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[Department  
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Research and analysis

# School and college voice: April 2024

Updated 17 December 2024

## Applies to England

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## Introduction

The Department for Education (DfE) commissioned Verian (formerly known as Kantar Public) to recruit and maintain a panel of school and college leaders and teachers in England, known as the School and College Voice (SCV). The SCV is designed to collect robust evidence to help the Department for Education understand the perspectives of teachers and leaders. This allows us to make more effective policy.

The SCV works as a series of short surveys across the academic year, covering a range of new and longstanding policy issues. This report is about the findings from the April 2024 survey wave of the School and College Voice. This wave took place before the new UK government took office on 5 July 2024. As a result, the content may not reflect current government policy.

## Methodology

The SCV survey is answered by teachers and leaders who have agreed to participate in short, regular research surveys on topical education issues.

We select teachers and leaders randomly using records from the School Workforce Census (SWFC) and invite them to take part in an online survey. For the first survey of the academic year, we send invitation letters and emails to teachers and leaders. For other surveys in that same academic year, we send the invitation by email and text message to the teachers and leaders who agreed to join the panel in the first survey.

We conducted the survey between 24 April and 19 May 2024. The respondents were:

- 908 primary school teachers
- 772 secondary school teachers
- 770 special school teachers
- 1,086 primary school leaders
- 1,009 secondary school leaders
- 328 special school leaders

Unless otherwise stated, when we refer to the 'average' we are reporting the arithmetic mean. Complete findings can be found in the published data tables, which include more detail on how different groups answered each question.

The report makes some comparisons to previous surveys conducted in previous academic years, for example the [School and College Panel Omnibus Surveys for 2022 to 2023](#). These comparisons are helpful to understand how trends may be changing. However, the survey methodology changes over time and so comparisons to previous years are not as reliable as survey findings within each academic year. We introduced special school teachers and leaders to the SCV in the 2023 to 2024 academic year, so any comparisons from previous academic years do not include these audiences.

Further information on the survey methodology is available in the accompanying [technical report](#).

## **Banding for percentages**

We use a consistent banding system for describing percentages, as follows:

- very few - 0% to 10%
- a small minority - 11% to 32%
- a minority - 33% to 47%
- about half - 48% to 52%
- the majority - 53% to 66%
- a large majority - 67% to 89%
- almost all - 90% to 100%

We do not describe 0% and 100% as 'none' and 'all' because figure rounding may mean this is not accurate. For instance, 100% may be 99.6% of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole number.

## **Topics covered in this survey**

The survey included questions about:

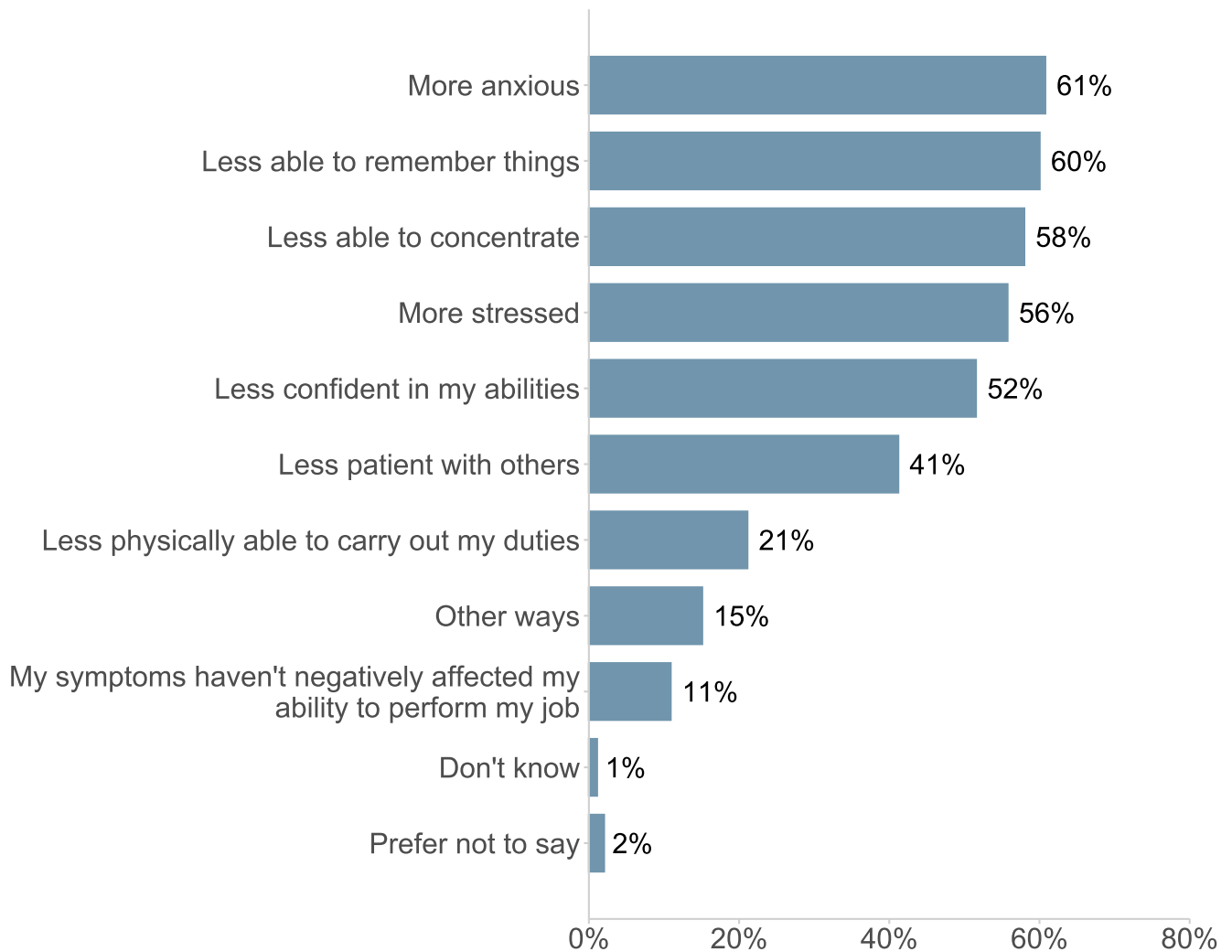
- teacher experiences of the menopause
- awareness of National Professional Qualifications
- money management in the curriculum
- waste and recycling in schools

- teacher knowledge and confidence of pupils' mental health
- teacher mental health literacy
- usage of primary school mathematics guidance
- awareness and implementation of the National Plan for Music Education
- awareness and implementation of the Model Music Curriculum
- implementation of attendance guidance
- assistive and accessible technology in schools

## **Teachers' experiences of the menopause**

A minority of female teachers (40%) said they had experienced or were currently experiencing symptoms of perimenopause or menopause. We asked these teachers in which ways, if any, their symptoms have affected their ability to perform their job (Figure 1).

**Figure 1: Ways in which symptoms of menopause have affected teachers' ability to perform their job**



Base: Female teachers who said they have experienced or are currently experiencing symptoms of perimenopause or menopause (n = 891). Respondents could select all that applied.

The most common responses were feeling more anxious (61%), being less able to remember things (60%), being less able to concentrate (58%) and feeling more stressed (56%) affected their ability to perform their job role. A small minority (11%) said their symptoms have not negatively affected their ability to perform their job.

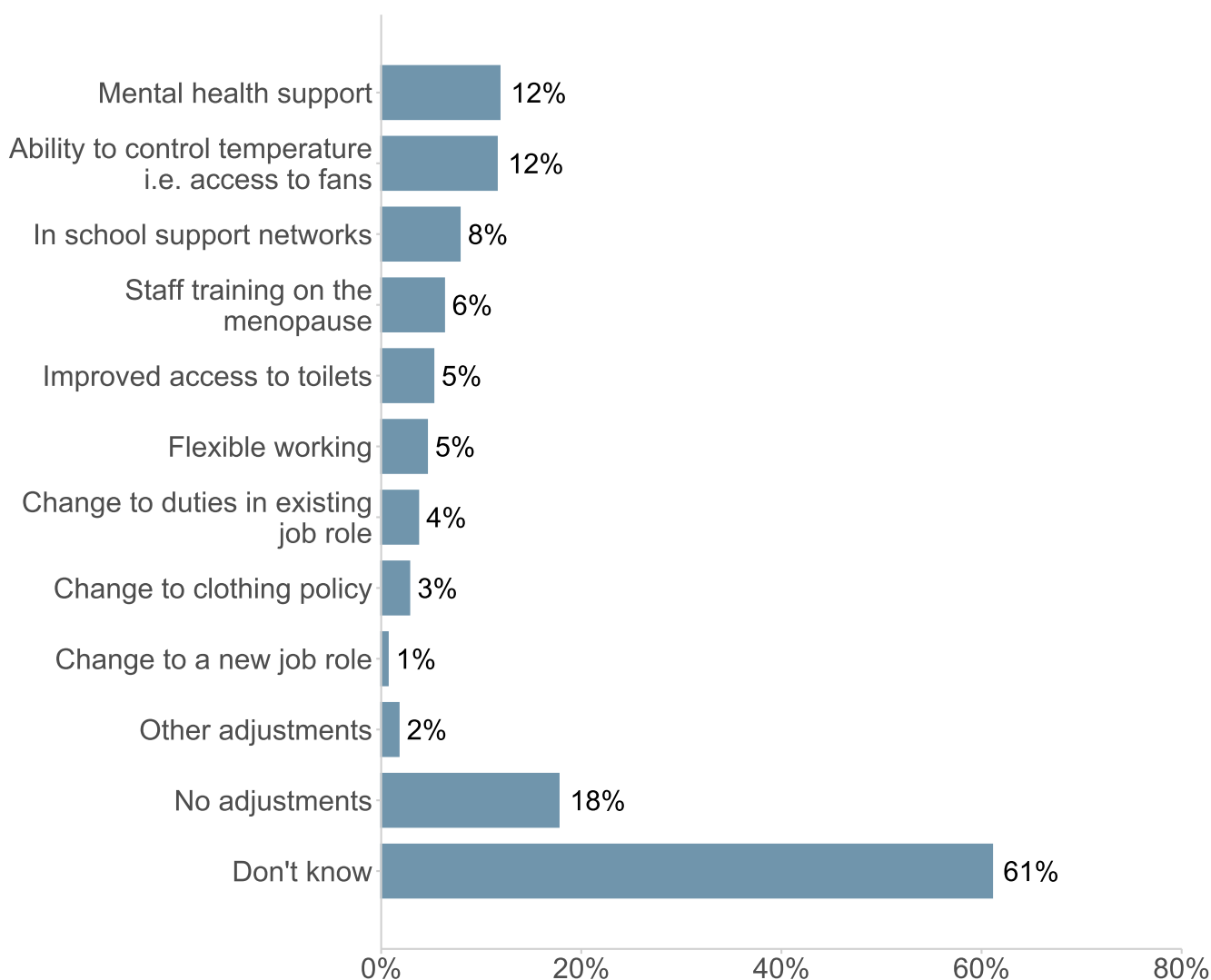
We asked those who said that their symptoms have affected their ability to do their job whether they have spoken to someone in their line management chain about this. A small minority (25%) said they had done so, while a further 8% said they had not done so yet but planned to do so. The majority (63%) had not discussed this with someone in their line management chain and did not plan to do so.

# School menopause policy and adjustments

A small minority of teachers (20%) said their school has a policy or action plan regarding the menopause, and a similarly small minority (23%) said their school does not have such a policy or plan. About half (52%) did not know.

We asked teachers what adjustments are available at their school to support teachers experiencing menopause or perimenopause (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Adjustments available in schools to support teachers experiencing perimenopause or menopause**



Base: All teachers (n = 2450). Respondents could select all that applied.

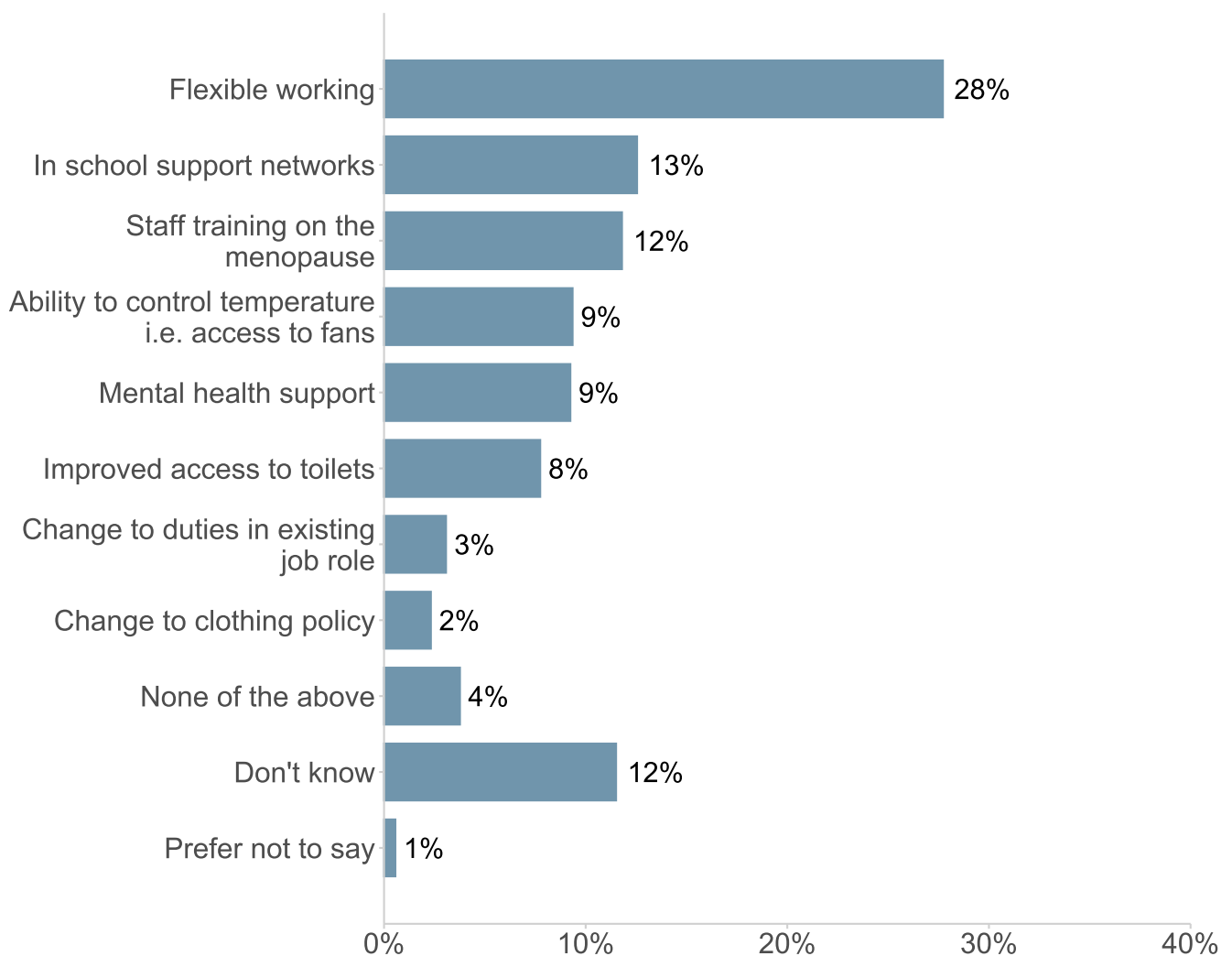
The majority of teachers (61%) did not know what adjustments were available, while a small minority (18%) said that no adjustments were available.

The most commonly available adjustments were mental health support (12%), ability to control the temperature (12%), and in-school support networks (8%).

We asked female teachers who have experienced symptoms of perimenopause or menopause whose school offers adjustments which of the available adjustments, if any, they have used. The most common response (47%) was that they have not used any adjustments. The most common adjustments used were ability to control the temperature (30%) and mental health support (14%).

Finally, we asked female teachers who have experienced symptoms of perimenopause or menopause which adjustment they would find most useful, regardless of whether it is currently available at their school (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Adjustments that teachers experiencing perimenopause or menopause would find most useful**



Base: Female teachers who said they have experienced or are currently experiencing symptoms of perimenopause or menopause (n = 891).

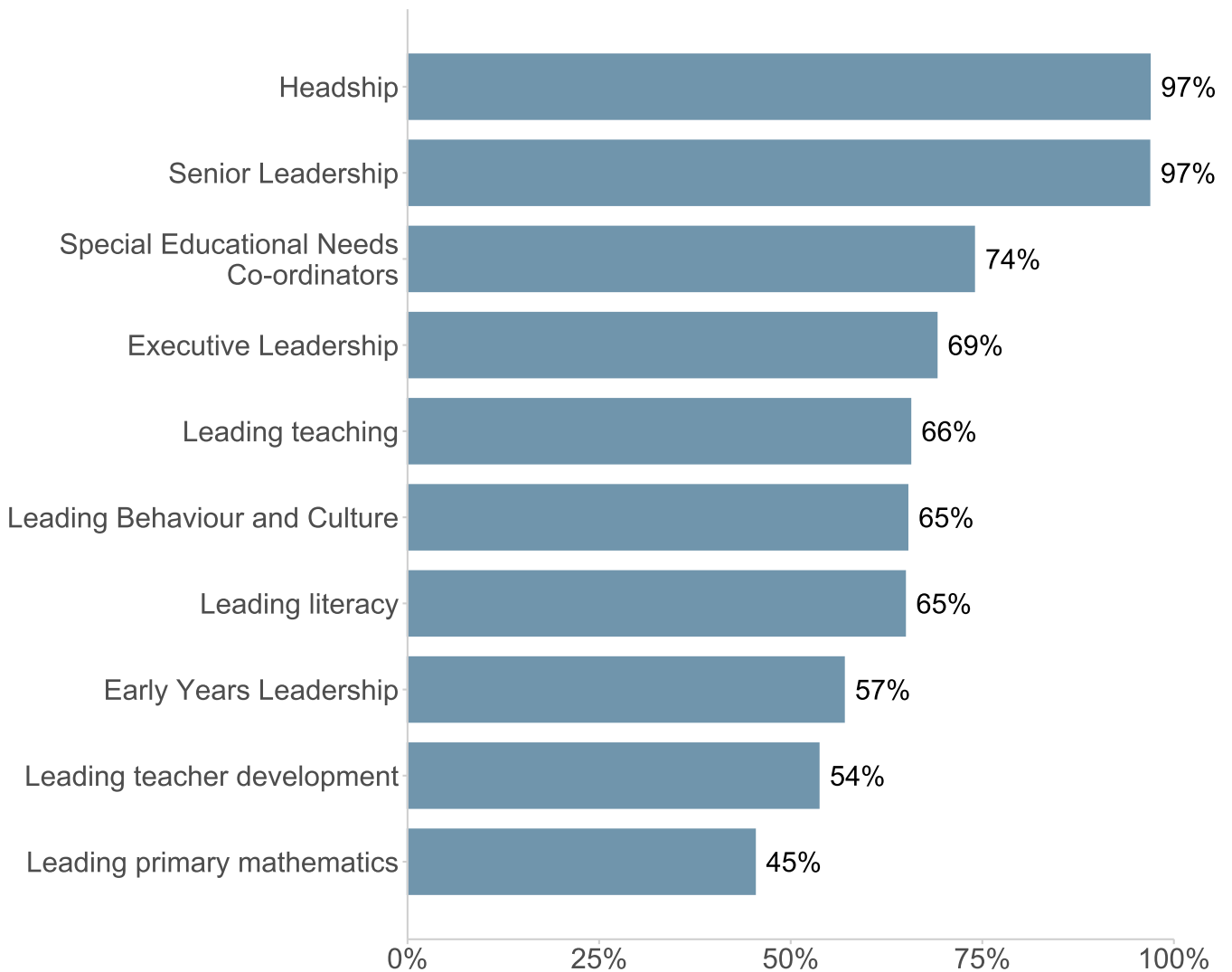
The most common response was that flexible working would be the most useful adjustment for those experiencing symptoms of perimenopause or menopause (28%). This was followed by in-school support networks (13%) and staff training on the menopause (12%).

## **Awareness of National Professional Qualifications**

We asked leaders which reformed National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) they had heard of (Figure 4).



**Figure 4: Awareness of National Professional Qualifications (NPQs)**

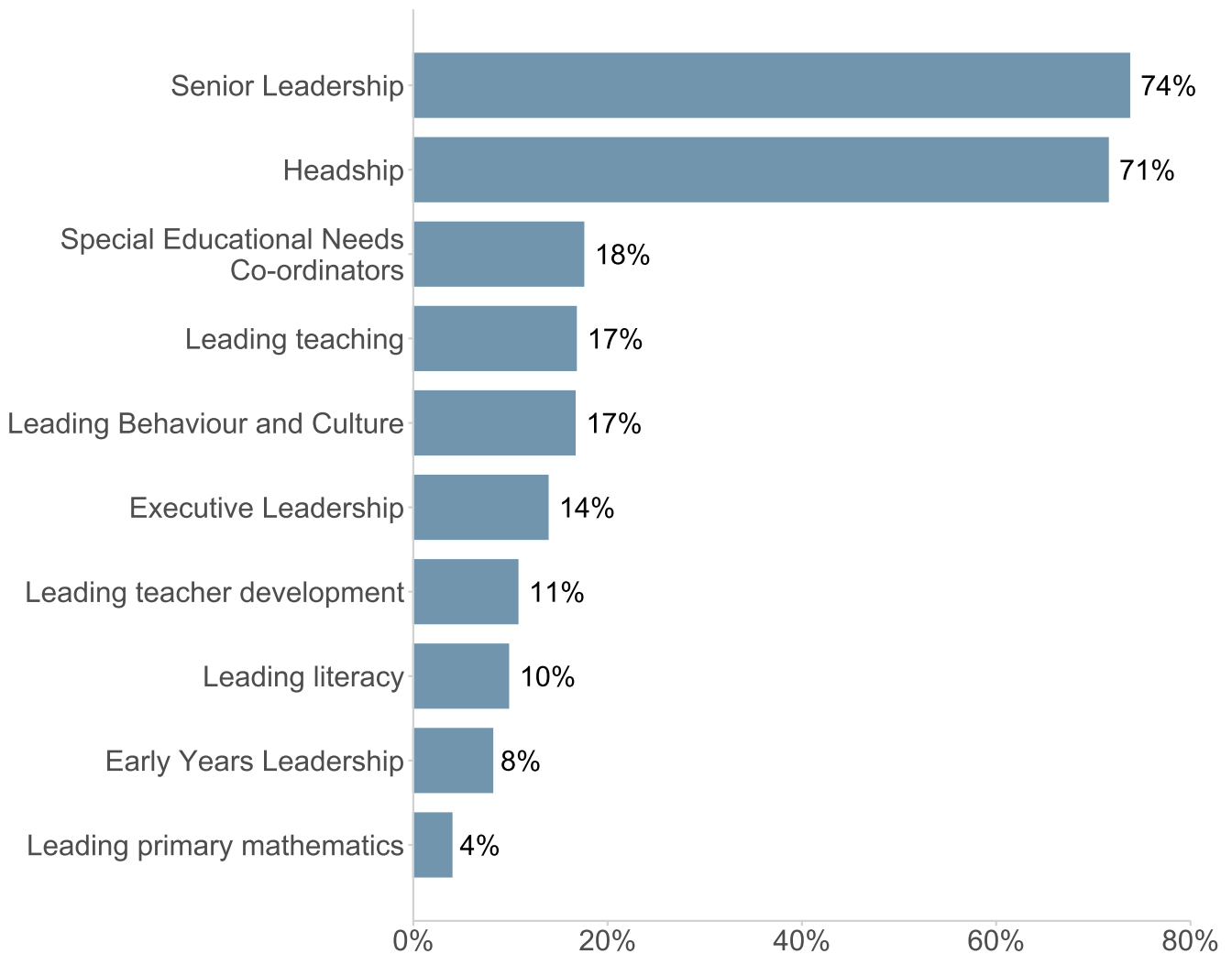


Base: All leaders (n = 2423). Respondents could select all that applied.

Almost all leaders had heard of the Headship NPQ (97%) and the Senior Leadership NPQ (97%), while a large majority had heard of the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators NPQ (74%), the Executive Leadership NPQ (69%), and the Leading Teaching NPQ (66%). Almost all leaders had heard of at least one of the reformed NPQs.

We then asked leaders which three NPQs they knew the most about, selecting from those they were aware of (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: National Professional Qualifications (NPQs) that leaders know the most about**



Base: Leaders who had heard of at least one NPQ (n = 2414). Respondents could select up to three options.

A large majority of leaders said that the Senior Leadership NPQ (74%) or the Headship NPQ (71%) was one of the qualifications they knew the most about. A small minority said that the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators NPQ (18%), the Leading Teaching NPQ (17%), or the Leading Behaviour and Culture NPQ (17%) was one of the qualifications they knew the most about.

We asked leaders who were aware of an NPQ who they think that each qualification selected was aimed at. Almost all leaders (94%) thought that the Senior Leadership NPQ was aimed at teaching staff who are aspiring to become senior leaders, while a large majority (83%) thought it was aimed at staff who have recently moved to a senior leadership role. A large majority thought that the Headship NPQ (75%) and Executive Leadership NPQ (77%) were aimed at staff who have been in senior

leadership roles for some time.

A large majority thought that the following NPQs were aimed at teaching staff who have recently moved to a specialist leadership role or area:

- Leading Literacy (84%)
- Leading Primary Mathematics (83%)
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (78%)
- Leading Teacher Development (78%)
- Leading Teaching (76%)
- Leading Behaviour and Culture (74%)

A large majority thought that the following NPQs are aimed at teaching staff who want to remain in the classroom:

- Early Years Leadership (83%)
- Leading Teaching (83%)
- Leading Literacy (81%)
- Leading Primary Mathematics (77%)
- Leading Behaviour and Culture (74%)

## **Money management in the curriculum**

We asked primary school leaders and secondary school leaders whether, since the start of the academic year, pupils in their school have been taught about money management.

A minority of primary school leaders said that their school had already taught pupils about money management (37%) or that they planned to do so in the future (37%).

A large majority of secondary school leaders (76%) said their school had already taught students about money management, while a further 8% said they planned to do so in the future.

## **Waste and recycling in schools**

Almost all primary school leaders (94%) reported that their school had recycling bins, as did a large majority of special school leaders (88%) and secondary school leaders (86%)

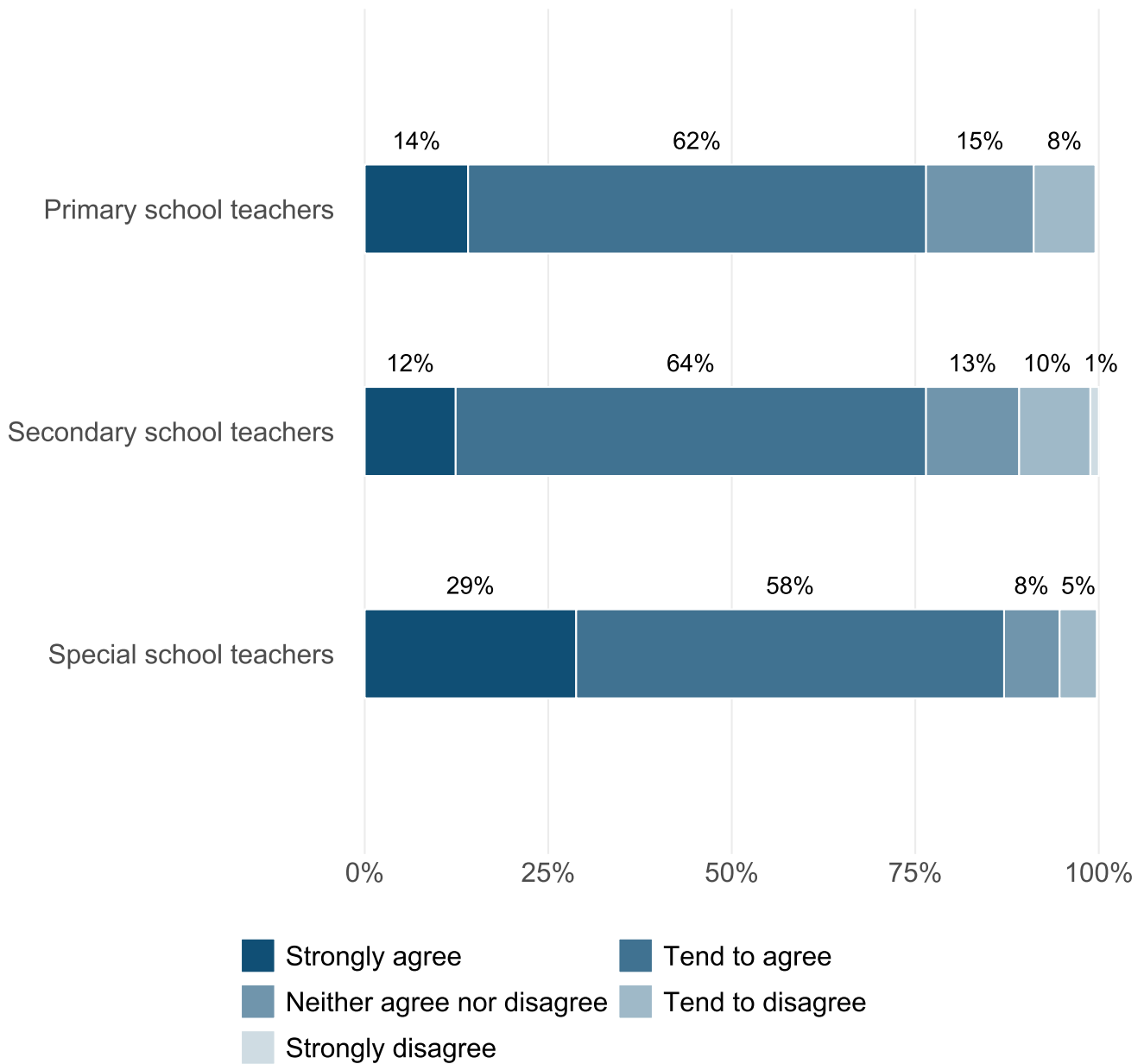
A minority of leaders (42%) said their school has a waste management plan. Among leaders who said their school has a plan, a small minority said the school had reviewed it either since the start of the 2023 to 2024 academic year (31%) or in the 2022 to 2023 academic year (25%).

A large majority of primary school leaders (81%), secondary school leaders (71%) and special school leaders (68%) said that their school had tried to reduce waste and encourage recycling since the start of the school year.

## **Teacher knowledge and confidence regarding mental health**

We asked teachers to what extent they agree or disagree with a range of statements about pupils' mental health. Firstly, we asked teachers to what extent they feel equipped to identify behaviour that may be linked to a mental health issue (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Extent to which teachers feel equipped to identify behaviour that may be linked to a mental health issue**



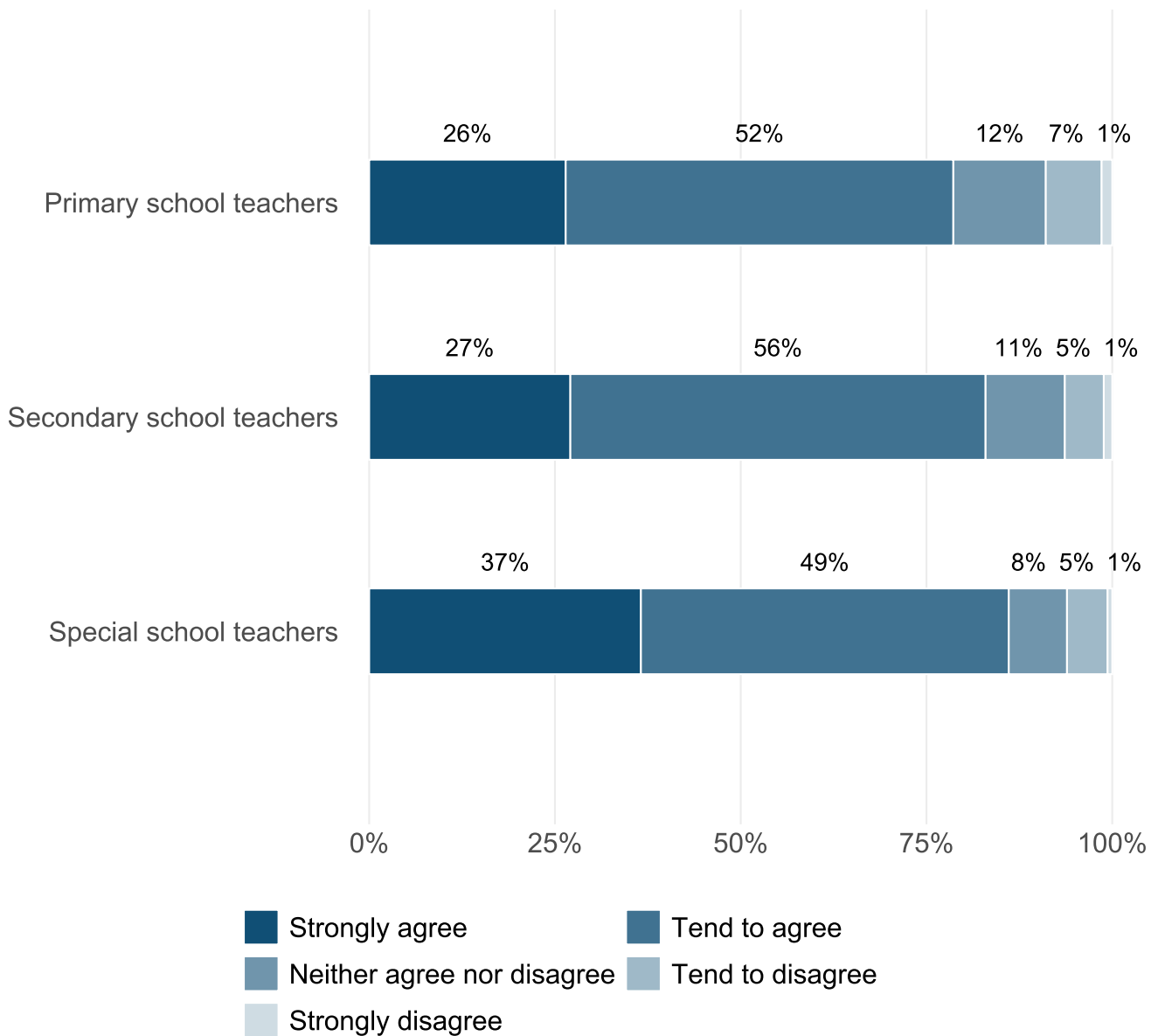
Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

A large majority of primary school teachers (77%), secondary school teachers (76%) and special school teachers (87%) agreed or strongly agreed that they could identify behaviour that may be linked to a mental health issue.

A larger proportion of teachers agreed that they feel equipped to identify behaviour that may be linked to a mental health issue compared to when last asked in June 2023, when 69% of primary school teachers and 66% of secondary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed.

We also asked teachers to what extent they knew how to help pupils with mental health issues access support offered by their school (Figure 7).

**Figure 7: Extent to which teachers know how to help pupils with mental health issues access the support offered by their school**



Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

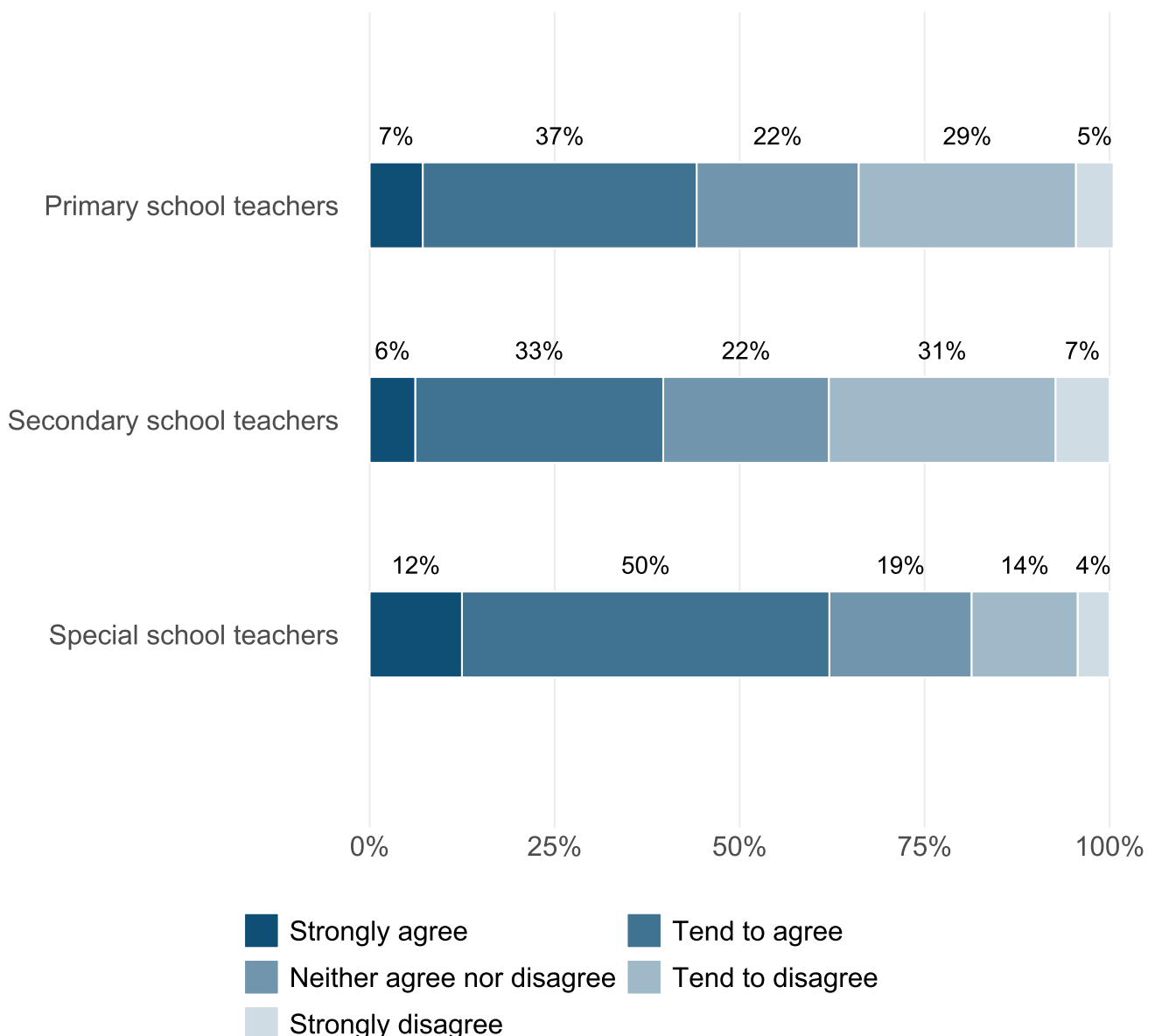
A large majority of primary school teachers (79%), secondary school teachers (83%) and special school teachers (86%) agreed or strongly agreed that they knew how to help pupils with mental health issues access support offered at their school.

A larger proportion of teachers agreed that they knew how to help pupils with mental health issues access support offered by their school compared to when last asked

in June 2023, when 62% of primary school teachers and 65% of secondary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed.

We asked teachers to what extent they know how to help pupils with mental health issues access specialist support outside of school (Figure 8).

**Figure 8: Extent to which teachers know how to help pupils with mental health issues access specialist support offered outside of their school**



Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

The majority of special school teachers (62%) agreed or strongly agreed they know how to help pupils with mental health issues access specialist support outside of school, while a minority of primary (44%) and secondary school teachers (40%) said

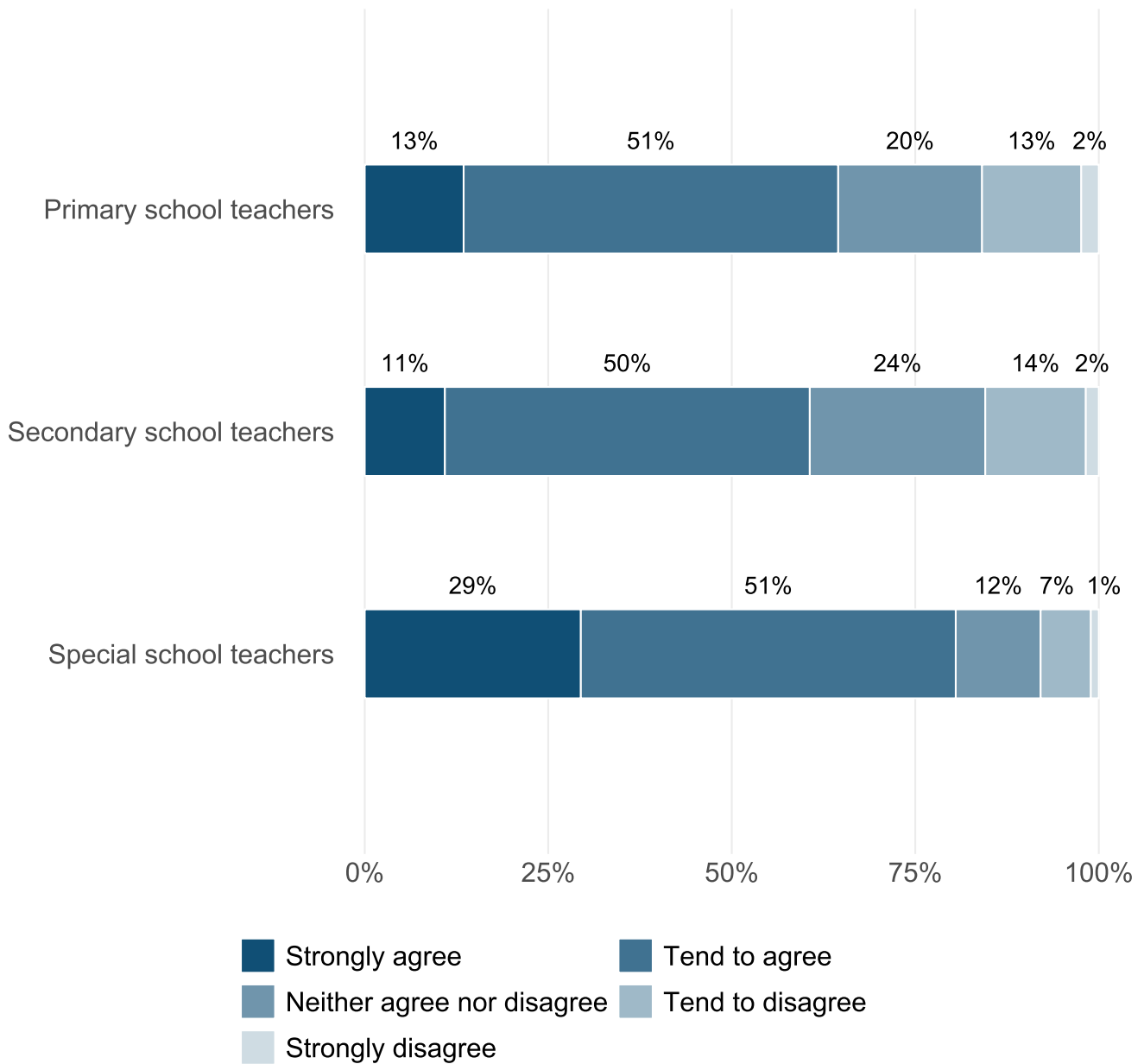
the same.

A similar proportion of primary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they know how to help pupils with mental health issues access specialist support outside of school compared to when last asked in June 2023 (42%), while a larger proportion of secondary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed compared to June 2023 (35%).

We asked teachers to what extent they feel equipped to teach pupils in their class who have mental health needs (Figure 9).



**Figure 9: Extent to which teachers feel equipped to teach pupils who have mental health needs**



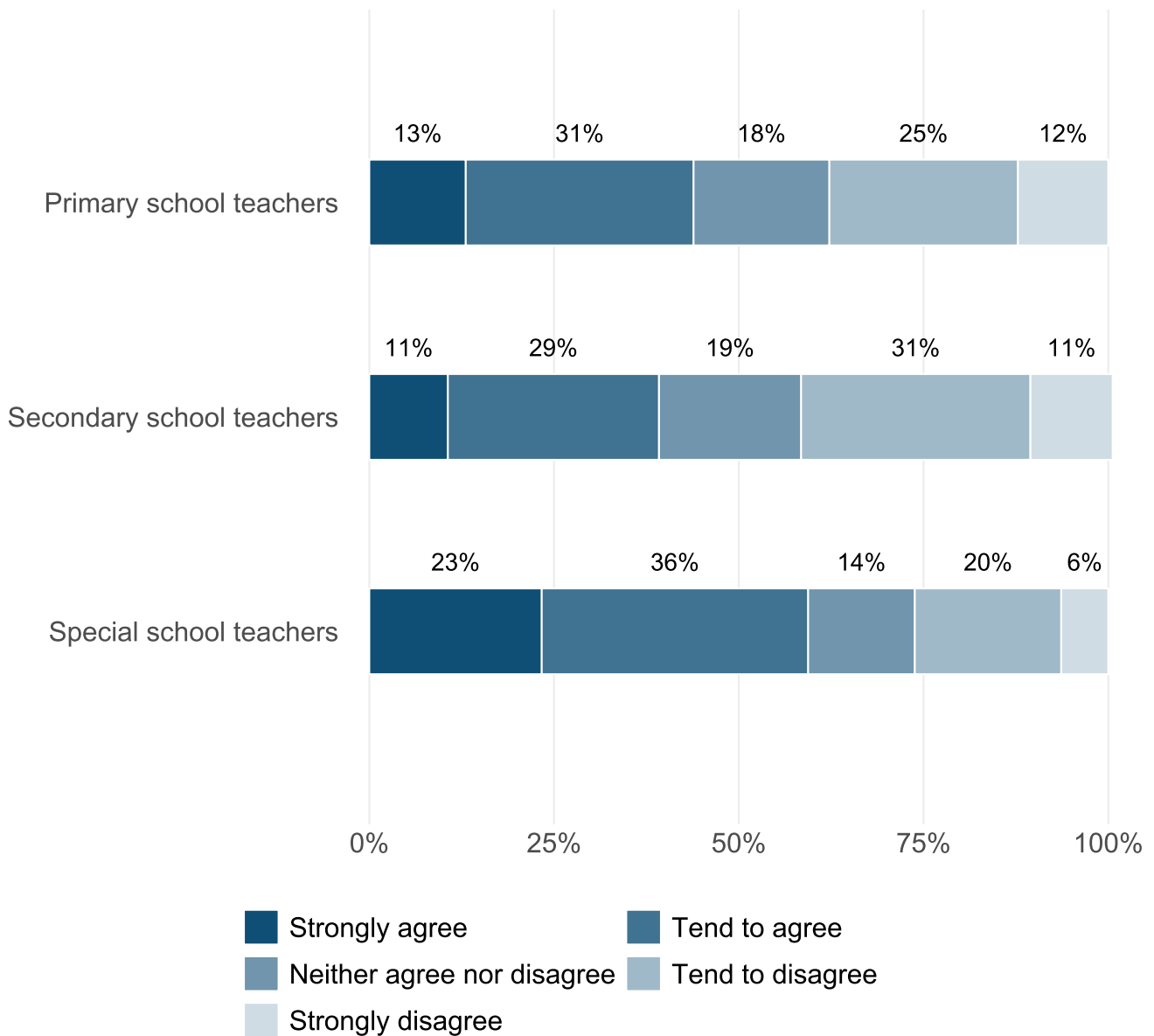
Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

The majority of primary school teachers (65%) and secondary school teachers (61%) agreed or strongly agreed that they felt equipped to teach pupils in their class who have mental health needs, while a large majority of special school teachers (81%) said the same.

A larger proportion of teachers agreed or strongly agreed compared to when they were last asked in June 2023, when 52% of primary school teachers and 50% of secondary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed.

We also asked teachers to what extent they have access to mental health professionals if they need specialist advice about pupils' mental health (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: Extent to which teachers have access to mental health professionals if they need specialist advice about pupils' mental health**



Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

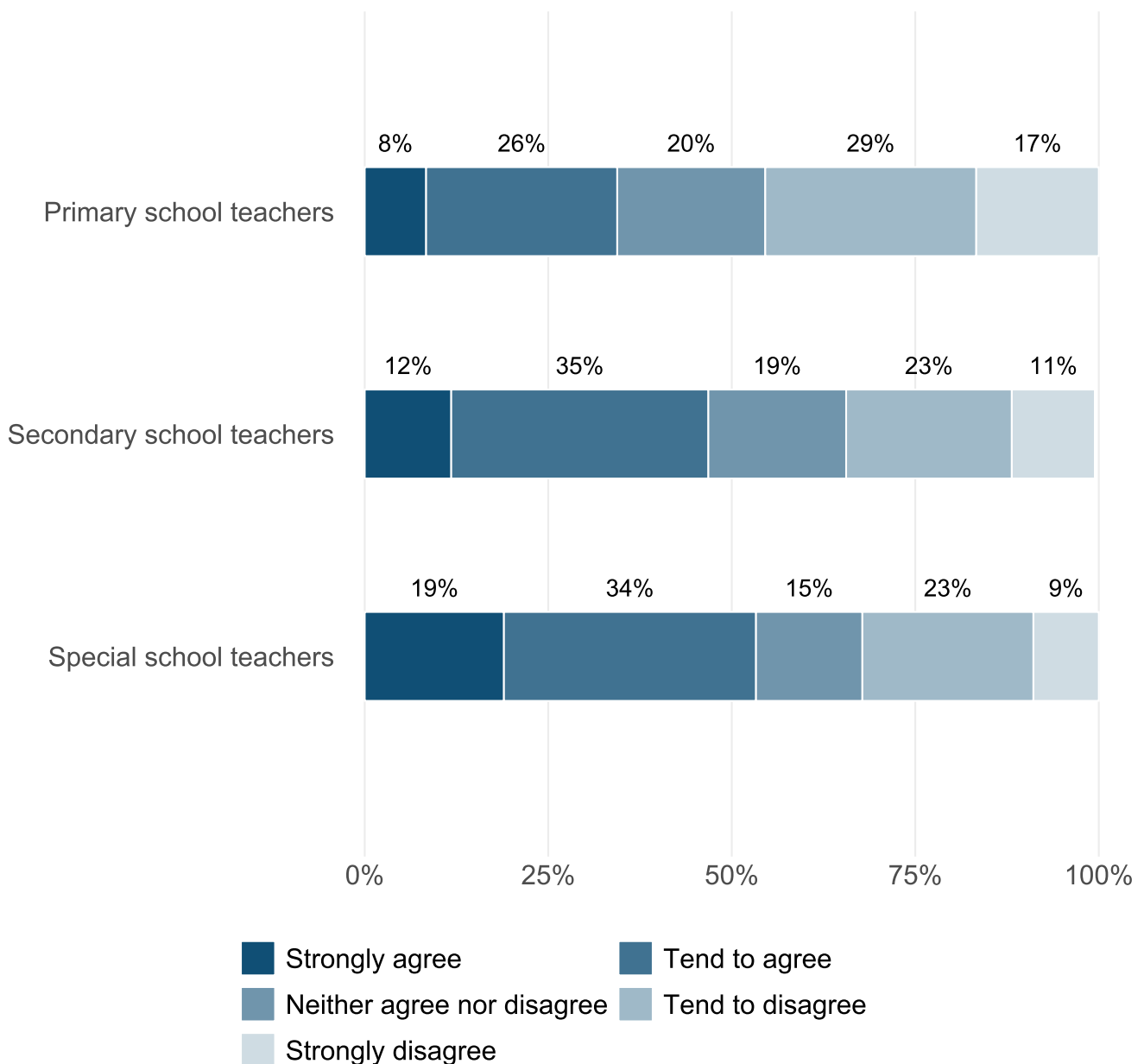
The majority of special school teachers (59%) agreed or strongly agreed that they have access to mental health professionals if they need specialist advice about pupils' mental health, while a minority of primary school teachers (44%) and secondary school teachers (39%) said the same.

A larger proportion of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they have access to

mental health professionals if they need specialist advice about pupils' mental health compared to when they were last asked in June 2023, when 34% of primary school teachers and 32% of secondary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed.

We also asked teachers to what extent pupils are able to access specialist support when needed (Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Extent to which teachers agree that pupils are able to access specialist support when needed**



Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

The majority of special school teachers (53%) agreed or strongly agreed that pupils are able to access specialist support when needed, while a minority of primary

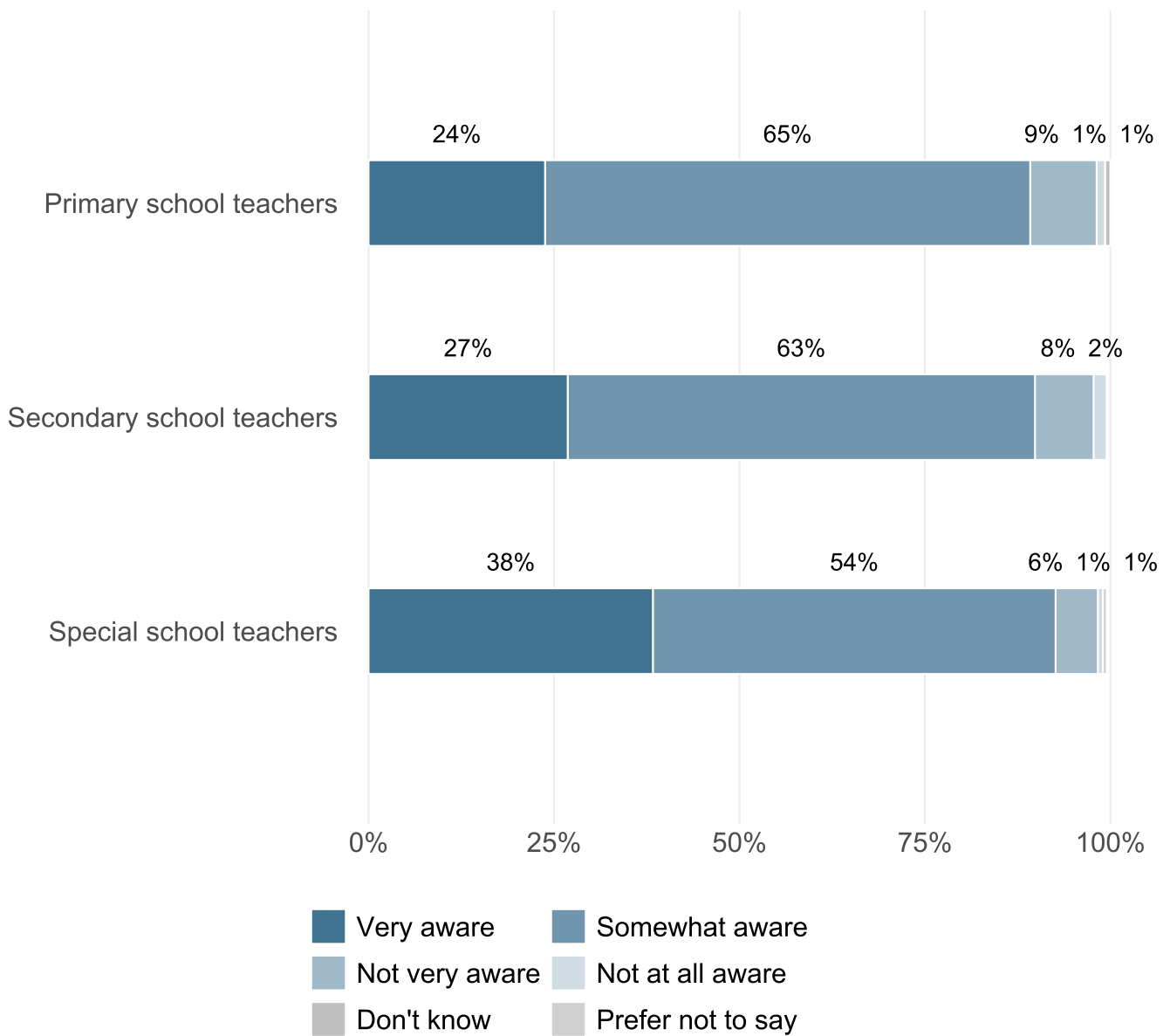
school teachers (34%) and secondary school teachers (47%) said the same.

A larger proportion of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that pupils are able to access specialist support when needed compared to when last asked in June 2023, when 26% of primary school teachers and 34% of secondary school teachers agreed or strongly agreed.

## **Teachers' mental health literacy**

We asked teachers how aware they are of the breadth of different mental health issues that children and young people may experience during their school years (Figure 12).

**Figure 12: Teacher awareness of mental health issues that children and young people may experience during their school years**

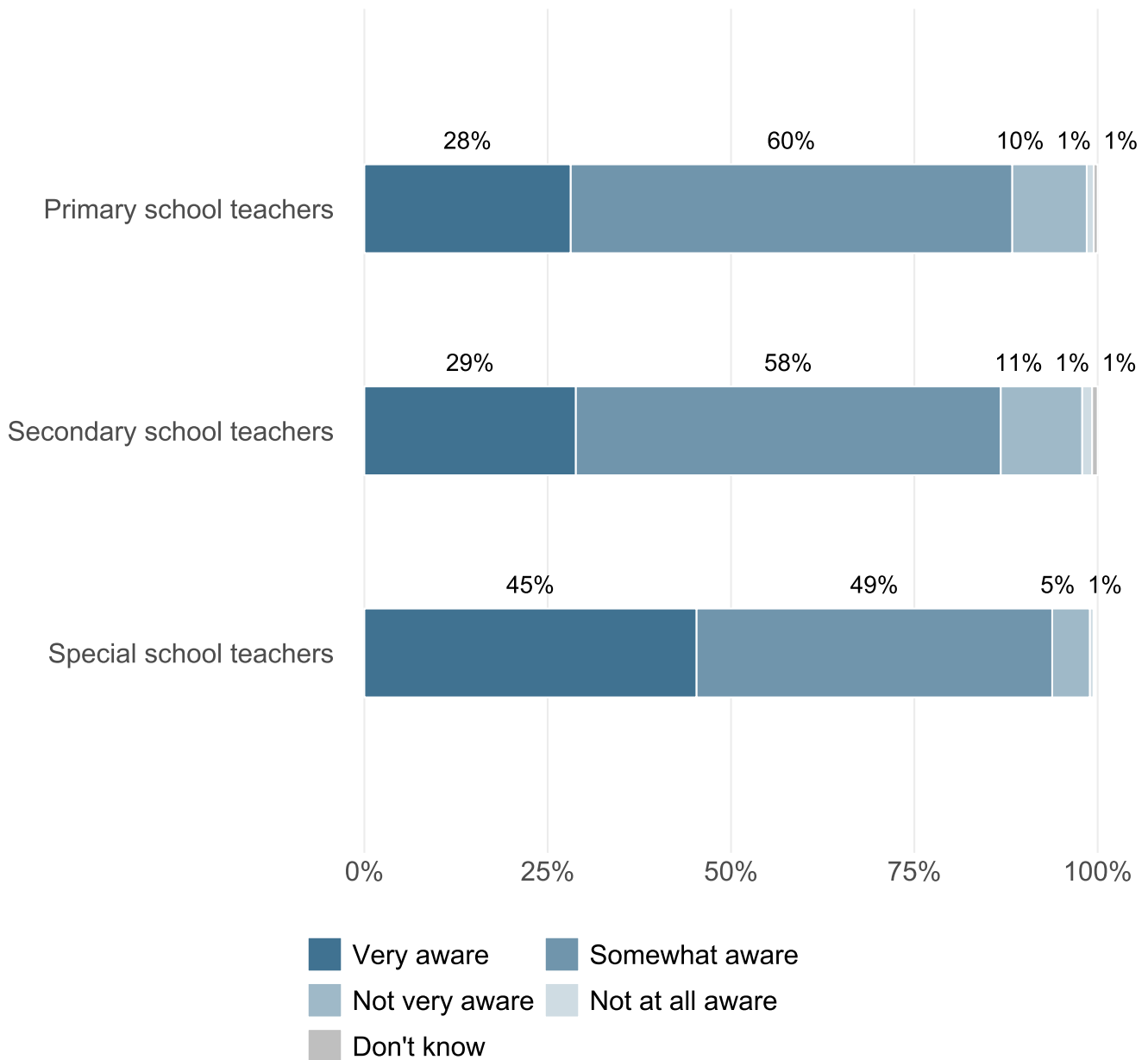


Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

A large majority of primary school teachers (89%) and secondary school teachers (90%) said they were very aware or somewhat aware of the breadth of different mental health issues that children and young people may experience during their school years. Almost all special school teachers (93%) said the same.

We also asked teachers how aware they are of the breadth of different risk factors for poor mental health in children and young people (Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Teacher awareness of risk factors for poor mental health in children and young people**

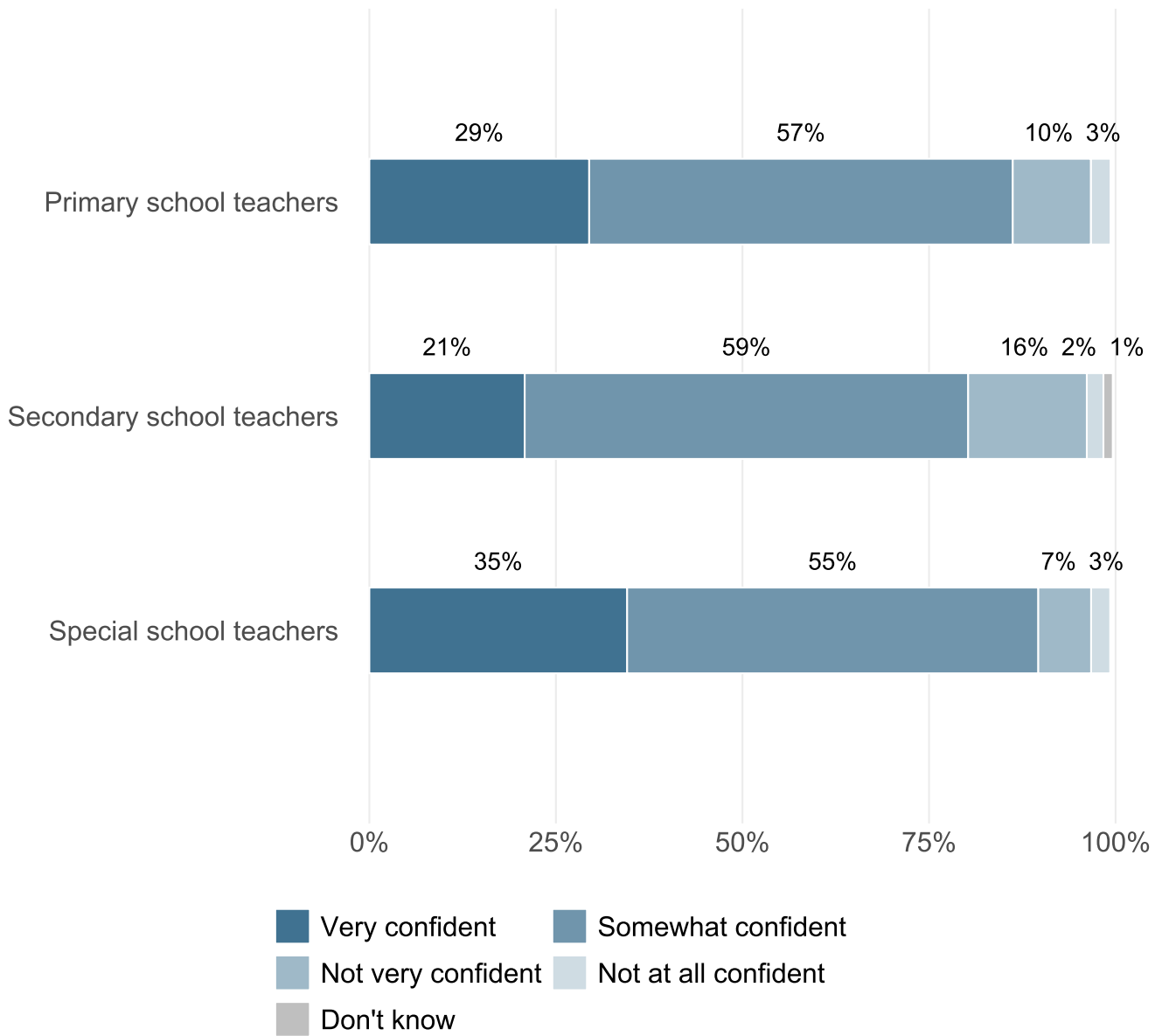


Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

A large majority of primary school teachers (88%) and secondary school teachers (87%) said they were very aware or somewhat aware of the breadth of different risk factors for poor mental health in children and young people. Almost all special school teachers (94%) said the same.

We asked teachers how confident they are that they understood the ways in which their school can promote positive mental wellbeing for children and young people (Figure 14).

**Figure 14: Teacher confidence that they understand the ways in which their school can promote positive mental wellbeing for children and young people**

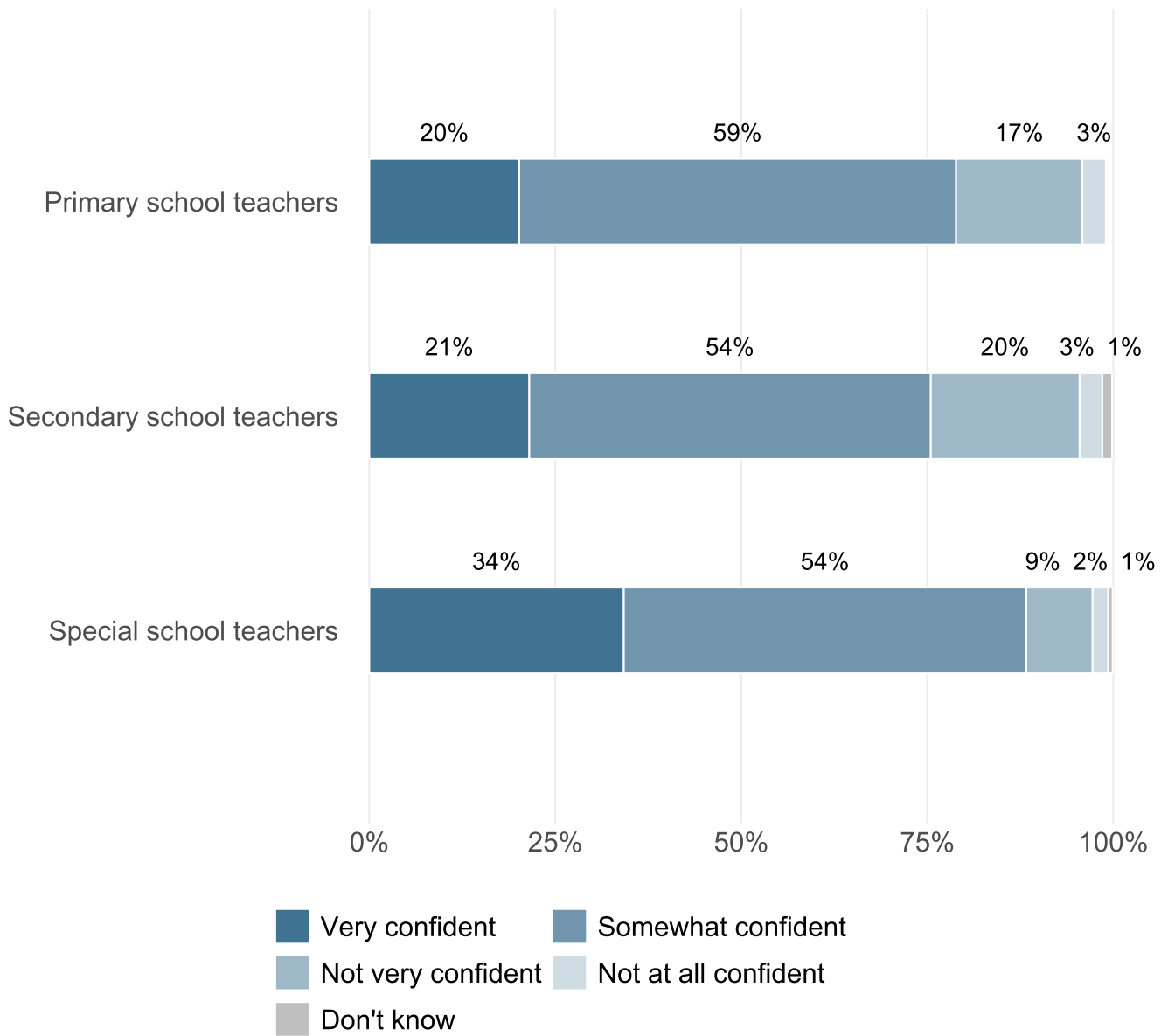


Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

A large majority of primary school teachers (86%) and secondary school teachers (80%) said they were very confident or somewhat confident that they understand the ways in which their school can promote positive mental wellbeing for children and young people. Almost all special school teachers (90%) said the same.

Finally, we asked teachers how confident they are that they understand the appropriate actions to take to support children and young people with poor mental health at their school (Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Teacher confidence that they understand the appropriate actions to take to support children and young people with poor mental health at their school**



Base: All teachers (n = 2450).

A large majority of primary school teachers (79%), secondary school teachers (75%), and special school teachers (88%) said they were very confident or somewhat confident that they understand the appropriate actions to take to support children and young people with poor mental health at their school.

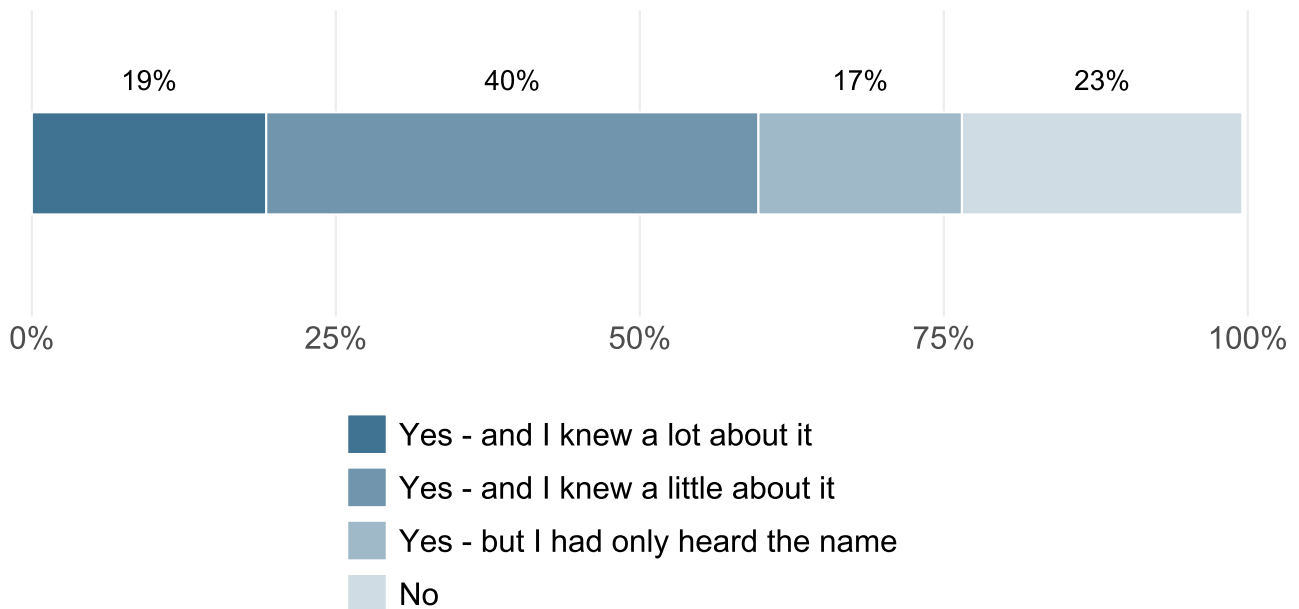
## Teachers' use of primary non-statutory



# mathematics guidance

We asked primary school teachers if they were aware of DfE's [mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2](#) prior to the survey (Figure 16).

**Figure 16: Primary teacher awareness of DfE's "mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2"**

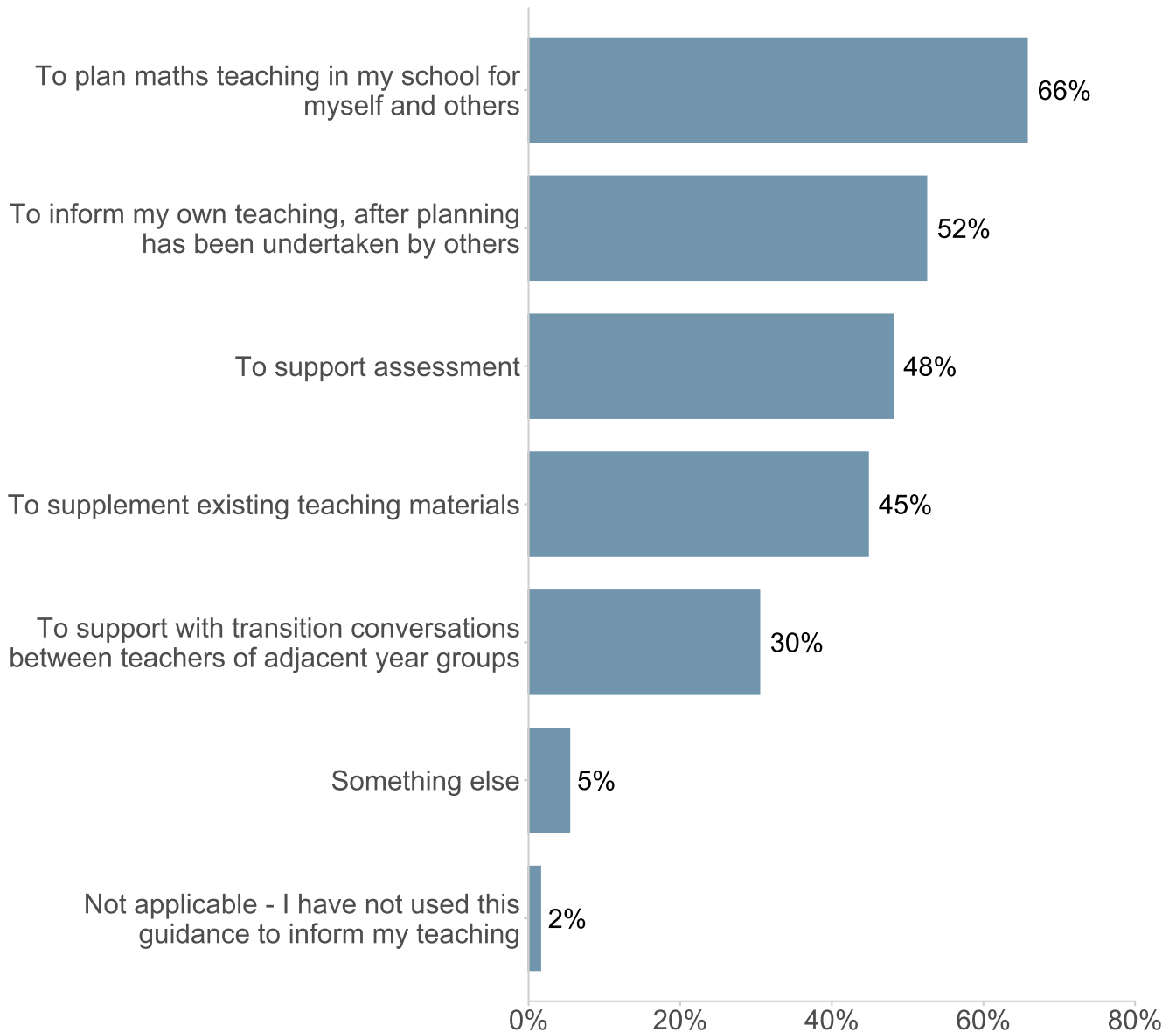


Base: Primary school teachers (n = 907).

A large majority (76%) were aware of the guidance, while a small minority (23%) had not heard of it.

The majority of teachers (55%) who were aware of the guidance said they or their school had used it. We asked these teachers in what way they or their school had used the guidance (Figure 17).

**Figure 17: How "mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2" has been used by teachers**



Base: Primary school teachers who said they have used "mathematics guidance: key stages 1 and 2" (n = 372). Respondents could select all that applied.

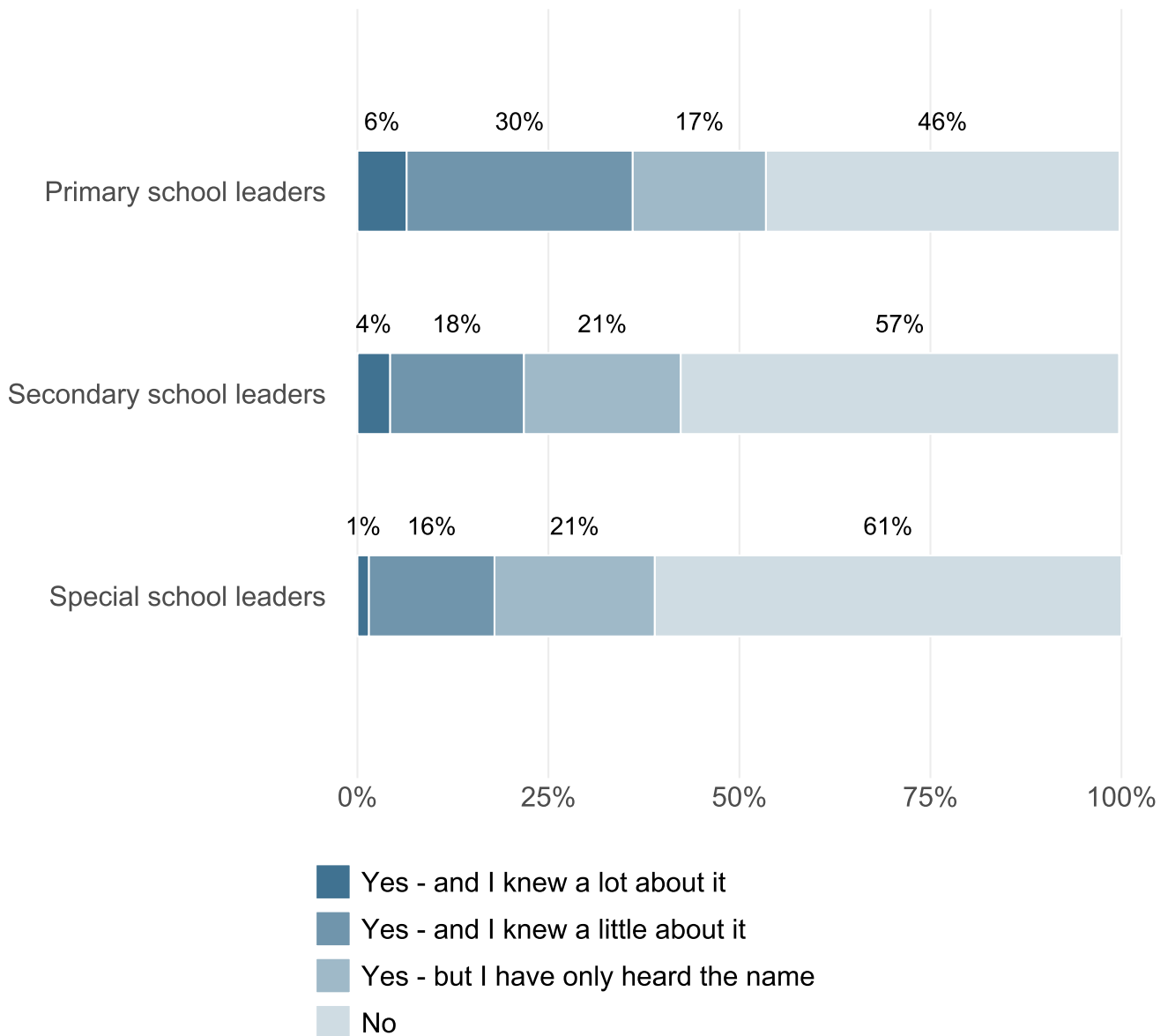
The most common responses were that they or their school had used the guidance to plan maths teaching in their school for themselves or others (66%), that they or their school had used it to inform their own teaching after planning has been undertaken by others (52%), or to support assessment (48%).

## National Plan for Music Education

# (NPME)

We asked leaders whether they were aware of the National Plan for Music Education (NPME), outlined in [The Power of Music to Change Lives: A National Plan for Music Education](#) (Figure 18).

**Figure 18: Leader awareness of the DfE National Plan for Music Education**



Base: All leaders (n = 2423).

The majority of primary school leaders (53%), a minority of secondary school leaders (42%) and special school leaders (39%) said they had heard of the NPME.

Very few primary school leaders (6%), secondary school leaders (4%), or special school leaders (1%) said they knew a lot about it.

These findings were similar to when last asked in March 2023, when 54% of primary school leaders and 40% of secondary school leaders said they had heard of the NPME, and 5% of primary school leaders and 6% of secondary school leaders said they knew a lot about it.

Of the leaders who had heard of the NPME, the majority (58%) said their school has implemented or begun implementing changes to music education as a result of the guidance. This finding is similar when compared to March 2023 (56%).

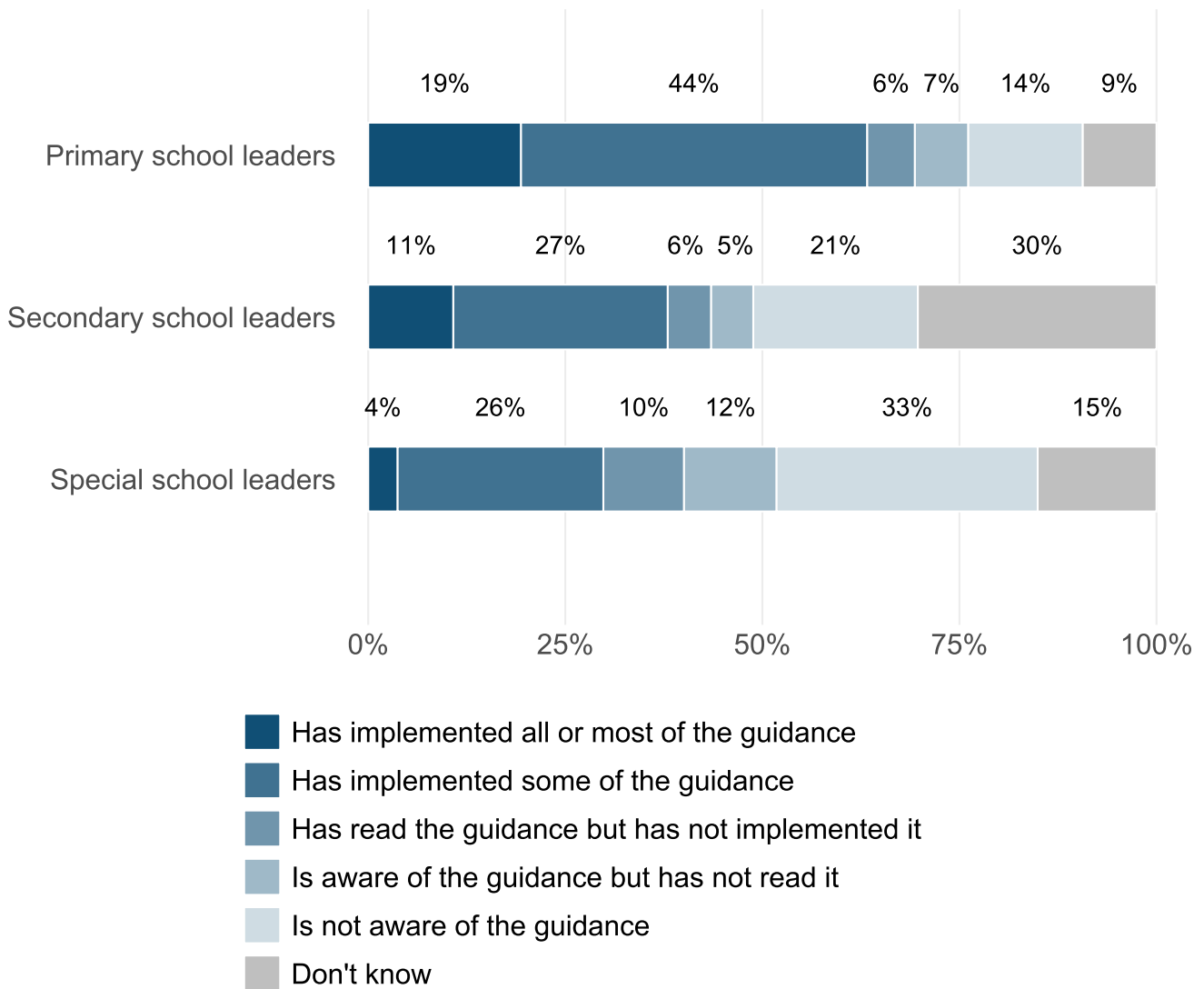
The majority of primary school leaders (64%) and secondary school leaders (53%) said their school currently has a music development plan, while a minority of special school leaders (46%) said their school has one. A larger proportion said their school currently has a music development plan when compared to March 2023, when 44% of primary school leaders and 35% of secondary school leaders said their school had a plan.

Among leaders who said their school currently has a music development plan, a large majority (85%) said their school intends to review their music development plan for the next academic year. Fewer leaders said this than in March 2023, when 91% of leaders said their school intended to review their music development plan for the following academic year.

## **The Model Music Curriculum**

We asked leaders whether they were aware of the Model Music Curriculum and whether their school has implemented changes based on the guidance (Figure 19).

**Figure 19: Awareness and implementation of the Model Music Curriculum**



Base: All leaders (n = 2423).

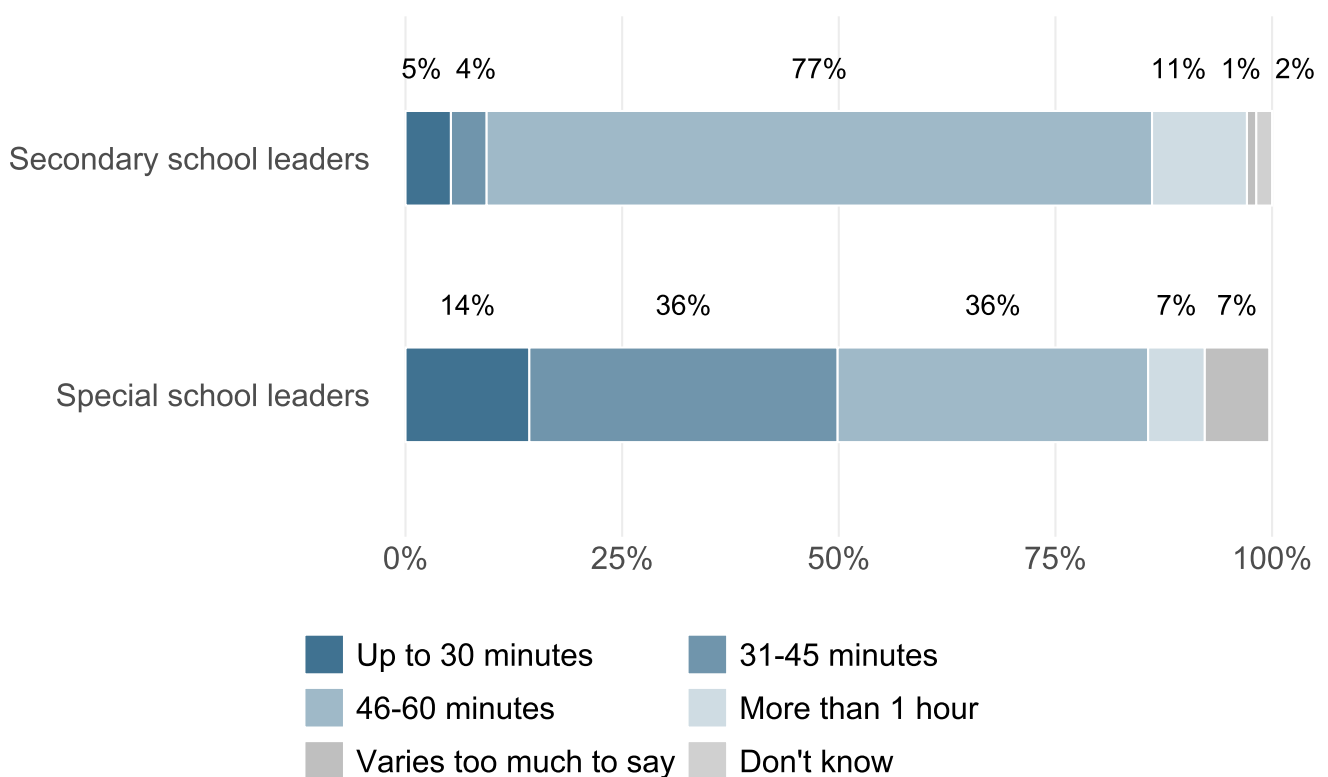
A large majority of primary school leaders (76%) had heard of the Model Music Curriculum, while about half of secondary school leaders (49%) and special school leaders (52%) had heard of it. These findings were similar to March 2023, when 71% of primary school leaders and 51% of secondary school leaders had heard of the Model Music Curriculum.

The majority of primary school leaders (63%), a minority of secondary school leaders (38%), and a small minority of special school leaders (30%) said their school has implemented all, most or some of the guidance from the Model Music Curriculum. These findings are similar to March 2023, when 59% of primary school leaders and 43% of secondary school leaders said their school had implemented all, most or some of the guidance.

We asked secondary and special school leaders whose school teaches KS3 pupils in which terms these pupils receive timetabled music teaching. Almost all secondary school leaders said that KS3 pupils receive timetabled music teaching in the autumn (98%), spring (97%) and summer terms (97%), while a large majority of special school leaders said that KS3 pupils receive timetabled music teaching in the autumn (60%), spring (62%) and summer terms (61%).

We asked secondary and special school leaders whose school provides timetabled music teaching to KS3 pupils how many minutes of music teaching KS3 pupils receive on average in a typical week (Figure 20).

**Figure 20: Average number of timetabled minutes of music teaching per week**



Base: Secondary and special school leaders whose school provides timetabled music teaching to KS3 pupils (n = 1201).

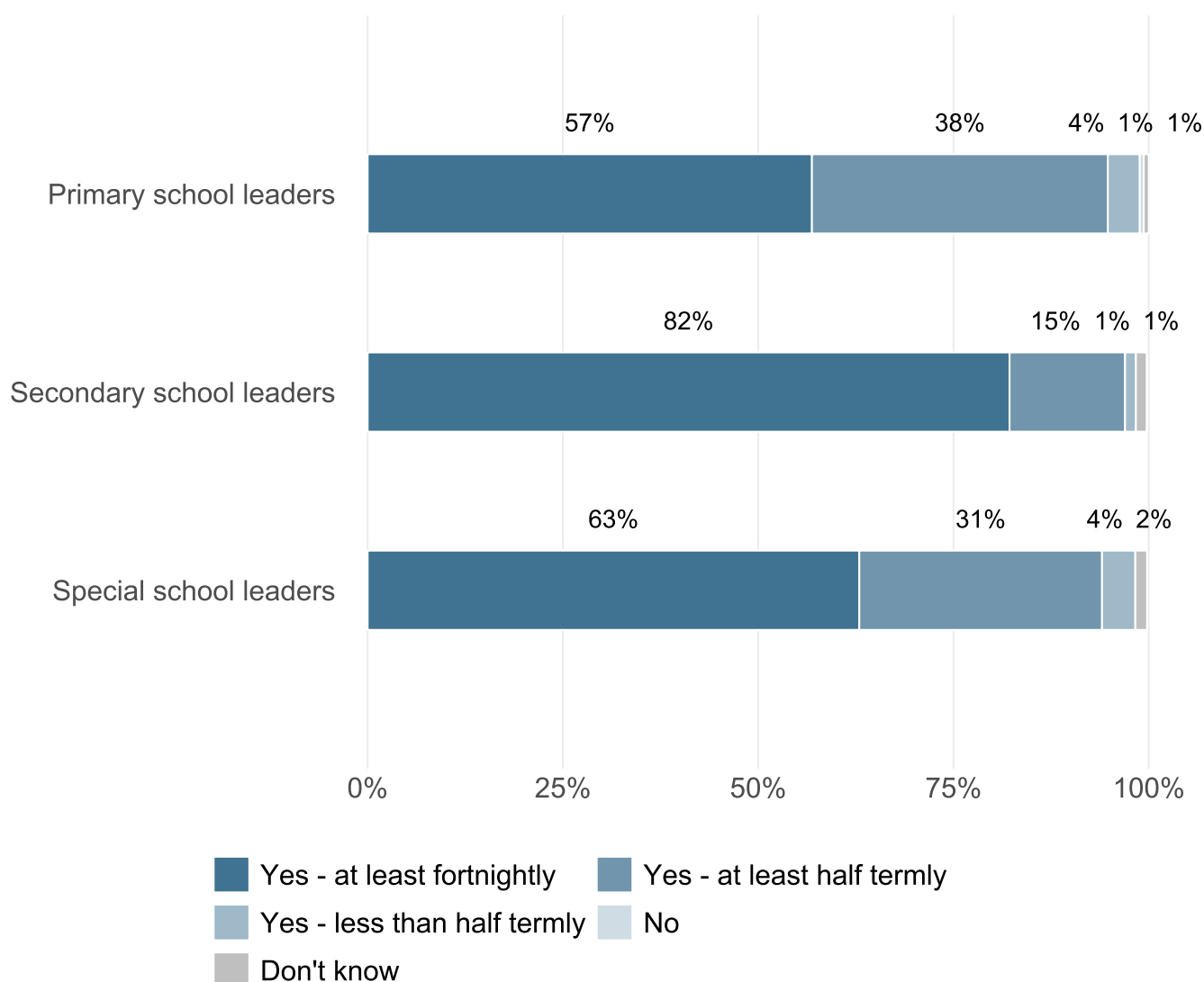
A large majority of secondary school leaders (77%) said that KS3 pupils receive 46 to 60 minutes of music teaching on average in a typical week, while a minority of special school leaders said that KS3 pupils receive an average of 31 to 45 minutes (36%) or 46 to 60 minutes (36%) of music teaching in a typical week.

# Implementation of attendance guidance

We asked teachers and leaders whether they had heard of DfE's ['Working Together to improve school attendance'](#) guidance. Almost all leaders (96%) and large majority of teachers (72%) had heard of the guidance. A large majority of leaders (82%) said they either knew a bit about the guidance or were familiar with the details, while a minority of teachers (38%) said the same.

We also asked leaders whether their school monitors attendance data (Figure 21).

**Figure 21: Whether schools analyse attendance data to identify pupils or cohorts that require support**



Base: All leaders (n = 2423).

Almost all primary school leaders (99%), secondary school leaders (98%) and

special school leaders (98%) said their school monitors pupil attendance data. A large majority of secondary school leaders (82%) and a majority of primary school leaders (57%) and special school leaders (63%) said they monitor this data at least fortnightly.

Almost all primary school leaders (93%) and secondary school leaders (98%) said their school benchmarks absence data against local schools and national levels. A large majority of special school leaders (79%) said the same.

The majority of secondary school leaders (57%) said their school holds Targeted Support Meetings with the local authority at least termly to identify pupils at risk of poor attendance and identify targeted actions. About half of primary school leaders (52%) and a minority of special school leaders (46%) said the same.

A large majority of primary school leaders (80%) and special school leaders (74%) said that their school has a single point of contact at the local authority for attendance issues. The majority of secondary school leaders (66%) said the same.

## **Assistive and accessible technology in schools**

A large majority of special school leaders (81%), the majority of secondary school leaders (64%), and about half of primary school leaders (50%) said that their school has an accessible or assistive technology policy.

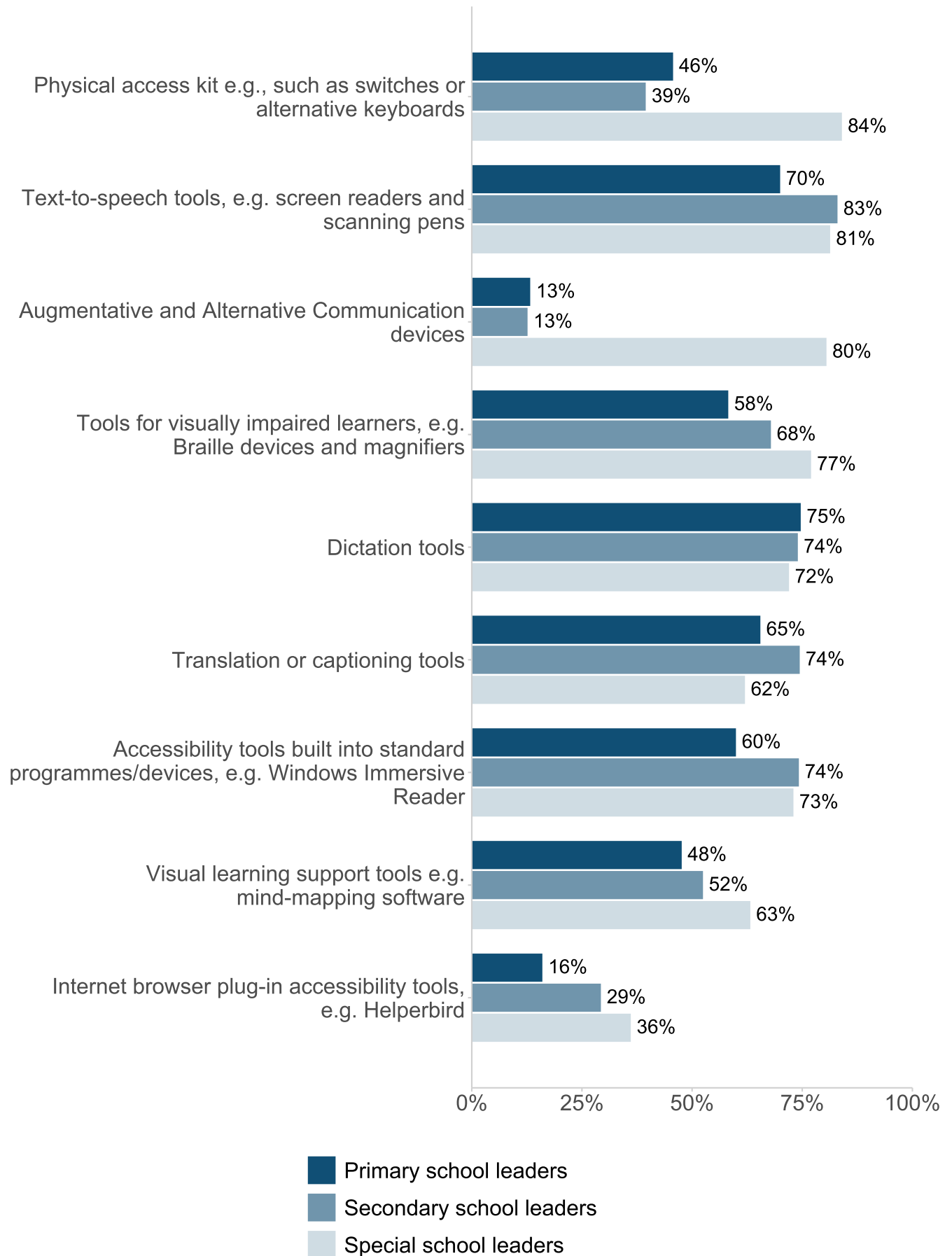
We asked leaders whether their school includes accessible and assistive technology development and provision in its improvement planning and self-evaluation form. About half of special school leaders (50%) said their improvement planning includes assistive technology, while a small minority of primary school leaders (13%) and secondary school leaders (21%) said the same. Similarly, a minority of special school leaders (46%) said their improvement planning includes accessible technology, while a small minority of primary school leaders (14%) and secondary school leaders (22%) said the same.

We asked leaders which types of assistive and accessible technology they had heard of (Figure 22).

### **Figure 22: Assistive and accessible technologies that**



## leaders have heard of



Base: All leaders (n = 2423). Respondents could select all that applied.

Primary school leaders most commonly said they had heard of dictation tools (75%) and text-to-speech tools (70%).

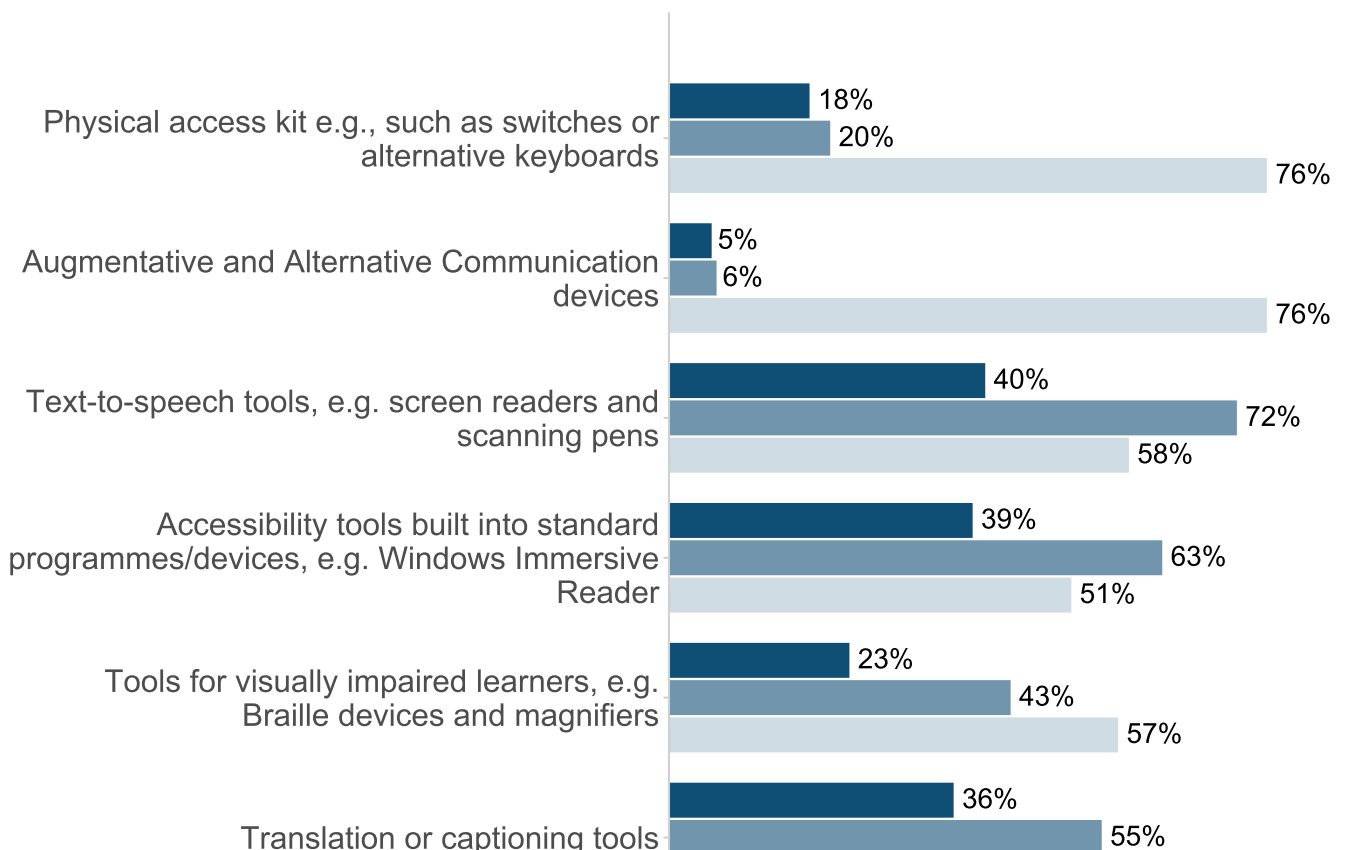
Secondary school leaders most commonly said they had heard of text-to-speech tools (83%), translation or captioning tools (74%), accessibility tools built into standard programmes and devices (74%), and dictation tools (74%).

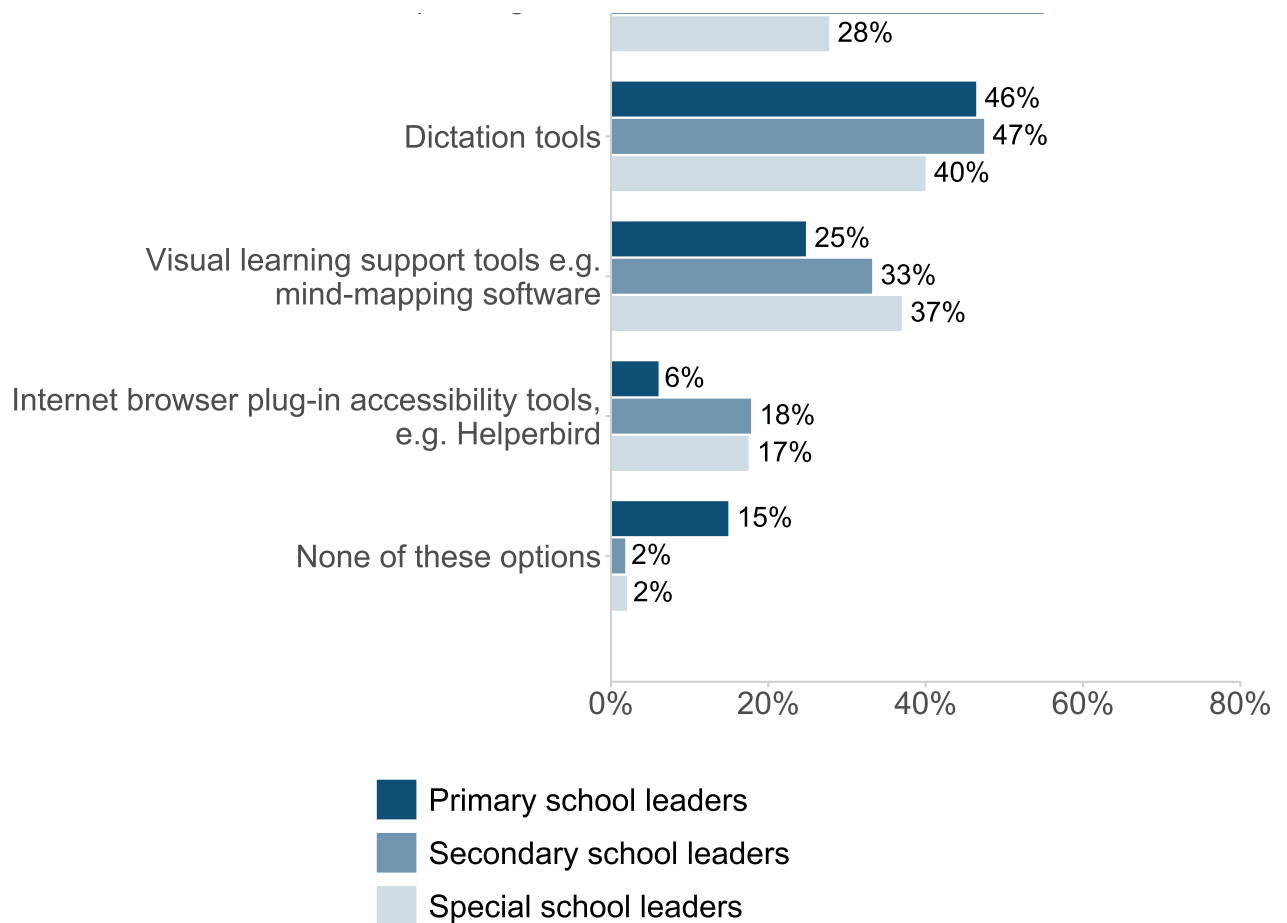
For both primary and secondary school leaders, the technologies they had least commonly heard of were internet browser plug-in accessibility tools and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices.

A large majority of special school leaders had heard of most of the technologies we asked about. They most commonly said they had heard of physical access kit (84%), text-to-speech tools (81%) and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices (80%). They least commonly said they had heard of translation or captioning tools (62%) and internet browser plug-in accessibility tools (36%).

We asked leaders who were aware of at least one of these technologies which of those technologies pupils with SEND use in their school to reduce or remove barriers to learning (Figure 23).

**Figure 23: Types of technology pupils with SEND use in schools**





Base: All leaders (n = 2284). Respondents could select all that applied. Respondents were only shown the technologies they said they were aware of.

Primary school leaders most commonly said that SEND pupils in their school use dictation tools (46%) and text-to-speech tools (40%).

Secondary school leaders most commonly said that SEND pupils in their school use text-to-speech tools (72%) and accessibility tools built into standard programmes and devices (63%).

Special school leaders most commonly said that SEND pupils in their school use physical access kit (76%) and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices (76%).

## Glossary of terms

**Mental Health Support Team (MHST)**

Provide additional capacity for early support and meeting the mental health needs of children and young people in primary, secondary and further education settings.

They have 3 core functions:

- deliver evidence-based interventions for mild to moderate mental health issues
- help mental health leads develop and introduce a whole school or college approach give timely advice to school and college staff
- liaise with external specialist services, to help children and young people get the right support and stay in education

## **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

A child or young person has SEND if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they:

- have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age
- have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions

Many children and young people who have SEND may also have a disability under the Equality Act 2010 - that is '...a physical or mental impairment which has a long-term and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Where a disabled child or young person requires special educational provision, they will also be covered by the SEND definition.

## **Special schools**

Schools which provide an education for children with a special educational need or disability. Almost all pupils in special schools have an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

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