspected often enough by Ofsted than to think they are inspected too much. Overall 51% of parents thought that schools are not inspected enough, while 42% thought that they are inspected the right amount.
- Parents of a lower social grade (C2DE) were more likely to feel that schools are not inspected enough by Ofsted (62%) compared with higher social grade (ABC1) parents (44%).

Ofsted uses evidence from a variety of sources when carrying out inspections of schools. Which in your view is the most important way?



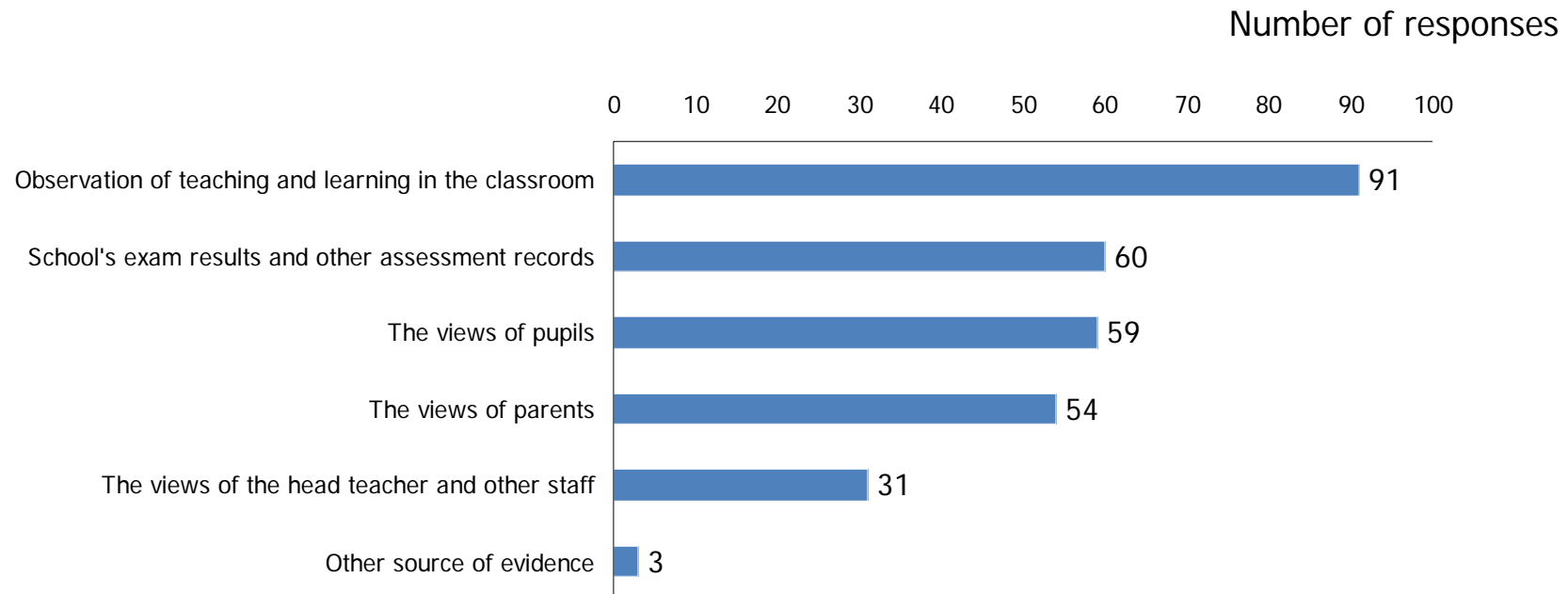
Base: All parents with a child in maintained school (381)

Ofsted uses evidence from a variety of sources when carrying out inspections of schools. The next question is intended to get your views on the relative importance of these different sources. Which in your view is the most important way?



- The previous chart shows the percentage of parents who thought each of the particular sources of evidence should be the MOST important for an inspection of their child's school.
- Three quarters (74%) of parents thought that observation of teaching and learning in the classroom should be the MOST important source of evidence for inspectors.
- Only 8% thought that the views of pupils or the school's exam results and other assessment records should be the MOST important source of evidence.
- Only 6% of parents felt that their own views should be the MOST important source of evidence.

Ofsted uses evidence from a variety of sources when carrying out inspections of schools. Which in your view are the **three** most important ways to get your views?



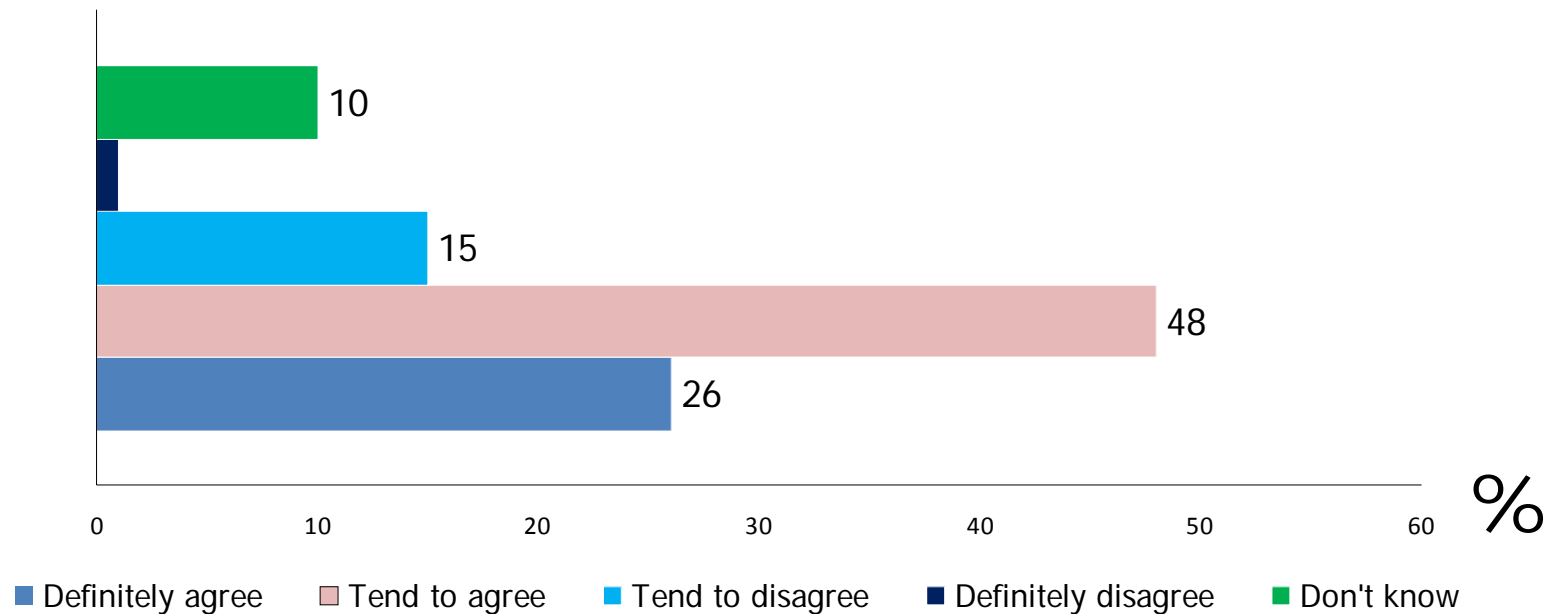
Base: All parents who selected a most important source of evidence for an inspection (377)

Engaging parents with inspections

Engagement with the inspection
process

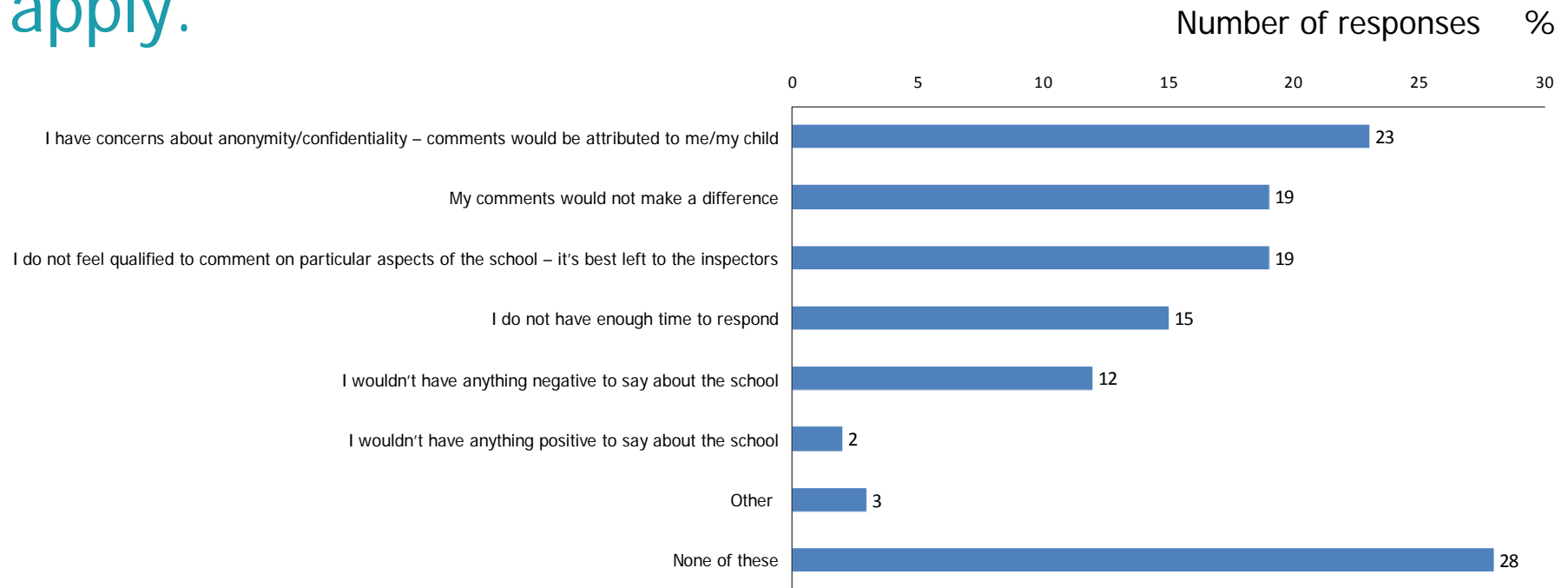
April 2010

Do you agree with the statement: 'I would like to have more opportunity to contribute during inspections of my child/children school and/or care provider.'



Base: All parents (407)

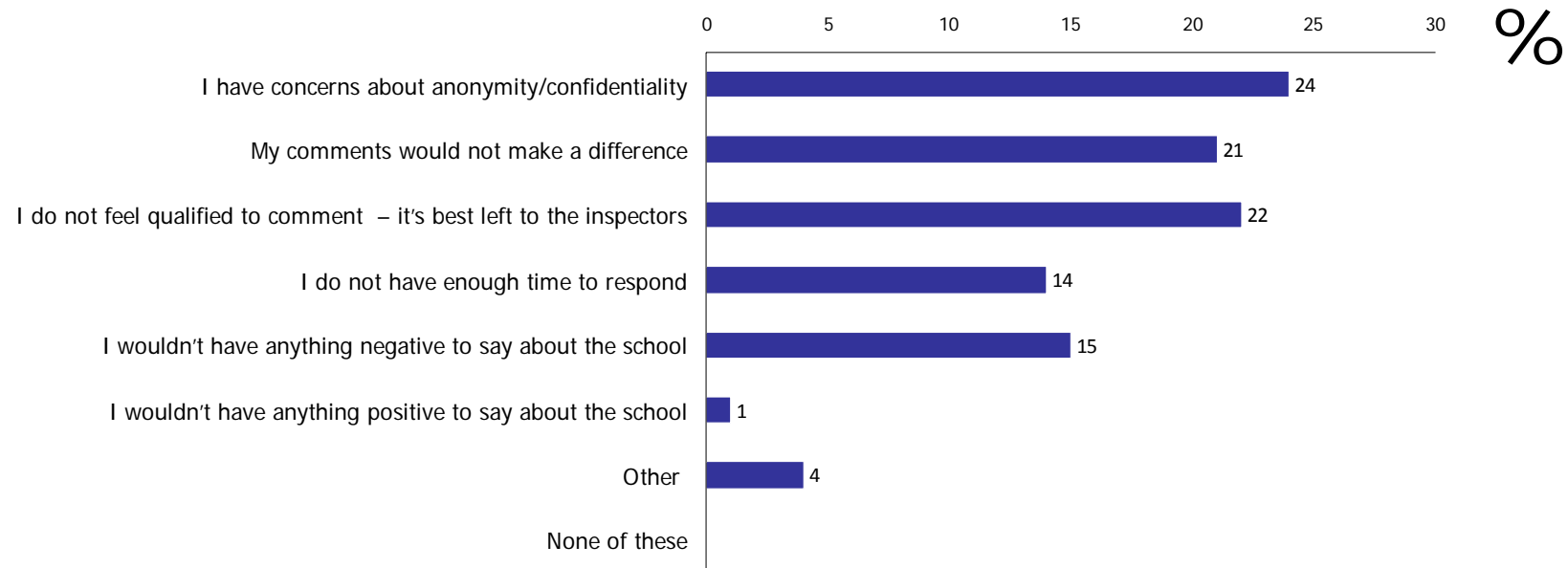
Which of the following are reasons why you might not give your views during an Ofsted inspection? Tick all that apply.



Bases: Q20 All parents with a child in maintained school (381), Q20a All parents who selected one or more reasons why they might not give their views during an inspection (269)

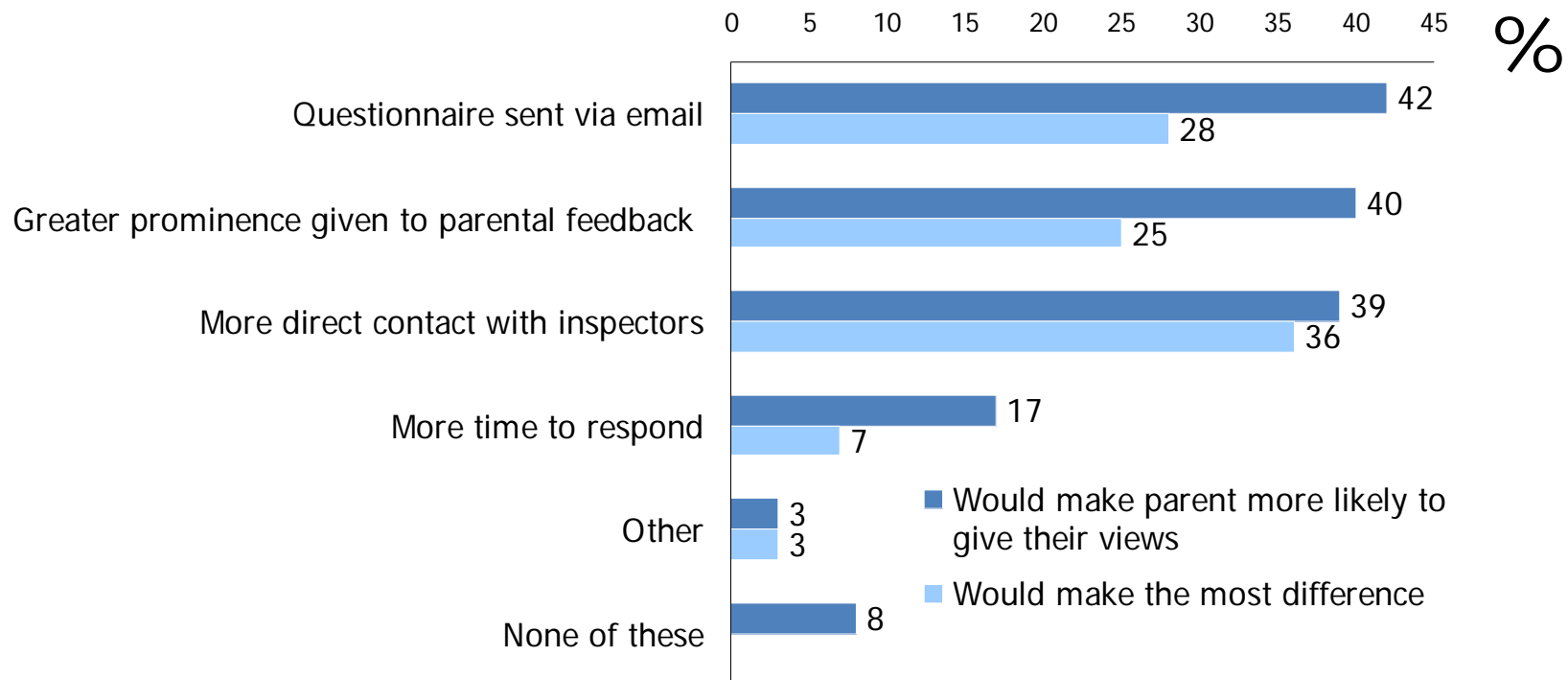


Which of the following are the **main reasons** you would not give your views during an Ofsted inspection? Tick only one.



Bases: Q20 All parents with a child in maintained school (381), Q20a All parents who selected one or more reasons why they might not give their views during an inspection (269)

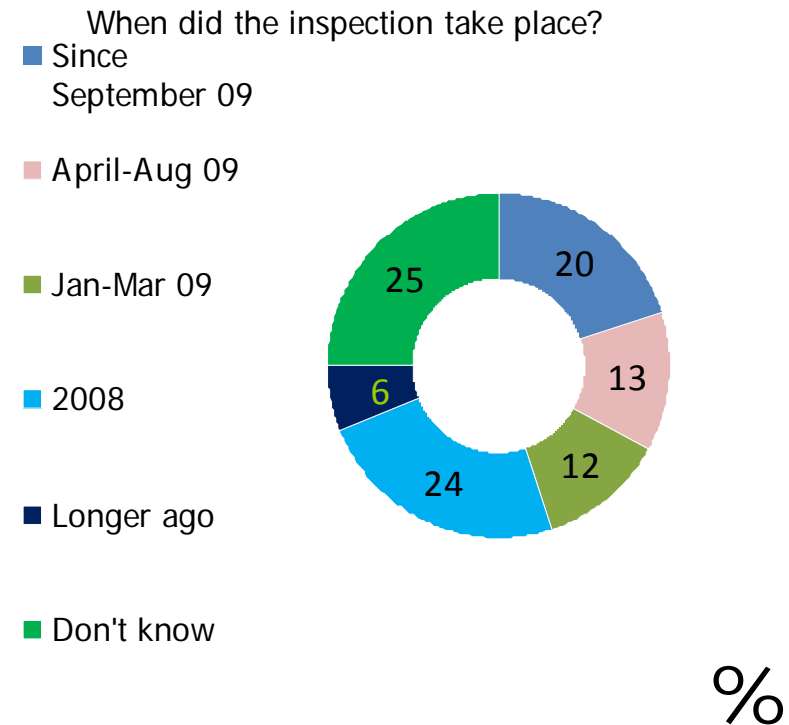
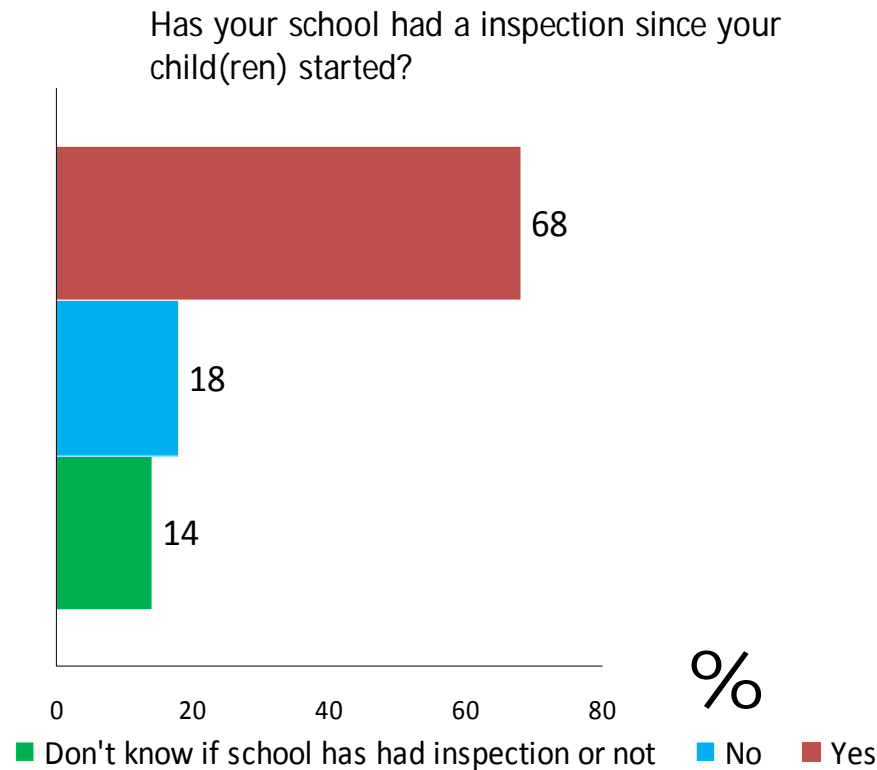
Which of these things might make you more likely to give your views during an inspection and which of these would make the most difference?



Experience of inspections

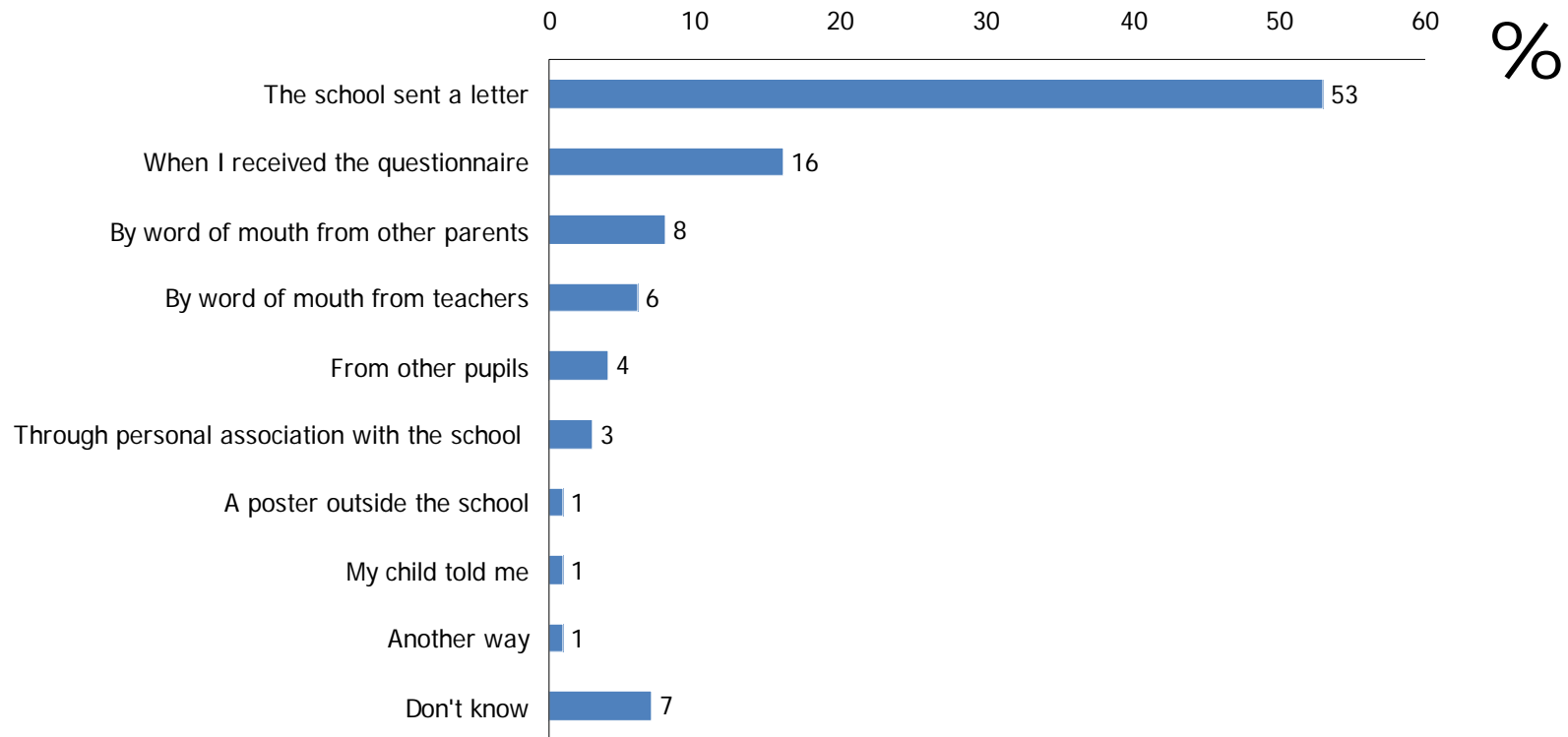
April 2010

Please think about your child(ren) in maintained schools. Since they started, has their school had an inspection by Ofsted? If so, when was the most recent inspection?



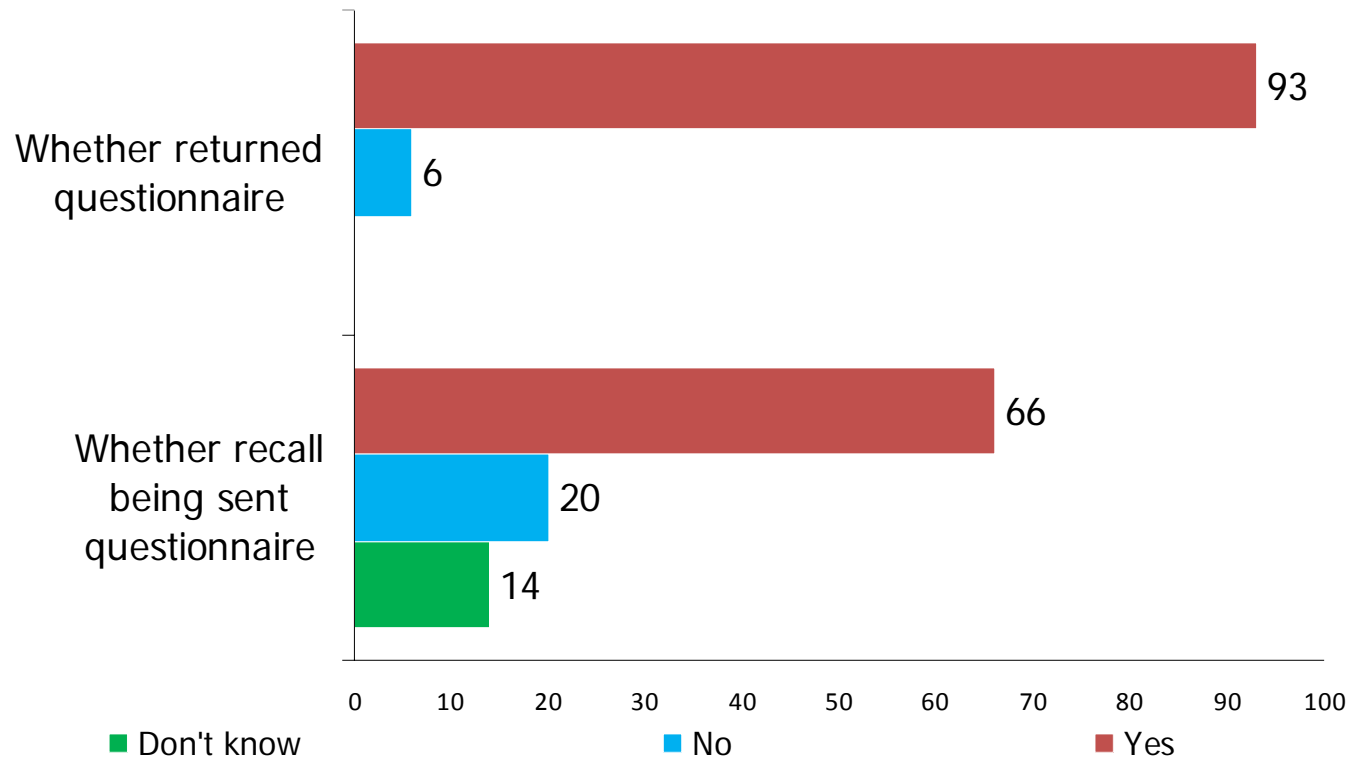
Bases: Q11 All parents with a child in maintained school (381), Q12 All parents aware of an inspection taking place at their child's school since they started (294)

How did you find out that the school was being inspected?



Base: All parents aware of an inspection taking place at their child's school since they started (294)

Do you recall being sent a questionnaire by the school on behalf of Ofsted to fill out at the time of the inspection. If so, did you return the questionnaire?

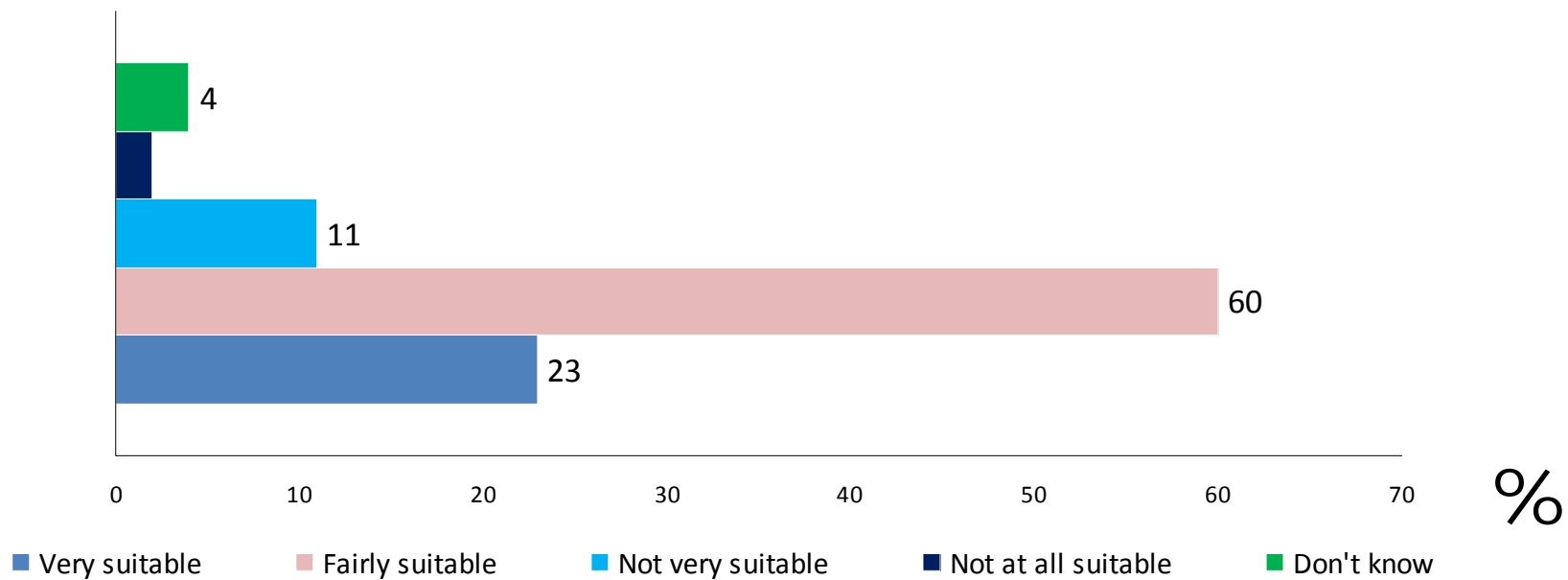


%



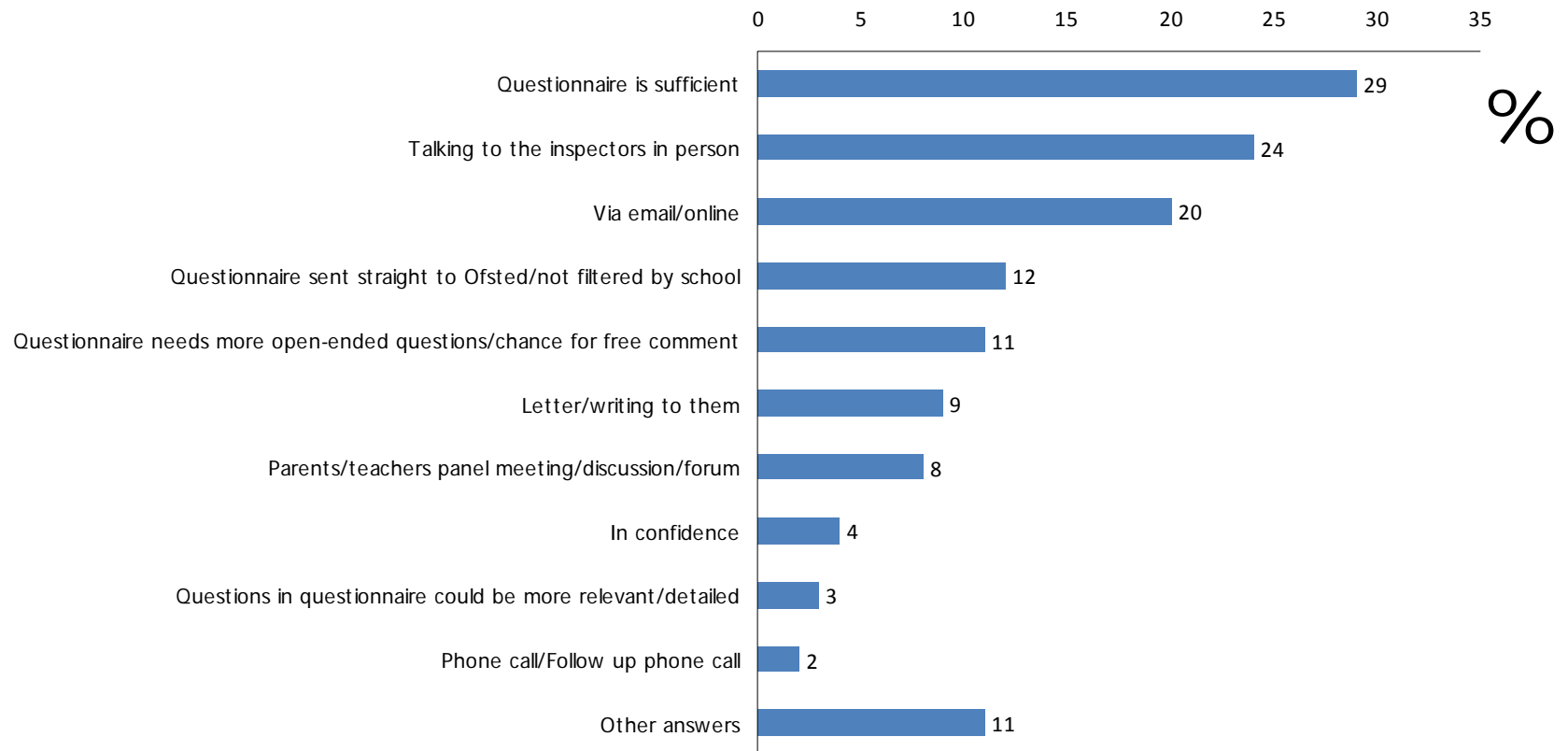
Bases: Q14 All parents aware of an inspection taking place at their child's school since they started (294), Q15 : All parents who recall being sent a questionnaire to complete at the time of the inspection (210)

How suitable did you think the questionnaire was as a means of putting your views forward for the inspection?



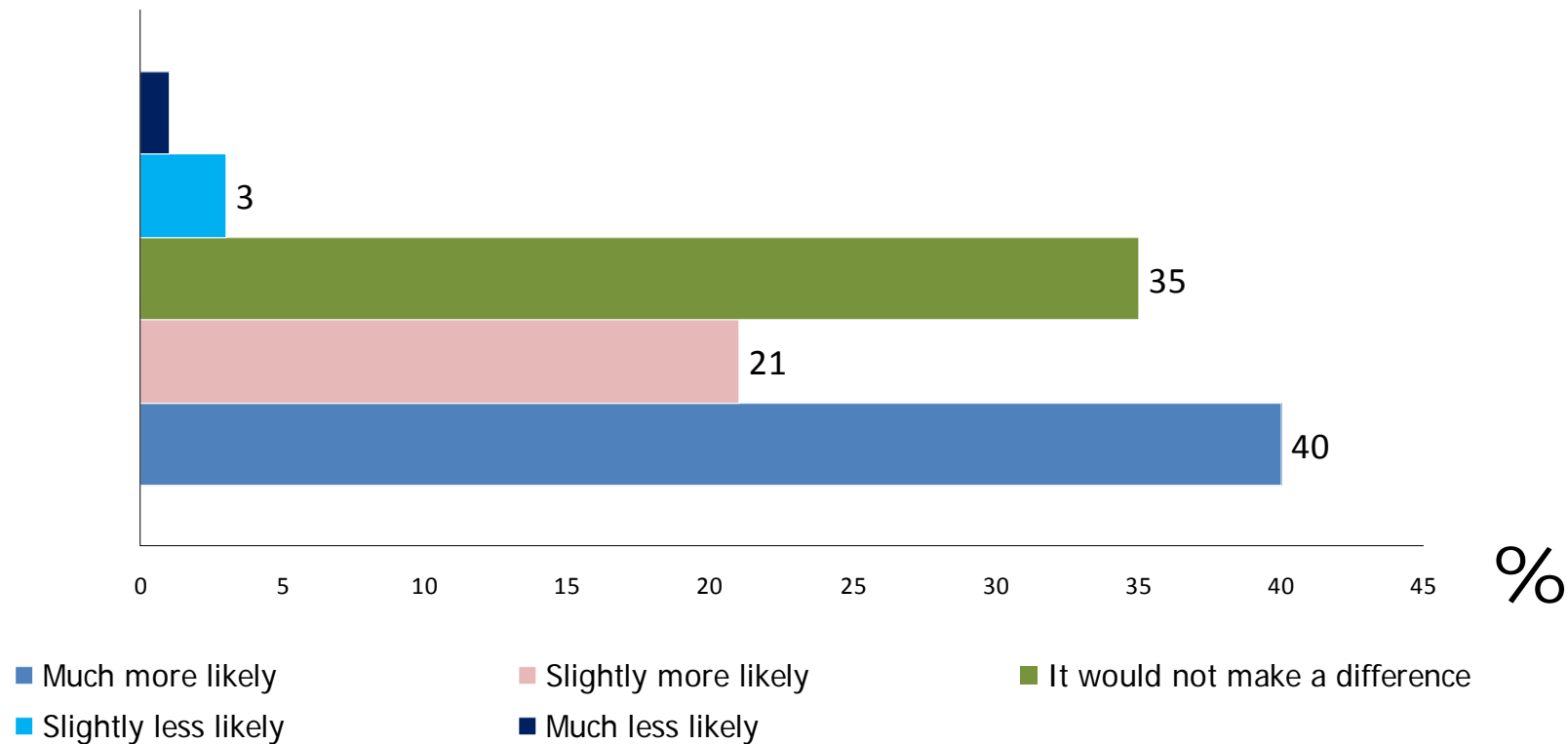
Base: All parents who recall being sent a questionnaire to complete at the time of the inspection (210)

How would you prefer to give your views?

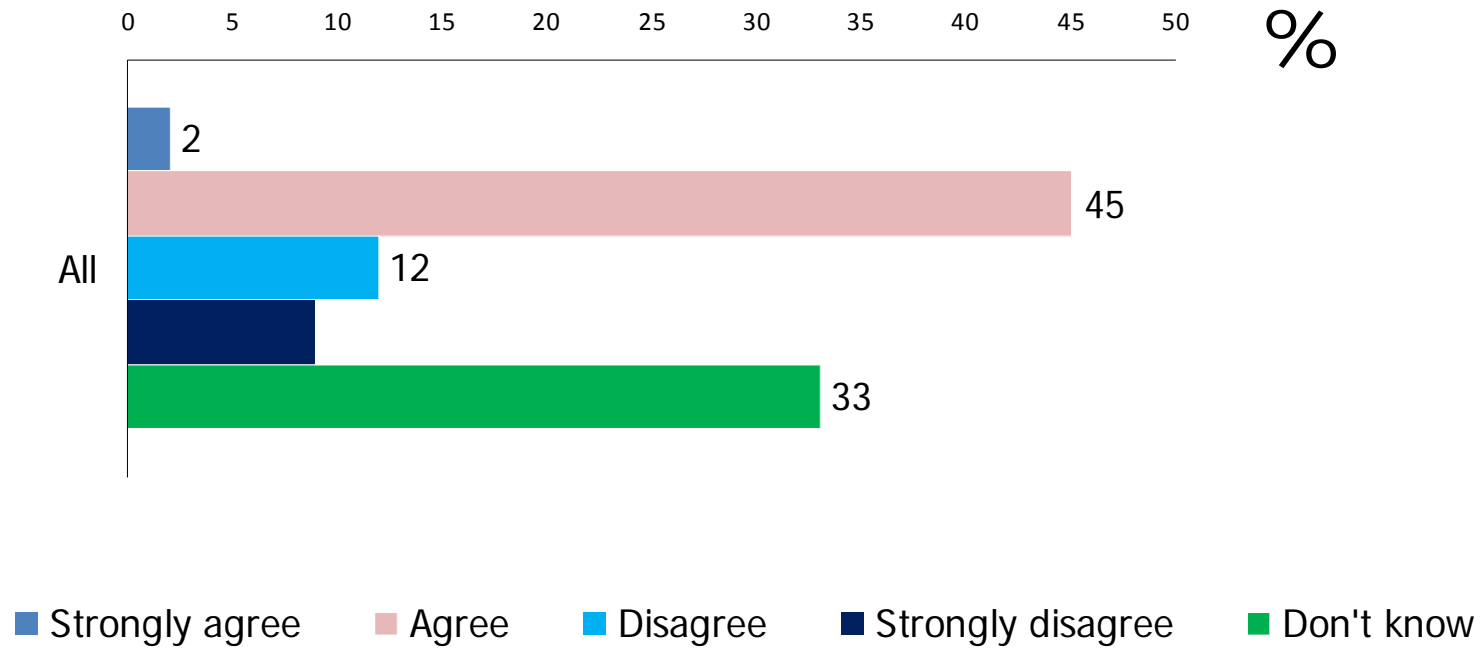


Base: All respondents who thought the questionnaire was fairly suitable, not very suitable or not at all suitable (163)

Would receiving an email version of the questionnaire instead of a paper copy make you more or less likely to give your views during an inspection?

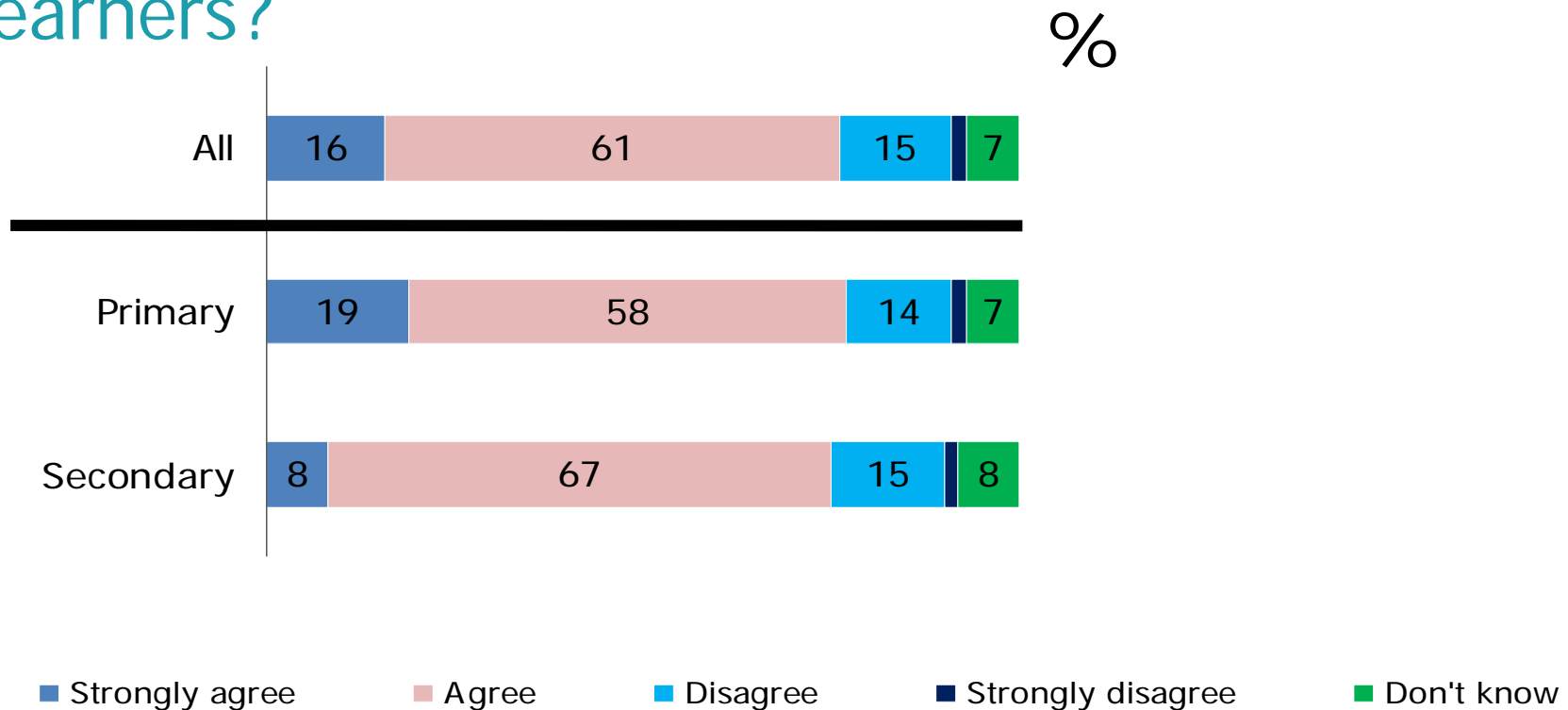


To what extent do you agree or disagree that your views were listened to during the inspection process?



Bases: All parents aware of an inspection taking place at their child's school since they started (294), Post September 2009 (56) , Pre September 09 (172), Post April 2009 (104), Pre April 2009 (124)

To what extent do you agree or disagree that Ofsted inspections have a positive impact for children and learners?



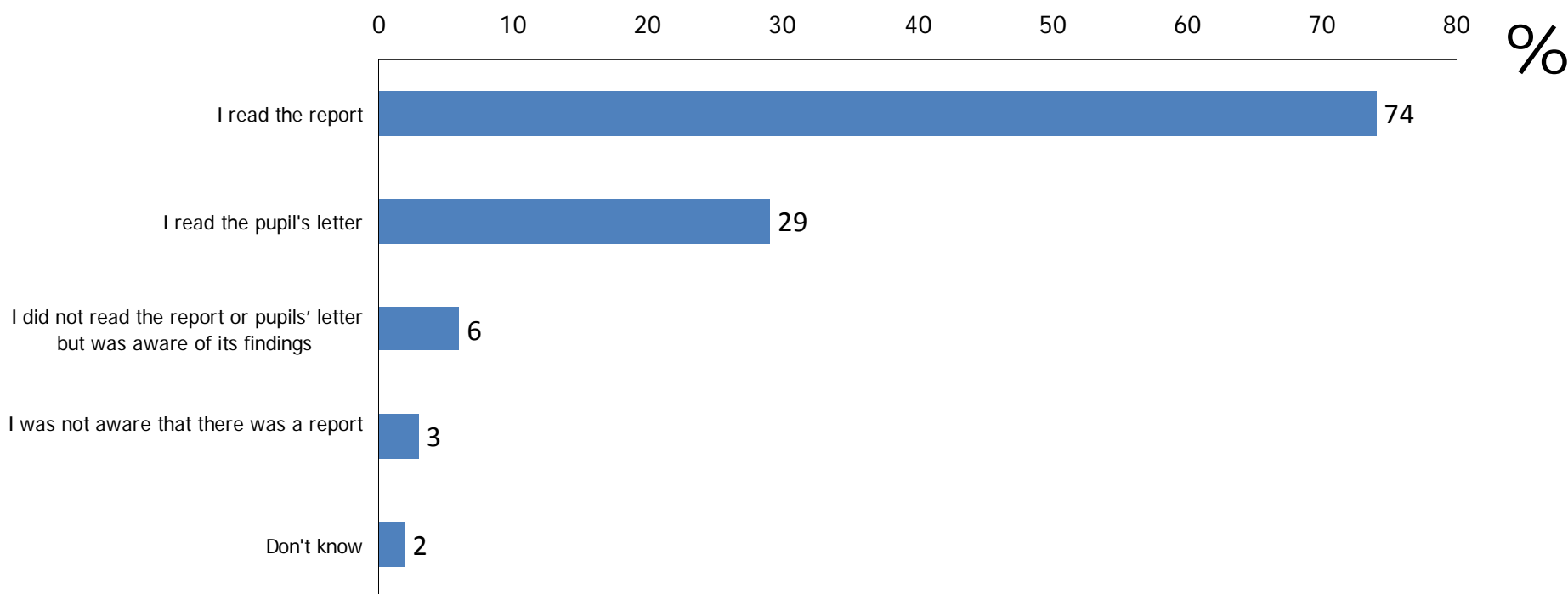
Bases: All parents aware of an inspection taking place at their child's school since they started (294), Primary (124), Secondary (115)

The report

Engagement with the inspection
process

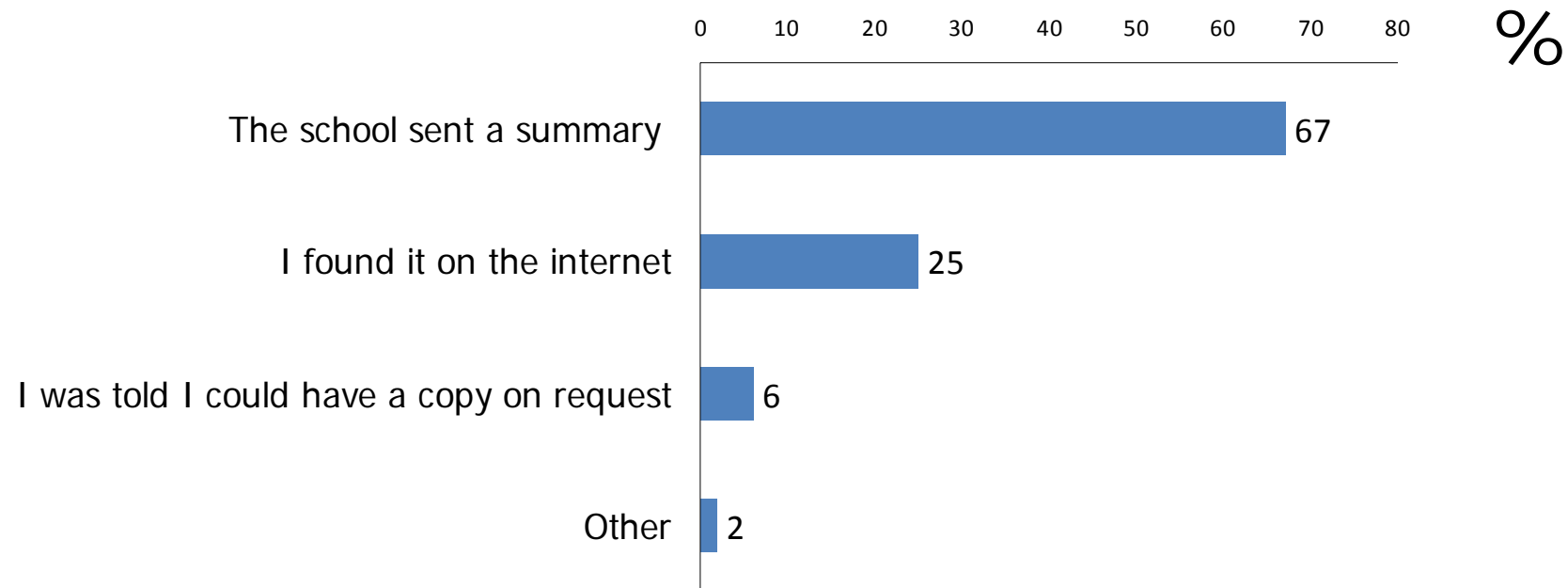
April 2010

To what extent were you aware of the findings from Ofsted's report on the school after the inspection had taken place?



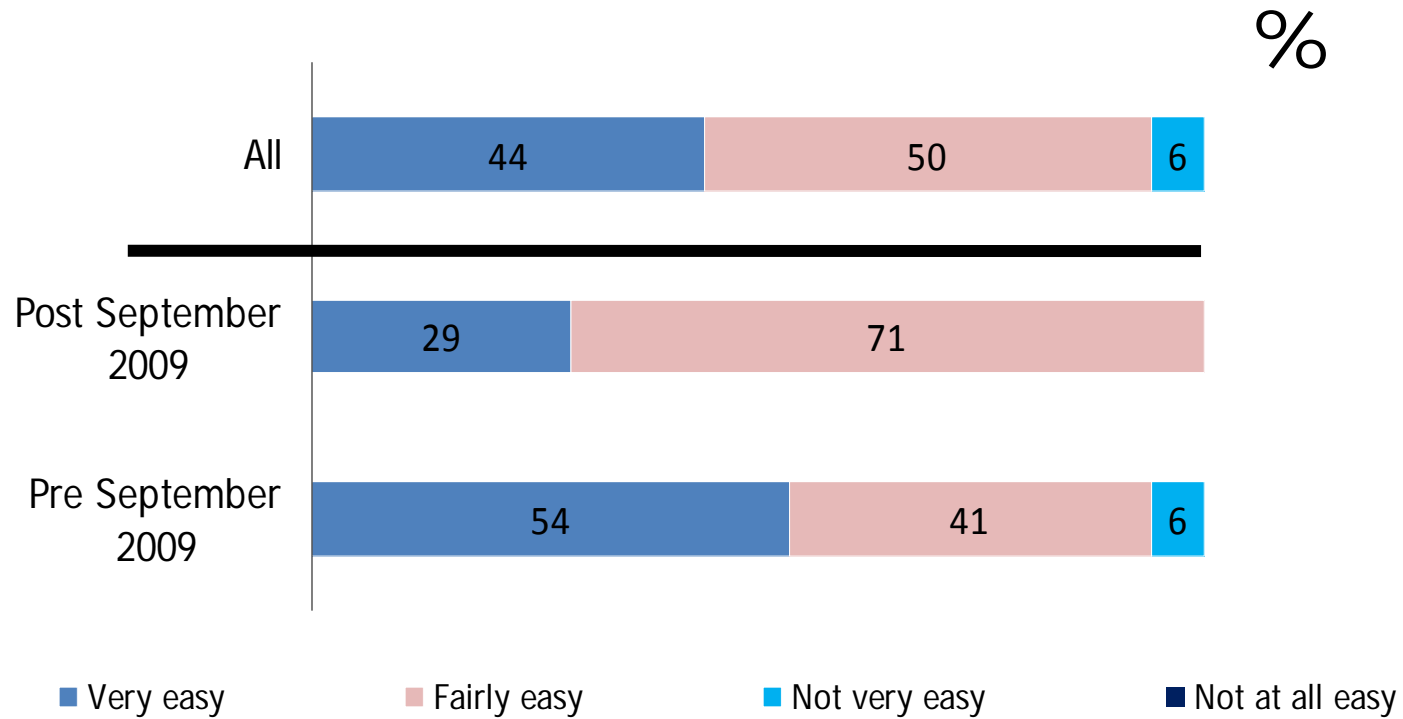
Base: All parents aware of an inspection taking place at their child's school since they started (294)

How did you receive a copy of the report?



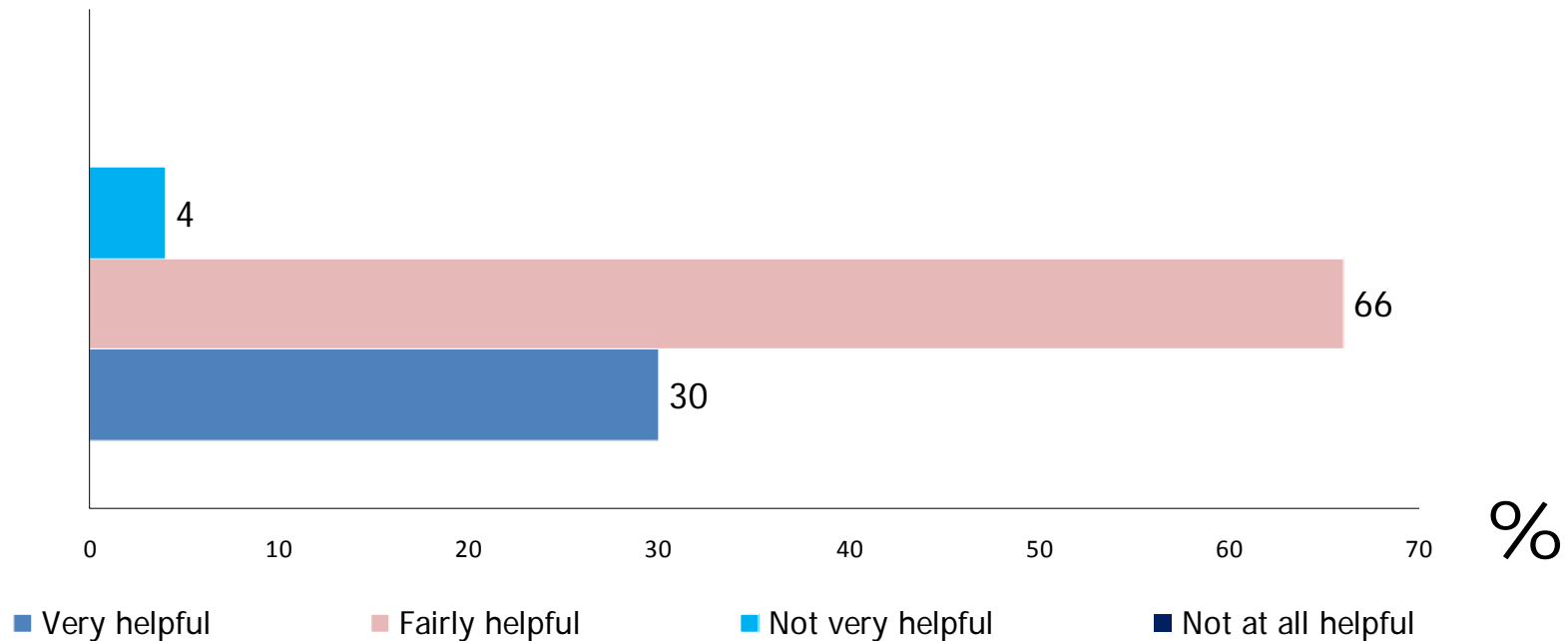
Base: All parents who read the report (212)

How easy was it to understand the report?



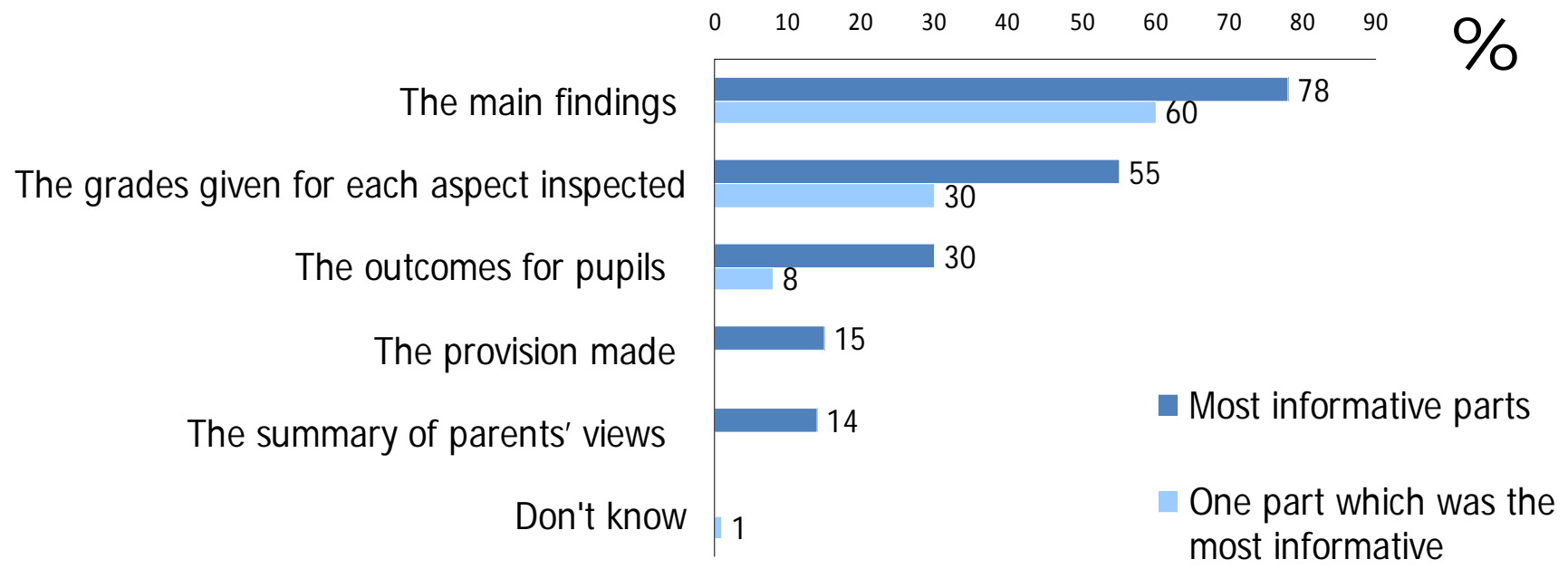
Bases: All parents who read the report (212), Post September 09 (40), Pre September 09 (131)

Was the overall layout of the report helpful?



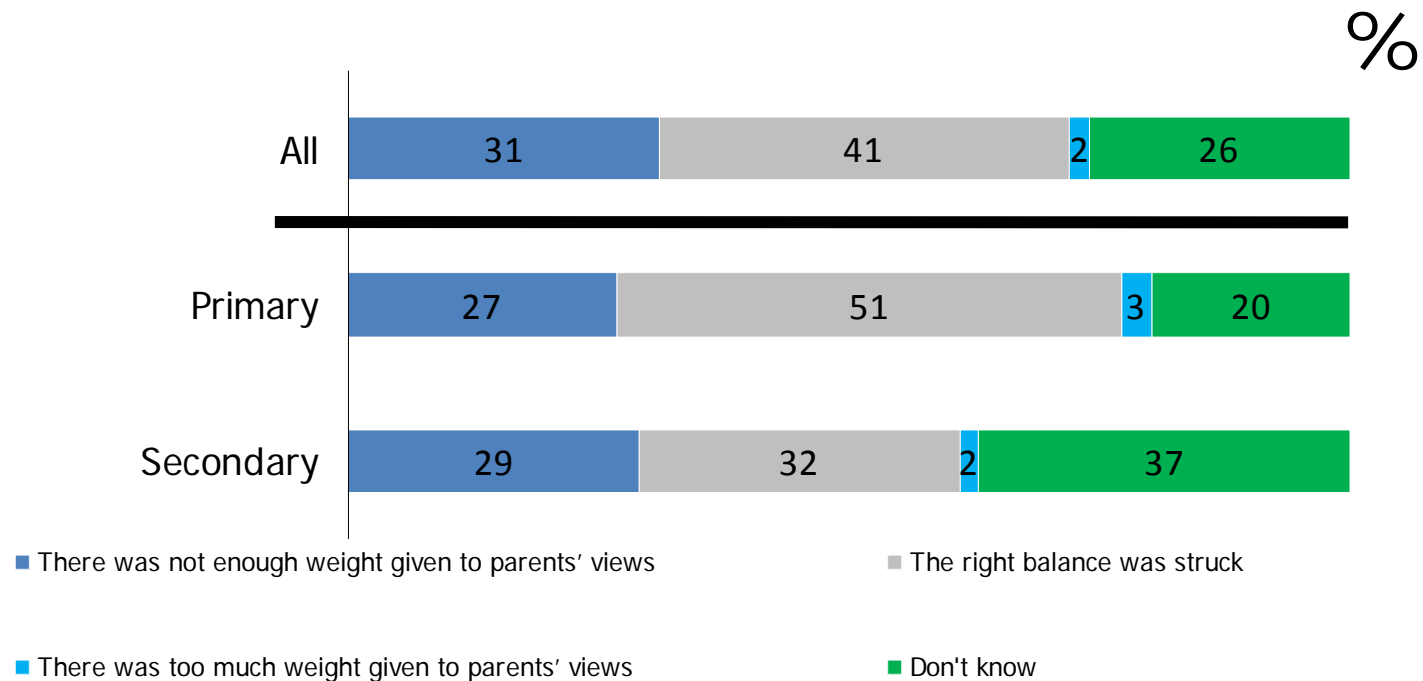
Base: All parents who read the report (212)

Which parts of the report were most informative for you and which of these was the most informative?



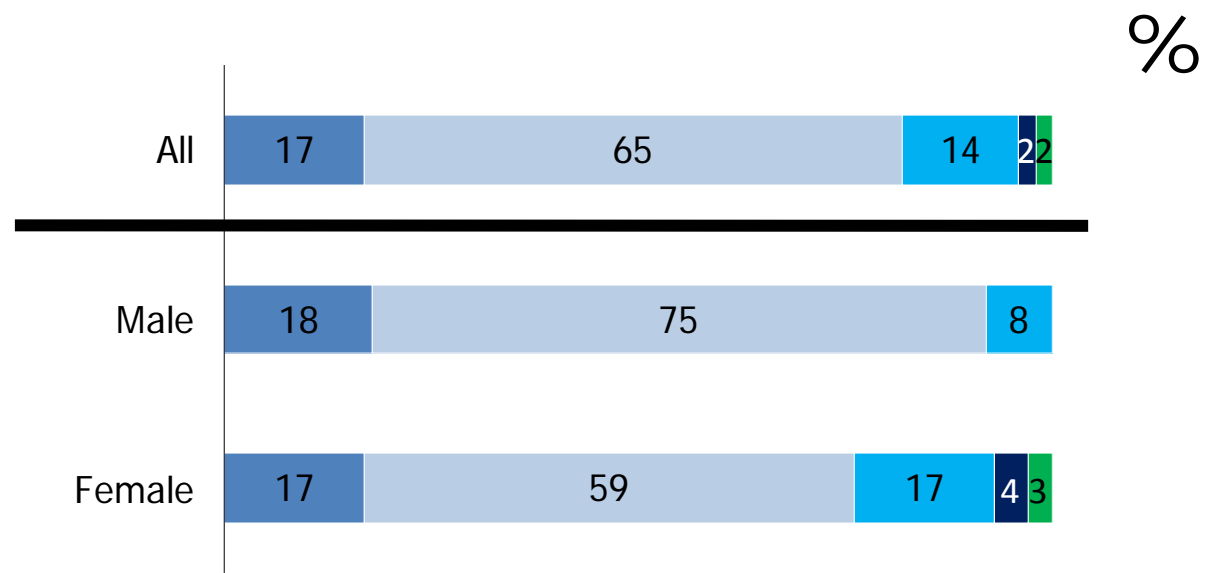
Base: Q26c: All parents who read the report (212) Q26d All parents who selected one or more parts of the report they thought were most informative (212)

Specifically, to what extent do you think parents' comments and views reported in the questionnaire summary were given enough weight in the overall report findings?



Base: All parents who read the report or were aware of its findings (283), Post September 09 (54), Pre September 09 (169), Primary (122), Secondary (110)

How well did the report findings reflect your own views about the strengths and weaknesses of the school?

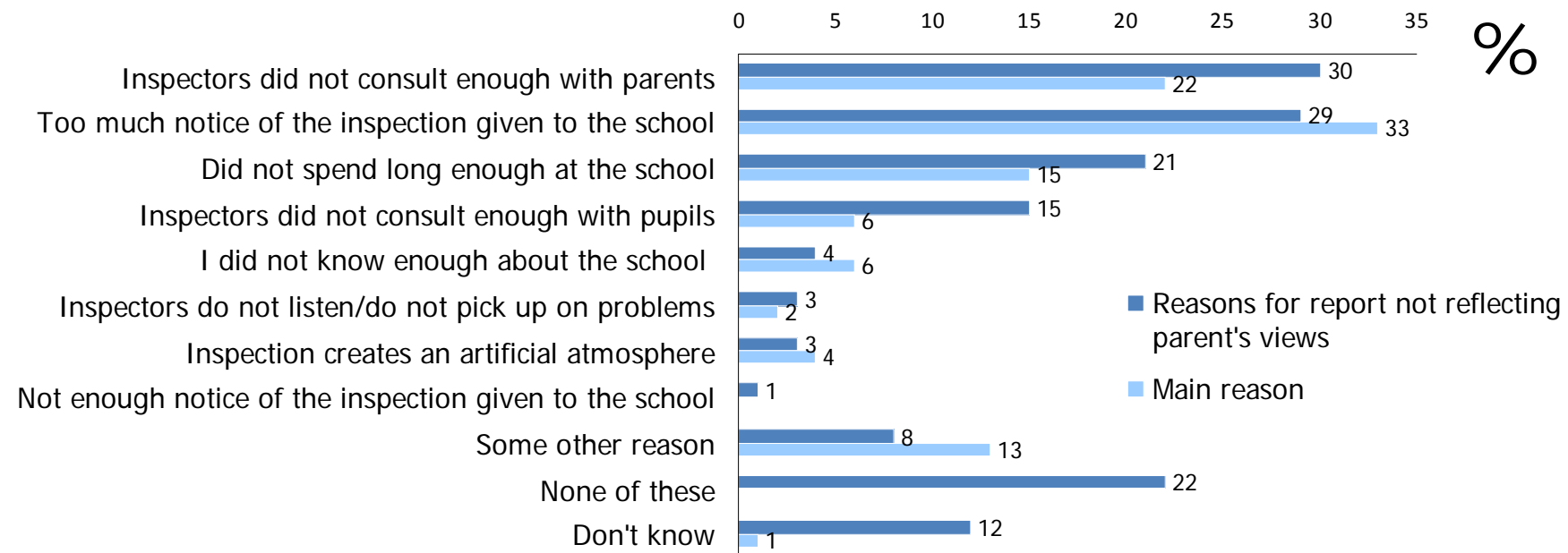


■ Very accurately ■ Fairly accurately ■ Not very accurately ■ Not at all accurately ■ Don't know



Base: All parents who read the report or were aware of its findings (283), Male (63), Female (220)

Which, if any, of the following factors do you think were reasons for the report not reflecting your views and which of these do you think is the **main** reason?

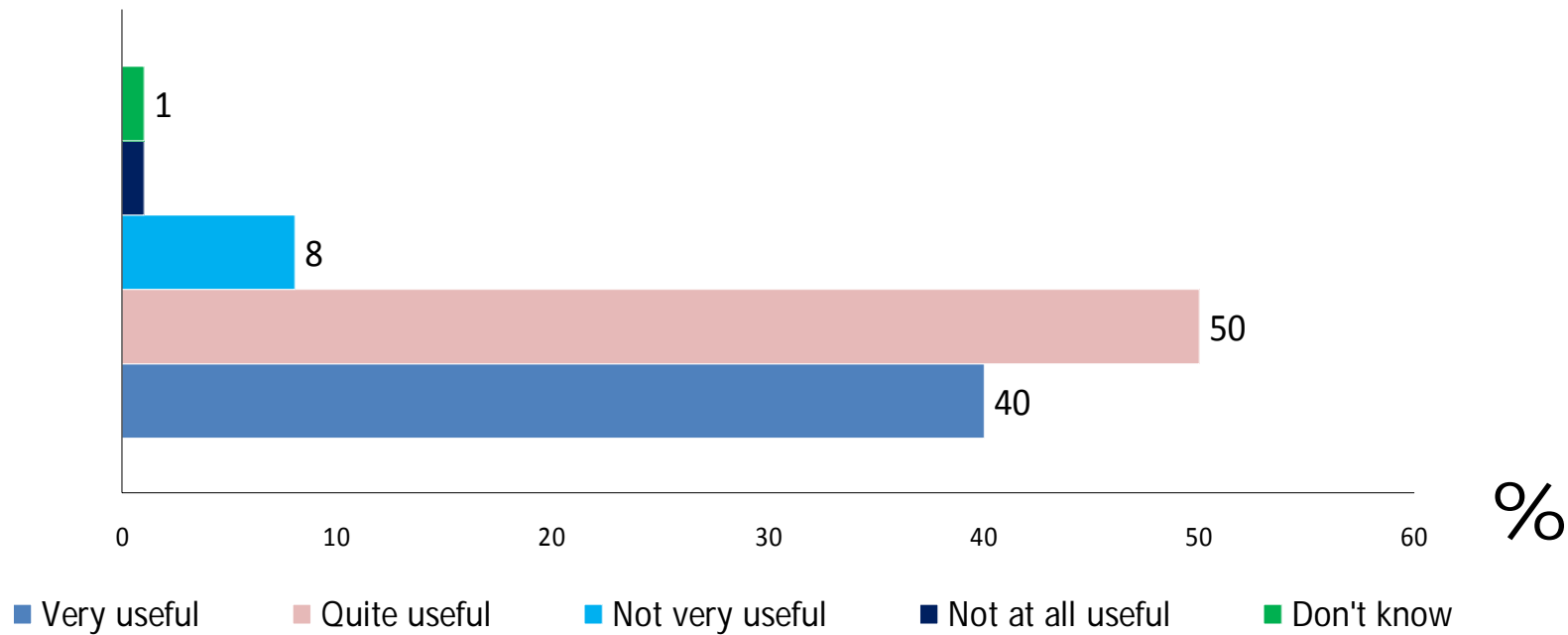


Base: Q27a All respondents who thought the report reflected their views only 'fairly accurately' or not accurately (235) Q27b All parents who selected one or more reasons for the report not reflecting their views (156)

Feedback in-between inspections

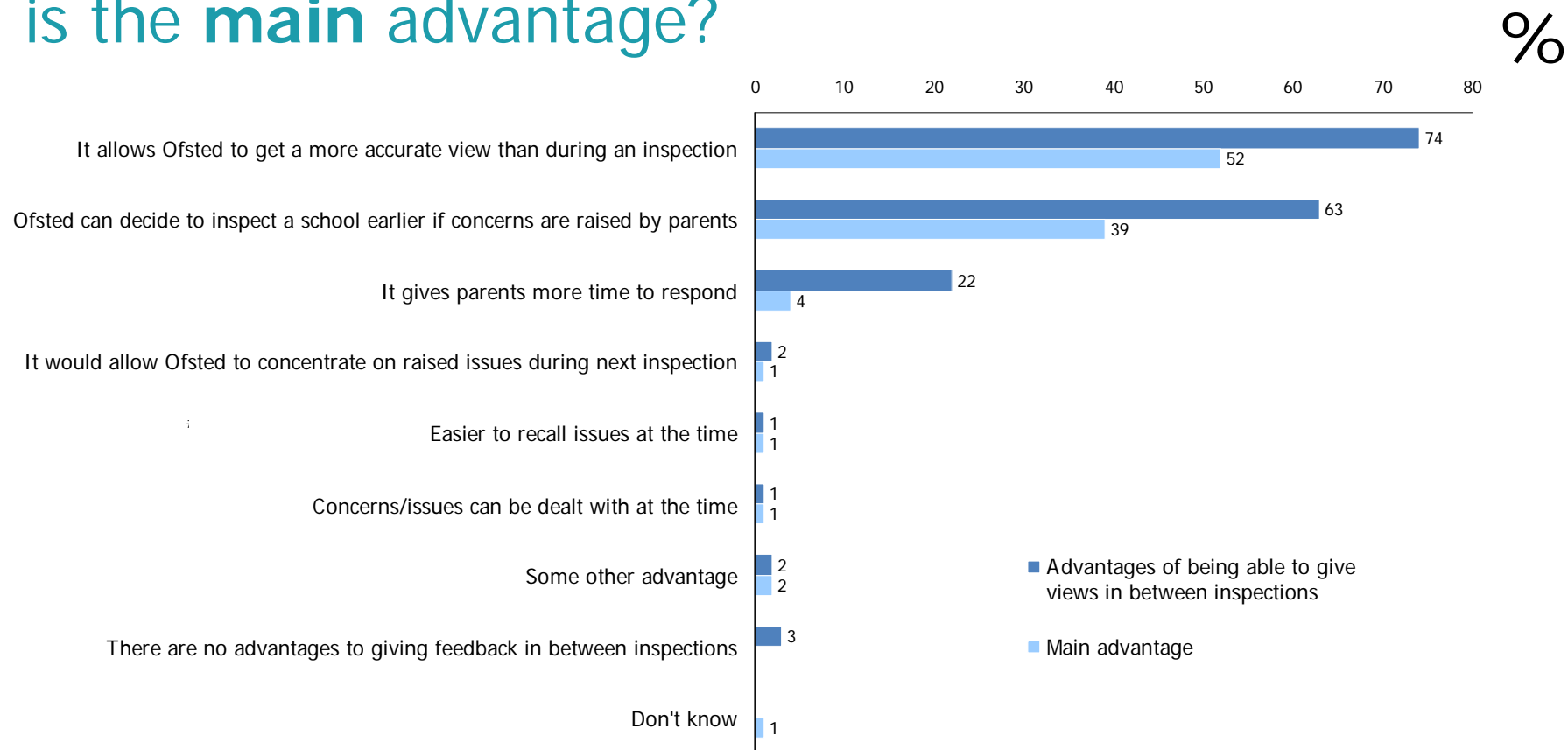
April 2010

How useful do you think it would be to be able to give your views about a school to Ofsted in between inspections?



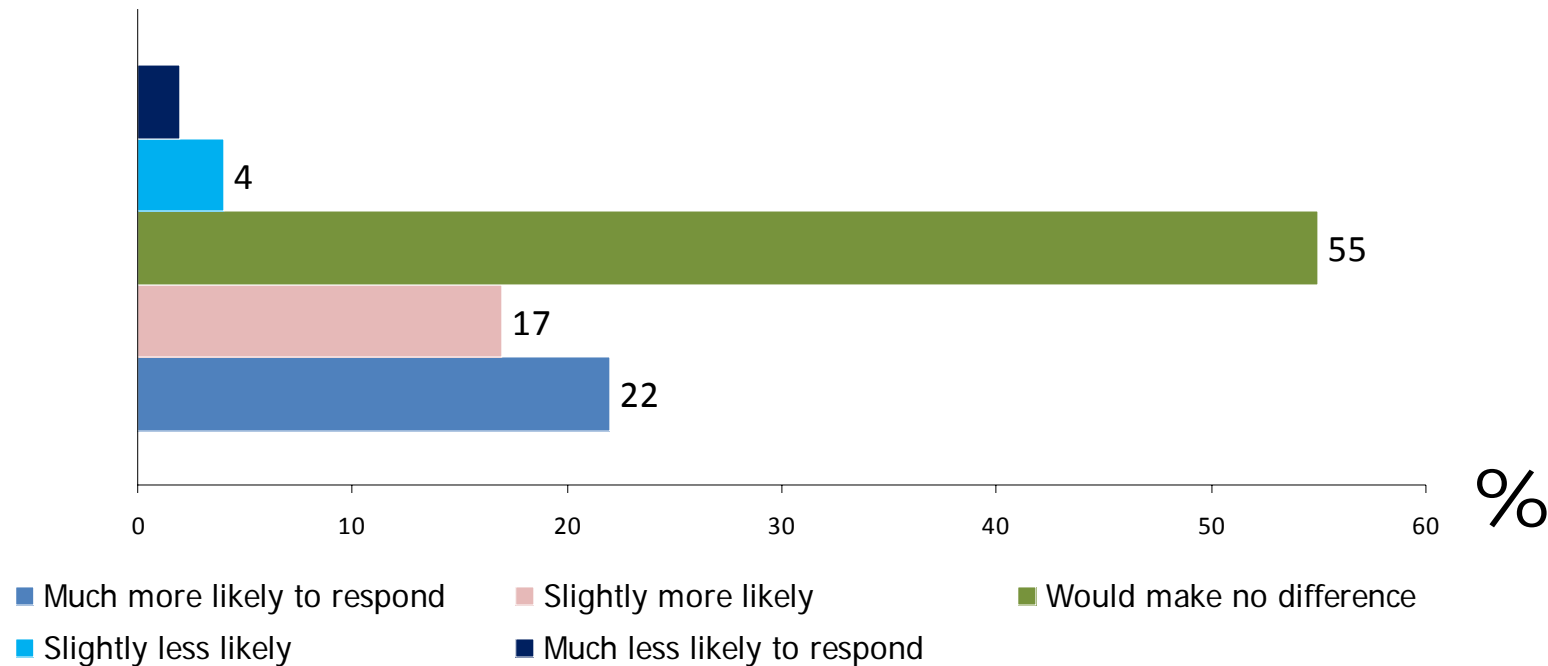
Base: All parents with a child in maintained school (381)

What do you think are the advantages of being able to give your views in between inspections and which of these is the **main** advantage?



Base: Q24 All parents with a child in maintained school (381), Q24a All parents who selected one or more advantages of being able to give views in between inspections (367)

Compared with during inspections, do you think you would be more likely to respond to a questionnaire in between inspections, less likely or would it make no difference?



Base: All parents with a child in maintained school (381)

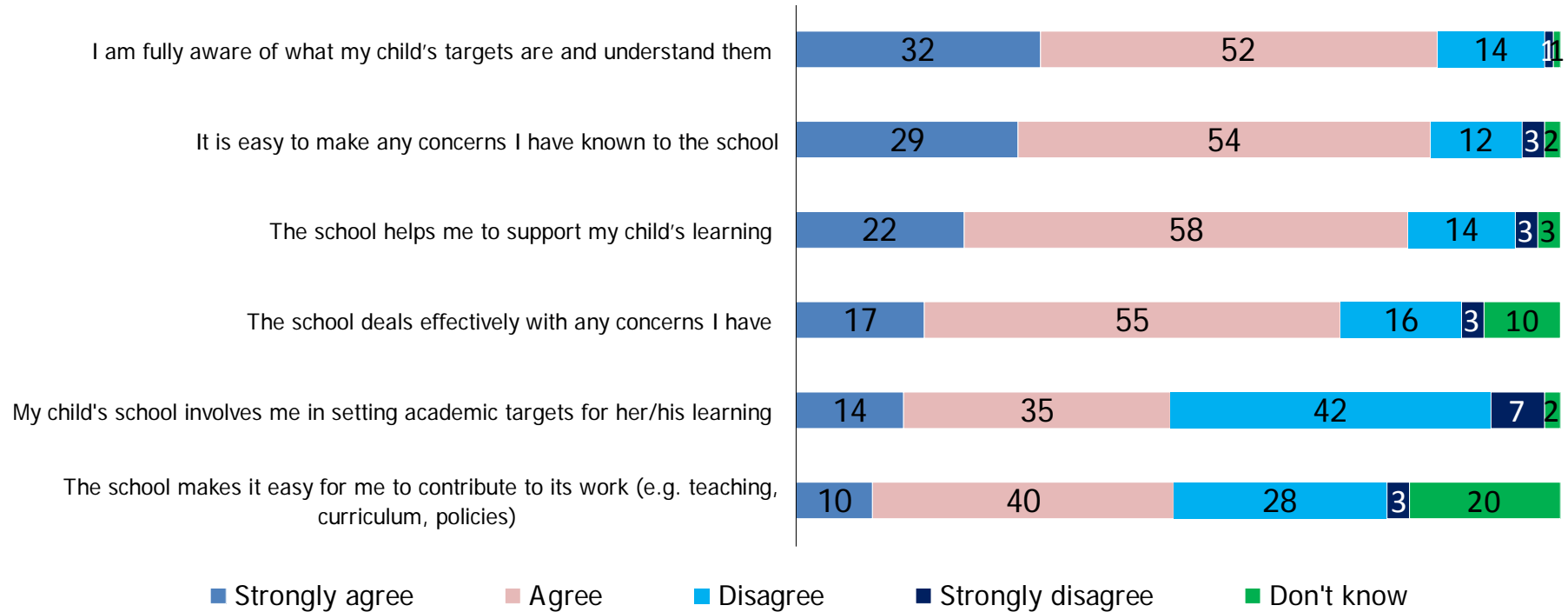
Involvement in child's education

April 2010

How well school involves parents in their child's education:

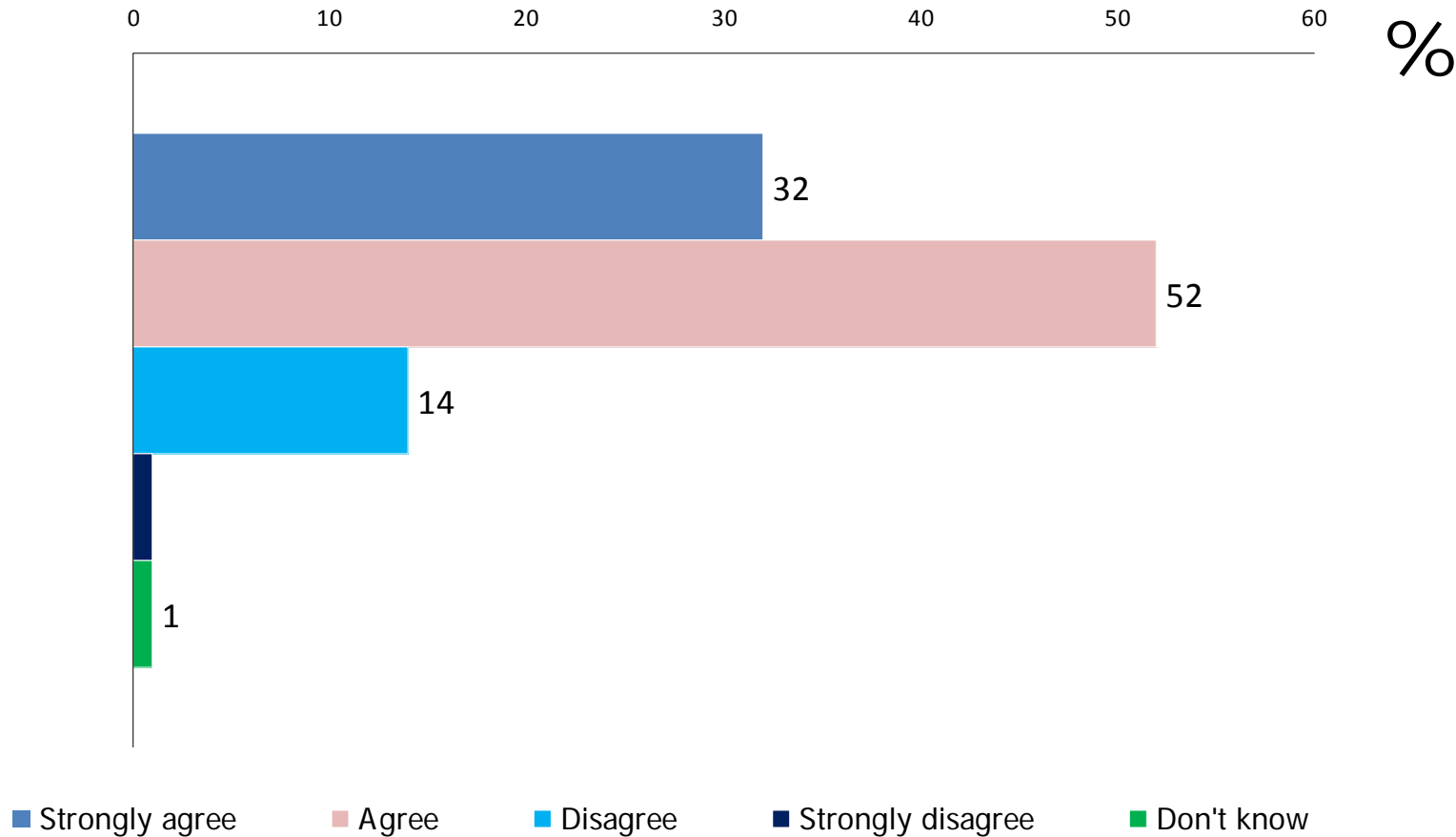


%



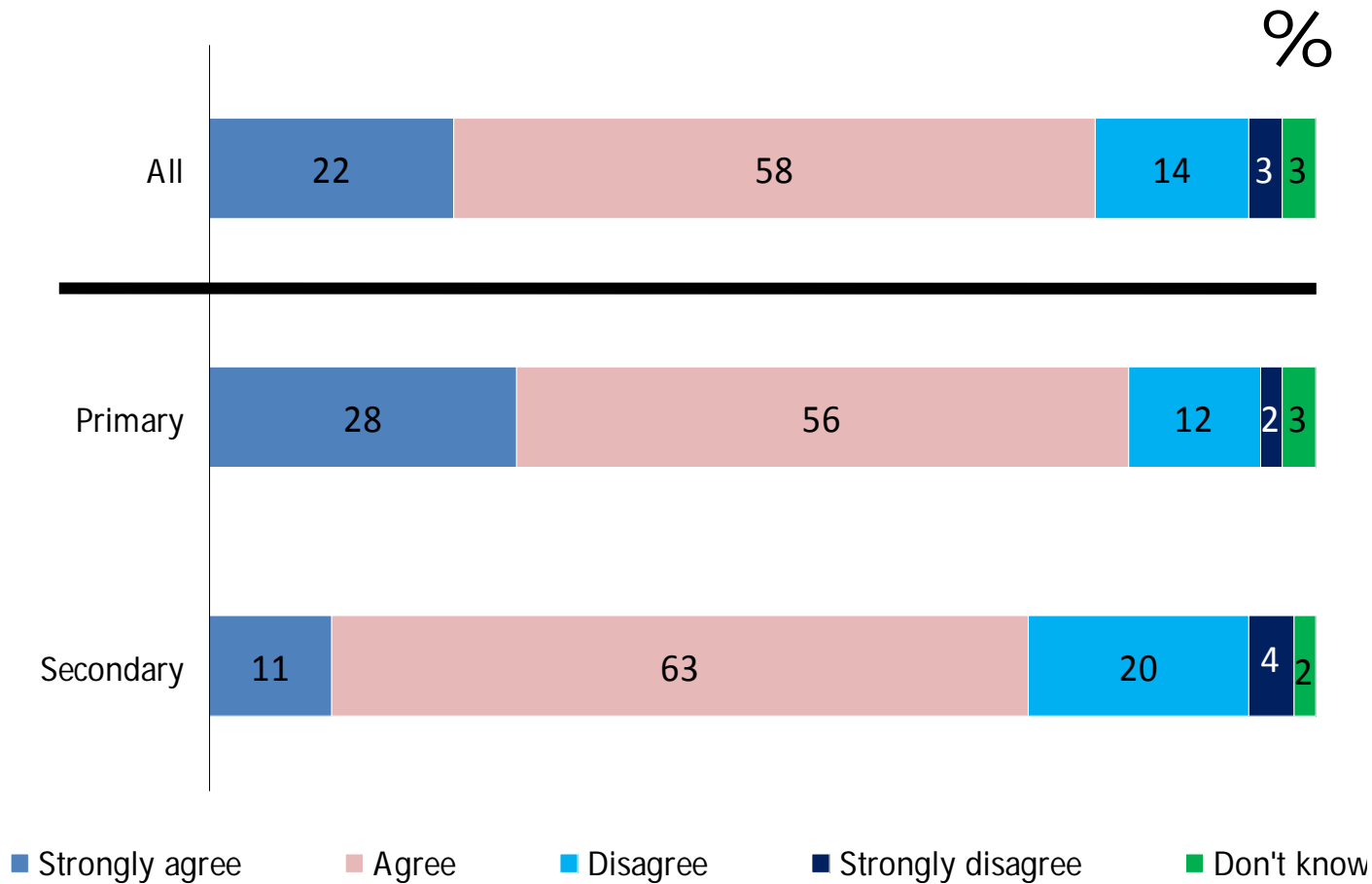
Base: All parents with a child in maintained school (381)

I am fully aware of what my child's targets are and understand them:



Base: All (381), ABC1 (296), C2DE (85)

The school helps me to support my child's learning:

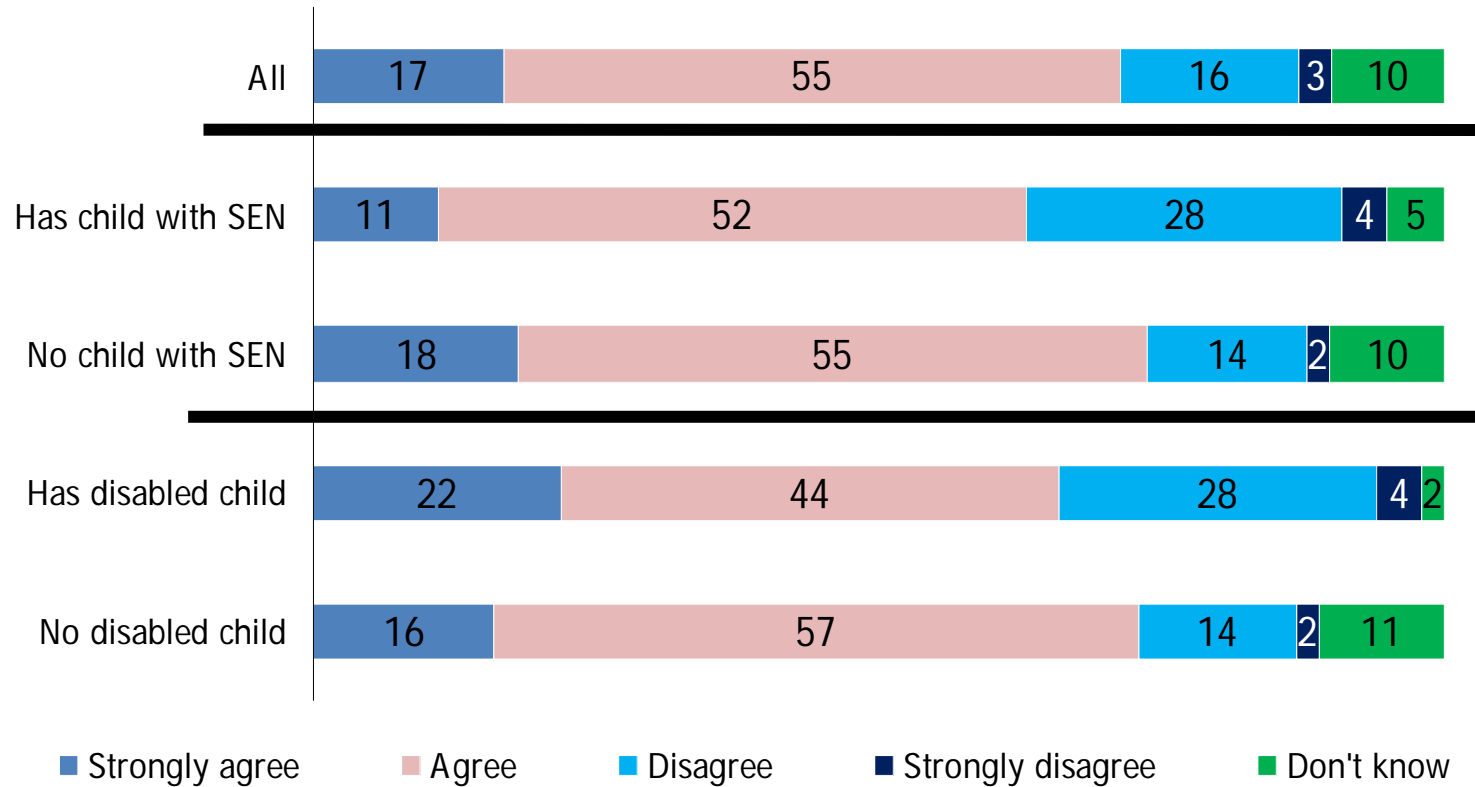


Base: All (381), Primary (183), Secondary (137)

The school deals effectively with any concerns I have about my child's education:

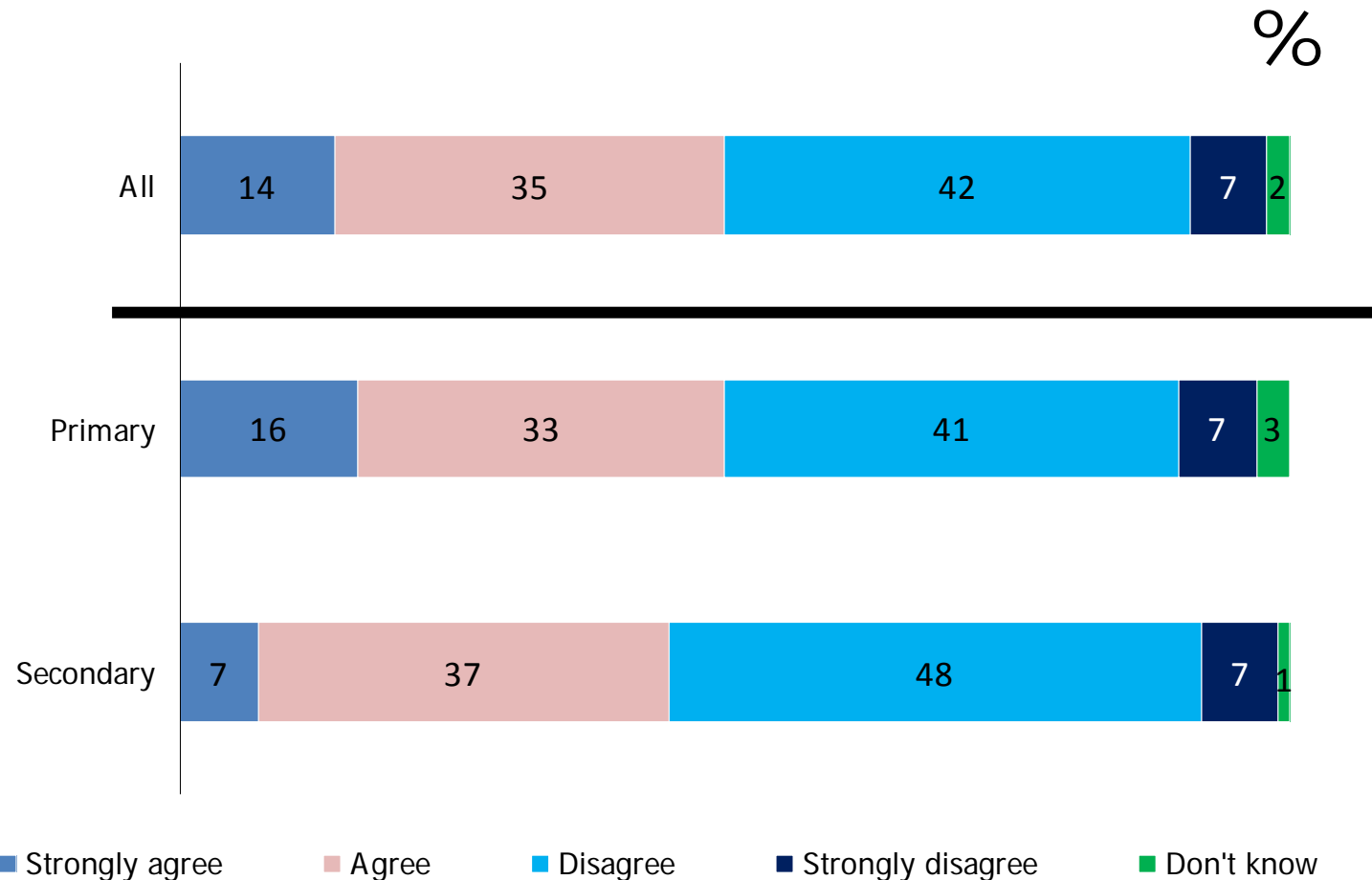


%



Base: All (381), Has child with SEN (50), No child with SEN (317), Has disabled child (66) No disabled child (309)

My child's school involves me in setting academic targets for her/his learning:

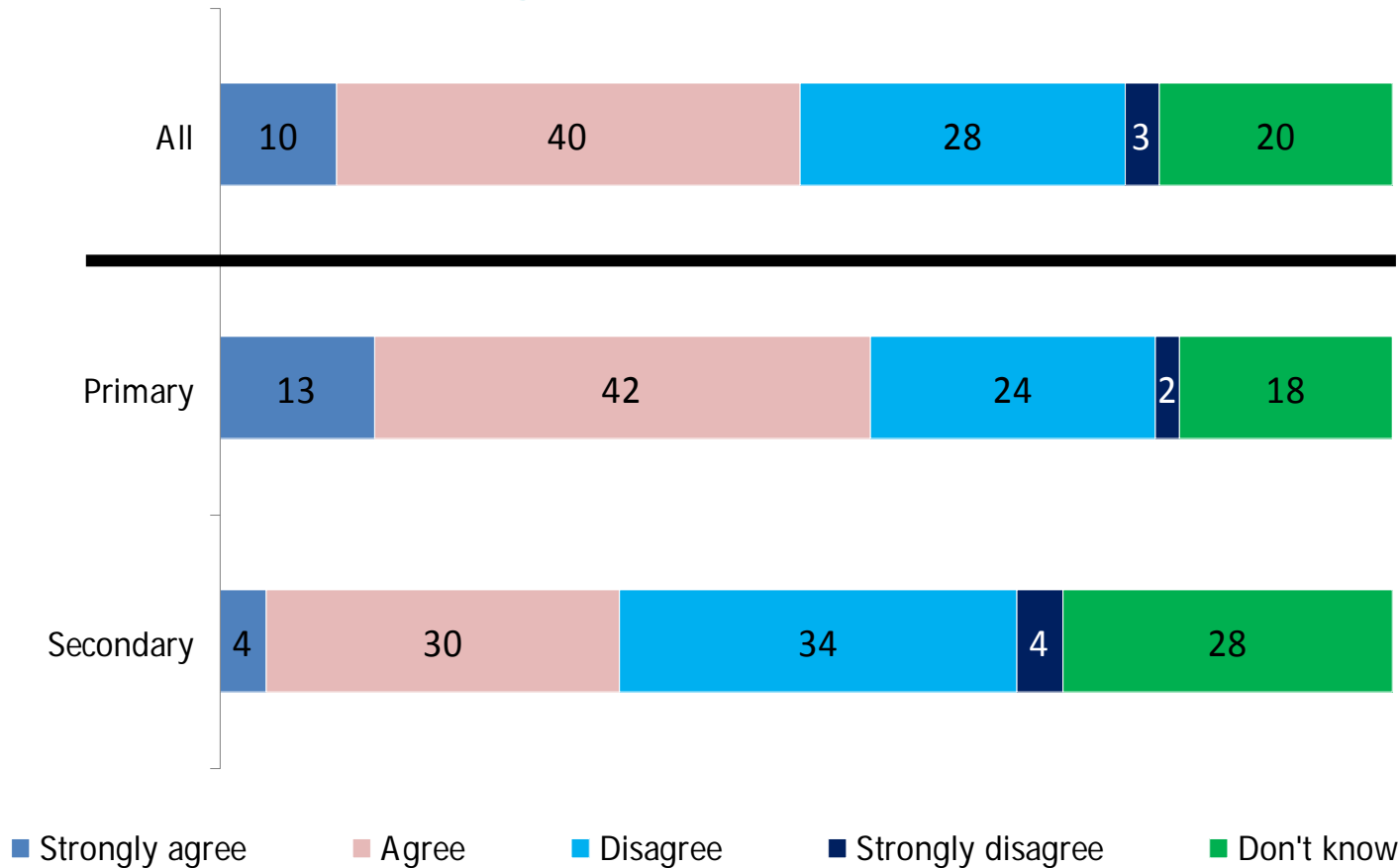


Base: All (381), Post Sept 09 (56), Pre Sept 09 (172), Post April 09 (104), Pre April (124), Primary (183), Secondary (137)

Do you agree: 'the school makes it easy for me to contribute to its work (for example teaching, curriculum, policies)'?



%

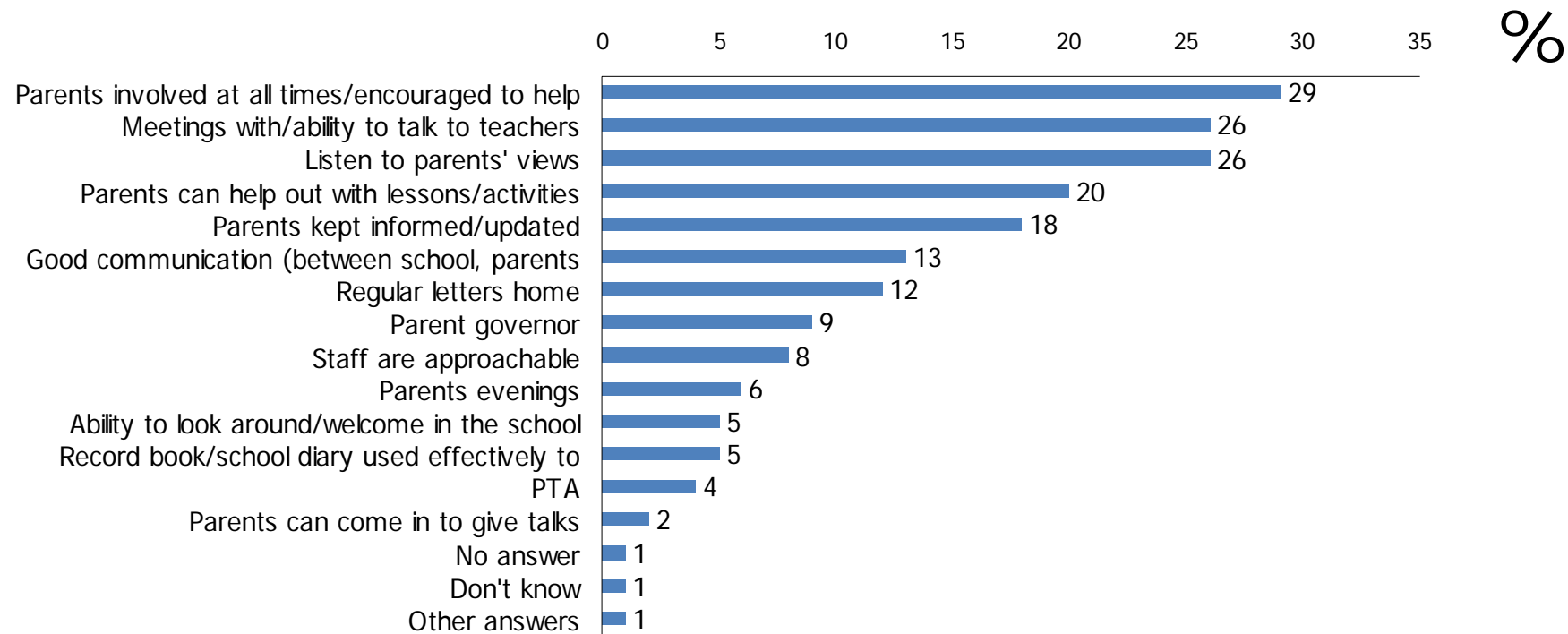


Base: All (381), Primary (183), Secondary (137)

Five most popular responses: why do you agree that the school makes it easy for you to contribute to its work?

- Parents are involved at all times and encouraged to help
- Plenty of opportunities to talk to teachers and have meetings with them
- Parents can help out with lessons and activities
- Good communication between school, parents and pupils
- Regular letters home
- Staff are approachable

Why do you agree that the school makes it easy for you to contribute to its work?

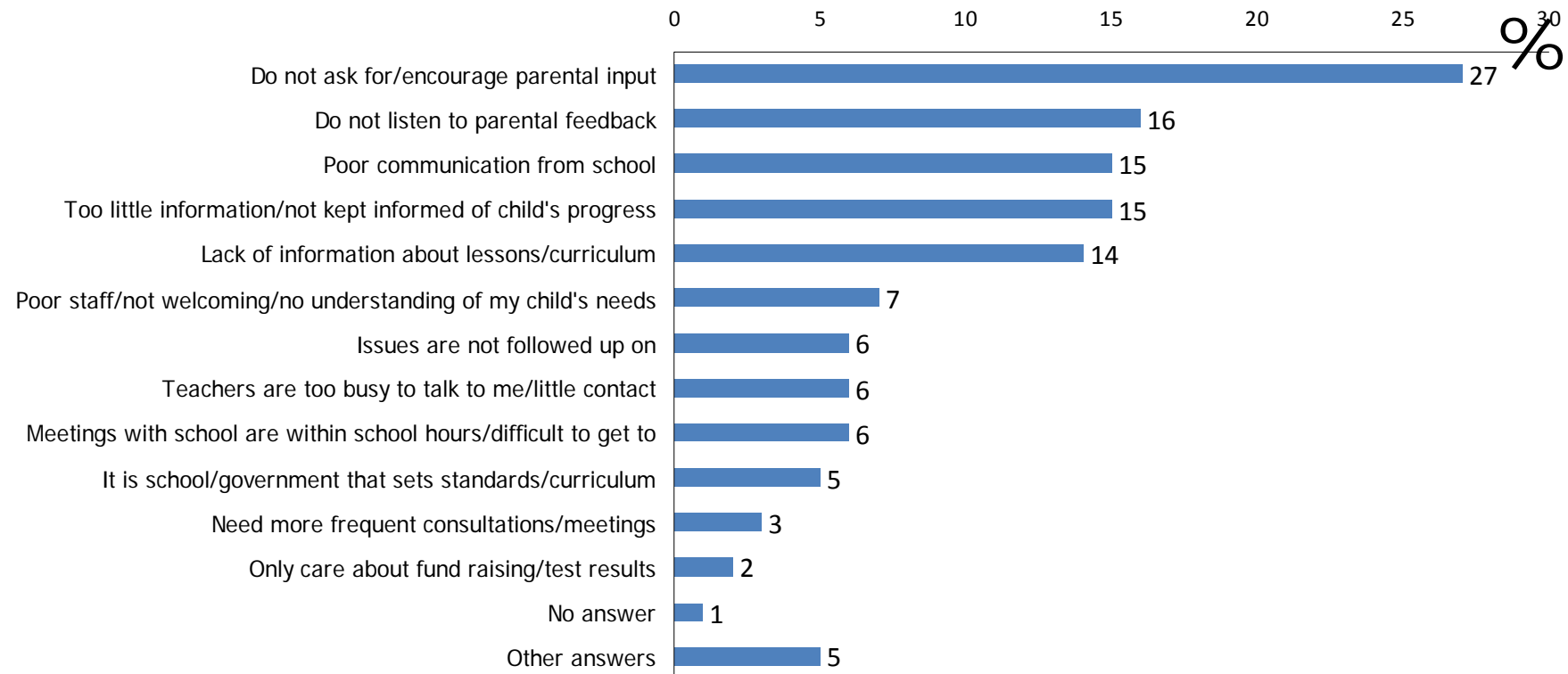


Base: All parents who agreed that the school makes it easy for them to contribute to its work (181)

Five most popular responses: Why do you disagree that the school makes it easy for you to contribute to its work?

- Parental input is not asked for or encouraged
- Poor communication from the school
- Not updated on child's progress
- Lack of information about lessons/curriculum
- Staff are not approachable
- Issues are not followed up on

Why do you disagree that the school makes it easy for you to contribute to its work?



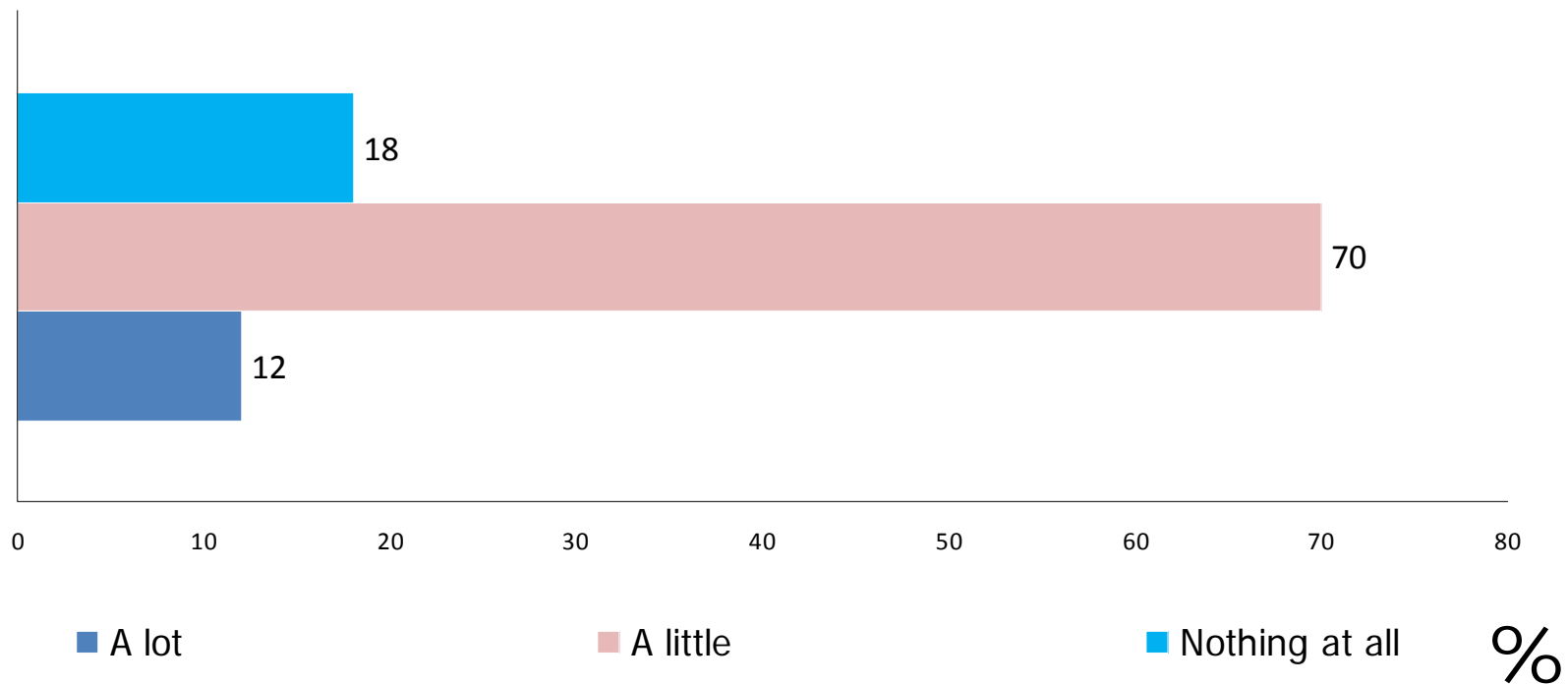
Inspection of Early Years Provision

Attitudes to inspections

April 2010

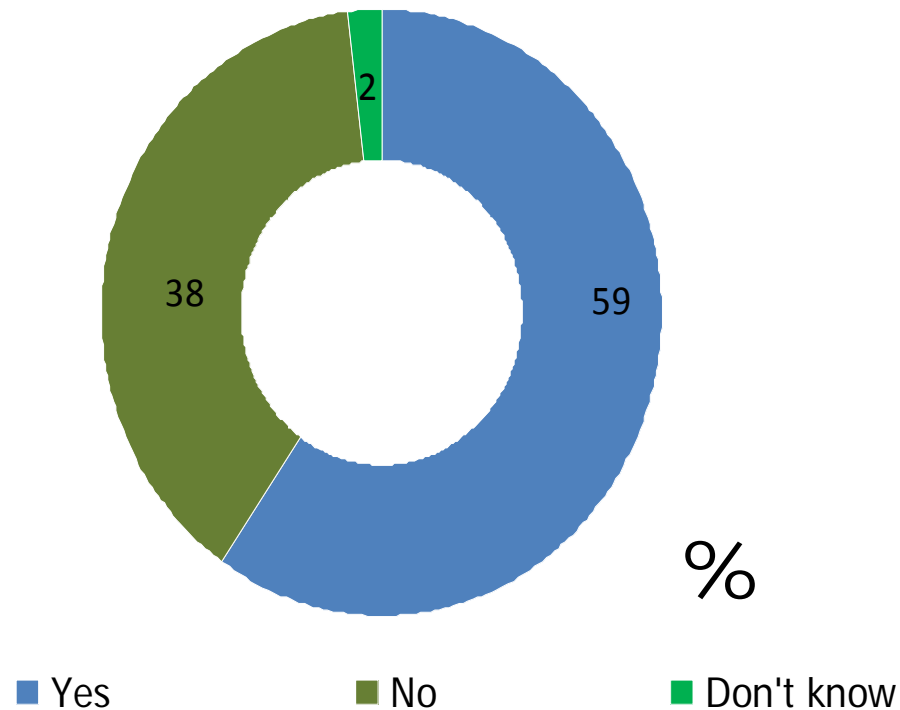


How much do you know about Ofsted's role in inspecting childminders and childcare providers?

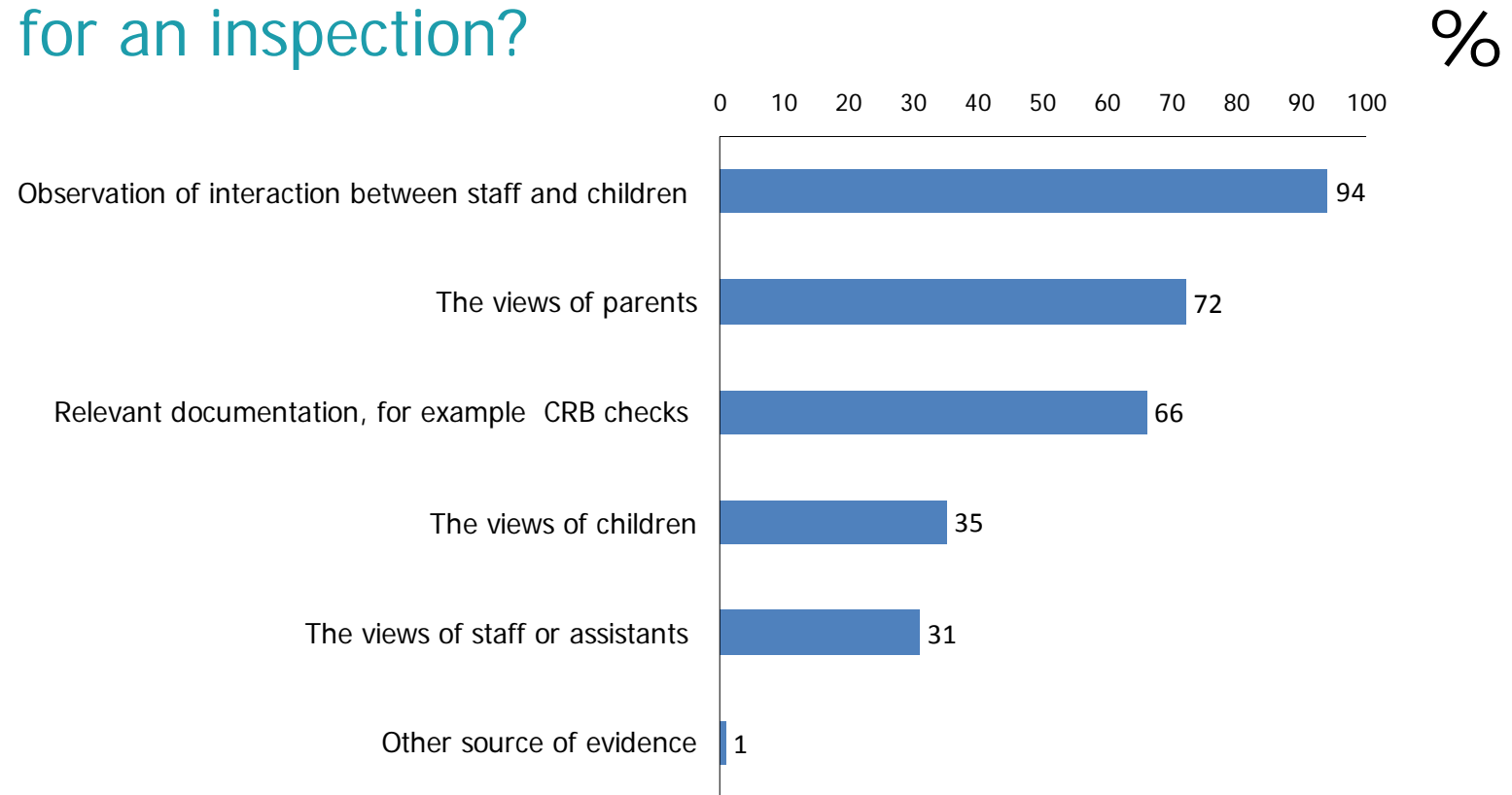


Base: All parents with a child in registered early years provision (97)

Did you look at Ofsted inspection reports when choosing your child/children childminder or childcare provider?

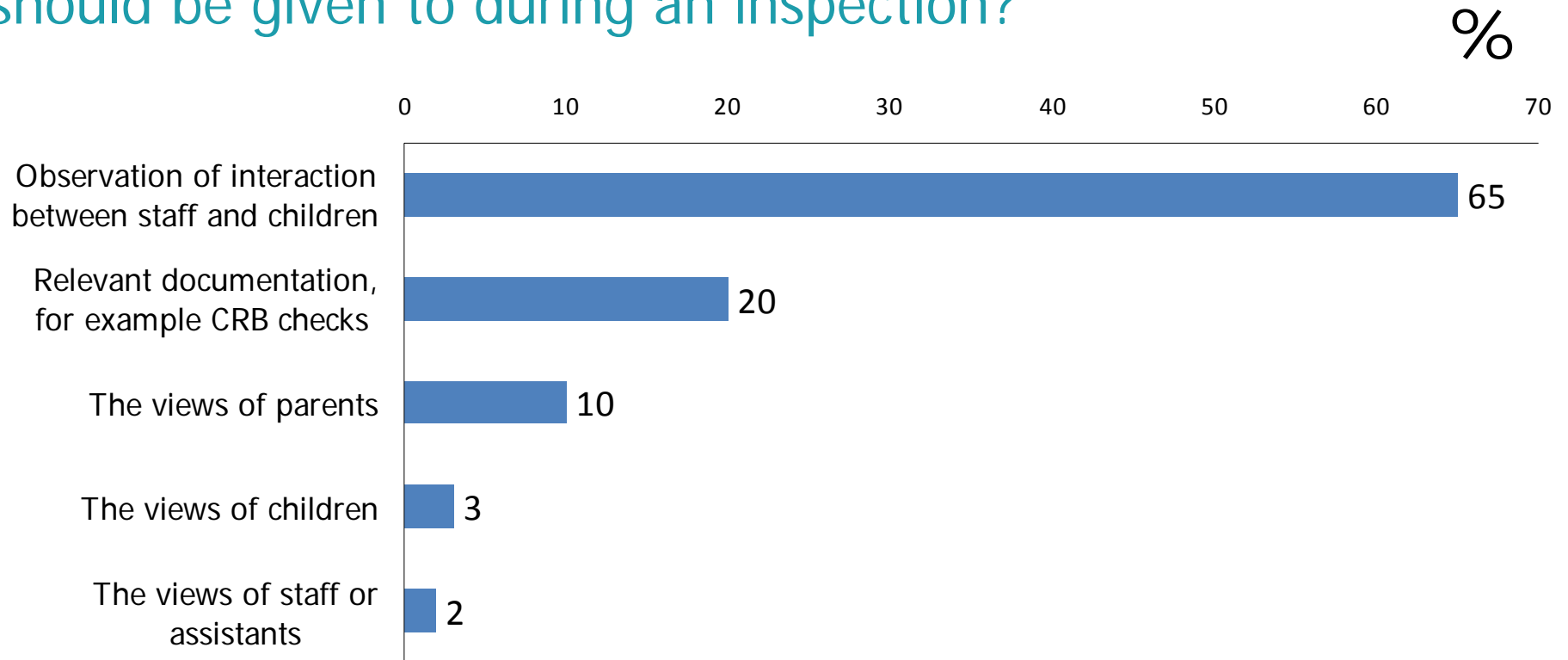


Ofsted uses evidence from a variety of sources when carrying out inspections of childcare providers and childminders. In your view, what are the **three** most important sources as evidence for an inspection?



Base: All parents who selected a most important source of evidence for an inspection (97)

Ofsted uses evidence from a variety of sources when carrying out inspections of childcare providers and childminders. In your view, which of these do you think **most** attention should be given to during an inspection?

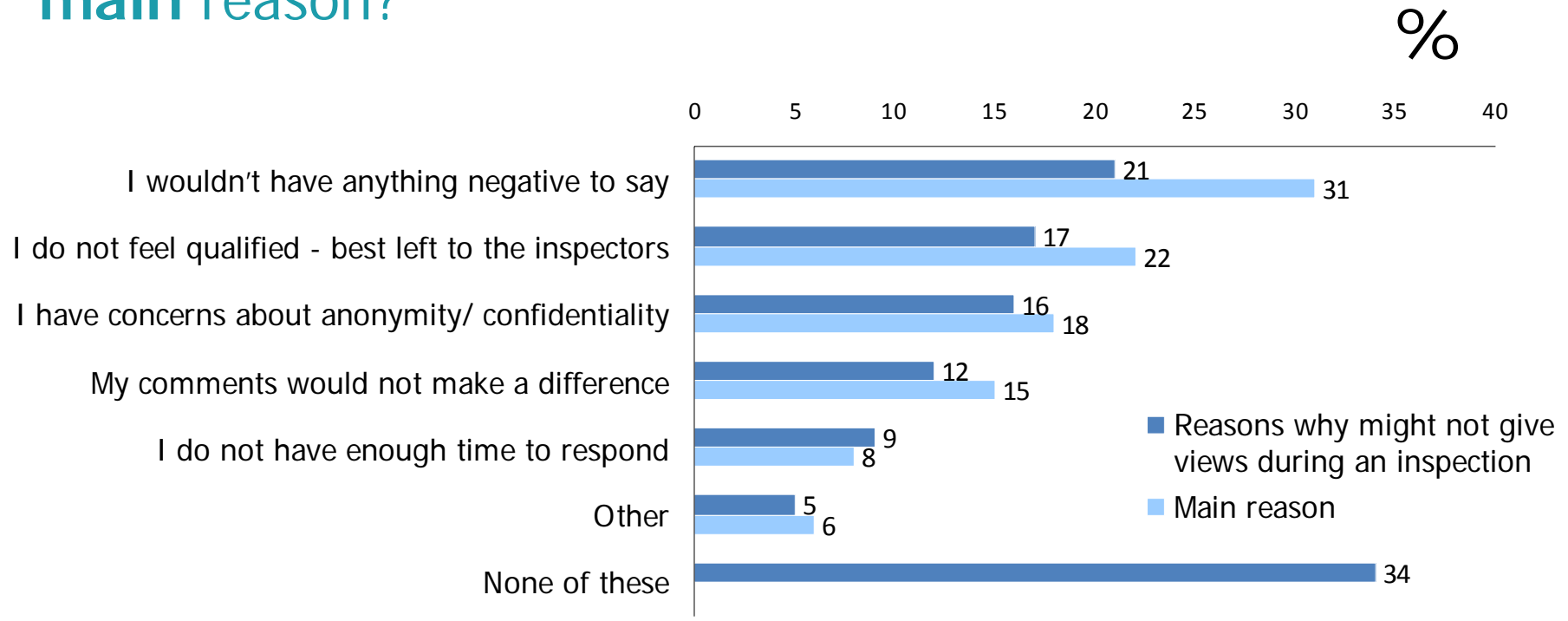


Bases: All parents with a child in registered early years provision (97)

Engaging parents with inspections

April 2010

Which of the following are reasons why you might be less likely to give your views during an Ofsted inspection and which of these is the **main** reason?



Bases: Q47 All parents with a child in registered early years provision (97), Q48 All parents who selected one or more reasons why they might not give their views during an inspection (63)

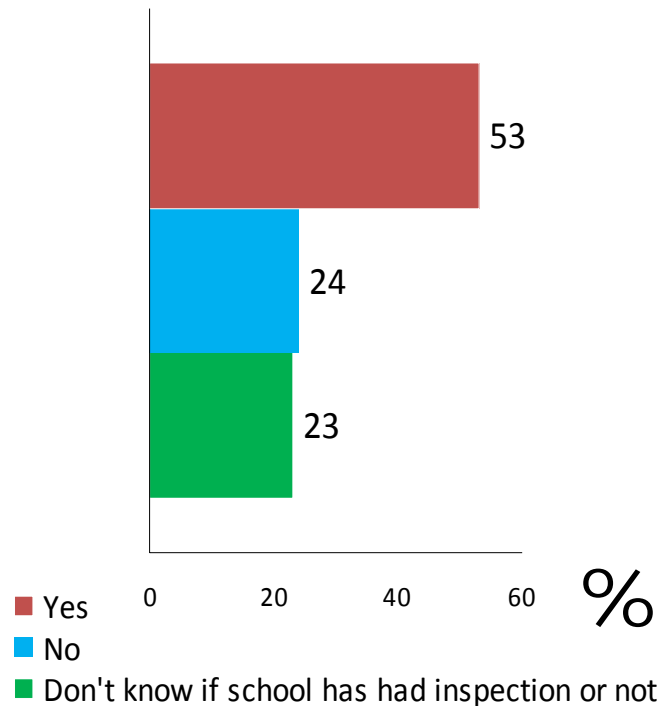
Experience of inspections

April 2010

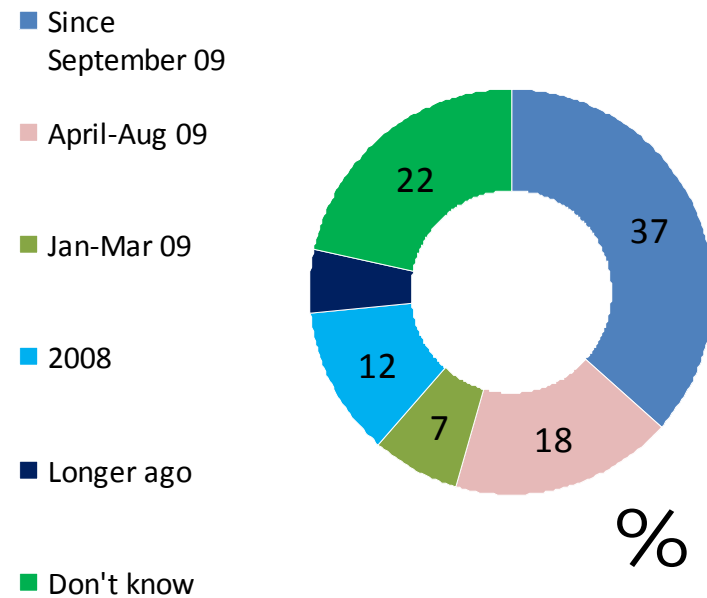
Since your child(ren) started being looked after by this childcare provider, has the provider had an inspection by Ofsted and when was the most recent inspection?



Has your provider had an inspection ?

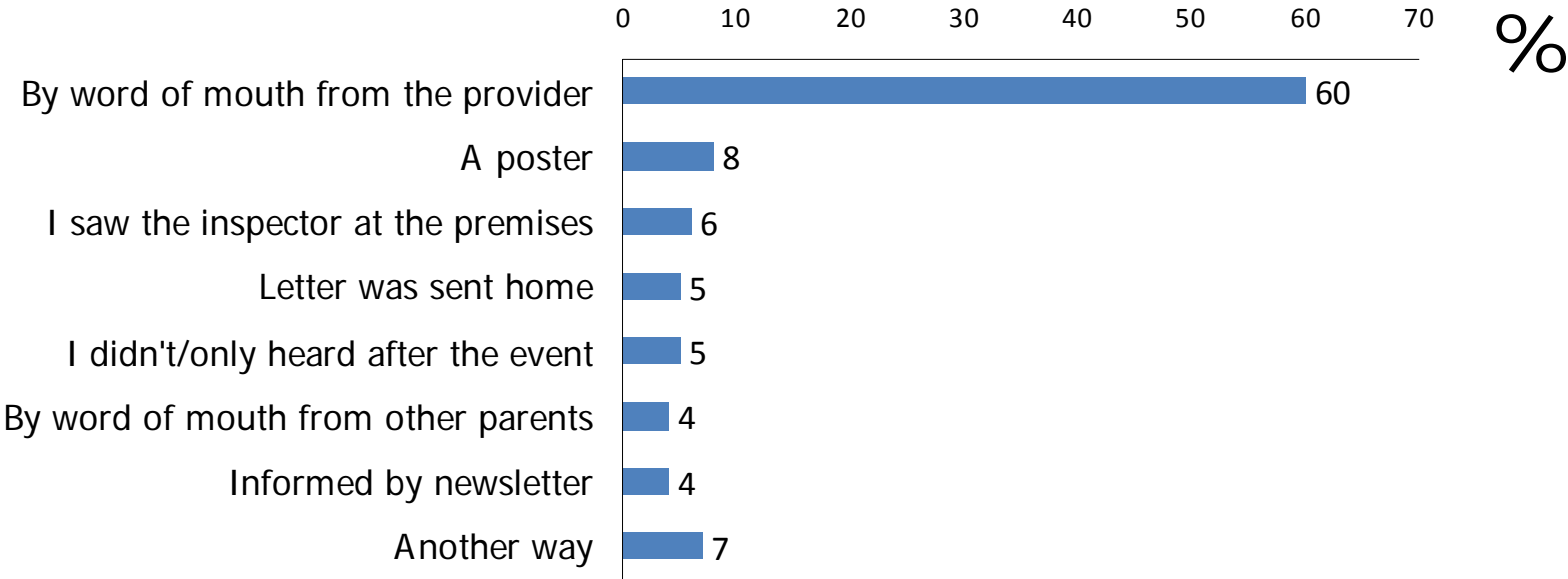


When did it take place?



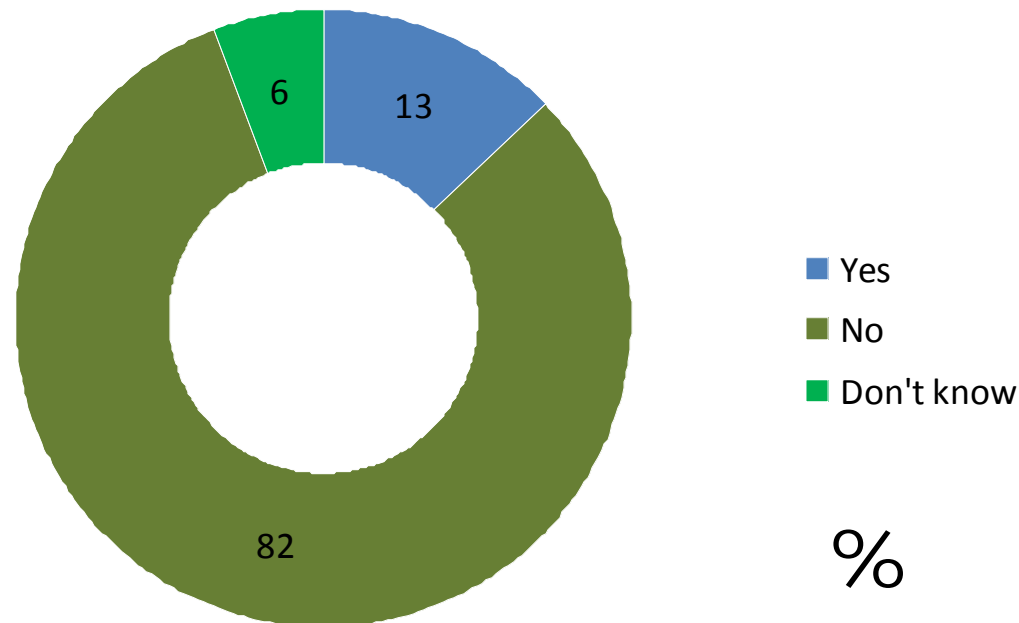
Bases: Q11 All parents with a child in registered early years provision (97), All parents who are aware of an inspection taking place at the childcare provider since their child started (53)

How did you find out that the provider was being inspected?

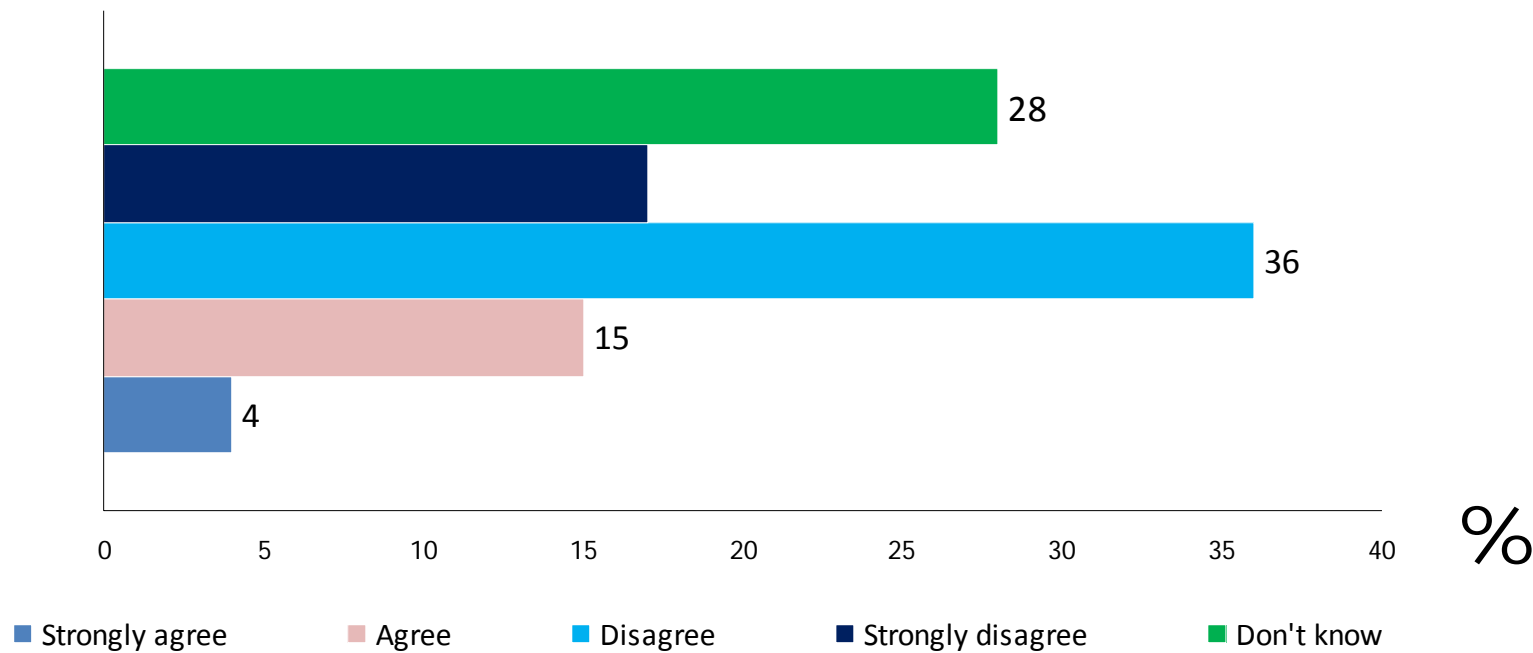


Base: All parents who are aware of an inspection taking place at the childcare provider since their child started (53)

You said that an inspection had taken place since your child has been with your childminder/care provider. Do you recall being asked to give your views on the care provider at the time of the inspection?

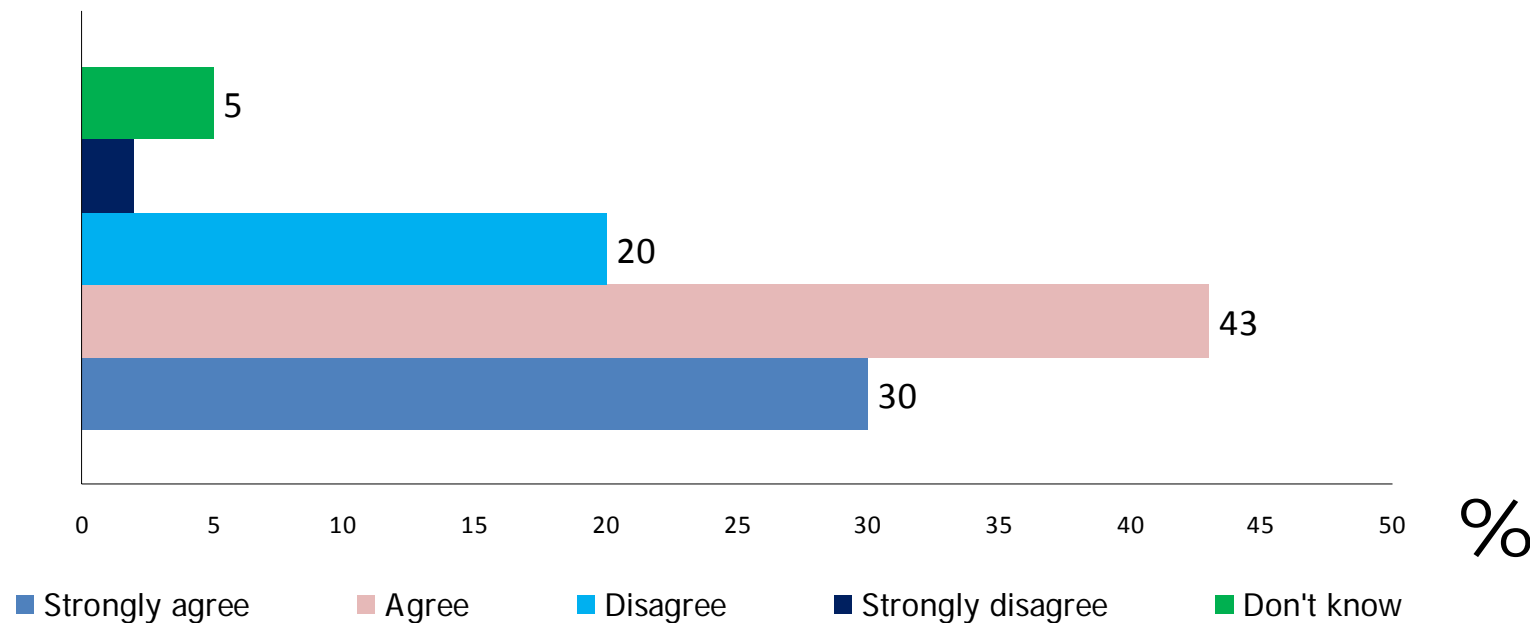


To what extent do you agree or disagree that your views were listened to during the inspection process?



Base: All parents who are aware of an inspection taking place at the childcare provider since their child started (53)

To what extent do you agree or disagree that Ofsted inspections have a positive impact for children and learners?





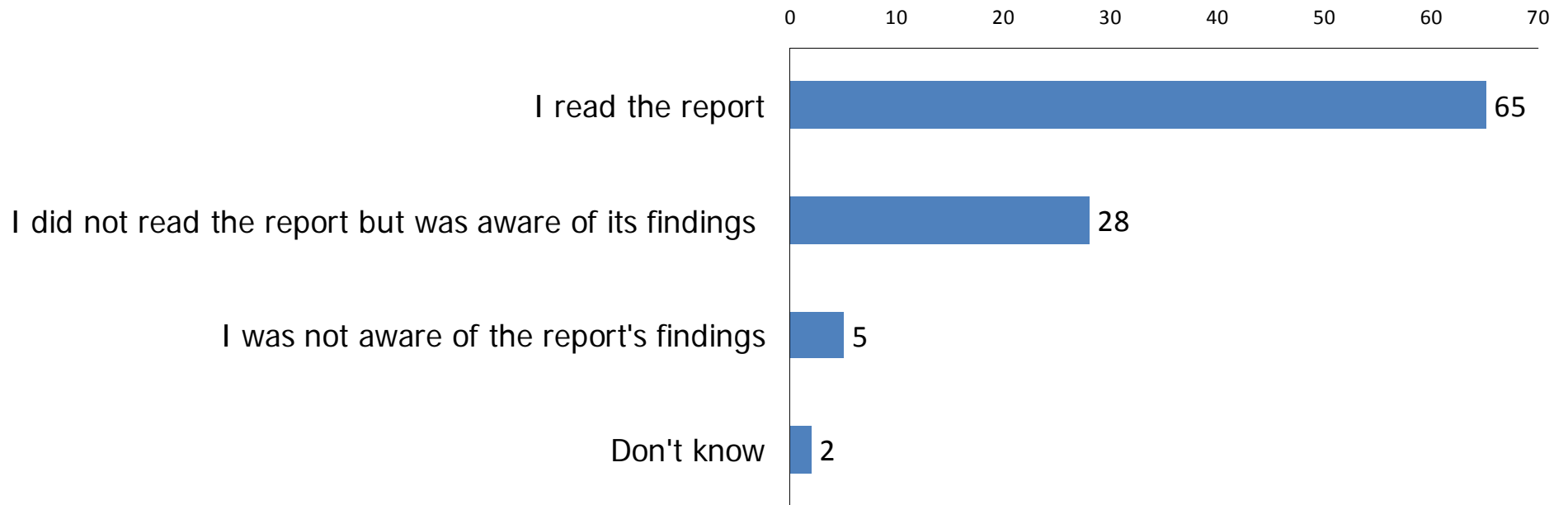
The report

April 2010

To what extent were you aware of the findings from Ofsted's report on the provider after the inspection had taken place?

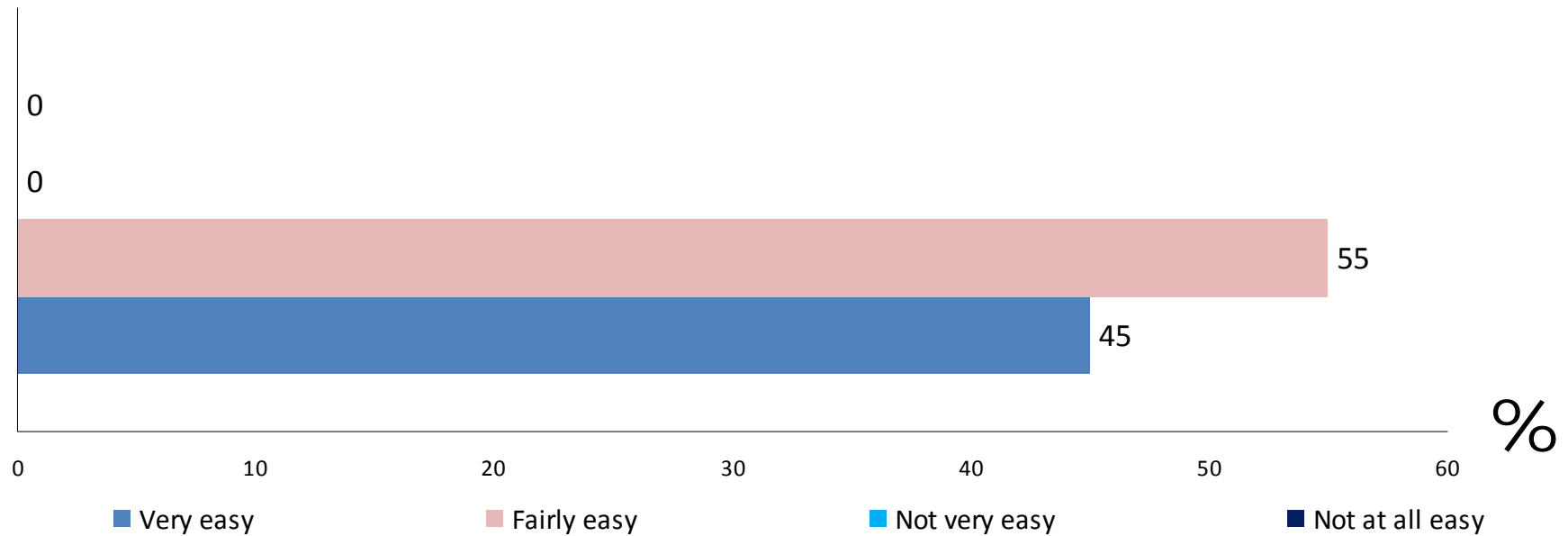


%



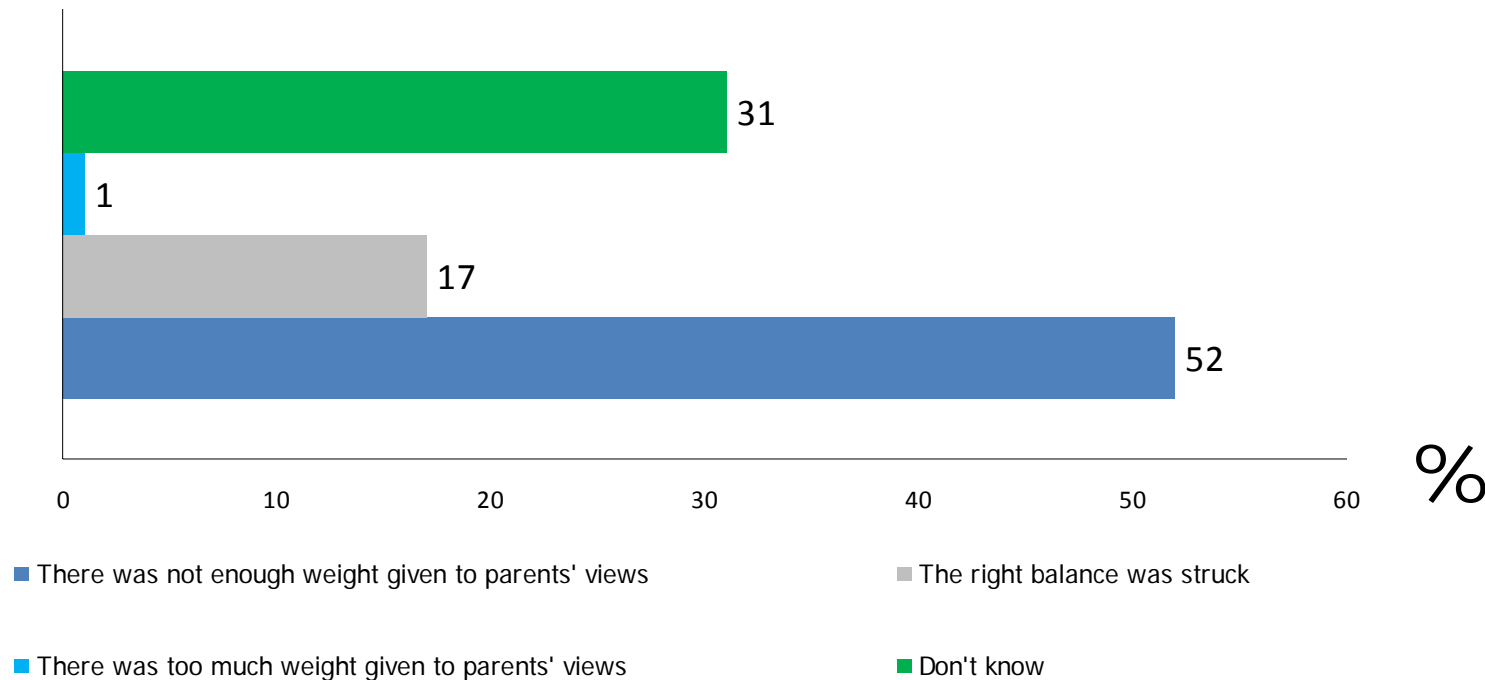
Base: All parents who are aware of an inspection taking place at the childcare provider since their child started (53)

How easy was it to understand the report?

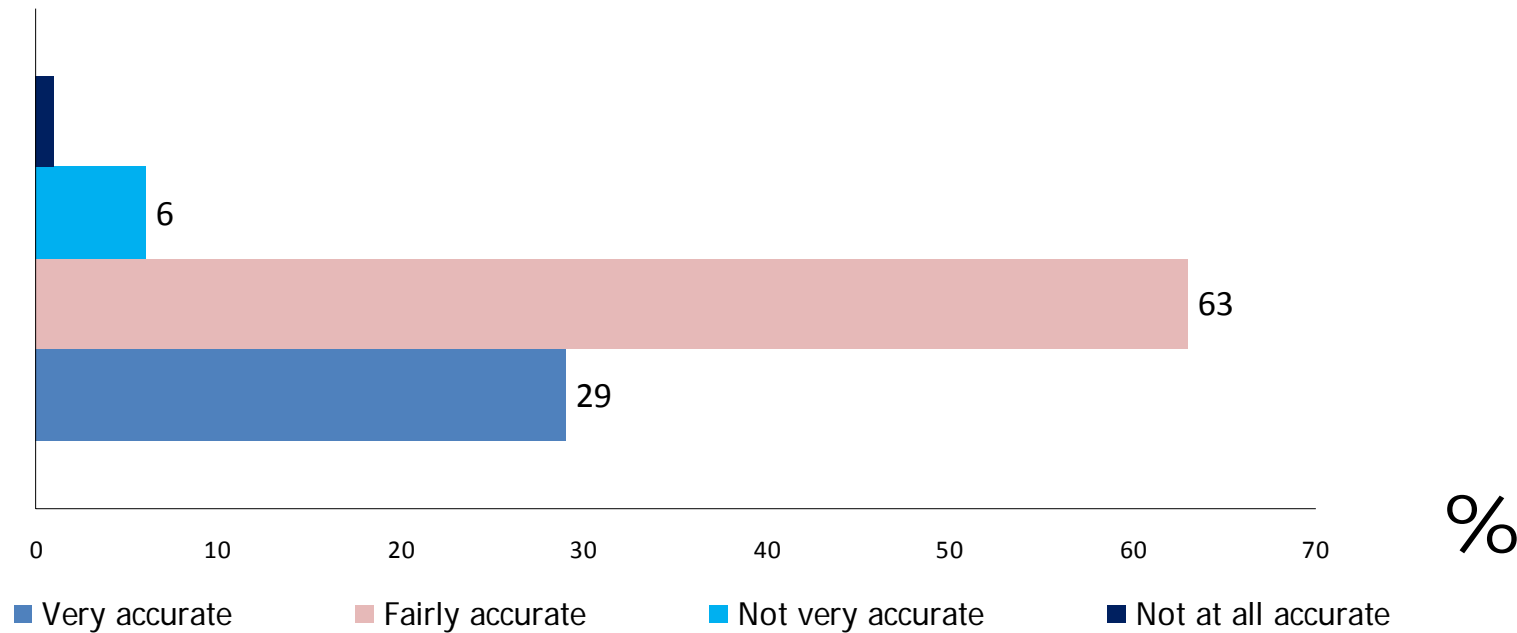


Base: All parents who read the report (34) * *Results should be treated with caution as base size is low.*

Specifically, to what extent do you think parents' comments and views were given enough weight in the overall report findings?

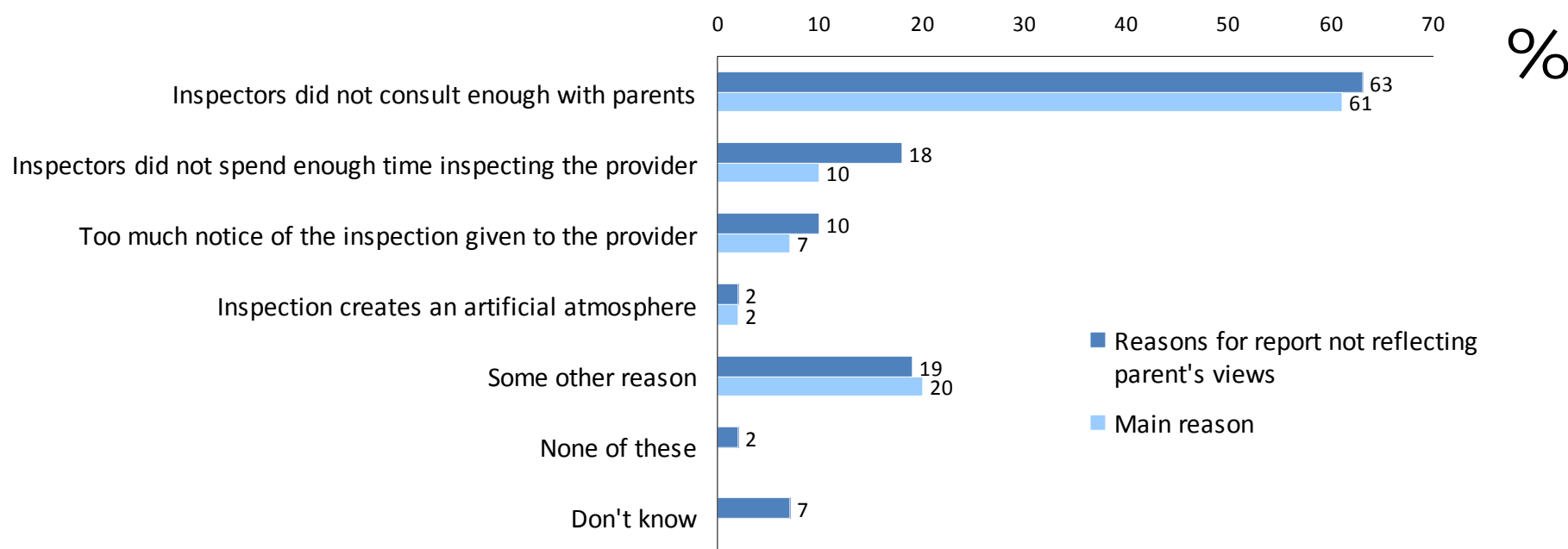


How accurate do you think the report findings were in reflecting your own view of the strengths and weaknesses of the provider?



Base: All parents who read the report or were aware of its findings (49) * *Results should be treated with caution as base size is low*

Which of the following factors do you think were reasons for the report not being entirely accurate and which of these do you think is the **main** reason?



Base: Q51 All respondents who thought the report was only 'fairly accurate' or not accurate in reflecting their own (36), Q52 All parents who selected one or more reasons for the report not being entirely accurate (32) **Results should be treated with caution as base size is low*

Summary

April 2010

Summary



Engagement

- Parents feel reasonably involved by school in child's education
 - Seventy three per cent would like more opportunity to contribute to school inspections
 - Most looked at Ofsted report prior to school selection (68%)
 - Most see inspections as having positive impact (76%)
 - Parents welcomed more direct contact with inspectors
 - Ninety per cent would find it useful to contribute in between inspections.
-
- Parents think observation in the classroom is the most important aspect of inspection
 - However, parental views are seen as important by many
 - Only forty seven per cent of parents felt listened to during inspection
 - Parents felt there is a lack of prominence given to parental views in report.

Summary



Barriers to parents participating in the inspection included:

- Confusion about confidentiality of feedback
- A feeling that they are lacking in experience/qualifications to comment
- Lack of confidence – ‘won’t make a difference’
- The less formal nature of Early Years provision meant parents thought giving ‘official’ feedback would be detrimental to their relationship with provider
- The Parents Questionnaire seen as suitable (84%) but an online version was preferred.

Views on the report

- Parents showed high awareness and readership
- Those who read the report found it easy to understand
- Parents thought views were not given enough ‘weight’ (prominence)
- However, overall report reflects parents’ views.