

# Coronavirus: Young People's Experience Survey

*Follow-up summary December 2020 (Published February 2021)*

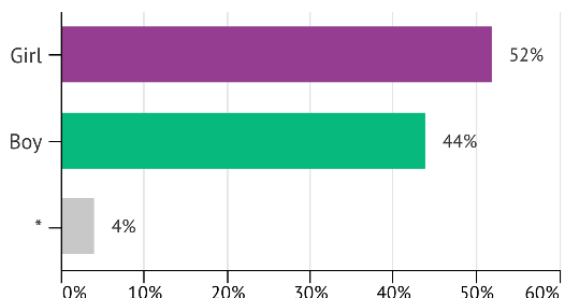
At the end of the Autumn term (between 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020), Kirklees Council's Public Health Intelligence team conducted a follow-up wellbeing survey for young people aged nine to 16.

The initial survey took part at the end of the Summer term in July 2020, exploring how young people were feeling and whether their behaviours had changed during lockdown, to assist in the preparation of pupils returning to schools in September. There were some notable effects of lockdown upon young people and observable differences between demographic groups, particularly gender and age. Key stakeholders involved in this project indicated that a follow-up survey would be beneficial in order to monitor the wellbeing of young people and to evaluate how they have felt about returning to school. This summary contains the findings.

## Who took part in the survey?

There were 284 respondents in total, broken down by demographics as follows:

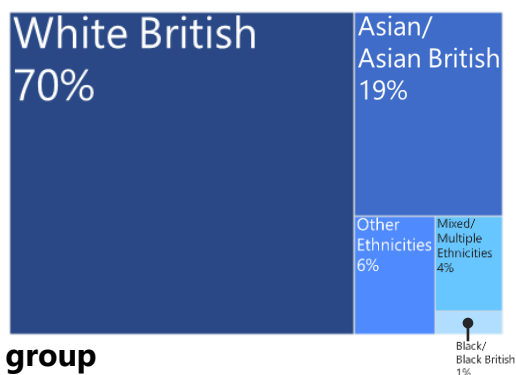
### Gender



Just over half said that they would describe themselves as a girl, and just fewer than half said as a boy.

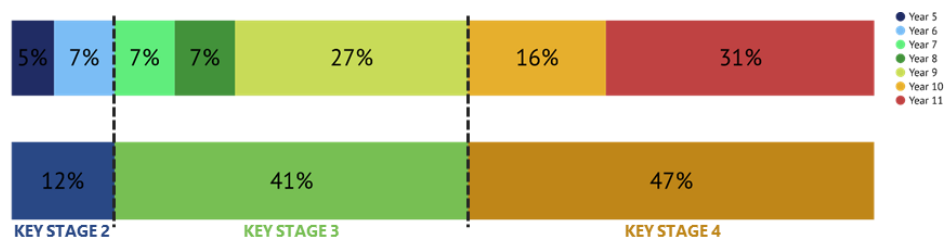
\*4% responded "Trans", "Non-binary", "I'd describe myself in another way", "I'm not sure" or "I'd rather not say".

### Ethnicity



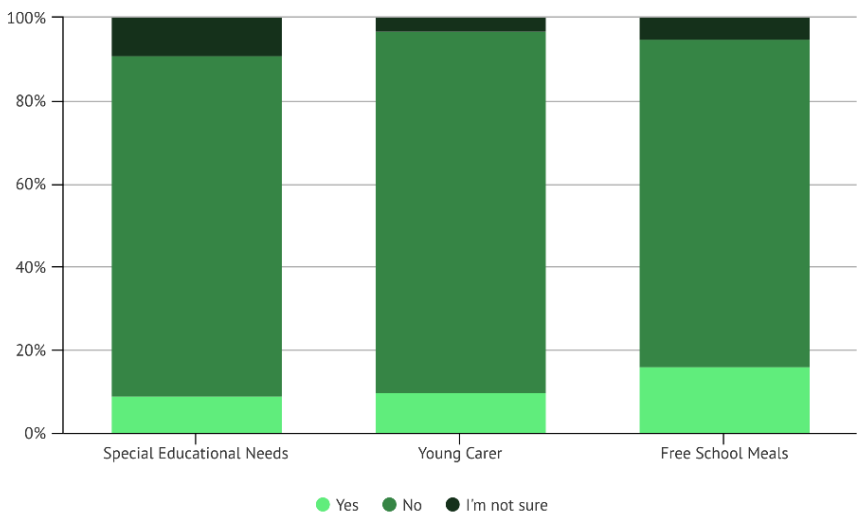
Compared to the overall Kirklees school-aged cohort, the ethnicity breakdown was slightly over-representative of White British young people (+~10%) & under-representative of Asian & Asian British young people (-~10%).

### Age group



The sample was predominantly older secondary-aged pupils.

9% of respondents said that they had a SEN, 10% said that were a Young Carer and 16% said they were in receipt of Free School Meals.

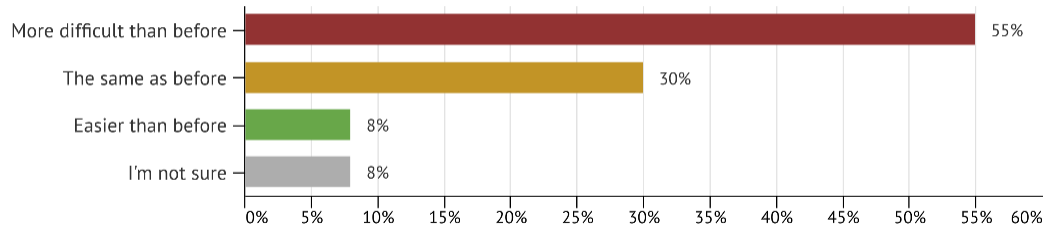


## School & learning

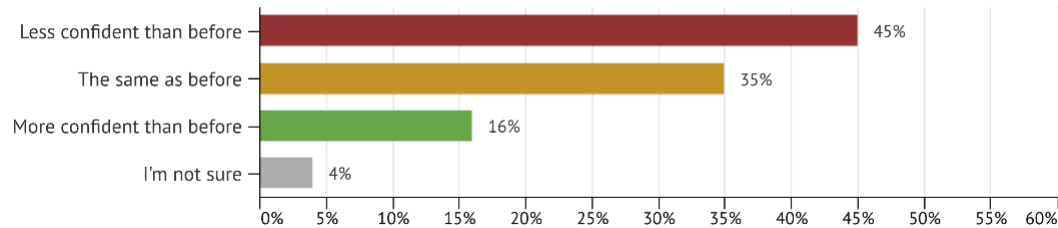
At the time of completion, the respondents had been attending school under the Department for Education's 'protective bubble' COVID-19 advice for around three months. Until their return, most pupils had not been routinely attending educational settings for over five months. 29% of respondents said that they started a new school in September.

The majority of young people said that they found returning to school more difficult than normal and that their confidence in their learning had decreased. There were no differences between those returning to the same school and those starting at a new school.

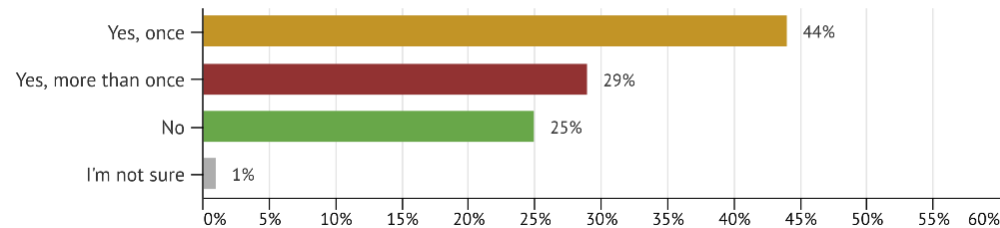
Compared to last year, how did you find returning to school in September?



Compared to last year, how have you felt about your learning since September?

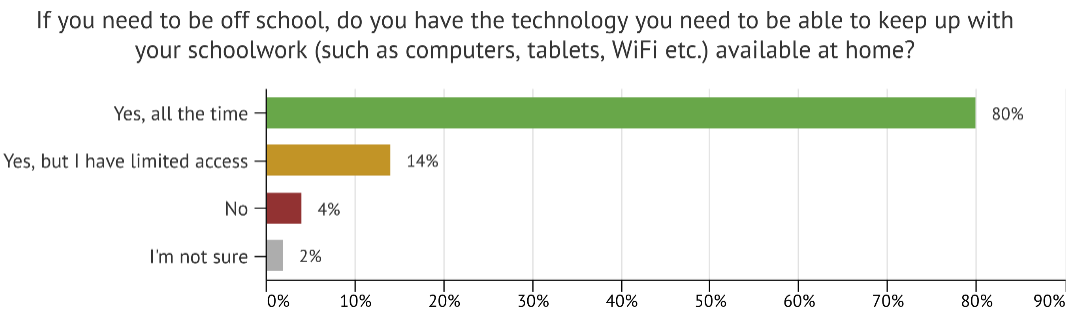
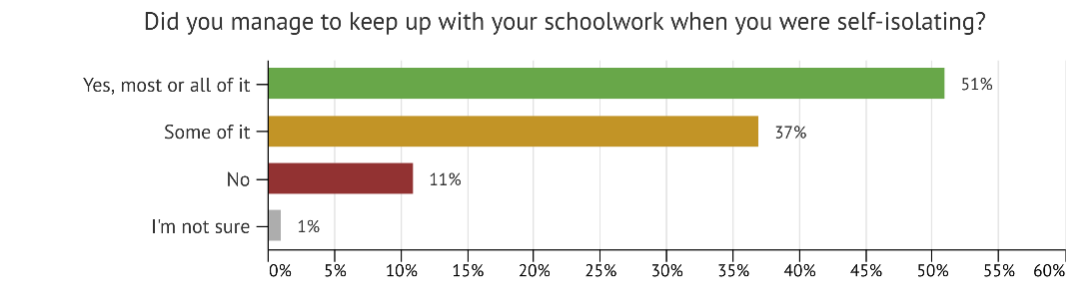


Since September, have you had any time off school because you had to self-isolate?



Since returning to school, around three-quarters of respondents said they had had to take time off school to self-isolate at least once.

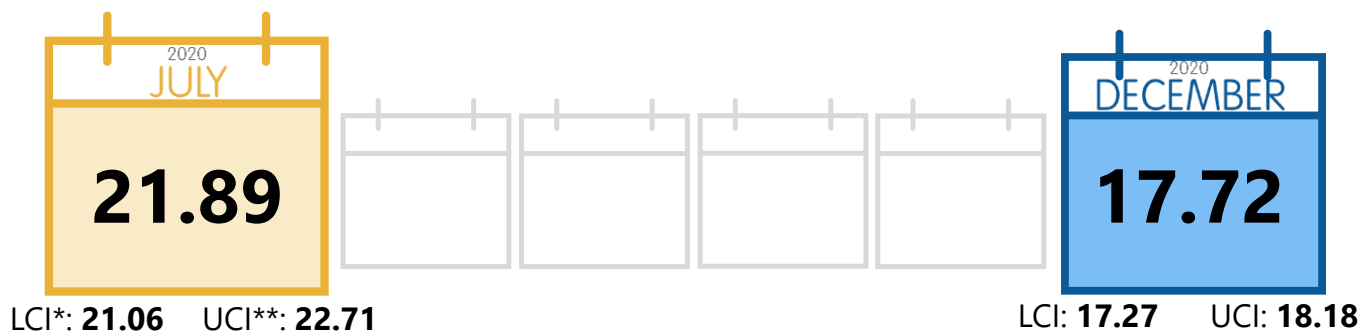
The majority of those who had been required to self-isolate said they *had* managed to keep up with most or all of their schoolwork. 1 in 5 said that they didn't have the open access to the technology that was necessary for keeping up with their schoolwork at home.



## Emotional wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing was measured using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS). This is a set of seven positively worded questions which, when answered together, give a validated score which can be an overall indicator of wellbeing. The maximum possible score (highest level of wellbeing) for an individual is 35, and the minimum score is seven. We used this measure as part of our first Coronavirus experience survey in July 2020.

The SWEMWBS is only a validated measurement of wellbeing for people aged 13 or over, therefore the following mean scores don't include data from respondents who were below this age at the time the survey was completed.



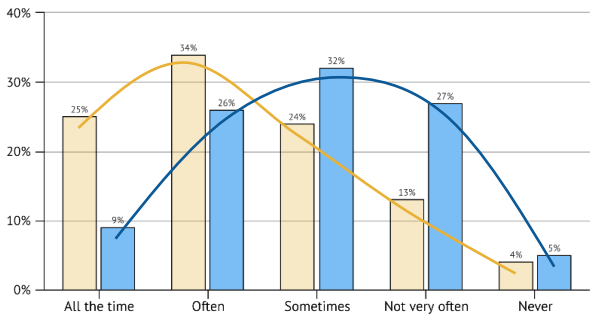
The mean SWEMWBS score in the December follow-up survey was statistically significantly lower than the initial score in July, indicating that overall wellbeing for this age group may have declined.

\*Lower Confidence Interval (95%) \*\*Upper Confidence Interval

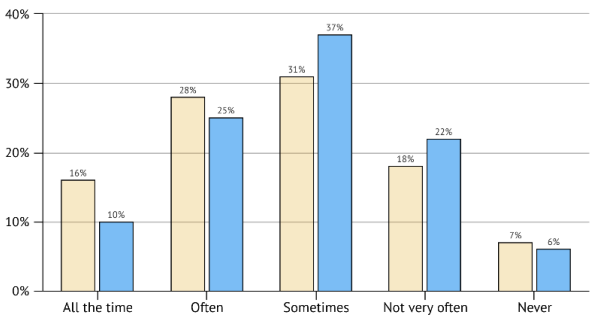
The following graphs show the results of the seven individual SWEMWBS questions, including the comparable data from the initial survey in July. As indicated in the first graph, the distribution of responses has shifted away from the positive responses on the left, to the more negative ones on the right.

In the past two weeks, how often have you been...

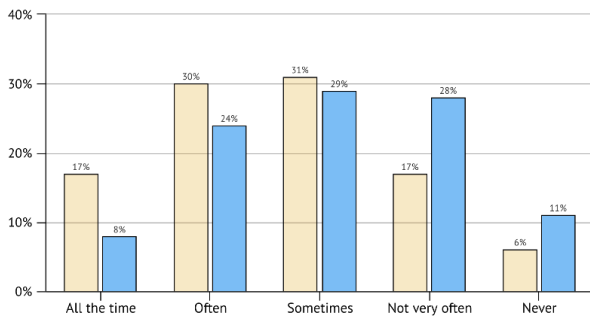
...feeling relaxed



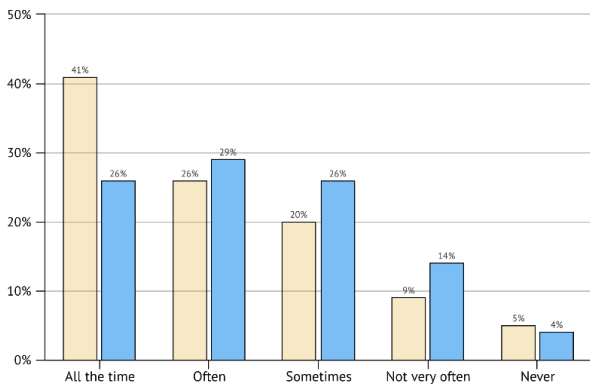
...feeling useful



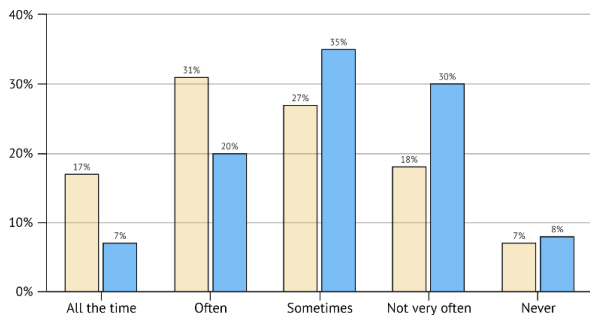
...feeling optimistic



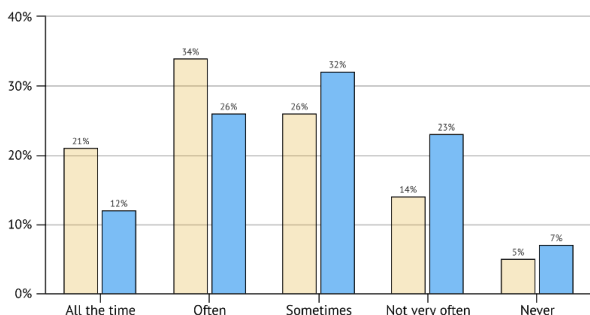
...feeling close to other people



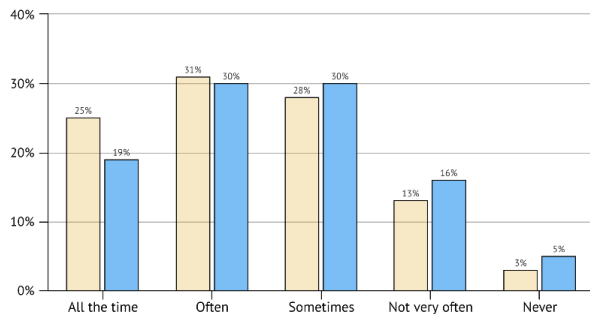
...thinking clearly about things



...dealing with problems well



...able to make up my own mind about things



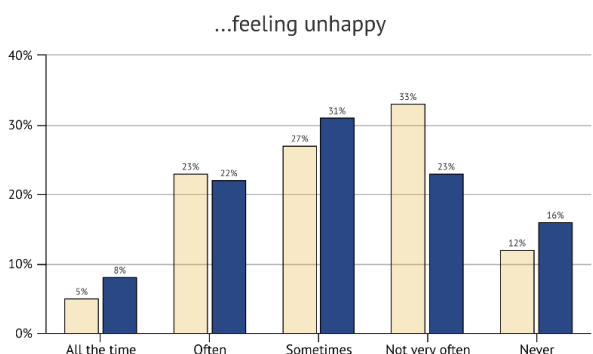
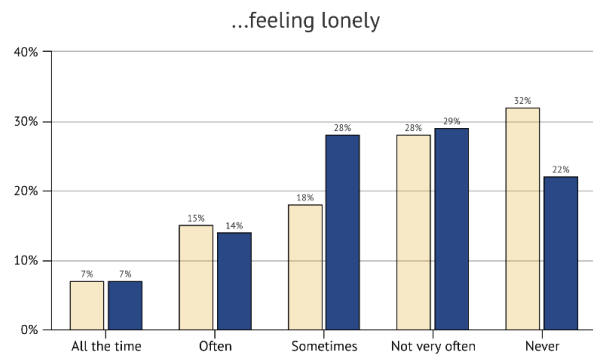
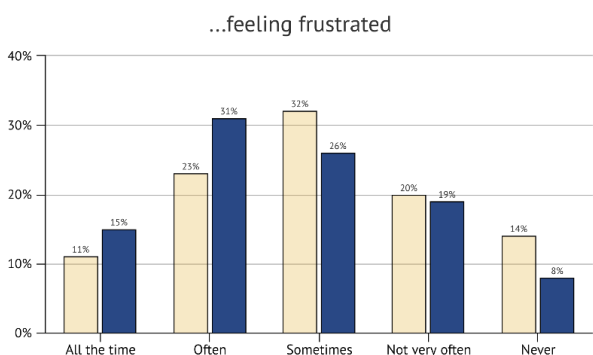
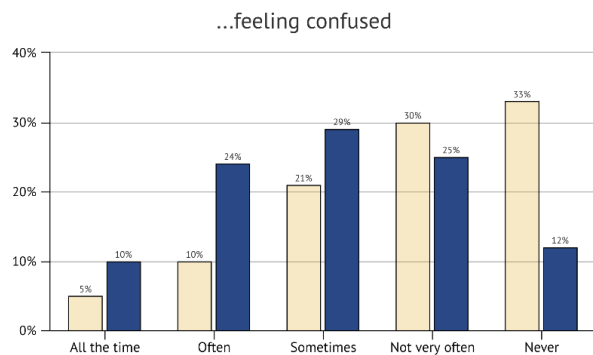
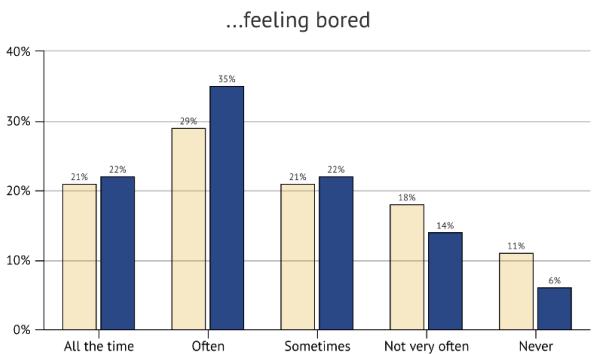
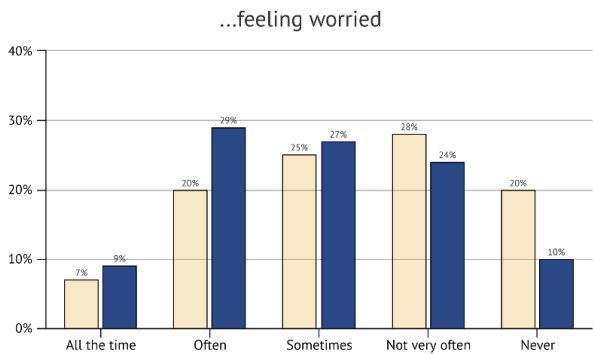
[Difference since July]

	"All the time" or "Often"	"Not very often" or "Never"
...feeling relaxed	▼24%	▲15%
...thinking clearly about things	▼21%	▲13%
...dealing with problems well	▼17%	▲11%
...feeling optimistic	▼15%	▲14%
...feeling close to other people	▼12%	▲4%
...feeling useful	▼9%	▲3%
...able to make up my own mind about things	▼7%	▲5%



The graphs below show the results of six questions, similar to the SWEMWBS questions but worded negatively, including the comparable data from the initial survey in July. They generally show that the frequency of experiencing negative emotions has been more likely to increase rather than decrease since July.

In the past two weeks, how often have you been...

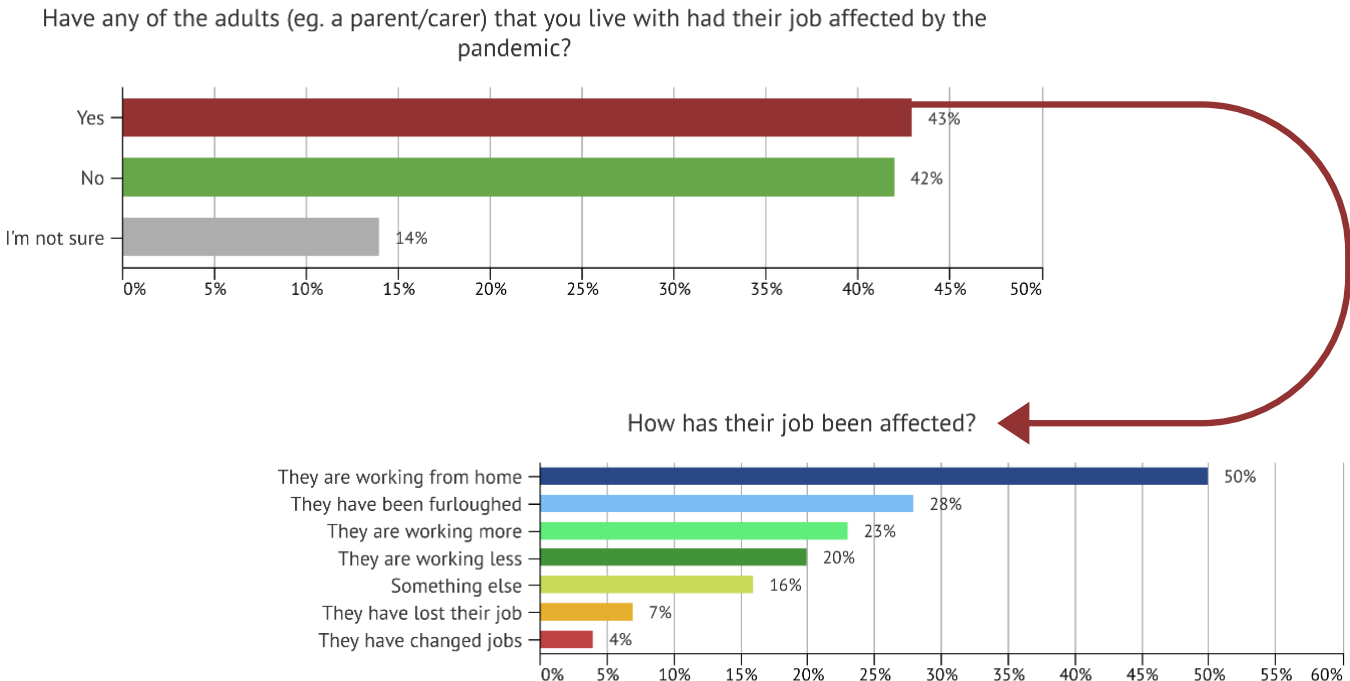


[Difference since July]	"Not very often" or "Never"	"All the time" or "Often"
...feeling confused	▼26%	▲19%
...feeling worried	▼14%	▲11%
...feeling bored	▼9%	▲7%
...feeling lonely	▼9%	▼1%
...feeling frustrated	▼7%	▲12%
...feeling unhappy	▼6%	▲2%

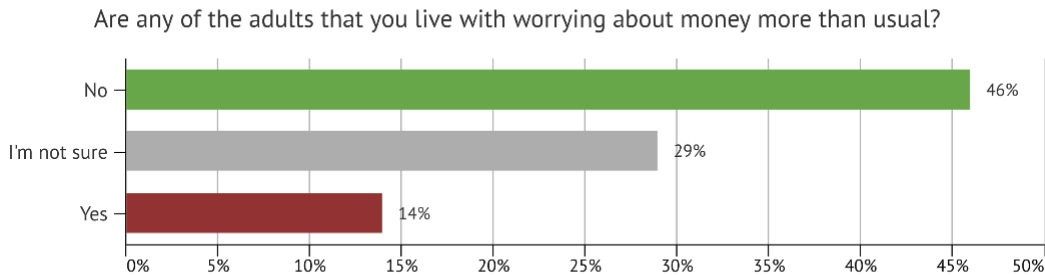
The differences between the distribution of responses in July and December show an overall shift in emotional wellbeing.

For the positively worded questions, the biggest changes were reduced feelings of relaxedness and clarity in thinking. Responses to the negatively worded questions showed the biggest increases in feelings of confusion and worry.

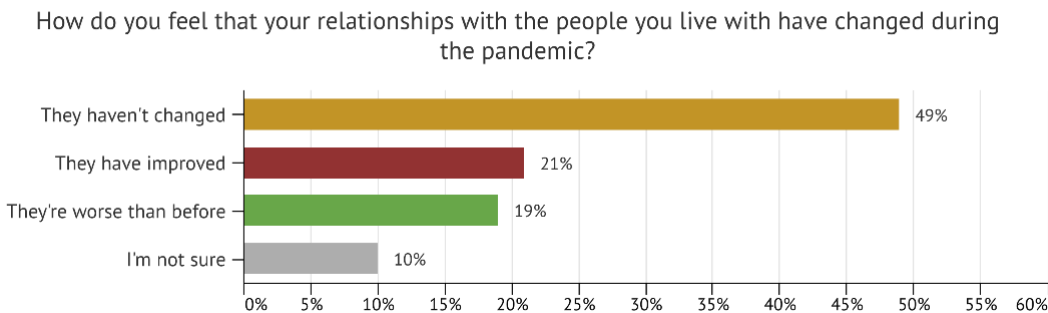
Just fewer than half the respondents said that the pandemic had impacted at least one of their parents' or carers' employment. Of those, the most common change (50%) was that they were working from home. More than a quarter (28%) had been furloughed and 7% said that their parent or carer had lost their job.



1 in 7 said that the adults at home were worrying about money more than usual, rising to 5 in 7 of those who had a parent/carer who had lost their job due to COVID-19.



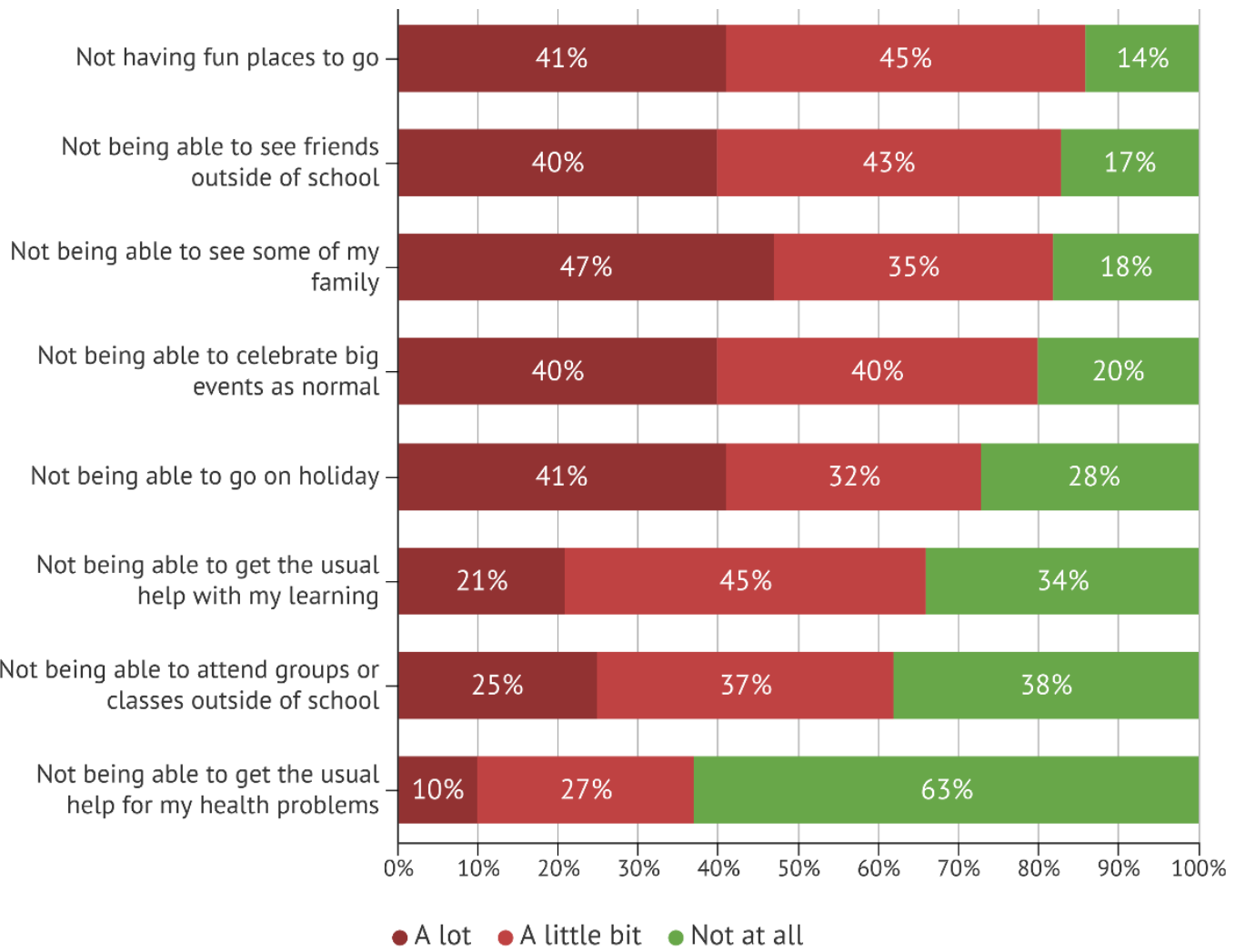
Around half of young people said that their relationships at home hadn't changed during the pandemic and 1 in 10 said that they were unsure whether or not they had. The remaining 40% were fairly evenly split in terms of improvement/worsening.



Most of the young people involved in the survey said that their lives had been impacted by various COVID-19 restrictions to some extent. 'Not having fun places to go' (86%) and 'not being able to see friends outside of school' (83%) were the most widely acknowledged impacts.

'Not being able to see some of my family' was the most **impactful**, with almost half (47%) saying that this had affected them **a lot**.

Although comparatively fewer people were affected by restrictions on access to their usual healthcare, 1 in 10 said that this had a substantial impact on them.



Further demographic analysis (as follows) identifies which groups are most affected by certain issues.

# Demographic summary

The profiles below give a brief insight into Key Stages and genders. Due to the number of respondents, further meaningful demographic analyses (including ethnicity, SEND, young carers and those in receipt of free school meals) was not possible.

 School & learning    Emotional wellbeing    Life at home

KS2



A smaller than average proportion of Primary school respondents said that their return to school was more difficult than usual. Similarly, they were less likely to have experienced a decrease in confidence.



This group were less likely than other age groups to be thinking clearly and half of KS2 respondents said that they felt worried most or all of the time. This doesn't appear to translate to unhappiness, as a smaller than average proportion of KS2 pupils expressed frequent feelings of unhappiness (12% compared to 30% overall).



This group were most impacted by COVID-19 restrictions; two-thirds said that not being able to see family affected them a lot.

KS3



The KS3 cohort were less likely than others to have found their return to school difficult and to have experienced a decline in their academic confidence.



They also had a higher mean SWEMWBS score than any other age group. Despite around a quarter feeling that they frequently felt worried or unhappy, this was a lower prevalence than overall.



Constraints on seeing friends and family tended to affect this group more than any of the other restrictions.

KS4



Perhaps due to their pivotal educational stage, KS4 respondents reported the biggest changes in how they found returning to school and in their academic confidence. A quarter also reported a substantial impact of not being able to access their usual learning support.



This age group had the lowest mean SWEMWBS score and were twice as likely than their KS3 peers to frequently feel unhappy. Almost half said they rarely felt optimistic.



This group were less likely to report extensive personal impacts of COVID-19 restrictions. A quarter of the Year 10 & 11 respondents said that their relationships with the people they live with had worsened during the pandemic.



## Girls



Girls were more likely than boys to find returning to school difficult & feel that their confidence in learning had declined. Reduced access to academic support also had a greater impact on girls than boys, with a quarter saying that it had affected them a lot.



Girls fared less well across all of the emotional wellbeing questions; their mean SWEMWBS score (17.09) was statistically significantly lower than that of the boys. It was also much lower than the girls' score in July 2020 (22.27). Almost half of the girls said that they felt worried (46%) or unhappy (47%) often or all the time.



Over a quarter of girls said that their relationships at home had improved. They were more likely to report that COVID-19 restrictions had impacted heavily on their personal lives, particularly seeing friends and family.

## Boys



Though boys appear to be less affected by change, half of them felt that returning to school after the summer break was more difficult in 2020. 2 in 5 reported a decrease in their confidence.



Their mean SWEMWBS score (18.40), while significantly higher than the girls', was considerably lower than the boys' score from July 2020 (22.61).



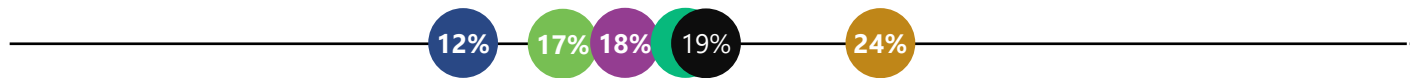
Boys were less likely to report improvements in their relationships at home, but they were no more likely to report deterioration. A slightly higher proportion of boys reported that restricted access to healthcare had had a big impact.

The data to support these demographic summaries can be found overleaf.

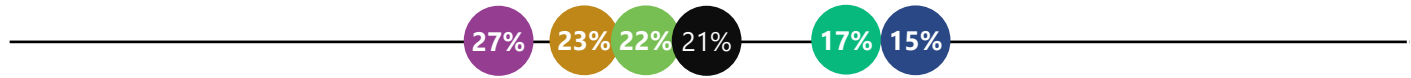




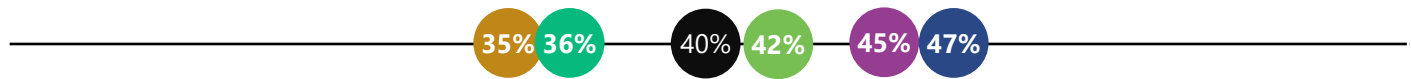
% who felt that their **relationships at home had worsened**



% who felt that their **relationships at home had improved:**



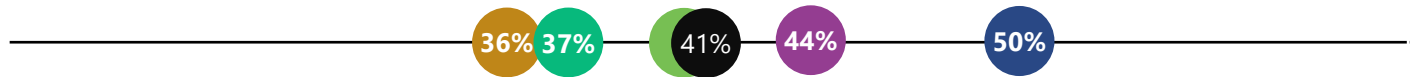
% affected a lot by **not being able to see friends** outside of school:



% affected a lot by **not being able to see some of their family:**



% affected a lot by **not having fun places to go:**



% affected a lot by **not being able to get the usual help for their health problems:**



% affected a lot by **not being able to attend groups or classes** outside of school:



% affected a lot by **not being able to celebrate big events** as normal:



% affected a lot by **not being able to go on holiday:**



For more information about this series of population surveys, please contact the Public Health Intelligence team:

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Further information can also be found [here](#).